

# government **donor** dialogue

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

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Photo: Seminar The European Union Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance and the Italian Development Cooperation in Albania; First day panel: Valbona Kuko, Flavio Lovisololo, Saba D'Elia, Genc Pollo, Albert Gajo (Photo/Italian Development Co-operation)

## The EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and the Italian Development Cooperation

From 26 to 27 May 2009, the Italian Embassy in Tirana held the seminar The European Union Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance and the Italian Development Cooperation in Albania, co-chaired by the DSDC Director of the Aid Co-ordination Unit, Valbona Kuko, and the Director of the Italian Development Co-operation, Flavio Lovisololo. The event was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister, Genc Pollo, the Italian Ambassador, Saba D'Elia, the Deputy Minister of European Integration, Albert Gajo, and the Head of the Political Economic and Information Section of the European Commission to Tirana, Thomas von

Handel. The aim of the first day was to outline the achievements in facing the challenges of European integration, with Regione Puglia and Regione Abruzzo providing focus on Cross-Border Cooperation. During the second day, several speakers from various Government ministries presented an overview of progress made toward the implementation of the Programme and outlined the choices in 2007-2009. The event saw the participation of 160 officials from international organizations, NGOs, Italian authorities and the private sector. The conclusion of the event was to adopt a joint strategy to improve co-ordination.

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## Ninth meeting of the IPS Support Group

The 9th Meeting of the Integrated Planning System (IPS) Support Group was held on 29 May 2009. Officials from the Ministries of Finance and European Integration, DSDC, Department of Public Administration, donors contributing to the IPS Trust Fund, and the Donor Technical Secretariat members participated in the meeting. The DSDC Director of Aid Co-ordination Unit, Valbona Kuko, said that major steps were taken in implementing the IPS and in the IPS Multi Donor Trust Fund in particular. She provided an overview of the progress made in 2009, highlighting that the IPS calendar was being implemented in a timely manner. Despite the progress, she said that problems still existed either due to administrative delays, or due to the difficulties related to often complex IT applications. The Director of Central Financing Contracting Unit in the Ministry of Finance, Anila Tanku, gave an overview of the contracting status of the IPS Trust Fund. The meeting recommended that donors should be kept informed in advance about any challenges and issues in order to provide support to the Government in due time.



Photo: Environment SWG on Management of Municipal Waste held on 12 May 2009

### **Environment Sector working Group on Management of Municipal Waste**

A meeting of the Sector Working Group on Environment, held on 12 May discussed the management of municipal waste. The Deputy Minister of Environment, Taulant Bino, gave an overview of the situation of the sector. The DSDC Co-ordinator, Oriana Arapi, spoke about the conclusions of the Conference on Donor Coordination for Western Balkans and Turkey held on Tirana in April, focusing on the conclusions from the environment working group. An update on main investments and funding recourses for the waste management was presented by an official from the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications, while the National Plan for Approximation with European Environmental Legislation prepared by Gtontmij/Carl Bro, was presented by the Deputy Project Team Leader, Narin Panariti. A discussion session was moderated by the Sector Working Group Focal Point, Ardi Stoios-Braken. The meeting highlighted that improvements on legislation, as well as the drafting and implementation of a national and regional plan for waste management are crucial for enhancing work in the sector.

### **Negotiations of the Mid-Term Budget Programme**

Negotiations on the Mid Term Budget

Programme (MTBP) were held between the Ministry of Finance and various Line Ministries in May. The MTBP as a document prepared by Government consisting of four sections: European Integration, Government programme, Public Investments and External Assistance. Based on the guidance "On Budget Preparation" and Policy Priority Note, all Government units should reflect in their budget requests full accordance with the: Government Programme, the Stabilization Association Agreement with the EU, the National Plan of European Legislation Approximation and Pre-Accession Instruments. In order to assess this, a process of analysing budget requests is regularly carried out by the Ministry of Finance in co-operation with the DSDC and each respective line ministry. The MTBP process is a key component for the implementation of the IPS through ensuring the linkage between policy priorities and budget.

### **Protocol with the Italian Development Cooperation**

In the framework of technical and financial cooperation between Albania and Italy, several meetings were held in May between the Italian Cooperation Office, DSDC, line ministries and relevant other public institutions. These meetings discussed the progress of the projects financed by Italy and the challenges faced with some of them. Among other

important projects, Italy is also financing in the water sector in co-operation with the UN, in railway and energy, while infrastructure, ports and roads remains a priority for the Italian Cooperation. The Government presented some new projects that will be included into the 2009 Cooperation Protocol.

### **Spain supports Albania to reform the prison system**

On 26 May 2009, the Ambassador of Spain, Manuel Montobbio, the Minister of Justice, Enkelejd Alibeaj and the General Director of Prisons, Gazmend Dibra inaugurated facilities in Fushë-Krujë prison as part of a project between Spain and Albania. Spain is supporting Albania to reform the prison system through the Project Support to the Ministry of Justice for the implementation of a programme to provide the inmates in prisons a better reintegration into society developed by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in co-operation with the Spanish and Albanian General Directorates of Prisons. This project is being implemented in Fushë-Krujë and Vlora prisons, providing equipment to implement training activities to promote the reintegration of inmates into society. The aim is to modernize the prison system according to international standards. A second phase of this project Supporting the reform and modernization of the Albanian prison system (with a budget of 450.000 Euros) will replicate the first one in other centres and will promote a legislative reform to unify the legislation and to strengthen the Prison Studies School.



Photo: Inauguration Press Conference Ambassador of Spain, Montobbio, Minister of Justice, Enkelejd. Alibeaj and General Director of Prisons, Gazmend Dibra inaugurate facilities in Fushë-Krujë prison (Photo/AECID).

### **Spain supports Albania to reform and professionalize the Advocacy of the State**

As part of the project Supporting the strengthening and consolidation of the Advocacy of the State in Albania, implemented by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in co-operation with the Spanish and Albanian General State Advocacies, an Advocates of the State appointment ceremony was held on 29 May. The appointment went through the first ever competitive examination and training process in Albania. The Minister of Justice, Enkelejd Alibeaj, the Ambassador of Spain, Manuel Montobbio and the Albanian and Spanish General Advocates of the State, Eduard Halimi and Joaquín De Fuentes respectively, chaired the ceremony. The aim is to consolidate the rule of law and strengthen the State Advocacy. It has

supported the elaboration of the Law on Advocacy of the State and its regulations. It will further improve the internal organization of this institution and the representation of Albania in national and international courts and will ensure legal advice prior to approving legal norms or contracting legal obligations.

### **New Information Brochure on Money Transfers from Switzerland**

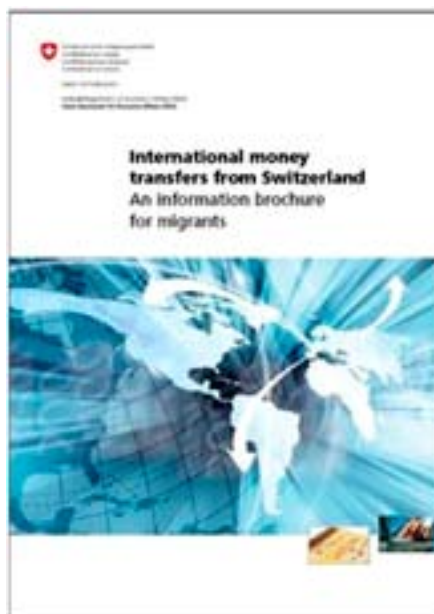
Many migrant workers transfer part of their income to relatives in their home countries. The Swiss Government, through its State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), issued a brochure on the various money transfer options and their costs. This aims to increase transparency in the money transfer market and the development impact of remittances. The brochure entitled International money

Photo: First promotion of Advocates of the State by competitive examination and training system (Photo/AECID)



## Albania coordinates regional project with CEFTA

Since 2008 the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy is co-ordinating the regional project CEFTA 2006, Improving opportunities for trade under the GTZ Open Regional Fund for Foreign Trade in South East Europe (ORF). The project facilitates dialogue between public and private stakeholders to identify and prioritize the most harmful Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade (NTBs) prevailing in the CEFTA region. On 25 and 26 May, the project brought together in a regional seminar some 50 representatives from governments, chambers of commerce, and business associations of the eight CEFTA signatories as well as regional and international trade experts. This event was supported by the CEFTA secretariat and coordinated with a recent OECD project dealing with NTBs. All participants agreed on a draft list of priority areas of NTBs, which was presented to the CEFTA deputy ministers in their meeting on 27 May 2009.



transfers from Switzerland is published also in Albanian and provides an overview of the options available for transferring money. Increased transparency in the money transfer market should make transfers less expensive and accelerate their arrival in the migrant's country of origin so that they benefit recipients more quickly. The brochure should help to increase the number of money transfers made via formal channels. Money thus injected into the financial system is made available for spending and investment, which is decisive in terms of increasing the development impact of remittances. The brochure is available in eight languages and can be downloaded from the SECO website link:

<http://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/shop/00008/02026/index.html?lang=en>

## Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minority through education and promotion of their rights

On 25 May 2009, the Country Director of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania, Daniel Züst signed a contract with the Executive Director of the Foundation Help for Children (NPF) Shpresa Spahiu on the execution of phase 6 of a project entitled Alternated Education and Vocational Training (CEFA). Switzerland provides a further grant from 1 May 2009 until 30 June 2012 totalling some 2 million USD. This will allow for the continued schooling of more than 300 Roma children until mid 2012 in four locations in Albania. The project is dedicated to the inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minority through promotion and enhancement of their citizens' rights. This aim will be achieved through investing in the education of Roma/Egyptian children in state schools; the training of Roma/Egyptian community members in certified vocational education centres; the empowerment of Roma/Egyptian communities through the participation in economic, cultural, social activities and decision-making within the project. The project is being implemented in Tirana, Korça, Elbasan and Berat. More project-information can be obtained on the Swiss Cooperation Office website ([www.swisscooperation-albania.ch](http://www.swisscooperation-albania.ch)) or directly from NPF at [NPFTirana@icc-al.org](mailto:NPFTirana@icc-al.org).

Photo: Country Director of Swiss Co-operation Office, Daniel Züst and the Executive Director of the NGO Help for Children, Shpresa Spahiu signing the contract for the project Alternated Education and Vocational Training (Photo/SDC).





Photo: The Italian NGO Avsi issued diplomas to 70 students on vocational training courses for teachers and trainers

### Diplomas for teachers and vocational trainers

On 9 May 2009, 70 students on vocational teacher training courses received official certificates in an event held by the Italian NGO Avsi in co-operation with the Albanian Association for Solidarity and the Spanish NGO Cesal. Supported by a 700,000 Euros grant from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the courses are designed to train young professionals, providing a range of high quality teacher trainings. Twenty seven of the professors received a diploma for pre-primary education, sixteen educators received a certificate for secondary level daily centres and twenty five other professionals from Shkodra achieved a pedagogical qualification in primary education. The certificates were awarded by the Vocational Centre Kardinal Mikel Koliqi in Tirana, and are recognized by the Institute of Curricula and Training.

### Italian Embassy delegation visits North Albania

From 5 to 14 May 2009, a delegation from the Embassy of Italy visited Northern Albania to monitor and visit several projects financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Lezha, the delegation paid a visit to the Programme for Bee-breeding development implemented by the Italian NGO UCODEP. Financed through a contribution of 500,000

Euros, the Project aims at creating micro-enterprises and the development of a marketing strategy for distribution and production of honey. The two other projects related to Occupational Promotion and Re-qualification for the reinsertion of Migrant workers, implemented by the NGOs aritas and IPSIA and financed through 1 million Euros, and the joint initiative Vides/Labor Mundi Social and Cultural promotion of young people in Lezhe, financed through a 500,000 Euros grant. In Shkodra, the delegation inaugurated the Vocational Centre Bardaj Bleran. With a budget of 900,000 Euros, and implemented by the NGO Celim, the project supports the training of people

Photo: Inauguration of the Bardaj Bleran vocational centre in Shkodra (Photo/Italian Development Cooperation)



## Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands visits Diber Qark Project in Peshkopi

On 13-14 April 2009, a delegation from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands visited Peshkopi to attend the signing ceremony of the first approved projects in 2009 of the Diber Qark Trust Fund programme and to participate in the Trust Fund's Steering Committee. A large number of new projects have been approved this year, which made the signing ceremony a success. During the Steering Committee, a number of issues were discussed, including the follow up and monitoring of projects that have now been completed, the planning of a mid-term review mission for the programme and the 'Diber info day' that will take place in the autumn. The project will look to conclude in 2011.



Photo: Ucodep project of beekeeping first honey production of the year (Photo/Italian Development Co-operation)

living in the Municipalities of Bardaj Bleran and Oblike by offering them access to professional opportunities. The last project visited in Skodra was the structural improvement of the regional hospital, a programme, co-funded through 900,000 Euros and implemented by the NGO Aispo. In Tamara, the NGO VIS and the Agency for Mountains Areas Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the framework of a 1.6 million Euros project for Integrated rural development in the Municipalities of Kelmend and Shkrel, District of Malesia and Madhe. The project aims at creating a local development fund that will finance economic community based activities. During the visit the Italian Ambassador, Saba D'Elia, stressed the importance of the Italian strategy of intervention in Northern Albania in the process of local development and expressed his satisfaction for the results achieved so far.

### **OSCE Presence in Albania launches civil society development fund in Korca**

On 20 May 2009, the OSCE Presence, in co-operation with the Korca Municipality and the German Embassy in Albania, announced the creation of a 25,000 Euros civil society development fund. The fund will support NGOs, community-based groups and individuals who carry out non-profit civic activism

in the region. The Municipality of Korca has dedicated over 7,500 Euros to the fund. The Korca Civil Society Development Centre will co-ordinate the fund. "We have worked closely with the Municipality to empower local civil society to undertake self-motivated activities rather than donor-driven initiatives," said the Head of OSCE Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch, during the signing ceremony.

### **OSCE Presence in Albania promotes public consultation in decision-making**

On 21 May 2009, some 30 officials from the private sector and government

Photo: CSDC Executive Director, Ereandra Taipllari, Mayor of Korca, Niko Peleshi and Head of the OSCE Presence Ambassador Robert Bosch



institutions discussed how to fulfil obligations to consult the public on environmental aspects of national and local planning processes during a workshop that was organized by the OSCE Presence and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration. The event familiarized participants with their legal responsibilities to allow the public a voice during the planning of projects. It formed part of the co-operation between the Presence and Ministry in the area of environmental information and implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

### **Italian NGO CICa presents the book "LULE"**

The Italian NGO Comunita di Capodarco presented the book Lule - about the difficult situation of juvenile disability can be faced through the commitment of NGOs like the Community of Capodarco with the support of the Italian Development Co-operation. The book shows pictures telling about the day by day lives of three disabled children. The CICa is present in Albania since 1996, when it was asked to manage the first centre for disabled people, in co-operation with local and central Albanian authorities and supported by the Embassy of Italy. The innovation of the project lies in the rehabilitation programme that follows international guidelines and the local staff has been trained with specialized courses of Italian experts and with traineeships in Italy.



Photo: Tonino's adventures being performed in Tirana. (Photo/Italian Development Cooperation)

### Deaf children performing theatre

The Institute for deaf children in Tirana, supported with a 700,000 Euro grant by the Italian Development Co-operation, through an intervention of the NGO Magis, held an integrated theatre workshop in Tirana. On 28 May 2009, the deaf and hearing acting company performed Tonino's adventures. The workshop move away from the idea of acting as a mere use of voice and expression through words by communicating using also body language. The performance aimed to highlight the importance of respecting without prejudice the variety of cultures in the world.

### Italy supports a new programme against gender violence

On 14 May 2009, the inaugural conference was held of the project Support to the Centre Luna Nuova that promotes women's rights in Albania. Co-funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through a 700,000 Euro grant and implemented by the NGO

Photo: Deputy Minister of Interior, Iva Zajmi the Deputy Minister of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Marjeta Zace, the Italian Deputy Ambassador, Francesco Saverio De Luigi at the opening conference of the project

(Photo/Italian Development Cooperation)

CIES, the Project looks to improve the living conditions of women in Elbasan. The event was opened by the Deputy Minister of Interior, Iva Zajmi the Deputy Minister of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Marjeta Zace and the Italian Deputy Ambassador, Francesco Saverio De Luigi. The importance of promoting woman's rights and the issue of domestic violence were highlighted in the conference.

### Albania takes steps to respect the rights of sexual minority

On the International Day against

Homophobia, on 17 May 2009, for the first time, Albania organised a public campaign against homophobia. An open letter, published in Shekulli newspaper, was signed by 24 major NGOs and individuals asking the Government to guarantee the human rights of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-gender community and to take steps to eliminate their discrimination. The campaign was accompanied by a poster campaign that was distributed widely throughout Albania with the aim to raise greater public awareness. The national and international community also facilitated the organisation of public lectures and





debates with students from different Tirana-based Universities, such as the New York University and University of Tirana. On the initiative of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a working group on this issue has been established since the start of 2009 with the participation of several human rights organisations and representatives of the international community. The aim is to support the initiatives that will enable the country to achieve higher standards in respecting the human rights of sexual minorities. During 2008-2009, Albania took several steps to debate such issues. The starting point was the First Human Rights Debate in Albania, on 12 December 2009 that was held by the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania in cooperation with the Gender Alliance for Development and the Albanian Human Rights Group. The culmination of this event was the approval of the Declaration of the First Human Rights Debate asking the Government to guarantee the respect for the rights of sexual minorities, women and children. The Debate was supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

## In-country Missions

### IMF

The IMF regional Public Financial Management (PFM) Advisor for South Eastern Europe, Brian Olden, visited Tirana from 4 to 8 May 2009 to discuss the role of the IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department in assisting the national authorities with their PFM reform agenda over the long-term with a particular emphasis on their efforts to develop liquidity and debt management capacities.

A mission from the IMF's Legal Department headed by Wouter Bossu visited the Bank of Albania from 24 to 30 May 2009 to assist the Bank of Albania in the preparation of the draft Payment System Law based on best international practices.

### World Bank

A World Bank Identification Mission for the Corporate Financial reporting Enhancement Project took place from 26 to 29 May 2009. The aim was to discuss and agree with the Ministry of Finance and members of National Steering Committee (NSC) on the priority actions needed for the first phase of the

project; implement arrangements of the project; discuss with NSC proposals with reference of activities to be undertaken; and finally, to discuss World Bank operational support including setting up a donor trust fund.

A World Bank expert for the Education Excellence and Equity Project visited Albania from 25 to 29 May 2009 to review samples of architectural designs for school rehabilitation. External consultants from the Ministry of Education and officials from relevant municipalities joined him in conducting the review.

A World Bank Mission for the Health Sector Modernization Project took place from 18 to 22 May 2009, focusing on: meetings with the health financing law working-group and lawyers to finalise draft law; participation in the workshop on monitoring and evaluation and National Health Accounts organized by the Ministry of Health; and follow-up on actions to be undertaken by the Ministry as identified in the benchmarks agreed during the project Mid Term Review in December 2008.

## 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](mailto:nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al)) or the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination (DSDC) ([agerxhani@km.gov.al](mailto: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.

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