

Getting a Personal Mobile Phone number through AERA

Contents

How to Request a Number/SIM Card	1
Before You Arrive	1
a- Is your phone going to work fully in European countries (including Albania)?	2
b- Is your phone locked to use only your US Carriers SIM Card?	2
Is there an initial fee?	2
What about billing?.....	2
Can I change my plan later?.....	2
I do not understand how the plans work?.....	3
What if I run out of Data Internet?.....	3
Roaming	3
What if I overuse my plan offer?	4
My Vodafone App.	4
Vodafone Plans	6
Request Form.....	7

You can order one or more Vodafone post-paid SIM cards from AERA. These are mobile phone numbers connected to a monthly plan of choice for personal use. The process is easy and you can start your application way before you arrive at post, so the number and SIM card can be active on your arrival and ready to use.

How to Request a Number/SIM Card

To apply for a personal Vodafone number you need to fill in the 'AERA Personal Vodafone Mobile Number' Request Form and submitted it to the AERA contact person. Please, fill in all the required info! We cannot guarantee the activation unless we have all the info.

Before You Arrive

You must make sure prior to your arrival that your phone will work in Albania. If you purchased your mobile phone in North America and through a mobile phone carrier (with contract), there are two things to consider:

a- Is your phone going to work fully in European countries (including Albania)?

Certain US mobile carriers use a special signal frequency that is not used in Europe. This phone will look for that frequency band to get a phone signal, and it will not find it. Please, make sure either by calling the carrier you purchased your phone, or search for Connectivity Bandwidth (check mostly 3G and 4G frequency) comparing those of your phone with European GSM bandwidth.

b- Is your phone locked to use only your US Carriers SIM Card?

Many US mobile phone carriers lock the phones they give on contract offers to their own SIM cards. That phone will not be able to accept any other SIM Card. You must contact your mobile phone carrier you purchased the phone and 1) ask if the phone is locked 2) get an Unlock Code to use it when you receive your new Vodafone SIM Card. The process of getting an unlock code may take some time. You might need to explain that you are in a tour of duty for US Government outside of US, as carriers usually like to drag such requests avoiding as much as they can losing customers.

Is there an initial fee?

AERA will provide you with a personal Vodafone SIM Card(s) and a Vodafone number attached to it. There is no cost for this. Vodafone will activate the number and your monthly plan of choice and make it active on the day you have opted on the Request Form. Your first month will be charged proportionally to the days of that month. Note though that your plan offers (Minutes, SMS, Data) will be also diminished proportionally in such case.

What about billing?

These are post-paid plans (contract plans), meaning you will be able to use your plan and pay after the service. Vodafone bills every calendar month. Billing is achieved all electronically and is made available online to AERA usually around 8th or 10th of the coming month. AERA Bookkeeper receives the bill data (a total invoice, individual invoices, as well as a general and detailed summary of each phone activity. AERA Bookkeeper will use the general data to charge each member's account a total amount owed (one total sum even if you have one or more numbers). You will pay these charges together with other credit charges on your account when AERA bookkeeper sends your account statement with the total to be paid. AERA does not charge extra administration fees for Vodafone services and therefore will not send out details to everyone. However, if you have any concerns (large amount charged etc.) you can request via email AERA Bookkeeper for details of a particular month. Also, since we do not charge an administration fee, and these are personal phones we can't tell you how to use it and when, your phone charges are your responsibility. AERA will pay your bills and you are expected to pay AERA even if you have a dispute. All disputes with Vodafone, if excepted will be discounted on the next month's bill.

Can I change my plan later?

After using your Vodafone plan for a month or so, you may opt to increase your plan for better benefits at any time via an email request to AERA Bookkeeper. However, you may need to

wait three months before lowering you monthly plan (to a cheaper plan). Take this into consideration when you first select your monthly plan.

I do not understand how the plans work?

Every plan has set amount of National Minutes included (to call any other non-Vodafone number in Albania), within network minutes (to call any Vodafone number, National SMS and Data Internet. NOTE: Vodafone Plans do NOT include MMS (text message with images). You will be charged if you use them. Some higher plans include International Minutes and some even higher plans may include International SMS. If you opt for a plan with Intl. Minutes, make sure you check the footnote at the bottom of the Plan Table to see with which countries you can use those minutes.

International Minutes are beneficial not only to call from Albania to one of the listed counties, but also if you are in Roaming. More on this on the Roaming section.

What if I run out of Data Internet?

Data Internet will continue to work even after you use your monthly plan bonus, but the speed will be reduces to barely 256kb/s. If, after using you phone for a while, you notice you are short of data internet, consider the following before opting for the next (more expensive) monthly plan: You can purchase Data Bundles of 1, 2, 5 GB for:

- a. **1 GB - 210 ALL vat included**
- b. **2 GB – 350 ALL vat included**
- c. **5 GB – 560 ALL vat included**

You can buy one of these options immediately by sending a SMS to 141 with text “ M1” for 1 GB add on , “ M2” for 2 GB add on , “ M3” for 5 GB add on. The amount you purchase is valid till you end it or up to 30 days from purchase, whichever comes first.

Let’s say you have a plan with 5GB included per month. But by the 25th of that month you consume it and are now left with slow speed internet! You can opt for an extra 2GB bundle (350 Leke extra) that will carry you till next month 6 -7th. Than your plan 5GB for that new month will start and should carry you over till the end of that month. So, you only need on extra data internet every other month. This way, your expenses may be less that just having to upgrade to a better plan. But the choice is yours.

Roaming

Albania is a strategic place from where you can reach Greece, Italy, Montenegro, all the way to Croatia by just driving. Even more, you will probably spend you vacations in European countries like Germany, France, UK, Spain, etc. Vodafone has provided for and extra fee, that you may continue to use your monthly plan as though in Albania.

Vodafone offers for a fixed daily fee the ability to continue to use your plan offers as though you are in Albania. You can continue to use your Internet data and still call Albanian numbers using your National Minutes. If you have opted for a plan with Intl. Minutes and you are

travelling to one of the countries you can use those minutes, then you can call any local number in that country without extra charge until you consume all your Intl. Minutes.

Check the tables below for extra daily roaming fees:

Package Plan	Vodafone 1200	Vodafone 1800
Roaming daily fee within EUROPE (ALL VAT Incl.)	560	560
Roaming daily fee outside EUROPE (ALL VAT Incl.)	840	840

Package Plan	Red Start	RED Extra	RED Advance	Red Executive
Roaming daily fee within EUROPE (ALL VAT Incl.)	350	350	350	0* ALL
Roaming daily fee outside EUROPE (ALL VAT Incl.)	700	700	700	700

*0 fee up to the limit of 2GB/month consumption during roaming. After that a daily fee of 350 ALL (VAT Incl.) is applied

As you may notice, these fees are good if you travel to Europe and for a few days. Travelling for longer than a week may incur high expenses. You may opt for a local prepaid SIM card to use locally.

In order to benefit from Roaming service, you have to manually select the Vodafone partner in the country you are travelling. If you do not do it manually, your phone may pick up the strongest signal and that may be a different carrier. You will be charged extra fees if you do not use Vodafone Roaming partner signal.

You can check Vodafone Albania website (offered also in English) www.vodafone.al or you can contact Red at AERA Commissary a few days prior to your planned travel for the right carrier to choose.

What if I overuse my plan offer?

Your monthly fee is a set fee that allows you to use whatever that plan is offering. If you use more National Minutes, or SMS you will start to be charged for each of those over your monthly fee. Data Internet is an exception, as it will only reduce the speed to the lowest one 256kb/s that would barely allow you to check email, but is not good for browsing or voice calling.

My Vodafone App.

Vodafone Albania has an proprietary app (free from Google Play Store, Apple Store) called My Vodafone AL. You may not be able to see the app if your location is not set to Albania, as

Google and Apple have restrictions to localized apps (i.e apps that are restricted to a mobile carrier or a specific localization).

My Vodafone AL app is helpful for a variety of services and has extra bonuses. Once installed, you would need to go through a registration process. You enter your phone number and set a password, then Vodafone will send you a SMS with a 5 digit code confirmation that you enter in the appropriate section on the app. That's it!

The app will tell you in real time how much you have used your plans offers (minutes, SMS, data) and has a variety of other options in the menu. You can request data bundles from this app (instead of sending a SMS with special codes to 141 – as mentioned before). You also have small bonuses. Vodafone has partners with several local businesses to offer discounts to its members according to the use of your phone. Every month, you will be given codes to use with local business in Tirana like taxi services, fast food, groceries, travel agencies, Movie Theater, Coffee Shops, etc. Also, through a special menu command, you can shake you phone and try your luck for some data internet bonus (varies from 100MB to 300MB) valid for 24 hours. If not, you will get an inspirational quote from a famous person. You can try after 24 hours for more data. On festive days, Vodafone may offer through shaking option up to 1 GB free valid for 24 hours to a whole weekend.

My Vodafone AL is offered in Albanian and English. You will be given the option to set up the language right at the beginning. AERA Contact at Commissary can assist you with both registration and setting up the language.

Vodafone Plans

Package Plans	Vodafone 1200	Vodafone 1800	Red Start	Red Extra	Red Advance	Red Executive
M.Fee VAT Incl.	840 ALL	1260 ALL	1750 ALL	3360 ALL	5880 ALL	8260 ALL
National Minutes	1000	1600	2500	4000	Unlimited	Unlimited
SMS On Net	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
SMS Off Net	100	150	250	400	Unlimited	Unlimited
Data	2 GB	2 GB	5 GB	10 GB	15 GB	20 GB
Int'l Minutes	N/A	50*	100**	200**	300**	400**
Int'l SMS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	100
National minutes after bundle depletion (ALL VAT Incl.)	15.1	15.1	12.6	12.6	0	0
SMS Off Net after bundle depletion (ALL VAT Incl.)	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	0	0
Data after bundle depletion (ALL VAT Incl.)	0***	0***	0***	0***	0***	0***
Int'l Minutes	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C
Int'l SMS	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C	See Appendix 1/C
RED Roaming within EUROPE	560	560	350	350	350	0****
RED Roaming outside EUROPE	840	840	700	700	700	700

Note: Please note that the prices shown in the above table are the final prices for the US Embassy in Albania after the discount of 30% from our official prices. Please refer to APPENDIX 3 for our official prices.

***INT'l Minutes are towards 10 countries**

Italy, Greece, UK, Germany, Turkey, US, France, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland

****INT'l Minutes are towards 41 countries (as actual INT'l Add ons)**

Italy, Greece, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, Germany, UK, US, Turkey, Canada, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Romania, Austria, Bulgaria, Sweden, Poland, Norway, Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovenia, Australia, Ireland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Russian Federation, China, Ukraine, Finland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Malta, Israel, South Africa

******* After the data bundle depletion the internet speed is throttled and has a 0 ALL charge. For additional data with 3G/4G speeds the user can buy add-on bundles through My Vodafone App or SMS

******** 2 GB fair usage / Monthly while in Roaming is free of charge . In case Data Volume is higher than 2 GB while in roaming , daily fee of 350 ALL will be charged till 20 GB consumption

[Request Form \(on the next page\)](#)

**AERA PERSONAL VODAFONE MOBILE NUMBER
REQUEST FORM**

Requester's Details

Full Name: _____

Contact Email: _____

Work Office: _____
(If EFM, the spouse's)

Users Full Name: _____

Plan of choice: _____

Date of Activation: _____
mm / dd / yyyy

Do Not Activate Roaming Voice Calls:

Do Not Activate Roaming Data:

By signing this request form you, the undersigned, understand that this is your personal number and, therefore, you take full responsibility for the usage of these numbers and agree to pay AERA the amount listed on the bill that Vodafone will provide AERA for the requested number. AERA will charge you AERA credit account the total monthly amount converted into USD. Vodafone charges will be listed together with other charges on you credit account and will be due whenever AERA sends you the monthly statement, or whenever you want to pay your account. Any disputes about billing are a matter between user and Vodafone, and not AERA.

You also understand that this is a post-pay service, therefore you agree 1) to notify AERA prior to you leaving the post, or whenever you want, to terminate the use of this number. Failure to do so, will result in continuation of charges from Vodafone to AERA and, therefore, from AERA to your account, even if you have left post; 2) leave a blank check with someone you trust at post so that you will be able to cover your last Vodafone bill which may be available after you have left post.

Date Requested:

Requester's Signature

Submit this form via email to Redin 'Red' Manasterliu – ManasterliuR@state.gov