

NewsLetter



AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DHOMA AMERIKANE E TREGTISË

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ALBANIA

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AmCham Albania Celebrates Its 25th Anniversary

President Begaj and the U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Acknowledge the Role of AmCham Albania

The 25th anniversary of the American Chamber of Commerce was marked by a landmark event, a Gala Evening honoring the founders, the organization's extraordinary journey, and its impactful contribution to economic developments between the two countries.

On this occasion, the American Chamber was honored by the President of the Republic of Albania, Mr. Bajram Begaj, and the Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy, Ms. Nan-

cy VanHorn. In their welcoming remarks, both highlighted AmCham's contribution to regulatory processes in support of business and its important intermediary role between American and Albanian businesses.

"The American Chamber has become one of the most trusted and respected voices in the country and remains a key factor in strengthening the voice of the business community," stated Ms. VanHorn, emphasizing AmCham's role and citing concrete legal and regulatory improvements

achieved as a result of the organization's work and expertise.

President Bajram Begaj echoed this assessment, noting that "AmCham provides a valuable contribution and is a strong voice of the business community as well as the best intermediary between American and Albanian businesses."

Everything began with a strong idea that brought together 44 business leaders through the initiative of the U.S. Embassy's Economic Attaché, Mr. Charles Levesque, to introduce to the country an exceptional brand, the American Chamber of Commerce which today, after 25 years, has grown into a vibrant community of 276 businesses.

"The American Chamber had a clear objective: to build a sustainable bridge of cooperation between Albania and the United States and to



foster a climate of trust and transparency by promoting the American way of doing business,” said AmCham Executive Director Neritan Mullaj in his welcoming remarks.

AmCham President Grant Van Cleve emphasized that the era of political change and economic challenges is guiding the world toward better times, with the United States playing a leading role. “The American Chamber plays an important role in the development of Albania–U.S. relations, because, as echoed in both our national anthems, in the land of liberty and the brave we encourage the innovative spirit of entrepreneurs and guide them forward,” stated AmCham President Grant Van Cleve.

Both leaders of the Chamber outlined the organization’s innovative vision to guide technological and

digital developments in business through a new elite generation. As part of this vision, the “Innovative Entrepreneur of the Year” Award will be introduced and presented annually to the most outstanding innovative entrepreneur, Executive Director Neritan Mullaj announced during the event.

While the vision for the future is clear, the reflective moment of the 25th anniversary also served to honor the pioneering companies that have stood alongside the organization and made history together with it. The American Chamber awarded the “25 Years Member of the American Chamber” distinction to 23 loyal member companies.

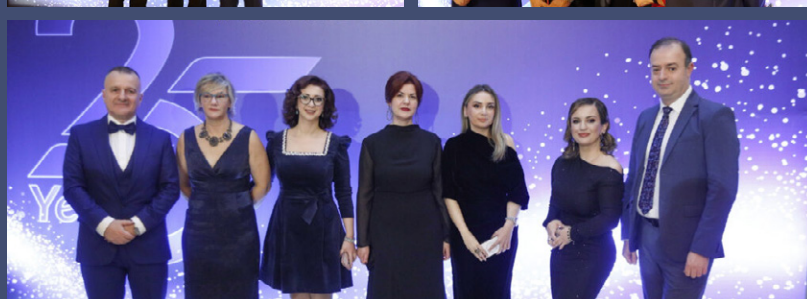
The Chamber also paid tribute to members and leaders who are no longer with us but are remembered for

their outstanding contributions. Executive Director Neritan Mullaj honored the memory of U.S. Ambassador Joseph Limprecht, former AmCham President Jeffrey Griffing, and in particular, entrepreneur Dritan Mezini.

“The American Chamber will remember with great respect this innovative figure who, through his actions, led dynamic technological changes and encouraged businesses to embrace these innovations. Personally, I feel a strong obligation to honor this friend and colleague with whom we shared ideas and visions, some of which we were able to bring to life,” said Mr. Mullaj.

The American Chamber expressed its gratitude to the event sponsors whose generosity made the organization of this magnificent event possible.





AMCHAM ALBANIA'S STATEMENT ON THE FISCAL PEACE AGREEMENT

The American Chamber of Commerce in Albania (AmCham) in its role as a constructive partner in public dialogue, has consistently reflected sensitivity and a high level of responsibility toward reforms that affect the business climate, economic development, and market integrity. As an organization that represents the interests of both American and Albanian investors, AmCham places essential importance on transparency, fair competition standards, and sustainable medium and long-term policies.

In this context, AmCham expresses its concern regarding the draft law “On the Fiscal Peace Agreement,” which is currently under review in Parliament and is expected to be approved in the session of 11 December 2025. Our professional assessment highlights a number of issues with broad legal, economic, and fiscal governance implications.

1. HIGH RISK OF UNDERMINING FAIR COMPETITION

The draft law creates a scheme in which businesses that have duly reported their profits over the years are placed in a disadvantageous position, while those that have avoided tax obligations stand to benefit.

The mandatory application of an 18% increase in taxable profit from the previous year, regardless of the sector or the taxpayer's actual performance, replaces the self-declaration process with an arbitrary formula that does not reflect the actual financial performance of the entity and creates an unfair burden on compliant taxpayers.

Meanwhile, businesses with historically low declared profits benefit from a low calculation base, creating inequality and market distortion. This practice harms compliant and serious enterprises and undermines the constitutional principle of equality before



the law.

2. REAL RISK OF LEGALIZING CAPITAL OF DUBIOUS ORIGIN

The draft law enables the re-declaration of financial statements for the past five years, including the restatement of cash, the elimination of liabilities, or the declaration of previously unregistered assets, without the need to justify them as accounting/tax errors or deliberate non-declarations. In any case, the differences are taxed at a reduced rate of only 5%. These changes to historical financial statements are allowed without the need for supporting documentation or clear justifi-

cations, thus endangering the fundamental principles of National and International Accounting Standards that require consistency and reliability of financial information.

This mechanism, which is not accompanied by any requirement to verify the origin of funds, creates a clear pathway for legalizing capital of unclear or potentially criminal origin.

inal origin.

The absence of a robust control mechanism in line with anti-money laundering legislation, combined with the exemption of auditors from responsibility for resulting discrepancies, further increases the risk that the initiative will be perceived as a disguised form of fiscal amnesty.

This development undermines confidence in the fiscal system and jeopardizes the country's international reputation, particularly in the context of assessments by the European Union and MoneyVal.

Additionally, the draft law may jeop-

ardize the country's efforts to fulfill the recommendations of the OECD's BEPS (Base Erosion and Profit Shifting) task force, which aim to combat international tax evasion.

3. REDUCTION OF TAX ADMINISTRATION QUALITY

The draft law significantly restricts tax inspections on income tax during the agreement period, limiting oversight solely to "desk review." This weakens the tax administration's ability to detect evasion and creates an environment conducive to abuse.

The draft law does not offer clear and objective criteria for selecting taxpayers who can benefit from the fiscal peace agreement (such as tax risk assessment, historical declaration performance, etc., to avoid including taxpayers who have repeatedly avoided taxes). Furthermore, the draft law does not contain mandatory deadlines within which the tax administration must review the taxpayer's request and prepare and send the agreement proposal.

Furthermore, the possibility of renewing the agreement for up to two additional years creates a problematic dependency between businesses and the administration, turning the agreement into a potential tool for pressure or favoritism, with a high risk of administrative corruption.

4. SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND FISCAL CONSEQUENCES

A tax rate of only 5% will be applied in cases where the realized profit increases by more than 18%, as well as in cases of re-declaration of other financial items. This creates a considerable gap between the regular tax rates (15% for corporate income and 23% for certain business categories) and the preferential rate of the scheme.

This large difference has no economic justification and creates a strong incentive for all businesses to move towards the "fiscal peace" scheme, substantially reducing poten-

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tial state budget revenues. At a time when public finances require stability and predictability, this model encourages tax avoidance practices and shrinks the tax base.

Moreover, considering that more than 90% of taxpayers currently benefit from tax exemptions, the taxpayer base is further narrowed.

5. SIGNIFICANT LEGAL CONCERNS AND VIOLATION OF FUNDAMENTAL TAXATION PRINCIPLES

The draft law undermines several core principles of tax law and constitutional standards, including:

- » the principle of equality before the law;
- » legal certainty;
- » proportionality of tax obligations;
- » the obligation of the administration to treat all taxpayers equally.

The draft law is not accompanied by the necessary secondary legislation that would enable its implementation. Moreover, it foresees that such implementing acts will be approved only three months after the law enters into force.

The draft law sends a wrong message to the business community, creating the perception that voluntary compliance with tax laws is not rewarded, while tax evasions may benefit from temporary amnesty mechanisms. International studies have clearly shown that such schemes seriously damage the culture of tax compliance in the long run and create a negative cycle of poor tax behavior.

6. CONCERNS ABOUT THE LACK OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR FEEDBACK

AmCham is also concerned about the limited transparency and insufficient public consultation surrounding this draft law (as well as the other laws of the 2026 fiscal package). The timeframe provided for stakeholders to review and comment on a measure of such significant fiscal, economic, and legal impact has been unreasonably short and inconsistent with good legislative practice.

The accelerated process not only restricts the ability of businesses and experts to provide substantive feedback but also undermines trust in the policymaking process and raises questions about the robustness and legitimacy of the proposed reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spirit of constructive dialogue and support for sustainable reforms, AmCham calls for a full review of the draft law. Albania needs fiscal policies that:

- » encourage formalization and honest tax compliance;
- » ensure fair competition;
- » strengthen the integrity of the tax administration;
- » preserve business trust and the country's international reputation.

Fiscal reforms must be based on clear principles of transparency, equality, and the rule of law—standards that this draft law, in its current form, does not fully meet.

AmCham and the General Directorate of Taxation Hold Joint Discussion on Business Issues

Focus on
Fiscal Peace,
Communication
with the Tax
Administration, and
Tax Reassessment
Procedures

The American Chamber of Commerce convened a roundtable discussion bringing together leading member companies and the Director General of Taxation, Mr. Ilir Binaj, to address concrete issues related to the implementation of tax and fiscal legislation affecting business activity. Executive Director Neritan Mullaj described this format of dialogue as highly productive, as it allows both sides to confront their respective perspectives and engage in discussion based on arguments and facts.

“Clarity in doing business within a transparent and fair regulatory system is the main objective for which the American Chamber works,” stated AmCham President Grant Van Cleve in his opening remarks.

A draft law that has raised numerous questions within the business community the Fiscal Peace initiative was also discussed during the forum. Executive Director Neritan Mullaj requested specific information regarding how this law would be implement-

ed by the tax administration.

“This is an offer made by the government to businesses that do not wish to be audited but agree to pay the amount required by the state budget for revenue collection. We will provide all necessary clarifications on how fiscal peace will be implemented for businesses once the law is approved,” stated Mr. Ilir Binaj, referring to the draft Fiscal Peace law, which is expected to be approved article by article in plenary session this week.

In this context, Mr. Mullaj reiterated the American Chamber’s clear position on the need for constructive and transparent legislation that supports free competition and builds trust within the business community.

During the meeting, the Chair of the Taxes and Customs Committee, Ms. Alketa Uruçi, presented several of the

most critical issues faced by AmCham member companies.

One of the key issues directly affecting business-administration relations remains communication with the General Directorate of Taxation (GDT), which, according to experts from AmCham’s Tax Committee, requires substantial improvement.

Many Chamber members have reported delays or a lack of responses from the GDT to their requests for clarification on issues that, despite having been formally submitted for years, re-





main unresolved. Additionally, the official website of the GDT presents shortcomings, as legislation is published in an unsuitable and difficult-to-access format. Another institutional communication issue is the lack of coordination between Customs and Tax Authorities regarding customs declarations, which directly impacts business operations.

Addressing technical issues related to the implementation of fiscal legislation, Ms. Uruçi called on GDT experts to make a qualitative leap not only in drafting and approving laws in line with EU directives, but also in ensuring their application in accordance with practices in EU Member States and the rulings of the European Court of Justice. Examples of incorrect application of the law are particularly evident in VAT practices related to sales below cost. Although the provisions have been harmonized with EU directives, the tax administration's practice remains flawed. This has also been reflected in cases of VAT and corporate income tax reassessment for companies engaged in electricity sales, where it has been claimed that sales were made below cost or below purchase price, despite the fact that price fluctuations stem from external factors unrelated to the Albanian market.

The American Chamber proposed cooperation with the GDT to identify relevant European Court

of Justice rulings related to VAT application, with the aim of translating and publishing them in collaboration with GDT experts, so that they may be applied during tax audits.

Another issue raised by Chamber members concerns delays in the procedures for implementing tax agreements, as well as the lack of a clear and consolidated practice regarding the documentation required for submission. This issue is expected to be addressed at the beginning of the new year, with the GDT making available an online application system that will significantly reduce document processing time.

The meeting served as an open and constructive forum for dialogue. In conclusion, GDT leadership expressed their readiness to maintain this form of communication through the American Chamber in addressing issues and ambiguities faced by the business community.





General Assembly Meeting: The AmCham Community Elects New Board Leadership

The American Chamber of Commerce organized its General Assembly Meeting during the jubilee year marking its 25th anniversary. The organization's beginnings with 40 members and the election of its first Board of Directors marked the start of an extraordinary journey, which today celebrates a community of 276 members and a strong presence of American companies in the country.



The General Assembly serves as a key reporting moment on the work carried out by the administrative staff in implementing the policies undertaken by the Board of Directors to advance the three core pillars of service to members advocacy, training, and networking. The Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce, Neritan Mullaj, reported to members on the membership structure, financial performance, lobbying processes, and developments within the organization's structure.

"2025 has been a particularly dynamic year for the Chamber's Committees and experts, who have been engaged in concrete issues that directly impact the country's business climate, with a specific focus on supporting and strengthening American businesses," stated Mr. Mullaj. He also presented to members and invited guests two key advocacy issues aimed at supporting American investment. These included concerns regarding fees imposed on development permits particularly those affecting renewable energy production projects and the in-

voicing of service supplies to U.S. businesses without the application of VAT. Both issues represent important advocacy efforts that directly support the operations of American companies.

Of particular significance in AmCham's advocacy efforts was the initiative to propose to the government the removal of customs tariffs on products originating from the United States of America. "We believe that such an approach would create more favorable conditions for international trade and would position Albania as a strategic economic partner of the United States in the region," stated Executive Director Neritan Mullaj.

The American Chamber's approach to promoting partnership with the United States was also emphasized by President Grant Van Cleve in his address. He highlighted the organization's capacity to play a role in economic and geopolitical developments and to in-



fluence government policy in strengthening relations with the United States as Albania's strategic partner and supporter on its path toward EU integration and economic empowerment. "The United States plays a central role in global geopolitical developments, and Albanians, as one of the most pro-American nations, can rely on this friendship. AmCham can play a role in further strengthening this relationship," stated Mr. Grant Van Cleve.

The AmCham community was also addressed by the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Albania, Ms. Natasha Ahmetaj, who commended the cooperation between AmCham and the Bank of Albania on key topics such as Open Banking and the promotion of information for businesses regarding Albania's integration into SEPA. Ms. Ahmetaj emphasized the significant

opportunity facing financial institutions and business organizations to leverage this momentum of innovation, workforce skills enhancement, and technological development in support of the country's economic growth.

NEWLY ELECTED AMCHAM LEADERSHIP

Elections at AmCham reflect the will of the membership to select new leaders who will guide the Chamber for a two-year mandate. Six candidates competed for four vacant positions: President, Secretary, and two Board Member roles. All candidates were given the opportunity to present themselves to AmCham members and outline their vision for the organization's leadership, as well as the strengths of their professional background.

At the conclusion of the voting process, members granted a second mandate to the President of AmCham Albania, **Mr. Grant Van Cleve of Prodigy shpk**, and to the **Secretary of the Board, Mr. Dritan Nako of Titan Albania**.

Members also elected **Mr. Pëllumb Kallaba of CWP Europe (Eralb Invest 2 Sh.P.K.)** and **Ms. Rovena Dhroso of Novartis Pharma Services Inc.** as Board Members.

PRESIDENT

Grant Van Cleve, Prodigy shpk

SECRETARY

Dritan Nako, Titan Albania

BOARD MEMBERS

Pëllumb Kallaba, CWP Europe (Eralb Invest 2 Sh.P.K.)

Rovena Dhroso, Novartis Pharma Services Inc.

Investor Support Days 2025: Strengthening U.S. Investment and Albania–U.S. Economic Cooperation

As part of the “Investor Support Days 2025” initiative, the Albanian Investment Development Agency held today a dedicated meeting for U.S. investors, in cooperation with the American Chamber of Commerce in Albania. The meeting was considered of particular importance, as it directly aligns with AmCham’s core objectives of improving the business climate, strengthening Albania–U.S. trade relations, and promoting U.S. investment in the country.

The American Chamber of Commerce has played a key and continuous role in fostering a more predictable, competitive, and transparent business environment in Albania. Through structured dialogue with public institutions, advocacy based on concrete analysis, and the active engagement of its committees, AmCham has contributed to improvements in the legal, fiscal, and regulatory framework by addressing the concerns of both domestic and foreign investors. This sustained engagement aims not only to facilitate the operations of existing U.S. companies in Albania, but also to increase the confidence and interest of new American investors, positioning the country as a serious and competitive destination for strategic investments in the region. For this reason, such meetings are of particular value, as they serve as concrete platforms for cooperation between the public and private sectors in support of economic develop-



ment and the strengthening of transatlantic ties.

The roundtable brought together representatives of public institutions and U.S. businesses, who discussed new investment opportunities in strategic sectors such as energy, tourism, technology, and professional services. The potential of the Albanian market was highlighted, along with simplified business procedures and the availability of 100% online services, which contribute to an improved investment climate.

The Executive Director of AIDA, Ms. Laura Saro, underscored the importance of continuous dialogue with the private sector and reaffirmed the institution's commitment to addressing in a timely manner the issues and challenges raised by investors, with the aim of creating a highly supportive environment for foreign investment.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Minister of Finance, Mr. Andi Memeti, outlined Albania's competitive advantages, including the harmonization of leg-

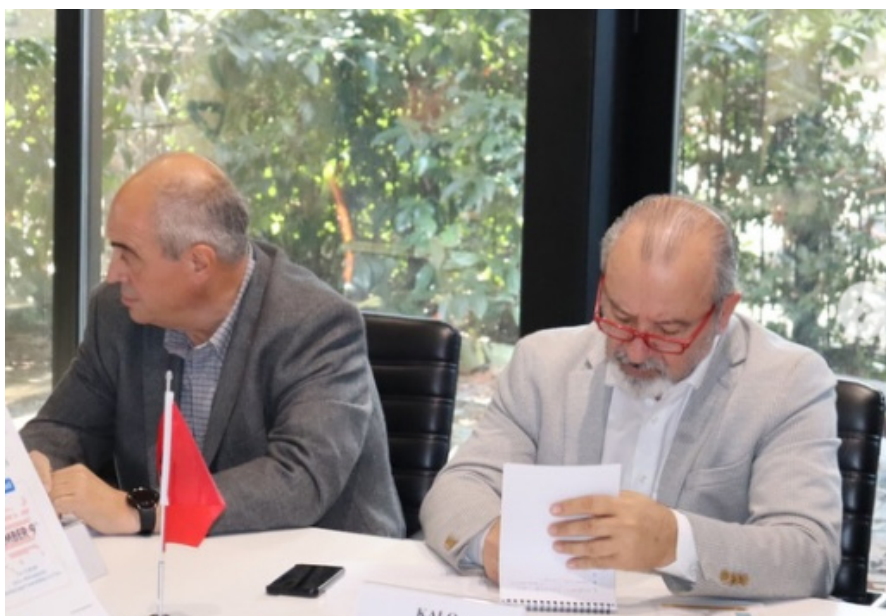


One of the key issues directly affecting business-administration relations remains communication with the General Directorate of Taxation (GDT), which, according to experts from AmCham's Tax Committee, requires substantial improvement.

islation with the European Union by 2027, macroeconomic stability, and the financial and structural support provided through the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans.

Representatives of U.S. businesses put forward a number of recommendations for further improving the investment climate, including the need for faster legal alignment with the EU, increased transparency, more effective public consultations, strengthened efforts to combat corruption, and the modernization of the business registration system.

In conclusion, the meeting was assessed as an important step toward strengthening cooperation with the approximately 254 U.S. companies currently operating in Albania, as well as toward creating an even more favorable environment for attracting new American investments, in line with the mission and strategic objectives of the American Chamber of Commerce.





A Decade of Impact, Albania Investment Council Marks 10 Years of Public-Private Reform

The Albania Investment Council marked its tenth anniversary with a high-level event that brought together senior government officials, members of parliament, international partners, and business leaders.

The milestone served both as a celebration of achievements and as a reflection on the Council's role in advancing economic reform through structured public-private dialogue.

Established in 2015, the Council has become a key platform for addressing concrete business challenges and translating dialogue into measurable results. Over the past decade, it has delivered more than 350 actionable recommendations, many of which have been implemented by the authorities. These reforms have contributed to simplified tax inspection procedures, the digitalisation of VAT refunds, streamlined public services, and improved access to finance for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises.



As Albania continues its path toward European Union integration, the Council's contribution to building trust, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking remains particularly important. Its work has helped align business-related reforms with EU standards while strengthening cooperation between

the public and private sectors.

Ms. Ekaterina Solovova, Head of EBRD in Albania, highlighted the key factors behind the Council's sustained impact. She emphasized the Albanian government's commitment and active engagement in implementing reforms, the private sector's trust and constructive participation that ensures proposals are grounded in real market needs, the Secretariat's analytical rigor and impartiality in delivering evidence-based recommendations, and the role of international partners in reinforcing accountability and transparency.

Congratulating the Council on this significant anniversary, the President of AmCham Albania, Mr. Grant Van Cleve, praised the Albania Investment Council for successfully transforming dialogue into action and strengthening cooperation between stakeholders.



AmCham: Urban Waste Law as a Test of Government Policies for the Competitiveness of Albanian Industries

The Law on Integrated Waste Management has been approved by Parliament by a majority vote and without debate among Members of Parliament, despite objections raised by interest groups that called for a postponement of its adoption and for the addressing of several issues to ensure alignment with the relevant EU Directive.

AmCham Albania was among these stakeholder groups, with its experts preparing detailed recommendations addressed to the relevant ministries and parliamentary committees.

The American Chamber of Commerce reiterated its request that the draft law on urban waste be discussed in parallel with the draft law *On Extended Producer Responsibility*, as the two initiatives are intrinsically connected and must be treated in an integrated manner to avoid overlaps that could create confusion for businesses.

Equally important for AmCham was the issue of the exceptional import of two waste streams from the “green list,” which would enable one of the country’s most important industries—the cement industry—not only to optimize costs and operate more efficiently, but also to achieve key decarbonization objectives set by the United Nations.

The Secretary of the Board of AmCham, Dritan Nako, also a representative of the cement industry, expressed

confidence that its implementation would bring necessary and positive changes to Albania’s integrated waste management system. At the same time, referring to Article 72 of the draft law, he highlighted the urgent need for the industry to have the legal possibility to import alternative materials from the “green list” of the European Waste Catalogue, given that their availability within the country is currently insufficient, in order to use them as substitutes for fossil fuels.

He also referred to European best practices and to the recommendations outlined in the World Bank’s 2024 report on Albania regarding measures related to climate change, emphasizing that this solution would enable the cement industry to contribute up to 40% of the country’s UN decarbonization targets, while simultaneously optimizing production costs and ensuring the necessary level of competitiveness in export markets.

AmCham has included this request in its recommendations addressed to

the relevant ministries and parliamentary committees, stressing that the exceptional import of the two green-list waste streams would not only support the achievement of decarbonization objectives, but also optimize costs for domestic producers, enhance energy efficiency, ensure a healthy level of “Made in Albania” exports to European markets, and consequently increase state budget revenues.

The American Chamber of Commerce views this advocacy effort as part of the broader consultation process, which continues to fall short in terms of coherence and the attention given by decision-making structures to the arguments put forward by the business community.

Protecting industries through fair legislation that promotes healthy competition and prepares domestic producers for the European market is also part of AmCham’s responsibility, in support of a legal and regulatory framework that ensures certainty for investors and local businesses.



Grant Thornton Albania Strengthens the Accounting Profession Through Awareness Conferences

Grant Thornton Albania successfully held two Awareness Conferences in Tirana: The Forensic Accounting Awareness Conference and the Accounting Outsourcing Awareness Conference as part of the activities undertaken under the World Bank-funded project “Development of Accountancy Services and Public Awareness and Forensic Accounting

The conferences were organized by Grant Thornton Sh.p.k, in collaboration with the Institute of Certified Accountants (IKM), as a component part of the Project on Strengthening Quality of Auditing and Financial Reporting (SQARP), which was supported by the Ministry of Finance, the World Bank and funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The Conferences contributed to the project's overall objective of strengthening the accounting profession by enhancing the quality of accounting services in line with international standards, building forensic accounting capacity, and preparing the market for the export/outsourcing of accounting services internationally.

These initiatives represent an important step in supporting the continued advancement of the accounting profession in Albania at both national and international levels. In addition, the Conferences aimed to increase awareness and visibility of the project and to promote the new services offered by members of the Institute of Certified Accountants.

FORENSIC ACCOUNTING AWARENESS CONFERENCE

The *Forensic Accounting Awareness Conference* was held on 11 December 2025 with the primary objective of promoting understanding and awareness of the important role forensic accounting plays in detecting, preventing, and investigating financial misconduct, while also advancing the recognition of forensic accounting certification

in Albania. The conference brought together professionals involved in forensic engagements, academics, international organization and ministries representatives to discuss the important role of forensic accounting in maintaining financial integrity, detecting fraud, and ensuring transparency and accountability in both the public and private sectors.

The event highlighted the growing importance of forensic accounting in today's increasingly complex financial landscape, where organizations face heightened risks of fraud, embezzlement, and corruption. Recent financial crises and the rise in economic crime have reinforced the need for more qualified professionals in financial forensics.

The conference was moderated

by Kledi Kodra, Managing Partner of Grant Thornton Albania and benefited from valuable contributions of the panelists: Sotirag Dhamo, President of the Institute of Certified Accountants of Albania; Erisa Rodhani, Directory of Harmonization on Financial Management, Control and Accounting, General Directorate of Harmonization of Public Internal Financial Control, Ministry of Finance of Albania; Andrei Busuioc, Senior Financial Management Specialist, World Bank; Inge den Hollander, Board member of the Association Certified Fraud Examiners (Netherlands Chapter); Ervin Koçi, General Director, Financial Intelligence Agency; Nurjeta Pogaçe, Judge, School of Magistrates; Erjola Vejzati, Executive Director, Public Oversight Board and Sandra Damijan, International Key Expert, Grant Thornton Slovenia.

Through a series of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, participants gained deeper insights into the vital role of forensic accounting in strengthening financial integrity and accountability. The panelists highlighted that as financial transactions become more complex and fraudulent schemes more sophisticated, the profession must evolve, adopting specialized forensic techniques and tools to keep the pace of developments.

The event contributed to raising awareness about the need for specialized training and capacity building in forensic accounting to support effective financial oversight and fraud prevention.

THE PURPOSE OF THE FORENSIC ACCOUNTING AWARENESS CONFERENCE WAS TO:

- » Highlight the objectives of the project, particularly its focus on developing professional standards and public awareness within the accounting profession;
- » Enhance awareness of the importance of forensic accounting



The event contributed to raising awareness about the need for specialized training and capacity building in forensic accounting to support effective financial oversight and fraud prevention.

as a tool for strengthening governance, transparency, and accountability;

- » Promote the establishment and recognition of the Forensic Accounting Certificate, aimed at setting benchmarks for professional competence and ethics;
- » Support the accounting profession in establishing Forensic Accounting as a separate specialist service area in the accounting organizations in Albania;
- » Highlight the evolving role of Chartered Accountants in forensic and investigative accounting;
- » Encourage government participation and support in institutionalizing forensic accounting practices within the public and private sector;
- » Facilitate collaboration with international partners such as the World Bank, SECO, and ACFE,

to align local capacity-building efforts with global standards; and

- » Promote synergy between the judiciary, regulatory authorities, and the accounting profession to enhance the effectiveness of financial crime prevention and investigation.

ACCOUNTING OUTSOURCING AWARENESS CONFERENCE

The *Accounting Outsourcing Conference* was held on 25 December 2025 with the primary objective to promote the export of accounting services by Albanian accounting and audit firms, and to enhance their capacities to export their services mainly to the EU and the US. A key focus of the event was to discuss the ways and skills required to approach international clients such as Italy, Luxembourg UK and US.

The Conference brought together accounting professionals, business leaders, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, service providers, academics, ministries and representatives from international organizations and institutions in Albania, Balkan region and abroad to discuss the opportunities and challenges related to the export of accounting service abroad while also encouraging regional and international cooperation in the sector.

As global demand rises for skilled professionals who can support financial reporting, compliance, internal controls, and digital transformation, the Conference offered a timely platform to showcase Albania's capacity to deliver high-quality outsourced services.

Moderated by Kledi Kodra, Managing Partner of Grant Thornton Albania, the conference was enriched by insightful contributions from the panelists: Sotirag Dhamo, President of the Institute of Certified Accountants of Albania; Erisa Rodhani, Directory of Harmonization on Financial Management, Control and Accounting, General Directorate of Harmonization of Public Internal Financial Control,



Ministry of Finance of Albania; Andrei Busuioc, Senior Financial Management Specialist, World Bank; Stavri Pici, Confindustria Albania in charge of the ICT/BPO sector; Blerti Lekbello, Chief Executive Officer, GSL Enterprise Solution; Neritan Mullaj, Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in Albania and Sean Sweeney, Chief Executive, KOSI Corporation Ltd. The panelists discussed how accounting outsourcing has become a vital component of modern business operations, enabling organizations worldwide to increase efficiency, reduce costs, comply with complex regulatory frameworks, and access specialized expertise. Rapid digitalization and the growing demand for accurate, transparent, and timely financial reporting have further expanded opportunities for reliable outsourcing partners, an area in which Albanian firms are increasingly well positioned.

Against this backdrop, the Conference served as a platform to raise awareness of the benefits and economic impact of accounting outsourcing, emphasizing its role in generating revenue from international markets, creating new employment opportunities for qualified professionals, and strengthening Albania's competitiveness as a regional hub for specialized financial services. Grant Thornton highlighted that the development of outsourced accounting services also

has a long-term reputational impact, enhancing international trust in Albanian accounting and audit professionals and supporting their integration into global value chains.

In addition to technical discussions, the conference served as an important platform for networking and collaboration among stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Participants shared experiences, explored export-oriented strategies, and discussed ways to strengthen Albania's institutional and regulatory framework to better support firms seeking to operate internationally. The event underscored the need for targeted capacity building, certification, and international accreditation to further enhance the credibility and competitiveness of Albanian accounting and audit firms abroad.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE WAS TO:

- » Highlight the objectives of the project, particularly its focus on developing professional standards, enhancing visibility, and increasing public awareness of the accounting profession in Albania;
- » Raise awareness of the strategic importance of accounting outsourcing as a key driver of competitiveness, efficiency, and international market expansion;
- » Promote the development, recog-

nition, and adoption of outsourcing-related competencies and certifications to support global service delivery;

- » Create opportunities for networking and to encourage potential regional and international collaboration within the sector;
- » Support accounting and audit firms in establishing outsourced accounting services as a distinct, export-ready service line within their organizations;
- » Emphasize the evolving role of Chartered Accountants (CAs) in delivering high-quality, technology-driven outsourced accounting solutions;
- » Encourage government participation in creating an enabling environment for the export of accounting services, including supportive regulatory, tax, and digital & data protection policies;
- » Facilitate collaboration with international partners such as the World Bank, SECO, and regional professional bodies to align Albania's outsourcing capabilities with global standards; and
- » Promote coordination among regulatory authorities, professional organizations, and private-sector stakeholders to enhance the competitiveness and international positioning of Albanian accounting service providers.