The Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance (CSDG) is an independent, non-profit non-governmental organization established in November 2010 and based in Tirana. CSDG's mission is to improve democracy, governance, and policymaking in Albania by generating evidence-based research, monitoring public attitudes and opinions, and promoting informed citizen engagement. CSDG believes in the necessity of a radical transformation of the democratic processes in Albania and the need to create new ways of governing and policymaking at the local and national level.

The Center is committed to developing programs that link democracy and governance to the concerns of citizens. The CSDG approach begins with identifying issues of importance and then conducting rigorous research that serves to protect and foster debates at all levels of society.

(1) **Democracy Program** focuses on empirical research on democratic political processes and institutions (elections, voters, electoral system, political parties, parliament, government, and more). It focuses on the relationship between democratic ideals and norms and democratic practice through social scientific analysis based on normative theories of democracy. The purpose of the program is to ensure that citizens are at the center of politics and not in special individual, group or party interests. The aim of the program is to promote political accountability, democratization of political parties, improving the integrity of electoral processes and democratic culture, space and values.

(2) **Governance Program** focuses on the analysis of government institutions and processes, policy issues, and governance challenges. It focuses on examining the five basic principles of good governance: transparency, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. The governance program contributes to tackling corruption by promoting good and sustainable governance. It identifies issues and problems and proposes recommendations aimed at improving government performance, informing public debate, and providing policymakers with expert analysis and ideas to ensure better governance.

(3) **Security Program** which conducts in-depth research and critical analysis on security issues, security sector reform and governance, security and human rights. It combines rigorous research and policy consulting and acts as a bridge between academia and practice. CSDG has a dedicated staff of five and a number of collaborators in Albania and abroad who design and implement projects.
DEMOCRACY PROGRAM

Project: Support the implementation of justice reform through monitoring and evaluation of Special Prosecution (SPAK) and Special Courts

The aim of the project supported by Open Society Foundation for Albania was to strengthen the independence, impartiality and effectiveness of the new justice institutions in the fight against corruption and organized crime and contribute to the proper implementation of justice reform.

Roundtable Discussion, 23rd July 2021: “The performance effectiveness of Special Prosecution Office and Special Courts for corruption and organized crime”

On 23rd July 2021 was organized the Roundtable Discussion “The performance effectiveness of Special Prosecution Office and Special Courts for corruption and organized crime”. The purpose of the roundtable was to present main findings and recommendations of the Interim Assessment Report for the period between January to June 2021, which was carried out following the previous performance assessment of Special Prosecution Office and Special Courts for corruption and organized crime for the year 2020.

The assessment was based on a new methodology, which assess the performance of the Special Prosecution Office and the Special Courts based on three main dimensions such as: productivity, efficiency and relevance. The participants considered the methodology a very effective and important tool in providing a more comprehensive performance assessment of institutions for combating corruption and organized crime performance, in order to improve the reporting practices by these institutions.
Monitoring Report “Implementation of the Communication Strategy by the new justice institutions”


In the monitoring of the first quarter of 2021, the annual monitoring conducted in 2020 was used as a comparative basis to see the positive or negative performance of the institutions themselves.

The full report can be accessed in the link below:


Publication of the quarterly Newsletter SPAK Monitor

SPAK Monitor No. 11 and 12 addresses issues related to the progress of the judicial review process in corruption and organized crime cases registered in the Special Courts for Corruption and Organized Crime, by conducting an assessment against some key indicators.

This assessment served to identify and analyse main key features in the quality and effectiveness of judicial response to corruption and organized crime cases.
GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Project: “Encouraging whistleblowing in public and private sector and increase public outreach through online engagement tools and social media platforms”

The main aim of the project was to raise awareness on the need to fight corruption and promote the practice of whistleblowing, to foster positive attitudes to whistleblowing and promote it as a viable method of resisting corruption.

This project was implemented by CSDG during the period from October 2020 to June 2021, in the framework of the regional project “Whistleblowing in Action: Exposing and remedying corruption in Southeast Europe through supporting whistleblowers and strengthening free speech rights”, supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

This project aimed to: a) Support and advise whistleblowers; b) Investigate and publicize whistleblower disclosures and retaliation complaints; c) Launch new and expand existing civil society campaigns; d) Develop and advocate for new and improved whistleblower protection laws; e) Ensure whistleblower laws are properly enforced and implemented; f) Raise public awareness of whistleblowing’s role in enhancing accountability and justice.

In order to meet the stated objectives:

- It was created a dedicated Blog Post in which were published on monthly basis insights, thoughts and stories related to the whistleblowing practice in Albania;
- There are produced and posted in social media informative and educational resources such as infographics; briefings and commentaries;
- There are promoted positive and successful whistleblowing cases through a special case studies section, in order to show different whistleblowing situations and provide relevant learning points.
SECURITY PROGRAM

Project: Conduct research to guiding P/CVE messaging in the Tirana municipality and support the Albanian CVE Center to developing research and strategic communication capacities

The overall aim of the project supported by Hedayah was to strengthen the capacity of the responsible institutions to the full implementation of measures 5 and 6 of the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, related to strategic communication in order to counter and prevent violent extremism.

The deliverables of the project included the development of three workshops which aimed to strengthen the capacity of the involved institutions as well as improve the processes and practices to formulate and communicate strategically messages that oppose and prevent violent extremism and the preparation of a research report.

Workshop 3: “A strategic approach to delivering P/CVE messaging and narratives in Albania”

CSDG organized on 28th January 2021 in close collaboration with the Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism the Workshop: “A strategic approach to delivering P/CVE messaging and narratives in Albania”.

The main goal of the workshop was acquiring knowledge on strategic communication in preventing violent extremism and developing a pilot project to be deployed for tactical purposes in the Tirana Municipality.
Research Report: Exploring the development of a strategic communication on P/CVE in Albania

The main output of the project was the preparation of a research report on exploring the development of a strategic communication for the prevention and fight against violent extremism in Albania.

This study analyses the latest trends with regard to the role of the Islamist propaganda in driving radicalization and violent extremism (VE) in Albania.

The full report can be accessed in the link below:

Project: Measuring citizens' attitudes towards security and justice in Albania

In its third edition of the Security Barometer, CSDG has joined the Western Balkans Security Barometer (WBSB) in its second edition to conduct an identical regional barometer in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia.

This edition was different from the two previous barometers, because it has taken a regional dimension by measuring not only the perception of Albanian citizens towards their institutions and security issues, but also their perceptions on regional cooperation and specifically the relations between Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia. The results of the WBSB supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) include four different reports for each country.

Albanian Security Barometer 2022 (four Reports)
Project: C1-EU-NPA - Improved Policy Debate and Accountability to Delivering on Fundamentals First, through the Establishment of Cluster One EU Negotiations Platform – Albania (C1-EU-NPA)

The general objective of this project supported by the Netherlands Embassy in Tirana and implemented by four organizations is to support Albania’s EU accession negotiations related to Cluster One chapters (fundamentals first) through improved policy debate and strengthened accountability and CSOs role in the process.

October – November 2021, Joint meetings with the participation of the relevant key stakeholders from target public institutions

Introductory meetings were held with public institutions, responsible for coordinating the chapters of Cluster 1, more specifically, with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Public Procurement Agency. Informal meetings were also held with the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration as well as representatives of the Office of the Chief Negotiator.

November 2021, Establishment of dedicated web-based communication channels for the dissemination of project activities and results/ Preparation of factsheets and infographics be aired through online means

The compilation and publication of periodical infographics on issues related to Cluster 1 has started. As a start, general analyses on the level of preparation of Albania in Cluster 1 chapters have been published according to the reports of the European Commission.
8th November 2021, Project introduction: “Improved Policy Debate and Accountability to Delivering on Fundamentals First, through the Establishment of Cluster One EU Negotiations Platform – Albania (C1-EU-NPA)”

This first event was organized, in cooperation with the Institute of European Studies, aimed to present the project and engage the academia in the process of negotiations with the EU with a focus on areas covered by Cluster 1.

15th November 2021, Roundtable Discussion between: media, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the Committee for European Integration

In cooperation with the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration, in the premises of the Albanian Parliament was held the 1st Roundtable Discussion "Improving Policy Debate and Accountability in Fulfilling the First Group of Negotiating Chapters (Cluster 1)", aiming to further inform the media and the public on the project.

The Roundtable served to demonstrate the joint engagement of governmental and non-governmental actors in the first group of negotiation process (Cluster 1) and in the integration process as a whole.