

## **Balkan Basics Student Sample**

Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, two of the Balkan Republics, are alike, but at the same time they are very different. Their differences are in their ethnic groups, governments, languages and other things. Although they have their differences, they have many similarities in things such as religion, GDP per capita, and size of their population. Here is a little more about the two republics.

One of the countries that is being compared is Albania. Albania is about 29,000 square miles in size with a population of about three million. The GDP per capita of Albania is \$11,400 and its capital is Tirane. The government type is a parliamentary democracy.

The other country is Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina is almost twice the size of Albania but the population is about the same as Albania's. Bosnia and Herzegovina's capital is Sarajevo. The government type is a federal democratic republic. Their GDP per capita (\$9,800) is about the same as Albania's.

Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina have different ethnic groups. Albania's population is 83% Albanian while Bosnia and Herzegovina's population is 48% Bosniak, 33% Serb, and 15% Croat. However, both countries have Muslim (Islam) as their major religious group with Roman Catholic and Orthodox religions as second or third after Muslim.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina speak Bosnian Croatian and Serbian while the Albania's speak Albanian. The literacy rate of Bosnia and Herzegovina is 99% and Albania is 98%--both very similar. The number of people living below the poverty level is also very similar (Bosnia and Herzegovina is 17% and Albania is 14%).

In some ways, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina's economies are alike. They both grow wheat, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. In their factories they both produce textiles, oil, and tobacco. A few things that Albania produces that Bosnia and Herzegovina does are lumber, food products, chemical, and hydropower. Some things that Bosnia and Herzegovina produces that Albania does not are metals like steel, lead, zinc, manganese, and aluminum. While there are similarities and differences between Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, they both are located in the Balkan region and represent the diversity found in this area.