

# CCIFA Weekly News

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**Revue de presse hebdomadaire/Përmbledhja javore e shtypit /Weekly press review  
Activité hebdomadaire de la CCIFA /Aktiviteti javor i CCIFA /CCIFA Weekly activity**



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**Mr. Jean-Alain JOUAN-"GRAND MASTER"**

<http://president.al/?p=40176>

**PRESS CORNER**



Mr. Jean-Alain JOUAN

<b>Title</b>	<b>23.03.2017 The President of the Republic, H.E.Mr. Bujar NISHANI awards the "Grand Master" title to Mr. Jean-Alain JOUAN</b>
<b>Source</b>	Presidenca.al
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://president.al/?p=40176">http://president.al/?p=40176</a>
<b>Date of Article</b>	23.03.2017

On 21.03.2017, with the decree no. 10091, The President of the Republic, H.E.Mr. Bujar NISHANI, awards the "Grand Master" title to Mr. Jean-Alain JOUAN, with the motivation: *"For valuable contribution to the successful implementation with the world advanced standards of one of the country's major processes, which has facilitated the free movement of Albanian citizens, equipment with biometric identity documents through the establishment of national network of registration offices and distribution and establishment of a National Personalization Center".*

## ***A LA UNE CETTE SEMAINE /HIGHLIGHTS***

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### **Albania's Jan-Feb trade gap shrinks 7% on higher exports**

Albania's trade deficit decreased to 40 billion leks (\$317.4 million/295.6 million euro) in the first two months of 2017, down from 43 billion leks a year earlier, due to a rise in exports, the statistical office, INSTAT, said on Friday. Exports rose 14.7% year-on-year to 39 billion leks, whereas imports added 2.6% to 79 billion leks. In February alone, exports grew 11% on the year to 20 billion leks, while imports rose 4.8% to 44 billion leks. Italy remained Albania's main trading partner in the first two months of 2017, absorbing Albanian exports of 21.1 billion leks and providing imports of 24.9 billion leks. Other major importers into Albania were China, Turkey, Greece and Germany. Albania exported mainly textiles, footwear, minerals and fuels, and construction materials. The country imported predominantly machinery, equipment and spare parts, as well as food, beverages and tobacco.

(Scan TV)

### **Government approves 2018-2020 fiscal framework**

Ministry of Finances has completed its Macro Financial Framework 2018-2020 which aims to lower the country's fiscal deficit from 2 percent in 2017 to 1.8 percent of the GDP in 2018 and 0.6 percent in 2020. The policy aims to provide an optimal level of investment to around 4.6 percent of GDP (including the Regional Development Fund, as well as investments in the energy sector financed from the state budget) and pave the way to lowered public debt until 59.6 percent in 2020. According to this document, the government aims a positive primary balance and growth for the years 2018-2020, respectively by 1 per cent by 2018 from 0.7 percent targeted in the 2017 budget; .1.8 percent in 2019; and 2.3 percent in 2020. This fiscal consolidation will enable the level of public debt to GDP continue the downward trajectory started in 2016. Public debt is expected to fall to around 66.3 percent of GDP in 2018, 62.8 percent in 2019 and further to 59.6 percent in 2020, as the document says. According to the policy paper, public investment in the short and medium term are expected to be kept at least 4.6 percent of GDR which is important to feed aggregate demand in the short term and to shift economic growth at a level higher within medium and long term.

## ***A LA UNE CETTE SEMAINE/HIGHLIGHTS***

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### **SEE economies to attain 3% avg annual GDP growth by 2019**

The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW) said it expects the economies of Southeastern Europe (SEE) to attain average annual GDP growth rates of up to 3% for the 2017-2019 period, as private consumption and increasing investment will continue to be the main growth drivers over the forecast horizon. In some SEE countries, such as Romania, Albania and Kosovo, the annual economic growth levels in the period between 2017 and 2019 may be even higher than 3%, WIIW said in its Spring 2017 Forecast Report for the region of Central, East and Southeast Europe (CESEE), posted on its website. Longer-term foreign direct investment (FDI) trends hold particular promise for the Western Balkans, while in Romania the prospects in the field are also good, especially in the automotive sector, the WIIW said. Nevertheless, in the Western Balkans, any confrontational interventions by Russia and uncertainties as to developments in Turkey could prove quite disruptive, and the influence of the EU and USA in the region could decline, WIIW adds.

(Source: Seenews)

### **Albania eyes railway line with Greece**

Albania is negotiating with Greece its plans to built a new railway line connecting the two countries. The project is in the feasibility study stage and is expected to be adopted in April. The new initiative is being discussed between the Ministries of Transport of the two countries and the total cost of this project amounts' to about 1 billion euros. At a meeting Monday, the Parliamentary Committee of Law approved the ratification of the loan agreement between the Republic of Albania and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for financing the project "Albanian Railways - Rehabilitation of the railway line Tirana - Durres and construction of the railway line to the International Airport Tirana." The works for this railway line is expected to start by September of this year and the deadline for completion of the project is around 3 years. The loan agreement for the construction of the railway line Tirana-Rinas-Durres is worth 36.8 million euros. The project envisages rehabilitation of existing railway, and building branch to the airport. Works are expected to start in September this year, and is projected to be operational railway lines within three years. Director General of Transport and Infrastructure Policy at the Ministry of Transport, Thimio Plaku said that the government foresees ambitious investments in railway sector. "Last week we started a feasibility study on the railway Durres-Rrogzhdine-Elbasan-Librazhd-Pogradec and Lin. Also we have a grant of 4.5 million euro recently adopted which will be carried out for the implementation of the railway project Vora - Hani Hoti. We have applied together with the Greek Ministry of Transport for a feasibility study on the rail link between Albania and Greece," Plaku said. The project on the construction of Tirana-Rinas-Durres has a total cost of 91 million euros, with 36.8 million euro loan from EBRD, 32.9 million euros grant from the Berlin agreement within the European Union projects for the Western Balkans, while the rest will be funded Albanian government.

Source: (Balkanweb)

## **Collections from Income Tax Amounted to Lek 1.620mln**

According to the Ministry of Finance's report on fiscal indicators, income tax revenue amounted to Lek 1.620 million or Lek 143 million more in January compared to the Lek 1,477 million of the same period in 2016. Referring to the report on fiscal indicators are projected to amount to Lek 29 200 million. The main influence was the increased awareness of taxpayers to declare the real transactions in imports and sales. The action plan against informality oriented towards controls based on risk analysis and continuity of processes, the simplification of declaration procedures and establishing a permanent communication with business operators were among the influential factors. All foreign or domestic companies registered in the commercial register and pay the VAT are subject to income tax. The General Tax Directory has been able to collect some of the unpaid tax obligations from 2016; through the realization of orders blocking bank accounts. A further 34% were sent notifications by the tax directory, warning them of impending security measures if they do not pay their obligations, resulting in the collection of 4.5 million lek; while only 7% of debts were able to be recovered simply by general notification. Recovery values also include over 1 million lek from seized assets and 462,202 lek gathered from the orders to block business products at the custom points. According to the General Tax Directory, the amalgamation of unpaid tax obligations in the last 2-5 years has resulted in the total amount of debt registered for 2016.

(Albanian Daily News,5)

## **Albania's StarTek seeks permit to build 2 small hydro power stations near Tirana**

Albanian construction and real estate management company StarTek has applied for a permit to build two hydro power plants with an installed capacity of 2 MW each, the energy ministry says. The company proposes to build both power stations, Selma and Dolmja, alongside Tirana's Erzen river, according to two separate statements published on the ministry's website on Monday. An eight-day period for the potential filing of objections to StarTek's proposal has been set, the ministry said. Tirana-headquartered StarTek was established in 2003.

(ATA)

## **New status for mining industry employees**

The government is drafting a special status for the mining industry employees. Ministry of Energy and Industry (MEI) announced Wednesday that the request came from the miners and ex-miners retired, and it is being discussed between experts since several months in order to conclude in the preparation of a contemporary legal draft. According to MEI, one of the main requirements that all unions have presented is related to the minimum wage of current workers of the mine, which is required to be at least Lek 70,000 per month. On this salary, the draft also provides rewards for seniority. In cases of underground accidents or cases of full disability, miners seek pension for their spouses, when not employed, or pension for their children up to 18 years old. The draft provides for a minimum pension increase up to Lek 30,000 and a decrease in underground working years, on which it is calculated the retirement. Beneficiaries of this status have the right to perform twice a year free medical checkup and in case of diseases they will receive free medical treatment, according to the Ministry of Energy. The beneficiaries of this status will be, current and former employees who are retired miners and the total number of the beneficiaries is estimated at around 8,000 people, MEI said.

(Scan TV)

## L'ACTUALITÉ

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### **Albania's EU-harmonised annual inflation slows to 3.7% in Feb**

Albania's annual EU-harmonised consumer price inflation was 3.7% in February, decelerating from 4% in January, the country's statistical office, INSTAT, said on Thursday. February inflation was driven mainly by a 8.1% rise in the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) of food and non-alcoholic beverages, which have the largest weight of 38.02% in the consumer basket. Compared to January, Albania's HICP rose 1% in February. Albania's non-HICP added 2.2% on the year and ticked up 0.5% on the month in February, INSTAT said earlier this month. INSTAT started publishing inflation measurement through the HICP last month. The HICP measures consumer price inflation in the euro area. It is compiled according to a methodology that has been harmonized across EU countries to ensure that the data for one country can be compared with the data for another.

Source: Scan TV

### **Number of foreign visitors to Albania up 4.5% in Jan-Feb**

The number of foreign national who visited Albania in the first two months of the year rose 4.5% year-on-year to 358,478, the statistical office, INSTAT, said on Thursday. Visitors who entered Albania for the purpose of recreation represented 13.5% of all foreign nationals, or 48,269, INSTAT said. By comparison, 29,665 foreign nationals visited Albania for recreational purposes in January-February 2016, or 8.6% of the total number of foreign visitors, INSTAT said citing data from the state police directorate. In February alone, Albania was visited by 185,721 foreign nationals, up 9.5% on the year. Out of the total, 30,652 came to Albania for recreational purpose. The largest part of foreign citizens in February, or 33.9%, came from Kosovo, followed by Macedonia with 16.1% and Greece with 15%. Most of the foreign visitors entered Albania by land - 83.6%; 13.5% arrived by air and 2.9% came by sea.

Source: ATA

### **Alleviating Measures Needed if Minimum Wage Increases**

TIRANA - Raising the minimum wage would have a significant impact in alleviating social inequality and improve the lives of people in need in Albania.

In an interview with SCAN TV, economy expert Arben Malaj claimed that increasing the minimum wage, studied in many countries, impacts economies in different forms.

Currently, the minimum wage for the calculation of social contributions is Lek 22 thousand per month, and it remains unchanged since several years. According to government sources, the level of the minimum wage is expected to reach the range of Lek 23,000-24,000, but the move has caused many concerns from the business community.

The proposal on the growth of mandatory minimum wage, based on which the contributions of employees can be paid has sparked debates as the business is against.

Gjergji Gjika, head of the Albanian Chamber of the Textile Industry, a sector which counts over 100 thousand employees, says that there are arguments against the growth of minimum wage.

Meanwhile, the minister of Finance says that this modest growth doesn't have any impact in the competition of businesses. According to him, this movement can be done once the minimum living standard has been legally defined.

The debate for the increase of minimum wage started after the government increased minimum wage by 26% for public service employees. According to the government, minimum wage for public sector will not be any less than Lek 37.5 thousand or 280 euros a month.

The Minister of Finance says that the growth of minimum wage doesn't affect business competition.

Source: ADN

## 'Le Monde'

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'Le Monde', Article for Albanian Alps

TIRANA - The renowned French newspaper "Le Monde" dedicated a long article to the Albanians Alps and the life in this beautiful part of Albania. This article was the result of collaboration between this "Le Monde" and "La Balaguere" blog journalists that visited these areas during a trip to Albania.

"Le Monde" offers to the readers all over the world a detailed description of the Albanian Alps, part of the Dinaric Alps, focusing on Kelmendi area, the images of the notorious bunkers located all over the country, and locals' traditional dresses.

"The traditional alcoholic drink of Raki should be tasted along with a cup of coffee, at least that what my guide Rifat says to me," writes one of the journalists that visited Albania. The journalists also visited Lepusha, known as the place of hundreds of spirits.

"All these bunkers were constructed during the communist era as a result of Enver Hoxha's paranoia and continuous fear from an attack by the Yugoslavian army," narrates this article, which ends with the description of an old lady that stands in her house door watching the foreign visitors.

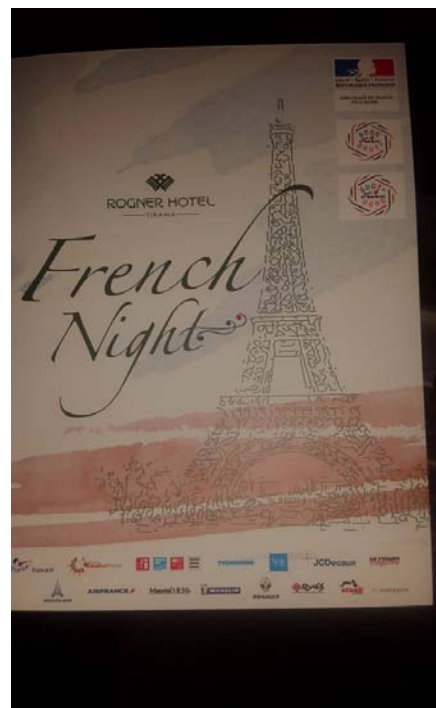
Source: ADN



## Mais aussi...

Journée internationale de la Francophonie, Ministère étranger, Tirana

<https://www.facebook.com/AlbanianMFA/videos/1264789890302514/>



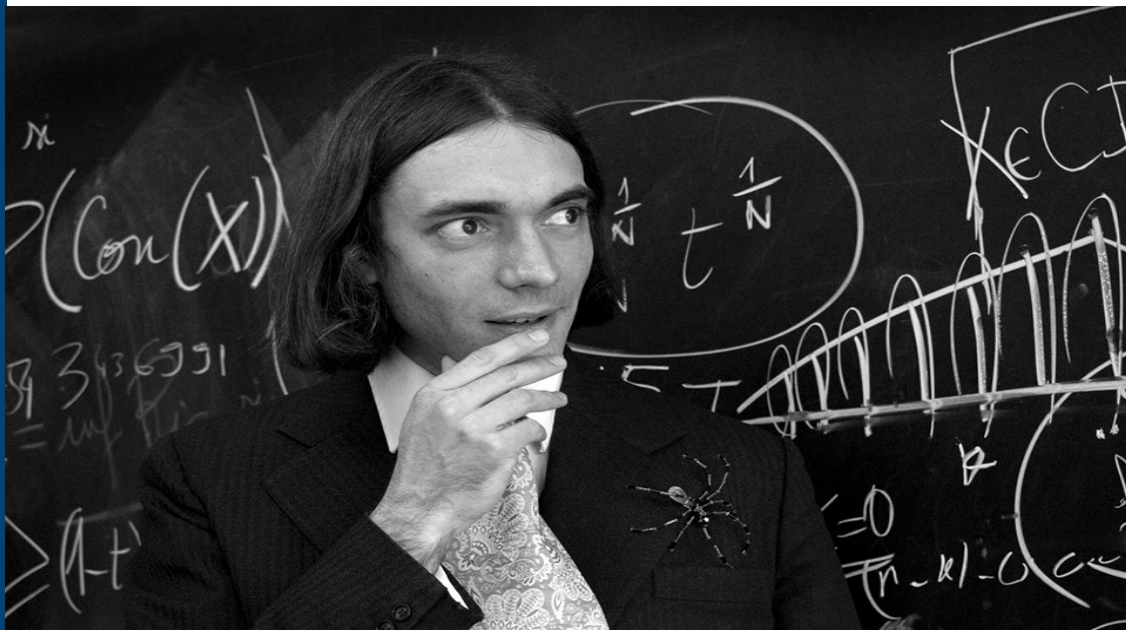
**Forumi i 3-Te Ekonomik Francophon ne Shqiperi, 23 Mars 2017**



**Forumi i Grave Francophon, 20 Mars 2017**

à bientôt/soon...

Cedric Villani - Arti dhe matematika



"Askush nuk mund të jetë matematicien nëse nuk e ka shpirtin e një poeti », thoshte Sonia Kovalevskaya. Megjithatë duket se logjika matematike nuk mund t'ia lerë vend intuitës, gjenisë krijuese, bukurisë. Por në fakt është krejt e kundërta, edhe vetë matematicienët, të cilët janë të obsesionuar nga nocioni i elegancës, e konsiderojnë veten si artistë, madje si poetë. Le të ekspolorojmë pra lidhjet midis këtyre dy universeve."

Cedrik Villani ka lindur në vitin 1973 në Brive-la-Gaillarde dhe i ka kryer studimet në Tulon dhe në Paris. Midis viteve 2000-2010 ai ka qenë kërkues shkencor në Shkollën e Lartë të Lionit dhe ka qenë shumë herë profesor i ftuar në Shtetet e Bashkuara të Amerikës. Më pas ai ka qenë profesor në Universitetin e Lionit, laureat i Medalies Fields në vitin 2010, drejtor i Institutit Henri Pointcare dhe rishtazi është emëruar edhe si një nga shtatë këshilltarët e grupit të nivelit të lartë që drejton Këshillin Shkencor të krijuar nga Komisioni Europian.

27 Mars, 6 PM - 7 PM

Place: Reja.al; Bulevardi Deshmoret e Kombit, Tirana, Albania



# Les sources de cette semaine/The Source

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**Albanian Daily news**

**Scan TV**

**News 24**

**Gazeta Shqip**

**ATA/WEB**

**Gazeta Dita**

**Gazeta Sot**

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