

## **MIGRANTS IN GREECE. THE RIGHT TO HEALTH**

The object of this text is to describe the migration phenomenon comprehensively, focusing on the major issue of health of the immigrant population in Greece. The migration flows, as massive as they are today, form a quite contemporary phenomenon. In Greece today inhabit about a million immigrants and refugees from Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. Their flow in Greece has grown over the last two decades. Despite the efforts of the Greek state and the European Union to diminish their number, it is commonly accepted that the policies they adopt bring the opposite results. It is not within the objects of the text to examine the reasons of imposing such deterrent policies, but it is more than certain that they have a negative impact in the process of immigrant's integration in Greek society.

The irregular means of entry to the country make them to remain on the sidelines at irregular residence without the legal documents of stay. The situation allows for a multitude of violations of civil and social rights of the immigrant group to take place. The large percentage of their employment in the informal and uninsured work confirms this fact. The consequences of that "choice" implies automatically their exclusion from basic services of the welfare state.

The access to health service and provision of health care stands at the top of this issue. The right to health care is universal and unalienable. Their exclusion of these services traps them on the sidelines, hampering, at the same time, the integration process. The adverse living conditions and the neglect of health raises a serious background, where mental and physical illness occur, which further impede their integration in the host country.

The legal framework of immigration in Greece is characterized by a number of gaps and ambiguities, which impede the integration process. For the Greek legislator legal residence is directly related to regular employment. Therefore, the performances of individual and social rights are subjects to legal work and, by extension, the immigrants' social insurance. A comparison with the respective legal frameworks in the rest of Europe confirms the contradiction among European Union countries.