

GPSG Working Paper #18

Migrant Lived Experiences and Resistance to the Securitisation of Migration in Greece: The Modern '300'

Georgios Karyotis
Senior Lecturer
University of Glasgow

Dimitris Skleparis
PhD Candidate
Queen Mary, University of London



Abstract

This paper explores overlooked dynamics relevant to the criminalisation and securitisation of migration, with Greece serving as a case-study. Reminiscent of an heroic episode in ancient Greek history, where Leonidas and the Spartans willingly stood to their inevitable death against the mass Persian army, about 300 irregular migrants engaged in a 44-day hunger strike in January 2011, achieving some concessions from the state. The paper draws on a set of face-to-face interviews with these migrant protesters, complemented by discourse analysis. Its aims are twofold: firstly, to analyse the impact of securitisation and of the economic downturn on the migrant experience; and secondly, to explore the migrants' attempt to resist and react to their criminalisation through organised protest action.

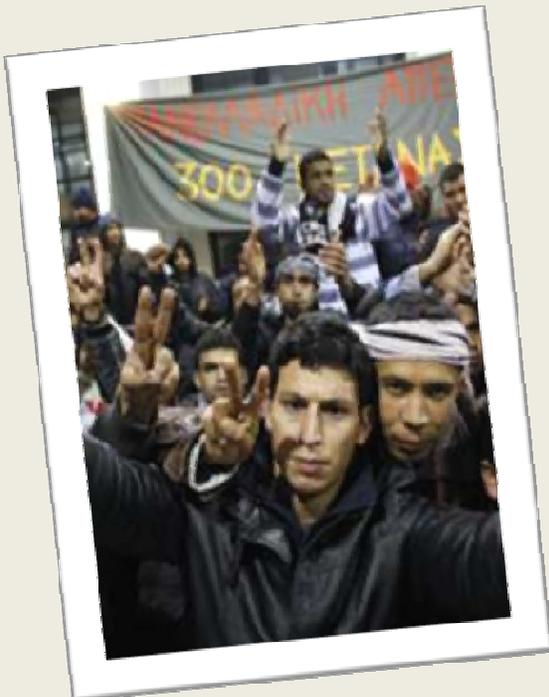
The first section sets the stage for the analysis by looking at the national context and migration patterns. The second section discusses the migrants' own evaluations of their lived experiences and mobilisation. The third section then reflects on the discursive strategies that migrant protesters themselves employed to influence migration discourse and policy. The analysis demonstrates that the prevalence of restrictive frames and policies on migration, predictably, increase migrant insecurity, abuse and deprivation. Nevertheless, irregular migrants are able and willing to escape their invisibility, even temporarily, by challenging established frames, making strategic alliances and engaging in highly political, rational and ideologically defined protest action.

Keywords: *migration, protest, hunger-strike, Greece, discourse, criminalisation, securitisation, economic crisis*

Author Bios:

Georgios Karyotis (PhD, University of Edinburgh) is a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Glasgow and Secretary of the Greek Politics Specialist Group (GPSG) of the PSA. His research interests include securitisation theory, migration, terrorism, political behaviour, austerity politics, and South-Eastern Europe politics.

Dimitris Skleparis is a PhD Candidate at Queen Mary, University of London and research executive in qud, a Greek market research company. His research focuses on the securitisation of migration and asylum, the role of EU policies, governmental and non-governmental actors, and security professionals in this process, and the individual and collective migrant acts of resistance that emerge as challenges within this context.



Acknowledgements and Citation

The authors would like to thank survey participants for taking part, Phoebe Kouvelas for research assistance, and The Carnegie Trust for financial support. Previous versions were presented at the Universities of Westminster and Edinburgh.

A relevant *podcast* on “Migration and Activism in Greece during the Economic Crisis” is available at:

<http://www.gpsg.org.uk/publications/podcasts/>

An updated version of this paper will be published as a chapter in a collective volume – for full citation details, updates or any questions/comments, please contact the authors.

For more details and related research, see: <http://www.AusterityPolitics.net/>

Introduction

It has become commonplace to argue that questions about migration provoke – almost inherently and typically exaggerated – anxieties about its impact on host societies. The trend is for citizens in the Western world to perceive migrants predominantly as a threat to the economy, to a particular way of life, and not least, to public order, among others. Receiving states, on their part, have adopted immigration laws and policies that are designed to restrict flows of, primarily but not exclusively, irregular migrants. These include measures to reinforce borders, proliferate criminal sanctions for migration offences, facilitate detention and deportation processes, and tighten conditions of entry and stay (Parkin, 2013). This phenomenon of conflating migration, crime and security, observed at both public attitudinal surveys and state policies is at the heart of the interrelated process of ‘criminalisation’ and ‘securitisation’ of migration.

A plethora of studies in the literature seek to analyse the discursive process through which the migrant-criminal thesis is constructed. Among others, they identify political and media discourses (Buonfino, 2004), security practices (Basaran, 2008), institutional configurations (Karyotis, 2007) and forms of governmentality (Bigo, 2002) as playing a crucial role in the top-down framing of migration as a menace. What these emphatically highlight is that securitisation occurs as a result of a process wherein elites and publics, in a given context and within specific structures, reach a shared understanding that migrants are inferior and/or threatening, which is irrespective of any “objective measurements of how dangerous they ‘really’ are” (Waever 1996:106). In fact, securitisation is not only found to be counter-productive to migration management and detrimental to migrant human rights (Guild, 2010) but is also, counter-intuitively, unrelated to increases in either crime rates or immigration flows (Palidda, 2011). Instead, it is periods of socio-political instability and economic downturn that produce the greatest supply (in the form of hostile elite discourses) and demand (in the form of rising public threat perceptions) for intensified criminal-migrant frames (Melossi, 2003).

While both the process and implications of securitisation continue to inspire heated academic debates that cross disciplinary and theoretical divides, how migrants themselves experience and react to it remains poorly understood. The scarcity of empirical data, such as surveys that would shed light on the migrant experience and attitudes is partly to blame for this relative imbalance in the literature. A more underlying reason, arguably, derives from the way that securitisation itself is conceived. The emphasis tends to be on the interplay between three types of actors: ‘securitising actors’, commonly political and security elites who portray migration as a threat, ‘facilitating actors’, such as the media, who popularise the threat image by reproducing the official discourse, and an empowering audience, such as the citizens within a state, who evaluate these cues against competing representations, and, accordingly, develop positive or negative attitudes towards migration (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1997). Migrants themselves, on the other hand, are often ignored because they are seen as the passive protagonists and subjects of securitisation, who lack agency and a voice to impact upon how migration is framed and managed.

Greece offers an ideal setting to explore overseen dynamics relevant to the securitisation of migration. It is a country with persistently high anti-immigration attitudes since the unexpected inflow of migrants in the early 1990s, undergoing a severe economic crisis since 2010 and having to rely on external rescue packages to prevent involuntary default on its debt. Drawing on discourse analysis and a set of face-to-face interviews with migrants that staged a 44-day hunger strike in January 2011, the aim of this paper is twofold: firstly, to analyse the impact of securitisation and of the economic downturn on the migrant experience; and secondly, to explore the migrants’ attempt to resist and react to

their criminalisation through organised protest action. The first section sets the stage for the analysis by looking at the national context and migration patterns. The second section discusses the migrants' own evaluations of their lived experiences and mobilisation. The third section then reflects on the discursive strategies that migrant protesters themselves employed to influence migration discourse and policy.

The Securitisation of Migration in Greece

The tectonic geopolitical shifts with the end of the Cold War transformed Greece from an emigration into a de facto immigration country. An estimated one million irregular migrants¹, mainly from Albania (about 65%), the Balkans and Eastern Europe, arrived in the 1990s in a country with a population of about eleven million citizens (Karyotis, 2012). While for those migrants Greece was the final destination, a second wave, with different characteristics followed with the turn of the millennium. Migrants mainly from Asia and Africa arrived irregularly, seeking to use Greece as a transit to other Western European countries. However, due to the Dublin II regulation and the intensification of internal European Union (EU) border controls (e.g. FRONTEX), they became trapped in Greece.

This sudden influx activated a defence mechanism on the part of the state, with political elites, security professionals, and the mass media, all contributing to the discursive securitisation of migration (Karyotis, 2012; Swarts & Karakatsanis, 2012; Karyotis & Skleparis, 2013). The discourse of political elites in particular emphasised the need to fortify the borders, protect national identity and curtail the development of socio-economic threats that migrants were deemed responsible for, such as an alleged increase in crime rates, although there was little objective evidence in support of these claims (Karydis, 1996; Antonopoulos, 2005; Antonopoulos, Tierney, & Webster, 2008).

Law and migration policy, equally, projected the message that migration is a threat that has to be curtailed. The country's first immigration Law introduced in 1991, as well as subsequent amendments to its legal framework were driven entirely by security considerations and were designed to prevent the entry and stay of migrants. For instance, Law 1975/1991 adopted very narrow definitions of asylum and family reunification, excluded irregular migrants from welfare services including health care (except in emergency cases) and education, and criminalised any form of solidarity from the private sector, such as access to housing, public transport and employment (Karyotis 2012). In the absence of any provisions for integration and with effectively all routes to regular immigration sealed off, the emphasis of the authorities was on hardening and militarising the external border, through, for example, the establishment of new border guard forces in 1998 and later the construction of a 10.5 kilometres fence across its northern border with Turkey in 2012 (Karyotis & Skleparis, 2013).

With limited opposition to the dominant securitised frame on migration, it is not surprising that a ubiquitous moral panic ensued (Antonopoulos, 2005: 251). One of the most persistent causes of public insecurity was the perception that migration is linked to criminality. For instance, 84% of citizens in 1993 felt that migrants pose a public order threat (Kiprianos, Balias & Passas 2003: 154), a view shared with an overwhelming 92% of police officers, who in a 2006 survey thought migrants were partly or exclusively

¹ According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the term 'irregular' migrants, is preferable to 'illegal' or 'clandestine', which have negative connotations. 'Irregular' migrants, include all those who arrive in a country without required papers, including asylum seekers. Even if their citizenship status may result in their arrest while their claims are processed, their detention is administrative, not criminal.

responsible for the perceived increase in criminality (Antonopoulos, Tierney, & Webster, 2008: 372). What is perhaps paradoxical is that despite these collective public anxieties towards migrants, most Greeks reported that they had not been personally affected by their presence and had often developed friendship ties with them (Kasimis, Papadopoulos & Zacoboulou 2003).

Accelerated economic growth and recognition that the overall economic impact of migrants – including of irregular ones – was positive, facilitated some tentative moves towards liberalising policy in the eve of the new millennium. Even so, the adoption of a series of one-off regularisation programs (in 1998, 2001, 2005 and 2007), granting amnesty to categories of settled migrants lacked a long-term perspective, while the 2005 Action Plan for the social integration of immigrants (Law 3386/2005) was not really implemented in practice (Triandafyllidou et al, 2013: 23). The onset of the Great Recession since 2007 and the subsequent severe Greek debt crisis of 2010 put an abrupt end to any hesitant moves towards liberalisation. The state, at both discursive and policy levels, retreated to a harder stance on immigration, while public anti-immigration attitudes and support for far-right parties reached new heights (Karyotis & Skleparis, 2013).

Immigration emerged as one of the most salient issues, alongside the austerity debate, in the run up and aftermath of the 2012 Parliamentary elections. Surveys of Greek Members of Parliament and their voters revealed that all parties, with the exception of the radical left SYRIZA exhibited varying degrees of anti-immigration bias (Karyotis, Rudig & Judge, 2014). More tellingly, even SYRIZA voters did not connect with their party on this issue and instead perceived migration as a threat. What this might point towards is that conditions of economic crisis compress the space for political alternatives and provide fertile ground for intolerance. Tensions between migrants and citizens in Greece did indeed intensify, resulting in social segregation, vigilantism against migrants and racial violence. For instance, the 'Network for the Recording of Incidents of Racist Violence' identified a 20% increase in incidents of racist violence in 2012, compared to 2011 (Karyotis & Skleparis, 2013).

The picture that emerges is that Greek migration management is characterised by short-termism, knee-jerk reactions and incoherent policies, indicative of its inability to shake off the established frame that, fundamentally, migration remains 'an unwanted burden for the country' (Triandafyllidou, 2009: 174). The securitisation of migration also has unquestionably detrimental impact on the human rights of migrants, with arbitrary discrimination based on ethnic and racial characteristics, inhumane conditions in detention centres and even threats of physical violence described by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as routine (Human Rights Watch, 2013).

Against this backdrop, about 300 immigrants residing irregularly in Crete, travelled to Athens and Thessaloniki in January 2011 and commenced a hunger strike, which lasted for 44 days. Supported by solidarity groups and NGOs, the hunger strikers put their lives at risk but achieved some concessions from the state with regards to their legal status. Their number, 300, is reminiscent of a heroic episode in ancient Greek history, where Leonidas and the Spartans willingly stood to their inevitable death against the mass Persian army in pursuit of higher objectives (Walsh & Tsilimpounidi 2012). The difference, however, is that while the Spartans' sacrifice is glorified and celebrated, the migrants' battle soon faded into obscurity, after a short period of visibility. Drawing on a set of face-to-face interviews with these migrant protesters, the next section discusses their profile and motivations, and assesses their own evaluations of their protest action and of the impact of criminalisation on their lives.

Profile and Lived Experiences of the Hunger Strikers

The above section contextualised the two-decade long process of securitisation of migration in Greece. The analysis indicates that this has been driven by elite discourse and state policies and negotiated with citizens, who experienced a heightened sense of anxiety towards 'the other'. The main opposition to this has come from civil society groups, such as the Human Rights Watch and intergovernmental organisations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with some moderate successes, including the clearance of anti-personnel mines Greece held across its northern border until 2009 (Karyotis & Skleparis, 2013). Migrants themselves had scarce, if any, opportunities to make any impact on immigration discourse or policy.

This changed somewhat with the debt crisis that exploded in Greece in 2010. Not only did it have a tremendously negative effect on economic conditions but also provoked unprecedented levels of anti-austerity protest (Rudig & Karyotis, 2014). In such a climate of intense general mobilisation and rising economic deprivation, migrant activists found fertile ground to attempt to make their own grievances heard. Drawing on the experience of previous sporadic and fragmented migrant marches, and motivated by the worsening socio-economic conditions, a migrant movement with a more coherent basis started to emerge.

Instrumental to this was the support from social networks and NGOs. Members of the 'Migrants' Forum in Crete', a local NGO, proposed a hunger strike, originally pencilled for November 2010, when a new restrictive immigration law was being pushed through Parliament. Participants residing in Crete irregularly were recruited by volunteers on a door-to-door basis and a decision was reached to host the hunger strike simultaneously in the two major cities, Athens and Thessaloniki. With support from other local sympathisers, the protesters travelled by boat and occupied symbolic public spaces, commencing the strike on 25 January 2011. In total, 287 people took part, following a few last-minute withdrawals, 237 of them in an unused building of the Athens Law School and a further 50 in the Labour Centre in Thessaloniki.

The hunger strike, a form of activism that in Greece and Europe falls outside the normal 'protest repertoires' (Tilly, 1995: 26), captured media and public attention and provoked passionate reactions of sympathy/condemnation. Support came from migrant groups and networks, NGOs, antiracist and university student bodies, labour associations, neighbourhood initiatives, anarchist collectives, and left-wing political parties. Some of these joined forces to create the 'Initiative for Solidarity', which, among others, organised demonstrations in support of the hunger strikers. The protesters themselves formed their own collective body, the 'Assembly of Migrant Hunger Strikers' (AMHS).

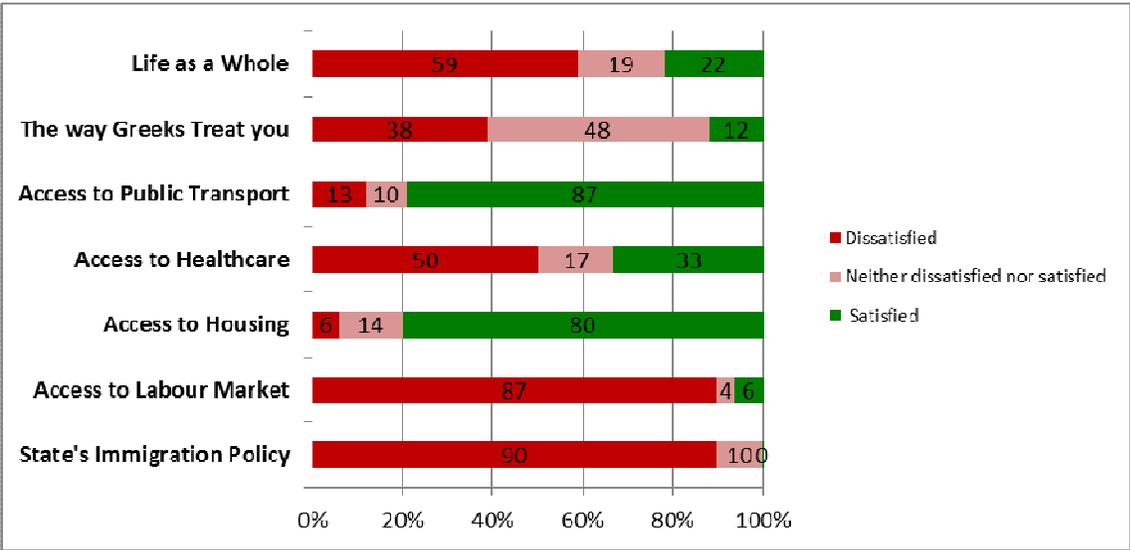
Our face-to-face interviews, held in Crete in July 2012, allow us to have a closer look at the profile and attitudes of the hunger strikers. By the time of the survey, 100-120 of the 287 participants had permanently left Greece and a further 40-50 were on holiday. About 20 individuals refused the invitation to participate. In total, 52 interviews were conducted, each lasting approximately 30 minutes, using an original structured questionnaire, which included both open and closed questions. The research was funded by the Carnegie Trust, whose support is gratefully acknowledged, and carried out in accordance with the standard code of practice for research including human beings; no individuals can be identified from the data collected.

All of our respondents were nationals of Maghreb countries, 48 from Morocco, 2 from Algeria and 2 from Tunisia. Most were in their mid-to- late 20s and single (92%). In terms of

their employment status, 40% were working full-time, 37% part-time, and 19% were unemployed – nationwide unemployment in Greece at the time of the survey was about 25%. The majority of migrants found employment opportunities in the construction sector, as well as in the tourist industry and agriculture. As was also the case with citizens, the impact of the economic downturn had been uniformly detrimental to their living conditions, with 90% noting that their life was worse (62% much worse) compared to before the crisis. The reduction of employment opportunities was cited as the main problem by almost all respondents, closely followed by the increase of racism and the prevalence of anti-immigration discourses.

Criminalisation and securitisation of migration, inevitably, increase migrant insecurity. Almost one in two (46%) of our respondents reported that they had been a victim of some form of abuse, either verbal (21%), physical (15%) or both (10%). The frequency of abuse varied: for some migrants it occurred once (10%), for others 2-5 times (25%), with 11% reporting they had been abused more than 5 times. When asked to describe in an open-ended question who they were abused by, the most common answers, by far, were ‘the police’ and ‘fascists’, presumably, a reference to supporters of the extreme right ‘Golden Dawn’ party, who have been linked to prosecution of migrants. Only a small minority referred to Greeks in general as the culprits of racist attacks, although some did note that they had expected people to be kinder.

Figure 1: Levels of Satisfaction



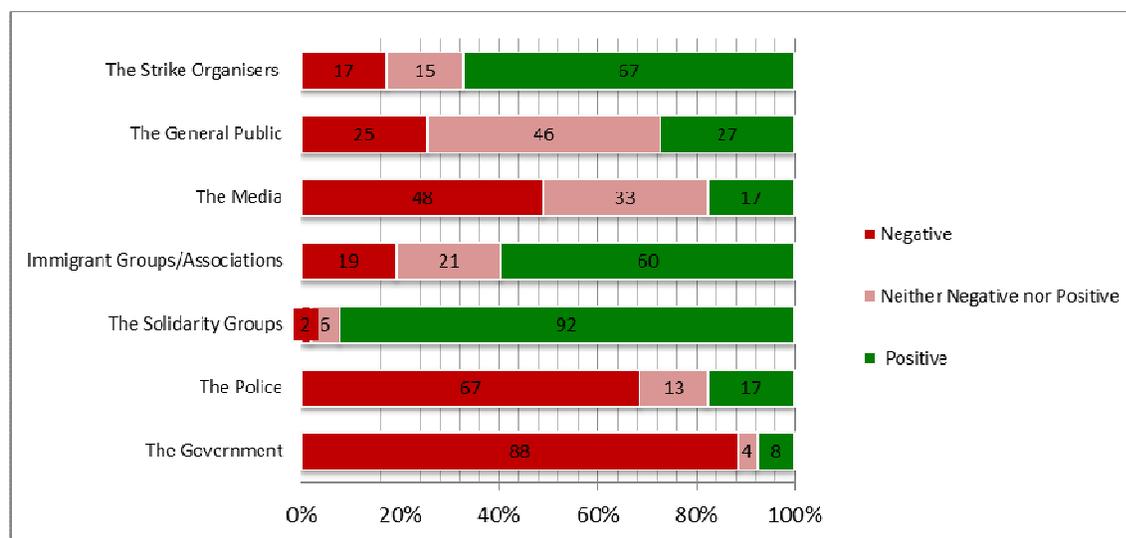
Own data, collected July 2012. Question wording: ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you are nowadays with...? (in %)’

We asked participants to express their level of satisfaction with various aspects of their lives that might have been affected by the criminalisation of migration (Figure 1). An overwhelming majority (90%) were, unsurprisingly, dissatisfied with the state’s illiberal immigration policy (81% very dissatisfied). Similarly, 89% of respondents were unhappy with their access to the labour market (77% very dissatisfied), an indication of both the impact of the economic crisis, as well as of criminalisation, considering the legal provisions of heavy penalties for employers who hire undocumented migrants.

Nevertheless, in other areas, the restrictive laws did not seem to be enforced and formal exclusion did not affect the migrants' daily lives. For instance, respondents were satisfied with their access to the housing market (80%), public transportation (77%) and healthcare (50%), despite the threat of penalties to citizens who provided these services to irregular migrants. Furthermore, a minority (38%) expressed dissatisfaction with how they were treated by citizens in general, which is perhaps lower than we might have expected, given the aforementioned high abuse rates and the increased public exposure that activism entails. When these are read in conjunction with other studies that find that citizens often develop friendship ties with migrants (Kasimis, Papadopoulos & Zacoboulou 2003), it suggests that criminalisation does not result in a total exclusion from access to certain rights and services, as 'nonstatus migrants experience different degrees and forms of exclusion in their daily lives' (Monforte & Dufour, 2011: 203).

When asked to evaluate the involvement of a range of actors, specifically with regards to their hunger strike, our interviewees were very positive about the solidarity groups, strike organisers and immigrant associations but were very critical of the way the government and the police managed the issue (results plotted in Figure 2). With the government refusing to negotiate until the health of many of the strikers reached critical levels, a deal was finally brokered on 9 March 2011 to end the protest, whose escalation was damaging the government's reputation and legitimacy (Dingley & Mollica, 2007). The migrants' demand for full regularisation was rejected but some moderate ad hoc concessions were made, including being granted a biannually renewable status of 'indefinite tolerance' and given special permission to visit their home countries. For most these were not enough. On a 0-10 scale, where 0 means 'not at all', and 10 means 'absolutely', the mean average of respondents' who retrospectively believed that the goals of the hunger strike were achieved was just 3.1, although on a personal level they felt that participation helped them grow as individuals and was something to be proud of.

Figure 2: Evaluations of Key Actors Involved in the Hunger Strike

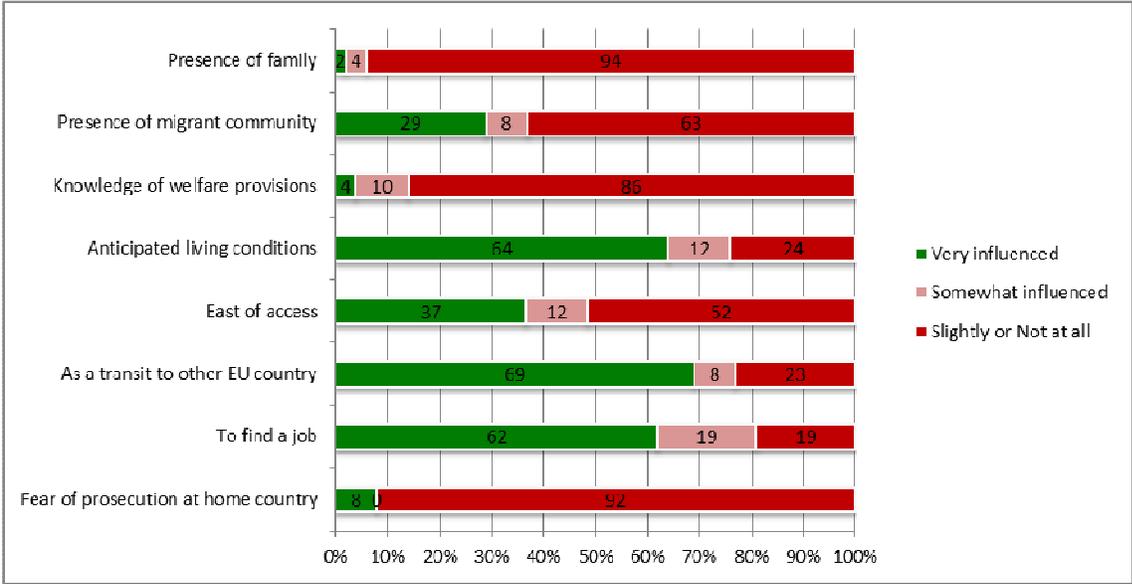


Own data, collected July 2012. Question wording: 'How positive or negative would you say the involvement of each of the following actors was in the strike action? (in %)'

Our data also allows us to see a snapshot of migration pathways and evaluate the participants' overall migrant experience in Greece. The majority of respondents, 73%, had

been residing in Greece for more than 5 years. Only a small percentage, 9%, came to Greece regularly with a student or tourist visa. The remaining 91% entered the country irregularly via Turkey, through Samos (33%), Patmos (20%), other islands (18%) or the land borders in Northern Greece (21%). Figure 3 plots responses about the drivers of their decision to emigrate. The most important motivation was to use Greece as a transit destination to another EU state (69%). Pursuit of better living conditions (64%) and employment (62%) were also important drivers but fear of prosecution in their home countries was not (8%). Findings also debunk some of the myths about other pull factors, such as presumed knowledge of welfare provisions and presence of existing migrant communities, which do not apply in this case. Overall, 40% expressed a desire to settle permanently in Greece, despite criminalisation, with the rest seeking to move elsewhere in the EU or return to their home country.

Figure 3: Push and Pull Factors of Migration



Own data, collected July 2012. Question wording: 'To what extent did any of the following influence your decision to come to Greece (in %)?'

Framing the Protest Movement

In addition to the performative act of the hunger strike, the migrant protesters sought to make an impact on debates relevant to the criminalisation of migration through fifteen press statements. Discourse analysis is employed in this section to explore their collective framing of the protest action. The Assembly’s first public statement on 23 January 2011 introduced the protesters to the public as ‘migrant men and women, refugees from all over Greece [...] [who] came here to escape poverty, unemployment, wars and dictatorships’ (AMHS, 2011a). Our individual level survey data above challenge the accuracy of this statement. All protesters were in fact male, residing in Crete, exclusively from Maghreb countries, while very few had been persecuted in their home countries. However, adopting an all-encompassing and open identity was designed to maximise its potential to mobilise support from the over one million migrants across Greece, in the name of whom the hunger strike was conducted (Jasper, 2004).

Accordingly, the protesters underlined that the main aim of their collective action, as framed, was the regularisation of all undocumented migrants in Greece (AMHS, 2011a), to dispel any suggestions that they were driven by either individualistic motives or any underlying psychological conditions (Silove, Steel & Waters, 2000; McGregor, 2011). In this respect, they specifically highlighted that: '[W]e are not mentally disordered. We started a fight through our own conscious processes. Our morale is very high and we don't need any kind of psychological support' (AMHS, 2011b).

The protesters repeatedly and emphatically stated that they were fully conscious of the risks they were taking: '[w]e risk our lives because, either way, there is no dignity in our living conditions (...)' and '[w]e would rather die here than allow our children to suffer what we have been through' (AMHS, 2011a). They expressed certainty that their struggle was a just one and a source of commitment, self-legitimacy and pride: '[we will] exit this building either as winners or dead' (Dama, 2011). Thus, they portrayed their hunger strike as their last resort to pressure the government to address their grievances, deriving from the criminalisation of migration: '[w]e do not have any other way to make our voices heard, to raise awareness of our rights' (AMHS, 2011a).

The protesters also strategically framed their collective identity as being first and foremost workers, irrespective of their ethnicity or legal status, by underlining that their struggle seeks to 'send a message to every Greek and foreign worker to rise up [...] This strike belongs to all of us' (AMHS, 2011c). Their irregular status was not hidden but attention was shifted away from it: '[w]hether by regular or irregular entry, we came to Greece and are working to support ourselves and our families. We live without dignity, in the dark shadow of illegality' (AMHS, 2011a). By constructing an image of themselves as suffering workers, who did their best to provide for their families, they tried to humanise their struggle and generate empathy among Greek citizens, who were experiencing relatable economic hardship at the time. After all, key to securitisation is the construction of adversarial identities ('us' versus 'them'), which the protesters sought to re-imagine as not being based on ethnic/citizenship grounds but on economic/class ones.

Related to this, both the hunger strike as a form of protest (Simeant, 1998) and its framing as a labour movement were designed to appeal to left-wing audiences in particular. The protesters finger-pointed 'the West', the 'multinational companies and their political servants' for the economic crisis, echoing the discourse of left-wing parties (AMHS, 2011a). They rejected the scapegoating of migrants, emphasising instead that their vulnerable position as irregular migrants enables employers and state agencies to benefit from the 'harsh exploitation' of their labour. However, they highlighted the fact that this applies to migrants and citizens alike and thus made a plea to 'our Greek fellow workers, everyone suffering exploitation, to stand with us' (ibid).

Despite the role of various social networks in the organisation of the protest, the hunger strikers defended the independence of their actions, rejecting allegations that they were pawns in a bigger political game: '[w]e take our decisions by ourselves during the assemblies we hold, and we do not get influenced by external factors' (AMHS, 2011d). Reiterating, they insisted that '[w]e, 300, took the initiative for that kind of struggle, without the intervention of political parties, organisations and individuals' (AMHS, 2011e). Finally, they underlined that they were not victims and they should not be portrayed as such: '[w]e are not those piteous, destitute migrants, deprived of housing, work and clothes that the media are describing'. Instead, they portrayed themselves as active political agents who 'came to fight, for as long as our bodies will allow us, for our rights and for a life with dignity' (AMHS, 2011d).

Conclusion

The paper analysed both the top-down process and the impact of criminalisation/securitisation on migrants' lives. It demonstrates that prevalence of restrictive frames and policies in Greece to manage migration is very detrimental for its subjects, the migrants themselves, who experience increased levels of insecurity, abuse and deprivation. While an accurate assessment of this would require the comparison of our findings with a sample of the migrant population who did not participate in protest action, our data give a good indication of how migrants experience criminalisation. What is somewhat comforting is that, even in such hostile conditions, there appears to be a degree of solidarity that exists within society. As our analysis demonstrates, migrants experience different degrees and forms of exclusion, which is lower than the legal framework prescribes in relation to certain rights and services, such as housing and healthcare.

The other key take-away from the Greek case is the demonstrable desire and ability of irregular migrants to escape invisibility, even temporarily, and popularise their grievances. What is important in this area is that the discourses of the protesters did not only result from the daily experiences of the actors within mobilisations, as Della Porta & Piazza (2008) claim. Instead, the framing of the hunger strike by the protesters was markedly strategic, seeking to make links with potential allies among both migrants and citizens to maximise the impact of their message. Admittedly, the protesters achieved less than they desired from the hunger strike. However, the alliances built, the socialisation experience gained and the visibility they received has planted a seed for a challenge to securitisation that is likely to find fertile ground to grow, once the economic conditions, mainly, and the political environment improves.

It is worth concluding by reminding ourselves that criminalisation of 'the other' is not a new phenomenon in human history and it both can and should be resisted. The 1847 Annual Report of the American Institute (1848) of the city of New York eloquently captures this sentiment:

The tide of emigration which now sets so strongly toward our shores, cannot be turned back. We must receive the poor, the ignorant, and the oppressed from other lands, and it would be better to consider them as coming filled with the energy of hope for happier days, and more useful labors, than they found at home. No one, I presume, seriously believes they come with bad intentions, and then whose fault is it that they live here in cellars more filthy than the cabins of whose wretchedness we hear so much, and for whose existence, half the blame is thrown upon the government they have left. Let us first cast the beam from our own eye. We are parties to their degradation, inasmuch as we permit the habitation of places, from which it is not possible improvement in condition or habits can come. We suffer the sub-landlord to stow them, like cattle, in pens, and to compel them to swallow poison with every breath. They are allowed, may it not be said required, to live in dirt, when the reverse, rather, should be enforced.

References

- American Institute (1848). Sixth Annual Report of the American Institute of the City of New York: Made to the Legislature, March 25, 1848. Albany. Retrieved from http://archive.org/stream/annualreportofam61847amer/annualreportofam61847amer_djvu.txt
- AMHS (2011a). *Statement of the Assembly of Migrant Hunger Strikers*. Retrieved from <http://hungerstrike300.espiblogs.net/2011/01/23/statement-of-theassembly-of-migrant-hunger-strikers> (in Greek)
- AMHS (2011b). *Announcement to Society*. Retrieved from <https://allilmap.wordpress.com> (in Greek)
- AMHS (2011c). *Press Release Decision of the Assembly of Migrants on Hunger Strike*. Retrieved from <https://allilmap.wordpress.com> (in Greek)
- AMHS (2011d). *Decision of the Assembly of Migrant Hunger Strikers*. Retrieved from <http://diktio.org/node/705> (in Greek)
- AMHS (2011e). *Announcement of the Hunger Strikers*. Retrieved from <https://allilmap.wordpress.com> (in Greek)
- Antonopoulos, G. A. (2005). The Limitations of Official Statistics in Relation to the Criminality of Migrants in Greece. *Police Practice and Research*, 6(3), 251-260.
- Antonopoulos, G. A., Tierney, J. & Webster, C. (2008). Police Perception of Migration and Migrants in Greece. *European Journal of Crime Criminal Law and Criminal Justice*, 16(4), 353-378.
- Basaran, T. (2008). Security, Law, Borders: Spaces of Exclusion. *International Political Sociology*, 2(4), 339-354.
- Bigo, D. (2002). Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 27(1), 63-92.
- Buonfino, A. (2004). Between Unity and Plurality: The Politicization and Securitization of the Discourse of Immigration in Europe. *New Political Science*, 26(1), 23-49.
- Buzan, B., Waeber, O., & de Wilde, J. (1997). *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Dama, G. (2011). *Lives Below Zero*. Retrieved from <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=257380> (in Greek)
- Della Porta, D., & Piazza, G. (2008). *Voices of the Valley, Voices of the Straits: How Protest Creates Communities*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Dingley, J. C. & Mollica M. (2007). The Human Body as a Terrorist Weapon: Hunger Strikes and Suicide Bombers. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 30(6), 459-492.
- Guild, E. (2010). *Criminalisation of Migration in Europe: Human Rights Implications*. Issue paper commissioned and published by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Strasbourg.
- Human Rights Watch (2013). *Unwelcome Guests: Greek Police Abuses of Migrants in Athens*. Retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51bae3274.html>
- Jasper, J. M. (2004). A Strategic Approach to Collective Action: Looking for Agency in Social-Movement Choices. *Mobilization*, 9(1), 1-16.

- Karydis, V. (1998). Criminality or Criminalization of Migrants in Greece? An Attempt at Synthesis. In V. Ruggiero, N. South, & I. R. Taylor (Eds.), *The New European Criminology: Crime and Social Order in Europe* (pp. 350-367). Oxon: Routledge.
- Karyotis, G. (2007). European Migration Policy in the Aftermath of September 11: The Security-Migration Nexus. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 20(1), 1-17.
- Karyotis, G. (2012). Securitization of Migration in Greece: Process, Motives and Implications. *International Political Sociology*, 6(4), 390-408.
- Karyotis, G., & Skleparis, D. (2013). Qui Bono? The Winners and Losers of Securitising Migration. *Griffith Law Review*, 22(3), 683-706.
- Karyotis, G., Rudig, W., & Judge, D. (2014). Representation and Austerity Politics: Attitudes of Greek Voters and Elites Compared. *South European Society and Politics*, 19(4), (DOI:10.1080/13608746.2014.977478).
- Kasimis, C., Papadopoulos, A., & Zacoboulou, E. (2003). Migrants in Rural Greece. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 43(2), 167-184.
- Kiprianos, P., Balias, S., & Passas, V. (2003). Greek Policy Towards Immigration and Immigrants. *Social Policy & Administration*, 37(2), 148-164.
- McGregor, J. (2011). Contestations and Consequences of Deportability: Hunger Strikes and the Political Agency of Non-citizens. *Citizenship Studies*, 15(5), 597-611.
- Melossi, D. (2003). In a Peaceful Life: Migration and the Crime of Modernity in Europe/Italy. *Punishment & Society*, 5(4), 371-397.
- Monforte, P. & Dufour, P. 2011. Mobilizing in Borderline Citizenship Regime: A Comparative Analysis of Undocumented Migrants' Collective Actions. *Politics & Society*, 39(2), 203-232.
- Palidda, S. (2011). A Review of the Principal European Countries. In S.Palidda (Ed.), *Racial Criminalization of Migrants in 21st Century* (pp. 23-30). Farnham: Ashgate.
- Parkin, J. (2013). The Criminalisation of Migration in Europe: A State-of-The-Art of the Academic Literature and Research. Working Paper No. 61, Liberty and Security in Europe Papers.
- Rudig, W. & Karyotis, G. (2014). Who Protests in Greece? Mass Opposition to Austerity. *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(3), 487-513.
- Silove, D., Steel, Z. & Waters, C. (2000). Policies of Deterrence and the Mental Health of Asylum Seekers. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 284(5), 604-611.
- Swarts, J. & Karakatsanis, N. M. (2012). The Securitization of Migration: Greece in the 1990s. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 14(1), 33-51.
- Tilly, C. (1995). *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2009). Greek Immigration Policy at the Turn of the 21st Century: Lack of Political Will or Purposeful Mismanagement?. *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 11(2), 159-178.
- Triandafyllidou, A., Dimitriadi, A., Marouf, M., Hatziprokopiou, P., Gemi, E., Nikolova, M., and Yousef, K. (2013) *Migration in Greece: People, Policies and Practices*. Working Paper, ELIAMEP and EUI.
- Waeber, O. (1996). European Security Identities. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34(1), 103-32.

Walsh, A. & Tsilimpounidi, M. (2012). The Disappearing Immigrants: Hunger Strike as Invisible Struggle. *Theory in Action*, 5(2), 82-103.

Email: georgios.karyotis@glasgow.ac.uk, d.p.skleparis@qmul.ac.uk

© Georgios Karyotis and Dimitris Skleparis, 2014