

# **SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN ALBANIA**

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## **Abstract**

The elimination of poverty and social differences is one of Albania's current challenges and stays in focus of social policies not only in Albania, but also in all Western Balkan region, which is seeking to join the big European family. Before the collapse of the communist regime, Albania has been known, not just for its rigid policy of the government and the attitude of insulation to the outside world, but also for the denomination as a country with an egalitarian society, where equality was the main principle of the states' policy. When the communists took power, the situation of poverty and social-economic conditions was deplorable. Hunger was widespread, hundreds of newborn infants died from different contagions, tuberculosis and malaria had gripped the country, a large part of the population lived in almost uninhabitable places, or worse, they were homeless. Therefore, the new communist state had to give an immediate solution to the situation and to work for the continuous improvement of social-economic status. The aim of this proceedings has been the chronological introduction of the historical view of social inequalities in Albania: the origin, problems, delays and also the progress that the country has made in the area of this phenomenon in two different periods: before and after 1990, in attempt to make a general analysis of strategic reforms in social policy framework, as well to avoid every possible social differentiation, which would constitute a serious obstacle to the development of the country and the European Integration.

**Key words:** *poverty, social differences, communist regime, social policies, challenges.*