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# EXPLOSIVES INVOLVING INCIDENTS IN ALBANIA 2017 - 2022

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# Contents

Executive summary.....4

Introduction .....5

Explosive-involving attacks taking place in Albania .....6

Seized explosives.....12

Conclusions .....16

Recommendations .....18

Appendix 1: Explosives executed cases in Albania (June 2017 – 10 Dec 2022) .....20

Appendix 2: Explosives seized in Albania (May 2017 – 10 Dec 2022).....22

## Acronyms

App Appendix

C4 High explosive, that due to its chemical composition is mouldable and plastic

CCTV Closed-circuit television

EOD Explosive and Ordnance Disposal

LEA Law Enforcement Agency

OCG Organized Crime Group

Q Quarter

TNT Trinitrotoluene, a highly explosive substance

## Executive summary

The following study focuses exclusively on explosive involving incidents taking place in Albania during a period from June 2017 till early December 2022. After highlighting the potential that the usage of explosives for criminal or/and terrorist purposes, by their very nature, possesses to create major problems against the targets (being them individuals, businesses or institutions) but also against the country's security in general, the study analyses some characteristics of the explosives execution incidents in Albania, in terms of the most preferable techniques, used by the perpetrators, the geographical distribution of the explosive related cases, targets chosen, etc. On the other hand, the explosive seizure cases as well as arrests, by the police, of the explosive traders/traffickers, constitute another area of interest, elaborated in this study, due to the modus operandi of the dealers and the exploding devices preferred mostly in this market but, also for an obvious inverse relationship, as the statistics, provided in the study suggests, between cases of explosives executed and those seized by the police. In addition, despite the official reports, which actually remain incomplete, statistics provided in this study shows a moderate increasing trend regarding explosive involving incidents in Albania (both executed and seized ones) which should be seriously considered and dealt with by the Albanian public security agencies. The last part of the study consists of recommendations for the necessary measures to be undertaken by the state and private organizations in order to increase the security for their staff and the whole population at large.

## Introduction

During the past, till 2015, several documents of international institutions were mentioning an increasing trend of the use of explosives, particularly remotely detonated explosives, placed in vehicles and at private residences, reaching a peak of 72 explosions, occurring only in 2015<sup>1</sup>. In some other official Albanian documents, it was accepted that “[...] during 2017 [...] it was observed that criminal groups are increasingly using remote control explosives to protect their activity and also to eliminate their rivals”<sup>2</sup>. Despite some success of the public security agencies, against the illegal explosives’ usage, in the following years, there were 37 such attacks reported in 2019, a drop to about 25 ones per each of the two following years, with another increase to 35 explosives-involving attacks in 2022 (till 10 Dec)<sup>3</sup>. Such increasing trend, together with the explosives-seized cases, have contributed to keeping this phenomenon “much in fashion” in Albania, making it a serious security concern for the state law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and businesses. For several years, in succession, explosives-involving attacks taking place in Albania were part of reports of the national and international organizations, then, starting from 2018, the explosives were gradually missing in such reports, despite this type of incidents were continuing to take place and mentioned in the media. It seemed like, due to frequent occurrence and the fact that the explosive-involving incidents in Albania remain of relatively not very high profile, a kind of “familiarization” with them was taking roots, including not only the public opinion but also the specialized agencies. On the other hand, the Albanian official reports in such aspect remain very incomprehensive, focused more on the progress (sometimes very limited) compared to the past, failing to provide a clear picture and give answers to many questions related to explosive-involving incidents in Albania, such as the magnitude of such events, the estimated trends, their real effects to the country’s security situation in general, as well as what are some of the most sensitive regions, etc. A very crucial element that remains scarce, if not entirely missing in the official reports, is “the post incident results”. Thus, in cases of explosives executed, very rarely the perpetrators were identified and arrested. In most of such cases, the standard concluding phrase of the police reports is: “the experts are working to elucidate the details...”

Given such situation, the author of this study started independently to keep records of every explosive related incident (executed or prevented due to timely intervention by the police) as they were reported in media, for the period 01 June 2017 – 10 Dec 2022, creating two separate databases, for the explosives executed and the cases where the explosive possessors were identified and arrested in due time by the police. Thus, while some very few incidents of this nature may have passed unnoticed, hidden into the dense flow of other news, the rest (the majority, if not all) was carefully recorded. As such, huge data was collected (the appendixes 1 and 2 at the end of the study represent a slightly simplified version of the original databases) which enabled doing more in-depth analysis and drawing and providing evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of State (OSAC) Albania 2016 Crime and Safety Report (no longer accessible on internet).

<sup>2</sup> “SALWs, their ammunition and explosives control strategy, 2019-2024”, P.9.  
[https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Albania-1/ENG\\_Albanian\\_Strategy\\_on\\_Firearms\\_Control-24-06-2019.pdf](https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Albania-1/ENG_Albanian_Strategy_on_Firearms_Control-24-06-2019.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> For more details regarding the explosive-related cases taking place in Albania see the App 1 and 2, at the end of the study.

## Explosive-involving attacks taking place in Albania

The table below (fig.1.) – synthesizing part of the above-mentioned database, provides a general view, by a quantitative perspective, of the explosives involving incidents taking place in Albania during the period 01 June 2017 – 10 Dec 2022 (65.5 months). Based on that generalized data, it might be easily realized that the frequency of such events is about 3.5 incidents per month (out of which 2.4 executed, with different impacts against the target, while in about 1.1 cases per month, the attempt has failed, because the explosives assembled and being transported to the “end user”, were seized by the police). Due to the lack of data regarding explosives-involving incidents, taking place in other countries, it is hard to make comparisons and estimate the significance of the above figures, however, intuitively, they might be considered a serious concern, especially for a small country and population like Albania<sup>4</sup>.

	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021			2022 (10 Dec)			TOTAL		
	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury	Incidents	Fatality	Injury
Exploded	5	0	0	28	0	9	37	1	3	25	0	3	27	1	3	35	1	2	157	3	20
Failed/seized	4			15			10			12			17			16			74		
TOTAL	9			43			47			37			44			51			231		

**Fig. 1. Explosives involving incidents in Albania (01 Jun 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)**

In support of such concern may serve also the fact that there have been five cases during the analysed period (see App. 1) in which two explosions were activated, in almost the same time (Vlorë, on 2 May 2018, two explosions in 45min; Fushë Krujë, on 31 Jan 2019, two explosions in 30 min; Shkodër, on 5 Jan 2020, two explosions within 2 hours; and on 26 Mar 2022, almost simultaneously; Tirana, on 10 Aug 2022, also almost simultaneously two explosions) offering further evidence for a relative preference, given to explosives, as a “weapon of choice”, when some individuals in Albania, attempt to “settle the old scores” with their opponents. Several reasons seem influencing that preference, among which the most likely should be related to the intrinsic features of explosives, such as:

First, it is very difficult to prevent the explosive attacks and even more difficult to discover and hunt down the perpetrators after the attacks, due to the minimal material evidence left behind. Usually, almost all the evidence is destroyed by the explosive blast.

Second, such acts have very considerable effects, which are instant and involve physical and psychological consequences. They can immediately destroy personal life, economy and, in cases of targeting businesses, despite human or/and material losses, can significantly damage their reputation as well - all such effects, part of the perpetrators’ usual intent.

Third, they can cause collateral damages in human lives and property. Individuals or objects which might not be directly targeted, may also suffer serious consequences. This makes

<sup>4</sup> According to official data (Albanian Institute of Statistics) the Albanian population within the Albanian borders is about 2.8 million inhabitants, <http://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/treguesit-demografik%C3%AB-dhe-social%C3%AB/popullsia/publikimet/2022/popullsia-e-shqip%C3%ABris%C3%AB-1-janar-2022/>

sometimes difficult to determine which had been the real target of the attack, complicating thus the ensuing investigations conducted by the LEAs.

Last, these kinds of attacks have the capacity to spread fear for (likely) following attacks. As such, they can be successfully used by criminal groups as an intimidation means towards the rival groups or individuals, but on the other hand, these acts may discourage the legitimate businesses' employees (being they target, potential target, or perceived as vulnerable because of the colocation with the previous) to remain and work for their employer.

Regarding the human casualties caused by such attacks, as the table shows, there are 3 fatalities, in 3 separated attacks, during the period analysed, which constitute about 2% of the explosive-involving attacks, while in all such cases, during the same period of time, 20 targeted persons suffered explosive blast injuries, constituting 12.8% of the total attacks. Understandingly, the mortality might have been greater, since, due to uncontrolled effects of explosives, once activated, the injured people (not to consider other random subjects nearby) quite by chance escaped death. On the other hand, in three cases, the explosive charges, implanted either under the targeted persons' vehicle or house, were discovered in due time, by chance and deactivated or exploded in controlled way by EOD<sup>5</sup> teams (specifically, in Durres, on 19 Nov 2018, in Vlora, on 31 Jan 2019 and Rreshen, on 06 May 2019). Assumingly, the consequences might have been graver, had the perpetrators succeeded in their goal.

The database on explosives attacks (App.1) enables further analysis to consequently draw some related conclusions. Thus, explosives were used mostly against the businesses, while the motives remain unclear, whether such acts were caused due to the rivalry, a kind of grievance by nearby people, or even as extortion. Thus, in 34 cases, or 21.7% of the explosive executions, targets were businesses (coffee bars, shops, hotels). The properties (usually vehicles) of police officers were the target of the executed explosives in 10 cases<sup>6</sup>, the vehicles of prosecutors in two cases<sup>7</sup>, the houses of opposition activists (Democratic Party members) were targeted in 3 cases<sup>8</sup>. Given the fact that none of the police officers, prosecutors or opposition's activists were harmed during such attacks, while of the whole number of the targeted businesses, only in one case the owner was injured (Elbasan, 16 Nov 2018) it might be assumed that the purpose of the attacker in all these cases had been mostly to threaten and discourage the target, rather than causing serious harm to them. In addition, there were at least two cases when the explosive attack was repeated against the same target. Thus, a business (hotel) in Saranda, in ownership of M.M, was attacked twice (respectively on 9 Feb 2021 and 29 Jun 2022) while the house of A.P. in Fushë Kruja, was targeted three times (2 Oct 2020, 9 Mar and 18 Apr 2021). However, in both cases, only moderate material damages were inflicted. On June 11, 2020 a powerful explosive blast occurred in Tirana during the early hours of the morning. The explosive was placed at a restaurant in a central street of the capital. Although, no one was injured in the explosion, the restaurant was heavily damaged and two coffee shops, nearby, suffered also serious damages. Police managed to arrest the perpetrator, a person with high criminal records<sup>9</sup> and reportedly the competition was the cause of this criminal act. The location of the target in a highly populated area of the city, well-patrolled by the police and very close to the country's central state institutions, did not deter the perpetrator (and potential attack orderers) from carrying out this attack. On the other hand, the

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<sup>5</sup> EOD – here: Explosive and Ordnance Disposal

<sup>6</sup> Police officers targeted on 11 Jan 2018; 22 Apr 2019; 5 Jan 2020; 27 Jan 2020; 3 Sep 2021; 23 Apr 2022; 20 May 2022; 2 Jun 2022; 8 Jun 2022 and 15 Oct 2022 (App. 1)

<sup>7</sup> Two prosecutors targeted by explosions respectively on 21 Dec 2019 and 11 Mar 2021 (App.1).

<sup>8</sup> Opposition activists targeted respectively on 8 Aug 2019, 23 May 2021 and 19 Nov 2022 (App.1)

<sup>9</sup> Syri.net (2020). Author of the explosion at the bar near "Petro Nini" arrested. His witness : "the attack was ordered..." (in Albanian), <https://www.syri.net/kronike/346846/arrestohet-autori-i-tritolli-ne-lokalin-prane-petro-nini-deshmia-ne-polici-eksplozivi-ishte-porosi/>



serious damages suffered by two nearby businesses show the high possibility of being victim of an explosive attack as a collateral damage. Additionally, ATMs were targeted in two cases,<sup>10</sup> clearly for money appropriation aims.

Two mayors were target of explosions over this period of time, the first in Burrel (4 Nov 2017) while the second, in Lushnja (31 Dec 2019). The latter was openly challenged by his former driver, throwing an improvised explosive device in his office. Consequently, the mayor and his secretary were injured by the explosion blast while the attacker was arrested.

Only in 12 cases (out of 157 charges-exploded cases, constituting 7.6% of the total) the perpetrator, reportedly, was identified by name, while there is little, if any, information regarding their interrogation, motives, subsequent prosecution and related final court of law's penalizations. However, a more in-depth analysis of the perpetrators' identification circumstances, as reported in the media, suggest that rather than the investigations' outcome, it was the perpetrators' profile that has brought about such identification. Thus, in a couple of cases, the explosion's author openly challenged the target, ignoring any measure to mask his act (e.g., the above-mentioned attack against the Lushnja mayor, done by his former driver, who threw the improvised charge in his office, while the former was working in the office, or the case in Vlora, on 31 Mar 2019, where a person activated an explosive against the house of his father, due to their ownership disputes). In some other cases (out of 12 mentioned above), the actions of the perpetrators have been very amateurish, leaving much evidence around (especially on the nearby CCTV cameras) regarding their acts, enabling the police to spot them and arrest in relatively short time.

There are four cases where the perpetrators have used explosives against public critical infrastructure, which make them standing out of all other explosive-executed cases. Thus, on 18 May 2018 a local hidro-power station in Kukës was heavily damaged with explosives, while in Fushë-Krujë, as the result of explosive charges against pylons of a high voltage power grid<sup>11</sup>, done twice (respectively on 07 Jan 2019 and 18 Mar 2019 in different pylons) a relatively large area was left without energy for several hours. In another case, in Delvinë, the local water distribution system was slightly damaged by explosion (4 Apr 2019) causing some water supplying problems to the local population. For sure, related investigation by the competent authorities should have followed after each of such incidents, but nothing was made public regarding the results of these investigations, in terms of authors, motives, etc. Nevertheless, despite the terrorist-like patterns in each case, such possibility seems less likely, even though should not be entirely ruled out as an option. At least in the cases of power grid attacks, the most likely motivation seems the local population grievance, against some cement factories located there, causing pollution which has provoked local protests in that area time after time. In support of this conclusion seems also the explosion location. While the author(s) might have chosen to damage some more remote and hard-to-reconstruct pylons, they preferred to do that in that specific region, which, for many analysts, not only caused the factories to stop working, but was deliberately were giving a hint regarding their specific intention against these factories. Another point of interest is the fact that, even though the area, around these factories is relatively well guarded by public and private security, the perpetrators managed to achieve their purpose, seemingly leaving no evidence to track them down, which speaks for their skills and familiarization with the areas (most likely belonging to the local population). Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that, based on some early signs, preconditions for terrorist-motivated attacks with employment of explosives are present in Albania as well. Thus, on 12 Nov 2017, Albanian State Police arrested a 29-year-old man in Pogradec. The police found in his

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<sup>10</sup> ATMs targeted in Ura Vajgurore, on 4 Jan 2019 and Kavajë, on 26 Aug 2019 (App.1)

<sup>11</sup> The power transmission line damaged with explosion is part of the Tirana-2-Podgorica High-Voltage line, which accounts for 50% of energy transmission in the country.

apartment explosives (TNT) and a significant amount of ammunition. The man has been considered a high-risk person<sup>12</sup> by the Albanian security authorities. Returned from Syria, he was intercepted by the Albanian intelligent agencies while having communications with other persons in Shkodra, arrested that time as well for plotting an attack against the Israeli football team in Albania (considered as religiously motivated)<sup>13</sup>. It is assessed that the total number of the Albanians who joined ISIS during 2011-2014 is about 144 people, out of which, about 45 have returned to Albania so far<sup>14</sup>.

It is interesting that no foreign citizens, based in Albania, have been targeted so far in all the explosives-involving attacks. However, this fact may change in the future, especially in case of a terrorist motivated act.

The last field (column) of the explosives-executed database (App.1) presents the severity of each of such case, via a four colour-coded categorisation: Red="very severe", Orange="severe", Dark-yellow="moderate", Bright-yellow="low or insignificant". Based on that categorisation it seems that in six cases (3.8% of the total) the outcome of explosion was "Very severe". In 28 other cases (17.8% of the total) the consequence was "Severe". In 19 cases (12% of the total) such effect was assessed as "Moderate", while the rest, in 104 cases, or 66.4% of the total, the explosion effect was "Low or insignificant". These figures, clearly demonstrate that, despite relatively high incidence of explosives-involving attacks (2.4 per month) the final intent of the perpetrators seems mostly to discourage or to extort money (or other benefits) from the target, rather than killing him/her or annihilate their business or property. Such conclusion, leads to another deduction regarding the nature of these attacks, as mostly being "crime-motivated". In case of terrorist-motivated explosives attacks, as cases of this nature have shown in other countries, the consequences would certainly be much more severe.

As the App.1 suggests, the type of explosive used during the analysed period was predominantly TNT. Hand grenades were used in five cases (3.2% of the total explosives executed cases), while C4, reportedly, was used in two cases (1.2% of the total). This "preference" of the perpetrators for the TNT, compared to other exploding materials, is explained mostly with the availability and the relative easiness of finding it, as well as the affordable price for this explosive in the illicit weapon market. Currently illicit arms trafficking in Albania accounts for a total of 18% of the OCGs' revenue (it is the second most profitable means of revenue after drug trafficking, which accounts for 42%)<sup>15</sup>. However, other alternative sources for arms acquisition are exploited by the criminal rings as well. There have been several cases in support of this conclusion, the most sensational one, was the case when, on 26 Oct 2022, the police, in one incursion, in Batër village (Dibër), seized 1.16 ton of TNT and 3815 electrical fuses, arresting two persons (see App.2). Such huge amount of TNT was

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<sup>12</sup> Sot.com (2016). Investigations, Ervin Duka in communication with Albanians fighting in Syria (in Albanian), <https://sot.com.al/aktualitet/hetimet-ervin-duka-komunikim-me-shqiptar%C3%AB-q%C3%AB-luftonin-n%C3%AB-siri>

<sup>13</sup> In 2020 the arrested were cleared from all charges, "Zëri"(2020) "Suspicion regarding a terrorist attack in Albania-Israel football match, court decision for 4 arrests" (in Albanian) <https://www.zeri.info/sport/349445/dyshimet-per-sulm-terrorist-ne-ndeshjen-shqiperi-izrael-merret-vendimi-per-4-te-arrestuarit/>

<sup>14</sup> Among the Albanians who joined ISIS during 2011-2014, it is believed that about 28 were killed there, 37 (women and children) were repatriated by the Albanian government during 2020-2021, while the repatriation for the rest is ongoing. PREVEX, 2021. D5.2 Working Paper on enabling environments, drivers, and occurrence/non-occurrence of violent extremism. [https://www.prevex-balkan-mena.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/D5.2-FINAL\\_3019-1.pdf](https://www.prevex-balkan-mena.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/D5.2-FINAL_3019-1.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Fabian Zhilla, Besfort Lamallari "Organised Crime-Threat assessment in Albania", P.16 [https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Threat\\_Assessment\\_of\\_Albanian\\_Organised.pdf](https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Threat_Assessment_of_Albanian_Organised.pdf)

explained with the presence of some mines in that region, and the routine use of TNT for the mines related operations, which might have been exploited by the traffickers and perpetrators for acquiring such huge exploding materials.

Earlier, on 09 Jan 2019, a considerable amount of weapons and ammunitions arsenal was thieved from the Albanian Navy Base of Pashaliman, near Vlora (one of the two navy bases, considered as highly secure). According to the Albanian State Police, the thieves have been collaborating with people working inside the base, since the guards had left their posts shortly before the supposed theft time. Among the ammunition that was stolen there were 60 hand grenades. However, according to the databases (App.1 and 2) as it was mentioned earlier, the use of grenades in Albania, compared to other explosives involving attacks, is minimal. Thus, arms and grenades thieved at the military base are suspected to have been stolen for the purposes of later sell (as mentioned above, the illicit arms market is an important revenue source for the OCGs in Albania). On the other hand, the case of Navy Base in Pashaliman shows the ability of OCGs to penetrate and find collaborators for their purposes of weaponry acquisition, even in some supposed highly secured and hard-to-get-in places, such as military bases.

Improvised explosive “self-activated” traps were used in three cases (during the analysed period) causing injuring of the supposedly aimed targets in 100% of the cases, once they inadvertently activated the hidden trigger. Thus, the first such attack, taking place in Tirana, on 15 May 2018, resulted in injuring both the couple, the owners of the targeted house; the two other ones, in Gjirokastra, on 25 Feb 2019 and again in Tirana on 9 Feb 2021, resulted respectively with one injured person. Such “effectiveness” of this type of explosive usage (more precisely the triggering technique employed) might tempt other, more frequent applications of this method in the future, with likely increase of the number of victims, especially, among others, due to the fact that media reports provide almost any details regarding how the trap was devised and activated, offering thus free and easily available “know how”. On the other hand, there is one case, where the perpetrator(s) used a drone to carry the explosive charge and land it inside a factory to overpass the encircling walls, and defeat the other related security measures in place<sup>16</sup>. While, due to the politically charged atmosphere of that time, this incident passed almost unnoticed, it, along with the remotely activated charges (usually via the mobile phones) may herald a shift into a stage of more sophisticated explosive devices and methods, to guarantee greater success for the perpetrators, against the target and in avoiding actions of the public security agencies in their efforts to crack them down.

Regarding the geographical distribution of explosive involving attacks, as the table (fig.2) and the chart (fig.3.) show, they have occurred mostly in Tirana (21.8%); Vlora (14.7%); Fushë-Krujë (12.8%); Durrës (~9%) and Shkodër (~7.7%).

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<sup>16</sup> Attack with drone-delivered explosion took place in Durrës, on 10 June 2021, against the business (a factory) owned by L.K., a well-known businessman and politician.

Sn	Regions	Incidents		Deaths	Injuries
		No	%		
1	Berat	1	0.64%		
2	Burrel	1	0.64%		
3	Delvinë	3	1.92%		
4	Dibër	3	1.92%		
5	Durrës	14	8.97%		
6	Elbasan	5	3.21%	1	1
7	Fier	3	1.92%		1
8	Fushë Krujë	20	12.82%		
9	Gjrokastër	4	2.56%		2
10	Kavajë	2	1.28%		
11	Krujë	1	0.64%		
12	Kukës	2	1.28%		
13	Laç	2	1.28%		
14	Lezhë	9	5.77%		
15	Lushnje	6	3.85%		
16	Mat	1	0.64%		
17	Përrenjas	1	0.64%		
18	Pogradec	5	3.21%	1	
19	Rrëshen	1	0.64%		
20	Sarandë	3	1.92%		
21	Shkodër	12	7.69%		3
22	Tiranë	34	21.79%	1	8
23	Vlorë	23	14.74%		3
Total		156	100.00%	3	15

Fig.2. Explosives involving attacks by regions (01 Jun 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

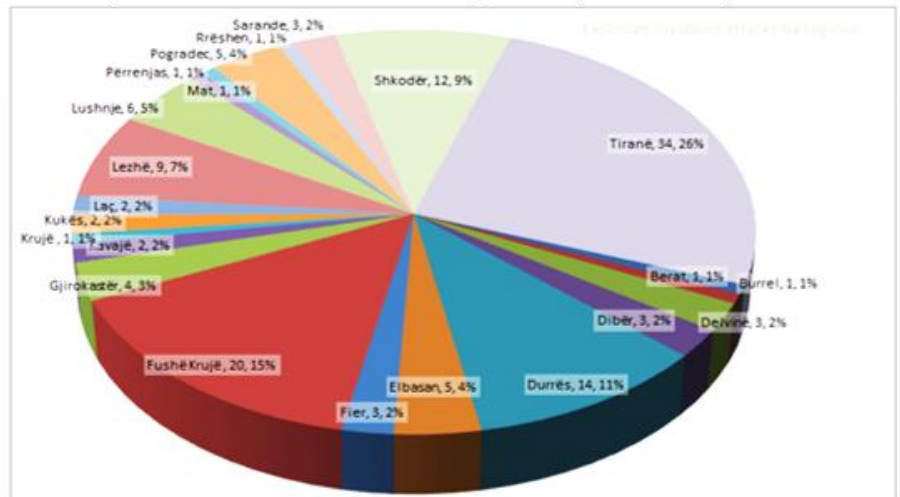


Fig. 3 Explosives involving attacks by regions (01 Jun 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

Sn	Region	Cases	%
1	Elbasani	10	13.5%
2	Fier	2	2.7%
3	Krujë	2	2.7%
4	Kukës	2	2.7%
5	Kurbin	2	2.7%
6	Lezha	12	16.2%
7	Pogradec	2	2.7%
8	Shkodër	3	4.1%
9	Tirana	9	12.2%
10	Vlora	9	12.2%
11	Others	21	28.4%
Total		74	100.0%

Fig.4. Explosive seized by regions (01 June 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

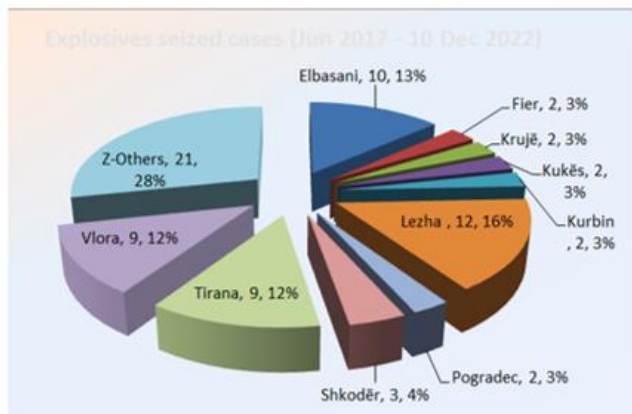


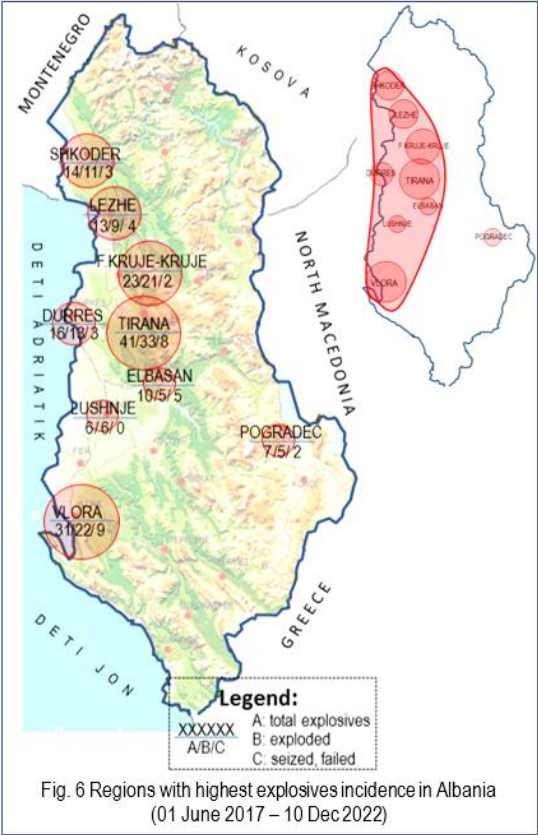
Fig. 5 Explosives seized cases by regions (01 Jun 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

Taking in consideration also the explosive seized cases (table in fig.4 and chart in fig.5) Lezha, a small city about 50 km northwest of Tirana, emerges as highly affected by the explosive incidents as well (with 16.2% of the explosives seized occurring there). The map in the fig.6 offers a better view where the explosive-involving incidents (executed and seized, combined) have taken place the most. Clearly, it is the “crescent” region of Tirana-Shkodra-Durrës-Vlora.

## Seized explosives

The database on the seized explosives cases during the period Jun 2017 – 10 Dec 2022 (a slightly simplified version is presented in the App.2, at the end) represents another valuable source of information with regards to the explosives-involving concerns in Albania. Thus, during this period, there were 74 cases reported, where the police have managed to intervene in due time and arrest the explosive possessors/transporters. Understandably, that was achieved after intelligence collected by the police, regarding “who”, “what”, “when” and “where”. Even though, compared to the number of cases where the perpetrators have achieved their goal of exploding their charges, the seized cases number is lower (about 47% of the executed ones, or a ratio of about 1:2 in favour of executed cases) it might be considered a success from the police, especially given the problems that the state police is still suffering, mostly regarding the level of manning, equipment, etc. In more concrete terms, the database in App.2 shows that there were 96 persons identified and arrested, in total, during the police operations of hunting down the explosions in Albania (however, it was never made known if the arrested person in each case, was a “maker”, “placer” or just “transporter”). On the other hand, hardly any of them belonged to middle levels, let alone the high levels of criminals’ hierarchy in Albania (at least, not such information was released by the LEAs). In addition to the arrested persons, 106 explosive charges and a large number of other auxiliary parts were seized (in addition to the 1.16 ton TNT and 3815 electrical fuses, seized in one case, on 26 Oct 2022, mentioned earlier).

Regarding the weaponry, possessed by the suspects during these operations, police have seized: 21 AK-47s, 8 rifles, 29 pistols, 2 shotguns, 1 sniper rifle and 2 rifles equipped with optical sights, 3 hunting rifles, 1 machinegun, as well as huge ammunition, including armour piercing one. In 20 cases, drug was seized as well, mostly cannabis, while cocaine and heroin were seized in one separate case per each, either being transported together with the explosives and weapons, or in the suspects’ houses or their living/activity premises, searched by the police immediately after they were arrested on possession of explosives. Clearly such enormous amount of armament and ammunition, but also their type, as well as the drugs carried and seized together, indicate the sophistication of the organized crime and the developed scale of the weaponry market in Albania, mentioned more specifically earlier. In addition, it should be assumed that significant amount of weaponry and ammunition, looted from the military depots in Albania during the anarchy of the year 1997 (despite partially collected by state via different programs, while a certain part disappeared through the



international illicit market) is still circulating in criminals and other individuals' hands<sup>17</sup>. A clear indicator for the easiness of weapon acquisition in Albania is also the fact that almost after each crime, the vehicle and armament used, have been found later burned, in order to avoid the perpetrators being tracked down by the investigators. On the other hand the above figures show the level of challenge that the law enforcement agencies have to face, in their efforts to tackle the organized crime in Albania.

C4 type explosive was seized in 8 cases, but it is unclear what the total amount of C4 was in these seizures (only in three cases, due to the related reports' specification, the amount of C4, combined, was 3.6 kg). Similar to the explosives-execution cases, the majority of charges seized were of TNT type, which, as elaborated earlier, is explained with the availability and affordability of this explosive type in Albania. In 12 cases, hand grenades were seized as well (62 pieces altogether). In one case (on 31 Oct 2022) three anti-tank mines were seized, along with other explosives (most likely to exploit their explosive content – about 5.7kg TNT per each). The last examples show the perpetrators' flexibility and "creativity", in their efforts to exploit and modify any material and equipment available, with the potential to be used as an effective exploding device.

In 16 cases (21.6% of the total cases) the charges seized were equipped with remote controlled mechanisms (controlled via mobile phone) a preference for these triggers in the market due to their reliability in attacking the aimed target and the comfortability for the perpetrators to act unnoticed and secure. As for any other market item, demand and supply might cause in the near future, that the price and availability for remote controlled explosives to enable a more massive usage for these items, posing thus a greater risk for the targeted subjects, but also for the general security in Albania<sup>18</sup>.

In 46 of the explosive-seized cases (out of 74, or in 67% of the total) the operation was planned in advance (in 2022 there were 14 pre-planned operations, or 30% of all pre-planned operations) which proves the increasing capacity of the police and other law enforcement agencies in Albania, in collecting related intelligence, as almost the only and most effective way in dealing with such crime.

After analysing separately, the executed and seized explosives' cases, a combination of data from both tables of App. 1 and App.2, enables obtaining a new chart (Fig.7) which helps drawing some other, very important conclusions. First of all, it seems a moderate growing trend of the executed explosives over the years (red dotted line). A growing trend seems also regarding the explosives cases where the police have managed to intervene in due time and seize the explosives (as well as other auxiliary components of the seized charges) while being transported by illegal traders (blue dotted line). In addition, some peaking points are easily recognisable in Q (quarter) 1/2019, Q4/2019, Q4/2020, Q2/2021, Q2/2022. People familiar with the political situation in Albania will easily recall that these periods coincide with respectively the political turmoil of 2019 (violent protests of the opposition during March-May of that year, and the similar political atmosphere that was associated with the local elections of 30 June 2019, followed by many opposition disputes especially in some opposition strongholds, such as Shkodra) general elections of 25 Apr 2021, intra-opposition disputes of early 2022, which in some cases escalated in violent clashes between fractions supporters, etc. There are also two cases (out of three in total, as mentioned earlier) of the opposition

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<sup>17</sup> It is estimated that only AK-47s, looted from the military depots, total to about 226,000 pieces. Zhillari, Lamallari, "Evolution of the Albanian Organized Crime Groups", P.23.

[https://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/evolution\\_of\\_the\\_albanian\\_organized\\_crime\\_groups.pdf](https://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/evolution_of_the_albanian_organized_crime_groups.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Reportedly, the actual price for remotely controlled charges, in the Albanian illicit market, is between EUR 1,500 – 3,000. Alert.al (2020). "Explosives controlled remotely by mobile phones" (in Albanian) at: <https://alert.al/kryesore/mina-me-telekomande-te-lidhura-me-celular-ne-shitje-per-3-mije-euro/>

activists being targeted by explosives attacks, which coincide with such high political tensions, specifically taking place on 8 Aug 2019 (local elections<sup>19</sup>) and 23 May 2021 (general elections<sup>20</sup>).

Interestingly, three last cases (out of four in total) where the critical infrastructure was

attacked with explosives, took place in January – April 2019, in a volatile political atmosphere, when the opposition parliament members relinquished their parliamentary mandates and a series of violent protests took place in the main squares of Tirana.

Considering the above, it might be concluded that there is a certain correlation between the political situation and the explosives involving incidents (a significant indicator of the country's security/criminal situation in general).

Such conclusion seems rational, given also the stress that the public security agencies in Albania (police in particular, which remains understaffed and unsatisfactorily equipped) are put due to political tensions. Reportedly, in many cases, certain contingents of the State Police were moved from their permanent district bases, to Tirana, to augment the police forces there, while dealing with the opposition protests, as well as providing law-and-order for political parties meetings during the electoral campaigns. It happened very frequently during the Q1/2019, but also during the electoral campaigns, before and after that year. Such temporary police redeployments have overstretched not only the dislocated forces, but also the police contingents, remaining in their parent units, who had to fulfil, with fewer forces, their public security duties, turning to become more difficult than normal, due to the same political atmosphere in their own districts.

Interestingly, according to the chart, Q3/2017 represents the lowest level of explosive executed cases, for the whole period in analysis, despite there were general elections on 25 June, that year. However, rather than a rebuttal, it goes in line and supports the above conclusion, because it is well known that, due to an accord, reached in May 2017, between the two leaders of the Socialist Party (in power) and Democratic Party (the main opposition party) which resulted in power sharing, giving the DP some ministerial and other important posts, for several months, before and after the elections, the whole electoral campaign was characterized by low tones (something unique for Albania). Such low political tension persisted for a couple of months after the election, to gradually increase again, upon the regaining by the SP (as the winner of the elections) of all the positions, previously given to DP.

While there is a convincing correlation between the political unrest in Albania and the frequency of the explosives execution incidents during the analysed period, the chart clearly shows also an inverse relationship between cases of executed explosives and those seized by the police. It seems like, in an almost perfect order, wherever the number of explosive-seized cases (blue line) increases, the number of explosives executed cases (red line) decreases and vice-versa

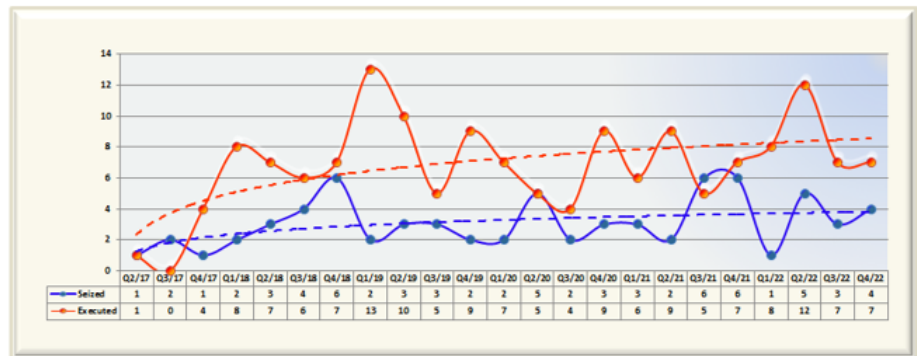


Fig.7. The trend of explosives-related incidents, 01 Jun. 2017 – 10 Dec.2022

<sup>19</sup> Referred local elections were held on 30 June 2019, with much tensions and violence before and after them.

<sup>20</sup> Referred general elections were held on 25 Apr 2021, characterized with violence and even fatalities, while much disputes characterized the post-election period for several months.

(except actually the Q2/2022). Understandably, any case where police have duly intervened and seized explosives (as well as arresting their possessors) not only affects physically the explosive usage act(s), by arresting the involved people and depriving them by some explosive materials, but also, psychologically, it conveys a strong message to the criminal rings, forcing them to refrain (at least for a while) and do their own “cost-benefit” estimation on the usefulness of following such methods.



## Conclusions

As the analysis of the explosives-involving incidents shows, especially the monthly frequency of about 3.5 incidents (2.4 executed and 1.1 seized) the explosives usage in Albania over the last 5.5 years (particularly remotely detonated ones, placed in vehicles and at private residences or businesses), was a preferable means in the hands of criminals against their targets, being they either rival OCGs or third parties. Unfortunately, turning to become a “much in fashion” means for dispute solving, explosives seem to be employed also by other wrongdoers, as a “weapon of choice”, causing such phenomenon to remain a security concern in Albania, with much physical damages and psychological effects to the targets and the Albanian society at large.

So far, explosives seem mostly applied by the organized crime groups (OCGs) as a means of turf wars against their rivals. However, the explosives’ involving attacks, used as a terrorist method should not be ruled out, especially because of some latent such tendencies/attempts that have been seen sporadically, time after time. Furthermore, today *“terrorism and organized crime are increasingly blurred, [...thus] differentiating between the two can be counterproductive”*<sup>21</sup>.

Due to this difficulty to differentiate between criminal and terrorist acts, there have been several cases where explosive-involving attacks in Albania were mistakenly classified as “terrorist acts”, making the security situation look murkier. In fact, for the moment, the risk of terrorist-motivated explosives attacks seems low.

In cases of being motivated by terrorist goals, such explosives attacks would have different targets, especially disruption of community normal life and critical infrastructure, while the explosive charges would be much larger, in order to inflict heavier damages. In such cases, in addition to the above, some major projects/companies in Albania, international ones in particular, might be a preferable target as well, due to their high profile (seen as EU major projects). Even though the terrorist threat in Albania is assessed as “low”, employment of the modern communication technologies for radicalisation propaganda and other related activities might grow very concerning. Terrorist groups seem spread in several communication platforms in order to better disseminate their ideologies and extremism rhetoric. The likely connection of the radical elements with the foreign fighters or other terrorist organizations may become an inciting factor for terrorist activities<sup>22</sup>, conducted by extremist groups or even “lone wolves”. This becomes more appalling given the prevention/reaction capacities of the Albanian state which remain limited and still “in the making”. Critical infrastructure in Albania is exposed to attacks and remains vulnerable even in well-guarded areas (as attacks against the power grid in Fushë-Kruja showed).

Despite the nature of attack – conducted by the organized crime or terrorists (or both) – the means (including explosives) will be at the perpetrators’ choice. In such circumstances, adequate measures should be taken in advance, by any organization, in order to prevent, mitigate and recover after such attack(s) to protect their personnel, facilities and reputation. As such, apart from the public security agencies, these categories of physical risks should be recognized and taken in consideration also by private enterprises, especially the middle and

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<sup>21</sup> Mark Shaw, Prem Mahadevan. “When terrorism and organized crime meet”. [https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/PP6-7\\_2018-1.pdf](https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/PP6-7_2018-1.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Albanian State Intelligent Service, Public Report 2021 (in Albanian). Available at <https://www.shish.gov.al/files/Public%20Report%202021%20Shqip.pdf>.

big ones. That requires continuous assessment of explosive related risks, adequate prevention and mitigation measures, incident reporting and ensuing investigation processes in place, while recovery measures should always be an important part of dealing with these risks.

As the so far evidence shows, the target of the OCGs when using explosives has never been the international community/individuals in Albania. However, they may be exposed to incidental risks as part of “collateral damage”, while being caught unintentionally in the “line of fire”. In the contrary, in case of terrorism-motivated attacks, the international community and businesses will be some of their preferable targets.

The illicit arms trafficking in Albania constitutes an important part of OCGs’ “revenues portfolio” (the second one, with 18%, after drug trafficking). That certainly makes the criminal groups to sustain their operations in this field, creating thus and keeping a volatile, even encouraging environment for explosive usage, at least for the foreseeable future.

## Recommendations

Direct relationship between political/social unrest and criminality level in a country, as proved above, calls for the political factors to avoid harsh political confrontations and try to play their legitimate roles and functions within the democratic institutions and in constitutional way.

Since during the explosives-involved attacks, the post blast material evidence to be exploited by investigators to trace the perpetrators is minimal, if any, the best way to tackle this phenomenon is intelligence and based on that, prevention of such attacks before taking place. For that purpose, the LEAs should enhance their intelligence gathering capacities, along with risk assessments and prognosis analyses.

Given the relative easiness in acquiring explosives and related auxiliary components in illicit market in Albania, any effort by LEAs and other state agencies in tightening (if not completely closing) of supply sources of such materials, would significantly contribute to lowering the explosives involving attacks' incidence. In that context, any move (import, export) of such materials for industrial purposes (mines, big construction projects) and military activities should be strictly controlled, documented, inspected and verified.

State and private companies (especially middle and large ones) should prepare realistic scenarios, based on risk assessments, to orient and support security plans and related preparation, in coordination with public security agencies, to sustain deliberate acts against them, including explosives-involving attacks. In that vein, special attention should be given to training of the personnel in general and those dealing with mailboxes and visitors, in particular, to prevent the risk of "parcel bombs" and other hazardous substances being passed into the companies' offices and sites. Important part of their personnel training in sustaining of explosives attacks should be how to react individually and collectively in order to mitigate their effects.

Since in case of explosives-involving attacks conducted by terrorists the destruction effect is expected to be much higher than already seen in Albania, while, on the other hand, earthquake of 2019 and recent floods exposed the limited capacities of the state regarding search-and-rescue (SAR) operations, it should be considered of the first priority building and enhancing such capacities, along with the first aid and evacuation ones, up to a quality and size level that would allow successfully handling such scenarios. Such capacity (human and material) should be rightly allocated in central and local civil emergency agencies while the staff should be appropriately motivated, payed, trained and tested for their capabilities to accomplish such missions.

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U.S. Department of State (OSAC) Albania 2016 Crime and Safety Report.

## Appendix 1: Explosives executed cases in Albania (01 June 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

Sn	Victims		Target:	Incident location	Date of incident	Year	Explosiv type	Severity	Sn	Victims		Target:	Incident location	Date of incident	Year	Explosiv type	Severity
	Deaths	Injured								Deaths	Injured						
1	No	No	H.T.	Fushë-Krujë	02.Jun	2017	TNT		66	No	No	P. F.	Tiranë	1-Dec	2019	TNT	
2	No	No	N.R.	Burrel	04.Nov	2017	TNT		67	No	No	M.H.	Tiranë	6-Dec	2019	TNT	
3	No	No	Z.S.	Dibër	08.Dec	2017	TNT		68	No	No	A.K.	Vlorë	21-Dec	2019	TNT	
4	No	No	Ç Family	Elbasan	25.Dec	2017	TNT		69	No	No	P.K.	Tiranë	27-Dec	2019	TNT	
5	No	No	K.M.	Tiranë	30.Dec	2017	TNT		70	No	2	F. T.	Lushnjë	31-Dec	2019	TNT	
6	No	No	?	Shkodër	02.Jan	2018	TNT		71	No	No	Secretary P. M.	Shkodër	5-Jan	2020	TNT	
7	No	No	F.P. M.P.	Shkodër	6-Jan	2018	TNT		72	No	No	K. B.	Shkodër	6-Jan	2020	TNT	
8	No	No	?	Vlorë	06.Jan	2018	TNT		73	No	No	O. B.	Durrës	27-Jan	2020	TNT	
9	No	No	R.K.	Pogradec	10.Jan	2018	TNT		74	No	No	M. S.	Durrës	30-Jan	2020	TNT	
10	No	No	A.V.	Fushë-Krujë	11.Jan	2018	TNT/Grenades		75	No	No	N. A.	Shkodër	6-Feb	2020	TNT	
11	No	3	L.K.	Shkodër	13.Jan	2018	TNT		76	No	No	A. M.	Lezhë	15-Feb	2020	TNT	
12	No	1	G.L.	Gjrokastër	23.Jan	2018	TNT		77	No	No	K.H.	Tiranë	28-Feb	2020	TNT	
13	No	No	S.Sh.	Lushnjë	23.Jan	2018	TNT		78	No	No	V. Z.	Delvinë	3-May	2020	TNT	
14	No	No	?	Vlorë	09.Apr	2018	TNT		79	No	No	B. H.	Tiranë	12-May	2020	TNT	
15	No	No	E.A.	Fier	16.Apr	2018	TNT		80	No	No	E. M.	Tiranë	30-May	2020	TNT	
16	No	1	E.M.	Fier	21.Apr	2018	TNT		81	No	No	?	Vlorë	4-Jun	2020	TNT	
17	No	No	F.B. N.B.	Vlorë	02.May	2018	TNT		82	No	No	A. K.	Tiranë	11-Jun	2020	TNT	
18	No	No	E.Ç.	Vlorë	02.May	2019	TNT		83	No	No	E. K.	Fushë-Krujë	14-Jul	2020	TNT	
19	No	2	L.S.	Tiranë	15.May	2018	TNT		84	No	No	Gj. Ll.	Tiranë	21-Jul	2020	TNT	
20	No	No	?	Kukës	18.May	2018	TNT		85	No	No	M. T.	Elbasan	4-Aug	2020	TNT	
21	No	No	G.D.	Tiranë	27.Jul	2018	TNT		86	No	3	P. Gj.	Tiranë	15-Sep	2020	TNT	
22	No	No	LI.B.	Laç	03.Sep	2018	TNT		87	No	No	B. N.	Durrës	8-Oct	2020	TNT	
23	No	No	B.M.	Fushë-Krujë	10.Sep	2018	TNT		88	No	No	E. N.	Lezhë	30-Oct	2020	TNT	
24	No	No	B.F.	Pogradec	16.Sep	2018	TNT		89	No	No	Xh. B.	Vlorë	30-Oct	2020	TNT	
25	No	No	J.Ç.	Vlorë	23.Sep	2018	TNT		90	No	No	S. H.	Durres	2-Nov	2020	TNT	
26	No	No	Ch.Factory	Kukës	23.Sep	2018	TNT		91	No	No	T.Ç.	Elbasan	5-Nov	2020	TNT	
27	No	No	M.Family	Fushë-Krujë	07.Oct	2018	TNT		92	No	No	L. Gj.	Lezhë	19-Nov	2020	TNT	
28	No	1	A.A.	Elbasan	16.Nov	2018	Grenade		93	No	No	H. F.	Shkodër	19-Nov	2020	TNT	
29	No	No	A.D.	Durrës	19.Nov	2018	TNT		94	No	No	L. Gj.	Lezhë	11-Dec	2020	TNT	
30	No	1	A. A.	Vlorë	23.Nov	2018	Cell phone triggered		95	No	No	N. B.	Shkodër	26-Dec	2020	TNT	
31	No	No	I. L.	Fushë-Krujë	23.Nov	2018	TNT		96	No	No	S. N.	Tiranë	23-Jan	2021	TNT	
32	No	No	N. Family	Vlorë	14.Dec	2018	TNT		97	No	1	Gj. M.	Tiranë	9-Feb	2021	TNT	
33	No	No	V. B.	Vlorë	20.Dec	2018	TNT		98	No	No	M.M.	Sarande	9-Feb	2021	TNT	
34	No	No	ATM Bank	Berat	04.Jan	2019	TNT		99	No	No	P. Ç.	Pogradec	21-Feb	2021	TNT	
35	No	No	Power Grid Pylor	Fushë-Krujë	07.Jan	2019	TNT		100	No	No	A. P.	Fushë-Krujë	9-Mar	2021	TNT	
36	No	No	D.H.	Tiranë	22.Jan	2019	TNT		101	No	No	A. M.	Tiranë	11-Mar	2021	TNT	
37	No	No	N. M.	Gjrokastër	25.Jan	2019	TNT		102	No	No	A. A.	Lushne	5-Apr	2021	TNT	
38	No	No	A. B.	Vlorë	31.Jan	2019	TNT		103	No	No	A. Xh.	Vlorë	12-Apr	2021	TNT	
39	No	No	R. Ç.	Fushë-Krujë	31.Jan	2019	TNT		104	No	No	Sh. N.	Kurbin	15-Apr	2021	TNT	
40	No	No	E. C.	Fushë-Krujë	31.Jan	2019	TNT		105	No	No	A. P.	Krujë	18-Apr	2021	TNT	
41	No	1	V. Ll.	Gjrokastër	25.Feb	2019	TNT		106	No	No	I. V.	Durres	23-May	2021	TNT	
42	No	No	V. S.	Tiranë	28.Feb	2019	TNT		107	No	No	B. Ç.	Lushnje	29-May	2021	TNT	
43	No	No	Power Grid Pylor	Fushë-Krujë	18.Mar	2019	TNT		108	No	No	D. K.	Vlorë	9-Jun	2021	TNT	
44	No	No	H.Q.	Durrës	20.Mar	2019	TNT		109	No	No	L. K.	Durres	10-Jun	2021	TNT	Drone
45	No	No	A. Ç.	Fushë-Krujë	28.Mar	2019	TNT		110	No	No	D. A.	Lezhë	20-Jun	2021	TNT	
46	No	No	F. Q.	Vlorë	31.Mar	2019	TNT		111	No	No	E. D.	Dibër	27-Aug	2021	TNT	
47	1	No	E.Ç.	Pogradec	01.Apr	2019	Grenade		112	No	No	L. K.	Durres	3-Sep	2021	TNT	
48	No	No	Water distrib	Delvinë	04.Apr	2019	TNT		113	No	No	?	Tiranë	5-Sep	2021	?	
49	No	No	S. X.	Fushë-Krujë	07.Apr	2019	TNT		114	No	No	?	Vlorë	7-Sep	2021	?	
50	No	No	S.Z.	Vlorë	11.Apr	2019	TNT		115	No	1	K.Z.	Vlorë	26-Sep	2021	Hand Grenade	
51	No	No	Dh. K.	Fushë-Krujë	18.Apr	2019	TNT		116	No	No	E. H.	Krujë	5-Nov	2021	TNT	
52	No	No	?	Fushë-Krujë	19.Apr	2019	TNT		117	No	No	R. K.	Tiranë	6-Nov	2021	TNT	
53	No	No	L. Ç.	Tiranë	22.Apr	2019	TNT		118	No	No	O. I.	Tiranë	7-Nov	2021	TNT	
54	No	No	A. Gj.	Rrëshen	06.May	2019	TNT		119	No	No	A. H.	Fier	26-Nov	2021	C4	
55	No	No	Textile Factory	Vlorë	04.Jun	2019	TNT		120	No	1	I. S.	Vlorë	19-Dec	2021	C4	
56	No	No	A. T.	Lushnje	06.Jun	2019	TNT		121	No	No	?	Tiranë	20-Dec	2021	?	
57	No	No	Greek Memorial	Delvinë	23.Jul	2019	TNT		122	1	No	E. R.	Elbasan	30-Dec	2021	TNT	
58	No	No	?	Tiranë	26.Jul	2019	TNT		123	No	No	B. S.	Vlorë	3-Jan	2022	TNT	
59	No	No	V. D.	Tiranë	05.Aug	2019	TNT		124	No	No	V. K.	Vlorë	5-Jan	2022	TNT	
60	No	No	T. K.	Lezhë	08.Aug	2019	TNT		125	No	2	M.H. S. D.	Tiranë	7-Jan	2022	TNT	
61	No	No	ATM Bank	Kavajë	26-Aug	2019	TNT		126	No	No	N. S.	Krujë	21-Jan	2022	TNT	
62	No	No	AP Family	Fushë-Krujë	2-Oct	2019	TNT		127	No	No	A. D.	Durres	24-Jan	2022	TNT	
63	No	No	A. B.	Tiranë	18-Oct	2019	TNT		128	No	No	A. Xh.	Pogradec	14-Mar	2022	TNT	
64	No	No	G. K.	Dibër	8-Nov	2019	TNT		129	No	No	Xh. B.	Shkodër	26-Mar	2022	TNT	
65	No	No	F. T.	Gjrokastër	20-Nov	2019	TNT		130	No	No	Lici Family	Shkodër	26-Mar	2022	TNT	

Sn	Victims		Target:	Incident location	Date of incident	Year	Explosv type	Severity	Sn	Victims		Target:	Incident location	Date of incident	Year	Explosv type	Severity
	Deaths	Injured								Deaths	Injured						
131	No	No	?	Lezhë	1-Apr	2022	TNT		146	No	No	A. A.	Tiranë	10-Aug	2022	TNT	
132	No	No	H. G.	Durrës	23-Apr	2022	TNT		147	No	No	M. Z.	Tiranë	10-Aug	2022	TNT	
133	No	No	N. Y.	Sarandë	24-Apr	2022	TNT		148	No	No	R. P.	Tiranë	24-Aug	2022	TNT	
134	No	No	N. Rr.	Shkodër	20-May	2022	TNT		149	No	No	A. K.	Krujë	28-Aug	2022	TNT	
135	No	No	E. K.	Vlorë	30-May	2022	TNT		150	No	No	B. L.	Tiranë	1-Oct	2022	TNT	
136	No	No	A. Ll.	Kamëz	31-May	2022	TNT		151	No	No	Z. K.	Lezhë	15-Oct	2022	TNT	
137	No	No	P. V.	Shkodër	2-Jun	2022	TNT		152	No	No	E. P.	Tiranë	19-Oct	2022	TNT	
138	No	No	R. R.	Durrës	8-Jun	2022	TNT		153	No	No	B. Ç.	Lushnje	2-Nov	2022	TNT	
139	No	No	L. M.	Kavajë	8-Jun	2022	TNT		154	No	No	M. B.	Fushë-Krujë	2-Nov	2022	TNT	
140	1	No	A. S.	Tiranë	11-Jun	2022	TNT		155	No	No	Dh.K.	Përrenjas	19-Nov	2022	TNT	
141	No	No	Sh.A.	Durrës	19-Jun	2022	TNT		156	No	No	J.K.	Durrës	26-Nov	2022	TNT	
142	No	No	M. M.	Sarandë	29-Jun	2022	TNT		157	No	No	L.L.	Sarandë	5-Dec	2022	TNT	
143	No	No	T. M.	Lezhë	1-Jul	2022	TNT										
144	No	No	R. P.	Tiranë	28-Jul	2022	TNT										
145	No	No	R. H.	Mat	2-Aug	2022	TNT										

## Appendix 2: Explosives seized in Albania (01 May 2017 – 10 Dec 2022)

Sn	Pers. Involved	Perpetrator	Other pers. Involved	Location	Date	Types of Explosive seized	Numb of explosives	Drugs seized		Arms seized		Police actions	
								Yes/ No	Type	Yes/ No	Type	Planned oper	Oper name
1	2	F. Ç S.K.	1	Lezhë	10/05/17	Cell phone activated charge	3	No	-	No	-	Yes	Etalon
2	2	N.R. M.H.	No	Elbasan	13/07/17	Cell phone activated charge	3	No	-	No	-	Yes	Specialisti
3	2	J.M. E.K.	No	Tirana	12/03/17	Cell phone activated charge	3	No	-	No	-	Yes	Explosion
4	1	E.D.	No	Pogradec	12/11/17	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
5	1	R.H.	No	Vlora	17/01/18	Cell phone activated charge	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	Packages
6	2	A.P. V.C.	2	Lezhë	21/02/18	Cell phone activated charge	3	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	Yes	Goes On
7	1	F.LI	No	Kubin	10/05/18	Cell phone activated charge	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	Skuter
8	1	E.S.	No	Lezhë	23/06/18	Cell phone activated charge	6	No	-	No	-	Yes	Udhëtimi
9	?	?	No	Burrel	24/06/18	Time charge	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
10	1	A.K.	1	Durrës	01/07/18	TNT	4	No	-	No	-	No	-
11	1	Gj.P.	No	Vlora	15/03/18	TNT and Grenade	8 TNT Packs, 1 Grenade	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	1Pistol	Yes	Maskimi
12	1	F.L.	No	Kukës	24/03/18	TNT	1	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	?	-
13	4	E.V.	3	Lezhë	30/03/18	Time charges	4	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	Yes	Telekomanda
14	1	P.K.	No	Elbasan	20/10/18	Cell phone activated charge	4	No	-	No	-	Yes	Mengel
15	1	F.L.	No	Tirana	24/10/18	TNT	14	No	-	No	-	No	-
16	3	K.G.	2	Tirana	02/11/18	TNT	17	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	1Aussault Rifle	Yes	Ndëshkimi të fortëve
17	1	F.K.	No	Tirana	11/11/18	TNT	8 packs (x150gr), 1grenade	No	-	No	-	No	-
18	2	A.B. H.Gj.	No	Kukës	07/12/18	Cell phone activated charge	3	No	-	No	-	Yes	Muzgu
19	1	A.N.	No	Lezhë	15/12/18	Cell phone activated charge	4	Yes	Heroine (130 gr)	No	-	Yes	Trotly

Sn	Pers. Involved	Perpetrator	Other pers. Involved	Location	Date	Types of Explosive seized	Numb of explosives	Drugs seized		Arms seized		Police actions	
								Yes/ No	Type	Yes/ No	Type	Planned oper	Oper name
20	1	?	No	Elbasan	04/02/19	Cell phone activated	1	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	Yes	Zaranika
21	1	?	No	Vlora	31/03/19	Cell phone activated	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
22	2	?	Yes	Lezhë	01/04/19	Cell phone activated	3	Yes	Cannabis (3.2 kg)	No	-	Yes	The Long Way
23	1	?	No	Bulqizë	04/04/19	Grenade	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
24	1	K.P.	No	Vlora	08/04/19	Cell phone activated	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
25	1	?	No	Elbasan	27/07/19	Grenades	27	No	-	No	-	No	-
26	1	?	No	Elbasan	13/08/19	TNT	1.6Kg	No	-	Yes	19 Pistols 400	Yes	Paper
27	1	P.Th.	No	Korce	30/08/19	Explosive devices	1	No	-	Yes	Rifle & rounds	Yes	-
28	2	T.B. S.B.	No	Vlora	16/10/19	TNT	Several packs	Yes	Canabis 10kg	Yes	4 AK-47, 1pistol	Yes	Selenica
29	1	P.D.	No	Lezhë	06/12/19	Grenade	1	Yes	?	No	-	No	-
30	1	?	No	Permet	10/10/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
31	2	?	No	Shkodër	16/02/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
32	1	?	No	Kubin	13/05/20	TNT	Several packs	Yes	Canabis	yes	Ammo	Yes	Shemria
33	1	?	No	Vlora	04/06/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
34	?	?	No	Vlora	11/06/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
35	1	R.V.	No	Elbasan	12/06/20	Grenade	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
36	2	?	No	Tirana	18/06/20	TNT, Hand grenades	10 TNT, 10 Grenates	No	-	Yes	1mach. gun; 7 AK-47; 3 pistols; 2 MP7s; 1 sniper; 1	Yes	Yrshetu
37	?	A.B.	Yes	Krujë	13/07/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
38	1	L.Zh.	No	Elbasan	24/03/20	TNT	6	No	-	Yes	1AK-47	No	-

Sn	Pers. Involved	Perpetrator	Other pers. Involved	Location	Date	Types of Explosive seized	Numb of explosives	Drugs seized		Arms seized		Police actions	
								Yes/ No	Type	Yes/ No	Type	Planned oper	Oper name
39	?	?	?	Vlora	13/10/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
40	?	?	?	Vlora	21/11/20	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
41	?	?	?	Lezhë	03/12/20	TNT	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	Distanca
42	1	E.V.	No	Tirana	15/02/21	TNT	1	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	1AK-47, ammo	Yes	Sunday
43	1	I.T.	No	Durrës	19/02/21	TNT	3	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	Rifle & rounds	No	-
44	2	A.G. B.G.	No	Durrës	16/03/21	TNT	4	No	-	No	N/A	Yes	Distanca
45	3	B.F. J.F. A.Gj.	No	Durrës	01/06/21	C4, TNT, Fuses	1.2kg C4, 3.4kg TNT, 3 HGs	No	-	Yes	AK-47	Yes	Binomi
46	1	E.J.	Jata	Fier	18/06/21	Cell phone activated charge	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	?
47	?	?	?	Krujë	11/07/21	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
48	1	S.L.	No	Durrës	13/07/21	C4, Fuses, hand grenades	490gr C4, 4 fuses, 2 hand grenades	No	-	Yes	pistol	Yes	?
49	?	E.Th	1	Durrës	17/07/21	TNT	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	Parandalimi
50	?	?	No	Elbasan	02/08/21	hand grenade	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
51	?	?	?	Durrës	16/08/21	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
52	1	A.E.	No	Durrës	24/08/21	TNT	4	No	-	No	-	Yes	Furnitori
53	?	P.D.	1	Durrës	12/10/21	TNT	2	No	-	No	-	Yes	Terminali
54	2	A.M. L.L.	?	Lezhë	24/11/21	C4, 17 fuses	30	No	-	Yes	Handgun	Yes	Pilana
55	1	Sh.B.	No	Lezhë	03/12/21	C4, Fuses, hand grenades	4	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	Rifle & ammo	Yes	?
56	5	E.V. H.N.	N.M. M.M. L.	Lezhë	07/12/21	C4	2	No	-	Yes	2 AK-47, 2 optical sight guns, 1 handgun	Yes	Mataro
57	?	?	No	Sarandë	20/12/21	hand grenade	2	No	-	Yes	2 AK-47, 1pistol	No	-

Sn	Pers. Involved	Perpetrator	Other pers. Involved	Location	Date	Types of Explosive seized	Numb of explosives	Drugs seized		Arms seized		Police actions	
								Yes/ No	Type	Yes/ No	Type	Planned oper	Oper name
58	?	?	?	Girokaster	29/12/21	C4, fuses, fuse cord	4	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	No	-
59	3	A.Q. Xh.V. L.B.	?	Durrës	14.03.22	electro fuses	2000	No	-	No	-	Yes	Ditë vere
60	1	D.L.	No	Mirditë	25/05/22	TNT	4	Yes	Cannabis	No	-	Yes	Domgioni
61	1	R.K.	No	Durrës	06/01/23	TNT	4	No	-	No	-	Yes	Kulla
62	1	E.P.	No	Tirana	21/06/22	TNT	3	No	-	Yes	1 Sniper, AK-47, Ammo	Yes	Silent
63	?	?	No	Shkodër	28/06/22	TNT	1	No	-	No	-	No	-
64	3	S.G. E.G. G.G.	Fier	07/06/22	hand grenade	2	Yes	Cannabis	Yes	2 hunting rifles	Yes	Yes	Gizë
65	1	N.M.	No	Tirana	15/07/22	TNT, fuses	20	No	-	No	-	Yes	Explode
66	1	P.C.	No	Pogradec	11/08/22	TNT	3	No	-	No	-	Yes	Remote
67	1	F.D.	No	Durrës	13/03/22	TNT, fuses	4	No	-	No	-	Yes	Stacioni
68	2	I.B. G.B.	yes	Durrës	04/10/22	TNT, fuses	4kg	No	-	Yes	hunting rifle, pistol	Yes	Porositesi
69	?	?	?	Tirana	10/10/22	Hand grenade, fuses	4	No	-	No	-	No	-
70	2	A.B. V.D.	?	Elbasan	14/10/22	Hand grenade, ammo	6	Yes	Canabis	Yes	AK-47, pistol	Yes	Deshiran
71	2	L.G. R.S.	?	Elbasan	20/10/22	Charges, C4, fuses	2charges+C4 +fuses	No	-	Yes	AK-47, pistol, armor-piercing ammo	Yes	Prevention
72	6	B.K. D.K.	Yes	Bulqizë	26/10/22	TNT, fuses	1.16 ton, 3615 fuses	No	-	No	-	Yes	Toka e antë
73	2	P.K. C.M.	Yes	Shkodër	31/10/22	C4, Mines remotely controlled	1.6kg, 3 mines	Yes	Canabis	Yes	Shotgun	Yes	Qarku
74	3	I.P. A.G. K.T.	No	Lezhë	25/11/22	TNT, fuses	1	Yes	Cocaine	No	-	Yes	Ndëshkimi

*36 Persons identified and arrested in total*