Albanian emigration in the context of crises, economic development and rising inequalities

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Albania as a case study

Population age-sex structure in 1970

Albania’s age-sex structure in 2021
(zero-migration projection based on 2011 Census)

Sources: UN, HFC
Albania as a case study

GDP per capita (current prices, $)

Stalinist-model communism, complete isolation, absence of emigration

Collapse communist system

36% urban

Financial crisis, regularisation of migrants IT, GR

Political & economic consolidation

>50% urban

Number of children per woman (TFR)

Sources: UN, HFC
Hypothetical drivers of emigration

• 15y-lagged regional young age population pressure

• Economic development
  – Position in regional economic geography (GDP)
    • Dummy for UE border area
  – Household wealth (asset index)

• Crises periods, followed by consolidation (period-dummies)

• Changing motives, proxied by education: from to ?

• Migration capital, from the family to the community: or ?
Data and methods

- Retrospective data from the Living Standards Measurement Survey 2008

- **Trend estimation** of the propensity of short- and long-term emigration (3-10 months vs 11+ months; standardized according to age)

- **Longitudinal & multivariate models** of
  - *Selection of 1st emigrants* (discrete-time logistic regression);
  - *Selection of short-term* movers, among 1st emigrants (logistic regression)
  - *Changing selection over time* (using interaction effects of selection criteria and period-dummies)
Results: Trends in the propensity of emigration, 1990-2007
Results: Selection and diffusion of migration, 1990-2007

- Population pressure: 

- Regional development, 1990s: 

- Wealth, long-term: 

- Education, long-term: 

- Family network, men: 

- Substitution of community for family networks among men among men
Discussion

• Demographic, economic and social drivers of emigration are confirmed, but do not account for the unabated trend!

• Other processes at work:
  – Regularisation & crisis-induced inflation of cumulative causation
    • cohort effects & extensive networks
    • Rising inequalities between regions and between households
  – Persistent income differentials with the UE, prestige of education and opportunities for career advancement abroad
  – Rising aspirations (and disappointment in Albania)
  – Gender inequalities in a patrilocal society
Thank you for your attention!