

Informative Bulletin

September 2019

ALBANIAN NATIONAL, PROFESSIONAL, BUSINESSWOMEN AND CRAFTS' ASSOCIATION

IN THIS NUMBER

Round Table in Pogradec: "Standard build Trust"

Nga Tefta Demeti

On September 27, 2019, in Pogradec was held the Round Table "Standards Build Trust". This meeting was organized by the SHGPAZ in the framework of the implementation of the project "Promoting Entrepreneurship for Youth and Women Entrepreneurs in Albania", which is funded by the EU through CFCU. The meeting was attended by representatives of local institutions such as the deputy mayor of Pogradec, Ms. Entela Gusho, as well as the tax representative in the municipality, local representatives of IPARD, women entrepreneurs of Pogradec, etc. The topic opened the debate and there

was great interest in the implementation of standards by businesses as well as the presentation of standards by the representative of the General Directorate of Standards in Tirana. In addition, Pogradec municipality presented the initiative that for women entrepreneurs opening new businesses will be tax exempt for the first 6 months. ...

P.7



Albania: moderate progress in the SMEs policies

On September 6th 2019, in Tirana, the OECD presented the progress made by Albania... P.4



Regional Business Forum North Macedonia - Albania - Kosovo

On September 18th, 2019 in Skopje was held the Regional Business Forum... P.5



Business access to finance and regulatory framework

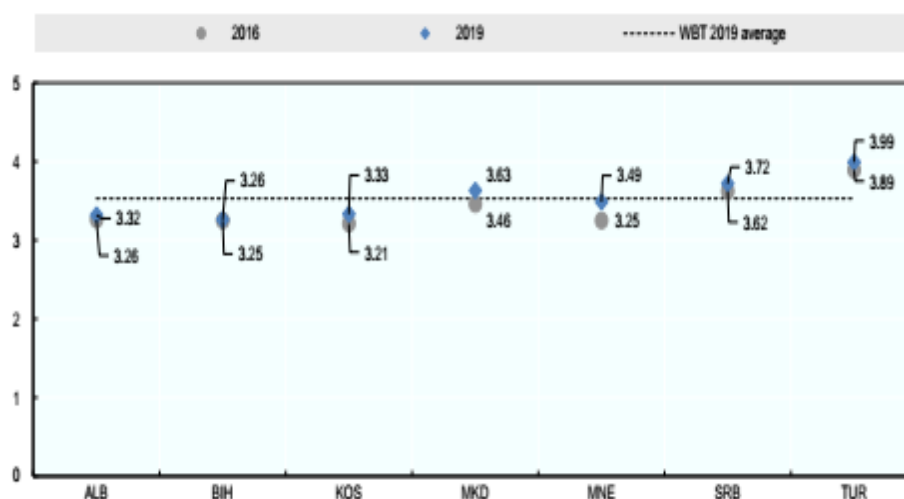
By Eriona Rebi

According to the latest OECD report, the assessment of access to finance for Albania in 2019 has slightly improved compared to 2016 – more precisely from 3.26 to 3.32. This slight increase in the ratio reflects the few changes made to sub-segments of this dimension to facilitate SMEs access to finance. More specifically during the 3-years period 2016-2019, some improvements have been made to the legal and regulatory framework to support bank lending to businesses, but performance in other areas remains largely unchanged, and the high level of informality in micro and small businesses is still a major challenge in this area.

The legal framework for insured / collateralized transactions has been reformed to allow insured creditors to be paid first after a bankruptcy proceeds of a business has started. This strengthens the rights of the secured creditors and may encourage banks to increase lending. Despite the adequacy of the current legal framework, the practical implementation of the laws remains difficult. In June 2017, banks suspended cooperation with bailiffs, accusing them of poor services and high costs. A new regulation for resolving these

issues/claims is being drafted but has not yet been adopted.

Albania has a cadastral system, which is accessible to the public. However, this system is not yet fully available online, reducing its ease of use and reliability, which is



a major concern for investors and financial institutions. The register is not unified, but organized by regions, with different offices applying different standards. Information also may not be up to date in real time, especially due to illegal construction. This also makes real estate registration unreliable. However, the document estimates that little improvement has been made in establishing a publicly accessible register of movable property security rights, a positive development since the last valuation. However, these registrations are not available online and the system is heavily dependent on paper documents, which limits access and often results in movable assets being rejected as collateral. There is a public credit registry and coverage has increased

significantly since the last assessment: more than half of the population is covered, compared to about 16% in 2015. This improvement has mostly reflected the policy of the Bank of Albania adding reports from many financial institutions non-banks. However, given that public registries usually do not collect information beyond financial institutions, there is limited opportunities to increase further coverage by gathering information from other sources such as retailers or social services, without establishing a private credit bureau. To allow for wider

coverage and full credit rating, the Albanian Association of Banks has initiated a project to establish such a credit bureau, although this is in its early stages.

Implementation of Basel III has not yet begun. To protect defenseless borrowers, banks are required to disclose the risks of foreign currency borrowing to their clients.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

What is trade secret?

By Albana Laknori

Based on recent studies many companies / businesses regard trade secrets as an important mean of protecting their valuable information. Unless formally protected by intellectual property rights, and not specifically and well-defined in field law, trade secrets generally consisting of confidential information and knowledge of commercial entities would result in relatively little protection under the law. National protection against abuse by third parties, as currently this protection is not even clearly defined. As a result of poor legal protection and increased risk of misuse of trade secrets by certain entities, those business advantages that are based on trade secrets are at risk.



Given trends such as globalization, resource depletion, and the massive use of ICT, the threat of misuse of trade secrets is expected to continue to grow in the future. Particularly vulnerable to this threat are businesses, small research institutions that often can neither effectively protect

intellectual property rights nor inform themselves of trade secret protection, nor seek the protection of their trade secrets in court given the risks and uncertainties involved in the current conditions. It is precisely in the aforementioned conditions of a globalization of the market for goods and services, but also of the very high speed of information movement from source to the public that we can often say in real time, the transposition of the EU Directive for the protection of trade secrecy turns out to have priority in the current stage of economic and social development. In addition, some other clarifying changes to the existing legal framework in the field of Industrial Property are foreseen, following the improvement of legislation and generally related to the procedures that the amended Law on Industrial Property has defined as subject matter of the GDIP.

stadin aktual të zhvillimeve ekonomike-sociale.

Completing the legal framework with the incorporation of trade secret protection into law is an even better opportunity for foreign businesses in developed countries to see Albania as a safe place for their industrial trade activity, which offers the same level of protection with that of their countries of origin. The European Union, as an



organization where the Republic of Albania aspires and is working to become a member, has as its primary criterion the adoption of European standards and the protection of European values in the national legislation of each member state, which is considered a Europeanization process. Among the priorities of this process is the protection of trade secrets.

www.dppm.gov.al



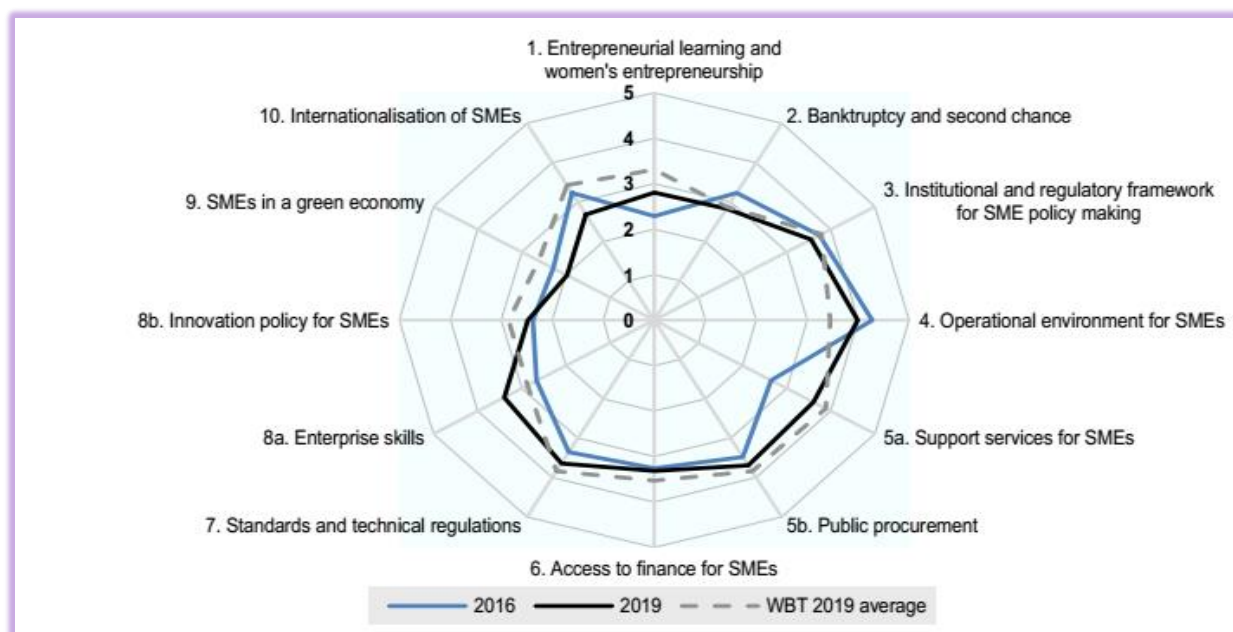
Albania: moderate progress in the SMEs policies

By Tefta Demeti

On September 6th 2019, in Tirana, the OECD presented the progress made by Albania in the development of Small and Medium Enterprises 2019 policies according to SME policy Index for the Western Balkans and Turkey. The meeting was also attended by the Minister of Economy and Finance Mrs. Anila Denaj.

According to this report, it is estimated that Albania has made moderate progress in 2019 compared to 2016. Out of the 10 dimensions analyzed, it has made progress in 5 dimensions: in **"SME Support Services"** (from 2.65 points in 2016 to 3.61 in 2019) and **"Enterprise Skills"** (from 2.64 points in 2016, to 3.4 points in 2019), and a slight improvement in the indicators of **"Learning about entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship"**, **"Access to finance"** and **"Standards"**.

Albania is estimated to have deteriorated in 5 other dimensions compared to 2016, while compared to other Western Balkan countries and Turkey, Albania is rated below the regional average of 8 dimensions and remains the leader in the region for the "SME Operational Environment". , thanks to the deregulation reform, and the steps followed for business registration and licensing, as well as providing services to the public. Albania has much to do in terms of policies to further support SMEs as the engine of the country's economic development.



Human Development Index (HDI)

By Kujtime Stefani

The **Human Development Index (HDI)** is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living.

Albania's HDI value for 2017 is 0.785— which put the country in the high human development category—positioning it at 68 out of 189 countries and territories.

Albania's 2017 HDI of 0.785 is above the average of 0.757 for countries in the high human development group and above the average of 0.771 for countries in Europe and Central Asia. From Europe and Central Asia, countries which are close

to Albania in 2017 HDI rank and to some extent in population size are Bosnia and Herzegovina and Moldova (Republic of), which have HDIs ranked 77 and 112 respectively. Between 1990 and 2017, Albania's HDI value increased from 0.645 to 0.785, an increase of 21.7 percent. Between

1990 and 2017, Albania's life expectancy at birth increased by 6.7 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.2 years and expected years of schooling increased by 3.2 years

		Human Development Index (HDI)	Ranking	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	Gross national income (GNI) per capita
1	Albania	0.785	68	78.5	14.8	10	11,886
2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.768	77	77.1	14.2	9.7	11,716
3	Moldavia	0.700	112	71.7	11.6	11.6	5,554
4	Europe & Central Asia	0.721		73.4	14.1	10.3	15,331
5	High level HDI	0.757		76	14.1	8.2	14,999

Regional Business Forum North Macedonia - Albania - Kosovo

By Flutura Xhabija



On September 18th, 2019 in Skopje was held the Regional Business Forum between North Macedonia - Albania - Kosovo. The meeting was organized by the respective chambers of commerce, but from Albania by Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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.

Education Gateway as a tool for Safer Children

By Esmeralda Ballesha*

September brings back not only cold but also the pupils at schools. The education they learn is important to be adequate academically but also to help them with matters which they face in the daily basis.

Education can be used as a gateway for young people to attain the knowledge and the skills that they need to make proper choices and develop lifelong healthy patterns. Most of the time children are not aware of the invisible 'enemies' that surround them. Bacteria can be spread everywhere and is ready to strike their health. This is why food safety subjects have to be taught in a very young stage in order for the children to be careful in the way they deal with food and personal hygiene.

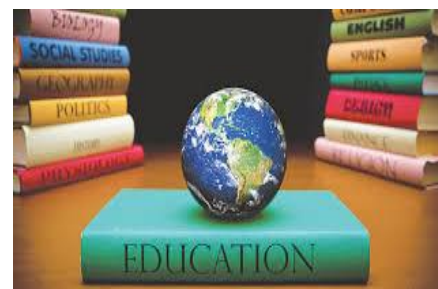
Food safety habits are important for them to learn at a young age in order to help them understand how to prevent food-borne illnesses and food poisoning.

Establishing appropriate school curricula's by identifying the effective components can assist children in improving their behaviours, knowledge and skills that they need to make healthful food choices and develop lifelong safety patterns.

That's why is very much needed to introduce the basic rules of the food safety at the 'Civic education' subject in the primary schools and later on the information given to

the oldest students can be developed further to capture their interest and engage them more through scientific subjects that can also explain food supplies and the risks in different stages.

Children are the future, if we focus the path of their knowledge towards food safety we will not



only expand their horizons but also ensure that the future will be led by conscious persons about this sensitive topic.

* Esmeralda Ballesha
National Technical Advisor
Support to Food Safety, Veterinary and
Phytosanitary Standards

THE
FOOD
SAFETY
PROJECT

Standards build Trust

Nga Tefta Demeti

... Also, from the local representatives they were presented difficulties of farmers and stockbreeders of the region to benefit from grant funds which are very few and the benefit to the farmers were very few. This is the reason that interest for applications were reduced year-on-year.

One of the difficulties encountered by farmers is the lack of laboratories for analysis, for which they must refer to the AKU laboratory in Korça and for some specific tests to the AKU laboratory in Tirana. This takes a long time and their product does not reach the market to be sold.

Whereas for IPARD funds there were many difficulties in informing, completing applications and achieving standards. Local representatives seek to support the marketing of the best and most characteristic products in the area.

From Mr. Michael Parker, the team leader of the project Support to Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Standards, was introduced the new 4-year EU-project, as well as the Ireland experience, in support of small farmers. So, Ireland's experience



was that small farmers must to come together and share the costs of standards, training, certification etc. to make their products competitive in their region and beyond, in order to enter in the European market.

There are a lot of to be done in completing the standard infrastructure chain, in order that Albanian products to meet the requirements standards to enter in the European market.

Arba Kokalari, first albanian Eurodeputy



Arba Kokalari, 32 years old, is the first Albanian to become an Euro deputy in the European Parliament. Kokalari is Albanian-Swedish and lives in Stockholm. She was born in Tirana on November 27th, 1986 and held the post of international secretary of the Moderate Party youth group. The party won 17.6% of the votes, making it possible that four euro deputies, including Kokalari, to be part of the European Parliament.

Arba Kokalari is a senior official of Albanian origin that has been elected as Vice President of the European Parliament for the People's Party.

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)

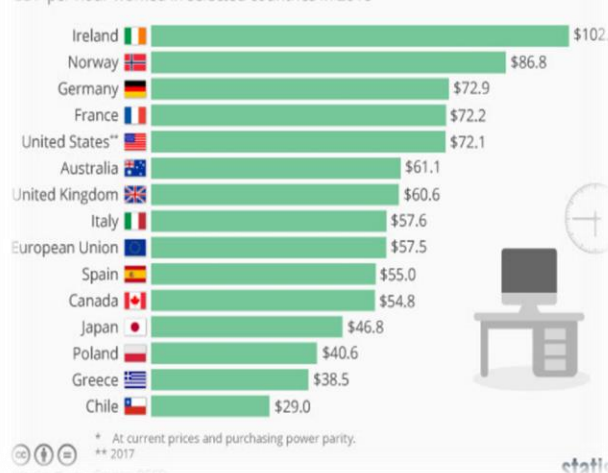


Do you know who has the highest productivity?

According to a study published by Stata, productivity as GDP / working hours for 2018 results the highest for Ireland with 102.3 \$, followed by Norway with 86.8 \$, Germany at third place with 72.9 \$, France with 72.2 \$ and the USA with 72.1 \$.

How Productive is an Hour of Work?

GDP per hour worked in selected countries in 2018*



Do you know how much is spent on education?

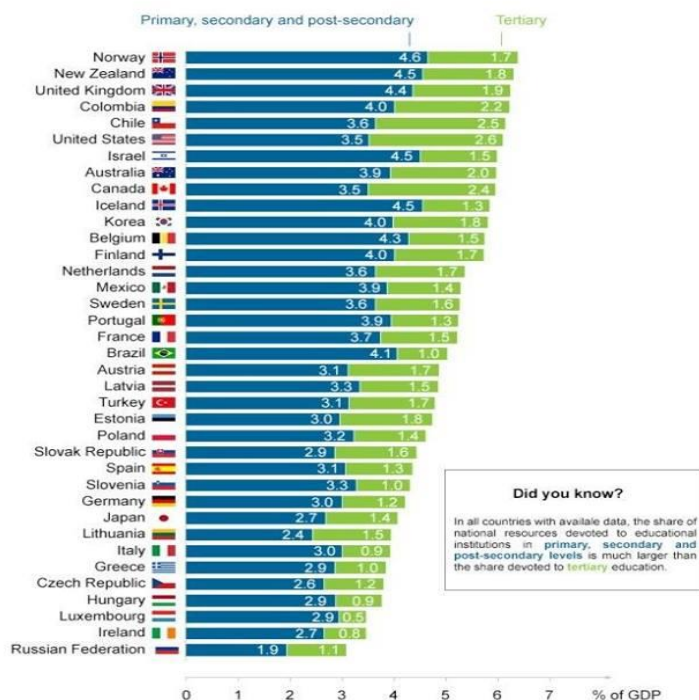
According to an OECD 2018 publication the countries that spend most on pre-university education are:

Norway with 4.6% of GDP, New Zealand with 4.5%, UK with 4.4%.



How much is spent on education?

Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions, % of GDP (2015)



Did you know?

In all countries with available data, the share of national resources devoted to educational institutions in primary, secondary and post-secondary levels is much larger than the share devoted to tertiary education.

Source: Education at a Glance 2018, Indicator C2.



Women and Health

Multiple Sclerosis

Assembled materials by **Arlinda Demeti**

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a chronic disease that affects the nervous system causing a variety of possible symptoms, including problems with eyesight, movement of arms or legs, sensitivity or balance. MS is a disease that accompanies an individual throughout his or her life, which can be mild but can also cause serious disability to the individual's health. The disease can occur at any age, but is most common at ages 20-40, and occurs 2-3 times more in females than in males. One of the most common causes of disability in young people (20-30 years) is MS.

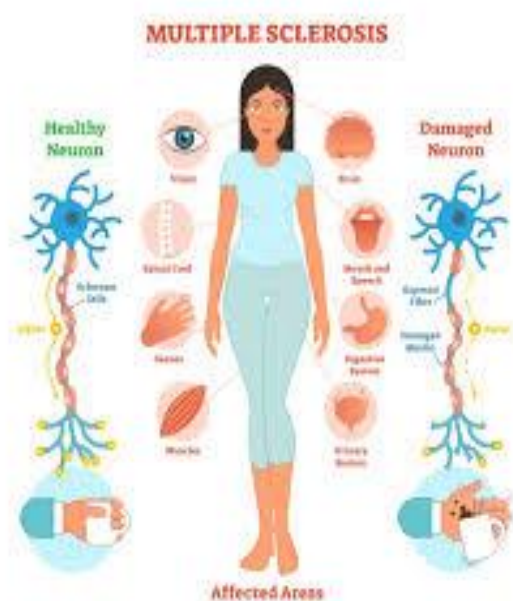
Symptoms of MS

Symptoms can vary from one individual to another and can affect any part of the body. The main symptoms are:

- Fatigue
- Difficulty in walking
- Visual problems such as blurred vision
- Problems with urinary bladder control
- Numbness or tingling in different parts of the body
- Spasms and cramps or muscle stiffness
- Problems with balance and orientation
- Problems with thinking, learning and planning

Depending on the type of MS that the individual has, the symptoms

can appear and go away at different stages, but may also worsen over time. MS can begin with individual repetition (Relapsing-Remitting) or gradual progression.



What Causes MS

Multiple sclerosis is an autoimmune disease, where the immune system attacks the nervous system and mainly the layer that encapsulates and protects the nerves (myelin). It is unclear which factor influences the immune system to attack the nervous system, but most experts think a combination of genetic and environmental factors may be involved.

Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis

There is currently no cure for MS, but some treatments can help

control the health status. The treatment a patient needs depends on the specific symptoms and the difficulties he/she has. Treatment may include:

- Specific treatments for individual symptoms of MS.
- Treatment of recurring cases with steroid medications to accelerate recovery.
- Treatment to reduce the number of recurrent episodes using medications called "disease modification therapy".

Disease modification therapies can also help to reduce or slow down the overall worsening of disability in patients with recurrent MS or progressive secondary MS who develop recurrent episodes.

Recently FDA (Food And Drug Administration) has approved the first oral drug (Siponimod)

in 15 years to treat secondary progressive MS with active disease. Clinical trials showed a significant reduction of the risk of disease progression, including impact on physical disability and cognitive decline. This drug is already registered in Albania.

Living with Multiple Sclerosis

If you are diagnosed with MS, it is important to take care of your general health. Living with MS is a big challenge, but new treatments over the last 20 years have significantly improved the quality of life in patients diagnosed with MS. Multiple sclerosis is rarely fatal to life.

Information Sessions for "Call for proposal"

The **World Vision** **Albania and South East European Youth Network** are organising five (5) Information Sessions for the Call for proposal title: *"Supporting human rights defending organizations through sub-granting scheme"*. Publication reference: CfPo2/2019.

Following the dates and time-frame for the "Information Sessions" to be held in 5 different cities of Albania:

- **Shkodra:** date October 14th 2019, time 09:15 - 13:15
- **Tirana:** date October 15th 2019, time 09:15 - 13:15
- **Vlora:** date October 16th 2019, time 09:15 - 13:15

- **Lezha:** date October 17th 2019, time 09:15 - 13:15
- **Korça:** date October 18th 2019, time 09:15 - 13:15

All interested parties are invited to participate at the Information Sessions events.

For more information, please visit:

<https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/66920>



Meeting with the new mayor of Pogradec



On September 1, representatives of SHGPAZ Pogradec together with the President of the Mrs. Flutura Xhabija met in the Pogradec municipality with the new Mayor of Pogradec Mr. Ilir Xhakolli and his staff to discuss policies to support women entrepreneurs in Pogradec.

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

Informative Bulletin

September 2019



Prepared by:

Msc. Flutura XHABIJA
& Msc. Arlinda DEMETI
& Editorial office