

**‘Assessment on Labor Market Relevance for the Existing Study
Programs of the University ’’Haxhi Zeka’’ in Peja’**

Draft Document

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Abbreviations

CIB - Center of Innovation and Bussiness

EU - European Union

EHEA - European Higher Education Area

HEI - Higher Educational Institutions

KTTO - Knowledge and Technology Transfer Offices

LMR - Labour Market Relevance

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RTC - Research Transfer Centers

SME - Small and Medium Enterprises

TAK - Tax Administration of Kosovo

UP - University of Prishtina

UHZ - University Haxhi Zeka

1. Introduction

The higher education in Kosovo was conducted for many years 'in parallel system' in private and outside the formal system of higher education. As a result, university staff were isolated from the developments in higher education in other European countries, the curricula for most subjects remained unchanged and the teaching and learning methods remained largely old-fashioned, consisting of rote learning of theory with little reference to developments in the real economy.

Although the state of Higher Education has improved significantly since 1999, teaching methods have remained largely unchanged and the connections with the real economy and the labor market conditions are fragile. Indeed, the HEIs in Kosovo have little, if any, cooperation with industry. This is mainly due to the tendency inherited from the previous system (that universities were only responsible for educating students, not equipping them for the job market (Euforia Project, 2014).

Apart from the University of Prishtina, Kosovo's Government decided to establish new public universities in Kosovo. From 2008 until 2015, many public universities in Kosovo were established, such as the University of Prizreni "Ukshin Hoti", the University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka", University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani", University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini", University of Gjilani "Kadri Zeka" and University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj.

Nowadays, apart from the academic and scientific activities, the labor market relevance of the programmes respectively the employment of the graduates is crucial for the Universities. According to the Lisbon Strategy of Europe 2020, there should be an interlinkage between the economy and universities. Considering the limited possibilities of the local economy respectively public sector to absorb the graduates, there is immediate need to develop a framework respectively programs and activities which could upgrade student knowledge and capabilities for supporting the private sector respectively creating jobs by enhancing university-industry cooperation. University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja (UHZ) has some previous experience of developing university-industry cooperation with the EU partners, which experience should be extended in the near future.

This study aims to evaluate the study programmes at the UHZ regarding labor market relevance. The results derived from the applied methodology and by incorporating the Peja University management, academic staff, graduates, students, and the business community in the Peja region will be the framework for further development of educational programmes.

This study is structured as follows: the Introduction part, followed by the part which explains the importance of the education and labor market, explaining the current connection between Universities and the economy, with a particular focus on Kosovo. The next part will explain UHZ background and review of the UHZ strategy, particularly emphasizing the objectives. Furthermore, the methodology will be presented, followed by the main findings, interpretation of the results, conclusions, and recommendations.

2. Why should the universities be linked with the Labor market

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in providing high-level professional competences, giving graduates a base of knowledge and skills and enabling them to constantly adapt to changing labour conditions. The development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has been an essential instrument in the EU integration process, and employability has been one of its primary goals from its very beginning (Trunk, 2022).

In addition, there are at least two critical challenges facing universities within the EHEA in relation to labour market demand: (1) Providing education and training based on competences and skills that enable graduates to meet the needs of the labour market; (2) Active dialogue between higher education institutions and employers. Therefore, individuals need a good mix of skills (professional/technical and transversal) to achieve good labour market outcomes. From other points of view, state of the economy is also crucial factor as the labour market outcomes of graduates are affected by the state of the economy. This can become especially apparent during economic downturns, when jobs are harder to find and starting wages are lower. According to a study of (Zgaga et.al, 2014) the specific history of the Western Balkans is also reflected in the perception of the role of higher education institutions, therefore the research shows that in the countries where the recent conflict was most serious (i.e. Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) higher education institutions are expected to contribute to reconstruction of society more than support the economic growth. Furthermore, the idea of higher education serving the economy is not fully adopted, as academics would like to see their institutions focus more intensely on the 'broader societal roles' of higher education.

This is also a challenging issue for the transition countries; therefore, higher education institutions and policymakers performed different institutional reforms such as upgrading educational programmes and other educational activities. Additionally, the capacity of higher education institutions to reform and deliver various programmes depends primarily on their human resources (i.e. academic and support staff), the physical infrastructure available (i., specialized equipment, laboratories etc.); and funding to support the design and delivery of programmes. These factors can influence an institution's ability to introduce new programmes relevant to the labour market; expand existing programmes that lead to good labour market outcomes; and reduce (or close) programmes that do not lead to good graduate outcomes. Furthermore, reducing or closing programmes with poor labour market outcomes can be difficult due to the contracts and other signed agreements with the employees at public institutions.

According to the European Commission (2019), many countries such as Austria, Hungary, Portugal and Slovenia initiated the Labour Market Relevance (LMR) with the objective of supporting policymakers and employers to develop effective ways in aligning the skills cultivated by higher education systems with those sought by employers. This is performed by development of a self-reflection questionnaire for use by higher education institutions to identify and address institutional-level barriers and introduce innovative practices.

3. University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja - Background and Review

Peja region has previous higher educational experiences. Since 1960, as high school named High economics respectively Commercial school, later Faculty of Applied Business Sciences as a part of the University of Prishtina. Based on these premises and staff, the University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" was established during 2011. As Peja was well known for its tradition in business, agribusiness, arts and culture, therefore UHZ has oriented the study programs in these direction in order to be able to respond the needs of the labor market (UHZ Strategic Plan 2020-2024, page.8).

Currently, the University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka", provides around 11 programmes, respectively 8 bachelor's and 3 master's programmes, including as follow:

- **Faculty of Business** with study programmes on:
 - i) Business and Management in both levels bachelor and Master programs. This programme is taught in Albanian and Bosnian languages, which is crucial not only for studies but also for inclusiveness.
- **Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment** with programs on:
 - i) Management of Tourism, Hotel, and Environment in Albanian. followed by
 - ii) Management of Tourism taught in the Bosnian language.
- **Faculty of Law** with study programs in:
 - i) General Law at Bachelor Level
 - ii) International and European Law at Master Level.
- **Faculty of Agribusiness** with study programs on:
 - i) Agro-environmental and Agro-ecology,
 - ii) Food Technology;
 - iii) Plant Production Technology.
- **Faculty of Arts**, including study programs:
 - i) Artistic Education in Interpretation in Bachelor Degree.
 - ii) Music Education taught at Master Level.

It is crucial to be noted that some of these programmes are accredited until 30 September 2022; therefore, the UHZ management currently should undertake many reforms towards sustainability of the University, with a focus on academic programmes.

According to the current Strategy (2020-2024) the UHZ is aware that it should also continually review existing study programs, revise and update them in accordance with the recommendations of staff, students, alumni and employers. At the same time, there is a need for course syllabuses to be constantly revised and updated in line with new developments (UHZ Strategic Plan 2020-2024, page,21). UHZ has signed many agreements and cooperation with public institutions, private businesses, and companies that provide its students with opportunities to perform internships, paid

and unpaid, to offer practical work. In this framework, UHZ has also collaborated with local institutions and businesses. UHZ has agreements with the public, local and central institutions in which around 500 students do internships within a year, and over 25 local companies and businesses in which over 350 students do their internships.

Apart from other attempts to increase the human resource capabilities, the UHZ has participated in different EU funded projects, mainly Tempus and Erasmus+. The project which aimed connection university and economy was – Entrepreneurial Universities for Industrial Alliance - Entrepreneurial Universities for Alliance and industry funded by Tempus project within the period 2013-2016. This project was the first step toward creating interlinkage between economy and universities. The second interesting project which connects university with economy and innovation, supported by the EU respectively Erasmus+, is Creating Theory to Practice Centers for Innovation and Employment including the period from 2018-2021 with the aim of creating better opportunities for work innovation and employment.

It should be noted that for the HEI-s in Kosovo at the early stage of their functioning, the labor market relevance was not the objective of the public Universities including UHZ. The University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" has compiled a strategic plan for 2020- 2024. Among the main strategic objectives of the university are:

- **Efficient, transparent and accountable management and administration;** therefore they attempt to functionalise and make more efficiency the management and administration of the University, which is the precondition for further successful activities.
- **Teaching and Learning;** with which objective the UHZ will try to increase and promote the academic staff, upgrade the current academic programs, create new programmes and specifically PhD studies.
- **Quality assurance;** which will support development of the academic staff and other crucial activities of the University.
- **Scientific research objective;** which consists the creation of the offices for research and increasing the number of research institutes, research journals etc.
- **International and inter-institutional cooperation;** mainly is addressing the international cooperation, while the inter-institutional cooperation on the local basis is not addressed apart from Center of Innovation and Business (CIB) which according to the strategy was out of the function, therefore there is a lack of institutional cooperation with local institutions and businesses, which could improve the opportunities of graduates on the labor market.
- **Numerous quality services and activities for students;** is also addressing some crucial issues for the students, such as international events and conferences, but there is a lack of instruments that connect students with practical work and labor market.
- **Sufficient, contemporary, and well-equipped infrastructure;** it is a precondition for the university functioning and interlinked with teaching and research opportunities, but there also is a lack of projected offices and space for entrepreneurial activities.

4. Methodology

Among the main methods and tools used in skills assessment and labor market needs in the OECD countries are graduate surveys and employer surveys. Regarding the methodology, empirical analysis employs data based on a questionnaire applied to students and graduates of all levels and all programmes of the UHZ. The additional surveys are performed with the alumni group, representatives of the public institutions, and the private sector within the Business Management - Academic Programme.

For the analysis, five different types of questionnaires are designed and applied with a sample of around 500 surveys. The applied surveys have included 10-12 questions, which cover topics related to expectations from University studies, skills obtained, academic programmes, additional needs for training, employment after graduation, sector in which they work (or would like to work), region, and other relevant issues.

The primary approach of the surveys it was to ensure a high rate of response as well as appropriate answers. While compiling the surveys, the aim was to design simple questionnaires and avoid complex questions, such as personal questions and questions related to financial issues, to address the study's main questions. Therefore, due to the small number of questions and the academic purpose of the surveys, the response rate was significantly higher.

In addition, an overview of study programmes offered by UHZ (administrative data) is reviewed by analyzing the current study programmes provided, considering Peja region comparative advantages. The other methodology employed for this study is mainly based on desk review analysis supported by development strategies of the university compiled primarily in the period 2020-2024. In addition, other relevant documents, which reflect the best EU practices, are also reviewed and could be implemented at the UHZ.

5. Findings and Interpretation of the results

As among the main objectives of higher education is to provide its graduates with skills needed to succeed in the labor market, in this part of the study are the results of analysis including different categories such as bachelor's and master's students from Programme in Business Management, alumni, representatives of the public institutions, and representatives of the private sector respectively businesses.

In addition, there is performed an analysis with other UHZ Programmes such as: Informatics in Business; Management of Human Resources; General Law at Bachelor Level; International and European Law at Master Level; Management of Tourism; Hospitality and Environment-Bachelor; Management of Environment - Master; Agro Environment and Agro-Ecology; Plant Production Technology; and Artistic Education in Interpretation - Bachelor.

5.1 Results of a survey at Bachelor Programme- Business Management

In this part of the study, there will be the interpretation of the results obtained from the surveys conducted with bachelor students in the Business Management Programme. The objective is to evaluate their recent experiences at the university, although they are still in the educational process.

Regarding the fulfillment of their professional expectations, around 70% declared positively while only 30% negatively although only some of them applied for employment. The second question has to do with practical activities, approximately 80% reported that they did practical activities, and only 20% did not.

In addition, there will be analysed respectively discussed among the most crucial issues, such as: the academic programme of this degree and its relevance to the labor market.

Following the direct question regarding programmes, respectively what they think about the relevance of the programmes for the labor market, around 56.7% declared that this programme it's not an adequate programme for the labor market needs, while only 43.3% think that this programme is an adequate programs for the labor market.

In addition, there is another question regarding the student's labor market knowledge. Interestingly, students believe that they have adequate knowledge of the labor market, around 63.3% think so, while 36.7% think that students from this programme don't have sufficient understanding of the labor market.

Following the study, the intention was to analyze the possible improvements that should be done at the University; therefore students believe that practical work should be increased by 63.3%, followed by improvement of academic staff performance with 20% of them, and 16.7% of them think the educational programmes should be improved respectively reformed.

Additionally, there was a question about the need for additional training, and many of the students, around 63.3%, think that there is a need for other training, while 23% relatively and surprisingly 13.3% believe that there is no need for additional training and additional activities.

Nowadays, lifelong learning activities are significant for the support of the employees therefore, the following issue was about which specific skills they need or in which directions should the University work to strengthen their capabilities.

In this regard, the need for training should be analyzed carefully to apply the most appropriate forms that could support the knowledge of the students and graduates.

Among different skills ranked, around 31% of the students declared that digital skills are crucial for the relevance of the labor market, followed by communication skills with 31%, about 25% with analytical skills, and only 13% for writing skills. As the labor market is dynamic and exposed to different challenges, there is always a need for additional training and skills. In addition, these skills enable people to adapt to changing demands within a job or change from one job to other.

According to the responses, it is evident that the University respectively this programme should be supported institutionally to perform better and also offer better opportunities for their graduates, therefore around 53.3% of the respondents declared that this programme should be supported institutionally during the drafting and upgrading academic programmes; furthermore the programme should be based on the pragmatic approach and be attractive for the labor market. The rest of the respondents (around 46.7%) declared that UHZ should be supported by practical work.

Although at an early phase, according to the surveys, it seems that around 60 % of the students applied for a job, approximately 13.3% didn't apply and 26.7% will apply. In the survey, it was not explicitly mentioned for which position you applied or any specific issues, as at this stage, it is very early for the students to find any professional job.

Another question has to do with regional issues as not all the students of this Programme at UHZ are from Peja, as many of them are coming from nearby cities. Additionally, some of them could find employment even in Prishtina, due to better employment opportunities.

According to the answers, it seems that most of the graduates would apply for job at Peja around 70%, while 16.7% in the region, including Istog, Deçan, Gjakova and Klina, and the rest (around 13.3%) will search for opportunities in Prishtina or even somewhere else.

Another very crucial issue for the labor market and employment is the choice between public sector, private sector, creating their own business or continuing with further education, considering that in countries like Kosovo and cities like Peja there is a limited choice for employment.

Most of the respondents respectively, 66.7% prefer the public sector which could be a serious challenge for the future perspective of the young graduates as Kosovo public sector is limited especially in municipalities as Peja. Around 13.3% prefer to create their own business which could be a difficult but good choice. Only 10% of the respondents think of finding a job at the private sector, while 10% of them think to continue the educational process respectively master's studies.

5.2 Results of surveys with Master Programme in Bussiness Management

Following the study, there is an interpretation of the results obtained from the analysis performed with Master students from the Bussiness Management Programme. This group of students could be considered better informed and experienced with the university profile, programmes and more experienced with the labor market needs.

According to the expectations from the studies in this programme, only 30.7% of the students answered positively, while 17.3% declared negatively, followed by a significant number of them (52%) who think that they fulfilled their expectations relatively.

Practical work and additional activities are crucial for employment; therefore, according to the respondents, most of them (respectively 64%) realized the practical work, while the rest (around 36%) of the respondents didn't realize any practical work. According to this result, the situation with employment should be better.

However, this issue could be explained based on two scenarios. The first scenario is that during their practical work, the students couldn't convince their employers with their professional work. The second scenario is that there was no problem with the graduates from UHZ, but there was not enough activity from the firms to extend their employment contracts.

As the programmes should be continuously upgraded, it is challenging to find the adequacy of the programmes for the new needs and circumstances created in the markets.

According to the answers from the respondents, interestingly, around 53.3% of the respondents declared negatively, if the programme is adequate for the labor market needs, although they are enrolled in the programme. On the contrary, only 46.7% think this programme is adequate for the labor market. This group of respondents is probably employed; therefore, their interpretation is positive.

In addition, there is a similar question, not only for programme but generally for the graduates and their professional knowledge regarding the labor market needs. Here could be included not only programme but also academic staff, literature, practical work, exchange at international Universities, and other additional issues.

According to the results, only around 45.3% of the graduates from this programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market. In comparison, about 54.7% do not have enough professional knowledge for the labor market needs. This could also be explained considering the higher unemployment rate in Kosovo.

Based on experience, it is crucial to recommend possibilities respectively what should be improved at the university in order to exploit the opportunities coming from the labor market or creating opportunities. Most of the respondents declared that practical activities would help the graduates, therefore they should be applied at this programme. In addition, around 24% of graduates think that this academic programme should be upgraded, followed by 24% which think that there should be improvement of the academic staff.

Apart from the programme, practical approach, and academic staff, the graduates must be supported with additional specific knowledge such as writing, communication, digital, and analytical skills. Following the results, most required skills are considered digital skills by 32% of the respondents, followed by communication skills reported by around 28%, analytical skills by around 23%, and only 17% declared writing skills.

The employment status is essential not only due to financial issues but also for the enrollment of future students in this Programme. According to the survey around 44% of the graduates are

employed, while 22.7% are employed at the private sector, followed by 21.3% which declared that are employed at the public sector.

The employed graduates declared that around 64% of them are employed in Peja, only 10.7% in the region including Istog, Gjakova, Decani, Klina, and interestingly about 25.3% in Prishtina as Prishtina offers more opportunities for the graduates and especially on the public sector, respectively public administration, government etc.

Regarding the employment status, the results are as follows: almost 52% of the respondents applied for employment while 26.7% did not follow by 21.3% who declared that they would apply in the future. Analyzing the employment structure, it is crucial only to address graduates working professionally as a result of their studies but not graduates working out of their profession. It is also interesting to analyze the region in which they will apply, first as the students at this Programme are enrolled not only from Peja, but also from neighboring cities and also from Montenegro. The second issue is that Peja has limited choices for employment, therefore, some of the graduates will be interested to apply for job even in Prishtina. According to the results around 66.7% of the graduates are interested to apply in Peja, while 12% in the region including Istog, Decan, Gjakova and Klina and the rest around 21.3% in Prishtina. The large number of the interested graduates to be employed in Prishtina is due to better opportunities for the employment there.

Sector is also crucial for the analysis, as it was expected, that most of the graduates prefer the public sector to be employed respectively around 69.3% of the respondents. In the private sector the number of interested people is very small only around 12%, while 18.7% of the respondents would like to create their own business. In Kosovo, including Peja and other cities graduates are facing double challenges. First, the lack of knowledge's obtained from the Universities; and second, challenges regarding the structure of the economy which doesn't offer much opportunities for employment. Accordingly, most of the graduates around 74.4% declared that the main challenge is limited opportunities from the local institutions and businesses, followed by only 25.3% which declared that the main challenge for the labor market is limited knowledge obtained from the University.

5.3 Results from the survey with ALUMNI

Following the study, there are results obtained from the analysis with the Alumni as very important group of the University. Their experiences from the University are crucial for the analysis especially considering their employment status.

In the question if they realized their professional expectations from the Programme of Business Management, they responded as follow: only 42% of them realized their expectations, while 37% relatively and only 21% absolutely not, therefore around 58% of them expected better professional career.

Expectations are very critical, as weaker than expected outcomes raise different concerns, and disappointment for the individuals but also for their families, which invested in their higher education, therefore they expect sustainable employment and well-paying jobs, which is not always case in Kosovo, considering higher unemployment and other labor market challenges.

Regarding practical activities, the situation was promising as most of the respondents, respectively 68.4% of them, declared that they realized practical activities during their studies but this is crucial to be transformed as the employment opportunity. The rest of the respondents, 31.6% didn't have any chance to realize a practical work.

About the relevance of academic programmes for the labor market, namely around 63.2% think that the Business Management Programme is adequate for the labor market, while 36.8% doesn't share the same ideas and experiences with it. This opinion of the Alumni Group is also very important for future graduates from the UHZ, considering their experience with the labor market. Regarding adequate knowledge for the labor market of the graduates from this programme, also many of the respondents, around 57.9% declared in favor of it, while 42.1% of them think that graduates from the programme don't have adequate knowledge for the labor market.

About the improvements and measures which should be undertaken in order to support the graduates and the activities, could be ranked as follow: practical work followed by programs and academic staff. In favor of improvement of practical work are 55%, for the programs 31%, while for the academic staff 14% of the respondents.

According to the obtained analysis, additional skills with which should be supported students of this programme are: writing skill, communication skills, digital skills and analytical skills. According to the majority of the Alumni Group the analytical skills are the most important skills for the labor market. Around 21% declared for the digital skills also considering the recent need for the digitalization activities. Communication skills are crucial for managerial and entrepreneurial activities as well as for marketing, sale and other related activities according to 16% of the group. Only 10% of the Alumni Group think writing skills are essential for success in the labor market.

The employment status of the Alumni Group is crucial also for the future potential students of this programme, therefore the results are as follows: around 47.4% of them are not employed, which represent a higher rate of unemployment, while both employed groups are in total 52.6%. Another important issue to be analysed is that many of them are employed at the private sector 31.6%, and only 21.1% are employed at the public sector which characterizes the structure of the public sector in Peja, and lack of opportunities for employment at the public sector.

According to the region of the employment, not always all graduates from the Programme will be employed at Peja, first, as they are from different regions, and second, in some cases they will ask for opportunities in Prishtina, especially when it comes for the employment at the public sector. Unemployed Alumni, 57.9% of them already applied, 26.3 didn't apply, 15.9% will apply for job.

The question for unemployed Alumni was about the preferred region and response, was as follows: around 68.3% in Peja, around 21.1% in Prishtina or other cities, while 10.5% in the region. Regarding the sector in which they would like to work or create their own business, around 57.9% prefer public sector, only 15.8% the private sector, maybe due to insecurity which provides, some business. It is encouraging the fact that 26.3% of the Alumni would like to create their own business, respectively be self-employed.

The last issue to be analyzed was the most challenging labor market issue- unemployment. Most of the alumni, 73.7%, answered that there are limited possibilities for work from local institutions and businesses.

Finally, only 26.3% of the alumni group declared that there is a lack of knowledge obtained from the University, therefore, they face unemployment challenges.

5.4. Results from the survey with the Private sector - Business

The private sector respectively, businesses could provide essential perspectives on the knowledge and skills required by the labor market. This part of the study looks at what the companies declared about skills that higher education graduates need to bring to the labor force. The survey with the business community was facilitated by the Alumni Office at the UHZ. The businesses are based in Peja, while the respondents are students and graduates from UHZ respectively from the Business Management programme.

Analyzing the employment of Business Management graduates in the private sector, around 40% of the businesses declared that they had employed this graduates, while around 60% of the surveyed businesses they didn't have employed any graduates from this programme. There is interesting to be analyzed, or to extend the analysis in which activities University graduates are employed, as there is evidence that many of them are working not any professional work.

On the contrary, among the surveyed businesses, 75% declared that they didn't offer any practical experiences for the graduates of this programme in the private sector. In comparison, only 25% provided practical experience for the graduates.

It is a crucial issue for our study; how businesses evaluate Business Management graduates related to academic programmes and labor market, therefore only 45% of the businesses think that this degree has the adequate programme for the labor market. In comparison, around 55% believe that this programme is adequate respectively, 45% of the businesses think relatively while only 10% think that this programme is not adequate programme for the labor market.

Almost similar response relates to the question: of how business evaluates Business Management graduates related to labor market. Only 40% of the businesses accept that these graduates are

prepared for the labor market, while around 45% think relatively, while 15% think these graduates are not ready for the labor market.

Regarding the reforms and improvements that should be done at Business Management programmes, most of the businesses suggest that there should be undertaken the reforms, respectively up-grade this academic programme, around 46%, and enhance practical work, to prepare better graduates for the labor market.

If the graduates from this programme need additional skills, there is around 35% of businesses that accept it, while approximately 55% think relatively, and only 10% of them think that they don't need any additional skills. According to additional skills which should be supported students, between writing, communication, digital and analytical skills, most of the surveyed businesses declared that the graduates need to develop analytical skills, around 44% followed by 22% for the communication skills, writing skills around 19%, and digital skills only 15%.

Cooperation between University and businesses it is the only question which all surveyed businesses agree absolutely; around 100% declared better collaboration with University; therefore, from the business approach, they understand the importance of University-Industry cooperation.

According to the aspects which industry should support this programme, it should also be noted that the significant number of businesses respectively 35% suggests that industry should support the University during drafting the programs to ensure some practical approach, followed by 40% which think that industry should support the University with practical experiences. The rest of the businesses declared that University could also be supported in other forms.

Answering about if the University has invited the private sector for any consultation or during drafting the programs, most of the businesses declared that they have been not requested by the University for any advise, consultation or any issues related to programmes, while only 10% accept for being invited by the University. This shows that there is a need for closer cooperation between UNHZ and Industry to support this programme.

5.5. Results from the survey with Public Institutions (Tax Administration)

Public institutions have a direct impact on Universities through significant investments they make in higher education institutions. In addition, their reflection on the performance of the Universities is of great importance, therefore, below it is represented the results of the performed surveys. Initially, analyzing the practical involvement of the graduates from this programme at the Public Institutions, it is unpredictable as, according to the study, only around 14.3% of the Tax Administration of Kosovo (TAK) offered practical work to the Business Management graduates.

How representatives of (TAK) evaluate this academic programme related to the labor market, is among the significant questions; therefore, around 57.1% of them think that this programme is

adequate programme for the labor market, while about 42.9% believe that this programme is not sufficient for the labor market needs.

In addition, how (ATK) evaluate Bussiness Management graduates related to labor market, should be considered institutionally as only 28.6% of them believe that the graduates are prepared for the labor market, while around 71.4 % of them think that these graduates are not ready for the labor market.

It is acceptable that UHZ should undertake reforms respectively improvements. According to the results, around 48% declared for the reforms in the academic programme, and around 52% for the practical activities.

Answering which are additional skills that should be supported Bussiness Management graduates is not an easy task. Although for the matter of the analysis is included writing, analytical, digital and communication skills. Most of the respondents around 33% declared that analytical skills are most important, followed by communication skills with around 29%, and then by digital skills 24%.

There is absolute consensus on the need for better cooperation between University and Public Institutions, respectively 100% declared that Public institutions should intensify their cooperation with University. In addition, related to the question about any institutional involvement of (ATK) with University for any consultation or during drafting or reforming the programme, also 100% of the respondents declared that they had not been invited.

It is obvious that University, need to be supported institutionally by other public institutions such as Tax Administration, Customs, Municipality etc, to support students towards achievement of labor market needs. Most respondents declared that this programme should be supported by offering practical work for the students, followed by many respondents, around 33,3%, who think that the best way of supporting University is during drafting the programmes, by focusing on a practical approach.

5.6. Comparing results from Students, Master, and Alumni Group

In this part of the study, there is the idea to compare different findings between different stakeholders, namely, students of Bussiness Management at bachelor level with Master students and Alumni group as the comparison between the groups is crucial for the matter of the analysis.

According to *professional expectations* from the University the group of Alumni and Master Group share close answers regarding expectations from University, respectively 30% of Master Group declared that they meet expectations, and 42% of the Alumni Group, while the group of students shared quite different opinion, therefore they are optimistic as they didn't experience still labor market challenges. *Practical work* also is one of the issues in which three categories

of respondents share almost the same results such as around 80% of students, 64% Master Group and 68 % Alumni.

Regarding *Programmes*, only 43.3% of students think that this Programme is an adequate programme, similarly, only 46.7% of the master Group are in favor of the current programme while although small group of respondents around 63.2% of the Alumni group are positive in this regard. In addition about the *knowledge* of graduates there is mixed ideas and experiences as 63.3% of students think that at the end of studies they will have adequate knowledge, while master group only 45.3% followed by alumni also with 57.9%.

All groups agree on the need for reforms respectively *improvements at this Programme*, apart from practical work and academic staff, the need for reforming the *educational programme* is expressed through 16% of students, 24% of Master Group, and the large number of Alumni Group around 31%.

According to *additional skills* such as communication, analytical, writing, and digital skills students and Master Group share the similar idea about digital skills, respectively 35% and 32% while, more than half of Alumni Group around 53% of them consider that digital skills are crucial for the Programmes. For the status of employment and sector, around 56% of Master group are unemployed, while Alumni group are 47.4% of them are unemployed. It is important to note that within group of employed, 36.1% of the Alumni group are employed at Private sector, while 21.1% at the public sector.

A similar situation is with the Master Group, as 22.7% are employed in the private sector, while 21.3% are in the public sector. Although the number of employed respondents is significant in the private sector, the preference of respondents is to be employed in the Public sector. At the same time, only 18.7% of Master Group and 26% of Alumni would like to create their own business. Concerning the most challenging issues regarding labor market, it is dominated by both groups that the main challenge is lack of opportunities by institutions and companies for employment, respectively, the master group with around 74.4% followed by the alumni group with about 73.7%.

6.1. Analysis of other UNHZ Programmes

Apart from the evaluation of the Business and Management programme, in addition, there will be an analysis of other UHZ programmes such as:

- Informatics in Business;
- Management of Human Resources – Master;
- General Law at Bachelor Level;
- International and European Law at Master Level;

- Management of Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment-Bachelor;
- Management of Environment - Master;
- Agro Environment and Agro-Ecology;
- Plant Production Technology;
- Artistic Education in Interpretation - Bachelor.

6.1. Informatics in Bussiness

Evaluating the programme, respectively if students realized their professional expectations from the programme, the answers are as follow: most of the respondents, around 84%, answered positively, while around 16% relatively.

In addition, analyzing the practical activities, during their studies around 69% of respondents positively and around 31% answered negatively. Furthermore, analysing if this programme is adequate for labor market, most of respondents around 74% declared that this programme is adequate for labor market, while only 26% not.

Analyzing if the students from the programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, most of the respondents, around 91% of them, accept that students have adequate knowledge for the labor market, while in contrary only around 9% think that this programme is not adequate for the labor market. About their recommendations on what should be improved to meet the labor market needs most of the respondents, 54 %, think about practical work, around 38% the Programme while only 8% think that academic staff should be reformed.

The additional skills which should be supported the students of this program are: writing skills for around 8% of respondents, digital skills around 38%, and analytical skills, for around of 54% of the respondents.

Students who are at the master's degree potentially applied for the employment. In the question, if they are employed, around 91% are employed? Most of them are employed at the private sector around 69% and only 24% in the public sector. Only 8% are not employed. Regarding the region in which they are employed, around 76% are employed in Peja, while 16% in the Region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline) followed by 8% in Prishtina or other cities.

Among the respondents which are not employed around 46% of them applied, while 42% not, followed by 9% which declared that they will apply for employment? About the region in which they will apply most of them declared in Peja, respectively 90 % followed by 10 % in the region including (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline). Regarding the sector in which they prefer to be employed, around 61% declared for the Public sector (Government, Municipality, etc), while 8% of them would like to create their own business–self-employment.

The rest of the respondents, around 31%, would like to continue their master's studies. Finally, about the most challenging issue regarding labor market - unemployment, according to the 31% of the respondents is lack of knowledge obtained from University. In comparison, around 69% of them think that the most challenging issue is limited demand from local institutions and businesses.

6.2. Management of Human Resources - Master

In terms of realization of professional expectations from this programme most of the respondents 75% declared that they realized their expectations, while 19% relatively followed by 6% of them which declared no.

About the practical activities, during their studies, around 74% reported that students did practical activities, while only 26% declared that couldn't realize any practical activity.

In question, if this is an adequate programme for the labor market, around 83% of the respondents declared yes, while 17% doesn't think that this programme is sufficient for the labor market according to their experiences.

Regarding professional knowledge of the graduates from this programme, most of them 86% reported that graduates from this programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, while only 14% think that graduates from this programme doesn't have adequate knowledge.

According to the reforms and further steps towards improvement based on the current situation, around 49% think practical work should be promoted, followed by other reforms of Programs with around 43%, followed by 19% who believe that academic staff should be reformed.

About the additional skills which should be supported students from this programme many of them around 50% think about communication skills, around 13% about writing skills, 25% about the analytical skills, followed by 32% which think that digital skills are crucial for this programme.

Asking about employment status, around 62% reported being employed while only 38% are unemployed. Within the respondents who are employed about 32% at the public sector, while 30% at the private sector.

Regarding the region, only 19% declared that they are employed in Peja, around 32% in the region including (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline), and about 49% in Prishtina or other cities.

Among the 19% of unemployed respondents around 51% applied for the job, while 38% not, followed by 13% which they will apply.

Regarding their preferred region many of them around 32% would like to apply in Peja, 19% in Region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline) and around 49% in Prishtina or other cities.

The most required sector will be the Public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration) for around 53%, followed by Private Sector (business) for approximately 25%, and 22% think of creating self-employment.

Regarding the most challenging issues regarding labor market and employment for around 19% of them, the problem is with obtained knowledge from University, followed by the limited opportunities from the local institutions and businesses for approximately 81% of them.

6.3. General Law at Bachelor Level – Study Programme

According to the surveys, around 79.7% of the respondents admitted that they achieved their professional expectations by studying this degree at UNHZ. In comparison, only 20.3% of the respondents declared that they didn't meet their expectations.

Regarding practical activity, during their studies, the results are as follows: only 26.6% realized practical activities, while most of the respondent namely 73.4%, dint realize any practical activity during their studies at this programme within UHZ.

About the programme and its relation to the labor market, surprisingly, most of the students, respectively 71.9%, declared that UHZ Bachelor programme in Law is adequate programme for the labor market, while only 28.1% expressed negatively.

In addition, addressing the core question, of weather students from this programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, around 82.8% responded positively followed by only 17.2% of the respondents which think that students of law programme doesn't have adequate knowledge for the labor market.

Furthermore, related on what should be improved at Bachelor Programme in Law, most of the respondents suggested the practical work around 60.9%, followed by academic staff with 21.9% and Programmes, 17.2%.

Around 60.9% favor the additional training, approximately 25% declared relatively, while only 14.1% declared that there is no need for further training.

The additional skills which should be supported according to the students are writing skills for 20.3%, communication skills for around 60.9%, digital skills for around 20.3%, and analytical skills for around 12.5%.

The main aspects in which Institutions could support this programme are as follow: for 64.1% of the respondents, the practical work is the most important, while for 35.9%, the primary support could be by facilitating the university during the drafting of this programme.

The employment status is crucial also; therefore, only 17.2% of respondents are employed, around 20.3% declared that they would apply, and 62.5% stated that they are unemployed.

In our question, in which region you will apply, 57.8% of them usually answered in Peja, followed by 29.7% in the area including Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline, and a minor group of around 12.5% in Prishtina or somewhere else.

Finally, the sector is also essential for the analysis; therefore, around 50% will apply at the public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration, Courts etc.), 17.2% declared for the Private sector, 17.2% to create their own business – self-employment and around 15.6% will continue with Master studies.

6.4. International and European Law at Master Level - Study Programme

This part of the report will evaluate the Master programme in Law concerning the labor market; therefore, the first issue discussed is the professional expectation of studying in this programme. Furthermore, around 45% of respondents think they meet their professional expectations from the programme, followed by 35% relatively, and only 20% did not realize their expectations.

According to practical activities during their studies, according to the survey, only 30% did practical activities, in the contrary, most of the respondents, around 70% didn't.

In addition, about the Master Program in Law, around 75% of respondents reported that this program is adequate for the labor market, while 25% think that the programme is not adequate for the labor market needs.

About their recommendations what should be improved to meet the labor market needs, most of the respondents, 65.2% think about practical work, around 30.4% the programme should be upgraded while only 4.3% believe that academic staff should be reformed.

The additional skills which should be supported the students of this program are writing skills for around 17 % of respondents, communication skills for about 34%, digital skills for around 40%, and analytical skills, for around 9% of them.

The status of employment is also evaluated, but there is a very pessimistic view as only around 30% of them are employed therefore 10% of them at the public sector while 20% at the private sector. Additionally, around 70% of them are unemployed. This pattern is significant for our analysis as this could be taken as a recommendation that this degree should upgrade the programme to support students in the private sector, private businesses, etc.

The region in which most of the graduates are employed is Peja according to 54% of them, Region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline) around 26%, and in Prishtina or other cities only 20%.

Regarding their employment applications, according to the respondents, only 15% of the respondents applied, while 70% didn't apply and around 15% of them declared that they would apply in the near future; therefore, this could be a reason why a large number of the respondents from this programme are not employed.

About the region in which they will apply, most of them declared in Peja, respectively 63% followed by 19 % in the region including (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline), and only 18% in Prishtina or other cities. The sector in which they would like to be employed is as follow: Public sector such as (Government, Municipality, Administration, Courts etc) for around 70%, at the Private Sector (business) around 20% and approximately 10% would like to create their own business– self-employment. Finally, about the most challenging issue regarding the labor market - unemployment, about 45% of the respondents reported for a lack of knowledge obtained from University. In comparison, around 55% think the most challenging topic is limited demand from local institutions and businesses.

6.5. Management of Tourism Hospitality and Environment - Bachelor

Based on the analysis performed, around 88% of the respondents reported that by studying for this degree at UHZ, they achieved their professional expectations, while only 12% of the respondents didn't meet their expectations.

According to practical activities, during their studies, the results are as follow, only 23% of them realized practical activities, while a majority of the respondent's namely around 77% didn't realize any practical activity during their studies.

In addition, about the programs and their relation to the labor market, the majority of the students, respectively 91% of them declared that this programme is adequate for the labor market, while only 8% stated negatively.

Analyzing the most important issue respectively question, if the students from this programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, around 88% responded positively followed by only 12% of the respondents which think that students of this programme doesn't have adequate knowledge for the labor market.

Regarding on what should be improved at this Programme around 56% of the respondents reported the practical work, followed by 44% of respondents which suggested that Programme should be improved.

In addition, around 34% of the respondents declared for the need of additional training, followed by 21% of them which answered relatively and the rest around 45% declared for no need of additional trainings.

Regarding additional skills which should be supported according to the students are: writing skills for 12%, communication skills for around 21%, digital skills for about 67% of the respondents, and analytical skills no respondents.

The core issues in which Institutions could support this programme are as follow: for the 45% of the respondents, the practical work is the most important, while for 56% the main support could be by supporting the university during the drafting programmes.

The employment status is crucial also; therefore, only 12% of respondents applied for the employment, around 67% declared that they would apply, and 21% declared that they didn't apply.

Regarding their application for employment and sector, only around 24% of them answered in Peja, followed by 65% in the region including Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline and a minor group around 11% in Prishtina or somewhere else.

In addition, according to their preferences, most of the respondents around 45% will prefer the Public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration etc) followed by 34% the Private sector (business) and only 11% are in favor of creating their own business— self-employment. The rest only around 11% of them, would like to continue with Master studies.

6.6. Management of Environment - Master

Analyzing the programme, respectively if students realized their professional expectations from the programme, the answers are as follow: most of the respondents, around 63%, answered positively, while around 37% relatively.

About the practical activities the respondents around 91% of them reported that they did practical activities, followed by 9% of them which declared that they didn't performed any practical activity.

Evaluating if this programme have adequate programmes for labor market, around 81% reported that this programme is adequate, while 19% is not adequate for the labor market.

In addition, about the knowledge of the graduates for the labor market, around 89% declared that they have earned adequate knowledge, while 91% of the respondents declared not.

Regarding the reforms and possible improvements, around 51% think that practical work should be enhanced, for the reforming of programs around 33% of them, while academic staff about 17% of respondents.

For the additional skills which should be supported by students from this programme, around 14% about writing skills. 36% about communication skills, 36% declared about digital skills, and 14% about analytical skills.

For the status of employment around 36% of them are employed while only 9% at the sector and 27% at the private sector. In addition, the major part of the respondents declared as unemployed, around 64% of them.

Regarding the region in which are employed, according to the analysis around 60% are employed in Peja, followed by around 40% in the region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline) and not any respondents declared in Prishtina.

Asking if they applied for employment, among the unemployed respondents, around 41% of them applied, followed by 40% who didn't applied and 19% of them declared that they will apply in the future.

The most preferred region in which they will choose to be employed is Peja with around 56%, followed by the region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline) with about 23% and Prishtina or other cities with about 21% of them.

Regarding their preferences about the sector, around 57% would like to be employed in the public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration, etc), followed by 32% who would like the private sector (business), and around 11% plan to create their own business – self-employment.

According to the most challenging issue regarding the labor market- unemployment, 46% of them think that the problem is with obtained knowledge from University, followed by 54% of them who believe that the main problem of unemployment is limited opportunities from the local institutions and businesses.

6.7. Agro Environment and Agro Ecology

In addition, to the analysis, there will be an evaluation of the Agro Programme, starting with the fundamental question if students realized their professional expectations from this programme. Around 55.6% of the respondents reported that they meet their expectations from the programme, while the rest 44.4% reported that they didn't.

Regarding any practical activity, around 82% declared that they did some practical activities while 18% did not.

Furthermore, related to adequate programmes for labor market, around 77.8% reported that this programme is adequate for the labor market. In comparison, only 22.2% think that this programme is not adequate for the labor market needs.

Addressing the issue if the students from the programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, most of the respondents, around 84% of them, accept that students have sufficient knowledge of the labor market. On the contrary, only approximately 16% think that this programme is not adequate for the labor market.

Regarding the reforms and initiatives respectively, what should be improved in this programme, most of them declared that practical work should be one of the reforms, with around 57% of respondents. Furthermore, approximately 43% of the respondents think there should be reform of the academic programmes.

Additionally, analyzing the question related to the need for additional trainings, the majority of respondents think that 88.9% of them declared the need for further reforms while only 11.1 declared relatively.

Evaluating which are additional skills that should be supported in this programme, around 34% declared communication skills, followed by 45% who think digital skills and about 21% for analytical skills.

About the main aspects in which Institutions could support this programme, around 33% think that other institutions could support this programme, during drafting UHZ programmes, based on pragmatic approach, while other respondents, around 67% of them believe in practical work.

Regarding the employment status, around 45% of them are unemployed, while 12% are employed, followed by around 43% of them who declared that they would apply for employment.

The location, respectively the preferred area in which they will apply, most of them around 78% declared for the Peja, while only 12% declared for the region (Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline).

Regarding the sector in which they prefer to be employed, around 56% declared for the Public sector (Government, Municipality, etc). In comparison, 23% of them would like to create their own business– self-employment. The rest of the respondents, around 21%, would like to continue their master's studies.

6.8. Plant Production Technology

Analyzing the programme, if students realized their professional expectations from the programme, the answers are as follows: most respondents, around 92%, answered positively, while about 8% relatively.

Regarding practical activities, during their studies, around 82% of respondents positively, and approximately 18% answered negatively.

Furthermore, evaluating if this programme is adequate for the labor market, most respondents, around 94%, declared that this programme is adequate for the labor market, while only 6% are not.

Also, regarding the professional knowledge and whether graduates from this programme have adequate understanding of the labor market, the majority of the respondents, namely 95%, declared yes, while the rest only 5% answered negatively.

Analyzing the reforms and improvements that should be undertaken in this programme, 67% of respondents declared for the practical work, followed by 33% of the respondents who reported that programs should be upgraded.

Furthermore, according to the respondents, the additional skills that should be supported in this program are communication skills for around 34%, digital skills for about 40%, and analytical skills for approximately 26%.

According to the employment status of the employment, students from this programme, around 46.7% reported that they are employed, followed by 53.3% who are not employed. The majority of employed respondents are employed at the private sector, while only 6.7% are in the public sector.

Analyzing specifically only employed graduates, only around 5% of respondents are employed at Peja while the majority of them, almost 95% are employed at the Region, including Istog, Deçan, Gjakova, Kline. Regarding their employment application, almost 41.7% of them applied, in the contrary 16.7% didn't apply, followed by 41.7% who declared that they would apply.

It is important also to address the region in which they will apply, around 63.6% in Peja, while 36.4% in the region, respectively Istog, Deçan, Gjakove and Kline. At the same time, no respondents would like to apply in Prishtina.

Regarding the sector in which they would prefer to be employed, many of them declared for the private sector around 46.2%, while 30.8% in the public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration etc). Around 23.1% of respondents think of creating their own business— self-employment.

Furthermore, according to the respondents, the most challenging issues regarding labor market-unemployment is the knowledge obtained from University, 6.7%. The majority of respondents, around 93.3%, think there are limited opportunities from the local institutions and businesses.

6.9. Artistic Education in Interpretation - Bachelor's Degree

According to the analysis performed, around 94% of the respondents reported that by studying this degree at UHZ they achieved their professional expectations. In comparison, only 6% of the respondents didn't meet their expectations. Following the study, the results from the Programme-Artistic Education in Interpretation will be presented.

Regarding practical activities, during their studies, the results are as follows: only 67% of them realized practical activities, while 34% of the respondents didn't realize any practical activity during their studies.

Related to the labor market and their program, the majority of the students from this programme, respectively 95%, declared that this programme is adequate for the labor market, while only 5% said negatively.

In addition, if the students from this programme have adequate knowledge for the labor market, around 94% responded positively, followed by only 6% of the respondents who think that students of this programme don't have adequate knowledge of the labor market.

Answering the question what should be improved in this Programme, around 34% of the respondents reported the practical work, followed 49% of respondents who suggested that Programmes should be up-grade, while 17% declared reforms related to academic staff.

In addition, around 42% of the respondents declared the need for additional training, followed by 42% who answered relatively, and the rest, approximately 16%, expressed no need for further training.

Regarding additional skills which should be supported in this programme, according to the students, should be communication skills for around 84% of the respondents, digital skills for approximately 17%, and analytical skills no respondents.

The main issues in which Institutions could support this programme are as follow. For the 67% of the respondents, the practical work is the most important, while for 34% the primary support could be helping the university during the drafting programmes.

The employment status is also crucial for this programme, although it is specific; therefore, around 51% declared that they would apply, and 49% claimed they didn't.

In addition, according to their application for employment only around 50% of them answered in Peja, followed by 42% in the region including Istog, Deçan, Gjakove, Kline and a minor group of around 8% in Prishtina or somewhere else.

According to their preference, around 25% of respondents will prefer the Public sector (Government, Municipality, Administration etc) followed by 5% in the Private sector (business) and only 29% are in favor of creating their own business– self-employment. The rest, only around 41% would like to continue their Master studies.

Following the study, below there is a table1 including all the programmes evaluated but representing only three relevant questions to the programmes and the labor market.

Table1: UHZ Programs and their application at the labor market

Programs	UNHZ has adequate Programmes for the labor market	UNHZ graduates have adequate knowledge of the labor market	UNHZ should reform the Programs
Business Management- Bachelor	43.3%	63.3%	16.7%
Business Management - Master	46.7%	45.3%	24 %
Informatics in Business	74%	91%	38%
Management of Human Resources	83%	86%	43%
General Law – Bachelor	71.9%	82.8%	17.2%
International and European Law- Master	75 %	90.1%	30.4%
Management of Tourism, Hotel& Environment	91%	88%	44%
Management of Environment- Master	81%	89%	33%
Agro Environment and Agro-Ecology	93%	94%	33%
Plant Production Technology	77.8%	86%	43%
Artistic Education in Interpretation	95%	94%	49%

Source: Own analysis

Apart from other components, the employment rates indicate labor market demand for individuals with skillsets, which are analyzed and represented in the study. Additionally, earnings as one of the indicators are not evaluated in this study as the earnings of graduates vary significantly from person to person, and higher education graduates, on average, earn more than individuals with lower educational attainment.

7. Conclusions

Reviewing the current state of UHZ, strategic plans, and most importantly, based on the surveys conducted with the graduates and students from the following Programmes such as: Business Management - Bachelor and Master; Informatics in Bussiness; Management of Human Resources; General Law at Bachelor Level; International and European Law at Master Level; Management of Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment; Management of Environment; Agro Environment and Agro-Ecology; Plant Production Technology; and Artistic Education in Interpretation, the main conclusions are as follow:

- Previously the main objective of the Public Universities, including UHZ, was not labor market but currently, these objectives are changing; however, in Kosovo, including businesses in the curriculum development was a challenging issue due to the low level of the educational background of local entrepreneurs. According to (OECD, 2017), around 54% of European Universities reported involving employers and professional associations in Curriculum Development.

- Considering the results obtained of all surveyed categories, respectively around 11 Programmes, although positive results, there is a suggestion that some of the programmes to be upgraded and reformed according to the current needs of the labor market.
- Another crucial issue of concern is the employability of the graduates, as according to the performed analysis, in most of the individual programmes employability of graduates is under 50%; therefore this issue needs to be addressed not only from the level of individual programmes but also from the University Management level.
- Therefore, the capacity of UHZ to reform the existing programmes and deliver new programmes should be in accordance with their human resources, i.e. academic staff. In this situation, University of Peja faces double challenges, first upgrading the current programs and second, creating new programmes, especially in PhD level in which the level should be applied high-quality teaching and research. In addition, these reforms should be supported by work-based learning experiences and extracurricular activities.
- The employers respectively businesses can provide important first- hand information about the current skills of the graduates and the skills that the labor market requires, however according to the results, the major part of the business community and public institutions was not involved in the University activities. Therefore, UHZ should involve permanently business community, public institutions, Alumni group and other stakeholders during drafting programs and educational process in order to support students during the process, as the impact will be higher. Supporting students or graduates ex-post after finalising their studies sometimes on non-standard working activities will have a lower impact on preparing them for the labor market challenges.
- Finally, there is the issue of exploiting opportunities or creating opportunities. According to the results of this study but also based on the current state of the local economy there is limited choice regarding the employment opportunities, in Peja and region. Therefore the UHZ mainly should design the framework for creating programs and professional graduates which will create opportunities, namely self-employment entrepreneurship activities, rather than expecting employment from the public administration and institutions.

8. Recommendations

Labour market relevance and outcomes are not the sole mission of higher education institutions, as programmes exist for various reasons. Considering the current state and market needs, the UHZ aims to be linked with the industry, supporting graduates and preparing for the labor market, both locally and internationally. Considering this fact, these are the main recommendations:

- Employment of the Research Assistants and Research Associates within University Institutes and Centers, to ensure research based approach.
- Provide qualifications and trainings permanently in learning and teaching for the current and new academic staff at the University; case of Lifelong Learning schemes and programmes.
- Create and support Industrial Doctorates based on practical approach, mostly model used by Horizon 2020 Programme, which doctorates could easily connect candidates with the industry and labor market.
- Support local staff as Postdoctoral Fellows (additional 6 months for placements in the non-academic sector) which placement will help local staff to understand the challenges of economy and labor market.
- UHZ should create new elective courses with the focus on entrepreneurship, business, digitalization and knowledges about the EU market.
- Create and support Research Transfer Centers (RTC) or Knowledge and Technology Transfer Offices (KTTO); Case of the University of Ljubljana.
- Ensure functionalization of Industrial Boards not only at the University level but also in Faculty level; therefore, these boards will support specific programmes and their involvement should be on a monthly basis.
- Increase participation at Erasmus + and apply to Horizon Europe Programme with a focus on Industrial Leadership Pillar in cooperation with businesses to link the university with economy and create opportunities for the staff and students.
- Offer small grants to support the applicants at Erasmus+ Projects with a special focus on connection with Industry, which could increase cooperation of SME-s, industry, and the University.
- Prioritize the research projects applied from the Research Institutes, and enhance the teamwork which could enable better connection with the labor market.
- Permanent consultation with Business community and Public institutions to identify their needs therefore to ensure that services provided by university are useful. This will be possible by creating Liaison Offices – University- Industry, case of EUFORIA Project.
- Finally, UHZ can improve the labour market relevance through many initiatives such as restructured programme offerings, admission processes, academic and career support, improved learning and teaching practices, work-integrated learning, extra-curricular activities and international exchanges.

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