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**Education as an Important Factor on Migrants Integration: Albanian Migration Case****Abstract**

*Migration involves a series of events that can be highly influence the identity of migrants during the process of integration. This process may involve uprooting, being separated from traditional values, being placed in new social and cultural different situations of hosted countries. So for many migrants, social integration process is not quite easy. Resistance to their participation in society results from language problems and culturally defined behavior that often reinforce stereotypes and prejudices. This situation brought out many challenges in the social identity, integration problems of migrants life in hosted countries but even during the education process or learning of language.*

*This paper will focused on the analyzing of Albanian migration after post-communist society. Also will be debate on the education and language learning as an important element on the integration of migrants.*

**Keywords:** *Education; Learning Language; Integration of migrants; Albanian migration*

## 1-Introduction

The collapse of communism in the Balkans brought about significant political, economic and socio-cultural changes. Albania was one of the countries influenced by these changes, which became internationally pluralist country after establishing of the democratic political system. During 1990-s the end of the communist regime and the raise of democratization process helped Albanian society to become 'open border' toward other countries of the world, especially toward Western countries. This situation formed the contact of Albanian state with other states in the world. The closed borders between Eastern and Western European countries were suddenly opened and many people from these regions, faced with the freedom of moving and borderless movement, dismantling of the production system and welfare state in their countries of origin, started seeking better life chances and work opportunities in the Western and Southern Europe. One of these countries was also Albania. This phenomenon was quite new and had complex consequences of the Albanian society. Massive exodus occurred over this period, mainly to the neighbouring countries such as Greece and Italy. This was a stereotype exodus incomparable with any of the other former communist countries. 'The most visible exoduses were in July, 1990, when several thousand Albanians took refuge in foreign embassies in Tirana, and from March to August, 1991, when boats almost submerged by dense crowds of shabbily dressed Albanians, crossed the Adriatic to Italy. Over the same period of time, thousands of Albanians walked across the mountains from southern Albania into northern Greece' (De Waal; 2005). Because, the massive flows of migrants, in the host society have been appear many different social, cultural and even political problem. But on the other side, it is very important to stress that Albanian migrant, not all the time have been accepted to be the members of the society. For this reason, the integration of migrants has been difficult sometimes. This article discusses the integration process of Albanian migrants, by taking into conference the language learning process and education. Also this article focuses on the analysing of Albanian migration during the post-communist period.

## 2-Migration Phenomenon of Post-Communist Albanian Society

Migration is a very complex phenomenon in the perspective of socio-cultural and economic life. Human migration is the movement of people from one country to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary. Migration patterns were further assumed to be influenced by factors such as distance and population densities. According to Hein people are expected to move from low income to high income areas, and from densely to sparsely populated areas, that is, the general notion that migration movements tend towards a certain spatial-economic equilibrium, has remained alive in the work of many demographers, geographers, and economists ever since and, as we will see, is also the underlying assumption of push-pull theories (De Hein; 2006).

Nowadays Albania is a country on the move, with massive levels of both internal and international migration. During the communist era (1944-90), migration had come to be a virtual dream, as it was officially prohibited, and emigrants and family members left behind had been ostracized or severely punished. The fall of communist regime during 1990-s and democratization process brought out opportunities of free movement of people and goods and political, economic and cultural forming relations of Albania with different countries of the world. 'The fell of communist regime eventually fell, the end of the controls on internal and external migration and the collapse of the centrally planned economy unleashed a demographic shift at an unprecedented pace, as individuals and entire households started migrating to the cities or leaving the country altogether (Azzarri & Carleto, 2009).

From 1990 till nowadays Albanian society is considered as 'open border' toward the different countries, especially to European ones. Free movement or migration phenomena were quite new for Albanian society in early 1990-s. According to Ikonomy, Albania, after 21 years

(according to the study of the World Bank shows that the number of migrants abroad Albania is around 860,485 persons, or about 27.5% of the population are still facing with some migration problems, but there are form policies for bringing social control over the migration and its situations (Ikonomi; 2009).

**Table 1. Main Countries of destination for Albanian Emigrants (IOM; 2007)**

Country	Number	Year	Source
Greece	434.810	2003	European Commision Annual Report on Statistics on migration, Asylum and Return
Italy	348.813	2006	ISTAT Italian Statistical Office
USA	113.661	2000	US Census
UK	50.000	2005	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Employment and Equal Opportunities, Albania
Canada	14.935	2001	Canadian Census
Germany	11.630	2002	Federal Statistical Office

The flow of Albanian migration took the form of a huge flood toward different states of the world, but especially toward European Countries. The main policy focus of European Countries is on managing inward migration, governments may also restrict internal movements and outward migration. But the European countries applied the different migration policies for Albania. Because the Albanian migration situation during 1990-s was quite different from other migration phenomena of the world. Although the flood of Albanian migration was illegal, it was accepted by these countries. Of course these acceptances have been done for the benefit of these countries and even the Albania.

International Migration, have been formed by the Albanian and post-communist countries during 1990's. So according to the data (see Table 1) the flow of Albanian migrants was directed mostly towards Greece (434.8410 migrants), Italy (348.813migrants), the

USA (113.661 migrants), the UK (50.000 migrants), Canada (14.935 migrants), and Germany (11.630 migrants). So till 2010, as the last reports show, the total number of Albanian migrants that – live all over the world is 1705500.

Albanian migration seems to be a lake of opportunities and challenges not just for migrants themselves, but also for the Albanian society as a whole. Selecting the destination for migrating is related to push and pull factors such as ease of finding work, geographical proximity, ease of entry into the host country, relatives who live in places where they migrate, recognizing the opportunities for education and improvement of professional skills, opportunity to work in their profession and better salaries compared to other countries (Ikonomi; 2009). Another important element that challenges the migration phenomena is also the migrants' integration.

### **3-Impacts of language learning on Social Integration of Albanian migrants**

The concept 'integration' is used by social researches in migration field for referring the degree of involvement of migrants in hosted society as the other social actors. The term 'integration' is to emphasize respect for and incorporation of differences and the need for mutual adaptation. According to Fix, 'integration' reflects an appreciation of diversity instead of the homogeneity that 'assimilation' has come to connote' (Fix, 2001).

Also integration is a process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups. The particular requirements for acceptance by a receiving society vary greatly from country to country; and the responsibility for integration rests not with one particular group, but rather with many actors: immigrants themselves, the host government, institutions, and communities (IOM; 2011). Here is very

important to claim that integration is not same concept with assimilation. Here the emphasis of assimilation is done on sameness. In fact, the word suggests that, to become full members of the host community, immigrants and their descendants must adopt its cultural standards. This also implies that immigrants must abandon their own culture (language, traditions, etc.), to adapt to the host community. Take linguistic assimilation. The assumption here is that immigrants should stop using their own language in order to become more proficient in the language of the host country or region. Integration, unlike assimilation, integration emphasizes respect for difference. It suggests a process of adjusting to, and joining, the host community without losing one's own culture or identity. Taking language again, it does not make dropping one's own language a condition of learning the new one: on the contrary, keeping up one's own language is respected, and even desirable, especially with family and friends. Most immigration countries today speak of integrating immigrants rather than assimilating them (Kaya; 2002).

Gray claimed that integration is adopted with the goals of the migration policies that involve the management of migration and migrant settlement. There is an implication that integration is about participation or involvement which takes place to a certain degree (Gray, 2006) 'Since it is the root metaphor in terms of which successful migrant insertion into 'host' societies is imagined 'integration' will, here be understood to refer not only to the kind of social positioning/incorporation which an individual migrant might achieve but also and more fundamentally, to specific ways of understanding the social cohesion of the host society' (Zammit, 2007).

For this reason it is very important to claim that migrants have to participate in the society social, cultural and political activities same as other people. Also they have to have the responsibilities of being the receive society's members. These will match the social mobility of member of receive society and migrants. But, here integration does

not mean that emigrants must sever ties to their countries of birth nor abandon their cultures, language, traditions, values, religion and identities. Sometimes has been facing the social and economic realities formidable barriers to integration of many migrant. Especially this happens with migrants that do not speak and understand the host society's language. Durkheim claimed that this is the process of integration. Process of integration of migrant is related with social solidarity and social cohesion of hosted societies. Integration is a dynamic process that 'giving' and 'takings' take place over time. In responding to migrants' needs, host societies are unlikely to be able to provide the ideal level of support, constrained by different factors such as economical resources, community need, integration policies, education policies, willing to be integrated on the hosted societies etc. So the migrants have to deal with set of existing traditions, customs, values and norms ect. And learning different language, cultural values, traditions and norms, and must accept the different race and ethnicity. For the members of hosted countries they need to accept diversity of migrants for helping social solidarity and cohesion of society. Because the migrant have to be a part of integration process in the society and it will help social solidarity of hosted society. So the process of migrants' integration depends on the shift in the host societies' attitudes towards them. So migration integration process is not simple and most of the time is accompanied with different social anomies and identity problems. Migrant integration process is complex and fundamentally tied with debates about the migrants' role in the sender and hosted societies.

So integration is a process that needs time. But not all times is successful for both migrants and hosted societies. Because integration is a two way process where migrants and hosted societies social actors have responsibility for wellbeing and social cohesion of society.

According to Migrant Integration Framework Identities are six strategic pathways though which migrants and receive societies collaborate to facilitate migration integration. These pathways can be listed as language and education, economic mobility, equal treatments

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and opportunity, cultural and social interaction, civic participation and citizenship etc. (Department for Communities and Local Government;2012) All these elements are part of migration policies to adopt migrants with the public order and social life.

As the focus of this article is on the language learning and social integration of migrants, let analyze it in more details. Language has a particularly significant role to play in the process of individual and societal integration of migrants. It constitutes both the medium of everyday communication and a resource, in particular in the context of education and the labour market. Furthermore, languages and accents can act as symbols of belonging or foreignness and give rise to differentiation and discrimination. Inequalities in terms of access to education, income, central institutions, societal recognition and social contact are significantly, although not exclusively, determined by linguistic competence in the relevant national language. Like cultural diversity in general, linguistic diversity can lead to innovative stimulation and inter-cultural exchange, on the one hand, but can also give rise to problems of understanding and coordination, on the other, for example in the context of work situations or social contacts. 'Thus, linguistic pluralism always triggers the need for a general communication medium which can usually be fulfilled through the teaching and acquisition of the relevant national language. This may also give rise to processes of linguistic adjustment which may, however, be hindered or entirely blocked by certain circumstances' (Esser; 2006).

But unfortunately in place where Albanian migrants have been settled more (Greece and Italy) do not have such kind of tolerance. Albanian people have the propensity on the learning of foreign language. Also the relationship between Albania and Greece or Albania and Italy (before and after the communist period) formed a conscience on learning and speaking well these languages. Language acquisition and language retention are understood here as the outcome of the interaction of immigrants' activities or learning, on the one hand, and

certain social conditions, on the other. The learning of the new language depends on four basic factors: motivation (e.g. the prospect of increased income), access (e.g. opportunities for contact or availability of courses), skills (e.g. general intelligence or particular ability to learn languages) and the costs associated with learning (e.g. time involved, pressure to assimilate). To analyze the Albanian migration and integration policies in these states for last two decades differ a lot from each other.

Greece applied a model of integration that in social sciences is called as Robert Park Model of Integration. This model is based on the assimilation and homogenization process. 'The migrant integration policies in Greece were focused on the changing in norms, culture, language and identity (especially religion identity). Greece applied as France nationhood policies for cultural assimilation too. These policies were good just for receiving countries stabilization but not for Albanian migrants. These formed the risk and the complexity of social identities to migrant. Also the stigmatization processes of identity make second generation to feel as the member of any society' (Likaj Shaqiri; 2013).Discriminations, misunderstanding, social conflict est. were caused because of formation of these 'difference' between migrants and Greek citizenships. These factors affect the learning language in best manner, but also may cause the mentality of negative attitudes toward language and even the society at whole. The links between migration, language and integration begins with a presentation of some basic conceptual and theoretical information on the classification of the linguistic dimension within the problem of the integration of Albanian migrants in Greece. But every human being that lives in the society has a feeling of desire to be accepted and be a member of it. For this reason, the factor that might change the situation is education. Based on and beyond this, language is also an important component of the mechanisms, through which the system integration of (differentiated) societies proceeds. As part of resource endowment and human capital, it provides integrating inter-

dependencies on the different markets and as a symbol that defines situations and activates cultural ideas or values it also provides collective identifications. As a medium, it becomes significant to the extent that it reduces transactional costs and helps to increase the productivity of economic processes which benefits individuals directly and societal prosperity indirectly. In this respect, the investment in a (common) language is also a problem concerning the provision of a collective good which is of benefit to all, including those who do not learn the language.

But analyzing the Albanian migrants' integration situation in Italy and compare it with Albanian migrants integration in Greece it is quite different. We can say that Albanian migrants in Italy are more oriented to be integrating than Albanian migrants in Greece. This has been caused because the migration policies. The applied model of migration policies in Italy, according to social science have been identified as Cultural Pluralist Model. This model is based on the application of more tolerance of culture of origin countries of migrants, integration of migrant in receive countries and also ignore the idea of separation. 'A series of manifest theoretical and institutional reasons can be found for the link between language and education (with language as part of the explanans of educational success), school tuition is firstly instruction through linguistic communication and, even in times of increased transnational migration, is almost always carried out in the relevant national, local or institutional language. In this respect, language acts as a resource that clearly influences the efficiency of learning, that helps or hinders in the learning of the relevant material' (Esser; 2006). So policies encouraged the maintained of difference of language (for Albanian migrants has been noted that the foreign language has never been an element for not being integrated, because Albanian migrants learn the language of host countries very fast), in culture and religion. These policies made possible Albanian migrants to be more integrated on the Italy.

## 4-Conclusion

Massive exodus occurred over the post-communist period of Albania, mainly to the neighbouring countries such as Greece and Italy. This was a stereotype exodus incomparable with any of the other former communist countries. This situation has been reflected as the challenges of Albanian society and also has been formed the complexity of social structure even in the host society. An opportunity for the migrant to be fast adopted is the fast learning of language of host societies. This was a very good opportunity to incentive the integration process. Unfortunately this phenomenon, have not been taken into consideration. In Greece Albanian migrants faced many problems during the integration process but also being accepted as a 'new comers' or 'guests' of the society. But, Italian policies encouraged the maintained of difference of language (for Albanian migrants has been noted that the foreign language has never been an element for not being integrated, because Albanian migrants learn the language of host countries very fast), in culture and religion. These policies made possible Albanian migrants to be more integrated on the Italy. The productivities associated with the relevant human capital may vary in accordance with the language skills as a necessary resource for numerous activities. Albanian migrants are often faced with the problem that the usability of previously acquired human capital, such as education and occupational experience, changes with the shift in the linguistic context. This factor has not been caused by the lack of possibilities to learn the language, but by the politics that each state forms for the integration of migrants.

As conclusion, language can have symbolic effects on labor markets, increase the employees, increase the dialogue, the economy but also make possible the exchanges of social capital between the society members and emigrants reduce the social distance, discrimination etc.

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