

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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The following Information on State-trading has been received from the Ministry of Industry, Transport and Trade of the Republic of Albania.

INFORMATION ON STATE-TRADING

Definition of State-Trading Enterprise

Governmental and non-governmental enterprises, including marketing boards, which have been granted exclusive or special rights or privileges, including statutory powers or constitutional powers, in the exercise of which they influence, through their purchases or sales, the level or direction of imports or exports.

Comments

There are no State-trading enterprises in Albania as per the above definition.

There are a few Foreign Trade Enterprises which used to have a monopoly on import and export activities. This monopoly ended in 1991 with the passage of the Law on State Enterprises which gave all enterprises in Albania, both private and State-owned, the right to import or export freely and more generally proclaims the freedom of all enterprises to conduct their business in accordance with the principles of a market-based economy.

We underline that there are no governmental or non-governmental enterprises or marketing boards which have exclusive or special rights or privileges regarding import or export activities.

It is also important to note that the few Foreign Trade Enterprises that continue to exist, play a very limited role in terms of total trade.

During the first 6 months of 1996, imports amounted to US\$ 424.4 million, out of which the private sector imported US\$ 331.7 million or 78 per cent of total imports and the State sector imported US\$ 72.4 million or 17 per cent. It is important to note that of the 17 per cent imported by the State sector, only a small part was imported by Foreign Trade Enterprises (less than 2 per cent), of which the remainder was imported by other State enterprises for their own use, and not to be sold on the domestic market.

A similar pattern exists for the exports. During the first 6 months of 1996, total exports were US\$ 111.1 million, out of which the private sector was responsible for US\$ 89.2 million or 80 per cent, while the State sector accounted for US\$ 21.9 million or 21 per cent.

If we compare the figures for the same period of the previous year, we may see that for both imports and exports, the role of the private sector has increased by 72 per cent and the State sector has decreased by 45 per cent.

Questionnaire on State Trading

I. Enumeration of State Trading Enterprises

1. Does your country maintain enterprises covered by the provisions of Article XVII? If so, list the products or groups of products for which State enterprise is maintained or for which an enterprise has exclusive or special privileges.

Answer:

No. Albania does not maintain enterprises covered by the provisions of Article XVII.

As noted above there are no enterprises, neither State nor private, which have been given exclusive and special privileges regarding importing or exporting.

However, for reasons of transparency, we are listing here below the few remaining Foreign Trade Enterprises with a short description of their activity on import and export (no production) and their status:

Dependent on the Ministry of Industry, Transport and Trade:

1. Industrialimpeks

Main activity: import of raw materials for the textile industry, school and office articles, import and export of chemicals, etc.

Status: State-owned.

2. Makinaimpeks

Main activity: import of equipment, machinery, household equipment, spare parts and commodities.

Status: State-owned.

3. Artekspport

Main activity: export of handicraft articles, import of raw materials for clothing industry, other commissioning operations.

Status: In process of transformation into shareholding company.

4. Agroexport

Main activity: export and import of foodstuff and agriculture commodities.

Status: In process of transformation into shareholding company.

5. Albkoop

Main activity: import of electric and electronic household equipment. Other import and export activities including foodstuff and raw materials.

Status: State-owned.

Dependent on the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy

1. Minergoimpeks

Main activity: exports and imports of minerals and imports of raw materials for industry.

Status: 49 per cent privatized and 51 per cent State-owned.

Dependent on the Ministry of Construction and Tourism

1. Mandimpeks

Main activity: export of raw materials in the field of construction as marble, cement, etc. and import of construction materials, vehicles for the need of municipalities, etc.

Status: State-owned.

Additional Information

Currently, there are hundreds of private companies which exercise their activity and cover all ranges of imports and exports.

The Foreign Trade Enterprises do not have any monopoly or special rights in comparison to the private-owned companies. Even for tender bids organized by State institutions, all State-owned enterprises and private-owned companies freely participate in such tenders on the basis of open competition.

Finally, the privatization strategy covers all Foreign Trade Enterprises, and a part of them are already fully privatized or transformed into commercial shareholding companies.

The remaining Foreign Trade Enterprises will be privatized in time. In the event that some of them may remain State-owned for the needs of local institutions, the necessary explanations will be given.