

Hometown Imotski

Croatian Migrant Workers in Germany and Their Transnational Engagement

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Imotski

- Yugoslavia: labor migration since 1963
- Imotski: by 1971 nearly 20 percent of the population abroad
- Primary sources of study: local newspaper, municipal gazette
- Four forms of transnational engagement:
 - Samodoprinos
 - Guest worker factories
 - Donations, private actions
 - Private investments



The Samodoprinos

- Samodoprinos: Financial instrument of the smallest federal unit in former Yugoslavia, a kind of local tax.
- Procedure: Referendum, compulsory fees. Payment behavior: 76% participation (according to state wide poll)
- 1970, 1973, 1976: 22 referenda in Imotski:
 - roads
 - water pipes
 - Health clinic
 - primary school
 - eletrification

Hard-currency factories

- *Pionirka*: textile enterprise since 1963 in Imotski
- Construction of three production facilities with remittances
- Village Aržano, first hard-currency facility: migrant investment: 220,000 DM. Construction begins in 1970: approx. 100 jobs.
- 1970s: construction of two more production facilities: returned credit or guaranteed work place (per migrant loan: 6,000 DM)
- 1989: two production facilities still active, but struggling

Conclusion

- Migrants disposition to engage in home community beyond family support.
- Threefold motivation: relative's quality of life, social recognition, wish to return or profitable investment.
- Risk of unprofitable investment.
- Local actors have to see risk and potential of remittances and develop a strategy how to engage migrants.
- Communication: distribution of information, social recognition and identity construction.

Thank you for your attention

