



# *“Balkan Region: The Turbo-Style Experience” -Albania-*

*Public Accreditation Agency for Higher Education*

*Dhurata Bozo*

*Director*

*dhuratabozo@gmail.com*

*Vienna, 7-8 May 2009*

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

A - Balkans; Regional Context

B - Albania; case study

C - Developments/Problems/ Difficulties

D - (Self) Questions and Reflections

E - What's next!!!!

# Balkan:

## Etymology & History

The region takes its name from the **Balkan mountain** range in Bulgaria (from the Turkish *balkan* meaning "a chain of wooded mountains", based on the word *balakan* 'stone, cliff',).

*The name is still preserved in Central Asia where there exist the Balkan Mountains and the Balkan Province of Turkmenistan. On a larger scale, one long continuous chain of mountains crosses the region in the form of a reversed letter S, from the Carpathians south to the Balkan range proper, before it marches away east into Anatolian Turkey. On the west coast, an offshoot of the Dinaric Alps follows the coast south through Dalmatia and Albania, crosses Greece and continues into the sea in the form of various islands. The mountain range that runs across Bulgaria from west to east (Stara Planina) is still commonly known as the Balkan Mountains.*



# Balkan: geographical map

- A: Fully located**
  - ALBANIA
  - BOSNIA&HERZEGOVINA
  - BULGARIA
  - GREECE
  - KOSOVO
  - MONTENEGRO
- B: Significantly located**
  - CROATIA
  - SERBIA
- C: Partially located**
  - ROMANIA
  - SLOVENIA
  - TURKEY



# Balkan: Geopolitical Map

Albania  
Bosnia&Herceg.  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Greece  
Kosovo  
Macedonia  
Montenegro  
Romania  
Serbia  
Slovenia  
Turkey



# **Balkan:** actually and in practice

**In most of the English-speaking, western world:**

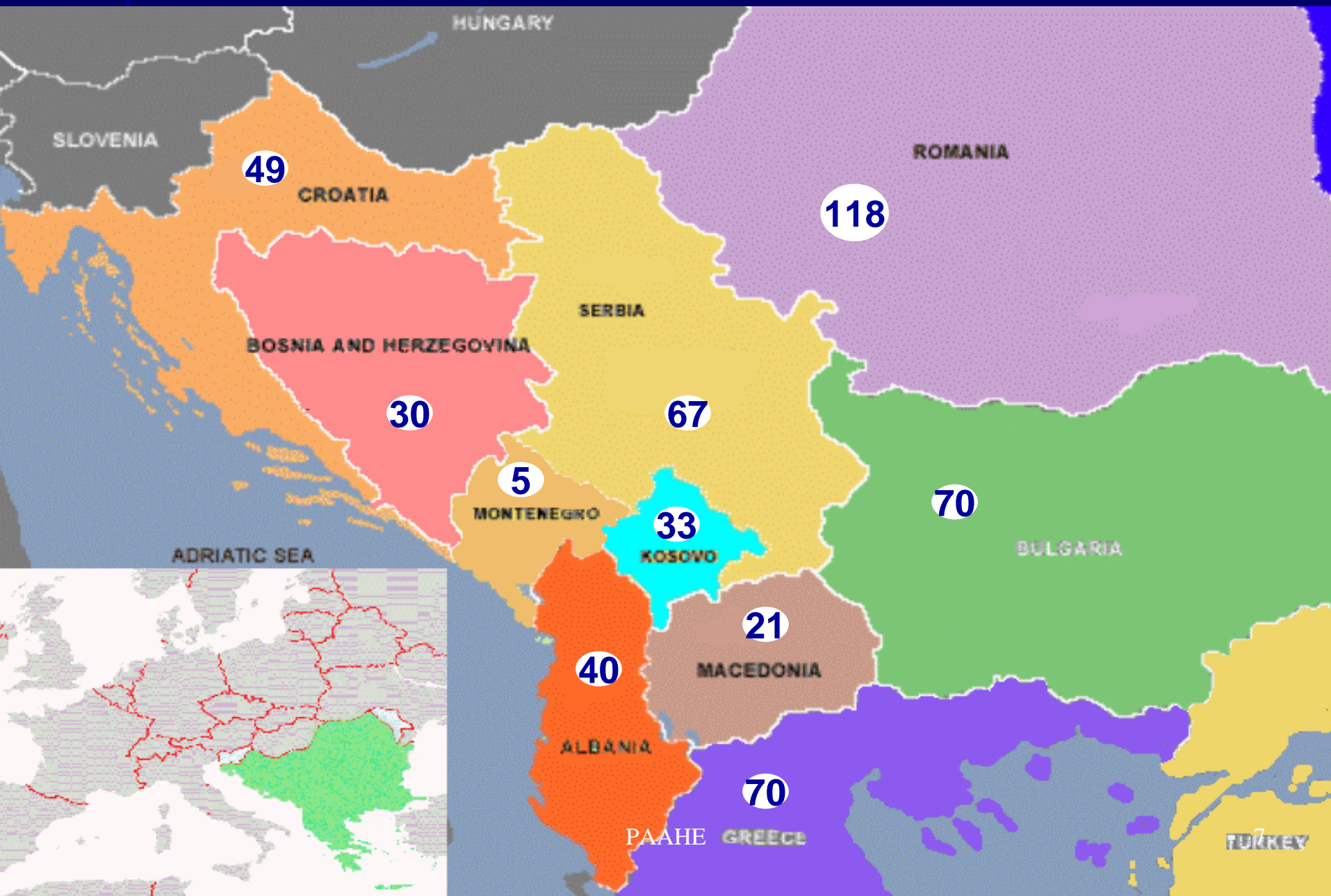
**the countries commonly included in the Balkan region:**

1. **Albania**
2. **Bosnia and Hercegovina**
3. **Bulgaria**
4. **Croatia**
5. **Greece**
6. **Kosovo**
7. **Macedonia**
8. **Montenegro**
9. **Serbia**

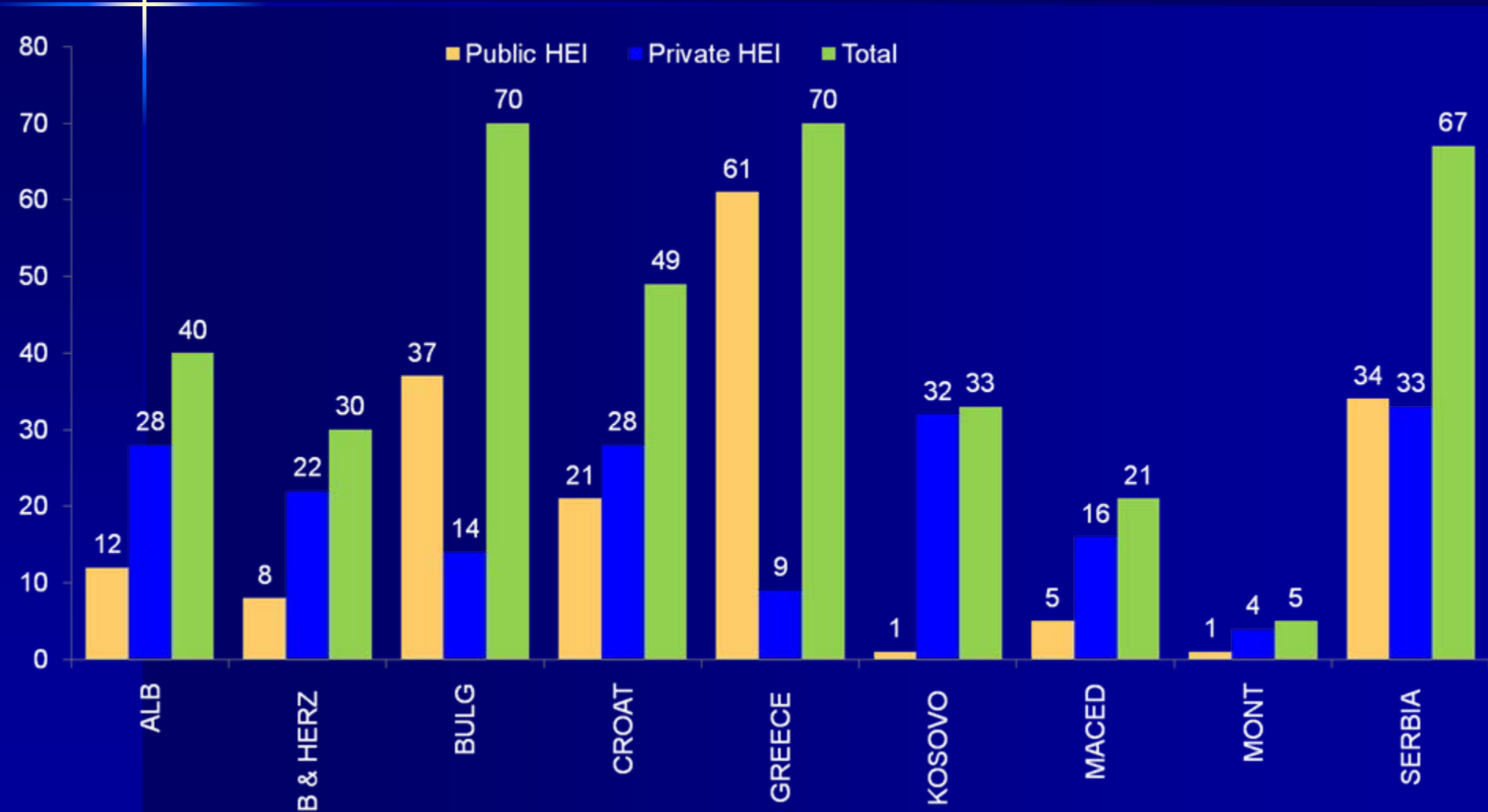
**other countries sometimes included:**

1. **Moldova**
2. **Romania**
3. **Slovenia**

# A - Mapping and number of HEIs in the Balkans



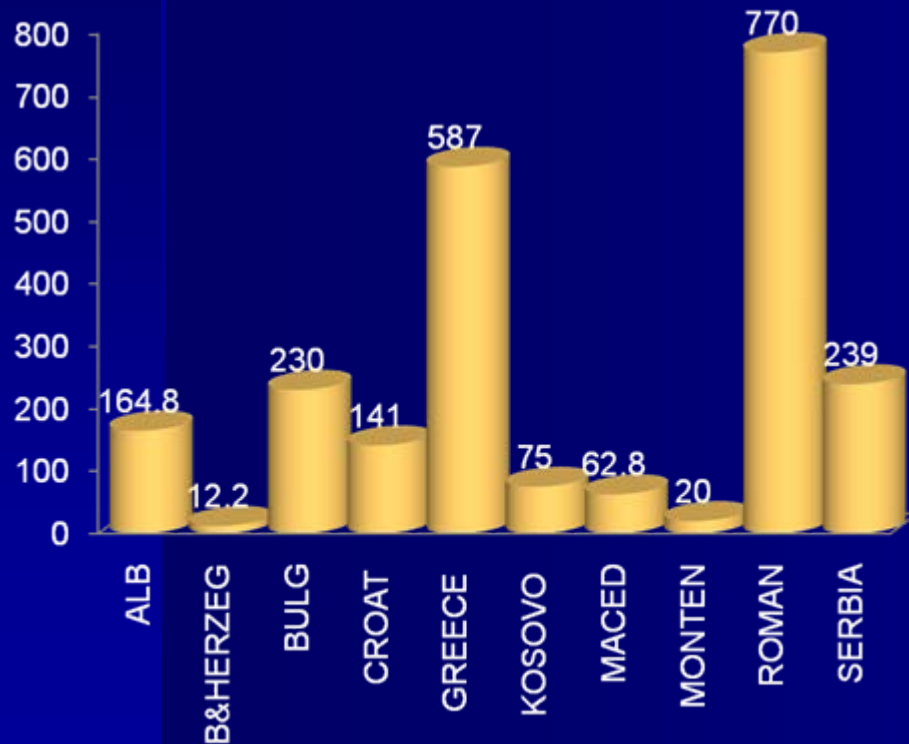
# A: Balkan Region: Public & Private HEIs



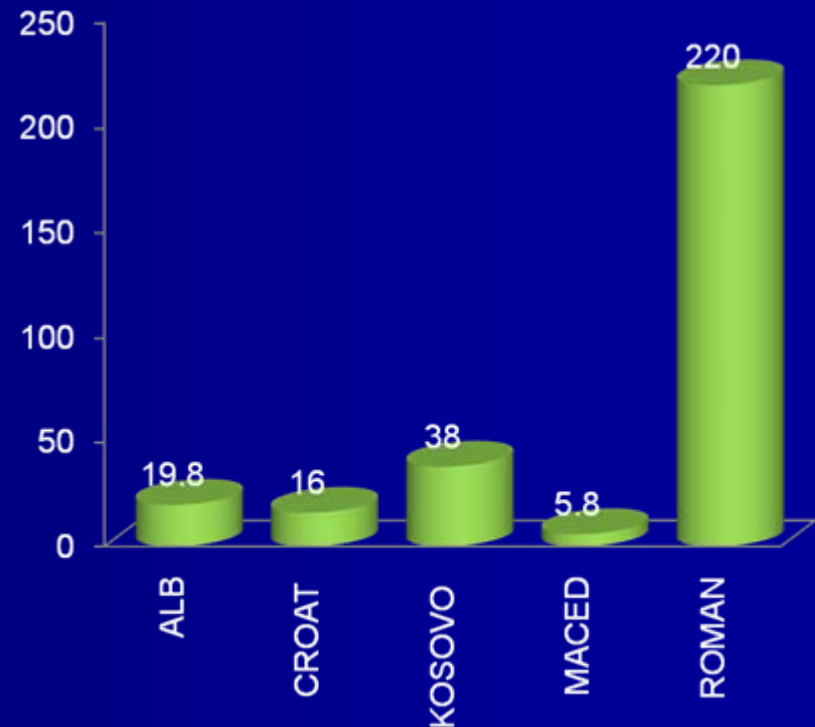
# A: Balkan Region

## Public & Private HEIs: Students

Total number of students in Balkan HEIs (\*1000)



Number of students in private HEIs (\* 1000)



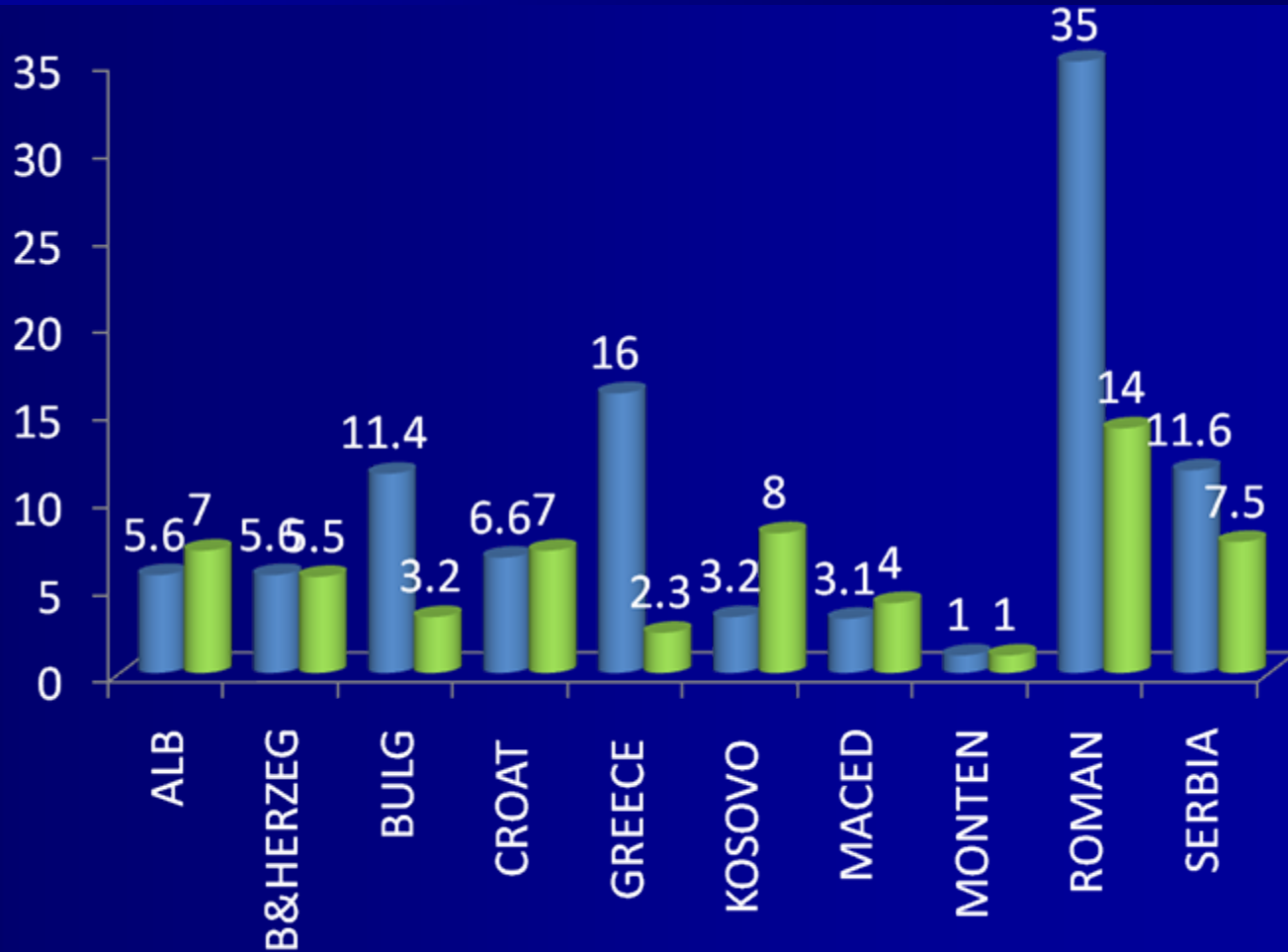
# A- Balkan: Public and Private HEIs and students

Country	Population (in million)	Number of HEIs		Number of students (x1000)	
		Public HEIs	Private HEIs	Public	Private
<b>ALBANIA</b>	<b>3.8</b>	12	28	145	19.8 (12%)
<b>BOS.&amp; HERZEG.</b>	<b>3.9</b> (2006)	8	22	12.2 (2006-2007)	
<b>BULGARIA**</b>	<b>7.8</b> (2008)	37	14	230	
<b>CROATIA*</b>	<b>4.5</b> (2008)	21	28	125	16 (11.4%)
<b>GREECE</b>	<b>11.2</b> (2008)	61	9	587 (2004-2005)	
<b>KOSOVO</b>	<b>2.2</b>	2	27	37	38 (51%)
<b>MACEDONIA</b>	<b>2.1</b>	5	16	64	8.9 (12%)
<b>MONTENEGRO</b>	<b>0.68</b>	1	4	20	
<b>ROMANIA***</b>	<b>23.8</b>	62	56	550	220 (28%)
<b>SERBIA*</b>	<b>7.9</b>	34	33	239	

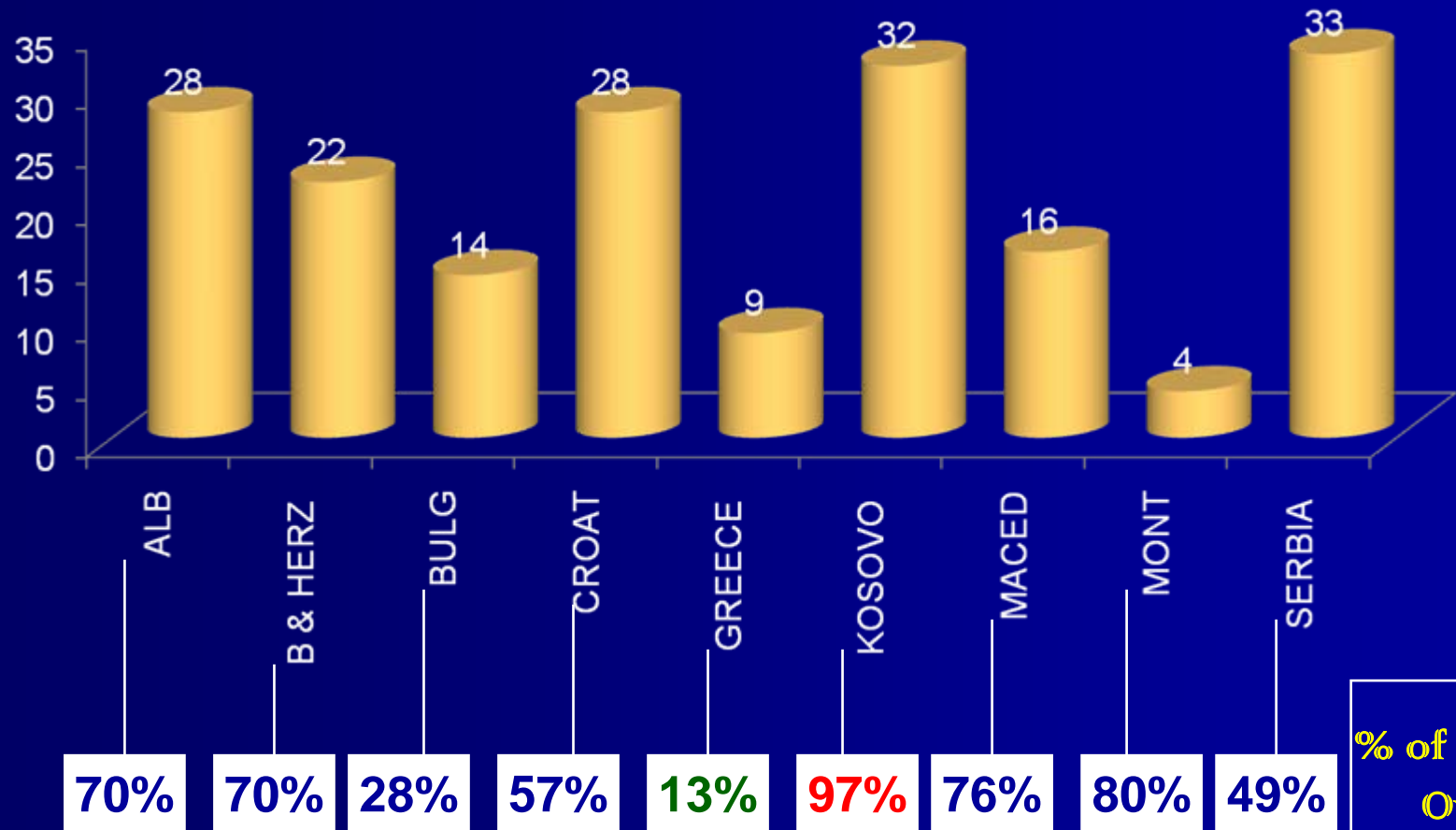
# A: Balkan Region

Comparison: population ratio / PrHEI number ratio

ALBANIA	5.6	7
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	5.6	5.5
BULGARIA	11.4	3.2
CROATIA	6.6	7
GREECE	16	2.3
KOSOVO	3.2	8
MACEDONIA	3.1	4
MONTENEGRO	1	1
ROMANIA	35	14
SERBIA	11.6	7.5



# A: Balkan Region: Private HE



% of PrHEIs  
Over  
Total HEIs

# A: Balkan Region: Private HE

- Different numbers and nonhomogenous distribution
- Different ratio Public/Private HEIs; ranges between 1:32 (Ko) - 61:9 (Gr)
- No reasonable (explainable) correlation Population/Public/Private Institutions
- Students Ratio Private/Public : over 10% (rapid changes and dynamics)

# A: Balkan Region- PrHE: QA (Accreditation) data

Countries	Number of Private HEIs	Accreditation status
ALBANIA	<b>28</b>	<b>see later in B</b>
B.& HERCEG	<b>22</b>	Accreditation in progress
BULGARIA	<b>14</b>	The accreditation process has been completed for all HEIs (14 private included)
CROATIA	<b>28</b>	Accreditation in progress
GREECE	<b>9</b>	Private Institutions are not under the legal authority of national QA institutions (??)
KOSOVO	<b>32 (?)</b>	1 private
MACEDONIA	<b>16</b>	5 accredited
MONTEN.	<b>4</b>	Accreditation in progress
ROMANIA	<b>56</b>	29 Accredited , 5 Temporarily auth. to function and undergoing accred. 22 Temporarily authorised to function ,
SERBIA*	<b>33</b>	Accreditation in progress

# A: Balkan Region

## Some characteristics of PrHE

- Recent (last 10-15 years) and unknown (when started for most countries) phenomenon
- No regulation or prevention at the initial phase
- Rapid and spontaneous growth and change in a short time: number of institutions and programs
- Fast Extending in various fields of HE and rapid expanding in number of students enrolled: over 10%

# A: Balkan Region

## Some characteristics of PrHE

- Competition with the public sector for academic staf, students, public money (tuition fees)
- Increasing and extension rate of PrHE sector, more rapid than national capacity (HE policy and QA practices) to prevent, precede, adapt and develop proper and effective QA mechanisms (!!!)
- Discrepancy between establishment/licensing, *ex ante*, *post ante* (first and periodic) accreditation criteria, requirements and procedures (!!!)

# B – Albania: a case study

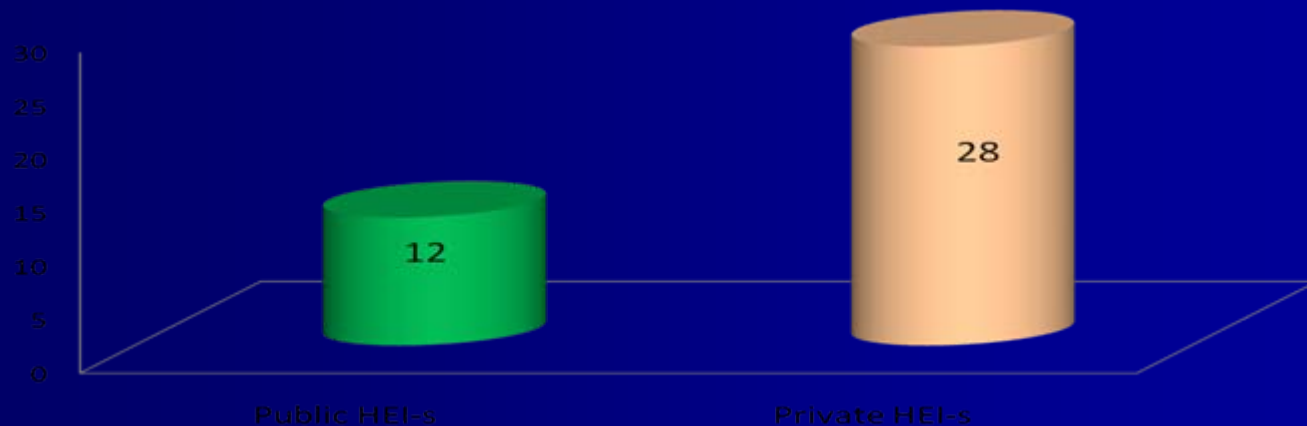
## Private Higher Education sector

- **Figures and Facts** (updated April 2009):
  - **Size**
  - **Growth in time**
  - **Study programmes**
  - **Student share**
  - **Ownership**
  - **Other..**
- **QA issues: establishment, control, accreditation processes and procedures**

# B – Albania- Higher Education sector

Public and Private HEI-s in ALBANIA

**Higher Education Institutions : 40 Total**



## Public HEI-s: 12

- 9 universities (3 in Tirana, 6 regional)
- 2 academies
- 1 military university

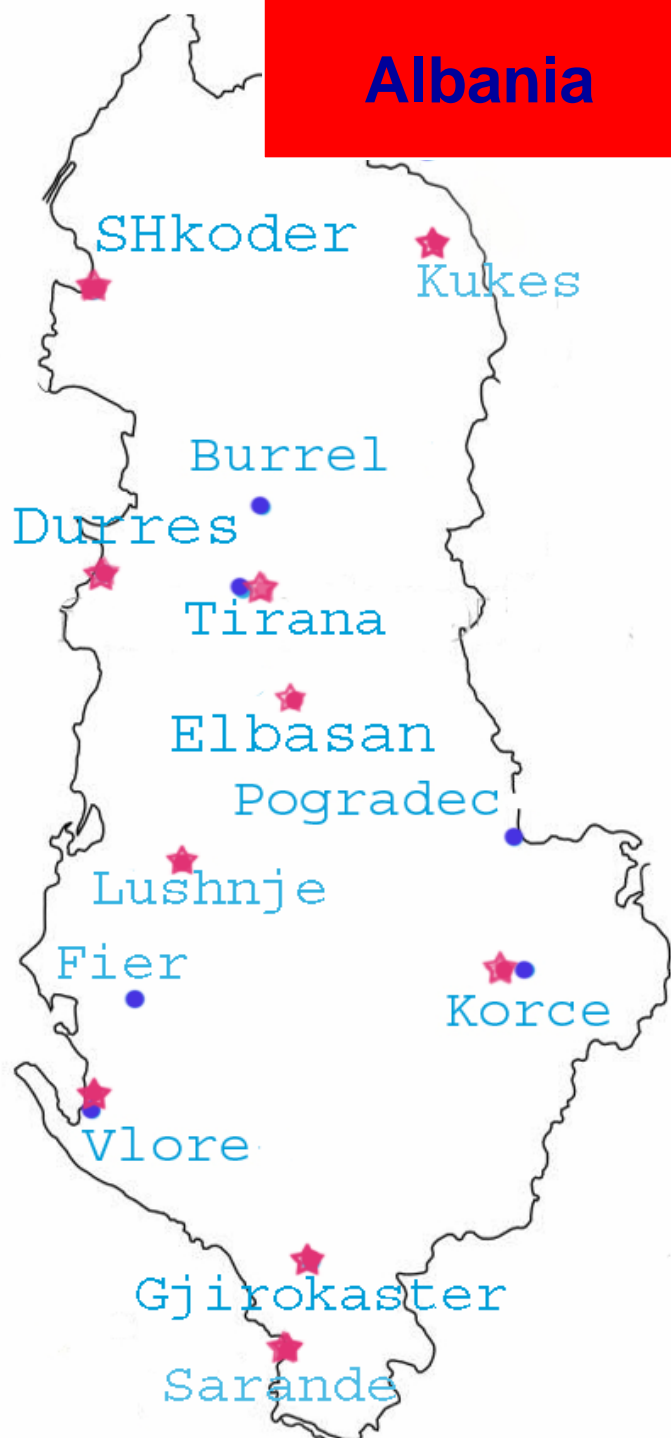
309 HE programmes

## Private HEI-s: 28

- 21 universities/higher schools (3 regional)
- 1 academy
- 3 faculties
- 3 colleges

187 HE programmes

# Albania



## Geographical distribution of public & private

### of higher education institutions in Albania

#### Public HEIs 12

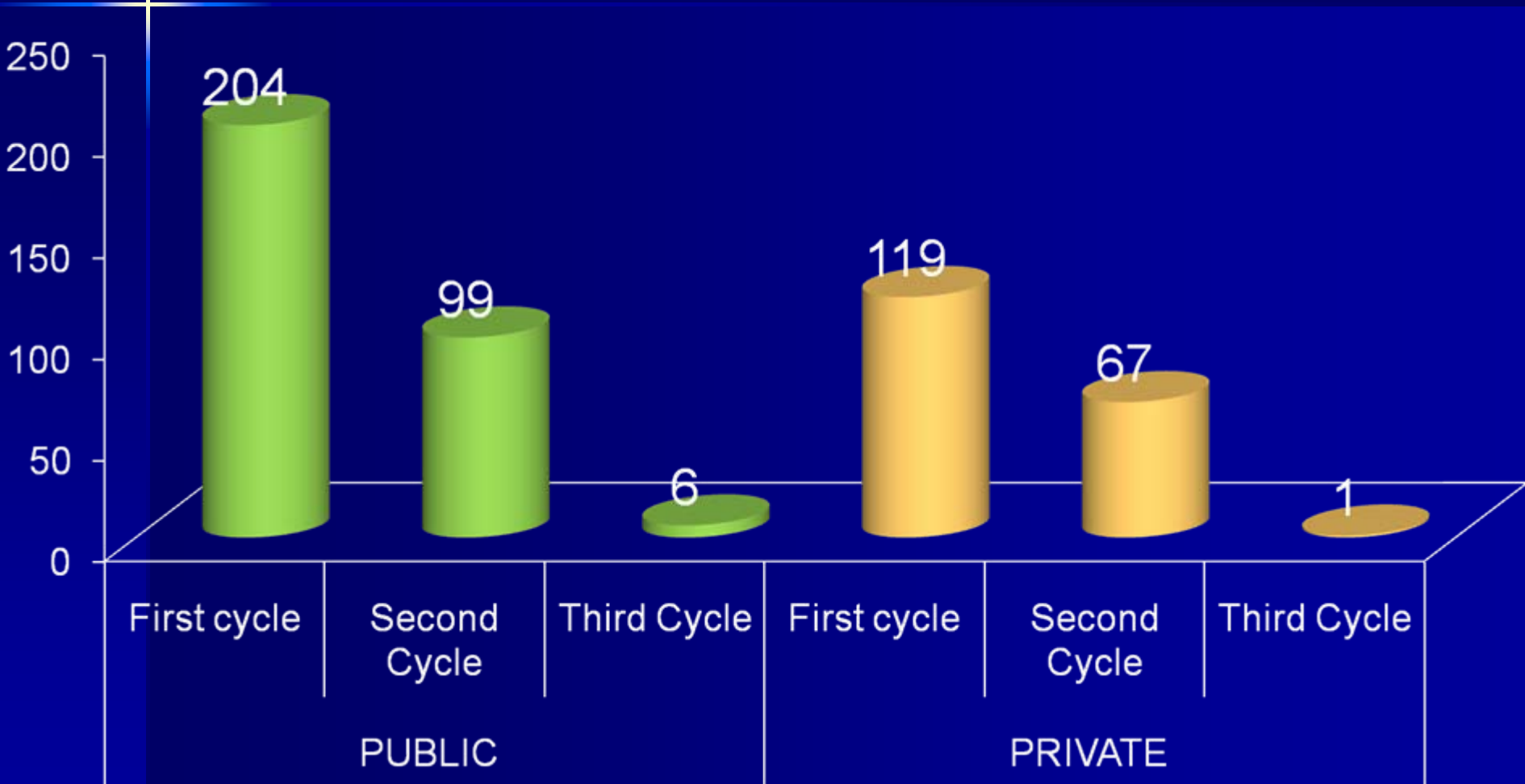
- 5 HEIs in Tirana, 6 regional HEI
- 2 academies
- 1 military HEI
- 2 regional faculties of Tirana Univ
- 309 programmes

#### Private HEIs 28

- 25 HEIs in Tirana, 3 regional HEI-s
- 21 higher schools ???, 3 faculties, 3 colleges, 1 academy
- 187 HE programmes

# B – Albania-

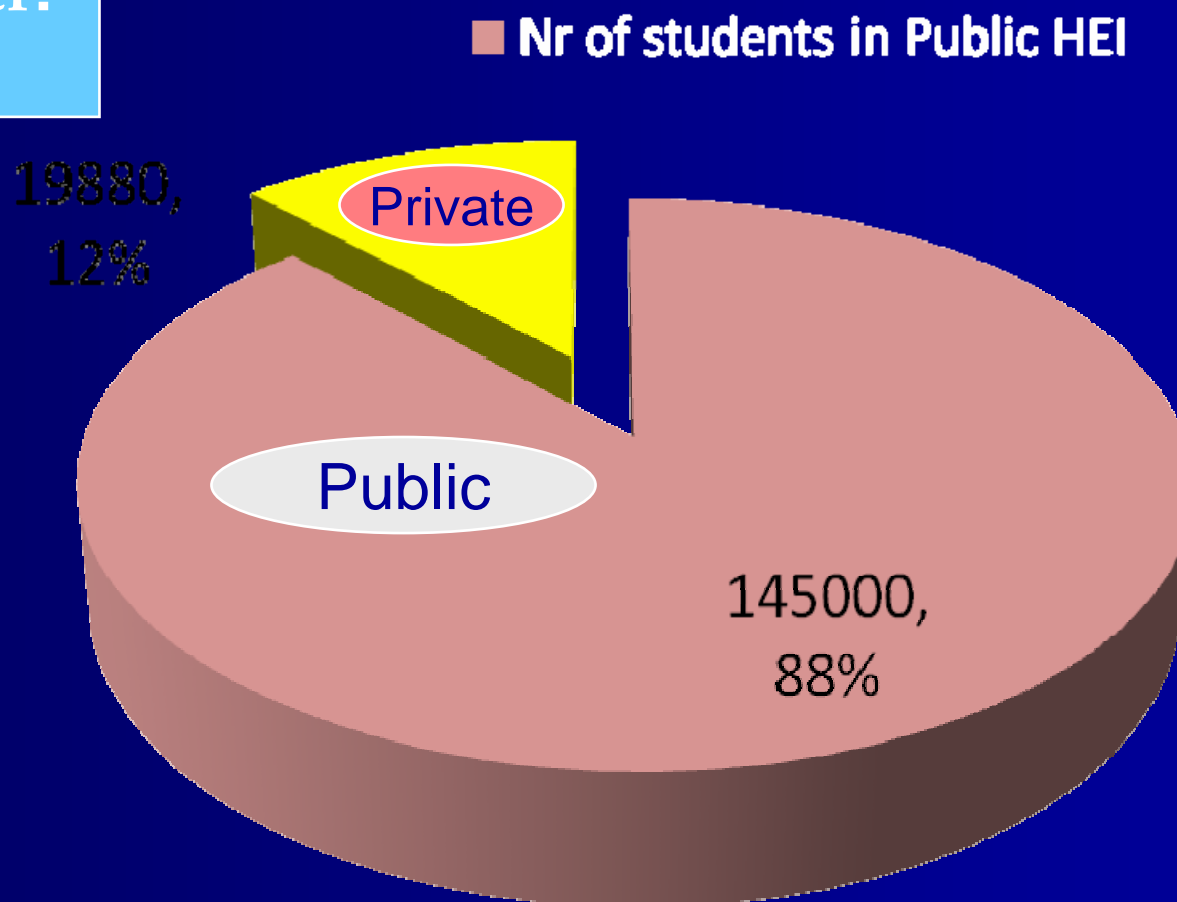
HE Study Programmes by cycles of study



# B – Albania-

## Student enrolled in Public and Private HE

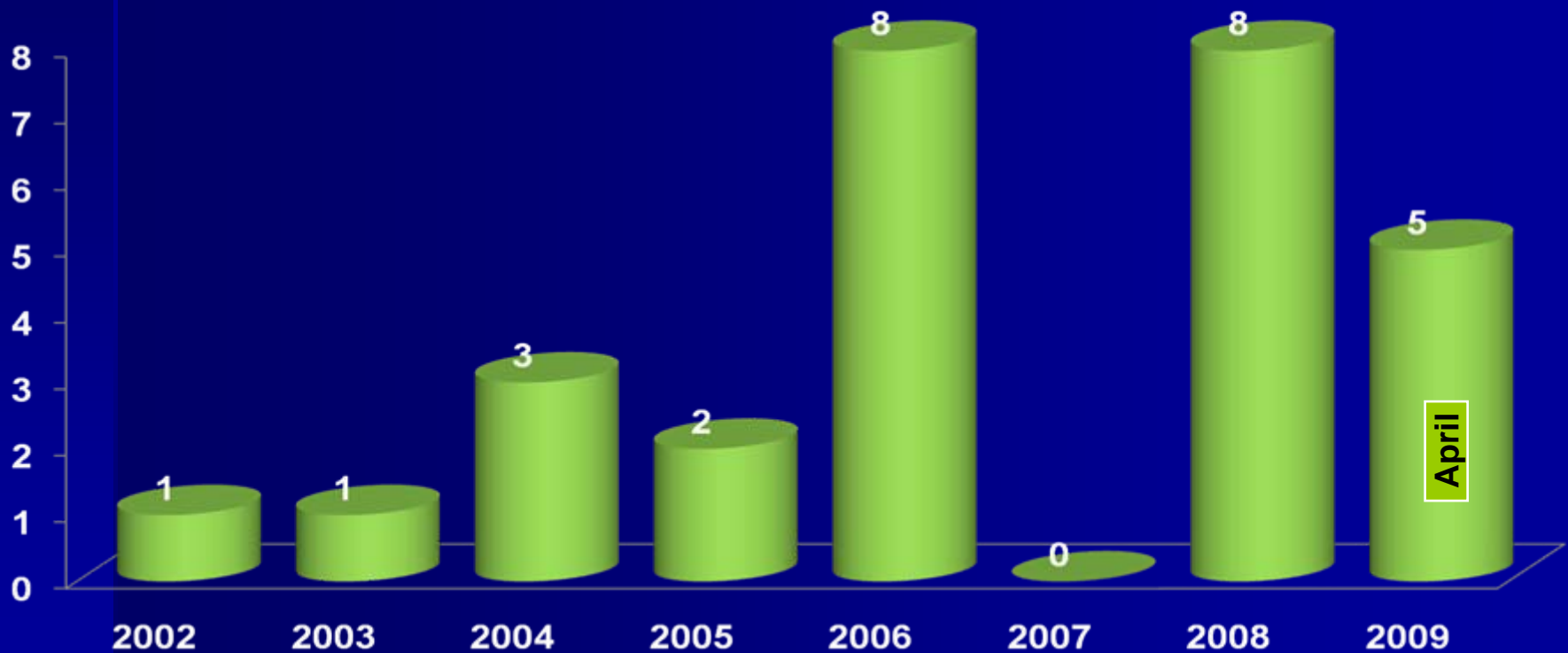
Total number:  
164,880



# B – Albania-

## PrHEIs by year of establishment/licensing

Number of PHEI-s 2002 - 2009. Total 28



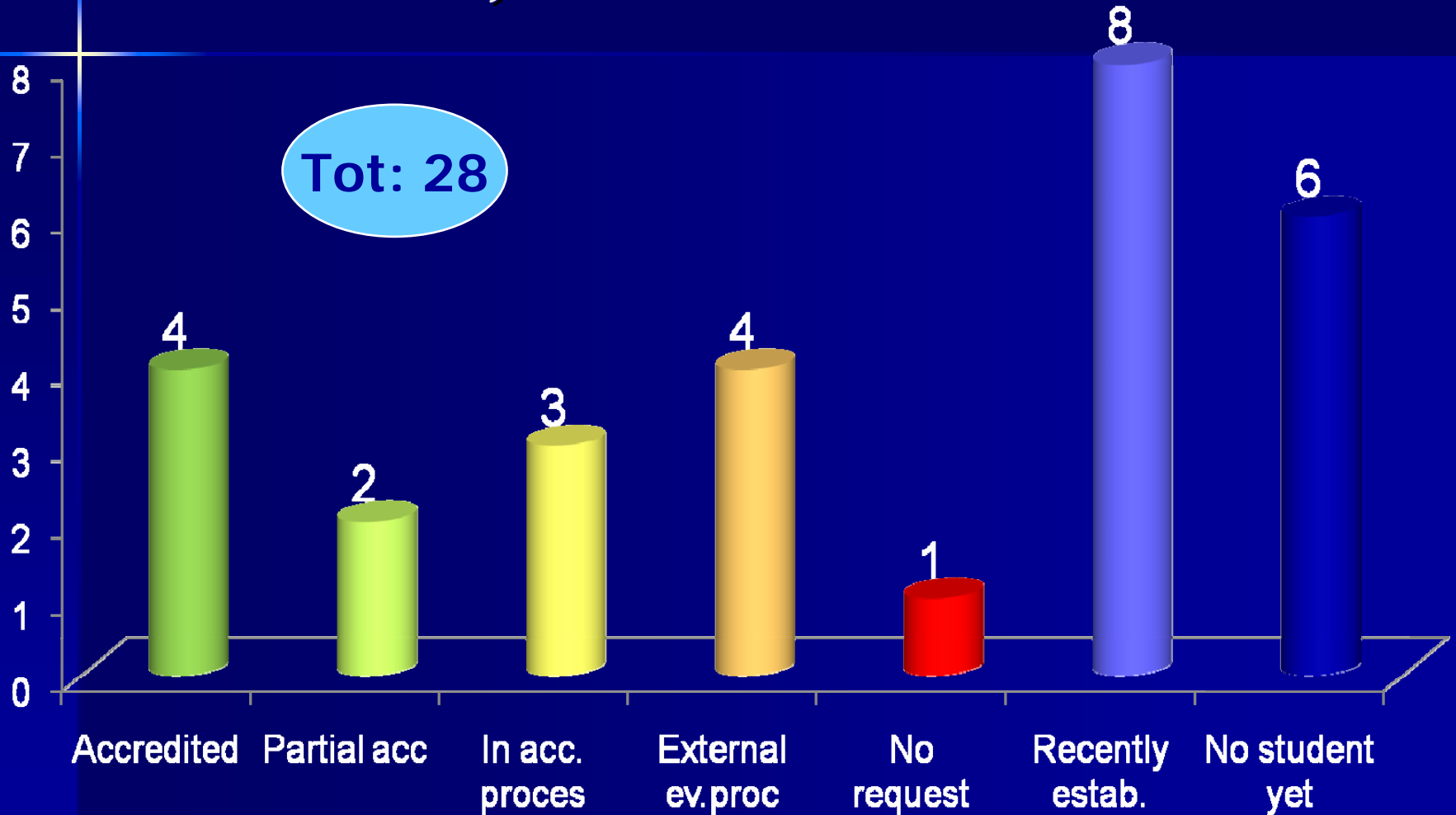
# **B – Albania-**

## Growth and change characteristics of PrHE sector

- Increasing number of PrHEIs
- Extension and expansion of HEIs in many study fields
- Increasing of diversity/variety of study programmes
- Attraction and increase of permanent academic staf
- Increasing of student number and share with Public HEI
- Vertical invasion (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle); recently

# B – Albania-

## Private HEIs ; accreditation situation

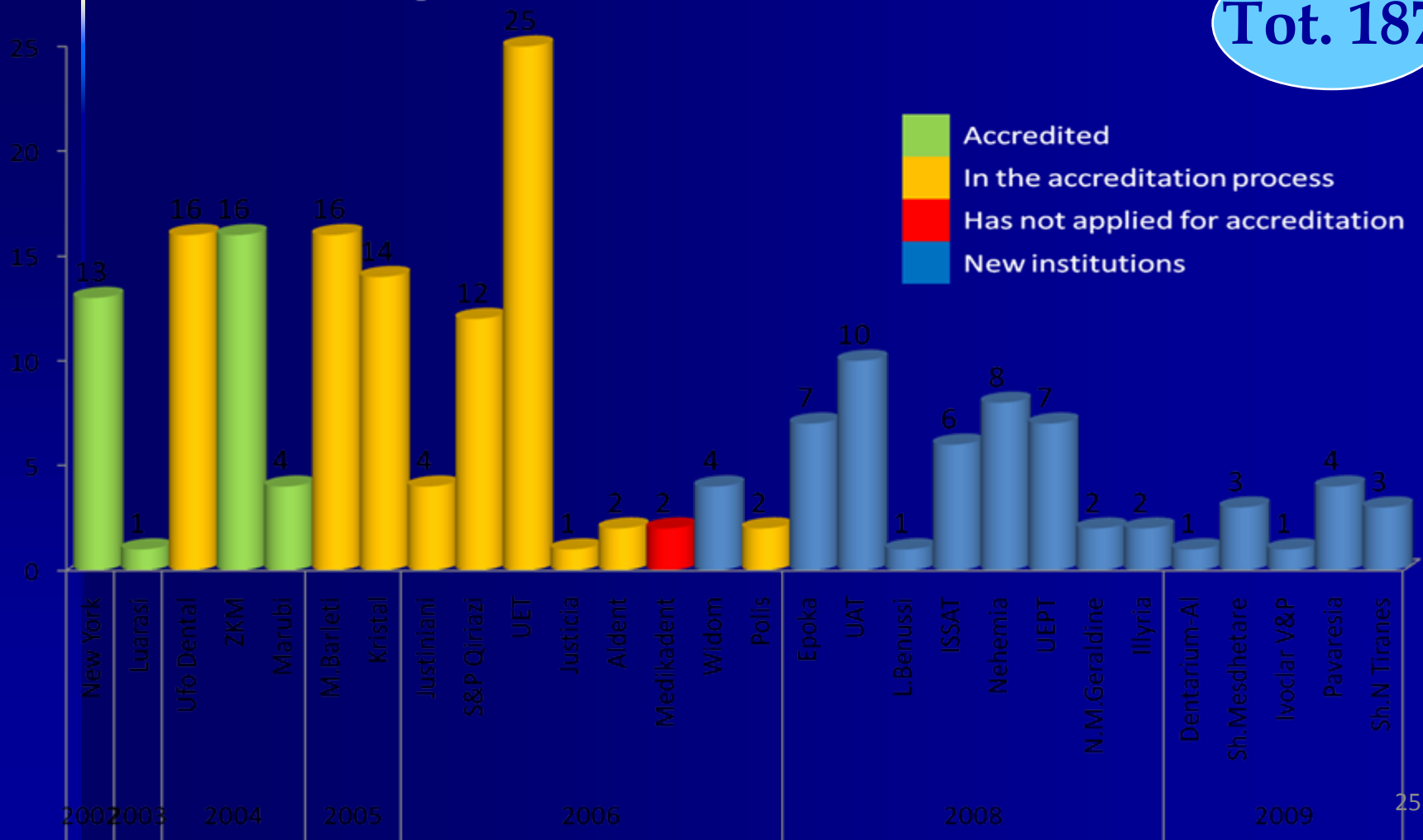


# B – Albania-

## PrHE: Distribution of Study Programmes by institution

Programms and accreditation status for each PHEI-s

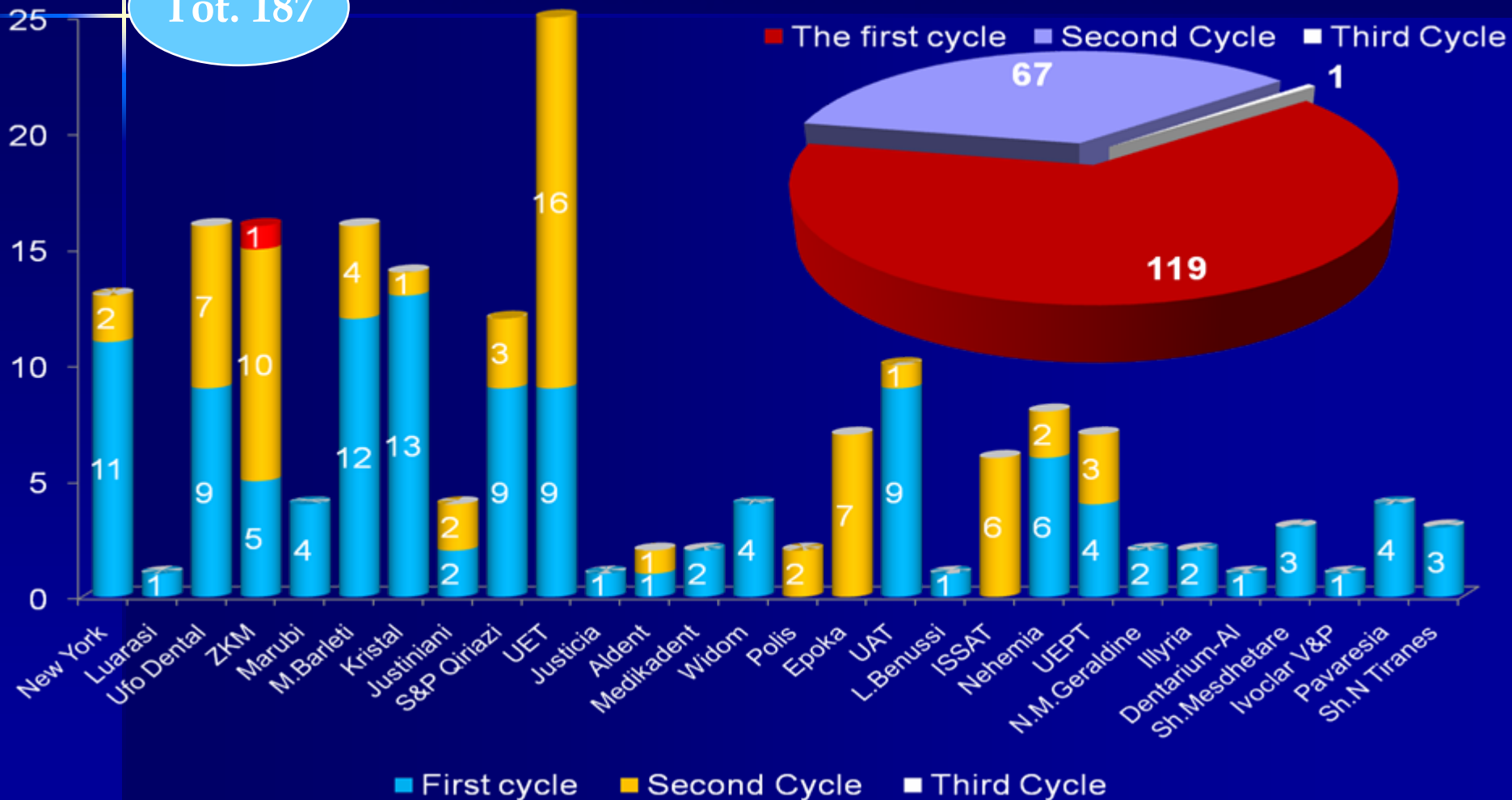
Tot. 187



# B – Albania-

## Study Programmes/by cycle/by institution

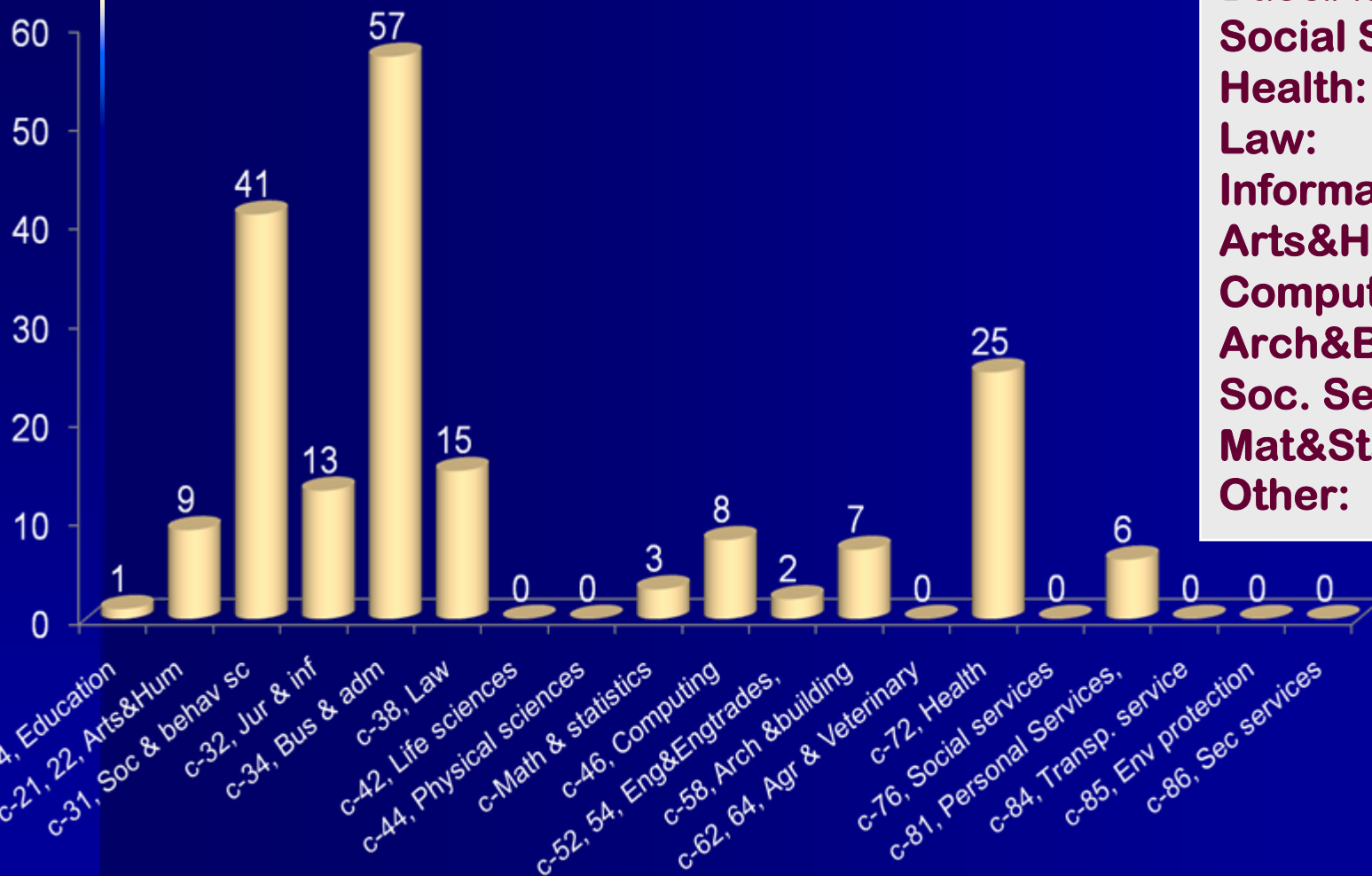
Tot. 187



# B – Albania-

## PrHE Programmes: Fields of Study (ISCED)

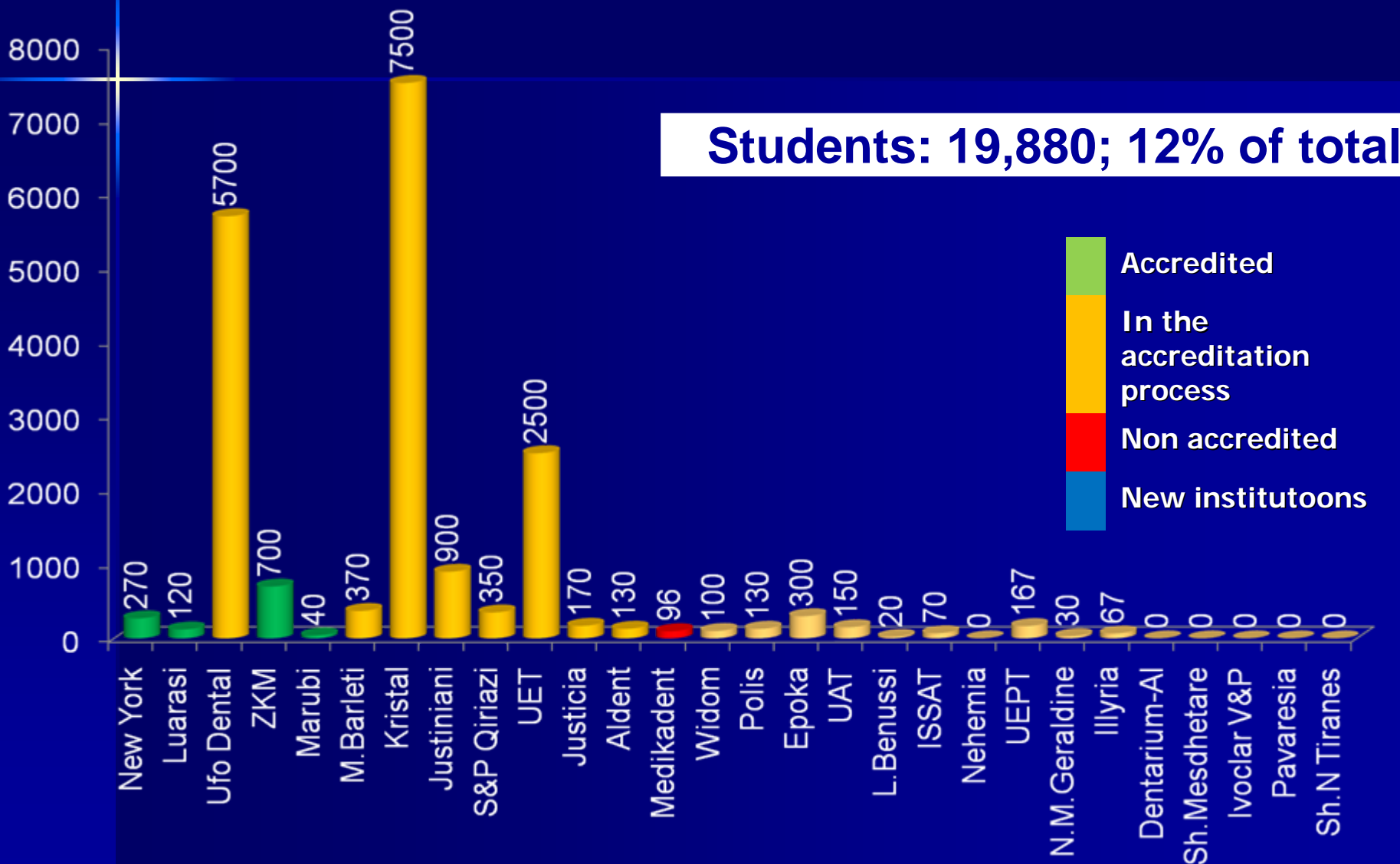
Number of programs for each ISCED field of education



<b>Bus&amp;Adm.:</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Social Sci.:</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Health:</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Law:</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Informatics:</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Arts&amp;Hum.:</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Computing:</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>Arch&amp;Build.:</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Soc. Serv.:</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
<b>Mat&amp;Stat.:</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Other:</b>	<b>1%</b>

# B – Albania-

## Private HE - Students



# B – Albania-

## PrHEIs: Ownership/no/for profit status

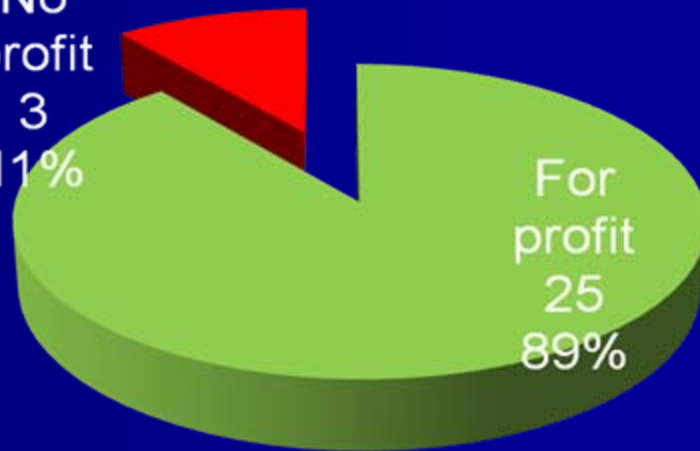
Ownership



No profit

3  
11%

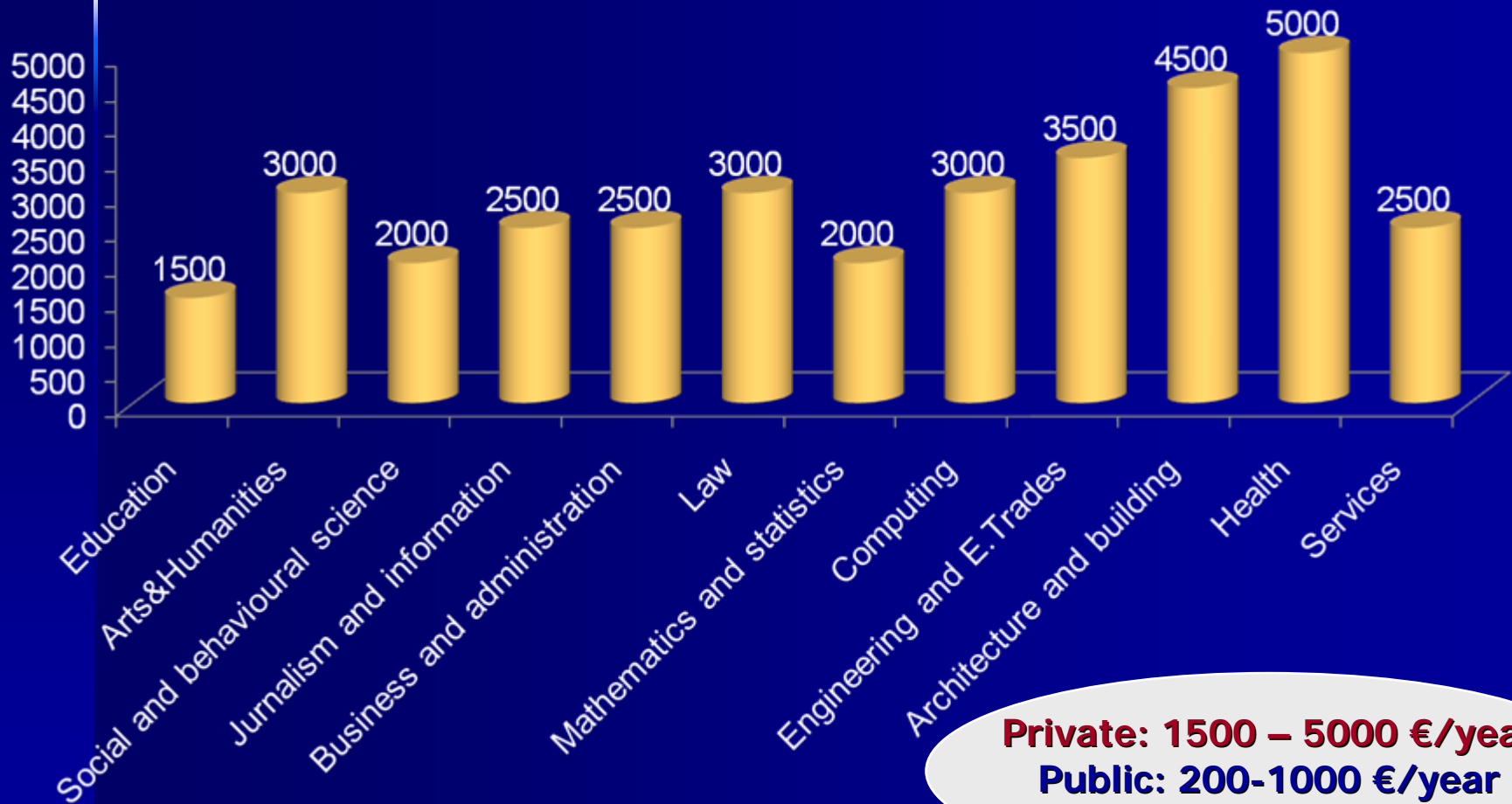
For profit  
25  
89%



# B – Albania-

## Private HE :Tuition Fees

Private - Tution/Fee for each academic field in €



**Private: 1500 – 5000 €/year**

**Public: 200-1000 €/year**

**Average salary: 400 €/month**

# **B – Albania-**

## **Private HE - Quality Assurance**

### **■ QA institutions:**

- PAAHE (APAAL): Public Accreditation Agency for Higher Education**
- Accreditation Council**
- Ministry of Education and Science**
- Government**

# B – Albania-

## PAAHE - Public Accreditation Agency for Higher Education

### External Quality Assurance

- External Evaluation of HE institutions and Programmes; *ex ante*, first and periodical
- Audit of Internal QA
- Criteria and requirements
- Analytical, comparative evaluations
- System wide analysis
- Follow up & monitoring between accreditations
- Support for Accreditation Council: secretariat

# B – Albania-

## Accreditation Council- AC

Based on and in line with External Evaluation results

- Recommendations to Ministry
  - New programmes and institutions (Public HEIs)
  - Accreditations of established Institutions and programmes (public and private)
- Consultancy to the Minister for QA issues, HE standards, etc.

## **B – Albania-**

### Ministry of Education and Science

- The Minister takes the final accreditation decision but..

#### **Based on and consistent with**

- the external evaluation results and outcomes
- Recommendations of AC

# B – Albania-

## Private HE: QA Practises and Procedure

External evaluation & Accreditation: same for Public and Private and consists of:

- Self-evaluation, peer review, follow up (if needed), accreditation decision, appeal (if any)
- On site visit
- Evaluation reports on a SWOT model base
- Predefined and priority informed criteria, requirements and procedure
- Transparency and publication of results

# B – Albania-

## QA Procedure: Licensing

Founding and establishment procedures and requirements have undergone changes (2002-2009)

- **Establishment of new PrHEI and/or Programs: licensing procedure:**
  - *Ex ante* programme evaluation (on paper; project evaluation); PAAHE
  - Ministry : overall assesment of the project
  - Government issues the license to start

# B – Albania-

## QA Procedure: Accreditation

**Post establishment QA processes are the same for Public and Private**

- **Post licensing QA:**

**evaluation-accreditation**

- **First**

- **Before the completion of studies (the shortest program)**
- **Agency (PAAHE or an ENQA agency), Accreditation Council, Ministry**

- **Periodical; every 6 years**

# C - Reflections

## Private Higher Education: What has changed Positively

- Change and reshape of the picture/scenario/panorama of the whole HE sector in the country
- Posing real competition between HE providers in general (challenge for the public HE)
- PrHEIs offer better study conditions and facilities
- PrHE offer more market oriented/driven programmes and react more rapidly to market needs and feed-back
- More student centered, open, rapid and flexible to changes and to students and feed-back
- More diversity and choice for the students, adult learners
- Opening and exposing of HE to the public; more transparency and information
- Effects and influences the public perception and mentality, driving towards pragmatic ground market oriented programmes (effecting positively the public institutions as well)

# C - Reflections

## Problems & Difficulties

- **Too many applications and institutions in a too short time**
- **Discrepancy and change of establishment /licensing requirements and standards with time**
- **Accreditation criteria and procedure not fully consistent with licensing requirements (post *vs* ex ante)**
- **Most PrHEIs set different student selection criteria (some do not have at all) compared to Public sector**
- **Business or Academic: unclear and dubious balance between the business and academic component in institutional governance**

# C - Reflections

## Problems & Difficulties

- **No possibility to assess the learning outcomes of the graduates, the employment rate and market feed-back**
- **Social effect/impact: most of for profit, non accredited institutions, enroll the major number of students (**more 50 %; 2 of them around 2/3**)**
- **Increasing and extending rate of HEIs and programs (**turbo style**), faster than the following rate of QA procedures and processes (**normal style**)**
- **Public pressure: daily updated, live information and transparency needed; public want to know which is better: public or private (questionnaire PAAHE)**
- **Consumer protection role of QA bodies is actually needed as much as classic/traditional QA processes**

# D –Questions for us

## What's happening?

- Do we know our PrHE system?
- Have we ever analysed the system as a whole (or we work locally and emergency only)?
- Do we have the system under control?
- If we do not want to control or because we can't, can we influence it?
- Does PrHE sector meets the same standards and do they offer education at least with same quality as Public HEIs (supposing it offers good quality education)??
- Do we have specific and effective emergency and long term QA mechanisms and practices to rapidly intervene?
- Can the system be improved or corrected?

If yes.....

**What do we want and what are we able to do ?**

# D – Questions for us

## What we should and can do?

- Will we take the control or leave it to the open, free, uncontrolled market competition (with unexpected consequences in terms of quality of graduates)?
- Should we establish more rigid gatekeeping than postlicensing QA requirements and practices to avoid the socio-economic consequences?
- May the QA bodies elaborate and implement effective (non bureaucratic and paper producing only) measures and practices to ensure acceptable and the same quality as Public?
- Will the political and QA bodies for HE (are they willing also) to take over the responsibility or play the usual “ping pong game”?

If yes HOW we can change the situation

# D – Questions for us

## How?

It depends on what we want to do and what we are able to do but there are some measures which can be possible to be taken:

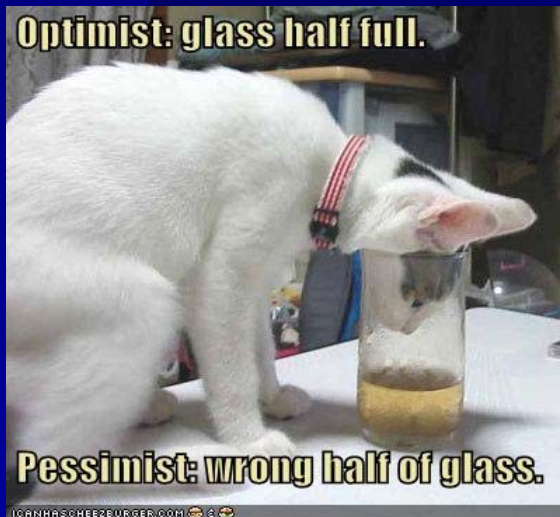
- Fill the legislation gaps not overrule
- Set same requirements, procedures and standards for Public and Private; same game rules for better quality and fair competition  
Stimulate providers who operate in market-driven study fields (but not only), complementary to and/or not filled by the public sector
- Establish pragmatic and time effective QA practises; to keep the pace
- Foreign expertise in all processes
- All QA bodies should coordinate actions
- Full Transparency, public information and warning on possible threats...

# E: What comes next...

It depends on us; no many choices



Optimist: glass half full.



Pessimist: wrong half of glass.

## Choice 1

Take it optimistically

We really want to see that half is full and the problem is there;

The most blind is who doesn't want to see?

If we want to face it..

Saying “We can't touch the problem”  
is only an excuse

# THANK YOU



Agjencia **Publike** e Akreditimit të Arsimit të Lartë

**Public** Accreditation Agency for Higher Education

Address:

Bul. "Zhan d'Ark", Pallatet e Lanes, Nr.2, Shk.2, Ap.17  
Tirana, Albania

Tel.&Fax:: + 355 42 257 954/226 6302

Email: [aaal@albamail.com](mailto:aaal@albamail.com)

[dhuratabozo@gmail.com](mailto:dhuratabozo@gmail.com)

[www.aaal.edu.al](http://www.aaal.edu.al)