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Action Summary

Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye III

Action against Economic Crime in Albania

(HF III-AEC-AL)

Action title	Action against Economic Crime in Albania (HF III-AEC-AL)
Action area	Albania
Budget	€895.000
Funding	European Union / Council of Europe
Implementation	Economic Crime and Cooperation Division, DG I, Unit I, Council of Europe
Duration	48 Months

I. Background

The European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye (also referred to as: Horizontal Facility phase III or HF III) is a co-operation initiative of the European Union and Council of Europe for South East Europe. The first phase of the Horizontal Facility ran from May 2016 to May 2019, and the second phase ran from May 2019 to December 2022. The third phase of the Horizontal Facility will be implemented from January 2023 to December 2026, and it will continue to build on the Statement of Intent signed on 1 April 2014 by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the European Union Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, in which both Organisations agreed to further strengthen their co-operation in key areas of joint interest.

The Horizontal Facility includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye. Beneficiaries and counterparts include governmental bodies at all levels, notably specialised structures within the Ministries of Justice, Interior and Finance, anti-corruption bodies, judicial and prosecutorial services, anti-money laundering supervisory bodies, Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), and representatives of civil society.

According to reports issued by Council of Europe monitoring bodies (GRECO and MONEYVAL), as well as EU Progress Reports, deficiencies remain to be addressed in order to ensure the impact and effectiveness of the measures to prevent corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing.

II. Action's approach in Albania

The Action against Economic Crime in Albania (AEC-AL) aims to strengthen the capacity of the institutions in Albania in preventing and combating economic crime, including corruption, money laundering and

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

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organized crime. It builds upon the results achieved and lessons learned during the implementation of Phase I and II of the Horizontal Facility by continuing its support to effective implementation of key recommendations of the Council of Europe’s monitoring mechanisms: Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL).

The Action will focus on supporting the authorities in several directions including:

1. Improved legal and operational framework to effectively target corruption;
2. Enhanced capacities for prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing and improved effectiveness of law enforcement and criminal justice sector in the fight against economic crime.

III. Action’s Objectives and Outcomes

The overall objective of the Action is to contribute to and increase the trust in the rule of law and democracy in Albania through prevention and control of economic crimes in accordance with European and other international standards. The specific objectives of the Action are:

Anti-corruption	Intermediate Outcome 1	Improved legal and institutional framework to effectively target corruption
	Immediate Outcome 1.1	Harmonized legal and operational framework in the fight against corruption with international standards and good practices
	Immediate Outcome 1.2	Enhanced effectiveness of anti-corruption measures especially focusing on the integrity of public officials at central at local levels
	Immediate Outcome 1.3	Strengthened capacities to address corruption risks at municipal level
	Immediate Outcome 1.4	Enhanced legislative and institutional framework on political finance
Anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism	Intermediate Outcome 2	Enhanced capacities for prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing and improve effectiveness of law enforcement and criminal justice sector in the fight against economic crime
	Immediate Outcome 2.1	Improved effectiveness of law enforcement and criminal justice sector in the fight against economic crime
	Immediate Outcome 2.2	Capacity and institutional building for AML risk-based compliance and supervision concerning particularly the non-financial sector improved
	Immediate Outcome 2.3	Analytical capacities of the General Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering (GDPML) enhanced
	Immediate Outcome 2.4	Enhanced legislation and institutional capacities of authorities to trace and confiscate criminal assets

IV. Implementation Arrangements

As a key actor in this thematic area, the Council of Europe’s Economic Crime and Cooperation Division (ECCD) is in charge of implementing the activities under HF III-AEC-AL.

For the purpose of implementing various specific activities, the Action engages international experts with demonstrated experience in the field of fighting against economic crime as well as local experts from Horizontal Facility countries in order to ensure that the project delivers high quality assistance to the beneficiaries.

V. Contacts

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