

Annual Activity Report

January – December 2018

Investment Council Secretariat | Tirana, Albania |
January 2019

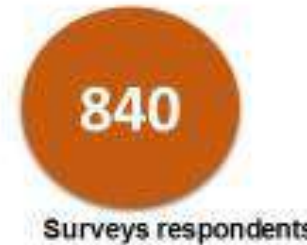
Investment Council is a very fruitful and successful institution. It started as a modest instrument and now is being consolidated as a very active one in the formatting of the legislation, in the representing of issues and concerns faced by the Albanian economy or even specific sectors.

Arben Ahmetaj, IC Chair/Minister of Finance and Economy, 14 December 2018

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INVESTMENT COUNCIL, 15 April 2015 - 31 December 2018



IC Recommendations, address:
19 By-Laws, 17 Laws

I. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the main activities performed by the Investment Council and supported by its technical Secretariat during January – December 2018. The IC entered its fourth year of functioning in April 2018 and it is now considered “as a real instrument not only for investors but for the government too”¹.

During the reported period, the IC has held three plenary meetings, four regional consultation meetings, one focus group meeting, a big roundtable on legal investment framework. In addition, it conducted a national wide survey on the investment climate and concluded a preliminary work on the next meeting agenda “On Inspections.” In addition, seven other IC recommendations were completed, while the overall number of completed recommendations for 2015-2018 reached 32.

Plenary IC meetings during 2018 were focused on:

- ✚ *The Electronic Platform on the Construction Permits and Its Impact in the Improvement on the Investment Climate – 13 February 2018*
- ✚ *Legal Framework on Investments in Albania, Current Debates and Challenges – 18 June 2018*
- ✚ *On the Formalisation and Competitiveness in Tourism – 15 October 2018*

The IC Secretariat consolidated its network and partnerships around the IC platform through increased consultations (online survey and direct consultation meetings) with around 480 representatives from the business community as well as with 14 public central and local institutions. Since 2015, the consultation occurred in various forms such as annual business surveys, focus group meetings, face-to-face consultations, field visits or reaching a wide audience through other communication means such as print and electronic newsletters, social media, etc. *The consultation rounds, have enabled the Secretariat to put together a communication network with around 10,000 companies, which represent 10% of the national active enterprises.* The work of the Secretariat was further expanded in the regions by collaborating with regional chambers of commerce such as CCI of Durrës, CCI of Gjirokastër or Municipality of Korça. It also consolidated for the second year its excellent cooperation with academic institutions such as Epoka University in Tirana.

¹ Quote from the interview with the private sector partner by the EBRD Evaluation Team, “*The EBRD’s ICGI Investment Climate Support Activities, Case study: Albania*” (October 2018) <https://www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/evaluation-latest-reports.html>

During 2018, IC Secretariat strengthened the cooperation with the Secretariat of National Economic Council, led by the Minister of State for the Protection of Entrepreneurship (MSPE) by participating and contributing to the business consultation sectoral meetings on Energy, Employment, and Agriculture, organised by the Minister during March – December 2018, and through participation of MSPE’s representatives in the IC meetings.

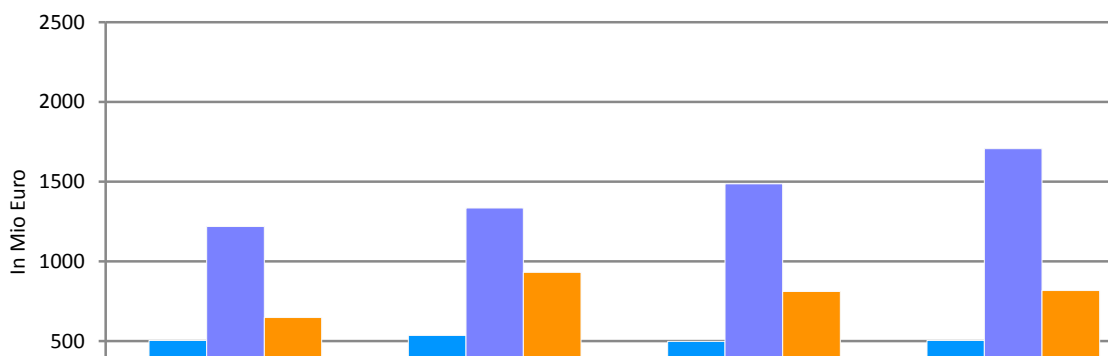
By the end of December 2018, the Prime Minister announced major changes to the composition of the Government, affecting also the IC composition. The new Minister of Finance and Economy and new IC Chair, Ms. Anila Denaj took over on 21 January 2019.

II. MAIN HIGHLIGHTS ON BUSINESS CLIMATE DURING 2018

The economic policy remain an important guide to the IC activity. The focus of the last Economic Reform Program 2018-2020, remains on reduction of the regulatory burden to business, improving access to finance, improving the institutional capacity for research and innovation, skills in the labour market, and modernising public employment services.²

With regard to the economic developments during 2015-2018 (Fig 1) Albania has shown a positive trend in private investments after 2015; while FDIs and public investments have slowly taken off and entered in a positive cycle (observation of the IC Secretariat based on various official sources).³

Fig. 1 Public, Private and Foreign Investments in Albania (in Mio EUR)



Source: Secretariat’s Own Data Collection (Dec 2018) based on Official Data from Ministry of Finance, Bank of Albania, INSTAT

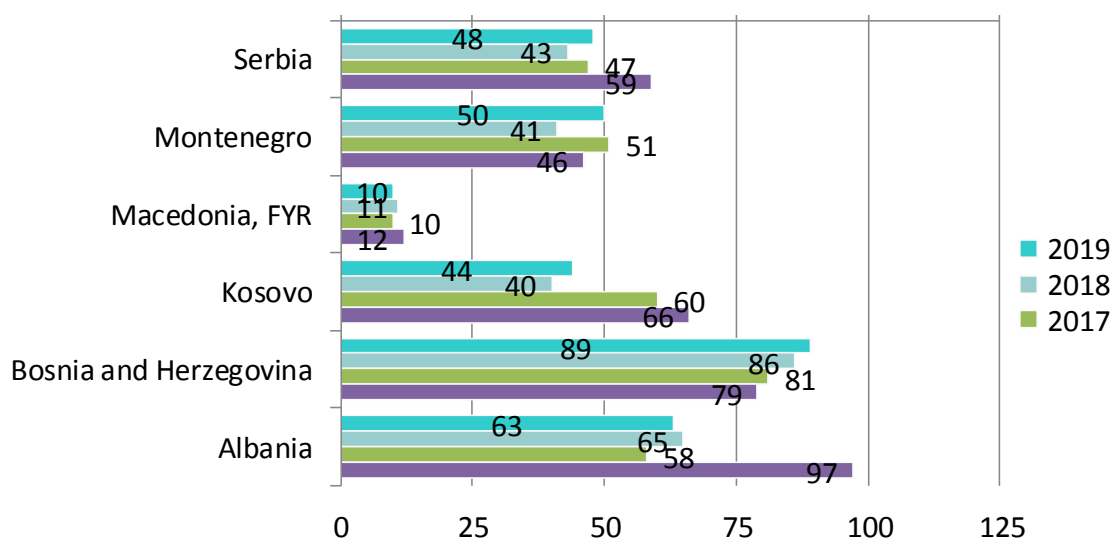
² The proposed reform measures rely upon the previous ERP 2017-20 focused on improving the business environment by formalizing the economic activity, fighting corruption, enforcing land ownership and improve access to finance remain important priorities for the Government of Albania

³ For more see IC Secretariat’s Publication: “Albania Economic Outlook,” December 2018 https://www.investment.com.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ENG_economic-outlook-presentation-dec2018.pdf

However, significant convergence towards EU living standards requires a major and sustained boost to productivity and investment. Firm-level productivity is significantly below EU standards, reflecting years of under-investment, weak institutions and a difficult business environment especially as relates to the stability of laws, difficulties in accessing a reliable electricity supply, and limited access to finance (Sanfey and Milatovic, 2018).⁴

With regard to the progress on Albania’s international ranking, there have been some considerable improvements since 2015, including recent improvement by 2 positions in DB 2018/2019 report. However, Albania still ranks the lowest in the area of dealing with construction permits, energy, fiscal procedures and property registration (IC Secretariat, “Albania Economic Outlook,” December 2018). There is some improvement in the indicators of energy, enforcing contracts and registration of properties. Albania ranks best in indicators related to the financial system.

Fig. 2 Ranking of Western Balkan Countries on Ease of Doing Business Indicator



Source: Secretariat Own Data Collection (Dec 2018) from <http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomies/>

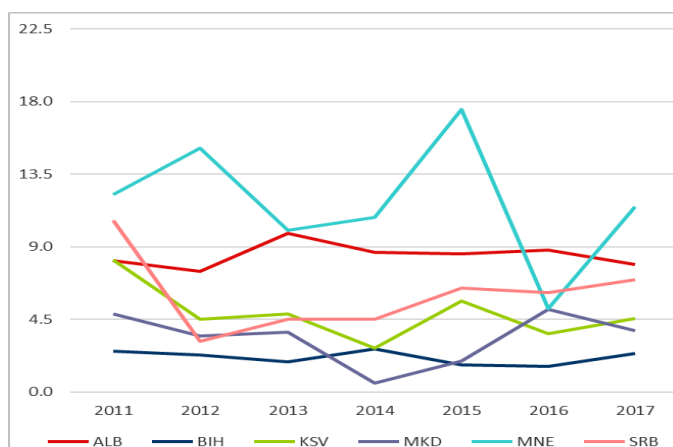
In the framework of Competitiveness Indicators 2018-2019, Albania’s ranking has improved in the indicators related to institutions, market efficiency and innovations while education and business sophistications are the indexes of competitiveness with most significant deterioration⁵. In addition, Albania is ranked the *second in the region for the value of the foreign investments* in years with sources highly concentrated in the *energy sector* and a few others. Current issues on the gap of investment (between potential and current figures of FDIs)

⁴ Sanfey, P., Milatovic, J. (2018), “The Western Balkans in transition: diagnosing the constraints on the path to a sustainable market economy”

⁵ Source: World Economic Forum - Competitiveness Report 2018; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2018>

basically relate to the lack of pre-investment necessary to reduce initial capital investment and lack of the capacity of Albanian government to approach potential investors (Centre for International Development, Harvard University, 2018). In a positive development, Albania is starting to secure new investments in the renewables sector.

Fig. 3 Flow of FDI in the Western Balkans



Source: World Development Indicators

III. IC CONTRIBUTION IN ENABLING IMPROVEMENT OF INVESTMENT CLIMATE

The Investment Council follows a methodology of engagement with the public administration and business community that allows for a follow up of IC recommendations prepared in consultation with different stakeholders. This mechanism (ongoing engagement with the public administration and business community) allows us to follow up on IC recommendations and identify IC impact on the investment climate in the country. The Secretariat reports on the progress and impact of the IC work through monitoring various media publications and official government sources. We have attempted to list some key IC contributions to the national reforming agenda on investment climate in 2018.

a) By accelerating policies on investment, relevant to the sectors considered as potentials for jobs creation or new investment

As of 2016, the IC suggested to prioritise and support the innovation and specific professions by industry (recommendations in the IC Meeting V⁶ and IX⁷). Recent two consecutive fiscal packages 2018-2019, provided incentives for companies operating in the software industry⁸ and included also incentives to technological investments such as reducing VAT on agricultural machineries. Other IC recommendations to be mentioned are: a) the establishment of pilot zones for investments in tourism based on economic and urban development plans (IC Meeting V), that are now part of the current investment policy intervention in tourism, b) transformation of the state properties to potential brown investment and preparation of feasibility projects, that are now promoted to investors by AIDA under different initiatives such as 100 villages or others, c) interventions as part of the policy papers produced under Berlin process in late June 2018, including the mapping of incentives (part of the recommendations from IC Meeting V as April 2016), are further integrated at the policy level as part of the REA-RIRA reforms 2018 under investment pillar (Albanian Official Gazette no.19, 2019)⁹. In addition, transparency on national incentives to investment is being further consolidated as part of the preparation of new investment legislative framework.

b) Less regulation burden to the business through further simplification of the business procedures

As end of 2018, 12 documents on tax procedures are no longer requested to the business but are generated electronically with no additional costs¹⁰. The General Customs Directorate (GCD) has standardized the procedures on the calculation of reference prices, applicable alternative methods and applicable customs tariffs, upon the approval of the internal instruction No.3 dated 23.01.2018 and No.6 dated 26.01.2018. Additionally, a lower number of physical inspections is reported while the risk based system is enriched with information from other state agencies, aiming the increase of its efficacy. The improvements achieved in 2017 with regards to the transparency of tax and customs administrations, have been further

⁶ “To establish a workforce that is qualified and certified on specific technological processes,” Recommendation of IC Meeting V (2016), https://www.investment.com.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/EN_Matrix-of-Recommendations.pdf

⁷ For more information, IC Meeting IX, Matrix of Recommendations, Finding no. 7, https://www.investment.com.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/EN_Matrix-of-Recommendations-2.pdf

⁸ Reduction of corporate tax from 15% to 5%

⁹ http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore_zyrtare/2019/PDF-2019/19-2019.pdf

¹⁰ IC Meeting 10, Recommendation 6 “Increase online information exchange or access to a certain number of data, in order to reduce the burden on business and increase the speed of trade exchanges, the case of verifying the fiscal obligations.” https://www.investment.com.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/EN_Matrix-e-Rekomandimeve-1.pdf

strengthened in 2018. Periodic information on tax procedures is being published in the media as well through pop-ups in e-tax platform (recommendation of IC Meeting II).

c) Influence Government's agenda on the importance of quality of skills & labour market and potential for investment

Key IC messages (2016) on the need for a systematic analysis on the current and future needs of business sector regarding labour skills, and the necessity for a vision to establish a sustainable cooperation between business and universities is now part of the government agenda.¹¹ Quality of education, preparation of talent skills and serious business involvement in the education curricula - are now part of the overall priority for policy intervention. Also, recently the Albanian government is considering the service sector, specifically Business Service Outsourcing (BPO)¹² as one of the main drivers (together with tourism, manufacturing, agriculture) of job creation for 2019, and a working group on the quality of skills in the BPO sector is already initiated as February 2019, as recommended by IC in its ninth meeting¹³.

d) Improvement of electronic platform on construction permits as an innovative and digitalised public service instrument enhancing service and transparency to the business

The Government recently approved a decree for creating a consolidated database of e-permits applications under the Territory Development Agency, responding to the explicit recommendation of the IC Meeting XII. This change in the ownership of the database will centralize the information and unify the procedures for all the Municipalities. Additionally, the Municipality of Tirana is considering to amend some internal procedures on the e-permits platform as recommended by the IC in Meeting XII. Also, Ministry of Agriculture is now part of the e-permits platform. This step was undertaken in the framework of verification of procedures and approval of the development/construction permits in the territory of the Republic of Albania in agriculture (IC Meeting XII).

¹¹ <https://financa.gov.al/denaj-te-rritet-bashkepunimi-midis-biznesit-zyrave-te-punes-shkollave-profesionale/>

¹² BPO was the sector selected by the IC in 2016 for its investment potential

¹³ <https://www.investment.com.al/meeting/ic-meeting-9-labour-market-skills-in-the-bpo-sector/>

e) A better Prior Public Consultation & Notification of Governmental Acts

In 2018, there was better public consultation of governmental acts compared to 2015, but still weak compared to the number of approved laws. Since November 2017, the Electronic Register of Public Notifications and Consultations is fully implemented from the technical point of view (in 2015 none of the above was functional, while the law was approved in late 2014). The Secretariat is closely monitoring this consultation process as relates to the relevant business laws/acts published in the Platform (recommendation of IC Meeting III). Compared to 2017, it results that there is a larger number of institutions that upload draft-laws in the platform with an increased diversity of issues they address. Although there is some progress, there is still a need for improvements. Many laws are not published in time in the portal, while the businesses are not being proactive in publishing comments and suggestions relevant to the drafts.

During 2018, the IC approved in total 33 recommendations. These recommendations aim to address issues related to the legal, regulatory, institutional and technical aspects of the electronic platform for construction permits; and issues in the tourism sector related to strategic development, legal obligations, as well as institutions/administrative capacities and transparency/awareness.

In 14 meetings (starting from 2015), the IC has approved 126 recommendations, out of which 116 have been direct proposals of the Secretariat based on the consultation with stakeholders and relevant analyses, while the rest (10) are recommendations from the business members which have been endorsed during the IC meetings.

Overall, during 2015-2018, 32 IC recommendations can be considered as fully completed while 11 are under consultation/discussion process. The list of the recommendations, status and their progress are filed in a consolidated database updated by the Secretariat. For some examples that highlight the achievement of the IC, please refer to Section “IC Documents 2018” of this report, “PPT Presentation - IC Key Achievements 2015-2017.”

IV. IC MEETINGS, JANUARY – JUNE 2018

MEETING XII

Electronic Platform on Construction Permits and its Impact in the Improvement of the Investment Climate

The objective of this meeting was elaborate an assessment on the functioning of the e-Permits platform and its impact in the facilitation of the construction procedures for the investors. The platform was launched by the government as an instrument to facilitate construction permits' administrative procedures and enhance transparency for the public.

Secretariat's analysis aimed to provide clarity and answers to the following questions:

1. Is the e-Permits platform a single-window service?
2. Has it disciplined the application and evaluation procedures considering the deadlines, the required procedures and documents?
3. Has the platform promoted efficient institutional coordination?



Picture 1. Investment Council Meeting XII, “For the Well-Functioning of e-Permits Platform” (Tirana, 13 February 2018)

Preparatory phase

Since 2016, while working on the identification of challenges to investment climate, particularly those related to agricultural and industrial warehouses, the IC Secretariat identified a need from the business to have more information on construction procedures. During several meetings it came out that there was a lack of information to both businesses and some municipalities on the applicable procedures. To assist with some useful business information, the IC Secretariat

prepared in August 2016 a summary information¹⁴ on the applicable legislation and procedures to be followed by the businesses.

Methodology & Consultation

1. Desk research on the national legislation in the field of territorial planning and development and on the institutional legal framework established for the implementation and monitoring of this legislation;
2. Desk research on the strategic documents and international reports such as EU Progress Report 2016, Doing Business 2017, etc., and e-Permits platform models implemented in different countries of the region (e.g. North Macedonia, Serbia).
3. Preparation of a semi-structured Survey/Questionnaire to be completed by e-mail and discussed in direct interviews with architects, designers, territorial planning experts, investors, and interested groups. Meanwhile, specific questionnaires were prepared for central public administration institutions and 4 Municipalities (Tirana, Durrës, Korça, and Shijak). In total, the Secretariat held 37 interview meetings (with 66 persons).
4. Consultation with 22 experts in this field, at a Focus Group meeting (25 October 2017) to discuss in advance the most important findings and recommendations to be presented at the IC Meeting.

Organization of the IC Meeting

The IC plenary meeting was held on 13 February 2018, chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economy, Mr Arben Ahmetaj. The meeting was attended by 13 members (3 government representatives, 4 international partners, and 6 members from the business community). The Secretariat presented to the IC an analytical work containing 16 recommendations, requiring about 25 actions to be taken by the government agencies.

Approved Recommendations

Main findings of the analysis were grouped in 3 pillars, related to:

1. *legal aspects*, for issues that could be addresses through additions and changes in the legal and sub legal framework;
2. *institutional coordination issues*, that could be addressed by institutions involved through completing the obligations imposed to them by laws and/or by-laws, and by the necessary institutional cooperation;

¹⁴ Download: [Summary on Applicable Legislation for Construction Permits \(in Albanian\)](#)

3. *technical aspects* of the e-Permits Platform, that the experts recommend to be addressed in discussions at technical level, and which require investments and operational/technical changes.

Other findings were on issues that are not directly related to the e-Permits Platform and the services it provides, but instead related to issues faced by the construction sector in general.

Some of the main recommendations were the following:

- Preparation by Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), Territorial Development Agency (TDA) of a detailed operational, technical and legal manual as an Instruction for all the users. The manual should be made available to all platform users, in particular Municipalities, and AIDA should promote the platform's one-stop-shop services to potential investors.
- Suspensions to the platform, when necessary, should be made only on legal basis.
- Unification of the tariffs for the application of construction permits in the e-permits platform.
- Continuous training and qualification of the human resources directly involved in the approval procedures of the construction permits via e-permits platform. Consolidation of dedicated structures only for this process.
- Raising transparency in the decision-making for applications made via the platform by enabling structured hearing sessions with the applicants, according to the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Code.
- TDA should be provided by the legislation with the attributes of the legal and technical administrator of e-permits platform.

The approved recommendations were officially submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, MIE, TDA, Ministry of Finance and Economy, etc.

MEETING XIII

Legal Framework on Investments in Albania, Current debates and challenges

The objective of the meeting was to introduce and highlight to the IC members, main findings from the process of discussions with stakeholders on the

need for a unified law on investments. The approval of the unified law is a commitment of the Albanian Government, to replace the Law ‘On Foreign Investments’ (1993) and Law ‘On Strategic Investments’ (2015), as included as well in the Regional Investment Reform Agenda (RIRA).

The background paper prepared by the Secretariat and shared with the IC members, focused on the following issues:

- 1) Is the current legal framework harmonized with the recommendations of best international practices, like UNCTAD¹⁵ recommendations?
- 2) Is this framework motivating and ‘easily applicable’ for the local and foreign investors that choose Albania as a destination for new investments?

Preparatory phase

This meeting can be considered as a follow up of the work conducted by the IC Secretariat during 2016, in the framework of the analysis on ‘*Investment Promotion Incentives: Albania vis-à-vis Balkan countries*’ where it came out that investors assessed positively the current legal framework, but they were sceptical on the effectiveness of its implementation.

The Albanian Government, supported by IFC/WB, has initiated the process for drafting a unified investment law. It was requested and voted by IC business representatives that the Investment Council should be the platform where the draft should be presented and widely consulted with all the stakeholders. In this context, the Secretariat, with the status of observer, facilitated the organisation of 12 meetings of the technical working group with representatives from the MFE, AIDA, & IFC experts, as well as close consultations at a higher level for specific issues. In addition, the Secretariat, upon the request of the Minister’s Cabinet, assisted the working group with the delivery of a comparative analysis of the “Investors Grievance Mechanism Models”¹⁶ implemented in 6 different countries: Greece, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine and Georgia.

Methodology & Consultations

- Desk-research of the legislation, strategic documents and reports of international institutions such as the EU, UNCTAD, US State Department, REA, etc.
- Facilitation of the drafting process, and coordination and monitoring of timely delivery of the Working Group milestones.

¹⁵ Investment Policy Review (2017), UNCTAD

¹⁶ To read the full document, refer to the list of documents listed in Section XVI of this Report.



Picture 2. Working Group on the Investment Legislation (Tirana, 15 February 2018)

- Organisation of a large scale Consultative roundtable on 23 May 2018, in close cooperation with IFC experts and Ministry of Economy and Finance, represented by the Deputy Minister of Economy (also Head of the Working Group for the drafting of a unified legal package on investment) and the Cabinet of the Minister for the Protection of Entrepreneurship. The meeting was attended by around 60 participants representing foreign and local business associations such as AmCham, Italian Chamber of Commerce, ATTSO, DIHA, ICE, FIAA, Advantage Austria, ACERC, AITA, Nordic Association Albania, CCI Tirana, UCCIAL, BTSH, etc., local and foreign companies such as Vodafone Albania, Bankers Petroleum, ABCom, Forscher, Alpha Bank, Antea Cement, Balfin Group, TAP, Shell, Colliers, etc., as well as legal and tax consulting firms such as Boga & Associates, HMM, Mazars, Baker Tilly, Kalo & Associates, Optima, AA+ etc. [Minutes of the Consultation Roundtable](#).

Picture 3. Consultation Roundtable ‘Investment Legal Framework, Main Challenges and Debates’ (Tirana, 23 May 2018)



Organisation of the IC Meeting XIII

The IC Meeting XIII was held on 18 June 2018, chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economy, Mr Arben Ahmetaj, with the special participation of EBRD’s Vice President, Mr Alain Pilloux, and new Director for Western Balkans, Ms Zsuzsanna Hargitai. Present in the meeting were 11 IC Members including former members from the business community.

During this meeting, Minister Ahmetaj underlined the importance of the legal framework on investments as relates to the guarantees, transparency and predictability for investors. He asked business representatives to send any

comments on the current legal framework to the Secretariat while affirmed that the draft law will be shared and consulted with the business community through the IC in due time. Speaking on behalf of the EBRD, Mr Pilloux encouraged the government to continue to improve the business climate, as very important to promote investments, and informed that EBRD will continue to support the growth of the private sector in the Albanian economy, primarily through risk sharing with local commercial banks, also to encourage them to step up lending to the real economy (particularly in the local currency). More detailed information on concrete steps is provided in Section V.



Picture 4. Investment Council Meeting XIII, “For a simplified legal framework” (Tirana, 18 June 2018)

MEETING XIV

On the Formalization and Competitiveness in Tourism

The objective of this plenary meeting was to point out and debate on the degree to which the economic activity in tourism is hampered by informal activity and tax evasion, and provide recommendations that could address such findings. For the above purposes, IC Secretariat prepared a detailed analysis which focused on:

- Apprehending and measuring informal economy in the sector;
- Evaluating the impact of tax incentives on formalization and explore the relation between informality and sector competitiveness.

Methodology & Consultations

- **Desk research** on the national legislation covering the tourism sector in terms of regulatory and institutional framework, national strategic documents, regional countries strategic documents on tourism, other studies and reports on tourism from national and international organizations.
- **A national scale survey** was implemented as source of primary information. The survey aimed to gather information on three broad areas of business and investment climate being: tax compliance and tax controls, investment climate of the sector, and informal tourism economic activity. The survey was based on a standardized, closed questions questionnaire, previously implemented by IC Secretariat. The questionnaire was reviewed to accommodate questions on informality. Reviews and suggestions from relevant stakeholders were reflected in the final form, which became available online.
- **In-depth interviews with stakeholders.** Direct interviews took place during the period July - September 2018 with representatives of the tourism business associations, public institutions, fiscal experts, tour-operators and travel agencies. In total, the Secretariat held 15 face-to-face interview meetings with relevant stakeholders (government, companies, associations, and donors).
- **Regional consultations with business in the regions:** During September 2018, Secretariat organized in close cooperation with local CCIs, three regional focus group meetings in Durrës, Gjirokastër and Korça with 65 businesses operating in the tourism sector.
- **A Focus Group meeting** was held in Tirana (September 26, 2018) with participation of 20 representatives (from MFE, MTE, GTD, NTA, Tourism Associations, other Business Associations and experts) to discuss in advance and validate the most important findings and recommendations to be presented at the plenary IC Meeting.



Picture 5. Consultation with companies in the tourism sector in Durrës, 5 September 2018



Picture 6. Consultation with companies in the tourism sector in Gjirokastra, 7 September 2018

Picture 7. Consultation with companies in the tourism sector in Korça, 12 September 2018



Picture 8. Focus Group Meeting (Tirana, 28 September 2018)

Organisation of the IC Meeting XIV

The IC Meeting XIV was held on 15 October 2018, chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economy, Mr Arben Ahmetaj. Present in the meeting were 12 IC Members and representatives from several groups of interest in the tourism sector. The meeting was attended by around 25 observers representing the business community, domestic and foreign business associations and representatives from state institutions such as Ministry of Tourism, etc.

During this meeting, Minister Ahmetaj emphasized that although the tourism sector has a substantial growth, its formalization remains a challenge for the country. During the last tourism season, many tax control structures were engaged, although in the focus were not penalties, but taxpayers' education and further formalization. Informality remains a systemic problem of the sector with

peculiarities as per tourist destinations and business models. Some of the major raised business concerns were unfair competition, lack of quality in human resources to cope with the increasing number of visitors, impediments to access to finance, the need for more investments in the public infrastructure etc.

Approved Recommendations

Some of the main recommendations were the following:

- **Finalization and approval of the Strategy of Tourism.** Aligning of the objectives between MTE and MFE with regard to the actions, concrete measures and responsible agencies to tackle informality in the sector. More concretely, defining of clear formalization milestones to meet the objective of the draft-strategy on tourism: "registration of 80% of family accommodation (rooms, apartments, houses) by 2022." Concrete actions and methods that address the formalization issues (identification and registration) could make the strategy objective realistic.
- **Tourism strategies to be tailored as per business model and tourist destinations.** Considering that informality in the sector remains systemic and highly diversified and with many specifics, it is suggested that the formalization strategies could be tailored in accordance with the specifics of informality by city (e.g. Vlorë and Durrës as massive touristic destinations would have a different strategy against informality compared to Korçë and Gjirokastrë considered as cultural touristic destinations).
- **Identification and registration of accommodation structures could be finalized with a simple labelling of formal operators in tourism sector - which states that the operator are recognized as registered operators that regularly pay tax and tariffs.** This labelling has been used in neighbouring countries such as Greece/Croatia as a transitional measure toward full formalization of the sector. This is a preliminary step until the National Register is consolidated.
- **Anti-informality education and information programmes should be coordinated and developed for both tax administration and inspectorates, the latter one monitoring the conformity of the market on permanent basis.** This could be implemented on regular basis, and focused not only during the tourism season, because actions during high season has had a negative impact on business activity and tourists' perception.

V. FACILITATING PREPARATION OF THE UNIFIED INVESTMENT LAW

In 2017, the Albanian Government adopted an Investment Policy Statement committing to the preparation of a Unified Investment Law, which would replace the Law on Foreign Investments (1993) and the Law on Strategic Investments (2015), as part of a general effort to improve the investment climate in Albania. The purpose of the new Law is threefold: (1) to update existing investment legislation according to the best international standards, (2) to provide a unified and competitive legal framework for attracting new domestic and foreign investment, and (3) ensure compliance with Albania's national legislation and international treaties.

To achieve these objectives, the Albanian Government adopted a Decree in 2016 for the setup of a working group (with eight professionals) from the Ministry of Economy, Tourism and Entrepreneurship and the Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA). The working group was tasked with gathering and channelling the opinions of national and international participants and preparing the draft Unified Investment Law. The work of the Working Group was foreseen to be completed by the end of 2018, but due to the challenging debates no final draft of the law was eventually agreed.

On 15 October 2018, a new Instruction was issued by the Minister of Finance and Economy reshaping the composition of the Working Group, including also the IC Secretariat as a member to provide support as relates to the administrative and organisational aspects (draft minutes of meeting, follow up of tasks, coordination of the next steps, etc.).

Tentative Timeline until Approval of the Unified Investment Law

December 2018	Draft Law submitted to the Working Group for Review
January 2019	The working group reviews the draft law and makes the necessary changes
February 2019	The agreed version is sent to the Line Ministries for opinion
February 2019	The draft law is sent for opinion to interest groups
March 2019	Submission of the draft Law to the Council of Ministers
June 2019	Law passed in the Parliament

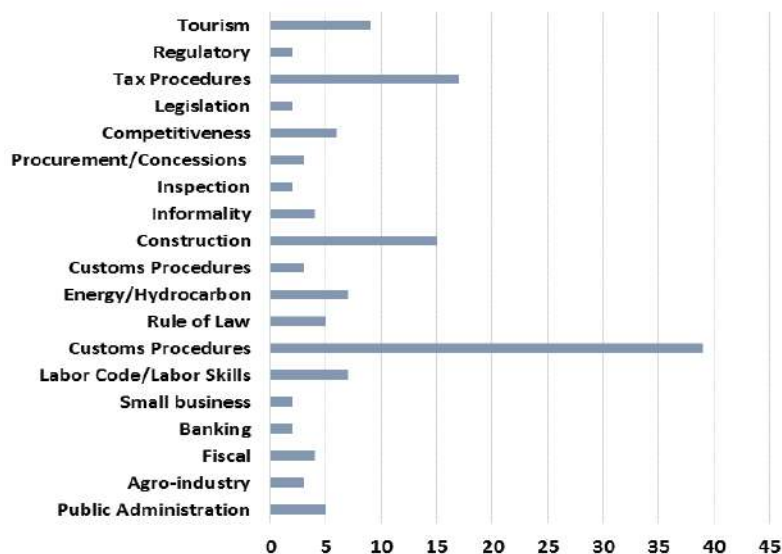
VI. UPDATE OF THE DATABASE WITH MAIN CONCERNS COMING FROM THE BUSINESS

As part of its work, the Secretariat collects and elaborates concerns arriving from the business community regarding the investment climate in Albania. Until end of 2018, the Secretariat has identified, gathered and summarized about 135 concrete business concerns.

These concerns have been directly submitted to IC Secretariat by the businesses, or identified as such by the Secretariat during meetings and consultations. All business concerns have been subject to a preliminary verification from both legal and economic perspective and impact. The list of updated business concerns serves as an “inventory” for elaborating a realistic and sustainable agenda for upcoming IC Meetings.

As of December 2018, main part of the business concerns continue to be related to the functioning of tax & customs procedures, VAT reimbursement, unfair competition & informality, lack of clarity of sectorial legislation, abuse with the inspections in agroindustry sector, non-liberalisation of energy market, or specific concerns related to the low competitiveness of the products ‘*Made in Albania*’ such as the customs tax for specific inputs in agriculture, or impediments for exporting meat products to EU. This database serves also as an important source of setting Annual IC Agenda since 2015.

Fig. 4 Areas of Business Concerns recorded by the Secretariat, 2015-2018



Source: IC Secretariat, Database of Business Concerns (December 2018)

VII. IC MEMBERS DURING 2018

During 2018, IC members from state institutions were only 6 compared to 8 during 2015-2017, as the Minister of State for Relationships with Parliament (and Minister of State for Local Affairs were no longer part of the structure of the new Government established in September 2017.

In January 2018, 6 new IC members from the business community were appointed with a one-year mandate, as per the rotation mode stipulated in the IC Rules and Regulation. The decision was taken by the IC Chair based on a list of potential business candidates for IC Members in 2018 prepared by the Secretariat and discussed with relevant partners of the IC.

Leaving Members

Companies:

1. Shkëlqim Bozgo - Country Manager, TAP
2. Luan Leka - CEO, EHW GmbH
3. Samir Mane - President, Balfin Group

Business Associations:

1. Arben Shkodra - Chairman, Producers' Association
2. Luan Bregasi - President, BiznesAlbania
3. Mark Crawford - President of AmCham

Newly Appointed Members

Companies:

1. Edmond Spahiu - Chief Executive Officer, Alb-Star Sh.p.k.
2. Isuf Ferra - CEO, Ferra Co
3. Seyhan Pencabligil - CEO, BKT

Business Associations:

1. Tom Kristian Larsen - President, FIAA
2. Ines Muçostepa - Chair, UCCIAL
3. Grigor Joti - Chair, Albanian Commercial Union

During March-April 2018, the Secretariat met individually each of the leaving members, in line with the standards and methodology of the IC work. The purpose of these meetings was to gather opinions on their experience as members of the IC, suggestions for improvements regarding the work of the IC and the Secretariat, as well as their insight on the investment climate in the country.

Comparing this feedback with the previous group of leaving member (2015-2016), it is noted a convergence of business representatives' views as relates to the importance of the platform in the long term for the country. They appreciate the quality of technical notes, IC working methodology (bottom up), the tripartite model and the way how the prioritisation of business issues has been performed so far. In the second round, the businesses acknowledge that the platform has provided an opportunity for them to become aware of the importance of contribution in a different level of dialogue, above their private interests, while reconfirming the need for a more proactive role of the Government, especially as relates to the follow up of recommendations.

IC MEMBERSHIP DURING 2018

<i>Permanent Member, State Institution</i>	IC Chair/Ministry of Finance and Economy	Mr Arben Ahmetaj, Minister
<i>Permanent Member, State Institution</i>	Bank of Albania	Ms Natasha Ahmetaj, Deputy Governor
<i>Permanent Member, State Institution</i>	General Tax Directorate	Ms Vasilika Vjero, General Director
<i>Permanent Member, State Institution</i>	General Customs Directorate	Ms Belinda Ikonomi, General Director
<i>Permanent Member, State Institution</i>	AIDA	Mr Sokol Nano, CEO
<i>Permanent Member, Donor</i>	World Bank	Ms Maryam Salim, Country Manager
<i>Permanent Member, Donor</i>	EU Delegation in Albania	Ms Olga Anghelakis, Head of Operation Section for Economic Reform and Infrastructure
<i>Permanent Member, Donor</i>	EBRD	Mr Matteo Colangeli, Head of EBRD RO
<i>Permanent Member, Donor</i>	IFC	Ms Laura Qorlaze, Representative
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	Albstar Shpk	Mr Edmond Spahiu, CEO
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	Ferra Co	Mr Isuf Ferra, CEO
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	BKT	Mr Seyhan Pencabligil, CEO
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	FIAA	Mr Tom Kristian Larsen, President
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	UCCIAL	Ms Ines Muçostepa, Chair
<i>Non-Permanent Member, Business</i>	Albanian Commercial Union (BTSH)	Mr Grigor Joti, Chair

To date, 17 IC business members, representing 8 business associations (1 with two mandates) and 9 companies, have contributed to the dialogue in the IC. In early 2019, Secretariat in cooperation with the new IC Chair and EBRD will be working to improve the IC format, based on a review and analysis of the functioning and performance of the IC in the past years, and on best global experiences with Public-Private Dialogue platforms. Main objective would be to accommodate the permanent membership also for business community representatives.

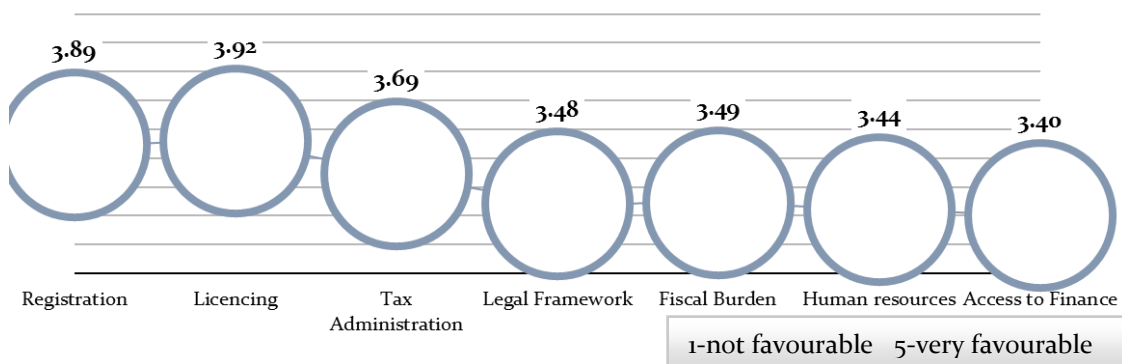
VIII. 2018 IC SURVEY

Conducting surveys has become an important and effective tool for the Secretariat to engage with business community on eminent investment climate concerns, while it started as a proposal by Investment Council members. Its purpose is to take stock of timely business concerns, opinions on the impact of economic reforms targeting the fiscal system and informality in investment climate and follow up on their dynamics. Surveys offered also the opportunity to absorb practical solutions to identified problems. Feedback from the surveys has constantly fed the IC meetings and discussions, which is in compliance with the IC principle of evidence-based analysis. By the end of 2018, the survey platform (including the database of business contact details, questionnaire, communication and data processing methodology) has turned into a well-consolidated means for the IC Secretariat. **2018 was the third consecutive year that the Secretariat carried out a survey on investment climate.**

The investment climate survey 2018, was conducted during June-September 2018. The invitation to respond to the questionnaire was sent to a randomly selected sample of 500 companies from a database of 10,000 businesses identified by the Secretariat using sources from the GTD and the NBC. This sample was stratified similarly to the national distribution of enterprises per sector, turnover and employment. The invitations sent out to the companies were followed up by emails and phone calls, as a way to incentivise businesses to respond. The survey fed with useful information the study on informality in tourism sector, as well as the study on the inspectorate reform. A summary document with survey results on investment climate 2018 will be published by the IC Secretariat during 2019. The overall investment climate survey, counted 357 respondents, from which 5 were considered outliers and incomplete responses. Overall response rate was 70%, given that the targeted sample was 500 companies.

In summary, companies' concerns are related to high tax burden and complexity of tax system especially for SMEs, unfair competition, infrastructure, access to finance, consultation of legal framework, receiving services from the state, lack of qualified staff, lack of facilitating practices for new companies to promote their registration and formalisation, etc.

Fig. 5 Business Perception on the Investment Climate in Tourism



Source: 2018 IC Survey “On Investment Climate”

Secretariat’s analysis confirmed that what affects significantly the impact of any tax policy on informality is the soft side of informality measures - professional inspectors, clear and very accurate reporting from any inspection and information sharing between tax authorities and businesses.

IX. INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME 2018

During July-September 2018, the Secretariat engaged 6 interns, students from reputable universities in Tirana, to assist with the implementation of the IC Survey 2018, more specifically in increasing the awareness on the survey, interviewing companies on the phone, and other data entry work. In the end of their internship programme, the interns were awarded a certificate for their work.



Picture 9. The Interns with the Secretariat’s Team (Tirana, 15 October 2018)

Students' Impressions on their internship experience

“During this summer (2018), I had the opportunity to be part of the internship organised by the Investment Council Secretariat. At first I thought it would be hard because I live in Shkoder. But with the help and collaboration of the interns and Secretariat’s staff, I went through one of the most beautiful experiences. I also believe that this internship will be very valuable to my CV. We were a group of girls who cooperated with each other very well, and I believe that the fruit of this good cooperation is the result of our work. Also, a positive thing about this internship was the reimbursement of expenses, as little as it may be, it was a kind of stimulus, and it has its value since we were all students. During the work, we were faced with different situations in our interaction with the business. I think that from this internship I have gained a lot of knowledge regarding the topic that the survey dealt with, and I think this basic knowledge will serve me well in the future as well.

In general, it was a good structured and well-organized work. We encountered only difficulties with the contact details of the companies, which were often missing or incorrect. However, I believe that this survey will yield very good data. What I could understand from the many calls I conducted, there is the lack of confidence that something will be done to improve the investment climate.

I hope in other future collaborations.”

Dorina Amuli, 27 September 2018

“This internship at Investment Council was a great experience. Having the opportunity to learn and gain new abilities working side by side with skilful people, was what anyone expects from an internship. We had to contact and talk with different businesses understanding their problems, also helping them to answer the questionnaire. After we achieved the objective we attempted to create a solution about the problems we encountered. The final part of trying to solve everyday life problems showed it was worth the time and energy. I am thankful for my internship at Investment Council because of how much it aided me to grow both professionally and personally. Thank you.”

Rafaela Disha, 11 January 2019

X. COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY

INVESTMENT COUNCIL WEBSITE

The IC Website has been managed by the Secretariat since its launch in July 2015. The website provides essential information about the Investment Council such as IC meetings (agenda, minutes of meeting, PPT presentations, technical notes etc.), press releases after each IC Meeting, IC & Secretariat’s activities (e.g. meetings with stakeholders and focus group meetings), publications in the media, etc. So far, the trend of visitors to Investment Council website has been positive. During 2018, the total number of web visitors amounted to 4,724, the highest annual number since the launch in July 2015. The majority of visitors have found the Investment Council website and reached information shared through search

engines, however recently it is noticed an increase in the number of visitors that reach IC website through indirect ways such as social media, or reference of IC website by other websites.

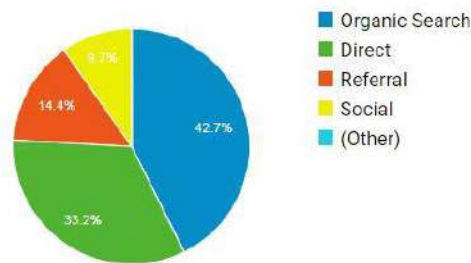
1 Jul 2015 – 31 December 2018

Website Audience

	2,015	2,016	2,017	2,018
Users	2,272	3,615	4,122	4,724
Page views	12,600	22,856	19,292	17,632

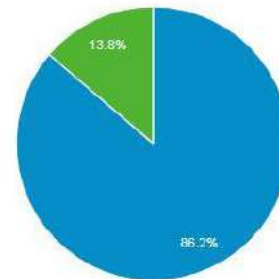
Website Acquisition Overview

Top Channels



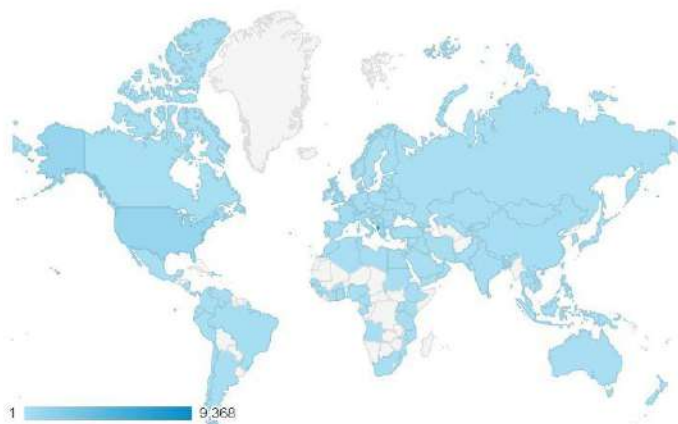
New vs. returning visitor

■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor



The website content is provided in Albanian and English. Around 35% of website viewers reside outside Albania.

Website Country Overview



Country ?	Acquisition
	Users ? ↓
	14,336 % of Total: 100.00% (14,336)
1. 🇦🇱 Albania	9,368 (64.60%)
2. 🇺🇸 United States	1,067 (7.36%)
3. 🇬🇧 United Kingdom	676 (4.66%)
4. 🇰🇲 Kosovo	467 (3.22%)
5. 🇫🇷 France	370 (2.55%)
6. (not set)	305 (2.10%)
7. 🇮🇹 Italy	264 (1.82%)
8. 🇩🇪 Germany	163 (1.12%)
9. 🇧🇷 Brazil	147 (1.01%)
10. 🇬🇷 Greece	99 (0.69%)

Website Behaviour

Most viewed pages

Page views

- About Investment Council	2,353
- 2018 IC Survey 'Investment Climate'	1,692
- Secretariat's Team	1,407
- 2017 IC Survey 'Investment Climate'	1,383
- 2015 IC Survey 'On Tax Audit'	1,129
- News	1,016
- 2015 IC Survey 'On Informality'	923

INVESTMENT COUNCIL ON FACEBOOK

The IC page on Facebook is managed by the Secretariat and it currently has an audience of around 960 followers (December 2018). The page is continuously updated on the activities of the Council and articles of interest on investment and business climate, economic growth etc. from reputable portals. On some occasions, social media has been also used to announce Secretariat's Surveys.

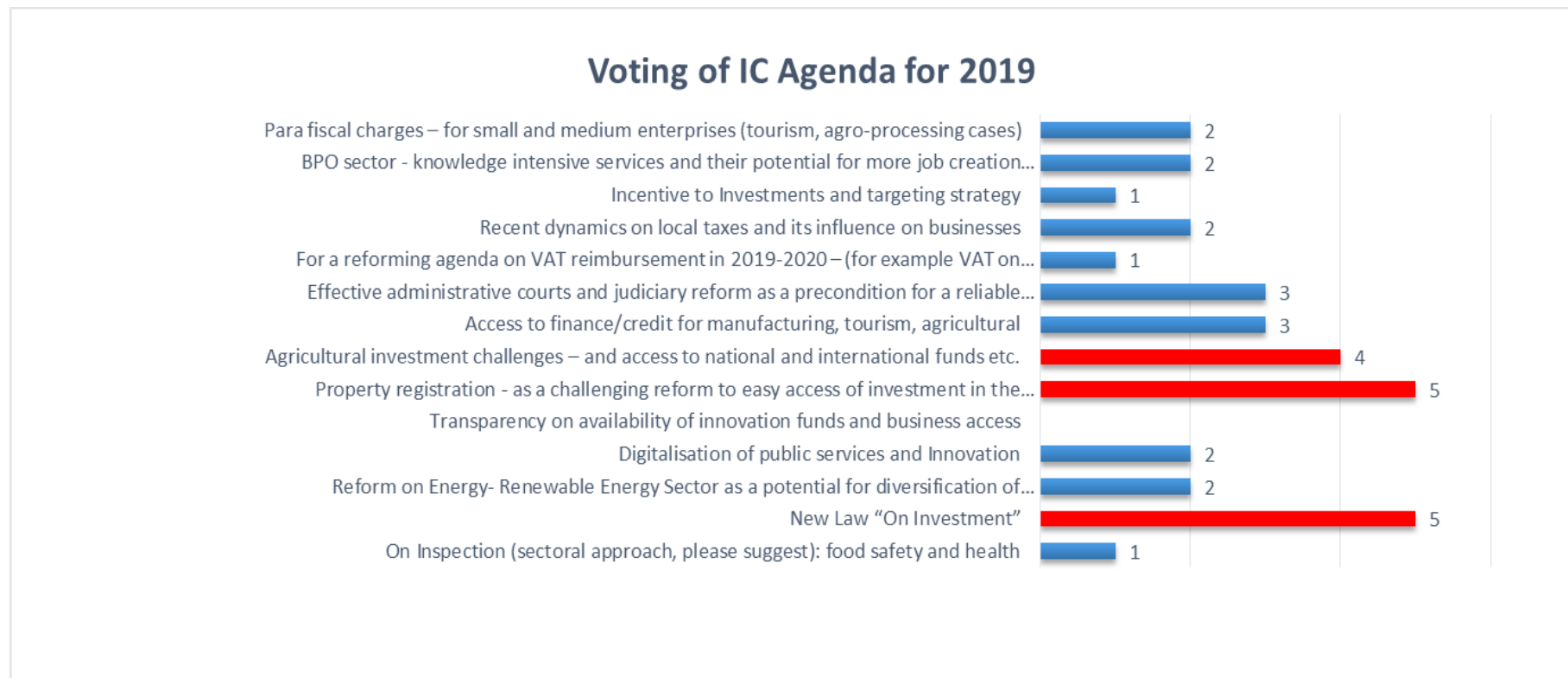
2018 IC NEWSLETTER

The 2018 IC Newsletter is the third edition produced in print and electronically by the Secretariat. It was distributed to over 150 stakeholders by regular post and to around 500 by e-mail. It serves as a very good instrument to inform all the stakeholders on the main outputs of the Council, and to reach audiences with little information on the Council.



XI. VOTING RESULTS OF 2019 IC AGENDA

Voting results of IC Agenda for 2019 by the IC Members of 2018. Definitive subjects to be tackled by the IC will be subject of further consultations with the new IC Members 2019, in line with the Government’s priorities.



Number of votes: 9

XII. EVENTS

MEETING WITH POTENTIAL ITALIAN INVESTORS

In the framework of a mission organised by Confindustria Albania with new Entrepreneurs of Confindustria Foggia, the Secretariat held a meeting to introduce briefly Albania and its market. The meeting was attended by the President of Confindustria Foggia, Mr Gianni Rotice. Italian investors expressed their interest for information on investment incentives, priority sectors, and concrete support from the Government to investors.



Picture 10. Meeting with a group of Italian investors, led by President of Confindustria Foggia (Tirana, 31 January 2018)

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BRAINSTORMING SESSION ON THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROGRAM IN ALBANIA 2018-2020

In January 2018, Albanian authorities finalised the document on Economic Reform Program (ERP) 2018-2020 and endorsed it to the European Commission on 31 January 2018. A mission from the EC Head Quarters visited Tirana during 1-2 March 2018 and the Secretariat contributed to a round table held with representatives from the business community.

PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMIC FRANCOPHONE FORUM OF TIRANA

The event was attended by a delegation of more than 50 French economic actors from Lyon region interested on economic exchanges with Albanian companies. The Secretariat participated in this forum, represented by Head of Secretariat, Ms Diana Leka.

PARTICIPATION IN THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF EBRD-SUPPORTED INVESTMENT COUNCILS

On 15-16 March 2018, the Secretariat of Albania Investment Council participated in the Annual Conference of EBRD-Supported Investment Councils in Tbilisi, Georgia. The purpose of this 2-day event was sharing of respective key achievements for 2017 and lessons learnt, and disseminating best practices. Main issues tackled during the specific sessions were related to the shaping of economic policy, focusing on how EBRD's investment can change the business culture in transitional economies, as well as on how international business/economic rankings (e.g. Doing Business Report; Global Competitiveness Report; Heritage Foundation Economic Freedom report etc.) can be used to help a country make and track progress on reforms, and what risks

such rankings may pose. In the end, it was emphasized that ICs have tackled so far systematic issues of the business climate, and will continue to keep up their good work in investment climate by also including sustainable development goals, digitalization, inclusion (gender, youth, regional, etc.) and scaling up the start-ups.



Picture 11.
Participation of the Secretariat in the EBRD-Supported Investment Councils Conference (Tbilisi, 16 March 2018)

COOPERATION BETWEEN IC SECRETARIAT AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL (NEC) LED BY THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PROTECTION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

During the reporting period, a new communication channel was set up between the Investment Council Secretariat and the NEC Secretariat, led by the Minister of State, Ms Sonila Qato. As part of her work, the Minister organized several consultations with business representatives. Main concerns identified through these roundtables were recorded in the IC database, to be further analysed by the Secretariat, as part of its working methodology. More specifically, business concerns were identified through sectorial meetings on Agriculture, Energy, Agro-processing, Employment, or insurance and health sector.



Picture 12. Participation in the Roundtable organised by Minister for the Protection of Entrepreneurship regarding Business Concerns on Agriculture (Tirana, 26 March 2018)

Picture 13. Participation in the Roundtable organised by Minister for the Protection of Entrepreneurship regarding Business Concerns on Energy/Hydrocarbon sector (Tirana, 27 March 2018)





Picture 14. Participation in the Roundtable organised by Minister for the Protection of Entrepreneurship regarding Business Concerns on Employment (Tirana, 28 March 2018)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONSULTATION PROCESS LED BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY ON THE INVESTMENT PILLAR AS PART OF THE REA DOCUMENTS

The Secretariat’s participation and contribution was requested by the MFE and was considered as quite relevant by the organizers, especially as relates to the previous IC work in the area of incentives to investment and quality of skills (3-4 April 2018). A Second Meeting of the WB6 MAP Component Contact Points (CCPs) was held on 15 May 2018, in Tirana. The objective of the meeting was to present the results of monitoring on the MAP REA implementation as of mid-April 2018.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE EU DELEGATION ROUNDTABLE – DISCUSSION WITH BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES ON 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

On 27 April 2018, in the context of the adoption of the Albania 2018 Report, the EU Delegation organized a prolific meeting with representatives of the business community in Albania, where the Secretariat also participated and contributed. The Secretariat’s intervention was based on the IC findings.



Picture 15. Participation in the roundtable organised by the EU Delegation with Business Representatives in the framework of 2018 Annual Report (Tirana, 27 April 2018)

CONTRIBUTION TO THE OECD RECONCILIATION MEETING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY (2016-19)

On 3 May 2018, represented by Ms Diana Leka, the Secretariat participated and contributed to the [Session ‘Assessment Reconciliation: Dimension 6: Access to Finance.’](#) Ms Leka highlighted that based on IC work and findings, some of the obstacles of business to financing are related to informality and cost of getting credit.

PARTICIPATION IN CORPORATE INTEGRITY FORUM

On 14 May 2018, the Secretariat participated in the Corporate Integrity Forum, organized by ICC Albania, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Netherlands in Albania. This forum brings together local and international leaders from business, civil

society, government and international organizations to elaborate on multi-stakeholder collaboration as a model to impact responsible business conduct.



Picture 16. Participation in the Corporate Integrity Forum (Tirana, 14 May 2018)

CONTRIBUTE TO THE PUBLIC PRIVATE DIALOGUE FOR RIRA

On 13 September 2018, the Secretariat participated in the event “Open Day in Albania on Public Private Dialogue for the Regional Investment Agenda for the Western Balkans (RIRA),” organized by ICC Albania, as local partner of Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM) in Macedonia and with the support of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). This event was part of a series of events alike organized in all Western Balkans 6 countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. During the event it was discussed about the necessity to enhance the dialogue between public, private and civil society actors on the implementation of the regional investment policies.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL

On 17 October 2018, it was held a meeting of the NEC, chaired by the Albanian Prime Minister, Mr Edi Rama. Agenda of the meeting was “Draft Budget and Fiscal Budget for 2019.” During this meeting, the Prime Minister stressed out the importance of anti-informality measures, tackling some concrete results of this campaign. He informed that a new approach will be developed with more facilitated procedures. In addition, in this meeting it was presented the new fiscal package for 2019. In this meeting, the Secretariat, represented by Head of Secretariat Ms Diana Leka, participated as an observer (comments submitted to the MFE on the fiscal package 2019 are listed in Section XIII of this Report).



Picture 17. Participation in the NEC Meeting (Tirana, 17 October 2018)

PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTATION OF 2019 EU ANNUAL REPORT FOR ALBANIA

On 5 November 2018, the Secretariat participates in the consultation with the economic actors organised by the EU Delegation in the framework of the preparation of Albania 2019 Annual Report.

PARTICIPATION IN THE ALBANIAN TOURISM INVESTMENT SUMMIT

On 27 November 2018, the Secretariat participated in the Albanian Tourism Investment Summit. This Summit brought together key players in the tourism sector to discuss the potentials and challenges of tourism development in Albania, new destinations and perspectives for the development of tourism infrastructure projects.

PARTICIPATION IN THE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING OF RISIALBANIA PROJECT PHASE 2 ON EMPLOYMENT

Head of the Secretariat was invited to participate and contribute as a member (observer) in the steering committee of the Advisory Board of RisiAlbania project, led by the Deputy Minister, Ms Senida Mesi. This is in follow up of the cooperation and work on quality of skills in Albania.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE RCC WORKSHOP – TACKLING INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT IN ALBANIA: CURRENT SITUATION AND THE WAY FORWARD

On 21 December 2018, the Secretariat participated in the RRC Workshop “Tackling Informal Employment in Albania.” The focus of the workshop was presentation of a diagnostic report prepared by the Regional Cooperation Council on the topic of informal economy and informal employment in Albania, which evaluates the extent, nature and drivers of this phenomenon. Key recommendations were discussed collaboratively to create a holistic approach to tackling informal economy and informal employment in the country. Head of Secretariat, Ms Diana Leka presented some IC recommendations (see in Section XVI) regarding the topic, and expressed Secretariat’s readiness to contribute in the future.

XIII. IC DOCUMENTS 2018

Ctrl + click on the document title to download.

January 2018

 [2017 Activity Report \(public use\)](#)

February 2018

 [IC Newsletter 2017](#)

- ✚ Agenda of the IC Meeting XII
- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘On the Functioning of e-Permits Platform’
- ✚ Summary Document ‘On the Functioning of e-Permits Platform’
- ✚ Technical Note ‘On the Functioning of e-Permits Platform’
- ✚ Matrix of Recommendations ‘On the Functioning of e-Permits Platform’
- ✚ Minutes of the IC Meeting XII ‘ On the Functioning of e-Permits Platform’

March 2018

- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘Albania Investment Council, Key Achievements for 2017, Plans for 2018’ – Tbilisi Conference
- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘Albania Investment Council, Effective Partnerships with Key Stakeholders’ – Tbilisi Conference

April 2018

- ✚ Feedback from IC Leaving Members from Business Community, 2016-2017

May 2018

- ✚ Agenda of the Roundtable “Legal Framework on Investments”
- ✚ Summary of Minutes - Roundtable “Legal Framework on Investments”

June 2018

- ✚ Agenda of the IC Meeting XIII
- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘Legal Framework on Investments, Main Debates & Challenges’
- ✚ Summary Document ‘Legal Framework on Investments, Main Debates & Challenges’
- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘Aligning Albanian Investment Legislation with Good International Practices’ by Marc Reichel, IFC

July 2018

- ✚ 6-Month Activity Report 2018
- ✚ Albania Economic Outlook, June 2018
- ✚ 2018 IC Survey
- ✚ Some Models of Investor Grievance Mechanism

September 2018

- ✚ Regional, 2018 IC Survey Findings - Durrës (Alb)
- ✚ Regional, 2018 IC Survey Findings - Gjirokastra (Alb)
- ✚ Regional, 2018 IC Survey Findings - Korça (Alb)
- ✚ Regional, 2018 IC Survey Findings – Vlora (Alb)
- ✚ PPT Presentation, Focus Group Meeting in Tirana – 28 September 2018

October 2018

- ✚ Agenda of the IC Meeting XIV
- ✚ PPT Presentation ‘On the Formalization and Competitiveness in Tourism’
- ✚ Technical Note (Short Version) – Findings and Recommendations
- ✚ Technical Note (Long Version) – On Formalisation and Competiveness in Tourism
- ✚ Matrix of Recommendations
- ✚ Minutes of the Meeting
- ✚ Secretariat Comments to 2019 Fiscal Package – Letter to Minister Ahmetaj

November 2018

- ✚ [Albania Economic Outlook, October 2018](#)

December 2018

- ✚ [Summary Paper “On Legal and Institutional Framework in Tourism”](#)
- ✚ [Albania Economic Outlook, December 2018](#)
- ✚ [Comments related to the RCC Study on Informal Economy and Employment](#)
- ✚ [Summary of 2018 IC Recommendations](#)

XIV. IMPRESSIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

I express my respect and gratitude for the Secretariat's work and contribution on the development of agriculture and rural areas. I would like to propose for the IC to tackle in one of its meetings during 2019, concerns about agro-tourism, environment and agribusiness.

Agim Rrapaj, President of Albania Agricultural Council (KASH), December 2018

We really appreciate sharing with us the IC Meeting XIV materials on the "Formalization and Competitiveness in the Tourism Sector." The Findings and Recommendations of the analysis are very helpful to our project work.

Edlira Muedini, Project Manager, RisiAlbania, 20 November 2018

I thank you for all the work done in the service of tourism, and I hope this will not remain the last initiative in this direction.

Kliton Gërxfhani, Albanian Tour Operators Association, 15 November 2018

Thank you for the invitation to discuss technically the issue (Formalisation in Tourism). I liked the presentation and the preparation methodology.

Nevila Popa, Local Economic Development Expert, USAID Project, 2 October 2018

(participant in the Focus Group Meeting, 28 Sep 2018)

Very interesting survey questions, indeed. I look forward to seeing the results.

Zbulo! Discover Albania, 6 August 2018

(respondent to the 2018 IC Survey)

12-Month timeline

2018
Jan

Appointment of New IC Business Members for 2018

2018
Feb

IC Meeting XII 'Electronic Platform on Construction Permits'

2018
Mar

Participation in the EBRD-IC Supported Conference Tbilisi, Georgia

2018
Apr

Meetings with Leaving IC Members

2018
May

Consultation roundtable on Legal Investment Framework

2018
Jun

IC Meeting XIII 'Legal Framework in Albania'

2018
Jul

2018 IC Survey

2018
Aug

2018 IC Survey

2018
Sep

Regional Consultation Meetings with 65 companies

2018
Oct

IC Meeting XIV 'Informality in Tourism'

2018
Nov

Contribution in Working Group Meetings on UIL

2018
Dec

Contribution in the RCC Workshop on Informal Employment in Albania