



Republic of Albania  
MINISTRY OF FINANCES AND ECONOMY

**DOGANA  
CUSTOMS**

# CUSTOMS 2021

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## PRIORITIES IN 2022









## Speech of the General Director of Customs **Mr. Genti Gazheli**

2021 was a challenging year for the Customs Administration. Good management, transparency and close cooperation with International Partners, enabled successful coping and visible progress towards a digitalized and efficient administration.

Revenues generated in 2021 were a historical record in comparison with every year of modern history of the Albanian customs.

The strategy pursued for trade facilitation in the function of economic growth, through the promotion of exports and the effective supervision of imports, proved to be successful.

The service to citizens and economic operators 24/7, including the challenging periods due to earthquakes and the Covid-19 pandemic, enabled the facilitation of exports and the provision of imports, in particular of medication, medical equipment and vaccines against Covid-19.

Citizens' complaints and suggestions have been addressed with priority and we have worked closely with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as Business Associations, by solving problems or obstacles presented effectively and in a timely manner.

Through the provision of digitalized services (paperless), fair competition and equal treatment is ensured for both exporters and importers, as well as for their customs agents, reducing the time for processing customs declarations and improving the quality.

Risk assessment methods and effective cooperation with international partners, have enabled the identification and seizure of smuggled excise goods, significant undeclared monetary values (CASH), as well as products that are dangerous to the health of citizens and to the security of the country.

Digital governance, through the portal of services "e-Albania", offers 34 out of a total of 41 services to economic operators, while 100% of them will be digitalized within 2022. During 2021, over 5000 digital authorizations were issued.

The latest report of the World Bank on e-Commerce Diagnosis in Albania, praises the key reforms of the General Directorate of Customs, based on the principle of facilitating lawful trade, encouraging digital trade and simplifying customs procedures.

The issuance for the first time of eight Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) has reduced their administrative costs, while we continue encouraging operators with high intensity of trade exchanges to apply to be provided with this authorization.

We have signed three important acts for the facilitation of customs procedures with the Customs Administration of Kosovo, for the border checkpoints of Durrës and Morina, as well as the exchange of information for trade risk assessment between the two countries.

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In the framework of the "Open Balkan" initiative, we have intensively discussed the facilitation of customs procedures and mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators with the counterparts of Serbia and Northern Macedonia.

With the European Commission, through DG TAXUD, it has been achieved the approval of the support program for the Customs Administration for 5 years (2022-2026), through which is aimed the approximation of the Albanian customs standards with the standards of the European Union.

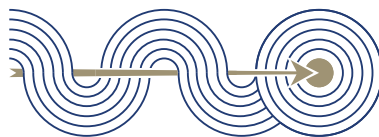
The IMF (International Monetary Fund), has started for the first time the cooperation with the Customs Administration for the construction of the Medium Term Revenue Growth Strategy (MTRS 2022-2026) and has provided technical assistance in the field of risk analysis and a posteriori control for the products of excise, mainly of domestic production.

The World Bank, in the new strategy of partnership with Albania (Country Partnership Framework 2022-2026), has included for the first time the Customs Administration in consulting and implementing the strategy, increasing the capacity of the customs administration in e-commerce and shortening the waiting time at customs branches at border checkpoints with countries in the region.

The improvement of the quality of service for citizens and economic operators and the close cooperation with all partners inside and outside the country, remain an unchanging priority of the customs administration, in order to facilitate lawful trade, to control strictly with the purpose of prohibiting and discouraging the illegal activities, and bring our standards closer to those of the European Union.

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# The mission



The main responsibility of the customs authorities is the supervision of the international trade of the Republic of Albania, contributing to the open and fair trade in the implementation of the trade policies and those of other sectors of the Albanian economy, which affect the trade and the security of the entire commercial chain. For this purpose, the Customs Authorities aim at protecting the financial and environmental interests of the Republic of Albania from unfair and illegal trade, while supporting the lawful business activity; ensuring the security and protection of the Republic of Albania and its inhabitants, as well as environmental protection in close cooperation with other authorities, while also maintaining the proper balance between customs controls and the facilitation of lawful trade.



**The Albanian Customs, for the fulfillment of its Mission, define the following strategic principles:**

- The principle of protection of the society and financial interests of the Republic of Albania.

- The principle of supporting the competitiveness of Albanian companies.

- The principle of further facilitating lawful trade.

- The principle of control and management of the supply chain used for the international movement of goods.

- Principle of cooperation, maintaining, developing and enhancing mutual relations between customs authorities and other government agencies and between customs.



## The Vision

- Full compliance with EU standards and best practices.

- A modern, professional, impartial, honest, credible and uncorrupted public institution.

- A supportive partner of the business community and custodian of the society and the supply chain.

The Albanian Customs Administration is in constant effort to successfully fulfill its missions, such as the fiscal mission, the trade facilitation mission, the defense mission, as well as the mission of the commitments undertaken by the Albanian Government in the process of Albania's integration into the European Union.

*Based on the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 921 dated 29.12.2014 "On the Customs Administration Personnel", as amended, the staff of the General Directorate of Customs comprises 1102 employees, distributed at central (GDC 464) and local level (Customs Branches 638).*

ACA (Albanian Customs Administration) has 1102 employees distributed at the central and local level. Specifically, the General Directorate has 464 employees and the customs branches consist of 638 employees. At the central level, the GDC (General Directorate of Customs) is organized into four departments and directorates:



<b>Office of General Director</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Administrative Department</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Technical Department of Excise and Customs Procedures</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Department of Analysis and Aposteriori control</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Enforcement Department</b>	<b>206</b>

#### Locally, it is organized in 17 customs branches

[Shkodër, Lezhë, Kukës, Bllatë, Tiranë, Rinas, Durrës, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korçë, Kapshticë, Berat, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastër, Sarandë and Tri Urat Përmet]:

#### Land

[Shkodër, Kukës, Bllatë, Tiranë, Elbasan, Qafë Thanë, Korçë, Kapshticë, Berat, Fier, Gjirokastër, Sarandë and Tri Urat]

#### Sea

[Lezhë, Durrës, Vlorë, Sarandë] and

#### Air

[Rinas, Kukës Airport]

<b>Land</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Sea</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Air</b>	<b>2</b>





Air Albania, Kukës Airport

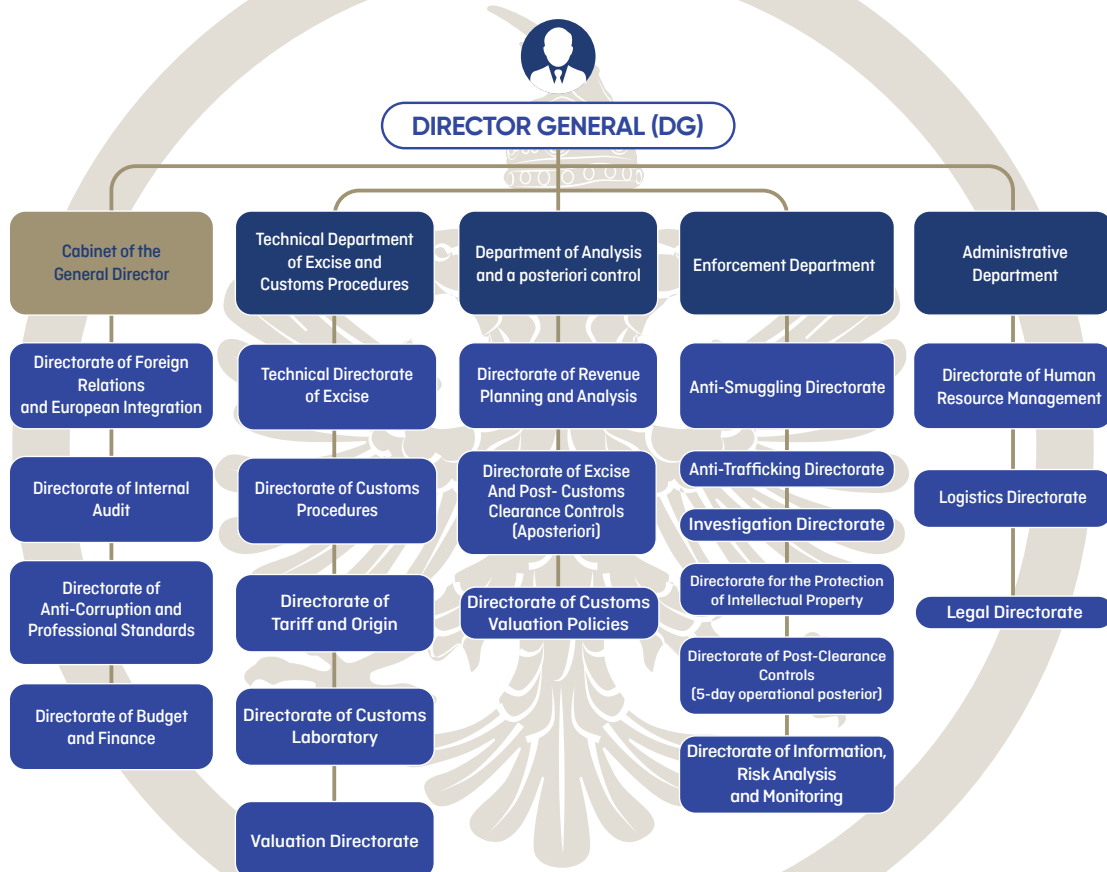




Durrës Customs



## Organization chart





Durrës Customs

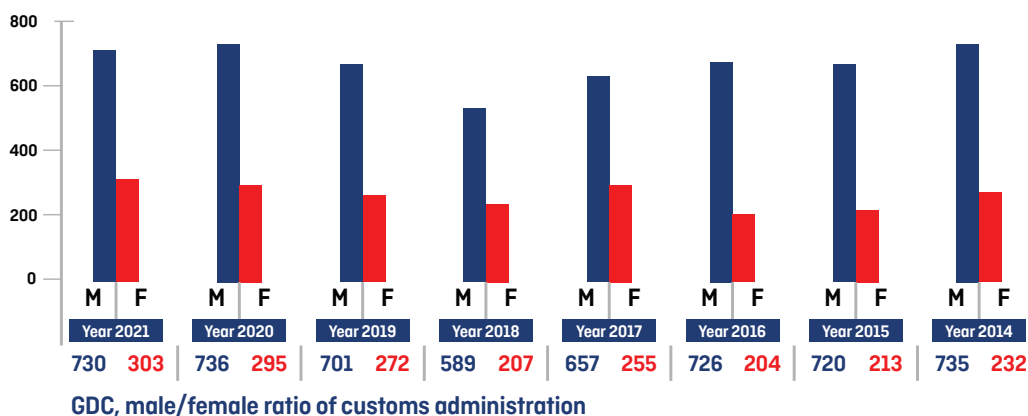


## 1. Gender ratio in the Customs Administration over the years

The average age of the employees is 43 years old and more than 90% of the staff holds a university degree. The ratio between men and women is 30% women and 70% men.

Regarding the gender balance, we notice that the percentage of women in the administration from 2014 to 2021 has increased by 51%, while in the Customs Branches it has increased by 16%.

**Gender ratio of the Customs Administration on the actual number**



## 2. Training and professional development

The Customs Administration is responsible for ensuring that its employees have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the strategic and operational objectives of the organization. In 2021, 113 trainings were conducted and 1045 employees of the Customs Administration were trained.



# OPEN BALKAN



# Events



The main activities of ACA in 2021

## Albania-USA:

**Meetings of the Director General, with the  
Ambassador of the United States of America;**  
[11/02/2021-26/11/2021]

The meetings were focused on the efforts and achievements of ACA to respect international standards in the service of citizens and businesses to facilitate legal business and control the movement of goods, fight against corruption and illegal trafficking.



## Meeting with the Customs Attaché of France (Tirana):

**Fight against illegal trafficking and French  
Customs assistance**  
[16/03/2020 and 14/10/2021 ]

The General Director of Customs has held two work meetings with the Customs Attaché of France where issues of common interest were discussed, especially regarding the fight against illegal trafficking and the assistance of French Customs in this regard, as well as increasing the exchange of information.



## Facilitation of customs procedures for Italian businesses:

### Meeting with the First Secretary for Trade at the Italian Embassy in Tirana and the Director of the Office for Foreign Trade

[01/06/2021]

The focus of the meeting was the facilitation and simplification of customs procedures for Italian businesses that develop economic activity with our country in order to increase the exchange of goods, but also their activity, informing Italian companies with the innovations of ACA, mainly in connection with the services provided online and the facilities offered by obtaining the status of Authorized Economic Operator.



## Albania-Turkey:

### Heads of Customs discuss joint projects

[03/06/2021]

The General Director of the Albanian Customs, Genti Gazheli, held a bilateral meeting with the Director of the Turkish Customs, Mustafa Gümüş, where the intensification of the cooperation between the two customs administrations was discussed. During this meeting with his Turkish counterpart, Mr. Gazheli praised the commitment of the two administrations for a mutual partnership in several areas, such as trade facilitation, exchange of information and implementation of joint projects. This meeting took place in the framework of the two-day visit of Prime Minister Edi Rama in Turkey, at the center of which was the progress of bilateral cooperation projects in digital technology, tourism, pharmaceuticals, energy and transport.



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## Cooperation with partners:

### Cooperation with partners, important in the fight against illegal trafficking

(09/06/2021)

Albanian Customs Administration attaches special importance to cooperation with international partners, especially in strengthening border control. The General Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli, received in a meeting the authorities of "Border Force International", of Great Britain, in the framework of the cooperation that the customs authorities have with Border Force International.



## Obtaining AEO status:

### Convenience for business throughout the region.

#### Informative meeting with the business for AEO

(10/06/2021)

ACA executives held a meeting with businesses that adhere to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Durrës, where they were closely acquainted with the criteria and benefits of obtaining the status of Authorized Economic Operator.

Businesses were informed that the "Authorized Economic Operator" certificate is a status issued to "trusted traders" who can benefit from many customs simplifications. In the framework of the Trade Agreement between the Western Balkan parties-CEFTA, AEO is a security certificate for fast customs services to facilitate, not only the free movement of goods in terms of economy and time, but also increasing the prestige of the respective customs administrations in the service of business.





## Albania-Turkey:

### Cooperation in the field of customs is increasing

[21/06/2021]

Increased cooperation between the two administrations, especially in the exchange of information, but also the facilitation of procedures for business of both countries, were at the center of the bilateral meeting between the Head of the Albanian Customs, with the senior delegation of the Turkish Customs.



## Executives of Customs:

### Balkan Customs Executives gather in Tirana, cooperation facilitates trade and European integration

[29/06/2021]

The Directors of Customs of the Western Balkans held in Tirana the 6th informal high-level regional meeting, which was attended by representatives of the HMRC, Border Force.



## Albania-United Kingdom:

### Meeting of the General Director with the Minister of the Interior of the United Kingdom

[09/07/2021]

Familiarity with the activities undertaken by customs in the fight against illegal trafficking, mainly trafficking of monetary values and narcotics and the operation of the Joint Cargo Unit at Rinas Airport. The UK Home Secretary was also briefed on the ACA's achievements in the fight against trafficking-as a result of cooperation with the Border Force and the HMRC.



## Albania-Macedonia:

### **Increase the cooperation for joint controls at the Qafë Thanë Border Crossing Point** (15/07/2021)

Increasing the cooperation and efficiency in the border controls between Albania and North Macedonia, was the main topic of the activity held at the BCP Qafë Thanë. USAID donated devices in this event. The General Director of the Albanian Customs, Genti Gazheli, the US Ambassador to Albania, Yuri Kim, the US Ambassador to Northern Macedonia, Kate Marie Byrnes and the Director of the Customs Administration of Northern Macedonia, Goran Sugareski were present. These devices ensure that customs authorities achieve the highest standards in border procedures, business climate improvement and border security controls.



## Albania-Japan:

### **Meeting of the General Director, Mr. Gazheli with the Ambassador of Japan** (23/07/2021)

The focus of the conversation was on increasing trade exchanges between the two countries and the benefits of ACA, thanks to the direct contribution of the Japanese Government to the WCO, through the Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF Japan), in order to increase the customs capacity of ACA and contribution to the process of reforming and modernizing the customs administration.



## January 26-International Customs Day

Traditionally, to mark International Customs Day (ICD) on January 26 each year, the WCO Secretariat devotes a theme that is relevant to the challenges faced by the global customs community. The slogan chosen for 2021 was "Strengthening Customs Recovery, Renewal and Sustainability for a Sustainable Supply Chain". Customs, working with other border agencies, play a key role in facilitating trade and travel, simplifying, standardizing and harmonizing border procedures, and securing borders. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance and critical role that Customs plays in this context, ensuring the continued functioning of the supply chain and ensuring that essential and medical goods cross borders without delay at a time when it is most needed.



## Grabom:

### New customs Border Crossing Point with Montenegro opens

[03/08/2021]

The joint BCP between Albania and Montenegro was opened in Grabom of Malësia e Madhe. The inauguration of this Joint Checkpoint Point of Grabom was attended by the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Zdravko Krivokapić, several ministers of the two governments as well as senior executives of Customs and Police of the respective countries.





## Cooperation with Kosovo:

### **The facilitation of customs procedures will increase trade between the two countries**

[07/10/2021]

The Albanian and Kosovo Customs Administrations have a very good and consolidated cooperation on all issues of mutual interest. The General Director of the Albanian Customs, Genti Gazheli, paid an official visit to the Kosovo Customs, where he was received by the General Director, Agron Llugaliu. Topics of mutual interest were discussed in order to speed up and facilitate customs procedures in the clearing of goods in Morinë/Vërmicë and Durrës, such as simplified mutual procedures, sensitization of economic operators, the possibility of mutual recognition of sealing and ensuring the presence of Kosovo authorities in Porto Romano.



## Albania-United Kingdom:

### **Meeting of the General Director with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth for the European Neighborhood and the Americas**

[11/10/2021]

The focus of the meeting was on strengthening the interaction between the agencies operating in the Durrës Port, in order to increase effectiveness in the fight against trafficking. The UK Foreign Secretary also became acquainted with the functioning of the Joint Container Control Unit as well as the achievements of the ACA in the fight against trafficking-as a result of cooperation with the Border Force and the HMRC.



## Thessaloniki Summit:

### Cooperation between regional customs, a step towards EU integration

[04/11/2021]

The General Director of Customs, Genti Gazheli, was part of the Thessaloniki Summit at the invitation of the Secretary General of International Affairs of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and attended the Meeting on Cooperation between the Western Balkan Countries. This Summit was held under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic H.E. Mrs. Katerina Sakellaropoulou.



## Albanian Customs:

### Part of EU projects in the fight against counterfeit goods

[17/11/2021]

The Albanian Customs Administration and Austrian Agency successfully completed the Twinning Project funded by the European Union with the object "Support to the Albanian Customs Administration in relation to the implementation of the EU Customs Code and increasing operational capacity in the field of counterfeit goods".



## Albania-Kosovo cooperation:

### Three important acts in the field of Customs are signed

[26/11/2021]

In the framework of the meeting of the two Governments of Albania and Kosovo, the respective Customs Administrations signed three important acts: "Joint Manual for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Morinë-Vermicë border BCP"; Joint order "On the functioning of risk profiles in the implementation of procedures of transit of the goods through the territory of the Republic of Albania in the Republic of Kosovo and vice versa"; Manual "On transit procedures at the Kosovo Customs Office at the Durrës Seaport".



## Open Balkan

### Agreement to facilitate the free movement of goods and people

[17/12/2021]

The Minister of Finance and Economy, Delina Ibrahimaj, signed a cooperation agreement with Macedonia and Serbia, in the framework of the "Open Balkan" initiative, which will help increase economic cooperation between our countries, recognizing the status of Authorized Economic Operators, which will facilitate the free movement of goods and people.





From the visit to Turkey of the Minister of Finance and Economy with the Turkish Customs Authorities



# Revenue Collection 2021



Realization for the period January - December 2021:

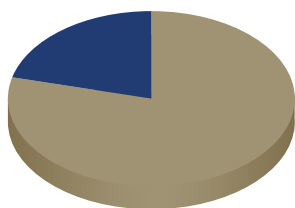
+24.1 billion

ALL increase



✦ **Planned** 169.05 billion ALL

✓ **Realization** 193.2 billion ALL



79 %

of revenue success



Economic growth



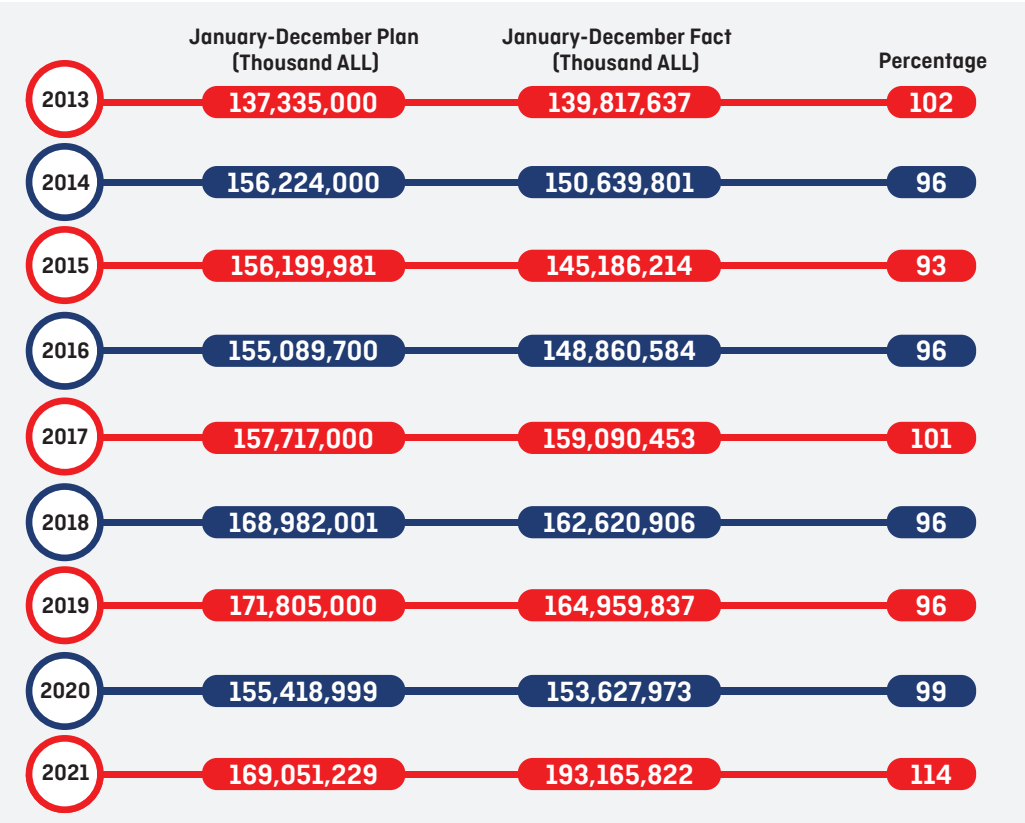
Increased import flows



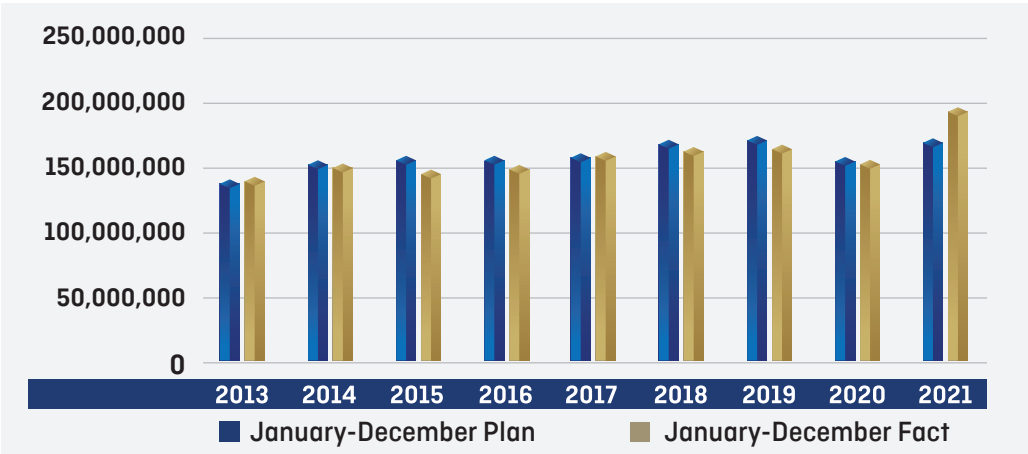
Good administration

Revenues in the 12 months of 2021 were realized in the amount of 193.2 billion ALL from the 169.05 billion ALL planned, or about 24.1 billion ALL more (about 240 million USD more). Compared to the total increase of the import flow, the increase of the revenues from the international prices occupies only 21% of the total increase of the statistical value. So 79% of revenue success comes as a result of economic growth, increased import flows and good administration. Meanwhile, over 3 billion ALL revenues have been lost from the exchange rate decline and, if we include this effect within the volume / price increase ratio, then the ratio is transformed into 91.5% good administration and 8.5% price increase. The growth of customs revenues in total is about 2 times more than the economic growth calculated by INSTAT. Compared to the 2020, about 39.5 billion ALL more have been realized.

It should be estimated that January-December 2021 has the highest realization of each 12-month period in the history of customs.



Plan Fact 2013-2021

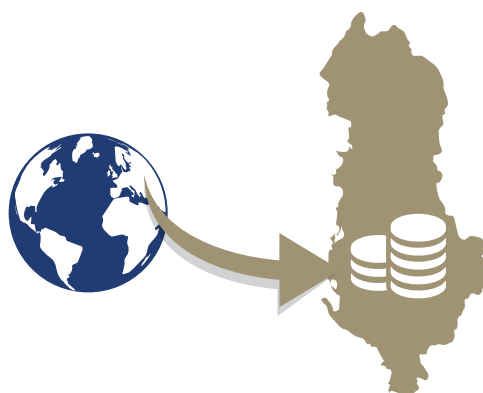


The following expresses the situation of NET income divided by taxes:

Income	Customs Duty	Net Excise	VAT	Royalty	Net Total
January-December 2021	7,457,468	51,636,820	131,301,237	2,445,002	192,840,526
January-December 2020	6,241,286	44,521,140	100,474,719	1,795,450	153,032,595
XII-M Plan 2021	6,500,760	49,400,264	110,750,651	2,399,554	169,051,229
Difference 2021-2020	1,216,182	7,115,679	30,826,518	649,551	39,807,931
Difference in %	19%	16%	31%	36%	26%
Realization Diff. XM-Plan	956,708	2,236,556	20,550,586	45,447	23,789,297
Realization Diff. XM-Plan %	15%	5%	19%	2%	14%

### Customs Duty

**+1.2 billion**  
ALL more from the  
resumption of imports  
of goods originating  
outside the EU



### Excise

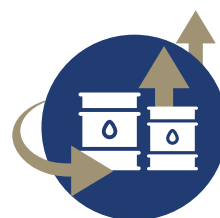
**In total**  
**+7.1 billion**  
ALL, that mainly  
originated from:



Increased import  
of cigarettes  
with **+2.7 billion**



Increased import of beer  
with **about 230 Mln**



Increased import  
of  
with **+3.4 billion**

## VAT

In total, VAT, compared to the 12 months of 2020, has given about 30.8 billion more, stimulated mainly by:

**+4.5**

billion ALL

increase in electricity

**+4**

billion ALL

increase in  
import fuel

**+4**

billion ALL

increase in  
consumption of daily  
consumer goods

**+3.2**

billion ALL

increase from  
import of base  
metals

**+1.8**

billion ALL

increase in  
imports of  
used vehicles

**+1.3**

billion ALL

liquefied gas

**+1**

billion ALL

plastic and  
its byproducts

**+1**

billion ALL

increase in imports  
of clothing, textiles

**+840**

mIn ALL

metal constructions

**+730**

mIn ALL

prepared foods

**+620**

mIn ALL

cigarettes etc...

## Royalties

**+840** mIn ALL

due to the combined  
effect between the  
increase in the exported  
amount of crude oil

With about

**30.000** tons

and nearly the doubling of  
the 12-month average  
international price

About

**40** mIn ALL

plus are provided by  
other minerals



## Customs Procedures and Technical Aspects

### a. Digitalization of customs procedures

The Customs Administration has been operating paperless for several years, while it has been involved in intensive processes of digitalization and online provision of all services. The Customs Administration has set clear objectives in the service of citizens and businesses aiming at alignment with EU standards in terms of facilitating international trade and the transfer of at least 50% of businesses to the green channel. These standards will help strengthen risk assessment systems and a posteriori controls mainly on excise products.

The Digital Customs concept is the main objective of the General Directorate of Customs for the use of digital systems in the collection of customs duties, the control of the inflow and outflow of goods, people, the movement of money and to ensure cross-border trade.

Currently, citizens and businesses can benefit by **online processes, through the e-Albania portal, with 34 of the 41 services** offered by Customs, including license applications, request applications, authorizations, system services, Sicpatrace, certifications etc.

- "Digitalization" has modernized the Albanian customs system.
- "Digitalization" has provided more service quality and reduced costs and time of customs procedures for businesses, as well as reduced room for tax evasion and corrupt acts.
- "Digitalization" has enabled the approximation of Albanian standards with those of the European Union.
- "Digitalization" has improved efficiency in the Customs Administration by reducing the time and cost of processing the customs declaration as well as reviewing applications for favorable decisions.

### b. Trade facilitation

#### 1 Green Corridor (CEFTA)



Based on DCM No. 269 date 01.02.2020, "On the approval of the joint proposal prepared by the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and the CEFTA Secretariat, to facilitate the transport of essential goods within the Western Balkans", the CEFTA parties have defined the priority "green" BCP, which for the Republic of Albania are the customs branches Durrës, Morinë, Shkodër (Hani i Hotit), Qafë Thanë and Kakavija.

## Priority "green" points of border crossing (CEFTA)



The CEFTA Secretariat in cooperation with all member parties has also compiled a list of goods of primary importance in order to cope with the situation caused by COVID 19, by the population and health authorities. The list of goods includes food products, medicines, disinfectants, masks, gloves, medical devices, etc.

All CEFTA parties have agreed that the customs authorities and other authorities operating at the border should accelerate the passage of goods (according to the approved list) across the border through the creation of "green" corridors/lanes.

The creation of this green corridor has enabled the vehicles transporting these goods to be authorized to avoid any possible entry/exit from the territories of the CEFTA parties, and have enabled priority in carrying out all procedures, including customs controls and those of other authorities operating at the border.

## 2 Single Window

Single Window is a government-mandated platform that allows the submission of information to meet regulatory requirements between economic operators and government authorities.

Single Window enables electronic communication between the customs authorities and all national institutions that issue permits, licenses and authorizations, which are necessary for the performance of customs procedures, thus reducing customs clearance time, reducing costs for businesses, providing convenience and transparency.

In order to fulfill this commitment, measures have been taken through the investment of the World Bank in the framework of the Trade and Transport Facilitation Project in the Western Balkans, which, for the Customs, envisages the development of:

- Single customs counter project (Single Window);
- Development of the new computerized transit system - NCTS platform;
- Construction of a joint BCP in Qafë Thanë.

### 3 International Transit System

Albania has started efforts to implement NCTS with the help of IPA funds, and currently there is an important project of the World Bank for Trade and Transport Facilitation, approved by Law no. 62/2019. The implementation of the NCTS is one of the key components of this project.

The implementation of the NCTS aims to standardize customs transit processes in countries that are parties to the Common Transit Convention (CTC), having in mind:

- Analysis of Albanian Customs legislation and procedures related to NCTS.
- Analysis of the Administration information system for full interaction and interconnection with EU-NCTS.
- Drafting of reference terms for the development and implementation of the NCTS system, based on the best practices of the members of the Common Transit Convention.

### c. Granting the status of "Authorized Economic Operator"

This is the status issued to "trusted entrepreneurs" who can benefit from multiple customs simplifications. An economic operator which is located in the customs territory of the Republic of Albania and meets the criteria set out in the Customs Code, can apply for the status of authorized economic operator.

#### WHAT IS AEO?

##### **"Authorized Economic Operator"**

is a program based on the Customs-Business partnership.

Economic operators, voluntarily, meet a set of standards to guarantee the common goal of **supply chain security**.

- **AEO D:** AEO for customs simplifications
- **AEO S:** AEO for safety and security aspects

#### HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

- 1** Show up at the General Directorate of Customs;
- 2 Submit:**
  - Application form;
  - Self-assessment questionnaire;
- 3** Upon receipt of the application form, the customs authorities will review it, follow up on the proper form and assist you with the consultation to meet the criteria.

**Criteria** to be met by the subjects that apply as well as the **benefits** deriving from the status of “Authorized Economic Operator”:

## CRITERIA

### To obtain the AEO status

- Conformity.
- Financial solvency.
- Efficient trade and transport data management system.
- Security and protection standards.

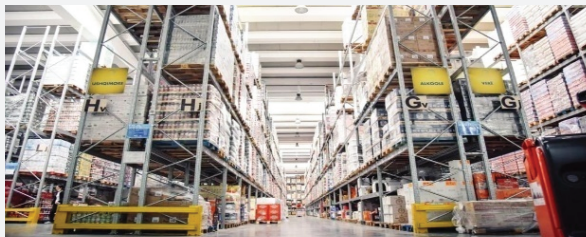
## BENEFITS

- ✓ More favorable treatment in relation to risk assessment and controls.
- ✓ Simplified or exclusive access to certain customs procedures.
- ✓ Joint recognition agreements with other states.

## Information and awareness campaign

Informing and raising the awareness of economic operators about the benefits brought by the AEO status has been and will remain in focus of.

- Informative meetings with businesses interested in obtaining AEO status.
- Announcements at Chambers of Commerce (central and local) as well as business associations.
- Individual invitations to businesses.
- Trainings with business representatives.



## Statistics



### d. Tariff and Rules of Origin

The Customs Administration has worked towards the design, adaptation and implementation of the changes of the Harmonized System of the World Customs Organization and Combined Nomenclature 2022, in the framework of the standardization of CN with EU CN 2022.

During 2021 there have been some developments regarding the legal framework in relation to the origin of goods:



Businesses and industry will have the opportunity to apply the new rules to the goods they trade. These rules are more flexible and easier than the existing rules of the Convention, whenever it suits them, as their use is an additional opportunity, and not an obligation.

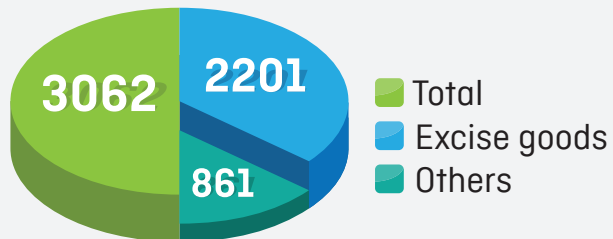
## e. Customs Laboratory

- Established in May 2000, with funding and technical assistance from the Italian Customs Agency.
- The only customs laboratory in the territory of the Republic of Albania.
- Laboratory accredited by the General Directorate of Accreditation for 38 analytical indicators.
- LIMS system implemented (Laboratory Information Management System).

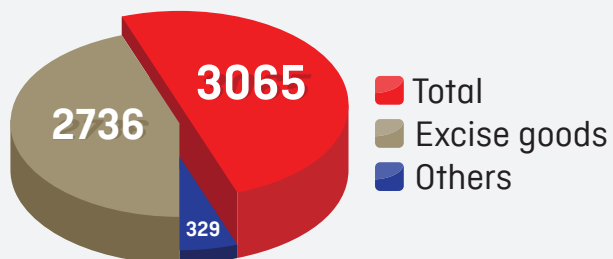
The main objective of the Directorate of Customs Laboratory is the professional analysis of the goods brought for analysis, the issuance of the Certificate of Verification of the Type of Goods and the Tariff Classification.

- During 2021, a total of 3062 items or 26284 analytical indicators were analyzed.
- Of these 2201 samples (excise goods, hydrocarbon and alcoholic products) or about 20,000 accredited analytical indicators.
- 72% of the samples analyzed represent excise goods.
- 3065 Tariff Classification Certificates have been issued, of which 329 have differences of tariff classification and 65 Analysis Sheets.
- Participation in 8 International Aptitude Tests.

Analyzed goods



Tariff classification certificates



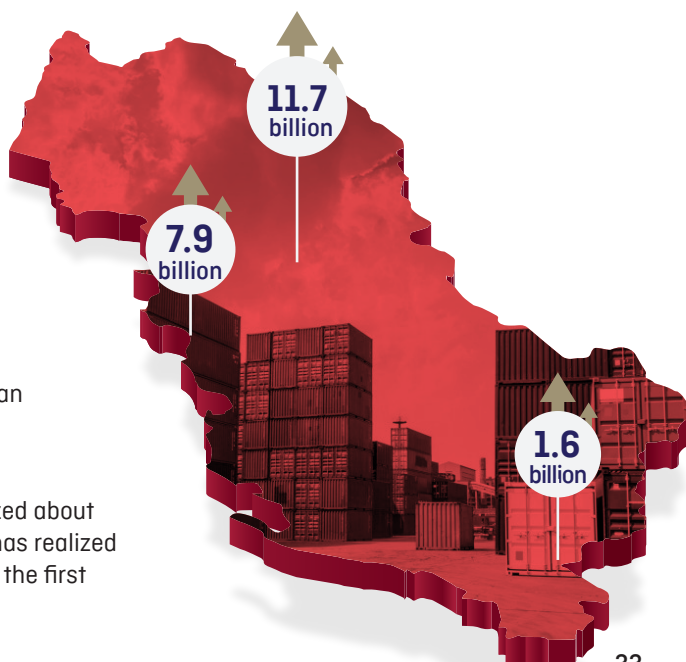
According to customs branches, revenues of January-December 2021 have been:

Customs Branches	Progressive Plan (thousand ALL)	Difference to the Progressive Plan (thousand ALL)	In % to the Progressive Plan
Tiranë	61,783,610	11,684,564	119
Rinas	2,601,662	168,736	106
Durrës	68,166,388	7,894,484	112
Shkodër	3,178,446	580,563	118
Pogradec	1,838,244	113,803	106
Gjirokastrë	13,533,969	1,558,005	112
Korçë	388,713	97,774	125
Kapshticë	3,348,834	759,382	123
Vlorë	5,673,663	588,141	110
Fier	2,390,244	423,281	118
Sarandë	133,167	26,792	120
Elbasan	2,579,424	111,182	104
Lezhë	1,717,709	-292,780	83
Berat	388,765	74,132	119
Kukës	1,188,326	310,438	126
Peshkopi	137,464	14,904	111
Tri Urat	2,602	1,193	146
<b>Progressive 2021</b>	<b>169,051,229</b>	<b>24,114,593</b>	<b>114.3</b>

Tirana Customs Branch has realized about **+11.7 billion** ALL more than the plan or has realized the plan at **119%**.

Durrës Customs Branch has realized about **7.9 billion** ALL more than the plan or has realized the plan at **112%**.

Gjirokastra Customs Branch has realized about **1.6 billion** ALL more than the plan, or has realized the plan at **112%**, a result achieved for the first time in this branch.



## Excise Goods:

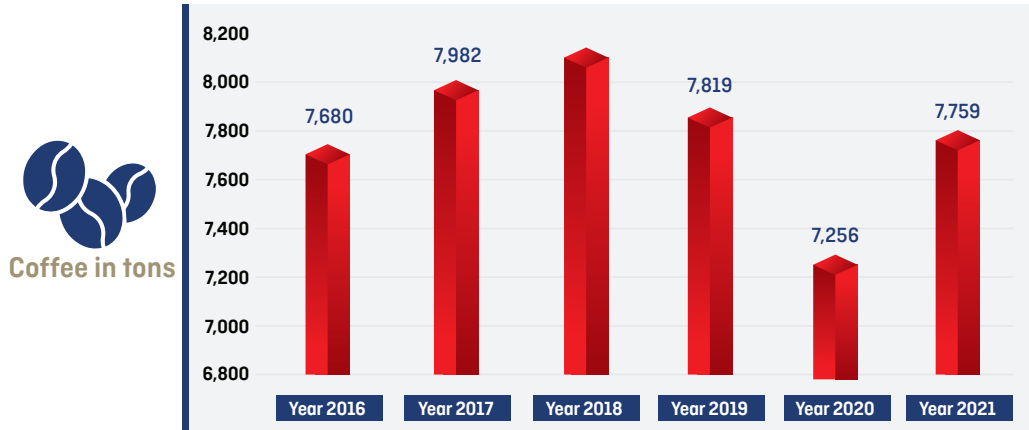
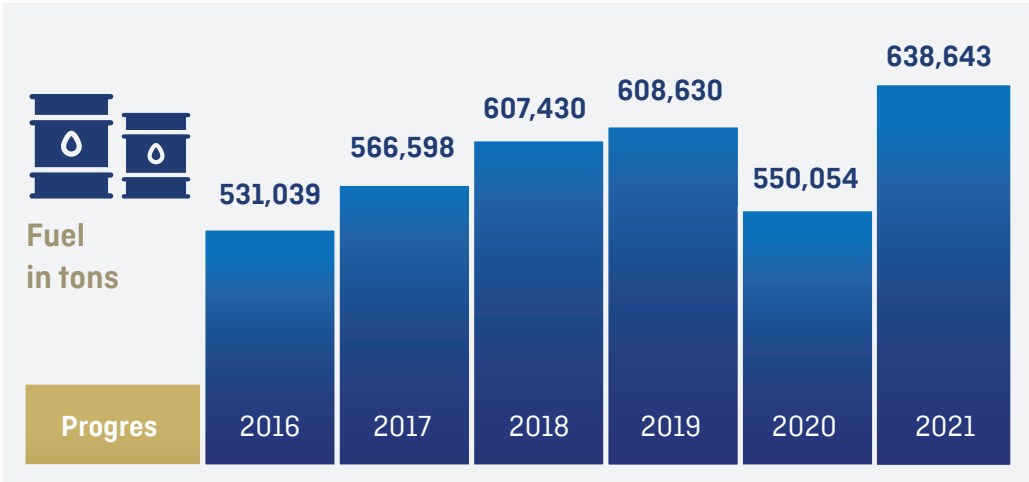
The performance of excise goods is as follows:

January-December 2020-2021

	YEAR 2020 January-December 2020		YEAR 2021 January-December 2021		Difference			
	p/ton	Exc in (Thousand ALL)	p/ton	Exc in (Thousand ALL)	Quantity	TREND	Excise	TREND
Beer	40,920	1,321,277	48,406	1,576,220	7,486	↑	254,943	↑
EAD Beer	39,970	853,109	41,429	643,175	1,459	↑	-209,933	↓
Beer consumption	80,891	2,174,386	89,835	2,219,395	8,944	↑	45,010	↑
Cigarettes	1,265	7,627,863	1,435	9,093,612	170	↑	1,465,749	↑
EAD Cigarettes	1,443	8,789,345	1,502	10,011,787	59	↑	1,222,442	↑
Cigarette consumption	2,708	16,417,208	2,937	19,105,399	229	↑	2,688,191	↑
Tobacco	85	512,024	99	595,114	14	↑	83,090	↑
EAD Tobacco	41	122,621	54	161,423	13	↑	38,803	↑
Tobacco consumption	126	634,645	154	756,537	27	↑	121,893	↑
Coffee	2,445	146,688	2,961	177,675	516	↑	30,987	↑
EAD Coffee	4,816	264,421	4,803	263,689	-13	↓	-732	↓
Coffee consumption	7,261	411,109	7,764	441,364	503	↑	30,255	↑
Fuel	380,602	16,872,877	429,291	19,104,207	48,689	↑	2,231,330	↑
EAD Fuel	169,478	6,270,683	209,484	7,750,850	40,006	↑	1,480,167	↑
Fuel consumption	550,080	23,143,560	638,775	26,855,057	88,695	↑	3,711,497	↑
Alcoholic beverages	659	196,672	935	278,130	276	↑	81,458	↑
EAD alcohol beverages	569	130,218	836	195,950	267	↑	65,733	↑
Alcoholic beverages consumption	1,229	326,890	1,771	474,080	542	↑	147,191	↑
Energy drink	13,784	0	18,002	0	4,218	↑	0	↑
EAD Energy drink	0	0	0	0	0	↑	0	↑
Energy drink consumption	13,784	0	18,002	0	4,218	↑	0	↑
Wine	3,959	215,029	5,266	277,142	1,307	↑	62,113	↑
EAD Wine	1,051	41,379	1,333	52,635	282	↑	11,256	↑
Wine consumption	5,010	256,408	6,599	329,777	1,589	↑	73,369	↑



Excise goods in 12 months period , in consumption, for the period 2016-2021 have the same performance:



Processing time for the IM4 declarations, for the declarations of January-December 2020-2021 has been:

Year	Blue			Yellow			Red			Green		
	Minutes	Declarations	Min/Dec	Minutes	Declarations	Min/Dec	Minutes	Declarations	Min/Dec	Minutes	Declarations	Min/Dec
2020	1,626,289	55,808	29	14,656,495	173,299	85	11,700,377	24,229	483	1,285,058	41,734	31
2021	1,897,279	64,397	29	14,621,876	196,555	74	12,187,838	27,158	449	1,860,850	58,017	32
DIF	270,990	8,589	0	-34,619	23,256	-10	487,461	2,929	-34	575,792	16,283	1

It is worth noting that the time of processing customs declarations is one of the most important elements of performance, measurable by the World Customs Organization.

A statistical analytical element is also the Statistical Value per Kg. This shows how the declaration was made over the years and how the pace of price changes was. In the table below are shown all the imports for free circulation, but excluding the items Fuel, Gas, Electricity, Cigarettes and Car as these items are very variable both in price and weight:

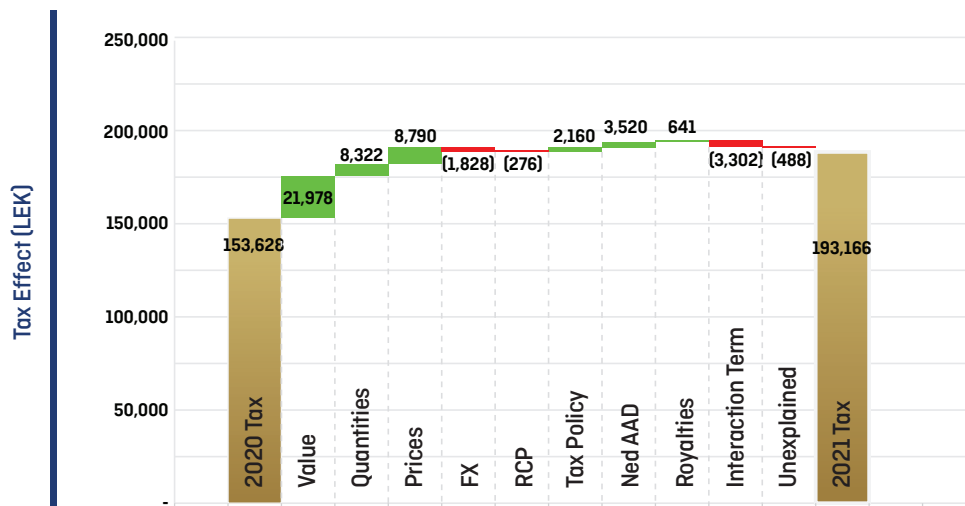
Year	Net weight kg	St value in ALL	Total tax in ALL	vt/kg	income/kg
2016	3,122,300,418	386,130,938,417	78,045,170,182	124	25
2017	3,340,515,263	398,714,015,913	84,522,657,962	119	25
2018	3,254,632,328	390,239,475,442	84,404,642,883	120	26
2019	3,334,583,107	394,584,294,480	83,665,242,747	118	25
2020	3,467,694,791	391,254,722,042	81,203,737,825	113	23
2021	3,869,738,959	491,181,215,093	100,988,105,173	127	26

As can be seen, the statistical value per Kg and income / Kg have an increase compared to a year ago. This shows that for the same amount of imports, the Customs Administration collects more revenue.

Valuation methods, too, have an important aspect to revenue. The following table presents data on transaction valuations and those with other methods, for import for consumption. As seen for the period January-December 2021, the highest transaction usage figure was recorded:

Year	Coeff. 1f 1	Coeff. > 1	All	% of transaction usage
2016	626,834	64,958	691,792	91%
2017	682,642	67,050	749,692	91%
2018	788,766	62,189	850,955	93%
2019	837,190	52,713	889,903	94%
2020	831,149	46,690	877,839	95%
2021	985,929	45,886	1,031,815	96%

The transaction usage increase is a priority of the business facilitation strategy.



For the analysis of customs revenues, all micro data are evaluated, to identify and evaluate the factors that have positively or negatively influenced them.

According to the analysis for 2021 in customs revenues, the factors that have had a positive impact have been:

- a) The declared values in import have given an increase of about ALL 22 billion compared to 2020.
- b) Imported quantities have given a positive effect of about ALL 8.3 billion.
- c) The effect of the increase of international prices, which is estimated at about +8.8 billion ALL. It should be noted that, after so many years of falling international stock market prices, we are finally reaching the point of rising prices that presupposes the recovery of the economy after the effects of the pandemic. Compared to the total increase of import flow, the increase of revenues from international prices occupies only 21% of the total increase of statistical value.
- d) Revenue growth as a result of Fiscal Policies with an effect of about +2.2 billion ALL.
- e) The factor "Declarations with EAD" which reflects the contribution of excise tax payment to income with an effect of +3.5 million ALL. This is the effect of more use of fiscal warehouses by entities.
- f) Royalties with an effect of +641 million ALL. This effect is combined with the increase of the exported quantity by about 18 thousand tons and the increase of the international price by about 48%.

Despite the impact of these positive factors, the analysis also identifies the factors that have negatively affected customs revenues, as follows:

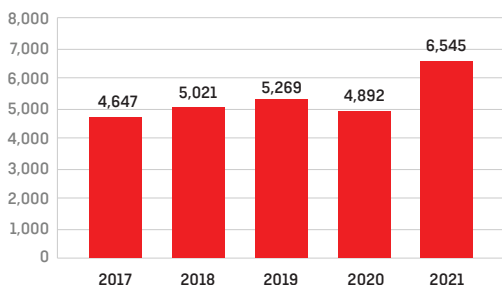
- a) The exchange rate effect continues to be negative on customs revenues, by about **ALL 1.8 billion**. The biggest negative effect is given by the large decrease in the exchange rate of Euro currency, with an average of 9.7 points as a 12-month. It should be noted that part of the exchange rate effect is also included in the Interaction Terms factor, which means that in total the exchange rate approaches the value of about **3 billion**, significantly **neutralizing the increase in revenues from stock exchange prices**.
- b) The "**Interaction Term**" factor has had a negative impact on customs revenues by **-3.3 billion ALL**. This factor explains the minus change in customs revenues from the combination of elements such as the exchange rate, fiscal policies, transaction prices, etc.
- c) The "**Other**" factor, which has given a positive effect of about **500 million**.
- d) The effect of the application of reference prices has given a negative effect of -276 million ALL, and has come as a result of the increased use of the transaction method.

The analysis clearly shows that the increase has been general. Electricity, Fuel and basket goods have the main growth of about + 30%, which is many times higher than the economic growth of 7% set by INSTAT.

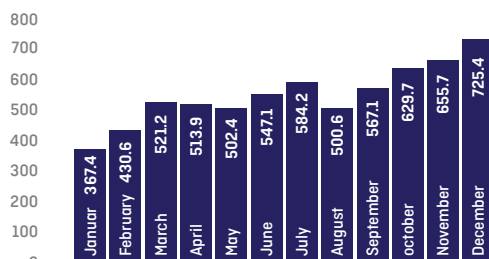
**Table 2: Values of imports in mln Euro**

Month	Year				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	260.0	337.2	340.7	343.7	367.4
February	325.6	345.1	398.7	423.3	430.6
March	400.4	418.7	445.9	341.8	521.2
April	367.4	403.2	455.8	297.8	513.9
May	408.4	441.5	479.8	363.7	502.4
June	427.2	428.7	437.0	420.0	547.1
July	415.9	460.0	486.6	456.2	584.2
August	372.7	386.4	424.2	390.6	500.6
September	399.0	404.7	427.4	423.6	567.1
October	430.9	462.3	487.0	481.0	629.7
November	411.6	448.3	430.7	451.4	655.7
December	456.9	484.9	454.9	499.2	725.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,676</b>	<b>5,021</b>	<b>5,269</b>	<b>4,892</b>	<b>6,545</b>

## Imports according 2017-2021 / mln Euros

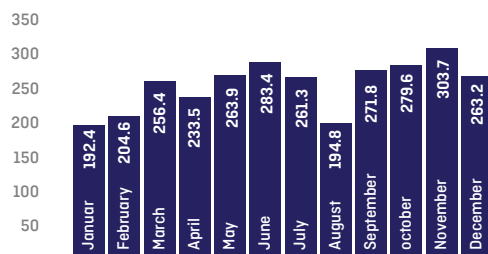
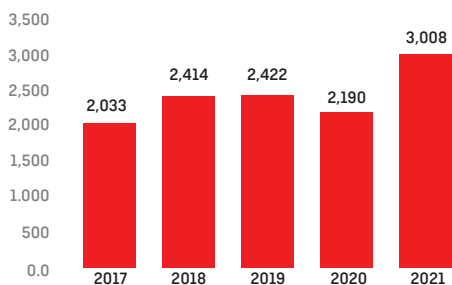


## Imports according to the months of 2021/ million Euros



**Table 5/1: Export value in mln Euros**

Month	Year				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	139.8	176.3	177.7	187.7	192.4
February	146.7	179.7	181.1	199.5	204.6
March	167.0	204.5	220.9	147.2	256.4
April	183.3	205.5	213.1	114.1	233.2
May	178.8	230.8	224.7	174.1	263.9
June	168.6	211.3	208.3	186.4	283.4
July	186.3	212.5	226.6	197.4	261.3
August	139.7	162.3	165.4	156.6	194.8
September	180.9	207.3	203.2	203.1	271.8
October	185.7	237.4	222.9	215.2	279.6
November	191.0	212.4	199.4	222.1	303.7
December	164.7	174.2	179.3	186.6	263.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>2,414</b>	<b>2,422</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>3,008</b>



## Excise and a posteriori controls

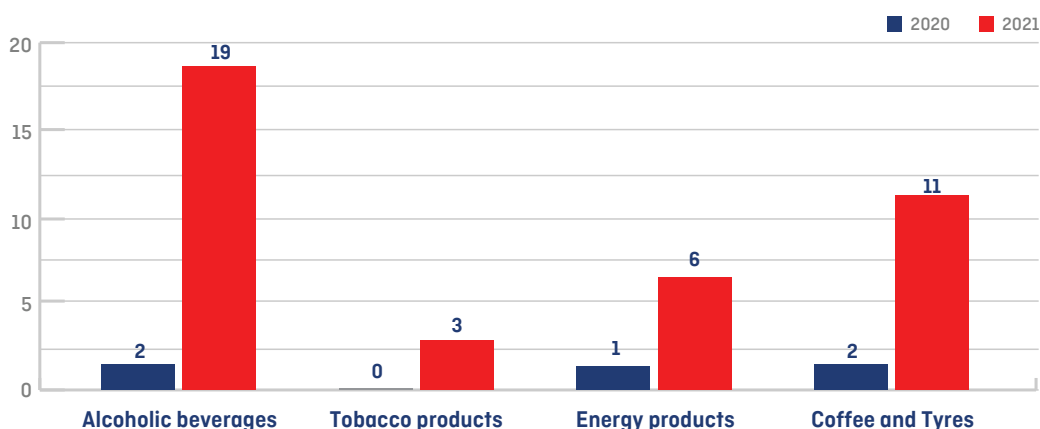
During 2021, despite the specifics of the pandemic and its consequences on the current situation, the Customs Administration has continued to work on fulfilling functional tasks with priority on the realization of customs revenues, with increased focus on excise revenues. It has been worked toward the aim of reducing evasion and respecting legal provisions.

During the period January-December 2021, controls were exercised at operators in the field of excise goods such as "cigarettes", "fuel", "coffee", "alcoholic beverages", etc. Furthermore according to the table below:

Excise Product Controls				
Product type	No. of controls	No. of positive controls	Additional liabilities (ALL)	Penalties (ALL)
Alcoholic beverages	112	19	5,852,106	12,339,327
Tobacco products	4	3	19,902,220	
Energy products	64	6	6,989,560	14,529,440
Coffee and Tyres	53	11	0	969,000

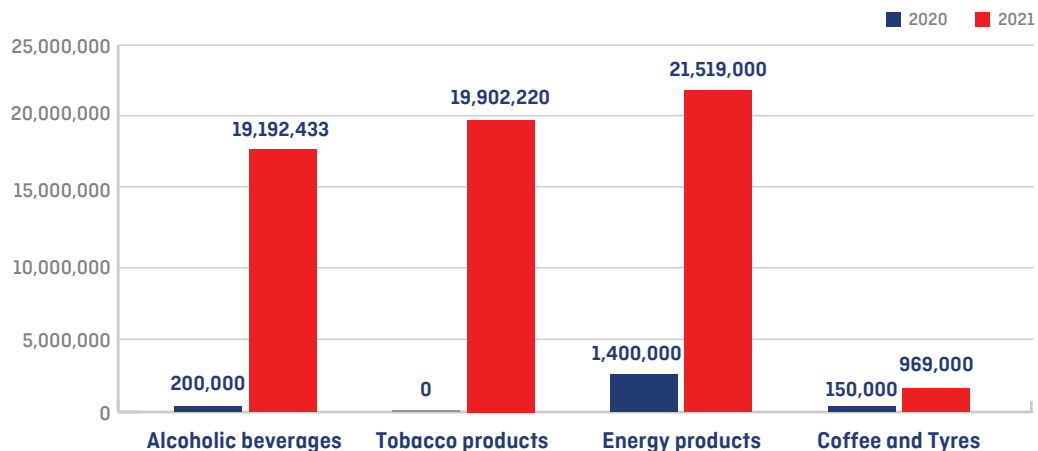
## Controls performed compared to 2020

### Cases with findings





## Violations found in ALL

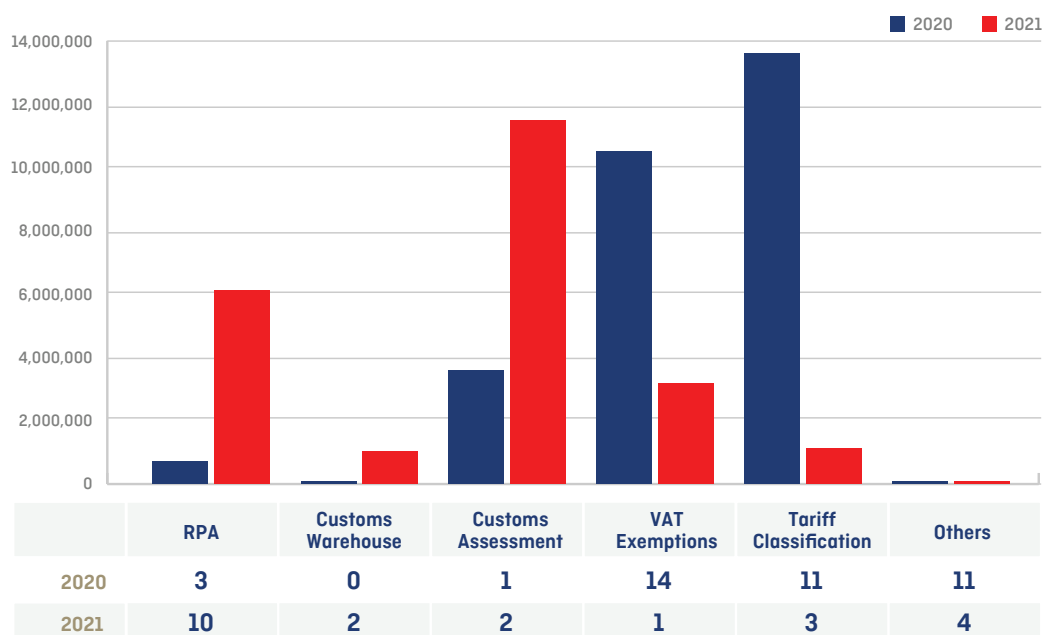
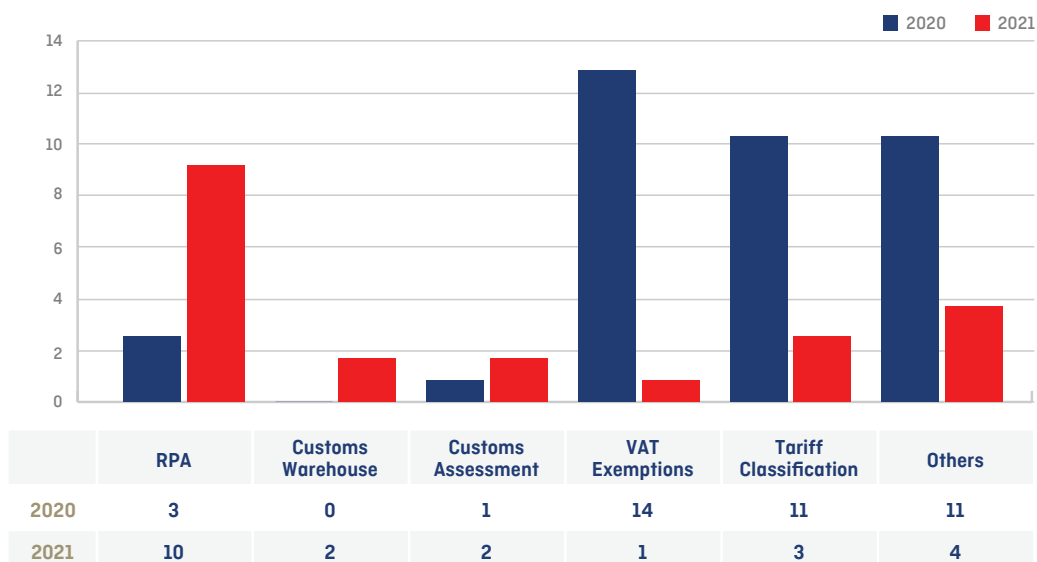


Attention has also been paid to the fight against informality and irregular products. For this purpose, working groups have been set up which have conducted controls in about 500 economic operators, of which, 26 cases have been found with irregularities.

During 2021, 6,015 tests were performed near gas stations and inert production points, which constitute a total of 3,448 entities, of which 27 resulted in violations. For cases with violations, it was proceeded with the collection of the unpaid liabilities and penalties in accordance with legal provisions.

During 2021, 22 "Control Programs" were carried out for goods placed under special regimes such as "Active Processing Regime", "Customs Warehouse" and controls for customs assessment or tariff classification for goods after customs clearance.

With the aim of "Improving cooperation and exchange of information with the tax administration", it is worth mentioning the organization of joint controls with the tax administration or other sectors of the Albanian economy, which affect trade and trade chain security.



### Customs debt monitoring

In order to strengthen the work for customs debt collection, risk profiles have been developed for entities with obligations and cooperation has continued with the structures of the National Agency of ICT at the GDC, for the development of new systems for recording and monitoring customs debt.

## Customs Assessment Policies

For 2021, it has been intervened in the assessment in about 75% of cases identified and suggested for review of the customs assessment.

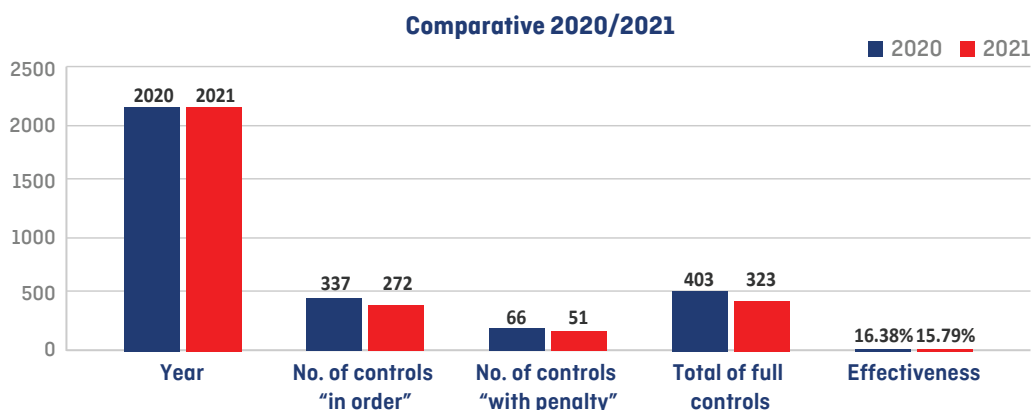
This value, which is constantly increasing (55.5% in 2019, 62.8% in 2020 and 75% in 2021), is an indicator of increasing the effectiveness of monitoring work and cooperation between the relevant structures of the ACA.

## Customs supervision and control

The important missions of ACA are the protection of society and of our business partners as well as the guarantee of national security by relying on risk management and efficient and effective controls.

In the framework of the protective role of the financial interests of the Republic of Albania and the businesses that operate in it, the Customs Authority conducts continuous controls based on the type of goods and their riskiness.

During **2021, 2,705** controls were exercised, of which **323** or about **12%** were complete. During the controls, **54** cases of customs violations were found, of which **51** with penalties, with a total value of ALL 17,545,547. Effectiveness of controls with violations for the period January - December 2021 was **15.79%**.



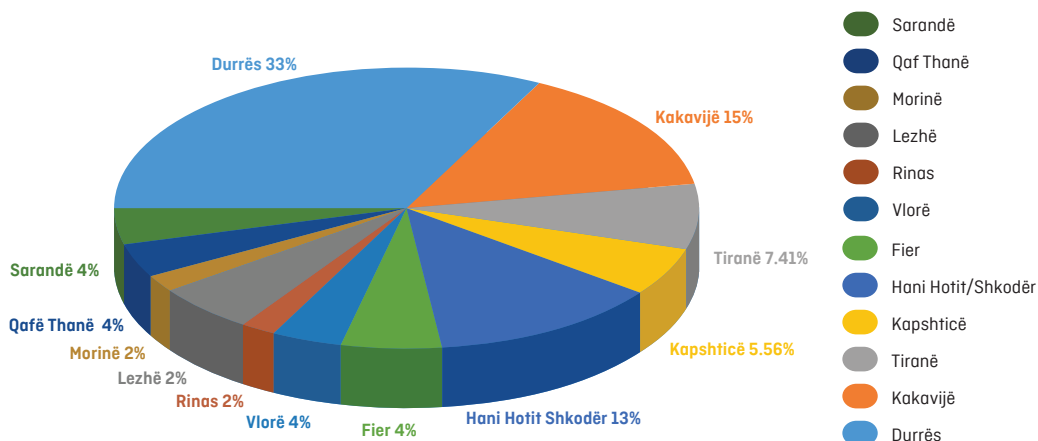
During 2021, customs violations identified by the Directorate of Anti-Smuggling in cooperation with other structures of the GDC, have been more in used personal goods, as well as clothing and used items, mainly originating from: Great Britain, followed by Turkey, Italy and China.

The highest number of administrative offenses found during the controls exercised by the Anti-Smuggling Directorate, in cooperation with other structures, results in the customs areas: Durrës Ferry Square, followed by the BCP of Kakavija, Hani Hoti, and others according to the table below.

Table with the number of cases, their % and the total value divided by customs areas:

Customs Branches	No. of cases with violations	%	Value/Total
Durrës	18	33%	13,370,515
Kakavijë	8	15%	584,470
Tiranë	4	7.41%	295,852
Kapshticë	3	5.56%	515,371
Hani Hotit/Shkodër	7	13.00%	2,025,597
Fier	3	5.56%	188,820
Vlorë	2	4%	129,868
Rinas	1	2%	20,000
Lezhë	3	5.56%	83,738
Morinë	1	2%	251,316
Qaf Thanë	2	4%	40,000
Sarandë	2	4%	40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>17,545,547 ALL</b>

% of customs violations, divided according to Customs Areas 2021:



### Fight against illegal trafficking

As a result of the increase of controls in order to prevent, detect and crack down on narcotics trafficking, based on risk analysis, in the port of Durrës were made 10 kg of cannabis originating from South America.

Cocaine	Cannabis	Weapons	Clandestines	Medicines
573 Kg	10 kg	3 pcs	144 People	5 Seizures

At the Kapshtica BCP, 2 relic weapons, of the 15th century, originating from France, were seized. The Customs Administration is one of the leading institutions in the preservation of movable cultural objects, bearers of historical memory and national identity.






### Money movement control

As a priority in the fight against organized crime and terrorism, in the framework of measures against money laundering and terrorist financing, and in implementation of the recommendations of the "Moneyval" committee, controls over the movement of physical money (Cash), through BCP, the structures of the Anti-Trafficking Directorate, in cooperation with other structures of the Customs Administration as well as other national and international law enforcement bodies, have increased the controls in these points, in order to identify and prevent cases of cash movement by criminal groups. The achieved results are reflected in the following tables.

### Cases of cash seizures / non-declarations at BCP

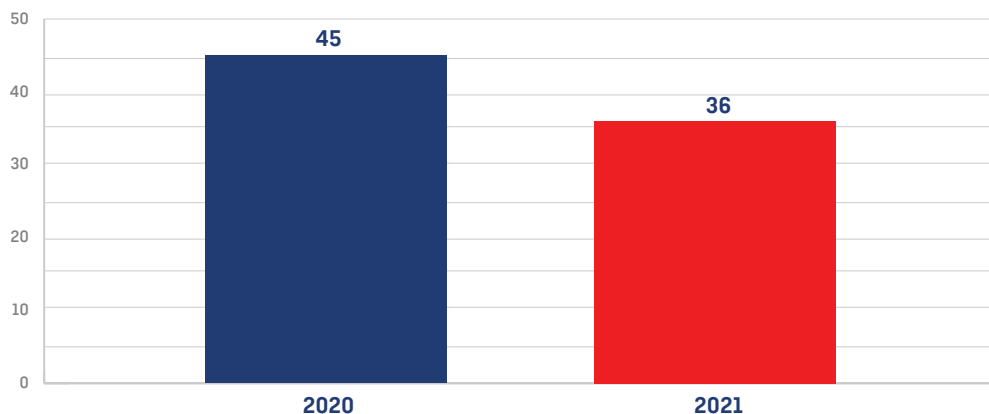
In 2021, during the controls exercised by the Customs Administration at the BCP, a total of 36 cases of Non-Declaration of Monetary Values were ascertained. Below, they are divided by Land / Sea / Air border check points:

			
2021	11	5	20

### Seized amounts according to BCP

				Total
2021	GBP 89,160 EUR 32,000 USD 33,100	GBP 208,410 EUR 96,540 ALL 82,500	GBP 94,210 EUR 1,090,155 ALL 342,000	GBP 391,780 EUR 1,218,695 USD 33,100 ALL 424,500

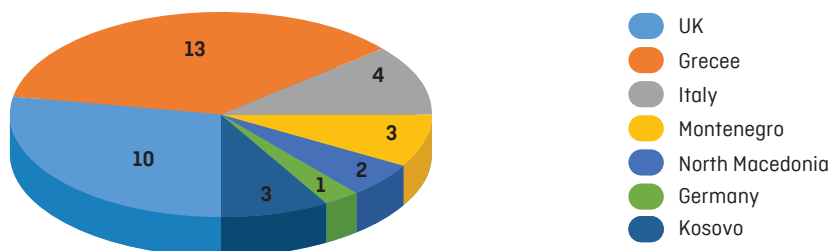
### Cases of CASH seizures in BCP



In 2021 there is a decrease in cases of seizures and evidence of Suspicious Activity Reports (RAD). This decline has come as a result of anti-Covid 19 measures, as many states have restricted free movement in their territories.

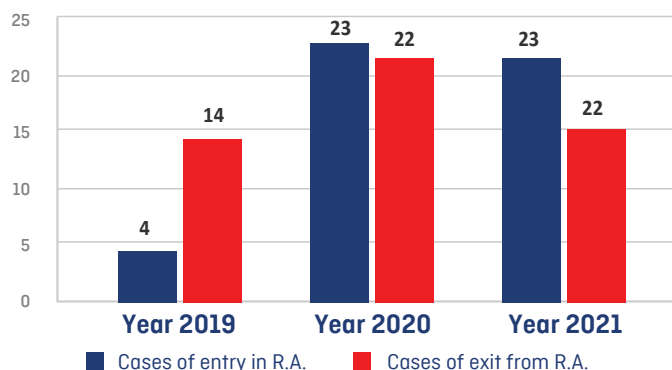
### Cases of seizures according to BCP

The largest number of Cash seizures / non-declarations was made at Mother Teresa International Airport, with amounts ranging from GBP 12,000 to GBP 42,000.



### Cases of cash seizures in the entry/exit

#### Cash seizures 2020-2021





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## **Intellectual Property Protection**

In accordance with the mission of the Directorate for the Protection of Intellectual Property (DPIP) on the protection of intellectual property rights for goods entering and/or leaving the Albanian territory, at the request of right holders, DPIP has processed 110 applications for the protection of intellectual property rights.

Activities of an operative nature led to the seizure of 1800 pairs of sports shoes and 33,360 liters of insecticides which turned out to be infringing on intellectual property rights and their destruction was decided according to the legislation in force.

## **Customs Investigation**

The Directorate of Investigation is the structure that deals with the investigation of customs administrative violations and the conduct of investigations into criminal offenses in the customs field. Coordinates the fight against fiscal fraud, security issues and undertakes active operational actions in the field to investigate and crack down on criminal activities in the customs field.

Based on information from other structures of the GDC, or on issues initiated mainly after the collection of data and the performance of preliminary actions, on the basis of reasonable suspicion of committing criminal offenses in the field of customs to avoid customs duties or excise duties, the Directorate of Investigation has prepared and sent to the Prosecution 27 criminal reports / referrals.

## **Directorate of Information, Risk Analysis and Monitoring**

The mission of Risk Analysis is to achieve the fairest possible balance between facilitating large-scale trade while maintaining control over the international movement of goods, persons and means of transport, through the adoption of risk management techniques to determine the existence of its largest areas of exposure as well as to effectively allocate the resources available to manage these risks.

During 2021, the cooperation and exchange of information has increased in order to crack down on customs violations, based on bilateral agreements with all counterpart customs, especially with neighboring ones.

## **Directorate of Excise And Post-Customs Clearance Controls (Aposteriori)**

Customs procedures enable customs declarations to no longer be subject to documentary and / or physical controls at customs terminals; rather the control to take place at a second moment in warehousing facilities by shortening the time of customs clearance of goods and stay of vehicles at customs terminals. This mode of selection for control, gives a bigger breath to the legitimate business by transferring the time of exercising customs control, from the customs premises to the premises of the economic operator and reducing the costs and the time of processing the goods for them.



Customs Officials

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# International cooperation



The Albanian Customs Administration (ACA), as part of the international customs network and law enforcement agencies, during 2021 has been intensively involved in increasing its role and presence through international participation and representation of its structures in activities aimed at protecting economic interests and national security as well as increasing technical and administrative capacities. These commitments consist mainly of:

- Participation and management of activities and projects of administrative cooperation and technical assistance funded by the European Union (EU) and other international organizations; (EU Twinning, ITMS, Comobilion, Horizon 2020 + BB - SW, NCTS, Q. Thane, DG. Taxud, Hunter - Border Force, EXBS etc)
- Participation in regional, European and international cooperation initiatives and programs (WCO, SELEC, Olaf, CEFTA, CEFTA WEEK, Open Balkan etc)
- International representation of the institution (bi / multilateral meetings, Turkey, Greece, Kosovo, Balkan 6, meetings with Kosovo of the joint group of experts resulting in the signing of 3 agreements)

## 1 Projects with the European Union and the World Bank

The General Directorate of Customs (GDC) has participated and / or benefited in the following projects:

### **Twinning Project AL 17 IPA FI 02 20**

On November 24, 2020, the implementation of the Twinning Project funded by the European Union began with the object "Support to the Albanian Customs Administration in relation to the implementation of the EU Customs Code and increase operational capacity in the field of counterfeit goods". The project was implemented by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance and the Albanian Customs Administration for a period of 12 months with a total fund of 400,000 Euros. The main purpose of this project was the approximation of customs bylaws and tertiary legislation with the latest EU standards, as well as the implementation of an electronic system in order to protect intellectual property rights.

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Within the project,

- 13 EU Regulations have been analyzed, prepared preliminary drafts for amending the Customs Code and Implementing Provisions.
- 14 draft Guidelines have been prepared in accordance with EU guidelines.
- A Training Strategy has been drafted, which enables the best education of customs officials.
- INES + System has been installed and made operational, a new electronic system for managing cases of infringement of intellectual property rights, which will have a positive impact on improving the results of ACA in this field.
- 122 ACA employees at the customs center and branch were trained.

### **World Bank (WB) (Regional) Project “Facilitation of Trade and Transport in the Western Balkans”**

Under this Project worth 17,600,000 Euros (or 20,000,000 USD) Customs benefits from components worth ~ 12 million USD, which include:

- National Single Window.
- New Computerized Transit System (NCTS).
- Establishment of the Joint BCP in Qafë Thanë.

The expected completion date of these projects is December 15, 2025.

### **Project "Mobility in the Ionian Coast - COMOBILON"**

Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program "Greece-Albania 2014-2020", aims to improve the border infrastructure, within which the Albanian side benefits from the sub-project 'Construction, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation of the BCP Qafë-Botë with an indicative budget ~ 2.3 million Euros. The implementation of this project has started in 2019 and is currently in the final stage of preparation of technical specifications, for the equipment that will be procured with the funds of this project.

### **IPA 2013/024-190 - “Development of Integrated Tariff Management System Modules” (ITMS)**

The objective of this project, with an EU budget of 2,400,000 Euros and co-financing from Albania in the amount of 150,000 Euros, is to strengthen the institutional capacities of the Albanian Customs Administration through:



- Development of a computerized integrated tariff management system (ITMS) with compatible TARIC (European Union integrated tariff) modules including all EU systems (tariff, mandatory origin information, mandatory tariff information, European Customs Inventory of Chemicals, etc)
- Support in project management, quality assurance, technical training.
- Supply of hardware for ITMS.

The project is expected to be completed within 2023. Currently ACA, in cooperation with the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) and EU subcontractors, are working on the implementation of software for various ITMS modules, to be completed within the first half of 2022 and the servers (hardware) that will be used for the implementation of the system are provided.

#### **Project “Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners” (PEN-CP)**

The PEN-CP program can be described as ‘a new network for promoting customs innovation and an on-line platform, providing valuable innovation mediation services’.

The aim of PEN-CP is to establish a network of customs practitioners, which facilitates the translation of research and innovative ideas and requirements for customs security into practical solutions, technologies and process improvements, which would help customs administrations overcome the challenges of modern customs management. customs and border security.

#### **DG TAXUD program “Customs 2020”**

Participation in the DG Taxud Program "Customs 2020" has given our Administration the opportunity to cooperate in areas of common interest with the national customs administrations of the EU and the European Commission. This Program provides concrete assistance and knowledge transfer to customs managers and other responsible staff.

In November 2021 ACA was invited by DG TAXUD to participate in the new Program of DG TAXUD "Customs Program" for the period 2021-2027, as a continuation of the program "Customs 2020". Meanwhile, internal procedures with the Ministry of Finance and Economy for the approval of this agreement are underway.

#### **Trade Release Study of measuring the time of customs procedures for goods**

This study was conducted with the support of the World Bank (IFC) in the period 8-14 November 2021, in the land BCP Qafë - Thanë, Morinë and Kapshtica, in the internal customs branches Tirana, Fier and Elbasan, as well as in the Port of Durrës (Ferry terminal). The study was conducted in accordance with the methodology set by the World Customs Organization.

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The study consists of a comprehensive approach, which:

- Improves the efficiency of customs administrations and other government agencies involved in the movement of goods in customs procedures of import, export or transit.
- Enables customs authorities and other stakeholders to explore synergies and work together to address national concerns or obstacles which represent a source of delays or problems in the movement of goods.
- Creates better conditions for accelerating the international movement of cargo and thus reducing transaction costs for traders and encouraging domestic and international investment.
- Increases opportunities for the expansion of national productivity, leading to improved country's international competitiveness.
- Supports government macroeconomic initiatives through growth and development, by strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of cross-border agencies.

Undertaking such a study provides the customs administration with a basis for measuring actual performance in relation to border procedures, by identifying obstacles and making it possible to explore solutions to address problems.

### **The 'Hunter' project of the UK Border Force in Albania**

The Border Forces Project in Albania focuses on technical assistance in identifying unknown threats, improving border security and enhancing opportunities for regional cooperation on risk analysis and intelligence.

### **EXBS program (Export Control and Related Border Security)**

The General Directorate of Customs has a very good cooperation with the EXBS Program (Export Control and Related Border Security).

As part of this collaboration on April 08, 2021, Representatives of the EXBS Export Control and Border Security Program, at the US Embassy in Tirana, donated 6 laptops to the Anti-Trafficking Directorate.

From March 29 to April 1, 2021 GDC participated in the online meeting organized by the World Customs Organization and the EXBS Mission of the US Embassy, on "Summary of Customs Operations Practices for Enforcement and Confiscation" on the implementation of controls on trade of strategic goods.

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On June 23, 2021, the 13th meeting of the Southern Border Initiative (SBI) of the EXBS Program took place in Tirana, while on October 20, 2021, the 14th Meeting of the Southern Border Initiative (SBI) of the EXBS Program was held online. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Customs Authorities and the Border Migration Police from 4 countries: Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia.



On September 13-16, 2021, representatives of the GDC participated in the Seminar held online on the Classification of Goods.

## 2 Cooperation with international organizations

### Cooperation with the World Customs Organization

Albania has been a member of the World Customs Organization (WCO) since August 1992, and since then actively participates in WCO Council meetings, committees and subcommittees, benefiting from the best experiences of developed countries and implementing those in our customs system. Albania is a party to several WCO conventions and instruments, such as the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Codification and Description System and the revised Kyoto Convention on the simplification and harmonization of customs procedures. Also, ACA for years contributes with its information in the preparation of WCO reports. During 2021, numerous ACA representatives have participated in numerous WCO activities, such as:



- Meetings of the Customs Cooperation Council and meetings of various committees /subcommittees (such as: Standing Technical Committee [Session 231/232], Harmonized System Committee [Session 67], Technical Committee of Origin [Session 39], Capacity Building Committee [Session 12], Management Committee of the Revised Kyoto Convention [24th Meeting], Law Enforcement Committee [Session 41], Technical Committee on Customs Valuation [Session 52], Subcommittee of Integrity [Session 20], etc.).
- Various conferences (such as: PGS Global Conference, Conference on updating the Passenger Prior Information Guide, Second Global Conference on Origin, Conference on the "Hercules III" Program, Conference of Customs Managers of the Europe Region ", etc.).
- Various operations (such as: Armstrong VII, IDEAL X; PANDORA VI, DEMETER VII, PATHFINDER, STOP II).
- Webinars and working groups (such as: Webinars on Human Resource Management in times of crisis, webinars on COVID-19 vaccines, SAFE Working Group, etc)

## Cooperation with CEFTA

The year 2021 marked the 15th year of operation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), where the main achievements in which ACA has contributed, are:

- Amendment of rules of origin, making them more flexible for the benefit of economic operators.
- Finalization of the recognition of the programs of Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) at the level of experts for North Macedonia, Serbia and Moldova.
- Operation of Green Corridors, to guarantee faster and safer circulation of essential goods.

ACA has participated in a series of meetings and working groups at the level of experts in the fields of rules of origin, customs tariff, risk management, AEO, etc.

The year 2021 also marked the beginning of the unveiling of the SEED + platform, as a platform that will support the exchange of documents (certificates) necessary for the release of goods. The main achievements of CEFTA, under the leadership of North Macedonia were presented at the closing conference (December 16, 2021) of the Management of North Macedonia entitled "CEFTA - 15 years making trade happen".

**A great support for the realization of CEFTA priorities is provided in the framework of cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.**

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GIZ has supported regional activities focusing on supporting regional economic integration, proper implementation of the regional risk management strategy, raising awareness of operators about the benefits of AEO or drafting legal monetary declarations at the border, customs investigation manuals and anti-smuggling or support for training and providing dogs and practical exercises for customs dogs, etc.

## **Open Balkan**

The 'Open Balkan' is a political and economic initiative through which the three member states (Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia) aim to increase trade and cooperation, as well as to improve bilateral relations. The goals of Open Balkan are also to provide greater opportunities for student exchanges and to encourage the integration of the member states in the EU. In the framework of facilitating/eliminating barriers in trade between the parties, ACA has participated and played an active role in a series of meetings and activities held for this purpose, in conclusion of which two agreements for mutual recognition of the programs of authorized economic operators (AEOS) were signed between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia with the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania.

On November 25, 2021, the Albanian Parliament approved the law "On the ratification of the Agreement on the establishment of joint BCP between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia", in implementation of which, the work will continue for the drafting of technical protocols for the implementation of the agreement for the BCP of Qafë Thanë, which will be restructured in the framework of the [regional] Project of the World Bank (WB) "Facilitation of trade and transport in the Western Balkans".

## **Other cooperations**

ACA has been active in the framework of cooperation with other institutions and international organizations where as the most important can be mentioned the cooperation with SELEC, UNODC, EXBS, OLAF, International Monetary Fund, OSCE, Steering Committee for SEED Maintenance, etc.

In cooperation with HMRC, the ICE CONNECT platform for the integration of customs and tax risk management is being constructed. HMRC has also supported the development of several activities under the WCO framework such as Operation LYNX, training on the use of the nCEN platform, etc.)



From the meeting with the General Director of DG Taxud, EU, Mr. Gerassimos Thomas

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### 3 European Integration Process

Albania is in the stage of opening negotiations for the fulfillment of the obligations of membership in the European Union, and the General Directorate of Customs, as an institution, is not only directly involved in giving its contribution in Chapter 29 "Customs Union", but it is also a contributing institution in Chapter 1 "Free movement of goods", Chapter 7 "Intellectual Property Law", Chapter 16 "Taxes", Chapter 30 "Foreign Relations" and Chapter 33 "Financial and Budgetary Provisions".

In this context, the obligations of the GDC have been met, in relation to:

- Contribution to the Progress Report for Chapter 29 "Customs".
- EU-Albania Subcommittee "Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation" and "Justice, Freedom and Security".
- National Plan for European Integration (NPEI) 2022 - 2024.
- European Integration Partnership Platform for Chapter 29.
- Drafting of the Negotiating Position for Chapter 29 "Customs".
- Monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the European Commission for 2020 for Chapter 29 "Customs".

The customs staff has participated in the trainings of the Seasonal School of Enlargement Negotiations (RESPA) and in the trainings organized within the project "Support to the EU Integration Process of Albania", which supports the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in the European Integration process.



# Welcome to Albania



Durrës Customs



# Priorities of the Customs Administration for the year 2022



Priorities	Strategies	Goals	Activities	Deadlines
<b>1. Facilitation of Lawful trade.</b>	<b>1.1</b> Transfer of controls from the customs areas to the premises of operators/ entrepreneurs.	<b>1.1</b> Reduction of the duration of customs procedures by 7%.	<b>1.1.1</b> Increase in processing number in the green channel from 20% to 35%. (from 347 for 2021 to 400 for 2022).  <b>1.1.2</b> Joint awareness campaign with the IMF to increase the number of AEOs.  <b>1.1.3</b> Reduction of processing time of the customs declaration. (from an average of 88 min per procedure to an average of 80 min per procedure).  <b>1.1.4</b> Paperless- Provision of all possible services online. (From 34 that are already in 40 services. 41 Services in total).	<b>1.1.1</b> 31.12.2022  <b>1.1.2</b> 31.05.2022  <b>1.1.3</b> 31.12.2022  <b>1.1.4</b> 30.06.2022 Depends on National Agency of ICT.
<b>2. Increase in the effectiveness of Customs Control.</b>	<b>2.1</b> Harmonization of customs facilitation procedures with the intensity and effectiveness of controls.	<b>2.1</b> Development of an automated module for the exercise of control. (in cooperation with NAICT).	<b>2.1.1</b> Analysis of the effectiveness of risk profiles and the review, depending on the result of the analysis. (analysis of about 200 risk profiles).	<b>2.1.1</b> 31/07/2022

		<p><b>2.2</b> Reinforcement of the supervision of production, stocking and sale of excise products.</p>	<p><b>2.2.1</b> Extent of risk analysis to EAD. (Excise Accompanying Document).</p> <p><b>2.2.2</b> Exercise of all controls (100% of them) profiled to increase the range of controlled entities (unless control is required by operators or customs branches).</p> <p><b>2.2.3</b> Establishment of the violation management module by electronically entering the minutes, the evaluation act, and the decision of the chairman until the end of the appeal process in the system.</p>	<p><b>2.2.1</b> 31/03/2022</p> <p><b>2.2.2</b> 30.04.2022</p> <p><b>2.2.3</b> 31.01.2022 (workflow and terms of reference).</p>
		<p><b>2.3</b> Increase in the effectiveness of the a posteriori control.</p>	<p><b>2.3.1</b> Improvement of control methodologies related to the Excise and a posteriori, and staff training for their implementation.</p>	
<p><b>3. Improvement of The Risk Analysis System and the Strengthening of Excise Products Supervision.</b></p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Reorganization of all resources in order to assess risk and strengthen the supervision.</p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Redistribution of more resources for the purpose of excise and a posteriori administration.</p>	<p><b>3.1.1</b> Structure review and the implementation immediately after approval.</p> <p><b>3.1.2</b> Raising the awareness of operators and reduction of problems in modus operandi.</p> <p><b>3.1.3</b> Exercising joint controls with:</p>	<p>Depending on the approval.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

			<i>Responsible State Inspectorate (RSI), General Directorate of Taxes (GDT), General Directorate of Metrology (DPM), Marking Concession Company (MCC), National Agency of Natural Resources (NANR), State Police Directorate (SPD)</i>	
<b>4. Increase in the Income.</b>	<b>4.1</b> Strengthening of the control of domestic excise products and the strengthening of the a posteriori control.	<b>4.1</b> Increase in the revenue of 2022 to the extent of economic growth (4% increase compared to 2021).	<b>4.1.1</b> Exercise of more efficient and effective profiled controls in support of the objective.	<b>4.1.1</b> 31.12.2022.
<b>5. Intensification of cooperation with key partners and the approximation to EU standards.</b>	<b>5.1</b> Cooperation with the EC through DG TAXUD.	<b>5.1</b> Obtaining support from DG TAXUD for the approximation of Albanian customs standards with EU standards.	<b>5.1.1</b> According to the agreement that will be signed with DG TAXUD.	
	<b>5.2</b> Cooperation with the International Monetary Fund.	<b>5.2</b> Creation of the Medium Term Revenue Growth Strategy (MTRS 2022-2026) in the field of risk analysis, a posteriori control for excise products, mainly domestic production.	<b>5.2.1</b> According to the work plan that will be agreed with the IMF.	
	<b>5.3</b> Cooperation with the World Bank.	<b>5.3</b> Cooperation to increase the capacity of the customs administration in e-commerce.	<b>5.3.1</b> According to the agreed program with the WB.	



**Customs Houses and Branches**

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Durrës Customs