

## Resolve the Obstacle of Informal Work

### A Good Practice Story from Chania, Greece



Migrants are employed as caregivers, but little is known about this workforce. Their contribution has undoubtedly been great, but what is happening to them during this long pandemic?

One day we will all be old, and some of us might need help from family members or migrant care workers. It is important to remember the migrants that provide elderly care services during a pandemic. Without their contribution, our society would not function. The domestic and care sector is dominated by migrant woman, who in some cases have left behind their own family and relatives. Working informally during the pandemic, migrant care workers in Greece are excluded from the aid measures and benefits provided by the Greek government.

### The Story of Lela

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*My name is Lela. I arrived in Greece in 2014. My husband was here before since 1993. We have 3 daughters studying at the University of Tirana. I left my country to support my daughters' studies. My husband was tired of being alone and far from his family all these years, supporting us in Albania, so he asked me to join him. Our daughters are now adults, but they still need help to finish their studies.*

*For me, **language and access to legal documents** was the key to integration. Initially, I bought a spelling book to learn some basic Greek for communication purposes.*

*I spent eighteen months with a family in Corinth. They were an elderly couple with health problem (psychological problems) - I tried to understand them and adapt to the situation, and to provide emotional support to them.*

#### **How I did this job**

*I told them my story and they told me theirs; we built a very **good relationship**. I don't want to hide that sometimes I **didn't feel very safe**, but I had to remain and adapt to the situation. We always had long conversations. Speaking the same language helped the situation a lot. The couple was bilingual, so I was able to communicate with them.*

*Two years later, in 2016, I arrived in Chania (we kept in touch for the first year, they phoned me sometimes).*

*On 2015 my husband lost his status as a Greek expatriate, during an interview with the commission. He applied and received a residence permit for 2 years. I applied after him in 2016, for residence for the due to my husband's low income. I was advised by the*

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*authority to go back to Albania and to apply for family reunification from there. **I remained here due to a lack of financial resources; we had to support 3 daughters to continue their studies in Tirana, but also my husband was not able to earn more to support my application.***

*We found a lawyer in Athens who took over our case and advised us to keep all the proof that I was here continuously. During these 7 years I have had to work illegally, therefore the payment was very low, 500 per month. **I am not very sure what will happen after 7 years of waiting, and I don't know what will happen if I will get ill, as I have never been to the hospital during those 6 years of waiting (I am 50 years old).***

*The waiting time of 7 years is too long. Being undocumented all these years, it was impossible to integrate myself. Without official documents, nobody can hire you, it is not possible to attend any training courses, and of course the payment is very low.*

*I feel myself very good with Greek people.*

*Language is still a problem when speaking to the authorities to access documents for family reunification. My only option is to work as a family care worker.*

*Under the condition below, I will hopefully be able to receive my residence permit after 7 years.*



## Legal Information



*5.1a Exceptional reasons / Seven years of residence article 31 par.4 (Law 4540/2018) Duration: 3 years*

*A basic condition for obtaining a permit for Exceptional Reasons / 7 years is a continuous seven-year stay in the country before submitting the application. Any absences should not exceed six (6) months in the total of seven years.*

*1. An exact photocopy of all pages of passports or travel documents that cover at least the period of the previous seven years (7 years) from the application.*

*2. Electronic payment of 300 euros (par. Code 2108)*

*3. Documents of certain date, on the basis of which the seven-year residence in the country is calculated:*

*(a) Proof of attendance at public educational institutions in Greece of themselves or their children*

*(b) Proof of application for a temporary or permanent residence permit or international protection status*

*(c) Work permit or proof of work permit application*

*(d) Copies of rejection decisions on applications for the issuance or renewal of a residence permit*

*(e) Previous residence permits regardless of their issuing authority*

*(f) Copies of tax returns of previous years, legally and on time submitted*

*(g) Copy of VAT return*

*(h) Proof of insurance in a Greek main insurance company*

*(i) Health booklets*

*(j) Accounts of utility organizations as well as mobile or fixed telephony in the name of the applicant, issued by providers of any legal form, accounts of credit institutions under the supervision of the Bank of Greece*

*(k) Receipts of transfer of remittances to the countries of origin, through credit institutions, intermediation companies in the transfer of funds, foreign exchange and payment services, according to Law 3862/2010, which are supervised by the Bank of Greece*

*(l) Certificates of attendance of Greek language courses by public educational institutions or by N.P.I.D. supervised by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religions*

*(m) Judicial decisions*

*(n) Decisions of administrative expulsion or return, which have not been executed, declarations of registrations, proof of hospitalization in hospitals*

*(o) Notarial documents drawn up in the presence of the applicant*

*(o) Excerpt from the book of crimes and incidents kept by the Police Department*

*(p) Service notes, ordering departure from the country*

*(p) Certificate for the issuance of a public transport card*

*(s) Other documents issued by a public authority*

*(t) Other private documents, other than responsible statements, which are endorsed by a notary or other civil servant as to the date of their issuance or when their substantive content is mentioned in a public document or when there is other fact date. The visa is made by noting on the document the word "considered" and the date.*

*4. Supporting documents for the issuance of the card:*

*(a) Four (4) recent, color passport type photographs (40x60mm without frame / high resolution / on white background / neutral expression etc.) as well as in digital format on optical storage disc (CD) in JPEG 2000 graphic format.*

*(b) Fee for a standalone document card 16 euros (e-payment / code 2119).*

*(c) An official public document of the country of birth or origin officially certified and translated from which the place of birth is clearly indicated. The translation must also indicate the place of birth in Latin characters. (Presented only if the passport does not show the city of birth in Latin characters)*