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FLEXI-CURITY OR INFORMAL-INSECURITY?
SOME NOTES ON UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN GREEK PERIPHERAL REGIONS

(Séance / Session 2)

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Abstract

The present article examines and charts some demographic and socio-spatial characteristics of the migratory populations living in the prefecture of Preveza at the region of Epirus, Greece. It seeks some first answers in relation to: a) the number of undocumented immigrants in the local labour markets under study, b) the relevance of the 'flexicurity' concept to immigrant workers. By doing so, the paper highlights some possible interconnections between 'hidden' migratory populations and development in localities of peripheral regions, such as the one under study. The research draws upon data collected during 2008, in the frame of an empirical research conducted by the prefectural administration of Preveza. Other data sources, such as the lists of migrants holding an official residence permit and national census data, are also comparatively explored. All the above sources potentially offer valuable insights for the demographic characteristics of migrants in Preveza. The paper discusses the insufficient and controversial character of Greek official statistics, as reflected upon the 'identification' of contemporary migration in the country. Finally, the paper ends with some tentative conclusions for the possible interrelationships between regional development, 'flexicurity' and contemporary migration policies.

Resume

INTRODUCTION

Greece is a country that has recently experienced a major socio-economic transition of multiple spatial manifestations: this is related to country's changing profile from a traditional emigration-sending to an immigration-receiving pattern of development. As expected, the massive influx of migratory waves in Greek urban and rural areas was mainly related to immigrants mainly originating from the neighbouring Balkan countries, specifically Albania. This transformation is reflected on the changes of basic demographic indicators. Between 1991 and 2009, the number of migrants living in the country increased for almost four times, while new migratory waves continue to enter the Greek mountainous and sea frontiers. About 10 per cent of the Greek population is consisted of migrants, of which more than 200.000, according to 2008 estimate, are undocumented. According to recent data Albanians, which are the dominant group of migrants, exceed 600.000 individuals and corresponds to more than 60 per cent of all migrants in the 13 Greek regions (IMEPO 2006).

Apparently, geographical proximity is one central reason facilitating the massive migration from the former state socialist Balkan countries towards Greece (Fakiolas and King 1998; Mai et al. 2005; Mai and King 2008). Easy and inexpensive access of immigrants to the Greek territories is in turn connected to other important pull-factors; these are the relatively low costs of living as well as the availability of, mostly atypical or informal, employment opportunities offered in the receiving localities. From the migrants' point of view, Greece was not the most wanted, yet it was the most proximate and accessible destination (Carletto *et al.* 2006; IMEPO 2008). This setting has started to change during the end of 2008, when the effects of global and national economic downturn became prevalent.

Migrants among many others, like women and the unemployed, may find themselves at the forefront of the flexicurity debate -a new concept introduced by the EU attempting to combine labour flexibility and atypical employment with employment, income and social security- due to their significant exposure in non-standard employment. In this regard, Southern European labour markets and peripheral regions are of great importance, for they are the main entry points for thousands of foreign workers, mainly undocumented or illegal. The expanding presence of immigrants and their weak incorporation into local life, which is in turn a result of their informal employment and illegal residence status, has been related to several episodes of social tension in the area (Pijpers, 2009).

The region of Epirus, holding a population of 336.392 (2001), was one among the most important entry points for the country's migratory waves. Immigrants' influx has unavoidably transformed the region and new socio-economic patterns along with social tensions have emerged. Certain differentiations from the national profile are observed in the study region. Epirus presents the highest homogeneity among immigrants in Greece as 86,4 per cent of the migrants in the area are Albanians. Moreover, the share of women immigrants is 45,1 per cent while those living in rural areas are 41 per cent of all immigrants in the region. The respective figures on a national level are 40,8 and 18,8 per cent (Dellaris 2008).

The region, which is constituted by the prefectures of Preveza, Ioannina, Arta and Thesprotia, is a rather 'poor' spatial entity of the Greek social formation holding a GDP of about 5.600 million Euros (2008). This is no more than 2,4% of the Greek Domestic Product. There are only three less developed regions, in terms of total GDP, in the country. Notably, one of these regions is the one of Ionian Islands, neighboring to Epirus and up to the borderline with Albania. In terms of total GDP per capita during 2008, the region exhibits an amount of 15.937 Euros as compared to 21.821 for the whole country and 16.904 for the Ionian Islands. This figure has improved at rate of 4,1% since 2006 which is less than the 5,2% achieved in Greece. As far as the Gross Value Added per productive sector is concerned, Epirus presents an increased presence of primary activities than the Greek average (7,4% primary, 19,3% secondary and 73,4% tertiary as compared to 3,7%, 19,0% and 77,3% on a national level). Still, the regional economy is intensively related to the tertiary sector.

Important inequalities are observed within the region: 15,1% of the regional GDP is produced in Preveza which holds for almost 17,5% of the region's population. Preveza's product decreased at about -1,5% between

2000-2005. The corresponding figures for the 'richest' prefecture in the region, the one of Ioannina, are 57,1% and +4,6%, respectively.

Ioannina is the capital city of the region while Preveza and Arta are the next two biggest cities in the region of Epirus; almost all other agglomerations are small towns with less than 10.000 inhabitants. The city of Preveza holds a population of more than 16.300 individuals (83,2% of the municipality's and 28,1% of the prefecture's population) and stands for the main urban agglomeration found in the study area, located no more than 90 kilometers far from the Greek-Albanian border line.

The above framework taken as granted, the remaining part of the paper examines and charts some demographic characteristics of the migratory populations living in the urban centers and the municipalities of the prefecture of Preveza. It seeks some first answers in relation to: a) the estimation of undocumented migrants in the local labour markets under study, b) the relevance of the 'flexicurity' concept for immigrant workers. In parallel, some possible interconnections between migratory population and development in peripheral localities and regions, such as the ones under study, are tentatively explored. The overall effort draws upon data collected during 2008, in the frame of an empirical research conducted by a private statistical company on behalf of the administration of the prefecture of Preveza. This primary survey took the form of a complete census aiming at locating and analyzing the specific demographic and socio-economic characteristics of immigrants in the study area. Other data sources such as the lists of those holding an official residence permit, according to the Immigration Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, are also explored. All the above sources offer valuable insights in relation to the demographic characteristic of migrants in Preveza. The paper discusses the insufficient and controversial character of Greek official statistics, as reflected upon the conceptualization and 'identification' of contemporary migration in the country. Finally, it presents some tentative conclusions related to the interconnection between development in Greek local labour markets, flexicurity and migration policies.

FLEXICURITY AND IMMIGRANT EMPLOYEES

A few notes on the flexicurity concept

During 2007, the European Commision (EC) launched a public initiative through the establishment of a "Mission for Flexicurity", whose mandate was: i) to assist Member States, in cooperation with social partners, in promoting the Common Principles of Flexicurity (a new concept adopted from the Nordic experience, one which attempts to combine labour flexibility and atypical employment with employment, income and social security) at the national and sub-national level; and ii) to consider ways to facilitate the integration of flexicurity in the processes and tools of the 2008-2010 cycle of the Lisbon Strategy and European Employment Strategy, and in particular in the implementation of the Integrated Guidelines (EC, 2008). Yet, atypical employment is considered not only less secure than more standard employment but also provides fewer career prospects and training chances while often disqualifies workers from social benefits (Kleinknecht, 2006). A significant question arises, then, around the economic, institutional and geographical prerequisites for atypical forms' successful integration into a socially accepted, flexicurity-enhancing framework.

According to the EC, all Southern European countries should provide for a less-strict regulatory and administrative framework, in order to enhance flexicurity. Equally, annual reports from Southern European Ministries of Employment consider the 'limited availability' of atypical employment and the protection against dismissals as important factors causing labour market rigidity and persisting unemployment in their countries (Wilthagen & Tros, 2004; EC, 2009).

Although atypical and informal employment's expansion, as widely admitted, is an outcome of recent changes in productive and regulatory patterns, there are numerous misunderstood parameters of the phenomenon in 'post-modern' localities of developed countries and the EU. In particular, there are questions regarding the causes, rates and socio-economic dimensions of the expansion in these types of jobs; their

contribution to the restructuring of contemporary local labour markets; and the relationship between, on the one hand, modern atypical forms (e.g. temporary employment agencies' work) and, on the other, traditional atypical employment forms or informal employment forms (e.g. seasonal contracts or undocumented jobs respectively). Answering these questions is not easy, given both the lack of reliable statistics for all productive activities and the divergent views regarding recent changes (Coe et al, 2007). For instance, certain discussants see the expansion of atypical forms, wage and hours flexibility, along with flexible productive patterns, as necessary conditions for revitalizing national and regional economies (Wilthagen & Tros, 2004). Others, however, view it as a new managerial strategy deepening work fragmentation and downgrading employees' status, developments which have important negative effects on productivity and sustainability, of both firms and local economies (Houseman & Osawa, 2004). In any case, any coherent strategy related to flexibility and security in contemporary labour markets should be based on appropriate and consistent demographic data related to distinct spatial entities. In the following sections issues around immigration demographic data regarding the 'undocumented phenomenon' will be discussed.

Methodological notes related to estimates of undocumented migration

Any attempt to estimate the population of undocumented immigrants who either enter a region by crossing a given borderline over a given period of time or live and work in that specific region at a given moment, is a difficult task to undertake. A basic contradiction lies in the heart of that specific task: undocumented migrants wish to continue working and living in an area though they avoid being recorded by any institution. Unless an official procedure of 'legalization' unravels on behalf of regional or state authorities, migrants feel reluctant to participate in studies put forward by researchers or local experts. As has been noted (Jandl, 2004), any estimation of the expansion of undocumented migration faces the following constraints:

- From a methodological point of view, it should rely on indirect methods
- It should compare alternative statistics that can be found in the study area
- It is exposed to large margins of errors or insufficiencies

Given the above, the basic techniques that are used for estimating undocumented migrants which live and work in a certain region are captured in the following Table 1. Some of these techniques are utilized in the forthcoming section of the paper:

Table 1: A classification of methods and techniques for the estimation of undocumented migration

	Method's name	Methodological foundations
1	Residual	Differences between census data and other registries
2	Multiplier-survey	The 'undocumented population' can be found if a proper multiplier which connects the unknown to another variable can be found (e.g. the undocumented population is 2,5 times larger than the one of documented immigrants)
3	Capture-recapture	The population of a certain region/ area is counted during two different and distinct surveys. Those specific members of the population not present at the second survey in the region/area are estimated through the elaboration of Poisson parameter, thus leading to estimations of the total population
4	Regularization registries	Calculating the number of immigrants that took part in a regularization program conducted by local or state authorities
5	Informal sector rates	Estimating undocumented migrants through their presence in the informal sector (e.g. by measuring illegal employment, data from labour inspectorates etc).

Source: Authors' compilation based on Jandl (2004)

For Greece, a recent attempt to estimate the size of undocumented migration is the one of Triantafyllidoy and Maroukis (2009), conducted in the frame of an EU-funded research project. This particular study estimated a number of 280,000 irregular migrants present in the Greek territory at the end of 2007, based on i) recent accounts of the population (2007), ii) the fact that there were 678,268 migrants with stay permits in 2008 and iii) accounts of 363,700 migrants that still had a valid stay permit in March 2009 and 314,568 that were in the process of renewing it (the respective numbers in 2007 were 433,751 and 250,000). These data can offer for a first rough estimate of undocumented migrants in the prefecture of Preveza: take as granted that according to the 2001 census a 0,46% of migrants found in Greece were living in Preveza and by assuming that this percentage also applies for their share in overall undocumented migration, an estimate of more than 1200 irregular migrants is accounted for Preveza. Although this number is possibly exceeding real figures as irregular migrants are unevenly concentrated in major Greek urban centres (e.g. Athens, Thessaloniki), it can be a rough maximum estimate for the study area.

Methodology and data analysis
Three (3) different data sources are employed, analyzed and compared in this section of the paper. At first, data from the national census conducted in 2001 by the HelStat (i.e. the Greek official statistic agency) are presented. Second, data from the above mentioned empirical research conducted by a private statistical company on behalf the Prefecture of Preveza. This was carried out during 2008 and took the form of a complete census aiming at locating and analyzing the specific demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants in the study area. Third, the lists of migrants holding an official residence permit, according to the Immigration Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, in January 2008, are presented. All three sources offer valuable insights in relation to the employment and demographic characteristic of migrants in Preveza.

The methods that are comparatively implemented in order to evaluate the above sources and provide valuable estimations of undocumented migration in the study area, are: i) the 'residual', method used for an estimation which is based on the differences between the empirical research and the registries of Immigration Directorate, and ii) the 'muptiplier' method, helpful for identifying irregular migrants in the municipality of Preveza in relation to their presence in the rest of Preveza's municipalities.

National Statistics' findings for the prefecture of Preveza, 2001
According to the national official census conducted in Greece during 2001, the permanent population in the prefecture of Preveza is consisted of 58,144 individuals of whom 3,470 are migrants (either of a Greek gene or not). Migrants are 6% of the total population in the prefecture while 4,8% and 4,7% are the respective figures for the prefecture of Ioannina and the region as a whole. Thus, the highest percentage in the region can be observed in Preveza as more than one out of five immigrants in Epirus is located therein. A percentage 55,4 % of these immigrants refers to men while the rest are women.

Immigration census in the prefecture of Preveza, 2008
The study area (Prefecture of Preveza) is divided into eight (8) municipalities (Preveza, Fanari, Zalongo, Parga, Filippiada, Anogeio, Thesprotiko, Louros) and a single community (Kranea). The research team of the statistical company was based on a variety of different sources in order to locate and question the total migratory population therein.

In order to locate the migrants that live and work in the municipality of Preveza (the most significant city which holds for the capital of the whole Prefecture) the registries of the Municipal Police were used. According to the researchers, this was due to the fact that undocumented migrants in the city were reluctant to participating in the census. This is partly attributed to that, i) an important number of undocumented migrants is concentrated in the urban area of Preveza, and ii) many migrants officially living in the rest of Preveza's municipalities are working in the city of Preveza on a seasonal basis, as will be highlighted in the forthcoming sections of the paper. For all other municipalities except Preveza, possibly all documented and undocumented

migrants were recorded, as they could be easily located and accessed in such less populated districts. In parallel, a basic source of information was the above mentioned list of migrants holding a legal immigration permit of work and stay. On the other hand and in order to locate the migrants of a non-Greek gene living in the area, the registries of several local authorities were used.

The migratory population can be divided into two main groups: one consisted of migrants of a Greek gene (known as 'Omogeneis' which are further divided into 'Vorioipeirotes' coming from Albanian villages close to the Greek-Albanian borderline and 'Rosopontioi' from the former socialist Republic of Georgia) and another consisted of all other immigrants. The latter group is consisted of those that have no previous Greek origin. 'Non-Greeks', which is by far the largest group, are mainly Albanians that have settled in the area since 1990. According to the empirical research, 3.636 migrants are living in Preveza. These migrants are further divided into a group of 2.877 migrants of a gene other than Greek ('Non-Greeks') and a remaining group of 759 of a Greek gene (*see Table 1, columns 7-15*).

Although these two sources are not straightly comparable, a comparison with 2001 census reveals a slight increase of about 166 migrants (+4,8%) in a prefecture level. Yet, relevant figures among distinct municipalities are rather differentiated as there is i) an increase in Preveza, Fanari and Kranea, ii) a stability/ slight decrease in Parga, Thesprotiko, Louros and Zalongo and important decrement in all other municipalities. These trends are partly related to the uneven distribution of immigrants across the prefecture: one out of two immigrants is found in the city of Preveza and an important percentage (more than 21%) is located in the municipalities of Parga and Fanari. The city of Preveza as well as the famous tourist destination of Parga are the only two municipalities with an important spatial concentration of immigrants also reflected by their Location Quotient (LQ) which exceeds 1,4. In other words, immigrants are mainly directed towards urbanized socio-spatial agglomerations or areas characterized by intensive seasonal activities, such as tourism.

As obvious, the migratory phenomenon in Preveza is almost exclusively related to the neighboring post-state-socialist country, as in every municipality more than 91% and almost all (96,3%) of the migrants living in the municipality of Preveza during 2008, are Albanians. The rest of migrants are coming from a variety of countries of the Balkan Peninsula (mainly Bulgaria, Romania), other former-socialist countries (e.g. Ukrane, Armenia) and countries of the developing world (such as India or Pakistan).

A basic finding of the empirical research, standing as a direct estimate of undocumented migration, is that a significant number of migrants are undocumented. Indeed, about 13,5% in all the municipalities of the prefecture, except the one of Preveza for specific reasons underlined above, are not recorded by any official authority thus live and work on an informal status. By applying the multiplier-survey method for an estimate of the undocumented in the city of Preveza, and by assuming that the same percentage is possibly representative of the phenomenon therein, we take a figure of 1.561 'Non-Greeks' (with an increase of 13,5%) and a total of 2.151 migrants in the municipality of Preveza (*see Table 1, columns 7-15*).

Data from the Immigration Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2008
Similar trends can also be observed when official data from the Immigration Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, are comparatively examined. According to both these registrations, 2.833 migrants are holding a legal work and stay permit in the area. The biggest concentration is the one in the homonymous municipality (40,1%), followed by Fanari (13,7%), Zalongo (13,2%) Parga (10,0%) and other smaller ones. By comparing this spatial dispersion to the corresponding presented above, it is prevalent that immigrants are more 'urbanized' and more concentrated towards bigger cities than the official registries 'believe'.

Furthermore, a marginal 1,3% of immigrants in the prefecture are informal citizens and labourers. Things are rather differentiated when studied on a different scale of analysis, as the municipal one, as can be seen from *Table 2 (columns 16-19)*.

Table 2: Dispersion of immigrants and estimations of undocumented migration in the municipalities of the prefecture of Preveza, 2001 & 2008

| | National Statistics' census, 2001 | | | | | | Census of the prefecture of Preveza, 2008 | | | | | | | | Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2008[**] | | | | |
	(1) Population	(2) Immigrants	(3) % immigrants	(4) Immigrants' dispersion	(5) Population's dispersion	(6) LQ	(7) Non-Greeks	(8) Greek-Albanians	(9) Total immigrants	(10) LQ	(11) % immigrants	(12) Immigrants' dispersion	(13) change 2001-2008	(14) Albanian immigrants	(15) Holding residence permit	(16) Holding residence permit	(17) Immigrants' dispersion	(18) Undocumented [(7)-(16)]	(19) % Undocumented
Preveza	19,984	1628	8.1%	46.9%	34.4%	1.4	1,375/ 1,561[*]	590	1,961/ 2,151	1.6	9.8%	53.9%	333	96.4%	100%/ 86.5%[*]	1137	40.2%	238/ 424	17.3%/ 27.2%
Anogeio	1,291	70	5.4%	2.0%	2.2%	0.9	23	5	28	0.3	2.2%	0.8%	-42	96.4%	82.6%	20	0.7%	3	13.0%
Zalongo	4,893	274	5.6%	7.9%	8.4%	0.9	248	9	257	0.8	5.3%	7.1%	-17	94.9%	93.1%	375	13.3%	-127	-51.2%
Thesprotiko	4,944	138	2.8%	4.0%	8.5%	0.5	127	8	135	0.4	2.7%	3.7%	-3	96.3%	89.0%	166	5.9%	-39	-30.7%
Louros	5,260	213	4.0%	6.1%	9.0%	0.7	168	23	191	0.6	3.6%	5.3%	-22	98.4%	100%	215	7.6%	-47	-28.0%
Parga	3,846	353	9.2%	10.2%	6.6%	1.5	258	79	337	1.4	8.8%	9.3%	-16	97.3%	100%	285	10.1%	-27	-10.5%
Fanari	8,751	382	4.4%	11.0%	15.1%	0.7	390	39	429	0.8	4.9%	11.8%	47	97.2%	91.2%	387	13.7%	3	0.8%
Filippiada	8,165	399	4.9%	11.5%	14.0%	0.8	249	6	255	0.5	3.1%	7.0%	-144	91.4%	89.2%	214	7.6%	35	14.1%
Kranea (community)	1,010	13	1.3%	0.4%	1.7%	0.2	43	0	43	0.7	4.3%	1.2%	30	100%	46.5%	29	1.0%	14	32.6%
Total Preveza	58,144	3470	6.0%	100%	100%	1.0	2,877/ 3,067	759	3,636/ 3,826	1.0	6.3%	100%	166	96.3%	86,5%	2828	100%	49/ 239	1.7%/ 7.8%

[*] According to the Immigration Directorate of the Municipal Police of Preveza, all immigrants recorded during 2008 in the municipality hold a residence-permit. Thus, whenever a second value appears in a cell it is related to an increase/ 'correction' of 13,5% in the population of immigrants at the municipality of Preveza

[**] Holding a residence permit, according to the Immigration Directorate of the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1/2008

The bi-polar of legal-undocumented migration holds various interrelationships with the distinct socio-spatial entities of the study area. Indeed, the ratio of irregular to total 'Non-Greek' migrants is geographically dispersed in an uneven way between the municipalities of Preveza. One the one hand, there exist entities like Louros and Zalongo where a negative percentage is observed, while in four municipalities, the capital city included, positive values of more than 13% are present (see *Table 2, column 19*). As far as the former group is concerned, one possible explanation is that immigrants registered in smaller municipalities are during the research period living in the city of Preveza or elsewhere. The latter group signifies that important shares among immigrants in cities like Preveza or smaller communities like Kranea are undocumented.

What should be highlighted is that these figures are possibly underestimating the phenomenon. As noted above, by applying the multiplier-survey method for an estimate of the undocumented immigrants in the city of Preveza, we take a total of 1.561 'Non-Greeks' migrants in the municipality of Preveza (immigrants of Greek origin are excluded from this estimation as they all posses a legal status). This more realistic estimate is in turn increasing the overall percentage of undocumented in the prefecture at 7,8% (239 immigrants). In parallel, a new estimation of almost 27% (424 undocumented immigrants) can now be made for the city of Preveza.

DISCUSSION

Studies in Greece so far, have systematically revealed that contemporary Albanian migratory population is mainly consisted of young and middle-aged, hard-working men. Women's presence is equally important, though less frequent. The vast majority of migrants are salaried labourers although an increasing share of self-employed individuals can be identified among them. In parallel, both men and women tend to live in bigger households than natives do. This tendency is, in turn, reversing the stagnant or declining demographic trends that were typical of Greek peripheral localities before the migratory movements were triggered. More than this, such a demographic dynamism implies that migrants live and prosper in their own ways but in the same localities with Greeks and other citizens (Iosifides *et al*. 2007; King, 2005; Carletto et al, 2006; Cavounidis 2006; Kasimis, 2008).

This study shows that a significant number of immigrants, despite the regularization efforts, remain undocumented, which in turn means that most of them are informal labourers. As showed above, a comparison of different and reliable data at the appropriate spatial scale of analysis can bring to front hundreds or thousands of 'hidden' foreign workers and their households' members. In the city of Preveza undocumented are possibly somewhere between 13% and 27% of the total documented immigrants. This is a sufficient indicator that migratory populations are still treated as a pool of cheap labour for Greek economic and productive priorities. In other words, a large group of foreign workers facing risky working conditions and mainly excluded from social security contributions, is present in local and regional labour markets. This group of workers, among others, undermines the potential positive outcomes expected from regularization initiatives. On the one hand, these risky conditions seem to be related to good prospects of earning and saving, at least comparable to the ones of the native population. On the other, although Greeks and migrants are possibly both involved in tax-evading, unregulated activities; the benefits they enjoy from such an involvement are not the same. This is so because the latter are involved from a relatively weak bargaining position, as compared to their Greek counterparts or employers, a situation which is positively related to the lack of Greek citizenship (IMEPO 2006).

All these remarks should be further contextualised within the framework of the productive priorities of the Greek economy. In fact, during the last two decades there was a great need for temporary semi-skilled workers in the country. These labourers were assigned to a number of activities among different workplaces and various spatial scales, from small rural occupations in distant villages to Olympic Games infrastructures in Attica. Their cheap labour was an important contributing factor for the accomplishment of 'ONE's' (European Monetary Union's) objectives by the Greek state. It also bolstered the improvement of both the

profit rates of middle-sized capital and the overall accumulation process in the country (Fakiolas and King 1998; IMEPO 2006).

The official policy towards Albanian migrants has been instrumental in their treatment as cheap labourers by Greek employers. The legal framework for immigration still continues to be insufficient and hostile, and the necessary mechanisms to implement it are corrupted. Even though the periodic forced repatriation (see *skoupa*) operations aimed at retaining a 'logical' level of foreign workers in the country, relatively easy access (in terms of proximity and loose border controls) reinforces new waves of undocumented workers. Indicatively, almost 40.000 immigrants were subject to forced repatriation during 2008, across the Greek-Albanian border. By such means, a 'sufficient' mechanism for keeping migrants' labour cost at a low level has been developed by the Greek administrations (Cavounidis2006; IMEPO 2008).

One extra reason facilitating the pertaining percentages of undocumented migrants is the one of frequent back and forth movements between the hosting and the sending economies. For example, many researchers have highlighted that migrant's remittances, either in a material or social form, combined with other direct inflows to motherland and frequent back-and-forth movements, improved the families' lives to a great extent (Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou 2005; Vullnetari 2007). Nicholson (2004) observes that in the 1990s migrants tended to leave without their families and periodically return in Albania every few months in order to assist their family (e.g. bring money back home, help during the harvest). Some of them used to return for a period of time in order to serve in the army or rest until a new migration decision was taken. All these movements often blur the lines between the legal and undocumented status, as in the case of previously regularized immigrants which visit Preveza frequently, though they are not in a position to renew their residence permit.

Another pathway into undocumented status is related to immigrants that are not in a position to renew their stay permits as they have lost their jobs or have turned into the status of informal worker. Indeed, an often interchange among various instances of atypical employment, on the one hand, and certain types of informal work is a common day reality in many sectors and activities of the Greek local labour markets. Some typical examples can be found in the construction sector were migrants are employed under the form of seasonal employment, for a period of time necessary to obtain the minimum social contributions required. Then, migrants, though 'officially' fired, continue to work as undocumented ones in order for the employers to avoid the increased cost of social contributions. In other cases, such as the tourist industry or other tertiary activities, immigrant workers are employed on a part-time while they are working on a full time-basis. This certain type of labour law 'violation' can also take the form of unofficial and in many cases unpaid overtime working hours, so much for typical secondary activities as for the tertiary sector. In all cases, very 'famous' and widely known 'indirect' practices that help keeping labour-cost at a low level, are implemented in Greek socio-spatial entities. By that means, a 'fluid' situation is prevalent in Greek labour markets, one that periodically turn migrants from 'flexicure' employees to 'informal-insecure' workers and the vice-versa.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS AND SOME POLICY REMARKS

Implementing available methods and comparing different data sources, as in this paper, can prove to be a good indirect source for valuable estimations of undocumented immigrants. Yet, some weaknesses of the methods presented in *Table 1* should be discussed. As far the residual method is concerned, a serious problem identified is the underestimation of undocumented migrants present during the official surveys. Some variants of the multiplier-survey method that can be utilized can prove to be rather useful for future researchers. For example, comparing different demographic sources with classic or advanced demographic techniques and exploiting indirect sources could offer for good estimations of the unknown multiplier. As such, data concerning the birth rates of undocumented migrants' infants taken from hospitals, the immigrants' children that can be found in public schools and the consumption patterns of migrants related to certain goods or

facilities can prove to be invaluable sources when compared to the respective figures for the documented migrants or whole population.

Furthermore, attempts to calculate the stock of undocumented migrants in an area should be aware of the fact that such registries are only 'partially representative' of the population of undocumented migrants. This due to that i) not all irregular workers and their families are willing to participate in relevant programmes, while ii) severe amounts of migrants that temporarily posses a legal residence or work permit may be subject to frequent back-and-forth 'movements' between regularity and irregularity. This is mainly connected to that migrants should keep on working on a formal status in order to be available to renew their residence/ work permit.

As far as demographic methods are concerned, this study underlines that researchers in this specific field of inquiry should try and develop/ implement more sophisticated tools and concepts in order to estimate the undocumented residents or workers, as precisely as possible. The existing techniques, but most of all the available data and censuses suffer from significant biases or uncertainties. As an outcome, a variety of policy measures are based on unreliable information and the overall contribution of irregular migration on local productive systems and societies is largely misconceived.

Some policy comments which could possibly offer wider lessons to demography experts and flexicurity working bodies can be drawn from this specific paper. As know, regularization programs were the main pathways for helping undocumented immigrants to get out of irregular status and become foreign citizens of a host country. This was also the Greek case. Still, a significant amount of immigrants remains uncountable and undocumented, as the story of Preveza tells us. This situation challenges the very foundations of demographic accounts and 'flexicure' labour markets. As far as the former are concerned, no valid estimations of specific demographic aspects of a population can be made, in spatial entities where a significant part of the population remains 'hidden'. In the case of the latter, combining flexibility to security is a rather difficult task to undertake, at least in the Greek labour markets, and the ongoing fiscal and social crisis in the country and the EU taken as granted. In any case, security cannot be achieved or promoted among undocumented citizens, contributing to the argument that not recorded immigrants must be located and regularized if ideally functioning 'flexicure' labour markets is what we need.

Eliminating trends towards irregularity is a task associated with an appropriate regulation of certain inherent discrepancies of the Greek institutional framework; one discrepancy is related to the fact that between inviting an immigrant worker to work in a region (*metaklisi*) and until this foreign worker obtains an official permit, a year is the minimum time required and the Greek bureaucratic procedures taken as granted. Another major discrepancy is related to that, in many cases residence permits cannot be renewed as the minimum requirements are difficult to achieve. Similarly, the requirements for family reunification cannot be obtained as immigrants must prove that they earn a minimum annual wage or pay more than 150 daily-accounted social security contributions. All these phenomena prove that a combination of informality and insecurity rather that a unified flexicurity-type functioning will be a widespread reality for immigrant labourers in Greek regional labour markets, for the years to come.

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