



Mapping of policies affecting female migrants and policy analysis: the Cyprus case

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Introduction

Cyprus is a small island economy characterised by a process of rapid transformation that have taken place over the last 30 years, and particularly since run up and eventual accession to the EU in May 2004, this process is accentuated. From an emigration country it has become a new migration destination that is best seen as part of the southern European labour migratory system (see Anthias and Lazaridis, 1999, 2000; Trimikliniotis, 1999; Trimikliniotis and Pantelides, 2003; Thompson, 2006). Migration to Cyprus is sharply gendered as migrant workers are composed of different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds and are located in specific industries. In the 'southern European model' of labour migration the demand for labour is structured by a post-industrial development of the service industry and the international division of labour that leads to a growth of the fields of tourism, domestic, care and other service work, posts that are mainly filled by female migrants (see Anthias and Lazaridis, 2000; King 2000). Cyprus must be located within this framework (see Anthias and Lazaridis, 1999, 2000; Trimikliniotis, 1999; Trimikliniotis and Pantelides, 2003).

According to the Demographic Survey Report (PIO 2006: 12), the population of Cyprus is estimated at 854.300 at the end of 2005 (compared to 837.300 at the end of the previous year), of whom 766.400 live in the territories under the control of the Republic; Turkish-Cypriots are said to be 87.000 persons, Greek-Cypriots 656.000 and foreign citizens 110.000. An analysis of population data on long-term immigrants¹ (106.284 people for the years between 1997 and 2004) shows that the sex ratio for long-term immigrants² was slightly in favour of female immigrants, six years out of eight (1997-2004); the overall sex ratio was 98 men for 100 long-term immigrant women. During this period, the largest number of immigrants came to Cyprus from EU countries (mostly Greece and the United Kingdom), with the sex ratio being in favour of men (25.188 women out of 55.468 long-term immigrants). The lowest sex ratio was registered for European, but non-EU countries (13.041 women out of 21.785 long-term immigrants) where there were only 67 men for each 100 long-term female immigrants (the Russians made up the largest immigrant group overall- e.g. 644 women in 2004, followed by Bulgarian, Ukrainian and Moldavian women). As regards Asian countries (11.304 women from a total of 19.792 immigrants), the sex ratio value indicated 75 men for every 100 women (nationals from Sri-Lanka and the Philippines constituted the largest number of long-term immigrants every year-registered data- in 2004 these groups numbered 1.059 and 1.069 women respectively).

Most of these long-term immigrants come to Cyprus for employment- e.g. in 2003, from a total of 16.779 long-term immigrants, 9.185 came for employment (and 4.104 were women); in 2004, out of 22.003 long-term immigrants, 12.801 (or 58%) came for employment (and 5.948 were women). The largest groups of female economic immigrants in Cyprus, in 2004, were from the following countries: the Philippines (1.069), Sri Lanka (1.059), Russia, Poland (521), Bulgaria (348), Ukraine (248) and Moldova (218).³

Moreover, the previously mentioned analysis of statistical data identified the work immigration flow to Cyprus as being a main source of foreign spouses for Greek-Cypriots; in

¹ This is a statistical analysis of data on marriage, mixed marriage and immigration in Cyprus, in Fuliass-Souroulla, M. (2005) *Marriages between Greek Cypriots and Foreign Nationals in the Republic of Cyprus*, University of Cyprus, unpublished PhD Dissertation.

² The category of long-term immigrants includes people coming to Cyprus for: visiting friends, study, employment, settlement, permanent settlement (Cypriots), returning home from work abroad (Demographic Report No.42/2004, Statistical Service, Republic of Cyprus).

³ Data from *Demographic Report No.42/2004*, Statistical Service, Republic of Cyprus, Table 109, p.154.

this sense, a strong association between the number of immigrants and the number of their mixed marriages to Cypriots was found. Marriages between Cypriot men and women work migrants from Eastern-European countries (Russian Federation, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Moldova) made up 55% of all marriages entered by Cypriot men during the period 1994-2004 (Fulias-Souroulla 2006). Therefore, the female spouses of Greek-Cypriots constitute an important target group for labour market integration policies in Cyprus.

Third country migrants (i.e. non-EU nationals) in Cyprus are employed in sectors of the economy where there are labour shortages (this is a first condition for obtaining a temporary work permit) - primarily doing jobs that Cypriots no longer want to do. The immigration policy controls the employment of migrant workers on a short-term, temporary, employer-tied and restricted-to-specific-sectors basis.⁴ As pointed out elsewhere,

Migrant workers generally enjoy low status and low pay, but these are apparently better than what they would get in their country of origin. With the exceptions of those (non-Europeans) who are married to Cypriots and have the right to abode, and the highly educated and skilled migrants, other 'third country nationals' are granted work permit to do a *specific job*, for a *specific employer* and for a *specified time*. There is no room for change or career development upwards in the labour market hierarchy (Trimikliniotis, 2003: 16).

Key informants interviewed stressed that work permits for foreign workers to come to Cyprus were strictly to cover labour demand where this could not be met, and this is still the main issue in public discourses. Businesses and employers put pressure on the government to allow foreign labour force to come to Cyprus in 1990s; however, due to the reaction of the largest trade unions, the government had decided to adopt the system of foreign workers employment for a limited period of time and with limited terms of their work contract (See Trimikliniotis, 1999).

It is noteworthy that migrant workers are labelled as 'foreign' or 'alien workers' in official state and public opinion discourses, and by this they are denied the very label 'migrants' or 'immigrants': the term 'alien worker' or 'foreign worker', which is referred to in all policies, laws and regulations denotes the underlying motive that they are to be considered essentially as *Gastarbeiters* or *guest workers*. The label immigrant or migrant is reserved for Cypriot emigrants who reside as 'immigrants' or 'migrants' in diasporic communities abroad. From a first glance one may notice that immigration policy and the whole institutional/legal framework for the employment of migrant workers attests that the Republic of Cyprus can be characterized as a 'temporary permit' type of country. At first instance policies appear 'gender-blind' and 'migration-blind' lacking the mechanisms for effective policy implementation, which results into an inexistence of welfare and settlement services for migrants. However, this 'gender-blindness' is only the façade: there are labour markets entirely made up by migrant women such as domestic workers and women in the sex industry, whilst there is a gendered division of labour in most industries employing migrant workers. Moreover, policies have a gendered effect and we can locate multiple instances of indirect discrimination as defined by the anti-discrimination Acquis Communautaire.

⁴ In this sense, the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2004-2006)*, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Republic of Cyprus reads: "A basic characteristic of the labour market is the employment, in large numbers, of foreign workers (especially in unskilled jobs or professions requiring little training) from third countries, with fixed term contracts. The total number of legally employed foreigners was 42.200 in 2003 which represented 12,9 % of the gainfully employed population. From a sectoral point of view, 29,7% of foreign workers were employed in 2003, as domestic assistants, 19,3% in the hotel and restaurant sector, 9,7% in construction, 7,7% in the agricultural sector, 9,3% in manufacturing and 11,1% in commerce" p.11.

As concerns the gender dimension, key informant interviews revealed the necessity of a gender approach to be embedded in regulations related to migration given that there are already in place gender-based anti-discriminatory law and practices. Moreover, the creation of the Equality and Anti-discrimination Authority (essentially giving such powers to the Ombudsman) and the fact that the Ministry of Labour (and other Ministries) have to report to the EU Commission on the implementation of laws concerning equal treatment and treatment in employment and in other fields create a favourable climate for such policies (see Cyprus Report of Work Package 2, FeMiPol).

1. General policies and their effects on female migrants

A consideration of the general policies on labour market and welfare is necessary as this is the context within which migrant female workers are operating. Also, issues of collective bargaining are relevant. Moreover, the wider socio-economic and employment context of Cyprus need to be taken into account, if we are to understand the employment of female migrant workers.

Cyprus's strong trade unions with a trade union density of about 80%, the strong traditions of tripartism and the high level of growth over the last thirty years has meant that in general workers in Cyprus have enjoyed a high standard of living and secure employment under conditions of almost full employment. Via collective bargaining the vast majority of workers have enjoyed index-linked wages: all collective agreements in Cyprus at sectoral and enterprise level include provisions for pay rises on the basis of the Cost Living Allowance (COLA), an institution in force since 1944 of COLA, which right viewed as a major historic achievement of the trade union movement (see Slocum, 1972; Sparsis, 1998). Indeed, precisely to sustain the same levels of economic growth and to keep in check any wage increases due to shortage of labour, following a long campaign by employers, trade unions eventually consented to allowing migrant workers in a highly regulated manner on the basis of the criteria agreed. Amongst them there is a large number of female migrant workers.

However, the process of accession to the EU has created a new environment as the Cyprus Government have adopted policies of 'liberalisation' and 'flexibilisation' of the labour markets in line with EU policies and the Lisbon agenda and tight control on public spending and control on welfare. The declared policy echoes a policy in a neoliberal direction,⁵ although the strong reaction by the trade unions, particularly the Left (i.e. the trade union PEO and AKEL),⁶ who accused the Minister of Finance as being the expression of 'neo-liberalism' in the government, has kept in check any attempts to impose a full-blown neoliberal agenda. The Government policy on structural fiscal reform and 'structural reforms in the labour market 'to increase flexibility and the adaptability of the labour force', the 'liberalisation in various

⁵ The declared policies as presented in the National Action Plan for Employment and the various policy declarations by the Minister of Finance are indicative. See for example the lecture of the Minister of Finance, Michael Sarris titled 'The National Lisbon Program: the Long-needed Platform for Reforms in Cyprus', 11 Nov. 2005 at

[http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/3E0169F5D672A530C2257211006D492F/\\$FILE/~5388293.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/3E0169F5D672A530C2257211006D492F/$FILE/~5388293.pdf?OpenElement) accessed on 16.12.2006.

⁶ See the press report on the General secretary of AKEL attacking the Minister of Finance of neo-liberalism and anti-worker attitudes (*Politis; Simerini, Phileleftheros* 17/11/2006) and the Government Spokesperson's reaction on the 16/11/2006.

sectors' and other policies in order to meet the demands for adopting the euro by January 2008.⁷

Although the Government policies can be described as interventionist in line with the 'developmentalist' approach adopted by all Governments since 1960, there has been a shift towards a more *laissez-faire* approach (see Panayiotopoulos, 1995). Over the recent years and particularly since accession there has been a steady rise in unemployment (which is still at a low 5.5 %) and an increase in more flexible and atypical forms of employment, although these are nowhere near the EU standards. However, the sectors of the economy which are dominated by female employees such as retail, services and care jobs and certain types of sectors in the hotel/restaurant and light industry are prone to higher levels of insecurity and precariousness. The fact that many women work in sectors without strong trade union traditions makes them more vulnerable than workers in other sectors. Moreover, the fact that at the higher echelons of the trade union hierarchy the numbers of women are small may work against a more forceful representation of women's issues on the trade union agendas.

Despite the increase in the numbers of women in the labour market and, to a certain extent, a shift away from the patriarchal structure of employment, the overall situation of women remains particularly disadvantageous vis-à-vis that of men.⁸ Women's employment rate lags significantly behind that of men, women's unemployment rate is almost double, and women prefer or are preferred in positions of flexible employment, particularly part-time and temporary employment. It seems that women rather than men are more likely to be employed in atypical forms of employment, which are generally less secure and stable. An indication of this is part-time work: according to the Labour Force Survey 2004, there has been a rise in the numbers of women in involuntary part-time work, whilst there has been a reduction in the number of men when compared with 2003. The statistics show that the under the reason stated for working in part-time employment was because they did not find a full-time job, one can see the disparity between men and women: for 2003 it was 2.166 and dropped to 1.873 in 2004 for men, whilst for women it was 4.000 and rose to 4.999 in the same years.⁹

At the same time, they continue to be over-represented in low-skilled jobs, and there are indications that they fill a significant number of jobs in the clandestine economy. This last category includes the large number of female migrant workers employed in the so-called 'sex industry', as well as many migrants employed as domestic workers.¹⁰ In addition, women as a whole constitute the majority of unpaid workers in family enterprises. It should be noted that the largest increase in employment in 2001 (1.400 persons in total) related to private households that employ domestic staff, and was due to the continued increase of migrants employed as domestic workers. According to the overall pay data from the National Statistical Service's Labour Statistics, 2001, managers and senior management received the highest pay, followed by qualified professionals and technical assistants, while unskilled workers received the lowest wages. The lowest paid 25% of employees received a monthly wage of about CYP 529 (EUR 875), while the highest paid 25% received monthly wages higher than CYP 1.055 (EUR 1.740). The corresponding figures for 2000 were CYP 507 (EUR 840) for the lowest 25% and CYP 975 (EUR 1.610) for the highest. The median wage, which indicates the border

⁷ See Ομιλία του Προέδρου της Δημοκρατίας κ. Τάσσου Παπαδόπουλου στην Ημερίδα με θέμα: «Ευρώ και Κοινωνικό Κράτος» για έναρξη της διαφωτιστικής εκστρατείας για την ένταξη της Κύπρου στην ευρωζώνη και εισαγωγή του ευρώ, 31/05/2006 at http://www.delcyp.cec.eu.int/en/euro_and_cyprus/President.doc

⁸ For an account of this see Soumeli, E. and Trimikliniotis, N. (2004) 'Equal opportunities and industrial relations', EIRO at <http://www.eiro.eurofound.ie/2004/01/feature/cy0401103f.html>

⁹ For more on this see also Trimikliniotis et. al. (2005).

¹⁰ See Trimikliniotis, N. (2003) 'Migrant workers and industrial relations', EIRO <http://www.eiro.eurofound.ie/2003/11/feature/cy0311103f.html>

between the lowest paid 50% and the highest paid 50% of employees, rose to CYP 729 (EUR 1.210) in 2001 from CYP 692 (EUR 1.140) in 2000. With regard to the gender wage gap, in 2001 men were paid on average 34.9% more than women, a situation identical to 2000, while women received lower pay on average than men in all main occupational categories. However, the gap was smaller in occupations that require greater skill, such as the managers and senior management, and greater in the categories of machine operators, and people working in the service sector and in sales.¹¹

Overall, the position of women in the Cypriot labour market is clearly worse than that of men, in respect of their participation in employment and unemployment and in relation to the quality of their employment. The same is true with regard to the wage gap between men and women.

General policies and the effects on female migrants

When trying to deduce from the ‘general policies’ the effects on female migrants, it is necessary to point out there are no specifically targeted policies on female migrants or female migrant workers, save for situations in certain sectors where the entire working force is made up of women. Officials would quickly point out that there is ‘equal treatment for all, irrespective of sex/gender’. However, this is precisely the reason why there are gender-specific results: there is no evaluation or impact assessment of policy, particularly in this field. In fact, we can refer to an ‘immigration-integration conundrum’ as a key characteristic of the Cyprus general policy, given that at least so far there is no ‘integration policy’ as such. Moreover, there is such a degree of fragmentation and problematic coordination between the regulation of migration issues, labour/employment and social security/welfare issues, health issues and educational issues,¹² that on many occasions one can hardly see the connection between the logic of one institution and that of another working with the same target group: the migrant communities residing in Cyprus.

The very term ‘integration’ is problematic as a notion due to the historical context in which it was born, which may ring the bells of the now sociologically discredited notion of ‘assimilationism’: the use of the term ‘integration’, to ‘integrate’ ethnic/cultural minorities into the dominant/hegemonic ‘national body’, is present in some discourses in Europe. Sociologically, the notion of ‘integration’ is based on a ‘functionalist’ perception of society; nevertheless for the purposes of the FeMiPol project it was conventionally agreed to be positively defined as ‘participation, access, belonging.’ In the Cyprus context the term integration (ενσωμάτωση) and the more inclusive term used in many Greek texts (ένταξη) was hardly used as far as official policy is concerned. We thus cannot speak of an ‘integration policy’ as such, save for the ‘National Action Plan for Social Integration’, a process more or less imposed due to accession into the EU. Very recently these terms have begun to be used in public debates and discourses as part of civil society interventions.

If we were to single out the characteristics of the Cyprus Republic’s immigration and ‘integration’ system since 1990, when Cyprus became a new migration destination through a policy change allowing migrant worker permits, low skill, low paid, low status jobs that

¹¹ For more details see Soumeli and Trimikliniotis (2004)

¹² These issues were discussed and elaborated during a presentation of the paper titled ‘Integration and Migration of Female Immigrants in the Labour and Market and Society- Policy Assessment and Policy Recommendation’, 18 October 2006, Goethe-Zentrum, Nicosia, 21, Markos Drakos Ave, 1102 Nicosia

Cypriots refused to do were to be filled by migrant workers who were given ‘temporary work permits.’ This was initially four years for ‘third country nationals’, changed to six, and then changed again to less than five years, so as not to give people the right to become ‘long-term migrants’. There is a general immigration policy that regulates the entrance and stay of migrants as well as policies dealing with their employment; however, these are not integrated as a comprehensive and well-designed policy framework, nor is there a comprehensive approach and planning for dealing with immigrant-related issues in Cyprus.

Key informants interviewed stressed that immigration law and regulations are fragmentary, ad hoc and problematic. The standard reactions of governments are always to respond with some Council of Ministers decisions about the economic need of different sectors of economy. This is also due to the fact that the main immigration law is an outdated British colonial legislation, which was amended several times, but retains the same basic characteristics. It cannot meet either the requirements imposed by the European directives regarding migration. Under these conditions, there is a great need for new immigration regulations and laws embedded into a new approach, because there are many pending regulations on various topics so that these needs are currently met on an ad-hoc basis (WP2).

The declared policy principle is that there is equality of opportunity and treatment of migrants in respect of their terms and conditions of employment.¹³ The *Policy Description* of the Report reads that:

The general policy and practice of the Government of Cyprus is that migrant workers and their families should enjoy treatment not less favourable than that offered to nationals in matters of employment. All labour laws and regulations apply in the case of migrant workers, on equal footing with nationals. Exception is being made as regards employment in the public sector, where employment positions are mostly reserved for citizens of the Republic” (p.16). It further enumerates a number of international conventions protecting the rights of migrant workers ratified by the government.

Moreover, in the same report, a decision of the Council of Ministers is mentioned, ‘setting out the policy as well as the criteria and procedures for the employment of foreign workers on a temporary basis’. It imposes, inter alia,

an obligation on employers to provide to foreign workers equal treatment with nationals regarding terms and conditions of employment.

In case of violation of their obligations, the employers are penalized and no work permits are granted to them in the future for the employment of foreign workers (p.17).

As for policy implementation, the report specifies the control procedures to reinforcing the policy’s practical application:

- (a) It is mandatory for local employers applying for a work permit, on behalf of a foreign worker, prior to his/her entry to submit a contract of employment specifying all terms and conditions of employment. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance then submits a relevant recommendation to the Ministry of Interior (Migration Department) which decides for the issue or not of the work permit;
- (b) periodical site visits by Officers of the District Employment Offices for examination of the conditions of employment of foreign workers; and

¹³ Source: ‘National Report against Discrimination in the fields of the European Union Acquis. Policy and Measures against Discrimination”, Nicosia, June 2003, ‘Foreign Workers- employment” section. Written by the Ministries of Justice and Public Order, Labour and Social Insurance, Interior, Health, Education and Culture and the Law Office of the Republic.

(c) facility is given to have recourse to the competent authority (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) for submitting grievances before resorting to judicial bodies” (p.17).

There is no particular reference to female migrant workers in the policy. The only reference in this sense is found in the Article 28(2) of the Cyprus Constitution, which guarantees the protection of human rights regardless of race, religion, *gender*, ethnic group, political or other convictions, wealth, social class or any other ground. Moreover, according to the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Department of Labour- Terms and conditions of Employment, ‘the Cyprus Government has also accepted Article 19 of the Revised European Social Charter (i.e. the right of the migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance). These instruments provide, inter alia, for no less favourable treatment for migrant workers than that of nationals’.¹⁴

Violations of rights are widely reported. Therefore, as regards prominence in public debates it can be noted that the media generally adopts a sensational approach, mostly rather hostile to migrant workers in general and in particular including sexist stereotypes and connotations when it comes to women (see Trimikliniotis, 1999; 2005; Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2005). Previous empirical research findings show the depth of discriminatory practices against female migrants in the labour market and work place (Trimikliniotis, 2003; Charakis et al. 2005). Moreover, research based on narratives of these women who participated in various research projects (such as Kadir, 1999; Trimikliniotis and Pantelides 2002 and others) revealed that,

many domestic workers are denied basic rights-holiday, money overtime, rest time and are often subjected to all sorts of abuses. Domestic workers have perhaps the worst deal (together with agricultural workers and women working in the sex industry). They often suffer psychological (and physical) abuse and the threat of expulsion is commonly employed as a disciplining device (Trimikliniotis, 2003: 16)

Key informant interviews confirm that violations of work-related rights and contractual terms is a frequent phenomenon and domestic workers in particular have many complaints about the fact that they are often obliged to work more hours or days than those stipulated in their contract, while not being paid accordingly. There are also complaints about bad treatment and sexual harassment by employers. Moreover, it was stressed that implementation of existing legislation is problematic. A main factor invoked is the perception which prevails amongst the authorities’ and many civil servants, which is often negative and xenophobic. This results in an unwillingness to fully monitor and implement policies, particularly when it comes to the ‘integration’ of immigrants and the enhancement of their rights and belonging.

1.1 Policies regulating employment in sectors with high participation of migrant women

Domestic work and sex work in Cyprus are two sectors where almost exclusively female migrants are employed. One can notice a sharp gender division of labour based on ethnic background. In general Eastern-European (white) women are the first preference for the sex industry (prostitution and ‘artists’/‘dancers’), by and large replacing the traditional stereotypes of the ‘exotic’ Asian women working in cabarets, as was the case before the collapse of Eastern European ‘socialist’ regimes. Asian women are preferred for home care and ‘caring jobs’, perhaps linked to some stereotyped notion of the ‘black (or dark) maid’ (Trimikliniotis, 2003; Panayiotopoulos, 2005; Agathangelou, 2005).

¹⁴ Source: www.mlsi.gov.mlsi/dl/dl.nsf accessed on the 11th of April 2006.

Key informant interviews confirmed this and noted that migrant women in Cyprus fall in one of the following categories (a) domestic workers and (b) the women who work in cabarets/night clubs, bars, beer shops as barmaids and ‘artistes’. These are the two main categories of women who live and work under very poor conditions, and are also the most exploited. They do not enjoy protection from trade unions as long as they are not connected with other employees. The women who work in cabarets/night clubs reside only for three months, and the control that the employers exert over them means that it does not allow them to be unionized. Moreover, the nature of female domestic workers’ employment also creates major obstacles in organising the workers in terms of collective trade union rights. A third category of migrant women workers concerns those who work in the agricultural sector for very short periods, i.e. some months for picking vegetables and fruit. Further labour market sectors employing migrant women workers include jobs such as nurses, sale assistants, hotel cleaners, or employees in other industries. In the hotel industry there are trade unions, but small firms are not all unionised or the trade unions are weak. In any case, the position of female migrant workers in the labour hierarchy is generally located at the lower echelons, something that makes them rather powerless.

1.1.1 Policies regulating domestic and care work

The demand for the services of domestic workers is associated with the rising standard of living of some Cypriot families. In other cases domestic workers are employed by old or sick people reflecting also the fact that social services for the elderly and the disabled in Cyprus are undeveloped. Moreover, processes of globalisation have created the conditions for the ‘globalisation of care’ (see Panayiotopoulos, 2005). Panayiotopoulos (2005) refers to a significant number of households responded to the growing demand for care for the elderly by becoming petty employers of immigrant women. The material above provides some illustration of how the labour regime and the day-today lives of immigrant women are shaped by the nature of the care regime.

The Cyprus case is a prime example of the commoditisation of domestic labour via the use (and abuse) of female migrant labour. The same author puts it in this way:

Female migration from the Philippines to Cyprus and worldwide can be seen as a practical illustration of globalisation in the personal-service sector. In theoretical terms, the transfer of reproductive labour can be understood as a form of servitude. It is, however, very different to the servitude associated with the employment of young girls from the countryside by wealthy urban households: the labour regime in modern servitude is characterised by the commoditization of reproductive labour itself, and the existence, in most cases, of written contracts involving the payment of pre-agreed wages.

There are no specific policies regulating domestic and care work, with the exception of the procedure for the employment of domestic assistants. The procedure of issuing work permits is regulated by Laws on Aliens and Migration and by Decisions of the Council of Ministers and of the Ministries Commission for Alien issues. The applications are submitted to the District Labour Offices that investigate and confirm whether the criteria for employment of foreigners are fulfilled (i.e. the investigation into the possibility of satisfying the needs of the employer by local labour force, Cypriot or European citizens). The application forms (together with all the necessary documents) are forwarded to the Civil Registry and Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior, which is the responsible authority for issuing work permits.

The employment of domestic workers is allowed in the following situations:

- (a) When both spouses are employed and therefore contribute to the Social Insurances Fund, and have children smaller than 9 years of age;
- (b) When the family has an annual taxable income larger than 20.000 Cyprus pounds (on average 32.000 Euro);
- (c) In case there is need to care for old persons, people with special needs, people with serious illness and generally, or people who are not able to take care of themselves;
- (d) When the aliens are going to work in the houses of managerial staff (of offshore companies) or in the houses of diplomatic personnel in foreign embassies based in the Republic of Cyprus.

The employer would also submit a bank guarantee letter of 200 to 500 Cyprus pounds (on average 300 to 700 Euro - the due amount depends on the employee's country of origin) to cover expenses of expatriation; the letter should expire six months after the expiration date of work contract.

In spite of the fact that the contract provided is a standard contract available from the Ministry of Labour, between 1990 and 2006, domestic workers have not received any pay rise by law (FeMiPol Wp2).

Policy Implementation and Evaluation

The anti-discrimination legislation is beginning to have some effects. In 2005, following a complaint, the National Equality Body issued an important decision that may have significant effect on the terms and conditions of employment of domestic workers. Firstly, as regards the standard contract used for the employment of migrant domestic workers,¹⁵ the Equality Body's investigation found that the standard contract, which was used by the immigration authorities, without consultation with other governmental departments and without negotiations with trade unions, prohibits the employee from participating in any political activity or any trade union activity.¹⁶ Breach of any term of the contract leads to automatic termination of the employment, residence permit and work permit of the employee. The Equality Body's Report concludes that it is a paradox that a document drafted by the administration should seek to restrict a right guaranteed by the Constitution, by international conventions and laws transposing EC Directives. The Report recommended that the standard contracts of all migrant workers employed in all fields should be reviewed by the Ministry of Labour and be revised to exclude the restriction of rights guaranteed by the Constitution and by international conventions.

Secondly, the Equality Body also found that the monthly salary provided in the contract is CYP 150 (approx. Euro 260) for work of forty two hours per week, equivalent to CYP 0,82 (approx. Euro 1,41) per hour, which is about five times less than the hourly wage of a Cypriot domestic helper (on average CYP 4,50 or Euro 7,75) and less than half the lowest salary fixed for six different professions.¹⁷ In addition, migrant domestic workers are not entitled to thirteenth salary¹⁸ or cost of living allowance. There have been reports of a more recent version of the standard contract that provides for an annual pay rise of five per cent, however this is not observed by employers and there is no system in place to address this systematic

¹⁵ In accordance with data from the Ministry of Interior, the number of migrant domestic helpers in 2003 was 17.955.

¹⁶ The Greek version of the standard contract contains a prohibition on both political and trade union activity. The English version of the same document forbids only political activity and makes no reference to trade union activity. Employees are asked to sign both the English and the Greek text.

¹⁷ By virtue of a Council of Ministers Decision (No. 288/2005) the lowest monthly salary for clerks, nursing assistants, kindergarten and nursery assistants, school assistants and shop assistants for 2005 is CYP362 (Euro 624) for the first six months and then CYP385 (Euro 664).

¹⁸ An extra monthly salary paid at the end of December as matter of custom.

violation on the part of the employers. The Equality Body Report describes the disparity in the wages of Cypriots and migrants as scandalous and illegal on the basis of the Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation Law (transposing Directive 2000/78/EC) as well as contrary to the policy decision of the year 1991¹⁹, which sets the observance of the principle of equal pay vis-à-vis Cypriots as a condition for the employment of migrants. The report recommends taking measures for improving the salary levels of migrant domestic workers.

Key informants interviewed suggested that this matter is being discussed at the policy-making levels, but the most informed ones seemed convinced that ‘there won’t be any serious changes in their salaries’ (because ‘many families won’t afford to have this advantage of employing a domestic helper’ national case 6, Wp2). Nevertheless, the Minister of Interior informed us that the decision for a pay increase is made.²⁰

Prominence in public debates

Asian women have become the stereotype of domestic workers/servants, and seen as a ‘necessity’ for every household that can afford them. In fact the term *Asian woman* (in Greek: Ασιάτισσα) is used in many instances interchangeably with *Filipino woman* (in Greek: Φιλιππινέζα) or *Sri Lankan woman* (in Greek: Σριλανκέζα). A common phrase used in popular discourse is: “*What do you think I am? Your Asian/Filipino woman?*” The expression “*I work like a ‘black’*” (in Greek: μαύρος), with its racist connotation, was used before the wave of new migration, but has now reached wider application in popular discourse, and is found in casual talk among Cypriots. It is also used as a term of abuse against migrant workers (Trimikliniotis 2003). The question that arises is to what extent this attitude towards domestic workers affects possible policies of integration regarding this category of migrant women?

1.1.2 Policies controlling prostitution

Prostitution is not prohibited in Cyprus, however some prostitution related activities are, such as: (a) keeping, managing or assisting in the management of a brothel, the use of letting premises to be used as a brothel (sect. 156 (1) of the Criminal Code); (b) procuring a woman to be a prostitute or to work in a brothel (Section 157 of the Criminal Code); (c) detaining a woman against her will in a brothel (Sect. 162 (b) of the Criminal Code); (d) living on the earnings of prostitution (Section 164 of the Criminal Code); (e) a woman or man aiding for gain the prostitution of another woman (sect. 165 of the Criminal Code).²¹

Moreover, migrant women who are given a visa to stay in Cyprus are prohibited from becoming prostitutes; or otherwise they face deportation.

Cypriot nightclubs or cabarets employ 1.100-1.300 migrant women, many of whom are from former USSR countries and other eastern European countries, to work as ‘entertainers’ or ‘artistes’ as they are called²² (cabaret dancers). It is common knowledge that many of these women are prostitutes and it is suspected that a number of them could be trafficking victims

¹⁹ Decision of the Council of Ministers of 06.12.1991.

²⁰ Opening by Interior Minister Mr Neoklis Sylikiotis at mini conference titled ‘Building Europe with New Citizens- The Civic Participation of Immigrants: A Cypriot Perspective’, organised by Intercollege and Symfiliosi, 25 October 2006 at Intercollege, Nicosia, UNESCO auditorium.

²¹ UN Economic and Social Council, *Contemporary Forms of slavery related to and Generated by discrimination, in particular Gender Discrimination- review of Developments in the Field of Contemporary Forms of Slavery and measures to Prevent and repress all contemporary Forms of Slavery, including the Consideration of Corruption and International Debt as promoting factors of Contemporary Forms of Slavery*, 22 May 2003 (E/CN. 4/Sub.2/AC. 2?2003/4).

²² A term, which, in Cyprus is synonymous to ‘prostitute’.

(see USA Report 2006). The 2006 USA Report ‘Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000: Trafficking in Persons Report’ lists Cyprus as a ‘TIER 2 WATCH LIST’:

Cyprus is primarily a destination country for a large number of women trafficked from Eastern and Central Europe for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Other countries of origin include the Philippines and the Dominican Republic. Traffickers continued to fraudulently recruit victims for work as dancers in cabarets and nightclubs on short-term "artiste" visas, for work in pubs and bars on employment visas, or for illegal work on tourist or student visas. Traffickers often rotated victims between different cabarets in cities throughout Cyprus. There were credible reports of female domestic workers from India, Sri Lanka and the Philippines forced to work excessively long hours and denied proper compensation.

During the period 2003-2005, a number of reports, some of which are based on empirical investigations or estimates, contributed to awareness raising at the level of Cypriot public opinion on the issue of sex-trafficking. At the end of 2003, the Office of the Commissioner for Administration issued a report about the situation of sex-trafficking in Cyprus, a report that has provoked intense debates.

- At the beginning of 2004, the Report of the European Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Robles on Cyprus was made available to the public and the Country Report of the U.S. State Department put Cyprus. Both reports criticise the Cypriot government for not taking the appropriate measures in order to forbid human trafficking and especially sex-trafficking.
- In 2004, the country report of the U.S. State Department put Cyprus, for the first time, on the watch list (TIER 2 Watch List), in spite of Government efforts, the results were not produced to tackle sex-trafficking effectively. Also, the report makes recommendations for measures to assist victims and to improve controls by the police, so as to try and close routes of sex-trafficking.
- Also, in 2004, the police established a Human Trafficking Prevention Bureau in charge of coordinating actions against trafficking and collaborating with international police departments.
- In 2005, Cyprus was deleted from the watching list of the U.S. State Department, a fact that does not translate into any improved conditions for female workers in the sex industry.

The question whether the migrants in sex industry are ‘victims’ of certain constraints or they ‘consciously chose this occupation’, constitutes a topic for further debates and research, as emphasized by Lenz (2006: 16).

Cabaret dancers are not officially allowed to engage in prostitution, but this does happen on a routine basis. The question of the regulation of prostitution of foreign women is problematic as it hits on social and patriarchal conservatism as well as a tacit understanding which expresses itself as a *kind of unofficial policy in practice* of strictly controlling the sexuality of cabaret dances for health reasons (aids, and other sexually transmitted diseases). The result is the failure to monitor compliance of the law, and many of these women are caught in the margins of illegality, whereby their dependence on their employer-pimp increases (Trimikliniotis 2004). Touching on this problem, the European Commissioner for Human Rights suggested²³ that the number of women who enter the Republic to work as “artists” or entertainers is disproportionately large considering the island’s population.

²³ Report of the European Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Robles on Cyprus, submitted to the European Council on 12.02.2004.

Up to recently it used to be the case those migrant women who entered Cyprus with a work permit as cabaret dances or ‘entertainers’ could not move to another industry. If they tried, their visa would be automatically suspended and they would be deported, and therefore many of them were forced into prostitution to avoid deportation. The policy, followed by the authorities, of strictly adhering to the original conditions of entry with regards to the field of employment, was criticized as forcing immigrant women into prostitution. Finally, the policy was changed following a report by the Commissioner of Administration (Trimikliniotis, 2005: 45).

In February 2005 the Civil Registry and Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior produced a revised leaflet²⁴ for women who enter the country for the purpose of working in cabarets. The leaflet is available at airports in English, Russian, Romanian, and Bulgarian, and lists the requirements for *artistes* work permits (including medical tests) and the rules governing their compensation. It states that the employers commit a criminal offence by forcing *artistes* to prostitute themselves. However, an *artista* likewise violates the law if she willingly prostitute herself, a fact that may consequently lead to her deportation. Moreover, any *artiste* who wishes to escape from the exploitation ring, after submitting a complaint to the Population and Migration Department, is granted an extension of her residence permit in Cyprus (which is issued for three months with the possibility to be extended up to six months) and the right to change her employer and/or job, if she is willing to cooperate with the authorities for the criminal prosecution of her employer and/or any other person who is responsible. *Artistes* are also entitled to ask for compensation due to violation of their rights. The leaflet does not mention trafficking, but states that its aim is to protect aliens from exploitation. It lists contact numbers for the Social Welfare Services, the Ombudsman’s Office, and several NGOs.

1.2 Unemployment policies

The issue of unemployment is not affecting the migrant population in the same way that it may be in other European countries, as in order to enter Cyprus, migrants must first obtain a job, and their stay is dependent on being in employment. The vast majority of migrant workers, primarily drawn from ‘third countries’, before Cyprus formally acceded to the EU on May 1st 2004, are on stay conditions of this kind, whereby unemployment does not theoretically arise. Second-generation migrants are still very young and small in numbers, and in any case most long-term immigrants²⁵ are repatriated after 5 years. Very few ‘third country’ nationals get to stay in Cyprus on a permanent basis. Moreover, unemployment is generally not an issue, as Cyprus has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the EU (currently at about 4,5%). However, there is an upward trend which has begun to worry certain sectors of the population (Trimikliniotis, 2001; INEK, 2005).

²⁴ “Informative leaflet for women, nationals of third countries, who enter the Republic of Cyprus for employment as artistes in entertainment places (cabarets)”, Civil Registry and Migration Department, Ministry of Interior, June 2005.

²⁵ *Short-term immigrants*: “Are persons who enter Cyprus with the intention of remaining less than one year for the purpose of working in an occupation remunerated from within the country or studying. This category may include dependants who accompany such persons or come to join them.”

Long-term immigrants: “Are persons who enter Cyprus with the intention to settle in Cyprus, or to stay for one year or more”. These definitions are used in the Demographic Report No.42/ 2004, Statistical Service, Republic of Cyprus, 2005, p.22-23.

In the objectives of the European Employment Strategy, the National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006 refers to the current situation concerning the unemployment of non-EU and EU nationals. It states that this “is not a problem at this stage given the controlled nature of the entrance policy and procedure in Cyprus from third countries for employment purposes that requires prior to entry permit, securing employment for a specific occupation and employer” (p.31). On the other hand, the NAP/employment mentions that ‘the recent increase of economic immigrants entering Cyprus illegally may create conditions of social exclusion’ (p.31).

The Department of Labour²⁶ presents ‘foreign workers’ as a source satisfying the demand for labour from employers: “Apart from the positive impact of the sharp increase in the demand for labour over recent years, there has been a shortage of jobs and qualitative imbalances on the job market, which was tackled by employing foreign labour on a temporary basis. The sectors with acute qualitative imbalances are hotels and restaurants, manufacturing and the wholesale and retail trade, which employ a high percentage of foreigners and have high rates of unemployment. This is an indication that the supply of labour from the unemployed cannot satisfy the demand for labour from employers, and the shortage is met by employing foreigners.”

1.3 Social policies for re-entering the labour market

According to the National Action Plans for Employment and Social Inclusion 2004-2006, migrant workers in Cyprus, due to their temporary residence status, were not originally considered a group at risk of exclusion or as specific target-group in relation to unemployment. The NAP/employment 2004-2006, describes two schemes: ‘Scheme for the Promotion of Training and Employability of the Unemployed’ and ‘Scheme for the promotion of Training and Employability of the Inactive Female Labour Force’. Even if both schemes include the organisation of vocational training programmes for the provisions of core skills (e.g. communication and interpersonal relations, team work, digital literacy and learning of languages), none of them indicate migrant workers as a target group. However, they cover ‘specific target-groups of unemployed people’, with priority given to women and groups of people that are in danger of social exclusion (p.70). The assumption made here is that the migrant workers are in danger of social exclusion, but no explicit reference is given.

The National Action Plan for social inclusion 2004-2006, stresses that “through the support and modernisation of the Public Employment Services (PES), a number of measures will be pursued for re-entry into the labour market of the long-term unemployed’ (p.32). Once again, there is no specific reference to migrant workers in the measures enumerated; however, one of the measures has a very broad focus and aims at the: ‘improvement of the ability to serve special groups of the population, such as persons with disabilities, the long-term unemployment, women, older workers and other vulnerable persons.’”

1.4 Policies combating illicit work

The phenomenon of *undeclared* work - defined as 'any paid activities that are lawful as regards their nature but not declared to the public authorities' (NAP/Employment 2004-2006) - is an issue which has been preoccupying EU institutions for a number of years. The current EU employment guidelines call on the Member States to transform undeclared work into

²⁶ Labour Market Information, Department of Labour available at http://mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/dmlinformation_en/dmlinform -accessed on 11/4/2006.

regular employment, by developing and implementing broad actions and measures to eliminate such work. Proposed measures include a simplification of the business environment, removing disincentives and providing appropriate incentives in the tax and benefits system, and improved law enforcement including the application of sanctions. The National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006 addresses the issue of undeclared work under Guideline 9: Transforming undeclared work into regular employment. It states that there are no valid data on undeclared workers in Cyprus and that ‘the operation of the Cyprus economy in conditions of **nearly full employment** and the existence of labour shortages in some sectors is rather not consistent with this type of undeclared work’ (p.37). [Bold in the original text].

It also mentions two characteristics of the Cyprus economy that ‘may create favourable conditions for undeclared work, namely the relatively small, family size enterprises as well as the rapid increase of illegal economic immigrants’.

Policies and Implementation

The following policies are presented as priorities for the period 2004-2006:

- To improve the efficiency of tax authorities by enhancing tax controls (through reducing tax evasion and tax avoidance);
- Simplifying the procedure for the submission of tax returns via the internet by legal persons, as well as providing a special regulation for undeclared income (tax amnesty);
- A Census of Establishments was planned to be carried out in 2005, with the purpose of measuring the extent of undeclared work.

As for Policy Implementation, the NAP/inclusion mentions in the “operation of the labour market” framework, that “the discouraging of undeclared employment is targeted through the development of an appropriate methodology for its registration” (p.27). The system of collective bargaining (with the participation of social partners) and the minimum wages which applies for certain sectors play a supportive role in this context. Moreover, the ‘Foreign Workers Bureau’ of PEO (the left-wing trade union) promotes some activities for their integration in trade unions.

Many migrant workers are forced into illicit work as a result of the paradox of fixed and short-term employment: when their four-year term is up many migrant workers go underground to continue to work, or others who are refused to release papers (which is prescribed in their work contract) are forced to run away from their designated address in search of other employment, even if illicit.²⁷ Moreover, many refugees and asylum seekers, who are legally restricted to work only in agricultural sectors, are thus forced to work illegally.²⁸

The National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006-2008,²⁹ under the subheading “2.3.2 Employment policy for foreign workers” repeats the general statements that “the strategy for the employment of third country nationals will be revised with a view to serving the development needs of Cyprus without undermining the objective of increasing the domestic supply of labour. This strategy will enhance efforts to promote access to the labour market for persons facing special problems (e.g. women, young persons and older workers), since these persons are affected by the influx of foreign labour into Cyprus. The measures envisaged under the new strategy are:

- Strengthening the infrastructure of the Department of Labour for the effective monitoring of the labour market
- Enhancing the monitoring infrastructure of the new strategy.”

²⁷ Key informants noted that this is a wide-spread phenomenon (See FeMiPol Workpackage 2).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Lefkosia, September 2006.

2. Policies targeting migrants

The strong tradition of tripartism is evident in the manner in which the employment of migrant workers was regulated from the outset of the new policy in 1990. The tripartite agreement between the government, the employers' organisations and trade unions is the basis for the policies and practices governing migrant workers from the moment of entry: their working conditions and their legal and social rights. The 'Criteria' agreed mean that migrants workers are granted the same employment terms and all other rights enjoyed by Cypriot workers and are covered by existing collective agreements and social security schemes (see Trimikliniotis, 1999; 2005a:20). However, in practice there is such a degree of 'flexibility' in the implementation of policy, and together with the 'element of temporality' of migrants' work, this has resulted in an interpretation of policy that entails a failure to properly protect migrant workers from employer abuse of their bargaining position. In fact the danger that this would take place was noted by the study conducted in the Planning Bureau of the Government as early as 1989, before the implementation of the new policy. The study suggested that there is a danger that flexibility in implementation "may allow employers to evade the expressed condition that states that pay terms will be the same as with Cypriot employees" (Planning Bureau 1989:20). In fact various subsequent Governmental and Parliament Reports, European Commission Reports such as the ECRI Reports, and Reports of the National Focal Point on Racism and Xenophobia for the EUMC, illustrate the fact that there is widespread abuse of the rights of migrant workers.

All major studies on third country migrant workers in society point to the same conclusion: that they remain in 'a vulnerable position', as the Second ECRI Report on Cyprus³⁰ described it; they continue to be in a vulnerable position in spite the improvements of the institutional and legal framework, as the Third ECRI Report on Cyprus (published on 16 May 2006) concluded. This is particularly the case as regards their employment situation. The Third ECRI Report records that the working conditions in the sectors of farming and agriculture – the labour forces of which are almost entirely made up by migrant workers, and furthermore are sectors open to the employment to asylum seekers - are 'extremely poor': wages are well below the minimum fixed by collective sectors of the economy. The Report refers to non-governmental organisation reports that asylum seekers are pushed towards the irregular labour market' (para.55) and recommends that the Cypriot authorities ensure that asylum-seekers are not discriminated against in exercising the right to employment granted to them by law' (para. 60).

Patterns of inequality in the labour market can be located if one examines the kinds of jobs migrant from third countries and some other numerically smaller ethnic groups are concentrated in. Third country migrants are by policy design concentrated in the lower echelons of the labour hierarchy, as a condition for granting them employment and an entry permit is that they take up jobs that Cypriots do not wish to do: typically these are low skill, pay and status. However, what is particularly problematic is that migrant workers have little, if any, opportunity for training and betterment, and no opportunity whatsoever to progress or

³⁰ ECRI (2001) *Second Report on Cyprus*, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 3 July 2001.

advance in the employment ladder in terms of promotion or career move, as their stay is tied to a particular job and employer.³¹

2.1 Migration and naturalization policies, policies regulating residence and work. Influences on illegal immigration

The government has declared that it is going to adopt a new employment strategy on migrant workers. In a paper submitted to the tripartite committee on labour issues, the Ministry of Labour is to be the basis for a general policy whose primary goal will be to curb the ‘uncontrollable influx of foreign workers’ (i.e. third country nationals employed in Cyprus). The main features of the paper include the quota on the employment of ‘foreigners’ at a national level and on a sector basis; affording ‘foreign workers’ the right to change employer after the first year but within the same job and sector; also as six week maximum period is placed for such a request to be considered. There will be a priority-based system in which the first priority will be given to acceding countries, to be followed by third country nationals, who will be employed in specified economic sectors under strict criteria. Application must be made from outside of Cyprus. The third priority will be afforded to asylum seekers, and finally foreign university students, who are studying in Cyprus for three year courses and may work only after the first year of studies.³² The new strategy is still in draft form.

Also, there is a proposed amendment to the Aliens and Immigration Law to meet the EU directives on long-term stay and family reunification: Directive 2003/109/EC on long term resident status migrants has not been transposed yet, but a new immigration bill presented in Parliament in March 2006³³ purports to transpose both this Directive and Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunion, as well as a number of other immigration-related EU Directives.³⁴

Discussion on the bill is still in progress at the time of writing, with the government receiving considerable criticisms from MPs and NGOs for the delay in producing the bill and in making the necessary changes, for not consulting NGOs in the process of drafting,³⁵ for stepping up deportations of persons who might otherwise be entitled to long term status³⁶, and for introducing conditions that make it nearly impossible for any migrant to be entitled to this status.³⁷

According to the new immigration law, which was submitted in Parliament on 23.3.2006, the following preconditions must be satisfied in order for the status of long term migrant to be granted:

³¹ See Trimikliniotis, N. and Pantelides P, (2003) “Mapping Discriminatory Landscapes in the labour market”, in: *The Cyprus Review*, Vol. 15, Spring 2003, N. 1. and Harakis C. (ed.) (2005) *Antikoinoniki Symperifora ton Neon tis Kyprou- Ratsistikes taseis*, Athens: Sakoula.

³² Dalitis, F. (2005) “Freno stin anekselekti isroi ksenon ergaton” in *Phileleftheros*, (22.11.2005).

³³ Bill amending the Aliens and Immigration law, submitted to the House of Parliament on 22.03.2006.

³⁴ Directive 2003/110/EC of 25.11.2003 on assistance in cases of transit for the purposes of removal by air; Directive 2002/90/EC of 28.11.2002 defining the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence; Council Framework Decision of 28.11.2002 on the Strengthening of the Penal Framework to Prevent the Facilitation of Unauthorised Entry Transit and Residence.

³⁵ Hazou, E. (2006) “Immigration blames staff shortages for new law delay” in: *The Cyprus Mail*, (05.07.2006).

³⁶ Hadjivasilis, M. (2006) “Proeidopoiisi gia ta dikaiomata ton Evropeon” in *Phileleftheros*, (26.09.2006);

Theodoulou, J. (2006) “New delay to immigration bill”, in: *The Cyprus Mail*, (04.07.2006); Saoulli, A. (2006) “Countdown to EU migrant law crackdown” in: *The Cyprus Mail* (22.01.2006).

³⁷ Vasilioiu, V. (2006) “Kypropoiisan kai odigia tis E.E.”, in: *Phileleftheros*, (12.09.2006).

- Having stable and regular financial means for their own maintenance and for the maintenance of their dependents, without having to resort to the social insurance system of the state. For assessing such “financial means”, the following will be taken into account: income from full-time gainful employment; other legal sources of income; contract of employment of open ended duration or of at least eighteen months duration; the cost of living including rent; having accommodation for him/herself and their dependents “satisfactory for an equivalent family in the same area” which meets specifications of safety and health; if they intend to work as self-employed, the economic viability of the business including skills and experience in the field; having medical insurance covering all risks customarily covered by insurance companies for Cypriot citizens; having sufficient knowledge of the Greek language and of Cypriot history and culture; not to constitute threat for public order.³⁸
- The following documents must be submitted: a passport valid for at least five years; valid residence permit with an address in the areas controlled by the government; a contract of employment; certificates of academic and professional qualifications and prior experience; tax returns for the last five years and certificate of tax clearance; VAT clearance certificate; bank statement; proof of income from other sources; title deed for residence or rental agreement and all utility bills; contract for medical insurance; certificate from the Ministry of Education showing success in a Greek language written examination and in a written examination on Cypriot history and culture; criminal record.³⁹

The requirement of Greek language proficiency has raised particular objections from NGOs and social partners, since the government has presently made no arrangements for free language classes to be offered to migrants.

There is case law from the European Court of Justice⁴⁰ as well as from the Supreme Court of Cyprus⁴¹ which asserts that the provisions of Directive 2003/109/EC can be invoked directly since the deadline for transposition (23.01.2006) has passed. The declared government policy at the moment is that persons with lawful stay of at least five years in the country are granted an extension of six months in their residence permit, until the law transposing the Directive enters into force. NGOs report however that this policy is hardly ever implemented, while media reports of deportations of persons residing in the country for over five years become more and more frequent. There have been NGO reports of cases where persons are deported whilst their applications before the Supreme Court challenging their deportation order are still pending, while in other cases, reasons other than the expiration of the residence permit are invoked by the immigration authorities for carrying through the deportation order.⁴²

³⁸ Cyprus/ Draft Law amending the Aliens and Immigration Law (2006), article 18H.

³⁹ Cyprus/ Draft Law amending the Aliens and Immigration Law (2006), article 18I.

⁴⁰ ECJ/ 8-81 / Becker.

⁴¹ Cyprus/ Nebojsa Micovic v. The Republic of Cyprus / Case No. 1012/2005 (18.11.2005); Milos Dejjic v. Republic (26.07.2005). The latter case was also investigated by the Ombudswoman, who found that although Directive 2003/109/EC had not yet been transposed and its deadline for transposition had not passed, its principles should have been adhered to and all the relevant parameters of the case should have been taken into account: A/P 389/05 (17.02.2005). On the same issue, another decision of the Ombudswoman dated after the deadline for transposition of the Directive was more affirmative on the fact that the Directive can be invoked directly: File No. 2319/2005 (13.03.2006).

⁴² For example, in the case of Marwet Harihanov, public interest was invoked as the reason for his deportation, although he himself had no record of any suspicious activities: Costakopoulos, J.(2006) “Apelasi me aorato stigmatismo” in: *Politis* (04.10.2006). There is case law asserting that the state’s discretion over a migrant’s residence in the country can be very broad when reasons of public order and national security are invoked: See for instance Cyprus/ Ivan Todorov v. Republic/109/2000, (14.12.2004).

The Immigration Office has discretion to extend the period of stay and work of third country nationals working as domestic helpers or carers beyond the maximum time allowed in exceptional circumstances for ‘humanitarian reasons’ (i.e. where the employer is elderly or has special needs)’ (Trimikliotis, 2005a:10). This measure affects women migrants directly (the majority of domestic helpers and carers from third countries being women).

The nationals of accession countries (Bulgaria and Romania) have no maximum stay in Cyprus if they find employment and work legally, and they may change status from visitors to workers. Employers must have permit from the Labour Office in order to employ them, but no bank guarantee needs to be submitted by the employer, as it is the case for other third country nationals. Also, they may change employer without a release paper.

Table: Distribution of Migrant Workers in Sectors of the Economy

Year/ Sector	2005*	JAN. 2006**	April 2006**
Agriculture	3578	3904	3961
Manufacturing	3959	3374	3466
Fishing	42	34	33
Mining	60	40	43
Waters supply/ electricity and gas	8	14	15
Construction	4495	3532	3532
Tourism	2958	1839	2095
Wholesale / Retail/repairs	4692	4524	4595
Education	582	534	547
Restaurants	4984	5006	5519
Health and Social activities	823	809	805
Other Trade Activities	1446	1493	1629
Transport	802	650	659
Intermediary Financing Organisations	263	248	268
Other Social Activities		955	963
Public administration		876	880
Domestic Labour	15863	16257	16236
Entertainment	1200	***	***
Other		61	67
Total	46880	44150	45326

*This table was given to the social partners by the Department of Labour in July 2005. There is some variance with the figures provided by the Statistical Service. Moreover, they do not include (a) EU nationals, (b) the Greek-Pontians, (c) students, (d) asylum-seekers and refugees and (e) any estimate of the undocumented workers.

** This table was apparently updated in 1 August 2006 based on the Statistical service of the Social Security Department and was provided to the NFP by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance in October 2006.

***This figures are missing from the Figures provide by the Social Insurance Department.

Table: Other Categories of Migrant Workers in Cyprus

	2003	2004	2005
Migrant workers with work permits	38,000	40,000	52,000
Pontiac Migrants	10,000-12,000*	20,000*	20,000-25,000*
Greek Citizens	10,000	10,000	10,000
Migrant workers in offshore companies	5,000	-----	-----
Refugees & Asylum Seekers 2003, 2004, 2005	4,032 cases	8,284 cases	7,291 cases
Undocumented Migrant Workers	5,000-15,000*	10,000-30,000*	10,000-30,000*
Total			75000-110000

This table was compiled by the researchers based on information from the Cyprus Statistical Service, the Immigration Department, and estimations.

* estimated

Policy evaluation

There is a hierarchy of priorities with regard to access to the labour market, with the first priority including the most wanted categories (i.e. Cypriot citizens, EU nationals and their families and persons of Greek origin), and the least wanted and implicitly legitimated category of third country nationals (new arrivals). The measures are even more restricted in the case of asylum seekers, their employment being limited to agriculture and farming.

It is evident that these measures establish a very strict and rigid hierarchy of migrants (and implicitly of female migrants) in Cyprus (without any possibility of upward mobility) with regard to their access to and mobility in the labour market. Logically, any migrant integration policy will reflect –to a certain extent- this hierarchy of access to employment, as this arena is a major one as concerns integration processes.

Acquisition of the Cypriot Citizenship is made by (a) Registration or (b) Naturalisation, which was regulated via the legal provisions of *Cap. 11/61 on Nationality of the Republic of Cyprus Law of 1961, Law on citizenship 1967*. They are now integrated into one new *Law on the Population Archive N. 141(I)/2002*. The only category of foreign nationals without Cypriot origins entitled to acquisition by registration consists of spouses of Cypriot citizens.

(a) *Registration as a result of marriage to citizens of the Republic of Cyprus*: A person of full age and capacity who has contracted a marriage to a citizen of Cyprus may submit an application after completing 3 years of marriage and harmonious cohabitation with the Cypriot spouse (in case that the alien entered or stays illegally in Cyprus, these provisions shall not apply).

(b) *Acquisition of Cypriot Citizenship by Naturalisation*: An application may be submitted by persons of full age and capacity who were legally residing in the Republic of Cyprus and who in the last 8 years before their application accumulated more than 5 years of residence or more than 7 years of residence, if they are sports players, sports technicians or coaches or work in International Business Companies, or for Cypriot employers etc.

All the applications are signed before a Judge or a Court Registrar, and different fees (ranging from 25 to 210 Cyprus pounds for acquisition by naturalisation) have to be paid by different categories of applicants.

There are other exceptional situations where citizenship may be granted, but this is a matter of discretion by the council of Ministers. Due to the policy that migrant workers' permits cannot be extended beyond four years (or six years in the case of some domestic workers), the chance of acquiring citizenship for these groups is rather slim, unless they are married to a Cypriot or are granted leave to stay on other exceptional reasons. Cypriot policy makers are generally very reluctant to grant citizenship to migrants (due to the Turkish policy of settlement and colonisation of the occupied territories).

As regards 'illegal' immigration, the practice of the immigration authorities is to deport migrants living illegally in Cyprus for several years, in spite of the criticisms it has received from legal circles, human rights NGOs, the Ombudsman, and the Commissioner for legislation. The Cyprus government has failed to transpose Directive 203/109/EC (by January 2006) concerning criteria for granting of the status of long-term immigrants to illegal immigrants. Media reports state that the Cyprus government intends to apply for a permit to postpone transposition until 2007. It is certain that when the said directive is finally transposed, the criteria for granting the status of long-term migrants will include proficiency in the Greek language⁴³. The latter is very difficult to achieve because, as key informants have pointed out, most of the labour migrants in Cyprus are not educated, and many cannot write even in their own languages. Besides, there is one more important factor to take in consideration, namely the fact that the Cypriot dialect they hear on an everyday basis and the Greek language are two different things.

2.2 De facto Integration policies: migrant language, education and culture

In the *Sixth Action Guide*, one of the eight main conclusions-action guides in the National Action Plan for Social inclusion 2004-2006 makes special reference to the growth of migratory flows towards Cyprus in recent years, and highlights their beneficial contribution to economic growth (p.10). Consequently, it argues that this situation "poses a challenge to the formulation of policy in order to steer long-term trends in particular directions" (p.10). The means to achieve this goal are enumerated: appropriate combinations of entry and resident status, the integration of foreign workers after their entry, the implementation of labour legislation and compliance with collective agreements. However, as long as "a basic characteristic of the labour market is the employment in large numbers of foreign workers (especially in unskilled jobs or professions requiring little training) from third countries, with fixed term contracts" (p.11), the implementation of any integration policy addressing migrants is due to fail.

Furthermore, the NAP/social inclusion recognises the immigrants as a group at risk of exclusion (or a vulnerable group) motivating that with the passing of time, the present social characteristics (i.e. "first wave" immigrants; many do not remain in Cyprus, which they see as a stepping stone for re-emigration) change, and the importance of inclusion policies increases. Under the section 'Human rights issues linked with immigration' in the report by Robles, the Commissioner for Human Rights (2003), the absence of any policy of integration of the immigrant population in society is discussed. The official discourse on immigrants as people coming to work in Cyprus for a very limited period of time leaves little room for a policy of integration. The report recommends that the Cyprus Commissioner of Administration is bestowed with duties of supervising the integration of migrants in Cypriot society.

⁴³ Source: update to the National Report: Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Cyprus, 2006- unpublished paper by Trimikliniotis, N.

The integration policy in relation to migrants is in an incipient phase. Even if the legislation is becoming more updated in relation to the issue, the state and civil society mechanisms to act for migrants' integration are still incipient. Some measures are described below.

Language training

Language training is a key issue in relation to integration into the labour market. Very few, if any, migrants arriving in Cyprus speak the language. Greek language classes for foreigners are made available through programmes within the Adult Education Centres and the State Institutes for Further Education; both institutions belong to the Ministry of Education and Culture. The programmes offered through the two institutions promote general adult education and life-long learning only in Greek with the exception of Greek language classes for foreigners; therefore, immigrants who do not speak Greek are not able to attend other classes for education and life-long learning. The classes of the programme "Greek for foreigners" within the Adult Education Centres are offered in English and Russian. Therefore, the foreigners who are interested in attending these classes must have a proper knowledge of either English or Russian languages. Fees are reasonable, but there are only 22 lessons in a year, and each lesson is 90 minutes long – a fact that makes it almost impossible to acquire a proper knowledge of the Greek language (as Greek is a very difficult language for foreigners to learn).

The State Institutes for Further Education offer lessons in the Greek language twice a week (from October until end of June), of 90 minutes sessions. These classes are only for English language speakers, and furthermore the fees may not be affordable for all the people interested. Moreover, there are many private institutions offering Greek language classes, but the fees are far too high for the majority of migrant workers who usually have low incomes. Concerning migrant women, there are also some mainstream NGOs that organise Greek language courses, but only for short periods of time.

An issue related to migrants' proficiency in the Greek language concerns employment in the public sector, which is restricted only to Greek-speaking citizens (of the Republic of Cyprus and the EU). In order for a Cypriot or EU citizen to get employed in the public sector, proficiency in the Greek language (to be proven through a written exam) is a compulsory condition.

Multicultural education

According to the Report of the Ministry of Education for 2005, there were 3.505 non-Greek native speaking children in primary schools, representing 6,1% out of total pupil population in primary/basic schools, which points to the existence of a new multicultural environment. A number of international Reports throw some light on the extent of the problem of racism and discrimination, and the situation of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and minorities in education. The Third ECRI Report on Cyprus notes that in spite of improvements of the institutional anti-discrimination framework, many of areas of concern recorded in the Second ECRI Report are still prevalent. Initiatives and EU projects involving educators, NGOs and the Ministry of Education have facilitated antidiscrimination and multicultural training of teachers and pupils, as well as research. Finally, the process of implementation of the comprehensive educational reform, which contains an ambitious vision for combating discrimination in education, is continuing in a slow pace.

The Annual Report 2005 of the Ministry of Education (2005: 280) reads: "it is necessary to provide an education that supports the language and distinctive cultural features of the various ethnic groups, but also an education that helps bilingual pupils to learn Greek as their second language for a smoother transition to the Greek Cypriot society" Moreover, the proposal for

Educational Reform officially adopted by the Government aims to transform the educational system into a genuine multicultural system. However, studies illustrate that there is a long way to go and there is reluctance and resistance to move properly into a multicultural system of education (see Cyprus RAXEN National Focal Point Report for 2006).

As far as implementation goes, the Ministry of Education Report (2005: 280) refers to a mainstreaming programme in which bilingual pupils participate in the classrooms along with the native Greek-speaking pupils, which is currently being used. Also, a flexible system of intervention within the ordinary timetable exists, which “involves putting bilingual pupils in a separate class for some hours a week, for intensive learning of the Greek language and specialized assistance according to their specific needs.”

Multiculturalism in public discourses

Issues relating to the conflict between the notions of “multicultural education” and the “ethnocentric core of the educational system” have concerned the media recently. The Ministry recognises the need for ‘inter-cultural education’, but has historically opposed moves to create a genuine multicultural system organised at national level that treats all cultures as equally valuable (see Trimikliniotis 2004: 20).

Overall, there have been some improvements in dealing with immigrants and minorities over the last five years, in that there is more awareness of the issues and some elements of recognition of different cultures. However, the policy goals remain general and do not have the force of concrete policies and targets, as proposed by the most important study on Cyprus education in the ‘Proposal for Educational Reform’. In practice, reform is slow and contradictory, and little has been implemented in terms of the content of education, as regards the combating of discrimination against vulnerable groups, and a genuine multicultural education.

The Second ECRI Report on Cyprus (2006) recommended that there should be initiatives to educate children in human rights with a particular emphasis on non-discrimination and the need to respect difference’, proposing that these subjects are introduced in the curricula of all schools. The Third ECRI Report on Cyprus notes however, that in spite of increased attention to these issues, it is reported that these aims contain only general guidelines and that they are only marginally translated into concrete long-term initiatives’. Moreover, the same report notes that in spite of some training opportunities at the Pedagogical Institute, “the effectiveness of human rights initiatives is undermined by the lack of understanding of and a genuine sensitivity to human rights by many teachers” (para. 37). As already noted in the Second ECRI Report on Cyprus, the authorities do not collect data broken down by categories of ethnic origin, religion, and nationality in different areas of policy, including education, something that “would be beneficial in order to monitor the situation of different minority groups and highlight possible problems of direct and indirect discrimination” (Third ECRI Report on Cyprus, para. 96).

The Third ECRI Report on Cyprus refers to “reports of de facto school segregation of Pontian Greek children” (para. 85), whilst some studies on racism and education record stereotypes and discrimination against migrant children,⁴⁴ Turkish-Cypriots and Roma amongst pupils. In

⁴⁴ Trimikliniotis, N. (2001) “The Educational Problems of the Pontians in Cyprus: Preliminary Research and Report on Primary Education”, Report on behalf of the Cyprus Association of Sociologists submitted to the Ministry of Education 2001; Trimikliniotis, N. (2004) “Mapping Discriminatory Landscapes: Ethnic Discrimination in a divided Education System”, in: *The Cyprus Review*, Vol. 16, N. 1, Spring 2004, Research

July 2004, following a complaint, the Commissioner investigated the issue as to whether the institution of educational districts⁴⁵ has been adhered to or not in the case of the school of “Panagia Theoskepasti” in Paphos. According to the statistics of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture for the school year 2003-2004, 5.5 per cent of all primary education pupils were non Greek-speakers, 2.6 per cent of all secondary education pupils were non Greek-speakers, and 2.5 per cent of all technical education pupils were non Greek-speakers. However, at the secondary school of “Panagia Theoskepasti” in Paphos, from a total of 327 pupils, 146 were Greek-Cypriots and 156 Pontians. It emerged that the Ministry of Education was faced with a number of requests from parents of Greek-Cypriot pupils for their children to be transferred to schools other than the ones attended by the Pontian pupils. The Commissioner of Administration recommended that the principle of balanced distribution of pupils should be adhered to, in order to avoid ghettoization of non Greek-speaking pupils, and promote the principle of equal treatment.⁴⁶

Official policy of the Ministry of Education is to prohibit any action that violates the personal freedoms and convictions of the pupils (or parental religion of pupils) and aims at changing their religious beliefs. The Ministry makes arrangements for accepting the pupils’ parents’ request not to attend the Religious Studies lessons. Those lessons may contain elements of various religions, but is heavily weighed in favour of the Greek Orthodox religion (which is compulsory for all Greek Cypriots in primary and secondary education), and in any case other religions are presented from the vantage point of the Greek Orthodox faith with non-Christians presented more or less as ‘pagans’ and the other Christian dogmas as ‘heresies’, in spite of efforts to present a more multi-faith approach to religious education⁴⁷.

Furthermore, the so-called ‘Helleno-Christian ideals’ seem to be deeply embedded in the educational system and school curricula of courses such as History, Modern Greek, Religious Studies, as well as extra curricular activities, such as celebrations and practices, the daily Morning Prayer, obligatory attendance to church mass a few times a year, and the existence of Christian icons in classrooms. There is no prohibition against wearing crosses, but the school authorities have not yet been confronted with the headscarf issue, since most of the Muslim children attending schools come from agnostic or secular societies or families. Some schools also have their own Christian orthodox church built and operating in the schoolyard. The CER (Commission for Educational Reform) in its chapter on historical review of the educational system in Cyprus points out that primary school education was ultimately aimed at initiating young people “to the ethno-religious and Hellenic orthodox Christian culture of the Greek

and Development Centre – Intercollege, Cyprus and University of Indianapolis, USA; Trimikliniotis, N. (2004) “Institutional Discrimination” Workpackage 4, *The European Dilemma: Institutional Patterns and the Politics of ‘Racial’ Discrimination*, Research Project Xenophob, EU Fifth Framework Program 2002-2005, http://www.multietn.uu.se/the_european_dilemma/; Trimikliniotis, N. (2003) “Discriminated Voices - Cyprus Report”, Work Package 2, *The European Dilemma: Institutional Patterns and the Politics of ‘Racial’ Discrimination*, Research Project Xenophob, EU Fifth Framework Program 2002-2005, http://www.multietn.uu.se/the_european_dilemma/; Spyrou, S. (2004) *Educational Needs of Turkish-speaking Children in Limassol*, UNOPS, February-March 2004, Nicosia; Harakis C. (ed.) (2005) *Antikoiononiki Symperifora ton Neon tis Kyprou- Ratsistikis taseis*, Athens: Sakoula.

⁴⁵ In April 2003 the Cyprus Council of Ministers approved the school districts on the basis of a balanced distribution of pupils and the avoidance of concentration of pupils of Pontian origin in one school, with the aim of social integration of non Greek-speaking pupils into the wider educational system.

⁴⁶ Cyprus Commissioner of Administration, Complaint No. 28/2004.

⁴⁷ Illustrative of this is a paper presented by the Theology teacher- Inspector for the Ministry of Education and Culture, where he argued that there is a ‘modern’ and ‘enlightened’ approach in the teaching of Religious Studies in Primary and Secondary Schools in Cyprus. Nevertheless, in his presentation, he referred to other Christian dogmas as ‘heresies’ (see Tapakis, A. «I Thriskeftiki Agogi sti Simerini Polypolitismiki Kinonia”, in: *Paedia kai Evropi*, a seminar organised by NGO ‘Anagenmisi’ in Paphos (31.4.2004))

Cypriot Republic”⁴⁸, something which is considered to be a deviation from the ecumenical humanistic education, and which contradicts the efforts to introduce a multi-cultural setting and curriculum, that would cater for the 3158 non-Greek-Cypriot pupils out of the total 58.524. The Chair of the Commission of Educational Reform publicly criticised the presence of churches and church symbols in the schools as being anachronistic and contrary to the multicultural spirit of a modern European education system.

The head of Department for Human Rights from the Office of the Commissioner for Administration stressed the importance of multicultural education, and mentioned that until recently, someone who used to live in Cyprus, legally or illegally, could register his/her child in a public school. Starting with 2005, in order to control issues related to migration, the Ministry of Education and the Migration Department have changed the policy and decided that any child, in order to be registered in a primary school or kindergarten, must show a paper proving that his/her parents live legally in Cyprus. The result is that those children with parents living without papers in Cyprus- and there are many in this situation- simply choose not to go to school in spite of the implications of this choice.⁴⁹

2.3 Implementation in the national context of EU employment policies for the integration of migrants in the labour market

In Cyprus, the following current projects are funded or co-funded by the European Commission: EQUAL and the European Refugee Fund. All three projects are specifically addressing the issue of vocational training of migrant workers and asylum seekers. These projects are pilot projects and cannot be regarded as general policies, although they may affect policies in the future.

EQUAL project in Cyprus:

The main objective of the EQUAL project “Social rights for Asylum Seekers, Social Rights for All” is to help the social and economic integration of asylum seekers who temporarily stay in Cyprus until the final assessment of their application. The project activities include among others: language training and training on issues of Cypriot/European culture, the setting up of a mediation and employment support mechanism, research into the characteristics of social exclusion of asylum seekers in Cyprus, training of employers and trade unions on migration policy and combating of xenophobia, and a training and job placement programme (with emphasis placed on attracting an equal number of male and female participants). Project partners include migrant support NGOs, such as KISA (Immigrant Support Action Group) and Apanemi (Women’s Information and Support Centre).

The NGO Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) launched the *European Refugee Fund project* entitled “Measures to integrate women refugees into society in Cyprus and promote a multi-cultural society”, which includes the following activities: informational and educational seminars for women refugees, Greek language courses for women refugees, and the establishment of a network including local and European organizations.

⁴⁸ Cyprus Report of the Commission on educational Reform: “Democratiki kai Antropini Paedia stin Evrokypriaki Politeia”, p.50 available in summary form at <http://www.moec.gov.cy/metarithmisi/manifesto.pdf>

⁴⁹ The head of Equality Authority stressed that the right to education is a fundamental right any child must enjoy and there cannot be any constraints regarding it; therefore, this right should not be conditioned by the parents’ residence status in Cyprus. The Ombudswoman assured the support of EU organisms in this sense because, in principle, this regulation heightens social exclusion as long as many children do not go to school because if they do their parents would be in danger of deportation (FeMiPol Wp2).

The key informant interview conducted with a representative of a mainstream organisation for women informed about the European Refugee Fund (ERF) in Cyprus, a programme that started in 2005 and provides integration related programmes. However, in practice, there is not much integration measures implemented for migrants in Cyprus, generally speaking. To give an example, there are some language courses organised by the Ministry of Education, only once a week, from October until June, already mentioned in a previous section; but there are no courses created specifically for migrants (the courses available are for those who already speak a second language and they are able to communicate in that language in order to learn Greek). All the courses available through different programmes are just for short periods of time, and there are no courses that cover the real needs of immigrants.

2.4 Policies giving access to political rights and participation and enabling migrants to establish associations

2.4.1 Political rights

There are no legislative provisions for non-EU nationals to vote in municipal or other elections in Cyprus. However, in 1995 Cyprus signed the Convention for the Participation of Foreigners in public life at Local level (1992), but this has been never regulated, as Cyprus never ratified it. In this sense, “with extensive reference and quotations from the declaration of the Council of the EU (19.11.2004) on the benefits of immigration and social integration of immigrants, the Ombudsman pointed to Directive 2003/109/EC on the status of third country nationals who are long term residents, which needs to be transposed into Cyprus law by 23.01.2006, and which guarantees to long term residents legally residing in a member state for five years stability of residence and rights analogous to those of European citizens. The Ombudsman concluded by recommending that the Council of Europe Convention for the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level be ratified as soon as possible, and that the relevant adjustments are made to the Cyprus legal framework to afford political rights to long term migrants at municipal level” (Trimikliniotis 2005b:40).

2.4.2. Rights to association and membership in trade unions

The right to freedom of association and membership in trade unions is guaranteed by the Constitution (articles 21, 26 and 27) and the laws on trade unions. In practice, however, there are violations of the rights of migrant workers, particularly in sectors that are not unionised. In this sense, the Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Cyprus specifies that collective bargaining agreements cover all workers, citizen and foreign, with the exception of housekeepers and *artistes* (sex workers). However, there are no third country migrants elected into the leadership of any trade union; and the fact that they are mostly temporarily employed in Cyprus is prohibiting their participation at a leadership level.

Policy evaluation: Immigrants cannot participate in elections (there are restrictions on voting and standing for office) unless they are granted full citizenship, but there are no formal prohibitions of membership in parties and organisations, rights for self-organisations, public rallies, etc. Overall, “the situation in Cyprus can be described as rather disappointing on the issue of civic participation of migrants, however there are some small but encouraging signs” (Trimikliniotis, 2005a:19). Migrant support and solidarity NGOs in Cyprus together with some research and information centres have through their reports, research, discussions and awareness campaigns contributed to the improvement of the conditions for integration, visibility and civic participation in community organisations.

2.5 Anti-racism, anti-discrimination, equal opportunities and affirmative action policies

Anti-racism, Anti-discrimination and Equal opportunities legislation: It is the only body of legislation with a practical impact on the migrants' lives; the issues affected are mostly related to their employment conditions.

The Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation Law No.58 (I)/2004, which transposes Directive 2000/78/EC, stipulates the right to recourse to Courts, as well as to the Commissioner of Administration, to persons who have been discriminated against in the fields of access to employment; access to vocational orientation and training; working conditions; terms of employment; and membership to trade unions. The Equal Treatment (Racial or Ethnic Origin) Law No.59 (I)/2004, which transposes Directive 2000/43/EC, contains a wide definition of discrimination and is furthermore wide in scope, covering social protection, medical care, social provisions, education, and access to goods and services, including houses.

An exception to the applicability of the Law stipulates that this Law does not apply to "differential treatment" due to nationality or to regulations and conditions for entry into and stay in the Republic of third country nationals, and treatment emanating from the legal status of third country nationals. Law No.58 stipulates the right to recourse to the Courts or even filing a complaint to the Commissioner of Administration, but this is a procedure that requires both a level of awareness of the existence of this procedure and a certain degree of literacy combined with a good understanding of the Greek language, conditions that are not fulfilled by most migrants. On the other hand, Law no.59 enables organisations whose objects include the fight against discrimination (i.e. anti-discriminations NGOs) to file on behalf of and with the consent of the complainant an action in the Courts, or a complaint at the Commissioner's office. Moreover, any other laws or regulations that contravene the provisions of Law no. 59 are annulled to the extent that they contain direct or indirect discrimination.

2.6. Policies combating 'illegal immigration'

In Cyprus, "undocumented migrants" or "illegal immigrants" are either workers who have entered the country legally but remain after their visa conditions have expired (therefore, being "over-stayers") or migrants who arrive in the Republic of Cyprus (some 80% of the total of undeclared immigrants according to the authorities) from the Turkish-occupied part of the island⁵⁰.

The legal framework regarding migration in Cyprus is fragmentary and has developed very rapidly in the 1990s. Prior to 1990, the policy towards migration was restrictive. The policy change, allowing the entry of migrant workers, was seen as a necessary step in resolving the labour shortage; at the same time a new set of measures were introduced to curtail and repress what the authorities term as 'illegal immigrants'. The net result has been both the failure to control the flow of migration and a fragmentary and inconsistent application of policy on migration. This was partly reflected in judicial decisions on migration cases (Trimikliniotis, 2005a:20).

The Government of Cyprus signs bilateral agreements with Middle East neighbouring countries (e.g. Syria, Lebanon) designed to slow down illegal immigration. For example, the new

⁵⁰ According to the Cyprus Observer Weekly Newspaper published in the Northern Turkish-Cypriot part of the island (7-13 April 2006), "immigrants coming to Cyprus generally aim to pass to the Greek Cypriot side. In 2004, according to Greek- Cypriot sources, 5,287 immigrants tried to enter South Cyprus that, in 2005, became 5,175". Available at <http://observercyprus.com> accessed on 18/4/06.

restrictions want to stop Syrian poor immigrants from arriving in Cyprus as tourists and then going to work.⁵¹

The Robles Report (2003) makes recommendations to the Government to consider the possibility of classifying foreigners' illegal entry to and residence in Cyprus as an infringement of regulations, rather than as a criminal offence, in order to save persons from multiple penalties (imprisonment and expulsions), particularly when they are willing to return home.

2.7 Policies combating trafficking of human beings

Forms of trafficking

According to governmental estimates, more than 1,000 foreign women (mostly from ex-communist European countries and ex-USSR countries) arrive every six months to work as “artistes” in cabarets in Cyprus. During any given year, approximately 3,400 foreign artistes are employed in Cyprus. Traffickers forcing women into prostitution recruit victims for work as dancers in cabarets/nightclubs on short-term “artiste” visa, for work in pubs and bars on employment visas, or for illegal work on tourist or student visas. Although not all foreign artistes are victims of trafficking, a Cyprus Ombudswoman’s Report on sex-trafficking concluded that thousands of women who had arrived legally to work as artistes in cabarets were, through various forms of pressure and coercion by their employers, prostituted; moreover, they were living in desperate conditions and had suffered human rights violations. The majority of the cabaret artists in Cyprus are young women in their 20s, but some are younger. Some have children, some arrive in Cyprus to earn money for their families and help their children, and some work to pay for their studies.⁵²

All of these women arrive in Cyprus in a similar way—by responding to newspaper or employment agency advertisements inviting young women to work as cabaret dancers or as barmaids in cabarets, nightclubs, and bars on the island. Many women mistakenly trust seemingly legitimate, sympathetic, and knowledgeable employment recruiters. Others are deceived by their acquaintances, even childhood friends.⁵³ Many young women are recruited through apparently legitimate agencies and sign contracts for jobs as barmaids or as dancers in cabarets. Furthermore, the officially organized unions of cabaret owners and “artiste agents” have succeeded in blocking any proposed regulatory changes to their industry. In their many years of operation, not one cabaret has lost its license for abetting prostitution.⁵⁴

General policy. Legislative measures. The *Combating of Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors Law, 2000 (L. 3(I)/2000)*, which is in line with the corresponding Joint Action of 24 January 1997 adopted by the Council of the European Union on the basis of Articles K3 of the Treaty on European Union concerning action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children. The Law criminalizes such activities, provides for severe punishments, as well as for the protection, compensation and rehabilitation of victims, and furthermore extends the jurisdiction of Cyprus Courts.

The offence of sexual exploitation carries a 15 year prison sentence. Article 7 grants State aid, within reasonable limits, to victims of exploitation; such aid comprises subsistence allowance, temporary accommodation, medical care, and psychiatric support. A foreign worker lawfully

⁵¹ Source: Migration News available at <http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/comment.php> accessed on 18/4/06. It mentions also that “there are an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 immigrants without documents in Cyprus”.

⁵² The Protection Project, “The Cabaret Artistes of Cyprus,” Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 2005.

⁵³ The Protection Project, “The Cabaret Artistes of Cyprus,” Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 2005.

⁵⁴ The Protection Project, “The Cabaret Artistes of Cyprus,” Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 2005.

present in Cyprus who is a victim of exploitation can approach the authorities to find other employment up until the expiry of the initial work permit (Article 9). Lastly, the Council of Ministers, under Article 10, appoints a guardian for victims with the principal duties of counselling and assisting them, examining complaints of exploitation, and having the culprits prosecuted, as well as for pinpointing any deficiency or loophole in the law, and for making recommendations with a view to their removal⁵⁵.

Furthermore, in line with the Directives and policies of the EU, the Law Office of the Republic is in the process of preparing two separate laws, one on the Trafficking in Human Beings and the other on the Sexual Exploitation of Children⁵⁶. Cyprus has also ratified a long list of trafficking-related international and European conventions, but “the Government of Cyprus does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so”⁵⁷.

Policy implementation and evaluation

(a) *Administrative measures*: the Government of Cyprus has established a Monitoring Unit for combating trafficking and sexual exploitation of human beings. It is primarily responsible for the implementation of the law and for the formulation of relevant policy. The Unit is in the process of drafting a National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Human Beings based on the Brussels Declaration of 2000⁵⁸.

(b) *Operational measures*: (b1) taken by the Police, include the following: strict enforcement of the existing legislation; passport and operational control; frequent visits by Police Officers to entertainment establishments in order to ensure application and observation of provisions of the contract employment; provision of information leaflets in a number of languages, concerning employee rights, to women working in places that are considered to be of risk regarding sexual exploitation, and provision of contact numbers in case of need; strengthening the control at borders⁵⁹.

Specialized NGO's, such as the Immigration Support Action Group (KISA) and Apanemi (Women's Information and Support Centre), collaborate closely with competent authorities, especially the Welfare Department and the Police, in providing humanitarian assistance to women victims, and in defending their rights. The Government has stopped issuance of new cabaret licenses, and now prohibits hiring replacements for women on 'artiste' visas who are identified as victims and removed from cabarets. The Welfare Department of the Ministry of labour routinely ensured that victims received temporary shelter, legal and financial

⁵⁵ Source: Report by Mr Robles, the Commissioner for Human Rights Report, June 2003.

⁵⁶ Source: Cyprus Third, Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report (1993-2003) on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Office of the Law Commissioner 2004.

⁵⁷ Source: U.S. State Dept. Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2005 available at <http://gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Cyprus-2.htm> accessed on 17/4/2006.

⁵⁸ Source: Cyprus Third, Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report (1993-2003) on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Office of the Law Commissioner 2004.

⁵⁹The Police works in close cooperation with many international institutions (e.g. FBI, Interpol etc) for the collection and exchange of information and data.(b2) Cyprus has signed a number of bilateral agreements with other countries, especially the neighbouring countries and Central and Eastern European countries for regional and international Police co-operation concerning organized crime, exchange of information, border control, illegal immigration, trafficking of human beings: Source: Cyprus Third, Fourth and Fifth Periodic report (1993-2003) on the Implementation of the United nations Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Office of the Law Commissioner 2004.

assistance, and issued residence and employment permits in cases where victims cooperated in an investigation⁶⁰.

The report on trafficking (2003) of the Commissioner for Administration made analogous recommendations, and their implementation is currently being monitored. The Ombudsman also exerts pressure to determine decision making process in this scope: either by improving operational measures taken by the police, or by taking measures for better informing women about their rights and for protecting victims of exploitation. For the protection of sex workers from exploitation, the institution of custodian of exploitation victims has been introduced, i.e. it is the Director of the Social Welfare Services. The custodian in collaboration with other Services and Departments has the following functions: to advice and guide victims; to take all measures for the full investigation of their complaints; to arrange for their medical treatment and safe residence; to promote through the competent authorities the persecution of persons who have engaged in actions which constitute violation of the law; to take all measures in order to support their rehabilitation, employment and repatriation of victims. The alien victim is entitled to denounce the employer or any other person to the Police or to the Welfare Department, or apply for help and guidance from the nongovernmental organisations listed in the leaflet.⁶¹

Public Discourses on Trafficking

Sex trafficking has attracted increased publicity and there is more sensitivity amongst the public and government authorities, but there is little being done to robustly combat the phenomenon.⁶² As far as public awareness is concerned, there is confusion between 'prostitution' and 'trafficking' as the boundaries between the two are blurred: if 'exploitation' is the determining characteristic of 'trafficking', then there is an ambiguity in cases where there is no overt coercion or more apparent forms of exploitation.

In any case, only via a strong political will and a joint effort of governmental and non-governmental organisations can there be a concerted effort to combat trafficking. Moreover, unless the rights of sex workers are enhanced and there is support from local networks and a more sensitive approach by the state, little can be done to combat trafficking. The role of the Ombudswoman can be important given that her investigative powers and her intervention on the subject has increased awareness and revealed the practices in this difficult sector. Nonetheless, insufficient understanding of the root of the problem and of its real dimensions further impedes informed analysis and policy making; a case in point is the reluctance of women who are victims of violence and/or trafficking and exploitation to report violence against them and seek support and assistance- e.g. in 2004, the police reported only 91 cases in which people were charged with crimes related to prostitution and sexual exploitation⁶³.

Many reports (that have been already cited) on trafficking in human beings in Cyprus generally agree that the legislative framework for combating trafficking is clearly insufficient to solve the

⁶⁰ Source: U.S. State Dept. Trafficking in persons Report, June 2005 available at <http://gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Cyprus-2.htm> accessed on 17/4/2006.

⁶¹ Key informant interviews revealed that, in practice, when victims of trafficking are referred to the director of the Social Welfare Services appointed by the government as the custodian for these victims, they are hosted in hostels for old people and given an allowance of 50c (less than one euro) per day. Moreover, they are maltreated by the authorities and confidentiality is not assured (See FeMiPol Workpackage 2).

⁶² See the seminar 'Vital Voices' Anti-Trafficking coalition Building in Cyprus' organised in June 2005 by the U.S. Embassy in Cyprus. It aimed to identify opportunities for collaboration between NGOs and authorities on both sides of the island, as well as to facilitate anti-trafficking coalition efforts in civil society (available at http://www2.avacom.net/kiatipis/books_on-line/emporio_koritsion/ - accessed on 13/4/06).

⁶³ According to the 2005 Country report on Human Rights Practices in Cyprus, section on 'Trafficking in Persons', available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61643.htm> accessed on 11/3/2003.

problem, and an action plan is necessary, involving both prevent control measures and punitive procedures. According to some reports⁶⁴, government recognition of the problem has improved, and there has been some shift in awareness among officials, the press and the public. Nevertheless, the government has done little to generate public awareness about the role clients can play in contributing to trafficking in Cyprus. According to the same sources, the government should immediately formalize its recently completed National Action Plan and proactively enforce its implementation; moreover, it should work to improve cooperation with civil society on victim protection and assistance. Although the anti-trafficking unit held a number of press conferences and appeared in popular media to promote its anti-trafficking activities, the government did not conduct any large-scale demand-oriented awareness campaigns.

3. The role of civil society: A question of a weak civic participation of migrants

Organisations and associations of immigrants in Cyprus

A number of cultural, self-help and religious organisations as well as other activist organisation have been identified.⁶⁵ The vast majority, if not all, of the existing immigrants' associations are mostly, if not exclusively, active in the field of arts and culture. These would involve mainly the immigrants from Eastern Europe (Russians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians etc.), the long-term migrants who are integrated into Cypriot society, the Pontian Greeks, the Syrians, and the various associations of domestic helpers who are predominantly women from South-East Asia (mainly Sri-Lankans and Filipinas). The latter organisations, apart from cultural activities, are also active in informal self-help networks, for example offering social and psychological support to victimised members of their community, helping their members obtain legal representation or connect them with local human rights NGOs for assistance in labour disputes and other matters. Some of the most active immigrants' organisations are enumerated: The EU Filipino National workers Association in Cyprus, formed by Filipina women working in Cyprus as domestic helpers, the main aim of which is to help other Filipina people (mostly women); Aliantza Romana, which organises cultural and religious activities for the large community of Romanians in Cyprus, who are mostly women married to Cypriots; The Russian Community, which is quite large and well organised, with at least three associations; and The Cyprus-Bulgarian Friendship Association, active in the field of entertainment and culture; The Cyprus Islamic Society - a small religious organisation. It is worth mentioning the high levels of migrant women's participation in these organisations.

3.1 Mainstream society organisations supporting immigrants in Cyprus

The main focus of the migrant support and solidarity NGOs in Cyprus is to protect the basic rights of migrants. Some of these NGOs, such as KISA (Immigrant Support Action Group) have been active in the area of migrant support since 1997. There are a few more recent initiatives, such as the Migrant Worker's Bureau, belonging to PEO, the largest left-wing trade union in Cyprus; a relatively new organisation based in Limassol⁶⁶ called Apanemi, which caters for women migrants; and the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in Cyprus. One may also add to the list the very few research and information centres, such as the Mediterranean Gender Association and the Cyprus Labour Institute (INEK-PEO) who

⁶⁴ Source: U.S. State Dept. Trafficking in persons Report, June 2005 available at <http://gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Cyprus-2.htm> accessed on 17/4/2006.

⁶⁵ These were identified by the POLITIS EU project report "Active Civic participation of Immigrants in Cyprus" (2005: 42).

⁶⁶ Limassol is the second largest city of Cyprus.

have, through their reports, research, discussions and awareness campaigns, contributed to the improvement of the conditions for integration, visibility and civic participation in community organisations (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2005: 20)..

An organisation supporting migrant women is *The Shelter for Victims of Sexual Exploitation*. This is a shelter founded in February 2004 by the Russian Church in Cyprus, which receives women victims of trafficking fleeing from their pimps/employers, who mostly come from the former USSR (Russia, Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine) and other Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria and Romania. It offers them free shelter and meals and helps them find employment in other fields or assist them if they want to return to their country of origin. It also provides them with a small income levels for their basic needs (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2005: 42). Less affluent Russian and other Russian-speaking migrant workers are organised around the Russian Church in Limassol. The priest of this church is a Cypriot who speaks fluent Russian and who actively fights for the rights of the Russian speaking poor migrants, highlighting in particular the plight of the women-victims of human trafficking, with frequent newspaper articles, TV appearances and other initiatives and campaigns (for more details see Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2005: 45). *Apanemi* is a Women's Information Centre and Shelter of Victims of Violence, a mainstream society NGO active in migrants support. It offers support, advice, shelter and other specialised services to all women (including female marriage migrants) who are victims of racism, discrimination, domestic violence, trafficking and related issues.⁶⁷ Another mainstream society NGO that regularly receive complaints by migrants and try to resolve them is *KISA (Action for Equality, Support and Anti-racism)*. There are immigrants who are members of its steering committee, and many more play an active part in organising its activities. KISA also employs legal and administrative staff, advises immigrants on their rights, and takes up cases with the employer against whom immigrants have filed complaints.

3.2 Migrants in Public Discourses

In the media a regular discursive connection is made between the increase in numbers of migrant workers and the rise in unemployment. In the 1990s trade unions adopted a defensive approach towards migrant workers, and made regular xenophobic remarks, such as: “*they* [‘migrant workers’] *are stealing our bread*”, “contaminate our culture”, or are to be blamed for rising criminality and other ‘social problems’. Moreover, even the super-exploitation and human rights violations of migrant workers have been invoked as justification for their deportation. The trade unions of the Left are more cautious and adopt a more sympathetic approach towards migrants, but they have done little to organise migrant workers in their ranks. Recently, there was a shift towards a generally more sympathetic approach towards migrant workers, even criticising their own previously ‘defensive’ stance, yet it is not clear whether this is the result of a more ‘enlightened approach’ or a pragmatic recognition that migrant workers are here to stay (Trimikliniotis and Pantelides, 2003:16).

There is absence of research on integration processes of immigrants in Cypriot society. A starting point is the *Politis* report, which aimed at mapping active civic participation of immigrants in Cyprus, but further research is required on other integration issues, which are closely related to

⁶⁷ The organisation is a partner in the EQUAL project and they plan to implement some activities integrated into a project about women's cooperative (prototype activities in the case of Cyprus). This is a model that envisages the cooperation of native and migrant women who would teach each other how to craft traditional objects for selling and therefore earn some money for themselves. This also constitutes an occasion for social interaction between women of different ethnic backgrounds, contributing to their smooth adaptation to the host society (see FeMiPol Wp2).

civic participation. In this sense, its concluding remark is illustrative for pointing out the characteristics of immigration in Cyprus, which can be the starting point for further research

The migration model in Cyprus is characterised by the limited duration of the migrants' stay in Cyprus, the fact that work and entry permits are linked to one particular employer (with the exception of some legal provisions recently introduced), the extreme exploitation in terms of salary and working hours, the flagrant violations of contractual provisions on the part of the employers, does not allow for the full development of migrant communities, with their own social, economic, political and cultural structures. Migrants in Cyprus are still considered as 'foreign workers' and, as such, they are denied any political rights. These lead to the very low civic participation of migrants even in their own ethnic/migrant associations. At best, they are involved in religious or cultural groupings, which are of little consequence as far as civic participation is concerned, or self-help networks (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2005: 48).

Any policy recommendations for the integration of immigrants should envisage these main characteristics of labour immigration to Cyprus and build on a critique that attempts to overcome the contradictions and antinomies the system entails.

The key informant interview with female policy-makers revealed that organisations dealing with migrants are making efforts to overcome the failure of integration in Cyprus. Over the last few years, the NGO sector has been developing, but still a small number of people are involved. Racism and xenophobia within Cypriot society discourages many people from actively participating in non-governmental organisations for migrants' support or anti-racist organisations. There have been initiatives in the last years, as materialized in programmes providing protection and support, which is an encouraging sign. However, most of these organisations are many times perceived as 'suspicious' by the public and media, and face hostility from the state authorities, who depict them as 'trouble-makers' or 'damaging to the' national cause' at the time Cyprus is semi-occupied by foreign troops.

4. Summary/ Discussion

The debate about the nature of the policy recommendations to be made concerning the integration of female immigrants in labour market and society ought to focus on proposing measures that will work towards empowering them with more civil rights and liberties. The ECRI Reports persistently note the absence of a policy dealing with the regulation of migrants' entry and residence, the rights pertaining to their employment, but also with the fuller integration of the immigrant population in society.⁶⁸

Another aspect that requires measures for improvement is the mechanism of policy implementation, as there is currently a lack of enforcement mechanisms (as underlined by reports previously mentioned). There is also a need for developing welfare and migrant settlement services, and the government should design welfare services programmes with the purpose to ameliorate class inequality (see the NAP/inclusion that consider migrant workers as “vulnerable group”, but does not mention any measures to improve their condition). Concretely, some recommendations about policy improvement might cover the following areas:

- (a) The right to organize and bargain collectively. Collective bargaining agreements cover all workers, citizen and foreign, with the exception of housekeepers and *artistes*/sex workers. The latter are also amongst the most disadvantaged categories of migrant workers in Cyprus.
- (b) Prohibition of forced or compulsory labour. The government prohibits forced or compulsory labour, but there are reports stating that foreign domestic workers and illegal foreign workers are subject to the non-payment of wages and the threat of deportation⁶⁹.
- (c) Acceptable conditions of work⁷⁰, including the following:
 - *Pensions*. Migrant workers are not allowed to claim pensions unless they become citizens (although in some cases there are bilateral agreements that allow workers to claim credit in their countries of origin).
 - *Salaries*. The immigration services of the Ministry of Interior are responsible for enforcing *Overtime*. By law there is no premium day for overtime for foreign workers, however limits on workweeks are stipulated in their contracts and vary according to the sector of work.
 - *Labour exploitation*. Following the country's EU accession, the Ministry of Labour experiences a substantial increase in the number of complaints of labour exploitation. Migrant workers, primarily from Eastern Europe, East Asia, and South Asia, reportedly were forced to work up to 13 hours a day, 7 days a week, for very low wages. NGOs and the Ombudsman also confirmed that employers often retained a portion of foreign workers' salaries as payment for accommodation.
 - *Maltreatment*. There are reports of mistreatment of domestic workers and other foreign workers. Such reports usually involve allegations that domestic maids, primarily from East or south Asia, have been mistreated by their employers or fired without reason, in violation of their contracts. Although the law protects domestic workers who file a complaint with the Labour Ministry from being deported until their case have been adjudicated, NGOs reported that many women did not complain to authorities out of fear of deportation.

⁶⁸ Source: Report of the European Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Robles on Cyprus, submitted to the European Council on 12.02.2004

⁶⁹ See for example, U.S. Department, 2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Cyprus, available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61643.htm> - accessed on 17/4/1006.

⁷⁰ The main reference for this paragraph is U.S. Department, 2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Cyprus, available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61643.htm> - accessed on 17/4/1006.

- *Health and safety at places of work*. This legislation applies to all economic activities. However, the law does not apply to private residence (households) where persons are employed as domestic servants.

(d) Campaigns for awareness rising about female immigrants' problems are needed. Awareness rising has to address different audiences or target groups: female immigrants themselves, governmental institutions, policy makers, NGOs, and various assistance organisations, including migrant organisations. In this sense, some concrete actions might envisage the following:

- Informing migrants about their rights and where to get assistance;
- Improving funding of NGOs;
- Providing embassies with information and leaflets in various languages about migrants' rights and assistance;
- Information campaigns on possibilities and obstacles female immigrants might be confronted with.

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