



Country Fact Sheet

Albania

2018



Credit: IOM/ Antonio Fantasia, 2016

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I. Checklist for Voluntary Return



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Before the Return

The returnee should

- ✓ Request set of documentation from the German authorities which would be necessary for them after arrival as regards registration and re-registration procedures in the educational and health system as well as job market.
- ✓ Maintain kindergarten and school certificates/ diplomas, training certificates/diplomas, medical reports, if any, and vaccination books for children, mainly.
- ✓ Duly inform family or relatives in the home country about return dates for purposes of airport reception arrangements.
- ✓ Inquire about entry procedures in case of missing valid travel passports, as lengthier ones apply for temporary travel documents (TTD).

After the Return

The returnee should

- ✓ Register entry with the border and immigration authority upon arrival.
- ✓ Contact the civil registry office of the relevant municipality for the registration of new family members born abroad and identity documentation issuance, if lost.
- ✓ Contact local municipal authority to apply for social welfare and registration of children to creches.
- ✓ Contact the local education office for the enrolment of children to kindergartens/schools.
- ✓ Contact the local employment office for job seeking purposes.
- ✓ Contact the family doctor for registration and application of health card

II. Health Care

I. General Information

The healthcare system in Albania is mainly public. The private healthcare sector is still developing, and it covers most of the pharmaceutical and dental services as well as some clinics for specialized diagnoses, mainly being situated in Tirana.

The Albanian law guarantees equal access to healthcare for all citizens. Public healthcare in Albania is the major provider of health services, health promotion, prevention, diagnosis and treatments for the population of Albania. Primarily, the Government of Albania funds the State healthcare system. State insurance does not cover medical costs incurred in the private sector, as a result, they are only accessible to people who can afford to pay for them.

Benefits:

- Health services to the general practitioner and family doctor.
- Health services from the specialist.
- Health services in home, polyclinic and hospital.
- Laboratory examinations and radiological examinations.
- Tertiary unique examination with 90% refund and co paying with 10% refund.
- The drug reimbursement list 100% refund for children 0-12 months of full Invalids, pensioners, the blind and orphans.
- All drugs within and outside the list 100% for veterans with chronic disease and war invalids.

- Drugs with partial reimbursement for all other categories of population, in different percentages, but not less than 50% - the list of drugs versus prescription drawback, issued by the General Practitioner in all pharmacies that have contracts with the Health Insurance Fund.

Costs:

The minimal contribution for the compulsory health insurance for the self-employed is 3.4% of the double of the monthly minimum wage. While for the employed the contribution is 3.4% of the monthly gross salary. As regards the social insurances, the contribution is 24.5% of the monthly gross salary. The employer covers 15% of this amount whereas the employee 9.5%.

2. Medical treatment and medication

Medical facilities and doctors:

- Qendra Spitalore Universitare Nënë Tereza
- Rruga e Dibrës 372, Tirana 1000
- Telefon : 00355 4 2349233

Procedure of admission:

The returnee contacts the public hospital's secretary office to submit their ID and health card. A visit is arranged to the relevant medical expert for examination/check-up. A medical file is opened for the patient in case they need hospitalization.

Availability and costs of medication:

Imports dominate Albania's drug market and most major international brands are present in the country. Locally manufactured products account for a small share of the total market. The prices of medicines vary on quality and manufacturer.

Health Care System: Access for Returnees

Eligibility and requirements:

The Health Insurance Fund is the only autonomous public institution, which manages and develops the compulsory healthcare insurance scheme in Albania. The Fund covers the economically active and economically inactive people are included in the health insurance scheme, with the only difference that the first pay contributions themselves, while the second category is covered by the state budget.

Registration procedure:

The initial registration is performed at the family's doctor.

Required documents:

Returnees should bring their ID when applying for registration of health card.

III. Labour Market and Employment (1/2)

I. General Information

According to the World Bank, due to strong growth performance, Albania grew from the poorest nation in Europe in the early 1990s to middle-income status in 2008, with poverty declining by half during that period.

The country's economic activity is based on service provision, agriculture, and industry. Albania is a country rich in natural resources, but the economy depends on agriculture, oil processing, mineral extraction, energy, tourism, and textile industry.

The main sectors of the economy include the extractive industry, accommodation and food services, transportation, information and communication, services, processing industry, energy, gas, water and waste treatment, construction, and trade.

According to CEIC, Albania's Labour Force Participation Rate increased to 59.1% in December 2017, compared to 58.7% in the previous quarter. The data reached an all-time high of 59.1 % in December 2017 and a record low of 50.8 % in March 2014.

In the latest reports, Albania's Population reached 2.9 million people in December 2017. Unemployment dropped to 13.4% in December 2017. The country's monthly earnings stood at 543.0 USD in December 2017. Albania's GDP PPP per Capita is forecasted to be 13,193.74 PPP Intl \$ in December 2018 as reported by the International Monetary Fund's "World Economic Outlook".

2. Ways/assistance to find employment

The returnee applies to the Migration Counter (Sportel Migracioni) at the local employment office. The application is free of charge. The National Employment Service has facilitated the application through an online platform at <http://www.puna.gov.al/>

Unemployment Assistance: Access for Returnees

Eligibility and requirements:

At least 1 year of work insurance is required for eligibility.

Registration procedure:

Eligible persons should contact the local Employment Office to collect the necessary information.

Required documents:

- Work book;
- ID copy;
- Family certificate;
- Certificate by the tax office indicating that the person is not registered as a tax payer;
- Testimony from school that the children under 18 are attending school;
- Testimony from higher educational institutions for dependants up to 25 years old;
- Testimony from the medical commission on the disability of dependent(s);
- Mortgage certificate of land property (if any)

III. Labour Market and Employment (2/2)

3. Unemployment assistance

General information on public and/or private unemployment assistance:

- Persons who have been insured for at least 3 years of work will receive 6 unemployment salaries.
- Those with 10 years of insurance at work receive 12 months of unemployment assistance.
- Women above 55 and men above 60 will receive 12 months of unemployment salary under the condition of having contributed 1 year to the social insurances.

Benefits and Costs:

The basic level of unemployment benefits for each beneficiary is 50% of the country's minimum wage, around 220 USD per month.

Persons who meet the conditions for obtaining unemployment benefits are entitled to receive additional family income above the basic amount, to the extent of 5% of the unemployment benefit, for each dependent child up to the age of 18 years of age, as well as for persons who are continuing studies or are disabled, up to the age of 25 years.

When the parents are divorced by a court decision, the family supplement is given to the parent in charge of the child(ren).

4. Further education and trainings

Regional Directorates of Public Vocational Training under the National Employment Service offer different vocational training courses in Tirana, Durrës, Vlorë, Korce, Shkoder, Gjirokaster and Elbasan. They offer free of charge services for returned migrants.



Credit: IOM/ Antonio Fantasia 2016

IV. Housing

I. General Information

Average rent, running costs/utilities

Monthly rent varies depending on the size of the dwelling and location, with downtown being more expensive. It usually ranges from approx. USD 580 to USD 210 for furnished dwellings. Monthly utilities for two people (electricity, water bills, gas, heating) is USD 65 on average .

Demand and supply

Tirana, as the capital of the country, offers more housing opportunities and higher rent prices.

Housing facilities for returnees / social housing

Albania has a Social Housing Strategy aimed at providing low and middle income households who cannot afford a house in the open market with available, accessible, affordable and quality housing solutions. In particular, the scheme aims at households with vulnerability indicators resulting in housing exclusion.

However, the Ombudsman's office has observed that most municipalities have no budget allocated for social housing purposes.

Returned migrants can benefit from social housing program, with rental fees paid partly or fully by the local government authority.

2. Ways/assistance to find accommodation

Real estate agencies where information can be obtained operate countrywide .

- Century 21 Albania (www.century21albania.com)
- Albanian Real Estate (<https://www.realestate.al>)
- Remax (<https://www.remax-albania.com>)

3. Social grants for housing

In case the social housing rental fee exceeds 25% of the household's net income, the local authority subsidizes the rental grant. The priority beneficiaries are orphans, disabled people, returned migrants, Roma community, etc.

The set of documentation is filed to the local municipal office and is subject to additional requirements.



V. Social Welfare

I. General Information

According to the "National Strategy for Social Protection 2015 - 2020", the economic assistance scheme is the main instrument for "alleviating poverty" in the country. However, the payment currently has a limited impact on poverty reduction. There are currently about 80 000 families who benefit from scheme payments. The Economic Assistance Scheme targets relatively well the poor families, as the poorest part of population (20% of the population in the country, but not all within this group may be considered poor) benefits 56% of the scheme's spending.

Costs:

The costs are covered by the relevant local government.

Benefits:

The calculation for full grants is made in line with the household structure, but it cannot exceed 78 USD/month.

2. Pension System

The first pillar in the Albanian pension scheme is the PAYG funded system, publicly managed and "defined benefits" (DB) where benefits are calculated according to a specific formula based on the number of working-years, wages earned, as well as the contributions paid.

The second pillar is that of privately managed, voluntary contributed and defined contributions (DC). Law no. 10197, dated 10.12.2009 "Voluntary pension funds" consolidated the legal basis in the private pension market.

Benefits:

The retired receive retirement payments on a monthly basis.

3. Vulnerable Groups

Families without income; orphans who are not provided institutional assistance; victims of trafficking; victims of domestic violence; and minors under guardianship are considered vulnerable groups and targeted by the social welfare system. The assistance is provided mainly by government institutions such as the State Social Service (SSS).

The social administrators at the social services departments in the municipal units collect the set of documents such as a copy of the ID of the applicant and potentially other family members. The administrator, then completes an online application for economic aid, which summarizes the information on: family composition, education and employment; type of dwelling; household assets / assets; income from social protection programs.

The Office for Vulnerable Children and Youth in Albania (FLA) also provides assistance to children and youth whose rights are violated due to the behavior of the state administration and if their families do not have the opportunity to cover the costs of legal aid.

Social Welfare System: Access for Returnees

Eligibility and requirements:

Any returned migrant has access to the social welfare scheme like any other citizen of the Republic of Albania.

Registration procedure:

The returned migrant needs to register at the respective local municipal unit.

Registration documents:

IDs; Declaration on economic status of the family; Family certificate; House ownership documents; Unemployment certificate; School registration document for children.

VI. Educational System

I. General Information

Primary education: The Albanian literacy rate hovers at around 99% and efforts are ongoing to maintain this. Education is compulsory for the first 9 grades. The academic year is divided into two semesters beginning in September/October and ending in June/July.

Secondary education known as *regular* takes a further three years to complete. The focus is on academic teaching and preparation for university. Many schools have recently been rebuilt and are being equipped with modern technologies.

Tertiary education is represented through a significant number of both public and private universities in Albania that are well dispersed in the major cities. The University of Tirana is the oldest and biggest with a current student population approaching 15,000 and a teaching staff of nearly 900. Its faculties include economic sciences, foreign languages, history and philology, medicine, natural sciences, law, social sciences, and physical education.

Educational Level	Age
Child care / nursery school	0,5 – 3
Kindergarten	3 – 6
Primary Level	
Basic First Stage	6 – 11
Basic Second Stage	11 - 15
Secondary Level	
Middle School	15– 18
Vocational training	15-17/18
Higher Education	
University	From 18

Vocational education is an alternative to regular school takes between 2 to 4 years depending on whether a simple diploma or a full trade qualification is desired.

2. Cost, loans and stipends

Public education is free up to secondary level. Public University tuition fees vary from USD 245 to USD 390 per year. Tuition fees in private universities are higher and vary from USD 2,400 to USD 3,600.

Only a limited number of students with excellent scores are granted scholarships from the university. There are other categories such as students coming from no-income families, orphans, students who have lost parental guardianship, students identified as victims of trafficking, disabled students, etc. who are exempt from tuition fees. Their attendance is funded through local government authorities or social services.

The student should deposit the relevant documents to the University Secretariats: the personal request for a scholarship, the ID, the family certificate, a testimony from local municipality that the student's family is benefiting from social welfare grants, the testimony of the orphan status, the medical report of disability, court decision if the student has lost parental guardianship, etc.

3. Approval and verification of foreign diplomas

Application can be done either online or in written request deposited to the Educational Service Centre (QSHA). In addition, the applicant should submit the diploma obtained in a third country, score lists, a copy of ID and certification of payment.

Educational System: Access and Registration Procedure for Returnees

Returnees should approach the local Educational Directorate to register their children. Free of charge training is provided for returned migrants at Regional Directorates of Public Vocational Training in 7 districts of the country.

VII. Concrete Support for Returnees

I. Reintegration assistance programs

As of 2010, the Government of Albania has made continuous efforts to develop and implement a policy framework on returning migration and reintegration. The core element of the reintegration mechanism is to be found in the Migration Counters located at 36 regional and local employment offices throughout the country, which assess the reintegration needs of returning migrants and refer them to existing public services, such as health, education employment and so forth.

The establishment of such mechanism illustrates the efforts of the country to consolidate institutions that deliver services and social support and to increase the overall access of the population to public services.

2. Financial and administrative support

The only financial support is the social welfare grant allocated by the local government authority.

Returnees can look for administrative support in the offices of local municipalities and of local employment services.

3. Support to start income generating activities

Albanian Microfinance Institute (NOA, Fondi Besa, Agro & Social Fund, FedInvest, FAF & UniFin) – find contact details on the pages below.



Foto nga: IOM/ Antonio Fantasia 2016

VIII. Contact Information and Useful Links (1/4)

International, Non-Governmental, Humanitarian Organizations

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Rruga "Ibrahim Rugova"
Nd. 42, H.12, Apt. 4
Tirana
Tel: +355 (0) 4 2257836-7
Fax: +355 (0) 4 2257835
E-mail: infotirana@iom.int
Website: <http://www.albania.iom.int>

United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

Rruga "Skenderbej",
Gurten Building, 2nd Floor, Tirana
Tel.: +355 (4) 2250 205, 2250 224, 2250 234
Fax: +355 (4) 2250 286, 2250 289
Email: registry.al@undp.org
Website: <http://www.al.undp.org>

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Rruga "Skenderbej",
Gurten Building, 2nd Floor, Tirana
Tel. 355 4 4548400
Email: tirana@unicef.org
Website: <https://www.unicef.org/albania>

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Rruga "Skenderbej",
Gurten Building, 2nd Floor, Tirana
Tel.:+355 4 225 78 38
Email: albaniaoffice@unfpa.org
Website: <http://www.unfpa.org>

World Health Organization (WHO)

Rruga "Skenderbej",
Gurten Building, 2nd Floor
Tel.: +355 42266162, +355 42266163
Fax: +355 4 2266163
Email: whoalb@euro.who.int

World Bank

Rruga «Ibrahim Rugova», 34
Tirana
Tel. (355 4) 2280 650/1
Email: agjokutaj@worldbank.org
Website: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/albania>

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Twin Tower I, Suite 5-4
Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit
Tirana
Email: RR-ALB@imf.org
Tel: +355 (4) 2280 400
Fax: +355 (4) 2280 401

UN Women Office in Albania

Rruga "Skenderbej",
P. 8, 2nd floor, Ap. 29,30,31
Tirana
Tel: +355 4 450-2555
Fax: +355 4 450-2555
Website: www.facebook.com/unwomenalbania

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

Rruga "Skenderbej",
Gurten Building, 2nd Floor
Tel: 355 4 2250205
Fax: 355 4 2250286
Email: albti@unhcr.org
Website: www.unhcr.org/albania

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Torre Drin Building, 4th Floor
Rruga "Abdi Toptani"
Tirana
Tel: +355 4 2232 898

VIII. Contact Information and Useful Links (2/4)

Relevant local authorities (employment offices, health/pension insurances etc.)

Regional Employment Directorate BeratEmail: migena.toto@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355 694080206

Berat

Regional Employment Directorate FierEmail: nustret.avdulla@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355682068990

Fier

Regional Employment Directorate LezheEmail: fatmir.delishi@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692079746

Lezhe

Regional Employment Directorate ShkoderEmail: rozafa.zmijanej@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355694081600

Shkoder

Regional Employment Directorate KukesEmail: ledian.halilaj@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355695555669

Kukes

Regional Employment Directorate TiranaEmail: marisa.kacorri@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355696268269

Tirana

Regional Employment Directorate ElbasanEmail: oltion.kokunja@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692716128

Elbasan

Regional Employment Directorate KorceEmail: florenc.tabaku@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692059333

Korce

Regional Employment Directorate DurresEmail: indrit.buka@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692088884

Durres

Regional Employment Directorate DiberEmail: fatmir.bulku@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355682325432

Diber

Regional Employment Directorate GjirokasterEmail: eduart.pesha@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355697765558

Gjirokaster

Regional Employment Directorate PukeEmail: astrit.kuci@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355682036355

Puke

Regional Employment Directorate PermetEmail: florand.hasani@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355686053605

Permet

Regional Employment Directorate BulqizeEmail: asllan.daxha@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355693333501

Bulqize

Regional Employment Directorate Malesi e MadheEmail: rasim.demaj@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692140631

Malesi e Madhe

Regional Employment Directorate TepeleneEmail: oltjon.mema@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355686159999

Tepelene

Regional Employment Directorate VloreEmail: mariana.cani@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355692039315

Vlore

Regional Employment Directorate MatEmail: lefter.pasha@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355 685856455

Mat

Regional Employment Directorate LibrazhdEmail: veri.bicaku@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355682311816

Librazhd

Regional Employment Directorate TropojeEmail: shpresa.bucpapaj@shkp.gov.al

Mobile: 00355685125248

Tropoje

VIII. Contact Information and Useful Links (3/4)

Medical Facilities

Hospital University Centre “Nënë Tereza” (QSUT)

Rruga e Dibrës, Nr. 372, Tirana

Tel:+355 4 2349233

Website: www.qsut.gov.al

Trauma Hospital

Rruga Lord Bajron, Tirana 1000

Tel: 00355 4 430 5501

Regional Hospital Durres

Rruga Telat Noga

Tel: 00355 52 222 222

Website: www.srd.gov.al

Regional Hospital Elbasan

L. Haxhijas

Tel: 00355 54 258644

Website: www.sre.gov.al

Regional Hospital Berat

Lagja Kushtrimi

Tel: 00355 32 234222

Regional Hospital Diber

Bulevardi Elez Isufi

Tel: 00355 2182072

Regional Hospital Fier

Lagja I Maji, Rruga "Cameria"

Tel: 00355 34222021

Regional Hospital Gjirokaster

Lagja "18 Shtatori"

Tel: 003558463768

Regional Hospital Korce

Shetitorja "Fan Noli"

Tel: 003558242972

Regional Hospital Kukes

Tel: 003552425373

Regional Hospital Shkoder

Rruga Kolë Heqimi I I

Tel: 003552243347

Website: www.srsh.gov.al

Regional Hospital Vlore

Lagja "Partizani,,

Tel: 003553322657

Regional Hospital Lushnje

Lagja Xhevdet Nepravishtja

Tel: 00355 3522268

Psychiatric Hospital Vlore

Tel: 0035533 229 89

Email: s_psikiatrik_vl@yahoo.it

American Hospital (private)

Rruga Lord Bajron, Tirana

Tel: 00355 4 235 7535

Website: www.spitaliamerikan.com

Spitali Hygea (private)

Mbikalimi i Kamzës, KASHAR 1051

Tel: 00355 4 239 0000

Website: www.hygeia.al

VIII. Contact Information and Useful Links (4/4)

Other Contacts (e.g. NGOs for women and children, microcredit-lending)

Organization “Different & Equal

Rr. Milto Tutulani, P. Alb-Milenium, Shk.6, Ap. 39, Tirana
Tel: +355 (4) 222 18 9
E-Mail: different&equal@icc-al.org
Web: www.differentandequal.org

Counselling center for abused women and girls (CCWG)

Rruga «Sami Frasheri» Pall. 9, P.C. 1000 Tirana
Tel.+355 4 2233409

Office for Vulnerable Children and Youth in Albania (FLA)

CRCA Albania
Tel: + 355 4 2265741
E-mail: info@crca.al
Web: www.crca.al

Save the Children Albania Country Office

Rruga Mihal Popi, No. 7
Tirana
Tel:: +355 4 226 1840
<https://albania.savethechildren.net/contact-us>

"Vatra" Psycho-Social Centre

Lagjia: "Isa Boletini"
Rruga: "Nermin Vlora Falaski"
Pallati 13, Shkalla I, Kati III
Vlore
Tel: +355 33 22 40 78 /+ 355 69 88 84 613 (24 hours)
Website: www.qendravatra.org.al

"Tjeter Vizion" NGO

Lagja "Aqif Pasha"
Rruga "Ali Arapi", Nr.19
Elbasan
Tel: + 355 54 252919
Fax. +355 54 252919
E-mail : tjetervizion@gmail.com
Website: <http://tjetervizion.org>

Micro Credit Albania (MCA)

Blvd. "Zogu i Parë"
Tirana
Email: info@mca.al
Tel: +355 684055570
Website: www.mca.al

Saving and Credit Association "FED Invest"

Rr. "Qemal Stafa", P. 9 -katësh, Nr. 70, Kati2, Pazari i ri.
Tiranë
Email: info@fedinvest.al
Tel: + 355 4 2 251 910 /911
Website: www.fedinvest.al

FAF Sha

Rruga Dervish Hima 4
Tirana
Tel: +355 4 2 223937
Website: www.faf.al

UniFin

Tel: +355 4 224 469
Cel: +355 67 20 82 497
e-mail: ocane@unionijehona.org

Fondi Besa

Rr: Brigada VIII, Pall. 5, Tirane
Tel: +355 2253841
Email: mfi@besa.org.al

Agro & Social Fund

Rruga "Pjeter Bogdani", Pallati 23/4, Kati i II, Tirane
Tel: +355 46 31 57 43
Email: info@asfund.org
Website: <http://asfund.org/>

For further information please visit the information portal on
voluntary return and reintegration **ReturningfromGermany:**

<https://www.returningfromgermany.de/en/countries/albania>