Background Note: Albania

Official Name: Republic of Albania

PROFILE

Geography
Area: 28,748 sq. km. (slightly larger than Maryland).
Major cities: Capital--Tirana (600,000, 2005 est.). Others--Durres (200,000, 2005 est.),
Shkoder (81,000, 2005 est.), Vlore (72,000, 2005 est.).
Terrain: Situated in the southwestern region of the Balkan Peninsula, Albania is predominantly
mountainous but flat along its coastline with the Adriatic Sea.
Climate: Mild, temperate; cool, wet winters; dry, hot summers.

People
Population growth rate (2009 est.): 0.56%.
Ethnic groups (2004 est., Government of Albania): Albanian 98.6%, Greeks 1.17%, others
0.23% (Vlachs, Roma, Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Balkan Egyptians, and
Bulgarians).
Religions: Muslim (Sunni and Bektashi) 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, and Roman Catholic
10%.
Official language: Albanian.
Health (2007 est.): Life expectancy--males 74.95 years; females 80.53 years. Infant mortality
rate--20.02 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Government
Type: Parliamentary democracy.
Independence: November 28, 1912 (from the Ottoman Empire).
Branches: Executive--President (chief of state), Prime Minister (head of government), Council
of Ministers (cabinet). Legislative--140-seat unicameral People's Assembly or Kuvendi
Popullor elected by regional proportional vote; all serve 4-year terms. Judicial--Constitutional
Court, High Court, multiple district and appeals courts.
Suffrage: Universal at age 18.
Main political parties: Democratic Party of Albania (DP); Albanian Socialist Party (SP);
Socialist Movement for Integration (LSI); Albanian Republican Party (PR); Demo-Christian
Party (PDK); Union for Human Rights Party (PBDNJ); New Democracy Party (PDR); Social
Democratic Party (PSD); Social Democracy Party (PDS).