



ALBANIA

A safe country ?

No country can be deemed « safe ». That is the spirit of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees which provides for the individual examination of each asylum claim: each personal situation is unique. To label a country as a “safe country of origin” suggests that there is no general risk of persecution and that the state of law is respected. A “safe” country can also be categorised as a “safe third country” where asylum-seekers who have transited through the said country may be returned there because their asylum procedures is in line with international and European refugee law standards. Many examples show that human rights standards are often not met.

The notion of safety as an examination tool can have dire consequences on asylum-seekers’ rights (see policy brief Safe country of origin): accelerated procedures, non suspensive appeals i.e. removal before a final decision is made, claim likely to be rejected if not inadmissible in the case of “safe third” countries.

The European Union is discussing a draft Regulation establishing an EU common list of safe countries of origin comprising, inter alia, Albania which, to date, is only listed by 8 Member states out of the 13 existing national lists of safe countries of origin (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and United-Kingdom).

The AEDH, EuroMed Rights and the FIDH are opposed to the notion of « safety » which is usually used as a means to remove people in a country where they, allegedly, would not be at risk: is that really the case?

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

- **Violence against women** and domestic violence
- **Discrimination if not marginalisation against handicapped people**
- **Discrimination against LGBTI people**
- **Discrimination against ethnic minorities** such as « Egyptians » and above all Roma people, especially as regards access to accommodation

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OPINION

- **Attacks** against journalists
- **Pressure on media by government**
- **Insufficient measures** adopted by the authorities to protect journalists against such threats

STATE OF LAW & INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY

- Corruption and very slow judiciary system, as well as **impunity** that hamper effective **access to justice**

TORTURE, INHUMANE & DEGRADING TREATMENT

- **Several cases of torture and ill-treatment** reported
- **Bad detention conditions**

FURTHER INFORMATION

AEDH, EuroMed Rights, FIDH, « Safe » countries:
denying access to asylum, May 2016
LIEN

Compilation and summary by the Human Rights
High Commissioner, Universal Periodic Review, 2016
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Albanian Helsinki Committee, 2014 report
[http://www.ahc.org.al/web/images/publikime/en/
Humane_Rights_Report_2014.pdf](http://www.ahc.org.al/web/images/publikime/en/Humane_Rights_Report_2014.pdf)

Human Rights Watch, Universal Periodic Review,
2009
[https://www.hrw.org/news/2009/04/15/hu-
man-rights-watch-upr-submission-albania](https://www.hrw.org/news/2009/04/15/human-rights-watch-upr-submission-albania)

Amnesty international report (2015-2016)
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Final observations by the UN Human Rights Committee,
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[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/
treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=C-
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EuroMed Rights
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الأورو-متوسطية للحقوق

