
Recent Efforts to Regularise Undocumented Immigrants

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**RECENT EFFORTS TO REGULARISE
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS**

GREECE

by

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PART ONE

1. *Introduction*¹

Situated in a geographical region in which political and religious tensions have been kept high throughout the post World War II period and being in addition the only country in Western Europe to have a civil war (1946-1949) and a military dictatorship (1967-1974), Greece tops the list of other European countries in the “special features” concerning its recent migratory movements. Including Greek political refugees and ethnic Greeks, it had one of the largest outflows of nationals in 1945-1973 (net emigration amounted to nearly one million persons, about equally divided between western Europe and overseas countries, out of a population of 7.2 million in 1951). It also had one of the largest return migrations in the twelve years of the ensuing period². The mass emigration and sizeable repatriation has been followed since the late 1980s by:

- a) the settlement of about 80,000 Pontians (ethnic Greeks from Pontos in Asia Minor who had settled around 1922 in the then Soviet Union);
- b) dozens of thousands of ethnic Greeks from Albania who come and go legally but they are not encouraged by official policy to settle in Greece;
- c) about 350,000 to 450,000 undocumented economic immigrants (UEI) from the former Socialist and the Third World countries, 8%-11% of the registered labour force and about one fifth of the registered wage and salary earners employed in the country³.

¹ I should like to thank the 22 Greek and 8 foreign interviewees, as well as the many members of the Coordination Committee for Fighting Racism and its Chairman Mr. Thodoros Pangalos with whom I had useful discussions. Many more have helped me to carry out this Case Study: From the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the General Secretary Mr. Basil Bracatsoulas, his associate Mrs Mirili Zalaora and Mrs. Caterina Kritikou of the Employment Department; from the General Confederation of Labour in Greece, the research fellows Mr. Petros Linardos-Rylmon, Mr D Katsoridas and the secretary of the Committee for the regularization of undocumented foreigners in Greece Mrs D. Papadopoulou; from the Confederation of the Greek Industries the legal advisor Mrs Anastassia Koutsibitou of the Department of Relations with Social Partners. Dr. Martin Baldwin-Edwards co-editor of the quarterly South European Society and Politics, resident at present in Greece has made useful remarks on an earlier draft of the Study, and Mrs. Fotini Alexandrou has offered valuable assistance in arranging appointments with the interviewees and collecting documents and other information from a score of scattered sources.

² Nearly half of the economic emigrants to Northern Europe returned in 1974-1986, along with over four fifths of the 60-65,000 political refugees of the 1946-1949 civil war, while over 100,000 Greeks or ethnic Greeks from Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus and Zaire settled in the country in 1955-1975.

³ In the inaugural session of the Committee for the regularisation of foreigners on November 1st 1996 (see below), the Minister of Labour stated that the number of the undocumented immigrants exceeds the 400,000 (Min. of Labour, Minutes of the Committee). Other estimates, official or unofficial put their number at over half a million but there are also lower estimates of 300,000-350,000. Judging by personal observations in various parts of the country and by discussions with many people, among whom officials of the Ministries of Labour and Agriculture, the author of this Case Study is convinced that the number quoted by the Minister is very close to the actual number, with an approximate seasonal variation of 10%-15%, more in summer and autumn, fewer in winter. The registered labour force amounts to about 4.2m (41% participation of the 10.45m population), employment to 3.8m and the employed wage and salary earners to 2m (NSSG Stat. Yearb. and Labour Market Surveys).

The number of UEI increased gradually during the 1980s to reach, from about 20,000 to 30,000 in the beginning, to about 150,000 towards the end of that decade. Overstaying Polish tourists were the main nationality represented in them, most of the remaining coming from many Third World countries. That number jumped quickly to its present size in the early 1990s, following the Gulf War and the political changes in Albania. About half of the UEI are estimated to be Albanians who along with others from the former Socialist and third world countries enter Greece illegally, crossing the 1,181 km. land, river and lake northern borders or landing on a Greek coast (15,000 km.). The remaining come from dozens of countries in all continents, a considerable number entering illegally, the majority though being overstaying tourists and students. The UEI are an indispensable source of labour supply for many unskilled seasonal and casual but also some regular jobs on the land and in the urban centres. They are however a cause for many misapprehensions, fears and extreme attitudes both of the man in the street and at the highest political level. Unlike all other Southern European countries, Greece has not so far applied any regularisation policy, while in the last 25 years the number of immigrants with work permits has ranged between 24,000 and 34,000, half of them being ethnic Greeks and nationals of other EU countries.

Both size and structure make immigration in Greece quite different from that in all other European countries, including those in the south. As in other countries however and in ways that were wholly unexpected just a few years ago (Baldwin-Edwards/Schain 1994:1), many aspects of economic and political life in Greece have now been touched by immigration which affects average wage and employment levels, as well as the working and living environment of local people in all walks of life. Immigrant employment in practically all economic sectors and productive branches has been the single most important change in the Greek labour market since the late 1980s. For obvious reasons, all three social partners (trade unions, employer associations and the government) have a direct interest in it. Despite the 1.25m deportations and expulsions since 1991, according to official figures (Ministry of Public Order), the economic immigrants continue to enter the country illegally or as tourists and to find jobs. Although most of those jobs are not wanted by Greeks and a large part are in agriculture and animal husbandry, a small number are, especially in construction, raising doubts about the rationality of the government policy in allowing foreigners to have them.

The trade unions have not objected to the UEI presence in the labour market and are in favour of regularisation, an indication that not many locals are keen to undertake the work done by them. About the same attitude is shown by the large firms which are under strict labour inspection and find it difficult to employ UEI, although some do through sub-contracting with smaller firms. The farmers, the smaller firms and the households which constitute the bulk of the immigrants' employers are less eloquent in their pronouncements on the regularisation of the UEI, a reflection perhaps of their awareness that it would not be easy for them to cope with higher wages plus high social security contributions. In addition to the objection of allowing foreigners to have a number of jobs wanted by the Greeks, the reaction of some Greeks to the regularisation is also due to their belief that immigrants are responsible for the increased criminality and to their apprehensions that the permanent residence of many foreigners in the country might create influential national and religious groups. The mass media have increased those fears through exaggerating the unlawful activity of some immigrants. Similar fears however are also expressed by the Ministries of External Affairs and National Defense (see their letters B.1 and B.2 in the Appendix), indicating that at least part of the "official" Greece is not in favour of many resident aliens in the country. There are hardly any foreigners employed in the public sector. Even in state education, including the departments of foreign languages,

foreign teachers are a rarity. In addition, the very strict aliens law (L.1975/1991) is applied in a very conservative way in naturalising foreigners with many years of residence in Greece and in granting residence permits, even to nationals of other EU countries.

The present case study concentrates on the working and living conditions of the UEI in Greece and on the recent efforts to regularise them. Following the terms of reference, the emphasis is on the problems and opportunities related to immigration, and on the efforts to regularise the UEI. Part One gives a short account of foreign immigration, tries to estimate its tangible and intangible benefits and costs, and analyses the perceptions of the Greeks concerning immigrants. An indicative account is also given of good and worth imitating practices with respect to immigrants and other minorities. This Part is mostly based on the existing bibliography and the academic and field research known to the author. A major weakness of the research on immigration in Greece is that basic statistics on the demographic, economic and social characteristics of the UEI are lacking, while relevant estimates by officials and researchers vary considerably. Furthermore part of the information coming out of some surveys and opinion polls needs careful evaluation for the following reasons:

- a) Much experience and sophistication are needed in order to find out what people in different educational levels, professional groups and social strata really think about the UEI, a new phenomenon in Greece which affects so many aspects of life and work of so many and different people.
- b) As already stated, opinions are much influenced by the media which tend to exaggerate the violations of the law committed by foreigners. Furthermore hardly any mention is ever made of the fact that many unlawful foreigners belong to extreme political and religious groups or are employed by organised international gangs and have nothing to do with the economic immigrants. In addition little is known about the “bad practices” in the country toward the UEI, although many of those practices reflect the inefficiencies of the Greek state and are equally directed against Greek nationals. Despite the considerable progress in the organisation of the state made in recent years, the gap between society and the state is as large as that between immigrants and the state.

Part Two examines the attempts made in the last six years to regularise a number of UEI, by offering them permits for seasonal work. More recent efforts include the establishment in summer 1996 of a 15 member committee, referred to below as the Committee, with the purpose of formulating two Presidential Decrees for the regularisation of all undocumented foreigners, and to set the terms under which residence and work cards, valid for a fixed time and renewable could be issued. A draft of those Decrees has been prepared and examined by OKE (Economic and Social Committee⁴), six Ministries, the prefectures, the trade unions and other interested parties. All have expressed their views in reports and letters sent to the Committee. The main points of these views are presented in the Appendix. For an evaluation of the efforts for regularisation made so far, additional information has become available through

⁴ Established by L.2232/1994, and formed as an entity in autumn 1995, the OKE consists of the Chairman and 48 members coming from unions, employers, self-employed, farmers, chambers, professional associations, university teachers and independent experts. Its General Secretary, appointed by the Minister of the National Economy assists the President in his/her duties and is responsible for its work. Its main duty is to examine all important issues on industrial relations, social insurance, taxation and socio-economic policy, and to suggest policy measures. Detailed comments on the draft Decrees for the Regularization of foreigners are given below, Chapter 6.

the minutes of the Committee sessions, as well as from flexible (and adapted to the persons) detailed interviews, conducted by the author with 22 Greeks and 8 foreigners.

2. *Main Characteristics of the Immigrants*

The fears of the developed EU countries that free movement of Greek labour would cause mass immigration to them, and of Greece that it would be flooded by highly qualified persons from the north, have not been realised⁵. Neither have the dire predictions in the press come true about the “invasion” of Western Europe, following the radical reforms in the socialist countries in 1989-90, in part because of much tighter restrictions of border controls and their enforcement, in part because the predictions themselves were highly inflammatory (Baldwin-Edwards/Schain 1994:7). Greece however has received and absorbed a large number of wage flexible and geographically mobile undocumented immigrants, and its labour market appears now to be moving to an “equilibrium”, with both immigrant employment and high unemployment among the locals. According however to official pronouncements and the strict aliens L. 1975/1991, “Greece is not an immigration country”.

Similar developments took place some years ago in the countries of Northern Europe. Despite high and prolonged unemployment, their domestic labour markets needed and were supplied by wage flexible and geographically mobile labour, in order to meet the changing work attitudes of their domestic labour force and the challenges posed by European economic integration. The main differences with those in the south are the “better” geographical location and the smaller size of the underground economy in northern European countries which help them to keep a low percentage of UEI among their foreigners. All Europeans however differ from the North Americans and others from the New World who regard immigration as a normal process, to be taken for granted, and any interference with it as requiring justification. The Europeans do not normally consider themselves as belonging to large-scale countries of immigration, whatever the current realities may be, and tend to regard immigration as an exceptional process requiring justification for its continuation (Coleman D. 1993:414).

Legal immigrants

The very few immigrants with work permits who are not ethnic Greeks or nationals of other EU countries (about 12,000 to 15,000) come from about three dozen countries the world over and include a wide range of talented people, as well as persons with middle and low level skills: from trainers and coaches in athletics, to artists, seamen and workers in live stock, fishing, handicrafts, industries and households⁶. According to the aliens L.1975/1991, all come as persons possessing skills and offering labour not supplied by Greeks or nationals of other EU

⁵ Greece became a full member of the then EEC on 1/1/1981 but free movement of labour was stipulated as from 1/1/1988. About 80,000 Greeks have been employed by Greek construction and other firms in Germany for contract work since 1987 and about an equal number have emigrated to that country due to family reasons. The highly qualified persons from EU employed now in Greece, a few thousand, are marginally more than they were before free movement was put in effect (Greek Min. of Labour and Petropoulos N. 1996).

⁶ Foreigners with residence permits amounted to 158,313 and 163,073 in December 1993 and 1994 respectively (1.5% of the total population, about half of the foreigners are females). About a quarter come from the other EU countries, an equal percentage from the remaining European ones and the former socialist countries, and the rest from all other continents. Their total number and the structure by country has shown only minor variations in the last 10 years (NSSG Stat. Yearb. 1989, 1995, 1996).

countries. A considerable number are Filipino females undertaking domestic work but invited as nurses who are in short supply in Greece (the reverse is the case with qualified doctors who are proportionally twice as many as in the developed countries!). The work permit is usually for one year, and is renewable annually for four more years. Following that it can be renewed for two years. After 15 years the immigrant can apply for a permanent residence permit which also includes the right to work. On special intergovernmental agreements some immigrants, mainly Egyptians, have been in the country for over three decades, while some Pakistanis came over in the early 1970s, the years of near full employment. Practically all of them live now in Greece with their families, they send their children to the local schools and many of both the first and the second generation have established small firms in catering, retail trade and tourism, they work as taxi and lorry drivers and some, very few, work as medical doctors and in other professions (Fakiolas R. 1994, 1995 and Fakiolas/King 1996).

On the whole documented economic immigrants are “polarised” between those with high qualifications and the unskilled. The same differences exist in the pay and even in the “real” legal status. The pay of the former category is roughly that of the locals and usually above it, when they are employed by foreign firms. Therefore they can afford to bring in their families, legally or as overstaying tourists, and to pay the market prices for the services they use. They usually send their children to the private Greek or foreign language schools at all levels which function in the country. The latter category are paid on the average around 30% less than the locals for comparable quality of work, and most of the family members they invite (as a rule illegally), are employed in the shadow economy. Both categories however are covered by social insurance and can join the trade unions as members. They hardly use the subsidised part of the social infrastructure (schools, houses, hospitals, etc.), either because they can afford to pay the market prices for those services (the first category), or because they are mostly young, healthy and without their families (the second category). Except for the few who have permanent residence permits, unemployment and turnover among them are practically zero because the work permit is employer and job specific. The employee can change none, while the employer is responsible for all terms specified by the permit (work attendance, social insurance contributions, etc.).

The refugees

Up to 1991 61,000 immigrants had asked for political asylum and to 21, 000 of them work permits were issued. During 1985-1995, 22,224 political and economic refugees were resettled in overseas countries (53.5% in USA, 40% in Canada). The Poles and the Iraqis constitute the two largest contingents of refugees, making up over 50% of the departures. Practically all refugees and recognised asylum seekers are now given working cards or are tacitly allowed and assisted to find jobs. During the past two years steps have been taken to harmonise Greek legislation with the Geneva Agreement, and the policies of the Council of Europe and the European Union regarding political refugees; and to lay the ground work for improving the living and working conditions of the political and humanitarian-status refugees. In recent months these efforts have been intensified. New proposals have been drafted by the government following the initiatives of the legal community and of the Greek Council of Political Refugees. The new initiatives aim at further improving the refugee status and include such proposals as the harmonising of the Greek procedures with the EU Agreement of 15 June 1990 (ratified by Law 1996\1991), the reunion between recognised refugees and their dependants, the inclusion of transit places (e.g. airports, ports of entry) as legitimate places for

asylum seeking, the treatment as recognised political refugees of those who have been granted temporary residence permits on humanitarian grounds, and the specifications of conditions for the temporary employment of asylum seekers. Recently the refugees, among them a large number of Kurds from Iraq and Turkey⁷, have been given the right to participate to professional training courses. The courses however have not been adapted to the needs and possibilities of the refugees (see Papantoniou/Frangoudis/Kalavanou 1996:141 ff., Petropoulos N. 1996:27 and Lianos Th. 1997:4).

Undocumented economic immigrants

The UEI consist mainly of those who come as tourists or students on the one hand and those entering illegally on the other⁸. As students usually come persons from the Third World who cannot obtain permission to leave their respective countries or to have a tourist visa from Greece. As tourists come the majority of immigrants from the former socialist countries except Albania. A Warsaw-Athens bus service with low fares runs regularly and many use it to come and go frequently. The network factor is now highly developed and accounts for practically all Polish immigration in Greece which is put at 80,000-100,000. According to the information supplied by them, it is usual for many of their compatriots to come to Greece for seasonal work and for others to come and stay in the country until they have reached certain short-term saving objectives. Unless they are involved in unlawful activities, they are seldom disturbed by the police.

Bus services also run with Romania, Ukraine and other former socialist countries, but the network connections of their nationals is not, as yet, so developed as that of the Poles. Many come through various employment agencies (illegal in Greece) which charge them heavy down payments before they start off and not infrequently a percentage of their wages. The services provided may also include a stable address for their mail, as well as rudimentary accommodation (old small flats for half a dozen persons, space in offices for use only during the night, etc.). Early in the evening during the week days and the whole day on Sundays immigrants frequent certain places, different for each nationality or group of countries. A well-known place frequented by thousands of immigrants from the former Soviet Union and other former socialist countries is around the church Agios Constantinos, in the centre of Athens.

The majority of the UEI however are cross-border migrants and are mainly Albanians for whom "Greece is gradually transforming into a preferred country of immigration, in spite of a lot of problems and contradictory situations" (Barjaba K., 1997:4). Proximity helps them to maintain structural connections with families and communities in Albania. Although some of them are Muslims, they are not characterised by any cultural distinctiveness. Like all those from the other former socialist countries, they have high standards of formal education, from 9 to 15 or more years. They must however walk long distances and to use some means of transport if they want to reach Athens or other regions in the south. If caught at the border they are usually deported. The journey of those in all nationalities who enter by crossing the river borders with Turkey or who land on a Greek coast is much more difficult, costly and

⁷ The new refugee camp in Agios Andreas hosts (autumn 1996) 1,600 Kurds. Others are hosted in the Lavrion camp, one of the oldest in Europe established soon after the end of World War II for refugees from the then socialist countries. Both camps are about 35 km. from Athens. The Kurds are now allowed to work.

⁸ On the kinds of illegal immigration, the policies of various countries in confronting it and similar issues see Cornelius/Martin/Hollifield (eds.) 1995

dangerous. Traffickers charge up to US \$ 4,000 per person and over two dozen migrants every year are drowned in the sea or the border rivers and lakes, or are killed in their attempt to cross mine-fields, etc. Hardly any week goes by without an attempt of a group of immigrants to enter illegally, found out by the border police. Many more attempts are frustrated, all causing a tremendous amount of human suffering.

By definition all undocumented economic immigrants are economically active and therefore they add to the labour force. According to estimates by the 8 immigrants who were interviewed, on arrival about one in three have a job found through their network connections in Greece (relatives, friends, compatriots, professional agents). The others are looking for one which they do find sooner or later. Each national group tend to offer their labour primarily on specific regional and job markets. A large number of the Poles for example work in the building trade, the Filipino women in domestic service, the Albanians in agriculture and animal husbandry. In addition to the UEI from other countries, the Albanians who work in the urban jobs face competition from the legal immigrant group of ethnic Greeks from Albania who have preferential treatment by the Greek employers because of their ethnicity and knowledge of the Greek language. (The other immigrant group of ethnic Greeks, the Pontians from the former Soviet Union, who settle in the country and are supported by the government in finding accommodation and jobs, hardly compete with the UEI on the job market).

Pressed by economic exigencies, the UEI are flexible in pay and kind of work, and are geographically mobile. Their productivity is usually below that of the Greeks in jobs requiring knowledge of the local language and some familiarity with the work and social environment (domestic service, sales work, communication with other people). Not infrequently however it is higher for various reasons: many work in trades for which they have received formal training and on which they have work experience; quite a few undertake jobs below their formal qualifications and work experience and therefore they can be very efficient if they want to; others have better work attitudes, are more systematic in their work, they work longer hours for fear they would lose their jobs or they accept shifting from one job to another, according to the work available. For example employees in hotels and catering are usually prepared to undertake building maintenance and repair work, gardening and even agricultural jobs during periods of low activity on the main job; musicians undertake jobs of ordinary employees in exchange of accommodation offered by the employer, etc. Employers and immigrants stressed this point in the interviews, while the trade union of musicians, the flower growers in the Peloponese and other farmers in various parts of the country stated it in their letters commenting on the regularisation procedures (see D.7, E.5 in the Appendix). Albanians are familiar with agricultural and animal husbandry jobs which are much on offer all over the country and in very many cases they can communicate in their own language with the locals because hundreds of thousands of Greeks still understand Albanian (their Christian ancestors came from Albania to Greece generations back). It should be emphasised once again that almost without exception immigrants from the former socialistic countries, including of course Albania, have at least a 9 year formal education, the majority have finished technical and professional schools and a large percentage are junior college and university graduates.

Working mainly in casual and seasonal jobs, most immigrants have high rates of labour turnover and many (although usually short) periods of unemployment. A recent EKA (Athens Labour Centre) survey in spring 1997 found that 26% of the UEI are unemployed or are employed in casual jobs and 65% work more than 10 hours a day (Press reports on April 18th 1997). The answers given in the interviews taken by the author of this study indicate that in casual jobs, like repair and maintenance work in construction undertaken privately by each immigrant, the turnover rate is about 5-8 times in a month. For those employed in agriculture it is much lower because seasonal jobs on the farm usually last for some days and even weeks, as indicated clearly by the letters sent to the Committee for the regularisation of foreigners. At the other extreme sales personnel, household helpers and employees of small sub-contracting firms have more stable jobs, although many miss some work days. Expressing the experiences of many others of their kind, the employers and the immigrants who were interviewed made also the point that immigrants become somewhat selective in jobs when they secure some accommodation and through market connections they have alternative job opportunities and a higher opportunity cost. This may be an indication that by reducing their labour turnover, regularisation would both raise the productivity of immigrant labour and also decrease its job and geographical mobility.

No assessment can be made about UEI unemployment rates because of the wide differences among the immigrants. Some have regular and therefore quasi “stable” jobs in domestic service, catering, sales shops, flower growing and animal husbandry. After they become familiar with the technicalities of a certain job their work becomes easier and more efficient. Therefore both they and their respective employers have an interest in maintaining the (informal) employment contract. Others in seasonal and casual jobs may be unemployed for as long as one quarter of their normal working time. Some immigrants learn quickly the rudiments of the Greek language and move on to self-employment and sub-contracting activities, often conflicting with their employment agents or former sub-contractor employers (information supplied by the regional Labour Inspectors).

3. Socio-economic Effects of Immigration

Benefits to producers and consumers

For two specific groups could it be said without much doubt that immigration is beneficial in the short-run because both reveal their preferences from the alternatives they have: the immigrants themselves because they migrate; and the users of their labour because they employ them instead of using local labour, substituting capital and technology for labour and/or producing less. Given that no major labour market or social conflicts have developed and that the trade unions have not reacted to their employment, it is reasonable to assume that large sections of the Greek population also share directly in the benefits of immigration or are aware of them. In all opinion polls over 70% of the respondents believe that the immigrants are useful for the economy. The two main benefits are the lower wages paid to the UEI and the fact that in very many cases they are now almost the only source of labour supply for producers and households, allowing also the qualified and more disciplined part of the Greek labour force to move up the professional ladder and occupy positions of higher responsibility. In addition the UEI make limited use of the inadequate social infrastructure, hardly tax its heavily subsidised part and consume primarily domestically produced goods. According to the aliens law, any kind of services including health services provided to undocumented foreigners

by public organisations is penalised, except in emergency cases. It is not however clear what an emergency case is⁹.

No systematic research has been made on a national scale for the wages paid to the UEI and for the real cost of their labour for the employers. For Northern Greece it has been estimated at 40% below that for the locals (Lianos/Katseli/Sarris 1995). Whatever the accuracy of that estimate and its relevance for other parts of the country, that average must conceal large differences. Certainly the difference in wages between the UEI and the locals should cover at least the risk premium of the employers for violating the law and also the social insurance contributions which are not paid and are among the highest in all OECD countries¹⁰. In manufacturing industry and many other trades, contributions amount to about 40.5% of the nominal wage, about equally shared between the employer and the employee. In many jobs which are characterised as unsanitary and dangerous and comprise nearly half of all wage and salary earners they amount to 51%. For the seasonally employed building workers contributions amount to over two thirds of the nominal wage. Beyond the difference due to the risk premium and the insurance contributions, the wages of the UEI vary considerably because the conditions of both the supply and demand for immigrant labour differ in each case. A shortage of seasonal or casual labour would push wages up, whereas abundant labour supply by needy immigrants in conditions of more regular work would result in very low wages. Information from interviews with employers, immigrants and Greek trade unionists indicates that undocumented immigrant labour costs the employer around half that of the locals for work of the same productivity. It is usually below half when many immigrants in need compete for few work places but over half when seasonal or casual demand for labour is intense and immigrants “share” with the employer the short run “benefit” for evading taxes and social insurance contributions. Naturally, intense demand for labour without immigrant labour would cause also wage increases for the locals. The likely result would then be for many marginal firms to close down and the demand for labour to be curtailed. In a longer perspective capital intensive processes could be introduced which would affect the amount of labour needed, the skill structure of employment, the product mix and probably the cost of production.

Like the few documented immigrants from the former Socialist countries and the Third World, the UEI work mostly in jobs not wanted by the locals. Even with considerable wage increases, adequate local labour could not be made available for certain seasonal or casual jobs, and for certain households with handicapped persons. For many other jobs prospective employers could not afford to pay the wages demanded by the Greeks because they would be priced out of the market. Being prepared to work in jobs not wanted by Greeks and in others for lower wages, the UEI enable many marginal firms to continue their operation so that the employment opportunities for Greeks are not reduced. Had the locals an interest in the jobs taken by the UEI, they would have reacted against their employment. In their letters to the Committee, OKE, the Ministry of Agriculture and many prefectures strongly favour the employment of immigrants, stating that without it output would be lower (see A.1, B.5, C3, C.4 and others in

⁹ To be sure, some employers and especially those who rely on business with the state, pay social contributions for the UEI they employ, charging them with the employee part of them. On the basis however of the aliens law, the social security organizations refuse to offer them services. To an extent this is covered through informal activities of some human rights NGOs and individuals mentioned in the next Chapter. In Athens the only available health services to migrants are those provided by the health centre of the municipality of Athens but few migrants address themselves to it (Papantoniou/Frangoudis/Kalavanou 1996:141).

¹⁰ Despite repeated reforms since the late 1980s, social insurance runs an accumulated deficit of over US \$ 6 billions.

the Appendix). The field research in Northern Greece has reached the conclusion that immigrant labour in that region (estimated at 12% of total employment and 30% of that of the wage and salary earners) contributes to about 1% addition to the GDP (Lianos/Katseli/Sarris 1995). Deporting a large part of the immigrants would have a much larger impact on the output because of the reverse multiplier effects on economic activity. A decrease for example in the food production because of the reduction of their work in agriculture would have adverse effects on the output and the employment in the food industry and on the exports of the agricultural produce, with further repercussions on the economic activity. In tourism during the seasonal peaks, in the building and road maintenance and repairs, and in domestic help the negative effects of a large reduction of foreign labour may be less obvious but perhaps more detrimental in the long run. If important work in them is not done or is diluted, it will affect productive capacity and overall productivity (in tourism), real capital depreciation (in construction) and female participation in the labour force (in domestic help). In general there are no indications that the UEI deprive locals of jobs they are prepared to take. On the contrary. In agriculture, animal husbandry and, indirectly, in the households, the indications are that immigrant employment contributes to maintain employment for or reduce the loss of jobs wanted by the Greeks.

Costs

The immigrants send home a sizeable amount of foreign exchange. For the Albanians alone it is put at US \$ 400m annually (Barjaba K., 1997:3, puts at US \$ 500m the emigrant remittances of his compatriots in Greece and Italy). This is a large sum for Greece, given the wide and chronic deficit in its external current accounts. The less tangible and somewhat questionable costs of immigration¹¹ include the slow-down in certain technological and socio-economic adjustments which would promote economic development in the long-run:

- a) The development of the socio-economic institutions and the proper change in the social attitudes for a larger labour force participation and increased labour mobility. Save for the seasonal peaks of activity, the skilled and the semi-skilled labour offered by the immigrants is not in short supply, and even during those peaks the needs of the economy could be to a large extent satisfied by factoring in more women, unemployed, casual workers and students during their vacations. This however would require significant changes in real price relatives and fringe benefits, as well as considerable administrative efficiency. It could also require changes in social attitudes, in which Greece differs substantially from the more developed countries. For example, many Greek students in need are highly reluctant to work in “non-office” jobs in Greece. Yet many of those who have studied abroad are very proud of their “employment record” in those jobs during their studies.

¹¹ They are questionable because in other countries which have faced similar situations for many decades, like for example the USA, this slow-down has not been observed. Many hypotheses can be made about socio-economic developments without the undocumented immigration in them.

- b) The substitution of capital and technology for labour. This substitution should take place where it is justified by existing factor availability and relative factor prices, and made possible by state administrative efficiency and the ability of small firms and agricultural households to reorganise their production¹².
- c) The proper changes in the product mix in agriculture and the better utilisation of the existing possibilities for a longer tourist period. In both agriculture and tourism the period of intense activity could be prolonged to create more regular jobs and reduce the need for the seasonal and the casual ones.
- d) Being to a large extent the result of the underground economy in the country, the UEI are also one of the factors that tend to increase it further, with all the economic, social and political consequences of this development.

The relationship between underground economy and undocumented immigrant employment is quite unsettled in all countries of Southern Europe. In Greece the UEI find jobs because the 800,000 farmer households, 80,000 small industry and handicraft firms in manufacturing and a similar number of small firms in the tertiary sector offer abundant opportunities for informal arrangements. In many respects however this displays or indicates a harmonious combination of interests between the several kinds of participants, e.g. a combination of legal and “illegal” work in agriculture with work in handicrafts, tourism, construction or transport. As indicated by the official admission of the Ministries and the prefectures that there is a sizeable undocumented employment in their areas of responsibility (see Appendix), the Greek state refrains from interfering. It has no special interest to disrupt the social peace that the co-existence of formal and informal types of work have so far brought about. Neither wants the state to diminish the competitive advantages for export oriented products, promoted by this “irregularity” (for similar cases in Portugal see Baganha M. 1997:25-48)¹³. For those informal arrangements however the Greeks have to pay relatively insignificant fines, if they are ever fined by the administration or are taken to the courts, whereas the foreigners are deported, not infrequently without having been paid for work done.

In many other respects the post war migration and the present situation in Greece are similar to those in Portugal, Spain and Italy. All three sent about 7m. emigrants to Western Europe and overseas in 1946-1973, followed by large repatriation and then by an influx of economic immigrants. The latter were mostly undocumented, coming primarily from the Third World, in Italy also from the former socialist countries. Despite the legal sanctions against their

¹² The indications about the degree of capital scarcity in the country are not clear. Despite considerable reductions in the last 2 years, interest rates offered by the banks for the savings accounts are about 9% annually. This is twice as high as in the developed countries which however have about half the inflation of Greece (current annual inflation rate in Greece 6.2%). On the other hand there are indications that capital scarcity is not so acute. Practically every farmer has his own tractor and the productive capacity for packing and processing the agricultural produce is much above existing needs. Aspiring to have their own productive capacity, many municipalities have established processing installations, although they could use the excess capacity of their next door neighbours

¹³ For Portugal Baganha M. (1997:41, 48) concludes that “as long as the state remains tolerant, inefficient and in some cases even an informal employer, the informal economy in Portugal will not become a residual economic form. It will remain an integral and sizable part of the national economy”. She further states that “on economic grounds the immigrants’ insertion will increasingly take place in the informal economy, especially in the building sector which is expected to grow at a higher rate.

employment and an open unemployment around 10% of the labour force in Portugal and Italy and about 20% in Spain, the undocumented immigrants do find jobs in the local markets.

It sounds paradoxical but the immigration of Albanians seems in many respects to constitute a “reasonable fit” for both countries. Albania relieves much of its heavy pressure of labour supply. At the same time it benefits from large foreign exchange inflows from emigrant remittances, while keeping its nationals literally at walking distance from home. Greece on the other hand benefits from immigrant labour, being also in a position to adjust its size to the existing economic and political requirements. Like that of the few immigrants employed with work permits, the level of the undocumented immigration in Greece is roughly adjusted to the existing at each time economic needs, through timely and area selected deportations. The Swiss have applied the same policy for many decades but on a legal basis. The Greek policy however to adjust labour supply to the changing needs by kind of work and geographical area through both tolerating the employment of UEI and keeping its size under control incurs a considerable administrative, political and moral cost. Greece has to police a very large number of UEI, to deport or expel about 250,000 of them every year and to tolerate a situation which leads to extensive abuses and blackmails from employers, house owners, traffickers and employment agents. The policy is also based on a latent but nevertheless official support for illegality with all its political implications and its adverse consequences for the spread of the underground economy.

Social

As early as in 1993, 52% of those responding to a Eurostat opinion-poll held the view that there were too many foreigners in their respective countries (see Weidenfeld/Hillenbrand 1994:17). Similar percentages came out from a more recent opinion poll conducted by EKA (Athens Labour Centre) in 1995. In fact many Greeks express fears about the large number of foreigners of different races or religious creeds and especially Muslims who are now in Greece. Even for the few long-staying foreigners who are integrated, they fear that integration works both ways and therefore it could influence morals in the country. The main slogan of the 1967-1974 dictatorship of the Colonels was “Greece belonging to Christian Greeks” and some political parties have never ceased to play around with similar slogans (see next Chapter).

In the last few years many Greeks tend to believe that a large percentage of the Albanian immigrants are criminals. They are also very reserved to other foreigners, although their fear is much less for the Bulgarians, the Ukrainians and the Russians, and even less for the Poles. It is true that criminality among the foreigners has increased in the last 2-3 years and many persons from various countries enter Greece legally or illegally with the purpose to get involved in unlawful activities. It is also true that some of the immigrants from the former socialist countries, mainly Albanians and Rumanians were in prison for violation of the penal law, before they entered Greece. The same more or less holds true for many other foreigners.

Yet the widely held view that criminality among the immigrants is high is not substantiated by available statistics or to say the least, it is difficult to ascertain. Ministry of Public Order data on violations of the law indicate that overall criminality among immigrants is much below that

of the locals¹⁴. Furthermore a large part of the crimes are committed by foreigners belonging to international gangs, religious organisations and extreme political movements, none of which has anything to do with economic immigration. In the last twenty years about a dozen “professionally committed” assassinations of persons high up in the social ladder have not been clarified by the police, while other crimes are committed by the “national mafias” of various countries. To give some recent examples, on April 20th 1997 a coast guard patrol vessel belonging to the port authorities of the island of Corfu off the Albanian coast was stolen by the Albanian Mafia. On April 26th 1997 a gun shooting with a Greek coast guard shot dead took place in another island near by. And on April 30th the main news item was the gun-shooting between Greek security forces and Albanian gangs of smugglers in various sea and land border areas in North Western Greece. The police reported that the Albanian Mafia send for sale to their associates in Greece (Greeks, Albanians, other foreigners) large quantities of drugs, as well as guns and ammunitions stolen from the Albanian army. Also to consider is that personal resistance against some unlawful activities (petty theft, quarrels etc.) is more difficult in the congested living conditions and the insecurity of work and life of the UEI. Barjaba K. (1997:5), an Albanian himself finds “an increasing aggressiveness of the Albanian immigrants especially in Greece, where they receive no more the hospitality they experienced before”.

In general, the perceptions of the public are more negative than the evaluations of the impact of foreign workers by social scientists, trade unions and the government. A survey of 500 households conducted in 1995 by the Athens Labour Centre (EKA) in the Attica region, where there is a large concentration of aliens revealed high percentages who believe that foreign workers are responsible for the high unemployment (72.5%), for the increase in the crime rate (55.5%) and for the decline in wages (53%). Except for the opinion that they undertake many jobs undesirable for the Greeks, the comments of the interviewees were mostly negative, whereas the positive ones were very few.

The results of another survey which studied the opinions of 1,000 15-29 year olds in the Thessaloniki region show continuity but also differences from the general household study in the Attica region. The overwhelming majority of the young people believe that the presence of the foreigners do constitute a causing factor for unemployment (92.5%) and to an increase in crime (87.7%), with the percentages higher in Thessaloniki than in Athens, possibly because of the greater proximity of the former to the northern borders. High percentages however believe that the foreigners are victims of circumstances (75.3%) and that they should get equal pay and social security (72.6%). The results suggest that the young people are more of an ambivalent attitude toward the foreigners (Pertopoulos N. 1996:18 and Barjaba K. 1997:5).

Two aspects of the feelings against the foreigners, experienced in all societies and referred also to the low income groups of the same ethnicity, should be mentioned: One is the devaluation of real estate in areas of increased settlement of foreigners; and the second that many working

¹⁴ In the years 1993, 1994 and 1995 respectively 333,000, 273,000 and 280,000 violations of the law have been registered, of which 5,600, 6,700 and 9,100 from foreigners. The foreigners, over 5% of the population, are responsible for only 1.5%-3.2% of the violations. Earlier data on court decisions showed that although crimes against property and fights committed by foreigners were more than proportional to their estimated number in the total population, homicide, rapes and other serious crimes were much fewer (Ministry of Public Order, I Kathimerini 11/6/1993 and Petrinioti X. 1993). More recent data however indicated an increase in the crime rate among the foreigners. In the US Department of State “Greece Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996”, it is stated that as of September 1996 there were 5,178 inmates in the Greek prisons, of whom approximately 2,000 were foreigners, half of them Albanians (US Dept. of State 1997:2.).

people at the lower side of the professional ladder consider immigrants as competitors on the market both for their jobs and for the level of their wages. This has come out clearly at the interviews with foreigners. Unable to document their real grievances, those who feel that their interests are harmed by the presence of the foreigners support views about criminality, unreliability of the foreigners, etc. Neither is the enmity directed only against foreigners, legal or undocumented. In Greece it is equally directed against the Pontians who have recently arrived from the former Soviet Union and the Roma, both Greek nationals. This conflict has assumed an endemic form in areas in the country, like those in Menidi and Ano Liosa in the North-Eastern suburbs of Athens. There gypsies and Pontians have occupied unused land and built low quality prefabricated houses, causing strong reactions from the other residents whose properties are thus devaluated. On March 31 1997 the Minister of Public Order stated that “the area in Ano Liosa is not accessible to the police. There are no proper houses and the police has not full knowledge, let alone control, of what happens there in terms of smuggling and many other activities”. Another indication that racism is not directed only against foreigners is that extreme rightist groups often attack pro-migrant groups on occasions such as protests in the streets. Usually however no violence against the foreigners themselves is exercised (for more on those issues see Papantoniou/Frangoudis/Kalavanou 1996).¹⁵

4. Good Practices against Racism and Policies to Imitate

Generalisations about the Greek attitudes towards the foreigners and other minorities in the country may lead to false conclusions. Examples of both favourable and negative opinions attitudes abound and it is common experience that these kinds of variables do not lend themselves easily to quantification. There are clear indications of an attitudinal and institutional racism in Greece. This is partly supported by certain state policies and to some extent by the orthodox church which, however, offers valuable social work to all sections of the population in need (see R. Fakiolas 1995 and US Department of State Report on Greece 1997). The examples of good practices given below should be seen in the framework of a much delayed interest shown by the Greek state and the NGOs in the issue of large undocumented immigration. On the other hand there has not been any serious manifestation of ethnic, religious or racial violence, despite the significant social and economic strains in the last years of the prolonged low rate of economic growth (about 1.2% annually since 1980), the high unemployment and the unprecedented large employment of foreigners in all productive sectors.

Although limited, they do exist and are implemented policies for cultural integration, welfare entitlements and services in the main cities and especially in the Athens area. These have been enhanced recently due to the impetus of the EU year against racism and include scores of activities by the about three dozen anti-racist organisations active in the country (gatherings, lectures, theatre performances, radio and television presentations, debates of various kinds, etc.). Most of them receive now official support and financial aid. For the increased awareness on the problems involved in discrimination and its political repercussions many factors have

¹⁵ In a recent broadcast (11\02\1997), the State Broadcasting Corporation ERT1 transmitted opinions of its listeners to the effect that “the majority of the new-comers from Albania and those who make efforts to enter the country plan to replace quickly through burglarizing and other unlawful activities the money lost by “investing” in the Pyramid System in Albania. On the other hand, in a television communication with viewers which lasted for 2 hours on 18/4/1997, only 2 out of 10 respondents believed that the number of foreigners in the country should be reduced sharply on grounds that they cause unemployment and are responsible for the increase in criminality. The remaining emphasized that their contacts with foreigners have been very satisfactory.

contributed: the attacks against immigrants in Germany (mainly Turkish but also Greeks and other nationalities), the memories brought back by those attacks, the fear that enmity and hatred against immigrants may gain momentum and have serious political repercussions, and above all perhaps the belief of the majority of the Greeks that foreigners offer useful labour. Most likely this is a belated effort by various organisations to improve their image among large sections of the population. Among those who take an active part in trying to influence the Committee for the regularisation of UEI are 16 Greek human rights organisations and 15 immigrant ones. Yet no legal status has been given to the latter, depriving them of donations and financial assistance from EU. The examples presented below purport to show some aspects of the pro-human rights official and non-government activity in the country but also how much is still left to be desired.

The President of the Republic and the Prime Minister participated in an official meeting in the old Parliament in Athens on February 26th 1997 to celebrate the beginning of the EU year against racism. The main speech was delivered by the Prime Minister who *inter alia* mentioned the fact that a close colleague of him, University Professor and former (after the September 1996 general elections) Deputy Minister of External Affairs was attacked by some because of his Jewish origin. A 30 member chorus of pupils from the Polish school in Athens sang Greek songs at that meeting. However, a large demonstration was organised by the human rights and similar groups outside the old Parliament, showing once more the distrust of those groups to the Greek state. On April 9th 1997 the Minister of Labour delivered a long speech at the two day Conference on "Immigrants in Greece. Regularisation-Racism-Xenophobia"¹⁶ emphasising that the Ministry is bent on the regularisation of all undocumented immigrants. He maintained that all foreigners in the country should have equal rights at work and in social insurance with those of the Greeks, and that foreigners who have been in the country for 7 or more years should have easy naturalisation procedures (these views are also included in the draft Presidential Decrees for Regularisation analysed below). Most of the political parties and the unions were represented in that Conference and all were in favour of the regularisation, accepting as fair and fully justified the many complaints expressed by the large number of the immigrant participants. The two representatives of the Journalists' Association in Athens apologised for the unfavourable picture given by some newspapers and broadcasting stations in the country. They argued that the journalists had nothing to do with it. The main cause for this unfavourable picture has been the fierce competition of the media to attract readers, listeners and viewers through exaggerating grossly any violation of the law by the immigrants.

A main feature in the last parliamentary elections of September 1996 was the change in the status of two small parties. In its pre-election campaign, the Coalition of the Left and Progress took a stand in favour of the foreigners and the about 120,000 Muslim minority in Thrace, Northern Greece. The Coalition polled about 50% more than in the previous elections. The reverse was the case with the rather conservative in national matters party of Political Spring which lost nearly half of its strength and did not succeed in electing any MP (it had 10 previously). It supported the view that no places in the broader public sector of the economy should be given to the Muslim minority members who declare that they have not a Greek conscience. However, in the two-day Conference on Refugees and Immigrants in 9-10 April 1997 mentioned above, the representative of the Political Spring was much in favour of the

¹⁶ The conference was organized by GCLG (General Confederation of Labour in Greece), the Committee for International Democratic Solidarity, the Greek Council for the Refugees, the Union of the Filipino Immigrants in Greece and the Pan-african Association in Greece, and was held at the GCGL offices in Athens

regularisation of all immigrants in the country and in them having equal rights with the Greeks at work and in social insurance.

At the lower levels, the institutional vacuum in granting undocumented immigrants legal status is partly filled in by assistance offered formally and informally by NGOs which are more active in the field of the refugees and especially in the main cities, and some only in Athens; by welfare organisations specialising in foreigners; and by the church, parish organisations and informal charity organisations or groups. In the border areas many immigrants find shelter in monasteries and church institutions. In Athens they receive meals by parishes. Anti-racist and other organisations supporting human rights, as well as certain professional groups like the bar association also offer various kinds of services. Many civil servants and employees in the public sector often go out of their way to help individual migrants. On a broader spectrum foreigners have managed to create contacts and develop networks, through which public officials and policemen are influenced in order to help them, particularly in the case of deportations and even to re-enter the country. Barjaba K. states that the attitude of the Greek state institutions, NGOs and other organisations toward the Albanians in Greece is positive in the case of humanitarian associations, progressive press, trade unions and several religious institutions. He also finds that Albanians are now also employed in their profession as engineers, musicians, general practitioners etc. He believes that “a sort of cultural and professional Albanian immigrant in Greece is going to be born in the near future” although he is aware that most in that category are of Greek origin. He further believes that the attitude toward Albanians is negative in the case of extremist and ultra-nationalistic associations, extremist mass-media and press, and different levels of religion which fully support xenophobia, especially Albano-phobia (Barjaba K. 1997:4, 7).

Social welfare and health services are offered by some employers to the UEI, although part of them is charged to the UEI in terms of longer working hours and increased work intensity. These services include provision of medical care through the private sector but also through the social insurance organisations. Having the consent of the medical personnel, they charge to the name of Greek beneficiaries immigrant visits to doctors and the medicines prescribed (for most diagnostic procedures and drugs the direct cost for the insured is from insignificant to nil). The services offered may also include help to enrol the children at schools, to care for needy persons and to intervene when major problems exist. These and similar attitudes constitute the continuation and revival of a paternalistic employer-employee relation, prevalent in Greece (as in other countries) until the early 1930s, when social security was limited¹⁷ (see in Papantoniou/Frangoudis/Kalavanou 1996, for a more detailed analysis on those issues).

In collaboration with the Secretariat for Adult Education (a state agency), the Athens Bar Association (15,444 members) issued a circular on 31/03/1997 stating that it undertakes to offer legal services free of charge to needy immigrants, gypsies and other minorities. They rely

¹⁷ The main Social Insurance Foundation (IKA) for the wage and salaried employees of the private sector was established in 1937 and the corresponding one for the farmers OGA (Organisation for Agricultural Insurance) in 1961. In some cases “this condescending philanthropic behavior of the employer towards the employee culminating in the case of Albanians in the offer to baptise them and change their name, is to be interpreted as a means of the indigenou to express their superiority and exercise moral domination over the foreigner, who is considered as a child needing guidance (le bon sauvage?). In order to achieve acceptance the foreigner has to deny his identity and his past and accept the new one offered to him. On the other way round the migrants may manipulate their benefactors. For example Albanians undergo multiple baptisms in order to acquire many protectors” (Papantoniou\Frangoulis\ Kalavanou 1996:143-4).

on their own resources (cash from their budget and free of charge services offered by some of their members), they have received Drs. 10m (about US \$ 37,000) from the Secretariat above and they are in search for additional support in their efforts. On March 20th the Bar Association decorated 2 MPs, 1 Jewish stockbroker and 2 writers for their anti-racist activities. The Trade Unions have also tried to be helpful. They have given immigrants an office in the Athens Labour Centre, they offer them moral support and assist them in other ways in cases of employer exploitation and racial discrimination.

In the current school year the children of both the legal and the undocumented migrant families were accepted for enrolment in the Greek schools, without however the introduction of any change in their curricula. Therefore foreign children must understand Greek in order to enrol. In Athens 211 boys and 172 girls have been enrolled in the two schools addressed to the returning Greek migrant children from English speaking countries. The Athens Municipality offers the possibility to all foreign children to enrol to the municipal kindergartens. Immigrants also benefit from approximately one dozen schools teaching in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish which function in Athens and Thessaloniki for the foreign children originating from Western counties (see Papantoniou/Frangoudis/Kalavanou 1996).

Foreigners are not sitting idle expecting others to help. They benefit considerably and in many cases they rely on the cohesion of the group, mutual assistance, informal networks and formal organisations. The Poles have created an important network of mutual assistance, have established various informal and (under the legal coverage of local participation) also formal small service firms in Greece. They are reputed by the locals for their reliability at work. They run a primary school and a kindergarten for their children in Athens and the Pope has sent over a priest to cater for their spiritual needs, even though dozens of churches function for the approximately 120,000 Catholics in the country. The Pan-African and the Filipino Associations also run a kindergarten each for their children and like the Poles they are active in protecting their members and other immigrants.

PART TWO

5. The Efforts for Regularisation

The 600,000 to 700,000 non-Greek nationals from about a hundred countries who live now in Greece pose the question of ‘who is a migrant?’ in a world divided into rich and poor, free and oppressed politically or religiously, and characterised by two opposing trends: One is the formation of large economic and political associations (EU, NAFTA, Commonwealth of Independent Countries, et al.). Between them trade tensions are likely to remain and occasionally to grow but within each association restrictions on the movement of people and goods are kept at a minimum. At the same time the rapid globalisation of economic activity both requires and facilitates an ever increasing geographical mobility of labour. Although many of those developments concern mainly the nationals of the economically advanced countries, the distinction between “guests” or “foreigners”, and “residents” or “nationals” tends to become irrelevant because foreigners and locals have almost the same rights in life and work.

The second trend is a revival of nationalism across Europe and of more tense ethnic, racial and religious fanaticism across the world. From Africa to Asia and from the former Socialist countries to Western Europe itself violent conflicts do not seem to have abated and it appears that civil and small wars are now more numerous than ever before in the 20th Century. These developments lead to a different treatment of people, foreigners and locals alike, according to their origin and beliefs, and cause great hardship to people not involved directly. In many cases they also generate large numbers of refugees and other migrants, or result in restrictions of economic migration which reduce its overall benefits for economic and cultural development. Persons with high professional qualifications, income or wealth hardly face any serious migration problems, whatever their nationality or creed, especially when they come from the developed countries. At the other extreme there are migrants from the less developed and the former socialist countries with no marketable skills, as well as asylum seekers and refugees from countries with restricted political, religious and racial freedoms. To this latter category belong the overwhelming majority of the UEI in Greece, a country which has the direct repercussions from the intense conflicts in the neighbouring countries in the north, as well as in the Near and the Middle East (R. Fakiolas 1997).

Back in the early 1990s, the Greek government tried to regularise some undocumented Albanian immigrants through the issue of about 30,000 seasonal work permits and to ask for the support of Albania in controlling the flow of its nationals to Greece. The same efforts were made with Turkey, through which most of the illegal entries to Greece from the Third World take place. Neither of them succeeded because no agreement was reached at the government level. Albania found the number of permits very small and the duration very short, while Turkey has never accepted the responsibility of the last port of entry. No doubt a great deal of those difficulties was due to the political problems between Greece and the other two countries. As the years went by Greece took unilateral measures to better guard its land and coast line frontiers but it had very limited success. Besides a considerable number enter legally as tourists or students and subsequently overstay.

An agreement containing 14 articles was made with Bulgaria on 15/12/1995 and ratified by the Greek Parliament (L. 2407, Government Gazette, Part A, No. 103, 4/06/1996). Nevertheless it has not been put into force because it has not as yet been approved by the Bulgarian Parliament¹⁸. An almost identical agreement was signed on May 17th 1996 between the governments of the Greek Republic and the Republic of Albania and submitted to the Greek Parliament on December 5th 1996 but it has not yet been ratified. The agreements are on “The seasonal employment of labour”, they are for 2 years and renewable tacitly for one more year each time. The difficulties encountered in this kind of agreements become obvious through a perusal on their main points. In particular each agreement stipulates that seasonal employment of nationals of the one country in the other should last no less than 3 months (2 months in the case of Albania) and no more than 6; within 10 days after the work and residence permit expires the employee must leave the host country and to meet this obligation the sending country must cooperate with the host one; no family members are covered by either agreement; social insurance and health issues will be dealt with separately in a new agreement.

As already mentioned, in summer 1996 a 15 member Committee was established and begun its regular weekly sessions in November of that year. Its purpose has been to formulate two Presidential Decrees for the regularisation of the undocumented immigrants, and to set the terms under which residence and work cards, valid for a fixed time and renewable could be issued (L. 2434/1996 on “Policy measures for employment and technical-professional training”)¹⁹. The first Decree will specify the procedures for the registration of the foreigners in Greece, the conditions under which a Temporary Residence Card for them would be issued and renewed, and the government agency, local government, etc. which will be authorised to register the foreigners and issue the cards. The second Decree will specify the conditions under which the holder of the Temporary Residence Card may obtain a Residence Card of Limited Duration, renew it and obtain a Card of Long Duration. It will also regulate issues pertaining to the legal employment of the foreigners in the private sector of the economy and in the primary economic sector, as well as the social security obligations and rights of the foreigners and their employers. Drafts of the two Decrees prepared by the Committee have been examined by OKE (Economic and Social Committee), the Ministries and other interested parties who have expressed their views in reports and letters sent to the Committee. On the basis of those viewpoints the Committee is revising the drafts and plans to have a new (and final) version of them in May-June 1997.

According to the draft, the aim of the first Decree is to specify the conditions for the legal residence of the foreigners in Greece, irrespective of the way they have entered the country and whether or not they are employed without work permits. Within 2 months the foreigner must appear to the nearest OAED department (Organisation for the Employment of the Labour Force, a state agency) to declare personal data, address, kind of specialisation, employer, willingness to work in Greece and likely work he/she intends to do. The foreigner must present

¹⁸ In that year a bilateral agreement between Greece and Albania provided for the transfer of Albanian inmates to the Albanian prisons. Only 23 of the approximately 1,000 prisoners were repatriated during the first 9 months of that year. The Greek government attributed low participation in the repatriation program to the unwillingness of the Albanians to consent to repatriation (US Dept. of State 1977:3).

¹⁹ The Committee is chaired by the General Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and has as members representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Public Order, National Defence and Merchant Marine, OAED, agricultural cooperatives, the trade unions, the farmers associations, the employers associations and the bar association. Representatives of the immigrants and the refugees participate in its sessions only as observers and on an advising capacity.

his/her identity card or passport, other relevant documents (birth certificate, education, family status, nationality, country of origin, previous employment) and three photos. If employed illegally he/she must declare the name of the employer. The 2 months time can be prolonged for 2 more. Upon registration, the foreigner will be provided with a Temporary Residence Card valid for 6 months, on the basis of which he/she can work legally. The card could be renewed for 3 more months by OAED, following an application by the foreigner and an approval by a committee established by a resolution of the Minister of Labour. OAED, GCLG and the local employers association will be represented in that committee. For renewing the temporary card account should be taken of the conditions prevailing in the local labour market and of the overall prospects for immigrant employment. The reasons for not renewing the card include conviction by the courts, violation of the rules concerning the issue of the card and illness dangerous for the public health. For national security or public order reasons the Minister of Defence or of Public Order could impose restrictions on the movements or the area of settlement of the immigrant. Those who do not register will be deported immediately, being also charged with the cost of deportation. Employers who employ immigrants must declare it within 2 months, having no obligation to the social insurance organisations for any likely previous employment. Immigrants with a Temporary Residence Card have the same rights with the Greeks in pay, social insurance and working conditions. Those who violate the terms of this Decree will be punished according to the aliens L.1975/1991.

The draft of the second Decree specifies that in order to be provided with a Residence Card of Limited Duration (3 months to 3 years, giving the right to leave Greece once a year and return within 2 months), the foreigner should present to the competent authority his/her Temporary Residence Card, as well as the passport or the identity card. In case he/she has neither, the foreigner should present an official certificate from his/her country that an application has been made for the issue of a passport or a certificate of his family situation verified and stamped by a Greek consulate in his/her country. The foreigner should also present a copy of the private work contract (if such a contract exists) and a social insurance card, or a certificate from the tax authorities showing that the income earned since the issue of the temporary card has been at least half of that earned by an unskilled worker. Those employed in agriculture should present receipts of contributions made to the Agricultural Insurance Fund (the draft Decree specifies that employment in the primary sector is allowed only on the basis of a contract for seasonal or regular work and on condition that the employer provides accommodation for the foreigner). Those dealing in trading activities should submit documents showing that they have registered with the competent authorities and have been insured. In addition the foreigner must present a health certificate from a Greek state hospital, certificates from both the country of origin and Greece that he/she has not been convicted by the courts for more than 1 year imprisonment and is not prosecuted. Convictions from political reasons are not taken into account. For the renewal of the Card of Limited Duration which could be for 1 to 2 years, there should be taken into account the kind of work done by the foreigner, the labour market conditions and the broader interests of the national economy. The foreigners should have equal rights and obligations with those of the Greeks in pay, conditions of work and social insurance. Proving residence in Greece for 7 years and the possession of adequate means to support him/herself, the foreigner can have a Card of Indefinite Duration and ask for permission to bring in family members. As in the case of the first Decree, punishment of those who violate the terms of this Decree should be according to the aliens L.1975/1991.

By reading those two drafts one sees how difficult it is for the Committee to deal with the complex issues of regularisation in conditions of a) lack of information and relevant experience in the country (Italy next door applies now for the fourth time an amnesty policy, see below), and b) a deep distrust of both the immigrants and many Greeks in the immigration policies of the state. The reactions to the two drafts described below show clearly those difficulties.

6. *Reactions to the Draft Decrees on Regularisation*

The following information about regularisation comes from 22 interviews with Greeks and 8 with immigrants in Greece and the minutes of the Committee sessions. The main source however are the 61+1 views (the Ministry of Merchant Marine has sent two letters), expressed in writing on the drafts of the two Presidential Decrees prepared by the Committee. The main points of the views expressed in letters and reports sent to the Committee are presented in the Appendix.

Responses to the drafts of the two Presidential Decrees

A.	OKE and OAED	2
B.	Government Ministries	6+1
C.	Prefectures	29
D.	Trade Unions	9
E.	Employers Associations	5
F.	Refugee Organisations	3
G.	Human Rights Groups, legal entities, firms and individuals	7
Total		61+1

The letters and reports sent to the Committee have been written independently by different government departments, state organisations, trade unions, employer associations, elected local governments etc. which face different problems of unemployment, labour needs and public law and order in their regions and areas of responsibility. It is natural therefore that the opinions expressed and the attitudes revealed cover a wide spectrum. Many are extreme in one or the other direction: Some demand very favourable policies for the immigrants (e.g. giving them voting rights, deporting them only on the basis of court decisions) which the government and many Greeks are not at this stage prepared to accept. Others maintain that all Albanians should go home and the like. The majority however are less extreme, although still very different. A brief account of the main points is presented below.

- 1) Explicitly or implicitly, the Ministry of Agriculture (B. 5), 26 of the 29 prefectures and 27 other respondents, in all 54 of the 62 responses, recognise the need for foreign labour, although most of them emphasise the labour shortages in the primary sector of the economy.
- 2) Wide differences of view exist among the government ministries. Unlike that of Agriculture, the four other Ministries (External Affairs, Defence, Merchant Marine and Public Order - B.1, B.2, B.4 and B.6) are very sceptical about the proposed regularisation. They believe and clearly express their fear that residence and work cards for a large number of UEI implies additional rights, such as social insurance benefits, family reunion educational facilities and places of prayer which are also an obligation stipulated by the Council of Europe. Once in the country with legal status, it will be from difficult to impossible to send immigrants home in 6 months or 1 year, and the difficulties will increase as the time of legal residence becomes longer. The possibility therefore exists for the immigrants to form national and religious groups and press for their claims from positions of increased strength.
- 3) According to the General Confederation of Labour in Greece (D.1) all immigrants who register should be regularised, have equal rights in pay, social insurance and conditions of work with those of the Greeks and be also allowed to bring in their family members. Those however who upon the expiration of the time specified by their respective cards fail to prove that they are employed should be deported immediately and strict controls should be imposed at the borders. In collaboration with the General Secretary of the GCLG, the Minister of Labour should stop for 6 months the issue of new cards, if they judge that the labour market and the overall economic conditions justify that policy measure. Employers who violate the employment laws should be punished severely.
- 4) The 15 page analysis by OKE (A.1) is the most detailed response in comments and suggestions for improvements. It is also the most critical of the draft Decrees, casting doubts on the possibility for them to be effective.
 - a) The immigrants come to Greece and find jobs because of the inadequate local supply of labour for casual, seasonal and regular unskilled jobs in agriculture and various services, as well as because structural weaknesses in the Greek economy encourage unregistered economic activity. The great extent of the black economy in the productive branches which face difficulties has increased the demand for cheap labour and has been a pole of attraction for immigrant flows. There is a need for remedial measures because all others and especially the aliens L.1975/1991 have not had the expected results. For the first time the legal approach to the immigrant issue emphasises the importance of the economic and industrial relations aspects of immigration.
 - b) The targets however of the draft Decrees are not clear: Registration for legalisation? And for a limited or for an indefinite time? And to what extent? How about the new immigrants? And what about the position of the dependent family members, an issue which is not specified?

- c) The time suggested for the immigrants to register (2 months with the possibility for two more) is very limited, especially if it is not known what will come after the registration. For the immigrants the temporary residence card provided for by the draft of the first Decree has meaning only when it is known what will come next. The registration cannot be an aim by itself. Whereas the immigrant is asked to register and declare in which economic sector he/she intends to work, the temporary card could be renewed for 3 more months on conditions which are not clear. They will depend on the local labour market situation and be specified by the second Decree. The law provides for two Presidential Decrees on an issue which should be faced in a unified manner. Therefore the two Decrees should be applied simultaneously.
- d) The drafts do not regulate immigrant employment on the land although this is perhaps the largest part of immigrant employment. On the contrary, they exclude it from the equality between Greeks and foreigners in subjects of social insurance and labour law.
- e) Apart from the discouragement of the immigrants to register, the procedures specified for a renewal which could be as short as 3 months would tax heavily the limited resources of OAED (In their report (A.2), OAED state that they will consult a list of the Ministry of Public Order of those who do not qualify to have a residence card. They also ask the Ministry to up-date that list regularly. It is obvious then that the administrative part of the regularisation procedures leaves much to be desired).

On the basis of the above and many more remarks made in their report, the OKE suggest that: special provisions should be made for depended family members, the possibility should be examined of establishing a special government agency to help OAED in handling the regularisation procedures, the cards should not be employer specific because the majority of the immigrants are employed in casual and seasonal jobs. A permanent card should be issued for those with a stable employer and should be based on a corresponding employment contract for seasonal or regular work. A certain number of work days proved by the respective social insurance contributions should form the basis of cards of an annual duration. Finally cards for immigrants sub-contracting with many employers or undertaking jobs on their own account should be provided on the basis of minimum earnings proved by officially approved receipts.

- 5) Hardly any mention is made in the draft Decrees about the demand of many households for “reasonably” priced labour to meet urgent family needs (baby, old age and invalid care, house maintenance and repairs) and of the equally urgent labour needs in hotels and catering during the seasonal peaks.
- 6) Although the letters and reports express collective or majority views (with only 3 exceptions), some indicate that those who formulated them are not very well aware of the administrative difficulties encountered in applying the measures they suggest. For example in about 8 out of 10 letters it is suggested that stricter border controls should be applied and heavier penalties, including imprisonment, should be imposed on those employing immigrants illegally. With the present state of administrative efficiency and

popular attitudes towards the immigrants in Greece, the effect of those measures will be limited in the short run and only slightly more effective in the years to come, in view of the fact that in very many cases of seasonal and casual jobs Greek labour is not available at any wage level. These measures should certainly be used but only as complementary to effective incentives and other disincentives.

7. The Likely Effects of Regularisation

Legality and administrative efficiency

In introducing his much more “liberal” bill on immigration to the Parliament (end of February 1997), the Italian Prime Minister stated that the issues of migration are among the most delicate and complex faced by the EU. The experiences of Italy, Spain and Portugal which have started applying “amnesty” policies since the mid-1980s are certainly indicative of the great complexity and difficulty which such programs encounter. Spain’s first regularisation programme in 1986 was met with great suspicion and yielded only 23,000 out of an estimated 100,000 illegal aliens; Italy in the same year achieved 105,000 in a programme restricted to full-time employees - the remaining number was estimated at 204,000. A later Spanish programme of 1991 was more successful with 109,000 out of an estimated 300,000. Italy’s 1991 programme yielded 216,000 in a very generous inclusion of the unemployed, self-employed and students as well as employees covered by the previous initiative. Yet this still left an estimated 600,000 illegals. The results of a 1995 programme are not known at the time of writing. Portugal has had two regularisations - in 1992 and 1996 - with 39,000 regularised out of an estimated 80,000 in 1992 (Baldwin-Edwards, 1995; Baldwin-Edwards, 1997). The first programme proved difficult because applicants did not understand exactly the situation, with few people turned down but about half the 70,000 applications incorrectly filled in. Interestingly, some people with Portuguese nationality even applied whereas others who thought they were Portuguese (but were not) failed to apply (EC, RIMET 1993).

In Greece it is not known which amendments the Committee will effect on the drafts of the two Presidential Decrees for the regularisation of the UEI, following the comments made by the interested parties. It is also difficult to say when the Decrees would be signed and what their effects would be. Given the suspicion attached to the Greek state, the uncertainty surrounding the proposed legislation and the very limited duration of the residence permits (6 months as compared with 1 year in all other countries) the rate of registration for Greece’s first programme of regularisation is not likely to be very high. Neither is there any guarantee that regularisation would not attract more undocumented immigrants, in the hope that they too would be legalised at a later stage. The extended land borders and the long coast line of the country make it difficult to restrict significantly illegal flows, while the large tourist traffic does not allow effective controls of the overstayers. The expectations therefore that the Decrees would succeed in regularising a large part of the UEI, or that undocumented immigrant employment would be curtailed substantially may prove very optimistic. From the indications so far, the experience of other South European countries and the opinions of some better informed Greeks it appears that no more than half of the UEI would register. Of the 22 Greeks interviewed by the author of this case study only 5 believed that over half of the UEI would be convinced or allowed by their employers to come to the authorities, whereas 8 put the likely

percentage of registration around one third. Of the 8 immigrant interviewees, 4 stated that they found their employers and those of other immigrants they know of very reluctant to cooperate.

It is obvious therefore that some of the present problems of the undocumented immigration would remain and that additional efforts would be necessary to cope with them. The situation however would be quite different after regularisation. Whatever their effects on the registration of the UEI, the Presidential Decrees would provide the state with an impetus to increase its administrative efficiency in controlling and regulating immigration, and at the same time it would allow employers to continue to benefit from the more flexible immigrant labour, without breaking the law. The immigrants as well would have their alternative, by being able to have legal employment in the country. Therefore, all factors being taken into account, the indications are that from the administrative point of view regularisation would be a valuable experience for Greece and that after it the problems of the undocumented immigration would be less acute. Practically all persons interviewed were of the opinion that the efforts for regularisation are necessary, while 3 immigrants said that their employers would be happy to stop violating the aliens law. As shown below, arrangements are possible through which both employers and immigrants would be satisfied, without causing reactions from the local trade unions. The main prerequisite for those arrangements would be for locals in all walks of life to understand that the regularisation of the UEI would have all round beneficial effects; and for immigrants to improve their image in the host community, playing their own part in increasing further tolerance and understanding in the Greek society for foreigners.

Economic effects

It is reasonable to assume that regularisation and permission or tolerance to bring in family members would create the tendency to increase both the wages of the immigrants and the overall dependency ratio of the (Greek and foreign) population in the country through family reunions. An important economic effect of family reunions would be to change the character of immigration into a family one, increasing the demand for the inadequate and heavily subsidised social infrastructure and reducing to a degree the spatial mobility of immigrants. The social and political effects of the family re-unions which are analysed in the following Section would be equally important.

With regularisation the wages of the immigrants would tend to rise to the level of the minimum wage specified by the national and branch collective agreements or to the respective market rates, in the many cases that these are above the minimum wages. The overall cost of immigrant labour for the employer would increase further because of the social insurance contributions but from this cost the “risk premium” for violating the law should be subtracted. Although legality may induce some employers to hire some immigrants for more skilled jobs, the overall employment effect for the immigrants of the higher wage costs would be negative. Assuming that immigrant labour supply would not change substantially after regularisation through additional flows or the deportation of those who do not register, some or many immigrants would be unemployed and prepared, as some unemployed Greeks do, to work for less than the market rate. In this situation many employers would press for wages lower than those prevailing in the market but at least equal to those fixed by the collective agreements, thus preventing the “wage drift”. Others would press (illegally) for wages below the specified minima.

At this point it should be repeated that despite high unemployment and large economic immigration, a large amount of very useful work for the country is not done. This is either because the state budget and the households cannot afford to pay for it, or because producers in the private sector find that, by paying the wages demanded by the Greeks their production would be priced out of the market. This paradox applies to many jobs covering a wide range: safety on the roads, forest protection, nursing and catering work in the medical and the welfare institutions, picking fruit, bringing the harvest in, breeding animals, working in handicrafts, baby, old age and invalid care at home, looking after young pupils outside the class rooms, various kinds of cleaning. To the extent that the Greeks are not prepared to undertake those jobs at the wage fixed by the collective agreements, it would be beneficial for the country to employ legally immigrants at that wage. Being in need to have an income and also to pay for social insurance contributions in order to renew their residence and work cards, the regularised immigrants would intensify their work efforts, be more efficient and compensate to a large degree for the higher cost of their labour for the employers. Security, increasing time of residence in the country and learning the local language would raise labour productivity further. In this way employers may have both legality in employment and low, in comparison to the corresponding labour productivity, wage costs. Therefore immigrants, employers and the national economy would benefit without causing serious trade union reactions, since immigrants would continue to work mainly on jobs not wanted by the locals.

Also to consider is the fact that the artificially narrow wage differential between unskilled and skilled labour maintained by trade union pressures and by active welfare policies in the country since the early 1980s has been broadened by the lower wages paid to the UEI. Consequently Greece would have to reduce exports and increase sharply its imports of goods produced with low-skill labour, if immigration is substantially reduced or immigrants are paid the market rates for the locals which are above the legal minimum wages. The trade unions are entitled to and it is also their duty to insist that at least the legal wages, determined every year with their consent, are paid to all working people. It is not however in their responsibility to support wage claims above that minimum, even when the interactions between supply and demand for labour determine higher rates in the market.

The flexibility above with respect of the immigrant labour is in accordance with the policy measures applied by the Greek government (March-April 1997) for all working people. The policy aims at introducing more flexibility in the labour market and includes the reduction of the regular employment in the civil service and the public corporations and the curtailment of various fringe benefits which are not based on increased efficiency. It also includes the reduction of overtime and the increase of part-time work, the re-employment on a part-time basis of some employees made redundant in firms which went bankrupt and the introduction of the Saturday work when there is demand for it.

If there is competition for few work places, many legalised immigrants would be prepared to work for less than the wage specified by the collective agreements and many employers would certainly avail themselves of that opportunity. This however would be illegal and it is likely to create conflicts between Greek and foreign workers if the former consider that they are undercut in their pay and replaced from their jobs. It would certainly be in the interests of the trade unions to prevent such a situation in close collaboration with the government, as it was done in the receiving countries of Northern Europe during the early post war period. In this case the government would have the active support of the trade unions to fight against illegal employment which is at the root of the large underground economic activity.

In the medium run there may be some negative side effects of regularisation. For example immigrants may lose some of their job flexibility, become less mobile geographically or be employed in more skilled jobs and compete with the locals in the labour market. By that time however the problem of the large amount of undocumented immigrant labour will not be so acute and the foundations for a multinational and multi-racial labour force would have been laid, in a more tolerant society. This issue is further discussed below.

Socio-political effects

As already mentioned, regularisation would lead to tolerance and the Presidential Decrees may even specify permission to the immigrants to bring in family members. Attempts in France and Germany to limit family reunification have been stuck down by administrative and constitutional courts as a violation of international agreements - in effect making it impossible to suspend legal immigration. In addition, the courts have consistently affirmed a network of rights of resident immigrants, and have limited the ability of governments to prevent asylum seekers from entering the country (Baldwin-Edwards/Schain 1994:8-10). The reservations therefore expressed by the Ministries of External Affairs, Defence and Public Order to the regularisation (see B.1, B. 2 and B.6 in the Appendix) may be due to the fear that foreigners of other races and religious creeds and especially Muslims would be difficult to integrate on the basis of the "traditional" society approach applied by Greece. Thinking more in political terms, those Ministries may realise that regularisation would soon turn into a process similar to that occurring now in Western Europe and which they are not fully prepared to accept. Through long residence facilitated by law and through family reunions on humanitarian and EU legal grounds, resident labour would become resident communities and in case the law also facilitates naturalisation and citizenship, ethnic communities. Soon, the "problem" could no longer be seen solely in terms of labour migration. Immigrants would turn from objects of policy to political actors who would have an impact on the structure and on the relations among the political institutions and would challenge the long-accepted model of national identity in Greece. The same fears are also expressed by many other European countries in which the majority of the immigrants are documented but the number of naturalisations is persistently kept very low (below 1.5 % of the population in most of them, OECD SOPEMI 1993, 1994, 1995 and Petriniotis X. 1993).

It is likely and even certain that regularisation in Greece would have the same as in other EU countries results on family re-unions and on the structure of the political institutions. The country however would be able to add its own experience in regularisation to that of other countries in order to combine border and internal controls for the immigrants, with the proper incentives of the local employers to use documented labour and strong disincentives to avoid employing immigrants without work permits. Although not of a decisive importance, a part of the "pull" factor for immigration in Greece could be under the control of the policy makers, who would limit incoming flows by creating obstacles to migrate, including *inter alia* tighter border controls, increased visa requirements, greater use of deportations, redefining the criteria for asylum and coordination of national policies. The question however arises as to the extent that the Greek government is prepared to follow such policies, if there is almost a consensus among their economic advisors that immigration contributes to output increases, the most important single factor in a society in which economic needs to satisfy are both intense and rapidly expanding. As analysed in the previous Section, the regularisation of a large part of the UEI through systematic policy measures will test the ability of the country to utilise immigrant

labour by combining legal employment and satisfactory wages for the immigrants, with wage flexible and geographically mobile labour for the employers, in jobs not wanted by the Greeks. The way to reach that target is long and it will not be without obstacles. It appears however that the efforts to reach that target through regularisation are by far the best alternative for the country.

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APPENDIX

RESPONSES TO THE DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL DECREES

Below are the main points made in 62 letters and reports sent up to the end of March 1997 to the Committee charged with the Preparation of 2 Presidential Decrees for the Regularisation of the Undocumented Immigrants (L2434/1996). They are classified into the categories A-G (OKE and OAED, Ministries, prefectures, trade unions, employer associations, refugee organisations, and corporations and individuals) and they are numbered by category. The views expressed are those of the respective government departments, prefectures, etc. For trade unions and associations they are summaries of resolutions taken in extraordinary meetings.

A. *OKE and OAED*

1) Economic and Social Committee (OKE)

(A 15 page analysis of the draft Decrees with detailed comments and suggestions for improvements).

In addition to the limited employment opportunities and the low wages in their respective countries, the immigrants come to Greece and find jobs because of the obviously inadequate local supply of labour for casual, seasonal or regular unskilled jobs in agriculture and various services, as well as because structural weaknesses in the Greek economy encourage unregistered economic activity. The black economy which has assumed large dimensions in the productive branches which face difficulties has caused a large increase of the demand for cheap labour and has been a pole of attraction for immigrant flows. The draft Degree recognises the need for remedial measures because all others and especially the aliens law 1975/1991 have not had the expected results. For the first time the legal approach to the immigrant issue emphasises the importance of its economic and industrial relations aspects. However the draft of the first Degree has many weaknesses which casts doubts on the possibility for it to be effective. In particular its targets are not clear: Registration for legalisation? And for a limited or for an indefinite time? And to what extent? How about the new immigrants? The time suggested for the immigrants to register (2 months with the possibility of two more) is very limited, especially if it is not known what will come after the registration. Regarding the immigrants the provisional residence card provided for by the draft of the first Degree has meaning only when what comes next is specified. The registration cannot be an aim by itself. Therefore the first and the second Decree should be applied simultaneously. In addition more internal consistency of the first Degree should be attained. Whereas the immigrant is asked to register and declare in which economic sector he/she intends to work, the provisional card could be renewed for three more months on conditions which are not clear. They will depend on the local labour market situation. Furthermore the law provides for two Presidential Decrees on an issue which, because of its high economic and social importance should be faced in a unified manner. These and other weaknesses cast doubts on the possibility for the draft Degree to be effective. Apart from the discouragement of the immigrant to register, the procedures specified would tax heavily the limited resources of OAED with the three-month registration procedures. Therefore the provisional card should be for 6 months or more. Most important perhaps is that the draft Degree does not regulate

immigrant employment on the land, although this is perhaps the largest part of their total employment. On the contrary, it excludes them from the equality between Greeks and foreigners in subjects of social insurance and labour law. And it does not specify what would be the position with the depended family members.

On the basis of the above and many more remarks made in their report, OKE suggest that those who can prove that they are in the country for 7 or more years will be issued with a permanent residence and work card; special provisions should be made for depended family members; the possibility of establishing a special legal entity to help AOED in handling the regularisation procedures should be examined; the cards should not be employer specific because the majority of the immigrants are employed in casual and seasonal jobs; a permanent card should be issued and be based on an employment contract for those with a stable employer and on seasonal employment contracts for those employed in seasonal work; a certain number of work days proved by the respective social insurance contributions should form the basis of cards for an annual duration; cards for immigrants sub-contracting with many employers or undertaking jobs on their own account should be issued on the basis of minimum earnings proved by officially approved receipts.

2) Organisation for the Employment of the Labour Force (OAED) (31/12/1997)

(A 6 page document with suggestions concerning registration procedures, application forms and the type of the provisional residence card).

The foreigner fills in the application form and handles it over to OAED along with his Passport and two Photos. OAED consults a list by the Ministry of Public Order (MPO) with names of the foreigners who do not qualify for a provisional card. If the immigrant applies to another authority for renewal and for further renewals he/she intends to apply to that authority, the procedures will start all over again from the beginning and the new authority will ask the previous one to cancel the name of the immigrant from its register. Records from every authority will be transmitted to a central office, so that duplications are avoided. The MPO should update regularly the list for the foreigners who do not qualify for a card or its renewal.

B. Government Ministries

1) Ministry of External Affairs (9/9/1996)

Entry and residence controls of the foreigners leave much to be desired. Therefore a re-examination of the existing situation, as well as better coordination of the ministerial activity on this issue are in order. To this effect more information should be collected about the legal and illegal immigrants, as well as the labour requirements in the country. The EU member states have voted in favour of restrictions in the entry of nationals from third countries for depended employment or independent professional activities. We must however respect human rights in accordance with our traditions and cultural values, as well as our obligations to the Council of Europe.

- a) Massive regularisation of the illegal foreigners would be improper at this stage. Neither would it be in favour of the immigrants: i) for lack of coordination among the various competent authorities and ii) because, due to the ineffective border controls, new waves

of immigrants may take place, following the announcement of the intended regularisation. These difficulties may lead to a *fait accompli* and establish interests with unforeseeable economic and social consequences for the national security. Furthermore, the preferential treatment of some national groups would mean discrimination against others with repercussions on our external relations.

- b) Regularisation implies the direct recognition of rights, on the basis of the existing laws (naturalisation after a period of time, family re-union, transfer of pension rights, educational facilities, places for worship and religious activities, etc.). Granting by necessity rights to the legal immigrants, there is a case that national and religious groups may be formed. c) Temporary regularisation would lead to similar problems after the validity of the cards expires. Besides, to change an article of the basic Aliens Law 1975\1991, a new law is necessary. A Presidential Decree would not suffice.

The Ministry is open to suggestions for the regularisation of certain categories of immigrants, on the basis of the existing at each time conditions.

2) Defence Ministry (23/12/1996)

All foreigners who present themselves to the authorities should be issued with a card by the Ministry of Public Order, in cooperation with OAED and with Special Service Departments which dispose of the necessary organisation and electronic equipment. Regularisation however may lead to the creation of national and religious groups. The Defence Ministry should have direct information about the cards issued so that it takes the proper measures in cases of emergency. The possibility should be considered to ask for EU aid, in order to finance employment programs for the aliens in the country.

3) Ministry of National Economy (1/8/1996)

It is necessary to have as soon as possible estimates from the competent authorities of the number of the immigrants who are necessary in jobs avoided by the Greeks, broken down by productive branch, skill level, prefecture and season of the year. In this way we could take the necessary measures.

4) Ministry of Merchant Marine (21/2/1997)

The following term should be added to the Decree: “The rules and regulations for the legal employment of the immigrants should not apply to the foreign seamen serving on ships under the Greek flag”.

In a previous letter of July 25th 1996 the Ministry states that “no card should be issued to the undocumented immigrants because this may induce a new wave of immigration in the hope of regularisation. In Attica and other areas with many undocumented immigrants camps should be established to host them until they are deported or granted legal residence. This would relieve police and the port authorities from keeping and guarding them. It would also serve as a disincentive for other immigrants entering the country”.

5) Ministry of Agriculture (8/8/1996)

Labour supply on the land is not satisfactory and acute labour shortages appear, especially during the seasonal peaks of activity, hindering timely harvesting etc. The main reasons are the preference of many younger persons to seek urban employment and the low work effectiveness of the working farmers, due to their ageing. The continuous reduction of farm labour causes wage increases and higher production costs which make agricultural output not competitive both within EU and in the world markets. The employment of immigrants has offered an “economic” relieve to the farms, by stabilising in the last three years daily wages at Drs. 4,000-5,000 (US \$ 16-20) and it has also contributed to match the increased seasonal demand with adequate labour supply. (The long letter of the Ministry mentions immigrant participation during the seasonal peaks in the production of ten export products which cannot be mechanised). We must therefore carry on with the employment of immigrant labour. At the same time however we must introduce certain modifications in the present system in order to avoid the adverse social effects which, if they continue at their current pace could have more serious consequences. Taking it for granted that economic immigrants will be with us for a long time, we suggest that an “immigrant register” is established, so that those employed without work permits are deported and even have their return to the country prohibited.

On the other hand Greek workers avoid intensively to work as shepherds, as well as to be employed in pig sties, cow herds and poultry farms, all of which are regular jobs, because of the harsh working conditions in them. Consequently a large number of foreign workers is employed throughout the year, enabling the normal functioning of the corresponding firms. Given however that the majority of those immigrants are undocumented, a serious problem is created by police interference. We suggest therefore that upon employer requests, the competent departments of the Ministry of Agriculture grant work permits to all those immigrants. In addition to solving the employment problem, the regularisation would provide useful statistical data.

6) Greek Police (29/7/1996)

In formulating the Presidential Decree various factors should be taken into consideration: The bilateral agreements signed with some sending countries, the need to resort to foreign labour in the cases available labour supply by Greeks and other EU nationals is not adequate (provided for by Art. 21 of the Aliens’ Law 1975\1991) and the restrictions put by EU for the entry and employment of nationals of third countries. No card should be issued for immigrants who are considered by the Police dangerous for law and order in the country and in case it has been issued it should be invalidated.

C. Prefectures

Administratively, Greece is divided into 52 Prefectures (Nomos). The Prefects (Nomarchs) and their counsellors are elected in the municipal elections held every four years.

1) Athens (12/11/1996)

The prefecture of Athens issues permits for foreigners in the broader Attica area so that a large part of all permits in the country are issued by it. The card for the regularisation of the immigrants should be for 1 year and be renewed after an examination of the labour market situation in order to restrict the unemployment of the Greeks. The employers of the immigrants should be responsible for the social security contributions of their employees. Strict penalties should be imposed for those who violate the Aliens' Law.

2) Eastern Attica (9/12/1996)

A residence card should be issued by the Organisation for the Employment of the Labour Force (OAED) and be valid for 3 months. Having that card the immigrant should present to the prefecture a statement of his/her employer with all data concerning the conditions of employment (specialisation, working hours, wage level). On the basis of this statement an employer specific card should be issued for 3 months. For its renewal the immigrant should have a job.

3) Biotia, bordering Attica on the north (15/11/1996)

Undocumented immigrants working in jobs not wanted by the Greeks should be regularised. These include the highly seasonal ones, as well as jobs those with unsanitary and/or harsh working conditions. In some of them (shepherds, in cow herds, fish farming), mainly Indians and Pakistanis are employed. For other jobs not wanted by the Greeks, the needs should be registered and workers from Albania, Bulgaria and Romania should be invited to be employed in them. For those in cow herds, pig sties, and poultry farms, legal residence in Greece should be extended to over 7 years. Workers from Asia, Central America and Africa should be invited to work as shepherds, because in that particular job there is no interest from Greeks or nationals of other countries. A serious problem is created by immigrants (mainly females) who profess to be artists but are employed elsewhere. More strict rules should be imposed to the Greeks who violate the aliens law.

4) Chalkis, Euboia, about 100 km N.E. of Athens (29/11/1996)

Work permits should be issued for the employment of foreigners in cow herds, poultry and fish farms, flower growing and green houses. As regards the agricultural firms, the stipulation of the aliens law for firms to employ 5 Greeks in order to qualify for the employment of aliens should be abolished. These firms face urgent seasonal needs for labour for which there is no adequate supply of Greek labour. Regularisation is necessary for the Albanian immigrants employed in jobs avoided by the Greeks. The prefecture has a large fishing fleet and the relevant employers complain that their legally employed foreign fishermen pay large sums to IKA for social security contributions, without having the corresponding benefits, because of the short time they remain in the country (the fishing period lasts for 9 months). Immigrants are paid three times over the wage for the unskilled workers specified by the National Collective Agreements. The penalties for employers violating the laws should become more strict.

5) Drama, bordering Bulgaria (18/12/1996)

With the exception of cases related to bilateral agreements, tourism, marriage and ethnic Greeks, all foreign economic immigrants, legal and illegal, should be given proper notice to leave the country. Stricter penalties should be imposed to the Greeks who violate the laws concerning the legal employment of aliens. In this way the work of the Greeks would be protected.

6) Evros, bordering Turkey (22/11/1996)

A provisional card for 1 month should be issued, and could be renewed for 6 more months on condition that all obligations to the Social Security Organisations have been met. A systematic examination of the labour market situation should take place, so that cards are issued only for jobs for which the Greeks are not interested.

7) Kavala, Thrace, N.E. Greece (26/11/1996)

Some formalities for the invitation of a foreigner should be abolished (sending a document to the invited employee for signature, knowledge of the Greek language for renewal after five years, strict security conditions imposed by KYA (State Security Service). Priority should be given to the regularisation of the foreign spouses of Greek nationals.

8) Kilkis, bordering the Republic of Macedonia of the former Yugoslavia (10/1/1997)

Within 48 hours after arrival, the foreigner should register by the police or the Social Security Foundation (IKA) and be offered medical insurance. The card should be for 3 months and be renewed on condition that the immigrant has been employed for a certain minimum of days and has paid the legal social security contributions. Prison sentences should be introduced for locals employing immigrants without a work permit or card. Citizens who host or rent accommodation to foreigners should declare them to the police.

9) Pella, Macedonia (20/1/1997)

Immigrants in the area are mainly Albanians (the latter are put at 15,000 to 20,000) who work without permits in agriculture and animal husbandry. Their number varies by the season. It is higher during summer, when the picking of peaches, a principal product of the area, takes place. In 1995 7,091 Albanians were arrested and deported and in the 11 first months of 1996 5,268 (plus 206 from other former Socialist countries and 1 from Turkey). For the illegal employment of foreigners 17 fines were imposed in 1995 and 11 in 1996. The legally employed foreigners were 41 (they came from 11 countries, none from Albania, 25 were spouses of Greek Nationals) and in the 11 months of 1996, 43 (3 from Albania, 31 spouses of Greek nationals). In order to facilitate employment in agricultural jobs, immigrants from countries like Albania and of the former Yugoslavia should be invited by prospective employers, as specified by the Aliens L. 1795\1991. Their number should be determined at the beginning of each year by the local authorities and the work permits should be for a period under one year.

10) Kozani, Northern Greece (19/11/1996)

For seasonal work in picking fruit and in the tobacco fields, the issue of cards or permits should become simpler in order to facilitate the work of the farmers-employers. For regular jobs in both agriculture and animal husbandry the cards or permits should be for two years. The local authorities should have the right to issue work permits in cases of increased labour needs, as for example for building in earthquake stricken areas.

11) Thesprotia, bordering Albania (14/11/1996)

Cards should be issued by the Labour Inspectorates or the OAED only to the ethnic Greeks with foreign passports and be for one year. The prerequisites for the issue should be a written statement by the employer that he/she is prepared to employ the foreigner (of Greek ethnicity) for a certain time period and for a specific job, as well as a medical examination of the immigrant. An additional prerequisite should be that housing is provided for the immigrant. The persons leaving with him should be registered as well. Heavy penalties should be imposed to the employers who violate the Aliens' Law.

12) Tricala, Northern Thessaly (15/11/1996)

Work cards should be issued for seasonal labour needs in agriculture and for urban jobs faced by inadequate labour supply of the Greeks. Their duration should vary to match existing needs.

13) Carditsa, Thessali (18/11/1996)

Illegal employment, especially of the Albanians, has assumed large dimensions at the expense of law and order, the Social Security Organisations and the whole economic and social life in the country. Therefore all undocumented immigrants should be deported. Border controls, especially with Albania, should become more effective because many deportees come back. Being agricultural, our region needs some immigrants for seasonal agricultural jobs. Therefore a small number of foreigners should come on the basis of bilateral agreements and following an invitation by their employers. Work permits should be for 3 months.

14) Magnesia, Thessali (27/11/1996)

Cards should be issued for a minimum duration of 6 months. This would contribute to avoid unnecessary return home and re-entry of the immigrants, save the authorities from unnecessary work for checking documents etc., and help the employers in their business planning.

15) Euvritania, Central Greece (25/11/1996)

(About the same as that from Carditsa prefecture above). Illegal employment has assumed large dimensions, at the expense of the Social Security Organisations and the whole economic and social life in the country. Therefore all undocumented immigrants should be deported. Border controls, especially in the borders with Albania should be more effective because many deportees return to the country. Only a small number of foreigners should be employed,

following an invitation by employers. For our region, where unemployment is high, only a few foreigners are needed, mainly for seasonal agricultural work and for animal husbandry jobs. Work permits should be of a short duration.

Peloponese

16) Korinth, 110 km west of Athens (25/11/1996)

Immigrants should be employed only in jobs on the land and in the food packing of fresh agricultural produce. The regularisation in other economic sectors should be against the interests of the Greek working people. The cards or work permits should be only for 3-6 months and be for a certain area. Special arrangements are necessary for those who have been in the country for a long time and their children attend Greek schools.

17) Arkadia (3/2/1997)

Cards should be issued primarily to married couples. Card holders should register by the police and live in proper houses.

18) Argolis (19/11/1996)

Economic immigrants should have only a short stay in Greece and be insured even if they work on the land. Penalties should increase for the Greeks who violate the Aliens' Law.

19) Ilia (22/11/1996)

Cards should be issued for unskilled work in agricultural jobs, mainly seasonal, for which Greek labour is not adequately supplied. The issue of the cards should take place after systematic examination of the labour market conditions by OAED.

20) Lakonia (21/11/1996)

The cards should be issued only for work on the land, be seasonal and for a duration of 3-6 months (for example during the peak periods of work on the olive trees and the citrus fruit). The issue of cards for other jobs would be against the interests of the Greek working people. The issue of the cards should be in close cooperation with the local government which in each region would register the needs for labour, after they examine carefully the local market conditions. If there is over supply of labour by the immigrants, priority should be given to the refugees and those who face more urgent family needs.

21) Messinia (25/11/1996)

Cards for 6 months should be issued only for those immigrants for whom there is work on the land. Given the high and still increasing unemployment in the region, immigrants should not work in other jobs.

Islands

22) Corfu, Ionian sea, across the Albanian coast (27/11/1996)

The police are the most competent authority to collect data concerning undocumented immigrants, either tourist overstayers or illegal entrants. Therefore they must supply the prefecture with the required information about the immigrants. The prefecture should be responsible for the issue of the cards, in cooperation with the Local Labour Centre. Heavy penalties should be imposed on employers violating the Aliens' Law. The card should be for 6 months and be renewed for 2 years. The Local Labour Inspectorate however holds the view that the cards will not solve the problem either of the labour market or of the immigrants themselves. Pressed for employment in order to earn an income, immigrants could not reject any kind of employment. In contrast, the cards would "legalise" employers and at the same time leave them free to dismiss their immigrant employees whenever they want.

23) Lefkada, Ionian sea (29/11/1996)

The cards should be issued in closed cooperation with the local authorities which know better the labour market conditions. (A letter by the local Union of the Building Workers has been attached -see below, Responses by the Trade Unions).

24) Zakynthos, Ionian sea (25/11/1996)

Our views should have been asked before the establishment of the Committee. We are sceptical about the effectiveness of a 14 member Committee in which so many different legal entities are represented. The procedures referred to the Art 16 N.2434/1996 (the one establishing the Committee) will not solve the acute problem of the immigrants; it will make it more complex because the Authorities situated at the Centre do not know as well as the local ones the needs and the shortages in the local labour markets. Therefore local governments should be authorised to issue work cards and permits, in cooperation with the Local Labour Centre, the OAED and the police, after examining each time the existing labour needs. In any case, only a limited number of cards and permits must be issued.

25) Samos, across the Turkish coast (19/11/1996)

Faced with 2,000 seasonally unemployed, it would be unacceptable for immigrants to work in jobs outside agriculture. A small number should be employed for seasonal work on the land, such as on the olive trees, on the basis of cards with a duration of up to 3 months.

26) Iraclion, Crete (14/11/1996)

Being primarily agricultural with a developed animal husbandry as well, our region is in need of farm labour, especially for picking olives and grapes. Therefore foreigner employment should be only for those jobs and on a seasonal basis, in particular for the months August-September and November-February. Adequate legal employment of immigrants would contribute to a more systematic use of the agricultural land and in cost reductions.

27) Chania, Crete (4/12/1996)

a) Labour shortages requiring immigrant labour appear frequently in heavy manual jobs, especially in remote areas (construction and wood work, various kinds of unskilled labour). b) The employment of immigrants is also necessary in certain agricultural jobs (picking olives and grapes, work in green houses), as well as in animal husbandry and fishing. c) Cards for a duration of up to 6 months should be issued by the competent Aliens Department and renewed for 2 more months (About the same as in Rethimnon and Lassithi below)

28) Rethymnon, Crete (21/11/1996)

Foreigners should be employed only seasonally in picking olives and citrus fruit, in animal husbandry and in fishing, between October-March. They should also be employed in the leather goods industries and in jobs with harsh working conditions. In our region there is much tourism. Immigrants however should not be allowed to work in hotels and in catering, because there is adequate labour supply from Greeks and nationals of other EE countries. Cards and permits should be employer and job specific.

29) Lassithi, Crete (18/11/1996)

Foreigners should work only in agricultural jobs for which there are labour shortages (bringing in the harvest, picking olives and grapes, vegetable growing) and for the months April-September every year. Foreigners contribute to a more systematic use of agricultural land and in cost reductions.

D. Trade Unions

1) General Confederation of Labour in Greece (22/7/1996)

Subject: Regularisation of Immigrants in the Labour Market (a 7 page document with the names of the President and the General Secretary at the end. After giving some statistical data and estimates about the number of the immigrants, they make several proposals. The main points are summarised below).

Immediate registration of all refugees and other legal and illegal immigrants and issue of residence and work permits for all. The legalisation should include all depended family members. Equal rights with the Greeks at work, and social insurance. Efforts to attract economic immigrants to the trade unions. Deportation of those who have not registered within the set time period and also of those who cannot prove that they are employed after their cards expire. Heavy penalties for the employers who violate the employment laws. Effective border controls. Reforms in the system of the Labour Inspectorates. The Minister should maintain the right to stop for 6 months, with the consent of the General of the Labour Confederation, the issue of work permits, if the labour market and overall conditions justify that particular measure.

2) Confederation of Democratic Agrarian Associations of Greece (25/2/97)

The large employment of immigrant labour in agriculture has the following characteristics: a) It is exclusively seasonal. Immigrants are employed for a few weeks in each area in heavy agricultural seasonal jobs b) Both the employment size and the employed persons change by area and season. The time of peak work activity also changes, depending on weather conditions, while the personal characteristics of the immigrants themselves are important (how much each one of them can stand the difficult working conditions). c) The immigrants are mainly employed by small family farms which do not dispose of adequate labour for heavy jobs.

Application of the measures suggested by Art. 5 of the draft Presidential Decree (“the employment of foreigners is permitted only on the basis of a seasonal employment contract and on condition that the immigrant has a residence card”) would cause an average rise of the prices of the farm products by 15%. It would also compel the small farmer to apply costly bureaucratic procedures by employing experts (lawyers, tax experts, etc.) and move on that cost to the product prices. It would probably expose them as well to blackmails by the immigrants for wage increases.

Therefore only firms which employ immigrants for 6 months or more should have to apply the registration procedures. The seasonally employed immigrants on the land should be excluded from them. Instead employers should submit to the authorities all personal data of the employed immigrants, including certificates and the like. A period of 6 months should be provided for the application of any new measures, in order for the farmers to be acquainted with the unprecedented new obligations imposed on them.

3) General Confederation of Greek Agrarian Associations (26/7/1996)

(A three page letter).

Up until recently the Greek agriculture was largely based on the work supplied to farms by the farmers themselves and their families, mostly owners of the cultivated land. Wage labour was used by the very few large farms and by the smaller ones during the seasonal peaks of activity. The rapid urbanisation and the gradual development of the market orientation of crops which went on parallel with the monoculture, i.e. producing only that crop which brought higher earnings, have increased dependence on wage labour. It is not an exaggeration to be said that Greek agriculture has faced successfully the present agricultural crisis thanks to the employment of foreign labour. To continue functioning, Greek agriculture needs to have an adequate supply of that labour. Bureaucratic procedures to invite foreigners and specifications that those foreigners should possess skills in inadequate supply in Greece should not be included in the proposed Decree.

4) National Confederation of Greek Trade (26/7/1996)

It is necessary to estimate the number of immigrants which the economy can absorb, and to register the economic activities in which their employment would be most useful. In this way it would be possible for them to compliment with their labour economic activities and not to act in an antagonistic manner.

5) General Confederation of Handicraft and Traders of Greece (29/7/1996)

Foreigners contribute to the development of Greece through their employment in those sectors of the economy and especially in the primary one, which face shortages of Greek labour. Given the high unemployment in the country, foreigners should be employed only in those sectors where their employment would not have negative effects on that of the Greeks. If the employers are in need of labour, authorities should not refrain from issuing the required work permits. If for whatever reason the need is not satisfied, the employer could employ foreigners without sanctions. In wages and social security contributions the foreign workers should have the same rights and obligations with the Greek ones, and be included in the educational projects for technical and professional training.

6) Federation of Workers and Employees in the Leather Industries (24/2/1997)

(Resolution of the February 20th 1997 assembly)

The immigrants in Greece, who count many thousands and many also work in our own trade, are subjects of hard exploitation. The employers pay them low wages and leave their employees without any social insurance. Yet the Presidential Decree establishes conditions, prerequisites and deadlines which make impossible the regularisation of the great majority of the immigrants.

All immigrants in the country should be regularised without delay and in ways which safeguard their dignity and the right to work. Equal rights with those of the Greeks should be granted to all immigrants, who must be allowed also to bring in their families. Heavy penalties should be imposed for illegal employment. We, in the trade unions, will take all proper measures to supply the necessary information to the immigrants and receive them in our unions.

7) Panhellenic Musical Association (7/2/1997)

The foreign musicians (excluding soloists) cause unemployment among Greek musicians. Unemployment is now 40%. Imagine what would happen after regularisation. Foreigners are preferred by employers because they accept lower pay and also because they undertake additional jobs (as porters, cleaners, etc.) in exchange of boarding offered to them. Musicians should be excluded from regularisation. In the cases the Association has indications that immigrant musicians do not cause unemployment among the Greek ones, foreigners would be welcomed to work.

8) Union of the Building Workers in Lefkada, Ionian sea (20/11/1996)

The working foreigners should have the same rights with the Greeks and the other European workers in wages, the legal working time and the working conditions.

9) Albanians (no further details, since they have entered illegally- 24/2/1997)

(Resolution taken at the February 20th 1997 meeting).

The Greek state behaves in the same manner as the Albanian communists in the past and the President Sali Berissa at present. We must have equal rights with the Greeks in employment, education and the opportunities to pursue our cultural activities. The Decree sets conditions which make regularisation impossible.

E. Employers Associations

1) General Confederation of Handicrafts and Trade in Greece (21/2/1997)

(A 3 page letter sent to OKE)

It is well known that the immigrants contribute to the development of the country through their employment in those sectors, and especially in the primary one, in which there are labour shortages or the Greeks do not supply their labour for that kind of work. We do not object to using immigrant labour in those jobs. On the contrary, it is absolutely necessary. On account however of the high unemployment in the country which has reached 11% of the labour force and is still growing, immigrants should be employed only in sectors which need labour . so that it is not at the expense of the employment of the Greeks. Employers who have urgent needs for labour should be able to hire immigrants without the sanctions provided for by the existing laws. Equal rights with those of the Greeks should be established for the immigrants who should also participate in technical and professional training courses organised by OAED.

2) Federation of Industries in Northern Greece (20/2/1997)

(A 3 page letter sent to the Chairman of OKE)

We approve of the effort to regularise undocumented immigrants, giving them and their families a chance to earn a living in Greece without breaking the law, and at the same time helping our agriculture and animal husbandry. We suggest however that the time for registration increases two-fold with the possibility to increase further following a common resolution by the Ministries of Interior, Public Order and National Defence. A large number of immigrants work on the land employed by individual farmers. They are not insured with IKA (Foundation for Social Insurance). Neither could they be insured with OGA (Organisation for Agricultural Insurance) because this is only for the farmers. The DD should regulate this issue in ways which will not be at the expense of the farmers, taking also into account that Greek labour for agricultural work is in very short supply. Also to consider is the fact that the low wages paid to the immigrants contribute to pick fruit, bring in the harvest and carry out various other very useful for our national economy jobs. It is reminded that some years ago many of those jobs were not performed because of labour shortages. The same applies to many jobs in animal husbandry.

3) Association of Greek Fish Farmers (Thessaloniki, 22/1/1997).

Our trade has developed rapidly in the last 10 years and has become one of the most dynamic productive branches. It employs now 2,000 persons and has an annual output worth Drs. 3-4 billion (US \$ about 12m-16m), of which 85% is exported. Our main problem is to find adequate labour to employ. The illegal Albanians offer valuable labour on which our production depends and allow to carry on production at competitive export prices. Any likely deportation of them would ruin our firms because very few Greeks want to do the hard work in fish farming.

4) Federation of Greek Mariculture (18/12/1996)

Our trade represents 200 firms employing in regular jobs 3,000 persons, of whom 600 foreigners. It exports annually output worth Drs. 25 billion (US \$ 100m).

We propose that immigrants are employed when Greeks are not available. All immigrants employed in the county should be regularised. Special measures should be taken for social insurance, considering also the need to keep costs at competitive levels.

5) Flower Producers in Trizinia, Peloponese (9/12/1995)

Attica, Crete and Trizinia are the three most important flower growing regions in the county, disposing of significant open air cultures and green houses. Because of inadequate labour supply by the Greeks many immigrants and especially Indians are employed. The Indians work for many years and have specialised in those jobs. We could say that they are indispensable. Without their work, flower production could not continue. Unlike the Albanians who are trouble makers, drink too much and work on a casual basis, the Indians cause no problem whatever to the police or to the community.

F. Refugee Organisations

1) High Commissioner for Refugees. Branch office for Greece (20/12/1996)

Thanks for the permission granted to our representative to attend the Committee meetings. It is hoped that the Presidential Decree will enable the asylum seekers, the temporary residents on human grounds and those of a refugee status to have legal employment, as provided for by the L.1975/1991. It is suggested that the Decree includes the following stipulation "For the renewal of the Card, consideration is given to the inability of return to the country of origin for objective or humanitarian reasons. Also to consider are the serious personal consequences of a deportation, which could be out of proportion with the reasons for it".

2) Greek council for refugees (27/9/1996)

(A covering letter with 7 pages of suggestions for the improvement of the position of the refugees and asylum seekers in the country).

3) Foundation for Social Work (6/12/1996)

Established in 1967, the Foundation works in close cooperation with the High Commission for the Refugees in Greece. The basic Aliens Law 1975\1991 should be modified in some of its articles, in favour of the refugees and asylum seekers

G. *Regal entities, human rights groups, firms, individuals*

1) National Labour Institute (13/11/1996)

(4 pages of amendments to the draft Presidential Decree, mainly of an administrative and legal character)

2) An individual from Crete, member of a right wing party (7/3/1997).

The mass illegal immigration and the efforts to turn the society into a multicultural one would cause disasters, the same as in other countries. Those who emigrate should be helped to return and remain in their respective lands.

3) A retired Colonel, participant in the National Resistance during the foreign occupation (20/11/1996).

The government's initiatives are against the interests of the nation and the working people (they are "anti-Greek" and "anti-labour"). The place of both the Albanians and of the ethnic Greeks holding Albanian passports is in Albania.

4) An individual, handwritten letter signed, no address (29/1/1997)

Have you solved the unemployment problem of the Greeks and you want now to solve that of the Albanians? If Greece is in need of labour why don't you bring Germans, French and Belgians to reciprocate for the hospitality offered by them to the Greeks some years back? They are industrious and they would also bring along their civilisation. What could the Albanians offer to Greece?

5) Institute for the promotion of professional interests, Thessaloniki (10/1/1997)

The regulation should be postponed in order for the country to formulate first an immigration policy.

6) Letter in favour of 50 undocumented Filipinos in the island of Ko, Aegean sea (5/10/1996)

(Addressed to the Ministry of Public Order with a copy to the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance)

A couple of years ago a garment company in the island invited 50 Filipinos under a 5 year contract to work for Drs. 5,960 daily. Having bankrupted it moved to Bulgaria, leaving without employment the Filipinos who now receive unemployment benefits. Soon however their residence and work permits expire. Could it be possible to renew them enabling the immigrants to remain and work legally in the country? They have been in Greece for 5 years with an excellent employment record and they have never given any cause for complain to the island community. (signed by 51 inhabitants. The appeal is supported by a letter of the Metal Engineering Department of the University of Patras).

7) Letter by a lawyer, active member of a Human Rights group (8/1/1997)

The draft Decree uses the term “illegal immigration” which is insulting for the undocumented immigrants. It asks for registration but offers no guarantee to the immigrants. It does not include students and family members. The time given for registration (2 months) should increase to 6. Establishment of court procedures and guaranties for repealing the validity of a card (many more modifications are suggested).

8) Coordination Committee of Immigrant and Anti-Racist Organisations (21/11/1996)

(It represents 15 immigrant organisations and 16 Greek ones which support immigrants, human rights and anti-racist movements. Its 3 page letter addresses separately the Ministries of Labour, Public Order, Health and Welfare, Justice, Internal Affairs and Education, with specific claims to each one of them. A few of the most interesting points are mentioned below).

Work permits should be not employer specific, they should be granted to all holders of residence permits, as well as to women and depended family members. Employment without a work permit should not be penalised. Equal rights with Greeks at work, social security, annual leaves, etc. No deportation or prolonged arrest without a court decision. The right of the immigrants to participate in municipal elections, easier and quicker procedures for granting the Greek citizenship, more respect by the Aliens Departments to the immigrants. Free access of the immigrants to the schools at all levels, introduction of special courses for immigrant children and elimination from the school-books of all racist texts.

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

The following persons have been interviewed. For all the capacity is given, for some the names as well.

GREEKS (22)

High ranking state officials (3): Ministries of Labour and Social Insurance, External Affairs and Public Order (one from each ministry).

Trade Unions (3): J. Manolis (Deputy Chairman of GCLG), Mrs. Z. Sokou (Member of the Executive Committee of GCLG), Ch. Papamargaris (former Chairman of the Federation of the Bank Employees, at present Chairman of the International Democratic Solidarity, Greek Branch).

Employers Associations (2): Ant. Vagias (Lawyer at the Confederation of the Greek Industries, Member of the Committee for the regularisation of the foreigners), J. Delotis (Hotel Manager, member of the Executive Committee, Association of the Hotel Owners).

Academics (4): G. Glytsos, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre of Planning and Economic Research, doing research on Migration; Ant. Kontis, Associate professor at the University of Athens, doing research on Migration; Ant. Papantoniou, Head of the Reintegration Centre for Returning Migrants, Athens and Thessaloniki; G. Siampos (Demographer, Reader at the Economic University, Athens).

Hellenic Institute of Solidarity and Cooperation with Developing Countries (1): A. Xatjimikes, Head of the institute.

Businessmen employing immigrants (3): One architect who undertakes building and major repair work all over the country, one shipowner and manager of a shipping company in Piraeus and one shopkeeper in Athens.

Farmers employing immigrants in Attica and in the neighbouring prefecture of Biotia, Central Greece (3): One employs foreigners during the seasonal peaks. The other two (one has green-houses and the other breeds animals) employ them on a regular basis. The first two speak Arvanitika (an Albanian dialect). All three have insisted that without the undocumented immigrants they and many other farmers in the region could not keep their farms in operation.

Households employing immigrants (3): A divorced working woman with two small children; an elderly couple with a handicapped person in the family; a middle class family (husband, house wife, a twenty year old female student) who have employed immigrants in various capacities (for domestic work, gardening and house maintenance and repairs).

FOREIGNERS (8)

Immigrant Associations (6): Representatives from the associations of the Filipinos (perhaps the most active in the Country), the Poles (the Polish Club is also very active, especially in administrative and cultural issues), the Africans (the Pan-African Union), the Kurds, the Erythreans and the Albanians. The first five have been documented and their residence in Greece ranges between 3 and 6 years. The Albanian is an illegal entrant. On and off he has been in Greece for 3 years.

Two individuals: A Bulgarian woman with tertiary education in the computer science who works as a waitress in a hotel. She has been for 2 years in Greece but she has visited Bulgaria twice to see her two young children. A trained nurse from Ukraine who came to Greece through a Greek-Russian employment agency five months ago and does domestic work. She also has two young children in Ukraine. Both are overstaying tourists.

All foreigners who were interviewed can communicate in English (4 of them speak the language quite well) and in Greek. The Bulgarian made intensive efforts to learn Greek and recently she had a substantial raise in her wage. The Ukrainian is learning the language fast, in order to use it as a qualification for a better job.