SHAPING THE CITY: THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EVOLUTION OF THE MACEDONIAN DIASPORA IN VIENNA

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ABSTRACT

This analysis posits that the Macedonian diaspora in Vienna represents a paradigmatic case of community evolution, tracing its transformation from a post-war labor collective into a complex and influential social body. The central argument is that the community's profound internal heterogeneity spanning ethnic, religious, and regional lines has been a catalyst for developing a robust organizational infrastructure. This infrastructure has proven essential not only for cultural preservation and intergenerational identity negotiation but also as a platform for significant economic agency, most notably through socially embedded entrepreneurship. This report integrates a review of existing literature with a proposed mixed-methods research framework designed to capture the contemporary dynamics of this evolution. The findings suggest that the diaspora is not a passive minority group, but an active agent that contributes to and co-creates the economic vitality and multicultural identity of contemporary Vienna. Its trajectory offers crucial insights into the dynamics of integration, resilience, and social cohesion in modern European urban centers.

Keywords: Diaspora Studies, Community Evolution, Urban Sociology, Macedonian Diaspora, Vienna, Migration, Social Cohesion, Ethnic Entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

This report synthesizes the complex trajectory of the Macedonian diaspora in Vienna, documenting its transformation from a transient "Gastarbeiter" population into a structurally integrated yet legally distinct component of Austrian society [1]. The community acts as a "tenth province" of North Macedonia, serving as a critical node for political, religious, and economic activities [1]. Key findings indicate that the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC) functions as the central institution for national identity preservation [2], while the economic evolution is characterized by a shift from manual labor to professional entrepreneurship and advanced technology transfer, such as the DigiTS-ME project [3]. Persistent challenges include navigating the legal environment of "Third Country Nationals" (TCNs) and addressing the significant gender gap in professional labor market participation [4], [5].

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a **qualitative synthesis approach**, designed to deconstruct the evolution of the Macedonian diaspora through three intersecting lenses: legal frameworks, socio-demographic shifts, and economic transnationalism. The study adopts a **longitudinal perspective**, tracking the community's transformation from the recruitment agreements of the 1960s to the contemporary era of digital integration. This approach allows for an assessment of how the diaspora has navigated the shift from