



End Term Self Assessment Report

National Action Plan 2018-2020



ALBANIA

Component I

COMMITTEMENT I: Open Government In Order To Increase Transparency Of Government Reporting And Improve Accessibility To Information

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Albania has continued to work with the aim to provide a satisfactory progress with regard to the public availability of accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound budgetary information.

This is a continued work that has been materialized in different programs in the Albanian policies, such as, strategic documents i.e. PFM Strategy, action plans, as OGP Action Plan, IPA annual action documents etc.. The results expected to open government in terms of transparency of government.

The work that has been done during 2018-2022 has been reflected from improved indicators, such as: prepared and published monitoring reports by MoFE, Official Government printings and relevant websites (continuously), third party assessments, e.g. Open Budget Index (biennially). OBI has shows that relevant improvements has occurred and the 2019 OBI for Albania increased: Transparency:55/100, Public Participation:7/100 Budget Oversight:65/100 from the respective assessment for 2017: 50, 52 and 69.

Regarding the current state for transparency and oversight of the budget: the entry point is met since the 2020 budget was published (Executive's budget proposal and the enacted budget) in a timely manner for the general public on the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MoFE) website and in printed form in the Official Gazette and budgetary information is generally accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound. External audit and control are also performed. The crisis context will however require close monitoring of use and impact of funds for measures under the crisis response packages.

Visibility and communication actions which aims to expose the government to the citizen eyes, shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. The upcoming actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The continuation of the membership in OGP and in specific the current priority on fiscal transparency, will continue with the aim to improve transparency and to achieve a fully open government.

COMMITMENT I:	
Open Government in order to Increase Transparency of Government Reporting and Improve Accessibility to Information	
2018-2020	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Finance and Economy
Commitment Description	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>Transparency is one of the eight basic principles of "Good Governance". According to the OECD, budget transparency is defined as "full disclosure of all relevant budget information in time and systematically". Transparency in public finances is a key element of governance, which leads to macroeconomic and fiscal stability, and determines higher rates of economic growth. In addition, it helps to improve the efficiency of public spending, while the increase of non-transparency leads to the reduction of fiscal discipline.</p> <p>The Ministry of Finance and Economy has been focused on the transparency of the budget, as one of its priorities, which was materialized in the 2014-2020 Public Finance Strategy.</p> <p>Lack of budget transparency leads to: lack of availability of required information, lack of public information, reduction of citizens' confidence in how public funds are spent, etc. Problems also arise when there is a lack of publication of the monitoring reports, mid-year report, year-end report, "Citizens Budget", which is a simple language pamphlet that illustrates the main aspects of the annual budget, which should published on time and of course, understandable to citizens.</p> <p>However, despite the measures taken in this context, Albania, according to the "Open Budget Survey 2015" report, is among the countries that had declined in the state budget transparency, ranked first in the region, with a score of 38 points 100 possible. In addition, it is necessary to further advance with the improvement and increase of Budget Transparency.</p> <p>In the first half of 2018, MoFE launched the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the 2014-2020 Public Finance Management Strategy. The MTR's objectives are to identify progress, achievements, challenges and gaps to plan the next agenda and SMART</p>

	<p>approach to PFM reform.</p> <p>The mid-term evaluation report of the PFM strategy contains a brief description of the methodology followed, the progress of each component of the pillar strategy during the years 2014 to the first half of 2018; addressing the recommendations issued by international evaluation reports; setting priorities for each pillar as well as describing a new framework for revision of the strategy.</p> <p>The MoFE, in the framework of Public Finance Management (PFM) activities, fulfilling budget activities/ documents that are criteria and required by the Open Budget Index (OBI) so that the information on the budget is published on time, easily accessible and understandable to the citizens, has undertaken to continue further the progress on Budget Transparency.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>Component 1 aims to provide a more open Government and specifically an Increase Transparency in Government Reporting and Improve Accessibility to Information.</p> <p>The policy objective of this activity is to guarantee a public finance system that promotes transparency, accountability, fiscal discipline and efficiency in the management and use of public resources to improve the quality of service delivery and economic development.</p> <p>The expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of National Government Accounts according to International methodologies (ESA 2010 and GFS 2014) • Coverage of fiscal risks in the Fiscal Risk Statement • Increasing the level of implementation of internal control systems in practice within budgetary institution.
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p><i>First step:</i> Diagnosing the priority measures that can promote and increase Transparency in Government Reporting and Improve Accessibility to Information,</p> <p><i>Second step:</i> Implementing and monitoring these measures,</p> <p><i>Third step:</i> Assessment of the action plan implementation.</p> <p>The above steps are accompanied with several results, so even small progress and small changes, still are positive indications for opening the government. The expected results comprise improved government reporting in terms of quantity and quality of the</p>

	statistics and data that can be provide.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p><u>Transparency and Access to Information</u> Some of the activities impact positively and directly the transparency and access to information. For instance, preparing and publishing a new document, as is Fiscal Risks Statements, it signifies that more information is available for the public on this certain issue.</p> <p><u>Public Accountability</u> The government work in the framework of the OGP is one engagement that prove the increased accountability of the government. As well, standardizing and making more public information, makes government more opened to the citizens eyes so it push them to be more accountable</p> <p><u>Public & Civic Participation</u> Promoting transparency and making more information available for public, it might have push them, not only to be aware, but also to raise their voices when budget hearings session are developed.</p> <p><u>Technology & Innovation</u> During this plan implementation the technological innovation has not been used specifically in order to advance participation, transparency or accountability.</p>			
Additional Information	Public Finance Management Reform (PFM Strategy 2014-2020 & PFM Strategy 2019-2022).			
Completion Level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X	
Description of the results	<p>Transparency of Government Reporting and Improve Accessibility to Information is priority not only in the OGP framework, but also from sectorial programmes priorities, such as PFM reform. During 2019-2020, several public events were organized and CSOs participated. During first half of 2019, CSOs have been invited in the PFM Steering Committee (SC) to provide their feedback for the PFM Annual Monitoring Report 2018, and to discuss on the new strategy 2019-2022 and in July they were asked for their comments on the new PFM Strategy.</p> <p>In this continuation, on July 30, 2019 it was conducted the PFM strategy consultation workshop, and several CSOs participated and</p>			

	<p>provided their comments. In October 2019 it was organised the launch event of revised PFM Strategy 2019-2022. As well CSOs have been invited to attend SC meetings: in April 2020 and in July 2020 two PFM SC were held to approve new PFM monitoring mechanism and to introduce and approve the 2019 PFM monitoring report.</p> <p>For each activity of the action plan OGP 2018-2020, as below is presented the overall performance and the results achieved during 2019 and 2020 from this action plan implementation.</p> <p>1.1 Establish a comprehensive statistical system covering the needs of budgetary and semi-budgetary entities. 1.2 Creating standardized Information. 1.3 Creating alternative methods for gathering information 1.4 Integration of Additional Information on the Treasury System (AGFIS). 1.5 Integration into New Templates for Exchange of Information. 1.6 Compare the results and approve new information.</p> <p><u>Year 2019</u></p> <p>Strengthening systems and capacities to prepare government financial statistics in line with international standards is one of the main focus in order to improve transparency. During 2017, for the first time INSTAT compiled and transmitted Government Finance Statistics (GFS) data according to the requirements of the European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010 transmission program. The inter-institutional Working Group (INSTAT, MoFE and Bank of Albania) finalised the list of General Government Units according to GFSM 2014 and ESA 2010, and successfully developed during 2019 data exchange systems aiming to create a sustainable statistical system for the General Government Units.</p> <p>In line with the 2019 output targets, INSTAT successfully developed data exchange systems, so collaboration at technical level with MoFE and BoA could further contribute to creating a sustainable statistical system for the general government units. The exchange system that was created with the support of the TA from SECO and IMF is being tested for its completeness and will be the basis for preparing government statistics.</p> <p><u>Year 2020</u></p> <p>INSTAT has continued to work on further alignment of government finance statistics with international standards (ESA 2010; GFSM2014) although in very difficult situation due to the pandemic</p>
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of COVID -19. Regular meetings (online / face to face) of the inter-institutional working group are conducted in order to share the best information available and to make experimental estimates using the new IT system. The exchange system that was created with the support of the TA from SECO and IMF is being tested for its completeness and will be the basis for preparing Government Finance Statistics data according to the requirements of the European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010 transmission program.

As a result of the pandemic situation, the SECO project that assists Albania to produce Government Finance Statistics is postponed until December 2021.

1.7 Drafting a detailed statement of fiscal risks and inclusion in the budget documentation

Year 2019

Good progress was made in financial oversight and fiscal risk management. The 2019 Annual Budget Law was accompanied with an enhanced Fiscal Risk Statement, which includes also the disclosure of contingent liabilities related to the final court decisions, risks associated with SOEs and some PPP contracts. The performance monitoring over concessions/PPP contracts with budgetary support has been intensified, not only monitoring the financial performance but also the performance indicators planned/actual for each concession/PPP contract. By the end of 2019 an enhanced Fiscal Risk Statement was presented with the Annual Budgeted Law, accompanying documents where more fiscal risks are disclosed and monitored. In particular, the Fiscal

Risk Unit has been working on:

- ✓ Enhancing the disclosure of the contingent liabilities related to the final decisions issued by the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, the International Court of Arbitration and final administrative court decisions issued in Albania;
- ✓ Expanding the monitoring and analysis of the main SOEs. FRU periodically monitors and prepares on a quarterly basis the analyses of the main SOEs. This monitoring is primarily focused on the energy sector's financial and non-financial performance analysis. A database with financial and nonfinancial indicators for water supply sector's performance has been created and the Unit has been closely assisted by WB's TA to work with the water sector to enrich the dataset. The establishment of the sector databases will further strengthen the Unit's capability to perform trend analysis for the sectors and will enable prospective analysis in the future;

	<p>✓ The performance monitoring over concessions/PPP contracts with budgetary support has been intensified, not only monitoring the financial performance but also the performance indicators planned/actual for each concession/PPP contract. Starting from 2019, monitoring and reporting process for concession/PPP was institutionalized through the inclusion of the calendar and standards for their reporting in Supplementary Instruction No.1, dated 17.01.2019 "On the implementation of the 2019 budget". This monitoring is performed on a monthly basis. Monitoring of PPP contracts with and without budgetary impact is included in the Preliminary Report on Concessions and PPPs monitoring, which accompanies FRS.</p> <p><u>Year 2020</u></p> <p>The progress achieved in 2019 is maintained and the fiscal risk report was integrated in the annual budget document. In 2020, MoFE introduced instruction No. 37 date 06.10.2020 which provides all legal backing for registration, consolidation and publication of information on expenditures arrears at General Government Level. The benefits of such a coordinated and consolidated way are a consolidated view on arrears at all levels and sources, timeliness and accuracy of information. The consolidated information is published in Ministry of Finance website in the form of a consolidated table and it also included in the fiscal risks content of the annual budget document.</p> <p>1.8 Monitor public institutions regarding the implementation of FMC requirements.</p> <p>1.9 Implementation of FMC funds in public sector entities.</p> <p><u>Year 2019</u></p> <p>The DHFMC has implemented all activities/actions aimed to achieve the targets for 2019. It has started the preparation of the Policy Paper on Further Development of PIFC in Albania for the period 2021–2022 and drafted an instruction ‘On the delegation of tasks of employees in public sector units’, both contributing towards having a stronger financial management system and internal control environment. The purpose of the Policy Paper is to implement PIFC across the entire public sector and cover its three core principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. decentralised managerial accountability underpinned by financial management and control (FMC) systems,2. functionally independent internal audit (IA) and;
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	<p>3. centralised harmonisation of methodologies and standards relating to FMC and IA.</p> <p>Regarding the draft instruction ‘On the delegation of tasks of employees in public sector units’, the main purpose is to define the rules and procedures to be followed in the process of delegating tasks. The DHFMC has drafted as planned the methodology of internal control quality review aiming to have a functional internal control system in place. The methodology will be used to analyse and evaluate in detail the state of play of the internal control system of public sector units and to issue recommendations for addressing identified deficiencies. It is expected that the methodology will be approved by the third quarter of 2020.</p> <p>All activities/actions aimed to achieve the targets set for 2019 to strengthen the PFIC monitoring system were implemented. Firstly, the Minister of Finance and Economy approved the amendments to the methodology for performance monitoring of internal control systems in Public Units. The reason for the revision was to improve some of the existing performance indicators used as the basis for evaluation of the BIs and to add indicators aiming to monitor the performance of the areas considered as highly risky, such as procurement and arrears.</p> <p>In addition, the self-assessment questionnaires for financial management and control and for internal audit were revised as well. Secondly, the content and the outline of the annual report on the functioning of the PIFC system are of a better quality, because the revised methodology for performance monitoring of BIs helped to assess in a better way the state of play of the internal control system. As a consequence the ranking of public units based on performance was more meaningful. Thirdly, during 2019 internal control system issues were discussed extensively during the PIFC Board meetings.</p> <p><u>Year 2020</u></p> <p>Despite the situation created by Covid-19, the DHFMC, has continued the work for the realization of the objectives set in order to implement the system of financial management and control in public units.</p> <p>During 2020, as mentioned also during 2019, the instruction on the delegation of rights and duties to the units of general government was approved.</p>
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	<p>Also, the commitment for the finalization with approval of the Policy Document for the development of internal control in the public sector has continued and a draft Methodology for the Evaluation of the Quality of the Internal Control System in Public Units has been sent for approval.</p> <p>In order to assess the reliability of the reports of the general government units on the functioning of the internal control system, 5 institutions were monitored for which an official letter was prepared with the relevant findings and recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>As one of the main tasks of the DHMFC, the assessment of the state of the internal control system in the general government units for 2019 has been carried out, where the internal control system is presented as partially effective.</p> <p>In cooperation with the Local Finance Project, it became possible to hold awareness meetings with managers of 8 local self-government units on the rigorous implementation of the requirements of the law on financial management and control.</p> <p>During this period, the DHFMC is engaged in the implementation of several activities in the framework of providing technical assistance to selected pilot institutions, to create appropriate conditions for the implementation of an effective system of internal control.</p> <p>In order to create a complete program in the service of capacity building of public units' employees in the field of internal control, the training curricula for Financial Management and Control are being reviewed which will be approved at the meeting of the PIFC Board at the end of the year</p>		
Next steps	Even though the planned activities have been implemented and completed, continuous efforts are being undertaken in order to improve more the transparency in terms of the quality and simplification of the information that is published. Therefore, Fiscal Transparency is a commitment that is incorporated in the New OGP Action Plan for 2020-2022, which is focused on two specific objectives, such as: Budget Transparency and Transparency on the Public Revenue.		
Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable	Start Date:	End Date:	Completion level

Compilation of National Government Accounts according to International methodologies (ESA 2010 and GFS 2014)		2018	2020	Substantial
Coverage of fiscal risks in the Fiscal Risk Statement		2018	2020	Completed
Increasing the level of implementation of internal control systems in practice within budgetary institution		2018	2020	Completed
Contact Information				
Lead implementing agency		Ministry of Finance and Economy,		
Persons responsible person from implementing agency				
Title, Department		Directorate for Managing the Reforms in Public Finance		
Email and Phone				
Other Actors Involved	Government, Ministries, Department/ Agency	The Prime Minister's Office, INSTAT.		
	CSOs, private sector, multilaterals, working groups	AIS (Albanian Institute of Science) a member of the Coalition for Open Government Partnership (OGP) for Albania. Business community members, SOROS.		
Additional Information				

Component II

COMMITTEMENT II: Open Governance to Modernize Public Services and E-Gov

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Albania has pursued a groundbreaking reform that reinvents the way public administration delivers services to its citizens. The reform relies heavily on innovation and the use of information technology (IT) to improve standards, procedures, and the organization of service delivery. The objective of the public service delivery reform was to create an administration that focused primarily on the needs of citizens, with particular attention to be paid to addressing accessibility needs of marginalized groups.

In this regard, Albania has embarked on a path of no return towards the provision of online public services and the complete digitalization of the administration's work processes. Found in a long wave of digitalization process, Albania is currently undergoing one of the most important transformation processes in its history of public services digitalization. To a greater and greater extent, citizens will interact with public institutions only online. The government is determined to turn institutions into full service to citizens and has completely focused its attention on transforming physical counters into online ones.

e-Albania, which is the national e-Gov portal, acts as a front-end point for government institutions to deliver their services, thus operating as a one stop single access point to citizens 24/7. The portal, which currently provides more than 750 e-services, is connected to the Government Interoperability Platform that is the underlying and core architecture allowing the interaction between 53 electronic systems of public institutions.

Nowadays, a large range of public services that up to yesterday were only offered through traditional means, requiring representation to the respective offices, paper application, waiting in line, filling in forms, etc., are now taken electronically, with a counter over the mobile, smartphone or home computer. In this sense, all technological accomplishments behind it meet the goal of providing public services that consist in: simplification of procedures, electronic applications for public services, security, speed and functionality quicker than ever and most importantly with access 24/7 regardless of the citizen/business location.

Following the reform in administrative services and especially the deregulation process, all public services have been reviewed in detail in order to reduce the number of accompanying documents citizens need to provide to obtain a public service, and digitalize services in order to diversify their providing channels, as well as facilitate their obtainment.

From January 1, 2020, a new process for public services has begun, that of providing 472 public service applications to citizens and businesses exclusively online. Citizens and businesses apply only online through the e-Albania platform and it is the public administration employees who are required to provide all the associated state documents. All governmental data and documents are now being used and reused within the administration, relieving citizens of the burden of collecting them physically in hard-copy at the state counters.

As of January 1, all state documents that were previously required to be gathered by citizens are not being required to them anymore. It is the civic employees who secure these documents on behalf of the citizen, either by downloading their e-sealed version from the e-Albania platform or by requesting them to the providing institution through a dedicated electronic system we developed only for this purpose. By the end of 2020, more than 1200 public services or 95% of all public service applications will be provided on e-Albania portal.

The Albanian government is committed to work for a better, qualitative, open and transparent governance. In fact, with increasing public demands for a transparent and accountable government and the ongoing efforts of the Government of the Republic of Albania to ensure a better and more open communication with citizens and civil society, NAIS, also within this Global Initiative, during 2018 – 2019 implemented the opendata.gov.al portal, which through its three main modules serves as an information window for the progress of the OGP project for Albania, as a consultation place among citizens and decision-making institutions in Albania, and as well as a unique source of publication of open government data. The Open Data portal is a reality in Albania and until now the portal provides open data in the fields of health, treasury, budget, customs, education, business and much more.

COMMITMENT II:	
Open Government To Modernize Public Services And E-Gov. Governance	
2018-2020	
Lead implementing agency/actor	National Agency Of Information Society (NAIS)
Commitment Description	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>The Albanian Government has supported the values promoted by a multilateral initiative, such as the Open Government Partnership which is one of the most important tools to promote government transparency globally, to increase civic participation in public life, and to use new technologies to improve administrative efficiency and combat corruption.</p> <p>It's a well-known fact that the lack of transparency encourages corruption and inefficiencies. Approach to Open Data Government presents a radical change from a closed government culture towards a government driven by transparency.</p> <p>Efficient and effective public service delivery models are essential to not only meet the needs of citizens, but also to weaken the attractiveness of and opportunities for corruption. Accessing public services can impose significant administrative burdens on citizens and businesses if it requires them to personally navigate opaque, time consuming and complex bureaucratic systems with unclear, non-standardized, application requirements and processes.</p> <p>When citizens and businesses rely on fact-to-face contact with administration officials amidst such complexities in an opaque system establishes the incentives and opportunities to increase corruption risk in public service delivery. Furthermore, the inefficiencies of these convoluted service delivery models squander government resources that could be otherwise channeled into public services.</p> <p>Developing a service delivery model that utilizes technology and online platforms to streamline bureaucracy in a transparent and standardized way the government of Albania has worked to increase the accessibility and accountability of public service delivery and build public trust in government services, but the effectiveness of this model will depend on the comprehensiveness of the transformation.</p>

What is the commitment?	<p>The policy objective of this activity is the development of a public administration that provides high quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient manner, through the use of electronic services and open government data.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p><i>Executive summary on the main results which have been contributed to solving the identified problem</i></p> <p>Albania, on its way to the information society, has made considerable progress. Our main investments have gone to centralized infrastructures which have enabled us to have product and service standardization, lower maintenance costs, increase the quality of our products and services as quality assurance processes are performed.</p> <p>Such an example is the Governmental Interoperability Platform, the basic architecture that enables the exchange of real-time data in a secure and reliable form as a necessary step to simplify services that the state offers to citizens, businesses and public administration, as well as the reduction of the number of documents required from citizens or business to obtain public services. We were the first in the region to integrate this kind of platform.</p> <p>Another example is the unique e-governmental portal, called e-Albania, in order to provide quality and fast e-services to the citizen and business. The citizens now remember only one portal link for finding public services online and find things easier and quicker, due to using one single interface.</p> <p>On the other hand, we have also implemented multifunctional and centralized systems where each institution has its own module customized to their specific needs. Legacy systems have been upgraded in the past years and a lot of others have been newly developed. We have invested in digitalizing physical archives, improving physical and cloud infrastructures, developing dedicated platforms for circulating legally valid documents, equipping the relevant actors with an electronic seal or signature, etc.</p> <p>The Government of Albania has pursued a groundbreaking reform that reinvents the way public administration delivers services to its citizens. The reform relies heavily on innovation and the use of information technology (IT) to improve standards, procedures, and the organization of service delivery. The objective of the public service delivery reform was to create an administration that focused primarily on the needs of citizens, with particular attention to be paid to addressing accessibility needs of marginalized groups.</p> <p>In this regard, Albania has embarked on a path of no return towards the</p>

provision of online public services and the complete digitalization of the administration's work processes. Found in a long wave of digitalization process, Albania is currently undergoing one of the most important transformation processes in its history of public services digitalization. To a greater and greater extent, citizens will interact with public institutions only online. The government is determined to turn institutions into full service to citizens and has completely focused its attention on transforming physical counters into online ones.

e-Albania, which is the national e-Gov portal, acts as a front-end point for government institutions to deliver their services, thus operating as a one stop single access point to citizens 24/7. The portal, which currently provides more than 750 e-services, is connected to the Government Interoperability Platform that is the underlying and core architecture allowing the interaction between 53 electronic systems of public institutions.

From January 1, 2020, a new process for public services has begun, that of providing 472 public service applications to citizens and businesses exclusively online. Citizens and businesses apply only online through the e-Albania platform and it is the public administration employees who are required to provide all the associated state documents. All governmental data and documents are now being used and reused within the administration, relieving citizens of the burden of collecting them physically in hard-copy at the state counters.

As of January 1, all state documents that were previously required to be gathered by citizens are not being required to them anymore. It is the civic employees who secure these documents on behalf of the citizen, either by downloading their e-sealed version from the e-Albania platform or by requesting them to the providing institution through a dedicated electronic system we developed only for this purpose. By the end of 2020, more than 1200 public services or 95% of all public service applications will be provided on e-Albania portal.

The Albanian government is committed to work for a better, qualitative, open and transparent governance. In fact, with increasing public demands for a transparent and accountable government and the ongoing efforts of the Government of the Republic of Albania to ensure a better and more open communication with citizens and civil society, NAIS, also within this Global Initiative, during 2018 – 2019 implemented the opendata.gov.al portal, which through its three main modules serves as an information window for the progress of the OGP project for Albania, as a consultation place among citizens and decision-making institutions in Albania, and as well as a unique source of publication of open government data. The Open Data portal is a reality in Albania and until now the portal provides open data in the fields of health, treasury, budget, customs, education, business

	and much more.
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p><u>Transparency and Access to Information</u></p> <p>The expansion of the e-Albania portal has expand citizens' online electronic access to applications to public services provided by the public administration. Enabling the right to information is important in preventing corruption, as well as it aims to make more information available, ensure equal access to information in all sectors of the community and guarantee adequate protection for the privacy of individuals. Enabling every citizen to get acquainted with the information of public services through the e-Albania portal, guaranteed 24/7 at any time.</p> <p>The e-Albania portal enables citizens to access online applications for services provided by the public administration acting as the digital gateway to facilitate service providers and beneficiaries' access to information, electronic procedures and assistance for obtaining services. The e-Albania portal is designed with user-friendliness firmly in mind, allowing anyone, regardless of their level of digital literacy, to access online services through an adaptable and intuitive interface.</p> <p>As the Open Data Portal centralizes publically available data in one place it increases the ease and simplicity for those wanting to access data and ensures accessibility of information to the public. As data on the Open Data Portal is published in a format that is easily searchable and can be downloaded to various formats it can be easily and effectively accessed by the widest range of users.</p> <p>Because open data allows users to compare and combine the connections among different datasets, tracing data across a number of programs and sectors users can identify if are any gaps or misleading information and provide subsequent feedback to the responsible institution therein promoting a system of accountability towards relevant and reliably accurate information.</p> <p>As the portal prioritizes transparency and open data, the Open Data Portal enables Albanians' legal right to information and through this transparency and improved information access will help increase trust in the government.</p> <p><u>Public Accountability</u></p> <p>The e-Albania portal enables citizens and businesses to provide feedback and comments regarding public services. The portal also establishes traceability for actions service delivery actions as after completing the online application, the citizen is equipped with a unique number that enables them to track the status of their application, making the public institutions accountable for the processing of the application. Electronic forms of feedback also enable traceability and promote the ability to track changes in perceptions over time, promoting greater accountability</p>

of public institutions to address citizens' feedback and concerns.

To the other hand, Open data, if timely, comprehensive, accessible, comparable and interoperable, has the capacity to provide citizens with the opportunity to better understand what officials and politicians are doing and what government actions and processes are taking place that as a result incentivizes public institutions to operate in an ethical and efficient manner.

Ensuring that the data uploaded to the Open Data portal is done so in an interoperable, follows agreed upon standards, and is comparable allows users to compare and combine different datasets. Increasing number of data sets accessible through open data portal has a multiplier effect whereby because open data allows users to compare and combine the connections among different datasets, tracing data across a number of programs and sectors users can identify if are any gaps or misleading information and provide subsequent feedback to the responsible institution therein promoting a system of accountability towards relevant and reliably accurate information and responsible decision making.

Open data reinforces governments' obligation to respect the rule of law, and provides a transparent and accountable foundation to improve decision-making and enhance the provision of public services.

Public & Civic Participation

The increasing number of electronic services in e-Albania portal has enabled more citizens to provide feedback on more public services. With their privacy protected, citizens can feel safe in providing honest feedback and recommendation. Such feedback provides government with greater insights into how e-government services can be improved further and will help to build a citizen-centric culture to public service delivery. This wide-range community process builds trust and enables opportunities for public participation towards the improvement of services.

The government will thus have holistic and timely information into the citizens or businesses obtaining public services. This implies that there will be complete transparency as to what government services or benefits the citizens or businesses obtain based on their unique identification and ensuring interoperability between all government institutions.

Technology & Innovation

Through technology and innovation, the e-Albania portal enables fundamental improvements to public service delivery by decreasing the number of accompanying documents required from citizens / businesses; as well as re-engineering the entire process of their delivery, in order to reduce the steps needed to obtain the service, digitalization of internal

	<p>processes while reducing bureaucracy, costs and time for citizens, and makes use of open data technologies and online capacities as the fundamental mechanisms to achieve all of its objectives.</p> <p>Through the e-Albania portal citizens and businesses have to only access one resource for all public service delivery applications, as opposed to having to seek out several institutions. Through the online portal citizens and businesses can access real-time information, as well as express their opinion regardless of location or time, thus having better opportunities for their influence in decision-making, increasing transparency and giving of the public account by the relevant institutions.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Open data provides the opportunity for information sharing and accountability in real time and enables a participatory approach to knowledge building and sharing. Open data presents opportunities to provide innovative, evidence-based policy solutions and support economic benefits and social development for all members of society.</p> <p>The use of an online electronic platform also removes the need for human interaction in government-citizen service delivery and as such reduces opportunities for corruption and provides protection of privacy for citizens encouraging them to use the resources more freely and provide honest feedback.</p>			
Additional information	This commitment co-aligns with the Cross-Cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy 2015-2020.			
Completion Level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
				X
Description of the results	See under ‘milestone results’			
Next Steps	The 2020-2022 Action Plan will continue the work of the 2018-2020 action plan.			
Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable	Milestone results	Start date	End date	Completion Level
2.1.1. Developing the information section on the Open	The National OGP website http://ogp.gov.al/en is developed as an important commitment to be accomplished and contain information about:	2018	2020	Completed

Government Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OGP initiative in Albania, its mission and strategy; • Legislation and OGP statements; • Reports on previous Action Plans; • Activities undertaken during the years; • Events regarding the involvement of civil society; • Links to open data and public consultation portals; • Online repository which collect, publish, and document a repository on the domestic OGP website/webpage in line with IRM guidance. The repository include information about OGP processes and commitment completion, including evidence of the completion. 			
2.1.2. Development of the "Open Data" section for transparency on the activity of public institutions	<p>The national open data portal http://opendata.gov.al is developed as an important commitment to increase accessibility of citizens and transparency of public institutions on open data.</p> <p>The implementation of the Open Data Portal has been accompanied by a series of steps and important activities for identifying important data that should be part of the portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and maintain an inventory of data held / generated by the government and analyze which of the data are considered open based on the Law no. 119/2014 dated 18.09.2014 "On the right to information"; • Recognize the integrity of the data that public institutions keep / generate; • Prioritize the data to be included on the portal starting from the main data according to three 	2018	2020	Completed

	subgroups based on the best international practice and continuing with other valuable data that have high impact for society.			
2.1.3. Identification and collection of data in the appropriate format from the public administration institutions	<p>The open government data are identified by all the public entities that are publishing their specific data on the portal. The identification is based following the upcoming laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law no. 119/2014, "On the Right to Information"; • Law no. 146/2014 dated 30.10.2014 "Public notification and consulting"; • Decision No. 147, dated 18.02.2015, "On the Approval of the Policy Document for the Implementation of Public Open Data and the Creation of the Open Data Portal"; • Decision of the Council of Ministers, No. 16, dated 04.01.2012, "On the right of the public to have environmental information"; • Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 703, dated 29.10.2014 "On the National Agency of Information Society"; • Law no. 10325, dated 23.09.2010 "On the Basis of State Data"; • Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 961, dated 24.11.2010 "On the definition of the Coordinating Regulatory Authority of the State Data Base"; • Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 945, dated 02.11.2012 "On the adoption of the regulation" Administration of the State Data Base "; • Decision of the Council of 	2018	2020	Completed

	<p>Ministers, no. 734, dated 28.08.2013 "On the establishment of a unique system for the registration, authentication and identification of users in receiving public services from electronic systems";</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 710, dated 21.08.2013 "On the establishment and operation of information retention systems, continuity of work and service level agreements". <p>The identification of the data that public institutions gather, process and publish is the first important step. Identification of these data, based on the fact that there is one a large number of institutions involved, poses a no small challenge.</p> <p>The list of institutions that are publishing data on the open data portal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport 2. Ministry of Health and Social Protection 3. Ministry of Finance and Economy 4. Ministry of Internal Affairs 5. Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs 6. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development 7. Ministry of Defense 8. Ministry of Tourism and Environment 9. National Agency of Information Society 10. General Directorate of Road Transport Services 11. National Business Center 12. State Police 			
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	13. Institute of Cultural Monuments 14. The National Agency of Natural Resources 15. Albanian Road Authority 16. The National Diaspora Agency 17. Archeological Service Agency 18. State Export Control Authority 19. Inter-Institutional Maritime Operations Center 20. Agency for Legalization, Urbanization and Integration of Informal Zones / Buildings			
2.1.4. Integration of data into the portal	<p>Until now, the portal provides more than 100 datasets in the fields of health, treasury, budget, customs, education, business and much more, and NAIS is constantly working on the exposure of other data.</p> <p>The existing Government Gateway, established by NAIS, is a major technical support to enable communication among all institutions to maximize the automation of the government data disclosure process. A lot of the open data published on the Open Data portal are automatically taken from the electronic systems of state institutions, through dedicated web-services that expose the data to the portal.</p> <p>Based on the Law no. 119/2014, "On the Right to Information" and in accordance with the transparency program adopted for any public authority, the latter prepare in advance, in easily understandable and accessible formats, and made publicly available on their website the following categories of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Economy and finance 	2018	2020	Completed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and social protection • Education, culture and sport • Infrastructure and energy • Environment • Agriculture and food products • Population • Transport • Government and public sector • Business • Public security • European Integration • e-Albania 			
2.2.1. Implementing new electronic services on the e- Albania portal	<p>e-Albania, which is the national e-Gov portal, acts as a front-end point for government institutions to deliver their services, thus operating as a one stop single access point to citizens 24/7. The portal, currently provides 760 e-services. A major part of the services offered on the portal are 100% re-engineered hence offering a completely paperless service.</p> <p>From January 1, 2020, a new process for public services began, that providing 472 public service applications to citizens and businesses exclusively online. Also, from June 30, 2020 more than 395 other services are being offered through e-Albania portal. Citizens and businesses apply only online through the e-Albania platform and it is the public administration employees who are required to provide all the associated state documents. All governmental data and documents are now being used and reused within the administration, relieving citizens of the burden of collecting them physically in hard-copy at the state counters.</p> <p>As of January 1, all state documents that were previously required to be gathered by citizens are not being required to them anymore. It is the civic employees who secure these documents on behalf of</p>	2018	2020	Completed

	<p>the citizen, either by downloading their e-sealed version from the e-Albania platform or by requesting them to the providing institution through a dedicated electronic system we developed only for this purpose.</p> <p>Following this approach, all e-services whose applications are only available online from January 1 have been completely changed in their format by dividing the list of associated documents into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The left-side documents which are simply listed but are not the responsibility of the citizen to provide • The right-side documents which include only self-declarations and private documents and should be provided by the citizen himself. <p>A dedicated system (e-Signed Documents Circulation System) has been set up for the interaction of all institutions, with the aim of exchanging all enclosed documents of the citizen's file in electronic form, paperless and bearing electronic signature. This reduces the burden on citizens and businesses in institutions and the only documents they need to upload are self-declarations and documents that they receive from private entities.</p> <p>Through this system, employees request the documents needed by institutions that generate them, and the latter process the request for said document. After being electronically signed by the institution's head, the document is sent back through the system to the employee who made the request. In the end, the public administration official completes the applicant's file with administrative documents issued by state institutions, and then provides the citizen with the</p>			
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	<p>requested public service.</p> <p>2700 civic employees working in counters have been trained during the last few months, on how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist citizens who will come at the counters, to apply online on e-Albania. • provide the enclosed documents generated by the state by receiving them through the Electronic Signature Distribution System. <p>In order to reduce as much as possible the bureaucracies associated to public services, during the past months, they underwent a deregulation process with the aim of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the number of associated documents required to citizens/businesses; • Re-engineering the whole process of their provision, in order to reduce processing steps, digitalize internal processes thus reducing bureaucracies, costs and time for citizens. <p>In order for the government as transparent as possible, after completing the online application, the citizen is equipped with an unique number that enables him to track the status of his application. He has also the option to upload additional documents through his unique application number if needed or requested later by the institution.</p> <p>As for short-term goals, NAIS, in collaboration with all public institutions have developed an action plan for 2020 regarding the online-only public service applications, which is divided into three phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first phase (January 1st) marked 			
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	<p>only the first step of transitioning 472 applications of public services to online-only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The second phase (in process) marked the second phase with 395 public service applications to online-only and • The third phase will be in December 2020, when we will have another 394 service applications online-only, which in total make up over 90% of all public services. <p>The number of registered users has also increased drastically. Currently, the total number of registered users on the e-Albania governmental portal is more than 1,690,000. During January – October 674,661 new users were registered (compared to 237,508 in the same period one year ago).</p> <p>There are over 1,900,000 uses of electronic services each month on the e-Albania portal (average data of 2020). Over 19.7 million uses of electronic services were registered during January – October 2020, compared to the same period for 2019.</p>			
2.2.2. Data Exposures to the Government Interaction Platform	<p>The portal, is connected to the Government Interoperability Platform that is the underlying and core architecture allowing the interaction between 53 electronic systems of public institutions.</p> <p>The Government Interoperability Platform enables 63% of the application forms are pre-filled automatically by the interaction and exchange of data between these registers in real time.</p> <p>In 2013, only six electronic systems were connected to GG, while in 2020</p>	2018	2020	Completed

	<p>this number is 9 times higher than in 2013. This connection enables real time communication and data exchange between different electronic systems of institutions by creating the possibility of providing more electronic services for citizens, businesses and the government employees itself.</p> <p>The no. of transactions carried out in GG (52 million) in 2018 was 76 times greater than the number of transactions in 2013, and more than double the total no. of the previous year's transactions. The no. of transactions carried out in 2020 (133 million) is 194 times greater than the no. of transactions in 2013.</p>			
Contact information				
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Marseda Prifti		
Title, Department		Department of e-Gov Relations with Public Institutions		
Email and Phone		marseda.prifti@akshi.gov.al		
Other Actors Involved	State actors involved	<p><i>Other government agencies involved:</i> Line Ministries and their dependent institutions, local government, independent institutions</p> <p><i>Non-governmental agencies involved:</i> Citizens/businesses/public administration employees</p>		

Component III

COMMITTEMENT III: Open Governance For “Better Regulation”

III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public administration reform in Albania is an important and challenging process, closely associated with the country's path towards the European Union and at the same time, it is one of the main priorities of the Government of Albania, as a key instrument for providing high-quality services to the public.

The improvement of the administration's capacities is one of the key factors for a successful integration process. The administration should be prepared for the integration process, and especially for the phase after the opening of accession negotiations, the work, the bilateral dialogue, the adoption of our legislation to *acquis* and everything else that awaits us in this important process.

The quality of the public administration is an important topic for us all, as the citizens own the right to have a well-functioning and effective administration, which follows the laws and rules, protects public goods, offers qualitative services and is accountable by being transparent and accessible. The public administration is the basis on which all reforms undertaken by the government are implemented, hence the focus continues to be the establishment of efficient structures, raising the capacities of the public servants and improving their performance, by orienting the administration towards services and the fulfilment of the citizens' needs and requirements.

In terms of improving the *policy-making system and the quality of legislation*, Albania has taken the necessary steps to implement the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), a system that ensures an increase in the quality of the policy development process based on the implementation of more in-depth analysis of legal acts before their approval. The Impact Assessment, which is already mandatory, has also enabled increased transparency and improved the quality of drafting the legislation. In addition to the policy-making process by the Government, the Regulatory Impact Assessment, by now has begun to be integrated into the legislative process in Parliament as well, and the process is conducted to all draft laws, which meet the criteria to undergo the RIA process.

In the framework of strengthening the systemic approach and the *integrated governance system*, Albania has already a functioning Government's Systemic Platform, which aims to improve the coordination of policies/strategies, through the Integrated Planning System Information System (*IPSIS*), public finances, through the Albanian Financial Management Information System (*AFMIS*) and foreign aid, through the External Assistance Management Information System (*EAMIS*). The implementation of these three systems directly supports the modernization of the public administration and creates the conditions for a performance-oriented approach, efficient policy planning, in line with budget programs, as well as reporting and monitoring results and performance for key indicators. For both IPSIS and AFMIS, piloting has already started in 3 central institutions, while for EAMIS, data entry and testing has started with donors.

In order to raise the *coordination of the public initiatives* and to ensure the harmonization of interventions in different sectors, to guarantee the proper political attention and leadership in some of the key sectors, Integrated Policy Management Groups (*IPMG*) and Sectoral Steering Committees (*SSC*) have been established. These structures function systematically based on a well-defined regulatory framework and, among other things, they play a key role in the coordination and decision making process on a high political level, for reforms in the relevant sector, in supporting planning, programming and monitoring development assistance for the sectors involved. Also this mechanism on the Good Governance play the role of the Multi Stakeholder Forum on the Open Government Partnership **which is permanent mechanism for participatory and evidence approach also with civil society offering in this approach more agility and flexibility as a working mechanism and open dialogue with CSOs.** The IPMG/MSF coordinate policies and monitor implementation covering measures related to civil society advancement, decentralization and local governance, public administration reform, service delivery public, transparency & anti-corruption, statistics, e-government and digitalization. It will also coordinate with civil society all measures that will be planned in the Action Plan 2020-2022, enabling consultations in periodic stages.

Positive developments have been made in terms of completing the legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure public participation in *public policies consultation*. For four years now, the main strategic documents of the Albanian government have been subject to a public consultation process, which has had a wide impact since the beginning of its implementation. There is already a network of public consultation coordinators, set up in each line ministry and work has begun on preparing operational guidelines for line ministries to carry out the public consultation process and the operation of the public consultation e-register, as a significant step towards raising the standard of legislative drafting, making this process transparent and comprehensive. Attention has also been focused on the local level with the training of officials in municipalities.

COMMITMENT III: Open Governance for “Better Regulation” 2018-2020	
Lead implementing agency/actor	Department for Development and Good Governance, Prime Minister’s Office
Commitment Description	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>Policy and strategy development is based on the Integrated Planning System (SPI). IPS is the national decision-making key system for defining strategic directions and resource allocation (the World Bank refers to the Albanian SPI as one of the best practices in the region).</p> <p>The IPS's main goal is to draft a strategic, integrated, structural and accountable plan for Albania, including harmonizing the adaptation of existing planning and monitoring systems within the new system and reorganizing structures under the new system. IPS aims to avoid drafting ad hoc policies and strategies, avoid overlapping, and ensure compliance with financial planning processes.</p> <p>The IPS institutional framework is further consolidated with the restructuring of the Prime Minister's Institution and the strengthening of the monitoring and strategic planning capacities in this institution through the establishment of the Development and Good Governance Policy Unit at the Department of Development and Good Governance and the Regulatory Acts Programming Unit at the Regulatory and Compliance Department.</p> <p>Information systems are being set up for different components of SPI. Since 2007, the Medium Term Budgeting System (MTBP) is functioning for all line ministries, while the Government Financial Information System (AFMIS), the Foreign Assistance Management Information System (EAMIS) and the Information System for the Integrated Planning System (IPSIS). Regarding the legislative process and the quality of the legislation, there are efforts to improve the analysis, plan the measures and their fulfilment.</p> <p>In general, the process of drafting the legislation is accompanied by insufficient transparency and lack of stakeholder consultation. In 2014, the Law on Public Consultation of Political and Legislative Acts was adopted, as well as a new law on the right of information, for which the necessary measures for full and qualitative implementation should be taken. In few cases there have been genuine ex ante and ex post assessments of the consequences of legislation.</p> <p>Challenges:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidating the framework of the Integrated Planning System remains a challenge. Moreover, it is necessary to consolidate the capacity of the new structures related to the functioning as a whole of the entire system mechanisms. Increasing system efficiency needs to be addressed through its consolidation. • Establishing information systems for IPS components requires a clear implementation of business core processes related to policy, budget, and investment planning. On the other hand, the capacity building of the institutions involved is necessary. <p>In terms of improving the regulatory system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies aim at strengthening the system of integrated planning, policy and legislation monitoring, reporting and evaluation, which transforms government priorities into concrete actions; increasing the transparency of government's strategic documents and monitoring them; enhancing the capacity of ministries to develop good policies and legislation in line with the acquis. • Policies in this sector will also aim at increasing efficiency in strategic planning and monitoring the performance of implemented policies; • Establishment of information systems for public policy and public finance planning systems; • Capacity building and improvement of horizontal coordination and cooperation between ministries, as well as within line ministries; as well as the establishment of mechanisms for controlling the effectiveness of legislation.
What is the commitment?	<p>The policy objective of this activity is the development of a public administration that provides high quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient manner, through the use of modern technologies and innovative services, and complies with European integration requirements through impartial, professional and accountable civil servants, part of the efficient structures. A transparent policy-making, inclusive, policy-making system that ensures alignment with the acquis.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p><i>Executive summary on the main results which have been contributed to solving the identified problem</i></p> <p>Public administration reform in Albania is an important and challenging process, closely associated with the country's path towards the European Union and at the same time, it is one of the main priorities of the Government of Albania, as a key instrument for providing high-quality services to the public.</p> <p>The improvement of the administration's capacities is one of the key factors for a successful integration process. The administration should be prepared for the integration process, and especially for the phase after the opening of accession negotiations, the work, the bilateral dialogue, the adoption of our legislation to acquis and everything else that awaits us in this important process.</p>

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and open dialogue with CSOs. The IPMG/MSF coordinate policies and monitor implementation covering measures related to civil society advancement, decentralization and local governance, public administration reform, service delivery public, transparency & anti-corruption, statistics, e-government and digitalization. It will also coordinate with civil society all measures that will be planned in the Action Plan 2020-2022, enabling consultations in periodic stages.

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Result oriented approach on the priority measures

(i) After the reorganization of the new government, Albanian authorities have clarified the formal status of the coordination and management structures for PAR, both at the political and administrative levels.

- **Thus, the Deputy Prime Minister provides overall political leadership for the PAR political process and on the technical level the Department of Development and Good Governance within the PMO, which serves as the Technical Secretariat,** which ensure the technical management and efficiency of the Good Governance policies in terms of the quality control for mid-term review, implementing and monitoring reforms in line with government priorities.

This mechanism is designed to converge cross cutting Good Governance related policies, using an integrated approach that requires a substantial degree of inter-ministerial cooperation, while ensuring harmonisation of policies and strategies developed for Good Governance sub-sectors.

The IPMG-Good Governance and Public Administrative is a high-level Policy Dialogue Platform comprising officially appointed representatives of the relevant ministries, and other government agencies related to GGPA sector, as well as invited development partners and civil society representatives.

In this perspective the IPMG GGPA constitutes a high-level governance policy dialogue in terms of planning and monitoring structure which is designed to ensure that the sector's core policy and financial processes are managed in a coherent, effective, results-oriented and integrated manner and intends to support the implementation of Good Governance Agenda for Albania over the next years with intensive policy dialogue aiming at accompanying the reform process with its greater focus on whole of government, delivering outcomes with and through other sectors, and greater contestability of advice and services for Building Better Governance.

Progress made in improving the policy coordination, programming and monitoring across the sectors in 2018. The Sector Wide Approach Mechanism for coordination, programming and monitoring was approved by the Albanian Government in 2015. Accordingly, the Government established integrated policy management groups (IPMGs) aimed at improving the co-ordination of reforms across the Government's top priority areas in four pilot sectors. **In October 2018, this mechanism was revised with the PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism"**¹.

The revised mechanism enables the streamlining and implementation of the sector wide approach in all sectors in order to manage and coordinate sector policies in line with the Integrated Planning System (IPS) and good governance principles through sectoral management and coordination groups. In accordance with the PM Order, 5 Integrated Policy Management Groups (IPMG) and 5 Sector Steering Committees (SSC) were established:

- IPMG - "Good Governance and Public Administration", chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister;
- IPMG- "Competitiveness and Investment", led by the Minister of Finance and Economy;
- IPMG - "Employment and Training", led by the Minister of Finance and Economy;
- IPMG - "Integrated Land Management", whose function is performed by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Integrated Land Management Reform, led by the Minister of Justice;
- IPMG - "Integrated Water Management", the function of which is carried out by the National Water Council;
- SSC - "Justice Reform", led by the Minister of Justice;
- SSC - "Internal Affairs", led by the Minister of Interior;
- SSC - "Public Financial Management", chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economy;
- SSC - "Liaison", led by the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy;
- SSC - "Environment, Climate and Waste Management", led by the Minister of Tourism and the Environment.

The sector coordination through the Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG)/ SSCs/TGs it as a process in which all significant funding for the sector—whether internal or external—supports a single policy and expenditure program under government leadership, with common approaches across the sector. The sector approach and use of IPMGs will strength overall government policy

¹ PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism"

	<p>coordination, programming, and the implementation of EU integration and national development initiatives in priority sectors. This is to be achieved through the development of (i) Strategic Framework (crosscutting policy documents for priority areas and specific sectors, crosscutting strategies, action plans, etc.); (ii) Cross-cutting and national programs and implementing measures, such as: National Single Project Pipeline; (iii) Progress reports, monitoring of achievement of goals and priority objectives (priorities), IPA reporting, planning, programming or monitoring of external assistance or other preparatory documents and support for the process of European integration; (iv) common guidelines, joint positions building and position papers for priority crosscutting issues and of particular importance and related reforms.</p> <p>The mechanism of the Sectoral Management and Sector Co-ordination Groups foresees the establishing of the General Technical Secretariat, composed by PMO, MoFE, MoEFA.</p> <p>The General Technical Secretariat coordinate at central level inter alia and the interaction of this mechanism with other processes related to policy planning, budgeting and European integration, as well as the harmonization of related processes with the implementation of information management systems, for the Integrated Planning System. Also, in each line ministry is been established a technical secretariat that ensure technical coordination for running the IPMGs, SSCs and Thematic Groups.</p> <p>The IPMGs and SSCs have the following roles and responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure joint co-operation and decision-making at a high political and managerial level on planning, coordination of implementation and monitoring of cross-sector and national policies and programmes in priority areas, reforms and strategic framework.; • Play a supporting role in coordinating the planning, prioritization, programming and monitoring of development assistance for the sectors involved (mainly at the level of thematic groups) through the organization of regular dialogue and interaction with development and integration partners; • Play the role of the Sector Monitoring Committee for IPA (IPA – Sector Monitoring Committees), ensuring reporting on the monitoring of IPA funds by sector (budget support etc.), in compliance with Article 53 of the Framework Agreement with the European Union² and in accordance with the relevant methodologies applicable to this purpose; • Provide preliminary preparations and support, in the framework of the European Union membership process. • Guide and ensure the preparation of inter-sector coordinated contributions to priority areas and specific sectors concerned, to the Strategic Planning
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² Law no. 37/2015, dated 9.4.2015 "On the ratification of the framework agreement between the Republic of Albania, represented by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the European Commission, on the rules of implementation of the financial support of the European Union for Albania, within the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II).

Committee (SPC), which provides general direction of the state policy of priorities and other committees with decision-making functions.

This Integrated Sectoral Management Mechanism for the Implementation of the Sectoral wide Approach shall use Policy and Public Finance Management Instruments, European Integration Process, and Co-ordination of Foreign Assistance, which are established within the Integrated Planning (IPS) and relevant information management systems under IPS (IPSIS, AFMIS, EAMIS).

Work has continued intensively during the period 2018-2019 to establish the responsible structures as well as increase awareness and capacities regarding the functioning of the mechanism. Within November 2018, the General Secretariat of the Mechanism, has been set up and fully functioning. It is composed of representatives from PMO, MoFE, MEFA, It coordinates at central level the inter alia and the interaction of this mechanism with other processes related to policy planning, budgeting and European integration, as well as the harmonization of related processes with the implementation of information management systems, for the Integrated Planning System.

Related to the full functionality the Integrated Sector Approach Mechanism has been fully operational after the approval package and only through 2019, have been conducted 27 high-level dialogue meetings (Integrated Policy Management Groups or Sectoral Steering Committees) and 81 technical-level meetings of Thematic Groups with a participatory approach/trilateral approach/. The mechanism has fully operated in achieving its function and role by ensuring extensive dialogue on priority policies and specific sectors with independent institutions, local government, civil society and development partners.

- i. Significant progress has been made in setting up IPS information management systems which will improve policy planning and coordination, and the link with public finance management and foreign aid: IPSIS, AFMIS and EAMIS. These three systems make up the Government System Platform, which is a novelty in the Balkan region and beyond in regards to the level of modernization of the administration in terms of management of public policy, finance and transparency.
- ii. The Integrated Planning System Information System (IPSIS) ensures the preparation of strategic planning and policy documents (strategies, policy documentation, action plans, National Plan for Europe and Integration, Legislative Plan, programs, etc.) and their monitoring, through performance/passports of indicators, as well as ensures harmonization with the Medium Term Budget Program, etc.

The Integrated Planning System ensures that:

- The strategic documents will be transmitted in a coherent approach in the e-register consultation ensuring the feedback mechanism form the citizens

	<p>ensuring in real time coordination with the (i) civil society and (ii) public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interlinkages with the Open Data Platform in order to have a better acces with the CSO and public in terms of the monitoring reports and strategic documents to the public. <p>The Council of Ministers Decision Nr. 290, dated 11.4.2020 “On the creation of the state data basis of the informed information planning system (SIPI/IPSIS)” the Integrated Planning System Information System (IPSIS) is signed by Prime Minister and sent for execution to all Government Units and their subordinated units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of the IPSIS platform has been installed that confirmed the complete installation of the IPSIS components, deployed of final application and issuance of System Installation Certificate, followed by official notification for starting of IPSIS operational acceptance testing; • Most of activities has been completed according the IPSIS contract. The user acceptance testing/and Module Tests Scripts/Protocols have been approved for each module and strategic document from mid-March 2020 until end of April. The User Acceptance Testing sessions are finalized. The sessions were conducted with the participation of all DDGG staff, the PMO Regulatory Directorate, representatives of the MEFA and selected Ministries. • Also the ToT training (150 core users from LMs) have been conducted for all line ministries and 5 Networks IPSIS have been formalised testing and using the IPSIS system (i) Policy Network; (ii) Integration Accession Network (iii) Programme Network (iv) Regulatory Network and (v) Project Network. • Also the IPSIS Manuals (the entire package/25 Manuals) have been prepared for the ToT and have been translated into Albanian. • The User Acceptance Testing sessions are finalized. The sessions were conducted with the participation of all DDGG staff, the PMO Regulatory Directorate, representatives of the MEFA and selected Ministries. • 8 dedicated workshops / training of 120 system users (June 2020) have been conducted / line ministries for the methodological framework for data quality/ performance indicators in 8 workshops dedicated to me 4 sectors: (i) direction and internal work (ii) financing and the economy (iii) social protection and health and (iv) infrastructure and energy. (4 training reports after the end of the dedicated seminar) • Developed training manual for staff and line ministries regarding the monitoring of the strategic framework (strategy / programs / policy documents). The manuals were distributed to users and served as the main curriculum basis for specific training for this system module. • In the framework of the activities related to the design and adaptation of the IPSIS platform for use by Local Government Units, the preliminary steps have been conducted, as below: • e) Preparation of an in-depth/ comprehensive analysis Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) relates to KPIs and Institutional Capacities (a
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	<p>comprehensive analysis with an innovative methodology with the evaluation component using the analysis of 75 strategies / 1692 KPI; all ML and 30 LGUs);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • f) Preparation of the National Data System Plan / System Data Plan (NSDP) 2027 for the IPSIS application (forecast of measures that will be needed in the short / long term and long-term measures for better functioning of the systems). • g) 1 Workshop / Webinar for discussion / consultation through the Thematic Policymaking Group which have been discussed with all stakeholders the (i) CNA and (ii) National Systemic Data Plan 2027 with members of 80 participants (i) ML (ii) LGU (iii) development partners <p>iii) The Public Consultation process has been conducted for all acts which have passed through various forms of extended consultation with stakeholders and for which accurate and sufficient evidence is provided by institutions on the number of meetings organized, comments collected and the extent of their reflection in the final draft but not published in the electronic register.</p> <p>The public consultation process have been improved for ex on 2019 (January-December) showed progress for the quality index, scoring 5.12 from 3.25 in 2018. Also, the number of acts subject to public consultation which have passed through public consultation process is increased for 2019 compared to 2018, respectively 71.42% versus 47.23%.</p> <p><i>The Impact Assessment Reports</i> are published in the Electronic Register of Notices and Public Consultations and are submitted to the Albanian Parliament as an integral part of the legal package that accompanies the draft laws. During 2019, about 70 Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) reports were drafted by the line ministries and reviewed by the Regulatory Action Planning and RIA Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, which is the Unit responsible for implementing this process, and out of them almost 40 of have been approved by the Council of Ministers.</p> <p><i>Progress has been made in completing the institutional legal mechanisms that ensure public participation in public policies` consultation.</i> The Public Consultation process has been implemented for several acts, which have passed various forms of consultation with stakeholders and for which accurate and sufficient evidence is provided by the institutions for the number of organized meetings, the comments collected and the degree of their reflection in the final draft, but have not been published in the electronic register.</p> <p>In the framework of strengthening the measures for planning the General Analytical Program of Draft Acts for 2019 (GAPDA) in order to ensure harmonization with NPEI and reduce the number of draft laws submitted to the Assembly, not included in this program, the guideline that regulates the drafting process of the general analytical program of draft acts for 2020 was approved by order of the Secretary General of the</p>
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	<p>Council of Ministers. This guideline clearly defines the rules, procedures and deadlines to be followed in the drafting process of GAPDA which will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for deliberation during 2020.</p> <p>In order to strengthen the capacities within the ministries, with the support of OECD/SIGMA, during 2019, trainings with the representatives of the RIA network of each ministry were organized, in order to acquire the necessary knowledge to carry out the Impact Assessment process.</p> <p>Regarding the increase of transparency in the publication of legislation, continuous monitoring has been carried out where it has resulted that the Center of Official Publications (COP), for 2019, has published all consolidated versions of legal acts published during this year, a process that should also be implemented by central institutions, which should publish consolidated versions of legal acts on their official websites.</p>
<p>Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?</p>	<p><u>Transparency and Access to Information</u></p> <p>The objective of this commitment is underpinned by the establishment of a framework of protocols and procedures to entrench a culture of transparency in the public administration.</p> <p>The design and implementation of the selected milestones establishes precedence for transparency requirements in Albanian policy making procedures and a foundation to further increase transparency in the future. The guiding methodologies for the preparation of policy making documents - the IPSIS manuals – clearly outline for each of the 25 selected modules the methodologies that must be followed and are available in two languages (<i>milestone 3.1</i>). The creation of structured operational guidelines for the IPMG with accompanying annual integrated calendars and annual plans promotes accountability and transparency regarding the functioning of the IPMG (<i>milestone 3.5</i>).</p> <p>The associated milestone activities have been chosen to provide a regulatory basis to ensure citizens’ improved access to quality information. Reforms to public administration to support improved policy making have been guided by publically available Prime Minister Orders. The revision of the mechanism for improved government coordination -- Integrated Policy Management Groups (IPMGs) – towards a cross sectorial and integrated approach was announced through PM Order Nr. 157 (<i>milestone 3.4</i>). Furthermore, the design of operational guidelines for public consultation establishes rules for the dissemination and publication of the results of public consultations and thus, establishes quality checks and requirements for public institutions to ensure that the public has complete and useful access to participant feedback (<i>milestone 3.7</i>).</p> <p>Capacity building activities related to public consultations have been conducted in a number of ministries to ensure that these public institutions have the professional capacities necessary to plan and report on the results of public consultations so that the public has improved access to the policy making process(<i>milestone 3.8</i>).</p>

Collaboration with the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) to improve the electronic register for public consultations ensures that all institutions publish relevant information, such as proposed passport of indicators, in a timely fashion, while the improved interoperability between the register and other information systems enabling easier and more effective dissemination of information (*milestone 3.8*). The regular monitoring of the public consultation process and the creation of upcoming improved guidelines establish a framework for continuous improvement of information dissemination quality (*milestone 3.9*).

Public Accountability

Increasing the integrity and accountability of public institutions is the primary aim of the public administration reforms of this commitment. The creation of a series of comprehensive manuals for the implementation of IPSIS (*milestone 3.1*) and the approved legal framework necessary for the integration of the information planning system in operations throughout the public administration (*milestone 3.2*) ensures the regulatory basis for executing and enforcing the public administration operation reforms. This promotes the accountability to clear guidelines for data quality and performance indicators in the reporting of public institutions (*milestone 3.3*). A series of training and capacity building sessions with representatives from the central government and all ministries to train trainers and users on 5 IPSIS's networks and accompanying training manual (translated into Albanian) establish mechanisms that hold public officials accountable to the proper implementation of the IPSIS platform (*milestone 3.3*).

Public accountability is further facilitated by the increased cross institutional coordination promoted by this commitment. The establishment of the Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG) to improve the implementation of public administration reforms through a cross-sectorial approach with on-going cooperation and collaboration between institutions (*milestone 3.4; milestone 3.6*). A corresponding calendar and corresponding annual plan for the function of the IPMG that clearly outlines the roles, tasks and responsibilities for these reforms and provides a mechanism for answerability to the fulfillment of these responsibilities (*milestone 3.5*).

In the development of operational guidelines for public consultations, in particular on the e-register, consultative meetings and joint work sessions with civil society have ensured that guidelines assign responsibility for effective management and implementation amongst government officials and were designed through a process visible and understood by civil society (*milestone 3.7*). A series of workshops with various ministries aim to ensure that each institution is well trained and aware of its accountability to the established guidelines on the expectations for developing, managing and reporting on the results of public consultations (*milestone 3.8*). Regular monitoring and improvement of guidelines for public consultations promotes continuous improvements in the administration of effective public consultations (*milestone 3.9*).

Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) take a systemic approach to the assessment of the positive and negative effects of proposed and existing policies, regulations and non-regulatory alternatives. Consequently the use of RIAs obliges public institutions to demonstrate the rationale of their policy making decisions and holds them accountable and answerable to their results. The drafting of regulations for RIAs and their accompanying methodology and legal framework obliges public institutions to the use of RIAs (*milestone 3.10*). Capacity building exercises and supplementary guiding materials conducted with the support of SIGMA strengthen the ability of public institutions to effectively implement RIAs (*milestone 3.11*). Meanwhile, the publication of such materials enables citizens to hold public institutions answerable to the proper implementation of RIAs (*milestone 3.11*). Finally, the appropriate implementation of RIAs is regulated by the establishment of a monitoring framework (*milestone 3.12*).

Public & Civic Participation

In order to facilitate reforms that deliver to the needs of citizens substantial efforts have been made to establish formal opportunities and mechanisms with sufficient accompanying resources for citizens to participate in the development and implementation of these reforms.

Workshops and webinars with stakeholders through the thematic policymaking group ensured that citizens were consulted with in the development of improved operational guidance for public institutions (*milestone 3.3*).

The collaboration with civil society organizations and institutions in joint work sessions and meetings enabled the co-creation of operational guidelines and reporting requirements for public consultations and managing consultation platforms (*milestone 3.7*). This collaboration aimed to build co-ownership of the development public consultation framework to also increase public trust and engagement in participating in public consultations generally. Opportunities for citizens to participate in policy making across the public administration is strengthened through the training of public officials across ministries on the proper planning and implementation and reporting of results from public consultations (*milestone 3.8*). Meanwhile, the regular monitoring of the public consultation process establishes a mechanism to continuously improve the environment for public consultations (*milestone 3.9*). This is elaborated further in the scrutiny process of RIAs that ensures all reports are published and publically available and outlines regulations for public consultation and improvements to the process there of (*milestone 3.11*).

Technology & Innovation

The entirety of this commitment to deliver its transparency, public accountability and civic participation objectives relies on the technological framework of electronic systems. The IPSIS system relies on the online platform that enables the interoperability of the systems and ensures traceability.

Online platforms for information dissemination – from regulations, ministerial orders to every stage of the policy making process—and public consultations enable greater

	<p>reach to more citizens and provide a more accessible means for citizens to participate</p> <p>In particular, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the use of online systems was particularly important in 2020 and ensured the continuation of trainings and public consultations without interruption.</p>			
Additional information	<p>This commitment co-aligns with the Cross-Cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy 2015-2020. The strategy approved in 2015 by the Albanian government acts as the guidelines for public administration reforms. It is comprised of four pillars, with accompanying strategic objectives and 130 activities. The 2019 implementation of the strategy is well aligned with the milestones and objectives of this commitment.</p> <p>In particular, it is aligned with:</p> <p>Pillar I: Policymaking and the Quality of Legislation</p> <p>Pillar II: Organization and Functioning of the Public Administration</p> <p>Pillar III: Civil Service: Human Resources Management</p> <p>Pillar IV: Administrative Procedures and Oversight</p>			
Completion Level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
				X
Description of the results	See under ‘milestone results’			
Next steps	Non-applicable			
Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable	Milestone results	Start date	End date	Completion level
3.1. Drafting a methodology for the preparation of strategic documents (strategies, programs, action plans, policy documents, etc.).	IPSIS Manuals (the entire package/25 Manuals) have been prepared for the entire modules (strategies, action plans, policy documents, programs, etc) and have been translated in the two languages AL and EN versions.	2018	2020	Completed
3.2.	The Council of Ministers Decision Nr. 290, dated 11.4.2020 “On the creation of	2018	2020	Completed

Drafting a legal package for the functionality of the IPSIS system	the state data basis of the informed information planning system (SIPI/IPSIS)" the Integrated Planning System Information System (IPSIS) is signed by Prime Minister and sent for execution to all Government Units and their subordinated units.			
3.3. Improve the capacity of the Department of Development and Good Governance & line ministries in terms of monitoring policies / strategies / action plans / development programs, in accordance with IPSIS & AFMIS methodologies	<p>The application of the IPSIS platform has been installed that confirmed the complete installation of the IPSIS components, deployed of final application and issuance of System Installation Certificate, followed by official notification for starting of IPSIS operational acceptance testing.</p> <p>Most of activities have been completed according the IPSIS contract. The user acceptance testing/and Module Tests Scripts/Protocols have been approved for each module and strategic document from mid-March 2020 until end of April. The User Acceptance Testing sessions are finalized. The sessions were conducted with the participation of all DDGG staff, the PMO Regulatory Directorate, representatives of the MEFA and selected Ministries.</p> <p>Also the ToT training (150 core users from LMs) have been conducted for all line ministries and 5 Networks IPSIS have been formalised testing and using the IPSIS system (i) Policy Network; (ii) Integration Accession Network (iii) Programme Network (iv) Regulatory Network and (v) Project Network.</p> <p>Also the IPSIS Manuals (the entire package/25 Manuals) have been prepared for the ToT and have been translated into Albanian.</p> <p>The User Acceptance Testing sessions are finalized. The sessions were conducted with the participation of all DDGG staff, the PMO Regulatory Directorate, representatives of the MEFA and selected</p>	2019	2020	Completed

	<p>Ministries.</p> <p>8 dedicated workshops / training of 120 system users (June 2020) have been conducted / line ministries for the methodological framework for data quality/ performance indicators in 8 workshops dedicated to me 4 sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) direction and internal work (ii) financing and the economy (iii) social protection and health and (iv) infrastructure and energy. <p>(4training reports after the end of the dedicated seminar)</p> <p>Developed training manual for staff and line ministries regarding the monitoring of the strategic framework (strategy / programs / policy documents). The manuals were distributed to users and served as the main curriculum basis for specific training for this system module. In the framework of the activities related to the design and adaptation of the IPSIS platform for use by Local Government Units, the preliminary steps have been conducted, as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of an in-depth/ comprehensive analysis Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) relates to KPIs and Institutional Capacities (a comprehensive analysis with an innovative methodology with the evaluation component using the analysis of 75 strategies / 1692 KPI; all ML and 30 LGUs); • Preparation of the National Data System Plan / System Data Plan (NSDP) 2027 for the IPSIS application (forecast of measures that will be needed in the short / long term and long-term measures for better functioning of the systems). • 1 Workshop / Webinar for discussion / 			
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	consultation through the Thematic Policymaking Group which have been discussed with all stakeholders the (i) CNA and (ii) National Systemic Data Plan 2027 with members of 80 participants (i) ML (ii) LGU (iii) development partners			
3.4. Review of the Legal Basis and Regulatory Framework for the Functioning of IPMGs and / or SWGs to Address Challenges in Government Structures and Change of Functions	Accordingly, the Government established integrated policy management groups (IPMGs) aimed at improving the co-ordination of reforms across the Government's top priority areas in four pilot sectors. In October 2018, this mechanism was revised with the new PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism" ³ .	2018	2018	Completed
3.5. Preparation of standard tools (tool kit) for the functioning of IPMG for Good Governance & Operational Guidance / Progress IPMG (reviewing the regulatory framework for the functioning of IPMG for Good Governance)	<p>The Integrated Mechanism Calendar for 2019, as a programming tool related to the annual functioning of the IPMG/SSC was drafted under the leadership of the General Secretariat, in cooperation with the Technical Secretariats of IPMG/SSC, which is based on the tasks and responsibilities arising from the order of the Prime Minister No. 157, dated 22.10.2018. The calendar has also served as a source of information but also as an instrument for comparing and verifying data.</p> <p>Better programming on IPMG Integrated Annual Calendar 2020 and Annual Plans has been in the focus also for 2020. The Technical Secretariat on IPMG GG has organized 10 dedicated workshops with the ThG/Technical Secretariats in January 2020, in order to ensure integration into the</p>	2019	2020	Completed

³ PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism"

	<p>calendar of activities related to the tasks foreseen in PM Order no.157 dated 22.10.2018. The consolidated calendar of the Mechanism altogether with the Annual Plans was finalized within February 2020. In March 2020, the IPMG Annual Progress Report for 2019 was finalised based on (i) the methodology and (ii) the information and data analysis provided by the Technical Secretariats of IPMG/SSC in accordance with the approved reporting formats and according to the methodological guidelines for drafting reports.</p> <p>It is finalized through a consolidated process the (i) Annual Integrated Calendar and (ii) Annual Plan for IPMG and SSCs for the recent year (2020).</p> <p>Both IPMG Calendars, the one for 2019 and 2020, have been sent to EUD both electronically and through official letters.</p>			
<p>3.6.</p> <p>The systematic functioning of the Policy Group's Policy Group and the establishment of a policy-making network with policy units in line ministries</p>	<p>Accordingly, the Government established integrated policy management groups (IPMGs) aimed at improving the co-ordination of reforms across the Government's top priority areas in four pilot sectors. In October 2018, this mechanism was revised with the new PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism" which foreseen the Thematic Group on the Policymaking⁴. Based on the new Prime Minister Order have been organized continuous meeting on 2019 and 2020 on topic such us: (i) systemic approach IPSIS, (ii) usebility and systemic data, etc.</p>	2018	2020	Completed

⁴ PM Order Nr. 157, dated 22.10.2018 "On Implementing the Sector Wide Approach for the (Cross) Sectors and Establishing and Functioning of the Integrated (Cross) Sectorial Mechanism"

<p>3.7. Preparation of Operational Guidelines for line ministries for carrying out the public consultation process and functioning of the public consultation of e-register.</p>	<p>During 2019/2020, the Office of the Prime Minister and line ministries have benefited from the support of SIGMA in developing draft Guideline for public consultation process. Since November 2019, through the EU funded technical assistance project „Improving the Regulatory Framework and Public Consultations“, series of workshops and joint working sessions have been held for coordinators of public consultations and other relevant staff in ministries with the aim of improving the capacities of ministries for more effective planning and managing of public consultations. These workshops also served to test some of the templates proposed in the draft Guideline for public consultation process prepared with SIGMA support.</p> <p>In addition, a number of meetings have been held with representatives of institutions that support consultative councils or manage consultation platforms that aim to improve the participation of relevant stakeholders in the policy-making process - such as the Civil Society Support Agency (Council). National Civil Society), Agency for Dialogue and Co-Government (Co-Government Platform), Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (European Integration Partnership Platform), Albanian Investment Council, Agency for Local Government Support. A total of 159 participants took part in dedicated meetings, joint work sessions and meetings dedicated to public consultation guideline. In general, the implementation of these guidelines should contribute to improving the capacity of officials responsible in the ministry for the effective management of public consultations, and in particular for better quality reporting of public consultation results.</p> <p>It is precisely the quality of feedback to</p>	2019	2020	Completed
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	<p>public consultation participants that has a direct impact on the trust and motivation of stakeholders to participate in open consultations and to contribute to the policy-making process.</p> <p>Based on lessons learned and feedback gathered from ministries, Prime Minister's Office and the EU TA project expert team, more detailed set of guidelines with updated templates have been prepared and piloted in cooperation with all line ministries. Through this process, a stronger ownership of new guidelines was intended to be ensured and ministries are expected to be ready to implement them more effectively following their official adoption and dissemination.</p> <p>Overall, the implementation of these Guidelines should contribute to improving capacities of responsible officials in ministries for effective managing of public consultations, and especially for better quality reporting on the results of public consultations. It is precisely the quality of feedback to participants of public consultations that has a direct impact on the trust and motivation of stakeholders to take part in open consultations and contribute to policy making process.</p>			
3.8. Training / Capacity Building for Responsible Staff in Line Ministries for the Use of Public Consultation e- Platform	<p>Consultation and capacity building activities related to draft Guidelines on public consultations have been conducted as below:</p> <p><u>Joint workshops for coordinators in all ministries, agencies and PMO</u></p> <p>Workshop on planning and managing of public consultations – 7 February 2020</p> <p>Workshop on developing consultation plans and consultation documents – 20 February 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Finance (with attendance of staff of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship)</u></p>	2019	2020	Completed

	<p>Online workshop on planning of public consultations - 16 June 2020 Online workshop on reporting on results of public consultations – 17 June 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Defence</u> Online workshop on planning of public consultations - 10 July 2020 Online workshop on reporting on results of public consultations – 13 July 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Interior</u> Online workshop on planning and reporting on results of public consultations – 13 July 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs</u> Online workshop on planning and reporting on results of public consultations – 17 July 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth</u> Online workshop on planning and reporting on results of public consultations – 27 July 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Tourism and Environment</u> Online working session on planning and reporting on results of public consultations – 29 July 2020</p> <p><u>Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy</u> Online working session on planning and reporting on results of public consultations – 3 August 2020</p> <p><u>National Agency for Information Society (NAIS)</u> Joint meeting with PMO and NAIS for the purpose of improving the Electronic Register for Public Consultations, ensure timely collection of data required in Guidelines and proposed passport of indicators, as well as enhancing interoperability between Electronic Register and other information systems, such as</p>			
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	IPSIS.			
3.9. Regular monitoring of the implementation of the public consultation process	<p>The Public Consultation process has been conducted (mid 2020) the Annual Report for all legal acts which have passed through various forms of extended consultation with stakeholders and for which accurate and sufficient evidence is provided by institutions on the number of meetings organized, comments collected and the extent of their reflection in the final draft. The Report results that the public consultation process have been improved for ex on 2019 (January-December) showed progress for the quality index, scoring 5.12 from 3.25 in 2018. Also, the number of acts subject to public consultation which have passed through public consultation process is increased for 2019 compared to 2018, respectively 71.42% versus 47.23%. For 2020 through the new guideline will be produced the upcoming Report for 2020/ which will ensure the full year/and cycle all the approved acts.</p>	2019	2020	Completed
3.10. Establish rules that make the implementation of the Impact Assessment process mandatory	<p>Based on the Prime Minister's Order no.102, of June 2017, "On setting up of working groups for piloting the implementation of Impact Assessment Methodology, in some ministries", which has been amended with the Prime Minister's Order no.194, dated 9.11.2017, the piloting process for the implementation of the RIA methodology was carried out by two ministries, Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy.</p> <p>On December 2017, both piloting ministries finalized the implementation of the RIA methodology for the draft laws as mentioned above, with the support of SIGMA.</p> <p>In March 2018, the RIA Methodology was</p>	2018	2018	Completed

	<p>updated and finalized by the RIA Unit in the PMO and distributed to the Line Ministries to work with. Also in order to make RIA instrument as obligatory into the policymaking/legislation process, on April 2018, was amended the Decision CoM no. 584 dated 28.08.2003 “On the approval of the Regulation of the Council of Ministers” through the Decision CoM no.197/2018. In May 2018, was approved the Order no. 6 dated 21 May 2018 of the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, which defined the draft-laws to be subject of the RIA process in 2018, (in total were 13 draft-laws), selected from the Analytical Annual Program of draft acts.</p>			
<p>3.11. Strengthening capacities, through various employee training (RIA Network) in line ministries and the Prime Minister’s Office, in order to improve the process of regulatory impact Assessment</p>	<p>In order to increase capacity building for the implementation of the RIA process across ministries, during March – June - November 2018 and February 2019, RIA Unit with the support of SIGMA, organized different training sessions with Line Ministries, including dedicated sessions to the appraisal methods on impact assessment.</p> <p>Since starting from January 2019, all draft laws that fulfil RIA criteria’s, are subject to impact assessment process by Line Ministries and in order to further increase capacity building for the implementation of the RIA process and support them in conducting RIA for specific drat laws, during May – June - October 2019, RIA Unit with the support of SIGMA, organized different training sessions with Line Ministries. These sessions were more hands-on and included also other officials from the ministries (besides RIA network) that were specifically involved in the draft laws there were discussed. Participants appreciated these interactive sessions that helped them in the filling of the RIA template.</p>	2018	2020	Completed

	<p>After the trainings they were provided with additional guiding materials for each RIA including recommendations and best practice RIA examples from other EU countries in order to urge their critical thinking when conducting the impacts assessment.</p> <p>During the scrutiny process of RIAs, the RIA Unit made sure that the regulatory impact assessment's reports were published alongside the whole legal package in the government public consultation electronic platform and were accessible to public consultation, asking the line ministries to do so in every case. Besides, the public consultation session in the RIA report was also subject of scrutiny by the RIA Unit, asking for information on the feedback received during such consultation and the evidence based data acquired by the stakeholders.</p> <p>In terms of improving the RIA process and increasing capacity building, as well as improving the public consultation process, the Prime Minister's Office benefited a one year technical assistance with EU support (from November 2019-November 2020). During February 2020 the RIA Unit with the support of the TA organized 4 sessions of dedicated trainings</p>			
3.12. Improve the planning process of drafting legal acts by defining the general of the PPAP drafting process	<p>On 2019 have been adopted the guidelines for the drafting process of the Analytical Annual Programme via the General Secretary's order no.14, date 7.11.2019 Following the analytical plan's adoption, the RIA Unit prepared the main framework for the monitoring process. According to the reports prepared in May 2019 the analytical program's realization, for the 1st quarter was 21%. Whereas, according to the report prepared in May 2020, the AAP's realization for the 1st quarter of 2020 was 40%. This means that the</p>	2019	2020	Completed

	implementation rate of the AAP is improved.			
Contact information				
Name of responsible person from implementing agency				
Title, Department	Department for Development and Good Governance, PMO			
Email and Phone				
Other Actors Involved	State actors involved	Department for Regulatory and Compliance, PMO, Ministry of Finance and Economy, The National Agency of Information Society, Albanian School of Public Administration, Line Ministries, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs		
	CSO, private sector, working groups, etc	Policymaking Thematic Group		

Component IV

COMMITTEMENT IV: Open Governance For Creating Safer Communities

IV. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corruption is a threat to democracy, good governance, fair competition, sustainable economic, social and political development of a country. It severely hinders economic development, creating a system of inequality, prejudice and nepotism, destroying people's trust in their state, so the fight against corruption is today one of the primary challenges of any state with a democratic culture, vision and high integrity. The government has and will continue to have an unwavering will in the fight against corruption, through preventive actions, punitive measures and awareness-raising activities. The government's priority in the fight against corruption is in line with the conditions set by the European Union for the opening of EU membership negotiations. The fight against corruption is one of the five policies that our country is advised to follow with priority in the process of European integration of the country. Likewise, the prevention and punishment of corruption is an obligation deriving from Albania's accession to international instruments for the fight against corruption such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention against Corruption, the Council of Europe Civil Convention against Corruption etc.

Since 2015, Albania follows and implements the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Anti-Corruption. The vision of ISAC 2015-2023 is: "Albanian institutions with high integrity and transparency, which enjoy the trust of citizens and guarantee quality and uncorrupt service". The major policy goals of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Anti-Corruption are to prevent, punish and raise awareness/education about corruption. These goals are long-term and extend throughout the implementation of the strategy and action plan.

In response to the country's development needs and legitimate expectations of our public and our international partners, the government aims to undertake an anti-corruption effort that includes a threefold preventive, punitive and aesthetic approach. Commitments undertaken and set objectives are in line with the obligations stemming from the Stabilization and Association Agreement and EC recommendations for Albania to join the European Union.

Corruption and its fight continue to be one of the major challenges and one of the major crosscutting priorities for Albania. During 2007-2010, governmental reforms have aimed at modernizing state administration and its work processes, thus contributing to preventing corruption in areas where corruption was at very high levels and where the impact on the country's economy was significant.

Strengthening control structures and exercising new mechanisms such as ACTF, increasing the transparency of this mechanism, strengthening cooperation between institutions in the administration and recording of anti-corruption denunciations, strengthening preventive mechanisms such as the online declaration of assets of officials are initiatives envisaged in this action plan and are conceived in accordance with the principles of open government.

COMMITMENT IV: Open Governance For Creating Safe Communities	
2018-2020	
Lead implementing agency/actor	Ministry of Justice ADCG GDSP HIDACCI
COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>Corruption is the main obstacle to the path of sustainable political, economic and social development of states. In 2013, Albania marked again for the third year last country side from the countries of the region in the ranking of the global corruption perception index, thus taking the mark as the most corrupt country in Europe. Decline - the rise of public perception over the last 10 years, objectively, coincides with committed or lacking governance reforms. For this reason, the government considers public perception of corruption not only as an indicator of its (corruption) state of affairs but also as a measure of the success or failure of government policies and programs in the fight against corruption.</p> <p>Against this background of facts and this political and social awareness, with the ultimate goal of modernizing governance in the country, the government is committed to uncompromising and zero tolerance against corruption by giving this public policy the priority it deserves.</p> <p>Albania has a inter-sectoral strategy against corruption, which is accompanied by two action plans, implemented and the third one is under implementation. A strategy that has 18 specific objectives divided according to three approaches: preventive, punitive and awareness-raising.</p> <p>The preventive approach is also part of the open government action plan, with envisaging mechanisms to strengthen the fight against corruption.</p>
What is the commitment?	The policy goal of this commitments is to control, verify the denunciation of corrupt practices in public institutions by the anticorruption mechanism, as the Anti-Corruption Task Force is and to encourage citizens to use mechanisms for denouncing and preventing corruption; to increasing the transparency of the National Coordinator against Corruption in monitoring the implementation of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Against Corruption and to improve the handling of corruption denunciation and strengthening of the anti-corruption prevention mechanisms.

<p>How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?</p>	<p>Executive summary of results</p> <p>The priority of the government in this area is best suited to the conditionality set by the European Union to open negotiations for EU membership. The fight against corruption is one of the five policies that our country is advised to follow with priority in the country's European integration process.</p> <p>Likewise, prevention and punishment of corruption is an obligation deriving from Albania's adherence to international instruments for the fight against corruption such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Council of Europe Criminal Convention against Corruption, the Council of Europe's Civil Convention against Corruption etc.</p> <p>In response to the country's development needs and legitimate expectations of our public and our international partners, the government aims to undertake an anti-corruption effort that includes a threefold preventive, punitive and aesthetic approach. Commitments undertaken and set objectives are in line with the obligations stemming from the Stabilization and Association Agreement and EC recommendations for Albania to join the European Union.</p> <p>With Decision no. 241, dated 20.04.2018 of the Council of Ministers, the Action Plan 2018 - 2020 was approved in implementation of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy against Corruption 2015-2020, Passport of Indicators, establishment, functioning and tasks of the Coordination Committee for the implementation of ISAC and Inter-Institutional Anti-Corruption Task Force. Establishment of the Inter-Institutional Anti-Corruption Task Force, responsible for inter-institutional inspections, according to the Action Plan of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy against Corruption, chaired by the Minister of Justice, National Anti-Corruption Coordinator and composed of representatives from the Prime Ministry, Public Prosecutor's Office and the Procurement Agency.</p> <p>ISAC has in its composition 18, specific objectives, two of which are respectively:</p> <p>Objective A4, <i>Improve the handling of allegations of corruption</i> and objective A.5, <i>Strengthen the regime for declaring and controlling the assets of public officials and cases of conflict of interest</i>, and closely related to this commitment, to ensure open governance through the exercise of power to create good and secure governance.</p> <p>During this two-year period, positive developments have been made regarding the progress of the activity of handling denunciations against corruption in the public administration. For the years 2018, 2019, 2020, the establishment of the Inter-Institutional Anti-Corruption Task Force, with</p>
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Decision no. 241, dated 20.04.2018 of the Council of Ministers responsible for inter-institutional inspections, according to the Action Plan of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy against Corruption, has recorded concrete data in the punishment of corruption cases and reports that 36 criminal reports have been referred to the prosecution, mainly for the offense criminal misconduct, in most cases and in collaboration; State police structures have increased cases of data generation from citizens' denunciations through the use of the ADCG platform, shqipëriaqëduam.com; as well as the procedures of the system of online declaration of assets of officials, subject of declaration.

Information on priority measures

2018:

The ACTF inspected 58 institutions, of which the following were recommended: 445 disciplinary and administrative measures, 102 dismissed employees, 36 criminal reports

The Minister of Justice/NCAC has come out in front of the media and the general public to make public the ATF 13- press releases. These findings have been made public in the media and are published online at MoJ, www.drejtesia.gov.al. Also during 2018, there are two other public statements of the Minister of Justice/NCAC in meetings with representatives of international organizations and on the International Day against Corruption.

Identified: 979 criminal offenses, detected: 885, (detected by old 1), detection in percentage: 90.39%, perpetrators prosecuted: 1394, arrested: 116, detained: 90, free trial: 1164, removed: 23, various. The number of corruption investigations generated by citizens' denunciations is 197 cases, for which police and investigative actions have been carried out and referred to the Prosecutor's Office.

1084 complaints were registered in the Platform, "Office of Co-Government", in the Prime Minister and 1056 complaints were verified and answered, 28 cases in process (within the deadlines).

The Agency for Dialogue and Co-Government reports periodically on citizen and business denunciations every week through detailed data presented in the report for each minister and the prime minister.

The procurement procedure for the hardware infrastructure of the asset declaration system was realized and finalized in September 2018. The contract was signed in early October 2018 with the winning company and in December the installation of hardware and their configuration was completed.

The implementing company of the ikubINFO project during December 2018 has developed training curricula for all modules of the electronic asset declaration system and has organized the first phase of training for the category of key users of the system, part of HIDAACI staff.

2019:

The ACTF inspected 13 institutions, 13 in-process controls, and recommended: 91 administrative measures of which 84 were implemented, 105 disciplinary measures were recommended and 65 were implemented by the inspected institutions.

From the number of corruption investigations generated by citizens' denunciations to the State Police, 1286 criminal offenses have been identified (including corruption cases and criminal offenses of incumbent officials), for which police and investigative actions have been carried out and referred to the Prosecutor's Office; 928 complaints were registered in the Platform "Office of Co-Government", in the Prime Minister.

The process of installing the database and application continues. This process was performed following the completion of the virtualization and completion of the operating system implemented by the company Infsoft responsible for the installation and configuration of electronic hardware devices. Both of these operational actions were accompanied by technical assistance and training for technical staff and other users of the system, part of HIDACCI staff has drafted training materials for the network infrastructure that has hosted the new electronic system, and SimpliVity infrastructure.

2020:

137 criminal offenses were identified and 126 of them were detected, or in the amount of 91.97%, a total of 205 perpetrators were prosecuted, of which 21 perpetrators arrested and detained, 180 prosecuted at large and 4 perpetrators were declared wanted. Criminal offenses only for corruption for the first quarter of 2020 are 34 criminal offenses, 53 suspected perpetrators prosecuted, of which 11 perpetrators were arrested and detained, 41 were prosecuted at large and 1 was announced in looking.

205 complaints were registered on the Platform "Office of Co-Government", Prime Ministry.

<p>Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?</p>	<p><u>Transparency & Access to Information</u></p> <p>Providing frequent and regular communications with citizens and the general public by the National Coordinator Against Corruption (NCAC) for control procedures by the ATF and with the aim of raising awareness and confidence in these control mechanisms (milestone 4.2.1 and 4.2.2)</p> <p>Meanwhile, the publication of such materials enables citizens to hold public institutions accountable for the proper implementation of certain procedures.</p> <p><u>Public Accountability</u></p> <p>The set of measures and provisions of this action plan have been set with the aim of strengthening the accountability of public administration bodies to strengthen anti-corruption efforts. (milestone 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 e 4.5)</p> <p>The design and forecasting of measures related to this principle has been aimed at establishing and providing better services to the public, and this is influenced by the priority verification and treatment of cases that cause corruption in public administration bodies, this has and the essential justification of the establishment and functioning of the ATF with the approval of decision 241/2018 of the Council of Ministers. Establishment of control groups/drafting of control calendar and execution of controls by ATF (milestone 4.1.1; 4.1.2 and 4.1.2)</p> <p>In particular, due to the COVID-19 pandemic some of the activities did not reach the target values, like the finalization of the using of the online system of asset declaration, and AC Task Force.</p> <p>Anticipation of measures and initiatives to guarantee the online declaration of assets of officials in order to strengthen control and timely evaluation of them. (milestone 4.5). Increasing the number of complaints against corruption in the administration; Increase of inter-institutional cooperation in investigating corruption cases (milestone 4.4.1)</p> <p><u>Public & Civic Participation</u></p> <p>The measures included in this action plan aim to encourage citizens to use the mechanisms for denunciation and prevention of corruption and to bring citizens closer to the use of these structures and means of denunciation (milestone 4.3.1).</p> <p><u>Technology & Innovation</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
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Additional information	This commitment is in line with the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Against Corruption 2015-2023. The strategy adopted in 2015 by the government acts as a guide for specific areas of the fight against corruption in the country. This strategy consists of three pillars/approaches, with 18 accompanying strategic objectives. The implementation of the strategy for 2019/2020 is in full compliance and harmonized with the benchmarks and objectives of this commitment. In particular, it is in line with the following pillars that the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Against Corruption interacts with. Approach A: Preventive Approach B: Punitive Approach C: Awareness				
Completion Level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	
				x	
Description of the results	See ‘Executive summary of results’ and ‘milestones’				
Next Steps	Such measures are ongoing/part of the new Anticorruption Action Plan 2020-2023 and their continuity will be under monitoring and expected impact in the fight against corruption				
Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable			Start date	End date	Completion Level
4.1 Control and verification (administrative investigation) of the implementation of legality and/or denunciations of abusive, corrupt or arbitrary practices in all public administration institutions and state agencies	Control groups have been set up for any incoming denunciations/inspections on ATF's own initiative as well. A total of 71 institutions were inspected, of which the following were recommended: 550 disciplinary and administrative measures, 102 dismissed employees, 36 criminal reports.		2018	2020	Completed

4.2 Publications and press releases of the NACC to the public and interested groups on the findings of the audits performed	The Minister of Justice/NCAC has come out in front of the media and the general public to make public the ATF press releases. These findings have been made public in the media and are published online at MoJ, www.drejtesia.gov.al . Also during 2018, there are two other public outlets of the Minister of Justice/NCAC in meetings with representatives of international organizations and on the International Day against Corruption	2018	2020	Completed
4.3 Periodic reporting of ADB on platform denunciations	The Agency for Dialogue and Co-Government reports periodically on citizen and business denunciations every week through detailed data presented in the report for each minister and the prime minister.	2018	2020	Completed
4.4 Improved handling of denunciations against corruption	Evidence of criminal offenses has progressively increased (979/year 2018 and 1286/year 2020). The number of denunciations received from ADCG platforms has increased)	2018	2020	Completed
4.5 Procedures and stages of implementation of the system for online declaration of assets of officials	The system design process has started, the database installation and application process has been completed; the process of virtualization and completion of the operating system; electronic hardware configuration; technical assistance and training for technical staff and other users of the system, part of the HIDACCI staff has drafted training materials for the network infrastructure that has hosted the new electronic system, as well as the SimpliVity infrastructure; The tendering procedure for the maintenance of the system has been completed.	2018	2020	Completed
Contact information				
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Other Actors Involved	State actors involved	MoJ GDSP ADCG HIDACCI CSO Thematic Group Anticorruption