

## **Action Plan 2024-2025 of the National Cyber Security Strategy 2020-2025**

Considering the increased cyber security threats and attacks against the Albanian critical and important information infrastructures, the Albanian government has increased its efforts to achieve a high level of cyber security at national level. The National Cyber Security Strategy 2020-2025 foresees the need to revise the respective Action Plan every two years, based on the development dynamics of the cyber security sector. In this context, the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cyber Security (NAECCS) has revised the Action Plan of the National Cyber Security Strategy for the period 2024-2025, drafting a new strategic plan in accordance with the policy goals and specific objectives of the National Cyber Security Strategy 2020-2025. This action plan, in addition to NAECCS, also includes several other institutions such as, State Police, National Agency for Information Society, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, National Authority on Classified Information Security, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, Electronic and Postal Communication Authority, Coordination Center against Violent Extremism, State Agency on Child Rights and Protection, and Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, which are responsible for its implementation.

The revising process has included coordination and periodic consultations with all responsible institutions and interest groups regarding the preliminary draft of the new action plan drawn up, through meetings and continuous email communications to request opinion and suggestions, as well as integrate relevant comments of all parties involved in line with strategic objectives. After integrating the comments and suggestions of the involved parties, the Action Plan 2024-2025 has also been consulted with the experts of the Regional School of Public Administration to perform a more accurate forecast and analysis regarding the necessary budget, leading to the preparation of the final version of this plan.

The Action Plan 2024-2025 on cybersecurity is an ambitious strategic plan and its implementation contributes to the Government's efforts to guarantee cybersecurity at the national level, through protecting critical and important information infrastructures, increasing capacities and awareness, creating the necessary mechanisms for the security of citizens in cyberspace, with a focus on children and young people, and increasing national and international cooperation with strategic partners in the field of cybersecurity.

This new action plan addresses the priorities, needs, and challenges regarding cyber security at the national level, through the provision of necessary activities in accordance with the relevant specific goals and objectives. These activities aim to improve policies and procedures, increase technical and human capacities, strengthen cyber security structures and infrastructures, prevent and reduce phenomena such as cybercrime and illegal online content that threaten the safety of citizens in cyber space, as well as strengthen national and international cooperation, aiming to increase the the preparedness and resilience of Albania in the field of cybersecurity.

The Action Plan 2024-2025 will contribute to achieving the following results, aimed by National Cyber Security Strategy 2020-2025 as well:

- Improvement of policy and legal frameworks, including laws, strategic policies, regulations, methodologies, and procedures. For instance, the new Methodology for the Identification and Classification of Critical and Important Information Infrastructures has been drafted based on national context, needs and priorities, and in line with EU guidelines and Directives.
- Empowerment of cybersecurity structures and their respective technical infrastructures regarding technical and professional capacities as well as their respective procedures. For instance, this includes many activities such as the capacity improvement of the National Security Operational Centre (SOC) for monitoring and handling cybersecurity incidents, establishment of malware analysis, cyber investigation and cyber incident simulation laboratories, technical and professional capacity building, technological analysis of the environment of critical infrastructures, optimization of security infrastructure, improvement of incident handling and management procedures, etc.
- Awareness raising and education as well as improvement of prevention and protection measures regarding cybersecurity threats, cybercrime, and illegal online contents, internet safety and child online protection, as well as violent extremism and radicalization in cyberspace.
- Increasing professional capacities in cybersecurity through educational programmes. To achieve this, the revised action plan foresees the design of new study programs and updating existing higher education curricula in the field of cybersecurity, online courses, training programs and cyber drills for cybersecurity experts of the institutions and operators of critical information infrastructures, etc.
- Strengthening national and international cooperation, where several activities are planned, such as a forum with public and private institutions in Albania and international agencies, creation of a cyber diplomacy structure in MEFA in coordination with NAECCS, drafting and signing bilateral and multilateral agreements in cybersecurity, promotion and implementation of international law, norms and CBM-s regarding responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, active participation in UN, NATO, OSCE, EU, and other international organizations, regional cyber drills, participation in international projects, etc.

The Action Plan 2024-2025 also contributes to the European integration process of Albania, as it foresees activities regarding the improvement of current legal and policy framework through the implementation of EU policies, cybersecurity standards, and best practices, and international cooperation with strategic partners.

The status of the Action Plan 2024-2025 is in process.