

# **National Analytical Study on Racist Violence and Crime**

**RAXEN National Focal Point for Greece**

ANTIGONE  
Information & Documentation Centre  
on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non Violence

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1948 the UN member states formally declared their opposition to any form of discrimination based on biological or cultural differences by stating in Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Since then two covenants – the Civil and Political Rights, and the Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 – elaborated on this statement and in 1963 the UN adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination stating that racial discrimination is not only a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, but "an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and as a fact capable of disturbing the peace and security among peoples".

The European Union considering racism as a “major challenge for European societies” and acknowledging “high levels of racist incidents and discrimination”<sup>1</sup> acted by introducing Article 13 in the EC Treaty and thus allowing the adoption of European legislative and other measures to combat discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin and religion or belief. Later, the Council of Ministers adopted the Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 and the Equality in Employment Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November to be transposed into national law in 2003 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

Greece’s legal provisions in the area of racial discrimination and racial violence are minimal, although the transposition of the two EU directives is expected by late 2003. However, law alone is not sufficient: some real political will, along with public education programmes, will be needed for the minimisation of racial conflict. A serious gap in Greece lies with the deficit of information and data on issues of racial conflict: in the absence of computerised court data or systematic recording by the police of crimes with a racial content, there is almost total reliance upon mass media reporting along with NGO investigation and reports. These are hardly reliable methods for accurate evaluation of the situation.

The problem of data comparability across the EU is a serious one; we adopt here an analytic framework which might serve to facilitate comparison. At the very least, it enables a more thorough analytical approach by distinguishing types of racial violence, along with some specific subcategories. The four main types are: attacks on the person; damage to property; threats against the person; and abuse aimed at the person.

Using all available evidence, we conclude that overall levels of racial violence are not yet at significant levels in Greece, whereas the subcategory<sup>2</sup> of police and border-guards is worryingly visible. The incidents recorded are mainly physical violence by police against Roma, and physical violence against immigrants by border-guards. There are also reports in another sub-category, of detention conditions<sup>3</sup>, although conditions seem slowly to be improving.

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<sup>1</sup> “An Action Plan Against Racism”, Brussels, 25.03.1998, COM(1998) 183 final.

<sup>2</sup> “Police and border-guards” is subcategory [A1] of the main type of racial violence “Attacks on the person” [A].

<sup>3</sup> “Detention conditions” is subcategory [A2] of the main type of racial violence “Attacks on the person” [A].

Damage to property principally seems to concern Roma for private property, and Jewish cemeteries/monuments for the subcategory of religious buildings.

Threats against the person again seem to concern the Roma, although there were two recorded incidents in 2002 concerning immigrants. There is extensive reporting of incidents in the sub-category of forced prostitution and forced beggary, particularly when involving minors<sup>4</sup>. This area has been highlighted by international US reports, in two of which Greece was harshly denounced. The formal legal provisions to deal with the problems are now in place, and there is some evidence to suggest that progress has already been made in dealing with the problems.

Finally, abuse aimed at the person has not appeared as a major issue, other than a rather unsatisfactory court case in Patras, again involving Roma. Another aspect of it, consisting of racist or antisemitic graffiti, has been taken up by Greek Helsinki Monitor, most notably in an Open Letter to the Prime Minister. The significance of this area is that not only is it personally offensive, but also constitutes incitement to racial violence. Law 927/1979 prohibits such; but this law has never been used by a public prosecutor. There remains a serious question, therefore, about Greece's socio-political acceptance of its only law on racial violence.

Five policy recommendations are made, with the aims of more accurately recording data for adequate knowledge of the situation; training and setting codes of conduct for border-guards and police; reforming and modernising legal provisions; and public awareness raising and education issues. At this time, racial violence does not look a serious problem in comparison with the rest of the EU: however, future developments could rapidly change this situation, and pro-active measures might avert possible racial conflict.

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<sup>4</sup> "Forced prostitution and beggary" is subcategory [C1] of the main type of racial violence "Threats against the person" [C].

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. AIM AND NATURE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to provide a starting point for the systematic documentation and exploration of the issue of racial violence and discrimination in Greece. In fact it should be treated more as an “analytical report”, rather than as an “analytical study”, which in view of the problems mentioned below and the limitations of the current project is not realistically feasible. The absence of both official statistical data and primary scientific research on the topic of racial violence and discrimination in Greece does not allow us to provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of racial violence, as it unfolds during the successive historical transformations of Greek society in the context of the RAXEN project.

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

- Absence of official statistical data; where some data do exist, they have usually not been statistically elaborated (raw data); also, public authorities tend to provide them selectively requiring special permissions that are granted after long bureaucratic processes.
- Absence of relevant Greek research literature.
- Problems with the quality of the data provided by NGOs, as their level of organisation and mode of operation do not allow them to record verifiable and consistent information.
- The need to rely on media for reports of incidents of racial violence, due to the absence of public monitoring mechanisms; some of these reports were verified by addressing the competent authorities, but this process has proved to be extremely time consuming, while in some cases authorities invoking the personal data protection legislation refuse to give information to third parties, such as the NFP.

The present study relies heavily on data collected during 2001, while an effort has been made to analyse data covering the period up to the end of October 2003.

## 1.2. ORAGANISATION OF THE STUDY

We follow the framework laid down in the RAXEN 4 guidelines, although some sections are slightly longer than envisaged. We hope that the discursive nature of most of this material justifies slightly longer discussion in the case of Greece, where little coherent policy or even data-collection exists. More background material is included in two Appendices, covering vulnerable social groups – Appendix A – and definitional discussions on the term “racial violence” by other NFPs – Annex B.

## 2. RACISM IN GREECE: POLITICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The appearance of a significant and therefore “visible” number of foreigners (either as migrants or as refugees) is a new feature of Greek society and therefore there is no evidence of xenophobic or racist attitudes or incidents in past decades nor is there any relevant research literature. In this sense it is very difficult to understand and interpret adequately the recently documented<sup>5</sup> rise in racism without resorting to oversimplifications and generalisations referring to the presumed fear reaction of a community – Gemeinschaft – towards the ‘Other’, although such interpretations abound in media debates. It would therefore seem to be more productive to probe for the multidimensional causes and nature of racism in the socialization processes forming the dominant “national – ethnic” ideology that actively promotes the image of a unified and homogenous community.

The formation of ethnic identity is a process involving “...a number of forces: social exclusion and stigma and political resistance to them, distinctive cultural and religious heritages as well as new forms of culture, communal and familial loyalties, marriage practices, coalition of interests and so on.”<sup>6</sup>

Since the achievement of national independence in 1830, the Greek state engaged in a vigorous nation building process that required a powerful national myth moulding the multiple traditions and different collective memories into a unifying scheme: Thus “...the historical trajectory of the nation has been traced in a linear form and without ruptures or discontinuities from antiquity to modernity. Thus, any changes, which have marked the past and the history of the national community, have been re-constructed in such a way that the nation is represented as a homogeneous and compact unit. In contrast to contemporary times that Greece appears as a nation-state, the Greek nation survived through the centuries within a number of different political formations such as the great Empires (Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman), which succeeded each other in the region. Nationality was thus defined as the expression of genealogical descent and in direct reference to the glorious past of Themistocles, Pericles and Alexander the Great.”<sup>7</sup> This national myth was easily transformed into a powerful irredentism that fuelled the successive expansions of the Greek state at the expense of its neighbours throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while also serving as a political strategy to relieve popular discontent.

In this way Greeks have learned to feel different from, but also superior to all their neighbours, Turks, Albanians, Bulgarians and Serbs not only in terms of ethnicity and religion, but because they could make no claim on the universally acclaimed classical

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<sup>5</sup> EUMC (2001), “Attitudes towards minority groups in the EU: a special analysis of the Eurobarometer 2000 survey”, p. 12

<sup>6</sup> Modood T., Beishon S. and Virdee S. (1994), *Changing Ethnic Identities*, Policy Studies Institute, p. 120 available at <http://www.psi.org.uk/publications/ETHNIC/identity.htm> (09/09/2002)

<sup>7</sup> Triandafyllidou, A., Calloni, M. and Mikrakis, A. (1997) 'New Greek Nationalism', *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 2, no. 1, available at <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/2/1/7.html> (12/09/2002)

Greek culture. Nationalist sentiments are strong in Greece and nurtured further both by the educational system and by the political parties not only as a means of keeping the voters' attention away from serious economic and social problems<sup>8</sup>, but also as a means of using “glories of the past to recompense for the failures and dissatisfaction of the present”.

In a speech delivered in Northern Greece in 1989 the former President of the Hellenic Republic M. Sartzetakis defined the Greek nation as “anadelphon” –alone, without siblings–, a neologism that encapsulates the essence of modern Greek nationalist ideology and hints to the link between the Greek nationalist ideological discourse and the current manifestations of racism, xenophobia and intolerance in Greek society.

The study of ethnic myths and nationalist discourses can only partially account for phenomena of racism and intolerance. In addition it is necessary to examine the social, legal, economic, political or demographic factors that may contribute in the creation of a climate of hostility<sup>9</sup> and furthermore, the social groups expressing hostility towards the “other”, especially the “*Modernisierungsverlierer* (“modernity losers”) —young, elderly, uneducated, farmers, and unskilled and semi-skilled workers— who have purportedly turned en masse to the parties of the new radical right in an “expression of protest over unrepresented political demands”.<sup>10</sup> This element needs to be examined particularly carefully in Greece with unemployment levels fluctuating constantly at a high level of 10.5% - 11.5% for the past decade and affecting primarily the above-mentioned groups.

### 3. THE EXTREME RIGHT IN GREECE

The traditional topographic classification of the political spectrum into a “right”, a “centre” and a “left” was absent from Greek politics dominated by issues linked to the nation building process and economic reform (transition from an agrarian to a modern economy) until almost the interwar years. The two main political forces dominating Greek politics until World War II were then categorised according to their policies vis-à-vis the modernisation drive, however, both adopted in different ways the national myth and irredentist aspirations.

During the political cum economic crisis of the 1930s General I. Metaxas using a threatened general strike by the communists as pretext, persuaded the king on Aug. 4, 1936, to suspend key articles of the constitution. This was the beginning of a dictatorship which lasted four and a half years, till the occupation of the country by the Axis forces, in 1941.

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<sup>8</sup> Mouzelis, N. (1978) “Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment”, New York: Holmes & Meier. p. 135

<sup>9</sup> Saxton G. (2001) “The Origins of Socially and Politically Hostile Attitudes to Immigrants and Outgroups: Economics, Ideology, or National Context?”, available at <http://www.acs.brockport.edu/~gsaxton/Politics&Policy.pdf> (01/09/2002)

<sup>10</sup> Dalton, R. (1990) “Germany Transformed: Public Opinion and German Studies.” *German Studies Review* p. 174

The Metaxas dictatorship is heralded by most historians as the first appearance of the extreme right in Greece. However, the strong economic and political links to Britain coupled with Italy's aggressively expansionist policies did not allow the regime to align with either the Italian or German regimes established during the same period. On the contrary soon after the outbreak of the II WW Italy invaded Greece forcing Metaxas into a defensive war that was soon to become an anti-fascist struggle mobilising the entire population and resulting into a counter offensive and the defeat of the Italian forces in Albania.

During the German occupation of Greece the communist party organised the partisan movement and gradually became identified with the struggle for national liberation invoking memories of the Greek revolt against the Ottoman Empire. After the war as the conflict between the pro-communist and anti-communist escalated leading eventually to the bitter three-year civil war (1946-1949) both sides laid claim to the same nationalist ideology.

Greece emerged from the civil war as a "dual society": the defeated pro-communist rebels were tarnished with the label of national traitor, while the victors took over the state, which did not merely remain, as always, at the centre of clientelist policies, but, in addition, assumed an active ideological role in the perpetuation of the division between the losers and the winners of the war, by offering jobs and state subsidies to ones, repudiating and purging the others, long after the end of the hostilities. Almost one third of the civil servants were fired between 1946 and 1948 and an official "certificate of loyalty to the nation" (established by the Law 509/1947) was required not only for a job in the civil service, but also for acquiring a driving license or for the participation at University entrance examinations.

The dictatorship of the colonels (1967-1974) imposed its authoritarian yoke invoking as the official alibi the "communist menace", primarily directed not at socialist reform, but "national treason" with the presumed surrender of national sovereignty to neighbouring socialist, but also traditionally hostile countries (i.e. Bulgaria). However, as the junta extended political persecution against the whole political spectrum, including conservative citizens and politicians, after its collapse, the old ideological recipe of legitimation became unusable. The junta, politically isolated, collapsed after its failed coup d' Etat in Cyprus and the consecutive Turkish invasion ironically charged with similar "national treason" charges to those that legitimated its own rise to power.

The first post-dictatorship government led by the conservative K. Karamanlis opted for the modernisation of state structures, investing especially in the perspective of the admission of Greece in the European Communities. In order to achieve the necessary "European – democratic" acceptance the communist party was soon legalised and political institutions became more tolerant.

More than ten years passed before the first extreme right political manifestations appeared in the form of very small and marginalised organisations that never enjoyed popular support and were mostly ridiculed by media and opinion leaders.

During the late 1990s, however, the appearance of racial incidents and the growth of xenophobic discourse coupled with the deregulation of the electronic media allowed some members of extreme right wing organisations to enter the dominant political discourse

primarily by opening small TV stations and later by occasionally entering debates held at major TV stations, thus enlarging their potential audience.

Generally, however, extreme right wing organisations remain politically marginal and enjoy minimal popular support, as was evident in successive elections and Euro elections in which such groups participated without managing to achieve more than a couple of thousand votes, since their ultra-nationalist rhetoric actively competing with the nationalist discourse of the main political parties is forced to such extremes as to become ridiculous.

The only party that seems to be growing in popularity with a mainly anti-foreigner ultra nationalist platform – largely copying the French “Front National” – is “LAOS”<sup>11</sup> (Popular Orthodox Alarm) linked to a small TV station (TILEASTY former TELEACITY).

Three main small right wing extremist organisations are active in Greece:

- “Chrysi Avgi”<sup>12</sup> (Golden Dawn) is the largest neo-Nazi organisation with about 300 active members. It is considered by anti-fascist NGOs responsible for several cases of verbal intimidation and some attacks during the past two years against migrants, foreigners and left wing demonstrators. However, the police has no record of a particular incident of racial violence involving members of this organisation. On June 16 and February 2, 2001 it organised small demonstrations against the migrants’ legalisation, and on April 9, 2002 a rally in support of the French “Front National” and Le Pen’s campaign for the French Presidency.
- “Proti Grammi”<sup>13</sup> (Front Line) is an ultranationalist organisation. It participated in the last parliamentary elections receiving approximately 12.000 votes and during the 1999 Euro elections when it received approximately 48.000 votes.
- “Elliniko Metopo”<sup>14</sup> (Greek Front) is a new ultranationalist organization producing a newspaper, a webpage. It will participate in the forthcoming municipal and prefectural elections on a broadly anti-immigration platform. The organisation claims to be related to the French “Front National”.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.karatzafelis.gr>

<sup>12</sup> <http://go.to/4thAugust>; WAP site <http://www.wapdrive.com/andmark/metaxas> ;  
<http://www.xrushaugh.org/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.hellas.org>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.metopo.gr> and <http://www.e-grammes.gr>

## 4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AFFECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS

The most important legal provisions affecting vulnerable groups primarily in relation to racial violence and discrimination have been enacted very recently indicating that the state has only recently begun to respond to take measures against racism and discrimination. Therefore, the implementation and application of this framework will require more time before its effectiveness can be evaluated.

**The Greek Constitution of 1975/76**<sup>15</sup> (reformed on April 6, 2001) guarantees the personal rights, dignity, respect of person and property and freedom of religion and thought. Article 5, par. 2 states that “All persons living within the Greek territory shall enjoy full protection of their life, honour and liberty irrespective of nationality, race or language and of religious or political beliefs.” However, it should be noted that generally the constitution does attribute the same social and political rights and privileges to Greeks and foreign nationals. Also, according to the constitution special status is accorded to the Orthodox Church as the “prevailing religion”.

**Law 927/1979**<sup>16</sup> is the only criminal specifically anti-racist law: it states that “whoever intentionally and publicly instigates, either orally or in the press or through written texts or illustrations or through any other means, acts of activities capable of provoking discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or a group of persons, only due to their racial<sup>17</sup> or national origin, is punishable by imprisonment of up to two years or a fine or both.” These penalties also apply to “whoever creates or participates in organizations pursuing organized propaganda or engaging in any other activity of any kind aimed at racial discrimination.” The penalties are one year in prison and/or a fine for “whoever publicly expresses...ideas offensive to any person or groups of persons due to their racial or national origin.” In 1984, after repeated appeals by the Central Jewish Board of Greece, the Parliament passed an amendment to Law 927 in a new article -appended to Law 1419/84- specifying that, “discrimination on the basis of religion is also punishable”. In 2001 another amendment -appended to Law 2910/2001- allowed the public prosecutor to bring charges ex officio. However, as it has repeatedly been pointed out by human rights NGOs the law is very difficult to apply: consequently there has only been one attempt to enforce the law, when the Greek Ombudsman asked in a special report<sup>18</sup> formally the Public Prosecutor to bring charges against the Municipality of Nea Kios for issuing a formal municipal decision barring the local Roma from entering the city.

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<sup>15</sup> Available in English at <http://www.hri.org/docs/syntagma/> (13/09/2002)

<sup>16</sup> Greece, N 927/1979 (10/10/1979), PUBGR0467

<sup>17</sup> The term “racial discrimination” or “racism” is defined according to Article 1. 1. of the International Convention for the Eradication of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966) that was ratified by Law 494/1970 (PUBGR0704). The term “race” is to be considered as a “social construction” based on personal and social characteristics of individuals including their religion, culture, nationality and ethnic origin.

<sup>18</sup> Office of the Ombudsman (2000), “Special report on the situation in Nea Kios” Athens, Ref No 8267, available at [http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/por\\_8267\\_2000\\_da.doc](http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/por_8267_2000_da.doc) (12/06/2002), NFPGR0082, PUBGR0188

**Law 2910/2001**<sup>19</sup> regulates the entry, residence and employment conditions for aliens and citizenship acquisition. The law set in motion, for the second time, a registration process for economic migrants, but the government has not yet produced an evaluation of the process. The Ombudsman's Report<sup>20</sup> and reports from several NGOs stressed certain negative aspects of the law noting especially serious problems with its implementation and especially the migrant registration process by the Prefectures (local authorities responsible for the registration process) who had not been properly prepared, organised or staffed. Subsequently the law was amended, following partly the proposals of the Greek Ombudsman, by Law 3013/2002<sup>21</sup>. Accordingly the six-month permits issued to migrants during the first phase of the ongoing legalisation, as well as Green Cards and other types of residence permits that had expired or were soon to expire, were extended to December 31, 2002. Also the requirement to interview each applicant was dropped, as it proved impossible to interview individually hundreds of thousands of applicant migrants.

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

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

- a) Family reunification provisions; the necessary preconditions that must be fulfilled are onerous and incomplete (children who become of age are required to leave the country after one year unless they can find suitable employment –under the conditions prescribed for mi-grants that is virtually impossible– or continue their studies –highly unlikely given the living conditions and social provisions for migrants, but even so after their studies they are still required to leave).
- b) Access to healthcare; Article 54 (Par. 2) stipulates that hospitals must inform the police, if any undocumented alien seeks medical treatment. The Hellenic Data Protection Authority has ruled (19/06/2001, Ref. No. 1258) after a complaint by the Hellenic Centre for Infectious Diseases Control that this articles is unconstitutional and in breach of the legislation requirements of the Protection of Private Data and must be disregarded. It must also be stressed that healthcare is provided to all individuals in Greece in emergency cases and especially victims of AIDS/HIV infection are provided free all necessary medical care.
- c) Access to education; the Law does not embrace the current contra legem practice of not requiring documentation for the children of undocumented migrants to attend school and consequently Headmasters who enrol children may face heavy penalties.

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<sup>19</sup> Greece, N. 2910/2001 (02/05/2001), PUBGR0448

<sup>20</sup> Office of the Ombudsman, (2001) "Special report on the implementation of the registration procedures under Law 2910/2001" Athens, Ref No 2013, available at [http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/diavivasi\\_koinepstef.doc](http://www.synigoros.gr/reports/diavivasi_koinepstef.doc) (15/09/2002), PUBGR0196

<sup>21</sup> Greece, N. 3013/2002 (10/05/2002), PUBGR0446

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

**Law 3013/2002**<sup>22</sup> amended Law 2910/2001 and established the Institute for Migration, which has not yet been formed, as an independent public policy research organisation.

**Law 2790/2000**<sup>23</sup> regulates the repatriation procedures for ethnic Greeks from the NIS. The law established special rights, privileges and social support structures for repatriates to assist in their integration. The law was criticised for providing Greek citizenship “too easily” and thus open to possible misuse, as a previously quoted report from Karamanlis Foundation indicates. Repatriate organisations supported the special citizenship acquisition processes prescribed by this law arguing that investigations into the official records of the countries of origin could easily allow the establishment of true ethnic identity of citizenship applicants.

**Law 2740/1999**<sup>24</sup> establishes the State Certificate of Greek Language. This is the first state recognised language qualification and theoretically allows the holder to seek employment in public services (i.e. local authorities, public bodies, etc.) where knowledge of the Greek language is normally a formal prerequisite.

**Law 2477/1997**<sup>25</sup> constitutes the founding regulation of the Greek Ombudsman (Synigoros tou Politi). The Greek Ombudsman is an Independent Administrative Authority, whose actions are not subject to control by any governmental or other administrative authority and its operation has been highly praised by all NGOs. This institution is considered as a very important safeguard for democracy and human rights. On October 1, 1998, the institution of the Ombudsman began to function in Greece. In its four years of operation, the Ombudsman has gained widespread recognition within Greek society, having already proved its importance for the protection of citizens' rights, combating of maladministration and ensuring the observance of the laws. However, it should be noted that the role of the Ombudsman is to act as an intermediary between citizen and state and therefore it cannot intervene in cases of discrimination or harassment by physical or legal persons.

**Law 2413/1996**<sup>26</sup> established and regulates intercultural education and regulates the operation of the Centre for Greek Language, which is the public body responsible for the State Certificate of Greek Language.

**Presidential Decree 295/2001**<sup>27</sup> established and regulates the Directorate of Aliens and Immigration at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This is the first public administration structure dealing specifically with migrants. Previously migration issues were mostly the concern of the Ministry of Public Order. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains the competent authority for issues concerning the autochthonous Muslim minority. The

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<sup>22</sup> Greece, N 3013/2002 (01/05/2002 ), PUBGR0446

<sup>23</sup> Greece, N 2790/2000 (16/02/2000), PUBGR0470

<sup>24</sup> Greece, N 2740/1999 (16/09/1999), PUBGR0469

<sup>25</sup> Greece, N. 2477/1977 (18/04/1997), PUBGR0462

<sup>26</sup> Greece, N 2413 (17/06/1996), PUBGR0468

<sup>27</sup> Greece, P. D. 295/2001 (19/09/2001), PUBGR0464

Ministry of Public Order has become the competent Ministry for issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers.

**Presidential Decree 100<sup>28</sup>**: In the context of the harmonisation of Greek radio and television legislation with the provisions of European Parliament and Council Directives, the State Radio and Television Council is required to preventively ban radio and television programmes, if their content encourages or provokes discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or a group of persons due to their gender, racial or ethnic origin, their religion, political convictions or sexual preferences.

**Protocol between Greece and Turkey for the implementation of Article 8 of the Agreement on combating crime, especially terrorism, organised crime, illicit drug trafficking and illegal migration<sup>29</sup>**: The Protocol ratified by Law 3030/2002 aims at the readmission of illegal immigrant being smuggled from Turkey back to that country within 14 days of arrival. Greece must provide proof that the migrants entered Greece from Turkey and asylum seekers and refugees will not be returned according to the Geneva Convention rules. NGOs and the UNHCR have voiced their concern about the possible implications of this agreement for genuine asylum seekers. According to a recently released official report of the Greek Office of the UNHCR, more than 230 persons are known to have been reprocessed to Turkey from the implementation of this protocol in November 2001 until June 2002.

**The Lausanne Treaty<sup>30</sup>** constitutes the legal basis for the legal definition, treatment, rights and obligations of the Muslim minority in Greece. Despite bilateral differences in the interpretation of certain clauses all subsequent agreements between Greece and Turkey have relied upon the Treaty. It regulates every aspect of the relationship between the Greek state and the Muslim minority.

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

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

**There are, as yet, no legal provisions for the *prevention* of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious harassment and discrimination.**

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<sup>28</sup> Greece, P. D. 100 (17/03/2000), PUBGR0589

<sup>29</sup> Greece, N. 3030/2002 (15/07/2002), PUBGR0594

<sup>30</sup> English text available at <http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/> (09/09/2002)

## 5. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

### 5.1. THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION

From the beginning of the data collection process, we approached the term “racial violence” with apprehension, as we felt that it is at best ambivalent, difficult to translate, defined differently or not at all in the various member states and thus a problem for the required data comparability. It is also still lacking in analytical rigour, at least from a sociological point of view, as is evident from the existing research literature that tends to define the term operationally to cater basically for the needs of recording agencies.

The EUMC guidelines for the data collection require us to present the definition of racial violence according to the country legal system; quantitative and qualitative occurrences of different types of crimes (criminal and non-criminal offences); perpetrators; victims; and comment on the comparability of different data sources. Thus the EUMC refers primarily to the legal (criminal and civil) connotations of the term. We assume that it is for this reason that all NFPs, including our organisation, have focused almost exclusively on the legal and particularly the criminal aspect of racial violence.

A careful examination of the data collection reports of the other NFPs reveals that most share our apprehension: these are outlined in Appendix B, below.

### 5.2. A “WORKING DEFINITION” OF RACIAL VIOLENCE

Given a complete lack of national definitional terms, data collection or analytic framework [see below, Ch. 7], we propose here a 4-part typology, along with some subdivisions of specific sectors where such violence appears. For example, actual physical violence is treated as a specific sub-category [A1] when inflicted by state employees [police, border-guards, inter alia], but also appears as a general category [A] of actual physical harm. Similarly, damage to property is a general category, but with a specific sub-category of damage to places of worship and other religious monuments. The purpose of this typology, with subdivisions, is to permit easier analysis of apparently discrete incidents and show the relative importance of each category, insofar as data are available.

An aspect of racial violence, which is quite ambiguous analytically, is whether we should concern ourselves only with violence perpetrated by the host community against minorities, or adopt a broader approach. We have chosen the latter for completeness, as violence between immigrant groups or even within one community is clearly of some interest. Nevertheless, most of the reports concern violence emanating from the host community.

The chosen categorisation is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Typology of forms of racial violence**

A	Attacks on the person	Subcategory 1	Subcategory 2
	Physical assaults; throwing objects; encouraging dogs to attack; restraining freedom to move	Police or border-guards on duty	Conditions of detention
B	Damage to property		
	Arson; damage to personal possessions; graffiti on property; vandalism; offensive or dangerous objects thrown.	Synagogues or other religious buildings	
C	Threats against the person		
	Violent manner; physical gestures; threatened violence/assault; threats against family or friends	Forced prostitution or forced beggary	
D	Abuse aimed at the person		
	Racist or other offensive graffiti; abusive behaviour; threatening or abusive telephone calls; written abuse; obscene material put through a letterbox	Racial or other graffiti left on public property	

## 6. EXISTING AND NON-EXISTING DATA AND SOURCES

As we have already frequently stated, both data collection and research relating to acts of racial violence and harassment perpetrated against vulnerable social groups do not exist. The lack of relevant data and studies has led us to a more qualitative approach scrutinising all available evidence in our attempt to analyse the current situation.

The lack of statistical and other data concerning racial violence are due to:

- absence of public monitoring mechanisms and specialised bodies,
- absence or technical deficiencies in the electronic recording of data where it exists,
- inadequate co-ordination of the competent authorities on collecting data and information,
- lack of interest in collecting data by the competent public authorities<sup>31</sup>,
- lack of funding for scientific research<sup>32</sup>,
- the nature of racial violence that is frequently unrecorded.

<sup>31</sup> Officials in several public authorities seemed genuinely puzzled at our insistence for reliable data and our scrutiny of the methods used in their data collection. We could argue that in Greece there is a deeply rooted suspicion of “statistics” that can perhaps be explained with reference to the political use of statistics in the not too distant past.

<sup>32</sup> Primarily those who fund it largely determine the subject matter and focus of scientific research. Consequently, it seems that neither the relevant national public authorities nor private institutions or social partner organisations have considered discrimination in employment to merit further attention.

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

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

Our findings rely primarily on data collected in the context of the RAXEN2 and RAXEN3 data collection activity. We would like at this point to stress that the collection of data, perhaps uniquely among other NFPs, is carried out exclusively through personal interviews by one expert assisted by a Focal Point responsible for Northern Greece. Furthermore, we also employ on a full-time basis a legal expert who monitors the Ministries of Justice and Public Order and the Athens Courts and Thessalonica<sup>33</sup>. The EUMC asked NFPs generally to avoid relying on media reports. However, in the case of racial violence the general lack of monitoring and data left us with no alternative but to use the media that frequently documents such cases. After consulting with the EUMC we included such reports in the data base, although we were concerned about both the quality and comparability of such data despite the fact that gradually we were able to examine and verify many of the reported cases ourselves.

## 6.1. DATA SOURCES

The data collection used the following sources:

**Ministry of Public Order:** Officials at Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Public Order provided us with a set of data, which was later also published on the internet<sup>34</sup>. The dataset that was given to us includes general summary data on criminal activity incorporating the variable nationality, but not ethnicity. The Ministry informed us that neither ethnicity nor religion are variables that can be included in data made available to the public as it contains “sensitive information of a private nature”. Racial motivation is not recorded by police authorities and there are no recorded arrests or prosecutions on the basis of the anti-racist criminal Law 927/1979. More –unspecified– data on crime are released to Europol and Eurostat, but are not publicly available.

**Ministry of Justice:** The Ministry has no data on racial violence since any criminal act is prosecuted irrespective of race, religion or ethnic origin and there are no data on the motivation of crimes. No recent data were made available to us concerning prison population and statistics of convictions and acquittals from judicial authorities, as the

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<sup>33</sup> Greek courts have no computerised system that would facilitate monitoring. The Athens Bar Association has recently created a data base that is, however, not searchable by keywords requiring knowledge of the details of a particular case. We are therefore forced to visit regularly and examine the Court Secretariat records in Athens and Thessalonica, but we have to rely on reports from other sources for litigation cases in other provinces.

<sup>34</sup> Available in Greek only at <http://www.ydt.gr/index12.htm> (12/08/2002)

Ministry has data only up to 1997 available also from the National Statistical Service. The Ministry has initiated a computerized data collection programme; however, staffing problems have led to the accumulation of more than 80,000 prisoner and litigation files that will take a considerable amount of time to process. Neither prisons nor the courts are linked to the Ministry electronically.

**Ministry of Merchant Marine:** The Ministry of Merchant Marine has data concerning the number of foreigners arrested for illegal entry into the country that were made available to us and are also available in the form of Ministry press statements.<sup>35</sup> The Ministry also has case data, but no statistics, on acts of racial violence perpetrated by Coast Guard officers, but they are not publicly available, because they constitute part of ongoing official investigations and are protected by the personal data protection legislation.

**The Greek Police:** Referred us to the Ministry of Public Order

**The Greek Coast Guard:** Referred us to the Ministry of Merchant Marine

**The Greek Border Guard:** Referred us to the Ministry of Public Order

**The Greek Army (Ministry of Defence):** The Greek Army has no data on recorded incidents of racial violence or harassment.

**The Office of the Ombudsman (Synigoros tou Politi):** The Ombudsman has conducted a number of investigations and reports that were made available to us. However, it should be noted that as an independent public authority the mandate of the Ombudsman limits his jurisdiction to disputes between persons and public authorities and therefore cannot acknowledge or record allegations of racial violence or harassment perpetrated by persons, groups or organisations. It should also be noted that we have established a regular working relationship with the Ombudsman.

**The National Commission for Human Rights:** The NCHR has compiled recommendations to the government and two Annual Reports that were made available to us. It should be noted that we have established a regular working relationship with the NCHR.

**The Greek Office of the UNHCR:** The UNHCR retains records of human rights violations concerning asylum seekers and refugees including incidents or acts of racial violence perpetrated by public authorities only that were made available to us.

**The National Statistical Service of Greece:** The NSSG has only information provided by the above competent Ministries.

**National and international NGOs and IGOs:** The following NGOs and IGOs collect data either through their own investigations (Médecins du Monde, Greek Council for Refugees, Greek Helsinki Monitor, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International), in the form of complaints (Greek Council for Refugees, Greek Helsinki Monitor, Network for the Social Support of Migrants and Refugees) or from media reports (Greek Helsinki

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<sup>35</sup> Available in Greek only at <http://www.tidis.yen.gr/Upload/20021.TIFF/200219134236.tif> (01/09/2002)

Monitor, Greek section of the Youth Against Racism in Europe, Anti-Racist Initiative of Thessalonica). Data were made available to us either in person or through their Internet websites and we have established a good working relationship with the Greek NGOs.

**University Departments, Research Organisations and Institutes:** No studies have been carried out specifically concerning racial violence or harassment, although some studies incorporate theoretical elaborations or observations.

**Media:** The absence of monitoring by any agency has made press reports the main initial source of information and newspaper articles and references constitute the bulk of the available data on racial violence after verification and in certain cases independent inquiry by our staff. We monitor the press regularly through a press clipping service and all publications that concern racist violence are recorded, substantiated, if possible and recorded on the RAXEN database.

## 6.2. DATA ON RACIAL VIOLENCE

**“In Greece “social reporting” and the systematic monitoring and measuring of changes in the social structure are largely underdeveloped. Up to the present there has been not been an effort to design comprehensive social surveys, particularly for social reporting purposes.”<sup>36</sup>**

Therefore, we present here the most prominent incidents over the last 4 years, according to the typology of Table 1.

### 6.2.1. Category A – Attacks on the person

The most extreme phenomenon of racial violence ever perpetrated by an individual in Greece concerns the case of P. Kazakos, who on the nights of October 19 and 21, 1999 shot a number of foreign migrants killing two and injuring seven, because, as he stated at court, he hated foreigners. Kazakos was convicted to double life imprisonment plus 25 years in prison, which was upheld on Appeal<sup>37</sup>. The three judges and a four-member jury of the Criminal Court of Athens reached unanimous guilty verdict on two counts of murder and seven of attempted murder, as well as several lesser charges. Interestingly, however, he was not charged with violation of the main anti-racist Law 927/1979, although the prosecution described him as a “racist murderer”.

Human rights NGOs have strongly criticised the government for failing to support the victims of the racist killings. Only one, Egyptian Shaad Abdelhani, 33, receives a small disability pension, as he is partly paralysed.

20/05/2000 Following a dispute over an illegally parked vehicle owned by a local Roma, the municipal council of Nea Kios adopted a resolution to evict all Roma from the land

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<sup>36</sup> Greece, National Center for Social Research, EuReporting Working Paper No. 8: Greece: Contributions to Social Reporting, Institutions, Activities, Publications (1999), p. 2, PUBGR0708

<sup>37</sup> Tzivilakis, K. (2003), “Crazy but not insane”, in: Athens News, (15/11/2003), PUB/GR/0656

they own and live on in the region. The municipality also asked the police to assist in implementing their decision to evict all the Roma within 48 hours. The municipality further established “surveillance groups” and organised a series of demonstrations by local residents against Romani presence in the town. Roma were reportedly prevented from entering the town, shopkeepers were instructed not to sell anything to Roma, and Romani children were afraid to go to school. Ten days later, the neighbouring municipality of Nea Tirynta issued a similar ban on Romani presence, requiring that Roma leave the region by August 30, 2000. These municipal decisions sparked off a series of violent incidents in the region. On June 9, 2000, in Nea Kios, a shack owned by a Romani man was burned to the ground during the night by unknown perpetrators. On June 15, a seventeen-year-old Romani youth was shot and wounded by two non-Romani youth in Nea Kios. The Ombudsman issued a report on the events in Nea Kios characterising the municipal council’s action as “illegal”. On June 30, 15 lawyers and politicians submitted a signed complaint to the public prosecutor’s office in Nafplion asking for criminal charges to be filed against Municipal officials according to anti-racist Law 927/1979.

27/03/2001 In Lesvos two police officers arrested A. Hodi, aged 24, an documented Albanian migrant, who had reported to the police that he and some of his compatriots had been denied entry to a night-club because of their nationality. The two officers allegedly punched and beat him with truncheons threatening him with summary deportation if he insisted filing his complaint. Later he was released severely injured and had to be admitted to hospital. A. Hodi filed charges against the policemen and criminal proceedings on charges of “torture and other offences against human dignity” under Article 137A of the Greek Penal Code were instigated against the police officers. Similar charges were brought against one more police officers who was present at the police station while A. Hodi was being beaten. A. Hodi subsequently withdrew a criminal complaint he had filed against the police officers after the latter apologised publicly and paid his hospital fees. However, the withdrawal of the complaint has not halted criminal proceedings. An official inquiry by the Police recommended that one officer be dismissed from service, and the other police officers receive lesser sanctions. Local newspapers strongly supported the officer who was dismissed.<sup>38</sup>

30/07/2001 A fight broke out at a bar in Mytilene, involving A. Hodi and a group of Albanian friends and the owner and employees of a bar, in which five or six Greek men were wounded, one of them seriously. According to the owner of the bar, Arjan Hodi and his companions had tried to force their way into the bar, while the Albanians claimed that the dispute had started because they had been refused entry because of their nationality. Three days later A. Hodi and three other Albanians were tried in Mytilene on charges of forming a criminal association, possession and use of weapons, threat and causing grievous bodily injuries. Three were tried without a defence lawyer, since they were unable to provide documented proof that they lacked sufficient funds and therefore were not eligible for legal aid. The four defendants were convicted, sentenced to suspended 37 months imprisonment each and deported from Greece immediately. Furious crowds tried to lynch the four defendants on their way to and from the court room and the trial took place under strict security measures. Television showed angry local citizens with

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<sup>38</sup> Amnesty International Report Amnesty International February 2002 AI Index: EUR 25/003/2002  
[http://web.amnesty.org/aidoc/aidoc\\_pdf.nsf/index/EUR250032002ENGLISH/\\$File/EUR2500302.pdf](http://web.amnesty.org/aidoc/aidoc_pdf.nsf/index/EUR250032002ENGLISH/$File/EUR2500302.pdf), p.1

shotguns making threatening statements about Albanians and other immigrant workers. In the meantime a during a meeting held at the nearby village of Loutra it was decided to expel some 150 Albanians, including families and children from the village in 48 hours. The government and most politicians, as well as the media, accused the villagers of racism.<sup>39</sup>

17/11/2001 A group of Greeks attacked five Albanian migrant workers who were leaving from a night club in Gera village on Lesbos, stabbing one of them with a knife, and seriously wounding him. Two of the Albanians were taken to hospital for treatment. Four Greeks were arrested; they reportedly claimed that the Albanians had initiated the fight. However, witnesses claimed that the Greeks had attacked the Albanians for having “dared” to enter a club reserved for Greeks.<sup>40</sup>

In 2003, the number of reported racial attacks was larger than ever noted before; we have recorded 11 incidents in this category over the period October 2002-October 2003.<sup>41</sup> However, 5 did not involve Greeks; 2 were unknown attackers of immigrants; 2 were of immigrants attacking Greeks; and only 3 were of Greeks attacking immigrants (of which one resulted in Greeks fighting Greeks, over a racist incident). It is not therefore possible to talk in simplistic terms about such racial violence. One recent incident in Piraeus, Athens (3/11/03) did proceed along more clear racial lines: after a carcrash involving a Pakistani driver, a motorcycle gang of 20 Greek youths went on a rampage against various Pakistanis, including a videostore owner, a man at a bus stop, and a motorcyclist.<sup>42</sup> The following weekend saw a mass demonstration in Piraeus by the Pakistani community and human rights activists.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid*, p.3

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*, p.3

<sup>41</sup> Tzivilakis, K. (2003), “Crazy but not insane”, in: Athens News, (15.11.2003), PUBGR0656; (2003), Mytilini: travmaties kata ti diärkeia epeisodion metaxy prosfygon (Mytilini: injured refugees during fights), in: Athens News Agency (02.10.2003), PUBGR0607; (2003), Ratsistikes mahes ston katavlismo prosfygon (Racist fights in a refugee reception centre), in: Eleftherotypia (30.10.2003), PUBGR0624; (2003), Xylokopisan 3 Egyptioys mesa sto spiti tous (3 Egyptians beaten inside their apartments), in: Ta Nea (05.08.2003), PUBGR0610; (2003), Efage porta kai ton efage (He was denied entry in a café, and killed the café owner...), in: Eleftherotypia (25.08.2003), PUBGR0615; (2003), Daktilofagos (The finger-eater), in: Eleftherotypia (17.06.2003), PUBGR0618; (2003), Ston isaggelea dio Irakini (2 Iraqis sent to the prosecutor), in: Eleftherotypia, (03.10.2003), PUBGR0619; (2003), In Brief: Nigerian Killing, in: Kathimerini English Edition, (03.01.2003), PUBGR0651; (2003), Ioannina: maskoforoï allodapoi listepsan omoethnis tous lathrometananstes (Ioannina: Masked immigrants robbed illegal migrants), in: Athens News Agency (16.07.2003), PUBGR0620; (2002), Mahairies me parelthon (Knife-fights with a past), in: Eleftherotypia (19.11.2002), PUBGR0621; (2003), Safari vias kata Alvanon apo “aganaktismenous” Patrinous (Safari of violence against Albanians from ‘frustrated’ Patrans), in: Eleftherotypia (01.10.2003), PUBGR0625; (2003), Mia apli parexigisi teleiose me mahairies (A simple misunderstanding ended in knife-fighting), in: Eleftherotypia (11.10.2003), PUBGR0627; (2003), Woman witness to murder is abducted, in: (04.04.2003), Kathimerini English Edition, PUBGR0659; (2003), In Brief: Extortion Arrest, in: Kathimerini English Edition (03.07.2003), PUBGR0663; (2003), In Brief: Double Murder, in: Kathimerini English Edition (18.07.2003), PUBGR0665

<sup>42</sup> (2003), Kokkinia: Nearoi ratsistes motosikletistes kakopiisan Pakistanous (Kokkinia: Young motorcyclist racists attack Pakistanis), in: Athens News Agency (04.1.2003), PUBGR0604; (2003), Mihanovii Klou Kloux Klan (Motorcyclist Klou Kloux Klan), in: Eleftherotypia

## SUBCATEGORY 1 – RACIAL VIOLENCE INVOLVING POLICE OR BORDERGUARDS

18/5/2000 Repatriated Greek history teacher P. Tsatsanides was arrested in a bus by policemen controlling identification cards and severely beaten because he asked them to behave politely.

25/06/2001 More than 100 asylum-seekers reported having suffered beatings and other inhuman treatment at a makeshift detention centre in Hania, Crete, upon arriving on the island at the end of May. The asylum-seekers also accused the officers of confiscating their personal belongings. Two months later an official inquiry found that five men and one officer of the Coast Guard had committed acts of violence and a criminal investigation was launched by the Naval Tribunal to establish possible criminal charges. The case is pending and all involved officers work normally having been transferred to other posts.

02/08/2001 Albanian, R. Tafili, was severely beaten by police officers at an Athens police station and hospitalised with a ruptured spleen.

04/08/2001 Two young Roma, Th. Stephanou and N. Theodoropoulos, were reportedly insulted and subjected to ill-treatment by police officers in the town of Argostoli on the island of Cephalonia.

24/10/2001 21 year old Roma Marinos Christopoulos was shot and killed by police officer G. Tylianakis in the area of Zefiri near Athens for failing to stop at a police roadblock. The police officer was charged with premeditated murder, but was released on bail. For some days the Roma population in the area rioted.

21/11/2001 20 year old S. Selnikou from Albania was shot and killed in a cafeteria in Athens by police officer I. Rizopoulos, allegedly because the gun was fired accidentally during a police control.

30/11/2001 Coast Guard officer Y. Markolefas was punished with 30 days confinement for "not preventing a refugee from cleaning his boots in public" after an incident shown on national and international television.

28/01/2002 150 heavily armed police officers raided a Roma settlement in Aspropygos near Athens causing a pregnant Rom woman, Y. Tsakiri, to have a miscarriage after an as yet unidentified officer reportedly kicked her repeatedly in the back and stomach, while many Roma residents were subjected to humiliating and harsh treatment.

03/04/2002 Albanians D. Blendar and S. Elidon filed charges against a police officer in Pylos for severely beating them during their detention as suspects of theft. Their wounds are substantiated by public hospital reports.

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(05.11.2003), PUBGR0616; (2003), Pakistanis attacked by Piraeus biker gang, in: Kathimerini English Edition (05.11.2003), PUBGR0647

<sup>43</sup> (2003), Pakistani immigrants... , in: Kathimerini English Edition (02.11.2003), PUBGR0648

Over the period October 2002-October 2003, we have recorded 7 press reports of incidents involving immigrants or minorities.<sup>44</sup> In addition, there is extensive documentation of alleged police brutality towards Roma,<sup>45</sup> along with a landmark conviction of a police officer for killing a Romani man.<sup>46</sup> The incidents with immigrants are serious, involving shootings, serious injuries and death, and male sexual assault. Thus a more clear picture emerges here: of border-guards and coastguards abusing or killing illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers; and of police accused of abuse of Roma – especially of young male Romani.

## SUBCATEGORY 2 – CONDITIONS OF DETENTION

The conditions under which asylum seekers are received and treated is a measure of the country's humanitarian ethos, its level of tolerance and its respect for human rights. Unfortunately, reports from a variety of international organisations and NGOs like the European Council's Committee for the Prevention of Torture Degrading Treatment or Inhuman Punishment (CPT), the UN Committee for the Eradication of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT), Amnesty International, the International Helsinki Monitor, Human Rights Watch and others rate Greece as a country with a seriously flawed record and little regard in its treatment of asylum seekers.

The absence of any reception centres at the border regions led the Police and Coast Guard to use various buildings such as basements, storage facilities, deserted industrial facilities, football grounds, etc. as temporary detention centres. Living conditions in these are appalling and the situation is usually aggravated because most of those crossing the border illegally already face health problems. The example of Vena in Thrace, repeatedly reported by

Médecins du Monde is typical – over 200 persons detained in a very narrow space had to break the locks because of the lack of fresh air. Similar conditions apply at Athens airport

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<sup>44</sup> (2003), Ekthesi Diethnous Amnistias – Anthropina Dikaiomata - Ellada (Amnesty International Report on Human Rights in Greece), in: Athens News Agency (28.05.2003), PUBGR0608; (2003), Ta protoselida tou Alvanikou typoy (The front pages of Albanian newspapers), in: Macedonian News Agency (28.05.2003), PUBGR0609; (2003), Apilite me apelasi martyras se diki gia vasanistiria (Witness in torture trial threatened with deportation), in: Eleftherotypia (28.09.2003), PUBGR0611; (2003), Sto skamni I limeniki gia kakopiisi metanaston (Coast guards on trial for injuring immigrants), in: Eleftherotypia (29.9.2003), PUBGR0613; (2004), Erotimata gia to foniko pyr tou sinoriofylaka (Questions regarding the shooting of immigrants by a border police officer), in: Eleftherotypia (25.09.2003), PUBGR0623; (2003), Physical abuse of Roman by Greek police, in: European Roma Rights Centre, Roma Rights, Number 1-2 (08.2003), PUBGR0670; (2003), Greek authorities fail to adequately discipline and prosecute police officers for human rights violations against Roma, in: Roma Rights, Number 3 (10.2003), PUBGR0672

<sup>45</sup> (2003), Cleaning Operations: excluding Roma in Greece, in: European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor, Country Report Series, No. 12 (04.2003), PUBGR0674

<sup>46</sup> (2002), First ever conviction of a Greek policeman for abuse of Roma, in: European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor, Roma Rights, Number 2 (02.2002), PUBGR0668; (2003), Police officer sentenced for killing Romani man in Greece, in: European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor, Roma Rights, Number 1-2 (08.2003), PUBGR0671

and other detention facilities that have been criticised in the strongest possible terms by all human rights organisations.

In addition, the conditions of detention of illegal immigrants throughout Greece have been of unacceptable quality, and repeatedly investigated and criticised by the Ombudsman. There has been some limited attempt to ameliorate the situation in Athens. Two recent reports of the problem have been noted: one from Amnesty International<sup>47</sup> and another independent report.<sup>48</sup>

## 6.2.2. Category B – Damage to property

Relatively little information is recorded in the press on this issue, and information is largely collected by NGOs. The principal victims of damage to property are the Roma, with a continuous pattern of their abuse by local state authorities.<sup>49</sup> An example is given below.

13/09/2001 The municipal authorities of Aspropyrgos destroyed 6 makeshift Roma huts and their possessions. Aspropyrgos Mayor G. Liakos had conducted similar actions in February 1999 and July 2000. The Ombudsman and the Greek Helsinki Monitor asked the Public Prosecutor's Office to initiate an *ex officio* prosecution, applying the *in flagrante* procedure, according to Law 2910/2001, Article 39, Paragraph 4 in reference to the racist offences contained in Articles 1 to 3 of Law 927/1979, as well as Greek Penal Code Articles 241 (violation of domestic asylum), 259 (violation of duty), 331 (self-administration of justice), 381-382 (destruction of foreign property), and 137A, paragraphs 1 and 3 (ill-treatment-based upon the relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights). This request was denied.

### SUBCATEGORY 1 – DAMAGE TO RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Again, this phenomenon seems to be rather specific – directed solely at Jewish religious buildings – and almost completely unreported in the Greek language press. (It should be noted that as Greece does not permit any mosques outside of Thrace, there is actually no possibility of damage to Islamic buildings!)

Incidents occur continuously of damage to cemeteries, such as the one in Ioannina vandalised three times in 18 months,<sup>50</sup> a Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki,<sup>51</sup> and

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<sup>47</sup> (2003), Migrants still face abuse, in: Kathimerini English Edition (29.05.2003), PUBGR0658

<sup>48</sup> (2003), Metanastes enantion tis astynomias (Immigrants against the police), in: Eleftherotypia (28.09.2003), PUBGR0612

<sup>49</sup> (2003), Continuing Violence against Roma in Greece, in: European Roma Rights Centre, Roma Rights, Number 1 (05.2002), PUBGR0667; (2003), Cleaning Operations: excluding Roma in Greece, in: European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor, Country Report Series, No. 12 (04.2003), PUBGR0674

<sup>50</sup> (2003), Nei vandalismoi apo neonazistes (New vandalisms by neo-nazis), in: Eleftherotypia (10.10.2003), PUBGR0655; (2002) Jewish Cemeteries of Ioannina and Thessaloniki, in: Yahoo Groups: Balkan Human Rights List (23.04.2002), PUBGR0675

<sup>51</sup> Agiomavritis, P. (2003), Thessaloniki Holocaust Memorial vandalized, in: Athens News (07.02.2003), PUBGR0653

apparently unreported in the press, vandalism of a newly erected Holocaust memorial in Rhodes.<sup>52</sup>

### 6.2.3. Category C – Threads against the person

01/04/2002 The Municipal Council of Lehena and Manolada asked for the eviction of all foreign migrants from the area arguing that they constitute a public health hazard unless their dwellings can be subject to inspections. Migrant workers are employed there as seasonal agricultural workers and live in makeshift huts in the fields without sanitary facilities.

28/05/2002 At the International Book Fair held annually in Thessalonica a group of around 100 persons led by a well known extreme-right activist K. Velopoulos entered the stand where the publications from Balkan countries were and tore and burned books from Bulgaria, Romania and FYROM, the content of which was considered to be insulting. Employees of the Fair were verbally harassed, with comments like “are you Greek or Bulgarian?”.

The harassment of Roma, and most particularly the threat of unlawful eviction, is a common pattern in Greece and generally not reported by the Greek media. NGO reports are the main source of information.<sup>53</sup>

One type of this sort of violence has been reported in the Greek press – that of “mafia” style activities. In two Peloponnesus prefectures, Albanian ‘mobsters’ keep prices high by controlling the immigrant labour force in agricultural work with violent means.<sup>54</sup> This report is not confirmed by other sources, however.

#### SUBCATEGORY 1 – FORCED PROSTITUTION AND FORCED BEGGARY

We have included this as a form of racial violence first because of its link to migration and the nationality of its victims who are never EU nationals, but usually of the CEEC, NIS and Albania; secondly, because the treatment of trafficked women and children by primarily Greek traffickers constitutes one of the most hideous forms of racial violence.

According to the US Department of State Annual Report on Trafficking (2001),<sup>55</sup> Greece is primarily a destination country (Tier 3) and, to a lesser extent, also a transit country, for women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Major countries of origin include Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Albania, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Romania. Women from North Africa (Tunisia and Algeria), Asia (Thailand and the

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<sup>52</sup> Greek Helsinki Monitor (2002), Anti-Semitism in Greece: a current picture 2001-2002, PUBGR0666

<sup>53</sup> (2003), Physical abuse of Roma by Greek police, in: European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor, Roma Rights, Number 1-2 (08.2003), PUBGR0670; European Roma Rights Centre (2003), ERRC/IHF: Harassment of Roma in Greece, PUBGR0673

<sup>54</sup> (2003) Ergatononi se Ilia-Ahaia ("Labor-mafia" in Ilia-Ahaia), in: Eleftherotypia (24.07.2003), PUBGR0614

<sup>55</sup> US Department of State (June 2002), Annual Trafficking in Persons Report 2001, available at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/10815.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10815.pdf) (15/09/2002)

Philippines), the Middle East and other countries (Moldova, Georgia, Poland, and Kazakhstan) are also trafficked to Greece.

The Government took some steps toward combating trafficking, but although the Minister of Public Order, M. Chrysochoides described it as a first priority for the Greek police, the long awaited Bill on Trafficking<sup>56</sup> (announced in November 2001) was not introduced to Parliament until October 2002<sup>57</sup>. Until then, the prosecution of traffickers was very difficult and consequently there were few arrests and prosecutions, while fines and sentences were minimal. After yet another denunciation by the USA in July 2003,<sup>58</sup> in which Greece was ranked along with Belize, Bosnia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Myanmar, North Korea, Sudan, Surinam, Turkey and Uzbekistan, protection for the victims of trafficking was finally instituted by presidential decree in August 2003.<sup>59</sup>

A recent study,<sup>60</sup> suggested that the years 1991-1996 saw a 60% rise in the number of clients for prostitutes while sexual transactions saw a 100% rise. Another survey by G. Lazos found that 26% of prostitutes had been introduced to prostitution only after prolonged physical and psychological violence. Of the 13,677 foreign women brought to Greece as "artists" from 1991-1995, 1,277 were arrested on prostitution charges a number referring only to recorded arrests and not the hidden prostitution camouflaged by socially accepted professions such as waitresses, dancers, masseuses, hostesses, beauticians, strippers and actresses in pornographic videos. The 2003 US Report claimed that in 2002 alone, some 18,000 people were trafficked to Greece;<sup>61</sup> although G. Lazos believes that the peak of activity was in 1997 with 21,700 victims, and it has declined since owing to police activism.<sup>62</sup>

Press reports over 2003 do in fact indicate quite extensive police activity in uncovering forced prostitution,<sup>63</sup> as well as some limited success with forced beggary of trafficked children.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The Bill was praised, but also criticised by the Ombudsman, the National Commission of Human Rights and Human Rights Watch: Recommendations Regarding the Draft Law for the "Fight against Trafficking of Human Beings and the Provision of Aid to the Victims of Crimes related to the Financial Exploitation of Sexual Life", March 8, 2002 available at [http://www.hrw.org/background/eca/greece/greece\\_law.htm](http://www.hrw.org/background/eca/greece/greece_law.htm) (11/09/2002)

<sup>57</sup> Konstantaras, N. (2003), Rattling the chains, in: Kathimerini English Edition (14.06.2003), PUBGR0661

<sup>58</sup> (2003), US faults Greece for 'sex slavery', in: Kathimerini English Edition (12.06.2003), PUBGR0660

<sup>59</sup> Tzilivakis, K. (2003), Sex slave tells of agony, in: Athens News (03.10.2003), PUBGR0654

<sup>60</sup> Emke-Pouloupoulou I. (2001), "Trafficking in Women and Children: Greece, a country of destination and transit", MMO Working Paper No2, available from <http://www.uehr.panteion.gr/pdf/MMO-wp2.pdf> (14/09/2002), p.10, PUBGR0243

<sup>61</sup> (2003), US faults Greece for 'sex slavery', in: Kathimerini English Edition (12.06.2003), PUBGR0660

<sup>62</sup> Konstantaras, N. (2003), Rattling the chains, in: Kathimerini English Edition (14.06.2003), PUBGR0661

<sup>63</sup> PUB/GR/0605; PUB/GR/0622; PUB/GR/0626, PUB/GR/0650; PUB/GR/0662; PUB/GR/0664

<sup>64</sup> (2003) Roumanoi anagazan mikra paidia na zitianeoun (Roumanians forced small children to beg on the streets), in: Eleftherotypia (17.09.2003), PUBGR0617

#### 6.2.4. Category D – Abuse aimed at the person

There appear to be no reports of these involving foreigners – which tends to suggest that the phenomenon is simply not unusual enough to be press-worthy. Indeed, it may be that immigrants in Greece simply accept abusive behaviour as a normal part of life. The only reports concern Roma and the Jewish community, and these are generally collected by NGOs.<sup>65</sup>

The most significant incident in this category was aimed at Roma in the city of Patras<sup>66</sup>. On May 29, 2002, with the assistance of the European Roma Rights Centre and Greek NGOs, two residents of the Roma settlement, Ms. Maria Vasilari and Ms. Eleftheria Georgopoulou, had filed a criminal complaint with the Misdemeanor Prosecutor of Patras. The complaint was directed against the local cultural associations, whose chairmen drafted and signed a Letter of Protest allegedly full of racist epithets, and based on the Greek Law 927/1979 criminalizing acts or activities aimed at racial discrimination, incitement to racial violence, racially offensive expression, and the establishment of and participation in organizations promoting such activity. Following the complaint, a trial was held on June 25, 2003 before a three-member chamber of the Patras Misdemeanour Court, where the plaintiffs showed that the Letter of Protest expressed racially offensive ideas and amounted to incitement to racial discrimination.

The background of the story is the following: In mid-November 2001, local Patras daily newspapers published a Letter of Protest reportedly signed by 1,200 non-Roma residents of Patras, all of whom lived in the vicinity of a Roma settlement situated in the area of Riganokampos. The denouncement threatened "militant action" by residents of Eglykada, Perivola, Neo Souli and Riganokampos if the Roma were not immediately evicted from their settlement. The Letter blamed the Roma, as a group, for a litany of acts ranging from felonious to petty, including but not limited to: physical violence, arson, vandalism, theft, swearing, and even ringing doorbells. In addition, it accused the Roma of three specific crimes: a physical assault and battery, an arson attack on a car, and a forceful trespass into a local sports facility.

As regards allegations of specific criminal acts contained in the letter and attributed to the Roma, documents obtained from the 5th Police Station of Patras established them to be patently untrue. According to the police, "there is no entry in our files concerning the perpetration of any of the alleged offences."

According to Law 927/1979, publicly blaming a group for the actions of a few individuals is irrational and blatantly racist. Calling for the exile of an entire racial group - under threat of "militant action" - for acts never committed by any of its members is, in addition, malicious and criminal. However, the court in Patras dismissed the case. The public prosecutor's motion to drop all charges stated that the defendants had no "malicious intent" aimed at the defamation of Roma and that the Letter of Protest in question was merely intended to draw the authorities' attention to the plight of the Roma themselves. This assertion is clearly at odds with the facts of the case. The Letter of Protest was in no way concerned with the problems faced by Roma, but rather expressly

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<sup>65</sup> namely, European Roma Rights Centre and Greek Helsinki Monitor  
<sup>66</sup> (2003), Open letter to Minister Petsalnikos from ERRC/Greek Helsinki Monitor, in: Yahoo Groups: Balkan Human Rights List (24.07.2003), PUBGR0676

focused on "what it means for the [non-Romani] residents of our area to co-exist and live together with them." Nonetheless, and providing no reasoning for its decision the court accepted the motion.

Finally, during the course of the proceedings the presiding judge, Ms. Eleni Koufi ,in response to a comment by defence counsel that Roma commit many crimes, she said "it is true", and added that there were at that time "many cases pending against Roma in the courts of Patras." When Ms. Maria Vasilari stated that the Letter of Protest had insulted her, Judge Koufi responded by saying: "you have to admit, you Roma do steal though."

#### SUBCATEGORY 1 – RACIAL OR OTHER OFFENSIVE GRAFFITI LEFT ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

The argument for including this category, is simply that public graffiti of an offensive racial nature should not be allowed to remain visible for an extended period of time: arguably, its existence legitimates and encourages racial hatred and violence. Therefore, public authorities have a duty to detect and remove such graffiti – or, at the very least, to respond to public complaints of such.

The only recorded incident of this in September 2003, was noted in an Open Letter to Prime Minister Simitis,<sup>67</sup> written by Greek Helsinki Monitor. The graffiti were displayed at various points on the Corinth-Tripoli highway, and included anti-Semitic, xenophobic and neo-Nazi slogans. However, it is clear that such graffiti are displayed, albeit in smaller lettering, across Greece. There is no known response by public authorities on this issue.

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<sup>67</sup> (2003), Open letter to Prime Minister Simitis, in: Kathimerini English Edition (25.09.2003), PUBGR0652

## 7. COMBATING RACISM – SUPPORTING DIVERSITY

Few projects or initiatives combating racial violence and harassment *per se* can be cited. However, all projects combating racism and supporting vulnerable groups indirectly assist in the fight against racial violence. Such projects date from 1994 and are fully or partly financed by the EU. In this section we will briefly present the most important projects, actions and initiatives.

### 7.1. LARGE SCALE PROJECTS

- **The EQUAL Initiative** has approved four projects to develop actions combating racism and xenophobia in the strands “Combating Racism and Xenophobia in connection to the Labour Market” and “Support of Social and Professional Integration of Asylum Seekers”. 18% of approved projects<sup>68</sup> in all strands relate to vulnerable social groups (migrants and refugees, religious minorities, repatriated ethnic Greeks). However, as we have discovered by contacting all migrant organisations in Greece, very few participate or are even aware of EU-funded projects. Representatives of migrant community organisations suggested to us that this is mainly due to the inadequate and inappropriate dissemination of information. The approved projects are the following:
  1. “Dream”: Combating racism and xenophobia in the media; the agency responsible is the Vocational Training Centre “DEMETRA”; the project is to be implemented in Athens, Thessalonica and Volos with actions mainly focused on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.
  2. “Forum on Social Cohesion”: Combating racism and xenophobia in the media; the agency responsible is the Athens News Agency; the project is to be implemented in Attica with actions mainly focused on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.
  3. “Post-Information Centre for Immigrants – Repatriated – Refugees”: Developing vocational skills as a means of combating racism and xenophobia; the agency responsible is the Greek Mission of the International Organisation of Migration; the project will cover the whole of Greece with actions mainly focused on foreign migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriated and migrant ethnic Greeks.
  4. “Web – Feedback”: Use of the internet for combating racism and xenophobia; the agency responsible is the Greek Red Cross; the project will cover the whole of Greece with actions addressing asylum seekers exclusively. We will be monitoring closely the implementation of these projects scheduled to start in late 2002 closely.

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<sup>68</sup> Information on the approved EQUAL Projects in Greek only available at <http://www.labor-ministry.gr/ekt/equal/index.htm> (22/04/2002)

- **The Integrated Action Plan for the Roma**<sup>69</sup> includes measures and practices to be implemented by various national actors including local authorities, prefectures, NGOs and others for the improvement of the social situation of the Roma population in Greece. It is a six -year (2001-2008) plan to be financed partly from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework and partly from national funds to a total 35 MEURO. Actions are aimed at the creation of **infrastructure** (housing and Roma support centres) and the provision of **services** (training, employment, adult education, etc). The project is the result of a long consultation process between the government, Local Authorities, the ROMANET network and the national Federation of Greek Roma Associations. The measures for **services in employment** include interventions for pre-training, training, access to employment, counselling and supporting services and education of Roma as well as relevant organizations and individuals involved. The Action Plan appears to be well designed and it is supervised directly by the Prime Minister’s Office as a sign of the importance attached to it by the government.

Most of the actions are focused on housing and sanitary facilities. Since 1999 the state has provided Roma with 2,500 pre-fabricated houses in settlements around Greece. Meanwhile, a recent Ministerial Decision 18830/09-05-02 defined the terms for granting 3,500 housing loans to Greek Roma, 80% of the loans’ interest being subsidised by the state. However, a major problem that remains to be solved is the legal definition of the Roma population, which given the lack of demographic and other statistical data will prove to be a daunting task that may seriously delay or even endanger this project. In this context the competent agency EETAA has already tendered a demographic study to be conducted in 2003.

In this context the Rom Municipal Network has started during 2002 to implement an information, training and awareness campaign<sup>70</sup> addressed to local communities. Meetings are held by the Network in co-operation with the Greek Committee for Co-operation with UNICEF, and the Greek Social Workers’ Association, under the title “Travelogue for Combating Social Exclusion and for the Social Integration of the Greek Roma”. The three meetings held up to this moment have been attended by over 400 people, while another three meetings are pending in 2002 and 2003. These meetings are intended to mobilise local opinion makers, train local officials and raise public awareness on issues that concern the Greek Roma. The contribution of the Roma to local community development is given particular emphasis.

- **The National Action Plan for Employment 2001** (and the subsequent NAP for Employment 2002) co-funded by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework introduce a novel approach based on the following:

“Neither economic growth nor technological progress is enough in itself to limit inequality and poverty and to combat the problem of social exclusion. New disparities are now developing alongside the old, some of them transitory and others permanent. If ignored, they are capable of jeopardising social cohesion and impeding economic growth. Precisely because the causes of poverty are complex, and very often differ among the various vulnerable

<sup>69</sup> EETAA (2001): “Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma”, Athens: EETAA, PUBGR0578

<sup>70</sup> There is no published information available. For more details please contact the NFP (info@antigone.gr)

groups within the population, our policy focuses on - and is specifically designed for - particular target groups. The actions intending to promote employment among the vulnerable groups involve a new method of approaching these groups: facilitating the admission to programmes of employment, work experience and vocational training; activating the individual to develop his/her skills; participation in programmes of special 'empowerment' themes, such as boosting self-confidence, psychological support, resolving legal issues and accessing health services; combating racism and xenophobia in the labour market. Specifically: Provisions of support services; Integrating programmes; Pre-training preparation and developing language skills; Employment subsidy.”<sup>71</sup>

The most significant element of the 2001 and 2002 National Action Plans is that the need for positive action on combating racism and discrimination is acknowledged.

## Comments

In view of the numbers of individuals affected by discrimination it is obvious that a greater and more systematic effort is required to significantly improve the situation. NGOs and migrant community organisations have repeatedly stressed that EU financed projects are simply not sufficient to combat discrimination and racism in any area of social life. They have also pointed out to the inadequate dissemination of information<sup>72</sup> claiming that most Roma and migrants learn little about these projects who target and affect very small numbers anyway.

It should also be noted that the evaluation results of such projects and initiatives should also be publicly available (for instance on the project's or the funding authority's website) to allow public scrutiny of their impact and effectiveness especially since large sums of public funds are used. The common practice of simply announcing the number of beneficiaries and the cost of actions is not sufficient.

Finally we should point to the absence of any single central authority co-ordinating the efforts of nationally controlled projects and programmes. It is assumed that projects selected, financed and evaluated directly by EU DGs are coordinated by the relevant DG, however, the absence of such a national authority leads frequently to the duplication of efforts, the waste of valuable resources and most importantly hinders the flow of information and data concerning the actions and results of such projects and programmes.

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<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001), National Action Plan for Employment 2001, p.19 available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2002/may/nap2002/nap2001\\_el\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2002/may/nap2002/nap2001_el_en.pdf) (14/09/2002)

<sup>72</sup> Projects results are “disseminated” through elaborate conferences, the internet or leaflets left in local authority offices and thus beyond the “reach” of most members of vulnerable social groups. Additionally, very few projects are in fact disseminated in any language other than Greek rendering them incomprehensible to most migrants or Roma who cannot read well or at all.

## 7.2. ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC BODIES

- **The Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED)**<sup>73</sup> operates since 1994 a number of vocational training and employment projects and programmes aimed at social groups facing or endangered with social exclusion in the labour market. However, OAED has not implemented any projects dealing directly with issues of racial violence, harassment and intimidation at the work place.

Generally the anti-discrimination activities of the Manpower Employment Organisation concerning vocational training and employment are significant, but limited to a very small number of beneficiaries and thus acting more as an example of good practice than actually making a difference in the employment situation of vulnerable groups. Furthermore these activities are neither monitored or externally evaluated and relevant records or data are not available.

- **The General Secretariat for Adult Education**<sup>74</sup> is a public body catering primarily to the needs of Roma and repatriated ethnic Greeks. It focuses on employment and vocational training issues, but has carried out no work on racial violence or harassment. Like OAED the beneficiaries are few and the operations and activities are not externally evaluated. There are no available statistical data concerning its activities.
- **The Labour Inspectorate Body**<sup>75</sup> supervised by the Ministry of Labour is responsible for receiving and examining complaints related to employers' abuses and is also empowered to examine on its own initiative various issues regarding the labour market. This body could, potentially, monitor racial violence, harassment and intimidation at the workplace.
- **The Research Centre for Equality Issues**<sup>76</sup> (KETHI) is a public body that has set up Information Centres for women in co-operation with the General Secretariat for Equality within the framework of the NOW (New Opportunities for Women) Community Initiative in the cities of Athens, Thessalonica, Patras, Herakleion and Volos. Since 2000 their operation has been partly financed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework funds. The Centres address the needs of: (i) women seeking legal aid; (ii) women residing in remote communities; (iii) women who are in danger of social exclusion, such as heads of single-parent families; immigrants and repatriates; the victims of domestic or other kinds of violence; women released from prison. The Information Centres: (i) employ specialist personnel, trained in the provision of information, advice and support of women in employment and social incorporation; (ii) ease the re-integration of women into the labour market; (iii) promote women's entrepreneurial activities; (iv) motivate unemployed women towards the assertion of their personal and professional future; (v) aid women with psychological and social problems.

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<sup>73</sup> Directorate for Special Social Groups responsible for the planning, implementation, coordination of the supporting programmes and measures (according to Laws 2643/98, 1262/82 and Presidential Decrees 246/86, 1836/89, 1892/90, 2081/92, 2431/96 and 33485/98). More information available at <http://www.oeed.gr> (10/05/2002)

<sup>74</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.gsae.edu.gr> (28/06/2002)

<sup>75</sup> Established by Law 2639/98. More information available at [www.labor-ministry.gr](http://www.labor-ministry.gr) (22/06/2002)

<sup>76</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.kethi.gr> (21/06/2002), NFPGR0163

KETHI has made available to us some statistical data and other information concerning its activities. However, the data refer to earlier periods (1995-1998) and are not collected systematically due to staffing shortages.

- **The Ministry of Public Order** has organised a variety of training seminars for civilian staff and the police concerning the rights of asylum seekers, refugees, women etc, mainly through actions funded by the EU (ULYSSES Programme, STOP), in co-operation with agencies such as the Greek Council for Refugees, the Greek mission of the International Organisation of Migration etc.

In April 2001 the Ministry formed the Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings (ΕΠΕΑ) in order to study the phenomenon of trafficking in Greece and develop an effective national plan of action in co-operation with national, European and international law enforcement agencies. The Task Force concluded its study with the drafting of an anti-trafficking Bill that was adopted by the Ministry and is expected to be tabled to the Greek Parliament. The Task Force has already compiled a data base concerning trafficking and developed plans for the creation of a new police department specialising in trafficking. Additionally it has prepared a new syllabus for the Police Academy concerning sexual exploitation and trafficking and a awareness raising campaign for the general public. The Task Force is composed of high ranking officers of the Greek Police, representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Public Order, the General Secretariat for Equality, the International Organisation of Migration and specialist experts.

## Comments

It is evident that the number and scope of public bodies involved in combating racism and discrimination and promoting diversity and equality in employment is limited. We have not included the Ombudsman's Office, because it does not deal directly with issues concerning employment as its legal mandate limits its powers to intervene only between individuals and public authorities. Since none of the vulnerable groups in question has until now been employed or tried to be employed in the public sector there have been no such cases brought before it. However, the Ombudsman has dealt repeatedly with issues concerning the regularisation process itself and has highlighted in its Special Report the problems in the application of Law 2910/2001. Accordingly, the government amended the law on May 1, 2002 improving the relevant procedures and automatically extended the validity of all residence and work permits until the end of 2002, since it was proved impossible to examine existing and new applications before that time due to the complexity of the procedures and the lack of an appropriate computerised process<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>77</sup> Until today all residence and work permits are handwritten (more than 700,000). The burden added to the workload of the civil servants engaged in the process and the unavoidable delays in the process are immense.

### 7.3. ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- **Local Councils for the Prevention of Crime**<sup>78</sup>, are to be established according to Law 2910/2001 in every Municipality, the aims of which include, *inter alia*, combating racism and violence. Ten Municipalities have formed such councils, but the process is still in its early stages of development.
- **“Anti-racist Charter for Local Authorities”**: In view of the October 2002 municipal elections the “Citizens’ Movement against Racism” drew up in May 2002 this charter and urged candidates to incorporate it into their election programmes and campaigns. Many candidates supported by PASOK and/or left wing party SYN have signed the charter.
- **The Municipality of Rahes**, on the island of Ikaria, actively supported the creation of the association “Multi-National Workers of Ikaria”.
- **The Municipalities of Daphne and Nea Smyrni**, in the greater Athens metropolitan area, actively supported the creation of the “Greek-Kurdish Solidarity Association”.

Local authorities have also implemented a large number of EU financed projects for the improvement of the social integration of vulnerable social groups usually involving vocational training and social support structures. Some examples are the following:

- **Advisory Service**<sup>79</sup> set up in the Municipality of Perama in the context of a transnational project aiming at the support of individuals who experience discrimination and social exclusion. Among the objectives of the project were to establish an "access point" in the form of an advisory service for persons wishing to report incidents of discrimination and social exclusion in employment and housing, seeking psychological and legal support, while also providing " first hand" advice to these persons regarding their legal, civil and financial rights and direct them to appropriate agencies for further advice and help, in order to establish their rights and resolve conflict. However, although the reported incidents will be registered in a data bank in order to derive a typology of discrimination situations no such information is as yet available and the project has not yet been evaluated. In the interview we held with the project manager we were informed that there have been only a few reports of incidents of discrimination in employment. It was suggested that the low response rate could be attributed to the very limited (if any) action that could be taken to redress the reported problem.
- **Information Material** in the form of booklets in three languages, Greek, Turkish and Russian, providing information on local government, legislation, rights and employment were published by the Municipality of Sapes<sup>80</sup> in the context of the project “Backing up a new life – integration of refugees entering through North Eastern Greece” has published three information booklets. They address immigrants, refugees and the Muslims living in the area and are provided free of

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<sup>78</sup> There is no published information available. For more details please contact the NFP (info@antigone.gr)

<sup>79</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.ombudsman.gr> (01/06/2002), NFPGR0082

<sup>80</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.dsapes.gr> (05/06/2002)

charge. Sapes' population is estimated at: 40% Christian; 35% Muslim; 25% ethnic Greek repatriates. This activity, coupled with vocational training programmes and other initiatives are aimed at improving co-existence of the different ethnic, religious and cultural social groups in the area. It is an example of good practices on the part of the municipality in its attempt to undertake a new role for local governments on immigrant and refugee issues.

- **Service Centre (KYA)** set up by the Municipality of Agia Varvara<sup>81</sup> targeting socially vulnerable groups threatened by unemployment. The Centre attempts to bring in touch local businesses and unemployed. This is a positive attempt to inform and advise both prospective employers and the unemployed, who find a source of support in the Centre. Furthermore, KYA is a permanent structure, which not only organises the local market within a framework of co-operation and mutual support, but also plays a significant part in the sensitisation of businesses and the local community in general as regards training and employment.

## 7.4. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

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

- **The “Centre for the Information and Support of Repatriates” (KEPYP)**<sup>82</sup> is one of the most active NGOs mainly in the field of the social integration of repatriates, including refugees and immigrants. KEPYP is active in many fields and particularly the employment of repatriates, as well as other refugee and migrants. It provides information, and advisory and psychological/social support, professional orientation and support of new business initiatives. The Centre operates a Greek language education programme and is a certified entity for the provision of Support Services for the Exclusion from the Labour Market EU project (sub-project2: repatriates, migrants, refugees), and a leader at the national level for the Integra project.
- **The General Confederation of Workers** has established a Migrants' Office<sup>83</sup> as part of the Information Centre for Workers and the Unemployed. At present staffing shortages allows the Office to disseminate only information, but in the future migrants will also be able to register complaints on racist treatment or harassment.
- **The Piraeus Labour Centre** (a social partner organisation) has set up a similar Migrants Office since 1998.

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<sup>81</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.agiavarvara.gr> (01/05/2002)

<sup>82</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.mitnet.gr/kepyp> (03/05/2002), NFPGR0152

<sup>83</sup> More information available on line in Greek at [http://www.gsee.gr/KEPEA/kepea/Greek/gpe\\_index.htm](http://www.gsee.gr/KEPEA/kepea/Greek/gpe_index.htm) (02/04/2002), NFPGR0187

- **The Foreign Women’s Network**<sup>84</sup> (NGO) is a non-profit organization run by and for foreign women, provides in person and through the Internet information on employment and various other matters informing Greek state agencies, private enterprise and NGOs of the needs, aspirations and the potential of the foreign community.
- **The Annual 3-day Anti-Racist Festival**, organised jointly by the “Social Support Network for migrants and refugees” (part of the Greek NFP structure) and migrants’ organisations.
- **STOP Now!** Campaign against trafficking carried out by the Research and Action Centre for Peace.
- Other active NGOs include the “Support Centre for Repatriates and Migrants of the Orthodox Church of Greece”, the “Ecumenical Project for Refugees of the Orthodox Church of Greece”, the Greek “Anti-Poverty Network” and the “Nostos Society of Social and Cultural Support of Repatriates” who have carried out various anti-racist projects none, however, aimed specifically at racial violence.

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<sup>84</sup> More information available on line in both Greek and English at <http://www.foreign-womens-network.gr> (01/03/2002), NFPGR0095

## 8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The legal framework relevant to racial discrimination, racial harassment and racial violence is not well developed in Greece, although should improve with transposition of the two EU directives. Law 927/1979 has never been tested in the courts, as no public prosecutor has ever initiated proceedings. There remains, therefore, a question of the effectiveness of this legal provision.

Data collection and monitoring of racial violence in Greece is almost non-existent, as the police do not record the relevant variables. Since the principal sources of data are press reports and NGOs, we are heavily reliant upon their accuracy and representativeness: there is room for doubt in both cases. In particular, the Greek language press seems to have very little, even zero, coverage of incidents involving Roma and desecration of Jewish cemeteries and monuments. Thus, the actual collection of data by the state is an imperative.

Despite serious definitional problems for comparative purposes, we adhere to a 4-typology framework to analyse the rather limited data. Attacks on the person, although serious and even resulting in death, are not noticeably on the increase: in fact, the most serious incident occurred in 1999. Nor are Greeks necessarily involved in such violence, as much of it is intra-community. However, there are many reports of serious incidents involving border-guards [with immigrants] and the police [with Roma]; there also continue to be problems with conditions of detention. Another very serious issue is trafficking and prostitution, which the Greek state rather belatedly has begun to address; the signs for the future are encouraging, in that many prostitution rackets are being broken up by police investigation and raids. Also, the legal provisions for dealing with traffickers and also protection of victims are now in place. Issues of attacks on private property seem primarily to concern the Roma; again, there is evidence that the central state is now addressing some of the issues. However, desecration of Jewish monuments, along with racist graffiti receives little or no attention in the press or in political discourse: this remains an area of concern. Finally, the extreme situation described in some detail concerning the non-Roma citizens of Patras, and the unsatisfactory judicial proceedings, are of great concern. This incident shows clearly that racial stereotyping is endemic, within the judiciary as well as the public, and that a very perfunctory approach is taken in formal procedures of investigation. This latter point is continuously being emphasised in NGO reports on the Roma, most particularly with respect to police internal investigations of alleged brutalities. There remains, therefore, great doubt about the ability of the state to implement non-discrimination procedures and protection of its minorities.

Several priorities emerge from this picture. First, the need for systematic data collection and processing on issues of racial violence: it is not acceptable to rely on poor media coverage and NGO investigations and monitoring. Secondly, the need for state institutions to be created to deal with these issues, to analyse the data collected, to formulate policy proposals, and to stimulate public awareness and sensitivity to racial and minority issues. Thirdly, that the state needs to train its own employees in matters of racial sensitivity, discipline in the less-regulated new border-guard force and coastguard, along with a code of conduct. The responsibility for public awareness of racial issues lies primarily with the state itself, and its own self-regulation is an appropriate starting point.

Without such, the situation with Greece's population of immigrants and minorities could become problematic in the future.

## 9. ANNEX A: VULNERABLE SOCIAL GROUPS

### 9.1. DEFINITION, DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (responsible for asylum seekers, refugees and the Muslim minority) adheres to the existing international legal definitions (1951 Geneva Convention) for asylum seekers and refugees and the 1923 Lausanne Treaty for the Muslim minority of Thrace.

The Ministry of Public Order (supervising the Police and Border Guard), the Ministry of Merchant Marine (supervising the Coast Guard), the Ministry of the Interior (supervising Local Authorities and responsible for migration issues) define vulnerable groups according to the taxonomy adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security<sup>85</sup> to be used in the context of policies and projects aimed at combating social exclusion. The following groups are listed (non hierarchical categorisation):

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

For the purpose of this study we will examine the political – cultural situation of the following groups that are possible victims of racial violence due to their ethnic, religious and cultural specificity:

- Documented and undocumented migrants (aliens)
- Asylum seekers and refugees (aliens)
- Roma (Greek citizens)

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<sup>85</sup> Indirectly in the sense that there is no official list, but such groups are defined as vulnerable in policies and projects aimed at combating social exclusion. Relevant information in Greek only available at [http://www.labor-ministry.gr/index\\_gr.html](http://www.labor-ministry.gr/index_gr.html) (22/05/2002). Also some additional information on definitions of vulnerable groups can be found in the “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and available at [europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001e1\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001e1_en.pdf) (21/06/2002).

- Religious Minorities (Greek citizens)
- “Repatriated” ethnic Greeks from the NIS and migrant ethnic Greeks from Albania (NIS repatriates acquire Greek citizenship through a special process and Albanian ethnic Greeks hold a special residence permit)<sup>86</sup>

A common feature of the above groups is their relative social exclusion<sup>87</sup> from essential public social services, such as education, vocational training, social welfare and health care and from other social activities and their marginal position in the labour market. The problems created by social exclusion have led many such groups to develop and rely on extensive informal aid and self-assistance networks that have further alienated them from mainstream society.

### 9.1.1. Resident Aliens – Documented / undocumented migrants, asylum seekers & refugees

**Documented migrants** are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece legally holding a residence and work permit.<sup>88</sup>

**Undocumented migrants** are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece illegally either without a residence and work permit or holding one that has expired.<sup>89</sup>

**Asylum seekers** are foreign nationals and their immediate dependants (wife/husband, minor or handicapped children and parents) who apply or have applied orally or in writing to any public authority for political asylum according to the 1951 Geneva Convention as amended by the 1967 New York Protocol or have entered the country with the intention to apply for asylum according to the Dublin Convention 1990 as transposed in national legislation.<sup>90</sup>

**Refugees** are foreign nationals who reside and work in Greece legally having acquired the status of political refugee by the competent authorities following the due process prescribed by international law and transposed on national legislation.<sup>91</sup>

According to the first preliminary results of the 2001 Census, published in May 2002, the number of resident aliens has risen significantly: The number of **recorded** non nationals has reached a total of **797,093**<sup>92</sup> (7,3%) of a total population of **10,964,080**. In the Athens

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<sup>86</sup> Official data concerning the number of special permits issued are not available.

<sup>87</sup> Although formally entitled to such services, members of these groups will in many cases not use them either because they are (self) intimidated by poor language skills or because of ill-treatment by officials or because they see no real benefit.

<sup>88</sup> Greece, N. 2910/2001 (02/05/2001), PUBGR0448

<sup>89</sup> *ibid*

<sup>90</sup> Greece, P. D. 61/1999 (06/04/1999), PUBGR0592

<sup>91</sup> *ibid*

<sup>92</sup> Including refugees and asylum seekers. In relation to economic migrants the number of refugees and asylum seekers is very small. UNHCR data show that since 1980 and until 2001 Greece awarded refugee status to a total of 6,460 persons with a refusal rate of over 90%.

Metropolitan Area the **recorded** non nationals are **376.732 (10%)** in a total population of **3.761.810**.<sup>93</sup>

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

We are dealing therefore with a highly mobile immigrant population that is either not adequately monitored<sup>94</sup> - concerning those that cross the borders legally - or not monitored at all - concerning those that cross the borders illegally.

Another indicator of the number of foreign migrants are the results of the two migrant registration processes in 1998 and 2001. In 1998 **371,641**<sup>95</sup> migrants registered for residence and work permits with the National Manpower and Employment Organization<sup>96</sup> (OAED), but the National Institute of Labour (EIE)<sup>97</sup> estimated that more than **150,000** did not register mostly because they could not secure the necessary documentation (minimum number of work days certified officially by social security or tax authorities) or because were prevented by their employer under threat of dismissal. Official data concerning the 2001 registration process are not yet available, since the processing of applications will not be finished before the end of December 2002, but the Ministry of the Interior<sup>98</sup> announced in December 2001 that approximately **351,000** migrants applied for residence and work permits by the end of the deadline - some of whom may have applied unsuccessfully during the earlier period. Thus we can assume that the number of both registered (approximately **720,000**) and unregistered (200,000 – 300,000) migrants is about **900,000** that roughly corresponds to the findings of the 2001 Census taking into account that many unregistered migrants preferred not to participate in the Census for a variety of reasons, mainly fear of deportation. The migrant population constitutes, then, roughly **8,5% - 9%** of the total population. It should also be added that a rising number of migrants are beginning to form families characterized by high fertility in contrast to the Greek population<sup>99</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> National Statistical Service (2002), Census 2001 Data, available at [http://www.statistics.gr/new\\_site/Hellenic/gr\\_tables/S1100\\_SAP\\_1\\_pinakas1b\\_i.HTM?code=\(12/05/2002\)](http://www.statistics.gr/new_site/Hellenic/gr_tables/S1100_SAP_1_pinakas1b_i.HTM?code=(12/05/2002))

<sup>94</sup> Data concerning visas held by the border authorities (Ministry of Public Order) are not correlated or crosschecked with data concerning residence & work permits (Ministry of the Interior). Therefore it is not possible to have data on the number of migrants residing in the country. Existing data refer to rough estimations.

<sup>95</sup> Kavounidis J. and Hatzaki L., (2000) "Alien Applications for Residence and Work Permits", Athens: National Institute of Labour, available at [http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents\\_keimena\\_ergasias2.htm](http://www.eie.org.gr/Greek/contents_keimena_ergasias2.htm) (12/05/2002)

<sup>96</sup> More information mostly in Greek from [www.oaed.gr](http://www.oaed.gr) (03/03/2002)

<sup>97</sup> More information mostly in Greek from [www.eie.org.gr](http://www.eie.org.gr) (13/03/2002)

<sup>98</sup> The Ministry of the Interior has replaced the Ministry of Labour and the National Manpower and Employment Organization as competent public authority according to Law 2910/2001.

<sup>99</sup> "The question of low fertility was also raised in relation to the relatively recent immigration flows into Greece. This discussion focused on the differential fertility between immigrants and nationals. The publication of the SOPEMI 1999 report, and in particular the point raised that in several countries the percentage of births in the immigrant population is higher than the percentage of immigrants within the total population, has generated further discussion on

## Asylum seekers and refugees

Demographic data concerning asylum seekers and refugees in Greece are collected by the Ministry of Public Order, but are not publicly available. However, the UNHCR office in Greece releases such data in Greek through its website<sup>100</sup>.

The total number of refugees in Greece, as of 31 December 2001, was 6,948, of whom 60% are Turks and Poles. During the year 2001, 5,499 asylum applications were submitted, mainly by Iraqis, Turks and Afghans, 1,312 of which were examined. 147 persons were granted refugee status, while another 148 were granted residence permits for humanitarian reasons. Of the total number of applications, 306 concerned unaccompanied minors<sup>101</sup>.

During the first seven months of 2002, 2,838 asylum requests were submitted and 2,810 were examined (including earlier pending cases). 25 persons were granted refugee status and another 34 were granted humanitarian status. The main countries of origin for asylum applications are Iraq (1,190 – 41.93%) and Afghanistan (841 – 29.63%). 429 asylum seekers withdrew their applications probably, because they had already remained in Greece long enough to be able to apply for a residence permit as migrants.

## Illegal Entry

Data by the Ministry of Public Order concerning the numbers of migrants and refugees arrested for entering the country illegally are impressive. During 2001, 219,598 immigrants were arrested for illegal entry into the country, 167,168 of whom by the Border Guard (constituting 76% of the total, compared with 50% in 2000) and the rest by the Police, while the Coast Guard arrested 6,864. It should be noted that Chinese nationals were for the first time among those arrested during 2001.

Ministry of Public Order data<sup>102</sup> concerning arrests for illegal entry indicate that the main entrance points for asylum seekers are the river Evros, border between Turkey and Greece (22.3% of the total), the island of Mytilene lying very close to the Turkish mainland (21.7%), the greater area of Volos (13.3%), the island of Chios (9.71%) and Evia (8.9%).

A recently published Panteion University study “Comparative Research of the Relationship Between Organised Crime, Illegal Immigrants and Undeclared Labour”,

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this topic. Despite the lack of reliable statistical data in Greece, it has been estimated that during 1999 30% of all live births came from immigrants. In addition, it has been argued that if the actual patterns of immigrant fertility continue for the next 20 years, 150,000 births will come from the immigrant population. For further information see the report by the European Observatory on Family Matters (2001), Bagavos Ch., “Focus Monitoring 2000: Fertility, Greece: ”General context in relation to the perception and discussion of demographic trends and family needs”.

<sup>100</sup> Ministry of Public Order data available from UNHCR available at [http://www.unhcr.gr/exec/article\\_1.htm](http://www.unhcr.gr/exec/article_1.htm) (12/09/2002)

<sup>101</sup> Ministry of Public Order data available from UNHCR available at <http://www.unhcr.gr/research.htm#i> (03/09/2002)

<sup>102</sup> “Eleftherotypia” (29/5/2002) available at [http://www.enet.gr/online/online\\_p1\\_text.jsp?dt=29/05/2002&c=112&id=8062760](http://www.enet.gr/online/online_p1_text.jsp?dt=29/05/2002&c=112&id=8062760) (01/09/2002)

conducted by sociology professor Constantinos Koskinas, psychology professor Stamos Papastamos and tutor of sociology George Alexias, found that, of the total number of aliens arrested for illegal entry into the EU, 24.8% were arrested entering through Greece.

### 9.1.2. Roma

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

It is virtually impossible to obtain reliable demographic data on the Roma population since there is no relevant ethnic or linguistic category recorded by the Census. The last Greek Census that contained linguistic data in 1951 recorded 7,500 individuals speaking Romani. However, several studies<sup>103</sup> show that the number of Roma was always far higher than that.

Existing research on selected samples in certain municipalities indicates that their number is somewhere between 150,000<sup>104</sup> – 300,000<sup>105</sup> loosely organised in “tribes” that are distinguished by features not always identifiable by the non-Roma. The demographic situation becomes even more complicated in view of the entry into the country of Roma from neighbouring Balkan countries after the Bosnian and Kosovo wars.

Until 1955 the Roma were stateless. Since then gradually until 1978 they were all granted Greek citizenship, but many still do not register with either the police in order to acquire an identity card or with a municipality in order to receive social benefits<sup>106</sup>.

The problem of recording accurately the Roma population presents unique difficulties on the one hand because a significant number continues to lead a nomadic life and on the other because many settled Roma refuse to be recorded as such due to the stigma attached. In interviews with Roma representatives we were told of several cases of educated and settled Roma who keep their Roma identity secret for fear of losing their jobs or the respect of their colleagues and non Roma friends.

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

**Repatriated ethnic Greeks (palinnostountes omogeneis)** are residents of the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union of Greek ethnic descent who have the right to apply for the acquisition of Greek citizenship, if their nationality cannot be

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<sup>103</sup> Vaxevanoglou, A. (2001), “Greek Gypsies: Marginalised and family men”, Athens: Editions Alexandreia, p. 17, PUBGR0576

<sup>104</sup> Komis, K. (1998): “Gypsies: History, Demography, Culture”, Athens: Editions Ellinika Grammata, PUBGR0577

<sup>105</sup> EETAA (2001): “Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma”, Athens: EETAA, p.45, PUBGR0578

<sup>106</sup> ROM Network, (2000) “Panhellenic Census Study investigating the social, housing conditions and needs of Greek Roma Citizens”, unpublished, available on request from the ROM Network <http://www.romanet.gr>, PUBGR0408

established by the procedures laid out by the Ankara and Lausanne Treaties. Citizenship is granted on the basis of the findings of a special committee appointed jointly by the Minister of the Interior and the Foreign Minister on the basis of an interview and examination of all or any of the following original documents: passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, family status certificate, identity card or internal passport or any other document that can prove Greek descent.<sup>107</sup>

**Migrant ethnic Greeks (omogeneis)** are Albanian citizens of ethnic Greek descent. They are entitled to a special residence and work permit of three year duration that is issued by the Aliens Department of the Greek Police after examination of all or any of the following original documents: passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, family status certificate, identity card or internal passport or any other document that can prove Greek descent.<sup>108</sup>

There are no reliable demographic data concerning the number of repatriated ethnic Greeks from the NIS or ethnic Greeks migrants from Albania<sup>109</sup>. It should be noted that the demographic situation of both groups is considered to be a politically highly sensitive issue.

**Repatriated Greeks from the NIS:** Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of violence in several former socialist republics a large number of ethnic Greeks<sup>110</sup> migrated to Greece. According to a demographic study made by the General Secretariat of Repatriated Greeks (Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace) with the help of repatriate NGOs in the regions of Macedonia and Thrace, approximately 135,000 ethnic Greeks entered the country since 1980.<sup>111</sup>

Several legal provisions were instigated since then to facilitate their acquisition of Greek citizenship: According to the 24755/6-4-1990 Joint Ministerial Decision (Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Defence) repatriated Greeks could enrol on the municipal registers and remain in Greece indefinitely without providing the necessary documentation. In 1993 according to Law 2130/1993 the concept “repatriation” became a legal term and ethnic Greeks were distinguished from other foreign nationals in the acquisition of Greek citizenship by a special rapid process. By 1998 more than 95,000 repatriates had acquired Greek citizenship status. A Committee of Inquiry<sup>112</sup> that investigated the special process of repatriate citizenship acquisition discovered many irregularities.

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<sup>107</sup> Greece, N. 2790/2000 (16/02/2000), PUBGR0470

<sup>108</sup> Greece, Ministerial Decision 4000/3/10-e (15/04/1998), PUBGR0459

<sup>109</sup> For example the following source quotes a far smaller number than indicated by Greek sources for repatriate Greeks from the NIS. CEMES (1998), Ethnobarometer Working Paper No. 2, Codagnone C.: “New Migration and Migration Politics in Post-Soviet Russia”, available at [http://www.cemes.org/current/ethpub/ethnobar/wp2/wp2\\_ind.htm](http://www.cemes.org/current/ethpub/ethnobar/wp2/wp2_ind.htm) (13/06/2002), PUBGR0713

<sup>110</sup> Another smaller group from both the NIS and CECs were political refugees who had fled Greece after the 1946-49 civil war.

<sup>111</sup> More information available in Greek from the website of the General Secretariat of Repatriated Greeks that is part of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace available at [www.mathra.gr](http://www.mathra.gr) (21/06/2002)

<sup>112</sup> Karamanlis Foundation (2001): “Findings of the Electoral Committee of Inquiry on the 2000 National Elections”, available at [http://www.idkaramanlis.gr/html/arxeio/anal\\_eklog.html](http://www.idkaramanlis.gr/html/arxeio/anal_eklog.html) (10/09/2002), PUBGR0581

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

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

#### 9.1.4. Religious minorities

**Muslim inhabitants** of Western Thrace are considered to be all Muslims established in the region to the east of the frontier line laid down in 1913 by the Treaty of Bucharest.<sup>113</sup>

The term “religious minority” is used to refer primarily to the autochthonous Muslim minority in Thrace whose legal status and rights are governed by the 1923 Lausanne Treaty and other subsequent bilateral agreements. According to the 1951 census, there were 92,443 Turkophones, 7,429 Gypsies, and 18,671 Pomaks, for a total of 118,533. The difference between that figure and the 112,665 Muslim total can be explained by the fact that some of the Turkish speakers were probably ethnic Greek Orthodox who came to Greece from Anatolia as a result of the 1923 population exchange. After the 1951 census, the Greek National Statistical Service removed the categories national/ethnic origin, language use and religion for reasons of national policy.<sup>114</sup> Today the Muslim minority of Thrace, depending on estimates, numbers between 80,000 -120,000, roughly the same as the number in the 1951 census, which taking into account their high birth rate indicates that a significant number has left the country during the past decades. The Muslim minority is composed of three ethnic groups, namely Turks, Pomaks and Roma, but the largest group by far is constituted by ethnic Turks. It is not possible to acquire more specific demographic data concerning the ethnic composition of the Muslim minority as many Pomaks and Roma have come to identify themselves as ethnic Turks, while speaking less the Romani and Pomak languages than Turkish.

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<sup>113</sup> Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations (Appendix A, Article 2), Lausanne January 30, 1923 between the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Greek Government. English text available at [http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/\(09/09/2002\), PUBGR0465](http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/(09/09/2002), PUBGR0465)

<sup>114</sup> Rozakis Ch. (1996), “The international protection of minorities in Greece,” in Featherstone K. and Ifantis K., eds, “Greece in a Changing Europe: Between European Integration and Balkan disintegration?”, Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 98, PUBGR0579

## 9.2. SOCIAL SITUATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

Racism and discrimination experienced by vulnerable groups is part of the general social conditions under which they live and work in Greek society. These groups are not homogenous as far as their main attributed or acquired social characteristics are concerned, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, education, skills, and occupation<sup>115</sup>. These characteristics are constantly changing through the influence of a multitude of political, economic and social factors across time and these changes influence their lifestyles, life chances, expectations and choices. Consequently the social profile and social position of these groups are related to an ongoing process, as it is constantly re-structured through the past and present organizations of social relations and practices.<sup>116</sup>

The debate concerning the relationship between the position of vulnerable groups in society and racism began in Greece during the 1990s with the influx of considerable numbers of undocumented migrants and the rapid changes in the ethnic landscape of the Balkans. However, even today the issue of discrimination and racism that such groups experience still constitutes a marginalized and “secondary” issue within a broader debate concerning the ethnic composition and inequalities in the social structure and stratification of Greek society. Therefore, one can find little primary research on the social situation of vulnerable groups, as recent reviews of the relevant research literature indicate.<sup>117</sup>

Findings from the few existing studies, however, seem to concur in that poverty, deprivation and social exclusion are common characteristics affecting the social life of all vulnerable groups. The situation is aggravated by the relative underdevelopment of the social welfare system and its inadequate provisions affecting low income groups more seriously. Among the vulnerable groups under consideration some undocumented migrants, most asylum seekers and many nomadic Roma seem to be in the worst position living in conditions of absolute poverty, namely lacking even basic housing, employment of any type and suffering from malnutrition. In contrast there seems to be a marked improvement in the living conditions, life chances and the social situation of the Muslim minority in Thrace during the past decade.<sup>118</sup> We can also assume, as there are still no relevant data available, that the situation of documented migrants is improving since their legal status allows them both access to public services and better wages and living conditions.

Regrettably, however, since there is no monitoring system in place it is not possible to have reliable and regular data concerning the situation of vulnerable groups. Our analyses

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<sup>115</sup> OECD (2001), “The employment of foreigners: Outlook and issues in OECD countries”, p.172

<sup>116</sup> Petracou, E. “Exploring the social and historical dimensions of migration in Europe with special reference to Greece”, unpublished PhD Thesis CRER, University of Warwick, UK, p. 43, PUBGR0707

<sup>117</sup> National Center for Social Research (1999), EuReporting Working Paper No. 8: Greece: “Contributions to Social Reporting, Institutions, Activities, Publications”, p. 2, PUBGR0708

<sup>118</sup> Human Rights Watch (1999), “Greece: The Turks of Western Thrace” available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/greece/index.htm#TopOfPage> (28/08/2002) and Mekos, Z. (1999) “Thrace: Aspects of the minority problem”, Komotini: Thracian Research Association, p. 125 – partly available at [http://orpheus.ee.duth.gr/Mekos/Mekos1/ENG\\_EDITION.HTML](http://orpheus.ee.duth.gr/Mekos/Mekos1/ENG_EDITION.HTML) (10/08/2002)

must rely, therefore, on data from existing studies and primarily on reports produced both by official (independent authorities) and unofficial (research institutes, individual researchers, NGOs) sources.

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

**Economic migrants** entered the country “illegally” in large numbers since the 1990s and remained undocumented until the registration processes of 1998 and 2001: Albanians working in agriculture and construction, Poles and Rumanians as skilled manual labourers, Philipinos as seamen and domestic workers, Pakistani, Indians and Bangladeshis as unskilled labour in small factories and manufactures, Africans as small traders.

A major pull factor for economic migrants has been the large informal economy that accounts for up to 30-35% of Greece’s GDP. Until 1998, when the first migrant registration process was initiated, undocumented migrants provided Greek industry and agriculture with the cheap labour that was essential for their survival in the emerging competitive European market. Small labour intensive enterprises in agriculture, construction and manufacturing that are still prominent in Greece tried to remain competitive through the use of the cheap labour provided by the undocumented migrants who were willing to be both geographically *mobile* and *flexible* regarding working conditions, practices and wages.

The very low income, a part of which is in most cases sent back to the country of origin, accounts partly for the harsh conditions of life characteristic of most economic migrants in Greece. Housing, particularly for those working in rural areas more often than not consists of makeshift huts with no heating or sanitary facilities. In urban areas the high cost leads many migrants to rent substandard accommodation and/or to cohabit in large numbers. Public health and social services are available to documented migrants, but, although there are no specific data available, it is likely that discriminatory practices may also prevail.

Migrants are also largely “invisible” in most entertainment facilities (cinemas, theatres, bars, coffee shops, etc) of both urban and rural areas. In interviews with representatives of migrant organisations we were told that the migrants’ absence from such facilities can be attributed both to the cost involved, but also the fear of a control by the police and racist verbal incidents. To put it in simple terms we were told that there is still a “fear of going public” even for documented migrants.

The absence of a concrete migration policy and legal framework that left migrants for several years in a legal and social vacuum has contributed in their exclusion from both the use of public social services and participation in social life. Furthermore, the continuing absence of adequate social support structures, such as advice centres for the legal, social and economic orientation and integration of migrants makes it difficult for them to satisfy basic social and cultural needs, such as political, cultural and social expression and recreation.

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

**Refugees and asylum seekers** have also entered Greece in increasing numbers since the 1990s. Greece is a major entry point for asylum seekers given its proximity to countries with authoritarian regimes or in conflict and with its long and difficult to patrol sea borders very close to the Asian mainland. Emergency reception facilities are thus critical, since people arrive throughout the year and without warning, often in considerable numbers.

Greece formalized the administration of its main reception centre for asylum seekers, as well as certain health and welfare issues, through Presidential Decree 266/1999, assigning responsibility to the Ministry of Health and Welfare for the Lavrion Refugee Centre, the country's only government funded reception centre with a carrying capacity for 300 persons. Five more reception centres operated mostly by NGOs and located around Athens, in Lamia, Thessalonica and Evros, near the northern border with Turkey accommodate in total a maximum of 600 - 700 persons. Therefore, for most asylum seekers there is no free accommodation available and most – even during the winter – resort to sleeping in parks or public squares in Athens until they find employment that will allow them to pay for housing.

Temporary reception and accommodation facilities available to asylum seekers vary depending on the location where the asylum application is lodged: No organized reception facilities exist on any of the islands, thus asylum seekers are accommodated in an ad hoc way, depending on their number and the options available either in detention facilities or in the case of large groups in stadiums, schools or halls of entertainment. In either case, conditions are very poor, and several problems arise due to the lack of space and suitable infrastructure leading to basic problems of hygiene. International organisations like the UN Committee against Torture<sup>119</sup>, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), NGOs like The Greek Council for Refugees, the Medecin sans Frontier and the Social Support Network for Migrants and Refugees, as well as independent administrative authorities like the Ombudsman<sup>120</sup> and the National Commission for Human Rights<sup>121</sup> have

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<sup>119</sup> CAT (2001) 26th session, 9 May 2001, Concluding Observations on the Report by Greece available at <http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/48265AF463FDBC01C1256A48002E764C?opendocument> (10/09/2002)

<sup>120</sup> Office of the Greek Ombudsman, (2001), Report on the Conditions of Detention for asylum seekers awaiting deportation, available at <http://users.hol.gr/~diktio/reportsinigoros2001.pdf> (14/09/2002),

repeatedly reported on the very poor conditions of detention for asylum seekers and migrants awaiting deportation for several months, due to the lengthy bureaucratic procedures involved.

Refugees, asylum seekers with pending claims and persons granted temporary residence under the humanitarian status provisions are granted a work permit and access to health care, education and social assistance. While this theoretically facilitates legal employment, in fact their situation is very problematic given the high rate of unemployment among unskilled workers and the large number of migrant workers competing for jobs. Although many asylum applicants hold qualifications from their home countries, they usually cannot provide proof of it and therefore their employment is usually limited to unskilled jobs either in the tourist trade or in the agricultural and construction sectors. This has led to increased competition among refugees for jobs where language skills and further qualifications are not required.<sup>122</sup>

### 9.2.2. Roma

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

The attitudes of the Greek population towards the Roma are, as in other southern European countries, mostly negative. As will be discussed in detail later, the most serious incidents of racial violence have in fact been directed against Roma, but still no attempt is made either in the schools or by the media to raise awareness and educate the Greek population concerning the culture, characteristics and problems of the Roma who have come to constitute the most marginalised and socially excluded social group.

Roma are mostly employed as seasonal agricultural workers or, more often, as street vendors experiencing insecurity and discrimination<sup>123</sup>: “The chances of finding employment within an increasingly competitive labour market are virtually nonexistent. If one adds to the above the prevailing stereotypes concerning the indolence of the Roma, it will be only the “bravest” employer who will ever think of employing a Roma. In the public sector, the possession of a junior high graduation certificate (compulsory

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<sup>121</sup> National Commission for Human Rights, Annual Report 2001, pp. 43 – 47, Athens: National Printing Office

<sup>122</sup> Mestheneou, E., (2000), EU CARE: Refugee Entrepreneurs in Greece”, p.9 available at <http://www.gcr.gr/investigations/EU-CAREReport.doc> (08/09/2002), PUBGR0248

<sup>123</sup> Exarchos, G. (1998), Social Exclusion of Roma, p. 78 in Kassimati, K. (ed), “Social Exclusion: The Greek Experience”, Athens: Gutenberg.

education) is the legal precondition for employment, thus excluding practically all the adult Roma.”<sup>124</sup>

There is no statistical data concerning Roma employment, but according to the ROMANET<sup>125</sup> network most Roma are now self-employed street vendors. Among those who have managed to settle in certain areas, particularly the areas of Agia Varvara and Nea Liosia in Athens some have established flourishing businesses, but most seek a meagre existence as street vendors. The more affluent with some capital to finance their operations will trade in household goods like plastic kitchenware and plastic furniture. The rest will traditionally sell agricultural products in local markets. Since they find it increasingly difficult to compete with the low prices offered by supermarkets, most choose to operate without registering with the tax authorities or (expensive) municipal licenses that often results to problems with the police. Since street vendor licenses are issued by the local authorities Roma are disadvantaged as most local authorities refuse to grant them.

A small number of Roma are specialist craftsmen in traditional arts or music; they have relatively stable employment, but their numbers are dwindling, as there is no interest by the young to follow the long and difficult period of apprenticeship. Although it is very difficult to estimate Roma unemployment the Social Welfare service of the Ministry of Health and Welfare has reported that the number of Roma who register for benefits is rising rapidly indicating possibly that unemployment is driving poverty levels higher.

The rising unemployment and poverty among the Roma has significant negative effects and is an important factor of the rising criminality among them. Many young Roma are attracted by the “easy money” that can be made through the drug trade and some of their settlements are already well known as drug trafficking and trading areas with all the negative consequences for the Roma social image and their relations with the local population. Racist stereotypes, a deeply rooted mistrust and cultural misunderstanding often leads to conflicts that frequently characterise the Roma’s relationship to public authorities and especially the police.

Roma educational attainment is at very low levels: According to the unpublished, but released to us, final report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Framework Programme “Gypsy Education”, approximately 60% of the Roma (18-50 years old) are illiterate (they have never attended school), while an additional 22% are functionally illiterate (UNESCO standards).

Roma housing conditions are also reported<sup>126</sup> to be very poor particularly for the nomadic Roma who have no access to regular sanitary facilities, water or electricity. Roma wishing to rent houses are discriminated against and are refused or offered substandard accommodation at high prices. Roma purchasing houses find it very difficult to secure a

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<sup>124</sup> Statement on the Situation of Roma in Greece by the International Romani Union Secretary General Christo Kyuchukov, 20 December 2001, available at [http://www.errc.org/rr\\_nr1\\_2002/noteb5.shtml](http://www.errc.org/rr_nr1_2002/noteb5.shtml) (23/05/2002)

<sup>125</sup> The Municipal Network for the Roma in Greece. More information available on <http://www.romanet.gr> mostly in Greek (23/02/2002), NFPGR0098

<sup>126</sup> EETAA (2001): “Integrated Action Plan for the Greek Roma”, Athens: EETAA, p.57, and also several reports from the Greek Helsinki Monitor available at <http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/special-issues-roma.html> (12/09/2002)

mortgage, because of the nature of their employment. The absence of reliable demographic data do not allow us to have a clear picture of the number of nomadic Roma, however the ROM network suggested that they probably constitute about 20% - 30% of the total population. It is also difficult to define the nomadic Roma, as many tend to transform camp sites to semi-permanent settlements. Local authorities are often in conflict with groups of Roma that set up unregulated camps on public land and there are several recorded cases where they have forcibly evicted them.

Until recently the Roma were publicly represented only by “clan” and “tribal” leaders who were usually the wealthiest individuals. The only form of collective organisation existed in the Agia Varvara Municipality, with an association established in 1939 and representing the Roma in Greece and abroad. During the last ten or so years the Roma have gradually started to organise themselves in associations<sup>127</sup>, although the influence of clan and tribal leaders is still strong in most areas.

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

Since 1996 a number of projects have been carried out in support of the Roma. However, the general evaluation of the effectiveness of these projects is clearly negative: According to the official EETAA Report: “these projects can only be evaluated empirically, since there is a total absence both of reliable and scientific appraisals of the quantitative and qualitative data concerning these projects and of official statistics concerning the Roma population.”<sup>128</sup>

The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003<sup>129</sup> refers to the ambitious “Integrated Action Plan” for the Roma according to which 310 million Euros will be spent in the next six years to improve the social situation of the Roma population. Approximately 20% of the above sum is earmarked for various training and employment measures.

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<sup>127</sup> *ibid*, p. 32, PUBGR0578

<sup>128</sup> *ibid*, p. 23

<sup>129</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2001), “National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2001-2003”, available at [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napincl2001el_en.pdf) (21/06/2002)

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

Despite preferential treatment by the Greek state (and after control of their ethnic descent credentials they receive 500 Euro upon arrival for the purchase of household equipment and a small annual supplement of 230 Euro) most repatriated ethnic Greeks<sup>130</sup> from the NIS face serious difficulties integrating into mainstream Greek society. Culture shock, language problems, lack of educational qualifications, the inability to ratify existing qualifications and discriminatory practices by many employers are only some of the issues, which have not yet been systematically studied or monitored.

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

In the words of the social support centre “Efxini Poli” set up by the Municipalities of Acharnon and Nea Liosia, “we have to approach with sensitivity the difficulties that this population faces in a place in which they belong, but in which they also feel strangers: limited knowledge of the Greek language which results in difficulties in communicating and transacting; limited and sometimes erroneous information regarding the functions and laws of the Greek State; differences in education/training and many times differences in work – experiences; lack of job seeking skills; limited social networking; lack of any established social integration system (i.e. housing, bureaucracy, acquisition of jobs, pensions, educational system, recognition of degrees, etc); negative stereotypes and prejudices of the majority of the population against these groups and vice-versa. All the above mentioned lead repatriated Greeks to feel insecurity, uncertainty, discouragement, social isolation and social exclusion.”<sup>131</sup>

In 1994 the General Secretariat for Repatriated Greeks (established in 1990) began to function as part of the Ministry of Macedonia & Thrace in order to facilitate their reception and social integration as well provide them with social care and housing assistance. In 1998 the Secretariat carried out a demographic study of repatriated Greeks in Macedonia and Thrace recording also their educational and vocational qualifications.

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<sup>130</sup> Greeks colonised Mediterranean and Black Sea coastal areas since the antiquity. Some of them did not assimilated with local populations and retained a Greek ethnic or cultural identity until modern times. Such groups were mainly to be found in the Black Sea region (Pontians). In 1922 the Greek defeat from Turkey resulted in the relocation of more than one and a half million ethnic Greeks who lived in coastal regions of Asia Minor and the Black Sea to Greece. Large numbers of ethnic Greeks also lived in the Soviet Black Sea coast. After the downfall of the Soviet Union many were forced by war or unemployment to migrate to Greece. The Greek government acknowledged them as ethnic “repatriate” Greeks and facilitated their “return” by introducing favourable legislative and other support measures including the acquisition of Greek citizenship.

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.mitnet.gr/kepyp/English/Description.htm> (15/06/2002)

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

#### 9.2.4. Cultural and religious minorities

There are no studies concerning specifically the social situation and conditions of life of the Muslim minority in Thrace. The status of Muslims in Greece is precarious, because they represent a group that is viewed not only in religious, but more in ethnic terms as “Turks” and thus a possible threat. Already at school children are taught from a very early age that “the primal enemy is the eastern neighbour who had for centuries enslaved the nation”; stories of forced conversions to Islam and equally heroic deaths and martyrdoms in defence of Christianity abound in Greek history textbooks. Consequently racist tendencies fuelled by a “paranoia” regarding the “Turkish threat” have rendered most Greeks hostile, unresponsive to, and frequently in violation of the human rights of Muslims.

The human rights violations suffered by Muslims in Greece over the years under the guise of the formal, “to the letter”, application of the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, that determines their rights and obligations, have confined them to the role of second-class citizen. When expedient, Muslims are portrayed as intolerant and uncivilised, monolithic, intolerant of pluralism and dispute, patriarchal and misogynistic, fundamentalist and potentially threatening to the Greek cultures and therefore not really deserving the rights of a free people.

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

The Muslim minority in Thrace has generally been isolated and economically depressed for decades. However, claims of discriminatory denial of Muslim applications for

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

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

The Treaty of Lausanne provides that the Muslim minority has the right to Turkish-language education, with a reciprocal entitlement for the Christian (Greek) minority in Istanbul (now reduced to about 3,000). Thrace has two Islamic seminars and several secular Turkish-language schools. The government's disputes with Turkey over teachers and textbooks caused these secular schools serious problems in obtaining faculty and teaching materials in sufficient number and quality. Under a 1952 educational protocol, Greece and Turkey may exchange annually 35 teachers on a reciprocal basis. The teachers serve in Istanbul and Western Thrace, respectively, but in recent years the Greek side limited the exchanges to 16 teachers per country due to the dwindling needs of the small and aging Greek population in Turkey. Muslim leaders in Western Thrace complained that the Government erected bureaucratic barriers to prevent the Turkish teachers from performing their duties for much of the academic year. More than 8,000 Muslim children attended Turkish-language public schools and an additional 150 attended 2 bilingual middle schools with an additional Islamic religious curriculum. Approximately 1,300 Muslim students attended Greek-language secondary schools. However, many Muslims attended high school in Turkey, as they seek to continue their education in Turkish Universities.

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

The Muslim minority has traditionally been a target for influential nationalists from both the right and the left –members of the Greek Parliament or elected representatives in Local Authorities – from all major political parties. Their rhetoric and arguments are rarely openly racist, but they will invariably put forward the argument that Muslims are “foreign” to Greece in ethnic as well as cultural terms. In their discourse the distinction

between ethnicity and religion is often intentionally blurred, implicitly identifying Muslims with Turks and thus suggesting that they represent the “enemy”. Racist views and discourses against Muslims do not necessarily take the form of open verbal attacks. The message “Ausländer Raus” that could under certain conditions constitute in itself a criminal act<sup>132</sup> in Greece, can easily be disguised as an “analysis” of the “dangerous consequences” of the presence of indigenous and migrants Muslim minorities in Greek society -for instance the threat for public safety, rising unemployment, etc- that will not in itself be considered as criminal or even politically condemnable.

Several reports from national and international NGOs<sup>133</sup> suggest that, despite the difficulties, conditions have gradually improved during the past 10 years along the marked improvement in the relationship between Greece and Turkey that has always affected the Muslim minority. Some data from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Framework project “Muslim Children Education” that included a small study of the social conditions corroborate these findings. However, it is clear that the social situation of the Muslim Roma and Pomaks who mostly live in remote and relatively isolated mountainous villages in the Rodopi region of Thrace is far worse compared to that of others living in the cities.

The relative lack of evidence led us to arrange a series of formal interviews with two representatives of the Muslim minority on August 23, 2002, the religious leader, Moufti Metso Jemali and Member of Parliament, Galip Galip. They did not report any problems concerning the exercise of religious duties or institutional discrimination<sup>134</sup> and suggested that Muslims face similar social and economic problems as the Christian population. Both singled out the following problems that remain to be solved: The control exercised by the Greek state on the religious educational establishments, the heavy taxes imposed on Muslim communal property (Wakf) in response to similar taxation on Greek property in Turkey<sup>135</sup> and the delays in reattributing Greek citizenship status to members of the minority that were deprived of it in past years<sup>136</sup>. Both community leaders expressed their concern over the harsh conditions of life in mountainous villages and the serious economic difficulties faced by local farmers both Muslim and Christian.

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<sup>132</sup> According to article 1 of the 927/1979 Law “any public incitement to acts that could cause discrimination against persons or groups because of their race, national origin, or religion is a criminal act punishable with imprisonment and a fine.”

<sup>133</sup> Human Rights Watch (1999), “Positive steps by the Greek State”, update to the Report: “The Turks of Western Thrace”, available at [http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/greece/Greec991-05.htm#P196\\_32031](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/greece/Greec991-05.htm#P196_32031) (10/09/2002)

<sup>134</sup> For instance difficulties in the acquisition of driving licenses or the sale and purchase of land, etc

<sup>135</sup> The problem is being resolved as both countries have agreed to bilaterally suspend these property taxes.

<sup>136</sup> According Article 19 of the Greek Citizenship Code (Law 3370/1955): “A person of non-Greek ethnic origin leaving Greece without the intention of returning may be declared as having lost Greek citizenship. The article was abolished in 1998. According to the then Minister of the Interior, Alekos Papadopoulos, since its introduction in 1955, 60,000 Greek citizens, mostly Muslims had lost their Greek citizenship status.

## 10. ANNEX B: NATIONAL DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS WITH THE TERM “RACIAL VIOLENCE”

**The Austrian NFP**<sup>137</sup> stresses that the term “racial violence is not used “by any one of the actors in the field...The problem of terminology is not merely an academic one. Given the above stated facts, we can presume that no data will ever be officially collected under the heading “racial violence” in Austria. So, if we want to have comparable data on the subject in a harmonised European approach, we must find a new terminology combined with a clear definition.”

**The Belgian NFP**<sup>138</sup> also points to problems with the use of the term that is perhaps more encompassing, but also more difficult to study or even to record than for instance the term “hate crime” used by the UK police.

**The Danish NFP**<sup>139</sup> underlines at the beginning of its report that the existing data are very limited, because of the notion “racial violence”, which is not used in the Danish context, since violence is categorised in accordance with the “concrete actions, i.e. threats, fights, killings etc.”, while motivation does not comprise a separate category of crime and is not recorded.

**The Finnish NFP**<sup>140</sup> points out on p. 5 of its report to problems in the definition of “racist motivation” by the police officers who are required to classify criminal acts and stress that many racially motivated crimes may not be recorded.

**The French NFP**<sup>141</sup> begin their report by arguing that “the issue of ‘racial violence’ raises major conceptual and methodological problems. The range of phenomena corresponding to the notion of “violence” is very wide, and notoriously poorly covered by legal definitions and procedures. To introduce racism as a qualification - and perhaps as an explanatory variable - merely compounds these difficulties. Furthermore, the notion is not familiar to the French debate, and it is therefore not possible to draw on extensive research and on an established policy framework as in some other countries.... Qualification of acts as “racist” (the word “racial” is hardly ever used in this context in French, and in any case raises theoretical issues that are beyond the scope of this report) in the media covers a wide range of phenomena. Sometimes, violence, attacks and murders are considered as “racist” by the press...The connection makes it apparent that what is being qualified here is the intention of the perpetrator, which is usually ascertainable from the circumstances. On the other hand, there is no presumption that the status of the victim (in terms of skin colour, religion, “origin”, nationality, etc.) *in itself* creates a presumption of “racial” or “ethnic” violence. This is partly common sense, partly a reflection of the French ideological climate, which is hostile to “racial” or “ethnic” categorization. As a result, other kinds of violence are not considered as “racial”,

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<sup>137</sup> Austrian NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 23

<sup>138</sup> Belgian NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 2

<sup>139</sup> Danish NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 1

<sup>140</sup> Finnish NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 5

<sup>141</sup> French NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, pp. 1 & 2

even when “ethnic” issues are part of the context: so-called “urban violence”, for example. On the other hand, the context may be referred to by news, media and social science research. For instance, foreigners may be said to suffer from “institutional violence”, that is to say the symbolic violence of public agents engaged in discriminatory practices. Violence in schools is also often set within a similarly racialized context, and is sometimes analyzed in “racial” terms.”

**The German NFP**<sup>142</sup> is also critical of the terminology used and comment on the problems associated with its use in the German context: “The usage of these terms in German varies somewhat: whilst 'anti-Semitism' is not open to other interpretations, the term *Rassismus* ('racism') would be rarely used in this context. In specialist literature, the media and amongst the general public, the terms *Rechtsradikalismus* ('radical right-wing'), *Rechtsextremismus* ('extreme right-wing') and *Fremdenfeindlichkeit* ('xenophobia') are employed as virtual synonyms. Only the newly introduced 'Criminal Investigation Registration Service - Politically Motivated Criminality' (KPM-D-PMK) of 2001 offers some degree of differentiation, but even this source does not use the term 'racism'. This leads to the fact that the differentiation between 'racism' and 'xenophobia', as suggested by the EUMC, is frequently impossible....In this report, the term 'racial violence' will not be employed as the German translation of this term ('rassisch') is one which is tainted by history and could lead to confusion. Instead reference will be made to 'racist violence'. Furthermore the German NFP points out to what it calls “incidents in the twilight zone” and highlights the problem with those incidences that may for a variety of reasons go unreported.

**The Dutch NFP**<sup>143</sup> presents the most detailed proposal for defining “racial violence”. They point to the problem of differentiating between racial violence and violence incited by the extreme right and underline the significance of underreporting which makes “only a portion of the phenomenon visible”. Furthermore they refer also to the problem of the frequent anonymity of the perpetrators which does not allow us to assess motives and backgrounds. As a possible solution they suggest the use of a “broad working definition of racial violence as behaviour in which one party intentionally harms or threatens to harm another party, and in which this behaviour is mainly aimed at physical damage to objects and/or persons. Following on this definition, *racial violence* can be understood as: that form of violence in which the victims or targets are chosen on account of their ethnic, racial, ethnic-religious, cultural or national origin. However, *racial violence* can also exhibit a wide range of inter-ethnic dimensions: 1. native versus non-native, or ‘white against black’; 2. the reverse: non-native versus native, or ‘black versus white’; 3. non-native versus non-native belonging to different ethnic groups, as in a confrontation between a group of Antilleans and a group of Moroccans.

**The UK NFP**<sup>144</sup> finally, suggests a very simple definition, proposed in the Macpherson Report and used by the British Police since 1999 for the purpose of recording only, in order to maximise the capture of racist incidents: “A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”.

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<sup>142</sup> German NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 18

<sup>143</sup> Dutch NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 2

<sup>144</sup> UK NFP, (2002), EUMC, Data Collection Report on Racial Violence, p. 1

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