

# Reintegration of the Children of the Returnee Emigrants in the Albanian Educational System

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**Abstract.** Apparently a poor country with many problems, the origin of millions of immigrants, the Albania of the 2000s is experiencing a phenomenon that recalls old images. Many immigrants are returning home. But while there is a national strategy for protection and reintegration of the children whom are victims of trafficking, there is one in terms of re-education and social integration as well of children of returnee emigrants. While has been created the sufficient conditions for the education of albanian immigrants (Priority Greece and Italy) and are established standard curricula for teaching in the albanian language the children of the emigrants in the world, there are no such conditions in albanian schools, which day by day are becoming the host of the children of returnee immigrants. The purpose of this study is to present an analysis of the work done by children of returnee emigrants in our educational system, focusing on their reintegration. This study will consider the first and the second generation of children (children of emigrants born in Albania and children of emigrants born in the host countries), the phenomenon of returnee emigrants, their situation in Albania after the return (in terms of their adaptation to Albanian school system) and concrete contribution to education by the state institutions and society to re-integrate children of emigrants of different categories.

**Key words:** children of emigrants, reintegration, educational programs, Albanian language.

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## 1. Historical Background

At present the Albanian emigrants composes about 27,5% of the general population and 35% of the active population of the world (UNDP, Human Development Report 2009). Greece and Italy have been identified as primary countries of destination, followed by United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, United States of America, etc.

During the years it has been generated another phenomenon within albanian migration called the migration of return, caused from different reasons that are mostly related with reasons of emigration itself, with the situation of the people who have emigrated or the familiar context. These factors often have influenced the volunteer return. On the other hand, the experiences of return may come from negative experiences such as, failing on receiving the regular status in the destination countries, the forced return as the result of illegal stay in the destination countries according to the determinations/conditions in Admission Agreements or other practices of return in the origin countries.

The Albanian emigrants with the illegal status in EU, especially those who live in Italy and Greece, have been more exposed to the forced return than the emigrants with the regular status returned willingly. According to the official statistics of the Interior Ministry, during 2009 there have been registered 64.625 returned cases or 47.239 returned Albanian citizens, from whom 38.412 are cases who have been caught in the borderline or close to it and 26.213 cases have been caught in deepness of the territory of the origin countries. The reason of emigration in 99.99% of cases has been the lack of employment. Regardless of ways of return, forced return or the volunteer ones, the people who are returned can be classified as eventual investors, qualified emigrants or without any profession. The integration of the Albanian citizens who return in native land (country) is the focus of the five-year National Strategy "The reintegration of the Albanian citizens returned in country" that has just started its implementation. This Strategy determines furthermore the valuable devices addressed to the Albanian citizens who return willingly. The purpose of the policy for the returned Albanians is the assurance of a stable return for them through the facilities of the process of reintegration, aiming the decreasing of the costs of the migration, the increasing of the advantages and the stimulation of the contribution of the emigrants for the economic growth in the country. The mechanism of the support for their reintegration begin to work from the moment of the arrival of the returnees in Albania. According to the Admission Agreements or other forms of forced returns, the returned Albanians come under the procedure of the identification and interviewing in the Crossing Border Stop by the Boundary and Migration Police.

## 2. The National Policies and the Legal Frame

The National Action Plan of Migration (NAPM) that is an integral part of the National Strategy for Migration, foresees the measures of the Albanian Government for the management of the afflux of the emigration and the compilation of a whole

policy for emigration. This plan includes measures that handles both types of returnees, the forced and the volunteer ones, through the implementation of the Admission Agreements.

(Measure no. 5 and measure no. 10 determine respectively "The implementation of the Admission Agreements" and "The implementation of the Admission Agreements including EU/Albania as well as the citizens of the third countries")

There are certain approved strategies, a few of them in the process of implementation, from the Albanian Government with the aiming of providing social protection for the people in need, including the returned Albanians from the emigration, part of these groups in need.

Such issues as, the return and the reintegration of the Albanian citizens, the offering of the services of the vocational preparation and the employment, the social services for the groups in need, the returns and the reintegration of the victims of trafficking, of the abandoned children or who are coming from the vulnerable strata, remain the focus of certain strategies; The Sectional Strategy of the Employment and Professional Forming 2007-2012, The Sectional Strategy of the Social Protection 2007-2013, The Strategy of the Social Inclusion 2007-2013, The National Strategy Against the Trafficking of the Human Beings 2008-2010 and the National Strategy against trafficking and for the protection of children, victims of trafficking, The National Strategy for the Children 2005-2010, The National Strategy for the Improvement of the Living Conditions of the Roma Minority, as well as the National Plan of Action for the Decade of Inclusion of Roma 2010-2015.

The offices of Migration, already active, give the information about the regular ways for emigration as well as the opportunities of reintegration after the return. These offices manage also the register for the Albanian citizens returned from the emigration, including the accepted ones too.

Whatever, it has been noticed that the offices of the Migration has to become stronger in offering better services, through trainings and the technical support (including the running connection of internet, the updating of the information, etc) Moreover, it is noticed that in general there is a little to no information about the services of reintegration for the Albanian citizens offered from the offices of Migration, the regional and local Offices of Employment, no matter of the promotional activities through leaflets, display advertising, etc. As a result of it the register of emigrants has less data recorded compare to the real number of the returned people in the country.

The number of the registered people is very low. Another reason of it is the lack of linking the registration with a certain service of reintegration. Neither the law doesn't include this link for the returnees. Based only on a self-declaration the returnee might have the probability to get registered for more than one time, thus there is a gap to not prove his real status. As a result of it, the law is not dispensed limiting evidently the probability of a well-defined package for the reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens according to their specific needs. This would help in orienting the offices of Migration for a fair reference to actual services.

The new Strategy is conceived to be realized in two phases and it goes along with an Action Plan that has comprised 42 measures. The Strategy for reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens is part of the national policies for migration. It's as an enlargement of the vision of the National Strategy for migration related to the reintegration of the returned Albanian emigrants, although it doesn't address wholly the issues of reintegration. Its vision is the assurance of a stable return for the emigrants through the support of the reintegration, despite the way of return. (The Strategy for reintegration pg 3) From the legal aspect, the execution of the Law no. 9668 date 18.12.2006 for "The emigration of the Albanian citizens with the reason of employment" where is foreseen the services of reintegration in country, has faced the difficulties. This law determines only general responsibilities for the state structures in the process of emigration, where are included both, the return and the reintegration. The main problem related to the execution of this law is the unification of treating the two groups with different migratory characteristics, the emigrants and the returned Albanian citizens', at the same group of services, as well as referring in the two different cases with only one status "the status of emigrant", without defining the right criteria for benefiting the services for the returned emigrants.

### **3. Analysis for the implementation of the legal frame related to reintegration**

The accountable Institutions will report close to the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities about the level of implementation of the measures and the Action Plan for the reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens', the problematic of their implementation as well as recommendations for the situation improvement. The report will include also data analysis of the situation about the offering of the supportive services for reintegration of the returned citizens. The technical secretaries will draw the methodology of data recording according a standardised format. The progress of the strategy will be measured based on certain indicators, which are:

- The number of adapted curriculums of the professional public preparing

- The Rule of the Regional Directories of Education approved with the appropriate definitions for the returned Albanian citizens.
- The Special Curriculum for the supplemental lessons of the Albanian language drafted from the Ministry of Education and the Science through the Institute of the Education Development
- The number of children / students who have profited educational service in the summer schools that will be attended even by this category of children, for the supplemental lessons of the Albanian language
- The number of children / students who have been assisted from the psychological treatment of the educational system

One of the objectives of "The Strategy for the reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens" is,

- The enlargement of the activity and the treated problematics in the annual seminar of the teachers, aiming the growing of abilities for a long-term plan for the reintegration of the children of the returned emigrants.

Concerning the support of reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens' in Albania in the General Education System as well as that Professional through informing and offering of services (articles 29, 30, 31, 31, 32, 33 of the Action Plan) there have determined these objectives:

- Determining the tasks in the Operating Rule of the regional Directories of Education and Educational Offices for reintegration of the returned Albanian citizens as well as manners of collaboration with all the local institutions that operate to support these citizens.
- Drafting of special curriculums for supplemental lesson of Albanian language from the Ministry of Education and Science through the Institute of Education Development.

During this process will be considered the possible differences of the schools in the main countries of destination where the Albanian emigrants are located in comparison with the programmes offered by Albanian educational system.

- Organizing the summer schools attended from this category of the children as well
- Including in the annual plan of the regional Directories of Education these duties:

a) The Section of Statistics will identify and report periodically in the Ministry of Education and Science about the coming and setting up the children of the returned emigrants in the institutions of pre-university education.

b) The Section of Curriculums and Quality will have available programs in helping these children after identifying all their needs according to the age groups.

c) The Section of Curriculums and Quality will collaborate with the Institute of Education Development as well as non profit specialized NGO-s that are offering training programs for this special category of children.

- The National Agency of Education and Professional Forming in collaboration with specialized institutions in and out of country has to make the adaptation of the policies of curriculum with the needs of returnees for their education and professional forming.

Although the National Action Plan has determined a specific support for the children of the returned emigrants, currently there doesn't exist neither one special program nor special classes for this category.

#### 4. Conclusions

Evaluating the measures of reintegration of the National Action Plan for Migration is identified that these don't address completely the needs for reintegration of the returned emigrants and especially of their children. The reason is that doesn't exist an well-determined mechanism of information related to the public services in country and ways to be referred constantly to these services. Moreover these measures are general and their range is focused only in the services of vocational preparation and employment while the needs of the returned emigrants are more than those. For a special vulnerable category such as victims of trafficking and minors without accompanying, there is made all the legal and institutional mechanism related to the referral mechanism in the entry borders. Unfortunately there are not such as mechanisms that will determine and supervise the work for the reintegration of the children of the returned emigrants in the Albanian education system.

Therefore, the law hasn't been executed limiting evidently the possibility of determining a clear package of reintegration for the returned emigrants according to their specific needs, which will lead in referring to existing services.

The identified needs in improving the services of reintegration in country are:

- Strengthening the institutional mechanism for informing and referring the returned emigrant to the public services. It is necessary a frequent communication between institutions that play a key role in presentation

and facilitation of the process of returning and reintegration. They have to exchange continually information, expertise and resources for clarifying their position in the process of reintegration and the limitations of their inclusion in this process.

- Improving the Legal bases for enabling the functioning of the mechanism of referral in continuity and for creating more space for the groups in need among of the returned emigrants.
- Identifying the existing possibilities for vocational forming for the returned emigrants
- Urging the collaboration with the civil society for implementation of the common projects in helping the reintegration
- Aiming the making of facilities for children of the reaccepted Albanian citizens it has foreseen the inclusion in the Directive of the Ministry of Education and Science "For Starting the Academic New Year" of modalities and actions such as; registration for the first time in the education system of the children born out of the country, the continuity of the studies out of country and the equivalence of diplomas and notes. Even so, in reality this doesn't help in solving the problems that these children face daily in Albanian education system.

The Albanian Government is committed to support the social, economical and cultural integration of emigrants in hostile countries with keeping and making the Albanian cultural inheritance (the National Strategy for Migration and National Action Plan for Migration). What about the integration of these emigrants and especially of their children in Albania? Emigration has been treated mainly in the framework of the measures against trafficking and managing of the borderlines (the Albanian Strategy against trafficking of human beings, 2001, the Strategy of Integrated Management of Borderlines, 2003). What about the social and educational measures?

The current situation of integration and reintegration of the children of emigrants in the Albanian education system, unfortunately it's not as we would wish to be. There is a lack of adapted programmes for them, of well-trained teachers for these special cases and of course, of psychological service in the schools that will help in the transition period in the lives of this category of children.

Considering this issue as one of the priorities of the Albanian Government with the objectives that are expected to be realized in 2015, possibly soon we will see the concrete changes in the educational integration of this returned vulnerable category in the Albanian society.

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