



Home Office

# Country Policy and Information Note

## Albania: Gender-based violence

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# Executive summary

Albania is a patriarchal society with traditional views of a subordinate position of women being prevalent in parts of the country. However, significant progress has been made and is continuing to strengthen the law in equality and protection for women and to improve opportunities for women in terms of education, employment, healthcare and the political/public sphere.

In the Country Guidance case of [DM \(Sufficiency of Protection – PSG – Women – Domestic Violence\) Albania CG \[2004\] UKIAT 00059](#), heard 15 March 2004, promulgated on 1 April 2004, and updated in November 2013, the Upper Tribunal held that women in Albania do not form a particular social group.

In general, women are unlikely to face a real risk of gender-based violence (GBV) from non-state actors. Further, while GBV can encompass various forms of harm, not all forms, or instances, are sufficiently severe to meet the threshold for persecution or serious harm. The onus is on the person to show otherwise.

The government operates a generally effective criminal justice system, including a police force and a functioning judiciary, with legal aid for victims of GBV. Furthermore, the state has taken reasonable steps to prevent GBV by operating a legal system for the detection, prosecution and punishment of acts constituting persecution or serious harm, which is accessible to women.

The Referral Mechanism against Domestic Violence is now in place in all 61 municipalities. Shelters have sufficient capacity and are professionally run. Both the state and non-governmental organisations provide healthcare and psycho-social, educational, vocational, employment, financial and housing support for victims of GBV.

In general, the state is willing and able to provide protection.

In general, internal relocation is likely to be viable, particularly to larger cities such as Tirana, Durrës, Fier, Vlora and Shkoder.

In general, where a claim is refused, it is likely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

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# Assessment

Section updated: 5 March 2026

## About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether, in general**:

- a woman faces a real risk of persecution/serious harm due to gender-based violence (GBV) by non-state actors
- the state can provide effective protection
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

This CPIN has been developed with assistance from Artificial Intelligence (AI). Where AI has been used, it has been reviewed by a human editor.

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## 1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

### 1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when one has not already been undertaken (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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**Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

### 1.1.5

- 1.1.6 The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

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**Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## 1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention, Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

- 1.2.4
- 1.2.5 The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## 2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 Women at risk of gender-based violence (GBV), or who have experienced GBV, do not form a particular social group in Albania. Although they share an immutable characteristic, their gender, and, for those who have experienced GBV, their background, which is innate and cannot be changed, they are not a distinct group because they are not perceived as different by surrounding society or Albanian law, despite traditional views of their subordinate position being prevalent in parts of the country (see [Legal framework](#)).
- 2.1.2 In the Country Guidance case of [DM \(Sufficiency of Protection – PSG – Women – Domestic Violence\) Albania CG \[2004\] UKIAT 00059](#), heard 15 March 2004, promulgated on 1 April 2004, and updated in November 2013, the Upper Tribunal held that women do not form a particular social group (paragraph 10). The available country evidence considered in this Note continues to support that assessment (see [Country information](#)).
- 2.1.3 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Convention reasons necessary for the grant of refugee status, the question to be addressed in each case is whether the particular person will face a real risk of serious harm as a result of GBV which is sufficient to qualify for Humanitarian Protection.
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, including particular social groups, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.5 For further guidance on gender issues, see the Asylum Instructions [Gender Issues in the Asylum Process](#) and [Humanitarian Protection](#).

## 3. Risk

- 3.1.1 In general, women are unlikely to face a real risk of GBV from non-state actors. Although GBV is reportedly widespread in Albania, it includes a wide spectrum of behaviour, much of which is not likely to be sufficiently serious by its nature and repetition to reach the high threshold of persecution or serious harm. The onus is on the person to show otherwise.
- 3.1.2 Around half of Albania's population are women. Patriarchal attitudes and societal norms continue to reinforce discriminatory and stereotypical roles, rights and responsibilities according to gender. Nevertheless, notable progress continues to be made in areas including awareness, women's education, healthcare access, and political representation (see [Cultural and social attitudes](#)).
- 3.1.3 Under the Constitution of Albania, everyone has a right to education with legal guarantees of equality and near gender parity in enrolment. Employment protections are in place and female labour force participation has grown to 53.5%. Whilst women generally earn less than men, the gender pay gap continues to narrow, from 6.2% in 2024 to 4.9% in 2025 (it was not clear whether the gender pay gap referred to equal pay for equal work or structural inequalities meaning that women are more likely to be in low-paid work). However, women are more likely to work in informal, unpaid or low-paid work, particularly in agriculture (see [Education](#) and [Employment and economic participation](#)).
- 3.1.4 Discriminatory rhetoric and gender stereotyping were documented during the 2025 parliamentary elections and whilst issues such as social norms, financial limitations, and limited access to political networks hinder women's involvement in politics, political representation has improved. 38% of candidates were female in the 2025 elections, the new cabinet achieved gender parity and women now hold 51 parliamentary seats and half of ministerial posts, supported by initiatives to strengthen leadership (see [Political/public participation and representation](#)).
- 3.1.5 Divorce is legal in Albania (see [Family law](#)). Whilst attitudes towards divorce are conservative, particularly in rural areas where families may pressure women to stay with violent husbands, reporting indicates changing attitudes and an increase in completed divorces. Ministry of Justice data stated that 6,632 couples divorced in 2024, around 1,000 more than in 2023, although data from INSTAT, Albania's official national statistics agency, recorded a lower figure of around 4,100 divorces for the same year. The divorce-to-marriage ratio has increased, with around 25 divorces per 100 marriages in 2024, compared to 15.8 per 100 marriages in 2021. Sources noted that divorce requests were made predominantly by women and across a wide age range, including couples aged 40–50, and that there was an increase in divorces resolved through mediation rather than lengthy court processes. Changing social attitudes, declining stigma, increased female labour market participation and financial independence and a greater willingness to end marriages have been attributed as reasons why the divorce rate has increased (See [Single and divorced women and mothers](#)).
- 3.1.6 Single mothers reportedly face stigma and economic hardship, and in rural areas, social norms continue to restrict women's autonomy. However, in urban centres such as Tirana and Durres, living independently is more accepted. Lone-parent households make up around 10% of families, most

headed by women, and support services exist in some larger cities, including extended childcare for victims of abuse (see [Single and divorced women and mothers](#), [Position of women in society](#) and Assistance and reintegration).

- 3.1.7 GBV, which includes domestic and sexual violence and femicide, occurs, but there is no comprehensive data collection system to record violence against women, making it difficult to assess prevalence. The last national survey on GBV in Albania was conducted by INSTAT in 2018, based on a sample of 3,443 women aged 18-74. The survey found that 47% of ever-partnered women had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) at some point in their lives, and 33.7% had experienced such violence in the preceding 12 months. Among women who had never lived with a partner but had been in a relationship, 65.8% reported experiencing dating violence. Forms of abuse reported included coercive control, psychological, physical, sexual and economic violence, with 21% of women experiencing physical and/or sexual violence in an intimate relationship during their lifetime. Younger women aged 18–24 were reportedly the most affected. The survey has not been repeated since, and more recent information relies primarily on police, protection order and court data. Societal attitudes and stigma likely contribute to under-reporting, and an increase in reported figures over time do not necessarily reflect changes in prevalence and could be attributed to increased awareness and changing attitudes (see [Domestic violence, including intimate partner violence](#) and [Attitudes to gender-based violence](#)).
- 3.1.8 Whilst underreporting can affect figures, reports of violence against women have remained relatively consistent over recent years, with around 5,000 reports annually which equates to well under 1% of women affected). In 2024, the European Commission reported the following numbers of police reports on violence against women: 2021: 5,448; 2022: 5,367; 2023: 5,198. In 2024, it was reported that the General Directorate of State Police identified 5,445 cases of domestic violence during the year ([Police response](#)).
- 3.1.9 Women make up the majority of domestic violence murder victims in Albania. The People’s Advocate (Ombudsman) reported that 32 women and girls were killed from 2021 to 2023; 27 were killed by family or intimate partners and 24 of these cases qualify as femicides, committed by 22 perpetrators, most of whom were male. Common motives for femicide included jealousy, refusal to accept separation/divorce, new relationships, or retaliation for police reporting. Albania’s intentional female homicide rate (0.8 per 100,000 in 2023) is mid-range compared with other Western Balkan countries and slightly higher than the UK (0.7) (see [Femicide](#)).
- 3.1.10 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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## 4. Protection

- 4.1.1 In general, a woman who has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from a non-state and/or ‘rogue’ state actor is likely to obtain protection from the state. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 The government operates a generally effective criminal justice system,

including a police force and a functioning judiciary. Furthermore, the state has taken reasonable steps to prevent GBV by operating a legal system for the detection, prosecution and punishment of acts constituting persecution or serious harm, which is accessible to women.

- 4.1.3 In the country guidance case of [DM](#), the Tribunal held that the state offers sufficiency of protection against domestic abuse (paragraph 18). Since [DM](#) was promulgated, the government has implemented a number of measures to improve both the law in regard to domestic abuse and services and support for victims.
- 4.1.4 The Constitution of Albania guarantees equality for all and prohibits unjust discrimination based on gender. Albania has ratified several key international agreements, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Istanbul Convention, which came into force in Albania on 1 August 2014. In 2025, the European Commission stated that, although the legal and institutional framework for gender equality is partially in place, legislative alignment with the EU acquis as well as implementation and enforcement need to be improved (see [Constitution of the Republic of Albania](#) and [International law and instruments](#)).
- 4.1.5 Domestic legislation provides for equal rights for women and men in all public spheres and guarantees equal opportunities. In 2018 and 2020, amendments to the law strengthened protections against domestic violence and aligned Albania with international standards. New legislation adopted in November 2025 further strengthened the law by improving older provisions on gender equality and prohibiting any form of discrimination based on gender. In addition, the law introduces gender quotas of 30 to 50% for women's representation across public institutions and formally recognises unpaid care work as an economic contribution (see [Domestic legislation](#)). The Criminal Code includes provisions for domestic violence, sexual assault, rape (including spousal rape), stalking, and sexual violence. Penalties reflect the severity of the crime and are comparable to those for other serious crimes (see [Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania](#)).
- 4.1.6 By law, women have equal rights to marriage, divorce, custody, and property ownership. Forced marriage is illegal, and both spouses have equal rights to be the head of the household and to be guardians of their children (see [Family law](#)). Albania's labour legislation prohibits gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and unequal pay ([Employment and economic participation](#)).
- 4.1.7 The Referral Mechanism against Domestic Violence is a dedicated state mechanism that aims to protect and support survivors of domestic violence and GBV. It is composed of a team of community professionals who have institutional responsibility to respond and address the various needs of survivors of domestic violence. The Mechanism has been functioning since 2012 and is now in place in all 61 municipalities (see [Co-ordinated referral mechanism](#)).
- 4.1.8 A 24/7 national GBV hotline operates with expanded counselling capacity, multilingual services and is integrated within the referral mechanism. The Bright Sky app, operational since 2021, allows users to assess relationship safety, learn about different forms of abuse, and locate nearby support

centres. In 2022, Vodafone Albania Foundation and the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation provided smartphones with the app to 70 women across 5 cities, supported the establishment of 2 self-advocacy groups, and informed and referred more than 200 women survivors to specialist services, around 50 of whom received free legal aid or psychosocial counselling. The app now has 25,234 users, with 85% reporting direct benefits (see [Hotline and app](#)).

- 4.1.9 Whilst challenges such as low rates of investigations, withdrawal of victim statements, victim-blaming attitudes and inconsistent enforcement remain, Albania has taken steps to strengthen the police response to violence against women. Specialist domestic violence units have been introduced, officers have received targeted training and standard operating procedures for domestic and sexual violence have been adopted. Improvements have also been made to facilities for receiving victims at police stations, and recruitment of female officers has reportedly improved community policing and engagement with at-risk groups. Victims may withdraw police statements due to family pressure; however, a reluctance to seek protection does not mean that protection is unavailable. While challenges remain, including a relatively low proportion of domestic violence reports progressing to criminal proceedings, official data show a gradual increase in investigations, rising from 38.7% in 2018 to 43.6% in 2022, indicating improvement in law enforcement response (see [Police response](#)).
- 4.1.10 Two types of protection order are available to victims of GBV: protection orders and emergency protection orders (EPOs). Protection orders can impose a range of measures such as banning the abuser from the residence, prohibiting contact with the victim and children, and requiring participation in rehabilitation programs. EPOs offer immediate but temporary protection, lasting until a full protection order is issued. Recent legal reforms have introduced new tools, such as police-issued EPOs. Although challenges remain, such as inconsistent application of court orders, difficulties in enforcing protection orders, and victims withdrawing requests due to family pressure, especially in smaller cities, where the police sometimes fail to apply the full range of protective measures, over 33,000 individuals have been granted protection orders in the past 15 years, with women and children being the primary beneficiaries (see [Protection orders](#)).
- 4.1.11 There were approximately 809-899 convictions of GBV each year between 2021 and 2023 out of 2,046 criminal proceedings opened in 2021 and 2,274 criminal proceedings opened in 2022 (the number of criminal proceedings opened in 2023 is not available). A lower number of prosecutions or convictions does not in itself indicate a failure by the state, as cases may be discontinued or not progress due to a range of factors, including evidential difficulties or the withdrawal of a victim's statement. While harsher penalties have been introduced for domestic violence, so far there have been no cases where the gender-related motivation behind a crime was established, but, in line with recent amendments to the Criminal Code, the courts now have the ability to issue harsher sentences where crimes occurring in a domestic setting are concerned. The introduction of victim co-ordinators in prosecutors' offices is another positive step, assisting victims once a case reaches the prosecution stage and informing them of their procedural rights, thus improving victims' trust in the criminal justice system, though more harmonisation is needed across districts (see [Prosecution](#)).

- 4.1.12 Free legal aid for victims of domestic and sexual violence and provisions allowing victims to access free counselling and court representation are in place. Although women may lack awareness of the legal assistance available, several NGOs offer free legal counselling and court representation for survivors of violence. In 2024, Different and Equal provided legal aid to 57 domestic violence victims and 3 sexual abuse victims, while Vatra assisted 263 victims in 2023 (see [Legal assistance, legal aid and access to justice](#)).
- 4.1.13 Shelters for victims of domestic violence have sufficient capacity and are professionally run. As of May 2024, 12 of 47 municipalities had shelters, with a total of 30 emergency beds and 32 long-term beds available. 13 emergency shelters exist, offering accommodation for up to 72 hours, alongside legal and psycho-social support. A state-run shelter in Tirana and 6 NGO-operated shelters offer longer-term accommodation and are primarily dependent on external funding (see [Shelters](#)).
- 4.1.14 Whilst sources note that coverage is reportedly uneven and gaps remain in gender-sensitive healthcare and specialised mental health services, state and NGO services provide healthcare, psycho-social, educational, vocational, employment, financial, and housing support for victims of GBV. In 2023, the NGO Vatra assisted 126 victims with counselling, and in 2024, D and E and supported 392 survivors and 469 children with reintegration programmes including psycho-social counselling, medical care, education, and vocational training. During 2024, 71 survivors obtained employment and 31 received employment counselling, while financial support through social benefits has increased. Housing assistance, including rent subsidies and inclusion in social housing schemes, has benefitted 134 survivors and 285 children, although availability is constrained by funding and limited landlord engagement in smaller municipalities (see [Healthcare](#), [Education](#), [Employment](#), [Financial support](#) and [Housing](#)).
- 4.1.15 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instructions on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#), [Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim](#) and [Gender identity issues in the asylum claim](#).

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## 5. Internal relocation

- 5.1.1 In general, where a woman has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from a non-state or 'rogue' state actor, she is likely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk. This is because there are parts of the country, such as Tirana, Durres, Fier, Vlora and Shkoder, where it will be reasonable to expect a woman who fears GBV to relocate. Each case must be considered on its own facts.
- 5.1.2 Albania is a little larger than Wales, with a population of 2,363,314 inhabitants of whom 520,000 live in the capital, Tirana. The law provides for freedom of movement and women are able to move freely to another part of the country (see [Freedom of movement](#)).
- 5.1.3 Whilst challenges such as economic hardship persist, particularly for less-educated women, single and divorced women, women can and do live independently and are able to move from rural areas to cities such as Tirana, Durres, Fier, Vlora and Shkoder where there is a greater degree of

acceptance of living alone and employment, financial support and social benefits are more accessible. The census of 2023 showed that there were 60,447 families composed of single mothers with children, which was approximately 8.6% of the total number of nuclear families (see [Single and divorced women and mothers](#) and [Financial support](#)).

- 5.1.4 For further guidance on internal relocation and factors to consider, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## **6. Certification**

- 6.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94(3) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Albania is listed as a designated state. It must be certified under section 94(3) if you are satisfied it is clearly unfounded.
- 6.1.2 Where a claim is refused, it is likely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 6.1.3 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

## About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the [About the assessment](#), is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before 28 November 2025. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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## 7. Legal framework

### 7.1 Constitution of the Republic of Albania

7.1.1 Article 18 of the [Constitution of Albania](#) states that 'All are equal before the law' and that 'No one may be unjustly discriminated against for reasons such as gender...'<sup>1</sup>

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### 7.2 International law and instruments

7.2.1 Albania has ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women<sup>2</sup> and is bound by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)<sup>3</sup>.

7.2.2 Albania has also ratified the Convention of the Council of Europe on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (otherwise known as the Istanbul Convention), which came into force on 1 August 2014<sup>4</sup>.

7.2.3 In November 2022, the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN) published a report entitled, 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment; a situational analysis,' (AWEN report of November 2022), which stated:

'CEDAW [UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women] and the Istanbul Convention address sexual violence and sexual harassment at various levels. CEDAW includes gender-based violence, but without detailed definitions of different forms of violence. It refers to domestic violence and abuse, ... dowry deaths, acid attacks, female

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<sup>1</sup> Govt of Albania, [Constitution of Albania](#), 19 August 2021

<sup>2</sup> UN OHCHR, [OHCHR Dashboard](#), no date

<sup>3</sup> CoE, [28 years of Albanian membership ...](#), 2 October 2024

<sup>4</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action ...](#), no date

circumcision or female genital mutilation, sexual trafficking and exploitation, sexual assault, incest, sexual harassment, forced sterilization and abortion, beating, and coercion. In CEDAW, violence against women is restrained to “domestic violence” or situations where women are in violent relationships. It also gives a definition of “sexual harassment” (paragraph 18) but connecting it only to the workplace.

‘The Istanbul Convention has a greater focus on violence against women and includes all forms of violence. It clearly refers to different forms of violence against women: psychological violence (Article 33), stalking (Article 34), physical violence (Article 35), sexual violence, including rape (Article 36), ... female genital mutilation (Article 38), forced abortion and forced sterilisation (Article 39), sexual harassment (Article 40), and aiding and abetting the commission of these offences (Article 41). Although it does not define crimes called “crimes of honour”, they are included in Article 42. Also, the Convention provides a broader definition of sexual harassment beyond the area of employment (Article 40) and acknowledges that this phenomenon can occur in formal and informal educational or recreational settings.’<sup>5</sup>

- 7.2.4 In the report of November 2022, AWEN noted that Albania had ratified the International Labour Organization Convention on ‘Violence and Harassment’ 2019 (No. 190); Law No. 7961, dated 12/07/1995, ‘Labour Code of the Republic of Albania’, amended by Law no. 136/2015; and 2008 Law On Gender Equality In Society, all of which protect employees, including women, from workplace discrimination and harassment<sup>6</sup>.
- 7.2.5 In the Albania 2025 Report, the European Commission (EC) stated that, ‘The legal and institutional framework for gender equality is partially in place, but legislative alignment with the EU acquis as well as implementation and enforcement need to be improved.’<sup>7</sup>

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### 7.3 Domestic legislation

- 7.3.1 Albania’s [Law on Gender Equality in Society](#) ‘... regulates fundamental issues of gender equality in public life, the protection and equal treatment of women and men with regards to equal chances and opportunities for the exercise of their rights, as well as their participation and contribution in the advancement of all social spheres.’<sup>8</sup>
- 7.3.2 The [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#) ‘... regulates the implementation of, and compliance with, the principle of equality and non-discrimination in relation to race, ethnicity, colour, language, citizenship, political, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic, education or social situation, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, living with HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, parentage belonging, parental responsibility, age, family or marital condition, civil status, residence, health status, genetic predispositions, appearance, disability, affiliation with a particular group or

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<sup>5</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p14), November 2022

<sup>6</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p17), November 2022

<sup>7</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#), 4 November 2025

<sup>8</sup> Govt of Albania, [Law on Gender Equality in Society](#), 24 July 2008

any other ground.<sup>9</sup>

7.3.3 UN Women described Albania's [Law on Measures Against Violence in Family Relations](#): 'Law No 9669 ... was established "to prevent and reduce domestic violence in all forms, through appropriate legal measures, and to guarantee protection through legal measures to members of the family who are subject to domestic violence, paying particular attention to needs of children, the elderly and the disabled."<sup>10</sup>

7.3.4 AWEN also referred to Law No. 9669 'On Measures Against Violence In Family Relations', as amended:

'The aim of the law is to prevent and reduce domestic violence in all its forms and to protect victims through a rapid, affordable and simple procedure. The two most important improvements of this law date from 2018 and 2020. The amendments strengthened the protective and procedural measures to deliver a more effective response to domestic violence and the protection of victims ... For the first time, women and girls in intimate relationships are protected, without having a formal relationship with the perpetrators, such as marriage or cohabitation. ... [T]he amendments made ... define the measures for the immediate removal of the perpetrator from home, the specific programs of rehabilitation for perpetrators, the establishment of a register of protection orders, etc.'<sup>11</sup>

7.3.5 The AWEN report 2022 noted that:

'... there are a number of laws and by-laws that provide for services for victims of violence, including sexual violence, such as: the law on social care services, which provides for specialized services for abused women and girls; the law on state-guaranteed legal aid that provides free legal aid to victims of sexual violence; the law on social housing, under which abused women are part of the categories that benefit from social housing; the law on social assistance that includes the category of abused women in benefiting economic assistance.'<sup>12</sup>

7.3.6 In an undated article, UN Development Programme (UNDP) stated, 'In recent years, Albania has made notable progress in developing its legal ... framework with the objective of ending domestic violence and violence against women ... A comprehensive legislative framework has been established to ensure a coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence.'<sup>13</sup>

7.3.7 Balkan Insight, or the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network [BIRN], was established in 2004 as a network of non-governmental organisations promoting freedom of speech, human rights and democratic values in Southern and Eastern Europe<sup>14</sup>. In November 2025, Balkan Insight reported that parliament had voted to adopt a new law on gender equality:

'The new legislation ... aims to improve older provisions on gender equality, offers new protections and guarantees for women and girls and prohibits any

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<sup>9</sup> Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, amended 2020

<sup>10</sup> Govt of Albania, [Law on Measures Against Violence in Family Relations](#), 2006

<sup>11</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p16), November 2022

<sup>12</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p17), November 2022

<sup>13</sup> UN DP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

<sup>14</sup> Balkan Insight, [About BIRN](#), no date

form of discrimination based on gender ...

'Under the law, the burden of proof in gender-based violence cases will now fall on the offender, not the victim.

'To boost equal representation in decision-making, the law introduces a gender quota for women's representation ranging from 30 to 50 per cent in parliament, government, the public administration, the police, the diplomatic service, and boards and supervisory councils of official bodies...

'It also recognises unpaid work, such as childcare and care for the elderly, as a genuine economic contribution for the first time, obliging the government to measure it and include it in budgetary policies.'<sup>15</sup>

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## 7.4 Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania

7.4.1 The [Criminal Code of Albania](#) contains a number of articles criminalising offences related to gender-based violence:

- Article 130/a criminalises domestic violence with prison sentences ranging from 2 to 5 years<sup>16</sup>.
- Article 121/a criminalises stalking and harassment, with aggravated penalties for cases involving partners<sup>17</sup>.
- Article 102 defines and criminalises rape and sexual assault, including spousal rape, with prison sentences ranging from 3 to 15 years and rising to 20 years where the act causes the death or suicide of the victim<sup>18</sup>.
- Article 107/a criminalises sexual violence and coercion with prison sentences ranging from 3 to 7 years when committed against an adult and rising to 25 years where the act causes the death or suicide of the victim<sup>19</sup>.

7.4.2 AWEN noted, 'Although the Criminal Code contains a number of provisions for sexual violence against adults ... there is still a need to include more precise definitions and in accordance with [the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW] in order to address this phenomenon... The issue of "lack of consent/approval" of the parties involved in sexual relations is still elusive...'<sup>20</sup>

7.4.3 The Council of Europe (CoE) Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) is an independent human rights monitoring body mandated to monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ('Istanbul Convention'). GREVIO adopted an evaluation report on June 2024 and published it in September 2024 (GREVIO report 2024); this report addresses progress made in bringing support, protection and justice to female victims of violence and domestic violence under selected provisions of the Istanbul Convention<sup>21</sup>. The report

<sup>15</sup> Balkan Insight, [Albania Gender-Equality Law Draws Praise and Condemnation](#), 7 November 2025

<sup>16</sup> Govt of Albania, [Criminal Code of Albania](#), 27 January 1995, amended 2017

<sup>17</sup> Govt of Albania, [Criminal Code of Albania](#), 27 January 1995, amended 2017

<sup>18</sup> Govt of Albania, [Criminal Code of Albania](#), 27 January 1995, amended 2017

<sup>19</sup> Govt of Albania, [Criminal Code of Albania](#), 27 January 1995, amended 2017

<sup>20</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p16), November 2022

<sup>21</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (p4), 17 September 2024

stated:

‘A more comprehensive overhaul of the Albanian Criminal Code is underway. ... GREVIO points to the need to further align Albania’s criminal law with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention, notably by replacing the outdated force-based definition of rape with one based on lack of consent. ... Such changes could facilitate the recognition and prosecution of cases of rape that are currently still outside the remit of criminal law and send a positive message about building trust among victims.’<sup>22</sup>

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## 7.5 Family law

7.5.1 There are a number of provisions in the [Albanian Family Code](#) (and related laws) which guarantee gender equality, including:

- Equal rights for women and men to enter into marriage freely, based on mutual consent (Articles 8, 33, 130)
- Equal rights to be recognised as heads of households and legal guardians of children (Articles 50, 215, 227, 53)
- Equal rights to choose where to live (Article 55; also Article 38 of the [Constitution of Albania](#))
- Equal rights to initiate divorce the same requirements for annulment (Articles 125, 129 and 132)
- Equal rights and responsibilities for custody and guardianship after divorce (Articles 154, 155)<sup>23</sup>.

7.5.2 The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) published Concluding Observations on the fifth periodic report of Albania in November 2023. In this report, CEDAW noted ‘with concern ... Reports that family court judges often fail to take domestic violence into account in deciding on child custody and visitation rights in divorce cases.’<sup>24</sup> The source did not provide any further detail or expand on what was meant by ‘often’.

7.5.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO noted the issue of mandatory reconciliation for several crimes concerning violence against women:

‘... These concern serious crimes such as rape and forced marriage. Under Article 284 of the Albanian Criminal Proceedings Code, these crimes require a criminal complaint to be lodged by the victim, which brings them under the remit of the law on mediation which prescribes mandatory reconciliation ... GREVIO is concerned that this may effectively stand in the way of securing justice for women victims of rape and forced marriage. It not only runs counter to the requirement of ex officio investigation [investigations initiated by the authorities<sup>25</sup>] and prosecution as set out in ... the Istanbul Convention, but also has a negative effect on reporting and, subsequently, convictions in respect of these crimes ...

‘As regards mandatory alternative dispute resolution in civil proceedings,

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<sup>22</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 3), 17 September 2024

<sup>23</sup> Govt of Albania, [Albanian Family Code](#), 8 May 2003

<sup>24</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 47c), 14 November 2023

<sup>25</sup> OECD, [Detecting cartels for ex officio investigations](#), 19 September 2024

GREVIO ... notes with satisfaction that in response to findings in its baseline report [November 2017<sup>26</sup>], mandatory conciliation was specifically excluded from proceedings for a court-issued emergency barring or protection order by means of an amendment to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations.<sup>27</sup>

- 7.5.4 GREVIO noted that, '... no changes have been made to the family law provisions that require a mandatory reconciliation hearing to be held as part of divorce proceedings, with no exceptions made for cases in which there had been domestic violence.'<sup>28</sup>
- 7.5.5 An article published by the UN in 2020 stated that, following changes made to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations in 2018, the reconciliation procedure had been abolished in Courts<sup>29</sup>.
- 7.5.6 In March 2018, UN Women noted that Albanian civil and family law recognize women's equal right to land and property<sup>30</sup>.
- 7.5.7 New Lines Institute, an organisation based in the US which states that its mission is to '... provoke principled and transformative leadership based on peace and security, global communities, character, stewardship, and development,' and its purpose is to '... shape U.S. foreign policy based on a deep understanding of regional geopolitics and the value systems of those regions,'<sup>31</sup> published an article in May 2025 by Alice Taylor, a British-born journalist who has been living and working in Albania for seven years<sup>32</sup>, which stated, 'Albania's legal framework provides women and girls with equal rights to men: the rights to own and inherit, ... and to use legal recourse to right the wrongs against them. But in reality, implementation is lacking.'<sup>33</sup>
- 7.5.8 See Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Unaccompanied children](#) for information about underage marriage.

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## 8. Position of women in society

### 8.1 Demography and geography

- 8.1.1 The Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) reported that, as of 1 January 2022, the population of Albania was 2,793,592 inhabitants. The sex ratio was 98.6 males for 100 females. Therefore, females formed approximately 50.2% of the population or 1,402,383 people, and males formed approximately 49.8% of the population, or 1,391,209 people<sup>34</sup>.
- 8.1.2 INSTAT reported that, as of 1 January 2023, the population of Albania was 2,761,785 inhabitants. The sex ratio was 98.0 males for 100 females. Therefore, females formed approximately 50.5% of the population, or 1,394,701 people, and males formed approximately 49.5% of the population,

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<sup>26</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>27</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 132-134), 17 September 2024

<sup>28</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 134), 17 September 2024

<sup>29</sup> UN, [Revised law empowers women survivors of violence in Albania](#), 10 June 2020

<sup>30</sup> UN Women, [One room, her only home](#), 7 March 2018

<sup>31</sup> New Lines Institute, [Who we are](#), no date

<sup>32</sup> New Lines Institute, [Women's rights in Albania: A growing phenomenon...](#), 12 May 2025

<sup>33</sup> New Lines Institute, [Women's rights in Albania: A growing phenomenon...](#), 12 May 2025

<sup>34</sup> INSTAT, [Population of Albania](#), 15 April 2022

or 1,367,084 people<sup>35</sup>.

- 8.1.3 INSTAT did not publish a report covering the year 2024.
- 8.1.4 INSTAT reported that, as of 1 January 2025, the population of Albania was 2,363,314 inhabitants, with a sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 97.8<sup>36</sup>. Therefore, females formed approximately 50.6% of the population, or 1,195,837 people, and males approximately 49.4% of the population, or 1,167,477 people.
- 8.1.5 INSTAT further noted that, as of January 2025, the population had declined by 1.2% compared to 1 January 2024<sup>37</sup>.
- 8.1.6 GeoGnos, an 'open source reference engine,'<sup>38</sup> reported that 65.7% of women aged 15 to 49 were married in 2018<sup>39</sup>.
- 8.1.7 GeoGnos described the distribution of the population as 'a fairly even distribution, with somewhat higher concentrations of people in the western and central parts of the country'<sup>40</sup>

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## 8.2 Cultural and social attitudes

- 8.2.1 In the Concluding Observations published in November 2023, UN CEDAW remained '... concerned about the persistence of deep-rooted stereotypes, including as a consequence of kanun [customary law<sup>41</sup>], concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, which overemphasize the traditional role of women as mothers and wives, thereby undermining women's social status, autonomy and educational and professional opportunities and exacerbating gender-based violence against women.'<sup>42</sup>
- 8.2.2 In the Country Gender Assessment of July 2024, the World Bank noted societal views of women in business and politics:

'While most people perceive women and men as equally competent business executives, there is a wider gender gap regarding perceptions of political leadership. 86.1 percent of women and 76.4 percent of men perceive both genders as equally competent business executives. Although women are more likely to agree with this statement, the difference is not significant. However, regarding the statement "Men make better political leaders than women do," there is a significant gender gap, with 46.9 percent of women and 66.4 percent of men agreeing or strongly agreeing.'<sup>43</sup> The [report](#) provided further detail concerning women's involvement in politics (section 8.2).
- 8.2.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated that it had:

'... received information about the prevalence of gender stereotypes at all

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<sup>35</sup> INSTAT, [Population of Albania](#), 2 June 2023

<sup>36</sup> INSTAT, [Population of Albania](#), 12 June 2025

<sup>37</sup> INSTAT, [Population of Albania](#), 12 June 2025

<sup>38</sup> GeoGnos, [About](#), no date

<sup>39</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

<sup>40</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

<sup>41</sup> European Scientific Institute, [Kanun ... customary law of Northern Albania](#), 29 October 2015

<sup>42</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 21), 14 November 2023

<sup>43</sup> World Bank Group, [Albania - Country Gender Assessment](#) (p44), 18 July 2024

levels of society, including in the police forces, among healthcare professionals and in education facilities. ... The prevalence and justification of strict gender roles and stereotypes, especially in rural areas, is sometimes attributed to “Kanun”, a collection of customary laws historically applied among people living in the mountainous regions of northern Albania. Traditions concerning gender stereotypes and roles applied in these areas today at least partially derive from Kanun, which essentially reduced women to property, sold by their father into marriage and unable to own or inherit. GREVIO received information of some rare instances where norms derived from Kanun are still applied today, especially in more isolated rural areas in the north of the country ...<sup>44</sup> GREVIO did not provide information about which norms from the Kanun are applied today.

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### 8.3 Attitudes to gender-based violence

8.3.1 In March 2019, INSTAT published a report on the 2018 National Violence Against Women and Girls Survey, the latest comprehensive national survey for Albania, which focuses on self-reported experiences and was undertaken with the support and involvement of UN Development Programme and UN Women (INSTAT report 2019). The report explained who had been included in the survey, stating:

‘The final sample of women included 3,443 households and women age 18 to 74 years. The sample was not equally distributed across prefectures [sic] as more women were sampled in Tirana (27.1%), the capital city which has a much larger population, and in Fier (11.5%) and Elbasen (10.6%), compared to Kukës (3.0%) and Gjirokastër (2.6%) where far fewer women were sampled. There was a fairly equal distribution of women sampled across each of the age groups. ... In terms of education, 42.4% of women had a lower secondary education (8-9 years), 27.8% had a upper secondary education, and 19.7% had a university education; only 7.7% of women had only a primary education or less.’<sup>45</sup>

8.3.2 In the report on the survey, INSTAT noted social norms regarding intimate partner violence:

‘Most notable is that as many as 1 out of 2 or 52.2% of women age 18-74 maintained all or most people in the community believe violence between a husband and wife is a private matter and that others should not intervene, and 46.5% maintained all or most people in the community believe a woman should tolerate some violence to keep her family together. In addition, 1 out of 4 women maintained all or most people in the community believe that when a woman is beat [sic] by her husband she is partly to blame or at fault (27.5%), and that a woman should be ashamed or embarrassed to talk to anyone outside of her family about abuse or violence in her marriage (27.6%). These social norms can contribute to the prevalence of intimate partner domestic violence against women and keep battered women trapped in abusive and violent relationships.’<sup>46</sup>

8.3.3 INSTAT also reported on social norms concerning sexual violence towards

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<sup>44</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 47), 17 September 2024

<sup>45</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p12), March 2019

<sup>46</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p65), March 2019

women and girls: ‘... 1 out of 4 or 26.1% of women age 18-74 maintained all or most people in the community believe a woman should be ashamed or embarrassed to talk to anyone if she is raped, and 1 out of 5 or 21.2% of women maintained all or most people in the community believe if a woman is raped she has probably done something careless to put herself in that situation.’<sup>47</sup>

8.3.4 In an undated article, UN Women stated, ‘Violence against women has deep roots in the patriarchal traditions, including strict gender identities and roles and patriarchal authority.’<sup>48</sup> The article further stated, ‘Despite some increase in recent years, the number of domestic violence cases reported to authorities continues to be low, especially among the marginalized communities.’<sup>49</sup>

8.3.5 In November 2022, AWEN published a report entitled ‘Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, a Situational Analysis,’ which reported on a study carried out with survivors of sexual violence and harassment. It is not clear how many women and girls took part, when data were gathered or whether the sample was representative and therefore whether the results can be generalised. The report was translated using an online translation tool, and stated:

‘Often, survivors of violence come from family and social contexts where a patriarchal mentality prevails, where gender stereotypes remain rigid and victim blaming predominates...

‘In one of the focus group discussions, a participant would say: “The male may be the initiator, but the female is always the culprit.” As categorical and irrational as this may sound, evidence from the cases studied confirms that victim blaming continues to be a critical problem in issues of sexual violence and harassment, and that it knows no bounds even when the victim is the victim of sexual violence and when she is a child who has just started first grade...

‘By blaming the victim, some seek to find the “solution” in restrictive measures for them rather than in confronting and addressing the abuser. This comes in the form of requests to not speak, to forgive, or to limit the girl/woman's freedom...

‘In cases of incest, family members blamed the girls, victims of violence, but also their mothers who had failed to “educate them properly” and/or “prevent” “the thing from happening.” This in itself generated more violence against girls and women in the family...’<sup>50</sup>

8.3.6 In the same report, AWEN noted social attitudes towards women who reported or left abusive husbands:

‘In the social environment of survivors, the most serious consequence is exclusion from society/community or from the family and/or discrimination in the work environment. Participants indicated that in many cases their family did not support their decision to denounce their husband and separate. Brothers in particular seem to be more strict against their sisters. Civil

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<sup>47</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p66), March 2019

<sup>48</sup> UN Women, [Ending violence against women](#), no date

<sup>49</sup> UN Women, [Ending violence against women](#), no date

<sup>50</sup> AWEN, [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment: A Situation Analysis](#), November 2022

society representatives also expressed that family support plays an important role in making the decision to denounce and even more so in the re-integration into society of girls and women survivors of sexual violence...

'The same stance has been taken by the wider community of survivors. They have indicated that community members have discriminated against them by criticizing them for the decision they made, making negative comments about them, and not supporting them in their decision...'<sup>51</sup>

8.3.7 The report further stated:

'Girls and women survivors show that seeking help in a context with a judgmental and blaming mentality for the victim requires extraordinary strength and courage, but also support from family and community. The latter often play an opposite role, becoming obstacles and discouraging survivors...

'... most women who reported their partners faced negative reactions and comments from their family of origin and community that worsened their emotional state...'<sup>52</sup>

8.3.8 In the Concluding Observations of November 2023, UN CEDAW noted 'with concern ... The underreporting of domestic violence against women and girls owing to victims' fear of stigmatization or reprisals, their economic dependence on abusive partners, legal illiteracy, linguistic barriers and lack of trust in the law enforcement authorities...'<sup>53</sup>

8.3.9 In an article dated May 2024, Balkan Insight noted potential barriers for victims of domestic violence in taking forward legal action:

'Zaimi, the Tirana judge, said that some victims of domestic violence are too afraid to appear in court, fearing retribution from their husbands or relatives. Many women end up withdrawing charges, citing "social and economic considerations", she told BIRN [Balkan Insight].

"Sometimes, family members encourage reconciliation; often, the families of the women refuse to help them out and tell them to return to the husband."

'In that case, said Zaimi, "she risks losing the economic aid and, often, the chance to escape the cycle of violence."...

'Municipal coordinators, whose duty is to deal with cases referred by police, believe that lack of adequate help is the reason why many women choose to step back.

'Arjola Gjuta, domestic violence coordinator in Kamza municipality, north of Tirana, said she receives three or four calls every week from the police regarding cases of domestic violence, but often the victims opt to try and reconcile with their partners.

"Often they refuse any kind of help," she said. "The pressure from both the perpetrator and the families can be very strong."<sup>54</sup>

8.3.10 The same article stated, "Due to the general mentality of society, victims often return to their violent situation after filing a complaint to the police,"

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<sup>51</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment: a situational analysis](#) (p27), November 2022

<sup>52</sup> AWEN, [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment: A Situation Analysis](#) (p33), November 2022

<sup>53</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 23c), 14 November 2023

<sup>54</sup> Balkan Insight, ['No Way Out': Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

[Kurbin] municipality said in a written response to BIRN [Balkan Insight].<sup>55</sup>

8.3.11 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated, ‘... a dangerous stereotype that is present among the general public, but also among some professionals who are in touch with women victims, is that violence against women is foremost a consequence of poverty and does not concern all members of society equally.’<sup>56</sup>

8.3.12 GREVIO noted that ‘NGO reports indicate that stigma continues to be one of the major obstacles to victims seeking protection and reporting, in particular of sexual violence, including rape. ...’<sup>57</sup>

8.3.13 GREVIO continued: ‘The barriers to reporting are even more pronounced when it comes to women victims faced with intersectional discrimination, in particular women of Roma and Egyptian origin, women with disabilities and women in closed institutions such as psychiatric hospitals.’<sup>58</sup>

8.3.14 GREVIO declared that it was ‘... seriously concerned that the number of reported cases of rape in Albania is extremely low... Rape and sexual violence are associated with such stigma and shame that victims simply do not turn to the authorities for help and support...’<sup>59</sup>

8.3.15 In November 2024, Voice of America (VoA), which is the largest U.S. international broadcaster and is funded by the U.S. Congress<sup>60</sup>, reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, noting that denunciations of violence had ‘increased significantly’ in 2024. The article stated, ‘...the significant increase in denunciations comes from increasing awareness among victims to reject violence and no longer hide it.’<sup>61</sup>

8.3.16 In the Albania 2025 Report, the EC referred to ‘... high levels of under-reporting due to social norms and associated stigma.’<sup>62</sup>

8.3.17 In February 2025, Deutsche Welle (DW), an international broadcaster based in Germany which aims to provide ‘impartial news and information and the promotion of cultural dialogue and freedom of opinion’<sup>63</sup> published an article which stated:

‘According to experts, violence against women in Albania is deeply rooted in economic, cultural and institutional inequalities.

‘Ines Leskaj, head of the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN), explains: “The reasons for violence are multiple and intertwined: economic dependence, social isolation, lack of psychological support,” she told DW. “But at the core of the problem is the patriarchal mentality, because it does not allow the victim to live her life independently, free from violence.”

‘Leskaj adds that the pressure does not come solely from the perpetrator but also from the family and the wider community.

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<sup>55</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>56</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 47), 17 September 2024

<sup>57</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 143), 17 September 2024

<sup>58</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 144), 17 September 2024

<sup>59</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 146), 17 September 2024

<sup>60</sup> VoA, [Mission, Firewall and Charter](#), no date

<sup>61</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations...](#), 27 November 2024

<sup>62</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#), 4 November 2025

<sup>63</sup> DW, [About DW](#), no date

“Women are seen as property, as objects of shame, as the cause of 'dishonor.' This pressure pushes violence to escalate, sometimes resulting in femicide,” she said.<sup>64</sup>

- 8.3.18 For more information on reporting and recording of gender-based violence, see [Data collection](#).

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## 8.4 Single and divorced women and mothers

- 8.4.1 Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (Global Initiative), an organisation which works to build an inclusive global strategy against organised crime<sup>65</sup>, published a report in December 2021 in response to questions asked by the Home Office. This report stated that it is possible for a woman to live alone in cities such as Tirana, Durrës, Fier, Vlora and Shkoder without her family, despite the fact that Albania has a relatively patriarchal culture. These cities are university cities and it is normal for students (male or female) to live alone and work part-time or full-time<sup>66</sup>.
- 8.4.2 In October 2022, a Home Office (HO) fact-finding team met with Brikena Puka, Executive Director of Vatra, which provides assistance to victims of domestic abuse and trafficking. Ms Puka commented, ‘In Albania there is a mentality in rural areas that families don’t accept divorce. A family thinks when their daughter gets married she should stay with her husband despite DV [domestic violence]. The other issue is there may be no possibility for families support their daughters, because of poverty and lack of accommodation.’<sup>67</sup>
- 8.4.3 The HO fact-finding team also met with representatives from the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation who stated, ‘For a single woman with a child ... she will ... be stigmatised. She would be blame shamed. It’s seen that a woman cannot live without a man.’<sup>68</sup>
- 8.4.4 The HO fact-finding team also met a representative of Caritas, who stated: ‘A lot of rural people are coming to Tirana, some of them are divorced or their husband is outside the country or they have a lot of social issues and are living alone.’<sup>69</sup> The same person added that there were social barriers to women living independently, stating that, ‘Some are not very educated. They may feel afraid of life in Tirana...’<sup>70</sup>
- 8.4.5 When the HO fact-finding team met with representatives of the German Embassy in October 2022, they discussed life for single women and were told, ‘There is a risk from society. ... Being a single woman is not common or viewed well. ... The situation is different when you look at Tirana or Durrës compared to traditional rural areas.’<sup>71</sup>
- 8.4.6 When the fact-finding team asked if a woman from a rural area could relocate to Tirana, representatives of the German Embassy responded,

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<sup>64</sup> DW, [Albania: Femicide cases expose gaps in protection system](#), 2 February 2026

<sup>65</sup> Global Initiative, [Catalyzing the Building Blocks of a Global Strategy](#), no date

<sup>66</sup> Global Initiative, Blood feuds in Albania, 13 December 2021 (report available on request)

<sup>67</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>68</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>69</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>70</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>71</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

'They could, but the expectation is that women stay at home, but they could relocate. We had a case where a woman victim of GBV [gender-based violence] has relocated to Durres and [been] provided with support. So there are cases.'<sup>72</sup>

- 8.4.7 The HO fact-finding team also met with representatives of the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation who described attitudes towards women in Albania, stating, 'There is a huge difference between villages and cities. In Tirana there are some independent girls and women, but there are also some that are submissive to male relatives. ... Some come to Tirana to study and are independent here, but when they go back it is the same and they go back to being submissive.'<sup>73</sup>
- 8.4.8 In December 2022, BBC reported on a young woman who grew up in a village in northern Albania, stating:
- 'Valerjana moved out of the family home aged 16 to study theatre directing and photography in Albania's capital city, Tirana.
- "In Tirana, girls and women have more advantages and are more emancipated. While in the village the situation, even now, is still a disaster [in terms of rights for women]," she says.'<sup>74</sup>
- 8.4.9 The census of 2023 gave details of 705,795 nuclear families 'by type of family,' which included family units headed by lone mothers and lone fathers:
- Married couples with/without children: 620,270 families (approximately 87.9% of total)
  - Cohabiting couples with/without children: 13,070 families (approximately 1.9% of total)
  - Lone fathers with children: 12,008 families (approximately 1.7% of total)
  - Lone mothers with children: 60,447 families (approximately 8.6% of total)<sup>75</sup>
- 8.4.10 The HO fact-finding team of October 2022 met with representatives of the General Directorate of State Police. During this meeting, they were told, 'It is very difficult for a single woman or single mother to make it in Albania unless they are provided with a job or economic support. If they have neither they can never make it. So this is not official information but I know it happens.'<sup>76</sup>
- 8.4.11 The HO fact-finding team met with representatives from the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation who stated, ... 'For a single woman with a child it would be very hard due to the lack of financial support ...'<sup>77</sup>
- 8.4.12 The HO fact-finding team also met a representative of Caritas, who stated that single women were coming to Tirana from rural areas and added that 'The poverty has increased.'<sup>78</sup>
- 8.4.13 When the HO fact-finding team met with representatives of the German

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<sup>72</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission: Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>73</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission: Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>74</sup> BBC, [The last of Albania's 'sworn virgins'](#), 10 December 2022

<sup>75</sup> INSTAT, [Albania Population and Housing Census 2023](#) (Table 29, p94), 2023

<sup>76</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission: Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>77</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission: Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>78</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission: Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

Embassy in October 2022, they discussed life for single women and were told, 'In rural areas women are dependent on men and it is hard for them to have access to the labour market.'<sup>79</sup>

- 8.4.14 The HO fact-finding team also met with representatives from Centre for Legal Civic Initiatives, a civil society organisation, who mentioned maintenance (alimony) for single mothers, stating:

'Another point is regarding single mothers. We would also like to see the execution of court decisions provide alimony in cases of divorce. The lack of execution of court decisions affects children as they don't receive any child support. They have a lot of problems, in cases of divorce or separation... Separation/divorce in Albanian law is related to marriage but there is nothing for partnerships. But many single mothers are in this situation, they are single mothers following a partnership.'<sup>80</sup>

- 8.4.15 In the report of November 2022, AWEN reported on harassment of women in the workplace due to their being divorced or survivors of sexual assault:

'Harassment in the workplace for being divorced and even worse, sexual assault was quite prevalent. As mentioned above, most of the women who were looking for a job met a lot of sexual harassment mainly from business owners.

“There have been cases where I have even left my job because of sexual harassment, because when they see you vulnerable as a divorced woman...it seems like a direct attack...I have seen that they have other interests and I have left my job. These cases happen often in Albania. ...” (woman, urban area, survivor of sexual assault)<sup>81</sup>

- 8.4.16 In the Concluding Observations published in November 2023, UN CEDAW noted 'with concern... The widespread phenomenon of fathers who do not comply with child support orders.'<sup>82</sup>

- 8.4.17 In an article about domestic violence published in May 2024, Balkan Insight stated:

“The victims return to the perpetrators simply because they see no other way out, no help from state bodies or other aid groups,” said Vjosa Zaimi, a Tirana judge who specialises in family law...

'Gender inequality in terms of employment, property ownership and economic opportunity means many Albanian women are financially dependent on their partners.'<sup>83</sup>

- 8.4.18 Balkan Insight further stated that employers can be reluctant to employ women who are 'perceived as being involved in some kind of domestic dispute ...' and that '... private business owners were reluctant to hire victims of domestic violence “due to the general mentality”.'<sup>84</sup>

- 8.4.19 In the Country Gender Assessment for Albania, published in July 2024, the World Bank reported on the issue of childcare, particularly for single

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<sup>79</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>80</sup> UKHO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>81</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment; a situational analysis](#) (p27), November 2022

<sup>82</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 47d), 14 November 2023

<sup>83</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>84</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

mothers:

‘Parents of young children face the daunting task of juggling childcare responsibilities with earning an income. The scarcity of childcare facilities exacerbates this challenge, leaving parents with few options, such as relying on untrained caregivers, reducing work hours, or even quitting their jobs altogether. ... even when children reach primary school age, parents continue to grapple with the balance between work and childcare due to school hours and breaks. This struggle is amplified for single parents ... Analyzing school calendars in the Western Balkans reveals that children spend only half the working hours of a full-time employee in school annually. This underscores the necessity for accessible and affordable preschool and afterschool care. ...’<sup>85</sup>

8.4.20 In the Annual Report 2024, the non-governmental organisation Different and Equal (D and E), which provides reintegration services for victims of abuse and exploitation<sup>86</sup>, reported on childcare for children of victims of domestic violence, which is provided without cost to the users and which operates beyond the usual hours of nurseries and schools in the following areas:

- Shkozë (attended by 13 children; 8 mothers were supported to engage in full-time employment)
- Shkodër (attended by 15 children; 8 mothers were supported to engage in full-time employment)
- Dajç (attended by 20 children; 12 mothers were supported to engage in full-time employment)
- Lezhë (attended by 22 children; 22 single mothers were supported)<sup>87</sup>

8.4.21 In an article dated November 2024, VoA reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, quoting the representative of the Gender Alliance for Development Center, Mirela Arqimandriti, who addressed the situation for female victims of rape, stating that they, ‘... lack economic independence, which forces them to remain in abusive relationships, or face financial insecurity while trying to rebuild their lives...’<sup>88</sup>

8.4.22 In February 2025, the Albanian news outlet Politiko reported:

‘The number of divorces in Albania has marked a significant increase in 2024, reaching 6,632 cases, about 1,000 more than in 2023...

‘... The trend of separations is not limited to young couples, as the majority of requests are made by women.

‘Drita Avdyli, National Chamber of Mediators: “There is no age limit for family separation. Last year, the age range was 40-50 and the requests came from women.”

‘Another growing trend in 2024 is the increase in divorce requests with mediation agreements, avoiding lengthy court processes.

‘Drita Avdyli, National Chamber of Mediators: “There are over 2 thousand

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<sup>85</sup> World Bank Group, [Albania - Country Gender Assessment](#) (p25), 18 July 2024

<sup>86</sup> D and E, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>87</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p22), 14 June 2025

<sup>88</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations ...](#), 27 November 2024

cases resolved through mediation during 2024, while in 2023, 1200-1300. ...”

“Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan and Fier top the list of cities with the highest number of divorces for 2024, while Kukës, Gjirokastra, Saranda and Dibra have recorded the lowest number.”<sup>89</sup>

8.4.23 INSTAT data indicate that in 2024 there were 16,120 marriages, a decrease of -7.7% from 2023, and 4,100 divorces, a decrease of -1.6% from 2023<sup>90</sup>.

8.4.24 In November 2025, the Albanian news outlet CNA reported:

‘Although the absolute number of divorces fluctuates, their ratio per 100 marriages has increased significantly. In 2021, for every 100 marriages there were only 15.8 divorces, while in 2024 this ratio reaches about 25 divorces per 100 marriages, the highest level in the last five years...

‘Mentalities are also changing. Young people are focusing more on careers and financial independence, postponing marriage until a later age or preferring cohabitation without formalization.

‘On the other hand, higher labor market participation and independent incomes give women more autonomy, making them less dependent on marriage as an economic mechanism. At the same time, this also increases the willingness to divorce when the relationship does not work out, avoiding the sacrifices that were once considered necessary to preserve the family.

‘... As social norms have been liberalized, the stigma against divorce has weakened significantly. Today, divorce is seen as an acceptable solution and not as a failure, which makes it easier to make this decision.’<sup>91</sup>

8.4.25 See [Assistance and reintegration](#) for information about support available to women.

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## 8.5 Freedom of movement

8.5.1 Albania is roughly 28,000sqkm<sup>92</sup>, a little larger than Wales<sup>93</sup>, with a population of 2,363,314 inhabitants, as of 1 January 2025<sup>94</sup>. 520,000 people live in the capital, Tirana<sup>95</sup>. As of 2023, nearly 65% of the population live in urban areas, although, according to GeoGnos, the population is fairly evenly distributed, ‘with somewhat higher concentrations of people in the western and central parts of the country’<sup>96</sup>

8.5.2 Around 18% of the population is estimated to be aged 14 and under, 67% aged from 15 to 64, and 15% aged 65 and older<sup>97</sup>. Most are ethnic Albanian, around 1% are Greek, 1% are classified as ‘other’ and the remainder are ‘unspecified’<sup>98</sup>. A small majority are Muslim, while the rest are a mix of faiths, including Roman Catholic 10%, Orthodox Christian 6.8%, atheist 2.5%,

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<sup>89</sup> Politiko, [Divorces on the rise, over 6,600 couples separated in 2024](#), 22 February 2025

<sup>90</sup> INSTAT, [Births, deaths and marriages](#) (Marriages and divorces, 2020-2024), no date

<sup>91</sup> CNA, [Family transition, marriages decline, divorces increase](#), 24 November 2025

<sup>92</sup> UN Data, [Albania](#) (General information), no date

<sup>93</sup> MapFight, [Albania size comparison](#), no date

<sup>94</sup> INSTAT, [Population of Albania on 1 January 2025](#), 12 June 2025

<sup>95</sup> UN Data, [Albania](#) (People and Society), no date

<sup>96</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

<sup>97</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

<sup>98</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

Bektashi (a Sufi order) 2.1%, other 5.7%, unspecified 16.2%<sup>99</sup>.

8.5.3 The INSTAT report, *Men and Women in Albania, 2022*, released on 5 July 2023, noted: 'In 2022, the total number of people who have changed their place of residence within the country is 34,844, where according to gender, 13,928 are men and 20,916 are women.'<sup>100</sup> The 'Men and Women in Albania' report published in September 2025 did not mention the number of people who had changed their residence over the previous year.

8.5.4 The US Department of State (USSD) Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2024 (Country Report 2024) did not mention freedom of internal movement<sup>101</sup>. The USSD Country Report 2023 stated:

'The constitution and law provided for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights...

'... To receive government services, citizens changing place of residence within the country had to transfer their civil registration to their new community and prove the legality of their new domicile through property ownership, a property rental agreement, or utility bills. Some individuals could not provide documentation and thus lacked access to public services. Other citizens, particularly Roma and Balkan-Egyptians, lacked formal registration in the communities where they resided. The law did not prohibit their registration, but the process was often difficult to complete. Many Roma and Balkan-Egyptians lacked the financial means or necessary information to register.'<sup>102</sup>

8.5.5 The Freedom in the World 2024 report, published by Freedom House on 29 February 2024, stated, 'Albanians generally enjoy freedom of movement, though criminal activity and practices related to historically predominant honor codes limit these rights in some areas. People are generally free to change their place of residence or employment.'<sup>103</sup> The Freedom in the World 2025 report does not contain information about freedom of movement<sup>104</sup>. The Freedom in the World 2026 report for Albania was not available at the time of writing.

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## 9. Socio-economic indicators

### 9.1 Global equality/inclusivity ranking

9.1.1 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) measures discrimination against women in social institutions across 179 countries. It considers laws, social norms and practices that restrict women's and girls' rights and access to empowerment opportunities and resources<sup>105</sup>. The SIGI report 2023, which is the most recent at the date of publication and used legal information collected until 31 August 2022, scored countries on the level of

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<sup>99</sup> GeoGnos, [Albania](#), no date

<sup>100</sup> INSTAT, [Men and Women in Albania, 2022](#) (p16), 5 July 2023

<sup>101</sup> USSD, [2024 Country Report on Human Rights Practices](#), 12 August 2025

<sup>102</sup> USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#), 22 April 2024

<sup>103</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2024](#), 29 February 2024

<sup>104</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2025](#), February 2025

<sup>105</sup> OECD, [Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard](#), no date

discrimination women faced, with 0-20 being very low and 50-100 being very high. Albania scored 9 with overall 'very low' levels of discrimination<sup>106</sup>. It broke down this score across 4 different areas as outlined in the table below<sup>107</sup>:

<b>Discrimination in the family</b>	9
<b>Restricted physical integrity</b>	15
<b>Restricted access to productive and financial resources</b>	5
<b>Restricted civil liberties</b>	7
<b>Overall SIGI score and classification</b>	9

9.1.2 The report explained the 4 different areas (dimensions) covered the major socio-economic areas that affect women and girls. The indicators within each of the 4 areas are outlined in the table below<sup>108</sup>, although no further breakdown on how Albania scored against the individual indicators was available.

<b>Discrimination in family</b>	Child marriage	Household responsibilities	Divorce	Inheritance
<b>Restricted physical integrity</b>	Violence against women	FGM	Missing women	Reproductive autonomy
<b>Restricted access to productive and financial resources</b>	Access to land assets	Access to non-land assets	Access to financial services	Workplace rights
<b>Restricted civil liberties</b>	Citizenship rights	Freedom of movement	Political voice	Access to justice

9.1.3 The Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS), an organisation which aims to create 'a more peaceful, equitable, and just world by focusing on the pivotal role women play in preventing conflict and building peace,'<sup>109</sup> published its global Women Peace and Security Index 2025/26 which ranks and scores 181 countries on women's wellbeing, considering 13 indicators under justice, security and inclusion to generate scores from 0 (worst) to 1 (best)<sup>110</sup>. Albania ranked 68 (by comparison Denmark was top and the UK was 23, generating a score of 0.731 out of 1<sup>111</sup>).

9.1.4 The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Index '...benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key dimensions (subindexes): Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.'<sup>112</sup>

<sup>106</sup> OECD, [SIGI 2023 Global Report](#), 18 July 2023

<sup>107</sup> OECD, [SIGI 2023 Global Report](#) (p164), 18 July 2023

<sup>108</sup> OECD, [SIGI 2023 Global Report](#) (p167), 18 July 2023

<sup>109</sup> GIWPS, [Who We Are](#), no date

<sup>110</sup> GIWPS, [Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26](#), 23 October 2025

<sup>111</sup> GIWPS, [Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26](#), 23 October 2025

<sup>112</sup> WEF, [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#) (p5), June 2025

The 2025 report ranked Albania 36 out of 148 countries (1 being the most equal) in 2025<sup>113</sup>.

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## 9.2 Education

9.2.1 Under Article 57 of the [Constitution of Albania](#), everyone has a right to education<sup>114</sup>. Education is compulsory from the ages of 6 to 16<sup>115</sup>. The [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#) provides for equality in relation to education (see Articles 1 and 17)<sup>116</sup>.

9.2.2 UN CEDAW published Concluding Observations on the fifth periodic report of Albania on 14 November 2023, in which it noted ‘with concern:’

‘(a) The disproportionately high levels of illiteracy among rural women, women with disabilities ... and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma and Balkan Egyptians;

‘(b) That women remain underrepresented in non-traditional fields of study, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT), owing in part to the persistence of gender stereotypes;

‘(c) The lack of age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education at all levels of education; ...

‘(e) Harassment and bullying of girls and women, in particular lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, in educational environments and the limited information on the number of complaints and investigations in such cases and on the penalties imposed.’<sup>117</sup>

9.2.3 INSTAT reported the number of pupils, by sex, enrolled in both public and private education in the academic year 2023-24; these numbers were used to produce the following approximate percentages:<sup>118</sup>

	Primary school	Lower secondary school (up to age 16 <sup>119</sup> )	Upper secondary school	Post-secondary (not tertiary)	Tertiary
Male	52%	52%	53%	60%	42%
Female	48%	47.8%	47%	40%	58%

9.2.4 See Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Unaccompanied children](#) for further information about education, including girls in education.

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<sup>113</sup> WEF, [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#) (p33), June 2025

<sup>114</sup> Govt of Albania, [Constitution of Albania](#), 19 August 2021

<sup>115</sup> EC, Eurydice, [Albania](#), 15 September 2025

<sup>116</sup> Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, amended 2020

<sup>117</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Albania](#), 14 November 2023

<sup>118</sup> INSTAT, [Education enrollment statistics, 2023-2024](#) (p5), 3 May 2024

<sup>119</sup> INSTAT, [Education enrollment statistics, 2023-2024](#) (p6), 3 May 2024

### 9.3 Employment and economic participation

9.3.1 Under Article 9 of the [Labour Code of Albania](#) (LCA), discrimination in employment based on gender is prohibited<sup>120</sup>. Under Article 32 of the LCA<sup>121</sup>, and under Article 12 of the [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#)<sup>122</sup>, sexual harassment in the workplace is prohibited. Under Article 115 of the LCA, there must be equal remuneration for work of equal value<sup>123</sup>. Under Article 104 of the LCA, there is provision for maternity leave<sup>124</sup>.

9.3.2 In the Concluding Observations of November 2023, UN CEDAW welcomed initiatives such as the National Employment and Skills Strategy, 2023–2030, which includes gender equality indicators for the employment of women<sup>125</sup>.

9.3.3 UN CEDAW’s report continued:

‘The Committee notes the State party’s efforts to strengthen employment policies, including several positive legislative measures improving labour standards and aligning them with international and European Union standards. However, the Committee notes with concern:

‘(a) That the 6.6 per cent gender pay gap, albeit lower than the European Union average, is a result of the lower participation of women in the formal labour market and amounts to 27 per cent in the industry sector, in which women are concentrated;

‘(b) The concentration of women in lower-paid jobs in the informal economy, where they are exposed to exploitation and excluded from social security coverage;

‘(c) The large number of women engaged in unpaid care work or work in family businesses;

‘(d) That women working in certain industrial sectors are often paid below the legal minimum wage, deprived of paid annual and sick leave and given inadequate equipment to work in unsafe working environments;

‘(e) The high unemployment rates among rural women, women with disabilities, and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma and Balkan Egyptians.’<sup>126</sup>

9.3.4 In July 2024, the World Bank noted progress in women’s access to education, healthcare and political representation, and stated:

‘... Despite these advancements, Albania continues to grapple with deep-seated challenges that hinder the full realization of gender equality. The economic landscape still exhibits significant gender gaps, with women’s participation in the labor market lagging and their representation in entrepreneurship remaining limited. Societal norms contribute to an uneven distribution of unpaid labor, often placing a disproportionate burden on women, and curtailing their professional and personal growth opportunities. The “motherhood penalty” [the significant divergence of employment trends

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<sup>120</sup> Govt of Albania, [Labour Code of Albania](#), 12 July 1995, amended December 2015

<sup>121</sup> Govt of Albania, [Labour Code of Albania](#), 12 July 1995, amended December 2015

<sup>122</sup> Govt of Albania, [Law on Protection from Discrimination](#), 4 February 2010, amended 2020

<sup>123</sup> Govt of Albania, [Labour Code of Albania](#), 12 July 1995, amended December 2015

<sup>124</sup> Govt of Albania, [Labour Code of Albania](#), 12 July 1995, amended December 2015

<sup>125</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (p2), 14 November 2023

<sup>126</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (p2), 14 November 2023

for men and women in parenthood<sup>127]</sup> remains a stark reality, hindering women's career progression and amplifying gender disparities in the economic domain.<sup>'128</sup>

9.3.5 The World Bank published gender data for Albania, released in 2025, which included the following:

- 'In Albania, the labor force participation rate among females is 53.5% and among males is 68.2% for 2024. The labor force participation rate is the proportion of the population ages 15 and older that is economically active. Since 1990, female labor force participation has increased. Compared with labor force participation in [countries in] the upper middle income group, the gap between men and women is lower in Albania.'<sup>129</sup>
- 'Vulnerable employment for females has improved in Albania since 1991. Workers in vulnerable employment are the least likely to have formal work arrangements, social protection, and safety nets to guard against economic shocks; thus they are more likely to fall into poverty. Vulnerable employment among women is 49.5% and among men is 47.3% in Albania for 2023. The rate of vulnerable employment is higher for men and women in Albania compared to the average rate in Europe & Central Asia.'<sup>130</sup>
- 'Data is not available for Albania for Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex (% of 24 hour day)'<sup>131</sup>
- 'In 2024, 41.2% of women and 51.5% of men in Albania had an account. The gap in account ownership between men and women in Albania, 10.3, is larger than the gap of the Europe & Central Asia aggregate, 4.6. Account ownership denotes the percentage of respondents who report having an account (by themselves or together with someone else) at a bank or another type of financial institution or report personally using a mobile money service in the past 12 months.'<sup>132</sup>

9.3.6 The most recently published gender-disaggregated statistics for Albania at the time of writing are contained in INSTAT's 'Women and Men in Albania 2024' report, published in September 2025 (INSTAT women and men report 2025). INSTAT noted their methodology: 'The main sources of data are social surveys and administrative records. Social surveys are designed to collect gender-disaggregated data. Likewise, institutions providing administrative data under MoUs with INSTAT are oriented toward collecting sex-disaggregated information.'<sup>133</sup> The report noted:

- 'Men are more present in the labour market than women, reflecting higher participation rates, respectively 82.3% and 69.3% for ages 15–64.
- 'Employment status structure shows that 51.2% of women are employees, while 28.5% are unpaid family workers.
- 'For both men and women aged 15–64, agriculture dominates

<sup>127</sup> World Bank Group, [Albania - Country Gender Assessment](#) (p29), 18 July 2024

<sup>128</sup> World Bank Group, [Albania - Country Gender Assessment](#) (p52), 18 July 2024

<sup>129</sup> World Bank Group, Gender Data Portal, [Albania](#), Fall 2025

<sup>130</sup> World Bank Group, Gender Data Portal, [Albania](#), Fall 2025

<sup>131</sup> World Bank Group, Gender Data Portal, [Albania](#), Fall 2025

<sup>132</sup> World Bank Group, Gender Data Portal, [Albania](#), Fall 2025

<sup>133</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

employment. In 2024, 41.5% of women were employed in agriculture. The second largest sector was trade, transport, hospitality, business, and administrative services, with 22.6% of employed women and 28.3% of employed men.

- ‘... Reasons for inactivity differ by gender: 14.0% of women declared being inactive due to household duties, compared to only 0.4% of men.
- ‘The number of unemployed female jobseekers increases with age, while the opposite occurs for men.
- Data show that about half of unemployed jobseekers of both genders have 8/9 years of education, 46.9% for women and 44.3% for men.
- ‘... 48.4% of urban pension beneficiaries are women. In rural pensions, the gender ratio is quite different, with 63.7% being women.
- ‘The gender pay gap is 4.9%. Men earn an average gross monthly wage 4.9% higher than women. Compared to the previous year, the gap decreased by 1.3 percentage points.’<sup>134</sup>

#### 9.3.7 The same report noted:

- ‘... Women owners or managers were most prevalent in small enterprises (1–4 employees), at 32.6%.
- ‘.. The number of women-owned or managed businesses was higher in the Services Sector than in the Production Sector, 33.6% and 18.0% respectively.
- ‘... In support schemes of the Albanian Investment Development Agency, 40.6% of beneficiaries were women.’<sup>135</sup>

#### 9.3.8 In August 2025, CNA published an article which stated:

‘While women’s average wages have grown faster than men’s, the gap has narrowed to 4.9% [in 2024], down from 6.2% a year earlier. This means that men are paid about 5% more on average than women. The gap remains wider than in 2021, when the gender pay gap hit an all-time low of 4.5%.

‘Although the gap has narrowed, there are only 4 occupational groups where women were paid more than men in 2024, down from 5 a year earlier. The occupations where women are paid more are:

‘Administrative and commercial managers; Legislators, senior civil servants and executive directors; Employees in electro-technology professions; Service and support workers.

‘Although in most professions, women earn less than men, there is one category where they always dominate, that of managers, being even the highest paid of all.

‘According to INSTAT, in the “Administrative and commercial managers” profession group, women were paid ... an increase of 6% compared to the previous year. This is the highest paid profession group in the country. Compared to men working in the same profession ..., female managers are paid 6.5% more.

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<sup>134</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

<sup>135</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

‘Even in the state, women are paid more. In the occupational group “Legislators, senior civil servants and executive directors”, the average monthly salary of women was ... 7.9% more than that of men in the same category.’<sup>136</sup>

9.3.9 In the Albania 2025 Report, published on 4 November 2025, the EC stated:

‘On equality between women and men in employment and social policy, gender inequality in employment remains, with the employment rate gap between men and women extending to 13% in 2024 (10.4% in 2023). The unemployment rate for men was 8.0%, while for women was 9.6%. The NEET [not in education, employment or training] rate among youth remains high with 2.1 points higher for women (25.6%) than men (23.5%). The gender pay gap in wages narrowed to 4.9% as compared to 6.2% in the previous year.’<sup>137</sup>

9.3.10 In September 2025, UN Albania reported that women own just over 11 percent of the country’s agricultural land<sup>138</sup>.

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#### 9.4 Political/public participation and representation

9.4.1 On 17 April 2025, Pembroke College, Oxford University, published an article by Dr Endrit Shabani, an alumna of the College, who worked with Professor Stephen Whitefield and UN Women in Albania to design the Women’s Participation in Elections Index, which ‘...would systematically measure the legal, economic and social barriers that prevent women from fully participating in the political life of the country.’<sup>139</sup> Dr Shabani explained the positive impact of the Index:

‘At first glance, Albania appears to be at the forefront of promoting women in government, with more than 56% of cabinet roles held by women, surpassing most European countries. Yet, beneath the shining surface, troubling realities emerged from the findings of the Index. Examining 29 dimensions of the electoral process across the country’s 12 regions, it showed that women encounter significant barriers: from the freedom to vote independently to the significant challenges they face as political candidates. On the one hand, women’s freedom to vote was often curtailed by coercion, including from family members, and many felt that their voices would not make a difference. On the other hand, political campaigns of women candidates were often starved of resources and donor support. The index visualised these struggles, leaving them at a disadvantage before their journey even begins.

‘Despite the challenges, the index did more than just expose problems, it pointed to the way forward, offering suggestions on what ought to be done to improve women’s participation in politics. ...

‘... in 2019 ... we led a legal initiative to amend the electoral code of Albania. ... This momentum culminated ... in 2020, with a landmark amendment to the Albanian Constitution, which for the first time stipulated that the electoral

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<sup>136</sup> CNA, [In only 4 professions, women are paid more than men, ...](#), 28 August 2025

<sup>137</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p75), 4 November 2025

<sup>138</sup> UN Albania, [... landmark assessment on gender equality monitoring...](#), 23 September 2025

<sup>139</sup> Pembroke College, Oxford University, [... Fight for Women's Place in Democracy](#), 17 April 2025

system must guarantee gender representation in Parliament.’<sup>140</sup>

9.4.2 Article 64 of the [Constitution of Albania](#) requires parties to ensure gender representation in their candidate lists, guaranteeing a balanced proportion of women and men<sup>141</sup>.

9.4.3 In an article dated April 2025, UN Women stated:

‘Women currently hold 50 of the 140 seats in the Albanian Parliament. and only 8 of the 61 municipalities are led by women. Despite their potential, women continue to face systemic barriers that hinder their full participation in politics. Social norms, financial constraints, and limited access to political networks often make it difficult for women to step into leadership roles. ...

‘Recognizing these challenges, UN Women in Albania, with financial support from the Swedish Government organized a series of training sessions across Albania to support aspiring women leaders. More than 130 women and girls from across Albania came together to build leadership skills, share experiences, and gain the tools they need to engage in politics ...

‘The training sessions focused on core political skills such as public speaking, campaign organization, leadership, and voter engagement strategies. Through hands-on exercises, participants honed their ability to communicate effectively, understand legislation, and craft messages that resonate with voters...’<sup>142</sup>

9.4.4 In the Albania 2025 Report, published in November 2025, the EC noted:

‘During the parliamentary election [of 11 May 2025<sup>143</sup>], 787 female candidates ran for a seat in Parliament (38.47% of all candidates). While this is a positive development, the OSCE/ODIHR [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights] election observation mission highlighted persistent gender stereotyping and discriminatory rhetoric against politically active women as significant barriers to participation...

‘Following the elections, women remain under-represented in Parliament, holding 51 of the 140 seats...

‘A new government took office following the 11 May 2025 parliamentary elections, composed of nine men and nine women.’<sup>144</sup>

9.4.5 The EC also reported on the recruitment of civil servants, stating, ‘In 2024, from the total number of appointed candidates, 61% were women and 39% men. From January to August 2025, out of 248 appointments, 163 were women and 85 were man. Overall, the gender distribution is 66% female and 34% male. Women account for 59% of middle-level managerial positions and 44% of senior-level managerial positions.’<sup>145</sup>

9.4.6 The INSTAT women and men report 2025 noted that:

- ‘... Women’s representation in Parliament during 2024 was 35.7%.

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<sup>140</sup> Pembroke College, Oxford University, [... Fight for Women's Place in Democracy](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>141</sup> Govt of Albania, [Constitution of Albania](#), 19 August 2021

<sup>142</sup> UN Women, [Empowering Women Leaders: Toward Greater Political Representation](#), 2 April 2025

<sup>143</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p3), 4 November 2025

<sup>144</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p22-23), 4 November 2025

<sup>145</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p26), 4 November 2025

- ‘In the 2023 local elections, 10.4% of mayoral candidates were women, while 13.1% of elected mayors were women.
- ‘Women’s participation in diplomatic missions in 2024 was comparable to men: 37.5% of ambassadors were women, while 66.7% of Ministers Plenipotentiary were women.’<sup>146</sup>

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## 10. Prevalence of gender-based violence

### 10.1 Forms of violence and overall prevalence

- 10.1.1 For definitions of gender-based violence see the Asylum Instruction [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#) and UN Women [FAQs: Types of violence against women and girls](#).
- 10.1.2 Gender-based violence covers a wide spectrum of behaviour. Where possible, CPIT has differentiated between types of violence experienced by women in the sections below, but there remains overlap.
- 10.1.3 On 30 April 2025, INSTAT published crime and criminal justice statistics for 2024. It noted: ‘... In 2024, 17,761 individuals were affected by crimes—an increase of 4.3% year-on-year. The majority were victims of crimes against the person and sexual violence, with 38.8% of all victims being women.’<sup>147</sup>
- 10.1.4 UN Albania and partner agencies in Albania annually lead the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. On 25 November 2024, UN Albania noted:
- ‘According to the latest prevalence survey, almost one in two women in Albania has experienced violence in their lifetime. In the first nine months of this year, 2,923 women reported violence. Over 3,800 women sought help from the Counseling Line for Women and Girls: While the 12% increase compared to last year indicates that gender-based violence remains widespread, it also suggests that trust in the protection system available to victims is on the rise.’<sup>148</sup>
- 10.1.5 See section 11 for more information on prevalence according to form of violence.

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### 10.2 Domestic violence, including Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

- 10.2.1 The latest official data specifically on GBV in Albania comes from the INSTAT report 2019, based on a sample of 3,443 women (see [Attitudes to gender-based violence](#) for more information on the report methodology). The survey has not been repeated since. Information after 2019 relies mainly on police records, protection orders, and court statistics.
- 10.2.2 The INSTAT report 2019 noted:
- 47% of the women and girls surveyed (who had been married and/or lived with a partner) had ‘ever’ (in their lifetime) experienced intimate partner violence;

<sup>146</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

<sup>147</sup> INSTAT, [Crime and criminal justice statistics, 2024](#), 30 April 2025

<sup>148</sup> UN, [... Albania Launch 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#), 25 November 2024

- 33.7% reported ‘currently’ (within the past 12 months) experiencing intimate partner violence at the time of being asked
- 65.8% of the women and girls surveyed (who had never married/lived with a male partner but had been involved in a relationship with a male without living together) had ‘ever’ experienced dating violence (‘a type of intimate partner violence occurring between two people in a close relationship’<sup>149</sup>);
- 61.8% were experiencing dating violence at the time of being asked<sup>150</sup>

### 10.2.3 The INSTAT report continued:

‘More specifically, 41.2% of women “ever” experienced coercive controlling behaviours, 31.4% experienced psychological violence, 18.0% experienced physical violence, 8.6% experienced sexual violence, and 7.0% experienced economic violence. In fact, 1 out of 5 or 21.0% of women “ever” experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both, in their marriage/intimate relationships.

‘In terms of current experience, 1 out of 3 or 33.7% of women experienced intimate partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey. More specifically, 1 out of 4 or 25.2% of women “currently” experienced coercive controlling behaviours, 19.7% “currently” experienced psychological violence, 7.2% were experiencing physical violence, 7.0% were experiencing economic violence, and 3.6% were experiencing sexual violence. It is notable that 8.2% of women “currently” experienced physical and/or sexual violence, or both.

‘Women age 18-24 years were most likely [to] experience intimate partner domestic violence (55.8% ever, 55.8% current). As women age, their “current” experiences of intimate partner domestic violence decreased, with only 25.8% of women age 55-64 and 18.2% age 65-74 experiencing intimate partner domestic violence.’<sup>151</sup>

### 10.2.4 In an article published in May 2024, Balkan Insight included statistics on the number of reported cases of domestic violence, by gender, from 2019 to 2022 using statistics from the General Directorate of the State Police<sup>152</sup>:

Year	Total cases	Women victims	Men victims	Women (%)	Men (%)
2019	4,629	3,596	1,235	78	27
2020	4,701	3,497	1,370	74	29
2021	5,312	3,871	1,458	73	27
2022	5,214	3,772	1,466	72	28

### 10.2.5 In an undated article, UN DP stated, ‘The number of cases [of violence against women] reported to the relevant authorities remains low in comparison to the actual number of women who experience violence (4,591 in 2018, 4,629 in 2019, 4,701 in 2020, and 5,312 in 2021). During the period

<sup>149</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p8), March 2019

<sup>150</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p13), March 2019

<sup>151</sup> INSTAT, [Violence against Women and Girls in Albania](#) (p16), March 2019

<sup>152</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

of national lockdown in 2020, the number of calls made to the national counselling hotline increased by a factor of three in comparison to the same period in the previous year. However, the number of reports of domestic violence made to the police was lower than in previous years for the same period.<sup>153</sup>

- 10.2.6 In March 2025, AWEN and Kosovo Women’s Network (KWN) published a report entitled, ‘How much does protection cost?’ (AWEN/KWN report of March 2025). The report stated that, ‘In 2022, the helpline [116 117] received 3,117 calls, involving psychological violence (62% of cases), physical violence (55%), and economic violence (29%).’<sup>154</sup>
- 10.2.7 On 27 November 2024, VoA reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, stating, ‘In Albania, over 4 thousand reports of women and girls to the police for violence against them have been registered this year [2024]... According to statistics, one in two women declares that they have experienced some form of physical, psychological, economic, sexual and digital violence once in their lives.’<sup>155</sup>
- 10.2.8 In the annual report covering 2024 and published in April 2025, Amnesty International stated, ‘The police reported that, in the first six months of the year [2024], 686 women had been subjected to domestic violence, an increase of 30 cases compared to the previous year.’<sup>156</sup>
- 10.2.9 The INSTAT women and men report 2025 reported that, in the year 2024, ‘1,456 women reported domestic violence. Tirana had the highest number of female victims (41.1%), followed by Durrës (15.2%) and Fier (8.3%).’<sup>157</sup>
- 10.2.10 In October 2025, the news outlet Euronews Albania reported, ‘Thanks to greater awareness and public sensitization, the number of reports to social and law enforcement structures for legal prosecution of domestic violence perpetrators has been increasing.’<sup>158</sup>

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### 10.3 Femicide

- 10.3.1 In the Country Gender Assessment for Albania, published in July 2024, the World Bank referred to statistics from 2020, stating, ‘The majority of family violence murder victims are women, comprising 88.9 percent of victims in 2020. Women exhibit increasing rates as victims of family murders, surpassing men by 18.3 percentage points, while men experience decreasing rates.’<sup>159</sup>
- 10.3.2 The World Bank published data on intentional female homicides per 100,000 females; the data for Albania and other countries in the Western Balkans is set out below, as is data for the UK for the purpose of comparison:
- North Macedonia: 1 per 100,000 females (2023 data)
  - Albania: 0.8 per 100,000 females (2023 data)

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<sup>153</sup> UNDP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

<sup>154</sup> AWEN/KWN, [How much does protection cost? ...](#) (p15), March 2025

<sup>155</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations ...](#), 27 November 2024

<sup>156</sup> Amnesty International, [Human rights in Albania](#), 28 April 2025

<sup>157</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

<sup>158</sup> Euronews Albania, [Gjrokastër: Rise in Domestic Violence Cases...](#), 16 October 2025

<sup>159</sup> World Bank Group, [Albania - Country Gender Assessment](#) (p50), 18 July 2024

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 0.8 per 100,000 females (2023 data)
- UK: 0.7 (2021 data)
- Serbia: 0.6 (2023 data)
- Kosovo: 0.3 per 100,000 females (2021 data)
- Montenegro: 0.3 per 100,000 females (2023 data)<sup>160</sup>

10.3.3 In 2024, the People’s Advocate (Ombudsman), which defends the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of individuals from unlawful and incorrect acts or omissions of public administration bodies<sup>161</sup>, published a report about femicides in Albania from 2021 to 2023 which stated:

‘Between 2021 and 2023, a total of 32 women and girls were killed in Albania, 27 of which by perpetrators with whom they were or in a family or intimate relationship. Of the 28 perpetrators, 26 were men and boys; only in two cases the crimes were committed by a woman and a girl. ... According to information available, of the 32 cases of killings of women and girls, 24 fulfil the criteria to qualify as femicides, or killings because of gender. The crimes in these cases were committed by 22 perpetrators.’<sup>162</sup>

10.3.4 The People’s Advocate’s report noted that the femicide rate [number of femicides per 100,000 population of women and girls] for Albania in 2023 was lower than that for the United States<sup>163</sup>. The report also included a comparison with other countries in the region and with the EU; this revealed the following:

‘In 2021, the rate of femicide in Albania was higher than in North Macedonia, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia, Malta, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Hungary, and Montenegro.

‘In 2022, the rate of femicide in Albania was lower than in some of the above-mentioned countries, but higher than in Slovenia, North Macedonia and Italy.

‘In 2023, the rate of femicide in Albania was lower compared to North Macedonia but higher vis-à-vis the rest of the countries chosen for the purpose of this comparison exercise [i.e. the countries mentioned above].’<sup>164</sup>

10.3.5 The People’s Advocate’s report explained motivations for femicides, stating, ‘... in most of the cases the women and girls were killed for reasons such as jealousy, refusal to accept separation/divorce, refusal to accept the fact that the victim was in a new relationship after separation with the perpetrator, and/or out of revenge for reporting them to the police.’<sup>165</sup>

10.3.6 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated, ‘Official data show that 16 women were killed in their family environment in 2021, and 12 were killed in 2022. Data for 2023 and previous years demonstrate an increase in the number of gender-related killings.’<sup>166</sup> However, the report did not provide data for 2023

<sup>160</sup> World Bank, [Intentional homicides, female \(per 100,000 female\)](#), no date

<sup>161</sup> People’s Advocate, [About us](#), no date

<sup>162</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p7), 2024

<sup>163</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p29), 2024

<sup>164</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p8), 2024

<sup>165</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p8), 2024

<sup>166</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 166), 17 September 2024

or the previous years to which it made reference.

10.3.7 The EC did not include the number of femicides in every annual report on Albania in connection with EU accession, but the following were noted in some annual reports (it was not possible to obtain statistics for the years 2024 and 2025 in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)):

- 2020: 6 women killed in family relationships (not clear whether these murders met the criteria for femicide as set out in [Forms of violence](#))<sup>167</sup>
- 2021: 11<sup>168</sup>
- 2022: 8<sup>169</sup>
- 2023: 13<sup>170</sup>

10.3.8 In March 2024, VoA reported, ‘On average, one female victim every month, or 159 women and girls have been killed by family members and partners in the last 13 years from 2010 to the present, 12 of which were killed in the last year alone.’<sup>171</sup>

10.3.9 On 27 November 2024, VoA reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, stating, ‘Activists claim that 17 Albanian women and girls have been killed this year [2024] in the region...’<sup>172</sup> It was not clear whether the ‘region’ includes North Macedonia and Kosovo, which are also referred to in the article.

10.3.10 In the Albania 2025 Report, the EC stated that ‘The continued high number of femicides per capita is still a serious concern.’<sup>173</sup>

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## 10.4 Other forms of violence

10.4.1 The INSTAT men and women report 2025 noted: ‘Girls accounted for 15.5% of victims of sexual crimes.’<sup>174</sup>

10.4.2 In an article dated 1 December 2023, UN Women reported:

‘Forty one percent of Albanian women active online have experienced some form of technology-facilitated violence in their lifetime – the new research “The Dark Side of Digitalization: Technology-Facilitated Violence Against Women in Eastern Europe and Central Asia” shows. Albania was part of this year-long research investigating the forms and prevalence of technology-facilitated violence against women and its impact on women and girls’ attitudes, experiences, and access to services.

‘The average percentage of women from all countries covered by the research who have been subject to this type of violence is 53.2% (including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan,

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<sup>167</sup> EC, [Albania 2021 Report](#), 19 October 2021

<sup>168</sup> EC, [Albania Report 2024](#) (p39), 30 October 2024

<sup>169</sup> EC, [Albania Report 2024](#) (p39), 30 October 2024

<sup>170</sup> EC, [Albania Report 2024](#) (p39), 30 October 2024

<sup>171</sup> VoA, [Albania, every month a woman is killed ...](#), 8 March 2024

<sup>172</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations ...](#), 27 November 2024

<sup>173</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p39), 4 November 2025

<sup>174</sup> INSTAT, [Women and men in Albania 2025](#), 12 September 2025

Türkiye, and Ukraine). More than one third of women facing tech-facilitated violence experience it on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, while in Albania and Türkiye Instagram was pointed out as the social media platform where this type of violence occurs the most.

‘According to the research, most of technology-facilitated VAW [violence against women] is perpetrated by unknown persons (50.3%), while in 32.1% of case it is perpetrated by persons that are close to women, such as partners, family members, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, supervisors or peers, representing an extension of the violence that exists offline. In Albania, respondents reported that the main perpetrators are current or former partner (followed by family member and the boss)...’<sup>175</sup>

#### 10.4.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO found:

‘Online and technology-facilitated violence against women is a growing phenomenon in many countries. As reported by both authorities and civil society, recent years have seen an overall increase in crimes committed in the digital sphere in Albania and a sharp increase when it comes to violence against women committed online. This trend is particularly evident in the increase in instances of online stalking, especially committed through social media. In this regard, one study found that 12% of young women and 5% of young men in Albania have been subjected to blackmail by means of photos, videos or other material containing sexual content. ... research has shown that almost half of domestic violence victims report experiencing some form of online abuse during the relationship and/or after the relationship ended.’<sup>176</sup>

#### 10.4.4 In April 2025, VNA, an independent media platform situated in Albania<sup>177</sup>, reported:

‘The annual report of the General Prosecutor's Office on criminality in the country, submitted to the Assembly, says that during 2024 sexual crimes in Albania have increased by almost 30% compared to the previous year.

‘The report highlights 161 investigations in total, which have sent 85 people as defendants to the courtroom.

‘The most numerous cases of this nature of crime have been observed “sexual or homosexual relations with minors” and “sexual harassment” and among the defendants is a girl, as well as a foreigner.’<sup>178</sup>

#### 10.4.5 For information about human trafficking, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Human trafficking](#).

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## 10.5 Data collection

#### 10.5.1 In a report of March 2023, ‘Social and Institutional Response to Femicide in Albania,’ UN Women noted challenges with data collection:

‘Gender-based criminal offense is an offense committed under aggravating circumstances, but the official crime statistics fail to provide specific data, disaggregated by gender, age, characteristics of the perpetrator and the

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<sup>175</sup> UN Women, [New regional research unveiled: ...](#), 1 December 2023

<sup>176</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 7), 17 September 2024

<sup>177</sup> VNA, [VNA.AL - Our Mission for Truth](#), no date

<sup>178</sup> VNA, [Sexual crimes during 2024 increased by 30%, Saranda the city ...](#), 4 April 2025

victim for each offense. Fragmentary statistics on violence against women do not provide adequate guidance for an effective crime prevention policy. Law enforcement agencies and the judiciary collect and process data on crimes against women and girls. INSTAT [Albanian Institute of Statistics] conducts periodic surveys and publishes data on women, crime, and victims of crime. Despite the progress made regarding the collection, processing, and publication of crime data disaggregated by age and gender, perpetrators and victims, the statistics are still not standardized, harmonized, and do not provide public data on victims and perpetrators according to specifics and all types of crime. The statistical yearbooks of the Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Justice do not provide data on crimes and victims by gender.<sup>179</sup>

- 10.5.2 In the report of 2024, the People's Advocate stated that the Femicides Observatory was established in March 2024 within the structure of the People's Advocate and explained:

'Through this mechanism, country-wide data are collected and then comprehensively analysed with the aim of identifying any issues or gaps in the existing mechanisms for the protection of victims of violence. The findings of the analysis serve as a basis for formulating concrete recommendations to the National Mechanism for Combatting Gender-Based Violence and relevant institutions. The information is entered into a dedicated data system on femicides in line with the UN statistical framework and best European practices. ...'<sup>180</sup>

- 10.5.3 On an undated UNDP project webpage in relation to the programme, UNDP stated, 'Notable advancements at the institutional level include ... enhancements to the local information system for registering cases of domestic violence (REVALB)...'<sup>181</sup>

- 10.5.4 In the report of 2024, GREVIO noted that 'several advancements' had been made in data collection since the baseline report (November 2017<sup>182</sup>) but noted:

'... that the system still requires data-input practices to be harmonised and is missing data from the justice sector about the progress of each case through the court system. Further efforts in this regard are also needed to extend data collection for other types of violence against women beyond domestic violence...

'In addition to INSTAT, the police, prosecutors, courts, municipalities, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and High Judicial Council all collect annual data on domestic violence and various other forms of violence against women. Given the lack of interconnectedness of these data-collection systems and the lack of a unified system that would follow each case from report to its judicial outcome, it is evident that further harmonisation of the process of data collection is needed...

'As regards data from courts, although information reached GREVIO about very few convictions for violence against women committed in the digital

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<sup>179</sup> UN Women, [Social and Institutional Response to Femicide in Albania](#), March 2023

<sup>180</sup> People's Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p11), 2024

<sup>181</sup> UN DP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

<sup>182</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

sphere, no official data were received on the number or types of sentences issued. ... disaggregated data for court-issued emergency barring orders (EBOs) and protection measures, as well as data on EBOs issued for cases of psychological violence alone, were not submitted to GREVIO.

'As regards data on gender-based killings, this is currently collected annually by the Ministry of Justice, albeit not broken down by sex...'183

- 10.5.5 For information about the impact of social attitudes on reporting of gender-based violence, see [Attitudes to gender-based violence](#).

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## 11. State protection

### 11.1 Government attitudes, policies and funding

11.1.1 In an undated article, UN DP stated, 'In recent years, Albania has made notable progress in developing its ... policy ... framework with the objective of ending domestic violence and violence against women...'184

11.1.2 In the report of 2024, 'GREVIO observed a strong will ... among the authorities ... to continue on the path of reforms in the field of violence against women and domestic violence.'185

11.1.3 GREVIO further noted:

'As regards comprehensive and co-ordinated policies in Albania, given its finding in the baseline report [November 2017<sup>186</sup>] that the response to violence against women other than domestic violence had been piecemeal and had lacked a comprehensive approach, GREVIO welcomes the adoption of the fourth consecutive National Strategy for Gender Equality (2021-2030) and the related Action Plan on Gender Equality, the former of which includes "reduction of gender-based and domestic violence" as one of its goals. The new strategy also states that one of its aims is to fulfil the obligations of the authorities arising under the Istanbul Convention. GREVIO notes that despite some exceptions the national strategy remains largely focused on domestic violence, at the expense of other forms of violence covered by the convention, such as sexual violence.'187

11.1.4 The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021 – 2030 is available on the [UN Women – Albania](#)<sup>188</sup> website.

11.1.5 GREVIO also referred to government funding for 'gender budgeting' and combating violence against women:

'Since the adoption of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report [November 2017<sup>189</sup>], the share of gender budgeting in the general budget has consistently increased, reaching 9.6% for the period 2023-2025...

'GREVIO notes with satisfaction that 648 945 000 Albanian lek (ALL) [approximately £5,798,679<sup>190</sup>], being the largest share of funding planned in

<sup>183</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 29-32), 17 September 2024

<sup>184</sup> UN DP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

<sup>185</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 2), 17 September 2024

<sup>186</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>187</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 15), 17 September 2024

<sup>188</sup> UN Women, Albania, [National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030](#), no date

<sup>189</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>190</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00893478 GBP, 1 August 2025

the National Strategy for Gender Equality, has been earmarked to be used towards the goal of reducing all forms of harmful practices, including gender-based violence and domestic violence. However, GREVIO also notes that to reach this goal, ALL 366 879 473 [approximately £3,278,263<sup>191</sup>] (56.5% of the planned expenses) remain to be secured. What is more, it appears that a significant proportion of the funds that are marked as secured in fact will either originate from foreign donors or still need to be acquired by means of fundraising.

‘... GREVIO notes, in a similar way to its findings in the baseline report [November 2017<sup>192</sup>], that a significant gap in financing for the implementation of policies and providing services remains a serious challenge that needs to be addressed.’<sup>193</sup>

#### 11.1.6 GREVIO also noted the provision of financial assistance:

‘... the creation of the Social Fund, a new avenue used by central government to finance projects put forward by municipalities, is a positive step taken ... for securing financing for the municipalities, who play a vital role in the provision of services to women victims ... The fund operates on a year-by-year project basis. According to the state report, between 2020 and 2022 a total of 15 municipal projects, many of which concern domestic violence, were supported with a total of €2,294,087 [£20,482<sup>194</sup>]. ...

‘Another positive step ... is the introduction in 2019 of a specialised budget line of ALL 4 000 000 [£35,737<sup>195</sup>] by the Ministry of Justice, earmarked for the financing of NGOs that provide free legal aid. A first public call was issued in 2021, but none of the NGOs who applied met the criteria for being awarded funds. The call issued for 2022 suffered the same outcome. Only during the third call issued in 2023 were two NGOs awarded limited funding.

‘Further to the point of financing of NGOs, GREVIO notes that the role of the Agency for the Support of Civil Society has been enhanced in the period under review with the allocation of ALL 17 900 000 [£160,018<sup>196</sup>] (46.67% of the total funds allocated) to NGOs providing services to victims of domestic violence. However, despite this, no funding was awarded to this category of NGOs in 2018 and 2020. In this respect, concerns reached GREVIO about a lack of transparent procedures and numerous bureaucratic hurdles hampering the ability of NGOs to secure financing from the state. Information received from civil society indicates that many of the NGOs providing services for women victims nonetheless still depend, for a large part or fully, on foreign donors to be able to operate. The application process for the scant funding from the state or the municipalities requires extensive documentation to be submitted by hand, is project-based and lacks sustainability. ... This has de facto resulted in no financing for entire categories of organisations, such as NGOs providing services for women victims suffering from disabilities or Roma women.’<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00893478 GBP, 1 August 2025

<sup>192</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>193</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 22), 17 September 2024

<sup>194</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00893410 GBP, 1 August 2025

<sup>195</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00893755 GBP, 1 August 2025

<sup>196</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00893853 GBP, 1 August 2025

<sup>197</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 24 to 26), 17 September 2024

- 11.1.7 In the report of 2024, the People’s Advocate stated that the Femicides Observatory was established in March 2024 within the structure of the People’s Advocate. The report explained:
- ‘The Observatory is a monitoring mechanism which was established to address cases of killings of women and girls, with a view to preventing the phenomenon and ensuring effective enforcement of the legislation against gender-based violence.
- ‘... the office of the People’s Advocate is also engaged in monitoring court proceedings in homicide cases where the victims are women and girls. The purpose of this exercise is to conduct an analysis of judicial proceedings and decision-making.’<sup>198</sup>
- 11.1.8 In November 2024, UN Albania reported on government spending for 2025: ‘... over 64 million lek [approximately £574.326<sup>199</sup>] have been allocated for social housing to support 970 survivors of violence, including women and single-parent families. Additionally, 733 million lek [approximately £6,577,566<sup>200</sup>] will be used to enforce 2,900 emergency protection orders. However, unlocking further investments remain essential to expand prevention efforts and survivor support services.’<sup>201</sup>
- 11.1.9 The AWEN/KWN report of March 2025 stated:
- ‘The Government of Albania has committed to implementing the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, ... which requires offering comprehensive, victim-centred services to persons who have suffered gender-based violence. The Government does not have sufficient expertise and capacities for providing these services alone. Therefore, it relies on services provided by women’s rights civil society organisations (WCOSOs), which have decades of expertise offering such services. Yet, the Government has not allocated adequate financing for these services, which places the existence of centres offering these services and thus victims of violence at risk. To implement its commitments under the IC [Istanbul Convention], the Government of Albania urgently needs to allocate resources from the Government budget for WCOSOs service providers...’<sup>202</sup>
- 11.1.10 In an undated article on the website, UN Women stated, ‘The Government has set up services and coordinated efforts to respond to reported cases of violence against women in all municipalities, though adequate financing and close monitoring are needed to ensure their full effectiveness.’<sup>203</sup>
- 11.1.11 In the Albania 2025 Report, published in November 2025, the EC stated that implementation and enforcement of the legal and institutional framework need to be improved. The report added, ‘Weaknesses remain in implementing the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030 and its Action Plan ... The activities in preparing Local Gender Action Plans continued.’<sup>204</sup>

<sup>198</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p11), 2024

<sup>199</sup> Xe.com, [Currency Converter](#) (1.00 ALL = 0.00897384 GBP), 14 January 2026

<sup>200</sup> Xe.com, [Currency Converter](#) (1.00 ALL = 0.00897331 GBP), 14 January 2026

<sup>201</sup> UN Albania, [... 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#), 25 November 2024

<sup>202</sup> AWEN/KWN, [How much does protection cost? ...](#) (p5), March 2025

<sup>203</sup> UN Women, [Ending violence against women](#), no date

<sup>204</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#), 4 November 2025

## 11.2 Co-ordinated referral mechanism

11.2.1 In information dated December 2019, UN Women explained, ‘The Referral Mechanism against Domestic Violence, is a dedicated mechanism that aims to protect and support survivors of domestic and gender-based violence. It is composed of a team of community professionals who have institutional responsibility to respond and address the various needs of survivors of domestic violence. Each member of the team plays a key role in the overall community response to the crime of domestic violence.’<sup>205</sup>

11.2.2 In January 2023, UN Women published an interview with the local coordinator of the domestic violence referral mechanism in Tirana, who stated:

‘The coordinated referral mechanism was established in 2012. Since then, the referral mechanism has undertaken measures that comprehensively address all forms of violence against women and girls. The legal framework has been consolidated and improved, making it a strong basis for the mechanism’s activity. Standard protocols have been approved for managing cases of violence during normal periods as well as in times of crisis, and these protocols are well known by the members of the mechanism. ...

‘The referral mechanism also includes civil society organizations (CSOs), which provide indispensable services for victims of violence, such as psychological support, free legal aid, accommodation, and support and rehabilitation programs for perpetrators of violence. Including CSOs in the mechanism makes case management easier and more holistic.’<sup>206</sup>

11.2.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated that ‘... that the CRM [co-ordinated referral mechanism] has now been successfully put in place in all 61 municipalities of the country.’<sup>207</sup> GREVIO continued:

‘... mechanisms in bigger cities are well organised, meet regularly to discuss individual cases and foster a good level of co-operation between the members of the municipal points of the CRM. GREVIO observed that this is less so when it comes to smaller municipalities, where the mechanism was rolled out more recently. ...

‘GREVIO further notes that two new protocols were developed by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in the period under review that concern the management of domestic and sexual violence cases. ... GREVIO notes with interest that the protocols in question prescribe the exact roles of all the structures participating in the municipal CRM, with precise timelines. GREVIO nonetheless notes that there are no protocols or standard operating procedures in place when it comes to forced marriage, forced sterilisation or the treatment of women victims of domestic violence suffering from mental disabilities. ...

‘Despite the successful rollout of the CRM and the adoption of the above protocols, ... Further efforts are needed to improve the interinstitutional co-operation among all members of the CRM.

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<sup>205</sup> UN Women, [The Referral Mechanism against Domestic Violence in Albania](#), 20 December 2019

<sup>206</sup> UN Women, [UN Women - Interview: 'Addressing violence against women ...'](#), 23 January 2023

<sup>207</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 79), 17 September 2024

‘Another reform in the period under review is the introduction of Gender Equality Officers, currently assigned to 11 ministries and as contact points at the State Police and INSTAT, who serve as focal points at the respective institutions for all issues touching on gender equality. ...’<sup>208</sup>

- 11.2.4 UNDP Albania is implementing the UN Joint Programme ‘Ending Violence Against Women in Albania – Phase II’ (2023–2025). On an undated UNDP project webpage in relation to the programme, UNDP noted that, CRMs had expanded to all 61 municipalities in Albania<sup>209</sup>.

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### 11.3 Training of professionals

- 11.3.1 In November 2023, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) reported that it had:

‘...delivered a national training course on gender-responsive policing of violence against women and girls from 13 to 17 November in Riviera Golem, Albania.

‘The course – organized by the OSCE Transnational Threats Department, the OSCE Presence in Albania and the Albanian Security Academy – was delivered by national police officers and prosecutors who had previously benefited from the OSCE train-the-trainers course in Warsaw, as well as by other national experts engaged with the OSCE. Twenty police officers and eight prosecutors from various municipalities in Albania - twenty women and eight men – learned to respond to cases of violence against women and girls while maintaining a victim-centred approach.’<sup>210</sup>

- 11.3.2 In the Annual Report 2023, the NGO Vatra, which provides services and expertise for the prevention and protection of victims of domestic and societal violence,<sup>211</sup> noted various training activities carried out during the year, which included the following: ‘During the year, Vatra conducted 8 trainings with the participation of 145 representatives of law enforcement and local government agencies, state and non-state institutions working in the - field of trafficking and violence, in the municipalities of Vlora, Berat, Klos, Peshkopi, Fier, Lushnje, Gjirokaster, and Saranda...’<sup>212</sup>

- 11.3.3 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E reported on the training they had provided for professionals dealing with victims of violence during the year:

‘D&E, in collaboration with the municipalities of Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje, has organized five training sessions with the participation of 87 professionals, including local-level stakeholders and civil society organizations. The purpose of these trainings was to enhance their capacities in supporting the reintegration of GBV survivors and in addressing their needs during the implementation of their socio-economic reintegration plans.’<sup>213</sup>

- 11.3.4 In the report of 2024, GREVIO noted:

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<sup>208</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 80 to 82), 17 September 2024

<sup>209</sup> UN DP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

<sup>210</sup> OSCE, [OSCE training strengthens criminal justice responses...](#), 17 November 2023

<sup>211</sup> Vatra, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>212</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p37), 2024

<sup>213</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

‘As regards training levels of law-enforcement officers, GREVIO notes that the teaching plan adopted by the Police (Security) Academy for the period 2017-2020 included mandatory initial training on investigation of cases of domestic violence, including a separate course concerning child victims. Training on sexual harassment, sexual violence and co-operation with the CRM [co-ordinated referral mechanism], however, are made available as in-service training only and remain voluntary ...

‘As per information received from the Ministry of Justice, the topic of domestic violence is present in the mandatory curricula for initial training at the School of Magistrates ..., and sexual violence is taught as part of a broader course on criminal law. ... GREVIO notes that none of the other types of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention appear to be covered in the initial training package...

‘GREVIO notes with satisfaction that a series of training programmes for Local Co-ordinators of the CRM [Co-ordinated Referral Mechanism], some of which were undertaken in co-operation with specialist NGOs, took place in the period under review. Municipal local co-ordinators are similarly trained extensively ... GREVIO is satisfied to see that this training has had an effect, which is visible in the overall improvements of the functioning of the CRM...<sup>214</sup>

#### 11.3.5 GREVIO also noted training for professionals in healthcare and education:

‘In the healthcare system, ... the number of healthcare professionals receiving training, and the level of its impact, still falls short of the expected results. A total of 613 healthcare professionals attended a limited number of non-mandatory training sessions on aspects of violence against women relevant to their work, including on the standard operating procedures for treatment of victims of gender-based violence by healthcare staff. ... This finds support in the information received by GREVIO about insufficient gender sensitivity by healthcare professionals when dealing with victims of violence against women, especially in general hospitals, which often serve as primary entry point for victims. ...<sup>215</sup>

#### 11.3.6 GREVIO drew the following conclusions about the training of professionals:

‘...the effect of training remains hampered by external factors, such as frequent staff turnover ... which prevents an effective transfer of knowledge between professionals. Furthermore, training overall tends to concentrate on domestic violence and to a smaller extent on sexual violence, and less on other forms of violence against women, such as forced marriage, or (apart from limited training for police officers) on risk assessment.<sup>216</sup>

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## 11.4 Police response

### 11.4.1 In February 2023, UN Women noted a positive police response to the reporting of violence against women using the Bright Sky phone app. The article referred to the experience of a particular user of the app, stating, ‘Over the course of two months, [Aferdita Kote] learned how to use it thanks

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<sup>214</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 60 to 64), 17 September 2024

<sup>215</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 65 to 66), 17 September 2024

<sup>216</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 67), 17 September 2024

to the Roma Women’s Rights Centre, until one day she finally got up the nerve to use it. The police showed up at her door to find her with bruises on her face. “I reported domestic violence through the mobile app and the police came to my house immediately...” The article added that Ms Kote’s abusive partner had been detained and she had been granted a protection order for a year<sup>217</sup>.

11.4.2 In the Concluding Observations of November 2023, UN CEDAW noted ‘with concern... the persistent reluctance of women to file complaints owing to ... discriminatory attitudes among law enforcement personnel.’<sup>218</sup>

11.4.3 The EC Albania 2024 report also noted the following number of police reports on violence against women (including domestic and sexual violence) from 2021 to 2023:

- 2021: 5,448
- 2022: 5,367
- 2023: 5,198<sup>219</sup>

11.4.4 Amfora, an Albanian non-profit media platform<sup>220</sup>, reported, ‘According to the General Directorate of State Police, from January to December 2024, 5445 domestic violence cases have been identified and treated by the police authorities, “among them, 3822 victims have been girls and women, and 1754 have been men”.’<sup>221</sup>

11.4.5 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated that it ‘... welcomes the measures taken to address violence committed online by introducing a specialist police unit, but as this unit does not specialise in violence against women, it is concerned that the response may be insufficient.’<sup>222</sup>

11.4.6 GREVIO continued:

‘In response to GREVIO’s findings in the baseline report [November 2017<sup>223</sup>] ..., the Albanian authorities increased the number of police units specialising in domestic violence ... The state report mentions that these specialist officers have received training on domestic and sexual violence, stalking and violence against minors. GREVIO also notes improvements to the facilities for receiving victims in some police stations, which is a positive step towards earning victims’ trust. GREVIO notes, however, the need to also introduce greater degrees of specialisation in relation to other forms of violence, notably rape and sexual violence, among the Albanian police force.

‘...Another encouraging development since the baseline report is the introduction of the Bright Sky smartphone application that victims can use to report domestic violence and submit evidence to the police. GREVIO notes that it is being insufficiently used, therefore more focus should be placed on operationalising it and advertising its advantages.’<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> UN Women, [Tackling domestic violence through technology in Albania](#), 28 February 2023

<sup>218</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 13c), 14 November 2023

<sup>219</sup> EC, [Albania Report 2024](#) (p39), 30 October 2024

<sup>220</sup> Amfora, [ABOUT AMFORA. AL](#), no date

<sup>221</sup> Amfora, [Between silence and clicks: Technology is not helping ...](#), 21 June 2025

<sup>222</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 8), 17 September 2024

<sup>223</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>224</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 139, 141), 17 September 2024

11.4.7 GREVIO also noted the introduction of standard operating procedures:

‘GREVIO further found in its baseline report [November 2017<sup>225</sup>] that there had been a need to develop standard operating procedures at the level of Albanian police for crimes beyond domestic violence, to which the authorities responded by adopting two standardised protocols outlining the steps to be followed by all members of the CRM, including the police, in cases of domestic violence and cases of sexual violence. ... The victim-centred nature of some of the measures they include, such as the requirement to collect evidence (medical or otherwise) in a victim-centred way and the right of women victims to have forensic evidence lifted by a female doctor, are important improvements in ensuring victims’ engagement in investigations.’<sup>226</sup>

11.4.8 GREVIO also expressed concern that it had: ‘...received indications that women victims of violence still face serious challenges in reporting, including inaction by authorities and individual officers minimising the violence and seeking justification either in the victim’s behaviour or that of the perpetrator.’<sup>227</sup>

11.4.9 GREVIO further noted:

‘Victim-blaming attitudes are still widely present in law enforcement, especially in smaller towns outside of Tirana. Cases of psychological violence alone are rarely deemed to require a response by law enforcement. Similarly, GREVIO has heard accounts of instances where police officers have attended a scene of domestic violence without conducting a risk assessment or having the perpetrator removed from the shared household, instead only warning them not to commit further violence.

‘Moreover, there seems to be little oversight or accountability when the police fail to comply with their due diligence obligation to protect women victims and investigate violence against women and domestic violence. Urgent measures are necessary to improve women’s trust in the system, including, but not limited to, ensuring that each and every complaint of domestic violence and violence against women is taken seriously, processed speedily and dealt with in a victim-sensitive manner. To do so would entail addressing the high rate of staff turnover among the police force, ensuring victims’ access to trained female officers on a systematic basis and other more systematic measures to change the prevailing attitudes about gender-based violence among the police, improve retention of experienced police officers and encourage knowledge sharing inside the police force.’<sup>228</sup>

11.4.10 GREVIO also noted the rate of investigations once reports have been made to the police:

‘... official data indicate that despite a marginal improvement, there is nevertheless a continuously low rate of investigations opened compared to the reported number of cases of domestic violence – 1,914 criminal proceedings were opened out of 4,951 reports [38.7%] made to the police in 2018, 1,793 criminal proceedings were opened out of 4,629 reports [38.7%]

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<sup>225</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>226</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 142), 17 September 2024

<sup>227</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 143), 17 September 2024

<sup>228</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 144 to 145), 17 September 2024

made to the police in 2019, 1,886 criminal proceedings were opened out of 4,701 reports [40.1%] to the police in 2020, 2,046 criminal proceedings were opened out of 5,312 reports [38.5%] made to the police in 2021 and 2,274 criminal proceedings were opened out of 5,214 [43.6%] reports made to the police in 2022.

‘... Information received ... indicates that cases are often rejected at the stage of investigation on account of lack of sufficient evidence or the withdrawal of the victim’s statement. The key reasons identified for the number of statement withdrawals were a lack of gender sensitivity in the investigation, pressure from the families (both the victim’s and the perpetrator’s), instances of secondary victimisation through repeated testimonies, inappropriate questioning and the overall lack of trust in the criminal justice system. GREVIO notes with concern that the withdrawal of the victim’s testimony frequently puts an end to an already lengthy investigation, as prosecution is most often then discontinued, running counter to ... the Istanbul Convention...’<sup>229</sup>

11.4.11 In November 2024, Gazeta Tema, an Albanian news outlet, reported on the positive impact of the recruitment of female police officers:

‘Albanian Minister of the Interior, Ervin Hoxha, marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women by reaffirming the country’s ongoing commitment to gender inclusion within its police force and the broader public security sector...

‘...reforms in recruitment and promotion processes have helped ensure equal representation of women at all levels of the police force. Hoxha also praised the positive impact of female officers in community policing, where their involvement has strengthened relationships with at-risk groups and improved conflict resolution.’<sup>230</sup>

11.4.12 In the Albania 2025 Report, published in November 2025, the EC stated that ‘The police’s weak enforcement and accountability in handling cases of violence against women remains a concern.’<sup>231</sup>

11.4.13 See the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of protection](#) for general information on policing.

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## 11.5 Protection orders

11.5.1 The CoE published undated information which set out the legal basis for protection orders:

‘Law No 9669 of 18.12.2006 “On Measures against Domestic Violence” ... stipulates that civil courts can order protective measures for victims, through a quick procedure, called “protection orders”.

‘Pursuant to this domestic violence law two types of protection orders may be issued:

‘- The protection order (Articles 10-17) is a court order, specifying a series of protective measures for the victim(s) of domestic violence.

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<sup>229</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 149), 17 September 2024

<sup>230</sup> Gazeta Tema, [Albania focuses on gender equality in police force...](#), 25 November 2024

<sup>231</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#), 4 November 2025

‘- The emergency protection order (Article 18-20) is a temporary court order that is valid until the issuance of the normal protection order. It can be issued within 48 hours, when the abuser poses direct and immediate threat to the safety, health or well-being of the victim or other family members. Upon issuance by the court, both types of orders are immediately effective and are valid regardless of notification to the abuser.’<sup>232</sup>

#### 11.5.2 The article continued:

‘Measures that can be taken under a protection order include (Article 10):

- ‘The person committing violence is ordered to refrain from committing any further acts of violence or threatening to do so against the victim or other victim’s family members;
- ‘The person committing the violence is banned by the residence for the period specified in the order, with the condition that he/she can access the residence only by further authorisation issued by the court;
- ‘Victims and minors may be placed to temporary shelters;
- ‘The person committing violence is restrained or forbidden from meeting the victim’s children;
- ‘Parental rights of the abuser are temporarily removed and children are placed under temporary custody of the victim parent;
- ‘The person committing violence is ordered to make periodical payments to cohabitants that, as a result of one of the measures, are stripped of their living means;
- ‘The victim of domestic violence may be placed to a rehabilitation program;
- ‘The person committing violence is ordered to participate in rehabilitation programs, etc.’<sup>233</sup>

#### 11.5.3 In the Concluding Observations published in November 2023, UN CEDAW noted ‘with concern... The lack of information on the effective enforcement and monitoring of compliance with protection orders, in particular restraining and separation orders, for victims of domestic violence, which exposes women who are victims of such violence to a risk of revictimization...’<sup>234</sup>

#### 11.5.4 In an article published in May 2024, Balkan Insight stated:

‘Over the last 15 years, 33,828 individuals have been granted protection orders due to domestic violence, a figure that represents roughly five per cent of households.

“In most cases, women, children and girls are those who receive immediate protection orders,” said State Police spokesman Genti Mullai...’<sup>235</sup>

#### 11.5.5 Balkan Insight further noted, “Last year [2023] alone, the State Bailiff Service was asked to assist in 1,039 court-issued protection orders. In 18 per cent, however, the assistance was no longer required because the victim withdrew

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<sup>232</sup> CoE, [Report on the National Campaign against Violence against Women in Albania](#), no date

<sup>233</sup> CoE, [Report on the National Campaign against Violence against Women in Albania](#), no date

<sup>234</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 23d), 14 November 2023

<sup>235</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

the request for protection.<sup>236</sup> See [Prosecution](#) and [Attitudes to gender-based violence](#) for information about potential barriers to women pursuing protection orders and prosecution.

11.5.6 Amfora reported on the number of protection orders issued for domestic violence in 2024 and 2023: 'In 2024, 2969 protection orders for domestic violence were issued, and among them, 2166 were for women and girls, whereas in 2023, there were 2772 protection orders of such nature, 2051 of which were for women and girls.'<sup>237</sup>

11.5.7 In the report of 2024, GREVIO reported on emergency barring orders issued by the police:

'... One new measure introduced ... through amendments to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations, is the option for the police to also issue EBOs [emergency barring orders], effective immediately and valid for 48 hours ... The police-issued EBOs are complementary to the existing court-issued ones and are intended to close the gap in protection that existed in the period between an application for an EBO to a court and the moment a decision was issued. ...

'GREVIO observes that the police are reluctant to make full use of this new instrument. In 2021, 3,266 requests for EBOs and protection orders were made to courts, while only 415 measures were issued by the police. In only 237 of those cases was the perpetrator removed from the dwelling. The police issued 424 EBOs and removed 221 perpetrators from their dwellings in 2022, compared to 2,940 requests for court-ordered measures.

'Furthermore, the police frequently do not take into account all risk indicators when performing a risk assessment, which then results in a conclusion that no EBO is necessary in the case at hand. This and similar gaps in the performance of the police are more evident in smaller cities outside of the capital Tirana. On this point, GREVIO was informed about municipalities where not a single EBO had been issued by the police. Information also reached GREVIO about situations where the failure to afford victims immediate protection occurred on account of the police being acquainted with the perpetrator as well as a certain reluctance to leave the perpetrator homeless ... As an alternative, police officers sometimes resort to informal solutions, such as requesting a "promise" from the perpetrator to refrain from further violence or asking the perpetrator to leave the house voluntarily until a court-issued order arrives, thus leaving a significant gap in the continuous protection for women victims.

'Reports from civil society further indicate that a significant number of EBOs forwarded by police to the courts lacked a sufficient description of the relevant incident or other details, resulting in the application eventually being dismissed for lack of evidence. ...

'The police also do not systematically include children who have witnessed violence in EBOs as protected parties that the perpetrator is prohibited from contacting. Subsequently, children are not always included in the court-issued order either. ... Considerations for the safety of victims and children should ... take precedence over contact with children until safe and long-

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<sup>236</sup> Balkan Insight, ['No Way Out': Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>237</sup> Amfora, [Between silence and clicks: Technology ... gender-based violence ...](#), 21 June 2025

lasting solutions such as supervised visitation can be arranged. ...<sup>238</sup>

#### 11.5.8 GREVIO also reported on court-issued emergency barring orders:

‘As regards court-issued emergency barring orders, GREVIO observes that the obstacles to their effective implementation and enforcement, as identified in the baseline report [November 2017<sup>239</sup>], remain. GREVIO was informed that courts do not consistently order the removal of the perpetrator from the family dwelling, but sometimes order the perpetrator to keep to one room, while the victim continues to reside in another, or order the perpetrator to keep a distance of a couple of metres only. Similarly, GREVIO received information about mutual orders issued with seemingly no primary-aggressor analysis being made. These types of decisions by courts, although in the minority, continue to undermine the trust of victims in the system for protection.’<sup>240</sup>

#### 11.5.9 The GREVIO report continued:

‘On a general note, in the absence of collected data, it is unclear if EBOs are being issued – by the police or courts – for cases of psychological violence alone, in the absence of any physical violence. Furthermore, serious implementation gaps still remain in terms of the execution of both police and court-ordered EBOs. GREVIO heard concerns about the insufficient responsiveness on the part of the responsible authorities in this regard (local police directorates and the state judicial enforcement service), particularly when it was found that the perpetrator had no alternative accommodation. No information was submitted to GREVIO about sanctions issued regarding agents of any state authority for failure to enforce an emergency barring order ...

‘As regards sanctioning perpetrators who have breached an EBO, the state report mentions that 163 perpetrators were prosecuted in 2021, and 158 in 2022. The state report, however, does not contain information on how many of these perpetrators were convicted or what type of sentences were issued.’<sup>241</sup>

#### 11.5.10 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated:

‘Restraining and protection orders are conceived to prolong the protection afforded to the victim and her children by emergency barring orders and may be considered complementary to the protection offered by the latter...

‘...an obligation was introduced that courts must continue the procedure for a protection order even where the parties claim that the conflict had been resolved. This is an important rule that protects victims from outside pressure during the initial moments after reporting the violence ... [and] it has been highlighted as the key reason for the measured increase in the number of accepted requests for both emergency barring and protection orders, at least by the Tirana District Court, for which comparative data are available.

‘... there is still a lack of harmonised approach when it comes to the inclusion of children in protection orders by different courts. While the law

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<sup>238</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 170 to 171), 17 September 2024

<sup>239</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>240</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 172), 17 September 2024

<sup>241</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 173), 17 September 2024

obliges the courts to automatically include any children who have been subjected to or have witnessed violence in the protection order ex officio, this is not always done in practice. ...<sup>242</sup>

#### 11.5.11 GREVIO also referred to issues in enforcing protection orders:

‘... the problems with enforcement of protection orders, as found in the baseline evaluation report [November 2017<sup>243</sup>], appear to persist. ... the responsible officials are often unresponsive and perpetrators breaching protection orders are not systematically arrested or convicted. This might be explained by the insufficient capacity of the state judicial enforcement service, which is one of the key institutions tasked with monitoring the implementation of all protection orders in Albania and which is hampered by shortages in staff and operational capabilities.

‘... From the available data it can be observed that many cases of EBOs still do not result in subsequent protection orders. Although there is no obligation to do so, courts sometimes summon victims to clarify the facts and the victim’s failure to appear can result in the proceedings being discontinued. ... GREVIO was informed that the closing of courts ... has hampered victims’ ability to attend hearings, as courts have now become more distant for some victims and attending hearings has become more costly. In addition, women continue to face pressure from their surroundings and family, at times resulting in the withdrawing of the request. ...

‘... protection orders continue to be available to victims of domestic violence only and cannot be issued for other forms of violence against women, contrary to Article 53 [of the Istanbul Convention].<sup>244</sup>

#### 11.5.12 In November 2024, VoA reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, quoting the representative of the Network for Women's Empowerment in Albania, Ines Leskaj, who stated that ‘a significant number’ of protection orders had been issued in 2024<sup>245</sup>.

#### 11.5.13 In November 2025, Generis Global Legal Services, a world-wide network of legal professionals<sup>246</sup>, published the following information about emergency barring orders and longer-term protection orders:

‘Protective orders, also known as restraining orders, serve as essential legal instruments designed to shield victims of domestic violence from their abusers in Albania. These orders provide a formal prohibition against the perpetrator, establishing clear conditions that limit their ability to approach or contact the victim. The protective order process is a critical aspect of the justice system aimed at ensuring the safety and security of individuals who have experienced domestic abuse.

‘To be eligible for a protective order in Albania, victims must demonstrate that they have suffered from domestic violence. This can include physical, emotional, or psychological abuse. The involved parties must present evidence, such as police reports, medical records, or witness testimonies, to substantiate their claims. Once a petition is filed, the court typically conducts

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<sup>242</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 178 to 181), 17 September 2024

<sup>243</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>244</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 182 to 184), 17 September 2024

<sup>245</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations ...](#), 27 November 2024

<sup>246</sup> Generis, [About Us](#), no date

a prompt review, often on the same day, to assess the urgency of the request. This swift action is paramount, as the safety of the victim may depend on the immediate issuance of the order.

‘The duration of protective orders in Albania can vary based on the specific circumstances of each case. Generally, these orders can be temporary or permanent, depending on the severity of the situation and the perceived threat. Temporary protective orders may last for a few days or weeks while permanent orders can extend for several months or even years, providing long-term security for the victim. Additionally, the violation of a protective order can lead to serious legal consequences for the offender, including civil or criminal charges, thereby reinforcing the significance of complying with such mandates.

‘In sum, protective orders represent a vital tool for promoting safety and justice for victims of domestic violence in Albania. By understanding the process of obtaining these orders and the implications associated with them, victims are better empowered to take necessary steps toward safeguarding their well-being.’<sup>247</sup>

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## 11.6 Prosecution

11.6.1 In the report of 2024, the People’s Advocate noted that, ‘In line with recent amendments to the Criminal Code, the courts now issue harsher sentences where crimes occurring in a domestic setting are concerned; however, so far there have been no cases where the gender-related motivation behind the crime was established.’<sup>248</sup>

11.6.2 After analysing 16 court judgments in cases of femicides from 2021 to 2023, the report stated, ‘In the applications for trial submitted by the prosecution and the respective court judgments no attention was paid to the gender motivation behind the killing. However, from the evidence of the victims’ families, one can identify elements which speak to the perpetrators’ feeling of superiority over the victims simply on account of them being men.’<sup>249</sup>

11.6.3 In the Albania 2024 Report, the EC noted the following number of criminal convictions in connection with violence against women (including domestic and sexual violence) from 2021 to 2023:

- 2021: 899 (of 5,448 police reports)
- 2022: 873 (of 5,367 police reports)
- 2023: 809 (of 5,198 police reports)<sup>250</sup>

11.6.4 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated:

‘GREVIO takes note of the information received about the existence of general guidelines issued by the State Prosecutor “on the effective investigation and prosecution of criminal offences against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence” (no. 17/2020) but it did not receive any information allowing it to assess its impact.

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<sup>247</sup> Generis, [Domestic Violence Protection Measures in Albania: ...](#), 7 November 2024

<sup>248</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p10), 2024

<sup>249</sup> People’s Advocate, [The killing of women and girls...](#) (p60), 2024

<sup>250</sup> EC, [Albania Report 2024](#) (p39), 30 October 2024

‘On the other hand, GREVIO received information about diverging practice in prosecutors’ offices across the country, which highlights the need for further harmonisation. While very limited data exist about the prosecution of types of violence other than domestic violence, the available information indicates that despite overall low trust in the prosecution process among victims, ... no effective measures were introduced in the period under review to prioritise or otherwise ensure adequate investigation and prosecution of such cases.’<sup>251</sup>

#### 11.6.5 GREVIO further noted:

‘Since GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report [November 2017<sup>252</sup>], Albania has introduced a new position of victim co-ordinator, attached to every prosecutor’s office in the country, which GREVIO welcomes. The role of this co-ordinator is to assist victims once a case reaches the prosecution stage and to inform them of their procedural rights. Although the co-ordinators do not specialise in violence against women, their presence has a positive impact on victims’ trust in the work of the prosecution.’<sup>253</sup>

#### 11.6.6 GREVIO also reported on conviction rates for domestic violence:

‘According to the state report, a total of 5,312 reports of domestic violence were made to the police in 2021, while this figure was 5,214 in 2022. It also indicates that the number of convicted perpetrators for the crime of domestic violence was 711 in 2020, 879 in 2021 and 1,016 in 2022. Moreover, statistics provided by INSTAT indicate that for 2022 only 43.4% of all reported crimes reached the trial stage, which confirms the discrepancy highlighted above. No information was provided to GREVIO about the length of sentences issued in cases of violence against women and domestic violence or about the number of sentences issued for psychological violence alone, which appear to be very few. Available information, however, indicates that perpetrators, even repeat offenders, spend little time incarcerated, and pose a great risk to the public and their family once released.

‘No official data were made available to GREVIO about the conviction rates for sexual violence, including rape, or the types and length of sentences issued. According to the information available, judges in these proceedings often apply a high threshold of proof that requires women victims to demonstrate that they had manifested physical resistance in order to reach a conviction. GREVIO notes that this is partially to blame on the force-based definition of rape still in force, which requires urgent alignment with Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention. At the same time, GREVIO is concerned that apart from the definition of rape, which does not criminalise non-consensual intercourse [the law uses a force-based definition of rape instead of one based on lack of consent; see [Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania](#)], the high threshold applied by judges can also be explained by persistent attitudes about sexual violence and rape. A particularly concerning trend in this regard highlighted by NGOs is that of cases of “corrective rape” [the rape of a non-heterosexual female in the belief that it would change her

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<sup>251</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 150 to 151), 17 September 2024

<sup>252</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>253</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 148), 17 September 2024

sexual orientation<sup>254]</sup> ... which have so far gone unpunished.<sup>'255</sup>

#### 11.6.7 The GREVIO report 2024 continued:

'GREVIO's attention was drawn to the widespread use of abbreviated proceedings in cases concerning domestic violence, which under domestic law allows for a one-third reduction in the sentence if the perpetrator does not dispute the facts of the case. Perpetrators often make use of this opportunity, which is in turn accepted by the courts, despite the victim's wishes. Many of these cases are also processed without due regard for all the circumstances of the case, resulting in an indictment for a crime carrying a lighter penalty, which in turn results in very low sentences.

'Information also reached GREVIO about an increase in delays in criminal proceedings as a result of the recent judicial reforms in the country and the reluctance of criminal courts to decide on damages claims put forward by a victim as part of the criminal judgment.

'In light of all of the above, the low rates of conviction in all cases of violence against women and domestic violence in Albania are of great concern. Urgent measures in this regard are necessary to regain the victims' trust in the judicial system.'<sup>256</sup>

#### 11.6.8 See the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of protection](#) for general information on the justice system.

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### 11.7 Legal assistance, legal aid and access to justice

#### 11.7.1 The AWEN report of November 2022 noted provisions for victims of sexual abuse:

'Law 35/2017 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 7905, dated 21/03/1995, "Criminal Procedure Code" with the addition of Article 58/b "Rights of sexually abused victims and victims of human trafficking" requires that sexually abused victims be heard without delay by a judicial police or prosecutor of the same gender; refuse to answer questions regarding his/her private life obviously not related to the criminal offence; request to be heard during the trial through audio-visual tools pursuant to the provisions of this Code." Also, this law legitimises every victim of a criminal offence to be entitled to lodge a claim for compensation from the perpetrator of the criminal offence. The victim can also submit this lawsuit to the Prosecutor's Office so that the two processes can be conducted as one...'<sup>257</sup>

#### 11.7.2 In the Annual Report 2023, Vatra reported that they had assisted 263 victims of violence over the year with legal services<sup>258</sup>.

#### 11.7.3 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E reported that they had provided primary legal assistance to 57 victims of domestic violence during the year, stating that, 'Victims were informed about: divorce procedures, protection orders, access to economic assistance, failure to provide means of subsistence, victims' rights in criminal proceedings, parental responsibility, enforcement of

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<sup>254</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 143), 17 September 2024

<sup>255</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 153 to 154), 17 September 2024

<sup>256</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 155 to 157), 17 September 2024

<sup>257</sup> AWEN, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment; a situational analysis](#) (p16), November 2022

<sup>258</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p31), 2024

alimony, housing rent subsidy, change of residence etc.<sup>259</sup> In addition, D and E reported that they had provided secondary legal assistance, including support with divorce lawsuits, protection orders and appeals<sup>260</sup>.

- 11.7.4 D and E reported on the provision of reintegration programmes for women survivors of violence, including women from vulnerable groups, in targeted municipalities (Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje). D and E is collaborating with three partner organizations, Tjeter Vision association in Elbasan, the psycho-social center Vatra in Vlorë, and the Gender, Peace, Security association in Durrës. The provision of individualised support includes legal aid and support<sup>261</sup>.
- 11.7.5 D and E also reported that they had provided primary and secondary legal assistance to 3 victims of sexual abuse during the year 2024; this included support with criminal proceedings<sup>262</sup>.
- 11.7.6 UN Women reported that ‘...the number of Free Legal Aid Centers increased to 20 from 12 in 2022.’<sup>263</sup>

- 11.7.7 In the report of 2024, GREVIO reported:

‘Legal counselling services for victims of violence have been improved in the period under review by means of a new law introduced in 2017 on legal aid guaranteed by the state, which provides for the possibility of victims of domestic and sexual violence to benefit from free primary (counselling) and secondary (representation before a court) legal aid. The services are provided by municipal primary legal aid centres, higher education institutions and NGOs. Although the numbers of victims benefiting from legal aid are low compared to the number of reported cases of violence and the overall number of beneficiaries of legal aid, the numbers should increase over the years, especially if supported by appropriate funding and awareness-raising measures.’<sup>264</sup>

- 11.7.8 The AWEN/KWN report of March 2025 stated:

‘A 2017 law ensures access to legal aid in terms of counselling and court representation, provided by the state, including for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Municipalities and CSOs provide these services. Several shelters provide legal counselling as part of their packet of services. Additionally, the Centre for Legal Civic Initiatives in Tirana focuses explicitly on this, including handling court cases referred by other WCSOs [women’s rights civil society organisations] and actors. The Centre does not receive any state funding.

‘Twice, the Ministry of Justice has authorised Vatra [an NGO] to provide primary legal aid services as defined by Law No. 11/2017 “On State-Guaranteed Legal Aid” for September 2022 - September 2024 and October 2024 - September 2026. ... Vatra is partially financed by the state...’<sup>265</sup>

- 11.7.9 In the Concluding Observations published in April 2025, the UN Human

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<sup>259</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p11), 14 June 2025

<sup>260</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p12), 14 June 2025

<sup>261</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>262</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p12), 14 June 2025

<sup>263</sup> UN Women, [End Violence Against Women in Albania \(EVAW\) - Joint Programme](#), no date

<sup>264</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 108), 17 September 2024

<sup>265</sup> AWEN/KWN, [How much does protection cost? ...](#) (p15), March 2025

Rights Committee (HRC) expressed concern about a 'lack of effective access to legal aid...' for female victims of violence<sup>266</sup>. The UN HRC did not expand on this.

11.7.10 In the Concluding Observations of November 2023, UN CEDAW noted 'with concern... the persistent reluctance of women to file complaints owing to judicial gender bias...'<sup>267</sup>

11.7.11 New Lines Institute published an article in May 2025 which stated that, although the law provides for women and girls with equal rights as men, 'Women and girls are often not aware of their rights, and when they try to seek justice, they fail for several reasons. These include corruption, a long backlog of cases, societal taboos and stigmas against victims, economic complexities, and a lack of resources at every level.'<sup>268</sup>

11.7.12 The website of the Center for Legal Civic Initiatives (CLCI) provided the following, undated information:

'The Center for Legal Civic Initiatives (CLCI) is an Albanian non-for-profit organization, with the head office in Tirana, established in November of 1997. From 2001, a branch of the center functions even in the city of Shkodra.

'The ...CLCI operates as a legal and psycho-social service center for the violated and poor women. All services are provided for FREE...

**'Mission of CLCI:**

'Building the women access in the legal and justice system through:

- Offering legal service, accompanied by free psycho-social support for the poor and/or violated women and girls.
- Participation in drafting of laws and of state policies, based on gender equality.
- Intermediation for democratization and improvement of the justice system through studies, monitoring, and generalizations of the best legal practices.'<sup>269</sup>

11.7.13 In the Albania 2025 Report, the EC stated, 'Specialised support services for victims of violence continue to be donor driven and insufficient, particularly ... free legal aid ...'<sup>270</sup>

11.7.14 See the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of protection](#) for general information on the criminal justice system and legal aid. See [Non-governmental assistance](#) for further information about the assistance provided to female victims of violence by NGOs.

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## 11.8 Rehabilitation of perpetrators

11.8.1 In the Annual Report 2023, Vatra reported that they had supported 30

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<sup>266</sup> UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Albania](#), 30 April 2025

<sup>267</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 13c), 14 November 2023

<sup>268</sup> New Lines Institute, [Women's rights in Albania: A growing phenomenon...](#), 12 May 2025

<sup>269</sup> CLCI, [About](#), no date

<sup>270</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p39), 4 November 2025

abusive men with rehabilitation counselling<sup>271</sup>.

- 11.8.2 In the report of 2024, GREVIO noted that, ‘... with the introduction of the legislative change to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations from 2020, courts can now order perpetrators to attend rehabilitation programmes as part of the procedure for a protection order. It did not, however, receive any official information about the extent to which this provision is being used in practice.’<sup>272</sup>

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## 11.9 Hotline and app

- 11.9.1 In February 2023, UN Albania reported on the Bright Sky phone app:

‘The Bright Sky application ... was launched in Albania in 2021 through the “Hidh nje H’app” (“Take a st’aap”) campaign. This free app provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or to those concerned about someone they know. It enables users to assess the safety of a relationship, access information about different forms of abuse and how to help a friend that may be affected and locate their nearest support centre.

‘In March 2022, Vodafone Albania Foundation in collaboration with the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF) provided the smartphones equipped with the Bright Sky application to 70 women in five cities: Tiranë, Vlorë, Fier, Lezhë and Korçë. ADRF and its partner organizations, Roma Women’s Rights Center and Aleanca LGBT, supported vulnerable women – in particular Roma women, women with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ community – through technological literacy training and information on reporting violence, as well as through peer-to-peer support, counselling and legal aid.

‘Since 2021 they have established two self-advocacy groups of women with disabilities and women from the Roma community, who were trained to provide information and support to other women from their communities. More than 200 women survivors of violence have been informed and referred to more specialized services, of whom around 50 have received free legal aid and psychosocial counselling...

‘The application has 25,234 users so far and 85 per cent of them have benefited directly.’<sup>273</sup>

- 11.9.2 In the report of 2024, GREVIO reported:

‘The national helpline (116 117) operated by the Counselling Line for Women and Girls NGO in Tirana has continued to operate on a 24/7 basis in the period under review. Although the co-operation of the helpline with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection was formalised on the basis of an agreement, the state funding remains based on financing projects that have to be submitted annually. The capacity of the helpline has increased with 10 counsellors employed, adding English and Italian as languages in which its services are available. The helpline has been successfully integrated within the CRM ... GREVIO was informed that victims of sexual violence

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<sup>271</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p18), 2024

<sup>272</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 73), 17 September 2024

<sup>273</sup> UN Women, [Tackling domestic violence through technology in Albania](#), 28 February 2023

increasingly make use of the helpline, which attests to the pivotal role that it has acquired within the network of structures.<sup>274</sup>

### 11.9.3 The AWEN/KWN report of March 2025 stated:

'In 2022, the helpline [116 117] received 3,117 calls ... Despite formalised cooperation with MHSP [Ministry of Health and Social Protection], the Line still must reapply for financing annually. It also relies on donations and international funding to function seamlessly. ... Additionally, a regional helpline covers Durres and Tirana counties, while receiving calls from other cities, as well. It is run by the Albanian Community Centre. AWEN and its members also provide support and referrals via email and other electronic means, as foreseen by the IC. ... However, they are not sufficiently financed by the Government to cover all costs.'<sup>275</sup>

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## 12. Assistance and reintegration

### 12.1 Availability of social care services

12.1.1 In an article published in May 2024, Balkan Insight stated, 'The government says the situation has improved [in terms of help available for victims of domestic violence]. "Immediately following a complaint, municipalities provide emergency help as well as long-term help with protection, recovery from trauma, empowering and reintegrating victims of various forms of domestic violence," Albania's ministry of health and social protection told BIRN [Balkan Insight].'<sup>276</sup>

12.1.2 Balkan Insight further stated:

'Memaliaj Municipality in southern Albania and Malesia e Madhe in the north both said they had no funds available to aid victims of domestic violence but relied on support from the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP.

'Skrapar Municipality in southern Albania said the state referral mechanism had sent 21 cases in which the victims required immediate protection but that it had no funds with which to respond.

'Dibra Municipality in the northeast also said it was short of money and capacity... "The municipality does not have adequate capacities to shelter [victims of domestic violence]," it said in a written response to BIRN [Balkan Insight].'<sup>277</sup>

12.1.3 When commenting on the services available for victims of gender-based violence, such as access to financial support, training and education, healthcare and housing, the GREVIO report 2024 noted that '...as these services are provided at the municipal level, despite being part of the municipal CRM, their availability and quality depends largely on the financial abilities and policy choices of the municipality itself.'<sup>278</sup>

12.1.4 The AWEN/KWN report of March 2025 stated, 'Social care services in Albania are provided in three levels, which are the national, local, and

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<sup>274</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 109), 17 September 2024

<sup>275</sup> AWEN/KWN, [How much does protection cost? ...](#) (p15), March 2025

<sup>276</sup> Balkan Insight, ['No Way Out': Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>277</sup> Balkan Insight, ['No Way Out': Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>278</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 91), 17 September 2024

regional. According to a 2024 assessment report, there are 21 municipalities in Albania where social care services are not yet provided, located largely in urban areas (90%). NGOs, charities, and development partners have tried to provide access to social care services where they are lacking.<sup>279</sup>

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## 12.2 Shelters

12.2.1 In May 2024, Balkan Insight reported on domestic violence, stating, ‘According to data collected from 47 of Albania’s 61 municipalities via Freedom of Information requests, only 12 have shelters that can provide immediate accommodation...’<sup>280</sup>

12.2.2 The article continued, ‘... a 2023 audit by the High State Audit Office found very limited shelter capacity for victims of domestic violence – countrywide, there are 30 beds for emergency accommodation and 32 for long-term stays, yet thousands of cases are reported every year.’<sup>281</sup>

12.2.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO noted the provision of emergency shelters:

‘The Albanian authorities have responded to the findings in GREVIO’s baseline report [November 2017<sup>282</sup>] as regards the lack of emergency services by introducing 13 municipal emergency shelters. To a certain extent, this closes the identified gap in emergency victim protection and represents a positive step in the direction of continued support offered to women victims. These shelters, most of which are operated by the municipalities, offer accommodation for up to 72 hours and are accessible if the victim is referred to one by the local co-ordinator. In addition to safe accommodation, many of them also offer legal and psycho-social services. To streamline the work and the services offered at these shelters, a standardised protocol was issued in the form of an instruction from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The emergency shelters receive victims and their children, with the exception of boys above the age of 14, who are separated from their mothers and placed in separate facilities.’<sup>283</sup>

12.2.4 GREVIO also reported on shelters for longer stays:

‘... the challenges pertaining to long-term shelters identified by GREVIO in the baseline evaluation report [November 2017<sup>284</sup>] appear to persist. There is only one state-operated shelter located in Tirana, with 40 beds divided into eight rooms, which receives women victims and their children. When the number of victims is low, these are used as family rooms, which would meet the requirement of using “family places” instead of beds, although at the cost of reduction of capacity. The shelter offers primary healthcare services, education for victims’ children and psycho-social support. Access to this shelter is contingent on victims reporting the crime and having obtained a court-issued protection order. Victims that have not done so are systematically turned away, despite the shelter rarely being at full capacity.

‘Six NGO-run shelters concentrated in Tirana and big cities add to the overall

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<sup>279</sup> AWEN/KWN, [How much does protection cost? ...](#) (p15), March 2025

<sup>280</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>281</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>282</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>283</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 103), 17 September 2024

<sup>284</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

capacity and partially fill this gap by operating with very limited funding, dependent fully or for the most part on outside donors, which does not fully remedy the geographical disparity in the availability of services. The financing of the state-run shelter has also been recently reduced.

‘GREVIO received reports that because of the obligation to report violence and the bureaucratic hurdles related to that, victims often opt for NGO-provided specialist services that allow for more flexibility. Moreover, further efforts to move towards a more victim-centred approach in the provision of services at state-run shelters (emergency and long-term) are required .... Looking forward, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that some of the planned outcomes of the National Strategy for Gender Equality are an increased number of emergency and long-term shelters, but even more importantly, an improvement in the quality of services that they provide ..., as well as increased support for NGOs providing specialist services ...’<sup>285</sup>

12.2.5 GREVIO also noted the provision of support when a person leaves a shelter:

‘... there are few to no specialised services available for victims after they leave the shelter, such as transitional apartments. GREVIO stresses the continuing need for measures to ensure long-term psychological support for victims of violence against women after they leave a shelter. ... although victims are free to seek long-term counselling at [general mental health hospitals and community mental health centres], there is no mandatory follow-up of victims after they leave a shelter. The practices of NGO-operated shelters differ, depending on the means and capacity of each.’<sup>286</sup>

12.2.6 In the Albania 2025 Report, the EC stated, ‘Specialised support services for victims of violence continue to be donor driven and insufficient, particularly ... the funding of shelters, ... and the reintegration and rehabilitation of victims of violence.’<sup>287</sup>

12.2.7 The following shelters are available:

- [Emergency Shelter \(Forumi i Gruas\)](#), Elbasan. The Emergency Shelter assists and supports abused women, who denounce their abusers, are at risk and seek to be provided with a Protection Order (Immediate Protection Order or Protection Order) or a Preliminary Immediate Protection Order. The shelter provides accommodation for up to 2-3 days, when a woman is waiting to be issued with an Immediate Protection Order and up to 15 days when a woman is waiting to be issued with a Protection Order. The shelter provides counselling, medical services, accommodation and food<sup>288</sup>.
- [Shelter Edlira Haxhiymeri](#), Tirana. This is a residential centre for victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence. The centre offers services for victims of domestic violence, both women and children, in residential, public and non-public centers approved by the Albanian State<sup>289</sup>.
- [Tjeter Vision](#) (website in Albanian language), Elbasan. Offers social

<sup>285</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 104), 17 September 2024

<sup>286</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 107), 17 September 2024

<sup>287</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p39), 4 November 2025

<sup>288</sup> Emergency Shelter, Elbasan, [Home](#), no date

<sup>289</sup> Shelter Edlira Haxhiymeri, [Home](#), no date

services for vulnerable children, youth and women<sup>290</sup>.

- [Vatra Psycho-Social Centre](#) was established in 1999 and is based in Vlore. Vatra works for the prevention of domestic violence and protection of victims. It has a staff of 29 people, including social workers, a psychologist, a teacher, a doctor/nurse, lawyers, and an employment specialist. Vatra's activities include the following:
  - Rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of sexual abuse and all forms of violence through direct services in the shelter and community
  - Increased access to justice for victims in the framework of the functioning of the Legal Clinic with lawyers and psychologists
  - Awareness campaigns
  - Capacity building of representatives of state institutions and NGOs through trainings, workshops, mentoring, etc.
  - Lobbying and advocacy. Contribution to the improvement of local and national policies as well as the national legislation for the protection of rights of victims of domestic violence<sup>291</sup>.
  - The website states that since setting up a shelter in 2001, Vatra has assisted more than 2,000 victims of domestic violence<sup>292</sup>.
  - In the Annual Report covering 2023, Vatra reported that they had supported 290 victims of family violence and gender-based violence and 66 of their children with empowerment services. They had also supported 356 people with psychological and legal services<sup>293</sup>.

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## 12.3 Centres for victims of domestic and sexual violence

12.3.1 When a HO fact-finding team visited Albania in October 2022, they met representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, who stated, 'In Tirana hospital, the Liliun centre provides assistance to victims of violence, including sexual .... Such assistance is provided for men, boys, girls and women, so for all individuals... At the Liliun Centre at Tirana hospital, from 2018 until 21 July 2022 there have been 110 beneficiaries. Out of these 80% have been children – in total 90% were women and girls.'<sup>294</sup>

12.3.2 In the report of 2024, GREVIO reported on services for victims of sexual violence:

'The Albanian authorities responded swiftly to GREVIO's findings in the baseline report [November 2017<sup>295</sup>] concerning the lack of specialised services for victims of sexual violence. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that since December 2018 the first centre for victims of sexual violence in

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<sup>290</sup> Tjeter Vizion, [End Slavery Now](#), no date

<sup>291</sup> Vatra, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>292</sup> Vatra, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>293</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p31), 2024

<sup>294</sup> HO, [Report of a fact-finding mission; Albania: Human trafficking](#), October 2022

<sup>295</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

Albania, the Liliu centre, has been opened as part of a hospital centre in Tirana. The centre has a multidisciplinary team offering emergency healthcare and forensic services, as well as psychological and legal counselling services for both adults and child victims of sexual violence, who are referred to the centre from CRMs [co-ordinated referral mechanisms] across the country. The services are provided based on a standardised protocol for a period of up to 72 hours after the sexual assault, after which the victim is referred further into the network of structures.<sup>296</sup>

12.3.3 GREVIO also registered concerns about the low number of women and girls using the centre:

‘Despite instructions issued by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection to the contrary, GREVIO is concerned that access to the centre is conditional on the victim reporting the crime. According to information provided in the state report, the centre received 23 girls and eight adult women victims in 2019, 21 girls and three adult women victims in 2020, 28 victims, 80% of which were girls in 2021, 31 girls and one adult woman in 2022. In view of the high prevalence rate of sexual violence in Albania, with 8.6% of women having experienced sexual violence, GREVIO is very concerned about the low number of victims treated in the centre, in particular adult women. This may be a direct result of the obligation to report a sexual assault or rape in order to benefit from the services of the sexual violence centre, which is in stark contrast to the purpose and spirit of the Istanbul Convention and expressly prohibited under Article 18, paragraph 4, of the convention. ... significant additional efforts are required to inform women of the existence and functioning of the sexual violence referral centre.’<sup>297</sup>

12.3.4 GREVIO also noted that ‘...certain improvements to align the work of the centre with the requirements of Article 25 of the [Istanbul] convention have still to be implemented, such as improving the centre’s victim-centred approach and introducing medium or long-term trauma support and counselling for victims. ... there do not appear to be systematic referrals of victims to women’s NGOs that offer such services either.’<sup>298</sup>

12.3.5 GREVIO also referred to the number of centres in the country:

‘GREVIO emphasises that the standards of Article 25 [of the Istanbul Convention] require that rape crisis centres and/or sexual violence referral centres must be available for every 200,000 inhabitants and that their geographic distribution should make them accessible to victims in rural areas as much as in cities. In this respect GREVIO notes with satisfaction that the National Strategy for Gender Equality envisages the creation of four additional regional centres for victims of sexual violence, focusing on victims with mental health disorders and the creation of two long-term trauma centres for victims who have suffered sexual violence, also targeting victims with mental health issues. GREVIO was also informed that with the help of foreign donors, there is a plan to replicate the model of the Liliu centre in other hospitals, which would bring much needed services closer to victims’ places of residence.’<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 115), 17 September 2024

<sup>297</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 116), 17 September 2024

<sup>298</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 117), 17 September 2024

<sup>299</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 118), 17 September 2024

12.3.6 In the Concluding Observations published in April 2025, the UN HRC ‘... regrets that reception centres for victims of domestic violence are not yet available throughout the territory of Albania and that there is a general lack of awareness, as well as administrative barriers, which discourage victims from making use of such facilities...’<sup>300</sup>

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## 12.4 Non-governmental assistance

12.4.1 Non-governmental assistance is provided by organisations including the following:

12.4.2 [Different and Equal](#) (D and E) stated that it is ‘... a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing high quality reintegration services for victims of trafficking, exploitation and abuse, and to improving the legal, institutional and social context to prevent and counter these violations of human rights.’<sup>301</sup> In their 2025 report, D and E reported that they assisted 135 survivors of sexual violence and abuse and 287 of their children through their reintegration programme in 2024<sup>302</sup>. Of the 135 adults, one was male and the rest were female<sup>303</sup>. D and E stated that they provide continuous monitoring and follow-up of the beneficiaries of their services<sup>304</sup>.

12.4.3 [Human Rights in Democracy Center](#) (HRDC) works to protect human rights in Albania, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, including women and children<sup>305</sup>. Activities include the prevention of domestic violence, the provision of legal services and psycho-social services for women who are primarily victims of domestic violence, and the provision of socio-economic empowerment for female victims of domestic violence<sup>306</sup>. HRDC has an office in Tropoja; further information is available here: [Tropoja's Office](#).

12.4.4 In June 2020, UN Albania reported on a female victim of domestic violence who had benefitted from assistance from HRDC as she separated from her husband:

‘Her separation process went smoothly with the support of the Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC), a civil society organization partnering with UN Women under the regional programme on ending violence against women “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds,” funded by the European Union.

“The organization has been with me every step of the way, helping me benefit from economic aid and rental bonus,” says Leka.<sup>307</sup>

12.4.5 [UN Women – Albania](#) stated that it is working closely with all actors in society to combat violence against women, including sexual violence and harassment. The website stated that UN Women is involved in the following activities:

- Ensuring that national policies and legislation are improved and implemented in compliance with Albania’s international human rights

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<sup>300</sup> UN HRC, [Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Albania](#), 30 April 2025

<sup>301</sup> D and E, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>302</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p3), 14 June 2025

<sup>303</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p6), 14 June 2025

<sup>304</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>305</sup> HRDC, [About us](#), no date

<sup>306</sup> HRDC, [Our Activities](#), no date

<sup>307</sup> UN Albania, [Revised law empowers women survivors of violence in Albania](#), 10 June 2020

commitments and obligations

- Awareness-raising and outreach initiatives
- Supporting the provision of specialized services for women and girls subjected to violence, to guarantee their protection and rehabilitation; reaching out to some of the most disadvantaged groups of women, including Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, advocating for the removal of barriers that these women face in accessing available services<sup>308</sup>.

12.4.6 UN DP Albania published an undated article in which it reported on the UN Joint Programme, 'Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II,' which ran from 2023 to October 2025 and was implemented by UN Women, UNDP, and UNFPA:

'The programme targets all women and girls who have experienced violence in Albania. It places a particular focus on women and girls who are subjected to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including LGBTI women, women with disabilities and Roma and Egyptian women. Furthermore, the project engages men and boys as pivotal agents of change ...

'The UN Agencies collaborate closely with national partners, including the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the State Police, Local Government Units, National Human Rights Institutions, the media, civil society and grassroots organisations, amongst others...'<sup>309</sup>

12.4.7 In February 2025, the UN Population Fund (UN FPA) reported on a project designed to combat gender-based violence and harmful practices, which is summarised below (further information is available in the [article](#)):

'The Ministry of Health and Social Protection and UNFPA, in partnership with and supported by the Italian Government ... launched today a new 3-year project of 1 Million EUR budget for a period of 36 months during 2025-2027, which aims to combat gender-based violence and harmful practices in Albania.

'The main goal is to strengthen gender responsive governance i.e. Coordinated Referral Mechanisms at local municipal level, to strengthen equality and non-discrimination, to promote women's empowerment and human rights observance, and to reduce violence against women and girls in 9 municipalities: Dibër, Klos, Pogradec, Kolonjë, Korcë, Konispol, Vlorë, Selenicë, Tiranë.

'The intervention will focus towards:

- 'Ensuring the well-functioning of Coordinated Referral Mechanisms and service providers at municipal level responsible to address and protect from Gender-Based Violence;
- 'Improving legal and normative frameworks;
- 'Strengthening the oversight role of Civil Society Organisations and National Human Rights Institutions to monitor compliance with international

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<sup>308</sup> UN Women, [Ending violence against women](#), no date

<sup>309</sup> UN DP, [UN Joint Programme Ending Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II](#), no date

and national standards on Violence Against Women and Girls;

- ‘Strengthening state and non-state actors’ capacities and resources to develop and implement proper gender responsive planning and services.’<sup>310</sup>

12.4.8 Further information about this project is available in [Non-governmental assistance](#).

12.4.9 For further information about the services and assistance provided by NGOs, see [Awareness-raising](#), [Training of professionals](#), [Legal assistance and legal aid](#), [Rehabilitation of perpetrators](#), [Assistance and reintegration](#).

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## 12.5 Healthcare

12.5.1 In the Annual Report covering 2023, Vatra reported that they had assisted 126 victims of domestic violence with counselling<sup>311</sup>.

12.5.2 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E reported on the provision of reintegration programmes for women survivors of violence, including women from vulnerable groups, in targeted municipalities (Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje). D and E is collaborating with three partner organizations, Tjeter Vision association in Elbasan, the psycho-social center Vatra in Vlorë, and the Gender, Peace, Security association in Durrës. The provision of individualised support includes psycho-social counselling and medical assistance. As part of the project, 392 survivors of gender-based violence and 469 of their children have received support based on their individual needs and tailored reintegration plans (as of December 2024)<sup>312</sup>.

12.5.3 In the report of 2024, GREVIO stated:

‘...many healthcare professionals still lack a gender-sensitive approach when working with victims. As a consequence, victims still have a low level of trust in healthcare professionals, who continue to be cited as one of the weakest links in the network of services. This assessment finds further support in the findings of a report [by the Human Rights in Democracy Centre], according to which 95% of victims who applied for a protection order on the basis of physical violence over the course of two years had either not requested or had not obtained a special medical report about their injuries.’<sup>313</sup>

12.5.4 GREVIO’s report continued:

‘An important step towards introducing a gender-sensitive approach and harmonising the practice of healthcare professionals was the adoption in 2020 of a standardised protocol for addressing cases of domestic and gender-based violence by healthcare professionals and their role within the CRM.... the training of healthcare professionals is a welcome step to enhance the application of the above protocol. However, in the absence of information about its application in practice, it is not possible to assess whether this measure has led to any tangible benefits for victims so far. Furthermore, standardised protocols for addressing cases of forced

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<sup>310</sup> UN FPA, [New project launched to reduce Gender-based Violence in Albania](#), 28 February 2025

<sup>311</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p33), 2024

<sup>312</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>313</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 95), 17 September 2024

sterilisation, FGM or forced marriage are lacking.

‘...the introduction of a “Basic Package of Primary Healthcare” under the new National Health Strategy ... introduced rules on regular screening for violence by healthcare professionals of all women and girls above the age of 14. However, available information indicates that that this obligation is not regularly followed in practice.

- 12.5.5 GREVIO also noted the situation for victims of gender-based violence with mental health issues:

‘A concern that was raised by multiple stakeholders was the absence of healthcare services addressing the needs of victims suffering from mental health problems, which require a holistic range of services, including trauma care. The number of such victims has increased in recent years, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic, as has awareness about their needs. However, due to the absence of specialised institutions, they receive treatment either in mental health hospitals or in ordinary shelters for victims. Neither of these two options seem to provide the whole range of healthcare services that these victims need.’<sup>314</sup>

- 12.5.6 In the Albania 2025 Report, the EC stated, ‘Specialised support services for victims of violence continue to be donor driven and insufficient, particularly healthcare...’<sup>315</sup>

- 12.5.7 See the Country Policy and Information Notes on [Albania: Mental healthcare](#) and [Albania: Medical healthcare and provision](#) for general information on these subjects.

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## 12.6 Education

- 12.6.1 In the Annual Report 2023, Vatra reported that they had provided the following assistance for victims of gender-based violence: 46 victims received employment counselling (this figure also includes victims of trafficking); 8 were financially supported to receive professional training; 33 beneficiaries obtained employment with Vatra’s assistance; 3 beneficiaries received financial support to set up microbusinesses<sup>316</sup>.

- 12.6.2 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E stated that they had supported and enrolled 11 victims of domestic violence and 126 of their children in various levels of education during the year 2024. The report added, ‘Cooperation was established with Regional Education Directorates and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth to facilitate school enrollment. All beneficiaries were provided with schoolbooks and educational supplies.’<sup>317</sup>

- 12.6.3 D and E also assisted 40 beneficiaries with vocational training courses during 2024 (it wasn’t clear how many were survivors of domestic violence and how many were victims of trafficking). The Annual Report stated:  
‘D&E has supported program beneficiaries in their efforts to enter the formal labor market. The D&E team continuously guides beneficiaries to choose professions in demand, tailored to their personal skills. They are trained on

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<sup>314</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 99), 17 September 2024

<sup>315</sup> EC, [Albania 2025 Report](#) (p39), 4 November 2025

<sup>316</sup> Vatra, [Annual Report 2023](#) (p35), 2024

<sup>317</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#), 14 June 2025

how to present themselves to potential employers, engage in effective communication, perform well in the workplace, and prepare a CV and cover letter. All new cases in the program were accompanied by the economic empowerment coordinator to register as unemployed jobseekers at the Employment Offices and to receive offers for vocational training or employment opportunities.<sup>318</sup>

- 12.6.4 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E also reported on the provision of reintegration programmes for women survivors of violence, including women from vulnerable groups, in targeted municipalities (Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje). D and E is collaborating with three partner organizations, Tjeter Vision association in Elbasan, the psycho-social center Vatra in Vlorë, and the Gender, Peace, Security association in Durrës. The provision of individualised support includes education and vocational training<sup>319</sup>.
- 12.6.5 In the report of 2024, GREVIO remarked, ‘The most promising examples of legislative reform are the inclusion of victims of domestic violence in the category of jobseekers who can benefit from free vocational training; ... [and] the introduction of new types of companies called “social enterprises” that prioritise the employment of disadvantaged groups, including victims of domestic violence...’<sup>320</sup> The report continued, ‘Implementation, on the other hand, offers a mixed picture. There has been no public call for social enterprises, suggesting insufficient implementation of the law in question...’<sup>321</sup>

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## 12.7 Employment

- 12.7.1 In May 2024, Balkan Insight published an article on victims of domestic violence in Albania, stating that, ‘Measures to facilitate their long-term reintegration into ... the job market are non-existent.’<sup>322</sup>
- 12.7.2 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E reported on the provision of reintegration programmes for women survivors of violence, including women from vulnerable groups, in targeted municipalities (Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje). D and E is collaborating with three partner organizations, Tjeter Vision association in Elbasan, the psycho-social center Vatra in Vlorë, and the Gender, Peace, Security association in Durrës. The provision of individualised support includes employment counselling and support and income-generating programmes<sup>323</sup>.
- 12.7.3 D and E reported that, during the year 2024, ‘71 victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse were employed, while 31 others received employment counseling.’<sup>324</sup>

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## 12.8 Financial support

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<sup>318</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p13), 14 June 2025

<sup>319</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>320</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 89), 17 September 2024

<sup>321</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 90), 17 September 2024

<sup>322</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>323</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>324</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#), 14 June 2025

- 12.8.1 In May 2024, Balkan Insight published an article which stated, ‘Albanian law foresees support programmes and protection mechanisms such as state housing and help finding work that should allow victims of domestic violence to leave their abusers, but in reality only a fifth of those who go to the authorities actually receive any financial support through Albania’s primary social welfare tool, Ndihma Ekonomike.’<sup>325</sup>
- 12.8.2 In the report of 2024, GREVIO remarked that ‘The most promising examples of legislative reform ... [include] increasing the amounts of financial assistance received by victims of domestic violence for the period of duration of a protection order.’<sup>326</sup> The report continued, ‘... in 2022 the amount paid as a social benefit to victims of domestic violence has been increased threefold to ALL 9 000 [approximately £80<sup>327</sup>] and is continuously being paid to every victim benefiting from a protection order for the entire duration of the order.’<sup>328</sup>
- 12.8.3 GREVIO further noted, ‘...it appears that not all categories of victims of gender-based violence can qualify for benefits and victims who are already receiving one financial benefit are in practice denied other financial benefits despite meeting the criteria.’<sup>329</sup>

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## 12.9 Housing

- 12.9.1 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E reported on the provision of reintegration programmes for women survivors of violence, including women from vulnerable groups, in targeted municipalities (Kamëz, Krujë, Cërrik, Gramsh, Vlorë, Fier, and Lushnje). D and E is collaborating with three partner organizations, Tjeter Vision association in Elbasan, the psycho-social center Vatra in Vlorë, and the Gender, Peace, Security association in Durrës. The provision of individualised support includes housing assistance, including rent subsidies and long-term housing support through inclusion in the social housing program<sup>330</sup>.
- 12.9.2 In the Annual Report 2024, D and E stated that 134 victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse and 285 of their children were assisted in rented apartments during the year<sup>331</sup>.
- 12.9.3 In an article published in May 2024 concerning domestic violence, Balkan Insight stated:
- ‘...victims rarely benefit from rent subsidies.
- ‘Several municipalities contacted by BIRN [Balkan Insight] acknowledged problems in the provision of care for victims of domestic violence but said their resources were extremely restricted. Some noted a problem with landlords who are reluctant to rent to women perceived as being involved in some kind of domestic dispute ....
- ‘The municipality of Tirana, the capital, told BIRN it had dealt with 3,388

<sup>325</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>326</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 89), 17 September 2024

<sup>327</sup> [Xe Currency Converter](#), 1 ALL = 0.00890307 GBP, 3 September 2025

<sup>328</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 90), 17 September 2024

<sup>329</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 91), 17 September 2024

<sup>330</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p19), 14 June 2025

<sup>331</sup> D and E, [Annual-Report-2024-compressed.pdf](#) (p15), 14 June 2025

cases of domestic violence over the past three years; only 25 victims received rent subsidies and five benefitted from subsidised mortgage payments.

‘The numbers are even worse in smaller cities and municipalities.

‘Kurbini Municipality in central Albania said that even if it secures funds to help pay the rent of a victim of domestic violence, few landlords are willing to get involved.’<sup>332</sup>

12.9.4 Balkan Insight further stated, ‘...out of 7,000 cases [of domestic violence] registered in the last five years, just 3.4 per cent of victims benefitted from municipal rent subsidies.’<sup>333</sup>

12.9.5 Balkan Insight also noted barriers to women pursuing protection orders or prosecution and quoted a domestic violence coordinator in Kamza municipality, north of Tirana, who noted that, among other issues, “... the area doesn’t have a strong stock of houses for long-term rent.”<sup>334</sup>

12.9.6 Balkan Insight also noted potential difficulties for women in inheriting and owning property:

‘Albanian women are often at a disadvantage due to beliefs among some families that only men should own or inherit property.

‘Forty-six year-old Edlira ... told BIRN [Balkan Insight] she had come under pressure from her brothers to give up her share in the house their parents left to them when they died. A mother to two daughters, Edlira has lived in the house since 2009 after divorcing her husband ... “I have no place to go, with two daughters and a husband who never paid for them. And my factory salary is barely enough to survive.”

‘Elona Saliq, a notary, said she had sometimes witnessed psychological violence towards women who visit her office.

“If one of the daughters has doubts and wants to have her share, everybody gets into her face urging to follow tradition or face becoming an outcast,” Saliq told BIRN. “I have seen cases when mothers are placed under pressure not to speak to their daughters and to follow the male line.”

‘But Mimoza Sadushi, chairman of the National Chamber of Notaries, said things were improving. “We still have cases in which daughters give up their inheritance in favour of their brothers,” Sadushi said. “But such cases are increasingly rare.”<sup>335</sup>

12.9.7 In the report of 2024, GREVIO remarked, ‘The most promising examples of legislative reform are ... the prioritisation of victims of domestic violence in the process of assigning social housing; ... [and] the introduction of a rent subsidy for victims paid by the municipalities...’<sup>336</sup>

12.9.8 GREVIO continued, ‘Implementation, on the other hand, offers a mixed picture. ... The availability of the rent benefit is insufficient on account of a lack of funds attributed for this purpose. Moreover, with the recent increase

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<sup>332</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>333</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>334</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>335</sup> Balkan Insight, [‘No Way Out’: Support Shortfall Forces Albanian Abuse Victims...](#), 30 May 2024

<sup>336</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 89), 17 September 2024

in prices, the amount does not cover the cost of rent in Tirana ...  
Furthermore, although still insufficient, victims have begun to benefit from social housing as part of recent construction projects undertaken by the government.<sup>337</sup>

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## 12.10 Awareness-raising

12.10.1 UN CEDAW also stated that, 'The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to combat discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices by launching awareness-raising campaigns.'<sup>338</sup>

12.10.2 In their [Annual Report 2023](#), covering the year 2023, Vatra reported on various activities undertaken in towns across the country to raise awareness of gender-based violence.

12.10.3 In their Annual Report 2024, D and E reported on awareness-raising activities it had carried out during the year:

'Awareness-raising activities have been organized with women and girls—especially survivors of violence from rural and remote areas—to inform them about the available reintegration programs. In collaboration with local partners and members of the local coordination mechanisms, D&E has used various tools such as brochures, posters, leaflets, and awareness-raising messages to conduct informative sessions, community focus groups, and direct meetings. These initiatives aim to raise awareness and provide information on the services available to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), as well as how to seek help and access the appropriate contacts. These activities culminated during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence [see below].'<sup>339</sup>

12.10.4 In the report of 2024, GREVIO reported:

'Since the baseline evaluation report [November 2017<sup>340</sup>], little progress has been made to increase the authorities' efforts to challenge social norms, attitudes and gender stereotypes by undertaking both general and targeted measures to raise awareness about gender-based violence. The efforts during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence as well as limited campaigns initiated and fully funded by external donors, have had limited reach. Therefore, a national, long-term campaign targeting domestic violence and other forms of violence against women remains a necessity.'<sup>341</sup>

12.10.5 However, GREVIO noted 'with satisfaction' that '... overall progress has been made ... to improve the teaching programmes on gender-based violence in formal education and to expand the existing programmes on sexual education'<sup>342</sup> but added that, '... teaching on gender stereotypes, gender-based violence and sexuality education in practice remains in large part dependent on the willingness of schools and individual teachers, with some schools performing significantly better than others.'<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 90), 17 September 2024

<sup>338</sup> UN CEDAW, [Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report...](#) (para 21), 14 November 2023

<sup>339</sup> D and E, [Annual Report 2024](#) (p21), 14 June 2025

<sup>340</sup> CoE, [Albania - Istanbul Convention Action against violence...](#), no date

<sup>341</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 45), 17 September 2024

<sup>342</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 50), 17 September 2024

<sup>343</sup> CoE, [Building trust by delivering support, protection...](#) (para 52), 17 September 2024

12.10.6 In November 2024, VoA reported on the National Conference Against Gender-Based Violence in Albania, stating that, ‘... the activists assessed at the national conference that community awareness and education against gender-based violence still remains limited...’<sup>344</sup>

12.10.7 In an undated article on the website, UN Women stated that it ‘... regularly undertakes awareness-raising and outreach initiatives all around the country, to challenge harmful gender stereotypes and discrimination. These initiatives are implemented in close collaboration with civil society organizations, media and private sector partners.’<sup>345</sup>

12.10.8 In December 2024, UN Women reported that it had:

‘...partnered with the Government, civil society organizations, international partners, and UN agencies for this year’s commemoration of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Activities included sports events, community awareness campaigns, exhibitions, an award ceremony, the launching of a report, youth engagement initiatives, and private sector collaborations, all under the theme #NoExcuse – UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls.’<sup>346</sup>

12.10.9 The article noted a wide range of activities carried out for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, including the following:

‘As part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2024, a dynamic and diverse digital campaign was launched to raise awareness and deliver empowering messages across a wide range of audiences. By collaborating with social media influencers, media outlets, and businesses, the campaign strategically targeted different communities to ensure maximum impact...’

‘Collectively, these efforts resulted in close to one million views on social media, demonstrating the power of digital storytelling in driving awareness and inspiring action against gender-based violence.’<sup>347</sup>

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### 13. Avenues of redress

13.1.1 See the Country Policy and Information Note on [Albania: Actors of protection](#) for general information on avenues of redress.

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<sup>344</sup> VoA, [Albania, over 4 thousand denunciations...](#), 27 November 2024

<sup>345</sup> UN Women, [Ending violence against women](#), no date

<sup>346</sup> UN Women, [Albania Stands Together: Marking the 16 Days of Activism ...](#), 20 December 2024

<sup>347</sup> UN Women, [Albania Stands Together: Marking the 16 Days of Activism ...](#), 20 December 2024

# Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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# Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Law
- Prevalence
- Police protection
  - Protection orders
- Societal attitudes
  - Role of women
  - Attitudes to gender-based violence
- State protection
  - Government approach, policy and strategy
  - Co-ordinated referral mechanism
  - Police response
  - Prosecutions
  - Awareness-raising
  - Training of professionals
- Assistance for victims
  - Shelters: number, capacity, location, services
  - Healthcare, including mental healthcare
  - Financial assistance
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Housing
  - Childcare
- Avenues of redress
- Life for single women/single mothers
  - Civil registration and data security
  - Freedom of movement
  - Societal attitudes and stigma

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# Version control and feedback

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **5.0**
- valid from **1 April 2026**

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment.

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## Feedback to the Home Office

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

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## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

### **Independent Advisory Group on Country Information**

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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