



Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2025 and Action Plan 2021-2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I: STRATEGIC CONTEXT	7
1.1. Introduction and aim of the strategic document	9
1.2. Vision of the strategy	10
1.3. Methodology	10
1.4. Risk analysis, achievements and lessons	11
PART II: PURPOSE OF POLICIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENT	17
2.1. Purpose of Policy I: Reduction in serious and organised crime threat and impact	19
Specific objective 1.1: Disrupting criminal activities in the area of narcotics	19
Specific objective 1.2: Dismantling illegal trafficking	20
Specific objective 1.3: Disrupting the economic crime of money laundering	21
Specific objective 1.4: Investigating, criminally prosecuting and convicting criminal structures' leaders and members	20
Specific objective 1.5: Strengthening international police cooperation	22
Specific objective 1.6: Apprehending internationally wanted persons	23
Specific objective 1.7: Strengthening jurisdictional relations with foreign authorities	23
2.2. Purpose of Policy II: Protection of citizens, institutions and economy	24
Specific objective 2.1: Identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming subject to constraint, violence and intimidation by organised crime	24
Specific objective 2.2: Improving professionalism	25
Specific objective 2.3: Sapping financial motive for participation in organised crime	25
2.3. Purpose of Policy III: Increase of preventive force against serious and organised crime threats	26
Specific objective 3.1: Conducting awareness-raising campaigns with the participation of central and local institutions, civil society, business, media and other players in order to prevent organised crime	27
Specific objective 3.2: Offering and coordinating domestic/foreign support to vulnerable areas and communities	37

PART III: IMPLEMENTATION, RESPONSIBILITY OF INSTITUTIONS,	
REPORTING AND MONITORING.....	27
3.1. Responsibilities of institutions.....	31
3.2. Accountability, reporting and monitoring.....	32
PART IV: BUDGET ANALYSIS.....	35
4.1. Budget analysis for the implementation of the strategy.....	37

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMSCA	Agency for the Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets
DISA	Defence Intelligence and Security Agency
NAECCS	National Authority for Electronic Certification and Cybernetic Security
FSA	Financial Supervisory Authority
SA	Security Academy
EU	European Union
NIB	National Investigation Bureau
BA	Bank of Albania
USSD	Bank of Albania
US	State Department
NBA	National Bar Association
DGP	Directorate General of Prisons
DGC	Directorate General of Customs
DGMLP	Directorate General for Money Laundering Prevention
DGSP	Directorate General of State Police
LDP	Local Directorates of Police
DGT	Directorate General for Taxation
EMCDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
EMPACT	European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats
FAST	Fugitive Active Searching Team
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
RDF	Regional Development Fund
OCG	Organised Crime Groups
NICHR	National Institute for Cultural Heritage Registration

HEI	Higher education institutions
HPC	High Prosecutorial Council
HJC	High Judicial Council
MoESY	Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MEFA	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
MoC	Ministry of Culture
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoTE	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
MoHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
CPA	Community policing assistant
AGO	Attorney General's Office
SP	State Police
MP	Military Police
CCVE	Centre for Countering Violent Extremism
NBC	National Business Centre
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
SIENA	Secure Information Exchange Network Application
SOCS	Serious and Organised Crime Strategy
SIS	State Intelligence Service

PART I:
STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENT

The Serious and Organised Crime Strategy was mapped out following on from two previous strategies: The Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2008-2013, and the Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2013-2020. Unlike the previous documents, the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy focuses on the fight against serious and organised crime, targeting its main components, including trafficking in drugs, human beings, weapons, art and cultural heritage works and money laundering, as well as organised crime groups.

The strategy was subject to a process of consultations among the government institutions involved in the fight against serious and organised crime, which will be largely instrumental to the implementation of this strategy and to the monitoring of its progress.

The strategy is based on data and assessments provided by law enforcement and intelligence institutions and agencies, and on external evaluation reports made by domestic and international institutions.

This strategy was mapped out in several stages:

The first stage included organised crime threat assessment, based on measuring the outcomes obtained during the implementation of the Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2013-2020. Such assessment helped identify the needs and shortcomings concerning the hitherto approach against serious and organised crime, on the basis of which the purposes of policies/the policies, the specific objectives of the strategy and the performance indicators designed to measure the outcomes were developed in a second stage. Such assessment also included the findings and recommendations contained in the independent national and international reports, which have year after year addressed issues relating to the enforcement of law and fight against organised crime in Albania. A series of international strategic documents and good practices in this area, which have been consulted, have also been instrumental to stages three and four of this process. The final document and the Action Plan for the implementation of the strategy between 2021 and 2022 were mapped out during stage three, and during stage four, they were subject to consultations with the public and stakeholders.

The subsequent chapters of this strategic document will address a number of issues relating to the steps taken to come up with this strategy, its goals and expectations, as well as the implementation and monitoring of defined objectives.

The first part of this document provides an overall evaluation of the efforts, achievements and challenges in the fight against serious and organised crime in the country, based on the internal analyses made by the Albanian institutions, and referring to the main reports written by international institutions and bodies covering these issues. This part will be dedicated to development of the vision of the strategy, which will be the main aim of the joint efforts of the Albanian institutions in the fight against serious and organised crime, indicating how this strategy relates to the effective legal framework and the other strategic documents in this area.

The second part focuses on the strategic approach to be applied in this document, with detailed explanations being given on the three main policies outlined in this strategy, and on the specific objectives for coordinating the activity of institutions in dealing with serious and organised crime.

The third part sets out the priority actions to be taken by the institutions for each of the three policies, and lastly, the fourth part deals with the Action Plan 2021-2022, which will help implement the policies and specific objectives and the division of responsibilities among the institutions, and set out timelines for implementing the measures.

1.2. VISION OF THE STRATEGY

The Serious and Organised Crime Strategy will be instrumental to the coordination of efforts made by the Albanian institutions dealing with a number of issues and challenges in the area of security, which have generally been identified in the risk analysis, and will be guided by the vision of this strategy:

‘Assuring a safe environment, free of serious and organised crime threats, for development of the country and the society, thus ensuring individual’s life, free entrepreneurship and observance of lawfulness overall.’

This vision complies with the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020, in which the fight against organised crime relates to the ‘Good Governance, Democracy and Rule of Law’ pillar, and supports the NSDI’s vision: ‘Albania with a society without trafficking, organised crime and threats of terrorism, and projecting the image of a peaceful country and a country with European standards for security,’ regarding the objectives envisioned in order to create a safe environment for the society by reducing the supply and the opportunities for illegal use of narcotics, reducing illegal trafficking, and particularly, trafficking in human beings from/through Albania by 2020, and develop contemporary investigative services, and strengthen international and regional cooperation.

The challenges envisioned to be encountered by this strategy also relate to the challenges set out in the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020: (1) making greater efforts in strengthening cooperation among the law enforcement agencies; (2) creating reliable ‘traceable data’ from investigations of a preventive nature of the processes and convictions systematically associated with the use of financial investigations; (3) accelerating and intensifying fight against drugs production and trafficking in order to ensure that it has a longer effect; and (4) waging a better coordinated and more focused fight against all forms of organised crime through international cooperation and taking stronger countermeasures.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

As explained further on in subchapter 5, the effective legal and institutional framework and the relevance to the strategic documents and priorities of this document fully comply with the strategic documents, at the national and international level, adopted by the Parliament and the Council of Ministers, ensuring that the vision, policies and specific objectives fully comply with these strategic documents.

Drafting of this strategy was planned in the framework of the National Plan for European Integration 2020-2022, assigning a coordinating role to the Ministry of the Interior as the institution carrying the greatest weight on maintaining public order and safety. Throughout all the stages, starting from the risk analysis to its adoption, this document has been consulted with other institutions, including the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Attorney General’s Office and so on, which have particularly contributed to the drafting of this strategy.

In the course of the drafting of this document, alongside the legal infrastructure and the various state-run programmes, during an analysis made in order to assess the situation and plan the priorities, goals and alternatives for future development, consideration was also given to findings and recommendations made in the international reports, including the progress reports by the European Commission, the Stabilisation and Association Committee, GRETA, USSD, ICRG/FATF, etc.

Additionally, in early December 2020, this document was published for public consultation on the following address <https://konsultimipublik.gov.al/Konsultime/Detaje/313> and no other comments or suggestions have been made regarding its contents.

1.4. RISK ANALYSIS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS

Alongside the periodical assessments made by the Albanian institutions, international bodies, being independent and unbiased, report that, *‘Albania has made good progress in strengthening the fight against organised crime,... and these steps represent some tangible progress.’*¹ According to the European Commission, Albania’s progress in this aspect is supported by *‘further intensification of police operations to dismantle criminal organisations,... and [Albania’s] strong commitment to counter the trafficking of drugs’*². Cooperation with the EU Member States and Europol, enhanced cooperation between police and prosecutors, implementation of the EU *Acquis* in this area, implementation of the constant recommendations and implementation of the Action Plan in order to address the FATF requirements are mentioned among the key factors leading to a considerable number of successful operations, and the arrest of the criminal organised group leaders. Special attention is also devoted to the role and importance of the new justice institutions, and specifically the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office. The US State Department considers continuation of the implementation of justice reform and the work against organised crime to be of vital importance³.

In regard of the outcomes in the fight against narcotics, it is reported that, *‘As in the past years, Albania showed also in 2019 a strong, constant commitment to counter the production and trafficking of cannabis.’* Permission for aerial surveys to be made by the Italian *Guardia di Finanza*, co-financed by the EU, the work of the joint investigation teams, and the large-scale law enforcement operations relating to cocaine and heroin in cooperation with the police authorities from the neighbouring countries, and particularly from Italy, which have been instrumental in identifying and prosecuting criminal organisations at the core of narcotics trafficking operations, including those carried out over the sea, are mentioned as key factors in this regard. As a result of these operations, the volume of hashish seizures has also increased. In its Albania Report 2020, the European Commission makes mention of Albania’s continued cooperation with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) under the working arrangement signed between Albania and EMCDDA in March 2019. International factors and cooperation, including Albania’s efforts to accede to the European Union, have also been considered by the US State Department to have impacted positively on the increased volume of drug seizures, and the number of drug-related arrests in 2019. This Department points out that, even though Albania’s role as source or market for illicit drugs beyond cannabis is minor, there has been an increase in cocaine seizures in Western Europe linked to Albanian crime groups’ involvement.

As well as continuing and strengthening international cooperation, including addressing of the new trends in the area of drug trafficking, it is necessary that the Albanian authorities take additional political, legislative and organisational actions. Adopting the national strategy and plan to counter drugs, reviewing legislation concerning narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, updating the list of prohibited psychoactive substances, and establishing the National Drug Observatory and the Early Warning System for the new psychoactive substances are among the needs identified.

Referring to the challenges faced, the outcomes obtained and the recommendations given for strengthening the fight against illegal trafficking, it is still reported that Albania is a source, transit and destination country for

1. EU Commission, Albania 2020 Report, Brussels, 6.10.2020, p. 6.

2. Ibid.

3. United States Department of State, International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Albania 2020, p. 93: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Tab-1-INCSR-Vol.-I-Final-for-Printing-1-29-20-508-4.pdf>

trafficking in human beings. Victims include women and children, who are subject to trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation to the neighbouring countries and EU Member States.

Albania has increased trafficking victim prevention and protection efforts, and has continued its actions to enforce the law.⁴ In December 2019, Albania adopted additional actions designed to prevent trafficking in human beings, particularly by increasing the State Police's detailed control of minors leaving Albania. The national referral mechanism for (potential) trafficking victims is considered to be fully operational. The Albanian authorities must however increase efforts to ensure early identification of victims and potential victims, intensification of cross-border cooperation with the neighbouring countries and international cooperation, as well as victims' successful reintegration. Special attention must be paid to unaccompanied children and child victims of trafficking, ensuring them appropriate protection, as well.

In reference to illegal trafficking in firearms, Albania is considered to be both a destination and a transit country for light firearms. Albania has adopted the Strategy for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Ammunition and Explosives 2019–2024 and the Action Plan 2019–2021, and has actively participated in EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT operational action plan on firearms.

Illegal trafficking in cultural properties is another issue resulting in multiple consequences to our society, causing historic damage, as it inhibits scientific research and understanding of the past; cultural damage, resulting in loss of identity of the countries of origin; as well as social damage, oftentimes being a financial resource for criminal activities and harming the economies of the countries of origin.

Illegal trafficking in cultural properties, being another form of illegal trafficking, is a complex, wide-ranging and comprehensive issue. It could take on different forms, involve multiple countries and serve different purposes, depending on the geographical, socio-economic and political context. It is a huge and profit-making criminal activity; it includes cross-border illegal webs and markets; it generates loss of heritage; and it finances other crimes.

Fight against illegal trafficking in cultural property requires a strong legislation, awareness raising and inter-sectoral cooperation. In its Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2013-2020, the Government of Albania has also put priority on and shown commitment towards prevention of and fight against illegal trafficking in intangible cultural properties.

The Albanian law enforcement institutions and agencies have conducted a series of operations in order to detect, identify and find objects, and investigate and convict offenders involved in these forms of trafficking. Given that protection of cultural heritage works is of utmost importance, detailed objectives to be attained and detailed actions to be taken by various law enforcement institutions and agencies have been laid down in a specific Action Plan supplementing and accompanying this strategy.

According to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) valuation, Albania has made progress in improving effectiveness of its regime against money laundering and terrorist financing, including adoption of legislation concerning application of register for beneficial owners, taking of actions to help reduce informal economy and use of cash, and establishment of dedicated specialist teams and appointment of officials to investigate and prosecute money laundering, in every region⁵. Even though the European Commission considers that some progress has been made in seizing and confiscating criminal assets, the number of money laundering cases for which a final verdict has been delivered, remains low. Alongside continued implementation of the Action Plan agreed upon with the Financial Action Task Force concerning prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing, efforts are required to help strengthen financial investigation and fight against money

4. United States Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, Albania 2020: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/albania/>

5. Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Albania: <http://www.fatf-gafi.org/countries/d-i/iceland/documents/increased-monitoring-october-2020.html>

laundering. Greater attention must be paid to the identification and confiscation of criminal assets that are found abroad or are inaccessible, and the enforcement of rules governing extended confiscation and preliminary freezing of assets, and the systematic use of parallel financial investigations into organised crime, which must systematically accompany criminal proceedings from the start.

On a yearly basis, the Directorate General of State Police makes a national assessment of serious and organised crime threat, including risk assessment of criminal groups, in order to develop a picture of the crime and threats this Directorate faces, and to make decisions on the operational measures to address them. Based on their area of activity and their legal responsibilities, other law enforcement institutions and agencies gather, compile and share data and information about the illegal activity of serious and organised crime.

Police cooperation with the EU Member States and Europol has intensified, leading to a considerable number of successful operations and the arrest of structured criminal group leaders. The Albanian law enforcement agencies make use of the operational agreement with Europol, including through proactive and timely information exchange through SIENA, and make use of joint investigation teams to conduct investigations with their EU counterparts.

Albania also participates in Europol's operational analysis projects and analysis projects regarding cybercrime, environmental crime, organised property crime, terrorism and migrant smuggling, and trafficking in human beings, weapons and explosives. Europol Liaison Office to Albania, officially opened in July 2019, was the first to operate from the Western Balkan region. Albania has increasingly shared information with Europol. In 2019, Albania joined the informal Anti-Money Laundering Operational Network and became a strategic partner in the fight against 'organised property crime,' one of Europol's priority crime areas and a priority under the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT).

The European Commission considers that, in 2020, the number and quality of messages exchanged through the secure information exchange network application (SIENA) improved significantly since the end of 2019, and there have been positive developments concerning cooperation with Interpol. The opening in July 2019 and operation of the Europol Liaison Office to Albania, being the first to operate from the Western Balkan region, and the deployment of a Europol Liaison Officer to Tirana helped to further strengthen police cooperation with Europol and the EU Member States. Albania has also continued to cooperate well on criminal matters, including with the EU Member States. Its cooperation agreement with Eurojust, which entered into force on 1 November 2019, is expected to further facilitate judicial cooperation between the Albanian and EU practitioners in the fight against cross-border organised crime. However, Albania should further improve international judicial cooperation, the timely implementation of multilateral instruments and its institutional capacity. Such efforts must be made alongside further efforts in order to align legislation with the EU *Acquis* and promote the exchange of best practices in judicial cooperation.

In November 2017, the Government of Albania took the decision to create the 'Power of Law' operation. The 'Power of Law' was conceived as a separate structure within the State Police, which is manned by officers dedicated to fight against organised crime. One of the first tasks for the 'Power of Law' was to come up with an accurate map of the organised crime groups, their area of activity, their impact across the territory and the identification of their leaders, members, financing subjects, assets and financial activities for laundering criminal products. Following this preliminary work, spanning over a period of nearly three years, the 'Power of Law' operation has achieved a series of concrete results through the police operations conducted, which have led to the arrest of a significant number of criminal group members and the seizure of their assets worth about EUR 120 million.

In cooperation with international partners, the Fugitive Active Searching Team, namely FAST Albania, was created in July 2019. In February 2020, this unit became part of the European network ENFAST, thus becoming the first country, being an EU non-member country and operating from the Western Balkans, to have such a dedicated specialist unit. By September 2020, the unit, of which focus is to apprehend dangerous

persons wanted, also in cooperation with the EU sister units, has been instrumental in apprehending 22 most wanted persons, both Albanian and foreign, within the territory of the Republic of Albania.

With reference to the establishment of new institutions, as a result of the justice reform, an Anti-Corruption and Organised Crime Court (ACOCC), a special prosecution office (SPAK) and a special bureau of investigations (NBI), along the US model of the FBI, were created. The main goal of these three institutions is to combat organised crime and corruption. Their organisation and operation are regulated by specific legislation. And they are totally independent from the other control bodies within the justice system, and operate under the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and the law governing their organisation. This new form of organisation and operation has eliminated a serious issue they had been grappling with for many years, namely the functional and organisational dependency on the governing links across the justice system. These three institutions consist of judges, prosecutors and investigators, who have already been vetted for their personal conduct, assets and professionalism.

Given that creation of the specific institutions, and particularly the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), would be a long time in the making, the Government of Albania took a number of immediate actions to assist the justice system institutions in the fight against organised crime and corruption.

Greater focus was put on the legislation to be applied by law enforcement institutions and agencies. As well as penal legislation, in the fight against organised crime the institutions and agencies make also use of other even more proactive forms, such as prevention legislation.

As early as 2004, Albania has a tradition in adopting prevention legislation with the promulgation of the first so-called *anti-mafia* law along the Italian model. Despite the frequent amendments made to it over the years, the essence of this legislation has not changed. Its focus has only been on those called property-related measures, namely seizure and confiscation of commodities and assets of persons involved in criminal activities.

On 31 January 2020, on the Government's initiative, such legislation was complemented by adopting Normative Act No. 1 'Concerning preventive measures in the framework of strengthening the fight against terrorism, organised crime and serious crime, and of consolidating public order and safety.'

Alongside the existing property-related measures concerning seizure and confiscation, the new legislation, being even more aggressive, sanctioned person-focused preventive measures, including special supervision of persons or economic measures, including banning given private enterprises from participating in public tenders or concessions.

Such legislation put an even more efficient instrument in the hands of the Albanian law enforcement institutions and agencies, as it allowed for a coordinated and complex action against organised crime through the implementation of person-focused preventive measures and property-related preventive measures, including seizure or confiscation of assets, in order to help curb the financial power of criminal individuals or groups, as well as economic measures, including revocation of licences or permits, or banning commercial companies from participating in public tenders, with such measures allowing limitation of injection of criminally obtained money into the economy.

1.1. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN FORCE, RELEVANCE TO STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND PRIORITIES

Albania has a comprehensive legislation and subordinate legislation and a considerable base of strategic documents addressing serious and organised crime issues. One of the main priorities in the Programme of the Government of Albania and the priorities of the Ministry of the Interior includes strengthening of public order and safety, including fight against organised crime, illegal trafficking, narcotics, etc.

The wide-ranging legislation concerning fight against serious and organised crime includes a whole number of legislation acts and subordinate legislation acts comprising the required base to regulate this area, such as:

- ✓ Constitution of the Republic of Albania;
- ✓ Law No. 108/2014 of 31 July 2014 ‘Concerning State Police,’ as amended;
- ✓ Law No. 103/2014 of 31 July 2014 ‘National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania’;
- ✓ Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Albania, as amended, which sets out the competence to investigate criminal offences relating to organised crime, and Law No. 95/2016 ‘Concerning organisation and functioning of institutions in order to fight corruption and organised crime,’ under which the Special Public Prosecutor’s Office was set up, with such office having the competence to investigate offences committed by organised crime;
- ✓ Law No. 9917 of 19 May 2008 ‘Concerning prevention of money laundering and funding of terrorism,’ as amended. The aim of this law is to prevent concealment of money and products derived from criminal activity;
- ✓ Law No. 10192 of 3 December 2009 ‘Concerning elimination and disruption of organised crime and trafficking through preventive measures against property,’ also applicable to property of persons about whom there exists a reasonable doubt, based on clues, also concerning participation in criminal organisations or in armed gangs;
- ✓ Decision No. 44 by Bank of Albania Supervisory Council of 10 June 2009 ‘Concerning adoption of the Regulation “Concerning prevention of money laundering and funding of terrorism”’;
- ✓ Law No. 9110 of 24 July 2003 ‘Concerning organisation and functioning of the serious crime courts’ sanctioned establishment of the Serious Crime Court and the Serious Crime Prosecution Office, with the investigation into penal offences in the area of serious and organised crime laying within the latter’s competence;
- ✓ Law No. 10173 of 22 October 2009 ‘Concerning protection of witnesses and collaborators of justice’;
- ✓ Law No. 10193 of 3 December 2009 ‘Concerning jurisdictional relations with foreign authorities on criminal issues’;
- ✓ Law No. 79/2020 ‘Concerning execution of criminal decisions’;

- ✓ Normative Act No. 1 of 31 January 2020 ‘Concerning preventive measures in the framework of the fight against terrorism and serious and organised crime, and consolidation of public order and safety’;
- ✓ National Security Strategy;
- ✓ National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020;
- ✓ Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2013-2020 and Action Plan 2013-2016;
- ✓ Concerning approval of Action Plan 2019-2020 for the Cross-cutting Strategy to Combat Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism 2013-2020;
- ✓ National Action Plan concerning Fight against Trafficking in Persons 2018-2020;
- ✓ National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019-2022;
- ✓ Priorities of the Minister of the Interior;
- ✓ Agreements with EUROPOL and INTERPOL;
- ✓ *Antiskifter* Task Force;
- ✓ Conventions against Cross-border Organised Crime, etc.

This strategic document is related with and contributes to the principles underlying the National Strategy for Development and Integration, Chapter ‘Good Governance, Democracy and Rule of Law,’ and to the following strategic objectives:

- Creating a safe environment for the society by reducing the supply and opportunities for illegal use of narcotics;
- Reducing illegal trafficking, and particularly, trafficking in human beings from/across Albania by 2020;
- Improving effectiveness in the fight against economic and financial crime, money laundering, corruption and proceeds of crime;
- Improving effectiveness of the cybercrime unit;
- Developing a contemporary investigative service;
- Strengthening international and regional cooperation.

PART II:
PURPOSE OF POLICIES AND SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC
DOCUMENT

2.1. PURPOSE OF POLICY I: REDUCTION IN SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME THREAT AND IMPACT

Fight against serious and organised crime is one of the main priorities for the Government of Albania and the Ministry of the Interior. It is also one of the main criteria for Albania's accession to the European Union. Consolidation of the rule of law and enhanced security in the country are closely related to the building of human capacities and logistical capabilities across the law enforcement institutions, improvement of the legal framework, improvement of investigation quality and the strengthening of inter-institutional and international cooperation.

This strategy and the accompanying action plan are based on the Government's vision to protect citizens and the country's progress from serious and organised crime threats and impact by reducing risks and improving prevention power.

This document will be a guide to implementation in practice of the comprehensive approach against illegal activities and organised crime structures, which includes interaction among the Government, private sector, community and the citizens.

The priorities, objectives and concrete measures laid down in this strategy are organised and aim to address three main issues in facing serious and organised crime: (1) **Pursue**; (2) **Prevention**; and (3) **Protection**.

Despite the progress made, the scale of the challenge to be met in the fight against serious and organised crime is stark, and therefore, this strategy revises the approach in dealing with it. Taking into consideration the complex and constantly developing nature of the organised crime structures, activities and forms of manifestation, at the core of this strategy will be a comprehensive approach taken by the entire Albanian society against this phenomenon, with the government institutions, private sector, communities and citizens playing their role in a collective effort to reduce organised crime threat and impact. For this purpose to be met, the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2025 sets out three policies.

Reduction in serious and organised crime threat calls for the simultaneous addressing of the main concerns relating to organised crime illegal activities, and particularly, to those in the area of drugs and illegal trafficking, and criminal offences in the area of money laundering and economic crime. Pursuing and dismantling organised crime structures, operating inside or outside of the country, is certainly crucial in order to effectively implement this policy.

Effective attainment of the afore-mentioned objectives will be supported through making use of new skills and capabilities in order to disrupt serious and organised crime spread and impact, by improving the systems, legal framework, human resources and the level of cooperation and coordination among the institutions and domestic players that have a role and responsibility in this area. Special attention will also be focused on the need to strengthen international cooperation, and apprehend and bring nationally and internationally wanted fugitives to justice, and put in place a special regime in the high security prison for the most dangerous offenders.

Specific objective 1.1: Disrupting criminal activities in the area of narcotics

The fight against drugs will intensify through law enforcement institutions' coordinated engagement with the partner countries. Deep-going reform processes will also be undertaken that will have an effect on the legislation and the logistics and personnel of the institutions.

At the core of this approach will be the new data gathered and analysed, and the enhanced intelligence

and assessment capabilities, which will allow the law enforcement institutions and the government to better understand organised crime networks' organisation and activity, as well as their advantages and vulnerabilities, in order to target their disruptions to greater effect. Given that the Albanian criminal groups and networks operate in an almost entirely cross-border context, the pursue and disrupt delivery approach will also be adapted to this trend, by qualitatively deepening cooperation with law enforcement institutions from the European countries, where the Albanian organised crime groups operate.

Reduction in threats and negative impact caused by illegal activities in the area of drugs will be supported through the carrying out of the following measures and activities:

- Increasing detective activity led by intelligence and evidence;
- Updating the specific cannabis cultivation database with information from all possible domestic and foreign sources;
- Planning, organising and realising joint meetings, analyses and operations in order to increase detection, investigation, criminal prosecution, conviction and seizures in this aspect;
- Establishing and operationalising the Early Warning System;
- Establishing and operationalising the National Drug Observatory;
- Storing and disposing of narcotic substances and precursors and keeping the samples as exhibits during court proceedings, in line with the standards and best practices;
- Strengthening border controls in order to prevent and dismantle international drug trafficking;
- Enhancing efficiency of cooperation with partners in order to detect illegal activities and dismantle criminal structures;
- Improving legislative framework concerning psychotropic substances and precursors, and updating the list of prohibited psychoactive substances;
- Improving legislative framework concerning procedure for disposal of narcotic substances and precursors and the keeping of samples.

Specific objective 1.2: Dismantling illegal trafficking

In this strategy, special attention will also be focused on reducing the threat from illegal activities in the area of trafficking, including trafficking in human beings, assistance for crossing the border illegally or otherwise known as migrant smuggling, trafficking in firearms, ammunition and explosives, and trafficking in works of art and cultural properties, etc. In regard to this, additional activities and measures will be projected and implemented based on the accompanying action plans.

Reduction in threats and negative impact caused by illegal trafficking activities will be supported through the carrying out of the following measures and activities:

- Increasing illegal trafficking detective activity led by intelligence and evidence;
- Planning, organising and realising joint meetings, analyses and operations in order to increase detection, investigation, criminal prosecution, conviction, and seizures and

confiscations in this aspect;

- Strengthening cooperation with partners in order to detect illegal trafficking and dismantle criminal structures engaged in these activities;
- Improving and adopting standard procedures and mechanisms against trafficking in small arms and light weapons;
- Drawing up and adopting the National Action Plan ‘Concerning prevention of and fight against trafficking in intangible cultural properties’;
- Strengthening border controls in order to prevent and dismantle international cultural property trafficking;
- Establishing and operationalising the Inter-institutional Task Force for the Preservation and Fight against Theft of and Trafficking in Cultural Properties;
- Formalising the market and monitoring the sales of cultural properties privately and physically;
- Complementing national legislation in line with international instruments regulating cultural heritage preservation, international standards and best practices;
- Ensuring access to and interaction between the state-run systems and databases handled by the Ministry of the Interior (State Police), Directorate General of Customs and the Ministry of Culture (National Institute for Cultural Heritage Registration), for the purposes of identification, tracking down, prevention, monitoring and stopping in time the cases and persons related to illegal trafficking in cultural properties;
- Ratifying Conventions in the area of cultural heritage still unratified by the Albanian State, including the UNIDROIT Convention, the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property, Nicosia 2017;
- Providing training to staff at every border checkpoint in the use of the state-run database National Register of Cultural Property (NRCP).

Specific objective 1.3: Disrupting the economic crime of money laundering

Implementation of this strategic objective will also be supported through improving the processes for identifying, seizing and confiscating criminal groups’ finances and assets. This will help narrow the scope of action, financial power and motives to engage in organised crime structures, and render reinvestment of proceeds from illegal activities impossible. Disruption of the economic crime and money laundering constitutes one of the main pillars of the fight against organised crime, and the large-scale cooperation among the institutions and with the partner countries will be of paramount importance for the attainment of this objective.

Reduction in threats and negative impact caused by economic crime and money laundering will be supported through the carrying out of the following measures and activities:

- Strengthening central and local specialist capabilities to investigate economic and financial crime, including joint training;
- Ensuring on-line access to and interaction between databases for the purposes of

supervision and investigation in the economic and financial area;

- Ensuring inter-institutional coordination and cooperation in order to increase the amount of information shared among the responsible structures, and making in-depth analyses of money laundering risks and data management (*track record*);
- Improving implementation of targeted financial sanctions and increasing proactive and parallel financial investigations from the start of criminal prosecution;
- Increasing seizures and confiscations based on intelligence and in-depth qualitative investigations;
- Reviewing and approving the legislative framework concerning tracking down, seizure, confiscation and recovery of organised crime products;
- Managing seized and confiscated assets while preserving their economic value.

Specific objective 1.4: Investigating, criminally prosecuting and convicting criminal structures' leaders and members

Establishment of the new structures to operate in the fight against serious and organised crime is quite hopeful in terms of disrupting the organised crime groups and convicting their leaders and members. In order to attain positive results on this front, particular attention will be devoted to improving effectiveness of investigations into the criminal organised structures, and especially the criminal activities' leaders and financing subjects. Strengthening of the technical capabilities and investments for the purposes of in-depth, qualitative and proactive investigations, and complementing and improving legislation will be instrumental in improving effectiveness in the fight against organised crime structures.

For the purposes of criminal investigation and the conviction of organised crime structures' leaders and members the following measures and activities will be carried out:

- Improving effectiveness of investigations into organised crime structures, and especially of criminal activities' leaders and financing subjects;
- Expanding access to and ensuring interaction between public/private databases accessible by the responsible authorities, and developing and enhancing use of the analytical capabilities (*software*);
- Purchasing equipment for the Scientific Police;
- Drawing up projects, absorbing funds and coordinating projects in order to support the human capacities and the infrastructural and logistical capabilities across law enforcement agencies;
- Purchasing equipment for and providing technical assistance to State Police structures in the fight against cultivation of and trafficking in narcotic substances and organised crime;
- Applying a special regime in the high security prison;
- Increasing investigations into organised crime structures' infiltration methods and cases (corruption, threats, etc.).

Specific objective 1.5: Strengthening international police cooperation

Organised crime is a challenge that goes beyond the borders of the Albanian territory. Many Albanian criminal groups carry on their activity in the European Union countries and at large. Hence, an excellent cooperation between the Albanian and partner institutions is required. Active participation in Europol, Interpol and regional cooperation platforms will help improve exchange of information on criminal structures inside and outside of the country, with this resulting in more joint police operations against criminal activities and structures.

In order to further strengthen international cooperation across the law enforcement agencies, the following measures and activities, being a key element in the successful fight against organised crime structures' activities and members, will be carried out:

- Improving information sharing with law enforcement agencies from the countries across the region and beyond on criminal structures inside and outside of the country;
- Actively participating in Europol, Interpol and regional cooperation platforms;
- Concluding and carrying out agreements with other countries on data sharing (fingerprinting, DNA profile, vehicle data, criminal records, financial data, etc.);
- Increasing joint police operations against criminal activities and structures.

Specific objective 1.6: Apprehending internationally wanted persons

This specific objective directly relates to consolidation of cooperation with the law enforcement agencies from the partner countries. Last year, Albania set up a special unit, which will only be dealing with the apprehension of internationally and nationally wanted persons. This unit has joined the ENFAST network, which is an umbrella for the special units from several European countries. Through training and active participation in the FAST meetings the aim will be to increase the number of internationally wanted Albanian and foreign nationals, localised and arrested.

Finding, tracking down, apprehending and bringing nationally and internationally wanted fugitives to justice, along with enforcing the law, constitute an important aspect for reducing serious and organised crime threats and impact, for Albania and beyond. In order to drive forward and reinforce the results achieved hitherto in this aspect, the following measures and activities will be carried out:

- Actively participating in ENFAST meetings and training;
- Improving information sharing with ENFAST, Europol and Interpol member countries;
- Increasing the number of internationally wanted Albanian and foreign nationals, localised and arrested;
- Publishing and updating internationally wanted persons' identity information.

Specific objective 1.7: Strengthening jurisdictional relations with foreign

Jurisdictional relations with foreign authorities in the course of the criminal process represent one of the most critical forms of cooperation among States with regard to challenges around criminal activities and persons engaged in them. Globalisation and free movement of nationals pose joint challenges in the area of security, which cannot be coped with within a jurisdictional territory, but requires cross-border cooperation. This strategy is designed to help improve jurisdictional relations with foreign authorities in response to those persons making attempts to dodge punishment of the law, and accordingly, boost mutual trust with the other countries.

In order to further reinforce criminal justice outcomes against serious and organised crime offenders and illegal activities, it is crucial that the international instruments and mechanisms at the jurisdictional level be used to their fullest extent. To this end, the following measures and activities will be carried out:

- Improving effectiveness of judicial cooperation in relation to minimising the time for implementing requests made by Albania and foreign countries for international judicial cooperation;
- Updating and accessing criminal court records for the Albanian nationals convicted abroad;
- Supporting and increasing participation in the joint investigation teams (bilateral JITs/ Eurojust).

2.2. PURPOSE OF POLICY II: PROTECTION OF CITIZENS, INSTITUTIONS AND ECONOMY

As a result of serious and organised crime activity, over the years, many citizens have suffered the consequences of this activity in various forms, including trafficking for prostitution or forced labour purposes, extortion of their monetary or material values, damage to property and wealth, and indeed, harm to health and loss of life. Members of organised crime structures have also stated their intention and inclination to engage in actions designed to neutralise the work of public servants, including law enforcement institutions and justice bodies, through various forms of intimidation and corruption.

Organised crime has also a negative impact on a country's legitimate economy. With their large monetary proceeds, criminal groups intend to penetrate and invest in various sectors of the economy by making use of the various forms for laundering and recycling the criminal proceeds, introducing semi-legitimate business practices and starting legitimate activities in order to cover covert criminal activities and the origin of the proceeds from them, causing harm to competition, etc. As per above, reduction in organised crime threat to and negative impact on citizens, institutions and the country's legitimate economy, and their protection from these threats is considered to be a specific policy of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy.

Specific objective 2.1: Identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming subject to constraint, violence and intimidation by organised crime

In the fight against serious and organised crime, the law enforcement agencies must be able to assure the health and life of witnesses, collaborators, justice officials, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups. This way, people's trust in government institutions will increase, and the State-citizen relations will improve.

In order to more efficiently fight serious and organised crime, it is crucial to first assure the physical security and life of the witnesses and collaborators of justice, justice officials and law enforcement agencies and the crime victims, including victims of trafficking. The following measures must be carried out in order to attain such objective:

- Assuring the life and physical security of the witnesses, collaborators of justice and officials in charge of the fight against organised crime, and of the victims of trafficking through special programmes;
- Concluding and carrying out international agreements on protection programmes for witnesses and collaborators of justice;
- Offering assistance to the victims of trafficking.

Specific objective 2.2: Improving professionalism

Alongside assuring integrity, improvement of professionalism across the law enforcement agencies will become especially important for the purposes of the implementation of this strategy. Crime investigation structures in the State Police will provide joint training to the employees from the law enforcement agencies, intelligence services and justice officials for the purposes of in-depth and qualitative investigations, criminal prosecution and offenders' conviction. This will only result in greater expertise and consolidation of the spirit of cooperation across the Albanian institutions.

Further and constant improvement of the professional capacities is a condition for a most effective response to various forms of the manifestation of organised crime, including the most complex ones, and the detection, investigation and conviction of their offenders, who are increasingly using advanced methods and tactics in order to avoid detective and investigative activity carried on by law enforcement agencies, with the ultimate goal being to dodge penal liability. The following measures must be carried out for such objective to be attained:

- Providing training to crime investigation structures in the State Police in the most advanced forms and methods of investigation into criminal structures and activities;
- Providing joint training to employees of law enforcement agencies and intelligence services and to justice officials for the purposes of in-depth and qualitative investigations, criminal prosecution, offenders' conviction and seizure/confiscation of criminal products and assets;
- Providing training to employees of law enforcement agencies, judges and prosecutors in the victims' role in criminal justice;
- Admitting students, who have finished the second cycle of higher education, to the Security Academy.

Specific objective 2.3: Sapping financial motive for participation in organised crime

This objective will mainly focus on the analysis of legislation, the policies and role of institutions for the purposes of measures of an economic and property-related nature. Such activity aims to identify the shortcomings required to be later on improved in the legislation. In this aspect, changes to legislation and subordinate legislation will be made for the purposes of improving prevention of investing criminal proceeds in the economy. Training in this area will also allow the carrying out of preventive property-related measures more effectively.

Protection of the legitimate economy from the opportunities and leeway that could be exploited by organised crime structures in order to recycle the proceeds of criminal origin, is an important aspect of the protect delivery approach against organised crime threats to and negative impact on society. Implementation in practice of the administrative approach against organised crime has proved efficient for various law enforcement agencies. Follow-up of and strengthening the implementation of this approach in Albania will be possible through the following measures:

- Making an analysis of the legislation, policies and role of law enforcement institutions and agencies for the purposes of preventive measures of an economic and property-related nature;
- Identifying shortcomings and needs in order to improve the preventive legal framework;
- Drafting and adopting changes to legislation and subordinate legislation in order to improve prevention of investing criminal proceeds in the economy;
- Providing training, making analyses and ensuring inter-institutional coordination on the carrying out of preventive property-related measures.

2.3. PURPOSE OF POLICY III: INCREASE OF PREVENTIVE FORCE AGAINST SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME THREATS

Organised crime structures and networks have the intention of and are constantly involved in recruiting new members to carry on and further expand the criminal activities. Due to mainly social-economic difficulties, criminal structures have shown high competence in recruiting new members, as is also indicated by statistical data provided over time on the profile of offenders convicted of such criminal activities, both inside and outside of the country.

This policy relates to the vision of the Government of Albania to comprehensively tackle illegal phenomena, including organised crime threats and negative impact, not being limited only to the pursue and protect delivery approach. The prevent delivery approach requires the necessary time and the engagement of all the players in the society, beyond the government institutions, in order to produce sustainable and effective outcomes in reducing organised crime threats and impact. Such policy relates to the need to raise awareness and the sense of joint responsibility for security in the community, and boost citizens' trust and increase their cooperation with institutions in response to efforts to carry on illegal activities and their forms of manifestation. Likewise, offering development alternatives to the communities and areas most affected by and most exposed to organised crime structures' illegal activities and recruiting efforts is at the same time an aspect of critical importance to the successful implementation of the preventive approach. In concrete terms, such policy will be implemented through the carrying out of the following measures and activities:

Specific objective 3.1: Conducting awareness-raising campaigns with the participation of central and local institutions, civil society, business, media and other players in order to prevent organised crime

Challenges around organised crime and criminal activities overall cannot be coped with by taking a confrontative and robust approach alone; instead, focus must parallelly be on raising public awareness, including all the relevant players with a far-reaching influence such as the central and local institutions, civil society, business, media, etc.

A number of steps have been taken by the Albanian institutions in this regard. Based on an inter-institutional agreement concluded with the British Embassy in Tirana, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth is presently developing an instructional package (module) concerning serious and organised crime. This agreement aims to help implement an instructional/curriculum package about prevention of serious and organised crime in a number of pilot schools and regions in the Republic of Albania.

On the basis of such module, MoESY and the Quality Assurance Agency for Pre-University Education (QAAPE) will initially give training to teachers teaching 'Civics' in a number of pre-university education institutions selected for piloting. These teachers will later on teach their students under the monitoring of the training group. This project is designed to be further expanded to all the schools across the country. In the framework of this project, awareness-raising activities have also been carried on with students of the age group 13-18.

The following measures will be carried out in order to attain the first specific objective of this policy:

- Conducting awareness-raising campaigns at the central and local level, with targeted groups and with topics adapted to the local context in regard to risks, consequences and prevention of engagement in criminal activities;
- Delivering open lectures and seminars in public and private educational institutions;
- Making awareness-raising video-messages about organised crime risks and consequences, as well as promoting positive models among youth and broadcasting them in local media, posting them to social networks, etc.;
- Organising Local Public Safety Councils' meetings with guests from among the civil society and youth and key players across communities, with the focus being put on awareness-raising about organised crime.

Specific objective 3.2: Offering and coordinating domestic/foreign support to vulnerable areas and communities

Offering and coordinating internal and external support for vulnerable areas and communities is a particular challenge in the context of this strategy. As a first step the strategy sets out the identification and analysis of these areas and communities in order to coordinate, and then, drive implementation of the social and financial programmes and projects with the aim of preventing criminality. Serious efforts will later on be made in order to promote social programmes focused on people in need. Transfer of confiscated objects to local government units' ownership in order to be used as social housing will also be encouraged.

The following measures will be carried out in order to attain the second specific objective of this policy:

- Identifying and making an analysis of the geographical areas, communities and social groups affected by and vulnerable to illicit structures and illegal activities;
- Promoting social programmes focused on people in need and crime victims through projects financed out of the Special Fund earmarked for prevention of criminality;

- Encouraging transfer of confiscated objects to local government units' ownership in order to be used as social housing.

PART III:
IMPLEMENTATION, RESPONSIBILITY
OF INSTITUTIONS, REPORTING AND
MONITORING

3.1. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTITUTIONS

The following institutions are responsible for implementing the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy and the Action Plan:

- Ministry of the Interior
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Finances and Economy
- Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- Ministry of Tourism and Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Anti-Corruption and Organised Crime Special Structure
- High Judicial Council
- Attorney General's Office
- State Intelligence Service
- National Authority for Electronic Certification and Cybernetic Security
- Financial Supervisory Authority
- Bank of Albania

3.2. ACCOUNTABILITY, REPORTING AND MONITORING

Accountability

Approximation and review of the strategic document will be subject to requirements of Decision No. 290 by the Council of Ministers of 11 April 2020 ‘Concerning creation of the state-run database of the integrated planning system information system (IPSIS) in order to ensure compliance with IPSIS.’

The process of accountability, monitoring and assessment analysis will be implemented by the following coordinating structures:

- **Integrated policy management group (IPMG);**
- **Sectoral Steering Committee (SSC)** for public order and safety matters, which will examine and approve the reports pursuant to the policies and objectives set out in this strategic document.

The Ministry of the Interior is the institution responsible for leading the development of this strategy, and coordinating the institutions involved in it.

Monitoring

Alongside the implementation of the actions set out in the strategy and the action plan, continuous monitoring of the structures engaged with the performance of obligations arising from these documents is considered to be necessary in order to allow an analysis of the actual situation surrounding their implementation, and oversee the periodic implementation for the purposes of their most effective fulfilment.

Monitoring and evaluation of the work of the authorities that are duty-bound to implement the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, will help follow the strategy and assess the extent to which its policies and objectives are implemented, and the measures and activities are carried out.

The Action Plan will be monitored by the integrated policy management group (IPMG), approved by Order No. 157 of the Prime Minister of 22 October 2018 ‘Concerning the taking of action to implement the sector-wide/inter-sectoral approach, and the establishment and functioning of the integrated cross-sectoral/inter-sectoral mechanism.’

Representatives from the main institutions responsible for security matters (including MoI/DGSP, MoD, MoESY, MoHSP, etc.), the donors and the civil society (representatives from non-government organisations) will take part in the process.

In order to assure pursuance of policies in the fight against organised crime, based on this strategic document, the following measures will be taken:

- Indicators set out in this strategy will be monitored;
- Changes in the cross-sectoral programmes will be recommended, with consideration being given to the achievements, circumstances, risks and previous experiences, and in line with the recommendations contained in the European Union progress reports;
- Consultations with stakeholders will be ensured, including systematic dissemination of information to the public;

- Contribution will be made to increased consistency and integration of the security policies and measures across all the levels of management, and to the better use of resources.

Monitoring will be conducted based on the 6-monthly and yearly reports on the monitoring and coordination of the attainment of the objectives and implementation of the measures laid down in the action plan.

Improvements in the monitoring and assessment system are intended to help facilitate/assist efforts with the approximation of the strategic framework and priorities in various areas, and give out information about the country's policies on rising to the challenge of fight against serious and organised crime. Strengthening and expanding the statistical framework both in MoI and DGSP and in the other responsible institutions will help facilitate the formulation of policies based on evidence/data, and enable an objective assessment of the attainment of objectives.

Reporting

All the institutions in charge of implementing the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy and its Action Plan will write reports on a 6-monthly and yearly basis pursuant to the obligations laid down in the Action Plan in furtherance of the strategy, and will enter the data into the IPSIS system.

The Ministry of the Interior will be the leading institution, which will collect, process and analyse the periodic 6-monthly and yearly reports to be submitted by all the institutions responsible for attaining the objectives and carrying out the relevant measures.

The institutions must report periodically on the implementation of measures, at a 6-monthly interval, by virtue of the data reported to the integrated planning system information system (IPSIS) at the Council of Ministers and at the Inter-institutional Technical Secretariat.

Pursuant to points 6 and 7 of the Order No. 157 of the Prime Minister of 22 October 2018 'Concerning the taking of actions to implement the sector-wide/inter-sectoral approach, and the establishment and functioning of the integrated cross-sectoral/inter-sectoral mechanism,' the Sectoral Steering Committee 'Home Affairs,' chaired by the Minister of the Interior, will examine, discuss and approve the progress reports, and the monitoring reports on the achievement of the aims and priorities pursuant to this strategic document and action plan.

Besides continuous monitoring, progress in the achievement of the aims of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy will be measured by two ways of assessment, namely the mid-term assessment, which will be made at the close of the two-year long period, by the end of 2022, and on the basis of which the results achieved, management of resources and quality of implementation will be analysed. Such analysis will help point out the changes in the overall social and economic context, and assess whether the aims are substantial, compared to the initial context, and identify the necessary actions. The Action Plan 2023-2025, designed to help attain the objectives set out in the strategy, will be drawn up based on this assessment.

For the purposes of a final assessment, at the close of the implementation period, an analysis of the whole strategy and its overall impact will be made. In the course of such analysis, the results of the measures carried out, the resources invested and the extent to which the expected effects have been achieved, will be looked into. During the final assessment, an analysis of the data from various sources will be made, including the findings of the performance monitoring and of the assessment of the active programmes impact on the fight against organised crime.

PART IV:
BUDGET ANALYSIS

4.1. BUDGET ANALYSIS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE

This chapter provides a description of the overall allocation of the financial resources funding the products of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2025. The financial effects have been calculated for each and every institution based on the carrying out of the activities under the relevant measures set out in the action plan of this strategy. The financial effects are in detail borne by the respective annual budgets of the responsible institutions, and by the donors' budget earmarked for the implementation of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2021-2025 and the Action Plan 2021-2022.

The costing process is based on consultation of the national documents, including the Medium-term Budget Programme 2021-2023, and on consultations with the institutions concerned. The action plan is accompanied by the analytical costing for each and every measure.

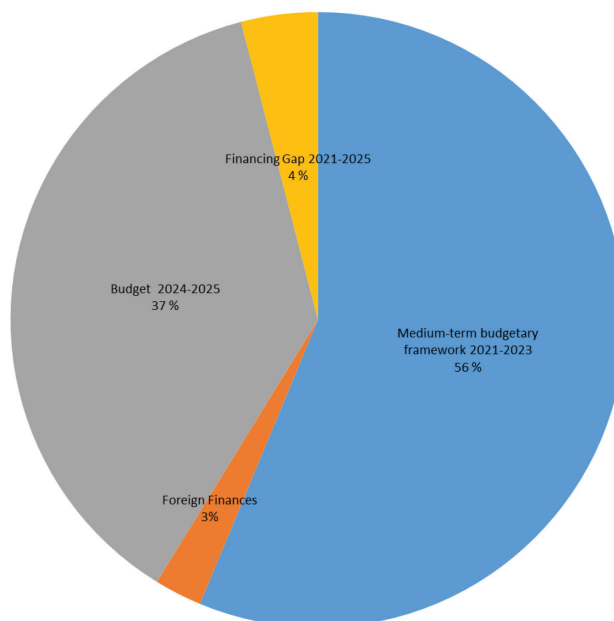
The total estimated costs for the implementation of this strategy and its action plan are 19,947,019,300 lekë or EUR 159,576,154. The reference average exchange rate is estimated at EUR 1 per 125 lekë.

In financial terms, the Purpose of Policy I is expected to have the greatest weight in the implementation of the plan, respectively 84%. The Purpose of Policy II will reach the value of 13%, and the Purpose of Policy III will reach the value of 3%. The following statement shows the financial costs over a 5-year long period, during which the strategy will be implemented:

Purpose of Policies	Nature/ typology of costs	Total costs	Planned costs	Costs to be planned in	Funding gap
		2021-2025	MTBP 2021-2023 Budget and donors	the budget 2024-2025	2021-2025
Purpose of Policy I	Current	16,254,958,300	9,278,054,500	6,173,903,800	803,000,000
	Capital	577,211,000	577,211,000	0	
Purpose of Policy II	Current	2,566,900,000	1,540,140,000	1,026,760,000	0
	Capital	0	0	0	
Purpose of Policy III	Current	547,950,000	329,250,000	218,700,000	0
	Capital	0	0	0	
TOTAL [lekë]		19,947,019,300	11,724,655,500	7,419,363,800	803,000,000
TOTAL [Euro] EUR 1 = 125 lekë		159,576,154	93,797,244	59,354,910	6,424,000

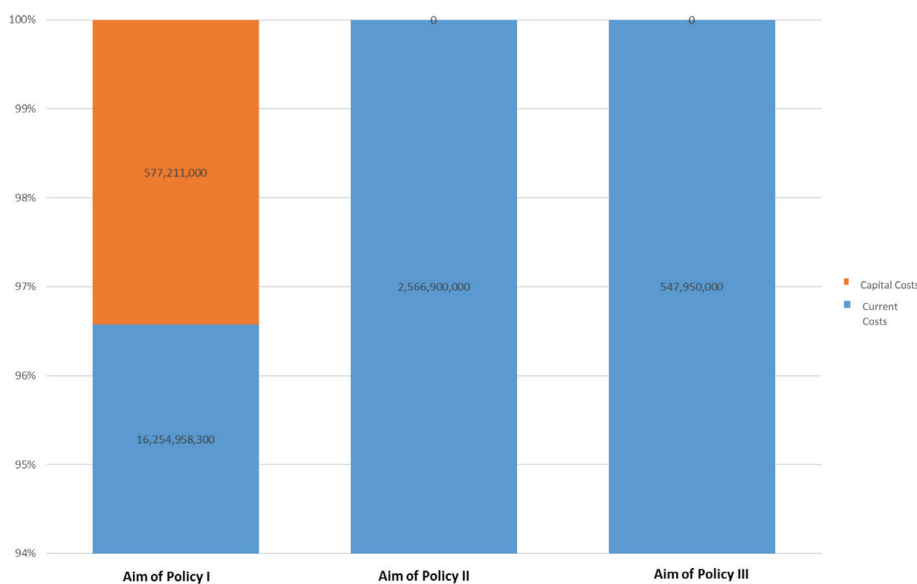
Funding for the action plan of the strategy will come from two principal sources, namely the state budget and donors' financial support. For the period between 2021 and 2025, 93% of the funds required for the implementation of the plan is expected to be met out of the state budget, and 3% out of donors' funding, with the funding gap being 4%.

Costs of the Action Plan - SHARE OF EXPENDITURE



Current costs account for about 97%, with the rest being projected for capital costs. In the following chart, they are broken down according to the Purpose of Policies:

Costs of Policy Objectives



The Action Plan of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy will be reviewed every 3 years in order to ensure that it reflects the progress regarding the carrying out of the measures, and to update it in line with the medium-term budget programmes and the priorities of each and every institution. With regard to the action plan measures not covered financially yet, the responsible institutions will plan their needs for budgetary funds through the respective budget programmes, as part of the process of planning the medium-term budget programme and the annual budget.