

**Public Affairs Section**  
U.S. Embassy Tirana, Albania

**GRANT REPORTING FORM**

*To be Accompanied by a Financial Report (see Financial Report Guidelines)*

*Please type. If you need more space, attach a separate sheet. Please attach also copies of any relevant press coverage.*

**Name of the organization:**

Qendra per Studime Krahase dhe Nderkombetare QSKN/Center for Comparative and international Studies CCIS

**Date the grant was received:**

Start date 01-Sept- 2021  
End date 30- April- 2022

**Amount of the installment(s) and when received:**

First installment 08/24/2021 – 9,973.41USD  
Second installment 02/08/2022 – 9,973.87 USD

**Has the grant been used in a way consistent with the original proposal? If not, please explain:**

Yes, it has been used as proposed

**Please describe the impact the project, including evidence of change of attitude or knowledge (use indicator data to measure project results/outputs and outcomes):**

The project “*we SIGN for JOBS*” aimed in advocating and creating *employment opportunities* for deaf community, and trained 136 deaf young people age 18-35, in 18 districts in Albania. CCIS trainers and ANAD interpreters worked closely together with the Deaf people to inform them about employment opportunities, design simplified forms and procedures to be used by ADISA and NESHA to access their employment programs, and in partnership with local Chamber of Commerce and local businesses guided the deaf people to concrete employment results. The project aimed a synergy with similar projects led by organizations working with and for people with disabilities and those advocating for human rights in Albania.

CCIS and ANAD in a joint effort are enabling employment for deaf people via the information given by a series of videos and training on employment opportunities and access to employment documentation.

We SIGN for JOBS project reached its goal to give accesses to employment information and opportunities for deaf community in Albania now supported by [ADISA](#)

You can find the info [here](#)

The videos are produced by the project team with the support of the USA Embassy in Tirana  
<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-now-supported-by-adisa/>

<b>Project result and indicators</b>	
<b>Planned</b>	<b>Results</b>
120-150 deaf young people trained about employment programs and how to apply	136 people trained
12 training held in 12 districts	12 trainings including 18 districts (Tiranë, Durrës, Lushnjë, Fier, Vlora, Elbasan, Librazhd, Shkodër, Lezhë, Korçë, Pogradec, Berat, Tropojë, Peshkopi, Kukes, Lac, Krujë Gjirokaster, Sarandë) <a href="https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-started-the-capacity-building-for-employment-with-deaf-community/">https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-started-the-capacity-building-for-employment-with-deaf-community/</a> <a href="https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-we-continue-the-training-deaf-people-on-employment-opportunities/">https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-we-continue-the-training-deaf-people-on-employment-opportunities/</a> <a href="https://qskn.al/more-training-for-a-full-support-of-deaf-community/">https://qskn.al/more-training-for-a-full-support-of-deaf-community/</a> <a href="https://qskn.al/a-full-week-of-trainings-we-sign-for-jobs-project/">https://qskn.al/a-full-week-of-trainings-we-sign-for-jobs-project/</a> <a href="https://qskn.al/a-very-needed-and-successful-employment-training-program-for-deaf-people-in-albania-was-finalized/">https://qskn.al/a-very-needed-and-successful-employment-training-program-for-deaf-people-in-albania-was-finalized/</a>
1 training package in sign language	1 training package
1 illustrated info sheet for job employments in sign language	6 video with employment info from ADISA translated in sign languages <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=807F5OWt_4s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=807F5OWt_4s</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzOn3Mc1MYk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzOn3Mc1MYk</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoLinPxe1W4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoLinPxe1W4</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_euuuVHDbos">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_euuuVHDbos</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FypUMlgrGLk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FypUMlgrGLk</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX-2HD3LrgQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX-2HD3LrgQ</a>
2 consultations meeting with government employment agencies (NESA, ADISA)	5 consultation meetings, ADISA 2 NESA 1 Ministry of Economy and Finance 1 GIZ 1 <a href="https://qskn.al/anad-dhe-ccis-marrin-pjese-ne-takimin-konsultues-tek-ministria-e-financave-dhe-ekonomise/">https://qskn.al/anad-dhe-ccis-marrin-pjese-ne-takimin-konsultues-tek-ministria-e-financave-dhe-ekonomise/</a> <a href="https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-kick-off-meeting-on-the-international-day-of-sign-languages/">https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-kick-off-meeting-on-the-international-day-of-sign-languages/</a>
1 meeting with Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tirana	3 meetings <a href="https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-meets-with-the-tirana-chamber-of-commerce-and-industry/">https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-meets-with-the-tirana-chamber-of-commerce-and-industry/</a>

1 Meeting with Chamber of Commerce in Korca	Online meeting with two businesses
1 meeting with ADRF and joint awareness campaign, synergy with their USA Embassy grant project	1 joint activity for the awareness campaign (ADRF projects supported from eth USA Embassy) 1 joint event regarding implement with Austrian Development Agency  <a href="https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-creating-synergies-with-other-projects/">https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-creating-synergies-with-other-projects/</a>
1 Recommendation package in sign language for the employment government agencies in Albania related to procedures in sign language	1 recommendation document
1 video with project participants testimonial	1 promotional video <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQMS3FJDUvs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQMS3FJDUvs</a>
1-2 people from deaf community to sign contracts with local businesses	2 people employed from the ANAD community Ermal Celaj- Car wash Matilda Zika- Mulli I vjeter coffee shop

**Please describe how the project was implemented (key activities, engagements, and interventions) and how the goals of the project were met:**

**1. WE sign for Jobs- Project Kick off meeting on the International Day of Sign Languages  
Sept 23, 2021**

CCIS and ANAD, in the framework of the “International Week of Deaf People” September 23-30, 2021 and on the day of “International Day of Sign Languages” in collaboration with COD, Center for Openness and Dialogue, held the kick off meeting of the project “WE SIGN FOR JOBS”.

Representatives of a number of public institutions in Albania became part of this open meeting: the Deputy Minister of Education, Sports and Youth, Mrs. Nina Guga, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection, Mrs. Bardhylka Konspiri and the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination Mr. Robert Gajda, as well as representatives of the Regional Education Directorates in Tirana and districts.

The participants discussed about quality education for deaf people towards employment opportunities.

Participants

Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth

Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination

Ministry of Finance and Economy  
Local Education Office Tirana  
National Employment and Skills Agency  
Agency for Quality Assurance of Pre-University Education  
Institute of Deaf Students  
Board member of ANAD

<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-kick-off-meeting-on-the-international-day-of-sign-languages/>

## **2. Creating synergies with other projects**

**Sept 28, 2021**

CCIS has conducted joint activities, together with ANAD and Austrian Development agency, Municipality of Tirana and experts, creating synergies of the project “We SIGN for JOBS” with similar projects leaded by organizations and institutions working with and for people with disabilities and those advocating for human rights in Albania.

We had a fruitful discussion with the deaf community about their needs and opportunities for employment. Unemployment among Deaf and hard hearing people in Albania is considered one of the main problems. 61% of deaf people in Albania (ANAD & INSTAT 2016) are unemployed, a figure higher than other disability groups, or for the group defined as completely unable to in the general population (2011 Census). Despite the Law 15/2019 ““On employment promotion” and UN CRPD ratification there is a lack of successful state effort in Albania to integrate Deaf into the open labor market

This partnership intends not only to ensure employment for the deaf community but fundraising also, encourage local support and create successful examples of such involvements.

<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-creating-synergies-with-other-projects/>

**March 18, 2022**

"We sign for Jobs" project group has continued being part of the social and networking activities in the city. On march 18, 2022 CCIS and ANAD were part of the event for promoting the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, organized by Tirana Municipality and UN Women

The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life is addressed to the local and regional governments of Europe, who are invited to sign it, to make a formal public commitment to the principle of equality of women and men, and to implement, within their territory, the commitments set out within the Charter. To assist in the implementation of these commitments, each signatory authority undertakes to draw up an Equality Action Plan, which sets out its priorities, actions and resources to this end. In this framework, Municipality of Tirana and UN Women in Albania have engaged with all of the institutions and organizations in its territory, in order to promote the achievement of real equality in practice.

Equality of women and men constitutes a fundamental right for all, and an essential value for every democracy. In order to be achieved, this right needs not only to be

legally recognized, but to be effectively applied to all aspects of life: political, economic, social and cultural. Despite numerous instances of formal recognition and progress made, equality of women and men in daily life is still not a reality. Women and men do not enjoy the same rights in practice. Social, political, economic and cultural inequalities persist – for example, salary disparities and political under-representation. These inequalities are the results of social constructs built upon numerous stereotypes present in the family, education, culture, the media, the world of work, the organization of society... So many domains in which it is possible to act, adopting a new approach and making structural changes. As the spheres of governance closest to the people, local and regional authorities represent the levels best placed to combat the persistence and the reproduction of inequalities, and to promote a truly egalitarian society. They can, through their competences, and through co-operation with the whole range of local actors, undertake concrete actions in favor of equality of women and men.

<https://qskn.al/projekti-we-sign-for-jobs-i-bashkohet-aktiviteve-te-bashkise-tirane-dhe-un-women-per-promovimin-e-kartes-europiane-per-barazi-te-grave-dhe-burrave-ne-jeten-vendore/>

#### **Participation to Activism fair**

**October 22, 2021**

CCIS and ANAD participated in the Activism fair for National Activism DAY, highlighting the importance of our project We Sign for JOB, as a local action and initiatives in various cities for the employment of the Deaf community in Albania

#### **3. ANAD dhe CCIS part in consultation meetings from Government institutions**

**Nov 16, 2021**

"we SIGN for JOBS" project was part of the consultative meeting that the Ministry of Finance and Economy held with all stakeholders involved for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the field of education and vocational training and their integration into the labor market.

The Ministry of Finance and Economy in cooperation with the project "Development of Employment Skills" implemented by UNDP Albania, with the support of the Swiss government, have undertaken a study to assess the situation of inclusion of students with disabilities in vocational secondary education.

Considering the complexity of the VET system and the challenges and barriers faced by students with disabilities, the main purpose of this study was to analyze their situation in this system and to present recommendations for intervention in legal activity, and introducing and improving inclusive cultures and practices

<https://qskn.al/anad-dhe-ccis-marrin-pjese-ne-takimin-konsultues-tek-ministria-e-financave-dhe-ekonomise/>

#### **4. CCIS and ANAD promoting the project "We sign for Jobs" in the International Day of People with disabilities.**

**Dec 3, 2021**

An illustrative video was produced and shared in CCIS, ANAD and USA Embassy in Tirana webpage and social media.

<https://www.facebook.com/CenterCCIS/videos/494111771820483>

## **5. Design and preparation for Trainings materials**

**Nov 1, 2021- Dec 31,2021**

The team of “We Sign For Jobs” project, CCIS adviser and ANAD-SHKSHNJND trainers finalized the set of training materials “Finding Employment Opportunities”. The materials are 6 short videos in sign language, mainly with figures and illustrations, easy for the deaf community to be understood. The training materials have information about the employment programs in Albania, how to access them, how to approach ADISA and National Employment offices in 12 districts, how to search jobs on line, how to contact local Chamber of Commerce’s. The trainings were conducted during Feb and March 2022.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=807F5OWt\\_4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=807F5OWt_4s)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzOn3Mc1MYk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoLInPxelW4>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_euuvHDbos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_euuvHDbos)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FypUmlgrGLk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX-2HD3LrgQ>

<https://qskn.al/selecting-materials-for-trainings-for-deaf-people/>

<https://qskn.al/1730-2/>

## **6. A fruitful meeting at ADISA**

**January 25,2022**

Great discussions and joint efforts ADISA-CCIS and ANAD-SHKSHNJND.

The project team and the representatives from ADISA, the executive director Mr. Lorin Ymeri and the director for the development of the services Mrs. Jonida Taraj, discussed on how to facilitate the access of the deaf community into employment opportunities, and what needs to be changed in ADISA’s forms and procedures for a greater access.

They agreed to post the training videos “Finding Employment Opportunities” on their website and in the social media. Based on the feedback taken from participants in the training simplified forms and procedures to facilitated access of the deaf community into employment opportunities were designed, to be used by ADISA Integrated Services Center and National Employment and Skills Agency (NESA) to access their employment program.

<https://qskn.al/a-fruitful-meeting-at-adisa/>

## **7. Training program**

**February – March 2022**

In the framework of the project “We sign for Jobs” during February and March 2022 CCIS and ANAD worked together and trained 136 young people from the community deaf from all over Albania (Tiranë, Durrës, Lushnjë, Fier, Vlora, Elbasan,Librazhd, Shkodër, Lezhë, Korçë, Pogradec, Berat, Tropojë, Peshkopi, Kukes, Lac, Krujë Gjirokaster, Sarandë). The purpose of the training program was to promote opportunities in employment and economic development for the Deaf community in Albania.

The training was guided from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Sustainable Development Goals to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, the international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value, and Albanian legislation. New and revised employment promotion programs in accordance with the new law 15/2019 “On employment promotion” aims at supporting the most vulnerable groups and registered unemployed jobseekers benefiting from these programs; provides and supports employment, advice, and professional qualification for people with disabilities.

The objectives of the training program were: to inform and train deaf community in 12 districts in Albania about employment opportunities, according to potential programs and access to information and to collaborate with Public administration structures (ADISA Integrated Services Center and National Employment and Skills Agency (NESA) to complement the procedures for employment of deaf community.

Most deaf adults are physically able to work, but major obstacles to their employment include access to information due to linguistic barriers and limited skills. However, deaf people who are employed or self-employed generally had unskilled, low-paying, non-academic jobs. This is understandable, given that their educational path currently ends at ninth grade and that the Institute of Deaf Students provides orientation for only three occupations: carpentry and shoe making for boys, and dressmaking for girls.

According to their discussions during the training the top sectors in which deaf people are employed include manufacturing, healthcare, retail, professional services, and construction. The trainings sessions have also shone fresh light on some of the specific barriers to career progression, such as the lack of deaf role models in work and insufficient networking opportunities. Deaf young people are already less likely to be employed than their hearing peers and this concerning report shows some of the reasons why.

If they're deprived of good quality, accessible careers advice at this pivotal stage of their life, it puts them at a serious disadvantage before they've even moved into the world of work.

Those that do find a job are arriving with incredible skills to offer, but all too often they're unfairly held back by a real lack of support, inclusion and deaf awareness.

Deaf young people are capable of anything, but unless they get the support they need, a generation of potential risks going to waste.

Since the education system for deaf people during their school years has failed and they have hardly any chance to work and earn their living and so to participate fully in Albanian society, adult professional training programs should be offered in sign language, free of charge as gateway training for enhancing their employment opportunities; joint sessions with Chamber of Commerce needs to be held, a synergy with other similar project for People with disabilities (PwD) needs to be created, informing them about employment programs, training for employment, and the opportunity to use a sign language interpreter should be offered.



<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-started-the-capacity-building-for-employment-with-deaf-community/>  
<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-we-continue-the-training-deaf-people-on-employment-opportunities/>  
<https://qskn.al/more-training-for-a-full-support-of-deaf-community/>  
<https://qskn.al/a-full-week-of-trainings-we-sign-for-jobs-project/>  
<https://qskn.al/a-very-needed-and-successful-employment-training-program-for-deaf-people-in-albania-was-finalized/>

#### 8. **Meeting with Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry** **April 14, 2022**

The two project partner organizations met with representatives of the Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry in order to create bridges of cooperation between the deaf community and businesses that are members of the CCIT.

The meeting was attended by CCIT representatives, Mrs. Albana Lakonri, Secretary General, Mr. Bashkim Sykja, advisor to the president of CCIT, Mrs. Aris Tasho, head of the project office, and Mr. Florjan Rojba, executive director of ANAD, together with Mrs. Nevila Xhindi, project advisor at CCIS.

Mrs. Xhindi made a presentation of the “We sign for Job” project supported by the Small Grants for Democracy Program of the United States Embassy in Tirana and implemented by CCIS and ANAD. Mr. Rojba made a presentation of the problems faced by the community of deaf people in Albania and especially focused on their employment. Today the deaf community is in great difficulty of finding employment, although the law makes it mandatory for businesses to employ people with disability.

Mr. Sykja stressed in his speech the importance of this meeting and the need to know ANAD and deaf community that the organization represents. Mr. Sykja promised that the members of the chamber will be informed about this meeting and will receive the necessary information for the community of deaf people in Albania.

The meeting was evaluated by the parties as very important not only to get to know each other, but to set up a new collaboration with concrete results.

<https://qskn.al/we-sign-for-jobs-project-meets-with-the-tirana-chamber-of-commerce-and-industry/>

#### 9. Ongoing management project

#### 10. Project visibility and dissemination FB and website @CCIS and @ANAD

### **Please give an illustrative example of the program’s success:**

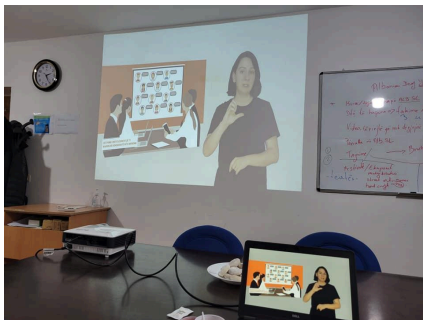
#### **Trainings**







Designing the training materials



Meeting with Tirana chamber of commerce and Industry



Any problems encountered and how they were solved:

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N/a

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**Please describe the likely future impact of the program and what new plans or projects were conceived:**

Deaf community in Albania find it difficult to earn a living because they face major barriers to access education, training and employment – including stigma and discrimination from employers who do not know how to include them.

This pilot project trialed various interventions to see which are most effective in increasing meaningful inclusion of deaf men and women in waged employment in the private and public sectors. The intervention targeted deaf young people in 18 cities, with limited education, learning from the project on how to find a job and to have accesses in the employment information.

The project has established peer groups of deaf workers and jobseekers, who will meet once a week to provide peer support and help each other negotiate the employment journey. In collaboration with partners like Municipality of Tirana, NESAs, Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the team has also sensitized public transport companies on accessible and safe transportation for people with disabilities. The project has also worked to identify and sensitize suitable companies interested in hosting deaf candidates, and will work with them to provide a safe and conducive learning environment for deaf female and male employees, including through training supervisors and co-workers on Sign Language, conducting workplace accessibility assessments.

CCIS and ANAD are identifying companies who are particularly suitable and interested in hosting deaf candidates, and will work with the companies to provide a safe and conducive working environment for deaf female and male employees, while working with deaf candidates to build their skills and ability to thrive in the workplace.

CCIS and ANAD is planning to submit new proposals regarding deaf's employment to donors like SWIS Cooperation, GIZ, UNDP, Austrian Cooperation Agency.

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**Other comments or suggestions for improving the program:**

The program was very supporting to the civil society working for and with deaf community in Albania.

Increasing successful occupational outcomes for individuals who are deaf must involve a planned process of training, support, and advocacy for employees and potential employers. Assisting individuals who are deaf to understand and disseminate vital information to potential employers regarding accommodations and other ways to enhance workplace productivity is essential to the future advancement of this population in today's workforce in

Albania.

Continues training and future research that provides employer data would be an important strategy toward improving the occupational opportunities for this community.

Thank you for your cooperation!