

Population Movements and Migration as a Trend: The Case of Albania

Juventina Ngjela
Edvaldo Begotaraj
Natalja Qana

Abstract: Migratory movements are part of the early history of human migration and nowadays there are still many migrations from one country to another. Albanian migration after the 1990s has attracted the attention of many different scholars and academics. According to experts, migration has become a key survival strategy but also constitutes an important feature of the Albanian economy and society. This study will investigate the reasons of migratory movements in Albania, and if the expectations of people who migrate have been met or not. Current problematics migrants might have will be analyzed, thoughts and arguments will be considered, whether they would like to stay in the destination country, or if they will try to move to another country or will return to their country of origin. Based on the data obtained, recommendations will be given to the right institutions in Albania, considering eventual measures, to avoid the permanent departure of qualified and educated individuals or to promote temporary migration, or more specifically, the circular migration. The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between employment, economic situation of families, the integration in the destination country, the achievements in the destination country and their influence on the motivation to emigrate, creating a new life away from the country of origin, as well as in the decision to stay temporarily or permanently in the country of destination or to move to a new destination country. The study focused on collecting information from the answers received from an online survey with questions about people motives to migrate, addressed to individuals from Albania who have had as their experience the phenomenon of migration. 308 people participated in the study. The study showed that the main reasons for living their country were the level of employment, the economic level of the families, the integration in the country of destination, the purpose achieved in the country of destination. The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents, mostly in EU, confirmed they have adapted to living in the destination country. They are adapted to the language of the host country, to the culture of the country of destination but without neglecting the cultural elements of the country of origin.

Keywords: Migration, Albanian, employment, integration



Dr. Juventina Ngjela, University of Albania, juvenina.ngjela@yahoo.com;
Dr. Edvaldo Begotaraj, College University "Logos", edvaldo.begotaraj@kulogos.edu.al
Dr. Natalja Qana, Luarasi University, qananatalja@gmail.com



0000-0003-4648-6766
0000-0001-6753-3328
0000-0001-5658-739



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Introduction

Migratory movements are part of the early history of human migration and nowadays there are still many migrations from one country to another. Albanian migration after the 1990s has attracted the attention of many different scholars and academics. According to experts, migration has become a key survival strategy but also constitutes an important feature of the Albanian economy and society as a whole.

Albania has traditionally been considered a country of migration. External and internal migration is seen as a way of surviving in difficult times of war and in times of peace, in conditions of economic, social and political instability.

Historical circumstances, as one of the main causes influencing migration, have shaped and determined the direction of Albanian migrations. Albania has constantly been a country where the population has moved continuously, inside and outside the country. The intensity and direction of these movements has been different in several periods.

This study will investigate the reasons of migratory movements in Albania, and if the expectations of people who migrate have been met or not. Current problematics migrants might have will be analyzed, thoughts and arguments will be considered, whether they would like to stay in the destination country, or if they will try to move to another country or will return to their country of origin. Based on the data obtained, recommendations will be given to the appropriate institutions in Albania, considering eventual measures, in order to avoid the permanent departure of qualified and educated individuals or to promote temporary migration, or more specifically, the circular migration.

The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between employment, economic situation of families, the integration in the destination country, the achievements in the destination country and their influence on the motivation to emigrate, creating a new life away from the country of origin, as well as in the decision to stay temporarily or permanently in the country of destination or to move to a new destination country.

The study was based on the creation of four research questions and subsequently main hypothesis created. Thus, the research questions concern the level of employment in the country of origin and its correlation with the motivation to emigrate. Moreover,

concerns are raised about another motivation to emigrate, about the economic influence. Furthermore, research questions include the integrations of people at the country of destination and the decision to remain at the destination country or the will to go back at the country of origin. Consequently, the hypotheses suggests that the level of employment in Albania, both with the economic situation, influence the motivation to emigrate, creating a new life away from the country of origin. Furthermore, a second hypotheses suggests that the new lifestyle and the integration at the new country influence the decision to not go back in the country of origin.

According to IOM (2011) in the Book of Emigration Terminology, migration is the process of human movement, because of crossing the international border, or movements within the state. This population movement includes all types of people movement, which can happen for different reasons, persons moving to start a new life in another destination country.

The concept of migration has its origins from the term “*migraine*” from Latin, which means “*to move*” and which refers to the resettlement of people in time and from one place to another. Thus, migration is a phenomenon that stems directly from the freedom and opportunity to move (Ikonomi, 2011).

Migration occurs due to the driving factors of the country of origin (dynamics and demographic structure, poverty, social divisions, unemployment, political situation, etc.) and attractive factors of the destination country (high wages, better livelihoods, favorable policies of emigration, family ties - relatives who have emigrated before, employment relief, etc., Xhelili & Avdiu, 2018).

During years 1991-1992 there was a significant movement of the Albanian population to nearby destinations such as Italy and Greece. This first wave first involved people who chose to migrate through the Embassies present in the Albanian territory. Following first pluralistic elections, in March 1991, about 25,000 Albanians chose to migrate massively on ships towards the coast of Puglia. Thus, thousands of Albanian citizens left their country heading to Western European countries. It is estimated that in that period, from March 1991 to October 1992, about 300,000 people emigrated.

The exodus of the local population in this period occurred for several reasons, mainly for political instability, difficult economic situation, and social insecurity (Piperno, 2003).

Following the gravity of the circumstances, although Italian government at first was unprepared to deal with, somewhat, measures were taken to normalize and to face of the situation. Italian authorities made a concession known as the Martelli Law by giving people temporary residence permits and the opportunity to register at employment offices (National Legislative Bodies, 1990).

The 2000s were generally calm compared to the 1990s, even though there were still people migrating from Albania. After years 2000 there was a relative stability combined with strong control measures from Western countries and Albania itself. During 2010s the subsequent economic crisis involving mainly Italy and Greece, resulted in a decrease of the rate of emigration from Albania. Nevertheless, emigration continued either in the form of seasonal or permanent migration. It is a sustainable migration that still exists towards Italy and Greece, and nowadays increasingly towards new destinations in Europe and North America. Moreover, emigration to more distant developed countries such as United Kingdom, United States, Canada and Australia has already turned into a new trend.

Meanwhile many Albanians are settled permanently at the countries of destination, being integrated at the host societies, recently is manifested also the phenomenon of Brain Gain, with several Albanians choosing to turn back in the country of origin.

After the 2000s Albania took a series of measures to prevent illegal immigration; in 2003 the Law no. 9034 dated 20.03.2003 was approved, revised by law no. 9668, dated 18.12.2006, regarding "the emigration of Albanian citizens for employment reasons".

The object of this law was the regulation of relations in the context of migration of Albanian citizens, who leave the Republic of Albania for employment reasons (Law on Emigration of Albanian Citizens for Reasons of Employment, 2003).

The economic situation and the rate of employment affect the reason for emigrating

Migration is as old as humanity wandering in search of better life, but international migration according to all state border rules has improved so much that only at the beginning of the 21st century did the nation-state system, passports and visas were improved to regulate the influx of people (Martin, P., Abella, M., & Kuptsch, C., 2008).

The several factors and consequences of globalization push many people to move from their country of origin for a better life and of course by the legal rules of population movement.

The backward economic development in comparison with the countries of the region has also influenced the different features that this phenomenon has shown in Albania, which King and Barjaba (2005) call "*exclusion from exclusion*". Many expected that the fall of the Iron Curtain would lead to high rates of East-West migration driven by economic contrasts.

Nonetheless, mass migration from East to West failed to materialize. This was an exception to the economic rule that migrants move to countries where wages and economic conditions were better. The exemption from exclusion was certainly Albania / the only clear example of the outbreak of mass migration across previously unexplored borders.

Emigration is a product of driving and attractive factors. In the case of Albanian emigration, the driving factors have prevailed compared to the attractive ones. Albanians consider the emigration as a solution, not as a choice. The driving factors are also different. However, economic factors prevail among them. Unemployment is still a driving factor affecting migratory flows.

Although driving factors predominate, some attractive factors continue to be influential in motivating to emigrate. Among them, could be mentioned the educational factors, which are expressed in the large number of Albanian students studying in foreign universities: Italian, Greek, American, German, Dutch, etc. Another attractive factor continues to be the aspiration of qualified Albanians to build professional careers in Western countries. Among the attractive factors can be mentioned the support from existing migrants and their families in the host countries (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Albania, 2015).

Migration for employment reasons or the movement of people across borders to work has reached the top of political agendas in many countries of origin, transit, and destination (OSCE, 2009). Different countries are constantly increasing their regulatory capacities to manage the movement of labor through various policies and cooperation agreements. The movement of people for employment reasons will continue to exist and therefore it is necessary to fully manage migration for employment reasons; and

in the meantime, avoiding the negative effects it could have from this free movement of the population.

Migrants have an impact on the development of the countries of destination and origin. Immigrants thus make a major contribution to the improvement of human capital in their countries but also through remittances, which their relatives spend on their needs in the country of origin.

But migration also has a positive effect on countries with an aging population, helping to increase the workforce. Also, many studies show that migrants are involved in employment in jobs left vacant by the local workforce when the latter do not prefer to be engaged in certain jobs. Thus, migration supplies an opportunity to complement the workforce of the destination country, including in different sectors a young workforce which affects the growth of dynamism and innovation.

Integration in the destination country

The emigration of individuals to another society in addition to material benefits is accompanied by coping in the process of inclusion, integration and adaptation to the social conditions of the host society. The main influences of this process are “cultivation” and “assimilation” of emigrants in the host society. This situation is supposed to involve the full acceptance and accommodation of the newcomers in the host society. Involvement also occurs with the fading of changes in customs, traditions, norms, values, etc., with those of the natives (Gunther, 1969).

Immigrants and their children must adjust to the new living in their destination country. But it often happens that these applications of the elements of adaptation bring about a fading of their culture (language, traditions, etc.), to adapt to the culture of the destination country. But sometimes the phenomenon of assimilation helps immigrants to adapt more quickly to the new living in the destination country.

Thus, the frequent non-use of the mother tongue will help the immigrants to learn the language of the destination country, which will be more useful in the communication of daily life in the workplace and at school. This will help them to get to know the culture of this country even better (Kaya, 2002).

The integration of immigrants in the destination country is facing the “continuity of integration”, which is the process of assimilation and acculturation of the society. Although this process poses challenges to the identity of the immigrant. Immigrants are challenged by stigma and adaptation efforts in the host country. Albanian emigrants have also met discrimination from host societies.

The Albanian states and the host countries have been constantly trying to arrange agreements between them to create a more effective protection and support for the emigrants. Through the respective policies of the countries, the emigrants enjoy equal treatment with the citizens of the host countries for labor power, social security payments, union membership, etc. (OSCE, 2006).

The social integration of migrants in destination countries is interdependent on the various processes found in it. To have the most effective integration, a part of the emigrants is physically connected with institutions which help the emigrants in their integration in the society and in the fields of economic, cultural, school life, etc. Moreover, the aid from these institutions is also offered to immigrants for the preservation and continuity of the cultural identity, norms, values, traditions, etc. of their country of origin (Bell, 1975).

Immigrant associations also serve as a connecting bridge between young immigrants from Albania and immigrants who have previously emigrated to these destination countries; working to ensure the social integration of Albanian immigrants in the host society.

European integration for immigrants is based on the pluralist model, especially after visa liberalization. Through various centers and associations that run in the host countries, emigrants are encouraged to learn the Albanian language. Also, the policy of quarterly residence of seasonal emigrants gives them the opportunity to feel more accepted by the locals and of course to preserve the socio-cultural identity.

The goal achieved in the destination country (of individuals from emigration)

Individuals considering freedom of movement decide to emigrate to host countries for various reasons. The countries of origin and the host countries are constantly develop-

ing policies to help immigrants. To help the resettlement of migrants in the destination country, measures are taken by the respective countries in five directions:

- Protection of migrant workers for employment reasons,
- Regulation of the labor market,
- Easing social cohesion,
- Increasing social welfare and
- Supplying social protection.

The above measures are also found in the smallest standards expressed in international human rights legislation and international labor law. But in addition to international legislation where many states are part of, countries of origin also have their own national legislation to protect the rights of their immigrants in the countries of destination. Institutions must work together to create employment opportunities for migrants leaving their countries of origin for a better life but also to supply more monetary income.

But different states often apply for granting of permanent or temporary status to migrants for several reasons. For example:

- Employers of destination countries employ migrants in low-skilled jobs, jobs for which temporary workers are required.
- Increasing size of the demographic deficit. This reason has led many countries to sign agreements for the admission of migrants for employment purposes.
- It often happens that the granting of permanent status to immigrants can be granted even when a close link is proved between immigrants and employers.

Granting residence status in destination countries also helps migrants to become involved and integrate into social life in the destination country 16

Certainly, working in immigration supplies a substantial income for individuals who have decided to live and work outside their country of origin. The immigrant family saves part of this income. Emigration has a primary impact on the country's economy as a result of remittances. Remittances are one of the main pillars of the Albanian economy, influencing the realization of various investments in the country of origin.

Problems, findings and analysis of results

The study focused on collecting information from the answers received from the questionnaires addressed to individuals in cities in the Republic of Albania, who have had as their experience the phenomenon of migration. 308 people took part in the study.

1. Gender of respondents

Out of 297 participants in the study, it results that 76.8% belong to the female gender, while 23.2% belong to the male gender. 11 people did not respond.

2. Age group of respondents

Out of 302 participants in the study, it results that 19.24% of them belong to the age group 0-20 years; 57.1% of them belong to the age group 21-30 years; 21.1% of them belong to the age group 31-50 years; and 2.5% of them belong to the age group 51-65 years. 6 people did not respond.

3. Civil status

Out of 302 study participants it results that 58.3% claim to be single, 32.1% claim to be married; 8.2% claim to be in a cohabiting relationship with their partner and only 1% are divorced. 6 people did not respond.

4. Level of education

Out of 302 participants in the study, it results that 3% of them claim to have elementary education; 13.2% of them claim to have high school or middle school education; 56% of them claim to have a Bachelor's degree; and 20.9% of them state that they have completed Master studies in one of the profiles for which they have completed Bachelor studies or different with them and 0.9% have completed doctoral studies. 6 people did not respond.

5. Country of origin

Out of 242 participants in the study, it results that 20.47% are from the city of Tirana; 29.13% are from Fier, Berat, Durrës and Shkodra; 5.11% did not answer and 45.27% are from almost all other cities in Albania. 66 people did not respond.

6. Place of destination

Out of 247 persons interviewed, it results that 24.29% of them claim to have emigrated to Germany; 22.67% of them claim to have emigrated to Italy; 18.21% of them claim to have emigrated to Albania; 9.31% of them claim to have emigrated to England; 6.47% of them claim to have emigrated to Greece and 6.47% claim to have emigrated to France, Belgium, Sweden and Canada. 61 people did not respond.

7. Level of employment in the country of origin

From the persons participating in the study from 293 respondents it results that 35.5% of them claim to have been employed before emigration; while 64.5% of them claim that they were not employed before emigration. 15 people did not respond.

8. Reason for emigration

Out of 291 respondents regarding the reason for emigration, it results that 29.9% claim that they emigrated for a job that provided you with more income; 8.6% state that they have decided to emigrate to create a financial capital for the family; 12.4% claim to have emigrated for studies; 32% state that they have decided to emigrate for a better life for themselves and their family; 3% claim to have emigrated to join their family; 4% state that they wanted to leave Albania and 2% specified other reasons for leaving Albania. 17 people did not respond.

9. Employment in the country of destination

Out of 213 respondents it results that 38.96% did not specify the position where they work in the host country; 31.92% of them claim to have worked in the health sector (nurse, assistant nurse, physiotherapist); 14.1% are positioned in the services sector (cleaners, plumbers, babysitter, driver, saleswoman, etc.); 8.1% expressed that they work in other jobs; and 6.1% are not in employment situation. 95 people did not respond.

10. Realizing of the trainings about the work in the destination country

Out of 291 respondents, it results that 60.8% receive training on the work they perform in the destination country and 39.2% do not receive training on the work they perform in the host country. 17 people did not respond.

11. Financial situation in the host country compared to that of the country of origin

Out of 294 respondents, it results that 36.1% said that the financial situation is high income; 24.1% have stated that their financial situation is above average income; 32% are middle-income and 7.8% are low-income. 14 people did not respond.

12. Adaptation of lifestyle in the destination country

Out of 292 persons interviewed, it results that 59.2% have been relatively adapted to the way of life in the destination country; 36.3% are fully adapted to living in the destination country; 3% did not adapt at all and only 1.5% specified other answers. 16 people did not respond.

13. Integration of migrants in the destination country

Out of 291 persons interviewed, it results that 69.1% have managed to be sufficiently integrated in the destination country; 24.4% answered that they are fully integrated in the destination country; 4.5% answered that they do not feel at all integrated in the destination country and only 2% specified other reasons. 17 people did not respond.

14. Situations of prejudice and discrimination in the country of destination

From 292 answers received from the questionnaires it results that 45.5% have never encountered situations of prejudice and discrimination by the locals; 40.4% turn out to have answered that they have encountered several times situations of prejudice and discrimination by the population of the destination country; 9.9% have experienced situations of prejudice and discrimination by locals many times and 4.2% have specified other answers. 16 people did not respond.

15. Current living

Out of 297 respondents it results that 57.2% are satisfied with current living; 23.6% are very satisfied with their current living; 13.5% say they are not very satisfied with their current living; 4.7% said they were not at all satisfied with their current lifestyle and only 1% specified other answers. 11 people did not respond.

16. Realization of the purpose for which individuals have emigrated

Out of 293 respondents, it results that 60.4% the purpose for which these individuals have emigrated has been somewhat realized; 23.5% have replied that it is fully realized; 12.6% answered that it was not realized and only 3.5% specified other answers. 15 people did not respond.

17. The problems that immigrants currently face

Out of 275 respondents, it results that 40% of the respondents have temporary problems with employment; 37.5% of the respondents have specified other problems in terms of the problems they face (such as difficulties in knowing the language of the host country, difficulties in lifestyle, difficulty in obtaining documents, etc.); 18.5% of the respondents stated that they have problems with housing and only 4% of the respondents turn out to have answered that they have problems with the education of children. 33 people did not respond.

18. The thought of migrating to another destination country

Out of 297 respondents, it results that 53.9% answered that they do not intend to emigrate to another destination country and 46.1% want to emigrate to another destination country, to see the opportunities they offer to immigrants. 11 people did not respond.

19. Desire to return to the country of origin

Out of 298 respondents, 66.4% do not want to return to their country of origin and 33.6% want to return to their country of origin. 10 people did not respond.

Discussions

- The results of the questionnaires show that individuals who have recently decided to emigrate belong to the age group - 21-30 years; age which is interested in securing a job and increasing financial situation.
- The results show that only a low percentage of respondents stated that they are divorced or practice cohabitation.

- The findings show that a significant percentage of immigrants who have decided to leave their country have completed higher education and Master studies. This is exactly what is considered in international terminology as brain drain.
- The movement of emigrants to different countries of destination is accompanied by cooperation between the institutions of the two countries (country of origin and destination) and interstate cooperation; aiming at maximum protection against their citizens. Cooperation between states also affects the avoidance of negative elements of immigration, such as. his irregular movement.
- The high level of unemployment in the country of origin is a driving factor for the emigration of Albanians to different countries of destination; for securing a job to meet and their daily life requirements.
- As we notice and from the answers received from the respondents about 31.92% work in the health sector; This high percentage of employees in the field of health also comes from the agreements concluded between the institutions of the country of origin and destination to recruit these individuals as different countries have increasing demand for employment of individuals in these professions.
- More than half of the respondents find that the financial situation is very good compared to the country of origin.
- Emigration has a primary impact on the country's economy as a result of remittances. Most of this income is provided by the employment of the head of the household, while the rest is provided by other family members. The immigrant family saves part of this income.
- From the data collected from the questionnaires it results that a high percentage of respondents is the initial goal for which they decided to emigrate has not been achieved. This leads us to the reasoning that the destination countries have offered you the relevant opportunities to achieve their goals and objectives.
- From the answers received from the respondents came a series of initial problems faced by immigrants in the host country. Problems that are natural and take their time to minimize.
- Temporary employment problems also come because of obtaining temporary permits or completing pre-training before these migrants start working. Immigrants also face

other problems: such as difficulties in recognizing the host country, difficulties in life-style, which are minimized over time; this is due to the constant effort of the emigrants to adapt to the lifestyle of the host country but also thanks to the provision of assistance by the relevant actors of the destination country.

- Individuals decide to emigrate to different countries of destination for a variety of reasons such as: standard of living in destination countries, higher employment opportunities, higher wages, better economic opportunities, opportunities for professional development and different qualifications, political stability, meritocracy, stability, providing the best services, etc.

- The return of migrants to the country of origin is influenced by a number of factors. It is the immigrants themselves who decide to stay or return after a period of emigration. There are several reasons why immigrants decide to return to their country of origin but three of them are the main motives:

- Economic
- Social
- Psycho-social (family, personal)

The decision to stay or return is a matter for the immigrant himself.

Conclusions

The study reached to the conclusion of confirming the hypothesis raised at the beginning of the study:

The level of employment, the economic level of the families, the integration in the country of destination, the purpose achieved in the country of destination affect the motivation to emigrate, emigrate, create a new life away from the country of origin, as well as the decision to stay temporarily or permanently in the destination country or to move to a new destination country; which is verified by the analysis of the information collected.

- The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents, exactly 95.5% said they have adapted to living in the destination country. They are adapted to the language of the host country, the use of which is necessary during the performance of daily work

but also for communication during daily life; are adapted to the culture of the country of destination but without neglecting the cultural elements of the country of origin. There are also those people who may have changed their religion as a reason to adapt to the culture of the destination country. Respondents who used the language of destination stated that this was done to help children continue their education in order to perfect the language of the country of destination, thus helping them to study their schooling as efficiently as possible.

- The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents are integrated in the destination country. This comes for several reasons: high employment opportunities, relevant policies that help immigrants, the local community which continuously provides support and assistance to this contingent of individuals.

- The study concluded that a very high percentage of respondents answered that they are employed in the country of destination, respectively 93.08%. So finding a job to provide income and meet the needs of their daily life pushes these people to build a new life towards different destination countries. But it should be noted that in the countries of destination most emigrants do not work in their professions for which they graduated in Albania. For most of them the recognition of diplomas or the continuation of specializations is a worrying problem and requires time.

- The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents for about 83.9% has achieved the purpose for which individuals have emigrated. The most important factor that has driven the country's emigration has been the economic factor. Mostly Albanians leave for economic reasons, such as: difficult living conditions, difficult economic situation, inability to find a job in the country of origin, etc. Difficulty finding a job in the country of origin also exists among educated people who have invested in their education in the hope of finding a future job in their country of origin.

- The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents who have decided to emigrate about 77.8% have completed Bachelor, Master, and doctoral studies. The phenomenon of brain drain from the countries of origin to those of the destination can be explained by analyzing the "driving" and "attracting" factors. In general, qualified intellectuals decide to emigrate by also making a comparison of elements between countries of origin and destination. This comparison by them is made in several perspectives such as: economic, political, social, cultural, educational, etc. Qualified persons, in ad-

dition to in-depth knowledge of their profession, also possess knowledge in foreign languages, which makes it even easier to integrate into the host society but also to invest in various university specializations.

- The study concluded that a high percentage of respondents about 80.8% are satisfied with current living in the destination country. This is also due to the fact that the host countries take appropriate measures to come to the aid of persons who decide to build a new life in these countries through policies, strategies, relevant legislation; through the protection of these individuals by relevant institutions; through the provision of relevant services that these individuals need; through the provision of social protection and support by all relevant actors.

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