



LivingTogether Programme

Migrant Cities Research:

TIRANA

NOVEMBER 2008

Contents

Part 1. Introduction	2
Part 2. Introducing ten migrants and migrant families	12
Part 3. Analysis	32
3.1. Legal status, protection and dealing with authorities	32
3.2. Social and cultural life	46
3.3. Sense of belonging and identity	56
Part 4. Conclusion	59

Researchers: Ilir Gedeshi and Egest Gjokuta (Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Tirana)

Disclaimer: British Council is not responsible for the views expressed in this report.

Part 1. Introduction

Tirana is the capital of Albania and the most important administrative centre of the country. Historical evidence shows that the city was founded in 1614 during the Ottoman period by Sulejman Pashë Bargjini, who constructed the first buildings: a mosque, a bakery and a bath house.

Since being proclaimed the capital of Albania in 1920, the population of Tirana has increased rapidly. It had 10,845 inhabitants in 1923, 38,000 at the beginning of the Second World War and around 60,000 by the end of it. Alongside ethnic Albanians were minorities such as Vlachs/Aromenians, Roma and 'Balkan Egyptians' an Albanian-speaking minority not to be confused with Egyptians from Egypt. Most of the population was Muslim, living in full harmony with the Orthodox and Catholic minorities.

During the communist period (1945–90) - a 45-year period during which Albania isolated itself from most of the world – the population of Tirana quickly increased due to the process of industrialisation that attracted workers from the countryside and other Albanian cities. New industries such as textiles, machine building, food production and construction were created and expanded. Research, scientific, artistic and sports institutions were founded. By the beginning of the post-socialist transition Tirana had a population of 244,000 mainly young people with an average level of education much higher than other parts of the country.¹

The post-socialist transition reforms (stabilisation, liberalisation, privatisation and reconstruction) – often introduced in a 'shock therapy' manner – were accompanied by deep structural changes and unknown social wounds. Industrial operations, mostly created in the 1960s, were shut down, causing high unemployment (especially during the early years of transition). Living standards worsened for large sections of the population while new economic areas and sectors such as services and construction were developed. International and internal migration represent the single most important political, social and economic phenomenon of this transition.² As a result of these large population movements, Tirana has become the most dynamic city

¹ INSTAT, *Popullsia e Shqipërisë në 2001. Tiranë 2002*

² Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A., *Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania*, *ESA Working Paper*, No. 04-13, 2004

in Albania. Between 1989 and 2001 the Albanian population in general decreased by about 113,000 while the population of Tirana itself increased by around 103,000 to 341,000.³ The population of Tirana has doubled due to natural population growth rate and internal migration. By the end of 2007 the population of Tirana was estimated to be more than 650,000 or about one-fifth of the country's population.

This report deals with three types of migration as it affects Albania: international migration, internal migration and returned migration. With different directions and levels of intensity, this migration has turned Albania into a 'country on the move', according to Carletto *et al.* (2006)⁴ or into what Russell King has described as 'a sort of laboratory for studying the new migratory processes'.⁵

International migration

During the last 17 years over one million people (i.e more than 25 per cent of Albanian citizens and over 35 per cent of the Albanian labour force) were estimated to be living abroad, mainly in Greece and Italy. No other Central or East European country has been so affected by international migration in such a short period of time. Barjaba and King (2005) characterise Albanian international migration as 'intense' (particularly during 1991–93 and immediately after the chaos of 1997, following the collapse of pyramid money-making schemes), with 'a high degree of irregularity and as a largely economically driven process'.⁶ Usually Albanian international migration is dominated by the young and by men, with women following their husbands and parents in a later phase.

Three types of international migration can be identified.⁷ First, there is the very common short-term migration (for periods of days, weeks, or months), almost exclusively to Greece; second, long-term migration, to Greece and Italy and other countries in the EU; and third, legal long-term migration to the US and Canada.

³ INSTAT, Popullsia e Shqipërisë në 2001. Tiranë 2002

⁴ Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza A., A country on the move: international migration in post-communist Albania. *International Migration Review*, 40(4), 2006

⁵ King, R., Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development., *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 7, No 2, August 2005

⁶ Barjaba, K., King, R., Introducing and theorising Albanian migration, in King, R., Mai, N., Schwandner-Sievers, S., (eds) *The New Albanian Migration*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005

⁷ Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A., Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania, Rome: FAO, *ESA Working Paper* 04-13, 2004

Many scholars think that Albanian migration follows a cycle. Albanians from rural or remote areas of the country migrate first to Tirana or to a richer coastal region. This internal migration acts as a platform both for a better life for the family as a whole, and for the emigration of some of its younger members abroad once they have accumulated enough capital.⁸ Some of these international migrants move on from the country of first destination to countries with higher income opportunities and better living conditions. A study conducted in 2007 showed that 21 per cent of those who originally migrated to Greece, moved on to the UK, 12.6 per cent to Italy and 9.4 per cent to Germany.⁹ Many migrants see Greece as a 'transit country' or as a 'first step before migrating somewhere else'¹⁰ or like 'the key to open the gate'.¹¹ The ease of illegal entry to Greece across a mountainous border that cannot be easily controlled has made Greece the first migration choice for many Albanians.

A study of returned migrants showed that the most important motives were economic: improving living standards, finding a job or finding work of a more satisfactory nature. These three factors combined represent more than three-quarters of Albanian migration motives.¹²

The macroeconomic situation in Albania in the 1990s was totally different by 2008. Unemployment in Albania was 26 per cent in 1992 but 22.6 per cent according to the census of 2001.¹³ Real wages had sharply declined at both the beginning and the end of the 1990s. Meanwhile, 26 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line and 4.7 per cent lived in extreme poverty, unable to meet basic food requirements. A large number of individuals were clustered around the poverty threshold.¹⁴ By the end of the 1990s, about 20 per cent of families lived on economic aid.¹⁵ This 'survival migration' had become the single most important survival strategy utilised by Albanian households.

⁸ Zezza, A., Carletto G., Davis, B., Moving away from Poverty: a spatial analysis of poverty and migration in Albania, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 7 (2), 2005; King, R., Vullnetari, J., *Migration and Development in Albania*, Brighton: University of Sussex, DRC on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, Working Paper C5, 2003

⁹ European Training Foundation, *The contribution of human resources development to migration policy in Albania*, 2008

¹⁰ Labrianidis, L., Lyberaki, A., Albanian immigrants in Thesaloniki: paths of prosperity and oversights of their public image, Paratiritis, Thesaloniki, 2001

¹¹ King, R., Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 7, No 2, August 2005

¹² European Training Foundation, *The contribution of human resources development to migration policy in Albania*, 2008

¹³ INSTAT, *Albanian Population in 2001*, REPOBA, 2002

¹⁴ World Bank, *Albania – Poverty Assessment*, November 2003

¹⁵ INSTAT, *Statistical Yearbook 1993–2001*, Tirana, 2003

Another factor was political insecurity and violence.¹⁶ As well as a big ‘push’ towards migration in 1990 which was caused by the political crisis, the further breakdown of civic life and law and order that followed the crises of pyramid schemes in early 1997 caused violence and revenge killings – people felt that their lives were endangered and saw migration as a way out of this problem.

Although these push factors are very important, others can be identified. One is personal freedom, especially for young people. Student migration, for example, is seen by young Albanians, especially young women, as a route to advance their education and professional careers as well as an escape from a paternalistic, convention-bound society. Older people approve because they regard education as a means of self-improvement for the individual and the family.¹⁷ A fourth push factor was the collapse of social support mechanisms in the 1990s as collective services: kindergartens, canteens, rural medical centres, etc., which had provided a platform of basic social welfare, were closed down.

These figures increase according to the educational level and employment status of the migrants. In Tirana, where this educational level and employment status are higher than in other areas, the weight of economic reasons is reduced.

Albanian migrants in Greece are employed mainly in labour-intensive sectors and firms operating in the underground economy. They work in construction, agriculture, industry and tourism.¹⁸ Albanian women work mainly in housekeeping and the care of the elderly, in tourism, in agriculture and in industry. In Italy, the main sectors of employment for men are construction, industry and services, and housekeeping for women.

Brain drain

In Tirana – where most universities, tertiary education institutes and research institutes of the country are located – there is a specific term for the migration of highly qualified professionals: brain drain. During the period 1991–2006

¹⁶ King, R., Vullnetari, J., Orphan Pensioners and Migration Grandparents: The Impact of Mass Migration on Older People in Rural Albania, *Ageing and Society*, 26, 2006

¹⁷ King, R., Dalipaj, M. and Mai, N., ‘Gendering Migration and Remittances’, *Population Space Place*, 12, pp. 409-434, 2006; King, R., Vullnetari, J., ‘Orphan Pensioners and Migration Grandparents: The Impact of Mass Migration on Older People in Rural Albania’, *Ageing and Society*, 26, 783–816, 2006

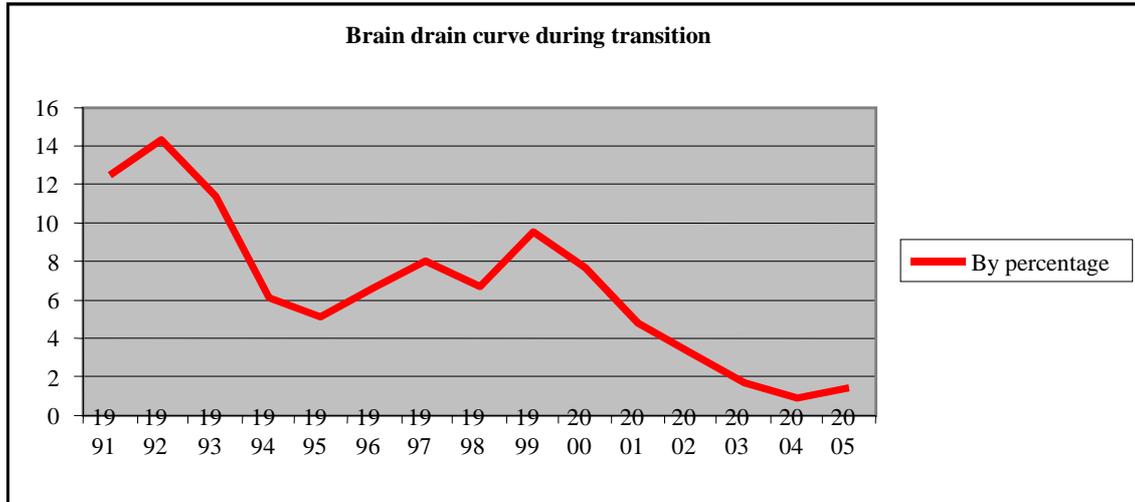
¹⁸ Germenji, E., Does human capital matter? Integration of Albanian immigrants in the Greek labour market. Paper presented at Marie-Curie conference on Multi-Level Governance of Immigration Flows, Athens, Greece, 30 March – 3 April, 2005; de Zwager, N., Gedeshi, I., Germenji, E., Nikas, Ch., Competing for remittances, IOM, 2005

more than 50 per cent of Tirana's university lecturers and research workers, most of whom were young and had postgraduate degrees from Western European countries or the US, left Albania. Almost half of them were aged 25–34, and unlike most mass migrants, three-quarters of them left with their families.¹⁹

The dynamics of brain drain from Tirana reached its peak in the periods 1991–93 and 1998–99 (Figure 1). Several factors explain these peaks. For example, initial departures from 1991 to 1993 reflect the sudden opening of the country right after a 45-year period of self-isolation - the economic, political and social crises which emerged in the first years of transition, as well as the wide economic gap between Albania and the EU countries. In contrast, the situation of 1997–99 is largely explained by the economic, political and social chaos that overwhelmed Albania after the collapse of the pyramid schemes.

¹⁹ Gedeshi, I., From brain drain to brain gain: Mobilising Albania's skilled diaspora, in Tamas, K., Palme, J., (eds.), *How Migration Can Benefit Development*, Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm 2006

Figure 1



Source: CESS, January 2006

The impact of brain drain has declined since 2000, due to the improvement of the economic and social situation in Albania, age structure changes in the universities and research institutions and the increasing difficulty of migrating to Western Europe.

But brain drain still continues. Most of the talented Albanian students who successfully complete their studies in Western Europe and the US remain in those countries after they finish their studies.²⁰ It is estimated that in 2007 about 4,500 Albanian students left to attend university abroad, mainly in Italy, France, Germany, England, Greece and USA. The non-return of the successful university and post-university students will in the long-run prove the major manifestation of brain drain from Albania. This process will be further accelerated by the policies of several European countries, the USA and Canada, to stimulate the flow of foreign students.

In late 2005, the main host countries for the Albanian brain drain were the US (26.3 per cent), Canada (18.4 per cent), Italy (13.7 per cent), Greece (12.9 per cent), France (9.7 per cent) and the UK (2.9 per cent). Surveys suggest that as many as 60 per cent of Albanian graduates abroad are not working in the profession for which they trained. If this is true, and there is independent evidence from surveys in host countries that it is, we can conclude that brain drain from Albanian universities and research institutions is more a process of

²⁰ King, R., Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 7, No 2, August 2005

'brain waste', and in this case the loss for the country may not only be considerable, but also irreversible.

Internal migration

During the socialist period (1945–90), the distribution of Albania's population was fairly static. Population movements within the country, like everything else, were centrally planned and people could move only with the permission of authorities. With the start of the transition period, the massive spontaneous internal migration in Albania also began. Albanian citizens, free to do what they wanted, migrated from rural to urban areas and from villages and small cities to bigger cities where they felt – rightly – that there would be better educational, health, social and employment opportunities for them and their offspring.

The World Bank's Albanian Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS) conducted in 2002, 2003 and 2004, together with data from the 2001 Population and Housing Census (PHC) of Albania, indicate that during 1990–2004 about 20 per cent of the population, or about 450,000 individuals, migrated within the country.²¹ The most significant population flows during this period were from the poor and remote north-east districts, but also the mountainous south towards the western lowlands, mainly to Tirana and the coastal districts.²² Tirana is by far the principal destination of internal migrants, accounting for about one-third of total migration. In recent years the share of internal migrants moving to Tirana has increased further. Between 2002 and 2004, almost four out of ten internal migrants moved to the municipality of Tirana.²³

The majority of those who migrate are people of working age. The 2001 Population and Housing Census indicated that 86 per cent of internal migrants belonged to the actively working population group, and 46 per cent were younger than 30.²⁴

Literature on internal migration suggests that poorer households are more likely to participate in internal migration. Making use of data from the 2002 LSMS, Zezza *et al.*, (2005) find that internal migration in Albania is caused by

²¹ World Bank, *Albania. Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction. A Poverty Assessment*. December 2007, Report No. 40071-AI

²² Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A., *Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania, ESA Working Paper*, No. 04-13, 2004

²³ World Bank. *Albania. Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction. A Poverty Assessment*. December 2007, Report No. 40071-AI

²⁴ INSTAT, 2004

poverty.²⁵ Since the incidence of poverty among new residents is significantly higher than among longer-established residents, the authors warn that migration from rural areas of Albania to some extent results in the relocation of poverty to urban areas.

Yet the economic factors are not the only driving force for internal migration in Albania. Other factors include poor access to basic services and dismal infrastructure, poor living conditions and harsh terrain.²⁶ Dealing with a lack of hospitals and schools turned out to be more difficult than dealing with the poor infrastructure of the remote mountainous areas of the country. This continuing depopulation has had a psychological impact on those staying behind, leading to a further spiralling of migration.

Return migration

Return migration is a recent phenomenon in Albania, which has developed at the same time as Albanians have started to emigrate towards increasingly more distant destinations. A survey conducted with 256 returnees to the city of Tirana in 2007 showed that almost three-quarters of them had returned to Albania after 2001, when the socio-economic and political situation started to improve. Return migration can and should be seen as a resource for the socio-economic development of Albania from the financial capital (savings), human capital (skills and experience acquired abroad) and social capital it brings to the country.

Return migration has been associated with an improvement in the financial situation of the returnees' households in Tirana, according to 73 per cent of returnees. Another 17 per cent think that the situation has not changed. Only 10 per cent believe that their households are financially worse off since they migrated.

About 90 per cent of returnees managed to bring with them savings accumulated during the period they had worked abroad. Although less than 30 per cent of their savings has been used to invest in private businesses, this is a larger figure than the remittances they sent home.

There is a high tendency among Albanian returnees towards self-employment. Of all returnees to Tirana, 53 per cent chose self-employment upon their

²⁵ Zezza, A., Carletto, G., Davis, B., *Moving Away from Poverty. A Spatial Analysis of Poverty and Migration in Albania*, *ESA Working Paper*, No. 05-02, 2005

²⁶ King, R., Vullnetari, J. *Migration and Development in Albania*, *Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty*, University of Sussex, Working Paper C5, 2003

return. They used their savings mainly to finance micro-enterprises and to buy equipment. Most of those micro-enterprises belong to the service sector such as small shopkeeping (59 per cent), hotels/restaurants (9 per cent), repairs (8.4 per cent) and transport (7.6 per cent).

The data shows a weak correlation between the returnees' employment sector abroad and their work in Albania. In this case, Albania does not seem to benefit sufficiently from the skills and experience that returnees gained abroad.

Immigrants in Albania

Albania experiences not only emigration but also immigration. According to official statistics offered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, approximately 7,000 foreigners entered Albania as migrant workers in the period 1996–2007. They are mainly employed in the construction, trade, service and education sectors. Around 75 per cent of them come from Turkey, China, Egypt and the EU countries. The latter are mostly specialists working for Western companies operating in Albania. The majority of foreign immigrants are employed in Tirana.

Part 2. Introducing ten migrants and migrant families

The ten interviews took place with four returned migrants, four family members of migrants and two immigrants living in Tirana at the time. The interviewees were selected carefully in order to reflect the characteristics of Albanian migration during the post-socialist transition. The research team also interviewed many key stakeholders who lived in Tirana who could give information regarding migration. These included government policy-makers, local authorities, NGO representatives, experts and teachers. All names are fictitious. To gain a broader picture, the research team also made use of quantitative data from a survey of 256 returned migrants in Tirana conducted by CESS (The Center for Economic and Social Studies in Albania) at the beginning of 2007. The research team also used literature regarding Albanian migration, sources which are included in the bibliography.

1. Bashkim

Name: Bashkim

Sex: Male

Age: 45

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Works in an internet café

Bashkim originates from a village in Peshkopi district, in north-east Albania. At the end of the 1980s after he started his family, he left his parents and built a new house on land granted to him by the local authorities. With the start of the post-socialist transition, the former land owners put pressure on him and he had to move away.²⁷

The problems started when the transition began. Despite the fact that we had very good relationships before, the former owners of the land insisted on having it back – even where the house was built. Legally, I had all the right permissions, but they put me under a lot of pressure. Despite the interventions and negotiations made by mutual friends, old people and relatives, we did not reach an agreement. We did not even agree that I could buy their land or that they could buy my house. In

²⁷ In many villages of northern Albania the land of the former state-owned agricultural farms was not distributed according to Law no. 7501 of 1991. Based on a silent and informal agreement the land was returned to the ownership that existed before the communist system.

order not make enemies with my neighbours I decided the only solution was to move from the village. I demolished the house and sold its materials.

Bashkim migrated to a neighbouring village and a friend offered him a house, the value of which he could pay back over three years.

In order to secure the money and to feed my family, I migrated illegally each year to Greece for three or four months. I worked in agriculture and with the money I saved I bought the house.

In 1993, he lost his son in a car accident and his family migrated again to the city of Rogozhina.

After the accident, we decided to migrate immediately. In Rogozhina I had a married sister and also my wife had her sister there. They helped us initially and we stayed at the house of our relatives for about six months. Afterwards, with the savings acquired from migration to Greece I bought an apartment and built a stall to sell fruits and vegetables. My income was low, but I wanted to stay near my wife after the tragedy that happened to us, so I did not migrate to Greece any more for some years.

Looking at his difficult economic situation, Bashkim's brother-in-law, who had migrated to the UK and had been employed there since 1999, encouraged him to go there too.

My brother-in-law was very aware of my financial situation. This is why he told me to sell everything to go to the UK. So I sold the house and with that money we bought visas to go to Italy. Since we had separate names in our documents, my family was split, me on the one hand, and my wife and children on the other. The Italian authorities deported my wife and children twice for irregular documents. I stayed in Italy for about 40 days waiting for my family. From the stress and the difficult living conditions experienced there, I became ill with sinusitis.

From Italy Bashkim's family migrated to Brussels and negotiated with a group of people-smugglers to enter the UK illegally.

We paid around 800 marks per person, which we borrowed. I thought at first that we would be in England within a week. But we stayed in Brussels for 100 days and tried ten times to cross by hiding in a truck from a French port into England. We did not succeed. We were obliged to register as migrants in Brussels in order to receive economic aid. At

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

the eleventh attempt we were lucky. The truck we jumped into reached the port just before the start of the ferry and was not properly checked. After a few hours we were in England and when we thought we were far enough from the port we started yelling and making noise. The driver stopped, asked how many of us were there, and brought us to a police station in Birmingham. There, they gave us food and questioned us the next day. They settled us in a house. From there we escaped again and went to Manchester where my brother-in-law lived. We registered with the police there and they offered us housing and financial aid.

With the help of his brother-in-law Bashkim worked in a shrimp packing factory..

Other Albanians were working there. We worked during the night and during the whole week.. I received £30 per night or £900 per month. The first year, we were able to save £9,000, which I sent to Albania to pay the debts we owed for migrating to England.

Bashkim's son and daughter went to school, while his wife, with the help of an Albanian from Kosovo, started work as a housekeeper.

During his stay in England Bashkim could only work for the first year. The sinusitis he suffered in Italy worsened and he needed to have three operations.

The medical service in the UK was splendid. However, after the interventions I was not able to work any more. The only thing I could do was to help my wife from time to time.

During the week, Bashkim went to the library and used the internet.

I read there all the news from Albania and learned about using the computer.

At the end of the week he went with his children to the cinema.

There were many reasons why Bashkim decided to return to Albania. The main reason was that he was refused permanent residence in England.

I was waiting for the warning to leave and every day this gave me more stress.

He estimated that he had saved enough money to start a business in Albania. Furthermore, he missed his relatives.

With the money he saved in the UK Bashkim migrated back to Tirana. He bought an apartment and a small shop, which he thinks his wife will run. He currently works in an internet café.

2. Skender

Name: Skender

Sex: Male

Age: 33

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Baker

Skender was born in the village of Dvoran, in Korça district, and migrated to Korça with his family at the start of the post-socialist transition. In 1993, he migrated to Greece for the first time.

Economic reasons obliged me to migrate. My father was a soldier for about 20 years but was dismissed by the reforms and remained unemployed. Another factor was my age. I was 18 when I first migrated. I went illegally with a group of friends and cousins to Athens where I stayed for nine months. I did different jobs mainly in construction. Then I was caught by the police and repatriated. The second time, I migrated in 1993 for one month. Then I migrated again for five or six months. Until I started to work as a baker I worked mainly in construction.

He secured a job in a bread factory from a recommendation.

A childhood friend of mine was unloading flour in a bakery in Athens. He told me about this job. The Greeks were also more confident when they employed us by recommendation.

Skender worked in this bakery for about eight years and gradually learned the profession.

I had no position and first started as an assistant. I used to work a lot, about nine hours each day and only had a day off on Sunday. But after a year I started to work with the oven. In time I mastered the job and improved my skills. In the bakery there was an old expert to whom I stayed close. He encouraged me to learn and told me that even when

we wash the dishes we learn something new. After three years I felt in love with the profession. I had the desire to learn something new every day and I noted down everything especially how biscuits were made which was something special. I have the notes even today. After four to five years I began to trust in my abilities. After five or six years I managed to fill my own warehouse with products and I was promoted to supervisor.

After 5 or 6 years of work I could fill a shop with goods. My salary increased and I took 100 drachmas a week, plus the bonuses. I took many responsibilities on me and I was promoted to supervisor..

In the end of the 1990s Skender thought seriously about returning to Albania.

Things were going well and the Greek owner trusted me, but I missed my father and my mother. Despite this, during this period I got married and had a daughter. My wife stayed at home, the family expenditures increased, and I was the only person with a job. When we had no kids, my wife worked as well and we saved something. But when our little girl was born it was hard to save money. This is why I decided to return to Albania to start a business. During the last two years I worked for 15–16 hours a day, I also worked on Sundays and with this income I bought all the equipment needed for the bakery.

At first, Skender returned to the city of where his parents were living. He opened a bakery in an old storage depot where he did not have to pay any rent and started producing and distributing bread to other shops.

The bread's quality was good but the sales were limited. Often a part of the product was returned to me because it could not be sold. I had invested a lot of money in the equipment. I had also incurred debts to buy a truck for bread distribution, but the work was not going as it should.

In early 2000, disillusioned by the profits from his business, Skender migrated to Greece again.

I left my wife in Korça and started to work again in the same business in Athens and for the same salary. When I told the Greek owner that the work did not go as it should in Albania he said that you cannot succeed in business in six or seven months. It is not easy to build something. It is very easy to buy five or six machines but it is hard to maintain them. He told me that I had started badly because I opened my bakery in my father-in-law's warehouse to avoid paying the rent,

and in a remote area, where nobody came to buy. I should open the shop in the centre of town where people pass by. After three months in Greece I found my self-confidence again and returned to Albania.

On his return to Korça, Skender rented a shop in the city centre and after some months things improved. His sales increased and within a year he had paid all his debts, bought some new equipment and gained a good reputation. After three years, he decided to migrate to Tirana.

The main reason for migrating to Tirana was related to the future of my children. But there were also economic reasons. In Korça I had my house, my shop, my car and the business was going fine for me. However, I wanted to expand more. I couldn't do this in Korca since it is a small town, whereas in Tirana one has the chance to do more.

In Tirana, Skender rented a shop and produces and sells bread and different sweets. He works together with his wife. His clients are increasing and he has hired two workers. He says that he can expand his business even further if he can get a bank loan, if he can cope with the bureaucracy, and as long as there is no electricity shortage. Meanwhile, he keeps in contact with his ex-employer in Greece.

We talk on the phone every two or three days. This is mainly a business relationship. For example he tells me about new products that I don't know about and he gives me the recipe or he explains about something I don't do correctly, and he provides me with business advice.

3. Mimoza

Name: Mimoza

Sex: Female

Age: 33

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Public administration

Mimoza earned a degree in 1998 and completed an MBA in the Faculty of Economics. She works in public administration. Mimoza's family has migrated to the USA.

My parents migrated to the USA in 2002. My father was a soldier but he was dismissed as a result of army reform and took early retirement. My mother was retired. My brother migrated to Greece in 1992 when he was 20 and was working in a fast food outlet. In 1998 he migrated from Greece to the US. He is married to an Albanian who migrated with her family to the US in 1991.

The main reason for the migration of Mimoza's family was only partly economic. Her grandmother on her mother's side had US citizenship and when the post-socialist transition started she had the right to migrate to the US with her children.

Seven of my eight aunts and uncles now live in the US with their families, while one has migrated to Germany. So, most of my mother's relatives, more than 30 people, now live in the USA.

The migration of Mimoza's parents has been accompanied by continuous emotional strain.

My parents' migration was very stressful. They were elderly, did not speak English and did not really know whether they would have the chance to work and to earn their living. However, my brother was in the US like all my cousins from my mother's side. But, in the absence of a visa, since I was not older than 20, I remained in Albania, and my parents are worried about me. They come once a year to see me but they cannot stay too long due to the number of days they have to live in US territory to keep their US status. The last time my mother stayed only for two weeks and to me it seemed as if she never came.

Mimoza's life has changed a lot because of her parents' migration. She feels lonely, she thinks she has acquired too many responsibilities and she cannot even plan her short-term future.

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

At first, wishing to go to the US, I finished a two years Masters programme but at the same time I have had to abandon many of my ambitions. I wanted to start a second subject but I could not. I have been waiting to migrate to the US. But the more time passes, the more I feel that I don't want to stay in Albania - but I'm not so keen as before to move to the US. This means that actually I am in the air, caught between two countries. If I migrate to the US tomorrow I will do this only because of the sacrifice my parents have made for me, in other words only to feel morally fulfilled. I don't want to break their hearts. Once I'm there, I will decide whether I will stay or return to Albania.

4. Silvi

Name: Silvi

Sex: Female

Age: 33

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Lecturer

Silvi's family is composed of herself, her parents and her two sisters. Her father was an optician and her mother was a teacher. In the 1970s her father was transferred to the city of Lezha where Silvi was born and spent the first 13 years of her life. When she finished the eighth class her family moved to Tirana and Silvi joined the foreign language lyceum specialising in English.

I liked the English language very much and I completed high school with excellent results and gained the gold medal. My father had started to work in a department of the Ministry of Health, and had many contacts with foreigners. He introduced me to some of his English friends. They invited me to England and this made it possible for me to perfect my English.

When she finished high school Silvi and a friend applied to many American and Australian universities.

I had a book with addresses of universities and we began to apply. In the early 1990s in Albania there was no internet and we wrote letters. I was accepted by the University of Sydney but at the time I did not wish to go so far from Albania. My friend went to Australia and completed her study there with excellent results. She was recognised as the best foreign student in that university. I went to England and started to study economics. I completed one semester and then I realised that this was

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

not the right subject for me. So I transferred to a modern history course, which I completed in 1999.

While she was a student Silvi also worked as an interpreter.

I was studying at the university when the influx of Albanian migrants due to the crisis of 1997 began. One day some friends told me that Albanian migrants have arrived and that the authorities needed an interpreter. I started interpreting. Most of my friends received money to finance their studies from their parents, worked or were in debt. I did not have such problems and this was thanks to interpreting. It was very hard because I had to study and to work as an interpreter at the same time.

After she finished university Silvi worked for one year at BBC Albania, which gave her a very high opinion of the level of professional training. Afterwards she worked for a year in a large recruitment agency specialising in staff for the Stock Exchange and large banks. From 2002 to 2004 she worked on her Masters in history and simultaneously carried on her work as an interpreter.

I started my Masters for one year, but I realised very soon that it was impossible to study and work with interpreting at the same time. This is why it took me two years to complete my master. During this time I visited many cities in England.

Silvi had a rich social life in England. She visited museums, art galleries, cinemas, shows and she visited other countries as a tourist.

The cultural life in England was marvellous, very challenging, and this is what I miss mostly here in Albania. Despite the fact that I was in good economic conditions, got discount tickets with my student card. Moreover, London was a very open-minded city. You could go to a restaurant and see that the person next to you comes from another nationality; the waiter comes from a third country, and so on. I liked cultural tourism a lot.

Silva had excellent groups of friends at university and at the institutions where she worked. She also had many English acquaintances, but she says that she had only a few true friends.

Each time I came to Albania and met different people I saw that they were very warm. This is why I decided that as soon as I finished my Masters I would return and try to live and work in Albania.

At the end of 2004, Silva returned to Albania. For a short period she worked in the Ministry of Integration on EU projects. Currently she is a lecturer in a private university. Silvi says that she is beginning to think about her future.

Albania offers all that I was looking for, and fulfils me. The social environment here in Albania is perfect. There is no stress. You just go out with your friends for a coffee. There is the chance to have fun and do what you want to do.

On the other hand,

Cultural life in Tirana is really poor and unfortunately with a low level, while in the political arena, I see too much aggression. This is something I can't stand about Albania.

5. Beni

Name: Beni

Sex: Male

Age: 39

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Small trader

Beni finished high school in the city of Korça in 1987, worked for a year as a teacher in a village and afterwards did his military service. He migrated to Greece in 1992.

I went illegally to Greece two or three times. I have worked in Thessalonica and in a village until I settled down on the island of Crete.

His main reasons for migrating were economic.

Although I could work as a teacher in a village, the salary was really low and I could not afford living costs.

In Crete he was joined by his three brothers, who are still living there with their families.

In 1996 Beni married a girl from Albania and took her to Greece with him. His two children were born in Greece. In Crete, Beni has mainly worked in agriculture and in tourism.

During the winter I worked in agriculture while during the summer I worked in the tourism sector. I did worked as a waiter, kitchen staff, gardener, pool cleaner.... In other words, I did everything there was to do in the bar and in the hotel. I worked every day of the week including Sundays. I worked for many hours during the day, especially during the tourist seasons, which were two or three months long. We started to work at eight in the morning, had two hours of rest, and then we worked again till midnight. For the work I did I received 25 euros per day. My wife worked also with me.

There are many reasons why Beni's family returned to Albania.

I never thought that I would stay in Greece forever. The Greeks despised us. Moreover, the pay per working day in Albania, for those who like to work and have some qualifications, has increased to about 2,500 lek²⁸, and for me it was shameful to stay longer there. My parents in Albania were living alone and one of the brothers had to return to take care of them. I got bored there and the Greeks despised us. However, I hesitated about returning, I postponed it several times. When one day my son came home from school and said the he did not want to go any more because the others insulted him by calling him 'alvanos' because he pushed one of them by mistake, then I decided to return here immediately and without hesitation.

Once he had returned to Albania Beni migrated with his family to Tirana.

We moved to Tirana because here there is more opportunity and there is more space. There is work here and Tirana has better schools for my children and a better health service. Some days ago, my son had some problems with his eye and I sent him immediately to the hospital. If I was in the village I would not have been able to.

With his migration savings Beni has bought a shop and some equipment and has started a small trading business. He works together with his wife.

This business gives us independence, and this is important. I never wanted to work for the others. This business is easy to manage and safer for us. With the savings we had I could open also a Greek tavern and my wife and I could manage it very well. But look at the restaurant in front of us; it is almost empty although it is lunchtime.

²⁸ About 20 euros

Beni has bought 1,000 square metres of land in a suburb of Tirana and wants to build a house with his brothers when they return and perhaps start a new business together.

In Greece Beni had a lot of positive experiences.

In the first place we learned work discipline. Here in Albania there is a lot of unemployment but when you find a worker he does not want to work. In Greece a worker will do whatever he can. In Greece, we changed our views, but here there are two mentalities side by side: capitalism and socialism. I also learned to communicate with people, and work ethics. The wife of my Greek owner was very tired by her job but when a client came she smiled to him and was very helpful. These lessons are very useful in my business.

6. Milto

Name: Milto

Sex: Male

Age: 50

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Military

Milto is a military official in the Armed forces. He graduated from the Military Academy in Tirana and was posted abroad in the 1990s, to Greece, Switzerland, Canada and the US. During his military career he has worked as a commander in military bases and in different army institutions.

He married in 2002 and had a son one year later.

My wife had a small business in Tirana. Before we were officially married we both applied for the American green card lottery. My wife won the lottery while I did not. Meanwhile, she became pregnant. So, we both decided that she would go to the USA and that our son would be born there so that he could acquire US citizenship. After our son was born, my wife returned and we stayed together as a family for a while. But the rules for getting a US passport are very strict and my wife has to fulfil the necessary time in the US. Our financial situation does not allow her to travel back and forth from the US to Albania. In fact it is more than a year and a half since I have seen the rest of my family.

Their main reasons for trying to migrate, as for so many, are economic and social.

In the first place there's the economic factor. Despite the relatively good salary that a soldier earns in Albania, it is insufficient to fulfil the normal financial needs of a family and to contribute to the healthy development of a child. The second reason is the education of my child. The education system in our country has deteriorated a lot during the transition years. The state in Albania, unlike other countries, does not take that responsibility. It lacks perspective. The country seems to be in a never-ending socio-economic transition although it is now 18 years since it began.. This is why we decided that my wife and son should migrate to the US first and that when the legal conditions were fulfilled I would also apply to migrate. My wife is actually in the process of gaining a US passport and will have one in a short time and after this I will apply too. I hope to join my family by the end of this year.

Milto continues to work in a scientific institution of the Albanian armed forces and is looking forward to join his family. He phones them every day.

The separation from my family has been very stressful to me, especially during the first months. It is hard to wake up in the morning and not see them around. I try to fill this empty space with my other relatives. I have a sister who stays close to me and the same goes for her children.

Milto's wife works as an accountant in a supermarket in a town in the US.

It was hard for her to face all the difficulties alone. But we made all these sacrifices for the sake of our child. Our boy goes to kindergarten and is being well educated. He can now communicate in three languages – Albanian, English and Spanish. This is a great pleasure for us.

7. Nezir

Name: Nezir

Sex: Male

Age: 52

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Water supply and sewage worker

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

Nezir is a Roma from the Meçkar tribe.²⁹ He lives with his wife, his 14-year-old son and two grandchildren, one aged eight and the other ten, in a small rented house in one of the poorer suburban areas of Tirana. He works for the public health and sanitation department of the government but also does casual jobs. His wife has been unemployed since they migrated from a village. His son and his two grandchildren are in compulsory education. Nezir's two married daughters migrated to Greece in the late 1990s.

One of their daughters later divorced and has left her own two daughters in her parents' custody. She is in a difficult economic situation and does not have legal status in the country to which she has migrated. Nezir says that

When we ask her for help, our married daughter sends 100 or 200 euros from time to time. My daughter, the mother of two young girls, cannot help us financially. This is why the struggle to support our grandchildren falls upon my shoulders.

In 1994, Nezir's family migrated from the village of Grabjan in Lushnja district and settled in Tirana.

The main reason we migrated was our family's difficult financial situation. We could barely feed ourselves. We came to Tirana hoping for a better life. In Grabjan, we owned agricultural land but a lot of money was needed to cultivate it, to work it and to harvest the products. This is why we sold the land and the small hut we were living in and with that money came to Tirana. We constructed a hut, but the living conditions were really bad. When our little granddaughter became ill, we rented this house.

Nezir and his wife feel very responsible for the upbringing of their grandchildren, which is a source of continuous stress on them. It is difficult for them to explain to the girls why their parents are abroad and cannot take care of them.

It has been five or six years since they have seen their mother, who cannot come here as she is an illegal migrant and does not have a regular permit or passport. Our daughters were not even registered with the population registration office.³⁰ However, our main problem is economic. We all live on my modest salary and the income that I gain

²⁹ In Albania exist four Roma tribes : Meçkar, Karbuxh, Cergar and Kurtof. They are distinguishable from one another by the dialect, their dressing, their way of life and characteristic professions.

³⁰ In the Roma community the average age of a girl's marriage is 14–15. Since the Albanian legislation allows marriage for girls from the age of 16, the marriage at this age is informal.

from any casual job I do in the afternoons or on holidays. Moreover, our granddaughter suffers from a chronic blood disease and needs continuous medical treatment and blood analysis once every month in the hospital. Each month we must pay around 3,000 lek³¹ just for her medicine, a considerable amount with our small income. Another problem is the girls' education. I take them to school every day and my wife waits for them when they finish. But I have to help them in the afternoon – with what little I know – when they do their homework. My wife has only four years of education and cannot help. So far, they are average pupils but we are very worried about their future. However, they want to continue education.

Another worry for the family of Nezir is the safety of the girls.

They are growing up, knowing that they are without parents, and we are afraid that bad people may cheat them or traffic them.

³¹ About 24 euros

8. Rolande

Name: Rolande

Age: 52

Nationality: French

Occupation: Manages a confectionery shop

Rolande is a French citizen who has lived in Albania since 1990. She is married with five children. Her husband and four of her children live in Paris, while one of her sons has been working as a doctor in Albania for two years since opening a private clinic.

From time to time, my husband comes to Albania or I go to France, but I like Albania like my own fatherland and I see my future here.

At first Rolande came to work as a specialist for a large French company that dealt with drinking water. In 1998, when she finished her contract with this company she decided to open a confectionery shop.

I noticed that in Tirana there were many bars and restaurants but few confectioners. That is why I decided to open a sweet shop with French specialities in one of the busiest areas of Tirana. At first I had only three or four Albanian workers whom I had trained, but gradually we expanded and today there are about 14 people who work here. It is not easy to invest and it has taken a lot of effort. But this is proof that even a foreign investor can succeed in Albania.

She encountered many difficulties.

At first, there were administrative difficulties like with taxes which in France does not happen. I do not accept compromise and this is why I have suffered a lot. Most of the workers who learned the profession left after some time. It takes time to learn everything. One must learn. I started my business gradually, while other people wanted to expand rapidly. But they were wrong since learning itself is also valuable.

Rolande has survived difficult times during her years in Albania, including the events of 1991–92, with riots and demonstrations, and the events of 1997 with the violence that came after the disruption of the pyramid schemes. She wanted to be involved in Albanian political life. This is why in the elections of 1997, 2001, and 2005 she was registered as an independent candidate.

I wanted to be integrated in Albanian political life, and to go to Brussels to the European Parliament to talk more about Albania. I wanted to do

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

the same thing with foreign investors. I always thought that in Albania much could be achieved. When I first arrived in Albania some French people told me that I wouldn't achieve a great deal. But I was confident and I told them that they would see. I saw important changes in Albania especially after 2000.

Rolande learned Albanian and has integrated herself into the Albanian environment.

I like Albania because here the life is calm compared to the intensive and stressful life of Paris. I have made more friends with Albanians than I have with foreigners. I have learned a lot from Albanians- but they have also learned something from me.

According to Rolande, cultural and artistic life in Albania has improved.

I have a business in Albania and I don't have much free time. However, in Albania, there is an absence of cultural activities. In Tirana there is opera, but this is not enough. There is also a need for something softer, like an operetta – a show which everyone can enjoy. Not everyone likes the same thing.

The continuous improvement of public services could affect migration.

There are no general medical practitioners who can refer patients to more specialised services. Also there's no specific accident and emergency service. These are things which could be simply solved by better organisation which would not cost a lot.

9. Remzi

Name: Remzi

Sex: Male

Age: 70

Nationality: Albanian

Occupation: Retired

Remzi is a 70-year-old retired man who lives with his wife. His two daughters have migrated with their families and are living in Canada. Until he retired, Remzi worked as a biology and chemistry teacher in a high school in the city of Shkodra. In 2003, he migrated with his wife to the city of Tirana.

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

The main reason for migration was because our second daughter, who came to Tirana before we did, needed help. She needed someone who could take care of her children, to take them to school and to bring them home. Like all Albanian parents, we responded to the request of our daughter positively. Meanwhile, despite the fact that I am retired, I teach a few hours of lessons in a private primary school. Our daughters help us economically in different ways. We are very dear to them, especially now we live alone. They want us to go and live with them in Canada. But we are better off than we were in Shkodra.

Remzi's elder daughter, who studied in the University of Shkodra's faculty of education, migrated to Germany in 1992. Her fiancé migrated first, staying for a few months in Italy and then settling in Germany. At first they worked together in a restaurant. However, when their child was born it was hard for them to take care of her as they both worked all day.

They asked if they could bring their daughter to us, to the grandparents, to bring her up. In order to help our daughter, we accepted without hesitation. They brought her when she was 18 months old and took her back when she was four. At first the little girl had a hard time getting used to us. Then, when she got used to us, she had difficulties adapting to her parents. Bringing up our granddaughter was a huge moral responsibility for us. Once, when she became ill, my wife got sick too, from the stress.

In 2001, Remzi's daughter migrated to Canada.

Remzi's second daughter studied Albanian language and literature at the University of Shkodra. In 2001, she migrated to Tirana with her husband in search of better living conditions and worked as a primary school teacher in a private school. Encouraged by her sister she applied to emigrate and in 2006 left with her family for Canada.

Now they are with their families in a city in the south of Canada and are well integrated. Their children go to school. We went to visit them to see how they live.

The emotional stress of being separated from their children and nieces can be very strong.

In Shkodra we have an expression that says that 'difficulties are worse than absence'. We miss our children a lot, their absence is hard for us, but because we know that they are integrated in their migration country it is not a problem for us that they are not here. We are at peace and

the absence becomes smaller. We miss our granddaughters in particular. I have granddaughters but nobody calls me grandpa. This causes me great spiritual suffering.

10. Antonio

Name: Antonio

Sex: Male

Age: 58

Nationality: Italian

Occupation: Trader

Antonio is an Italian citizen from Pescara who migrated to Albania in 1994. He specialises in producing wooden furniture .. Since 1994 he has been in a relationship with an Albanian girl and they have three children. Currently he sells home furniture and has a shop and warehouse in one of the main areas of Tirana. Antonio works with his wife and they are happy with their business.

At first Antonio did business in Yugoslavia. After the break-up of that country and the loss of the Yugoslavian market Antonio decided to settle in Albania. He set up a woodworking factory near Tirana producing goods for the Albanian market. During the civil unrest of 1997 that resulted from the collapse of the pyramid schemes in Albania, his business suffered great losses. Most of its equipment and machines were stolen or burned. Antonio says:

I was the only Italian who stayed in Albania after the 1997 unrest, but I lost all my investments.

After this, Antonio changed the nature of his business. He started to import household articles from Italy and selling them in Albania. He says:

In my business I have created a good name and a stable client base that continues to expand. I try to behave well with the clients, who are all people who know me. This is why I am settled in Albania. I feel great here.

Antonio's main problem is the safety of private investments.

The state must create more safety for everyone, and encourage the creation of new jobs. It must be clear in its politics, must have vision and must encourage foreign investments.

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

He also predicts the danger of competition from the new and quickly expanding commercial centres in Tirana.

Most of them have very high prices and low quality which is not in the Albanian consumer's best interests.

Antonio is integrated in Albanian society, understands Albanian and has many Albanian friends. He says:

Most of my friends are Albanian and many of them are also my clients. However, I also know many foreigners, Americans, Germans, and English etc. In Albania we know many people who we visit on Sundays or holidays, we meet them in bars or restaurants in Durres, at birthday celebrations and other occasions.

Antonio is not particularly interested in the cultural and artistic life of Tirana.

We work all day, from seven in the morning to nine in the evening. So it is hard for me to follow the cultural and artistic life of the capital. The children also need their time and space.

Antonio is satisfied by some public services.

We are beginning to experience the education and healthcare services. My elder girl is in the fourth grade at the state primary school, while our younger daughter goes to the kindergarten. So far we are satisfied. In the future, when our children grow up, we think they should continue into universities here in Albania. In my opinion, my children should not migrate abroad because their future is here. We've had no problems with health so far.

Part 3. Analysis

Like other socio-economic phenomena, migration has had both positive and negative influences on the social and economic development of Albania. Within this context, the Albanian government should aim to maximise the positive sides of migration and minimise the negative ones. This chapter will analyse some of the most important aspects of the socio-economic impact of migration seen from three different points of views: the impact of migration, the impact of return migrants and the impact of immigrants.

3.1. Legal status, protection and dealing with authorities

Impacts of emigration

Migration and poverty

Remittances are viewed as the most important financial contribution of the migrants to their families. In 2007 the remittances of Albanian migrants reached 945 million euros. They represented 13 per cent of GDP, were three times higher than net foreign direct investment, double the official development aid received by Albania and covered 50 per cent of the trade deficit.³² However, in the context of unfavourable economic and social conditions, this monetary value injected into the Albanian economy has until now been insufficient to increase domestic production. It has mainly been used to import consumer goods. Due to a shortage of investment, which could potentially generate more employment opportunities, some of the younger generation is obliged to migrate: a survey conducted with 250 people of the 18–40 age group in Tirana at the beginning of 2007 showed that 38 per cent of them wished to migrate. Furthermore, recent studies suggest that, primarily as a result of family unification in host countries, the remittances of Albanian migration are likely to undergo a gradual decline in the short term.³³

Many scholars argue that the remittances of migrants reduce poverty. To the best of our knowledge no study has ever tried to examine empirically the impact of remittance flows on poverty reduction in Albania. However, some survey evidence from various regions of Albania do shed some light on their benefits. A qualitative assessment study by the World Bank in 2001 showed

³² Bank of Albania, 2008

³³ de Zwager, N., Gedeshi, I., Germenji, E., Nikas, Ch., *Competing for remittances*, IOM, 2005

that migration and remittances formed an important part of household livelihood strategies in Albania. Remittances had contributed directly to rising household incomes as well as increased household consumption in goods and services. The study concluded that migration and remittances were the main factors distinguishing non-poor families from poor ones. Families benefiting from remittances were more likely to be non-poor. This is expressed also by an interviewee who says: *'a poor family is one that does not have a member who can migrate abroad'*.³⁴

The 2005 Living Standards Measuring Survey (LSMS), a World Bank study of 2007 confirmed a large difference in consumption and poverty between households with migrants and those without. The study stated that without the large inflows of remittances living conditions would almost certainly be worse.³⁵ The general opinion among Albanian authorities and foreign experts is that remittances do play a major role in reducing poverty. For many Albanian households access to the migration network and family opportunities for migration are seen as one of the possible means to escape poverty.

The difficult economic situation, unemployment and low wages are mentioned in all the interviews we conducted. Bashkim, who could not survive with the low income generated by his employment sold everything and borrowed money in order to finance the purchase of a visa and his family's trip to England. He says: *'My family could not survive on the 15,000–20,000 lek that I received. Moreover, only I was working while my wife was unemployed.'* Teuta, who has worked in Greece, says:

I have completed secondary education and I was working as a quality controller in a clothes company which had 70 workers. However, when the transition began, the enterprise was shut down and all of us became unemployed. Nevertheless, there is always a choice for active people. I migrated illegally to Greece in early 1994 and then I took my family there.' Astrit, who worked in the public sector, complains about the low wage: *'economic reasons pushed me to migrate. It is not that I did not like what I was doing but by the end of the 15 days'³⁶ I had to borrow money because I did not have enough income to live on my wages.*

³⁴ De Soto, H., Gordon, P., Gedeshi, I., Sinoimeri, Z., *Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment*, The World Bank Washington DC, 2002

³⁵ World Bank., *Albania, Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction. A Poverty Assessment*. Washington 2007, Report No. 40071-AL

³⁶ In Albania wages are usually paid twice a month

The same reason goes also for Beni, who says: *‘Although I could work as a teacher in a village, the salary was really low and I could not afford living costs.’*

The IOM 2005 study also confirmed that remittances have played a major role in improving the general financial situation of those households that receive them. A survey of 1,006 migrant households showed that 89 per cent received remittances from migrants during 2004. These remittances represented 43 per cent of the budget of the migrants’ households. When the relatives of migrants were asked to express their thoughts regarding migration and remittances, the conclusions were very interesting. The families that received remittances had a positive opinion.. Only 3.7 per cent of them stated that their financial situation had not improved. This number can be compared with those of the families who did not receive remittances from migrants. About 59 per cent of them reported that there was no improvement of their financial situation.³⁷

Meanwhile the survey of 256 returned migrants conducted in Tirana showed that 71 per cent estimate the financial situation of their families as sufficient and 6 per cent as more than sufficient to cope with their main needs.

Brain drain

A brain drain has negative consequences for the country of origin. Traditional brain-drain literature considers the migration of highly qualified professionals as destructive to the economy. The shrinkage of human capital resources, which are the fruits of the investments of many generations, generates a negative impact on the long-term economic growth and welfare of the country.

Between 1991 and 2008, due to a massive migration of lecturers and research workers, the universities and research institutions of Tirana lost at least 5,500 months of specialisation, mainly to France, Italy, Germany, Greece, Austria, the UK and the US. This figure is at least twice the number of training months that Albanian higher education institutes were allocated during the period 1992–2005, through the TEMPUS 1 and 2 Projects.

As a consequence of brain drain, Albanian universities and research institutions are suffering a decline of competitive capacities and a weakening of the quality of their work. A university rector, complained:

The consequences of brain drain are evident. We notice a degradation in work quality. The level of lecturing is quite poor, since a newly graduated lecturer cannot have the same level of know-how as an

³⁷ de Zwager N., Gedeshi I., Germenji E., Nikas Ch., Competing for remittances, IOM, 2005

experienced one. Often, to address certain problems, I need to create ad hoc commissions, because the experts are missing. Those who used to be best have already migrated and those ranked behind are hired by the private sector. If the rector faces difficulties in this respect, how can a student find the expert to consult or argue a thesis?

Another important impact of brain drain is the break-up of research teams. In many research institutions the implementation of projects is carried out in teams, with each member covering a certain segment according to their area of competence. Qualified professionals impart their knowledge and skills directly or indirectly to the other members of the team. The migration of these people leads to project failure, causes decomposition of the teams and loss in terms of the additional skills that would have been indirectly imparted to other individuals in the team.

Additionally, the high dynamics of brain drain and the desire to migrate among many young people in universities and research institutions all over the country has affected the long-term motivation of research workers. It is well known that in research, the expected benefits are often experienced only in the long term. For example, a historian may need to work for many years in libraries and archives to produce important findings. Yet the high dynamics of brain drain or the desire for migration encourages professors and scientific staff to see only in the short term. An academic at the Polytechnic University of Tirana stated: *Thinking in the short term has become a modus vivendi. Young people are predisposed to plan in the short term. Many of them consider the university like a trampoline to reach another country or win a scholarship. They always have the hope that something better will follow. I fear these distractions, which inhibit them from maturing as researchers or scientists.*

In many research institutions, the research ‘memory’ accumulated by many years of work is being wasted and there is no transmission of experience and knowledge from one generation to the next. This concern was emphasised by the head of an institution under the umbrella of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection: He says: *‘As a consequence of brain drain our institutions are suffering the loss of important parts of their research memory. We have made efforts to create a register of the research results as a database accessible to all of us. But, it’s not easy.’* The head of another important research institution comments: *‘One of the peculiarities of research worker migration is that they are middle-aged and highly qualified people. As a result, in our institute only the extreme age groups have remained; the oldest and the youngest. Given that young professionals do not possess adequate experience, the transmission of know-how becomes difficult.’*

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

Another negative impact of the brain drain process is that it does not produce positive signals for the country of origin. If professionals are leaving their country, potential investors are likely to view this in a negative light. This means that foreign investors may begin to question whether the country that is experiencing such an outflow of professionals is a good location for their funds, if they perceive the migration of professionals as a sign that the economic and political future of the country is uncertain.

In the long run, as qualified professionals continue to migrate, the sending country loses not only the current but also the future stock of human capital. Professionals have more chances than other groups to leave the country with their dependants, specifically their children. Yet the latter have a high probability of becoming educated and qualified professionals in the future. This future cohort of professionals is then also lost to the economy of the sending country.

Economic impacts of return migration

Return migration can and should be seen as a valuable source of the socio-economic development of Albania as a result of financial capital (savings), human capital (skills and experience acquired abroad) and social capital being brought back into the country.

Investment in business

A survey conducted with returned migrants in Tirana showed that 90.6 per cent of returnees reported that they had brought savings with them on their return. The accumulation of savings in the migration country is one of the main objectives of the migrants. In his interview Bashkim says: *'The main goal of my migration was to accumulate savings so that when I returned to Albania I would have the opportunity to open my own business and buy a house. The savings would help me live a normal life in Albania. I admire a person for his ability to save and not from the monthly wage he or she receives.'* The literature and related surveys show that, compared to migrants from other countries, Albanian migrants are distinguished by their strong propensity to save money. Korovilas (1999) for example estimates that each Albanian migrant in Greece saves at least US\$ 2,340 annually.³⁸ Conti *et al.*, (2003) estimate that Albanian migrants in Italy save on average 55.2 per cent of their earnings.³⁹ Gedeshi *et al.* (2003) estimated the average household savings

³⁸ Korovilas, J., The Albanian economy in transition: the role of remittances and pyramid investment scheme, *Post-Communist Economies* 11 (3), 1999

³⁹ Conti C., Natale M., Strozza S., Le rimesse degli immigrati: determinanti, modalita di invio e aspettative di impiego. N. Acocella e E. Sonnino (a cura di) *Movimenti di persone e movimenti di capitali in Europa*, Roma, 2003

for Albanian migrants at 5,056 euros.⁴⁰ An IOM study (2005) estimated the average annual savings at 5,390 euros per household.⁴¹

According to the survey in Tirana these savings of returned migrants have been used for:

- living expenses (46.8 per cent)
- business (37.8 per cent)
- to buy property (12.3 per cent)
- to buy furniture/households goods (8.5 per cent)
- savings (6.4 per cent).

Challenges exist related to the use of remittances and savings. Empirical data show that the remittances are mainly destined for consumption, while savings are used for investments. There appears little difference among respondents regarding the use of savings when compared to education or by the type of employment abroad. Returnees from the UK and Italy invest more than those from Greece.

There is a positive relationship between returned migration and self-employment. Empirical data show that almost 60 per cent of returnees in Tirana, mostly those with high savings, choose self-employment. They use their savings primarily to finance micro-enterprises and to buy equipment.⁴² Bashkim, who returned from the UK, invested his savings in buying computers to create a small internet café, Beni invested in equipment for his small shops and bought a van for his business and Skender bought an oven and the equipment for producing bread and cakes. Thirty-nine per cent of returnees choose salaried employment mainly in construction, public administration, small trade and hotels and restaurants. Silvi, for instance, who studied and worked in London, first worked in public administration when she returned to Albania and currently teaches in a private university.

Most of the micro-enterprises created by returned migrants belong to the services sector such as trading (59 per cent), hotels and restaurants (9 per cent), repairs (8 per cent), transport (8 per cent) and manufacturing (7 per cent). In most cases these are small low-productivity businesses often in the informal sector,⁴³ suggesting poor entrepreneurial skills on the part of

⁴⁰ Gedeshi I., Mara H., *The encouragement of social-economic development in relation to the growth of the role of the remittances*, UNDP, Tirana 2003

⁴¹ de Zwager, N., Gedeshi, I., Germenji, E., Nika, S. Ch., *Competing for Remittances*. Tirana 2005

⁴² Nicholson, B., *From Migrant to Microentrepreneur*, *South-East Europe Review*, 2001

⁴³ World Bank., Albania, *Labor Market Assessment*, Report No. 34597-Al, May 2006

returnees.⁴⁴ Some of these businesses which have a family character provide employment for other members of the household. They are based on extremely hard work by the owner.⁴⁵ Data shows that the possibility of self-employment increases with the length of the migration period. Research which states that the likelihood of being involved in one-person or family-owned businesses is highest among households returning from countries other than Greece⁴⁶ is also confirmed by our data.⁴⁷

There is a correlation between experiences in the migration country and the enterprise. Labrianidis *et al.* (2005) and Kilic *et al.* (2007) argue that the Albanian migrants '*replicate businesses in which they work abroad*'.⁴⁸ The data from our survey partially confirms this thesis. Only some of the returnees who worked for a long time in manufacturing (12 per cent), construction (16 per cent), transport (29 per cent), commerce (33 per cent), repairs (38 per cent) and hotel or restaurant (39 per cent) have replicated these businesses in Albania. This correlation seems to hold true for petty trade (67 per cent) and ICT (100 per cent).

In cases when the returnees replicate the business in which they worked abroad, they usually use the skills and 'know-how' they acquired in the migration country. Skender, who after working for about six years in a bakery in Greece used the skills learned there to start a similar business in Tirana. Aida, a migrant who returned with her husband from Athens and opened a hairdressing shop in Tirana has a similar experience. She says:

In Athens I attended the professional lyceum for hairdressing. I finished the school and graduated to a hairdressing shop. It was a very large one. I started as an assistant and gradually learned all aspects of the work until I became a fully qualified and experienced hairdresser. I have worked in this profession for more than four years.

People returning with new skills

⁴⁴ World Bank., *Albania: Urban Growth, Rural Stagnation and Migration. A Poverty Assessment*, Tirana, 24 July 2007

⁴⁵ Data shows that they work an average of nine hours a day during week days.

⁴⁶ Kilic, T., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Zezza, A., *Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania*, Working Paper, 2007; World Bank., *Albania: Urban Growth, Rural Stagnation and Migration. A Poverty Assessment*, Tirana, 24 July 2007

⁴⁷ The likelihood of being involved in own businesses is 48.6 per cent among returnees from countries other than Greece and 46.6 per cent among returnees from Greece.

⁴⁸ Lambrianidis, L., Hatziprokopiou, P., 'The Albanian Migration Cycle. Migrants Tend to Return to Their Country of Origin after All', in R. King, N. Mai and S. Schwandner-Sievers (eds.), *The New Albanian Migration*, Sussex Academic Press: Brighton-Portland, pp. 93–117, 2005; Kilic, T., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Zezza, A., *Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania*, Working Paper, 2007

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

A survey conducted in 2007 in Tirana showed that more than three-quarters of the returnees worked as unskilled workers in agriculture or construction, which did not give them professional experience. In many cases this has had the effect of 'disqualifying' them from following the profession for which they were educated. The survey data shows that 70 per cent of male returnees with secondary professional and university education worked as unskilled workers, mainly in construction, agriculture and hotels and restaurants, while women worked mainly in housekeeping and care for the elderly. Gjon says, '*In Athens I met many Albanians with university education who became building labourers*'. Teuta, an ex-migrant to Greece, says: '*The wife of my brother has completed higher education but works as a housekeeper for some Greek families*.' Valbona, who has been a migrant in Greece for several years, makes the same assessment:

The work I did in Italy was not the same as the work I did in Albania. In Albania I was an economist by profession and a head of department in a foreign bank and I had a good experience there. In Italy I worked as a cashier in a restaurant. Although I was appreciated, the work was relatively unskilled. It was like a 'de-qualification' process to me.

Under these circumstances the migration of highly educated people is not a process of brain drain but one of 'brain waste'.⁴⁹ This process is accompanied by a loss of human capital for both the country of origin and the host country.

Our data shows that the time factor is important in improving the status of the migrants in the labour market. In the beginning the difficulties are enormous because migrants have no legal status, they don't know the language of, nor the environment in which they live. They don't know the conditions of the labour market and so on. However as time passes they gradually improve their socio-economic status. Almost 42 per cent of the migrants have changed their social and economic status. The male migrants have passed from agriculture and construction to manufacturing and hotels and restaurants while the females progress from cleaning to petty trading. Migrants have also improved their qualifications.

The empirical data show that there is more mobility for men who have completed secondary education. Skënder is an ex-migrant with secondary education who has opened a bakery in Tirana:

⁴⁹ Gedeshi, I., 'From brain drain to brain gain: Mobilising Albania's skilled diaspora', in Tamas K., Palme J., eds., *How Migration Can Benefit Development*, Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm, 2006

When I migrated to Greece I did not have any qualifications and I initially worked in construction. The work was really tiring. A childhood friend of mine who was unloading flour in a bakery in Athens found me the job I still do today. In the bakery I started as an assistant, but after a year I began to work with the oven. With time I mastered the job and improved my skills. In the bakery there was an old expert to whom I stayed close. He encouraged me to learn and told me that even when we wash the dishes we learn something new. I had the desire to learn something new every day and I noted down everything, especially how biscuits were made which was something special. I have the notes even today. After four or five years I began to trust in my abilities. After five or six years I managed to fill my own warehouse with products and I was promoted to supervisor.

Another ex-migrant says:

A friend of mine was with me in Greece. He worked in construction there and does the same job in Albania. He can construct a building from beginning to end. He has also gained good experience. He has about 20 workers and has all the equipment needed for the work. Anyone who migrated to become skilled at a job really learned it. In the beginning we worked with restrictions but those who had the will learned the job.

There are also differences concerning the working experiences between those who migrated to Greece and those who migrated to Italy, Germany and the UK. More migrants to Italy, the UK and Germany worked in manufacturing and services than they did in Greece, where more worked in agriculture. Secondly, almost 32 per cent of the migrants in Italy, Germany and the UK- compared to 22 per cent in Greece – have increased their qualifications, and now work as skilled workers. These distinctions can be explained by the characteristics of the receiving economy. Greece, has a stronger demand for unskilled labour in construction, agriculture and services.⁵⁰ Lambriakis *et al.*, analysing returned migrants from Italy and Greece, have also noted a third characteristic. They state that the rates of entrepreneurship were higher in Italy.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Lambrianidis, L., Lyberaki, A., Back and forth and in-between: Albanian return-migrants from Greece and Italy, *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 2004

⁵¹ Lambrianidis, L., Hatziprokopiou, P., Albanian return migration: migrants tend to return to their country of origin after all, in R. King, N. Mai and S. Schwandner-Sievers (eds.), *The New Albanian Migration*, Sussex Academic Press: Brighton-Portland, pp. 93–117, 2005

Almost 22 per cent of the returnees have studied or have been trained in the migration country. Almost half of them received training in their place of work. This percentage is more than twice as high in the UK, Germany and Italy, than in Greece. This percentage is higher for migrants with university education and lower for those with primary education. In her interview Silvi, who worked for one year for the BBC in London appreciates the training she did there. She states: *'At the BBC they trained me very well - from this point of view I was lucky.'*

Migration to countries which have a consolidated market economy system and a strong democracy also changes the mentality and behaviour of the migrants there. Beni, who was a migrant to Greece, cites education and working ethics which are really useful to him in his business. He says:

In the first place we learned work discipline. Here in Albania there is a lot of unemployment, but when you do find a worker he does not want to work. In Greece a worker will do whatever he can. In Greece we changed our views, but here there are two mentalities side by side: capitalism and socialism. I also learned to communicate with people, and work ethics. These lessons are very useful for my business.

This is also stated by Teuta, but she includes the attitude people have towards money.

Communication experience is great. In Greece I also learned other things regarding relationships with people, in other words how to speak with them and how to welcome them in the shop. I try to teach this to my colleagues. Another aspect was the way they used money there. When they gained some income they invested it or bought properties.'. As the years passed, many of the migrants changed their economic behaviour. Skënder says: 'In the beginning I thought of staying in Greece for three or four years until I got enough money and bought a house in my motherland. But then I started to think that it would be better to save and to invest. In Tirana I currently rent my house and shop. I want to expand my business by taking bank loans. and when they do well, I would like to buy first the shop and then the house.

Skender has also learned management strategies from his former employer.

The owner said you cannot succeed in business in only six or seven months. It is not easy to build something new. It is very easy to buy five or six machines, but it is hard to maintain them. He told me I had started badly because I opened my bakery in my father-in-law's warehouse to avoid paying the rent, in a remote area where nobody

came to buy. He told me that I should not be scared of rent and that I should open a shop in the centre of the town where people pass by. After I worked in Greece for three months I found my self-confidence again. The Greek owner told me that I could stay and he wanted to give me space and to be my partner. But he said that for me it would be better to return since I wanted to work in Albania. He told me to stick to my business. When I returned I rented a shop in front of the city hall in Korça. Later on I obtained good long-term clients so the words of my Greek owner became true.

Maintenance of links to places where they were formerly immigrants

The returnees have created a rich cognitive social capital in their migration countries. Most of the returnees have relatives and friends still abroad, or have friends and colleagues in the host countries. According to our data, 65.6 per cent of them lived in areas where most of the population was native-born and 66 per cent had close contact with the local population. This form of social capital helps the returnees to develop commercial and economic relationship with the host countries.

Teuta, who migrated with her family for about 11 years to Greece and currently has a small clothes shop for women in Tirana, explains:

In my business I co-operate with a Greek who I knew in Greece. He has a relationship with the owners of the warehouses where I buy the clothes. Before I came back to Albania I discussed with him the idea of opening a shop for clothes. I own the business, but he helped me a lot. We plan to expand this activity and he will invest the business by opening a large shop selling the 'Lacoste' brand in Tirana.

Skender has another type of relationship with his owner in Greece. He takes advice from him regarding new products and business progress. He says:

With my former Greek owner I maintain a relationship and we talk on the phone every two or three days. This is mainly a business relationship. For example he tells me about new products that I don't know about and he gives me the recipe. Or he explains about something I don't do correctly.

Halim, a former migrant to Verona in Italy, buys stone and the equipment for working marble from the firm where he previously worked. He says:

The firm where I worked sells me the marble for a more favourable price than other clients. The employer I had in Italy has also visited my company here in Albania. He advises me on where to buy the equipment I need. Actually I have also ordered a machine to do some special marble processes. To be able to buy this equipment I took a loan for which my Italian owner was the guarantor.

Other migrants are promoters of small direct investments in Albania. Gjon, a former migrant to Greece, shows his experience:

I came to Albania with a Greek investor. He had a factory for producing vertical and horizontal lattices. I worked for about six months in his

factory and we came together to Tirana. I was not prepared to return to Albania but he insisted, telling me that he would help me and that we would work together. We had a good relationship. There are many other migrants who have invested together with the Greeks in Albania. A friend of mine has created a firm with a Greek which installs lifts.

There are various forms of co-operation between Albanian migrants and foreign businessmen in foreign direct investments. A bank employee who has been a migrant to Italy explained:

The returned migrants often work as the managers of associations which are created with foreign and Albanian capital. They often become partners, mostly in small businesses. In the case of large investments the migrant can be an associate or a manager. The association is property of the foreign investors who come to invest in Albania.

However, this influx of foreign direct investment would be greater if the socio-economic environment in Albania was more attractive. Gjon states:

I worked in construction for a Greek employer who had as a brother-in-law a great businessman. One day the master invited both of us to his house. During lunch I started to praise Albania. But the businessmen listened to me and said I didn't know so much about Albania, because once you go there they close every door to you. He said he had been to Albania and that you could not invest there.

The social capital they have gained also helps returnees to re-migrate when their living conditions in Albania do not improve. Teuta:

I keep on good terms with Athens. If I go there I can stay with friends and they are able to find me work. They have been very friendly with me.

Economic impacts of immigration

Boosting local business

During the transition period many foreigners have invested in the creation of small, medium and large businesses in Tirana, mainly in the production and service sectors. These foreign investments have an impact on economic reconstruction, have introduced new technologies and 'know-how', have increased employment and are creating a new business climate. Many of the foreign investors have introduced a new work culture. Rolande started a

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

sweet manufacturing business in Tirana ten years ago, which she is continuously expanding. She says;

I noticed that in Tirana there were many bars and restaurants but few confectioners. That is why I decided to open a sweet shop with French specialities. At first I had three or four Albanian workers who I had trained and today there are 13 or 14 workers.

Antonio has a business that deals with the importing and selling of household goods and furniture. He notes the good and stable relations he has with his growing number of clients. Others work in international organisations, as consultants or as qualified specialists.

Foreign investments in Albania often encounter obstacles impeding the growth of their business. Antonio, talking about the events of 1997.

The state must create more safety for everyone and should encourage the creation of new job places. It must be clear in its politics, must have vision and must encourage foreign investments.

Sam, a foreign investor, who has worked in Tirana for years, mentions the infrastructural shortages:

The constant power outages increase production costs and act as an obstacle in realising our contracts.

Rolande mentions the difficulties she encounters with corruption in the field of tax and duties and the mentality of the officers. She says:

At first there were administrative difficulties like with tax which in France does not happen. I do not accept compromise and this is why I have suffered a lot. Most of the workers who learned the profession left after some time. It takes time to learn everything. One must learn. I also started my business gradually, while other people wanted to expand rapidly. But this is wrong since learning itself is also valuable.

The presence of foreigners in Albania has made the social and cultural life of the capital more dynamic. It has also had an impact on the increasing prices of food products, and of the rents of the apartments. Genti, a representative of a travel company says that *'the presence of immigrants makes Tirana look like a city with high tourist appeal which is without doubt reflected in an increase of prices'*. Klea, an employee of a real estate agency in one of the main streets of Tirana, states:

While Albanians rent apartments for prices up to 350 euros the foreigners often rent apartments for 800 to 1,200 euros per month. In our agency about 15–20 per cent of approaches are made by foreigners. Many of these apartments are of high quality and very nicely furnished foreigners have certainly had an impact in increasing the rent prices.

3.2. Social and cultural life

Migration and urbanisation

The impact of migration can be noted in the fast urbanisation of Tirana. It can also be observed in the deep contrast that exists between central and peripheral areas, where the different approaches and cultures of internal migrants, non migrants, returned migrants and immigrants live together. Internal migrants came mainly from traditionally poor areas, such as the north and the north-east of the country.⁵² One long-time resident of Tirana, Luan, observes:

People coming from all over the country now live in the periphery of Tirana. The majority have come from the north as well as the north-eastern part of the country. Those who were born and grew up in and around Tirana are a minority compared to those who came from other parts of Albania.

In many cases this internal migration was fed by the remittances of international migrants, but has also served as a step towards further migration. The return of international migrants was followed by internal migration towards Tirana. Bashkim, Beni and Skender invested their savings in Tirana after they returned from some years of international migration experience. They state that the main reasons they settled in Tirana are the greater opportunities of employment, investment opportunities and better prospects for their children. Skender:

The main reason for migrating to Tirana is related to the future of my children but there are also economic reasons. In Korça I had my house, my shop, my car and the business was going fine for me. However, I wanted to expand more and I couldn't do this in Korca since it is a small town, and in Tirana one has the chance to do more.

⁵² World Bank, *Albania, Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction. A Poverty Assessment*. Washington 2007, Report No. 40071-AL

Beni expresses almost the same concerns:

We moved to Tirana since here there is more opportunity here and there is more space. There is work here, and Tirana has better schools for my children and a better health service.

It seems this tendency of returned migrants to migrate towards Tirana will continue in the future. This is affirmed by Beni in his interview who says that his brothers' families, who are from southern Albania 'will come and invest in Tirana when they return from migration to Greece'. Consequently, further population pressures on Tirana can be expected in the future.

Benefiting from uncertain ownership status, internal migrants have created informal settlements in the suburban areas of Tirana. In many of these districts, due to chaotic and large-scale internal migration, there is a lack of adequate roads, power, water and sewage systems. There are also few proper education and health services, nor entertainment and leisure activities. Agim, an education expert in Tirana says:

There are many cases where we have 55 students in one class. Some classes have more. This has a negative impact on teaching quality and on social relations between students and teachers.

Consequently, suburban areas of Tirana resemble a gigantic village,⁵³ where some of the poorest and most socially disadvantaged groups in the country are settled. Zezza *et al.* also speak about the 'relocation of poverty'⁵⁴ from impoverished rural mountainous areas, into urban areas. According to Dervishi, despite the fact that these internal migrants obtain work as manual and semi-skilled workers in Tirana, mentally and culturally they retain the values of their rural areas of origin.⁵⁵

The centre of Tirana has become over-urbanised due to the high density of new blocks of flats and apartments. The concentration of the population has made Tirana the city with the highest population density in Albania, with more than 600 inhabitants per square kilometre.⁵⁶ The population of the city continues to increase by five to seven per cent a year, mainly as a result of

⁵³ Vullnetari, J., Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review, IMISCOE, Working Paper No. 18, September 2007

⁵⁴ Zezza, A., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Moving away from poverty: a spatial analysis of poverty and migration in Albania. *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 7(2), 2005

⁵⁵ Dervishi, Z., Urbanizimi i jetës së popullsisë fshatare apo ruralizimi i qyteteve? Rasti i Tiranës. *Politika dhe Shqëria*, 1(8), 2001

⁵⁶ Tirana Regional Council 2005

internal migration (three to five per cent).⁵⁷ In Tirana, the non-migrants and the successful returned migrants who live in the city centre hold the most important jobs in administration, business and other key sectors. Moreover, Tirana is characterised by a loss of green spaces and open areas to other non-productive activities, with air and noise pollution, and roads constantly blocked by traffic jams.

The impact of migration on the communities 'left behind'

Migration is the only option for economic survival and the improvement of a family's living conditions, but its social cost is very high. Jozefina, a teacher in Tirana, asserts:

Migration is a means to survive but it is causing a tragic end to Albanian families. We all feel heartsick for our sons and consider migration an irreparable wound caused by the difficult life we are living.

The separation of families due to migration affects all generations: children, parents, and grandparents. Engjëll, a director in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs says:

Emigration is a contradictory process... From a social point of view, it has positive effects. However it is associated with heavy negative consequences such as the abandonment of the elderly and children and the quick rise in divorce cases resulting in husbands and wives living apart.

The effects of migration on families

Widespread international migration causes family disintegration, which leads to further negative economic consequences. Nimet, a Roma woman from Tirana says: '*international migration breaks up families.*' Families separate for long periods of time, resulting in significant emotional stress and marital break-ups. Another Roma woman from a suburban neighbourhood of Tirana says: '*Here most marriages end because there are those who go abroad and stay for months and even years without coming back.*' Alban, a sociologist dealing with family and divorce cases during the post-socialist transition observes:

In the first nine months of 2007 there were 970 divorce cases in Tirana and without doubt migration was one of the main causes. A family whose partners have been separated for a long time becomes

⁵⁷ Lulo, R., Probleme të urbanizimit në Shqipëri, *Studime Gjeografike*, 2005, 15

dysfunctional, there are contradictions, and in the end this brings its destruction. In this social phenomenon, migration constitutes a dominant factor. In Tirana almost one in three marriages is dissolved and this phenomenon tends to be aggravated through time.

Women feel much greater psychological stress due to the migration of men in their household. Most of them are obliged to take on the children's education by themselves. A similar case is Milto's, waiting for years to join his family in the USA:

The separation from my family has been very stressful for me especially during the first months. It is hard to wake up in the morning and not see them around. At it was hard for my wife to face all her difficulties alone. But we made all these sacrifices for the sake of our child.

Mimoza, whose family circle migrated to the US some years ago feels lonely and thinks that she had taken on too many responsibilities. She says:

I remained in Albania and my parents are worried about me. They come once a year to see me but they cannot stay too long. The last time my mother stayed only for two weeks and to me it seemed as if she never came.

Waiting for a US visa has been a great strain for her and she is obliged to think only about her short-term future.

I have been waiting to migrate to the US. But the more time passes, the more I feel that I don't want to stay in Albania but not necessarily to the US. This means that actually I am in the air, caught between two countries. If I migrate to the US tomorrow I will do this because of the sacrifices my parents have made for me. In other words only to feel morally fulfilled. I don't want to break their heart. Once I'm there, I will decide whether I will stay or return to Albania.

The effects of migration on children who remain

Other migrants, who are usually undocumented and unskilled, have low incomes and face great difficulties in the first years of migration. They will have left their children with their parents. In the first years of migration with her husband, Remzi's daughter worked almost all day managing a restaurant. So she has sent her daughter – almost two years old – for about two years to stay with her parents in Tirana. Nezir's daughter is divorced, is in a difficult

economic situation and has no legal immigration status in the country she has migrated to. She left her two daughters in the custody of her parents.

The psychological stress of children who are separated from their parents, and the responsibility of grandparents in bringing them up is present everywhere. Remzi:

At first the little girl had a hard time getting used to us. Then, when she had got used to us, she had difficulties adapting to her parents. Bringing up our granddaughter was a huge moral responsibility. Once, when she became ill my wife got sick too, from the stress.

It is difficult for Nezir to explain to his granddaughters why their mother cannot come and visit them.

It has been five or six years since they have seen their mother, who cannot return here since she is an illegal migrant and does not have a regular permit or passport.

The migration of parents also has a negative impact on the education of the children. Fredi, a teacher in a primary school on the periphery of Tirana says:

The children whose parents have migrated do not have good school results and often drop out. This also happens because their grandparents have difficulties in taking care of them.

Nezir, whose grandchildren are of school age, is concerned, not only with the responsibility of schooling them, but also their physical security.

I take them to school every day and my wife waits for them each day when they finish. But I have to take care of them in the afternoon as well, and help with that little I know, when they do their homework. My wife has only four years of education and cannot help them. They are growing up, knowing that they are without parents, and we are afraid that bad people may cheat them and traffic them.

For many other grandparents, usually from poor and marginalised population groups, bringing up grandchildren is also a serious financial problem. Nezir:

My daughter, the mother of our two granddaughters, cannot help us financially. This is why the struggle to support our grandchildren falls upon my shoulders. However, our main problem is economic. We all live just with my modest salary and the income that I gain from any casual job I do in the afternoons or on holidays. Moreover, our

granddaughter suffers from a chronic blood disease and needs continuous medical treatment and blood analysis once every month in hospital. Each month we must pay about 3,000 lek just for her medicine, a considerable amount out of our small income.

Likewise, Ervehe, an elderly Roma woman who lives with her grandchildren in a suburban area of Tirana says:

I receive a pension of 7,000 lek⁵⁸ per month and I am ill. I also have four little granddaughters from my two daughters who are both divorced and have migrated to ensure the daily bread. One of them is in Italy and the other in Greece. They left me their daughters to take care of but they cannot help me economically. I am afraid to go to hospital to be cured because then there will be nobody to take care of them.

The difficult financial situation of grandparents living solely on their pensions is the main reason why many children abandon school and work on the streets. Ardian, a social sciences researcher states:

Most children who abandon school and work in the suburban areas of Tirana are those who live with grandparents who receive a minimal pension. Consequently, in 90 per cent of cases, children who live with their grandparents cannot live in normal socio-economic conditions – their needs cannot be fulfilled. They live below the poverty level and this leads them to abandon school, to work on the streets and to start begging. Consequently some difficult social problems have been created which were unknown before transition.

The effects of migration on older people who remain

In some cases the return of migrants is also motivated by the obligation to take care of elderly ill parents, some of them in poor health. In many Albanian families there is a tradition that parents should live together with one of their sons, usually the younger one, and his wife. The younger child has responsibility of taking care of his elderly parents, in order to earn the respect of society. Beni, who had migrated to Greece with all his brothers says:

My parents in Albania were living alone and one of my brothers had to return to take care of them.

⁵⁸ About 57 euros

Skender and Bashkim also say that missing their parents and relatives was a reason for their return.

Traditionally, when the parents only have girls, their place is always with the family of their husbands. Remzi has two married daughters who migrated to Canada:

They always want us to go and live with them in Canada. However in Shkodra we have a very strong tradition according to which the support of the parents falls on the shoulders of their son. It seems to us that our daughter went to her own house- and we cannot live in the house of our daughter's husband

Sometimes migrants take the path of long-distance care, looking after their families from abroad by sending remittances, gifts, letters and family videos; and in long-distance phone calls making decisions about health and wellbeing. In the survey of 256 migrants from Tirana, 97 per cent of respondents contacted their families often, and 65 per cent of those asked visited their families from time to time. The survey shows that these remittances are mostly used for daily basic expenditures such as food and clothing. They pay for furniture, consumer durables, home improvements and life-stage cultural practices such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Thanks to the remittances of their migrant children, many parents in Albania are in a good financial situation and feel safer psychologically. Remzi says:

Our daughters help us economically in different ways. We are better off than we were in Shkodra. But we feel also safer since we know that if something happens to us, our daughters will help us.

In these cases the migration of children and their families provokes strong emotional strain. One of those interviewed described it as 'a huge spiritual pain'. In the traditional Albanian family the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is very strong. Remzi states:

We were used to having our granddaughters at home. But I have four granddaughters and yet here nobody calls me grandpa. When I went to Canada my granddaughters would compete with each other as to who would stay with me on that day.

This strong emotional stress is only reduced if grandparents have the chance to visit their children and grandchildren more often. 'I wish,' says one older Albanian, 'that the authorities of the host country would not set so many obstacles so that we could visit our children time to time.'

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

Many other migrants, especially those who live in Greece or the UK, do not possess legal resident status in the destination countries: many entered clandestinely, remain undocumented, and work in the black economy. The status of the illegal migrant makes it difficult for them to come and go, since they can be detained by the police or border authorities. In this case they cannot go to visit, help or take care of their aged parents during difficult periods such as illness or depression. This situation is made even more difficult by the fact that pensions are low and the quality of the health service has worsened during transition. Many pensioners have insufficient access to basic health services. Rolande, a French woman who has spent almost all of the transition period in Tirana states:

There are no general medical practitioners who can refer patients to more specialised services. Also there's no specific accident and emergency service. These are things which could be simply solved by better organisation which would not cost a lot.

Furthermore, in Tirana there is also a lack of specialised institutions that can take care of the third generation, as Agim, an official at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs outlines.

Institutions in Albania were unprepared for the phenomenon of mass migration. Despite the fact that there more than 18 years have passed since the start of transition we still have only five state homes for old people in Tirana, with a capacity of 300 places.

Other migrants who are unskilled and work in low-paid and casual jobs have small incomes and face difficulties in their daily life. In such conditions it is hard for them to give financial aid to their parents, who have small pensions. A number of elderly people are losing their social support. An academic who follows pension issues closely observes:

One of the biggest social problems that pensioners face is the fact that many of them are alone because their children have migrated to Greece or Italy. Quite often, the children are not in a position to help their parents or be by their side in their most difficult days. Migration is creating pensioners who have become lonely 'orphans'.

This strengthens the sense of depression, social abandonment and loneliness many older people feel,⁵⁹ creating the phenomenon of socially isolated

⁵⁹ King, R., Vullnetari, J., Orphan Pensioners and Migration Grandparents: The Impact of Mass Migration on Older People in Rural Albania, *Ageing and Society*, 26, 2006

'orphan pensioners'.⁶⁰ The National Human Development Report for Albania⁶¹ in 2005 confirmed that elderly people living alone and at high risk of abandonment are one of the most vulnerable social groups in Albania.

The impact of return migration

Returning migrants bring new ideas, behaviours and practices to their country of origin, gained during their stay in the migration country. These social remittances are often more important than the economic ones in their long-term effects.⁶² They influence many aspects of everyday life, such as gender and generational roles, human rights, and political and social participation in Albania. Consequently, returning migrants can be seen as agents of social and political change.

Bashkim originates from northern Albania, where tradition and patriarchal norms have been stronger than in other parts of the country. During his stay in the UK he changed his opinion of the role and position of his wife. He consulted all the members of his family about the decision to return to Albania.

If my daughter would tell me that she doesn't want to return to Albania she had her right to say so and I would have respected her decision. The same goes for my wife.

In contrast to many Albanian migrant males who sent money to their families – Bashkim sent more remittances to the family of his wife.

I have helped my wife's family more. They needed it more than my own family. Usually my wife and I decided this together.

Many of the returned migrants stated that they want a more varied cultural life on their return.

Bashkim, in his interview compares the period of his stay in England with that of his life in Albania. He says:

In the UK I went to the library or I went to a bookshop and read books and Albanian newspapers. I also went to the cinema at weekends with

⁶⁰ De, Soto H., Gordon, P., Gedeshi, I., Sinoimeri Z., *Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2002

⁶¹ UNDP, *Pro-Poor & Pro-Women Policies & Development in Albania*. National Human Development Report Albania 2005

⁶² Kapur, D., *Remittances: The New Development Mantra?* Geneva: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs. G-24 Discussion Paper Series, No. 29, 2004

my children. In the UK I spent most of the time with my family. Here it is the opposite. I spend more than 12 or 14 hours a day at work.

In the countries of migration most of the returned migrants developed certain expectations regarding the role of government and institutions, standards of services, etc. Bashkim states that:

In the UK everything functions in accordance with the rules and that one does not hear nepotistic excuses about someone being someone else's nephew. In the UK you have someone you can go and complain to concerning any problem and you can solve things, while in Albania it is hard because public administration does not function as it should.

Consequently, returned migrants demand higher standards of governance and pressure.

While Silvi gained political maturity from her migration experience, she is unsatisfied with the aggressiveness of political life in Albania.

In the political arena I see too much aggression. This is something I can't stand about Albania; so much that I do not want to see any political documentary. It makes me sick when I see Albanian politicians screaming at each other.

The impact of immigration on social and cultural life

The participation of immigrants in the social and cultural life of Tirana is an important element in their integration process. In his interview Antonio states that *'I work all day so it is hard for me to follow the cultural and artistic life of the capital'*. Rolande is more involved. Despite working every day she seeks a more varied and diversified cultural life.

There is an absence of cultural activities. In Tirana there is opera but this is not enough. There is the need for more variety. Something softer, like an operetta, a show that everyone can enjoy. Not everyone likes the same thing.

Participation in political or social networks

Usually immigrants do not participate in political and social networks. Egest is the director of a well-known NGO in Tirana.

Some of the foreigners in Tirana are part of international networks. These people cannot participate in political parties or social networks

due to the conflicts that this generates in their workplaces. Others are businessmen who in most cases are mainly interested in their businesses and their everyday work. Qualified workers often tend to see themselves as only temporary visitors in Albania.

Despite their low participation in political and social networks, immigrants are interested in their development in Albania. They are informed about them by the mass media and by daily discussions with their Albanian colleagues. During these discussions they express their thoughts based on their experiences in their countries of origin, which in most cases have a more consolidated democratic system and market economy than Albania.

There are of course exceptions. Rolande participated as an independent candidate for deputy in two general elections in Albania.

I stood several times. I did so in 1997, in 2001 and then in 2005. But I never won, though they told me I was only a few votes short. It is very difficult. I don't think the parties wanted me to win. I also considered being directly involved in a political party but I want to speak about my own ideas and to be interested in people's needs.

3.3. Sense of belonging and identity

Interviews with returned migrants show that the sense of belonging to a city, or more generally to a receiving country, is defined by structural factors such as legal and socio-economic status or religion.

For many Albanian migrants their sense of identity and belonging in the host country is related to financial motives. Some migrants set money aside to send remittances to their families while others save for their living expenses, to invest in property or to start up a business when they return home. One of the reasons that Bashkim returned from the UK was that he had '*saved enough money to create a new business and to buy a house*'. Beni, who migrated to Greece for ten years, believes that '*pay in Albania for those who like to work has increased, and for me it was a shame to stay in Crete any longer*'.

Other migrants, especially those who stayed in Greece, associate their return to Albania with the xenophobic feelings that exist in certain groups of the Greek population. Beni says:

I got bored there and the Greeks despised us. When one day my boy came home from school and said he did not want to go there anymore

because the others had insulted him by calling him ‘alvanos’ because he pushed one of them by mistake, then I decided to return here - immediately and without hesitation.

Bashkim feels insecure about living in London due to his uncertain residence status. He says, ‘I was waiting from day to day that they called me to leave England and this provoked a lot of stress for me’. Beni does not see any relevance in the type of job in the migration country. He says,

In Crete I worked in agriculture and in tourism. During the summer I did every kind of job that the hotel had, opening the beach chairs on the beach. I worked every single day without a break. But the work didn’t give me any pleasure nor offer any potential. I would have stayed there doing the same type of job until I retired.

Silvi, who studied and worked for some years in London, was very pleased with her professional experience and the cultural life, but she missed the social environment and spiritual relationships.

The cultural life in England was marvellous, very challenging, and that is what I miss most here in Albania. London was a very open minded city. You could go to a restaurant and see that the person next to you had another nationality; and the waiter came from a third country and so on. I loved cultural tourism. In London I had many English acquaintances but few close friends. However, each time I came to Albania and met different people I saw that they were very warm. That is why I decided that by the time I finished my masters I would return and try to live and work in Albania. Albania offers me all that I was looking for; it fulfils me. The social environment here in Albania is perfect. There is no stress. You just go out with your friends for a coffee. There is the chance to have fun and do what you want to do.

Other migrants could not construct a full social identity in the migration country because they miss their family, friends and social network. Beni, who returned from Greece, says ‘... there we worked all day. In Albania one has a social network with friends and relatives with whom you can stay and talk.’ Skender, who was a migrant in Athens, states: ‘Things were going well and the Greek owner trusted me but I missed my mother and father.’

Apart from the return migrants in Tirana there are also immigrants. The French businesswoman Rolande is one of them. She has lived in Tirana since the early days of the post-socialist transition and has integrated gradually into the social, economic and political life of Tirana.

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

I like Albania, because here life is calm compared to the intensity and stress of Paris. I have made more friends with Albanians than I have with foreigners. I have learned a lot from them, but they have also learned something from me.

Antonio, an Italian who has lived in Tirana for more than ten years, states almost the same thoughts:

In my business I have created a good name and a stable client base which has expanded every year. I try to behave well with the clients, who are all people who know me. This is why I am settled in Albania, I feel great here. Most of my friends are Albanians and the majority of them are also clients of my business.

He sees his future and that of his children in Albania. *“My children should not migrate abroad because they have their future here.”*

Part 4. Conclusion

The first part of this report provided a profile of the city of Tirana and explained the causes, the types and the different forms of migration which despite their intensity exist alongside one another and interact with one another. They have turned Albania into a ‘*country on the move*’ according to Carletto *et al.* (2006).⁶³ It has become ‘*a sort of laboratory for studying the new migratory processes,*’ according to Russell King.⁶⁴

The second part of the report provided the profiles of four returned migrants, four family members of migrants left behind and two immigrants. These carefully selected profiles based on original interviews provide the social and economic causes of, and the different stories of migration and return migrants, of the people left behind and of the immigrants. The story of each of them symbolises different aspects of Albanian migration during the post-socialist transition. Every Albanian migrant can read fragments of his or her own life in each of these interviews.

Bashkim, Beni and Skender represent the massive illegal migration of the early years of the transition and have moved from rural areas into urban ones, from internal migration to international migration or vice versa and from short-term migration to long-term. It is clear that economic reasons – poverty, unemployment and low incomes – are the main push factors which oblige ordinary Albanians to illegally cross the mountains and the seas. But it is not only Milto, with his education, who has a deeper perspective of the causes. In a never-ending transition period he stresses the worsening of services, the state that does not take proper responsibility and the lack of planning.

In the first place there’s the economic factor. Despite the relatively good salary that a soldier earns in Albania, it is insufficient to fulfil the normal financial needs of a family and to contribute to the bringing up of a child. The second reason is education. The educational system in our country has deteriorated a lot during the transition years. The state in Albania, in contrast to other countries, does not take responsibility. Lastly, it is also the lack of perspective. The country seems to be in a

⁶³ Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A., A country on the move: international migration in post-communist Albania. *International Migration Review*, 40(4), 2006

⁶⁴ King, R., Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 7, No 2, August 2005

never-ending socio-economic transition although it is now 18 years since it started..

Silvi, and potentially Mimoza and Milto, reflect a specific form of international migration, the so-called brain drain or, as expressed in many interviews, 'brain waste'. In contrast to mass migration this form of migration is legal and mainly oriented towards the USA and Canada. Each of the returned migrants has – during the years spent in the migration country – accumulated a rich financial, human and social capital, which they try to use in their country of origin. While Mimoza, Milto, Nezir and Remzi represent the stories of the people left behind, the social cost of migration has been overlooked in return for the financial benefits of remittances. Rolande and Antonio represent the new process of immigration into Albania which works in parallel with migration and will certainly grow in the future.

The third part of the report, based on qualitative and quantitative data, analysed some aspects of the socio-economic impact of migration seen from three different points of view: the impact of migration, the impact of return migrants and that of immigrants. The impact of migration in lowering the poverty level is visible in Albania, to the point that distinguishing between a 'poor' family and a 'non-poor one' is recognised by whether or not they receive remittances.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, brain drain has negative consequences, since the country loses the most precious part of its human capital. The return of migrants on the one hand and immigrants on the other is important for social and economic development, because they bring with them social and financial capital, work experience and innovative ideas. However, most of them emphasise that the social and economic environment of Albania is not attractive for investment, and 43 per cent of the returned migrants wish to re-migrate.

The strengthening of intercultural dialogue between migrants and the local population is the core of this report. Migration has contributed to the recognition by Albanians of different aspects of Western culture. They have changed behaviours, mentalities and their work ethic. They have acquired new ideas and have achieved better education and more qualifications. Bashkim, who originates from a remote rural area of northern Albania, where a patriarchal mentality towards women prevails, tells about a conversation he had with a more recent migrant:

⁶⁵ De Soto, H., Gordon, P., Gedeshi, I., Sinoimeri, Z., *Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment*, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2002

When I returned from England to Albania, a boy from my region sat next to me on the plane, and I had a friendly chat with him. He had been living in England for a while, had a good job, and had obtained all his legal documents. He was coming to Albania because he was engaged. During our chat I asked him whether he had brought a gift for his fiancée. He was surprised and said no. What kind of gift should I bring her? he asked. I suggested to him that he should buy her a gift for New Year's Eve.

The behaviours, ideas and practices which migrants bring home with them when they return to their motherland, gradually transform the community left behind. Migrants have become agents of social and political change. These social remittances of Albanian migration are often significant and have a longer-lasting impact than financial remittances. Their interviews and life stories have enriched this report.

The Albanian government faces challenges ahead and a critical dilemma concerning migration. If nothing is done, many of the problems described here will increase in the future and will hinder the social and economic development of the country. If action is taken in the appropriate direction, positive results will follow.

Bibliography

- [1] Barjaba, K., King, R., 'Introducing and theorising Albanian migration', in King, R., Mai, N., Schwandner-Sievers, S., (eds.) *The New Albanian Migration*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005
- [2] Carletto, G., Davis, B., Stampini, M., Zezza, A., *Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania*, Rome: FAO, ESA Working Paper 04–13, 2004
- [3] Conti, C., Natale, M., Strozza, S., 'Le rimesse degli immigrati: determinanti, modalita di invio e aspettative di impiego', N. Acocella e E. Sonnino (a cura di) *Movimenti di persone e movimenti do capitali in Europa*, Roma, 2003
- [4] Dervishi, Z., 'Urbanizimi i jetës së popullsisë fshatare apo ruralizimi i qyteteve? Rasti i Tiranës'. *Politika dhe Shoqëria*, 1(8), 2001
- [5] De Soto, H., Gordon, P., Gedeshi, I., Sinoimeri, Z., *Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2002
- [6] de Zwager, N., Gedeshi, I., Germenji, E., Nikas, Ch., *Competing for remittances*, IOM, 2005
- [7] European Training Foundation, *The contribution of human resources development to migration policy in Albania*, 2008
- [8] Gedeshi, I., Mara, H., *The encouragement of social-economic development in relation to the growth of the role of the remittances*, UNDP, Tirana 2003
- [9] Gedeshi, I., 'From brain drain to brain gain: Mobilising Albania's skilled diaspora', in Tamas, K., Palme, J., (eds.), *How Migration Can Benefit Development*, Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm, 2006
- [10] Germenji, E., 'Does human capital matter? Integration of Albanian immigrants in the Greek labour market'. Paper presented Marie-Curie [1] conference on Multi-Level Governance of Immigration Flows, Athens, Greece, 30 March-3 April, 2005
- [11] INSTAT, *Statistical Yearbook 1993–2001*, Tirana, 2003
- [12] INSTAT, *Albanian Population in 2001*, REPOBA, 2002

LivingTogether

Equal opportunity and access in society

- [13] Kapur, D., 'Remittances: The New Development Mantra? Geneva: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs'. *G-24 Discussion Paper Series, No. 29*, 2004
- [14] Kilic, T., Carletto, G., Davis, B., Zezza, A., 'Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania', Working Paper, 2007
- [15] King, R., Vullnetari, J., 'Orphan Pensioners and Migration Grandparents: The Impact of Mass Migration on Older People in Rural Albania', *Ageing and Society*, 26, 2006
- [16] King, R., Vullnetari, J. 'Migration and Development in Albania', Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, University of Sussex, Working Paper C5, 2003
- [17] King, R., Dalipaj, M. and Mai, N., 'Gendering Migration and Remittances', *Population Space Place*, 12, pp. 409–434, 2006
- [18] King, R., 'Albania as a laboratory for the study of migration and development', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 7., No 2., August 2005
- [19] Korovilas, J., 'The Albanian economy in transition: the role of remittances and pyramid investment scheme', *Post-Communist Economies* 11 (3), 1999
- [20] Lambrianidis, L., Hatziprokopiou, P., 'The Albanian Migration Cycle. Migrants Tend to Return to Their Country of Origin after All' , in R. King, N. Mai and S. Schwandner-Sievers (eds.), *The New Albanian Migration*, Sussex Academic Press: Brighton-Portland, pp. 93–117, 2005
- [21] Lambrianidis, L., Lyberaki, A., 'Back and forth and in-between: Albanian return-migrants from Greece and Italy', *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 2004
- [22] Lulo, R., 'Probleme të urbanizimit në Shqipëri', *Studime Gjeografike*, 2005, 15
- [23] Nicholson, B., 'From Migrant to Microentrepreneur', *South-East Europe Review*, 2001

- [24] UNDP, *Pro-Poor and Pro-Women Policies and Development in Albania. National Human Development Report, Albania 2005*
- [25] Vullnetari, J., 'Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review', IMISCOE, Working Paper No. 18, September 2007
- [26] World Bank, *Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction. A Poverty Assessment*. Washington 2007, Report No. 40071-AL
- [20] World Bank, *Albania, Labor Market Assessment*, Report No. 34597-AI, May 2006
- [27] World Bank, *Albania – Poverty Assessment*, November 2003
- [28] Zezza, A., Carletto, G., Davis ,B., 'Moving away from poverty: a spatial analysis of poverty and migration in Albania', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 7(2), 2005