

## *Is there such a thing as migration of poverty in Albania ?*

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### ***Abstract***

The aims of this paper are two-fold: To investigate whether poverty has moved with migrants from rural to urban areas and to measure the impact of migration in terms of several dimensions

While Albania is more known for its massive international migration, internal migration is also noteworthy and understudied. This paper consequently tries to fill a gap in the literature by assessing the impact of internal migration on poverty. Earlier studies on Albanian migration show that internal and international migration flows show distinctive patterns: internal migrants mainly come from the mountain and North-Eastern districts, migrate to the peripheries of big urban centres, and are generally poorer.

We make use of detailed information on the residence duration of internal migrants, as well as local economic and social conditions they are exposed to, taking advantage of the 2005 Albania LSMS with a focus on the households oversampled in peri-urban Tirana. We assess whether welfare in terms of health, education, consumption, income, and inequality has changed after internal migration. Our descriptive statistics confirm earlier studies on peri-urban Tirana and show that migrant households live in poor dwelling conditions, work in irregular and unstable employment and have low levels of health and schooling. However, their total per-capita income and consumption is higher than for rural households. Recent arrivals are poorer and migrant households are poorer than non-migrant households in peri-urban areas, so to some extent we see that poor households relocate from rural to peri-urban areas.

Further analysis on the impact of internal migration is based on econometric techniques. The propensity-score-matching (PSM) approach and the instrumental variable (IV)

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method are used to compare rural migrant households in the destination communities with their similar counterparts in rural Albania who did not move, taking their pre-migration wealth into account. The econometric analysis confirms our descriptive statistics and show that migration has had a positive impact on income, but that overall consumption levels are unchanged or reduced.

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