

Capital: Tirana
Population: 3.5 million (July 2002 est.)
GDP(current U.S.\$): \$4.114 billion (2001)
Population below national poverty line: 29.6%
GDP per capita (current U.S.\$): N/A
GDP per capita (purchasing power parity): \$1,196 (2001)
Religion: Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, Roman Catholic 10%
Language: Albanian (Tosk is the official dialect), Greek
President: Alfred Moisiu
Prime Minister: Fatos Nano
Ambassador to U.S.: Fatos Tarifa



National Interest: Albania has played a significant moderating role in the Balkans and is a member of the Stability Pact, created after the Kosovo crisis to achieve peace and prosperity and reinforce democracy and human rights in the region. Albania has been a willing partner on issues of crucial importance to the U.S. The nation offered moral and material support following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and has contributed significantly to the war against terrorism. Albania is both a source and transit route for the trafficking of human beings.

OVERVIEW OF USAID'S FOCUS IN ALBANIA

FY 03: Total AEEB - \$28 million, USAID Total - \$21.133 million

Economic Restructuring (FY03 \$5.306 million, 25%): Subsistence agriculture continues to dominate the Albanian economy. Imports exceeded exports in 2002, creating a \$900-million trade deficit. USAID activities encourage economic growth by supporting agribusiness development, as well as the growth of private small and medium enterprises. Assistance aims to enhance their market shares (domestic and foreign) and improve their cash flows. Agribusiness associations receive training on strengthening their organizations and representing their interests. USAID also seeks to improve the availability of financing to entrepreneurs and to strengthen banking operations and supervision.

Civil Society (FY03 \$4.327 million, 20%): Preparing for the local elections (October 2003) is a cross-cutting element of USAID's civil society work this year. USAID will continue to train political operatives across party lines; encourage disaffected youth to become more involved in the political process; and equip parliamentarians with effective legislative tools. USAID will train election commissioners at all levels, and the Civic Forum program will educate Albanians in democratic principles. USAID will help the government to implement a liberal NGO law that passed in 2001. A popular television show highlighting citizens' efforts to improve their communities will receive continued support, and a new anti-corruption and anti-trafficking TV program will be launched. Various government ministries and municipalities will receive technical assistance on devolving central functions to local governments.

Rule of Law (FY03 \$2.28 million, 11%): Through the Rule of Law program, USAID plans several training sessions in FY 03 for judges. Course topics include legal reasoning and drafting judicial decisions, civil law and procedure, due legal process, contracts and torts. Information centers will be opened in courts throughout Albania. The USAID-sponsored Albanian Coalition Against Corruption (ACAC) will support various anti-corruption activities, and ACAC subgroups will monitor the judiciary, parliamentary proceedings, and budgetary decisions. The Citizens' Advocacy Office (CAO) will expand its operations to review more human trafficking cases, and a special session on corruption and trafficking will be held in Albania in 2003.

Health Sector Improvement (FY03 \$3 million, 14%): USAID's health program works to improve the access, use and quality of key health services, primarily those used by women and children. Activities include reforming the primary health care system's management structure; encouraging the Ministry of Health to incorporate family planning and reproductive health services in proposed changes; and fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Special Initiatives & Cross-Cutting Programs (FY03 \$6.22 million, 29%): Special initiatives support the development and implementation of a strategic action plan to reform the energy sector; assistance in the management of Albania's first land registration system; the establishment of a network for the reintegration of Albanian trafficking victims; and a private-public initiative to reduce poverty. Cross-cutting programs address the training needs of all USAID-funded activities.

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