

# Regularization as an immigration policy: structuring 'temporary citizens'- narratives of young Albanian migrants in Greece

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# Regularization as an remedial immigration policy: aims

- Regain control
- Reinstate order
- End human suffering and put an end on migrants' exploitation-ensure equal rights
- Tackle labor market deregulation

(Ghosh 1998)

# The study

- 40 biographical interviews with young Albanians (16-25 years old)
- Semi-structured interviews with representatives of Albanian associations, state agencies and NGOs
- Athens, Greece

# Regularization programmes: the Greek experience

- The 1998 (presidential decrees 358 and 359/1997) –around 358,000 applicants
- The 2001 (law 2910/2001)- 351-360,000 applicants
- The 2005 (law 3386/2005) -no data announced

# Features of Greek regularization programmes

- One-off
- Completion in two stages, registration stage and regularization stage (1998, 2001)
- Work permit a prerequisite for issuing a residence permit-hence legal status is contingent on formal employment status
- Provision of temporary residence permit-renewal on an annual basis
- Strict criteria for issuing a long term residence permit or acquisition of Greek citizenship

# Implementation of regularization programmes

- Administrative dysfunctions (lack of 'administrative preparedness' Levinson 2005)
- Inability to issue the permits on time
- Extension of deadlines and introduction of semi-regularized status- the so-called 'certificate' of having submitted documentation for residence permit
- Employers' unwillingness to pay social insurance contributions

# Regularization outcomes

- Short duration permits and misadministration problems resulted in confining migrants in a 'limbo', marginalized, insecure state of 'permanent temporariness' (Mountz et al 2002) and quasi-documented status (curtailment of freedom of movement, no entitlement of benefits, etc)
- Differential layers of migrants: regularized, semi-regularized, irregular

# Regularization practices: towards a temporary migration regime?

- Migration is a transitory phenomenon
- Migrants are viewed as temporary workers
- Structuring entrapment in a 'regularization cycle' and temporary legal status
- Structuring 'transient belonging' and temporary residents



# Narratives of young Albanians

- *I wish the regularization process was different. From the moment I get the residence permit I have to run to prepare and submit the documentation prior to the expiration of my permit...Literally throughout the year I am busy gathering documentation to renew my permit. I have been granted residence permit for one year and I have been in Greece for 7 years now. OK at first I was illegal, then after 6 years I got a permit of one's year duration and after . To sum up, I put a lot of effort throughout the year to issue a residence permit for one year! (Ermal, 22 years old)*
- *I have to renew my permit every year, which means that I have to get a declaration from my employer, I need social security proof, a fee of 150 euros, etc..I have relatives in Germany, they have got a passport after 10 years of residence and they can travel in Europe and I have to issue a residence permit on an annual basis (Irma, 24 years old)*

# Evaluating regularization programmes and suggestions

