

Albania and Italy Migration policies and their development relevance

A Survey of Innovative and “Development-Friendly” Practices in Albania and Italy

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SUMMARY

This paper examines the relationship between migration policy and development policy in a specific country pair, Italy and Albania, between 1991 and 2006. The relationship between these two countries has been largely shaped by Italian concerns over the uncontrolled immigration from Albania which took place in the 1990's. The Italian response has been to provide development assistance as a means of obtaining greater cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration. Albania, with its institutions slowly developing capacity, has responded to this compact. Italy became the second principal destination for Albanian migrants and Albania one of the main immigrant groups in Italy. Several areas for possible concerted policy include training and recruitment in the home country; student mobility and brain drain; diaspora groups; and remittance investment. While the country pair may seem ideal for policy coherence between migration and development spheres, a number of structural factors outside of the legislative domain have prevented the evolution of concerted policy. In fact, little has been done in any of these areas. More recently, international support has helped to restructure Albanian migration policy according to good practice and to propose measures in all of these areas, although the implementation of specific measures awaits partnership, funding and increased institutional capacity and ownership. Italian migration policy, on the other hand, is conceived according to national priorities and continues to ignore development impact. The limited development-oriented pilot projects in immigration source countries have generally neglected Albania. Italian development aid policy, on the other hand, influenced by NGOs and by a changing approach to aid in general, has begun to consider the impact of migration on development in Albania and to plan interventions which recognise the ties between these areas and seek positive synergy.

INTRODUCTION

Geographical proximity and colonial history unite Albania and Italy. The massive migration flows of the past fifteen years make this country pair a useful example in examining the reciprocal evolution of migration policy between two countries and the development impact of these policies on the sending country.

A review of the relationship between Italy and Albania could reach as far back as the Roman Empire. It could start with the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century and the welcoming of Albanian refugees in southern Italy. There are a handful of ethnic Albanian communities in Italy dating back to the 16th century, when the rulers of Southern Italy invited Albanians to leave the Ottoman province and settle in Calabria and Sicily. Even today, some villages in these regions are ethnically Albanian, and a few of the oldest residents speak vestigial dialects. These isolated communities were largely forgotten until rediscovered in reference to the arrival of modern Albanians. Nonetheless, the existence of these communities has no effect on policy regarding Albania.

The review could as easily start with the Fascist occupation in the 1930's, which saw Italy dominate Albania until the end of the Second World War. Regardless of the starting point of a history of Italian-Albanian relations, however, recent history is largely framed in the context of mass migration. The starting date is 1991.

ALBANIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY

Albanian migration to Italy started after the collapse of the Communist regime in Tirana in the early 1990's. Albania had been one of the most isolated countries in the world and living standards were far below those of other East European countries. Albanians, who had for years been kept from exposure to the outside world and limited even in their internal mobility, began to flee the poverty, backwardness and growing chaos endemic in the country. Their destinations were neighbouring Italy and Greece, which they knew through television and radio broadcasts. King (King & Vullnetari, 2003, p. 25) divides Albanian emigration into four phases: the "Embassy Migrants" in 1990; the "Main Mass Exodus" of 1991; the Pyramid Crisis of 1997; and the Kosovo Crisis of 1999.

The first boatloads of Albanians arrived on the southeast coast of Italy in 1991: 28,000 in March 1991 and 20,000 in August 1991. This profoundly affected Italian public opinion and the future perception of migration in general in Italy; even today, these rusty ships reappear in newspapers to symbolize migration.

During the 1990's, Albanians were the leading applicants for asylum in Italy, although they rarely received refugee status. By the early part of this decade, applications for asylum from Albanians had dwindled to only a handful. There were 547 recognized Albanian refugees living in Italy in 2003 (ISTAT, 2004).

There has been a steady flow of Albanians throughout the past decade, and Albanians have benefited from the regularizations conducted in 1995 (about 30,000), 1998 (about 39,000) and 2002 (47,763) (Carfagna 2002, pp. 66-67, and ISTAT 2005). Albanians have also benefited from special permits (about 10,000 issued to the first arrivals in 1991) and from special provisions for refugees during the Kosovo war.

Undocumented arrivals from Albania have dropped off sharply. Table 1 shows the number of persons landing along the Italian coast from 1998 to late 2004. Close cooperation with Albanian authorities – and the Italian presence in the ports of departure in Albania – in the late 1990's led to a drop in the traffic along the Apulian coast after 2000. When traffic shifted

to Calabria, the Italian authorities sought cooperation with Turkey and Egypt, where many of the ships passed before arriving in Calabria. Turkish and Egyptian cooperation led to the drop in arrivals in Calabria. Undocumented Albanians no longer come to Italy by sea. Currently most undocumented traffic into Italy is from North Africa towards Sicily. This dangerous route, when not cut short by shipwreck, usually leads to the island of Lampedusa, halfway between Tunisia and Sicily.

Undocumented migration to Italy has not decreased, although the means of entry have changed. Most undocumented migrants are visa overstayers. Estimates of the undocumented presence vary and range up to 750,000 for the beginning of 2006 (according to the CGIL trade union). Most of the undocumented migrants are from developing countries (DCs), primarily in Eastern Europe; the only least developed countries (LDCs) to send significant numbers of regular and irregular migrants are Senegal and Bangladesh.

Legal inflows of Albanians remain significant. Visas issued by the Italian consular services in Albania were 35,889 in 2000, 45,470 in 2001 and 33,070 in 2002, 39,496 in 2003, and 38,785 in 2004. For 2004, about 5500 were work visas and 13,250 were family reunification visas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, p. 143; Caritas, 2005, p. 82-83).

Residence permits issued to foreigners in Italy in 2004 and valid at the end of the year show the importance of Albania, which accounted for 9.3% of all new permits, second only to Romania (Tab. 2). The same table show that most immigrants (80%) to Italy are from developing countries and few (4.3%) from the least developed countries.

Albanians represent 13.2% of all foreigners listed with Municipal registries in Italy (316,659 out of 2.4 million in 2004), making them the leading registered foreign population. Residence permit data for the past decade shows how the Albanian population grew rapidly, increasing 10-fold from 1992 to 2003 (Table 3). Albanians have settled in all parts of Italy (Table 4). In 2003, there were 50,000 Albanian school children in Italian public schools. Albanian adolescents also accounted for 16.8% of the unaccompanied minors found in Italy in 2005. These minors are subject to repatriation upon reaching 18 years of age unless they receive judicial approval for their stay in Italy.¹

Foreign inmates represent about a third of the Italian prison population, and the 2,905 Albanians in prison in mid-2005 accounted for more than 15% of the total number of foreign inmates.

Italy was by no means the only destination for Albanians. About 20% of the total population – or about a million people – is abroad. The main country of destination is Greece, which hosts at least 700,000 Albanians. Albanians are the major immigrant group in Greece, accounting for as much as 90% of the foreign population in Greece, and 60% of Albanian emigration. Italy is estimated to represent only 20% of the Albanian population abroad. Other important destination countries for Albanians are the UK, USA and Canada, and Germany.

ITALIAN-ALBANIAN RELATIONS

By the mid-1990's unregulated traffic across the Straits of Otranto had become a visible problem for police and public opinion. Law 563 of 1995, the so-called "Apulia Law", created temporary reception centres to deal with the influx of undocumented people escaping from the Balkans. Because of the importance of the movement of undocumented migrants, drugs and arms across the Straits of Otranto, cooperation with Albania was a major priority for the

¹ Municipalities are responsible for unaccompanied minors. Most minors who do not abandon their municipally-funded group homes are granted a work permit upon turning 18. Others disappear from these open facilities.

Italian government. At the same time, achieving political and social stability in Albania was perceived as a major objective in foreign aid, since it was expected to reduce criminal activity emerging from Albania. Albania therefore became a key recipient of Italian development aid (600 million euro between 1992 and 2005) and in the context of military and police cooperation.

During this period, intense activity by Italian Coast Guard and border authorities led to numerous naval interceptions. Thousands of Albanians were sent back without ever setting foot on dry land, or caught near the beach shortly after landing in Apulia. The intensification of Italian naval patrols also led to tragic accidents such as the sinking of the *Kater I Rades* in March 1997, in which at least 58 Albanians drowned after their boat was struck by an Italian cutter in international waters. Numerous other fatal incidents occurred right through 2002.

In 1997, the collapse of the pyramid schemes in Albania and ensuing public disorder led to an even greater outflow of Albanians (about 18,000 arrived by boat in Italy). This raised great concern in Italian public opinion and led to major investment in Albania in an attempt to restore order and limit the impact on Italy. An Italian paramilitary presence was established and cooperation launched, especially in the port of Vlore. “Operation Alba” was a multinational “stabilisation” mission led by Italy, with France, Turkey, Greece, Spain, Romania, Austria and Denmark as partners. The OSCE and the UN,² faced with the chaos in Albania, encouraged an Italian response, and in April 1997 the Italian parliament approved the mission, which lasted four months and brought 3000 Italian soldiers, almost half the “Alba” contingent, in Albania. Their main task was to protect the OSCE observers of the June elections and to guarantee the safe arrival of humanitarian aid and supplies.

April 1997 also saw the arrival of the 27th Naval Group of the Italian Navy in Durres, which was responsible for patrolling Albanian coastal waters and collaborating with local authorities in fighting “emigration”.

In June of 1997 the Italian Interforce Police mission began providing assistance and advice to Albanian police. Headquartered in Tirana, the Interforce mission also has branches in Shkoder and Dures as well as at the marine border control points.

After Operation Alba, the Italian military presence in Albania remained under the form of the Delegation of Italian Experts (DEI), following a protocol signed between the Italian and Albanian Ministers of Defense in Rome on 28 August 1997, for assistance in reorganising the Albanian Army, Navy, Air Force and Police.³ There are still 25 members of the DEI in Albania. Between 1997 and 2005 the DEI spent 8.7 million euro on training Albanian security personnel and granted 62 million euro in goods and services.

Throughout these operations, and even as emergency police measures were being implemented, Italy was involved in negotiations with the Albanian government for a readmission agreement. Italy is usually careful to negotiate labour agreements only once a readmission agreement is in place (Chaloff 2004). Yet the need for an agreement with Albania was so great that the labour migration agreement was signed the same day as the 1997 Readmission Agreement, 18 November 1997.⁴ The labour migration agreement was meant to provide an immediate justification for politically unpopular repression of unregulated migration. For Italy, the two agreements expressed the hope that migration from Albania could be limited to the planned quotas and mechanisms noted in the labour agreement. The facilitations Albania has received under the bilateral agreement have gone no

² UN Security Council Resolution 1101 28.3.1997.

³ The protocol was approved by Italian parliament in Law 1/98, 13 January 1998, later law 42/98, 13 March 1998.

⁴ The Readmission Agreement and the Labour Migration Agreement came into force on 1 August 1998.

further than the granting of set-asides in the quota system (see below), rather than any specific recruitment or assistance.

Italy was, of course, not the only country interested in finding mechanisms to ensure long term stability in Albania. The Stability Pact for South East Europe, a 40-partner international initiative for the Balkan area, was first discussed in late 1998; Italy supported the initiative. The pact was signed on 10 June 1999. While the initial focus of the Stability Pact was on conflict resolution, fighting crime and supporting economic development, migration issues were later recognised with the creation of the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Return Regional Initiative. This initiative – currently little more than a talking shop – focuses on asylum, migration, integrated border management and visa and consular issues. Italy, in any case, is not a donor and is not directly involved in the MARRI initiative.

By 1999 the Italian government had decided to formalise its own broad initiative for supporting stability in the Balkans, including Albania. In October 1999 the first draft of what would become Law 84 – the “Italian Participation in the Stabilisation, Reconstruction and Development of the Balkans” Law – was presented in parliament.⁵ It was signed by the Italian President on 21 March 2001. The law makes no reference to migration or to migratory flows, although it does concentrate on creating a steering committee to establish priority criteria for planning and awarding aid in the region – criteria that later included support for managed migration flows.

According to Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, “Albania is no longer a priority country for Italy.” The extensive migratory flows have ended – because of police cooperation and the simple fact that Albania has already sent much of its labour force abroad. While Italy is an important trading partner (Italy receives 74.8% of Albanian exports and provides 31.5% of Albania’s imports⁶) (table 5), the small market Albania represents, and the high degree of risk associated with investment, means that it is not an economic priority. Italian firms failed to play a major role in the principal privatisations and tend to concentrate their investment in small and medium firms and outsourcing.

Nonetheless, Italy’s diplomatic mission to Tirana is its second largest, after Washington DC, with 100 staff in the different bodies, and is considered a prestigious posting among Ministry of Foreign Affairs personnel: the Ambassador to Tirana can expect a top-level posting afterwards.

ITALIAN MIGRATION POLICY

Italy was long a sending country of migrants, with at least 25 million Italians emigrating between 1876 and 1973. Migration policy during that century concentrated on protecting Italian emigrants. Foreign migration to Italy began during the 1970’s, in the absence of any specific labour migration recruitment measures or even an adequate legislative framework.

Today Italy is one of the leading destination countries in Europe – second only to Spain – due to labour market demand. An aging and wealthier population has meant that lower skill, hazardous, low wage and low status jobs have been abandoned by Italians. Workers born outside the EU represented 16.4% of all job starts in 2005 (table 6). The absence of collective solutions for the elderly has driven a domestic assistance market now estimated to require between 500,000 and 800,000 workers, almost all of whom are immigrants. The past twenty

⁵ “Disposizioni per la partecipazione italiana alla stabilizzazione, alla ricostruzione e allo sviluppo di Paesi dell’area balcanica”, 21 March 2001.

⁶ Data for 1st trimester 2005.

years have seen the gradual definition of an Italian migration policy, in an attempt to govern these flows.

Institutional interests within the Italian government influence policy in different directions: migration policy is determined by the Prime Minister's office, which defines priority and answers requests from members of the governing coalition; it is usually members of the coalition whose staff draft proposed legislation. The key Ministries in defining the technical content and applying legislation are the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (semi-officially known as the Ministry of Welfare) and the Ministry of Interior; even when these Ministers are of the same party, they may have divergent priorities and must respond to demands from different constituencies (employers' associations and federations, trade unions, and civil society). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also plays a role, especially in negotiating bilateral agreements. Immigration laws also require applicatory regulations. These regulations may only be approved after years of discussion and negotiation, delaying application of a new law until roles and functions can be assigned. The ongoing decentralization of administrative functions towards local (Regional, provincial and municipal) authorities adds a further level of complexity, as some initiatives are decided – or contested – across various levels of government.

Modern immigration legislation first appeared in Italy in 1986 (Law 943/1986) to regulate entry of immigrants seeking employment. The sharp rise in migration in the late 1980's – which followed the changing labour market rather than any change in the law – and the end of the Iron Curtain prompted hasty passage of a broader law in 1990 (Law 39/1990, known as the '*Martelli law*'), which provided for annual planning of migratory flows, norms regarding the rights and obligations of foreigners in Italy, their stay and work conditions and other matters regarding family reunion, and social integration. Asylum – which had not yet seriously affected Italy – was also addressed. At the time, Albania was still a closed country.

Immigration became a significant issue in the 90's – in no small part because of flows from Albania – leading to Law 40/1998 (the so-called *Turco-Napolitano law* or *Testo Unico*), issued by the centre-left government. This law, passed during a period when Albania was the spotlight country for immigration to Italy, created a three-pillar immigration policy, subsequently upheld by the centre-right coalition, based on:

- a) fighting illegal migration - bilateral agreements and criminal penalties
- b) regulating legal migration - a quota system (an annual ceiling);
- c) integrating resident foreigners - a national immigration fund.

The government was required to publish three-year planning documents for immigration. Entry to Italy was allowed within the national quotas and with either a job offer (invitation from an employer), or 'sponsored job-seekers' (guaranteed by a legal resident).

In 2002, the 1998 immigration law was revised. Law 189/2002 (known as the *Bossi-Fini Law*) imposed further restrictions on entry and tightened the conditions for stay; integration measures were left intact.

The management of foreign labour flows in Italy centers on the quota system, which establishes a ceiling for annual entries for labour purposes. During the period 2002-2005, the annual decree set quotas for the entry of 79,500 immigrant workers annually, of whom 50,000 were admitted for seasonal work only.⁷ The quota was doubled for 2006. Family reunification in Italy is exempt from the quotas.⁸ Those with a family permit are allowed, but not required,

⁷ Seasonal work may last up to 9 months. Because of the incentives for returnees – facilitated visa processing, priority list, and eventual possibility to convert to a long-term work permit – there are few cases of overstaying seasonal work visas.

⁸ Foreigners who have held a permit for dependent or self-employment work, study or religious reasons for at least one year, or a residence card (art. 29) can apply for reunification with: a) spouse; b) dependent children; c)

to work. This means that spouses and dependents of foreigners with labour permits are allowed to work. Those with work of family permits also have full access to the health system and to social security, and acquire pension rights in accordance with contributions.

Italian Migration Law 40/1998 as modified by law 189/2002

The Quota system	The number of authorisations for entry for work purposes is established annually after hearing the Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring ¹ and the relevant Parliamentary Commissions.
Entry conditions	<p>Non-EU immigrants can enter Italy only with a 'residence contract' (<i>contratto di soggiorno</i>) – i.e. a contract of dependent employment with an employer (a firm or a family), according to availability within the quota system.</p> <p>A needs test for foreign workers was added in 2002, requiring the employment office to publish the job opening; if there is no answer after 20 days, the prefecture authorises the entry of a new non-EU worker. There is no skills test, although certain categories are exempt from the quotas.</p> <p>The employer has to guarantee the availability of housing for the worker, complying with the minimum standards laid down by the law for public housing, and also payment of travel expenses for the workers to return home.</p> <p>A “sponsor” system was created by the 1998 law but eliminated by the 2002 Law.</p> <p>Entry for self-employment is subject to the self-employment quotas.</p>
Residence permit limits	<p>The residence permit varies depending on the type of work :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a total of nine months for seasonal work. Starting in 2002, foreigners coming to Italy for at least two consecutive years may be granted a multi-annual permit for up to three years for seasonal work, or, within the quota, a normal work permit. • one year for dependent temporary workers and no more than two years for non-temporary workers, self-employed work, or family reunification. • renewals are subject to the same time limits (the 1998 Law allowed for renewals of twice the length) <p>Non-EU workers who lose their job have a maximum of six months to find a new job, after which they face expulsion (the 1998 time limit was for the duration of the permit and not less than 12 months).</p> <p>Anyone with a residence permit that allows indefinite renewal (<i>i.e.</i>, work or family), and who earns enough to provide for himself/herself (and family) might request a 10-year automatically renewable residence card after six years in Italy (compared to 5 years under the 1998 Law).</p>

The quotas do not address specific skills, such as technical abilities, or qualifications, such as educational level, of immigrants. Applications are processed in the order in which they are filed, rather than according to the category of the job filled. Exceptions are made for certain professions (ranging from translators to athletes to international executives) which are exempted from the quotas.

The quota system does use a set-aside, or “privileged quota”, for specific nationalities (Tab. 7). The set-aside is both a minimum and a ceiling for foreign workers from specific countries. Italian policy has been to award privileged quotas to those countries which collaborate in the fight against undocumented migration, both within the framework of bilateral agreements or through approval by the Ministerial working group responsible for recommending set-asides to the Prime Minister (Chaloff, 2004).

The quotas historically fell short of national estimates of demand for foreign labour as estimated by the Excelsior system⁹ and applications to provincial labour offices almost always

dependent parents. Parents over age sixty-five are allowed to enter under family reunion only if they can prove that no other child can provide for them in their native country; siblings and other relatives are not entitled to legal entry.

⁹ The primary means for estimating labour market shortages is the Excelsior Information System, created for *Unioncamere* in agreement with the Ministry of Labour. This system is run by Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture, and uses a survey of businesses to produce an annual analysis of expected Italian labour market demand by enterprises (<http://excelsior.unioncamere.net>). The system is reasonably detailed, looking at planned hires in the following year according to a number of parameters: sector and geographic location of business activity, experience level of personnel sought, intention to train, and

far exceed the available quotas¹⁰. The fact that demand exceeds availability is where the Albanian set-aside has been relevant. Since 1998, the first year of application of the quota system, there has always been a set-aside for Albanian workers (Tab. 8). The set-aside guarantees that a certain number of Albanians will be able to enter Italy regardless of demand. There has always been sufficient demand in Albania to saturate the set-aside.

The quotas have been accused of failing to effectively manage labour migration (Lemaître, 2003). Quotas have been set at the political level, with great sensitivity for public opinion. The gap between the stated demand for foreign labour by employers and the actual quotas suggests that labour demand is met by undocumented migrants. With demand exceeding supply, foreign workers arrive through other channels (according to the Ministry of Interior, with short-term visas) and work undocumented and unregistered. Their hope is either to establish a relationship with an employer willing to undertake the complicated bureaucratic procedures necessary for legal entry, or to support their application during one of the periodic regularizations. Many of the Albanians who currently reside in Italy, in fact, came without documents and were later regularized (Triandafyllidou and Kotic, 2003).

A number of factors make Italy a vulnerable country for undocumented migration. On the one hand, a considerable informal economy, the rapid growth of the domestic and personal services sector and the predominance of small businesses provide work for undocumented migrants. On the other hand, Italy is particularly vulnerable to irregular entry because of its Mediterranean extensive coastline, and its important tourism and pilgrimage industry make it a relatively accessible country for applicants for tourist visas.

Undocumented flows from Albania have been sharply reduced, especially through border cooperation. On the other hand, the large number of Albanians now resident in Italy has facilitated the arrival of their relatives on short-term visits. Overstaying their tourist visas is one way to get around the numerical ceiling on labour migration from Albania. Overstayers work irregularly until able to take advantage of the annual quotas to return to Albania and enter through the legal channel. Past evidence of extensive irregular migration and employment can be found in the periodic regularizations (five times in sixteen years: 1986, 1990, 1996, 1998 and 2002), allowing the cumulative regularization of about 1.5 million migrants, of whom more than 100,000 were Albanians.¹¹

Strict and bureaucratic procedures for regulating presence have a negative effect on the security of regular migrants in Italy. The short duration of residence permits, coupled with the long wait for renewal, often leaves immigrants trapped in the country, limiting the opportunity to travel home and to maintain ties or become involved in entrepreneurial projects abroad.

Italy also spends very little on integration measures: the small national fund created in 1998 was later folded into a generic social services fund, leaving only a few million euro earmarked for integration measures at the national level. Poor integration – discrimination in the labour and housing market – reduces the resources available to migrants for any purposes, including remittances or investment in the home country.

nationality (Italian or foreign). This testifies to the sharp distinction in the Italian labour market between foreign and citizen workers, as well as the role that the Excelsior system is meant to play in lobbying for quotas. Excelsior yields an estimate of the range (minimum to maximum) of expected hires during the following year. Excelsior uses a telephone sample of more than 90,000 of the 5.8 million registered businesses in Italy, and direct face-to-face interviews with all 4000 businesses with more than 250 employees. For more information on the role of Excelsior and its implications, see Chaloff 2005, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰ For example, by June 2005, the Ministry of Labor had registered 240,000 applications for the 99,500 openings. The disproportion was greater in the major cities: a factor of 8 in Rome and 16 in Milan.

¹¹ The September 2002 regularization covered domestic workers and home-helpers and contract employees. Applicants had to prove that they had been hired before June 10, 2002, and had never received a deportation order. 646,829 permits were issued, a substantial increase in the resident foreign population.

ALBANIAN MIGRATION POLICY

As noted above, Albania has signed bilateral agreements, especially on controlling undocumented migration, since 1997. The policy process in Albania was driven by the insistence of donor states – and later, states supporting the Stability Pact and Accession Process – that Albania staunch the flow of undocumented migrants. At the same time, Albanian citizens resented this willingness of the Albanian government to become the enforcer of limits on “survival migration”. Nonetheless, the Albanian government is committed to the Stability and Association Agreement – finally initialed in February 2006 – and many of the reforms in the migration sector have been due to pressure and support – in equal measure – from the European Commission, the lead donor in Albania.

Albania’s current migration law, L. 9034 (20.3.2003), “On the Migration of Albanian Citizens for Employment Purposes” was drafted in the framework of the Stability Pact and the EU accession process. Compared to the Italian migration law, the Albanian Law is quite terse and outlines basic principles rather than specific mechanisms. The Law affirms the right to emigrate and return (art. 4) and promises support and services to emigrants. The Law proposes the creation of both a Labour Emigrant Registry for aspirant emigrants (art. 8) and a registry for prior emigrants (art. 19). Underpinning the law is a principle that Albania must provide – and guarantee – a legal framework for economic emigration, even as it must work to protect the rights and preserve the culture of Albanians abroad, through bilateral agreements and consular services.

Much more significant in current policy is the National Strategy on Migration (NSM): Development of a Migration System, approved by the Albanian Council of Ministers, 19.11.2004. The project, proposed by IOM and assigned to the Albanian Government, was co-funded by the EC under the CARDS 2001 programme and ran from September 2003 to May 2005.¹² IOM proposed the project “to strengthen the capacity of Albania to develop and implement migration legislation policy”, specifically “to bring Albanian laws in the field of migration in line with international standards; clarify, identify and build capacity of Albanian authorities; assist in concluding readmission agreements”. The original project proposal highlighted two objectives: creating the legal and institutional mechanisms for drafting the NSM, and then creating the structures and mechanisms for implementing the NSM.

The project, which produced a five-year NSM meant to run from 2005-2010, involved a wide range of international experts and produced new research and policy papers in an attempt to draft a broad strategy covering all issues affecting migration issues.

Even more importantly, the NSM led to the drafting of a National Action Plan on Migration (NAPM), listing the various actions to be taken to achieve each of the measures of the Strategy, identifying the actors involved, defining resources and costs for each action and even providing benchmarks.

The NSM, then, represents the blueprint for Albanian migration policy in the upcoming years. It can be seen as an innovative practice in itself: a broad initiative, involving government and non-government actors, amassing and exploiting the latest research and policy developments in migration and development, building capacity through discussion and workshops, and producing a shared work plan – the NAPM – which should guide actions by the new government. The NSM makes explicit links between migration and development, especially in its discussion of “benefiting from Albanian emigrants abroad” and the measures proposed in the area of circular migration, return and brain drain.

¹² Total cost: 1.25 million euro. It received a favorable evaluation from its donors.

The Action Plan provides a full list of tasks and estimates costs for each action. It is therefore a blueprint for action by the Government of Albania, but dependent on the allocation of resources which generally have to come from donors. One interviewee called it a “wish list”.

One question regarding the NSM is about ownership. While the project owner was clearly the Albanian government, some question about the fragility of institutions remains. The preliminary evaluation by the European Commission Delegation in Albania noted that “the main stakeholders are not entirely prepared under a technical, financial and managerial point of view to take over the project and their institutional capacity needs to be strengthened further,” even if the “degree of beneficiaries’ commitment is generally good”. In fact, the same functionaries who were involved in workshops, round tables and drafting of the NSM continue to speak about the Strategy as a foreign process, and to refer to it as instructions rather than as decisions.

Application of the NSM is also hindered by continuing institutional uncertainty. Vast staff changes following the change of government in 2005 have meant that many of the functionaries and Ministers who had developed expertise during the NSM process have been replaced by novices. The very coordination of the strategy is unclear, with departments in different Ministries appearing to jockey for control of the portfolio to strengthen their own position in a moment of institutional change.

Further, it is important to note that the NSM process was not intended to have an impact on actors from the main receiving countries, nor was it specifically linked to policy in Greece or Italy. While the Italian Embassy in Tirana was aware of the NSM development, provided data and participated in some of the conference events, as well as mentioning the NSM in its reports to the Ministry in Rome, there is no real awareness of the NSM in Italian institutions working with Albania in the field of migration. Although the NAPM proposes measures of lobbying Italy and Greece for greater respect of migrant rights and for application of specific legislation benefiting Albanians, during his first official visit to Italy, the Albanian Prime Minister lobbied – successfully – for the traditional requested increase in quotas for Albania, without going into the bilateral issues identified by the NSM.

Policy Guideline Themes in the Albanian National Strategy on Migration

A. Combating illegal migration	Addressing Root Causes of Migration	
	Return	Return of Albanian Nationals to Albania by EU Member States
		Return of 3rd Country Nationals to Albania by EU Member States
		Return of 3rd Country Nationals to 3rd Countries by Albania
B. Linking emigration of Albanians and development of Albania	Benefiting from Albanians abroad	SUPPORTING ALBANIAN EMIGRANTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the image of Albanian emigrants abroad • Improve Albanian diplomatic and consular services for Albanian emigrants • Protecting the rights of Albanian emigrants
		Mobilizing Albanian communities abroad
		Drive remittances to investment into business
	Organizing an adequate emigration policy	Management of circular migration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information on emigration possibilities • Registration of migrants • Bilateral labour agreements as tool for circular migration • Albanian students in the EU Member States • Visa Policy
		From Brain Drain to Brain Circulation
C. Elaboration of an appropriate legal framework for emigration and immigration		
D. Institutional framework and means for migration policy, specifically the implementation of the NSM		

Currently, a number of Albanian departments are responsible for migration: the Department of Migration within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (emigrants and immigrants, even if the latter are still few in number); the Ministry of Interior (which contains a Directorate for Refugees and Asylum and a Directorate for Border Control; the latter includes the Division of Migration and Visas); and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Institute of Diaspora and Department of Consular Services). The Directorate of Immigration at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs plays the role of coordinator, even as a consultative body, and interacts with the Social Services and Vocational Training directorates in the same Ministry.

The National Strategy for Employment, Social Services and Social Insurance, (NSESS), the draft umbrella strategy, assigns only two paragraphs to consideration of migration.

The Ministry of Finance lacks a single office for coordination of issues related to remittances, investment and savings by migrants.

Some reference should be made to the role of local government in Albania, especially as regards local governance of local development, where it may have a greater possibility for impact. One expert on local development stated that “regional councils have a much higher capacity than at the Ministry level”.¹³ This evaluation is further reinforced by the observation that the 2005 elections resulted in widespread replacement of Ministry officials at all levels, largely obviating previous investments in capacity building. Local government staff is protected from the spoils system.

Each region has its own Local Development Strategy, developed in concertation with stakeholders. While remittances and activity by returning migrants is a central element in local economic development, the issue is not often addressed in Local Development Strategies.

Part of the issue is perception. In Vlore, 70-75% of local businesses are owned by returning emigrants, yet the local authorities do not see them as “role models” or consider them important.

The perception at the local level is of little coordination at the national level, little support and severe under-capacity. Further confusing the situation, the Ministry of Local Government was recently absorbed by the Ministry of Interior. While this reorganization does not necessarily affect functioning, in practical terms it has reduced decentralization and reframed the concept of local governance, one more modelled on the prefectural priorities of traditional concern to the Ministry of Interior. “The merge took place too soon, before local development priorities matured,” claimed the expert, making local development a less important concern. The National Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises is likewise quite “weak”, even though this would be a vital institution for supporting returning migrants.

Of course, “returning migrants don’t go back to their home regions, but rather to the Tirana-Durres Corridor. Yet the business environment there is saturated and they probably have more chance of successful return if they start a new business in their home region”. The local authority in Gjirokaster, for example, is well aware of the role of the diaspora in local development, of ethnic Greek Albanians who have left to work in Greece but who have started to invest in the area. Migration issues are not cited in its Local Development Strategy, but the local authorities do have contacts with emigrants in Greece.

Mayors, in fact, know where their emigrant citizens are. They have no registries, and therefore they are quite limited in terms of their statistical monitoring – just as at the national level – by this shortfall in data. There is also a lack of communication between local authorities and central institutions in terms of the specificity of emigration and return in each area, since institutional communication is weak between the local and central level.

¹³ Interview with Andrea-Rosalinde Hofer, OECD LEED Centre.

On the other hand, local authorities do have a concrete instrument for financial incentives for migrants: they have a margin of flexibility, with a possibility of creating tax abatements for businesses of 7-10%. This has not yet been widely experimented.

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN ITALIAN POLICY

As noted above, as long as Italy was a sending country, its foreign policy addressed only emigration issues. As inward flows became an Italian foreign policy interest, most attention has been devoted to efforts to reduce undocumented migration into the country. Nonetheless, in addition to the agreements on readmission and police cooperation, some bilateral agreements specifically dealing with labour have been signed. The first agreement was with Albania, underlining its importance in this new policy direction.

Institutional framework for managing migration

The opportunities for inter-institutional discussion of migration and development are quite limited. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs counts at least four departments dealing separately with these issues: Cooperation and Development; Cultural Affairs and Universities; Immigration; and Political Affairs. While information circulates within the Ministry, responsibilities are clearly separated, and it is only on the occasion of official visits that the single departments draw up their own priorities and issues, to be collated by the Political Affairs unit.

Outside of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, development disappears from the policy agenda, as does consideration of the impact of migration on the sending country. One public official involved in formulating migration policy in Italy, who preferred to remain anonymous, stated, “99.9% of discussion regarding immigration policy ignores the impact on the sending country”. The Italian migration policy described above, in fact, concentrates on meeting the short-term needs of Italian employers – through seasonal and dependent work quotas. The migration policy itself contemplates circular migration is addressed only to the degree in which unemployed foreign workers are required to leave the country if they fail to find a new job. Brain drain, likewise, is not actively combated, although it could be argued that the obstacles faced by foreign university students attempting to obtain a work permit to stay on in Italy represent a discouragement of settlement and an incentive to return.

Public opinion and popular pressure on Italian migration policy

Italian migration policy, and specifically its policy regarding Albania, has been strongly driven by public opinion, certainly more than by consideration of demographic, labour market or human rights issues. Public opinion has limited the possibilities of linking migration policy to development, since it has generally been concerned with security issues.

Several distinct phases of popular opinion regarding Albanians may be identified (Triandafyllidou, 1999). The first arrivals, in 1991, were characterised by images of rusting boats full of impoverished Albanians arriving in Southeastern Italy. These images of desperation – in a period when Italian public opinion was still caught up in the enthusiasm over the collapse of the Berlin Wall – were met with solidarity, even within the economically troubled region where these Albanians arrived.

Shortly after the first arrivals, the media turned to portraying Albanians as a source of crime and began to associate Albanian women with prostitution. Albania was also perceived as a corrupt country in chaos where the rule of law was impossible and trafficking was widespread, as portrayed in the 1995 Italian film “Lamerica”. Albanians were viewed as

treating Italy as a promised land of easy riches. Police investigators used terms like “merciless” to describe Albanian criminals and disregarded any possibility of police collaboration with Albanian law enforcement, considering the Albanian police to be untrained and corrupt.¹⁴

By the mid-‘90s newspapers began to use the term “Albanian” almost interchangeably with “prostitute” and “criminal”. During this period, trafficking from Albania also intensified with the rusty fishing boats giving way to high-speed rubber rafts. The general image of immigration in Italy was that of criminal elements (Censis, 2003), and Albanians were at the heart of this perception. The dominant imagery of immigration in that period was that of rubber rafts and derelict ships foundering in the rough waters of the Straits of Otranto. Television portrayed images of these ships lit by the spotlights of Italian Coast Guard ships and helicopters.

The chaos of the 1997 events further reinforced the Italian public image of Albania as a source of chaos, criminality and disorder. The 1999 Kosovo crisis – which saw a massive involvement of Italian NGO’s and charities in the refugee camps of Northern Albania – provided additional images of an impoverished country, although this time there was a significant humanitarian interest.

In the same period, changes in the trafficking networks led to a decline in the presence of Albanian sex workers relative to other nationalities in Italy,¹⁵ and helped break this stereotype of Albanian women as involved in prostitution.

Similarly, the widespread employment of Albanian men in the industrial and construction sectors broadened the perception of Albanians as workers. Nonetheless, employers tend to favour other nationalities over Albanians. One complaint regarding the privileged quotas for admission of Albanians is that it does not reflect the labour demand of employers, who have no special interest in Albanian workers.¹⁶ Albanian workers also report discrimination from employers, including the perception that they are “looked down on” and that their qualifications are disregarded (Triandafyllidou and Kasic, 2003, pp. 1009-1010). Nonetheless, Italian authorities are now able to programme labour migration from Albania without raising concern in public opinion.

International and bilateral considerations in Italian migration policy

Regardless of the demands of public opinion, the margin for maneuver in the area of international and bilateral relations are quite limited in migration policy. The 1998 law assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior responsibility for negotiating agreements with other countries on readmission, and granted the right to offer material and support for these purposes (art. 11 par. 4 of Law 286/98). The 2002 immigration law instructs the Government to plan its foreign aid considering the “collaboration of other countries in preventing illegal migration, fighting traffickers and exploitation of prostitution...” as well as instructing the Government to cut aid to countries which do not attempt to prevent the re-emigration of their own citizens expelled from Italy (art. 1, par. 2).

One anomaly in the Italian immigration policy is art. 1, par 1, of Law 189/02, which extends existing tax deductions for private contributions to non-profit organizations to cover authorized non-profits working in countries outside the OECD. This provision, which has

¹⁴ Police Inspector Petrillo, head of an anti-trafficking investigation regarding Albania, Marghera (Venice) Police, 20/10/1998.

¹⁵ For example, in 1998 half of the recipients of a “social protection” permit – granted essentially to trafficked prostitutes who escape from exploitation – were granted to Albanians; this declined to 7.5% in 2004.

¹⁶ Interviews with Mirko Pari, Confesercenti Rimini, 18/10/2001; Angelo Candido, Federalberghi, 17/4/2003. Regarding both tourism and agricultural workers, see Censis 2002.

never been incorporated into the tax law, may be considered a charitable gesture by the center-right coalition within a law which considerably restricted immigration measures.

Cooperation policy is also discussed in the 2004-2006 planning document prepared by the Government with the aim of guiding migration policy and determining quotas. The planning document, refers to the role of cooperation in a special section.¹⁷ Here, again, a series of development initiatives are considered important because “stimulating social development and productive capacity in receiving countries helps reduce migratory pressure, especially illegal pressure, helping create conditions for orderly management of migration flows”. Debt conversion, SME development, technical assistance, emigration information and microcredit are all considered as contributing to this objective. Even voluntary repatriation schemes are considered “development aid” in this document. When discussing development in the migration context, then, the “root causes” approach appears to be the only one.

Development assistance policies and their reference to migration

Among OECD countries, Italy devotes the smallest fraction of GDP to development aid (0.15%). Development aid is generally split between developing countries (DCs) and the least developed countries (LDCs). The former generally receive more credits, while the latter receive more grants. As noted above, Albania has been a major recipient of Italian development aid, ranking in the top 10 – and the leading European country – since the early 1990’s (table 9). It remains a major receiving country. In addition to attracting new development aid (table 10), military and police cooperation have not completely wound down.¹⁸ Active projects in Albania with Italian development funding – whether grants or credits – are worth 335 million euro (table 11). Most of the investment is in long-term infrastructure such as power plants and lines, roads and sewage systems (70.2% of funding).

The significant involvement and investment in Albania by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Directorate of Cooperation and Development – regardless of the broader policy objectives – has concentrated mostly, in fact, on infrastructure and institution building. The first cycle of projects, from 1991 to 1997, were mostly on roads and basic infrastructure and run by the Ministry itself.¹⁹ After the 1997 events, many more “social” projects were funded, using NGO’s to conduct the projects. These projects aim at addressing local poverty and the absence of social structures.

While migration policy makes little reference to development issues, development policy has similarly been largely separated from migration issues. Some signs can be found of increasing attention, especially as undocumented migration became a major foreign policy issue in the 1990’s.

All of these expenditures in Albania have been in the historic Italian logic of overseas direct development aid: reducing poverty and instability (Chaloff & Piperno, 2004). These are, of course, push factors for migration, but a review of the projects funded fails to show any attention to specific migration issues.

In funding projects in Albania, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs DG for Cooperation and Development has been constantly aware of the importance of undocumented migration. It noted, in 2002, “as far as Italy is concerned, we should emphasize that our cooperation effort,

¹⁷ Documento programmatico sull’immigrazione per il triennio 2004-2006 (2005), in Official Journal of the Italian Republic n. 169, 22-7-2005, Suppl. Ordinario n. 128.

¹⁸ In addition to the development aid listed in the table, Ministry of Interior cooperation, equipment grants and regional development projects amount to an additional commitment.

¹⁹ Albania holds interest for Italy as a country along the Bari-Black Sea Corridor VIII, one of the Trans-European Network Corridors, meant to link Bourgas and Varna in Bulgaria with Vlore and Durres in Albania. The Italian interest in Albanian roads and ports is no surprise, since corridor VIII is strategic for South-Eastern Italy.

in particular in the field of security and defense, has found close correspondence in the contraction (about 60%) of clandestine immigrant flows: this is demonstrated by the positive Albanian social and economic reaction to the Italian development policy”²⁰. In other words, the Italian Development authorities are aware that their resources are both carrot and stick in the fight against undocumented migration.

Italian development aid strategy has also started to make reference to migration issues. In 1999 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs DG for Cooperation and Development presented a research paper to the European Commission entitled “Promoting local development through small size enterprise clusters: the role of migrants”, where migrants were seen as development agents in the position to set up and aggregate SMEs in their origin countries²¹. This was one of the first Italian attempts in this direction, although it did not have a significant impact on subsequent national development strategy. The paper was proposed and written by an external research institute, so cannot be considered a sign that the Ministry had already assimilated the importance of the concept.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Development Department, once again responding to proposals and ideas promoted by outside bodies, has commissioned a framework analysis of migration circuits, with an interest in co-development.²² One objective of this action is to produce a Strategy Paper on migration and development. Obviously, these terms have become buzzwords that require official attention, but the interest runs deeper: in the absence of coordination between different departments, a single and shared document can provide cross-fertilization that would otherwise be absent. The promise of more efficient expenditure of aid resources and a positive role of past migrants also attracts institutional interest. Nonetheless, external policy papers and exercises are not guaranteed assimilation, especially in bureaucratic structures.

Some innovative pilot projects linking migration and development have been conducted by IOM in an Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) and in the framework of its MIDA (Migration for Development in Africa) program. The IMIS project aims to set up a mechanism for matching the Egyptian supply and the Italian demand of labour, including a mapping of the Egyptian community in Italy and enhancing its associations in order to turn brain-drain into a resource for development. MIDA, on the other hand, is a framework initiative for “mobilizing African diasporas”. In Italy, a pilot phase concentrated on “assessing the interest and potentialities of sub-Saharan Africa immigrants in Italy who are willing to contribute to their countries of origin’s socioeconomic development;” ongoing programs target Ghana and Senegal. The idea is to support and link migrant communities with other actors interested in creating self-sustaining development projects, as well as in channeling remittances towards productive investments. MIDA sees migrants as potential development agents. Creating a nucleus of qualified and motivated migrants, increasing their social capital through contacts with institutions and NGO’s, and encouraging projects within the framework of Italian development cooperation may also be an applicable approach for Albanians.

Concrete examples of projects can be found. One is in Afghanistan, with the return of qualified emigrants, and the other in Senegal, in collaboration with Italian NGOs. The Senegal project is particularly interesting as migrants were considered for the first time promoters of a local development strategy and aid was partly dictated by their requests.²³

²⁰ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 2002 p. 141.

²¹ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 2002, p. 27. MFA/DGCS (1999), “Promoting local development through small size enterprise clusters: the role of migrants”.

²² [<http://www.cespi.it/SCM.htm>].

²³ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 2001, p.126 and Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 2002, p. 176.

The 2004 OECD Development Assistance Committee Peer Review of Italian development policy (OECD 2004, p. 39) underlined the need for greater policy coherence, especially in the area of linking migration and development.

Even the development NGO's themselves are not always sensitive to the impact of migration issues on their work. The director of an NGO involved in Albania reflected, "the Albanian experience was very important for us, to understand these aspects. Now we take them into consideration in all our projects, and our last three summer seminars have focused explicitly on this issue. Yet you rarely hear discussions which link these two, and most of the projects I see don't even consider it."²⁴

Nonetheless, while Italian migration policy ignores development impact, Italian development policy has been evolving from the "root causes of migration" paradigm towards a "migration for development approach", as well as finding ways to work alongside the Italian labour migration mechanisms to promote training and return. The "root causes" approach, in fact, concentrated on the general factors – poverty, unemployment, living standards – thought to drive emigration, in the hope of preventing departures. The "migration for development" approach allows that migration has or will take place and plans educational, social and entrepreneurial support initiatives alongside circular flows and remittance channels.

Examples of such approaches, however, are still hard to identify in Albania.

Regional initiatives for migration and development

The late and still inchoate approach to co-development policies by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is partially compensated at the local level. Sub-national governments have come to play an increasingly important role in both migration and decentralized cooperation. Regions and municipalities first stepped in to make up for the failure of the Italian central government to enact and finance reception and integration policies appropriate to its admission policies. The boom in immigration coincided with the transfer of responsibility to the Regions. Migration also coincided with the transformation and segmentation of the labour market and demand, leading to important differences in regional migrant labour needs which are difficult to address centrally. Italy is also on the border of Europe, exposing some regions to emergency flows such as during the Kosovo war.

Since the '90s, local governments have also intensified and institutionalized their international cooperation activities, in particular towards the Mediterranean and the Balkan areas (Albania, the former Yugoslavia, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestinian Authority), often creating innovative partnership initiatives with LDCs.

Some Italian regional migration legislation has made explicit links between immigration and development. This is attributed to a sort of "proximity effect", since the local administration, civil society organizations, staff and migrants themselves are in closer contact. Local stakeholders who have been sensitized to these issues are able to influence regional policy much more easily than national policy, which is decided far from the local level. These two sides of policy planning, migration and development, are often connected at the regional level and, as a result, a broad range of pilot schemes in the area of co-development have been attempted.

The main sectors of action by Italian decentralized cooperation are the following (Frattolillo & Stocchiero 2002):

- a) workforce training, selection and recruitment projects;
- b) return;
- c) projects to create employment and reduce migratory pressure;

²⁴ Interview with Gianluca Antonelli, VIS, Rome.

d) projects for the optimal use of remittances.

Projects concerning migrant training and return are implemented by most Italian regions and are also foreseen by almost all migratory and development regional laws. Furthermore, workforce training, selection and recruitment projects can be framed in the Italian immigration bill which grants priority to applicant migrants who have attended a professional training in the origin country.²⁵

These projects, however, are very small. The Veneto region, for example, selected 23 workers in Albania, trained them in the building sector and, once in Italy, placed them in local enterprises for a six-months apprenticeship. At the end of the project 82% of the beneficiaries were still working in the sector they'd been trained for. Similar small courses have been organized in other regions. They are generally unaccompanied by a strategy aimed at increasing brain circulation and training supply in emigration countries; in this sense, they risk exacerbating the skill drain. Most of these projects, however, concentrate on training unskilled workers for trades in Italy. The attention devoted to them can be attributed to their pilot nature rather than to their representing a solution to short-term labour demand.

Return is the second major area of interest for the Italian local governments. The most innovative projects have linked the promotion of voluntary return for entrepreneurial purposes to the possibility of setting up transnational economic partnerships. One example is the Agfol Vocational Training Agency project, run by the Veneto Region with EU funding in 1995. 30 Albanian immigrants were selected and trained through a professional course and apprenticeships in Veneto enterprises in order to learn how to establish their own businesses or launch joint ventures in Albania. The 1997 pyramid schemes crisis disrupted the project, but some returnees were successful and are still managing fairly large enterprises.

There are still few examples of programs for assisting the social and economic reintegration of irregular migrants. One EU-funded project, *Alnima*, assisted the return of 120 Moroccan and Albanian prisoners and Nigerian trafficking victims. Those serving a prison term in Italy received six months training in prison (chosen on the basis of a previous local labour market assessment); once deported to the origin countries they received a subsidy for attending in-firm traineeships or further professional training. Micro-credit was available for selected returnees willing to start their own business. While the impact in Albania on recidivism seemed to be limited, the absence of assistance programs aggravated conditions for forced returnees (Coslovi & Piperno, 2005).

Another area where local authorities have shown interest is in supporting voluntary return of Rom on the one hand and unaccompanied minors on the other. Both groups represent challenges for local authorities, especially municipalities: the former, confined to makeshift campsites and living in severe marginalisation, provoke reactions from neighbouring residents; the latter are a financial burden on the authorities to whom they are entrusted. Initial contacts with local areas in the countries of origin – especially Romania – have led to informal collaboration between social services and NGO's in both countries, in the attempt to find solutions.

Despite all the experimentation, Italian regional co-development programs suffer a series of structural shortcomings. Actions are isolated, excessively sectorial, lack continuity and are inadequately coordinated with programs and activities with similar objectives undertaken by other regions or central institutions. There is a shortage of specialized staff and scarce coordination and promotion of migrant associations. Regional budgets available for migration-related initiatives are limited, and most ends up spent on reception and social services for resident migrants. This is one reason why transnational decentralized co-development projects are few and involve few beneficiaries.

²⁵ L. 189/02 art. 17.

Nonetheless, one area which seems particularly promising is that of “neighbourhood partnerships” between regions of origin and destination, in order to promote spontaneous development of circular migration patterns and forms of migratory “commuting”. EU programmes such as Interreg allow for transborder cooperation; numerous projects link the Adriatic coastal regions of Italy to Albanian and its neighbours. Adriatic initiatives such as the Adriatic Secretariat, the Adriatic Arc, the Forum of Adriatic Cities or the Adriatic University support capacity building of institutions and local authorities in Albania. This infrastructure may serve as a future driving force in co-development.

ALBANIAN MIGRANTS IN ITALY: HUMAN RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL

The Albanian population in Italy is composed largely of people with secondary school (63%) or middle school (19%) education (de Zwager et al. 2005). Men are employed in low-skill low-status employment, while women are engaged in even lower paid domestic work.²⁶ “Those who emigrate are young, and generally the richer, if not the better educated.”²⁷ The tendency to settle is quite high, with family reunification and school enrolment increasing sharply. Spatial distribution also sees Albanians throughout the country, rather than concentrated in certain regions, cities or even neighbourhoods. Cultural assimilation – as indicated, for example, by nominally Muslim Albanian families having their children take catechism classes in public schools – is high. Migrant associations describe an initial resistance to expressing Albanian identity – not surprising, given the negative image that long dominated. This has limited collective action and organisation. Migrant activists interviewed tend to dismiss their colleagues.

Recruitment and Labour Migration

As noted, Italian migration policy attributes great importance to managing the flows of regular labour migration. Furthermore, Italian migration policy assigns priority in the labour quotas to those foreign workers who have been trained in their home countries in the framework of employer-driven training-abroad programs.

Two important examples can be found in the relations between Albania and Italy, programs which highlight some of the issues in managed migration and recruitment.

The first project was a watershed project run by IOM Rome. The Italian Ministry of Labour first contacted IOM in October of 1998 to discuss means to implement the bilateral agreement signed with Albania the previous year. In the meanwhile, the Italian Framework Law had been passed, allowing for a certain number of visas to be issued to job seekers. The Ministry of Labour contacted IOM for assistance in developing a program to match supply and demand and organize the flow of job-seekers from Albania. When the draft proposal was shared with the Albanian authorities, the latter approved the role of IOM as the project implementer. The pilot initiative was closely coordinated with central and local authorities in Albania. In fact, Albania was very interested in the project “and saw emigration as a form of development cooperation! This is quite a reasonable idea, given the conditions at the time, but the idea that

²⁶ Domestic work by Albanians tends to be in cleaning. The important elder care and child care sector are largely occupied by women from other nationalities. Most Albanian women are in Italy with their families and are not interested in live-in caretaking work; Italian families also discriminate against Albanians in this sector. The boom in elder care has therefore not involved Albanians as much as Ukrainians, Moldovans and Romanians: only 2% of the caretakers applying for regularisation in 2002 were Albanians.

²⁷ Interview with Sokol Ndreca, Albanian Association, Rome.

emigration is a form of development aid has now passed”.²⁸ The project was approved on 20 December 1999, started in March 2000 and ran through September 2001. The objective was to “set up a mechanism and special procedures for selecting 5000 Albanian workers whose professional qualifications fulfils the Italian labour market needs” (IOM 2002). IOM advertised about the program and interviewed a 11,159 of the 28,525 candidates. Details of approved candidates – 5,038 – were put into a database which could be viewed by potential employers. The project was entirely based on identified Italian needs and the Italian system of qualifications – although equivalency was examined for Albanian nursing schools – and involved tests developed in Italy by Italian vocational training schools. The Albanians played no concrete role in defining the project or its mechanisms.

The database was also meant by the Ministry of Labor to be a pilot project for the construction of the Foreign Worker Registry (AILE), meant to become the master database for candidates for managed labour migration.

The project did not involve training; it was simply a registration and evaluation of candidates for a database of potential migrants. While the database was open to prospective employers, the system relied on the mechanism of job-seeker visas, whereby Albanians could enter Italy to seek employment. Access to such visas required inclusion in the database. 1500 Albanians listed in the database managed to enter Italy using the job-seeker visa, since participants were granted priority in access to the job-seeker visa. When the job-seeker visa was eliminated in the 2002 immigration reform, the main reason for the database also vanished.

The database could not play a significant role in matching Albanians with employers in Italy prior to departure. In fact, few employers resorted to use of the database to find employees, despite extensive training by IOM for local employment offices. The employers who used the database to recruit employees – specifically in the nursing sector – retrained and supported their workers once in Italy. Generally, using a list to hire employees is “unnatural”, even when an international organization guarantees for the skills attested. Language problems are a factor, but direct acquaintance remains the main criteria in choosing to hire a worker. The need for personal and face-to-face meetings, as well as a trial period, has systematically hindered attempts to regulate entry through distance intermediation, and explains the abuse of the quota system as a “rolling regularization”. The job-seeker visa was meant to facilitate such meeting, but was criticized by the center-right as vulnerable to free riders, and eliminated from the law.²⁹

A side effect of the evaluation and inclusion in the database was that it “demonstrated to the accepted candidates that they could effectively work in Italy”, that their skills were applicable in the Italian labour market. “Most of these people are in Italy now, since they knew they could find work, they will have found a way”.

The project was abruptly ended after a 600,000 euro investment and ownership summarily passed to the Albanian government. IOM proposed to manage the database and provide technical assistance to the Albanian Ministry of Labor but the Italian stakeholders were no longer interested in this kind of registry.

The second, and more recent, example of a structured labour migration program comes from a smaller scale initiative of the Veneto Region employment agency. The 2002 project involved choosing and training Albanian workers for Veneto employers, based on profiles identified in Italy. The project worked closely with the Albanian employment services. “This was very important, because it helped reinforce a culture of legal access to the labour market”.³⁰ From a

²⁸ Interview with Ugo Melchionda, IOM, Rome.

²⁹ The job-seeker visa still required the holder to find regular employment within 12 months of entry or face expulsion.

³⁰ Interview with Mime Ruffato, Tirana.

list 430 potential students, drawn from Albanian unemployment rolls, 200 were chosen for vocational training, of whom 70 ended up in the courses. Many of the students had to then wait months to receive their visa for Italy; the Veneto Region did not intervene to facilitate the issuing of visas. The project, like the IOM project, concentrated on skills needed in Italy and did not take into consideration circular migration or return. Yet, for the students, “emigration is a safety valve to deal with unemployment, and not a life choice. Veneto only considered its own needs – raw manpower and the total number of workers needed – yet such a spontaneous industrial culture can’t guarantee long term employment. It’s important to think about return.”

Neither project planned for return; training was oriented towards the Italian market. Both of these projects were started in a period when conditions in Albania were quite severe and the business climate very hostile, so return did not seem feasible. It should also be noted that sponsors from Italian labour agencies are not generally interested in training foreign workers for short contracts, but prefer to count on their investment rather than see it disappear back into the country of origin.

Private employment agencies in Albania play only a marginal role in emigration. No more than 15 are licensed and, with the exception of the nursing sector, the number of emigrants is quite low. Nonetheless, the Directorate of Migration is concerned about possible abuses, notwithstanding the new regulations imposed in January 2005. Current concerns regard fee structures and inspection regimes. According to the Albanian law, the migrant should not bear any recruitment costs, yet there are many claims by workers that the agency demands a fee of about one month’s salary. The inspection regime is still unclear, since the Ministry is understaffed and lacks experience in inspecting such agencies. Italian agencies, on the other hand, are less interested in Albania than in other East European countries such as Romania and Bulgaria.

Albanian migration law defines short-term emigration as lasting less than a year. Italy has a migration policy allowing seasonal work for up to 9 months; Albanians are accorded priority in seasonal work visas. The Albanian policy is not to see seasonal migration as circular.

One exception to the absence of agencies in Albania is nursing. The nursing shortage in Italy led Italian policy to exempt nurses from its labour quotas in the 2002 law. This raised some concern in Albania, where there is “a crisis with the loss of nurses. Higher salaries don’t even appear to be the answer in Albania.”³¹ The nursing sector is one where employment agencies have been able to establish a niche. The agency “La Speranza”, for example, has an office in Tirana and an office in Milan, and has sent 500 nurses from Albania to northern Italy since 1999. The Milan office contacts private hospitals and nursing homes. The Tirana office verifies the qualifications – only the new post-1995 Albanian nursing schools are recognized in Italy – and prepares the documentation for recognition of nursing skills. “Nursing education is of good quality in Albania”, according to the Italian embassy. The agency also provides language lessons and preparation for the nursing exam in Italy. Nursing is a traditional profession for Albanian women, but about half of the agency’s clients are men. “These men went to nursing school only so they could emigrate”.³² There is little doubt that the expansion of the nursing sector – schools in at least six cities, with Tirana alone producing 300 graduates annually for a nursing sector where there is no demand – is due to emigration opportunities. La Speranza reports that not one of the 500 nurses sent to Italy has returned.

The Italian public sector employs most nurses in Italy. While some Regions have started to recruit nurses from abroad – in Romania – through bilateral programmes with nurse training institutes, the public sector has shown no interest in bilateral arrangements with Albania. In

³¹ Interview with Majlinda Hafizi, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Tirana.

³² Interview with Arben Ismalaj, Human Resources, La Speranza employment agency, Tirana.

fact, public recruitment lags behind the private sector in nursing. Only recently have public hospitals even opened their job listing to non-citizens, allowing recognized nurses from abroad to apply. Most of the 7000 foreign nurses – who represent about 2% of all registered nurses in Italy – work in the private sector.

Student migration in Italy

Albania has become the leading sending country of foreign students in Italy, accounting for a quarter of the total foreign enrolment of 38,298, which in turn accounts for about 2% of total enrolment (tab. 12). In 2004-2005, the Italian Ministry of University counted 9552 Albanians enrolled in public and private universities in Italy (Vatican Universities are excluded, but do not generally attract Albanian students). Enrolment by Albanians is on the rise, although some observers attribute these increases to misuse of the student visa. “Once you’re in, there are no more checks. The consulates have discretion in deciding whether a student is really going to attend the university or not, but once the visa is issued, there are no checks. Renewal only requires a few exams”.³³ Such discretion may have played a part in the refusal of visas to hundreds of Albanian students in 2005. The Italian consulate in Tirana rejected the applications providing a required explanation, that the students’ knowledge of Italian was insufficient, “despite having passed the course at the embassy’s own Italian Cultural Institute. [The civil society NGO] Mjaft! organized a demonstration in front of the embassy and was able to reverse some of the decisions”.³⁴ The Italian consular services in Albania, however, report that many of the applications for student visas are patently specious. “Two 28-year old unemployed men who have never studied and suddenly want to study philosophy in Italy? This is the kind of case we often see.”³⁵

Taking advantage of the resource represented by Albanian students is difficult because “Italy has historically viewed foreign students as a nuisance. They require more paperwork from the bursar’s office and usually need housing. They have been more tolerated than welcomed”.³⁶ In fact, foreign student enrolment in Italy is quite low compared to other European countries, and has long hovered below 2%. The availability of scholarships is limited, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided scholarships to only 13 Albanian students in 2004, out of about 400 grants made to foreign students. Tuition fees for foreigners are the same as for Italians.

Promotion of Italian culture in Albania – while divorced from university recruitment policy – means that, in addition to the Institute of Culture in Tirana, Italy subsidises three bilingual lyceums in Tirana, paying for Italian language teachers and instruction. Graduates of these lyceums are likely to consider Italy for their studies. There is also a private Italian university opening outside of Tirana – Nostra Signora di Buon Consiglio – which has benefited from a US\$ 20 million grant from Italian Cooperation and Development. This is the first example of an attempt to imitate the “American University” network, with Italian-language economics and medicine departments intended for full equivalency with Italian universities.

Only recently have Italian universities begun to provide information in Albania, and only in 2005 did the Italian Ministry of University provide information on enrolment in English on its website. Some consular services may provide help: “We [in Vlore] helped students pick their University and their Department. The Universities played no role in picking students, although some were more aggressive, sending us brochures and instructions regarding specific students enrolled.”³⁷ This interest by Universities is generally attributed to falling

³³ Interview with Giampiero Forcesi, UCSEI, Rome.

³⁴ Interview with Besjan Pesha, Mjaft!.

³⁵ Interview with Francesca Santoro, Italian Consul, Tirana.

³⁶ Interview with Carlo Finocchietti, CIMEA, Fondazione Rui.

³⁷ Comments by Marcello Fondi, formerly Italian Consul in Vlore

enrolment – after all, the demographic decline has meant that the university-age cohort in Italy is continually shrinking – and changes in the funding to Universities which reward higher enrolment. Such factors have led Italian Universities to offer mobility programs, distance learning, and even instruction in English rather than Italian – which was not only unthinkable but actually prohibited until recently.

In the absence of “an organic policy”, foreign University students – including Albanians – are largely left to their own resources. Information is provided by friends and relatives already studying in Italy. The difficulty in obtaining information has also meant that the Universities cannot meet their own foreign-student quotas: there is space for four times as many foreign students as actually enroll.

Italian universities have never attempted to remain in contact with their alumni, although a national database is being put together to record all University graduates and their qualifications. This should also provide a map of foreign students, among other students.

One issue regarding foreign students is that “they generally study in the health professions (medicine, pharmacy) or in architecture – fields where there is already a glut of graduates in Italy, and which are not important for the ‘internationalization’ of the Italian economic system”³⁸. While “most students plan to go back to their own countries – they come to Italy planning to go back – this can be difficult. If they leave, try to make a go of it in their own country, and fail, they’ve lost all chance to return to Italy.”³⁹ The current immigration law addresses foreign students under the quota system. Annual quotas set a maximum number of conversion of study permits to work permits, usually half the total number of self-employment permits. Those foreign students who do not apply for a work permit upon graduation, or whose application is rejected, lose their right to stay in Italy, and their permit is cancelled. They must leave the country or face expulsion.

Italian Universities have ignored the issue of brain drain. Italy, in fact, suffers from its own brain drain (the only net loss of university graduates in the EU), and efforts in Italy have concentrated more on convincing Italians to return than on qualified foreigners in Italy. “Italy is not a country that looks for high quality immigrants. All you can find is brain waste for the qualified immigrants who do come. It’s probably for the best that Italian universities don’t do anything for Albanians”.⁴⁰

Brain Mobility in Albania

In Albania, one of the main concerns is that Albanians leave to study abroad and then do not return. Many of these students left the country in the 1990’s, and the Albania they remember is quite different from the modern Albania. In fact, one of the basic challenges is simply acquainting Albanian students with today’s Albania.

AlbStudent, an international association of Albanian students, in cooperation with the NGO Mjaft!, has been experimenting a small-scale but promising initiative in this sense. AlbStudent started a summer apprenticeship programme for the summer of 2005, aimed at bringing Albanian students and new graduates from abroad to work in the public sector and in enterprises, offering a one-month unpaid apprenticeship. AlbStudent negotiated with Albanian Ministries, the Raffaisen Bank, the Popular Bank of Albania and the Institute of Contemporary Studies, arranging short-term internships. 60 internships were available, and after publicizing the initiative through internet discussion groups and other AlbStudent networks, 550 applications were received. While “enterprises and ministries have no experience or culture of internships”, and the project often had to invent tasks for the interns,

³⁸ Interview with Carlo Finocchietti, CIMEA, Fondazione Rui.

³⁹ Interview with Giampiero Forcesi, UCSEI, Rome.

⁴⁰ Interview with Luca Einaudi, Prime Minister’s Office, Rome

the results were very encouraging.⁴¹ Many of the interns came back to Albania only for the internship – despite the lack of a salary – and were both shocked by the “inefficiency of the public sector and inspired to do something for their country”. Attracting students back from abroad is seen as a powerful means for reforming the institutional culture in the country, since a culture of efficiency and legality is stronger in the EU than in Albania. AlbStudent plans to expand the internships in 2006 with the involvement of major Albanian employers. The project was not particularly expensive – it was conducted with a €14,000 grant from the German Embassy in the framework of the Stability Pact, and with cooperation from the Albanian Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture – and it relied heavily on volunteer activity. The project demonstrates on the one hand the interest of Albanian students to learn more about their opportunities and on the other hand the willingness of public institutions to interact with the diaspora; it is, however, impossible to draw conclusions about the outcome for returns in the long term.

Another project – less grass roots but more structured – was run by the Soros Foundation from 1998 to 2001. The objective was to reinforce public institutions by supporting the employment of qualified Albanians returning from abroad. In a period when public salaries were extremely low, the program provided a salary top-up quadruplicating the pay of the beneficiaries. About 100 beneficiaries were in NGO’s and central administration, and an additional 50 in local administrations. The salary top-up was not a deciding factor in the return, since it was offered to those who had already returned and been hired to work in the public sector; nonetheless, 2/3 of participants were still in their jobs in 2005 (salaries now provide a living wage, obviating the subsidy). The Soros Foundation also encouraged the creation of a “network of fellows” for beneficiaries, an idea which was extended to the 5000 students who have received full or partial support from the Foundation until 1999. The risk of the salary subsidy is that it may represent discrimination against those who have studied locally.⁴² The project spent more than \$600,000 over a 3-year period.

Ongoing Soros initiatives in brain mobility include subsidies for Albanian researchers abroad who write their theses on Albania and require funding for the travel home to do research. This, like the AlbStudent initiative, is a way to inform them about current conditions.

Beyond the problem of brain drain, there is also the problem of brain gain; this is particularly important in the University sector. Structural obstacles to return – in addition to salary and workload issues – include “problems with mentality: there are problems with recognition of foreign qualifications, and hostility of the old guard, which feels threatened... Within the University, Deans are elected, for example, so they have to have a ‘faction’,” and outsiders face difficulties.⁴³ For academics, the strategies that seem to be most promising are those that foresee short-term returns, such as lecture cycles and exchanges. This allows expatriate Albanian academics to contribute to the educational system without renouncing their foreign appointments and salaries, and helps Albanian students make contacts with foreign institutions.

The main obstacle for returning qualified Albanians in the public sector is not economic but has to do with career opportunities, and especially the patronage system which reigns in both the University and Public Administration.⁴⁴ The Department of Public Administration has attempted to favour the hiring of foreign-trained Albanians by eliminating, in 2004, the Albanian work experience requirement for qualified positions, since this had excluded

⁴¹ Interview with Endri Dileu, AlbStudent, Tirana. See also praktika-online.com and albstudent.net.

⁴² Interview with Valbona Sulce, Soros Foundation, Tirana.

⁴³ Interview with Eno Ngjela, UNDP, Tirana.

⁴⁴ Interview with Eno Trimçev, AIIS. See also Trimçev (2005).

foreign-trained individuals.⁴⁵ The new Albanian government is interested in setting aside positions in the Public Administration for returning migrants. Genc Pollo, the Albanian Minister of Education, led a delegation in February 2006 to Rome and Florence – home to 3,000 Albanian students – to promote this project to Albanian student groups. This initiative has been criticized because it devalues the Albanian University system by giving priority to those who have studied abroad, regardless of other indicators of merit.

Some doubt remains about the kind of jobs which can effectively convince skilled migrants to return. “Only political careers can attract skilled migrants!”, joked one Ministry official.⁴⁶ Yet the NGO sector also attracts those who are trained abroad. In some cases, this is because it offers higher salaries; this also distorts the local supply of volunteers. “Who wants to work as a volunteer once they’ve been paid 500 euros/month – a mayor’s salary! – to work on a short term NGO project funded from abroad?” complained the head of one civil society organization in Albania. VIS, an Italian NGO, has seen the involvement of many foreign-trained Albanians as trainers in its own programs for teachers and youth workers; “these people returned to Albania less for economic reasons than to contribute something to their country”.

One challenge is simply knowing who and where the brains are. A number of different organizations are working on registries and surveys of qualified Albanians abroad (Albanian Institute for International Studies; Center for Economic and Social Studies; AlbStudent). Depending on the level of qualification used, the numbers exceed a thousand.⁴⁷

Vocational training: staying or leaving?

One of the major social investments in cooperation in Albania is vocational training. One centre run by the Salesians in Albania is the Don Bosco complex in Tirana, which offers a school, youth and family centre, activities for Rom, and cooperates in vocational training initiatives. By working with employers it has a good record of job placement, but “even though Salesians train so that youth will stay in Albania, they’re generally disappointed. At first, we trained to keep people in the country, to build Albania’s future. But we’ve got to face reality. Work on skills is important for the developing country, but it doesn’t always get spent locally. It’s important to train for host countries, too, since skilled workers means better labour migration policies. Anyway, it depends on more than economic factors, there are also subjective factors, like family.”⁴⁸

In addition, some projects funded by a mix of public monies and donations form a weak link between sending countries and host countries. The NGO VIS, for example, runs a number of projects in Albania, relying on the international network of the Salesian order. In some cases, local church groups in Italy approach VIS about supporting youth projects in Albania. This links Italian communities in a charitable relationship with communities in Albania, but seems an unlikely foundation for more advanced forms of cooperation for co-development.

Diaspora groups

The vast Albanian diaspora is divided into two main groups: an old diaspora in the USA, dating back to the late 1940’s, and a much larger diaspora comprising the post-1990

⁴⁵ This was the objective of Prime Ministerial Order 37, 1.28.2004, “On Encouraging the Employment of Foreign Educated Persons”.

⁴⁶ Interview with Majlinda Hafizi, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Tirana.

⁴⁷ The AISS concentrates on highly qualified emigrants interested in returning, with full information on at least 300; CESS, with funding from the Soros Foundation, has more than 1000 names of PhD and Masters students interested in return and cooperation; AlbStudent maintains lists of students in the countries where its local activists are involved.

⁴⁸ Interview with Gianluca Antonelli, VIS, Rome.

emigrants, and located mostly in Greece (more than 760,000) and Italy (more than 320,000). The US diaspora, which is well settled and successful, is seen as a possible source of philanthropy (financial capital), while the more recent diasporas are seen as a possible source of financial capital (remittances and investment), social capital (networks) and human capital (returns and circulation).

From an institutional standpoint, the Albanian authorities have attempted to provide services and support to the diaspora, primarily through the National Institute of Diaspora at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Institute of Diaspora was created in January 1996 under the Prime Minister and transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in September of the same year. The Director of the Institute has a staff of five. The definition of “diaspora” used by the institute is quite broad and covers everyone from the 16th century communities in southern Italy to recent temporary labour migrants in neighbouring countries. The program of the Institute is concentrated on four areas: maintaining detailed information on the diaspora, including economic, intellectual and cultural potential; protection of rights of emigrants; supporting the integration of Albanians abroad by promoting a positive image of Albania; and language education for Albanian abroad. The Institute relies on consular authorities both for information and for supporting its initiatives. The Institute has some databases – such as lists of Albanian media abroad, associations, and a celebrity list, but has no actual documents or reports. Its work on Albanian language instruction abroad – such as textbook and curriculum development – is stymied by continuing debate over the role of the Ministry of Education. The Institute “maintains a low profile, and doesn’t care about acknowledgement”,⁴⁹ although it does accompany delegations abroad and organizes prizes for cultural celebrities and meetings with associations.

The Institute does not have great expectations of the diaspora. High initial expectations of investments were frustrated first by the general difficulties of foreign investors and then by the pyramid collapse. Some recent interest from Albanian-owned SMEs in Greece and Italy drew the attention of the Institute, although remittances seem more important to the Institute than investment. The Institute has not been able to affect emigrant choices. “These are personal choices. For example, a rich businessman from America paid to pave the streets in his home village”, but no associations have worked on similar projects. From Tirana, diaspora associations appear weak and transitory, subject to internal conflict. Assimilatory pressure in host countries appears strong, with negative implications for the future. “In Greece, Albanians change their religion and stop speaking Albanian.”

Longer term goals include the creation of cultural institutes – “not like the Italian Culture institutes, but rather to promote Albanian culture to Albanians”. The Institute intends to identify teachers among emigrants and use them in the centers.

Diaspora services are quite limited. Student and diaspora organizations criticize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its absence from their countries and for the low profile it has maintained. Mjaft! complains that it is difficult to organize cultural activities for Albanian workers abroad, whose work days are long and exhausting, leaving little time for recreation and culture. The Institute of Diaspora is unknown to the Albanian associations in Italy, whose spokesmen criticize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for more basic failings of the Department of Consular Services, such as inefficiency in issuing documents and delays in consular procedures. There is discontent with the costs of consular services, which are relatively high – Albania operates a cost-recovery principle under which consular fees must pay for the costs of foreign missions. The Institute of Diaspora also reports the complaints of emigrants: a demand for voting rights; cultural support; more media attention to emigrant issues;

⁴⁹ Interview with Thimi Nika, Director, Institute of Diaspora, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tirana.

promotion of opportunities for return; increased involvement by the Albanian government in defending the rights of Albanian migrants and lobbying for regularization.

Interviews with diaspora representatives in Italy confirm the Albanian view of a fragmented and disorganized associative life, concentrated on social and cultural events and little inclined towards pooling of resources or other initiatives for the home country. There is a nationally distributed Albanian-language weekly, *Bota Shqiptare*, but the media does not reveal an organized community.

Return

Returning migrants represent important human, financial and social capital, but the obstacles to returning Albanians with professional aspirations remain substantial. (Piperno, 2003a).

Professional experience abroad is a desirable calling card. Those experienced in jobs which may have seemed humble in Italy or Greece are sought after in Albania (even waiters, mechanics, skilled builders, let alone plumbers, electricians and cooks). Return migrants are widely considered more skilled and knowledgeable regarding modern methods. Their work ethic is also considered greater.

Financial capital is also a major resource favouring return migrants, since the credit system in Albania is so underdeveloped. Savings accumulated abroad are rarely enough to start a business, although they may represent seed money for attracting loans from family and friends, from banks, or from former employers in Italy.

Social capital is represented by the networks created abroad and by the capacity to manage relationships across borders and cultures. Return migrants working in Albania continue to procure material and equipment – and occasionally retraining – from suppliers in their emigration country. Entrepreneurs are able to count on their contacts, while job seekers in Albania are treated more favourably by foreign businesses.

In late February 2006 the Albanian Government proposed a draft law providing a 3-5 year tax exemption for Albanian emigrants who want to invest. The Prime Minister also asked the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication to include land sections in the urban planning of Tirana to offer the emigrants home lots. The Prime Minister's Economic Advisors were opposed on the grounds that these measures would distort the market and undercut existing businesses.⁵⁰

There is no doubt that, however little economic importance Albania holds for Italy, the reverse is not true. Italy is a major trading partner for Albania and there are all the conditions for closer economic ties. The Italian embassy in Albania issues thousands of business visas annually to Albanians, "trying to be flexible with businessmen". Because Albanian businesses must register, it is fairly easy to avoid abuse of the business visa. "The Commercial Section of the Embassy reviews the papers of business visa applicants. We give a short-term visa at first to see if they come back, and then if customs stamps and turnover show the business increasing, we'll issue biannual visas."

Another phenomenon noted by the Embassy is the return of Albanians after 5-7 years in Italy to start their own businesses. "They've got the Residence Card, so they don't have to worry about visas or renewing their permits." The Italian Embassy and the Italian business associations in Albania, however, have no contacts with these returning entrepreneurs.

Opportunities for return investment in Albania exist in the export sector (especially doing piecework under contract to Italian companies), but much of the opportunity in Albania is related to construction and consumption, two sectors driven by remittances (see below). The priority for most remitting Albanians is the purchase of residential property and the

⁵⁰ *Gazeta Shqiptare* newspaper, 23.2.06, p. 4.

construction of housing (Uruçi E. 2003, p. 27). This has led to a housing boom, as emigrants purchase homes for themselves and their relatives; regardless of their place of origin, many emigrants wish to purchase in Tirana, leading prices to spiral up and creating further possibilities. Many returning migrants have experience in the construction sector and find opportunities in Albania. Likewise, remittances have provided cash for consumption to family members remaining in Albania, stimulating the opening of numerous cafés, bars and restaurants, another opportunity for investment by returning Albanians.

Remittances

Remittances have become a major area of attention in development and migration policy and research. Italy, long a net beneficiary of remittances, became a net sending country in 1997. Outgoing remittances from Italy have increased sharply in recent years. Official remittances rose from 750 million euro in 2000 to 2.1 billion euro in 2004 (Tab. 13). Of these official flows in 2004, Albania received – according to the Bank of Albania – about 100 million euro, or less than 5% of the total. Unofficial – informal – remittances to Albania in 2004 were estimated to be about 150 million euro. Italy represents about 30% of remittances to Albania – in line with the distribution of Albanian migrants abroad.

Remittances are essential for Albania; in 2004, they represented 13.7% of GDP (Tab. 14). The National Strategy on Migration devotes much attention to how to improve and exploit remittance channels, especially driving remittances into investment in Albania (B.1.3 of the NSM). As in other remittance-dependent countries, much of the concern is with informality and with the high transaction costs and limited impact on the banking system of private money transfer services. The Albanian government would like to see remittance channels shift to the formal sector, in order to reinforce the credit sector.

Within the framework of the NSM activity, IOM commissioned a survey on Albanian emigrants (de Zwager 2005). The principal findings of the de Zwager study were:

- a high propensity for savings: Albanians in Italy, Greece and the UK averaged 5390 euro savings annually per household;
- remittance channels are largely informal (77.4%), and formal channels usually do not involve banks;
- other evidence that remittance flows have reached a plateau and will decline in the future are confirmed by the study;
- long-term intentions do contemplate return in the future, although they would require significant changes in Albanian development and conditions before returning.

The National Strategy on Migration contains a series of proposed measures to improve the impact of remittances (p. 41), including incentives and financial products. Nonetheless, there are no concrete strategies in place to increase formal flows or to improve investment pathways, nor does the Ministry of Finance take any consideration of such measures in fiscal or macroeconomic planning.⁵¹ The Albanian associations in Italy express skepticism that tax incentives can make a difference in productive investment of remittances. “Much of the money is laundered, anyway, and goes to the construction sector.” Further, they expect remittances to drop sharply as Albanians in Italy are “caught by rising costs in Italy and Albania,” family reunification, and home purchases. The latter is a major factor for immigrants settling in Italy: more than 12% of Italian mortgages in 2004 were signed by immigrants, and mortgage payments cut sharply into savings and surpluses available for remittance.

⁵¹ Interview with Kloalda Kamberi, Ministry of Finance, Tirana.

Due to their constant increase and to the new concerns about security (informal money transfers have been suspected of use in financing international terrorism), remittances have drawn more attention from Italian policy makers, government and banking institutions. The Italian debate on migration and development has begun recently to address remittances as well.

Although no project dealing with remittances has so far been funded by the Department for Development Cooperation, the Italian government presented a paper on remittance enhancement at the June 2004 G-8 summit. The discussion revolves around possible implementation of policies aimed at: fostering the transfer of remittances through banking channels; strengthening linkage between remittances, economic growth, investment and income distribution in immigrants countries of origin; and enhancing remittances through welfare-oriented mechanisms.

The Italian banking system, which until very recently paid little attention to migrant clients, is now starting to create financial products for the foreigners in Italy. Promoting formal channeling of remittances obviously constitutes a core element of this strategy, although banks see money transfer as a loss leader for gaining migrant clients. Existing transfer projects, further, are based on collaboration between banks in both countries and strong local ethnic communities; in this sense, they are point-to-point initiatives that are difficult to scale up to a national level. So far they have yet to be involved in any broader development projects and remain commercial and social initiatives for the benefit of individuals.

Italian banks have also shown surprisingly little interest in Albania, given the substantial remittance flows and the geographical and economic ties. There is only one established Italian-Albanian bank, founded by the Capitalia group and later sold to San Paolo, with three branches in Albania; a local bank from Southeast Italy also bought a small Albanian bank in 2005. Italian banks also showed no interest during the privatizations of Albania's savings banks, and "there are no indications that other Italian banks will be expanding their operations into Albania in the near future" (Hernández Coss 2006, p. 12). However, the Italian bank Monte dei Paschi has started an agreement with the Albanian bank Credins for the sending of remittances.

The reluctance of Italian banks to invest in Albania is partly due to the small size of the market, but mostly regards the low capacity of Albanian bank staff; the security risk related to money laundering; legal uncertainty and the high rate of non-performing loans (Piperno, 2003b).

Albanians in Italy are among the least banked migrant groups (fewer than 50% have a bank account), but have not attracted much interest among banks. Remittance services are seen by banks as a loss leader to attract other more lucrative banking business, such as current accounts, personal credit, mortgages and other products, rather than a profitable service in itself.

Pension and Insurance

All workers, whether foreign or Italian, are subject to the same pension requirements. Italy has a number of bilateral agreements on portability of pensions with other OECD countries. Italy and Albania do not have a bilateral agreement on pensions. In the absence of such an agreement, Albanian workers in Italy are subject to Italian rules on the number of years of contribution before pension eligibility. The 2002 immigration law in Italy eliminated the cash-out option opened by the 1998 law for foreign workers from countries with which Italy has no bilateral pension agreements. In any case, the Italian pension institute, INPS, periodically reviews the situation of foreign workers in Italy to determine the most advantageous solution: bilateral agreements might be promoted when Italy sees them as

economically favorable.⁵² A protocol for technical assistance between INPS and the Albanian Institute for Social Security is in force, and was recently renewed (September 2005) but frequent changes in Albanian staff have made real cooperation more difficult. A joint working group (INPS, Italian Ministries of Labor, Foreign Affairs and Interior) in Italy is working on solutions for such issues as paying out pensions in Albania, but no bilateral agreement is currently sought by Italy. Albania would like to sign an agreement, but has only been able to do so with Turkey.

CONCLUSIONS

Italy and Albanian are perfect candidates for co-development oriented migration policies. After all, there is a large and stable Albanian community in Italy sending hundreds of millions of euro home annually, extensive commercial and cultural ties, significant development spending, and thousands of Albanian students in Italy. Yet few concrete innovative practices in development-friendly migration policy between Italy and Albania can be found.

Italian migration policy is still developed according to interests and considerations that have nothing to do with impact on the sending country, or on the human resources involved in migration. Policy makers involved in migration policy – from setting national legislation to establishing procedures – are more concerned with controlling short-term legal labour migration than with development impact. The bilateral measures foreseen in migration policy – labour agreements, training abroad, law enforcement cooperation – are highly Italocentric. Nor does migration policy seem to be the place for development-friendly policy, given the sharp distinction in mission and operation between migration policy and foreign aid institutions.

Italian development activity is, on the other hand, increasingly aware of migration-related issues and of the opportunities for synergy. This is partly due to the constant work of NGO's active in countries where migration to Italy is significant, or NGO's and local administrations in regions of Italy where migrants have settled. The production of policy papers by research institutes and influence by international organisations has also helped the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs DG for Cooperation and Development to begin to think in terms of co-development and the benefits of circular migration. Albania has not, however, been a priority country for experimentation of such ideas.

Turning to Albania, in the policy sphere, Albanian policy has been heavily stimulated by the political and economic importance of migration to address migration issues, and it appears clear to all stakeholders that migration policy and development policy must be linked. Yet much of the actual policy has been developed thanks to pressure and funding from donor organisations, especially the EU, and the capacity of the Albanian institutions – in terms of human and economic resources – still appears weak.

The failure of development-friendly migration policy to clearly emerge in this country pair cannot be blamed entirely on a failure to recognise the importance of such a link in policy circles. Structural factors and existing conditions are not as favourable as they first appear. Diaspora associations are weak in Italy, and many Albanians show slackening ties with the home country, reducing interest in return, investment or even remittances. Albania remains a country where investment is difficult, corruption widespread and basic services – and comforts – are not guaranteed.

⁵² Interview with Francesco Di Maggio, INPS, Rome

Nonetheless, there are a number of promising factors, emerging approaches and new initiatives that may produce results in the coming years.

First, the Albanian National Action Plan on Migration lists a series of concrete measures that should reinforce the structures responsible for maintaining links and handling circular migration between Albania and Italy. The current administrative confusion following elections should be resolved and tasks will be distributed. The most important elements are diaspora services, currently completely absent.

Second, the number of Albanians who have studied in Italy is growing annually. University cooperation is strong. While the Italian authorities have ignored these alumni until now, their involvement in associations and in NGO's, as well as initiatives of temporary and permanent placement in key positions, should increase the positive impact of the relatively liberal Italian student visa policy on Albania.

Third, training initiatives in Albania – both public and through NGO's – have begun to take into account the possibility of migration and to plan accordingly for a mobile base of human capital. At the same time, many Albanians have acquired permanent residence in Italy, obviating the problem of continuous renewal of work contracts and residence cards and allowing, finally, free movement between the two countries and possible entrepreneurial attempts in Albania without the loss of the right to return to Italy.

Fourth, the involvement of decentralized cooperation, of Italian local authorities, has begun to focus attention on circular migration pathways and on ties between local areas. This has yet to bear fruit in Albania, but has already strengthened return options for migrants from other countries.

Development-friendly Migration Policies: lessons from the country pair

The review of current migration policies in Albania and Italy reveals, as noted above, a number of areas in which development-friendly policy can emerge.

The first point that emerges, especially for the receiving country, is that greater institutional awareness of the relationship between migration and development is essential. The fragmented coordination of migration policy, on the one hand, and development policy, on the other hand, has kept experts within the Italian administration from sharing experiencing and forging a common strategy. The formal demarcation of each policy domain is a fundamental handicap in developing integrated policy. However, even without a redistribution of responsibility, migration policy makers should develop a greater awareness of the development implications of their decisions. The noteworthy absence of focused demands from sending countries should not be taken to mean the absence of needs.

Second, for the sending country, the national strategy requires further assimilation, especially in administrations not expressly charged with management of migration issues. The encouragement of return investment, for example, is hindered by the lack of a coordinating office or service, as well as by poor communication with local authorities.

Third, some mechanisms for development-friendly migration policies seem poorly suited to the country pair examined. Seasonal work programmes which have had success in other countries, linking seasonal migration to training and activities in the home country, are less applicable in a country such as Albania where the agricultural and tourism seasons coincide: seasonal work in Italy means leaving fields untended in Albania. Other mechanisms for ensuring productive return need to be explored, such as training for transnational entrepreneurship, or the provision of bonuses for return. Vocational training for emigrants, a keystone of the Italian migration policy, has not yet been linked with return plans or capacity building in Albania itself; this is a challenge to overcome.

Fourth, return investments by successful emigrants have taken place largely without institutional support from either government. Entrepreneurs have been able to identify promising sectors and to leverage their different forms of capital without any incentive programme. It should be noted that their return was facilitated by the acquisition of residence rights in Italy. Granting stability to immigrants can actually provide them with the security to undertake a return project.

Finally, similar measures can allow students to experiment a return home without the loss of residence rights if the return is unsuccessful. Increased recruitment of Albanian students in Italy needs to be followed by support for them once they have returned to Albania.

In conclusion, fifteen years of migration and exchange have turned Italy and Albania into important and experienced partners, able to interact at the institutional level, with strong economic ties and intimate knowledge of each other's policies and situation. The fact that this has not led to innovative policies linking migration to development can only be taken as a shortcoming, one which needs to be addressed in the near future.

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

In Albania

Mr Besjan Pesha - Mjaft, (civil society organisation)
Ms Kloalda Kamberi - Ministry of Finance
Ms Maijlinda Hafizi – Director, Directorate for Migration, Ministry of Labour & Equal Opportunities.
Ms Elizabeth Warn, Project Officer, IOM Tirana
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TABLES

Tab. 1 – Undocumented migrants intercepted along southern Italian coastal Regions, 1998-2004

Coastal Region	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Apulia	28458	46481	18990	8546	3372	137	18
Sicily	8828	1973	2782	5504	18225	14017	13594
<i>Lampedusa</i>					9669	8819	
Calabria	873	1545	5045	6093	2122	177	23
Total	38159	49999	26817	20143	23719	14331	13635

Source: Ministry of Interior, 2004

Tab. 2 – First-time residence permits issued to foreigners, Italy, 2004

Country	Number of First-time Permits	% of all permits issued
Romania	62342	19,5
Albania	29605	9,3
Morocco	24565	7,7
Other DCs	138837	43,5
LDCs	13841	4,3
EU-10 (post-2004)	21552	6,7
EU-15 (pre-2004)	14207	4,4
Other OECD/EEA	14349	4,5
Stateless	33	0,0
Total	319331	100,0

Note: figures include only first-time permits valid at the end of the year.

Source: Ministry of Interior, 2005.

Tab. 3 – Albanians with residence permits in Italy, 1 January, by gender, 1992-2005

Year	Men	Women	Total	% of all immigrants
1992	21382	3504	24886	3.8
1993	18479	3995	22474	3.8
1994	18347	5385	23732	3.7
1995	18095	7150	25245	3.7
1996	20301	9882	30183	4.1
1997	48586	18022	66608	6.8
1998	50287	22264	72551	7.1
1999	55916	31679	87595	8.0
2000	87748	45270	133018	9.9
2001	93268	53053	146321	10.6
2002	97570	61747	159317	11.0
2003	100874	70693	171567	11.4
2004*	155082	115301	270383	12.3
2005*	182145	134514	316659	13.2

Source: ISTAT. * 2004-2005: population registry data. Permits showed a total of 233316 Albanians (10.3% of all foreigners) for 31 Dec 2003.

Tab. 4. – Albanians in Italy, according to area of residence, 31.12.2004

Area of Italy	Men	Women	Total
North West	60402	44287	104689
North East	47415	35616	83031
Central Italy	42930	44906	87836
South	22323	16352	38675
Islands (Sicily and Sardegna)	3537	2279	5816
Total	176607	143440	320047

Source: ISTAT 2005

Tab. 5 – Italy-Albania Import-Export (millions of Euro)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004 1 st Sem.
Italy to Albania	291	370	468	546	554	285
Albania to Italy	158	191	254	287	298	172
Balance	133	179	214	259	256	113

Source: Italian Foreign Trade Institute, 2005.

Tab. 6 – Foreign born individuals signing contracts in 2004, by type of contract and nationality.

Country of birth	Individuals hired with		Total
	Long-term contracts	Short-term contracts	
Romania	92377	15138	107515
Albania	67005	14043	81048
Morocco	63494	11972	75466
Ukraine	37047	11972	49019
Poland	24265	10961	35226
China	28199	2767	30966
Tunisia	17533	6114	23647
Switzerland	17334	4284	21618
FR Yugoslavia	16991	3287	20278
Philippines	18400	1664	20064
Ecuador	17548	2353	19901
Senegal	14613	3512	18125
Moldova	15925	2174	18099
Egypt	15239	2656	17895
Peru	15095	2017	17112
India	12167	3797	15964
Slovakia	10060	5412	15472
Sri Lanka	11202	1417	12619
Bangladesh	9836	1443	11279
Pakistan	9381	1713	11094
Argentina	9489	1592	11081
Brazil	9208	1563	10771
Macedonia	8496	1783	10279
Nigeria	6749	1401	8150
Bulgaria	5651	1276	6927
Other countries	85853	10502	96355
Total	639157	126813	765970

Source: Caritas analysis of data from INAIL, 2005

Tab. 7 – Preferential quotas for Albanians within the Italian quota system, 1998-2006

Year	Preferential Quotas for Albania	Total Preferential Quotas	% of preferential quotas
1998	3000	6000	50,0
1999	3000	6000	50,0
2000	6000	18000	33,3
2001	6000	15000	40,0
2002	3000	10000	30,0
2003	1000	9500	10,5
2004	3000	20400	14,7
2005	3000	21700	13,8
2006	4500	38000	11,8

Source: Ministry of Labour

Table 8 – Preferential quotas for specific nationalities within the quota system, 1998-2006

	Preferential Quotas										Total	Argentina*	% of total quota
	Albania	Morocco	Tunisia	Somalia	Egypt	Nigeria	Moldova	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Other			
1998	3000	1500	1500								6000		10.3
1999	3000	1500	1500								6000		10.3
2000	6000	3000	3000							6000	18000		21.7
2001	6000	1500	3000	500						4000	15000		16.8
2002	3000	2000	2000	0	1000	500	500	1000		0	10000	4000	17.6
2003	1000	500	600	0	300	200	200	500	300	5900	9500	200	12.2
2004	3000	2500	3000	0	1500	2000	1500	1500	1500	3900	20400	400	25.6
2005	3000	2500	3000	1000	2000	2000	2000	1500	1500	3200	21700	200	13.2
2006	4500	4000	3500	100	7000	1500	5000	3000	3000	6400	38000	500	22.4

* Argentinian, and later (2004-2005) Uruguayan and Venezuelan, citizens of "Italian descent" (direct descendent, up to 3 generations)

Source: Ministry of Labour

Tab. 9 – Top 20 countries receiving Italian development aid (grants & credits) - 2002-2004 (in Euro)

2002		2003		2004	
Country	Grants & Credits	Country	Grants & Credits	Country	Grants & Credits
Argentina	12,258,936	Morocco	84,459,263	Tunisia	54,367,750
Albania	43,105,493	Albania	54,284,957	Albania	46,479,640
Afghanistan	36,237,195	Afghanistan	34,756,709	Afghanistan	22,541,781
Ethiopia	31,609,724	Ethiopia	24,500,361	Angola	22,400,661
Algeria	30,071,729	Jordan	23,810,572	Sierra Leone	19,084,186
Angola	27,988,452	Honduras	16,382,927	Mozambique	18,546,698
Mozambique	17,315,260	Mozambique	15,617,770	Etiopia	13,781,127
Serbia Montenegro	15,540,708	Chinese P. Rep.	14,614,898	Somalia	10,499,182
Swaziland	10,579,717	Egypt	12,539,544	Ghana	10,423,396
S Africa	9,598,674	Palestinian Auth.	11,428,008	Iraq	10,293,327
Somalia	9,256,007	Iraq	10,108,176	Serbia Montenegro	9,420,218
China	8,849,279	Uganda	7,776,687	Sudan	9,250,334
Nicaragua	8,794,142	Angola	6,058,709	Egypt	7,869,324
Palestinian Auth.	8,356,474	Argentina	5,571,808	Uganda	6,177,055
Brazil	7,208,637	Somalia	5,526,152	India	5,887,862
Sudan	6,670,464	Sudan	5,501,344	Argentina	5,842,700
Iran	6,669,308	Brasile	5,019,786	Syria	5,746,204
FYROM	6,577,184	Croatia	4,257,396	Palestinian Auth.	5,526,407
Bosnia-Herzeg.	6,030,907	Eritrea	3,826,565	Dominican Rep.	5,422,548
Egypt	5,957,527	N Corea	3,731,963	Bosnia-Herzegovina	5,225,941
Subtotal	308,675,817	Subtotal	349,773,595	Subtotal	294,786,341
Total	558,391,863	Total	445,647,521	Total	420,465,128

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006

Tab. 10 – Italian Bilateral Development Aid commitments to Albania, 2000-2004, as a fraction of overall aid

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Grants and credits actually spent in Albania (in Euro)	16,275,623	17,952,703	27,495,909	21,764,855	15,280,739
Grants and credits to Albania as a % of overall development aid	-	4.7	6.5	5.6	3.8

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004.

Table 11 – Total active Italian Development Aid projects in Albania, by sector, 31 12 2005

Sector	Loan		Grant		Total	
	No. of projects	€ million	No. of projects	€ million	No. of projects	€ million
Energy	3	105.02	2	1.32	5	106.34
Transportation	3	61.05	4	2.07	7	63.12
Water-Sewer	3	40.47	2	1.60	5	42.07
Private Sector	1	27.50	4	4.82	5	32.32
Urban/Rural Infrastructure	2	9.00	7	14.60	9	23.60
Health/Social Services	2	10.08	11	9.86	13	19.94
School/Training	1	3.00	11	14.81	12	17.81
Agriculture	0	0.00	11	16.37	11	16.37
Institutional Support	0	0.00	11	13.31	11	13.31
Total	15	256.12	63	78.76	78	334.88

Source: Italian MFA, 2006

Tab. 12 – Albanians enrolled in Italian Universities, by field of study and gender, 2004-2005

Field of Study / Department	Male	Female	Total
Economics and Business	697	1132	1829
Law	559	876	1435
Political Science	524	706	1230
Medicine	391	702	1093
Literature and Philosophy	278	483	761
Engineering	593	121	714
Mathematics, Physics and Natural Science	272	228	500
Pharmacy	112	340	452
Foreign Language and Literature	109	274	383
Architecture	178	104	282
Psychology	34	162	196
Education	37	125	162
Sociology and Social Science	34	82	116
Italian Language and Culture	43	33	76
Communications	28	43	71
Statistics	17	24	41
Agrarian Sciences	22	17	39
Physiology / Physical Education	24	3	27
Cultural Heritage	14	6	20
Veterinary Medicine	7	5	12
Interdisciplinary	49	64	113
TOTAL	4022	5530	9552
All foreign students	16168	22130	38298
% of all foreign students	24,9	25,0	24,9
Total University Enrolment	799,664	1,020,557	1,820,221
foreigners as % of all students	2,0	2,2	2,1

Source: Ministry of University, 2005

Table 13 – Outgoing remittances from Italy through official channels, 1991-2004

Year	Remittances in '000 €	% increase over the previous year
1991	56,810	-
1992	102,775	80.9
1993	126,532	23.1
1994	173,530	37.1
1995	208,132	19.9
1996	245,833	18.1
1997	292,315	18.9
1998	392,507	34.3
1999	510,259	30.0
2000	588,244	15.3
2001	749,369	27.3
2002	791,616	17.7
2003	1,167,060	47.4
2004	2,093,697	79.4

Source: Unione italiana cambi, Caritas Roma, 2005. Euro values for 1991-1998 are based on later fixed €/Lit. exchange rate

Table 14 – Remittances of Albanian emigrants, in million US\$, 1992-2004, according to channel

Year	Formal Channels	Informal Channels	Total	As % of GDP
1992			150,0	
1993			274,8	22,3
1994	28,3	349,6	377,9	19,4
1995	59,5	325,1	384,6	15,5
1996	60,0	439,6	499,6	18,6
1997	83,6	183,3	266,9	11,6
1998	113,7	338,6	452,3	14,8
1999	89,1	279,0	368,1	10,0
2000	162,8	368,0	530,8	14,3
2001	243,9	371,0	614,9	15,2
2002	282,3	349,2	631,5	13,9
2003	310,3	467,8	778,1	11,4
2004	470,0	558,0	1028,0	13,7

Source: De Zwager 2005, p. 21.