Regularising undocumented immigrants in Greece: procedures and effects.

by Rossetos Fakiolos

Abstract This article examines the administrative procedures and results of the two legalisations in Greece in 1998 and 2001. Although the massive inflow of foreign immigrants had started in the late 1980s, the number of foreigners granted residence and work permits was restricted, causing a large stock of undocumented immigrants and creating the mentality that these economic immigrants are a new source of low-cost unregistered labour. Following the two legalisations, an increasing number of foreigners have progressed towards integration. Little has changed, however, in the other main aspects of immigration to Greece: not all undocumented immigrants have applied for legalisation; for various reasons many do not renew their green card when it expires; new of previously expelled migrants flock in, attracted by the demand for their flexible labour and facilitated by the large underground economy; around 230,000 expulsions continue to take place annually; and there is no indication as to how things are likely to develop after the new extension given all permits until 30 June 2003. Under the present conditions of high unemployment, increasing economic uncertainty and political tension in the country, a third legalisation within a short time-frame may cause serious social reactions. The main challenge to migration policy now is how to effectively control migrant inflows and prevent legal immigrants, who also help to redress the serious demographic imbalances in Greece, from lapsing into illegality.

KEYWORDS: UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS; REGULARISATION; GREECE; ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF IMMIGRATION; MIGRATION POLICY

Introduction

Due to higher mortality than fertility rates and to shortages in both low-skilled and skill-specific labour, EU countries need the immigration of non-EU nationals at productive ages (OECD 2001a, 2002). However, high living standards, developed social security systems and free political institutions are attractive to more immigrants than host-country governments believe are needed or acceptable without causing social unrest. The EU currently has about 12 million residents who are third-country nationals (SOPEMI 2001: 86). There is also a consensus that immigration alone will not resolve EU demographic and labour-market problems. Whereas no democratic country can control outflows, not all incoming migrants have the characteristics required by a particular host country. Factors such as the amount of pressure on the labour market, the type of shortages involved (absolute or relative, short- or long-term), the key features of those shortages (sectors and/or skill-levels affected) and their determinants (skills mismatch, inadequate labour supply, persistent labour-market rigidities) vary markedly across countries (OECD 2002: 3). The restrictions on immigration applied by host countries in their efforts to match inflow to existing needs cause large-scale irregular immigration, of which over a dozen types have been identified (Ghosh 1998: 1-6). The estimated number of irregular immigrants by receiving country varies from a few hundred thousand to over one million—in the United States about five million and in the Russia Federation about three million (Ghosh 1998: 9-16)—indicating that the phenomenon is not confined to any migration regime in particular.

Irregular immigration is at the centre of political debate in EU countries, firstly because of the magnitude of these population flows; and secondly because the phenomenon has persisted, despite the clearly expressed determination of the receiving countries to prevent it (OECD 2000: 53). Notwithstanding strix external and internal controls applied at high administrative and moral cost, new economic migrants pour in, reflecting primarily the existing labour-marke needs. With their wage and job flexibility, the immigrants offer useful and often indispensable productive work. References to their positive contribution to the host economies abound in the literature. (1)

Given that migrants belong neither to their country of origin nor to the country of destination, and that illegal immigration persists in periods of economic decline or slow-down and in countries that maintain very different immigration policies, it is illusory to think that it can be eliminated solely by state intervention and improved cooperation between sending and receiving countries (Tapinos 2000: 38). The European Commission (2000a: 3) notes that 'the is a growing recognition that the “zero” migration policies of the past 30 years are no longer appropriate'. On the one hand, large numbers of third-country nationals have entered the Union in recent years and these migratory pressures are continuing, with an accompanying increase in illegal immigration, smuggling and trafficking. On the other hand, as a result of growing shortages of labour at both skilled and unskilled levels, a number of member-states have already begun to actively recruit third-country nationals from outside the Union (European Commission 2000a: 3; OECD 2001a: 3).

Notwithstanding the very real contribution of undocumented immigration to the economy, especially in avoiding complex and time-consuming administrati procedures in marginal economic activities and among farmers and artisans employing immigrants for casual and seasonal work, it has several distorting effects that on balance outweigh the positive ones. Being to a large extent the result of the shadow economy, it only serves to expand it further. The shadow economy is put at between 12 and 15 per cent of the total economy in most Northern European countries; twice as much in Italy and Greece. As a rule, its size is 230,000 expulsions associated with state efficiency in each country (International Monetary Fund 1999). Tolerating of undocumented immigration diminishes the legitimacy of the state and creates unfair competition for the legally employed, punishing them and rewarding the irregulars and their employers, who come to rely increasingly on sources of cheap, flexible and exploitable labour (Collinson 1993: 14). This mentality will take much effort and time to change while immigration flows themselves generate certain patterns of demand which, in turn, stimulate further immigration.

In addition to the heavy administrative and security costs of external and internal control, the unregistered employment of immigrants deprives social security funds and the state budget of large amounts of revenue. In many countries, especially those of Southern Europe, it may also delay institutional or administrative adjustment to their new role as countries of immigration. Undocumented immigrants are often the subjects of exploitation and blackmail, while their expulsion causes much human suffering. Prolonged illegal status also exposes host countries to criticism that they benefit from irregular migration without offering the immigrants adequate opportunities for economic and social integration. The fight against irregular immigration is therefore crucial to restoring production and labour systems that are compatible with fair competition and respect for workers' rights (OECD 2000: 65).

In addition to helping sending countries to create greater employment opportunities and develop their democratic Institutions in order to reduce the need for migration, (2) host countries have two alternatives when faced with illegal immigration:

* To expel as many undocumented immigrants as they can and to try to restrict illegal flows. Parallel to this, host countries might facilitate only the migration of those whose skills correspond to current labour-market needs. Policies focusing primarily on specific immigrant characteristics would best serve host-country interests, but these may be seen as a form of discrimination (SOPEMI 2001: 52). They also ignore the fact that many immigrants have been on the run for a long time and have no other place in which to settle. As well as being a breach of the law, irregular migration is also a manifestation of individual liberty. It is also the case that policies of expulsion are likely to have limited success because other immigrants would rush in as (false) tourists, students or short-term legal workers, and then overstay. And to the extent that the policies do succeed, they would disrupt production because of irregular immigrants' contribution to it. Regularised migrants invited to replace them are likely not to be as 'flexible' as those expelled. Greece, for example, has expelled about 2.3 million immigrants since 1990 (some several times), Italy has repeatedly used its warships to prevent migrants arriving by boat from disembarking on its shores and there is an ongoing discussion in many countries, including Britain, about the possibility of uniting their naval forces in order to patrol coastlines.

* Legalisation. Unlike the invitation of selected individual immigrants or groups with specific demographic and labour-market characteristics, a legalisation
can apply only general eligibility criteria, such as the date set for illegal entry and the requirement of legal employment for the issue and renewal of the green card. Therefore it may exclude immigrants with other useful characteristics—younger and with particular skills—although the legalisations mostly concern economic immigrants of working age (OECD 2001b: 187; SOPEMI 2001: 53). Legalisations are usually applied when internal and external controls fail to restrict illegal immigration, while both the reality of a large resident foreign population and the partial dependence of the economy on immigrant labour are finally accepted. Meanwhile, a large and growing proportion of the immigrants believe that they are in the host country, regardless of status, because their employers value their labour (see Baldwin-Edwards and Arango 1999; OECD 2000: 55). Yet experience in both Europe and the United States shows that no legalisation exercise has ever put an end to illegal immigration (OECD 2000: 34).

Legalisations are costly and complex procedures. They can take the form of Long-established and recurrent processes as in France, or be the result of a single date-specific scheme taken after lengthy preparation and extensive debate, as in the USA in 1986, Greece in 1998 and 2001 and Italy, Spain and Portugal since the mid-1980s (OECD 2000: 54). They grant irregular immigrants legal rights on a range of issues, from legal residence and work to voting rights and naturalisation, and help them to obtain regular work, invite dependent family members, integrate into local society—in sum, to lead a normal life.

Employment is the key to effective integration and therefore takes priority, although some countries choose to give other support (and not work) to their refugees over quite a long period. In conditions, however, of high unemployment and increasing economic uncertainty, immigrants are more vulnerable to unemployment than nationals, partly because of employment discrimination against them (OECD 2001b: 174). To the extent that they benefit from equal opportunities and possess the required qualifications, their labour may become competitive rather than complementary to that of the nationals. As integration proceeds, competition may develop and substitution rates increase (Koff 2002). Competition helps to raise productivity and keep inflation down but it may also create antagonism.

Social integration generally depends on progress made in economic integration. It may nevertheless be slow if immigrants form closed neighbourhoods and restrict most of their social and economic activities to their own ethnic or racial group, as is the case in many European cities (see Ministry of Education 2001). Voting rights come last and may be generous or be granted only after a long legal stay in the host country and upon naturalisation. Through their integration, immigrants adjust their working patterns and lifestyles to those of the local society but they also affect attitudes and morals within it. However, until they are fully integrated in the society of the host country, they remain an ‘alien’ group within it.

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This paper sets out to investigate the characteristics of the 1998 and 2001 legalisations in Greece, against a background of a rapidly ageing Greek population, persistent high unemployment among the unskilled and many skilled categories, and an age-old tradition in the migration of Greeks. During 1945-73 alone nearly 1 million people emigrated, and in 1974-85 some 350,000 repatriated. The country, however, lacks administrative experience of the issues raised by the massive immigration of foreigners, whose share in the total population increased from under 2 per cent in the late 1980s to about 10 per cent ten years later. The first section of the article briefly describes recent demographic and economic developments in the country; the second critical reviews the new Aliens Law of 2001. The third part of the paper examines the main features of the two legalisations and attempts to evaluate their demographic and socioeconomic effects, while the final section delves into issues of Greek migration policy.

Recent demographic and economic developments in Greece

This section of the paper looks at the changing character of the Greek population, including an important increase in immigrant children, together with income, unemployment and labour market characteristics.

Declining fertility and compensating immigrant flows

In 1998 there were 100,894 births and 102,668 deaths in Greece against 150,000-157,000 births and under 100,000 deaths annually during the 1950s. Meanwhile the proportion of those aged over 65 in the total population increased from 7 per cent in 1951 to 13.7 per cent (1.4 million persons) in 1991 and 16.5 per cent (1.76 million persons) in 1998 (National Statistical Service of Greece 1997, 2000). With virtually zero natural population growth, it increase in total numbers by 687,025 persons between the 1991 (10,252,580) and 2001 (10,939,605) censuses was due to the ethnic Greeks who had settled in Greece from Albania and the countries of the former Soviet Union, and to the counting of five times more foreign-passport holders (Table 1).

Further insights into the changing character of the Greek population can be gained from an examination of data on school rolls. As shown in Table 2, the declining number of children of indigenous parents registered in primary and secondary schools is partly compensated by the rapidly increasing number of ethnic Greek and foreign-immigrant children—65,546 pupils with foreign parents enrolled in primary and 16,475 in secondary schools (a total of 82,021) in 2000-01. Additional data from the Ministry of Education shows that the number of pupils born in Greece to immigrant parents increased from 1,458 in 1996 to 2,680 in 1998-99. The real increase probably is larger because many pupils born to naturalised ethnic-Greek parents are registered as indigenous, a fact confirmed by empirical observations in maternity hospitals. The distinction between indigenous and recently naturalised Greeks is still made in the Greek studies, seem not to be adequate (Ministry of Education 2001: 37-8; SOPEMI 2001: 83). With the passage of time and results in anti-immigrant, xenophobic and racist manifestations. The 26 multicultural schools, offering 500 reception classes which help immigrant children have repopulated many schools, forming even the majority of the pupils in some classes.

In hundreds of primary schools, foreign children (whose expulsion, as in other European countries, is forbidden and who, since 1997, have been able to enrol irrespective of the illegal status of their parents) now number over 10 per cent of all pupils and in some schools exceed 30 per cent (OECD 2000: 15). In areas of high immigrant concentration—Attica, Elefsis, Thesprotia, Mykonos—foreigners have populated many declining inner-city and suburban areas as their children have repopulated many schools, forming even the majority of the pupils in some classes.

Income growth and unemployment

The average annual growth of the (registered) GDP (gross domestic product) was about 1 per cent between 1979 and 1999 (under half that in the EU) and has since 2001 risen to 3 per cent. In 1998 the EU unemployment rate was 9.1 per cent as against 6.2 per cent in Greece. These data reflect the ‘unresolved’ relationship between migration and economic growth (Appleyard 1992; Ghosh 1998; Hammar et al. 1997; Tapinos 2000; and for Greece, Fakios 1999). During this period Greece experienced a large and continuous inflow of people, initially returnees and then ethnic Greeks and foreigners. But its GDP growth rates have been affected primarily by other factors. About one-third of recent growth is due to the net inflow of resources from EU Structural Funds (about 3 billion euros annually until 2006), financing, among other things, around one-third of all public works (European Commission 2002: 50). A number of infrastructure plans, mainly supported by these funds, are scheduled for completion before the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Income per head in terms of purchasing power amounts now to about 70 per cent of the EU average and a 3.7 per cent annual growth is targeted until 2006. To attain that rate, however, serious balance of payments and other difficulties for restructuring the economy have to be overcome. Defence absorbs 4.9 per cent of the GDP, proportionally more than double EU and NATO-countries’ spending, price inflation in November 2002 (3.6 per cent) was nearly twice as high as that in the EU, and the public debt stands at 105.3 per cent of GDP, as against 69 per cent in the EU as a whole (Ministry of Economy and Finance 2002a, 2002b, 2003).

The employment rate in the age group 15-64 years rose from 53.4 per cent in 1991 to 55.4 per cent (35.4 per cent for females) in 2001. The latter is still considerably below that in Ireland (66 per cent) and the European Union area (61.2 to 55 per cent for females) where, however, the rate for part-
Labour shortages and undocumented foreign immigration

Due to rising educational standards and improving socio-economic conditions, an increasing number of Greeks are only prepared to undertake uninteresting jobs at wages that would price them out of the market. Therefore the labour shortages that emerged were ‘relative’, in the sense that they were caused by the low wages offered in the market. The ‘absolute’ shortages, i.e. the specific labour categories not available in the country, were covered by the invitation of selected individual immigrants: artists, athletes, coaches, skilled workers, careworkers and experts in various fields.

In the years of near-full employment in the early 1970s, the ‘unrewarding’ jobs were mostly undertaken by legal immigrants from Asia and Africa, and in the later years mainly by ‘tourist’ Poles who worked without permits. There then followed irregular immigrants from countries the world over, but the main inflow was from the neighbouring Balkan states and especially Albania, after their radical political reforms in 1989-90. Although the flexible immigrant labour force induced even more Greeks to shun these uninteresting jobs, the number of work permits was kept to around 15,000 (Table 1), restricting immigrant to irregular employment and further expanding the already large underground economy.

Following the example of other countries, Greece applied its two regularisations in 1998 and 2001, after failing to restrict undocumented immigration through bilateral agreements for the exchange of seasonal labour with Bulgaria in 1996 and Albania in 1997. Mainly because of their onerous procedures, few employers have used these agreements (although there are no exact figures available). Meanwhile, large sections of the economy were partly dependent on immigrant labour and, although the invitation of immigrants with specific characteristics has always taken place, their number could by no means meet existing demand, especially for seasonal and other categories of low-qualified work. Besides, it was known from empirical observations that the overwhelming majority of undocumented foreigners were economic migrants. The procedures and effects of the two legalisations are examined in the third section of the paper, after a critical review of the changes introduced by the new Aliens Law.

Main features of the new Aliens Law

The new law ‘On the status of aliens and naturalisation’ 2910/2001 (Government Gazette 91/A/2.5.2001) has replaced Law 1975/1991 (the previous one was Law 4310/1929). In principle this new law does not apply to EU citizens, refugees, asylum-seekers or persons with double or multiple nationality who are considered Greek citizens (for the judicial aspects of the law see Scordas 2002).

Rules and aims of the legalisation

The law stipulated the time-frame and the administrative procedures of the second legalisation but it also introduced certain vague eligibility criteria that allowed variable interpretations, at a great cost to both the immigrants and the administration.

The legalisation appears to have two main aims:

* To legalise as many irregular migrants as possible by advertising the benefits of regularisation and by introducing the purchase of 250 social-security stamps as an additional criterion for eligibility. The large number of foreigners who are now legal (Table 1) indicates that this aim has been achieved, positing the challenge to migration policy to help prevent immigrants from lapsing back into illegality.

* To restrict irregular flows by strengthening external and internal controls. The law annuls the expulsion of illegal immigrants who help the police to reveal practices promoting prostitution (see Ministry of Education 2001: 43-4). In addition the law re-affirms the principle that all public services and legal entities under public law, local authorities, notaries, public utility ventures and social security funding bodies must refrain from offering their services to irregular immigrants. This obligation is also extended to hospitals, sanatoriums and clinics, unless there is an emergency or children need medical care. The aim is to confront cases of abuse of the free national health service which arise from the activities of criminal networks that bring into the country aliens from neighbouring states with the sole purpose of being hospitalised in Greek public establishments (Arts. 51-6; also Scordas 2002: 37). In July 2002 Greece ratified a protocol signed with Turkey in November 2001 to the effect that each country would receive back undocumented immigrants who had left their country of origin and were arrested and sent back to it by the country of destination. It is, however, one of the so-called ‘low policy agreements’ and does not bind either of the two countries to take proper measures to prevent illegal immigrants landing in the other country. About 500 illegal immigrants have been returned to Turkey since then, whereas about 15,000 have managed to enter Greece. (3)

The law, however, does not link illegal immigration to the widespread undeclared employment in Greece of Greeks and foreigners. The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) suggests that measures taken to combat the hiring of illegal immigrants must address the problem of undeclared work in general, and not just the employment of illegal immigrants (OECD 2000: 8, 65, 133). Unless governments effectively combat the spread of the underground economy, most immigrants who try to renew their residence permits or obtain a job in the mainstream labour market will risk illegality (and at times illicit or criminal activities).

Permits, family reunion and naturalisation

The law has maintained and promulgated the following features:

* the issue of limited-time green cards;

* the decoupling of residence and work permits;

* strict regulations for renewing residence permits (five annual renewals before a two-year permit and ten years’ legal residence before a permanent permit may be issued; and

* onerous regulations in the procedures for obtaining a work permit and inviting foreign workers;

* there are very few provisions, however, such as minority-language instruction or legal arrangements for the co-ordination or exportability of acquired pension rights, to encourage migrants to repatriate voluntarily.
Within the six-month period of validity of his or her residence permit, the migrant is expected to apply for a residence and a work permit (the duration of which is at the discretion of the authorities). The required documents include health and penal-record certificates, evidence of full social insurance coverage and a written contract or statutory declaration by an employer willing to employ him or her for a given time period. Should the contract be broken, the employer undertakes to inform the Aliens Department and the local authority in the relevant municipality (Art. 66). For the 1998 legalisation, however, it took Greek state institutions up to two years to issue these permits (see Papantoniou-Fragoudi and Leventi 2000). Curious, also, is the requirement for legal employment and a work contract at a time when the immigrant has no work permit and therefore has no right to work. The law specifies (Art. 68) that an applicant would not be expelled until his or her application has been approved or rejected, yet nowhere is it stated that she or he would be allowed to work.

Unlike the 1991 law, however, the new Aliens Law does not tie the work permit to the employer. Instead, it provides for a general work permit, which is granted after a written statement is obtained by an employee from his or her potential employer. This is certainly a complicated situation and the applicants of Greek origin.

Applicants for citizenship must prove a total of ten years’ legal residence (15 under the previous law) in the 12 years preceding the date of application. Ten years' legal residence are also required in France, Spain and the Netherlands. Refugees recognised under the 1951 Geneva Convention require only five, while foreigners born and raised in Greece and those married to or who have children with Greek spouses are exempt from the residence requirement. The length of time immigrants can be detained by the police without trial is shortened, while racism and xenophobia come under penal law and can be indicted by the public prosecutor ipso jure.

Inviting foreign workers

Perusal of Articles 19-22 indicates that, as with the 1991 law, the new Aliens Law has strict regulations pertaining to the invitation of foreign workers, while the government intends to maintain full control over their number and characteristics. (4) However, as in Italy and other countries (Zincone 1999: 49), the list of workers needed by labour sector and region is unlikely ever to be drawn up, and the other formalities will never be put into practice.

Although the law sets out in detail regulations governing the immigration of entrepreneurs, it offers no particular incentives to technology specialists, putti the emphasis solely on the immigration of unskilled workers for regular and seasonal work. Neither is there any reference to the role of immigration in the economic and social development of the country. If, however, the high income growth continues as scheduled, Greece, following other developed countries (SOPFLI 2000, 2001) would have to systematically utilise the skills possessed by those immigrants already present, and introduce incentives for the inflow of more qualified foreigners.

Fees

The social security contributions and taxes unpaid by irregular migrants over the years are now reclaimed by the state through ‘excessive fees’, as the Gre Ombudsman's Report (Ombudsman's Office 2001a) on the new law calls them. By introducing the purchase of 250 social security stamps as an eligibility criterion and charging high fees at every stage of the issue and renewal of a card, the law has introduced a 'pay-and-stay principle'. For the provisional six months' residence permit the law required a fee of 147 euros. In the 9 September-11 November 2002 legalisation in Italy, the fee was 100 euros for an employee and 40 for a domestic worker. (5) For the regular residence permit an additional fee is required, depending on its duration: 147 euros for a one-year permit, 294 for permits valid from one to two years, 441 for permits valid from two to six years and 882 euros for permits over six years (Art. 71). Immigrants also had to pay 6 euros per page for the ministry for the translation into Greek of documents required for registration. However, since the capacity of ministry services was limited, many migrants resorted to authorised lawyers and certified translators who charged up to three times as much as the ministry. Furthermore, in most registration offices in the big cities, many immigrants had to employ intermediaries to repeatedly queue in their place for long hours during the migrants' working day.

Applying for naturalisation, immigrants have to pay 1,470 euros (Art. 59) which is non-refundable if the application is rejected (no reason need be given, Art. 61). They should also assemble, translate and/or officially certify the required supporting documents, in a process that can drag on for months or year. Although international law does not recognise an obligation for states to naturalise aliens, the adoption of administrative procedures lacking any law-based justification is inconsistent with the rule of law and may encourage corrupt practices (Scordas 2002: 36). The fee for naturalisation has been removed for applicants of Greek origin.

It could be said that the new Aliens Law has introduced a redistribution of income at the expense of the poorest section of the population. The worst effect perhaps that, despite the professed aim of the policy to help immigrants to 'stay legal', the high fees and costs of the regularisation may induce them to prefer the risks of illegality rather than assume the cost of regularisation and the risk of non-regularisation at the end of the process. Immigrants in financial difficulties at the time of submission of their renewal application may not be able to prolong their presence in the country legally.

Administrative reforms and functional efficiency

Soon after the registration period of the 1998 legalisation, Greece's very poor statistics on immigration improved considerably due to a flow of information on applicants’ characteristics. Unfortunately, to date, similar statistics from the 2001 legalisation have not become available. The paucity of relevant information permeates most developments in the field of immigration, primarily reflecting the difficulties faced by the Ministry of the Interior.

The reason for this deterioration in the flow of data may be that, on the eve of the second legalisation, the government decided to transfer the main responsibility for statistical information output to the Ministry of the Interior, removing it from the Ministry of Labour, despite the latter's experience of the first legalisation and its obvious interest in the economic character of immigration. The Labour Ministry, however, still has a say on the issue of the work permit, which is granted after a written statement is obtained by an employee from his or her potential employer. This is certainly a complicated situation which contributes to delaying procedures for the issue of work permits.

The decision was also made to establish:

* regional migration committees in Greece (Art. 9);

* employment departments within the regional administrative centres and the main Greek embassies abroad for the invitation of foreign workers (Art. 19);

* a research centre on migration policy within the Ministry of the Interior (Art. 73).
The question is whether adequately trained and experienced personnel are available to staff and efficiently run the new agencies at home and abroad, and whether the other ministries involved would be in a position to support the relevant costs and administrative effort necessary to implement the reforms. Administering the heavy bureaucratic procedures for legalisation has already heavily taxed the capacity of the inexperienced Ministry of the Interior.

In its Special Report (21 December 2001), the Ombudsman's Office (2001a) criticised the lack of coordination and co-operation between the various agencies, their poor organisation and the incompetence of insufficiently-trained officials. It warned that, if nothing was done to remedy the situation, it would take decades to replace the six-month temporary permit, issued upon application, with a one-year permit to all eligible immigrants. Of the 1,731 cases examined by the Ombudsman's Office during 2001 under the section 'Human rights', about one-third concerned foreign immigrants (Ombudsman's Office 2001b: 19). The new extension for the validity of all permits until 30 June 2003, announced on 30 December 2002, is another indication of administrative dysfunction.

World-wide experience shows that, in order to be effective, research institutes should be independent and accountable for the quality of their research to other institutes and individual experts. To satisfy its needs, the Ministry of the Interior would instead, and more appropriately, benefit from the work of individual researchers on relevant subjects: for instance from the Mediterranean Migration Observatory of Panteion University, Athens and the Migration or Diaspora Laboratory of Athens University, both established in 2000; and from effective participation in the International Metropolis Project and other similar research and policy networks. More than 18 months after the new law came into effect, hardly any information has been available from the ministry about the activities of the new centre. Nor have there been any government initiatives, such as the setting up of special committees, as in Italy and other countries (Zincinc 1999) for investigating the effects of the two legalisations. Holland has found that the integration of legalised immigrants takes generations rather than years, and since 1988 it commissions surveys every three to four years to monitor progress (Vemeulen 2001).

The two legalisations

Procedures and numerical results

Applied much later than in the three other Southern European countries, the first legalisation in Greece increased the number of legal foreigners about five-fold a of economic migrants (excluding EU nationals and ethnic Greeks) ten-fold. Shortly after, however, Greece applied the second legalisation, which also elicited a large number of applicants (Tables 1 and 3), demonstrating that, despite massive expulsions, there was a degree of tolerance to illegal immigration.

The extensions granted increased the validity of white cards in 1998 to about 14 months. During that time, immigrants had to present social security stamps. In Tables 3 and 4) indicate the high propensity of regularised immigrants to lapse into illegality. It is assumed that most of them did so because they could not secure the required social security stamps. Ir response to this problem, IKA (the main Social Insurance Foundation for private-sector employees) reduced by half the social insurance contributions for regularised immigrants to lapse into illegality. It is assumed that most of them did so because they could not secure the required social security stamps. Ir response to this problem, IKA (the main Social Insurance Foundation for private-sector employees) reduced by half the social insurance contributions for social security stamps. In 1999, when applying for a Schengen visa but it grants no voting rights. (7) A similar purpose was served by the six-month permit under the 2001 legalisation, the validity of which, as mentioned previously, was first extended until 31 December 2002 then, on the eve of 2003, for six further months. The difficulties, however, persist.

With both legalisations, many immigrants did not register (Table 1). Among them, following the 1998 legalisation, were those who simply did not know about it; those who did not qualify (such as those who had penal records of the many Poles who had been legally in the country but worked without permits); those who could not prove that they resided illegally in Greece before the threshold date of 23 November 1997; who were afraid to give the police their name and address; who were dissuaded by their employers (who employed them without insurance); and those who did not plan to stay in Greece for. Reaffirming the basic tenet of Greek policy that the country has reached saturation point and therefore irregular immigrants should not be allowed to stay, the Greek Prime Minister referred to some of the figures on 19 October 2001, and in a later statement he maintained that, in 2001, 150,000 immigrants were caught trying to enter Greece illegally. (8) Of these, 6,864 were ‘boat migrants’, compared to 3,644 in 2000. During 2001 coastguards prevented 51 Turkish boats from landing illegal immigrants in Greece. Many more did manage to enter Greece, while others perished on the journey. In the week 18-24 December 2002, four boats attempted to disembark over 200 illegal immigrants in various parts of Greece. One boat sank in rough seas and a second crashed on the shore. More than 30 immigrants drowned.

Ethnicity, age and education of the 1998 applicants

From the 1998 regularisation, the structure of applicants by ethnicity, age and years of schooling indicates that they have those demographic and labour-market characteristics required in Greece. The following features can be highlighted.

such a solution would involve, experience demonstrates three further things. First, it is impossible to maintain full control over research carried out and empirical observations made by a range of commentators. (9) I will deal in turn with wage rates and real earnings, and then with

Available employment statistics include only wage-earners or the self-employed, whereas pensioners have no social security incentives for declaring their

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The importance of both ethnic Greek and foreign immigrants in total numbers has already been discussed. Before the two regularisations, the foreign immigrant contribution to balancing the age structure of the labour force affected mainly the unregistered labour market. Post-regularisations, its influence extends to the largest part of the labour market and as dependent family members come in legally, the effects spread even further. In addition: *

According to empirical observations, however, most of those who had not registered were from the rural areas and were male, indicating that the concentration in urban areas is considerably less intense. As always, in situations in which many immigrants are unregistered, relevant statistics should be interpreted with care.

Demographic effects and schooling

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* An increasing number of immigrants are becoming eligible to apply for naturalisation.

* Young, dependent family members invited legally to join their parents, are continuously adding to the population and, as they come of age, to the labour force. Youth are important for employment in all productive sectors, especially in agriculture, construction, the shipyards and the merchant navy.

* More foreign children, born to foreign parents, are attending Greek schools, as was shown in Table 2. Greek citizenship is not acquired by birth in Greece but the majority of the immigrant children born there are likely to remain in the country and will find it easier to integrate and naturalise.

As already mentioned, immigration alone will not stop the decline nor the ageing of the total population. Apart from the unrealistic growth in entry flows such a solution would involve, experience demonstrates three further things. First, it is impossible to maintain full control over migration gains and the age distribution of entry and exit flows because of voluntary departures, and illegal and legal entries of dependent family members and immigrants from other EU countries on the basis of the Schengen Agreement and on humanistic grounds. Second, the fertility difference attributed to foreign women tends to decline very quickly the longer they stay in the host country. And third, foreign populations are also subject to ageing. Migration therefore should be seen as part of the policy response, alongside efforts to raise skill levels and encourage active ageing.

Greece has a long way to go in encouraging its older workers to remain in employment longer. As shown above, the employment rate is under that of the EU. The statutory retirement age in the private sector is 62 for females and 65 for males, as in most EU countries. The average, however, declines to around 56 because of frequent early retirement schemes, numerous categories of so-called ‘dangerous and unhealthy jobs’ which have a lower retirement age, and the large proportion of the workforce pensioned off, even at a relatively young age, due to ill-health. In the public sector, where full pension rights are acquired after 35 years of service (including any employment in the private sector), the actual retirement age is also below 60 because many employees start working before they are 25 and early retirement schemes are also frequent. As a rule, any increase in the retirement age meets with strong trades-union resistance.

Available employment statistics include only wage-earners or the self-employed, whereas pensioners have no social security incentives for declaring their employment (which in some cases is also restricted by law). We therefore do not know how many pensioners are employed, work at looking after the substantial --in many households--family properties, or are seeking work. Empirical observations show that many belong to this last category, pointing to a lack of flexibility in two relevant fields: a) to allow working people to establish pension rights after any number of years’ service but to start receiving their (smaller or larger) pension when they reach an age stipulated by law; and b) to help the working population, as they grow older, to move to other jobs more suitable for their age, within their broader specialisation. Older construction workers find it difficult to climb up multi-storey building projects and become more prone to accidents; miners find it harder to work underground; school-teachers to teach young pupils; typists to sit at the keyboard for hours on end and the army, police and firemen to participate in strenuous assignments, manoeuvres, expeditions, etc. With the systematic analysis of each case, and suitable preparation, including some retraining, persons in similar situations could move to less strenuous jobs in administration, supervision, consulting, coordination, planning and tutoring, utilising thus their accumulated work experience.

Economic effects

The legalisations have both positive and negative economic effects on immigrants and on the economy. The following findings come from systematic research carried out and empirical observations made by a range of commentators. (9) I will deal in turn with wage rates and real earnings, and then with broader effects on the economy.
Wage rates and real earnings

Being determined primarily by the supply-demand relationship of the labour market, the real wages of undocumented immigrants differ considerably according to season, region and kind of job. For equal productivity, employers seem to choose indifferently between Greeks and foreigners, although not infrequently they offer lower pay to the latter, taking advantage of their weaker legal status, including the risk of expulsion.

For legalised immigrants wage determination is more complex. Irrespective of the real pay, employers tend to declare the legal minimum in order to avoid paying all the legal social security contributions, while immigrants are interested in securing the required registered working days in order to renew their permits and have health insurance coverage. These practices apply equally to Greek employees and are caused by a combination of factors, including high social security contributions and an unsatisfactory in the minds of most recipients--social insurance benefits, inadequate provision of state services and petty corruption of public officials inherited from old and widespread habits. Other causes are ineffective labour inspection, large numbers of self-employed workers and those employed in small firms with fewer than five persons on the payroll--these firms tend to benefit from the recent increase in the outsourcing practices of the larger ones. Despite the considerable progress made in all these fields over the years and strict laws (tertiary education is constitutionally a state monopoly), there is considerable growth in private-sector education and medical care, while many citizens have to use intermediaries or party political connections in dealing with state bureaucracy. Greece does not occupy a praiseworthy position in the Transparency International list of countries with corruption practices (Council of Europe 2002). Reference to these issues is necessary because, as OECD suggests (2000: 66), the overall underground economy in a country is at the root of illegal immigration.

As a rule, it is only because the cost of legal immigrant labour is below that of Greek labour, and because Greeks will no longer undertake certain jobs (like for example, live-in domestic work or seasonal/casual work in remote places) for any ‘reasonable’ wage, that employers take on immigrant labour, in which case the immigrant supply of labour is the main determinant of wage levels. Where employers pay the current market rate but benefit from the job flexibilis of immigrants, i.e. their willingness to do different jobs within the firm (the farm, the household, etc.), this becomes an important cost-reducing factor for small firms, unable to employ different workers for different jobs. For example immigrants are willing, as a rule, to combine driving, gardening, cleaning or receptionist work in a small hotel, or a semi-skilled job and various odd jobs on a construction project. Demarcation issues are unknown among them. In other cases employers ask for more (unpaid) working time, offering in exchange various services such as food, accommodation, transportation, help with paperwork in dealing with the public administration, even invitations to social gatherings, which may cost the employers little but be precious for the immigrants. To the extent that such arrangements are successful there are benefits all round because they reduce labour market rigidities. OECD observes that many labour market measures have aimed related to promoting equity and stability, with side effects that may impede the proper functioning of the labour market (OECD 2002). One of these measures is designed to keep artificially narrow the wage differential between unskilled and skilled labour, maintained by trades-union pressure and welfare policies.

This process however is not without problems. Open labour conflicts between immigrants and their employers are more frequent since the legalisations. Several strikes have broken out recently over wage and similar claims. There are also repeated complaints that many large construction firms working on the preparation of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens violate the rules for working hours and the safety conditions of the foreign workers they hire in legally. Among others, these practices cause high rates of work-related accidents and occupational illness.

Unlike many other countries, in which the unemployment rate for immigrants is up to three times higher than for nationals (OECD 2001b: 173), in Greece appears to be only marginally greater (see Table 5). For both Greek and foreign women the rates are over twice as high as those for men (see also SOPEMI 2001: 55). The breakdown by foreign country shows no substantial differences between them or between foreign and EU nationals. Annual fluctuations, however, are considerable. For Albanians the rates were 17.9 per cent in 1991 and 7.9 per cent in 1992, and for EU nationals 8.1 per cent (1991), 8.1 per cent (1992), 16.6 per cent (1996) and 16.2 per cent (2000). Considering the difficulties in obtaining accurate data for persons having both registered and unregistered employment, care should be exercised in interpreting these statistics.

As in most other host countries (OECD 2001b: 174, 178), an increasing number of legalised foreigners in Greece become self-employed, while others establish small businesses on their own or in association with Greeks. In both cases a large proportion of the clientele comes from other immigrants. Being conditional upon the ability to communicate in Greek, these forms of employment help immigrants to avoid discrimination and other employment complications and significantly promote their social integration. At the same time they benefit local society by breaking down barriers of ignorance and indifference about life and work in other countries (Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998: 6).

In all, the majority of legalised immigrants in Greece earn (according to their statements) between two and four times which that they could earn in their home country. Immigrants who have been resident longer in the host country tend to be closer to the upper limit, although such comparisons may underestimate other benefits in the home countries. Empirical observations, however, show that an increasing number of legal immigrants earn a reasonant and regular income and try to organise their lives as Greek nationals do.

Effects on the economy

Most studies based on a wide variety of data sources and methodological approaches show that immigrant labour is complementary to rather than a substitute for that of Greek nationals. Therefore the effect of immigrant employment on the economy is positive, although some low-skilled national group: stand to lose by it (OECD 2001a: 182). For Greece, the few relevant econometric studies have also shown that immigration has favoured the employment and income of the more qualified section of the Greek labour force but has negatively affected that of unskilled workers. They have further estimated that immigrants contribute to the generation of about 1 per cent of GDP, although part of it is remitted abroad, widening the already large current accounts deficit of Greece.

With the implementation of appropriate policies, immigrant employment could help to meet the challenges posed by rapid technological and economic development and to keep price inflation down. The wage-and job-flexible labour of immigrants, however, may retard efforts to reorganise production and substitute capital and new technology for labour, on which sustainable long-term development depends. It may also reduce the pressure to increase the supply of national low-qualified labour and at the same time reduce seasonal and casual demand for it by extending the tourist period and changing the structure of crops. It has been shown above that an increasing number of Greeks (among them some low-qualified and unemployed) have changed their attitude towards work, and many are led to believe that certain jobs are only for immigrants. Recent research has shown that nearly all wage labour in the Greek agricultural sector is undertaken by immigrants (Kasimis et al. 2002). In addition, the legalisations have given the state the moral ground to continue massive expulsions and to strengthen the sanctions against irregular employment by dissuading employers, mainly in seasonal activities, from resorting to it.

Social security contributions and benefits

By contributing to social security funds and paying taxes, the legally employed immigrants cover their health care and use of the subsidised part of the social infrastructure (e.g., schools, urban transportation). Because of their low income very few pay income tax, but VAT (value added tax) and other indirect tax (which in Greece contribute about two-thirds of state revenues) are levied on most of the market products they consume. It is true that legally employed migrants benefit from the fixed-capital accumulation created by older inhabitants but this is largely counterbalanced by the fact that Greek society has not incurred any costs for the migrants' upbringing and professional training.
The argument that without them Greece would not have achieved its high growth rate since 1997 is an exaggeration. As shown above, economic growth as demographic developments are determined by many more factors than migration of any type. Had it not been for flexible immigrant labour, other wage an employment adjustments would have been made and the structure of unemployment, a large part of which is for unskilled workers, would have been different.

In a well-functioning mixed economy the supply the productivity of services by households corresponds, by and large, to their take-home pay and other indirect benefits. As in all societies, there are certainly unfair income inequalities, referred to in modern parlance as ‘structural violence’. In Greece they seem to be more pronounced due to its large underground economy and weak public administration, though these, of course, affect the indigenous and foreign populations alike. To the extent that discrimination against legal foreigners prevents them from having fair opportunities for professional and social advancement, there would be good reason for Greeks to fight against these practices. The sooner adequate institutions are established for the present multinational society to develop gradually into a multicultural one, the better for the prosperity and higher quality of life of all concerned. In the loose organisational structure of the country, however, there remains the question of whether immigrants, as a working group, benefit from their fair share of social insurance funds.

Policy issues

The brief critical review of postwar Greek migration policies which follows seeks to explain their idiosyncratic character, which is also reflected in the new law. Three key points are made.

Firstly, the policies seem not to challenge Greek national traditions, they seem to be largely unencumbered by demographic concerns and to maintain a minimal commitment to admitting a limited number of refugees and others on humanitarian grounds. This is evidenced by the low acceptance rate of asylum-seekers and the strict pre-requisites for foreigners not related to Greeks in applying for citizenship. Perhaps this may be justified by the approximately 600,000 ethnic Greeks who have settled in Greece since the mid-1950s from Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus, Zaire and the former socialist countries. Together with the high fertility of the first postwar period, these inflows have resulted in a population increase from 7.3 million persons in 1951 to about 10.3 million in 2001 (excluding foreigners). On the other hand, the bitter experience of high structural unemployment throughout most of the twentieth century (which in recent years has been the second highest in the EU after Spain) has enhanced the criterion of labour market needs in migration policy decisions by maintaining the number of work permits issued to foreigners at a very low level.

The policies also seem to maintain only minimal accountability to public opinion. This may be due to the geographical position of Greece at the far south-eastern end of Europe, with no borders with any EU state, long land borders with Moslem Turkey, and (between 1945 and 1989) with three Marxist socialist states. Greece also lies in the vicinity of politically unstable countries with a pronounced labour surplus and is the only EU state to have experienced full-scale civil war of a Marxist nature since the Second World War. Long-standing historical reasons have also played an important role. The peoples of the Balkan peninsula have lived for some two and a half thousand years under different political rulers—Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Turks—with considerable freedom to move around and choose their place of settlement. Therefore large populations of different creeds and ethnicities found themselves on the 'wrong' side of the borders established early in the twentieth century. Explicit and latent territorial claims have developed among the newly established states and mutual accusations about ethnic and religious discrimination continue unabated, with violent conflict among the numerous ethnicities in the former Yugoslavia since 1988 being another act in that drama.

Finally, fears that foreigners of other races and religious creeds, and especially Moslems, would not be easy to integrate into 'traditional' Greek society also arise. Islam in the minds of many Greeks has been historically associated with Ottoman rule and is today connected with the 'Turkish threat'. Once in the country legally, it would be difficult or impossible to send immigrants home and the difficulties would increase as the time scale civil war of a Marxist nature since the Second World War. Long-standing historical reasons have also played an important role. The peoples of the Balkan peninsula have lived for some two and a half thousand years under different political rulers—Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Turks—with considerable freedom to move around and choose their place of settlement. Therefore large populations of different creeds and ethnicities found themselves on the 'wrong' side of the borders established early in the twentieth century. Explicit and latent territorial claims have developed among the newly established states and mutual accusations about ethnic and religious discrimination continue unabated, with violent conflict among the numerous ethnicities in the former Yugoslavia since 1988 being another act in that drama.

In short, up until the mid-1980s, Greek migration policies appear by and large to have been rational. Encouraging emigration in the first postwar period of high unemployment and capital shortages, and repatriation after 1974 when near-full employment prevailed in the economy and democracy had been restored after the collapse of the 1967-74 dictatorship, seem to have considerable merits. Greece also had to welcome and facilitate the settling-in of ethn Greeks, many of whom had been compelled to flee their respective regions of origin. Equally necessary was the issuing of work permits to foreign passpc holders because many of them were ethnic Greeks, and because foreigners possess useful skills and can satisfy the basic needs of the economy.

Greek policy appears to have been late in realising that, in a world of rapidly decreasing transport costs, increasing circulation of goods and capital, and considerable cross-border movements linked to tourism, tertiary education, professional training and business travel (as well as a large Greek merchant navy), it is anachronistic to conceive of immigration control exclusively in terms of sovereignty (Tapios 2000: 38). Restricting work permits to a small number of foreigners with specific qualifications and tolerating for many years a large undocumented immigration had many drawbacks, while present fear about the effects of naturalisation become increasingly groundless. For example, increasing five-fold the present annual figure of about 500 naturalisations of foreigners with no relationship to Greeks would add up to about 1 per cent of the Greek population in 40 years, and most of them would have resided for decades or even been born in Greece. Equally detrimental is the very little effort made by the state in recent years to promote integration.

Conclusion: new challenges

Policy is presently facing new challenges. In the first round of the local elections on 13 October 2002 the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) was supported by nearly 14 per cent of the electorate in the Greater Athens and Piraeus area, where about one-third of all Greek citizens vote. The Rally professes its faith to the Greek nation, the Orthodox Church and the family; and blames the rich, globalisation, illegal immigrants and the inappropriate (as they call it) behavior of some of the 5,000 Greek Jews in the country for the everyday problems facing citizens. Various opinion polls, however, have shown that the Rally is supported by only 2.0-2.6 per cent of the electorate, so that its success appears to have been mainly a protest vote with no lasting effects. In the second round of the elections, from which the Rally was excluded, most of its voters chose the liberal and the socialist candidates, despite the advice of the Rally leadership to abstain. Its sudden electoral success, however, worries many people from other political persuasions.

Three more challenges should be mentioned. Firstly, in the prevailing conditions of persisting high unemployment, some dormant labour market and social antagonisms are likely to develop of re-surface, for more legalised immigrants apply for jobs wanted by the Greeks and tax heavily the already inadequate social infrastructure (hospitals, schools, houses). Driven by economic exigencies and tempted into increased spending through the effects of easily-avaliable credit cards, some low-skilled Greeks may start to look for jobs now undertaken by immigrants.

The second challenge concerns the evident long-term effects of the stereotyping as criminals in the late 1990s of Albanians, Romanians and other foreign Fed continuously with tales of trafficking, prostitution, exploitation of children and smuggling involving foreigners, many Greeks believe that the majority of immigrants enter Greece to commit crimes; their belief is re-affirmed by the fact that roughly 50 per cent of inmates in Greek prisons are foreigners. Recent opinion polls show that, even among schoolchildren, around 70 per cent believe that there are too many foreigners in the country who do not speak Greek are of a different religion and are responsible for the increase in criminality and unemployment. Many ask for the police to become more stringent with them.
It is obvious that many people are ignorant of or overlook important facts about immigration:

* the productive work of immigrants, especially in seasonal and domestic work;
* the tens of thousands of immigrants who have the keys to Greek households and visit them regularly to clean, look after the gardens or do maintenance and other work in the absence of their owners, honouring absolutely the trust showed to them;
* the criteria for arresting foreigners and Greeks are by no means the same;
* a much larger section of the foreign population consists of persons in the age group in which, in any country, delinquency is high;
* most of the foreigners imprisoned have committed petty crimes, largely caused by their insecurity and congested living conditions, while many are embittered and provoked by the abuse of employers against them;
* there is no evidence that, for homicide and other serious crimes, criminality among immigrants is above that among Greeks;
* many of the serious crimes in the country are committed by organised criminal factions related primarily to international drug dealers and terrorism, while other crimes relate to political conflicts in foreign countries and, like the previous ones, barely involve any economic migrants (see Karydis 1998; Psimmen 2001; Triandafyllidou 2001).

The third challenge is to implement a systematic policy on integration. Given that, as a rule, the volume of illegal migration depends first and foremost on government’s capacity to set migration regulations and, in accordance therewith, to regulate conditions for the entry and residence of foreigners and for the granting and renewal of residence and work permits, the policy should accept the reality of illegal immigration and try to restrict it as much as possible. Strict application of such laws delineates the borderline between legality and illegality (OECD 2000: 54). Integration is a two-way process of give and take, and does not usually occur voluntarily because people are more inclined to use their rights than to meet their obligations.

A necessary measure for integration is to assist immigrants to acquire equal opportunities in the labour market by offering them Greek language classes at technical and retraining courses, as well as incentives for participating more actively in economic and social developments. What has begun in the educational sector with the establishment of multicultural schools, as already mentioned, should extend to other fields as well. The policy should then offer immigrants selected to stay in Greece the opportunity to plan their lives from a medium- and even long-term perspective. This means that integration should proceed within the framework of continuous but controlled immigration, aiming towards the creation of a multicultural society. This would prevent the marginalisation of certain incoming groups and would help immigrants to become self-reliant citizens who feel that they are members of the society in which they live and have reasons for contributing to its development. The relevant experiences of other countries are valuable in this respect (Ministry of Education 2001: 137-8).

These challenges are not difficult to meet if the Greek people are helped to understand that, on both economic and demographic grounds, the positive effects of immigration outweigh the negative ones; and that the fairly prosperous society in which they live is a multinational one, as are all other EU countries. If, however, the number of immigrants increases further, the process of integration decelerates and regularised immigrants start once again to lapse into illegality, the adverse social repercussions from increased irregular immigration seem to be unavoidable.

Table 1. National and foreign population in Greece, 1991-2001

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<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991 census</td>
<td>10,252,580</td>
<td>Albania 40,000-60,000 *</td>
<td>167,000 **</td>
<td>80,000-120,000 (about one-third ethnic Greeks and Greek Cypriots)</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>650,000-700,000</td>
<td>About 300,000</td>
<td>Over 200,000</td>
<td>About 580,000</td>
<td>230,000 on average **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 census</td>
<td>10,939,605</td>
<td>Former Soviet Union around 110,000 *</td>
<td>797,000 **</td>
<td>Foreigners with valid work permits before the 1998 legalisation (about half ethnic Greeks and EU nationals)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * As Greece avoids naturalising ethnic Greeks from Albania but instead issues special identity cards giving them all the rights of Greek citizens except the right to vote, few seem to have registered in the census as such. The same applies to ethnic Greeks from the Soviet Union who have kept the nationality of their country of origin. In 1990-99, 103,000 Greek Pontians from the former Soviet Union were naturalised (official statement in the Greek Parliament on 21 December 2001). The quarterly Labour Force Surveys of the National Statistical Service of Greece classify under the same column Greek nationals and those who have a second nationality as well. The inflow of ethnic Greeks that started in the late 1980s has gradually come to a standstill. ** Among foreign-passport holders in 1991 there were 35,000 EU nationals and their number in 2001 is put at 45,000. It is also estimated that about 100,000 Greek Cypriots and ethnic Greeks were counted. If these estimates are correct, the non-EU foreigners counted were around 650,000, not many more than the legalised ones until 30 June 2003, when the extension of all non-renewed cards expires.
The large number of expulsions, voluntary migrant travel out of Greece and extensive shuttle migration through its long coastal and mountainous borders show that some of these immigrants form a complex stock and flow pattern. Sources: Census data for 1991 and 2001; Ministry of Labour and Social Security 2002, 2003 (for valid permits and expulsions).

Table 2. Immigrant children registered in primary and secondary schools, 1995-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School years</th>
<th>Pupils with parents who are:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>47,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>54,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>67,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>73,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3. Main features of the 1998 and 2001 legalisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School years</th>
<th>Main features</th>
<th>1998 legalisation</th>
<th>Over two years</th>
<th>2001 legalisation</th>
<th>Over 18 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>79,737</td>
<td>1,404,050</td>
<td>1,471,881</td>
<td>1998 legalisation</td>
<td>1,425,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>67,210</td>
<td>1,404,050</td>
<td>1,471,881</td>
<td>1998 legalisation</td>
<td>1,425,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>54,943</td>
<td>1,450,351</td>
<td>1,505,294</td>
<td>1998 legalisation</td>
<td>1,425,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>47,666</td>
<td>1,884,277</td>
<td>1,931,943</td>
<td>1998 legalisation</td>
<td>1,931,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Applications and approvals for the issue and renewal of green cards for the 1998 legalisation, April 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Approvals</th>
<th>Rejections</th>
<th>Source: Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Employment Department, April 2001.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications for renewing the green card</td>
<td>84,621</td>
<td>45,700</td>
<td>Approvals for the renewal of the green card 84,621 Rejections for the renewal of the green card 45,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications for issuing a green card</td>
<td>220,211</td>
<td>219,024</td>
<td>Approvals for the issue of a green card 220,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Ministry of the Interior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

(1) For instance: 'We must not underestimate the fact that illegal migration to a large extent meets the need for flexibility imposed by the adjustment of the employment systems to the changing economic conditions' (SOPEMI 1989: 86-7). And 'The fact that the United States and some West European states have times turned a blind eye to illegal immigration indicates an implicit recognition of the economic benefits of undocumented immigration--at least during periods of economic boom' (Collinson 1993: 15). For similar reference to Southern EU countries see Baganha (1997), Baldwin-Edwards and Arango (2000). Empirical observations in many countries often show increases in prosperity for many, without corresponding increases in the official statistics on registered income and employment, while only to a small extent does the labour of undocumented immigrants substitute for that of national ones.

(2) Developed countries offer about 0.2 per cent of their GDP to development aid, against 0.7 per cent asked for by the UN, while emigrants of all kinds amount now to about 175 million persons (of whom about 56 million are in Europe), twice as many as in 1975.

(3) Migration News Sheet, April 2002: 3.

(4) The regulations of Articles 19-22 include the preparation of annual reports by OAED (state employment agency) indicating existing labour needs by sectors and region and estimating the needs which could not be satisfied by Greeks, ethnic Greeks, EU nationals and legal immigrants residing in Greece. A decision then taken by the Ministries of Labour and Social Security, the Interior and External Affairs as to the number of workers to be invited by labour category, geographical region, duration and source country. The relevant lists would be sent to Employment Departments abroad (to be established) which would advertise the available vacancies and form lists of persons who wished to come to Greece. These lists would then be presented to interested employers in Greece who would choose from the list the persons whom they want to employ, providing a statutory declaration to the effect that they would undertake to them, as well as a bank guarantee for three months' wages and the likely costs of their expulsion. Approvals go back to the state administration and Greek consulates abroad for the issue of entry visas. Once in Greece the immigrants sign a work contract with the employer. To invite foreign workers for seasonal work (six months maximum each year), employers should follow the procedures above and also abide by regulations stipulated by inter-governmental agreements (Art. 24).

Greece is one of seven EU countries (along with Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Luxembourg) where non-EU immigrants do not have the right to vote or stand for local government, though some groups of them enjoy such rights in Spain, Portugal and the UK. In Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands immigrants have these rights after six months to five years of legal residence (Athens News, 20 September 2002: A12).

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