

21 tetor, Fushë Arrëz

22 tetor, Pukë


ALBANIAN NATIONAL, PROFESSIONAL, BUSINESSWOMEN AND CRAFTS' ASSOCIATION

IN THIS NUMBER

Informative Bulletin

October 2019

Seminar in Fushë-Arrëz EU / National grant programs that support women entrepreneurs

By Tefta Demeti

On October 21st, 2019, at the Fushë-Arrëz Children Center, a seminar was held with Women Entrepreneurs from Fushë-Arrëz on EU / National Program that support women entrepreneurs with grants. This meeting was organized by the SHGPAZ in the framework of the implementation of the project "Promoting entrepreneurship among youth and women entrepreneurs in Albania", which is funded by the EU through CFCU Tirana. At this meeting were presented national programs where calls are

open to support women entrepreneurs or those who want to open a business as well as EU programs.

For the EU-supported program

IPARD, women stated that it is quite difficult to apply and there are high criteria that are



hardly met by the women entrepreneurs of Fushë-Arrëz that mostly are from rural area. They desperately need information and support grants.

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Business access to finance and financial instruments

By Erjona Rebi, PhD

According to the latest OECD report for 2019, Albania's private sector credit to GDP ratio is about 35%, continuing to be lower compared to similar countries in the region. About 42% of this loan goes to SME financing, compared to an average of 48% in the region. Meanwhile, the stimulating central bank's policy has kept the key interest rate at historically low levels, largely affecting interest rate cuts in lending segment. However, credit performance remained generally weak. According to the latest OECD report, the assessment of access to finance for Albania in 2019 has slightly improved compared to 2016 - from 3.26 to 3.32 in particular. Albania also has the highest non-performing loan ratio (NPL) in the Western Balkans, although this indicator has been declining for the last 5 years, from the maximum level of 25% in September 2014 to 20% in August 2016 and 13.7% in February 2018. This decline is mainly attributable to mandatory non-performing loans write off and the Bank of Albania's proactive method of resolving NPLs for large borrowers as part of an action plan for resolving bad loans NPL. On the other hand, NPL sales have been limited due to low expected levels of recovery and tax obstacles. Overall, this development is an important step towards creating more favorable conditions for the recovery of the banking sector's lending activity.



However, the financial intermediation as measured by the loan-to-deposit ratio remains very low compared to other Western Balkan economies, highlighting that there is still room to deepen the role of financial intermediaries in the economy and in improving and managing financial flows. Given that there are just large businesses that have caused the increase in nonperforming loans, as well as the high rate of use of financial leverage of these businesses, in recent years there is a growing interest of banks to lend to SMEs. However, the latest regulatory change, which requires banks to provide credit based on declared balance sheet to the official tax registers, may hamper the SME financing. On the other hand, high levels of informality in the economy, and especially

among SMEs, are another important factor that impedes funding for many small businesses. Another positive development in lending is a more balanced currency structure.

In response to the low interest rates and increased efforts of the Bank of Albania to promote domestic currency lending, the foreign currency lending has been diminished in recent years. In order to protect consumers, banks need to emphasize the risks of foreign exchange rate fluctuations and to illustrate them clearly the risk they are bearing. Even so, just over half of new loans to private non-financial corporations in 2017 were denominated in foreign currency. Support programs exist to facilitate access to finance for SMEs, such as the EBRD, the Government-financed AZHBR; Albanian-Italian program for the development of Albanian SMEs; and the European Fund for Southeast Europe. However, their scope remains limited and commitment has sometimes been low.

The development of non-bank financial institutions remains very limited. Microcredit, leasing and factoring companies have a well-defined legal framework, but the penetration of this financial segment into the economy is low. Microcredit, comprised of 13 savings and loan associations, is by far the most common type of financing, accounting for two thirds of all loans from non-bank

financial institutions. Financial leasing institutions are following, accounting for less than 30%, while factoring contributes a marginal share. Although leasing and factoring volumes have increased in recent years, these instruments remain unused. Factors determined this performance is a low level of understanding and recognition of these financial instruments and non so much favorable conditions applied by them - both in price and non price terms. Likewise, the lack of a well-structured and national wide financial education policy in the economy makes it necessary to formulate these policies and to make these instruments more popular by entrepreneurs and investors in the country.

Venture capital and business angel are almost non-existent in Albania and there is no attempt to develop them. Start-ups have very difficulty finding financing to start their business, even though lately banks have become more willing to finance some projects.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY Industrial Property Law

By Albana Laknori

Some changes are taking place in the Industrial Property Law:

i- Defining "Utility Models" as a separate object from the patents of inventions because of their individuality and while the law itself in the following provisions has treated them in two separate chapters, as two separate industrial property objects, with non-identical definitions and defensive procedures.

ii- Adding the term "Appellations of Origin" to Article 1 of the Act, because the treatment of Appellations of Origin as a separate subject of IP has been in force since the entry into force of Law 17/2017, on 25.03. 2017. For this reason, it is necessary to include it in Article 1 of the law, which is a general informative article

iii- Adding the term "Trade Secret" because it is foreseen that with the adoption of this draft law, "Trade Secret" shall be legally one of the objects of Industrial Property.

1- Article 2 of this draft law provides for changes consisting of:

The inclusion in section 4 of the law entitled "Definitions" of the definition of identical brands, which already exists in the trademark regulation adopted by DCM no. 315, date 31.05.2018. However, because of the general nature and importance of this regulation, we find it necessary to put it into the law. This definition has also been reproduced in full and in accordance with the

definition for identical marks of the European Court, which will be subject to examination in accordance with the criteria set out in Article 142 of the Law.

2- The proposed amendment to Article 10 of this law becomes necessary presently because the Republic of Albania has acceded to the Lisbon Treaty and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Treaty "On the International Protection and Register of Geographical Indicators and Appellations of Origin".

3- The proposed amendment to Article 11 of this law follows on from the improvement of the procedures carried out by the DPPI, with the aim of specifying each of them which previously proved to be unclear and as such less effective for applicants. This new regulation makes these procedures clearer and as such understandable, transparent and easily applicable.

4- The proposed amendment to Article 12 of this Draft Law is made for the same reasons as the Article 11 proposal.

5- The proposed amendment to Article 13 is intended not to restrict persons having a permanent residence in the Republic of Albania, or carrying out activities within its territory, in the establishment of their representatives who shall carry out such protection procedures of the IP asset, only in the circle of employees of the applying business entity.

www.dppm.gov.al



European Vocational Skills Week

By Ana Zacharian*

From 14-18 October 2019, Helsinki welcomed the 4th Edition - European Skills Week supported by Finnish Presidency and the European Commission.

This EC initiative is launched since 2016, initiated by the Commissioner Ms. Marianne Thyssen in charge of employment, social affairs, skills and job mobility which gave a significant boost to the Vocational Skills agenda within her mandate, also by turning it into a personal mission already fulfilled now at the end of her mandate.

The **European Vocational Skills Week** initiative and other initiatives undertaken by the European Commission to promote skills for decent work and life have awakened up the responsible institutions and stakeholders of EU countries and Candidate Countries with strong dynamics on the importance of professional skills for youth employment, promoting lifelong learning for unemployed adults thereby bringing vocational education and training closer to people's needs, business closer to schools and universities, and more attentive policymaking to the real skills needed for the economy today and in the future.

For 4 years, the European Skills Week has been transformed into a European-wide movement where numerous activities, initiatives and events are being organized by all European countries. A virtual

platform enables the whole community to register their activities which can be visited by a wide audience under the unified branding of "European Vocational Skills Week Partner" thus giving every project, initiative and organization etc. a high visibility.

Inspired by so many experiences, Albanian Skills started right away in 2018 with the launch of the first edition of the "Albanian Skills Week" and the second in May 2019. We are also an active partner in informing and promoting the



week's activities online in order to contribute to raising the interest and awareness of the VET community in Albania.

Albanian Skills has the privilege of participating in 3 editions of "European Vocational Skills Week", organized in Brussels-November 2017, in Vienna - November 2018 and now in Helsinki. Albanian Skills is an active member of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, an initiative of the European Commission - and as such contributes in discussion panels, workshops or another that may be needed by this community.

Building "Finland House" gathered delegates from all EU countries, candidates but also from other

continents, commissioners and senior officials of the European



Commission, international organizations, VET experts, young activists in the field of training, learning, etc.

The entire week activity in Helsinki was an extraordinary experience of work, meetings, information and visits combined with many more activities prepared in this context such as visits to different schools and companies in Helsinki, the award ceremony such as: best provider, best research project, best VET innovator project, best intern, best company providing professional practice, etc. This week's slogan was: VET for ALL, Skills for Life.

A variety of activities will continue to take place in other EU Member and Candidate States until the end of the year.

*CEO & Cofounder

Albanian Skills
National Association for Skills
Competitions



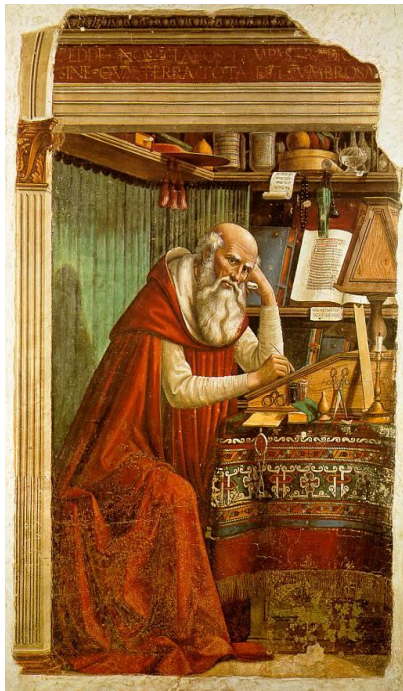
International Translation Day

By Flutura Xhabija

International Translation Day is celebrated every year on September 30th, as it is today; commemorating the death of St. Jerome, the Bible translator, considered the patron saint of translators.

Saint Jerome was born in Illyria in 347 in the Western Balkans and died on September 30, 420 in Bethlehem at the age of 73.

For his great contribution to the diversity of translation in our times, many world-renowned associations were encouraged to put forward the idea of an officially recognized international translation day to show the solidarity of the worldwide community of professionals in the field, which is be-



coming increasingly essential in the age of globalization.

At their request, these associations succeeded in approving from United Nations General Assembly on May 24th, 2017, a resolution announcing September 30 as International Translation Day. This day is celebrated in some parts of the world, but not yet in Albania.

As a very modest translator in this field, with several years of experience, especially after the 90's, I find it appropriate to wish all Albanian translators and interpreters who have contributed and contribute to their tireless work to translate from foreign languages into Albanian and vice-versa, major artistic and political works, scientific and technical etc. for the Albanian public.

Happy holiday dear colleagues!

Entrepreneurial Women's Congress in the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative countries

By Flutura Xhabija

On October 16-18th, 2019, the Entrepreneurial Women Congress with the countries involved in the Adriatic-Ionian initiative was held in Arta, Greece.

The meeting was organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Arta and discussed the activities that should take place during the years 2020-2021.

In this forum, women entrepreneurs were represented by the President of SHGPAZ Mrs. Flutura Xhabija with a group of women entrepreneurs from the Pogradec area, but not only.

Mrs. Flutura Xhabija discussed the needs of women entrepreneurs and the objectives for the coming years.



The International Tax Competitiveness Index

By Kujtime Stefani

The International Tax Competitiveness Index (ITCI) seeks to measure the extent to which a country's tax system adheres to two important aspects of tax policy: competitiveness and neutrality. A competitive tax code is one that keeps marginal tax rates low. In today's globalized world, capital is highly mobile. Businesses can choose to invest in any number of countries throughout the world to find the highest rate of return. This means that businesses will look for countries with lower tax rates on investment to maximize their after-tax rate of return. If a

smallest impact on growth.³ Separately, a neutral tax code is simply one that seeks to raise the most revenue with the fewest economic distortions. This means that it doesn't favor consumption over saving, as happens with investment taxes and wealth taxes. This also means few or no targeted tax breaks for specific activities carried out by businesses or individuals.

A tax code that is competitive and neutral promotes sustainable economic growth and investment while raising sufficient revenue for government priorities. There are

country's corporate taxes, individual income taxes, consumption taxes, property taxes, and the treatment of profits earned overseas. The ITCI gives a comprehensive overview of how developed countries' tax codes compare, explains why certain tax codes stand out as good or bad models for reform, and provides important insight into how to think about tax policy. Due to some data limitations, recent tax changes in some countries may not be reflected in this year's version of the International Tax Competitiveness Index.

2019 Rankings

For the sixth year in a row, Estonia has the best tax code in the OECD. Its top score is driven by four positive features of its tax code. First, it has a 20 percent tax rate on corporate income that is only applied to distributed profits. Second, it has a flat 20 percent tax on individual income that does not apply to personal dividend income. Third, its property tax applies only to the value of land, rather than to the value of real property or capital. Finally, it has a territorial tax system that exempts 100 percent of foreign profits earned by domestic corporations from domestic taxation, with few restrictions.



country's tax rate is too high, it will drive investment elsewhere, leading to slower economic growth. In addition, high marginal tax rates can lead to tax avoidance. According to research from the OECD, corporate taxes are most harmful for economic growth, with personal income taxes and consumption taxes being less harmful. Taxes on immovable property have the

many factors unrelated to taxes which affect a country's economic performance. Nevertheless, taxes play an important role in the health of a country's economy. To measure whether a country's tax system is neutral and competitive, the ITCI looks at more than 40 tax policy variables. These variables measure not only the level of taxes, but also how taxes are structured. The Index looks at a

Regional Conference "On the Steps of Modern Times"

By Flutura Xhabija

On October 23rd, 2019, a regional conference "On the steps of modern times" was held in Podgorica, Montenegro, attended by a delegation of the SHGPAZ with president Mrs. Flutura Xhabija.



In the meeting were discussed future policies to support women entrepreneurs in the region.

1. The conference provided a broad platform to seek answers to important economic, political and social issues relevant to the development of women's entrepreneurship.
2. Strengthening women's economic position is one of the priority tasks in pursuing gender equality policies.
3. Women's entrepreneurship is still an untapped resource for economic development.
4. The overall assessment is that the legal framework governing and encouraging women's entrepreneurship is good, but a better implementation would help to advance women's entrepreneurship in the region.
5. It is necessary for entrepreneurship to have multiple effects on the economy overall through job creation, so let's continue to su-



pport women's entrepreneurship, implement gender-sensitive private sector development measures, fiscal policy and legislation.

6. Support initiatives to introduce tax deductions for the first few years of business.
7. Continue activities to eliminate business barriers and create an environment for better development of women's entrepreneurship by creating a new Strategy for the development of women's entrepreneurship in the coming period.
8. Promote parents' economies and the role of fathers in raising children.
9. Provide support and promotion of women in management and leadership positions.
10. More visibility for women entrepreneurs in the media through special campaigns and programs.
11. Promote the gender statistics needed in policy making & monitoring.
12. Lifelong learning is one of the important factors in eliminating gender stereotypes that put women at a disadvantage.
13. The Challenge of Women Entrepreneurship it is still traditional culture and the expectation that women should

separate business from their private lives.

14. Use of European funds for the development of women's entrepreneurship.
15. Strengthening the networking and cooperation of women entrepreneurs, nationally, regionally and internationally etc.

20th Anniversary of Educational Institutions "NUMANI", Fier



October 24th, 2019. Non-public educational institutions "Numani" in Fier celebrated the 20th anniversary of their establishment. In front of the many friends and guests, students, alumni, parents and teachers, has been a presentation of the school and its achievements in these 20 years of life. For the founder of this school Mrs. Suzana Numani, investing in education requires spirit and passion, and on this 20th anniversary, she has thanked all those who wholeheartedly educated and raised generations of students, without forgetting all those who have chosen the "Numani" family to be educated.



FACTS

25.7%

The number of active businesses led / owned by women for 2018 in Albania was 25.7%, with a decrease of 4 points percentage compared to 2017, where they accounted for 29.7%. (INSTAT, June 2019)



3.2%

Credit for 2018 resulted in a moderate increase of only 2% compared to the previous year and accounts for 35.2% of GDP, with a decrease of 2.2 percentage points compared to 2016. (Bank of Albania)



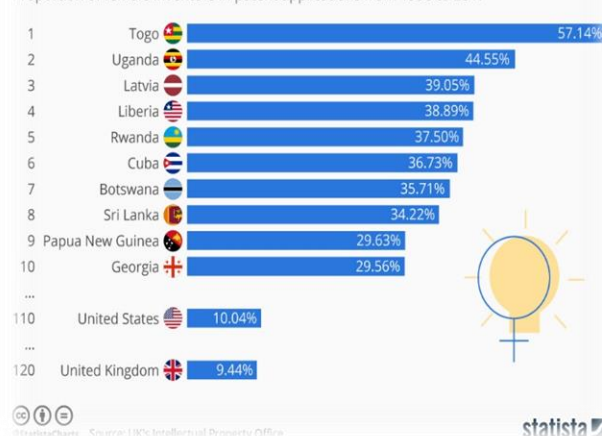
Countries that have more women inventors

A study published by the UK Intellectual Property Office has explored the gender profile in invention patents worldwide.

Africa has the highest proportion of women who have filed patent for inventions. Whereas in the USA applications from women were 10% and in England 9.44%.

The Countries With The Most Female Inventors

Proportion of female inventors in patent applications from 1998 to 2017

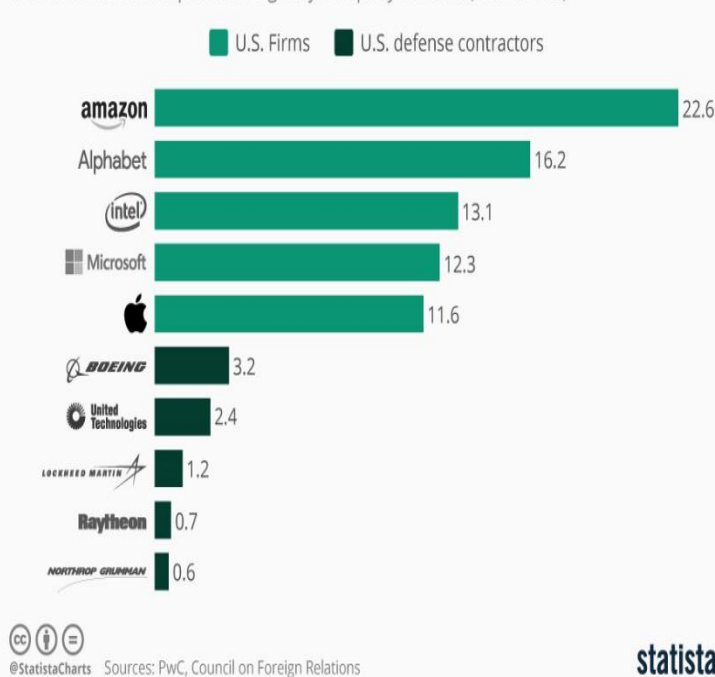


Companies' budget for research and development

According to a publication by Statista, private companies that have spent more on Research and Development for 2018 are:

Amazon with \$ 22.6 billion, Alphabet \$ 16.2 billion; Intel \$ 13.1 billion; Microsoft \$ 12.3 billion; Apple \$ 11.6 billion.

Private Sector Outspends Defense Contractors in R&D



Woman and Health

Breast Cancer and Vitamin D

Assembled materials by **Arlinda Demeti**

We are in October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and it is very important for women to self-check and breast-check periodically! Therefore, oncologists recommend that regular breast eco and mammogram be performed.

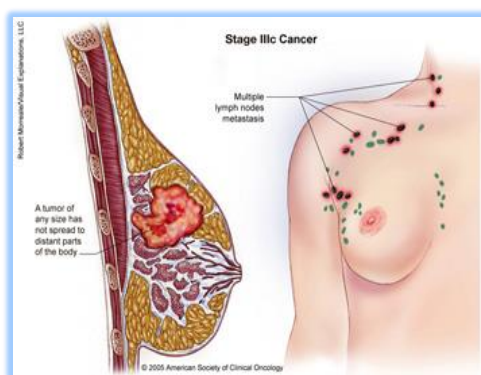
The major threat of breast cancer comes from the silent nature of the disease. Cancer does not cause pain during gland growth. According to experts, the highest death rates are recorded in countries where breast cancer is not diagnosed until the most advanced stages of the disease. But if the tumour is diagnosed in time, the chances to cure it are significantly increased by up to 98%.

But what is breast cancer?

Breast cancer develops from the cells of the breast itself. Cells in one part of the breast become abnormal and begin to grow, cluster and form a tumour, which suppresses and spreads out of control and destroys normal breast tissue. If left untreated, these abnormal cells can spread and damage or destroy the normal tissue surrounding them. The most risky age is after the age of 50 as well as after menopause, but in recent years it has been noted that this age has decreased significantly.

Science today considers vitamin D deficiency the leading cause that creates conditions for the

degeneration of physiological processes within our cells. Numerous scientific studies have recently been conducted to find out about the link that has to do directly with the emergence of degenerative diseases, and from a study published in July-August 2019, researchers point to the link of vitamin D deficiency directly to the risk of cancer, especially breast cancer.



How is vitamin D obtained?

Vitamin D is created in the skin through ultraviolet sunlight. Nowadays it is thought and also the laboratory surveys show that 90% of people in general and 70% of the elderly have severe vitamin D deficiency because of inadequacy of receiving sunlight. Our skin synthesizes vitamin D only when exposed to the sun. It is very difficult to know exactly how much sunlight we need because it depends on the skin tone, location, time and time of day. Parallel 40 is the area with the highest exposure to ultraviolet rays, with low exposure during winter.

According to Dr. Holick in his book "The Vitamin D Solution" "To ensure a normal daily amount of



Vitamin D we need to stay in the sun for 30 minutes and 70% naked."

Few foods contain natural vitamin D. Most commonly found in Codfish Fish Oil; Herring fish; Ocean salmon; Tuna fish; Mackerel fish.

But it is difficult to obtain from foods the total amount needed 40-80 ng/ml in the blood, although the amount of vitamin D in the blood is still debated. However, it is recommended to take vitamin D3 orally because D3 is the chemical form produced by the human body.

It is recommended that the daily intake of vitamin D during meals (Holick MF) is:

0-6 months - 1000UI (25 mcg);
7-12 months -1500 UI (38 mcg);
1-3 years old -2500UI (63 mcg);
4-8 years old -3000 UI (75 mcg);
9-18 years old - 4000 UI (100 mcg) and
Over 18 years old - 4000 UI (100 mcg)

Seminar in Puka with women entrepreneurs

On October 22nd, 2019 was organized in Hotel "Puka" in Puka city an informative seminar about the EU and national programs that support with grants women entrepreneurs. Information on these programs was missing and the majority of them had no e-mail address.



Women entrepreneurs were all in the field of crafts and their number was small.

International Girls' Day

The United Nations has designated October 11 as International Girl's Day! It is time to give the girls courage to pursue their dreams, raise their confidence and celebrate all their talents.

Girls are:

- strong
- smart
- talented
- innovative
- powerful
- capable
- bold



International Rural Women's Day

On October 15th, 2019, in the framework of the International Day of Rural Women, a meeting was held in Tirana to establish a national network of rural women.



We wish success to the network of rural women in their journey as a potential mean for further economic development of rural areas.

Note: The opinions presented in the bulletin are those of the experts themselves and do not represent the opinion of EU

Informative Bulletin

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