



Photo: EU Workshop on Sector Approaches in the context of EU integration, held in Sarajevo on 22-24 March 2010 - Session 3 on Governance of the sector approaches. From left to right: Head of the Austrian Development Cooperation, Astrid Wein, Director of Italian Development Cooperation, Flavio Lovisolo, DSDC Director, Valbona Kulko, and Michel Gontier, EU Delegation to Albania

Workshop on Sector Approaches in the context of EU integration

On 22 -24 March 2010, a workshop on Sector Approaches in the Context of EU Integration, was organised in Sarajevo by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Finance and Treasury and the European Commission-Directorate General Enlargement. The event provided the opportunity to identify methods for the formulation of sector approaches and to develop sector approaches in countries engaged in the EU integration process. Through lessons-learned from past programmes, the workshop focused on the formulation of practical guidance

and toolkits. The workshop was organized in four working sessions: (1) the formulation of sector approaches; (2) linking sector approaches to EU integration objectives; (3) governance of sector approaches; and (4) benchmarking and evaluation of sector approaches. The DSDC, with the support from the Italian Development Cooperation, the Austrian Development Cooperation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), organised and provided presentations on the session on Governance of sector approaches.

Their presentations highlighted the need for co-ordination mechanisms in sector approaches, the importance of Government structures and the linkage between planning and the medium-term budget programme, and co-ordination mechanisms, such as the Sector Working Groups, Fast Tracking Initiative of Division of Labour, and the development of Harmonisation Action Plans. The conclusions drawn were presented during the plenary session by the Head of the Austrian Development Cooperation, Astrid Wein. To view materials and presentations from this workshop, please [click here](#).

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Message from Minister of State

Dear readers,

I would like to congratulate the DSDC and the DTS for jointly publishing and continuously improving the Government-Donor Dialogue newsletter. I am pleased to see that this newsletter is now also being published in Albanian. Indeed, I believe this publication will really help us to share our thoughts on past achievements and the challenges that lie ahead.

As a signatory country to the Paris Declaration on the External Assistance Effectiveness, Albania remains fully committed to the principles of "effective leadership, ownership and alignment of development policies". We have made progress towards increasing the national ownership, aligning and harmonizing donor support with stated national priorities, while our future efforts will focus on 'managing for results' and improving accountability. These efforts have been internationally recognized and have, I believe, contributed to elevating the country's image. We have improved our sector strategies and have learned to better define our 'vision' and policies on guiding the flow of external aid assistance. I believe that the process is now much healthy and on firmer footing both in terms of effectiveness of our policies and efficiency of their implementation. Yet, our overarching goal remains guaranteeing transparent, efficient and accountable governance as we head towards an even more challenging phase.

As Chair of Government-Donor Round Table, I would like to stress that with our commitment and the support of the donor community, we have made remarkable progress in many sectors.

Deepening the public administration reform is a vital commitment for the Government that is widely supported by donors. The approval of the strategy for public administration was an important step that will be followed by the implementation of civil service law reform. With this commitment and continued donor support, we now have a more holistic approach to business registration through the "one stop shop", ensuring greater transparency, saving time and cost through simplified procedures. The new online tax system guarantees transparency for both foreign and domestic businesses, and will reduce corruption in the tax collection. E-procurement



platform is now used for all bids at a central and local government level, while the Public Procurement Commission and the Procurement Advocate have been established as independent bodies to protect the rights of businesses. Moreover, both the Government and the public can now benefit from a fully computerized and modernized National Civil Registry and voters' list.

Another area that is benefiting from the external assistance and where Albania has made substantial progress, is in the area of 'Information and Communication Technology'. The digitalization and modernization of government have been considered as the main tool for increasing the efficiency, transparency and quality of public services. Albania in the 'digital age' is the main refrain and our vision is to digitalize all public services and extend it nationwide.

As Minister of State, I would like to say to my colleagues from the Government and donor community, that with steady progress on the reform process, dedication and hard work, we have managed to bring our country up to this stage, a NATO member country and close to EU candidate status.

Once again, I would like to thank both donors and my Government colleagues for their contribution and commitment and encourage them to further strengthen this co-operation in pursuit of our main goal, the full EU membership. The Government is determined to make further progress and we very much count on the support of the development partners.

Sincerely,

Genc Pollo

Minister of State for Reforms and Relations with the Parliament



Photo: During the meeting of Inter-ministerial Committee on 30 March 2010

Meeting of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Integration to approve the EU Questionnaire

Inter-ministerial Committee on Integration approved on 30 March 2010 the last five remaining chapters of the EU Questionnaire. During February and March 2010, the Committee held regular meetings on weekly basis discussing and approving overall answers to some 35 chapters of the Questionnaire. Prime Minister Berisha saw this as the conclusion of an intensive and complex work that took about three months and involved the entire public administration and other institutions, academia and experts from partner countries. Almost 160 inter-institutional meetings were organized to answer the crosscutting questions. "Having this document assessed and approved, and receiving the candidate status is a decision of paramount importance for the EU integration of our country" he said during the meeting. He commended the administration for its hard work and commitment in finalizing the Questionnaire on time. The completed EU questionnaire will be handed to the Delegation of the European Union in early April 2010.

Joint training on Sector Wide Approaches and Programme Based Approaches

A workshop on Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) and Programme Based

Approaches (PBAs) was organized by the DSDC and Sida on 9 and 10 March 2010. The training was delivered by the Swedish expert, Stefan Sjolander. The event was attended by line ministries, DSDC, Sida as well as officials from development partners working in the environment area. The event focused on explaining the different types of PBAs and SWAP, and the environment was selected as the sector to analyze and apply a PBA and SWAP model. Participants learnt how to operationalise PBA in the environment sector as well as define the roles that the main actors are to play and the steps in the process. Attendees managed to draft the work plan for establishing a PBA and define the instructional structure composition, role and duties. To view materials from this workshop, please click [here](#).



Photo: The workshop on Sector Wide Approaches and Programme Based Approaches on 9 and 10 March 2010.

Working group meeting on Millennium Challenge Corporation Phase II

The sixth meeting of Inter-institutional working group on the implementation of Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Phase II was organized on 26 March 2010, chaired by Minister of State, Genc Pollo and attended by Deputy Ministers, general directors in line ministries, the DSDC, USAID and its subcontractor Chemonics, and representatives from the US Department of Justice. Minister Pollo stressed the progress made since the last meeting of this group, but drew attention to some outstanding issues with line ministries, other institutions, USAID and its sub-contractors. USAID Mission Director, Joseph Williams said that an MCC mission will be visiting Albania in the first two weeks of May 2010 to undertake a medium-term assessment for MCC II. Another MCC mission will visit in June to perform an impact assessment of MCC I in Albania.



Photo: Launching ceremony of 2008-2009 Albania Demographic and Health Survey, Tirana 15 March 2010.

2008-2009 Albania Demographic and Health Survey is published

On 15 March 2010, the Ministry of Health, INSTAT and Institute of Public Health in collaboration with Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania, USAID, UNICEF, UNFPA launched the 2008-2009 Albania Demographic and Health Survey (ADHS), the first ever conducted in Albania. The Minister of Health, Petrit Vasili, the Deputy Chair of Health Assembly Committee, Tritan Shehu, Country Director of Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania in Albania, Daniel Züst along with representatives from USAID and UNICEF all offered opening remarks. The Survey collected data on demographic patterns, fertility, maternal and child health, HIV, nutrition, migration and the role of women. According to the Survey, disparities in health and nutrition status, access to health services and levels of knowledge of family planning, HIV/AIDS and STIs were seen as areas for improvement. "Population-based studies of this magnitude are a major undertaking that provide information on important indicators which measure the progress of a country," said Minister Vasili. The Demographic and Health Survey was conducted from October 2008 to April 2009 and interviewed 8,994 households. The Survey was run by INSTAT and the Institute of Public Health and was funded by the USAID, the Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation. Assistance to ensure quality of the survey was provided by ICF MACRO. The survey provides a set

of data and statistically sound estimates of social indicators which will be used by policy makers, researchers, NGOs and academia. The next step is to make the results of the ADHS available to the government institutions, researchers and the public to help design policies and improve the health of the population. For more information about the Demographic and Health Survey can be found here .

Child Helpline moves to the new premises to expand its operation for those in need

On 9 March 2010, First Lady Teuta Topi and Government members joined UNICEF and the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania for the opening of new offices for the first national call service for children. The National Child Helpline in Albania (ALO 116) and the Pan-European Child Helpline in Albania (ALO 116-111) allows callers

to get information for special child services, to report missing children and to discuss issues affecting them. "Our role is to meet children, listen to what they have to say and talk with them...Perhaps, working together we can begin to address the issues of their fears, desires, and dreams," said Mrs. Topi. "Any type of abuse is harmful to children's development – and the number of help line callers tells us that child protection in Albania still needs to improve. The helpline is a significant milestone and part of an overall child protection system. For this, we need the ongoing commitment and support of government institutions, civil society and the private sector. I like to especially thank the telephone companies, Albtelecom, AMC, Eagle Mobile, Vodafone and Telecommunications Regulatory Entity (AKEP) who make their services available, free of charge, for this cause" said Mr. Detlef Palm, UNICEF Representative in Albania.



Photo: The opening of the new offices of Albania's first national call service for children (UNICEF).



Photo: Celebration of the World Water Day 2010 (GTZ)

Since June 2009, 100,000 calls have been received and ALO 116 is now available to more than 1 million children, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The service is free of charge and available from any phone.

Celebration of the World Water Day 2010

As part of UN World Water Day, on 22 March 2010 the Albanian national authorities promoted public awareness around the main cities relating to the development of water resources and the implementation of the recommendations of Agenda 21. The theme for 2010 'a World Water Day, Clean Water for a Healthy World, stressed that the quality and quantity of water resources were at risk. The Water Supply and Sewerage Association of Albania, the Ministries of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications, and Health, the Tirana, Fier, Vau Dejes and Korça Water Utilities, Faculty of Civil Engineering and GTZ-German Technical Cooperation organized a public awareness campaign in central Tirana. Leaflets were distributed containing advice on how to save the water, on the importance of clean water for health. The event was well supported by a large group of student volunteers from the Department of Environmental Engineering. Similar activities were also held in other major cities.

First Albanian Conference for Drugs Safety and Pharmacovigilance

On 23 March 2010, the first national

conference for Drugs safety and pharmacovigilance was held in the presence of the Minister of Health, Petrit Vasili and the Minister Counsellor of the Italian Embassy in Tirana, Francesco Saverio De Luigi. The event was supported by the National Centre of Drugs Control in the Ministry of Health, funded by the Development Cooperation Office of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The event discussed: the creation of the pharmacovigilance structure as a priority of the health sector strategy, its functioning and the international referring system in order to adapt the structure to EU structures and legislation needed in order to have such structure in place. The aim was to prepare an action plan, starting with the preparation of the law and creation of a system of pharmacovigilance, discussing about health structures involved and their responsibilities with international structures.



Photo: First Albanian Conference for Drugs Safety and Pharmacovigilance

Anticorruption Steering Committee meeting

The Steering Committee of Project Against Anticorruption in Albania, funded under IPA 2008, held a meeting on 10 March 2010. Minister of State, Genc Pollo highlighted the importance that the Government is giving to the project, stressing that the project was delivering results. He called upon the government institutions to further elaborate their priorities in fighting corruption through action plans. The Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union in Tirana, Helmuth Lohan, expressed satisfaction with attention paid by the Albanian institutions and particularly by Minister Pollo to anti-corruption related reforms.

Achievements in this sector will be a key focus of the forthcoming European Commission opinion on Albanian application to EU membership. The Council of Europe started to implement the Project on 1 September 2009 with the aim of assisting democracy and the rule of law through preventing and controlling corruption.

The need for having clear statistics on corruption cases processed before the courts, the necessity of having sufficient human resources in authorities involved in anti-corruption, and need for promotion of anti-corruption reforms were some of the recommendations from this meeting.



Foto: OSCE Chairperson's Special Envoy meets with President Topi during his visit in Tirana

OSCE Chairperson's Special Envoy visits Tirana

Overcoming the political impasse is crucial for Albania to continue making progress in implementing its ambitious reform agenda, the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Zhigalov, said during a visit to Tirana from 15 to 16 March 2010. "We recognize the progress made by Albania in carrying out democratic reforms," he said. "The co-operative climate established in the past between the government and the opposition has contributed to the significant successes achieved in this area." In welcoming the entry of the main opposition Socialist Party into the Assembly, Zhigalov expressed the hope that this would pave the way for future political debate to be conducted within a parliamentary setting. He stressed that the OSCE stands ready to support the efforts of Albania's political parties to engage in political dialogue. "However, the responsibility to resolve the current situation ultimately lies with the national players," he said. During the visit, all local interlocutors stressed their appreciation for OSCE's contribution to the ongoing reform progress of the country. Zhigalov expressed his strong satisfaction regarding the strong co-operation between the OSCE Presence and the Albanian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and all other national authorities. Zhigalov also briefed local interlocutors on the future plans of the Kazakh Chairmanship, paying reference to the envisaged informal ministerial meeting due to take place in Almaty in the summer this year. "These meetings will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss, inter alia, a follow up to the Corfu process, the Vienna Document 1999, OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan and the substance of the OSCE summit" he said. Zhigalov's agenda in Tirana include meetings with President Bamir Topi, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ilir Meta and Socialist Party Chair Edi Rama.

The tenth Conference of Albanian Anaesthesia-Reanimation Society

On 26-27 March 2010, the tenth National Conference of Albanian Anaesthesia-Reanimation Society was organized with the theme Anaesthesia, Emergency; intensive therapy of Pain where new regulations of the European Society of Anaesthesiology on intensive therapy and the latest projects on this sector were discussed. The aim of the event was to develop the professional skills of medical and nursery staff. The Society and Ministry of Health organized this event with funding from Italian Cooperation for Development of the Italian Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, within the frame of supporting the Order of the Professionals and Medical-Scientific Societies. The event saw many sector professionals exchange information with foreign partners to develop modern medical techniques especially on the field of intensive therapy. For the first time, a special session on nursery took place where the role of nursery staff was treated in the premises of the intensive therapy and emergency leading to the unification of surgical interventions.

Conference Shaping the Role of the County in a challenging environment

Over the past three years, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands supported the programme Strengthening Local Governance in Dibra. This programme was based on an agreement between the Dibra Regional Council, the Dutch Embassy, and SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. The conference Shaping the Role of the County in a challenging environment, organised on 3 March 2010 in Tirana, explored changes and innovations on the Regional Council, during a programme that contributed to the discussion on shaping its role in development. The event brought together senior central and local government officials, programme partners and donors. During its plenary sessions and parallel workshops, the achievements, dilemmas and lessons learned from the Dibra programme were shared with participants and its wider application to the policy dialogue on decentralisation and regional development were explored. Importance was attached to sharing the results of the work, the challenges met on the way and the factors that have determined success and sometimes failure with all partners. The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and SNV decided to respond to the needs of this relatively disadvantaged region that so far had not received major donor support, by establishing a Trust Fund and offering advisory services to strengthen local capacities. Over 66% of local government units and 78% of the population benefited directly from projects implemented in their localities through the Dibra region managed fund. From the outset it was

clear that the programme would not solve all the local development problems as the time span of the programme (three and a half years until September of this year) and the level of funding provided (some 4.1 mill Euros from the Embassy) were not enough. The event was used as a platform to discuss the future and inspire other regions and donors to replicate this model. Although the era of development co-operation between The Netherlands and Albania is ending by the end of 2010, it should not be seen as the end of Dutch engagement with Albania. The Netherlands will continue to support Albania on its way towards EU-integration, with a stress on assisting Albania in meeting EU-standards.

Meeting of the Sector Working Group on VET

A meeting of the Sector Working Group on Vocational Education and Training was held on 9 March 2010 to review progress made. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, DSDC and donors contributing in the sector participated in the meeting chaired by Minister of Education, Myqerem Tafaj, and the Country Director of Swiss Cooperation Office, Daniel Züst, the focal point of this SWG. Minister Tafaj repeated the importance of VET in building human resources, focusing on mid-level skilled workers and stated that VET (skilled categories) should reflect contemporary market demands. The meeting stressed the challenges in the sector like: attracting students and increasing their participation in VET, boosting VET graduates' employability; improving the quality of VET, strengthening relations among social partners that operate in VET. The main challenge is considered its adaptation to the needs and requirements of the market. The need for monitoring employment strategy and identification and preparation of project pipelines, well before deadlines, was stressed by the DSDC Co-ordinator, Oriana Arapi in order to increase the rate of absorption of funds in the sector. At the end it was agreed that the next SWG meeting will be held on 8 June 2010.



Photo: The conference Shaping the Role of the County in a challenging environment, organised on 3 March 2010

GTZ support to Vocational Education and Training

As part of the GTZ project Vocational Education in North-Eastern Albania, in the Dibra, Kukës, Shkodra and Lezha regions, new vocational education courses and existing vocational education were introduced. The project began with a labour market study, the development of new curricula, and in September 2009 the schools started with the vocational education. The workshops of vocational schools were equipped with the most up to date

equipment. In Dibra and Kukës, two new workshops for technical training were organized. From February 2010, a school in Lezha has a new computer classroom. On 3 March 2010, two tailoring workshops/classrooms were inaugurated in a technological school in Shkodra. Having started in August 2008, the project will last until the summer 2014.

Sector Working Group on Legal Reform

On 30 March 2010, the International Consortium organised a meeting of the



Photo: GTZ project Vocational Education in North-Eastern Albania- Students at their new sewing machines in Shkodra;

The General Prosecutor's Office supported by EU assistance

The closing ceremony of the EU project on Support to the General Prosecutor's Office to undertake Inspection and Evaluation of Prosecutors took place on 16 March 2010.

The project assisted the General Prosecutor's Office in improving its management and working practices to enhance the efficiency and transparency of prosecutorial function. It enabled the General Prosecutor's Office to benefit from the assistance of Spanish and Italian counterparts to improve their internal functioning, the creation of efficient and transparent systems for the inspection of prosecutors, as well the definition of specialised training seminars.

The Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Albania, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan stressed the significance of a transparent, accountable, efficient and depoliticised judiciary for a functioning democracy and said that "the independence of the judiciary, the independence of the General Prosecutor's Office starts with the mutual understanding between the political world and the judiciary world that justice cannot be political, preferential or discriminatory".

The 800,000 Euros project started in October 2008. It was implemented through a Twinning between the General Prosecution Office, the Spanish General Prosecutor's Office and the Italian High Council of Judiciary.

Sector Working Group on Legal Reform that was attended by representatives of the State Police, Serious Crime Prosecutor Office, Ministries of Justice and Finance, DSDC, General Prosecutor Office, PAMECA, EURALIUS, OPDAT, UNICEF, OSCE, Italian Embassy, and Albania Helsinki Committee. The meeting, chaired by the OPDAT representative, Melissa Schraibman, discussed progress made on the implementation of Anti-mafia law. The representative of Serious Crime Prosecutor's Office, Besnik Muçi made an overview of the work carried out and said that the law was expected to positively influence the investigation and the confiscation of real estate properties. Participants noted that the Serious Crime Prosecutor Office was the main institution that will be responsible for the law's implementation.

Programme Support of Minors in Albania by International Legislation

An Italian Cooperation/Ministry of Foreign Affairs delegation visited Albania on 22 to 24 March 2010 to participate in the fifth steering committee of the programme Support of Minors in Albania by International Legislation. This is a three-year programme of decentralised cooperation promoted by Italian Cooperation together with Emilia Romagna Region as a leader, in partnership with Marche and Puglia Region. The programme, implemented by the Forlì Municipality, aims to promote and increase the rights of children and young people, and improve capacity building on the rights of children in municipalities, Ministries and civil society organisations. The aim is to improve the living condition of children in Albania and especially those at risk and abandoned. The programme has completed and delivered 3 territorial social plans in three beneficiary towns: Elbasan, Shkodra and Vlora, using an integrated and participatory methodology and has funded 14 pilot social projects in co-operation with local NGOs. The programme has foreseen also the creation of a data base for children situation and training on legislation and adoption. The total budget of the programme is 2 million Euros. The delegation visited Elbasan to evaluate the activities funded by the

programme and to meet local institutions, minors and partners.

PAMECA III - Fourth Steering Committee Meeting

On 16 March 2010, PAMECA III held its Fourth Steering Committee Meeting to discuss the progress of the Project from September 2009 to February 2010. The Steering Committee was chaired by Minister of Interior, Lulzim Basha, EU Ambassador Helmuth Lohan, the Deputy General Director of Police, Agron Kuliçaj, the Deputy General Director of Customs, Flamur Gjymishka, and PAMECA III Team Leader, Cecil Craig. Minister of Interior Lulzim Basha said that priority areas were: the implementation of the new anti-mafia law, Integrated Border Management, public security, and community policing. In terms of achievements, he mentioned the creation and functioning of Inter-institutional Maritime Operational Centre (IMOC) and the functioning of the joint Border Crossing Point (BCP) at Murriqan. He commended the parties for the organization of the National Conference on Community Policing, an initiative, he said, that would be followed up by a cross-cutting action plan and drafting of sub-legal infrastructure. He also mentioned the Government decision to reallocate a considerable number of police guard officers. Ambassador Lohan raised main issues of concern related to community policing, the production of quality crime statistics, and the concern around foreign plated vehicles. He was keen to see major progress in these areas over the next six months. The General Director of the State Police, Agron Kuliçaj said that through PAMECA support, there had been positive developments in the areas of professional standards, police training, integrated border management, HR management and public security. The Deputy General Director of Customs, Flamur Gjymishki, stressed the co-operation between customs and State Police, reflected in agreements between Customs Directorate and Border Migration Police. He said that a spirit of co-operation persists in the joint use of logistics, joint control in BCPs, the realization of the agreement, one stop – one control, and joint actions in the fight against crime. The Head of the project, Cecil Craig provided an overview of the project and assured the delegates that PAMECA III team is



Photo: The U.S. Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission, Deborah Jones, helped deliver the seedlings to farmers who expressed their deep appreciation for the assistance from the American people.

» committed and will continue to support the ASP in its priority areas of need.

USAID Donates Vegetable Seedlings to Albanian Flood Victims

On 17 March 2010, USAID donated over 80,000 tomato, pepper and cucumber seedlings to 52 greenhouse farmers from the communes in northern Albania. These farmers lost their crops during the severe floods that occurred last December and January. The production coming from these seedlings will bring important income to farmers during the spring months, helping them quickly rebuild their livelihoods and improve their commercial farming with new, high-value crops. The U.S. Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission, Deborah Jones, helped deliver the seedlings to farmers who expressed their deep appreciation for the assistance from the American people.

OSCE Presence donates biometric passports readers to Albanian police

On 25 March 2010, the OSCE Presence in Albania donated 16 biometric passports readers to the Albanian State Police in a ceremony at the Kakavija border-crossing point in Gjirokastra. The equipment will further modernize Albanian border control and increase border security, both key criteria for the visa liberalization process. The Head of the OSCE Presence

in Albania, Ambassador Robert Bosch, Interior Minister Lulzim Basha, the General Director of the State Police, Hysni Burgaj, and Pellumb Nako, the Deputy General Director and Border and Migration Police Director participated in the event.

Germany supports Albania establishing a centre for the treatment of the rare "brittle bone disease"

The hospital in Durres intends to build

a centre for the treatment of the rare genetic bone disorder Osteogenesis Imperfecta (brittle bone disease). This disease causes bones to break easily, even in the slightest accident. The centre will not only offer assistance to patients in Albania, but also to those from neighbouring countries. The German side will render support to Albanian health care professionals. Within the framework of a seminar about the brittle bone disease, two specialists from the University Hospital in Cologne will visit Durres in June. The medical expert in this field, Dr. O. Semler, as well as the physiotherapist, Ms. T. Petersen, will give a lecture to Albanian physicians during the seminar from 10th June until 12th June. Dr. Semler himself is affected by the brittle bone disease. It is, therefore, his personal concern to train medical personnel working in the field of Osteogenesis Imperfecta. During the seminar, main focus is set on introducing a new medical treatment as well as a specific kind of physiotherapy. Furthermore, a medical cooperation between Germany and Albania in the field of brittle bone disease shall be discussed. The medical team will give a press conference about the outcome of the seminar on Friday, 11th June 2010 at 16.00 o'clock in the hospital's assembly hall on the 3rd floor.



Photo: "A citizen applies for identification document and biometric passport at the Kamza Municipality"

Study visit to France and Germany to Support the Department of Public Administration

Organized by GTZ, representatives from the Ministry of Interior and the Department of Public Administration (DoPA) visited the Ecole National d'Administration in Paris and the German University of Administrative Science in Speyer. The aim was to negotiate co-operation agreements to assist the Government in setting up a School for Public Administration in Tirana. The General Secretary, Etion Kapedani and DoPA Director, Blerta Selenica were received by the French Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy to participate in several senior level meetings. This activity was implemented as part of the project Support to the Albanian Department of Public Administration that aims to strengthen the capacity of the administration to execute sound HR Management. The project is co-funded by the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession and co-funded by German Technical Cooperation.

EU assistance to bring Albania's customs in line with the EU

A 2 million Euros project funded by the EU aims to raise customs procedures to EU standards. The twinning between the Albanian authorities, Austrian Customs Administration and the support of the Polish Customs Service will bring EU experts to Albania to help approximate national legislation to EU standards, to implement the National Strategy on Integrated Border Management; and to prepare Albania for adhesion to the Common Transit Convention. At the project's launching ceremony on 11 March 2010, the Head of the EU Delegation to Albania, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan said that it was the harmonisation of customs procedures that explained the success of the EU Internal Market, as it had created a business environment of reliability. "The EU is investing so many resources in bringing Albania's customs in line with those of EU member states because of Albania's EU



Photo: Study visit to the French Ministry of Interior

integration perspective. For Albania to harmonise its procedures with those of EU members means to experience EU integration in hard, tangible terms. It means becoming a part of a vast market where the rules of the game are known, respected, and business-friendly" he said. The project will end in 2012 and will be implemented by the Austrian Customs Administration with the support of the Polish Customs Service.

USAID Supports Opening of Tourism Information Office in Shkodra

USAID's Local Governance Programme in Albania (LGPA) and the Municipality of Shkodra are working together to promote the development of tourism as a generator of employment and economic growth in Shkodra. On 19 March 2010, the Municipality of Shkodra opened a new Tourist Information Office, as part of the city's ongoing tourism promotion efforts. The office will offer free of charge, high-quality professional information

services to tourists and visitors. This initiative is a public-private partnership between the Municipality, LGPA, and Çelësi Company that will enhance an important sector of Shkodra's economy, generate private investments, and foster local economic development in the city.

Two new projects approved by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Two projects were approved by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March. The first one, a 388,728,00 Euros initiative on Strengthening of socio-educational services to promote social and cultural development of children, young and women in Tale (in Lezha), will be implemented by the Italian NGOs VIDES & Labour Mundi. The project aims to improve the living conditions of children, youth and women by offering them access to educational services. The second project on Educational support and training for children and adolescents in deprived areas and activation of a Community Youth ➤



Photo: new Tourist Information Centre opened in Shkodra with support of USAID

Centre is co-funded by the Italian Development Cooperation through a 192,000 Euros grant that will be implemented by the Pope John XXIII Community Association. The project aims at sustaining the development of rural communities by providing educational services for children living in economically difficult conditions.

USAID, Community Support Environmental Clean-up

With the support of USAID's Local Governance Programme in Albania (LGPA), the Municipality of Gramsh has embarked on an effort to improve public services for the community, particularly in waste collection and disposal. In early March, dozens of citizens, civil society organizations, businesses and students, volunteered to join the City of Gramsh and USAID, in a city-wide clean-up effort to jump-start the city's



Photo: Peace Corps Director, Hill Denham, and Peace Corps Volunteer, Tauschia Copeland, gather with a group of student volunteers in the new city park that is being built with the support of USAID, the Municipality of Gramsh, and the U.S. Department of Defense.

new service improvement action plan. USAID contributed over 15,000 USD for large trash bins for the city and several local businesses donated products to support the clean-up effort. Banka Popullore donated almost 10,000 USD for 120 park benches and 100 trash receptacles for the park. USAID, Peace

Corps, and community volunteers installed new benches and built over 100 meters of walking paths in three public parks. In addition, the U.S Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation contributed 120,000 USD to repair outdoor recreational facilities at the Shefqet Guzi high school.

In-country Missions

The World Bank Independent Evaluation Group visited from 1 to 5 March 2010. This was a fact

finding mission to conduct a review of the Country Assistance Strategy Completion Report.

World Bank

A World Bank Mission for the Albanian Response to Climate Change for Agriculture visited from 11 to 15 March 2010. The aim was to follow up on agreed key actions from the previous mission, and to discuss and agree on further activities required for the detailed analytical work of the program. The programme team will hold discussions with a steering committee, established by the focal points and comprised of various agriculture and climate change stakeholders.

A World Bank Mission for the Western Balkans Programmatic Poverty Assessment took place from 8 to 10 March 2010. The aim was to clarify the next steps of support to the production of the Living Standard Measurement Survey report and to discuss INSTAT capacity building needs.

governmentdonor**dialogue**

As of 15 November 2009 until 15 May 2010, the OSCE Presence in Albania will be the Chair of the Donor Technical Secretariat.

Any comments regarding Government-Donor Dialogue (both positive and negative) are strongly encouraged

From January 2010 Government-Donor Dialogue will be available in both English and Albanian language.

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.

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