

Document #2048623

AI – Amnesty International

Albania 2020

Domestic violence against women increased during lockdown. The Prime Minister threatened to use extraordinary powers to close media for “spreading panic” over COVID-19. Roma and LGBTI people continued to face discrimination.

Background

Between 31 March and 23 June, Albania derogated from certain European Convention on Human Rights obligations in the name of containing COVID-19. Excessive measures were used to enforce the lockdown.

Violence against women and girls

Gender-based violence worsened during the lockdown. A women’s rights NGO reported a threefold annual increase in calls to the national Counseling Line for Women and Girls during the March-May period.

The sexual abuse of a 15-year-old girl by her school’s guard and three other men sparked public outrage in June. Hundreds protested gender-based violence in the capital, Tirana.

Freedom of expression

In March, the Prime Minister threatened media organizations with closure for “spreading panic” over COVID-19.

The authorities retracted a controversial anti-defamation law that threatened online media freedom.

In August, the authorities seized Ora News TV following an investigation into the owner’s assets. The media group remained operational.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants

UN Rapporteurs expressed concern and the Ombudsman found serious human rights violations in Harun Çelik’s expulsion to Turkey on 1 January. Harun Çelik, a Turkish teacher linked to the so-called Gülen movement, had applied for asylum in Albania.

Discrimination

In April, Roma activists protested discrimination in the government’s allocation of financial emergency assistance that did not cover those working in the informal sector.

Parliament adopted amendments to the law on discrimination, significantly expanding the scope of groups covered by legal protection.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people

LGBTI people remained subject to widespread discrimination, including being denied the right to same-sex partnerships.

The Order of Psychologists prohibited its members from performing conversion therapy. The Ministry of Health banned medical intervention on newborn intersex children.

Excessive use of force

Activists protesting the demolition of the National Theatre in Tirana on 17 May faced disproportionate use of police force. Two journalists covering the protest were verbally assaulted and hit by police officers; one was temporarily detained.

Street clashes erupted in several cities following the shooting of a 25-year-old man by a police officer enforcing a COVID-linked curfew on 8 December. Two journalists covering the protests were detained and assaulted. The Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights called on authorities to reverse blanket bans on freedom of assembly.

© Amnesty International

ecoi.net summary:

Report on the human rights
situation covering 2020

Country:

Albania

Source:

[AI – Amnesty International](#)

Original link:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/europe-and-central-asia/albania/report-albania/>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

7 April 2021

Document ID:

2048623

Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum
Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
[T \(Telefon\)](#) +43 1 589 00 583
[F \(Fax\)](#) +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
Imprint & Disclaimer
F.A.Q.
Data Protection Notice

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverband Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

