

governmentdonor*dialogue*

ISSUE No. 32, Monthly Newsletter - October 2009

A Joint Effort of the Donor Technical Secretariat
and the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination

www.dsdc.gov.al

www.aidharmonisation.org.al



Photo: Effective Support for Enlargement - A conference organised by the Swedish Presidency of the EU and the European Commission, DG Enlargement on 19 October 2009.

Effective support for Enlargement

On 19 October 2009, the European Commission and the Swedish EU Presidency held a joint conference on Effective Support for Enlargement in Brussels. The aim was to examine aspects of aid effectiveness, paying attention to the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) given its decisive role in preparing the Western Balkan countries for their future EU membership. The conference addressed: Effective assistance for reforms, discussing how better results can be achieved through better planning and implementation of financial assistance; Adequate capacity for absorbing financial assistance, devoting particular attention to the sound preparation of countries for the implementation of the Regional, Human Resources and Rural Development Components of IPA;

Linkage of EU objectives and country sector strategies in programming of assistance, taking stock of the progress made in the donor co-ordination process; Adapting financial instruments to current challenges, focusing on the needs of the countries and the impact of the current global crisis. The Department of Strategy and Donor Co-ordination (DSDC) Director, Valbona Kuko presented the progress made on IPS and elaborated how Albania has developed and implemented sector strategies that underpin the National Strategy for Development and Integration, how far these strategies were supported by public expenditure frameworks and how external assistance is linked to government priorities. To view materials from the conference, please click [here](#).

In this issue

- **Conference on Effective Support for Enlargement**
- **The Albanian justice system on its way to European standards**
- **Demographic Health Survey (DHS)**
- **National Strategic Document For the Investigation of Financial Crimes**
- **Joined Forces to Fight Tax Evasion and Corruption**
- **Development of Strategy to Support Albania's Olive Industry**
- **Capacity Building for implementing the Rural Development Strategy**
- **UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality**
- **SWGs on Gender and SME Development**
- **Fourth Annual Human Rights Film Festival**
- **Child-Led Environmental Education Initiative**

temi Shqiptar i Drejtësisë drejt Standarteve Europiane” “Albanian Justice System on its way to European Standards”



Photo: Conference The Albanian Justice System on its way to European Standards held in Tirana on 22 October 2009

The Albanian Justice System on its way to EU Standards

A Conference on The Albanian Justice System on its way to European Standards was held in Tirana on 22 October 2009, organised by EURALIUS, and co-funded by the German Embassy, the Friedrich Ebert and Konrad Adenauer Foundations. President Bamir Topi and Minister of Justice Bujar Nishani spoke at the event, declaring that further steps are needed to improve the justice system. The Head of the EC Delegation Ambassador Helmuth Lohan said that the judiciary

continued to function poorly and that much remained to be done to meet the key European Partnership priority by ensuring its independence, transparency and efficiency. The German Ambassador, Berndt Borchardt said that he was optimistic that Albania is going to master these challenges. The Head of EURALIUS Roland Miklau summarized the current state of progress as well as gaps and needs within the implementation of justice reform. Former Presidents Alfred

Moisiu and Rexhep Meidani moderated panel discussions on the development of a justice reform strategy and on the efficiency and supervision of courts, judges and prosecutors. The former German State Secretary Christoph Kulenkampff and Experts of EURALIUS analysed the justice system proposing reform steps. The Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice in Estonia Martin Hirvoja spoke on reducing corruption risks by increasing the salaries of judges and prosecutors.

Demographic Health Survey

On 5 October 2009, the Ministry of Health released the preliminary report of Albania's first Demographic Health Survey (ADHS). The Survey was carried out by INSTAT and the IPH. A total of 8,994 households were contacted. Results indicate further decline in fertility rates, a decrease in contraceptive prevalence rate and an increased use of modern contraceptive methods. Immunization coverage for children remains at 95% and a majority of women receive antenatal care and deliver their babies in a health facility. However, one in six children is stunted and 7% of children are wasted. The Survey received major funding and technical support from: USAID, UNICEF, SDC, UNFPA, WHO and the Government of Spain.



Health Community celebrates achievements of USAID Health Programme

The results of a six-year effort to develop Albania's primary health care system were presented to over 120 experts, practitioners, and government officials from five Albanian regions at a conference held on 14 October 2009 in Tirana. Over the past six years, USAID/Albania has worked to strengthen the Government's health reform efforts to create a fully integrated primary health care system that responds to the basic health needs of the population and to major public health threats such as Pandemic Influenza and HIV/AIDS. In partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Health Insurance Institute, ProShëndetit has helped roll-out a package of reforms that involved the standardization of health care delivery, financing, and information systems. Health centres across the Albania are now using the new

health information system developed and funded through the USAID health project, operate as financially autonomous bodies, and are staffed by qualified staff to deliver a basic package of primary health care services.

Inter-ministerial meeting on One-UN programme

The One UN inter-ministerial working group met on 9 October 2009 in Tirana. Chaired by DSDC Director, Valbona Kuko, the meeting brought together General Secretaries from all line ministries. Mrs Kuko gave an outline of the One UN programme and its achievements, institutional structures, the status of the coherence fund and joint projects under the programme. The meeting saw discussions on the next steps to be taken in relation to identify projects in 2010 to be submitted by line ministries, and fields for co-operation over the next four years.

Photo: U.S. Ambassador John L. Withers, II delivered remarks celebrating the progress reforms in Albania's primary health care system (Photo USAID/Albania).



Meeting of Government Strategic Planning Committee

On 26 October 2009, the Government's Strategic Planning Committee held its 31st meeting to discuss 2010 draft budget and the Medium-Term Budget Programme for 2010-2012. Prime Minister Sali Berisha highlighted that the draft budget 2010 is considered the most ambitious budget ever, pointing out that the policy of major increases in salaries and pensions; support of reforms in education, health; information society, infrastructure, rural development and agriculture are the key orientations of this budget. Additional funds need to be allocated also to Ministry of Integration for the process of completing the EU membership questionnaire.

IPS implementation 2009-2013 workshop

General Secretary of the Council of Ministers, Gjergj Lezhja called a regular meeting with General Secretaries from line ministries to introduce the IPS Implementation until 2013. Organized by DSDC, the meeting was also attended by some senior officials from other state institutions as well as local and international IPS experts. The aim was to review the status of IPS, identify implementation challenges and introduces IPS improvements for 2009-2013. The meeting highlighted the crucial role of all General Secretaries and their ministries in IPS as Albania moves from system design to implementation. Policy, Regulatory and Fiscal Impact assessments were introduced as new monitoring mechanisms to be put in place.

OSCE Presence offers seminar for judges and prosecutors on alternatives to imprisonment

A seminar for judges and prosecutors on the use of sentences that do not involve imprisonment, organized by the OSCE Presence in Albania in co-operation with the School of Magistrates and the UNICEF, concluded on 30 October in Shkodra. The training course followed new Criminal Code amendments that provide for more alternatives to imprisonment, such as probation, and for an office to supervise such sentences. The Head of the OSCE Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch said: "The probation service is a positive step that will reduce overcrowding in prisons. Unnecessary imprisonments should be avoided as they carry high financial and social costs. This seminar aimed to make sentencing practices more efficient and uniform and to clarify the newly adopted legislation for judges and prosecutors." The seminar focused on how probation services work and how judges and prosecutors can co-operate with probation officers. A German judge and a German probation officer presented best practices from EU countries.



Photo (DSDC): During the consultation meeting of the strategic document

Government approves the National Strategic Document for the Investigation of Financial Crimes

The National Strategic Document For the Investigation of Financial Crimes was consulted with partners in a meeting held on 15 October 2009 in Tirana with senior officials from the General Prosecution Office, Ministries of Finance, Interior, DSDC and Bank of Albania. Donors were represented by the EC Delegation, Embassies of the Netherlands, Denmark, Greece and US as well as OSCE and INTERFORZA. Prepared by the General Directorate for Prevention of Money Laundering in the Ministry of Finance, the document was supported by a CARDS-twinning project with the German Federal Crime Office, entitled "Tackling money laundering and financial crime". The document represents the means and instruments that enable Government to ensure public security. The document was later approved by the Council of Ministers thus fulfilling one of the conditions for facilitating visa liberalization process.

EU-IPA project "Capacity Building for implementing the Rural Development Strategy"

Under IPA 2008, the European Commission and the Government agreed on the project Capacity Building for implementing the Rural Development Strategy funded by the EU and implemented by GTZ with German Embassy support. An inaugural meeting was held on 12 October 2009 with the participation of senior officials from Ministries, DSDC, donors, universities, and various professional associations. The project's aim was to establish and strengthen the institutional and administrative capacities in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection to design and implement the policies and the supporting means for the development of agriculture and rural areas in the framework of EU pre-accession assistance programmes for IPARD (IPA for Rural Development).

International conference on agriculture, rural development and enlargement

On 16 October 2009, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection, in co-operation with the Albanian Foundation for Training and Development and Groupe de Bruges, held an international conference in Tirana entitled The future of agriculture and rural areas in an enlarging Europe: dealing

Photo: Albanian judges and prosecutors at a seminar on alternatives to imprisonment organized by the OSCE Presence, Tirana, 27 October 2009. (OSCE)





with diversity. Minister Genc Ruli in his opening speech highlighted that Albania feels privileged that such international conference is held in Tirana at the time the country is working toward joining EU. Agriculture made up 22% of GDP and was seen as a main national priority. The event discussed the challenges of rural development, and served at exchanging experiences between aspiring EU members in the region.

General Directorate of Taxation, Taxpayers join forces to fight tax evasion and corruption

"People who engage in tax corruption or evasion, damage the service that you deserve. Denounce tax evasion and tax corruption." Launched in October by the General Directorate of Taxation, this slogan is part of a national media campaign to encourage the public to use the General Directorate's toll-free hotline: 0800 14 14. Funded by the MCC Threshold Programme II, the campaign hopes to improve how the General Directorate's tracks and investigates allegations of tax evasion and corruption. Its essential message is that tax compliance is a civic duty that affects the integrity of the entire system. Evasion and corrupt actions by some taxpayers and officials undermine the legitimate expectations of all taxpayers for fairness. Citizens can submit a written denunciation by visiting www.tatime.gov.al, downloading a form, filling it out and returning it by email, mail, or hand-delivering in person.

OSCE Presence provides police with books on policing

On 27 October 2009, the OSCE Presence in Albania presented the Ministry of Interior and the State Police with a package of books on policing. The publications will serve as reference material for the State Police in its efforts to implement and improve the long-term strategy of community policing. The books were based on research by policing experts from OSCE participating States. The publications focused on democratic policing principles and the partnership between law enforcement agencies and the public, as well as on the rights of minors. Opening remarks were delivered by the Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, Ambassador Robert Bosch, and Minister of Interior Lulzim Basha.



Photo: Head of Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch (r), presents three OSCE publications on policing together with Albanian Interior Minister Lulzim Basha (l). (OSCE/Joana Karapataqi)

UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality

The One UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality Steering Committee met on 30 October 2009 to discuss the progress on the sector. Co-chaired by UN Resident Co-ordinator, Gülden Türkoz-Cosslet and the Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Filloreta Kodra, the meeting was attended by Ministry officials, the DSDC, civil society and UN agencies. Mrs. Cosslet stressed that, from UN's perspective the Programme is considered to be one of the most successful joint programme as it was responding to the priorities set by the Ministry thus receiving political commitment from Government, and civil society. Deputy Minister Kodra expressed her commitment to seeing tangible results. Under UNIFEM's leadership, the UN agencies came together to define joint roles and to co-ordinate in each step the implementation of the joint programme.

USAID Links Albanian Businesses to Foreign Investment Opportunities in Tourism

USAID co-organized and co-funded a Conference and Exhibition on Tourism and Real Estate in Albania held on 7 to 9 October 2009 in Tirana. The event showcased to foreign investors the opportunities for investment in Albania's tourism and real estate industries. The event introduced



Photo: During the two-day event, tour operators from Austria, Greece and the United Kingdom met with Albanian tour operators and hotels, holding over 50 business-to-business meetings to discuss opportunities for future relation (Photo USAID/Albania)

USAID's newest project, Rritje Albania, a 5-year, \$10 million programme that will increase the competitiveness of Albanian non-agriculture enterprises. During the event, USAID held a discussion with industry leaders on the development of public-private partnerships in tourism, and held dozens of business-to-business meetings among Albanian and foreign tour operators. Tour operators from Austria, Greece and the UK met with Albanian tour operators and hotels, holding some 50 business-to-business meetings to discuss future opportunities. The event began a week-long familiarization tour with foreign tour operators to Albania's southern coast and to the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Butrint, Gjirokastra, and Berat. For information about USAID's Rritje Albania project, visit: <http://albania.usaid.gov>

USAID Promotes Development of Strategy to Support Olive Industry

In October, officials from the Ministry

of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection, olive oil producers, processors and traders met with USAID's Albanian Agriculture Competitiveness Programme to discuss the strategic priorities for growth in the olive sector and ways to strengthen the policy dialogue between private and public sector. The proposals of participants will shortly be presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection in December as policy recommendations.

USAID conference highlights need for policies, programmes for women

Domestic violence, high unemployment, and a lack of representation of women in politics and other decision-making positions are all serious issues that need addressing in light of national aspirations to join the EU. Over 100 women's rights activists, local and central government officials, and business women, participated last week in a national women's conference in Tirana funded by USAID. USAID Mission Director, Roberta Mahoney noted how Albania has taken major steps in recent years to adopt the legal framework on women's rights and gender equality and encouraged the Government to devote more human and financial resources to ensure the implementation of these laws. To support

Photo: USAID is currently co-operating with Lushnja's Technology Transfer Centre on a trial of super-high density olive planting in Albania. Although in its testing phase, the technology may be promising for large-scale investments in Albania's olive sector.



this initiative, USAID announced a small grants programme to support local NGOs to address women's participation in politics, education, and decision-making

Fourth meeting of SWG on gender equality and domestic violence

A Sector Working Group (SWG) on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence was held on 29 October 2009. Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Filloreta Kodra recognized the Government's achievements such as approval the Law for Gender Equality in Society as well as provisions in implementation of this Law. She stressed the work carried out toward training of representatives of central and local governmental institutions on gender equality and domestic violence issues. She also raised the issue of improving Ministry-donor co-ordination by encouraging participants to present challenges faced. The meeting provided an update on process of nomination of gender equality employees. It was agreed that this SWG will be organised every quarter and that the next one will be held in January 2010. It was agreed that the UN will share the Annual Work Plan 2009-2010 for the Joint Programme on Gender Equality after it is adopted by the Steering Committee. The suggested topic for the next meeting is women participation in local elections in which lessons are learned from June's parliamentary elections.

Donor's forum on Small Medium Enterprise development

On 15 October 2009, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) and Italian Development Co-operation held a donor's forum on Small Medium Enterprise development. The meeting was co-chaired by Deputy Minister, Eno Bozdo and the Head of Italian Cooperation, Flavio Lovisolo. The aim was to discuss how to strengthen the capacities of METE and Albinvest to develop, implement and monitor SME policy in order to provide entrepreneurship programmes. The overall objective of the sector is to maintain sustainable growth and increase competitiveness



Photo (DSDC): SME donor's forum

of the private sector, as well as provide a healthy business environment for investment and employment. Some of the actions identified to enhance progress include: building a Business Relay and Innovation Centre, analysing the training needs for SMEs, and drafting a National Competitiveness Programme.

Fourth Annual Human Rights Film Festival

The fourth annual International Human Rights Film Festival was held at Marubi School Film Academy in

Photo: The producer of the film *Two Little Girls* discussing the plight of trafficked Albanian women with high school children from Tirana and school children from Roma and Egyptian community.



Photo: Focus groups with Korça teachers (Photo UNICEF)

September/October 2009. The festival offered an outstanding programme of socially contemporary international films from around the world covering topics ranging from tolerance and peace to freedom of expression. Newly introduced this year, afternoon discussion forums took place dealing with issues like children's rights and HIV/AIDS. The event was supported by a large group of bilateral donors, UNICEF and the private sector. The aim was to educate young people via the art of filmmaking that human rights must be understood to be practiced.

Child-Led Environmental Education Initiative

During October, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration in introducing environmental education in the primary schools of five regions. So far, 1,200 teachers from 240 schools have been trained and are applying child friendly methodologies on environmental education. The schools are also supported by NGOs to develop and carry out specific clean up activities to preserve the environment. The Embassy of the Netherlands is a major donor for this three year programme. In Korça schools, after being given the topic How to save Water, at the end of the month children brought to class their water bills and showed how they had managed to lowered their families household's water consumption.

Conference on Social Inclusion: Getting on Track with the Millennium Development Goals

With the support of UNDP Kosovo office, the Kosovo Assembly held a regional conference entitled Social inclusion: Getting Track with the Millennium Development Goals on 19 to 20 October 2009 in Pristina. The aim was to advance the EU Social Inclusion agenda, while also highlighting the challenges and opportunities of meeting social development goals in the framework of the MDGs. The event helped to improve policy initiatives by learning from regional experiences in effective poverty reduction policy measures. The event gathered Kosovo MPs, region government officials, representatives from civil society and business sector in the region. The Albanian delegation was led by the Deputy Albana Vokshi, and was made up of officials from the Ministries of Economy, Labour, Education and Environment. The DSDC co-ordinator, Oriana Arapi made a presentation on IPS implementation and MDG monitoring. The event ended by identifying next steps in the roadmap towards achieving MDGs and social inclusion in Kosovo.

Meeting on Regional Co-operation Support Programme for the Balkans

As part of a Regional Cooperation Support Programme supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on 19- 20 October 2009 a Steering Committee meeting was held in Bari to discuss the projects funded under the Intervention Line 2.4 Dialogue and Culture to present the Regional Cooperation Support Programme for Balkan countries and projects funded in the culture sector. The meeting highlighted the challenges and opportunities for boosting the partnership between Italian regions and institutions from the Balkan and helped improve co-operation and future steps to be undertaken. The meeting saw participation of officials from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Development and regional government officials from Puglia, Sicily, Apulia, Marche, Abruzzo and Calabria. The Albanian delegation was composed of the General Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and the DSDC. Albania was commended as the most active country in this programme, in the region.

Environment and Sustainable Development

A seminar entitled Regional Cooperation with Southern Mediterranean countries and Western Balkans: Environment and Sustainable Development was held on 9–10 October 2009 in Torino. The participants were introduced with all projects related to environmental issues in the Mediterranean area, management of water resources and industrial site cleaning up. Steering committees met to discuss three major projects: PRIMA (Serbia-Bosnia), RIVA (Albania) and RISMED (Egypt-Tunisia-Morocco). The Albanian delegation was composed of officials from Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, a DSDC team member and an official from the Shkodra Municipality - a beneficiary from RIVA project Environmental Requalification of Shkodra Lake.

In-country Missions

Meeting with Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

On 23 October 2009, a meeting was held with DSDC Director and Thomas Knecht, from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, accompanied by Swiss Development Cooperation Country Director in Albania, Daniel Züst. The aim was to discuss Government priorities in donor co-ordination and the latest issues related to private sector development. DSDC Director, Valbona Kuko presented Government policies supporting the private sector development, suggesting that more support is needed in financial and insurance sector, as well as in building local government capacities in better managing local services and building co-operation with businesses.

World Bank

A Mission for the Natural Resources Development Project took place from 26 October to 6 November 2009 to follow-up on the agreed actions during the last

supervision mission in January 2009; to finalize on action plan on the use of funds for the institutional aspects of the project; and to review the implementation of forest, pasture and micro-catchment management plans.

A Country Governance Review Mission took place from 25 to 30 October 2009 to consult with experts, partners and World Bank staff on the findings of the Governance review with a view of finalizing chapters for the Governance Review. The head of the mission worked with the Country office on preparing the launch of new activities under the Governance Partnership Facility (GPF) grant, notably the Mini Development Marketplace for Governance and Supervision Fund.

A Mission for the Macroeconomic Framework for Second Programmatic Development Policy Operation visited from 19 October to 5 November 2009 to carry out an assessment of the medium-term macroeconomic framework. The Country Economist and the World Bank team will work with the IMF team that will also be visiting Tirana at the same time.

governmentdonor*dialogue*

As of April 2009, the Netherlands is the current Chair of the Donor Technical Secretariat.

Any comments regarding Government-Donor Dialogue (both positive and negative) are strongly encouraged – and we promise to print all such comments received!

Want to contribute?

If you would like to contribute, send your text to the Donor Technical Secretariat (DTS) Office (nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al) or the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination (DSDC) (agerxhani@km.gov.al) by the 5th of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

Frequency

Each edition will be sent to you on the 15th of every month.

Who are the donors in Albania?

There are over 40 donors operating in Albania. To find out who they are please click [here](#).

To unsubscribe:

Please send an e-mail to Nevila Çomo (nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al)

The design of Government-Donor Dialogue Newsletter is financially supported by the OSCE Presence in Albania

STUDIO GRAFICO ELSIKONGO elsikongo@gmail.com

