



CONFERENCE

Μετανάστες ως εργαζόμενοι ή ανθρώπινες οντότητες;

Immigrants as workers or as human beings?

Venue: Zappeion Hall, Tuesday February 3rd 2004 at 5 pm (Room 14)

All member states of the European Union are now, in the 21st Century, countries of mass immigration. Even those with the longest histories of coping with immigrants – either as migrant labour or as post-colonial residents – are still vexed by questions relating to the rights and duties of relative newcomers to their societies.

Greece was the last of the EU (15) to experience immigration, and after only a decade has acquired a large immigrant population. The role of immigrants in both economy and society is now extensive and apparently crucial, yet the vast majority of immigrants remain in a temporary, semi-legal or illegal situation: their precarious existence in Greece is neither chosen nor desired, but has arisen as the result of Greek state policy.

Our general approach addresses the question “What rights should immigrants have in Greece?” In particular, the conference focuses upon the extraordinary demands made by the State for the renewal of work permits [social insurance contributions and employment record], as well as the explicit link made between continuous full-time employment and a right of residence [residence permit].

The axiomatic belief that immigrants should be tolerated only for their contribution as workers, is arguably non-rational, contrary to international law, and fundamentally inhumane. This meeting is designed to open up a debate on the rights and duties of both the Greek state and Greece’s immigrant communities – a debate conspicuous by its absence, and one that is sorely needed.

Thus, the aim of this conference is to enable a fruitful dialogue between immigrant communities, policy-makers/bureaucrats, and academics. In Session 1 [in Greek] speakers from the Synigoros tou Politi, Ministry of Labour, INE-GSEE, the Greek Migrants’ Forum and other migrant associations outline the official stances of their institutions. The second session [in English] explores the problems more analytically, with speakers from the Mediterranean Migration Observatory, the Greek National Commission of Human Rights, the Synigoros tou Politi, and immigrant communities. *In both sessions, extensive open discussion is encouraged between audience and invited speakers.*

First session [in Greek]

Official Positions and Policy

- Opening speech by Athens City Councillor, Ms. Yvette Jarvis
- Charis Simopoulos, **Synigoros tou Politi**
- Konstaninos Chrysinis, **Ministry of Labour**
- Petros Linardos-Rylmond, **INE-GSEE**
- Moavia Achmed, **Greek Migrants Forum**
- Ervin Shechu, **Forum of Albanian Migrants** [to be confirmed]
- OPEN DISCUSSION [in Greek or English]

Second Session [in English]

Issues of Legality, Employment and Migrants' Rights

- M. Baldwin-Edwards, Mediterranean Migration Observatory: *The unreasonable path to legality: social insurance, employment and legal residence*
- Nikos Sitaropoulos, Greek National Commission of Human Rights: *Issues of applicability of international labour migrant law in Greece*
- Isabella Monioudi, Synigoros tou Politi: *The linkage of employment and residence rights in Greece*
- Eda Gemi, ERGON KEK: *Migrants in the Greek labour market*
- Joe Valencia, KASAPI: *The experiences of the Filipino community in Greece*
- OPEN DISCUSSION [in English or Greek]

Chairs:

Prof. Xanthi Petrinioti and Martin Baldwin-Edwards
Mediterranean Migration Observatory