

Albania Program Summary

Albania’s program is focused on reforming the country’s public procurement process and strengthening the Tirana Tax Department to promote fiscal transparency and accountability. It is also supporting the establishment of a National Registration Center to help combat corruption in business registration. Albania’s second, or Stage II, MCC Threshold Program builds upon the significant successes of the first program and looks to institutionalize key reforms in public administration and judicial capacity building and to support anticorruption activities.

Program Highlights

- ★ The Ministry of Finance accepted risk-based audit selection, revoking the authority of local tax officials to select when to conduct audits. All selections will be made at headquarters through a risk analysis where the unreported tax liability is concealed. This is a critical step towards reducing opportunities for corruption in the tax administration.
- ★ All taxpayers now have access to electronic filing services. By removing direct interaction between taxpayers and tax collectors, the threshold program has helped to further reduce opportunities for public officials to seek informal payments. This builds on the successes of Albania’s first MCC Threshold Program.
- ★ The one stop shop for business licensing has opened and began operations. The new law on Licenses, Authorization and Permits - enacted in March - was a necessary precondition and outlines the new licensing reform procedures and policies. The one stop shop for licensing streamlines the process for businesses and complements the business registration one stop shop supported during the first threshold program.
- ★ Two informational workshops were held to review threshold program goals and activities with government and civil society organizations. The first workshop was attended by 70 Albanian officials; the second by 30 private sector representatives and civil society organizations.
- ★ An assessment on advocacy capacity of civil society organizations in program areas will be to help inform and tailor the program’s technical assistance.

Stage II Threshold Program Status

Status.....Implementation, Year 1

Stage II Threshold Program Information

Total Amount.....\$15.7 million

Duration.....2 years

Agreement Signed.....October 12, 2008

Country Information

Population.....3,129,678*

GNI Per Capita Income.....\$2,580