

Konispol Municipality Profile for EU Project Partnership

The Municipality of Konispol is the southernmost Municipality of Albania, bordered with Greece to the South, Finiq to the North, and Butrint National Park to the East. Part of the Region known as Çameria, the mountainous Konispol region holds many treasures, including ancient Paleolithic caves, the largest mandarin farms in Albania, the river of Pavllo, and the stunning beauty of Butrint National Park close by. It is a highly remote area, and remains one of the least trammled regions in Albania, attractive for those interested in agrotourism, hiking, cycling, wildlife, and a strong traditional culture.

The borders of Konispol grew in 2015 by act of Parliament of decentralization, the former territories of Konispol, Markat and Xarrë merged into the Municipality of Konispol in 2015. Headquarters are in the town of Konispol with administrative units in both Xarrë and Markat.

OUR MISSION

The Municipality of Konispol wishes to create a way of life that is inclusive, accessible, and sustainable and enjoyable for all inhabitants, youth, and tourists to thrive.

OUR GOALS

The Municipality of Konispol aspires to be transparent, truthful, and informative to local inhabitants and both foreign and domestic visitors. The following initiatives are guiding our municipality.

- Sound Social Welfare Policies.
- Sustainable Economic Development.
- Ecotourism Development. And Promotion
- Environmental Protection
- Agricultural Product Development and Promotion



Country:	Albania
Population:	8,245
Area:	221.88 km ²
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Sound Social Welfare Policies

The Municipality of Konispol aims to provide inclusive and quality social welfare services that protect vulnerable individuals and communities, as well as enhance the safety and dignity of these individuals.

- Implementation of the National Youth Action Plan and creation of a Youth Center or Council.
- Support for and protection of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Work with Mary Ward Loreto Foundation to both protect and empower the Roma and Egyptian communities within the municipality as well as educate the community of trafficking issues.
- Partnership with Local and International NGO's to promote diversity and collaborate to create inclusive social welfare policies.

Sustainable Economic Development

Our main priorities in the municipality of Konispol are the development of the agricultural and touristic economies, but other sectors of the economy need to be bolstered as well. Our goals include:

- Identifying ways to access new markets both for local importing as well as domestic and international export.
- Improving visibility of local products, including a branded Konispol labels for all goods coming from our region.
- Developing secondary markets that support our touristic and agricultural markets, including the development of transportation services, guest accommodations, slow-food restaurants, guide services, local artisanal food and handmade goods.
- Creating a Chamber of Commerce within the Municipality to advice and support new business ventures in the area, as well as diversify the types of businesses.

Ecotourism Promotion and Development

Konispol Municipality holds many beautiful natural landscapes and hidden treasures throughout the region. There is something for both domestic and international tourists of all kinds here, whether it be homestay accommodations for those who want a cultural experience, an agrotourism experience at a local farm, wonderful nature to be explored by vehicle, mountain bike, or foot. The village of Mursi, where the Mandarina Festival is held every year, is on Albania's list of '100 Villages' targeted for tourism development, with a unique culture and a beautiful location on Lake Mursi. The municipality is in a key strategic location for Southern Albania, with both the Greek border nearby and its proximity to Butrint National Park, Ksamil, and Saranda. With these touristic factors in mind, the municipality promotes:

- Setting up of a Tourism Center to promote services offered by the local community, as well as information on what to see and do in the area.
- Establishment of a single source website (visitkonispol.com) to connect tourists with the products and services of residents, including advertising of adventure itineraries and hospitality services.
- Promotion of local cultural and historical elements.
- Development of an ethnographic museum in Konispol Municipality.
- Creation and marking of new hiking trails in the Konispol Municipality, as well as posting them to online platforms such as Hiking Project and AllTrails.
- Development and implementation of a Tourism Action Plan.

Environmental Protection

The Municipality of Konispol aims to balance economic and infrastructural growth with protecting the natural resources and beauty of the region through these initiatives:

- Elimination of illegal logging in the region.
- Protecting and preserving our rivers and lakes especially from agriculture pesticides.
- Creation of a high-efficiency waste management system in the Municipality.
- Strict enforcement of laws protecting natural resources, including forest protection from fires

Organic Agricultural Promotion and Development

The main sector of the Konispol's economy is agriculture. Almost 70% of people living in the Konispol region own mandarin farms and many others also raise livestock and cultivate fruits and vegetables. Additionally, Konispol produces some of the most popular agricultural products in the south of Albania, including honey, mandarins, olive oil, dairy products, meats, pomegranates, and walnuts. To both promote and develop this market, we plan to:

- Improve agricultural production facilities and technologies by working with local agricultural associations, donors, and governmental agencies.
- Develop and promote agrotourism throughout the Konispol region to increase visibility and demand for our agricultural products.
- Creation of an agricultural coop to negotiate fair sale prices on agricultural products in the region, increasing the selling and bargaining power of farmers.
- Promote improved methods of cultivating agricultural products in order to breach into the European market.

The Municipality of Konispol is enthusiastic and keen to improve its partnerships throughout Albania and in the European Union in order to improve the lives of its residents, improve the western perceptions of Albania, and to prepare for integration into the European Union.