



**SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE
FOR LEADERSHIP
AND ACTION**



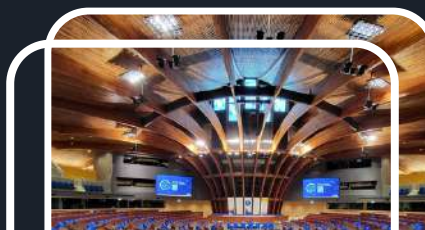
SILA PORTFOLIO

2022 – 2025

Prepared by :

Asst. Prof. PhD

Vladimir Kitanovski



+38970462441

<https://silainstitute.mk/wp/>

Str. Pelister N.35, 7000 Bitola,
N.Macedonia



ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE, POLICY, AND INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action - Portfolio '22-'25

Portfolio Overview

The Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action (SILA) was established in 2022 with a clear mission to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and research-driven solutions in the fields of education, sustainability, and food systems. Since its founding, SILA has actively engaged over 80 professionals through formal agreements, ensuring high-level contributions to the successful implementation of its projects.

SILA is led by Asst. Prof. Dr. Vladimir Kitanovski, a university professor at the Faculty of Technological Sciences, Department of Food Technology at the state-owned Mother Teresa University in Skopje. His extensive academic network enables SILA to involve experts from various fields, particularly academia, to contribute to the Institute's mission. This academic integration is one of SILA's core strengths, allowing for dynamic, evidence-based project implementation. Over the past three years, SILA's activities have been strategically developed across three key pillars:

- Education and Digital Transformation – promoting innovation and digital tools in formal and informal learning environments.
- Sustainable Food Systems through the WEFE Nexus and Food Packaging Technologies – addressing the interconnectedness of water, energy, food, and ecosystems with a focus on innovative and responsible packaging solutions.
- Environmental Sustainability and Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) – implementing LCA methods to support evidence-based decision-making and promote environmentally sound practices.

Together, these pillars reflect SILA's commitment to impactful, multidisciplinary work grounded in scientific knowledge and societal relevance.

SILA Profile



Who We Are

The Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action (SILA) is a dynamic interdisciplinary research and innovation institute established in 2022. Our organization is dedicated to driving sustainable change in the fields of education, food systems, and environmental sustainability, with a strong emphasis on leveraging digital transformation and the WEF E (Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem) nexus.

Our Mission:

We are committed to empowering academic and professional communities by fostering leadership, promoting cutting-edge research, and facilitating collaborative initiatives that advance sustainable practices and digital innovation in the food and environmental sectors.

Our Vision:

We envision a future where evidence-based strategies and inclusive leadership drive the transformation of food systems and environmental management, ensuring resilient, sustainable communities across the region and beyond.

Our Stakeholders:

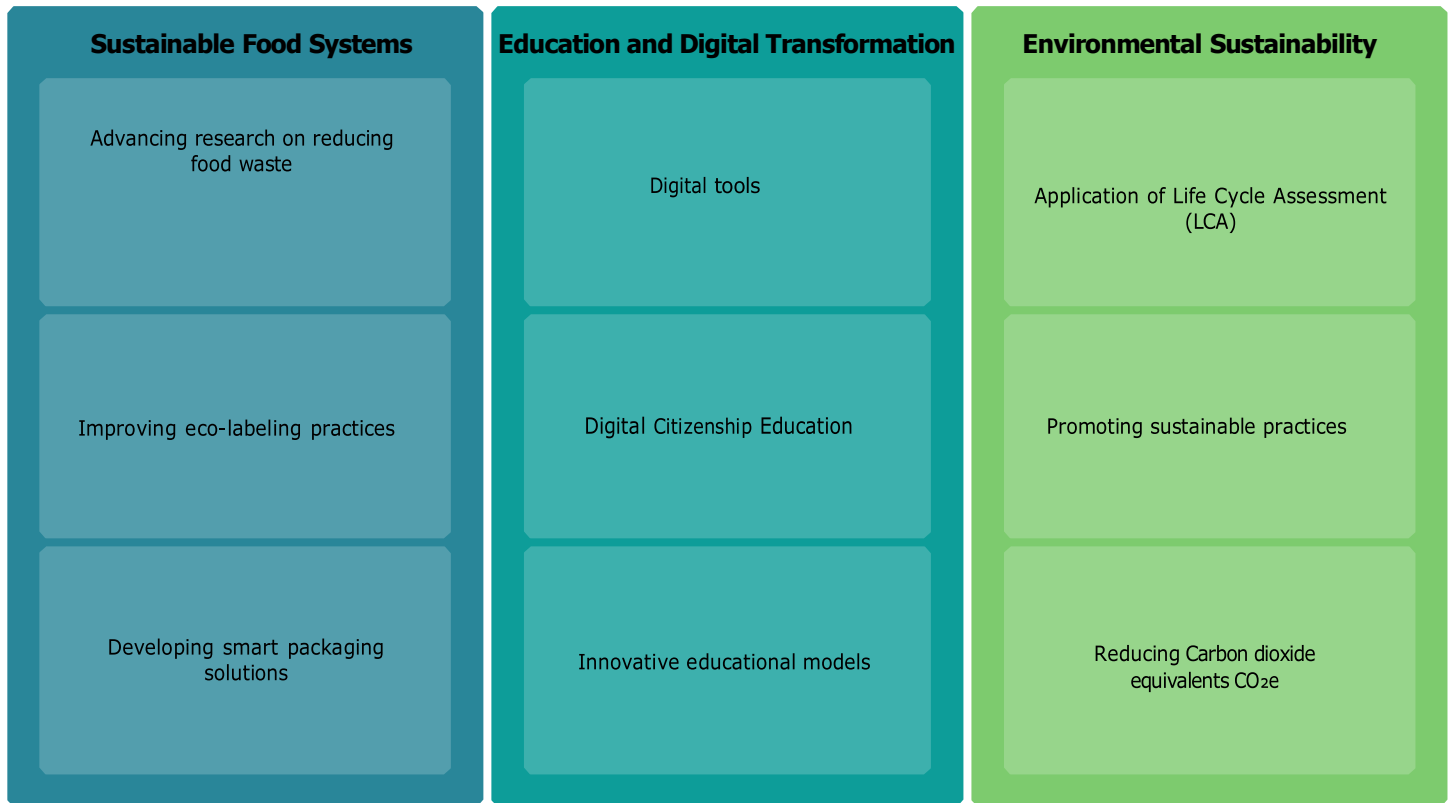
SILA's work is supported by a diverse range of stakeholders, including academic institutions, governmental agencies, industry partners, and non-governmental organizations. We actively engage over 80 professionals through formal collaborations, ensuring that our initiatives benefit from multifaceted expertise and real-world insights.

Our Operation and Reach:

Based in Bitola, North Macedonia—with close ties to key academic institutions like the Mother Teresa University and University St. Clement Ohridski—our operation spans a wide geographic and disciplinary spectrum. Although still in its early years, our agile team of experts and researchers represents a diverse workforce drawn mainly from academia and the broader research community. This diversity fuels our innovative approach and allows us to bridge gaps between theory and practice effectively. At SILA, we combine traditional research methodologies with modern digital tools to address contemporary challenges in sustainable food systems and environmental management.

Our strategic focus per pillars

- Sustainable food systems and Packaging Technologies: Advancing research on reducing food waste, improving eco-labeling practices, and developing smart packaging solutions.
- Education and Digital Transformation: Implementing innovative educational models and digital tools.
- Environmental Sustainability and LCA Assessment: Promoting sustainable practices through the application of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methods.



Our commitment to excellence and our expansive network of academic and professional partners are the cornerstones of our ongoing success and the driving force behind our future initiatives.

What We Do

At the Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action (SILA), our core mission is translated into action through a wide range of activities aligned with our three strategic pillars. To achieve our goals, we focus on the following core areas of work:

Development of Educational Materials

We design and produce tailor-made educational content, toolkits, policy briefs, and learning modules that support capacity building across all three thematic areas. These materials are used in schools, universities, public institutions, and by adult learners. Our materials emphasize critical thinking, applied knowledge, and innovation-driven problem-solving.

Training and Capacity Building

We conduct structured training sessions, professional development programs, workshops, and seminars for a wide range of target groups — from teachers and university students to policy-makers

and food industry stakeholders. Our trainings cover diverse topics such as digital safety and transformation in education, food waste prevention, ecolabeling, smart packaging technologies, and environmental impact assessments.

Research and Applied Studies

SILA regularly initiates and participates in applied research projects at both national and international levels. We specialize in integrating scientific methods with real-world challenges, particularly in the domains of food technology, packaging innovation, and environmental systems. Our researchers contribute to scientific publications and support evidence-based decision-making processes.

Networking and Collaboration

A key strength of SILA is our expansive academic and professional network. We create and participate in cross-sector collaborations, consortiums, and research alliances with universities, NGOs, public institutions, and private sector entities. These partnerships enable knowledge exchange, joint project implementation, and the amplification of impact across Europe and the Western Balkans.

Public Awareness and Dissemination Activities

We actively promote knowledge sharing through media outreach, public campaigns, digital storytelling, podcast production, and organization of international conferences and symposia. These activities help raise awareness and engage communities on the importance of sustainable food systems and environmental responsibility.

Training and Capacity Building



Development of Educational Materials



Networking and Collaboration



Through these actions, SILA not only contributes to knowledge generation but also fosters leadership, innovation, and practical solutions in key areas affecting both the environment and society.

Detailed Portfolio (2022-2025)

Granted Projects

1. Production of Teaching Aids for Primary and Secondary Education (2023)

- **Sponsor:** CES Academy
- **Purpose and Activities:** Developed five textbooks tailored for teaching staff in primary and secondary schools. Each manual covered essential topics on sustainable development, climate awareness, and resource management.
- **Results:** The materials were positively received by educators for their simplicity and relevance, contributing to the modernization of the national education system in North Macedonia.
- **SILA funding share:** 15.000 euro

2. Project "Tourism for Future" (2023)

- **Sponsor:** IPA-CBC
- **Objectives and Activities:** Focused on sustainable hotel capacity management through two regional training sessions. Stakeholders—including hotel managers, tourism professionals, and local community representatives—were trained in eco-friendly practices and energy efficiency.
- **Results:** Widespread implementation of green practices among participating hotels enhanced eco-tourism awareness and capacity in the region.
- **SILA funding share:** 1.800 euro

3. Training "Climate Resilience Management in WEF E Sectors" (2024)

- **Sponsor:** COST
- **Objective and Activities:** Held in Ohrid, this training brought together over 40 participants to develop integrated management skills across the Water, Energy, Food, and Ecosystem (WEFE) sectors.
- **Results:** Participants, including public officials, NGO members, and academics, gained practical tools to support climate-resilient planning and policies through a systems-thinking WEFE approach.
- **SILA funding share:** 8.000 euro

4. Erasmus+ Project "Understanding the WEF E Nexus" (2024)

- **Sponsor:** Erasmus+
- **Objectives and Activities:** Delivered a ten-day interdisciplinary program to deepen the understanding of integrated WEFE Nexus strategies for climate mitigation and resilience.
- **Results:** Enhanced cross-sectoral capacities and initiated collaborative networks among institutions involved in environmental governance and education.
- **SILA funding share:** 7.854 euro

5. Erasmus+ Project "Sustainable and Healthy Living Program for Adults" (2024)

- **Sponsor:** Erasmus+
- **Objectives and Activities:** Mirroring the WEFE structure, this training targeted adult learners with a focus on sustainable and healthy living practices.

- **Results:** Participants acquired tools and insights into food choices, nutrition, environmental sustainability, and lifelong well-being strategies.
 - **SILA funding share:** 3.578 euro
6. **Capacity and Operational Analysis of the Bureau for Development of Education (2024)**
- **Sponsor:** Ministry of Education and Science – Bureau for Development of Education
 - **Objectives and Activities:** This project involved a comprehensive assessment of the Bureau’s internal capacities and operational processes. The analysis included stakeholder interviews, institutional diagnostics, and benchmarking with similar agencies in the region, aiming to identify gaps, strengths, and opportunities for institutional enhancement.
 - **Results:** The analysis provided a clear overview of existing human and technical capacities and outlined recommendations for improved performance and alignment with current educational reforms. It served as a key input for future institutional development plans and was well-received by both the Bureau and the Ministry.
 - **SILA funding share:** 7.550 euro
7. **Functional Analysis and Systematization Framework for the Bureau for Education Development (2024)**
- **Sponsor:** Ministry of Education and Science – Bureau for Education Development
 - **Objectives and Activities:** The project’s core focus was to conduct a functional analysis of the Bureau’s work, followed by the development of two formal documents: an Act on Internal Organization and an Act on Systematization of Jobs. Activities included organizational workflow mapping, task evaluations, and role rationalization to improve the efficiency and strategic alignment of the Bureau.
 - **Results:** The project resulted in a modernized framework for the Bureau's internal structure, enhancing institutional transparency, accountability, and role clarity. The new organizational documents support better governance and operational adaptability, aligning the Bureau's structure with the evolving demands of the national education system.
 - **SILA funding share:** 7.300 euro

Societal Impact




Through its projects, SILA has achieved measurable societal impact in several key areas:

- **Educational Reform and Capacity Building:** By producing modern teaching aids and organizing specialized trainings, SILA directly supports the professional development of educators and public sector workers, empowering them to deliver content aligned with global sustainability goals.
- **Environmental Literacy and Behavior Change:** Projects like "Tourism for Future" and WEFE-focused trainings have led to improved environmental awareness among key stakeholders, fostering eco-conscious decision-making at the institutional and individual level.
- **Cross-sector Collaboration and Policy Influence:** SILA’s approach to engaging academia, civil society, and government bodies facilitates dialogue and cooperation, often resulting in the implementation of sustainable practices and shaping of local development strategies.

Economic Performance

SILA's operational model combines academic expertise with project-based funding, ensuring a flexible yet sustainable financial structure:

- **Project-Driven Revenue Streams:** All activities are funded through national and international grants, which support both implementation and human resource engagement. This has led to over 80 contractual engagements with professionals since 2022.
- **Value Creation Through Innovation:** SILA contributes to economic development by improving the employability of participants through upskilling, particularly in green transition sectors (e.g., sustainable tourism, WEFE resource management).
- **Efficient Resource Management:** By leveraging university networks and knowledge hubs, SILA minimizes overhead costs and maximizes knowledge transfer, ensuring high impact with lean operations.

<p>Projects</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 7 successfully implemented national and international projects since 2023, including Erasmus+, COST, CES Academy, National bodies and IPA-CBC-funded initiatives.● Topics covered include sustainable education, eco-tourism, WEFE Nexus training, and adult health and sustainability.● Over 80 professionals engaged through contractual agreements.
<p>Innovation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Developed first-of-their-kind teaching aids in North Macedonia linking climate, sustainability, and pedagogy.● Pioneered WEFE Nexus training formats integrating water, energy, food, and ecosystems with climate resilience strategies.● Promoted sustainable tourism practices with measurable behavioral changes in the private sector.
<p>Performance</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrated capacity to build cross-sectoral networks (education, tourism, government, NGOs).● Recognized for boosting societal awareness and promoting circular and sustainable economies.● High participant satisfaction and implementation rates in post-training evaluations.● Financial sustainability ensured through successful grant acquisition and strategic academic partnerships

Outlook

As the Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action (SILA) enters its next phase of development, our focus remains on expanding our impact and deepening our commitment to sustainable, inclusive, and evidence-based transformation in the fields of education, food systems, and environmental stewardship.

In the coming year, SILA will prioritize:

- **Strengthening Food Research & Sustainability:** With increasing relevance of food system resilience, we aim to initiate targeted research projects addressing food loss, sustainable packaging, and WEFE Nexus-informed food strategies, in collaboration with academic and industry stakeholders.
- **Digital Education for All:** Building on past educational successes, we will introduce more digitally integrated learning tools, particularly for marginalized or rural communities. We plan to develop interactive educational platforms and expand our training curricula to foster critical thinking, digital literacy, and climate awareness.
- **Youth Empowerment & Leadership Development:** Recognizing the potential of young changemakers, SILA plans to launch the **DCE Youth Ambassadors Network**, a regional initiative under the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education. This effort will empower digitally competent youth to promote safe, informed, and inclusive digital environments.
- **Cross-Sectoral Cooperation & Internationalization:** SILA will continue strengthening regional partnerships and aim for deeper participation in Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and Green Deal initiatives. We plan to position the Institute as a regional think tank on WEFE Nexus and sustainability innovation.

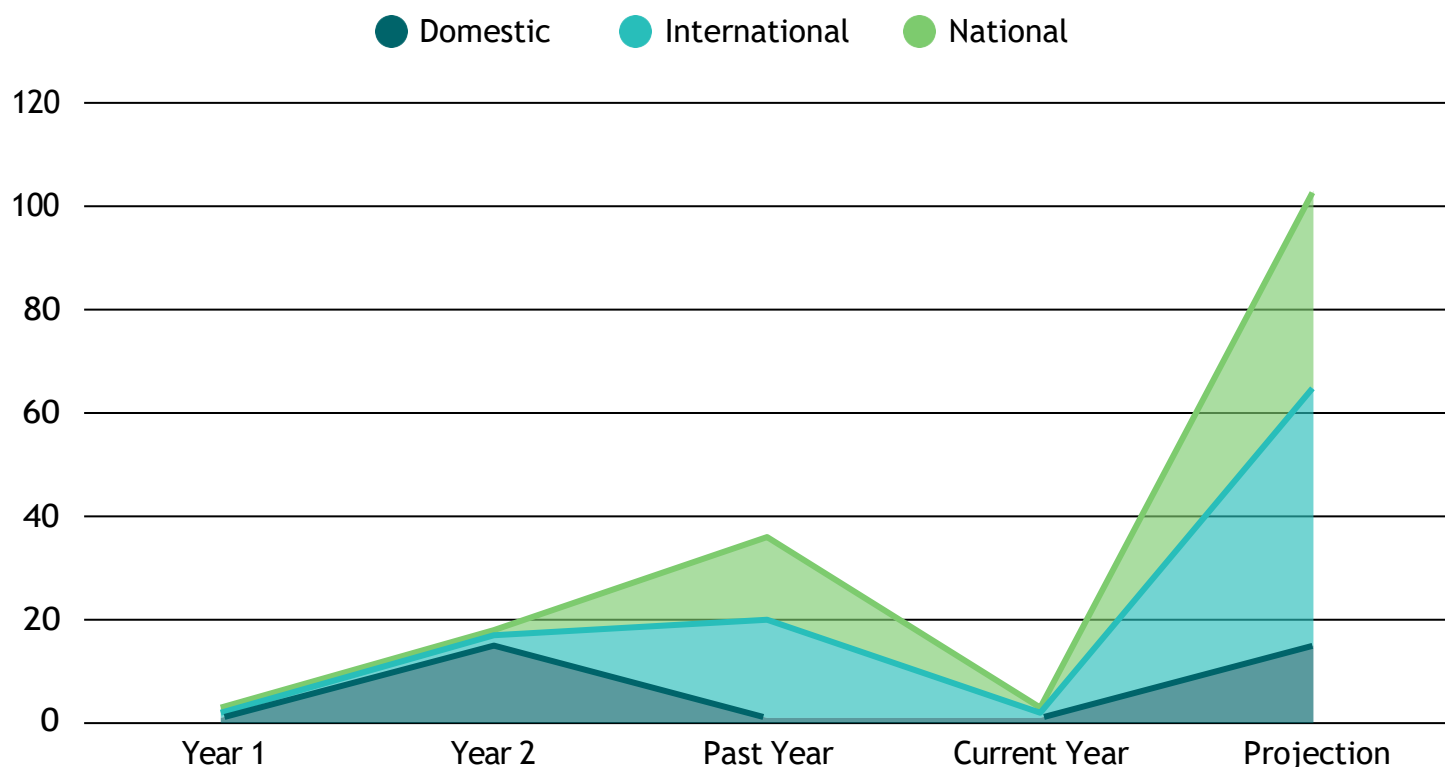
These outlooks are grounded in our past learnings—most notably the power of interdisciplinary collaboration, clear communication with end-users, and a tailored approach to local needs. Our readers and partners can look forward to innovative methodologies, stronger academic-industry-government synergies, and evidence-based outputs that drive real-world change.

Together, we will continue to lead with purpose, act with integrity, and transform knowledge into action.

Growth Projections

Revenues from **Domestic donators**, **International donators**, and **National public bodies** are on an upward trend yearly.

Revenue in EURO in K



Expansion Strategy of the Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action (SILA)

1. Geographic Expansion

To strengthen SILA's regional influence and operational reach, we aim to:

- **Establish satellite cooperation hubs** in neighboring Western Balkan countries to facilitate cross-border project development and implementation.
- **Develop strategic partnerships** with institutions and universities in the EU (e.g., UCL Institute of Education, Wageningen University, and others active in sustainable food systems and digital transformation).
- **Apply for regional IPA and Horizon Europe calls**, positioning SILA as a lead partner or scientific coordinator.

2. Diversification of Expertise and Services

To deepen our expertise and widen the scope of project engagement:

- Expand into **AI in education**, **data-driven sustainable agriculture**, and **circular economy in food systems**.
- Develop a **SILA Expert Pool** consisting of interdisciplinary researchers, practitioners, and

consultants from the region and EU member states.

- Offer **tailored research and consulting services** for public institutions in institutional diagnostics, systematization of jobs, and strategy development.

3. Capacity Building and Internal Development

To reinforce SILA's internal sustainability:

- Create an **internal team for project writing and coordination**, trained in Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and IPA funding schemes.
- Implement a **monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework** for all projects to ensure impact tracking and lessons learned.
- Strengthen the visibility of SILA by **publishing policy briefs, research summaries, and impact stories** through digital channels.

4. Innovation and Digital Solutions

To remain at the forefront of innovation:

- Invest in the **development of educational digital tools**, including learning platforms, mobile applications for sustainability, and virtual training labs.
- Launch an **open-access resource repository** with materials, handbooks, and models developed by SILA and project partners.
- Collaborate with tech SMEs and academia to develop **digital solutions for WEFE Nexus monitoring** and **smart food packaging systems**.

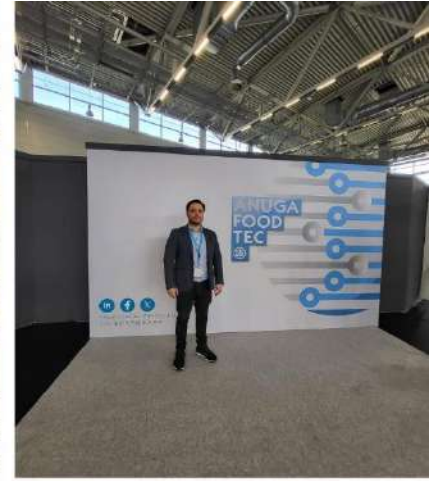
5. Youth Engagement and Inclusion

To sustain long-term social impact:

- Launch the **SILA Youth Fellowship Program** for university students and young researchers.
- Promote **Digital Citizenship Education Youth Ambassadors**, especially during the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education.
- Facilitate **community outreach activities** and school-based programs on food literacy and environmental awareness.

Capturing Impact: SILA in Action - Visual Highlights from Recent Events





Contact

Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action SILA


Research-driven organization based in North Macedonia, focused on advancing education, sustainable food systems, and environmental practices through innovation, collaboration, and capacity-building initiatives.

Address: Pelister N.35, 7000 Bitola, N. Macedonia

Phone: +389 (0)70 462-441

Email: silainstitut@hotmail.com

Website: <https://silainstitute.mk/wp/>

Facebook:  Scientific Institute for Leadership and Action SILA | Bitola

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/vladimir-kitanovski-255208264