

# **MIGRANTS, MINORITIES AND EMPLOYMENT IN GREECE**

## **EXCLUSION, DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION**

**RAXEN 3 Report  
to the ▲ European Monitoring Centre on  
Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)**

by the RAXEN Focal Point for Greece  
▲ ANTIGONE  
Information and Documentation Centre on Racism,  
Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A spectre haunts Europe today more than ever before; the spectre of the “others”: peoples with different cultures, skin colours, languages, religions, customs arriving at its shores, crossing its borders and settling in the fringe –spatial as well as social– of its societies. Northern European states have been affected by these migratory movements since the 1950s, but the states in the south experienced for the first time the sudden reversal of their traditional role from pools of emigration to hosts of immigration.

The nationalist political discourse in these countries soon turned its attention to the immigrant population affecting social and political behaviour in ways that contradict the long established European tradition of tolerance and the political desire and objective to build a multicultural and plural European society not only for the indigenous nations of Europe, but for all those who live in our society. Migrants became victims of racist and xenophobic attitudes and behaviour along with the other traditional targets of intolerance, the autochthonous Roma and other minorities.

Racism and xenophobia as forms of social behaviour – individual, social or institutional – guided by stereotypical negative representations of the “other” threaten the very fabric of European societies, causing mistrust, friction, conflict and sometimes violence.

Greek society, composed until recently of close knit social groups relying for social communication and support primarily on kin and interpersonal relationships, has been particularly affected in both positive and negative ways by the recent arrival of large numbers of migrants and refugees.

The spectacular economic recovery of the past decade that enabled Greece to integrate into the European economy and participate in the economic and monetary integration by improving its macroeconomic indicators is partly attributed to the significant influence of migrant labour. Migrant workers have contributed to the spectacular rise in the GDP during the 1990s by increasing both the surplus value produced and also consumer expenditure. Moreover, undocumented migrants formed a readily available, flexible, occasional and disorganised labour force that influences the average cost of manual labour.

Although the labour market has been undergoing serious restructuring in the past years associated mainly with a steady growth in the labour supply, existing studies and recent reports stress that migrants are not a threat to Greek employees, since they are not competing for the same jobs. Furthermore, it is convincingly argued that migrants indeed create employment opportunities as their work produces more profits that can be productively invested thus creating more jobs; in fact, since investments are normally in modern technology those that stand to benefit from the specialized jobs that are created are not the unskilled migrants, but the better skilled Greek labour force<sup>1</sup>. In this sense the persisting high unemployment rate cannot in any way be attributed to the presence of migrants and must be sought elsewhere in the complex web of factors that influences the labour market. However, as migrants become regularised and integrated into mainstream society they will eventually begin to compete with Greeks in the labour market.

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<sup>1</sup> Ioakeimoglou I., (2001), “■ Migrants and employment”, p. 80, in Marvakis A., Parsanoglou D. and Pavlou M., eds “■ Migrants in Greece”, Athens: Ellinika Grammata

The influx of migrant workers has also highlighted the persistent discrimination in employment which has become a serious social problem closely linked to both the lack of effective anti-discrimination legislative provisions and the structural inability of the Greek state apparatus to co-ordinate and implement effectively anti-discrimination measures. Foreign migrants, migrant ethnic Greeks from Albania, repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS and minorities, such as the Roma, are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by employers who often provide them with meagre wages, no social security, no benefits and poor working conditions. It should also be noted with great regret that migrant women, teenagers and even children are still being employed in a thriving sex industry especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

Article 13 of the § Amsterdam Treaty and its transposition into national legislations by Council Directives § 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and § 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, will soon provide the essential legal instrument for combating discrimination, racism and xenophobia and promoting diversity and equality especially in employment in all EU member states.

For this reason, the development of the appropriate anti-discrimination legislative provisions not only in penal, but most importantly in civil and administrative law at national and local level with specific and comprehensive measures covering key social areas such as employment, education, housing, access to public and social services and contractual relations between individuals must, therefore, constitute an important national priority in the coming years. The other crucially important task will be the creation of the appropriate competent public bodies to monitor the development of the social situation and the implementation of the legislation.

Racism, xenophobia and prejudice are still present in public institutions, including the judicial system and the police. Little effort and few resources have up till now been devoted to combating this institutional racism indicating that the government has neither attached the appropriate level of priority nor allocated sufficient resources to the fight against racism, discrimination and intolerance within state structures.

The situation in the area of employment is far from satisfactory. The lack of reliable official statistical data and the complete absence of public monitoring mechanisms hinder the effective central co-ordination and administration of national and local efforts to combat racism and promote equality and diversity. Existing research and other both official and unofficial data point to the continued existence of serious inequalities and discriminatory practices in the labour market.

However, the trends are not all negative. We can observe a significant number of encouraging signs demonstrating a slowly emerging commitment both by the state and civil society to combat racism, discrimination and intolerance. Some legislative and administrative measures that are gradually being introduced and a rising number of projects, programmes, action plans and various “good practice” examples by both public and private bodies in the fight against racism, discrimination and intolerance in employment can be cited as examples.

As National Focal Point of the ▲ RAXEN network we hope that the present study will provide EU institutions, national and local administration, decision makers and NGOs with a valuable tool in their fight against racism, intolerance and discrimination.

## **2. AIM AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

### **2.1. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to provide a starting point for the systematic documentation and exploration of the issue of racism and discrimination in employment contributing thus to national and European efforts to promote equality and diversity in the workplace irrespectively of race, religion, ethnic, or cultural characteristics.

The study should be considered more as an “analytical report”, rather than as a full sale “analytical study”, which in view of the problems mentioned below and the limited resources for the current project, is not realistically feasible. The relative absence of both official statistical data and the poverty of primary scientific research on the topic limits our ability to provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of racism and discrimination in employment in the context of the RAXEN project. Moreover, as the labour market and employment in Greece are in a continuous process of dynamic and rapid transformation affected by both internal and external factors their study becomes even more difficult and complex.

Research on issues regarding racism and discrimination in employment against vulnerable groups, such as migrants, refugees and autochthonous ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious minorities constitutes a new field of scientific inquiry in Greece. Consequently, as researchers, we were faced with serious difficulties, such as:

- Absence of official statistical data; where some data do exist, they have usually not been statistically elaborated (raw data); also, public authorities tend to provide them selectively requiring special permissions that are granted after long bureaucratic processes.
- Very limited resources of relevant Greek research literature;
- Problems with the quality of data provided by public authorities and state organisations;

The present study relies largely on the data collected during 2001, while an effort has been made to analyse data covering the period up to the end of August 2002, when deemed important. It will attempt to elaborate on issues relating to discrimination in employment, explain particularities and difficulties by pointing out omissions, deficiencies, and positive steps in the process of introduction and implementation of integration policies.

Moreover, the study will focus on initiatives and “good practices” from diverse actors, such as NGOs, trade unions and local authorities, emphasizing the importance of their contribution.

## 2.2. ORGANISATION & STRUCTURE

The study follows the structure proposed by the EUMC. However, the proposed size of each chapter has not been adhered to strictly: some chapters are longer as there is a need to elaborate more on certain issues relating to the country specific situation, while other chapters are shorter due to the lack of data and the insufficient time available to collect information<sup>2</sup>.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> chapter contains** an executive summary (p. 2)

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter** presents the aim and structure of the study (p. 5)

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter discusses** briefly the definitions of vulnerable social groups and their demographic, social, political and cultural situation (p. 7)

**The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter examines** the theoretical assumptions and methodological considerations that have guided both the data collection during RAXEN2 and the present analytical study (p. 29)

The 5<sup>th</sup> chapter examines critically the existing data and sources used and briefly point out the difficulties encountered due to the absence of such data and the inadequate structures and organisation of the available sources (p. 34)

**The 6<sup>th</sup> chapter elaborates** on the most important initiatives, bodies, actions and events and attempt to comment on their effectiveness from information received through our own research, since few evaluation or final reports of any of the projects were made available to us, despite repeated requests (p. 39)

Although the EUMC guidelines for this chapter refer to “turning data into information (what knowledge of importance is found up till now for reducing racism and supporting diversity) we fear that the knowledge accumulated from the existing data and information sources is inadequate for an analytical in depth treatment of the situation. In order to achieve this level of analysis extensive research must be initiated to collect primary data and information.

**The 7<sup>th</sup> chapter analyses** the findings of the data collection in reference to the basic theoretical assumptions guiding the study, attempting to relate them to particular causes and discuss the possible consequences. It should be noted though that such phenomena cannot be readily explained by reference to a simplistic cause and effect model. The “causes” of racism and discrimination in any area of social life and particularly employment are multiple and require a deeper and much more extensive study to be analysed adequately (p. 50)

**The 8<sup>th</sup> chapter summarises** the main findings of this study (p. 57)

**The 9<sup>th</sup> chapter presents briefly key recommendations** to policy makers to facilitate the promotion of more effective integration policies and improve communication and interaction among different groups in Greek society (p. 59)

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<sup>2</sup> Information is collected exclusively through very time consuming personal interviews, since public authorities and other sources are not accustomed to “divulging” information without formal procedures of obtaining due written permission, etc.

**Finally, an Appendix** has been added with tables and statistical data to allow the reader to have a better understanding of some key figures of the Greek economy in general and its labour market in specific.



### 3. THE SOCIAL SITUATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

Greece is a country with a long tradition of emigration. Since its establishment as an independent state in 1830, successive waves of emigration characterised Greek society. From 1880 to 1920 the emigrants' destinations were predominantly the United States<sup>3</sup>. After the Civil War in 1949, 56,000 people migrated as refugees to Eastern and Central European Communist countries and the Soviet Union fearing political persecution<sup>4</sup>. During the 1950s and 1960s the low wages, depressed by high levels of unemployment and underemployment, coupled with the economic growth experienced by northern European countries led, between 1958 and 1976, as much as one million Greeks, 10% of the total population, to emigrate.

The 1970s recession of the global economy that initiated a long process of deindustrialization and economic restructuring in Western European economies led many Greek emigrants to return. The number of returnees gradually increased reinforced by programmes of co-operation between Greek and European governments providing economic assistance for resettlement of guest workers as the result of the implementation of stricter immigration policies by Western European countries; by the mid 1970s emigration rates had dwindled to such an extent that the National Statistical Service stopped recording emigration.

After the fall of the Greek junta in 1974 and the legalisation of the communist party in a year later, the issue of the repatriation of the Greek civil war refugees was raised and since 1982, when they were allowed to repatriate, about 40,000<sup>5</sup> returned.

#### 3.1. Definition and demographics of vulnerable groups

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security<sup>6</sup> defines the vulnerable social groups according to a classification that is mainly be used in the context of policies and projects aimed at combating social exclusion. The following groups are listed (non hierarchical categorisation):

- Roma
- Repatriated ethnic Greeks
- Migrants
- Refugees

<sup>3</sup> As Emke-Poulopoulou points out in the period of 1890-1920 almost 600,000 Greeks (approximately 15% of the population) emigrated I.Emke-Poulopoulou (1986): ■ 'Problems related to emigration and to return migration' Athens: IMEO-EDHM

<sup>4</sup> I.K. Hassiotis (1993) ■ 'A review of modern Greek diaspora' Thessaloniki: Vanias, pp. 147-149.

<sup>5</sup> N Glitsos (1995) ■ 'Problems and policies regarding the socio-economic integration of returnees and foreign workers in Greece.' in ■ International Migration Quarterly Review Vol. 23 No. 2 pp. 155-176, especially p. 160 and Hassiotis (■ 1993) op. cit.pp.155-156.

<sup>6</sup> Indirectly in the sense that there is no official list, but such groups are defined as vulnerable in policies and projects aimed at combating social exclusion. Relevant information in Greek only available at <http://www.labor-ministry.gr/> (22/05/2002). Also some information on definitions may be found in the "National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003", prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

- Cultural and Religious Minorities
- Inhabitants of mountainous and remote regions
- Single parent families
- Prisoners and ex-prisoners
- Juvenile delinquents
- Addicts and ex addicts of narcotic substances
- Disabled individuals
- Mental patients
- HIV positive patients

For the purpose of this report we will examine the political – cultural situation of the following groups that may be discriminated against or become the victims of racism and/or xenophobia in the labour market:

- Registered and unregistered Migrants (aliens)
- Asylum seekers and Refugees (aliens)
- Roma (Greek citizens)
- “Repatriated” ethnic Greeks from the NIS and migrant ethnic Greeks from Albania (most NIS repatriates have acquired Greek citizenship through a special rapid process and Albanian ethnic Greeks hold a special residence permit)<sup>7</sup>
- Religious Minorities (Greek citizens)

A common feature of the above groups is their relative social exclusion<sup>8</sup> from essential public social services, such as education, vocational training, social welfare and health care and from other social activities and their marginal position in the labour market. The problems created by social exclusion have led many such groups to develop and rely on extensive informal aid and self-assistance networks that have further alienated them from mainstream society.

Generally the demographic picture of Greece that emerges from the formal Census data of the past 50 years is that of an ethnically homogenous country: According to the 1991 ■ Census, 98% of its 10.2 million people were at the time ethnic Greeks. Consequently problems of racism and discrimination on ethnic or racial grounds concerned, until recently, almost exclusively the Roma population and the relatively small Muslim minority in Thrace.

### 3.1.1. Resident Aliens (Registered - unregistered migrants, refugees and asylum seekers)

*Documented migrants* are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece legally holding a residence and work permit.<sup>9</sup>

*Undocumented migrants* are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece illegally either without a residence and work permit or holding one that has expired.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Official data concerning the number of special permits issued are not publicly available.

<sup>8</sup> Although formally entitled to such services, members of these groups will in many cases not use them either because they are (self) intimidated by poor language skills or because of ill-treatment by officials or because they see no real benefit.

<sup>9</sup> Greece, § N. 2910/2001 (02/05/2001)

*Asylum seekers are foreign nationals and their immediate dependants (wife/husband, minor or handicapped children and parents) who apply or have applied orally or in writing to any public authority for political asylum according to the 1951 Geneva Convention as amended by the 1967 New York Protocol or have entered the country with the intention to apply for asylum according to the Dublin Convention 1990 as transposed in national legislation.<sup>11</sup>*

*Refugees are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece legally having acquired the status of political refugee by the competent authorities following the due process prescribed by international law and transposed on national legislation.<sup>12</sup>*

According to the first preliminary results of the 2001 Census, published in May 2002, the number of resident aliens has risen significantly: The number of recorded non nationals has reached a total of **797,093<sup>13</sup> (7,3%)** of a total population of **10,964,080**. In the Athens Metropolitan Area the recorded non nationals are **376.732 (10%)** in a total population of **3.761.810.<sup>14</sup>**

However, the use of Census data for the purpose of monitoring is still problematic because on the one hand of the large number of unregistered migrants and on the other hand of the high mobility of the Albanian migrants (forming the majority of the migrant population) who may frequently leave the country to return days, weeks, months or years later.

We are dealing therefore with a highly mobile immigrant population that is either not adequately monitored<sup>15</sup> - concerning those that cross the borders legally - or not monitored at all - concerning those that cross the borders illegally.

Another indicator of the number of migrants are the two registration processes in 1998 and 2001. In 1998 **371,641<sup>16</sup>** migrants registered for residence and work permits with the National Manpower and Employment Organization<sup>17</sup> (OAED). The National Institute of Labour (EIE)<sup>18</sup> estimates that more than **150,000** did not register in 1998 for a variety of reasons, usually either because they could not secure the necessary documentation or because were prevented by their employer under threat of dismissal. Official data concerning the 2<sup>nd</sup> registration process (2001) are not yet available, but the Ministry of the Interior<sup>19</sup> announced in December 2001 that approximately **351,000** migrants applied for residence and work permits some of whom may have applied unsuccessfully during the earlier period.

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> Greece, § P. D. 61/1999 (06/04/1999)

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> Including refugees and asylum seekers. In relation to economic migrants the number of refugees and asylum seekers is very small. ▲ UNHCR data show that since 1980 and until 2001 Greece awarded refugee status to a total of 6,460 persons with a refusal rate of over 90%.

<sup>14</sup> National Statistical Service (2002), ■ Census 2001 Data, available in Greek at <http://www.statistics.gr/StatMenu.asp> (12/05/2002)

<sup>15</sup> Data concerning visas held by the border authorities (Ministry of Public Order) are not correlated or crosschecked with data concerning residence & work permits (Ministry of the Interior). Therefore it is not possible to have reliable and accurate data on the number of migrants residing in the country at any given time. Existing data refer to rough estimations.

<sup>16</sup> Kavounidis J. and Hatzaki L., (2000) ■ “Alien Applications for Residence and Work Permits”, Athens: National Institute of Labour, available at [http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents\\_keimena\\_ergasias2.htm](http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents_keimena_ergasias2.htm) (12/05/2002)

<sup>17</sup> More information in Greek on the website <http://www.oaed.gr> (03/03/2002)

<sup>18</sup> More information in Greek mostly on the website <http://www.eie.org.gr> (03/03/2002)

<sup>19</sup> The Ministry of the Interior has replaced the Ministry of Labour and the National Manpower and Employment Organization as competent authority according to § Law 2910/2001.

Thus we can assume that the number of both registered (approximately **720,000**) and unregistered (200,000 – 300,000) migrants unregistered bringing us to a total of about **900,000** that roughly corresponds to the findings of the 2001 Census taking into account that many unregistered migrants preferred not to participate in the Census for a variety of reasons, mainly fear of deportation. The migrant population constitutes, then, roughly **8,5% - 9%** of the total population. It should also be added that a rising number of migrants are forming families characterized by high fertility in contrast to the Greek population<sup>20</sup>.

### 3.1.2. Roma

*Roma are members of a social group sharing certain common ethnic – linguistic – cultural characteristics that may differ according to their tribe or clan – there is no official definition.*

It is virtually impossible to obtain reliable demographic data on the Roma population since there is no relevant ethnic or linguistic category recorded by the Census. The last Greek Census that contained linguistic data in 1951 recorded 7,500 individuals speaking Romani. However, several studies<sup>21</sup> show that the number of Roma was always far higher than that.

Existing research on selected samples in certain municipalities indicates that their number is somewhere between 150,000<sup>22</sup> – 300,000<sup>23</sup> loosely organised in “tribes” that are distinguished by features not always identifiable by the non-Roma. The demographic situation becomes even more complicated in view of the entry into the country of Roma from neighbouring Balkan countries after the Bosnian and Kosovo wars.

Until 1955 the Roma were stateless. Since then, gradually until 1978, they were all granted Greek citizenship, but many still do not register with either the police in order to acquire an identity card or with a municipality in order to receive social benefits<sup>24</sup>. Growing deprivation, though, is leading an increasing number to register in order to claim financial and other social benefits. This frequently leads to friction and conflict with municipalities that try to prevent Roma from registering as residents. The Ombudsman has recorded a number of such cases.<sup>25</sup>

The problem of recording accurately the Roma population presents unique difficulties on the one hand because a significant number continues to lead a nomadic life and on the other because many settled Roma refuse to be recorded as such due to the stigma attached. In

<sup>20</sup> “The question of low fertility was also raised in relation to the relatively recent immigration flows into Greece. This discussion focused on the differential fertility between immigrants and nationals. The publication of the SOPEMI 1999 report, and in particular the point raised that in several countries the percentage of births in the immigrant population is higher than the percentage of immigrants within the total population, has generated further discussion on this topic. Despite the lack of reliable statistical data in Greece, it has been estimated that during 1999 30% of all live births came from immigrants. In addition, it has been argued that if the actual patterns of immigrant fertility continue for the next 20 years, 150,000 births will come from the immigrant population (To Vima, 21/05/2000 – <http://www.dolnet.gr>.)” European Observatory on Family Matters, Focus Monitoring 2000: Fertility, GREECE (Christos Bagavos): ■ “General context in relation to the perception and discussion of demographic trends and family needs”.

<sup>21</sup> Vaxevanoglou, A. (2001), ■ “Greek Gypsies: Marginalised and family men”, Athens: Editions Alexandria, p. 17

<sup>22</sup> Komis, K. (1998): ■ “Gypsies: History, Demography, Culture”, Athens: Editions Ellinika Grammata

<sup>23</sup> EETAA (2001): ■ “Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma”, Athens: EETAA, p.45

<sup>24</sup> ROM Network, (2000) ■ “Panhellenic Census Study investigating the social, housing conditions and needs of Greek Roma Citizens”, unpublished, available on written request from the ROM Network <http://www.romanet.gr>

<sup>25</sup> Greek Ombudsman (■ Annual Report 2001), available at <http://www.synigoros.gr/annual01/ST/195-207.pdf> (01/03/2002)

interviews with Roma representatives we were told of several cases of educated and settled Roma who keep their Roma identity secret for fear of losing their jobs or the respect of their colleagues and non Roma friends.

### 3.1.3. “Repatriated” ethnic Greeks from the NIS and migrant ethnic Greeks from Albania

*Repatriated ethnic Greeks (palinnostountes omogeneis) are residents of the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union of Greek ethnic descent who have the right to apply for the acquisition of Greek citizenship, if their nationality cannot be established by the procedures laid out by the Ankara and Lausanne Treaties. Citizenship is granted on the basis of the findings of a special committee appointed jointly by the Minister of the Interior and the Foreign Minister on the basis of an interview and examination of all or any of the following original documents: passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, family status certificate, identity card or internal passport or any other document that can prove Greek descent.*<sup>26</sup>

*Migrant ethnic Greeks (omogeneis) are Albanian citizens of ethnic Greek descent. They are entitled to a special residence and work permit of three year duration that is issued by the Aliens Department of the Greek Police after examination of all or any of the following original documents: passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, family status certificate, identity card or internal passport or any other document that can prove Greek descent.*<sup>27</sup>

There are no reliable statistical data concerning the number of repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS and ethnic Greeks from Albania<sup>28</sup> permanently resident in Greece as Albanian citizens. It should be noted that the demographic situation of both groups is considered to be a politically highly sensitive issue:

#### Repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of violence in several former socialist republics a large number of ethnic Greeks<sup>29</sup> migrated to Greece. According to a demographic study made by the General Secretariat of Repatriated Greeks (Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace) with the help of repatriate NGOs in the regions of Macedonia and Thrace, approximately 135,000 ethnic Greeks entered the country since 1980.<sup>30</sup>

Several legal provisions were instigated since then to facilitate their acquisition of Greek citizenship: According to the 24755/6-4-1990 Joint Ministerial Decision (Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Defence) repatriated Greeks could enrol on the municipal registers and remain in Greece indefinitely without providing the necessary documentation. In 1993 according to Law 2130/1993 the concept “repatriation” became a legal term and ethnic Greeks were distinguished from other foreign nationals in the acquisition of Greek citizenship by a special rapid process. By 1998 more than 95,000 repatriates had acquired

<sup>26</sup> Greece, § N. 2790/2000 (16/02/2000)

<sup>27</sup> Greece, § Ministerial Decision 4000/3/10-e (15/04/1998)

<sup>28</sup> For example the following source quotes a far smaller number than indicated by Greek sources for repatriate Greeks from the NIS. Ethnobarometer Programme Working Paper No. 2: ■ “New Migration and Migration Politics in Post-Soviet Russia”, by Cristiano Codagnone, available at [http://www.cemes.org/current/ethpub/ethnobar/wp2/wp2\\_ind.htm](http://www.cemes.org/current/ethpub/ethnobar/wp2/wp2_ind.htm) (13/06/2002)

<sup>29</sup> Another smaller group from both the NIS and CECs were political refugees who had fled Greece after the 1946-49 civil war.

<sup>30</sup> More information available in Greek from the website of the General Secretariat of Repatriated Greeks that is part of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace available at <http://www.mathra.gr> (21/03/2002)

Greek citizenship status. A Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry<sup>31</sup> that investigated the special process of repatriate citizenship acquisition discovered many irregularities.

The issue of the exact number of ethnic Greek repatriates from the NIS and the process of citizenship acquisition has been repeatedly discussed in Parliament as both major parties have accused each other of falsely attributing citizenship status when in power in order to influence electoral results.

### **Migrant ethnic Greeks from Albania**

Official Albanian statistics puts the number of ethnic Greeks at 35,000, while various Greek sources claim that 200,000 – 400,000 ethnic Greeks occupy regions of Southern Albania. Greece has discouraged Albanian ethnic Greeks from acquiring Greek citizenship, while distinguishing them from other foreign nationals through a special residence and work permit of unlimited duration. In this way Greece can still claim the existence of a substantial ethnic Greek minority in Albania. However, as it has been argued repeatedly in the Greek Parliament the process of issuing these special permits was flawed and many ethnic Albanians have fraudulently also acquired such permits. Official data concerning the number of these permits is not publicly available, but various estimates put it at 80,000.

### **3.1.4. Religious minorities**

*Muslim inhabitants of Western Thrace are considered to be all Muslims established in the region to the east of the frontier line laid down in 1913 by the Treaty of Bucharest.*<sup>32</sup>

The term “religious minority” is used to refer primarily to the autochthonous Muslim minority in Thrace whose legal status and rights are governed by the 1923 Lausanne Treaty and other subsequent bilateral agreements. According to the 1951 census, there were 92,443 Turkophones, 7,429 Gypsies, and 18,671 Pomaks, for a total of 118,533. The difference between that figure and the 112,665 Muslim total can be explained by the fact that some of the Turkish speakers were probably ethnic Greek Orthodox who came to Greece from Anatolia as a result of the 1923 population exchange.

After the 1951 census, the Greek National Statistical Service removed the categories national/ethnic origin, language use and religion for reasons of national policy.<sup>33</sup> Today the Muslim minority of Thrace, depending on estimates, numbers between 80,000 -120,000, roughly the same as the number in the 1951 census, which taking into account their high birth rate indicates that a significant number has left the country during the past decades.

The Muslim minority is composed of three ethnic groups, namely Turks, Pomaks and Roma, but the largest group by far is constituted by ethnic Turks. It is not possible to acquire more specific demographic data concerning the ethnic composition of the Muslim minority as many Pomaks and Roma have come to identify themselves as ethnic Turks, while speaking less the Romani and Pomak languages than Turkish.

<sup>31</sup> Karamanlis Foundation, (2001), ■ “Findings of the Electoral Committee of Inquiry on the 2000 National Elections”, available at [http://www.idkaramanlis.gr/html/arxeio/anal\\_eklog.html](http://www.idkaramanlis.gr/html/arxeio/anal_eklog.html) (10/06/2002)

<sup>32</sup> Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations (Appendix A, Article 2), Lausanne January 30, 1923 between the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Greek Government. English text available at <http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/> (09/09/2002)

<sup>33</sup> Rozakis Ch. (1996), ■ “The international protection of minorities in Greece,” in Featherstone K. and Ifantis K., eds, ■ “Greece in a Changing Europe: Between European Integration and Balkan disintegration?”, Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 98



## 3.2. Social situation of vulnerable groups

The debate concerning the relationship between the position of vulnerable groups in society and racial discrimination started in Greece during the 1990s with the influx of considerable numbers of undocumented migrants and the rapid changes in the ethnic landscape of the Balkans. However, even today the issue of discrimination and racism that such groups experience still constitutes a marginalized and “secondary” issue within a broader debate concerning the ethnic composition and inequalities in the social structure and stratification of Greek society.

Few studies concerning the social situation of selected sections of vulnerable groups have been carried out. Most, however, seem to agree that poverty and deprivation is the most common characteristic affecting their social life. The situation is aggravated by the relative underdeveloped state of the social welfare system and its inadequate provisions that affect more seriously the low income groups. Among the vulnerable groups under consideration undocumented migrants and nomadic Roma seem to be the most disadvantaged groups. In contrast there seems to be a marked improvement in the living conditions of the Muslim minority in Thrace during the past decade and the situation of documented migrants in the labour market has improved as is evident by a marked, but unspecified as there are still no relevant data available, increase in the numbers of those registered with a social security foundation.

Regrettably, however, since there is no specialised monitoring system in place adequate and reliable data concerning the situation of vulnerable groups cannot exist. Our analysis will rely, therefore, largely on data from existing studies and reports produced both by official (public authorities) and unofficial (research institutes, individual researchers, NGOs) sources.

### 3.2.1. Resident Aliens (Registered - unregistered migrants, refugees and asylum seekers)

**Economic migrants** entered the country “illegally” in large numbers since the 1990s: Albanians working in agriculture and construction, Poles and Rumanians as skilled manual labourers, Filipinos as domestic workers, Pakistani, Indians and Bangladeshis as unskilled labour in small factories and manufactures, Africans as small traders.

Throughout this period the Greek state responded to a media induced “moral panic”<sup>34</sup> by gradually hardening its stance towards immigrants, especially Albanians, carrying out frequent “police sweeps”: random checks carried out in public transport and areas frequented by migrants followed by summary deportations for those without legal permits.

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<sup>34</sup> “Moral panic” is a term first used by Prof. Stuart Hall (Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies) in the early 1970s to describe the phenomenon of labelling by the media of a social group as deviant through the use of inaccurate and distorted, but “sensational” information. During the 1990s the media focused on Albanians as perpetrators of crimes; by highlighting those crimes that were committed by Albanians and focusing on nationality as the implicit, but causal explanation of criminal behaviour, the media created a “moral panic” inviting politicians and other selected opinion leaders to reinforce the image of Albanians as “criminal elements”. This process resulted in frequent police sweeps as the police responded eagerly to the media allegations. Albanians quickly became the “conventional” scapegoats. Since then erroneous allegations concerning the rise of criminal activity have been common place. It was only in late December 2001 that crime statistics were published at the initiative of Mr. Chryssochoides, Minister for Public Order, showing that Albanians did not contribute significantly to criminal activity and that at any rate criminal activity actually decreased in the past years.

Greece had never experienced such a phenomenon of mass migration before. Until 1998, there was no concrete migration policy: there was no state authority dealing with migration, no data were collected concerning migration, research institutes were studying migration and its consequences only on an ad hoc basis, specialist institutions, such as advice centres for the legal, social and economic orientation of immigrants (especially children), did not exist. Furthermore, migrants were excluded from aid by the social services, especially regarding employment, housing, health care, education; in addition migrants found it difficult to satisfy basic cultural needs, such as political, cultural and social expression, recreation and socialisation.

The absence of any regulatory function by the state combined with the migrants' desperate economic and social situation contributed in the creation of an environment of social exclusion and discrimination that soon led to the construction of negative stereotypes in the Greek media and by certain political personalities. The consequent racist attitudes and xenophobic feelings fermented amongst the Greek population were often used to justify policing actions. The rising wave of crime in Greece in recent years was largely attributed to migrants, especially Albanians, who soon became the "nation's villains".

In the aftermath of these problems the government started from 1998 formulating a more concrete policy on migration, introduced a number of legislative and administrative measures and included migrants in initiatives and projects aimed at improving their situation (EQUAL, etc).

A major pull factor for economic migrants has been the large informal economy that accounts for up to 30-35% of Greece's GDP. Until 1998, when the first regularization process was initiated, unregulated migrants provided Greek industry and agriculture with cheap labour essential for their survival in the emerging competitive European market. Small labour intensive enterprises in agriculture, construction and manufacturing that are still very prominent in Greece relied for competitiveness on the use of the cheap labour provided by the unregulated migrants willing to be both geographically *mobile* and *flexible* regarding working practices and wages. Migrant networks developed both in the source and the host country further influenced migrant flows. However, these informal networks which are vital for unregulated migrants, since they provide them with security, protection and even justice, are often linked to criminal organizations and tend to encourage migrants' participation in criminal activities. These clusters of migrant networks are highly active in Greece, especially in the Athens and Thessalonica metropolitan areas.

The conditions of life for migrants are harsh: Housing, particularly for those working in rural areas more often than not consists of makeshift huts with no heating or sanitary facilities. In urban areas the high cost leads many migrants to rent substandard accommodation and cohabit in large numbers. Public health and social services are available to registered migrants, but, although there are no specific data available, it is likely that discriminatory practices may also exist. Migrants are largely "invisible" in the entertainment facilities (cinemas, theatres, bars, coffee shops, etc) of both urban and rural areas. In interviews with representatives of migrant organisations we were told that the migrants' absence from these facilities can be explained both in terms of the cost involved and the real or presumed racist or discriminatory attitudes that may arise. To put it in simple terms we were told that there is still a "fear of going public" even for registered migrants.

There are, however, also positive signs. During the past year, as large numbers of migrants are now registered, there has been evidence that the situation is improving and we expect that gradually migrants will be better incorporated. In 2001 the General Confederation of



Labour announced its intention to allow union membership to migrants and there have already been some instances of industrial action by migrants working in agriculture<sup>35</sup>.

Dozens of small businesses belonging to foreign migrants serving both their communities and Greeks appear in central Athens. Migrant associations have been formed, some of which, like KASAPI, the Filipino Association, have been particularly active in providing essential social support structures in the form of a kindergarten, information and legal aid centre, etc. In the construction sector, some migrants –mainly Albanians– have evolved into contractors. Models of inter-cultural education have gradually been introduced to some Greek schools and at least one anti-racist large scale project was implemented by the Pedagogical Institute. Several other integration projects will be implemented in the coming years under the EQUAL initiative in employment and the media. The public administration (Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities) are gradually developing structures for the management of migration and the integration of migrants.

**Refugees and asylum seekers** have entered Greece in increasing numbers since the 1990s: Asylum seekers are issued with a temporary residence permit (“Pink card”) giving the person the right to take up temporary work, and access to health care, education and social assistance. Such temporary employment is usually in unskilled jobs either in the tourist trade or in the agricultural sector and construction sectors.

Since 2000, refugees were granted the right to obtain a work permit, as well as a residence permit. While this theoretically facilitates legal employment, in fact their situation is very problematic given the high rate of unemployment and the numbers of migrant workers. This has led to increased competition among refugees for jobs where language skills and further qualifications are not required.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.2.2. Roma

The Roma have been living in Greece at least since the Middle Ages. However, researchers agree that it is very difficult to define the Roma either ethnically or culturally as they tend to form quite separate communities, “tribes” and “clans” with distinct cultural and linguistic characteristics. In terms of religion there are two main groups Christian and Muslim. The Muslim Roma lived until recently mostly in Thrace, but many have during the past 20 years moved to the urban centres of Athens and Thessalonica in search of employment. All Greek Roma speak Greek (using a characteristic accent that is often ridiculed by other Greeks) and most speak Romani as their mother tongue, while about 20,000 living in Thrace have Turkish as their mother tongue. New arrivals from neighbouring Balkan countries do not speak Greek, but manage to communicate with other Roma using the Romani language.

The attitudes of the Greek population towards the Roma are, as in other southern European countries, mostly negative. Despite the fact that discrimination and racial prejudice against the Roma has always been widespread, no attempt has ever been made either by schools or the media to raise awareness and educate the Greek population concerning the culture, characteristics and problems of the Roma people who have come to constitute the most marginalised and socially excluded social group.

<sup>35</sup> We interviewed representatives of the striking migrants who reassured us that there had been no racist or xenophobic incidence during the strikes.

<sup>36</sup> Mestheneou, E., (2000), EU CARE: ■ Refugee Entrepreneurs in Greece, National Contribution to the EU funded programme for the European Commission Directorate General Justice and Home Affairs, under the budget line B3- 4113, integration of refugees; Unit A/2 “Immigration and Asylum”, p.9

Roma are usually employed as unskilled and unregistered workers in agriculture and trade experiencing insecurity and discrimination despite the fact that they are considered to be Greek nationals<sup>37</sup>: “The chances of finding employment within an increasingly competitive labour market are virtually nonexistent. If one adds to the above the prevailing stereotypes concerning the indolence of the Roma, it will be only the “bravest” employer who will ever think of employing a Roma. In the public sector, the possession of a junior high graduation certificate (compulsory education) is the legal precondition for employment, thus excluding practically all the adult Roma.”<sup>38</sup>

There is no available statistical data concerning Roma employment. According to estimates of the ROMANET<sup>39</sup> network most Roma are self-employed small traders. Among the few who have managed to settle in certain areas, particularly the area of Agia Varvara in Athens some have established flourishing businesses, but most are wandering traders. The more affluent with some capital to finance their operations will trade in household goods like plastic kitchenware and plastic furniture. The rest will traditionally sell agricultural products in local markets as street vendors.

The Roma wandering traders find it increasingly difficult to compete with the low prices offered by the supermarkets and most choose to operate without the (expensive) license that often results to problems with the police. Since street vendor licenses are issued by the local authorities Roma are disadvantaged as most local authorities refuse to grant them.

A relatively small number of Roma still work as unskilled labourers in construction and agriculture and generally in temporary or seasonal jobs that are difficult, dirty and badly paid, usually without social security. Since the early 1990s the influx of migrant labour from Albania and other countries has posed a significant threat for this group, as they tend to compete with them for the same unskilled jobs. Often racial tension develops and today the number of violent episodes, even murders, between Roma and migrants, especially Albanians is rising<sup>40</sup>.

A small number of Roma are specialist craftsmen in traditional arts or music; they have relatively stable employment, but their numbers are dwindling, as there is no interest by the young to follow a long and difficult period of apprenticeship. A very small number of Roma who have managed to study and find employment as professionals have rejected their cultural and ethnic characteristics in order to blend into mainstream society and avoid discrimination and harassment<sup>41</sup>. Although it is very difficult to estimate Roma unemployment the Social Welfare service of the Ministry of Health and Welfare has reported that the number of Roma who register for benefits is rising rapidly indicating possibly that unemployment is driving poverty levels higher.

The rising unemployment and poverty among the Roma has significant negative effects and is an important factor or the rising criminality among them. Many young Roma are attracted by the “easy money” that can be made through the drug trade and some of their settlements are already well known as drug trafficking and trading areas with all the negative

<sup>37</sup> Exarchos, G. (1998), ■ Social Exclusion of Roma, in Kassimati, K. (ed) ■ Social Exclusion: The Greek Experience, Athens: Gutenberg.

<sup>38</sup> Statement on the Situation of the Roma in Greece by the International Romani Union Secretary General Christo Kyuchukov, 20 December 2001, available at [http://www.errc.org/rr\\_nr1\\_2002/noteb5.shtml](http://www.errc.org/rr_nr1_2002/noteb5.shtml) (23/05/2002)

<sup>39</sup> The Municipal Network for the Roma in Greece. More information available on <http://www.romanet.gr> mostly in Greek (23/02/2002)

<sup>40</sup> The police does not classify such incidents separately as racial or racially motivated crimes.

<sup>41</sup> Lydaki A., (2000), ■ “Balame and Roma: the Gypsies of Ano Liosion”, Athens: Kastaniotis, p. 153

consequences for the Roma social image and their relations with the local population. Racist stereotypes, a deeply rooted mistrust and cultural misunderstanding often lead to conflicts that frequently characterise the Roma's relationship to public authorities and especially the police.

Roma educational attainment is at very low levels: According to the unpublished, but released to us, final report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Framework Programme "Gypsy Education", approximately 60% of the Roma (18-50 years old) are illiterate (they have not attended school), while an additional 22% are functionally illiterate (UNESCO standards). The Roma find often that schoolmasters under pressure from local parents will -illegally- refuse to enrol their children. On the other hand studies also suggest that many Roma will avoid sending their children to school fearing that they will lose their Roma identity.<sup>42</sup>

Roma housing conditions are also reported<sup>43</sup> to be very poor particularly for the nomadic Roma who have no access to regular sanitary facilities, water or electricity. Roma wishing to rent houses are discriminated against and are refused or offered substandard accommodation at high prices. Roma purchasing houses find it very difficult to secure a mortgage, because of the nature of their employment. The absence of reliable demographic data do not allow us to have a clear picture of the number of nomadic Roma, however the ROM network suggested that they probably constitute about 20% - 30% of the total Roma population. It is also difficult to define the nomadic Roma, as many tend to transform camp sites to semi-permanent or permanent settlements sometimes purchasing land from private individuals. Local authorities are often in conflict with groups of Roma that set up unregulated camps on public land and there are several recorded cases where they have forcibly evicted them.

Until recently the Roma were publicly represented only by "clan" and "tribal" leaders who were usually the wealthiest individuals. The only form of collective organisation existed in the Agia Varvara municipality: the "Gypsy Association of Agia Varvara" established in 1939 and frequently claiming to represent the Roma in Greece and abroad. During the last ten or so years the Roma have gradually started to organise themselves in associations<sup>44</sup>, although the influence of clan and tribal leaders is still strong in most areas.

In 1998, the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Greek Roma Associations (POSER) was established, around which, in time, 22 associations from around Greece, among them Turkish speaking Roma associations, coalesced. In the mid-1990s, the Rom Network was established, which was an effort by the local authorities to approach local Roma populations, to recognise their realities and problems and to propose, in co-operation with them, policies that would contribute to finding solutions. Currently the Rom Network numbers 61 members out of a total of some 100-110 Municipalities with Roma within their boundaries. It has a consultative role to the Prime Minister, has contributed to drawing the Integrated Action Plan and monitors its implementation.

Since 1996 a number of projects have been carried out in support of the Roma. However, the general evaluation of the effectiveness of these projects is clearly negative: According to the official EETAA Report: "these projects can only be evaluated empirically, since there is a total absence both of reliable and scientific appraisals of the quantitative and qualitative data concerning these projects and of official statistics concerning the Roma population."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p. 144

<sup>43</sup> EETAA (2001): ■ "Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma", Athens: EETAA, p.57, and also several reports from the Greek Helsinki Monitor available at <http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/special-issues-roma.html> (12/09/2002)

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p. 32

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p. 23

The ROMANET and DROM organisations have proposed the establishment of a monitoring centre for the Roma population that would be able to record their activities and provide the necessary reliable data for the planning of effective employment and social support strategies. This has not been realised yet, however, the Ministry of Labour has in the past ten years financed through European Initiatives like ADAPT, INTEGRA, YOUTHSTART, etc a number of projects aiming at improving the education and training of the Roma. NGOs and Roma organisations have criticised these projects as ineffective as they were not part of a comprehensive strategy, but rather isolated examples of good practices whose effect has been minimal.

The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003<sup>46</sup> refers to the ambitious “Integrated Action Plan” for the Roma according to which 310 million Euros will be spent in the next six years to improve the social situation of the Roma population. Approximately 20% of the above sum is earmarked for various training and employment measures.

### 3.2.3. “Repatriated” ethnic Greeks from the NIS and ethnic Greeks from Albania

**Repatriated ethnic Greeks**<sup>47</sup> from the NIS, despite preferential treatment by the Greek state (following a review of their ethnic descent credentials they receive 500 Euro upon arrival for the purchase of household items and a small annual supplement of 230 Euro), face serious difficulties integrating into mainstream Greek society. Culture shock, language problems, lack of educational qualifications, the inability to ratify existing qualifications and discriminatory practices by many employers are only some of the issues which have not yet been systematically studied or monitored.

Many repatriates accepted the financial incentives offered by the Greek state and settled in Thrace, where they competed with ethnic Turks and Pomaks for jobs in the manual labour market resulting in tension and conflict between these social groups. Others settled in urban centres, usually in areas inhabited by other socially disadvantaged social groups, such as the Roma with whom tensions also developed. With the help of local municipalities they gradually formed associations and developed some support structures for the improvement of their integration.

In the words of the social support centre “Efxini Poli” set up by the Municipalities of Acharnon and Nea Liosia, “we have to approach with sensitivity the difficulties that this population faces in a place in which they belong, but in which they also feel strangers: limited knowledge of the Greek language which results in difficulties in communicating and transacting; limited and sometimes erroneous information regarding the functions and laws of the Greek State; differences in education/training and many times differences in work – experiences; lack of job seeking skills; limited social networking; lack of any established

<sup>46</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security, “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

<sup>47</sup> Greeks colonised Mediterranean and Black Sea coastal areas since the antiquity. Some of them did not assimilate with local populations and retained a Greek ethnic or cultural identity until modern times. Such groups were mainly to be found in the Black Sea region (Pontians). In 1922 the Greek defeat from Turkey resulted in the relocation of more than one and a half million ethnic Greeks who lived in coastal regions of Asia Minor and the Black Sea to Greece. Large numbers of ethnic Greeks also lived in the Soviet Black Sea coast. After the downfall of the Soviet Union many were forced by war or unemployment to migrate to Greece. The Greek government acknowledged them as ethnic “repatriate” Greeks and facilitated their “return” by introducing favourable legislative and other support measures including the acquisition of Greek citizenship.

social integration system (i.e. housing, bureaucracy, acquisition of jobs, pensions, educational system, recognition of degrees, etc); negative stereotypes and prejudices of the majority of the population against these groups and vice-versa. All the above mentioned lead repatriated Greeks to feel insecurity, uncertainty, discouragement, social isolation and social exclusion.<sup>748</sup>

In 1994 the General Secretariat for Repatriated Greeks (established in 1990) began to function as part of the Ministry of Macedonia & Thrace in order to facilitate their reception and social integration as well provide them with social care and housing assistance. In 1998 the Secretariat carried out a demographic study<sup>49</sup> of repatriated Greeks in Macedonia and Thrace recording also their educational and vocational qualifications. The study showed that a number of repatriates held higher degrees and postgraduate qualifications that were unusable in the Greek labour market, like degrees in oil or nuclear engineering. Upon their arrival in Greece these scientists found themselves working as unskilled or semi-skilled labourers lacking the qualifications relevant to the Greek labour market and unable due both to their linguistic competence and their social exclusion from the academic “networks” to compete for academic positions.

**Ethnic Greek migrants from Albania** settled both in rural areas providing Greek farmers with much needed cheap labour and in urban centres reviving small labour intensive firms. Increasingly difficult to distinguish from ethnic Albanians members of this group frequently became victims of racism and xenophobia during their first years in Greece. Although they probably outnumber the repatriated Greeks from the NIS they seem to have gradually integrated and “merged” with the Greek population more successfully. A major contributing factor seems to have been precisely their attempt to escape identification with Albanians. Many retain links with their homeland mainly through relatives, the Church and political affiliation to the Albanian Greek minority party “Omonoia”.

### 3.2.4. Religious minorities

There are no studies concerning specifically the social situation and conditions of life of the Muslim minority in Thrace. The status of Muslims in Greece is precarious, because they represent a group that is viewed not only in religious, but more in ethnic terms as “Turks” and thus a possible national threat. All<sup>50</sup> Greek schoolchildren are taught from a very early age that “the primal enemy of Greece is Turkey, the eastern barbarian neighbour who had for centuries enslaved the nation”; stories massacres and forced conversions to Islam and equally heroic deaths and martyrdoms in defence of Christianity abound in Greek history textbooks -despite recent attempts to reform the content- and the discourse of most teachers in both primary and secondary education. Consequently racist tendencies fuelled by a “paranoia” regarding the “Turkish threat” have rendered most Greeks hostile, unresponsive to, and frequently in violation of the human rights of the Muslim minority.

The human rights violations suffered by Muslims in Greece over the years under the guise of the formal, “to the letter”, application of the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, that determines their rights and obligations, have confined them to the role of second-class citizen. When expedient, Muslims are portrayed as intolerant and uncivilised, monolithic, intolerant of

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.mitnet.gr/kepy/English/Description.htm> (15/06/2002)

<sup>49</sup> General Secretariat for Repatriated Greeks (1998), ■ “Demographic Study of the repatriated ethnic Greeks resident in the regions of Macedonia and Thrace”, Thessalonica: Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace, available after written request, p. 112

<sup>50</sup> Primary and secondary education public and private schools must use in all subjects the standard textbooks produced and distributed by the Ministry of Education.

pluralism and disputation, patriarchal and misogynistic, fundamentalist and potentially threatening to the Greek cultures and therefore not really deserving the rights of a free people.

The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne gives Muslims in Thrace the right to maintain social and charitable organizations ("wakfs") and provides for the function of muftis to render religious judicial services. Differences remain within the Muslim community and between segments of the community and the government over the means of selection of muftis (Islamic judges and religious leaders with limited civic responsibilities). There is also controversy between the Muslim community and the government over the management and self-government of the wakfs (Muslim charitable organizations) regarding the appointment of officials as well as the degree and type of administrative control. While traditionally the law placed the administration of the wakfs in the hands of the appointed muftis and their representatives, a 1996 Presidential Decree issued in response to objections from some Muslims that this arrangement weakened the financial autonomy of the wakfs and violated the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, put the wakfs under the administration of a government appointed committee for 3 years as an interim measure pending a final resolution of the problem.

The Muslim minority in Thrace has generally been isolated and economically depressed for decades. However, claims of discriminatory denial of Muslim applications for business licenses, tractor ownership, or property construction have diminished greatly in recent years. Nevertheless, the development of public utilities (electricity, telephones, and paved roads) in Muslim neighbourhoods and villages continues in many cases to lag far behind that of non-Muslim areas. Muslim leaders have also complained that the government routinely withholds permission from Muslims seeking to change their legal residence, which determines where they vote, from rural to urban communities within Thrace or from elsewhere in Greece to Thrace. They said permission to change legal residency from Thrace to elsewhere in Greece was granted readily, and charged that the practice was part of a government policy to encourage Muslim emigration from the region and to prevent the urban concentration of Muslims in Thrace.

The percentage of Muslims employed in the public sector and in state-owned industries and corporations is disproportionately far lower than the percentage of Muslims in the population. In the cities of Xanthi and Komotini, while Muslims hold seats on the prefectural and town councils, there are no Muslims among regular employees of the prefecture or the police. Muslims in Thrace are hired only for lower level, part-time work. According to the Government, lack of fluency in written and spoken Greek and the requirement for university degrees for higher level positions limit the number of Muslims eligible for government jobs.

The Treaty of Lausanne provides that the Muslim minority has the right to Turkish-language education, with a reciprocal entitlement for the Christian (Greek) minority in Istanbul (now reduced to about 3,000). Thrace has two Islamic seminars and several secular Turkish-language schools. The government's disputes with Turkey over teachers and textbooks caused these secular schools serious problems in obtaining teaching staff and teaching materials in sufficient number and quality. Under a 1952 educational protocol, Greece and Turkey may exchange annually 35 teachers on a reciprocal basis. The teachers serve in Istanbul and Western Thrace, respectively, but in recent years the Greek side limited the exchanges to 16 teachers per country due to the dwindling needs of the small and aging Greek population in Turkey. Muslim leaders in Western Thrace complained that the Government erected bureaucratic barriers to prevent the Turkish teachers from performing their duties for much of the academic year. On average during the past two years more than 8,000 Muslim children attend Turkish-language public schools and an additional 150 attended 2 bilingual middle schools with an additional Islamic religious curriculum.



Approximately 1,300 Muslim students attend Greek-language secondary schools. However, many Muslims attend high school in Turkey, as they seek to continue their education in Turkish Universities.

In order to improve conditions of life for the Muslim minority through the improvement of their education, the government has since 1996 implemented a large scale educational project financed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Framework. In addition universities and technical institutes set aside a certain number of places for Muslim students each year; 464 spaces were available in 1998. 124 Muslim students participated in the entrance examinations and 58 women and 54 men were accepted in universities and technical institutes of higher education.

The Muslim minority has traditionally been a target for influential nationalists from both the right and the left –members of the Greek Parliament or elected representatives in Local Authorities – from all major political parties. Their rhetoric and arguments are rarely openly racist, but they will invariably put forward the argument that Muslims are “foreign” to Greece in ethnic as well as cultural terms. In their discourse the distinction between ethnicity and religion is often intentionally blurred, implicitly identifying Muslims with Turks and thus suggesting that they represent the “enemy”. Racist views and discourses against Muslims do not necessarily take the form of open verbal attacks.

Several reports from national and international NGOs<sup>51</sup> suggest that, despite the difficulties, conditions have gradually improved during the past 10 years along the marked improvement in the relationship between Greece and Turkey that has always affected the Muslim minority. Some data from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Framework project “Muslim Children Education” that included a small study of the social conditions corroborate these findings. However, it is clear that the social situation of the Muslim Roma and Pomaks who mostly live in remote and relatively isolated mountainous villages in the Rodopi region of Thrace is far worse compared to that of others living in the cities.

### 3.3. Legal framework affecting vulnerable groups

There are no special legal provisions in either the civil or administrative codes nor any positive action measures concerning discrimination in the labour market<sup>52</sup> or affecting the employment situation of vulnerable groups with the notable exception of legal measures regulating the entry, residence and employment of migrants and repatriate Greeks:

**The § Greek Constitution of 1975/76<sup>53</sup>** (reformed on April 6, 2001) guarantees the personal rights, dignity, respect of person and property and freedom of religion and thought. Article 5, par. 2 states that “All persons living within the Greek territory shall enjoy full protection of their life, honour and liberty irrespective of nationality, race or language and of religious or

<sup>51</sup> Human Rights Watch (1999), “Positive steps by the Greek State”, update to the Report: ■ “The Turks of Western Thrace”, available at [http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/greece/Greec991-05.htm#P196\\_32031](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/greece/Greec991-05.htm#P196_32031) (10/09/2002)

<sup>52</sup> The provisions of the § Civil Servants Code (Law 2683/1999) could be considered to discriminate against all non Greek nationals as they stipulate that “only Greek citizens shall be appointed as civil servants”. It should be noted a number of occupations are practically exclusively occupied by civil servants, such as teachers or doctors. Citizens from EU Member States may be appointed, unless the appointment comes under the exemption in Article 48 (4) of the § EC Treaty. Also such citizens according to § Law 2431/1996 are allowed to “be appointed or recruited to positions or special duties which **do not involve the direct or indirect exercise of political power or the performance of tasks to safeguard the general interests of the state or other public sector agencies.**”

<sup>53</sup> Available in English at <http://www.hri.org/docs/syntagma/> (13/09/2002)

political beliefs.” However, it should be noted that generally the constitution does attribute the same social and political rights and privileges to Greeks and foreign nationals. Also, according to the constitution special status is accorded to the Orthodox Church as the “prevailing religion”. Article 22, Par. 1 states that “Work constitutes a right and shall enjoy the protection of the State, which shall seek to create conditions of employment for all **citizens** and shall pursue the moral and material advancement of the rural and urban working population. **All workers**, irrespective of sex or other distinctions, shall be entitled to equal pay for work of equal value.”

§ **Law 927/1979**<sup>54</sup> is the only criminal specifically anti-racist law: it states that “whoever intentionally and publicly instigates, either orally or in the press or through written texts or illustrations or through any other means, acts of activities capable of provoking discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or a group of persons, only due to their racial<sup>55</sup> or national origin, is punishable by imprisonment of up to two years or a fine or both.” These penalties also apply to “whoever creates or participates in organizations pursuing organized propaganda or engaging in any other activity of any kind aimed at racial discrimination.” The penalties are one year in prison and/or a fine for “whoever publicly expresses...ideas offensive to any person or groups of persons due to their racial or national origin.” In 1984, after repeated appeals by the Central Jewish Board of Greece, the Parliament passed an amendment to Law 927 in a new article -appended to Law 1419/84- specifying that, “discrimination on the basis of religion is also punishable”. In 2001 another amendment -appended to Law 2910/2001- allowed the public prosecutor to bring charges *ex officio*. However, as it has repeatedly been pointed out by human rights NGOs the law is very difficult to apply: consequently there has only been one attempt to enforce the law, when the Greek Ombudsman asked in a special report<sup>56</sup> formally the Public Prosecutor to bring charges against the Municipality of Nea Kios for issuing a formal municipal decision barring the local Roma from entering the city.

§ **Law 2910/2001**<sup>57</sup> regulates the entry, residence and employment conditions for aliens and citizenship acquisition. The law set in motion, for the second time, a registration process for economic migrants, but the government has not yet produced an evaluation of the process. The Ombudsman's Report<sup>58</sup> and reports from several NGOs stressed certain negative aspects of the law noting especially serious problems with its implementation and especially the migrant registration process by the Prefectures (local authorities responsible for the registration process) who had not been properly prepared, organised or staffed. Subsequently the law was amended, following partly the proposals of the Greek Ombudsman, by Law 3013/2002<sup>59</sup>. Accordingly the six-month permits issued to migrants during the first phase of the ongoing legalisation, as well as Green Cards and other types of residence permits that had expired or were soon to expire, were extended to December 31, 2002. Also the requirement to interview each applicant was dropped, as it proved impossible to interview individually hundreds of thousands of applicant migrants.

<sup>54</sup> Greece, § N 927/1979 (10/10/1979)

<sup>55</sup> The term “racial discrimination” or “racism” is defined according to Article 1. 1. of the § International Convention for the Eradication of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966) that was ratified by § Law 494/1970. The term “race” is to be considered as a “social construction” based on personal and social characteristics of individuals including their religion, culture, nationality and ethnic origin.

<sup>56</sup> Office of the Ombudsman (2000), ■ “Special report on the situation in Nea Kios” Athens, Ref No 8267, available at [http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/por\\_8267\\_2000\\_da.doc](http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/por_8267_2000_da.doc) (12/06/2002)

<sup>57</sup> Greece, § N. 2910/2001 (02/05/2001)

<sup>58</sup> Office of the Ombudsman, (2003) ■ “Special report on the implementation of the registration procedures under Law 2910/2001” Athens, Ref No 2013, download from <http://www.synigoros.gr/porismata.htm#>, year 2002, file name: *diavivasi\_koinepstef.doc* (15/09/2002)

<sup>59</sup> Greece, § N. 3013/2002 (10/05/2002)



The Law, despite some important innovations, preserves many of the provisions of the 1975/91 Immigration Law, but also antiquated immigration practices prior to 1991, as it maintains three fundamental principles: First, the need for two, separately awarded, but interdependent documents for residence and work that create unnecessary bureaucratic delays and difficulties; Secondly, onerous obligations on potential employers of immigrants for authorisation to enter Greece that cannot in practice be enforced; Thirdly, the law contains no mention of any measures for the social integration of migrants who are thus implicitly considered as a short term temporary labour force.

Several problems concerning the Law and its implementation were highlighted in the previously mentioned Greek Ombudsman's Special Report. Three stipulations of the Law were specifically criticised:

(a) Family reunification provisions; the necessary preconditions that must be fulfilled are onerous and incomplete (children who become of age are required to leave the country after one year unless they can find suitable employment – under the conditions prescribed for migrants that is virtually impossible – or continue their studies – highly unlikely given the living conditions and social provisions for migrants, but even so after their studies they are still required to leave).

(b) Access to healthcare; Article 54 (Par. 2) stipulates that hospitals must inform the police, if any undocumented alien seeks medical treatment. The Hellenic Data Protection Authority has ruled (19/06/2001, Ref. No. 1258) after a complaint by the Hellenic Centre for Infectious Diseases Control that this article is unconstitutional and in breach of the legislation requirements of the Protection of Private Data and must be disregarded. It must also be stressed that healthcare is provided to all individuals in Greece in emergency cases and especially victims of AIDS/HIV infection are provided free all necessary medical care.

(c) Access to education; the Law does not embrace the current *contra legem* practice of not requiring documentation for the children of undocumented migrants to attend school and consequently Headmasters who enrol children may face heavy penalties.

The Ministry of the Interior is already planning further amendments to the law aiming first at improving the social support structures available to migrants in order to improve the process of integration into Greek society and secondly at incorporating anti-discrimination provisions to protect migrants from racial discrimination in social life.

§ **Law 3013/2002** (footnote 47) amended Law 2910/2001 and established the Institute for Migration, which has not yet been formed, as an independent public policy research organisation.

§ **Law 2790/2000**<sup>60</sup> regulates the repatriation procedures for ethnic Greeks from the NIS. The law established special rights, privileges and social support structures for repatriates to assist in their integration. The law was criticised for providing Greek citizenship “too easily” and thus open to possible misuse, as a previously quoted report from Karamanlis Foundation indicates. Repatriate organisations supported the special citizenship acquisition processes prescribed by this law arguing that investigations into the official records of the countries of origin could easily allow the establishment of true ethnic identity of citizenship applicants.

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<sup>60</sup> Greece, N 2790/2000 (16/02/2000)

§ **Law 2740/1999**<sup>61</sup> establishes the State Certificate of Greek Language. This is the first state recognised language qualification and theoretically allows the holder to seek employment in public services (i.e. local authorities, public bodies, etc.) where knowledge of the Greek language is normally a formal prerequisite.

§ **Law 2477/1997**<sup>62</sup> constitutes the founding regulation of the Greek Ombudsman (Synigoros tou Politi). The Greek Ombudsman is an Independent Administrative Authority, whose actions are not subject to control by any governmental or other administrative authority and its operation has been highly praised by all NGOs. This institution is considered as a very important safeguard for democracy and human rights. On October 1, 1998, the institution of the Ombudsman began to function in Greece. In its four years of operation, the Ombudsman has gained widespread recognition within Greek society, having already proved its importance for the protection of citizens' rights, combating of maladministration and ensuring the observance of the laws. However, it should be noted that the role of the Ombudsman is to act as an intermediary between citizen and state and therefore it cannot intervene in cases of discrimination or harassment by physical or legal persons.

§ **Law 2413/1996**<sup>63</sup> established and regulates intercultural education and regulates the operation of the Centre for Greek Language, which is the public body responsible for the State Certificate of Greek Language.

§ **Presidential Decree 295/2001**<sup>64</sup> established and regulates the Directorate of Aliens and Immigration at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This is the first public administration structure dealing specifically with migrants. Previously migration issues were mostly the concern of the Ministry of Public Order. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains the competent authority for issues concerning the autochthonous Muslim minority. The Ministry of Public Order has become the competent Ministry for issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers.

§ **Presidential Decree 100**<sup>65</sup>: In the context of the harmonisation of Greek radio and television legislation with the provisions of European Parliament and Council Directives, the State Radio and Television Council is required to preventively ban radio and television programmes, if their content encourages or provokes discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or a group of persons due to their gender, racial or ethnic origin, their religion, political convictions or sexual preferences.

§ **Ministerial Decision 30426** regulates the issuing process and the number of work permits for aliens by region, speciality and country of origin. The process is very time-consuming and arduous and in practice it is never used by prospective employers who rely on existing documented or undocumented migrants. Clearly this regulatory process is designed to discourage prospective employers of migrant workers, but its unintended effect is to strengthen clandestine migration.

§ **Ministerial Decision 30300** provides special exemptions for the employment of migrants working for projects in the context of the 2004 Olympic Games. It was harshly criticised by NGOs as there is no provision for the status of these migrants after the end of the projects

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<sup>61</sup> Greece, N 2740/1999 (16/09/1999)

<sup>62</sup> Greece, N. 2477/1977 (18/04/1997)

<sup>63</sup> Greece, N 2413 (17/06/1996)

<sup>64</sup> Greece, P. D. 295/2001 (19/09/2001)

<sup>65</sup> Greece, P. D. 100 (17/03/2000)

§ Protocol between Greece and Turkey for the implementation of Article 8 of the Agreement on combating crime, especially terrorism, organised crime, illicit drug trafficking and illegal migration<sup>66</sup>: The Protocol ratified by § Law 3030/2002 aims at the readmission of illegal immigrant being smuggled from Turkey back to that country within 14 days of arrival. Greece must provide proof that the migrants entered Greece from Turkey and asylum seekers and refugees will not be returned according to the Geneva Convention rules. NGOs and the UNHCR have voiced their concern about the possible implications of this agreement for genuine asylum seekers. According to a recently released official report of the Greek Office of the UNHCR, more than 230 persons are known to have been reprocessed to Turkey from the implementation of this protocol in November 2001 until June 2002.

§ **The Lausanne Treaty**<sup>67</sup> constitutes the legal basis for the legal definition, treatment, rights and obligations of the Muslim minority in Greece. Despite bilateral differences in the interpretation of certain clauses all subsequent agreements between Greece and Turkey have relied upon the Treaty. It regulates every aspect of the relationship between the Greek state and the Muslim minority.

Among other Greek statutes referring to the prohibition of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious harassment and discrimination the most significant are:

- § **Presidential Decree 219/2000**: All public and private employees must be treated equally; any discrimination on the basis to sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, religious or political convictions or sexual preference is prohibited.
- § **Law 2683/1999**: The Civil Servants Code states that civil servants must treat every citizen equally regardless of sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, religious or political convictions or sexual preference. It should, however, be noted that anti-discrimination clauses such as the above are not accompanied by regulatory mechanisms or specific sanctions and thus cannot be practically enforced. .

There are no specific provisions in any of the above legal instruments for either the monitoring or the prevention of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious discrimination or harassment. Specific sanctions also do not exist except for criminal offences.

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<sup>66</sup> Greece, N. 3030/2002 (15/07/2002)

<sup>67</sup> English text available at [http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/\(09/09/2002\)](http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/(09/09/2002))

## 4. Theoretical and Methodological Issues

### 4.1. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The discrimination in the employment sector experienced by vulnerable groups is part of the general social conditions under which they live and work in Greek society. These groups are not homogenous as far as their main attributed or acquired social characteristics are concerned, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, education, skills, and occupation<sup>68</sup>. These characteristics are constantly changing through the influence of a multitude of political, economic and social factors across time and these changes influence their lifestyles, life chances, expectations and choices. Consequently the social profile and social position of these groups are related to an ongoing process as it is constantly (re) structured through the past and present organizations of relations and practices.<sup>69</sup>

The debate concerning the relationship between the position of vulnerable groups in society and racism began in Greece during the 1990s with the influx of considerable numbers of undocumented migrants and the rapid changes in the ethnic landscape of the Balkans. However, the issue of discrimination and racism that these groups experience still constitutes a marginalized and “secondary” issue within a broader debate concerning the ethnic composition and inequalities in the social structure of Greek society.

#### **The dual market in Southern European countries**

In order to study the social status of migrants, refugees, Roma, Greek repatriates and the Muslim minority in the labour market, it is useful to use the dual labour market theory<sup>70</sup> and the Southern European migration model<sup>71</sup> as departure points that can reveal some general and particular features and divisions of the labour market.

The Southern European countries of Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal, after the Second World War, experienced a high rate of emigration, mainly as recruited “guest workers” in the manufacturing sector, in northern European countries such as Belgium, Germany, Sweden etc. Their economy was and continues to be characterized by high levels of unemployment and the presence of a large “informal” labour market, especially in sectors such as tourism and personal services, agriculture and construction. These countries began to experience a sudden and rapidly rising migratory flow during the late 1980s. Their borders, easily accessible by sea and very difficult to patrol, rendered them open to clandestine immigration, while the relative absence of effective state mechanisms did not allow them to respond swiftly to the developing situation. It took at least ten years before they started developing specific immigration policies, but even then they were face with contradictory

<sup>68</sup> OECD (2001), ■ “The employment of foreigners: Outlook and issues in OECD countries”, p.172

<sup>69</sup> Petracou, E. ■ “Exploring the social and historical dimensions of migration in Europe with special reference to Greece” PhD Thesis CRER, University of Warwick, UK

<sup>70</sup> Kontis, A., (1998) ■ Indigenous and Foreign Labour Force in the Greek Labour Market, in Saki Karagiorga Institution, Conference Proceedings, Athens. And Gosh, J., and Lindquist B. (1995) ■ Conceptualising international labour migration: A structuration perspective. *International Migration Review* Vol. 29 No. 2 pp. 317-351

<sup>71</sup> King, R., (2000), ■ Southern Europe in the Changing Global Map of Migration in King R., Lazaridis G. and Tsardanidis C. H. ■ *Eldorado or Fortress? Migration In Southern Europe*. Hampshire: McMillan

interests that had to be satisfied. The small, mainly agricultural, labour intensive enterprises took advantage of the abundant cheap and geographically mobile unregulated and therefore also unprotected labour force. The resulting upward social mobility of the nationals, the new opportunities for the increasing participation of women in labour markets, in a period of very intense international competition made migrant labour a very attractive proposition<sup>72</sup>.

Eventually, the social problems that were created led to a series of regularization processes, but the informal labour market continued largely to benefit from a seemingly inexhaustible supply of unregulated migrant labour that continues to enter the southern EU Member States.

On the other hand, documented migrants are gradually entering the formal labour market and in some countries the competition with the indigenous labour is starting to have an impact on the economy and will undoubtedly become a serious social and political issue in the future.

### **Discrimination in the labour market**

Discrimination in the labour market has been extensively researched in a European context. It is our contention that a general definition of discrimination should be avoided as it tends to obscure the specificity of the situation. Therefore we find it useful to distinguish between different types of discriminations and thus construct a more specific framework for anti-discrimination action.

Moreover, it is necessary to note that this theoretical framework should be informed by national particularities, while at the same time should facilitate comparative analysis between EU Member States.

### **Types of labour market discrimination**

Since our primary goal is to collect data on racism and xenophobia a generalised framework establishing a typology of discrimination would be of limited explanatory value. Therefore we have found that the best available theoretical framework for our purposes is the one proposed by John Wrench<sup>73</sup>, because it distinguishes between different types of discrimination in employment, clarifying the particular type of discrimination in employment that is connected to racism. The framework distinguishes between the following types:

- **Direct or intentional discrimination** “which relates to identifiable individual acts of persons who were either personally prejudiced (racist discrimination), were basing their actions on perceived group characteristics (statistical discrimination), or were taking account in their actions of the prejudices and stereotypes of others (societal discrimination).”
- **Structural discrimination** is that which cannot be reduced to any particular individual’s bias or actions. It includes ‘indirect discrimination’, where apparently neutral recruitment practices or work practices inadvertently discriminate against members of a social group, ‘Side-effect discrimination’, where discrimination in one social sphere generates inequality in another, and ‘Past-in-present discrimination’

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid*, pp. 12-15

<sup>73</sup> Wrench, J. and Modood, T. (2000), ■ The effectiveness of employment equality policies in relation to migrants and ethnic minorities in the UK, Geneva: ILO, and Wrench J. (2001) ■ Observations from European comparative research on discrimination in employment, Discussion paper for the Raxen 2 NFP Working Group, EUMC, Vienna

where “neutral” practices have greater negative impact on a minority group because of historical, rather than current, intentional discrimination.<sup>74</sup>

## Evidence

To establish if there is discrimination in employment and its particular type, there are different “categories of evidence”<sup>75</sup>. These categories refer to:

- **statistical evidence**, Census data or other more focussed large scale surveys,
- **discrimination testing**,
- **research into actions of gatekeepers to the labour market**, such as employers or the staff of employment agencies (usually of a qualitative nature),
- **research into the experiences of members of ethnic minority communities** in the labour market or at the workplace (again usually qualitative),
- **collective or individual actions of aggrieved employees**
- **incidents reported to official Employment Tribunals.**

We would like to stress that these theoretical remarks can be used as a potential direction and guide for the further development of data collection, but also primary research and analyses of discrimination in employment.

## Actions combating discrimination

A series of interventions can improve the equal treatment of vulnerable social groups in employment. These include a range of actions from special training to diversity management depending on the types of discrimination that a national anti-discrimination law covers. These actions or interventions aimed at promoting equal opportunities and reducing discrimination in the labour market can be categorised into four distinct types:

- **The legal approach:** Individual victims have the right of access to civil courts and industrial tribunals for legal remedies against unlawful discrimination by employers.
- **The administrative approach:** Organisations, such as the state or local authorities, use their influence both as employers and as customers of goods and services to influence employment policies of other employers.
- **The voluntarist approach:** Employers take the necessary steps to reform their own procedures and policies. The usual model is the adoption of an equal opportunity policy tailored to fit the specific employer. It could include positive action measures by employers.
- **Collective action:** Political action by groups of workers or ethnic minority organisations. Through collective action, pressure is put on employers to adopt equal opportunity policies.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Wrench J. and Modood T. (■ 2000), pp.37-38 and Wrench J. (■ 2001) p.2

<sup>75</sup> Wrench J. and Modood T. (■ 2000), pp. 24 -25

<sup>76</sup> Wrench J. and Modood T. (■ 2000), pp. 39-40

## 4.2. METHODOLOGY

As we have repeatedly stated, both data collection and research relating to racism and discrimination in the employment sector is in its infancy in Greece. The lack of relevant data and studies led us therefore to a more qualitative approach scrutinising all available evidence in our attempt to analyse the current situation.

Our findings rely primarily on data collected in the context of the RAXEN2 and RAXEN3 data collection activity. We would like at this point to stress that the collection of data, perhaps uniquely among other NFPs, is carried out exclusively through personal interviews by one expert (Dr. Electra Petracou) assisted by a Focal Point responsible for Northern Greece. Furthermore, a legal expert analyses the legal framework and monitors the Ministries of Justice and Public Order and the Athens and Thessalonica criminal and civil Courts.<sup>77</sup>

### 4.2.1. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Data collected came from the following sources:

- **Existing official statistics** on employment, the regularization process for migrants and the number of refugees and asylum seekers from both national and international sources,
- **Studies** on employment, the labour market, migration issues, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, religious minorities, the Roma, etc.,
- **Ad hoc reports by** NGOs and Trade Unions on cases of discrimination,
- **Projects, programmes, initiatives and action plans** by public and private bodies,
- **“Good practice” examples,**
- **Conferences, workshops and meetings,**
- **Unstructured and semi-structured interviews** (formal and informal) that took place during the collection of data on employment issues in Raxen2 with employment agencies, with relevant (migrant, refugee, minority, Roma) associations, with NGOs and with public authorities (local and national).

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<sup>77</sup> Greek courts have no computerised system that would facilitate monitoring. The ▲ Athens Bar Association has recently created a data base that is, however, not searchable by keywords requiring knowledge of the details of a particular case. We are therefore forced to visit regularly and examine the ▲ Court Secretariat records in Athens and Thessalonica, but we have to rely on reports from other sources for litigation cases in other provinces.



## 5. EMPLOYMENT DATA

### 5.1. NON EXISTING DATA SOURCES

There is a clear lack of statistical and scientific data concerning discrimination and racism in employment due particularly to:

- absence of public monitoring mechanisms and specialised bodies,
- absence or technical deficiencies in the electronic recording of data by the competent authorities,
- inadequate co-ordination of the competent authorities on collecting data and information,
- lack of interest in collecting data by the competent public authorities<sup>78</sup>,
- lack of funding for scientific research<sup>79</sup>,
- the size of the informal economy<sup>80</sup>,
- the nature of undocumented migration.

Moreover, even in cases where data regarding vulnerable groups exist, the prevailing official attitude is not to allow researchers to have access. It is important to emphasize that this is the general rule and of course there are exceptions.

The lack of availability and reliability of data coupled with the unwillingness to disclose information has not only affected our own research, but anyone contemplating research in issues of discrimination and racism, and especially academic research that has the tendency to refrain from the huge effort required to conduct systematic research into these phenomena; however, such research is essential for the formulation of adequate and effective policies and measures against discrimination.

Therefore, our analysis utilises any and all relevant information and research finding. We have deliberately chosen to use all available sources not simply to “make up” for the lack of data, but to approach our subject matter as comprehensively as possible.

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<sup>78</sup> Officials in several public authorities seemed genuinely puzzled at our insistence for reliable data and our scrutiny of the methods used in their data collection. We could argue that in Greece there is a deeply rooted suspicion of “statistics” that can perhaps be explained with reference to the political use of statistics in the not too distant past.

<sup>79</sup> Those responsible for attributing and regulating funding also largely determine the subject matter and focus of scientific research. Consequently, it seems that neither the national public authorities nor private institutions or social partner organisations have considered discrimination in employment to merit further attention.

<sup>80</sup> Estimates of the size of the informal economy range from 30%-35%. This size easily foils any serious attempt to collect reliable data on the conditions of employment of unregulated migrants.



## 5.2. EXISTING DATA AND INFORMATION SOURCES (BRIEF CRITICAL DESCRIPTION)

### 5.2.1. OFFICIAL DATA

#### **Final results and analysis of the 1998 regularization process<sup>81</sup>**

The data concerning the regularisation process were collected by the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) and elaborated by the National Institute of Labour. This report processes the residence permit ("white card") applications filed by aliens to the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) during the first half of 1998, organised on a database provided by the National Employment Monitoring Centre (EPA). In its report the National Labour Institute (EIE) notes that in processing this database it corrected or ignored "inconclusive" data -not only in the case of inadmissible values. The report presents data concerning citizenship, gender and geographical distribution of aliens by region and prefecture. According to this report, the majority of migrants come from neighbouring Balkan countries: Albanian migrants represent 64,74% of the migrant population, while Bulgarian migrants represent 6,76% and Romanian migrants represent 4,55%. Other migrants come from Pakistan (2,92%), Ukraine (2,64%), Poland (2,32%), etc.

The majority of migrants are men. Out of a total of 371.641, 269.075 are men and 93.831 are women. Bulgaria, Ukraine, Philippines, Moldavia and are the countries from where the numbers of women are higher than men, while migrants from Pakistan, India, Egypt, Syria and Bangladesh are exclusively men.

#### **Press statement on the preliminary results of the 2001 regularisation process by the Ministry of the Interior<sup>82</sup>**

The Ministry of Internal Affairs coordinating the competent Regional and Local Authorities is responsible for the 2001 regularisation process. The only available data are a recent announcement by the Ministry of the Interior informing that 351.110 migrants applied for residence and work permits, of whom half are located in the Athens Metropolitan Area. The review of the applications will be completed in 2003.

#### **Statistical Bulletin on employment published by the National Statistics Service. The National Statistical Service<sup>83</sup>**

has the following departments that sent all data in primary form to EUROSTAT, according to EU § regulation 577/1998:

<sup>81</sup> Kavounidis, J. and Hatzaki, L. (2000) ■ "Alien applications for Residence and Work Permits", National Institute of Labour, Second revised edition, available in Greek only at [http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents\\_keimena\\_ergasias2.htm](http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents_keimena_ergasias2.htm) (12/05/2002)

<sup>82</sup> Ministry of Interior, Press Statement, available at:

[http://www.enet.gr/online/online\\_hprint.jsp?q=%F0%F1%DC%F3%E9%ED%E7+%EA%DC%F1%F4%E1&a=&id=49798076](http://www.enet.gr/online/online_hprint.jsp?q=%F0%F1%DC%F3%E9%ED%E7+%EA%DC%F1%F4%E1&a=&id=49798076) (19/01/2002)

<sup>83</sup> As stated above, the 2001 ■ Census, for the first time, included a special page for immigrants, referring to year of settlement, reasons for coming to Greece, family status, nationality and citizenship, employment, education and residence. Preliminary data, released in May 2002, state only the number and place of residence of foreigners. The remaining data are expected to be published in 2003.

- The Department of Natural and Migrant Population Movement, recently established and scheduled to operate in late 2002 or 2003 will collect data provided by other public authorities.
- The Labour Force Department conducts research by representative sampling and publishes the Quarterly Statistical Bulletin on Employment. The sample consists of 30,000 households, possibly including migrants, however, since the sampling frame still relies on the 1991 Census, the migrant quota is not *stricto sensu* representative. Consequently this survey cannot be considered as a reliable source of data concerning migrants' employment status. It is expected that this problem will be overcome when the sampling frame will be the 2001 Census, however this will occur in late 2003. In a recent (June 26, 2002) interview with the Director of the Labour Force Department, Mr. Kotsifakis we were told that existing data may possibly indicate some trend; however, they certainly cannot be considered reliable. Ideally, however, the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) responsible for recording the unemployed labour force, registering the unemployed and paying unemployment benefits as well as the Social Security Foundation that also records the employment status of individuals should enter their records into relational databases that could be used for statistical purposes.

### **Study on the demographic and social characteristics of the repatriated Greeks**

The General Secretariat of Repatriates (part of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace) conducted in the year 2000 a study on the demographic and social characteristics of repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS: statistics are provided concerning housing, employment, education and cultural activities for the years 1989 and 1999.

During the period between 1989-1999, 155,319 repatriates arrived in Greece: 74% settled in Northern Greece (59% in Macedonia and 15% in Thrace) and 21% in Attica; 47% migrated as families, while 17% as individuals; 12% are single parent families; 81% are up to 50 years old and 92% up to 64 years old; 10% university education, 8% higher technical education and 9% are graduates of technical colleges; the majority (87%) work in a variety of mainly manual occupations, unrelated to their educational and employment background.<sup>84</sup>

### **Labour Inspectorate and the Social Security Foundation**

The Labour Inspectorate (SEE) and the Social Security Foundation (IKA<sup>85</sup>) published<sup>86</sup> recently the first evidence from inspections carried out in a number of enterprises:

Out of 950 SMEs 101 were not registered with the Social Security Foundation, while 71% of their personnel was Greek; 35% of these SMEs did not provide workers with contracts or kept payrolls and 15% exceeded the limits on overtime. A high percentage of personnel without social security were found in hotels, restaurants, commercial and manufacturing enterprises. Half of the personnel on part-time employment worked in reality longer without compensation or social security benefits. The Labour Inspectorate levied fines totalling 375,000 EUR.

<sup>84</sup> General Secretariat for Repatriated Greeks (1998), ■ "Demographic Study of the repatriated ethnic Greeks resident in the regions of Macedonia and Thrace", Thessalonica: Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace, available after written request, pp. 74-97

<sup>85</sup> For more information in both Greek and English consult their website at <http://www.ika.gr> (28/06/2002)

<sup>86</sup> Labour Inspectorate and the Social Security Foundation Joint Press Statement, "Eleftherotypia", available at [http://www.enet.gr/online/online\\_hprint.jsp?q=%D3%C5%D0%C5&a=&id=84131464](http://www.enet.gr/online/online_hprint.jsp?q=%D3%C5%D0%C5&a=&id=84131464) (19/06/2002) and the website of the Ministry of Labour at <http://www.labor-ministry.gr/> (19-06-2002)

## 5.2.2. Collection of significant Reports, Projects and Studies

- **Combating Social Exclusion projects** coordinated by the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) and implemented by a variety of mainly Vocational Training Organisations (KEK). The data available refer to participants, both employees and self-employed individuals, categorized by target group, sex, age, municipality, but there is no information on country of origin or other more detailed data on the above groups.
- **Institute of Labour of the General Confederation of Labour Annual Report 2001**<sup>87</sup>, examines the role of the migrant workers in Greece and notes that only a relatively small part of the foreign labour force is competing for jobs with Greeks, while the influx of migrant labour has had a multiplier effect on the economy increasing turnover and the demand for Greek labour. The Report neither contains nor refers to pertinent data.
- **Municipal Network ROMANET study**<sup>88</sup> coordinated by ROMANET as part of the actions of the Operational programme “MULTI ROMA ACTION HELLAS” (“INTEGRA”). Research conducted between September and October of 2000 with a representative sample of 700 households in 13 prefectures in urban and rural areas found concerning employment that 14% were unemployed (the majority long term), while the occupations of those employed were 59.6% peddlers, 13% unskilled workers in agriculture, 5.7% flea market traders, 3% musicians (mainly street musicians) and 1% businessmen; 20% of the above worked on a seasonal basis; out of those occupied with trade, including musicians, only 1.4% have a shop; 78% have no social insurance; only 47% are actively searching for employment most through personal relations or on their own and only 5.6% through public agencies; Only 0.5% ever participated in vocational training programs, even though the employment programme INTEGRA combating exclusion for the labour market was running during the research; only 22% of those employed as peddlers have a legal permit. The reliability of this study is questionable due to the sampling method used: there is no sampling frame for the Roma population; however, the appropriate sampling methods were not used relying on a simple “random” search that does not guarantee the mathematical randomness and therefore the reliability of the representative ness.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Framework study**<sup>89</sup> conducted as part of the project “Gypsy Education” and coordinated by the University of Ioannina. According to the findings of this study 33.4% of Roma are occupied in peddling, particularly in the urban areas, 28% in agriculture and 3.5% as musicians; few are employed as wage workers. Their position in the labour market deteriorates rapidly due to the competition with migrants for jobs particularly in seasonal agricultural work, their lack of specialization, their educational attainment and widespread discrimination. The methodology used for sampling was not disclosed.

<sup>87</sup> INE/GSEE (2001) ■ “Annual Report 2001”, available at: <http://www.inegsee.gr/EKTHESI2001/ekthesi2001.htm> (10/05/2002)

<sup>88</sup> ROM Network, (2000): ■ “Panhellenic Census Study investigating the social, housing conditions and needs of Greek Roma Citizens”, unpublished, available on written request from the ROM Network <http://www.romanet.gr>

<sup>89</sup> Papakostantinou G., Vasiliadou M. and Pavli-Korre M. (1999) ■ “Economic, Social and Cultural Situation of Roma in Greece”, Ioannina: University of Ioannina Press

- **Social and Spatial Dynamics and Exclusion of Three Immigrant Groups in the Athens Conurbation**<sup>90</sup> was a significant qualitative study carried out in Athens in 1997 with 3 groups of immigrant workers, Albanians, Egyptians and Filipinos, on a sample (selected through “snowballing”) of 135 interviewees. The study showed that migrants tend to be employed in dirty and dangerous jobs characterized by high rates of insecurity and seasonality, mainly in the informal sector. It also indicates that the conditions of life are particularly harsh as most migrants tried to save part of their earnings to send home.
- **Albanian migrants in Thessalonica** is a significant empirical research on Albanian migrants based on 500 questionnaires. The study shows that male Albanian migrants work in construction (30.3%), in small firms/industries (24%), while the unemployed constitute only 2% of the sample; 91.9% are wage workers; 57.4% have social insurance and 69.5% claim to receive lower wages than their Greek colleagues. Albanian migrant women work in the domestic sector and in agriculture; 31.6% of employed women have social insurance. An interesting finding relates to the methods used to find employment: they seem to make no use of public resources (e.g. job centres, OAED, or newspaper advertisements), but rely exclusively on social networks of friends and relatives. There seems to be a significant difference in the level of wages between Greek and Albanian female labour with 63.7% of Greek female labour receiving relatively higher wages. The methodology used is extensively described and justified and therefore the findings can be considered both reliable and valid.
- **Refugee Entrepreneurs in Greece** is another unique and important study<sup>91</sup> about self-employment and the business activities of refugees in Greece; it notes their problems, and takes stock of the various programmes existing for their aid and the solutions provided to them. This is a first exploration of the phenomenon of refugee self-employment in Greece. In the absence of official statistical data, the research is qualitative, providing a worthwhile recording and analysis of the problems self-employed refugees face in Greece. It also provides a number of proposals for the increase of refugee self-employment in the country via the aid of relevant government services. Discrimination against their business was reported by some refugee entrepreneurs from Middle East countries. It was unclear, and indeed there were contrary opinions as to the extent of discrimination by suppliers, customers and government officials. Some reported a lot of help from ordinary Greeks; others reported indifference or some discrimination. The most important reported problem was the indirect discrimination practised by Greek banks who would not lend money without security, tax returns or a Greek guarantor.

### Information sources to be established in the future

According to the National Action Plan 2001<sup>92</sup> the Ministry of Labour will in the future set up a monitoring system of “Labour Market Indicators” to operate within its Operational Support Unit in cooperation with the National Employment Observatory and the National Labour

<sup>90</sup> Iossifides, T. and King, R. (1998) ■ “Social and Spatial Dynamics and Exclusion of Three Immigrant Groups in the Athens Conurbation”, *Southern European Society and Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 3 p. 210-253

<sup>91</sup> Mesthenaiou, E., ■ EU-CARE: Refugee Entrepreneurs in Greece. General Directorate on Justice and Internal Affairs; ■ “Migration and Asylum” National report on European Commission Programme B3-4113 on Refugee Integration available at [http://www.gcr.gr/investigations/refug\\_buisseng.htm](http://www.gcr.gr/investigations/refug_buisseng.htm) (12/06/2002)

<sup>92</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001) ■ “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

Institute. A flexible sub-system will operate at the Ministry of Labour for current and urgent needs, while basic indicators and trends will be made available on the Internet.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001) ■ “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf), pp. 44-45 (21/06/2002)

## 6. COMBATING RACISM - SUPPORTING DIVERSITY.

All initiatives combating racism and in support of diversity in employment date from 1994 and are fully or partly financed by the EU. The aim of this chapter is to elaborate *critically* on the most important initiatives, bodies, actions and events and attempt to comment concerning their effectiveness from information we have received through our own research, since few evaluation or final reports of any of the projects were made available to us despite our repeated requests.

### 6.1. PROJECTS COMBATING DISCRIMINATION IN SUPPORT OF DIVERSITY

The Community Initiative ADAPT produced ☀ 224 projects in Greece some of which aimed at improving the level of vocational training of vulnerable groups. The cost of these projects does not seem to correspond to their scope and the number of beneficiaries. Those ADAPT projects that aimed at vulnerable groups were directed at repatriated Greeks and (a smaller number) at the Roma.

The Community Initiative “Employment 1996-2000” (HORIZON, INTEGRA, YOUTH-START, NOW). The evaluation report<sup>94</sup> notes that neither HORIZON, NOW nor YOUTHSTART targeted non Greek vulnerable groups, Muslims or the Roma. In INTEGRA, the aim was to assimilate in Greek labour market repatriates from the NIS. However, specific important target groups represented very low rates of participation in INTEGRA projects and those are Roma, migrants and refugees.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security published its final report<sup>95</sup> on the data on the Operational Project Against Social Exclusion from the labour market regarding social groups with cultural and religion specificities for the period of 1997-2001. According to this report ☀ 35 and 20 projects for the vocational training of Roma and Pomaks respectively were implemented in Greece. The total budget for the Roma projects was 3,939,152 Euro and the total number of participants was 531 individuals, 297 men and 234 women. The programmes were implemented mainly in Attica, Thessaly, and Central Macedonia. The total budget for the Pomak projects was 1,979,890 Euro; 326 individuals, 208 men and 118 women participated in the areas of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

It should be noted that the published report contains no evaluation or information concerning the impact of the projects.

<sup>94</sup> A notable exception was the ■ “Evaluation of Community Initiative Employment” in Greece, compiled by Dr G. Amitsis and Dr. N. Ioannou of the Management Consultants REMACO available at: [http://www.europeanevaluation.org/pdf/2-3\\_Ioannou.pdf](http://www.europeanevaluation.org/pdf/2-3_Ioannou.pdf) (10/07/2002)

<sup>95</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2002), ■ “Operational Project against Social Exclusion from the Labour Market: Process of implementation of the Project towards Roma and Pomaks as target groups that belong to the social groups with cultural and religion specificities during the period of 1997-2001”, Athens, available only upon written request from the Ministry.



The “**Operational Programme: Combating Exclusion from the Labour Market**” ran from 1994 to 1999 and reportedly affected 38,000 persons at a cost of 240million euro. It is not clear by the existing data what part of those affected belonged to vulnerable groups.

The **Operational Programme: “Employment and Vocational Training”**, 2000 – 2006 is ☀ partly targeting vulnerable groups with a total budget of 1,998.9million euro. It is expected:

- **Firstly**, to develop and promote active policies to fight and prevent unemployment, avoid long term unemployment and facilitate the reintegration of long-term unemployed persons, establish and modernize or expand Public Employment Services, as well as of supporting infrastructure for socially vulnerable groups.
- **Secondly**, to promote equality of opportunities to access the labour market for all and especially for those threatened by social exclusion by funding studies and research for the systematic analysis of socio – economic exclusion, support, training and employment promotion actions for persons of socially vulnerable groups, as well as for the unemployed living in areas of high unemployment or pertaining to sectors struck by high unemployment.
- **Thirdly**, to promote and improve vocational training and consultative services for all, including socially vulnerable groups.
- **Fourthly**, to develop and promote the entrepreneurship and adaptability of the workforce for all, including socially vulnerable groups.

The **EQUAL Initiative** has approved ☀ four projects to develop actions combating racism and xenophobia in the strands “Combating Racism and Xenophobia in connection to the Labour Market” and “Support of Social and Professional Integration of Asylum Seekers”. 18% of approved projects<sup>96</sup> in all strands relate to vulnerable social groups (migrants and refugees, religious minorities, repatriated ethnic Greeks). However, as we have discovered by contacting all migrant organisations in Greece, very few participate or are even aware of EU-funded projects. Representatives of migrant community organisations suggested to us that this is mainly due to the inadequate and inappropriate dissemination of information. The approved projects are the following:

☀ **“Dream”**: Combating racism and xenophobia in the media; the agency responsible is the Vocational Training Centre “DEMETRA”; the project is to be implemented in Athens, Thessalonica and Volos with actions focused mainly on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.

☀ **“Forum on Social Cohesion”**: Combating racism and xenophobia in the media; the agency responsible is the Athens News Agency; the project is to be implemented in Attica with actions mainly focused on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.

☀ **“Post-Information Centre for Immigrants – Repatriated – Refugees”**: Developing vocational skills as a means of combating racism and xenophobia; the agency responsible is the Greek Mission of the International Organisation of Migration; the project will cover the whole of Greece with actions mainly focused on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.

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<sup>96</sup> Information on the approved EQUAL Projects in Greek only available at <http://www.labor-ministry.gr/ekt/equal/index.htm> (22/04/2002)

☀ **“Web – Feedback”**: Use of the internet for combating racism and xenophobia; the agency responsible is the Greek Red Cross; the project will cover the whole of Greece with actions addressing asylum seekers exclusively.

☀ **The Integrated Action Plan for the Roma**<sup>97</sup> includes measures and practices to be implemented by various national actors including local authorities, prefectures, NGOs and others for the improvement of the social situation of the Roma population in Greece. It is a seven-year (2001-2008) integrated action project to be financed partly from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework and partly from national funds to a total 35million euro. Actions are aimed at the creation of **infrastructure** (housing and Roma support centres) and the provision of **services** (training, employment, adult education, etc). The project is the result of a long consultation process between the government, Local Authorities, the ROMANET network and the national Federation of Greek Roma Associations. The measures for **services in employment** include interventions for pre-training, training, access to employment, counselling and supporting services and education of Roma as well as relevant organizations and individuals involved. The Action Plan appears to be well designed and it is supervised directly by the Prime Minister’s Office as a sign of the importance attached to it by the government.

**The National Action Plan on Employment 2001**<sup>98</sup> co-funded by national sources and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework introduces a novel approach based on the following statement:

“Neither economic growth nor technological progress is enough in itself to limit inequality and poverty and to combat the problem of social exclusion. New disparities are now developing alongside the old, some of them transitory and others permanent. If ignored, they are capable of jeopardising social cohesion and impeding economic growth. Precisely because the causes of poverty are complex, and very often differ among the various vulnerable groups within the population, our policy focuses on - and is specifically designed for - particular target groups. The actions intending to promote employment among the vulnerable groups involve a new method of approaching these groups: facilitating the admission to programmes of employment, work experience and vocational training; activating the individual to develop his/her skills; participation in programmes of special ‘empowerment’ themes, such as boosting self-confidence, psychological support, resolving legal issues and accessing health services; combating racism and xenophobia in the labour market. Specifically: **Provisions of support services, integrating programme, re-training preparation and developing language skills, Employment subsidy.**”

The most significant element of the 2001 National Action Plan is that for the first time the need for ☀ positive action on combating racism and discrimination is acknowledged and provided for by offering a variety of support options from language training to employment subsidies.

In the EU Council Recommendations on the Implementation of Member States’ Employment Policies<sup>99</sup>, in the Joint Employment Report<sup>100</sup> released in 2001 and in the

<sup>97</sup> EETAA (2001): ■ “Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma”, Athens: EETAA

<sup>98</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001) ■ “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, p. 19 available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

<sup>99</sup> EU Council recommendations on the implementation of Member States’ employment policies, (2001) available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/empl&esf/recommend2001\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/empl&esf/recommend2001_en.pdf) (11/06/2002)

<sup>100</sup> EU Commission Joint Employment Report (2001) available at



Council Recommendations on the Implementation of Member States' Employment Policies released in February 2002<sup>101</sup> it is stressed that “While progress is visible, more efforts are needed for the development and monitoring of indicators, quantitative targets and benchmarking.... Greece should continue and intensify efforts to develop a strategic framework and a set of well co-ordinated and balanced policies; speed up the reform of the Public Employment Services and upgrade the statistical monitoring system.”

**The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003**<sup>102</sup> in strange contrast to the 2001 National Action Plan contains only the following mention to vulnerable social groups:

Objective 3: Actions to help the most vulnerable, 4. Combating racism and xenophobia in relation to the labour market

“*Inter alia*, there are actions included in the EQUAL 2001-2006 EU Initiative aiming at: the investigation, promotion and enhancement of the role and the rights of aliens in the labour market, provision of support for the improvement of their skills and their social inclusion, the creation of awareness in combating racism and xenophobia on the part of public opinion, opinion leaders, and the social partners.”

## COMMENTS

In view of the numbers of individuals potentially affected by discrimination (an estimated 900,000 migrants and refugees, an estimated 250,000 Roma, an estimated 130,000 Muslim minority members, an estimated 135,000 repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS and an estimated 80,000 ethnic Greeks from Albania) it is obvious that a greater and more systematic effort is required to significantly improve the situation. NGOs and migrant community organisations have repeatedly stressed that EU financed projects are simply not sufficient to combat discrimination and racism in any area of social life. They have also pointed out to the inadequate dissemination of information<sup>103</sup> claiming that most Roma and migrants learn little about these projects, which target and affect very small numbers anyway.

It should also be noted that the evaluation results of such projects and initiatives should be published to allow public scrutiny of their impact and effectiveness, especially since large sums of public funds are used. The common practice of simply announcing the number of beneficiaries and the cost of actions should be avoided.

Finally we should point to the absence of any single central authority co-ordinating the efforts of nationally controlled projects and programmes. It is assumed that projects selected, financed and evaluated directly by EU DGs are coordinated by the relevant DG, however, the absence of such a national authority leads frequently to the duplication of efforts, the

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[http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment\\_social/comm/employment\\_social/empl&esf/jointrep2001\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/comm/employment_social/empl&esf/jointrep2001_en.pdf) (26/06/2002)

<sup>101</sup> ■ Council Recommendations on the Implementation of Member States' Employment Policies 2002, (2002) available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2002/mar/guidelines\\_02\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2002/mar/guidelines_02_en.pdf) (1/06/2002)

<sup>102</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security, ■ “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, available at: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001e1\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001e1_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

<sup>103</sup> Projects results are “disseminated” through elaborate conferences, the internet or leaflets left in local authority offices and thus beyond the “reach” of most members of vulnerable social groups. Additionally, very few projects are in fact disseminated in any language other than Greek rendering them incomprehensible to many migrants or Roma who cannot read well or at all.

waste of valuable resources and most importantly hinders the flow of information and data concerning the actions and results of such projects and programmes.

## 6.2. ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC BODIES

**The Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED)**<sup>104</sup> operates since 1994 a number of vocational training and employment projects and programmes aimed at social groups facing or risking social exclusion in the Labour Market. In particular OAED:

**Participates in the ☀ design and implementation of the National Plan** for empowering and integrating the social groups of population facing or risking social exclusion. The supporting measures enacted attempt to secure the acceptance and inclusion of these groups in society. *The programmes and support measures are implemented in six Employment Services for social groups facing or risking social exclusion in the cities of Athens, Thessalonica, Larissa, Volos, Patras and Heraklion, and in the three Training Centres for social groups risking social exclusion in Athens, Thessalonica and Larissa.*

**Provides ☀ regular training and apprenticeship programmes** to encourage and promote the integration of vulnerable social groups by allocating 10% of available places to members of such groups. Approximately 260 such individuals enrol in such training annually. Specializations vary greatly from the training of clerks in the use of computers to carpentry, woodworking, pottery, leatherworking, etc.

OAED co-funds and coordinates placement programmes aimed at the ☀ creation of new jobs by offering:

- Three-year subsidies to enterprises, to hire and employ people full-time.
- Three-year subsidy programme for enterprises concerning part-time employment
- Subsidy programme for seasonal enterprises and Municipal enterprises
- Employers' subsidy programme for part-time employment concerning disabled persons and retarded persons
- Subsidies for the adaptation period in a working environment
- Support for self-employment efforts through a special subsidy programme for young professionals

**Develops integrated actions for socially vulnerable groups** in partnership with other public bodies or private organisations.

The activities of the Manpower Employment Organisation are indeed varied and significant, but limited to a very small number of beneficiaries and thus acting more as an example of good practice than actually making a difference in the employment situation of vulnerable groups. Furthermore the activities are neither monitored nor externally evaluated and relevant records or data are not released.

<sup>104</sup> The Directorate for Special Social Groups is responsible for the planning, implementation, coordination of the supporting programmes and measures (according to Laws 2643/1998, 1262/1982 and Presidential Decrees 246/1986, 1836/1989, 1892/1990, 2081/1992, 2431/1996 and 33485/1998).

**The Employment Placement Unit of the General Secretariat for Adult Education**<sup>105</sup> is a public body catering to the employment needs of Roma and repatriated ethnic Greeks. The Unit assesses the needs of the labour market at the local level, records job vacancies via direct communication with employers, records the skills and special needs of members of vulnerable social groups, assesses new jobs, sees to the employment of individuals according to their skills, sets job interviews and follows up on career development. It also publishes information and leaflets for public awareness, and has a series of co-operation relationships with employers, other employment promotion services, and national employment services. However, the Unit is not geared towards immigrants and refugees, groups that need support at the local level as well. Also like in the previous case the beneficiaries are very few and the operations and activities are not externally evaluated. There are no available statistical data concerning these activities.

**The Labour Inspectorate Body**<sup>106</sup> supervised by the Ministry of Labour could provide, potentially, useful information on direct discrimination in the workplace. It is responsible for receiving and examining cases related to employers' abuses and it examines on its own initiative various issues regarding the labour market.

Unfortunately no statistical data are publicly available concerning its operation. Occasionally statistical data are released through specific press statements.

The Labour Inspectorate Body would be ideally suited to act both as a monitor of direct and indirect racial discrimination in employment and as mechanism ensuring the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, thus making up for the lack of data and research on these issues.

**The Research Centre for Equality Issues**<sup>107</sup> (KETHI) is a public body that has set up Information Centres for women in co-operation with the General Secretariat for Equality within the framework of the NOW (New Opportunities for Women) Community Initiative in the cities of Athens, Thessalonica, Patras, Herakleion and Volos. Since 2000 their operation has been partly financed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework funds. The Centres address the needs of: (i) women seeking legal aid; (ii) women residing in remote communities; (iii) women who are in danger of social exclusion, such as heads of single-parent families; immigrants and repatriates; the victims of domestic or other kinds of violence; women released from prison. The Information Centres: (i) employ specialist personnel, trained in the provision of information, advice and support of women in employment and social incorporation; (ii) ease the re-integration of women into the labour market; (iii) promote women's entrepreneurial activities; (iv) motivate unemployed women towards the assertion of their personal and professional future; (v) aid women with psychological and social problems.

KETHI has made available to us some statistical data and other information concerning its activities. However, the data refer to earlier periods (1995-1998) and they are not collected systematically as they lack the necessary personnel.

## COMMENT

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<sup>105</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.gsae.edu.gr> (28/06/2002)

<sup>106</sup> Established by Law 2639/98, see <http://www.isotita.gr/english/englegal.htm>. More information available at [www.labor-ministry.gr](http://www.labor-ministry.gr) (22/06/2002)

<sup>107</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.kethi.gr> (21/06/2002)

It is evident that the number and scope of public bodies involved in combating racism and discrimination and promoting diversity and equality in employment is limited. We have not included the Ombudsman's Office, because it does not deal directly with issues concerning employment as its legal mandate limits its powers to intervene only between individuals and public authorities. Since none of the vulnerable groups in question has until now been employed or tried to be employed in the public sector there have been no such cases brought before it. However, the Ombudsman has dealt repeatedly with issues concerning the regularisation process itself and has highlighted in its Special Report the problems in the application of Law 2910/2001. Accordingly, the government amended the law on May 1, 2002 improving the relevant procedures and automatically extended the validity of all residence and work permits until the end of 2002, since it was proved impossible to examine existing and new applications before that time due to the complexity of the procedures and the lack of an appropriate computerised process<sup>108</sup>.

It is also clear from this presentation that there is a clear lack of coordination of the efforts of public bodies that often leads to the needless replication of efforts with subsequent waste of valuable resources.

### 6.3. ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities have implemented a number of EU financed projects for the incorporation of vulnerable social groups into the labour market. Some examples are the following:

**In the context of a transnational project implemented from November 2000 to April an advisory service<sup>109</sup>** was set up in the Municipality of Perama, helping individuals who experience discrimination and social exclusion. Among the objectives of the project were to establish an "access point" in the form of an advisory service for persons wishing to report incidents of discrimination and social exclusion in employment and housing, seeking psychological and legal support, while also providing "first hand" advice to these persons regarding their legal, civil and financial rights and directing them to appropriate agencies for further advice and help, in order to establish their rights and resolve conflicts. However, although the reported incidents will be registered in a data bank in order to derive a typology of discrimination situations no such information is as yet available and the project has not yet been evaluated. In the interview we held with the project manager we were informed that there have been only a few reports of incidents of discrimination in employment. It was suggested that the low response rate could be attributed to the very limited (if any) action that could be taken to redress the reported problem.

**The Municipality of Sapes<sup>110</sup> in the context of the project "Backing up a new life-integration of refugees entering through North Eastern Greece"** has published three information booklets in three languages, Greek, Turkish and Russian, providing information for the citizens of Sapes on the local government, legislation, rights and employment. They focus on immigrants, refugees and the Muslims living in the area and are provided free of charge. Sapes' population is estimated at: 40% Christian; 35% Muslim; 25% Greek repatriates. Such activity, coupled with professional training programmes and other initiatives, is helpful towards the harmonious coexistence of different social groups. It is an

<sup>108</sup> Until today all residence and work permits are handwritten (more than 700,000). The burden added to the workload of the civil servants engaged in the process and the unavoidable delays in the process are immense.

<sup>109</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.ombudsman.gr> (01/06/2002)

<sup>110</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.dsapes.gr> (05/06/2002)

example of good practices on the part of the municipality in its attempt to undertake a new role for local governments on immigrant and refugee issues.

**The Municipality of Agia Varvara<sup>111</sup> has set up a ☀ Service Centre** targeting mainly socially vulnerable groups more threatened by unemployment but is open to everyone. The Centre attempts to bring local businesses and the local unemployed in touch. This is a positive attempt to inform and advise both prospective employers (who can employ local people through KYA) and the unemployed, who find a source of support in the Centre. Furthermore, KYA is a permanent structure, which not only organises the local market within a framework of co-operation and mutual support, but also plays a significant part in the sensitisation of businesses and the local community in general as regards training and employment.

## 6.4. OTHER BODIES COMBATING DISCRIMINATION IN SUPPORT OF DIVERSITY

Various other organisations such as NGOs, Trade Unions and Migrant Organisations are also engaged in work combating discrimination and racism in employment.

**The “Centre for the Information and Support of Repatriates” (KEPYP)<sup>112</sup>** is one of the most active NGOs. KEPYP is active in many fields and particularly the employment of repatriates, as well as other refugee and migrants. It provides information, advisory and psychological/social support, professional orientation and support for new business initiatives. The Centre operates a Greek language education programme and is a certified entity for the provision of Support Services for the Exclusion from the Labour Market EU project (sub-project2: repatriates, migrants, refugees), and a leader at the national level for the INTEGRA project.

**The General Confederation of Workers has established a Migrants’ Office<sup>113</sup>** as part of the Information Centre for Workers and the Unemployed, providing migrants with information.

**The Piraeus Labour Centre** (a social partner organisation) has set up a similar Migrants Office since 1998.

**The Foreign Women’s Network<sup>114</sup>** (NGO) is a non-profit organization run by and for foreign women, providing in person and through the Internet information on employment-related matters, informing Greek state agencies, private enterprises and NGOs of the needs, aspirations and the potential of the foreign community.

**Other active NGOs** include the “Support Centre for Repatriates and Migrants of the Orthodox Church of Greece”, the “Ecumenical Project for Refugees of the Orthodox Church of Greece”, the Greek “Anti-Poverty Network” and the “Nostos Society of Social and Cultural Support of Repatriates”

<sup>111</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.agiavarvara.gr> (01/05/2002)

<sup>112</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.mitnet.gr/kepyp> (03/05/2002)

<sup>113</sup> More information available on line in Greek at [http://www.gsee.gr/KEPEA/kepea/Greek/gpe\\_index.htm](http://www.gsee.gr/KEPEA/kepea/Greek/gpe_index.htm) (02/04/2002)

<sup>114</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.foreign-womens-network.gr> (01/03/2002)

## 6.5. JUDICIAL ACTIONS COMBATING DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

**The Supreme Court** of Greece ruled (§ Ruling No 1788/2001 based on Civil Code Law 904 pertaining to misappropriated gains) in favour of an unregistered migrant claiming wages and holiday bonuses owed to him by his employer over an eight year period setting a binding precedent for other law courts in Greece. The court found that although the lack of a work permit rendered the migrant's employment contract illegal, he does have the right to receive benefits and all holiday bonuses.

**The Appellant Court** of Athens ruled (§ Ruling No 4818/2001) that unregistered migrants are entitled to compensation for traffic accidents. The court commented that any decision to the contrary would contravene basic human rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

## 7. ANALYSIS

### 7.1. RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

From the data presented it is clear that the two social groups most vulnerable and indeed suffering most from discrimination in employment are undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and the Roma. While the Roma population suffers largely as a result of age-old prejudices translated into discriminatory practices and widespread intolerance of their presence, migrants belong to a category that is not denied a social existence, but on the contrary is almost “invited” to be exploited in the informal economy. Since the Roma are almost completely excluded from both the formal and the informal labour market as employees and would require a totally separate analytical approach for which there is no sufficient data or information, we will focus our present discussion on migrants and their developing position in the labour market.

#### 7.1.1. Informal Economic Activities and Migration – An Introduction

One of the definitions of ‘informal economic activities’ suggest that “...informal production encompasses those activities aimed at producing a positive effect on income (for the person executing the activities and/or for the person receiving the results), for which the terms of legislation and regulations (planning requirements, social security legislation, collective labour agreements, and the like) applicable to the activities are not being met”. The informal economic activity is thus conceived as a process of income generation rather than a deviant individual. The decisive characteristic of the informal economy which distinguishes it from the formal economy is therefore simply the absence of governmental control.<sup>115</sup>

The implications of these observations are far-reaching. “Against the grain of many popular views, there is no sharp demarcation between the formal and the informal economy. On the contrary, there is an extensive and ever changing transitional area in which the formal economy gradually transforms into a more informal one.”<sup>116</sup>

“European economies are motors of globalisation”, but while globalisation is far from being a new phenomenon, it is presently characterised by accelerating and intensifying human mobility involving more economies and people than ever before. Such mobility occurs in both real and virtual settings through migration, cultural exchanges, scientific co-operation, tourism, long distance telephone calls and the use of the internet. However, the dominant legal - political entity, the nation state, still controls the real global mobility by determining access through the universally legitimized system of geographical borders. Large nation states, such as the US and China will have in this case a decisive advantage in the labour mobility they can achieve.

At the EU level, efforts to increase labour mobility have attempted to break down barriers to mobility through a variety of measures. The Commission has proposed a Directive on freedom of movement, it has also launched a ‘Strategy on Building New European Labour

<sup>115</sup> Kloosterman, R., van der Leun, J. and Rath, J. (1999), ■ “Mixed Embeddedness: (In)formal Economic Activities and Immigrant Businesses in the Netherlands”, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 23 (2), pp. 253-267

<sup>116</sup> *ibid*



Markets by 2005', which includes mobility as a key goal. A High Level Task Force on Skills and Mobility presented further policy recommendations in December 2001, and an Action Plan was presented in February 2002. While removing obstacles to the mobility of Union citizens remains important, recent texts also recognise that 'current demographic and employment trends suggest a greater dependence in many Member States over the coming years on the skills and labour of third country nationals' and call for the adoption of pending immigration legislation. The Action Plan announces that the Commission will examine the interaction between immigration and employment and social policies in the EU and issue a report in 2003. The low levels of EU mobility imply inadequate utilisation of the European jobs pool and the relatively low degree of labour mobility in the EU is one of the main reasons why Europe lags behind the US in terms of long term employment performance and labour productivity.

On the other hand, many European countries that are currently experiencing high economic growth and job creation feel the "pressure, mainly from the side of employers, to adopt more effective and transparent immigration policies. Consequently, we can witness that governments are reconsidering their zero immigration policies and are slowly moving away from their exclusive focus on admission issues (despite 11 September and the current political prominence of extreme right-wing political parties in some European countries)."<sup>117</sup>

Migrants have always been part of most European labour markets. Governments always tolerated documented and undocumented migration to satisfy demand for workers of various levels of skill. Like many other advanced countries, EU Member States are facing the problem of "a decreasing labour supply, as new technologies create a demand for skilled labour and as ageing populations and affluent lifestyles require servicing by unskilled or low-skilled workers"<sup>118</sup>. Furthermore, employers are beginning to see diversity as an asset.

The sectors of the economy that need undocumented labour have identifiable characteristics. They tend to be sectors employing low-skilled labour that need not have host-country skills (including knowledge of the language), characterized by unstable employment or in which high job turnover has low costs, and are viewed as offering "undesirable" job characteristics. Consequently countries that are more likely to utilise the services of undocumented migrants and exploit their cheaply provided unskilled labour are those whose economies exhibit the above characteristics.

### 7.1.2. Patterns of THE Greek economy

There is a considerable margin of opportunity for non-registered employment with over 30% of the GNP produced by the "informal" economy<sup>119</sup>. While governments seek to limit the extent of the black economy, at the same time they are aware that some discretion has to be used. Thus it can be argued that the government and public authorities often overlook illegal employment in selected sectors, such as agriculture, in order to ensure that employers have a supply of cheap labour that keep Greek exports and products competitive.

The overarching goal of governments in the past 10 years has been to reduce inflation and bring the macroeconomic indicators in line with European Union criteria for Economic and

<sup>117</sup> Niessen J. (2002) ■ "New terms for the migration debate in Europe", available at <http://www.migpolgroup.com> (13/06/2002)

<sup>118</sup> *ibid*, p.3

<sup>119</sup> Pavlopoulos P. (1987) ■ "Informal economy in Greece" IOBE . No.17 Athens – available at: <http://www.iobe.gr> (01/11/2001)



Monetary Union and membership of the Euro group; this has had serious effects on labour market restructuring and associated unemployment. High unemployment and increased competition in the labour market has also helped to reduce wage expectations in considerable sections of the national labour force, lowering costs and thus inflation, as well as production costs, and allowing Greek products and services to stay competitive in the European economy.

Despite the slow increase<sup>120</sup> in employment rates the increase in the labour supply has been considerable and rapid, with more migrants entering the Greek labour market despite the introduction of registration procedures that should make their clandestine employment very expensive and consequently less attractive to employers. However, the absence of monitoring bodies and effective control procedures has allowed many Greek employers to continue the practice of hiring unregistered and therefore cheaper labour without paying the price for it. In fact there have been very few instances where employers have actually been fined for employing undocumented labour.

One of the rather obvious positive consequences for the economy is that undocumented migrants are employed with far lower wages and normally without social security. This leads to lower production costs and has a positive effect on the competitiveness of enterprises and the economy as a whole. Migrant workers have also contributed to the increase of the total consumer expenditure and to the income of certain categories of citizens, such as owners of real estate. Moreover, undocumented workers form a readily available, flexible, occasional, disorganised labour force that benefits those small labour intensive enterprises facing bankruptcy and closure in the face of growing competition from Europe and the Balkan countries by paying much less for wages, avoiding social security costs, and by employing them only when they need them.

In this sense the tolerance of the Greek state to undocumented cheap and vulnerable labour is an indirect way for enterprises to reduce the cost of labour and a way to refrain from enterprises moving to Balkan countries where the cost of labour is significantly lower<sup>121</sup>.

The majority of migrants are employed as unskilled workers in building sites, transportation, as domestics and nursing staff in middle-class households and as transient agricultural workers, and normally do the jobs that Greeks do not want to do - hard, badly paid, temporary jobs, without standard working hours or social security.

### **7.1.3. Segmentation of THE labour market and employment of vulnerable groups**

As Professor Kontis argues<sup>122</sup> migrant labour can be divided into four relatively homogenous groups according to their number and labour characteristics:

<sup>120</sup> The Ministry of Labour argues that between 1993 and 2000 - despite the stabilization policy, the decline in the rural population, job losses in manufacturing, the arrival of a large number of economic migrants and the accelerating pace of women entering the labour market - there has been a net increase in the number of jobs (226,000 new places). Ministry of Labour and Social Security, ■ "National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003", available at:

[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

<sup>121</sup> Labrianidis, L. and Lyberaki, A. (2001) ■ Albanian immigrants in Thessalonica, Thessalonica: Parathrhths p.153

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, pp.521-523

**The first group** is composed of migrants from Central and Eastern European countries, Egypt, Philippines, Pakistan, India and Kurdistan. It seems to form the 40%-50% of the total population of foreign labour (400,000-500,000) and is employed mainly as unskilled labour both on a part time and a full time basis. The majority of this group came from Albania with a high cross border mobility depending on seasonal labour demands.

**The second group** is composed of migrants from the USA, Canada, Australia and EU countries, but their numbers seemed to be declining (20,000-30,000).

**The third group** consists of foreigners; mainly unskilled, employed in shipping that constitute currently a very low, but increasing proportion (13,000-15,000) of the foreign labour population. These migrants were always documented, since this sector of the Greek economy is effectively regulated.

**The fourth group** comprises repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS and Albania (225,000-295,000), who have a different legal and social status than other migrants.

The second group composed of EU, USA, Australian and Canadian citizens is on the whole a highly qualified and skilled documented labour force enjoying the full protection of the law. Despite the fact that, in most of cases, they come in direct competition with indigenous labour, this has never been raised as a political issue.

On the contrary, the first and fourth groups are mainly employed as unskilled labour, on seasonal and part time basis. Sporadic evidence seems to suggest that they constitute a fairly homogenous group, however, there is no data concerning differences in education levels and vocational qualifications among the different nationalities.<sup>123</sup> However, it could be argued that for the majority, their present occupations are not related with their qualifications. There is some evidence to suggest that migrants from Eastern and Central European countries, including repatriates, seem to have higher qualifications than migrants of other nationalities even though – or perhaps because – the economic system in their country of origin was not that of a market economy<sup>124</sup>. According to evidence provided by KASAPI, the Union of Filipino workers, Filipino migrants – mostly women – seem to be yet another group with a relatively high level of education (secondary education, use of English, etc).

Undocumented workers are, generally, assumed to be qualified to be employed only as unskilled workers in part time jobs and on seasonal basis<sup>125</sup>. As the study of Chtouris and Psimmenos (1997) points out the majority of migrant labour force in the area of Attica was at the time employed on temporary basis changing occupation and employer almost on a weekly basis. As Fakiolas notes: “Working mainly in casual and seasonal jobs, most immigrants have high rates of labour turnover and many short periods of unemployment. A relatively recent EKA (Athens Labour Centre) survey<sup>126</sup> conducted in the spring of 1997 found that 26% of undocumented migrants are either unemployed or are employed in casual jobs, while 65% work for more than 10 hours per day for a substandard wage. However, lack of relevant studies and statistical data make it impossible to identify more clearly issues

<sup>123</sup> According to Kontis, in connection with findings of other research such as KAPA-Research, and Karasavvoglou the majority of undocumented migrants are characterised by low levels of educational attainment - referred in Kontis, A. (1998) ■ Indigenous and Foreign Labour Force in the Greek Labour Market, in Saki Karagiorga Institution, Conference Proceedings, Athens p.523

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, p. 523

<sup>125</sup> Psimmenos, J. (2001), ■ New Labour and informal migrants in Metropolitan Athens, in : Marvakis, Ath., Pansanoglou, D. and Pavlou, M., (eds) ■ Migrants in Greece, Athens: Ellhnika Grammata., p.112

<sup>126</sup> This is referred in Fakiolas, R. (1997) ■ Recent Efforts to Regularise Undocumented Immigrants Greece, EUROPEAN FOUNDATION for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions p.8, available at <http://www.eurofound.ie/publications/files/WP9740EN.pdf> (11/05/2002)

regarding patterns of employment under a dynamic perspective, such as the possible differences among specific nationalities or the proportion of undocumented migrant labour that are employed as semi-skilled or skilled labour and the conditions in which this may happen.

There is no data or comparative research on the employment and unemployment rates of foreign labour before and after the regularisation programmes. An empirical study<sup>127</sup> (1999) on 153 Bulgarian migrants showed that some of them worked before their applications for white and green cards. The study found that a large proportion of employers (43%) paid for employees' social security contributions and the majority of the participants did not change their occupation. A small percentage of the sample reported problems with their employers in that they did not allow them to register in order to get a work permit. Only 14 migrants changed jobs after the legalisation programme, getting a better payment and social security insurance.

Consequently, existing research data do not allow us to properly evaluate the effects of regularisation on the rate of unemployment of migrant workers. However, it is logical to assume, *inter alia*, that the heavy burden of insurance contributions on the employers would increase labour costs and consequently decrease the demand of their labour which means a potentially high unemployment rate for the documented migrant labour force<sup>128</sup>.

In interviews with migrant organisations we were told that there has been some unwillingness on the part of a small but significant part of the migrants to register. This was explained partly in terms of their fear of dismissal and their inability to handle the tedious bureaucratic procedures. Particularly for migrants intending to migrate to another country in the near future, the most important reason is that they felt that, since there are no bilateral agreements for the transfer of pension rights<sup>129</sup>, the money paid for insurance contributions are "wasted". To overcome this objection the government tried to provide migrants with a generous incentive by reducing by 50% their social insurance contributions.<sup>130</sup>

#### 7.1.4. EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Documented migrants have the same rights as Greek workers. However, as foreign nationals they cannot be employed in the public sector which is the largest employer in Greece comprising both state as well as local and regional authorities.

Employment in the public sector is formally open to Roma and members of Muslim minority in Thrace as Greek citizens. However, although there is no data available concerning the number of minority groups employed in the public sector, it is highly unlikely that any are actually employed. There are no data on participation rates in positive action measures in the public sector, since no such measures have ever been planned or implemented.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Markova, E. (2001), ■ The presence of Bulgarian migrants in the labour market and Greek society, in: Marvakis, Ath., Parsanoglou, D. and Pavlou, M., (eds) ■ Migrants in Greece, Athens

<sup>128</sup> Chletsos, M. (2001) ■ Political Economy of Migration in Naxakis, H. and Chletsos M. (eds) ■ Migrants and Migration Athens:Patakis p. 30

<sup>129</sup> *ibid* p.34

<sup>130</sup> Insurance contributions on average constitute almost 1/3 of the gross wage. This is paid by the employer 72% and the employee 28%.

<sup>131</sup> Data and research are absent on the issue with an observation regarding Pomak employment in this sector in Thrace in Labrianidis, L (1998) ■ The effects of supervised zones on the local economies in Saki Karagiorga Foundation, ■ Social Inequalities and Social Exclusion, Conference Proceedings, Athens, p. 562

### 7.1.5. Self Employment

According to the data published by the Ministry of Finance - TAXIS<sup>132</sup> Directorate (responsible for the electronic compilation of revenue and tax data) during 2000, foreign citizens originating from 90 different countries have established 2,873 new enterprises in Greece. 1,003 or 35% have been set up by Albanians, 151 by British, 148 by Germans, 136 by Syrians and 106 by Cypriots. Less than 100 enterprises have been established by Bulgarians, Italians, Poles, Bangladeshis, Ukrainians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Russians etc. The total number of foreign enterprises in Greece until 2000 was 5,909 the majority being located in Athens and other major cities, while some are also to be found in villages.

Only two studies focus on self-employment and the entrepreneurship of migrants. Fakiolas<sup>133</sup> examined Egyptians and Pakistanis in Greece who have established since the 1970s small firms in catering, retail trade, tourism, taxis, while a few have entered the professions. He also examined Poles who came during the 1980s in relatively small numbers, but have also managed to form enterprises on their own or with Greek partners. One very interesting recent qualitative study provides a valuable insight into the entrepreneurship of refugees showing that a relatively small, but growing number of refugees have managed to establish successful SMEs.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Newspaper "Imerisia", 26 January 2001

<sup>133</sup> Fakiolas, R. (1997) ■ Recent Efforts to Regularise Undocumented Immigrants Greece, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions available at:  
<http://www.eurofound.ie/publications/files/WP9740EN.pdf> (11/05/2002)

<sup>134</sup> Mestheneou., (2000), ■ "EU-CARE: REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS IN GREECE", available at  
<http://www.gcr.gr/investigations/EU-CAREReport.doc> (16/06/2002)

## 8. SUMMARY

Existing data and evidence seems to indicate that persistent discrimination in employment seems to characterise the situation of the vulnerable social groups in the Greek labour market. This study has highlighted the absence of data that would allow a deeper and more conclusive analysis which could guide effectively the measures taken by the authorities to improve the situation. In the next section specific recommendations will be proposed in order to resolve this problem and facilitate good governance.

The Roma population seems to suffer most from the existing inequalities and the racist attitudes prevailing against them in the labour market. Marginalised and neglected, it is not accidental that so many young Roma are attracted by criminal activities with little prospects other than long term unemployment.

The Muslim minority seems to enjoy a relatively privileged status with social characteristics and a social stratification system fairly similar to those of the rest of the Greek population. Nevertheless, its characteristic “absence” from public sector employment cannot really be attributed only to its lack of interest to participate. The extent to which religious, cultural and ethnic differences influence the modes of Muslim participation in the labour market remains to be investigated.

The repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS and Albania still suffer from discrimination in the labour market with difficulties in the formal recognition of their educational qualifications and in learning the language both of which affect their employment prospects. The state has assisted repatriates in multiple ways and most seem to be gradually integrating well into Greek society.

Finally the migrant and refugee population that compose by far the largest vulnerable social group present serious problems in their integration, occupy disadvantaged positions in the labour market and suffer from varying degrees of discrimination. Refugees and documented migrants are in a markedly better situation than asylum seekers and undocumented migrants whose precarious position leads them to accept the most degraded and badly paid employment. They also compose the group with possibly the highest short term unemployment rate. As the government has repeatedly stated that there will be no other legalization process it seems probable that undocumented migrants will soon face serious problems as they will not be able to continue evading capture and deportation. Asylum seekers are also in a precarious position, since Greece rarely awards refugee status and if their application is rejected they will have to leave the country or face deportation.

An important aspect of immigration policy in Greece is that the previous as well as the new law are preoccupied with the establishment of a recruitment scheme of temporary migrant labour according to labour market needs, while at the same time focusing policies on combating illegal entry rather than introducing support and integration measures. Thus, the promotion of diversity and the fight against racism and intolerance are effectively marginalized. Greece, it seems, has not as yet decided to utilize the experience of other European countries<sup>135</sup>.

In view of the latest Seville EU Summit statements it seems that in the future EU Member States are planning to enforce existing legislation more strictly, affecting, in the case of

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<sup>135</sup> Castles, S., (1984), ■ ‘Here for Good, Western Europe’s New Ethnic Minorities’, London: Pluto Press.

Greece, hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants, and also those employers who rely on them.

For the existing documented migrants and the other socially vulnerable social groups our study indicates that public authorities seem to be genuinely engaged along with other key actors such as local authorities, social partners, NGOs and other organisations in a serious effort to improve their employment status in the labour market and consequently their life chances.

However, there is reason for concern, since most of the actions are still not properly coordinated or rigorously -and publicly- evaluated. There is a growing fear that as in previous years the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion will be partly and ineffectively implemented, while the ambitious Integrated Action Plan for the Roma, that is centrally coordinated, may risk creating serious conflicts with local populations, as it has not been preceded by the necessary awareness raising and consensus building processes that would facilitate the establishment of a basic level of consensus between the Roma and local populations on a number of important issues, such as housing and education.

It has to be noted that the policies and measures for combating discrimination in the labour market and promoting the social integration of migrants and other disadvantaged groups should be an integral part of a wide range of general and specific policies. The main aspects of these policies should include measures, such as language and vocational training, the promotion of self-employment, education, regional and income policies, psychological, social and legal support services, awareness raising actions and active participation of the members of the relevant social groups<sup>136</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> For a categorisation of an effective economic integration of migrants in the labour market see Kontis, A., (2001), ■ 'Economic integration of migrants in the host society' in Amitsis, G. and Lazaridi, G., (2001), ■ 'Legal, social and political dimensions of immigration in Greece', Athens: Papazisis, pp.210-215.