



Republic of Albania
MINISTRY OF FINANCES AND ECONOMY

**DOGANA
CUSTOMS**

Green Book 2024

Priorities 2025





**DOGANA
CUSTOMS**

ALBANIAN CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

The Green Book 2024

Priorities 2025



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ABBREVIATIONS

EU:	European Union
CEFTA:	Central European Free Trade Agreement
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
FIAA:	Foreign Investors Association in Albania
WCO:	World Customs Organization
AEO:	Authorized Economic Operator
HMRC:	British Customs and Revenue Agency
HOIO:	Home Office International Operations of the British Ministry of the Interior
AKU:	National Food Agency
PEN-CP:	Innovation for Customs Administration
WB:	World Bank
DHAT:	American Chamber of Commerce
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNCTAD:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCODC:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
BKH:	National Bureau of Investigation
ITMS:	Integrated Tariff Management System
SEED:	Systematic Exchange of Electronic Data
EAD:	Export Accompanying Document
MCEN:	Marine Corps Enterprise Network



I. The Speech of the General Director Mr. Genti Gazheli

The year 2024 was challenging for Albanian Customs, but still a successful year by achieving around 2.3 billion EUR of revenues or around 125 million EUR more than 2023.

This result, much more than sufficient to satisfy, is worth encouraging the Customs Administration because greater work awaits us for 2025 where we are already intensively involved in the European Integration Process, in the negotiating position of Cluster 3 on “Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth”.

Digitalization of Customs services, facilitation of fair trade, service to business, protection of the country’s financial interests, fight against smuggling and evasion, were the main pillars which marked the performance of Albanian Customs for 2024.

In the context of facilitating the legal trade, while also maintaining risk-based control of the circulation of goods, means of transport or persons, during 2024, work was focused to increase the number of companies in the Green Channel and reduce the processing time of declarations in the Red Channel, where physical control is carried out, as well as the Yellow Channel, where the documentary control is carried out.

The simplification and digitalization of Customs procedures have yielded concrete results in terms of reducing the average time for reviewing online applications through e-Albania. During 2024, 5 more Authorized Economic Operators were added, bringing the total number of AEOs to 16, while many other applications to benefit from this status are under review.

Our focus has been and remains on Information Technology developments and in collaboration with AKSHI and UNCTAD which provides the Asycuda Word System, we have modernized and digitalized 100% of Customs services.

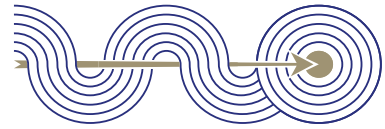
Cooperation with international partners in the function of trade facilitation, widely reflected in this publication, shows the stage reached by the performance and credibility of the Customs Administration in front of international institutions, such as: EU, WCO, CEFTA, IMF and WB, but also counterpart administrations, especially those of Italy and other border countries, in fulfilling our Mission as an efficient and transparent administration in the completion of its missions.

For 2025, we are on the right track towards a higher level of standards for the Albanian Customs Administration, in its mission to serve citizens and business, to facilitate exports and imports, 100% digital services, risk analysis supported by Artificial Intelligence Programs, facilities for Approved Exporters, Direct Declarants and Authorized Economic


Operators, professional and ethical service for Albanian and international businesses and citizens in each of the 18 Customs Houses throughout Albania.

The activity of the Customs Administration will be based on three main objectives for 2025: Efficiency, Security and Prosperity on the path of integration towards the European Customs Union.

MISSION AND VISION



Customs Authorities have as their primary responsibility to supervise international trade of the Republic of Albania, contributing to open and fair trade in the application of the trade policies and those of other sectors of the Albanian economy, affecting trade and security of the entire trade chain, and for this purpose, Customs Authorities aim at protecting the financial and environmental interests of the Republic of Albania from unfair and illegal trade, supporting legitimate business activity; guaranteeing the security and safety of the Republic of Albania and its inhabitants, as well as the environmental protection and, where necessary, in close cooperation with the other Authorities; maintaining the right balance between Customs controls and facilitating the legitimate trade.

 Albanian Customs, for the fulfilment of its Mission, has defined the following strategic principles:

<p>Principle of the protection of the society and financial interests of the Republic of Albania;</p>	<p>The Principle of supporting the competitiveness of Albanian companies;</p>	<p>The principle of further facilitation of legitimate trade;</p>	<p>The principle of supply chain control and management used for international movement of goods;</p>	<p>The Principle of cooperation, maintaining, developing and enlargement of mutual relations between Customs Authorities and other Governmental Agencies and between Customs Authorities and the business community;</p>
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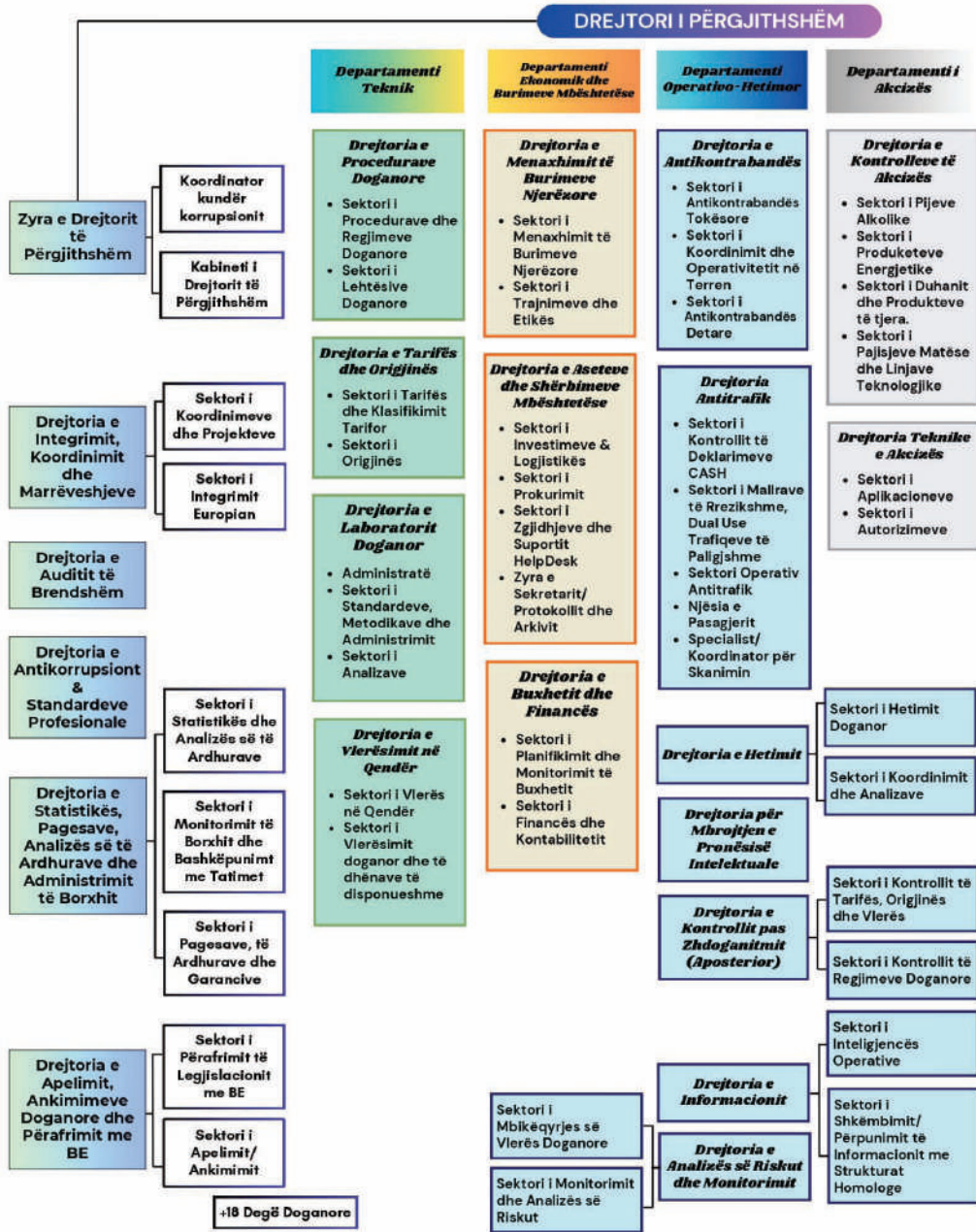
VISION

The vision of the Albanian Customs Administration is to be:

- in full harmony with EU standards and best practices;
- a modern, professional, impartial, honest, trustworthy and uncorrupted public institution;
- a supportive partner to the trading community and efficient protector of society and the supply chain.

III. ORGANIGRAM

Structure of the General Directorate of Customs



IV. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

January 2024

Cooperation between Albanian Customs, Italian Customs and Guardia di Finanza

The Director of the Albanian Customs Administration, Mr. Genti Gazheli, during an official visit to Rome, met the Director of the Customs and Monopolies Agency, Mr. Roberto Alesse, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Guardia di Finanza, Mr. Andrea De Gennaro, with the aim of strengthening the cooperation between the two countries on Customs matters.



In the continuation of the activities initiated with the Bilateral Agreements on Mutual Assistance, information exchange and administrative cooperation, it was decided to further intensify the joint efforts to guarantee legitimacy and security in cross-border trade activities.

The three Administrations have also agreed to start exchanging experiences and joint activities between the ports of Ancona, Bari and Brindisi and the Albanian Ports of Durres and Vlora. These initiatives will be financed also thanks to the funds of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) within the framework of the Adriacustoms Union Program.

Official visit to the Headquarters of the General Command of “Guardia di Finanza”

Following the meetings with the Director of Customs and Monopolies Agency, Mr. Roberto Alesse, and the Commander-in-Chief of Guardia di Finanza, Mr. Andrea De Gennaro, the General Director of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, was received on an Official Visit to the Headquarters of the General Command of Guardia di Finanza. This is the first visit of the General Director of Customs to Guardia di Finanza and Mr. Gazheli appreciated as very important the assistance of Guardia di Finanza mainly in the fight against smuggling and trafficking.



Among the Heads of the Institutions, it was agreed on signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation aiming:

- (I) prevention of illicit trade mainly by the sea;
- (II) the exchange of information between the two Institutions in the function of risk analysis;
- (III) training of Albanian Customs staff at the Guardia di Finanza Academy.



The cooperation between the Albanian and Italian Authorities in the field of Customs has a special importance since Italy is Albania's main partner with a trade volume of around 3.5 billion Euros per year, of which around 1.73 billion Euros are exports and 1.77 billion Euros are imports.

Cooperation between the Customs Directorate and the American Chamber of Commerce

The Meeting of the Chamber President, Mr. Grant Van Cleve and the Executive Director, Mr. Neritan Mullaj with the Customs Director General, Mr. Genti Gazheli, is the first step taken in 2024 by the Heads of the two Institutions to consolidate the working relations in the function of serving the business.

The American Chamber has a long history of periodic meetings with the Customs Directorate and it has built a direct communication platform in addressing issues that its members encounter at Customs.

This is reflected in the positive assessment that American Chamber Members have expressed to relations with Customs in the Business Index, demonstrating the effectiveness of building bridges of cooperation between business and institutions.



To strengthen this relationship, the Heads of AmCham and Customs have specifically discussed on cooperation plans during the year and the best ways to address “ad hoc” matters or those that are in process. The continuation of the facilitation of Customs procedures or the processes of digitalization of systems, remain bilateral topics for which the exchange of information and discussion on proposed solutions are necessary.

The Heads of both Institutions considered as very important the promotion of the AEO (Authorized Economic Operator) Status and encourage the businesses to apply for this Status which facilitates and shortens the Customs procedures.

The American Chamber is aware that Customs are the gateway for the business to the domestic market and therefore the first impression that local businesses, as well as foreign investors, receive about the standard of the business climate in the country. In view of this goal, the American Chamber will continue to foster these collaborations and relationships which produce security and clarity for business.

February 2024

Meeting with TAIEX Mission Experts

The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, received in a meeting Mr. Boris Kastelic, Director of the Customs Department and Mr. Branislav Gregorič, Coordinator of External Relations at the Ministry of Finance of Slovenia in the framework of the TAIEX Expert Mission (financed by the European Union).

The purpose of this Mission is to assist the Albanian Customs Administration in preparing the Action Plan of the “Customs Business Strategy 2023-2027”, also drafted with the assistance of the European Union, aiming to modernize the Customs Administration in order to facilitate trade.



In his speech, Mr. Gazheli stated that Customs was highly evaluated by the European Commission in the “screening” process and the main priorities of the Customs Administration for the next four years are: digitalization (Information Technology Systems and Artificial Intelligence in risk assessment) and strengthening the administrative capacities in the process towards a modern Customs according to the EU Standards.

TAIEX Experts assessed Albania’s progress in the integration process, mainly for Chapter 29 “Customs Union”, and emphasized that the Albanian Customs Administration must adapt to the challenges of EU Customs Union according to their best practices.

 March 2024**Meeting with the Director of SELEC**

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, received the Director General of the South East European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC), Oğuz Serkant Akin.



The focus of this Meeting was the further cooperation of the Albanian Customs Administration with the Law Enforcement Organization SELEC in the framework of the fight against cross-border organized crime, as well as in terms of the exchange of information and criminal intelligence.

The two Heads of Institutions also discussed the coordination of joint investigations, as well as facilitating the exchange of information between the 11 SELEC Member States.

Within the framework of SELEC's operational activities, Albania, which leads the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Smuggling Task Force, has coordinated so far 4 regional operations: Operation Eclipse, Operation Know-How, Operation Eclipse II and Operation Know-How II.

Meeting with UNCTAD Directors



The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, held a Meeting with the Heads of the UNCTAD Asycuda Program, Mr. Fabrice Millet, Program Manager, Mr. Dmitry Godunov, Regional Coordinator, Mr. John David, Program Development Director and Mr. Constantin Ciuta, Office Manager of the Asycuda Program.

The Director General, Mr. Gazheli, expressed the will of the Albanian Customs Administration for new continuous and sustainable developments of the Customs Information System in accordance with European Union standards which include Community Transit, Customs Decisions and Simplified Declaration.

The Director General of Customs underlined the role of Information Technology developments in reducing Customs procedure time for businesses and individuals, by promoting interactions with other Institutions, such as the National Food Authority, the Albanian Post, the General Directorate of Road Transport Service, etc.

UNCTAD directors expressed their readiness and willingness to support the ACA requests with the aim of modernizing the Customs Information System in line with EU standards.

The fight against trafficking and smuggling with the support of the United Kingdom

The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, met with the Director General for Immigration Enforcement at the British Home Office, Mr. Bas Javid.



The meeting discussed the measures taken by Albania in the fight against trafficking and smuggling and the support from the United Kingdom to Albania.

April 2024

Memorandum of Cooperation between the Customs Administrations of Albania, Italy and Guardia di Finanza

At the invitation of the Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, paid an official visit to Tirana the General Director of the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, Roberto Alesse, and the Commander General of the Guardia di Finanza, Andrea De Gennaro. This is the first simultaneous visit to the Albanian Customs by the two top managers of the Italian Customs and the Italian Fiscal Authorities. During the joint meeting between the three Heads of the Financial Institutions, it was discussed the cooperation between the Customs Administrations of Italy and Albania, reiterating the need to strengthen the trilateral relations between these Institutions.



The Director General of Italian Customs and Monopolies, Roberto Alesse, the Commander General of the Guardia di Finanza, Andrea De Gennaro and the Director General of Albanian Customs, Genti Gazheli, signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of an Italian-Albanian Joint Customs Commission, as an instrument for strengthening ties, trilateral cooperation and facilitating dialogue between the Guardia di Finanza and the Customs Administrations of Italy and Albania.

The Commission, co-chaired by the Director of the Customs and Monopolies Agency, Roberto Alesse, the Commander-in-Chief of the Guardia di Finanza, Andrea De Gennaro, and the Director of the Albanian Customs Administration, Gent Gazheli, will monitor the cooperation between the Customs Administrations of Italy and Albania and undertake joint initiatives, such as:

- a) promoting cooperation and mutual exchange of information;
- b) facilitating communication and cooperation to combat smuggling, fraud and other illegal activities related to international trade;
- c) developing and implementing joint programs to enhance operational and technological capabilities;
- d) promoting mutual understanding and respect for Customs regulations in force for participating countries and relevant international agreements.

Annual Meeting of ECA Regions on the protection of the ozone layer

The General Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli, participated in the Annual Technical Meeting for the Europe and Asia Region on the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, organized in Tirana by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania.



During his speech at this meeting, he stated that Albania has a complete legal basis for the Montreal Protocol in place. On the other hand, Gazheli said that the Customs System has created and regularly updated risk profiles for ozone-depleting substances, as well as for products and equipment containing them, in order to implement the prohibitions and restrictions.

The General Directorate of Customs cooperates with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and the National Ozone Unit to improve the quality of controls through the exchange of information and the provision of functional equipment for the identification of ozone-depleting substances.

Also, the General Directorate of Customs, in cooperation with the National Ozone Unit, conducts annual training for Customs personnel on the detection of ozone-depleting substances and the use of identification equipment for such substances.

Visit to the MBM Port in Porto Romano

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, visited the MBM Port in Porto Romano, Durres.



The increase with 35% of the processing capacities in a year, the reduction in vessel processing time and the fulfilment of technical conditions have turned the MBM Port in Porto Romano into a reference point for the entire regional market in only 3 years of activity, competing with ports throughout the region.

MBM Port is the largest fuel port in Albania. It has a capacity that supplies both the Albanian market and that of neighbouring countries. The Porto Romano Free Port Zone includes a terminal in the port area as well as hydrocarbon storage space. It has a modern infrastructure for the transfer of Petroleum Products and LPG from the port to the storage tanks. It has a record of 1.2 million tons transferred per year.

Visit to the Port of Durres

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, visited the Port of Durres, where with the approaching tourist season, an energisation of all host structures is required, especially those of Customs. Correctness, integrity and close cooperation with other law enforcement structures operating in the Port of Durres, as the largest port in the country, was the main message that he addressed to the employees of the Customs Administration.



With the launch of the Navis 4 online operating system, a new working standard is offered in the area of container processing at the Port of Durres, bringing a 45% increase in the volume of processed goods. Over 827 thousand passengers and 96,429 vehicles have travelled to/from the Port of Durres during 2023.

World Customs Organization Conference

At the invitation of the World Customs Organization, the Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, participated in the Regional Conference of Customs Directors at the World Customs Organization Headquarters in Brussels.



The new Secretary General of the WCO, Mr. Ian Saunders, presented the "Draft-WCO Modernization Plan", which foresees the strengthening of the regional dimension of the WCO through the development of a framework for regional entities and the formalization of the approach to regional structures and recognized WCO bodies.

The WCO Modernization Plan is based on a set of measurable and concrete indicators that respond to the challenges of Customs Administrations in terms of facilitating legitimate trade, revenue collection, the principle of protecting society and the country's financial interests, as well as institutional development.

Members of the European WCO Region, led by Norway, discussed the progress made in developing the plan and provided their support and guidance for improving cooperation in the regional dimension of the WCO.

■ May 2024

Meeting with the Director of Montenegrin Customs

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, met in Shkodra with the Director General of Customs of Montenegro, Vladimir Bulajčić. The two Heads of Customs Administrations stopped at the Customs Points of Hani i Hoti and Murriqan, two of the main entries and exits gates for Albanian and Montenegrin citizens.

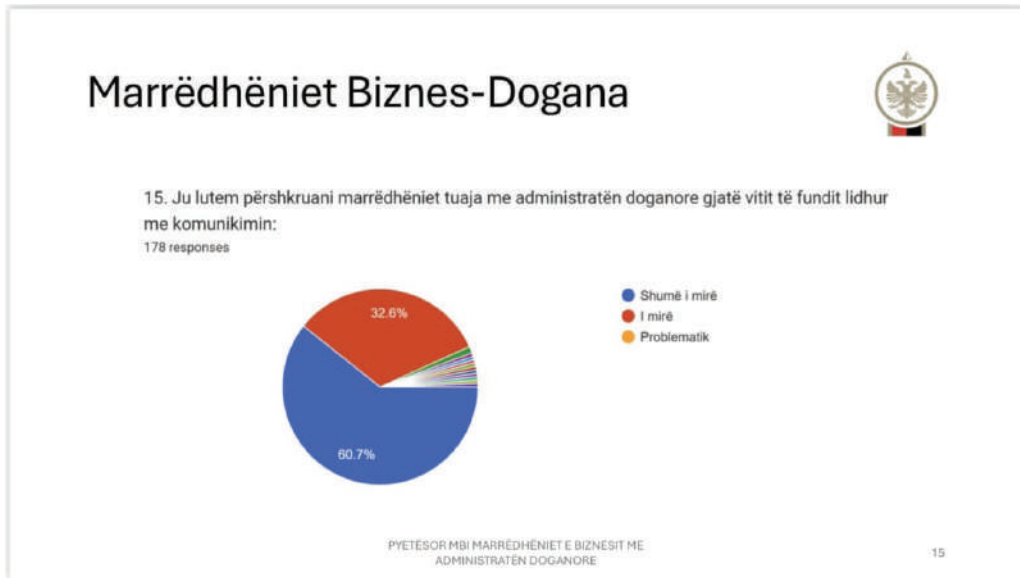


During the joint meeting of the two delegations, there was a discussion on increasing cooperation between our Customs, which, with the approaching tourist season, increases the flow of travellers on both sides of the border. Both sides agreed to facilitate procedures in order to reduce the time spent by travellers and the processing of goods.

Customs receives maximum ratings from business

The General Directorate of Customs has received maximum ratings in the second conducted Questionnaire in order to increase the transparency and continue the work to improve Customs services to business.

More than 56% of businesses responded that the applications are reviewed very quickly and over 75% of responses highlight that the declaration, physical verification and valuation procedures take less time than last year.



Overall, the assessment of the improvements which have been made in Customs procedures has received positive responses from 87.5% of respondents, and over 60% of them assess the relationship with Customs as “very good”, while 32.6% assess it as “good”.

Online services also received top ratings from businesses, and the processing of export and import declarations was rated 55.9% “very fast” and 40.1% “average”.

The General Directorate of Customs is rigorously evaluating all business suggestions in order to perfect its services towards European Union Customs Standards.

Customs Directorate at the SELEC Council Session

The General Directorate of Customs participated in the 24th Session of the SELEC Council (Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre) held on 30th of May 2024 at the SELEC Headquarters in Bucharest, Romania. This Session was attended by Council Members from all SELEC Member States, Operational Partners, Observers, as well as SELEC Management, Liaison Officers and Staff Members.



An important topic on the Agenda of the Session was the request of the National Bureau of Investigation of Albania to become an Operational Partner of SELEC, a request which was approved by the Council. The Council is the highest decision-making body of SELEC, composed of high-level representatives of the SELEC Member States.

June 2024

Study visit to the Zecca Dello Stato Polygraphic Institute, Rome

Based on the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Customs Administrations of Albania, Italy and the Guardia di Finanza, signed in Tirana on 4th of April 2024 and following the implementation of the mutual action plan, a high-level delegation from the Ministry of Finance, the General Directorate of Customs and the Securities Printing House conducted a study visit to the Zecca dello Stato Printing Institute in Rome.



This Institute, subordinate to the Italian Ministry of Finance, is a powerful structure, a protagonist of digital innovation that designs and produces securities for the Italian State.

The reason for this visit is to establish bridges of inter-institutional cooperation with this Institute, because of starting from January 1st, 2025, the fiscal stamps, as a security and state monopoly, are produced and distributed by an entity authorized by the Council of Ministers, an experience similar to that of Italy.

Third Meeting within the year with the Italian Customs counterpart

Following the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Customs Administrations of Albania, Italy and the Guardia di Finanza, signed in Tirana on April 4th, 2024, the Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, held a meeting with the Director of the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, Roberto Alesse.

In this meeting, the third between them within the year, the two Directors General reiterated the importance of intensifying relations between the two Customs Administrations, in particular technical assistance in the field of excise.

The meeting was also attended by the Director of ADM's International Relations Office, Andrea Mazzella, and the Director of ADM's Excise Directorate, Luigi Liberatore.



Memorandum “On the establishment of the Maritime Logistics and Supply Chain Observatory”

Under the special attention of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Energy, Ms. Belinda Balluku, the Memorandum “On the establishment of the Maritime Logistics and Supply Chains Observatory” was signed in Durres. The Observatory will serve as an inter-institutional digital platform for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data on maritime logistics and supply chains in Albania. On behalf of the General Directorate of Customs, the Memorandum was signed by the Director General, Mr. Genti Gazheli.



According to the Memorandum, the General Directorate of Customs is committed to providing statistical data on trade volumes of goods imported/exported/transited through

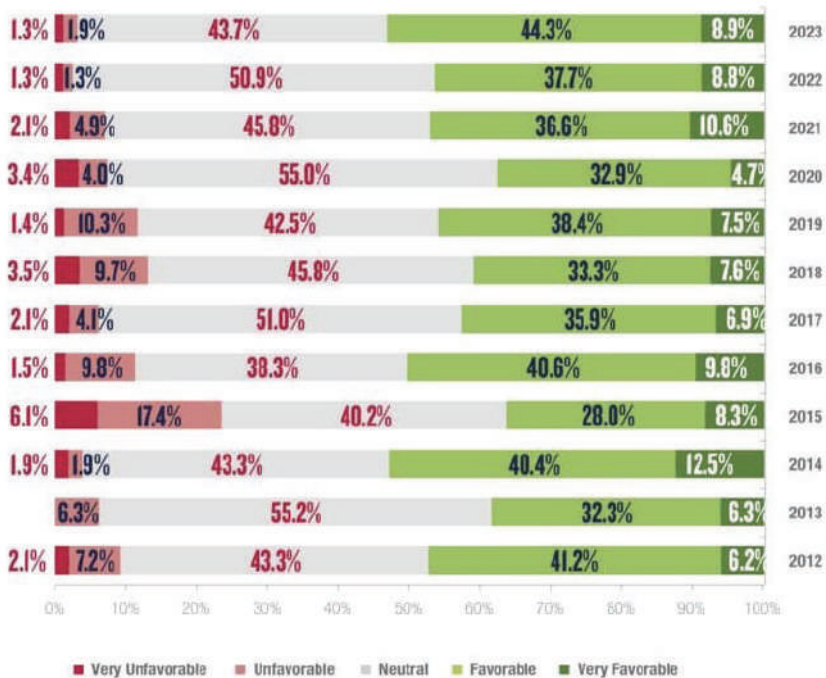
Albanian ports, as well as to assist in identifying countries of origin and destination, goods valuation and other public and useful data for the Observatory's research purposes.

US Chamber of Commerce Business Index Survey

The American Chamber of Commerce published the Business Index Survey where relations with the Customs Administration are at the highest levels compared to other institutions. According to the survey of AmCham Members, relations with Customs have improved significantly and steadily over the past three years, reaching the highest level, around 64.4%, while the average index marked around 47.6 percent.

3.4.2 Relation with Customs Authorities

How was the relation of your business with the customs authorities for the last year (2023)?



AmCham President, Grant Van Cleve, described the cooperation with the Customs Administration as very positive in improving the business climate in Albania. The number of businesses which rate their relations with the Customs Administration as very good has increased by 6.6 percent in the last year.

Relation with Customs Authorities

*A higher score is better.



July 2024

Visit to Vlora Customs

With the peak of the season approaching, the staff of the Vlora Customs House is on duty 24/7, responsibly and professionally handling the large number of vehicles and passengers at this important gateway for tourism in our country.



The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, visited Vlora Customs House, where he thanked the staff for their professional dedication during this busy season, while requesting that hospitality and professional accountability to be the motto of every employee of Customs Administration.

Visit to Murriqan Customs

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, visited Murriqan Customs Point, where he saw the work of the Customs employees at the peak of the tourist season. Expressing his gratitude to the staff for their professionalism in dealing with the high flow of visitors, he requested the most hospitable service during these high temperature's days.



At Murriqan Customs Point during the tourist season, 17,587 citizens and 5,263 vehicles crossed in just 24 hours.

Visit to the Customs House of Hani i Hotit

The Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli, also visited the Hani i Hotit Customs, which, like every other Customs Point in the country, faces a large flow of citizens on both sides of the border during the tourist season.



He thanked the employees who deal with the rhythm of work at the peak of the season with great professionalism, serving 24/7 to citizens and holidaymakers who cross this Customs Point.

■ August 2024

The Port of Durres, one of the main entry points for tourists this summer season, has registered record numbers. Over 85 thousand citizens have arrived at this Port through Italian Ports only during July.



The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, was at the Port of Durres, where around 15,000 passengers arrived on the first weekend of August.



“Mother Teresa” International Airport during August operated an average of 240 flights per 24 hours, while the number of passengers reached over 40,000 per day.



During July, Rinas Airport welcomed 1.2 million passengers.

Visit to Porto Romano

The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, together with the Minister of Finance, Mr. Petrit Malaj, visited the premises of the Fuel Port in Porto Romano, to closely observe the implementation of the Operational Plan between the General Directorate of Customs, the General Directorate of Taxation and the General Directorate of Police on the control of import, export, production, storage, transportation and trading of hydrocarbons.



The Joint Operational Plan aims to control and monitor the import, storage and trade of excise energy products on the implementation of the legislation in force. It also aims to identify individuals, natural or legal persons who illegally carry out the activity of importing, storing and trading excise energy products; increase the hitting force and prosecution of individuals, natural or legal persons who illegally carry out the activity of importing, storing and trading excise energy products; seize excise energy products which are not taxed or that do not meet the quality standard, as well as prevent smuggling or false declarations of excise energy products.



For the 7-month period of 2024, fuel consumption reached 381,083 tons, an increase of 19,700 tons compared to the same period of 2023 when consumption was 361,381 tons.

Visit to Morina Customs

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, visited Morina Customs House. During the meeting with the staff of this Customs, he thanked them for the dedication and professionalism shown in coping with the flow of travellers, because this tourist season has reached its peak, with over 4.5 million citizens and nearly 1.4 million vehicles which have crossed the border from June to the end of August.



Director Gazheli demanded accountability, increased attention and professional ethics from every employee of the Customs Administration in dealing with citizens and maximum commitment during the passenger flow months.

September 2024

Customs employees receive training on “Ship Control”

As part of the assistance provided by French Customs to the Albanian Customs Administration, the training of Albanian Customs employees on “On Ship Control” began at the premises of the Guardia di Finanza Command in Durres.

The opening ceremony of this training was attended by the Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, the French Customs Attaché, Christophe Bergeon, as well as the Guardia di Finanza Attaché at the Italian Embassy in Tirana, Gianpiero Carrieri.



Director Gazheli appreciated the cooperation with the French Customs Administration, which dates back many years and extends to almost all areas of activity of the Customs Administration, legislative, excise law, post-clearance and NCTS within the framework of IPA Projects, as well as the training of our law enforcement structures.

The Director of Customs highlighted the fact that this training is very important also due to the fact that the largest trade of our country is carried out by sea, mainly between the Port of Durres, Porto Romano, MBM Port and the Port of Vlora.



He expressed to his counterparts the readiness of the Albanian Customs Administration to further the cooperation and mutual assistance in all areas of Customs activity and in particular for Customs supervision and control in maritime transport.

Meeting with business in Durres



The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, held a meeting with business representatives in Durres. During discussions with members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he stated that Customs remains committed to the mission of facilitating Customs procedures and protecting fair trade.

He emphasized the digitalization of Customs services, as he announced that within the year all Customs procedures will be online through e-Albania. The Director General, Genti Gazheli, invited businesses to apply for the status of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO), through which they can benefit from many Customs simplifications.



“In these years, we have completely changed our approach to business with the philosophy that Customs is an institution which serves business and whose main mission

is to ensure transparent and predictable Customs procedures in order to generate revenue for the state budget, while maintaining the right balance between facilitating Customs procedures and controls,” - the Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli said.

Meeting with the UNODC Delegation



The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, welcomed a delegation from UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) led by Danilo Rizzi, Regional Representative for South-Eastern Europe.

Strengthening the cooperation between UNODC and the Albanian Customs Administration, as well as new areas of cooperation within the framework of the new UNODC Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe 2024-2029, were the main topics discussed during this meeting.

The Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe aims to link and synergise UNODC’s programme efforts in South-Eastern Europe over a 5-year period from 2024 to 2029 and supports the region’s aspirations for European integration.

October 2024

Forum with businesses in Shkodra

The Business-Customs Forum continued in Shkodra, where together with businesses operating in this city, discussions were held on further facilitating procedures and continuing the computerization of Customs services. The meeting was considered very fruitful as it was evident that relations between business and Customs are currently at their best.



The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, said that the approach to business has completely changed, while the main mission is to ensure transparent Customs procedures in order to generate revenue for the state budget. The development of technological systems is a continuous process towards improvement, said the Director General of Customs.

“Data from the system shows that we have a significant reduction in the processing time of declarations in all risk channels, while transaction valuations have significantly improved that for the period January-August 2023 were 97%, the highest transaction number used,” said Gazheli.

Businesses, for their part, appreciated the improvement of Customs procedures and the addition of new applications which allow them real-time access, transparently viewing each stage of the approval of applications, reliefs, tax exemptions, etc.

AdriaCustoms Project in Durres



Italian, Slovenian, Croatian and Montenegrin Customs Senior Officials gathered in Durres as part of the AdriaCustoms Project which aims to foster cooperation between Customs Administrations of the countries bordering the Adriatic Sea.

The Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli, during his speech at the meeting held at the Port of Durres, stated that the exchange of best experiences between Customs Administrations is the key to joint success in the fight against smuggling, counterfeit goods and illegal trafficking.

He particularly appreciated the cooperation with the Customs and Monopolies Administration in Italy and the Guardia di Finanza with which Albanian Customs signed a trilateral Agreement this year.

The AdriaCustoms Project, funded and supported by OLAF and the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, involves the exchange of experiences between Customs Administrations in the Port of Durres in Albania, Port of Bari, Ancona and Trieste in Italy and Port of Bar in Montenegro.

Customs - Business Forum in Tirana

The General Directorate of Customs, together with the Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, organized the Customs - Business Forum with a focus on facilitating Customs procedures and further computerizing Customs services. During the speech held at this meeting with businesses in the capital, the General Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli, stated that from January 1, 2025, revised Rules of Origin will enter into force that will facilitate trade through the electronic Certificate of Origin, significantly reducing time, but also costs for businesses.



The President of the Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Nikolin Jaka, said, among other things, that the Customs Administration's relations with business are currently quite positive. "The Customs Administration is increasingly serving business, offering transparent and predictable Customs procedures, where in addition to generating revenue, it aims to maintain a balance between facilitating procedures and Customs controls," - underlined Jaka.



The Business-Customs Forum was considered a good opportunity to discuss further improving the business climate and relations with Customs services towards EU standards. "I believe we share the same opinion that there is a significant improvement

in business assessments of Customs, as an institution which serves business and whose main mission is to ensure transparent and predictable Customs procedures,” - said the Director General of Customs, Genti Gazheli.

Businesses positively assessed the further digitalization of Customs procedures and the facilitation of exporters towards regional and EU markets. Customs again invited businesses to apply for Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) and Authorized Exporter Status to benefit from procedural facilities, as well as many Customs simplifications.

Brussels, 15th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation



Albania and the European Union held the 15th Meeting of the Sub-Committee “On Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation” in Brussels on 23rd and 24th of October 2024. Representatives from the European Commission discussed the latest developments in these areas with the relevant Albanian Authorities. The Meeting was co-chaired for the EU by Mr. Andrew Williams, Permanent Secretary for the Sub-Committee in DG NEAR of the European Commission, while for Albania by Mr. Genti Gazheli, Director General of Albanian Customs.

During this two-day meeting, the Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, stated that Albania has a legal framework in line with European legislation to the highest extent and remains deeply committed to fully align it with the “*Acquis Communautaire*” in the

field of Customs. The representatives of the European Commission positively assessed the progress made by the Albanian Customs Administration in particular in terms of the level of legal, institutional and administrative preparation and Albania's plans to join the Common Transit Convention.

DG TAXUD Experts, Mr. Antonio Blanco and Mr. Karel de Greve, also commended the progress that Albanian Customs has made in the field of Authorized Economic Operators, increasing the number to 16 AEOs.



The Meeting also appreciated the fact that during this year, which coincided with the opening of negotiations for the basic chapters of Albania's integration into the EU, Customs has progressed in trade facilitation, the implementation of the Albanian Customs Administration Business Strategy (2023-2027), as well as other provisions, such as those for Customs controls of counterfeit goods or mutual administrative assistance in Customs matters.

The OLAF representative, Mr. Paul Aleksander, expressed his gratitude for the update of the contact point for MAA by Albanian Customs. He highly appreciated the successful functioning of the mechanism in the field of mutual administrative assistance between EU Member States and Albania, while emphasizing that this successful cooperation was also followed by EU Member States. He also appreciated the operations carried out by Albanian Customs over the last two years, as well as the fight against cigarette smuggling.

“Women in Uniform Alliance 2024”

Albanian Customs was part of the “Women in Uniform Alliance 2024” Conference, an initiative of the British Embassy in Albania that took place for the second consecutive year in Tirana. The Conference this year addressed topics related to gender equality in law enforcement structures and supporting this issue in the Western Balkan Countries.



Ms. Aida Dizdari, Head of Shkodra Customs House, who delivered a speech at the event, emphasized that empowering women and their inclusion in decision-making are necessary steps for building a more just and inclusive society. The “Women in Uniform Alliance” is an initiative of the British Embassy in Albania in collaboration with Albanian Customs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice.

November 2024

Visit to Kosova Customs

The Director General of Customs of Albania, Mr. Genti Gazheli, paid an official visit to Kosova Customs, where he was received by the Director General of Kosova Customs, Mr. Agron Llugali. The visit was focused on strengthening the cooperation and exchange of experiences between the two institutions, as well as joint efforts to facilitate trade between the two countries. During the meeting, both delegations discussed Customs clearance operations at the Port of Durrës, where efforts to improve procedures and services have significantly impacted the increase in trade exchanges and saved time for businesses and citizens.



Also, it was discussed was cooperation at the Joint Border Point Morina - Vermica, a key place for exchanges between the two countries, where the latest technologies and practices are being implemented to guarantee safe and efficient crossing. Another important point of discussion was the European integration process, given the start of Albania's negotiations for EU membership. The Albanian team shared valuable information with Kosova Customs which is expected to help in further preparations towards meeting European standards. At the end of the meeting, the Directors General agreed to strengthen cooperation at all levels to improve capacities and address common challenges in the field of Customs. This close partnership aims to contribute to trade facilitation and support the economic development of both countries.

20 new specialists trained at the Guardia di Finanza Academy

20 young specialists of the Albanian Customs Administration conducted a training on "Activities of control and fight against illegal traffic in the Customs area" at the Guardia di Finanza Academy, in Ostia, Italy. The training is part of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Albanian Customs Administration, the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency and the Guardia di Finanza, which was signed in April this year in Tirana.



The ceremony held at the start of this training was attended by the Commander of the Guardia di Finanza Academy, General Francesco Mattana, the Head of the Department of the General Command of the Guardia di Finanza, General Vito Giordano, as well as the Director of the International Relations Office of the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, Andrea Mazzella, who conveyed his best wishes to the group of young officials of the Albanian Customs. During this training, in addition to lectures and practical field activities on the fight against illegal trafficking, smuggling and fraud, a study visit was also held at the international airport of Rome "Fiumicino", where the young officials were introduced to the operational activities carried out by the authorities at the airport.

Meeting of Balkan Customs Directors with EU Countries, Budapest



The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, participated in the High-Level Meeting of Customs Directors of the Western Balkans with EU Countries, in Budapest, Hungary. During his speech at this meeting, he stated that the process of European Integration and convergence towards the Customs Union are becoming increasingly tangible for Albania, thanks also to the Hungarian Presidency which has pushed things forward a lot.

“We are aware that we have entered an intensive negotiation process, not only for Chapter 29 “Customs Union”, but also for all other Chapters of the Internal Market, and this meeting is an opportunity to deepen the ties between the European Union and the Western Balkans, as we continue to undertake concrete legal reforms on European Integration, as a major political project.” - said, among other things, the Director of Albanian Customs, Genti Gazheli.

On the other hand, the Director of Customs emphasized that in the function of free trade, through the CEFTA Agreement, cooperation between the Customs Administrations of the countries of the region has increased, especially in the areas of information exchange, trade facilitation and the fight against trafficking.

At the World Climate Summit, COP 29



On November 20, within the framework of the 29th United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP29), a Conference was held on the topic "Green Customs: Dialogue among Customs Leaders". The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, together with other Customs Leaders from different countries of the world and representatives of the World Customs Organization participated in the event organized by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, where for the first-time Customs issues related to environmental protection were discussed.

The Conference highlighted the strategic role of Customs services in environmental protection and the importance of strengthening international cooperation in this regard. This event marked an important step both in solving global environmental problems and in increasing the role of Customs Authorities in the fight against climate change. The Meeting also discussed the measures taken by Customs Services to support the Green Customs Initiative, emphasizing the role of Customs Authorities in ecological balance and environmental protection.

December 2024

First EU and UNODC Regional Meeting



The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, participated in the first Regional Meeting of the Steering Committee of the EU Joint Action Promotion Programme - UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime).

During this meeting, discussions were held on strengthening the rule of law and good governance through effective border control measures at ports and airports, where Customs Authorities have an important role alongside the Border Police, international partners and other law enforcement institutions.

The Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli, said that Albanian Customs has had concrete results thanks to the partnership with UNODC, such as the Container Control Program, thanks to which over 1 ton of cocaine was identified and seized. Also, through the Air Cargo Control Unit, surveillance at airports has been significantly improved by increasing the capacities in the fight against illegal traffic through air routes.

Cooperation Agreement between SELEC and NBI

In order to coordinate efforts to enhance closer international cooperation in law enforcement, a Cooperation Agreement between SELEC and the National Bureau of Investigation was signed in Romania. On behalf of the NBI, the Agreement was signed by

the Director of the National Bureau of Investigation, Ms. Aida Veizaj [Hajnaj] and on behalf of SELEC, by the Director General, Dr. Oğuz Serkant Akin.



The ceremony took place at SELEC Headquarters in Bucharest in the presence of a High-Level Albanian Delegation, including the Director General of Customs, Mr. Genti Gazheli. Mr. Akin stated that “SELEC is confident that it has a new partner and that this cooperation will bring positive results for both parties.” The Agreement aims to increase cooperation between NBI and SELEC in conducting quality investigations in the field of criminal offenses against corruption and organized crime.

The Customs Administration has served with devotion and dedication even during the New Year's Eve hours at every Customs Point in Albania.



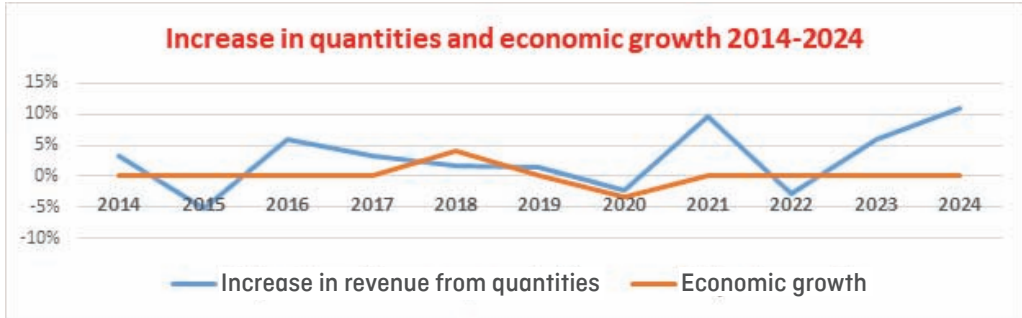
HAPPY 2025!



V. REVENUE'S PERFORMANCE OF CUSTOMS

The revenues for the 12-month period 2024 were realized at the rate of 229.6 billion LEK. Compared to the 12-month period 2023, about +12.5 billion LEK more were collected (106%).

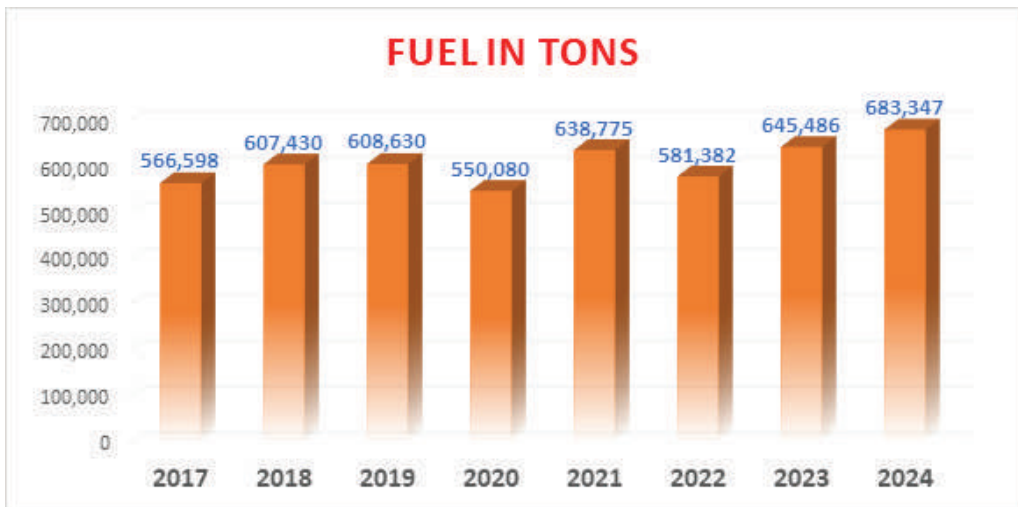
A clearer picture of the economic reality of the Customs Administration is the following graph:

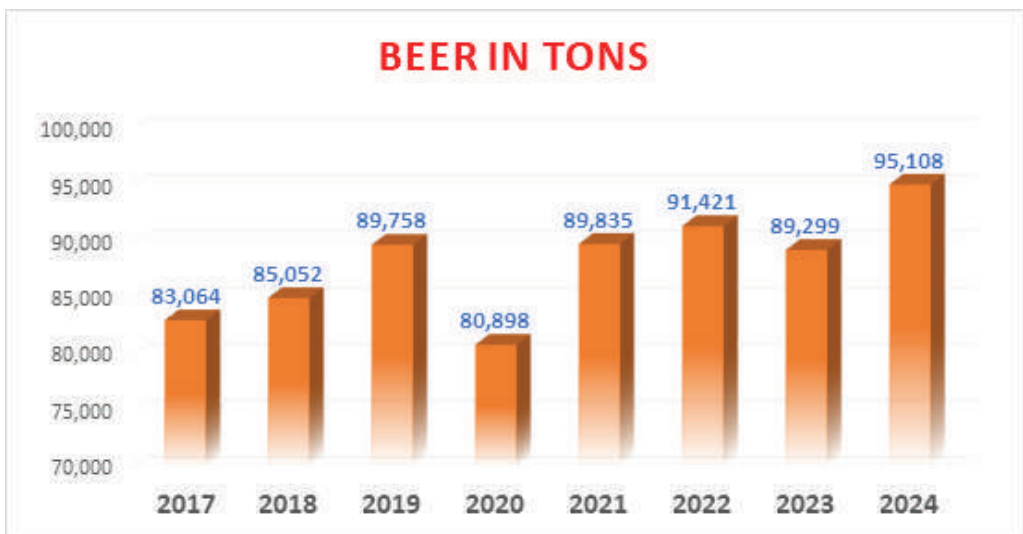
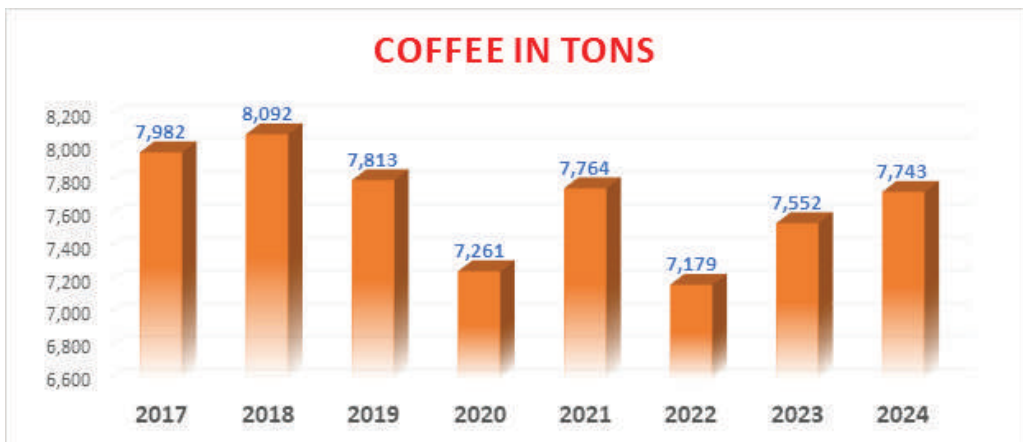
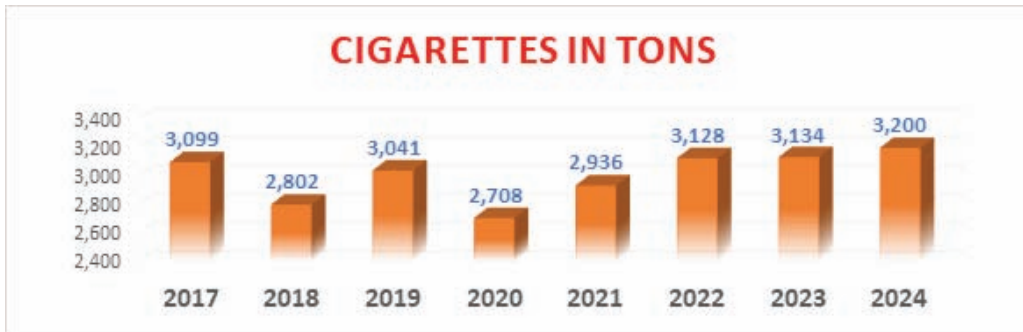


It is worth noting that, despite the loss of 17.2 billion LEK from the exchange rate, the 12-month period January-December 2024 remains the best in the history of Albanian Customs.

Performance of main excise goods:

All excise goods have a very good performance in revenue, compared to the 12-month period of 2023. In terms of consumption, the cigarette product is +66 tons, Fuel +37,861 tons, Beer +5,809 tons and Coffee +190 tons, thus reaching the highest left years.





During the period January-December 2024, the Albanian Customs Administration realized the highest number of processed declarations, with the greatest increase in Import Declarations 4 which bring the main income to the Customs Administration with 444,530 processed declarations, the highest number achieved in the recent years.

But what is most relevant, it is the improvement in the speed of processing declarations in the various Customs Channels. For the period January-December 2023-2024, we have a significant reduction in the processing time of declarations in all risk channels, which is also one of the priorities of the procedural improvements of the General Directorate of Customs.

The processing time in the yellow channel for the period January-December 2023-2024 has decreased by 13 minutes, while the red channel has recorded the greatest improvement, **reducing the time by 91 minutes.**

Reducing the time for processing declarations facilitates international trade, directly improving the business climate. Businesses can import and export goods faster, reducing Customs costs and speeding up the process of supplying the market. On the other hand, reducing the time increases transparency, minimizing the possibilities for abuse or deliberate delays, which would increase trust between businesses and the Customs Administration.

VI. LAW ENFORCEMENT

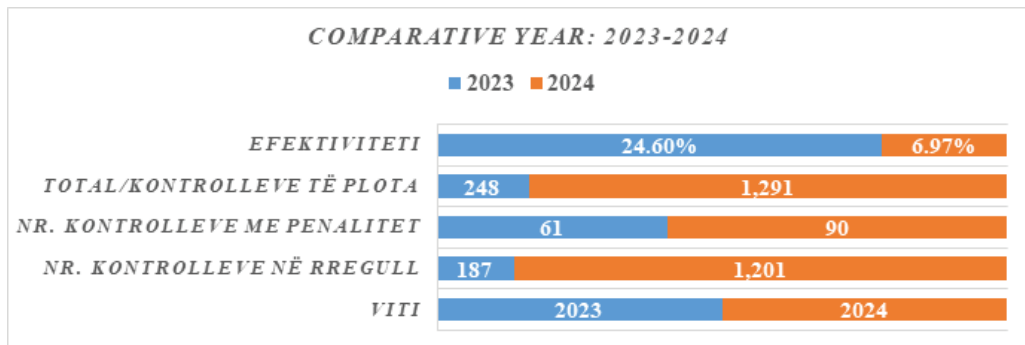
VI.1. Fight against Smuggling

During the period January - December 2024, the Anti-Smuggling Directorate (Road & Maritime Sector) carried out **3,414** controls, out of which **1,291** or about **38%** were complete. During the controls carried out, in cooperation with GDC structures, **127** cases of Customs violations were detected, of which **90** cases with penalties, with a total value of **30,121,200** LEK.

Full controls and effectiveness January - December 2023/2024:

Year	No of controls in order	No of controls with penalties	Total/full controls
2023	187	61	248
2024	1,201	90	1,291

Comparison Table January - December 2023/2024:



The Road Sector has carried out controls throughout the Customs territory and road axes, where priority has been given to cargos with risky goods, using information from the field, as well as that available according to the type of goods, subject, tariff classification, origin, but also controls for illegal trafficking.

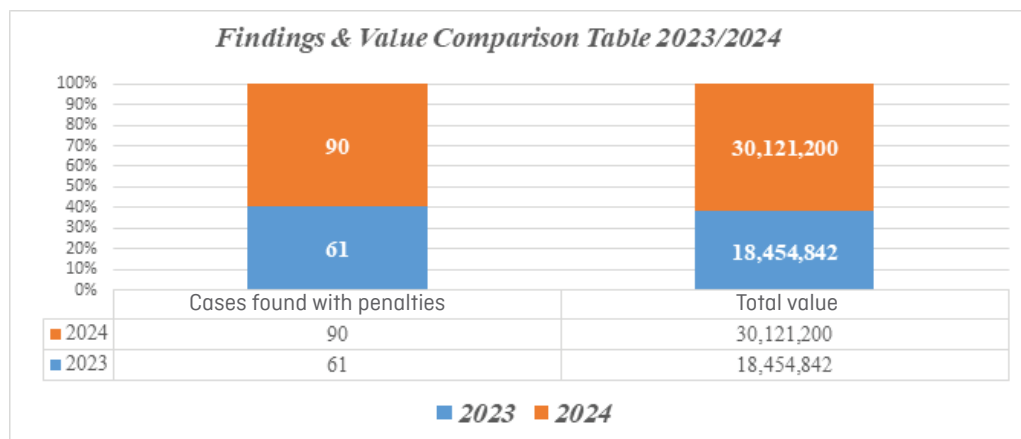
During the controls carried out, **90** cases with penalties were found, with a total value of: **30,121,200** LEK for the period **January - December 2024**.

Comparative table of findings/violations and value with the same time period last year:

A/S Director-ate	Cases found with penalties		Total/Value	
	January - December 2023	January - December 2024	January - December 2023	January - December 2024
Total:	61	90	18,454,842 LEK	30,121,200 LEL

Compared to the same time period in 2023, it results that in 2024, there are **29** more cases of findings/discoveries of violations or **48%** more, as well as an increase in the value of penalties by **11,666,358 LEK** more or **{+63% more in value}**.

Number of cases and total value 2023/2024:

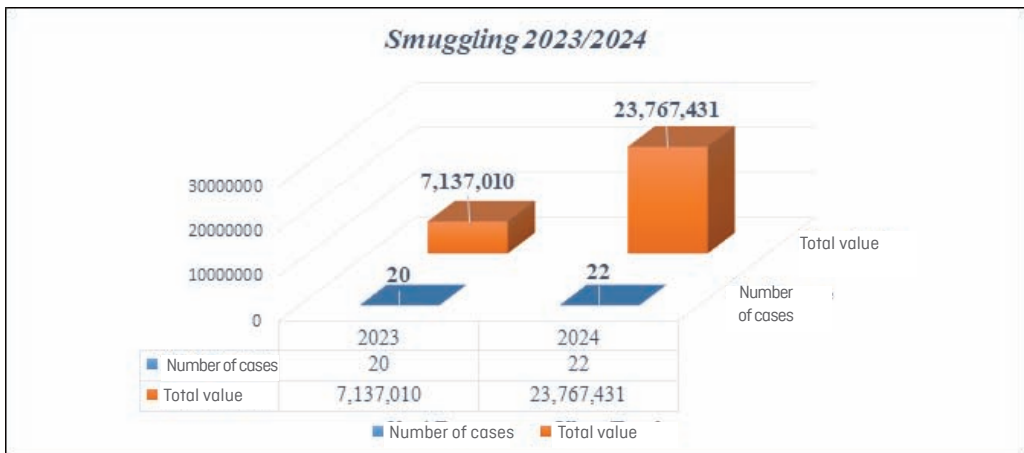


Number of Customs violations classified as administrative violations 2023/2024:

January - December 2023/2024				
Violation	Cases	Avoided Duty	Penalty	Total
Administrative 2023	61	6,399,643	12,055,199	18,454,842 Lek
Administrative 2024	90	8,455,791	21,665,409	30,121,200 Lek

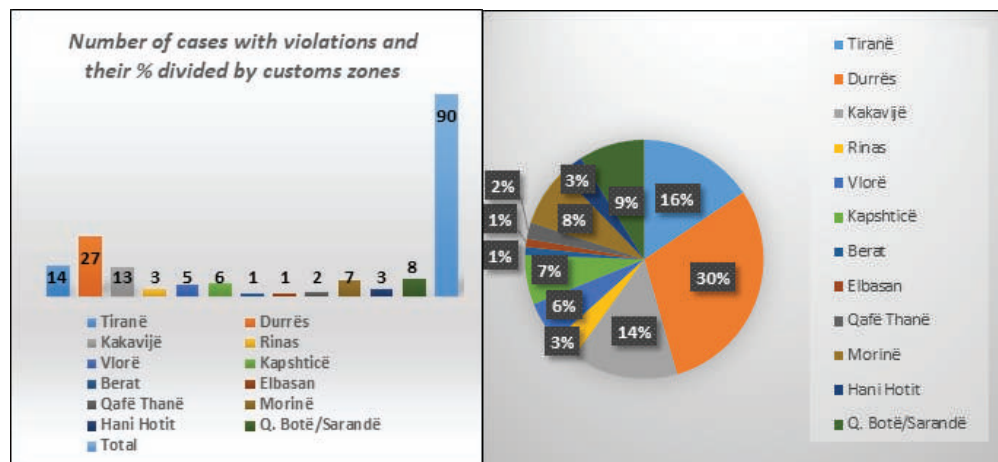
Compared to the same period in 2023, it is seen that we have a high increase in the number of Administrative Penalty Cases, but a decrease in its value.

Number of Administrative Cases & their Value 2023/2024:

Number of smuggling cases and their value 2023/2024:


The highest number of cases of violations, identified during controls carried out by the Anti-Smuggling Directorate in cooperation with other GDC structures, results in the Customs Zones: Durres, Tirana, Kakavija, Qafë Bote/Sarandë, Morina and then the other Customs Zones.

Number of cases with violations and their percentage divided by Customs Zones 2024:



During 2024, from the controls carried out by the Road Anti-Smuggling Units, **22** cases of goods suspected of trademark infringement were identified and blocked in the amount of: **30,844** pieces of various clothing and accessories, as well as **173.55** kg of various items that were forwarded for further verification to the Directorate of Intellectual Property Protection.

VI.2. Fight against illegal trafficking

During 2024, the Anti-Trafficking Operational Groups have carried out a total of 1284 controls at all Customs Houses at the Border Points at the entry and exit of the Republic of Albania.

From these controls, 20 cases of violations by the companies were identified for items such as:

- pyrotechnic substances;
- botox and hormone injectable substances;
- narcotic substances;
- valuables;
- undeclared cash at the border;
- smuggled living animals;
- smuggled goods.

The Operational Sector has participated in joint operations with other Directorates of the Operational Investigative Department and with other Law Enforcement Agencies, as well as homologous ones.

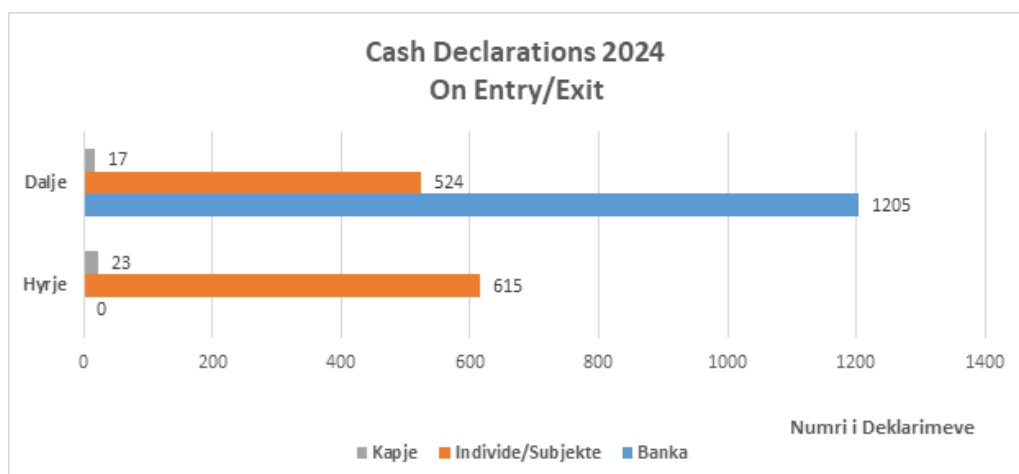
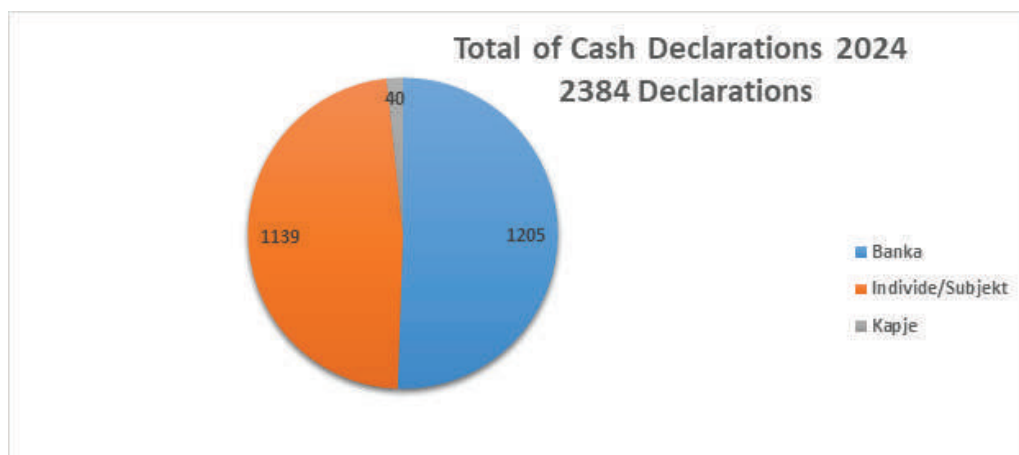
Passenger Information Unit Sector

During the data processing, this Sector has forwarded the names of citizens targeted by the ATSG System to the Operational Sector for verification. During the period January-August, **759 citizens were forwarded for control identified by the ATSG System, of which 2 were arrested and the rest were addressed as cases of suspicious activity.**

Cash Declarations for 2024

For the year 2024, the total number of cash declarations is 2384 declarations, of which 1139 declarations were made by banks, 1205 declarations by individuals/entities and 40 seizures/non-declarations.

In entry results in 615 voluntary declarations from individuals/entities and 23 non-declarations. In exit results in 1205 declarations from banks, 524 voluntary declarations from individuals/entities and 17 non-declarations.

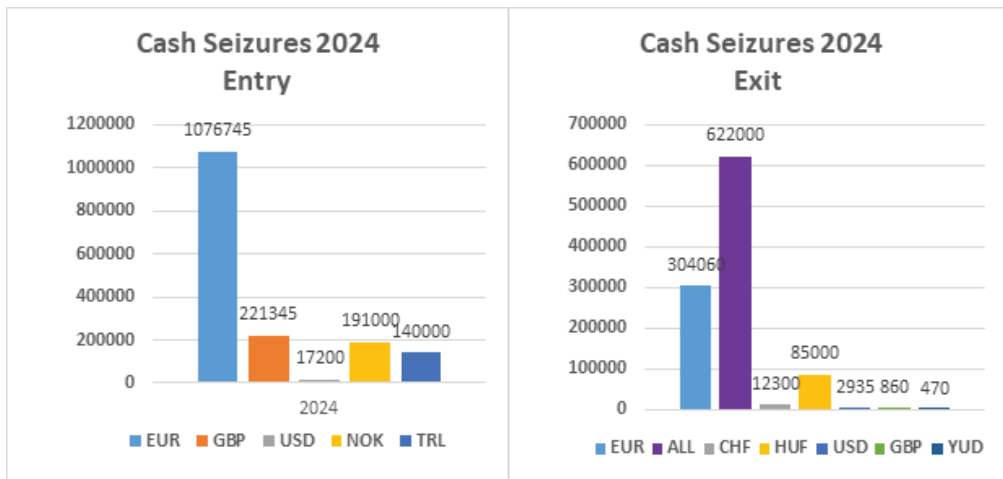
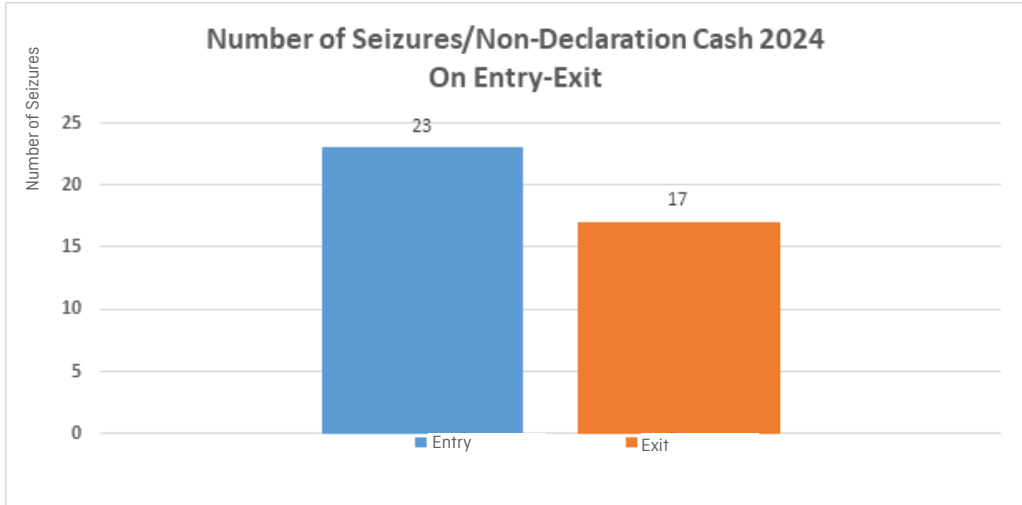


Suspicious Activity Reports (RAD)

During 2024, 7 RADs were sent to the Financial Intelligence Agency.

Cash seizures on entry and exit

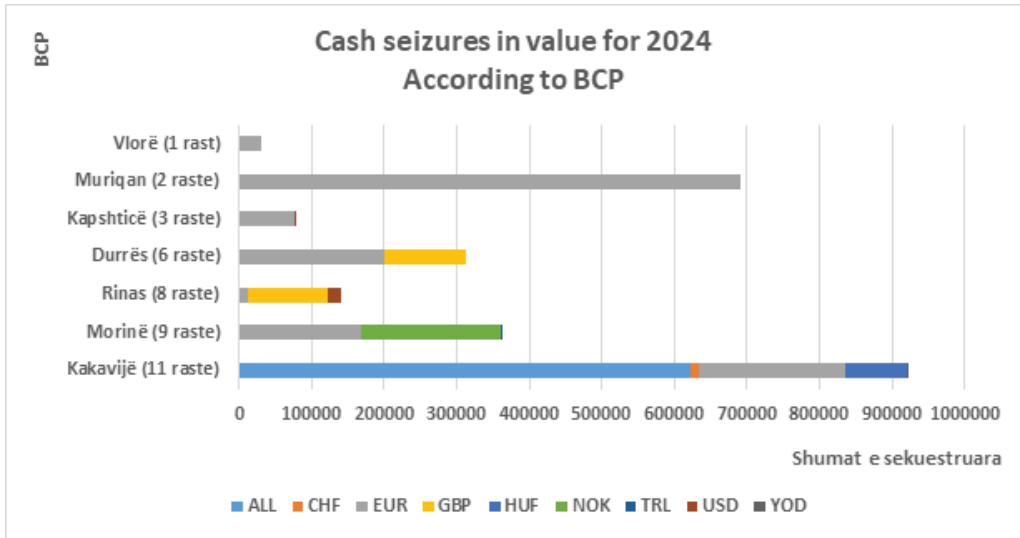
For the year 2024, 40 cases of cash seizure/non-declaration were recorded (23 cases on entry and 17 cases on exit). Seizures on entry and exit of the Republic of Albania are primary in Euro currency.



Cash seizures according to BCPs

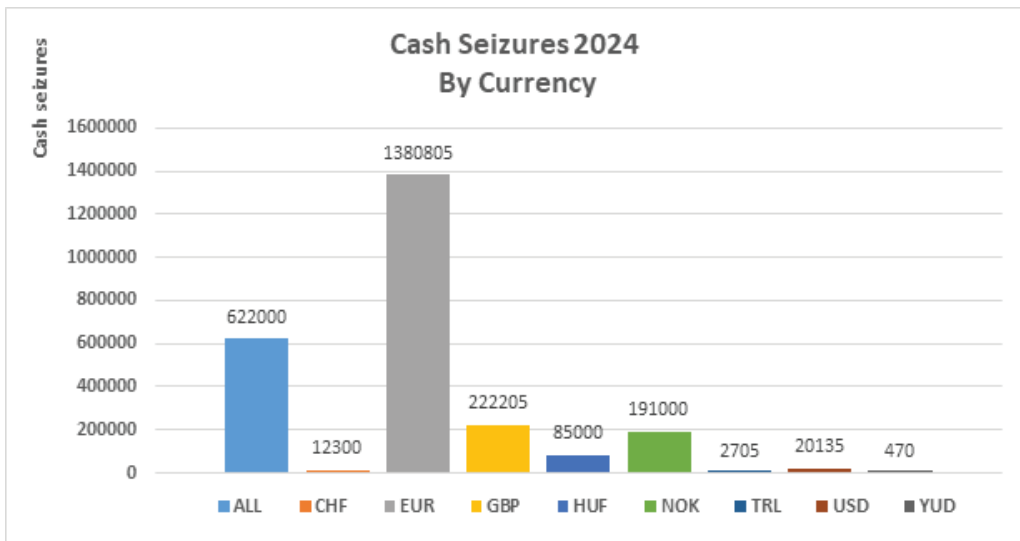
The highest number of undeclared Cash according to the BCPs belongs to the Kakavija Customs House with 11 cases, followed by Morina Customs House with 9 cases, Rinas Customs House with 8 cases, Durres Customs House with 6 cases, Kapshtica Customs House with 3 cases, Muriqan Customs House with 2 cases and Vlora Customs House with

1 case. The Kakavija Customs House also leads in the number of seized currency (ALL; CHF; EUR; GBP; HUF; YOD).



Cash Seizures by Currency

The EUR currency, just like in 2023, has led both on Entry and Exit this year, having the highest percentage of non-declarations compared to the other currencies. The second place is taken by the GBP currency, followed by the USD and NOK. There is a total of 9 currencies used in cases of non-declarations (ALL, CHF, EUR, GBP, HUF, NOK, TRL, USD, YUD).



Main Achievements

- ✓ Within the framework of cooperation with the Financial Intelligence Agency, monthly reports have been carried out regarding Cash declarations, reporting on import-export of metals and precious stones; reporting on training needs within the framework of Objective II of the National Strategy on the Prevention of Money Laundering for the period 2024 - 2030 and reports for the Inter-Institutional Technical Working Group (GTNP).
- ✓ Contribution within the framework of the Special Parliamentary Committee "On Deepening of Reforms on Good Governance, Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption for Albania 2030 in the European Union", for Component II - "Sectors with High Risk of Corruption".
- ✓ Contribution to the preparations for the evaluation by the MONEYVAL Committee, in completing the effectiveness questionnaires and supporting the preparations for the evaluation by MONEYVAL and ensuring the successful conclusion of this essential process for 2026.
- ✓ Contribution to the European Integration process in the design and implementation of measures and action plans to support the European Integration process (Chapter 1, Chapter 24, Chapter 27, Chapter 29, Chapter 30 and Chapter 31).
- ✓ Contribution regarding the identification of risks for measures in the National Risk Assessment Action Plan, within the framework of the National Strategy on the Prevention of Money Laundering 2024–2030.
- ✓ Review of the "Manual on the procedure for cash control" to support Customs Officers on cash declaration, pay checks, precious metals and stones at Border Customs Points/Houses, by making the relevant changes to the legislation, improving control and interview procedures.
- ✓ Review of the first draft of the Negotiating Position of Chapter 29 "Customs Union".

VI.3. Customs Investigation

The Investigation Directorate, based on information from other GDC structures, or on cases initiated mainly after the collection of data and the performance of preliminary actions, based on reasonable suspicions of the commission of criminal offenses provided for in the criminal legislation in the field of Customs for evasion of Customs duties or excise duties according to the provisions of Article 277 of Law No 102 dated 31.07.2014 "Customs Code of the Republic of Albania", as amended, has prepared and sent to the Prosecution Body during this period a total of **33** criminal reports/referrals.

Among the criminal offenses referred to are:

- “Smuggling of other goods” provided for by Article 174 of the Criminal Code;
- “Smuggling of goods for which excise duty apply or goods fully or partly exempted from Customs or Excise Duty” provided for by Article 172 of the Criminal Code;
- “Smuggling of goods for which excise duty apply or goods fully or partly exempted from Customs or Excise Duty” committed in complicity by more than three persons and in the form of a structured criminal group provided for by Articles 172 and 25 of the Criminal Code.
- “Smuggling of goods requiring license”, “The non-declaration of money and of valuable objects” and “Laundering the Proceeds of Criminal Offence or Criminal Activity” provided for by Articles 173-25, 179/a and 287 of the Criminal Code;
- “Trade and transport in smuggled goods”, “Storage of smuggled goods” provided for by Articles 178, 179 and 25 of the Criminal Code.
- “Concealment of income” provided for by Article 180 of the Criminal Code;
- “The non-declaration of money and of valuable objects” provided for by Article 179/a of the Criminal Code;
- “Abuse of Office” provided for by Article 248 of the Criminal Code.
- “Smuggling of prohibited or restricted goods” provided for by Article 171 of the Criminal Code.
- “Violation of Industrial Property Rights” provided for by Article 149/a of the Criminal Code.

For the period 1st of January 2024 – 31st of December 2024:

- A total of **33** referrals have been forwarded to the Prosecutor’s Office;
- **14** Customs violations and administrative offenses were found;
- **87** customs smuggling violations have been detected;
- **101** information have been forwarded to the Customs Houses for decision-making.

Avoided Duty	Penalty	Total
33 140 727 LEK	120 573 081 LEK	153 713 808 LEK

No	Total cases with violations/referrals
1.	33 Referrals forwarded to the Prosecutor’s Office
2.	20 Criminal proceedings delegated by Prosecutors’ Offices
3.	14 Customs violation cases, violation with avoided Customs duties 843,869 LEK and penalty 2 644 235 LEK

4	87 Cases of Customs violations, smuggling with avoided Customs duty 32,296,858 LEK and penalties 117 928 846 LEK
5.	101 Cases of information for decision-making sent to Customs Houses for companies or persons who have committed administrative/criminal violations

Description of the most important matters:

- The South East European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), based on the award procedure for joint investigations within the framework of cooperation within SELEC Countries, has awarded the Albanian Customs with the Second-Place Award, for the Albania-Turkey Cooperation in relation to the international investigations conducted for the Criminal Proceeding No 1030 of 2023 for the criminal offense of "Narcotics Trafficking" committed in complicity provided for by Article 283/a/2 of the Criminal Code. The criminal proceeding has been transferred to the competence of the Special Prosecution Office against Corruption and Organized Crime.
- 5 citizens of the Republic of Kosova were arrested in *flagrante delicto* in cooperation with the State Police and other structures of the GDC for the criminal offenses provided for in articles 173, 179-a, 287 and 25 of the Criminal Code. 300,000 EUR and 1,057,840 pills of medicine (Pseudoephedrine) with a total weight of 417.1 kg were seized and are kept in storage at Rinas Customs House.
- A referral and the first investigative materials have been sent to the Special Prosecutor's Office against Corruption and Organized Crime for the criminal offense " Smuggling of goods for which excise duty apply or goods fully or partly exempted from Customs or Excise Duty" committed in complicity by more than three persons and in the form of a structured criminal group, as provided for in Articles 172 and 25 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania. In cooperation with the Customs Authorities of the Republic of Kosova, 2 vehicles were blocked which were found to be mainly filled with water.
- The Investigation Directorate was part of the Operational Plan for Hydrocarbon Monitoring for the period 01.08. - 31.12.2024 in Porto Romano, with the aim of controlling and monitoring the import, storage and trade of excise energy products.
- 10,560 kg of Orbit chewing gum imported from China have been seized. This quantity was confirmed to be falsificated and could be harmful to health.

Joint Operations

- The operational plan “Armstrong XI” has been implemented in cooperation with the State Police, with a focus on the fight against trafficking in weapons, their parts, ammunition and explosives (and not only) through postal packages, designed to promote closer integration in work and enhance intelligence and investigation capacities.
- In cooperation with the State Police, an operation was conducted to hit the smuggling and illegal trade of the product “Botulinum toxin” known as “Botox”. The administrators of several aesthetic clinics were prosecuted, as it was suspected that the product “Botulinum toxin” found in their clinics was illegal and smuggled.
- In cooperation with the Narcotics Investigation Section, the “Chicago” operation has been finalized. 2 citizens have been arrested and 5 kg of cannabis sativa narcotics with a market value of 90,000 EUR have been seized.
- In cooperation with the Narcotics Investigation Section, after several months of investigative work, a group was busted that was trafficking narcotics from the US to Albania through the postal service.
- In cooperation with the Prosecutor’s Office at the First Instance Court of General Jurisdiction of Tirana, the Economic Crime Section at the General Directorate of the State Police and the General Directorate of Taxation, a preventive seizure has been imposed on the assets in the possession of citizens E. A., M. T., K. B., D. B., E. B., V. A., E. B. and the assets of several commercial entities proven to be in the administration of the aforementioned citizens for the criminal offense ‘Laundering of the proceeds of a criminal offense or criminal activity’ provided for by Article 287, paragraph two of the Criminal Code. The preliminary assessment results in the value of the assets being 50 million EUR.

VI.4. Customs Intelligence and Information Exchange

During 2024, cooperation and exchange of information increased in order to fight Customs violations, based on Bilateral Agreements with all counterpart Customs, especially with the neighbouring ones.

Within the framework of international cooperation, successful coordination and cooperation has continued with the South-East European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), in the joint fight against cross-border crime. In July 2024, the South-East European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC) awarded the Albanian Customs in cooperation with the Turkish Customs for the fight against trafficking with the Second-Place Prize. According to the Decision of the SELEC Committee and based on the award procedure for Joint Investigations within the framework of cooperation within the SELEC countries, the Albania-Turkey joint investigation has won the second prize.

In cooperation with our Liaison Officer at SELEC, two operational meetings were organized with the participation of representatives of the Directorate of Intelligence and the Directorate of Investigation, respectively, on 18th of January 2024 in Istanbul/Turkey and on 7th of March 2024 in Novi Sad/Serbia.

Albanian Customs chaired the 21st Meeting of the SELEC Task Force against Fraud and Smuggling which was organized on 12th of November 2024 in Bucharest, Romania, in continuous efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of illicit trade. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum in which participants could discuss regional approaches in preventing and combating Customs fraud and smuggling with the overall aim of strengthening regional cooperation between Customs and Police in this field, as well as establishing common directions to be followed at the regional level.

The national Customs Enforcement Network (nCEN) database has been operational since March 1st, 2021. Initially, nCEN was used in version 3.3.1. **During 2024, it was upgraded to version 3.10.0.**

The achievements of our Customs Administration are also reflected in the latest issue of **Herald Magazine, a publication of the WCO.** On pages 23-25, the Regional Conference on Trade Facilitation “Strengthening Collaborative Partnerships in the Digital Area” was covered, which was held on 8th – 9th of November in Tirana.

The collage features several elements:

- Top Left:** A photo of a dog sniffing a bag, with text: "Ready for the sniff test? The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "A dog is sniffing a bag to detect any illegal goods." and "A dog is sniffing a bag to detect any illegal goods."
- Top Right:** A photo of a person at a podium, with text: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." and "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods."
- Middle Left:** A photo of a person at a computer, with text: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." and "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods."
- Middle Right:** A photo of a person at a podium, with text: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." and "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods."
- Bottom Left:** A photo of a person at a podium, with text: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." and "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods."
- Bottom Right:** A photo of a person at a podium, with text: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." Below it: "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods." and "The dog is sniffing the bag to detect any illegal goods."

VI.5. Risk Monitoring and Analysis

During 2024, Monitoring Specialists have monitored and verified a total of 1361 Customs Declarations initiated by the online monitoring of the Electronic Customs Declaration Processing System. All cases have been monitored, coordinated and reported in real time.

Control findings followed up by Monitoring Specialists (2024)

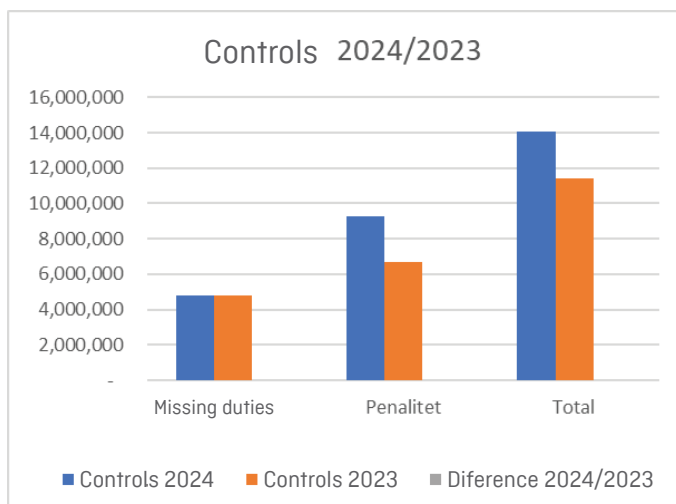
Burimi i Informacionit	shkelje	detyrim	penalitet	total
SM	53	3,935,042	5,880,616	9,815,658
MONITORIME/VERIFIKIM PESHE	74	863,225	3,368,231	4,231,456
Total	127	4,798,267	9,248,847	14,047,114

The table below shows the results of inspections with violations divided into obligations, penalties and total detections according to the nature of the violation. We have an increase in cases where misclassification, smuggling, undeclared goods, irregularities have been found.

Lloji i shkeljeve	shkelje	detyrim	penalitet	total
MALLRA TE PADEKLARUAR	60	2,837,133	5,778,783	8,615,916
SHTIM DETYRIMI	4	510,532	1,205,941	1,716,473
KEQKLASIFIKIM	14	1,425,080	1,067,557	2,492,637
PARREGULLSI	48	-	1,120,000	1,120,000
MALLRA TE NDALUAR	1	25,522	76,566	102,088
Total	127	4,798,267	9,248,847	14,047,114

If we analyse the work performance indicators with data from the previous year, we have an increase in both the number of controls and the total penalties and missed duties as follows:

	Ne rregull	Shkelje	Totali kontrolle	Detyrim i munguar	Penalitet	Total
KONTROLLE 2023	454	80	534	4,786,213	6,658,882	11,445,095
KONTROLLE 2024	1234	127	1361	4,798,267	9,248,847	14,047,114
DIFERENCA 2024/2023	63%	37%	61%	0%	28%	19%



Facilitation of legitimate trade

In the context of facilitating legitimate trade, while maintaining risk-based control of the movement of goods, means of transport or persons, Risk Analysis Specialists during 2024 have worked to increase the level of the Green Channel (no control) and reduce the level of the Red Channel (physical control). This has been achieved through an increase in the number of companies on the "Green" List, which for 2024 has increased to 2,200 companies, as well as better targeting of physical controls. As a result, the level of the Green Channel in 2024 is around 30.73%. We also have a decrease in the level of physical control, which in 2024 results in 6.57%.

Review of risk profiles

Currently, in our Customs System, there are 393 active risk profiles in import-export and 80 in transit.

Based on the risk areas, the structure of the profiles results to be mainly profiles for the purpose of checking for security, misclassification, value and excise of goods, respectively 39%, 27%, 6% and 5%.

During the period January - December 2024, the work of Risk Specialists consisted of developing detailed analyses in order to identify areas of risk, fiscal and non-fiscal, as well as analysing/assessing phenomena (tariff misclassifications, security, economic excise with risk, or on high-risk operators, etc.), which hinder the ACA in carrying out its tasks/missions.

The risk profiles that belong to the year 2024, maintain the same structure as the existing one, so the majority of them are fiscal in nature, specifically about 49% of the total profiles. While the remaining part, about 39% of the total profiles, consists of security profiles.

Customs valuation supervision

For the year 2024, the Customs Valuation Supervision Sector forwarded 2,240 cases to the Customs Houses for review of the Customs valuation. Of the cases returned, in 1,611 of them or 90% the valuation was intervened in, an increase of 10% compared to 2023. The value of additional duties for the above declarations for which we have responses from the Customs Houses for the year 2024 was around 60 million LEK, making the average value per declaration of additional duty as a result of interventions around 37,400 LEK.

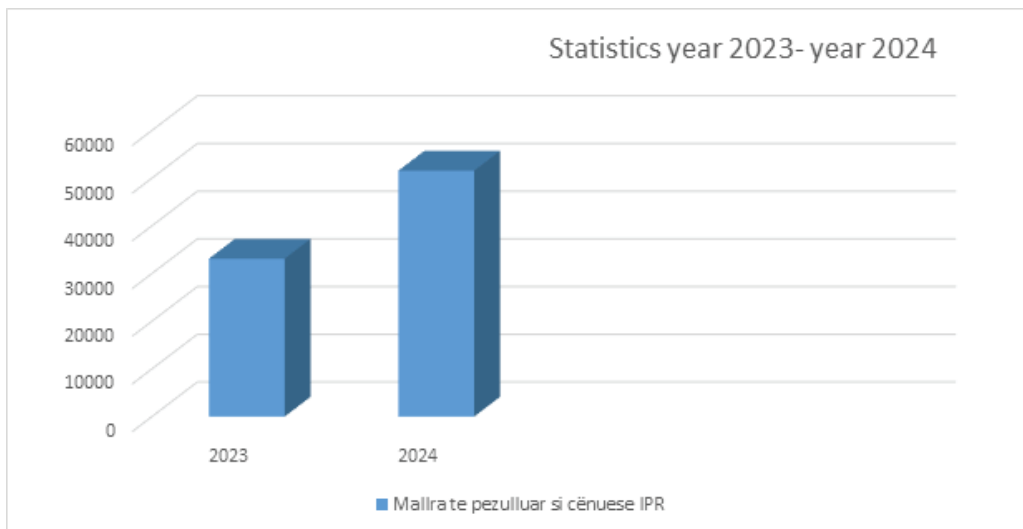
It should be noted that this is the highest value that this Sector has reported in years and it is an indicator of the increased effectiveness of the Sector's work and cooperation with Customs Houses and other GDC structures, such as the Internal Audit Directorate and the Post-Clearance Control Directorate.

VI.6. Intellectual Property Protection

During 2024, the Customs Administration has suspended the release into free circulation of **40,911** pieces of various clothing and accessories, which were suspected of infringing the intellectual property of various trademarks such as: "Louis Vuitton", "Moncler", "Lacoste", "Tommy Hilfiger", "Channel", "Adidas", "Prada", "Emporio Armani", "Calvin Klein", "Miu Miu", "Nokia" etc., for which there is an application for action approved by the Customs Authority.

It is also worth mentioning that during 2024, ACA suspended **10,650 kg** of chewing gum imported from China, under the trademark "Orbit", which it was confirmed by the rights holder to be counterfeit and could be very harmful to the health of Albanian consumers.

Comparative statistical data of suspended goods suspected of infringing an intellectual property for 2023 vs 2024



VI.7. Post Clearance Control

During 2024, work continued on fulfilling the functional tasks with priority on the collection of Customs revenues and the fight against tax evasion. 50 *a-posteriori* Control Programs were implemented on:

- Inward Processing;
- Customs valuation of goods.

Results of controls 2024 compared to 2023

Structures responsible		Performance measurement criteria	Year	
			2023	2024
Directorate of Excise and Post-Clearance Controls	<i>A-Posteriori</i> Sector	Number of physical/documentary controls carried out	25	50
		Number of controls resulting in violations	12	20
		Customs Duties (LEK)	67,463,444	1,866,837
		Penalties (LEK)	136,420,462	4,433,623
		Success rate in relation to the number of controls carried out	48%	400%
		Number of criminally reported cases	1	0

*In accordance with Law No 102/2014, dated 31.07.2014 "Customs Code of the Republic of Albania", as amended, there are found missed Customs duties in the amount of **1,866,837 LEK**, penalties **4,433,623 LEK**, in total **6,300,460 LEK**.*

VII. TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT

VII.1. Customs Procedures

Informing and sensitizing companies is the focus of the Sector in order to raise their awareness about the benefits of AEO Status and increase the number of applications and certificates issued. Also, informing and training of the Customs Houses staff regarding the benefits of this Status, as well as the priority treatment of these businesses with high reliability is the focus of the Sector, by developing the relevant trainings.

- Training with Customs Houses in cooperation with Training Centre of Customs Administration (QTAD);
- Training with representatives of institutions operating at the border such as Food national authority (AKU) in cooperation with GIZ.

The Authorized Economic Operator Program according to the relevant EU model has been implemented since 2019 with the full completion of the necessary legal basis and the drafting of the National AEO Program.

Currently, 16 Authorized Economic Operators have been approved out of 27 applications submitted for this purpose.

Considering the importance of mutual recognition of AEOs in the region and beyond, initially, Agreements on Mutual Recognition for AEOs were drafted and signed with North Macedonia and Serbia, and the relevant protocols were drafted within the framework of the Open Balkans Initiative in November 2022.

An important objective in this context remains the drafting of the Agreement on Mutual Recognition with the EU, considering the National Program for the Development of Authorized Economic Operators, which was presented to the group of experts of the CEFTA Countries and the latter gave a positive opinion for Albania in 2022, recommending the validation of this Program and thus paving the way on Agreements on Mutual Recognition of AEOs with the CEFTA Countries.

Based on Instruction No 06, dated 19.10.2020 "On the practical implementation of the procedures for application, approval, operation and supervision of Customs facilities and Authorized Economic Operators", the creation of monitoring programs for the activity of AEOs is already underway.

Currently, the relevant module in the Customs Information System "Asycuda World" for Applications and Authorizations/AEO Certificates is being tested in cooperation with UNCTAD. Regarding the testing of the relevant module, a meeting was held with the UNCTAD representative for this purpose and further developments for the testing process are awaited from our side.

Also, in cooperation with CEFTA Member Countries, an AEO database has been created regarding the exchange of AEO data in the region.

Development of the New Computerized Transit System – NCTS Platform

Currently the status of Activity WBTF-ALB-121B-1 which is related to the development and implementation of the Common Transit System (NCTS) is as follows:

In April 2024, after the review of the bidding companies by the Bid Evaluation Committee, the procedures for selecting the winning company were concluded and the evaluation reports were sent to the World Bank.

After the review and appeal period, the World Bank signed the contract with the winning company Net Company/Intrasoft in June 2024, with the tendering of the only Soft product, as the equipment and network of Hardware products will be provided by the AKSHI Institution, a proposal which arrived from AKSHI and has already been approved by the World Bank.

In view of the above, in cooperation with the company which will implement the NCTS System, with the advice of an international expert and the PIU (Project Implementation Unit), the Customs Administration has drafted the document with the national technical specifications which it is forwarded to DGTAXUD, has drafted the Order for the establishment of the working group that will participate in this process throughout the implementation phase, and has prepared the document NCTS P5 of NPP “National Project Plan and IT Strategy”.

The Single Window Customs Project (Single Window);

The status of the Activity, Implementation of the National Single Window (NSW) System, with Ref. No. WBTF-ALB-112CDEF, is as follow:

From October 14th to December 10th, 2024, the CFCU at the Ministry of Finance has published the tender procedure for Activity WBTF-ALB-112CDEF “The solution for the NSW Contract Implementation Project”.

A Bid Evaluation Committee has been established to select the winning company for the activity “Implementation of the National Single Window (NSW)” with Ref. No. WBTF-ALB-112CDEF.

The IOS& Epes Consultant responsible for Activity WBTF-ALB-111AB – 112AB – “Project design, technical specifications, supervision and quality assurance of the implementation of the National Single Window (NSW) in Albania (PSQA Contract)” has submitted task 4 “Change Management Strategy and Capacity Building Plan for the Project Supervision for Management Support and Quality Assurance of the NSW Implementation in Albania” approved by the Beneficiary and the World Bank.

Customs Procedures and Regimes Sector

For the period January - December 2024, 1658 applications were made for special regimes through the e-Albania Platform.

We had 9 online services through the e-Albania platform, to which 4 more services were added during 2024, currently we have a total of 13 online services.

12,864 authorizations for special regimes have been updated in the system.

The analysis conducted has shown that the processing time for authorizations for various applications made through the e-Albania Portal has been reduced, specifically:

- For 2023 the average time was 3.94 days;
- For 2024 the average time was 3.81 days.

Customs Facilitation Sector

We currently have 1 online service through the e-Albania Platform, to which another service will be added, bringing the total to 2 online services.

For the period January-December 2024, the following have been implemented:
4934 competencies have been updated in the system according to the requirements of the Customs Houses.

3023 new NIPTs received from the Debt Sector have been updated in the system.

449 responses were returned via email from the Customs Facilitation Sector.

32 cases of additional documentation for exemption from the territorial jurisdiction rule have been reviewed and responded to.

163 orders for exemption from the territorial jurisdiction rule have been reviewed and approved.

7 Authorizations for the use of the Simplified Declaration procedure have been reviewed and approved.

5 companies have been authorized as Authorized Economic Operators.

Digitalization/Innovation of Customs Services

The average time for reviewing online applications via e-Albania has been reduced:

For 2023 the average time was 3.94 days.

For 2024 the average time was 3.81 days.

VII.2. TARIFF

Sector Objectives:

1. Improvement and completion of normative acts.
2. Drafting of the Council of Ministers' Decision on "On the approval and official publication of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025", updating the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025 in the System.
3. Timely review of requests and granting of various authorizations.
4. Project Following: Development and Implementation of the Integrated Tariff Management System (ITMS).

The achievement of each objective is reflected as follows:

I. Improvement and completion of normative acts

1. The (revised) Instruction on “*Procedures for sampling, transportation, acceptance, storage of samples, administration of laboratory results and drafting of certificates of verification of the type of goods and tariff classification*” has been prepared and is in the process of approval in cooperation with the Customs Laboratory.
2. The DCM for “On the approval and official publication of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025” was sent, as well as the update of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025 in the System.
3. The update to the AW system of the CN 2025 as well as the taxation rules, was completed on time.

II. Timely review of requests and granting of various authorizations

For the period January-December 2024, they were carried out through the e-Albania Platform:

- **493** Applications

Application for machinery and equipment in function of the implementation of investment contracts with a value equal to or greater than 500 million (five hundred million) LEK which are not for sale	75
Application for machinery and equipment in order to implement investment contracts in the agribusiness sector, regardless of the investment value	147
Application for Favourable Tariff Treatment: Industrial Goods	14
Mandatory Tariff Information Authorization	5
Authorization for Exemption from Customs Duties	252

Updates for Reconstruction Subjects for 92 subjects have been managed in the AW Electronic Customs System.

Trainings have been conducted on tariff classifications and VAT exemption procedures.

Regarding the administration of laboratory results and the drafting of “Certificates of verification of the type of goods and tariff classification” have been carried out:

- 6702 Tariff Classification Certificates, of which 197 resulted in a change in the declared Tariff Code;
- 65 Sheets - Analysis compiled;

- Drafted and closed approximately 60 documents;
- There are approximately 6807 practices in the process (LIMS System), for which the analysis and classification procedure for received practices on the tariff classification of goods must be followed.

III. ITMS Project:

1. The Developing Company SIVECO and the Partner IKUB-INFO have carried out presentations of the ITMS System Modules.
2. The group of GDC specialists with representatives from the Tariff Sector, the Origin Sector, the Procedures Sector, the Risk Analysis and ICT Sector have been trained and they have carried out tests on the system.
3. The 8 required system modules have been developed by the Company SIVECO, installed in the hardware infrastructure at AKSHI and their tests have been carried out. The software of the modules has been delivered in February 2024.
4. Interconnection with EU Systems will be effective 1 year before accession.

VII.3. ORIGIN

During 2024, work was carried out towards the drafting, adoption and implementation of changes to the Harmonized System of the World Customs Organization within the framework of the standardization of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025.

Integrated Tariff Management System (ITMS) within the framework of the National Plan for Trade Policy Coordination and Trade Facilitation.

The ITMS Implementation Project has completed its first phase:

The group of GDC specialists with representatives from the Tariff Sector, the Origin Sector, the Procedures Sector, the Risk Analysis and ICT Sector have been trained and they have carried out tests on the system. The 8 required system modules have been developed by the Company SIVECO, installed in the hardware infrastructure at AKSHI and their tests have been carried out. Interconnection with EU Systems will be effective 1 year before accession in the following up phase.

Improvement and completion of normative acts;

1. The (revised) Instruction on “Procedures for sampling, transportation, acceptance, storage of samples, administration of laboratory results and drafting of certificates of verification of the type of goods and tariff classification” has been prepared and is in the process of approval in cooperation with the Customs Laboratory”.
2. The DCM for “On the approval and official publication of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025” was sent, as well as the update of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2025 in the System.

3. The update to the AW system of the CN 2025 as well as the taxation rules, was completed on time.

VII.4 CUSTOMS LABORATORY

Achievements for 2024, the Customs Laboratory has carried out the real-time and professional analysis of 6882 samples or 61990 analytical indicators, of which 6168 excise goods (about 90%).

The Laboratory has received the Status of “Accredited Laboratory” from the General Directorate of Accreditation for 84 analytical indicators, on April 30, 2024. The Accreditation Certificate is valid for the period April 30, 2024 - April 29, 2028.

The Customs Laboratory has participated in 8 Proficiency Tests: 5 organized by GCSL (General Chemical State Laboratory) Greece and 3 by the Italian Customs Agency. Work has been done to update the forms and procedures followed in the Laboratory in order to meet the criteria required in the assessment visit plan of the Experts of the General Directorate of Accreditation.



VIII. EXCISE

During 2024, the Excise Directorate carried out supervision, control and monitoring, according to specific products, of fiscal warehouses for production and storage, controlled and monitored the movement of excise products under suspension, as well as the implementation of the conditions and compliance by excise operators of the exemptions and refunds scheme, and cooperated with other central structures of the General Directorate of Customs for the control and monitoring of energy products after the closure of the marking process.

Based on the approved annual plan, the structures of this Directorate have carried out various analyses regarding the import, production, storage and movement of excise products, according to their type. Controls have been exercised to specify or update the technical regulations in the production process and the coefficients of losses and losses.

VIII.1 Excise Control

Revenues from excise products are the main voice in the total of Customs revenues. Specifically, net revenues from excise products account for 44% of total Customs revenues generated during 2024 (**101,769,243 from 229,519,901**).

The products with the greatest impact on excise revenue are:

- Fuels, 22.5% of total Customs revenues;
- Cigarettes and tobacco by-products, 15% of total Customs revenues;
- Other excise products account for about 16.5% of total Customs revenues.

More specifically, we are presenting you with an overview of the performance of excise products throughout 2024:

- **Fuels** had an accomplishment level of **58,977 tons or 9.4%** more compared to 2023.
- **Cigarettes and Tobacco Products** had an accomplishment level of **205 tons or 6.4%** more compared to 2023.
- **Coffee** had a realization level of **68 tons or 1%** more in quantity compared to 2023.
- **Alcoholic beverages** had an accomplishment of **599,000 litres or 5.8%** more compared to 2023.
- **Beer** had an accomplishment level of **5,092,000 litres or 5.6%** more compared to 2023.

A. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES SECTOR

Based on its functional tasks, this Sector has carried out controls both, in markets and at economic operators operating with excise products. Given the priorities and risks, this Sector is focused on controlling operators with the greatest contribution to revenue, mainly importers and producers of excise products “beer”, “alcoholic beverages” and “wine”. Based on the risk analysis, economic operators with increased risk have been identified and controls have been carried out at these economic operators.

For the period January - December 2024, **90 inspections** were carried out, of which 42 were importers of wine, beer and alcoholic beverages, while 48 were domestic producers of wine, brandy, alcoholic beverages and beer. From the inspections carried out, obligations and penalties were identified in **7 cases with missing duties in the amount of 1,202,919 LEK and penalties in the amount of 3,717,773 LEK.**

B. TOBACCO AND OTHER PRODUCTS SECTOR

For the period January - December 2024, a total of 57 control programs have been elaborated. All control programs have been drafted based on the risk indicators provided for in Instruction No 2 Prot., dt. 28.01.2023 “On the Manual on the Excise Control Methodology”, as amended. From the controls carried out, 1 (one) economic operator has resulted in a violation, for which the procedures provided for in the legislation in force have been followed.

As it can be seen from the control results, given that the number of controls and Customs presence has increased, operators are aware of the implementation of the legal requirements and the correct application of legislation.

C. ENERGY PRODUCTS SECTOR

During 2024, the Energy Products Sector at the Excise Control Directorate has been engaged in fulfilling its functional tasks and achieving the objectives set out in the Work Plan for 2023. The activity of this Sector has been based on the relevant legislation.

During the period January - July 2024, we coordinated the work and daily activities with the concessionaire GFI. This cooperation consisted of tracking, verifying and controlling the marking of energy products entered into circulation in the territory.

2,176 controls were carried out or about 272 controls per month;

- 3,200 tests/analyses have been performed or about 400 tests/analyses per month;

- 13 failed (unmarked) cases were found, 6 of them only in May;

Regarding failed (unmarked) cases, all verification and penalty procedures have been carried out according to the legislation in force.

In addition to the above controls, 4 controls were also carried out on fiscal operators, one of which resulted in a violation, for which measures were taken in accordance with legal provisions.

In the period following the termination of the Marking Concession Contract, employees of the Energy Products Sector have been engaged in joint group controls/verifications with employees of the Operational Investigation Department at the GDC. This cooperation has continued until 31.12.2024 based on the Operational Plan approved by the Head of the Institution, a plan which aimed at the control and supervision of energy products. This cooperation has proven effective in preventing violations and raising awareness among operators, referring to the results of the quantities of energy products entered for consumption in the territory during 2024 compared to 2023 [58,977 tons more].

D. MEASURING EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL LINES SECTOR

Throughout 2024, the Measuring Equipment and Technological Lines Sector has carried out control programs on various topics, as follows:

1. In relation to the objective *"On the prevention and detection of violations in the field of excise duty in order to maximize excise revenue"*, the Measuring Equipment and Technological Lines Sector has carried out **36 inspections** at operators mainly producers of alcoholic beverages, wine and brandy in order to verify the production range, as well as to update the production standards and loss/waste coefficients. These controls were carried out based on a risk analysis, taking as indicators the quantities of raw material grapes entered into the system for 2024 by various operators, the declarations in the stock accounting in the EMCS system, as well as the frequency of controls carried out.
2. In relation to the objective *"Prevention and avoidance of fiscal evasion"*, **25 controls** have been carried out by the Sector on the topic of *"Technical Verification of Fiscal Warehouses, Verification of the Technological Card"*. These controls of Fiscal Warehouses have included 5 operators processing Energy products, 10 operators producing Beer, 3 operators processing Hookah and 7 operators producing wine, brandy and alcoholic beverages.

A total of 61 inspections were carried out and were generally carried out in the periods planned according to the Annual Work Plan.

VIII.2 TECHNICAL DIRECTORATE OF EXCISE

In implementation of the functional tasks and objectives of 2024 by this Sector:

- **101 authorizations** have been processed **to benefit from the differentiated excise tax rate**;
- **34 excise duty exemption authorizations** have been issued **for the diplomatic corps** based on quotas approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- **Creation of additional code for 950 exemptions from excise duty on fishing vessel fuel**

Based on point 3, letter "d" of Article 10 of Law 61/2012 "On Excise Duties"; Article 20 of Decision of Council of Ministers No 612 / 2012 "On the Implementing

Provisions of the Law on Excise Duties”, as amended; Instruction No 18, dated 15.06.15 “On the procedures and criteria for supplying fishing vessels with fuel (gasoil) with exemption from circulation tax, carbon tax and excise duty”;

- **650 guarantees have been registered** in the Customs Information System, sent by the Customs Houses to Approved Depositors, as well as guarantees for fiscal stamps;
- Applications in the stamp production and distribution system **SICPATRACE:**
 - Order fiscal stamps – 2454 orders approved;**
 - SKU - 252 applications;**
 - Supplier Add-on - 261 applications;**
 - Profile creation - 133 applications;**
- Maintaining written correspondence with internal and external structures of the Customs System;
- Cooperating with Customs Houses and other institutions to resolve various legal and technical issues in the field of excise duties;
- Changes in the excise duty level for tobacco products, according to the 2025 calendar, have been reflected in the system.

a. Authorizations Sector

The Authorizations Sector has developed its activity in accordance with the functional tasks and objectives of 2024.

The Authorizations Sector has designed a total of 5 online services, of which 3 services are functional online while 2 services are to be implemented. With the implementation of these services, the Authorizations Sector goes completely online.

The average review (approval) time for online services is 3-5 days.

In implementation of the functional tasks and objectives of 2024, below are some statistical data:

Statistics:

- Online applications for new authorizations, total approved: 27 applications;
- Authorization modifications, additions or changes to the initial fiscal warehouse/ registered consignee authorization, approved in total: 27 cases;
- Cancellation of authorization for fiscal warehouses and registered consignees for a total of: 59 operators;
- Update of authorization deadline for fiscal warehouses in the system: 252 cases;
- Update of authorization deadline for registered consignees in the system: 161 cases.

There has been continuous and close cooperation with Customs Houses, communicating in real time on the back-end or by e-mail, to complete the missing documentation in the shortest possible time and with the aim of processing operators’ applications for authorization for fiscal warehouses and registered consignees as quickly as possible.

IX. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In the framework of bilateral and multilateral relations or international relations, visits of international Customs delegations to the Republic of Albania and of Albanian Customs Delegations abroad have been organized. In this context, work has been coordinated on the development of high-level, bilateral and multilateral meetings with the Customs Administrations of neighbouring countries.

World Customs Organization (WCO)



Albania has been a member of the WCO since August 1992 and since then has been actively participating in the meetings of the WCO Council, Committees and Subcommittees, benefiting from the best experiences of developed countries and implementing them in our Customs System. Over the past few years, Albanian Customs has participated intensively in various training programs of the WCO, which aim to invest in high-potential civil servants of the Albanian Customs Administration, expanding their capabilities, skills and knowledge in order to actively participate in the reform and modernization process of their administration.

During 2024, these activities were carried out:

- Albanian Customs has participated intensively in various WCO training programs which aim to invest in high-potential middle managers and expand their opportunities, skills and knowledge in order to actively participate in the reform and modernization process of their administration.
- Meetings of the Customs Cooperation Council and meetings of various Committees/Subcommittees (such as: Permanent Technical Committee, Harmonized System Committee, Technical Committee on Origin, Capacity Building Committee, Management Committee of the Revised Kyoto Convention, Law Enforcement Committee, Technical Committee for Customs Valuation, Integrity Subcommittee, 143rd/144th Sessions of the Council of the World Customs Organization, etc.);
- Various conferences (such as: Global PGS Conference, Conference on Updating the Advance Passenger Information Guide, Global Origin Conference, European Region Customs Heads Conference, etc.);
- Various operations (such as: PANDORA VI, DEMETER VII, STOP II);
- Webinar and working groups (such as: SAFE Working Group, etc.).
- It has been completed and forwarded to WCO:
 - *Annual Survey 2024,*
 - *WCO Survey, Smart Customs Project (where the National Contact Point for this project has also been appointed).*

- In cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, the General Directorate of Customs contributed to the completion of the World Trade Organization Reports.
- The participation of Customs personnel in various activities has been ensured within the framework of cooperation with WCO, GIZ, British Embassy (HRMC), CEFTA, UNODC, etc.
- Participation in the SELEC Council Session held on 30 May 2024, Bucharest.
 - 23rd Session of the WCO Integration Subcommittee (Brussels, Belgium).
 - 31st Meeting of the Pan Euro-Mediterranean Working Group of the Regional Convention on Preferential Rules (Brussels, Belgium).
 - 42nd Session of the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin (Brussels, Belgium).
 - Workshop on Free Economic Zones for the European Region (Skopje, North Macedonia).
 - 143rd/144th Session of the WCO Council (Brussels, Belgium).
- Regional Workshop within the framework of the “Sirius Project” (Zagreb, Croatia).
- 26th Meeting of the RILO Contact Point (Chisinau, Moldova).
- Meetings on Operation “Safe Horizon” (Warsaw, Poland).
- Training within the framework of the RANDA Project (Larnaca, Cyprus).
- WCO Laboratory Professionals Program (New Delhi, India).

Export Control and Border Security Matters Program (EXBS)

The EXBS (Export Control and Related Border Security) Program has been and continues to be one of the main partners of the Albanian Customs Service in supporting our efforts to improve border control and prevent the movement of risky goods, in particular dual-use and radioactive goods. EXBS has also contributed to increasing the representation of the Customs Service in international activities (international conferences and regional and international training activities) aimed at the control of dual-use goods, including in particular those for the control of radioactive materials, and it has organized training for Customs staff over the years.

During 2024, the following activities were held:

- Training on environmental organized crime and corruption (Opatija, Croatia)
- Western Balkans Regional Workshop (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Border Management in the Western Balkans (Tivat, Montenegro)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Thanks to the partnership with UNODC, we have managed to significantly improve surveillance at our ports and airports, increasing our capacity to fight the illicit trafficking. Albanian Customs has achieved concrete results thanks to its partnership with UNODC, such as the Container Control Program, which identified and seized over 1.5 tons of cocaine. Also, through the Air Cargo Control Unit, surveillance at airports has been significantly improved, increasing our capacity to combat illicit trafficking through

air routes. Likewise, during 2024, a course against illicit finance was held in Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and a technical consultation meeting was held regarding the establishment of a Regional Centre for Information Exchange in the Field of Maritime Border Management and Security in Larnaca, Cyprus.

CEFTA CEFTA

The Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA 2006) is a modern and comprehensive Regional Free Trade Agreement, designed as an integral part of the pre-accession agenda. It provides a solid legal basis for the preparation and implementation of policies in key areas related to trade and investment. The successful implementation of the Agreement until today with the full liberalization of trade in goods has significantly contributed to the creation of a free trade area in South-Eastern Europe. CEFTA Member States have agreed on an ambitious agenda to further contribute to economic growth.

During 2024, several activities were carried out with the support of CEFTA:

- Regional Meeting on Customs Risk Management (Skopje, North Macedonia)
- 27th Meeting of the Subcommittee on Rules of Origin (Pristina, Kosova)
- Study Visit on improvement of the implementation of AEO Programs in CEFTA (Brussels, Belgium)
- Green Lanes Steering Committee Meeting (Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina)
- Regional Training in Customs Data Analysis (Skopje, North Macedonia)
- 28th Meeting of the Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin (Pristina, Kosova)
- Meeting on the SEED+ System and the Risk Management Strategy (Budva, Montenegro).

German Association for International Cooperation (GIZ Albania)

Major support for the implementation of CEFTA priorities has been provided within the framework of cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

GIZ has supported regional activities with a focus on supporting regional economic integration, the proper implementation of the regional risk management strategy, raising awareness among operators about the benefits of AEO, drafting legal drafts for declarations of monetary values at the border, manuals for Customs investigation and anti-smuggling and support for trainings on dog possession.

With the support of the GIZ Project, several activities have been made possible for 2024:

- Meeting on strengthening cooperation between Customs Authorities and market surveillance agencies (Petrovac, Montenegro)
- Global Illicit Financial Flows Program (Skopje, North Macedonia)

- Regional meeting on AEO Programs (Budva, Montenegro)
- Study visit to DHL Centre (Leipzig, Germany).

A joint seminar between the Customs Administration and the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agencies from Albania and Kosova was also held, organized on 21st and 22nd of May 2024 in Durres, with the objective of enabling a peer-to-peer exchange on best practices regarding the reforms undertaken by both Governments to facilitate trade for AEO Companies, on the practical challenges faced by businesses, as well as on the needs for comprehensive cooperation between Border Enforcement Agencies.

The main findings of the national WGs (from the above-mentioned activities) were presented at a Regional Forum with the aim of comparing suggestions, assessing the most appropriate solutions at regional level, enabling the development of a common and harmonised approach for joint inspections of AEO Companies at regional level.

In the reporting period, the project organized three capacity-building workshops, one national (26th and 27th of June 2023, North Macedonia) and two regionals (28th – 30th of June 2023 and 20 March 2024) on Customs Data Analytics. The workshops aimed to support CEFTA Parties in accelerating the uptake of modern data analytics and incorporating new data sources to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Customs Risk Management at national and regional levels. Particular focus was given to data analytics, risk-based approaches and refined selection criteria to enhance their ability to collect reliable data on trade flows and to analyse this data for effective risk-based consignments targeting.

Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is an international organization in the field of mobility and transport, of which Albania is a Member State. The main objective of the Transport Committee is to assist in the implementation and adoption of EU legislation in the field of transport and by supporting projects that connect the regional partners of the Western Balkans among themselves and in the EU.

During 2024, the Transport Committee held meetings to develop the infrastructure of Customs Points in Albania and beyond.

- Green Lanes Steering Committee Meeting (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Meeting of the Technical Committee on Transport Facilitation (Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina)
- Technical Committee for the Transport of Dangerous Goods (Podgorica, Montenegro)
- Meeting of the Technical Committee on Transport Facilitation (Ohrid, North Macedonia).

AdriaCustoms Project

On 16 -17 of April 2024, Albanian Customs Top Officials and Experts participated in the presentation activity of the AdriaCustoms Project which aims at cooperation between Customs Administrations of the countries bordering the Adriatic Sea in the fight against

smuggling, counterfeit goods and illegal trafficking. The Project, funded and supported by OLAF and the Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, includes the exchange of best practices between Albanian Customs and the Italian, Slovenian, Croatian and Montenegrin Customs.

During 2024 within the framework of this Project are carried out:

- Expert exchange session within the framework of the AdriaCustoms Project (Bari, Brindisi, Italy)
- Implementation of Joint Customs Control Strategies in the Adriatic Sea (Durrës, Vlora, Albania)
- Expert exchange session within the framework of the AdriaCustoms Project (Podgorica, Montenegro).

HMRC

Initiated in 2022, the British Embassy in Tirana launched a project to address the inequalities and barriers faced by women in uniform in law enforcement sector. The project aims to address three key elements: institutional change (including attitudes and processes), skills (strength, fitness, hand-to-hand combat) and equipment (from hygiene products to uniforms). This Association is concerned with addressing equality when it comes to financial burdens, treatment in employment, training and recruitment.

After many activities, trainings and meetings held during 2022, 2023 (cited in the two previous publications), the “Women in Uniform Alliance 2024” Conference was held again in 2024 which provided this year the forum where women from all organizations have the opportunity to work in a safe space where they can share their experiences in the European arena.

The conference was attended by 41 participants from the Customs Administration. The Conference was supported by the Defence Attaché, Timothy Wight Boycott, a British Army Officer, Ms. Keqmezi Rexhepi, a member of the leadership of the Independent Customs Union of Kosovo and advocates for the welfare of workers, as well as other speakers from the region and Europe.

NCTS Project

In 2024, an important step was taken for the implementation of NCTS-P5, by establishing a working group for its implementation as a criterion set by the European Union for Chapter 29. The company Net Company Intrasoft was contracted by the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank and the project is expected to last 19 months, where a lot of training and testing is foreseen, following international standards, recommendations and best practices. NCTS is the Customs Transit Procedure which allows the movement of goods from one Customs Office to another in the same Customs territory, or from another

Customs territory, without collecting the duties and taxes that may be applicable to the imported or exported goods and without applying economic prohibitions or restrictions and provided that all requirements regarding Customs stamps, time limits or security are met.

“Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners” (PEN-CP) Project

PEN-CP is a 5-year Project (September 2018 - January 2024) funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Programme of the Network of Security Practitioners, with 13 European Customs Administrations (EU and non-EU) as active partners, including ACA. The PEN-CP Programme can be described as a new network for fostering Customs innovation and an online platform, offering valuable innovation intermediary services. ACA has continued to participate in the activities and surveys within this Project during 2024.

Single Window Project

The initiative for the National Single Window System Implementation Project begins after the ratification of Law No 62/2019 of the Loan Agreement between the Republic of Albania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project. KGH Customs has been contracted by the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank with the aim of identifying and selecting options, following international standards, recommendations and best practices for key strategic decisions to be taken for the components of each unit of the National Single Window.

IX.1. European Integration

The process of Albania’s integration into the European Union has been considered a national strategic priority, leading the country’s governing agenda. In June 2006, Albania signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement, which entered into full force in April 2009. Since June 2014, Albania has enjoyed the status of a candidate country for the European Union. Obtaining the status of a candidate country marks a very important step in the process of Albania’s integration into the EU, as it reflects the progress of the reforms undertaken and paves the way for the full process of our country’s accession to the European Union.

Currently, Albania is in the phase of opening negotiations for meeting the obligations of membership in the European Union and the General Directorate of Customs as an Institution is not only directly involved in providing its contribution in Chapter 29 “Customs Union”, but is also a contributing Institution in Chapter 1 “Free Movement of Goods”, Chapter 7 “Intellectual Property Rights”, Chapter 16 “Taxation”, Chapter 24 “Justice, Freedom and Security”, Chapter 30 “External Relations” and Chapter 33 “Financial and Budgetary Provisions”.

In this context, the GDC has completed the obligations regarding:

- The process of analysing, updating and completing the information in Albanian and English for Chapters 29, 33, 24, 7, 16, 30, as well as on the implementation of the obligations of the National Plan for European Integration (PKIE) 2024 - 2026.
- Completing/updating the EC 2024 recommendations for Chapter 29 "Customs".
- GDC's contribution regarding the weekly monitoring of PKIE 2024;
- Contribution to the Progress Report for Chapter 29 "Customs";
- Contribution to the Progress Report for Chapter 33 "Budgetary and Financial Provisions";
- Contribution to the Progress Report on Chapter 24 "Justice, Security and Freedom";
- EU-Albania Subcommittee "Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation";
- EU-Albania Subcommittee "Justice, Freedom and Security";
- The National Programme for Accession to the European Union (PKABE) 2024-2030 and the National Plan for European Integration (PKIE) 2024 – 2026. Work is underway to finalize the National Plan for European Integration (PKIE) 2025 – 2027.
- European Integration Partnership Platform for Chapter 29;
- Monitoring the fulfilment of the European Commission's recommendations for 2024 for Chapter 29 "Customs".
- Participation in online meetings regarding the preparation of the negotiating position for Chapter 29 "Customs";
- Ensuring participation in the Albania-EU Subcommittee "Justice, Security and Freedom", held on 20-21 March 2024, in Brussels.
- 15th Meeting of the Subcommittee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation.
- Preparation of the first draft of the Negotiating Position for Chapter 29 "Customs".
- CAF Completion for Chapter 29 "Customs", Chapter 16 "Taxation", Chapter 24 "Justice, Security and Freedom".
- Participation in periodic online meetings with the Ministry of Finance on Chapter 29 "Customs", Chapter 33 "Budgetary and Financial Provisions", Chapter 24 "Justice, Security and Freedom".

IX.2 Cooperation with partners

The Albanian Customs Administration, as part of the International Customs Network and Law Enforcement Agencies, has been intensively involved throughout 2024 in increasing its international role and presence through the participation and representation of its structures in activities aimed at protecting economic interests and national security and increasing technical and administrative capacities, which mainly consist of:

- participation and management of administrative cooperation and technical assistance project activities funded by the European Union and other international organizations; (EU Twinning, ITMS, Comobilion, Horizon 2020 + WB – SE, NCTS, Qafe Thane, Hunter – Border Force, EXBS)
- participation in international initiatives (including regional ones) and cooperation programs with similar European and international structures (WCO, DG TAXUD, SELEC, OLAF, CEFTA, Open Balkan);
- international representation of the institution (bi/multilateral meetings TR, GR, KS, Balkan 6, CEFTA WEEK);

More specifically:

In the vision towards a Customs with the Customs standards of EU Member States, the Business Strategy for the Albanian Customs Administration 2023-2027 has been drafted, with the assistance of the EU TAIEX Project. Within its framework, the 2-year Implementation Plan of the Albanian Customs Administration Strategy was drafted and approved 2024-2025.

In order to increase transparency with the public and accurately and clearly reflection of the activities and achievements of the ACA for 2024, its various activities, seizures and detections in the context of the fight against smuggling and illegal activities (trafficking in narcotic substances, monetary values, clandestine persons, excise goods, etc.), as well as notifications for economic operators and individuals on innovations and facilities in Customs procedures, improvement of Information Technology Systems, employment in the Customs Administration, etc., those have been regularly published on social networks and on the official website (dogana.gov.al) of the Institution.

X. INCREASING ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITIES

The Albanian Customs Administration is in continuous efforts to successfully fulfil its missions, such as fiscal, trade facilitation, defence, as well as the commitments undertaken by the Albanian Government in the processes of Albania's Integration into the European Union.

In order to adapt in the interest of fulfilling administrative activity, realizing the institutional mission and in order to increase efficiency in work, to respond to new challenges, with the Council of Ministers' Decision No 355, dated 26.05.2022 "On some amendments to the Decision of the Council of Ministers No 921, dated 29.12.2014 "On the personnel of the Customs Administration", as amended, the new organizational structure of the Albanian Customs Administration has been approved.

The General Directorate of Customs consists of 1,074 employees, at central and local level.

The General Directorate of Customs consists of 429 employees and is organized as follows:

- Office of the Director General;
- Administrative Department;
- Technical Department;
- Operational-Investigative Department;
- Excise Department;
- Human Resources Management.

Due to the dynamism of the Customs Administration, as well as the continuous efforts to increase the performance and quality of service provision to citizens and business throughout 2024, the Directorate of Human Resources Management at the GDC in cooperation with the Department of Public Administration have developed 86 recruitment procedures in the Civil Service. At the end of the recruitment procedures, 21 employees became part of the Customs Administration through the parallel movement procedure, 4 employees through the promotion procedure and 61 employees became part of the Customs Administration through the Civil Service admission procedure. The Customs Administration is composed of 965 employees, of which 685 have the status of Civil Servant. 31.1% of the Customs Administration are women and girls.

X.1. Training and Professional Ethics

The Training Sector during 2024 has organized and managed the training of Customs personnel in two directions:

1. Trainings initiated by specific projects, recommended by HSC (KLSH) or various institutions;
2. Trainings according to the Annual Program with QTATD.

For the period January - December 2024, a total of 37 different training topics were developed with the participation of 340 employees.

In implementation of the annual program approved by the Tax and Customs Administration Training Centre (QTATD) for increasing professional training and in accordance with the needs of employees, the Training Program has been implemented according to the Calendar approved by the QTATD. According to the approved Annual Calendar, the 2024 Annual Program has been 100% implemented.

42 training topics were carried out according to target groups:

For the target group “Functional Level of Customs Administration”, 17 topics were developed where 321 employees were trained.

For the target group “Continuous Level of Customs Administration”, 8 topics were developed where 327 employees were trained.

For the target group “Young Employees” (48 employees), 17 basic level topics were developed and 685 employees were trained.

In total, the Training Sector has managed 79 topics and 1673 employees have been trained.

X.2. Improving Customs Infrastructure

Investments completed in 2024

- I. Within the framework of inter-regional cooperation for trade and transport facilitation, in cooperation with the World Bank, it has been developed the Project “Physical Works at Qafe Thana BCP according to design”, No. WBTF-ALB-131C, part of the “Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project - Albania”, where works have begun at Qafe Thana BCP which are expected to be completed within 2025.



II. During 2024, in the context of strengthening the control and the fight against illegal trafficking, a procedure was developed at Border Points for the purchase of passenger baggage control equipment (scanners) for Customs Houses:

- Customs House Saranda, piece 1
- Customs House Kapshtica, piece 1
- Customs House Kakavija, piece 1
- Customs House Rinas, piece 1

The installation of these equipment will increase the quality of passenger baggage checks and shorten the check time, while maintaining the right balance between Customs controls and facilitating legitimate trade. Also, in 2025, the same procedure will be developed for the Customs Houses for the same purpose:

- Customs House Qafe Thana, piece 1
- Customs House Morina, piece 1
- Customs House Saranda, piece 1

III. Within the framework of the rehabilitation of the entry and exit gates in the Republic of Albania, investments have been made in the infrastructure of the Bllate Customs House by developing the procedure “Purchase of control cabins for the Bllate Customs House”.



- IV. As part of the rehabilitation of the entry and exit gates in the Republic of Albania, as well as a friendlier Customs, maintenance repairs of the premises and mural paintings of the Customs Houses have been carried out as follows:

Kapshtica Customs



Qafe Thana Customs



Muriqan Customs Point



Hani i Hotit Customs Point



Morina Customs



XI. PRIORITIES FOR 2025

- The implementation of the third phase of camera coverage for the Customs Houses of Porto Romano, Qafe Bote, Bllade, Saranda, Muriqan and Kukes Airport. This is one of the most important priorities and is expected to be finalized within the first three months of this year in cooperation with the AKSHI and the British Embassy, as the financiers of this Project.
- Development of Advanced Risk Modules: The integration of new technological modules for risk analysis will enable more accurate identification of high-risk cargo, using advanced algorithms and artificial intelligence.
- Reduction of Physical and Documentary Controls: By implementing the motto “check less, check better”, the aim is to reduce the number of physical controls, focusing only on high-risk cases. This will improve efficiency and reduce waiting times for economic operators.
- Personnel Training: Increasing the professional capacities of Customs staff for the effective use of new risk modules and for the implementation of modern risk management methodologies.
- Improving Inter-Agency Cooperation: Strengthening cooperation with other Law Enforcement Agencies and international partners on information exchange and coordination in risk management.
- Performance Monitoring and Evaluation: Establishing mechanisms for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of new risk modules, with the aim of continuous improvement of processes.
- Monitoring the ongoing progress regarding: Development of the New Computerized Transit System - NCTS Platform, Single Window Project; Implementation of the module for AEO Applications and Authorizations/Certificates in the “Asycuda World” System; Green Corridor with CEFTA countries; Trade Facilitation Committee; ORF/FT-GIZ “Support for Regional Economic Integration” Project, for the AEOs part; Implementation of the Express Mail Module for the possibility of using Electronic Advanced Data (EAD- Electronic Advanced Data); Interaction of the “Asycuda World” System with AKU Net; Implementation of pre-arrival/pre-departure declaration for the Albanian Post in the “Asycuda World” System; Completion of the BackEnd System of applications with 5 other online services.
- Other priorities: Correct implementation of the transitional provisions on rules of origin for 2025; Continuation of training on the correct implementation of the transitional provisions on preferential origin which are expected to enter into force during 2025;
- Real-time and professional analysis of samples received at the Laboratory; Continuous improvement of the Quality System in accordance with the requirements of the SSH Standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017; Expansion of the range of accredited analytical indicators with new indicators; Increased participation in Proficiency Tests, as an important tool for increasing the competence and reliability of the Customs Laboratory.

- Improvement and completion of normative acts. Drafting of the Decision of the Council of Ministers “On approval and official publication of the Combined Nomenclature of Goods 2026”, updating the CNG 2026 in the System. Project Follow-up: Development and implementation of the Integrated Tariff Management System (ITMS). Tariff classification for all goods arriving from the relevant Customs Houses or other structures after their analysis by the Customs Laboratory Directorate.

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