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Albania: Whether Albanians who have lived abroad and return to Albania are targeted by criminal elements in Albanian society because of a perception of their affluence

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A professor of geography at the University of Sussex (UK) who has published extensively on migration issues and Albania stated in a 16 January 2008 telephone interview that he has not noticed any targeting of returnees to Albania based on a perception of wealth. The Professor noted, however, that there may be a sense of jealousy toward people who return with increased financial resources (16 Jan. 2008). The Professor also stated that there has been an increase in the number of Albanian migrants that are returning to Albania with business and investment plans to improve the economic situation as opposed to those migrants that remain abroad and send remittances home (16 Jan. 2008) This information is corroborated by other sources who report that Albanian migrants who return to Albania often start small businesses (World Bank Sept. 2007, 4; Nicholson n.d., 98).

The following information may be of interest. In a 2005 report, the Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS), an independent research and policy organization that focuses on topics related to Albanian security (n.d.), included results from a survey that was administered to Albanians who were pursuing studies in a foreign country and Albanians that had finished studies abroad and had already returned to Albania (AIIS 2005, 23). The survey respondents answered several questions related to whether return to Albania and subsequent employment were attractive options (AIIS 2005, 23). The following results were reported:

The respondents who had decided not to return or were not sure if they would return to Albania in the next three years specified different answers for Albania's unattractiveness as a place of residence and work. The respondents that have decided not to return had mostly personal reasons for doing so - they either had no ties to Albania or had other personal reasons - while some of them simply perceived Albanian living standards as too low. ... [T]hose respondents that were not sure if they would return specified an unsatisfactory work ethic, difficulty in adaptation to Albanian life and scarce employment opportunities as their primary concern. (AIIS 2005, 23)

No further information on whether affluent Albanians who have lived abroad and return to Albania are targeted by criminal elements in Albanian society could be found