



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Albania: Procedures for registering a complaint against the police; effectiveness of such procedures; statistics on police abuse of authority

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Procedures to register a complaint

In Albania, an individual may file a complaint against the police through the office of the ombudsman, known as the People's Advocate (Avokati Popullit) (Albania n.d.). The People's Advocate may investigate a situation following a complaint or a request made by an "interested or injured person" or initiate its own investigations with the consent of the involved parties (ibid.). The People's Advocate has the authority to make recommendations to remedy violations committed by the government and to refer cases to a higher body should the perpetrator of the violation not respond to its recommendation (ibid.). Within the office of the People's Advocate, the second section is responsible for matters involving the police, secret services, armed forces and judiciary (ibid.). Since 2000, Ermir Dobjani has been the head of the People's Advocate (ibid.).

In its 2006 annual report, the People's Advocate indicated that there is a direct telephone line to connect people in pre-detention to police commissariats (ibid. 2007, 23.). In August 2006, the government of Albania, responding to recommendations made by the United Nations (UN) Committee Against Torture, explained that there are two telephone numbers that persons who are convicted or in pre-detention can call free of charge for assistance (Albania 17 Aug. 2006, para. 8). One number, 04 233671, connects callers to the Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) (ibid.), an organization that promotes human rights and is a member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) (AHC n.d.); the second number, 0800 2080, connects callers to the Directorate General of Prisons (Albania 17 Aug. 2006, para. 8). The People's Advocate recommended that there also be a telephone line connecting people in pre-detention to its own office (ibid. 2007, 23).

Regarding the inspection of pre-detention facilities, the Ministry of Interior has issued permits to officials from organizations such as the AHC, the Ombudsman's office (People's Advocate), and the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment so that their officials may conduct visits (ibid. 19 Jan. 2007).