

# Mobility: Immigration alert

April 2023



## Albania

Albania introduces Single Permits and new Residence Permits for specific categories of foreign nationals

### Executive summary

In early March 2023, the Albanian authorities began accepting applications for Single Permits from eligible foreign nationals. These individuals (or their employers) are no longer required to submit applications for proof of employment declarations or to obtain work and residence permits.

### Introduction of Single Permits

Individuals who have an employment contract issued by a local Albanian company are now eligible to obtain a Single Permit, which authorizes them to work and reside in Albania for up to one year initially, with the possibility of renewal. Previously, individuals with Albanian employment contracts were required to submit applications for proof of employment declarations and to obtain work and residence permits separately.

In addition, Single Permits are available to digital nomads (i.e., individuals who seek to work remotely from within Albania for a non-Albanian employer and remain on the payroll of the non-Albanian company) and are valid for up to one year initially. This is the first permit for remote workers issued by Albania.

Single Permits are also available for other (non-work) purposes and may be issued to individuals who are present in Albania for vocational training, voluntary service, humanitarian reasons or investment purposes.

### New Residence Permits

The Albanian authorities also introduced new Residence Permits for the following categories of foreign nationals:

- ▶ *Entrepreneurship or job search for researchers and students.* Researchers and students who seek to establish a business or search for employment opportunities in Albania may apply for a Residence Permit that is valid for nine months or more. These individuals must obtain a Single Permit before starting to work or deliver services via their new business.
- ▶ *Real estate investors.* Individuals who own property in Albania and seek to generate profits from the property may apply for a Residence Permit that is valid for up to one year initially.
- ▶ *Au pairs.* Individuals who are hosted by, and provide childcare and housekeeping services to, a family in Albania in exchange for accommodation may apply for a Residence Permit which allows them to reside (and take Albanian language and culture courses) for up to one year initially.
- ▶ *Retirees.* Eligible retirees who fulfil certain requirements may apply for a Residence Permit that is valid for up to one year initially.
- ▶ *Stateless persons.* Individuals who do not hold citizenship in any country and have resided in Albania for at least one year may apply for a Residence Permit that is valid for up to one year initially.

### Application procedure

Foreign nationals (or their employers) may submit Single Permit applications [online](#) from within or outside Albania. The National Agency of Employment and Qualifications (NAEQ) will conduct an initial review and provide its pre-approval. Individuals whose applications are pre-approved by the NAEQ must submit supporting documentation in person (or through an authorized representative) to the Regional Border and Migration Office for final adjudication. Successful applicants will be issued permits within four to 12 weeks of filing the online application. In general, the issuance of Single Permits is subject to quotas.

Applications filed by US nationals and nationals of the EU, Schengen and [Western Balkan](#) Member States, as well as specific categories of applicants (e.g., family members of Albanian residents, self-employed individuals, students, investors), are not subject to annual immigration quotas.

### Impact on employers

The introduction of Single Permits streamlines and reduces the time and costs associated with sponsoring foreign nationals to obtain work and residence authorization in Albania. In the short term, employers may face logistical challenges when converting existing (expiring) work or residence permits to Single Permits.

### Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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