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# Scaling-Up Universal Neonatal Hearing Screening in Albania

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## directions and future perspectives

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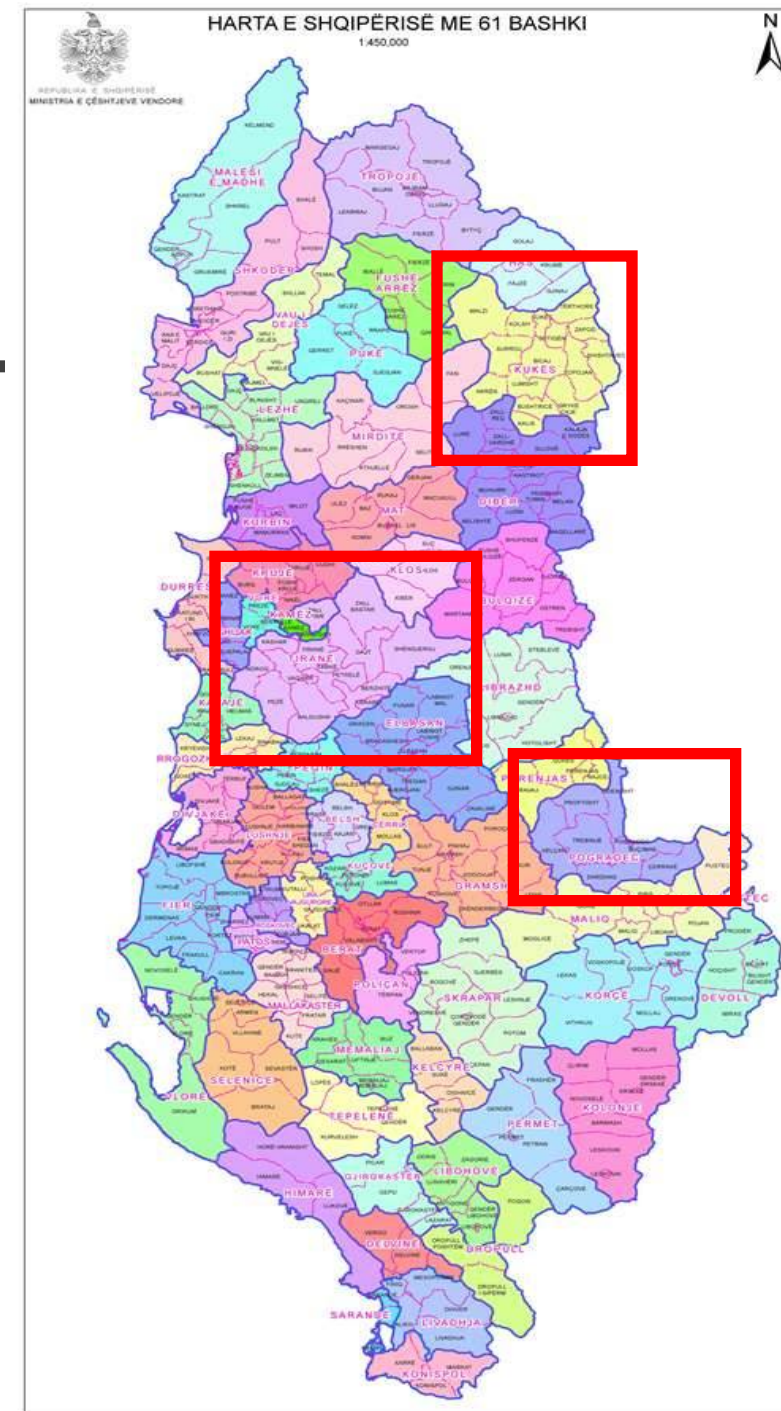
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- Preparatory phase: 2017
- Three regions/ 4 institutions selected
- Around 30,000 births/year (nationwide)
- Start of screening: 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018
- More than 10,000 babies have been tested so far (in total)



- **Final aim:** evaluation of costs of NHS in Albania
- Currently, universal newborn hearing screening is being implemented in: Tirane, Kukes, Pogradec.
- **Next immediate perspectives:**
  - ❖ spreading UNHS to country level
  - ❖ Establishment of a registry of detected cases, aiming for national registry
  - ❖ Ongoing expertise building

## Scaling-up UNHS in Albania – How?

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An immediate spreading and implementation of UNHS to country level is quite impossible, for now. Why?

1. the costs of UNHS in Albania not yet calculated.
2. the overall total national cost of UNHS unlikely to be covered “at one shot” by Albanian Government.

Therefore, **scaling-up** or gradually increasing coverage of UNHS would be a **wise approach**.

Current cost of devices purchased in the framework of UNHS in Tirana, Kukes and Pogradec (3 regions)

Project site	OAE devices	aABR devices	ABR diagn	Total cost	Cost of staff	Administrator	Nurses	Total cost/year
Tirana	7	3	2	84,351 €	Tirana	2	24	34,320 €
Kukes	0	2	0	20,394 €	Kukes	1	4	6,600 €
Pogradec	2	1	0	25,557 €	Pogradec	1	4	6,600 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>130,302 €</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47,520 €</b>

\* Cost of 1 OAE = 7,680 €; cost of 1 aABR = 10,197€; cost of 1 ABR diagn = €; cost of 1 staff = 110 €/month

Current cost of devices purchased in the framework of UNHS in Tirana, Kukes and Pogradec (3 regions):

- About **180,000 €** (equipment account for about 72% of this)
- Supposing that devices are bought only once, the cost for the second year of the project would be about **50,000 €** (staff only).

Of course, additional costs (maintenance, calibration, etc.) have to be calculated and predicted!



In Albania there are 37 maternity hospitals for the time being.

The type of screening (OAE vs. aABR) to be used has to be decided!

- If all remaining 33 maternity hospitals would be equipped with only one OAE, the cost would be:  $(33 \times 7,680\text{€}) + (1 \text{ nurse} \times 110\text{€} \times 12 \text{ months}) = \mathbf{254,760\text{€}}$  (for the first year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year only staff cost, i.e. 1320€ per nurse )
- If all remaining 33 maternity hospitals would be equipped with only one aABR, the cost would be:  $(33 \times 10,197\text{€}) + (1 \text{ nurse} \times 110\text{€} \times 12 \text{ months}) = \mathbf{337,821\text{€}}$  (for the first year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year only staff cost)
- After first year, there are only staff costs (supposing no device is broken!) Of course, additional costs (maintenance, calibration, etc.) have to be calculated and predicted!

Most likely, Ministry of Health will not agree to cover the cost of implementing UNHS at national level, through either OAE or aABR.

Therefore, a gradual scaling-up could work!

For example, scaling up to 6 more sites would require:

- **47,400€** (for OAE screening) or **62,502€** (for aABR screening, for the first year, and then only  $(6 * 1320€ = 7920€)$  for staff each subsequent year).

Of course, additional costs (maintenance, calibration, etc.) have to be calculated and predicted!

- This way, every two-three years more sites could be sustained gradually, until the entire country will be covered by UNHS!
- To this end, there is need for lobbying and advocacy with all major stakeholders (mainly Ministry of Health and Social Protection), based on:
  - Cost-effectiveness of UNHS in Albania (product of EUSCREEN in Albania)!

**THANK YOU!**