



# Employment procedure guides for job seekers from Kosovo aiming to work in Albania

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Entry and Stay of Foreigners.....	4
3. Types of Residence Permits in Albania.....	5
3.1 Temporary Permits .....	5
3.2 Permanent Permits.....	5
3.3 Special Categories .....	5
3.4 EU Citizens and 2025 Reforms .....	6
3.5 Domestic Workers .....	6
4. Albania–Kosovo Agreement on Residence and Employment.....	6
4.1 Rights and Benefits .....	7
4.2 Practical Guidance .....	7
4.3 Abolition of Temporary Residence Permits (2025 Reform).....	8
5. Legal Framework .....	8
5.1 Amendments to Legislation on Foreigners in 2025.....	9
6. Eligibility Requirements .....	9
6.1 Category-Specific Requirements .....	10
7. Application Procedures .....	11
7.1 Streamlined Procedures for EU and Kosovo Citizens .....	12
8. Rights and Obligations of Foreign Residents.....	13
8.1 Special Arrangements for Albanians and Kosovars .....	14
9. Digitalization and Online Platforms .....	14
10. Albania–Kosovo Special Cooperation Framework .....	15
11. Contacts and Institutional Responsibilities .....	17

# 1. Introduction

The Republic of Albania has undergone significant reforms in recent years to align its migration and residence regime with European Union standards, based on its broader European integration agenda. The system governing the entry, stay, and residence of foreigners is now codified in Law No. 79/2021 “On Foreigners,” as amended, which establishes the legal framework for visas, residence permits, and the rights and obligations of foreign nationals. The law aims to provide a transparent, predictable, and efficient process, while also safeguarding public order, national security, and social stability.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a practical guide for foreign nationals, Albanian institutions, and other stakeholders involved in migration management. It seeks to clarify the different types of residence permits available in Albania, the eligibility requirements, the procedural steps for obtaining and renewing permits, and the rights and responsibilities that accompany legal residence. By doing so, it ensures that foreigners who wish to study, work, invest, or join their families in Albania can navigate the system effectively and in compliance with national law.

The manual is organized into thematic sections, beginning with the entry and visa regime, followed by a detailed description of residence permit categories—temporary, permanent, and special permits such as those for investors and highly skilled workers. It also outlines the application process, required documentation, fees, and renewal conditions. Specific sections are devoted to rights and obligations, digitalization of services through the e-Albania platform, and the bilateral cooperation agreements between Albania and Kosovo that simplify residence for citizens of both countries.

A special focus is placed on the 2021 agreement between Albania and Kosovo, which represents a milestone in bilateral relations and regional mobility. This agreement introduced simplified procedures for citizens of both countries to obtain five-year residence permits with minimal documentation, later followed by government initiatives to abolish temporary residence permits altogether between the two states. In February 2022, Kosovo began issuing the first five-year residence permits to Albanian citizens under this arrangement, at a symbolic fee of only €5. More recently, both governments agreed in principle to abolish temporary residence permits for each other’s citizens, replacing them with simple notification procedures. These developments highlight Albania’s unique position in fostering regional integration, not only with the EU but also with neighboring Kosovo. This employment guide seeks to capture both dimensions, providing clarity, structure, and narrative guidance to anyone seeking to understand or engage with the residence permit system in Albania.

## 2. Entry and Stay of Foreigners

Foreign nationals enter and stay in Albania under rules determined by Law No. 79/2021 “On Foreigners” and related bylaws. Entry requirements depend on nationality, purpose of stay, and the existence of visa-free agreements. As a general rule, foreigners may remain in Albania for up to 90 days within a 180-day period without a residence permit. Nationals from visa-required countries must secure a Type D long-term visa before applying for residence in Albania.

The visa regime is maintained by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, which operates the electronic visa (e-Visa) portal. This system enables foreigners to apply for both short-term visas (Types A and C) and long-term visas (Type D). The Type D visa is particularly important as it serves as the legal basis for applying for residence permits inside Albania. For instance, a non-EU national who has secured employment in Albania must first obtain a Type D visa from an Albanian consulate abroad before submitting a residence permit application after arrival.

There are, however, significant exceptions to the visa requirement. Citizens of many countries, including the United States, enjoy extended visa-free stays. U.S. citizens, for example, may reside in Albania for up to one year without a visa, under a special bilateral provision. After that period, they must regularize their status through a residence permit if they wish to remain longer. Similarly, citizens of Schengen and EU member states benefit from Albania’s harmonized visa-free policy, allowing free entry for short stays.

Since July 2025, Albania has introduced simplified procedures for EU citizens and their family members, aligning its rules with EU free movement directives. EU nationals staying longer than 90 days no longer require a traditional residence permit. Instead, they must register their stay online within three months of arrival, after which they receive a certificate of registration. Their non-EU spouses and children are granted residence cards valid for up to five years, and all are eligible for permanent residence after five years of continuous stay.

Albania also recognizes regional agreements that create privileged mobility regimes. The most important is with Kosovo, where citizens of both countries can obtain five-year residence permits through a streamlined process that only requires an identification document and proof of address. This agreement has not only simplified entry and stay but has also paved the way for the full abolition of temporary residence permits between the two countries, expected to transform cross-border mobility.

In practice, foreigners seeking to reside in Albania must comply with both the general framework—valid travel documents, visas where applicable, and respect for stay limits—and the specific arrangements that apply to their citizenship. The system thus balances Albania’s commitments to openness and regional cooperation with the need to regulate migration in line with EU standards.

## 3. Types of Residence Permits in Albania

Albania's residence permit system has evolved into a multi-tiered framework designed to accommodate diverse categories of foreign nationals. The system distinguishes between temporary, permanent, and special permits, while also introducing special arrangements for EU citizens and for citizens of Kosovo under bilateral agreements.

### 3.1 Temporary Permits

The most common category is the temporary residence permit, generally issued for one year and renewable if the underlying conditions continue. Temporary permits cover a wide range of purposes:

- Type A permits are short-term and non-renewable, intended for foreigners staying for specific, limited purposes.
- Type B permits are standard temporary residence permits, typically valid for up to one year and renewable up to five times. These are used for work, study, family reunification, or research.
- Type S permits cover seasonal work. They are valid for six months, after which the worker must leave Albania for at least six months before reapplying.
- Family reunification permits allow foreign family members of Albanian citizens or resident foreigners to live in Albania, with conditions linked to proof of relationship, accommodation, and financial support.
- Study and research permits are granted to students, trainees, and researchers, usually tied to the duration of enrollment or project.
- Humanitarian permits cover refugees, asylum seekers, victims of trafficking, and stateless persons, issued under special procedures and protections.

### 3.2 Permanent Permits

Permanent residence (Type C) is available to foreigners who have resided legally in Albania for five consecutive years under a temporary permit. Applicants must demonstrate financial stability, accommodation, and ties to Albania. Absences exceeding six months in a year, or ten months over five years, may interrupt eligibility. Once granted, the permanent permit allows indefinite stay and free entry/exit.

### 3.3 Special Categories

Albania also provides special permits for highly skilled workers and investors:

- AL Blue Card: A renewable permit modeled on the EU Blue Card, granted to highly qualified workers with professional credentials and salaries above a set threshold. It combines residence and work rights.
- AL-C Blue Card: A permanent residence option for highly skilled workers who have resided and worked in Albania for a qualifying period.
- Investor Residence Permit: Introduced by 2021 amendments, this renewable two-year permit supports foreign investment. Applicants must meet financial thresholds (at least 10 million ALL investment, approx. €85–90,000) and demonstrate economic impact, such as job creation.

### 3.4 EU Citizens and 2025 Reforms

The 2025 amendments to the Law on Foreigners transformed the system for EU citizens. Under Article 33/1, EU nationals and their family members are no longer required to apply for residence permits. Instead, they must register online with the migration authority within three months of arrival. Upon registration, they receive a certificate confirming their right of residence. Non-EU family members are issued residence cards valid for up to five years, and both EU nationals and their families may apply for permanent residence after five years of continuous stay.

This reform not only simplifies procedures but also aligns Albania directly with EU free movement standards, marking a decisive step toward integration with EU acquis. A key challenge remains defining “sufficient resources” for economically inactive EU nationals, which will be clarified through secondary legislation.

### 3.5 Domestic Workers

Another important innovation in 2025 is the recognition of domestic workers as a legal category eligible for unique permits. Previously, this group operated in a legal grey area. Now, caregivers, housekeepers, and other domestic employees can obtain a residence and work permit for the duration of their employment contract, provided it is properly declared and compliant with labour standards.

## 4. Albania–Kosovo Agreement on Residence and Employment

Since 2021, Albania and Kosovo have established a unique bilateral framework that facilitates free movement, residence, and employment for their citizens. This arrangement reflects the strong political will of both governments to deepen integration and reduce bureaucratic barriers, while serving as a regional model for mobility and cooperation.

Under the agreement signed in November 2021, citizens of Albania and Kosovo became eligible to obtain **residence permits valid for five years** through a simplified procedure.

1. Required documents included only a valid passport or national ID card and proof of residence address.
2. The fee for Kosovar citizens applying in Albania was symbolic (€5), underscoring the special relationship between the two countries.
3. The purpose of residence (work, study, family reunification) no longer determined separate conditions, thereby streamlining the process

This marked a significant departure from Albania's general residence regime, which normally requires an employment contract, study enrollment, or financial proof depending on the type of permit.

#### 4.1 Rights and Benefits

Kosovar citizens residing in Albania under this framework enjoy rights comparable to Albanian nationals:

- **Employment:** No need for a separate work permit; Kosovars can enter the Albanian labour market directly.
- **Education:** Equal access to Albania's public education system, including universities.
- **Social rights:** Equal treatment in working conditions and access to services, provided they are registered and meet standard obligations (taxes, contributions, health insurance).

#### 4.2 Practical Guidance

For Kosovars seeking employment in Albania:

- **Notification:** Within 30 days of taking residence in Albania, inform the local migration authority (Border and Migration Police Directorate).
- **Documentation:** Present a valid ID or passport and proof of address (e.g. rental contract, ownership deed, or notarized declaration).
- **Validity:** You will receive documentation valid for five years, renewable under the same conditions.
- **Work Access:** You may seek employment in Albania without applying for an additional work permit. Employers are obliged to ensure equal treatment in wages, working hours, and labour standards.

### 4.3 Abolition of Temporary Residence Permits (2025 Reform)

In 2025, Albania and Kosovo advanced further by agreeing to **abolish temporary residence permits altogether**. The system was replaced by a **notification procedure**:

1. Citizens of either country moving across the border must notify local migration authorities of their residence within 30 days.
2. Upon notification, they are issued documentation valid for up to five years.
3. Unlike standard residence procedures, applicants are not required to demonstrate employment, income, or study enrollment.

This effectively creates a **free movement zone** between Albania and Kosovo, going beyond the EU model by eliminating almost all administrative hurdles

## 5. Legal Framework

The Albanian residence permit system is grounded in the Law “On Foreigners” No. 79/2021<sup>1</sup>, which repealed and replaced the earlier Law No. 108/2013. This law represents the central legal instrument regulating the entry, stay, and employment of foreigners, and it has undergone several rounds of amendments in 2022, 2023, and most significantly in August 2025. Together, these reforms reflect Albania’s ambition to modernize its migration regime, approximate EU standards, and respond to changing labour and demographic realities.

Law No. 79/2021, as amended, defines the categories of visas, types of residence permits, procedures for application and renewal, and the rights and obligations of foreigners. It also establishes the institutional framework for administration, primarily under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, through its Department for Border and Migration Police, and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, which oversees the visa regime. The law also mandates coordination with the National Employment Agency for work-related permits.

The law is complemented by secondary legislation: decisions of the Council of Ministers, ministerial instructions, and detailed bylaws that regulate implementation. For example, Council of Ministers Decision No. 858/2022 defined criteria for the Investor Residence Permit, including the investment threshold and job-creation conditions. Ministerial instructions issued in 2023 clarified documentation for family reunification and study permits. These implementing acts provide the practical detail necessary to translate broad legal principles into operational rules.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [https://mb.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Ligj-per-te-Huajt---nr.-79.2021\\_English.pdf](https://mb.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Ligj-per-te-Huajt---nr.-79.2021_English.pdf)

## 5.1 Amendments to Legislation on Foreigners in 2025

The August 2025 amendment package marked a turning point. Among the most important changes was Article 33/1, which for the first time enshrined the free movement of EU citizens in Albanian law.<sup>2</sup> EU nationals and their family members (including non-EU spouses and children) no longer require a traditional residence permit for stays beyond 90 days. Instead, they register online with migration authorities and obtain a certificate of residence. After five years, they are eligible for permanent status. This aligns Albania directly with the EU's free movement directives and represents one of the clearest signals of Albania's integration trajectory.

The 2025 reforms also created a dedicated unique permit for domestic workers, filling a legal gap that previously left caregivers and household employees in a grey area. By formally recognizing this category, Albania has extended labour protections and ensured compliance with international standards.

Additionally, the amendments modernized the visa system, introducing a tiered model for multiple-entry Type C visas: one-year, two-year, and five-year permits available progressively to compliant travelers. A 15-day grace period for minor overstays was also introduced, offering a more proportional response to unintentional infractions.

## 6. Eligibility Requirements

Foreign nationals seeking a residence permit in Albania must satisfy a set of general conditions that apply across all categories, in addition to specific requirements tied to the purpose of their stay. The purpose of these requirements is twofold: to ensure that foreigners have a legitimate basis for residence, and to protect Albania's social, economic, and security interests.

At the core, every applicant must hold a valid travel document—typically a passport—valid for at least three months beyond the intended duration of stay. Citizens of visa-required countries must also have entered on a Type D long-term visa, which is designed specifically for individuals intending to apply for residence permits after arrival. Visa-exempt nationals, including EU citizens under the 2025 amendments and U.S. citizens under bilateral provisions, may apply directly without a D visa.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the purpose of their stay, supported by documentary evidence. For example, an employment contract is required for work permits, an enrollment certificate for study permits, and proof of family relationship for reunification cases. Authorities

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<sup>2</sup> Read more about the amendment at from Karanovic & Partners , August 1, 2025, "Albania Adopts Amendments to the Law on Foreigners" <https://ceelegalmatters.com/briefings/30379-albania-adopts-amendments-to-the-law-on-foreigners#:~:text=Under%20the%20new%20rules%2C%20EU,within%20three%20months%20of%20arrival.>

scrutinize whether the requested permit corresponds to the declared purpose of entry, as inconsistencies can lead to rejection.

A further requirement is proof of sufficient financial means. While Albanian law does not set a single threshold, applicants are expected to show that they can sustain themselves during their stay without relying on public funds. In practice, this often involves providing bank statements, salary slips, or a sponsor's declaration of financial responsibility. The 2025 amendments highlighted the need to clarify what constitutes "sufficient resources," particularly for economically inactive EU citizens such as retirees or students, with secondary legislation expected to provide benchmarks aligned to Albania's minimum wage and cost of living.

Applicants must also provide evidence of accommodation, such as a rental contract, ownership deed, or notarized declaration of hosting. In addition, health insurance valid in Albania is required to ensure access to healthcare without burdening public services. A police clearance certificate from the country of origin or last residence, legalized and translated, must demonstrate the applicant has no serious criminal convictions (usually defined as sentences longer than six months). Authorities also vet each applicant to ensure they do not pose a threat to public order, national security, or public health, often in coordination with the State Intelligence Service.

## 6.1 Category-Specific Requirements

Each type of residence permit carries its own additional conditions:

- Work permits require an employment contract and, in some cases, labor market confirmation from the National Employment Agency. For the AL Blue Card, applicants must present proof of professional qualifications and a salary above the prescribed threshold.
- Investor permits require evidence of investment meeting the 10 million ALL minimum, proof of business registration, and demonstration of economic impact, such as job creation.
- Family reunification permits require legalized documents proving kinship (marriage or birth certificates), as well as evidence that the sponsor in Albania has adequate accommodation and financial capacity to support dependents.
- Study permits require an enrollment certificate from a recognized institution, proof of tuition payment, and parental authorization if the applicant is a minor.
- Humanitarian permits depend on referrals and documentation linked to the applicant's vulnerability status, such as refugee recognition or victim identification.

## 7. Application Procedures

The process of applying for a residence permit in Albania is regulated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Border and Migration Police Directorates, in coordination with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs for visa issuance. Since 2020, Albania has progressively digitalized this process through the e-Albania portal, though in-person submission at migration offices remains mandatory for verification and biometrics. The procedure aims to strike a balance between accessibility and compliance, ensuring that applications are processed within the legal deadlines while safeguarding the state's security and administrative integrity.

### Step 1: Pre-Application and Online Submission

First-time applicants are encouraged to begin with the e-Albania platform. The portal, which also provides an English-language interface, allows applicants to create an account and select the appropriate residence category (work, study, family reunification, investor, or other). Applicants must upload scanned copies of required documents, such as passport pages, biometric photos, proof of accommodation, and category-specific evidence (e.g. employment contracts, enrollment letters, or investment documents). The system generates an application number and provides confirmation via email.

For nationals of visa-required countries, the process starts earlier: a Type D visa must be obtained from an Albanian consulate before arrival. This visa enables entry into Albania and serves as the legal basis for the residence permit application once in-country.

### Step 2: Preparation of Documents

Applicants must gather original documents, translated into Albanian and legalized (apostilled or consular legalization, depending on origin). Common requirements include:

- Valid passport (copy and original).
- Two or more biometric photos (passport-size).
- Proof of accommodation (rental contract, ownership deed, or notarized host declaration).
- Proof of sufficient financial means (bank statements, salary slips, or sponsor declaration).
- Health insurance valid in Albania.
- Criminal record certificate from the home country, duly legalized and translated.
- Category-specific documentation: e.g. work contract and employer confirmation for employment permits; enrollment letter for students; legalized marriage or birth certificates for family reunification; investment proof for investors.

### Step 3: In-Person Submission and Biometrics

After completing the online pre-application, the applicant must appear in person at the regional Migration Police office within 30 days of entry (for visa-free or D-visa holders). In Tirana, applications are lodged with the Immigration Office at the Directorate of Border and Migration. At this stage, biometric data (fingerprints, photo, and signature) are captured. The applicant submits originals, signs the application, and receives instructions for payment of fees.

### Step 4: Payment of Fees

Fees vary by category but typically start at 10,000 ALL (approx. €85) for a one-year permit. Permanent residence permits may cost more (15,000 ALL), while certain categories (students, volunteers) may be exempted or charged reduced rates. Renewals usually carry the same fee as first applications. For Albanians in Kosovo, a special bilateral provision set the fee at only €5 for the new five-year permits, symbolizing the deepening of cross-border mobility.

### Step 5: Processing and Decision

By law, applications must be processed within 30 days of submission. In practice, decisions may take four to six weeks, depending on the completeness of documents and background checks by the State Intelligence Service. If an application is incomplete, the e-Albania system or the migration office will notify the applicant to provide additional documentation, which may delay the process. Applicants are allowed to remain in Albania legally while their request is pending, provided they applied before their lawful stay (90 days or visa validity) expired.

### Step 6: Permit Issuance and Collection

If approved, the applicant is notified to collect a residence permit card, a biometric ID document valid for the granted period. Collection is usually within two to four weeks after approval. If rejected, the applicant receives a written decision and may appeal within 15 days to the Ministry of Internal Affairs or to the competent administrative court.

## 7.1 Streamlined Procedures for EU and Kosovo Citizens

The 2025 EU-aligned amendments simplified applications for EU citizens, replacing the permit with an online registration requirement. EU nationals must register within three months of arrival, after which they receive a certificate of residence, while their family members are issued residence cards. For Albanian and Kosovar citizens, the 2021 bilateral agreement introduced a simplified five-year permit procedure, requiring only an ID and proof of address. By 2025, both governments agreed to abolish temporary permits altogether, replacing them with a simple notification system. Upon notifying local authorities of their stay, citizens receive documentation valid for up to five years.

## 8. Rights and Obligations of Foreign Residents

Residence permits in Albania do more than allow foreigners to remain legally in the country; they establish a set of rights and obligations designed to protect both residents and the host state. Holders of valid permits enjoy rights comparable to those of Albanian citizens in key areas such as work, education, and access to services, while also being bound by obligations that ensure compliance with national laws and safeguard public order.

1. **Employment and Work Rights:** Foreigners with valid work-based residence permits (Type B, AL Blue Card, Investor Permits) have the right to engage in employment or self-employment under the conditions specified in their permit. Holders of the AL Blue Card enjoy additional rights, such as access to highly skilled jobs and freedom to change employers within the permitted field. Employers are legally required to ensure foreign workers receive equal treatment in pay, working hours, health and safety, and social insurance contributions.
2. **Access to Education and Research:** Foreigners holding study or research permits are entitled to enroll in Albanian educational institutions and participate in research programs. Children of foreign residents, regardless of their parents' permit type, are entitled to access Albania's public education system under the same conditions as nationals.
3. **Social Benefits and Health Services:** Residents with valid permits have access to public goods and services, including health services, provided they hold valid health insurance. Social security rights (pensions, unemployment benefits) are extended based on reciprocity agreements or upon payment of contributions in Albania.
4. **Freedom of Movement:** Residence permit holders may enter and exit Albania freely during the validity of their permit. Permanent residents, EU citizens under the new registration scheme, and citizens of Kosovo under bilateral agreements enjoy especially flexible mobility arrangements, including long-term residence without the need for annual renewal.
5. **Non-Discrimination and Equal Treatment:** Under Albanian law, foreigners must not be discriminated against in employment, education, or access to services. They have the right to appeal administrative decisions concerning their residence, including rejections or revocations of permits, before the Ministry of Internal Affairs or Albanian courts.

Obligations of Foreign Residents

1. **Compliance with Laws:** Foreigners must respect the Constitution and laws of Albania. This includes payment of taxes and contributions, adherence to labor laws, and respect for public order.
2. **Registration of Address:** Residents are required to declare their residential address upon application and update it if they move. The residence permit is linked to the declared address, and failure to notify changes can result in administrative penalties or complications with renewal.
3. **Valid Documentation:** Permit holders must maintain valid passports, insurance, and other required documents for the entire duration of their stay. Submission of false documents or misleading information is grounds for immediate refusal or revocation of residence permits.
4. **Respect for Permit Conditions:** Foreigners must only work or study under the terms of their permit. For example, a student permit does not automatically confer work rights, while a work permit tied to a specific employer cannot be used for another job unless formally updated.
5. **Sanctions for Overstay or Illegal Work:** Foreigners who remain in Albania after the expiration of their permit may be fined (20,000–30,000 ALL for overstays) and risk removal from the country. Employers who hire foreigners without valid permits are liable for significant fines, tax liabilities, and, in repeated cases, criminal sanctions.

## 8.1 Special Arrangements for Albanians and Kosovars

Under the 2021 bilateral agreement and subsequent reforms, Albanians and Kosovars benefit from simplified residence and work rights. They are exempted from the obligation to obtain short-term work permits and can reside for up to five years based on simplified notification procedures. This framework guarantees equal rights in employment and education and symbolizes the deep integration of the two societies.

## 9. Digitalization and Online Platforms

Albania has invested significantly in digital governance, aiming to reduce bureaucracy and bring residence procedures closer to EU standards. The e-Albania portal has become the central platform for migration-related services, providing foreigners with a streamlined entry point for residence permit applications, renewals, and related services. This digitalization drive is part of Albania's broader national strategy on e-governance and has been reinforced by the 2025 amendments to the Law on Foreigners, which place online registration at the core of procedures for EU citizens and long-term residents.

## e-Albania Portal

The e-Albania platform offers two main services for foreigners:

- First-time residence permit application
- Renewal of residence permit

The portal allows applicants to create a personal account, upload scanned documents, and track communications with migration authorities. The system notifies applicants via email about missing documents or updates, reducing the need for multiple in-person visits. While the portal is accessible in English, all official documents must be submitted in Albanian, requiring translation and legalization where necessary.

## e-Visa Albania

For nationals requiring a visa before entering Albania, the e-Visa system provides an entirely online application process. Type D visas, necessary for long-term stays, can be obtained electronically prior to arrival. The 2025 reforms also updated the visa regime, introducing a tiered system for multiple-entry Type C visas (progressing from one to five years for compliant travelers) and a 15-day grace period for minor overstays, reducing the risk of disproportionate penalties.

## Registration of EU Citizens

A landmark change in 2025 was the shift from residence permits to online registration for EU citizens and their family members. Within 90 days of arrival, EU nationals must register through e-Albania, after which they receive a digital certificate of residence. Family members (including non-EU spouses and children) are issued digital residence cards valid for five years. This system mirrors EU free movement rules and places digitalization at the heart of Albania's integration process.

# 10. Albania–Kosovo Special Cooperation Framework

One of the most distinctive features of Albania's migration regime is its bilateral cooperation with the Republic of Kosovo. This framework goes beyond ordinary residence arrangements and represents a concrete step toward the gradual creation of a shared mobility space between the two countries.

On 26 November 2021, the governments of Albania and Kosovo signed a landmark agreement to simplify residence procedures for their citizens. Based on this agreement, both states committed to issuing temporary residence permits with a validity of five years, replacing the

burdensome annual renewal process. Citizens applying under this scheme were required to submit only:

- A valid passport or national ID card, and
- Proof of residence address (rental contract, property certificate, or notarized declaration).

The purpose of residence — whether family reunification, work, or study — no longer triggered separate requirements. This simplification reflected the political will of both governments to facilitate integration and people-to-people mobility.

#### First Permits Issued in 2022

In February 2022, Kosovo issued its first five-year residence permits to Albanian citizens. The Minister of Interior, Xhelal Sveçla, announced that the process had been simplified and the fee reduced from €50 to only €5. This symbolic fee underscored the special relationship between the two countries. Sveçla emphasized that Albanians moving to Kosovo for work or study could now secure residence with minimal bureaucracy, signaling a deepening of cross-border integration.

#### Toward Abolition of Temporary Permits (2025)

In 2025, the governments of Albania and Kosovo went further, adopting an agreement to abolish temporary residence permits altogether. Under this arrangement, citizens of both states who move to the other country need only notify local migration authorities of their residence within 30 days. Upon notification, they are issued documentation valid for up to five years. In practice, this means that Albanians and Kosovars can now reside, work, or study in each other's countries without undergoing the traditional residence permit process.

Deputy Interior Minister Blerim Gashani described the measure as “the removal of criteria previously required for temporary residence,” effectively replacing permits with a simple notification. This development creates a unique free movement zone, aligning closely with EU standards but in some ways going even further, since citizens are not required to prove financial means, employment, or study enrollment.

#### A Regional Model of Integration

The Albania–Kosovo framework is more than a bilateral convenience; it is a regional model. By eliminating barriers, both countries signal their intent to integrate socially, economically, and politically, while also showcasing the benefits of gradual free movement in the Western Balkans. For citizens, this agreement reduces costs, bureaucracy, and uncertainty; for institutions, it fosters deeper cooperation and mutual recognition of rights.

## 11. Contacts and Institutional Responsibilities

The residence permit system in Albania involves multiple state institutions, each with defined roles in implementation, monitoring, and enforcement. Understanding the responsibilities of these bodies helps foreigners navigate the system more effectively.

Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministria e Brendshme) is the primary authority for residence permits. Oversees the Department of Border and Migration Police, which processes applications, captures biometrics, and issues residence cards. Coordinates with security agencies (State Police, State Intelligence Service) for vetting.

Border and Migration Police (Regional Directorates). First point of contact for foreigners applying for permits. Located in each administrative region (qark), including Tirana, Durrës, Shkodër, Vlora, and others. Handle both applications and renewals, registration of foreigners' addresses, and enforcement (overstays, fines, removals).

Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (Ministria për Evropën dhe Punët e Jashtme). Manages the visa system, including the e-Visa Albania portal. Issues Type D long-term visas through consulates abroad. Responsible for legalization of foreign documents.

National Employment Agency (Agjencia Kombëtare e Punësimit). Verifies labour market conditions for certain categories of foreign workers. Provides confirmation for AL Blue Card applicants and investor-linked employment schemes.

Municipal Authorities. Local municipalities may indirectly support residence processes, particularly for issuing civil status documents or certifying addresses used in applications.

- **Ministry of Internal Affairs–Department for Border and Migration**  
Website: [www.mb.gov.al](http://www.mb.gov.al)
- **Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs**  
Website: [www.punetejashtme.gov.al](http://www.punetejashtme.gov.al)
- **National Employment Agency**  
Website: [www.akpa.gov.al](http://www.akpa.gov.al)