

**ON THE ACTIVITY
OF THE SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY
COMMITTEE
AND DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING
THE GOOD GOVERNANCE, ANTI-CORRUPTION
AND RULE OF LAW REFORM**



**SPC - Periodic Bulletin 02
July 2024**



**SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE
“FOR DEEPENING REFORMS IN GOOD GOVERNANCE,
RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION FOR ALBANIA 2030
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION”**

During July 2024, the Special Parliamentary Committee “for deepening reforms in good governance, anti-corruption, and the rule of law for 2030 Albania in the European Union” continued its preparatory work and started the first phase of drafting the analytical document (analysis), which will be prepared by the Group of Experts, already established and functional in this Committee.

The Special Parliamentary Committee and the Parliament’s experts at the Technical Secretariat have prepared the concept paper for the guiding structure of the analytical document, according to three main pillars: i) Good Governance, ii) Anti-Corruption, and iii) Rule of Law.

Additionally, during this period, work has been done to create the public communication platform and develop the website dedicated to the work of the Special Parliamentary Committee, so that the entire process is as transparent and institutional as possible, involving all actors and stakeholders.

During July were sent invitations for cooperation and engagement, and also processed their responses, to 75 institutions and organisations in the country, including **7** independent institutions (established by Parliament and reporting to Parliament); **22** civil society organisations (based on the NPOs register, registered in Parliament); **9** public and non-public universities (mainly those having Law and Economics Faculties); **8** main organisations representing the business community; **6** executive law enforcement agencies; **12** institutions of the justice system and **11** central government institutions, primarily those considered by the EU to be at high risk of corruption, aiming to involve them in this process since its initial phase.

Considering the relevant register that the Special Parliamentary Committee administers, it turns out that by July 31 the number of professionals proposed to be engaged with the Commission, in its established structures, is approximately **110 persons in total**.

The High-Level Experts Group (HLEG) and the Technical Secretariat (TS) are already functioning within the Special Parliamentary Committee. This team consists of about **70 proposed experts** (54 experts proposed as part of the HLEG and 16 as part of the TS) coming from independent institutions, civil society, lecturers of the Law and Economics faculties of public and non-public universities, and organizations from the business community.

The Special Parliamentary Committee has decided in its meetings to extend a public invitation for **international expertise** to be involved in this process, contributing with documents produced by them, offering advice and providing expertise as freelance consultants and in other capacities.

In the last days of July, invitations were sent to over 50 international organizations, international experts, institutes, faculties, and others.

- The Special Parliamentary Committee, to ensure a broad participation in this process of international expertise, in addition to publishing on its website, has sent a public invitation for collaboration to approximately 25 well-known international organizations with headquarters in Albania (14) and abroad (11), such as the Council of Europe, OSCE, USAID, FATF, UNDP, World Bank, SIDA, Austrian Development Agency and others. These organizations have been invited to become part of this process by assisting and monitoring the process, to contribute with concrete documents (studies, reports, analyses, etc.), and also provide advisors as external consultants to the HLEG. Invitations for collaboration have been sent to two important international assistance missions in our country, such as JUSTAL and OPDAT. Additionally, three academic institutions have been invited for expertise: the College of Europe, the Law Studies Department of the University of Salento, and the German “Hertie School” University.

Additionally, invitations have been sent to around **18 foreign experts from various countries** (such as experts and professors from universities in the USA, Germany, Italy, Austria, Croatia, the United Kingdom, etc.), who are internationally recognized experts and have previously collaborated with Albanian institutions in fields related to the work of the Special Parliamentary Committee.

- At the same time, based on the decision of the Special Parliamentary Committee, invitations have been sent to about **13 Albanian citizens** living and working abroad, who have distinguished and internationally certified experience as experts or professors at foreign universities, such as in the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, etc., to participate in this process as external consultants.

Meetings of the Special Parliamentary Committee

During July 2024, the Committee held a total of 3 meetings, during which the following preparatory and organizational decisions were taken:

- **The third meeting of the Special Parliamentary Committee, held on 10 July 2024**, adopted three decisions, as follows:

- *To send a request to the parliamentary opposition groups registered in Parliament for the nomination of representatives/experts to the 3 working subgroups established within the Special Parliamentary Committee, as well as to the Technical Secretariat.*

- *To send a collaboration invitation to all institutions, bodies, and organizations operating within the justice system and performing functions in the field of justice, to be represented with experts/professionals within the Experts Group. Representatives of these institutions will form a subgroup of experts and will engage in drafting the analysis for the rule of law in the justice field, in drafting*

the relevant action plan, and suggesting proposals for eventual legal and institutional changes. The invitation for collaboration was addressed to the High Judicial Council, the High Prosecutorial Council, the High Inspector of Justice, the General Prosecutor's Office, SPAK (Special Prosecutor's Office), BKH(National Investigation Bureau), the School of Magistrates, the Supreme Court, the Justice Appointments Council, the Appeal Chamber, and the National Chamber of Advocacy.

- *To send a public invitation for collaboration to the audiovisual media, printed media, online media and electronic media, which focus on issues related to the three main areas of the Commission's work. The invitation is for them to express interest in actively involving in the activities of the Special Parliamentary Committee and the Experts Group, to provide their eventual contributions to this process.*

On 19.07.2024, the Special Parliamentary Committee held its fourth meeting, during which was introduced and approved the guiding structure of the analytical document, according to the three main pillars: i) good governance, ii) anti-corruption, and iii) the rule of law. More specifically:

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The analysis for the first pillar, that of good governance, will be built on the basis of five key components, which relate to:

- *Transparency in the public administration reform;*
- *Effectiveness and integrity of the public administration;*
- *Accountability of the central and local governance institutions;*
- *Provision of digitalised services for the citizens;*
- *Effectiveness and transparency in managing public finances.*

ANTI-CORRUPTION

The analysis of the second pillar, that of anti-corruption, will focus on five key components, which relate to:

- *the prevention and fight against political corruption, for high-level political officials, elected representatives, and the political parties themselves;*
- *the prevention and fight against corruption in the sectors with the highest risk for corruption in central and local governance, as well as in the free market, competitiveness and the private sector;*
- *the functioning and efficiency of institutions that fight corruption, conflict of interest and the abuse of public finances;*
- *the prevention of illegal financial flows and money laundering;*
- *the establishment of an integrity-based society." .*

RULE OF LAW

The analysis of the third pillar, that of the rule of law, will focus on three main components, which relate to:

- *The lawmaking, oversight and coordinating function of the Parliament of Albania;*
- *The fundamental human rights and freedoms;*
- *The consolidation of the Justice Reform. (The analysis for this component, according to the methodology the Special Parliamentary Committee has approved, will be conducted along with representatives of the justice institutions, for the respective areas of responsibility, with the consultation, monitoring, and support of international assistance missions).*

The guiding framework and main guiding sources for the analytical document will be: the current legal and constitutional framework, as well as the recommendations and key findings of the progress report and the *screening* report for the first cluster 'The fundamentals,' the roadmaps approved in December 2023, 'Rule of Law' and 'Public Administration Reform,' the European Commission's report on Albania, the strategic and inter-sectoral documents approved by the Albanian government, the commitments of the Albanian government in international organizations, various reports from political and international organizations such as GRECO, MONEYVAL, DASH, OGP, Transparency International, OECD, SIGMA, etc., as well as reports and analyses from civil society and other business organizations.

On 26.07.2024, the Special Parliamentary Committee held its fifth meeting, in which was adopted the draft decision 'On the approval of the composition and leadership of the High-Level Expert Group and the Technical Secretariat'.

More specifically, the decision provides that the Special Parliamentary Committee should:

1. Administer and approve the register with the proposed names of experts and the Technical Secretariat, as well as other data sent in response to the invitation for cooperation from the entities interested to engage and contribute to this process.
2. Administer and approve the list of proposals for experts in the High-Level Experts Group and for the Technical Secretariat, based on the data of the register administered as above mentioned, in paragraph 1 of this decision.
3. Approve the composition of the subgroups of the High-Level Experts Group (the HLEG subgroups), organized according to the 3 activity areas of this Commission, proposed by independent institutions, civil society, public and private universities, and the business community.
4. Approve the composition and leadership of the Technical Secretariat, which will operate in support of the HLEG subgroups, organized according to the 3 activity areas of this Commission."
5. Approve the list of experts and professionals proposed by state institutions (law enforcement executive agencies, institutions at risk of corruption, ministries and their subordinate institutions), who will be attached to and involved in this process, supporting the High-Level Experts Group, according to their requests.

It was held the first meeting of the High-Level Experts Group and of the Technical Secretariat, which will operate under the Special Parliamentary Committee 'for deepening reforms in good governance, rule of law and anti-corruption for 2030 Albania in the European Union.

On 30 July was held the first meeting of the High-Level Experts Group and of the Technical Secretariat, which will operate under the Special Parliamentary Committee 'for deepening reforms in good governance, rule of law and anti-corruption for 2030 Albania in the European Union.

The meeting, convened by the chair of the Special Parliamentary Committee, Mr. Fatmir Xhafaj, was attended by around 60 experts and representatives from independent institutions, organisations and civil society, the academic world, representatives from the business community, etc., who will engage in the 3 areas of the Committee's activity.

The process is focused in and supported by the experts' direct contribution and engagement in drafting:

- i. The analytical document/analysis,*
- ii. The National Action Plan, based on the analysis findings, and*
- iii. The proposal of respective legislative and institutional solutions and measures*

During the meeting, the chairman of the Committee, Mr. Xhafaj, provided detailed information on the goals, objectives and methodology to be followed for the implementation of the first phase of this process. He also answered to the questions and suggestions from the experts present in the meeting.

The Committee members and the Parliament staff followed up with specific meetings with the experts of the three pillars, explaining in more details the methodology and the expectations for each pillar, as well as guiding and supporting them in their internal organization for the ongoing process.

What is expected to be the Committee's agenda for August?

All the documents submitted and administered by the Special Parliamentary Committee, which constitute the main framework on which the analytical document/analysis will be drafted, are made available for the High Level Experts Group, divided into 3 subgroups: i) good governance, ii) anti-corruption and iii) rule of law.

The experts are the ones who will independently and autonomously work throughout this process, which will be monitored and assisted by the international expertise. During August the experts groups will engage in reading, scanning and analysing the available documents and then identify the respective assessments, findings, problems and recommendations for the three areas on which the Special Parliamentary Committee works.

The Special Parliamentary Committee



SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

**"FOR DEEPENING REFORMS IN GOOD GOVERNANCE,
RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION
FOR ALBANIA 2030 IN THE EUROPEAN UNION"**