



# OSAC Country Security Report

## Albania

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*This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Albania Travel Advisory and Albania Country Information Page.*

### Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

#### U.S. Embassy Tirana

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Hours: 0800 – 1630, Monday – Friday.

### OSAC Country Chapter(s)

There is not an OSAC Country Chapter in Albania.

Contact [OSAC's Europe team](#) with any questions.

### Albania Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise increased caution in Albania due to crime.

Review OSAC's report, [Understanding the Consular Travel Advisory System](#).

### Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tirana as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania, indicating that there may be widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

The crime emergency line in Albania is **112**. Review the U.S. Department of State's Crime Victims Assistance [brochure](#).

### Crime: General Threat

The overall crime rate in Albania rose from 2024 to 2025 by about 17%, with the largest drivers of this increase reported as drug-related crimes, fraud, and weapons charges. Property crimes

saw a marginal increase (about 3%), but robberies decreased 21%, continuing a shift across the country toward nonviolent and nonconfrontational crimes. Violent crime, including homicide, also dropped for the fifth straight year, decreasing by about 3% in 2025.

The Albanian government is making a concerted effort to improve the country's law enforcement capabilities and reduce corruption. Organized crime has a noted impact on Albania, which hosts a network of criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking, extortion, bribery, money laundering, prostitution, and human trafficking. Many of Europe's illicit weapons and explosives originate from or transit through Albania, and authorities have shifted their attention to disrupt weapon trafficking networks.

Street crime is common in urban areas, predominantly at night. The most notable are burglaries of unoccupied residences and vehicles, bag snatching, and street scams. Armed robbery and other violent crimes against foreign travelers are uncommon; if confronted by armed assailants, comply with their demands.

Attacks using small improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and targeting individuals in contentious disputes have occurred. Remain vigilant when parking in unattended parking areas, avoid parking overnight in non-secure areas, and inspect vehicles for suspicious items. If you find something strange, do not tamper with it and contact the Albanian State Police immediately. The expatriate community is not a specific target, although members could become victims due to circumstance or proximity.

## Crime: Areas of Concern

As a safety precaution due to the potential for retaliatory violence and/or reports of unfair business practices and safety concerns, the following restaurants are off-limits for U.S. Embassy personnel:

- Juvenilja
- Juvenilja Castle
- Pasticeri Venezia
- Magic Club

Review OSAC's reports, [All That You Should Leave Behind](#), [Hotels: The Inns and Outs](#), [Considerations for Hotel Security](#), [Taking Credit](#), and [Our Two Cents: Petty Crime Basics and How to Minimize the Risk](#).

## Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping "K" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania.

Review OSAC's reports, [Kidnapping: The Basics](#) and [Active Shooter and Kidnapping Response Tips](#).

## Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tirana as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania.

There has not been a successful terrorist attack in Albania in the past decade, and the most recent foiled plots were in 2016 and 2018. The primary terrorism threat in Albania is the use of Albania as a source or transit country for money or material by terrorists, and the potential for radicalization to violence by returnees from Syria. The return of foreign fighters from Syria continues to be a concern due to their more radicalized views, tighter bonds with known terrorist groups, and newly acquired military tactics. The terrorism threat in Albania also includes Iran’s plotting against the resettled Iranian opposition group Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK). In 2018, Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) cell members were arrested after plotting to attack a MEK compound in Manez. Iranian cyberwarfare against this group in 2025 led to an official resolution by the Albanian Parliament declaring Iran a “state sponsor of terrorism.”

Albania has laws against terrorist acts; terrorism financing; collection, transfer, and concealment of funds that finance terrorism; conducting transactions with persons on the UN sanctions lists; recruiting and training people to commit terrorist acts; incitement of terrorist acts; and establishing, leading and participating in terrorist organizations.

The Albanian State Police Counterterrorism Directorate (CTD) works closely with U.S. agencies to align Albanian government requirements with U.S. expertise and resources, facilitating the Albanian government’s development of focused CT capabilities. The CTD can effectively and proactively detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism in its territory. The directorate has worked with other regional CT units to monitor potential threats and, where appropriate, provide evidence.

Some terrorist groups, and those inspired by such organizations, are intent on attacking U.S. citizens abroad. Terrorists are using less sophisticated methods of attack including knives, firearms, and vehicles to target crowds. U.S. citizens are reminded to remain vigilant with regard to their personal security and to take special caution at high-profile public events (sporting contests, political rallies, demonstrations, holiday events, celebratory gatherings, etc.); hotels, clubs, and restaurants frequented by tourists; places of worship; schools and parks; shopping malls and markets; and public transportation systems (including subways, buses, trains, and scheduled commercial flights).

## Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tirana as being a **LOW**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

## Elections/Political Stability

Elections in Albania have previously included elements of organized crime and corruption within the voting process. However, recent election cycles have resulted in a more balanced and fair process. Parliamentary elections were held in 2025, and election day was mostly calm. There were isolated reports of irregularities involving candidates and their supporters, though the Central Election Commission has said the reports would not negatively impact the election results.

Despite the overwhelmingly calm election, a joint observation mission from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE’s Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly for the Council of Europe, and the European Parliament have called for comprehensive electoral reform in Albania. They specifically noted that the election process was marked by the ruling party’s misuse of public resources, the two main political parties using divisive language, lack of transparency in campaign financing, and unbalanced media coverage of smaller parties.

Albania will next hold local elections in 2027 and Parliamentary elections in 2029.

## Protests & Demonstrations

Demonstrations and political protests are common in Albania. The protests are generally peaceful but have resulted in violence in the past. The demonstrations vary in size from several hundred to several thousand participants and frequently disrupt traffic. One of the most frequent sites of protest activity in the country is the capital’s main boulevard, Dëshmorët e Kombit, which is home to many government, diplomatic, and cultural facilities. Molotov cocktails are common during demonstrations, though they are generally thrown at buildings and not people.

Following the 2025 elections, political opposition groups engaged in significant anti-government protests across Tirana. Large marches blocked Tirana's Dëshmorët e Kombit Boulevard, and some demonstrations involved the use of Molotov cocktails and other pyrotechnics. Civic groups also executed sit-ins in government offices, some lasting over 100 days.

In 2026, large protests targeted a luxury resort project on Sazan Island. Gatherings began as localized environmental demonstrations, but when police broke up these gatherings, thousands of Albanians took to the streets in major cities. Protests grew to include calls against government corruption, and some became violent..

Review OSAC's report, [Surviving a Protest](#).

## Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Anti-U.S. sentiment is uncommon in Albania, and the international community is generally well-regarded.

## Law Enforcement

The Ministry of Interior oversees the Republican Guard and the Albanian State Police, which includes the Border and Migration Police. The Albanian State Police are primarily responsible for internal security. The Republican Guard protects senior state officials, foreign dignitaries, and certain state properties. The Ministry of Defense oversees the armed forces. The State Intelligence Service is responsible to the prime minister, gathers information, and carries out foreign intelligence and counterintelligence activities. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces.

Corruption and barriers to information sharing among government agencies, insufficient intra-agency coordination, and a still-developing judicial system continue to hinder Albania's law enforcement efforts. Albania's Special Structure Against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK), which was established in 2019, prosecutes cases involving terrorism, high-level corruption, and organized crime. SPAK prosecutes complex cases and cooperates directly with leading international law enforcement and prosecutorial entities. District prosecution offices throughout the country prosecute the remaining cases that do not fall within SPAK's limited jurisdiction. SPAK and other Albanian law enforcement services cooperate extensively with INTERPOL and other international law enforcement bodies.

## Police Response

Police have a visible presence throughout Tirana and other larger Albanian cities, although their response is often delayed due to limited resources and manpower. Police tend to respond more rapidly to reports from members of the international community. However, law enforcement's ability to protect and assist travelers is limited in some areas, particularly remote regions.

The Albanian government is trying to make a concerted effort to improve the country's law enforcement capabilities, particularly in the areas of counterterrorism and organized crime. Corruption and lack of resources within the police present continual challenges.

The emergency line for the police in Albania is **129**.

## Transportation Security

### Road Safety

Driving can be difficult. Travelers regularly encounter unsafe drivers nationwide, and disregard for traffic laws is widespread. Traffic accidents are frequent and repeatedly result in serious injury or death. Those choosing to drive should exercise strong caution and drive as defensively as possible.

Roads conditions in Albania continue to progress. Major thoroughfares between cities are usually paved highways. Many smaller roads in villages or neighborhoods are primarily dirt and rock, and are in poor condition. In the winter, roads through the mountains in northern Albania can be snowy and icy. Flash floods can occur at any time, opening deep and wide potholes, especially in outlying areas.

Nighttime driving is dangerous, with roads lacking proper lighting. Avoid traveling at night between cities because of the risk of automobile accidents. Plan to arrive at destinations before nightfall.

You can only use an international driver's license for one year in Albania, and must apply for an Albanian driver's license after one year. It is illegal to drive under the influence of alcohol. The police will seize your driver's license and vehicle if caught. You may also receive a fine or up to six months in prison. It is against the law to use a mobile phone without a hands-free device while driving.

Fuel and repair services are common in populated areas, but there is no formal roadside assistance. Tires and replacement parts may not be available. Emergency response services are inadequate. First responders have limited medical training and equipment. Accident victims often must transport to the nearest hospital in the car of a passerby.

Review OSAC's reports, [Road Safety Abroad](#), [Driving Overseas: Best Practices](#), and [Evasive Driving Techniques](#); and read the U.S. Department of State's [webpage on driving and road safety abroad](#).

## Public Transportation Safety

Public transportation options are limited and not usually recommended for visitors. Rail conditions are meager, limited, and the service unreliable. Private buses travel between most major cities almost exclusively during the day on variable schedules. Intra-city transit on buses has improved in recent years though pickpocketing occurs frequently on public buses. Marked taxis are safe and recommended for use. Passengers should negotiate a price before getting into a taxi.

## Aviation Concerns

Mother Teresa International Airport in Tirana (TIA, also referred to as "Rinas") is a newer and modern airport. Well-known regional airlines fly to Albania on a regular basis. There are no commercial domestic flights. As there is no direct commercial air service to the United States by carriers registered in Albania, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not assessed

the government of Albania's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards.

Albania continues to take steps to enhance its border security, to detect and deny entry to terrorists, and comply with UNSCR 2396 standards such as the use of API/PNR to improve screening of air passengers.

Review OSAC's Report, [Security in Transit: Airplanes, Public Transport, and Overnights](#).

## Maritime Security

Albania sustains a port security oversight system to comply with requirements under the International Maritime Organization's International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.

Mariners planning travel to Albania should also check for U.S. maritime advisories and alerts. Information may also be posted to the U.S. Coast Guard homepage [website](#), and the NGA broadcast warnings website select "broadcast warnings."

## Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Albania, review the local laws and circumstances on the U.S. Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [Gay and Lesbian Travelers](#)
- [Accessibility Needs](#)
- [Studying Abroad](#)
- [Faith-Based Travel](#)

## Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention "D" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania. If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately.

The law and constitution prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention and provide for the right of any person to challenge the lawfulness of his or her arrest or detention in court. The Albanian government generally observes these prohibitions, but there have been instances where police detained persons for questioning for inordinate lengths of time without formally arresting them.

Albania has a sound legal framework to fight corruption and prevent conflict of interest of public officials and politicians, including their family members. However, foreign investors cite



corruption including in the judiciary, government, public procurements, and media, lack of transparency and competition, large informal economy, and poor enforcement of contracts as some of the biggest problems hampering the business environment in Albania.

Impunity remains a serious problem. With the creation of the SPAK in 2019, the arrest and prosecution, of officials who commit abuses is increasing, however many officials, politicians, judges, and persons with powerful business interests are still able to avoid prosecution.

Corruption continues to be a serious problem in detention centers, particularly in connection with access to work and special release programs.

## Health Concerns

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Health “H” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania. Review the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) country-specific [Travel Health Notices](#) for current health issues that impact traveler health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters.

Medical care is inadequate in some areas, and emergency medical services are very limited. There are no trauma hospitals outside of Tirana. Individuals under continuing medical supervision should consult their physician prior to travel. Albania has few ambulances. Injured or seriously ill individuals may need to take taxis or other vehicles to the nearest hospital.

Find contact information for available medical services and available air ambulance services on the U.S. Embassy website. The U.S. Department of State strongly recommends purchasing international health insurance before traveling internationally. Review the U.S. Department of State’s [webpage](#) on health insurance overseas.

See OSAC’s [Guide to U.S. Government-Assisted Evacuations](#); review OSAC’s reports, [The Healthy Way](#), [Shaken: The Don’ts of Alcohol Abroad](#), [Health 101: How to Prepare for Travel](#), and [Fire Safety Abroad](#); and visit the U.S. Department of State’s webpage on [Your Health Abroad](#) for more information.

## Vaccinations

Receive vaccinations against Hepatitis A and B as a precaution prior to traveling to Albania. Travelers involved in outdoor activities should receive vaccination against rabies due to the large number of stray dogs.

Review the CDC [Travelers’ Health](#) site for country-specific vaccine recommendations.

## Issues Traveling with Medications

Carry a sufficient supply of any required medications, as pharmacies in Albania may not have the brand or type of medication you need available.



Review OSAC's report, [Traveling with Medication](#).

## Water Quality

Drink only bottled water, as local tap water does not meet U.S. standards.

Review OSAC's report, [I'm Drinking What in My Water?](#)

## Natural Disasters

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Natural Disaster "N" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Albania.

Albania is subject to destructive earthquakes. Tsunamis occur along its southwestern coast, and floods and drought issues, including wildfires are possible nationwide.

Air pollution is a problem throughout Albania, particularly in Tirana, due to antiquated industrial and power plants.

Review OSAC's report, [Earthquake Preparedness Toolkit](#).

## Cybersecurity

Albania is a target for malicious cyberattacks by state actors, including Iran and Russia. Albania has also experienced ransomware attacks from cybercriminal groups. In 2026, Iran conducted cyberattacks against Albanian state websites and systems. Malicious cyber activity by a state that intentionally damages critical infrastructure or otherwise impairs its use and operation to provide services to the public can have cascading domestic, regional, and global effects; pose an elevated risk of harm to the population; and may lead to escalation and conflict.

Review OSAC's reports, [Cybersecurity Basics](#), [Best Practices for Maximizing Security on Public Wi-Fi](#), [Traveling Abroad with Mobile Devices](#), and [Guide for Overseas Satellite Phone Usage](#).

## Counterintelligence Issues

There are no counterintelligence issues unique to private-sector operations in Albania.

## Import/Export Restrictions

Albania's customs authorities enforce strict regulations on the import or export of particular items, including weapons, endangered wild fauna and flora, and narcotics. Certain categories of products require licenses and registration before their importation to Albania, including but not limited to, insecticides, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals. There are no restrictions on satellite phones in Albania.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

*Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).*