

MIGRATION AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LANDSCAPE OF GREECE

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Abstract

Over the last decades migration has altered the economic and social landscape of Greece. Key migrant flows triggering this transformation were the massive migrant inflows that commenced with the collapse of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990's, the return flows provoked by the severe economic crisis affecting Greece since 2008, and the outflows of Greek nationals sparked by the same recession. Some of the main economic and social consequences of these flows are examined in this paper.

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Keywords: Migration, Greece, Economic Crisis.

Over the last decades migration has been a major factor shaping the economic and social landscape of Greece. A traditional migrant-sending country since the end of the nineteenth century, Greece became a migrant-receiving country in the last decades of the twentieth century. However, before the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, Greece was becoming a migrant-sending country once again. The impact of these inflows and outflows on the economic and social landscape of Greece is multi-faceted.*

This paper aims to examine certain dimensions of the impact of these migration flows. The dimensions focused on are grouped in two sets. The first set, corresponding roughly to the period from 1990 to the onset of the economic crisis in 2008, includes 1) the abrupt change from a relatively homogeneous to a very diverse population of Greece in the decade subsequent to the collapse of socialist and communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, 2) expansion of informal employment, 3) the substitution of family labour in small family enterprises and the home by migrant wage-labour, and 4) the entry of Greece into the Eurozone in 2001, which according to many observers was facilitated by the migrant presence. The second group contains dimensions that have developed concurrently with the economic crisis Greece has experienced since 2008: 1) continuation of unauthorised inflows of migrants without their being incorporated into wage-work as were previous waves of migrants, 2) expansion of return migration, and 3) the new wave of emigration by Greeks.

1. Transformations from about 1990 to the onset of the economic crisis

1.1 From relative homogeneity to diversity

In the last decades of the twentieth century, Greece was transformed from a traditional migrant-sending country to a migrant-receiving country. The main destinations of Greek emigrants at the end of the nineteenth century were the United States and Australia, while after World War II they became countries of northern Europe and especially Germany (Lianos and Cavounidis 2012). Flows of immigrants into Greece started to accelerate in the mid-1970s, but it was with the collapse of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 1990s that migrant inflows took on massive proportions, with Albania topping the list of source countries. The majority of immigrants present in Greece today originate from this geopolitical group of countries, although in recent years countries of Asia and Africa have emerged as the dominant source countries of migration to Greece.

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Some of the migrants from these ex-socialist regimes were of Greek descent and Greek migration policies embraced them, facilitating their entry and settlement. However, the overwhelming majority of migrants who arrived in the 1990s were not of Greek descent and either entered Greece without the proper documents or overstayed their initial visas, and most of these undocumented migrants were eventually legalised in one of the three programmes for regularisation of unauthorised migrants carried out in 1998, 2001 and 2005.

Table 1. Foreign Population of Greece in 1981, 1991 and 2001: Main Countries of Nationality

Citizenship	1981	1981	1991	1991	2001	2001
Total	9.739.589	100.00*	10.259.900	100.00*	10934097	100.00*
Greek citizenship	9.558.994	98.15*	10.092.624	98.37*	10171906	93.03*
Foreign citizenship	176.119	1.81*	166.031	1.62*	761.383	6.97*
Without citizenship or of unknown citizenship	4.476	0.05*	1.245	0.01*	430	0.00*
Country of citizenship of foreign nationals:						
"Developed" countries	115.431	65.54**	76275	45.94**	99901	13.12**
EU (15)	59.488	<i>51.54</i>	35304	<i>46.28</i>	46869	<i>46.92</i>
Cyprus	19.337	<i>16.75</i>	14651	<i>19.21</i>	17426	<i>17.44</i>
Australia	7.041	<i>6.10</i>	6313	<i>8.28</i>	8767	<i>8.78</i>
USA	23.659	<i>20.50</i>	13927	<i>18.26</i>	18140	<i>18.16</i>
Canada	4.136	<i>3.58</i>	4717	<i>6.18</i>	6049	<i>6.05</i>
Other "developed" countries	1.770	<i>1.53</i>	1363	<i>1.79</i>	2650	<i>2.65</i>
Balkan countries	5.821	3.31**	26226	15.80**	500226	65.70**
Albania	3.563	<i>61.21</i>		<i>78.38</i>	438036	<i>87.57</i>
Bulgaria	807	<i>13.86</i>	2413	<i>9.20</i>	35104	<i>7.02</i>
Romania	606	<i>10.41</i>	1923	<i>7.33</i>	21994	<i>4.40</i>
Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro for 2001)	845	<i>14.52</i>	1334	<i>5.09</i>	3832	<i>0.77</i>
FYROM	0	<i>0.00</i>	0	<i>0.00</i>	747	<i>0.15</i>
Croatia	0	<i>0.00</i>	0	<i>0.00</i>	219	<i>0.04</i>
Bosnia-Herzegovina	0	<i>0.00</i>	0	<i>0.00</i>	294	<i>0.06</i>
Other countries of Central and Eastern Europe	3.630	2.06**	25.022	15.07**	85715	11.26**
Poland	522	<i>14.38</i>	9624	<i>38.46</i>	12831	<i>14.97</i>
Hungary	237	<i>6.63</i>	291	<i>1.16</i>	538	<i>0.63</i>
Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic and Slovakia for 2001)	247	<i>6.80</i>	738	<i>2.95</i>	1009	<i>1.18</i>
Russia (USSR and Russian Federation for 2001)	1.515	<i>41.74</i>	12918	<i>51.63</i>	71337	<i>83.23</i>
Other formerly socialist European countries	1.109	<i>30.55</i>	1451	<i>5.80</i>	-	-
Other countries	51.237	29.09**	38508	23.94**	75541	9.92**
Asia	41.954	<i>81.88</i>	27567	<i>71.59</i>	56680	<i>75.03</i>
Africa	6.671	<i>13.02</i>	8726	<i>22.66</i>	15607	<i>20.66</i>
America	2.195	<i>4.28</i>	2022	<i>5.25</i>	3138	<i>4.15</i>
Oceania	417	<i>0.81</i>	193	<i>0.50</i>	116	<i>0.15</i>

Note: Those who are citizens of Greece and of another country are classified as Greek citizens. Those who have no citizenship or are of unknown citizenship have been excluded for calculations of percentages.

*As percentage of the total population. ** As percentage of the population classified as foreign citizens. Within each country group, the share of specific countries or continents as a percentage of the country group appears in italics.

Source: Kotzamanis (2009)

The rapid expansion of the population of migrants can be seen in a comparison of population census data for 1981, 1991 and 2001¹ (Table 1). It should be noted that data in Table 1 are by nationality and therefore do not correspond to migrants per se – for example, most of the migrants of Greek descent from the former Soviet Union have been naturalised and therefore do not appear as foreign nationals. The comparison of census data for 1981, 1991 and 2001 reveals firstly the rapid increase in the population of foreigners as a proportion of the total population. The share of the foreign population increased from under 2% in 1981 and 1991 to 7% in 2001, while most observers believe that the census of 2001 undercounted migrants, placing their actual population share around 10%. Secondly, a dramatic shift is apparent in the countries of citizenship of the foreign population. In 1981, 65% of foreigners in Greece were from so-called “developed countries” (undoubtedly many were spouses of Greek citizens or business executives) while by 2001 only 13% of the foreign population were from such countries. Likewise, in 1981 only 3% of foreigners were from Balkan countries but in 2001 66% were from these countries. Thirdly, the data exhibit the predominance of a specific source country among the foreign population of 2001 – Albania. A full 58% of the foreigners in Greece in 2001 were Albanian nationals. Fourthly, the data reveal the significance of a specific geopolitical group of source countries – collapsed socialist regimes of Central and Eastern Europe. More than three-quarters of migrants present in Greece in 2001 were from this geopolitical group of countries². It should be noted that at the time of collapse of the Soviet Union, EU documents expressed fears that migration pressure from the area would mainly impact Germany and Austria, but finally it was countries of Southern Europe that experienced massive inflows.

In recent years, countries of Asia and Africa have emerged as the dominant sources of migration to Greece. Like the previous inflows from Central and Eastern Europe, inflows from Asia and Africa are almost entirely unauthorised. Arrest data (Ministry of Public Order 2012) indicate that Afghanistan and Pakistan are the main countries of origin. The new diversity of the Greek population evidenced in the census data is visible in the streets of Athens and other cities, in the fields of the countryside, as well as in public schools of Greece. According to data of the Ministry of Education, foreign students have a significant presence in the educational system. As seen in Table 2, in the school year 2010-2011 the shares of foreign students at the elementary school and at the gymnasium (lower secondary school) were 12.4% and 10.8% respectively. Foreign students also accounted for an important share (around 13%) in the vocationally-oriented upper secondary schools TEE, EPAL and EPAS while their share was much smaller (5.4%) in the upper secondary school called the general lyceum, which prepares students for tertiary education³.

1. The last population census was carried out in March 2011 but unfortunately data by nationality and place of birth were not yet available as of February 2013.

2. See Cavounidis 2002a for a comparison of migrant inflows into Greece with those into other countries of southern Europe that were also transformed in the last decades of the twentieth century from senders to receivers of migrants.

3. See Cavounidis 2011 for a discussion of differences in enrollment and achievement of foreign and native students.

Table 2. Distribution of Foreign and Greek-descent students in public schools, School-year 2010-2011

Level of education	Total students	Number of foreign students and their percent of the student population	Number of Greek-descent students and their percent of the student population
Pre-primary	132,223	20,432 (15.4%)	1,265 (1.0%)
Primary	601,047	74,685 (12.4%)	5,605 (0.9%)
Gymnasium	321,682	34,626 (10.8%)	3,822 (1.2%)
General Lyceum	224,224	12,060 (5.4%)	1,780 (0.8%)
TEE, EPAL, EPAS ⁶	94,699	12,319 (13.0%)	2,385 (2.5%)
TOTAL	1,373,875	154,120 (11.2%)	14,857 (1.1%)

Source: J. Cavounidis (2011) "The Education of Migrant Children: Participation, Performance and Policies," *Greek Economic Outlook*, issue 15, Athens: KEPE www.kepe.gr

Thus, Greece was transformed over the past decades from a country that sent hundreds of thousands of migrants to Germany and other northern European countries after WW II, to a country receiving hundreds of thousands of migrants who have made Greece a newly diverse society.

1.2 Irregular employment and expansion of the informal labour market

Two important features, however, differentiate the postwar experience of Greece as a sending country from its current experience as a receiving country: the prevalence of undocumented migration and the prevalence of irregular employment in the informal sector. The overwhelming majority of Greeks who migrated to countries of Northern Europe in the postwar decades had proper documents and were employed in the formal sector of their economies, with employment being reported to the authorities and subject to state regulations. Indeed, West Germany actively recruited Greek migrants, signing a bilateral agreement with Greece to facilitate flows northward (Lianos and Cavounidis 2012). By contrast, the overwhelming majority of migrants to Greece since the early 1990s have entered the country without proper documents, while irregular employment of migrants in the underground economy has been widespread. Undocumented employment is characteristic not only of undocumented migrants, who by definition have no access to formal sector employment, but is also common among migrants who gained documented status in one of Greece's three regularisation programmes and thereby acquired the legal prerequisites for employment in the formal sector (Cavounidis 2002b, Cavounidis 2003).

According to the “South European model of immigration” proposed by King (2000), the labour demand which propelled peasants from Greece and other countries of Southern Europe to Northern Europe in the post-war decades differed from the labour demand which attracted migrants to Southern Europe in the last decades of the twentieth century. In the former case it was demand for industrial labour in the formal sector that pulled migrants northward, but in the latter case it was demand for flexible labour in the highly seasonal economic sectors characteristic of countries in Southern Europe such as agriculture, fishing, construction, and tourism, along with demand for domestic work and the care of dependent family members. Much of the labour in these sectors has a tradition of informality in countries of Southern Europe. These sectors indeed account for the bulk of employment of migrants in Greece today. Before the economic crisis began, and specifically in the second trimester of 2008, 51% of the foreign men employed in Greece were in construction while main sectors of employment of foreign women were services to households, with 45% of women employed there, while 19% were in the tourism-related sector of hotels and food services (Cavounidis 2012c).

The implications of the migrant presence for the extent of the informal economy is an issue that has been widely discussed in Greece even though there are no appropriate data on which to base reliable conclusions. Of course, a large informal economy existed in Greece prior to the onset of heavy immigration inflows at the beginning of the 1990s (according to some, about 30% of the economy), while other factors have been cited (Kanellopoulos, Gregou and Petralias 2009) as contributing to the extent of undeclared labour in Greece such as the relatively high levels of social insurance contributions, labour market rigidities, and poor public administration. A large proportion of migrants is undoubtedly involved in undeclared employment relationships. The difficulties faced by migrants in getting formal sector jobs were highlighted in a study (Cavounidis 2003) of migrants who had participated in Greece’s first regularisation programme and as a result had acquired the legal prerequisites for formal employment. Migrants were asked about the most important problem they faced with life in Greece and the problem they cited most frequently was the difficulty of finding a job in the formal sector of the economy, which would afford them the social security stamps they needed to renew their permits. They reported that in contrast, offers for jobs in the underground economy were abundant.

1.3 Substitution of family labour by migrant wage-labour

Another change in the social and economic landscape of Greece prompted by the migrant presence has to do with the longstanding family character of much of its economy. The migrant presence appears to have contributed to the substitution of unpaid family labour in small enterprises and homes by the use of migrant labour. Compared to other countries of the EU, Greece has long presented exceptionally high levels of

self-employment, with small family work units characterising agriculture, manufacturing and commerce. The influx of low-wage migrant labour appears to have enabled proprietors of farms, shops and other small businesses to hire workers and become employers, while previously they had relied only on family labour. A comparison of data on proportions of employers, those employed on their own account (without employees), salaried employees and family workers in 1986 (before massive migrant inflows began) and 2004 (after inflows) suggested that the presence of migrants willing to work for low wages contributed to changes in employment structures, specifically to the substitution of family labour by salaried employment as well as to a shift in the relative weight of the two segments of the self-employed, with an increase in those employing others and a decrease in those without employees (Cavounidis 2006).

The migrant presence appears to have facilitated the substitution of unpaid family labour by migrant wage labour not only in the ubiquitous small family enterprises of Greek urban and rural areas but also in homes. Limited institutional facilities for care of the elderly and of the young result in a heavy load of family care-work, typically shouldered by women. The widespread use of low-wage migrant women's labour in homes for domestic and care services is evidenced in the large numbers of foreign women employed in services to households, as seen previously. The substitution of waged migrant labour for unpaid family labour in family enterprises and in the home appears to have allowed the entry of native women into salaried employment. An analysis utilising regional Labour Force Survey data for the years 1998-2001 (Lianos 2003) came to the conclusion that the migrant presence did not affect the labour force participation rate of native men but did affect the participation rate of native women, and specifically that a 1% increase in the ratio of immigrants to the total population of a region resulted in an increase in the participation rate of women by 2.5%. In sum, the migrant presence seems to have propelled Greek employment structures towards convergence with those characteristic of most EU countries by contributing to an increase in the proportion of the employed population who work for wages and salaries rather than on their own account.

1.4 Entry of Greece into the Eurozone in 2001

The lower wages of immigrants have been cited by many researchers (e.g. Lianos 2004; Cholezas and Tsakloglou 2008) as having constrained production costs, thereby reducing inflationary pressure and contributing to the achievement of goals set as preconditions for Greece's entry into the European Monetary Union (Eurozone). Migrant low-wage labour was also widely reported to have contributed to the competitiveness of Greek products in international markets, allowing the survival of small and medium-sized firms (Cholezas and Tsakloglou 2008). At the same time, it has been argued that the low-wage labour offered by migrants has affected productivity negatively, in that it encouraged employers to focus on labour-intensive techniques and

delay adoption of new technology. Specifically, it was claimed that the use of cheap, irregular labour in small and medium-sized firms may have contributed to their productivity in the short-term and allowed for their survival, but had adverse consequences for productivity in the long-term.

2. Transformations concurrent with the economic crisis

The economic crisis that has plagued Greece since 2008 has resulted in new twists in the Greek migration experience which have further transformed the social and economic landscape of Greece. While unauthorised inflows are not a new phenomenon, a large proportion of these inflows cannot be incorporated into wage work in the informal sector of the economy as was the case previously. Flows of return migration have accelerated, and the emigration of natives has expanded markedly.

2.1 Continuation of unauthorised flows without incorporation in wage-work

In most countries of Europe, the recent economic crisis has led to a decrease in migration inflows. However, in the case of Greece, the deterioration of the labour market has not resulted in the abatement of unauthorised flows. Before surveying indicators concerning inflows, an examination of the effects of the crisis on the labour market position of migrants is in order.

Before the onset of recession in 2008, migrants in Greece exhibited lower unemployment rates than natives, contrary to the experience of most EU countries. This changed however with the economic crisis. In 2009 the unemployment rate of migrants surpassed that of natives for the first time, while the gap continued to increase through 2011. Specifically, between 2008 and 2011 the unemployment rate of foreign nationals increased from 6% to 18% while the unemployment rate of Greek and Cypriot citizens increased from 7% to 16%. The increase in unemployment was especially sharp among citizens of Albania, whose rate increased from 6% to 21% (Table 3).

A greater increase in unemployment among migrants than among natives during the present economic crisis has been observed in many developed countries that have been hit by the crisis (OECD 2011a, Papademetriou, Sumption and Terrazas, 2010, Ruedin and D'Amato, 2011). In most of these countries, the larger increase of unemployment among migrants is due mainly to the different sectoral distribution of their employment, given that migrants are concentrated in sectors which have been particularly affected by the crisis such as construction, industry and tourism. In addition, in most countries the economic crisis has affected male and female migrants differently, with the unemployment of males exhibiting steeper increases than that of females. These gender differences have been attributed precisely to the different sectoral composition of their employment. While male migrants are concentrated in construction and manufacturing, female migrants are concentrated in the provision of services to households, which have been less affected by the crisis.

Unemployed	127,045	344,240	8,991	48,971	189	544	5,548	31,533	3,254	16,894	136,036	393,211
The unemployed as % of population aged 15-64	3.8	10.4	3.3	16.2	3.2	7.5	3.4	18.0	3.2	14.1	3.8	10.8
Unemployment rate	4.9	13.5	3.6	18.1	3.9	11.9	3.7	20.2	3.3	15.4	4.8	13.9
Not economically active	731,944	767,924	20,735	32,309	1,070	2,686	14,983	19,635	4,681	9,988	752,679	800,232
The non-active as % of population aged 15-64	21.9	23.1	7.6	10.7	17.9	37.1	9.1	11.2	4.6	8.3	20.8	22.1
Total	3,342,971	3,323,146	272,182	302,835	5,963	7,235	163,842	175,625	102,376	119,975	3,615,152	3,625,981

Women

Labour force status	2008b Greek + Cypriot	2011b	Foreign		EU 14		Albanian		Other		Total	
			2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b
Employed	1,650,778	1,502,263	119,995	145,155	6,061	5,979	54,361	63,597	59,574	75,579	1,770,774	1,647,418
The employed as % of population aged 15-64	49.0	45.4	48.7	49.7	40.3	43.3	43.0	41.1	56.8	61.2	49.0	45.7
Unemployed	204,957	384,233	15,545	32,004	1,023	1,427	7,932	19,749	6,589	10,828	220,502	416,237
The unemployed as % of population aged 15-64	6.1	11.6	6.3	11.0	6.8	10.3	6.3	12.7	6.3	8.8	6.1	11.5
Unemployment rate	11.0	20.4	11.5	18.1	14.4	19.3	12.7	23.7	10.0	12.5	11.1	20.2
Not economically active	1,510,997	1,426,067	110,752	114,976	7,952	6,398	64,103	71,569	38,697	37,009	1,621,749	1,541,043
The non-active as % of population aged 15-64	44.9	43.1	45.0	39.4	52.9	46.3	50.7	46.2	36.9	30.0	44.9	42.8
Total	3,366,732	3,312,563	246,293	292,135	15,037	13,804	126,396	154,916	104,860	123,416	3,613,025	3,604,698

Source: Unpublished Labour Force Surveys (EL-STAT.), author's calculations.

Examination of the Greek data reveals the same pattern, with impressive differences between genders. Not only did the unemployment of migrant women increase less than that of migrant men (by 6% and 14% respectively) (Table 3), but their employment rate actually increased (from 49% to 50%), reflecting an increase in their labour force participation. The same trend of increase in participation and employment rates of female migrants during the economic crisis has been observed in other countries of the EU (OECD 2011a), and has been interpreted as an attempt by women to offset the loss of employment by male members of families or households.

The sharp increase in the unemployment of migrants was not accompanied by a decrease of migrant flows into Greece, as in other developed countries. On the contrary, heavy inflows continued, and Greece maintained its unenviable status as the main gateway of illegal migration into the EU. According to Frontex (frontex.europa.gr), the European border management agency that has been involved in patrols of Greek borders over the last years, in 2008 about 50% of illegal entries into EU countries were through Greek borders, increasing to 75% in 2009 and to 90% in 2010.

It should be noted that a large proportion of the migrants who attempt to enter illegally are propelled by difficult conditions in their country of origin and do not aim to remain in Greece but rather to continue on to another country of the EU. Greece is a target for entry into the EU because it forms an external border of the EU and its borders are not effectively controlled. According to a recent field study (Triandayllidou and Maroukis 2012), only about 1 in 10 of the irregular migrants who arrived in Greece between 2005 and 2011 managed to cross into Western Europe.

Main points of unauthorised entry have shifted over time. Up until 2008 Greece's land borders with Albania constituted the main point of attempted entry, but then the main pressure point became the Aegean sea borders with Turkey and next, after effective collaboration of Frontex and Greek authorities in the Aegean, the pressure point was diverted to Greece's land borders with Turkey along the Evros River. According to Frontex, most migrants intending to cross the Greek land border travel first to Istanbul, from where they are transported by people-smugglers to the Evros River.

In the summer of 2012, nearly 2,000 more Greek officers were deployed to the land border to reinforce the joint mission with Frontex, amid fears of a surge in migration from Syria as result of the crisis there. The new efforts, together with the new fence erected along the Evros River, appear to have brought results. While in the first seven months of 2012 more than 55,000 unauthorised migrants were arrested for illegal entry and residence by police and harbour authorities, compared to 48,000 in the first seven months of 2011 (an increase of 16%), by the end of 2012 the total arrests for the year were fewer than those for 2011, reaching approximately 77,000 as opposed to 99,000 in the previous year. It appears, however, that more effective control of the land border has shifted migration pressure once again to the sea borders of Greece and Turkey.

Until the recent noteworthy improvement in border protection, the unauthorized population appears to have expanded substantially, with countries of origin chiefly in Asia and Africa. It should be noted, though, that the expansion of the undocumented population is the result not only of unauthorized inflows but also of the reversion of documented migrants to undocumented status. Renewal of work permits requires proof of employment and social insurance payments. Lapse into irregularity has increased with the economic crisis because finding employment in the formal sector with social security stamps has become ever more difficult. As has been noted, when examining the impact of the economic crisis on flows, it is important to look not only at flows in and out of Greece, but also at shifts in legal status of those remaining in Greece.

Therefore, main features of migrant flows to Greece in the last decades have been their illegal character and the inability of authorities to bring them under control. Legal inflows have accounted for only a very small proportion of total inflows, owing to the very narrow channels for legal migration and to the very bureaucratic procedures it entails (Cavounidis 2008). Formerly, the policy of regularisation of undocumented migrants was used by the state to cope with the results of these failures. Most migrants legally present in Greece today were previously on Greek territory illegally and acquired their permits through participation in the regularisation programmes of 1998, 2001 or 2005. A repeat of a mass regularisation programme is not a prospect, owing not only to current high levels of unemployment among both natives and migrants but also to the strong objections voiced in recent years to such programmes in numerous EU capitals after the last implementation of regularisation in Spain in 2006.

It is very difficult to estimate the size of the unauthorised population present on Greek territory today. Two separate systematic efforts (Lianos *et al.* 2008; Maroukis 2008) to gauge its extent in the year 2007 placed it close to 200,000. A more recent assessment placed it around 350,000 (Maroukis 2011).

It appears that a large proportion of the new undocumented population is not incorporated into wage-work as were previous waves of migrants, but remains unemployed or participates in small-scale entrepreneurial activities, often illicit and highly visible on the street. Migrants without permits to engage in commerce are often involved in the sale of counterfeit goods, especially copies of designer handbags. For example, on the main commercial street of Athens, Ermou St., migrants spread their wares on cloths, playing a cat and mouse game with the police officers who periodically appear. Since 2011, a new common daily scene in the centre of Athens has been that of migrants pushing grocery carts from one trash bin to the next, scavenging for objects to be sold as scrap metal. Thus, the activities of recent migrants who have arrived during the crisis appear to be very different from those of past waves of migrants, who were incorporated into wage-work in construction, manufacturing, commerce, agriculture, and homes.

Not only have the economic activities of migrants become more visible to the public eye, but also their residences and gathering spots in public places have become increasingly concentrated in specific areas, thereby transforming urban space. Until the late 2000s, Greek social geographers continued to remark on the lack of formation of ghettos in Athens and the relatively even distribution of migrants across urban space compared to other major European cities (e.g. Maloutas 2007). The only notable pattern of social segregation ascertained was that described as “vertical segregation”, with the higher floors of apartment buildings being occupied by the more affluent, the lower floors by the less affluent, and the basements by migrants.

2.2 Expansion of return migration

The onset of the economic crisis and the deterioration of conditions in the Greek labour market since the end of 2008 have spurred return migration. The size of return flows is difficult to estimate but there are several indications of this trend.

One indication of return flows is the decrease in the size of the authorised migrant population. The number of non-EU foreign nationals holding residence permits, excluding those with permits for seasonal permits, increased in all years between 2004 and 2009 but their number decreased by about 100,000 between December 2010 and December 2011. Specifically, the authorised population dropped from approximately 603,000 at the end of 2009 to 448,000 at the end of 2011 (General Secretariat of Population and Social Cohesion 2011). As previously mentioned, some migrants may have lapsed from authorised to unauthorised status, and some of these may have remained on Greek territory. However, most of the decrease is probably related to return migration, whether by migrants who chose not to renew their permits or were unable to renew their permits.

On the other hand, data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show an increase in the population of migrants aged 15-64 between 2008 and 2011 (Table 3). It should of course be noted that the LFS is a sample survey of all households of Greece, regardless of the legal status of household members and also that it is generally acknowledged that migrant households have been under-represented in the specific survey while a large part of the increase they have shown in recent years can be attributed, according to an ELSTAT official, to improvement of their coverage in the survey. In any case, it is of course entirely possible that return migration prompted by the economic crisis was underway concurrently with continued unauthorised migrant inflows.

Apart from residence permits, other types of information have also been drawn on as evidence of a trend of return migration resulting from the economic crisis. For example, with respect to Albanians, the largest migrant community in Greece, the Albanian Foundation of International Studies estimated in 2011 that about 15% of the approximately half million Albanians in Greece had departed in recent years (Unit for Migration Studies, 2011).

Some indication of desire for return migration is provided by the great interest in the voluntary return migration programmes organised by the Athens office of the International Organisation for Migration in 2010 and 2011 for unauthorised migrants and migrants who had applied for asylum. Applications far outstripped places in the program. It was expected that the main nationalities participating in the new programme that began in 2012 would be Afghanis, Pakistanis, Moroccans, Bangladeshis and Iraqis.

The economic crisis no doubt has different effects on the migratory plans of various groups of migrants according to their legal status, the length of time they have stayed in Greece, and their family situation. For migrants who have developed longstanding ties with Greek society, such as through creation of a family, return to country of origin is difficult. On the other hand, unauthorised migrants may have fewer incentives to stay but at the same time may be reluctant to depart since it would be very difficult for them to return to Greece in the future.

2.3 New wave of emigration by Greeks

The sharp increase in unemployment in the Greek labour market since the last trimester of 2008 together with the worsening of terms of employment have caused many Greeks to seek employment abroad, especially younger population groups that have been characterized by particularly high unemployment levels and have not yet created families or other obligations. This turn toward employment abroad appears to mark a shift in the Greek migration experience and specifically that the conversion of Greece, from a sender of migrants to a receiver of migrants two decades ago, has now been followed by its transformation into a sending country once again.

The large increase in unemployment among Greek and Cypriot citizens aged 15-29 and 30-44 in the Greek labour market can be seen in Table 4. While unemployment in these age groups was high previous to the crisis, between the second trimester of 2008 and the second trimester of 2011 unemployment among men aged 15-29 increased from 12.6% to 29.3% while among women in the same age group from 20.5% to 38%. In the age group 30-44, unemployment increased from 3.7% to 11.6% for men and from 10.4% to 18.7% for women. As can be seen, a sharp increase in unemployment characterised all educational groups, including those with tertiary degrees and postgraduate degrees, despite the fact that such degrees are often considered the strongest “weapon” in times of economic crisis and high unemployment (OECD 2011b). Moreover, Eurobarometer survey data indicate that perceptions of Greeks concerning the future of their personal job situation are particularly negative. Of the 27 EU countries included in the survey, Greece showed the largest increase (30%) between 2006 and 2012 in the proportion of the population that expected their personal job situation to worsen over the next year (Bertoli, Brucker and Fernandez-Huertas Moraga 2013).

Table 4. Unemployment rates among population of Greek and Cypriot citizenship with completed education, by educational level, gender and age group

	Men				Women			
	15-29		30-44		15-29		30-44	
	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b	2008b	2011b
Ph.D. or Master's degree	20,9	45,5	4,6	7,7	11,1	21,6	3,9	9,3
Upper tertiary	13,9	33,6	3,1	7,4	19,3	35,0	4,7	12,1
Lower tertiary	14,1	31,6	3,7	9,8	19,7	35,2	12,1	21,0
Lyceum	12,0	25,8	3,9	11,2	22,2	40,2	10,9	20,6
Gymnasium	10,7	31,6	3,5	15,8	25,5	54,0	16,4	21,7
Primary or less	11,0	30,3	3,7	18,4	21,6	58,2	14,8	25,3
Total	12,6	29,3	3,7	11,6	20,5	38,0	10,4	18,7

Source: Cavounidis (2012a)

In the past, the Greek Statistical Authority published data on the emigration of Greeks as well as on their return migration. Unfortunately there are no such data available today. Likewise, the office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Athens that dealt with the migration of Greeks in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's to Australia, Canada, the United States and other destinations, no longer keeps data on Greeks and focuses exclusively on the migration of foreigners to Greece. In recent years the Greeks who have contacted the IOM about leaving Greece have been referred to embassies and consulates of the countries of interest. According to the IOM office in Athens, the main countries attracting the attention of prospective Greek migrants in 2012 were Germany, Australia and the United States, as well as some countries of the Middle East.

Data of the German Federal Statistical Office indeed exhibit a steep increase in the number of Greeks residing in Germany. During the first six months of 2011, the number of Greek citizens moving to Germany increased by 84% compared to the same months of the previous year. The German statistical service reported that migrant inflows were particularly large from countries of the EU that had been seriously affected by the economic crisis, but the data showed that the increase in inflows of Spanish citizens was smaller than that of Greece – Spanish inflows increased by 49%, compared to Greece's 84%. In the first six months of 2012, Greece exhibited the steepest increase in new migrants to Germany, with 15,700 arriving, representing an increase of 78% over the first half of 2011. In comparison, the 11,000 arrivals from Spain in the first six months of 2012 represented an increase of 46% over the same period of the previous year (www.spiegel.de 15.11.2012)⁴.

4. It should be noted, however, that in absolute numbers, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria were the main source countries of immigration to Germany over this period. It should also be noted that present levels of Greek migration to Germany are only slightly higher than those observed before Greece entered the Eurozone (OECD 2012).

According to results of the Gallup World Survey carried out between 2008 and 2010, 19% of the Greek population wished to move abroad permanently and 18% of these would have liked to move to Germany (OECD 2013). Of the total Greek population, 3.5% would have liked to move to Germany, rendering it the number-one preferred destination among Greeks. However, unlike other Southern European countries that were in the throes of economic crisis from 2008 and were also sending migrants to Germany, enrollment in Goethe Institute's German courses did not increase impressively in Greece between 2010 and 2011. Specifically, enrollment increased by 7% compared to 38% in Spain, 22% in Portugal and 14% in Italy (OECD 2013). Nonetheless, the sales of the German bookstore in Athens appear to have expanded substantially.

A statistical analysis (Bertoli, Brucker and Fernandez-Huertas Moraga 2013) of migration flows from countries of Southern and Eastern Europe to Germany and the importance of deterioration of conditions in alternative destinations revealed that in the case of Greece, approximately 33% of the change in migration flows to Germany between 2007 and June 2012 could be attributed to current economic conditions, as indicated by evolution of the unemployment rate, and about 11% to expectations about the future of the Greek economy, as indicated by 10-year bond yields. On the other hand, 61% of the change in flows was accounted for by "diversion effects"; in other words, Greek migrants who would have gone elsewhere ended up in Germany because of (negative) events or developments in other potential destinations⁵.

Another indication that Greeks are seeking employment abroad is the rapid increase in their registration on the website EURES, the gateway of European mobility in which public employment agencies (such as the Greek OAED) of the European Economic Area countries participate. Specifically, in October 2011, more than 20,000 Greeks had posted their CVs on the site, while in November 2010 there were fewer than 11,5000 (*Vima* 16.10.2011). According to the relevant data, all population groups exhibited an increase, but particularly those under 35 with higher education. A parallel increase in Greeks is observed with respect to numbers completing CVs for the Europass service, which like EURES was designed to facilitate labour force mobility. More particularly, in 2011 the number of Greek CVs doubled, from 46,400 in 2010 to 89,3000 by November 2011 (*Kathimerini* 16.12.2011).

Flows of Greeks to European countries in recent years have included many highly skilled professionals, including doctors. According to data (Bank of Greece 2012), 282 Greek doctors migrated to the United Kingdom in 2010 and 365 in 2011, while in the respective years 153 and 208 Greek doctors and related professionals migrated to Germany.

5. It should be noted that the diversion effects were found to be particularly strong in the case of Romanian migrants (99%), whose main destination country had been Spain until it entered recession.

The search for employment in Australia also appears to have increased significantly. The plethora of telephone calls to the Australian embassy in Athens prompted the organisation of five informational meetings in Athens in the autumn of 2011 about occupational skills in shortage in Australia, most of which require many years of education or training, such as in the medical professions. About 15,000 individuals requested to attend the meetings but invitations were extended only to about 1,250 who had relevant qualifications. Due to various requirements and restrictions, there has not been an increase in the number of migration visas granted to Greek citizens, despite the wide interest. According to data of the Australian Department of Immigration, only 15 Greek citizens arrived in Australia for permanent residence as skilled labour force in the financial year 2011-2012, compared to 35 in 2008-9, 26 in 2009-10 and 14 in 2010-11. On the other hand, arrivals of Greek citizens for permanent residence in Australia due to family reunification showed an increase: from 96 in 2008-9 to 93 in 2009-2010, 119 in 2010-11 and 139 in 2011-12. Obviously, these numbers are much smaller than suggested by the recent prominence given in the Greek media to the new tendency of Greeks to migrate to Australia.

A study of the migration of Greek tertiary graduates (Lambrianidis 2011) estimated that in 2010 approximately 110,000 to 135,000 Greek graduates worked abroad, or 8.5% to 10.5% of all such graduates who lived in Greece. It was ascertained that the completion of studies abroad reduces the length of time required to find employment abroad.

It should be noted that the current trend of reconversion into a migrant-sending country characterises not only Greece but also other countries of Europe that underwent transformation from sending to receiving countries in the last decades of the 20th century. More particularly, in 2011 increased migration propensity among natives with advanced degrees and skills was observed in both Spain and Ireland, although there were no specific data which could document the volume of migration (Migration Information Source, December 2011).

How does the present wave of emigration of Greeks compare with the emigration of Greeks in the postwar decades? A first dimension of comparison is the determining factors of migration. Poor labour market conditions were also the main drivers of the emigration of Greeks in the postwar decades. Statistical analysis of migrant flows from Greece to the United States, Canada, Australia and Germany between 1959 and 1977 showed that unemployment levels were important determinants of the outflows (Lianos and Cavounidis 2012). Of course it is not only the high levels of unemployment that are currently creating migration supply of Greeks, but also related factors such as the negative outlook for the Greek economy in upcoming years and the resulting gloomy prospects for career trajectories.

Second, the countries of destination that have attracted potential Greek migrants coincide to a large degree in the two periods. As in the past, countries of Northern Europe and especially Germany are migration targets, as are overseas destinations such as the United States, Canada and Australia, even though legal migration to these latter destinations is now proving difficult for present-day migration candidates. Unlike the past, some countries of the Middle East have emerged as attractive destinations for some potential migrants.

Third, as for volume, the extent the present wave will take is unknown but it would appear difficult for it to surpass the postwar exodus. For example, approximately one million Greeks migrated to West Germany between 1960 and 1985, or 11.5% of the population of Greece as recorded in the 1971 census (Lianos and Cavounidis 2012).

Fourth, as for the characteristics of those migrating, it appears that there will be major differences between the two waves of emigration. Today the supply of migration is especially intense among well-educated youth while the labour demand in their desired countries of destination is principally for high-skilled labour contrary to the postwar experience in which most Greek emigrants had limited education and migrated in response to demand for unskilled labour in Germany and elsewhere, just as emigrants from other Southern European countries to Northern European countries in the postwar decades. Of course, a related difference from the postwar experience is that the present outflow of Greek nationals coexists with an inflow of migrants seeking low-skilled work.

Fifth, as for spatial patterns of settlement, the new wave of migrants will probably exhibit lesser concentration in specific neighborhoods, towns and cities of destination countries than Greek migrants of the past. Today, a large part of the search for employment is carried out over the internet rather than through personal networks of kin and co-villagers – as in the past – who not only found jobs for new migrants but also aided them in the settlement process. Moreover, globalization and the convergence of social and cultural experiences, particularly among educated youth, would presumably weaken preferences to reside in close proximity with co-ethnics.

As yet, there are few indications as to the type of connections - which were intense among previous waves of emigrants - that the new diaspora will maintain with Greece. Nor is there evidence as to the extent to which the new opportunities offered the Greek economy by the presence of a new diaspora abroad will be effectively exploited.

As for return migration of Greeks, it remains to be seen what levels it will reach and how they will compare with those of previous waves of Greek migrants. Over the period 1968-1977 approximately 449,400 Greeks emigrated, while 237,500 Greek migrants returned, yielding a return rate of 53% (Lianos and Cavounidis 2012). Of course, some of the return migrants in that period had emigrated in a previous period, while some of the emigrants in that period could have returned later. The absorption rate (representing stay versus return) differed by country of destination, with the United States exhibiting the highest absorption (78.4%), followed by Canada (66.9%), Australia (50%), and Germany (45%).

Whatever the return rate, there is little doubt that the experience of emigration is once again transforming the economic and social landscape of Greece. This time it may not devastate entire villages, as it did in Northern Greece in the postwar decades, but with the exodus of large numbers of highly educated and skilled youth, it will undoubtedly alter the human capital composition of the population of Greece.

Conclusion

The economic and social landscape of Greece was transformed by the massive inflows of migrants that commenced subsequent to the collapse of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe while the economic crisis that Greece has faced since 2008 has added new twists to this transformation. It remains too early to assess the full impact of the dimensions of transformation examined in this paper.

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