

# Albania



## General Information



### Population

2.854.191 (World Bank 2019)

2.845.955 (INSTAT Albania 2020)



### Immigration

48.810 (UN Immigration Stock 2020)

20.753 (INSTAT Albania 2020)



### Emigration

1.250.451 (UN Emigration Stock 2020)

43.853 (INSTAT Albania 2020)



### Working-age population

1.952.204 (World Bank 2019)

2.047.069 (INSTAT Albania 2020)



### Unemployment rate

11 % (World Bank 2019)

11.6% (INSTAT Albania 2020)



### GDP

15.279 bn, current prices USD (World Bank 2019)

12.800 bn, EUR (INSTAT Albania 2018)



### Refugees and IDPs

Refugees:

121 (UNHCR Mid-2020)

Asylum Seekers:

6.557 (INSTAT Albania 2019)



### Citizenship

By Birth: No

By Descent: Yes

Dual Citizenship: Yes

Years of Residency: 5



### Territory

28.748 km<sup>2</sup> (CIA World Factbook)

# Migration Authorities

## Responsible Body

Ministry of Interior

## Responsible Minister

## Line Ministries

Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

Ministry of State for Diaspora

Ministry of Health and Social Protection

## Agencies

Albanian State Police

Directorate for Asylum and Citizenship

Directorate of Anti-Trafficking and Migration

Institute of Statistics

National Reception Center for Asylum Seekers

National Employment and Skills Agency

## Key Policy Documents

National Migration Strategy and its Action Plan 2019-2022

National Strategy for Integrated Border Management and its Action Plan 2014-2020

Strategy against Organized Crime and Serious Crime 2021-2025 and its Action Plan 2021-2022

National Strategy of Diaspora 2021-2025

2020 Law on Citizenship

2021 Law on Asylum

2013 Law on Foreigners

## Relevant Publications

Migration Profile 2016

Extended Migration Profile 2009

Analytical Report 'Lessons learned from the 2015-2016 migration situation in the Western Balkan region'

Policy Brief 'Highly-skilled Return Migrants to the Western Balkans'

Albania is predominantly a country of emigration and transit. Its diverse diaspora accounts for nearly half of the country's population with the largest Albanian communities established in **Greece and Italy**. Economic motives such as unemployment or low wages still represent the **key push factors** for out-migration but **recent studies** have also shown that Albanian migrants search for better education opportunities. The majority of Albanian nationals in the EU receive residence permits for family reunification and other reasons, and only then for remunerated activities. In 2019, **43.000 persons** left the country, which represents a 13.3% increase as compared to 2018. Moreover, a significant share of the Albanian population, including **young** and educated citizens, intends to emigrate in the future. The main countries of destination targeted are likely to change from Greece and Italy to **Germany and the US**.

With its **unemployment rate** constantly decreasing and reaching 11.9 % in 2020 (11.47 % in 2019), the country has fared relatively well compared to its neighbours. Albania's poverty rate, nevertheless, remains high with an estimated 32 % of the population in October 2020 and further projections for **growth**. The economic hardship in the country has motivated many Albanians to seek asylum in the EU, thus placing Albania among the top ten countries of origin of asylum seekers most of whom did not qualify for asylum. The year 2020 saw a record **66 % drop** in the number of asylum applications (6498) owing to COVID-19 and the resulting travel restrictions but also to the **continuous efforts of Albanian authorities** to tackle the unfounded asylum applications of own nationals.

Since 2017, **immigration to Albania** has been decreasing (by 5,3 % in 2018, and 12,3 % in 2019). Most immigrants are coming from Italy, Turkey and Kosovo. While Italian citizens come mainly for employment and education purposes, nearly half of Kosovo nationals arrive to reunify with their families. **Irregular migrants** have actively used Albania along with other Western Balkan countries as a transit territory *en route* to the EU. Over 50 % of irregular migrants and over 60 % of asylum seekers in Albania originate from Iraq and Syria. In 2019, their numbers have doubled reaching some **12,000** and **6,500** respectively.

Return migration of the most recent past is mainly related to the voluntary return of Albanian asylum seekers whose applications were rejected by EU MS and primarily by **Germany**. Another group of returning migrants, albeit much smaller in number, accounts for **Albanians** who wanted to establish a business or have been offered a better job at home. Albania has not yet managed to capitalise on return flows but has recognised the potential of its diaspora and return migrants for the country's overall development in the **National Strategy of Diaspora 2021-2025**.

Albania is part of various regional initiatives on migration and labour mobility. It has set the 'Agenda 2030' as a national priority and has endorsed the Global Compact on Migration and its objectives. Early 2021 saw the long-awaited adoption of the **new Law on Asylum**, which brings Albania closer to international standards and EU legislation. Some progress was also made in improving the institutional capacity on border management and reception. **The government** affirms to have completed and adopted a comprehensive national cross-sectoral migration strategy and proceeded with the implementation of the integrated border management strategy.