

The largest household (HH028) which represents the traditional extended family is made up of 14 members from three generations residing under one roof. This is one of the families which stays in Thethi year-round. It also includes the oldest year-round inhabitant (86 years old).

### Subsistence strategies

Prior to the Communist period, the economy was pastoral. During the Communist era land and animals were collectivized and the villagers secured their livelihood through wage work for the cooperative. Currently, most households have small holdings of crops and animals necessary to meet their domestic needs. Those families that do not overwinter return to Thethi for the summer months to enjoy the marvelous mountain air, to maintain their properties, work the land for fruit (strawberries, plums, grapes, apples, pears, cherries, and mulberries) and vegetables (tomatoes, lettuce, onions, garlic, and peppers), as well as the main staple crops (corn, potatoes, beans). The pastures are utilized for cows, sheep, and some goats, as well as for growing winter fodder (mostly alfalfa). Several families also keep beehives. Wild plums, wild strawberries, walnuts, and hazelnuts are available to gather freely. Almost every household makes its own *raki* from grapes or plums. Herbs are another plentiful local product. Thethi used to be a collection centre for herbs and animal hides in Communist times, but now there is no proper infrastructure for their profitable collection and sale.

A complex system of land ownership is evident, showing remarkable lack of dispute, which is so characteristic of other villages in Albania, following the fall of Communism and the national policy to return land which the State had taken for 40 years:

The residential seasonal <sup>migrator</sup> transhumance observed in Thethi has its roots in the old transhumant-pastoral lifestyle that was described by all respondents as their native occupation. Up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, trade was made with Gusi, Plav, and Peja (over the Qafa e Pejes pass to Montenegro). Although the current borders were drawn by the Great Powers in London in 1912, it seems that the effects were not fully felt until after WWII and the break with Yugoslavia in 1948<sup>2</sup>, after which time access to these old markets was no longer possible. These markets had been utilized for the purchase of corn which, by most accounts, was cheaper and more easily available in Montenegro in comparison to Shkodra. In turn, Shkodra market was mainly used to sell animals and pastoral products and for the purchase of salt, sugar, oil and other needed household goods. By the end of the 1930's the road had been built (under Zog's regime), apparently to serve Shkodra families with summer homes in Thethi - this was a time when several foreigners published material about their visits here, so one might assume that this indicates that many more actually visited.

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<sup>2</sup> This interesting fact is quite contrary to all historical documentation I have consulted to date. This is an interesting instance of the porous nature of borders, despite international agreements.