**Disability:IN Global Directory**

**Albania**

**Disability Definition**

In Albania, the definition and classification of disability have traditionally followed a medical model, primarily focusing on medical diagnoses and functional limitations. According to Albanian legislation, particularly [Law No. 93/2014](https://citizens.al/en/2019/07/23/ligji-i-ri-per-asistencen-sociale-personat-me-aftesi-te-kufizuar-nuk-humbasin-pagesen-pasi-punesohen/) "On the Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities," disability is defined as a long-term physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychological impairment that significantly restricts an individual's capacity to fully participate in daily life and societal activities.

Following Albania’s ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([CRPD](https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd)) in 2013, there has been a gradual shift toward recognizing disability from a social and human rights perspective. This transition acknowledges that societal and environmental barriers significantly impact the lives and opportunities of individuals with disabilities, extending beyond the impairments themselves.

Despite these policy advancements, Albania continues to grapple with challenges in fully implementing this rights-based approach. The current disability assessment system remains heavily medicalized, determining disability primarily through medical examination and functional capability rather than considering environmental factors. Advocacy organizations and international bodies, including the [UNDP](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/al/UNSSIA_Report_ReviewDisabilityAssessmentSystemInAlbania_English.pdf) and civil society groups, have highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive reform of disability assessment methods to align more closely with the CRPD principles.

Albania's recent strategic documents, notably the [National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2025](https://shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Plani-Kombetar-2021-2025_ENG.pdf), underscore a commitment to modernize disability assessments and expand the recognition of disability to include social, environmental, and rights-based dimensions. This ongoing reform aims to foster greater inclusivity and equality for persons with disabilities, moving Albanian society closer to full CRPD compliance.

**Legislation**

Albania’s legal framework for disability rights begins with its Constitution, which mandates equality before the law and directs the state to support individuals with disabilities in accessing healthcare, education, employment, and social integration. Central to this framework is the comprehensive [Law No. 93/2014, "On the Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities,"](https://qbz.gov.al/share/GEt_JG4gSaSRFonEjzPMCw) which outlines explicit obligations to ensure accessibility in public infrastructure, transportation, and communication services, while also introducing the concept of reasonable accommodation into Albanian law.

The country’s anti-discrimination provisions are reinforced through [Law No. 10221/2010, "On Protection from Discrimination,"](https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Res/AHR%20HRDC%20Albania%20LOI%20Final.pdf) prohibiting discrimination based on disability across all sectors, including employment, education, and the provision of services. Under this law, failing to provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities constitutes unlawful discrimination. Implementation and oversight of these anti-discrimination measures fall under the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, an independent equality authority.

In employment, [Law No. 15/2019 "On the Promotion of Employment"](https://natlex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/r/natlex/fe/details?p3_isn=115638) (replacing Law No. 7995/1995) establishes clear affirmative measures. Employers with 25 or more employees must hire at least one person with a disability, with additional hires required as the size of the organization increases. Employers who do not meet these quotas must make contributions to an Employment Fund, which finances vocational training, workplace accommodations, and self-employment initiatives. Vocational programs and employment promotion are managed by the National Agency on Employment and Skills.

Education rights for persons with disabilities are addressed in [Law No. 69/2012 "On Pre-University Education,"](https://arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Ligji_Parauniversitar.pdf) emphasizing inclusive education by mandating that children with disabilities receive education in mainstream schools whenever possible. The law provides mechanisms such as individualized support plans, assistant teachers, and rehabilitative services to ensure integration within general education settings.

Social protection and support services are governed primarily by [Law No. 121/2016, "On Social Care Services,"](https://qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2016/11/24/121-2016) which shifts the focus from institutional care toward community-based and family-oriented services. This law outlines services such as early intervention, home assistance, day care, respite care, and supported living. Additionally, [Law No. 9355/2005 "On Social Assistance and Services"](https://rm.coe.int/168048abea) (as amended) provides for financial assistance and specialized support, including monthly allowances for specific categories such as paraplegic and blind individuals.

Healthcare access for persons with disabilities is guaranteed by general health legislation, particularly [Law No. 10107/2009 "On Health Care,"](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Disability/StandardHealth/NHRI_Albania.docx) which affirms universal health rights, and [Law No. 44/2012 "On Mental Health,"](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67892f2393d4eae3088bd322/ALB+CIN+Mental+Healthcare.pdf) which provides protections and community-based services for individuals with mental health disabilities.

Internationally, Albania ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([CRPD](https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd)) in 2013, committing to uphold its principles across all legislative areas. As a candidate for European Union membership, Albania aligns its legislation with EU directives, including the [Employment Equality Directive 2000/78/EC](https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/a8eec3f9-b2ec-4cb1-8748-9058854dbc68_en?filename=Albania%20Report%202024.pdf), and is preparing for further compliance with the [European Accessibility Act](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/union-equality-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2021-2030/european-accessibility-act_en) and the [Web Accessibility Directive (EU 2016/2102)](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/web-accessibility-directive-standards-and-harmonisation#:~:text=The%20legislation,guarantees%20conformity%20with%20the%20WAD.). These commitments reflect Albania’s ongoing legislative efforts toward a comprehensive, inclusive framework that supports the rights and participation of persons with disabilities.

**Employer Requirements**

Albania has established explicit legislative requirements to encourage inclusive employment practices for persons with disabilities. Central to this effort is [Law No. 15/2019 "On Employment Promotion,"](https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13101:0::NO::P13101_COMMENT_ID:4318214#:~:text=15%2F2019%20on%20the%20Promotion,on%20employment%20and%20vocational%20training.) which replaced the earlier employment promotion legislation (Law No. 7995/1995). Under this law, both public and private sector employers with 25 or more employees are required to employ at least one person with disabilities. Additionally, for every subsequent increment of 50 employees beyond the initial 25, employers must hire another employee with disabilities.

Employers who fail to fulfill these hiring quotas are legally obligated to pay a monthly contribution, equivalent to Albania's national minimum wage, into an Employment Fund. This fund is specifically designated to support programs aimed at increasing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, including vocational training, workplace adaptations, and self-employment assistance. The administration of this fund and oversight of employment initiatives fall under the mandate of the National Agency for Employment and Skills ([NAES](https://akpa.gov.al/)).

Albanian law also explicitly prohibits employment discrimination based on disability through [Law No. 10221/2010 "On Protection from Discrimination."](https://kmd.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/law-brochure-english.pdf) This anti-discrimination legislation covers all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, remuneration, job assignments, training opportunities, promotions, and termination. Importantly, the law identifies the denial of reasonable accommodations—necessary and appropriate adjustments to facilitate equal opportunities—as a form of unlawful discrimination.

Employers, therefore, have a dual legal obligation: not only must they meet the mandated hiring quotas, but they must also proactively ensure workplaces are accessible and inclusive by providing reasonable accommodations. This obligation reflects Albania's commitment to align with the [European Union's Employment Equality Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32000L0078), which similarly emphasizes workplace equality for persons with disabilities.

Through these combined legislative measures, Albania has established a clear framework intended to ensure equitable employment opportunities and meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities within its labor market.

**Accessibility Requirements**

Albania has established a comprehensive legal framework to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities, primarily through [Law No. 93/2014, "On the Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities."](https://www.unicef.org/albania/reports/peoples-advocate-albania-side-children-disabilities) This legislation mandates that all public and private entities ensure their facilities, services, and information are accessible to individuals with disabilities. It introduces the concept of "reasonable accommodation," defined as necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments that do not impose a disproportionate burden, to guarantee persons with disabilities the enjoyment and exercise of all fundamental rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others.

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To operationalize the principles of Law No. 93/2014, the Albanian government has enacted several by-laws and decisions. Notably, [Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) No. 1503](https://smartbalkansproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Raport-ANALYSIS_COMPATIBILITY_LEGAL_FRAMEWORK_CRPD.pdf), dated 19.11.2008, approved the regulation ["On the Use of Spaces by Persons with Disabilities,"](https://smartbalkansproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Raport-ANALYSIS_COMPATIBILITY_LEGAL_FRAMEWORK_CRPD.pdf) which sets forth technical standards for eliminating architectural barriers in housing, public buildings, and service facilities. This regulation specifies requirements such as ramps, accessible toilets, tactile indicators, and audio announcements to ensure that new public buildings and transportation systems are disability-friendly.

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Further, [DCM No. 1074](https://smartbalkansproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Raport-ANALYSIS_COMPATIBILITY_LEGAL_FRAMEWORK_CRPD.pdf), dated 23.12.2015, focuses on removing obstacles in communication and infrastructure when providing public services to persons with disabilities. This decision emphasizes the need for accessible information and communication technologies, including the provision of sign language interpretation services and the adaptation of educational materials for individuals with hearing impairments. It also underscores the importance of training programs for sign language interpreters and the inclusion of sign language in educational settings.

To oversee the implementation of these accessibility measures, Law No. 93/2014 established the [National Disability Council](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2019/08/committee-rights-persons-disabilities-discusses-availability-sign-language#:~:text=Albania%20was%20committed%20to%20promoting,with%20disabilities%20in%20all%20areas.). This advisory body comprises representatives from disability organizations and is tasked with monitoring the enforcement of accessibility standards, proposing legislative improvements, and evaluating national disability action plans. The Council operates under the guidance of the ministry responsible for disability issues and collaborates with various stakeholders to ensure the effective realization of accessibility goals.

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In alignment with international commitments, Albania ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([CRPD](https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd)) in 2013. This ratification obliges the country to uphold the principles of accessibility and inclusion in all aspects of public life. Consequently, Albania's legal and institutional frameworks have been progressively harmonized with the CRPD's standards, reflecting a commitment to fostering an environment where persons with disabilities can participate fully and equally.

**Cultural Norms**

In Albania, cultural perceptions of disability are deeply influenced by traditional norms and societal attitudes, which have historically contributed to the marginalization of persons with disabilities. Disability is often viewed through a lens of stigma and shame, leading to social exclusion and limited participation in public life for individuals with disabilities. These perceptions are particularly pronounced in rural areas, where traditional beliefs and lack of awareness about disability rights persist.

Despite progressive legislation aimed at promoting inclusion, such as the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), there remains a significant gap between legal frameworks and societal attitudes. Persons with disabilities frequently encounter barriers to accessing education, employment, and healthcare, not solely due to infrastructural limitations but also because of prevailing discriminatory attitudes.

Efforts to shift cultural norms are underway, with various organizations and initiatives focusing on raising awareness and promoting inclusion. For instance, youth-led programs and partnerships have been established to foster understanding and acceptance of disability within communities. These initiatives aim to challenge stereotypes and encourage the active participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Moreover, educational campaigns and community-based projects are being implemented to address misconceptions about disability and to promote inclusive practices. These efforts are crucial in transforming societal attitudes and ensuring that persons with disabilities are recognized as equal members of society, with the right to participate fully and independently.

In summary, while Albania has made legislative strides toward disability inclusion, cultural norms and societal attitudes continue to pose significant challenges. Ongoing efforts to educate and engage communities are essential to dismantle stigma and to foster an environment where persons with disabilities can thrive.

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**Insights**

Albania has undertaken significant steps to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs), yet challenges persist across various sectors. The implementation of the National Employment and Skills Strategy ([NESS](https://meki.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/FINAL-Draft_NESS_Annual-Progress-Report_2023_30.10.2024.pdf)) 2023–2030 marks a pivotal move towards inclusive employment. This strategy emphasizes individualized employment plans and vocational training tailored for PWDs, aiming to bridge the employment gap and foster economic participation.

Despite these efforts, PWDs in Albania continue to face substantial barriers. A notable concern is the high risk of poverty among this group, with [54.6](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/SEPDF/cache/34425.pdf)% of PWDs at risk of poverty or social exclusion as of 2021. This statistic underscores the need for more robust social protection mechanisms and targeted economic support.

European Commission

Accessibility remains a critical issue. Many [public infrastructures](https://www.tiranatimes.com/people-with-disabilities-struggle-to-overcome-barriers/) lack necessary accommodations, such as wheelchair ramps and tactile indicators, impeding the mobility and independence of PWDs. Furthermore, the [digitalization of public services](https://balkaninsight.com/2025/04/25/digital-divide-the-albanians-left-behind-by-move-to-online-public-services/) has inadvertently marginalized PWDs who lack digital literacy or access to technology, highlighting the digital divide's impact on this community.

Gender disparities also emerge within the PWD community. Women and girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable, facing heightened risks of violence and limited access to support services. Addressing these gender-specific challenges is essential for comprehensive inclusion.

On a positive note, collaborative projects like the [Advance Social and Labour Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities initiative](https://euprojects.al/euprojects/advance-social-and-labor-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities/) demonstrate the potential of partnerships between governmental bodies and organizations to create inclusive employment opportunities. Such initiatives are instrumental in building capacities and fostering environments conducive to the active participation of PWDs in society.

In summary, while Albania has made commendable progress in policy formulation and strategic planning for disability inclusion, the translation of these policies into tangible improvements in the lives of PWDs requires sustained effort, resource allocation, and societal commitment.

# Supplier Diversity

Albania has made notable progress in integrating inclusive procurement practices that support the participation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in economic activities. A significant development is the introduction of "[reserved contracts](https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23023&langId=en)" in the revised public procurement law, aligning with the European Union's Directive 2014/24/EU. These contracts are specifically designated for economic operators whose primary objective is the social and professional integration of disabled or disadvantaged individuals. To qualify, at least 30% of the workforce involved in the contract must comprise PWDs or individuals from disadvantaged groups. This legislative measure aims to promote the inclusion of PWDs in the labor market through public procurement opportunities.

In addition to legislative reforms, [Albania's National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2025](https://shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Plani-Kombetar-2021-2025_ENG.pdf) underscores the importance of economic empowerment for PWDs. The plan advocates for the development of social enterprises and cooperatives that can participate in public procurement processes. By fostering such enterprises, the plan seeks to create sustainable employment opportunities for PWDs and integrate them into the broader economic framework.

Furthermore, Albania has embraced electronic procurement procedures through the [Electronic Procurement System (SPE)](https://open-procurements.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Albania.pdf) since 2009. This system ensures transparency and efficient allocation of public funds, making procurement processes more accessible to various stakeholders, including organizations supporting PWDs. The digital platform facilitates the participation of diverse suppliers by providing equal access to procurement information and opportunities.

While these initiatives mark significant strides toward inclusive procurement, challenges remain. There is a need for increased awareness and capacity-building among procurement officials and potential suppliers to effectively implement and benefit from these inclusive policies. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential to assess the impact of these measures and to make necessary adjustments that ensure the meaningful inclusion of PWDs in Albania's economic activities.

# Talent Sourcing Resources

Albania has implemented several initiatives to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs), focusing on vocational training, supported employment, and inclusive hiring practices.

The Albanian Disability Rights Foundation ([ADRF](https://enil.eu/independent-living-in-albania/)) has piloted a Supported Employment model aimed at integrating PWDs into the labor market. This approach provides individualized support, including job coaching and workplace accommodations, to facilitate sustainable employment for PWDs. The initiative has benefited approximately [180 job seekers](https://euprojects.al/euprojects/advance-social-and-labor-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities/) with disabilities, demonstrating the effectiveness of tailored employment support services.

In the realm of vocational education and training ([VET](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-05/Inclusive%20vocational%20education%20and%20training%20for%20persons%20with%20disabilities%20in%20Albania%20-%20English.pdf)), efforts have been made to create an inclusive system that accommodates the needs of PWDs. Adjustments to curricula, provision of appropriate didactic materials, and training for VET staff are among the measures implemented to ensure inclusivity. These steps aim to equip PWDs with the necessary skills and qualifications to access employment opportunities on an equal basis with others.

Furthermore, the Albanian government has established an [Employment Social Fund](https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=21612&langId=en) to support the integration of PWDs into the labor market. This fund finances employment promotion programs, vocational training, and workplace adaptations, thereby facilitating the employment of PWDs in both public and private sectors.

These initiatives reflect Albania's commitment to promoting the economic empowerment of PWDs through comprehensive support systems that address both skill development and employment facilitation.

**Additional Resources**

Albania has made significant strides in promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities ([PWDs](https://enil.eu/independent-living-in-albania/)) through various organizations and initiatives. These resources play a crucial role in advocating for policy changes, providing support services, and fostering inclusive practices across the country.

The Albanian Disability Rights Foundation ([ADRF](https://enil.eu/independent-living-in-albania/)), established in 1996, is a leading organization dedicated to promoting equal opportunities and improving the quality of life for PWDs and their families. ADRF offers a range of services, including information dissemination, training, legal aid, and employment support. The foundation also engages in advocacy and lobbying efforts to influence disability-related policies and legislation in Albania.

In collaboration with international partners, ADRF has implemented projects like the Advance Social and Labor Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities initiative. This [project](https://euprojects.al/euprojects/advance-social-and-labor-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities/) focuses on creating and strengthening supported employment services for PWDs, facilitating their integration into the labor market.

The [United Nations in Albania](https://www.undp.org/albania/projects/un-support-social-inclusion-albania) has also been instrumental in advancing disability inclusion. Their Disability Inclusion Action Plan aims to build human capital and promote social inclusion through various programs and policies. The plan emphasizes the importance of inclusive education, employment, and social protection systems that cater to the needs of PWDs.

For those seeking comprehensive information on disability-related news and resources in Albania, the [Disability Debrief](https://www.disabilitydebrief.org/library/country-albania/) platform offers curated content focusing on inclusion and rights. It serves as a valuable repository for stakeholders interested in the latest developments and best practices in the field.

These organizations and initiatives collectively contribute to creating a more inclusive and equitable society for persons with disabilities in Albania. By leveraging their resources and expertise, stakeholders can further enhance the participation and empowerment of PWDs across various sectors.