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CALLS & OPPORTUNITIES



ON SOME CHANGES "ON VALUE ADDED TAX"

During 2023, the legislation on VAT reimbursement in the framework of grant agreements in which it is foreseen not to use foreign financial resources to pay VAT has undergone several changes. Initially, on 13 April 2023, it was published in the official gazette, the Instruction No. 11 "For some additions and changes in Instruction No. 6, dated 30.1.2015, "On Value Added Tax in the Republic of Albania", amended, followed by another Instruction on 13 September 2023, No. 27 "For some additions and changes in Instruction No. 6, dated 30.1.2015, "On Value Added Tax in the Republic of Albania".

The immediate entry into force of the legal changes has brought the need for informing civil society organizations about the implementation of the new procedure.

In response to these needs, the National Resource Center for Civil Society organized a series of training programs with CSOs from all over the country, on the VAT refund procedure and the import exemption procedure and treatment, as a similar supply to exports for donation and grant agreements, the differences between them and the implementation in practice by CSOs.

Some of the key issues discussed as part of the trainings were: The Application Procedure for VAT Refund Certificate; The Application Procedure for VAT Refund; The Procedure for the Application for the Certificate for the Effect of Treatment as a Similar Supply to Exports; The role of the State Agency for Strategic Programming and Aid Coordination (SASPAC), the General Directorate of Customs, the General Directorate of Taxes and the Regional Tax Directorates; The Accompanying Documentation; The Deadlines, etc.



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by the European Union



PARTNERSALBANIA
FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

CODE OF STANDARDS FOR NPO-S IN ALBANIA

A SELF-REGULATORY PRACTICE IN GROWTH

In recent months, STREHA Centre, Plan&Go Organization, and Albcontact have joined the membership of the Code of Standards for NPOs, bringing to 24 the number of organizations publicly engaged to develop their activities in accordance with the Code of Standards.

The Code of Standards for NPOs in Albania is a self-regulatory mechanism that aims to improve the effectiveness of the work of non-profit organisations and increase supporters, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders trust by enhancing good governance of the sector, transparency, and accountability. The Code is a set of principles and commitments on how organizations conduct their work and activity.

From 2020, Partners Albania, in cooperation with the group of organizations that joined from the beginning of the drafting process the Code of Standards, and further in starting of its implementation, has worked to promote the Code as a self-regulatory practice and tool that contributes to stronger and more effective civil society organizations, by creating a basis on which leadership and management practices are assessed and improved.

The Code of Standards for NPOs in Albania has been recognized and welcomed by important international structures such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as part of the Document of Best Practices in the fight against terrorism and money laundering and recently in the Report of the European Commission for Albania 2022.

We invite all interested organizations to send their expression of interest and the necessary documentation to the Code of Standards dedicated platform standards4npo.al ! Through this platform, CSOs can test in real time, the current standards of their practices and opportunities for improvement against the implementation of the commitments of the Code of Standards.

For more information on the [Membership process](#), read here or contact the Code Secretariat at info@resourcecentre.al



ONLINE SELF-REGULATORY MECHANISM



The self-regulatory mechanism is available on the web platform, as well as a mobile application for **IOS** and **Android**.

For years now, the Resource Center has served as an informative and facilitating platform for possible networking for the non-profit sector and beyond, both locally as well as internationally. Through the CSOs Directory, the Resource Center offers opportunities for networking and creating partnerships for civil society organizations operating in Albania, enabling data on the mission and purpose of the activity, contacts, and locations of about 160 organizations that are part of it.

For more information on the [CSOs Directory click here](#).
We invite all interested [organizations to register here](#).

LEGAL SERVICE

The National Resource Centre continues to provide legal services to NPOs and civil society activists. During this period, legal advice was provided on the procedures for the establishment and registration of a foreign branch foundation in Albania, as well as obtaining the necessary licensing or possible accreditations according to the field of its activity, the legal procedures for changes in the founding documents of the organization, updating the decision-making bodies, the obligations of financial reports to the tax bodies in case of grants as an expert, as well as the legal steps necessary for the development and submission of a petition to the law-making bodies. The Legal Service is offered every Wednesday, ONLINE, from 14.00-17.00.

We invite all organizations and groups that need information and assistance regarding the creation, operation, and legal and fiscal compliance for NPOs to write to us at info@resourcecentre.al

For more information on the legal service and how to benefit from it, [read here](#).



ACTIVITIES FROM THE REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN ALBANIA



Helpdesk from the Vlorë Regional Office with CSO representatives to identify needs for environmental advocacy initiatives in the Vlorë region.



Meeting with journalists and members of the club of writers and artists "Petro Marko" for the promotion of the Center, as well as raising awareness for their wider involvement in local decision-making.



Meeting with representatives of local institutions and civil society organizations in Vlorë to raise awareness of elderly people in need and take them into consideration during the drafting of the budget for 2024.



Helpdesk from the Shkodër Regional Office with the "Dimension Human" organization on the identification of possible calls for projects related to services for the Day Center for the elderly.

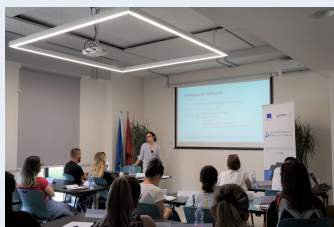


Meeting with the students of the high school "Oso Kuka" to raise awareness among young people about volunteerism and active citizenship.



Meeting with representatives of the Municipal Council for the establishment of cooperation after its constitution.

NPO ACADEMY



#Lecture7 covered project proposals and project management in the EU. The Academy participants were introduced to the EU financing application form, project management cycle, logical framework, stages of project preparation, and the problems and difficulties that non-profits face throughout the process. The illustrations with concrete examples of enterprises enriched the training and stimulated the discussions and the interest of the participants!

The lecture was led by Mrs. Ledina Gjijnuri, an expert, with several years of experience in the field of mobilization of EU funds, at the planning level of EU assistance for IPA funds, programming and drafting of analytical documents, as well as support in the preparation/evaluation of grant applications in within the EU funding/Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA).

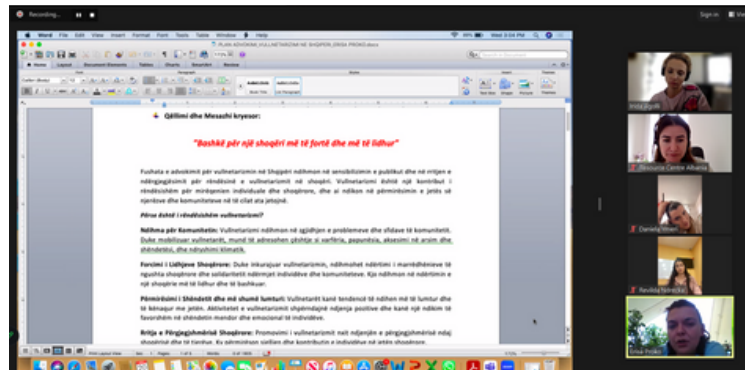
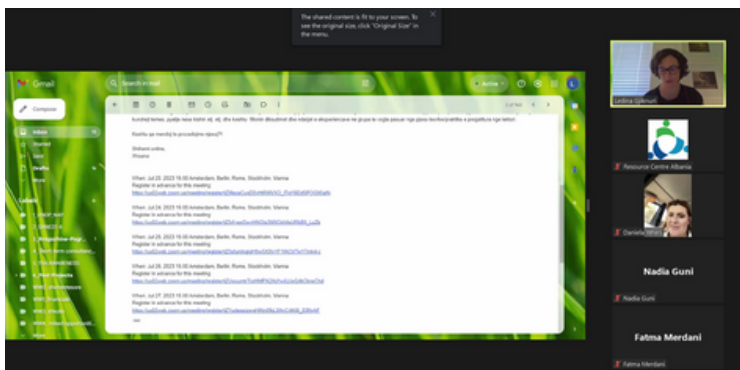


#Lecture8 "Advocacy and Lobbying" focused on issues related to the use of advocacy to influence decision-makers, the elements of an advocacy process as well and successful cases of advocacy campaigns.

The lecture was led by Mrs. Irida Agolli, a full-time lecturer at the Department of Labor and Social Policy at the University of Tirana since 2006. Her experience includes various consultancies for local and international institutions and organizations for conducting research, preparing of manuals, providing training, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

ASSISTANCE AND MENTORING FOR ACADEMY PARTICIPANTS

As part of the program, mentoring sessions with academics were held along with the development of lectures, focusing on discussions, sharing of models and practices on Project Proposal writing and application formats according to the requirements of different donors, current initiatives and needs for advocacy, and their development into concrete advocacy plans.



TRAINING PROGRAMS ON-DEMAND

In response to the sector's needs, the Resource Center has arranged a series of trainings focused on improving organizations' knowledge and capacities in various cities across the country on fundraising and diversifying funding sources.

With the opening of the call by **Smile.al** several regional trainings were organized, leading to an increase in understanding about crowdfunding platforms and their use, focusing especially on the application procedure, as well as the necessary documentation about the call.



NRC ACTIVITIES

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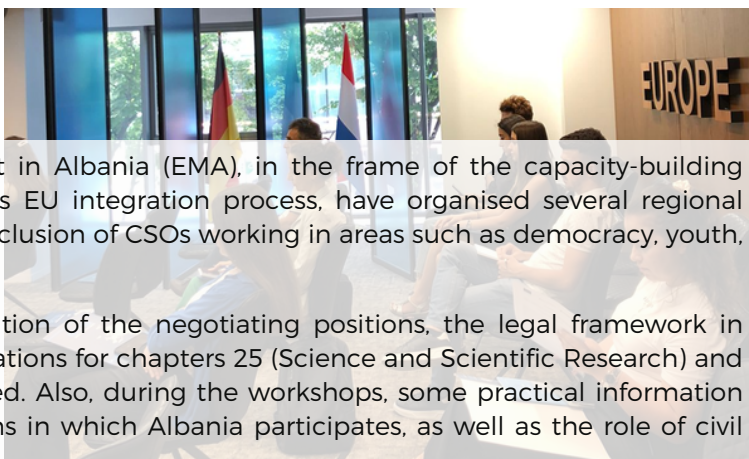
NRC ACTIVITIES

EU AQUIS

EU AQUIS, CSO PARTICIPATION, AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

The National Resource Center and the European Movement in Albania (EMA), in the frame of the capacity-building program in strengthening CSOs involvement in the country's EU integration process, have organised several regional workshops with the main focus on the opportunities for the inclusion of CSOs working in areas such as democracy, youth, education, and scientific research.

The negotiation process, the steps to be taken, the preparation of the negotiating positions, the legal framework in Albania, and the main state institutions involved in the negotiations for chapters 25 (Science and Scientific Research) and 26 (Education and Culture) were some of the topics addressed. Also, during the workshops, some practical information was shared with the participants on EU Community Programs in which Albania participates, as well as the role of civil society in consultation and monitoring.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CSO NETWORKS

Following the technical assistance program that the National Resource Center is offering in support of CSO networks, coalitions, and formal and informal groups. During this period, we continued working with the Youth Hub Network for the Western Balkans and Turkey, the CSOs Group for Voluntarism in Albania, as well as the Community Organisations Network to address their advocacy initiatives.

At the end of the Assistance for the Community Organisations Network, three organizations, the Youth Academy of Studies, Global Care Albania and the Initiative for Social Change, ARSIS, have further developed their advocacy capacities, as well as assisted in the drafting of concrete plans for the mobilization of communities and the advocacy of three initiatives that will soon be implemented: **(1)** The establishment of a school library in a rural area in Pogradec; **(2)** Creation of a sensorial environment for the integration of children with special needs in the area of Bathore, Tirana; **(3)** Creation of a friendly environment for children in the premises of the "26 November" school in Yzberisht, Tirana.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPORT ON ALBANIA 2022

In July, the European Parliament approved in a plenary session the "Report of the European Commission on Albania 2022" (Resolution 2022/2199(INI)).

Among other things, in relation to "Fundamental Freedoms and Human Rights", the report calls for the revision of the provisions of the Law on the Registration of Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) that violate the freedom of expression and organization; expresses concern about the very disproportionate fines related to administrative violations by NPOs; welcomes the Code of Standards for NPOs in Albania, as a self-regulatory mechanism, as well as suggests the simplification of the electronic registration of civil society organizations (paragraph 60, p. 15).

[Read her the full report.](#)

COUNTRY REPORT FOR ALBANIA 2022

MONITORING MATRIX ON ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CSOS DEVELOPMENT 2022

Partners Albania has published the annual report of the Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2022. The report presents an analysis of the enabling environment in line with the priorities set in the Roadmap for the Government's Policy "On the creation of an enabling environment for civil society 2019-2023".

Among other recommendations, the report states: **(1)** With the creation of the new electronic register on NPOs, expected to be functional by the end of 2023, the integration of state agencies' systems should be ensured to avoid duplication of reporting by NPOs, and to provide a clear understanding of the size and economic value of the sector; **(2)** Reclassification of the NPO sector as "low risk" on AML/CFT issues, by amending the AML/CTF legal framework to this regard, supported by the results of the application of the Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment Methodology for the NPO Sector in Albania, 2022.; **(3)** The government must seriously engage and take concrete actions to ensure the implementation of the measures of the Road Map for Drafting Policy and Measures for Enabling Environment for Civil Society 2019-2023, within its timelines. For more on the findings and recommendations, **[read the full report.](#)**



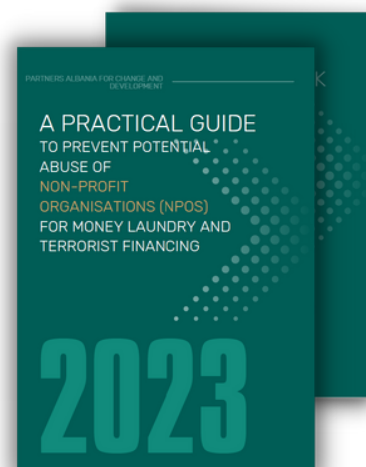
A PRACTICAL GUIDE

TO PREVENT POTENTIAL ABUSE OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (NPOS) FOR MONEY LAUNDERING AND TERRORIST FINANCING

In order to help the NPO sector, a Practical Guide to Prevent the Potential Abuse of Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) for Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing has been released by Partners Albania.

Through a practical and concrete approach, the Guide provides an overview of the legal and regulatory framework for the prevention of money laundering and financing of terrorism applicable to NPOs, as well as some case studies to increase understanding of the terrorist threat in the NPO sector.

[Browse the practical guide here.](#)



SCREENING REPORT ALBANIA

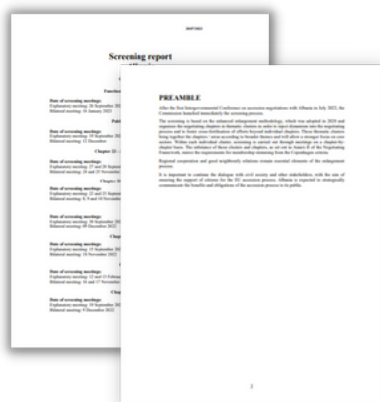
The European Commission has published the [screening report](#) for Albania, one year after the opening of the EU-Albania accession negotiations and the conclusion of the first round of meetings.

The report highlights Albania's progress towards the EU, key challenges in the country, and achievements in crucial reforms. Among other things, the report also dwells on the review of the regulatory legal framework and policies for civil society in the country, evaluating the establishment and development of the regulatory and institutional framework, but emphasizes that its implementation needs to be further strengthened. In addition to this, the report mentions the importance of structures such as the National Resource Center for Civil Society, which is regarded as an information and support platform for consultative and policy-making processes for the sector and other partners.

The findings of the European Commission report coincide with the findings of the Monitoring Matrix on the Enabling Environment for CSO Development, the Report for Albania 2022 and its recommendations are in line with a series of issues that underlie our advocacy efforts for an enabling environment for the sector, such as progress in the law on volunteering, the establishment and operation of the electronic registry of NPOs, the facilitation of VAT refund procedures, the establishment of incentives for individual donations, etc.

[Read here the full report.](#)

[Read more about Matrix 2022.](#)



ALBANIA ACTION PLAN REPORT RESULTS 2020-2022

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) published the Report on the Results of the Implementation of the Fifth Action Plan of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) for Albania, for the period 2020-2022.

According to the report, engagement between government and civil society was limited during co-creation and implementation of the 2020-2022 Action Plan. However, the creation of an OGP multistakeholder forum places Albania in a better position to engage civil society during the next action plan cycle.

[For more, find the full report here.](#)

THE CIVIL SOCIETY COMMISSION'S MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

With the end of the deadline for the expression of interest by CSOs to be members of the Civil Society Commission, and after the completion of the verification process for meeting the criteria, the People's Advocate announced the names of the organizations that met the legal criteria as members of the Civil Society Commission.

The organizations selected as members of the commission are as follows:

- "Civic Attitude" Center
- Foundation "Contribution for Education"
- Albanian Center for Sustainable Development
- "Social Justice" Organization
- "Wisdom" Legal Clinic

The above organizations selected as members of the civil society commission chose **Mr. Gentian Serjani**, representative of the "Social Justice" organization.

Also, periodic meetings of the Civil Society Commission are being held at the institution of the Ombudsman for the approval of the final draft of the regulation of the Civil Society Commission. This process aims to increase the involvement of civil society in the justice system. For more read here. **[For more information, read here.](#)**



ON THE REVISION OF RECOMMENDATION 8 AND ITS INTERPRETIVE NOTE

In June 2022, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Assembly agreed to consider amending Recommendation 8 and its Interpretative Note 10. FATF is currently consulting with all stakeholders before finalizing the changes. At the same time, the update of the Best Practice Paper to combat the abuse of NPOs is being consulted.

The draft amendment to the text of Recommendation 8 and the Best Practice Document proposed for consultation reflects the work and discussion of the Project Team established by the FATF. They are trying to address the problem of over-regulation of preventive measures for the NPO sector in some countries, recognizing the negative impact this can have on legitimate NPO activities.

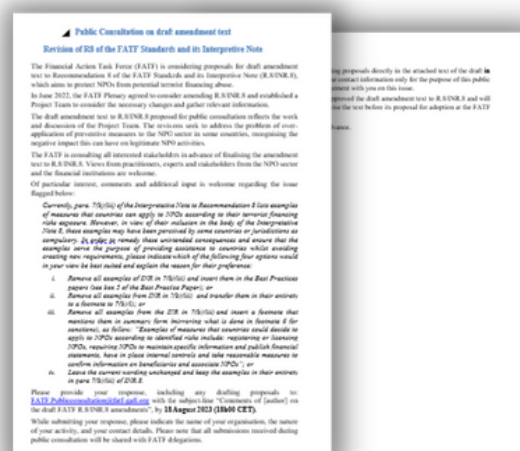
This is the second round of consultations, following last year's, which was open to evidence on how Recommendation 8 is producing unintended consequences for NPOs globally and the best practices to address them. the Code of Standards for Non-Profit Organizations in Albania, a practice around which Partners Albania is working, has been issued as a best practice in the first round of consultations, to be highlighted as a topic of interest for the Best Practices Document.

The consultation process provided a good opportunity for all experts and stakeholders from the NPO sector and financial institutions to offer concrete proposals in the text and/or comments.

Both documents can be accessed as follows:

Revision of Recommendation 8

Best Practice Document



BCSDN OPINION ON IPA III CONSULTATIONS: A NEED FOR INCLUSIVE, STRUCTURED, AND EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION PROCESS

During the month of July, Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) published its opinion on the IPA III Consultation (IPA III Multi-Country Action Document 2024).

BCSDN brings attention to the limitations of the current consultation process and urge EU for inclusive, structured, and effective collaboration, and the need for stronger support towards a more enabling civil society environment.

The Action document focusses only on funding diversification and CSO engagement in philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, social entrepreneurship and does not reflect the Guidelines' objective on fair and transparent public financial and non-financial support to CSOs.



READ HERE THE FULL OPINION

CIVIL SOCIETY

calls on EU to protect people's rights in the AI Act 'trialogue' negotiations

Civil society statement on fundamental rights in the EU Artificial Intelligence Act

150 civil society organisations are calling on the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council of the EU to put people and their fundamental rights first in the AI Act as EU institutions proceed to 'trialogue' negotiations. These decisive meetings will determine the final legislation and how much it centres human rights and the concerns of people who could be affected by 'risky' AI systems.

The statement focuses on 3 main issues such as: (i) legislation should ensure that the development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is responsible, (ii) publicly transparent and empower people to challenge potential harms, and (iii) legislation should set limits on harmful and discriminatory surveillance by national security, law enforcement, and immigration authorities as well as the importance of legislation limiting Big Tech lobbying and avoiding loopholes that undermine the regulation of AI activity.

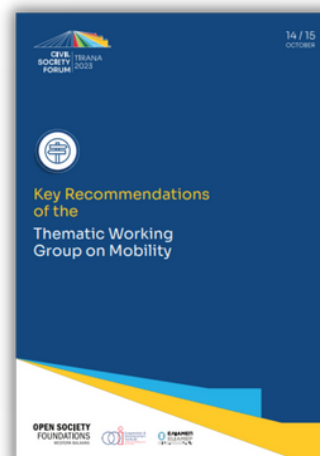
Read here the full statement.



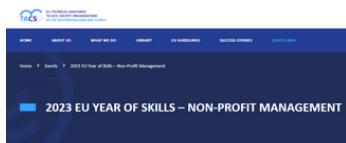
CSF TIRANA 2023 - CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

The Science and Innovation Center for Development (SCiDEV) organized the closing event of the Thematic Working Group on Mobility, which took place within the framework of the Civil Society Forum (FSC) and Think Tank 2023, as part of the Berlin Process Annual Summit. The CSF is an initiative that aims to promote regional cooperation and reforms in the Western Balkans, in relation to the EU integration process.

As part of the Forum, several thematic working groups have been created to identify good practices and develop policy recommendations regarding several topics such as: energy, access to the European common market, digitalization and connectivity, climate and the green agenda, mobility and migration, security and geopolitics and enlargement policy. During the last meeting of the SCiDEV-led Thematic Group on Mobility, findings came up from discussions with Western Balkan stakeholders regarding the potential of mobility in the region to promote innovation and cooperation through networking, research collaborations, and the exchange of knowledge and technology.



Read here the Key Recommendations



Njoftim për kandidim për përzgjedhjen e Anëtarit të Bordit Mbikqyrës të Agjencisë për Mësimetjeten e Shoqërisë Civile (AMSHC)

NUOTIM PËR KANDIDIM PËR PËRZGJEDHJEN E ANËTARIT TË BORDIT MBIKQYRËS TË AGJENCISË PËR MËSIMETJETEN E SHOQËRISË CIVILE (AMSHC)
Në mënyrë të ligjit nr.10993, datë 9.3.2009, "Për organizimin dhe funksionimin e Agjencisë për Mësimetjeten e Shoqërisë Civile", dhe të vendimit nr.768, datë 15.7.2009, të Këshillit të Ministrave, "Për miratimin e procedurave e të rregullave për kandidimin dhe përzgjedhjen e anëtarëve të Bordit Mbikqyrës të Agjencisë për Mësimetjeten e Shoqërisë Civile", shpallim njoftimin për kandidim për një anëtar të Bordit Mbikqyrës të Agjencisë për Mësimetjeten e Shoqërisë Civile (AMSHC).
Konkursimi është i hapur për përfundim të plotë deri më 25 shtator 2023.
Afeti i dorëzimit të aplikimit, deri më 25 shtator 2023.
Adresë: Kryeministria
Bulevardi "Dëshmorët e Kombit" nr.1, 1000
Tiranë, Shqipëri
Zyra e Sekretariatit të Përgjithshëm
tel: 04 22 777 401



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QUARTERLY CALENDAR

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