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THE MIGRATION IN THE LONGUE DUREE AND CURRENT PARTICULARITIES IN THE EU WITH AN EMPHASIS ON ITS MEDITERRANEAN MEMBER STATES

Abstract:	*In the context of this study, we shall attempt to understand migration by examining its theoretical aspect and the totality of its actions by means of the longue durée (long duration) theory of the Annales school of thought. We shall focus on the timelessness of the phenomenon and the current situation in the EU, with special reference to its southern member states. For the purposes of credibility of this approach and to comprehend what is really happening in the EU nowadays and how the latter handles politically the phenomenon of migration, we need to examine as many aspects of it as possible using an interdisciplinary approach of the specific historical, social and economic parameters, and their various collateral political connections.* *The holistic longue durée approach of the connection between migration and nation-state building process is a useful method of understanding modern European realities. In this context, we will examine the extent to which the structure of societies may fundamentally change, in relation to the inseparable concepts of nation and state. Human experience shows that migration had a significant impact on the rise of nations and that it was crucial in creating new identities. The above interconnections will be examined with special reference to the Mediterranean countries of Europe (being today the southern member-states of the EU), and their current views and positions.*
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Introduction. The Theoretical Framework. The *Longue Durée* Analysis as a Tool to Explain Current Migrations

In the context of this paper, we make use of the theoretical framework of the *longue durée* (long duration) of the Annales school of thought. We focus on the theoretical background and timelessness of the phenomenon, as a tool to understand the current situation in the EU with special reference to its southern member states; also, to draw useful conclusions based on the interpretive scheme of long duration[1]. This necessity becomes even more evident if we consider that the theory of the long duration has emerged in the European continent (though not just in it) as an alternative approach to interpreting and understanding the various parameters of socio-economic phenomena[2]. With

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[1] Fernand Braudel, *La longue durée*, "Annales", 1958, Vol. 4, pp. 725-753; Michel Vovelle, *L'histoire et la longue durée,* in Le Goff J. (Ed.), *La Nouvelle Histoire*, Complexe, Paris, 2006, pp. 77-108

[2] Ziza Joy Delgado, *The Longue Durée of Ethnic Studies: Race, Education and the Struggle for Self-Determination*, University of California, Berkeley, 2016; Anibal Arcondo, *Ruggiero Romano y la historia económica colonial de América Latina*, "Cuicuilco Revista de Ciencias Antropoligicas", Vol. 10, No. 29, 2003, pp. 6-16

the present study we aim to partly fill the gap that exists in research by means of the principle of long-term development and continuity.

In our effort to understand migration we need to examine its theoretical aspect with a clear scientific perspective and through the totality of its actions. For the sake of the credibility of the approach and to understand what is really happening in the EU today and how the latter handles migration in political terms, we need to examine as many aspects of it as possible using an interdisciplinary approach of the specific historical, social and economic parameters, with their various collateral political connections. Therefore, it should be researched and evaluated comparatively in a historical context, while its socio-economic variables – e.g. birth rate, mortality - should be interpreted in the context of the social development of every individual country.

In the context of modern European reality, we will try to clarify where the formation of national minorities could lead and, thus, to what extent the political and socioeconomic structure of states could fundamentally change. Therefore, the *longue durée* analysis could help us understand to what extent the growth of supranational societies within the EU has created new challenges in the sphere of decision-making. The interconnection and co-examination of immigration-identity, national consciousness, repatriation, urbanization, naturalization, multiculturalism, education, demographic issues, labor force needs, with special reference to the Mediterranean European states may be examined through the long *durée* method.

Understanding the holistic approach to migration is essential. To understand the current phase and predicting how things may develop soon, we will examine the long *durée* of the phenomenon. Migration is a timeless and historical reality, but its form and content are transformed by the era and phase of economic development of either societies or socio-economic systems, as well as by the needs of the ruling class it serves. The movements of populations in Antiquity, in the form of either settlement in other places or their conquest, and the effort to cooperate and co-exist with the natives like in Sicily, *Magna Grecia* and elsewhere, could be utilized as a great example for this approach. During the Greek antiquity, settlements and migration from city-states were linked to the daily needs of a people for the purposes of their survival[1].

In the modern era, from the 18th century onwards and for a period of approximately two centuries, migration has been accelerated by the mixing of world populations which have thus been extensively redistributed. The movements of people on the planet have created and fostered new social relationships. Moreover, in these developments we also observe the forms of movements of people. One may confirm in both an indirect and direct way that human society is in constant movement to meet its needs from the beginning of its existence. In Antiquity, this role was played by colonization. At the same time, through interactions with the natives, we have come to know the forms of culture that have led us to the present day. This begs the question of the importance of assimilation for a host society, in relation to the inseparable concepts of nation and state, and to answer it we will make use of experience, for example that of the USA[2].

Migration and the European Nation-States Building Process. A Holistic *Longue Durée* Approach

Nation-building is a process in which people are challenged to accept a common identity. However, it also entails the exclusion of foreign forces and foreign national groups. It is believed that what has happened along the way has been the creation of societies based on populations with a common and homogeneous origin. A particular feature of the emergence of the nation-state in the 19th century was the entrenchment of nations behind borders and 'walls' that nations themselves built. War, conquest, nation building and economic challenges contributed to populations movements in interconnection to the development of the European nation-states and the colonialism in various parts of the world. Ennio Triggiani expresses the opinion that migration and increase in human activity are

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[1] Jean-Luc Lamboley, *Migration and Greek Civilization*, in Isaacs A. K. (Ed.), *Immigration and emigration in historical perspective*, Pisa University Press, 2007, pp. 55-65; Mario Denti, *Greek Migrations from the Aegean to the Ionian coast of southern Italy, in the 7th century BC: shared Goods, rituals, heroic memories, in an aristocratic perspective*, "Ocnus", Vol. 30, 2022, Doi: 10.12876/OCNUS3011, pp. 173-182

[2] Ager Philipp, Markus Brückner, *Cultural Diversity and Economic Growth: Evidence from the US during the Age of Mass Migration*, "European Economic Review", 2013, Vol. 64, pp. 76-97; Ulysses J. Balderas, Michael J. Greenwood, *From Europe to the Americas: a Comparative Panel-Data Analysis of Migration to Argentina, Brazil, and the United States, 1870-1910*, "Journal of Population Economics", Vol. 23, No. 4, 2010, pp. 1301-18

gradually changing, making the definitions of belonging and citizenship obsolete and the correspondence between nationality and citizenship inconsistent[1].

Migrations contributed significantly to changes that occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries. European colonialism highlighted various forms of immigration. One of these was the gradual but extensive settlement of Europeans in every other continent. Europeans from various social strata immigrated, either permanently or temporarily, for various purposes. The changes that had occurred were demographic, political and cultural. The distribution of the world's population and the political map of the planet had already changed significantly, as many powers took control over extensive territories[2].

Here lies the link between state and nation and the interconnection with migration. Early in the 19th century, a nation was defined as a group of people who shared the same language and culture. Migration was usually left out of debates about nations. However, it played a significant role in the rise of nations. It is also characteristic that migration was central in creating new identities. Europeans who settled in America eventually created identities and focused on the lands they colonized. The crystallization of the American nation was associated with public debate and controversy. Characteristically, in the late 19th century the United States had imposed restrictions on immigration. Rhetorical questions, such as whether the country should be inhabited by Britons, Germans, Scandinavians, or, on the contrary, by Asian peoples, became the topic of speeches and discussions. Thus, there appeared the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act which was constantly renewed, with the prospect of ever-present obstacles to the entry of Chinese workers. At the same time there was also a census of the population which had recorded significant changes in the composition of the country. This led to the creation of groups that called for more selective controls on immigration[3].

We have already mentioned that the main migration stream took place between Europe and America; more specifically in the United States, which absorbed approximately two-thirds of the total migration. However, as early as the 19th century freedom of immigration had been restricted. There were specific reasons for this. To begin with, it was linked to a respective prohibition by the nation-states of Europe due to the original belief that if it was not enforced, they themselves would become weaker both economically and militarily[4]. Economic conditions, the reality of the capitalist system, create favorable circumstances for the settlement of people in other countries, such as the USA. In the process, however, American authorities reacted, and the countries of Europe were forced to change their tactics and provide the corresponding facilities to those who really wished to immigrate. In this sense, this assistance provided a solution for the acute social and economic problems that plagued capitalist societies. Consequently, immigration took on a special term: the regime of subsidized immigration. Germany, Belgium, and England around 1850 provided substantial grants to facilitate immigrants[5].

At that time the United States of America was officially implementing a policy of attracting immigrants to settle large tracts of land. However, public opinion was worried by the immigration stream which was constantly growing with populations coming from Southern and Southeastern Europe, such as Italians, Slavs and others, that were completely different from the Anglo-Saxon populations, who at the same time shared different cultural traditions. By the early 1890s the Germans who arrived in the United States no longer formed one tenth, nor the Scandinavians one fifth of the immigrants of the previous century from those countries. New immigrants consisted mostly of Italians who were 100 times more than their counterparts in the previous century, while the Slavs were 1,000 times more than their counterparts in the previous century[6].

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[1] Ennio Triggiani, *La Cittadinanza Europea per La 'utopia' Sovranazionale*, "Studi sull'integrazione Europea", Vol.1, No. 3, 2006, pp. 435-78

[2] Oriana Bandiera, Imran Rasul, Martina Viarengo, *The Making of Modern America: Migratory Flows in the Age of Mass Migration*, "Journal of Development Economics", Vol. 102, No. 3, 2013, pp. 23-47

[3] Erica Lee, *The 'Yellow Peril' and Asian Exclusion in the Americas*, "Pacific Historical Review", 2007, Vol. 76, No. 4, Doi:10.1525/phr.2007.76.4.537, pp. 537–562

[4] Marios Th. Rafael [Μάριος Θ. Ραφαήλ], *Η Μετανάστευσις: Μελέτη των ευρωπαϊκών και ελληνικών δεδομένων*, [*Migration: Study of European and Greek Data*], Athens, 1954, p. 12

[5] Ioannis Tournakis [Ιωάννης Τουρνάκης], *Διεθνής μεταναστευτική κίνησις και μεταναστευτική πολιτική*, [*International Migration Movement and Migration Policy*], Athens, 1931, p. 293

[6] *Ibidem*, p. 299

At the same time, there was also an immigration flow between European countries. The main host countries were France and Germany. Immigrants originated mainly from Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Spain. However, this specific migration did not have the features of a settlement. Instead, it was limited to the movement of labor force covering specific needs of the economy of these countries[1]. In Europe, external and intra-European migration occurred simultaneously. In the case of Italy, where 15 million people emigrated during the period 1876-1920, almost half of them (estimated at 6.8 million), settled especially in France, Switzerland Germany[2].

In the period after the First World War nationalist ideology became dominant, influencing European politics of this period. This was the era of the creation and growth of the nation-state, and the collapse of empires, with the new nation-states making their appearance in a spectacular way. From then onwards one must deal with new political entities creating new ethnic minorities, some of which were denied recognition or were even oppressed by the states to which they belonged. At the same time, nation-states had acquired the exclusive power to regulate all matters related to immigration, including freedom of travel, passports, visas, border controls, etc. Border controls and compulsory passports for travelers were the main means used to control it. At the same time political conflict and economic crisis were also important factors that significantly affected this phenomenon.

Because of the First World War, immigration within Europe had reached a new scale, with millions of people migrating in masse. Obviously, the collapse of empires, especially the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman ones, contributed to this phenomenon, leading to many changes and mainly to the redrawing of many borders. In this sense the national states that succeeded empires used national unity as a means of consolidating their position. Therefore, in this period we are dealing with two factors which lead to ethnic or forced migration. After the war the demographic situation of most European countries was extremely alarming. This was since a large part of the working age population had been killed, creating a short supply of labor force. This was particularly serious aspect, at a time when reconstruction and economic development were priorities, and industry was in desperate need of manpower. The result was that various countries signed agreements to encourage economic migration. A typical example was France, which in the 1920s brought in immigrants from Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia[3].

At this point we will dwell on an interesting issue. In the case of modern migration, migrants travel much longer distances than in the past, not just physically but also socially and culturally. This feature is further enhanced by the fact that technological progress has decisively contributed to movement in space. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, or generally during the 20th century, modern immigrants had moved between regions with different economic structures; regions that were at different levels of economic and social development. In other words, from less developed areas to more developed ones, with characteristic transitions from the village to the city and from agricultural to industrial production. Furthermore, the composition of modern migration flows is characterized by economically active individuals and economically inactive ones, for example, children, spouse, or parents, accompanying an economic migrant. One should note here that in the modern industrial era of the 19th and 20th centuries, the prevalence of nation-states enhanced the concept of the refugees because of the appearance, or even the existence, of fixed and closed borders as early as the end of the 19th century, and the subsequent division of the world in several countries. Until the 1950s the right to asylum was linked to authority, or 'sovereignty', exercised by the sites of asylum. The subsequent signing of the European Convention of Human Rights (1950) and the Geneva Convention on Refugees (1951) signifies the development of the asylum as an institution necessary to protect individual human rights[4].

South European Countries and Migration: From Outflow to Inflow

From the 1970s onwards there have been important developments that have affected migration trends in Europe. Firstly, in the wake of the oil crisis of 1973-1974, the industrialized countries of Western Europe decided to

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[1] Marios Th. Rafael, *Op. cit.*, p. 18

[2] Stephen Castles, Hein de Haas, Mark. J. Miller, *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 6th Edition, The Guilford Press, 2020, pp. 57-59

[3] Marios Th. Rafael, *Op. cit.*, p. 16; Pierre George, *L'immigration italienne en France de 1920 à 1939: aspects démographiques et sociaux,* in Milza P. (Ed.), *Les Italiens en France de 1914 à 1940*, École Française de Rome, Rome, 1986, pp. 45-67

[4] Cherubini Francesco, *Asylum Law in the European Union: From the Geneva Convention to the Law of the EU*, Routledge, 2014, p. 23

stop hiring foreign labor. This decision came at a time when the economic gap between the rich industrialized countries of the North and the poor or developing countries of the South had widened significantly, causing extensive migration to the countries of Western Europe. Subsequently, from the 1980s onwards, Europe became the preferred destination for refugees from the South. In addition to economic and political reasons, ecological and natural disasters, particularly in the poorest countries of the South, also played a role in bringing migrants and refugees to Western Europe. Finally, we should add here the effects of the disappearance of the Berlin Wall in 1989 because of the reunification of Germany, as well as the fall of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, which greatly modified the geopolitical outlook in Europe.

The fundamental restructuring of the world economy that occurred in the 1970s resulted in the decline of the employment of menial workers from Western Europe[1]. During the era of globalization, the increasing capital export from the more developed countries resulted in the establishment of manufacturing industries in underdeveloped regions. Because of this process, part-time jobs have largely replaced permanent employment.

After 1973, Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal, countries whose citizens would migrate in the past to other continents in search of better jobs and standards of living, began to experience an increasing inflow of immigration[2]. Eventually, this type of irregular migration was linked with a reduced capacity of national governments to regulate it. In Italy, between 1981 and 2010, foreigners with residence permits amounted to 7.6% of the population[3]. This sharp increase was due to a series of regulations on irregular residential populations between 1986 and 2009. Romanians constituted the largest group of immigrants in the country (960,000 in 2010), forming approximately a quarter of foreigners with a residence permit. Most of the non-residents of the EU were Albanians (483,000) and Moroccans (452,000)[4].

The Current Situation in the EU With Special Reference to its Southern Member States

The European Union as a whole, and its member states individually, have made intensive efforts in recent years to establish an effective common EU immigration policy[5]. The European Council determines the strategic priorities and makes special efforts within both the context of the European Union and the latter's relations with third countries in view of immigration pressures[6]. In fact, as far as asylum seekers are concerned, efforts are being made for them to be treated in the same way by all member states. Regarding refugees and migrants after their arrival, the European Union has established various rules on how legal migration flows will be managed and how asylum applications will be processed[7].

Migration and asylum are two spheres of the political field in which the EU has paid great attention and placed high importance. On 10 of April 2024, the European Parliament, after years of consultation, adopted the final texts of the EU Pact on Asylum and Migration. On 14 of May 2024, the European Council officially adopted the texts of the EU Pact on migration system, even though there was disagreement between the member states as well as between the Council and the Parliament. The new EU Migration Pact concerned negotiations between the European Commission, representatives of the EU member states and the European Parliament, and was expected to be approved by the EU elections in June 2024. It was officially presented in September 2020 by the President of the

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[1] St. Castles, et al., *Op. cit*., pp.111-112

[2] Emilio Reyneri, *Migrants' Involvement in Irregular Employment in the Mediterranean Countries of the European Union*, "International Migration Papers (IMP)", No. 41, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2001, www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/imp/imp41.pdf. (21.04.2025)

[3] Salvatore Strozza, Alessandra Venturini, *Italy is no longer a country of emigration. Foreigners in Italy: how many, where do they come from*, in Ralf Rotte and Peter Stein, (Eds.), *Migration Policy and the Economy: International Experiences*, Hans Seidel Stiftung, Munich, 2002, p. 265

[4] OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2012*, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2012-en, (21.04.2025), p. 242

[5] Patrizia Nanz, *Mobility, Migrants, and Solidarity: Towards an Emerging European Citizenship Regime,* in Benhabib S., Judith Resnik J., (Eds.), *Migrations and Mobilities- Citizenship, Borders and Gender*, New York University Press, 2009, pp. 410-38

[6] Trauner Florian, *Migration policy: an ambiguous EU role in specifying and spreading international refugee protection norms*, in Falkner G., Muller P. (Eds), *EU Policies in a Global Perspective. Shaping or taking international regimes?*, Routledge, London, 2014, pp. 149-166

[7] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/el/policies/eu-migration-policy/ (21.04.2025)

European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen in the form of a legislative proposal and recommendations for the member states on how to deal with migration. One could certainly say that the provisions of this Pact do not represent complete novelty in terms of European migration policies; rather they can be seen and evaluated in the same political line and process that the Union has been following on migration issues for a long time now. The regulations of the Pact came into force in June 2024, but there will be a two-year transition period, and the Pact will only be applied by all EU member states in 2026.

   The adoption of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum may be seen as the result of a long and difficult process shaped in the context of the EU over a period of 20 years. Long negotiations demonstrated the various tendencies on migration and asylum policy of member states[1]. Greece, Italy and Spain were looking forward to activating the solidarity mechanism. The group of the EU Mediterranean states (Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Malta) has expressed strong concerns in relation to migration flows. During the negotiations, differences persisted within the EU regarding stances on migration, particularly between the countries bordering the Mediterranean, which take in the majority of those arriving in Europe, and the central European member states which have long refused to take in additional cohorts of migrants, and which often have comparatively weaker economies than richer Western European and Scandinavian states. The Visegrád Group - Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic- has taken a restrictive migration stance, which has influenced EU policy negotiations[2]. The V4 disagree with the logic of compulsory percentages on the relocation of asylum seekers[3] from the Mediterranean member states, such as Italy and Greece, in the belief that this method will not solve the problem of incoming flows. The Visegrád Group favor the shifting of the focus towards the external dimension, that is, the adoption of a joint foreign policy and the safeguarding of the EU's external borders. The V4 views on strengthening the external dimension is also expressed by the fact that jointly they represent the third largest donor under the EU Emergency Trust for Africa, whereas individually they only rank fifth to eight[4].

   On the other hand, the members of the M5 group, such as Italy and Greece, seek to relieve pressure receiving considerable influxes of migrants, by relocating arrivals to other EU states. Migration routes to Europe from the Middle East and Africa via the Mediterranean have been used continuously since the beginning of the 2010s. As far as the three main Mediterranean routes are concerned (via the Western, Central and Eastern sections of that Sea), the IOM gives the following data: in 2024 migration to Europe dropped by nearly a third, from 292,985 in 2023 to 208,679 persons. However, the Eastern Mediterranean route is the main route (77,854, 37% of the total)[5]. There is a significant change in the migration flow via the Central Mediterranean route, which was less than half (42%) compared to that of 2023. However, there was an increase (27%) of flows via the Eastern Mediterranean route[6].

   In terms of absolute numbers, the following data are available for the EU's southern member states: Arrivals in Italy: 66,617 in 2024, arriving by sea, this is 58% less than in 2023 (157,652), marking a significant drop: 34,154 in 2020, 67,477 in 2021, 105,131 in 2022, 157,652 in 2023, 66,617 in 2024. Arrivals in Greece in 2024 have been the highest recorded in the country since 2019: 14,785 in 2020, 9,026 in 2021, 18,775 in 2022,

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[1] Jean-Pierre Cassarino, *La dimension extérieure dans le nouveau pacte sur la migration et l'asile: l'Union européenne rattrapée par la géopolitique*, "Revue internationale et stratégique", Vol. 2, No. 122, 2021, pp. 115-124

[2] Petr Kaniok, Vít Hloušek, *Visegrad four as an institution in times of EU crises,* "European Politics and Society", 10 April 2025, DOI: 10.1080/23745118.2025.2488815, p. 14

[3] Thomas Goumenos [Θωμάς Γούμενος], *Νέο Σύμφωνο για τη Μετανάστευση και το Άσυλο: κανονικοποίηση των hotspots και καχεκτική αλληλεγγύη*, [New Pact on Migration and Asylum: Normalization of Hotspots and Feeble Solidarity], "Δελτίο Ευρωπαϊκών Εξελίξεων", [European Developments Bulletin ENA], Ινστιτούτο Εναλλακτικών Πολιτικών [ENA Institute for Alternative Politics], Vol. 34, 2020, pp.10-12

[4] Karin Vaagland, Natascha Zaun, *Strategizing solidarity: an examination of the Visegrád group's role and motivations in EU migration policies*, "Journal of European Integration", 2024, p. 1; p. 9; Matúš Mišík, Monika Brusenbauch Meislová, *20th anniversary of the EU Eastern enlargement: Stocktaking of the membership experience, challenges, and opportunities*, "Journal of Contemporary European Studies", Abingdon, Routledge Journals, Taylor&Francis, https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2025.2491407, 2025, pp.1-11

[5] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Mixed Migration Flows to Europe. Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM Europe) (January - December 2024)*, "Yearly Regional Report", 2025, IOM, Vienna, pp. 4-5

[6] https://reliefweb.int/report/cyprus/quarterly-mixed-migration-update-europe-quarter-4-2024 (21.02.2025)

47,930 in 2023, 62.043 in 2024. Arrivals in Spain: 63,970 in 2024, amounting to a 37% increase compared to 56.852 registered in 2023. In 2020 there were 41,861, in 2021 50,945, in 2022 31,194[1].

According to Frontex data, asylum applications in the EU were reduced by 11% in 2024. However, they still exceed 1,000,000. Overall, last year there were submitted 1,014,420 applications for international protection, compared to the 1,143,437 registered in 2023. More specifically, the same report demonstrates that 48% of the 1,000,000 applications were submitted by people with a historically small chance of achieving a successful decision. Cyprus has had the biggest number of asylum requests per inhabitant: one for every 138 inhabitants[2]. According to the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), in 2024, Spain received 164,000 number of applications, while Cyprus and Greece (6,520 and 69,000 applications respectively) had the highest number relative to their population size[3]. For comparative purposes between 2023 and 2024 Eurostat provides the following statistics of asylum applicants concerning the three bigger EU mediterranean member states: for Italy: 151.120 (2023) and 130.565 (2024), for Spain: 160.460 (2023) and 164.010 (2024), for Greece: 57.895 (2023) and 68.995 (2024)[4].

According to some views, the actual implementation of the Pact will require a significant amount of time (months, or years) before it bears results[5]. Its adoption has not exhausted the debate on European asylum and immigration policies[6]. The issue of migration has many aspects and parameters for which there is no easy answer in the immediate future. There can be no one sided solution, and no country can deal with it on its own without deliberating with others; in other words, this is not a unilateral but a multilateral issue, with various economic, political and social aspects.

The challenge of the new Pact is to ensure the best possible balance between "responsibility and solidarity". The importance of solidarity among EU states has been emphasized. The southern EU member states are expecting the activation of the solidarity mechanism. The Med5 - the group of countries of initial arrival for most migrants comprising Italy, Spain, Greece, Malta, and Cyprus - are demanding "effective and sustainable" solutions. At this point it can be argued that certainly varying approaches among the 27 EU member states are not due to the purpose of the migration policy of the EU speaking about a fair system, but to the geographical factor.

Human Security and Migration in the EU

The EU's migration policy demonstrates its determination and inventiveness to deal with complex issues, such as the multifaceted one concerning the security dimensions of migration and human safety in general. The philosophy of the new migration policy, as stated in the new Pact for Migration and Asylum, has three facets: an external one that concerns the EU's relations with the main countries of origin of migrants/refugees, including partnerships; another concerning the security of its external borders; and a third, concerning solidarity between the EU's member states[7]. Academics have already noted that the pact essentially follows the EU migration continuum

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[1] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Mixed Migration Flows to Europe*, pp. 9-11

[2] Jorge Liboreiro, *EU asylum requests down by 11% in 2024, but still exceed one million*, https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/03/03/eu-asylum-requests-down-by-11-in-2024-but-still-exceed-one-million (03.03.2025)

[3] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Mixed Migration Flows to Europe*, p. 5

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_asyappctza/default/table. Asylum applicants by type, citizenship, age and sex-annual aggregated data (03.03.2025)

[5] Alberto-Horst Neidhardt, *Navigating the New Pact on Migration and Asylum in the Shadow of Non-Europe*, "Discussion Paper European Migration and Diversity Programme", European Policy Center, 26 January 2024, p. 8; Angeliki Dimitriadi [Αγγελική Δημητριάδη], *2025: Ένας κόσμος σε μετακίνηση αλλά με περιορισμούς*, [*A World on the Move But With Restrictions*], "Οι προβλέψεις του ΕΛΙΑΜΕΠ για το 2025", ["The forecasts of ELIAMEP Policy Paper for 2025"], No.176, 2024, pp. 24-25

[6] Matthieu Tardis, *The European Pact on Asylum and Migration: An Existential Challenge? Migration Crisis in the Mediterranean*, "IEMed. Mediterranean Yearbook", 2024, pp.86-90

[7] Carmine Conte, Başak Yavcan, *Reflection Paper on the New EU Pact on Migration & Asylum*, Migration a Policy Group, https://www.migpolgroup.com/index, php/2024/04/23/reflection-paper-on-the-new-eu-pact-on-migration-and-asylum/ (03.03.2025)

and deals with security issues relevant to migration[1]. The Union attempts to establish security measures among its member states and European citizens by avoiding racist overtones. Frontex follows the logic and practice of these measures, contributing to their implementation on the field. In this framework, Frontex understandably operates with the aim of saving lives, as well as identifying, containing and returning irregular immigrants[2]. Obviously, the strengthening of Frontex at external European borders, and the signing of agreements with developing countries concerning the repatriation of individuals that have unjustifiably left their homelands, subsequently entering EU territory, are features that contribute to the consolidation of a feeling of security.

The issue of security is directly associated with solidarity among the EU's member states, in the sense that the EU needs to function as a block, in terms of human security, by applying the motto responsibility-solidarity-security. Apparently, the association of migration with security indicates a development of the former from an internal issue into an issue of foreign policy[3]. Consequently, both member states and the EU as a group need to develop forms of diplomacy focusing on migration.

For the time being and as far as the Pact is concerned, we should wait and see whether it demonstrates sufficiently a capacity to deal with security as well as an ability to select in a just manner individuals eligible for asylum and incorporation; in other words, to demonstrate the degree to which receiving societies are ready to overcome stereotypes[4]. The main issue that arises is the extent to which European societies are prepared to face developing circumstances closely associated with respect for the rights of citizens of Europe's nation's states, as well as their readiness to make room for foreign ethnic groups without feeling threatened. In this context, socio-economic issues concerning European societies, such as unemployment, should also be taken into consideration.

Also associated with migration is an issue of meritocracy. The middle and lower classes of the receiving countries are at a disadvantage, feeling that their educational system is not so fair for all. How and when could employees of the present day who alternate between employers gain sufficient experience to become competitive? Those that originate from the upper social strata have more means and opportunities. Projecting this realization in the context of migration from third countries, one may assume that talented and qualified migrant workers holding a degree would be discriminated against due to their lack or limited understanding of the language and culture of their country of reception. Such features would make them less competitive, with an uncertain future in employment. Thus, they would be bound to follow the lot of the local working class that produces wealth but enjoys it less than expected. The millions of unemployed or semi-employed citizens of the member states need work, not "employment" without social security, and this situation is also true for migrants. One needs to look beyond the concept that migration means a cheap labor force and a lower production cost that promote competitiveness. This model of cheap labor needs to become obsolete.

Consequently, the EU will need to provide the proper circumstances for both natives and migrants to be able to find work that safeguards quality livelihood. It will need to take into consideration the needs of the labor market; the existing unemployment among youths of its member states; and the proper use of the qualities of those in need of refugee status. Highly qualified migrants contribute directly to innovation, while those with low qualifications play a significant part in areas of the primary sector[5].

Taking into consideration the struggle of European leaders and technocrats to find a happy medium and, secondly, the relevant challenges and doubts, the answer lies in a continuous dialogue that could contribute to the solution of practical problems: an internal European dialogue and a dialogue between the EU and third countries. The former needs to involve not just technocrats and governments, but plain citizens as well, since the multifaceted

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[1] Maciej Stępka, *The New Pact on Migration and Asylum: Another Step in the EU Migration-Security Continuum or Preservation of the Status Quo?*, "Bialystok Legal Studies", Vol. 28, No.1, 2023, p. 30

[2] Maciej Stępka, *Op.cit.*, p. 28, p. 32-33

[3] Cf. Diego Caballero Vélez and Ekaterina Krapivnitskaya, *The EU migration policy securitization process: From a domestic to a foreign dimension*, "Studia z Polityki Publicznej / Public Policy Studies", Vol. 7, No. 4, 2020, p.116. Also: Paula Garcia Andrade, *Tackling migration externally through the EU common foreign and security policy: A question of legal basis*, "European Papers", Vol.8, No 2, 2023, pp. 959-984

[4] Alberto-Horst Neidhardt, *Op.cit.*, p.8; Cf. Angeliki Dimitriadi [Αγγελική Δημητριάδη], *Op.cit.*, pp. 24-25

Eugenia Vella, [Ευγενία Βέλλα], *Η ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική για τη μετανάστευση: πρόσφατες εξελίξεις και μελλοντικές προοπτικές* [European Migration Policy: Recent Developments and Prospects], "Policy Briefs Ευρωπαϊκής Οικονομίας", ELIAMEP, No. 3, 2024, p. 1

issue of migration flows to the EU may in fact be solved by investing in the migrants' countries of origin. As far as the local European societies are concerned, the solution lies in the strengthening of a spirit of security and social justice.

Conclusions

In this paper we have used the concept of long duration (*longue durée*) to understand the current particularities in the EU with a special reference to the southern member states of the Union. The theoretical scheme of the Annales' *longue durée* allows us to study the subject holistically. We have applied the interdisciplinary perspective to understand the impact of migration on nation states. The concept of long duration can be used as an interpretative and guiding tool for an analysis of present-day data and predictions for the future, so that by longitudinal approaches we may reach synchronic conclusions to retain the necessary elements of the past on which to build the most appropriate policies.

In conclusion, this is undoubtedly a complex issue. We have noted that migration and asylum are two major chapters in which the EU's member states maintain views depending on their geographical parameters and proximity to third countries. This concept also includes the specificity of EU Member States in the Mediterranean.

The European Union should view the issue of immigration holistically, seeking the best possible perspective. Beyond the need to develop forms of diplomacy focusing on migration, there lies the strengthening of a spirit of human security and social justice. In view of the current situation, and to evaluate it in a long-term future perspective, policy makers and academics will probably need to discuss the nation-state model, which Europe has adopted over the last two centuries.

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