

The Immigration Policy of Three Mediterranean Countries  
of the European Union: Success and Failures

by

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**Abstract**

The present study focuses on the Immigration policies of three similar countries of the European Union: Greece, Italy and Spain. First examines the sources of immigration, second puts into analytical perspectives the three countries governments' responses to the increasing immigration, and third it compares and contrasts the success and failures of these countries in conforming with Schengen Agreement.

## Introduction

The three countries that are included in this short comparative study are: Greece, Italy and Spain. All these countries have at least three aspects in Common. First they are Mediterranean, second they are relatively less developed than the rest of the European Union<sup>1</sup>, and third all of them until recently experienced emigration. The latter characteristic is perhaps the most significant of all. It is significant because these three countries in a relative short period of time they had to adjust their institutional structures in order to deal with a new issue that it was not known to them. It is important to mention here the underlaying factors that contributed to this shift. According to Barsotti and Lecchini this shift was caused by two developments: " the gradual improvement in the economic situation and the living conditions in Europe's southern peripheries... and on the restrictive measures taken by the UK, France, Germany and Switzerland." (Barsotti and Lecchini, 1994, p. 81). An additional factor that makes these three countries similar with regard to immigration policies is that all of them belong to the Schengen Treaty. The Schengen Treaty continues to be a challenge and a test at the same time for the European Union's immigration common policy due to the lack of harmonized policies between the south and the north. The Treaty has been signed by all European Union members except Ireland, Britain and Denmark. Part of the Treaty's delayed application depends on the Southern European countries' immigration policy that is perceived to be inadequate by the more

experienced on migration matters northern members of the Union. Due to the countries' obligation to the Schengen treaty, a great deal of efforts have been exerted in order to conform with Treaty's provisions. Referring to the Italian and Spanish Migration policies Freeman states both countries orientations towards immigration are influenced entirely by the European Community policies (Freeman, 1994).

Similarities of the three countries on this particular policy area are extended to other aspects as well. They have experienced repatriation immigration, and the sources of immigrants are similar. For example North Africa and Middle East are the common sources for Southern European countries. In the case of Italy and Greece there is the Albanian crisis. The mass exodus in 1992 and in 1997 due to the unstable political and economic environment in Albania principally affected Greece and Italy. Both countries assumed leading roles in assisting a multinational-military force in order to stabilize the political and economic situation in Albania. The obvious reason was the mass immigration to both countries. It is estimated that there are more than 300,000 illegal Albanian immigrants in Greece and another similar number in Italy. "Migration News" reports that "Between March 13 and March 24, some 12,00 Albanians reached Italy on boats that were impounded in Italy to prevent them from returning for more Albanians" (Migration News, Vo.4, No. 4 April, 1997, P.1). The same publication states that at the same time a large number of Albanians also crossed the Greek border, however

not as large as the one in Italy. The Greek government responded differently this time than the 1991 exodus. It mobilized the army to intercept the illegally crossing the border Albanian immigrants.

It is believed that immigration policies have improved in the three Southern European countries under discussion, however it has not reached yet the level of the Northern counterparts.

#### Sources of Immigration for Spain, Italy and Greece

Traditionally, European migration destination have been the wealthier countries in the North. Germany, France, Netherlands, Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries. They still continue to be more attractive than the Southern countries of the Union but not to the same degree. Literature indicates a variety of reasons that make the Southern European Union countries a destination of third countries immigrants. First there has been a spectacular improvement in the economic condition of all three countries under study. For example, the economic gap between Italy and Northern Europe had narrowed during the "economic miracle" by the mid-1970s. Kity Calavita states that it was during that time when Italy began to receive immigrants while North Europe began to close its doors (Calavita, 1992; Barsotti and Lecchini, 1994). Italy although one of the poorest countries in Europe followed the post-war period, soon it became the fifth largest industrialized country in the world, fact that accounts for its needs of foreign labor. Greece and Spain had less

economic success than Italy but nevertheless their economies have achieved real economic growth in the decades of 1970s and 1980s (Fakiolas, 1995; Cornelious, 1992).

The second factor was the rapidly changing international political and economic environment during the late 1980's and early 1990s. The transition of the Eastern European countries from centralized to free market economies, the Yugoslavian conflict, the Albanian and the Bulgarian economic collapse, the continues Kurdish conflict in Turkey and Iraq, all of them have greatly contributed to the immigration pressures especially for Greece and Italy (Bourdouvalis, 1997). According to C.D. de Jong, however, Europe is threatened even more from its Southern neighbors than from the ex-communist countries. He states that,

Developments in North Africa, on the one hand are far more worrisome. High population growth rates combined with high rates of unemployment create an environment for increasing migration from most North African States. An increasing number of illegal immigrants have already arrived, especially in the Southern European States. This, however, is the tip of the iceberg (C.D. de Jong, 1997, p. 324.

Meissner et. al, report that "Of the 223,000 illegal migrants who registered for Italy's amnesty program in 1990, the majority were from North Africa and Asia" (Meissner et. al, 1993). North African immigrant most preferred destination is France which receives most immigrants from the Magreb countries. Due to French historical links to North Africa, and the country's economic strength, immigrants from the Southwest Mediterranean region attempt to reach France as their final destination. This

trend was more pronounced until recently. Spain has also become the attraction of foreign labor from North Africa. The country that provides more labor from Africa is Morocco. According to Bodega et. al, the most important factors for Moroccans to target Spain as a country of destination are geographic proximity and the ease in communications (Bodega et. al, 1995). Although Morocco is one of the North African countries that provide Spain with legal and illegal immigration, the country receives immigrants from other parts of the same African Region. Cornelious reports that half of Spain's illegal immigration originates in Africa from which 40 percent are Moroccans. The rest of the illegal immigrants to Spain come from Algeria, Senegal, Gambia and Equatorial Guile. One quarter comes from Latin America and the rest from Asia (China, Philippines), and Eastern Europe (Cornelius, 1994).

Despite that there is a trend of increasing immigration in the tree Mediterranean countries under study, data indicate that the Northern countries of the European Union continue to host larger proportion of immigrants. Both in Italy and Spain immigrants represent 1.5 percent of the population as opposed to an average of 4 percent in the European Union (Cornelious, 1994). The gap is even greater when we compare Spain and Italy with individual countries of the European Union such as France, Germany and Holland. In a recent study done by the Italian newspaper "La Republica" it shows that there are 4 million foreigners in France, 7 million in Germany and 1.2 million in

Holland (La Republica, April, 11 1997). In Greece the number of legal and illegal immigrants is estimated to be in the neighborhood of 500,000.

Although there are a number of similarities between Greece and the other two countries in terms of sources of immigration, there is also a striking difference. Labor movements both legal and illegal have been mainly caused by the political and economic changes of the neighboring countries. Greece's growing number of immigrants can be found more in the present decade than the last one as it is the case with the other two countries. During the eighties Greece's foreign labor could be only seen only in domestic services which was constituted principally by young women from the Philippines (Fakiolas, 1994). The next large group that was accepted by the Greek government as legal is a 50,000 Soviet Union citizens of Greek origins who automatically were naturalized Greek citizens. This group may not be strictly categorized as immigrants but at the same they were not returnees like the Greeks who had emigrated to the US, Australia, and the Northern European countries. The ex-Soviet Union citizens of Greek origin were similar to the Germans who returned from Soviet Union to Germany and automatically were naturalized. Although these groups have Greek and German origin, it has always been difficult to assimilate to their new adopted countries. Most of them did not speak the language. But perhaps the most significant obstacle to the assimilation of these groups was the lack of experience in a traditional free market economy. Thus,



one would expect this group to behave as if it were foreign.

The above observation makes Greece different from Spain and Italy in terms of sources of immigration, but what makes also Greece different is the fact that there is a constant increase of illegal immigrants in Greece since 1992. According to the Ministry of Public Order that is responsible for repatriating illegal immigrants the number of illegal immigrants increased by eight-fold from 1992 to the end of 1996. The number of illegal immigrants that enter Greece were estimated to be 58,972. The same source reveals that the Greek authorities repatriated 44,136 of them. Although it is impossible to have a clear picture of the real number of clandestine immigrants, these statistics indicate that the government has been successful in repatriating undesired labor in Greece. Another interesting revealing statistic from these data is that out of 50 countries that were cited as sources of illegal immigration to Greece only 11 countries provide 93% of the total. The country that supplies most of the foreign immigrants is by far Iraq (see table 1). More than one third comes from Iraq. This high number can be readily interpreted. The Gulf War created harsh economic conditions for Iraq. The UN oil embargo, the dislocation of the Kurds and the continues fighting in North Iraq between Kurdish factions and the Turkish army, pushes the population toward a better working environment. Greece is the closed better destination. The second largest source for Greek illegal immigration is Romania with 12,762. The inability of the Romanian economy to develop

faster in the free market economy has created the a "migration push". Greece has become a desired destination for three factors: a) proximity; b) cultural affinity; c) both countries' governments friendly relations. The same argument can be made for Bulgaria that is the other significant Balkan country for illegal immigration to Greece. From this table we can also detect that North Africa, the major source of immigration for both Italy and Spain, only Algeria and Morocco can be cited as mild contributors to the Greek illegal immigration.

But what makes Greece's and Italy's immigration peculiar is Albania. For Greece, Albania is by far the largest source of Immigration, both legal and illegal. The same is true for Italy. It was already stated above that the estimated Albanian population is 350,000 in each country. For Greece, the problem is so acute that Albania is treated individually by the Greek government for, both, statistical and immigration violation purposes. Geographical proximity is the most obvious reason for Albanians to prefer Italy and Greece. In addition there is the historical and cultural connection between Albania, and Greece and Italy. In Albania there is a large Greek minority that serves as a bridge between the two countries. Albanian and Greek populations have been mixing over the centuries which facilitated the learning of each other's customs.

Table 1 Illegal immigration to Greece from 1992 to 1996 of 11 selected countries

	Illegal entrance	Repatriation by the Greek author.
Algeria	278	277
Bulgaria	5246	4851
Yugoslavia	1576	1462
Iraq	21646	13989
Morocco	603	597
Pakistan	7096	6497
Poland	477	453
Pomania	12762	8460
Turkey	3713	1673 <sup>2</sup>
Bangladesh	2023	1993
Total	55417	40252

Source: This table was created by the author from data that was provided by the Greek Ministry of Public Order in May of 1997.

Since 1991 when the mass exodus began in Albania, the number of Albanians that enter Greece without permission reaches an annual average of 250,000. If we judge from the data given by the Office of the State Security in April of 1997 we will conclude that the Greek authorities have been in a constant pursue of expelling illegal immigrants from Albania<sup>3</sup>. In seven years there have been 1,343,212 Albanians that have crossed the Greek borders. It is an exceptionally high number for any country to deal with. And if one considers the size of Greece and its economic resources, the task is even more challenging.

Table 2 Albanian repatriation by the Greek authorities from April 1992-March 1997

1991	84,259
1992	276,656
1993	220,655
1994	216,449
1995	241,180
1996	271,337
1997	32,616
<u>Total</u>	<u>1,343,202</u>

Source: This table was created by the author from data that was provided by the Greek Ministry of Public Order in May of 1997.

As it can be observed from the above information Spain receives its bulk of its immigrants from Northwest Africa, Greece from Middle East and the Balkan Peninsula, and Italy from all the Area of North Africa and the Balkan peninsula.

### Responses to Immigration by Greece, Italy and Spain

The formulation of an immigration policy by these three Mediterranean countries have been characterized almost by all analysts as being temporary, spasmodic, incoherent and in some cases non-existent (Veugelers, 1994; Fakiolas, 1995; Freeman, 1994). The above characterization may be partially true because the last few years all governments claim to have improved their policies toward immigration. Understandably these countries lack institutional structure that can deal with immigration. Their experience on the issue is only recent. The 1970's marked the beginning for an inception of such policies and started mainly with Italy because its industrialization started earlier than in Greece and Spain. If one searches for any meaningful legislation that deals with immigration policies at a variety of levels in these countries, it will only be found during the eighties and nineties. Such legislation principally deals with legal and illegal immigration from non-European union countries and focuses on the following aspects of immigration; Issuing visas; guarding the borders for illegal immigration; and regularizing the "irregulars".

In the case of Italy there have been two major laws through

the 1980' and 1990s: The first law known as the Law 943 which consists of foreign workers rights, rules on the employment of foreigners and regularization program, was enacted in 1986 (Calavita, 1995). The law was considered a major legislative step that dealt comprehensively with a large number of issues. Among them included the guarantee of equal treatment of the foreign workers, sanctions against those who smuggle workers and against those who hire for exploitation reasons (Veugelers, 1994). However the most important element in the law was the legalization of the undocumented foreigners. The purpose of the law was to give amnesty to the foreigners who entered the country illegally and to extend the legal stay to those whose permission had expired. Of the 216,000 estimated illegal workers less than half of them were regularized. By all means it did not fulfil the governments expectations. According to a variety of reports a multiplicity of factors played significant role in this failed law (discussed below).

The second major immigration legislation in Italy was passed in 1990 is the Law 39, known better as the Martelli Law named after its author. If Law 943 did not succeed, the Martelli Law had a much better fate. Not only the new law was more successful it was also more comprehensive and more complicated. More elements and more specifics were included in order to avoid the confusion of the previous Law. According to Kity Calavita, Martelli himself described the law as consisting of three main parts:

strict rules to reduce the number of illegal immigrants already here and to discourage and impede the arrival of new immigrants, second, definitive rules to plan, to the best of our ability, the legal entry of other foreigners; third, to facilitate the integration of non-EC foreigners already present and regularized (Calavita, 1994, pp. 317-318).

If there was a success in the second law that success can only be seen in the area of regularization. More than 216,000 illegal immigrants given legal status under the Martelli Law. What made this law different from the previous one in 1986. A combination of factors: First there was a greater mobilization of the public opinion through the media that was generated by the killing of a South-African national in August 1989. Second that the law was highly publicized by the government; Third, the initiation for permit application had to be initiated by the immigrants themselves and not by the employer; Fourth, the labor unions were supporting the regularization of immigrants; Fifth, the ministries involved with immigration were allocated more funds to deal with the implementation of the immigration laws. All the above factors were almost absent during the implementation of the 1986 law (Calavita, 1994; Vaugelers; 1994; Seminar Report: Immigrants and Refugees, 1992).

Perhaps the most spectacular challenge for the Italian Immigration policy was the massive Albanian exodus in the 1990s. As it was mentioned earlier there is an estimate number of 350,000 Albanian illegal immigrants presently. The Italian response to this large Albanian "invasion" in a short period of time was not considered adequate. First according to the "Seminar

Report: Immigrants and Refugees",

The central government did not even try to deal with the very first arrivals. It readily dumped all responsibility on the local administrations that had neither experience nor the structure adequate to cope with thousands of refugees that poured into their regions (Seminar Report: Immigrants and Refugees, 1992).

Second, the subsequent response of the Italian Government was spasmodic and reactive. After the arrival of the Albanians the government attempted to do two things; first, to deport the ones who had reached the Italian soil through a mass deportation campaign; second, to patrol with the coast-guard and navy ships in order to impede new arrivals. In several occasions the Italian police rounded up Albanian illegal immigrants and sent them back to Albania. In other instances the navy intercepted boats loaded with undocumented passengers and turned them back. Some of these encounters resulted in tragedies. The latest tragic incident was in March 28, 1997 when "Albanian patrol boat loaded with refugees collided with an Italian naval ship, causing at least 89 Albanians to drown" (The Economist p. 48, April 12-18, 1997). The incident itself was a symbolic manifestation of the government's unclear policy towards the new wave of illegal immigration from Albania. The mass exodus of Albanians presented a multitude of problems for the Italian government. First, the government had to respond to the immediate necessity which was to contain the exodus, second to find adequate shelter for the new arrivals, third to repatriate those who reached the Italian soil. However, the most important was the economic and political

stability in Albania in order to avoid new influxes. The Prodi government decided to lead an international military contingency whose objective was to provide the necessary humanitarian aid in order to keep the population at home. Although the decision finally was approved by the Parliament nevertheless there was confusion among the party leaders whose support was necessary for a continues Italian presence in Albania. An initial support was given by the left and the right but it was withdrawn because of the governments objectives were not clear (The Economist, April 12, 1997). The next question to be answered is to what extent the Italian military presence in Albania will resolve the immigration from Albania. The only think that can be commented at the present is that the Italian government realized the magnitude of the problem and acted with an unusual resolve (despite the reluctant support from the parliament) for Italian governments. The mass exodus has stopped according to the news reports, fact that can be considered as a success.

Greece's responses to the immigration has been of three step approach: First, the government has mobilized its competent authorities to stop the smuggling and violation of temporary visas by non EU citizens. Second the government has signed agreements of repatriation of illegal immigrants with large number of countries including the largest supplying countries for example, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and Russia<sup>4</sup>. Third, Greece has regularized a number of undocumented immigrants. Most emphasis was given to the Albanian immigrants due to their sheer numbers and to difficulties of keeping them out. The mountainous



terrain of the Greco-Albanian borders makes it almost impossible to prevent crossings. However the Greek government, has been following a more "humane" approach since 1995. Granting working permits to the "irregular" Albanians serves a number of purposes that is perceived to be beneficial to both governments. First, Albania needs the remittances that Albanian workers sent home from Greece. According to the newspaper "Guardian" the remittances that are sent back to Albania are estimated to \$400 million annually more than half of the country's budget (Guardian, January 13, 1995). Stavros G. Dayios puts the number much higher. In his own words the situation of the Albanian illegal immigrants is as following ... "about 350,000 of them in all, are working illegally and, equally illegally are sending back to Albania remittances to a daily value of one million dollars: emigrant remittances (60 percent from Greece) account about for 98% of Albania's national budget" (Dayios, November, 1996, p. 57). Greece also receives a number of benefits by regularizing the Albanian illegal labor. Arguments that support these goals are heard from all sides of the political spectrum. The General Confederation of Workers of Greece is in favor of giving working permits to those who work illegal. First the Labor Unions reason that regularization of illegal labor will eliminate abuse among the foreign workers, second there is going to be real competition among all workers, both native and none. From the business point of view legalization of Albanian immigrants permits them to visit home frequently. When they visit home they

bring products that they buy in Greece. For the Greek manufactures this can become the best advertisement to their products<sup>5</sup>. From the government's point of view legalization will force the workers to pay for the states' overburdened social security.

Spain's response to the immigration pressures have been similar to those of Greece and Italy in some respect. Geopolitically speaking Spain is in a better position to prevent unwanted labor. The Spanish government has to mainly guard its southern coasts from the mass illegal immigration as opposed to Greece and Italy who have to prevent immigration from south and north. In addition Spain is farther from the Albanian and the other Eastern European countries whose first destination are Greece and Italy. As in the case of Italy, Spain's restrictive immigration policies developed after the middle eighties. The government's action on the issue are focussed in three main areas: a) Surveillance in the southern coastal area; b) more restrictive visa requirements; c) regularization of illegal immigrants. The first policy is considered to be somehow unclear as far as results are concerned. According to Bernhard Santel states that

"Contrary to popular belief, illegal immigrants only rarely arrive on Spain's shores during the small hours or early dawn in small, leaky boats, never to be caught. Such attempts have taken place, and it is true that the Spanish Coastguard has repeatedly stopped Africa would-be immigrants who attempted to enter the country by sea despite the extreme dangers this involves. But most of the immigration from Africa proceeds legally through the southern Spanish harbor of Algericas" (Santel, 1995, p. 77).

The second one has been more widely applied. Spain in effort to comply with the Schengen agreement imposed visa requirements for the Magreb and Latin American countries citizens whereas before were not required. It is believed that the imposition of visa requirements will increase the attempts of the North African citizens to enter Spanish territory illegal.

With regard to the regularization policy, the government had three such programs between 1985 and 1992. As in the case of Italy the last one was the most successful one. According to Cornelious, the success was due to the correction of the previous mistakes. " A total of 110, 067 illegal immigrants were regularized under this program" Cornelious, 1994).

The success was mainly contributed to the media, labor unions who supported the program and to various associations.

### **Greece, Italy, Italy and the European Union Immigration Policy**

A large body of literature deals with European Union common immigration policy and most importantly with the Schengen Agreement. The Schengen Agreement deals with external immigration and was primarily inspired by the 1992 project. In this agreement, not all Union members participated. United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark are not yet signatories. The Schengen group, as it is known, had agreed to remove border control by January 1993. Since not all EC members signed the agreement, the institutions were not involved; however, it is viewed as a blueprint for the coming regulations in Europe of the twelve

member states, as is foreseen by the Single European Act (Muss, 1992). The agreement provides a common information system, rules and regulations stipulating that carriers of persons (by sea, or air) have to check the necessary requirements for legal entry in one of the Schengen countries before taking passengers aboard (Martin, 1991). The most relevant items of the agreement deal with the border controls after January 1993; a three-month visa for the territory of the signatory countries; a first entry visa of a limited character remain possible, but the receiving country has to take responsibility concerning legal stay and possible extradition; a transit visa, in order to travel to a third country, does not allow a stay of more than five days in the Schengen countries concerned; a visa for a period extending the three months is considered to be a national visa, only giving transit rights to the person concerned (Muss, 1992). In addition to the specifics mentioned above, the Schengen countries have a common list of about 115 countries whose nationals will require visas to enter Schengen territory (Schutee, 1991).

The Schengen agreement has not gone into effect yet. It has been postponed several times due to a number of technical difficulties the member countries are confronted with. Perhaps the most significant reason for the delay is the inadequate policing system of the entrance points by the Southern European countries. Literature on the subject indicates that the ratification of the Treaty is delayed due to fear that immigrants that enter the southern states will freely move to the rest of

the Schengen group countries. In view of the other members of the Group the Treaty will go into effect if the necessary mechanisms are installed in the South to prevent immigration that will be spread in the North.

It is well known that Greece, Italy and Spain want to be part of the club and for that reason try to comply with rules. The record shows that successive legislations were passed by all governments of the three countries without significantly reducing the entrance of legal and illegal immigrants. In a symbolic title Magnetic south the "Economist" emphasizes the fact that although Prime minister Romano Prodi is determined to make his country a "fully paid-up member of the Schengen club, Germany, France and the Netherlands do not trust that appropriate policies will be applied by the Italian government. The reasons are stated as following:

A visit to Sicily shows why. In the past three years, thousands of illegal immigrants, mostly from Tunisia, have fetched up on the tiny Sicilian isle of Lampedusa, which lies only 120 kilometers (75 miles) off North Africa. Often they are caught, Italian law has hitherto given them a fortnight to return home. They rarely do. Instead, they travel north to continental Italy, then vanish, often over the Alps and into Europe's heartland (The Economist, January 4, 1997, p. 49).

The Economist's assessment of the situation in Italy should not focus only on the inability of the Italian government to respond to the issue. It should include the other three countries because they also display similar behavior as far as the Schengen Agreement is concerned. Furthermore, the non compliance with the Schengen Treaty's may be a manifestation of political and

economic pressures. Legislatures in Southern Europe pass laws to satisfy the European Union rules but at the same time the application of the law is laxed. Government's respond or do not respond because of the presence or the absence of a number of factors. Public opinion for example is less supportive to the restrictive legislation on immigration in Spain and Italy. Data based on the Eurobarometer survey of 1993 indicate that 16 percent of the Italian respondents answered that immigrants from south Mediterranean countries should not be accepted at all. In Spain the percentage was even lower. Only 4 percent of the respondents said that no immigrants from the same region should be absolutely prohibited. In Greece, the number was 31 percent. This indicates that public opinion in Greece was not in agreement with the other two countries of the study<sup>6</sup>. The striking difference however was between Spain/Italy and the other three large countries in the European Union whose immigration policies have been very restrictive. In France, 37 percent said that no immigrants from North Africa should be permitted, Germany and Great Britain the number was 25 and 28 respectively<sup>7</sup>. It is evident that restrictiveness on immigration reflects public opinion's attitudes. In connection to the public opinion there is the institutional political environment. None of the three countries has a strong anti-immigrant political party such as the National Front in France and the Republican Party in Germany to inflame the public opinion. Even the two right wing parties (MSI and Lega Nord) in Italy are not vehemently anti immigrant. As for

the major parties according to Freeman they "engage in conspiracy of silence" (Freeman, 1994, p.21). The phenomenon of such "conspiracy of silence" is evident in the other two countries of the south as well. Tolerance on immigration then may be caused by economic reason. The Southern European countries are following the path of the Northern European countries. Immigration in Northern Europe proved to be valuable during the years of industrial development. It is argued that Southern Europe needs foreign labor in order to develop its industries the same way the North did during the fifties and the sixties. Southern Europe needs immigrants because of it is native population is aging without been replaced due to low birth rates. According the General accounting officer of the Italian State Andrea Monorchio, Italy will need at least 50,000 immigrants annual to fill the positions created by the economy. Mr. Monorchio believes that immigration not only should not be stopped as it is argued by the Northern European countries, but it should be encouraged since it is needed (La Repubblica, April 11, 1997). Economics also dictate that cheap labor that is provided by immigrants from Third world countries will help the less developed countries of the Union to compete in the single market that was created with 1992 project.

### **Conclusion**

In the constantly increasing immigration pressures in the European Union, the three countries that are discussed here constitute the southern frontier of the European Union. In order for the Union to achieve a real single market as it was

envisioned by "the project 1992" there must be also a common immigration policy. From the discussion of this essay it is evident that there is a division between the Northern and the Southern countries of the Union in terms of immigration approaches and even philosophy. The Southern European countries are accused of being permissive and in some cases as being "inept" and not trustworthy as the Economist points out in the case of Italy. It is the view of this author that permissiveness should not be equated with "ineptness". Arguments have been made that as long as the Southern economies have the necessity for cheap labor, restrictive laws will be passed but will be unobserved.

The question of successes and failure may not be a function of how many immigrants are stopped at the ports and airports but what are the benefits of the countries who permit them to get in. In the case of the three countries that are discussed here the picture is not as clear as one would like. A number of measures have been taken by the countries which aims to curb the influx of immigrants. Of the three countries, Spain is considered to be the most successful in this effort. The main reason for that is its geographical position. The other two countries are in more disadvantageous position. The numerous Greek islands can not fully be guarded by the coastguard and the navy ships. Most of the illegal immigrants from the middle East are smuggled through the Aegean islands. Based on the statistics that were given by the Ministry responsible for monitoring immigration in Greece the



number of illegal immigrants that enter Greece is very large. However equally large is the number of those who were repatriated by the Greek authorities. Italy shows a slower pace of responding to the challenges for the following reasons. First one has to consider that Italy is a more attractive destination than the other two countries due to its more developed economy, second Italy is larger than the other two countries and third it is closer to the immigration sources than the other two.

## Endnotes

1. This statement must be qualified. Italy as a whole should not be considered one of the poorest members of the Union. It is only put in the same category because it displays two developmental levels: The Southern poor, and the Northern wealthy.
2. More than half of these immigrants are of Kurdish ethnicity. According to the data that was provided by the Ministry of Public Order, a very small number of Kurds are sent back to Turkey. The author suspects that the Kurds are given political asylum.
3. The data was obtained by the author through Office of the State security after his request.
4. This information was provided by the Ministry of Public Order after the authors's request.
5. There is an ongoing effort from the part of the Greek government and the Greek businessmen in order to capture part of the Balkan and other Eastern European countries newly developing free market economies. Greek public and private investment in East European countries is directly linked to the immigrants. According to the magazine "Europe" there were two Greek banks that were granted application to open branches in Albania which "would cater to Albanians who work in Greece and send home drachma remittances...an estimated \$400 million yearly, almost entirely in cash" Europe, p. 11, February, 1996).
6. The behavior of the Greek public opinion could reflect the 1993 bad publicity that immigrants received due to the deterioration of relations between Albania and Greece.
7. The data was adopted from a common project that the author of this article and Professor Salvatore Lombardo at Siena College. The project deals with public opinion and European Integration.

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