

Over the last three decades Albania moved from a closed authoritarian model to a nominally open democratic system. Albania's political system is, however, characterised by a lack of bipartisanship, which has a negative impact on security sector governance and oversight. NATO membership since 2009 and EU-driven reforms have had too little bearing so far on establishing a culture of democratic oversight.

Condition of democratic oversight of security



CULTURE

Oversight institutions, foremost the Assembly, lack a tradition of critical independent scrutiny of policy and spending by the executive.



CAPACITY

The Assembly has little in-house knowledge on security while audit and ombudsman institutions, as well as civil society, need better access to security information.

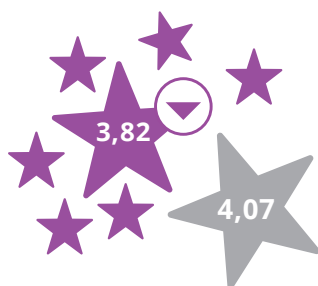


COOPERATION

Cooperation among oversight actors in holding the government to account on security is not yet commonplace and structured.

International democracy rankings

FREEDOM HOUSE, NATIONS IN TRANSIT – DEMOCRACY SCORE



3.82 in 2020 compared to 4.07 in 2010 (on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 is the lowest and 7 the highest level of democratic progress).

Measures 29 countries from Central Europe and Central Asia on National Democratic Governance; Electoral Process; Civil Society; Independent Media; Local Democratic Governance; Judicial Framework and Independence; and Corruption.

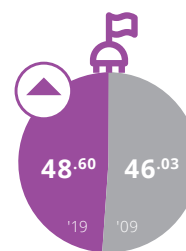
BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION – TRANSFORMATION INDEX



6.84 in 2020 (ranking 28 out of 137 countries), compared to 7.17 in 2010 (on a scale of 1 to 10).

Analyses and evaluates transformation processes of democracy, market economy and governance in 137 developing and transition countries.

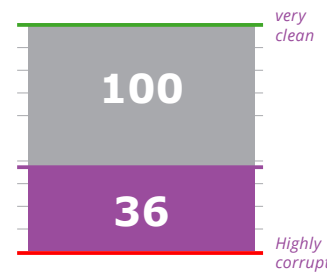
WORLD BANK – WORLD-WIDE GOVERNANCE INDICATORS



48.60 in 2019, compared to 46.03 in 2009 (average of 6 indicators) (ranking of 0 to 100 among countries worldwide).

Ranking over 200 countries and territories over the period 1996–2019 on six dimensions of governance: Voice and Accountability; Political Stability and Absence of Violence; Government Effectiveness; Regulatory Quality; Rule of Law; and Control of Corruption.

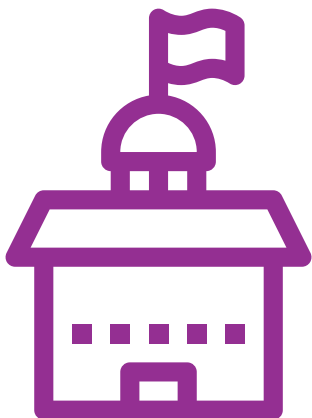
TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL – CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX



36 points in 2020 (out of 100) (ranking 104 out of 180 countries).

Ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, according to experts and business representatives.

ASSEMBLY OF ALBANIA



Unicameral Assembly of **140 seats**. Members **serve 4-year terms** and are elected in multi-seat constituencies by **proportional representation voting**.

In February 2019, opposition MPs resigned from the Assembly. As a result, **18 out of 140 seats are currently (2021) still not occupied**.

The Assembly currently consists of **86 male MPs and 36 female MPs**. The youngest member is female and is 30 years old. The oldest member is male and is 69 years old.



UNICAMERAL ASSEMBLY OF 140 SEATS



86 MALE AND 36 FEMALE MPS



THE YOUNGEST MEMBER IS FEMALE AND IS 30 YEARS OLD. THE OLDEST MEMBER IS MALE AND IS 69 YEARS OLD.



The Committee of National Security

(16 members, of which 4 are female)



The Subcommittee on Oversight of Law Enforcement and Police Vetting

(9 members, of which 2 are female)

Among the Assembly's key responsibilities are 'supervision of government work' and 'approving the state's accounts'.

The Committee of National Security is responsible for:

- Organisation of National Defence and the Armed Forces;
- Military Cooperation;
- Internal Affairs;
- Civil Emergencies;
- Public Order and Secret Services; and
- Issues of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda and implementation of the commitments arising thereof.

The Committee of National Security normally meets 1-2 times per week.

The Subcommittee on Oversight of Law Enforcement and Police Vetting is responsible for:

- Transitional and Periodic Assessment of State Police;
- Republican Guard and Internal Affairs; and
- Appeals by Service Officers in the Ministry of the Interior.

The Ombudsperson

The People's Advocate is elected by the Assembly for 5-year terms. The People's Advocate is independent but reports to the Assembly and makes recommendations on human rights and freedoms. The People's Advocate:

- Defends the rights, freedoms, and lawful interests of individuals from unlawful and incorrect acts by public administration bodies;
- Acts on the basis of the complaint or request submitted to its office; and
- Makes recommendations to remedy the violation of the right by the public administration body that has committed the violation.

In the office of the People's Advocate, a commissioner and staff are responsible for the security sector: police, intelligence, prisons, Armed Forces, and the judiciary. On an annual basis, the People's Advocate makes **over a hundred recommendations** and handles **around 5,000 complaints**.



**INDEPENDENT
5-YEAR TERM
5,000 COMPLAINTS (2019)
100+ RECOMMENDATIONS (2019)**

Independent Audit Institution

Among several tasks, Albania's State Supreme Audit Institution:

- Audits government (annual) budgets;
- Audits the use, management, and protection of public funds and public or state property;
- Audits the use of public funds provided by the European Union or other international organisations;



The State Supreme Audit Institution employs 149 auditors and managing staff, of which about 55 per cent is male and 45 per cent is female.

The chairperson of the State Supreme Audit Institution is elected by the Assembly for a **term of 7 years**.

Civil society

Albania's Constitution does not explicitly mention civil society, but in 2009 the Assembly did adopt a law for the establishment of the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS).



11,426 NGOS REGISTERED (2018)

According to the Tirana First Court of Instance, **in 2018, there were 11,426 civil society organisations registered in Albania. In that same year, 400 new organisations were registered (276 associations, 79 centres, and 45 foundations)**. The number of civil society organisations registered by the tax authorities, which probably offers a more realistic picture of active organisations, estimates the number at 4,503.

The Albanian Assembly has a specific person in charge of cooperation with civil society. The Coordinator for Interest Groups and Civil Society Organisations helps to ensure civil society's contribution to the legislative process and the Assembly's oversight duties.

Strengthening inclusiveness of oversight actors in the work of the Assembly as the national deliberative body of the country.

2

Fostering a culture of democratic governance and oversight among policy-makers that includes more openness on security matters and a more critical stance by MPs.

1

Establishing a parliamentary (sub-) committee on intelligence.

3

About DECOS

The 'Developing Capacity, Cooperation and Culture in Overseeing the Security Sectors of Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia' project (2019-22) seeks to empower democratic institutions and actors in their function of democratic oversight of security. It does so by increasing *capacities*, enhancing *cooperation*, and fostering a culture of oversight of the security sectors of Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. DECOS consists of a *capacity building* and a *research component* that are directed at democratic oversight actors – parliaments, independent institutions, and advisory bodies; and civil society organisations – in Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia.

Compiled by

Jos Boonstra,
Enea Shehaj and
Theoni Stamatopoulou



www.cess.org

The Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) collaborates in DECOS with the Albanian Institute for Political Studies (IPS), the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) from Albania, the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED), and the Institute for Democracy 'Societas Civilis' Skopje (IDSCS) from North Macedonia. DECOS is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands