

National Contribution to the Fundamental Rights Report 2023

Albania

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Policy and legal highlights 2022

Country study: policy and legal highlights 2022	
Issues in the fundamental rights institutional landscape	No developments in 2022.
EU Charter of Fundamental Rights	No developments in 2022.
Equality and non-discrimination	The Commissioner for Protection Against Discrimination presented its new Strategic Plan 2022-2026 , whose overall aim is to push the work on protection against discrimination forward through a new strategic approach. This Strategy has foreseen concrete measures under the second and third strategic goals, which aim to positively affect the situation of racism and ethnic discrimination in Albania.
Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance	No developments in 2022.
Asylum & migration	<p>Albania has partially transposed the Directive 2002/90/EU. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania is in the process of revision with the aim of its complete alignment with the EU directives.</p> <p>From July 2022, the border police at Tirana International Airport “Nene Tereza” have applied the E-gate system for the biometric identification of citizens entering to and departing from Albania for citizens over 16 years of age of the member countries of the European Union, citizens of the United States of America, citizens of Great Britain, and citizens of Canada as well as citizens with Diplomatic Passports who enter the Republic of Albania without a visa.</p> <p>With regard to foreigners, from 2022, the FER (National Electronic Register for Foreigners) system is used to register foreign citizens who enter Albania regularly and irregularly. The system interacts with the TIMS, National Register on Civil Status, the system of employment services, e-visas of any other state register or agreed with international agreements within the scope of responsibility of the legislation for foreigners.</p>

<p>Data protection and digital society</p>	<p>Albania deposited the instruments of ratification of the Council of Europe Protocol amending "the Convention for the protection of individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data", known as Convention 108+. This Convention was approved by the Assembly, on May 12, 2022, of Law No. 49/2022.</p> <p>On 1 June 2022, The Council of Ministers, approved the Decision no. 370, date 01.06.2022 "For the approval of the Intersectoral Strategy "Digital Agenda of Albania" and the 2022-2026 Action Plan."</p>
<p>Rights of the child</p>	<p>During 2022, the Albanian government continued to monitor the implementation of the National Agenda for Children's Rights 2021-2026, as the most important strategic document of the Albanian Government for the realization of children's rights in the country.</p> <p>In April 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted the National Program for Vision Care for Children for improvement of appearance in children 4-14 years old.</p> <p>In October 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted the "National Strategy for Youth and its Action Plan 2022-2029", which aims to guarantee the economic, political, social and cultural rights of youths 15-29 years in all the regions of Albania.</p> <p>In addition, in September 2022, the Ministry of Education opened a secondary school for students of the Institute of Deaf Children for the first time.</p> <p>With regard to economic assistance, in July 2022, the Parliament of the Republic of Albania approved Normative Act no. 12, dated 29.7.2022 "On some amendments and additions to law no. 115/2021 "On the budget of 2022", as amended", which created a new package of social resistance due to the consequences of the economic crisis, caused by the energy crisis and the increase in prices, as a result of the war in Ukraine.</p> <p>Lastly, The Minister of Justice drafted the Juvenile Justice Strategy 2022-2025, which will also include the passport of impact and outcome indicators to monitor the situation of suspected children and to monitor the progress of the implementation of the measures for protecting the procedural rights of children in conflict with the law.</p>
<p>Access to justice, including victims of crime</p>	<p>In February 2022, the Albanian Parliament adopted Law No. 13/2022 For the Ratification of Convention 190 "Convention on Violence and Harassment", of the International Labour Organization.</p> <p>In addition, in June 2022, the Parliament adopted the Law No. 62/2022 "For The National Registry Of Sex Offenders" which aims to prevent harassment, violence, abuse or sexual exploitation of any individual who lives in the Republic of Albania and to complete registration in the Registry of all those convicted of sexual crimes.</p> <p>With regard to the economic status of victims of domestic violence, starting from January 2022, the Council of Ministers tripled the payment</p>

	<p>of economic assistance for all victims of domestic violence provided with a protection order, from ALL 3,000 to ALL 9,000.</p>
<p>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability</p>	<p>During 2022, the GoA approved the Decision of the Council of Ministers "On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services for an independent life for persons with disability".</p> <p>In addition, GoA approved Decision of the Council of Ministers "On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services in assisting decision-making for persons with disability".</p>

1. Equality and non-discrimination

1.1 Legal and policy developments or measures relevant to fostering equality and combating discrimination focussing on LGBTIQ people and combating discrimination on the grounds of socio-economic status, health status and physical appearance

Under the scope of the governmental LGBTI policies framework in Albania, in February 2022 the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, together with other relevant stakeholders, presented the National Action Plan for LGBTI+ Persons 2021-2027.¹ This is the third national plan to protect the rights of LGBTI+ people and the first which covers a six-year period. It will contribute to the efficient development of the country, the fight against corruption, inequality, discrimination and the general level of impunity.

The plan has three policy goals which aim to: a) Improve the access of LGBTI+ people to public services and specialized support services that are effective, of good quality, and available throughout the country, in accordance with their specific needs and national standards harmonized with European/international ones; b) Ensure protection and security for LGBTI+ people through improving the legal framework, its effective implementation, as well as increasing the access of LGBTI+ people to the justice system; c) Create an inclusive, accepting and non-discriminatory society against LGBTI+ people in Albania.²

The overall cost of this plan is € 2,837,978, where the Albanian Government has foreseen to cover 62.3 % of its costs, out of which 15.3 % will be covered by the Mid-Term Budgetary Programme 2021-2023, and 46.6 % by the MTBP 2024-2027. Donors will support 18.3 % of the activities' costs, while 20.5 % of the overall costs still remain uncovered.³

Despite the promising situation, the budgeting process of all National Action Plans will be a challenge for the Albanian Government in practice, as this is a systemic problem in policy implementation in Albania.

¹ Albania, Council of Ministers, Decision no. 700 date 18.11.2021 "[On the approval of the National Action Plan for LGBTI+ Persons 2021-2027](#)" (*Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave "Për miratimin e Planit Kombëtar të Veprimit për Personat LGBTI+ 2021-2027"*)

² Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection & European Union and the Council of Europe, [National Action Plan for LGBTI People 2021-2027](#), p. 21.

³ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection & European Union and the Council of Europe, [National Action Plan for LGBTI People 2021-2027](#), p. 30-31.

1.2 Findings and methodology of research, studies, or surveys on experiences of discrimination against LGBTIQ people and on the grounds of socio-economic status, health status and physical appearance

In February 2022, ILGA-Europe in cooperation with the LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey (ERA) and national NGOs from all Western Balkan countries prepared the yearly Country submission for Albania under the scope of the LGBTI Enlargement Review.⁴ The submission outlined key developments and gaps, or challenges, concerning the effective implementation of policy on the equality of LGBTI people in 2021. Key points included policy and legislative developments concerning the adoption of the National Action Plan for 2021-2027. In addition, the establishment of LGBTI contact points was noted in Police Directorates of Tirana, Vlora, Gjirokastra, Fier, Elbasan, Durres and Korca.⁵ A significant development was the foundation of the Alliance against Hate, which is a coalition created by the Ombudsman, Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, the Audio-visual Media Authority, Media Institute, Commissioner for the Right to Information and Data Protection, and the Electronic and Postal Communication Authority.⁶

The Submission also included references to several homophobic statements made on TV against LGBTI people specifically targeting human rights defenders,⁷ specific areas of LGBTI discrimination such as access to services,⁸ and school bullying.⁹ Lack of progress was noted in legislation adoption and/or amendments “On the Recognition of Gender Identity” based on self-determination, and legal recognition of family as a union of two citizens of the Republic of Albania.¹⁰ Additionally, it noted lack of progress in the field of education where human rights and LGBTI issues are not included in the school curriculum.¹¹

⁴ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#).

⁵ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p. 7.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p. 8-10.

⁸ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p.10.

⁹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p. 8.

¹⁰ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p. 9-10.

¹¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans&Intersex Association (ILGA) Europe, [LBGTI Enlargement Review 2021](#), p. 8.

2. Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance

2.1 Data, research findings, studies, or surveys on experiences of ethnic discrimination, racism and hate crime

The Albanian Constitution guarantees in its article 18 protection from discrimination on different grounds, including racial and ethnic discrimination.¹² Also, the Criminal Code provides punishment for incitement to hatred or strife on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, as well as preparation, dissemination, or preservation for purposes of distributing writings with such content.¹³ As long as special legislation is concerned, the Law "On the Protection against Discrimination" provides the legal basis for the protection from discrimination.¹⁴ Article 1 of the law lists, among others, race and ethnicity as protected grounds.¹⁵ In Albania, two authorities have been given powers to fight discrimination (the Ombudsperson and the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination [CPD or the Commissioner]). The Ombudsperson has placed the fight against hate speech at a prominent place in her annual reports.¹⁶

During the reporting period the Commissioner for Protection Against Discrimination presented its new Strategic Plan 2022-2026,¹⁷ whose overall aim is to push the work on protection against discrimination forward through a new strategic approach.¹⁸

This plan has foreseen five strategic goals: a) raising awareness of the Albanian society and public institutions on equality and protection against discrimination; b) strengthening the effect of the CPD's decisions with the aim to increase the legal protection against discrimination; c) amelioration of national policies through studies and field monitoring of the implementation of domestic legislation for the protection against discrimination; d) ameliorating the collaboration with civil society, international organisations and media; and e) amelioration of the internal effectiveness and efficiency of the institution.¹⁹ This Strategy has foreseen

¹² Albania, Constitution (Kushtetuta), Article 18(2), 21 October 1998

¹³ Albania, Criminal Code (Kodi Penal i Republikës së Shqipërisë), Article 265, 27 January 1995

¹⁴ Albania, The Law on the Protection against discrimination (*Ligji Për Mbrojtjen nga diskriminimi*), 4 February 2010.

¹⁵ Albania, The Law on the Protection against discrimination (*Ligji Për Mbrojtjen nga diskriminimi*), Article 1, 4 February 2010

¹⁶ Albania, Ombudsperson (Avokati i Popullit) (2021), [Raporti vjetor i veprimtarisë së institucionit të Avokatit të Popullit për vitin 2021](#), p. 123.

¹⁷ Albania, A.Çibuku, [Shqipëria ka mundësi të zbatimit të ligjit për mbrojtjen nga diskriminimi – komisioneri prezanton strategjinë e re](#), "Citizens Channel", 21 July 2022

¹⁸ Albania, Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), [Strategic Plan of the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination 2022-2026](#), p. 17.

¹⁹ Albania, Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), [Strategic Plan of the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination 2022-2026](#), p. 41.

concrete measures under the second and third strategic goals, which aim to positively affect the situation of racism and ethnic discrimination in Albania. These measures include: adoption of concrete measures to prevent discrimination of Roma and Egyptians in their working environment based on ethnical grounds; monitoring of discrimination situations and identification of problematic areas; monitoring missions on access to education, healthcare system, and social services of Roma and Egyptians; monitoring of hate speech based on ethnic origin and race; identification of gaps and needs of the existing legislation to adopt new policies with the aim to avoid racial and ethnic discrimination; drafting of concrete recommendations as regards approximation of domestic legal framework with the European one as regards right and protection of Roma and Egyptians.

In his reply to the Ombudsperson request for data in frame of the FRA 2023 Human Rights Report for Albania, the CPD reported that during the period January – July 2022, eleven complaints and one ex-officio complaint lodged were related to racial and ethnic discrimination. We note here a slightly decreased number of complaints for the same ground compared with 2021 data²⁰.

The CPD emphasised that out of this number, four applications were declared as well-founded in terms of a discrimination claim.²¹ Additionally, three complaints were related to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, among which only one application was declared well-founded.²²

The role of the CPD expanded in judicial cases during 2022. Concerning judicial proceedings, the Commissioner was represented in 44 cases of judicial proceedings, including in proceedings initiated as appeal proceedings of the CPD decisions (25 cases), and in 19 cases as a third-party intervention.²³ During the same period, domestic courts have issued 53 judgments for the cases where the Commissioner appeared, and an increasing trend can be observed.²⁴ Out of this number, there were 30 cases where the Commissioner's decision was challenged before the court.

The Ombudsperson has made hate speech a prominent topic in her annual reports.²⁵ The two equality bodies, the Ombudsperson and the CPD have established a very effective and collegial relationship in tackling one of the main fields, hate speech.

²⁰ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 4.

²¹ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 7.

²² Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 6.

²³ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 2.

²⁴ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 3.

²⁵ [The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\), Report on Albania](#), page 14, para 1 adopted in April 2020.

The policy framework on violent extremism has not yet been completed, and the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism and the Action Plan 2015-2020 has expired. Even so, a new strategy and plan of action have not been adopted yet.²⁶ Policy development in connection with the National Strategy and the Action Plan is led by the Coordination Centre for Countering Violent Extremism, founded in 2017.

On 20 September 2022, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published conclusions on the implementation of the two specific recommendations with respect to Albania, and was subject to interim follow-up. Firstly, in its report on Albania (2 June 2020), ECRI recommended that the authorities should find a speedy solution to the long-running housing crises affecting the Roma and Egyptian communities in the Kabash and Guri i Kuq areas of the Pogradec municipality. In the case of Kabash, as part of the final phase of the registration process, the municipality has submitted to the Council of Ministers the necessary documentation to carry out the legal transfer of ownership of the building. Concerning the "Guri i Kuq" building, the local authorities of Pogradec applied for ownership, indicating that it would be used for social housing and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy agreed to this transfer. Secondly, ECRI recommended that the Albanian authorities need to finalise the necessary secondary legislation for the Law on Free Legal Aid and the Law on Social Housing.

In this regard, the Albanian authorities informed ECRI that all 13 planned by-laws for the Law on Free Legal Aid have been approved, and regarding the bylaws for the Law on Social Housing, 24 of them have so far been adopted out of an envisaged 27. Three additional acts have been prepared and are currently being reviewed in a consultation process with various experts due to their technical complexity. While acknowledging the good progress that has been made by the Albanian authorities in this respect, ECRI concluded that the recommendation has been partially implemented and recognises the significant efforts and positive steps taken.²⁷

To date, there have been no new studies on the situation of racism, xenophobia, and related intolerance in Albania published in 2022.

The formal registration of the Roma Community is still a problem in Albania and, as a consequence, they cannot access the National Health Card which results de facto in limited access to healthcare services and medicines.²⁸

Last October a positive practice was noted, which ameliorated access to health care services offered by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The Ministry provided mobile healthcare services for examinations of women population against breast cancer almost all over the country.

²⁶Albania, Prime Minister (Kryeministri) (2015), '[Strategjisë kombëtare për luftën kundër ekstremizmit të dhunshëm dhe planit të veprimit](#)', 18 November 2015.

²⁷ European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, [ECRI Conclusions on the Implementation of the Recommendations in Respect of Albania Subject to Interim Follow-Up](#) <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-conclusions-on-the-implementation-of-the-recommendations-in-respe/1680a807ce> 20 September 2022

²⁸ Albania, Written submission by the Ombudsperson General Section in regard to recommendations issued during 2021 related to minority rights-case of Durres Municipality- access of Roma community to healthcare, page 2.

In response to the Ombudsperson request within the framework of the FRA Report, the General Directorate of Police reported that there were registered six cases of hate crimes towards the LGBTI community.²⁹

2.2 Legal and policy developments or measures relating to the application of the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia and the Racial Equality Directive

The Ministry of Education and Sports reported that it has initiated the amendment procedure for the Council of Ministers Decision no. 666 date 10.10.2019 "On financial quotas in canteens and dormitories, determination of criteria on scholarships and payments for pupils in public pre-university institutions". The new draft aims to support, through scholarships, some additional social categories of pupils including children coming from vulnerable families, Roma and Egyptians, who are registered in the basic education system, but do not have the financial capacity to participate in it. The draft aims to facilitate better access to the Albanian pre-university educational system. This proposal is in line with the Council of Europe Recommendation (2011/C/191/01).³⁰

The Audio-visual Media Authority in its reply to the request for information to the Ombudsperson in the frame of the FRA 2023 human rights report, stated that it has started the review process of the Transmission Code, which will include special provisions towards protection against discrimination.³¹

A dedicated National Platform on Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Reporting was presented during the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. This platform is hosted in collaboration with www.isigurte.al.³²

The platform provides a summary of all relevant domestic legislation which protects Albanian citizens from hate crimes and hate speech. The reporting heading of the platform permits all citizens to include information about the problem that occurred, environment where it happened, type/form of the crime reported, where did it happen, and to upload photos if the victim has them. Moreover, a short summary of events can be included in the report. During the launching event of this online platform there was declared that for the period 2018-2022, 61% of online incidents involve hate speech. Meanwhile 78% of

²⁹ Albania, General Directorate of State Police (*Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë*) (2022), Reply to the request for information in frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023 nr. 426/8, date 09.08.2022, p. 3.

³⁰ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sports (*Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit*) (2022), Reply to the request for information in frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023 nr. 4845/1 date 29.07.2022, p. 2.

³¹ Albania, Audio-visual Media Authority (Autoriteti i Medias Audio-Vizive), Written Submission-Information in return to the request of the Ombudsperson, 2807/1, date 25.07.2022, p. 2.

³² Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, (*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*) (2022), Reply to the request for information in frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023 nr. 3031/2, date 29.07.2022, p. 11.

LGBTIQ people interviewed in this regard reported that they have been victims of violence.

3. Roma equality and inclusion

3.1 Policy developments in regards to the implementation of national action plans

Development regarding the implementation of the action plans	
Has the Member State adopted one or several action plan(s) for the implementation of the strategy (separately from the strategic framework? If yes, please provide a hyperlink	Yes, but not during the reporting period. The National Action Plan for the equality, inclusion and participation of Roma and Egyptians [2021-2025] was adopted in 2021. During this year, no other action plans have been adopted. Progress reports are foreseen to be delivered in 2023. There has not been any development so far.
How were Roma and Traveller civil society organizations consulted for the development of the action plan (please check with the competent national authorities and the most significant Roma organizations)?	N/A
Was the Equality Body and the NHRI and the Ombuds institution in your country consulted in the development of the action plan (please check with the competent national authority, the Equality body, NHRI and Ombuds institution)?	-
Does the national strategic framework and the action plan foresee a regular monitoring and review? If yes, who will conduct this.	-

Implications of the war in Ukraine on the situation of Roma	
Have Roma from Ukraine entered your country?	<p>There are no specific records on this issue.</p> <p>On March 18, 2022,³³ saw the approval of CMD no. 169, on "Setting the deadline for the entry and stay of Ukrainian citizens in the Republic of Albania. According to this CMD, Ukrainian citizens have the right to enter and stay in Albania without a residence permit for a period of up to one year.³⁴ This decision was taken in support of the law "On Foreigners", based on the proposal of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Interior. Further, CMD no. 173, dated 18.03.2022, "On granting temporary protection to Ukrainian citizens, stateless persons and persons who have acquired international protection in Ukraine, with temporary or permanent residence in Ukraine, as well as for the establishment of the Management Task Force of the flow of applicants for international protection" was approved. Therefore, Ukrainian citizens will be treated with temporary protection under the full asylum legal framework, assessed on a case-by-case basis as needed.</p> <p>Also, the Ministry of Interior issued information for the displaced persons arriving from Ukraine³⁵ regarding their entry and stay in Albania their rights and responsibilities. Based on this information,</p>

³³ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 169 date 18.03.2022 on ["Determining the term of entry and stay of citizens of Ukraine in the Republic of Albania"](#), (Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave "Për Përcaktimin e Afatit të Hyrjes dhe Qëndrimit të shtetasve të Ukrainës në Republikën e Shqipërisë").

³⁴ Albania, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, [Bilateral Relations Between Albania and Ukraine](#), (Ministria e punëve të Jashtme "Marrëdhëniet bilaterale mes Shqipërisë dhe Ukrainës") 24 May 2022

³⁵ Albania, Ministry of Internal Affairs ["Information for displaced persons arriving from Ukraine"](#) [Ministria e Brendshme, Informacion mbi shtetasit që vijnë nga Ukraina"] 2022

	there is no specific data on Ukrainian citizens who belong to the Roma community who have entered Albania.
If Roma from Ukraine entered your country how was this communicated in the media?	There are no specific records on this issue. The arrival of Ukrainian citizens was communicated by different media outlets in Albania such as: exit.al ³⁶ , Albanian Daily News ³⁷ , Balkan Insight ³⁸ , Politiko ³⁹ , Sot News ⁴⁰ RTSH ⁴¹ etc., and other important media in the country. All the above-mentioned media outlets communicated the arrival of Ukrainian citizens in general, without mentioning their ethnicity or race. According to the information received from Albanian authorities, there are no data on whether Ukrainian citizens belonging to the Roma community have entered the country.
Is there any evidence (articles, reports, analyses) of the impact of the economic implications of the war (inflation, food or energy prices etc.) on Roma? If yes, provide reference	Yes. Albania Daily News has published an article on the impact of the war on the Albania economy. The World Bank has published a press release on the economic challenges that Albania is going to face due to global developments. It noted that Albania is being affected by global developments and is facing new challenges that threaten economic and poverty prospects in 2022. Uncertainty regarding the war in Ukraine is affecting price stability and growth, which is expected to slow to 3.2 % in 2022. Private consumption is

³⁶ Albania, Exit.al portal, [Ukrainians Sheltering in Albania per Interior Minister](#), 16 May 2022

³⁷Albania, Albanian Daily News, [Ukrainian Refugees do not need Residence Permit in Albania](#), 18 March 2022

³⁸Albania, Balkan Insight, [Sunny Refuge: Ukrainian Refugees find Second Home on Albanian Seaside](#), 13 July 2022

³⁹Albania, Politiko.al, [The first Ukrainians arrive in Albania](#), 02 March 2022

⁴⁰Albania, Sot News, [The first Ukrainian refugees arrive in Tirana Spiropali discovers where they are sheltered](#), 13 March 2022

⁴¹Albania, Radio Tirana International, [An Ukrainian Family Arrives in Tirana](#), 14 March 2022

	projected to return as the main driver of GDP growth. Private investment could provide further support to growth if business climate reforms are implemented. ⁴² The rise of food, energy and oil prices have been reported by different media outlets, but none of them specify the situation of the Roma community. ⁴³⁴⁴
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⁴²The World Bank Press release [Albania Faces New Economic Challenges Despite Strong Post-Pandemic Recovery](#) May 4 2022

⁴³Albania, Albanian Daily News, [Albania Affected in fours aspects by Ukraine War](#), 27.02.2022

⁴⁴ Albanian Monitor.al, [Businesses and consumers except record price increases](#), 17.08.2022

3.2 Legal and policy developments or measures directly or indirectly addressing Roma/Travellers equality and inclusion

According to the National Plan for European Integration (2022-2024),⁴⁵ the National Health Care Program provides residential health care, mainly for marginalized Roma and Egyptian groups. In the framework of policy implementation by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP), free services are dedicated for Roma and Egyptian women such as: pap smears, free visits and other vital services. This initiative aims to increase access to health services for marginalized women in order to prevent diseases by the means of early screening. Awareness activities/training have been conducted for the Roma and Egyptian communities. The activities/training intended to distribute information on HIV infection in the Roma and Egyptian communities, in order to facilitate communication with family members during home visits.⁴⁶ Concerning the Albanian Report 2022, Roma, and Egyptian women, but also other vulnerable groups, face limited access to primary health care, and to sexual and reproductive healthcare services.

The MoHSP shared the information that the National Action Plan for the Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma and Egyptians 2021-2025 (NAPEIPRE) enables adequate conditions to achieve equality, participation, and inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minorities in Albania, in all aspects of social life, especially access to education, employment, housing, health, and social services, with the final aim to improve the quality of life and well-being, as well as to reduce the socio-economic and cultural gap between Roma and Egyptians on one hand, and the rest of society on the other.⁴⁷ An overall limited progress was achieved in the social inclusion of the Roma and Egyptian minorities. Participation of Roma in the local administration needs to be improved, and inter-ministerial, national and local coordination on Roma inclusion should be further strengthened. The institutional capacity of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, in charge of the coordination of Roma-related policies, remains weak and the human resources capacity of the social inclusion department needs to be strengthened.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 91, [National Plan For European Integration \[2022-2024\]](#) p. 427, “[Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave nr. 91 “Për Miratimin e Planit Kombëtar për Integrimin Evropian 2022–2024”] 09.02.2022

⁴⁶ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 91, [National Plan For European Integration \[2022-2024\]](#) p. 395 “[Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave nr. 91 “Për Miratimin e Planit Kombëtar për Integrimin Evropian 2022–2024”] 09.02.2022

⁴⁷Albania, The Ministry of Health and Social Protection, (*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*), (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 26 July 2022

⁴⁸ European Commission, [Albania Report 2022](#). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2022 Communication on EU Enlargement policy, 12 October 2022, p.36

Moreover, two other policy documents, the National Strategy and Action Plan for Social Protection 2020-2023⁴⁹ and the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2019-2022,⁵⁰ include specific measures targeting Roma and Egyptians. Their families are direct beneficiaries in all social protection and employment programs, in order to protect them from poverty and social exclusion. Roma and Egyptian families, beneficiaries of doubled economic aid, are expected to benefit from the network of social reintegration services and counseling, mediation, and employment. These services are programmed particularly for members of active working age to empower and integrate them into the labor market.⁵¹ Except the above mentioned, the EC observes negative progress of the overall employment rate of Roma and Egyptians due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to safeguard and improve the socio-economic standards of Roma and Egyptian minorities, in line with the Poznan Declaration and the Western Balkan Investment Framework should be put to the forefront.⁵²

The Technical consultation for the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030, was held on 16 November 2022 with the participation of the technical group and international partners such as: UNDP, European Union, Swiss Development Cooperation and GIZ. Through this strategy are addressed several aspects such as: Increasing skills for all professions; Better functioning of the labor market; More comprehensive employment mediation; Support measures for social policies; Decent and safe work including here Roma community.⁵³ On 16 December 2022, was held the meeting of the National Labor Council where a number of decisions were introduced, including the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030, which concluded the public consultation phase.⁵⁴ According to the Action Plan of this Strategy, the specific objective 1.1 foresees the promotion and encouragement of the participation of special groups in VET (such as Roma and Egyptians).⁵⁵

Within the framework of the NAPEIPRE 2022-2025, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection coordinates and monitors inclusive education and follows the measures taken by the Ministry of Education and Sports.⁵⁶ In order to facilitate

⁴⁹ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 866 dated 24.12.2019 "[On the approval of the National Strategy of Social Protection and Action Plan 2020-2023](#)", (*Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave "Për miratimin e Strategjisë Kombëtare për Mbrojtjen Sociale dhe Planit të Veprimet 2020-2023*).

⁵⁰ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. [National Strategy on Employment and Skills 2019-2022](#).

⁵¹ Albania, The Ministry of Health and Social Protection, (*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*), (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 26 July 2022

⁵² European Commission, [Albania Report 2022](#), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2022 Communication on EU Enlargement policy, 12 October 2022, p.37

⁵³ Albania, Ministry of Finance and Economy, [Technical Consultation for the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030](#), 16 November 2022

⁵⁴ Albania, Ministry of Finance and Economy, [To increase dialogue and cooperation between public institutions and business against the challenges of the labor market](#), 16 December 2022

⁵⁵ Albania, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Draft for public consultation on [National Strategy on Employment and Skills 2023 - 2030](#), (*Ministria e Financave dhe Ekonomisë, Strategjia Kombëtare e punësimit dhe aftësive 2023 -2030, draft për konsultim publik*) 22 November 2022

⁵⁶Albania, The Ministry of Health and Social Protection, (*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*), (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 26 July 2022

integration of pupils who are disadvantaged due to their social conditions, origin, and specific needs, CMD no. 486, dated 17.06.2020 "On the publication, printing, distribution and sale of pre-university education system textbooks" was issued. By means of this bylaw, 280,000 children received free textbooks from the 1st to 12th grade, including Roma and Egyptian pupils. In addition, vulnerable pupils are assisted with financial aid in the form of scholarships to attend pre-university education according to CMD No. 666, dated 10.10.2019 "On financial quotas for food in canteens and dormitories and the setting of the criteria for the benefit of scholarships and allowances for pre-university students in public educational institutions."

As reported by the Ministry of Education and Sport, this CMD is under revision with the aim to align national legislation with the Council of Europe Recommendation (2011/C 191/01), of 28 June 2011 "On Policies to Reduce Early School Leaving".⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Roma and Egyptian children have also continued to benefit from scholarships and part-time education programmes, as well as free textbooks and transportation to remote schools, but segregation in schools remains an issue that should be systematically addressed.⁵⁸

On 5 May 2021, the government of Albania submitted the 5th Report under article 25 of the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe "On the Protection of National Minorities".⁵⁹ In the framework of the periodic monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee delegation visited Albania from 14 to 18 November 2022, to evaluate progress made in the protection of national minorities. The delegation conducted meetings in Tirana, Korca, Fier and Dropull with representatives of the government as well as civil society and representatives of national minorities to discuss the implementation of the Framework Convention. Following this visit, the Advisory Committee will draw up its fifth opinion on the implementation of the Framework Convention in Albania containing specific findings and recommendations for follow-up. The fifth opinion is expected to be adopted in 2023.⁶⁰

In its reply to the Ombudsperson on the FRA Human Rights Report, the Ministry of Education and Sports⁶¹ reported that regarding the execution of the ECtHR decision on the segregation of Roma and Egyptian children of "Naim Frashëri" school in Korça,⁶² progress was noted during the annual meetings between "Naim Frashëri" school, the Local Office of Pre-University Education Korçë - Pustec and

⁵⁷ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sports, (*Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit*) (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 29.07.2022.

⁵⁸ European Commission, [Albania Report 2022](#), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2022 Communication on EU Enlargement policy, 12 October 2022, p.37

⁵⁹ Albania, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (*Ministria për Evropën dhe Punët e Jashtme*) (2021), 5th Report pursuant to article 25 of the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe 'For the Protection of National Minorities' (2021), 05.05.2021

⁶⁰ Council of Europe, [Albania: visit of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#), 15 November 2022

⁶¹ Albania, The Ministry of Education and Sport, (*Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit*), (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 29.07.2022

⁶² Judgement of [X and Others v. Albania](#), no. 73548/17 and 45521/19, dated 31.05.2022.

the pupils' parents, the latter having expressed their satisfaction regarding the professionalism of the school teachers. On 22 November 2022, representatives of local and central institutions, as well as equality institutions and CSO discussed at identifying concrete measures to support the implementation of the judgment as well as building inter-institutional synergies between them. They concluded to draw up an action plan with clear roles and responsibilities for dealing with the matter within a reasonable period of time.⁶³

On 12 December 2022, the Council of Ministers decided the execution of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, dated 31.5.2022, in the case "X and Others against Albania", for applications nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19, in the amount of 22,500 EUR in relation to non-pecuniary damage, plus any tax that may be applicable.⁶⁴

⁶³ Council of Europe, [Albanian authorities supported in addressing segregation of Roma children in educational institutions](#), 22 November 2022

⁶⁴ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 760, [For the execution of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, dated 31.5.2022, in the case "X and Others of Albania" \(for application nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19\)](#) (Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave, nr. 760), 12 December 2022

4. Asylum, borders, visas, migration and integration

4.1 National legal framework on criminalisation of 'humanitarian assistance' and domestic transposition of sanctions

EUMS	Implementation of Article 3 of Directive 2002/90/EC	
	<p>How has your EUMS implemented Article 3 of Directive 2002/90/EU</p> <p>The Albanian legal framework has regulated the notion of "humanitarian assistance" through the law no.79/2021 "On aliens".</p> <p>Article 3 of Directive 2002/90/EU is partially transposed through Law No. 7895, dated 27 January 1995 Criminal</p>	<p>Hyperlinked legal provision in EN and in the national language</p> <p>(EN) Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania, as amended: https://www.warnathgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Albania_CC_1995_am2015_en.pdf</p> <p>Article 298 Assistance for illegal crossing of borders:</p> <p>Sheltering, accompanying, putting at the disposition or use of means of sea transport, air transport or other means of transport, with the purpose of assisting in the illegal crossing of the borders of the Republic of Albania or in the illegal entrance of a person in another country without being its citizen or without residence permit for that country, is punished with imprisonment of from one to four years.</p> <p>When the assistance is given for purposes of profit, it is punished with imprisonment of from three to seven years.</p>

	<p>Code of the Republic of Albania⁶⁵.</p> <p>Article 298 "Assistance for Illegal Crossing of the Borders" criminalises:</p> <p>a) Sheltering, accompanying, putting at the disposition or use of means of sea transport, air transport or other means of transport, with the purpose of assisting in the illegal crossing of the borders of the Republic of Albania or in the illegal entrance of a person in another country without being its citizen or without residence permit for that country;(as foreseen by Art 1/a of Directive 2002/90/EU)</p>	<p>When this offence is committed in collaboration, or more than once, or has brought serious consequences, it is punished with imprisonment of from five to ten years.</p> <p>When the offence has led to the death of the victim as a consequence, it is punishable with imprisonment of no less than fifteen years or with life imprisonment.</p> <p>When the criminal offence is committed through the utilization of a state function or public service, the punishment is increased by one fourth of the punishment given.</p> <p>(AL) Kodi Penal i Republikës së Shqipërisë, i ndryshuar: https://qbz.gov.al/share/_YCvI02dROybrYpg2hNERg</p> <p>Neni 298 Ndhma për kalim të paligjshëm të kufijve</p> <p>Strehimi, shoqërimi, vënia në dispozicion ose përdorimi i mjeteve të lundrimit, të fluturimit ose i mjeteve të tjera të transportit apo çdo ndihmë tjetër, me qëllim kalimin e paligjshëm të kufirit të Republikës së Shqipërisë ose për hyrjen e paligjshme të një personi në një shtet tjetër, pa qenë shtetas i tij ose që nuk ka leje qëndrimi në atë shtet, dënohet me burgim nga një deri në katër vjet.</p>
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⁶⁵ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Kuvendi i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (1995), Law no 7895 dated 27.1.1995, as amended "Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania" (Ligj nr.7895 datë 27.1.1995 "Kodi Penal i Republikës së Shqipërisë, I ndryshuar") https://qbz.gov.al/share/_YCvI02dROybrYpg2hNERg

	<p>b) The above assistance given for financial gain (as foreseen by Art 1/b of Directive 2002/90/EU)</p> <p>Cases where the aim of the behaviour is to provide humanitarian assistance to the person concerned as stipulated in Art 1/c of Directive 2002/90/EU are not yet decriminalised and foreseen by the Albanian Criminal Code. Article 298 of the Criminal Code in regard to the crime of smuggling does not exclude humanitarian assistance by refraining from prosecuting those providing humanitarian assistance.</p>	<p>Kur ndihma jepet për qëllime fitimi, dënohet me burgim nga tre deri në shtatë vjet.</p> <p>Kur kjo veprë kryhet në bashkëpunim ose më shumë se një herë, apo ka sjellë pasoja të rënda, dënohet me burgim nga pesë deri në dhjetë vjet. Kur vepra ka sjellë si pasojë vdekjen e të dëmtuarit, dënohet me burgim jo më pak se pesëmbëdhjetë vjet ose me burgim të përjetshëm.</p> <p>Kur vepra penale kryhet nëpërmjet shfrytëzimit të funksionit shtetëror ose shërbimit publik, dënimi me burgim shtohet me ¼ e dënimit të dhënë.</p>
	Cases [incident numbers] of criminalisation of humanitarian assistance	
	<p>Number of cases recorded by the police in 2022</p> <p>In 2022,⁶⁶ 313 cases with 425 suspected authors</p>	<p>There are no cases linked with criminalisation of humanitarian assistance.</p>

⁶⁶ The number of cases for January-July.

	<p>were recorded by the Albanian Police with regard to the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence.⁶⁷</p> <p>However, since Albanian legislation does not recognize assistance for illegal border crossing for humanitarian purposes, none of these cases is specifically related to the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence for humanitarian assistance.</p>	
	<p>Number of investigations initiated in 2022</p> <p>During the first quarter of 2022 (January-March 2022),⁶⁸ 54 investigations with 38 defendants were registered and</p>	<p>Number and details of cases (if available)</p> <p>The General Prosecution Office did not have the details for the cases investigated. It only produces statistical data. There is no information if</p>

⁶⁷ Albania, Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of State Police (Ministria e Brendshme, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 960/1, 09 August 2022.

⁶⁸ According to the General Prosecution Office, the statistical data for the second quarter of 2022 (April – June) are still being processed and have not been formalized yet. (Albania, General Prosecution Office, Directory of the Institutional Coordination, (Prokuroria e Përgjithshme, Drejtoria e Koordinimit Institucional) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 461/1, 28 July 2022.

	investigated by the general jurisdiction prosecutor's offices in relation to Article 298 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania. ⁶⁹	there are cases where the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence is carried out with humanitarian intentions. ⁷⁰
	<p>Number of court decisions taken in 2022</p> <p>From the ICMIS System of the High and District Courts in Albania results that during 2022, the courts have taken 65 decisions in regard to the criminalization of human smuggling in the general context. However, none of the decisions relate to the criminalisation of 'humanitarian assistance'. The object of all the decisions given during 2022 was related to the punishment of assistance</p>	There are no court decisions in regard to the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance.

⁶⁹ Albania, General Prosecution Office, Directory of the Institutional Coordination, (Prokuroria e Përgjithshme, Drejtoria e Koordinimit Institucional) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 461/1, 28 July 2022.

⁷⁰ Albania, General Prosecution Office, Directory of the Institutional Coordination, (Prokuroria e Përgjithshme, Drejtoria e Koordinimit Institucional) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 461/1, 28 July 2022.

	<p>for illegal crossing of the border against payment. In addition, the purpose of crossing the border by foreign citizens was related to the use of Albania as a transit country to go to European countries for the purpose of employment or better living conditions.</p>	
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4.2 Use of the large-scale IT Systems in the area of asylum, migration and border control

The two main systems used by the Albanian state at border control points are: a) TIMS system and b) FER system. The FER (National Electronic Register for Foreigners) system is used to register foreign citizens who enter Albania regularly and irregularly. This system is created with the Council of Minister Decision no 857 dated 29.12.2021 and contains personal data for foreign citizens,⁷¹ which:

- a) have been provided with a visa to enter, stay or transit in the Republic of Albania;
- b) are provided with a residence permit for a temporary or permanent period, according to the criteria and types defined in the law;
- c) have been provided with a unique permit (residence and employment) in the Republic of Albania, according to the relevant motive of the permit provided by law no.79/2021, "On aliens"
- ç) result in irregular stay in the territory of the Republic of Albania.

The Electronic Register for foreigners interacts with the TIMS, National Register on Civil Status, the system of employment services, e-visas of any other state register or agreed with international agreements within the scope of responsibility of the legislation for foreigners.⁷²

Also, the Border and Migration Police has enabled the provision of biometric identity cards to foreign citizens who have acquired the right to a residence permit in Albania. All foreign citizens who have a valid residence permit in the Republic of Albania can apply to obtain a Biometric Card for foreign citizens. This card has the same characteristics as ID Card of Albanian citizens and enables registration

⁷¹ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2021), Decision no 857 date 29.12.2021 "For the establishment and operation of the national electronic registry for foreigners in the Republic of Albania", Vendim nr.857 datë 29.12.2021 "Për ngritjen dhe funksionimin e regjistrimit elektronik kombëtar për të huajt në Republikën e Shqipërisë", Official Gazette no.206 date 31.12.2021, Fletore Zyrtare nr.206 datë 31.12.2021 (<https://qbz.gov.al/share/duXrYVKUTjSQXOpKkWz0tw>)

⁷² Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2021), Decision no 857 date 29.12.2021 "For the establishment and operation of the national electronic registry for foreigners in the Republic of Albania", Vendim nr.857 datë 29.12.2021 "Për ngritjen dhe funksionimin e regjistrimit elektronik kombëtar për të huajt në Republikën e Shqipërisë", Official Gazette no.206 date 31.12.2021, Fletore Zyrtare nr.206 datë 31.12.2021. (<https://qbz.gov.al/share/duXrYVKUTjSQXOpKkWz0tw>)

of foreigners on the e-Albania platform in order to get the services that the platform offers for foreign citizens.⁷³

Furthermore, from 31 July 2022, the border police at Tirana International Airport "Nene Tereza" have applied the E-gate system for the biometric identification of citizens entering to and departing from Albania. Citizens equipped with biometric passports that are authorized to use the E-gate at the exit of the Republic of Albania are citizens over 16 years of age of the member countries of the European Union, citizens of the United States of America, citizens of Great Britain, and citizens of Canada as well as citizens with Diplomatic Passports who enter the Republic of Albania without a visa.⁷⁴

⁷³ Albania, Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of State Police (Ministria e Brendshme, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 960/1, 09 August 2022.

⁷⁴ Albania, Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of State Police (Ministria e Brendshme, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 960/1, 09 August 2022.

5. Information society, privacy and data protection

5.1 Initiatives in the use of artificial intelligence in both private and public sectors

Actor	Type	Description	Are Human Rights issues mentioned? (yes/no)	Reference
The Ministry of Education and Sports and Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF)	Memorandum of Understanding	On 20 May 2022, The Ministry of Education and Sports and the Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the project "Artificial Intelligence for Youth". This project aims to increase the skills related to technology and artificial intelligence among Albanian students, aged between 13 and 19 years old. The program will be piloted in 5 public schools and 2 training centers. It will	Yes, the right to education. Emerging technologies such as AI are changing and reshaping the world, having a tremendous impact on the employment and economic sectors, so this project aims to increase the skills related to technology and artificial intelligence among Albanian students, aged between 13 and 19 years old. This program will serve as a common good in education through providing the Albanian youth an opportunity to learn AI skills and apply them responsibly. In this way these youngsters will be equipped with the mindset and skills required for AI.	The Minister of Education and Sports and the AADF signed a MoU for the implementation of the project "AI for Youth" The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the AI for Youth Project.

		build 7 AI labs providing the certified teachers and students the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of AI and demystify it by equipping them with the mindset and skills required for AI readiness. The program will begin in the school year 2022-2023.		

5.2 Legal and policy initiatives on data protection and private life

The Information and Data Protection Commissioner has played an active role in following the procedures for the approval of the new draft law “On data protection” which is expected to be approved within 2022. During this year, special attention has been dedicated to strengthening the role of the contact person for guaranteeing the security of data processing as well as monitoring the recommendations left earlier with public and private controllers during the institutional activity. Moreover, the Commissioner is implementing several activities to raise awareness of the data controllers and processors.⁷⁵

During the reporting period, Albania deposited the instruments of ratification of the Council of Europe Protocol amending the Convention for the protection of individuals with regard to the Automatic Processing of Personal Data” (CETS Protocol No. 223, known as Convention 108+). The Assembly has approved this act with the Law No. 49/2022, for the Ratification of the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal

⁷⁵ Albania, The Information and Data Protection Commissioner [Komisioneri për të Drejtën e Informimit dhe Mbrojtjen e të Dhënave Personale] (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsman in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 27 July 2022

Data.⁷⁶ According to this law, the Republic of Albania assigned as the supervisory authority the Information and Data Protection Commissioner's Officer with address: "Abdi Toptani" Street, Tirana, Albania. [Article 2, Law no. 49/2022]. This Convention of the CoE is an important act for strengthening democracy, the rule of law and upholding fundamental human rights and freedoms.⁷⁷

The Ministry of Education and Sports and the Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the project "Artificial Intelligence for Youth". The Artificial Intelligence program, which is being implemented in more than 11 countries around the world, will also start piloting in Albania, with the aim of being included in all secondary schools. The First Artificial Intelligence Laboratory was inaugurated in "Sami Frashëri" high school.⁷⁸ Emerging technologies such as AI are changing and reshaping the world, having a tremendous impact on the employment and economic sectors, so this project aims to increase the skills related to technology and artificial intelligence among Albanian students, aged between 13 and 19 years old. The piloting of the program will begin in the school year 2022-2023 in five public institutions, where groups will be created that will conduct classes on Artificial Intelligence, after school hours, as an extracurricular activity at the selected educational institution. There will also be two private groups outside the schools.⁷⁹

Last year, on 22 December 2021, a database with sensitive personal data of 637,183 Albanian citizens was distributed through the "WhatsApp" application, marking the largest flow of official data in Albania. The database contained personal numbers, names, employers and the monthly salary of all persons registered as employed in the public and private sector in Albania. The published data represented January 2021 salary records.⁸⁰ Then, on 24 December 2021, news spread about the existence of another database with data on vehicle owners. Regarding this issue, the Information and Data Protection Commissioner has initiated an inspection at the General Directorate of Taxes, which is suspected to be the source of this leak. In this regard, the Commissioner stated that GDT did not have the appropriate standards for the

⁷⁶ Albania, Assembly of Albania, Official Journal of the Republic of Albania no. 79, [Law no. 49/2022 "For the Ratification of the the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data"](#), 26 May 2022

⁷⁷ Albania, The Information and Data Protection Commissioner Press Release [Instruments of ratification deposited with the Council of Europe](#) 01 August 2022

⁷⁸ Albanian Daily News, [First AI Laboratory inaugurated in Albanian High School](#), 16 October 2022

⁷⁹ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sports [Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit], [The Minister of Education and Sports and the AADF signed a MoU for the implementation of the project "AI for Youth"](#), 18 May 2022

⁸⁰ Albania, Politiko, [The salary list scandal, the three institutions from where the personal data of 630 thousand Albanians may have been leaked](#) 22 December 2021

protection of personal data.⁸¹ Immediately after the publication of the news, the Prosecution Office of Tirana initiated criminal proceedings ex-officio. During the investigations, the prosecutor's office accused two specialists of the National Agency for Information Society and two employees of the private sector. On January 7, 2022, it came out that the investigations were conducted simultaneously, as the same authors were accused in both cases.⁸² On 27 May 2022, referring to the announcement for the compilation of the investigations from the Tirana Prosecutor's Office, it was noted that the data only refers to criminal investigations for the salary database and not the vehicle plates database.⁸³

On September 6, 2022, the Albanian government cut diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran and issued an ultimatum to diplomatic staff at the Iranian embassy in the Albanian capital, Tirana, to leave the country within 24 hours due to a series of cyberattacks on Albanian institutions this summer. The first attack, which targeted the government server administrata.al, took place in May. The second took place in July and targeted the government portal e-Albania.al, where Albanian citizens can log in using their ID or passport number and apply for official documents, schedule appointments with Albanian consulates, etc. Subsequent US and Albanian investigations concluded that Iran was behind this "reckless and irresponsible" attack.⁸⁴ On 21 September 2022, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) released a joint Cybersecurity Advisory (CSA)- [Iranian State Actors Conduct Cyber Operations Against the Government of Albania](#) - detailing malicious cyber operations that included ransomware and disk wiper, rendering websites and services unavailable. The advisory indicates that Iranian state cyber actors acquired initial access to the victim's network about 14 months before launching the destructive cyber-attack, periodically accessing and exfiltrating email content. In order to limit the risk of compromise, CISA and FBI encouraged users and administrators to review the advisory and apply the recommended mitigations.⁸⁵

On 1 June 2022, The Council of Ministers, approved the Decision no. 370, date 01.06.2022 "For the approval of the Intersectoral Strategy "Digital Agenda of Albania" and the 2022-2026 Action Plan. The "Digital Agenda of Albania 2022-2026" aims to boost investments in the key areas of advanced computing and data processing, artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and the advanced digital skills needed to develop them. It has the potential to connect businesses, public administration and citizens with the latest technologies and resources and will help to be globally competitive and strategically autonomous, developing

⁸¹Albania, tpz.al, [Salary list scandal: The Information and Data Protection Commissioner speaks for Voice of America](#) 27 December 2021 2

⁸²Albania, Albanian Helsinki Committee, (2022) [POLICY AND POSITION PAPER "Legal and institutional overview of personal data protection and security in the country and their compliance with the acquis"](#), p. 14, June 2022

⁸³ Albania, Shqiptarja.com, [Announcement for the compilation of investigations from Tirana Prosecutor Office](#), 09 May 2022

⁸⁴ Deutsche Welle (DW), [Albania blames Iran for cyberattacks](#), 16 September 2022

⁸⁵ Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, [Iranian State Actors Conduct Cyber Operations Against the Government of Albania](#), 21 September 2022

and leading society towards Digital Transformation. The purpose of this document is to set goals for the upcoming years by following modern data platforms and digital technologies to meet the needs of the citizen, overcoming the lack of resources and adapting to the new way of working remotely by further advancing the digitalization of government services and the development of cyber skills.⁸⁶

On 29 September 2022, the Information and Data Protection Commissioner adapted the Integrity Plan 2022-2024 which is based on three main pillars: periodic strengthening of the professional and administrative capacities of the Commissioner's Office, modernization of the primary and secondary legislation of the responsible areas, as well as the fulfilment of the process of complete digitization of the institution's archive.⁸⁷

From 20 – 24 June 2022, People's Advocate of Albania and OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) organized the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions Academy. More than 20 ENNHRI Academy participants from national human rights institutions across the OSCE region were hosted by People's Advocate of Albania in Tirana to discuss on the topic of "Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights". The IX edition of the NHRI Academy is focused on one of the most important emerging human rights topics: artificial intelligence (AI). This initiative is sustainable taking into the consideration the fact that all the NHRI participants can share the knowledge on AI they gained through this Academy in their countries. Over the course of the week, the NHRI participants learned about how they can assess the impact of AI on human rights, use the NHRI mandate to tackle human rights issues related to AI, and take advantage of opportunities brought by digital technology and AI for more effective promotion and protection of human rights. In this order they can share their experiences in their respective countries. The NHRI Academy offers tailored and practical training for the continuous professional development of the staff at NHRI. The week-long event supports the exchange of good practices among NHRIs and provides a platform for professional networking between NHRIs, ENNHRI, ODIHR, academia, civil society, Human Rights Defenders and other stakeholders. Therefore this initiative can be transferable to the other countries, based on the diversity of participants at this Academy.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Albania, Council of Ministers, [Këshilli i Ministrave] (2022) ["For the approval of the Intersectoral Strategy "Digital Agenda of Albania" and the 2022-2026 Action Plan](#), 01 June 2022

⁸⁷ Albania, Information and Data Protection Commissioner, (*Komisioneri për të Drejtën e Informimit dhe Mbrojtjen e të Dhënave Personale*) Order no. 160, 28.09.2022 ["Integrity Plan" 2022-2025](#), 28.09.2022

⁸⁸ Albania, Albanian Ombudsperson [European Network of National Human Rights Institutions Academy](#), 20-24 June 2022

6. Rights of the child

6.1 Measures addressing vulnerabilities of children living in poverty and developments regarding the national implementation of the EU Child Guarantee

Measures addressing vulnerabilities of children living in poverty and developments regarding the national implementation of the [EU Child Guarantee](#).

Legislative changes	<p>During 2022, the Albanian government monitored in a continuous way the implementation of the National Agenda for Children's Rights 2021-2026, as the most important strategic document of the Albanian Government for the realization of children's rights in the country. It also continued the implementation of Law no. 129/2021 "On the status of "Children in the Care of the Republic". The purpose of this law is to take into the protection and care of the state children, where one or both of their parents, or in their absence, the person legally charged with their guardianship, have lost their lives under the conditions provided by the law for receiving the "Martyr " status. Up to 2022, 11 children, whose parents were declared "Martyrs of the Republic of Albania" have received the status of Children in the care of the Republic.⁸⁹</p> <p>On 20 April 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted the decision no. 246 dated 20.4.2022 for the adoption of the National Program for Vision Care for Children.⁹⁰ This program aimed to:</p>
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⁸⁹ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

⁹⁰ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022) Decision No. 246, dated 20.4.2022 "For the Approval Of The National Vision Care Program Package For Children" (Vendim Nr. 246, datë 20.4.2022 "Për miratimin e paketës së programit kombëtar për kujdesin e shikimit për fëmijët", Official Gazette no 63 dated 22.04.2022, Fletore Zyrtare nr. 63 datë 22.04.2022" (<https://qbz.gov.al/share/mocMqchhR4-HqaBh5hsHsA>)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determination of protocols for eye health monitoring and screening 2. Prevention of blindness in premature births, evidence of congenital eye anomalies and other congenital diseases 3. Preservation and improvement of appearance in children 4-14 years old 4. Highlighting the current needs for the successful implementation of this project <p>Pursuant to Decision 868 dated 29.12.2021 "For some changes and additions to Decision No. 597/2019 of the Council of Ministers "For determining the procedures, documentation and monthly amount of the benefit of economic aid and the use of the additional fund over the conditioned fund for economic aid", the amount of economic aid was doubled for families with three or more children and the amount for orphaned children, victims of violence and trafficking was tripled. About 80,000 children benefit from the economic assistance scheme.⁹¹</p> <p>To ease the financial effects affected by the war in Ukraine, families benefiting from economic assistance, persons with limited ability, and other beneficiary categories benefited from financial support in the amount of 3,000 lek per month, for a period of 3 months.⁹²</p> <p>Furthermore, during 2022, the Ministry of Education and Sports initiated the amendment of Decision No. 666 dated 10.10.2019 "For the financial quotas for food in boarding schools, defining the criteria for the benefit of scholarships and payments for students of pre-university education in</p>
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⁹¹ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022) Decision No. 868, Dated 29.12.2021 "For Some Changes and Additions To Decision No. 597, Date 4.9.2019, Of The Council Of Ministers, "For The Determination Of Procedures, Documentation And Monthly Amount Of Benefit Of Economic Assistance And The Use Of The Additional Fund above The Conditional Fund For Economic Assistance", Vendim Nr. 868, Dated 29.12.2021 "Për Disa Ndryshime Dhe Shtesa Në Vendimin Nr. 597, Dated 4.9.2019, Të Këshillit Të Ministrave, "Për Përcaktimin E Procedurave, Dokumentacionit Dhe Masës Mujore Të Përfitimit Të Ndhmës Ekonomike dhe Përdorimit Të Fondit Shtesë Mbi Fondin E Kushtëzuar Për Ndhmën Ekonomike", Official Gazette no 206 dated 31.12.2021, Fletore Zyrtare nr.206 datë 31.12.2021.

⁹² Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022) Decision No. 159, dated 12.3.2022 "For the Financial Support Of Some Special Categories To Mitigate The Effects Influenced By The War In Ukraine" Vendim Nr.159, dated 12.3.2022 "Për Mbështetjen Financiare të Disa Kategorive Të Veçanta Për Zbutjen E Efteve Të Ndikuara Nga Lufta Në Ukrainë", Official Gazette no 47 dated 29.03.2022, Fletore Zyrtare nr.47 datë 29.03.2022.

public educational institutions". The draft decision aims to support with scholarships some social categories such as students, including children of families in need who are enrolled in basic education, but who, due to financial inability, cannot attend classes and students of Roma and Egyptian minorities or students with one parent. The anticipated changes were made in implementation of the alignment of the Albanian legal framework with the recommendation 2011/C191/01 of the Council of Europe, dated June 28, 2011 "On policies to reduce early school leaving".⁹³

In regard to strategic documents, in October 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted the "National Strategy for Youth and its Action Plan 2022-2029", which aims to guarantee the economic, political, social and cultural rights of youths 15-29 years in all the regions of Albania.⁹⁴

The strategy has three main policy goals:

- a) Young girls and boys actively participate in society and feel empowered to express themselves with their voice. Inter-sectoral youth policies are coordinated, based on analysis, with well-funded mechanisms.
- b) Youth innovation and the growth of skills and professionalism of youth are supported and encouraged through quality education in ICT and other areas of digital development, increasing and thus improving the opportunities to enter the labor market.

⁹³ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sport, (Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4845/1, 29 July 2022

⁹⁴ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022) Decision No.692 dated 26.10.2022 "For the approval of the National Youth Strategy and its Action Plan 2022-2029" Vendim nr.692 datë 26.10.2022 "Për miratimin e Strategjisë Kombëtare të Rinisë dhe Planit të Veprimit 2022-2029", Official Gazette no.144 dated 1.11.2022, Fletore Zyrtare nr.144 datë 1.11.2022.

	<p>c) Active, healthy, physical, social and mental well-being of young people. Security, protection and the inclusion of young people in all their diversity, especially for those young people who are in situation risk or social exclusion.</p>
<p>Policy changes</p>	<p>During 2021, the Albanian Government adopted the National Program for implementing the EU Youth Guarantee. Up to now, there are no policy changes in regard to the implementation of the EU Child Guarantee, even though there were initiatives from civil society organisations to push the Albanian Government to develop an integrated and inclusive plan that puts at the centre of its goals zero child poverty, the elimination of child slavery, quality and inclusive education, protection from violence, discrimination and hatred, as well as the expansion of the range of protective services for children.⁹⁵</p> <p>However, during 2022, the Albanian Government has taken several measures to guarantee the economic, social and cultural status of the children in Albania.</p> <p>From January 2022, the National Council for Children's Rights and Protection, have held several meetings to discuss and take measures for monitoring the realization and protection of children's rights.⁹⁶</p>

⁹⁵ [Crcra/Ecpat Albania Requests that the Government Implement The Children's Guarantee](#) 6 July 2021.

⁹⁶ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

	<p>The “Baby check” was a new social policy that aimed to influence the birth rate as well as a universal policy for all families, not only for families in need, but also for every Albanian child born inside and outside the country. Until May 2022, 128,392 children have benefited from the baby check.⁹⁷</p> <p>The State Agency for Children's Rights and Protection set up the Online Digital Platform to visualize and display annual data from institutions at the central level, line ministries, municipalities and INSTAT related to the indicators of children's rights.</p> <p>Regarding the management of the cases with children, 241 child protection workers (CPW) work in the 61 municipalities of the country. During 2022, CPW managed 1487 cases. The managed cases were mainly cases of children at risk or victims of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation. Of these, 293 new cases of abused children have been identified. 581 cases managed belonged to children who lived in families with social-economic problems; 184 cases managed were related to psychological violence; 88 cases to physical violence and 45 cases managed dealt with sexual violence against children.⁹⁸</p> <p>Also, during 2022, the Child Protection Units managed 24 cases of trafficking, 158 cases of children in street situations, 14 cases of children whose civil status was not registered and 100 cases with</p>
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⁹⁷ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line “Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022” (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

⁹⁸ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line “Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022” (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

	<p>other problems such as: guardianship, online bullying, repatriation from EU countries, unaccompanied foreign children, etc.⁹⁹</p> <p>The National Counselling Line for Children in Albania "Alo 116" received a number of 11,784 phone calls during 2022, from which advice was provided for 749 cases and 234 cases were referred to institutions for specific treatment.</p> <p>To prevent and alleviate disadvantages related to the social and economic situation, origin and special needs of students, based on Decision no. 486 dated 17.6.2020 of the Council of Ministers "On the printing, publication, distribution and sale of textbooks of the pre-university education system ", for the year 2021-2022, 280,000 children of grades I-IX were beneficiaries of the free textbooks scheme. Additionally, 16 categories of students, including Roma and Egyptians, received free textbooks for grades X-XII.¹⁰⁰ In addition to this, in December 2022, the Council of Ministers approved the decision "For an amendment in the decision no.486, dated 17.6.2020 of the Council of Ministers "For the printing, publication, distribution and sale of school texts og the pre-university education system" in the framework of which were added as beneficial categories of free textbooks children attending basic education in public educational institutions, in detention institutions, in prisons and in institutions of social care.¹⁰¹</p>
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⁹⁹ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

¹⁰⁰ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sport, (Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4845/1, 29 July 2022

¹⁰¹ Albania, Council of Ministers, (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022), Decision no.834 dated 19.12.2022 "For an amendment in the decision no.486, dated 17.6.2020 of the Council of Ministers "For the printing, publication, distribution and sale of school texts og the pre-university education system" (Vendim nr.834 datë 19.12.2022 "Për një ndryshim në vendimin nr.486, datë 17.6.2020, të Këshillit të Ministrave "Për shtypjen, botimin, shpërndarjen dhe shitjen e teksteve shkollore të sistemit arsimor parauniversitar", të ndryshuar", Official Gazette no 172 date 22.12.2022, Fletore Zyrtare nr. 172 datë 22.12.2022.

	<p>From the school year 2021-2022, pursuant to the implementation of the Instruction of Minister of Education and Sport, no. 10 dated 17.05.2021 "For the registration and support in public pre-university educational institutions of children of persons in a migration/asylum situation/ of unaccompanied foreign children, of children returning from emigration, from areas of conflict or child victims of trafficking in the Republic of Albania", the Ministry of Education and Sport has followed the situation of the registration of these categories in educational institutions with the aim of supporting and guaranteeing their right to education.¹⁰²</p>
<p>Other measures or initiatives</p>	<p>In September 2022, the Ministry of Education opened a secondary school for students of the Institute of Deaf Children for the first time.¹⁰³ 25 students registered in this school following a program oriented in two main areas - technology and ICT.¹⁰⁴</p> <p>In the framework of the implementation of the Social Protection Strategy, 34 services with a value of ALL 196 million have been funded from the Social Fund. The beneficiaries of this fund for 2022 were as follows: 469 families in need; Over 900 young people from communities in need; 320 elderly people, and 626 children.¹⁰⁵</p> <p>With regard to economic assistance, in July 2022, the Parliament of the Republic of Albania approved Normative Act no. 12, dated 29.7.2022 "On some amendments and additions to law no.</p>

¹⁰² Albania, Ministry of Education and Sport, (Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4845/1, 29 July 2022

¹⁰³ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sport, (Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit) (2022), Order no.450 dated 25.07.2022 "For the opening of the higher secondary public educational institution, oriented, for deaf students, in the field of technology and ICT in Tirana", Urdhër nr.450 datë 25.07.2022 "Për hapjen e institucionit arsimor publik të mesëm të lartë, të orientuar, për nxënësit që nuk dëgjojnë në fushën e të nxënësve teknologji dhe TIK, në Tiranë"

¹⁰⁴ Albania, Ministry of Education and Sport, (Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4845/1, 29 July 2022

¹⁰⁵ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

	<p>115/2021 "On the budget of 2022", as amended", which enabled a review of the budget for financing in the amount of ALL 6 billion of a new package of social resistance due to the consequences of the economic crisis, caused by the energy crisis and the increase in prices, as a result of the war in Ukraine. The main beneficiaries of these measures were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) families in need who have no income or insufficient income b) orphans who are not in social care institutions c) parents with more than two children who are part of families in need d) victims of trafficking e) victims of violence <p>In addition to this act, from 1 October 2022, with Decision no 617, dated 22 September 2022 "On some changes and additions to decision no. 597, dated 4.9.2019, of the Council of Ministers, "For determining procedures, documentation and measures for the monthly economic assistance benefit and the use of the additional fund on the conditional fund for economic assistance", amended, women heads of households, beneficiaries of the economic assistance program who have up to two children aged between 0 and 18 years as part of the family benefit twice the amount of the existing payment of economic assistance, according to the structure of the family.¹⁰⁶</p> <p>Lastly, the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children" (PGFC) has held several meetings during 2022.</p> <p>In June 2022, PGFC, in cooperation with UNICEF Albania, OSCE and Save the Children, held an information session with the aim to discuss the challenges in the implementation of children's rights</p>
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¹⁰⁶ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022) Decision no 617, date 22.9.2022 "On some changes and additions to decision no. 597, dated 4.9.2019, of the Council of Ministers, "For determining procedures, documentation and measures monthly benefit of economic assistance and the use of the additional fund on the conditional fund for economic assistance", Vendimi nr.617, datë 22 shtator 2022 "Për disa ndryshime dhe shtesa në vendimin nr.597, datë 4.9.2019, të Këshillit të Ministrave, "Për përcaktimin e procedurave, të dokumentacionit dhe të masës mujore të përfitimit të ndihmës ekonomike dhe përdorimit të fondit shtesë mbi fondin e kushtëzuar për ndihmën ekonomike" , Official Gazette no 126 date 22.09.2022, Fletore Zyrtare nr. 126 datë 22.09.2022.

	<p>and to support the Albanian government in implementing the international and national legal acts on Children's Rights.¹⁰⁷</p> <p>In April 2022, PGFC organized a hearing session with the young people of the high school "Raqi Qirinxhi" in Korçë, where they presented a petition to the Speaker of the Assembly and deputies for strengthening parliamentary control and taking legislative measures to increase efforts to prevent sexual crimes against minors in our country.¹⁰⁸</p> <p>In September 2022, this parliamentary group held another hearing session with young people to hear their needs and challenges in the realization of their rights. The meeting was organised with the presence of the Albanian Committee of Helsinki, the Minister for Youth and Children, the Deputy Minister of Education and Sports, as well as students and teachers, representatives from secondary schools in the country including from Tirana, Berat, Korçë, Fier, Vlorë, Përmet, Lushnjë, Pogradec, Lezhë, Tropojë, Kukës, Shkodër, Librazhd, Kuçovo , Himare and others.¹⁰⁹</p> <p>In November 2022, the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children" in collaboration with civil society organizations held a listening session on the state of children's rights presented during the 93rd session of the UN Children's Rights Committee, Geneva, through three groups of children: CRCA Albania, Save the children, SOS Children's Villages.¹¹⁰</p>
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¹⁰⁷ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Work Report of the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children", Raport Pune i Grupit " Miqtë e Fëmijëve".

¹⁰⁸ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Work Report of the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children", Raport Pune i Grupit " Miqtë e Fëmijëve"

¹⁰⁹ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Work Report of the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children", Raport Pune i Grupit " Miqtë e Fëmijëve"

¹¹⁰ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Work Report of the Parliamentary Group "Friends of Children", Raport Pune i Grupit " Miqtë e Fëmijëve"

6.2 Legal and policy developments or measures in relation to child-friendly procedures for children as victims, witness or suspects/accused in criminal proceedings.

Legislative changes	The Assembly of the Republic of Albania has adopted law no 37/2017 “On Criminal Justice for Children Code”, which foresees specific rules for the protection of the procedural rights of children in conflict with the law, child witnesses or children as victims of criminal acts. After the adoption of this Code, the Council of Ministers has adopted some other sub-legal acts during 2020 in order to complete the legal framework for the protection of children, for guaranteeing their access to justice, and for offering of the psychological and social services to the children in conflict with the law. Regarding the transposition of Directive 2016/800/EU and Directive 2012/29 in the Albanian legal framework, the Criminal Procedural Code and the Criminal Justice Code for Children foresee all the guarantees for the assistance of the minor by the defender, the right to information, the right to notification, the right to medical treatment and psychological support, the provision of alternative measures, the implementation of prison arrest as a last measure, special treatment in freedom restriction institutions, the right to free legal aid, the right to compensation, etc. During 2022, there were no amendments to these legal acts. ¹¹¹
Policy developments	At the policy level, during 2022, the Minister of Justice set up the inter-institutional working group for the drafting of the Juvenile Justice Strategy 2022-2026. The Strategy was adopted

¹¹¹ Albania, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Codification and Harmonization of Legislation (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Kodifikimit dhe Harmonizimit të Legjislacionit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line “Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022” (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4131/1, 27 July 2022.

in December 2022.¹¹² It aims to address the problems faced by minors involved committing a criminal offense through the consolidation of a criminal justice system that aims avoiding deprivation of their freedom, when such a thing is possible; addresses the criminogenic factors through early intervention for the primary prevention of child involvement in criminality and criminal offenses committed against them, first among information, education and awareness of children, parents, society about the need to protect children from involvement in the commission of criminal offenses or victimization by them and secondly through the implementation of restorative justice and mediation programs in cases where children are involved in conflicts or criminal offences. The Strategy also included the passport of impact and outcome indicators to monitor the situation of suspected children and to monitor the progress of the implementation of the measures for protecting the procedural rights of children in conflict with the law.¹¹³

From 2020, pursuant to decision no. 314 dated 15.05.2019 "For the organization, operation and determination of specific regulations regarding the structure and organization of the Centre for the Prevention of Crimes of Minors and Youths" the Centre for the Prevention of Crimes of Minors and Youths (CPCMY) was established. During 2022, the Centre has extended its activity to all juveniles who were in detention and those juveniles/youths who have been sentenced to deprivation of liberty and developed a calendar of activities focusing not only on minors and young who were in the Institute, but also on minors who have been given alternative punishment measures. The Centre, in cooperation with the unit for the protection of children's rights and the workers for the protection of children held periodic meetings with minors to

¹¹² Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave) (2022), Decision no.892 dated 27.12.2022 "For the approval of the Intersectoral Justice Strategy for Minors 2022-2026, its Action Plan and Passport of Indicators" (Vendim nr.892 datë 27.12.2022 "Për miratimin e Strategjisë Ndërsektoriale për të Mitur, Pasaportës së Indikatorëve dhe Planit të saj të Veprimit" Official Gazette no.13 date 24.01.2023, Fletore Zyrtare nr.13 datë 24.01.2023

¹¹³ Albania, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Codification and Harmonization of Legislation (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Kodifikimit dhe Harmonizimit të Legjislacionit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4131/1, 27 July 2022.

	<p>consult their specific needs and to help them or their families through education, offering professional courses or employment opportunities. ¹¹⁴</p> <p>Several activities were organized for the promotion of alternative measures, for which the Centre has conducted information sessions focusing on new forms of detention and the implementation of friendly policies in juvenile justice. The activities were held in several high schools in Tirana and after the beginning of the new school year, the information sessions were extended to all the schools of the pre-university system in every city of Albania.¹¹⁵ In cooperation with the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, on the World Day of Zero Discrimination, the Centre for the Prevention of Juvenile and Youth Crimes organized a specific training on the measures that must be taken to avoid discrimination among minors who have been part of the criminal process.¹¹⁶</p>
Other measures or initiatives	<p>With the initiative of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, during 2022, 2 new integrated interdisciplinary services "One Stop Centre" were set up to protect child victims of sexual abuse and victims of crimes based on the Barnahus model. Both Centres were made up of well-designed and well-equipped environments that provide a child-friendly environment to prevent</p>

¹¹⁴ Albania, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Codification and Harmonization of Legislation (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Kodifikimit dhe Harmonizimit të Legjislacionit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4131/1, 27 July 2022.

¹¹⁵ Albania, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Codification and Harmonization of Legislation (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Kodifikimit dhe Harmonizimit të Legjislacionit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4131/1, 27 July 2022.

¹¹⁶ Albania, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Codification and Harmonization of Legislation (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Kodifikimit dhe Harmonizimit të Legjislacionit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 4131/1, 27 July 2022.

	<p>their re-victimization.¹¹⁷ These new services were established as part of regional hospitals in two regions of Albania: Shkoder and Fier, and offered:</p> <p>a) first and emergency aid; b) support in case of crises; c) specialized medical support and medical advice; d) specialized psychological counselling and therapeutic intervention; d) safe transport and e) referring the case to the respective institutions.</p> <p>UNICEF Albania has supported the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in the adaptation of hospital environments and has assisted in the drafting of work standards and protocols for the professionals included in the teams of the One Stop Centres.¹¹⁸</p> <p>In addition to these new centers, as of 2020, the National Center for the Protection of Children and Adolescents from Sexual Violence (ACA), member of the PROMISE network, had a new name: Barnahus Albania (children's home), becoming the first center of the Barnahus model in Albania.</p> <p>Lastly, in regard to training activities, the School of Magistrates organised a number of trainings with prosecutors and judges on:¹¹⁹</p>
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¹¹⁷ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Social Protection Development (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/2, 29 July 2022.

¹¹⁸ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Social Protection Development (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/2, 29 July 2022.

¹¹⁹ Albania, School of Magistrates (Shkolla e Magjistraturës) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 579/1, 26 July 2022.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) "Practical approaches to security measures, avoidance and sentencing in minor cases" (during February 2022)b) Online sexual exploitation of minors and methods of investigation: Reporting and assisting victims of online exploitation: jurisdictional issues (February 2022)c) Trafficking in human beings: Procedural position and support of victims during the trial of trafficking cases: The best interest of the child victim of trafficking (May 2022)d) "The role of prosecutors and judges in the execution of the avoidance of criminal sentences against minors". (June 2022) <p>During these trainings, the prosecutors and judges discussed alternatives to imprisonment of minors under the law No. 78/2020 "On the Organization And Operation Of The Probation Service"; procedural rights of the children victims of criminal acts/ victims of trafficking etc.</p>
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7. Access to justice – Victims’ Rights and Judicial Independence

7.1 Legal and policy developments or measures relevant to the implementation of the Victims’ Rights Directive and the EU strategy for Victims’ Rights 2020-2025

Regarding the implementation of the Victims’ Rights Directive, during 2022, there were no new developments regarding the approval or change of legislation in force in this field. The protection of the victims' rights and the facilitation of their access to justice is guaranteed by the amended Code of Criminal Procedure (Article 58) and Law no. 111/2017 "On legal aid guaranteed by the state".

In the procedural aspect, the General Prosecutor's Office monitored the implementation of the General Prosecutor's Instruction No. 17/2020 "On the investigation and effective criminal prosecution of criminal offenses of domestic violence, violence against women and hate-based violence" which has unified the procedural measures in all general jurisdiction prosecutor's offices with the aim that investigations and criminal prosecution of criminal offenses of domestic violence and violence against women is fast, efficient and comes with requirements for effective, proportional and deterrent sentencing measures.¹²⁰

While, in relation to violence and harassment, in February 2022, the Albanian Parliament approved Law No. 13/2022 For the Ratification of Convention 190 "Convention on Violence and Harassment", of the International Labour Organization. ¹²¹

¹²⁰ Albania, General Prosecution Office, Directory of the Institutional Coordination, (Prokuroria e Përgjithshme, Drejtoria e Koordinimit Institucional) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 461/1, 28 July 2022.

¹²¹ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 13/2022 For the Ratification of Convention 190 "Convention on Violence and Harassment", of the International Labor Organization 1986, Ligj Nr. 13/2022 Për Ratifikimin E Konventës 190 "Konventa Për Dhunën Dhe Ngacmimin", Të Organizatës Ndërkombëtare Të Punës, 1986 Official Gazette no. 30 date 3.2.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr. 30 datë 3.2.2022

In addition, on June 2022, the Parliament adopted the Law No. 62/2022 "For The National Registry Of Sex Offenders".¹²² This law aims to:

- a) Prevent harassment, violence, abuse or sexual exploitation of any individual who lives in the Republic of Albania;
- b) Define the rules for the establishment and operation of the National Register of Convicted of Sexual Crimes;
- c) Assign duties to responsible authorities, other authorities and any public or private institution or organization that works for children or victims of sexual violence.
- d) Taking measures for the complete registration in the Registry of all those convicted of sexual crimes.
- e) Regulate the movement and actions of convicts, limiting their physical or virtual contact with potential victims of sexual crimes.¹²³

The object of law 62/2022 is the determination of the principles, rules and procedures based on which the creation and operation of the National Registry of Convicted Sexual Crimes is undertaken; determination of the authorities responsible for the administration and maintenance of the Register at the central and local level and their respective duties, and determination of the principles and rules for ensuring monitoring of the registration process of those convicted of sexual crimes.¹²⁴ This law is based on the respect of the fundamental human rights and freedoms provided for in the Constitution of Albania, in the European Convention of Human Rights and in other acts for the protection of human rights of the United Nations Organization and the Council of Europe.¹²⁵ According to Article 5 of this law, all responsible authorities, public and private institutions or persons who due to their work have access to the Register, must evaluate and implement with priority the protection of the

¹²² Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 62/2022 "For the National Registry Of Sex Offenders", Ligj nr.62/2022 "Për Regjistrin Kombëtar Të Të Dënuarve Për Krime Seksuale", Official Gazette no 114 date 5.08.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr.114 datë 5.08.2022.

¹²³ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 62/2022 "For the National Registry Of Sex Offenders", Ligj nr.62/2022 "Për Regjistrin Kombëtar Të Të Dënuarve Për Krime Seksuale", Official Gazette no 114 dated 5.08.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr.114 datë 5.08.2022, Article 2, Neni 2.

¹²⁴ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 62/2022 "For the National Registry Of Sex Offenders", Ligj nr.62/2022 "Për Regjistrin Kombëtar Të Të Dënuarve Për Krime Seksuale", Official Gazette no 114 dated 5.08.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr.114 datë 5.08.2022, Article 1, Neni 1.

¹²⁵ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 62/2022 "For the National Registry Of Sex Offenders", Ligj nr.62/2022 "Për Regjistrin Kombëtar Të Të Dënuarve Për Krime Seksuale", Official Gazette no 114 dated 5.08.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr.114 datë 5.08.2022, Article 4, Neni 4.

high interest of the child, in every decision and activity undertaken by them.¹²⁶ According to Article 21 “Entry into force”, the law no 62/2022 enters into force 6 months after its publication in the Official Gazette, specifically on 5 February 2023.

7.2 Measures addressing violence against women

During 2022, MoHSP took a series of measures related to violence against women and domestic violence. It continued the work to increase the capacities of local coordinators against domestic violence and police officers regarding the implementation of legal changes to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations (2020/21 amendments).

In this regard, 50 Coordinated Referral Mechanisms were supported in order to increase the effectiveness of their work and 15-20 members were trained for each of the referral mechanisms. 58 coordinators from 42 municipalities were trained by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection with the support of UNDP on the difficulties and challenges in managing cases of violence against women.¹²⁷

About 400 police officers in 9 (nine) Local Police Directorates were trained for the proper implementation of legal changes, the timely and responsible issuance of protection orders as well as the monitoring of their implementation.¹²⁸ In addition to this measure, the General Directorate of the State Police has improved the computer system for statistical data processing, on the basis of which the data related to the crime of domestic violence is generated on a monthly basis. Furthermore, the State Police, in implementation of the improved legislation on domestic violence, has applied risk assessment in the treatment of

¹²⁶ Albania, Assembly of the Republic of Albania (Parlamenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë) (2022) Law No. 62/2022 “For the National Registry Of Sex Offenders”, Ligj nr.62/2022 “Për Regjistrin Kombëtar Të Të Dënuarve Për Krime Seksuale”, Official Gazette no 114 dated 5.08.2022, Fletore Zyrtare Nr.114 datë 5.08.2022, Article 5, Neni 5.

¹²⁷ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line “Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022” (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

¹²⁸ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line “Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022” (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

cases of domestic violence, taking the measure of removing the offender from the apartment if the level of danger has turned out to be an emergency.¹²⁹

Also, 61 local coordinators and 110 members of the 57 Referral Mechanisms were trained regarding entering of the data on cases of domestic violence in the REVALB system.¹³⁰

In addition, as part of the ongoing training program for prosecutors and judges, the School of Magistrates organized two trainings dedicated to domestic violence and violence against women.

With the initiative of the MoHSP, and in cooperation with the High Judicial Council, the School of Magistrates and UNDP Albania, the Commentary on the Law "On measures against violence in family relations" was developed and published. This commentary was helpful not only to all legal professionals who work in the field of violence against women and domestic violence, but also to every victim of violence to better understand the law and the rights of the victims.¹³¹

On April 2022, UNDP Albania, in partnership with the People's Advocate and the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination conducted the study "Violence Against Women in Politics". The study was mainly based on primary data from women's storytelling and focus group discussions and surveys. In this study, Albanian women shared stories of belittlement and offensive language, interruptions, jeers, insults, dirty jokes, false accusations in the media and threats.¹³²

¹²⁹ Albania, Ministry of Interior, General Directory of State Police (Ministria e Brendshme, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit) Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 960/1, 9 August 2022.

¹³⁰ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

¹³¹ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 3031/1, 29 July 2022.

¹³² Albania, UNDP, People's Advocate, Commissioner Against Discrimination (UNDP, Avokati i Popullit, Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi) (2022) Report Study, Violence of Women in Politics, Studim "Dhuna ndaj Grave në Politikë) (<https://www.undp.org/albania/publications/violence-against-women-politics>)

With regard to the economic status, starting from January 2022, The Council of Ministers tripled the payment of economic assistance for all victims of domestic violence provided with a protection order, from ALL 3,000 to ALL 9,000.¹³³

In the framework of the implementation of legal and by-law acts in the field of protection of the rights of adult and minor victims, the General Prosecutor's Office in cooperation with the Centre for Legal and Civic Initiatives, organised 3 trainings with the participation of more than 70 prosecutors and judicial police officers. The trainings were organised in the framework of the three-year project "Proactive Engagement for the protection and implementation of the law against gender-based violence and domestic abuse"¹³⁴ and focused on:

- a) Informing, protecting and supporting victims of domestic violence and violence against women during the criminal process (training with domestic violence coordinators of District Prosecution Offices) (March 2022)
- b) Criminal offenses added/amended in the Criminal Code in 2020-2021 on domestic violence (Training with prosecutors, judicial police officers, domestic violence coordinators of District Prosecution Offices, judges) (April 2022)
- a) Collection of data on the situation of criminality and victims in matters of gender-based violence and domestic violence: international standards (training with domestic violence coordinators of District Prosecution Offices) (June 2022)

As related to the free legal aid, during 2022, 591 women victims of domestic violence have benefited from primary legal aid and 61 women victims of domestic violence have benefited from secondary legal aid. Legal aid is provided mainly by primary legal aid service centers and NGOs authorized by the Ministry of Justice to provide free legal aid. Meanwhile, every year there is an increase in the number of cases of providing free legal aid through the online platform: juristi.al and the green number.¹³⁵

¹³³ Albania, Council of Ministers (Këshilli i Ministrave)(2022) Decision No. 868 Date 29.12.2021 "For Some Changes and Additions to Decision No. 597, Dated 4.9.2019, of the Council of Ministers, "On the Determination of the Procedures, Documentation and Monthly Measure of the Benefit of Economic Aid and the Use of the Additional Fund on the Conditional Fund for Economic Aid" Vendim Nr 868 Dated 29.12.2021 Për Disa Ndryshime Dhe Shtesa Në Vendimin Nr.597 Datë 4.9.2019, Të Këshillit Të Ministrave, "Për Përcaktimin E Procedurave, Dokumentacionit Dhe Masës Mujore Të Përfitimit Të Ndhmës Ekonomike Dhe Përdorimit Të Fondit Shtesë Mbi Fondin e Kushtëzuar Për Ndhmën Ekonomike" Official Gazette no 206 dated 31.12.2021, Fletore zyrtare 206 datë 31.12.2021

¹³⁴ Albania, General Prosecution Office, Directory of the Institutional Coordination, (Prokuroria e Përgjithshme, Drejtoria e Koordinimit Institucional) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 461/1, 28 July 2022.

¹³⁵ Albania, Ministry of Justice, Directory of Free Legal Aid (2022) (Ministria e Drejtësisë, Drejtoria e Ndhmës Juridike Falas" Statistical Data 2021-2022,(Të dhëna statistikore 2021-2022).

Another important measure in regard to sexual abuse of women and re-victimization is the initiative of Albanian Audiovisual Media Authority for including for the first time the gender equality and gender non-discrimination in the Broadcasting Code for Audiovisual Media in Albania. During 2022, the Audiovisual Media Authority held four public consultation meetings on the amendments of the new Broadcasting Code. The amendments aim to improve issues of gender equality in the media, avoid sexist language and protect women and girls, victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse from re-victimization during reporting in the audiovisual media, practically in over 50 televisions and about 70 radios. Specifically, according to the New section of the draft code "Promoting gender equality, preventing and fighting gender discrimination in the audiovisual media" the broadcasting operators are encouraged to take concrete measures to combat gender-based discrimination, victim blaming, violation of the private life of victims of gender-based violence and any other violation against women and their children.¹³⁶

As regard to the collection of statistical data, during the year 2022, the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) continued to work on the preparation of gender statistics as follows:

- ❖ Publication of the publication "Women and Men 2022" with a wide range of indicators;
- ❖ Calculation of the Gender Equality Index (GEI) for 2022 which measures gender equality in six core areas: work, money, knowledge, time, power, health, and the intersection of inequalities and violence, based on specific conceptual frameworks. The index is composed of 31 indicators.
- ❖ Preparation of Eurostat indicators on violence against women and girls, based in the survey that INSTAT conducted in 2018.¹³⁷

As part of its work during 2022, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination adopted an important recommendation in the field of protection of economic rights of women victims of domestic violence.

The recommendation was adopted in July 2022 with the focus on taking measures to guarantee access to economic assistance on the part of the victims of violence in family relations. It was issued toward the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, State Social Services, Municipalities of Tirana and Kamza and the High Judicial Council due to the delays and the practice of

¹³⁶ Albania, Audiovisual Media Authority (2022), (Autoriteti i Mediave Audiovizive), Report of Public Consultation regarding the amendment of Broadcasting Code for Audiovisual Media in Albania; (Raport i Konsultimit publik të ndryshimeve të Kodit të Transmetimit Mediatik në Shqipëri).

¹³⁷ Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Development of Social Protection (Ministria e Shëndetësisë, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Zhvillimit të Mbrojtjes Sociale) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request of information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022).

conditioning that local units put in providing assistance to victims of domestic violence for the benefit of economic assistance after the disclosure of the court decision on the protection order.¹³⁸

Lastly, in November 2022, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and UN agencies in Albania launched the "16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence" campaign, supported by UN Women. In harmony with this year's theme, "UNiTE! Get active to end violence against girls and women", the activities developed emphasize the important role of activists and women's rights movements. Special attention during 2022 was given to youth, through cooperation with Tirana European Youth Capital and Tirana Municipality to include more young boys and girls in the debate about gender-based and domestic violence.

¹³⁸ Albania, Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi) (2022) Recommendation for taking measures to guarantee effective access to economic assistance by the victims of violence in family relations, Rekomandim për marrjen e masave për të garantuar përfitimin në mënyrë efektive të ndihmës ekonomike, nga ana e viktimave të dhunës në marrëdhëniet familjare, dated 7.07.2022, datë 7.07.2022 <https://www.kmd.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Rekomandim-nr.-1002-date-07.07.2022-Per-garantimin-ne-menyre-efektive-te-NE-nga-viktimat-e-dhunes-ne-marredheniet-familjare.pdf>

8 Developments in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

8.1 CRPD policy and legal developments & implementation of the European Accessibility Act

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection continued the completion of the legislation in line with CRPD and the Law “On the inclusion and accessibility” by approving by-laws in this field. During 2022, the GoA approved the Decision of the Council of Ministers “On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services for an independent life for persons with disability”¹³⁹ and the Decision of the Council of Ministers “On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services in assisting decision-making for persons with disability”.¹⁴⁰

Fields that are still posing challenges are: physical accessibility, access to transport, access to information and communication for persons with disabilities.

MoHSP shared the information that in regard to progress on the reform of biopsychosocial model assessment of disability according to International Standards of WHO and International Classification of Functions, during 2022, it was implemented in

¹³⁹ Albania, Council of Ministres Decision No.436, “On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services for an independent life for persons with disability”, <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2022/94/94a88b3e-ef55-4b13-9752-b97539966910> (Per miratimin e rregullave, te procedurave dhe te kritereve te ofrimit te sherbimeve per nje jetese te pavarur per personat me aftesi te kufizuara), 22 June 2022

¹⁴⁰ Albania, Council of Ministres No. 470, “On the approval of rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of services in assisted decision-making for persons with disability”, <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2022/102/e8ee17b0-3928-4858-9362-0873bf5a577f> (Per percaktimin e rregullave, procedurave dhe kritereve te ofrimit te sherbimeve te vendimmarrjes se mbeshtetur te personave me aftesi te kufizuara), 6 July 2022

four (4) new regions as: Shkodër, Lezhë, Vlorë and Korçë¹⁴¹. The multidisciplinary teams are established with professionals as medical doctors and social workers.

National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025¹⁴², which was adopted during 2021 but not budgeted when approved, has been budgeted during 2022 in the framework of Intersectoral Measures according to the MoHSP.¹⁴³

10 projects out of 34 projects in total funded during 2022 through Social Fund by GoA, addressed the needs for services of persons with disabilities. The budget allocated by MoHSP for these projects was ALL 55,141,699, 27.5 % of the total budget of the Social Fund according to the data shared by MoHSP.¹⁴⁴

8.2 CRPD monitoring at national level

The Law "On inclusion and accessibility"¹⁴⁵ stipulates that the National Council for Disability has a leading role to monitor the National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities, as well as in drafting, coordinating and monitoring disability policies and the national legislation affecting the life of persons with disabilities.

¹⁴¹ Albania, The Ministry of Health and Social Protection, [*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*], (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 26 July 2022

¹⁴² Albania, Council of Ministers Decision No.276, National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities was approved by No. 276, [Plani-Kombetar-PAK-2021-2025_AL.pdf](#), "[Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave nr. 276 "Për Miratimin e Planit Kombëtar të Veprimit për Personat me Aftësi të Kufizuara 2021-2025"]", 12 May 2021

¹⁴³ Albania, The Ministry of Health and Social Protection, [*Ministria e Shëndetësisë dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale*], (2022) Written submission-information to the request for information of the Ombudsperson in the framework of the FRA human rights report for 2022, 26 July 2022

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.page 8

¹⁴⁵ Albania, The Law on the Inclusion and Accessibility (Ligji Per Perfshirjen dhe Aksessueshmerine),No.93/2014

The last report of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for Albania was in 2019.¹⁴⁶ The report provides recommendations on the effectiveness of the work and the operation of NCD, and these recommendations are included in the National Plan of Action for Disability 2021-2025, especially in view of improving the monitoring and coordination of disability policies at all levels. Specific Objective 2 of the Plan states the need to “improve the functioning of NCD with regards to the coordination of public policies, both horizontally and vertically, dedicated for persons with disabilities”.¹⁴⁷

From January to July 25, 2022, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, has handled 39 complaints (and 4 ex-officio) on alleged violations of disability’ rights. In 7 cases, discrimination was found and decisions have been issued by the Commissioner. One of these cases related to aspects of disability discrimination, and was taken to the Administrative Court of First Instance.¹⁴⁸

The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination adopted during 2022 an important recommendation in the field of economic assistance for women with disabilities.¹⁴⁹

The recommendation was adopted in July 2022 with the focus on taking measures to guarantee financial reimbursement for the difference in the price of energy up to 300 Kwh/month, even for women with a disability, who are not head of the household. The recommendation was issued toward the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Social Insurance Institute, State Social Services and the National Directorate of Civil Status. The legal basis of the recommendation was the unequal gender-based criteria applied by the General Directorate of Civil Status, when determining the head of the household.

¹⁴⁶ Albania, The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disability (Komiteti për të Drejtat e Personave me Aftësi të Kufizuar), [un-disability-rights-committee-review-albania-australia-ecuador-el-salvador](#), 2019

¹⁴⁷ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision No.276, National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities was approved by No. 276, [Plani-Kombetar-PAK-2021-2025_AL.pdf](#), “[Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave nr. 276 “Për Miratimin e Planit Kombëtar të Veprimit për Personat me Aftësi të Kufizuara 2021–2025”], 12 May 2021, p.70

¹⁴⁸ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Reply to the request for information in the frame of the FRA human Rights report for the year 2023, no. 1066/1, date 27.07.2022, p. 5

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p.6

In regard to this recommendation, CPD recommended¹⁵⁰ to the GoA to review the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 8/2015, amended, and Instruction no.1/2015 of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Health and Social Protection to stipulate clearly as beneficiaries of the energy price reimbursement all of the families with one of the partners with a disability, regardless of their position on the civil certificate.

¹⁵⁰ Albania, The Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination (*Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi*), Recommendation "On the application of reimbursement of the difference in the price of energy until 300 Kwh for women with a disability who are not head of household" (Rekomandim për përfitimin e kompensimit të diferencës së çmimit të energjisë elektrike, për efekt të heqjes së fashës së konsumit deri në 300 Kwh në muaj, për gratë me aftësi të kufizuar, që nuk janë kryefamiljare), [Rekomandim-nr.-1080-date-21.07.2022-Rimbursimi-Energjigje-Elektrike-per-Grate-me-AK-jo-kryefamiljare.pdf](#), July 2022.

Annex 1 – Promising Practices

Thematic area	EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION Please provide one example of a promising practice to tackle discrimination against LGBTIQ people or discrimination on the grounds of socio-economic status, health status and physical appearance, such as awareness raising campaigns or training for relevant professionals. Where no such examples are available, please provide an example of an awareness raising campaign held in your country in 2022 relevant to equality and non-discrimination of LGBTIQ people or on the other above-mentioned grounds, preferably one conducted by a national equality body.
Title (original language)	Trajnime të drejtuesve të policisë për hetimin dhe parandalimin e krimeve të urrejtjes dhe krimeve homofobike ¹⁵¹
Title (EN)	Trainings of state police leaders on investigation and prevention of hate and homophobic crimes
Organisation (original language)	
Organisation (EN)	Dutch Helsinki Committee
Government / Civil society	Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit & Prokuroria e Përgjithshme
Funding body	Dutch Helsinki Committee
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing	14.06.2022 – Order of the General Director of the State Police no. 1/P66. 30.06.2022

¹⁵¹ Albania, Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of State Police (Ministria e Brendshme, Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit) (2022), Written information to Ombudsperson with subject line "Response to the request for information regarding the report of FRA 2022" (Informacion mbi kërkesën e Avokatit të Popullit në lidhje me raportin FRA për vitin 2022), prot.no 960/1, 09 August 2022.

date if it has ceased to exist	
Type of initiative	Online training, exchange of know-how
Main target group	Police officers
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	100 representatives of the State Police were trained by the Dutch Helsinki Committee on how to investigate hate crimes against LGBTI+ people. During these training the participants had the opportunity to exchange experience with their dutch colleagues in the field.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The ameliorated knowledge can be transferred by the participants to other fellow colleagues in order to have a better investigation and case management of hate crimes against the LGBTI+ community. Moreover, the training modules for police officers of the National Faculty of Security and Investigation are being updated through this lens after the finalisation of these trainings, so in the near future there can be organised other trainings at national level on the same topic.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	This is a progressive initiative taking into account the previous situation and level of knowledge and approach of the state police towards the LGBTI+ community. These trainings can serve as an additional step towards a better fulfilment of LGBTI+ community fundamental rights inside the police stations.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	Police officer's level of knowledge is very important as regards the compliance of citizens fundamental rights. Monitoring data on the police attitude towards the LGBTI+ community would show the final results of these training.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as	This practice can be replicated with other police officers as the training modules are now ready, and the organiser [Dutch Helsinki Committee] can assist in this replication.

transferable to other settings and/or Member States?	
Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.	
Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	

Thematic area	RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE Please provide one example of a promising practices to address racism and xenophobia. Please give preference to a promising practice about participation and engagement of Equality bodies and CSOs in addressing racism and hate crime. Where no such practice exists, please provide one example of a promising practice related more generally to combating racism, xenophobia, and related intolerances.
Title (original language)	Platforma Kombëtare për Sigurinë e Fëmijëve në Internet
Title (EN)	National Platform for Child Internet Safety

Organisation (original language)	
Organisation (EN)	
Government / Civil society	Civil Society
Funding body	International donors
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	https://www.isigurt.al/
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	2015 2022 - The part of the platform dedicated to Hate Speech and Hate Crimes
Type of initiative	Non-profit
Main target group	Vulnerable groups, Albanian citizens in general including minor
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	The platform which is classified as a hotline (line to report and seek help) is a dedicated space, which serves as a unique source of information, manuals, guides related to the safe Internet for children, parents, teachers, professionals who work with/ for children to protect children from online abuse and exploitation. The purpose of the Platform is to coordinate efforts to identify and protect child victims, to identify illegal materials and those with inappropriate content for children on the Internet, to inform parents, teachers, children, etc., as well as to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation . The main mission of the platform is to report sites with illegal and harmful content for children and young people in Albania.
Highlight any element of the	This platform can be adopted or transferred to other institutions and discrimination grounds as it has a design and features which can be adopted to other protected grounds.

actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	It creates an online space dedicated to fighting hate speech and crimes, which is a necessity in our society. Moreover, online reporting creates a more comfortable environment for people who want to report hate crimes, as stigma and other factors are considered to have an impact on unreported cases [97% according to a Council of Europe study in 2021].
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	The platform performance and success is easily measurable, as data can be generated by the website administrator. Moreover, it can be easily accessed both in computer and mobile devices. It is user friendly, and people can directly report abuse cases and take further measures by authorities. Cases can be reported in real time.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?	
Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.	
Explain, if applicable, how the	

practice provides for review and assessment.	
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Thematic area	ROMA EQUALITY AND INCLUSION Please provide one example of promising practice in relation to the two topics addressed in the chapter: regarding the implementation of national action plans and regarding the legal or policy developments addressing Roma/Travellers equality and inclusion.
Title (original language)	
Title (EN)	ROMACTED: Promoting Good Governance and Roma Empowerment at Local Level
Organisation (original language)	Bashkimi Evropian dhe Këshilli i Evropës
Organisation (EN)	European Union and Council of Europe
Government / Civil society	European Union and Council of Europe
Funding body	European Union
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/-/launching-of-roma-week-2022-in-albania-history-and-culture-in-the-spotlight-for-a-better-present https://go.coe.int/crGVY
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing	5 April 2022 21 April 2022

date if it has ceased to exist	
Type of initiative	History and culture in the spotlight for a better present
Main target group	Roma community
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>Over 1500 people participated during the Roma Week activities in Albania (04-11 April 2022) under the slogan "History and culture in the spotlight for a better present". 34 national and international partners miscellaneous activities and initiatives took place in 15 Albanian municipalities raising awareness on the most prominent institutional barriers faced by the Roma minority while nurturing the policy dialogue towards Roma integration and empowerment.</p> <p>The monitoring reports on the implementation of the Local Action Plans for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022, supported within the frame of the EU/CoE ROMACTED Programme, were instrumental in shaping the policy dialogue and actions among respective stakeholders. Their findings and recommendations were also a valuable reference during the Policy Dialogue Seminar on Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian Minorities in Albania.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	<p>History and culture of Roma as very important elements to raise awareness on the most prominent institutional barriers faced by the Roma minority is one of the key elements of this initiative which can be transferable. In this regard, the history and culture can contribute to a change in perceptions, attitudes and behaviours within Albania towards greater respect for Roma's rights.</p> <p>The monitoring reports on the implementation of the Local Action Plans for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022, which highlight actions taken so far, discuss problems encountered at both central and local levels, and identify possible solutions to improve the effective implementation of inclusion policies. The best practices and possible solutions of these monitoring reports can be transferable as well.</p>
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as	Activities aim to raise awareness on the most prominent institutional barriers faced by the Roma minority while nurturing the policy dialogue towards Roma integration and empowerment. These activities ensure transfer of knowledge not only directly to the participants but even to the society at large.

opposed to 'one off activities')	
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	The monitoring reports on the implementation of the Local Action Plans for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022, were instrumental in shaping the policy dialogue and actions among respective stakeholders. These monitoring reports will help to better highlight the problems and challenges faced during the implementation of the Local Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?	The focus of the Policy Dialogue Seminar on Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian Minorities in Albania was on education, antigypsyism, employment, health, social care, housing and civil registration. The participants discussed actions taken so far, problems encountered at both central and local levels, and identified possible solutions to improve the effective implementation of inclusion policies. They exchanged opinions, experiences and best practices on inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania and in the other countries as well. All the above mentioned issues can be transferred to other stakeholders.
Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.	Not applicable.
Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	Not applicable.

Thematic area	INFORMATION SOCIETY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION Please, provide one example of a promising practice related to the topics addressed in the chapter, i.e., in relation to data protection, and/or artificial intelligence systems.
Title (original language)	Projekti "Inteligjenca Artificiale për të rinjtë"
Title (EN)	"Artificial intelligence for Youth" project
Organisation (original language)	Fondi Shqiptaro-Amerikan i Zhvillimit, Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit dhe Bashkia Tiranë
Organisation (EN)	Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF), the Ministry of Education and Sports, and the Municipality of Tirana
Government / Civil society	Civil Society and Public Institution
Funding body	Albanian-American Development Foundation

Reference (incl. URL, where available)	http://aadf.org/the-signing-of-the-memorandum-of-understanding-for-the-ai-for-youth-project/
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	18 May 2022
Type of initiative	Project
Main target group	Albanian students, aged between 13 and 19 years old
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	In May 2022, The Ministry of Education and Sports and the Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the project "Artificial Intelligence for Youth". The Artificial Intelligence program will be piloted in 5 public schools and 2 training centres. Through this project, will be built providing the certified teachers and students the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of AI and demystify it by equipping them with the mindset and skills required for AI readiness.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The building of 7 AI labs providing the certified teachers and students the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of AI and demystify it by equipping them with the mindset and skills required for AI readiness is a key element that can be transferable. This initiative can be implemented in more other schools in our country.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')</p>	<p>The program began in the school year 2022-2023 in five high schools and 2 training centres, where groups will be created and conduct classes on Artificial Intelligence, after school hours, as an extracurricular activity at the selected educational institution.^{152[1]} This initiative can be practised even by the other schools in the country.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>This initiative started to have its first impact as long as the first Artificial Intelligence Laboratory was inaugurated in "Sami Frashëri" high school.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>Emerging technologies such as AI are changing and reshaping the world, having a tremendous impact on the employment and economic sectors, so this project aims to increase the skills related to technology and artificial intelligence among Albanian students. This initiative is currently being implemented in more than 20 countries worldwide, with participants gaining and applying AI skills to solve real-world problems. Thus, it can be easily transferable to other countries.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

¹⁵² Albania, Ministry of Education and Sports [Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit], [The Minister of Education and Sports and the AADF signed a MoU for the implementation of the project "AI for Youth"](#), 18 May 2022

Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	Not applicable.
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Thematic area	RIGHTS OF THE CHILD Please provide a promising practice for the related topics addressed in the chapter (i.e., the impact of poverty and exclusion on children and children and justice).
Title (original language)	Shqiperia Je TI
Title (EN)	Albania is YOU
Organisation (original language)	Ministria e Brendshme dhe institucionet ne nivel lokal
Organisation (EN)	International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Government / Civil society	Ministry of Interior and other Albanian institutions at local level
Funding body	The European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2014-2020), Migration Office of the Belgian Federal Office for Home Affairs and the Repatriation and Deportation Service of the Netherlands
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	https://albania.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11401/files/inline-files/arise-all-project-brief.pdf
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	1 January 21 – 31 Dec 2022 (24 months)
Type of initiative	Campaign

Main target group	Albanian children and Youth
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	Regional Level
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	The project Awareness Raising and Information for Safety and Empowerment for All – Albania “ARISE-ALL” contributes to influencing the change of behaviour of the groups with high potential to migrate irregularly as well as key “enablers” in Albania. The project will raise awareness among Albanian citizens considering irregular migration to Europe on the risks of irregular migration and provides information on existing economic and educational opportunities in Albania and the regular migration channels to Europe. The project will establish an “influencers” network with personal migration experience, who are going to sensitise the population through events, social networks, mini projects, awareness raising, video messages etc. and engage two celebrities to endorse the campaign and distribute its messages
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	Through Albania is You campaign, the ARISE ALL project aims to contribute to collective efforts to tackle the dilemma of irregular migration in 12 regions of Albania and to change misperception of Albanian children and youth, boys and girls of life fulfilment through migration abroad. The projects includes activities such as: Peer to peer discussions about irregular migration; Essay competition in public schools; Open discussions with school students in regions covered by the project; Photo Exhibition with artworks by young boys and girls.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to ‘one off activities’)	The project establishes an “influencers” network with personal migration experience, who are going to sensitise the Albanian girls and boys through events, social networks, mini projects, awareness raising, video messages etc.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	The awareness raising initiatives using traditional and social media, celebrity endorsers and peer to peer sensitization through local and diaspora “influencers” will reach 200,000 people and 10,000 who will interact with the Mobile Application.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	

<p>Thematic area</p>	<p>ACCESS TO JUSTICE – Victim’s Rights and Judicial Independence Please provide one example of a promising practice in relation to the topic address in the chapter: i.e. Victim’s Rights Directive, the EU Strategy for Victim’s Rights and violence against women.</p>
<p>Title (original language)</p>	<p>Unë kam një Ëndërr</p>
<p>Title (EN)</p>	<p>I have a Dream</p>
<p>Organisation (original language)</p>	<p>Un Women</p>

Organisation (EN)	Un Women in cooperation with Center for Openness and Dialogue
Government / Civil society	Center for Openness and Dialogue
Funding body	Government of Sweden
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	This project was created in the framework of the "Gender-sensitive post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction" Project
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	March- April 2022
Type of initiative	Photo project
Main target group	Albanian Womens
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	Local
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	A photographic project that gives voice to the dreams of young women from all over Albania was exhibited in Tirana on the occasion of International Women's Day. In front of the camera, the Albanian girls freed themselves from the customary surroundings and the patriarchal norms, embracing the liberty of their dreams for an attainable future. Renowned photographer Jutta Benzenberg partnered with UN Women in Albania to bring to attention the reality of young women who live in remote parts of the country where gender stereotypes and patriarchal norms are still dominant.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The photographer captured snapshots of teenage girls as they went about their daily lives in their immediate surroundings and she also asked them about their dreams for their future. These dreams were later put together in a compilation and displayed alongside their portraits in an exhibition at the Center for Openness and Dialogue – an art space at the Prime Minister's offices in Tirana.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')</p>	<p>Through photography, this practice helps document the lives of women and girls in Albania, bringing to the attention of policymakers and interest groups the problems and difficulties women and girls face in their economic, family, political and artistic lives. The project is a call to society for equal rights and opportunities for defying gender stereotypes. Furthermore, it is a plea to bridge the gap that still stands between those dreams and their actual achievement.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>This practice has a measurable impact since through photography the life, challenges and barriers of more than 800 girls and women throughout Albania are brought to the attention of all actors who protect the rights of women and girls in Albania.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>The collection of the photographs and stories of Albanian women and girls will be published and will be open to access from all other countries, creating a comparable base regarding the challenges of women and girls not only within Albania but also in the region and beyond.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>N/a</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	<p>N/a</p>

Thematic area	ACCESS TO JUSTICE – Victim’s Rights and Judicial Independence Please provide one example of a promising practice in relation to the topic address in the chapter: i.e. Victim’s Rights Directive, the EU Strategy for Victim’s Rights and violence against women.
Title (original language)	Fuqizohu përmes Vetëmbrojtjes!
Title (EN)	Empowerment Through Self-Defense
Organisation (original language)	Un Women
Organisation (EN)	
Government / Civil society	
Funding body	The Government of Sweden through the UN Albania SDG Acceleration Fund
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	2021-2022
Type of initiative	Training Initiative
Main target group	High Schools and Teachers
Indicate level of implementation:	National

Local/Regional/National	
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>This initiative took place in the context of the "Gender-Sensitive Post-Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction" program, funded by the Government of Sweden through the UN Albania SDG Acceleration Fund. Gender-Sensitive Post-Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction" program. This was the first time that "Empowerment Through Self-Defense" was included as part of the school curriculum.</p> <p>Over 1200 students from nine high schools around Albania were trained in "Empowerment Through Self-Defense," a methodology that aims to prevent violence and reduce bullying in schools. An awards ceremony was organised to mark the conclusion of this initiative, which started in the autumn of 2021 with the training of 24 teachers and educators by UN Women, ESD Global Self-Defense, and local partner Aikido Albania. This was the first generation of education professionals in Albania who have been certified as Self-Defense Empowerment instructors. Following the training, they have been applying this innovative methodology in their schools, helping boost self-esteem and strengthening the safety of hundreds of youths. In parallel with training, an ESD national tour and awareness campaign was held in 12 regions of the country where around 500 young women, high school and university students, local government employees, NGO representatives were trained on empowerment through self-defence.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	<p>The teachers trained have been applying this innovative methodology in their schools, helping boost the self-esteem and strengthening the safety of hundreds of youths. As a result, over 1200 students from nine high schools around Albania, 24 teachers and 500 young women in the 12 regions of the country were trained in "Empowerment Through Self-Defense" .</p>
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	<p>Following this initiative the "Empowerment Through Self-Defense" was included as part of the school curriculum. This will result in more trained students and will contribute in protecting the safety of youths and protect them from violence.</p>
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	<p>Empowerment through self-defence can have an impact in addressing the root causes of the persisting gender inequalities in Albanian society. In addition, over 1200 students in Albania, As a result, over 1200 students from nine high schools around Albania, 24 teachers and 500 young women in the 12 regions of the country benefited from training conducted under this project.</p>

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>This initiative in Albania will be seen as a key violence prevention strategy to interrupt, respond to, and heal from interpersonal violence that may be evaluated as a good practice and implemented to other Member States.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	

Thematic area	Developments in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Please provide one example of a promising practice of national monitoring bodies (e.g., a well-run outreach campaign, an inclusive survey, a successful effort or initiative to improve legislation, etc.) in relation to projects or programmes implementing the CRPD or promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. Where no such practice exists, please provide one example of a promising practice in relation to projects or programmes implementing the CRPD or promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, focussing on projects and programmes implemented with EU funding.
Title (original language)	Informim dhe fuqizim i personave me aftësi të kufizuara për të kërkuar dhe për të marrë shërbime të kujdesit shoqëror
Title (EN)	Informing and empowerment of persons with disabilities to seek and receive social care services
Organisation (original language)	Fondacioni Shqiptar për të Drejtat e Personave me Aftësi të Kufizuara
Organisation (EN)	Albanian Foundation for Persons with Disabilities
Government / Civil society	Civil Society Organisation
Funding body	United Nation Fund-Albania funded by SDC (Swiss agency for Development and Cooperation)
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	https://adrf.al/index.php/sq/projekt/309-informim-dhe-fuqizim-i-personave-me-aftesi-te-kufizuara-per-te-kerkuar-dhe-per-te-marre-sherbime-te-kujdesit-shoqeror
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	May 2022
Type of initiative	Information and Training Project
Main target group	Persons with disabilities in municipalities of Rrogozhinë, Divjakë, Patos, Krujë, Kamëz

Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	Local
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>The initiative aims to empower people with disabilities, especially those living in remote and rural areas, in the municipalities of Rrogozhinë, Divjakë, Patos, Krujë, Kamëz, to raise their voices and engage continuously in decision-making processes that result in better access well in quality services for themselves and their family members. Meanwhile, the project aims to strengthen the capacities of the multidisciplinary disability assessment commissions in the five counties where they have been established, Durrës, Elbasan, Lezhë, Korçë and Vlorë, for the evaluation of the needs of people with disabilities.</p> <p>Project interventions will result in: i) persons with disabilities and their families living in 5 districts targeted by the project will be informed about social services, through social media or printed and audio-visual materials; ii) About 480 persons with disabilities and their family members in the 5 target municipalities, including those in remote and rural areas, will be empowered to claim their rights through information sessions organised in 60 administrative units or villages.; iii) At least 5 community-based groups/networks will be created with persons with disabilities and activists (one in each of the target municipalities), who will be prepared and trained to engage in information, awareness , lobbying, advocacy and in a sustainable dialogue for local decision-making regarding the access of persons with disabilities and their family members to quality public services; iv) Forums with the participation of interest groups in each municipality, will engage in formal discussions with local authorities to raise and address priority issues.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	Community-based groups and local forums are transferable elements of this initiative.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	The information delivered to the persons with disabilities will help them to require their rights from local governments even in the future. Also, community groups will be active not only during the initiative but will be supported in their activities in the future by the organisation.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>The quantitative and qualitative indicators will guarantee the measurement of the impact.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>This practice can be applied regardless of the legislative, institutional or cultural context.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>Stakeholders, including the beneficiaries were involved in the design and planning of the project through working groups in each municipality targeted.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	<p>It established a Steering Committee of the project with representatives of persons with disabilities and local government, which will review and improve where possible the intervention during the implementation of the project.</p>

Annex 2 – Case Law

Thematic area	EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION Please provide one high court decision addressing discrimination against LGBTIQ people or on the grounds of socio-economic status, health status and physical appearance (not related to health or disability or to other grounds like ethnic origin, religion). Where relevant, always highlight any relevance or reference to multiple or intersectional discrimination in the case you report.
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE Please provide the most relevant <u>high court</u> decision concerning the application of <u>either</u> the Racial Equality Directive or the Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia, addressing racism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance more generally.
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	ROMA EQUALITY AND INCLUSION Please provide the most relevant high court decision addressing violations of fundamental rights of Roma and Travellers.
Decision date	30 August 2022
Reference details	CASE OF X AND OTHERS v. ALBANIA, (Applications nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19), 30 August 2022
Key facts of the case (max. 500 chars)	The applicants are Albanian nationals of Roma and Egyptian ethnic origin. Their children attended the “Naim Frashëri” elementary school in Korça. During the 2012/19, the school was attended almost exclusively by children of the Roma and Egyptian minorities. Eventually, segregation complaints by 2 CSOs, resulted in a decision by the Commissioner against Discrimination, finding that these

	children of that school were suffering indirect discrimination on account of their over-representation in the school and ordering the competent bodies to take desegregation measures.
Main reasoning/argumentation (max. 500 chars)	Relying on Article 1 of Protocol No. 12 (general prohibition of discrimination) to the ECHR the applicants complain of discrimination and segregation in their children's education owing to the over-representation of Egyptian and Roma pupils in Naim Frashëri school. The applicants allege that the segregation of the school persists and that the quality of teaching is poor. On 18 December 2019 the applicants were granted anonymity pursuant to Rule 47 § 4 of the Rules of Court.
Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case (max. 500 chars)	Prohibition of discrimination: In this case, the Court very clearly speaks out against ethnic segregation in education, even where this segregation was unintentional, and does not require negative consequences in addition to the harm that the simple fact of separation already brings with it for the disadvantaged pupils. This judgement (re)establishes a clear and strong obligation of states to take action against segregation, regardless of its origin, and swiftly implement appropriate desegregation measures.
Results (sanctions) and key consequences or implications of the case (max. 500 chars)	The Court had found a violation of the Article 1 Protocol No. 12 prohibition of discrimination in the instance case, where the delays and the non-implementation of appropriate desegregating measures could not be considered as having had an objective and reasonable justification. Article 41: EUR 4,500 per applicants' household in respect of non-pecuniary damage. Article 46 § 2 Respondent State to take individual measures. On 12 December 2022, the Council of Ministers decided "the execution of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, dated 31.5.2022, in the case "X and Others against Albania", for applications nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19, in the amount of 22,500 EUR in relation to non-pecuniary damage, plus any tax that may be applicable. ¹⁵³
Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details (max. 500 chars)	Official languages in english and french

¹⁵³ Albania, Council of Ministers Decision no. 760, [For the execution of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, dated 31.5.2022, in the case "X and Others of Albania" \(for application nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19\)](#) (Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave, nr. 760), 12 December 2022

Thematic area	ASYLUM, VISAS, MIGRATION, BORDERS AND INTEGRATION
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	INFORMATION SOCIETY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION Please provide the most relevant high court decision related to the topics addressed in the chapter (i.e. data protection, and/or artificial intelligence systems).
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	ACCESS TO JUSTICE – Victim’s Rights and Judicial Independence
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.

Thematic area	DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD) Please provide the most relevant High Court decision, which quoted the CRPD or prominently referred to the CRPD in the reasoning.
Decision date	No case law has been identified for this thematic area.