[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country) [Template:Too short](/wiki/Template:Too_short) **Albania** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en), [Template:Respell](/wiki/Template:Respell); [Template:Lang-sq](/wiki/Template:Lang-sq); [Template:Lang-aln](/wiki/Template:Lang-aln)), officially the **Republic of Albania** ([Template:Lang-sq](/wiki/Template:Lang-sq), [Template:IPA-sq](/wiki/Template:IPA-sq)), is a country in [Southeast Europe](/wiki/Southeast_Europe), bordered by [Montenegro](/wiki/Montenegro) to the northwest, [Kosovo](/wiki/Kosovo) to the northeast,[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) the [Republic of Macedonia](/wiki/Republic_of_Macedonia) to the east, and [Greece](/wiki/Greece) to the south and southeast. It has a coast on the [Adriatic Sea](/wiki/Adriatic_Sea) to the west and on the [Ionian Sea](/wiki/Ionian_Sea) to the southwest. It is less than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from Italy, across the [Strait of Otranto](/wiki/Strait_of_Otranto) which connects the Adriatic Sea to the Ionian Sea.

The modern 28,748 sq km territory of Albania was part of the Roman provinces of [Dalmatia](/wiki/Dalmatia_(Roman_province)), [Macedonia](/wiki/Macedonia_(Roman_province)) and [Moesia Superior](/wiki/Moesia_Superior). After the collapse of the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) in Europe following the [Balkan Wars](/wiki/Balkan_Wars),[[1]](#cite_note-1) Albania declared independence in 1912 and was [recognized](/wiki/London_Conference_of_1912–13) the following year. The [Kingdom of Albania](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Albania_(1928–39)) was invaded by [Italy](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Italy) in 1939, which formed [Greater Albania](/wiki/Albanian_Kingdom_(1939–43)), before becoming a [Nazi German protectorate](/wiki/Albanian_Kingdom_(1943–44)) in 1943.[[2]](#cite_note-2) The following year, a [socialist](/wiki/Socialist_state) [People's Republic](/wiki/People's_Socialist_Republic_of_Albania) was established under the leadership of [Enver Hoxha](/wiki/Enver_Hoxha) and the [Party of Labour](/wiki/Party_of_Labour_of_Albania). Albania experienced widespread social and political transformations in the communist era, as well as isolation from much of the international community. In 1991, the Socialist Republic was [dissolved](/wiki/Fall_of_Communism_in_Albania) and the Republic of Albania was established.

Albania is a [parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic). The country's capital, [Tirana](/wiki/Tirana), is its financial and industrial heartland, with a population of almost 800,000 out of around 2.9 million Albanians.[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4) [Free-market](/wiki/Free-market) reforms have opened the country to foreign investment, especially in the development of energy and transportation infrastructure.[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6)[[7]](#cite_note-7) Albania has a high [HDI](/wiki/Human_Development_Index) and provides a universal health care system and free primary and secondary education.[[8]](#cite_note-8) Albania is an upper-middle income economy with the service sector dominating the country's economy, followed by the industrial sector and agriculture.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Albania is a member of the United Nations, [NATO](/wiki/NATO), the [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe), the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe), the [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](/wiki/Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation) and the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization). It is one of the founding members of the [Energy Community](/wiki/Energy_Community), [Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation](/wiki/Organization_of_the_Black_Sea_Economic_Cooperation) and the [Union for the Mediterranean](/wiki/Union_for_the_Mediterranean). It is also an [official candidate](/wiki/Accession_of_Albania_to_the_European_Union) for membership in the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union).[[10]](#cite_note-10)[Template:TOC limit](/wiki/Template:TOC_limit)

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

*Albania* is the [Medieval Latin](/wiki/Medieval_Latin) name of the country. The country is called *Shqipëri* by its people. The name may be derived from the [Illyrian tribe](/wiki/Illyrian_tribe) of the Albani recorded by [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy), the geographer and astronomer from [Alexandria](/wiki/Alexandria) who drafted a map in 150 AD that shows the city of [Albanopolis](/wiki/Albanopolis) located northeast of [Durrës](/wiki/Durrës).[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) The name may have a continuation in the name of a medieval settlement called Albanon and Arbanon, although it is not certain this was the same place.[[13]](#cite_note-13) In his *History* written in 1079–1080, the [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine) historian [Michael Attaliates](/wiki/Michael_Attaliates) was the first to refer to [*Albanoi*](/wiki/Albanoi) as having taken part in a revolt against [Constantinople](/wiki/Constantinople) in 1043 and to the *Arbanitai* as subjects of the Duke of [Dyrrachium](/wiki/Dyrrachium).[[14]](#cite_note-14) During the [Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages), the Albanians called their country *Arbëri* or *Arbëni* and referred to themselves as [Arbëresh](/wiki/Arbëresh) or *Arbënesh*.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16) As early as the 17th century the placename *Shqipëria* and the ethnic demonym *Shqiptarë* gradually replaced *Arbëria* and *Arbëresh*. The two terms are [popularly](/wiki/Folk_etymology) interpreted as "Land of the Eagles" and "Children of the Eagles".[[17]](#cite_note-17)[[18]](#cite_note-18)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

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The history of Albania emerged from the [prehistoric stage](/wiki/Prehistory_of_Southeastern_Europe) from the 4th century BC, with early records of [Illyria](/wiki/Illyria) in [Greco-Roman historiography](/wiki/Greco-Roman_historiography). The modern territory of Albania has no counterpart in antiquity, comprising parts of the Roman provinces of [Dalmatia](/wiki/Dalmatia_(Roman_province)) (southern [Illyricum](/wiki/Illyricum_(Roman_province))) and [Macedonia](/wiki/Macedonia_(Roman_province)) (particularly [Epirus Nova](/wiki/Epirus_Nova)).

### Prehistory[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

The first traces of human presence in Albania, dating to the [Middle Paleolithic](/wiki/Middle_Paleolithic) and [Upper Paleolithic](/wiki/Upper_Paleolithic) eras, were found in the village of Xarrë, near [Sarandë](/wiki/Sarandë) and [Mount Dajt](/wiki/Mount_Dajt) near [Tiranë](/wiki/Tiranë).[[19]](#cite_note-19) The objects found in a cave near Xarrë include flint and jasper objects and fossilized animal bones, while those found at Mount Dajt comprise bone and stone tools similar to those of the [Aurignacian culture](/wiki/Aurignacian_culture). The Paleolithic finds of Albania show great similarities with objects of the same era found at Crvena Stijena in Montenegro and north-western Greece.[[19]](#cite_note-19)

### Antiquity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Mbretëresha_Teuta_në_Muzeun_e_Shkodrës.JPG)[Queen Teuta](/wiki/Queen_Teuta) of the [Ardiaei](/wiki/Ardiaei) 231–227 BC|217x217px [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Illyria_and_Dardania_Kingdoms.png)[Kingdom of Illyria](/wiki/Illyria) and [Dardania](/wiki/Dardanian_Kingdom) in the 3rd century BC In ancient times, the territory of modern Albania was mainly inhabited by a number of [Illyrian](/wiki/Illyrians) tribes. This territory was known as [Illyria](/wiki/Illyria), corresponding roughly to the area east of the Adriatic sea to the mouth of the [Vjosë](/wiki/Vjosë) river in the south.[[20]](#cite_note-20)[[21]](#cite_note-21) The first account of the Illyrian groups comes from [*Periplus of the Euxine Sea*](/wiki/Periplus_of_the_Euxine_Sea), an ancient Greek text written in the middle of the 4th century BC.[[22]](#cite_note-22) One of the most powerful tribes that ruled over modern Albania was the [Ardiaei](/wiki/Ardiaei). The Ardiaen Kingdom reached its greatest extent under [Agron of Illyria](/wiki/Agron_of_Illyria), son of [Pleuratus II](/wiki/Pleuratus_II). Agron extended his rule over other neighboring tribes as well.[[23]](#cite_note-23) After Agron's death in 230 BC, his wife Teuta inherited the Ardiaean kingdom. Teuta's forces extended their operations further southward into the [Ionian Sea](/wiki/Ionian_Sea), defeating the combined Achaean and Aetolian fleet in the [Battle of Paxos](/wiki/Battle_of_Paxos) and capturing the island of [Corcyra](/wiki/Corfu), which put them in position to breach the important trade routes between the mainland of Greece and the Greek cities in Italy.[[24]](#cite_note-24) In 229 BC, Rome declared war[[25]](#cite_note-25) on Illyria for extensively plundering Roman ships. The war ended in Illyrian defeat in 227 BC. Teuta was eventually succeeded by [Gentius](/wiki/Gentius) in 181 BC.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Gentius clashed with the Romans in 168 BC, initiating the [Third Illyrian War](/wiki/Third_Illyrian_War). The conflict resulted in Roman victory and the end of Illyrian independence by 167 BC. After his defeat, the Roman split the region into three administrative divisions.[[27]](#cite_note-27)

### Middle Ages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)[thumb|](/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Principality_of_Arbanon.png)[Principality of Arbanon](/wiki/Principality_of_Arbanon) (12th–13th century AD) [thumb|left|180px|](/wiki/File:Palazzo_Reale_di_Napoli_-_Carlo_I_d'Angiò.jpg)[Charles I of Naples](/wiki/Charles_I_of_Naples) established [*Regnum Albaniae* (Kingdom of Albania)](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Albania_(medieval)) after he conquered a part the [Despotate of Epirus](/wiki/Despotate_of_Epirus).[thumb|190px|](/wiki/File:Venice1400.png)[Albanian principalities](/wiki/Albanian_principalities) in the 14th century.The territory now known as Albania remained under Roman ([Byzantine](/wiki/Albania_under_the_Byzantine_Empire)) control until the [Slavs began to overrun it](/wiki/Slavic_migrations) from 7th century,[[28]](#cite_note-28) and was captured by the [Bulgarian Empire](/wiki/Albania_under_the_Bulgarian_Empire) in the 9th century. After the weakening of the [Byzantine Empire](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) and the [Bulgarian Empire](/wiki/Bulgarian_Empire) in the middle and late 13th century, some of the territory of modern-day Albania was captured by the [Serbian Principality](/wiki/Serbian_Grand_Principality). In general, the invaders destroyed or weakened Roman and [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) cultural centers in the lands that would become Albania.[[29]](#cite_note-29) The territorial nucleus of the Albanian state formed in the Middle Ages, as the [Principality of Arbër](/wiki/Principality_of_Arbër) and the [Kingdom of Albania](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Albania_(medieval)). The [Principality of Arbër](/wiki/Principality_of_Arbër) or **Albanon** ([Albanian](/wiki/Albanian_language)): Arbër or Arbëria, was the first [Albanian state](/wiki/Albanian_Principalities) during the [Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages), it was established by [*archon*](/wiki/Archon) [Progon](/wiki/Progon_of_Kruja) in the region of [Kruja](/wiki/Kruja), in c. 1190. Progon, the founder, was succeeded by his sons Gjin and Dhimitri, the latter which attained the height of the realm. After the death of Dhimiter, the last of the [Progon family](/wiki/Progon_family), the principality came under [Grigor Kamona](/wiki/Grigor_Kamona), and later [Golem](/wiki/Golem_of_Kruja). The Principality was dissolved in 1255.<ref name=Clements31>Clements 1992, p. 31 *"By 1190, Byzantium's power had so receded that the archon Progon succeeded in establishing the first Albanian state of the Middle Ages, a principality"*</ref>[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[31]](#cite_note-31) Pipa and Repishti conclude that Arbanon was the first sketch of an "Albanian state", and that it retained semi-autonomous status as the western extremity of an empire (under the [Doukai](/wiki/Doukas) of [Epirus](/wiki/Despotate_of_Epirus) or the [Laskarids](/wiki/Laskaris) of [Nicaea](/wiki/Empire_of_Nicaea)).[[32]](#cite_note-32) The Kingdom of Albania was established by Charles of Anjou in the Albanian territory he conquered from the Despotate of Epirus in 1271. He took the title of "King of Albania" in February 1272. The kingdom extended from the region of Durrës (then known as Dyrrhachium) south along the coast to Butrint. After the creation of the kingdom, a Catholic political structure was a good basis for the papal plans of spreading Catholicism in the Balkans. This plan found also the support of Helen of Anjou, a cousin of Charles of Anjou, who was at that time ruling territories in North Albania. Around 30 Catholic churches and monasteries were built during her rule in North Albania and in Serbia.[[33]](#cite_note-33) During 1331–55, the Serbian empire wrestled control over Albania. After the dissolution of the Serbian empire, several Albanian principalities were created, and among the most powerful were the Balsha, Thopia, Kastrioti, Muzaka and Arianiti. In the first half of the 14th century, the Ottoman Empire invaded most of Albania. But in 1444, the Albanian principalities were united under [George Castrioti Skanderbeg](/wiki/Skanderbeg),[Albanian: Gjergj Kastrioti, Skenderbeu] the national hero of Albania.

### Ottoman Albania[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|After serving the](/wiki/File:Đurađ_Kastriota_(Skenderbeg).jpg) [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) for 20 years [Skanderbeg](/wiki/Skanderbeg) deserted and began a rebellion that halted Ottoman advance into Europe for 25 years. At the dawn of the establishment of the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) in Southeast Europe, the geopolitical landscape was marked by scattered kingdoms of small principalities. The Ottomans erected their garrisons throughout southern Albania by 1415 and occupied most of Albania by 1431.[[34]](#cite_note-34) However, in 1443 a great and longstanding [revolt broke](/wiki/History_of_the_Albanian-Turkish_Wars) out under the lead of the Albanian national hero [Skanderbeg](/wiki/Skanderbeg), which lasted until 1479, many times defeating major [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) armies led by the sultans [Murad II](/wiki/Murad_II) and [Mehmed II](/wiki/Mehmed_II). [Skanderbeg](/wiki/Skanderbeg) united initially the Albanian princes, and later on established a centralized authority over most of the non-conquered territories, becoming the ruling Lord of Albania. He also tried relentlessly but rather unsuccessfully to create a European coalition against the Ottomans. He thwarted every attempt by the Turks to regain Albania, which they envisioned as a springboard for the invasion of Italy and western Europe. His unequal fight against the mightiest power of the time won the esteem of Europe as well as some support in the form of money and military aid from Naples, the Papacy, Venice, and Ragusa.[[35]](#cite_note-35) With the arrival of the Turks, Islam was introduced in Albania as a third religion. This conversion caused a massive emigration of Albanians to the Christian European countries.[[36]](#cite_note-36)Along with the [Bosniaks](/wiki/Bosniaks), Muslim Albanians occupied an outstanding position in the Ottoman Empire, and were the main pillars of Ottoman Porte's policy in the Balkans.[[37]](#cite_note-37)