



Albania



Country Overview:

Location: Southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea and Ionian Sea, between Greece in the south and Montenegro and Kosovo to the north

Size: 28,748 sq km

Population: 3,011,405 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Tirana (Tirane)

Exports-commodities: textiles and footwear; asphalt, metals and metallic ores, crude oil; vegetables, fruits, tobacco

Imports-commodities: machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, textiles, chemicals

Currency: Albanian Lek (ALL)

Ethnic groups: Albanian 95%, Greek 3%, other 2% (Vlach, Roma (Gypsy), Serb, Macedonian, Bulgarian)

Religion: Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, Roman Catholic 10%

Government type: Parliamentary democracy

Chief of State: President of the Republic Bujar NISHANI (since 24 July 2012)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Sali BERISHA (since 10 September 2005)

Language: Albanian, Greek, Vlach, Romani, and Slavic



Republic of Albania / Republika e Shqipërisë

Meetings & Negotiations

- Business meetings will most likely start late but, it is **best** to get there on time.
- To greet: shake hands with men and women while **maintaining** steady eye contact.
- Upon the arrival of an important person, **everyone** should stand.
- Decisions are made from the top down and a group consensus **does not** usually play a role in the final outcome.
- It is **best** to have a good and honest translator who is skilled in your area of business .

-New solutions (haven't been tried before and/or unfamiliar) are **commonly** looked down upon.

-Albanian professionals **like** to be addressed with their formal title.

Business Attire

- Albanians take pride in the way they look.
- For men: formal suits and ties in darker colors. Shoes and their cleanliness are **important**.
- For women: dress suits are common. Younger women like to wear skirts, pants and tops. It's important for Albanian women to do their hair and make up.
- Business causal attire **may** be acceptable in certain industries.

Behavior

- Displays of frustration, anger and loud expressions of emotions are to be **avoided**. It is best to remain composed at all times.
- There is **no** formal protocol surround the giving and receiving of business cards.

- Albanians tend to sit **close** and speak to others in close proximity.
- Direct eye contact is **very** acceptable and an appropriate part of conversing.
- Albanians are **very** enthusiastic and expressive with their hands.

Gift Giving

- Gifts are **not** usually brought to an initial meeting.
- Albanians will **usually** save gifts to open in private.
- Wrapping gifts nicely is a good idea.

Appropriate Gifts:

- Postcards from your country and anything small would be a welcome gift in a business situation.

Gifts to Avoid:

- flowers

Business Tips continued

Conversation

- Albanians can be very **direct** when discussing superficial things, but when asked about deeper issues, they tend to skirt around the topic.
- Albanians try to maintain the highest personal image possible, especially regarding their family.

- Albanians tend to **bury** anything shameful or any bad news they have.
- In certain areas, if you shake your head from side to side you are indicating "yes" and an up and down movement means "no". To avoid confusion, speak your answers/ questions, 'po'(yes) or 'jo' (no).

Topics to Discuss:

- major Albanian cities

Topics to Avoid:

- Do not discuss politics, Albanians tend to be very passionate about political affiliations.