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BASHKIA  
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**PERFORM**

Performing and Responsive Social Sciences

National Coordination  
Unit in Albania

## Media release

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### **Tirana municipality starts cooperation with Swiss social science research programme**

**Through an agreement signed today the Municipality of Tirana will work together with Swiss project PERFORM to conduct research in several important fields**

Mayor of Tirana Erion Veliaj signed today an agreement that will make possible to conduct social science research and provide evidence and expertise for selected topics which require new policies and decisions. On behalf of the Swiss delegation the agreement was signed by Martin Dietz, Project Manager for PERFORM – a project that boosts social science research in Albania.

“Until now we are used to play it ‘by ear’, and this is OK when it comes to beginnings and to dealing with urgent issues. But from now on we must work based on ‘written score’, in order to make good decisions, based on research and data”, said Mayor of Tirana Veliaj.

“Good decisions on the part of government are almost always based on evidence. Albania has no time to waste when it comes to utilizing research for good political decision-making. This will be a great example of how social science can help authorities improve their decision-making”, said Swiss Ambassador Christoph Graf.

“This programme will consist in practical work on tangible policy projects by young social scientists, with the municipality. The research work will benefit course participants but also the municipality, providing experience in bringing in and using research evidence in policy making. The selected policy research projects are real cases. The project will provide coaching for the benefits of young researchers and for ensuring high quality outputs, and support of staff of the municipality that they can use the evidence in the policy cycle. The collaboration will provide at least part of a foundation for establishing this practice within the municipality and in future also other municipalities”, said Martin Dietz, Project Manager at PERFORM.

Based on this agreement, the Municipality has identified a number of topics/fields for which professional research is needed and will relate this to PERFORM. The project will delegate the research work for the selected topics to young academics and researchers. Researchers will undergo training in order to orient their work towards recommendations for policies and decisions. At the final stage of the cooperation, the Municipality will have a solid body of research and recommendations to develop its policies and decision-making.

This new intervention aims at improving policy-making by making available research capacities with an emphasis on social sciences, bridging the research community with decision makers. Through the proposals developed by young researchers the Municipality will be able to decide future measures and implement activities to address social issues.

PERFORM will engage consultancy group International Centre for Policy Advocacy (ICPA) and the Academy of Political Studies (APS) – another Swiss-supported institution - to build the capacities of young researchers who will work on the selected topics.

The goal of PERFORM is to promote scientific research and a better connection between research and policy-making. The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC and implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

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