

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CAPACITY- BUILDING IN THE WESTERN BALKANS



WELCOME TO THE FIRST NEWSLETTER FOR THE APEL - WB PROJECT

Project Overview

The APEL-WB project aims to support the development of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) systems in the Western Balkans. Through cooperation among higher education institutions, public authorities, quality assurance agencies, and other stakeholders, the project seeks to create more inclusive and flexible pathways to higher education and lifelong learning. Drawing on European experiences and good practices, particularly the Icelandic model of APEL, the project focuses on assessing existing conditions, strengthening institutional capacities, and promoting the recognition of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired through prior learning and professional experience.

Project Objectives

- Assess the current state of APEL in the Western Balkans.
- Identify conditions for APEL implementation.
- Strengthen stakeholder capacities in prior learning recognition.
- Promote inclusive access to higher education and lifelong learning.
- Foster cooperation among key stakeholders.
- Develop recommendations for future APEL implementation.
- Support the modernisation of higher education systems.



Project Partners

- LOGOS University College (Albania)
- University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi" (Albania)
- Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASCAL), Albania
- University of Prishtina (Kosovo)
- RIT Kosovo (Kosovo)
- University of Akureyri (Iceland)
- Tallinn University (Estonia)
- Ministry of Education and Sports (Albania)
- University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- University of Patras (Greece)
- Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (CIP), Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Kosovo



Project at a Glance

- 12 Project Partners**
- 6 Participating Countries**
- Erasmus+ CBHE Project**
- 36-Month Duration**
- Funded by the European Union through Erasmus+**





KICK - OFF MEETING

November 20 – 22, 2025

Organiser: LOGOS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TIRANA

Venue: Tirana, Albania / LOGOS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

APEL-WB PROJECT OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED IN ALBANIA

The APEL-WB project was officially launched during the Kick-off and First General Management Committee Meeting hosted by LOGOS University College in Tirana, Albania. The event brought together representatives of partner universities, ministries, quality assurance agencies, and other stakeholders from the Western Balkans and the European Union.

The meeting provided an opportunity to introduce the project's objectives, planned activities, expected outcomes, and implementation framework, while establishing a strong foundation for future cooperation among project partners.



PARTNERS COMMIT TO ADVANCING APEL IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

During the meeting, partners discussed the role of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) in promoting lifelong learning, widening access to higher education, and recognising skills acquired through work and life experience. Participants exchanged views on existing practices and future opportunities for strengthening APEL systems in the region.

The discussions highlighted the importance of collaboration among higher education institutions, public authorities, and quality assurance bodies in supporting the development of transparent and inclusive recognition mechanisms across the Western Balkans.





DAY 1: Official Launch and Project Introduction

The first day of the Kick-off Meeting marked the official launch of the APEL-WB project and brought together representatives from partner institutions across the Western Balkans and the European Union. Participants introduced their organisations, presented their roles within the project, and discussed the project's objectives, expected outcomes, and implementation framework. The sessions also focused on project management, quality assurance procedures, and the overall work plan, establishing a shared understanding and a strong foundation for future cooperation.

Day 2: Collaborative Work and Strategic Planning

The second day of the Kick-off Meeting was dedicated to intensive collaborative work and strategic planning among project partners. Through a series of working sessions, participants discussed key aspects of project implementation, including management plans, quality assurance procedures, research activities, portfolio development, and stakeholder engagement. Particular attention was given to dissemination and communication strategies, ensuring that project results will reach relevant audiences across the Western Balkans and beyond.

These discussions provided an opportunity for partners to exchange perspectives, clarify responsibilities, and align their efforts towards the successful achievement of project objectives. The working sessions strengthened coordination among consortium members and established a clear roadmap for the activities planned in the coming months.

Day 3: Cultural Visit and Networking



The final day combined cultural exchange with networking opportunities among project partners. Participants visited several cultural and historical sites in Tirana, gaining insights into the city's heritage and traditions. The visit provided a valuable opportunity for informal discussions, experience sharing, and relationship-building beyond the formal meeting sessions. This concluding activity further strengthened collaboration among partners and contributed to a positive and productive start to the APEL-WB project.





Development of the APEL-WB Roll-up Banner

As part of the project's communication and visibility efforts, the APEL-WB roll-up banner has been developed for use at meetings, workshops, conferences, and other dissemination activities. The banner promotes the project's visual identity and presents key information about its objectives, partnership, and Erasmus+ support.

By ensuring a consistent and recognisable presentation across all partner institutions, the banner contributes to enhancing project visibility, raising awareness, and supporting stakeholder engagement throughout the implementation of APEL-WB.

APEL Mapping Questionnaire Completed

As part of the APEL-WB project activities, partners completed the APEL Mapping Questionnaire, providing valuable insights into the current state of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) across higher education systems in the Western Balkans.

Based on a methodology successfully applied in Iceland, the questionnaire explores existing policies, practices, challenges, and opportunities related to APEL at both national and institutional levels. The collected data will support evidence-based recommendations and contribute to the future development of APEL systems in the region.



What's Next?

As the project moves forward, several important activities are planned for the coming months:

- Online training for WP6 members on Communication, Dissemination and Project Visibility.
- Continued data collection on the existing conditions for APEL implementation across partner countries.
- Upcoming coordination meetings and project management activities.
- Preparations for the partner study visit and project activities in Iceland.
- Further development of the APEL-WB website, communication channels and dissemination activities.

STAY CONNECTED

Stay informed about the latest project developments, events, and opportunities.

 Project Website
<https://apel-wb.org/>



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apelwb.project@gmail.com