



Improving **RE**search capacities
of **A**lbanian higher education institutions
in conservation and restoration of **C**ultural **H**eritage

WP1 | CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN ALBANIA: NEED ANALYSIS AND DEFINITION OF RESEARCH PRIORITIES

***HEIs perspective report: an analysis of the academic context
about cultural heritage research and education***



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Introduction

The report is aimed at illustrating, analysing and discussing the data obtained from the questionnaire functional to project REACH in-depth need analysis, core activity for WP1 (Outcome 1.1).

Though a preliminary need analysis had already been carried out by the consortium during a preparatory field visit to Albanian HEIs partners by *Alma Mater Studiorum* University of Bologna and University of Urbino Carlo Bo staff members and the Center for Innovation of Fondazione Flaminia representatives, there was the need to go further into details for proper, tailored implementation of project activities.

Although the identified basic necessities worked as starting point for developing the project idea, further deepening and specification of needs were mandatory to achieve a more precise evaluation of the critical aspects concerning, on the one hand, the assessment of research priorities and educational needs related to cultural heritage conservation at Albanian HEIs and, on the other hand, the subsequent structural improvement of the research system itself.

Within WP1, assessment of research and educational needs and priorities in cultural heritage conservation (Action 1.1) has been based upon a comprehensive evaluation of research facilities, activities and training courses available at and provided by the Albanian Universities and Institutions involved in the field.

Parallel to this survey, an overview on the operators currently involved in conservation and restoration interventions on Cultural Heritage in Albania and their requested skills has been conducted, alongside a comparative study between the existing training offer in Albania and the adopted criteria for the assignment of restoration works, to verify its adequacy to the actual needs for the quality of the interventions on cultural heritage (Action 1.2)¹.

To implement Action 1.1, a questionnaire has been designed and sent to teaching staff, researchers and technical staff from Albanian HEIs. Conceived by the University of Bologna (WP1 co-leader) with the advice of the University of Arts (WP1 leader), the questionnaire had preliminarily been presented to the project consortium on the occasion of REACH kick-off meeting (5th and 7th May 2020), and, then, discussed and approved during the first meeting of the project Steering Committee (30th May 2020).

¹ As indicated in the project proposal, information collected by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of Action 1.2 will be provided in the Country perspective Report on Cultural Heritage conservation in Albania (Outcome 1.2).



Introduction

In its final version, the questionnaire was made up of the following sections:

-  **Part 1 | GENERAL INFORMATION** aimed at collecting basic information regarding the home institution of the interviewees, their average age, educational qualification and position.
-  **Part 2 | SKILLS AND COMPETENCES** functional to outline, according to respondents' expertise, a detailed scenario on current tailored skills, know-how and competences in applied research to cultural heritage conservation available at Albanian HEIs.
-  **Part 3 | FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT** intended to acquire information on available facilities and equipment at respondents' Home Institution, this part will set the basis for mapping Laboratory spaces and providing, therefore, a list of the equipment to be purchased.
-  **Part 4 | IMPACT, DISSEMINATION, COLLABORATIONS** for detailed evaluation of the currently adopted approaches and tools for sharing and disseminating applied research and its results, with a focus on collaboration activities.
-  **Part 5 | EXPECTATIONS FROM THE PROJECT** aimed to evaluate which of the expected results of REACH project could represent, based on respondents' expectations, tangible proof of a sound increase in research capacities in the field of applied research to cultural heritage.

To adequately present the collected data and the considerations stemmed from the related analysis, the first part of the report will consider and examine the responses according to the Albanian Institution to which the interviewees belonged. Then, in the second part, a comparison between the answers provided by the different partners will be developed, in order to provide a complete and exhaustive picture that can be functional to the implementation of the following project activities and tasks. The discussion of the data also takes into proper consideration all the comments made during the first Intermediate Project Meeting, held in Shkoder (and via Microsoft TEAMS for partners unable to travel) on 21st October 2020.

Part ONE

data by partner

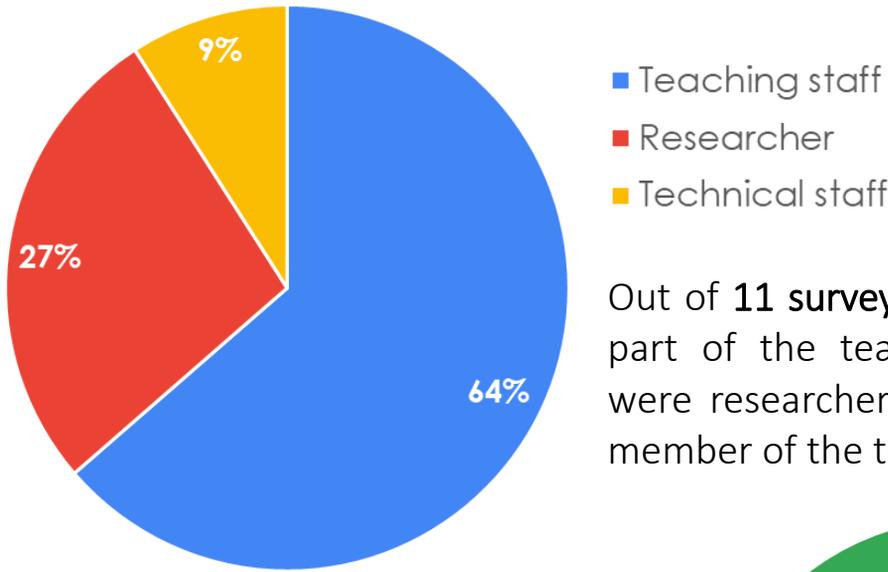




Università I Arteve

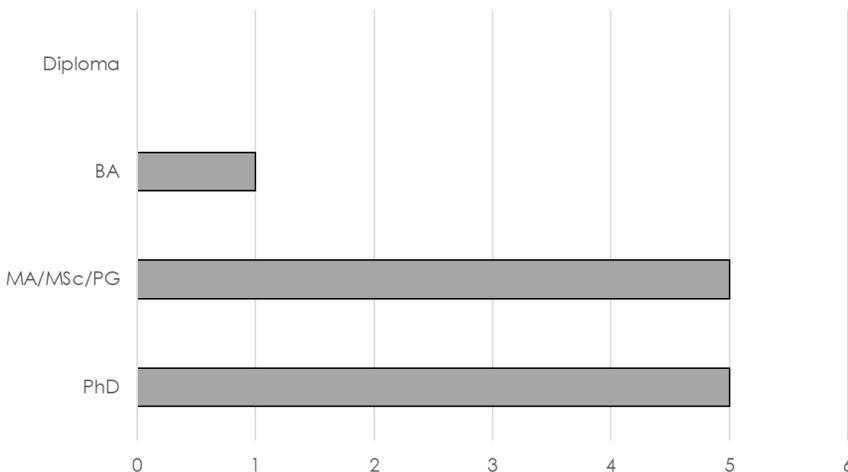
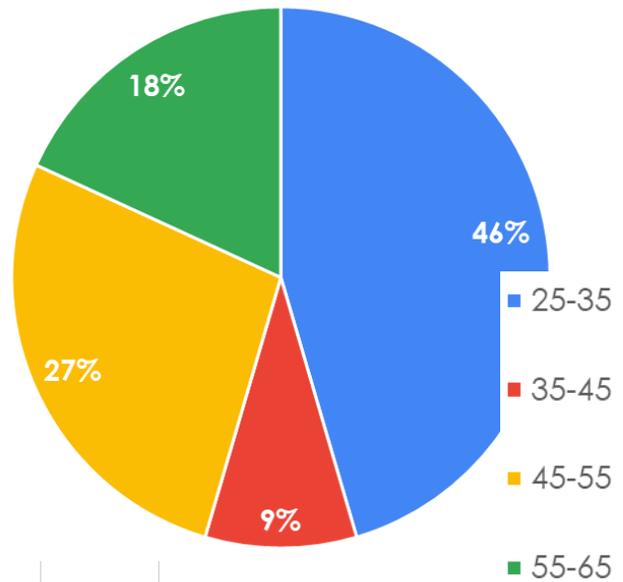
Partner # 1

General information



Out of **11 survey respondents**, 7 were part of the teaching staff (64%), 3 were researchers (27%) and 1 was a member of the technical staff (9%).

The **age groups** from which the majority of the responses was **25-25** (46%), followed by 45-55 (27%), years, followed by 55-65 (18%) and 35-45 (9%).



Half of the survey respondents have either a PhD or a post-graduate title as highest qualification. Only one has a Bachelor Degree.

Skills and competences



Question 1

Please choose the sentence that, in your opinion, better defines the purpose of research in the field of cultural heritage conservation (you can select a maximum of two options):

*deepening the **theoretical knowledge** of the object/monument/ site, to fully understand the **socio-cultural value** and provide the community with comprehensive content*

 5

*developing **new technologies** and **methods of intervention** on an object/monument/ site to foster their conservation and use by the community*

 5

*investigating, by means of scientific analyses, **constituting materials** and **technological features** of an object/monument/site, to provide conservators and restorers with suitable data that can aid in defining the **best methodologies** and **approaches***

 4

*verifying and monitoring the **structural/conservative conditions** of objects/monuments/sites in order to test and evaluate new products/devices/methodologies for conservation*

 4

Data analysis

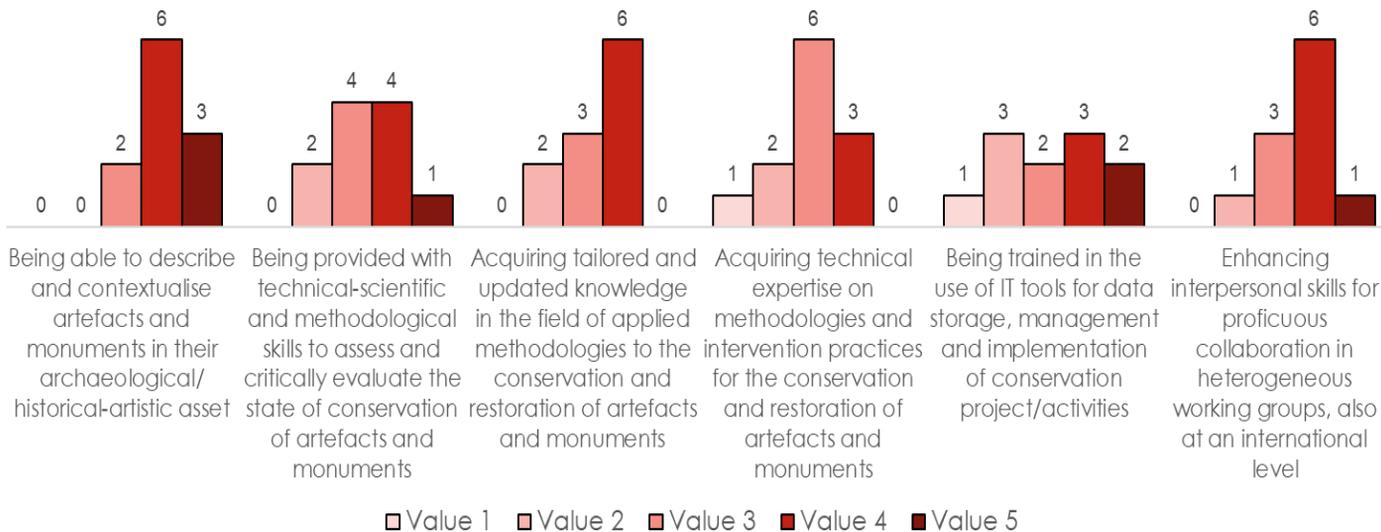
Provided answers highlight that, in applied research to cultural heritage, most respondents give high relevance to both theoretical studies aimed at understanding its socio-cultural value and to the development of new technologies and methods of intervention for conservative purposes. Scientific analyses of materials, parallel to verifying and monitoring the conservative status of monuments and artefacts are also considered relevant, but to a slightly lower extent.

Skills and competences



Question 2

According to your expertise, please assign a value, from 1 to 5, to the relevance of the following skills in the field of applied research to cultural heritage, with specific reference to conservation and restoration:



Data analysis

Being able to describe and contextualise artefacts and monuments in their archaeological/historical-artistic asset has been chosen as the most important expected outcome (value 5). *Acquiring tailored and updated knowledge in the field of applied methodologies to the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments*; *enhancing interpersonal skills for collaboration in heterogeneous working groups* have been selected as relevant outcomes (value 4) by the majority of respondents, followed by *acquiring technical expertise on methodologies and intervention practices for the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments* (valued 3).

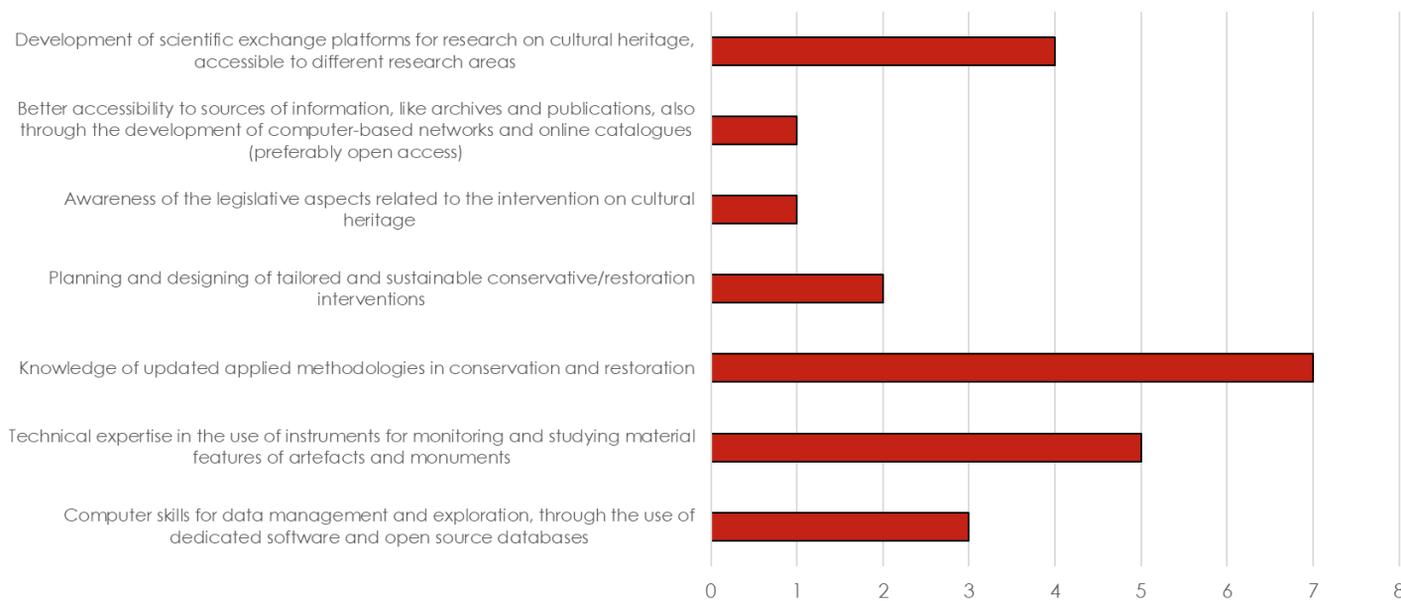
Being trained in the use of IT tools for data storage, management and implementation of conservation project/activities is considered of a scarce relevance (valued 2).

Skills and competences



Question 3

Considering your specific field of interest, please indicate which of the following skills should be improved in the Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in the field of cultural heritage study and conservation (you can select a maximum of three options):



Data analysis

Data show that acquiring *knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration* is considered a priority for respondents from UAT.

Improving *technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments* has also been identified as a field of particular interest, followed by the *development of scientific exchange platforms for research on cultural heritage*.

Enhancement of *computer skills for data management and exploration, through the use of dedicated software and open source databases*, together with *planning and designing of tailored and sustainable conservative/restoration interventions* are given less weight.

Last, fostering *awareness of the legislative aspects related to the intervention on cultural heritage* and *better accessibility to sources of information, like archives and publications, also through the development of computer-based networks and online catalogues* do not stand as priorities.

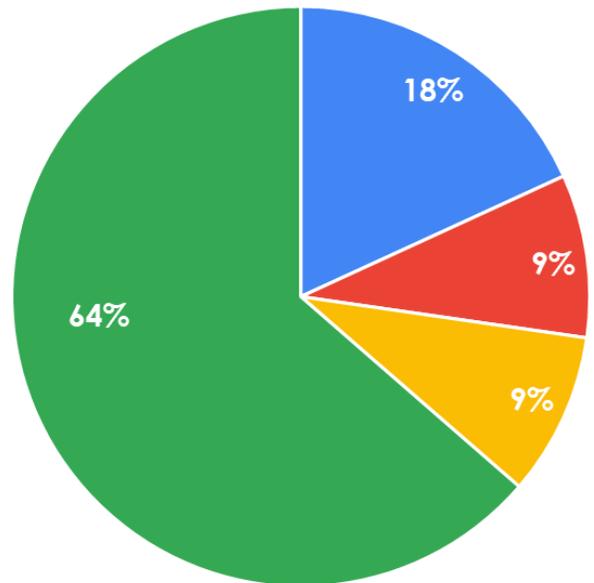
Facilities and equipment



Question 1

In the frame of research activities you have been involved in the past 5 years, how many times have you used technical-scientific instruments?

- 1-2 times
- 3-6 times
- more than 6 times
- I haven't used any



Question 2

Which instrument(s) have you used?

The questionnaire did not allow for the collection of useful information for graphical data processing.

This is probably due to the fact that, as can be seen from the pie chart above, most of the interviewees have not used any equipment in the last 5 years.

Only two respondents specified that they used computer-based software as a type of instrumentation

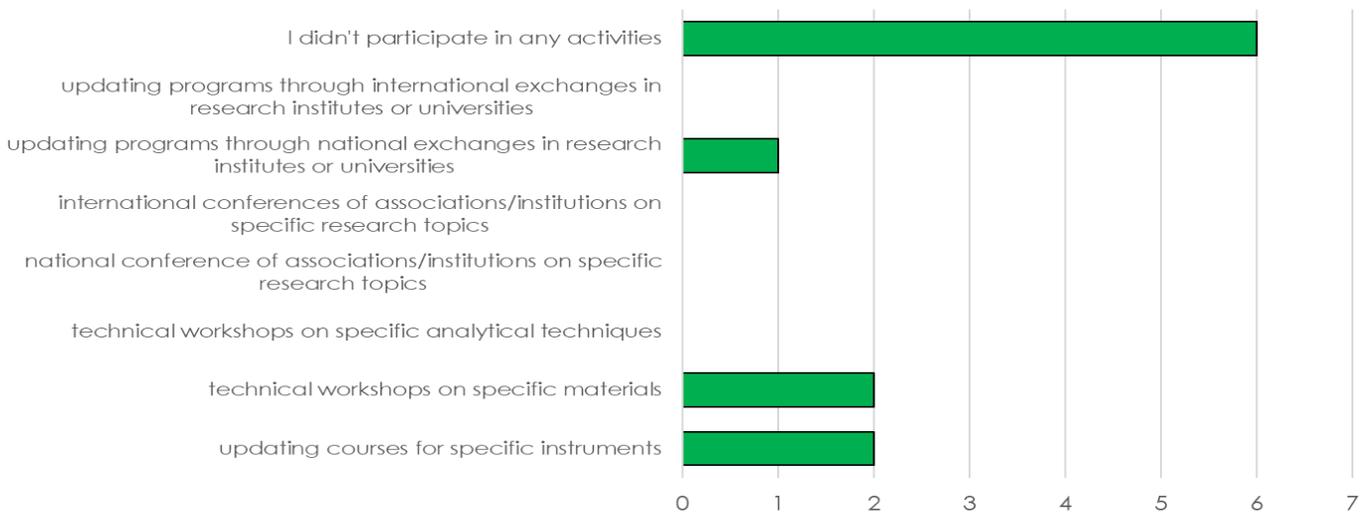


Facilities and equipment



Question 3

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities you have participated in the past 5 year:



Question 4

Which of the activities listed above would you like to be available for updating your knowledge and skills?



Data analysis

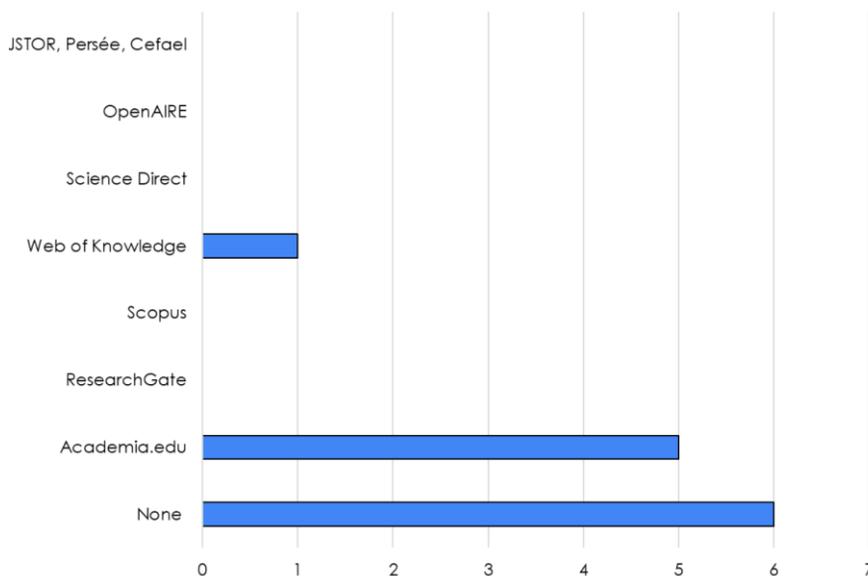
Most of the technical staff from UAS has not participated in updating activities in the past 5 years. The need to be involved in these activities clearly emerges from the above answers, with specific attention to the request for technical workshops on analytical techniques.

Impact, dissemination and collaboration



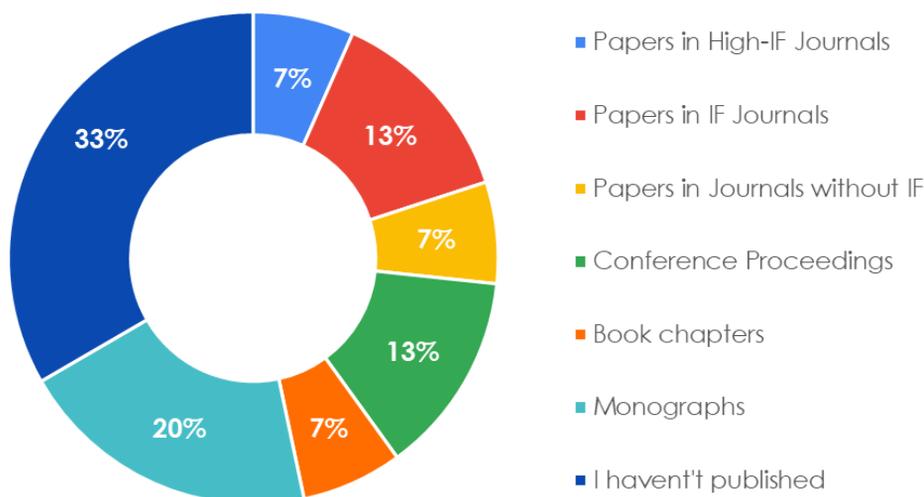
Question 1

Which repositories for academic studies do you know and use (you can select more than one)?



Question 2

Which types of contributions have you published in the past 5 years (you can select more than one)?

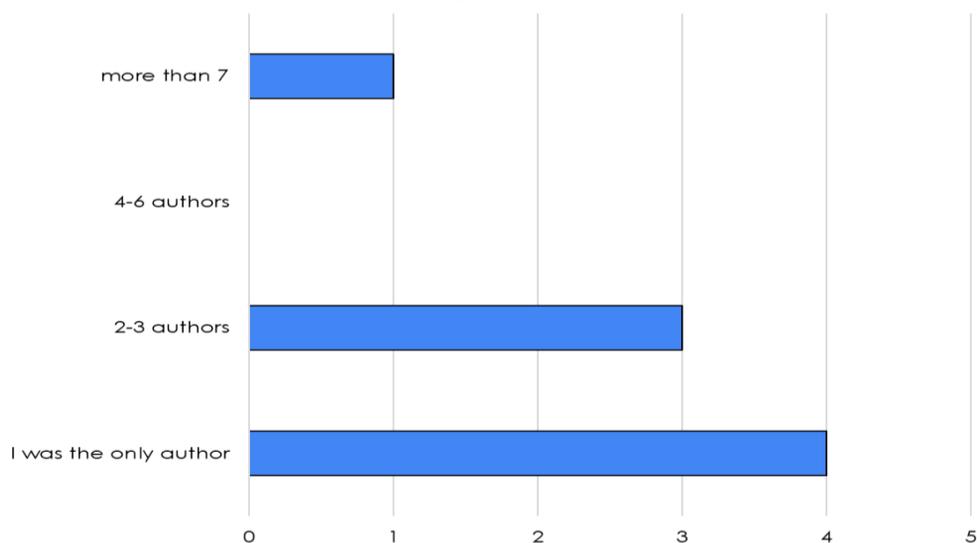


Impact, dissemination and collaboration



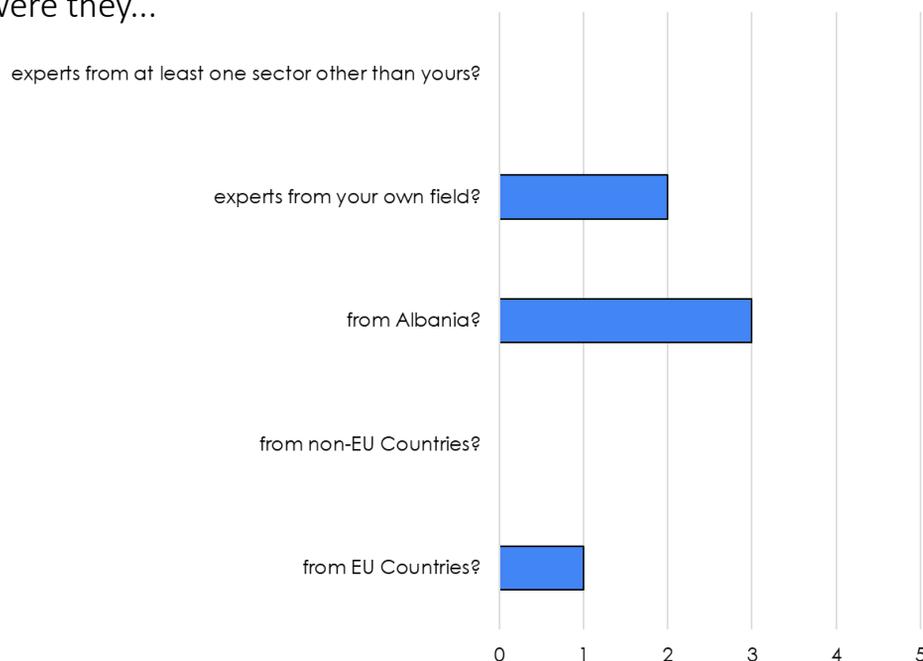
Question 3

If you have published at least 1 contribution in the past 5 years, how many co-authors there were on average?



Question 4

If you have published contributions with multiple authors in the past 5 years, were they...



Impact, dissemination and collaboration



Data analysis

Most of the UART respondents do not know or use repositories / platforms of studies and academic publications. Among those currently used internationally, Academia.edu is the only one used by the interviewees.

33% of the interviewees has not published contributions in the last 5 years; 20% of them has published monographs, followed by conference proceedings (13%) and paper in IF journals. Book chapters and articles in journals either without IF or with high-IF account for 7%.

Most of the respondents declare that they have published as only authors, a minor number with 2-3 co-authors.

Only 1 respondent has published with international co-authors, while the majority had co-authors of the same nationality and belonging to the same field of expertise.

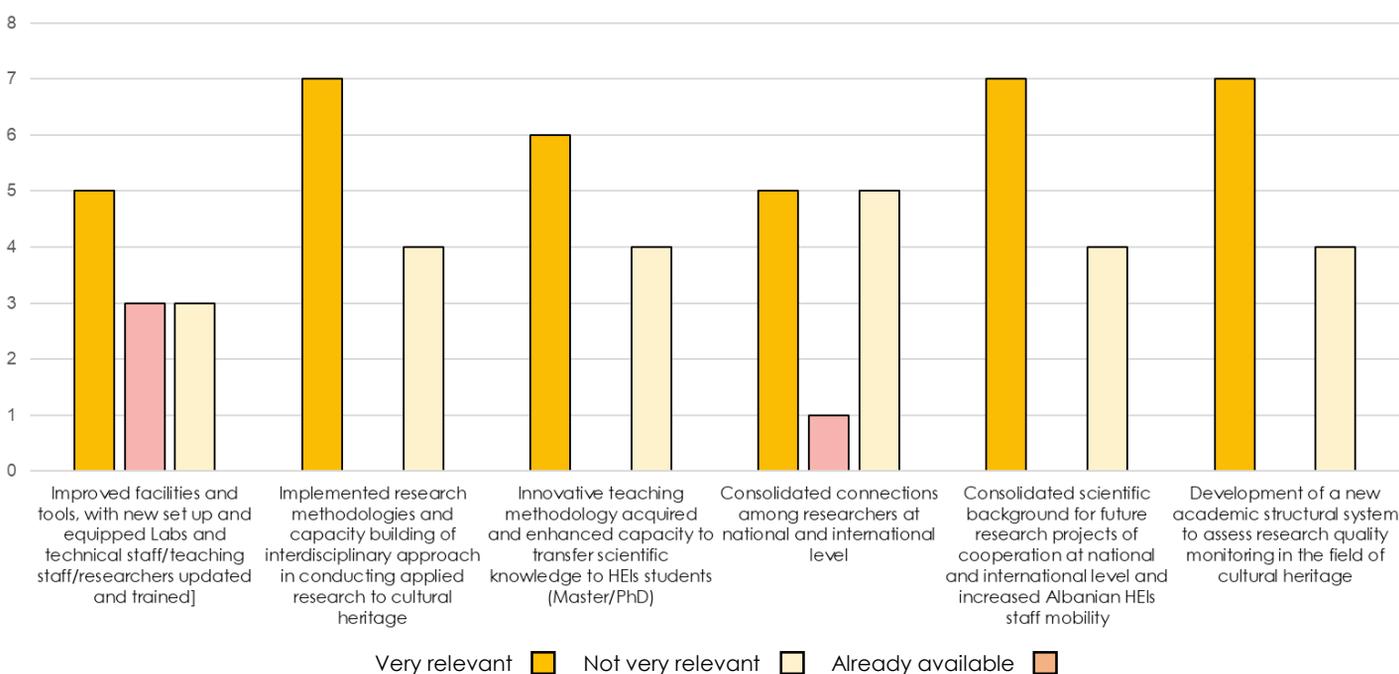


Expectations from the project



Questions 1-2

What are the outcomes of REACH project you consider relevant / already available / not very relevant for your Institution? And which is the most relevant in your opinion?



Data analysis

The majority of respondents from UAT considered as very relevant the following expected outcomes from REACH project: *implemented research methodologies and capacity building of interdisciplinary approach in conducting applied research to cultural heritage; consolidated scientific background for future research projects of cooperation at national and international level and increased Albanian HEIs staff mobility; development of a new academic structural system to assess research quality monitoring in the field of cultural heritage.*

Out of 12 respondents to the survey, 5 indicated that *consolidating connections among researchers at national and international level* is not a relevant outcome, while 3 stated that *improved facilities and tools, with new set up and equipped Labs and technical staff/teaching staff/researchers updated and trained* are already available.

Expectations from the project



Question 3

Why do you think it is important that your Institution is involved in this project? What is the advantage for the project goals and for the other participants? Which tools, information or knowledge are you able to share? Please, state 3 reasons:



#1 UART can make available to the consortium professional skills of its qualified staff and share its knowledge with other Institutions in a transparent and open way.

#2 The institution can provide its experience in the study of cultural heritage

#3 UART can provide support in developing Innovative teaching methodology, to enhance capacity to transfer scientific knowledge to HEIs students.

Question 4

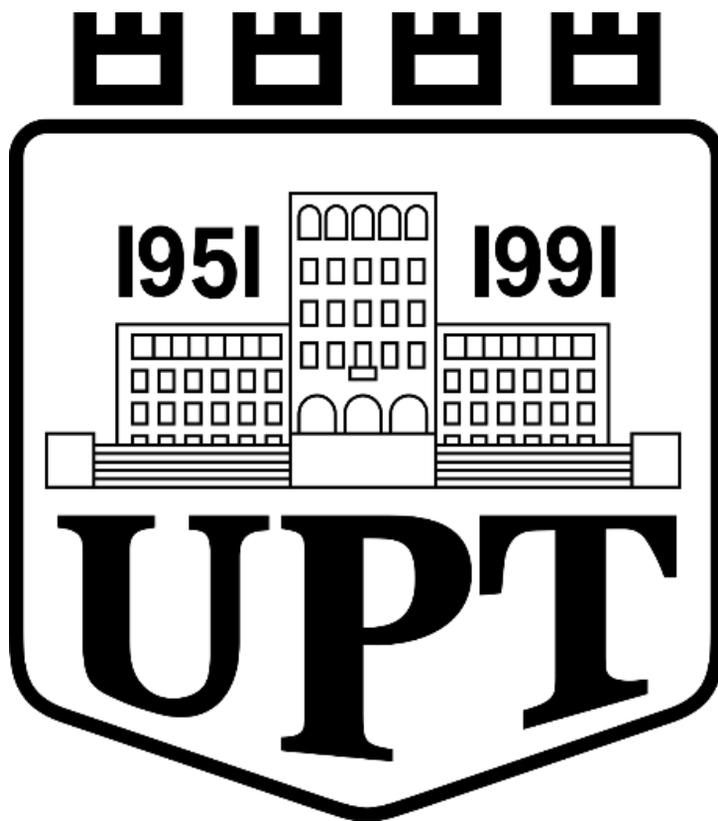
Please complete the sentence: "For my belonging institution, the participation in the REACH project will be considered a success when/if"

Teaching, research and technical staff will be supported with tools and updated information on this specific fields of study.

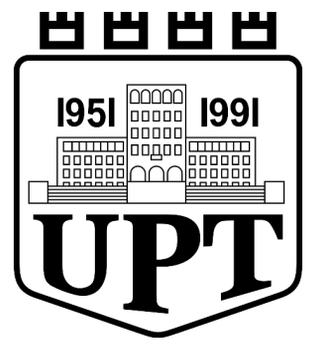
We will be able to train a new generation of researchers that will work together on the conservation of our cultural heritage.

What we would have learnt will be not something temporary, but permanent .

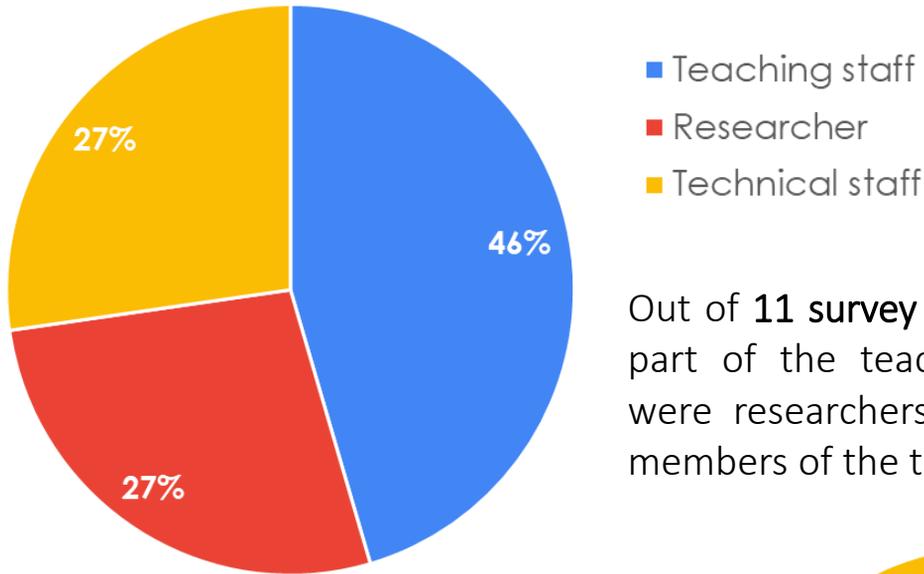




Universiteti Politeknik I Tirane

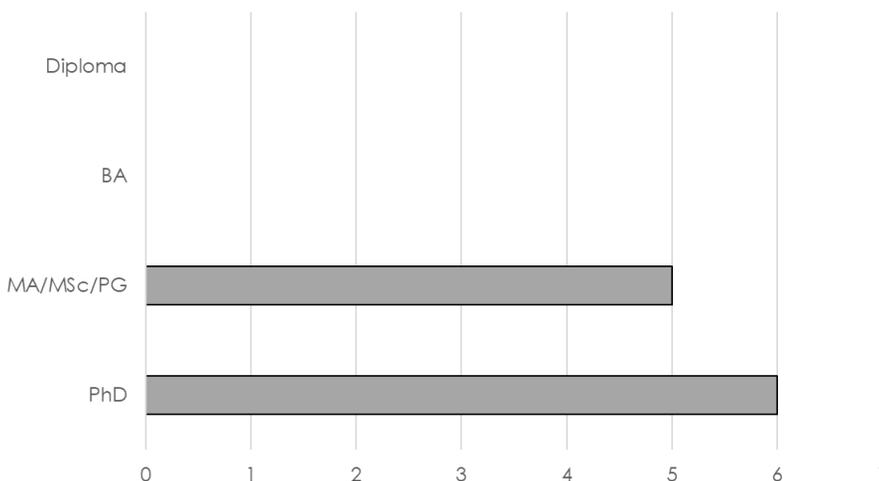
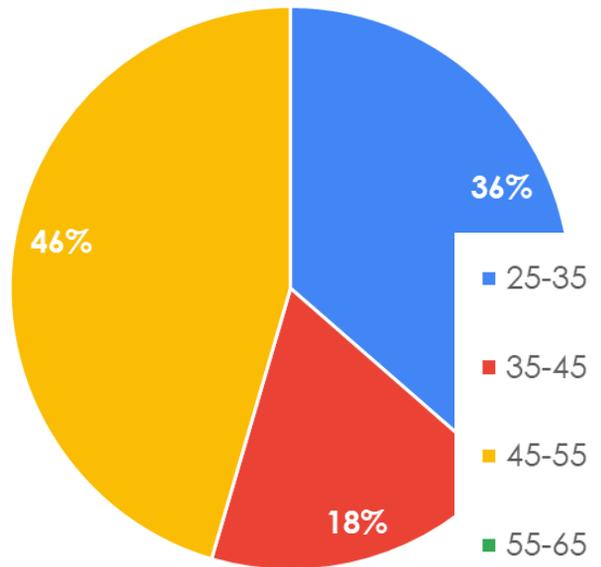


General information

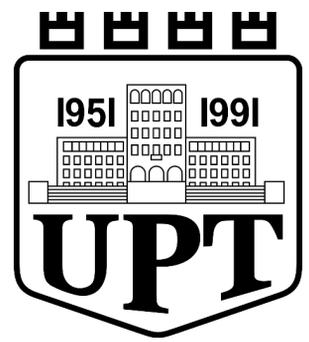


Out of **11 survey respondents**, 5 were part of the teaching staff (46%), 3 were researchers (27%) and 3 were members of the technical staff (27%).

The **age groups** from which the majority of the responses were obtained (30%) is **45-55**, followed by 25-35 (36%) and 35-45 (18%).



Half of the survey respondents said they have a post-graduate title as highest qualification. Six have a PhD, 2 a Diploma and 1 a Bachelor Degree.



Skills and competences

Question 1

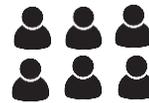
Please choose the sentence that, in your opinion, better defines the purpose of research in the field of cultural heritage conservation (you can select a maximum of two options):

*deepening the **theoretical knowledge** of the object/monument/ site, to fully understand the **socio-cultural value** and provide the community with comprehensive content*



5

*developing **new technologies** and **methods of intervention** on an object/monument/ site to foster their conservation and use by the community*



6

*investigating, by means of scientific analyses, **constituting materials** and **technological features** of an object/monument/site, to provide conservators and restorers with suitable data that can aid in defining the **best methodologies** and **approaches***



7

*verifying and monitoring the **structural/conservative conditions** of objects/monuments/sites in order to test and evaluate new products/devices/methodologies for conservation*



3

Data analysis

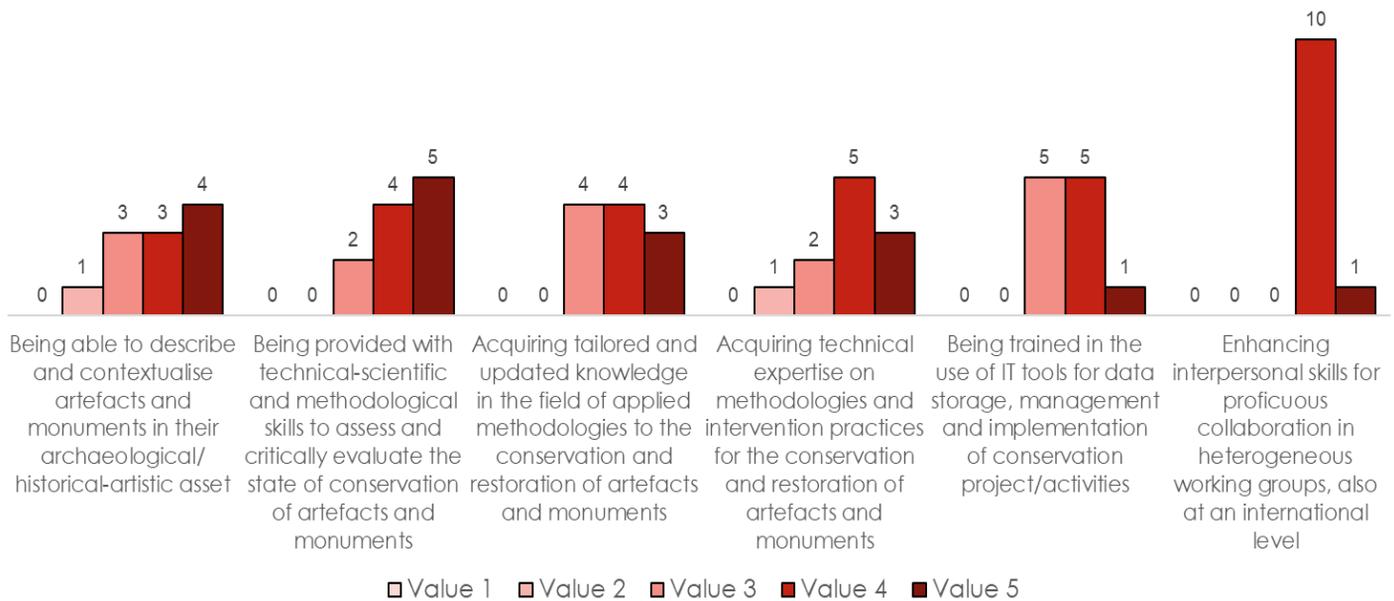
In the field of applied research to cultural heritage, highest relevance is given to the investigation, through scientific analyses, of constituting materials of artefacts/monuments and their technological features, followed by the development of updated technologies and tailored intervention strategies able to support conservative interventions.

Deepening the theoretical knowledge of cultural heritage is considered less relevance. Last, less weight is given to verifying and monitoring the conservative status of monuments and artefacts.

Skills and competences

Question 2

According to your expertise, please assign a value, from 1 to 5, to the relevance of the following skills in the field of applied research to cultural heritage, with specific reference to conservation and restoration:



Data analysis

Being provided with technical-scientific and methodological skills to assess and critically evaluate the state of conservation of artefacts and monuments, parallel to being provided with technical-scientific and methodological skills to assess and critically evaluate the state of conservation of artefacts and monuments, have been indicated as the most relevant skills in the field of applied research for cultural heritage (both valued 5).

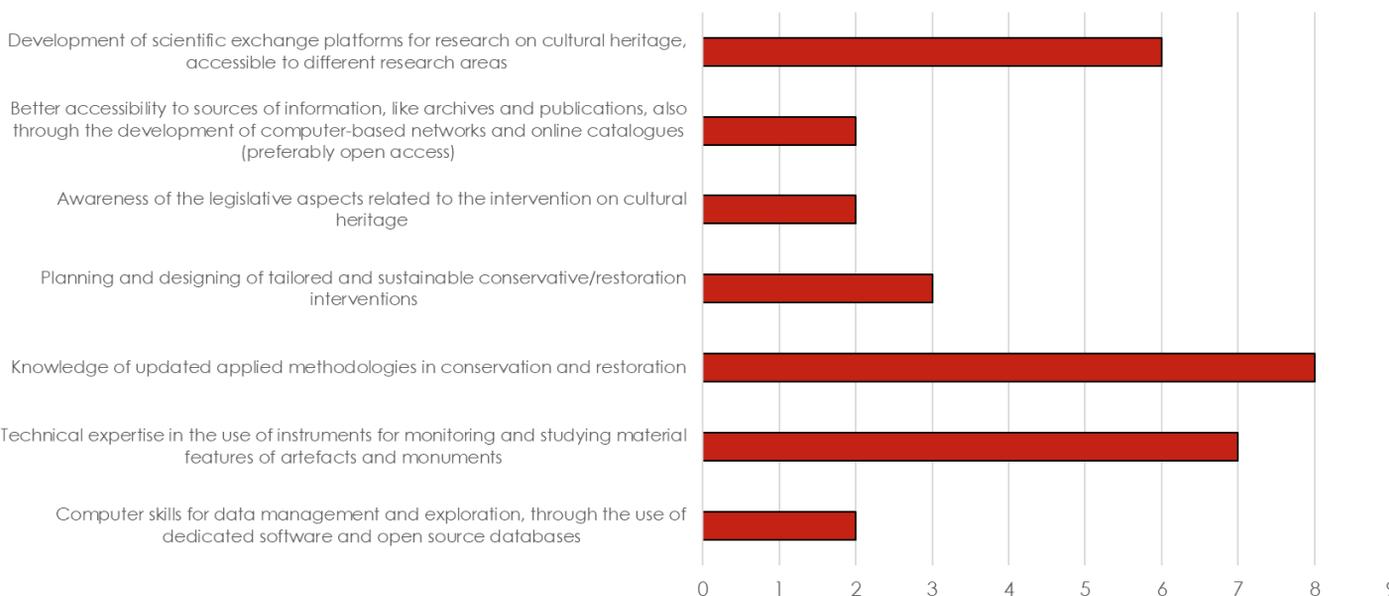
Considerable weight is also attributed to the majority of respondents to *enhancing interpersonal skills for collaboration in heterogeneous working groups* (valued 4), followed by *being trained in the use of IT tools for data storage and management* (valued 3).

Last, *being able to describe and contextualise artefacts and monuments in their archaeological/historical-artistic asset* is valued 2.

Skills and competences

Question 3

Considering your specific field of interest, please indicate which of the following skills should be improved in the Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in the field of cultural heritage study and conservation (you can select a maximum of three options):

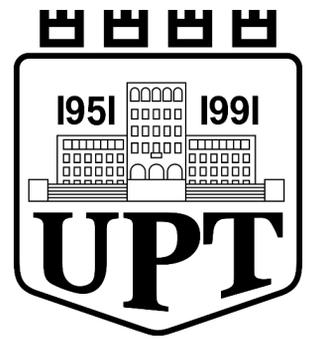


Data analysis

Knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration has been selected as the key skill to be improved at Albanian HEIs, followed by the enhancement of *technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments*.

High relevance is also given to the *development of scientific-based exchange platform*, standing as a primary issue by a high number of respondents.

Planning and designing of tailored and sustainable conservative/restoration interventions, strengthening the *awareness of the legislative aspects related to the intervention on cultural heritage* and providing *better accessibility to sources of information, like archives and publications, also through the development of computer-based networks and online catalogues*, do not stand as priorities.

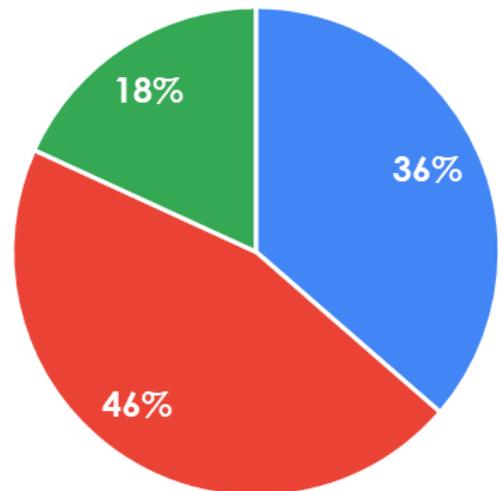


Facilities and equipment

Question 1

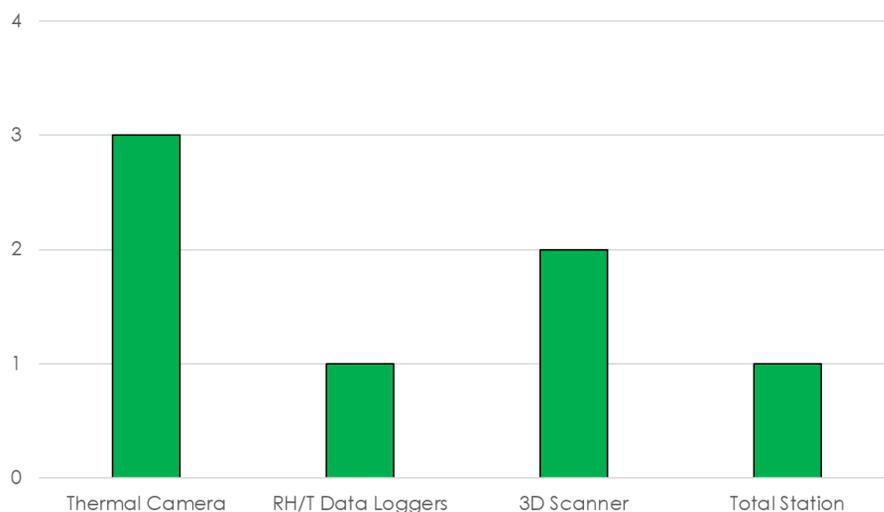
In the frame of research activities you have been involved in the past 5 years, how many times have you used technical-scientific instruments?

- 1-2 times
- 3-6 times
- more than 6 times
- I haven't used any



Question 2

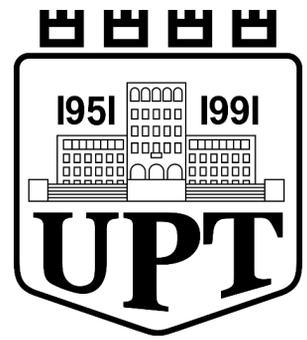
Which instrument(s) have you used?



Data analysis

According to data, 46% of respondents from UPT has used scientific equipment between 3 and 6 times in the last 5 years., followed by 36% that has used them 1-2 times. 18% of respondents has never used scientific instruments.

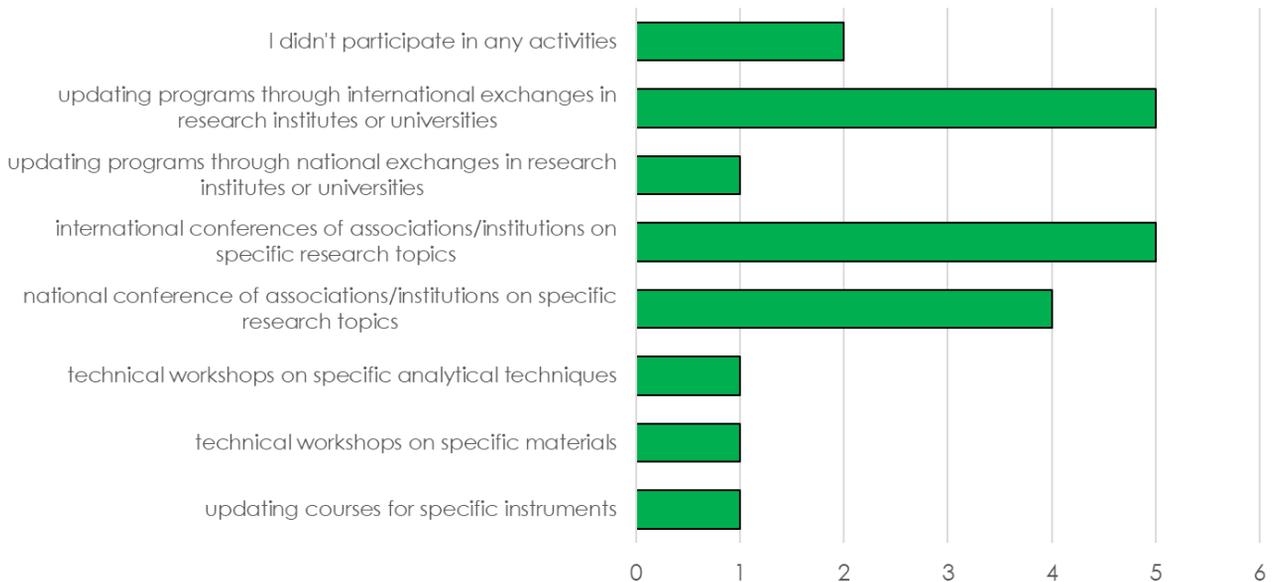
The most used tool is the thermal imaging camera, followed by on-the-field survey tools like 3D scanner and total station.



Facilities and equipment

Question 3

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities you have participated in the past 5 year:



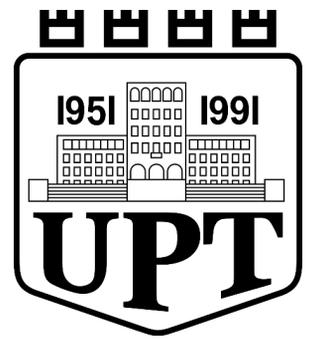
Question 4

Which of the activities listed above would you like to be available for updating your knowledge and skills?



Data analysis

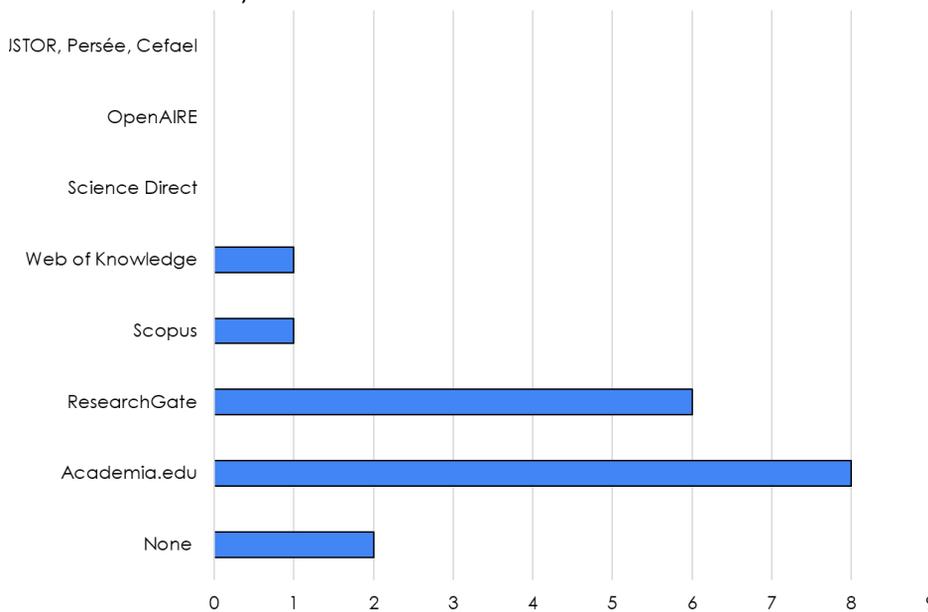
Technical staff from UPT emphasised the willingness to mainly participate technical workshops on analytical techniques and updating courses on specific instruments. Involvement in updating programs through international exchanges at research institutes and universities is also given relevance.



Impact, dissemination and collaboration

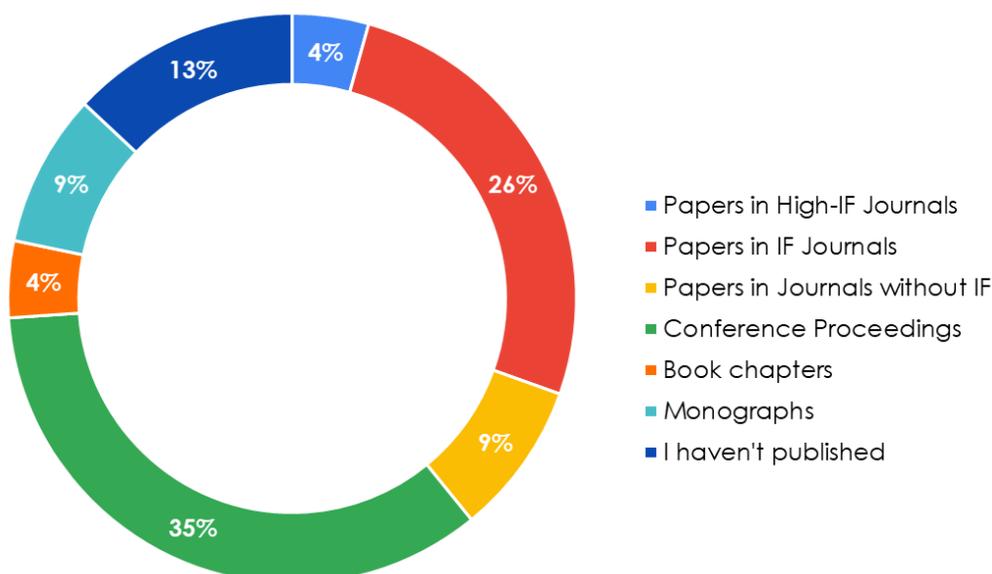
Question 1

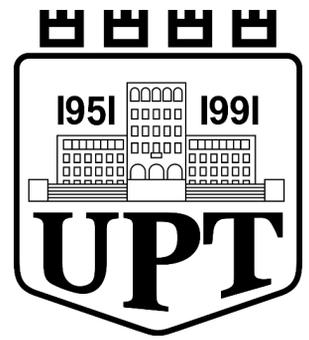
Which repositories for academic studies do you know and use (you can select more than one)?



Question 2

Which types of contributions have you published in the past 5 years (you can select more than one)?

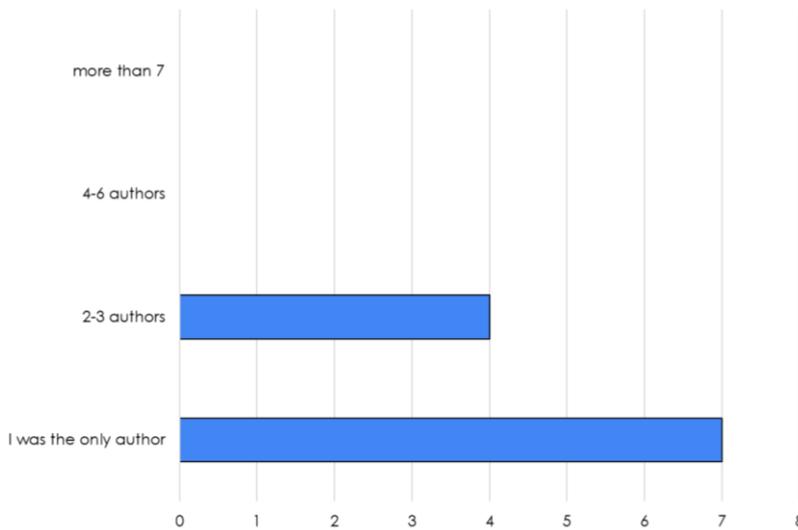




Impact, dissemination and collaboration

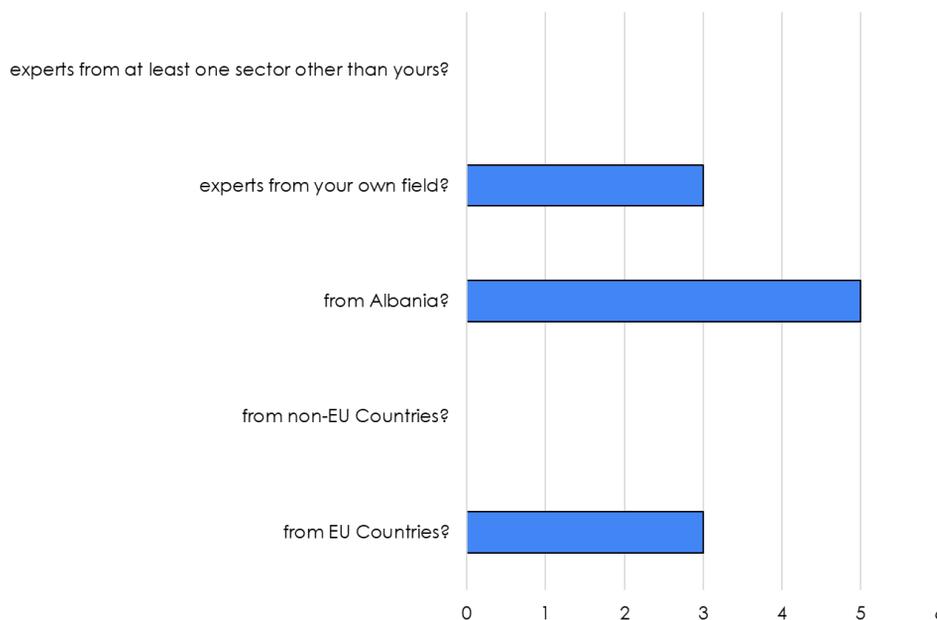
Question 3

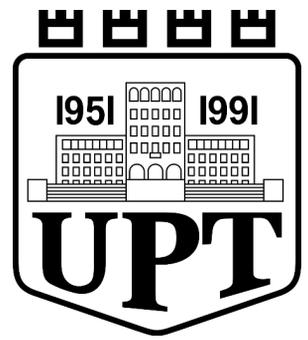
If you have published at least 1 contribution in the past 5 years, how many co-authors there were on average?



Question 4

If you have published contributions with multiple authors in the past 5 years, were they...





Impact, dissemination and collaboration

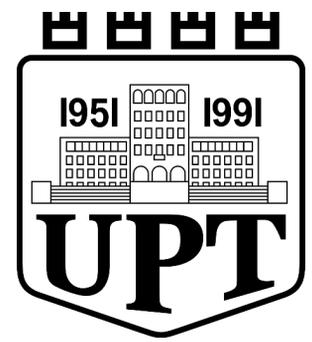
Data analysis

UPT respondents mainly know and use Academia.edu and ResearchGate as repositories for finding and sharing academic publications, while Scopus is known but less used.

35% of the interviewees has mainly published conference proceedings in the last 5 years, followed by about 26% that has published papers in IF journals. 13% of interviewees has not published in the last 5 years, followed by 9% who has contributions in journals without IF and monographs. Book chapters and papers in high-IF are last, counting for 4%.

Most of the respondents have published as only authors, followed by colleagues who published with 2-3 co-authors on average. Co-authors were mainly Albanian and experts from the same field of study.

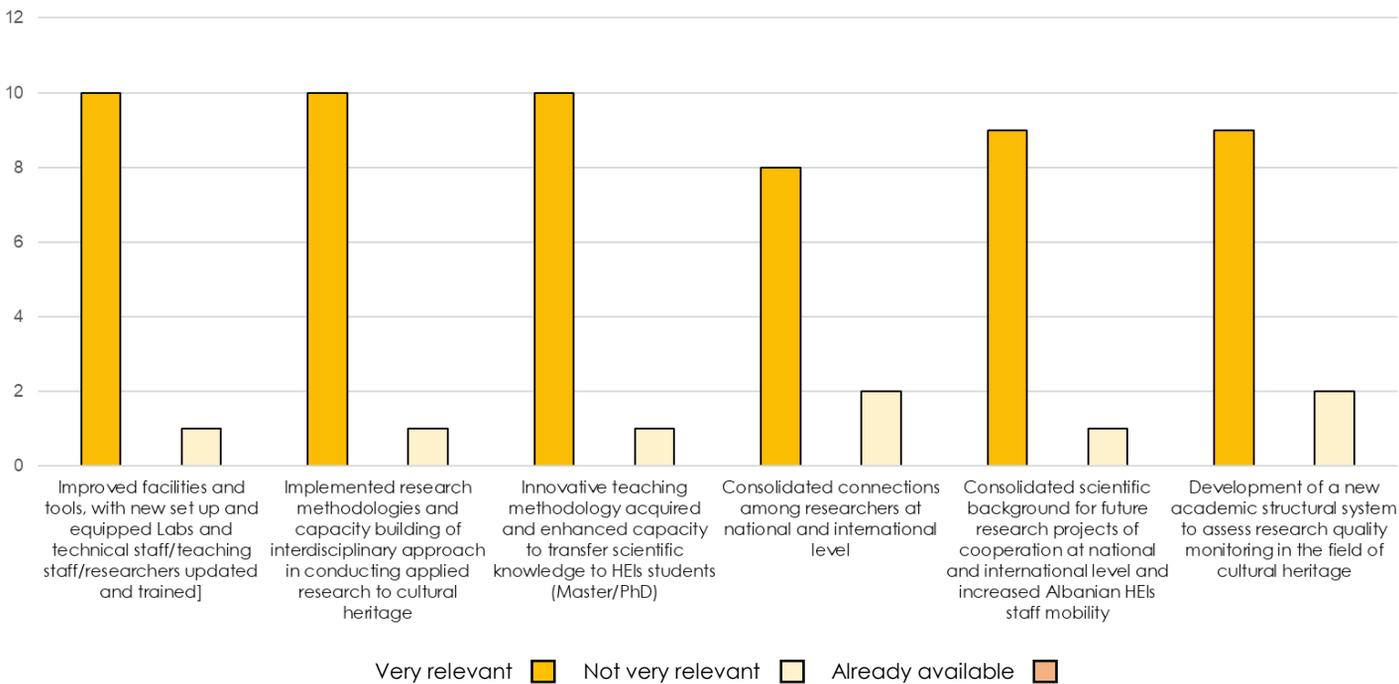




Expectations from the project

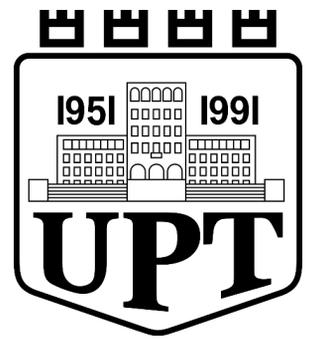
Questions 1-2

What are the outcomes of REACH project you consider relevant / already available / not very relevant for your Institution? And which is the most relevant in your opinion?



Data analysis

Almost all respondents from UPT identified as very relevant all the indicated expected outcomes from REACH project. *Improved facilities and tools, with new set up and equipped Labs and technical staff/teaching staff/researchers updated and trained; implemented research methodologies and capacity building of interdisciplinary approach in conducting applied research to cultural heritage; innovative teaching methodology acquired and enhanced capacity to transfer scientific knowledge to HEIs students (Master/PhD)* have been selected as the most relevant.



Expectations from the project

Question 3

Why do you think it is important that your Institution is involved in this project? What is the advantage for the project goals and for the other participants? Which tools, information or knowledge are you able to share? Please, state 3 reasons:



#1 UPT/FAU contributes to training the new culture heritage specialists in filed of conservation.

#2 Advantages for the project goal is having a consolidated material-based Laboratory.

#3 The Institution has a long history in researching and studying Cultural Heritage and UPT/FAU is a main contributor in the field.

Question 4

Please complete the sentence: "For my belonging institution, the participation in the REACH project will be considered a success when/if"

The Institutions will develop a network of people with different expertise, able to share sustainable strategies on conservation and collaborating on developing new methodologies.

We will be able to assemble a multidisciplinary group working together on equipment and combining sustainable technologies in restoration/conservation interventions, researching new ways of working on materials.

If standards to assess and evaluate the contribution of HEIs in applied to conservation and restoration will have been established.



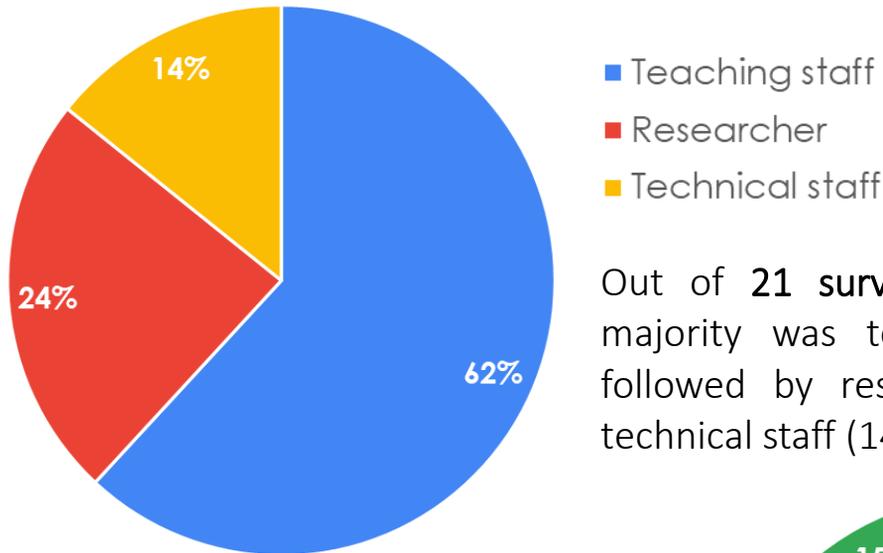
Universiteti I Shkodra
Luigj Gurakuqi



Partner #3

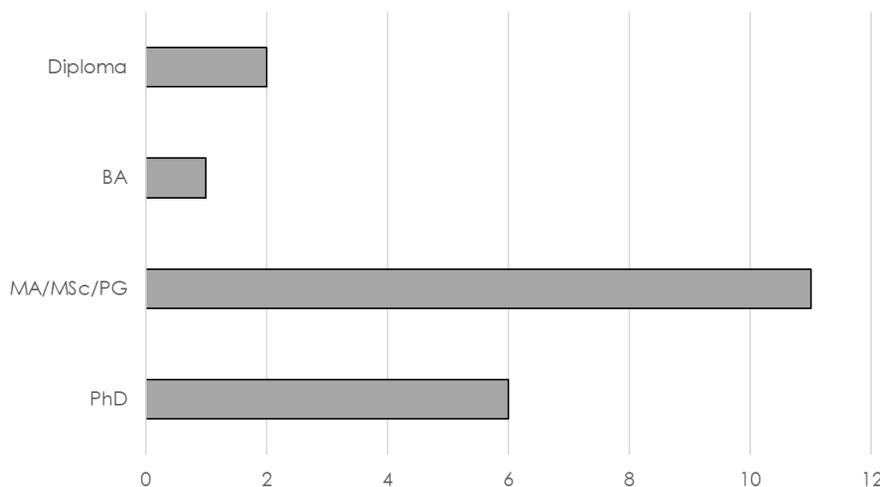
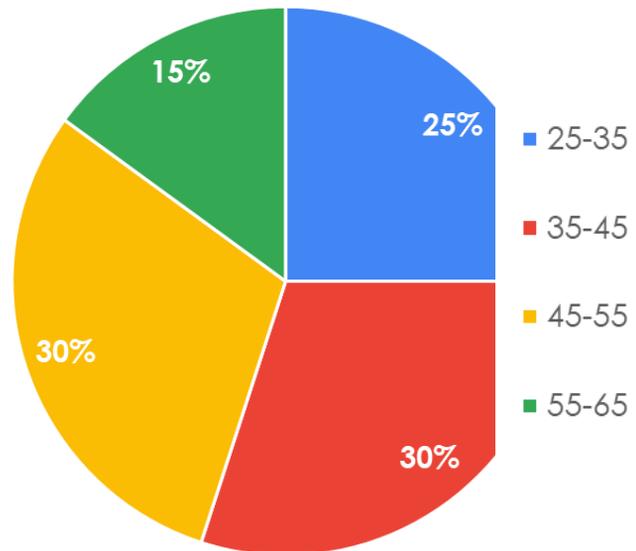


General information



Out of 21 survey respondents, the majority was teaching staff (62%), followed by researchers (24%) and technical staff (14%).

The **age groups** from which the majority of the responses were obtained (30%) are **35-45** and **45-55 years**, followed by 25-35 (25%) and 55-65 (15%).



Half of the survey respondents said they have a post-graduate title as highest qualification. Six have a PhD, 2 a Diploma and 1 a Bachelor Degree.



Skills and competences

Question 1

Please choose the sentence that, in your opinion, better defines the purpose of research in the field of cultural heritage conservation (you can select a maximum of two options):

*deepening the **theoretical knowledge** of the object/monument/ site, to fully understand the **socio-cultural value** and provide the community with comprehensive content*



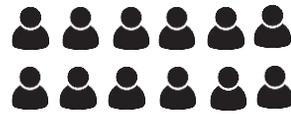
12

*developing **new technologies** and **methods of intervention** on an object/monument/ site to foster their conservation and use by the community*



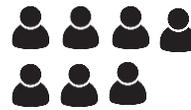
4

*investigating, by means of scientific analyses, **constituting materials** and **technological features** of an object/monument/site, to provide conservators and restorers with suitable data that can aid in defining the **best methodologies** and **approaches***



12

*verifying and monitoring the **structural/conservative conditions** of objects/monuments/sites in order to test and evaluate new products/devices/methodologies for conservation*



7

Data analysis

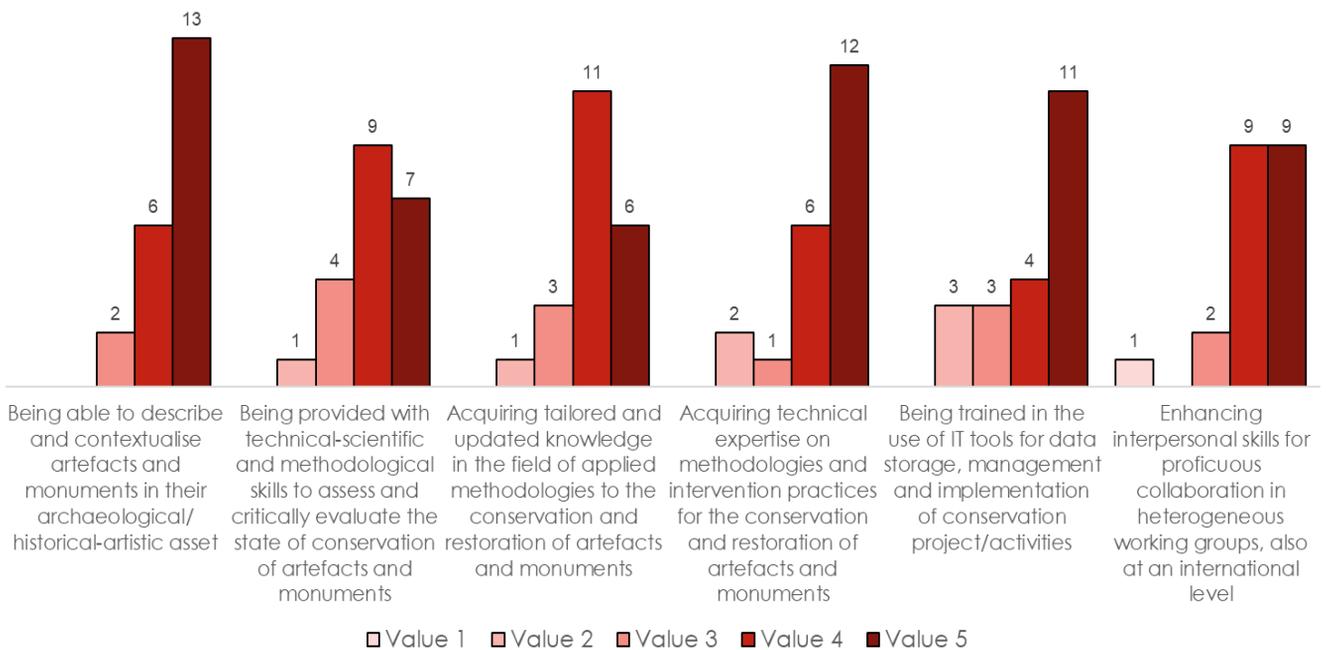
Data show that, in applied research to cultural heritage, most respondents attribute the same importance to both theoretical studies aimed at understanding its socio-cultural value and to scientific analyses of materials and their technological features. Verifying and monitoring the conservative status of monuments and artefacts is also considered to be relevant, while less weight is given to the development of updated technologies and tailored intervention strategies able to support conservative interventions.



Skills and competences

Question 2

According to your expertise, please assign a value, from 1 to 5, to the relevance of the following skills in the field of applied research to cultural heritage, with specific reference to conservation and restoration:



Data analysis

Being able to describe and contextualise artefacts and monuments in their archaeological/historical-artistic asset, together with acquiring technical expertise on methodologies and intervention practices for the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments have been assigned the highest value (5) by the majority of respondents. Acquiring tailored and updated knowledge in the field of applied methodologies to the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments is considered relevant as well (value 4).

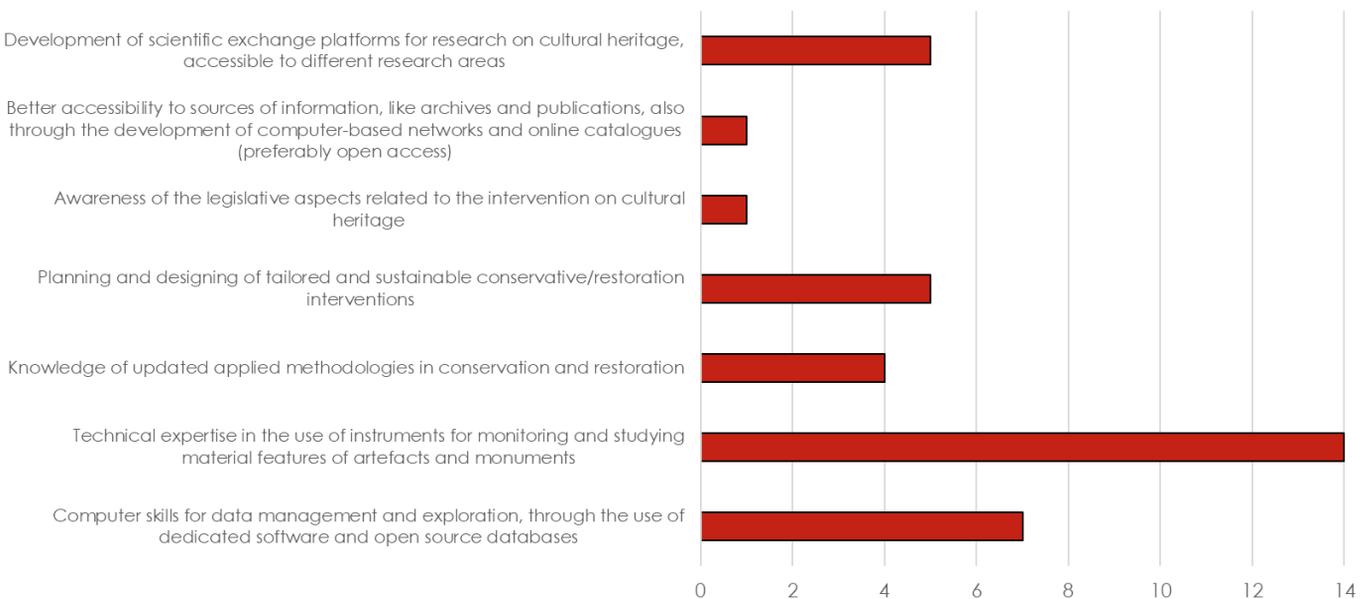
On the contrary, much less importance is given to being provided with technical-scientific and methodological skills to assess and critically evaluate the state of conservation of artefacts and monuments (valued 3), followed by being trained in the use of IT tools for data storage, management and implementation of conservation project/activities (valued 2) and, last, enhancing interpersonal skills for collaboration in heterogeneous working groups (valued 1).



Skills and competences

Question 3

Considering your specific field of interest, please indicate which of the following skills should be improved in the Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in the field of cultural heritage study and conservation (you can select a maximum of three options):



Data analysis

Data show that the improvement of *technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments* is considered a primary issue by the majority of respondents. The need for enhancing *computer skills for data management and exploration, through the use of dedicated software and open source databases*, is also highlighted by about $\frac{1}{4}$ of interviewees, followed by *planning and designing of tailored and sustainable conservative/restoration interventions* and fostering *knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration*. *Awareness of the legislative aspects related to the intervention on cultural heritage* and *better accessibility to sources of information, like archives and publications, also through the development of computer-based networks and online catalogues* do not stand as priorities.

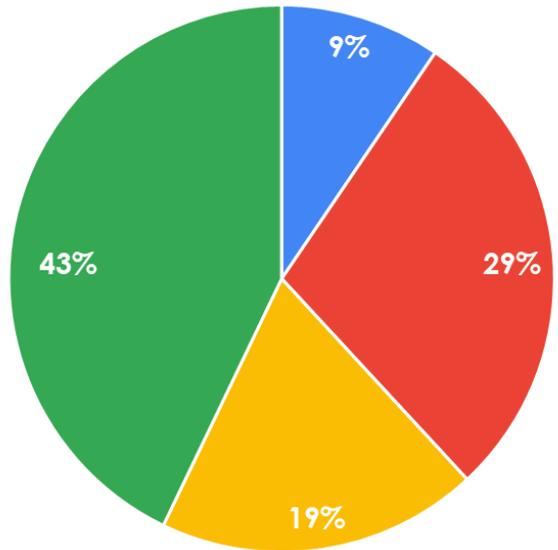


Facilities and equipment

Question 1

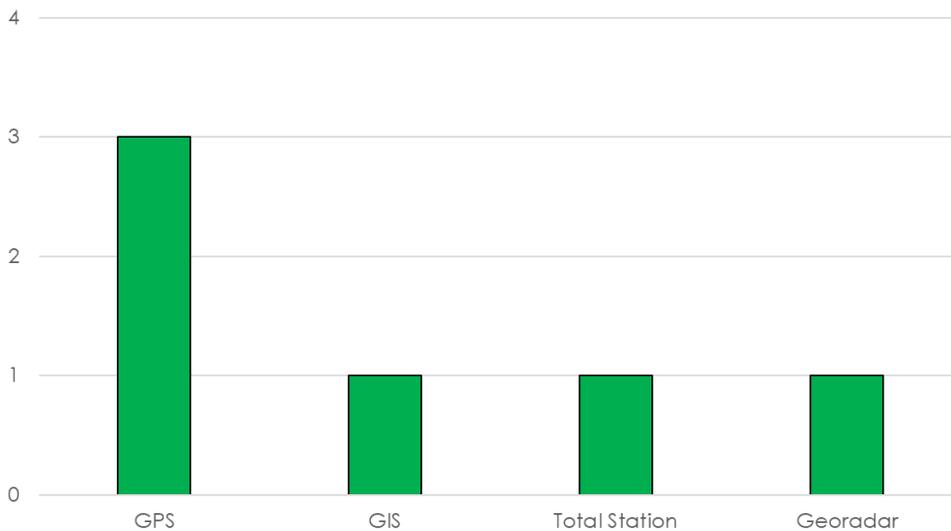
In the frame of research activities you have been involved in the past 5 years, how many times have you used technical-scientific instruments?

- 1-2 times
- 3-6 times
- more than 6 times
- I haven't used any



Question 2

Which instrument(s) have you used?



Data analysis

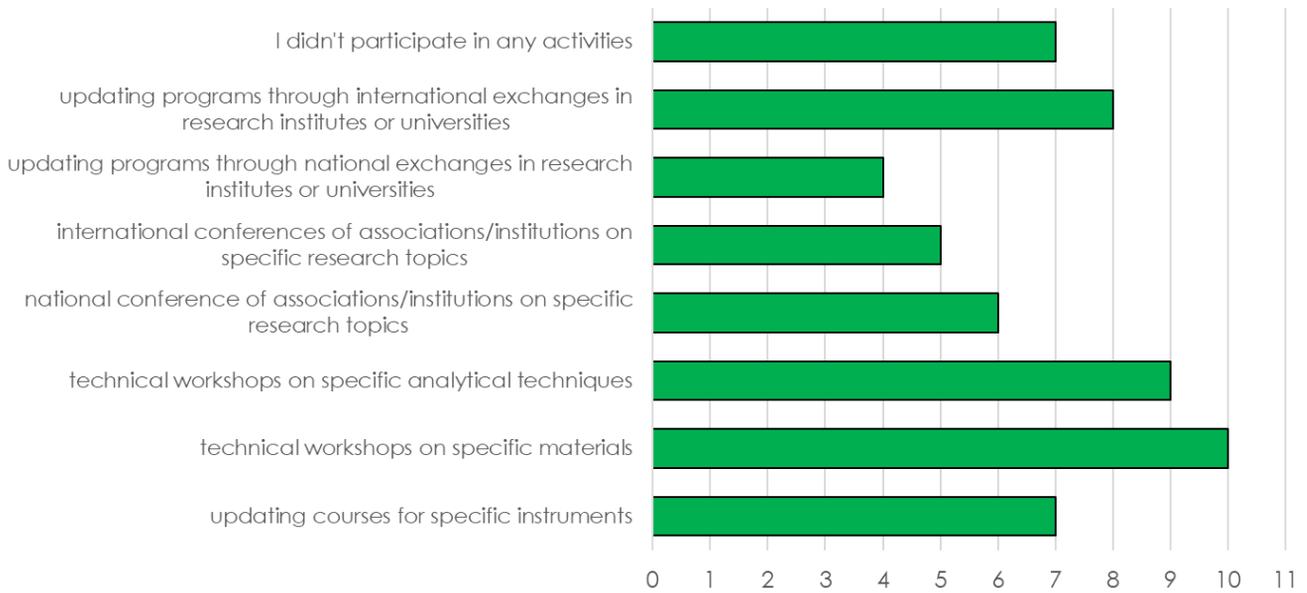
According to data, 43% of respondents from UNISHK has never used scientific equipment in the last 5 years. 29% of them declares to have used scientific instruments 3-6 times, followed by 19% that has used equipment more than 6 times. Last, about 9% of respondents has used scientific instruments 1-2 times. Data demonstrated a lack of scientific instruments being used for materials characterisation is , while GIS/GPS software and on-the-field survey tools prevail.



Facilities and equipment

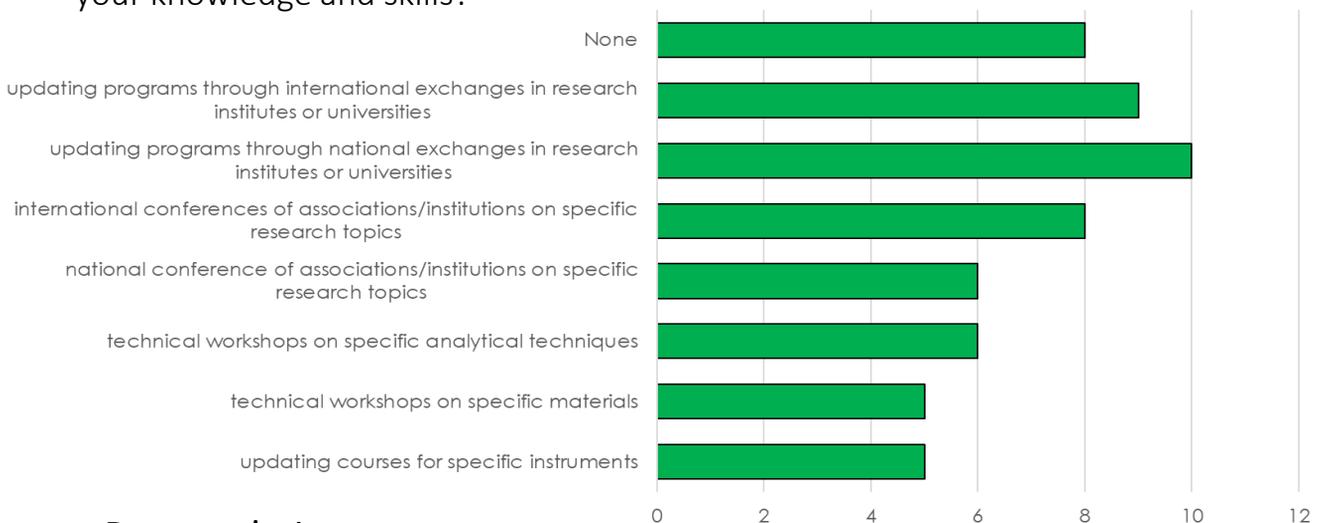
Question 3

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities you have participated in the past 5 year:



Question 4

Which of the activities listed above would you like to be available for updating your knowledge and skills?



Data analysis

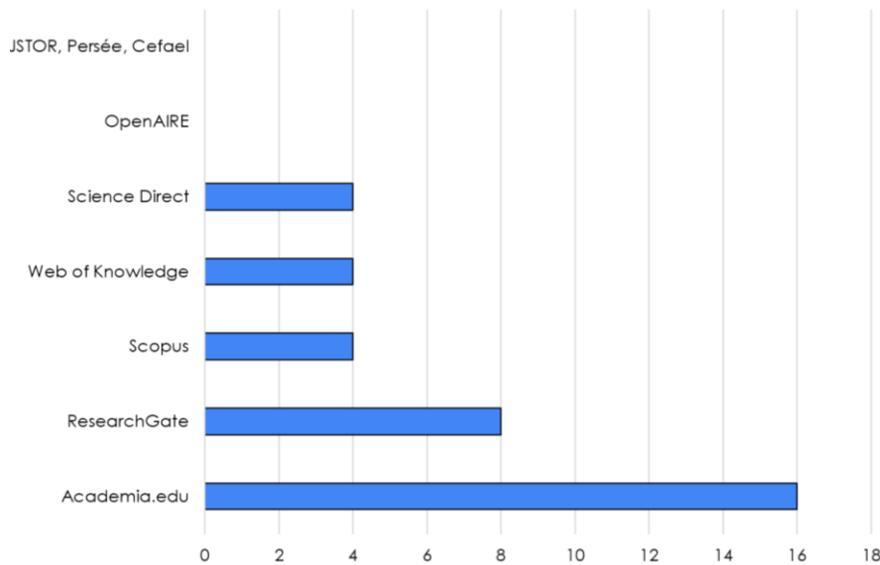
Technical staff from UNISHK highlights the need to be involved in updating programs through the participation in international and national exchanges at research institutes and universities, followed by international conferences.



Impact, dissemination and collaboration

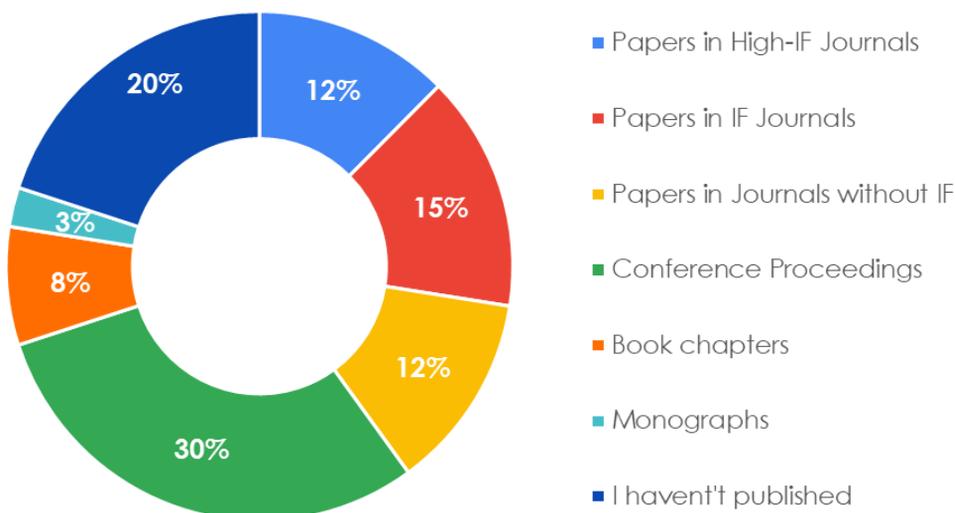
Question 1

Which repositories for academic studies do you know and use (you can select more than one)?



Question 2

Which types of contributions have you published in the past 5 years (you can select more than one)?

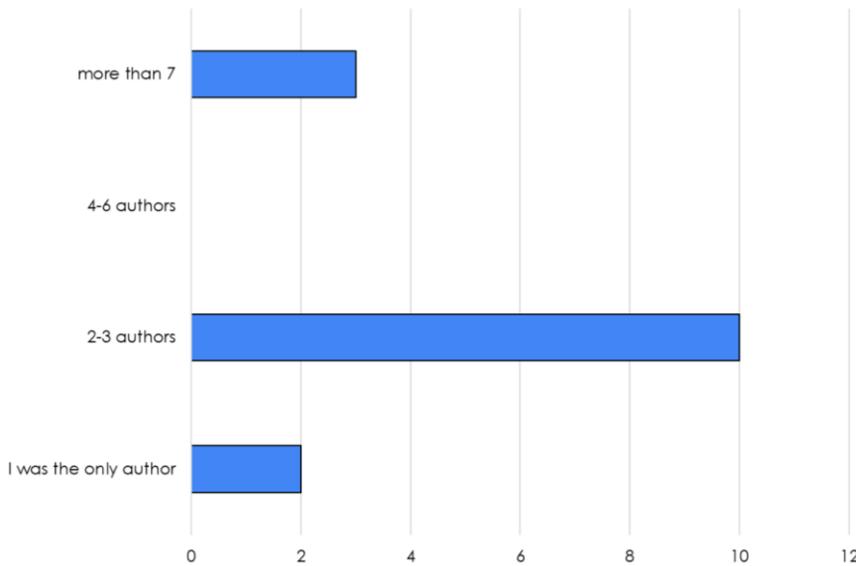




Impact, dissemination and collaboration

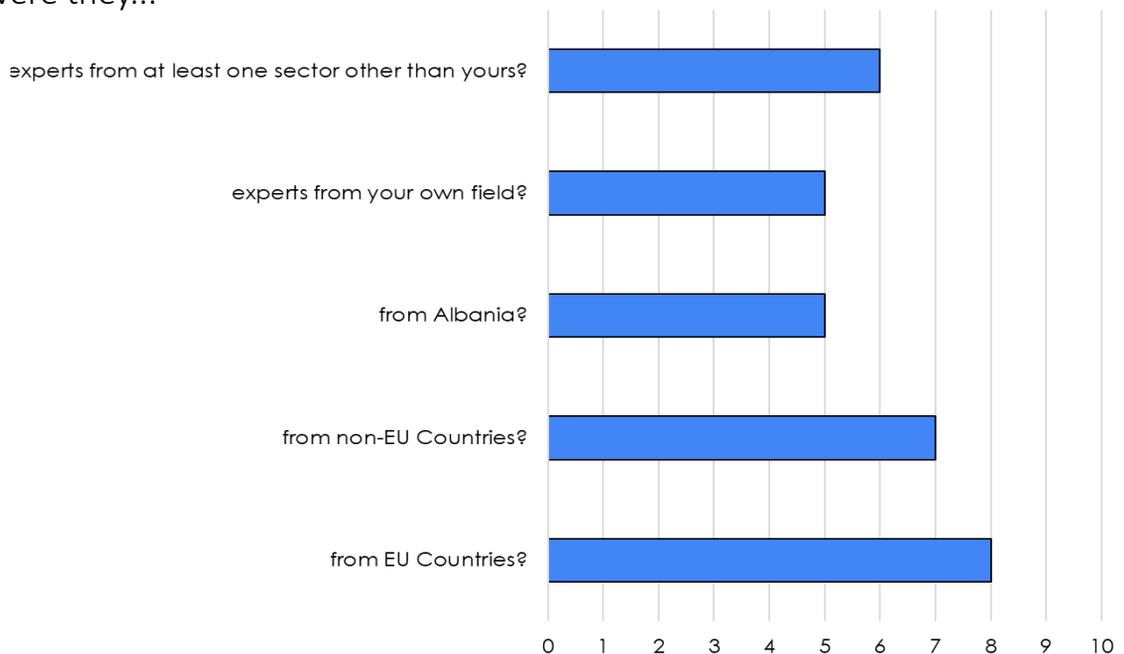
Question 3

If you have published at least 1 contribution in the past 5 years, how many co-authors there were on average?



Question 4

If you have published contributions with multiple authors in the past 5 years, were they...





Impact, dissemination and collaboration

Data analysis

UNISHK respondents mainly know and use Academia.edu as a repository for finding and sharing academic publications. ResearchGate is also quite common, while other platforms like Scopus, Web of Knowledge and ScienceDirect are much less used.

30% of the interviewees has mainly published conference proceedings in the last 5 years, followed by about 20% declaring not to have published any type of contributions. Papers in journals with and without IF respectively count for 15% and 12%; articles in high-IF journals also stand for 12% of the contributions. Book chapters only reach 8%, followed by monographs (3%).

Most of the respondents declare that they have published with 2-3 co-authors, while the number of those who have published as either only author or with more than 7 co-authors is limited.

The percentage of respondents declaring having had, as co-authors, colleagues from EU and non-EU countries, is noticeable. The publications are almost equaled between experts from the same field and from different areas of expertise.

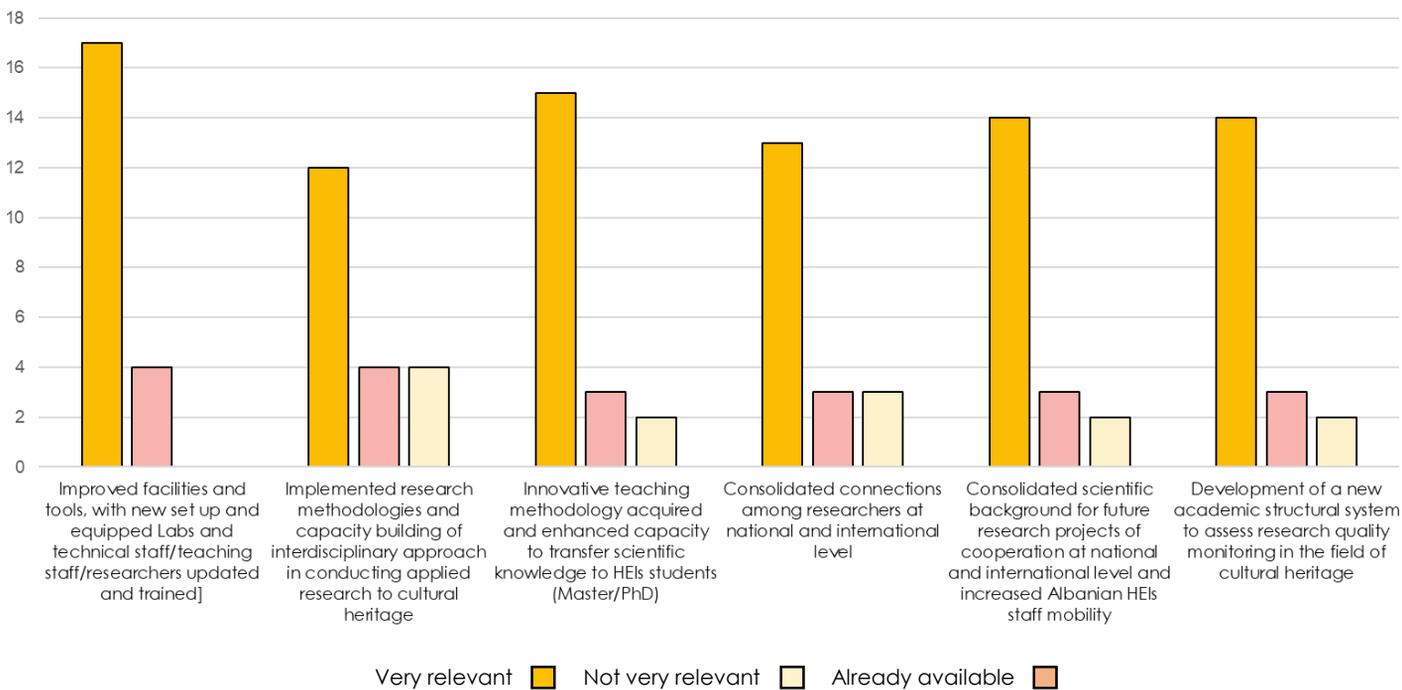




Expectations from the project

Questions 1-2

What are the outcomes of REACH project you consider relevant / already available / not very relevant for your Institution? And which is the most relevant in your opinion?



Data analysis

The majority of respondents from UNISHK identified as very relevant the indicated expected outcomes from REACH project. *Improved facilities and tools, with new set up and equipped Labs and technical staff/teaching staff/researchers updated and trained* has been selected as the most relevant among others.

Out of 21 participants in the survey, only 3-4 highlighted how the project outcomes are comparable to skills already available/not very relevant at their Home Institution.



Expectations from the project

Question 3

Why do you think it is important that your Institution is involved in this project? What is the advantage for the project goals and for the other participants? Which tools, information or knowledge are you able to share? Please, state 3 reasons:



#1 UNISHK can share data and knowledge with partner institutions and provide expertise in the development of new collaborative working methodologies.

#2 Because it hosts an important ancient collection of books in albanology-balcanology fund, available at university library.

#3 Such a project is not only important for a specific institution, but it can positively affect the whole community and region.

Question 4

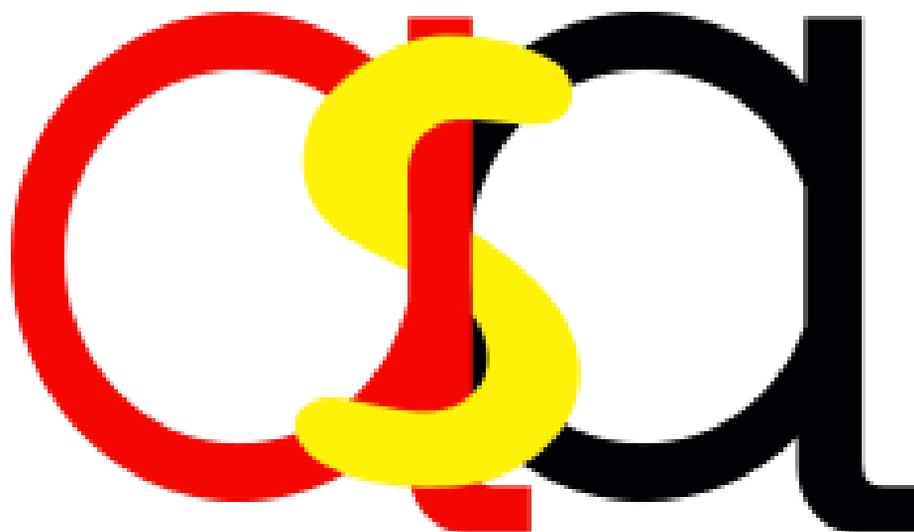
Please complete the sentence: "For my belonging institution, the participation in the REACH project will be considered a success when/if"

We will be able to cooperate and put all our knowledge in the project.

High-qualified staff will be able to train the new coming students interested in cultural heritage.

The qualified staff will be able to share their gained knowledge and experience with colleagues involved in cultural heritage studies.

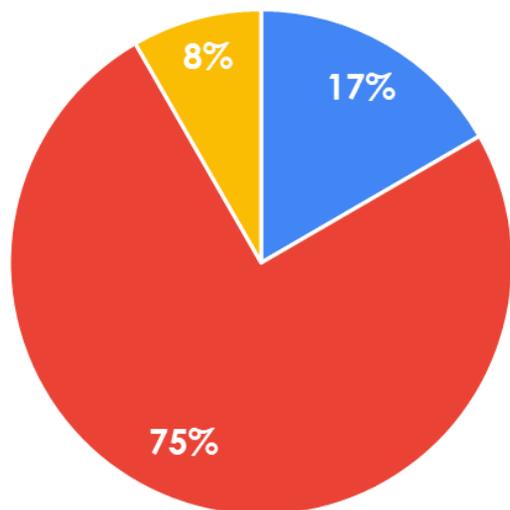




**AKADEMIA E STUDIMEVE
ALBANOLOGJIKE**

Partner
#4

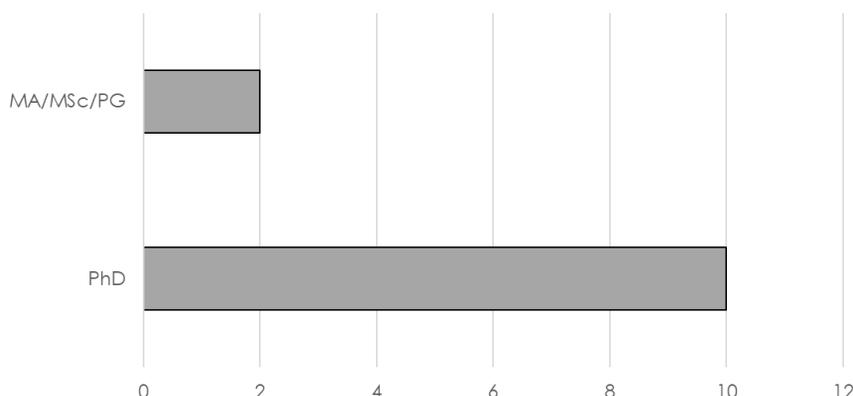
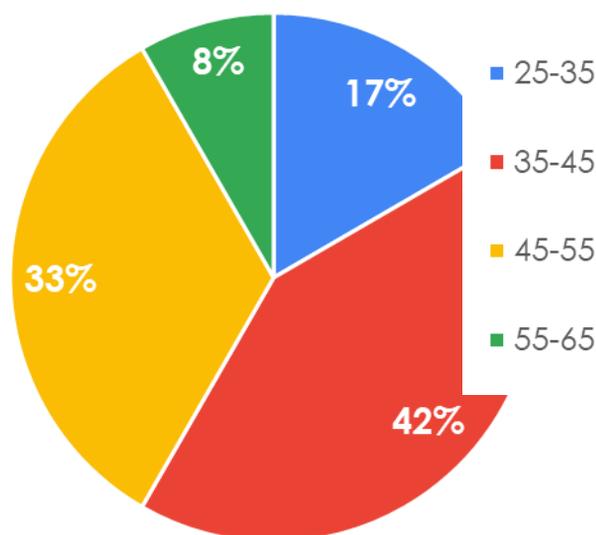
General information



- Teaching staff
- Researcher
- Technical staff

Out of 12 survey respondents, the majority was researchers (75%), followed by teaching staff (17%) and technical staff (8%).

The **age group** from which the majority of the responses were obtained (42%) is **between 35-45 years**, followed by 45-55 (33%), 25-35 (17%) and 55-65 (8%).



Out of 12 respondents, 10 said they had a **PhD** as a qualification.

Skills and competences



Question 1

Please choose the sentence that, in your opinion, better defines the purpose of research in the field of cultural heritage conservation (you can select a maximum of two options):

<i>deepening the theoretical knowledge of the object/monument/ site, to fully understand the socio-cultural value and provide the community with comprehensive content</i>		10
<i>developing new technologies and methods of intervention on an object/monument/ site to foster their conservation and use by the community</i>		7
<i>investigating, by means of scientific analyses, constituting materials and technological features of an object/monument/site, to provide conservators and restorers with suitable data that can aid in defining the best methodologies and approaches</i>		4
<i>verifying and monitoring the structural/conservative conditions of objects/monuments/sites in order to test and evaluate new products/devices/methodologies for conservation</i>		3

Data analysis

Data show that most respondents associate applied research to cultural heritage with theoretical studies mainly aimed at investigating its socio-cultural value. The need for the development of updated technologies and tailored intervention strategies able to support conservative interventions is also stressed.

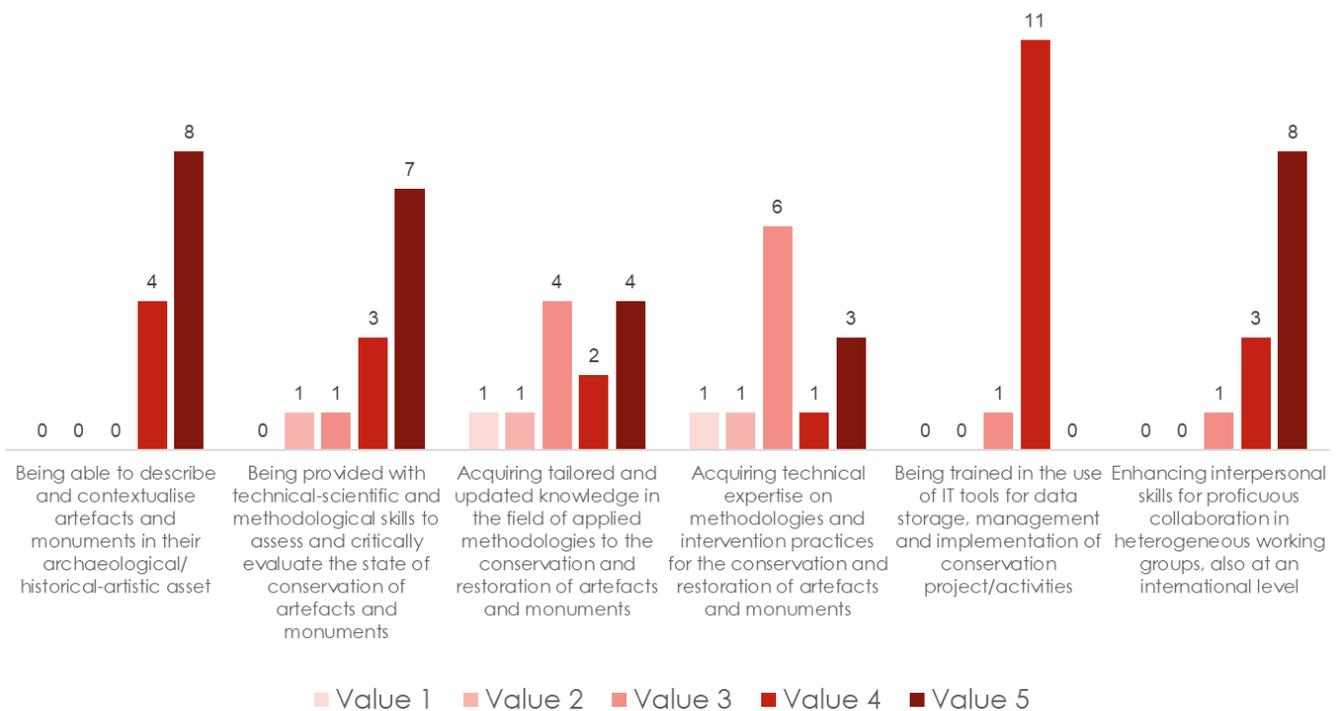
Relatively less importance is, however, given to the scientific study of constituting materials and making technologies, analogously to monitoring the state of conservation and understanding the degradation phenomena and related causes.

Skills and competences



Question 2

According to your expertise, please assign a value, from 1 to 5, to the relevance of the following skills in the field of applied research to cultural heritage, with specific reference to conservation and restoration:



Data analysis

Being able to describe and contextualise artefacts and monuments in their archaeological/historical-artistic asset, alongside enhancing interpersonal skills for collaboration in heterogeneous working groups and being provided with technical-scientific and methodological skills to assess and critically evaluate the state of conservation of artefacts and monuments, have been assigned the highest value (5).

Relevance has been given to *being trained in the use of IT tools for data storage, management and implementation of conservation project/activities* (valued 4), followed by *acquiring technical expertise on methodologies and intervention practices for the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments* (valued 3).

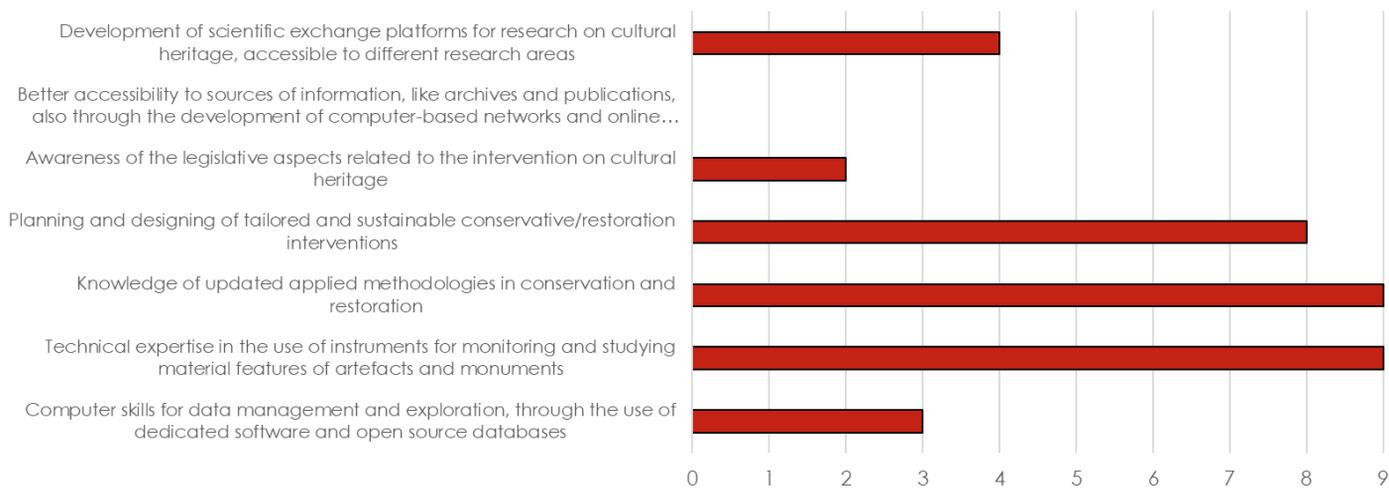
Less weight is given to *acquiring tailored and updated knowledge in the field of applied methodologies to the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments* (valued between 2 and 1).

Skills and competences



Question 3

Considering your specific field of interest, please indicate which of the following skills should be improved in the Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in the field of cultural heritage study and conservation (you can select a maximum of three options):



Data analysis

Knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration, technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments, and planning and designing of tailored and sustainable conservative/restoration interventions, have been selected as main skills to be improved.

Less relevance is given to the development of scientific exchange platforms for research on cultural heritage, accessible to different research areas and to computer skills for data management and exploration, through the use of dedicated software and open source databases.

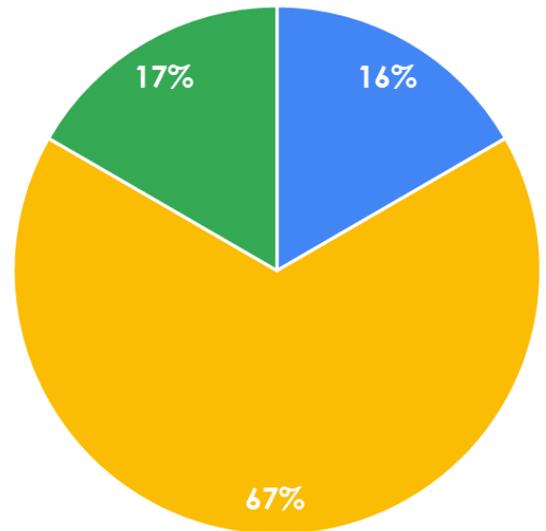
Awareness of the legislative aspects related to the intervention on cultural heritage and better accessibility to sources of information, like archives and publications, also through the development of computer-based networks and online catalogues do not stand as priorities.

Facilities and equipment

Question 1

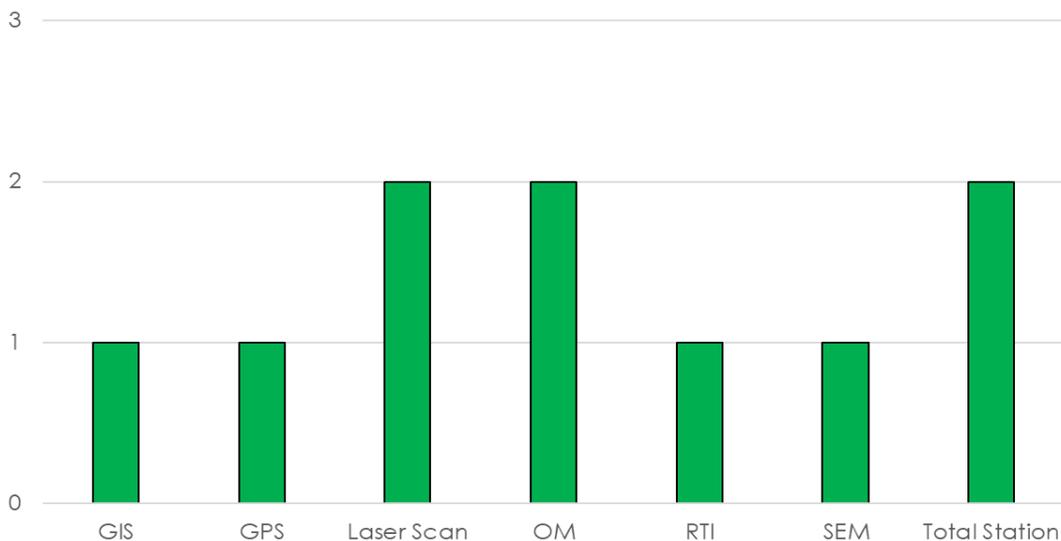
In the frame of research activities you have been involved in the past 5 years, how many times have you used technical-scientific instruments?

- 1-2 times
- 3-6 times
- more than 6 times
- I haven't used any



Question 2

Which instrument(s) have you used?



Data analysis

According to data, 67% of interviewed from ASA has used scientific equipment more than 6 times, followed by 17% who has never used any and 16% that has used instruments between 1 and 2 times in the past 5 years.

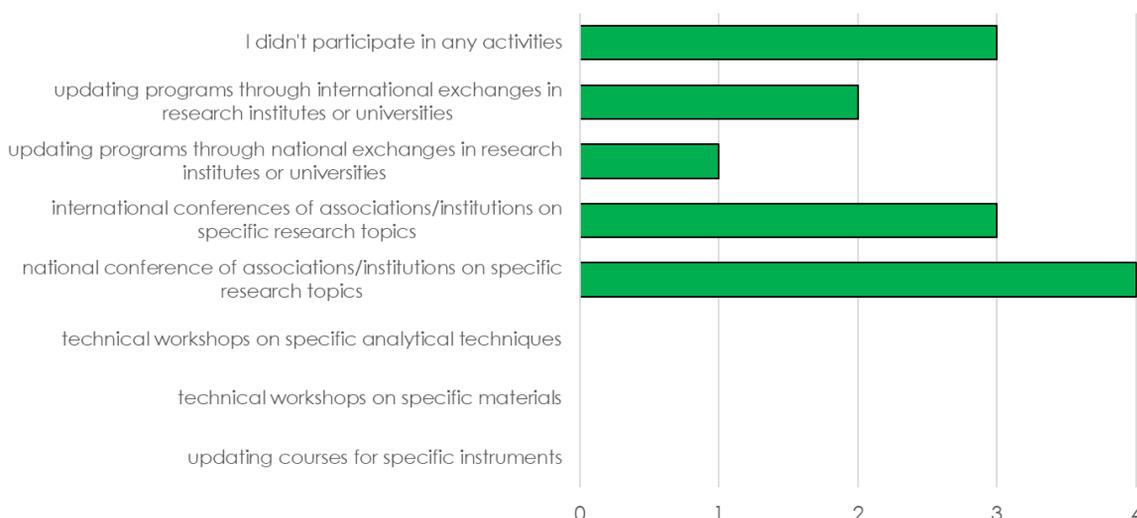
However, it can be noticed that the use of scientific instruments for materials characterisation is quite limited, while GIS/GPS software and on-the-field survey tools (i.e. laser scanner and total station) prevail.

Facilities and equipment



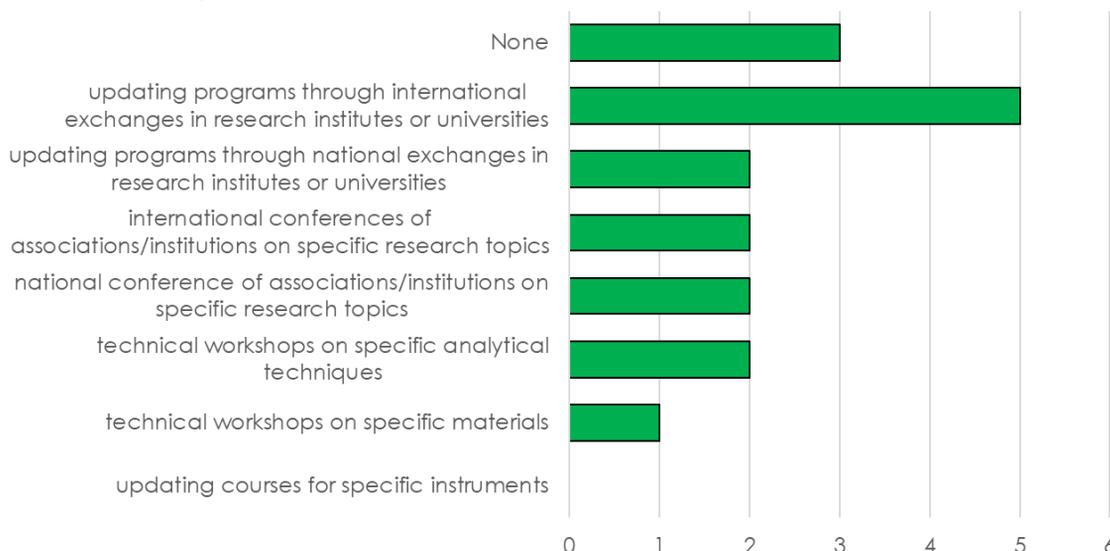
Question 3

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities you have participated in the past 5 year:



Question 4

Which of the activities listed above would you like to be available for updating your knowledge and skills?



Data analysis

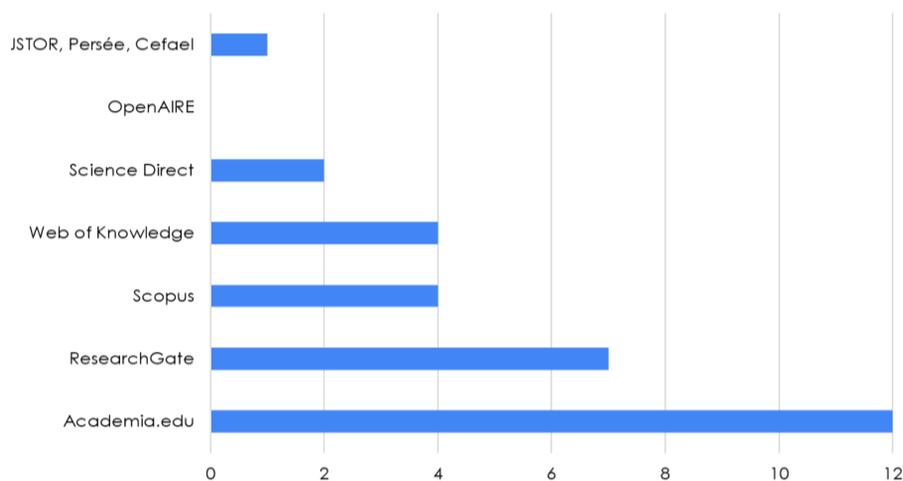
Technical staff from ASA highlights the need to be involved in updating programs through the participation in international and national exchanges at research institutes and universities.

Impact, dissemination and collaboration



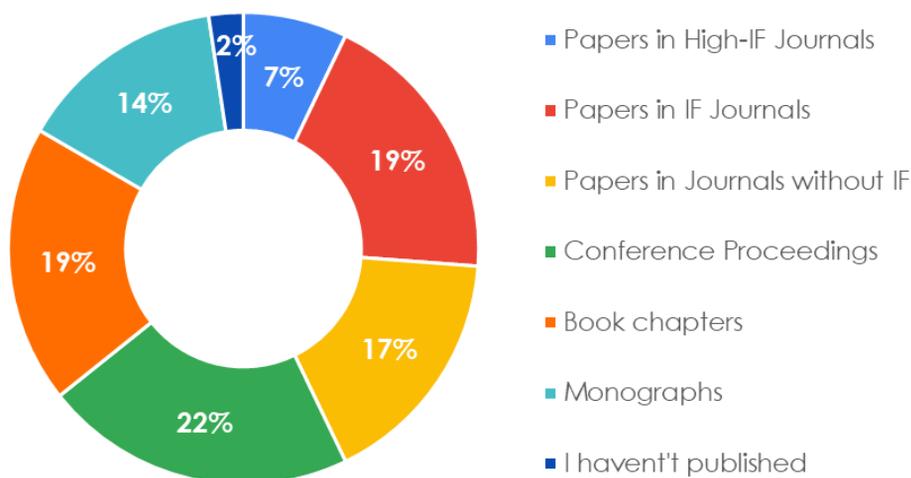
Question 1

Which repositories for academic studies do you know and use (you can select more than one)?



Question 2

Which types of contributions have you published in the past 5 years (you can select more than one)?

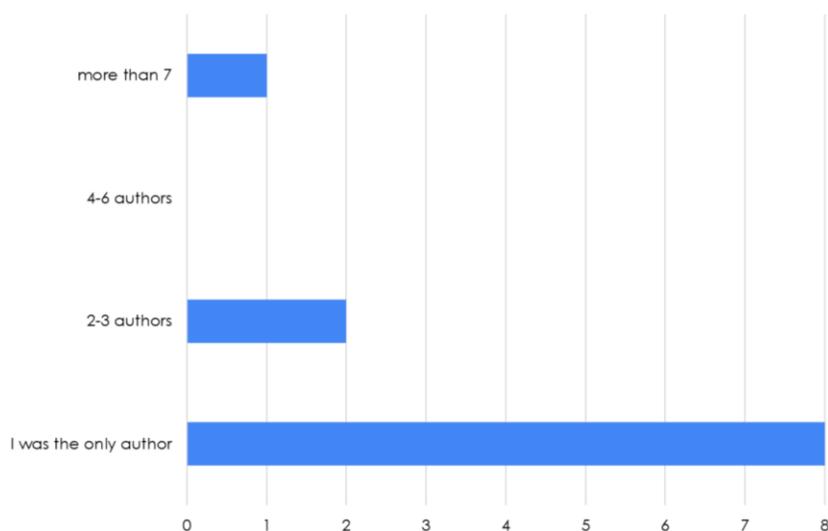


Impact, dissemination and collaboration



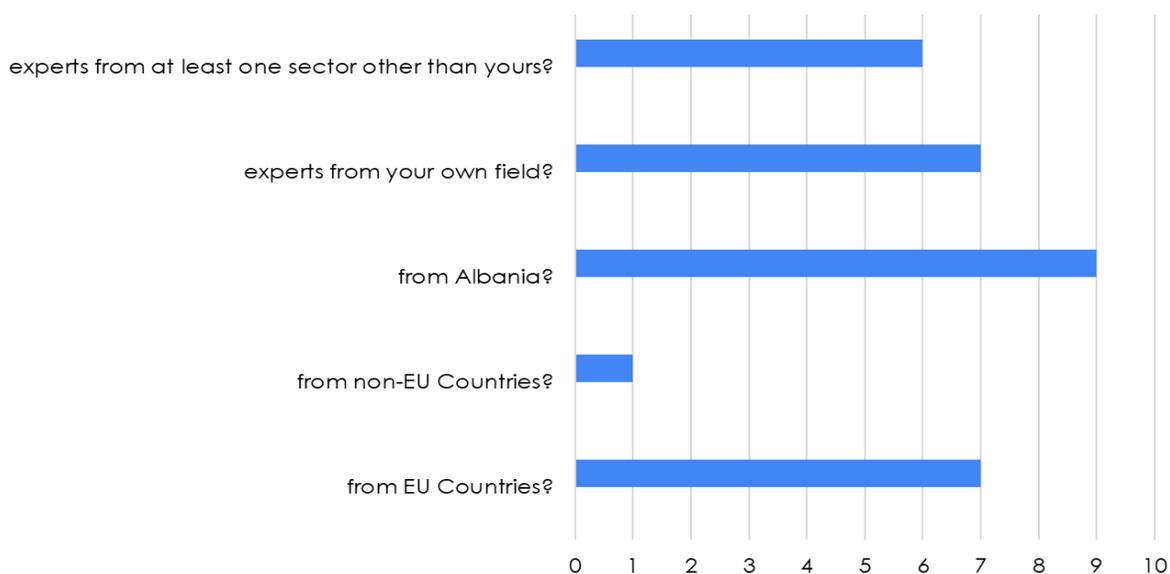
Question 3

If you have published at least 1 contribution in the past 5 years, how many co-authors there were on average?



Question 4

If you have published contributions with multiple authors in the past 5 years, were they...



Impact, dissemination and collaboration

Data analysis

ASA respondents mainly know and use Academia.edu as a repository for finding and sharing academic publications. ResearchGate is also quite common, while other platforms like Scopus, Web of Knowledge and ScienceDirect are much less used.

22% of the interviewees has mainly published conference proceedings in the last 5 years. Book chapters and papers in journals with IF reach 19%, followed by 17% of articles in journals without IF and monographs (14%). Relatively low is the percentage of papers in journals with high IF (7%) and of those who have not published any type of contribution (2%).

Most of the respondents declare that they have published as only author, and the number of those who have published with more than 2-3 co-authors is particularly limited.

Contributions with co-authors were mainly published with colleagues of Albanian nationality, with a predominance of those belonging to the same field of expertise. Last, the percentage of those who have published with co-authors not belonging to EU countries is particularly low.

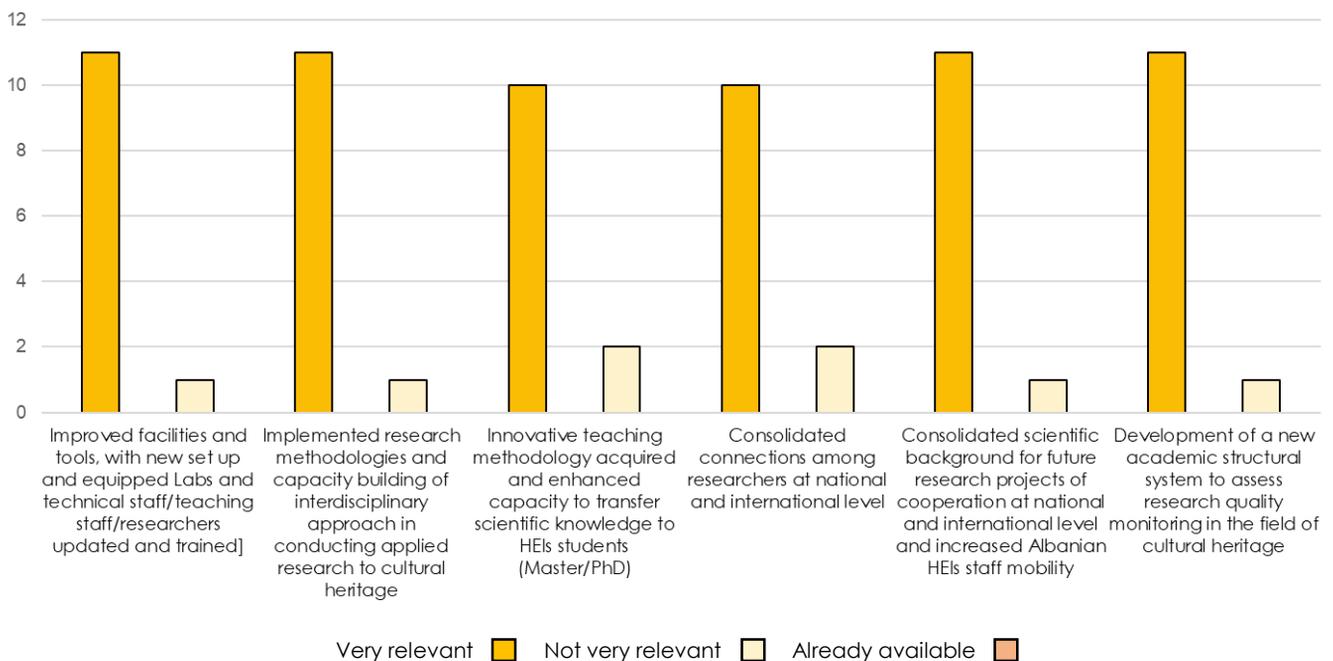


Expectations from the project



Questions 1-2

What are the outcomes of REACH project you consider relevant / already available / not very relevant for your Institution? And which is the most relevant in your opinion?



Data analysis

Almost all of the respondents from ASA identified as very relevant the indicated expected outcomes from REACH project. *Improved facilities and tools, with new set up and equipped Labs and technical staff/teaching staff/researchers updated and trained* has been selected as the most relevant among others.

Only 1-2 of the 12 participants in the survey highlighted how the project outcomes are comparable to skills already available at their Home Institution. *Dissemination and sharing* have been indicated as other expected outcomes.

Expectations from the project

Question 3

Why do you think it is important that your Institution is involved in this project? What is the advantage for the project goals and for the other participants? Which tools, information or knowledge are you able to share? Please, state 3 reasons:



#1 ASA is one of the most important research institutions not only in Albania, but also in the region offering expertise in different areas related to the cultural.

#2 The members of our institution engaged in this project have national and international experience not only in research areas but also in teaching.

#3 The Archaeological Museum (ASA/IA) houses more than 2100 artefacts, from Prehistory to late Medieval period; the archaeological funds (IA) house more than 110.000 archaeological objects of various categories of material.

Question 4

Please complete the sentence: "For my belonging institution, the participation in the REACH project will be considered a success when/if"

The project will be the premises for new generations of trained and performing technical and research staff, with implemented capacities and able to carry out interdisciplinary research on Cultural Heritage.

We will have facilities and tools improved, with new set up and equipped Labs.

REACH will have consolidated scientific background for future research projects at national and international level.



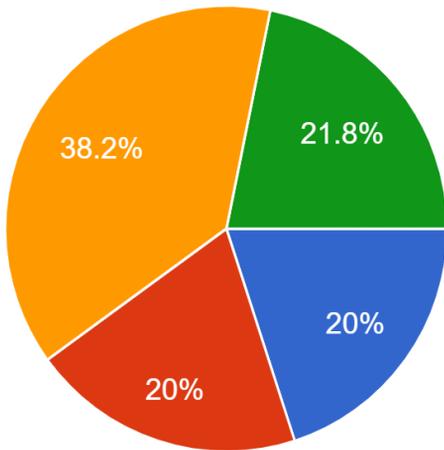
Part TWO

data comparison



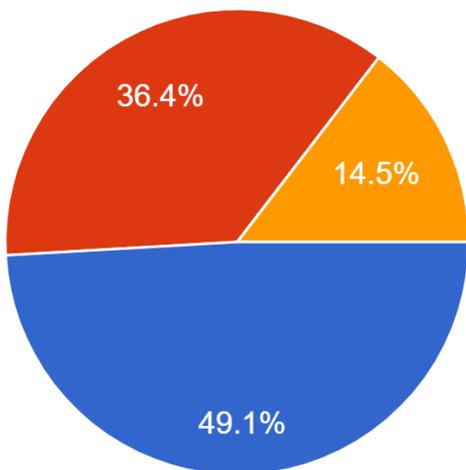
Data comparison

general information



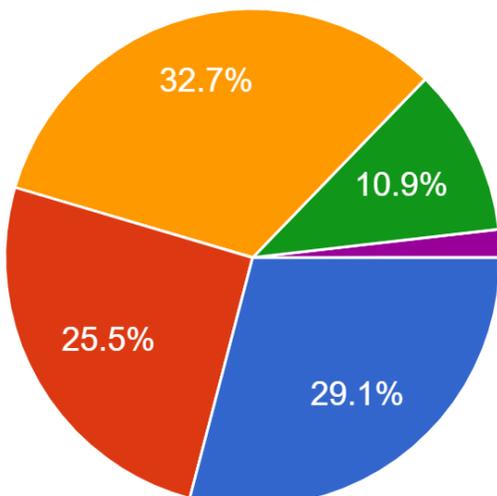
- UNIVERSITETI I ARTEVE
- UNIVERSITETI POLITEKNIK I TIRANES
- UNIVERSETI SHKODRES LUIGJ GURAKUQI
- AKADEMIJA E STUDIMEVE ALBANOLOGJIKE

Data comparison shows that a total of **55 staff members from Albanian academic partners** answered the survey: 11 from UART, 11 from UPT, 21 from UNISHK and 12 from ASA.



- Professor/Lecturer/teaching staff
- Researcher
- Technical staff

49 % of the respondents were members of the **teaching staff** (professors/lecturers), followed by **researchers (36%)** and technical staff (**14%**).

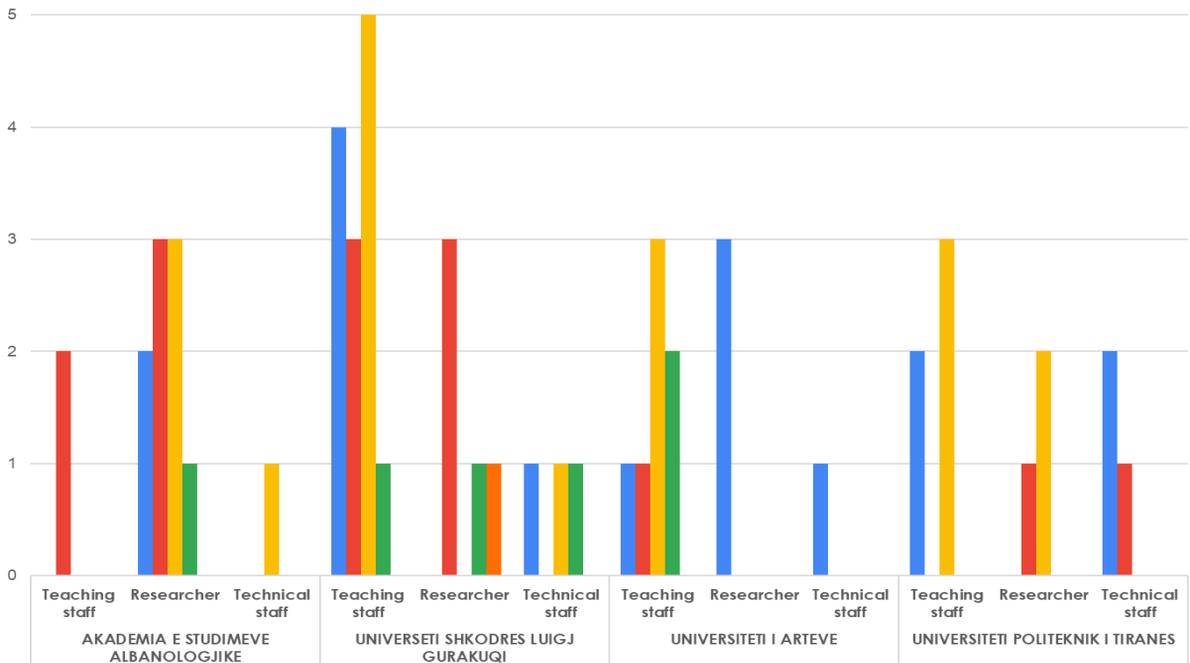


- 25-35
- 35-45
- 45-55
- 55-65
- Above 65

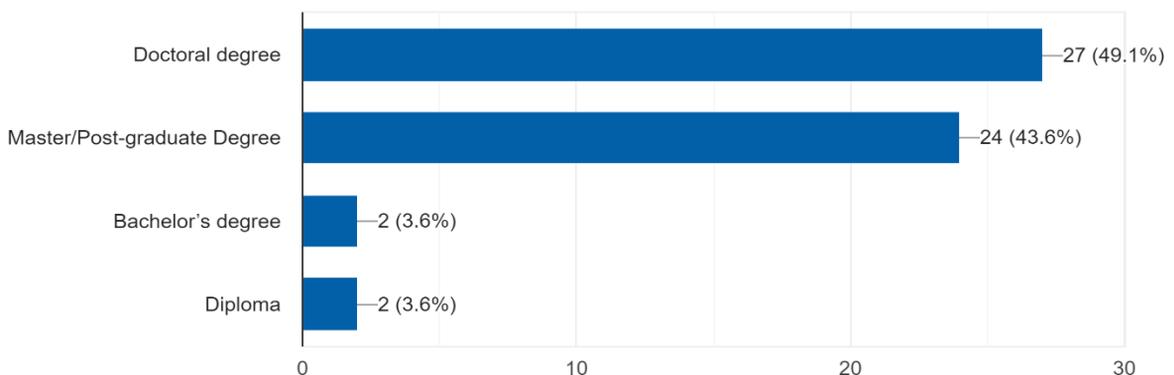
Most of the respondents belonged to the age group between **45-55 years**, followed by 25-35 and 35-45. Lower percentages of answers were provided by the age groups between 55-65 and above 65.

Data comparison

general information



This graph shows all the personal information relating to the collected data. For each partner participating in the survey, the roles of the respondents are indicated and related to the age group they belong to.



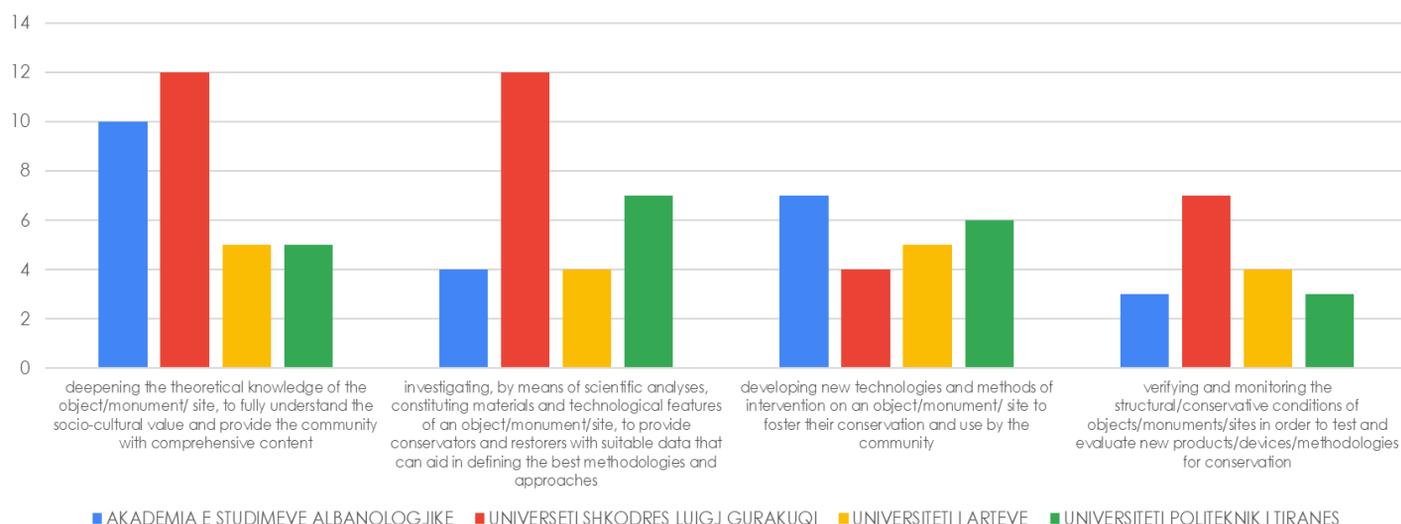
Last, collected data highlight that the percentage of respondents who declare to have a doctorate as highest qualification slightly exceeds that of those with a post-graduate qualification.

Data comparison

skills and competences

Question 1

Please choose the sentence that, in your opinion, better defines the **purpose of research in the field of cultural heritage conservation** (you can select a maximum of two options):



Data demonstrate that most respondents from UNISHK and ASA associate applied research to cultural heritage with theoretical studies mainly aimed at investigating its socio-cultural value, while this purpose is not given a specific relevance from UART and UPT.

Providing support to conservative interventions through the development of updated technologies and tailored intervention strategies able to support conservative interventions is also considered to be a noteworthy purpose of applied research to cultural heritage by respondents from all Albanian partners.

Last, collected information show that, except for UNISHK, relatively less importance is given to the scientific study of constituting materials and making technologies, analogously to monitoring the state of conservation and understanding the degradation phenomena and related causes.

Data comparison

skills and competences

Question 2

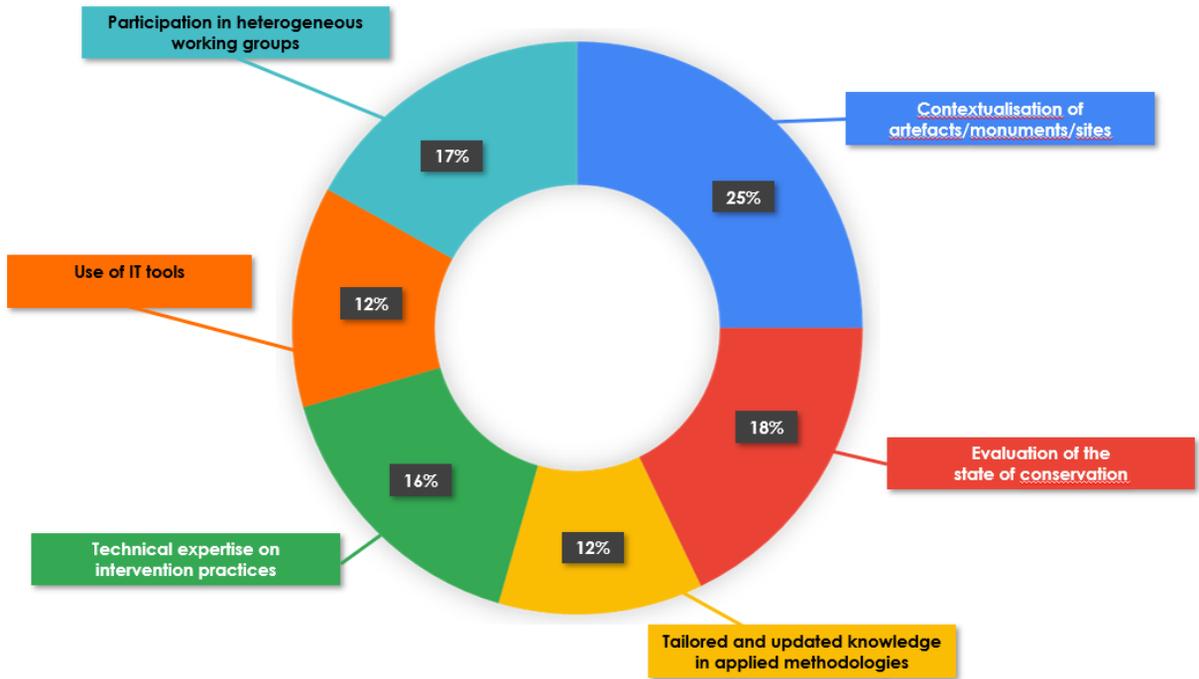
According to your expertise, please assign a value, from 1 to 5, to the relevance of the following skills in the field of applied research to cultural heritage, with specific reference to conservation and restoration:



More than half of the survey respondents (50.9 %) identified *being able to describe and contextualise artefacts and monuments in their archaeological/historical-artistic asset* as the most relevant skill in the field of applied research to cultural heritage (valued 5), followed by *enhancing interpersonal skills for collaboration in heterogeneous working groups* (valued 4).

Acquiring technical expertise on methodologies and intervention practices for the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments, together with *tailored and updated knowledge in the field of applied methodologies to the conservation and restoration of artefacts and monuments* have, respectively, been valued 3 by 27.3% and 25.5% of respondents, thus identified as skills of a moderate relevance in the field of interest.

Last, it can be observed that *being trained in the use of IT tools for data storage, management and implementation of conservation project/activities* has been assigned a low value (2) by about 10 % of respondents.



The above pie chart provides an overview of the collected data from a different perspective: here, the total percentage of survey respondents is related to the skills selected as more relevant in the field of applied research to cultural heritage.

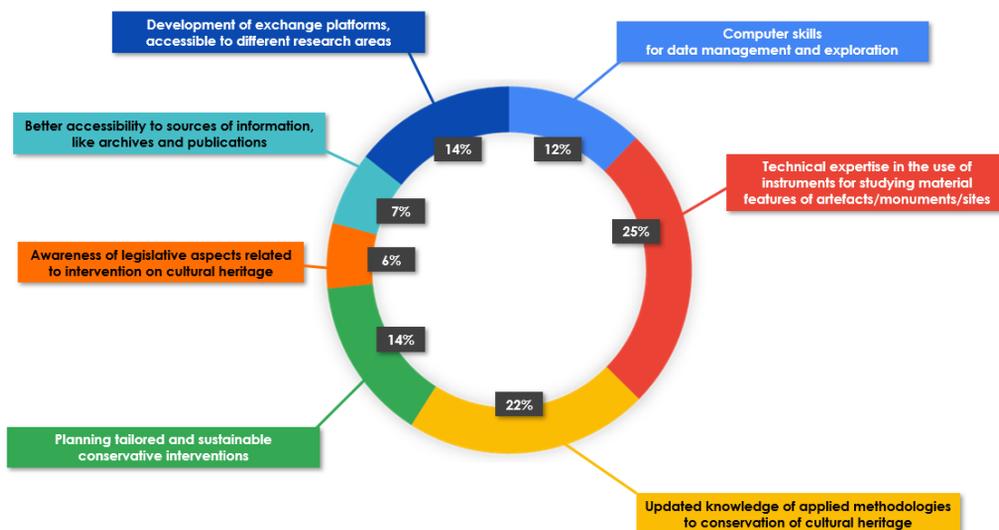
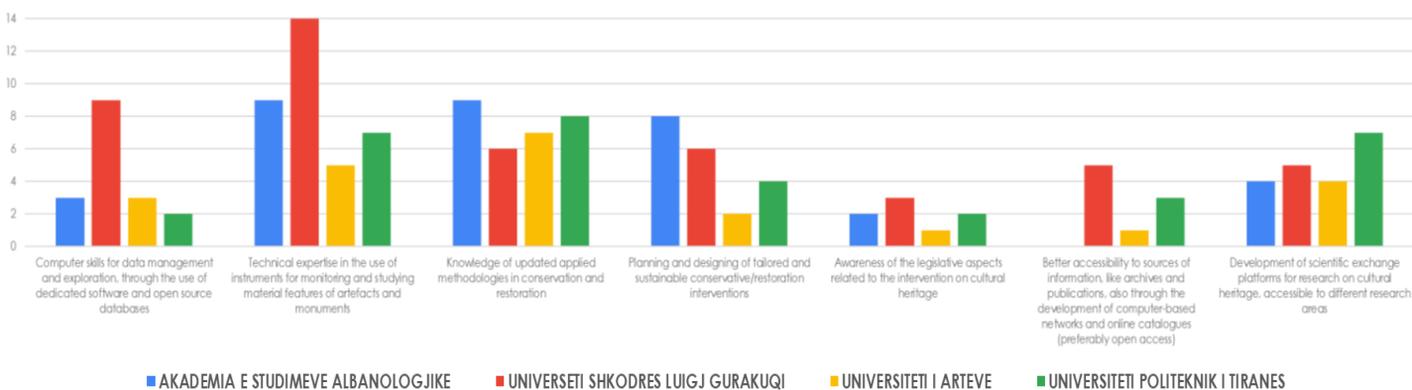
Data confirm the previous discussion, as it can be observed that more weight is assigned to skills in the research areas of humanities and social sciences; the need for collaboration in an interdisciplinary environment also stems.

Data comparison

skills and competences

Question 3

Considering your specific field of interest, please indicate which of the following skills should be improved in the Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in the field of cultural heritage study and conservation (you can select a maximum of three options):



Data from the survey show that *technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments* has been identified as the main skill to be improved, followed by *knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration*.

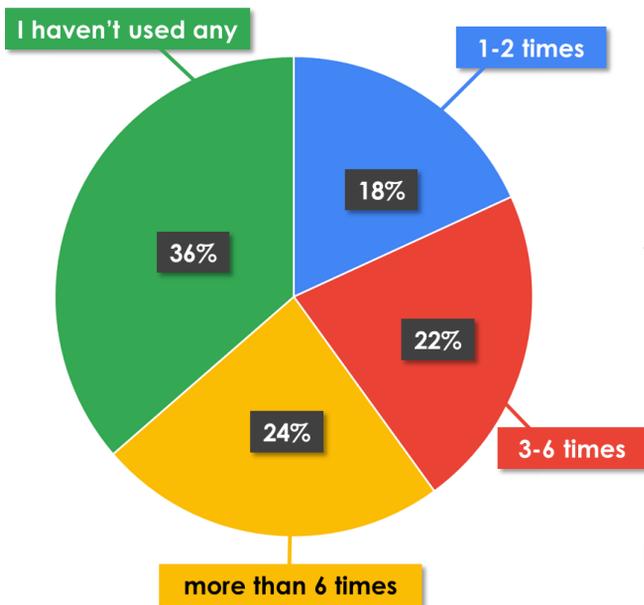
Planning and designing of tailored and sustainable conservative/restoration interventions, alongside the *development of scientific exchange platforms for research on cultural heritage* also stand as relevant, while a *better accessibility to sources of information* and the *awareness of legislative aspects related to the intervention on cultural heritage* do not seem to stand as priorities.

Data comparison

facilities and equipment

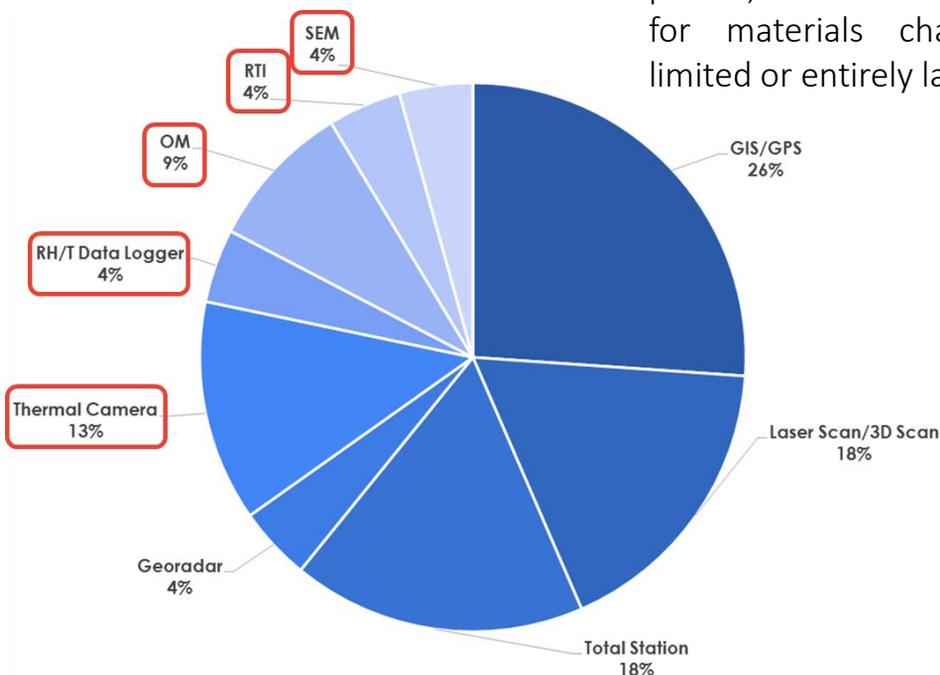
Question 1

In the frame of research activities you have been involved in the past 5 years, how many times you have used (or you have asked to use) technical-scientific instruments?



36% of interviewed from Albanian academic partners has never used scientific equipment, followed by 24% who has used them more than 6 times.

However, if a closer, more detailed look is given at the data, it emerges that the use of GIS/GPS software prevail, while scientific instruments for materials characterisation is limited or entirely lacking.

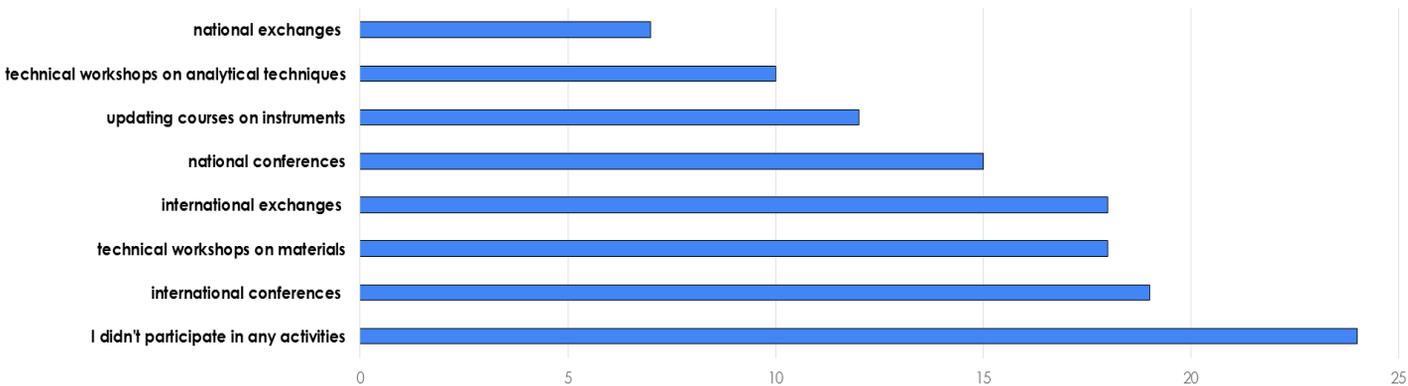


Data comparison

facilities and equipment

Question 2

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities you have participated in the past 5 year:

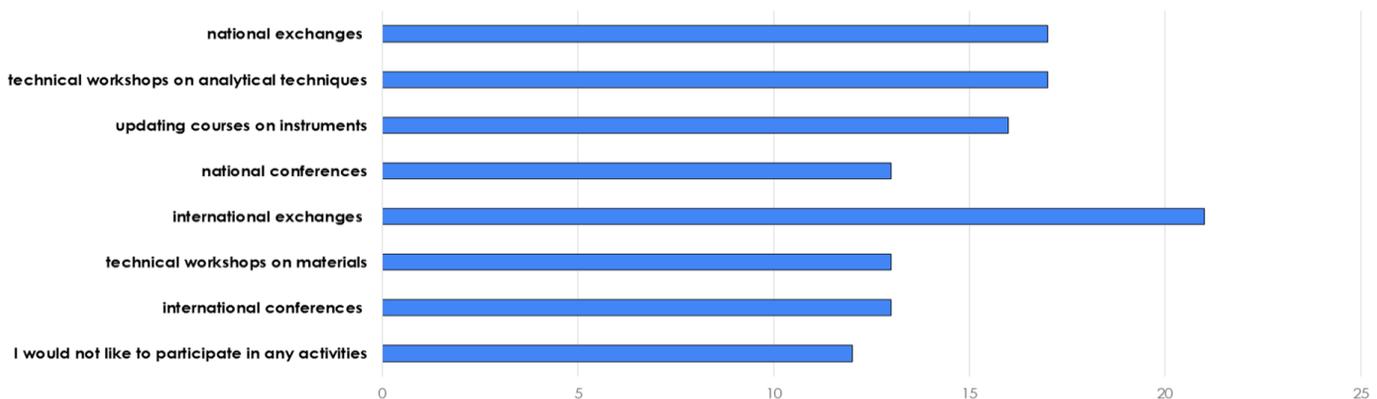


Collected data show that most of respondents did not participate in any of the listed activities.

Interviewees are mainly interested in international conferences, followed by technical workshops on materials and international exchanges.

Question 3

If you are a technician at your institution, please indicate which of the following activities would you like to be available for updating your knowledge and skills:



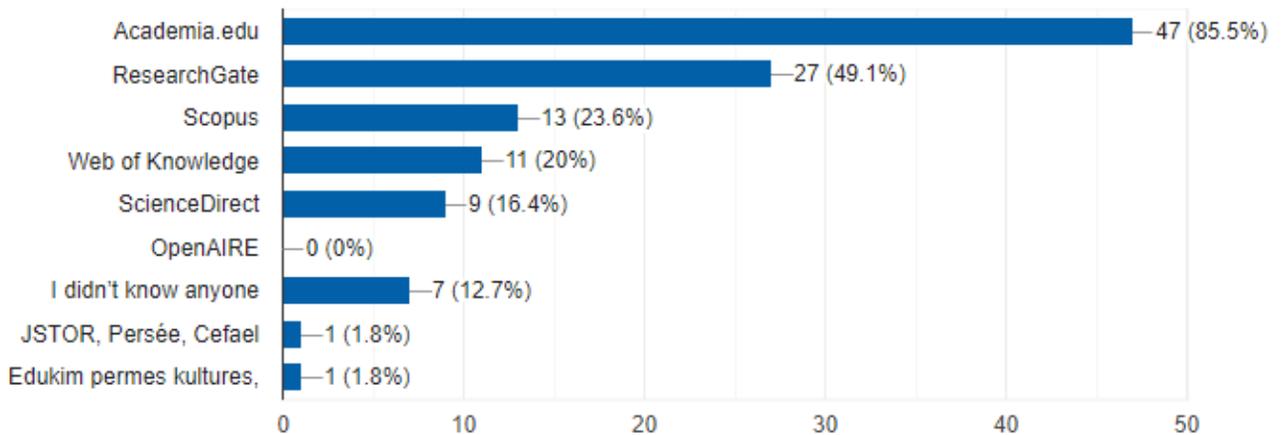
Among technical staff, the willingness to participate in more international and national exchanges emerges, alongside the need for technical workshops on analytical techniques.

Data comparison

impact, dissemination and collaboration

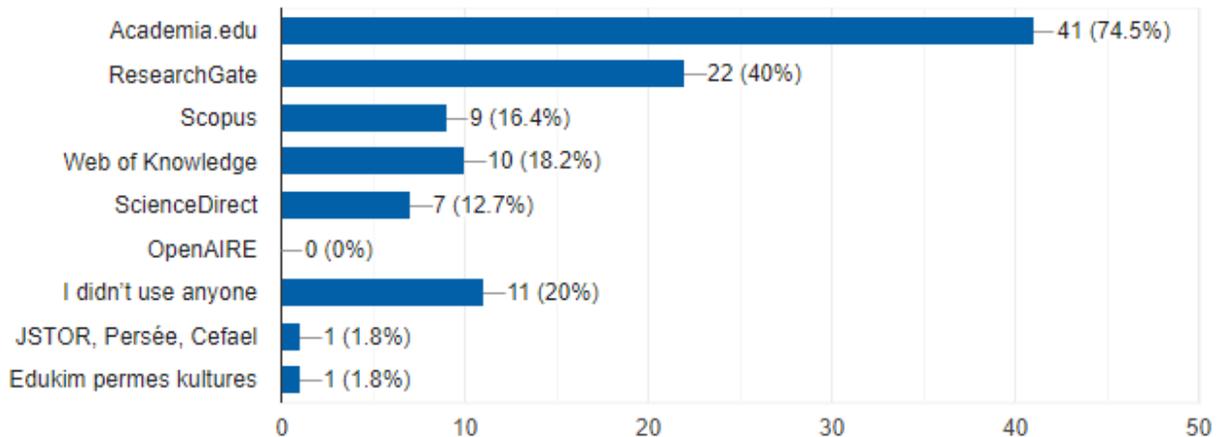
Question 1a

Which repositories for academic studies do you know (you can select more than one)?



Question 1b

Which repositories for academic studies do you use (you can select more than one)?

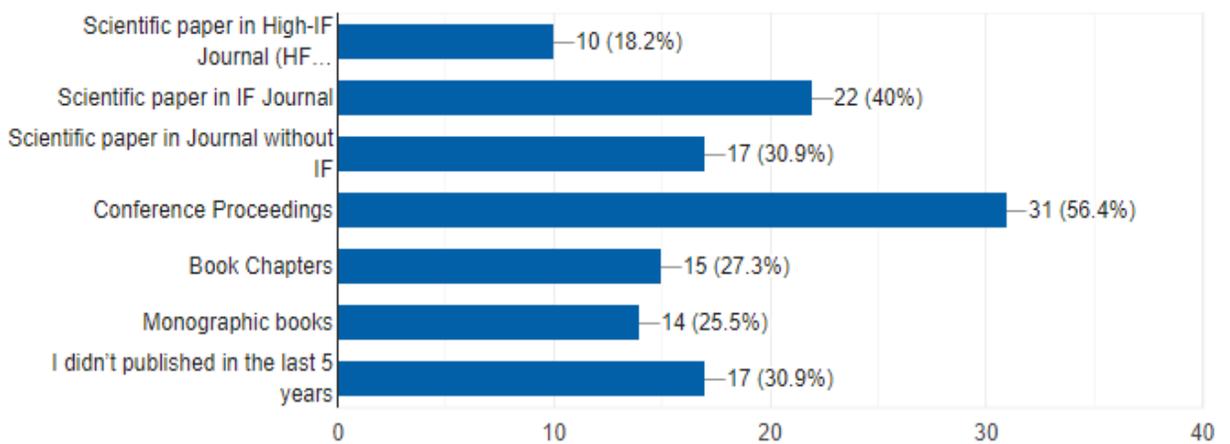


Data comparison

impact, dissemination and collaboration

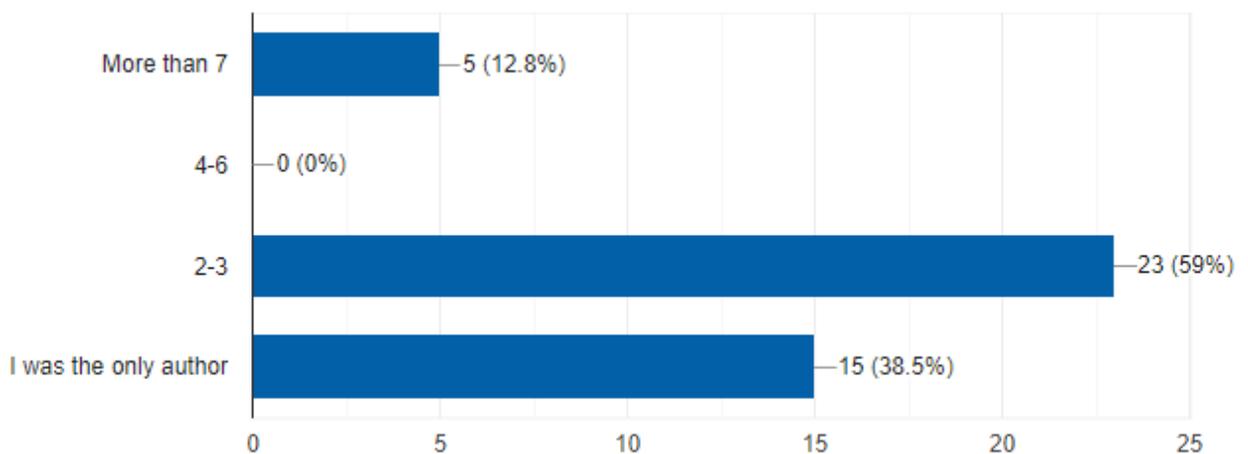
Question 2

Which types of contributions have you published in the past 5 years (you can select more than one)?



Question 3

If you have published at least 1 contribution in the past 5 years, how many co-authors there were on average?

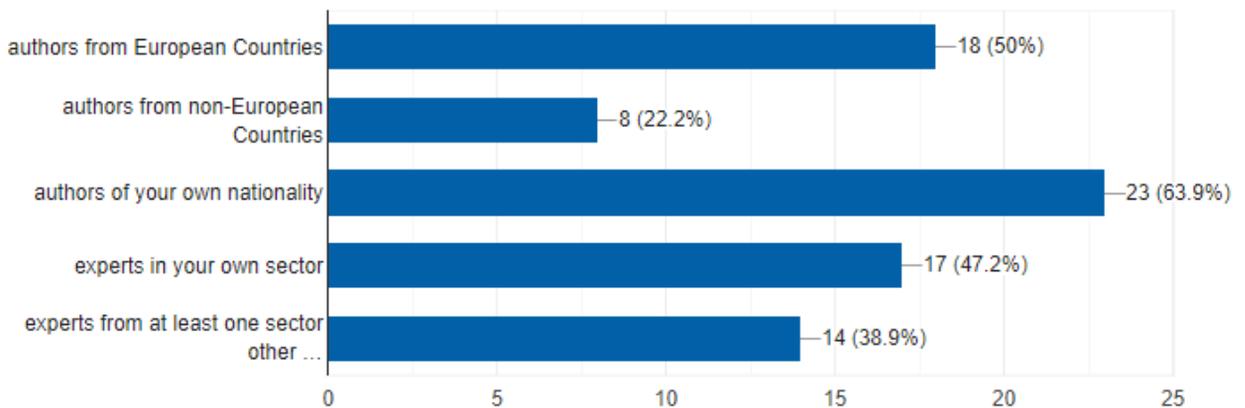


Data comparison

impact, dissemination and collaboration

Question 4

If you have published contributions with multiple authors in the past 5 years, please indicate if they were (you can select more than one):



It emerged from the survey that 43% of Albanian academic staff members mainly know and use Academia.edu as a repository for finding and sharing publications. ResearchGate is also common (22%), while other platforms like Scopus, Web of Knowledge and ScienceDirect are much less used.

24% of the interviewees has mainly published conference proceedings, while papers in journals with IF reach 18%, followed by 14% of academic staff without publications, 13% with papers in journal without IF, 12% who published book chapters and 11% monographs. articles in journals without IF and monographs (14%). Relatively low is the percentage of papers in journals with high IF (8%).

Data also highlighted that about 59% of the respondents who have published in the past five years had between 2-3 co-authors, followed by 38.5% with no co-authors.

Contributions with co-authors were mainly published with colleagues of Albanian nationality (64%), with a predominance of those belonging to the same field of expertise (47%).

Focus on
identified n  eds



In this perspective report, results stemmed from an in-depth analysis of the Albanian academic context in the field of applied research to cultural heritage conservation have been presented and discussed.

According to **Part 1 | GENERAL INFORMATION**, the questionnaire, administered to all REACH project Albanian academic partners, collected a total of 55 responses, mainly from members of the teaching staff aged between 45 and 55 years. On the one hand, this has allowed to outline a scenario mainly focused on the perspective and expertise of staff who has been part of the academic environment for a longer time – and, thus, more aware of the need to be met; on the other hand, minor interaction occurred with technical and laboratory personnel, whose responses to the survey did not exceed the percentage of 14%.

Data collected from **Part 2 | SKILLS AND COMPETENCES** allowed to outline a detailed scenario on current tailored skills, know-how and competences in applied research to cultural heritage conservation available at Albanian HEIs. It emerged that respondents mainly associate applied research to cultural heritage with humanities and theoretical studies, aimed at better understanding its socio-cultural value. Less relevance seems to be given to science-related disciplines and topics, as characterising constituting materials and making technologies, monitoring the state of conservation and understanding the degradation phenomena of cultural heritage.

The enhancement of interpersonal skills for working in heterogeneous and interdisciplinary groups, alongside the ability to support conservative interventions through the development of updated technologies and tailored, sustainable strategies, have been selected as key competences in the field of cultural heritage studies.

In line with achieved data, among skills that should be improved at Albanian HEIs to increase research capacity in cultural heritage conservation, the development of technical expertise in the use of instruments for monitoring and studying material features of artefacts and monuments has been identified as the main one, followed by knowledge of updated applied methodologies in conservation and restoration.





Data collected from **Part 3 | FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT** have been functional to acquire information on available facilities and equipment at respondents' Home Institution and their use.

It emerged that 36% of interviewed from Albanian academic partners has never used scientific equipment; moreover, collected data also demonstrated that, when referring to scientific instruments, most of the interviewees indicated GIS/ GPS software or stations for on-the-field surveys, while the use of equipment for materials characterisation is very limited or lacking.

As regards, specifically, the interviewed technical staff, about 25% declare that they have not had the opportunity to participate in events like workshops, conferences, exchange programs on the national and / or international territory in the last 5 years, underlining the interest towards the possibility of participating above all in workshops on specific materials and techniques, as well as in international exchange programs.



Part 4 | IMPACT, DISSEMINATION, COLLABORATIONS allowed to delineate a picture of the currently adopted tools for sharing and disseminating applied research and its results.

Data analysis highlighted that Albanian academic staff members mainly publish conference proceedings and know and use Academia.edu as a repository for finding and sharing publications, followed by ResearchGate. Data also showed that about 59% of the respondents who have published in the past five years had between 2-3 co-authors, followed by 38.5% with no co-authors. Contributions with co-authors were mainly published with colleagues of Albanian nationality (64%), with a predominance of those belonging to the same field of expertise (47%).



In **Part 5 | EXPECTATIONS FROM THE PROJECT** were evaluated on the basis of respondents' answers. Being provided with new set up and equipped Labs and technical staff/teaching staff/researchers updated and trained has been selected as the most relevant project outcome to be achieved, followed by the development of implemented research methodology and innovative teaching methods. Interviewees from each Albanian academic partner also conceive the project as a fundamental opportunity for the development of new interdisciplinary working environments and as a starting point for future research projects to be shared and implemented in the cultural heritage sector.



This document has been designed and drafted by Dr. Sara Fiorentino, research fellow at the Department of Cultural Heritage, University of Bologna.

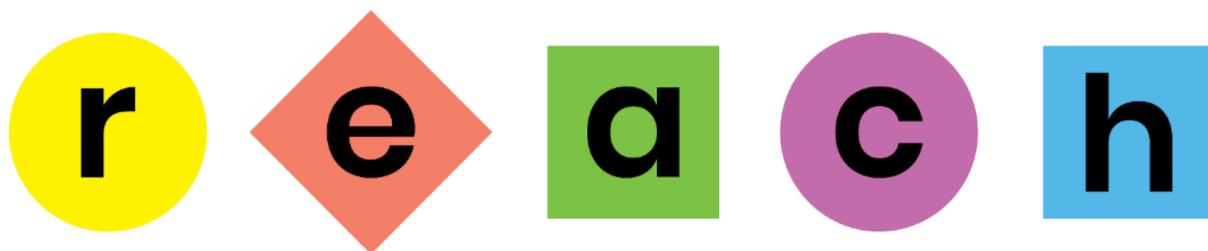
The undersigned was also responsible for data collection and processing, as well as the preparation of materials for the presentation of the need analysis results to all project partners at the Intermediate Meeting in Shkoder.

Albanian project partners are warmly thanked for having promptly answered the questionnaires; the undersigned is also grateful to: the project coordinator for having acted as an intermediary in the data collection phase; dr. Tania Chinni for her assistance in the preparatory phase of the survey and her kind collaboration on data elaboration; prof. Mariangela Vandini and Dr. Federico Messersì – members of project REACH working group at the University of Bologna – for having supervised all the implementation phases of the WP1 need analysis.

Ravenna, 26th October 2020

Sara Fiorentino, PhD

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sara Fiorentino". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and 'F'.



Improving **RE**search capacities
of **Al**banian higher education institutions
in conservation and restoration of **C**ultural **H**eritage



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