

NewsLetter



AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DHOMA AMERIKANE E TREGTISË

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ALBANIA

AMCHAM NEWS

CYBERSECURITY AS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY,

AmCham forum brings together oracle experts and key institutions

On page **2**



MEMBER NEWS

TITAN ALBANIA

Beyond cement, with people being at the core of everything we dream, we are the partner that Albania can count on.

23

Ring Telekom: Where Innovation and People Power Transatlantic Success

26

Pelium Winery, where land, passion, and friendship become wine

28

AmCham Establishes Working Group on Energy and Critical Infrastructure

PAGE 11

Western Balkans AmChams Strengthen Dialogue with the European Commission in Brussels

PAGE 12

AmCham and the General Directorate of Taxes Hold training on the new tax declarations

PAGE 13



AmCham & Nonaj Law Explore U.S. Market for Albanian Businesses

On page **4**

Constructive Dialogue Between the American Chamber and the Ministry of Health on Sector Challenges

On page **6**

AmCham Board Hosts Working Lunch with U.S. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Nancy VanHorn

On page **8**

AmCham launches the Youth, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Committee

On page **9**

ECONOMIC SPECIAL



Dimitër Shuli

GDPR Risk Assessment Tools for Data Protection Officers

18



Elvis Kotherja

Leveraging AmCham’s Tourism Committee Expertise to Drive Regional Competitiveness

20



Anna Savinkina

Healthcare: The Strategic Heart of Albania’s European Journey

21



Ardit Bilani

Souvenirs, Ambassadors of Albania and the Challenge of Informality

22



CYBERSECURITY AS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY,

AmCham forum brings together oracle experts and key institutions

In an increasingly technology-driven world, where digitalization underpins core business operations, cybersecurity has evolved beyond the confines of IT departments into a fundamental pillar of organizational resilience and trust.



Opening the forum “Building Secure Systems, Strengthening Cyber Resilience,” Neritan Mullaj, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce, underscored the urgency of investing in advanced security systems

and elevating cybersecurity to the forefront of business priorities. In line with this vision, AmCham convened a high-level forum bringing together Oracle experts, representatives from the National Cyber Security Authority, and leading local professionals in the field.

A central theme of the discus-

sion was the critical role of leadership and cross-sector collaboration in strengthening cyber resilience. “The time to build secure cyber systems is now this is no longer an issue that can be deferred,” stated Genti Daci, Chairman of the Digital Business Committee. He emphasized that cyber risk has moved beyond a purely technical dimension to become a strategic business concern, requiring sustained attention from both corporate leaders and institutions.

The panel featured Esmeralda Kazia, Director at the Incident Monitoring and Response Directorate of the National Cyber Se-



curity Authority; Tine Lenarčić, Cyber Resilience Expert at Oracle; Pavle Marjanović, Secure Systems Solutions Consultant at Oracle; and Sokol Qeraxhiu, Founder of Prisma. Moderated by Lejdina Çuçi, Chief Operating Officer at InfoSoft Systems, the discussion offered a comprehensive perspective that bridged technical expertise, regulatory frameworks, banking sector security, and long-term strategic planning for enhancing cybersecurity at both organizational and national levels.

Panelists highlighted how rapid digital transformation is exposing organizations to increasingly sophisticated and evolving

cyber threats. These threats now extend beyond data breaches to target communication systems and operational continuity. Oracle experts emphasized the importance of building secure enterprise communication infrastructures through the integration of cloud technologies, AI-driven solutions, and advanced defense mechanisms. Notably, modern cyberattacks are shifting away from traditional vectors such as email, increasingly targeting real-time communication channels including voice and messaging necessitating a fundamental rethinking of how security systems are designed and managed.

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The forum concluded with a strong consensus, cybersecurity is a shared responsibility that demands close and continuous collaboration between the private sector, public institutions, and technology providers.

The American Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with Nonaj Law in New York,

explores the U.S. market, challenges, opportunities, and strategic approaches for Albanian businesses

The American Chamber of Commerce in Albania, in partnership with the law firm Nonaj Law in New York, organized the Business Forum “Expanding Business in the United States: Opportunities and Strategies.” The event drew on the expertise of Mr. Altin Nonaj, Founder of Nonaj Law and Associate Professor at Fordham University School of Law, to provide practical insights for Albanian companies considering expansion into the U.S. market.

Designed as a platform for knowledge-sharing and practical guidance, the forum addressed key aspects of entering and operating in the United States. Mr. Nonaj led the discussion, presenting essential elements of U.S. legislation through concrete, real-world examples.

In his opening remarks, AmCham Albania Executive Director Mr. Neritan Mullaj emphasized that strengthening trade and busi-



ness relations with the United States remains a core priority of the Chamber. He highlighted the importance of equipping members with actionable knowledge on taxation, business structures, sectoral opportunities, and market-specific requirements.

Focusing on critical considerations for market entry, Mr. Nonaj outlined the regulatory framework for establishing a business in the United States, including the selection of jurisdictions with fa-

vorable fiscal policies. He also discussed strategic options available to investors, such as registering a new entity versus acquiring an existing business.

He further underscored that the U.S. legal system, grounded in the doctrine of common law, differs significantly from European legal systems and presents distinct complexities. In this context, engaging experienced legal counsel is essential to ensuring a smooth and successful market entry. Con-



A particularly engaging segment focused on visa processes and the legal implications associated with them, both for business establishment and employment in the United States.

tributing to the discussion, Mr. Dritan Mishto, attorney at Nonaj Law, highlighted the importance of relying on a trusted advisor to navigate legal and business relationships effectively in the U.S.

The forum also provided a comprehensive overview of U.S. workplace culture and employment law. Mr. Nonaj addressed key elements such as employment contracts, employer and employee rights and obligations, and compliance with regulations related to equality and non-discrimination, including gender, race, age, and other protected categories. Through practical examples, he illustrated areas where employers must exercise particular care when structuring employment agreements.

A particularly engaging segment focused on visa processes and the legal implications associated with them, both for business establishment and employment in the United States. This topic generated significant interest among participants, as it represents a



critical step for individuals and companies seeking to operate in the U.S. market.

The session concluded with an interactive discussion, during which participants explored Mr. Nonaj's professional perspective on sectors where Albanian businesses can successfully position themselves. In addition to legal insights, he offered a practical,

experience-based outlook drawn from cases he has handled. He also noted that, according to available data, over 250,000 Albanians are registered as employed in New York, a figure believed to be even higher in reality, highlighting sectors where the Albanian community has demonstrated strong performance, including construction, hospitality, and food trade.



Constructive Dialogue Between the American Chamber and the Ministry of Health on Sector Challenges

American Chamber of Commerce with the initiative of the Health Care Committee organized a working roundtable with the Ministry of Health to discuss some of the key challenges faced by businesses operating in this sector. The Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection, Ms. Eugena Tomini, took part in a constructive discussion focused on the legal framework and the functioning of healthcare systems, with an impact not only on business activity but also on public health.

The vital importance of issues such as the reimbursable medicines list, pricing methodology, and increasing the level of the healthcare budget underscores the necessity of dialogue with the Ministry of Health as an essential means of identifying

the most effective approaches for drafting and implementing the regulatory framework.

“For two years now, the Health Committee has established a clear bridge of communication with the Ministry of Health to develop a constructive dialogue on issues that we have addressed in a Posi-

tion Paper and continue to follow closely. We believe that dialogue is the most effective tool for resolving these matters,” stated Executive Director Neritan Mullaj during the meeting.

Deputy Minister Eugena Tomini explained that the increased focus on the healthcare sector has been reflected not only in a higher budget allocation, but also in a clear strategy aimed at paving the way for innovative treatments and diagnostics, as well as ensuring adequate healthcare services for the population. Particular attention has been given to oncological healthcare, due to the sensitivity of the diseases treated within this service and the ongoing efforts to establish high clinical standards. For this purpose, approximately EUR 15 million have been allocat-



ed in the budget. The establishment of the National Institute of Tumors will serve this objective by coordinating policies and best practices with EU countries and a counterpart institution in Milan. Additionally, significant emphasis will be placed on the digitalization of the entire process, bringing the sector to the necessary level of technological development, facilitating interaction among healthcare institutions, and improving decision-making processes.

Ms. Rovena Dhroso, Member of the Board of the American Chamber, emphasized the need for expertise in decision-making and highlighted the important role that public-private partnerships can play, particularly at moments when decisions are made and regulatory frameworks are developed.

The Chair of the Committee, Ms. Anna Savinkina, and the Vice Chair, Ms. Genta Peshkatari, presented the key issues on which the Committee is currently working, addressing both short-term and long-term objectives.

The update of the model for drafting the reimbursable medicines list, allowing for the inclusion of innovative drugs, as well

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as increasing the healthcare budget from 2.8% to 6%, in line with other countries in the region, were two of the main issues addressed by Chair Anna Savinkina.

Another concern raised by pharmaceutical companies relates to the pricing methodology, particularly the need to move away from referencing the minimum price and instead adopt an average price as a benchmark. Ms. Peshkatari stressed the necessity for the regulatory framework to revise the reference countries used for pricing, focusing on countries such as Slovenia and

Norway rather than North Macedonia and Serbia. This process is vital for the operations of pharmaceutical companies, as it directly affects business sustainability while simultaneously impacting public healthcare services. A fair and transparent pricing methodology would enable the market entry of well-established pharmaceutical brands capable of delivering innovative medicines and therapies, not only in the oncology sector.

During the meeting, members of the Health Committee also raised concerns regarding timelines for price determination, as well as the need for investment in human capital, which is critical for the healthcare system. The implementation and continuous upgrading of digital information systems was another issue highlighted by Committee members.

The meeting concluded with an agreement that experts from the Ministry of Health and representatives of the Health Committee will continue discussions at a technical level to further elaborate on specific issues requiring consultation and to guide necessary changes in the regulatory and legal framework.

AmCham Board Hosts Working Lunch with U.S. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Nancy VanHorn

Discussion Focused on Strategic Partnership and Advancing U.S. Investment



The Board of Directors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Albania held a Working Lunch with the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, Ms. Nancy VanHorn, in an open and constructive discussion on the key priorities shaping Albania’s business environment.

The meeting was held in continuation of engagements aimed at further strengthening the AmCham–U.S. Embassy partnership and reinforcing the shared objective of advancing economic relations between Albania and the United States.

In support of this objective, the AmCham Board places strong emphasis on its core advocacy priorities focused on improving the business climate and strengthening the regulatory framework. Through its active sectoral committees, AmCham advances reforms related to regulatory and fiscal predictability, innovation, security, sustainability, and sector-specific challenges such as in the digital, healthcare, and tourism industries.

Particular emphasis was placed on the effectiveness of the public consultation process. The Board underlined



the need to establish a structured and functional consultation mechanism that ensures meaningful dialogue, transparency, and reasoned institutional feedback. Strengthening stakeholder engagement is essential to building trust and ensuring that legislative and regulatory reforms are balanced, predictable, and effectively implemented.

Within the broader framework of investment climate discussions, it was emphasized the importance of fostering an increasingly attractive and competitive business environment for major international companies, including U.S. investors. The discussion also ad-

ressed the investment screening mechanism as an important instrument in the context of national security and strategic investments. AmCham reiterated its position that strengthening Albania’s investment framework should focus on building and promoting transparent, efficient, and predict-

able procedures for foreign investors. Ensuring legal certainty and regulatory clarity remains fundamental to enhancing investor confidence and positioning Albania as a reliable destination for high-quality international investment.

The Working Lunch reaffirmed the enduring strategic partnership between AmCham and the U.S. Embassy. The shared message was clear, advancing legal certainty, strengthening institutional dialogue, and promoting transparent and predictable procedures are fundamental to attracting quality international investment, fostering innovation, and supporting Albania’s sustainable economic development.



AmCham launches the Youth, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Committee

The American Chamber of Commerce in Albania has brought together young entrepreneurs and innovators through the establishment of the “Youth, Entrepreneurship and Innovation” Committee, a new platform designed to encourage strategic thinking and bold, forward-looking ideas among emerging professionals.

The Committee was officially launched in partnership with the U.S. Embassy, reflecting a shared commitment to cultivating the American spirit of entrepreneurship within a new generation of value-driven, purpose-oriented leaders. The event was intentionally held at American Corner Tirana, a venue that embodies American excellence in culture, education, science, and technology.

Held in the presence of the Chargé d’Affaires of the United States Embassy, Ms. Nancy VanHorn, the launch brought together not only the Committee’s members and leadership, but also AmCham’s Board of Directors, Premium Members, and Committee Chairs. In her remarks, Ms. VanHorn underscored the symbolic importance of the occasion, as the United States approaches the 250th anniversary

of its Independence, a nation built by entrepreneurs and innovators. “This is a new platform where young entrepreneurs can engage with American business expertise and turn ideas into opportunity,” she stated.

While moderating the event, Executive Director Neritan Mulaj described the initiative as “not simply a new structure within the Chamber, but a vision shaped by the Board’s conviction in the power of youth, innovation, and collective action.” AmCham President Grant Van Cleve also voiced his support, emphasizing that connecting entrepreneurs and innovators, particularly in Albania, with American expertise will remain a central priority for AmCham.

The ambition and vision behind the initiative were presented by



AmCham Vice President Rexhino Çekrezi, the driving force behind the Committee's establishment. He noted that the initiative has benefited from the support of the U.S. Embassy since its earliest stages." Our mission is clear: to connect young entrepreneurs and innovators with the standards, experience, and networks of the AmCham business community, and to translate those connections into tangible results," he stated. He further emphasized that AmCham member companies represent not only American leadership in technology, products, and services, but also a business culture that rewards merit and values new ideas. "I have experienced this firsthand. After returning to Albania, I received genuine trust and support from AmCham members," he added.

The Committee's leaders and members represent a diverse, cross-sector community of companies and business profiles. Through their executive and managerial roles, they bring the optimism, energy, and collaborative spirit of a generation that dares to challenge established standards and embrace technology not merely as a tool, but as a transformative mindset.

This forward-looking approach, driven by change and innovation, was reflected in their presentations. Klint Berdica, Chair of the "Youth, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Committee", introduced the Committee's work plan, outlining four key priorities that will guide its activities. First, promoting American and transatlantic business values by introducing young leaders to the principles of ethical leadership, account-

ability, and structured decision-making through knowledge exchange and international networking.

Equally important is supporting generational transition within Albanian businesses by encouraging mentorship and dialogue between founders and emerging leaders, thereby strengthening governance, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. The Committee also aims to foster ethical and sustainable innovation by connecting young leaders with global expertise and encouraging ideas that generate lasting economic impact. At the same time, it will enhance cooperation among AmCham committees and American Chambers abroad, facilitating knowledge exchange, aligning initiatives, and ensuring the effective transfer of best practices to Albania's business environment.



AMCHAM ESTABLISHES WORKING GROUP ON ENERGY AND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Amid rapid developments in the energy and critical infrastructure sectors, and growing interest among member companies to address key structural challenges,

AmCham Albania has established a dedicated Working Group on energy and critical infrastructure. The initiative, led by Board Member Pëllumb Kallaba, representing a significant American investment in Albania's wind energy sector, CWP, and supported by the Board, brings together leading companies with extensive expertise in regulatory and legal matters, as well as practical implementation.

Executive Director Neritan Mulla noted that ongoing economic developments have positioned energy and critical infrastructure as a strategic priority. In response, AmCham is placing strong emphasis on this Working Group,

recognizing its importance within the current economic and policy landscape. The group will serve as a collaborative platform aimed at improving transparency, clarity, and efficiency in the sector's legal and regulatory frameworks, while strengthening the competitiveness of both member companies and the broader sector in European and regional markets.

The group's inaugural meeting focused on defining a clear roadmap, outlining key objectives and actionable steps. Drawing on the expertise of its members, discussions helped identify priority issues in legislation and regulatory policy that directly impact the sector's day-to-day operations. The long-term ambition is for the

Working Group to evolve into a permanent Committee.

"Energy is the most critical issue facing the world today. The development of ambitious technologies, including AI and other innovations, depends fundamentally on access to energy. This is not only a challenge the United States is working to address, but one that has mobilized global efforts," stated AmCham President Grant Van Cleve.

Members also underscored the importance of strengthening legislation that supports the energy sector, alongside regulatory policies that directly affect its practical functioning, both of which will be central to the group's ongoing work.



Western Balkans AmChams Strengthen Dialogue with the European Commission in Brussels

A Western Balkans Roundtable was convened in Brussels, bringing together representatives of AmChams from across the region and senior officials from the European Commission and CEFTA.

The discussion fostered a multilateral dialogue on the region's EU integration, with a focus on aligning reform priorities, advancing economic integration, and approximating national frameworks with the EU acquis.

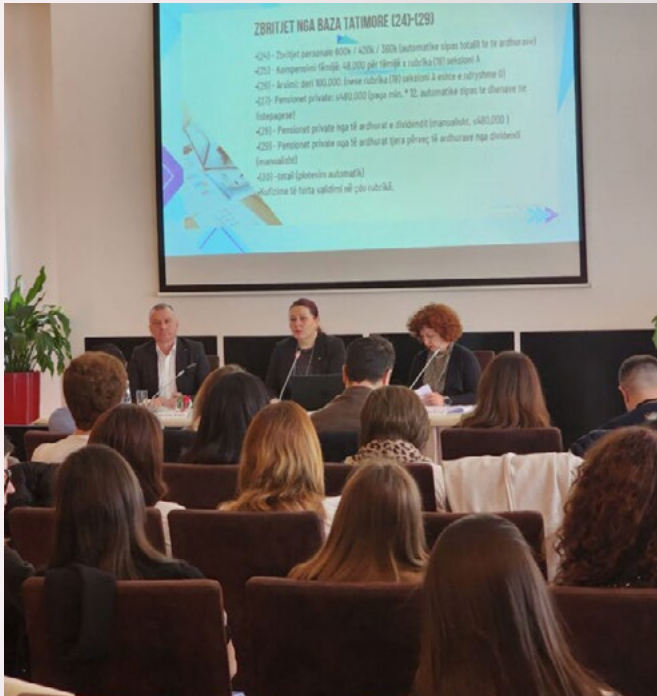
AmCham Albania was represented by its Executive Director, Neritan Mullaj. In his remarks, Mr. Mullaj underscored the importance of clearly defined national priorities across Western Balkan countries to accel-

erate their path toward EU membership. He also highlighted the need for well-designed and consistently implemented policies to effectively support this process. Also participating in the roundtable, highlighting the role that businesses in the region can play through their practical experience on the impact of EU regulations on operations and investments, were Albana Karapanco, Chair of the Legal Committee, and Marin Gjonaj, CEO of Gjonaj Group.

Participants stressed the impor-

tance of facilitating trade procedures, reducing non-tariff barriers, and addressing key regulatory challenges. The integration of the regional energy market into the EU single market emerged as another central theme of the discussions. AmCham Albania contributed to this exchange through its member Marin Gjonaj, who highlighted the importance of effectively managing the rules related to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), particularly in the context of renewable energy trade flows from the Western Balkans to EU markets.

The roundtable delivered a clear message, strengthened cooperation between the Western Balkans and the European Union, grounded in shared priorities and robust institutional coordination, is essential to advancing the region's European integration path.



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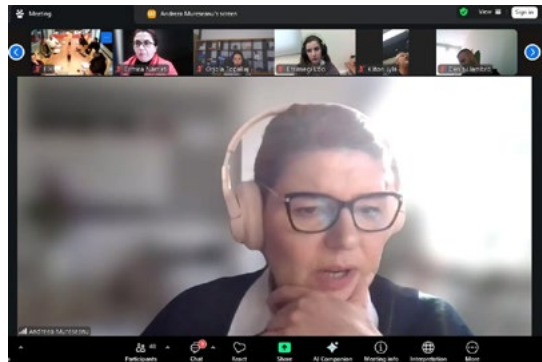
TRAINING PROGRAM TO ENHANCE CAPACITY IN THE LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN SECTOR

– MoveUp, IFC, and the American Chamber of Commerce

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, in cooperation with the American Chamber of Commerce, has launched the implementation of a training program aimed at improving operational efficiency in the logistics and supply chain management sector, while aligning business practices with European Union standards.

On January 12, the first module of the program, titled “Principles of Supply Chain Management,” was delivered over a four-day period and attended by approximately 100 participants, representing member companies of the American Chamber of Commerce as well as other businesses operating in the domestic market.

The program is implemented by the Supply Chain Management



Center, a leading institution in Romania with over 20 years of experience in professional training in logistics and supply chain management. The modules are designed to enhance participants’ operational capabilities by strengthening strategic customer relationships and increasing flexibility to adapt to an increasingly dynamic and competitive logistics environment.

The training program is designed for both operational and managerial staff of companies operating in

the logistics and supply chain sector, combining theoretical knowledge with practical application. An important component of the program also focuses on raising awareness of the legal and regulatory framework that Albanian companies will be required to implement as part of Albania’s European Union accession process.

Participants evaluated the module as highly useful and practical, actively engaging through Q&A sessions with the trainer and discussions directly related to their daily operational challenges.

The training program will continue in the coming months with the delivery of five additional modules, aimed at strengthening leadership, digital, and operational skills to enhance efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability in the logistics and supply chain management sector.



Get Together: AmCham Builds Bridges of Communication and Collaboration Among Members

The American Chamber of Commerce began the year with an event designed to promote networking and collaboration among its members.



Get Together” is a format inspired by the desire to build stronger communication bridges within the business community and to offer members a space to connect beyond strictly business discussions.

“This meeting format is a way to strengthen networking among Chamber members and marks the beginning of a series of events we have titled Get Together, because the core idea of this concept is to bring us together. It is an opportunity to meet, exchange ideas, and share the latest updates that may, why not, even lead to new business opportunities,” said Executive Director Neritan Mullaj in his welcoming remarks.

The first edition of the event featured a dedicated CEO spotlight, pre-



sending the story of Catalyst Story Institute, a U.S.-based company operating in the film industry and actively building bridges with the global film community.

Its Executive Director, Mr. Philip Gilpin Jr., delivered a brief presentation on the vision and work of Catalyst Story Institute in developing a new generation of professionals across the film industry’s service sectors. Through its training platform, the organization identifies and prepares local talent while positioning



Albania on the radar of key global film industry players.

The informal setting, free from the protocols of traditional formal events, created a friendly atmosphere and gave members the opportunity to engage openly and exchange ideas in a relaxed and collaborative environment

Implementation of next generation 3D scanners based on American technology at Rinas International Airport

At Tirana International Airport, next-generation Rapid Scan 3D scanners have been implemented, representing a significant advancement in the security screening process.

This technology enables the inspection of baggage without the need to remove items from bags, making the process faster and more efficient for passengers. The investment aims to enhance the travel experience by reducing waiting times and ensuring high security standards.

These advanced scanners allow passengers to keep electronic devices inside their luggage, eliminating the need to remove them during the screening pro-



cess. This innovation not only increases efficiency but also provides a smoother and more convenient experience for travelers.



Under the leadership of Mr. Shefqet Kastrati, Kastrati Group had the pleasure of welcoming the Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy, Nancy VanHorn, to Tirana International Airport. During the visit, the implementation of advanced security screening equipment manufactured in the United States was presented—an important step toward raising standards and strengthening security within Albania's airport infrastructure. This collaboration with trusted American partners reaffirms a continued commitment to quality, innovation, and safety.

EasyPay Represents Albania at “Champions of Growth” in Brussels

EasyPay participated in the international conference “Champions of Growth,” organized by the Future500 Initiative and IEDC – Bled School of Management, held at the premises of the European Commission in Brussels. The Albanian fintech company was selected among the 500 most promising companies in Central and Eastern Europe, representing Albania at a key forum focused on growth and innovation in Europe.

Future500 is a pan-European platform designed to identify and support high-growth potential companies (scale-ups), connecting them with investors, institutions, and European policymakers. The initiative aims to accelerate the development of the region's most promising companies and help them evolve into global leaders.

The platform was initially launched during the Bled Strategic Forum 2025 in Slovenia, as part of the Future 500 Forum, bringing together business leaders, investors, and policymakers from across Europe to discuss the challenges of scaling European companies and access to capital. EasyPay was also part of this earlier event, actively engaging from the early stages of the platform.

Participation in Brussels marks a continuation of this engagement and recognition of EasyPay's role in advancing digital financial services in Albania and the region. As one of the country's leading electronic payment platforms, EasyPay contributes to increasing financial inclusion and modernizing services for individuals and businesses.

The conference brought together

high-level representatives from European institutions, international investors, and business leaders, including European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos, Albania's Minister of Finance Petrit Malaj, as well as institutions such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Fund (EIF).

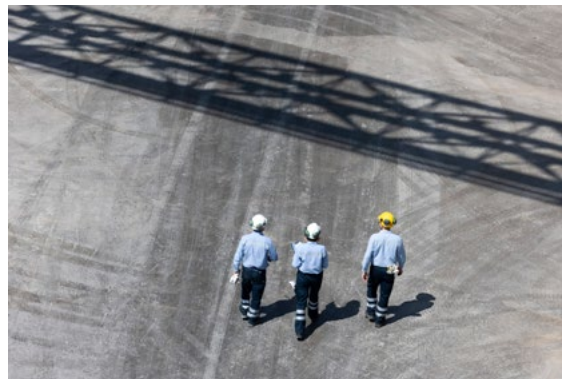
One of the key messages of the forum was that European companies have strong potential to grow within Europe, while emphasizing the importance of reforms to support innovation and scaleups. Special attention was also given to the integration of the Western Balkans, including Albania, into the European economy, highlighting the region's importance for companies seeking new markets.

For EasyPay, participation in this platform represents an important step toward expanding its international presence, building strategic partnerships, and promoting the potential of Albania's fintech sector across Europe.

TITAN expands its North American footprint with agreement to acquire Keystone Cement plant, advancing TITAN Forward 2029 Strategy

Titan SA (Euronext Brussels, ATHEX and Euronext Paris, TITC) announces that its subsidiary, Titan America SA (“Titan America”), listed on the NYSE, has entered into an agreement to acquire Keystone Cement Company, a Pennsylvania-based cement manufacturer and aggregates producer.

The transaction includes modern and high-quality assets such as an integrated cement plant, operating one of the most efficient cement kilns in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley, with a clinker production capacity of 990,000 short tons per year. Thanks to its attractive location, the plant is well-positioned to serve a 6.2 million short ton per year addressable market across Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Ohio, with strong exposure to large-scale infrastructure and technology investments and extensive transportation modernization programs. The acquisition is expected to accelerate top-line growth, enhance geographic diversification and improve operating margins through the realization of integration synergies, including substantial operational and commercial benefits from integration with the existing assets, Essex Cement in New Jersey and Roanoke Cement in Virginia, as well as Titan America’s fly ash processing



and marketing facilities operated with Separation Technologies, a Titan subsidiary across Pennsylvania and Ohio. The transaction price (subject to ordinary post-closing adjustments) is \$310,000,000, which corresponds to approximately \$313 per short ton of current clinker production capacity and its closing is subject to regulatory approval and other customary conditions. Bill Zarkalis, President & CEO of Titan America, commented: “The strategic investment aligns perfectly with Titan America’s long-term growth strategy in the economic mega-re-

gions along the East Coast of the US and enables Titan America to strengthen further its existing core materials business in the Mid-Atlantic region while adding complementary capacity in high-growth regions. It also demonstrates our disciplined M&A strategy, acquiring assets where our operational capabilities, commercial network, and financial strength can create substantial shareholder value.”

Marcel Cobuz, Chair of the Group Executive Committee, commented: “This acquisition in the US is consistent with the TITAN Forward 2029 Strategic Priorities, focusing on expanding cement capacity and accelerating inorganic growth in heavy materials, including alternative cementitious materials. It also complements the recent active Group portfolio management moves across our key markets towards the acquisitions of an integrated cement plant in the Greater Istanbul Market with US export potential, a cement grinding plant in France, aggregates bolt-ons in Greece, a precast Joint Venture business in the Western Balkans, along with investment partnerships in pozzolan in Greece and Türkiye as well as in fly ash facilities in the UK and in India.”

GDPR RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR DATA PROTECTION OFFICERS

Practical guidance for DPOs on selecting, implementing, and effectively using GDPR risk assessment tools within their organizations.



Dimitër Shuli

PMP®, CISM, DPO, | Information Security | Senior Project Manager | GDPR Certified DPO | IT management and strategy

Under the GDPR, the role of the Data Protection Officer is inherently risk-oriented. Article 39 assigns the DPO responsibility for monitoring compliance and advising on Data Protection Impact Assessments, positioning the role at the intersection of legal interpretation, organizational practice, and operational decision-making. While the Regulation does not explicitly require DPOs to quantify risk in financial terms, experience across sectors shows that many DPOs are increasingly turning to structured and quantitative risk assessment tools to strengthen their effectiveness.

This shift is driven by very practical needs. In complex organizations, qualitative statements about “high” or “medium” risk are often insufficient to guide prioritization. Quantitative approaches—when used appropriately—help DPOs distinguish between issues that are merely non-compliant on paper and those that expose the organization to material regulatory, financial, or reputational harm. They also provide a common language for engaging senior management and boards, allowing data protection risks to be discussed alongside other enterprise risks rather than in isolation.

In practice, risk assessment tools support DPOs in several critical ways. They enable clearer prioritization of remediation activities based on exposure, not just theoretical severity. They help justify resource requests by translating compliance gaps into potential financial impact. They strengthen the organization’s ability to demonstrate due diligence to supervisory authorities. And they allow reporting that is mean-



ingful to decision-makers who may not be specialists in data protection law.

The market now offers a wide range of tools aimed at supporting these objectives, but not all tools serve the same purpose. Some focus primarily on compliance status, others on risk modeling, and others on broader governance and workflow integration. Understanding these differences is essential before selecting any solution.

Many organizations begin with compliance checklists and gap assessment tools. These typically take the form of structured questionnaires aligned with GDPR requirements, producing an overview of compliance status and highlighting missing controls. Their strength lies in comprehensive coverage and the creation of an auditable trail of assessments over time. However, their outputs are usually qualitative. They can tell you *where* you are non-compliant, but not *how much* risk that non-compliance creates.

Risk quantification engines take a different approach. They use mathematical models to translate compliance data into estimates of risk exposure for the Organization, often expressed in financial terms or probability distributions. For DPOs, these tools can be particularly valuable when engaging with executive management, as they enable cost-benefit analysis and comparison of alternative mitigation strategies. Their effectiveness, however, depends heavily on the quality of the compliance data used as input and on the transparency and defensibility of the underlying model assumptions.

DPIA tools are more narrowly focused but remain essential. They provide structured frameworks to identify risks associated to Data Subjects for specific processing activities and document mitigation measures, directly supporting obligations under Article 35. Their limitation is scope: they are typically project-focused and do not provide a consolidated, portfolio-level view of organizational risk.

At the other end of the spectrum are full Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) platforms. These integrate GDPR compliance into broader enterprise risk management, offering workflow automation, reporting, and system integration. For large or highly regulated organizations, this integration can be powerful. For others, the complexity, implementation effort, and cost may outweigh the benefits, particularly if data protection is the primary use case.

Selecting the right tool therefore requires more than a feature comparison. DPOs must first consider organizational fit. The size and complexity of the organization matter, as does the maturity of existing compliance processes. A large enterprise may benefit from an integrated GRC platform, while a small or medium-sized organization may achieve better results with more focused tools. Existing infrastructure and the organization's capacity to implement and maintain the tool over time are equally important considerations.

Methodology transparency is another critical factor. A DPO should be able to explain, in clear terms, how a tool reaches its conclusions. The underlying methodology should be documented, defensible, and auditable. This is not only important for internal credibility, but also for external scrutiny if assessments are ever reviewed by a supervisory authority.

Regulatory alignment cannot be taken for granted. Tools should reflect current guidance from the European Data Protection Board and be updated as regulatory positions evolve. Where organizations operate across jurisdictions, support for national variations and local enforcement practices may also be relevant.

Equally important is the utility of the tool's outputs. Risk assessments are only valuable if they support real decisions. Outputs should be suitable for different audiences, from

operational teams to boards, and should lead to actionable recommendations that clearly answer the questions of what needs to be done, by whom, and when.

Even the best-designed tool will fail if it is not properly integrated into organizational processes. Effective adoption depends on reliable data sources, including records of processing activities, previous audit findings, incident and breach logs, and basic organizational parameters such as turnover and scale of processing. Assessment cycles must align with governance rhythms, whether through periodic reviews or trigger-based assessments following significant changes or incidents.

Stakeholder engagement is another decisive factor. Business units must be involved in providing accurate inputs. IT and security teams play a key role in interpreting technical risks. Legal counsel often contributes to the interpretation of regulatory exposure. Executive sponsorship is essential to ensure that identified risks lead to remediation decisions rather than remaining theoretical.

When well integrated, risk assessment tools can support a variety of practical workflows. They can underpin quarterly risk reviews by tracking changes in exposure over time and highlighting priority areas for action. They can inform pre-project decisions by modeling risk with and without proposed mitigations. They can also support incident response by helping assess potential regulatory outcomes and informing notification and communication strategies.

Implementation is not without challenges. Poor data quality will inevitably undermine results. Resistance from business units can slow or distort assessments. There is also a risk of over-reliance, where outputs are treated as definitive answers rather than decision-support inputs. Finally, technical or numerical results often require careful translation to be understood by non-specialist audiences.

Experience suggests several best practices. DPOs should start by clearly defining the decisions the tool is meant to support. Piloting with a limited scope before full rollout helps surface issues early. Ownership for both inputs and interpretation should be clearly assigned. Assessments should be embedded into existing governance calendars rather than treated as ad hoc exercises. Methodologies and assumptions should be documented to support defensibility, and tools should be periodically reviewed and recalibrated as enforcement patterns evolve.

Ultimately, risk assessment tools are exactly that: tools. They provide structure, consistency, and data, but they do not replace the DPO's professional judgment. It is the DPO who brings legal understanding, organizational context, and ethical perspective to the interpretation of risk. Used thoughtfully, these tools enhance that judgment rather than substitute for it.

Regulatory alignment cannot be taken for granted. Tools should reflect current guidance from the European Data Protection Board and be updated as regulatory positions evolve. Where organizations operate across jurisdictions, support for national variations and local enforcement practices may also be relevant.

Leveraging AmCham's Tourism Committee Expertise to Drive Regional Competitiveness



Elvis Kotherja

Chair of the Tourism and
Hospitality Committee

Comprised of some of the industry's most reputable and experienced companies, the Committee brings together deep sectoral knowledge, an international outlook, and a long-term vision. Its mission is to contribute meaningfully to the design of policies that will transform Albanian tourism into a competitive regional player and a key engine of sustainable economic growth. Through proactive engagement and structured dialogue with public institutions, the Committee has played an active role in drafting a comprehensive "Position Paper." This strategic document reflects the real needs of the market while offering practical, forward-looking solutions for the sustainable development of tourism. More than an analytical exercise, it provides actionable recommendations for meaningful reform, grounded in the firsthand experience of member companies and aligned with international best practices.

Within this framework, the proposed Long-Term Tourism Development Strategy addresses critical

Tourism is steadily consolidating its role as a cornerstone of the national economy, emerging as one of its most dynamic and influential sectors. In this context, the Tourism and Hospitality Committee of the American Chamber of Commerce is committed to harnessing the collective expertise of its members to help shape the sector's strategic direction.

challenges and sets out clear priorities to position Albania as a sustainable, high-value, and competitive destination in the region. The first and most critical pillar is workforce development. The demand for skilled professionals is both urgent and growing. This calls for stronger oversight by public institutions to ensure the quality and relevance of education across both public and private providers. Learning models have evolved significantly, now integrating theoretical knowledge, hands-on digital training, and direct workplace application. Companies that have invested in internal training academies are already building a more resilient and future-ready workforce. This modern approach ensures alignment between skills development and the demands of a globalized tourism market.

The second pillar focuses on tourism product development, which is intrinsically linked to the quality of human capital. In the private sector, financial management and revenue optimization play a pivotal role, with technology serving as a critical enabler for dynamic pricing and sales strategies. Innovation must be embedded across all business functions to maximize efficiency and competitiveness. In parallel, public institutions

and destination promotion agencies must adopt a more targeted approach, prioritizing key international markets over the next decade and positioning themselves as leaders in strategic destination marketing. Developing distinctive, high-quality offerings will be essential to differentiate Albania from its regional competitors.

The third pillar centers on formalization, standardization, and the promotion of year-round tourism. Sustainability lies at the heart of this vision. Aligning with UN Tourism destination standards should remain a central objective, ensuring that development is both responsible and enduring. Protecting Albania's natural and cultural assets must go hand in hand with building a tourism model that delivers long-term value. AmCham and its Tourism and Hospitality Committee are now in the final stages of presenting the "Position Paper," which will serve as a strategic roadmap for establishing standards and advancing a comprehensive, inclusive, and long-term development agenda. More importantly, it represents a call to action for all stakeholders across this vital industry, to work collaboratively toward a more formalized, regulated, and fully realized tourism sector.

Healthcare: The Strategic Heart of Albania's European Journey



Anna Savinkina

La Roche

Chair of Healthcare Committee

As I look at the skyline of Tirana today, I don't just see a city in construction; I see a nation in transformation. With the World Bank projecting a resilient 3.4% GDP growth for 2026, there is a palpable energy in our business community. We are no longer just preparing for the future; we are actively building it.

However, as we pave the way for our 2030 EU accession, we must ask a critical question: What is the most vital infrastructure for this journey? It isn't just the roads or energy grids - it is the health and productivity of the Albanian people.

FROM COST TO CAPITAL: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

For years, healthcare has been viewed through the narrow lens of budgetary spending. At Roche, and within the AmCham community, we believe there is a more powerful perspective: healthcare as a strategic investment. Every Lek invested in a resilient health system is capital injected into our most valuable resource: our citizens.

Currently, Albania allocates approximately 2.8% of its GDP to public health spending, according to the European Commission's 2025 Report. This is the lowest in the region

and significantly below the EU average of 10%. That 10% benchmark reflects a mature economic model where health is treated as a primary driver of workforce productivity and social stability, rather than just a cost center, a commitment evident in top spenders like Germany (11.7%), France (11.5%), and Austria (11.2%). While Albania is at 2.8%, other countries in the broader region or those who recently joined the EU (like Romania and Bulgaria) range between 6% and 9%. To secure our 2030 economic vision, this 10% target must serve as a powerful "North Star" for the Albanian government and treasury as they align national policy with EU standards. We must transition to a system where health is recognized as the engine of productivity: improving care not only saves lives but protects the economy from the massive indirect costs of lost work and disability.

CLOSING THE GAP: THE OUT-OF-POCKET CHALLENGE

A systemic hurdle highlighted in

the 2025 EC Report is that nearly 60% of total health costs in Albania are paid out-of-pocket by citizens. Under Chapter 28 (Consumer and Health Protection) of the EU *acquis*, our goal is clear: we must move toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

By working together to reduce this direct burden, we unlock household wealth that can instead fuel domestic consumption and small-business growth. This isn't about looking back at past difficulties; it's about ensuring that a health setback no longer leads to economic hardship for an Albanian family.

THE DOUBLE DIVIDEND: INNOVATION AS AN ECONOMIC MULTIPLIER

A groundbreaking 2025 Comparator Report on Cancer in Europe reveals a critical shift in health economics. While direct costs for innovative medicines have risen, they are increasingly offset by a massive reduction in indirect costs - the money lost to the economy when citizens



can no longer work. According to research by the WifOR Institute, every 1 EUR invested in health innovations (including innovative cancer care) results in direct improvements in population health and yields more than double (2+ EUR) the return in economic benefits.¹

THIS 'DOUBLE DIVIDEND' OCCURS WHEN EARLY DIAGNOSIS MEETS INNOVATIVE TREATMENT:

Productivity Gains: Between 1995 and 2023, the number of productive years lost to cancer declined by one-third across Europe due to earlier detection and the arrival of nearly 200 new innovative medicines.² **Societal Value:** A September 2025 EFPIA Analysis shows that advances in cancer care contributed €29.2 billion in societal health gains and added €53.7 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the European economy.³

1 <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12922146/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1777459680892238&usg=AOvVaw0EdhDXXCxl3Wpv-A5BL2zEH>

2 Hofmarcher, T., Lindgren, P., Skånberg, C., & Jönsson, B. (2025). *Comparator Report on Cancer in Europe 2025: Disease Burden, Costs and Access to Medicines and Molecular Diagnostics*. IHE Report 2025:2. Lund: IHE - The Swedish Institute for Health Economics.

3 Dolon. (2025). *The Transformative*

Applying this shift in health economics requires focusing on the practical delivery of care. Regionalizing cancer care will improve access, reduce system strain, and deliver more patient-centered services. Combining early screening with timely access to innovative therapies is the fastest way to keep our working-age population active and reduce the strain on our hospital infrastructure.

OUR ADVOCACY: A ROADMAP TO 2030

To bridge the gap to EU standards, AmCham is advocating for three fundamental pillars of partnership:

Increased Investment: We must support a more robust healthcare infrastructure to provide the level of care expected in the EU and significantly lower the 60% out-of-pocket burden.

Procedural Transparency & Digitalization: Modernizing our digital infrastructure is critical. By collecting data and measuring outcomes, we can prioritize and finance medi-

cines that are not only life-saving for patients but also provide the highest return to the national economy.

EU-Standard Access: We call for the alignment of medicine access with EU standards. Albanian patients deserve the same life-saving innovations as their neighbors in the EU.

A SHARED VISION FOR PROSPERITY

The journey to EU accession is a marathon, and it requires a spirit of partnership between the private sector and the government. Our message to policymakers, healthcare professionals, and the public is simple: A healthy Albania is a wealthy Albania.

By prioritizing health today, the Government is doing far more than meeting technical requirements; it is fortifying our national resilience. We want Albania to join the EU not just as a participant, but as a robust, high-performing member ready for seamless economic integration and long-term prosperity. Together, we can ensure that Albania's economic heart beats stronger than ever.

Value of Cancer Medicines. White Paper commissioned by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). Published September 25, 2025.

Souvenirs, Ambassadors of Albania and the Challenge of Informality



Ardit Bilani

Souvenirs are far more than small objects that tourists take home with them. They are silent ambassadors of a country, a representation of its culture, traditions, and national identity.

Every magnet, postcard, or handcrafted item that leaves Albania for another destination carries with it a fragment of Albanian history and emotion. For this reason, their quality and origin are of particular importance. A good souvenir is not only aesthetically pleasing; it must also be safe, durable, and a dignified representation of the country. In this context, the greatest challenge currently facing the market is informality.

The informal market is significantly harming businesses in general, and the souvenir sector in particular. Given that these products are small and relatively easy to transport, many individuals purchase them abroad, primarily in Turkey, and bring them into Albania in an uncontrolled manner, often via bus transport. At the same time, online ordering from various platforms has increased substantially, with products that are often of very poor quality, non-ecological, and in some cases potentially toxic.



These products do not undergo any regulatory oversight by the relevant institutions and fail to meet the required consumer safety standards. As a result, not only is fair competition undermined, but Albania's image among tourists is also put at risk. A low-quality souvenir does not represent the country as it should. In this reality, the role of structured and responsible businesses becomes even more critical. Souvenir Albania has chosen a clear path: placing absolute priority on product quality and safety. It is the first and only company in the market to import eco-friendly magnets, setting a new standard in Albania's souvenir

industry. Meanwhile, the European Union is also moving in this direction, preparing new regulations and stricter controls for products that may release toxic substances over time. This clearly indicates that the future of the market will increasingly be defined by quality, transparency, and environmental responsibility.

Therefore, market formalization is not merely an economic issue, but a necessity to protect consumers, preserve fair competition, and ensure that Albania is represented with dignity in the eyes of every visitor. Souvenirs are not just products, they are the image we choose to export.

BEYOND CEMENT, WITH PEOPLE BEING AT THE CORE OF EVERYTHING WE DREAM, WE ARE THE PARTNER THAT ALBANIA CAN COUNT ON.

INTRODUCTION:

Albania is at a turning point. From urban transformation to EU accession ambitions, the country is embracing change and Titan Albania is a valuable partner for this journey.

As TITAN Albania celebrates 15 years of building the country's infrastructure, CEO Mr. Dimitris Dimou reflects on the company's journey, its commitment to sustainability, and the opportunities ahead for Albania. Part of the TITAN Group, a leading international cement and building materials producer with a rich 122-year history, TITAN Albania draws strength from a legacy of innovation and excellence. With a personal connection to the country and extensive global experience in the industry, Mr. Dimou shares how TITAN Albania is embracing digital innovation, investing in its people, and helping shape a construction sector that is modern, resilient, and future-ready.

MR. DIMOU, WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US ABOUT TITAN AND ITS JOURNEY IN ALBANIA?

Titan Albania is part of TITAN Group, a global leader in building and infrastructure materials, with nearly 6,000 employees and operations in more than 25 countries across four continents. With 122 years of experience, our Group holds strong positions in the USA, the Balkans, Europe, Greece, and the Eastern Mediterranean, and recently expanded into India through a joint venture in supplementary cementitious materials. In Albania, our story began 15 years ago with what remains the country's largest-ever greenfield investment in the sector. It was a bold commitment, an ex-



pression of confidence in Albania's people and its future. From the outset, our goal was to become more than an industrial producer. We wanted to be a partner in Albania's development, contributing to modern infrastructure and sustainable growth. Today, Titan Albania is a key player in building the nation's infrastructure. We produce high-quality cement tailored to both international standards and local needs, serving everything from large infrastructure projects to high-rise buildings.

At the heart of this success are over 100 customers, thousands of people working in the construction sector, more than 400 dedicated employees, hundreds of suppliers and partners. They are the true foundation of our journey and, for me, my everyday heroes.



WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR GLOBALLY, AND HOW IS TITAN GROUP RESPONDING?

The construction sector is going through a profound transformation. Climate change demands urgent action, as cement production accounts for around 7% of global CO₂ emissions. At the same time, digitalization is reshaping how we design, build, and operate, while society expects companies to deliver value responsibly. These shifts are intensified by energy volatility and geopolitical instability, which complicate costs and supply chains. At TITAN, we address these challenges through our “Green Growth” strategy. We are reducing our carbon footprint by replacing fossil fuels with alternative sources such as municipal waste, biomass, and industrial byproducts, while exploring naturally decarbonized raw materials. At the same time, we are investing heavily in digital innovation to make our operations smarter and more efficient. We also collaborate with global initiatives such as GCCA and the Science Based Targets initiative, because collective action is

essential for lasting impact. For us, building a sustainable and resilient construction sector is both a responsibility and an opportunity to shape the future.

HOW DO YOU SEE ALBANIA'S CONSTRUCTION LANDSCAPE TODAY, AND WHERE DOES THE COUNTRY STAND GLOBALLY?

In just three decades, Albania has undergone a remarkable transformation. From a country in transition, it has become a dynamic, fast-growing economy, with modern skylines rising across Tirana and strategic infrastructure linking it to the region and beyond. Investments in airports, highways, and railways are enhancing mobility and positioning Albania more firmly on the European map. This growth is more than statistics; it is a story of resilience and ambition. Albania's path toward EU accession adds further momentum, with new laws promoting low-carbon building materials and sustainable development. Yet challenges remain. The country faces global pressures such as climate change, migration, and a shortage of technical expertise. To navigate these, Albania must con-

tinue investing in people, skills, and digital transformation, while drawing lessons from EU neighbors to build strong regulatory frameworks and innovative construction methods. With the right vision, Albania can position itself as a regional leader in sustainable growth.

CAN TITAN ALBANIA PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THIS DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE?

Absolutely. We are fully aligned with TITAN Group's Strategy 2026, which focuses on operational excellence, decarbonization, and digital transformation. Our target is to reduce CO₂ emissions by 25% by 2030, largely by optimizing clinker content in cement and increasing the use of alternative fuels to 40% of our total thermal energy. During the last 5 years we've already achieved a reduction by 5% of our CO₂ emissions and introduced lower-carbon products. These initiatives support Albania's environmental goals and highlight how industry can lead the transition to sustainability. Of course, regulatory frameworks will be critical in accelerating this progress.

HOW IS TITAN ALBANIA EMBRACING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digitalization is at the core of our operations. A milestone achievement has been the implementation of the Real-Time Asset Optimization (RTO) system, our plant's "digital co-pilot." This AI-driven solution processes data from thousands of sensors, analyzing production, mechanical, electrical, quality, and environmental performance in real time. RTO recommends optimal operating settings, enabling smarter and faster decisions. Since its launch, it has increased throughput by 10%, reduced energy consumption by 10%, and significantly cut CO₂ emissions. Beyond operations, digital tools such as TitanUp are transforming customer engagement, making services faster, more efficient, and more responsive.

WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY DOING IN RESPONSE TO SEISMIC SOCIETAL CHANGES?

Our people remain our greatest strength. In 2024 and 2025, we expanded learning and development programs, introduced the TITAN Leadership Model to nurture future leaders, and launched PODD (Point of Digital Dexterity), to equip teams with digital skills. We also foster a culture of meritocracy, collaboration, and bold thinking. Beyond our workforce, we strive to create value for society. A key initiative is the Albanian ESG Network, the first of its kind in the country. Bringing together businesses, civil society, institutions, and international partners, it aims to advance sustainable policies and align corporate strategies with European

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ESG principles. This platform positions Albania to take a leading role in sustainable development across the region.

IN THE LOCAL CONSTRUCTION SECTOR, DO YOU SEE OTHER THREATS?

The sector faces competitive pressures from imported building materials, often produced in markets with lower energy and labor costs but also opportunistic strategies. Indirect taxes such as carbon and fuel levies also increase domestic production costs. At Titan Albania, we view these challenges as an opportunity to reaffirm our long-term commitment. Our focus is on sustainable investment, capacity building, and supporting Albania's infrastructure. Producing cement is only part of our mission, building trust, resilience, and local expertise is equally important.

WHAT ARE TITAN ALBANIA'S FUTURE PLANS?

Looking ahead, our focus remains on growing together with our customers with quality, sustainability, and digital transformation as key levers. By 2030, we will invest over €65 million; €20 million to reduce our carbon footprint through fuel substitution; €25 million in energy efficiency projects; €20 million to boost productivity. Every further investment must create value for Albania, supporting communities and strengthening the economy. For us, growth means progress that lasts environmentally, socially, and economically.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT YOU? WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES? WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT?

I came to Albania almost a year ago with extensive experience in fuels, cement and building materials. This mission is deeply personal because Albania is now home to my family, and I share the same hopes and ambitions as its people. What concerns me most is the health and safety of our people. If every colleague goes home healthy and happy every day, I believe all other challenges can be managed. My priorities as a leader are to take Titan Albania beyond cement, to create the most engaging and empowering workplace in the country, and to remain a trusted partner in Albania's long-term development. Ultimately, I want to lead our operations in a country where everyone wants to live, making it, at the same time, a country where everyone wants to work.



RING TELEKOM: WHERE INNOVATION AND PEOPLE POWER TRANSATLANTIC SUCCESS

INTRODUCTION:

Ring Telekom stands out as an Albanian company that delivers critical operational processes for major U.S. telecommunications providers, combining technological efficiency with the strength of its human capital. Positioned in the local market as a BPO provider, the company has built a successful cross-border model by blending innovation and technology with experience and a strong client-first mindset.

Its services go far beyond basic processing. Ring Telekom provides customer care, product sales, and technical support for leading companies in both the United States and Albania. These partnerships represent more than standard business agreements, they reflect a

high level of trust in the company's ability to manage essential operational functions.

With over 15 years of experience, Ring Telekom has solidified its position through the quality and professionalism of its people. Human capital remains the foundation of its success,

with strong communication skills and expertise enabling the company to build lasting partnerships and collaboration bridges across the Atlantic.

"At Ring Telekom, we strongly believe that investment is the foundation of growth and sustainability. We continuously invest in resources and operational improvements, with a particular focus on training and the professional development of our staff," says CEO Armand Xhaferi.

Through this model, Ring Telekom demonstrates that young talent in Albania can thrive without the need to emigrate. Professionals based in Tirana can work with U.S. clients, gaining valuable international experience while remaining in their home country. By leveraging local talent and infrastructure, the company efficiently serves the American market.

INTERVIEW WITH ARMAND XHAFERI

CEO of Ring Telekom

1. What makes Albania competitive in delivering outsourcing services to the U.S. market?

Since 2015, Ring Telekom has been the first, and remains the only company in Albania fully dedicated to the U.S. telecommunications market, building consistent expertise and long-term partnerships.

Our key differentiator lies in our approach: while technology and AI are powerful enablers, people remain at the heart of everything we do. This allows us to offer more than a service we deliver true partnerships that generate measurable results for our U.S. clients.

2. Can Albania become a regional hub for BPO services serving the U.S. market?

Albania has strong potential to position itself as a regional hub for BPO services targeting the U.S. market. The country benefits from a skilled workforce, strong foreign language capabilities, and competitive cost structures.

However, long-term success will depend on continued investment in quality, training, and technology, as well as the establishment of higher service standards. From our experience at Ring Telekom, demand in the U.S. market is clear, and Albania is well positioned to seize this opportunity. With the right strategy, the country can evolve from a participant into a key regional player.



3. What is the next step for Ring Telekom in expanding this success model?

Our next step is to transition from a national success story into a recognized international player in the outsourcing industry. We are focused on strengthening our presence in the U.S. market, expanding into new sectors such as healthcare, logistics, and cus-

tommer experience, and advancing our operating model where technology and human expertise work seamlessly together to maximize performance.

Having built a strong foundation in telecommunications since 2015, the path forward is clear: to scale this model and position Ring Telekom as a trusted global partner for companies seeking sustainable growth.

RING TELEKOM

Ring Telekom is a globally recognized provider of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) services, known for delivering high-quality solutions and exceptional customer support. With its operational base in Tirana and strategic headquarters in New York City, the company upholds international service standards that ensure seamless connectivity and optimal business performance for clients worldwide.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET:

- Extensive expertise in call center and BPO services
- Cost-efficient solutions for global clients
- Advanced technology and modern infrastructure
- Customized, client-focused service models
- High operational flexibility and rapid scalability
- Strong and growing international client portfolio

We are not
professionals...
we are
perfectionists



PELIUM WINERY, WHERE LAND, PASSION, AND FRIENDSHIP BECOME WINE

This is more than a slogan at Pelium Winery, it is a declaration of intent. It reflects a philosophy where every detail matters, and where a deep passion for winemaking is elevated into a defining standard.

A visit to Pelium is not simply a wine tasting; it is an experience. What begins as a casual stop quickly unfolds into a journey through ancient Illyrian heritage, the very inspiration that led two friends to transform their shared dream of creating an Albanian wine brand into a destination for true wine enthusiasts. Located along the road to Korça, Pelium Winery reveals itself gradually, surrounded by vineyards that speak of patience, care, and the quiet determination required to build something exceptional from the ground up. A narrow path leads you to the winery itself, where architecture and nature exist in seamless harmony, creating a setting that feels both grounded and refined.

For Gentian Ramollari, wine is not merely a product, it is a living creation that requires constant attention and devotion. As he shares the story of the winery, an investment that marked a bold and defining chapter in his life, what stands out is something rarely encountered in business: a genuine emotional connection to what he creates. Inside, the winery reflects a delicate balance. Modern technology operates alongside an almost artisanal dedication to craftsmanship. Every stage of production is carefully monitored, and only those wines that meet uncompromising standards carry the Pelium label, wines defined by character, depth, and finesse. It is here that the meaning of “perfectionist” becomes tangible: every note, every aroma, every nuance in the glass is the result of intentional decisions, of compromises refused, and of an unwavering commitment to quality.

The name “Pelium” itself carries weight. Drawn from an ancient Illyr-

ian region, the very land where the winery now stands, it anchors the brand in a distinctly Albanian identity. But this identity is not inward-looking. It aspires to act as an ambassador, presenting the authenticity and richness of Albania to the refined and competitive world of international wines. For Gentian, this is not simply branding, it is a mission, to prove that Albanian wines can stand with confidence in the global premium segment.

When you leave Pelium Winery, you carry more than a bottle of wine. You take with you a story, and perhaps more importantly, the energy of an entrepreneur who believes deeply in his vision. In the end, the difference between a professional and a perfectionist may lie precisely there, in the refusal to settle for the ordinary, and in the courage to transform a craft into an identity.

At Pelium, you don’t just taste it, you feel it in every sip.