

REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA | SECOND PROFILE 2023

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS



IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**

Required citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2023. *Migration Governance Indicators Second Profile 2023 – Republic of Albania*. IOM, Geneva.

ISBN 978-92-9268-694-9 (PDF)

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MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

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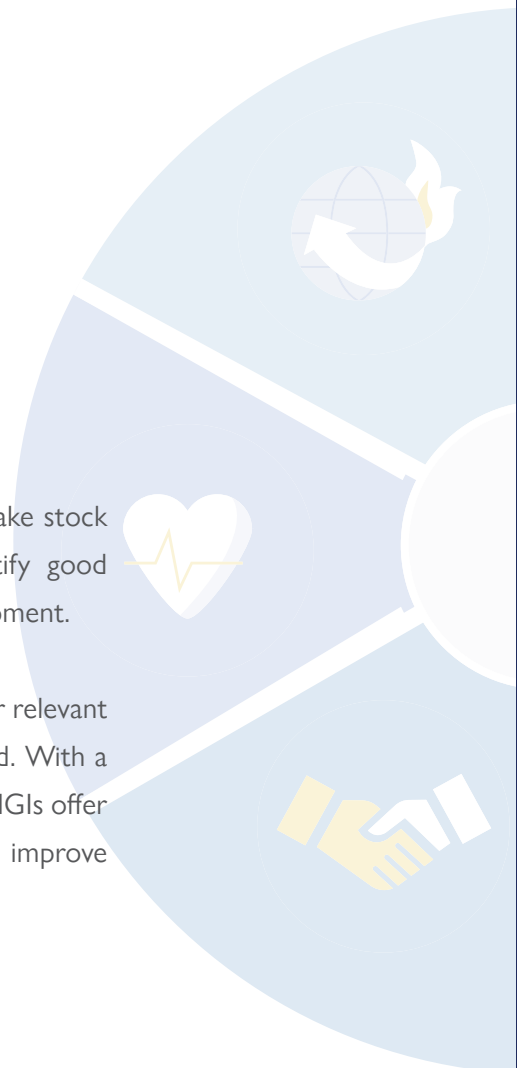
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OBJECTIVES

The MGIs aim to help governments, upon request, take stock of their migration policies and strategies to identify good practices and areas with potential for further development.

The MGIs open dialogues with governments and other relevant stakeholders to identify priorities on the way forward. With a focus on government ownership of the process, the MGIs offer support at the national and local levels to gradually improve migration management systems.



INTRODUCTION

“ Migration has been part of the human experience throughout history, and we recognize that it is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world, and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance.¹

The need to maximize the opportunities and to face the challenges that mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The incorporation of target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define “planned and well-managed migration policies”. This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance² Framework (MiGOF). This Framework³ offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances. That same year, IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact developed the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs), a standard set of almost 100 indicators that help States assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures.

The indicators constitute a starting point to engage governments in a consultative process that allows them to identify areas that are well developed and others that would benefit from further development, and most importantly priorities that are in line with the specific challenges and opportunities that a given country is facing.

The MGIs are characterized by three main fundamental attributes:

1. The MGI process is a **voluntary** exercise: The MGIs are conducted in countries that have requested to be part of the process.
2. The MGIs are **sensitive to national specificities**: The MGIs recognize the different challenges and opportunities of each context, and therefore, do not propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather aim to spark a discussion on what well-governed migration can mean.
3. The MGIs constitute a **process**: The MGI process is not a static tool to collect data on countries' migration frameworks. It is rather the first step of a dynamic exercise that can enable governments to identify areas of their migration policy in need of further development, or that could benefit from capacity-building.

The MGIs recognize that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities in relation to migration. Therefore, the MGIs do not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies.

Finally, the MGIs do not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, they take stock of the migration-related policies in place and operate as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries can consider as they further progress towards good migration governance.

MGI follow-up assessments aim to show the progress that countries have made in their migration governance policies since their first MGI assessment.⁴ This country profile presents a summary of the main changes and achievements that have taken place in the migration governance structures of the Republic of Albania (hereinafter also referred to as Albania), since 2018, as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGIs.⁵

¹ United Nations, [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) (A/RES/73/195 of 11 January 2019), paragraph 8.

² “Migration governance” refers to the system of institutions, legal frameworks, mechanisms, and practices aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants. It is used almost synonymously with the term “migration management”, although the latter is also sometimes used to refer to the narrow act of regulating cross-border movement at the State level.

³ IOM Council, [Migration Governance Framework](#), 106th Session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015), page 1, footnote 1.

⁴ The 2018 Migration Governance Profile for the Republic of Albania is available [here](#).

⁵ The MGI initiative is a policy-benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of Economist Impact. Funding is provided by IOM Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

IOM's MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane and orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adhere** to international standards and fulfil migrants' rights.
2. **Formulate** policy using evidence and a whole-of-government approach.
3. **Engage** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. **Effectively address** the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

At the basis of

MGIs

WHAT THEY ARE



A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures



A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed



A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG target 10.7 and the Global Compact for Migration implementation*

Which support the measurement of

WHAT THEY ARE NOT



Not a ranking of countries



Not an assessment of policy impacts



Not prescriptive



Note: "The Global Compact for Migration is framed in a way consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration."

The MGIs consist of almost 100 indicators grouped under the six different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:



MIGRANTS'
RIGHTS
PAGE 18

Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They look at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.



WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
APPROACH
PAGE 21

Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.



PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 24

This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.



WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 26

Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.



MOBILITY DIMENSION
OF CRISES
PAGE 28

This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals in relation to disasters and climate change, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.



SAFE, ORDERLY AND
REGULAR MIGRATION
PAGE 30

This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.



SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF UPDATES SINCE 2018

Migrants' rights

Since the previous assessment, the new Law No. 113 on Citizenship (2020) has expanded how Albanian citizenship is acquired by allowing a migrant who is married to an Albanian citizen to apply for citizenship after three years of marriage and having lived in Albania for at least one year. Migrants who are the parents of a minor with Albanian citizenship are also now able to apply for Albanian citizenship after legally and continuously living in Albania for at least three years. Stateless persons and refugees may also apply for citizenship if they have lived in Albania for at least seven years.

Long-term residents and their families have equal access to employment as citizens in Albania. Since the previous MGI assessment in 2018, the new Law No. 79 on Aliens (2021) introduced a “single permit” for all other migrants to access employment.

In 2019, Albania adopted the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019–2022, which addresses discrimination against migrants. The Strategy notes the need for more training for judges and police forces, as well as better monitoring of the implementation of the rights of migrants. The Action Plan includes measures on awareness-raising of the rights of migrants and their effective fulfilment and better monitoring of cases of discrimination against them.

Whole-of-government approach

Since the previous MGI assessment, Albania has strengthened its national migration legislation regulating immigration through Law No. 79 on Aliens, which oversees the entry, stay, work, study, and exit regimes for migrants in Albania and outlines the visa and permit regimes and procedures; and the new Law No. 10 on Asylum (2021), which regulates the procedures for granting asylum and complementary and temporary protection and increases the level of cooperation between responsible institutions.

Albania's National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan aim to build an intersectoral approach to migration in order to maximize the benefits of migration for migrants and Albanian society. The Strategy aligns with other national priorities, such as the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015–2020 (2016), the National Strategy of Diaspora 2018–2024 (2018) and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan established coordination and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy – the Technical Secretariat for Migration of the Ministry of Interior's Migration Section, the Technical Committee for Migration and the Steering Group on Migration.

In 2020, Albania adopted the National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora 2021–2025, and in 2022, the competencies of the Minister of State for the Diaspora regarding diaspora engagement were assigned to the National Diaspora Agency and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Partnerships

Albania, among other 40 countries, adopted the Istanbul Commitments on the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration and its Call for Action in February 2019.

The Government of Albania has strengthened partnerships with its diaspora through the creation of the Coordinating Council of Teachers in the Diaspora in 2020 and the Diaspora Coordination Council in 2018.

Albania has expanded its memorandums of understanding (MoUs) signed with destination countries by signing the Partnership, Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 2021, and the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Exchange of Information for Migration-related Purposes in 2022.

In 2019, Albania became part of the Open Balkan initiative, a regional agreement promoting labour mobility. As a result, Albania has signed several MoUs and agreements on tourism, taxation administration, import and export of goods, free access to labour markets, and interconnection of schemes for electronic identification of the citizens of the Western Balkans.

Well-being of migrants

As of 2019, the application process for the recognition of foreign diplomas is carried out entirely online through the Government of Albania's e-Albania portal.⁶

In 2021, Albania approved the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030 to promote gender equality for all women, including migrants, in the labour force, by increasing their access to “dignified work”.

Law No. 79 on Aliens has strengthened the country's institutional framework to ensure the ethical recruitment of migrants by charging the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) with the responsibility of carrying out assessments of all recruitment processes within two weeks of receipt of a work permit application. Additionally, under the Law, NAES may refuse to approve the request for the employment of a migrant if “employment has resulted from an irregular placement or recruitment”.

Mobility dimension of crises

In 2019, the Government adopted Law No. 45 on Civil Protection to reduce the risk from disasters and to guarantee the protection of people by strengthening the civil defence system. Article 57 explicitly states, “Citizens [local or foreign] have the right to seek protection ... from civil protection structures ... when affected by disaster.”

In 2021, the “Contingency plan for a possible massive influx of migrants and asylum-seekers at the Albanian border” was updated to guarantee the rights of migrants and asylum-seekers in Albania by improving the country's capacity to identify, process, and provide services to migrants and asylum-seekers, and through creating an environment where migrants feel secure.

Under Law No. 10 on Asylum, Albania offers temporary protection to persons who are fleeing war or other similar crises of violence or conflict in their respective home countries and whose home countries cannot guarantee their protection.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

In 2020, the Ministry of Interior adopted the National Strategy against Organized Crime and Serious Crimes 2021–2025 and the Action Plan 2021–2022 to combat human trafficking. The latter explicitly refers to migrants and establishes recurrent training for border and migration police officers.

Since the previous MGI assessment, Albania has strengthened its procedures to identify and assist migrants in vulnerable situations in a timely manner, by creating type “A” temporary permits of residence valid for three months for victims or potential victims of trafficking under Law No. 79 on Aliens.

Albania's Law No. 10 on Asylum strengthens the child-centric approach of Albanian procedures and measures aimed at ensuring the protection of migrant children, including unaccompanied children.

⁶ Visit the website of [e-Albania](#) for more information.

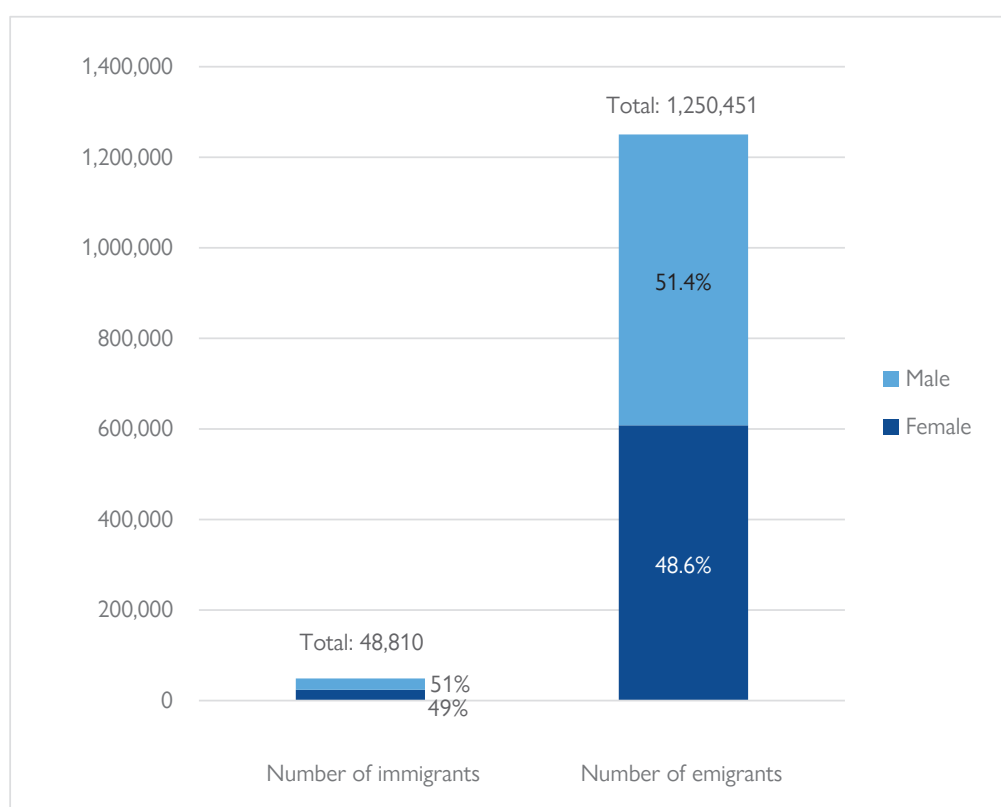


CONTEXT

Immigration to Albania has decreased in the past two decades after reaching its highest number in the year 2000 (76,695 people).⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) figures indicate that 48,800 international migrants were living in the country as of midyear 2020, which represent 1.7 per cent of the country's total population. Disaggregated data indicate that the share of female emigrants (49%) in 2020 was slightly lower than the share of males (see Figure 1). Additionally, Figure 2 shows that the majority of immigrants in 2020 were 0–19 years old, followed by working-age migrants, who made up 40 per cent of total immigration.

On the other hand, Albania has experienced increasing emigration since the 1990s, with emigration numbers reaching 1.2 million people in 2020, more than one third of its total population (2.9 million) according to data estimates by DESA,⁸ and 49 per cent of them female and 51 per cent male (see Figure 1). Comparing immigration and emigration figures shows that the estimated net migration in Albania in 2022 reached -10,600 migrants. In addition, data from the World Bank show that personal remittances received in Albania accounted for 9.9 per cent of the GDP in 2022.⁹

Figure 1. International migration to and from Albania (at midyear 2020)

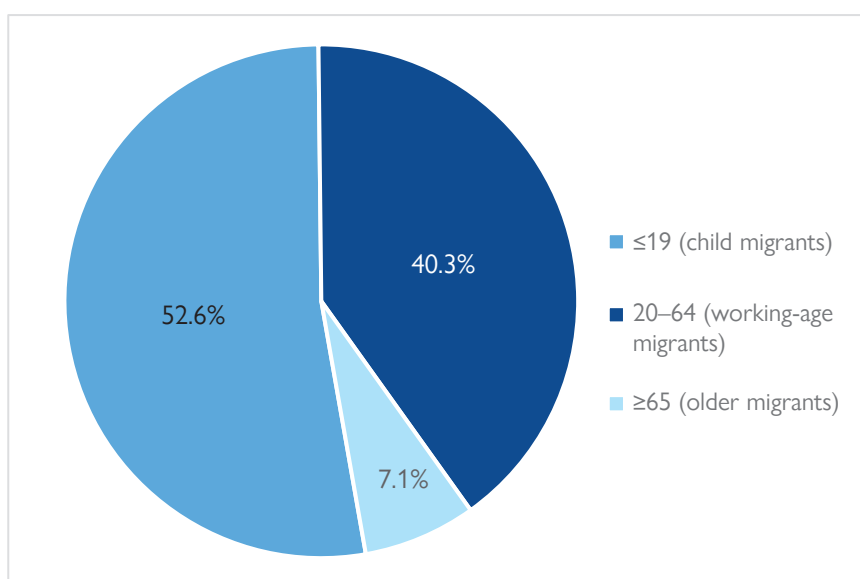


Source: DESA, *International Migrant Stock 2020*.

⁷ Visit the [Migration Data Portal](#) for more information.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Figure 2. Distribution of migrants by age group (at midyear 2020)

Source: Migration Data Portal, [Total number of international migrants at midyear 2020](#) (DESA, 2020).



KEY

FINDINGS



1

ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFIL MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

As per the previous MGI evaluation, migrants, depending on their migration status, can access Government-funded health services as Albanian nationals. The Ministry of Health and Social Protection is responsible for the design and implementation of strategies in the health-care sector as well as the regulation of health-care services. Economically active permanent residents are treated as economically active Albanian citizens – meaning that they have compulsory health insurance and access to health services on the same basis as citizens, under Law No. 10 383 on Compulsory Health Insurance (2011).¹⁰ In the event of a medical emergency, and in cases where the lack of medical care may endanger life, all migrants, irrespective of their status, have access to health care, as per Law No. 10 107 on Health Care in the Republic of Albania (2009) and Law No. 79 on Aliens (2021).

Albania grants access to education to all migrants, irrespective of migration status, asylum-seekers, refugees and persons under complementary protection. The right to education is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Albania (1998) and under Article 46 of Law No. 79 on Aliens. Further, Law No. 69 on Pre-university Education in the Republic of Albania (2012) guarantees the right to education “to Albanian citizens, aliens and stateless persons, without discrimination based on gender, race, colour, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, economic or social situation, age, place of residence, limited ability, or other reasons determined by Albanian legislation”. Under the same Law, education is provided free of charge to all students from preschool¹¹ to higher secondary education. Additionally, Law No. 10 on Asylum (2021) guarantees those with refugee status and those enjoying subsidiary protection the right to pre-university and higher education on the same basis as Albanian citizens, and further extends the right to education for children applying for asylum. To implement these provisions, the local education offices of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth have developed ad hoc plans to prepare asylum-seekers and unaccompanied children for school and support their integration, including by delivering language courses. These services also aid the children of returnees in accessing local schools, and monitor their progress and report on this to regional educational offices on a biannual basis.

All regular migrants have the right to access social protection services in Albania. Law No. 7703 on Social Insurance in the Republic of Albania (1993) explicitly grants access to social insurance to “(a) Albanian citizens and stateless persons, [and] former Albanian citizens who are outside the country, in accordance with the conventions, bilateral agreements and the regulation of the Social Insurance Institute; [and] (b) foreign citizens and stateless persons who work in Albania”. Social insurance grants a variety of benefits in cases of “temporary disability at work due to illness, pregnancy, old age, disability and loss of the breadwinner, accident at work and occupational diseases, [and] unemployment” (Article 7 of Law No. 121 on Social Protection (2016)). Article 8 of Law No. 121 guarantees the right to social protection – namely services in community centres, including centres for development; services in residential centres; social services in emergency situations; services of alternative care for children without parental care; and specialized services – for “aliens, stateless persons and refugees who live in the Republic of Albania”.

Albania has several agreements in place with other countries on the portability of social security entitlements. In 2003, Albania ratified the Agreement with the Government of the Republic of Türkiye for Social Protection, which provides for payment of social protection benefits for Albanians living in Türkiye and

¹⁰ Health insurance covers visits, examinations and medical treatments in public primary health settings and public hospitals; visits, examinations and medical treatments in private primary health settings and private hospitals; and medications, products and health treatments from contracted health services.

¹¹ According to Law No. 69 of 2012, preschool education applies to children aged between 3 and 6 years old.

vice versa. In 2015, the Agreement between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia on Social Protection and the Agreement between the Republic of Albania and Hungary on Social Protection came into force, ensuring the portability of social protection across the participating countries. Then in 2016, the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on Social Protection, and the Agreement with the Kingdom of Belgium on Social Protection came into force, with the latter enabling Albanians living in Belgium and vice versa to receive social security benefits from their respective countries of origin. In the same year, the Agreements on Social Protection with the Federal Republic of Germany, the Czech Republic, as well as Romania were signed. In addition, an agreement ensuring the portability of social security entitlements between Albania and Kosovo¹² was ratified and entered into force on 1 July 2022.

Permanent residents and their families have equal access to employment as citizens in Albania, while all other migrants require permits. Law No. 79 on Aliens allows long-term residents to “be employed, self-employed or engage in direct business activities, without the need for a work permit ... [and] enjoy the same economic, health and social rights as the Albanian nationals” (Article 96). Family members of migrants residing in Albania do not need approval from the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) to be employed in Albania. Under the Law on Aliens, all other types of migrants require “single permits” to access employment.¹³ According to NAES, single permits remain valid as long as the motive for awarding the permit remains unchanged – meaning that migrants under this permit can, in principle, seek another job under the same permit, but they must notify the authorities about the change in workplace (and address if applicable).

Law No. 113 on Citizenship (2020) expanded how citizenship is acquired by allowing a migrant who is married to an Albanian citizen to apply for citizenship after three years of marriage and having lived in Albania for at least one year. Migrants who are the parents of a minor with Albanian citizenship are also able to apply for Albanian citizenship after legally and continuously living in Albania for at least three years. Stateless persons and refugees may apply for citizenship if they have lived in Albania for at least seven years.

Albania gathers and maintains statistics on its citizens living abroad. The Ministry of Interior facilitates the registration of Albanian citizens residing abroad on a regular basis through the Address Registration Programme as part of the Albanian National Civil Register, a process that was initiated in 2016 under Law No. 14 on the Identification and Registration of the Addresses of Albanian Citizens Who Are Abroad. This is done on a voluntary and self-declaration basis: Albanian citizens living abroad can register their address online for free through the Government’s e-Albania portal.¹⁴ Further, since the previous assessment, Albania’s Council of Ministers adopted the National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora 2021–2025 (2020), which tasks the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, and the Minister of State for the Diaspora with the “evaluation and expansion of the National Civil Register and the migration database”. The National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora also tasks the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Minister of State for the Diaspora and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth with the creation of a separate registry for the “identification of cultural, sports, educational, social [and] scientific associations operating in the host countries as well as talented and successful individuals among the diaspora”. The Government of Albania presents data on citizens living abroad in its Extended National Migration Profile, published every four years, with the most recent being for the period 2015–2018.^{15,16}

¹² References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

¹³ These single permits include the following: permit as an employee, permit for seasonal employment, permit for transfer within the company, permit as a cross-border employee, permit for professional training, permit for sport practitioners, permit for voluntary services, permit for employees with high qualifications, permit for self-employed persons, permit for mobile digital workers, permit for investors, and permit for contractual services – a contract is required prior to applying.

¹⁴ See footnote 6.

¹⁵ The data collected include raw data on the migratory stock of the country, the number of Albanian citizens with residence in the European Union, statistics on the removal/deportation of Albanian citizens in European Union countries, the number of unaccompanied Albanian minors abroad, the number of acquisitions of host country citizenships, and data on returnees to Albania.

¹⁶ See: Ministry of Interior, 2020a.

There are several strategies and policies in place to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants. The Constitution of Albania was updated in 2022 to enshrine the equality of migrants' rights with those of citizens, establishing that "fundamental rights, freedoms and obligations provided for in the Constitution for Albanian citizens are also valid for foreigners and stateless persons in the territory of the Republic of Albania" (Article 16). As part of the strategic objective of the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019–2022 (2019) to "[e]nsure that a comprehensive non-discrimination framework effectively protects migrants' rights", it includes activities such as "[extending] legal guarantees of non-discrimination", "[raising] migrants' awareness of their rights and procedures for their enforcement" and "[improving the] effectiveness and monitoring of response mechanisms". Law No. 10 221 on Protection from Discrimination (2010) established the role of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination as the responsible body for ensuring the effective protection of migrants from discrimination, and it was updated in 2020 to extend "the principle of equality and non-discrimination" to "all persons who live and stay in the territory of the Republic of Albania", including "[n]atural and legal foreign persons".

1.2. Areas with potential for further development

In Albania, migrants' access to the labour market is regulated by yearly quotas. NAES oversees the setting of yearly quotas for professions in Albania and gives approval to companies and bodies seeking to employ migrants after demonstrating that the position cannot be filled by the following categories: an unemployed Albanian citizen, a migrant married to an Albanian citizen, the family member of a migrant residing in Albania, or a citizen of the United States of America, the European Union or countries of the Western Balkans residing in Albania.

Under Law No. 79 on Aliens, a migrant without a valid travel document, a valid visa or a residence permit "shall not be provided with public services from organizations and local administration, public interest entities and social insurance institutions" (Article 133). The General Directorate of Civil Status, under the Ministry of Interior, oversees the issuing of personal documents, including family certificates, birth certificates, marriage certificates and death certificates. Individuals can apply for these services online through the Government's e-Albania portal,¹⁷ but they are available only in Albanian; however, the documents themselves can be issued in other languages.

¹⁷ See footnote 6.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND
WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Immigration in Albania is regulated by Law No. 79 on Aliens (2021), which oversees the entry, stay, work, study and exit regimes for migrants in Albania, outlining the visa and permit regimes and procedures. The Law focuses on work procedures as well as rights, and considers vulnerable people, including victims of human trafficking and gender-based violence. In parallel, Law No. 10 on Asylum (2021) regulates the procedures for granting asylum and complementary and temporary protection, and it increases the level of cooperation between responsible institutions. In addition, the development of a new law on emigration is being considered, which would replace Law No. 9668 on the Emigration of Albanian Citizens for Employment Purposes (2006).

Albania's Technical Secretariat for Migration, within the Ministry of Interior, is responsible for coordinating the design and implementation of migration policies in the country. Established in 2020, the Technical Secretariat for Migration gathers reports every three months from all line ministries and institutions on the status of the implementation of the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019–2022 (2019).

Albania's national interministerial coordination mechanism for migration-related issues includes the Steering Group on Migration, the Technical Secretariat for Migration and the Technical Committee for Migration. The Steering Group, which was created in 2021, is a consultative body responsible for monitoring and overseeing progress in attaining the objectives of the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan and improving coordination mechanisms to ensure its implementation. The Steering Group meets at least once a year, with its most recent meeting held on 20 December 2022, and is headed by the Deputy Minister of Interior, with representatives consisting of deputy ministers from the various ministries responsible for measures listed in the Action Plan.¹⁸ In parallel, in 2020, the National Strategy on Migration established the Technical Committee for Migration, which has met three times as of December 2022¹⁹ and involves additional institutions to coordinate on migration-related issues.²⁰ The Technical Secretariat for Migration submits its quarterly reports on the status of the implementation of the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan to this Committee.

Albania has several bodies coordinating diaspora-related activities under the responsibility of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, which operates the Directorate of Public Diplomacy and Diaspora, since the reorganization of the Government of Albania after the latest parliamentary elections in April 2021. Under Law No. 16 on the Diaspora (2018), the National Diaspora Agency is responsible for gathering data on the diaspora and for the implementation of related policies and projects. Additionally, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs is charged with protecting and promoting the interests of the diaspora and organizes activities and regular consultative meetings with its members. Further, the State Committee for the Diaspora was established in 2017 with the aim of preparing guidelines for the drafting of new diaspora policies, proposing legal and institutional mechanisms for issues related to the diaspora, and promoting and developing the dialogue for the implementation of diaspora-related strategies, laws and policies, among

¹⁸ These are the Ministry of Interior; the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Finance and Economy; the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Tourism and Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; the Ministry of Health and Social Protection; the Ministry of Culture; the former Minister of State for the Diaspora; and the Minister of State for Relations with Parliament.

¹⁹ The Technical Committee for Migration has met three times: on 11 May 2021, 6 December 2021 and 13 December 2022.

²⁰ The Technical Committee includes the General Directorate of the State Police, the National Diaspora Agency, the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), the Department of Public Administration, the Albanian School of Public Administration, the National Agency for Employment and Skills, the Bank of Albania, the Albanian Investment Development Agency, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, the Albanian Financial Supervisory Authority, the Ombudsman, the State Inspectorate of Labour and Social Services, the Social Insurance Institute, the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services, the State Committee for the Diaspora, the School of Magistrates of the Republic of Albania, and the mayors of three municipalities representing the Albanian Association of Municipalities.

other objectives.²¹ In addition, based on Article 2 of Law No. 32 of 2018, the Albanian Fund for Diaspora Development was established in 2018 to ensure “the provision and distribution of financial resources, in the framework of promoting socioeconomic and cultural development, based on the National Strategy of Diaspora, through the encouragement and promotion of philanthropic tendencies and investments in support of the development of the diaspora in the Republic of Albania and abroad”.

Since the previous MGI assessment, Albania has adopted the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan, drafted by the Inter-institutional Working Group²² under the coordination of the Ministry of Interior, with IOM support. The Strategy aims to build an intersectoral approach to migration in order to maximize the benefits of migration for migrants and society. It aligns with other priorities of Albania, such as the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015–2020 (2016), the National Strategy of Diaspora 2018–2024 (2018) and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the country’s aspirations for accession to the European Union. The Strategy focuses on four specific objectives, namely “[guaranteeing the] strategic governance of migration in Albania”; “[guaranteeing] safe and orderly migration from, through, and to Albania”; “[developing] an effective labour migration policy while enhancing the positive impact of migration in the national/local socioeconomic development”; and “[promoting and protecting] migrants’ rights and their integration”.²³

Additionally, the National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora 2021–2025 (2020) aims to strengthen the engagement of the diaspora in migration and development policies while aligning with the interests of the country’s economic development and the importance of preserving the national identity. To do so, it sets out six objectives: “[s]trengthening and developing the relationship with the Albanian diaspora”, “[s]upporting organizational activities in the diaspora”, the “creation of mechanisms to facilitate and attract investments from the diaspora”, the “implementation of programmes for learning the Albanian language”, “informing the diaspora on the socioeconomic developments in their country of origin”, and “monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy of Diaspora”.

The National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2030 (NSDEI 2030) (2022) defines the strategic objectives for all sectors, including migration, for the period 2023–2030. The NSDEI 2030 took into account the National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan while defining its objectives. It includes a section titled “Migration management”, which explores Albania’s current migratory situation and legal migration framework, identifying various gaps in the successful implementation of Albania’s National Strategy on Migration. It aims to mitigate these by, for example, “strengthening reintegration mechanisms in order to guarantee a stable return of Albanian citizens”, “strengthening migration management structures and immigration policies to ensure the integration of migrants in accordance with international standards”, and “aligning migration policy with development policy for the benefit of migrants and Albanian society”. The NSDEI 2030 also addresses issues relating to the diaspora, including securing the right to vote for Albanian citizens living abroad, as well as the importance of the preservation of their identity and relationship with the home country.

Various government institutions in Albania collect and publish migration-related data. The Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) annually publishes data on population numbers on its website, including data on migrants and asylum-seekers. The latest data set was published in 2022 for the 2021 period (INSTAT, 2022a, 2022b).²⁴

²¹ The Committee is presided by the Prime Minister and includes the following members: the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs; the Minister of Interior; the Minister of Finance and Economy; the Minister of Justice; the Minister of Education, Sport and Youth; the Minister of Culture; the Minister of Tourism and Environment; the Minister of State for the Diaspora (which no longer exists); the Governor of the Bank of Albania; the President of the Academy of Sciences; and the Director of INSTAT.

²² The Inter-institutional Working Group comprises the Ministry of Finance and Economy; the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth; and the General Directorate of the State Police.

²³ As of December 2022, Albania is working on drafting a new Strategy on Migration once an assessment of the current Strategy is completed.

²⁴ The data on migrants cover the number of migrants with residence permits in Albania, disaggregated by gender and continent of origin; the number of applications for residence permits, disaggregated by country of origin – the main countries of origin for migrants in Albania; and the number of irregular migrants recorded, disaggregated by country of origin. The data on asylum-seekers cover the number of asylum-seekers in Albania, disaggregated by country of origin; the number of asylum requests by month; and the number of people who have obtained Albanian citizenship and the number of people who have renounced it, disaggregated by country of origin and age.

In parallel, the Ministry of Interior presents data through its Extended National Migration Profiles (last published in 2020 for the period 2015–2018), published every five years, and its Migration Profiles, published annually (last published in 2016). The Ministry of Interior is currently working on the plan and methodology for the next Extended National Migration Profile, which will be published in 2023 for the period 2019–2022.²⁵ This same Ministry, specifically through the Department of Border and Migration under the Albanian State Police, collects data at border points and through applications for visas and residence permits, and administers the National Electronic Register for Foreigners, which registers all migrants in the country along with their residency status. However, these data are not publicly available. Finally, the National Agency for Employment and Skills publishes an annual statistical bulletin (last published in 2022), which includes data on employment-seeker emigrants who have returned, and data on the employment permits, verifications and registration permits for employment given to foreign nationals.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

Albania's National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan does not take into consideration migration as a result of the adverse effects of climate change or environmental degradation and makes no mention of such phenomena.

INSTAT has not yet established a coordination mechanism or developed clear guidelines to compile, harmonize and standardize migration data collected by different government agencies.

Albania has a transparent and accessible set of rules regarding migration, but these are not yet centralized and remain scattered across various government websites. Albania continues to make efforts to digitalize procedures and improve the availability of public information and services online through the e-Albania portal, which provides relevant services in Albanian. Legal documents related to migration are accessible in Albanian through the Official Publications Centre. Information on the e-visa process is accessible online and available in Albanian and English on the e-Visa Application System website. The Law on Aliens is available in Albanian and English on the website of the Ministry of Interior. Additionally, the website of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs has a section catering to migrants, with information on citizenship issues, legalization and authentication of documents, the visa regime for foreign citizens, consular fees, and contact details of relevant ministerial offices provided in Albanian and English. Finally, the website of the State Police also includes links to relevant migration laws. Overall, the development of an online portal for foreigners to access centralized information on migration rules and the services provided, as well as to utilize those online services, is an area with potential for further advancement.

²⁵ The Extended National Migration Profile 2015–2018 (2020) contains, among others, the following data points: migratory stock by gender; Albanian citizens with regular residence in the European Union; removal/deportation orders for Albanian citizens from European Union countries; Albanian citizens temporarily detained when leaving the territory; unaccompanied minors with Albanian citizenship present in Italian territory; asylum-seekers with Albanian citizenship in European Union countries, considered as unaccompanied minors; acquisition of host country citizenship by Albanian citizens; returned Albanian citizens by age group and gender; returns of Albanian unaccompanied minors by country; net internal migration by county; foreigners residing in the country by nationality; foreigners studying in Albania; foreigners with international protection in Albania; foreign asylum-seekers in Albania by nationality; foreigners caught at the border or in Albanian territory; foreigners denied entry by motive; statistics on victims of human trafficking; issuance of work permits by nationality; foreigners residing in Albania by origin; foreigners residing in Albania by age group; residence permits for foreigners by motive; residence permits for foreigners by gender; and dynamics of remittances from Albanian immigrants.



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Albania is part of several regional processes and forums. It is part of the Budapest Process, established in 1993 as an “information sharing tool between European countries in a pre-EU enlargement setting ... [and a] forum for improving migration management”.²⁶ Albania is also a member of the Prague Process, established in 2009 as a regional consultative process on migration covering 50 European States, with the aim of “strengthen[ing] cooperation in migration management, and ... [exploring and developing] agreed-upon principles and elements for close migration partnerships between the participating countries”. Since 2003, Albania has been a member of the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) alongside Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo.¹² MARRI was established with a mandate to “promote closer regional cooperation and common, comprehensive and harmonized approach of MARRI Participants in areas of migration, asylum, border control, trafficking in human beings, visa regime, and integration and return of refugees”, with an aim to achieve international and European standards. It seeks to provide “free and well managed movement of persons in Western Balkans”. Finally, Albania has been a candidate for European Union membership since 2014 and, as such, is part of several regional processes, including the Stabilisation and Association Agreement signed in 2009 to strengthen cooperation in the management of visas, border control, asylum and migration, and to prevent irregular migration.

As a result of its participation in the Budapest Process 6th Ministerial Conference in 2019, along with almost 40 countries, Albania adopted the Istanbul Commitments on the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration and its Call for Action, which includes six priority areas of cooperation. In particular, countries have agreed to improve the conditions for regular migration and mobility, promote labour market assessments and mobility agreements, develop programmes for circular and temporary migration, enhance student mobility, and facilitate well-managed mobility for genuine travellers, including students, researchers and businesspeople, with improved transparency of rules and procedures.

Albania formally engages members of diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policy through formal consultative organizations. Since the previous MGI assessment, the Coordinating Council of Teachers in the Diaspora was created in 2020 as part of the Diaspora Publishing Centre, with the aim of improving the quality of educational policies for the Albanian diaspora communities. Albania also created the Diaspora Coordination Council in 2018 to integrate notable persons among the diaspora in various fields, such as education, technology, science and philanthropy, and to promote the interests of the diaspora through various activities. In addition, the National Diaspora Agency (NDA) organizes various activities with the aim of connecting to citizens who live abroad and practise certain professions. For instance, in 2021, two gatherings of professionals took place: one aimed at encouraging lawyers among the diaspora to exchange experiences, and the other for doctors working abroad, which focused on managing the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2016 and 2019 respectively, the country organized the first and second Diaspora Summits in Tirana, which included representatives from diaspora organizations, as well as government representatives from neighbouring countries. NDA maintains on its website a list of diaspora organizations, including contact information for each. Albania has various memorandums of understanding (MoUs) in place with destination countries and is currently seeking to negotiate several agreements with countries of origin. After the previous MGI assessment, on 5 February 2021, Albania signed the Partnership, Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which entered into force on 3 May 2021.

²⁶ As of February 2023, the Budapest Process has 51 member States and 7 observer States.

Additionally, on 16 May 2022, Albania signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Exchange of Information for Migration-related Purposes, which complements the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Readmissions of Persons and its Protocols (2005).

Albania participates in bilateral migration negotiations with origin countries such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iraq, Morocco, Pakistan, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, since 2014, Albania has participated in forums related to the European Union enlargement process, such as the Berlin Process,²⁷ which has held yearly summits involving the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo¹²) and European Union member States.²⁸

Since the previous MGI assessment, Albania has become part of the Open Balkan initiative, a regional agreement promoting labour mobility. The Open Balkan was initiated in 2019 after a trilateral meeting between the leaders of Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia. There have been attempts to include other countries and areas in the Western Balkans by way of several intergovernmental meetings, notably with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Kosovo.¹² As a result of these processes, Albania has signed several MoUs and agreements on tourism, taxation administration, import and export of goods, free access to labour markets, and the interconnection of schemes for electronic identification of the citizens of the Western Balkans. The 2021 Agreement on Conditions for Free Access to the Labour Market in the Western Balkans, signed by the Prime Ministers of Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia, aims to facilitate “the administrative procedures for entry, movement, stay and work of the citizens of other Contracting Parties”, and creates the baseline for the Open Balkan ID number, which the citizen’s country generates to facilitate the movement of workers.²⁹

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

The country engages civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies in a limited and ad hoc manner. The Technical Secretariat for Migration, under the Ministry of Interior, is tasked with carrying out two meetings a year with CSOs and other partners, including the private sector, to monitor the implementation of the National Strategy on Migration 2019–2022 (2019), which did not take place as planned. Additionally, according to the Strategy, “Several consultative meetings were held during the Strategy development process with civil society, business representatives, academia and researchers as well as representatives of international institutions and embassies in Albania.” CSOs and private-sector stakeholders were also consulted during the development of the National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora 2021–2025 (2020). Further, CSOs, academia and private-sector partners are expected to take part in consultations for the drafting of the new migration strategy in 2023. However, the National Strategy on Migration states, “The role of non-state actors (NGOs and the private sector) in policy implementation ... has been limited and of an ad hoc nature.”

²⁷ Visit the website of the [Berlin Process](#) for more information.

²⁸ The summits involve meetings of government leaders, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and the business community and are aimed at bringing the Western Balkan countries closer to European Union accession and opening opportunities for discussing migration and border issues.

²⁹ The Open Balkan ID number scheme is not yet implemented as of February 2023. The idea is that having this number will make it possible for citizens “to work in the private sector in any of these three countries, without recognition of the diplomas, without having to wait for various permits, and without facing administrative barriers”.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Albania has criteria and procedures in place for the accreditation of diplomas and qualifications received in other countries. Since 2019, the application process for the recognition of foreign diplomas has been carried out entirely online through the Government's e-Albania portal.³⁰ The Centre for Educational Services, established in 2017 under the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Albania, is responsible for the recognition of diplomas from abroad – except for the title of Doctor, which is under the direct jurisdiction of the Ministry. The application procedure is clearly outlined in Albanian and English on the e-Albania portal, including information on the documents that need to be submitted for different degrees, including bachelor's, master's, PhD and other academic titles. Additionally, in 2022, Albania approved the Agreement on Cooperation in the Western Balkans in the Field of Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and Scientific Grades Issued by Higher Education Institutions and Other Authorized Institutions, which aims to facilitate the recognition of diplomas from Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia.

Albania has a legal and institutional framework promoting the ethical recruitment of migrants. Law No. 79 on Aliens (2021) sets out relevant conditions that need to be verified by the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES). Under Articles 74.7b and 74.11 of this Law, permits for “foreign workers [are only approved if they] have not been recruited to work under less favourable working conditions than the Albanian workers in the same position ... [and a] review of information concerning wages, working hours and the other working conditions [is carried out]” within two weeks of the request of NAES. Similarly, the 1995 Labour Code of Albania was updated in 2016 to enshrine “the prohibition of discrimination and the application of the principle of equal treatment in the exercise of the right to employment and profession to all employment, self-employment and professions in the recruitment stages” (Article 9.5). Additionally, Albania's National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019–2022 (2019) seeks to “[e]nsure private operators comply with ethical recruitment standards by monitoring of their activity regularly” and to “[d]evelop standard guidelines for interviewing migrant workers to identify cases of exploitation or discrimination”. According to the Strategy, the Ministry of Finance and Economy “monitors the functioning of recruitment agencies to ensure the ethical recruitment of migrant workers”. Finally, the Government, in cooperation with IOM between 2021 and 2022, sought to promote the best recruitment practices for migrant workers and established guidelines on ethical recruitment.

Albania has various formal measures in place to promote gender equality for migrants in the labour force. Law No. 9970 on Gender Equality in Society (2008) promotes gender equality for all employees and enshrines the right “not to be discriminated against or fired from work because of marriage or pregnancy or maternity and guarantee the effective right to work” (Article 21e). It states that “foreign natural and legal persons, with residence, place of residence or headquarters outside the territory of the Republic of Albania, enjoy the protection offered by this Law in relation to Albanian State bodies” (Article 5). Further, the National Strategy on Migration acknowledges that the risk of unemployment is higher for women compared to men. Within the Action Plan of the National Strategy on Migration, the Ministry of Finance and Economy is charged with “[the development and implementation of] targeted measures for promoting migrant women's access to the Albanian labour market”. Based on the monitoring report of the Strategy in 2022, this has been achieved through an assessment of the existing “legal acts, administrative procedures and assistance schemes for employment” and identifying the “barriers to employment and protection of the rights of women [in] the labour market (with a focus on immigrants)”. The report also states that NAES is to “[c]onsider training female assistants to do consultations with migrant women, [and] publication of leaflets in the main languages

³⁰ See footnote 6.

used by migrant women informing them of contacts to [S]tate institutions and NGOs assisting in job-seeking.” Finally, Albania’s National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030 (2021), drafted by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, aims to mitigate “the barriers that keep women and girls away from the job market”, as well as improve “the access of women and girls of all groups to dignified work across sectors of employment (particularly science, technology, engineering [and] mathematics)”, including women migrants. Activities to be conducted to meet these objectives include informative productions like leaflets for women, improvement of government programmes, increase of kindergarten and childcare facilities, and adequate staffing of relevant institutions.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

National assessments to regularly monitor the labour market demand for immigrants are not carried out in Albania. While Law No. 79 on Aliens states that “[t]he single permit issued to an alien who is an employee within the established quota shall take into account the labour market developments and demands in the Republic of Albania”, and that NAES will approve applications only if it is within the “approved annual quotas”, it does not set up a mechanism with which to evaluate the labour market on a regular basis. Albania’s Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) carries out a national quarterly labour force survey. However, this does not constitute a national assessment for monitoring the labour market demand for immigrants.

The implementation of national assessments for monitoring the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigrants on the labour market is an area with potential for development. NAES publishes an annual report – “Annual analysis of the National Employment and Skills Agency and progress on activities” – which was last published in 2020 and includes data on the job market, the number of unemployed persons, open vacancies and data on its programmes. Moreover, INSTAT’s national quarterly labour force survey was last published in 2022. However, both publications do not analyse the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market. In 2021–2022, Albania has collaborated with IOM to strengthen the country’s data collection and analysis capabilities, with specific focus on labour migration and analysing the impact of migration on the labour market and the structure of the labour force.

Albania does not allow equal access to university education for all international students. It has assigned quotas for international students, prioritizing those from the Western Balkans.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE
MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Interministerial Committee for Civil Emergencies of Albania is the highest body for the coordination of institutions and management of the Civil Protection System in the event of emergencies. This Committee is led by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister or any minister nominated by the Council of Ministers, and it convenes in the event of an emergency. In coordination, the Council of Ministers approves “strategies, policies and programmes aimed at preventing, preparing for and responding to emergency situations”,³¹ and the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization monitors the state of emergency and collaborates with other bodies involved in emergency management at the local level. The Civil Emergency Planning and Response Department of the Directorate of Emergency Response Preparedness and Coordination, under the National Civil Protection Agency (NCPA) of the Ministry of Defence, is responsible for coordinating the first response in an emergency, and NCPA is responsible for preparing plans for emergency management and ensuring that they are implemented.

Albania’s National Civil Emergency Plan (2004) is the national emergency management framework and has specific measures to aid migrants in the country. It aims to “prevent, alleviate and ensure the recovery from any damage that affects the population, livestock, property, cultural heritage and the environment as a result of civil emergencies” (Section 1.2 on “Purpose, objectives and principles”). Under the Plan, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection is in charge of cooperating with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs “for the identification and treatment of injured persons or victims who are foreign citizens, as well as for facilitating procedures for international medical aid teams and field hospitals”. It also states that in emergencies, Albanian authorities do not distinguish between Albanian nationals and migrants. In parallel, Albania has adopted Law No. 45 on Civil Protection (2019), which aims to “reduce disaster risks and ... guarantee the protection of human life ... by strengthening the civil protection system”. Under Article 4, it establishes that “[e]veryone has the right to protection from natural and other disasters”, and Article 57 explicitly states that “citizens [local or foreign] have the right to seek protection of their lives and property from civil protection structures ... when affected by disaster”.

Albania’s “Contingency plan for a possible massive influx of migrants and asylum-seekers at the Albanian border” (2021) is regularly updated, though it has not yet been officially adopted by the Government. The contingency plan, developed by the Ministry of Interior, aims to guarantee the rights of migrants and asylum-seekers in Albania by improving the country’s capacity to identify, process and provide services to migrants and asylum-seekers, and through creating an environment where migrants feel secure.

In 2019 the Ministry of Defence created NCPA, which is tasked under Decision No. 747 of the Council of Ministers with “communicating with the international centres of information and response coordination”, “organizing information/awareness campaigns for the measures that must be taken to prevent and cope with disasters”, and cooperating with “municipalities, prefectures, central institutions, the private sector and various organizations to ensure information is disseminated to the population during crises”. To do so, the Agency publishes press releases on developments regarding responses to disasters on its website³² and operates the national 112 emergency services number.

³¹ This information is drawn from the National Civil Emergency Plan (2004).

³² Visit the website of Albania’s [National Civil Protection Agency](#) for more information.

Under Law No. 10 on Asylum (2021), Albania offers temporary protection to those fleeing war or other similar crises of violence or conflict in their respective home countries and whose home countries cannot guarantee their protection. Under Article 82, temporary protection is initially given for a period of one year and can be extended in six-month increments for a maximum of three years. The rights of persons under temporary protection are outlined in Article 86 and include the following: staying in Albania according to the duration of the temporary protection, having basic housing and living conditions, benefiting from health care, accessing pre-university education under the same conditions as Albanian citizens, exercising freedom of thought and religious belief, working and accessing professional training, and accessing legal aid guaranteed by the State. In March 2022, Albania enforced this rule for the protection of citizens fleeing the war in Ukraine through the adoption of Decree No. 169 (2022) and Decree No. 173 (2022), which grant temporary protection and housing in Albania for a period of one year to all Ukrainian citizens, stateless persons and persons who have obtained international protection in Ukraine. In addition, under Decree No. 169, biometric passports are not required for Ukrainian citizens to enter Albania.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

Albania does not currently have any environmental and climate change policies that consider human mobility issues as a response to crisis prevention. Albania's National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2030 (2022) states that "environmental protection is one of the priority sectors identified in the Government's programme for the next decade", but it makes no reference to migrants or displacement. Albania's Strategy on Climate Change and its Action Plans (2019) does refer to the movement of persons in terms of improvement of transport and better mobility overall, but it does not include provisions in terms of mobility or relocation due to natural disasters. Finally, Law No. 45 on Civil Protection makes no reference to migrants or displacement in this regard.

Albania's National Civil Emergency Plan provides for response and recovery post-emergency, but it does not contain specific provisions for migrants. The Plan recognizes that the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs should identify migrants in need of aid after the event, but it does not delineate any concrete initiatives for the recovery process. Similarly, the draft "Contingency plan for a possible massive influx of migrants and asylum-seekers at the Albanian border" does not specifically address disaster management in the wake of natural disasters.

While Albania has communication systems in place to disseminate information during crises, taking into consideration the specific vulnerabilities that migrants face is an area for further development.



6

ENSURE THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Albania has measures in place to ensure that migrant detention is used only as a measure of last resort. As per Article 115 of Law No. 79 on Aliens (2021), “Detention in a closed reception centre shall be a last-resort administrative action ... [only used] after all possible alternative actions have been exhausted.” This Law also includes specific provisions regarding the detention of migrant children, stating that only “[e]xceptionally, an unaccompanied minor ... shall be held in a State social facility established particularly for this purpose by or at another centre, in cooperation with international organizations which engage in missions to support children, victims of trafficking or other vulnerable categories”. Further, the Law requires that a social worker and a psychologist are consulted prior to detaining minors in closed reception centres.

Since the previous MGI assessment, Albania has adopted the National Strategy against Organized Crime and Serious Crimes 2021–2025 and the Action Plan 2021–2022 (2020) to combat human trafficking. Developed by the Ministry of Interior, the Strategy aims “to ensure that the Albanian Government and all State and non-State actors are engaged in and committed to preventing and combating human trafficking and ensuring the protection of individuals and vulnerable groups from trafficking”. Key activities include awareness-raising among relevant institutions as well as private companies in relation to the identification of trafficking risks, the adoption or amendment of laws and regulations, and the training of professionals who work with victims of trafficking, including women, men and children. The Strategy explicitly mentions migrants under its objective to ensure the “training of border and migration police officers, customs officers, asylum officers, and staff of migrant reception and accommodation centres to increase capacities for the identification of trafficking victims among asylum-seekers, migrants and unaccompanied children”.

Albania has policies and procedures in place for the timely identification of migrants in vulnerable situations and to provide them with adequate referral and protection services. The Border and Migration Police conduct screening interviews at points of entry to identify vulnerable persons in need of assistance and are then responsible for granting type “A” temporary permits of residence valid for three months to victims or potential victims of trafficking, under Article 53 of Law No. 79 on Aliens. The authorities may extend the validity of the permit when it is considered necessary due to the social conditions of the victim. Finally, Albania’s Department of Border and Migration operates two Registration and Temporary Accommodation Centres – one established in 2017 and the other in 2019 – which serve as processing centres for irregular migrants and provide immediate health-care services.

Albania has strengthened its procedures and measures aimed at ensuring the protection of migrant children, including unaccompanied and separated children. Law No. 18 on the Rights and Protection of Children (2017) ensures the protection of “the child with Albanian citizenship, without citizenship or with foreign citizenship”, and cites the local units of the National Agency for the Right and Protection of the Child, which falls under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, as the responsible body to implement this. In parallel, Law No. 10 on Asylum (2021) strengthens the child-centric approach of Albanian legislation by establishing that unaccompanied minors must not be interviewed without the presence of a trained social worker from the National Agency for the Right and Protection of the Child, and stipulates that siblings cannot be forcibly separated, ensuring the best interest of the child.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

Albania has measures to attract nationals who have emigrated to other countries, but these remain limited and ad hoc. The National Strategy on Migration and Action Plan 2019–2022 (2019) does not contain any relevant measures in this regard, though the National Strategy for the Albanian Diaspora 2021–2025 (2020) includes measures to facilitate and promote the return of qualified emigrants to Albania. For example, the latter Strategy outlines the need to “assess the supply and demand for qualified personnel in the Albanian labour market and promote contact between emigrants and medium and large enterprises in Albania”. To do so, Albania is working on developing an electronic data bank with CVs of professionals among the diaspora. However, a comprehensive mechanism focused on attracting nationals who migrated from Albania is an area for further development.

Although the National Strategy on Migration addresses the reintegration of returning nationals, specific actions pertaining to this aspect have not been executed as planned. Objective C of the Strategy focuses on developing an effective labour migration policy and enhancing the positive impact of migration. It mentions several actions related to facilitating the return and socioeconomic reintegration of Albanian citizens, such as assessing their employment needs, establishing funds to support small businesses for returnees, creating information packages and promoting the use of remittances. However, most of the activities related to the development of a comprehensive mechanism for the integration of returnees have not been implemented. Objectives C and D³³ of the National Strategy on Migration were the least implemented overall. There is potential for incorporating these objectives into the new strategy on migration to ensure their implementation.

Albania does not yet have any formal systems in place, including formal cooperation agreements with other countries, to trace and identify international migrants that have gone missing in the process of migration within the national territory, and it primarily does so on a case-by-case basis. Albania can safeguard only those migrants who enter the country regularly and are registered on the country’s National Electronic Register for Foreigners, the State database administered by the Ministry of Interior containing data on migrants who enter Albania to stay, transit, work or study. However, on an ad hoc basis, the Ministry of Interior can process requests from national or foreign institutions to trace and identify individuals provided that the foreign governments have data on their identities.

³³ Objective D focuses on promoting and protecting migrants’ rights and their integration.

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Albania for their engagement in this process. IOM hopes that the results of this assessment can feed into the Government's strengthening of their migration governance. After an MGI assessment, the following are recommended:



The MGI report can be used to inform policy work with the support of IOM (if desired).



The findings can feed into capacity-building activities, which may connect to other IOM initiatives.



A follow-up assessment can be conducted after three years to verify progress.



Governments can exchange best practices and innovative solutions with other governments that have conducted the MGI process.



KEY SOURCES*

* All hyperlinks were working at the time of writing this report.

European Commission

2009 [Stabilisation and Association Agreement](#).

Government of Albania

- 1993 [Law No. 7703 on Social Insurance in the Republic of Albania](#).
- 1998 [Constitution of the Republic of Albania](#).
- 2001 [Law No. 8834 on the Ratification of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region](#).
- 2003 [Law No. 9066 on the Ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Republic of Türkiye on Social Protection](#).
- 2005 [Law No. 9350 on the Ratification of the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Readmissions of Persons and its Protocols](#). Not available online.
- 2006 [Law No. 9668 on the Emigration of Albanian Citizens for Employment Purposes](#).
- 2008 [Law No. 9970 on Gender Equality in Society](#).
- 2009 [Law No. 10 107 on Health Care in the Republic of Albania](#).
- 2010 [Law No 10 221 on Protection from Discrimination](#).
- 2011 [Law No. 10 383 on Compulsory Health Insurance](#).
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ANNEX

The MGI process



1

Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGIs entail to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.



2

Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 90 indicators grounded in the six dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.



3

Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.



4

Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the [Migration Data Portal](#) and the [IOM Publications Platform](#).



www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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