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Albania: Structure and location of the police force; whether regional police forces share information with each other; procedure for filing a complaint with police; responsiveness of police to complaints (January - September 2006)

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Structure of the police

In July 2006 correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, the Justice and Home Affairs Coordinator of the European Commission delegation to Albania indicated that the Albanian State Police (ASP) is a centralized police force that functions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior (EU 13 July 2006). The Ministry of Interior was established in September 2005 when the Ministry of Public Order and the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization merged (*ibid.*). The ASP has twelve regional police directorates, each of which administers at least one police commissariat (*ibid.*). Each police commissariat oversees several police stations and police border crossing posts (*ibid.*).

As of 2006, the ASP was undergoing structural reorganization (*ibid.*), including the dismissal of 1,500 police officers from the 12,000-officer police force (*Korrieri* 23 Mar. 2006; Professor of History 13 June 2006; see also US 8 Mar. 2006, Sec. 1.d).

In its *2005 Progress Report* on Albania, the European Commission stated that, as part of the restructuring of the ASP in September 2004, an Organized Crime Directorate was created and the Internal Control Office was strengthened, thereby moving it closer to European Union (EU) standards (EU 9 Nov. 2005, 60). In its review of the ASP, the European Commission concluded that

[o]verall, the Albanian State Police has made progress in adopting a potentially more effective structure with improved internal regulation mechanisms and better results in fighting internal corruption. However, Albania has considerable room for improvement in legislation, management, infrastructure and international co-operation related to police work (*ibid.*, 61).

Location of police

The ASP's jurisdiction extends throughout the territory of Albania (EU 13 July 2006; Professor of History 13 June 2006; Canada 12 June 2006; CNR 18 June 2006).