



Monthly newsletter



May 2025



The ALSAI launches activities for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the city of "Independence"

The Albanian Supreme Audit Institution (ALSAI) has launched from the city of "Independence" the activities for the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the institution, a landmark event for the journey of public finance control in Albania. On April 10, 2025, the Chairman of the ALSAI, Mr. Arben Shehu and the Auditor General of the National Audit Office of Kosovo, Ms. Vlora Spanca, together with representatives of both institutions, paid a visit to the city of Vlorë. Although the ALSAI was established as a full structure 13 years after the birth of the Albanian state, the financial problem occupied an important place in the policy and economic activity of the "Government of Vlorë", led by Ismail Qemali.

Historical memory is one of the main elements in creating a sustainable identity not only of a nation, but also of a state institution. Therefore, the ALSAI chose the Independence Museum in Vlorë as one of the most important historical places in Albania, where the Declaration of Independence was held on November 28, 1912, to open the curtain of the 100th anniversary activities.

At the meeting with the delegation of the National Assembly of Albania at the Independence Museum, the history of the Declaration of Independence and the Albanian state formation was revealed, which simultaneously marks the moment of the creation of state institutions, their development over the years and the importance of sustainable management of public finances.



The Heads of Supreme Audit Institutions emphasized the importance of external control of public finances, as an essential pillar of good governance, transparency and accountability.

Appreciating the historical heritage of our country, Mr. Shehu and Ms. Spanca underlined that in order to preserve and further advance the values of professionalism and integrity in the public interest, responsible institutions are needed that work with dedication to strengthen the rule of law and for a government at the service of citizens.

Ms. Spanca congratulated the ALSAI on its jubilee anniversary, appreciating the 100-year contribution of this institution in the service of the state and citizens.

On May 20, 2025, the Supreme State Audit Office will celebrate 100 years of existence since its establishment in 1925 under the name "Control Council".

Statistics



54 conducted audits for the year 2025

93 audits are in process

19 finalized audits in April

44 audit reports published in the web

The Chairman of ALSAI, Mr. Arben Shehu, welcomed in a meeting the Italian Ambassador to Albania, Mr. Marco Alberti



The Ambassador of Italy to Albania, Mr. Marco Alberti, together with the Senior Director of the Guardia Di Finanza, Giampiero Carrieri, held a meeting on April 15, 2025 with the Chairman of the Albanian Supreme Audit Institution, Mr. Arben Shehu. His Excellency expressed his high appreciation for the work carried out by the ALSAI in the field of financial control of state institutions. The Italian Ambassador considered the role of the ALSAI in the European integration process of Albania to be fundamental.

"You, Mr. President, occupy a delicate place in the structure and architecture of the state, above all in the dimension of negotiations for Albania's entry into the European Union, where transparency, regularity, accuracy, accountability and the system of public accounts play an essential role" - said Mr. Alberti. He emphasized that cooperation between Albanian and Italian institutions will soon intensify.

Also, the Chairman of the ALSAI, Mr. Arben Shehu, thanked Ambassador Alberti for the visit and the assessment. Mr. Shehu expressed his gratitude for the support provided by the Italian institutions in the work of the ALSAI and underlined the need for further consolidation of bilateral relations. Mr. Shehu appreciated the great importance of cooperation between the two countries in the financial investigation sector of public institutions, considering it essential for strengthening good governance and the rule of law in Albania. The Ambassador confirmed the launch of cooperation within a few months between the ALSAI and important academic institutions of financial investigation.

It was also communicated about increasing the presence of ALSAI staff in Italian institutions such as the Guardia di Finanza and the Italian Police to gain the best experiences in financial investigation. This meeting marks an important step in strengthening bilateral relations and cooperation in the field of financial control, as a key aspect for Albania's journey towards the European Union.



The Fight against corruption, European Commission experts meet with Mr. Shehu at the Albanian Supreme Audit Institution



As part of the assessment mission for the "Fight Against Corruption and Organized Crime", the Chairman of the Albanian Supreme Audit Institution, Mr. Arben Shehu, hosted the European Commission experts in a meeting on the 7th April 2025.

During the meeting, Mr. Shehu underlined the commitment of the ALSAI to implement all legal and institutional obligations, ensuring continuous cooperation with all law enforcement institutions.

The Chairman of the ALSAI emphasized that the institution is committed to increasing transparency and accountability in the management of public finances, with the aim of preventing corruption and organized crime. The Secretary General, the Director of the Directorate of Communication, Publication and External Relations and representatives from the Legal Directorate also participated in this meeting.

ALSAI - NAO Kosovo, the first working meeting for the parallel audit "Dam Protection and Safety" is held



Following the decision of the heads of the two Supreme Audit Institutions in Albania and Kosovo to conduct a parallel audit on the protection and safety of dams, the first working meeting of the audit groups was held at the premises of the Albanian Supreme Audit Institution (ALSAI) on 1 and 2 April 2025. The audit groups of the ALSAI and the National Audit Office discussed the situation in Albania and Kosovo, regarding the identified issues related to the safety of dams, the clarification of the legal and regulatory framework, the focus on important issues, the exchange of national and international good practices, etc.

The meeting presented the assessment and classification of dams in terms of risk level, a practice that is not carried out and is not foreseen in the legal/regulatory framework, both in Albania and in Kosovo. The methodology and scope of performance audits in Albania and Kosovo have similarities in terms of deadlines and communication with the entities under audit. The audit groups of the ALSAI and the NAO will continue communication in order to review more detailed information and data, to conclude in the finalization of the audit program for the protection and safety of dams in Albania and Kosovo.

The ALSAI participates in the pilot program of the OECD International Academy for “Tax Investigation and Financial Crime”

On March 31-April 4, 2025, the OECD International Academy Pilot Program on “Misuse of Technology in Financial Crimes” was held in Ostia. The ALSAI participated for the first time in this program, represented by Ms. Joniada Goçaj.

This program focused on issues related to the use of technology to facilitate tax evasion, money laundering and other financial crimes; as well as how essential it is to understand these risks in order to strengthen investigative capacities and law enforcement, protect public finances and ensure the integrity of the global financial system.

Some of the main topics addressed during this program were:

- “Big Data” in Financial Crimes: Understanding its role in identifying and preventing financial crimes.
- Misuse of Financial Technology (FinTech) and New Crimes: How financial technologies are misused for illegal activities.
- Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT: The role of artificial intelligence in facilitating and combating financial crimes.
- Crypto Assets and Blockchain: Analyzing the risks associated with cryptocurrencies, decentralized finance and NFTs. (“Non-Fungible Digital Assets”).
- Money Laundering Risks from Cryptocurrency Misuse: Identifying vulnerabilities and implementing effective measures against them.



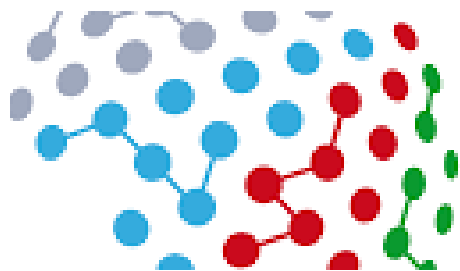
During the 5-day program, concrete examples from countries such as the Netherlands; the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore were discussed regarding the misuse of technology in financial crimes. At the end of the program, it was emphasized that although technology offers great benefits in the fight against financial crimes, it also creates opportunities for sophisticated crimes, including: tax evasion using decentralized finance platforms; money laundering through NFTs and cryptocurrency exchanges; misuse of innovations from Artificial Intelligence and Fintech for illicit profits.

The ALSAI, part of the Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) training on performance auditing



The Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) has organized the first block of the performance audit training program on 1-4 April 2025 in Sarajevo. The purpose of this program is to provide structured training to help build a professional performance audit network, in accordance with international auditing standards. Participants in this training are groups of young auditors from Supreme Audit Institutions of Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. The ALSAI participates in this program with the performance audit “Community care for the elderly and service decentralization”, with the participation of auditors Annavanessa Hoxhaj and Lorena Liçi.

The ALSAI attends the EUROSAI organized e-seminar on “Auditing of critical information infrastructure”



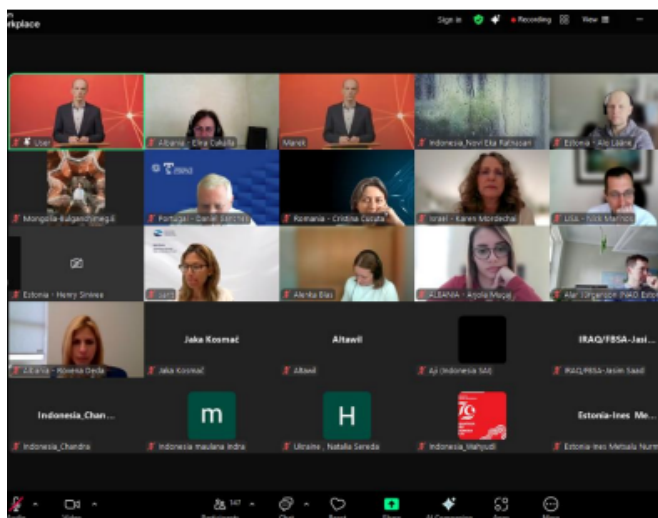
EUROSAI IT Working Group

The EUROSAI IT Working Group, of which the ALSAI is a member, organized on 24 April 2025 the online seminar entitled: “Auditing Critical Information Infrastructure”. The aim of this seminar was to explore cybersecurity and auditing critical information infrastructure in an increasingly complex digital environment, by exchanging international experiences and good practices among EUROSAI members and international partners. The online seminar was organized as a combination of sharing experiences from different SAIs, discussions with expert panels, as well as interactive questions and surveys with participants.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman of the EUROSAI - IT WG, who is also the Head of the Estonian SAI, stressed that systems built on critical infrastructures are very important for the functioning of a state and the provision of quality services to citizens. In this context, the development of IT auditing in these infrastructures is equally important.

The Estonian Information System Authority provided examples of practices as a model institution in terms of technological developments, in which cybersecurity standards are renewed every year, taking into account rapid technological changes and past experiences, with a focus on the risk of cyber attacks, as the representative of the Estonian Information System Authority also emphasized in his speech.

The panel discussion on the future of critical infrastructure cybersecurity shared views on ongoing challenges in standards and incident response, approaches to cyberattack risk, awareness of continuous monitoring, etc. Participants expressed that the maturity for managing and responding to cyber incidents is not the same in different countries. For this reason, public and private entities should prioritize cyber incident simulations, with a focus on obtaining information about the current situation of their infrastructures and where they should intervene in order to increase security.



Following the seminar, a representative from the U.S. General Audit Office (U.S. GAO) gave a presentation on “Using Audits to Improve Critical Infrastructure Protection from Cyber Threats,” providing an overview of the current situation and what can be improved to reduce the risk of ransomware attacks.








In this context, the GAO has also created the “Cybersecurity Program Audit Guide” to provide auditors with the methodology, techniques, and procedures to make appropriate assessments during critical infrastructure audits. In the closing remarks, the ITWG Secretariat announced the planning of the annual hybrid meeting of the IT WG, with a focus on e-government and e-services.

This seminar was attended by auditors from the IT Audit Department, as well as from the Information Technology Directorate at the ALSAI.

Thank you for reading!



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