



Dipartimento  
Architettura  
Ferrara

## BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

# 2<sup>nd</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HOUSING, PLANNING, AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY

TOWARDS EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PERSPECTIVES

OCTOBER 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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# **2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory**

## **Towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives**

### Conference Theme and Rationale

This conference returned for the second time within the Albanian and Mediterranean academic context, aiming to build a tradition of collaboration centered on scientific research and academia. Following the success of the first edition held on October 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, where proceedings were published in the Book of Proceedings, Albanica journal, and various international academic platforms, POLIS University and the Academy of Sciences of Albania relaunched this important event. The 2025 edition focused on housing, urban planning, and resilient territorial development, offering a platform for researchers, policymakers, and experts from the region and beyond.

Albania and the Western Balkans have faced major transformations in urbanization, spatial planning, and environmental management. Demographic changes, economic pressures, and environmental challenges created a need for new strategies in architecture, planning, and governance. This conference brought together diverse voices to explore these themes and promote resilient and sustainable development.

Key topics included architecture and the city, with emphasis on urban form, housing typologies, and the role of cultural heritage in modern urban design; urban mobility, addressing traffic challenges, public transport, and the use of technologies like GIS and AI in planning; and new housing models, focusing on affordability, energy efficiency, and innovative materials.

Discussions also covered demography and economy, exploring territorial governance, smart cities, social enterprises, and digital technologies such as AI, VR, and the Metaverse in urban management. Finally, the urban and natural environment was addressed through topics like pollution, adaptive planning, and nature-based solutions for climate resilience.

Through this conference, POLIS University and the Academy of Sciences of Albania aimed to foster a broad interdisciplinary debate on these pressing issues, combining academic and practical perspectives to offer concrete recommendations for future urban and territorial development policies and projects.

## Organizers' Announcement

The International Scientific Conference on Housing, Urban Planning, and Resilient Territorial Development: Toward Euro-Mediterranean Approaches was held on October 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in Tirana, Albania. Organized by POLIS University in collaboration with the Academy of Sciences of Albania and supported by national and international partners, including the University of Ferrara and Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, the event brought together researchers, academics, policymakers, and professionals to address key challenges in urban development, with a focus on resilience and sustainability in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The first day of the conference took place at the Academy of Sciences, while the second day was hosted at POLIS University.

The conference explored five main themes:

- I. Architecture and the City, which investigated the typological and morphological dimensions of urban form, the evolution of collective and individual housing types, the relationship between architectural design and urban identity, and the role of historical and cultural heritage in shaping contemporary cities;
- II. Urban Mobility and Resilient Cities, which addressed traffic congestion, infrastructure challenges, and public transportation, while also promoting the redesign of public spaces – such as streets, squares, and pedestrian zones – to improve accessibility and mobility; it also explored the integration of digital technologies like GIS, AI, and simulation tools to enhance planning, automation, and infrastructure management;
- III. New Housing Models, which examined innovative approaches to affordable and social housing in response to demographic shifts and technological change, along with energy efficiency strategies, passive energy systems, and the application of new sustainable materials and construction technologies;
- IV. Demography and Economy, which focused on macro-regional and national dynamics impacting territorial development, including urban governance, disaster risk reduction, and the rise of smart and inclusive cities; it also explored how emerging technologies – such as AI, VR, and the Metaverse – along with social enterprises and circular economy practices, could foster more equitable and adaptive urban systems; and
- V. Urban and Natural Environment, which analyzed environmental degradation in urban settings, including air, water, and soil pollution, and promoted nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based planning, and adaptive strategies to enhance environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

The conference was conducted in English and Albanian (with self-translated texts where applicable) and was free of charge, with all registration fees fully covered by POLIS University in support of open academic exchange. Key deadlines included abstract submission by June 15<sup>th</sup>, acceptance notification by June 30<sup>th</sup>, first draft of papers by September 15<sup>th</sup>, and final submissions by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

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Development: Towards Euro-Mediterranean  
Approaches  
October 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Tirana, Albania

#### **IV. Demography and Economy: Demographic challenges and models in Albania and beyond**

Territorial governance and systematic management / Cities as sustainable service systems / Smart city management / Social enterprises as drivers of territorial development / City-verse and new cybernetics: AI, VR, AR, and the Metaverse.

Circular and regenerative economy practices in the Western Balkans / Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: challenges and opportunities for resilient communities.

# Land Distribution and Control in Urban Areas

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## Abstract

*The distribution and control of land in urban areas remains an ongoing challenge in the spatial development of Albanian cities, particularly in the metropolitan area of Tirana. This study addresses the dynamics of land use in the capital city, analyzing the interplay between property ownership structures, informal urban development, and efforts toward integrated planning. Tirana, as the largest urban center in Albania, has experienced rapid urban growth since the 1990s, accompanied by high property fragmentation, uncontrolled construction, and difficulties in implementing urban plans (Toto & Allkja, 2019).*

*The research highlights challenges associated with the lack of coordination between local authorities and private landowners, informal property registration, and the absence of effective mechanisms for land readjustment or control. Through the analysis of planning documents and case studies in Tirana's urban periphery, the article argues that sustainable land control requires institutional reforms, digitization of the cadastral system, involvement of local communities, and policies balancing public interest with private property rights (Felstehausen, 1999; Stanfield et al., 1998). This study contributes to the literature on Albanian urban geography, emphasizing the need for a flexible, data-driven, and participatory approach to land management in urban areas.*

## Keywords

*Property fragmentation, urban land management, land distribution, urban planning, informal development*

## 1. Historical overview

The planning system in Albania has undergone major transformations since the 1990s, shifting toward a comprehensive and integrated approach (Toto & Allkja, 2019). Land reforms, initiated by Law No. 8053 (1995), granted legal ownership of former state enterprise lands to previous workers, but failed to fully resolve property rights ambiguities. Three categories of landholders emerged: (a) legal owners recognized under Laws No. 7501, 8053, and 7698; (b) informal or illegal buyers without certified ownership; and (c) illegal occupants of state or private land (Felstehausen, 1999).

The resulting legal ambiguity hindered the land market, fostering conflicts among former owners, new legal owners, and informal occupants. Land fragmentation became severe, with approximately 1.8 million small plots averaging 0.2-0.55 ha per parcel, often scattered 1-6 km apart. The extensive legal framework (Laws No. 7501-111/2019) has improved regulation but land control remains insufficient and enforcement weak (Felstehausen, 1999; Lovelace, 1965).

The planning system in Albania has paradigmatically changed since the end of the totalitarian regime in Albania opened the path for significant transformations after the 1990s, and even more so in the last decade, with a shift from the urbanism approach to a comprehensive and integrated system. Land reforms in Albania, initiated with Law No. 8053 (1995), granted legal ownership of former state enterprise lands to their previous workers. However, these reforms failed to resolve deep uncertainties surrounding property rights, as contradictions between ownership and land use persisted. As a result, many de facto landholders remained without legal titles, especially within informal settlements. Three main categories of landholders emerged: (a) legal owners recognized under Laws No. 7501, 8053, and 7698, including those compensated after natural disasters or public projects; (b) informal or illegal buyers lacking certified ownership documents; and (c) illegal occupants who seized state or private land.

This legal ambiguity has hindered the development of a functional land market, fostering conflicts between former legitimate owners, new legal owners, and informal occupants. The resulting insecurity has discouraged investment, land development, and long-term planning. Moreover, the reforms led to severe land fragmentation – about 1.8 million small plots (4-6 parcels per owner), averaging 1.17 ha per family and 0.2-0.55 ha per parcel, often scattered 1-6 km apart from each other and from settlements. Such fragmentation, shaped by demographic shifts, privatization stages, inconsistent legal interpretations, and regional disparities, continues to undermine the efficient and sustainable use of land in Albania. During the history after 1990s there are a bunch of regulation for Land and Immovable Property Reform, Privatization, Restitution, and Legalization 1991-2006 – Legal Framework

New laws on urban planning were introduced, focusing predominantly on building regulations and spatial organization within urban areas, with the same ‘urbanist’ approach as the previous period (Toto & Allkja, 2019).

Law No. 7501, On Land, dated July 19, 1991; recognizes the right to private ownership of land and immovable property, and establishes a system for land classification.

Law No. 7652, On the Privatization of State Housing, dated December 23, 1992; provides for rights to sell, lease, and mortgage privatized properties.

Law No. 7693, On Urban Planning, dated April 6, 1993; regulates legal transfer of building sites.

Law No. 7698, For Restituting and Compensating Former Property Owners, dated April 15, 1993; recognizes property rights of former owners of private buildings and building sites, as well as of rural land that had changed to building sites (urban land).

Law No. 7843, On the Registration of Immovable Property, dated July 13, 1994; lays the groundwork for establishing a uniform system of immovable property registration.

Law No. 8405, On Urban Planning, dated September 17, 1998; replaces Law No. 7693. Law No. 8405/1998 (amended several times until 2009) "On Urban Planning" Although adopted earlier, this law remained the main regulatory framework until 2009. It introduced the first system of urban regulatory plans (PRTR, PPV, PPU, etc.) and construction permits procedures. Was considered fragmented and outdated, which led to the reform process after 2009

Law No. 9235, On Recognition, Restitution and Compensation of Property, dated July 29, 2004; replaces, *inter alia*, Law No. 7698 and Law No. 7699; regulates restitution/compensation of immovable property expropriated, nationalized, or confiscated since 1944.

Law No. 9304, On Legalization and Urban Planning of Informal Zones, dated October 28, 2004; aims at formalizing urban informal housing zones.

Decision No. 183, On the approval of the methodology on the valuation of immovable property that will be compensated and of the one to be used for compensation, dated April 28, 2005.

Law No. 9482, On Legalization, Urban Planning and Integration of Illegal Buildings, dated April 3, 2006; replaces, *inter alia*, Law No. 9304. Law No. 9482/2006 "On Legalization, Urbanization and Integration of Informal Areas", amended later by Law No. 33/2012 and subsequent acts.

Law No. 10119/2009, "On Territorial Planning" Marked the first major reform of the planning system after 1990. Replaced the old law of 1998. Introduced the National Territorial Plan, General Local Plans, and Local Detailed Plans. Created National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA/AKPT). Aimed at decentralizing planning competences to municipalities and regions. Brought new instruments for development control and planning hierarchy (national → regional → local).

Law No. 107/2014, "On Territorial Planning and Development" is the current main law governing urban planning, land development, and construction permits. Merged planning and development control into a single system. Introduced the Integrated Territorial and Development Plans (PVRT), General Local Plans (PPV), and Detailed Local Plans (PPVZ). Established the National Territorial Council (KKT) as the highest approving body.

Created the Integrated Territorial Registry and Territorial Development Information System (TDIS) for digital permitting. Strongly linked planning to sustainable development principles. Required alignment of municipal plans with the National Territorial Plan (PKT). Before 2015, more than eight separate institutions were responsible for handling property titles in Albania. These bodies operated under different ministries and were governed by various, often uncoordinated, legal frameworks. Each institution followed its own procedures for property title registration, which frequently lacked coordination. Among them were:

- The Agency of Restitution and Compensation of Property for expropriated individuals

- The Immovable Property Registration Office
- ALUIZNI (the Agency for Legalization, Urbanization, and Integration of Informal Areas/Buildings)
- The Judicial Bailiff's Office for enforcing court decisions
- The State Advocacy, tasked with protecting state property interests and representing cases before the European Court of Human Rights
- The Agency for Inventory and Transfer of State-owned Immovable Properties
- The Land Governmental Commission on the Validity of Property Titles
- The National Housing Entity, responsible for social housing programs

Law No. 43/2015 "On Power Sector" (indirect, but influences spatial planning for infrastructure corridors).

Law No. 111/2019 "On Cadastre" – established the State Cadastre Agency (SCA), integrating property registration, legalization, and property restitution.

Law No. 20/2020 – Amendments to Law 107/2014 – Introduced improvements on permitting, planning instruments, and digitalization. Enhanced public participation procedures and clarified development rights and obligations of private owners. Strengthened enforcement mechanisms against informal construction.

Despite the extensive legal framework introduced to address land-related issues, land control in Albania remains insufficiently regulated and lacks effective enforcement mechanisms.

Year	Law No.	Title	Main Impact
2009	10119	On Territorial Planning	New planning hierarchy & institutions
2014	107	On Territorial Planning and Development	Unified planning & permitting
2020	20	Amendments to 107/2014	Digitalization, public participation
2018	111	On Cadastre	Unified property registry

**Table 1.** The most impact laws for Planning.

Source: Authors.

### 1.1. Fragmentation and informal claim-making

Informal claim-making and fragmentation have shaped Tirana's urban patterns. Rapid privatization generated formal and informal claims, contributing to city expansion and squatter settlements (Shinn, 1979). Studies sampling one-hectare grids catalogued land use, ownership, construction timelines, and documentation status. Findings show private, fragmented ownership complicates redevelopment and infrastructure deployment (UNECE, n.d.). The State Cadastre Agency (SCA),

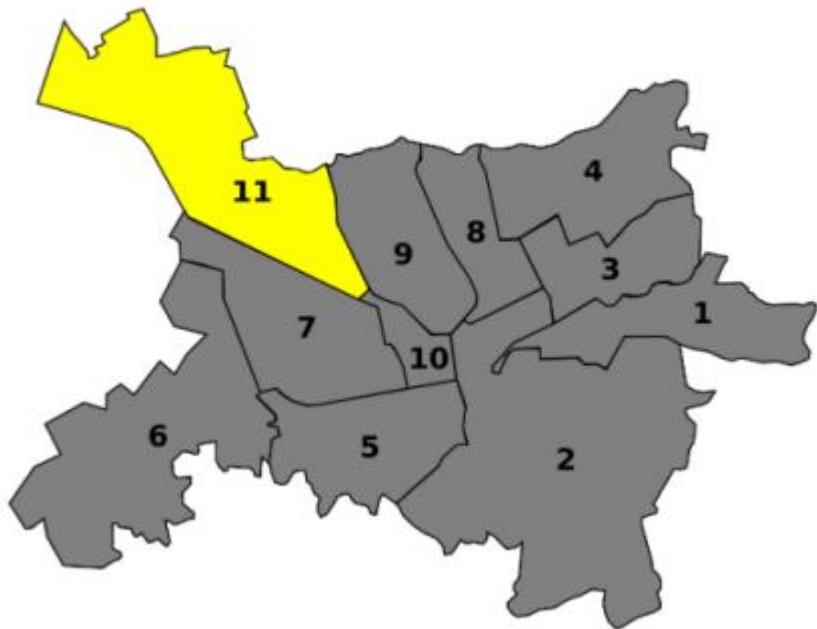
established in 2019, consolidated functions of legalization, restitution, and registration to enhance transparency and integrate land use planning (World Bank, n.d.).

Informal areas like Lapraka show residential structures built without permits, poorly connected to infrastructure, and often on illegally claimed land. In Lapraka, for instance, about 8,000 legalization applications were submitted since 2016, with ongoing delays caused by infrastructure projects like the Great Ring Road (SCA data, 2024). Nationally, around 25% of urban residents live in informal settlements, with significant discrepancies between formal registration and actual land use (UNECE, n.d.; World Bank, n.d.).

Informal claim-making and land fragmentation have played a critical role in shaping Tirana's urban use patterns. The Urban Growth and Land Use Changes in Tirana report documents how rapid privatization created both formal and informal claims, leading to a fivefold city expansion and the proliferation of squatter settlements. In informal peripheral areas such as Bathore, original squatters transitioned into recognized, serviced homeowners. By the early 2000s, roughly 60% acquired their land from prior squatters, while others used a variety of informal and formal methods.

Sampling within urban grids reveals further insights into how property structures intersect with usage. Studies involving random one-hectare grid samples across Tirana's urban fabric – both within and beyond ring roads – systematically catalogued use types, ownership modes, construction timelines, and documentation status of urban parcels. The uneven landscape of property ownership amplifies obstacles to unified land use planning. Private, fragmented ownership complicates urban redevelopment and infrastructure deployment – negotiations are time-consuming and often contradictory. Additionally, the persistence of informal ownership and incomplete cadastral records undermine tenure security, inhibit investment, and limit public-sector leverage for reorganization. Informal claim-making and fragmentation have shaped Tirana's urban patterns. Rapid privatization generated formal and informal claims, contributing to city expansion and squatter settlements (Shinn, 1979). Studies sampling one-hectare grids catalogued land use, ownership, construction timelines, and documentation status. Findings show private, fragmented ownership complicates redevelopment and infrastructure deployment (UNECE, n.d.). The State Cadastre Agency (ASHK), established in 2019, consolidated functions of legalization, restitution, and registration to enhance transparency and integrate land use planning (World Bank, n.d.).

Informal areas like Lapraka and Bathore show residential structures built without permits, poorly connected to infrastructure, and often on illegally claimed land. In Lapraka, for instance, about 8,000 legalization applications were submitted since 2016, with ongoing delays caused by infrastructure projects like the Great Ring Road (World Bank, 2019; Pojani, 2013). Nationally, around 25% of urban residents live in informal settlements, with significant discrepancies between formal registration and actual land use (World Bank, n.d.; OECD, n.d.).



**Figure 1. Administrative Unit 11, Lapraka.**

Source: Author.

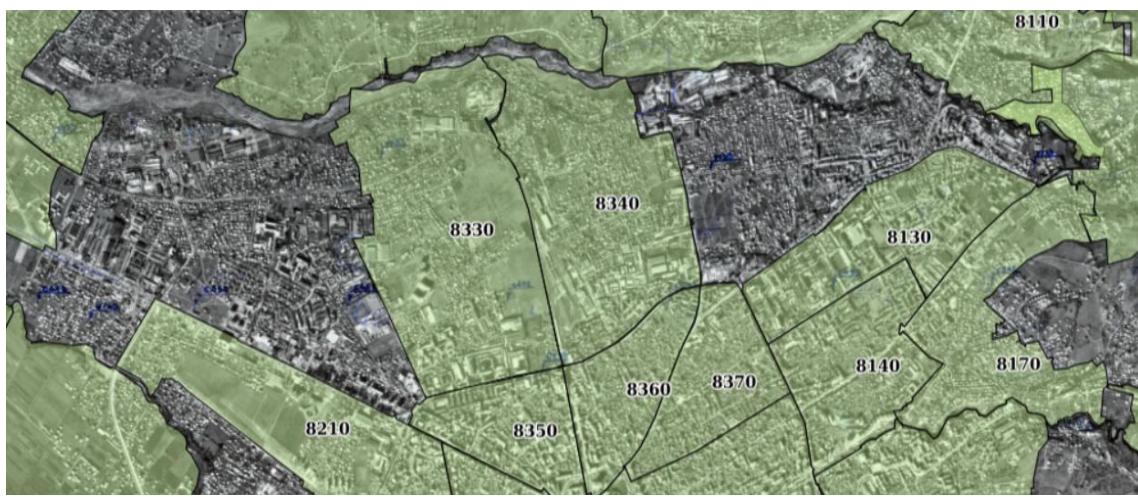
Most of the informal areas in Tirana are not connected to wastewater collectors, and the 1960's wastewater sewage system is insufficient to cope with the informal areas developed throughout the last decades. There are also issues with billed energy as there is a lack of functioning meters, theft, and insufficient receipts for billed energy. Illegal water-supply connections mainly come from informal areas, which, if compared to the total area where UKT (the Water Supply and Sewage Company) operates, account for over 26 per cent of connections. The Administrative Unit no. 11 otherwise known as "Lapraka" has long been known as one of the most problematic areas in the city concerning informal areas. Lapraka lies north-west of Tirana and is bordered by Administrative Unit no. 7 in the south-west, Administrative Unit No. 9 in the east, the Paskuqan Administrative Unit in the north-east, the Municipality of Kamza in the north, and Kashar Administrative Unit in the north-west. Lapraka is around 4km from the centre of Tirana and has an area of 5.2 km<sup>2</sup>.

## 1.2. Typology of informal constructions

Lapraka became a favored destination for families migrating to Tirana, and the resulting high housing demand led to the chaotic and unregulated urban development seen today. Informal land use in the area generally falls into three categories: (1) construction on privately owned land without permits or exceeding approved parameters (such as additional floors or building area), (2) construction on state-owned land, and (3) construction on private land owned by others, including former owners or individuals who gained ownership during the post-1991 privatization.

Most informal housing is concentrated along the riverbank and consists of self-built, unplanned structures designed to meet the immediate needs of their occupants, with irregular forms and

dimensions. As a major urban corridor, Lapraka has been designated as one of five strategic poles in the *Tirana 2030* General Local Plan (approved in 2017) and is currently undergoing significant infrastructure development, especially in its southern and northern zones. The southwestern part is intersected by the new Great Ring Road, which links Tirana to the Tirana-Durrës highway. Since 2016, around 8,000 legalization applications have been submitted in Lapraka, with about 2,000 still pending. In 2019 alone, approximately 240 legalization permits were granted, reaching a total of about 1,100 permits over the last two years. However, in 2020, construction of the Great Ring Road affected more than 400-500 housing units that were awaiting or undergoing legalization, causing significant project delays, disputes, and protests from affected property owners.

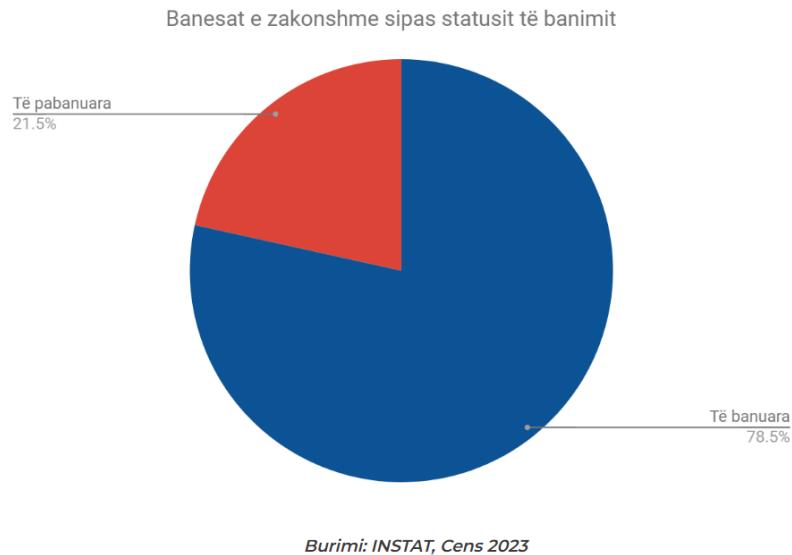


**Figure 2. Lapraka and Babrru Cadastral zone.**

Source: ASIG.

### 1.3. Formal registration: urban parcels

During the period January-September 2024, Available Statistics on Building Permits the Municipality of Tirana issued 174 building permits for new constructions, accounting for approximately 17% of the national total .In the same period, the approved floor area for new buildings amounted to approximately 926,250 m<sup>2</sup>.For the first three quarters of 2024, a total of 1.58 million m<sup>2</sup> of building permits were approved in Tirana, marking an increase of 60% compared to the same period of the previous year.



**Figure 3. Standard residential dwellings". Unoccupied dwelling 21.5% and Occupied 78.5%.**

Source: Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), Census 2023.

Tirana, as the largest and most informalized urban area in Albania, likely has a formal property registration rate at or below the national urban average of approximately 75% (UNECE). Informal settlements occupy about 41% of Tirana's residential area and house around 34% of its population (House Europe), indicating that a substantial share of urban parcels originated outside formal planning and registration frameworks. Nationally, UNECE reports registration coverage of about 75% in urban areas compared to 95% in rural areas, highlighting the significant urban-rural gap. Although Albania declared the completion of first property registration by the end of 2022 (U.S. State Department), persistent data-quality issues and delays have been noted in World Bank and technical reviews, particularly regarding ALBSReP uploads. This suggests that registered properties are not necessarily accurate or updated. While Albania's average property registration time (22 days) is shorter than in neighbouring countries, such as Kosovo and Bosnia, it contrasts with North Macedonia's near-universal coverage (99.5%), underscoring the continued need for legalization mechanisms to address Albania's large stock of legacy informal properties (UNECE).

Property registration in Albania faces significant data accuracy challenges, with EU reports estimating that around 80% of registered properties contain errors such as misplaced parcels, misaligned boundaries, and ownership inconsistencies, often resulting in overlapping claims. The People's Advocate has reported that cadastral maps frequently do not reflect actual field conditions, with multiple conflicting map versions – particularly in Tirana – intensifying the risk of parcel overlaps. The Venice Commission has also noted that such overlaps affect both private and state land, creating widespread legal uncertainty. To address these issues, Law No. 20/2020 requires the Cadastre to recognize only one valid title per property and to document unresolved overlaps, which must then be settled in court. Notably, about half of all civil court cases in Albania involve land-related disputes, including overlapping claims and boundary conflicts.

## 2. Methodology to assess overlapping/contested claims in Tirana

Official cadastral data collection, request parcel-level shapefiles or registry extracts from the State Cadastre Agency (SCA) for the administrative territory of Tirana. Make the verification of Municipal planning data approved on 2017 for Tirana Municipality using zoning/land maps and records of legalization of informal settlements (from Tirana Municipality).

### 2.1. Spatial analysis

Import parcel shapefiles into a GIS platform (e.g., QGIS or ArcGIS) and run topology checks to detect overlapping polygons, where two or more parcels claim the same space. Such overlaps are often observed in dense urban areas, where both informal and formal construction pressures have been high. In particular, many developments built with construction permits between 2004 and 2014 were executed in violation of their approved permits – extending building footprints beyond authorized limits, encroaching on adjacent parcels, rendering neighboring properties unusable, or restricting the space available for essential technical infrastructure such as roads *and other services*. Map areas of Tirana where informal settlements are concentrated vs. areas with fully registered land. Overlay urban plans with cadastral data to show mismatches.

### 2.2. Classification of claims

Categorize problematic parcels into overlaps (of parcels) or boundary misalignments adjacent parcels with mismatched borders. Contested ownership (multiple titles for one parcel in SCA system. Building permits growth vs. unresolved property documentation. Bathore settlement transition from informal land to serviced suburb, redevelopment projects in central Tirana delayed due to ownership disputes although all instrumnets legally are approved.

### 2.3. Quantification

Compute % of parcels in Tirana with overlaps; % of parcels with contested ownership; % of parcels requiring re-measurement (quality indicator, using VBB reports as benchmark).

### 2.4. Compare analyses and validation

According to OECD findings based on data from the State Cadastre Agency (SCA), 100% of urban land parcels in Albania have completed first-time registration, representing full digitalization for urban areas as of February 2022. This reflects a significant achievement in property registration reform for urban zones. While urban parcels are technically fully registered, this does not necessarily reflect compliance in construction or formal land use rights. Informality persists in the form of illegal buildings and settlements. As of 2020, 25% of residents in Albanian cities (including Tirana) lived in informal settlements.

Up to one-third of all buildings in Albania are illegal, according to the World Bank, due to lack of proper title or building permit

Cross-check GIS results with field surveys in selected neighborhoods (e.g., informal areas like Bathore, Kombinat).

## 2.5. Uploading of properties in the ALBSReP system

Between 2007 and 2014, the World Bank funded the Land Administration and Management Project (LAMP), which developed the ISO-compliant, web-based ALBSReP system (Land Administration Domain Model). Archives from 11 major cities were scanned, and 125 priority cadastral zones were registered for the first time.

Data show a peak in properties uploaded to ALBSReP in 2016, followed by a sharp decline in 2020. Earlier uploads were high in quantity, but low in accuracy – about 80% required re-measurement – while 2020 uploads were fewer but more accurate, requiring no further adjustments. The table shows the trend of properties uploaded in the system.

Year	No. of Properties Uploaded into the System
Before 2014	227,445
2014	240,434
2015	24,590
2016	283,061
2017	237,906
2018	173,342
2019	197,905
2020	114,700

**Table 2. No. of Properties Uploaded into the System for registration.**

Source: ASHK.

Albania's legal framework for expropriation, land readjustment, and pooling demonstrates notable gaps compared to European best practices. Expropriation is regulated by Law No. 8561 (1999, amended 2016), allowing the state to acquire private property for public purposes with compensation. However, implementation challenges persist, particularly the non-enforcement of court decisions, as illustrated by Ramaj v. Albania, where property rights were left unresolved for over 26 years. Land readjustment and pooling mechanisms are also underdeveloped; while provisions for consolidation exist, they are rarely applied, and institutional capacity remains

limited, with the National Inspectorate for Territorial Protection overseeing land use and unauthorized constructions. In contrast, countries such as Italy, Germany, and France maintain robust frameworks. Italian law provides clear constitutional and civil code guidance for expropriation, ensuring transparency and judicial remedies. Germany and France employ structured land readjustment systems that reorganize parcels for urban development, relying on voluntary participation and strong institutional support to promote fair and efficient land use. Aligning Albania's framework with these European standards would require enhanced legal clarity, institutional strengthening, and effective enforcement to safeguard property rights and foster sustainable land management.

Currently, IKMT and municipal urban planning offices are the main actors controlling urban land distribution, supported by legal mechanisms like expropriation and zoning. However, Albania lacks a fully operational land readjustment/pooling system and robust judicial enforcement, which limits comprehensive control over urban land allocation.

### 3. Conclusion

The evolution of land distribution and control in Tirana illustrates the cumulative effects of post-socialist property restitution, fragmented ownership patterns, and prolonged informal urbanization on contemporary planning outcomes. Historical reforms enabled the rapid privatization of urban land but lacked complementary instruments for land readjustment, contributing to parcel fragmentation and costly redevelopment negotiations. Case studies such as Bathore and Lapraka demonstrate how informal claims emerged in peripheral zones where cadastral systems and enforcement capacity were weak, leading to urban expansion beyond planned boundaries.

Recent institutional reforms including cadastral consolidation and digitalization have improved documentation accuracy and strengthened administrative coordination; however, persistent overlaps, contested titles, and inconsistent boundary records continue to limit planning coherence. The interaction between formal registration milestones and persistent informal construction suggests that legal titling alone cannot ensure orderly urban growth. Instead, coordinated spatial governance, integrated digital cadastral platforms, and participatory land readjustment mechanisms are required to align private property rights with public planning objectives.

Overall, the findings confirm that fragmented ownership structures, legacy informality, and limitations in enforcement capacity remain central constraints on sustainable urban land management. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing institutional adaptation, strengthened inter-agency coordination, and the adoption of flexible planning tools capable of resolving competing land claims while enabling strategic urban redevelopment (World Bank, n.d.; OECD, n.d.).

### 3.1. Recommendations for improvement

- Enhance the capacity and coordination of institutions involved in land administration, such as the State Cadaster Agency and the National Inspectorate for Territorial Protection, to streamline land management processes.
- Accelerate the land registration process to resolve ownership disputes and provide legal certainty, facilitating better land control and distribution.
- Develop policies to legalize and integrate informal settlements into the formal urban framework, ensuring access to infrastructure and services.
- Engage communities in land planning and decision-making processes to ensure that land distribution meets the needs of all citizens and promotes social equity.

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