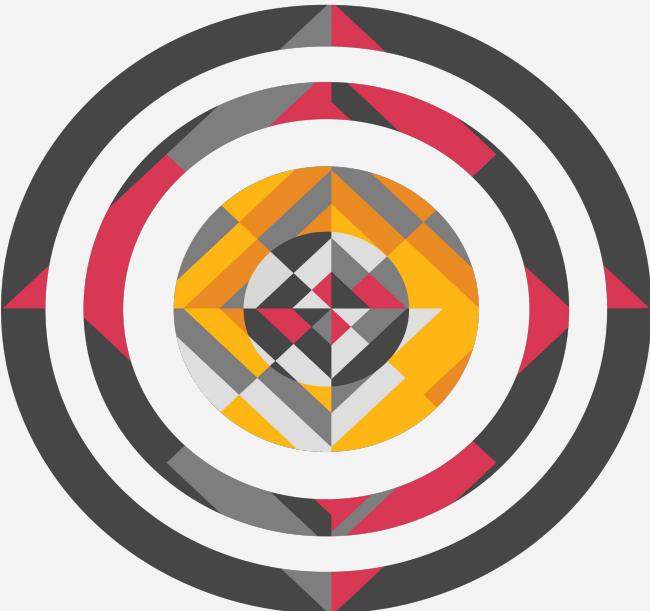




Working in Albania

December, 2020



In this leaflet you will find important information about immigration issues for expatriates coming to work in Albania, with focus on visa regime, work permits and residence permits in Albania.

It is not intended to be a comprehensive or exhaustive study of Albanian immigration law. Rather, it should be used as a guide as you prepare for your assignment in Albania

Expatriates

An expatriate is considered as a foreign national working under an Albanian employment contract or under a secondment agreement.

Residence and employment permits requirements for expatriates working in Albania

An expatriate can work in Albania after being equipped with a work permit. The expatriate must also apply for a residence permit if his/her stay in Albania exceeds 90 days within a 180 day period

Employment Permits

Foreigners working in the Republic of Albania, depending on their citizenship and nature of work in Albania, may obtain either a work registration certificate or a work permit. Citizens of some specific countries may obtain an employment declaration instead of a work permit. When employing a foreign employee, the employer must notify the Labour Office and the Directory of Borders and Immigration within 8 days from the commencement of the employment relationship.

There are several types of employment permits that foreign employees can obtain, depending on the purpose of their work in Albania. These consist of:

- a) work registration certificates;
- b) employment declarations;
- c) work permit

Work Registration Certificates

The obligation to obtain a work registration certificate applies to the individuals that:

- ❖ work in Albania not longer than 60 days (either consecutive or not) during each calendar year and provide services of installation of machineries supplied by a foreign entity or maintenance or repair of these machineries as well as training of employees for their use;
- ❖ work in Albania not longer than 60 days (either consecutive or not) during each calendar year, and provide auditing and consulting services; and
- ❖ work in Albania not longer than 90 days (either consecutive or not) during each calendar year, and offers business services, who does not involve in direct sales for the large public and does not receive remuneration from a source within the territory of the Republic of Albania.

Western Balkans, EU, Schengen zone and US citizens

Nationals of the Western Balkans, EU, Schengen and US have the same right of employment as Albanian citizens and are exempted from the obligation to obtain either the work permit or the work registration certificate, except for cases where the legislation in force requires Albanian citizenship for the job position. This category must be equipped with a Certificate of Employment Declaration, which can be obtained by the employer. The list of documents depends on whether the employee is hired by the Albanian entity or is an employee transferred within the group of a foreign entity.

Work Permit

Foreign citizens, not pertaining to any of the above categories and intending to work long-term in Albania must obtain a work permit. The work permit allows the holder to start his/her assignment in Albania. A work permit can be granted with or without time restrictions. The validity period of the work permit is based on the type of work permit.

Type of work permits consist on the following:

- "A/P" for employees;
- "A/PS", for seasonal work;
- "A/TN", for personnel transferred within the company;
- "A/S", for students;
- "A/NK" for cross-border employment;
- "A/FP" for professional training;
- "A/SHV", for foreigners providing volunteer services
- "A/AF" for family reunion;
- "A/KL", for highly skilled workers;
- "A/SP", for athletes;
- "A/PSH" for domestic workers;
- "B/VP", for the self-employed;
- "B/I" for investors;
- "C/CS", for contractual services;
- "D", for foreigners who obtain permanent work permit.

Timeframe for issuance of the work permit

The work permit is issued within 10 days from the submission of the required documentation by the applicant. The application for a work permit is filled at the Directory of Migration of the National Employment Service.

Types of Residence Permits

- ❖ Residence permit type "A", gives to the holder the right to reside in Albania during the period for which the residence permit is issued;
- ❖ Residence permit type "B", is a renewable residence permit and it is issued for a defined time period.
- ❖ Residence permit type "C", is a permanent residence permit and gives to the holder the right to enter, stay and exit Albania;
- ❖ Residence permit type "S", is issued to seasonal workers.
- ❖ Residence permit "AL Blue Card", is a renewable residence permit and it is issued for a defined period only to the highly qualified workers.
- ❖ Residence permit "AL-C Blue Card", is a permanent residence permit and it is issued only for highly qualified workers. It gives to the holder the right to enter, stay and exit the Republic of Albania.

Residence Permit

The foreign may stay in Albania for a short-term period, temporary period and permanent period of time.

Short-Term Stay

Short term stay should not exceed the period of 90 days for 180 days, based on the issued visa or the visa-free entry regime, unless otherwise foreseen in the law "On Foreigners" or agreements approved by the Republic of Albania.

Temporary Stay and Permanent Stay

Temporary stay and permanent stay may be granted only through the provision of the foreign with a residence permit.

Issuance of the Residence Permit

The residence permit is issued by the Regional Directorate of Borders and Migration.

Procedures for obtaining a residence permit must be initiated in accordance with the 90-day deadline within 180 days and the residence permit is issued in about 30 days from the date of application.

A provisional residence permit (valid for 2 months) is issued within approx. 10 days as of the moment of application of the residence permit until the issuance of the 1 year term one.

Reasons for Obtaining a Residence Permit

The residence permit is issued only for the following reasons:

- employment;
- self-employment;
- member of crew vessels;
- high qualification employee "Blue Card AL";
- seasonal employment;
- unpaid training;
- youth exchange programs;
- voluntary services;
- research;
- students;
- humanitarian cases;
- victims of trafficking of human beings;
- family reunion.

A permanent residence permit is also issued to a foreigner who will invest at least EUR 2 million in strategic sectors and open 100 new jobs (for at least one year).

According to the legislation, the central authority responsible for the treatment of the foreigners, who request to enter and reside in the Republic of Albania, evaluates cases/reasons not provided above and authorizes the local authority for the border and migration for the treatment of these cases in conformity with the legal provisions.

Registration with the City Hall

All foreign citizens residing in Albania should register with the Civil Registry within 30 days of obtaining their 1 year residence permit.



Visa Regime

Citizens from certain countries need a working visa in order to enter and work in Albania.

- ❖ Type A: Airport transit visa with one entry which allows the holder to remain in the international zone of the airport until the departure of their flight to their final destination. Type "A" visa may be multiple entry visa and the maximum validity of this visa is no longer than six months;
- ❖ Type C: Short term residence visa which allows the holder to enter and stay in the Albanian territory for up to 90 days of a 180 days period, starting from the date of first entry. Type "C" visa may be single, two or multiple entry visa and the period of validity can not exceed 5 years;
- ❖ Type D: Long term residence visa, which allows the holder to stay in Albania for up to 90 days of a 180 days period and to apply for the issuance of a residence permit. Type "D" visa is valid for one year, with a validity period of stay of 90 days, for single, two or multiple entries.



Totalization Agreements

Totalization agreements are tax treaties that seek to eliminate dual Social Security coverage and taxation and provide social insurance for individuals who live and work in more than one country in their working lives.

According to this agreements, a worker whose employer requires his or her temporary relocation from one country to another to work for that same company may continue to pay social security taxes and retain coverage solely in the country from which he or she transferred.

Currently, Albania has 8 Social Security Agreements in force with the following countries:

- Turkey;
- Hungary;
- Belgium;
- Austria;
- Germany;
- Luxembourg;
- Czech Republic;
- North Macedonia.

Obtaining a certificate of coverage

In order to be exempted from paying social security in Albania, the foreigner is required to be equipped with a certificate of coverage.

A certificate of coverage is an official form issued by the Social Security Administration (SSA) or an authorized agency of an agreement country to certify that the worker named on the form is subject to Social Security coverage in the issuing country and exempt from coverage in the other country.

In addition to tax exemptions, this certificate also allows international assignees to benefit from the health insurance package.

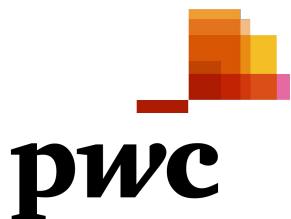
The validity period of the certificate of coverage is usually limited to 24 months, however this time period can be extended upon the approval of the competent authorities of both states.



Let's talk!

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