

Introduction

The year 2001 has been marked in Greece by the new legislation for the regularization of migrants. So far the regularization process was covered by law 1975/1991, under which only about one third of the migrants had been fully legalized. The new legislation was a step forward though we still have a long way to go. Because the Greek legislation regarding migration is fairly recent, the majority of the migrants in Greece have been unprotected from exploitation, manipulation and repatriation, for many years now.

Before showing the steps that have been made, the progress achieved and the many problems still remaining, we will introduce the issues by listing the main concerns at the present time.

- Ø Defining Racism and stereotyping and awareness raising
- Ø Legal issues, especially as related to residence, employment and welfare
- Ø Women's position (suffering from double discrimination)
- Ø The situation of the Roma
- Ø Working at E.U. level and at international level.

Serious obstacle for improvement is the lack of visibility of the problems. Migrants do not vote. Only a tiny number of them who came over ten years ago, married to Greeks, e.t.c., have voting rights. Furthermore, the large majority is only first generation in Greece. Over half of them still have no stable regularized status. This, unfortunately puts them very low in the priority list of politicians who still regard migrants as temporary residents.

One of the reflections of this lack of visibility, is the vocabulary used to define social situations by the institutions and the media. For instance, in Greece the government, (which has remained essentially the same, under the same party, over the last ten years during which we got to know immigration issues affecting us as a host-country,) has devised a vocabulary by which all Greek migrants abroad, many generations of them, are termed "Diaspora Greeks", all migrants returning to Greece from other countries, often after many generations, some hardly speaking the language, are called "Palinostountes", which means "those coming home" and the term "migrant" is only used for foreigners coming into Greece-and with a new, negative connotation. Most "palinostountes" are in fact refugees or migrants of Greek origin from South Eastern European countries, who have the same problems but at least get more

easily residence permits and voting rights as Greece observes the same legislative approach as Germany, regarding descent, in order to grant citizenship.

Accordingly, as far as the “Equal” projects funding goes, none of it was approved specifically for foreigners or is going to the “migrants”, all the projects being approved for the general definitions aimed in practice so far for the “Palinostountes” and other groups of Greek nationality, suffering from social exclusion. This makes the monitoring of the application of the projects approved quite important in the present and near future to make sure migrants with a foreign nationality are not discriminated against.*

Another persisting problem is that there is very little done to upgrade the skills of the public sector to deal with the new social phenomenon of migration, although it is now acknowledged that immigration has been a great benefit to the development of the economy - as it has been also formally admitted by the former Employment Minister Mr. Yannitsis. The resulting difficulties that arise create problems of access to services for the migrants and for employers of migrants.

This causes in turn, great insecurity to migrants when the untrained and inadequately informed public officials and employees cannot assist as they should, in the handling of their issues. The Ministry of Internal Affairs hired temporary assisting staff for a few months to assist the process of regularization but did not do much to train the permanent staff. It is very important for the public services to take responsibility for the smooth insertion of migrants and minorities in employment, education, training and social life, and to combat prejudice which blames the minorities for inadequacies of the system. Informing the public sector in general and raising awareness against prejudice and xenophobia needs to admit first that such problems do exist. But, if there is no authority admitting that the problem exists, then, naturally, nothing much is done to change it.

Therefore it seems useful to look at the way migrants are defined, the terminology used and the way this affects the policies.

One more issue to examine has to do with contemporary conflicts and the way this affects minority issues, especially after September 11th.

**The importance of the terms used was discussed extensively amongst the other issues, in the meetings of the N.G.O. Forum in Strasbourg, in October 2000 during the preparation (of the countries which are members of the Council of Europe) for the World Conference Against Racism.*

We consider terminology important because it affects awareness and policies. (In Strasbourg there were specific recommendations signed by the governmental representatives that do not seem to have much impact in practice, yet).

The geographic position of Greece makes the people working against racism also particularly aware of the position of Europe in the discussion of the conflicts ,especially on issues of the Middle East, Cyprus and the Balkan peninsula. The migrants and asylum seekers who come from countries with political regimes that suppress citizen 's rights, put the question of international solidarity to them and to their people at home. The Greek antiracist organizations are highly sensitized to these issues and there are a number of actions in this direction.

Finally Greece is the doorstep of **trafficking** of women, children and men, for the purpose of sexual exploitation, human organ transplants and forced labor, but especially for the sexual exploitation of women and children.

Therefore we had to lobby and to work hard on legislation that can put an end to modern forms of slavery, with special emphasis on victim protection.

The concepts, the terminology and the struggle against racism

In Greece it is rare for anybody to admit to racist ideas and practices, due to the connotations linking racism to fascism and the Nazi regime under which the country suffered for four years during the Second World War. It is also linked with the history of black slavery, at a time that there was liberation struggle in Greece (under the rule of the Ottoman Empire) so that Greeks feel a lot of sympathy for the black movement and with liberation movements in general. Also the Christian Orthodox Church considers all people children of Adam and Eve and pronounces racial ideas and racism as heretic. Therefore it is not possible to openly admit to racism, for those who profess themselves as Christians. This conceals a lot of problems behind liberal language.

In November 2001, the chairman of the Nikos Poulatzas Institute in Athens, mr.G Tsiakalos, gave three lectures on the issue of racism. The first lecture dealt with **definition of terms** in a functional way in order to assist political activity.

The second dealt with the **concepts and the language of racism.**

The third dealt with **combating racism.**

He presented the problem of Greeks not being able to structure a clear antiracist policy because they are not identifying negative practices as prejudiced or racist. What prevents this is the existence of strong beliefs according to which Greeks are “immune” to racism.

Racism is present in Greece, as the newspaper reported incidents and as we know from working within the target groups, but the preferred term used is **xenophobia**. This term conveniently **shifts the burden to the**

<other>who has to then prove that there is no threat on his part or, that the unjust treatment was not provoked.

This is the reason why so much of the institutional injustice and racism as well as police brutality play on the need for **<public security>**.

The definition of racism that was indicated as most functional by professor Tsiakalos was the one offered by **Martin Luther King**, that **“Racism is a framework of concepts, behaviors and actions which oblige people of a group to live in subordination and to have worse living conditions because they belong to this group”**.

Political or economic power can be at the root of racist legislation and active suppression of rights, even when the policy makers do not think of themselves as a “different” and “superior” race. As in the apartheid South African leaders’ ranks, there were some white policy makers who had no concept of black inferiority, but they acted in a racist way just out of the desire to favor a regime that gave them power and wealth at the expense of other human beings.

The racist theory supports the argument that there are many races which developed differently and should not be mixed because this causes degeneration of the species. These arguments were not confronted enough in Greece.

However the prevalence of these theories in foreign bibliography* used, also by scholars in Greece, and the manipulation of these theories by nationalist circles has spread poison that has affected policies over a prolonged period of time.

Modern biology might find enormously entertaining the falsified results of experiments which were included in the course books of several universities but these supposedly “scientific” conclusions unfortunately caused a lot of damage to generations of students.

Besides this, the tricky and out of context, manipulation of texts by racist writers, including quotes written by famous writers such as Voltaire or even Marx, have aimed to prove that ...everybody had racist ideas and to conscribe eventually all great thinkers, to racism; therefore it is, they conclude, right to separate people into higher and lower races and those of us who think different are, either ignorant, or members of a lower race, or have<sold out>.

The terminology used by racists is often derived from the natural or medical sciences in order to describe social issues: i.e. the terms <parasites>,< cancerous>, the terms <clean> and <pure> and the talk about purity, as well as the common expression of <waves of migrants>regarding a number of individuals, people who are migrants or *As Richard Lewontin ,professor of biology in Harvard, started to uncover since 1972 in his book “Science for the people” talking against the theories of biological determinism of Herrnstein and Jensen which were prevailing in the United States and supported by the press, given wide visibility .Also, Kamin’s uncovering of the Cyril Burt crooked evidence ,supporting the similarity of development of completely separated twins in order to prove biological determinist ideas. Kamin proved that the “evidence” was manufactured. But meanwhile great damage was done.

refugees, implying that they are a threat for others to be <drowned>.

It is interesting to observe that the manipulation of such terms and the reference to the classics who are chosen as <conscripts> according to the convenience of the moment, as well as the reference to public safety, all are **simultaneously** used in a racist incident.

On the other hand the ethnocentric racists identify themselves as <Greeksouls>, <enlightened> and other such glorified terms. Another example of language used to associate migrants and refugees with danger to the society where they come, is the use of the derogatory Greek prefix to the word migrant <lathro-> (lathrometanastes), meaning <il->, as in illegal, and referring, as a rule, to drug dealers and smugglers, used to describe people whose only crime is that they want to survive and to see their children live and grow.

Defining racism and giving it a specific content is quite important in order to fight against it and against the reproduction of its various parameters; it is also useful in order to develop specific action plans aimed to affect political parties of the progressive and/or left ideological scope, which have in the past regarded racism, not as part of the class struggle analysis, and, therefore, as an <irrelevant> issue.

This lead political parties to develop positions against equal rights and to adopt populist reasoning, such positions that expressly lead groups to submission and their lifestyles to deterioration, and is, therefore, racist. The importance of the need to address the progressive parties in order to invite them to create specific antiracist policy, so as to target institutionalized racism and so as to adopt language that does not categorize people associating them with social shortcomings, needs to be underlined.*

In conclusion, since we defined racism as the categorization of individuals in a way that leads to suppression of their rights, as citizens we should combat racism by identifying this sequence of ideology and action, especially at institutional level, whenever we are able to. This is not easy; an example was given at the lectures of some unfortunate teachers who, after a (European level) seminar, tried to disseminate their <awareness raising> and found themselves in trouble: they quoted during a presentation the example of a policeman who had arrested a 13 year old boy from Albania who had a new bike, accusing him for having stolen it, as no Albanian, in their view might possess a NEW bike.

**This is in accordance with our efforts here in Greece, by E.N.A.R. to get the democratic parties to sign the "Charter of Democratic Parties" of Europe against racism which over the last year has had successful outcome. But implementation of affirmative policies still leaves a lot to be wished)*

The boy and his parents finally managed to prove they had bought it and the policeman, upon releasing the boy, said that he had probably stolen the...money with which he bought the bike. Following the quotation of this incident, the teachers were accused by the local press of <racism against policemen>for quoting the incident.

This accusation not only attempted to diffuse the issue of the racist incident and prevented the teachers from the pedagogic use of the example, it also flattened the meaning of the word <racist>, by applying it so widely.

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The use of vocabulary in this way is similarly turning the tables presenting the victim as offenders, by associating law defying smugglers and drug dealers to migrants without papers through the use of the same prefix <lathro->.A drug incident, for example, in the North of Greece resulted not only in proposals for tighter border controls for all migrants, but also in suggestions for restricted work permits and stricter migration policies, all of them quite irrelevant to the incident.

Such generalizations provide the criminals with an enlarged moving space, since every migrant was viewed as a potential criminal, and they could be at loose and remain unpunished among so many suspects; therefore categorization and generalizations work against the security of the society that produces them*.

Professor Tsiakalos concluded that **racism should be defined in order to be combated** and racist attitudes, stereotyping, as well as racist behavior and activity, must be targeted at the same time as the **institutions** that reproduce them and which, in turn, are affected by them.

The discussions on racism in Greece are fairly limited and even a presentation of the issue often seems to offend, because of the assumption that Greeks are not racist. It is a similar assumption as the one presented to me by a Jewish friend who said once that ‘we, Jews, are so much used to seeing ourselves as victims of persecution that even if we throw bombs we still feel as victims.

**An intervention I made during a political party conference on Civil Society, where I was invited as a representative of E.N.A.R., included the proposal of hiring Albanian immigrants to the police force to combat Albanian crime which primarily affects migrants, anyway. The proposal was made as a response to the prejudice expressed there on criminality caused by migrants. This raised so much protest-it was so unthinkable to have Albanian policemen - that some people ran by my side afterwards to protect me. I was surprised though, to get congratulated by people who admitted the practice was quite successful for other migrant populations ,including Greeks, elsewhere, but they could not imagine it possibly even considered in Greece*

In a similar way, some Greeks seem often so full of their past struggles that they cannot perceive themselves as aggressors or oppressors and therefore allow space for unjust treatment by the community and the state, of minorities and migrants.

The various gallops, last year, that showed our people to be the most xenophobic population in Europe (still using the term <xenophobic>, rather than <racist>). There were also some articles comparing the positions held and demands made by people defined by Greeks as “Racists”, such as Le Pen in France, to some quite similar demands and positions of Greek politicians, of various democratic parties, which had a sobering effect for at least some people who managed to see the contradictions and to condemn them.

In Greece it is quite clear that nationalism is having effect in every party, in the whole spectrum, from the conservative to the communist. This is also reflected in the union leadership. Although some unions have taken positive steps to include migrants in their ranks, the majority of them are still indifferent or even hostile. This makes employment and insurance issues very difficult to resolve for migrants, although the rightful insurance would greatly benefit the system and the finances of the employment-related insurance schemes of the aging Greek work-market.

The E.N.A.R. round table in Greece

It is important to describe who are participating and contributing to the E.N.A.R. round table in Greece. The round table has changed to some extent since three years ago, due to greater changes and to the recent developments taking place in the Civil Society in Greece, having also consolidated its struggle.

Participating representatives at the round table on Sunday 11 November, 2001 were the following:

1. Sierra Leone National Association: Haroun Mansaray (+30102232994) and Santigi Kamara(+30108643280)
2. Antiracist Organization “Rigma”: Apergis Labros and Adreas Katsikoudis
3. European Network of Women :Niki Roubani , Aisel Zeibek(Also present were, Yvet Jarvis and Agellika Laska)

4. Albanian Union of Magnissia “Iliria”: Jonalda Premto and Eduard Tafaj(+304210484113)
5. Pontian Union of Magnissia: Kitsa Styliou and Tatiana Hatjikidi(+30 9370148144)
6. Roma Union of Magnissia : Apostolidis Theoharis(+30421086044)
7. Network for the Social Support of Migrants and Refugees: Ioanna Kourtovic and Kostas Argaliotis
8. Soudanese Community: Ahmed Moavia, Annissa Ali
9. Guana Community: Kenet Boama,Samseden Indrissu
- 10.Migrants Forum-Greece : Samseden Indrissu ,Ahmed Moavia
- 11.Iraqi Refugee Union: Beyssoun Natjach(+309770198853)
- 12.S.O.S. Racism-Greece: Adrianna Mardaki
- 13.Turkish Minority Movement: Netjat Ahmed(+330531020660),Topal Ismail
- 14.Syrian Migrants of Greece: Chanea org.Hamdan Abdoul
- 15.Syrian Migrants of Greece-Rethymno org.Ddakdouk Soule
- 16.Albanian Migrants’ Forum: Edvin Bodaki(+309380666539),feshorg@yahoo.com
- 17.Migrants’ House (Steki Metanaston)in Rethymno:Athanasios Marvakis (+30831036008,stekimetanaston@hotmail.com
- 18.Bulgarian Community in Rethymno:Slava Kostadinova,Steki Metanaston
- 19.Baglades Communjty:David Fazlul

The following were excused:

- 20.Roma Confederation: Halilopoulou Eleni
- 21.Union of Greek Catholic Youth: Barbalias George

Although not present very often at the meetings, the Roma Confederation are in close cooperation with our round table and we get invited to all their conferences and public events. The Roma Confederation is an association of about thirty organizations all over Greece. The president is Christos Lambrou and the General Secretary is Eleni Halilopoulou, participant at the E.N.A.R. General Assembly in Brussels.

The Catholic Youth are very active with Human Rights issues and against religious discrimination. They have cooperated with E.N.O.W. for the P.E.E.R. project, for creating training seminars for group building.

The Sudanese community is one of the older and more experienced communities, one of the few with second generation members. Although it represents a small number of immigrants it has contributed a lot to the proposals and lobbying for the new legislation, and to awareness raising

campaigns. Also with publications and information sharing, to the access of migrants to services related to the application of the new law.

The Network for the Social Support of Migrants is the organization which has helped the communities and the Migrants Network create the “Migrants’ house” in the center of Athens, where everybody is contributing for running the space and where a lot of our meetings and social activities take place. Also there are free lessons of the Greek language offered and the various communities get to meet and know one another. This is also the space where a lot of events are planned and where one can find the printed material of the various organizations. Also E.N.A.R.in Greece, cooperates with the Academic community and the result of this cooperation was, during this last year, that we contributed several chapters to an important book, by thirty writers - Academics, migrants and people representing organizations - which was titled “the Migrants in Greece” under the supervision of the “Nikos Poulantzas Institute”. The book was edited by three social scientists, Athanassios Marvakis, working closely with the Rethymno “Migrants House”, Milos Pavlou, working with the Ombudsman’s office and D.Parsanoglou, Historian and doctoral candidate in Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.

The issues that the network has worked on this year are many and range from awareness raising, capacity building and support services, to lobbying, especially related to legal issues. The minorities in Greece often find it difficult to perceive how working at a E.U. level, with their minimal resources, might be of benefit, when the problems at country level are so great. This is made worse by the general lack of support by institutions in Greece for grass root organizations, especially those without formal structures and formal budgets(hard to attain by people in social exclusion anyway) and the further bureaucratization of the civil movement. Therefore one of the key efforts has been towards capacity building in the organizations, using the opportunity of the P.E.E.R. project, (Paths for Empowerment of European Residents) funded by the European Commission.

LEGAL ISSUES

1.The struggle related especially to the regularization of people without residence or/and work permits.

A great number of migrants are still without papers due to the gaps in legislation which, by being so ineffective, has allowed for the exploitation of people. The majority of migrants being Albanian, makes

this the greatest concern of the Albanian Forum and supportive anti racist organizations, and a lot of time is dedicated to assisting people who are arrested, pending deportation, which in Greece has a different name meaning “sending forward”, as if it were willingly.

According to the Forum of the Albanian Immigrants in Greece and to the other migrant community associations in E.N.A.R.-Greece, the regularization of the majority of migrants who have been working for around ten years without papers, victims of all forms of exploitation and without legal protection, has been the most important issue.

The Albanian community, by far the largest migrant community in Greece, is represented by several non governmental organizations, of which the largest, the Forum, founded formally in 1998, deals with the interests of the Albanian Migrants in cooperation with the other grass root organizations.

The new law was discussed extensively by the Forum and many suggestions were made while it was still a draft, regarding several clauses that were found to be unfair, and even racist. The discussions involved many representatives from most major cities of Greece, and concerned all relevant matters, labor issues, women’s position, children’s education, family reunification, police abuse, the Press and how to sensitize the press, inverting the image the media often present as a result of xenophobic propaganda.

The Forum, in its report, said that although recently steps have been made against such phenomena as police brutality, individual racist acts, and violation of fundamental laws of the state, i.e. regarding insurance stamps which are habitually not bought for foreign workers, the situation regarding basic rights is still very much in violation of international standards. The massive deportations are still going on and the conditions of detention are still inhuman. There are great problems regarding the time limitations for the great number of papers needed for every stage of the procedure for the renewal of the residence permit, and great insecurity as far as the future is concerned.

The ‘without papers’ issue, which is a major problem in Greece, was presented in the E.N.A.R. seminar in Madrid, in December 2000, by Ioanna Kourtovic, representing the “Network for the Social Support of Migrants”, when the new legislation was still in draft form.

Mrs Kourtovic, a lawyer and activist with a long personal history in antiracist and human Rights struggles, suggested that in Greece as elsewhere, **our legal culture is being tested by our position on migration issues**, the “without papers” issue being the most crucial one for this test.

Mrs Kourtovic underlined the fact that we are tolerating in Europe with all the articulate legal systems, to keep people in jail, people who have committed no crime, for years, without any rights, just because they have no papers. "It is a form of apartheid", she stated. "In Greece, until the year 2000, 80% of the migrants were without papers. The Greek law gives 200 permits a year but a few million migrants are coming in and out through Greece. About one million, maybe more are presently here, and there have been in the past around two million "repatriations". Only 200.000 managed to get papers with the first regularization set of procedures". Mrs Kourtovic, who is also one of the writers of the book "Migrants in Greece", also commented on the problem that although **migration is a social issue, it is unfortunately regarded in Europe and in Greece as an economic one**. She also said that access to services for migrants in Greece is very difficult and without papers they cannot even get married. So many couples live together without getting married and have children who may one day have no fathers staying in the house. Also medical problems are a great concern because lately the hospitals are advised to request papers and migrants without papers are afraid to go to the doctors. One of the prerequisites for regularization of migrants is that they are in absolutely good health, which is a given fact for almost all Albanian migrants, coming from a system with free medical services, but they have to pay for all the tests in Greece and to be discriminated against, because such requirement does not exist, of course for the Greek working population, except for certain specific jobs..

The exploitation of working people has been great, and as the victims who suffer were also the witnesses who get expelled, there could be no trials or convictions. Also, 46% of the people in confinement are foreigners which does not correspond at all to criminality rates.

The article 5 of the European Convention for Human Rights allows the arrest and detention of people without specific criteria and time limits, so in Greece we have had detention of people for years, especially from Iraq, awaiting deportation even though the European court spoke about a "reasonable time".

Also Mrs Kourtovic proposed that :

Ø There should be special protection from deportation, for pregnant women, the sick, the old and the children.

Ø Detention of people who have done nothing wrong should not be allowed, it is a threat to our legal culture, in Europe, to allow this.

Also vulnerable groups should have special protection here as well.

Ø The Constitution should acknowledge the human rights of migrants

Response to the proposed new legislation regarding the regularization of migrants in Greece, we produced a document which:

Summarized the six proposals for new directives in Europe for migrants and refugees in 13 pages, readable by even people without a legal background and relating these proposals to the draft law in Greece. The undersigned had this paper checked by the organizations and circulated as a lobbying paper.

The last part referring to the draft law included the following points:

- Ø The law proposed two years of legal residence before a migrant can apply for his family to join him/her. This means that migrants whose children were even born in Greece but were not legalized so far, will be separated by their families. Also that they will not even be seeing them much, as the law allows the migrant to leave for a maximum of two months to go home. Some of these people have been staying in Greece for more than five years. One year was proposed as an alternative. The word “family” should also include dependant members such as grandparents who are not able to look after themselves, the sick members of the family and students as well as to out of marriage children and spouses.
- Ø There should be no article against employment of spouse. Given the low wages earned by migrants this would only lead to irregular employment and exploitation. This is also the root of racism as it leads working people to unfair competition and the migrants are victimized for losses of jobs by the local workers.
- Ø According to the draft the foreign worker could only obtain a permanent work permit after ten years. Considering that the proposed waiting time was far too long, we proposed three years of regular stay as it was in the “Amsterdam proposals”, after which the migrant should be considered a long term migrant, given rights similar to local employees.
- Ø An article making sure that wages should be paid to employees even in the case that they were deported, so that they would stop being exploited by certain employers.
- Ø Not to deport victims of trafficking but to protect them so they might testify.
- Ø When someone is to be deported without trial, for not having the right papers, to be given a week to look for documents.
- Ø Regarding people who are in lists of “unwanted”, because often the names given by criminals were not their own, the people affected should be able to address some department of justice to prove that they have been wrongly listed.
- Ø Medical care should be accessible for all, in emergency situations or when there is risk for permanent damage of someone’s health.

- Ø It is of paramount importance for the migrant to be able to change employer and not to be tied down to a single contract, otherwise there is a slave-master relation created.
- Ø There should be rights based rules and these rules should be applied so as to leave no space for racist attitude and corruption for public employees.

Finally the transitional stage regulations should be observed so that persons whose case has not been processed because of delays caused not out of their own omissions but due to the system weaknesses, do not get deported.

It has been very important to include in the new law the right of the public prosecutor to summon for racist behavior, without a person having to take his employer or anyone else showing racist behavior, to court. After circulating this report we answered many questions to policy makers who were not aware of many of the issues.

2.Migrant women

Migrant Women's issues were looked at and supported especially by women's organizations. Very few migrant women have joined women's N.G.O.s in Greece, because it is first generation of people who feel so insecure about their future and the legalization process that if women come from traditions where the women's movement does not exist, it takes a long time in the middle of all this, to consider the priority of their own choices. Women from Greece who are in N.G.O.s, still do not know how to approach migrant women and are looking for ways but believe migrant women are unwilling when often they are simply uninformed. In spite of that women have cooperated, even in small numbers in order to create proposals for policy makers. Some of these proposals signed by many organizations, are the following:

Regarding family violence, the most widespread and undisclosed crime on Earth according to the U.N. reports, women should be given protection. They should be able to resort to a procedure that would offer victims of violence an independent right to stay and work(art33 of the draft)This should also apply in case someone married her in order to exploit her sexually(forced prostitution), which has become a common criminal practice for traffickers.

The migrant women are not allowed to look for a job if they come for family reunification for a few years and this also means that they cannot put their little children in day care. So, they cannot attend courses to learn

the language and to generally explore their new environment. We consider that this state of complete dependence and arrest of their personal progress is unfair and damaging and should change. Migrant women should be allowed to bring when coming for work, their little children up to the age of six, without waiting for the family reunification period.

Women coming from countries where their life is in danger because of the status of women there, should be given asylum.

There should be established a regular procedure for regularization of migrants so as to minimize their unfair exploitation .

A lot of the issues regarding human trafficking ,especially of women and children for sexual exploitation but also for people to work in conditions of slavery and of others to be exploited, even killed for organ transplants, has been the subject of new legislation due to be voted in 2002, of which the key issue is the protection of victims and their safe residence in case they wanted to testify in court. All the deportations so far and the dehumanization of victims as a result of racism and sexism, since the majority are women have allowed for crime nests to be prospering. It also led to negative stereotyping of foreign women. Some young women have even committed suicide. This is now seen as a major issue in Greece and efforts are made for adequate legal tools, for raising public awareness and for S.O.S. lines. Particularly important is the abuse of children. Therefore the new proposed legislation must seek prevention, prosecution and protection, the three “P.s”, adequately.

3.The new legislation

The new law was passed in the spring of 2001, with a few of our remarks being acknowledged. It affects entry, work, residence, expulsion and the regularization of migrants without permits. It also affects the possibility of acquisition of citizenship, which is not a right but a possibility at the discretion of the authorities. Finally it affects bilateral country agreements for temporary workers. One important decision in Parliament, after much negotiation, was not to tie the work permit to one single employer. As the procedure is now, the alien wanting to come into Greece has to be invited by an employer who offers him/her a contract, undertakes all the expenses including repatriation in case that the authorities decide not to grant him a residence permit for one year and also produces a bank statement where three months salaries have been deposited. Only then does the alien apply for a vis a to

come into the country. When he/she gets to Greece follow the applications for work permit by the prefecture and of residence permit by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior. The alien, therefore is not permitted, on principal, to enter the country to look for a job. If his/her occupation were tied to one employer this would amount to near-slavery. But the Parliament finally decided that it is possible during the one year of the permit to change employer. The applicants who are already in the country had to submit the application for a residence permit to the municipality of their residence and to show proof that they had been in Greece for at least a year. For renewal, they have to apply at least two months before their visa expires.

One of the issues that was regulated worse by the new law was that of family reunification. They are given this right after two years of residence, and fortunately the first proposal that there would be no work permit for spouses was changed, as it would simply mean illegal work and exploitation of migrants. But the mother and father of the migrant are not considered family, nor children who might be not minors but have health problems and are dependent on the parents for survival. The 1997 law allowed those with a five year 'green card' to bring their parents. Also it is not clear in the new law, what happens to school graduates who are not minors any longer, and who want to continue their education and life in Greece where they have been living and going to school.(Family reunification issues are still discussed at E.U.level and no decision has been reached by the Council yet so as to promote a common policy.)

Renewing the work permit and residence permit every year for six years is costly and time consuming. After the sixth year the permit is granted by the ministry of Interior for two years only, while the spirit of the proposals at the European level is to have after five years a much more simple procedure for "long duration" migrants who may be treated the same as E.U.workers.

The new law had some significant improvement in that the issues of migration are no longer the domain of the Ministry of Public Order and the police. It has been transferred to the Ministry of Interior and the Prefectures and Municipalities. The importance of this cannot be underestimated; the role of the police in crime detection as well as prejudice prevailing within the police, discouraged migrants as well as other victims of racism from claiming their rights and characterized the issue of migration as a security issue, which created more prejudice. Also it created grounds for police corruption as there were cases of blackmail, bribery and other crimes detected by the Internal Affairs department, a

new department which the present minister has created to combat this problem. The Internal Affairs report showed that half the cases last year were related to aliens.

Therefore the new procedure carries a serious improvement. The application of the new improvement, though, has had its problems. Different ministries are involved in the regularization process, among which there is a lack of coordination and cooperation.

There is a lack of information and training and the deadlines were short and hard to keep, which created the necessity of offices to service migrants and employers of migrants, some of which charge a lot of money.

Because there has been no adequate training and awareness raising of public employees or adequate hiring of new staff, the handling of the regularization procedure, which involved much paperwork and was given very little time, created huge queues, confusion and frustration.

In fact some companies which were contracted to assist, only had a temporary role, and the expertise gained in the process is now lost to the public sector, while if the staff of the public sector were trained, their skill-upgrading would present a very substantial platform of permanently improving expertise.

The problem of employment related insurance was and still is, particularly stressful for migrants. Unfortunately there are many employers who do not insure migrants, and especially women and the young, if they can get away with it. If, on the other hand, there is any move to complain, people are simply sacked.

The subject of non compliance of employers to the law, regarding occupational insurance, is even more unjust for the migrants because, if they do not possess the right number of stamps, by the end of the year, they cannot renew their residence permit and consequently, many of them have to buy their own stamps. Also there is the disincentive of the waiting lines (for being law abiding), which are such, that people have to lose many working hours, waiting for hours and even days.

Even for people in the cleaning professions, (usually women,) the new law allows a procedure by which their (part time) employers can insure them, but the bureaucracy and the waiting lines for the people who want to have a cleaner once a week or twice a month is such, that they refuse to do it and look for cleaners who accept to work without the insurance.

What we are proposing is to have an ongoing process for the regularization of migrants and for their insertion in the best way in Greek society. As the professor of Economics, Mrs. A.Lyberaki, was saying (at the closing of a conference against racism convened through the efforts of E.M.P. Anna Karamannou), there are reasons for the regularization and insertion of the migrants, both negative and positive: “negative, so as not

to create conflict and exploitation, and positive, because difference is more interesting than homogeneity. It is revitalizing for any society to draw strength from different groups. It also help create skills of communication with whoever we consider the 'other' - not with our mirrors- which increases social confidence and solidarity”.

Finally, the perspective that was proposed by the antiracist organizations seems to be still missing from the law reform (maybe throughout the E.U., but certainly in Greece): **A clear antiracist policy supported by all the, so called, progressive parties.** As long as there is no such policy, real progress cannot be achieved. This allows the arguments of racist ideology to influence the unaware and to feed the misinformed nationalism of citizens prohibiting solidarity and democracy and causing conflict and damage through prejudice.

4.The Minorities

The position of minorities has improved overall, over the last year. There is room for improvement especially on issues regarding religious rights that are still under discussion and the educational parameters must continue to improve, but it is a much better situation compared to a few years ago.

The Turkish speaking minority in Thrace have met with a particular problem because of the new legislation on regularization of migrants: In order to resolve the status problem of those members of the minority who were deprived in the past of their nationality,(see the 1999 report on racism in Greece) the law is offering them **the same status as to the migrants through the regularization procedure.** This is quite unfair because these people were born as Greek citizens, do not have and cannot have, any other nationality. Because the status of these people has remained such, they have had a number of legal problems and have been unable to access services, to keep their businesses, to be creative instead of running around trying to resolve their situation, many of them suffer severe hardship which is also affecting their health. It is of paramount importance to have their nationality given back to them, as soon as possible, in a straightforward way. This would be proof of wanting a peaceful and rights based society in Thrace.

Letters which have been sent to the Ministers by the target group individuals, and lobbying by E.N.A.R., still remain unanswered.

5. Proposals regarding the application of the new law

The present law came to its substitution as a result of a great deal of campaigns and negotiations, initiating the second round of the regularization process for migrants.

Following the first months of the application of the new law, there have been meetings in 2001 and early in 2002, which have indicated the following points:

Ø The law is looking at the migrants as if they were only workers, not people. They must be absolutely healthy and working, therefore, “useful”. There are health tests that the local population do not have to take but migrants have to, when the health of migrants is often better than the indigenous people’s due to the high prioritization of health services in the former socialist regime that existed in most people’s countries of origin.

Since they are usually regarded as workers, not as persons, the suggestion of protecting them from unemployment, for protecting maternity, for legal protection is, therefore, “irrelevant” and not discussed by policy makers. Moreover:

Ø The work permit should not be necessary as the requirements are similar as for the residence permit. The procedure just adds to the queues and the expenses.

Ø There are very few information services for minorities in Greece, which means the migrants have to pay for a lot of services in order to get their papers up to date. Services must be provided at local authority level. The income from the fee deposited by the migrants should have reached the sum of 60 mil Euros of which only 15% goes to the local authorities. Where does the rest go? Shouldn’t some of it be allocated to services for the migrants? The new law has given rights to the migrants without the necessary infra structure for these rights.

Ø Welfare services: In Greece a lot of the welfare services are still assigned to the extended family (especially to unpaid work by older women) and as migrants do not have this support, the lack of services is uncovering the weaknesses of the whole system. It is a time that there are two opposite trends, one for the improvement of social services, especially at local level and another to have cuts and less personnel in the public sector. Minorities and migrants are caught in the middle of this and are not a priority for the policy makers, who are primarily interested in voters.

Refugees: The refugee situation is caused to a certain extent by their country’s local conditions and also by the instability caused worldwide by

globalization, therefore it has to be dealt with at many levels. Governments in Europe including Greece, are seeing the situation often in a “technical” way, classifying refugees not according to their needs and to the danger their lives have been in, but according to the narrow interest as seen by short sighted economic and nationalist criteria. From the past we know that refugees can be a contribution to a country. For example, the one and a half million Ethnic Greek refugees that Greece had to host; from Asia Minor in the 1920s and later, were a temporary shock at the beginning, but a tremendous boost to the development of the country later. Besides, Greece has sent refugees to other European countries in the late sixties and early seventies, during the military regime, up to 1974, some of whom are now politicians (even ministers), but seem to have forgotten what having to run away for your life, is. It is imperative that certain groups of refugees should be seen according to the conditions in their countries of origin. We are fighting against measures, though, such as those in Denmark where psychologists are employed not to assist but to learn the “truth” from children as to the country of origin, and also, we say “**no**” to closed detention centers, such as in Germany.

Some of the problems regarding refugees are the following:

- Ø Only a small percentage is given full refugee status, even for those few who are admitted to stay.
- Ø A lot of mayors do not allow for the proper services to be provided to asylum seekers when they get to Greece, by boat.
- Ø The social services have received funding for the medical assistance to refugee status seekers but the way medical care is given is not always proper, i.e. people are inoculated for diseases without having previously had blood tests. Also they are not being given any certificate, which means they might get more shots of the same, in the future. N.G.O.s are asking for blood tests which cost next to nothing and for a two language(Greek and English) certificate.

The centers for the temporary residence of refugees should be in the cities, where N.G.O.s can reach and assist them, not in some remote village(i.e. as on mountain Olympous and in Sperchiada,) where none speaks to them, can do nothing, and feel in exile.

Proposed amendments to the legislation

Now there is a new draft for the amendment of certain points such as the one regarding **deportation when the regularization process has started** but not been concluded due to the delays of the system. The amendments though are still quite legalistic in approach, there is the Human Rights approach still missing.

The proposals of the Roma organizations.

In May 2001 there was a three day conference on the Roma issues comprising the following topics:

- ü housing,
- ü employment,
- ü civil status,
- ü education, and finally,
- ü issues related to globalization and identity.

The conference was organized by a committee including the City Network

on Roma Issues, “Rom Network”, and the Confederation of Roma organizations, as well as the universities of Ioannina and Pantion.

E.N.A.R. representatives were invited to participate and here are some of the conclusions and suggestions of the conference, which started its works with the beautiful music of the Roma Byzantine Quire.

All problems are interrelated as a result of social exclusion of the Roma and reproducing, in turn, social exclusion. This does not mean that they must be postponed or referred from one authority to another, they must be tackled immediately and at many levels which will make long, medium and short - term solutions viable.

Housing: In the year 2000, out of the one and a half billion drachmas approved, only 5% was given for the improving the housing conditions of the Roma. About 55% was given for infrastructure and cannot be evaluated, and 31.7% was given to “other”, quite irrelevant purposes. By looking at the proposals made by the local authorities regarding future funding the range is, from well founded proposals, to others showing that there is no understanding of the needs.

There is a need for the creation of new housing units, and also for areas with the necessary infra structure, where the families may camp temporarily for working in agricultural and other short - term jobs. There is also need for city planning and expansion of infra structure, for loans and for allocation of land for meeting the needs of the housing of the Roma families. The absolute minimum space sought for each person is 10 square meters. The local authorities are requested to play a major role for the application of the proposed policies. The participation of the population affected by the planning and implementation is absolutely essential. It is important to create small neighborhoods, not to force

people into large units that may become ghettos. Taking into account the need for temporary hosting of relatives, there should be space allocated for temporary residence of families which can also act as a reserve space for future expansion. The number of families concerned is calculated to be around 10.000.

According to a study accepted by the Roma organizations around 80-100 new neighborhoods must be created for housing around 4.000 families (45 bil g.drach.s) and around 1.200 families need improvements(3-4 billion drach.s)The total cost is estimated in the area of 60 billion or 177million Euros.

Employment: The interventions related to employment have foreseen an increase in the Roma unemployment as many of the existing professions are now disappearing or taken by other groups, as the new coming migrants.

Many Roma are experienced in door to door trade, and in repair professions which are now limited. Most of those in trade are without formal permits, due partly to the fact that they do not have information on how to get them. The Roma are mostly self employed and irregularly employed. They are insecure, have to move about a lot and start working from childhood. These factors result in maintaining the social exclusion of the Greek Roma.

Employment policies should be seen in an integrated way, related to education, vocational training, business development, and access to salaried employment where the Roma participation is small.

Carrier orientation and professional training as well as life long training must depend on studying the general tendencies of employment and the continuous study of the Roma population.

Quotas for professional training should be set. Also facts such as the early marriages and starting of a family that interrupts their training must be taken into account. Sandwich courses that include paid training with insurance, is suitable, as with all vulnerable groups. Tax and insurance relief affirmative measures have also been suggested. The experience and talents of the Roma in trading, should be built upon. There should be more Roma mediators trained and employed in order to combat effectively the social exclusion especially in the areas of: health services, citizen's advice bureaus, youth centers, and employment advice bureaus. The participation of the Roma organizations in the drafting of these plans is very important.

Civil status: There were a number of proposals related to the civil status of the Roma population without proper papers. This causes a great deal of trouble to poor uneducated Roma who do not "exist" in legal terms, so

their situation must be changed and there must be prevention measures for the future.

Education: The inclusion of the Roma to education depends very much on their inclusion in other sectors, especially in housing, in employment, situation of civil status and of health.

It is important to see the Roma education policy as an integral part of the general education policy. Pre-school education is very important to the development of the children and there should be measures for creation of adequate nurseries, funding to the local authorities to cover the fees for the poor families and measures for the transportation of the children.

Also Roma parents should be informed and sensitized as well as the local community for the long term benefits of the community from Roma education. The role of the parents in helping with the homework is, in Greece, quite complementary to the school, and the parents of the Roma children cannot be given this role as many are illiterate. Therefore, there should be supportive structures for all the children who need it, with support study groups. Also, there must be study rooms as the Roma living conditions are often such that do not allow the children to prepare for school. There have been children studying by the street lamps.

Finally it is quite important to look at the curricula from the Roma perspective for the inclusion of activities and perspectives that make visible the cultural capital of the Roma, focus on characteristics of bilingual education, look at health education, and enhance musical education and art education against racism. The awareness raising and upgrading of skills of a larger number of educators and the employment of the trained educators in schools where there are Roma children will help the improvement of the numbers of Roma children who stay on and finish school.

Awareness raising

There have been a number of human rights and antiracist festivals to which the organizations participating in our Round Table have either contributed or have themselves organized.

There were events against racism, or the rights of children, for the rights of Roma, against trafficking of human beings and against all forms of discrimination. The yearly antiracist festival organized in Athens produced leaflets and encouraged a lot of discussions to which thousands of people participated. It was organized by the Network of migrant and refugee communities and the Network for the Social Support for Migrants and Refugees, and all the antiracist organizations participated.

Peace education

E.N.O.W. also coordinated the activities in Greece of a large international network for Peace Education, involving teachers, peace experts and youth organizations from conflict areas. Greece was chosen as the site for the events because of the contribution Greece can make to the idea of Truce, related to the Olympic Games. The project has been working for two years with educators, parents and youth from Serbia and Kosovo, the communities of Palestine and Israel, Cyprus (both communities), Ireland, France, (with school including large numbers of migrant children, South Africa, (Zoulou school for children with special needs), Egypt, e.t.c. In July 2001, 200 children and 100 adults and youth participated in the events which comprised art and sports for 11 to 12 year old children. The international media as well as media from the concerned communities covered the events, giving a lot of people hope for a peaceful coexistence and fighting prejudice by showing the face of the "other". It has been quite touching that even during the fights, in Israel the two schools involved in the project, the Jewish and the Palestinian have kept meeting every week, cultivating a little garden which is their local project. The next meeting for Games in Greece is planned for 2003 and training is continued this year.

This project was mentioned as the greatest example of support against racism by Greece, by the Sub Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban in August 2001.

Awareness raising

Festivals organized locally by the migrant communities against Racism have been very successful this year and as there is no funding from any public sources, a lot of volunteer work was involved. In Athens this festival has taken place for several years, but in other places it was for the first time. The great success of the festival in Rethymno, Crete where the local people saw migrants from Albania, Bulgaria, Syria, Romania, e.t.c., dancing to the music of their own musicians as well as to Greek music, for the first time, had great impact and was very empowering to the migrants themselves. The local authorities have offered the space and a dinner for coordinators of the conference. This was also a first positive step for migrant involvement in local authority lobbying, as a result of the P.E.E.R. project. It also brought more people to join the "Migrants House" groups.

In Magnesia the Albanian Migrant organization <Iliria> started lobbying for a right to the Albanian language as a choice in the schools, as a continuation of lobbying relevant to the Strasbourg intergovernmental conference decisions last autumn, regarding the educational parameters of the antiracist action plan, as proposed by the N.G.O. forum.

The P.E.E.R. project

The project was of particular importance to the organizations in Greece, because it gave the chance for numerous contacts, meetings and seminars, and involved people at many levels. It offered the chance to develop communication tools and lobbying tools and it allowed for travelling to empower organizations in different parts of Greece, which is time consuming and expensive, as Greece is a mountainous country with a lot of islands. A lot of people were involved in the project and the results were quite rewarding.

Conditions:

- Ø Under insecure conditions and with travelling limitations(migrants must show documents when travelling internally) because of the inadequate legal framework that exists in Greece. We were also faced with the unwillingness of the Belgian authorities to grant Visas to people with perfectly legal papers, for participation at European Level work on the project.
- Ø With the N.G.O.s being extremely busy to do support and advise work, necessary because of the inadequate structures which were provided by the authorities to support the last legalization process
- Ø With previous experience that suggested interactive building of the project, in order to combat horizontal prejudice and ignorance among participants.

The method was simple: We combined team building, communication and lobbying seminars. Everything people found useful was put on paper, translated, proof read, discussed, simplified, translated again.

We managed however to have a great time and to forge bonds among people, as in Greece the immigrants are first generation and besides advocacy work the first need is to empower and help the networking and connection of the work done throughout the country. Also, there were people who found the courage to stand up and talk for the first time in public. Others, directed discussions, did lobbying (it was done by people who did not know how to do it in the past)and drafted reports.

About eighty people from different age groups, both genders, from all the participating communities and from the Turkish speaking organization in Thrace, have attended. Many of them several different seminars, others only one.

There were three seminars in Nea Ionia, Magnesia (near Volos), three in Rethymno and many in Athens, in three of which there was national representation and in one, also three people from Cyprus(educators)were trained. In Cyprus we are empowering bi-communal contacts and have joined a bi-communal civil society project on human rights education.

Follow up:

- Ø A publication in Greek, English, Albanian, Russian, maybe Turkish as well.
- Ø A summer camp in Crete .
- Ø A formal closing of the project

Trafficking of Human Beings

One of the issues that we are currently working on is the modern forms of enslavement and the trafficking of human beings which we consider as the most appalling of international crimes.

Its victims are mainly women, many of them teenager girls, and children of both genders. This hideous trade that goes on in Greece or through Greece, concerns mainly girls and boys from the Eastern European countries.

There are women who first become victims of deception through ads which look completely innocent, then get sold several times, are terrorized and raped, often blackmailed to believe that their family will be suffering injuries if they do not submit, their documents being taken away, so that they end up imprisoned in some place unknown to them. The children are put to the streets for begging or their organs get sold, or, they are promoted to the sexual trade like the women. Children are reported to start with a first sale price of \$300 plus \$150 for virginity, and they end up with a price tag of thousands of dollars after they are sold off several times.

Women are obliged by their captors to see dozens of men every day, as many as sixty or seventy, often without condom for higher prices, and their slave masters claim the money for “expenses” until their “debt” is paid off.

Every now and then they get moved to different places, sold off again, so that they cannot establish any contact with anyone who might help them. SOMETIMES THEY MAY NOT EVEN KNOW THE NAME OF THE COUNTRY THEY ARE IN. When the police sometimes find them, they are deported and there is no way they can testify against their traffickers who are well supported by legal firms, paying high fees.

Our goal is to get information to the women in the high- risk countries for the **prevention** of the crime. Women and parents must get to know and to mistrust innocent-looking advertisements (seeking workers, artists or brides for marriages, etc.) and to have ways of insuring the safety of the people who seek to emigrate. Therefore the authorities responsible and **the policy makers concerned with immigration policies**, of the more economically developed countries have to find responsible ways of

dealing with migrants so as to prohibit exploitation of women and children by traffickers and the international crime.

The next duty of the countries where the women and children get trafficked is to pass **legislation** that will be effectively combating this crime, punishing the traffickers and the user of such services, especially when minors are involved, because users are part of the developing demand for this crime and it is often they who knowingly transmit disease demanding not to use protective condoms.

It is particularly important **to secure protection** including safe accommodation, legal and medical support and psychological assistance **to the women and children victims**, giving them the option to testify against their tormentors. This is not only a just social remedy but also the only way to secure witnesses against the traffickers. They may be given the option to go back home after they are offered the initial medical care but if they are deported, the traffickers will walk free and usually they recapture the frightened victims and take them back to a different or even the same country. There are women who tell us they were forced to get back over the mountains three or four times and there are women who have died in these routes from the exposure to the cold, and fatigue.

Finally, this trade which is calculated to bring to the traffickers enormous gains, linked also to drugs and firearms sales, is ground **for corruption** for public employees, because the bribing of authorities is a relatively minor cost to the international crime involved. This has indirect effect on the social cohesion and the security of every citizen of every European country, which in our opinion is one more reason that makes it a concern for all of us.

The European Network of Women in Greece is committed to the elimination of this crime and would collaborate with every agency which has the same goal, aiming to sensitise policy makers, Public Authorities, N.G.O.s, the Press and to also influence international policies to this end.

Some problems related to our cooperation at European level.

It is very important for the anti-racist movement in Greece to get connected with networks at E.U.level, in order to work together for the improvement of the position of minorities and migrants and victims of racism, through exchange of experience and formation of strong European level policies. The **conditions** for our work at local and European level are always the first thing we review critically because they either enhance or they make our work more difficult.

The European level policies against racism require in Greece a different approach as it is not meeting the same challenges with countries where migrants have been part of the Union movement and the Civil Rights movement, for several generations, or /and countries where the Welfare Systems are more inclusive and where migrants speak the language because of past colonialism and present economic colonization. In Greece we have very few migrants who speak Greek when they arrive,(of Greek descent) and also, very few Greeks speak Albanian or Russian.

Another problem is that the traveling within Greece for the representatives of the groups, because of the mountainous landscape and the islands, is more difficult, which makes phone bills higher and contacts more expensive and time consuming. This is made more problematic by the fact that new technologies are still a luxury for Greek salaried people and still very few individuals, let alone the poorer migrants, have any access to computers.

These facts are not usually taken into account when people outside Greece are devising European level action plans, projects and project evaluation general criteria. This creates many problems for our organizations, especially as the Greek government does not support the running costs of organizations and especially of antiracist N.G.O.s which do not reflect prospects for votes .Most Greek authorities would actually prefer not to acknowledge any grass root organizations of migrants and minorities, due to the inadequacies of the system which is still young compared to the other countries. Therefore, for our organizations, when cornered between the local indifference and the E.U. bureaucracy, it is difficult to keep E.U.level cooperation going.

The recent requirements, to take an example example, of participation to Action Plans, do not take into consideration this parameter. Moreover, regarding our participation in the E.N.A.R., which is very important for keeping a E.U. dimension to our work, the required by the Commission justifications are the same for all countries, but we know well that “same” does not mean “equal”. For example, spending justifications for all

E.N.A.R. round tables, as requested by the E.U. Commission, was exactly the same for all the round tables. As if the conditions in Holland were the same as in Greece.

This does not help the N.G.O.s here to establish a credible European level work in Greece. So, we may ask, when we get a long form to complete in exactly the prescribed way: Who is supposed to write (no staff) on which computer in what voluntary time the exact 10% for the sum that should have been spent here and 5% there and 25% elsewhere, when the needs have been incredibly varied. The decisions taken in an office in Brussels hardly reflect the reality of Greek N.G.O.s., which is a kind of uninformed behavior on the part of the officials.

Another problem is that the required sophisticated applications and reports targeting large projects and organizations, take away from other commitments demanding voluntary work. Commitments such as services and legal advice, which are more highly prioritized here, as there are no paid staff.

Participating in projects is necessary, but we wish for smaller, more user-friendly projects, near the grass root organization needs. Now, it means a lot of voluntary work for writing and coordinating and helping the evaluation, which is very taxing on the other, political and support work of the organizations. Also, reports are another problem. They do not necessarily reflect the result, they reflect the know-how of presenting results that may not even be truthful. We hope for E.U. officials to realize that efficiency is in the actual result, not in the presentation of it and that, if all countries are treated bureaucratically the same, then we have discrimination by neglect (neglecting to look at specific needs).

These concerns are expressed by many, though openly by fewer.

The situation in the poorer South of Europe and in countries like Greece and Ireland for example, must be handled with more sensitivity.

Especially when we are dealing with issues of prejudice we should remove some prejudiced obstacles and one positive thing in our working at E.U. level is that we are given this opportunity.

We may say, in conclusion, that we are not happy with the advanced bureaucratization which is silencing the grass root movement and really judges only who knows how to use the Commission language in order to find convincing arguments, which we all know, especially the Commission, that as an activity has no real effect upon people suffering from discrimination.