

THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA IN ALBANIA: CLIMATE, POLITICS, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

The work, within the paradigm of anthropology, analyzes the processes of formation of the Russian diaspora in Albania, the mechanisms of its interaction with local authorities, the algorithms for integration into local society, the contradictions that arise along the way, and the prospects for preserving linguistic, cultural, religious and ethnic identities in the context of global challenges of the 20th — early 21st centuries. The first generation of representatives of the Russian enclave in the western Balkans established themselves there after the revolutionary events of 1917 in Russia. The Russian-speaking diaspora grew significantly during the years of the “great friendship” between Albania and the USSR after World War II, when many Albanian men studying in the Soviet Union married Soviet women. The democratic reforms in both countries in the early 1990s gave further impetus to the growth of the Russian diaspora. Since then, not only Russian citizens marrying Albanians have begun moving to the Balkan country, but also wealthy individuals purchasing coastal property, entrepreneurs opening businesses, and those in the “freelance” professions, which allow them to work from anywhere in the world, who have chosen the Mediterranean climate and leisurely lifestyle over the bustle of overcrowded megacities. The primary focus of this study is on Russians who have settled in Albania over the past three decades — from the 1990s to the present. The ongoing transformation of Russians in the Balkans’ perceptions of their own identity, the forms and presentation of traditional and popular culture, traditional and customary ways of life, and family values in Albania, which has experienced radical changes in several socio-political, economic, and ideological structures over the past century, is a highly relevant subject of research. The analysis offered by the author is an attempt to decipher the complex process of relations between one’s own and others, between man and society.

Keywords: *Russians (Russian-speaking), diaspora, Albania, migration policy, ethnic identity, economic factors, social ties, cultural adaptation*

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