

**SWOT ANALYSIS FOR THE
SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OF THE
CITY OF DURRËS**

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I. OVERVIEW

▪ City Brief

The City of Durrës is situated in the north-western part of the Western Plain of Albania, and is the administrative centre of the Durrësi Region which includes two districts, Durrësi and Kruja, totalling for 6 municipalities and 10 communes. It covers an area of 46,1 m², which consists of 10,67% of the total region area. The city of Durrës has a Mediterranean climate with an average temperature of -1 °C in January and +21 °C in July. The average annual rainfall figure is 989 mm.

The district of Durrësi is located along the Cape of Rodon at an average altitude of 6 meters, with a 68.1 km coastline, comprising mostly of sand beaches. The region is bordered north by Lezha, south and east by Tirana, and west by the Adriatic Sea.

▪ Historical Background

Durrës is one of the oldest Albanian cities. Its establishment dates back as far as 627 BC when *Corinthian* and *Coryra* (modern Corfu) colonists moved in the area of an ancient settlement of the Illyrian tribe Taulant. The city's name has changed from initially *Epidamnos*, to *Dyrrab*, and then *Dyrrachium* (the latter – according to mythology was the nephew of Epidamnos).

The city economic activity started flourishing almost immediately as the settlers began to produce metals, fabrics, leather, and ceramics. A shipyard was also constructed for building and repairing ships. Due to coins found in Illyrian ruins in the city, Durrës is considered as having first circulated the Illyrian *Drachma*.

In the year 229 BC, Durrës shifted under Roman rule, still maintaining a fair amount of autonomy, until the period of *Augustus*, around year 20 BC when it became a full Roman colony. However, during this period, the city gained a considerable political power and some of its inhabitants rose to senior administrative positions. It also became the terminal point for the *Via Egnatia* and also a linkroad to Greece via *Apollonia* and *Butrint*.

As the civil wars broke out in Rome at the end of the republican period, in 49 BC *Pompey* evacuated and established himself in Dyrrachium. During the 1st and 3rd century AD, the city faced a rapid development, becoming a prosperous trading and administrative center on the eastern Adriatic coast. Roads were constructed, libraries, an aqueduct (first constructed by Emperor Hadrian and then repaired by Alexander Severius). The city became the center of the New Epirus towards the end of the 3rd century and continued to do well despite the crisis that hit the rest of the Roman Empire in the 4th century. In 345 it was highly damaged by an earthquake and in 395 became part of the Byzantine Empire. It was during the period of Emperor Anastasius (491 – 518) that important

buildings were constructed, such as the hippodrome, the Basilica of Arapajt, and the two surrounding city walls (whose ruins can still be seen). The acropolis was reconstructed in the 7th century and in the 9th century Dyrrachium was considered a Byzantine center of power in the Adriatic.

Between the periods of 10th and 14th century, the city suffered a series of attacks from Bulgarians, Normans, Venice, Charles of Anjou (who founded the Kingdom of Arberia with Durrës as its capital), and the Serbs. During the 14th century, Durrës was the main Albanian city counting 25,000 inhabitants. In 1392 returned to Venetian rule, but in 1466 it was besieged by Mehmet II The Conqueror, though only conquered 35 years later. During the Ottoman rule the city's importance declined as not only it was wrecked by the continuing attacks but also due to poor Ottoman management.

Following the fall of the Ottoman Empire, on November 26th 1912, Ismail Qemali raised the flag of independence but the city was captured three days later by the Serbs who remained there until May 1913. On that year, the city became the capital of Albania (though for a short period of time) under the rule of Wilhelm Wied. The Austrian prince was assigned king by the European big powers of the time but the coming years faced Durrës with a series of uprisings, as the city was captured then by the Serbs, then the Austro-Hungarians, and then the Italians. In 1920, Durrës ceased to be the Albanian capital, as the government moved to Tirana. In the inter-war period it became the residence of King Zog, and following his good relationships with Italy, the city prospered and factories for the production of pasta, cigarettes and flour were constructed. After suffering another earthquake in 1926, the many city buildings and roads were reconstructed. In 1939 it was the center of the resistance against the fascist Italian forces. In 1943, the city was captured by the Germans who demolished the city harbour through an explosion.

In the post-WWII era, Durrës rose again to its role as one of the largest Albanian industrial cities, concentrating on mechanical and chemical engineering, food processing, plastics, cigarette production, wine, etc.

▪ Demographics

The Durrës Prefecture has a population of 303,742, where 49,37% are males, and the rest females.¹ The city of Durrës itself has a population of 195,160, and has marked an average population growth of 4.6% per year in the five years between 2001 and 2006². However, after the political aftermath of the early 90s, Durrës has been faced with large masses of population being settled in the informal zones, such as the one of Keneta, with more than 30,000 inhabitants³ having moved there from different parts of the country since 1991.

¹ *Albania in Figures 2007*, INSTAT

² Data extracted from the *Durrës Municipality Statistical Bulletin 2006*

³ Austrian Cooperation with Albania, Report 2005

II. SWOT ANALYSIS

- **Why SWOT?**

With the signature of the Stabilization and Association Agreement in June 2006, Albania has formally committed itself to the pursuance of the EU integration path. However, in order to enjoy the privileges of membership, the country has to demonstrate that it is capable of bringing to the European table a healthy, democratic, economically strong, and politically stable state. In this context, much work remains to be done, and duties need to be shared, as, if we all want Europe, we all have to work for it. This is also where local governments come into the picture, as they are the closest form of government to the communities we live in, to our day-to-day problems, to the life of every average citizen.

However, it is also important to think strategically when considering where to start from, to identify and exploit those comparative and competitive advantages the country, or in this case the city of Durrës, has. Therefore, after completing a SWOT analysis, it will be easier to establish a sound strategy for development. The analysis provides a thorough overview of which sectors are problematic and to what extent, which are in good condition and how good, which pose a potential and how big of a potential, and which pose a threat and what kind of threat. While it is no discovery that the city of Durrës might have many areas which need intervention, this analysis will try to provide a synopsis of each, in an effort to identify possible priority areas. It is then up to local authorities and the various interest groups to decide how to approach these issues, so that the city can place itself on the right track to development, and the further goal of becoming a competitive European center.

STRENGTHS

1. Strategic Location, Both in-Country and Regionally

Durrës holds a very strategic geographical position on the map. *Firstly*, its location on the Adriatic coast, 200 km away from the shores of Italy and with direct connections to other important ports in the Adriatic and Ionian Sea, Durrës holds a clear competitive advantage over other industrial cities in Albania, when it comes to trading capabilities. To provide an example: Exports to Italy comprised of 28% of total exports in 2007, and imports 29% of total⁴. As it has the largest Albanian port, it covers the majority of such shipments. Each year, the port processes approximately 2.7 million tons of goods, or 78% of total maritime transport of goods, and approximately 700,000 passengers, or 80% of total maritime passengers transport.⁵ *Secondly*, Durrës holds an in-border advantage to other towns due to its proximity to the capital Tirana and to the designated Industrial Zone of the Tirana-Durrës axis.

⁴ *Albania's Trade Geography*. ACIT Trade Report 2007 (pp.35)

⁵ *Potentials for Socio-Economic Development of Durrës Region*. Development Strategy of Durrës Region. UNDP 2006

2. At the Crossroad of Naval, Road and Railway Networks

The city's central location in the Albanian map ensures it another advantage when it comes to transportation means. The Durrës railroad station, which stretches into the port area as well, is at the center of the Albanian railroad network, connecting the city to Montenegro in the north (via Han i Hotit), Vlora and Ballsh in the south, and Pogradec in the south-east (only 3km from the border with Macedonia). Though the railroad infrastructure is presently in inadequate conditions and only covers passenger transportation, the system is in place and provides for a high potential for goods transport and trade development.

Naval transportation also makes for a city strategic strength, being the main port of the country. Though it is still under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Telecommunications (MTPWT), its latest rehabilitation projects have helped the Durrës Port increase its cargo management capabilities, and provide improved quality services.

With regard to road transportation, not only Durrës is located at the intersection of the national roads connecting the northern region to the south, but it is also a strategic intersection for the region, with the development of the Corridor VIII, connecting Durrës to the Black Sea, via Macedonia and Bulgaria, but also in the latest construction of the Durrës – Morinë axis, a major government investment that will help connect Albania to Kosovo through a modern highway that will go through the Albanian northern mountains.

3. Largest Port in the Country

Durrës holds the largest Albanian Port both on the Adriatic and Ionian Coast. Before 1991, the Durrës port only provided shipment of goods, and not passengers. Due to the major political changes that affected the country, and the later intervention by state and foreign donors through rehabilitation projects, now the port of Durrës has an increased processing capacity. The World Bank led a project which undertook the modernization of two cranes, provide technical assistance and rehabilitate port offices and civil works, terminated in 2004. The total project cost was approximately \$17 million. Currently, the European bank for Reconstruction and Development is leading another project in the port, costing some €40 million, aimed at improving the quality of services, rehabilitating the terminal and cranes, and connecting infrastructure. Other investors in the Durrës port are the EU Phare Programme, American Agency for Trade and Development, etc. As mentioned above, each year, the port processes approximately 2.7 million tons of goods, or 78% of total maritime transport of goods, and approximately 700,000 passengers, or 80% of total maritime passengers transport.⁶ The improvement of the Port of Durrësi as a commercial port, paves the way to other smaller ports, such as the one of Porto Romano to be developed for special cargo shipments, like liquid materials, etc.

⁶ *Potentials for Socio-Economic Development of Durrës Region*. Development Strategy of Durrës Region. UNDP 2006

4. Tourist Town (favourable climate, culture, beach, large city, business tourism)

With regard to number of visitors per year, Durrës is the largest seaside tourist attraction in Albania. There are many factors that make Durrës attractive for tourists; a favourite Mediterranean climate with a relatively hot summer and mild winter, sandy beaches – appropriate for tourist activities, and a rich cultural heritage dating back to the 5th and 6th century BC. Also, being the second largest city in Albania, Durrës has a multitude of shops, entertainment facilities, and other tourist attractions. Durrës, as a main commercial intersection, could also be viewed as an adequate location for holding trade fairs, and other summits related to trade and production, which could attract a more business-profile tourism.

5. High Population Growth and Young Average Age

The Durrës City, as well as the whole Durrës region, has a high population growth. This is due not only to the birth/death ratio but also to the massive settlements from internal migration both in formal and informal areas. Furthermore, the city average age is 34, which is well below the national figure and provides for a high labour force potential. The above-mentioned traits testify for an existing potential in labour force, which could surely contribute to the development of the city's labour market.

6. Durrës Municipality as the Administrative Centre of the Durrës Region

Being the administrative centre of the Durrësi Region (which covers the districts of Durrës and Kruja, a total of 6 municipalities and 10 communes), viewed from the right perspective can be seen as an important advantage. The Durrës municipality, in this context gains bargaining power and a more favourable condition in shaping local policies and in determining decision-making within the region. Basically, the Durrës municipality, within the Durrës region holds a leading role, and not a following role.

7. Education – Vocational Schools

The secondary education indicators, point out an increase in attendance of secondary education in the post-2000 years for the city of Durrës, compare to the 1991 – 1998 period. This mainly attributed to the development of Vocational Secondary Education Institutions that has managed to equip the Durrës labour market with skilled labour in the areas of tourism, fisheries, etc. These schools accommodate some 30% of the total enrolled students in secondary education schools. The establishment of vocational schools has proved to be a successful tool in giving potential to the Durrës labour force.

8. Approval of extension of urban development 7,200 ha surface area

Opposite from other cities which are hardly coping with the rapid pace of urban development, the city of Durrës has an approved extension of urban development of 7,200 ha surface are, and has developed a clear archaeological map, of its cultural heritage

monuments, therefore, holds the right ingredients for giving rise to a systematic and well-designed urban development plan.

9. Natural Resources

The Durrësi Region is on the richest Albanian regions in natural resources. Such resources could prove to be an extremely valuable asset if attraction of domestic and foreign investors is handled well, and if the city establishes good management schemes.

WEAKNESSES

1. Uncontrolled Urban Development, and Management of Industrial Zones

As many other Albanian major cities, Durrës underwent an uncontrolled urban development in the last two decades, where illegal buildings were constructed in previously green areas. An example of this phenomenon is the area of the old beach and the area near the “Shkëmbi Kavajes” where building blocks have replaced forests and damaged the sandy beaches.

Informal settlements in industrial zones, such as the ones in Spitalla and Porto Romano are also an obstacle to cohesive urban development.

Also, the informal settlements of Keneta and Spitalla are a major challenge to the development of the city as a whole. The Austrian government has led a project aimed at “socio-spatial integration and development of communities in an informally developed neighbourhood in the city” which was implemented in partnership with Co-Plan and the Durrës Municipality. The project cost amounted to 442,348 Euro. However, the area of Keneta poses a large urban development challenge due to its technical problems lying below the sea level.

2. Weak Communication Bridge, Local Government – Business/NGO

As in most Albanian municipalities, the link to local businesses, NGOs and other institutions operating in the city is, despite municipality efforts, weak. Therefore, there exists no well-coordinated lobbying structure for the city development. The municipality has implemented a one-stop-shop plan for local business to minimize the communication gap with the local government; however, the perception still remains high that the municipality is not doing enough. NGOs on the other hand, as portrayed in a study conducted by the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), report a 52% figure of NGOs who believe to influence local decision-making in some way. While this figure is above national average, NGOs still report that more cooperation is required from the local government, because such cooperation is viewed as very important in shaping local development. So far, cooperation has been consultative or participatory, but not yet truly influencing.

⁷Even in those cases, it has mostly been driven, by NGOs, rather than by the local government through a cohesive strategy. The EU commission in its latest Progress Report of November 2007 also stresses the importance for a closer cooperation between civil society and local governments in achieving local development.

3. Stagnation of the Decision-making Process, as a Consequence of Institutional Political Polarization

Following the local elections of February 2007, the Durrës Municipality is headed by a mayor coming from left-wing lines, while the city council, is composed of a clear right-wing majority. Unfortunately enough, this fact, added to the deficient legislation on local governance, makes for a stagnation of the decision-making process when it comes to debatable issues where the overall political orientation of the two major party lines does not match.

4. Strong Competition from Tirana

The city's proximity to the capital Tirana can also be viewed as a weakness. Major Businesses who want to establish in this part of the country, considering the proximity to Tirana, and the highway connecting the two cities, sometimes find it more adequate to establish themselves just a few kilometres away, so that they can be closer to the capital, and to the facilities it provides as such.

5. Poor Management of Archaeological Resources

Durrës is a city with a rich cultural and historical heritage. It has monuments, museums, and other cultural tourism attractions, but fact is that, most of the antique monuments in the city, are either badly preserved (such as the amphitheater, over whose ruins, various buildings have been brought up, badly damaging the surrounding historical site) or not properly highlighted. Many ancient civilization ruins still remain underground, and though exists an adequate archaeological map of the city, little has been done further than just planning in this context. Durrës has a large potential for cultural tourism, which has been poorly managed so far.

6. Informal Settlers not Integrated in the City

As mentioned above, some progress is being made to integrate the informal settlers of the Spitalla and Këneta zones into the city life. However, this progress is still very low. These zones hold the highest figures in unemployment, illiteracy, school abandonment, poverty, health problems, etc. Sporadic attempts have been made to improve this condition, but the lack of a comprehensive strategy, is widening the gap between these "guest" settlers and the rest of the city areas.

⁷ *Report on Civil Society Needs Assessment in Albania*. Civic Partnership for the MDGs and NSSED 2005-2007. (pp. 18)

7. Administration of the Durrës Harbour

The Durrës port, even though it is the largest port in the country, it does not contribute much directly to the city's development, as it is managed and maintained by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works, and Telecommunications. Though it is the main commercial activity in the city, the local government has currently, little authority over its doings. Oddly enough, the local authorities are responsible for the waste management of the harbour, and other such chores, but have no direct access to profits from the works of the port, such as revenues from local taxation over goods/people entering the port, etc. Furthermore, investments made from the government or other outside donors for the improvement of the harbour facilities have little direct impact to the improvement of the quality of life of the city inhabitants.

8. Poor Infrastructure and Utilities Condition

Being a city that is trying to compete with other coastal tourist attractions in the east-Adriatic, Durrës has little to offer to its visitors, and of course current inhabitants, when it comes to infrastructure and utilities service.

The present road conditions, even if the municipality has somewhat improved some major axes within the city ring, are still poor, especially in the informal areas of Kënetë and Spitalla, but also in Porto Romano, and even other neighbourhoods closer to the city centre.

The railroad system is in extremely poor conditions and currently only serving passenger transportation. Its cargo transportation potential is therefore multiplied by zero.

Water supply remains a problem for the whole district, where in the summer; the daily supply is limited to 2 hours. This figure is even lower in Kënetë, Spitalla, and Porto Romano where most families lack supply of water during the summer. Some investment has been made in the water supply system such as from the World Bank through a \$17 million dollar project which improved somehow the service, but still remains in critical conditions.

The sewerage system is yet another highly problematic sector for the city of Durrës. The current system discharges sewages and rainwater into the sea, without prior treatment. This becomes a major threat not only for beach tourism but also for the health of the city inhabitants. Due to the latest informal settlements, there is an increased number of families who are not covered by a sewage system at all.

9. Unemployment and Under Qualified Work Force

Unemployment remains an issue for the city of Durrës, despite the evident progress that has taken place. Although the official figure is reported at approximately 11%⁸, due to many unemployed persons who do not register as such, this figure is expected to be

⁸ Unemployment figure extracted from the Municipality Statistical Bulletin 2006

much higher (up to 25%), especially if taking into consideration the informal settlements mentioned above. In a survey conducted by the National Democratic Institute in Albania, prior to the Local Elections of 2007, employment was reported as the major issue in need to be addressed by the Durrës inhabitants interview.⁹

Under-qualified work force is another major drawback for the Durrës labour market. Some progress is being made with the recent establishment of the Durrës University, and the emphasis of vocational training. However, under-qualification still poses an obstacle to labour market penetration from the average worker in Durrës.

10. Corruption

Corruptions, as well as at country level remains a high burden for sustainable economic development, being direct corruption, or perception of corruption. At national level, a study made from the Albanian Centre for International Trade, shows that corruption is perceived as the second largest reason for not doing business in Albania from foreign investors.¹⁰

11. Pollution and Toxic waste

Toxic waste remains one of the most problematic issues for the city of Durrës, the main reasons being lack of documentation and identification of such health threatening residuals. Previous industrial areas have not been cleaned from toxic waste and now they are populated by informal settlers. The areas of Porto Romano and Spitalle are an example of such. The lack of health infrastructure in these areas makes it even more difficult to identify health problems that might have arisen to these local settlers due to their exposure to toxic materials. Infant mortality in the city of Durrës, though it is below national average, holds pulmonary diseases as its main cause.

12. Large Informal Economy

Informal economy, as well as at country level – not a specific of Durrësi alone, remains a barrier to sustainable economic development. Also it reduces market access to those business entities who cannot manage the unfair competition upon entry.

13. Education

While some improvements are being made, such as the construction of two new schools in the year 2006 by the city municipality, education infrastructure remains a problem in Durrës. There are only three day care institutions for young children registered, including public and private. Such figure is anomalous considering the size of the population.

School abandonment rates are high, especially in the rural areas, or the informal areas of Keneta, Spitalle and Porto Romano.

⁹ NDI Albania Six City Survey. January 2007

¹⁰ Albania Trade Report 2007. ACIT

The teachers' education level is also a concerning factor in the pre-school sector, as one out of four teacher's has not completed the necessary education requirements. Other education sector problems are the large size of classes, transportation, etc. Nevertheless, all these factors, do link up to the under-qualification of the work force and its rising figure.

14. Health Sector

Though there has been a positive development in the sector regarding the introduction of the Health Insurance Scheme and the modernization of the Durrësi hospital, the sector remains problematic.

Regardless of country level, the Health indicators for the Durrësi Region have fallen in recent years. Unequal access to health services being the main problem, especially for informal areas. There is a low distribution of medical personnel and in some areas access to dental services or medical tests does not even exist. Though health is administered by the central government, intervention is needed in many directions.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Durrësi as an Active Joint of International and National Road Projects

The corridor VII and the Durrës-Morinë road projects pose a significant opportunity for the development of the Durrësi district, as it puts it at the centre of very important trade intersections and also increases its popularity in the international arena. The Durrës-Morinë segment will make it even easier for Kosovo tourists who are already fond of the coastal city and comprise for above 30% of its summer tourists.

2. Regulation to Prohibit Construction Over Archaeological Sites

Considering its many invaluable archaeological monuments, most of which still are uncovered, a regulation to prohibit the irrational constructions that have take place uncontrollably in the recent years, provide a healthy opportunity for Durrës to develop its cultural tourism in the right direction.

3. New Laws on Decentralization Driven by EU Integration

Albania has taken lately an initiative, in the framework of adhering to EU legislation, to transfer responsibility for VAT, local taxation, water supply and sanitation to local governments. Such mechanism would directly increase the local government's revenues and also improve their authority position in shaping taxation policy and especially in contributing to the problematic education and sanitation systems. Unfortunately, to this day, such changes have not yet entered into force, thus not only slowing down the overall reform process but have also increased the associated opportunity cost.

4. EU Integration and Trade

The prospects for EU integration, with focus on trade liberalization give Durrësi a competitive advantage due to its border with Italy and other EU countries via Adriatic Sea.

5. Proximity to Tirana, and to Industrialized zone Tirane-Durrës

Being on the terminus of the Tirane-Durrës highway, an industrial zone undergoing a rapid development, Durrës is likely to experience an economic boost in the upcoming years. This zone is a government's priority area for potential foreign and domestic investment.¹¹ In the near future, this area is foreseen to host many local and foreign investors who are interested in doing business in Albania.

6. “Local” Political Stability and Low Professional Turnover

Many foreign donor driven projects, have reported that one of the major causes for limited success in Albania, is the change of priorities, any time there is a government change, or even when there is a change in the higher decision-making level.

In the local elections of 2007, the mayor who resulted winner in the electoral race, came from the same party lines as the former one, thus ensuring some degree of stability in the personnel of the municipality and its different agencies, but also in the driving priorities for the city development. In view of the 2009 general elections, the above-mentioned fact, guarantees a certain degree of low personnel turnover, which makes for a more efficient institution.

THREATS

1. In-Country Migration

The cases of Keneta and Spitalla witnessed the fact that in-country migration poses a serious threat to the already problematic city of Durrës. Despite from the fact that migration to these two informal areas has ceased completely since 3-4 years ago, one lesson is to be learned; that measures should be taken to avoid such occurrences, or at least control them, in the future.

2. Limited Local Autonomy

Though noticeable progress has been made, local governments still have a limited amount of autonomy and little hand over important sectors for the city development. Shift of authority on taxation, education, and sanitation is happening very slowly. The municipality has little, if none, authority over the port facility, Durrës' major asset. Just

¹¹ As stated by AlbInvest Executive Director at Annual Trade Forum “Crans Montana”, May 2008

recently, the municipality has gained control of the water system, but which is in very poor conditions and little can be expected to be done with the small budget the institution has.

3. Slow Progress Towards Free Trade

Albania's signing of the SAA should be a helping hand to Durrësi's development in the context of free trade. However, slow progress in this direction is reducing the expected development pace of the city. The SAA has not yet entered into force, as not all EU member countries have ratified it. The Albanian government on the other hand is trying to respond to the legislation approximation needs and creating the conditions for successfully implementing such major agreement.

4. Low Local Government Revenues and Funds Absorption

According to their reported expenditures and revenues of the municipality of Durrës for the year 2006, a fall in revenues from taxes and tariffs (compared to year 2005) is notable at approximately 23%, being also 84% of the yearly forecasted revenue.¹² Revenues from unconditional transfers are somewhat higher than in 2005, but still remain at relatively low levels for a city of such potential as Durrës is.

5. Fast Development of Neighbouring Tourist Cities

Being a tourist-attracting city, Durrës has to compete with other coastal cities within the territory of Albania, and in the region. More and more Albanian are visiting coastal cities in Montenegro and Croatia in the past years, and Durrësi is poorly keeping up with attracting more visitors.

6. 2009 Elections and Change of Government

Though the current central government has an opposite political affiliation than the local government of Durrës, the upcoming central elections pose a particular threat to the central-local government relationship, and could stagnate the city's sustainable development. The municipality still receives largest part of its budget from the State Budget, administered by the Government.

¹² Data taken from the Durrës Municipality Statistical Bulletin 2006

ANNEX 1

Summarized Table of the SWOT Analysis for the City of Durrës

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strategic Location, Both in-Country and Regionally	Uncontrolled Urban Development, and Management of Industrial Zones
At the Crossroad of Naval, Road and Railway Networks	Weak Communication Bridge, Local Government – Business/NGO
Largest Port in the Country	Stagnation of the Decision-making Process, as a Consequence of Institutional Political Polarization
Tourist Town (favourable climate, culture, beach, large city, business tourism)	Strong Competition from Tirana
High Population Growth and Young Average Age	Poor Management of Archaeological Resources
Durrës Municipality as the Administrative Centre of the Durrës Region	Informal Settlers not Integrated in the City
Education – Vocational Schools	Administration of the Durrës Harbour
Approval of extension of urban development 7,200 ha surface area	Poor Infrastructure and Utilities Condition
Natural Resources	Unemployment and Under Qualified Work Force
	Corruption
	Pollution and Toxic waste
	Large Informal Economy
	Education
	Health Sector
Opportunities	Threats
Durrësi as an Active Joint of International and National Road Projects	In-Country Migration
Regulation to Prohibit Construction Over Archaeological Sites	Limited Local Autonomy
New Laws on Decentralization Driven by EU Integration	Slow Progress Towards Free Trade
EU Integration and Trade	Low Local Government Revenues and Funds Absorption
Proximity to Tirana, and to Industrialized zone Tirane-Durrës	Fast Development of Neighbouring Tourist Cities
“Local” Political Stability and Low Professional Turnover	2009 Elections and Change of Government

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**Rr. Mustafa Matohiti, No. 4/3,
Tirana Albania
Tel/Fax: +355 (0)4 2258 884
E-mail: info@agendainstitute.org
Website: www.agendainstitute.org**