

government **donor** dialogue

ISSUE No. 28, Monthly Newsletter - April 2009

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

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Photo: Conference on Donor coordination in the Western Balkans and Turkey, held in Tirana on 2-3 April 2009

Donor Co-ordination in the Western Balkans and Turkey

The Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination, and the European Commission, DG Enlargement jointly hosted on 2-3 April 2009 in Tirana a two-day conference on Donor coordination in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The event gathered some 200 stakeholders to review the progress made in enhancing donor co-ordination. The event was opened by the Director General for Enlargement, Michael Leigh, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, and the Ambassador of the Czech Republic, Marketa Fialkova. In his speech, Mr. Leigh highlighted the importance of organizing such a conference at a time of a global financial crisis, stating that the EU had already prepared an assistance package of 150 million Euros under IPA programming for partner countries in the region, while 600 million Euros would be offered by other international financial institutions. Prime

Minister Berisha spoke about the reforms process and expressed his commitment that all donor assistance will be used efficiently. At the end of the conference, partner countries were encouraged to increase the capacity of co-ordination structures to ensure coherent use of donor assistance, to establish structures necessary for the efficient decentralized management of IPA assistance, to support the national ownership of donor co-ordination, to ensure the predictability of aid and reducing transaction costs. Participants welcomed the invitation of Sweden, as the next Presidency of the EU, to the yearly donor conference to take place in Brussels on 19-20 October 2009, where progress will be reviewed. All conference materials can be found at www.dsdc.gov.al or at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/projects-in-focus/donor-coordination/index_en.htm.

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Inauguration ceremony of the Lushnja – Fier highway

On 9 April 2009, the Ministry of Public Works Transport and Telecommunications inaugurated the Lushnja–Fier highway financed by the Italian Development Co-operation through some 20 million Euros. The 21.5 km long highway has been built by the Maltauro & Delma Italian building company. Prime Minister Sali Berisha attended the inauguration ceremony, along with Italian Ambassador to Tirana Saba D'Elia and the Minister of Public Works Transport and Telecommunications Sokol Olldashi. Along with the four lane highway, the project includes the building of access roads, three overpasses as well as five safe passages for the public. The importance of the project lies in the connection of the two centres of Myzeqe lowlands, Lushnja and Fier: Lushnja becomes the only town with a highway crossing between it and further connecting this town with Fier. Well connected transport infrastructure is crucial for unlocking economies and sharpening competitiveness. The need to modernize regional transport constitutes a challenge to trade expansion and European integration.

Photo: Inauguration of Lushnja-Fier highway



Photo: International Consortium Annual Plenary Meeting held on 28 April 2009 in Tirana

International Consortium Plenary Meeting

The International Consortium (IC), a group that includes Embassies, international missions and non-governmental organizations that offer development assistance in the area of law enforcement and rule of law in Albania, held its annual meeting on 28 April 2009 in Tirana. The event was co-ordinated by ICITAP, the OSCE Presence and Delegation of the European Commission. The U.S Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Stephen A. Cristina, the Head of the European Commission Delegation in Tirana, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan, the Head of the OSCE Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch, Minister of Interior, Bujar Nishani, and Minister of Justice Enkelejd Alibeaj, all congratulated the Consortium for its contribution to the advancement of the rule of law. Mr. Ahmet Prenci, the General Director of Albanian State Police provided an overview of the support provided by the EU, the US and a number of international organizations, thanking them for their contribution with regard to developing the capacities of the State Police. The Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination gave a presentation on how they will work with international partners to improve donor co-ordination. The Issues moderated by ICITAP Program Manager, Darrel Hart, included briefings on the sustainability and impact of police training; the implementation of community policing;

Is the Muriqan Joint Border Crossing Point a model for the integrated border management in Albania?; the actions taken in dealing successfully with the fight against drugs and trafficking; and TIMS progress and its future IT sustainability challenges. IC Working Group on Legal Issues moderated by chief of Legal Department at OSCE PiA, Frank Dalton, included presentations on working toward increase transparency and co-operation in legal reforms; the implementation of alternatives to the detention of juveniles; addressing the shortcomings in prison system identified by national and international inspections/reports; and building a credible Witness Protection Programme. Presentations and other materials from the conference can be found [here](#).

UN builds kindergarten to benefit Roma children in Albania

In the village of Rom on the outskirts of Fier, UNDP and UNV are building a kindergarten to benefit 40 Roma children. The project is part of a larger effort in the framework of Delivering as One UN to empower vulnerable minority communities in Albania. The project works to reduce disparities and promote social inclusion by supporting civil registration, vocational training, local participatory planning and investments in small priority projects. Since the project's inception in March 2008, amongst others,

165 members of the Roma and Egyptian communities have been assisted in obtaining registration documents to ensure access to social services.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UNDP Acting Administrator Ad Melkert visited the project in March during an official visit to Albania and reiterated the need to support vulnerable communities and the importance of women's participation in advancement of social inclusion. While talking to local community members, Mr. Melkert said, "Every person, every child deserves good health care, good education and the United Nations is promoting and working in this direction." During his visit in Albania, Ad Melkert also met with the President Bamir Top and Prime Minister Sali Berisha and thanked them for their leadership over the Delivering as One initiative and for the fruitful cooperation with UNDP.

Promoting social inclusion and celebrating Roma culture

Roma community members, civil society, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Government ministers, United Nations representatives and media came together to mark International Roma Day on 8 April 2009. International Roma Day is a celebration of Roma history, traditions and culture and it aims to raise awareness on the challenges facing Roma communities worldwide.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the Roma community's contribution to Albanian society over many years. He noted that the Government of Albania has joined other Eastern



Photo: Under Secretary General Melkert meets with Roma Community in Fier.

European Governments in the 'Roma Decade Initiative' and in this context, is drafting the Albanian National Action Plan for Roma that addresses the overall needs of the community. UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Mrs. Gulden Turkoz-Coslett, described the commemoration of International Roma Day an opportunity to recognize the unique contribution of Roma to Albanian life and celebrate Roma culture and values. The commemoration serves as a opportunity to share a common objective and commitment to improve the life of Roma as well as their further integration into society. A Roma Cultural Fair was held to promote Roma culture and social inclusion through a variety of activities throughout the day. The event was organized in the framework of "Empowering the Vulnerable Communities of Albania" project implemented by UNDP and UNV in

Fier, Elbasan and Tirana, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

USAID, 4th Judicial Reform Index for Albania released

On 10 April 2009, the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), with support from USAID, released the 4th Judicial Reform Index for Albania, at an event held at the Magistrates School in Tirana. "A strong judiciary is the key to Albania's long-term success," said USAID's Mission Director, Roberta Mahoney. "The United States Government is firmly committed to the development of an effective, impartial and democratic judicial system in Albania." She urged legal professionals to use this assessment to build a transparent and fair judicial system comprised of professionals guided by principles of integrity and independence. She also stressed the importance of justice sector reforms to foreign direct investments and reforms in public administration. The Judicial Reform Index is an assessment tool implemented by ABA ROLI in order to assess a cross-section of factors important to judicial reform in emerging democracies. The Index is designed to help international and local partners to better target judicial reform programmes

Photo: Roma community members, civil society, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Government ministers, United Nations representatives and media came together to mark International Roma Day on 8 April 2009.



Announcement of the Preliminary Results of 2008 Living Standards Measurements Survey

Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank offices in Albania presented the findings of the 2008 Living Standard and Measurements Survey in Albania in a meeting held on 23 April 2009. The survey was conducted by INSTAT with the assistance of the above mentioned institutions and is the third in line following the 2002 and 2005 surveys. LSMS serves as one of the main sources of information to determine living conditions and measures the poverty situation of the country. It provides an indispensable tool to assist policy-makers in monitoring and targeting social programs. Furthermore the LSMS is the main source of data for monitoring the expected outcomes outlined in the National Strategy for Development and Integration. One of the main findings of 2008 LSMS is the steady reduction of poverty in the country as it moved on with its transition to a market economy. Indeed, results for 2008 indicate that 12.4 percent of the population was poor compared to 18.5 percent in 2005 and 25.4 percent in 2002. The survey results indicate a large reduction in poverty in rural areas between 2005 and 2008 which means that poverty may no longer be essentially a rural problem. According to the survey, broad areas of Albania continue to witness declining poverty rates. However, the data indicate a noticeable slowdown in the rate of poverty reduction in Mountain Areas, where the incidence continues to be the highest and which has seen little change since 2005.

by creating a quantifiable measure of their impact. It also functions as a tool to refine programme implementation and monitor progress towards establishing an accountable, effective, and independent judiciary. The Index for Albania examines Albania's judiciary through a prism of thirty factors reflecting the most main characteristics of successful judicial systems. It explores such issues as judicial education, and qualifications and appointment procedures of judges; independence and transparency of judicial decisions and judicial powers; budgetary considerations and issues of compensation.; ABA ROLI previously implemented such an Index for Albania in 2001, 2004, and in 2006.

Roundtable on Corruption – How to face it!



On 1 April 2009, the Government officials, members of the judiciary and prosecutors, donor agencies and international experts participated in a roundtable hosted by EURALIUS to speed up the fight against corruption. The Director of the Bureau for

Internal Affairs in the Austrian Ministry of Interior, Martin Kreutner, spoke about corruption and aspects of its prevention. The EURALIUS Expert, Mr Iruretagoyena stressed that the general supervision of the courts through general inspections, if carried out in a proper way, will help to prevent corruption in the judiciary.

Albanian Conference on pharmaceutical industry

The Italian Development Cooperation co-financed a conference on the pharmaceutical industry in Tirana on 24 April 2009. The event aimed at improving the discussion on the review of the current legislation defining the legal framework of pharmaceuticals in order to create a workable system for the approval of new products, based on quality and safety that ensures that new medicines reach the public quickly. The initiative, opened by the Minister of Health Anila Godo, has been a positive model of co-operation between the European Medicines Agency, the Agenzia Italiana del Farmaco, and the Albanian Institute for Medicines.

Ullastres Course on the European Union hold graduation ceremony

On 21 April 2009, the Minister of European Integration, Majlinda Bregu, the Ambassador of the Embassy of Spain, Manuel Montobbio, and former Spanish Secretary of State and Ambassador to the European Communities,

Photo: Roundtable organized by EURALIUS on 1 April 2009 aiming to speed up the fight against corruption





Photo: Handing of Diplomas for participants in the Course on EU

Raimundo Bassols, participated in an international roundtable Negotiating European Integration: lessons from Spanish experience. The event was part of the framework of the Spanish Tribune programme and acted as the closing event of the Ullastres Course on European Union organized by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation and the Spanish Secretary of State for the EU. This Course aimed at contributing to the consolidation of a professional administration for the EU in Albania and was carried out from November 2008 until March 2009 in the Ministry of European Integration.

Italian contribution in the mental health care sector

Photo: The Italian Ambassador to Tirana, Saba D'Elia, the Head of the Italian Co-operation Office of the Italian Embassy Flavio Lovisolò, the Minister of Health Anila Godo and representatives of the Italian NGO.

The Minister of Health, Anila Godo, signed on 30 April 2009 an agreement for the creation of a specialized mental health centre in Tirana with the Italian NGO Comunita' di Capodarco in the framework of the project Strengthening the rights of mental health patients in Albania financed by the Government of Italy through a 600.000 Euros grant. "Mental, neurological and behavioral

disorders are common to all countries and cause immense suffering. People with these disorders are often subjected to social isolation, poor quality of life and increased mortality. These disorders are the cause of staggering economic and social costs," said Minister Godo. The project aims to increase what is available to reduce the burden of mental disorders and to promote mental health in the framework of the mental health care reform process. "An effective treatment for mental disorders...could enable most of those affected to become functioning members of society and the social integration of those patients is our final goal", said an official of the Italian NGO.

Photo: The Italian Ambassador to Tirana, Saba D'Elia, the Head of the Italian Co-operation Office of the Italian Embassy Flavio Lovisolò, the Minister of Health Anila Godo and representatives of the Italian NGO



UN Habitat launch SILD initiative financed by Italy

On 7 April 2009, the Italian Co-operation Office in Tirana, the Ministry of Public Works Transportation and Telecommunications and the National Direction of Social Housing, participated in a workshop held by UN Habitat to illustrate the feasibility study on the Settlements and Integrated Local Development Initiative financed by the Government of Italy through 7 million Euros grant. The initiative aimed to replicate and up-scale at sub-regional level the Settlements and Integration of Refugees Programme (SIRP), a three year initiative financed by Italy and implemented in Serbia. SIRP has been implemented both at the central level and in seven municipalities to develop approaches for building capacities in the areas of social housing and integrated territorial approach linked to urban and local development, in the context of political and administrative decentralization and EU integration. In Albania the Italy funded initiative of some 500.000 Euros, will support the identification and testing frameworks for integrated sustainable settlements. The Municipalities of Vlora, Elbasan, Korca and Fier have been selected in order to start the decentralization reform for social housing services provision under the wider framework of urban development.



Gëzoni dashurinë, Gëzoni jetën

PËRDORNI KONTRACEPTIVËT BASHKËKOHORË!

për **momente të lumtura**



USAID-funded Family Planning Campaign Promotes Use of Contemporary Contraceptives

On 9 April 2009, USAID unveiled a new series of television, radio and print ads which will carry messages of how to have more 'happy moments' by using contemporary contraceptive methods to prevent an unplanned pregnancy. The new initiative, implemented by the Communication for Change (C-Change) Family Planning programme in Albania, is focused on increasing the use of contemporary contraceptive methods, countering misconceptions about side effects, and reducing the dependency on traditional methods, primarily focusing on young men and women between the ages 18 to 35. The event was attended by USAID's Mission Director, Roberta Mahoney, who said that the aim was to foster a healthier way of life for all citizens. She stressed the need for continued investments in the health sector as a key standard necessary for accession into the EU. She was joined by the Minister of Health, Anila Godo, and the wife of the Prime Minister, Dr. Liri

Berisha. The launch of the campaign follows the World Health Organization's World Health Day as an effort to raise awareness on such an important public health issue and to provide sensible solutions. The campaign will be supported with press articles and discussion programmes on television and radio throughout the year. Additionally, C-Change is working with partners, universities, and organizations such as UNICEF and UNFPA to reach pharmacists and university students in Tirana and Vlora. The TV spot is available on You Tube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CE6n9_SCSe0

International fair of technology and quality: Signature of the first loan contracts for SMEs

Within the framework of the Italian Albanian Programme for the development of Albanian SMEs the signing ceremony of the first loan contracts for Albanian Small and Medium Enterprises was held on 30 April 2009 in Tirana. Minister of Economy Trade and Energy, Genc Ruli, and Italian Ambassador to Albania, Saba D'Elia, opened the ceremony that

Photo: International Fair of Technology and Quality: Signature of the First Loan Contracts.





Photo: International Fair of Technology and Quality at the Palace of Congress

took part at the International Fair of Technology and Quality. The 1 million Euros loans disbursed under the provision of the Credit Line component of the Programme finance four new Albanian

enterprises. The loans are provided by the Intesa Sanpaolo Bank through the intervention of the CREDINS Bank, the National Commercial Bank and the Banca Italiana di Sviluppo.

Meetings of the Sector Working Groups

SWG meeting on Gender equality

On 22 April 2009, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities with support from DSDC and UNIFEM, hosted the Gender and Domestic Violence Sector Working Group meeting. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Minister Marieta Zaçe, who presented the Government's achievements in advancing gender equality since 2005. The Directorate of Equal Opportunities and Policies presented the progress made in the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence for 2008 and outlined future priorities that included support for ensuring higher participation of women in parliamentary elections, support to women's empowerment with particular attention to rural women through employment and entrepreneurship programmes, support in the approximation of national legislation with the EU legislation and the preparation of a public information campaign targeting women with information on access to

the labour market, employment offices, public and private vocational training opportunities, employment-related legislation and social services available to vulnerable women groups. DSDC also presented the SWG calendars and the draft TORs as efforts to standardize and harmonize the work of the SWG. meeting discussions centred on the co-ordination of donor reporting and how to avoid duplication of reporting. To review materials from this SWG, please click [here](#).

SWG on Agriculture and Rural Development

The Sector Working Group on Agriculture and Rural Development met on 30 April 2009 in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection. Officials from the Ministry, the DSDC and the donor community participated in the meeting. It was opened with an overview on the most significant achievements in the sector over the last four years giving also the planned future activities. An analysis of

public investments and gaps was given by the DSDC representative, while a report on budget planning and formulation process was presented by the Ministry of Finance. The meeting highlighted the need on improving donors reporting on their disbursement and the planned financing as well as a better co-ordination of all relevant actors.

SWG on Water

The Ministry of Public Work, Transport and Telecommunication in cooperation with the Department of Strategy Development and Donor Coordination and the Austrian Development Cooperation held another Sector Working Group meeting on water and sewerage on 30 April 2009. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Minister of Public Work, Transport and Telecommunication, Stavri Ristani together with the Head of the Austrian Development Cooperation Office in Albania, Astrid Wein as donor focal point for the SWG. The representatives from various international and Albanian institutions were updated by the Deputy Minister Ristani and by the General Director of Water and Sanitation, Taulant Zeneli on the situation regarding the impact of the transfer process of the Water and Sewerage Municipalities to local government units. Rikard Luka, Director in the Ministry presented an extract of the action plan for achieving Government aims. The Deputy Minister of Environment, Forest and Water Administration, Taulant Bino stressed the importance of including adequate treatment of waste water to the interventions in this sector as it had a major environmental impact on water quality and, therefore, on health and socio-economic development. It was agreed that this topic will be on the agenda for the next meeting to provide sufficient time for a full exchange of information and discussion. Responding to the requirements of Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, it was agreed to further explore new aid modalities such programme based approaches, "basket" funding, and/or direct budget support. The group was in favour of developing an annual work-plan. Ideas for potential themes will be collecting before the next meeting due to be held in late June. To review materials from this SWG, please click [here](#).

In-country Missions



Photo: Press conference of the IMF mission, led by Gerwin Bell, which visited Albania from 1 to 7 April 2009.

IMF

An IMF mission on Banking Supervision led by Goran Knežević visited Tirana from 16 March to 3 April 2009, to assist the Bank of Albania in producing models for reorganizing the Banking Supervision Department and to provide an assessment of those models that would mostly contribute to the enhancement of the processes within the BoA.

An IMF mission, led by Gerwin Bell, visited Albania from 1 to 7 April 2009, to discuss the impact of the global economic crisis and the appropriate macro-economic policy response. The mission noted that Albania would be affected by these developments despite its sound past macroeconomic and structural policies. They urged the government to tighten its fiscal stance and stressed the importance of continuous vigilant supervision and monitoring of the financial sector. They said that with the adoption of the required policies, Albania could still register positive growth in 2009, albeit at a lower pace than the rates experienced in the past decade.

An IMF mission on Central Banking Legislation led by Atilla Arda visited the Bank of Albania (BoA) from 6 to 16 April 2009 to assist in the drafting a new central bank law to ensure compatibility with the Treaty of Rome and the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and with international best practices. The mission focused on strengthening the Bank's autonomy and accountability in its implementation of monetary policy and its role in safeguarding stability.

An IMF mission on tax administration reforms led by Allan Jensen visited Tirana from 15 April to 5 May 2009 to assist

the General Department of Taxation in developing a comprehensive IT strategy that will define the requirements to a new IT system and identify business processes that require re-engineering.

An IMF mission on monetary and exchange Regimes led by Meir Sokoler visited the Bank of Albania (BoA) from 20 to 24 April 2009. Mr. Sokoler commented on various monetary policy documents that BoA staff prepared for the Supervisory Council meeting in April. Particular attention was given to the need to analyze data relevant to the assessment of the consequences of the global financial crisis.

World Bank

A World Bank Supervision Mission for the Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Clean-up Project took place from 27 April to 1 May 2009. The aim was focused on the Project's Management Action Plan in particular with regard to progress related to the Social and Vulnerability Assessment and the results of the pilot exercise.

A World Bank Information Technology Review Mission took place from 20 to 24 April 2009. The aim was to undertake the review and inspection of IT equipment and systems procured under some selected projects. This review helped to determine that the proceeds of the credits, loans and grants that Albania has received from the World Bank to finance IT equipment, systems or services are being used for the intended purpose.

A World Bank Supervision Mission for the Transport Project visited Tirana from 20 to 24 April 2009. The aim was to undertake the supervision of the Transport Project and to continue the policy dialogue.

The items discussed included the status of the project components; confirming the satisfactory implementation of the Environmental Management Plan (EMP); updating the project performance indicators for inclusion in the Implementation Status Report.

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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](#).

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