

## ALBANIA

### Whole country

Albania's rapid growth stems from a buoyant natural increase since World War Two combined with almost nil international migration until recently.

Unlike Cyprus and Israel, which bear the hallmarks of displaced northern-rim countries, Albania's economic and demographic characteristics place it more in the southern-rim camp, at least up to 1990. The situation is now changing. Long isolationist, Albania is

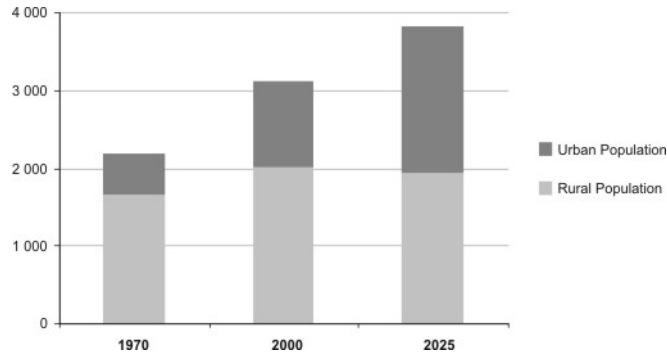


turning into a labour exporter, especially to neighbouring countries. In 5 years, 300 000 Albanians emigrated especially to Italy and Greece, producing a population decrease between 1990 and 1995. Further population loss could have occurred between 1995 and 2000 had the 1998-99 Kosovo war not induced mass but probably temporary immigration.

The fertility rate is still high for a northern-rim country at 2.38 children per woman in 2000 - on a par with Tunisia and Morocco - but will decline to level off at 2.10 from 2015. Concerning the natural increase, high life expectancy at birth has given Albania a very low crude death rate which will rise very little by 2025 due to the small older population. On the other hand, net emigration, although tailing off – 100 000 in 2000-05, 50 000 between 2005-10, 25 000 in 2010-15 etc. - is projected to continue, thus curbing overall population growth. It is likely to be driven by a range of factors, especially unskilled labour demand from Greece, encouraged by the fact that many emigrants are of Greek ethnic origin, or at least Greek-speaking.

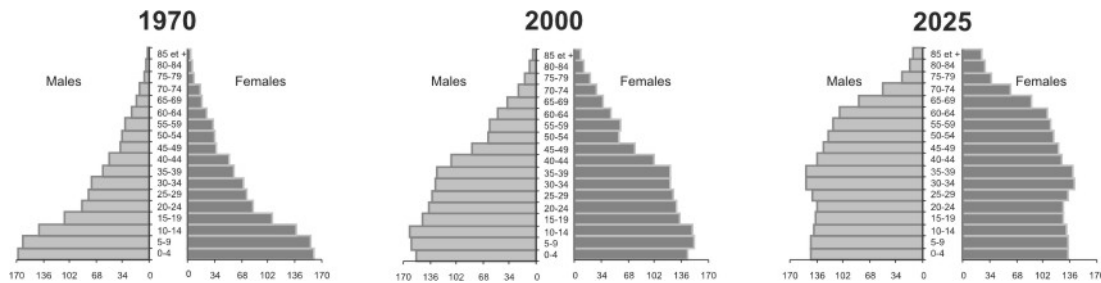
The population of Albania will therefore grow from 3.1 million people in 2000 to 3.8 in 2025, a rise of 22.6% more in line with the southern-rim countries. As well as being a political, economic, demographic, linguistic and religious case apart in Europe, Albania is also outstandingly rural. Barely a third of the population was urban in 1990 (in the administrative sense of population aggregates of over 400 people). By 2000, the increased pace of urbanization brought about by the new regime's easing of restrictions on population movement had significantly increased the urban population. There are now 1.112 million people in urban areas of over 10 000 people, i.e., an urbanization rate of 35.7%. Low urbanization rates have a tendency to rise very rapidly, as will Albania's with a projected 1.877 million town dwellers by 2025. The urban population growth rate will be nearly double the all-country rate, achieving a near-even urban/rural population balance at 49 and 51% respectively. In 2000-05, and slightly less so in 2005-10, Albanian population growth will continue to be affected by emigration with rates of 6 and 8 per thousand, respectively; thereafter it will rise to 9 per thousand, ensuring relatively buoyant growth.

**Figure 50. Rural population and urban population 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



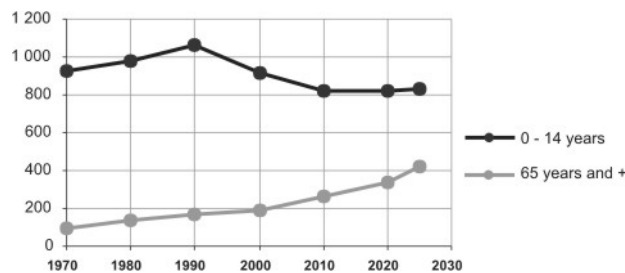
The age structure still reflects what was Europe’s highest fertility. Under-15s still make up nearly 30% of the 2000 population for just 6% of over-65s. Fertility decline will reduce the share of young people to 21.6% by 2025, as that of older people rises rapidly, doubling in both numbers and share.

**Figure 51. Population age structure (by 5-year age groups) 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



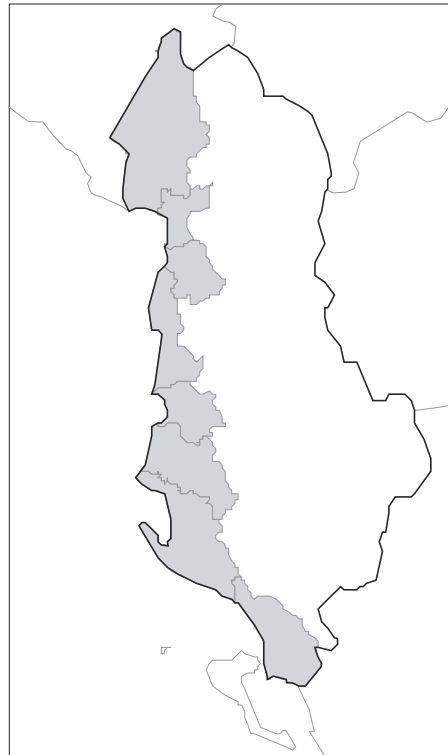
Albania’s labour supply is still shaped by its developing country demographic profile, with a very high 3:1 labour force entry-to-exit ratio in 2000. The labour supply should gradually return to demographic equilibrium over the 25 next years. At present, however, family strategies still focus on dispatching children abroad for want of work at home.

**Figure 52. Populations aged 15-and-under and 65-and-over, 1970-2025 (in thousands)**

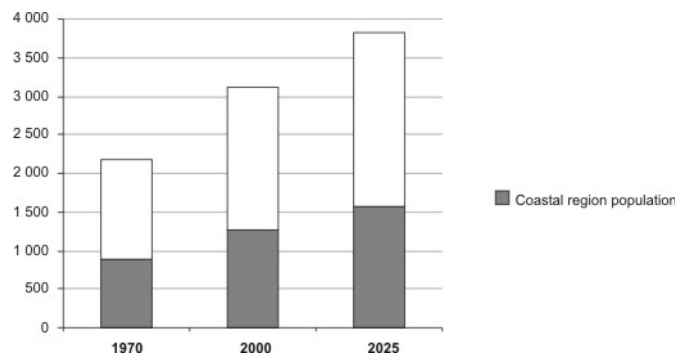


### Mediterranean coastal regions

The proportion of people living in Albania's eight Mediterranean regions remained stable between 1970 and 1990 at just under 41% of the total population. But behind the aggregate mean annual rate of growth of these eight Mediterranean regions - about 2.0% - over these 20 years lay wide between-settlement variations ranging from 1.8% for Shkoder to 2.6% for Lezhe. Between these two poles lay the districts of Dürres (1.8%), Vlore (1.7%), Lushnje (2.0%), Kruje (2.1%) and Sarande (1.7%). Differential fertility is only part of the reason for these growth rate variances, which stem mainly from differential - albeit limited pre-1990 - internal migration movements. The population of the non-Mediterranean regions grew at the same rate of 2.0% a year over the period. The population of the Mediterranean regions (down on 1990 levels by 2000) is projected to rise from 1.269 million in 2000 to 1.562 million in 2025, i.e., a gain of 293 000 people. At 0.83%, its mean annual rate of growth will track that of the non-Mediterranean part, but be sharply down on the period 1970-1990.



**Figure 53. Mediterranean coastal regions population as a share of total population 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**



Albania's coastline has no conurbations of over 100 000 people and only 13 of over 10 000 people. Their strong 3.4% mean annual rate of growth between 1970 and 1990 outpaced that of the inland urban areas. The population of Durrës (85 000 people) grew at a mean annual rate of 2.7%, reflecting its pull factor for internal migration. Not so Shkoder and Vlore, with mean annual rates of growth of 2.2%. Fier experienced rapid growth at 3.4%.

The Mediterranean coastal urban areas are projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years, rising from 480 000 to 809 000 people. They will broadly keep pace with inland urban areas at a 2.1% mean annual rate of growth. The urbanization rate of the Mediterranean regions will rise sharply from 37.8 to 51.8%.

**Figure 54. Rural and urban population of the Mediterranean coastal regions 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)**

