



Young Migrant Women in Secondary Education: Promoting Integration and Mutual Understanding through Dialogue and Exchange

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A) Historical background/ National context of immigration in Greece

Greece is known as a traditional emigration country. It is generally admitted that Greece has not been transformed from an emigration country to an immigration one but in the early 1990, just after the collapse of socialist regimes in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe. Although this perception has been challenged on several occasions (Psimmenos, 2000, p. 82; Parsanoglou, 2007, 2009), it remains the dominant representation, in public and in academic discourse, of the Greek migration paradigm. However, the 1990s mark a quantitative shift in the migration history of the country, whereas pre-existing tendencies and patterns are consolidated and intensified. The new phase in the history of migrant mobility in Greece has been classified by researchers under the general scheme of the so-called *new immigration in Southern Europe* (King and Black, 1997; King, 2000).

The main characteristics of this new immigration are in great part common to all southern European countries and can be summarised as follows:

- New Immigration occurs in the countries of Southern Europe after the petroleum crisis of 1974 and the eventual 'immigration stop' which north-western countries have imposed. More particularly, a net inflow of migrants is observed in Greece and Spain in 1975, in Italy in 1972, and in Portugal in 1981 (King, Fielding and Black, 1997).
- There is a great variety of countries of origin, although, in every case, there are some that dominate; in the Greek case the dominant nationality is by far Albanian but there are immigrants from a wide range of geopolitical areas.
- For an important period of time, the vast majority of immigrants were undocumented, because of the substantial lack of migration policy. The first regularisation programs were implemented in Spain in 1985, in Italy in 1987, in Portugal in 1992, while in Greece only in 1998 (Baldwin-Edwards, 2001).
- Another common characteristic of new immigration in Southern Europe, which affects the type of work performed by migrants, concerns the fundamental role of the informal economy (Reyneri, 1999) as well as the prevalence of flexible post-fordist models of organisation of production – especially in the sense of flexible work relations and practices, a much less important role of trade-unions, new forms of individualisation



and reduction of state intervention (Bonefeld and Holloway, 1991) and work relations in the southern countries.

- Finally, *feminisation of migration* is a trend that increasingly characterises migration mobility in other geographical contexts too, and is gaining importance as a factor affecting a series of economic and social sectors of 'host societies'.¹

It is necessary to note here that the above characteristics are not limited to the Southern European paradigm but, it could be argued, are part and parcel of the global 'post-gastarbeiter' paradigm of mobility. In other words, what has been identified as the 'new immigration in Southern Europe,' of predominantly informal character, is in fact the dominant paradigm met in all receiving societies, from EU member states to Northern America, Middle East countries, and Oceania. Informality in migrant mobility and in labour markets has been for some decades now an increasing and established tendency worldwide (Castells and Portes, 1989). The distinction 'formal-informal' is becoming not only obsolete but also an obfuscating simplification for any social setting even in the allegedly regulated advanced economies (Munck, 2005).

In the specific case of Greece, we could categorise new immigration in three distinct waves. These do not reflect three distinct sub-periods as much as three socially – more accurately *nationally* – constructed groupings:

- a) *Greek returning migrants* who, after a period of stay particularly in North-western European countries, but also in North America and Oceania, decided to return back home; this flow began as early as the late 1960s and contributed significantly to the reversal of the migratory balance in 1975 (237.524 persons from 1968 to 1977)²
- b) *migrants of Greek ethnic origin from the Former Soviet Union*, who were designated by the State as 'repatriated' [παλιννοστούντες] migrants³ even if they had never lived before in Greece and who started to arrive in a more or less regulated way during the mid-1980s and particularly during the 1990s (155.319 persons from 1977 to 2000)⁴
- c) *international foreign migrants*, who appear from the mid-1970s and on, and especially during the 1990s, when they became the dominant actors of mobility in the Greek context (estimated about 1 million persons)⁵

As far as nationalities among the foreign population are concerned, besides Albanians who comprise by far the largest migrant community in Greece, there is a wide range of emigration countries. Apart from older and newer EU member states' nationals and Northern American and Australian citizens, the largest nationalities, according to the 2001 Census of Population and Housing of the National Statistical Service of Greece (ESYE), which remains the most accurate source, are: Albanians (55.6% of the total foreign population, EU

¹ We use the expression 'host societies' in inverted commas, given – as Simon (1995, p.16) puts it – 'the racism and the xenophobia that migrants suffer in multiple cases'.

² According to the *Statistical Yearbook of Greece, 1969-1978* of the National Statistical Service of Greece (Markou, 1995, p. 33).

³ The equivalent of the *Aussiedler* in Germany.

⁴ According to the Census conducted by the General Secretariat of Repatriated Greeks from August 1997 to October 2000 (Kamenidis, 2000).

⁵ The figure of 797.091 reported by the 2001 Census of Population and Housing is today estimated to be about a million.



and non EU), Georgians (2.9%), Russians (2.3%), Ukrainians (1.8%), Pakistanis (1.4%), Turks (1%), Egyptians (1%), Armenians (1%), Indians (0.9%), Iraqis (0.9%) and Filipinos (0.9%).⁶

As is noted in international migration literature, migrant populations are predominantly young as they are comprised mainly of individuals in active age. This is also the case in Greece. We can conclude from Table 1 that the number of migrant children who are born in Greece or have arrived in the country via family reunification is increasing. According to the 2001 Census, which constitutes until today the most reliable official data on migrant population in the country, a very significant proportion of individuals with foreign citizenship belong to young age categories. In 2001, 36.8% of migrants were 0 to 24 years old, with some nationalities, such as Albanian, - which is the largest grouping- surpassing the average with 43.7%. If we add to the youth population the group of 25-29 yr. olds – according to Greek and European authorities and institutions people under 29 years of age are considered young workers – this percentage concerns more than half (50.9%) of the total migrant population; in the case of Albanians, 57.8%.

Table 1: Foreign population by age categories, Census 2001 (main nationalities)

Nationality	Total	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	0-24	% of Total	25-29	0-29	% of Total
Total	762.191	38.434	42.814	45.842	59.635	93.511	280.236	36,8%	107.443	387.679	50,9%
Albania	438.036	28.733	31.848	32.929	40.616	57.275	191.401	43,7%	61.847	253.248	57,8%
Bulgaria	35.104	715	940	1.413	1.877	3.522	8.467	24,1%	4.940	13.407	38,2%
Georgia	22.875	615	1.047	1.655	1.974	2.126	7.417	32,4%	2.284	9.701	42,4%
Rumania	21.994	548	398	452	1.050	4.276	6.724	30,6%	5.574	12.298	55,9%
USA	18.140	621	845	1.098	1.194	1.508	5.266	29,0%	1.671	6.937	38,2%
Russian Federation	17.535	405	764	1.177	1.232	1.649	5.227	29,8%	2.258	7.485	42,7%
Cyprus	17.426	163	219	266	3.103	4.844	8.595	49,3%	1.185	9.780	56,1%
Ukrania	13.616	188	414	516	527	1.182	2.827	20,8%	2.121	4.948	36,3%
United Kingdom	13.196	563	551	555	483	707	2.859	21,7%	974	3.833	29,0%
Poland	12.831	754	549	423	457	1.157	3.340	26,0%	2.538	5.878	45,8%
Germany	11.806	461	565	494	513	646	2.679	22,7%	883	3.562	30,2%
Pakistan	11.130	77	53	73	297	2.064	2.564	23,0%	2.851	5.415	48,7%
Australia	8.767	249	380	441	452	632	2.154	24,6%	925	3.079	35,1%
Turkey	7.881	105	111	134	218	411	979	12,4%	538	1.517	19,2%
Armenia	7.742	235	478	578	623	778	2.692	34,8%	817	3.509	45,3%
Egypt	7.448	475	198	145	165	598	1.581	21,2%	1.164	2.745	36,9%
India	7.216	104	40	35	165	1.334	1.678	23,3%	1.766	3.444	47,7%
Iraq	6.936	362	426	442	660	1.374	3.264	47,1%	1.256	4.520	65,2%
Philippines	6.478	283	201	96	74	177	831	12,8%	575	1.406	21,7%
Canada	6.049	160	306	377	423	515	1.781	29,4%	728	2.509	41,5%
Italy	5.825	172	204	211	430	347	1.364	23,4%	461	1.825	31,3%
Moldova	5.716	75	175	204	265	824	1.543	27,0%	1.120	2.663	46,6%
Syria	5.552	355	201	134	284	677	1.651	29,7%	1.012	2.663	48,0%
France	5.267	233	244	295	302	293	1.367	26,0%	478	1.845	35,0%
Bangladesh	4.854	26	10	23	90	693	842	17,3%	1.680	2.522	52,0%
Serbia & Montenegro	3.832	151	149	146	155	323	924	24,1%	821	1.745	45,5%
Other	38.939	1.606	1.498	1.530	2.006	3.579	10.219	26,2%	4.976	15.195	39,0%

Source: Elaboration from 2001 Census (Dimitri et. al., 2008)

We must note however that the majority of so-called “young migrants” in fact *are not* migrants. The fact that they carry imaginary representations or *unlived memories* of an often mythical country of origin does not legitimate labelling them migrants. To do so would be to suggest that migration is a form of a contaminating disease, which is transmitted from generation to generation. Certainly the State, in this case the Greek State, has managed with its policy to create a “second generation of migrants” or, to be more accurate, a first whole

⁶ Bulgarians and Romanians are also very significant nationalities (4.7%, and 2.9% respectively). Even if since January 2007 they are counted as EU citizens, we must note that they entered Greece as third country nationals; in addition, migration from these two countries was in a transitory period until 2009, during which Bulgarian and Romanian citizens did not have the right to stay and work in Greece (as well as in many other countries of the EU), but they had to follow the conditions imposed by the Immigration Law 3386/2005: see Circular 30269/09/02/2007 of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection and 22/13/03/2007 of the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation.



generation of people without civil and political rights who are called upon to justify their stay in the country where they were born or brought up. Indeed, this population cannot be classified under the general category of migrants, either socially or culturally.

B) National policy context on education and migrants

The three above-mentioned categories, ('returning', 'repatriated' and 'foreign' migrants) are not just descriptive; they imply differential policies and practices on behalf of the State. Given the importance attributed by the Nationality Code to the ethnic origin of (potential) citizens – in other words given the predominance of *jus sanguinis* over *jus soli* in the definition of Greek citizenship⁷ – returning and repatriated migrants have not only experienced an entirely different regime of regulation, in which access to citizenship and/or full legal rights are inscribed, but in addition they have been the main subjects of any proactive social policies designed and implemented for the migrant population.

It is true that the Greek state has not yet resolved essential issues concerning migration, such as the legal status of people who may live and work in the country for several years. The fact that after three regularisation programmes (1998, 2001 and 2005), with consecutive extensions no less, the regularisation of migrants remains an open question⁸ and undocumented migrants are still a significant proportion of the migrant population (Lianos *et al.*, 2008; Maroukis, 2008), is illustrative of the unanimously admitted inefficiency of Greek migration policy.⁹

However, the only field where certain specific measures have been implemented is that of education. As early as the 1980s, the *Ministry of Education* legislated special measures to facilitate the integration of repatriated Greek children into the educational system. In 1980, a Ministerial Decision (4139/20-10-1980) provided for the creation of *reception classes* (orientation classes) for children coming from abroad in order to support, mainly through language courses, their integration in the Greek educational system and society.

In 1983, reception classes as well as tutorial classes were enforced by law (the law 1404/1983). The aim of that legislative action was simply "normal" adjustment to the Greek Educational System and linguistic/cultural integration. The same year, the Presidential Decree 1404 provided for the creation of reception classes for students coming from countries inside and outside the European Economic Community, aiming to integrate them into the Greek social environment.

These initial steps were followed by a redefinition of educational policy *vis-à-vis* migrant children in the aftermath of massive inflows from Eastern Europe and especially Albania (Law 1894/1990). This law provided for the first reception classes for students coming from non-EC member states. These classes were not independent from the "regular" educational

⁷ The first significant challenge to this well established reality is a law passed in March 2010, which amends the Nationality Code to a broader and more inclusive conception of citizenship, as we show below.

⁸ In January 2007, ten years after the first regularization programme, the Minister of the Interior, Prokopis Pavlopoulos proclaimed in Parliament that 'the government would not leave any migrant in illegality' and he apologized to migrants for 'their suffering from the bureaucracy' (*Kathimerini*, 25/01/2007).

⁹ The Prime Minister, George Papandreou, admitting the diachronic inadequacy of Greek administration stated, during the 3rd Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) held in Athens, in November 2009, that "Greece will adopt standard procedures of restoring legitimacy to migrants who have been deprived of it because of technicalities".



programme and curriculum and their objective was the integration of students into the mainstream school programme, through courses of Greek language, history, and culture. In 1994, a Ministerial Decision (2//378/Γ1/1124, 3ε) stipulated the possibility of employing foreign teachers (on an hour-wage basis) for teaching the language and culture of countries of origin. However, this Ministerial Decision has remained ineffective, since such employment never took place.

In 1996 a legislative framework for intercultural education is established for the first time. The objective of this new form of educational integration policy is defined as “the organisation and the function of primary and secondary schools in order to provide education to young people with educational, social and cultural specificities” (Law 2413/1996, article 34). The law stipulated the transformation of public schools to intercultural and made it possible for private non-profit organisations to set up intercultural schools. Intercultural Education (or ‘Cross-cultural’ according to the translation by the Ministry of Education) has not yet been mainstreamed in the general educational system and has not yet embraced all students, Greek and foreign. A school can only be described as inter-cultural when students with migrant background account for at least 45% of the total student population. Therefore, it is rather a type of “minority school” for ‘foreign’ students. So far, there are in Greece only 26 Intercultural schools, of which 13 are primary schools, 9 junior high schools and 4 are senior high schools (Ministry of Education, http://ypepth.gr/en_ec_page1547.htm).

In 1999, a Ministerial Decision (10/20/Γ1/708/7-9-1999) provides for the creation of reception and tutorial classes for foreign students in order to provide intensive Greek language courses. A key feature of this legislative text is that it refers to Greek as a ‘second language’. Moreover, the law mentions the need for non-Greek students to learn the language and culture of the country of origin. The law did not schedule any teacher employment under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, and it leaves the designation of relevant competence to the prefectures; during the academic year 2002-3 there were 422 reception classes and 556 tutorial classes (Skourtou *et. al*, 2004, p. 25).

Since 1996, when intercultural education appeared as a policy issue for the first time, two public agents were set up in Greece in order to produce and implement policies concerning foreign and repatriated Greek students, as well as Intercultural Education:

- 1) The Special Secretariat for the Education of the Greek Diaspora and for Intercultural Education (*Ειδική Γραμματεία Παιδείας Ομογενών και Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης*), established by the Law 2413/1996, as a monitoring Secretariat of the Ministry of Education and, after the 2009 elections, restructured, but not yet activated, as Special Secretariat of Unified Administrative Section for Issues of Educational Programming, Greek Diaspora Education, Intercultural Education and Decentralisation (*Ειδική Γραμματεία Ενιαίου Διοικητικού Τομέα Θεμάτων Εκπαιδευτικού Σχεδιασμού, Εκπαίδευσης Ελληνοπαίδων Εξωτερικού, Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης και Αποκέντρωσης*)
- 2) The Institute for the Education of Co-Ethnic Returnees and for Intercultural Education (*Ινστιτούτο Παιδείας Ομογενών και Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης*), established by the Law 2413/1996, as a semi-autonomous institute within the Ministry of Education designated for consulting and monitoring multicultural education. It is worth noting that the tasks and resources entrusted to IPODE have more to do with the education of Greeks abroad than with providing for the needs of immigrant children in Greece (Triandafyllidou and Gropas, 2007, p.9).



Finally, it is worth noting that during 1997-2000 and 2000-2004, in the context of the growing cultural diversity of the student population, several research projects concerning immigrant students and cultural diversity issues took place in the framework of the *Operational Programme for Educational and Initial Vocational Training* (ΕΠΕΑΕΚ). Some of the most significant were the «Integration of Roma children in School» (University of Ioannina, <http://projects.rc.uoi.gr/projects/?lang=el&keID=18>), the «Education of Repatriated Greek and Foreign Students» (University of Athens, www.keda.gr), and the «Education of Muslim children» (University of Athens, <http://www.museduc.gr/index.php>). Also from a research perspective, two extensive research projects adopting a critical approach to the problem of racism and nationalism in Greece, specifically from the perspective of the low birth rate and the large influx of migrants during the nineties, resulted in books that explore and highlight the specificities of Greek nationalism and its consequences in the formation of normative gender and sexualities, and the social practices associated with motherhood (Halkias 2004, Paxson 2004).

C) Educational policy issues specific for migrant girls

Although ‘gender mainstreaming’ is becoming one of the priorities in designing educational policy, at least at an experimental level, no specific measures regarding migrant girls have been undertaken. In fact, even the available formal statistical data that concern the foreign student population does not take into account the dimension of gender.

Although the figures provided by the 2001 Census concerning distribution of foreign population by age categories, as shown in Table 1 above, are also analysed by gender, there is no such analysis when it comes specifically to the student population. As an indication of the lack of data concerning gender in the sphere of education, consider the following table.

Table 2: Number of pupils in primary and secondary schools (2002-2006)

Academic year	Greek	‘Foreigners’ and ‘Repatriated’	%/Total	Total
2002-03	1,332,611	96,899	7.3	1,460,464
2003-04	1,312,313	109,130	8.3	1,449,112
2004-05	1,310,859	138,193	9.5	1,449,052
2005-06	1,307,462	147,642	10.1	1,455,104
Percentage rate of change				
2002-06	-1.89%	52.37%		-0.37%

Source: Elaboration from the Institute for the Education of Greek Diaspora and Intercultural Studies (IPODE).

This gender-blindness is present also when it comes to policies. In fact, there are no educational policies concerning migrant girls, as there are no policies concerning non-migrant girls. This lack reflects the general ‘sexist myopia’ (Lazaridis, 2000) that characterises Greek migration policy in general. As suggested by Kambouri and Hatzopoulos (2009, p. 14), female migrants in Greece tend to be represented in policy, and regulated, either as a ‘complement’ to male migration in the framework of family reunification or as ‘victims’ of trafficking networks constituted by men, Greeks and foreigners. In a similar vein, young



people of migrant background are in principle confronted with an obvious contradiction: in the public discourse and space they find out they are not “young”, but mainly “Albanians”, “Roma”, “dangerous”, “inclined to delinquency” or “vulnerable” (Marvakis and Pavlou, 2006). At the same time, ironically, non-nationals as a whole are often represented in the media in ways that work to feminise them *vis-à-vis* nationals, as indicated by Golfinopoulos (2007, p. 44-46). This no doubt leads to further difficulties in how gender is articulated within migrant subjectivities, boys or girls regardless, that share public spaces, such as schools, with Greeks.

Nonetheless, gender is totally absent even in the general ‘second generation debate’, that gained ground in the public agenda especially in the aftermath of French suburbs riots, and culminated in the recent discussion following the proposal of the Law for the ‘Amendment of the Greek Nationality Code and the political participation of co-ethnics and legally residing migrants’ which passed in March 2010.

The only – indirect – references to issues of gender in the context of migration exist in some research projects, especially within the Operational Programme for Educational and Initial Vocational Training (EPEAEK). The project “Production of Supporting Educational Material for the Introduction of Issues Concerning Gender in the Educational Process”, implemented by the University of Ioannina (2000-2006) and monitored by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, is one example. The aim of the project was to support gender equality in Preliminary and Secondary Education.¹⁰ Specific references are made in the material produced within the project to raise awareness among teachers and students with regard to issues of gender equality. These combine gender-sensitivity with a concern for issues regarding migration, and cultural diversity. However, they reinscribe a representation of women and migrants as vulnerable social groups susceptible to victimisation.¹¹

In sum, we found a complete lack of policies focusing on the gendered aspects of the experience of students with migrant background at all levels of the Greek educational system. This is no doubt related to a generalised gender-blind perception of migration issues at the level of policy design and implementation.

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¹⁰ For more, see http://www.isotita-epeaek.gr/ipostiriktiko_iliko.htm.

¹¹ Specific references are made to trafficking when it comes to the issue ‘women and migration’ or ‘women migrants’.



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