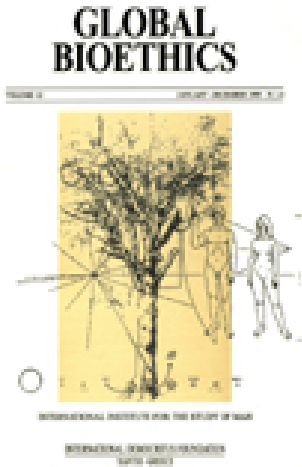


This article was downloaded by: [University of Stellenbosch]

On: 06 October 2014, At: 15:29

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Global Bioethics

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rgbe20>

Demographic and socio-economic aspects of a sample of Albanian women in the Province of Bari

A. De Lucia^a

^a Università degli Studi di Bari, Dipartimento di Scienze Statistiche, Via Camillo Rosalba, 53 70124 Bari, Italy

Published online: 10 Feb 2014.

To cite this article: A. De Lucia (1999) Demographic and socio-economic aspects of a sample of Albanian women in the Province of Bari, *Global Bioethics*, 12:1-4, 7-15

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/11287462.1999.10800740>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

De Lucia A.

*Università degli Studi di Bari,
Dipartimento di Scienze Statistiche,
Via Camillo Rosalba, 53
70124 Bari, Italy*

Demographic and socio-economic aspects of a sample of Albanian women in the Province of Bari

In order to evidence how and how much the local community influences the integration and socio-economical habits of female immigrants, we interviewed a sample of Albanian women who came to Italy during the immigration fluxes occurred between March and August 1991.

Beside the routine anagraphical information, we tried to evaluate the reason of choice and the degree of integration with the local population and the family traumas that this immigration caused.

Keywords: female immigrants, Albanian refugees, integration

The study of migratory movements is of great interest today, mainly on account of the new modality in which it is manifested. Indeed, these new migratory flows are no longer responses to the requirement for manual labor by the countries of arrival but, most of the time, are due to the serious demographic, economic and political conditions within the countries of origin (B. Chiarelli, 1992). In addition, the economic context within which the migratory movements take place appears to be different. The countries of arrival are undergoing processes of restructuring of the production apparatus, which are so deep as to place in doubt the traditional positive relationship between economic expansion and growth of employment and, indeed, to broaden the extent of "local and skilled" industrial and social inactivity, to which is added the entry of "unskilled" extra-European manual labor (Various Authors, Fondazione G. Agnelli, 1990).

Therefore, problems of socio-economic impact are created in the settlement areas. These problems strongly affect the local populations, which are profoundly unprepared to tackle them and certainly less amenable to politics of national integration similar to those adopted, in a more or less accentuated form, in the decades of growth subsequent to World War II. This unpreparedness and lack of openness have led to uncontrollable and at times even tragic situations, not to mention the impact of these processes on the national political equilibrium (the growth of new right-wing groups, Lepenism, etc.) (C. Bonifazi, G. Gesano, 1994; G. Gesano, F. Heins, 1994).

In this brief note, we provide some results of our broad research of a case study which, in our opinion, is of notable interest, namely the landing of Albanians from boats into the coast of Puglia, Italy between March and August 1991. In reality, the two influxes had completely different outcomes. The first aroused much positive attention, emotional participation and a warm welcome. Urgent interventions were immediately promoted for the Albanian refugees, and the civil protection agencies, charities and humanitarian associations were immediately alerted.

In contrast, the second influx took place among great polemic. About 20,000 Albanian refugees arrived in deplorable conditions off the coast of Bari. Although there was an attempt

to prevent this new mass landing, when it was understood that the conditions of health and hygiene aboard the ships was declining rapidly, the Italian authorities decided to permit the ships to dock. The refugees were "hosted" in the "Vittoria" soccer stadium and assisted in an extremely off-hand and provisional manner. Many of the Albanians returned to their country voluntarily, while one group of resisters was repatriated more or less by force.

In general, public opinion was characterised by statements and comments of disgust for the uniquely repressive actions chosen by the forces of law and order (F. Pittau, M. Reggio, 1992; E. Pugliese, 1991).

The events of March and especially August were so serious as to have an effect on the collective imagination of the Albanian population itself.

Because of these phenomena, the term "eksod" (exodus) appeared in the Albanian vocabulary. Even though it had previously played a large role in the history of Albania, it had been literally banned and treated as a crime in the last 50 years.

(K. Barjaba, Z. Dé rvishi, L. Perrone, 1992)

The exodus did not end with these two landings. Since then, there have been clandestine landings almost every day, which are less noticeable but certainly more constant. Indeed, the Italian government has deemed it necessary to issue a decree enabling the use of the armed forces for the control of the coasts of Puglia (government Decree of May 2, 1995, no. 152). Since we are dealing with a clandestine exodus, information concerning the presence of Albanians in Puglia is obviously completely uncertain. On the basis of data furnished by the Bari Police Headquarters, it is possible to provide a preliminary "official" picture of the situation of Albanians in the province of Bari:

Albanians landed in March 1991	<i>approximately</i>	40.000
Albanians landed in August 1991	<i>approximately</i>	25.000
Albanians expelled in 1993		352
Albanians expelled in 1994		587
Albanians expelled from 1/01/95 to 10/06/95		333
Albanians expelled from 5/03/91 to 10/06/95		1,272
Albanians obtaining residence (legal) from 5/03/91 to 10/06/95		2,495

Obviously the overall number of Albanians "legally resident or not" is markedly greater. Within the ambit of wider research aimed at defining the characteristics of the numerous ethnic groups in the territory of Puglia, we have turned our attention first to the Albanians. We believe that they are among the largest groups and thus potentially more likely to cause disturbances of the social equilibrium in many areas of Puglia. In particular, our investigation concerns the Albanian women who arrived in the last few years. About half of them have come to Italy to be reunited with their husbands, while the others have emigrated for reasons not strictly related to family. Instead, their choice mainly had the characteristics of the most recent female migratory movements, which, as is well known, have begun to assume decidedly new connotations in the last twenty years. Therefore, it appeared to be of great interest to turn our attention to this last phenomenon.

Already in 1983, Wihtol de Wenden spoke of the “new” conditions of women in migratory phenomena. She maintained that the woman has ceased to be considered simply as a factor of support of male emigration, destined only to favor demographic growth. Instead, she herself enters the structure of the labor market and acquires a relative freedom of behavior. Gradually, the problems of the migrant woman have been considered separately from the family situation and from the husband; her role extends beyond the domestic space, which men control less and less. In addition, a growing number of women emigrate alone or unmarried, both because their function in the local economy is no longer viewed as essential, and they are discriminated against in some societies, and because they seek to escape from the patriarchal society. As a consequence, female emigration is not limited to improving the level of income of the family, of consumer goods and individual lifestyle, but also provides a vehicle for the aspirations that lead to an improvement of the conditions of women in the zones of origin (C. Wihtol de Wenden, 1983). Therefore, until a few years ago, the migratory movements of women were very limited and rigorously conditioned by the patriarchal structure of their society of origin. This permitted strong maintenance of the nuclear family and the habits of the regions of origin. Only in the last few decades has female migration in Italy become more substantial, both on account of the low willingness of Italian women to accept domestic or generally humble labor (G. Arena, 1978) and the desire of the migrant woman to “escape” from the conditions of life, tied to cultural and social norms of the country of origin, which she no longer accepted (G. Favaro, M. Tognetti Bordogna, 1991).

The studies of female migrations are now numerous and cover the most diverse sectors of the research: from investigations of the identity crisis and psycho-physical stress of the immigrants (C. Del Miglio, A.F. Marchini, 1993; G. Raffaele, 1992) to very careful examinations of the immigration of women in relation to male presence (R. De Luca, M.R. Panareo, 1993) to studies of the “stabilization of the immigrants” with particular attention to the presence of foreign students in the Italian school system (E. Todisco, G. Maffioletti, 1992).

Methodology

The research was conducted on a sample of 188 Albanian women distributed throughout various areas of the Province of Bari:

Altamura	55	29.1%	Adelfia	8	4.3%
Bari	40	21.2%	Santeramo	6	3.2%
Sammichele	18	9.6%	Gravina	5	2.7%
Cassano	18	9.6%	Acquaviva	5	2.7%
Sannicandro	15	8.0%	Triggiano	3	1.6%
Casamassima	13	6.9%	Palo del Colle	2	1.1%

Given the difficulty of conducting the interview because of initial suspicion shown by the Albanian women, we chose a type of semi-structured interview and a single interviewer, in the person of Mariafrancesca Natale. In this way, the data were reliable and rigorously comparable with the information provided by the Bari Police, since the women interviewed had a high degree of confidence in the interviewer and, as a result, were extremely sincere.

The questionnaire was essentially divided into four parts: the first was aimed at knowledge of the structural characteristics (age, civil status, housing situation in Italy, religion); the second part concerned the family structure (household) in Albania and in Italy and family planning; the third was dedicated to the work experience of the interviewed woman; and the fourth part dealt with the migratory experience and other conditions of the immigrant (use of free time, discriminatory action and various problems of integration). We wished to give great weight to the analysis and description of this last sector, with the aim of elucidating possible “migratory stresses” already identified (G. Raffaele, 1992), which lead to “physical and psychic disturbances (mania, depression, paranoia) or even to deviant and criminal behaviors” (L. Grinberg, R. Grinberg, 1990).

Structural characteristics

The distribution by age of the interviewed women was:

Less than 20	5	2.7%
20-24	46	24.4%
25-29	72	38.2%
30-34	30	16.0%
35-39	9	4.8%
40-44	8	4.3%
45-49	8	4.3%
50 and over	10	5.3%

The place of birth of the 188 women was: Tirana 32.5%, Durazzo 28.7%, Valona 11.2%, Lusnia 5.3%, Coriza 4.8%, Scutari 4.8%, Cavai 3.7%, Cuciova 3.7%, Elbansan 2.1%, Saranda 1.6% and Berati 1.6%. With regard to civil status, married (56.8%) and single (34.6%) women prevailed, while only 8 were widows (4.3%), 5 were cohabiting (2.7%) and 3 were separated or divorced (1.6%). These findings conform well to the age of the immigrant women, which, as we have seen, was mainly between 20 and 34 years.

What seemed to us of extreme interest was the housing situation in Italy. Almost all the women were living in rented premises (77.6%), while the rest were: in host-family 12.2%, in an institute of nuns 4.8%, in their own house 2.7% and in an institute for refugees 2.7%.

The declared level of instruction was high; in fact, only 2 women (1.1%) were without any education, while 31.4% had completed the required period of schooling (8 years), 55.3% had attended secondary school (12 years) and 12.2% had a higher education degree, with 16 years of study.

With regard to the understanding of Italian, a small percentage of women stated that they knew little or none of the language (8.5%), whereas the understanding was good for 65.4% and adequate for 26.1% of the sample.

Concerning the professed religion, almost half of the women were Catholics (48.9%), while the rest were divided between Orthodox Christians (25.0%) and Muslims (23.4%). Only 2.7% declared themselves to be atheists.

Therefore, already from these first results, we can conclude that the Albanian women interviewed were rather young, with a good level of education and in search of stable conditions of life.

Structure and planning of the family

To the question "Have you brought your family with you?" 132 women responded positively, i.e. 81 "Yes" (42.8%) and 51 "Only in part" (27.2%), while only 30% said "No".

With regard to the motivation of a positive choice, almost all the women (85.6%) acted in this way in order to reconstruct in some way a nuclear family. The rest of the responses were distributed in the following manner: "to earn more money" 6.8%, "for health reasons" 4.5%, "for study purposes" 2.3% and "for political reasons" 0.8%.

With such a response, the interviewed women appear to have revealed the great need to recompose a nuclear family and certainly the desire to remain in Italy as long as possible.

With regard to dependent persons, 39.9% of the immigrant women had dependents in Italy and 10.1% had them in Albania, while 70.7% sent money back to their country. In our opinion, this occurs because they have developed a strong sense of family and feel a duty to help those who have remained in the home country and have economic difficulties. In fact, 86.6% of them had, when they lived in Albania, very frequent contacts (daily or weekly) with their relatives, 10.2% more than once a month and 3.2% not more than once a month. Evidently the Albanian women brought these strong ties with them, so much so that 98.9% of them were still in contact with their relatives, mainly by telephone.

Of the 188 women interviewed, 92 did not have children: of these, 90.3% hoped to have them, 4.3% did not and 5.4% did not know. Of the remaining 96, who already had children, 36.5% wanted more, 56.2% did not and 7.3% did not know. Again, of these 96, 55.8% had planned the birth of their children.

About half (50.5%) of those interviewed wished that their future children would be born in Italy and 48.4% wanted them also to have Italian citizenship.

The children of the interviewed women had in equal measure Italian friends (93.7%) and Albanian ones (91.1%). This finding reconfirms the desire for an ever greater and constant integration.

To the question "What do you want your child to do in the future?" the responses were: "Remain in Italy" 27.8% "return to Albania" 16.5%, "emigrate elsewhere" 3.8% and "I don't know" 51.9%. The conspicuous number of "I don't know" seems to be due to the precariousness of settlement in the places of arrival and to the enormous uncertainty of the socio-economic situation.

Work experience

With regard to working conditions, most of the women (124 = 66.0%) carried out a work activity in their home country: 40.3% in the service sector, 37.1% in industry, 16.9% in agriculture and 5.7% in the artisan sector. 54.1% had specialized duties, 41.1% performed general labor and 4.8% had executive posts.

121 of the women work in Italy (64.4%): 81.0% in the service sector, 7.4% in the artisan sector, 6.6% in industry and 5.0% in agriculture. Of these 121 women, 81.3% have general duties, 15.9% have specialized tasks and only 2.8% are office workers. Those who do not carry out any work activity number 67 (95.1% are housewives and 4.9% are students).

Of the women declaring that they had not performed any work activity in Albania, 31.2% were housewives, 41.0% were students and 27.8% were unemployed.

Virtually all (99.0%) of those who were married in Albania had husbands who worked: in the service sector 52.6%, in industry 36.1%, in agriculture 8.2% and in the artisan sector 3.1%. Instead, in Italy, of the 99.1% of husbands who continue to work, 67.9% are employed in the service sector, 25.5% in industry, 4.7% in the artisan sector and 1.9% in agriculture.

However, with regard to the work carried out in Italy, both by the women interviewed and by their husbands, we believe that it should be mentioned that one is dealing with service sector activities, which though have highly precarious and irregular connotations, most often with "under the table" payments.

Migratory stress

The following table reports the answers to the question "For what reason did you leave Albania?":

	N	%
POLITICAL MOTIVES	12	6.4%
POLITICAL-ECONOMIC MOTIVES	28	14.9%
ECONOMIC MOTIVES	74	39.4%
ECONOMIC-FAMILY MOTIVES	24	37%
FAMILY MOTIVES	27	14.4%
POLITICAL-FAMILY MOTIVES	15	8.0%
STUDY	5	2.6%
POLITICAL-ECONOMIC-FAMILY MOTIVES	3	1.6%

The decision to travel to Italy came in large part from the viewing of Italian programs on Albanian TV or generally from the mass media (53.8%). Another 20.2% of the women were drawn to Italy by the accounts of other immigrants, 19.1% had combination of these two factors, and (a result that should not be undervalued), 5.3% moved in response to a no clear destination, (some of them, at the time of departure, did not know that they were going to Italy, having embarked on the first ship available). Only 1.6% of the women were persuaded to travel and assisted by Caritas.

The following table reports the reasons of the women for preferring Italy as their destination:

	N	%
GEOGRAPHICAL VICINITY	17	9.0%
CULTURAL AFFINITIES	35	18.6%
EASE OF ENTRY AND/OR RESIDENCE	22	11.7%
POSSIBILITY OF WORK	75	39.9%
PRESENCE OF FAMILY MEMBERS	34	18.1%
DID NOT KNOW OF TRAVELLING TO ITALY	2	1.1%
DEMOCRACY/LIBERTY	3	1.6%

In Albania, the women dedicated 27.7% of their free time to recreational or sporting activities, 8.5% to political activity, 8.0% to religious or cultural activities and 6.9% to hobbies. 48.9% of the women interviewed did not carry out any free-time activity: of these, 72.8% because of a lack of possibility, 23.9% because of lack of time and only 3.3% by choice. In Italy, the women occupied their free time in the following manner: cultural activities 37.7% (TV-newspapers), hobbies 5.3%, encounters with other Albanians 29.3% and time spent with relatives 27.7%.

At this point of the questionnaire, it seemed necessary to ask the women for a prediction of their length of stay in Italy. Alongside a marked uncertainty about the future indicated by the response "I don't know" (34.0%), there was a strong wish to remain permanently (21.8%) and a desire for a long stay (from 3 to 10 years, 37.8%), probably due to the will to build up adequate savings. Only 5.9% of the interviewed women responded that they wished to stay for a period of 1 to 3 years, and 0.5% for less than 1 year.

With regard to the difference in relations between the sexes, 80.9% of the interviewed women believed that Italian women are more emancipated than Albanian women, while to the question "Do you think that there is discrimination between women and men in Italy?", there was a substantially equal distribution between "Yes" (52.7%) and "No" (43.0%), with only 4.3% responding "I don't know". To a similar question concerning discrimination between men and women in Albania, the answers shifted mainly toward "Yes", the value being 77.1% versus 21.3% for "No" and 1.6% for "I don't know".

Extremely significant, despite appearances, is the following table reporting the values of the responses to the question "Was life in Albania better?":

	N	%
YES	27	14.3%
NO	68	36.2%
I DON'T KNOW	93	49.5%

We believe it necessary to consider attentively the 49.5% of "I don't know" responses. These were due to a difficulty in choosing between a better economic situation in Italy and a greater presence of affectionate relationships in Albania. The dietary habits were changed for 66.0% of the women, against 29.7% who considered the variation to be only partial and 4.3% who indicated a complete absence of change.

The image of Italy "before coming" had the following distribution:

	N	%
RICH COUNTRY, EASY LIFE	77	41.0%
PLACE OF ONE'S DREAMS	84	44.7%
I DID NOT IMAGINE ANYTHING	14	7.4%
I KNEW IT, I HAD NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT IT	13	6.9%

Predictably very strange responses were given to this question. "Place of one's dreams" meant a place where one works little and earns a lot of money, "one could obtain everything", "one

enters the supermarket, fills the shopping cart and leaves without paying” and “one just has to telephone a number to win money and presents”. Naturally, all of this is in tune with the answers to the subsequent question “By what means was this image created?”: “television” 67.0%, “accounts of other immigrants or relatives” 3.3%, “television and accounts of immigrants or relatives” 29.7%.

However, quite different was “the image of Italy today”: “different” 71.3%, “the same” 18.6%, “worse” 5.9% and “better” only 4.1%.

With regard to the problem of Albanian prostitution, 61.2% of the women had heard of it, but 94.7% of these did not know any young woman who was a prostitute. 35.1% of the women thought that it was “organised”, while 20.2% believed it to be an individual choice and 42.6% did not know. Only for 2.1% of them did it have both “organised” and “individual” connotations. It must be specified that the indication “individual” did not refer to a behavior marked by free choice. In other words, according to the interviewed women, the individual choice involved the desire of the young women to follow, on the promise of marriage, their fiancés who, once in Italy, induced them to work as prostitutes. To the question whether prostitution was a “necessary” choice, 78.8% of the women responded “Yes”, 3.6% “No” and 17.6% “I don’t know”.

On this last topic, we found the interviewed women to be extremely closed in their attitude, suspicious and apparently lacking in emotion. These women, who in the other phases of the interview warmed up and seemed to want to talk for hours, exhibited the desire to distance themselves from a question that very probably scared them.

Wishing to draw very rapid and still preliminary conclusions from the study of our sample of Albanian women, we can state that the image of the immigrants is that of young women who try, at all costs, to adapt to the new environment, with the intention of staying for as long as possible in a place where they believe to have found great prosperity. For all this, they pay a very high price on account of the painful separation from their relatives and their homeland, which provokes in them a great sense of nostalgia. Nevertheless, about one-half of them want their children to be born and to remain in Italy.

Many live in extremely precarious conditions (lack of a residence permit, of work, of an established place), with discrimination much greater than that suffered in their country of origin. However, they are willing to accept any type of work in order not to be expelled. If all this is combined with the false image of Italy that they had prior to emigrating, one can understand how strong is the psychological stress suffered by this group of women.

Certainly, we do not believe that the findings of this preliminary study can be considered conclusive and it is our intention to carry out further detailed research on the women that we interviewed. Moreover, since they came only from the hinterland of the city of Bari, we plan to extend our investigation first to the southern part of the Province of Bari, where the Bari Police have identified the greatest concentration of immigrants, and finally to Milan and its surroundings, where, again from information furnished by the Police, it seems that there an active center of organisation and exploitation of prostitution has been formed and consequently there is a dangerous attempt to form criminal gangs.

References

- Arena G. 1978. Il lavoro femminile come fattore d'incidenza geografica. *Geografia*, Roma, pp. 158-171.
- Barjaba K., Z. Dérvishi, L. Perrone 1992. L'emigrazione albanese: spazi, tempi e cause. *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 107, pp.513-537.
- Bonifazi C., G. Gesano 1994. L'immigrazione straniera tra regolazione dei flussi e politiche di accogliimento.
- Chiarelli B. 1992. *Migrazione: Antropologia e storia di una rivoluzione in atto*. Vallecchi editore, Firenze.
- De Luca R., M.R. Panareo 1993. Le donne senegalesi nella loro esperienza migratoria in Italia. *La Critica Sociologica*, no. 105, pp.84-97.
- De Wenden Wihtol C. 1983. Introduzione a "La donna nei fenomeni migratori", *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 70, pp.130-131.
- Del Miglio C., A.F. Marchini 1993. Identità e cambiamento dell'immigrata filippina in Italia. *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 111, pp.450-467.
- Favaro G., M. Tognetti Bordogna 1991. *Donne del Mondo: Strategie migratorie al femminile*. Milano, p.74.
- Gesano G., F. Heins 1994. Trasformazioni demografiche e interventi sul mercato del lavoro. Tendenze Demografiche e Politiche per la Popolazione. Terzo rapporto IRP, Istituto di Ricerche sulla Popolazione. Il Mulino, pp.227-258.
- Grinberg L., R. Grinberg 1990. *Psicoanalisi dell'Emigrazione e dell'Esilio*. F. Angeli, Milano.
- Pittau F., M. Reggio 1992. Il caso Albania: immigrazione a due tempi. *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 106, pp.227-238.
- Pugliese E. 1991. La portata del fenomeno e il mercato del lavoro. In: M.I. Maciotti, E. Pugliese. *Gli Immigrati in Italia*. Laterza, Bari.
- Raffaele G. 1992. Le immigrate extracomunitarie in Italia. *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 106, pp.194-225.
- Todisco E. G. Maffioletti 1992. Scolarizzazione degli immigrati e attività interculturali in Italia. *Studi Emigrazione*, no. 107, pp.539-561.
- Various Authors 1990. *Italia, Europa e nuove immigrazioni*. Fondazione G. Agnelli, Torino.