

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ECONOMY AND INVESTMENTS (NCEI)

REGULAR MEETING

Prishtina, 21 April 2026, 14:00 – 16:30

The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Albin Kurti, and it was moderated by Artan Mehmeti, Head of the Secretariat of the National Council for Economy and Investments. The meeting was actively attended by 31 people, including 25 members of the NCEI, as well as about 10 observers. Participants were representatives of local business associations, foreign organizations, and state institutions in Kosovo.

I. Opening remarks by Prime Minister Albin Kurti, Chairman of the NCEI

In his introductory speech, he greeted and thanked the participants. He emphasized the importance of public-private dialogue as a key mechanism for cooperation between institutions and the private sector. He underlined that, despite the lack of some formal meetings, communication and cooperation have continued through the engagement of the Secretariat and relevant parties.

During the discussion, Mr. Kurti mentioned the positive economic developments in Kosovo, including economic growth in 2025 (3.6%), the increase in foreign investments and remittances, as well as their role in maintaining economic stability. He also emphasized the progress in advancing legal reforms and creating a more favorable environment for business, including a competitive tax regime.

Mr. Kurti spoke about concrete support for the private sector, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, through investments in production, certification and promotion in international markets. He also mentioned the ratification of international agreements and their benefits in economic development and European integration.

Special attention was paid to the Growth Plan and the financial support from the European Union, as an opportunity to accelerate reforms and strategic investments.

Finally, he emphasized the need for greater focus on the concrete implementation of reforms, in order to improve the business climate, increase investments and citizens' welfare. He considered that dialogue is an important mechanism for addressing challenges and achieving concrete results.

Sergiy Maslichenko, Head of EBRD, stressed the importance of the public-private dialogue platform as an effective initiative for cooperation between the public and private sectors, positively assessing the results achieved so far. He underlined the importance of resuming activities and continuity of work through sectoral meetings and focused discussions even outside formal formats. He also stressed the importance of organizing high-level discussions to further advance cooperation.

In the end, he expressed gratitude for the cooperation with SECO and Swiss partners, and for the commitment of all parties, encouraging the continuation of constructive discussions.

II. Summary of discussions

Artan Mehmeti, Secretariat of NCEI, spoke about the Law on Public Property and its interaction with other sectoral laws related to the use of public property. He stressed that, although the law was necessary for the creation of a unified framework, uncertainties have been identified during the implementation regarding procedures, institutional competencies and harmonization with other relevant laws.

Mr. Mehmeti emphasized that these uncertainties directly affect legal certainty, the duration of procedures and the willingness of businesses to invest, especially in sectors such as energy and mining, where long-term access to public property is required.

He also spoke about the issue of decision-making on the use of public property, where currently the Government decides for property leasing for periods of up to 15 years, while the Assembly decides for periods of up to 99 years. This was considered an issue that could affect long-term investments, so it would be useful to discuss it.

He underlined that the Ministry of Justice has established a working group for amending and supplementing the law, creating a momentum for discussing and addressing challenges. As options, he proposed to amend the only law in force on public property, or to harmonize it with other relevant laws through the issuance of a common legal package.

Mazllum Baraliu, External Consultant, KCCI, greeted and thanked the attendees. He stressed that the Law on Public Property has caused serious problems in practice, including blockades, misinterpretations and major obstacles for businesses. He went on to emphasize that hundreds of businesses have been negatively affected, especially due to the conflict and overlap of this law with other sectoral laws such as those on forests, mines and water.

He underlined that the current system is "hybrid" and creates duplication of competencies between institutions, bringing legal uncertainty and obstacles to investments, including strategic investments. This situation has caused significant economic damage and has affected the decline in business activity, even leading some of them to bankruptcy.

Mr. Baraliu said that a particular concern was the non-implementation of an administrative instruction of the Law on Forests, which was discussed between institutions and businesses, which is seen as a short-term solution for overcoming the current blockades.

Finally, he called for urgent solutions through the immediate implementation of the administrative instruction and the harmonization of the Law on Public Property with the sectoral laws, respecting the principle that special laws should have priority in implementation.

Genc Nimoni, Deputy Minister of Justice, greeted and thanked the attendees. He explained that the Law on Public Property has been initiated since 2016 and has been adopted in order to create a sustainable framework for the administration of public property. However, challenges and uncertainties have been identified during implementation, mainly due to the interaction with other sectoral laws, some of which were later adopted. He emphasized that the Ministry has addressed these issues through legal interpretations and interventions to unblock situations, although some problems remain, especially regarding procedures and deadlines.

He underlined that in this framework, a working group has been established for the amendment and supplementation of the law, with the participation of relevant institutions and contributions from stakeholders, including the business community, and that the process is in the final phase, with the final draft expected to be concluded soon.

He also spoke about the commitment to harmonize the Law on Public Property with other relevant laws and the invitation to all parties to contribute with comments until the finalization of the draft.

Besnik Vasolli, GKCC, greeted and thanked the attendees. He emphasized that the Law on Public Property has created significant challenges, especially due to the lack of harmonization with other laws adopted later. He praised the document prepared by the Secretariat for clearly identifying the problems and challenges in implementation.

He underlined that businesses, including members of the Chamber, have been affected by legal ambiguities and the complexity of procedures, while emphasizing the need for a more comprehensive approach in addressing these issues. As the main recommendation, he proposed the expansion of the working group to include representatives of the private sector and other stakeholders, in order to design a more sustainable and harmonized solution. He also suggested reviewing international practices (such as the case of Croatia) for simplifying decision-making procedures.

He emphasized the urgency for solving the existing problems and the readiness of the Chamber to actively contribute to the reform and consultation process.

Artan Mehmeti, Secretariat of NCEI, spoke about the issue of recognizing natural losses of food products for tax purposes. He underlined that these losses are inevitable during transportation, storage and sale, but are currently not clearly recognized in practice, creating a tax burden for businesses even for goods that do not really exist.

He clarified that the legal basis for the recognition of these losses exists in the tax legislation, but there is no by-law that would define the norms and concrete procedures for implementation. This situation negatively affects businesses, increasing costs, promoting informality and reducing the competitiveness of local producers in relation to the region.

He pointed out that according to preliminary analyses, losses of food products could reach values of 20–31 million euros per year, while the tax burden on these losses is estimated from 3.16 to 4.75 million euros based on 2024 data and different scenarios of loss rates.

He also mentioned the practices of countries in the region, such as Croatia, where losses are partially recognized according to the links in the supply chain. He requested a commitment from the Ministry of Finance for drafting bylaws and dealing with this issue, including the possibility of engaging professional expertise.

Hartim Gashi, PePeKo, greeted and thanked the attendees. He emphasized that the non-recognition of natural losses of food products continues to be a significant burden for local producers, negatively affecting their competitiveness in relation to the region.

He said that an increased problem in recent years is the practices of tax inspections, which have led to numerous cases of litigation between businesses and the tax administration, and that this situation creates costs and burdens for both businesses and public institutions.

Mr. Gashi mentioned one of the main concerns is the lack of standardization in the recognition of losses, leaving room for subjective interpretations and discretionary decision-making by tax officials or businesses themselves. He requested that the issue be urgently addressed through the issuance of by-laws, in accordance with the existing legislation, in order to create clear and standardized rules. He underlined that businesses prefer institutional solutions and not confrontation through court proceedings. He emphasized that this issue has also been raised in meetings with the relevant institutions, and a solution is expected in the near future.

Hekuran Murati, Minister of Finance, explained that it is planned that the work continues through a working group and the drafting of a by-law (administrative instruction), which will determine the manner and extent of recognition of natural losses of products. He emphasized that losses are currently recognized in principle, but require documentation and verification by

tax inspectors, which creates a procedural burden for businesses and opens up space for discretion in assessment. As a solution, he mentioned the possibility of simplifying the procedure by setting fixed loss rates: automatic recognition according to certain percentages. He also emphasized that the delays in dealing with this issue are also related to the lack of functional institutions during the past year, while now it is expected that with the functionalization of the Government, consultations and finalization of the instruction will continue. He reiterated that the aim is to simplify tax procedures and ease the burden for businesses.

Mentor Hyseni, Director of TAK, emphasized that after meetings with the German Chamber and representatives of the agriculture sector, a working group has been established in cooperation with Kosovo Customs to address the issue of recognizing natural losses of products. He also emphasized that information and expertise have been collected from the parties involved, and that the relevant material is at an advanced stage and ready for finalization as soon as the institutional procedures are concluded. The goal is for the process to move without delay towards approval.

He underlined the need for standardization of the rules, in order to avoid the subjective judgment of tax inspectors and the uneven treatment of businesses and said that the solution aims to be based on clear and verifiable criteria for documenting losses. He reiterated the commitment to the rapid finalization of the process and to the creation of a fairer and simpler system for businesses.

Artan Mehmeti, Secretariat of NCEI, concluding the discussion on these two issues, he summarized the commitments highlighted during this meeting. In this context, it was stated that: 1) The Ministry of Finance will continue the work for the issuance of the relevant act regarding the recognition of natural losses; and 2) The Ministry of Justice will continue the procedure for the revision of the Law on Public Property. In this context, Mr. Mehmeti also expressed his readiness, in the capacity of the NCEI Secretariat, to contribute with the necessary expertise in this process, as well as to facilitate continued constructive discussion towards an appropriate solution.

Mimoza Kusari Lila, Minister, MIET, greeted and thanked the attendees. Mrs. Kusari Lila spoke about the temporary measures for basic products in cases of market destabilization. She emphasized that the law has returned after the developments related to the decision of the Constitutional Court and the crisis caused by the global price increase after the war in Ukraine.

She explained that the draft law provides for mechanisms for the imposition of temporary measures such as ceiling prices and limitation of trade margins in cases of sudden price increases. These measures will be based on a defined methodology and will be implemented by an independent board of five members, three of which are outside the institutions and are elected by the Assembly.

She underlined that some provisions of the previous draft have been removed, as they are covered by the existing laws on domestic trade and anti-dumping measures. She said that the duration of the measures is limited to the period of market destabilization, up to about 60 days.

She emphasized that the purpose of the law is to create a legal basis for intervention in exceptional situations of price increase and not general market control. The draft law is currently in parliamentary procedure and is expected to pass the second reading, while in parallel it will proceed with the creation of the board after its approval. The process was conducted with an accelerated procedure, but with the involvement of stakeholders, including businesses and relevant organizations.

Mrs. Kusari Lila underlined that Kosova Invest continues to function with its recruitment regulation and processes, while the Kosovo Agency for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (KAIE) is in the final phase of establishment, with the draft internal regulation and approval by the Government, as well as the transfer of functions from KIESA, is expected.

She highlighted the division of institutional roles that Kosova Invest, within the Office of the Prime Minister, focuses on the promotion of investments and exports with an executive role, while MIET has a role in policymaking. Support for small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as startups, remains within the agency at the Ministry. Additionally, she spoke about the creation of two new divisions within the agency, such as the Division for Women's Businesses and the Division for Startups, with the aim of strengthening entrepreneurship, including the promotion of dual education and the development of entrepreneurial culture from secondary education.

Mazllum Baraliu, Consultant, KCCI, explained that the current draft law leaves room for by-laws, which may create ambiguities and delays in implementation, as well as the risk of exceeding the legal framework. He raised concerns that these uncertainties could lead to litigation and potentially even international arbitration, with significant financial consequences for both the state and businesses. He also emphasized that the case of non-implementation of existing administrative instructions, which can escalate into court proceedings in the Supreme Court and abroad if it is not addressed in time.

He requested that, despite the advanced stage of the draft law in the Assembly, there should be additional space for debate and comprehensive consultation with the private sector, in order to draft a more efficient and enforceable law. He emphasized the importance of cooperation between the Government and the private sector, as well as the need to improve the implementation of laws, avoiding conflicts and different interpretations that often lead to court settlements.

Bujar Kelmendi, KCC, greeted and thanked the attendees. He clarified that from the early stage of the drafting of the draft law on market measures, the Chamber has expressed readiness to

support the law in the interest of citizens and economic development, while maintaining the balance with the interests of businesses.

He underlined that the Chamber has actively participated in consultations with the Ministry of Trade and the working group, providing detailed recommendations and opinions on the improvement of the draft law. He emphasized the importance of a clear and enforceable law, as ambiguities in enforcement mechanisms can create gaps and difficulties for both businesses and citizens. As the main recommendations, the Chamber requested:

1. Clear division of institutional competencies within the decision-making mechanism (board), to avoid ambiguities in initiation, decision and control;
2. Involvement of representatives of businesses, civil society and experts in the decision-making board to ensure more balanced and professional decisions;
3. Clear and concrete definition of items and prices in the law, to minimize administrative discretion (p.sh. specification of basic products and price standards).

He also emphasized that a well-structured, clear and harmonized law with the interests of citizens and businesses would facilitate implementation and ensure higher efficiency in practice.

Arieta Pozhegu, AWPk, greeted the attendees. She raised some key issues related to the forestry sector and the timber industry. She emphasized the lack of certification and sustainable management of forests in Kosovo, underlining the need for investments and a long-term plan for their certification and good management, as a practice applied in countries in the region. As an example, she mentioned the planning of biomass heating plants, emphasizing that regulation and organization is needed for its collection and use. According to her, this may create challenges in the implementation phase.

She emphasized that the local timber industry continues to depend on the import of raw materials, while the great potential of local forests remains untapped due to the lack of investments and integrated planning. It raised concerns about the lack of coordination in the use of biomass and wood waste, which creates difficulties for the development of sectors such as pellet production and biomass energy. She also emphasized the lack of promotion of Kosovo's industry in international markets and the need for a clearer strategy of representation and participation in exhibitions and B2B activities. She also called for a more active and equal role for chambers of commerce and business associations in institutional projects and decision-making.

Mrs. Pozhegu also spoke about the lack of empowerment of vocational education and the need for the promotion of vocational schools, in order to increase the skills of young people and prepare them for the labor market and manufacturing industry.

Mimoza Kusari Lila, Minister, MIET, informed that in the discussion on the draft law on temporary measures for basic products, the law has been drafted in full compliance with the decisions of the Constitutional Court and does not aim at permanent control of prices in the market, but only limited interventions in cases of market destabilization. She clarified that the imposition of measures such as ceiling prices or trade margins is activated only in exceptional situations and for a limited list of basic products, while the specific list of products such as: flour, oil, milk, etc. is determined and published by the independent board.

As for the structure of the board, she emphasized that it is designed to avoid conflict of interest, excluding representatives with direct business or political interests, in accordance with the Constitutional Court's judgment. The initiation of measures can be done by different parties, the decision-making belongs to the board, while the control is carried out by the inspectorate.

She also said that the board does not have a permanent operational function, but meets only as needed, significantly reducing administrative costs. The structure includes ex-officio members from the relevant institutions and members elected by a competition approved by the Assembly. It was reiterated that the purpose of the law is to manage crisis situations and protect the consumer, while preserving the principles of the free market economy.

Artane Rizvanolli, Minister, ME, underlined that the use of discretion in the implementation of public laws and schemes is important to allow learning from practice and continuous improvement of policies, although it was acknowledged that over-specification in the law can also create risks for inflexible implementation and difficulties in rapid changes.

As for the energy and biomass sector, she clarified that the new heating plants are not planned to be based exclusively on biomass, but only in combination with other sources. She emphasized the lack of institutional cooperation for the use of biomass from forests, despite the initiatives for inter-institutional coordination and subsidization of equipment.

Mrs. Rizvanolli also spoke about the progress in the liberalization of the energy market, where current prices are significantly lower than the initial forecasts, and emphasized that support measures for businesses have been implemented through schemes and trainings with institutional and international partners.

Finally, she spoke about the grant schemes for energy efficiency and sustainable equipment, implemented in cooperation with KIESA and development partners, with the possibility of re-announcement for businesses that have not met the criteria for technical reasons.

Armend Muja, Minister, MAFRD, emphasized that the potential of forests for biomass production and development of the processing industry is considerable, but so far it has not been fully exploited due to the failure of some tendering procedures. The reasons for these failures are

currently being analyzed and the drafting of a strengthened national forest program that will address the identified issues has been announced.

In relation to the presented study, several key shortcomings were identified:

1. Ambiguity in the division of competencies in the process of construction permits, where in some cases municipal procedures are incorrectly applied for land categories that require treatment from the central level, causing administrative delays.
2. Restrictions in areas declared national parks, where economic activities cannot take place without a new institutional decision to change their status.
3. The need for harmonization between the Law on Public Property and the Law on Mines and Minerals, especially on the issue of quarries and areas exempt from licensing, which have been defined by law and decisions since 2010.

It underlined the importance of inter-institutional coordination to avoid divergent legal interpretations and improve implementation in practice.

Albin Kurti, Prime Minister, Chairman of NCEI, underlined the importance of continuous communication between institutions and the private sector, underlining that the relevant ministers and institutions should be fully accessible to address the obstacles and uncertainties of businesses.

He assessed the private sector as the main driver of economic development and employment in the country, while highlighting as a short- and medium-term challenge the lack of qualified workforce, as well as the gap between the demands of the labor market and the vocational education system.

Mr. Kurti emphasized the importance of strategic orientation for increasing vocational education and improving the quality of vocational schools, as well as expanding their profiles. He also proposed the strengthening and gradual shift of the dual education system towards the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship, Trade and Innovation, in line with the practices of developed European countries.

Finally, Mr. Kurti said that the main goal is to align the education system with the needs of the labor market and to measurably increase the effectiveness of dual education in function of the economy.

Meeting concluded.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Representatives from public institutions:

1. Prime Minister, Chairman;
2. the Minister of Finance;
3. the Minister of Economy;
4. the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Development;
5. the Minister for Regional Development;
6. the Minister of Culture and Tourism;
7. the Minister of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade;
8. the Minister of Finance;
9. the Minister of Regional Development;
10. Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Justice;
11. Deputy Minister of Local Government Administration;
12. Representative of the Central Bank of Kosovo;
13. the General Director of the Tax Administration of Kosovo;
14. the General Director of Kosovo Customs;
15. Acting General Director of KIESA;

Representatives from chambers and business associations:

16. Representative of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC);
17. the Executive Director of the German-Kosovar Chamber of Commerce (GKCC);
18. Representative of the American Chamber of Commerce – Kosovo (AmCham);
19. the Executive Director of the Turkish Chamber in Kosovo;
20. the Chairman of the Board of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI);
21. the Executive Director of the Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo (AWPK);
22. the Executive Director of the Kosovo Metal and Renewable Energy Industry Cluster (KIMERK);
23. the Executive Director of the Association for the Processing of Fruits and Vegetables of Kosovo (PePeKo);
24. Director of the Kosovo Prefabricated Construction Cluster (PREFAB);
25. Director of the Kosovo Women's Chamber of Commerce - G7;
26. the Coordinator of the Women's Economic Forum;

Representatives from Embassies and diplomatic missions:

27. Representatives from the U.S. Embassy;
28. Representatives from the Embassy of Switzerland;

Representatives from international partners:

29. the Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Office in Kosovo (EBRD);

Other participants:

1. Office of the Inspector General;
2. Legal Advisor to the Prime Minister;
3. Additional representatives from the EBRD;
4. Representatives from the KDWW;
5. Representatives from CTIK;
6. Representatives from the Ministry of Economy;
7. Representatives from the Ministry of Justice.