

Social and Economic Profile of the Return Migrants in Albania

Tirana, December 2016

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Abbreviations

WB	World Bank
EU	European Union
ETF	European Training Foundation
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MMSR	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
SM	Migration Counters
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

Executive Summary

This document aims to draft a socio-economic profile of Albanian returned migrants within the framework of the project “Improved social inclusion policies for vulnerable categories of migrants in Albania”. Its objectives are: a) to describe the characteristics of the vulnerable categories of returned migrants in Albania; b) to assist the central and local government in the needs assessment of the returnees and identification of potential services that would facilitate their reintegration; and c) to provide some recommendations regarding migrant re-integration policies.

This study is based on research conducted in 9 regions of the selected country to ensure representation of: a) all regions and topographies of the country; b) urban, semi-urban and rural populations; c) varying degrees of socio-economic development; d) different types of economy and industry; and e) various forms and intensity levels of international migration. In these regions there is also a notable presence of Roma and Egyptian communities. Selected regions include Shkodra, Kukësi, Tirana, Durrësi, Elbasani, Korça, Fieri, Vlora and Berati.

The study is based on the analysis of primary and secondary data. It involves a desktop review of relevant literature as well as qualitative and quantitative methods (cross-reference). The qualitative and quantitative methods component include a) focus group discussions with returned migrants; b) semi-structured interviews with returned migrants, returned asylum seekers, representatives of central and local government, representatives of international organization and diplomatic corps in Albania, experts etc.; c) a socio-economic survey with 41 returned asylum seekers from Roma and Egyptian communities and d) a validation workshop that discussed on the findings of this study.

After almost 26 years since the start of the post-socialist transition, it is estimated that over 1.4 million Albanians, which is almost half of current country’s population, have migrated. Although the features of this migration have changed during the last three decades, its high intensity that is mainly due to economic push factors has remained constant. Nevertheless, there is another process that takes place alongside international migration: the return of migrants which is either forced or voluntarily. The return of migrants due to economic and financial crisis culminated during the years 2012 and 2013. However, their return continued even during 2014 and 2016, clearly identifying two groups of returned migrants. The first one is composed of economic migrants that mainly return from Greece and Italy. Whereas, the second group is composed of Albanians that have applied for asylum in EU countries, predominantly during the period 2014 to 2015 and are being returned in groups.

The study revealed that during the period 2013 to 2016 the number of economic returned migrants that have returned from Greece and Italy due to implications of economic and social crisis has decreased. In order to draft the profile of returned migrant and to analyze the social exclusion level they were grouped into the following categories: unemployed, employed, self-employed, small and medium investors and students. The first group is characterized by emphasized social exclusion. It reveals the substantial needs for employment, economic aid and integration of children at schools. This group’s perspective on international migration is formed in the absence of the aforementioned conditions.. The second group is characterized by a higher professional level and is richer in social capital which has assisted them in employment. Based

on the interviews conducted, this group states that the quality of services available is problematic. The group of self-employed is characterized by a greater amount of social, human and financial capital. It needs financial support and technical consultancy before starting a business. The group of entrepreneurs are characterized by a higher level of human, financial and social capital needs, business consulting and more quality services in education and care. The group of returned students emphasized the creation of greater spaces to participate in economic, academic and political life of the country.

During 2014 and 2015 a relatively larger number of Albanians, most of whom were young and requested asylum to EU countries with families. Unemployment and underemployment, lack of income and difficult living conditions constitute the main push factors for most Albanian asylum seekers. Some marginalized groups such as Roma and Egyptians present other reasons such as discrimination as well.

Most returned asylum seekers are actually in worse economic conditions in comparison to when they left Albania and constitute a vulnerable group. Unemployment and lack of financial incomes are the main problems encountered by most returned asylum seekers. This socio-economic situation is harder for those families that sold their home and possessions to fund the trip or those that are in debt. Depending on the intensity of return of other asylum seeker, mainly from Germany, the size of this group will increase and the pressure in the labor market and in institutions that offer services will increase.

During the coming years, the process of the return of migrants will continue but with a lower intensity. Consequently, the policies must aim at: i) the efficient use of the financial, human and social capital of returned migrants and ii) the decrease in the migratory process by managing it by temporarily "clearing valves", such as seasonal and circular migration based on requests for labor in host countries.

In order for this to happen there is a need to: a) strengthen the relationship between migration and development and to increase the role of the diaspora in socio-economic development of Albania; b) to provide consultancy through agencies and second level banks for returned migrants that wish to invest their financial, human and social capital in economic activities; c) to draft a national strategy and new action plan that predicts a group of easing measures for migrants' investments; d) to better orient returned migrants regarding the use of skills gained abroad and to offer chances for re-qualification; e) to increase the quality of education and health services especially for children of returned migrants; f) to manage the migratory fluxes by vocational training of potential migrants conform labor market requests of host countries in order for the migration process to return into a *win-win situation*; g) to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation for regular gathering of data on returned migrants in order to enable for update of their profiles and for the timely implementation of adequate measures for their re-integration; h) to increase information on regular migration especially where there is no chance for short-term employment; i) create a detailed national database for returned students regarding their skills by sector aiming to prioritize their employment; and j) interventions from international partners' community in Albania to strengthen relations between returned migration and development as well as for social inclusion of most vulnerable categories identified by this study.

1. Introduction

The present document gives a socio-economic profile of the return migrants in Albania based mainly on qualitative but also quantitative research techniques as well as a literature review. The main objective of this study is to describe the characteristics of the vulnerable group of return migrants, to assist the Albanian Government in the needs identification and to provide some policy recommendations on returning migrants reintegration in Albania.

Aside from the conclusion and policy recommendations, the study is structured by research paragraphs. The first part of this study describes the methodology and research techniques adopted, the sources of information and the design of social exclusion indicators based on the existing literature in the sector. The second part describes the international migration process of the Albanian citizens, its characteristics, push and pull factors, as well as the influence of the global economic crises in the migration and return migration flows. The third part portrays the socio-economic profile of the return migrants in Albania, with particular attention on the special case of the returned asylum-seekers.

Objectives

As specified by the ToRs, the purpose of this assignment is to develop the socio-economic profile of Albanian returnees in context of the project “Improved social inclusion policies for vulnerable categories of migrants in Albania”.

The specific objectives of the assignment are:

- 1) To describe the characteristics of vulnerable categories of migrants in Albania;
- 2) To assist the central and local government in the needs assessment of the returnees and in the identification of the potential services that would facilitate their reintegration;
- 3) To give some recommendations regarding returnees reintegration policies.

The analysis will give priority to the following questions:

Which are the tailor-made policy recommendations that can be formulated in order to address the reintegration needs of the Albanian returnees? What policies need to be formulated and what services could be provided in order to include returnees in the economic and social life of the country? Which are the Albanian returnees’ needs that can be dealt with within the Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Albania?¹

The consultants were sensitive to gender issues and the data will be disaggregated according to sex and age, where relevant.

1 Official Development Assistance is defined as “those flows to developing countries and territories which are:
i. provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and
ii. each transaction of which:
*a) is administered with the promotion of the **economic development and welfare of developing countries** as its main objective; and*
*b) is **concessional in character** and conveys a grant element of at least 25 per cent (calculated at a rate of discount of 10 per cent).”
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm>*

2. Methodology

The definition of the concepts “*social inclusion*” and “*social exclusion*” has repeatedly changed over time depending on the context, targeted social categories and evolution of the Welfare State itself. Independent from the concept definition, social exclusion and social inclusion pose significant challenges to the policy-makers worldwide. That is why properly measuring social exclusion helps to address the challenges and to propose innovative social inclusion policies.

This paper adopts a consequential approach towards individualizing the proper definition of social exclusion/inclusion with regards to return migrants, while at the same time trying to adapt it to the evolving Albanian migration framework.

Firstly, we endorse the fundamental-rights-based UNDP definition of social exclusion (UNDP 2007, cited by Mathieson et al 2008) means:

“any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms”²

This definition is important to return migrants in general and to returned asylum-seekers in particular.

Secondly, this rights-based vision has been, for policy-related purposes, further elaborated by the World Bank (World Bank 2013³) in order to take into consideration “the removal of institutional barriers and the enhancement of incentives to increase the access of diverse individuals and groups to development opportunities.” The World Bank model measures four forms of capital that can affect an individual’s well-being, economic fortunes, poverty and inclusion. These forms of capital are (World Bank 2007⁴): i) *Financial Capital*; ii) *Physical Capital*; iii) *Human Capital*; iv) *Social Capital*. We support the World Bank ideal-type on financial, physical, human and social capital to the extent that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews (see attached Annexes) are structured along these identified forms of capital.

Thirdly, the UNSSIA program under which this paper has been written has chosen to base its work on the European Union definition and indicators of social exclusion. The European Union has agreed to a core set of poverty and social exclusion indicators, known as the ‘Laeken’ indicators. This consists of a set of common statistical indicators of social exclusion and poverty that are subject to a continuing process of refinement by the Indicators Sub-group (ISG) of the Social Protection Committee (SPC). The EU’s Laeken indicators serve to measure social exclusion from a policy point of view, with the aim of fostering comparability between countries (for an extended overview of the Laeken indicators refer to Shanaj, 2014).

2 **Mathieson, J**, Popay, J, Enoch, E, Escorel, S, Hernandez, M, Johnston H and Rispel, L, 2008, Social Exclusion Meaning, measurement and experience and links to health inequalities - A review of literature, WHO Social Exclusion Knowledge Network Background Paper 1, Lankaster University, UK, p.88

3 **World Bank/International Bank for Reconstruction and Development** 2013, Inclusion Matters – The Foundation for Shared Prosperity, Washington DC, p.278

4 **World Bank** 2007, Social Exclusion and the EU’s Social Inclusion Agenda - Paper Prepared for the EU8 Social Inclusion Study

Although for the purpose of the UNSSIA program the use of the 'Laeken Indicators' is recommended, we agree with Shanaj (op. cit) that "the Laeken indicators are somewhat narrow in scope, as they mainly address poverty, inequality and labour market access, considering income and employment as the main risk factors for social exclusion."

Fourthly, in order to tailor social exclusion profiles of return migrants, this paper has adopted the "Cassarino three-stage model" which measures social exclusion/inclusion as a spatial-temporal process. The 'three-stage approach' is therefore structured along three main migratory stages: i) situation before leaving the country of origin; ii) experience of migration lived in the main country of immigration; iii) return to the country of origin.⁵ In other words, this approach makes it possible: i) to understand the extent that the experience of migration as well as the social and institutional context at home has impacted patterns of reintegration; ii) to analyze why and how the human, social and financial capital of the interviewee has changed over time; iii) to compare diachronically the various factors which have motivated and shaped the migratory stages.

Finally, based on the aforementioned considerations we have endorsed the revised version of the Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix (Levitas et al 2007, in Shanaj op.cit) which divides social exclusion into three domains (*Resources, Quality of Life, and Participation*). Out of the ten sub-domains and respective indicators that the Matrix proposes, the authors of this study selected the most salient ones for the returnees category (Annex 1) where the sub-domains and respective indicators for the definition of social exclusion status of the return migrants are synthesized.

Hence, the consultants identified different vulnerable categories of Albanian migrants such as economic returnees (mainly due to the financial and economic crises in the European Union), rejected returned asylum seekers⁶, Roma and Egyptian returnees, unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs), and trafficked persons. Some of these sub-groups have been analyzed extensively. For example, IOM in 2015 has completed a study on the "Profile of the situation of unaccompanied minors and efforts for social inclusion" and the "Profile of the situation of trafficking victims and efforts for social inclusion".⁷ Similarly, in 2013, INSTAT and IOM Albania conducted an in-depth study on return migrants in Albania.⁸ Therefore, the paper will mainly be dedicated to economic returning migrants, mostly from Italy and Greece. The document will take stock of the IOM/INSTAT 2013 survey, since the countries of return migration flows remain the same, and will develop an analysis of the social exclusion profile which has not been in the focus of the IOM/INSTAT survey.

Meanwhile, a phenomenon of Albanian migration has intensified in the last 25 years: that is, the recent rapid growth of the number of Albanian asylum-seekers in the European Union (EU), (around 66,000 persons in 2015 compared to the 1,925 in 2010).⁹

According to the official statistics in Germany – the only place in the EU that identifies the ethnic origins of asylum seekers – around 6 to 10 % of the Albanian asylum seekers are of Roma and Egyptian origin.¹⁰ This percentage is considerably high when compared to the overall representativeness of the Roma and Egyptian population in Albania.¹¹ Therefore, the consultants will focus their study on the rejected asylum-seekers and Roma/Egyptian returnees, which happen to be the least analyzed target-groups.

This requires a terminological specification of the return migrant definition. According to the 2010-2015

5 **Cassarino J.P.** (2014), "Reintegration and development", Jean-Pierre Cassarino (Ed.), 2014, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies.

6 In this category are included also the returned asylum-seekers, though in a minor proportion, who made their return without having a prior negative response from the hosting Authorities.

7 **International Organization for Migration**, Profile of the situation of unaccompanied minors and efforts for social inclusion, Tirana, 2015; **International Organization for Migration**, Profile of the situation of trafficking victims and efforts for social inclusion, Tirana, 2015.

8 **INSTAT & IOM Albania**, 2014, Return Migration and Reintegration in Albania, ISBN: 978-9928-188-14-4

9 Eurostat official statistics. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

10 **European Union Asylum Support Office (EASO)**, Asylum applicants from the Western Balkans. Comparative analysis of trends, push-pull factors and responses. Belgium, 2013.

11 **INSTAT**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: A socio-demographic and economic profile based on the 2011 Census, Tirana, April 2015.

National Strategy of Reintegration of Returned Albanian Citizens, a returned migrant is “a person returning to his/her country of origin or habitual residence usually after spending at least one year in another country.”¹² In the case of asylum seekers, it is highly probable that a returnee has stayed in the destination country less than a year. Consequently, for the purpose of this study the consultants have considered a return migrant to also be an asylum seeker who has stayed in a country other than the country of origin for less than a year and who has returned to Albania either voluntarily or not.

Sampling

With regards to sampling, the qualitative and quantitative method consist of the following: a) prior to the initiation of field work, the consultants selected returnees from rural and urban areas through their *contact persons*¹³ b) the selected returnees were both males and females, and were of different ages; c) a part of the asylum-seeker returnees were selected through *snowball sampling*¹⁴; d) sample size was determined according to the intensity of emigration/return in a given region; e) the resulting figures indicate the number of questionnaires per region.

As far as *sample size* per target group is concerned we have applied the “*Outline of terms of reference of the Social Exclusion Profiles*” (Shanaj, 2014, op.cit). According to this sampling, 60 economic returnees and 44 rejected asylum-seekers were interviewed, while 44 Roma/Egyptian returnees responded to the questionnaire.

Site selection

Based on: i) different field researches previously undertaken and; ii) consultations with IOM staff in Albania, the consultants selected six regions for collecting and analyzing the information across a variety of categories, such as women, men, children, youth and elderly. These regions are: Shkodra, Kukësi, Tirana, Elbasani, Korca, Fieri, Vloora and Berat. The selection was made to ensure the representativeness of: a) all of the country’s regions and topographies; b) urban, semi-urban and rural populations; c) varying degrees of socio-economic development; d) different types of economies and industries; and e) different forms and intensity of international migration. Furthermore, in these regions there is a consistent presence of Roma and Egyptian communities.

Stakeholder workshop

The preliminary finding of the assignment was discussed in a validation workshop with representatives of a) the Albanian Government; b) the international donor community (UN agencies, etc.); c) civil society organizations, d) different Roma and Egyptian NGOs. An overview of all their recommendations has been reviewed and included in the final report.

Limits to the methodology

The *first* limit of the methodology was *time*. The two month time frame included August, which is a very difficult month for field work and for stakeholders’ availability. Therefore, time was insufficient for conducting more interviews, focus groups and questionnaires in comparison to the minimal standard defined in the methodology.

12 2010-2015 National Strategy of Reintegration of Returned Albanian Citizens, p.22, http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/schengen_whitelist_project_Strategy%20on%20Reintegration%20of%20Returned%20Albanian%20Citizens%202010-2015.pdf, retrieved on August 18th, 2016.

13 Contact persons are representatives of local and foreign NGOs which work on the field with return migrant, teachers and Roma community representatives working in the selected regions.

14 The snowball sampling was utilized because there are no lists or other obvious sources for locating members of the population (especially returned asylum-seekers).

The *second* factor is the unavailability of official statistical data for return migrants in the 2013-2016 timeframe.

The *third* limiting factor is related to the typology of some identified target groups, namely the Roma/Egyptian community of return migrants and returned asylum-seekers. Indeed, these categories showed some difficulties to respond to the interviews/questionnaires because of: i) their low level of education, and hence, the inappropriate articulation of their opinions; ii) reluctance to respond of the newly returned (from less than a month) Roma/Egyptian asylum-seekers.

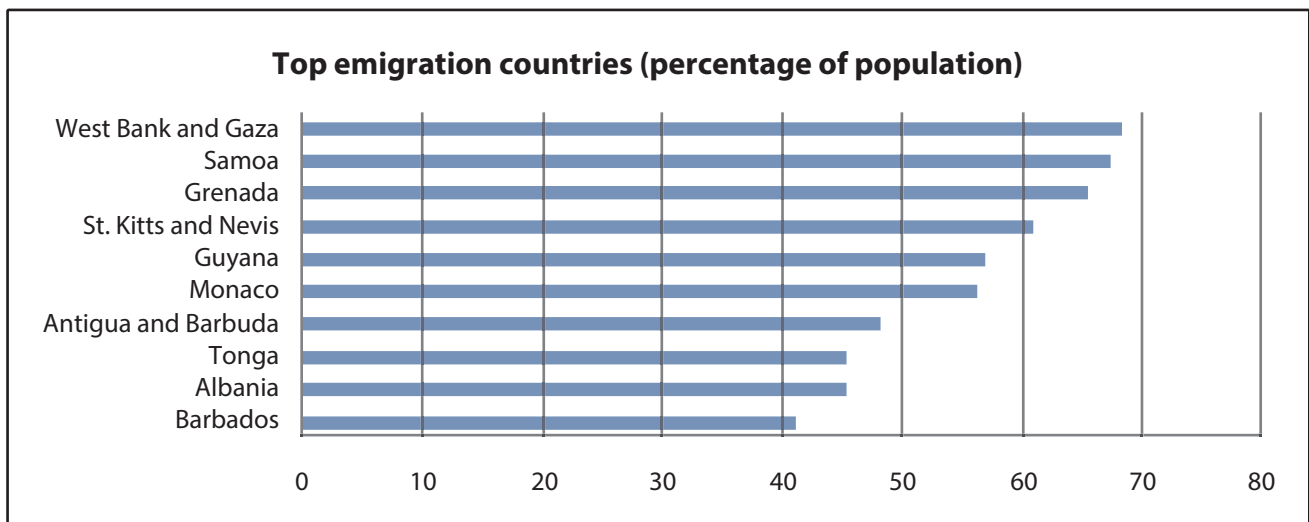
In order to mitigate the abovementioned limits/risks the consultants decided to: i) change the level of precision for the determination of the sample size from .05 to .15; ii) apply the quantitative techniques exclusively to the less numerous category of return migrants, alias the Roma/Egyptians return asylum-seekers.

3. Migration and return migration in Albania

After almost 26 years after the start of post-socialist transition, international migration remains one of the most discussed issues in Albania merely due to its size intensity and economic, politic and social consequences. Currently, over 1.4 million Albanian citizens¹⁵ or almost half of the current population of the country are migrants, mainly to Italy, Greece and to a lesser extent in the USA United Kingdom and Germany.¹⁶ Official data derived from the 2001 and 2011 Population Censuses reveals that over 600 000 persons have migrated from Albania during 1990-2001 and that about 481.000 persons migrated from the country during 2001-2011.¹⁷ The population of Albanian migrants has also increased in host countries from the natural birth rate especially from early 2000' due to family reunions and due to the young age of the migrants.

The data presented above ranks Albania as the first place worldwide regarding the dimensions of international migration (as a percentage to current population) and its intensity. The World Bank in one of its yearly publications '*Migration and Remittances Factbook*'¹⁸, places Albania amongst the top 20 countries of the world (the 9th in 2011 publication). A more careful review of this ranking reveals that most countries ranked above Albania, difference from it have a small population (less than 1 million inhabitants)¹⁹ and a long migration tradition and history (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Top emigration countries (percentage of the population)



Source: The World Bank, 2011

15 **The World Bank.**, Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011, World Bank, Washington DC, 2011.

16 **INSTAT.**, Migration in Albania, Tirana, 2014.

17 **INSTAT.**, Migration in Albania. Population and Housing Census 2001, Tirana 2004; **INSTAT.**, Population and Housing Census 2011, Tirana 2012.

18 **World Bank.**, Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011, World Bank, Washington DC, 2011.

19 The population of these states fluctuates from 30.000 inhabitants (Monaco) to 800.000 inhabitants (Guyana). The only exceptions are West Bank and Gaza whose population amounts to 4 million inhabitants but whose population has also a long migration tradition.

Despite the fact that Albanian migration has shown itself to be a dynamic and continuous process from the start of post-socialist transition, its intensity shows fluctuations. It has been high during the 90's, especially during the first decade in which migration fluxes culminated three times. Firstly, due to the immediate opening of the country and the drastic transition reforms undertaken in 1991-1993. Secondly, the economic, political and social chaos that was a consequence of pyramid schemes being shut down in 1997. Lastly, in 1999, in order to avoid ethnic cleaning started by Milosevic's regime half a million Kosovars migrated to Albania causing the slowdown of reforms. The dimensions and the high intensity, the illegal character, young male dominance, concentration in two neighbouring countries (Greece, Italy) and economic motivation are some of the key features of the Albanian migration.

The second decade of Albanian migration was characterized by the stabilization of the migration cycle. The legalization process of Albanian migrants in the main host countries started in the late 90's and was followed by family reunion, integration and improvement of their economic and social status in host countries. However, due to the increased economic and social stabilization in the country, migration continued with a lower intensity without extreme episodes and mainly in legal forms.²⁰

The third decade of Albanian migration is characterized by a relative increase in intensity and diversification of international migration fluxes, which additionally gained new features. Likewise, in 2015 about 66.000 Albanian citizens requested asylum in EU countries (mainly in Germany).²¹ Other data reveals that about 199.000 Albanian citizens applied for the American lottery (an increasing trend from 2011)²² and according to a study conducted by Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 60 % of young people wanted to migrate from Albania.²³ This reveals high migratory potential of Albanian population. The revival of Albanian migration, which is predictable and driven by economic indicators, reveals that the migration fluctuations will continue to be high during the third decade.

Economic factors are without a doubt the key push factor of Albanian migration during its three decades. Studies reveal that high unemployment and underemployment rates, low wages, poverty and low living standards are the main motives of migration for ¾ of Albanian migrants.²⁴ Alongside these factors there are other factors such as personal freedom, education, professional career, insecurity, violence etc.

The global economic crisis that started in the second half of 2008 also impacted Albanian migration.²⁵ The first impact was the reduced speed of economic development and the increased unemployment in Albania. Therefore, according to the World Bank data, the average GDP increase in Albania dropped from 6.1 % during the period 2000 to 2008 to 2.4 % during the period 2009-2015²⁶. Official unemployment, increased from 13 % in 2008 to 17.1 % in 2015 (it was 33.2 % for the age group 15-29 years old).²⁷ Moreover, the global economic crisis decreased remittances from Albanian migration, which constituted one of the key factors for softening poverty for more than 1/3 of families in Albania. While during 2007 remittances culminated to

20 **King R., Urci E., Vullnetari J.**, Albanian migration and its effects in comparative perspective. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Volume 13, Number 3, September 2011.

21 **Eurostat Newsrelease.**, Asylum in the EU Member States. Record number of over 1.2 million first time asylum seekers registered in 2015. 44/2016 - 4 March 2016.

22 In 2011 about 87.000 Albanian citizens applied for American Lottery, in 2012 the number of Albanian applicants amounted to 115.000, in 2013 about 123.000 Albanian citizens applied and in 2014 the number of Albanian applicants was 171.000. For more see: Diversity Visa Program, DV 2013-2015: Number of Entries Received During Each Online Registration Period by Country of Chargeability DV online registration period - Each year through the Department of State, Electronic Diversity Visa website, www.dvlottery.state.gov.

23 **Cela A., Kamberi G., Pici E.**, Albanian Youth 2015. Slow change, internet support ...and trust to EU "Friedrich Ebert" Foundation, 2015.

24 **Gëdeshi I., de Zwager N.**, Effects of the Global Crisis on Migration and Remittances in Albania, in the book *Migration and Remittances during the Global Financial Crisis and Beyond*, edited by Ibrahim Sirkeci, Jeffrey H. Cohen, Dilip Ratha, The World Bank 2012, Washington D.C.

25 **Gëdeshi I., de Zwager N.**, Effects of the Global Crisis on Migration and Remittances in Albania, in the book *Migration and Remittances during the Global Financial Crisis and Beyond*, edited by Ibrahim Sirkeci, Jeffrey H. Cohen, Dilip Ratha, The World Bank 2012, Washington D.C.

26 **World Bank.**, Country Partnership Framework for Albania 2015-2019, 2015

27 **INSTAT.**, Labour Market 2008, Tirana 2010; **INSTAT.**, Labour Market 2015, Tirana 2016.

952 million EUR or 12.3 % of GDP and in 2015 they dropped to 597 million EUR or 5.8 % of the GDP.²⁸ This influenced the increase of poverty of Albanian families, a phenomenon that was almost halved during 2002-2008.²⁹ In addition, international migration, including seasonal and long term migration, mainly to Greece and Italy that once constituted one of the key mechanisms by which Albanian families dealt with poverty during the two first decades, could no longer perform this function. High unemployment in both the main host countries of Albanian migration stopped new migration flows. This created a paradoxical situation. On the one hand the migration push factors increased while on the other hand, the traditional channels of Albanian migration flows were narrowed. Consequently, due to the global economic crisis, the lack of internal solutions and the perceptions people have about their futures, reflects an increasing trend in the migratory potential of Albanian population.

Moreover, alongside international migration another process is developed, namely, the return of migrants. This process was developed in two forms, voluntary return or forced return. The neoclassic theory of migration and the new economy of labor migration provide explanations for this process. The former perceives the return of migrants as a failure, claiming that migrants return due to obliged repatriation, non-integration in the labor market, nostalgia, weak health state or due to retirement.³⁰ The latter school of thought provides a more realistic picture in order to understand the aforementioned process, it views return as a normal step and as a concluding phase of the migration cycle, which is undertaken by migrants once they have achieved their main objectives.³¹ Based on this, returned migrants constitute an important factor of economic and social development since they bring financial capital (savings), human capital (education and skills, work experience, new mentality and ideas) and social capital (relations and contacts in migrating country) to their motherland.

In the Albanian context of the 90's one observes a trend for returned migrants, however most of them migrated again especially following the collapse of pyramid schemes in 1997 and political, economic and social chaos that followed. Up until early 2000, the main emphasis in Albanian migration was on the international migration process and remittances, with very little attention given to their return. An exception to this view, are the articles published by Kilic *et al* (2007), Lambrianidis and Hatziprokopiou (2005), Nicholson (2004) and Lambrianidis and Kazazi (2006).³² As the political and economic stability of the country began to grow, some authors wrote about the indications of a new wave of voluntary return of migrants³³, particularly from Greece and Italy. However, this phenomenon was not studied enough.³⁴

An empirical study conducted in 2007 with about 1000 returned migrants from European Training Foundation (ETF) revealed that the return curve of migrants mainly from Greece during the period 2001 to 2006 was increasing. The study which is based on the reasons for return, divides the migrants into four groups: forced return by host country authorities, non-integration into the labor market, nostalgia or family reasons and lastly, successful migrants that saved enough money and wished to start a business in their motherland.

28 Bank of Albania, 2016.

29 According to World Bank data in the period 2002 to 2008 poverty in Albania was halved in 12.4 percent but in 2012 it rose again to 14.3 percent. For more information see: **World Bank**, Sustainable economic growth towards increasing risks, South East Europe, Economic Periodic Report, No. 10, Autumn 2016.

30 **King R., Lulle A.**, Research on Migration: Facing Realities and Maximising Opportunities, European Union, 2016.

31 **De Haas H., Fokkema T., Fihri M. F.**, Return Migration as failure or success? The determinants of return migration intentions among Moroccan migrants in Europe, *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 16 (2).

32 **Kilic T., Carletto G., Davis B., Zezza, A.** Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania. Rome: FAO, ESA Working Paper, No 07-08, 2007; **Labrianidis L, Hatziprokopiou P.**, The Albanian migration cycle: migrants tend to return to their country after all, in R. King et al. (eds), *The New Albanian Migration*, 2005; **Labrianidis L, Kazazi B.**, Albanian Return migrants from Greece and Italy: Their Impact upon Spatial Disparities within Albania, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 13/1, Sussex Academic Press, 2006; **Nicholson B.**, Migrants as agents of development: Albanian return migrants and micro-enterprise, in Pop D., *New Patterns of Labour Migration in Central and Eastern Europe*, Cluj Napoca: Public Policy Centre, 2004.

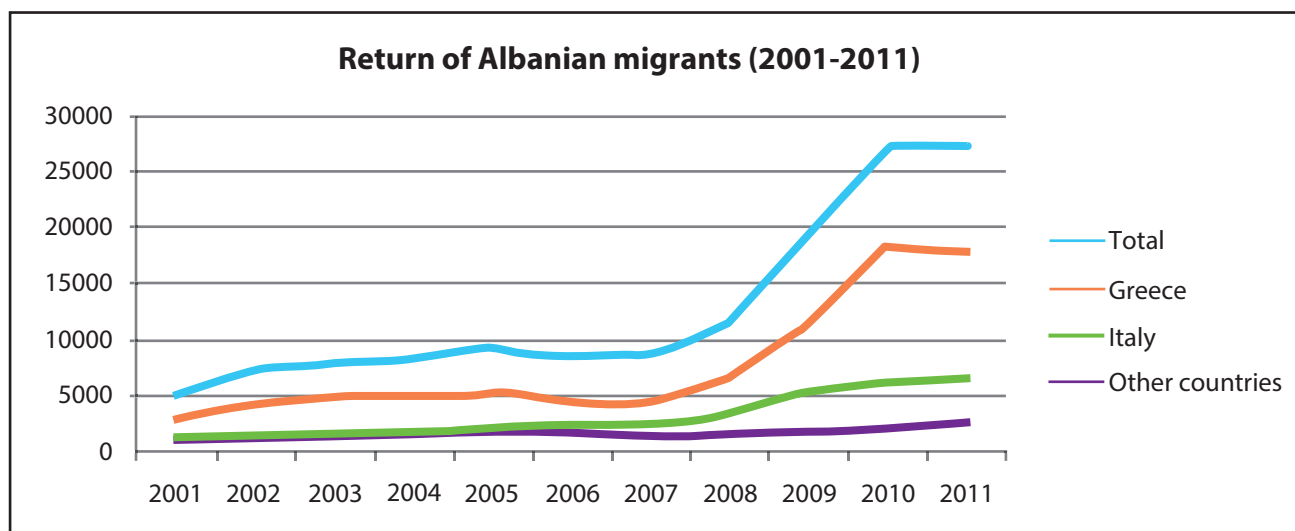
33 **Labrianidis L, Kazazi B.**, Albanian Return migrants from Greece and Italy: Their Impact upon Spatial Disparities within Albania, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 13/1, Sussex Academic Press, 2006.

34 **Labrianidis L, Hatziprokopiou P.**, The Albanian migration cycle: migrants tend to return to their country after all, in R. King et al. (eds), *The New Albanian Migration*, 2005.

However, the last group was small and represented only 8% of the returned migrants.³⁵ Empirical data revealed that 25.8% of returned migrants were unemployed, 36% were salaried employers, 35% were self-employed in the businesses that they created and 3.5% were entrepreneurs. Small family businesses were mostly located in the service sector (trade, bar-restaurants, hotels, transport). Interestingly, a large part of the returned migrants did not reproduce the type of work that they did in the host countries.³⁶ The study revealed that the return of migrants was unstable, 43% of the returnees were faced with improper social and economic environment or in order to complete their migration cycle wished to re-migrate in the near future.³⁷

IOM, UNDP and the World Bank jointly undertook a survey in 2009; the survey consisted of 2.270 long term migrants and was directed at the implications of the global economic crisis on Albanian migration and its impact on the national economy.³⁸ The study stated that due to the unemployment and underemployment in the main host countries (Greece, Italy), the income and savings of Albanian migrants were shrinking. This has been reflected in the short and medium term, by the reduction of remittances, decrease and re-orienting of the migration flows, restructuring of the migration cycle and the return of a part of the migrant's stock.³⁹ Out of the plenitude of possibilities available to Albanian migrants, for those that faced the consequences of the economic crisis, returning to the country of origin was viewed as the last and furthest alternative for about 12% of them. The study stated that the financial, human and social capital of a portion of the Albanian migrants could increase dynamics of economic development of the country if an environment that is conducive to return is created.

Figure 2. Return of migrants (2001-2011)



Source: INSTAT., Population and Housing Census 2011, Tirana 2012.

The global economic crisis caused an increasing shift in the returned migrants curve. Data of 2011 Census⁴⁰ reveals that beginning in 2008, there has been a notable increase in the returned migrants curve, especially from Greece and to a lesser extent from Italy (Figure 2). About five years after the global economic crisis, INSTAT in cooperation with IOM commenced a study mainly based on quantitative data on the phenomena

35 **European Training Foundation.**, The contribution of human resources development to migration policy in Albania, 2007.

36 Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou (2005) observed also a weak correlation between the employment sector of returned migrants in host country and their employment in Albania.

37 **European Training Foundation.**, The contribution of human resources development to migration policy in Albania, 2007.

38 **IOM., UNDP, WB.**, Global Crisis and Migration – Monitoring a Key Transmission Channel for the Albanian Economy, Tirana, 2010.

39 **Gëdeshi I., de Zwager N.**, Effects of the Global Crisis on Migration and Remittances in Albania, in the book Migration and Remittances during the Global Financial Crisis and Beyond, edited by Ibrahim Sirkeci, Jeffrey H. Cohen, Dilip Ratha, The World Bank 2012, Washington D.C.

40 **INSTAT.**, Population and Housing Census 2011, Tirana 2012. INSTAT., Migration in Albania, Tirana 2014.

of return of migrants and re-integration dynamics.⁴¹ The study revealed that 133.544 Albanian migrants over 18 years old that were mainly males (74 %), returned to Albania during the period 2009-2013. The return of migrants due to the loss of their jobs in Greece and Italy as well as for family reasons culminated in 2012-2013 (53.4 % of the total of returned migrants). Almost 34 % of them were employed and 20 % of them were self-employed at the time of the survey, which highlights that the extremely high unemployment rate among this group (46 %). Most of the participants that were employed and self-employed worked in agriculture, service and construction. The study showed that a very small part of returned migrants (7 %) invested their financial capitals; this was mainly in small trade, hotel sector, bar-restaurants and agriculture. Over half of the returned migrants report a lack of quality services and an inappropriate health system. Subsequently, due to the unemployment, insufficient income and lack of quality services, almost 1/3 of returned migrants wished to re-migrate.⁴² Other studies based on qualitative techniques show that most of returned migrants do not see any prospects in Greece or Albania but rather wish to re-migrate in countries such as the USA, Belgium and Germany.⁴³

The process of return of migrants has continued during 2014-2016. A distinction needs to be made between two groups of migrants in this period. The first group is composed of economic migrants that return from Greece, Italy and other countries. Partial data suggest that the return intensity of this group lowered. Consequently, the number of returned migrants registered in the Migration Offices from 1.536 persons in 2012 dropped to 520 in 2015.⁴⁴ On the other hand, the second group is composed of Albanian citizens that applied for asylum in EU countries mostly between 2014 and 2015, and returned in groups. Official statistics from Germany reveal that in 2015 3.622 asylum seekers returned and in the first half of 2016 3.717 others returned.⁴⁵ These numbers underscore an increasing trend of the return process of Albanian asylum seekers.

Considering the above described situation a set of questions emerge. What is the profile of returned Albanian migrants and what sub-groups constitute this share of population? What are their integration strategies in the motherland? How do they view their prospects in the short and medium term? What policies must be followed so that their return is transformed into a sustainable process?

41 **INSTAT, IOM.**, Return migration and reintegration in Albania, 2014.

42 **INSTAT, IOM.**, Return migration and reintegration in Albania, 2014.

43 **Caro E.**, "I am an emigrant in my own country": A profile of Albanian returnees from Greece, *Journal of Science and Higher Education Research*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2016.

44 Monitoring Report of the Action Plan of the National Strategy 2010-2015 for the reintegration of the Albanian return migrants, Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, National Employment Service, 2016.

45 <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/075/1807588.pdf>; <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/093/1809360.pdf>

4. Economic returnees: social exclusion profile

Introduction

This section will examine the profile of the returned migrants, mainly from Italy and Greece during 2013-2016. Based on their profile, we analyse the reintegration needs related for the most part to services, which may be specific or general services provided to Albanian citizens. Additionally, there will be a comparison with the profiles of the returned up to 2013, in order to see the evolution of needs and services to returned migrants. Finally, it will examine some specific phenomena pointed out during the structured interviews and focal groups such as: i) internal migration of returned migrants; ii) interplay between return and asylum-seeking; iii) social self-exclusion.

In the last five years, Albanian emigration has been characterized by the return of migrants to their country of origin. According to a 2013 study conducted by IOM and INSTAT, there were 135,144 returnees aged over 18 during 2009-2013, however there is no official data for the period after 2013. Although, the Border and Migration Department at the Interior Ministry has information about asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking and involuntary convert, mainly through flights organized by the authorities of the host countries, but this only constitutes partial data when compared to the overall phenomenon of returnees for economic reasons.

In addition, the Ombudsman has some statistics about the categories of returned migrants monitored through the Torture National Prevention Mechanism.

Some of the returned Albanian citizens presented themselves to the Migration Counters, which was driven by the need to obtain services that facilitate their reintegration in the country. Migration Counters (MC) are structures established to assist these returnees and facilitate their reintegration in society upon return. There are a total of 36 migration counters across the country. In the context of the *Strategy on Re-integration of Returned Albanian Citizens 2010 - 2015 and its Plan of Action*, these structures interview returned Albanian citizens, provided information about public and private services relevant to the needs identified (if any) and about specific projects of civil society in accordance with these needs. Returnees use these counters voluntarily.

Table 1. Albanian returnees registered in the Migration Counters (MC) by year

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Albanian returnees	896	1536	1171	834	520

Source: Monitoring Report of the Action Plan implementing the Strategy on Re-integration of Returned Albanian Citizens 2010 – 2015. Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MSWY). National Employment Service.

Statistics in Table 1 indicate a decrease in the number of persons who went to the Migration Counters. It is worth noting that the survey states that only around 26% of the interviewees had information about the Migration Counters.

Despite the lack of official data about the number of returned migrants in the period 2013-2016, there is a downward trend of the returning process. The fact that they obtain services from the Migration Counters, although partially, supports this hypothesis.⁴⁶ Additional factors that support the hypothesis of the downward trend of the returning flux at macro level include: i) subsided crisis during 2013-2016 in the main host countries such as Italy and Greece; ii) re-emigration of returned migrants through a cyclic migration process.

According to all studies conducted over the years, the majority of Albanian migrants are returned from Greece and Italy. This coincides with emigration which is mostly concentrated towards these two countries. IOM and INSTAT study shows that “70.3% of the returnees came from Greece and 23.7% from Italy.”⁴⁷ Moreover, the MMSR Monitoring Report for the period 2013-2016 states that “the majority of returned Albanian citizens who accessed the Migration Counters came from Greece and they make up approximately 80% of all returnees registered at Migration Counters. Much smaller is the number of citizens returned from Italy, namely 14% of returnees registered at the counters.”⁴⁸

Table 2. Albanian citizens accessing MCs by country they returned from in 2012-2015

Year	2012		2013		2014		2015	
Country		%		%		%		%
Greece	1,321	86	963	82	679	81	383	73
Italy	188	12.2	131	11	121	14	113	21
Other EU countries	17	1.1	64	5.4	21	2.5	15	2.8
Non-EU countries	10	1	13	1	12	2	9	1.7

Source: Monitoring Report of the Action Plan implementing the Strategy on Re-integration of Returned Albanian Citizens 2010 – 2015. Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY). National Employment Service.

These cross-checked statistics demonstrate that citizens returned from Greece - except for the number in 2015, which is low – have had more reintegration needs proportionally met, by accessing the Migration Counters in larger numbers.

These results are confirmed from the interviews with the Employment Offices and the Migration Counters at the local level. Etleva, manager of the Employment Office in Shkodra said: “Yes, the number has declined sharply since 2013. By law, we had the register of citizens returned and every quarter we sent the statistics to the ministry. So, the number of returnees during 2010-2014 was 284, only 48 in 2015 and just 30 so far in 2016.”

Again, according to the MSWY Monitoring Report “the majority of returnees stated unemployment in the host country as the main reason for coming back. Overall, the causes behind the return of Albanian citizens over the years have been somewhat the same. However, there is a tendency to return for causes other than employment, particularly during 2014-2015. Some returned due to a lack of documentation in the host country, but this accounts for a small number of returns in comparison to those who returned due to unemployment. There was an upward trend during 2012-2015 with regards to returns for reasons unrelated to unemployment - such as investments; however, the numbers remain low.” The Report also adds that “one of the reasons for the low number of registrations at the Migration Counters could be because

46 The number of registration not necessarily matches the number of returnees. For example, INSTAT and IOM show that the number of returns increased in 2013 compared with 2012, but the number of registrations in the Migration Counters decreased.

47 IOM&INSTAT, 2013, ibidem.

48 Monitoring report of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, 2016, ibidem.

these returnees come with a well-thought out plan and seek to implement it. Those who access Migration Counters probably still do not have a well-consolidated plan or lack sufficient funds to invest and open their own business, or need more information in this regard.”

The National Employment Service data indicates that the following services were obtained from the Migration Counters during 2012-2015: advice for employment - 2,752 returned citizens; vocational coaching – 804 returnees; information on healthcare services - 1,056 returnees; information on economic support - 598 returnees; and information how to start a business – 142 returnees.”

Empirical findings

The study uses the profile by IOM and INSTAT for 2009-2013 as a baseline and the MSWY profile for 2013-2016 is elaborated through semi-structured interviews and focus groups for returnees. Secondly, the study expanded its range of coverage by including the category of returnees who accessed the Migration Counters to a very limited extent (the self-employed or small and medium investors) or those who, according to statistics, hardly ever access these Migration Counters (e.g. student returnees).

In this sense, returning migrants interviewed in the selected regions are categorized into: i) unemployed; ii) employed; iii) self-employed; iv) small and medium investors; v) and students. A profile of needs and the level of social exclusion have been developed for each category, according to a selected methodology.

Unemployed returnees

This category consists of interviewed returnees who state that they: i) have no job; ii) live by economic aid and underpaid informal jobs.⁴⁹ In most cases, citizens have lived their migratory experience as a failure, unable to save income or acquire professions that would serve them in the labour market. In the first case, Rolandi, a teenager from Kukësi, said that his family consists of five persons: “Yes, Mom, Dad, two brothers and me. I am the oldest; the other is 15 and the youngest 12 years old. Father collects scrap metal in the villages, where he can. No work for me; I also collect scrap occasionally, but sometimes I earn some money and sometimes not.”

A typical case of the second category is Kujtimi, a head of household, who said in the interview: “Yeah, I work as a lump sum and any job I can find. I have worked as a baker, then as a waiter, because the money was not enough. I have a family of four, my wife and two children. She is unemployed, I am the only one providing, and what I earn is 10 thousand LEK per month, at most, plus 4 thousand LEK as economic aid. My son is only 2 years old and my daughter in the eighth grade. I cannot meet their needs. I have limited education, graduated from the high school and my wife finished only the primary 8-year education.”

The above-cited categories are dominated by: i) newly returned persons, no more than one year from their return; ii) women; iii) persons returning to rural areas.

For the unemployed returnees, particular attention must be paid to their family composition and their goals for long-term return. The interview-based survey shows that the long-term and family returnees make up the highest number of respondents.⁵⁰ This group shows a great need for reintegration support. Given that these citizens return for a long term and being families, they have greater reintegration needs. Therefore, they are more inclined to access the Migration Counters to obtain services, mainly related to medication for employment, but also related to eligibility for economic aid.

The group of respondents who returned after more than one year abroad are included in the categories described below (employed, self-employed, etc.).

49 A significant number of interview representing the above mentioned characteristics are returned Albanian asylum-seekers, but they will be analysed in a separate section of the study. So, findings in this paragraph do not refer to this group of returned migrants.

50 The same situation is identified also by the MSWY Monitoring Report.

The majority of returnees in this group have either 9-year or high-school education. This may relate to the reintegration difficulties this group faces upon return. A considerable number of these returnees had engaged in unqualified or low qualified jobs in the host country.

As for other needs of this group - considering its almost homogeneous composition - this group presents a high need for educational services for the reintegration of children. Most of the returnees in this group are families with school-aged children; therefore the majority of these returnees express the need for language services, but also psychological services, for their children. Albani, a returnee from Greece, said: "In Greece, I finished the 8th-9th grade. When I came back, I started a daily language course for Albanian, because the school did not have any teacher for us who knew Albanian. There were no other returnees in my class, but other classes had many of them."

In general, all categories of returned migrants analysed in the study show the need for educational services. However, the category of unemployed returnees has a higher risk of social exclusion, because they cannot afford the alternative options offered to them. Mihali, a teacher from Korça, describes the situations in this way: "The education system cannot provide, or better, does not offer language courses during the summer, so, anyone has to find an individual solution. Parents often opt to send their children to private schools, because having fewer students, there is greater care on their child and consequently better opportunities to advance."

In conclusion, a large number of unemployed respondents say that, although they cannot return legally to their last host country, their plan is to leave Albania as soon as they can.

Employed

This category is similar to the one above in terms of reasons of return. Hamiti, an employee from Berati said: "I am 40 years old now, and I left for Greece in 1996 when I was just 19. I left my parents here and stayed with my uncles in Greece. There I found work immediately, because jobs were easy to find back then. I have stayed in Florina and worked mainly in construction. Difficulties began in 2009, in 2010 I remained jobless and spent all my savings in one year, so in 2011 I returned because there were no prospects for me. The government started to cut down everything, wages were becoming lower and lower, so I returned. I was married and have a 3-month old son; this was the greatest difficulty, I could not raise him there. Adults may cope somehow with the lack of heating, but not a child. It was too much of a risk for us to stay any longer. My wife had been staying in Greece with me for a year, but she could not work because she was pregnant and she did not know the language."

The overall analysis of the respondents highlights some key differences, compared to the unemployed returnees: i) longer stay abroad; ii) as a result, enhanced professional skills; iii) returned earlier and had more time to adapt to the labour market.

But, one of the factors of success in finding a job seems to be the social capital or social ties of respondents. That's what Roni, a returnee from Korça said: "I am a construction worker, but the construction sector here had stalled. My friends helped me find the job I actually have (seller in a construction materials shop). I tried to do some private work, but it did not go well, because we had been away for 18 years and had no acquaintances. So, I attempted to enter the market as a house painter, but the market was in decline and had no success. Besides, I didn't know many people here.

As for employment assistance by public institutions, the same citizen explains: "The Employment Office just squandered my time, sending me to businesses that did not hire workers. They assisted me with nothing, nor with courses or training. A foundation helped me with training as woodworker, but I still could not manage to find a job and started here. Here I learned by doing and I can tell you, that you can apprehend much more on the job rather than by listening."

In general, this category of returnees “has started a new life”. They have lost any chance to renew residence permits; therefore, they perceive their return as non-negative. Even though they are aware of the difficulties in the country of origin “Looking at how my friends are doing there, I made the right decision to return. Not because I am doing very well here, but at least I am close to my family and with the help of friends you can overcome any problem. My friends who remained there are not faring well... However, it was better there for children, everything is provided, whereas here you have to buy medicines for children. The health care was much better there when I left, now I don’t know.”

This category does not consider returning (particularly to Greece) as a viable option, but rather the emigration to other countries (e.g. Germany, US, Canada, Australia, etc.). When asked about a possible return to Greece in future, Indriti from Tirana said: “No, but as a tourist yes. In Greece I would only return as a tourist, no more as a refugee. I had a really hard time there. But, I would emigrate to any other country should I have the chance, without thinking twice”

Self-employed

“When the crisis hit, it was terrible for my job. I worked with laying tiles and marble. When I saw that we were becoming jobless, I decided to return. I waited in the hope that things would improve, but our taxes increased and assistance was cut down, so we found ourselves without any way out.”

As illustrated by this extract from the interview with Adnan who is self-employed from Elbasani, a characteristic of returnees after 2013 is that they had been employed in sectors affected by the crisis (mainly tertiary sectors). The main reason behind the decision to return is the economic hardship, while living on savings. This can be considered as the crucial indicator in the decision-making process of returning. Adnan also said: “We returned three years ago, sometime in September or October. The last 3-4 months [abroad] we suffered a lot and always said that we must definitely leave. I took those few things I had, took the car and told my children that we would return. It was saddening to hear that we would come here to work for 7-10 EUR per day. Also, we had our house here, also the documents (...). My daughter was eight years old and I told her that she had to repeat a school year and it took one year for the boy to get used to it.”

The overall analysis of the interviews shows that the returnees during 2013-2016, compared to those in 2009-2013, come from more rural, semi-urban areas and islands (Greece, specifically), rather than from major urban areas. In comparison to the category of unemployed returnees who had almost spent their savings, the self-employed category touched their savings in the last period of their stay in the host country, and their savings spending has been more gradual. Returning with some savings has enabled them to adapt and survive in the first months after their return and to become self-employed and to partake in small economic activities.

In most cases, the respondents’ decision to return has been for family reasons, it has been hard and it has been taken over a relatively long time span. The deterrent factors in host countries that contribute to the decision to return are: reduced income and social status, the inability to send small children to kindergarten/nursery, reduced welfare aid/social services. On the other hand the attractive factors in the country of origin may include: owning a house (paying no rent) and family aid for children, mostly for those that are preschool age. Hence, the second most important factor in the return of this category has been shown to be the family and social status factor since many families prefer to return to their homes, work in various autonomous forms and having no extra costs in bringing up their children.

In another interview regarding the return experience, Armandi, a house painter from Tirana, said: “When I returned to Albania, I came around looking for work and I saw that things here worked very badly. A constructor told me to paint the whole flat in exchange for an apartment without an ownership certificate, but I saw how hard it was to legalize it... So, I had to look everywhere for a job and still to no avail...”

In this context, returnees of this category are generally characterised by difficulties in engaging with their human capital gained and by insufficient savings for long-term investments. However, there is a positive

correlation between the working culture and vocational skills as well as self-employment initiatives. In this way the social status of these returnees relatively improves (to autonomous entrepreneurs, albeit at micro level) and they have sufficient income for a long-term stay. This is confirmed by an interview with Asllani from Cërriku: "I am thinking of going back to Greece, provided that I get the same benefits as I used to get..."

The prospects of returning to the last country of emigration are linked to both the economic aspects, social welfare and in some cases, to the renewal of the stay permits. With regards to their needs in Albania, it has turned out that this category has hardly received any support (economic support and particularly for start-ups) for their activity, which vacillate between formal and informal.

In referring to other services, it is highlighted that the need to strengthen the concept of "school as a community centre", which should not only serve for education but also for the psycho-social integration of the children of returnees as well as their parents. Here is what Pëllumbi, a returnee from Durrësi, said: "My little daughter picked up quite well at school here and her average grade is 9.7. My son is not doing as good as in Greece, because here he has some problematic class mates. This is not the fault of authorities, but of parents and the culture here."

The category of the self-employed returnees mainly includes persons returning to villages. Furthermore, in this category the culture and working experience gained abroad, combined with the savings collected over the years, have been crucial to their conversion (from sectors such as construction) to agriculture. Here is what some villagers from Malësia e Madhe said in a focal group: "I have about 5 ha of land planted with sage, and hired some workers to clean the weeds and plough it. We sell it here, as there is a collection centre. But they buy it too cheap, 800 LEK/kg, and this is really bad... I also have a 3 ha plot planted with sage; besides my land, I got also land on rent."

This category of returnees have a great need for technical advice in the agricultural sector - especially agro-processing - to make sure that scarce savings, combined with the versatility of the agricultural sector do not go wasted or in the wrong direction. Marjani from Malësia e Madhe said: "We lack information. Sage is sold at 2 dollars in the stock market, but we sell it at less than half of it... We really need specialized assistance, either from the government or local government or anyone else, because we are spending, but cannot sell the production. We have stocks in our warehouse. A hectare needs 5 million LEK in costs, we are making the investment, but the problem is the low price and the market."

This category also thinks that they cannot return to the host countries in crisis (Italy and Greece) and a significant numbers of these returnees do not have any preference to re-emigrate since their family and social structure is stronger in rural areas.

Entrepreneurs

Although the category of small and medium entrepreneurs is quantitatively small, they are quite dynamic and diverse. For this reason, this section will analyse the entrepreneurs that returned before and after 2013, in order to point out the similarities, differences and prospects.

a) Entrepreneurs returned after 2013

Migrants that returned after 2013 have more or less the same reasons as other categories: economic crisis in the host countries, in urban, semi-urban and rural areas; reduction of income; family reasons, etc. Bashkimi from Elbasani said: "I emigrated to Greece in 1992, when I was only 16, until 1998 [...] then I got the documents and started working normally at a butcher's until 2014, when I returned to Albania. The shop was on the outskirts of the city, in a village, but on the main street where a lot of people passed by and the business was good. There I learned the butcher's trade... I got married in 1998, had a child there and my wife worked at a restaurant."

Generally, this category is characterized by a long and proper professional experience. In some instances, they suffered a reduction in income, not the loss of a job. Often this relative reduction has coincided with

the respondents' change of status (from single to married and parents) which leads to relatively increased spending. Bashkimi continues his story: "The situation here has always been worse than in Greece, but we decided to return for the sake of children, and because we were earning less, everything was becoming more difficult. My son will start first grade and I did not want to take him away, because one day we would come back to Albania. So we decided to return in 2014 and enrolled our boy in the first grade here."

Particularly for this category, aside from their vocational specialization and relatively considerable savings, they have preserved human and professional ties with their host country. That is what Bashkimi said: "Yes, we have very good connections with Greece... and our documents are valid until 2020. I was there in August, wanted to go this year too, but I had things to do... Yes, my working experience in Greece has been very helpful, such as communication with clients, way of behaving, cleanliness, everything. I cut the meat according to standards, just like in Greece. I buy the meat in villages, pick it myself. The clientele is growing now"

With regards to the needs and services in Albania, it is noted that there is a lack of specialised institutional assistance for business advice. Afrimi from Korça said: "No, no assistance, but they have not even bothered me, because I have all papers right. There were controls, normal, but no problems."

As for other services for this category, health services and education services are highlighted. However, for those children who have newly started their schooling cycle - having no comparing option, or no specific problems with the knowledge of Albanian language - the education services are satisfactory. Manjola, Ermal's mother said: "School is good, but healthcare is insufficient and completely different from what we had there."

As for entrepreneurs that returned after 2013, the decision to return from the host country - particularly in a still unstable macroeconomic situation - remains difficult. Anila has a small business in Tirana and she said: "Still don't know how things will go here, but much time should pass for us to decide on this."

b) Entrepreneurs returned before 2013

Entrepreneurs that returned before 2013 had stronger economic reasons to come back (deep crisis, especially in Greece) and a stronger desire to change their social status. This category mainly consists of families whose members worked for average/high wages and the economic crisis abruptly thwarted their long-term plans. That is how Pandi, a young boy from the south, explains his family's decision to return: "Well, my father had 15 thousand EUR, plus 10 EUR, and invested it in the shop we opened. We also invested in the house. Dad is waiting to reach the retirement age - because he has paid the insurance regularly - and come back."

Generally, these businesses encountered difficulties entering the market. Pandi continues his story: "*Our business did not go well, because my parents did not come to work and I could not cope with it, because I had to stay from morning to late evening. Supplying the shop needed time, but people were not used to buying in shops. Our shop was like a pharmacy, with porcelain tiles and new refrigerators, whereas others who lacked these conditions had more business than us... (...). We kept it for six months and then closed it... [...]. The tax officers came, also the fire protection officials wanted to impose a fine; a lady from a State institution came and wanted to steal from us; there were also businesses which did not pay taxes from the start. We paid taxes from the first month; these were obstacles for us.*"

An interview with a stakeholder from the city of Korça (representative of a consultancy organisation for start-ups) pinpoints that: "*The tendency is to open a business in Albania, mostly service businesses. Having their income basis converted into LEK, they had the chance to open a business in certain trades gained in Greece. There is some production mainly in agriculture, because people have exploited their own land, whereas here in the city of Korça, they have opened a market, a restaurant, a fast-food restaurant, others work with gypsum, or as electricians. They tried to put into practice the know-how obtained in Greece... A problem here is the lack of knowledge about the market. Another problem is the informality, because people are not used to abiding by the*

law, and the low profit margin. Rather than making a considerable investment with no return, one surely prefers working on wage in Greece. That would be better for them and many have returned to their host countries. Only some businesses which have been a bit unique have survived. For example, a dietician who graduated in Greece has a lot of business with diets; she introduced the culture of eating some plants she has brought here. So, things that make the business unique have functioned here; also, hair salons, or other services specialised in Greece came here and worked well."

With regards to the needs for services in the labour market, another respondent, Shpëtimi from Durrës said: "The small businesses are encouraged considerably, given that the profit tax is zero, but the problem is access to businesses like supermarkets, restaurants, which is quite difficult, so you need to bring something new on the market. Often start-ups are opened without a market study, so you can see whether the market really needs this new activity or not. This is not the case and often these small businesses are doomed not to live up to expectations."

Interviews with small businesses generally indicated that the returnees who did not have a proper business plan or any support by institutional conventional schemes have closed. Many entrepreneurs, who were disappointed by their experience, returned to their last country of emigration if they possessed the regular residence papers.

Contrariwise, people who had a valid entrepreneurial idea managed to enter the market and even contributed to the sustainable economic development of the territory in which they lived. This is illustrated by the interview with Manjola, a lady entrepreneur in the tourism sector in Durrës: "The business climate has been more problematic, whereas today it has improved functionally, but difficulties for businesses still persist. Many who had a good professional basis have done well here in Durrës. One returned migrant opened a meat processing establishment and has been successful, another has opened an establishment for biscuits production, and another does dairy. However, the number of successful returned entrepreneurs is very small compared to the total number of returnees."

With regards to the other needs such as for education, healthcare and so on, there are no big differences from the other categories of returned migrants under analysis.

Returned students

This category - smaller in number than categories of unemployed, employed and self-employed, but bigger than the entrepreneurs - not only displays special characteristics but perhaps also untapped potential.

The economic crisis is only one of the reasons that students return. Most of the interviewed students came from Italy and very few cases were from Greece. Beyond the legitimate economic reasons, the sample shows a considerable number of returns for "patriotic" reasons as well as the prospects of a better social status, which they can hardly achieve in Italy during the crisis or after the financial crisis.

In terms of engagement, returned students fit in with almost all of the above categories: employed, self-employed, small entrepreneurs. Some even work in highly specialized sectors, such as academia or management, but in more limited cases. The number of unemployed student returnees appears to be low, except in cases where students voluntarily reject a job below their qualifications obtained abroad. Here are some cases illustrated by a focal group in Shkodra:

"I have not exercised my major here and I currently manage a call centre from Kosovo. I moved the business here and we work mainly with Switzerland. For the moment we have 10 employees, but I do not want to have more people..."

"...I now work at the Cultural Monuments in Shkodra. It is very nice job and I feel good, but I still want to go abroad again. The economic reason is one of many, not that wages are low, but are not enough to sustain your life. For example, a young couple who both work in a State institution cannot start a new life here with what they get..."

"... I have opened my own business, a bar-restaurant..."

"... I work at a private university as an internal lecturer..."

Some respondents have applied for a job in public administration, but could not make it. Alma from Shkodra said: "I applied twice for a position in public administration and I was confused, it was impossible. I was interested in the academic field. The comeback was a disappointment for me. Here meritocracy is zero; you must be extraordinarily excellent to cope with what happens here. I returned because I had no other options."

Even in entrepreneurship, returned students must deal with the same problems as with the other returnees. In many cases, they manage to express their concerns more elaborately than other categories of returnees: *"The first difficulty is the mentality and the second is a clash of opinions. I am not saying that I came from Italy to change this country, but my mentality shaped abroad is quite different from the one here. In Italy, materialistic mind-set prevails, but they also have high ideals, mostly in the political sphere rather than economy. But here, there is a poisoned late post-communist mentality which makes life too materialistic and stripped of any values. In Italy, the person who is educated with values provides a more fruitful output, whereas here it is the one paid more. This is the first difficulty; second, it is the jealousy in inter-personal relations. I can see this in my working relations. If I favour someone or keep a friendlier attitude, this creates a poignant jealousy among others and affects their performance at work."*

Educational or healthcare services are not among the priority needs for student returnees, but their political or public participation is more emphatic: "It is impossible to make a career, people are too politicized, and this is a very big obstacle. You must be a member of a political party if you want to move up the ladder"

They note that political life is polarised and gaining a career is difficult, unless they are in a political party: "Yeah, I see students who engage with parties. They might not even know the concept of politics, but they follow these political party mechanisms and respect them. However, students often feel disrespected and abandoned by them. We are young and forums have the purpose of launching new ideas; we need emancipation and we must see the world differently"

Finally, re-emigration of returned students to their last host country, but quite often also to other countries, is perceived to depend on employment as well as social and economic integration. Those who wish to re-emigrate are mostly working in positions below their qualifications, or do not feel stimulated by the current job. Students who became entrepreneurs or have a satisfactory working and social position (the smallest number among respondents) do not plan to return in the short term, provided that their efforts yield the desired results.

Special cases

The qualitative analysis of interviews and focal groups identified some secondary phenomena and target groups worth mentioning: i) returnees from the Roma/Egyptian community; ii) cause-effect link between the return and asylum-seeking phenomena; iii) domestic migration; iv) social self-exclusion;

The first two categories are considered as 'hybrid cases', meaning that interviewees of these categories have, in large proportions, experienced both economic migration and asylum-seeking.

Roma/Egyptian community

Educational achievements among returned Roma and Egyptians are very low. It deteriorated after the '90s, as a result of the austerity of transition reforms and harsh social environment, with many children not attending or abandoning school. Mavrommatis⁵¹ observes that all Albanian Roma who migrated to Greece in the early '90s, unlike Greek Roma⁵², only had an 8-year education. The other generations of Roma and

51 **Mavrommatis G.**, Roma in Public Education, National Focal Point for Greece, ANTIGONE, Information&Documentation Centre, November 2004.

52 Estimates by mid-90's show that 60-80% of Greek Roma aged 18-50 years old were illiterate.

Egyptian migrants either had lower educational achievements or were illiterate. The low level of educational achievement is more widespread among Roma children, who have lived in segregated settlements in Greece. Studies show that 43% of Roma children aged 7-18 years old are illiterate⁵³. Some of them cannot speak Albanian, which is an additional difficulty to their integration into the education system in Albania. In addition, many Roma children are not registered in the civil registry offices. Statistics indicate that 13.2% of Roma children aged 0-7 were unregistered in 2012.⁵⁴

Unemployment is a key concern for Roma and Egyptian migrants returning from the neighbouring countries. In the absence of jobs in the formal sector, many of them work in the informal sector⁵⁵; doing casual, unqualified low-payment labour. Consequently, their main source of earning a living is casual labour, economic aid and savings from the host country. This is affirmed by Lulzimi, an Egyptian from Durrësi: “We are not engaged in any work here. We are just living on the savings we brought from Germany.”

One of the main concerns for Roma and Egyptian returnees is the lack of housing and appropriate infrastructure. Nearly 51% of Roma immigrants in Greece said they have no home in their country of origin and most of their settlements lack basic infrastructure (drinking water, sewerage, roads, etc.).⁵⁶ Agimi, a migrant from Elbasani, complains: “We have no house there, they brought it down, and it costs 4-5 million LEK to build it again”. Others live in overcrowded and dilapidated houses.⁵⁷

Return-asylum link

“I was in Greece with my brother. He stayed 6 months more than me, but he also returned because of the crisis. He saw the situation here and decided to leave again, because he had more opportunities than me, in the sense that he did not have children. He went to Germany to seek asylum... I told him not to go, as it looked like a money-making business, not something formal. However, he tried his luck, left and stood 14 months in Germany. When he returned, he stayed one month in Albania and could not take it any longer, so he returned to Greece”.

This interview by Dritani from Kukësi shows that the asylum-seeking phenomenon was present in 2014-2015 among citizens who returned prior to 2014. This group of returnees are very dynamic and thus it is very difficult to identify their social exclusion profile, which was discovered primarily through secondary sources (testimonies of relatives who left to seek asylum). It can be considered as a bridge-phenomenon between the category of returned migrants and asylum-seekers.

However, as the next section will explain, this phenomenon is somewhat present and predictable, considering the high migratory potential identified in many studies in this field.

The main characteristics of this group are: i) young; ii) not married; iii) un-renewed residence permit in their last country of emigration. Their stay in Albania is very limited, making the social exclusion profile and their needs more difficult to identify.

Another important category is comprised of those returned from abroad before the financial crisis, however, their post-asylum social profile will be discussed in the next section.

Domestic migration

In a number of cases observed, it turned out that migrants returned either: i) initially to their place of birth / residence before migration and then migrated inward; or ii) returned directly to an urban centre not being their place of birth or last residence before their emigration. In both cases, Tirana was the most frequent

53 **Gëdeshi I., Miluka J.**, The Roma Migration – How to maximize its benefits?, Soros Foundation, 2012.

54 Ibid.

55 **INSTAT.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: A socio-demographic and economic profile based on the 2011 Census, Tirana, April 2015.

56 **Gëdeshi I., Miluka J.**, The Roma Migration – How to maximize its benefits?, Soros Foundation, 2012.

57 **INSTAT.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: A socio-demographic and economic profile based on the 2011 Census, Tirana, April 2015.

destination of internal migration. The categories of returnees with a higher tendency of migrating inward are: i) returned students; ii) the employed, particularly those having specialized profiles; and iii) to a moderate extent, small and medium entrepreneurs. For example, Silvana from Shkodra said: “I worked as external lecturer at the University of Shkodra for one year. I applied for doctorate studies in Bulgaria in 2012 and came back to Albania to work and stay with my family. In my last year of doctorate studies, I decided to apply for a job in Tirana, because it provided more employment opportunities, and I got a job at the University of New York in Tirana in the Economics Department. I am satisfied and I teach micro and macroeconomics there.”

Another respondent, Gëzimi from Elbasani, said: “When I returned, my brother and I decided to move to Tirana. The idea was to open a business for advertising and digital marketing, as there is a good demand, whereas the same business would not be profitable in Elbasan, I think.”

Generally, the needs of these returnees appear to be linked to the coaching and advisory services for businesses or for finding a qualified job. A special characteristic is the need for a richer and more varied social and cultural life that somehow resembles their lifestyle in their last country of emigration.

Self-exclusion phenomenon

The self-exclusion phenomenon entails primarily: i) self-exclusion from the economic sphere, or rejection of a less qualified job; ii) self-exclusion from the social sphere, or rejection of mentality, lifestyle or standards in the country of origin. This is illustrated in the interview with Edlira from Shkodra: “I came back from Italy three years ago and I am jobless. I used to work as fitness instructor, but quit it. The main reason is that my work is not appreciated and owners are used to exploiting you and abusing you. However, actually I am doing a Master in Tirana and intend to move there.”

This phenomenon is related in some cases to the phenomenon of domestic migration. Persons suffering most from this self-exclusion are those with a qualified job, returned students or persons who have lived for a relatively long time in the country of emigration. Usually, these persons are very dynamic and intend to re-emigrate at the first chance they get. In few cases, they decide to stay, depending on conditions offered to them but they always keep a short-term perspective for emigration.

Conclusions: Social exclusion profile of returned migrants

Synthesized conclusions are presented in the revised Social Exclusion Matrix (Annex 1). The matrix gives a summary of the empirical findings on interviewed return migrants, broken down by sub-category and domains.

Identification of one or two indicators – according to the tailored methodology – gives us a picture of the marginal social exclusion; 3 identified indicators determine the consistent social exclusion, whereas a combination of the four indicators for each domain shows a deeply rooted social exclusion situation. Each category is domain-based. Thus, differentiated social exclusion profiles can be found in different domains. In the end, each profile was scanned based on three risk factors identified: gender, ethnicity and family composition.

Unemployed

The category of the unemployed returnees has a greater risk of social exclusion in the economic domain, since the majority of respondents confirm the presence of the four indicators. In the domain of quality of life, 2 out of 4 indicators are noted, but they deal with two crucial aspects such as self-esteem and personal wellbeing. As for the third domain, the educational system, economic exclusion and re-emigration intention constitute the profile of consistent exclusion. The three risk factors that appear to be sharp for this category are: women, big families, and returnees belonging to Roma / Egyptian communities (comparatively less than asylum-seeking returnees from the same communities), which present more underlined problems of social exclusion.⁵⁸

58 The following sections will provide a separate analysis for both economic and asylum-seekers returnees belonging to the Roma/Egyptian communities.

Employed

The category of the employed has virtually the same characteristics and indicators as the category of the unemployed, in terms of the perception of subjective poverty and the possession of necessary commodities. However, the general lack of debt and a relevant level of income (albeit insufficient), differentiates them from the category of the unemployed. The situation in the second domain is relatively more inclusive, mainly due to security and discrimination indicators. However, as observed for most of the other categories under this indicator, self-esteem and perceived personal welfare leaves much to be desired, especially with regards to the quality of health services. The comprehensive education of children of returnees remains a challenge and economic inclusion is the only difference with the category of the unemployed (although minimal). In terms of risk factors, returned women have a particular challenge; they must cope with more vulnerable employment conditions than men and endure the responsibility of caring for the whole family. Whether they have returned / found employment within at least 3-4 years is a very important factor in their re-emigration intent. Those who have returned at least 3-4 years ago have no intent to re-emigrate (or would do so only under specific conditions), whereas the other employed have a clear intent to re-emigrate.

Self-employed

At a first glance, the self-employed may be perceived as more involved than the category of the employed but the level of income is generally the same (and in some cases lower) than this category. Having or accumulating debt to open a micro business makes this category even more vulnerable, thus falling into the profile of consistent exclusion. With regards to the quality of life and inclusion, there is no difference in the number and indicators in comparison with the two previous ones. Finally, with regards to risk factors, big families undoubtedly have a potential risk of being in the profile of higher social exclusion. While in terms of gender composition, it is worth noting that the vast majority of the self-employed returnees are male earners, thus the profiling of the social exclusion of women is resultantly incomplete.

Entrepreneurs

It should be noted that most of the interviewed entrepreneurs were small and medium investors. However, their profile differs in many respects from the above profiles. In economic terms, although their situation is somewhat less problematic, their debt situation and access to credit makes this category more vulnerable. Beyond the economic aspect, the need for services (education, health, etc.) and access to a perceived satisfactory quality of live, this category remains almost the same as other categories. An important distinction is noted in the "re-emigration intent": interviews indicate that entrepreneurs that returned before 2013 generally intended to re-emigrate, whereas those returned after 2013 do not have the same intent, at least not in the near future. Lastly, risk factors do not appear to be important for this category.

Returned students

This category of returnees represents a special profile in some respects. In economic terms, most students appear to be employed. They have better paid jobs than other returnees because of their qualifications. However, the perception on possession of commodities needed remains the same with that of other categories. When analysing their quality of life, their personal perception of welfare and self-esteem remains the same. They undeniably have a better living standard than the employed/self-employed and other categories. Regarding inclusion, the analysis of interviews shows that this category has higher expectations about involvement in political and public life when compared to other categories, and they are more demanding. They also perceive themselves as insufficiently involved in political life in comparison with other categories, mainly in terms of opportunities to vote and expressing political affiliation. Finally, returning male students differentiate substantially from the above categories, as they generally represent a higher risk

factor than returning women students, especially with regards to the integration into the domestic labour market. Family composition and ethnicity factors do not apply to this category.

In conclusion, it could be stated that: i) the “economic” domain has a heavier specific weight in the social exclusion profile for all categories; ii) the “quality of life” domain is more polarised: on one side, the personal / family welfare situation is perceived as negative, whereas on the other, there are no observed issues about the subjective security or discrimination of returnees; iii) the “inclusion” domain also shows a vulnerable situation with regards to comprehensive education for all the categories of returnees. While the economic inclusion situation reflects symmetrically the economic domain, the re-emigration intent (migratory potential) remains high among all the categories interviewed.

5. Returned asylum seekers: the profile of social exclusion

Introduction

Europe is going through the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. Based on data from Eurostat, 1.255.640 persons applied for asylum in EU countries in 2015, an increase of 123% from the previous year and an increase of 487% compared to 2010.⁵⁹ A large number of asylum seekers are from Western Balkans countries and from Albania (5 % in 2015)⁶⁰. The main host countries for asylum seekers from Albania are Germany, France, England, Sweden, and Belgium.⁶¹

The figure below reveals the number of asylum seekers from the six Western Balkan countries for the period 2009-2015. As may be observed from figure, the number of Albanian asylum seekers increased from 2010 to 2015. Out of all the Western Balkans countries, Albania and Kosova reveal the largest increase in the number of asylum seekers in 2015, compared to the previous year. Recent Eurostat statistics that are not included in this figure reveal a considerable reduction in the number of Albanian asylum seekers in the first six months of 2016.⁶²

The first question posed is: Why Albanian citizens request asylum in some EU countries? During the first two decades the migration flows from Albania was mainly focused in neighbouring countries, namely, Greece and Italy. The existence of social networks, in the first years influenced massive migration and reduced migration costs (secured housing, food, helped to find a job) and its risks. The informal sector, especially in Greece, required unqualified workers (in construction, service and agriculture) at a low price, thus a large amount of Albanian migrants were employed. However, the high unemployment in neighbouring countries⁶³ and lack of opportunities narrowed these channels. Consequently, Albanians tend to target other countries where their employment opportunities and incomes are higher, and security is better. This argument is also stated by Arjan from Kukës, a returned asylum seeker: "Applying for asylum is the only way to stick your legs in that country where there is no support for you there, nobody that waits and assists you. The guarantee is that you deal with a European state administration where you request food, housing and then you learn the language and realize integration and so on (...)"

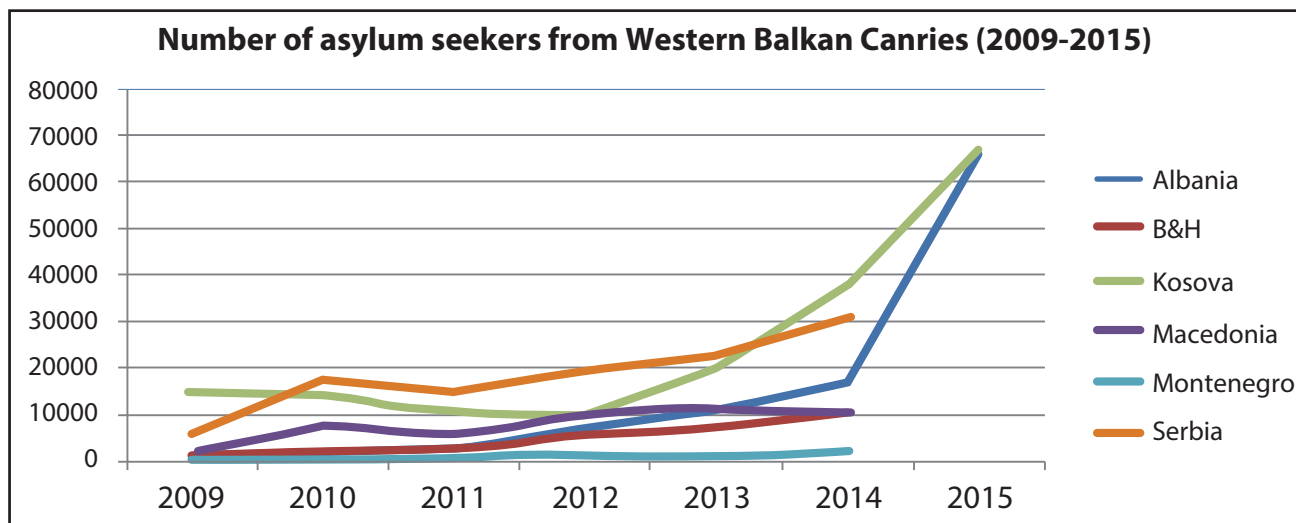
59 **Eurostat.**, Record number of over 1.2 million first time asylum seekers registered in 2015, Newsrelease, 44/2016, 4 March 2016.

60 **Connor Ph.**, Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015, Pew Research Center, August 2016.

61 **European Asylum Support Office.**, Asylum applicants from the Western Balkans. Comparative analysis of trends, push-pull factors and responses - Update. Belgium, May 2015; Ministry of Internal Affairs, Extended migration profile 2012-2014, Tirana 2015.

62 Based on data from Eurostat asylum seekers from Albania represented 2 % of the total number of asylum seekers or about 6000 persons. For more information see: **Eurostat.**, Number of first time asylum seekers slightly up to almost 306.000 in the second quarter of 2006, Newsrelease, 181/2016, 22 September 2016.

63 In 2015, based on Eurostat data, unemployment in Greece was 23.4 % and in Italy 10 % but it was higher amongst migrants.

Figure 3. Number of asylum seekers from Western Balkan Countries (2009-2015)

Source: Eurostat, 2016

These asylum seekers flows were encouraged and facilitated by the combination of some factors. The first factor was that, from the end of December 2008 Albanians could travel without visas to EU countries.⁶⁴ This also enabled low transportation costs (some hundreds of EUR per person) and facilitated travelling to the host country. The second factor was the rumours that were spread by personal social networks regarding the chances for employment in Germany or in other EU countries. In addition, individual success stories transmitted by communication channels often served as a catalyst of the process. Pranvera, a municipality employer at Kukës, said: “Most left to Germany thinking that they would be employed there and were cheated. Not all those who left were unemployed (...). There are many cases where people left their jobs here and went there (...)”

Last but not least, there are also the long procedures, material and financial gains and services (healthcare, education for children etc.) offered in the host country. Likewise, many returned asylum seekers speak about the financial benefits that they received in the host country. With these savings they re-paid their debts for funding their travelling and faced most of daily life expenses after they returned to Albania. Ismail, a returned asylum seeker stated: “In Germany we stayed for 15 months. They provided us with 300 EUR per person there. That money was sufficient and we could save since food was cheaper than here. (...) We gained some savings there. (...)”

Despite the fact that this part of the study focuses on the profile of Albanian returned asylum seekers, we will also discuss the causes (push factors), the selected routes of migration the sources of funding, the returnees' current needs and how do they perceive their prospects in the motherland. Most asylum seekers interviewed stayed little more than a year in the host country. Consequently, the personal characteristics and socio-economic conditions do not change a lot before migration when compared to return. Nevertheless, what has happened with the flux of asylum-seekers before may be repeated in future since the internal (push) factors in Albania are unchanged. .

Some partial data published by Pew Research Center, shows the demographic characteristics of Albanian asylum seekers that entered in EU countries in 2015. Almost half (46 %) belonged to the age group 18-34 years old and about 34 % were children under the age of 18 years old. Males dominate (61 %) and they are mostly

64 Albanians must hold a biometric passport in order to travel without visas to the EU. Moreover, the visa free regime concerns stays of up to 90 days within a 180-day period, imposing limitations and pressure on migrants who would prefer to stay longer in the host country. For more information refer to the “[Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Albania on the facilitation of the issuance of visas](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:22007A1219(05)&qid=1395933714988)” at [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:22007A1219\(05\)&qid=1395933714988](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:22007A1219(05)&qid=1395933714988)

young (almost half of them belong to the age group 18-34 years old).⁶⁵ The highest percentage of males at a young age (30 % males versus 16 % females for the age group 18-34 years old), revealed that almost half of them travelled alone to EU countries. This is in full compliance with the Albanian migration model that is male dominant. However, almost half of other males travelled and applied for asylum with their families.

In the flux of Albanian asylum seekers there are also many unaccompanied minors, mainly boys of the age group 15-18 years old.⁶⁶ According to Eurostat data in 2015, there were about 1060 Albanian children in EU countries, mainly located in United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, and the Netherlands.⁶⁷ In many cases, they are abandoned by parents or relatives in order to offer them a better life. Gëzim, a parent from Kukës, tells his story: "My son is 15 years old, knows English well and learned German quickly. Teachers in Germany sent me a letter and wrote me that the boy shall start school since he learned the language. (...) My son completed the class, took also the certificate and everything was in order. Where the officials of the commune came to return us to Albania, I asked if my son could stay but they refused. In Germany, there are centers for minors. We wished that at least the boy could stay in Germany in order to have a better future. That is why we migrated. But there was no chance". Despite the intentions of the parents, the status of being unaccompanied for both genders makes them especially vulnerable and exposes them to exploitation.

Regarding the ethnic composition of asylum seekers from Albania there is no data from Eurostat. However, based on the statistics in Germany which is the only EU country that provides the ethnic composition of asylum applicants, it is estimated that 11 % of asylum seekers are of Roma and Egyptian ethnicity and 84 % are of Albanian ethnicity.⁶⁸ In a previous publication, EASO (2013) estimated that Roma represented 6-10 % of the asylum seekers fluxes in Germany which shows that the dimensions and intensity of migration of Roma/Egyptians from Albania was higher than that of the majority population.⁶⁹ The percentage of Roma/Egyptians asylum seeker fluxes from Albania is visibly higher even when compared to the percentage they really represent within the total population of the country. This shows a stronger push factors regarding their migration.

Despite the fact that amongst the population of returned asylum seekers one can find individuals that represent all education levels most of them have lower secondary education. According to interviews their professional ability is low and most of them are unqualified. Migration into an EU country is also perceived by most of them as a chance for achieving training and for learning a profession.

Qualitative data from interviews shows that most of the Albanian asylum seekers are from North-east and Northern Albania, where the material poverty level is visibly higher than in other parts of the country. During 2015, the geographic distribution of asylum seekers was also extended to mid Albania up until the Vlora-Fier-Korça axis. Other qualitative data shows that some Albanian asylum seekers in Germany were migrants in Greece.⁷⁰ Based on the interviews, only 1/3 of Albanian asylum seekers in Germany returned to Albania thus far, while the rest is expected to return with high intensity in the coming months.⁷¹ This calls for better cooperation between state institutions, foreign embassies and research organizations with regards to the exchange of information and data analysis for the profile of returned asylum seekers.

65 **Connor Ph.**, Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015, Pew Research Center, August 2016.

66 Unaccompanied minors are persons aged below 18 who arrive in a Member State without an adult responsible for them, or minors who are left in an unaccompanied situation after having entered the territory of a Member State.

67 **Eurostat.** Almost 90 000 unaccompanied minors among asylum seekers registered in the EU in 2015, Press release, 2 May 2016.

68 **European Asylum Support Office.**, Asylum applicants from the Western Balkans. Comparative analysis of trends, push-pull factors and responses - Update. Belgium, May 2015.

69 **European Asylum Support Office.**, Asylum applicants from the Western Balkans. Comparative analysis of trends, push-pull factors and responses. Belgium, 2013.

70 According to the interviews with officials and experts in the German Embassy in Tirana, almost 1/3 of Albanian asylum seekers in summer of 2015 were economic migrants to Greece that went from there or after a short two or three days stay in Albania. Nevertheless during the fieldwork we did not encounter any returned asylum seeker that was a migrant in Greece what would enable for a deeper analysis of this case.

71 Interviews with officials and experts in the German Embassy in Tirana.

Empirical findings

Push factors

In the case of Albania, economic factors are the main ones to explain migration from the country and requests for asylum in EU countries. Unemployment and underemployment, the lack of income and the difficult living conditions constitute the main push factors for most of the Albanian asylum seekers. Mimoza, a mother from Elbasan, states: “Our economic situation has worsened with time (...). We did not have enough incomes due to unemployment. (...) Children were at school and we could not fulfil their needs. Therefore, we decided to live and request asylum in Germany. Economic factor, unemployment was the main cause. We were mostly unemployed than employed.” Almost the same story is told also by Petrit from a village of Malësia e Madhe: “In Germany we went for a better life. We are five in the family but me and my wife are unemployed. (...) We have little land. Economic aid was totally insufficient.”

Others complain about the low income and the lack of social insurance which produces stress and insecurity for their future. This is the case of Kujtim from Shkodra: “I have 15 years employed in black and nobody offers you a job that pays social insurance. (...) I received 20 thousand LEK per month while my wife worked in a pastry shop and was paid 15 thousand LEK per month. So, in total we both received 35 thousand LEK per month. With this money we were supposed to pay electricity, to educate the children, to feed ourselves and so on.”

Amongst the persons interviewed there are also young people with higher education or high school education that do not see a future in Albania. They want more job security and better paid jobs. Arjan, a young male from Tirana that studied Political Science said: “I am unemployed but I do not find any space in Albania. (...) When I was in Germany in the camp I made knowledge with lots of categories of persons from every city of the country. There were many poor people but there were many from the middle class. They too like myself thought that there is no future in Albania. This was all. Unemployment and poverty and lack of prospective are strongest causes for migration. These are the top three ones for me.”

Unemployment levels especially in the small cities much higher compared to the country’s average. Indrit, a 20 year old asylum seeker that had just returned told his experience: “All my friends from Kukës that were with me in Germany were unemployed. In my city there is work as a waiter, but with the salary that you receive you can do nothing.”

Some other asylum seekers that returned revealed the health problems and the lack of proper healthcare treatment was a push factor. Astrit from Kukës said: “I left to Germany due to economic reasons, unemployment and lack of incomes. But my son was also sick. I took a credit from the bank to medicate my son but there was no result. In Germany they helped me about my boy.”

Many interviewed persons that did not see any clear economic and social development of the country state, said that they were worried for the future of their children. This was also expressed by Fatime a young mother from Elbasan: “We thought about the children in the first place because to us, even if we would stay here we will not suffer for daily bread. We thought for the lives of our children, a better life for them.” Within this context the quality of education of children is an important push factor. In the perception of asylum seekers that are returned, the differences in education quality between Albania and Germany are visible.

Certain marginalized groups such as the Roma and Egyptians also have other reasons for applying for asylum in EU countries. On the one hand their poverty level and unemployment is visibly higher compared to the majority⁷². On the other hand there is also discrimination. This is also stated by Myrvetja, a Roma woman from Tirana that wants to request asylum: “Albania becomes worse and worse. (...). For us Roma it is even harder. There is discrimination because they do not employ us. There are no schools. So there is nothing

72 A recent UNDP study shows that unemployment rate amongst Roma and Egyptians was 56 % or three times more than official unemployment rate.

for us." Skënder, a Roma from Pogradec said: "It is not only economic reasons that made me leave the country. There is also discrimination. Nobody hears the voice of us Roma."

Who migrates?

Despite the desire to migrate by applying for asylum in an EU country not all families can migrate. Interviews and group discussions revealed that families that possess certain financial, human and social capitals can migrate. In the absence of money, for most families it is impossible to afford the travelling expenses and the cost of stay for several days in EU countries until they are admitted to refugee hosting centers. Fatime a poor Roma mother from a suburban neighbourhood of Tirana states this worry: "We need money to leave from Albania. But we do not have even enough money to buy our passports. Four passports are equal to 24 thousand LEKs plus travel expenses. (...) But I do not have enough money to eat. We take debts at shops. (...)". Other families in absence of savings, loan from banks or sell their properties. Luan a returned asylum seeker from Pogradec shows this: "Many asylum seekers from Pogradec took loans at banks (...) No one borrows you 1000 EUR knowing that you will migrate for asylum and it is not sure whether you come back to pay the debt. Many persons sent the money via money transfers shops from Germany to clear the bank loans or otherwise the bank would take their houses."

Rich families with informal social capital can avoid this risk and find support from their relatives to borrow money. Shkëlqim a villager from Korça, said: "In order to migrate to Germany we decided together with my wife. Then I talked with my friends and my wife's relatives to help me because one cannot go without money." Having a circle of friends or relatives migrants/asylum seekers may help in covering the cost of travel and in receiving necessary information with regards to migration conditions, procedure and prospects. Arben from Pogradec said: "In Germany there were also camps where conditions were bad such as for instance people could not wash, there was only a sandwich to eat (...). There were also camps with good conditions such as those near Berlin, near Frankfurt and Hanover (...). We received this information since we communicated with our friends in different camps (...)." Education or a previous migration experience is an easing factor since it helps migrants/asylum seekers to get oriented in host country. Many male asylum seekers had a previous history of migration mainly to and from Greece.

Family Decision

The decision to apply for asylum is the result of a wide family discussion. Anila a girl from Tirana that applied with her family for asylum in Luxembourg said: "We discussed with our family (...) Discussed for about two months and then we decided to go." In other cases it is a strategy of the entire family circle to migrate one after the other. Donika a mother from Durrës, said: "We want very much to migrate. I wanted my eldest son to go to Germany (...) I have three sons and everyone contributed financially so that he could go first. After him others will follow." Many families jointly organize the travel, share the costs, exchange information and stay together in the asylum country, thus producing more security for themselves. Marjeta a girl from Tirana said: "We discussed widely with our family and then decided to go. (...) We left with the family of my uncle's son. My aunt and my uncles' son families were composed by four members each. It was 12 of us for a minivan".

The routes

There are different methods used by Albanian asylum seekers to go to Germany. According to interviews, Albanian asylum seekers from Western Albania travelled by ferry to Italy and then by train or bus to Germany. Asylum seekers from North-east Albania travelled by bus to Kosovo or Macedonia into Serbia, Hungary and Austria and then continued by train to Germany. Other asylum seekers from Northern Albania travelled by taxi to Montenegro and continued towards Austria. A small portion of asylum seekers used air travel from Albania, Kosova, Macedonia and Greece towards Germany, France and Sweden. Altin a young male from Tirana that applied for asylum in Germany stated: "I left Albania in August last year where the flux was high.

I cannot find the words to describe it. I left by plain from Prishtina to Frankfurt (...). As soon as I entered the plain I noticed that there were many Albanians and all conversations one could hear were related to asylum. (...) They were together with their families, young boys, men, lonely women, mixed categories as one can say."

A vulnerable group

Many returned asylum seekers currently live in more difficult economic conditions compared to the period before they left Albania and they currently constitute a vulnerable group. Depending on the intensity of the return of other asylum seekers, mainly from Germany, the size of this group will grow and the pressure on the labor market and institutions that offer services will increase. According to the interviews, unemployment and lack of income is the key challenge faced by most of the returned asylum seekers. Mimoza, an experienced employee of the employment office in Kukës said: "When they return they come to the employment office and register themselves as unemployed. They re-enter into economic aid schemes. First they request for employment but we do not have a lot of employment opportunities to offer (...) Unemployment rate in our city is very high." Reshit, a head of family from Berat tells his experience: "It has been a month and a half since I returned from Germany and I could not find a job. I ask people around but now they offer me very low paid jobs. They say they can pay me no more than 15 thousand LEK per month. It is worse than before. Even my wife is unemployed."

Some returned asylum seekers said that they partook in voluntarily vocational training courses and language courses in the host country which would help them in finding a job there. Petrit from Elbasan said: "My wife followed the course of German language (...) It was like a vocational school, since there were also courses for cook and hairdresser (...)." Many interviewed persons said that they wished to do vocational training courses in Albania. They think this could help them find a job in their country of origin or abroad. However, it should be noted that vocational training courses often do not match labor market needs. Shpresa a local official from Kukës, said: "In our city there are two vocational courses offered. One is for tailor and the other for plumber. Nevertheless, even if you complete the course there is no employment chance. Here there are no tailoring enterprises. (...)".

This socio-economic situation is even harder for families that sold their houses and their possessions to fund their travels or that are in debt. This is the case for Shpresa, a Roma woman from Tirana, who returned from France. She stated: "Our family expenses to go to France were 3000 EUR. In order to secure this amount of money we sold everything we had and took also debts. (...) After return we live in the house of my mother in law. We live ten people in a room". Meanwhile, Halim a villager from Shishtavec of Kukës said: "To travel with our family I took a debt since the incomes from my work were insufficient for me to save money. I returned the debt to some people but I still have debts to return. I sold my horse to clear debts (...). Now I am in a worsened situation (...)." The chances of savings and of the duration of stay in the host country can ease debts. Genci from Malësia e Madhe stayed for 15 months in Germany and said: "The way to Germany cost me 1500 EUR but I did not request the money as a debt. I had some goats and cattle and I sold them to earn that money. Also another person that came with me to Germany sold his cattle, but he had a more bitter chance than me. They returned him within two months."

Many of the returned asylum seekers stated that the economic aid their families receive is small and insufficient to face the daily living expenses. In many cases this aid is only partial⁷³. Petrit that lives in a village of Kukës complained: "Since I came from there I receive 2 thousand LEK of economic aid. What can I do first with that money?! Even before going to Germany it was the same situation (...). Tomorrow I will bring my daughter to school but I have no money to buy her books."

Faced with unemployment, many returned asylum seekers live from the savings they gained during the period of stay as asylum seeker. Nevertheless, this situation produces stress and insecurity for the future

73 In Kukës, for instance, at the end of 2015 10 804 families received economic aid but 77 of them received partial economic aid. The average size of partial economic aid was 4.278 LEK per month or 31 EUR per month.

of their families. Astrit, a returned asylum seeker said: "My wife is unemployed while I sometimes do some casual jobs or go and search for jobs myself. Actually we live with savings from Germany and the economic aid we receive." Meanwhile Fatmir, a returned asylum seeker from Pogradec exclaimed: "We live with savings from Germany. But until when?!"

The impossibility of receiving specialized healthcare continues to be a big worry for some returned asylum seeker families. Elvira, a returned asylum seeker from Shishtavec articulated: "Me and my son were sick and were cured to the hospital in Germany. Now we have to go every month to do the check up at American Hospital in Tirana. But I did not bring my boy there. Economic aid that we receive is insufficient to cover even travelling expenses".

Some children lost a school year due to migration, which is another worry for their families. Other parents state differences in the education standards. Kujtim from a village of Malësisë së Madhe, said: "There, where the children goes to school it is warm inside. They have heaters. Here the children must take the woods in his backpack in order to heat at school."

Many asylum seekers complain that due to high unemployment, debts and lack of quality services or due to comparisons made regarding their time of stay in Germany, their quality of life worsened. One such case is Agron from Shishtavec who said: "My children cannot compare the food they received in Germany with what they eat here. They eat even bananas there while here they cannot even see it." Mimoza that lives in an old and overpopulated house verbalized: "The house there was good. Even here we do not possess such house. It was comfortable. I remember it even now."

Many returned asylum seekers see their individual perspective and that of their families in developed EU countries and mainly in Germany. This also the opinion of Hasan from Kukës: "If I would have the chance I would leave again. What can I do here?! I say lucky the one that went there and unlucky the one that returned here. I am unemployed and my wife is unemployed as well. After two years unemployed and with no normal living conditions I do not see any perspective in Albania." This perception on migration is almost general amongst returned persons. Nevertheless, they express different opinions concerning the kind of migration. A part declared they will try to gain asylum again, as soon as they get the chance. This is the case of Mentor from Korça who expressed: "I want to migrate again (...) I would request asylum again since I do not have anyone who can help me there..."⁷⁴ Other people want to migrate by securing an employment permit. This is the case for Mark from Malësisë së Madhe: "I do not see the perspective of my family in Albania. I wish to go to Germany again but not via asylum. I wish to apply for a job by regular papers that they give me in the enterprise where I worked."

Conclusions: Social exclusion profile of returned asylum-seekers

Returned asylum seekers are characterized by a relatively young age and most of them have young children. Most of them have lower secondary education. The main causes for migration of this category are unemployment, difficult socio economic situation and lack of prospective. Following the return from the host country, their socio economic situation did not change. Currently the main sources of income for them are the partial employment of family members, economic aid and savings from the period of stay as asylum seeker. In contrast, the families that could not save during asylum (due to lack of monetary benefits, short time stay) are now in debt and face greater economic difficulties compared to before they migrated. Most of the interviewees said they belong to the 'poor families' or 'not poor families' groups.⁷⁵ They own a house and house furniture but the quality of their houses is low. Families that live in the rural area own very small plots of land. Many of them evaluate that the level and quality of services (healthcare, education

74 Many returned asylums seekers are not aware that they cannot move within the Schengen area at least for 10 months where they are returned voluntary and at least for 30 months where they are deported.

75 We divided the families of returned migrants into four socio-economic groups 'very poor', 'poor', 'not poor', and 'relatively in good conditions'.

etc) is low. The lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector is the main cause of their problems. They possess cognitive social capital but lack structural social capital. Despite the fact that they take part in political life (local and parliamentary elections) they stated that their voice is impotent. Lacking employment they estimate that the only way out of their problems is international migration. The most vulnerable groups from the above mentioned social strata include returned asylum seekers with a negative experience and the ones that are unemployed.

6. Recommendations

This paragraph aims to provide some recommendations as to which policies the Albanian public institutions can undertake to improve the socio-economic conditions of the various categories of returned migrants.

According to all possible scenarios, the return of migrants is expected to continue with a lower intensity in the coming years in Albania. Moreover, as this document demonstrated, the structure of the profile of returned migrants is a dynamic process that depends on endogenous and exogenous factors such as socio-economic development of the country, the global economic crisis and the dynamics of migratory potential.

Consequently, measures and policies that will be undertaken by the responsible public institutions be it short term, mid-term or long-term should be adapted on the basis of updated profiles of returned migrants and should aim to i) effectively use the social, human and financial capital of returned migrants, ii) decrease the migratory process by managing it by temporarily “clearing valves” such as seasonal and circular migration based on requests for labor (hopefully qualified one) in host countries.

In order to ensure that the above mentioned recommendations are considered in the consultations with other important actors as well, we propose the recommendations below:

- I. To strengthen the connection between migration (especially return migration) and development and to make efficient use of the role of the Diaspora in socio-economic development of Albania;⁷⁶
- II. To provide consultancy by means of specific agencies and second level banks to some targeted groups of returned migrants that wish to invest their financial, human and social capitals into agricultural production activities and into sub-sectors of information technology;
- III. To draft an updated legal framework on migration, especially a new national strategy and a new national action plan that envisages amongst other things several measures (easing of taxes, subsidies, access to soft loans, specific investments in infrastructure);
- IV. Regarding the employment of returned migrants, in compliance with the new Law on Employment and Vocational Education it is necessary that: i) Migration Lockets possibly in cooperation with Employment Offices, be organized at the Municipality level and not on a regional basis, in conformity with the new Territorial Reform. This would enable the 25 municipalities that do not benefit from these services to be part of the scheme.; ii) to thoroughly review the role and structure of Migration Lockets in compliance with the National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2015-2020; iii) to consider the creation of an ambulatory Labor Office/Migration Locket in service of rural communities in general and of returned migrants that reside in these areas in particular; iv) to better orientate the use of qualifications gained abroad allowing the returned migrants to meet the labor market demand;
- V. Although the final aim of the economic and social policies of the Albanian institutions remains to be employment and social welfare of Albanian citizens. The high migratory potential in the country

76 This recommendation was suggested by representatives of EU Delegation Office in Albania.

and the management of temporary migratory flows towards host countries whose labor market reveals absorbing potentials should be considered. In doing so it is suggested to strengthen even further policies related to vocational training and their ties to the host country labor market. Consequently, regulated migration would constitute a win-win situation, in which Albania sends its qualified labor force on the one hand and on the other hand it benefits from an experienced labor force when they return;⁷⁷

VI. Since migration is a horizontal theme and therefore, it is not possible to create a specific sectoral policy, it is suggested that migration in general and return migration in particular is treated within Integrated Thematic Managed Policy Groups (IPMG)⁷⁸ and more specifically within i) IPMG for Economic Development (competition and innovation) ii) IPM for Employment and Skills and iii) IPMG for Public Administration;

VII. It is suggested to strengthen the institutional inter-relations between Albanian institutions, embassies resident in Albania and research institutions for the systematic gathering of data on returned migrants in order to enable the improvement of their profile and to take the necessary measures for their re-integration within the appropriate time;

VIII. Difficulties regarding integration in the education system of the children of returned migrants can be overcome by strengthening the implementation of policies of 'school as community center' especially through: i) including extra support teachers for courses in Albanian language for re-integration; ii) more constant inclusion of psychological services (especially for teenager returnee), iii) massive inclusion of parent in extreme curricular activities;

IX. It is recommended that a higher level of attention should be given towards cases of returned asylum seekers with specific health diagnosis, namely, children and the coverage of curing expenses from responsible institutions;

X. It is recommended that the recommendations of the MSWY Monitoring Report be fulfilled, in order to increase the information on Albanian returned citizens with regards to their chances of benefiting from the changes in the legal framework in the area of housing;

XI. Especially for the strata of returned asylum seekers that represents the highest migratory potential, it is recommended that the information on regular migration (especially where there is no short-term employment possibility) should be increased;

XII. Especially for the Roma and Egyptian community it is recommended that: i) the Roma and Egyptian asylum seekers category be included in the mid-term review of "The National Action Plan for Roma and Egyptians 2015-2020"; ii) that the role of civil society be strengthened in mapping and monitoring the cases of returned asylum seekers and that of potential ones;

XIII. Regarding the category of returned students, it is recommended that a detailed national database based on sectors aiming priority employment for them in sectors where there is more need for qualified labor be created or supporting them with startups in sectors with the highest development potential;

XIV. Regarding the category of asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors, it is recommended socio-economic profiles of them be created, since about 2/3 of them will soon be forcefully returned, mainly from Germany.

Lastly, it is recommended that the community of international parents in Albania address in the short term in their programs: i) interventions that strengthen relations between returned migration and development ii) initiatives that focus on the need and social inclusion of most vulnerable categories of returned migrants emerging from this study such as for instance returned asylum seekers (especially those that continue to return since a good part of them is expected to return shortly into Albania).

77 This recommendation was evidenced mostly during the interviews with representatives of the German Embassy and the GIZ Programme for Migration and Development in Albania.

78 IPMG are high level forums of government decision making structures within the framework of sectoral budget support of EU in Albania during the years 2014-2020.

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Annex 1: Revised Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix⁷⁹

Source: own

Domains/Sub-domains	Indicators	Status ⁸⁰
<p><i>Domain 1 – Resources</i> <i>Sub-domain: Material/Economic</i></p> <p>Income (assets, savings, remittances)</p> <p>Possession of necessities</p> <p>Debt</p> <p>Subjective poverty (people’s perception of whether they live or have lived in poverty, or whether their income is below the standard needed to keep their family/home out of absolute or overall poverty)</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>1-2 indicators per domain = marginal exclusion</p> <p>3 indicators per domain = consistent exclusion</p> <p>4 indicators per domain = deep exclusion</p>
<p><i>Domain 2 - Quality of Life</i> <i>Subdomains: Health and wellbeing, living environments and security</i></p> <p>Self-esteem/ personal efficacy (wellbeing)</p> <p>Sub-domain 5.1 Housing quality (living environment)</p> <p>Subjective safety, for example, perceptions and fear of crime (home and neighbourhood)</p> <p>Discrimination (security)</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>1-2 indicators per domain = marginal exclusion</p> <p>3 indicators per domain = consistent exclusion</p> <p>4 indicators per domain = deep exclusion</p>
<p><i>Domain 3 – Participation</i> <i>Sub-domains: education, economic and political participation</i></p> <p>Access to education (includes school exclusion, but also includes access to lifelong learning for working-age adults and older people).</p> <p>Paid work</p> <p>Political participation</p> <p>Intention to re-emigrate</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Employed, self-employed/Unemployed.</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>1-2 indicators per domain = marginal exclusion</p> <p>3 indicators per domain = consistent exclusion</p> <p>4 indicators per domain = deep exclusion</p>

79 The following risk factors will be included: gender, ethnicity, household composition.

80 The decision if one indicator accounts or not for social exclusion will be determined through the majority of the interviewees, as divided per categories.

Annex 2: Revised Bristol Matrix of Social Exclusion for Economic Returned Migrants

Source: Authors

Domains/Sub-domains	Indicators	Unemployed	Employed	Self employed	Entrepreneurs	Students	Roma/Egyptians ⁸¹	Status I social exclusion ⁸² (1-2 = marginal; 3 = consistent; 4 = deep)
Domain 1 – Sources Sub-domain: <i>Material/economic</i> Incomes (savings, economic aid, remittances) Possession of necessary goods Debts Subjective poverty (perception if they lived in poverty or if their living standard is below the minimum living standards in time and space.	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Unemployed 4 indicators Employed: 2 indicators Self-employed: 3 indicators Entrepreneurs: 1 indicator Students: 1 indicator Roma/Egyptian: 4 indicators
	Yes/No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	
	Yes/No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	
Domain 2 – Life quality Sub-domain: <i>Health and Welfare Living Conditions and Safety</i> Auto-esteem (welfare, life quality c) Quality of housing Subjective security (perception and fear for security such as for instance in neighborhood, town etc.) Discrimination	Yes/No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Unemployed 2 indicators Employed: 1 indicator Self employed: 1 indicator Entrepreneurs: no indicator Students 1 indicator Roma/Egyptians: 3,5 indicators
	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes/No	
	Yes/No	NO	No	No	No	No	Yes	

⁸¹ It is worth mentioning that almost all the interviewees under this category have had both an economic migration and an asylum-seeking background.

⁸² The decision if an indicator occurs or not in terms of social inclusion is taken if verified in most of the interviewed of the respective category.

Domains/Sub-domains	Indicators	Unemployed	Employed	Self employed	Entrepreneurs	Students	Roma/Egyptians ⁸¹	Status I social exclusion ⁸² (1-2 = marginal; 3 = consistent; 4 = deep)
<p>Domain 3 – Inclusion</p> <p>Sub-domain: In education system, economic life, political life.</p> <p>Access to proper education (inclusion in school, access to continuous education for adults)</p> <p>Paid job</p> <p>Political participation (voting, participation in the public life)</p> <p>Aim to re-migrate</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Employed/unemployed</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>No</p> <p>unemployed</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Employed</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Self employed</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Entrepreneurs</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Employed</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>unemployed: 3 indicators</p> <p>Employed: 2 indicators</p> <p>Self employed : 2 indicators</p> <p>Entrepreneurs: 1 indicator</p> <p>Students: 2 indicators</p> <p>Roma/Egyptian: 2,5 indicators</p>

Annex 3: Revised Bristol Matrix of Social Exclusion for returned asylum seekers

Source: Authors

Domains/Sub-domains	Indicators	Unemployed	Employed	Self employed	Entrepreneurs	Students	Status I social exclusion ⁸³ (1-2 = marginal; 3 = consistent; 4 = deep)
<p><i>Domain 1 – Sources</i> <i>Sub-domain: Material/economic</i></p> <p>Incomes (savings, economic aid, remittances) Possession of necessary goods Debts Subjective poverty (perception if they lived in poverty or if their living standard is below the minimum living standards in time and space.)</p>	<p>Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No</p>	<p>No No Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes No Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes No Yes/No</p>	<p>No No Yes Yes</p>	<p>No No Yes Yes</p>	<p>Unemployed: 4 indicators Employed: 1 indicator Positive experience: 1,5 indicators Negative experience: 4 indicators Roma/Egyptians: 4 indicators</p>
<p><i>Domain 2 – Life quality</i> <i>Sub-domain: Health and Welfare Living Conditions and Safety</i></p> <p>Auto-esteem (welfare, life quality c) Quality of housing Subjective security (perception and fear for security such as for instance in neighborhood, town etc.) Discrimination</p>	<p>Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No</p>	<p>No No No Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes/No Yes/No Yes</p>	<p>No No Yes/No Yes</p>	<p>Unemployed: 4 indicators Employed: 1 indicator Positive experience: 1 indicator Negative experience: 2 indicators Roma/Egyptian: 3,5 indicators</p>
<p><i>Domain 3 – Inclusion</i> <i>Sub-domain: In education system, economic life, political life.</i></p> <p>Access to proper education (inclusion in school, access to continuous education for adults) Paid job Political participation (voting, participation in the public life) Aim to re-migrate</p>	<p>Yes/No Employed/unemployed Yes/No Yes/No</p>	<p>No Unemployed Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes employed Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes/No Yes Yes</p>	<p>No Yes/No Yes Yes</p>	<p>No Yes/No Yes Yes</p>	<p>Unemployed: 3 indicators Employed: 1 indicator Positive experience: 1,5 indicators Negative experience: 2,5 indicators Roma/Egyptian: 2,5 indicators</p>

83 The decision if an indicator occurs or not in terms of social inclusion is taken if verified in most of the interviewed of the respective category.

Annex 4 - Sampling

The *sample size for the return migrants* is determined on the population size evidenced in the IOM/INSTAT 2013 survey (135.144). So the sample size is calculated as per the formula:

$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$ where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision (in this case we agreed on a level of precision at .1)

Formula application: $135.144/1 + 135.144 (0,1)^2 = \mathbf{99 \text{ economic return migrants}}$

Given the fact that interviews to this sub-group are family-based, the study will include no more than 60 interviews.

The *sample size for the Albanian return asylum-seekers* is determined on the population size evidenced in the German Official Statistics for the Bundestag on 2015 (3622)⁸⁴ and on the first half of 2016 (3717)⁸⁵ for a total of 7339. So the sample size is calculated as per the formula:

$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$ where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision (in this case we agreed on a level of precision at .15)

Formula application: $7339/1 + 7339 (0,15)^2 = \mathbf{44 \text{ return asylum seekers}}$

The *sample size for the return Roma/Egyptian asylum-seekers* is determined on the population size evidenced in the EASO (European Asylum Seekers Office) Reports⁸⁶. Both these reports, as stated in the former paragraph, evidence that "Roma/Egyptian asylum-seeker applicants from Albania constitute from 6 to 10 % of the overall number of Albanian asylum-seekers in Europe". Therefore, an average of 8 % out of 7339 asylum-seekers returnees would form a population size of 587 Roma/Egyptian asylum-seekers returnees

Again, the sample size is calculated as per the formula:

$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$ where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision (in this case we agreed on a level of precision at .15)

Formula application: $587/1 + 587 (0,15)^2 = \mathbf{41 \text{ return Roma/Egyptian return asylum seekers}}^{\mathbf{87}}$

Finally, it's worthy to mention that all interviews, focus groups and questionnaires are family-based which renders the sample size more representative than the figures stemming out from the respective formulas.

84 <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/075/1807588.pdf>

85 <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/093/1809360.pdf>

86 EASO Report 2013 and 2015, "Asylum Applicants from the Western Balkans: comparative analysis of trends, push-pull factors and responses".

87 It is worth mentioning that almost all the interviewees under this category have had both an economic migration and an asylum-seeking background.