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The Stratification of Citizenship in Europe: Citizenship Versus Irregularity

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Abstract

Citizenship functions not only to connect the individual to the sovereign state, but acts to induce feelings of belonging to a certain society. In this scope, managing the irregularity of migrants positions citizenship as a form of gatekeeping, controlling access to society and restraining those who seek it from accessing social membership. In this article, I outline the process by which European stratified citizenship has resulted in the loss of access to rights. This outline will serve to demonstrate how irregularity management strategies, be they high intensity criminalisation strategies as reflected throughout the EU or low intensity with integration measures as seen in Portugal, cumulate in the denial (or concession) of certain categories of people from citizenship.

Keywords: irregularity; citizenship; stratification; EU high intensity criminalisation

1. Introduction

Over recent years, public discourse has become increasingly fixated upon migration-related issues. Such discussions have been particularly prevalent among politicians and in the world of academia[1]. This discourse has revolved around not only the ever-changing phenomenon of international migration, but has embraced wider concerns

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[1] This article is an excerpt from the PhD thesis of the author. GUIA, Maria João, PhD Thesis. *Immigration, 'Crimmigration' and Violent Crimes. The Convicted Inmates and the Representations of Immigration and Crime*. University of Coimbra, 2015. The author wants to express her gratitude to João Pedroso.