

I N F O R M
D E V E L O P
M O T I V A T E

A N N U A L
R E P O R T

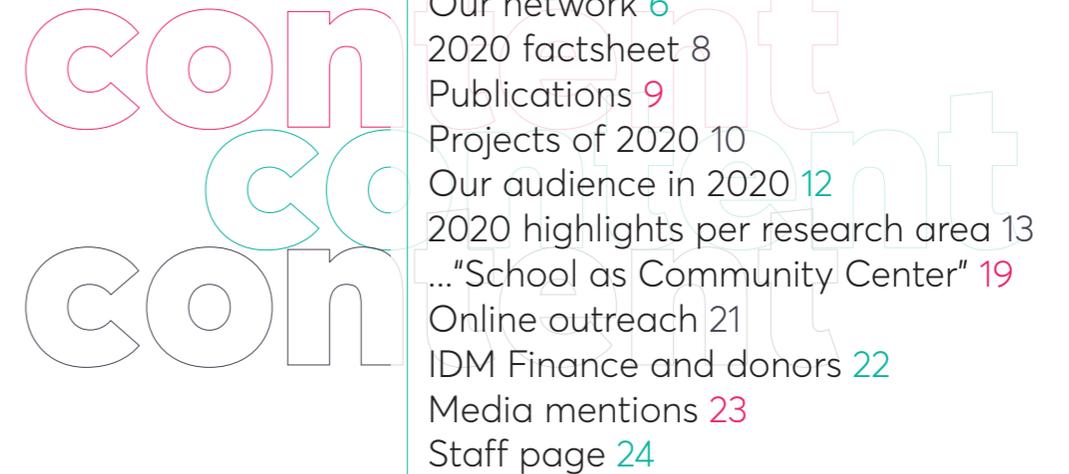
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VISION

Inform, Develop, Motivate for a democratic and prosperous society. IDM provides expertise, policy analysis, applied research, and capacity building for key societal actors to drive reforms and engage in evidence-based policy processes.

MISSION

Our mission is to advance societal capacities, generate and provide knowledge, skills and expertise for inclusive policy-making and evidence-based alternatives to bolster democracy and sustainable development.



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Sotiraq Hroni
Executive Director

Happy to share with colleagues, donors, partners, and friends of IDM in the public and private sector our work during 2020. It has been another year of accomplishments and growth in all of our programmatic areas, but I may highlight some of the most impactful cases.

The development of an Integrity Risk Assessment Methodology for the central and local government institutions is officially guiding institutional integrity and anti-corruption plan. The methodology was translated into integrity plans for institutions such as the Ministry of Justice, six municipalities, and one police commissariat.

Another important innovation of public policies was the functional model of the “triangle” cooperation to fight crime at the local level. Mayor, Police Chief, and local Prosecutor have agreed to consult citizens and share responsibilities by working together through a multi-stakeholder approach. There is full support to it by local stakeholders, but also central level institutions.

An ever-deepening and expanding model of a multiagency approach was the initiative of “school as community Center” that aims to empower young students in 16 high schools all over the country to build community resilience to overcome violent extremism. It is important to mention that the Ministry of Education and Sports, State Police, and municipalities have a positive track record of cooperation and investment in this regard.

A new working area for IDM has been the project that aims to link citizens with participatory and decision-making processes. This is not only a trust-building exercise between citizens and the parliament but also a laboratory of research and education to equip members of parliament and groups of interest with skills and instruments to work together and build agendas for improved public policies.

During 2020 IDM focused its research capacities in anti-corruption, state capture, and over-classification studies. Full reports in these areas will be published soon by Transparency International.

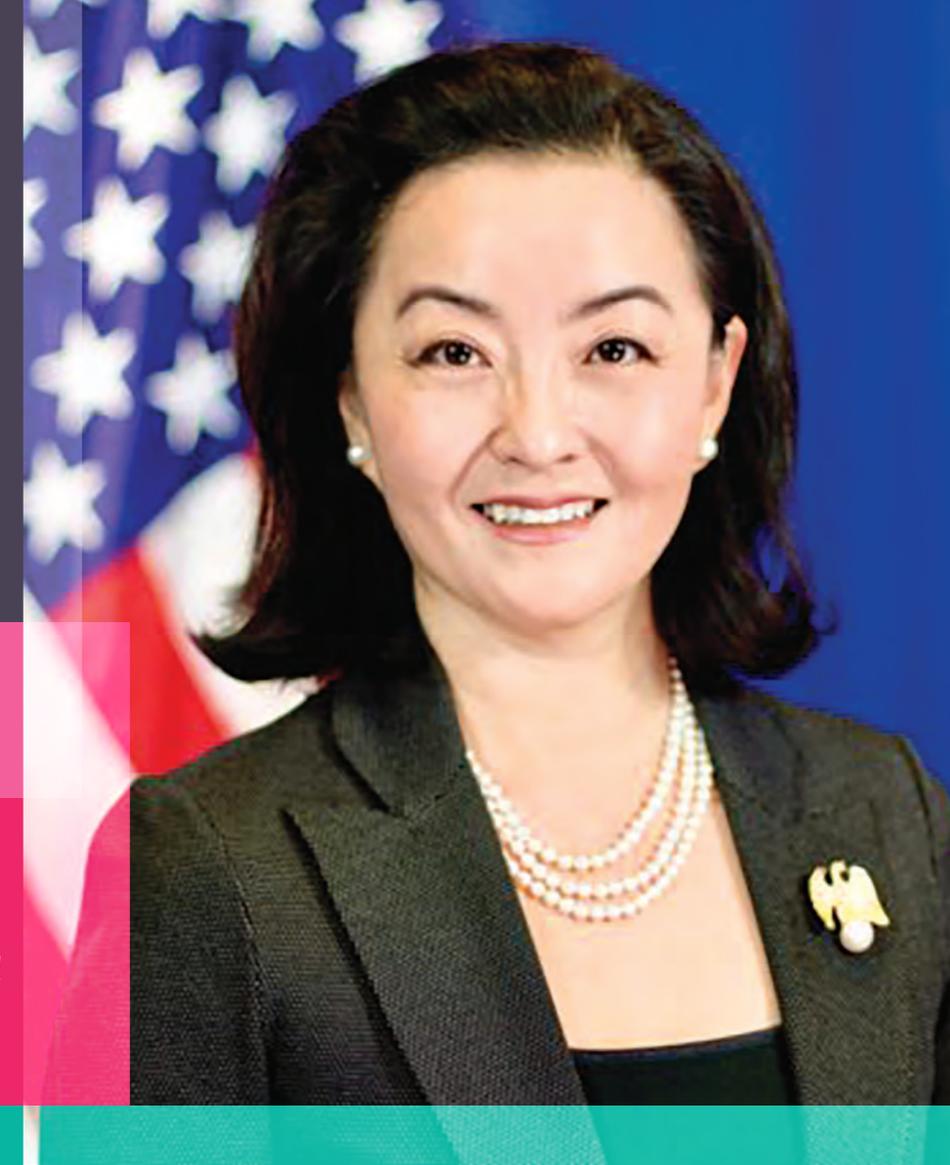
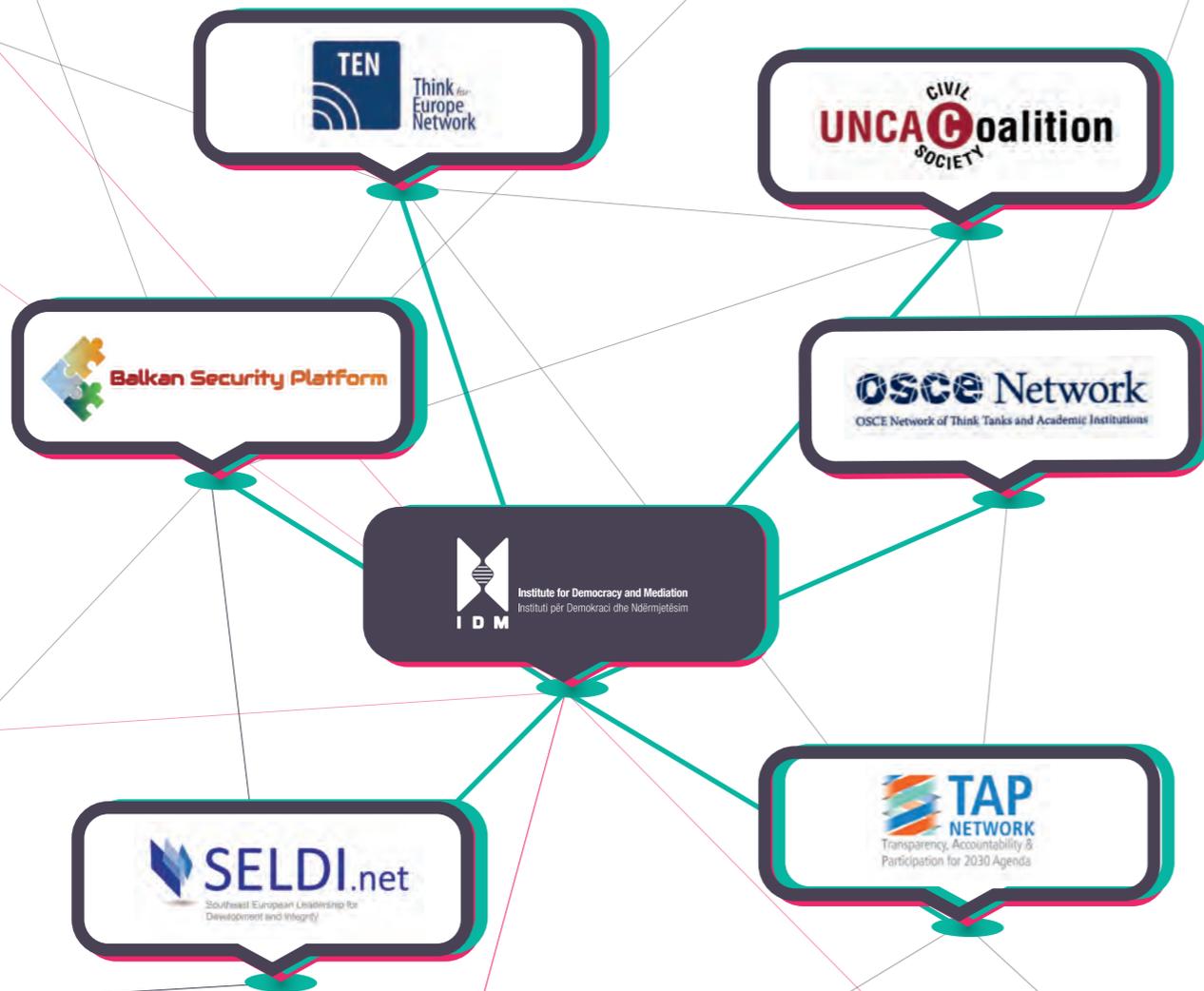
It is important to mention that the work in these and other areas continues side by side with institutional investments to internal capacity building. IDM is quite appreciative of the motivation and commitment of its staff and associates.

Closing this letter, I would also like to express our satisfaction and gratitude to our partnering institutions at the central and local level, our supporters, and donors. It has been a great year for us and we are looking forward to a continuous cooperation.

Sotiraq Hroni

Our Network

The institute is an active member of the following regional and wider **networks**



- H.E. Ms. Yuri Kim, US Ambassador to Albania during the national conference "School as a Community Center" (December 2020)

"We are working with you to build community resilience, empower women and youth, and promote moderate voices within the Islamic community, with School as Community Center project among them. We are proud partners with you on each of these initiatives...I congratulate you all for your work in bringing people together, building resilience in Albania's most vulnerable communities, and for your efforts to make Albania a safer, more prosperous environment for Albania's future: its youth."

2020 factsheet



In 2020, the Institute for Democracy and Mediation was engaged in the implementation of **26 projects**, of which some lasted three months while other projects were multi-year initiatives.



Donor organisations have supported our work in 2020, with a total annual budget of approximately **698,604.76 EUR**.



IDM published **42 publications** in 2020; including research studies, policy papers, handbooks, monitoring reports, integrity instruments, and several other deliverables such as commentaries, blogs, and news bulletins.



During 2020, IDM organised **232 public events**, including four national and regional conferences; 36 training workshops; 27 consultative meetings; 13 public accountability meetings; 8 (policy) roundtables; 4 launching events; a policy forum; a networking event; an awareness-raising campaign, an advocacy event.



Over **1029 people attended** our events in 2020, participants from local and central government; law enforcement; academia; societal groups; religious communities; media; local businesses; youth; civil society; and the international community.



In 2020, the Institute for Democracy and Mediation was **featured 141 times** in television, radio, newspapers, online news media, academic blogs, and other media outlets.

Research highlights

44

Publications

In 2020, IDM has published 44 publications tailored to a wide range of stakeholders; from government officials and other policy stakeholders to the general public. The publications aim to inform, develop and motivate various audiences across the country and internationally.

2
13
8
3
1
3
4
9
1

2 research studies or research reports related to EU enlargement, governance, security, and sustainability in civil society

13 monitoring reports on transparency and accountability at local self-government level

8 blog posts focusing on rule of law, media freedom, and environment

3 policy briefs on integrity to improve the performance of State Police, as well as briefs on civil society for good governance, and violent extremism prevention

1 handbook on building Integrity to improve performance and sustainability of anticorruption in the Albanian State Police"

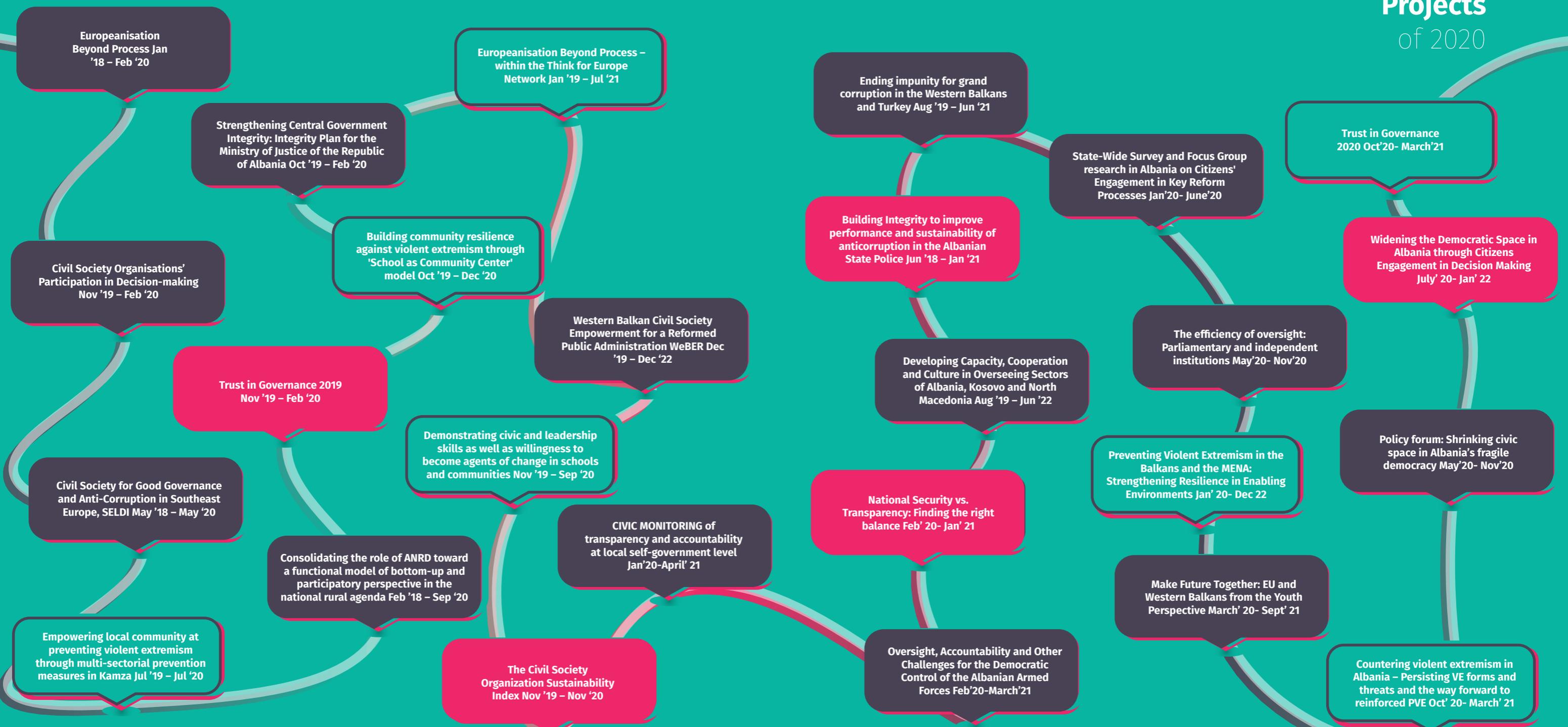
3 policy papers on the topic of Europeanisation beyond process, violent extremism prevention, and the efficiency of parliamentary and independent institutions

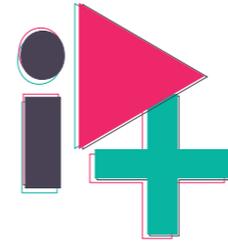
4 training modules focusing on strengthening integrity to improve performance and sustainability of anticorruption in the Albanian State Police, and the monitoring of transparency and accountability at the local self-government level

9 bulletins on integrity, accountability, and partnership

1 online platform for youth aiming to generate discussion among youth on topics related to internet freedoms, environment, and democracy.

Projects of 2020





2020 highlights per research area

Governance

2020 annual report represents a synthesis of the Governance Program's performance and highlights results on the integrity planning of central government institutions, monitoring the public administration reform as well as the consolidation of the institutional integrity of the Albania State Police. The key milestone of the program was the piloting of the Integrity Risk Assessment Methodology for the central government. So far, the Ministry of Justice became the first public institution in the country to draft and approve an Integrity Plan. This initiative sheds light on one of the most intractable challenges faced by public institutions in the country such as the fight against corruption.

Nevertheless, we continued to step up our efforts in developing a series of integrity tools that aimed to assist the police sector with evidence-based research and inclusive policy process in strengthening institutional integrity. This included amongst others: 1. monitoring the police vetting process from a civil society perspective to strengthen the effectiveness and transparency of this process; 2. development of the evidence-based policies through recommendations, a research study on integrity and corruption, policy papers, and briefs on enhancing the integrity of the state police.; 3.



Societal
Groups

11%

International
Organisations

2%

Media

2%

1%

Private
Sector

17%

Government &
Institutions

18%

Civil Society

49%

Educational
Institutions

The audience that attended
our events in 2020

Capacity development program to increase police officers' skills and capacities on issues regarding police integrity and ethics; 4. enhanced collaboration and synergies between law enforcement agencies, Prosecutor office, and municipalities by introducing formalised way for their corporation and increasing civic engagement and mobilization at the local level on issues related to public safety. Furthermore, IDM has worked with Transparency International to strengthen anti-corruption efforts through research on grand corruption cases and tailor-made laws in Albania, as part of a regional initiative.

Lastly, in the framework of the WEBER project, the monitoring of public administration reform ended in February 2021, and a regional conference took place on 25-26 February 2021 to present the regional findings. Additionally, local CSOs were invited to participate in an open call for small grants enabling them to monitor locally-specific public administration reform issues. Six grants were awarded in January 2021 and the implementation of the projects is expected to start in April.

EU and the Balkans

2020 was an important year for the EU's Enlargement process and the accession of the Western Balkans to the bloc. The EC first announced a new accession methodology, while later, in March 2020, the EU agreed to open accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia. IDM remained heavily involved in the regional debates on the enlargement process by outlining its position on the state of play and alternatives to overcome EU's enlargement fatigue through several policy documents, Op-Eds, and media appearances.

Furthermore, the Institute continued monitoring the fulfilment of conditions for the official opening of accession talks and the holding of the first intergovernmental conference while contributing to preparations and capacity-development for the start of accession negotiations. Moreover, IDM analysed the Albanian geopolitical factor in the region and its potential to serve as a catalyst and anchor of democratisation, regional cooperation, and the European integration process of the Western Balkans.

Security

IDM's Security Program has continued to uphold its tradition of delivering policy analysis and advice on current security issues. In line with IDM's objectives, the three guiding pillars of the work of the Security Program for 2020 have been: research, capacity building, and advocacy. The Security Program has implemented projects alongside international organisations, state institutions, local government, and communities. Some of the issues covered this year were violent extremism, defence governance, transparency and accountability of the security sector, strengthening community resilience towards extremism, and understanding organised crime in Albania.

Despite the limiting circumstances of COVID-19, the security program was successful in expanding its research capabilities. In that regard, it has engaged research projects with international partners such as Transparency International, Balkan Trust for Democracy, Center for European





Security Studies, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the Balkan Security Platforms (Western Balkans Organized Crime Radar initiative); as well as institutions such as the Albanian State Police, Ministry of Interior, the

Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism, and various municipalities.

During 2020 “triangle” meetings were piloted by IDM in three municipalities of the country, Elbasan, Lezha, and Kurbin to address the lack of a sustained involvement of local communities and transform local safety plans into a multi-stakeholder effort for which institutions are accountable to citizens. Based on the experience of the “triangle” meetings, a multi-actor local plan for crime prevention was drafted for each of the three municipalities which were part of the piloting phase. This is an innovative approach given the way it fosters multiagency interaction and cooperation, while its cyclic approach ensures inclusive and citizens-centred safety policies at the local level.

Additionally, IDM’s Security Program has continued to engage with projects on capacity building and advocacy, mainly at the local government and community level. Projects have been implemented in eight different municipalities in Albania and 16 different high schools. The focus of such projects has been advocating for stronger community-oriented policymaking by local governments while empowering youth to overcome community-level challenges and conflicts which might lead to extremism.

IDM’s security program is looking forward to continuing to build on its current research and expands its advocacy and capacity-building initiatives in the upcoming year. Specifically, the program intends to focus on relevant security challenges such as Serious and Organized Crime, illegal migration and trafficking, and Security Sector Reform.

Local governance & integrated development

During 2020 we continued having a strong voice in the sustainable rural development process in Albania implementing important bottom-up advocacy initiatives for effective participatory policies that are close to the problems and needs of rural communities’ residents. We aim to have an active role in the reform processes of the agriculture and rural development sector, in particular in aligning with the European policy on Community-led Local Development.

Our long-term vision for "Europe in rural Albania" aims to push forward processes and reforms that advance the interests and priorities of rural communities and accelerate these processes towards European best practices. Among the achievements of 2020, we highlight the nationwide consultation on Agriculture Governance and Rural Development (2019-2020), which provided us knowledge and insights on what needs to be improved and changed in the sector

The Second Edition "Pro Rural Women" event, the four rural regional forums, and the capacity building efforts for the empowerment of the Albanian Network for Rural Development (ANRD) human resources have impacted the acceleration



of rural reform processes helping rural CSOs and ANRD member organisations to influence the national agenda of rural development. Moreover, the work of LGID focuses on evidence-based and bottom-up advocacy, capacity building, and networking, aimed at bringing the national agricultural and rural policy to the core of public discourse. Regardless of the challenges faced as a result of the pandemic, the planning process for the second Albanian Rural Parliament which takes place at the beginning of 2021 has started.

Policy Lab: Facts & space

IDM's PolicyLab program continued fuelling the policy discourse with evidence and facts on various reforming processes in Albania, including public perceptions on governance, electoral processes, and political engagement. The national survey 'Audit of political engagement 2020' was conducted by IDM this year for the second time, following the first piloting of the study in 2016. The Audit paid particular emphasis to the Parliament as an institution, the processes linked with its work, and the integrity of elections.

The Parliament and citizens' involvement in the parliamentary activity has been at the centre of a new project launched by the Institute under the framework of, SDC's PACEP program. Last but not least, the annual barometer of public trust in institutions and satisfaction with public service

delivery was carried out by the PolicyLab's team for the eighth consecutive year.

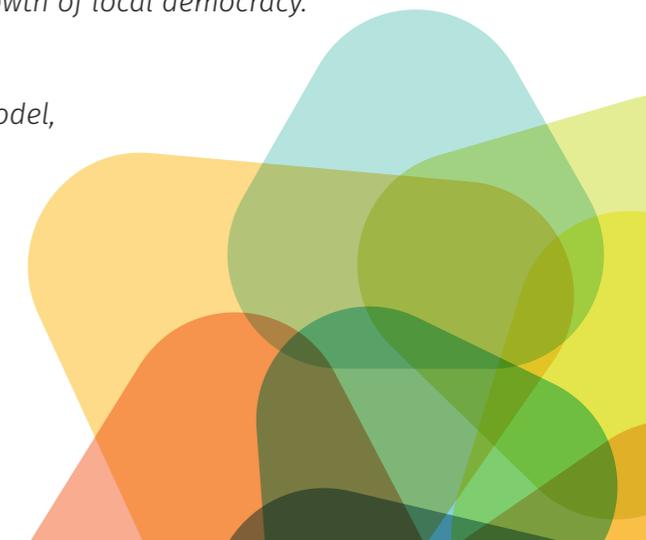


Towards a sustainable community through the “School as Community Center”

The “School as Community Center” is an important instrument in strengthening local communities through education, capacity building, promoting active citizenship, empowering women, and informing and raising the awareness of the community in combating intolerance, discrimination, and prejudice.

This model aims to transform the school into a meeting point which strengthens the partnership of local institutions – school – family – community – interest groups, as a supportive community environment, that enables interaction with all stakeholders; contributes to youth development and promotes active citizenship; supports the development of communities both in terms of safety and their commitment to decision-making and the growth of local democracy.

The experience built on the “School as Community Center” model, combines the interaction among local institutions, with local communities and stakeholders.



The Police Commissariat fulfils its work objectives within the local plan of "Community Policing". The police carry out periodic communications with parents, students, and young people and address proactively mutual issues at an early stage.

The school enables young people to increase their academic knowledge and get actively involved in the community. The school staff, in cooperation with the psychologist and the security officer, facilitate this process by exchanging information and partnering with the local actors.

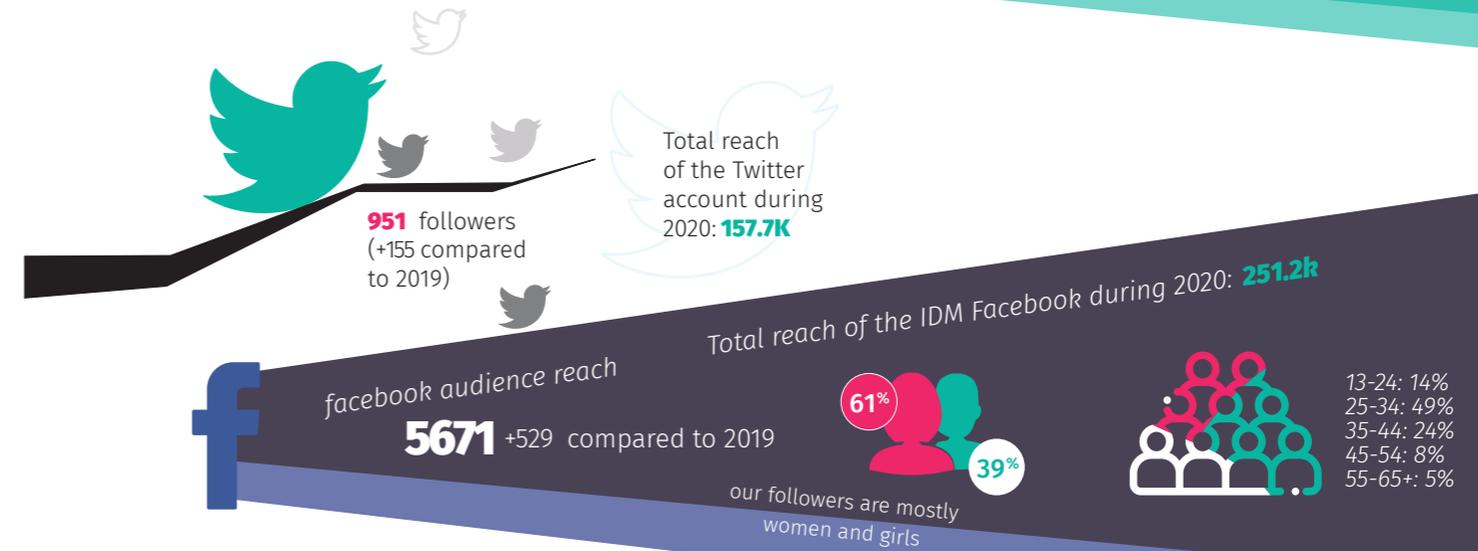
In 2020 we have successfully implemented the "School as Community Center" model in 10 high schools throughout Albania and expanded the model in 6 additional high schools.

You can find more at www.shkollaim.org



Online outreach

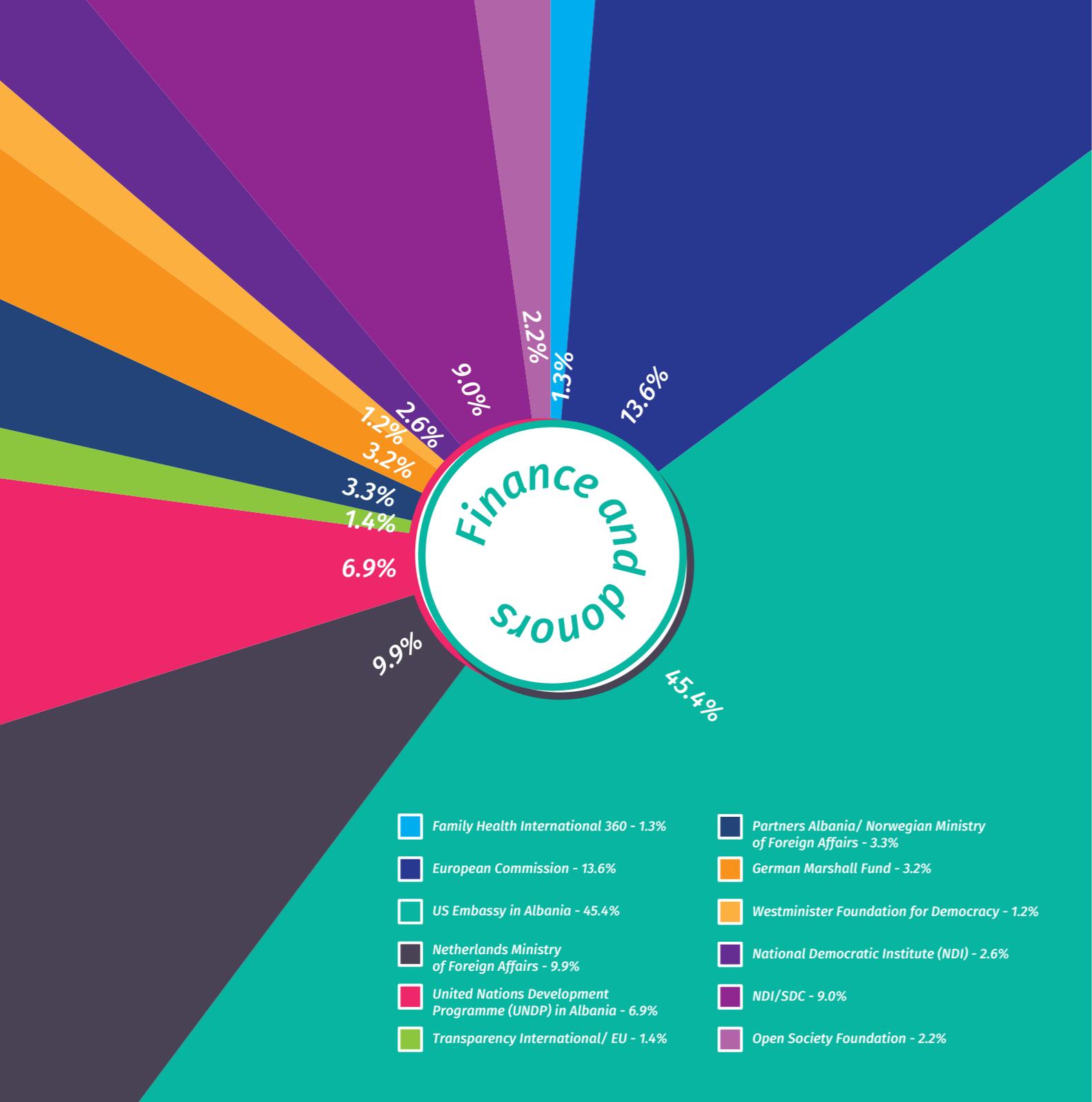
This was the first year of implementing the 2020-2022 communication strategy, by increasing our communication efforts and creating a recognisable institutional style for communication. Additionally, this year we increased our cooperation efforts with the press by sharing widely information on activities implemented by the institute and research reports. Such efforts were reflected in the increase of our online platforms engagement, including IDM's website, Facebook and Twitter.



In 2020, our website www.idmalbania.org was visited 80,274 times.



The majority of our audience resides in Albania, but IDM also has a substantial following in Kosovo, North Macedonia, Italy, United States, France, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, China, and Italy.



Media mentions

In 2020 the Institute of Democracy and Mediation, our staff, events, and our publications were mentioned 141 times in international, national, and local news outlets. IDM's staff members took part in TV panel discussions, wrote blogs on various topics, and took an active part in conferences and media platforms.

IDM appeared in the following broadcast media: A2 News, Euronews Albania, Top-channel TV, Ora News TV, Albanian Radio Television, ABC News, Vizionplus TV, News 24, RTV Scan, Fax News, and Voice of America (VOA). Relevant print and online news outlets including, but were not limited to Gazeta Panorama, Gazeta Shqiptare, Balkanweb, Exit, Reporter, Euronews, Monitor, Reporter, Mapo, Lapsi, etc.

Highlights:



In May 2020 IDM published the Opinion Poll "Trust in Governance" to measure citizens' trust in public institutions. It explores public perceptions regarding transparency and accountability, corruption, citizen engagement in policy and decision-making, satisfaction with public service delivery, and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies. The Program Director of IDM, Gjergji Vurmo took part in various interviews to discuss the findings.



During 2020, IDM's director took part in TV panel discussions regarding the audit of political engagement, emphasising the role of the parliament and the integrity of elections.



The Building Resilient Communities and Youth activism through the multi-stakeholder approach "School as Community Center" conference in December brought together various actors and the participation of the U.S Ambassador to Albania. The conference was live-streamed and was covered in various media channels.



National security issues attracted local and regional media attention. Program manager, Redion Qirjazi was also interviewed regarding the results of the annual Global Peace Index, which showed a decline, especially for the first months of 2020.



Program Director of IDM, Gjergji Vurmo took part in TV panel discussions and was interviewed on Albania's EU accession process, citizens' trust in reforms and the government, EU-Albania relations, and the potential enlargement reforms.

IDM team

-  Governance
-  EU integration
-  Security
-  Civic activism
-  Legal expert
-  Local governance
-  Rural development



Sotiraq Hroni
Executive Director



Gjergji Vurmo
Program Director



Evelina Azizaj
Program Manager



Rovena Sulstarova
Program Manager



Redion Qirjazi
Program Manager



Armela Xhaho
Project Manager



Lorena Totoni
Project Manager



Shefqet Shyti
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Researcher



Diori Angjeli
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Alban Dafa
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Romario Shehu
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Sheila Hafizi
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Denisa Shabani
Head of Finance



Greta Mehmeti
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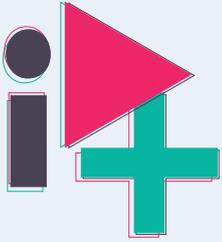
Edlir Daci
Driver and logistics

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The Institute for Democracy and Mediation – IDM, was established in November 1999 as a non-governmental organization dedicated to consolidate participatory governance and democratic institutions, European integration processes, civil society development, regional cooperation and security through independent research, capacity building and engagement of societal players.

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