

**MIGRATION AND COLLECTIVE FORMS OF SUPPORT
OF BIRTHPLACES IN THE CASE OF ALBANIANS
FROM MACEDONIA**

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Abstract

Labour migration has become a mass phenomenon among Albanians from the Republic of Macedonia – during the last five decades, tens of thousands of people have left their native areas, seeking profit in Western European countries in order to better their living standard. Remittances sent by migrants are an important source of income for relatives in their places of origin.

Most surveys examining the effects of migration tend to deal with remittances spent on food, clothing, housing, education, and health services. Investments in family-based business activities often are another accent of analysis. In this paper, however, I pay attention to issues of community-based or collective remittances. In the theoretical literature, collective remittances are seen as donations which are turned into investments of public interest. Various community projects financed through collective remittances have taken place in localities with high rates of migration. What distinguishes these projects is, namely, the collective benefit or good they provide.

This paper examines different forms of such local projects based on collective remittances and mutual community engagement in Albanian villages in Macedonia. With such resources, people urbanize their villages and also support seriously ill people or people who have been devastated by a disaster. Questions about the existence, uses, and impacts of collective remittances are analysed in relationship to the broader discussion of remittances and development.