

Local online workshop “Building urban economic resilience during and after COVID-19 in Tirana, Albania”

15 February 2021, 9-11 a.m. CET

Concept Note

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic is far more than a health crisis. It is affecting societies and economies at their core. While the impact of the pandemic varies from country to country, it has increased poverty and inequalities at a global scale and made achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development even more urgent. To support countries in their efforts to address the crisis, the United Nations developed a UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, which highlights the need to “empower local governments; scale up community and city level resilience” as core components for recovery. To implement this framework, the UN Regional Economic Commissions (UNECE, UNECA, UN ESCWA, UN ELCAC, UN ESCAP) together with UNCDF and UN-Habitat are working on a joint project: “Building Urban Economic Resilience during and after COVID-19”. This project promotes the “recovering better” principle by developing measures for planning and building resilient cities, advocating for an approach that is multi-hazard, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder; promoting the green and circular economy; overcoming inequalities; and assisting the most vulnerable groups.

Tirana is one of the pilot cities in the project. A local online workshop focusing on Tirana is organized with the following objectives:

- To provide information on the project to the Tirana City government and stakeholders and to receive a feedback from the participants on how the project could be implemented in the city;
- To familiarize the participants with the global diagnostic and planning tool on building urban resilience for local economic and financial response and recovery in the context of COVID-19, developed within the project and to be applied in the city of Tirana;
- To support strengthening the capacity of the local government and local stakeholders by introducing the key concepts and issues of urban (economic) resilience and the UN ‘building back better’ approach.

This first project workshop will be followed by a series of interviews with representatives of the national and local governments, NGOs, academia and private sector.

Agenda

Date: 15 February 2021

Location: Virtual / Zoom

Time: 9–11 a.m. CET

Languages: Albanian and English
(with simultaneous translation)

Meeting Type: Stakeholder engagement & visioning workshop

Agenda Items

Time:

09:00 – 09:15

Opening and welcome note

Ms. Fiona McCluney, UN Resident Coordinator in Albania

Ms. Gulnara Roll, Secretary to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

09:15 – 09:35

Presentation of the Urban Economic Recovery and Resilience Diagnostics Tool

Mr. Dmitry Pozhidaev, Regional Programme Advisor, United Nations Capital Development Fund

09:35 – 10:05

Panel Session 1. Social and economic changes in the life of the city of Tirana caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

Discussion questions:

- What are the main impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Tirana? Do you expect the impact to differ between Tirana neighbourhoods (urban or peri-urban)?
- How will the Tirana city government mitigate the multidimensional impact of COVID-19? Has the city developed recovery strategies?

Panellists:

Mr. Dorian Hatibi, Director of Social Housing, Municipality of Tirana

Ms. Vjola Tarka, Specialist, Department of the Supervision Secretariat for Reconstruction, Municipality of Tirana

Ms. Migena Kokeri, Director of Protection and Social Inclusion, Municipality of Tirana

Ms. Esmeralda Byberi, Director of Free Trade Zones, Foreign Investments and Diaspora at the Municipality of Tirana

Ms. Zana Vokopola, Director, Urban Research Institute

10:05 – 10:15 *Virtual coffee break*

10:15 – 10:45 *Panel Session 2. Activities in the city of Tirana supporting urban resilience during and after the COVID-19 pandemic*

Discussion questions:

- What are the main urban spatial challenges (urbanization, planning, housing, infrastructure, environment, etc.) that Tirana faces and what possible solutions can be applied?
- What is the role of city-level plans and strategies in promoting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and urban economy resilience?

Panellists:

Ms. Doris Andoni, Head of Housing Policy, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Albania

Ms. Jola Sado, Specialist, Department of Economic Urban Development, Municipality of Tirana

Ms. Frida Pashako, General Director of the Department of Territorial Development Control and Planning, the Municipality of Tirana

Mr. Ledjo Allkja, Spatial Planning Expert, Co-PLAN, Polis University

Dr. Elvana Zhezha, Country Programme Expert / National Liaison Officer, Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia, United Nations Industrial Development Organization

10:45 – 11:00 *Conclusions by the city government and UNECE*
