

Improvement of the delivery of public services at local government level, Albania

Assignment	Assisting the Albanian local and regional government in improving public administration of licensing and permits so as to create the necessary transparency and legal certainty and to streamline procedures.
Client	Government of Albania
Financing Agency	European Union (CARDS)
Partners	Eptisa (Spain), BMB, Foundation of Local Government Reform (Bulgaria)
Composition of Team	<p><i>BMB Mott MacDonald:</i> Pool of short-term experts</p> <p><i>Partner(s):</i> Team Leader, Assistant Team Leader/Training Coordinator, Senior Expert in Licensing, Project Manager, Deputy Project Manager</p>
Period of Assignment	<p>From April 2007 to April 2010</p> <p>Staff months: BMB Mott MacDonald: 1.6; Partner(s): 28</p>
Contract value	<p>BMB Mott MacDonald: € 70,230</p> <p>Partner(s): € 929,800</p>
Background	<p>Due of the decentralization process in Albania and as a result of the administrative reforms of 2003 the services for licensing and permitting of business activities in Albania were transferred from the central level to the municipal and commune level. This process sought to improve the business environment by simplifying the application procedures. However, its result was the opposite. The responsibilities of regional authorities, municipalities and communes in this process are unclear, and there is no clear or standardized approach to licensing.</p> <p>Therefore, in order to develop the Albanian integration and investment climate, the current situation should be changed by assisting the Albanian local and regional government in improving public administration of licensing and permits so as to create the necessary transparency and legal certainty and to streamline procedures.</p>
Description of project	<p>The goal of the project is to make the licensing system in Albania transparent, standardized and simplified. The main issues on which the project focuses are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Documenting and analysing the current local licensing situation in all local government units;(ii) Increasing the accessibility and the degree of standardization of licensing procedures at local level through consensus building;(iii) Increasing the transparency of licensing procedures at the local level;(iv) Developing the administrative capacities of local licensing administrations;(v) Increasing the collaboration between governmental levels in order to further rationalize the distribution of regulatory tasks between central, regional and local government.

The project is divided into a Project Mobilization and Inception Phase, and a Project Implementation Phase, comprising four tasks:
Task 1 – Licensing in Albania – Fact finding and analysis;
Task 2 – Licensing simplification and transparency – pilots;
Task 3 – Licensing simplification and transparency – roll-out;
Task 4 – Effective dialogue between central, regional and local governments

Services provided

In order to assist the Albanian government in improving its public administration at local government level, the consultants provide the following services:

Inception phase:

Mobilization of project management team and establishment of project office and website; set up of project steering committee; development of publicity and information strategy; organization of visibility event.

Licensing in Albania – Fact finding and analysis:

Development of research methodology; analysis of differences among regions and among communes/municipalities in licensing arrangements; census inventory of municipal and commune licenses; analysis of legal framework for licensing; analysis of existing data including census; establishment of digital database; best practice review; identification of pilot municipalities and licensing fields; establishment of monitoring and evaluation licensing baseline.

Licensing simplification and transparency:

Development of municipal/commune action plan; licensing departments analysis; development and piloting of licensing model and guidelines (including development of licensing training and support material); identify “roll-out” municipalities and communes; organization of the workshop and national conference.

Licensing simplification and transparency – roll-out:

Organization of roll-out workshop; municipal/commune licensing staff training; providing support to municipalities/communes; undertaking of PR actions; conducting of field survey; organization of closing workshop.

Effective dialogue between central, regional and local governments

- (i) Establishment of expert forum/coordinating body consisting of stakeholders’ representatives to develop the criteria for activities division and to draft proposals for improved distribution of tasks between central, regional and local government in the field of licensing;
 - (ii) Organization of national conference on licensing best practice and innovation.
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