

# **The Determinants of Albanian External Migration to Italy and Greece**

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Submitted To  
Central European University  
Department of International Relations and European Studies

Impartial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

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Budapest, Hungary  
05 June 2008

Word Count: 15.926

## **Abstract**

The thesis deals with the patterns of Albanian immigration to Italy and Greece, and aims to account for the differences in its size and form. The main argument is that the interaction of three main factors, namely the economic situation in Albania, the permeability of the Greek and Italian borders, and the immigration policies of these two receiving countries determine the size and form of the post-communist Albanian emigration. In particular, it argues that the permeability of the Italian and Greek borders determines the costs and risks of the immigration routes, and consequently the economic situation of the Albanian households determines how many can afford which route, and thus the size of immigration. It further argues that the immigration law in the receiving countries and the probability of entering the country again determine the form of emigration, i.e. whether it is short-term, circular, long-term, or permanent.

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## INTRODUCTION

In my MA thesis I analyze the root-causes of the differences in patterns of the Albanian post-communist immigration to Italy and Greece, especially with respect to its size and form. The size of Albanian immigrants in Greece is larger than in Italy, and the form of immigration is mainly short-term and circular in Greece, while it is permanent and long term in Italy. What is puzzling is that despite the differences in these patterns, the pull factors exercised by the two main receiving countries are similar and in certain respects even stronger for Italy and, as a result, one would expect more immigration to Italy. The similar pull factors are the geographical vicinity, form of economy, labor markets and previous emigration experience of Italy and Greece. The factors, in which Italy represents a stronger pulling force than Greece, are related to the wage differentials and to the Albanians' perceptions of these two countries. Furthermore, it is puzzling to see how more restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies from the Greek authorities, compared to the Italian ones, have led to higher amount of Albanian immigrants in Greece than in Italy.

The Albanian emigration is an interesting case to be studied, since it is a very recent phenomenon and it currently has the highest migratory rates in Europe. In addition, it represents a perfect case for the study of international migration, because when it started there were no previously existing networks, and thus it offers the researchers the possibility to observe how the routes start and evolve in the very beginning of international migration.

My argument is that the interaction of the economic situation in Albania, the permeability of the Greek and Italian borders, with the immigration policies of these two receiving countries determines the size and form of the post-communist Albanian emigration. My hypothesis consists of two parts. Firstly, while the border permeability determines the costs and risks of the immigration routes, the economic situation and propensity to emigrate of the Albanian households determines which route they can afford to take. Secondly, I argue

that the immigration law in the receiving countries and the probability of entering the country again determine for how long the illegal immigrants will stay and their form of emigration. I conclude that since, most of the Albanian potential emigrants need to escape poverty and do not have enough income to afford expensive trips, they choose the illegal route to Greece, which is much cheaper than the route to Italy.

Additionally, I show that when the costs and risks of entering the destination country are high but there is a chance to become legal, as in the case of Italy, then the immigrants already residing in the host country will be predisposed not to turn back home, as they will be afraid they will not be able to emigrate again. On the other hand, when the costs and risks of entering the destination country are lower but there is no chance to become legal, as in the case of Greece, then the immigrants residing in the receiving country will be predisposed not to settle, as they will not be able to reunite with their families and benefit from the healthcare and educational services. Instead they will turn back, or migrate back and forth, depending on the working season, or personal need, as there are high possibilities of crossing the border.

The methodology employed is the method of agreement and it takes into account four independent variables and controls for other five variables in explaining the dependent variable, being the patterns of Albanian migration to Italy and Greece. The method assumes that if the controlled variables are the same in both countries, then the difference in the dependent variable will be explained by the difference in the independent variables. Besides, the process-tracing method will be integrated in the framework, with the aim of capturing the variances within the two countries in different time periods. This will be possible by introducing a fourth independent time variable, which indicates the four different streams of the Albanian emigration.

In order to demonstrate my argument, in the first chapter, I introduce the empirical puzzle, so as to put the Albanian migration to Italy and Greece in a broader context. The

second chapter offers insight into the current debate on the Albanian emigration and it introduces some important theoretical tools which are helpful in building the explanatory framework. The last chapter elaborates on four main independent variables determining the immigration patterns, namely the propensity to migrate of the Albanian households, the permeability of the Greek and Italian border, the immigration policies in the two receiving countries, and the streams of migration.

## CHAPTER 1 – BACKGROUND

Albania has a very long history of external migration dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when after the death of Skanderbeg<sup>1</sup> until the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century almost one forth of Albania's population fled to southern Italy. The next massive emigration flows, mostly temporary in nature and known as '*kurbet*'<sup>2</sup> in the Albanian folklore, occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily for economic reasons. The main destination countries were the US and some Latin American states<sup>3</sup>, followed by Greece, where men would walk the border and work as seasonal workers, and other near destinations, including Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Egypt<sup>4</sup>.

The last massive emigration flow in Albania started with the disintegration of the communist regime in 1990. After 50 years of complete isolation from the world, where no external movement was allowed and the internal one was highly controlled, Albanians associated democracy and the Western world with free movement<sup>5</sup>. Since the early 1990s, however, there has been an extensive relocation of the Albanian population inside and outside the country, and for this reason many authors have named Albania '*a country on the move*'<sup>6</sup>. In terms of size, almost one forth of a total population of 3.5 million has left Albania in the last 17 years. A considerable part of these people has left the country permanently, while some have plans to return and some others migrate back and fourth.

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<sup>1</sup> Skanderbeg is an Albanian national hero, who fought against the Ottoman rule in Albania. He returned the Albanians back to Christian faith. After his death, however, Albania soon became part of the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity", *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004) S. 51 – 66: 51

<sup>3</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Albania: Looking Beyond Borders", *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (December 18, 2007)

<sup>4</sup> Calogero Carletto, Benjamin Davis, Marco Stampini, Stefano Trento and Alberto Zezza, "Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania", *ESA*, WP No. 04-13, (June 2004): 2  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/ae068e/ae068e00.htm> (June 5, 2008)

<sup>5</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Migration and Ethnicity in Albania: Synergies and Interdependencies", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume XI, Issue 1 (2004): 2

<sup>6</sup> Calogero Carletto, Benjamin Davis, Marco Stampini, and Alberto Zezza, "A Country on the Move: Internal Mobility and International Migration in Post-Communist Albania", *Processed, Fao*, Rome (2004)

Practically, between 1990 and 1996 more than 85% of the external movement took place to Greece and Italy, and the rest had for destination countries mainly the USA, Germany, UK, Canada, and Switzerland<sup>7</sup>. While the emigration to the second group of countries took place in small scales and has been mostly regular and permanent in nature, the emigration to Greece and Italy has been by and large irregular, especially in the early 1990s, and it has shown several temporal patterns. Namely, beside the permanent temporal pattern, it has shown long-term, short-term, and circular forms of emigration.

The immigration to Greece and Italy has been continuous and dynamic during the years following the fall of communism<sup>8</sup>. It has had two main peaks in 1991-1992 and in 1997-1998, corresponding to the collapse of the communist regime in the first period, and the pyramidal crisis in the second one. High unemployment, extreme poverty, physical insecurity, and a lack of hope have been the main push factors during these periods, which created a high migratory potential<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, the massive differences in living standards and wages between Albania and the two neighboring countries, combined with their geographical proximity, and relatively lax border controls, accounted for very strong pull factors and encouraged people to overcome the psychological obstacles and to create the vast migration flows of the last two decades<sup>10</sup>.

Italy and Greece were the immediate receivers of this emigration masses and reacted to the phenomenon, by restricting their immigration laws and developing militarized bordering policies. However, the Albanian emigration was untamable and in less than a decade the Albanians became the largest group of immigrants from a single country in both Italy and Greece. For the moment the Albanian immigrants make up nearly 65 % of all

<sup>7</sup> Nevila Konica, and Randall K. Filera, "Albanian Emigration: Causes and Consequences", CERGE-EI Working Paper 181, Prague (September 2005): 4

<sup>8</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Albania: Looking Beyond Borders", *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (December 18, 2007)

<sup>9</sup> See: Dhori Kule, Ahmet Mançellari, Harry Papapanagos, Stefan Qirici, and Peter Sanfey, "During Transition: Evidence from Micro Data", *ISSN 1466-0814*, April 2000

<sup>10</sup> Nevila Konica, and Randall K. Filera, "Albanian Emigration: Causes and Consequences", CERGE-EI Working Paper 181, Prague (September 2005): 4



immigrants in Greece, which makes for a very distinctive feature, as in no other country is there such a concentration of a single ethnic immigrant group. In Italy the Albanians make up 13.6% of all immigrants<sup>11</sup>, leaving behind even the Moroccan immigration, which has an older tradition of immigrating to Italy.

After this overview of the Albanian post-communist emigration, I will introduce the distinctive patterns it developed in the two neighboring countries. Specifically, the main differences are in the size and form of immigration. Other differences among the immigrants in Italy and Greece include their legal status, financial situation, educational level, and adapting degree in the hosting societies. The first and the most distinctive difference in the immigration patterns is quantitative, meaning that the majority of all the people who have left Albania, around 70%, did so to Greece, and a smaller fraction of 15% left to Italy<sup>12</sup>.

Secondly, the Albanian immigration in Italy has more of a permanent or long-term form, while in Greece it is mostly temporary or circular in nature. The next distinctive feature concerns the legal status of the immigrants, being that in the first years of the 1990s the ratio of irregular<sup>13</sup> immigrants to regular ones was 40 to 1 in Greece and 2 to 1 in Italy<sup>14</sup>.

Other differences between the two main receiving countries concern the economic sphere, or more specifically the financial and skill composition of the immigrants and their occupational patterns in the host countries. Practically, those leaving to Greece have been comparatively poorer and less skilled and come mostly from rural areas compared to those leaving to Italy, who are marginally more skilled, better off financially and come from the

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<sup>11</sup> Giovanna Zincone, "Main Features of Italian Immigration Flows and Stock", *Fieri*, (November 2006): 3 [http://www.fieri.it/ktml2/files/uploads/servizi/schede%20paese/easy%20italy\\_15\\_12\\_06.pdf](http://www.fieri.it/ktml2/files/uploads/servizi/schede%20paese/easy%20italy_15_12_06.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Nevila Konica, and Randall K. Filera, "Albanian Emigration: Causes and Consequences", CERGE-EI Working Paper 181, Prague (September 2005): 4

<sup>13</sup> The terms illegal and irregular will be used interchangeably.

<sup>14</sup> This was the ratio in 1997 before the first immigration law in Greece. See: Russell King and Julie Vullnetari, "Migration and Development in Albania", *Sussex Centre For Migration Research*, Working Paper, C5 (December 2003): 28

costal and urban areas of Albania<sup>15</sup>. Besides, the employment rate of the Albanian immigrants is the same compared to the national rate in Italy<sup>16</sup>, while experiencing higher rates than other immigrant communities in Greece.

Another interesting observation is that while Albanian immigrants have similar occupations in both receiving countries, there is more employment in the tourism sector in Greece<sup>17</sup>, and much less in a seasonal sector such as tourism, in fact it is not mentioned in any article that Albanian immigrants in Italy are widely occupied in this sector. Besides, another difference can be noticed in the way the Albanians immigrants have adapted themselves to the receiving societies. Practically, they have shown features of integration in Italy, while the ones residing in Greece have mostly assimilated by changing their religion, names and customs.

Beside the differences in immigration patterns among the two neighboring countries, there are also differences within each of them, from one period to another. Specifically, in the second decade of the Albanian immigration there has been more movement to Italy, bringing the ratio between immigration accumulations in Greece and Italy from 5:1 close to 3:1<sup>18</sup>. After 1999, the ratio of irregular immigrants also changed in favor of legal migration, and by 2003 there were 160,000 legal immigrants out of 200,000 in Italy, and 300,000 out of 600,000 in Greece<sup>19</sup>. Another changing feature is the source regions of the later immigrants to Greece, which has shifted to the rural parts of the mountain region of Albania from the previous rural central and southern regions<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> See: "Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007)

<sup>16</sup> Flavia Piperno, "From Albania to Italy: Formation and Basic Features of a Binational Migration System", CeSPI, (May 2002): 13

<sup>17</sup> "Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007): 59

<sup>18</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Albania: Looking Beyond Borders", *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (May 12, 2008)

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*

<sup>20</sup> "Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007): 2

To sum up, there exist differences both between Greece and Italy and within each of them during the last two decades of Albanian emigration. The differences between the two main destination countries can be summarized in four main dimensions. First, in terms of its size, there are much more emigrants going to Greece than Italy; second, in terms of period of immigration, meaning the emigration to Greece has been primarily circular or temporary, compared to permanent and long-term in Italy. Next, there are differences in the status of the immigrants; the ratio of illegal immigrants to legal ones has been higher in Greece than in Italy. Fourth, the regions where the emigration originates from are the central and southern rural areas for Greece, and coastal and urban for Italy. The differences within each of the countries, in different time periods, involve the shift of the illegal and legal migration from primarily illegal in the 1990s to mostly legal in the second decade, and a shift in the source regions of emigration to Greece from the rural southern and central to the rural mountain areas.

While there are all these differences in the Albanian immigration to Italy and Greece, the pull factors exercised by them are relatively similar and in certain respects they show to be stronger for Italy. The similar pull factors regard the geographical vicinity, form of economy, labor markets and previous emigration experience of Italy and Greece. While looking at the Albanians' perceptions of these two countries, and the financial returns, Italy scores better than Greece, and as a result it would be expected more immigration to Italy.

Let us see in more detail the pull force exercised by the two neighboring countries of Albania. Starting with the geographical vicinity, both Greece and Italy are only a couple of hours of sea or land travel distance away from Albania. The Italian coast is only one hour away by speedboat and no more than 7 or 8 hours by a normal boat from the Albanian ports of Vlore and Durres. On the other hand, Greece was as close as Italy by sea from Saranda, a city in the southern Albania, and just a night walk through the mountains. In addition to that, Italy

and Greece have similar labor markets concerning their very high rates of informal economy and their need for cheap immigrant labor, induced by the large reliance on the small medium enterprises and the agricultural and tourism sectors.

Moreover, when looking at the perceptions of Albanians considering the two neighboring countries, it could be expected that the size of Albanians going to Italy would be higher than those going to Greece. There is a wide consensus in the literature<sup>21</sup> concerning the preferences and perceptions of the Albanian citizens concerning the two main destination countries. Italy has been far more preferred than Greece in terms of what it represents, its cultural vicinity, language affinity, and bilateral relations with Albania. Italy so far has represented the west and is seen as the ‘door’<sup>22</sup> or the close ‘America’<sup>23</sup> for the Albanian citizens.

On the other hand, Greece and Albania have had problematic relations with each other, especially after the displacement of thousands of Albanians from Çameria in 1945. During communism, Greece was portrayed as the “bad” neighbor with irredentist intentions towards Albania<sup>24</sup>. Further more, recent studies carried out on the Albanians perceptions of the neighboring countries portray Italy in a more positive light than Greece<sup>25</sup>. These differences are sharper in urban-costal areas, and friendlier in rural-southern and rural-mountain areas, showing a correlation with the main destination of emigrants from these regions.

In terms of linguistic affinity, many Albanians have a good knowledge of Italian language, developed while watching Italian TV stations secretly from the communist regime.

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<sup>21</sup> See the works on Albanian emigration of: Kosta Barjaba, Russell King, Julie Vullnetari, Martin Baldwin-Edwards, Edwards

<sup>22</sup> Russell King and Julie Vullnetari, “Migration and Development in Albania”, *Sussex Centre For Migration Research*, Working Paper, C5 (December 2003): 29

<sup>23</sup> Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 7

<sup>24</sup> Louis Zanga, “A New Phase In Greek-Albanian Relations”, Free Europe Research, RAD Background, Report/233Radio (1987) <http://www.osa.ceu.hu/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/4-4-9.shtml>

<sup>25</sup> These were the result of a market study conducted by the Institute for Development Research and Alternatives (IDRA) in rural and urban parts of Albania, for a private company in 2007.

This practice was more in the costal part of Albania, and it allowed many citizens to learn the Italian language, get familiar with the Italian society and life, and perceive the western world through it. Thus, it seems logical that Albanian citizens with acknowledge of the Italian language and society would be more inclined to go there rather than going to Greece.

Next, the most noticeable difference regards the income disparity between Greece and Italy. Practically, the normal wages and the living standard in Italy were nearly twice as high as in Greece in the early 90s<sup>26</sup>. Although, traveling illegally to Italy was more expensive than traveling to Greece many Albanian citizens were aware of the fact that working for a couple of months in Italy would pay for their travel costs, and there would be higher financial returns for the following months or years<sup>27</sup>. Besides, according to the contemporary economics of labor<sup>28</sup>, the decision where to emigrate depends both on the costs and the financial returns. Nevertheless, the Albanian external migrants were primarily directed towards Greece, and to a lesser extend towards Italy.

To conclude, Albanian massive emigration has made for a unique case in the post communist Europe due to its size and intensity. It has been primarily an economically driven migration, with high rates of illegality directed mainly at Italy and Greece. While the Albanian immigration in the two main destination countries has had similar features, it has also revealed some distinctive patterns. Eventually, in the presence of similar pull factors from Greece and Italy, it seems rather puzzling why and how the variation in the size, form, legal status, occupational form, source regions in the sending country, and the residing areas in the destination countries developed in the two main routes of immigration, Albania-Greece and Albania-Italy.

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<sup>26</sup> <http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/Dialog/Saveshow.asp>

<sup>27</sup> It is common knowledge among the Albanian emigrants.

<sup>28</sup> Ampbell R. MsConnell and Stanley L. Brue, *Contemporary Labor Economic: Mobility, Migration, and Efficiency*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (McGraw-Hill, 1986)

## CHAPTER 2 – THEORY: THE “SURVIVAL”<sup>29</sup> MIGRATION

### 2.1 The debate

Given the importance and extent of the Albanian post-communist migration, many recent studies have been conducted on the issue of migration outflows from Albania and migration inflows to Italy and Greece. Overall, there are two main approaches to the phenomenon of the Albanian emigration, namely the sending and the receiving countries' perspectives. Those who have taken the first approach have mostly focused on the push factors and the characteristics of the Albanian emigration. On the other hand, those who have taken the second approach have scrutinized the situation of the Albanian immigrants once they are in the destination country.

The first one is taken by Barjaba<sup>30</sup>, Vullnetari<sup>31</sup>, King<sup>32</sup>, Kule et al<sup>33</sup>, Castaldo et al<sup>34</sup>, and Carletto et al<sup>35</sup>, who have looked at the problem from the sending country's perspective and focused on the causes of emigration, on the remittances and their effect on the development of Albania, and on why people decide to leave the country. They unanimously show that poverty, low expectancies and the lack of hope for a better future in Albania, high unemployment and insecurity for their own life, combined with geographical proximity and

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<sup>29</sup> Julie Vullnetari, “Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review”, *IMISCOE Working Paper* No. 18 (September 2007): 40

<sup>30</sup> Barjarba, Kosta. “Migration and Ethnicity in Albania: Synergies and Interdependencies”, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume XI, Issue 1 (2004)

<sup>31</sup> Julie Vullnetari, “Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review”, *IMISCOE Working Paper* No. 18 (September 2007)

<sup>32</sup> Russell King, 'Across the Sea and Over the Mountains: Documenting Albanian Migration', *Scottish Geographical Journal*, 119(3) (2003)

<sup>33</sup> Dhori Kule, Ahmet Mançellari, Harry Papapanagos, Stefan Qirici, and Peter Sanfey, “During Transition: Evidence from Micro Data”, *ISSN 1466-0814*, April 2000

<sup>34</sup> Adriana Castaldo, Julie Litchfield, and Barry Reilly. “Who is most likely to migrate from Albania? Evidence from the Albania Living Standards Measurement Survey”, *Sussex Centre for Migration Research WP*, Brighton BN1 9SJ (June 2005)

<sup>35</sup> Calogero Carletto, Benjamin Davis, Marco Stampini, and Alberto Zezza, “A Country on the Move: Internal Mobility and International Migration in Post-Communist Albania”, *Processed, Fao*, Rome (2004)

much higher living standards of Italy and Greece, are the main reasons which push people to emigrate<sup>36</sup>.

When it comes to explaining the decision to migrate, King, Barjaba, and Vullnetari agree on the point that the new economics of labor migration, which takes households as the unit of analysis, is the best approach to understanding the Albanian emigration<sup>37</sup>. This approach assumes that households diversify their labor portfolios to control risks coming from structural unemployment or income shortage, by sending members to work abroad<sup>38</sup>. Indeed, this approach is quite suitable to the Albanian society, considering:

- the very strong family ties;
- the patriarchal nature of the Albanian families, where male is the breadwinner;
- the very low number of females emigrating for reasons other than family reunification; and
- the large and continuous remittances sent to families back in Albania

Therefore, households will be my starting point when explaining the emigration path and the immigration patterns in the two neighboring countries.

The receiving countries' approach is taken by Freeman<sup>39</sup>, Baldwin-Edwards<sup>40</sup>, Bonifazi and Sabatino<sup>41</sup>, Hernández-Coss et al<sup>42</sup>, Piperno<sup>43</sup>, and Perlmutter<sup>44</sup>, who have

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<sup>36</sup> Dhori Kule, Ahmet Mançellari, Harry Papapanagos, Stefan Qirici, and Peter Sanfey, "During Transition: Evidence from Micro Data", ISSN 1466-0814, April 2000

<sup>37</sup> See: Julie Vullnetari, "Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review", *IMISCOE* Working Paper No. 18 (September 2007)

<sup>38</sup> Douglas S. Massey, "International Migration at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: The Role of the State", *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2. (June 1999): 305  
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0098-7921%28199906%2925%3A2%3C303%3AIMATDO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-%23>

<sup>39</sup> Gary P. Freeman, "Migration Policy and Politics in the Receiving States", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4. (Winter, 1992)  
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28199224%2926%3A4%3C1144%3AMPAPIT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H>

<sup>40</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity", *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004)

<sup>41</sup> Corrado Bonifazi and Dante Sabatino, "Albanian Migration to Italy: What Official Data and Survey Results Can Reveal", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 29 (2003)

<sup>42</sup> Raúl Hernández-Coss, José de Luna Martínez, Andrea Amatuzio, Kamil Borowik and Federico Lagi, "The Italy – Albania Remittance Corridor; Shifting from the Physical Transfer of Cash to a Formal Money Transfer System", Presented at the Conference on Remittances: An Opportunity for Growth, Bari, Italy (March 3-4, 2006)

<sup>43</sup> Flavia Piperno, "From Albania to Italy: Formation and Basic Features of a Binational Migration System", *CeSPI*, (May 2002)

viewed the matter from the receiving countries' perspective and focused on the ways the Albanian immigrants have integrated in the host countries, the impact these inflows have had on their domestic economic, social and political dimensions of the receiving countries, and the differences between the immigrant groups. They find out that the Albanian immigrants in Italy tend to have a higher concentration in small towns and in the southern part, compared to other immigrants, who have a higher tendency to settle in the big cities and in the north<sup>45</sup>. On the other hand, the Albanian immigrants in Greece tend to settle in Athens and major cities or in the region bordering Albania, compared to other immigrants who mostly settle in the urban centers and the international port of Patras, reflecting their plans to use Greece as bridge to the west, rather than a final destination<sup>46</sup>.

Next, Iosifides et al<sup>47</sup>, and Bonifazi and Sabatino<sup>48</sup> write that Albanian emigrants show slight differences in their occupation figures compared to other immigrant groups. In Greece the unemployment is higher among Albanians than other groups<sup>49</sup>, probably reflecting the very large percentage of Albanian immigrants and the fact that they are very badly represented by the media. On the other hand, Albanian immigrants in Italy are underrepresented in the self-employment figures, showing a less entrepreneurial attitude compared to other nationalities<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Ted Perlmutter, "The Politics of Proximity: The Italian Response to the Albanian Crisis", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1. (Spring 1998)

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28199821%2932%3A1%3C203%3ATPOPTI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G>

<sup>45</sup> Flavia Piperno, "From Albania to Italy: Formation and Basic Features of a Binational Migration System", *CeSPI*, (May 2002): 8

<sup>46</sup> Theodoros Iosifides, Thanasis Kizos, Elektra Petracou, Ekaterini Malliotaki, Konstantina Katsimantou and Elena Sarri, "Socio-Economic Characteristics Of Immigrants In Western Greece Region: Urban – Rural Continuum Or Divide?", *Migration Letters*, Volume 3, No. 2 (October 2006): 8

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*

<sup>48</sup> Corrado Bonifazi and Dante Sabatino, "Albanian Migration to Italy: What Official Data and Survey Results Can Reveal", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 29 (2003)

<sup>49</sup> Theodoros Iosifides, Thanasis Kizos, Elektra Petracou, Ekaterini Malliotaki, Konstantina Katsimantou and Elena Sarri, "Socio-Economic Characteristics Of Immigrants In Western Greece Region: Urban – Rural Continuum Or Divide?", *Migration Letters*, Volume 3, No. 2 (October 2006): 14

<sup>50</sup> Corrado Bonifazi and Dante Sabatino, "Albanian Migration to Italy: What Official Data and Survey Results Can Reveal", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 29 (2003): 981



Baldwin-Edwards<sup>51</sup> puts emphasis on the treatment of the Albanians by the Greek authorities and claims that the border control procedures by Italy and Greece have transformed the Albanian migration to a permanent one. On the other hand, Albahari<sup>52</sup> looks at the death rates on the Mediterranean sea and brings evidence of the maltreatments of the illegal immigrants by the border guards, and the collaboration of the corrupted authorities with the smuggling networks.

These studies have been mostly descriptive, reflecting the fact that this phenomenon is a very recent one and still needs to be documented, and they have focused on the individual migration routes, meaning that they have analyzed either the Albania-Italy route or the Albania-Greece one. Important information revealed by these approaches, which will be widely used in this thesis in the following chapters, is the documentation of costs varieties, network types, occupational types, and contingencies of the different emigration routes from Albania to Greece and Italy.

Overall, these approaches and studies inform us about the reasons people decide to leave Albania, their characteristics, and the different patterns they develop when immigrating to Greece or Italy. However, they do not provide an interactive comparative framework which could explain why the Albanian emigration followed the above mentioned path, and how the interaction of the pull factors from the two main receiving countries with the domestic push factors in Albania has shaped the Greek and Italian immigration patterns in the post-communist period.

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<sup>51</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Patterns of Migration in the Balkans", *MMO*, Working Paper No.9 (January 2006): 10, [http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo\\_working\\_papers/mmo\\_wp9.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo_working_papers/mmo_wp9.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> Maurizio Albahari, "Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe", *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

## 2.2 Framework

As the aim of the present thesis is to fill the above identified gap, I find it necessary to introduce some theoretical tools which will set the basic concepts to be used in the interactive framework. The main factors shaping the path of international migration are the push and pull factors and the networks, with the first two being the most important when an external migration starts off, and with the network becoming more and more important as the immigration flows mature<sup>53</sup>. This means that once the emigration has started and passes a certain threshold, it becomes a self-perpetuating process due to the creation of the social structure needed to keep further migration going<sup>54</sup>.

As the Albanian migration started from scratch in 1990, the networks did not play a decisive role in the paths selected. Rather, it was the pull-and-push factors that determined the first flows and set the path for future networks, which played the role of an amplifier of the existing trends. Thus, I will focus primarily on the pull and push factors as the determinants of the flows, and consider the networks as a perpetuator in the process.

The push factors represent pressure in the home country, and emigration plays the role of a ‘safety valve’, which relieves the pressure<sup>55</sup>. The pressure could be created by economic or not-economic factors<sup>56</sup>, such as famine, structural economic problems and crisis, unemployment, or persecution, insecurity, bad education and health-care systems. Whenever these factors combine to create a high pressure and unrest, there is a very high potential for

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<sup>53</sup> See: Wayne A. Cornelius and Marc R. Rosenblum, “Immigration and Politics”, *Center for Comparative Immigration Studies*, University Of California–San Diego, Working Paper 105 (October 2004): 5; Douglas S. Massey, “International Migration at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: The Role of the State”, *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2. (June 1999): 303  
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0098-7921%28199906%2925%3A2%3C303%3AIMATDO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-%23>

<sup>54</sup> *ibid*

<sup>55</sup> Michael Wintle, “Push-Factors in Emigration: The Case of the Province Of Zeeland in the Nineteenth Century”, *Population Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3, JSTOR (November 1992): 525

<sup>56</sup> Philip Martin and Gottfried Zürcher, “Managing Migration: The Global Challenge”, *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (March 2008): 4, <http://www.prb.org/bulletins/63.1migration.pdf>

emigration, and the realization of it will largely depend on the possibilities to emigrate, while the path and the patterns will depend on the pull factors and the existing networks.

On the other hand, the pull factors corresponding to the potential receiving countries can be conceptualized in terms of the labor market, the political stability, living standards, wage differentials, traveling routes, and the immigration law and policies, i.e. whether they are accommodative for immigrants or not. Though, just having more employment opportunities or higher wages does not necessarily make a country the destination of the potential emigration from another country. In case of rational potential emigrants, it would be expected that the decision to migrate will take into account the available alternatives and choose the one which gives the highest return or has the highest probability to get realized<sup>57</sup>. At the same time, while the highest financial returns will depend on the labor market and the economic situation of the receiving countries, the probabilities of entering and living there will be determined by the immigration policies of these countries<sup>58</sup>.

Indeed, it is widely believed that the receiving countries' immigration policies shape considerably the patterns of those who can enter and live in the country<sup>59</sup>. As far as the immigration policies are concerned, they can be thought of in two main dimensions: an internal-external dimension; and explicit-implicit one<sup>60</sup>. The external-internal dimension is concerned with the immigration policies controlling the entry and the treatment of the immigrants who are already in the host country. The explicit-implicit dimension distinguishes between openly stated public policies and hidden or passive control mechanisms and systematic malpractices of the public policies.

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<sup>57</sup> Douglas S. Massey, "Social Structure, Household Strategies, and the Cumulative Causation of Migration", *Population Index*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Spring 1990) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3644186>

<sup>58</sup> Eytan Meyers, "Theories of International Immigration Policy-A Comparative Analysis", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4. (Winter, 2000) <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28200024%2934%3A4%3C1245%3ATOIIPC%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>

<sup>59</sup> Grete Brochmann, "Control in Immigration Policies", *The New Geography of European Migrations*, ed. Russell King, (London: Belhaven Press, 1993)

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 105

By external immigration policies we understand the criteria set by the host countries to select and admit the foreign citizens, who can be permanent, temporary, refugees or illegal immigrants<sup>61</sup>. These criteria are implemented through asylum granting, visa schemes and border control policies. Border controlling policy is considered as a very important aspect that could also get militarized<sup>62</sup>. The internal component is related to the immigrants' policies, which are concerned with the way the resident immigrants are treated once they are in the host country, being the inclusion in the labor market, employer sanctions for hiring illegal immigrants, the housing conditions, internal surveillance, welfare state, health policies, and educational opportunities<sup>63</sup>. On the other hand, the implicit-explicit dimension differentiates and puts emphasis on the effects of the hidden or passive control mechanisms and systematic malpractices of the openly stated public policies.

After having introduced the necessary tools to think of the international migration's triggering and feeding factors, I will introduce the framework which will be used to analyze the path the Albanian emigration has followed, as well as the interaction of the pull factors from the two main receiving countries with the domestic push factors in Albania, and the way they shaped the Greek and Italian immigration patterns in the last two decades.

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<sup>61</sup> Eytan Meyers, "Theories of International Immigration Policy-A Comparative Analysis", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4. (Winter, 2000): 1246, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28200024%2934%3A4%3C1245%3ATOIIPC%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>

<sup>62</sup> Grete Brochmann, "Control in Immigration Policies", *The New Geography of European Migrations*, ed. Russell King, (London: Belhaven Press, 1993), 109.

<sup>63</sup> See: Eytan Meyers, "Theories of International Immigration Policy-A Comparative Analysis", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4. (Winter, 2000) <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28200024%2934%3A4%3C1245%3ATOIIPC%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>; *ibid*

<i>Dependent Variable</i>	The difference in the patterns of Albanian migration to Italy and Greece (introduced in the <i>Background</i> chapter).
<i>Control Variables:</i>	(1) labor markets (2) informal economies (3) e/immigration histories of Italy and Greece (4) asylum granting policies (5) media stigmatization
<i>Independent variables</i>	(1) propensity to emigrate of Albanian individuals (2) border permeability (3) external and internal immigration policies of the host countries (4) streams of the Albanian emigration

### 2.3 The Model

The model I will use to explain the patterns of Albanian migration to Italy and Greece (the dependent variable) will be composed of four independent variables, namely:

- (1) Potential emigrants:
  - a. the households' or individuals' propensity to migrate externally, and
  - b. their economic situation
- (2) Border permeability:
  - a. visas, and,
  - b. border control
- (3) External and internal policies of the host countries;
- (4) The time factor. (cross-tabulating variable)
  - a. Networks availability, and
  - b. Predominant form of emigration

The variables are operationalized as follows. The first variable, namely the potential emigrants, will focus on the characteristics and needs of the potential emigrants. It will measure the propensity and emergence of the individuals to migrate, and their financial abilities, which will determine the routes they can or can not take. The households' or individuals' propensity to migrate externally will be captured in the desire of people to leave the country and for how long, under the conditions of inequality within Albania and between

Albania and the two main receiving countries. Next, the financial situation of the households or individuals will be derived by the poverty index of the different regions of Albania.

The next two variables regard the external and internal immigration policies, both of them encompassing the implicit dimension beside the explicit one. The aim of introducing these variables is to capture the existing probability for the potential emigrants to reach a destination where they can fulfill their needs. The border permeability can be thought of as determining the number of people who can pass through, and the immigration policies can be thought of as the possibility for immigrants to realize their goals of immediate financial returns, or living for longer periods in the host country, and the degree to attract future immigrants.

The border permeability variable is to be conceptualized as the border control capabilities and efficiency, visa issuing annually from the Italian and Greek embassies in Albania, the possibility of several trials when illegally passing the borders, and the costs and risks associated with it. The external and internal immigration policies include (1) the treatment procedures by the police once the immigrants are in the host country, meaning the checking process at the work-places, and in the transportation vehicles for irregular migrants and the deporting procedures; (2) the immigration law of the receiving countries, i.e. whether it allows for immigrants to become legal in the country or not. If it does, then it will be analyzed if it allows for acquiring citizenship, the time required before accruing it, the requirements for working permit, and the family reunification policies; if there are any employer sanctions, the housing conditions, internal surveillance, welfare state, health policies, and educational opportunities.

Finally, the time variable will be divided into four different periods, which coincide with the four Albanian emigration streams as suggested by Barjaba<sup>64</sup>. The first one is the

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<sup>64</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Albania: Looking beyond Borders", *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (May 12, 2008)

1991-1992 stream, which was completely uncontrolled and about 300,000 people left Albania; the second one is the 1992-1996 stream, characterized by similar numbers of emigrants as the first one, even though there was a temporary improvement of the economy and better border controls. The third one is the 1996 -1997 stream, right away after the collapse of the pyramid schemes, which led to the emigration of approximately 70,000 people within a few months. The last stream, from 1998-to date, is characterized by a steady flow of about 50,000 people a year, following a gradual progress in economic, political, and social situations and improved immigration policies in the two major receiving countries, Greece and Italy.

This categorization is helpful to grasp two different analytical components of the Albanian emigration. First, it helps distinguish between the first phase, where there was no network present, and the other three phases, where networks played a very important role in determining the path of future emigrants. Second, it helps distinguish between the first three streams, where the emigration was mostly illegal, and the last period when it became primarily legal due to regularization programs and the introduction of more accommodative immigration laws in the two main hosting countries.

The hypothesis which explains the patterns of the Albanian external migration to Italy and Greece runs on three steps, building on each other and having different implication for different time periods. The first step suggests that the decision where to migrate will depend on the households' propensity to migrate, their financial status, their previous experience with migration and their networks availability. Basically, in the absence of networks (typically the first stream), the higher the propensity to emigrate and the worse the financial situation, the more it will lead the households to more risky and cheaper emigration routes. When networks are present or there has been some previous experience with emigration, then the networks will define the emigration route by offsetting the risks and costs associated with it.

The second step assumes that border permeability, where legal and illegal ways of crossing it are included, will determine the possibility of actually entering the destination country, and will consequently determine the size of emigration to Italy and Greece. Meaning, the higher the number of issued visas (the legal route), the laxer the border patrolling or the higher the number of times the emigrants can retry, the lower the death risk, and the easier/cheaper to acquire fake documents (illegal routes), the higher the number of the people who will be able to cross to the other side.

The third proposition builds on the previous ones and assumes that the treatment of immigrants in the host country, combined with the risks and costs of crossing the border again, will affect people's decisions on how long to stay in the receiving country and whether to return home or not. The third proposition could be conceptualized as follows:

<i>Form of immigration</i>		<b>External - (Border Permeability)</b>	
		<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Internal Policies</b>	<b>Accommodative</b>	Decision will be voluntary and depend mostly on other variables (Greece after 1998)	Long-term or permanent (Italy and other western countries)
	<b>Non-accommodative</b>	Short-term or circular (Greece before 1998)	No considerable migration will take place (assuming that there are other routes)

The assumption is that if there is continuous check for illegal immigrants in the places they live (in work places, in transportation vehicles, in specific neighbors and etc.) followed by immediate deportation, and if there exists no way of becoming legal combined with low costs of re-entering the host country, then short term or circular migration will be more probable to take place. This is the case of the immigration to Greece before 1998. In the case where the internal policies are accommodative and the border permeability is high, then it is expected that the time of migration will depend on other variables, such as labor market, and



others. This is represented by the post-1998 period in Greece, when the legal ways to live and work in the country were introduced and the ratio of permanent or long term immigration to Greece increased<sup>65</sup>.

On the other hand, if there is no serious control inside the host country and there exist ways of becoming a legal immigrant, combined with high costs and low probabilities of re-entering the receiving country again, long term or permanent migration will take place. This is the case of the immigration of Albanians to Italy during the whole post-communist period. In the last alternative, where the border permeability is low and the internal policies are non-accommodative, than very low rates of emigration are expected to take place.

This model does not assume a single direction causal relation, but rather a bi-directional one. This means that, it is not only the immigration policies which determine the type of immigration that will take place, but also the needs of the individuals. Practically, those households/individuals who aim to leave Albania permanently will target host countries which offer them the possibility to stay and live there legally and which offer higher financial returns in the long run. On the other hand, those who want to emigrate for a short time for immediate financial returns will not be primarily concerned with the immigration policies of the receiving country, and will choose a route which offers the highest returns in a short period.

Finally, the model assumes that the policies followed by one of the receiving countries, in this case Italy and Greece, have a direct effect on their own immigration patterns and also in the emigration patterns of the sending country, Albania. Besides, the model also assumes that these policies have an indirect effect, and as a result at a smaller scale, at each other's immigration patterns. So the hypothesis is that in the presence of a very high emigration pressure from inside Albania, and very restrictive immigration policies from one

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<sup>65</sup> See: Julie Vullnetari, "Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review", *IMISCOE* Working Paper No. 18 (September 2007)

country will push the potential emigrants to try the other country, where the border is more permeable or the internal situation is more accommodative.

## **2.4 Control variables**

The labor markets, size of informal economies, previous e/immigration histories of the receiving countries, asylum granting policies, and the way the immigrants are perceived in the host societies, for which media stigmatization could be taken as a proxy, are very important pull factors which could shape the immigration taking place in the receiving countries<sup>66</sup>. As I will show below, these factors are very similar for both Italy and Greece.

To start off with, the labor market variable refers to the segment where immigrants can get employed, meaning the low-skill or informal sectors. Both Italy and Greece rely heavily on small-medium or family enterprises, which themselves are in need of cheap immigrant labor and where is difficult for the authorities to trace the illegal workers. These sectors mainly include the agricultural, artisan, tourism, construction, house-service industries, and elders-maintaining services<sup>67</sup>. Besides, the employers in Italy and Greece have the same interest in having immigrant labor, and in both countries they request from the government to allow more immigrants in the country<sup>68</sup>.

As far as the explicit border control policies are concerned, after 1990 both countries, following the flood from the post-communist countries, militarized their borders and intensified the control procedures, by employing a large amount of guards and investing

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<sup>66</sup> See: Maria Siadima, "Immigration in Greece During The 1990's: An Overview", (PhD diss., King's College London, September 2001): 7-8; Flavia Piperno, "From Albania to Italy: Formation and Basic Features of a Binational Migration System", CeSPI, (May 2002): 6

<sup>67</sup> See: Amanda Levinson, "The Regularisation of Unauthorized Migrants: Literature Survey and Country Case Studies. Regularisation programmes in Greece", *Centre on Migration, Policy and Society*, (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2005)

<sup>68</sup> Kimberly Hamilton, "Italy's Southern Exposure", *Migration Policy Institute* (May 2002) <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/print.cfm?ID=121>; Maria Siadima, "Immigration in Greece During The 1990's: An Overview", (PhD diss., King's College London, September 2001): 8

heavily in military equipments<sup>69</sup>. This border militarization was a new phenomenon in the history of Italy and Greece, taking in consideration that until the 1980s they were both emigration countries and needed no restriction on entry.

Both Greece and Italy have had similar asylum granting attitudes, meaning that they have granted very low numbers of grants and these have been proportional and similar in both countries<sup>70</sup>. Finally, the media in both neighboring countries has heavily stigmatized the Albanian immigrants since the early 90s portraying them as criminals and dangerous individuals<sup>71</sup>. Only lately there has been a turn on the media, reflecting the presence of a majority of hardworking and integrated Albanians.

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<sup>69</sup> Maurizio Albahari, "Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe", *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/countrydata/data.cfm>

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*

## CHAPTER 3 – ELABORATION ON THE VARIABLES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

### ***3.1 Potential emigrants and potential destinations***

The aim of this subsection is to identify the potential emigrant groups in Albania in terms of their propensity to migrate and their economic situation. As mentioned before the households will be the unit of analysis. The assumption is that their economic situation will determine which route the emigrants can afford, while their reasons to leave Albania will further determine which country to choose. I argue that the decision Albanian emigrants on which country to go, will primarily depend on their possibilities to afford the trip, and secondly on their preferences on the destination countries.

#### **3.1.1 Propensity to migrate: who is about to leave?**

In general, there was a high pressure on every Albanian citizen to go abroad, induced by the 50 years long isolation from the world. During the communist regime Albania was an extremely isolated country and the Albanian state had denied to its citizens the most fundamental rights, such as holding a passport and traveling abroad<sup>72</sup>. To this is to be added also the context of a rigid mobility within Albania controlled by the state. There were only few people who could travel abroad and get introduced to the western culture and they were typically part of the elites. For all the rest it was almost impossible to travel abroad, thus, when the regime changed people were eager to go abroad.

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<sup>72</sup> Kosta Barjaba, and Russell King, “Introducing and Theorising Albanian Migration”, in King, R., Mai, N. and Schwandner-Sievers, S. (eds) *The New Albanian Migration*, (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 3, <http://books.google.hu/books?id=05Mw4-b9oN0C&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&dq=Introducing+and+theorising+Albanian+migration,&source=web&ots=l4DtUGUuKO&sig=Y5yaiM7sqivHZHZabEu0XGbsnFg&hl=hu#PPA2,M1>

However, the main factors making Albania a potentially high emigration country were the structural problems that developed after the change of regime in 1991, which put the Albanian households through very dire living conditions. Among the structural problems, the first and foremost has been the high unemployment combined with a very high rural concentration of the population and their high dependence on agriculture. Practically, after the collapse of communism more than 40% of the work force were laid off and given either a small assistance or sent into early retirement<sup>73</sup>, which under the circumstances of galloping inflation of 300% left many families with no income at all. Further more, in the rural areas, which made for almost 70% of the whole population in the early 90s<sup>74</sup>, the farmers were distributed very small and sometimes unworkable pieces of land, which could not produce enough to maintain a normal family, leaving out of discussion producing for trading.

An additional structural factor is the Albanian demography. Albania had experienced very high population growth rates after the 60s and still does at slightly lower rates<sup>75</sup>. This makes for a very peculiar characteristic of the Albanian population, where every year the amount of people who enter the workforce is much higher than those who get older and go out of it. Practically, with the cutting of jobs in the public sector in the early 90s and no significant compensation by creation of new workplaces in the private sector<sup>76</sup>, there have been increasing masses of young people unable to enter the job market in Albania.

Besides the economic push factors, there have been other non-economic reasons as well, namely the fear of persecution and physical insecurity in the early 90s and after the collapse of the pyramidal schemes in 1997, the need to reunite with family members already working and living abroad, and mainly the lack of hope for a better future in Albania. There is

<sup>73</sup> Kosta Barjaba, "Albania: Looking beyond Borders", *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (May 12, 2008)

<sup>74</sup> Though, for the moment the rural-urban divide is at levels of 57-43, the rural portion is very large. INSTAT

<sup>75</sup> INSTAT Albania

<sup>76</sup> "Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007)

ample of evidence of Albanian citizens having taken even the risk of death for themselves and their families, in order to escape the situation in Albania<sup>77</sup>. Albahari brings the words of a young Albanian immigrant in Italy saying that his life in Albania was not worth of living, so he crossed the sea illegally, even though he knew many people had died in the attempt<sup>78</sup>.

To sum up, while there existed a general high potential to migrate all over Albania. However, there were large parts of the population that needed immediate solution to the situation. Numerically, since 1990 around 40% of the work force have been unemployed and in need of an alternative to survive. In the rural areas, in the households that have many members, and among the young population the pressure is even higher<sup>79</sup>.

However, beside the *survival* push factors, there have been other factors which significantly affect people's decision to emigrate, such as: very low wages and bad working conditions compared to the west neighboring countries; lower living standards including the quality of the health services, insecurity, education possibilities, professional fulfillment, and the lack of hope for a better future (Figure 1).

### 3.1.2 Economic Situation: who can afford which route?

This aspect offers an insight on the economic situation of the Albanian households, with the aim of using it as a proxy for the route the Albanian emigrants can choose to leave the country. When looking at the Albanian poverty map throughout the last twenty years, it can be noticed that<sup>80</sup>:

- the urban areas are better off then the rural ones;

<sup>77</sup> See: Maurizio Albahari, "Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe", *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 29

<sup>79</sup> Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007)

<sup>80</sup> See: "Shqipëria: Tendencat E Varfërisë Dhe Pabarazisë, 2002-2005", INSTAT (2005)

- the southern region is better off than the coastal (south-western) and central ones, which themselves are better off than the mountain (north-eastern) region (Figure 2)

The same allocation is observed in terms of education and unemployment figures<sup>81</sup>. This categorization coincides with the emigration trends since the 90s, where it is noticed that in the first decade the rural southern and central parts of Albania were the source of immigrants to Greece, while the coastal part were the source of immigration in Italy (Figure 3). Lately, in the second decade of the Albanian post-communist emigration, there are noticed high rates of movement to Greece from the rural mountain region, and increased immigration to Italy and other Western European countries from the rural-central, rural-coastal areas, and the urban mountain region<sup>82</sup>.

These trends support the “inverted-U” hypothesis of Albanian emigration elaborated by Zezza et al<sup>83</sup>. This model assumes that the very poor households are unable to migrate internationally due to the costs associated with it, and only those families that are better off economically can afford to send their members abroad (Figure 4). Later on, as the economic situation improves, the very poor households can finally afford to migrate internationally, and those areas which experienced high outflows in the early 1990s show a decline.

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As mentioned before, the route chosen by the potential emigrants would depend on their propensity to migrate and their financial capabilities. By drawing on these variables, it follows that, in the first stream of Albanian emigration, those people living in the bordering regions with Italy and Greece and in the urban parts of Albania could afford to emigrate. Those living in the border regions could do so because of their proximity with the destination

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<sup>81</sup> See: “Poverty and Education in Albania: Who Benefits from Public Spending?”, World Bank, Human Development Sector Unit - Europe and Central Asia Region, Report No. 31983-AL (March 2005)

<sup>82</sup> “Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction”, World Bank, A Poverty Assessment, Report No. 40071- AL, (June 19, 2007)

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 4

countries, which implied lower costs and insight or knowledge of available routes. On the other hand those living in the urban areas were better off economically so they could afford paying for the trip. On the other hand, though the necessity to migrate could be higher in the mountain regions, their financial means to take the trip were scarce.

During the second stream, 1993-1996, the propensity to migrate decreased due to improvement of the economic and political situation in Albania, and the inflows of remittances from the members working abroad. In the same time the networks intensified and made it possible for poorer families, which usually were the relatives, neighbors, or acquaintances of those who emigrated in the first wave, to send members abroad. As a result in the second period the international migration would remain high on the same areas as in the first stream, and only small rates of emigration would take place from the poorest regions.

The third stream saw the outburst of another massive emigration, originating mostly from the regions that were heavily hit by the collapse of the pyramidal schemes<sup>84</sup>. There is an interesting twist to this occurrence. It should be noticed that the regions which were most severely hit by the financial crisis, were those with the highest figures of remittances<sup>85</sup>, meaning those with the highest emigration rates. The mountain regions would still continue to have a high propensity to migrate and scarce financial means to do it. So, the third stream was a reflection of the first two ones, but in an intensified and shorter form.

Finally, during the fourth stream, 1998-today, with the improvement of the economic situation in Albania, new potential emigrants and emigration routes emerged. Meaning, those living in the better off regions, southern, coastal and central areas, could now afford taking more expensive trips to countries which exercised high pulling force. On the other hand, those

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84 Charalambos Kasimis and Chryssa Kassimi, "Greece: A History of Migration", *Migration Information*, (June 2004) <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=228>

85 "Nje Vleresim i Tregut te Punes", World Bank, Report: 34597-AL (May 2006) [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/12/06/000310607\\_20061206143209/Rendered/INDEX/345970ALBANIAN1or0markets01PUBLIC10.txt](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/12/06/000310607_20061206143209/Rendered/INDEX/345970ALBANIAN1or0markets01PUBLIC10.txt)



from the mountain regions after experiencing a slow but continuous creation of networks and “improvement” of their financial situation could finally afford cheap ways to emigrate.

### **3.2 Border Permeability**

While, the first variable explains the potential size of emigrants, the border permeability variable is expected to determine who and how many can pass to the other side. The costs, risks, and the chances of crossing a border automatically select the potential people who can enter the host country. Indeed, many authors of international migration have noticed that it is not the destination that determines where to go, but the journey that results in a certain point of arrival”<sup>86</sup>.

There are two routes of crossing a border, a legal route and an illegal one, and together they determine the number of immigrants who enter a country. I suggest that analyzing the costs and risks associated with the immigration routes, and correlating it with the propensity and financial capabilities to migrate, should give us a better understanding of the Albanian post-communist emigration.

As far as the legal entries are concerned, they are measured by the number of the issued visas and the number of the citizenship granted. Barjaba has gathered evidence that the number of visas issued annually by the Greek embassy is almost 50% higher than the number of visas issued by the Italian embassy, 60.000-70.000 and 35.000-50.000 respectively<sup>87</sup>. These data seem to indicate that in terms of legal entry Greece has applied less restrictive entry policies than Italy, but when having a closer look at the data the pattern is reverted, since it can be noticed that in the 1990s, the visas issued by the Greek authorities were mainly going to ethnic Greek minorities in Albania, and only 10% of all the issued visas were granted to

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<sup>86</sup> Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 15

<sup>87</sup> Kosta Barjaba, “Albania: Looking beyond Borders”, *Migration Information*, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239> (May 12, 2008)

Albanian citizens<sup>88</sup>. It is an interesting fact that a considerable part of the people who took advantage of the liberal policies of the Greek authorities was of Albanian citizens who faked their birth documents, and who contributed to network creation for future flows<sup>89</sup>.

On the other hand, the illegal routes were taken by most of the Albanian emigrants<sup>90</sup> and they can not be easily or entirely controlled by the receiving countries, especially in moments of very strong immigration pressures. The illegal routes mainly include crossing the border without documents or by using fake ones. Both, Greece and Italy intensified considerably the border control since the beginning of the 1990s, by militarizing them and by investing heavily on control means, aiming at decreasing the illegal entries at minimum<sup>91</sup>. The effect of the border control policies had other consequences as well. While, discouraging the outsiders to enter Italy and Greece, they also discouraged the inside illegal immigrants not to turn back to their home country, as they could not have the chance to enter again.

Yet, the illegal routes from Albania to Italy and Greece due to existing differences on the borders developed different risks and costs. The border differences refer to their physical form and the possibilities of controlling them, meaning sea and land borders. Basically, Italy shares only a sea border with Albania, while Greece shares both a sea and a land border. The implications of the physical characteristics of these borders can be understood as follows:

- the land border can be better patrolled from the police than the sea one;
- the costs of crossing the land border are very low as they include only the physical energy of walking for a night and a symbolic amount of money for the guidance;
- the sea route involves relatively high costs and the risks of being drowned in the sea are high as well;

<sup>88</sup> Sonila Boçi, “Pakica Greke Në Shqipërinë Paskomuniste (1990-1996)”, *Studime Historike*, (Tirane 2003) [www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=F21859BD-3353-43CF-BDCD-E62572DD0B1C](http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=F21859BD-3353-43CF-BDCD-E62572DD0B1C)

<sup>89</sup> The Greek authorities have declared no data on this matter, as they consider it an issue of national security. See: Martin Baldwin-Edwards, “Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity”, *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004)

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 53

<sup>91</sup> Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

As a result the chances for the immigrants to make it to the destination in the first attempt are lower when using the land routes compared to the sea ones. However, when taking in consideration the fact that the costs of crossing the land border are very low; most of the Albanian immigrants after they are deported by the police retry crossing the border again, and eventually these leads to considerably higher chances of reaching the destination after several attempts. On the other hand, while the sea line is more difficult to be guarded and offers higher chances of reaching the destination in the first attempt, the risks of drowning and the amount of money needed to be paid to the *scafisti*<sup>92</sup> are high enough not to allow for many retrials. So as a result, an individual might have lower chances of getting to the other side, and higher costs when taking the sea routes to Italy or Greece.

Let us now see the illegal emigration routes which evolved during the last two decades in Greece and Italy.

### 3.2.1 Greece: low cost line

In Greece it is believed that the *illegal* routes were followed by most of the emigrants during the first decade<sup>93</sup>. There are three main routes, which are used by most of the immigrants to Greece, and they entail different costs, risks, and chances to enter the neighboring country<sup>94</sup>. The first and most common way of crossing the border to Greece during the first three streams, was walking the mountains in groups of 4 to 15 people, mostly helped by a person of the border region, who knew the road<sup>95</sup>. The monetary costs of this route are very low, as they include only the money for food, for transport<sup>96</sup> and for paying the

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<sup>92</sup> Scafisti is the term used for boatmen from the Italian authorities.

<sup>93</sup> See: Georgios A. Antonopoulos and John Winterdyk, "The Smuggling of Migrants in Greece: An Examination of its Social Organization", *European Society of Criminology*, (London: SAGE Publications, 2006)

<sup>94</sup> *ibid*

<sup>95</sup> Maria Siadima, "Immigration in Greece During The 1990's: An Overview", (PhD diss., King's College London, September 2001): 10

<sup>96</sup> Transport implies the traveling from home to the border, before hiring the guide and then for traveling in Greece until reaching destination city/village.

guide an amount of around 10-50\$ per person, depending on the size of the group<sup>97</sup>. The risks of getting caught by the Greek border patrols in such entrepreneurship are relatively high and followed by direct deportation and sometimes heavy beating by the border police forces<sup>98</sup>. However, because of the low costs and short distance many people that are deported retry as many times as possible until they make it to the destination place<sup>99</sup>.

Another alternative used during the first three streams was being smuggled on trucks by people who do business in Greece<sup>100</sup>. The chances to pass the border by this route are higher than the first one, but on the other hand the costs and risks are higher as well, namely the costs are at around 500-1000\$ per person and there are risks of losing their life during the process, and anyway it requires serious physical struggling<sup>101</sup>. Finally, one of the most preferred alternatives has been using underground visas<sup>102</sup> bought for the amount of 2000\$ at the Greek embassies in Tirana and Gjirokaster<sup>103</sup>, because of the low risk associated with it. However, this route did not secure for a 100% chances of entering Greece, because very often the border police would wrap the passport, even if it held a regular visa.

<sup>97</sup> It is common knowledge among Albanian emigrants.

<sup>98</sup> See: "Albanian Immigrants in Greece: Cases of ill-treatment by the Greek law enforcement authorities", AHC, [http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/te\\_tjera/Albanian%20Immigrants%20in%20Greece.pdf](http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/te_tjera/Albanian%20Immigrants%20in%20Greece.pdf) ;

Maurizio Albahari, "Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe", *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

<sup>99</sup> Maria Siadima, "Immigration in Greece During The 1990's: An Overview", (PhD diss., King's College London, September 2001): 10

<sup>100</sup> Georgios A. Antonopoulos and John Winterdyk, "The Smuggling of Migrants in Greece: An Examination of its Social Organization", *European Society of Criminology*, (London: SAGE Publications, 2006):

<sup>101</sup> E.g. the illegal immigrants are hidden in parts of the vehicles which will not be checked by the police. Many people have died suffocated during such trips. Personal experience is brought by Dritan, who almost died while being smuggled under a truck during his illegal immigration to Greece: Dritan Pashaj, personal communication with the author, August, 2004.

<sup>102</sup> See: Maurizio Albahari, "Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe", *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 27; Anna Triandafyllidou, "Mediterranean Migrations: Problems and Prospects for Greece and Italy in the Twenty-first Century", *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)*, Athens, Greece, and *European University Institute*, Florence, Italy, (March 2007) <http://foreignpolicy.it/cgi-bin/news/adon.cgi?act=doc&doc=3070&sid=19>

<sup>103</sup> Personal experience of Gazi V., who used to intermediate those who needed visa and the employers of the Greek embassy in Gjirokaster, Albania. Gazi V., personal communication with the author, April, 2005.; Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity", *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004): 2

### 3.2.2. Italy: business class

As far as the illegal routes to Italy are concerned, they flourished very fast in the first years of the 1990s and the main routes used from Albanian emigrants include using fake documents<sup>104</sup> and the sea ways, primarily from the port of Vlore and Durrës. The first route by using underground visas or fake documents is has very low risk and high chances of entering the destination country, but in the same time is associated with very high costs, which are usually unaffordable by most of the Albanian households<sup>105</sup>. Thus only a few people and households in Albania take this route.

The second route is the most used one by those who want to immigrate in Italy. It is cheaper than the first route, but includes high risks of drowning or being caught by the border guards. Many people in the coastal cities of Albania invested money in buying ‘gomone’ (speedboats) and hiring people to drive them. A man working on this business as a driver confessed that, before 1998 he would cross the sea up to three times a night and carry around 15-20 people each time<sup>106</sup>. These people, including women and children, are being smuggled by the *scafisti*, for the cost of 300\$ to 800\$ per person<sup>107</sup>, and the risks of losing their lives are quite high, because of the risky maneuvers of the *scafisti* when detected by the border patrols. The boatmen sometimes make such swift turns of the boat that people fall ‘accidentally’ in the sea<sup>108</sup> or other times they intentionally throw people on the sea in order to

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<sup>104</sup> See: Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 27; Anna Triandafyllidou, “Mediterranean Migrations: Problems and Prospects for Greece and Italy in the Twenty-first Century”, *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)*, Athens, Greece, and *European University Institute*, Florence, Italy, (March 2007) <http://foreignpolicy.it/cgi-bin/news/adon.cgi?act=doc&doc=3070&sid=19>

<sup>105</sup> Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 27

<sup>106</sup> Ilir used to work as a fast boat driver, before his boats were confiscated by the Albanian authorities in a joint operation with the Italian guards, in 1998; Ilir V., personal communication with the author, April, 2008.

<sup>107</sup> Ted Perlmutter, “The Politics of Proximity: The Italian Response to the Albanian Crisis”, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1. (Spring 1998): 214

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28199821%2932%3A1%3C203%3ATPOPTI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G>

<sup>108</sup> Kosta Barjaba, Zydi Dërvishi, and Luigi Perrone, “L’Emigrazione Albanese. Spazi, tempi e cause.”, *Studi Emigrazione/Études Migrations*, 29(107) (1992)

diverge the attention of the guards. The chances of getting caught by the border patrols have increased significantly since the early 90s, due to the sophisticated devices used by them to detect vehicles on the sea<sup>109</sup>.

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So, during the first stream of Albanian emigration, a situation where most of the people were escaping poverty and had very low incomes or no income at all, they were unable to afford an ‘expensive’ trip and most of them took the land path to Greece. Others, who left to Greece, were either ethnic Greeks or people bordering Greece. Those who made it to Italy usually were either part of the first accepted refugees in 1991, their relatives, people who could have access to boats in the coast regions, or others who could afford an expensive trip. It should be noticed that during the first stream the smuggling networks to Greece and Italy were just starting to take form, and they were taking place at individual levels and in unorganized forms.

During the following stream, the networks flourished very fast and the economic wellbeing of many families improved, especially of those who had relative working abroad. So, the poor situation of many potential emigrants were offset by the support of networks and remittances, and allowed for them to afford more expensive routes. But in the same time, the networks also determined the path for future flows, and this contributed to more and more people taking other routes to Greece and Italy, such as using underground visas, taking the sea route to Greece, and other means which were discussed above.

### ***3.3 Immigration policies of the host countries***

As mentioned before, the way immigrants are treated once they enter the host country depends on two factors, namely the publicly stated immigration policies (the provisions,

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<sup>109</sup> See: Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006)

allowances, and the internal control policies), and the societal discriminative or accommodative behavior towards regular or irregular immigrants. In the two dimensions there is considerable difference noticed between the two countries under analysis and within each of them in different time periods. I suggest that these differences combined with the first two variables determine the form of the Albanian immigration to Greece and Italy.

To begin with, both Italy and Greece are recent immigration countries, thus their immigration policies have developed after the 1980s in Italy, and in the 1990s in Greece. So when the Albanian massive emigration started, Italy had already done three regularization programmes in 1982, 1986 and 1990<sup>110</sup>. Greece, on the other hand was still operating with the 1929 Alien Law and before the Albanian immigrants entered the country in large numbers, it had seen no reason to amend it<sup>111</sup>. Still, after the collapse of communism in Europe, both Italy and Greece were unprepared for the large immigration that emerged, and Greece was facing a higher burden to cope with the new situation.

During the first decade, while Italy had already come to terms with the fact that the immigration was an inevitable phenomenon and was restoring to ways of keeping it to a minimum and introducing legal ways of immigration, Greece was doing the opposite. The Greek authorities and society considered immigration as an historical accident and restored to exclusionary policies<sup>112</sup>. Anyway, these attitudes did not stop the immigration flows but had impact on the legal status of the entrants, and the time patterns of their migration.

While analyzing the impact of the immigration policies of Greece and Italy to Albanian immigration, it should also be taken in consideration the extent to which these two countries were affected by the massive inflows of Albanian immigrants. Practically, although

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<sup>110</sup> Ferruccio Pastore, "To Regularize or Not to Regularize: Experiences and Views from Europe", *Center for International Policy Studies* (CeSPI) Rome, Italy (June 30, 2004)  
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/063004.php>

<sup>111</sup> Maria Siadima, "Immigration in Greece During The 1990's: An Overview", (PhD diss., King's College London, September 2001): 24

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 25

the Albanians make for the largest immigrant group in both neighboring countries, in Greece they make for 65% of the whole foreign population, while in Italy they make for nearly 14%. The implication is that the immigration laws in Greece and its regularization programmes' procedures were largely affected by the characteristics of the Albanian immigration and they primarily targeted this immigrant group. On the other hand, Italy while adopting its immigration programmes has taken in consideration other immigrant groups such as the Moroccans, Romanians, Chinese and others, beside the Albanian group.

In order to see more clearly the development of immigration policies in the two neighboring countries and their impact on the size and legal form of migration, I will individually introduce the amendments to the immigration law and their implications.

### 3.3.1 Greece: the two faces of Janus<sup>113</sup>

To start with, in 1991, Greece introduced its first amendment to the 1929 Law aiming at giving a solution to the massive inflows of immigrants, mostly Albanians. The law stated that “any attempt to enter Greece illegally can be punished with a term of imprisonment from three months to five years”<sup>114</sup>. The law was accused of being a law of policing, exclusionary and xenophobic as it offered almost no legal opportunities for the Balkan countries of entering Greece, and used extensively the police means to ‘take care’ of unwanted immigrants<sup>115</sup>. The law had two main dimensions, (1) expulsing all the illegal immigrants, and excluding them from any welfare benefits, such as education, government assistance, or any form of healthcare, and (2) applying liberal policies for those who could claim *Greek ethnicity*<sup>116</sup>.

Eventually, there developed two ways of entering Greece for Albanians, either by showing to be of Greek minority or by entering illegally. In the 90s many Albanian citizens

<sup>113</sup> N. Glytsos and L. Katseli, “Greek Migration: The Two Faces of Janus” (with N. Glytsos) in Klaus F. Zimmerman, ed. *European Migration: “What do We Know?”*, (Oxford University, Press, 2005)

<sup>114</sup> *ibid*

<sup>115</sup> Maria Siadima, “Immigration in Greece During The 1990’s: An Overview”, (PhD diss., King’s College London, September 2001): 24

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, 24



whether of being of Greek minority or not, changed their names and acquired birth certificates, which showed them to be of Greek ethnicity<sup>117</sup>. By 2004, the Greek authorities had granted around 200.000 ethnic identity cards to Albanian “Greek” minorities, a figure that is a much higher then those offered by the 1989 statistics of the Albanian authorities, which give number 60.000 the ethnic Greeks residing in Albania<sup>118</sup>. The result of these policies was large masses of Albanians fleeing to Greece, changing their names to Greek ones, and converting to Orthodox religion. They also set the bases for future immigrant flows.

The Albanian potential emigrants who could not show to be of Greek ethnicity were confronted with no other alternatives of entering or residing legally, so they crossed the border *illegally*. Before the implementation of the first regularization programme in 1998, almost 300.000 Albanian illegal immigrants were residing in Greece<sup>119</sup>. In the meantime, around 1 million<sup>120</sup> Albanians who had left the country since 1990, had been deported or returned voluntary, reflecting the active policing procedures, the seasonal or occasional labor market, and the dire conditions of being an irregular immigrant in Greece.

Konica and Randal<sup>121</sup>, have found that those who return voluntary have stayed twice as long in Greece as those who are deported. The shorter emigration periods of those who have been expelled mirrors the effects of a widely used internal immigration policy, which was based on regular inspecting of the immigrants living and working in the Greek territory for their documents. The practice followed when finding Albanian irregular immigrants was expulsing them immediately or keeping them in prison where they were frequently beaten and

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<sup>117</sup> It is common knowledge among Albanian emigrants.

<sup>118</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, “Patterns of Migration in the Balkans”, *MMO*, Working Paper No.9 (January 2006): 6, [http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo\\_working\\_papers/mmo\\_wp9.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo_working_papers/mmo_wp9.pdf)

<sup>119</sup> Nevila Konica, and Randall K. Filera, “Albanian Emigration: Causes and Consequences”, CERGE–EI Working Paper 181, Prague (September 2005): 4

<sup>120</sup> Amanda Levinson, “The Regularisation of Unauthorized Migrants: Literature Survey and Country Case Studies. Regularisation programmes in Greece”, *Centre on Migration, Policy and Society*, (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2005): 3

<sup>121</sup> Nevila Konica, and Randall K. Filera, “Albanian Emigration: Causes and Consequences”, CERGE–EI Working Paper 181, Prague (September 2005): 4

deported afterwards<sup>122</sup>. Only lately, there have been efforts by the part of the Greek authorities to improve the treatment of the undocumented immigrants<sup>123</sup>. Though, the numbers of the deported are still high in 2006 at around 130-140 people per day<sup>124</sup>.

The continuous expulsions, the temporary and seasonal labor markets, the absence of any welfare support, such as education or health care, encouraged the immigration to be primarily male-driven, circular, and short term in nature during the first three streams<sup>125</sup>. In the first decade, almost 95% of all Albanian immigrants were aged between 14 and 45 and more than 70% of them were male<sup>126</sup>, reflecting the high risks associated with the illegal entry to Greece, and the lack of possibilities for family reunification. The reason there is such a high percentage of male immigration to Greece is highly related to the immigration routes, which required physical strength and were risky for women.

In the meantime, the low costs of entering Greece allowed for many people to be able to take the route, and it also allowed the deported immigrants to try reentering Greece as soon as they were released at the Albanian border, or at high working seasons. A considerable fraction of the returned that already had saved some money either opened a business in Albania or tried other routes of emigration, mainly Italy<sup>127</sup>.

In 1998, eight years after the first inflows of Albanian immigrants, Greece undertook its first regularization programme, which combined with the financial crisis in Albania, acted as strong pull and push factors for the potential Albanian emigrants. During the negotiations

<sup>122</sup> See: "Albanian Immigrants in Greece: Cases of ill-treatment by the Greek law enforcement authorities", AHC, [http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/te\\_tjera/Albanian%20Immigrants%20in%20Greece.pdf](http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/te_tjera/Albanian%20Immigrants%20in%20Greece.pdf)

<sup>123</sup> "Më Shumë Vëmendje Për Trajtimin E Emigrantëve Shqiptarë Në Pikat E Kontrollit Kalimit Kufitar: Përfundime Të Vëzhgimeve Të Komitetit Shqiptar Të Helsinkit Në Pikat E Kalimit Kufitar", AHC (2006) [http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/ARKIV/Vezhgime\\_kufiri.pdf](http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/ARKIV/Vezhgime_kufiri.pdf)

<sup>124</sup> *ibid*

<sup>125</sup> Eugenia Markova, "Economic and Social Effects of Migration on Sending Countries: The Cases of Albania and Bulgaria", [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/34/4/38528396.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/34/4/38528396.pdf)

<sup>126</sup> Jean-Paul Sardon, "Demographic Change in the Balkans since the End of the 1980s", *Institut National d'Études Démographiques*, Vol. 13, No. 2. (2001): 56, [http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=1169-1018\(2001\)13:2<3A13%3A2%3C49%3ADCITBS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=1169-1018(2001)13:2<3A13%3A2%3C49%3ADCITBS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B)

<sup>127</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Patterns of Migration in the Balkans", *MMO*, Working Paper No.9 (January 2006): 10, [http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo\\_working\\_papers/mmo\\_wp9.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/publications/mmo_working_papers/mmo_wp9.pdf)

stages of this programme there were heated discussions concerning the inclusion of Albanian immigrants in the legalizing process, because of the opposition by a government minister, the prefectures bordering Albania, and several social groups<sup>128</sup>. In the end, the Greek Prime Minister decided in favor of legalizing the Albanian immigrants<sup>129</sup>, but still the xenophobic behavior of the bureaucrats and the political figures, led to and allowed for extensive malpractices of the legal procedures, and systematic discrimination towards the Albanian immigrants during this regularization programme<sup>130</sup>.

Some of these malpractices regard the denial of the legal status from the bureaucrats in the state agencies, delay of procedures, the complicated procedures asking for documents that were not easily acquirable, high fees<sup>131</sup>, and inefficient implementation of the programme due to the large number of applicants<sup>132</sup>. As a result of these inefficiencies combined with the lack of trust from the Albanian illegal immigrants in Greek authorities, as they perceived the programme as a trick to expulse them back to their home country<sup>133</sup>, the number of the applicants and the legalized Albanian immigrants was much lower than it was expected to be<sup>134</sup>.

Eventually, in 2001, three years later another regularization programme and an amendment of the immigration law were introduced, aiming the improvement of the procedures for the admission, residence and naturalization of foreigners<sup>135</sup>. One of the innovation of this Law concerns the transferring of the power to grant work and residence permit to local authorities, and requiring the immigrants to apply for the work permits at

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<sup>128</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity", *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004): 58

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 58

<sup>130</sup> See: ibid

<sup>131</sup> ibid

<sup>132</sup> Ibid, 57

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 57

<sup>134</sup> Applicants: 241,561; Legalized: 143,124. See:

[http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Greencard1998\\_%20ResPerm2004.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Greencard1998_%20ResPerm2004.pdf)

<sup>135</sup> Charalambos Kasimis and Chryssa Kassimi, "Greece: A History of Migration", *Migration Information*, (June 2004) <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=228>

overseas consulates<sup>136</sup>. This law led to the legalization of around 450,000 Albanians and together with the first regularization programme they had important implications for the patterns of the Albanian migration.

Both regularization programmes, were followed by large flows of children and women immigrants for family unification, shifting the ratio of male and females from 80:20% in 1998<sup>137</sup> to 59:41 % in 2001<sup>138</sup> and increasing rapidly the enrollment of the Albanian students in the Greek schools<sup>139</sup>. Because of family reunification practices and inclusion in the welfare benefits many immigrants changed their plans to return to Albania and settled permanently in Greece. Another effect was noticed on the decrease of the illegal immigrants compared to the legal ones and as a consequence a decrease on the number of people who were using illegal routes to enter Greece<sup>140</sup>.

### 3.3.2 Italy: fence in the sea

As mentioned before, in 1991 when the massive irregular flows from Albania started, Italy was already experienced in dealing with large flows of illegal immigrants and offered legal space for becoming regular. Italy had amended its immigration law in 1990<sup>141</sup> and had had three regularization programmes in 1982, 1986, and 1990, where about 330.000 illegal immigrants had been regularized<sup>142</sup>. Further on, after 1990 Italy implemented four other regularization programmes and law amendments, in 1995, 1998, 2002, and 2006, which regularized around 349.000 Albanian immigrants, turning them into the largest immigrant

<sup>136</sup> Martin Baldwin-Edwards, "Albanian Emigration and the Greek Labour Market: Economic Symbiosis and Social Ambiguity", *South-East Europe Review*, (January 2004): 58

<sup>137</sup> [http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Greencard1998\\_%20ResPerm2004.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Greencard1998_%20ResPerm2004.pdf)

<sup>138</sup> [http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Immigrants\\_Census\\_GR\\_2001.pdf](http://www.mmo.gr/pdf/statistics/greece/general/Immigrants_Census_GR_2001.pdf)

<sup>139</sup> Julie Vullnetari, "Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review", *IMISCOE Working Paper* No. 18 (September 2007): 50

<sup>140</sup> *ibid*

<sup>141</sup> Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Kimberly A. Hamilton, *Converging Paths to Restriction: French, Italian, and British Responses to Immigration*, (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Brookings Institution, 1996): 39

<sup>142</sup> "Ferruccio Pastore, "To Regularize or Not to Regularize: Experiences and Views from Europe", *Center for International Policy Studies* (CeSPI) Rome, Italy (June 30, 2004) <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/063004.php>

ethnic group in Italy<sup>143</sup>. These regularizations programmes acted as strong pull factors for potential immigrants, since it contributed to their perception that at some point after entering the Italian territory, they would get legal status.

From 1991, when the first Albanian immigration stream started, until today Italy, rather than change in the direction of the immigration policies, has shown continuity. So, as it will be shown below, the Italian immigration policies have got tougher for the illegal immigrants from one regularization programme to another, and in the same time they have become more and more accommodative for the regularized ones, in terms of their human rights, legal status, possibility to family reunification and others respects<sup>144</sup>. In fact the regularization programmes and the increased rights of the legal immigrants have made Italy a more and more interesting destination for the Albanian immigrants, and in the same time the increased control of the border and the entry routes has increased the costs and risks of entering the country.

The immigration law and policies of the Italian authorities compared to the Greek ones are characterized by a strong focus on impeding the illegal immigration, by preventing the illegal immigrants to enter the country. However, once they are in the territory for considerable periods, Italian authorities offer them the opportunity to become legal. Impeding the illegal immigration has taken two forms, one being the heavy militarization of the border control, and the other being tracing the sources of immigration at the home countries and contributing to the improvement of the situation. As part of the second policy, Italy not only established aid programmes in Albania, as one of the countries with high emigration but she

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<sup>143</sup> Giuseppe De Bartolo, "Immigration in Italy: The Great Emergency", University Of Calabria, Italy (2007): 9

<sup>144</sup> Ferruccio Pastore, "To Regularize or Not to Regularize: Experiences and Views from Europe", *Center for International Policy Studies* (CeSPI) Rome, Italy (June 30, 2004)  
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/063004.php>

also pushed for the EU to commit to sustained development assistance<sup>145</sup>. Practically Italy has been the main contributor of foreign aid to Albania, and in 1997, after the collapse of pyramidal schemes she led a UN military intervention in Albania aiming at restoring order and assuring that the foreign humanitarian aid would reach those in need<sup>146</sup>.

During the first two streams of the Albanian emigration the internal policies of Italy were rather accommodative compared to the Greek ones. Until 1995, few Albanian immigrants were residing legally in Italy, and they were part of those who were granted refugee status in 1991 and their families. More than half of all the Albanian immigrants in Italy were residing there illegally. During this time, the Italian authorities allowed for the illegal immigrants to access the health services, applied no serious punishment for the employers of the illegal immigrants, and it offered a 14-day grace period to the unauthorized residents to leave the country after they were detected by the police<sup>147</sup>. As the enforcement policies on illegal immigrants were relatively soft, the illegal Albanian immigrants in Italy could work without fear of deportation as in the case their compatriot in Greece.

These relaxed punishment policies, combined with infrequent internal controls for illegal emigrants, the expectation of future regularization programmes, and the high risks and costs of entering Italy again, had different impacts on the Albanian immigrants residing in Italy and the potential ones in Albania. While they pushed most of the Albanian illegal immigrants to stay for longer periods in Italy then their occupational conditions or personal needs and desires would dictate, they attracted those potential migrants from Albania, who

<sup>145</sup> Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Kimberly A. Hamilton, *Converging Paths to Restriction: French, Italian, and British Responses to Immigration*, (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Brookings Institution, 1996): 42

<sup>146</sup> Ted Perlmutter, "The Politics of Proximity: The Italian Response to the Albanian Crisis", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1. (Spring 1998): 205  
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0197-9183%28199821%2932%3A1%3C203%3ATPOPTI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G>

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, 44

wanted to emigrate permanently or for long terms, and discouraged those who wanted to migrate temporary and were in quest of financial returns in the short-term.

In 1995, the Dini regularization programme increased the police powers to expel the illegal immigrants<sup>148</sup> and in the same time it allowed for the regularization of 244,492<sup>149</sup> illegal immigrants, 13% of which were Albanians<sup>150</sup>. This regularization had a large impact on the Albanian illegal immigrants, because it allowed them to finally acquire a legal status and granted them the rights to family reunification, access to more welfare provisions, possibility of acquiring citizenship, and the freedom to travel back and forth to Albania. Eventually, after this regularization programme the percentage of the females and children entering Italy for family reunification reasons increased.

In 1998, even more restrictive policies for illegal immigrants were introduced by the Turco-Napolitano Act, bringing the Italian legislation in line with the Schengen Agreement<sup>151</sup>. This coincided with the first regularization programme in Greece, and in both of them most part of the regularized were Albanians<sup>152</sup>. Unintentionally, these restrictive policies combined with regularization procedures served as very strong pull factors for future illegal immigration flows. Eventually, in 2002, the Italian authorities had to undergo another regularization programme, the Bossi-Fini programme, to legalize the large amounts of new

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<sup>148</sup> Rima Al-Azar, "Italian Immigration Policies: The Metaphor of Water", *BC Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, (2008) <http://bcjournal.org/2006/italian-immigration-policies/>

<sup>149</sup> "Ferruccio Pastore, "To Regularize or Not to Regularize: Experiences and Views from Europe", *Center for International Policy Studies* (CeSPI) Rome, Italy (June 30, 2004) <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/063004.php>

<sup>150</sup> Laura Zanfrini, "Italian Policy on Irregular Migrants in the Labour Market and the Shadow Economy", *ISMU*, Milan, Italy, CDMG (2006): 66, [http://www.coe.int/T/DG3/Migration/Source/CDMG\(2006\)66%20report%20italy\\_en.doc](http://www.coe.int/T/DG3/Migration/Source/CDMG(2006)66%20report%20italy_en.doc)

<sup>151</sup> Kimberly Hamilton, "Italy's Southern Exposure", *Migration Policy Institute* (May 2002) <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/print.cfm?ID=121>

<sup>152</sup> Julie Vullnetari, "Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review", *IMISCOE Working Paper* No. 18 (September 2007): 37

immigrants in Italy. Practically, 634,728 illegal immigrants were granted legal status during this programme and a considerable part of them were Albanians<sup>153</sup>.

In the mean time, Italy was continuously investing large amounts of money in border controlling “high-tech methods of warfare”<sup>154</sup>, making the entry for illegal immigrants more and more difficult<sup>155</sup>. While these efforts have been relatively inefficient, they find a strong support from the political members, and the public opinion<sup>156</sup>. The result is the increase of the smuggling prices and sophistication of the networks involved. As a result the trip to Italy got more expensive and riskier. The implication for the Albanian immigrants

### 3.3.3 Interaction of the Greek and Italian immigration policies: the four streams

During the first emigration stream, which is also considered a *leap in the dark*<sup>157</sup>, most of the Albanian emigrants left the country with no clear prospects for their future. Most of them had a vague idea, if no idea at all, of the immigration policies of the receiving countries. They decided which country to emigrate depending on the available routes and their access to them.

Greece attracted the Albanian minorities and those who could claim to be so, and followed exclusionary policies on the others. As a result the emigration to Greece had two faces, one of the legal Greek minorities, and that of the illegal Albanians. Italy, on the other hand, after granting refugee status to the first group that entered Italy, followed preventing policies for the rest. The difference is that the immigrants, who were in Greece illegally, were

<sup>153</sup> Laura Zanfrini, “Italian Policy on Irregular Migrants in the Labour Market and the Shadow Economy”, *ISMU*, Milan, Italy, CDMG (2006): 66,

[http://www.coe.int/T/DG3/Migration/Source/CDMG\(2006\)66%20report%20italy\\_en.doc](http://www.coe.int/T/DG3/Migration/Source/CDMG(2006)66%20report%20italy_en.doc)

<sup>154</sup> Maurizio Albahari, “Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe”, *University of California*, San Diego, CCIS, Working Paper 136 (June 2006): 12

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, 12

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, 13

<sup>157</sup> Flavia Piperno, “From Albania to Italy: Formation and Basic Features of a Binational Migration System”, *CeSPI*, (May 2002): 3



all the time under pressure of being expelled from the police, and most of them were deported shortly after arriving in Greece. As a result the immigration to Greece took a temporary form. On the other hand, those residing illegally in Italy were “safe”, as the Italian authorities applied no strict internal control policies. They became aware as well of the possibilities of future legalization programmes, and as the costs of entering Italy again were high, they did not return home.

The second stream emigrants, from 1992-1996, were aware of the immigration policies of the receiving countries. During this period, as the illegal routes were flourishing, those who could afford an expensive trip and wanted to stay for long periods abroad took the route to Italy, knowing that they were not to be deported. While those who needed immediate solution to their financial problems and had no money to afford expensive routes (most part of the potential emigrants), walked the mountains to Greece to work for some months and turn back when captured by the police or after having made money to solve the immediate problems. During this phase the networks started playing very important role as well, overcoming the high costs for them who left to Italy, or compensating for the lower financial returns in Greece.

During third stream, after the financial crisis, people left Albania to escape the newly increased poverty and the lack of hope for a better future at home. In the mean time, Italy had just had a regularization programme and Greece introduced the intention to regularize the illegal emigrants by 2008. Besides, Italy signed an agreement with the Albanian government to patrol in its waters, and to destroy the smuggling groups, so as to decrease the amounts of illegal immigrants. As a result the route to Italy became more expensive and riskier, and it pushed many of the restless Albanian citizens to take the route to Greece.

The last stream of the Albanian emigration saw the regularization of most of the Albanians abroad. However, the ratio of legal immigrants was still higher in Italy than in

Greece, because of the differences in the efficiencies of the regularization programmes' implementation and the discriminative behavior of the officials in the two countries. Italy by being more efficient and less discriminative, granted legal status to most of the Albanian illegal immigrants were living in Italy. Greece, on the other hand, introduced complicated bureaucracies, which combined with discriminative behavior towards Albanian immigrants, and incapability of the bureaucratic structures to deal with large amount of immigrants, allowed for the regularization of slightly more than half of the Albanian immigrants.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of my thesis has been to explain the determinants of different patterns of the Albanian immigration to Greece and Italy. More specifically, I analyzed how, in a situation of high emigration pressure with more than 30% of the Albanian households live under the poverty threshold, the permeability of the Italian and Greek borders combined with the immigration laws of these two countries, gave birth to two different forms of migration. The forms being, more than 70% of the Albanian emigrants leaving to Greece mostly for short-term or circular immigration, and at less extent 15% leaving to Italy for long-term or permanent immigration.

I analyzed how the exclusionary immigration policies from the Greek authorities and the high permeability of the Greek border, gave birth to primarily illegal, short-term and circular migration of Albanian citizens, while granting special status to those who could show to be of Greek ethnicity. Further on I showed that the high risks and costs of entering Italy, combined with the internal accommodative immigration policies, pushed and attracted immigrants to stay permanently in Italy.

Finally I suggested that in the presence of very high emigration pressure in Albania the restrictive policies by one of the neighboring countries, instead of stopping the emigration flows, will divert them to the other country. Meaning that, the actions of the Italian authorities in increasing the border control mechanisms, and collaborating with the Albanian government in confiscating all the boats used to smuggle people to Italy, will induce a decrease of the flows to Italy by shifting them to Greece. On the other hand, the restrictive policies by the Greek authorities in granting legal status to the Albanian immigrants in Greece will push those who want to leave permanently Albania to go in Italy.

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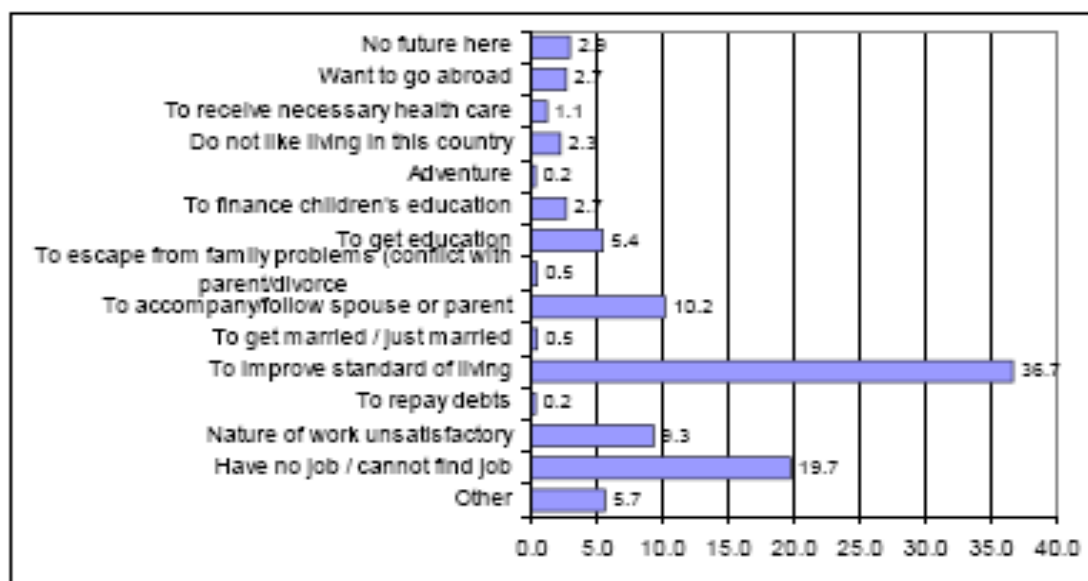
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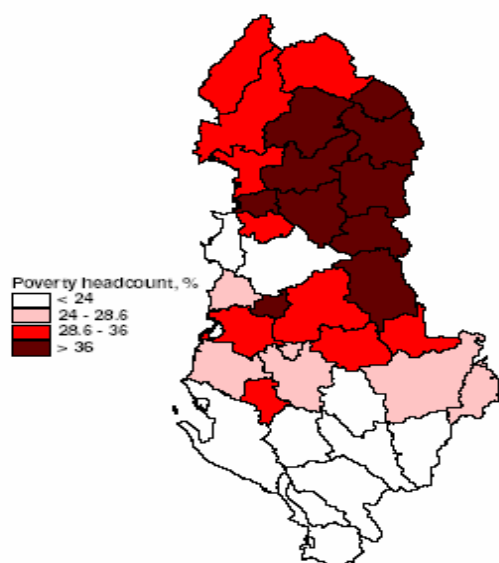
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Source: ETF, 2007

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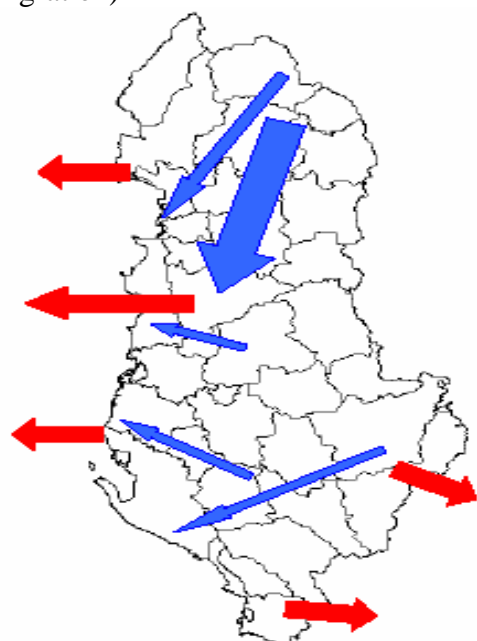


Source: Betti et al., 2003.

<sup>158</sup> “The Contribution of Human Resources Development to Migration Policy in Albania”, ETF, (December 2007): 29

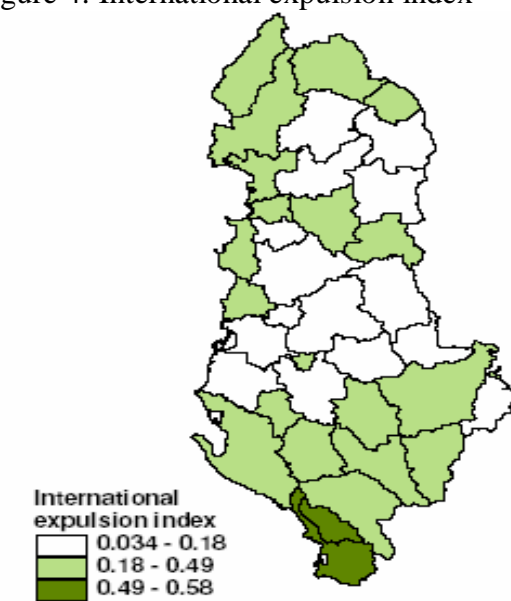
<sup>159</sup> Alberto Zezza, Gero Carletto, and Benjamin Davis, “Moving away from Poverty: A Spatial Analysis of Poverty and Migration in Albania”, ESA Working Paper No. 05-02 (March 2005): 16

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Source: PHC 2001.

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Source: 1989 and 2001 PHC.

<sup>160</sup> Alberto Zezza, Gero Carletto, and Benjamin Davis, "Moving away from Poverty: A Spatial Analysis of Poverty and Migration in Albania", *ESA Working Paper No. 05-02* (March 2005): 18

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*, 17

Figure 5: International out-migration as % of 1989 population<sup>162</sup>

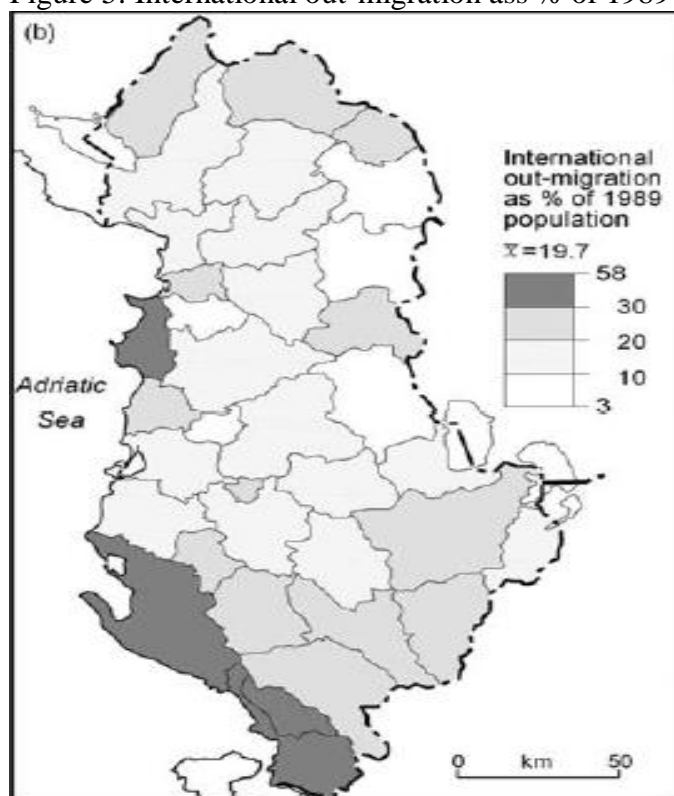
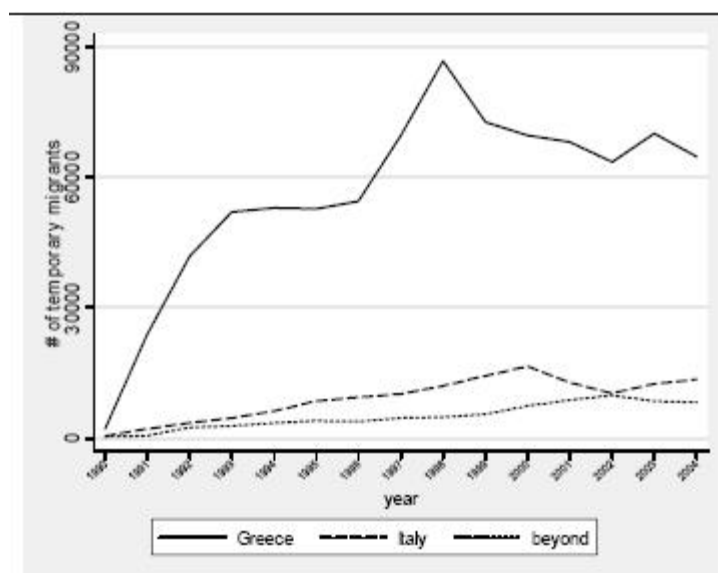


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<sup>162</sup> Julie Vullnetari, "Albanian Migration and Development: State of The Art Review", IMISCOE Working Paper No. 18, September 2007, pp. 64

<sup>163</sup> "Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction", A Poverty Assessment, June 19, 2007, Report No. 40071- AL

Figure 7: Flow of return temporary migrants by family residence area<sup>164</sup>

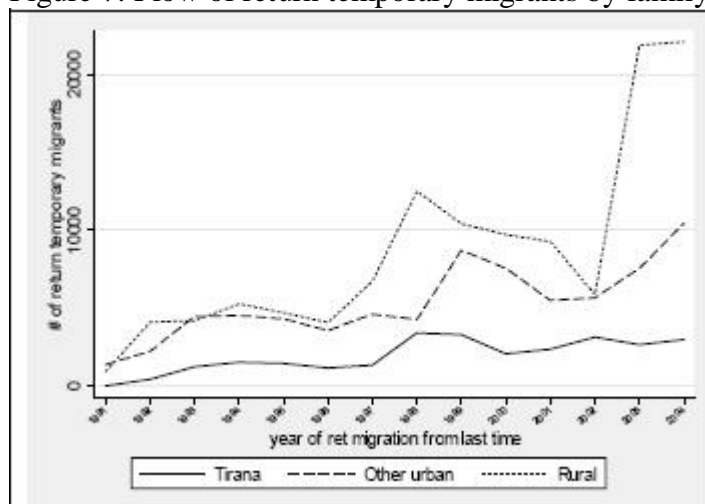
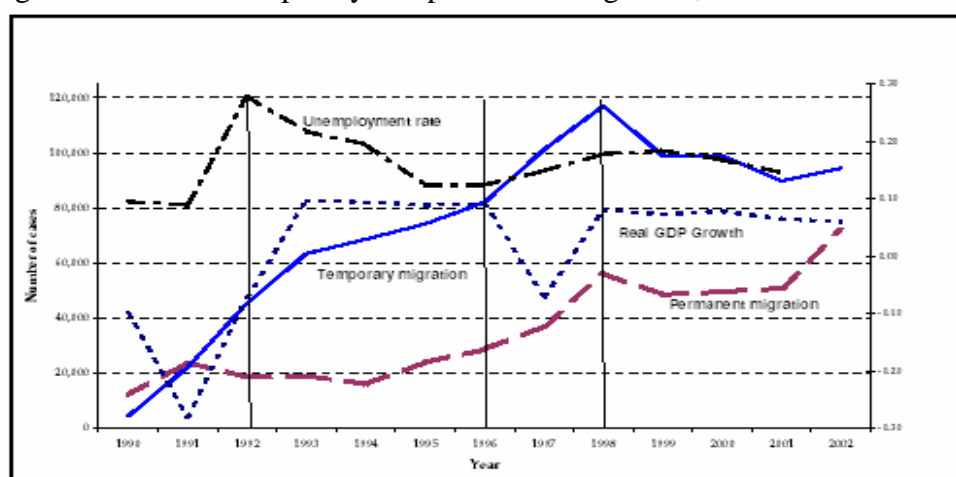


Figure 8: Permanent Migrants by Country of Destination and Residence of Original household (2000-2004)<sup>165</sup>

		Country of destination				
		Albania	Greece	Italy	Beyond	Total
Residence of household in Albania	Tirana	46.8	9.3	15.1	28.8	100
	Other urban	34.7	19.2	35.8	10.4	100
	Rural	41.1	29.3	24.3	5.3	100
	Total	40.0	24.9	26.4	8.7	100

Source: World Bank staff estimates from survey data

Figure 9: Flows of temporary and permanent migration, 1990-2002



Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook, Sept, 2002.; LSMS 2002. Reproduced from Stampini et al., (2005).

<sup>164</sup> “Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction”, A Poverty Assessment, June 19, 2007, Report No. 40071- AL

<sup>165</sup> “Albania: Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction”, A Poverty Assessment, June 19, 2007, Report No. 40071- AL

Figure 10: Albanian emigration by destination countries, 1991-2003

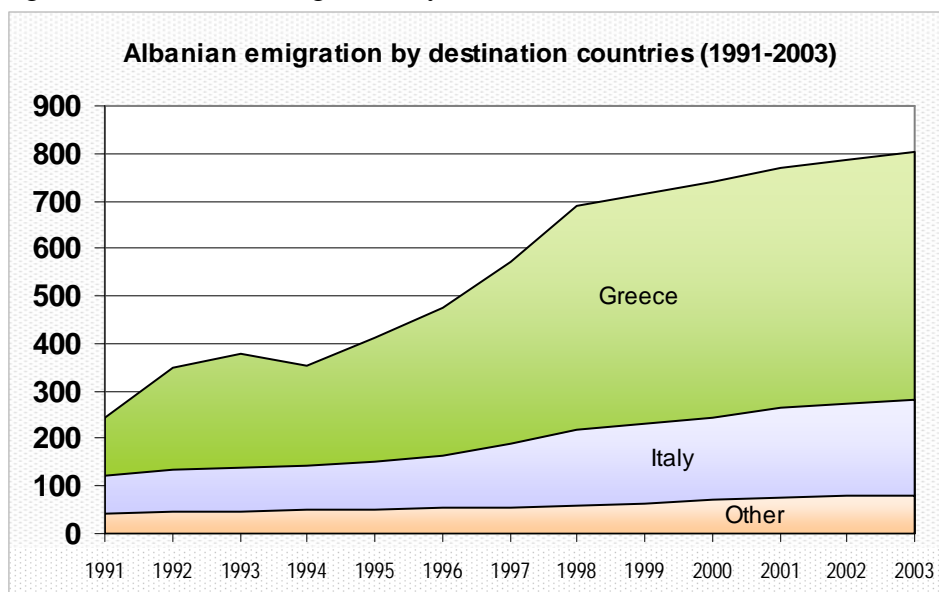
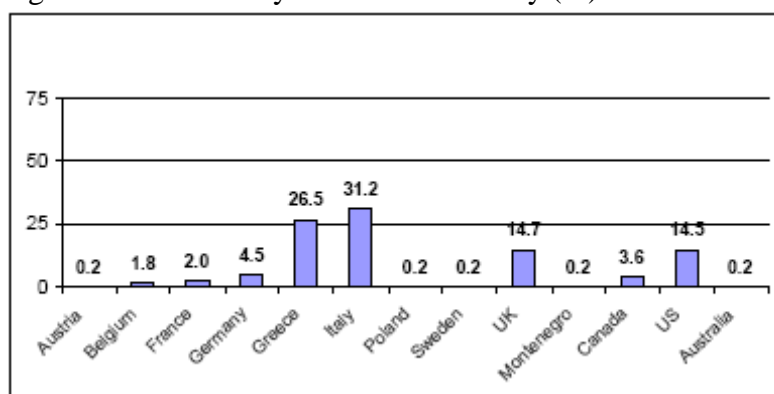
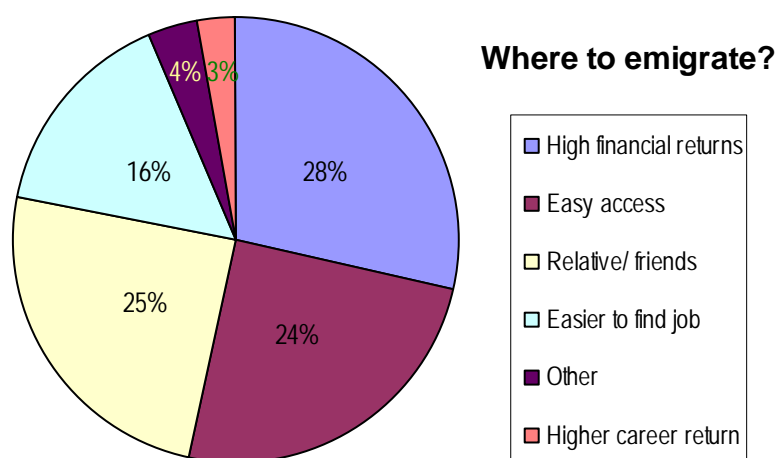


Figure 11: Most likely destination country (%)



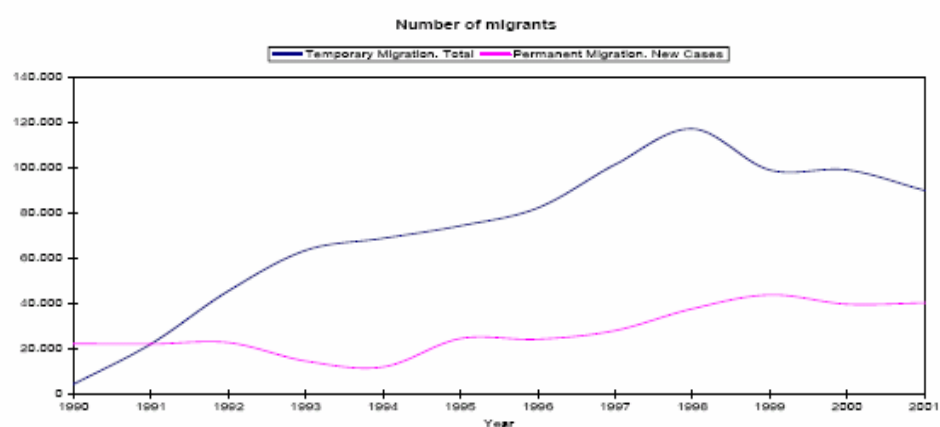
Source: ETF, 2007

Figure 12: Reasons of the Albanian emigrants of choosing the destination country



Source: Kule et al, 2000

Figure 3: Flows of temporary and permanent external migration, 1990-2001



Source: Carletto et al (2005).

Table 13: Employment of returning migrants by destination countries and gender (%)

	Greece		Italy	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Agriculture	35.3	7.5	12.6	5.3
Manufacturing	9.6	4.5	12.1	10.5
Construction	34.8	1.5	35.1	0
Commerce	0.6	1.5	2.9	0
Petty trade	2.3	4.5	3.4	5.3
Hotels and restaurants	5.4	11.9	13.2	15.8
Domestic	0.2	49.3	0	36.8
Public utilities	4.2	0	2.9	0
Public admin.	0	3	0	0
Transport	3.3	0	3.4	0
Repairs	3.7	14.9	10.3	21.0
Other	0.5	0	2.9	5.3
No answer	0	1.5	1.1	0
Total	100	100	100	100
Total number of respondents	567	67	178	20