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Albania: Procedure to obtain a passport from outside the country; type of identification needed to apply for a passport overseas; whether the policy for obtaining a passport has changed

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

During a 10 May 2007 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a consular official at the Embassy of the Republic of Albania in Ottawa provided the following information. The Consular Official noted that, as of 2007, the procedures governing passport issuance had not changed in recent years.

While noting that different embassies have different passport issuing procedures, and that in Europe, Albanian citizens may be able to obtain a passport directly from an Albanian embassy, the Consular Official indicated that she could only speak for the rules governing passport issuance procedures in Canada, where the embassy does not issue passports to Albanian citizens.

Albanian citizens who reside in Canada who wish to obtain a passport may apply for a "letter of authorization" at the Embassy of Albania; this letter can be used by the applicant to have a friend or relative apply for a passport in Albania on his or her behalf. All Albanian citizens in Canada have the right to obtain this "letter of authorization." In order to obtain this letter of authorization, the applicant must go in person to the embassy of Albania and must be applying only for themselves (they may not apply on behalf of another person). At the embassy, the applicant must submit an identification document, preferably an Albanian ID such as an old passport or birth certificate, although Canadian identification may also be accepted. The applicant must also provide data similar to that which would be required to grant a power of attorney, although the Consular Official emphasized that the letter of authorization is not a power of attorney since it is issued by the embassy. The letter of authorization itself contains basic biographical information about the applicant, such as parents' names, the applicant's place and date of birth, place of residence, as well as the number of the previous passport.

Once he or she obtains the letter of authorization, the passport applicant sends the letter (along with the supporting documentation such as photographs) by mail to his or her contact (proxy) in Albania who will be applying for the passport on his or her behalf. The proxy may be any Albanian citizen residing in Albania that the applicant trusts and