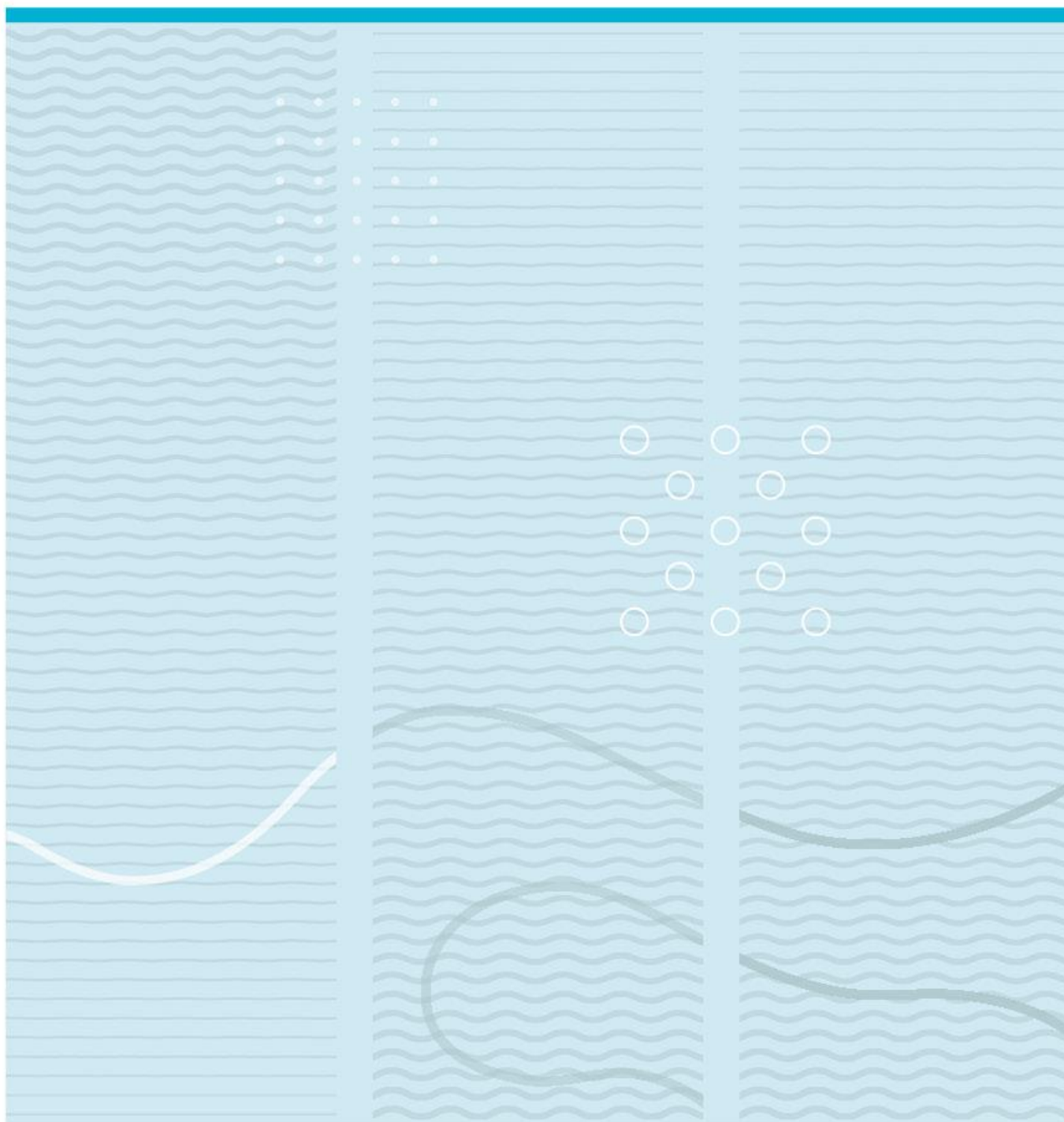


Eleni Kelaraki

# The role of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greece

A critical analysis based on migrants' and refugees' perceptions on integration and participatory parity.



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This thesis is worth 45 study points

## Abstract

In 2020, Greece adopted its third National Strategy for social integration of asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries. Nevertheless, despite the salience that migration has received in the country due to the number of people who have arrived and the poor management of the situation by the Greek government particularly after the so-called “refugee-crisis” of 2015, the initiatives taken by the state have been reported to be scarce and stagnant. In this light, civil society organizations have substituted for the state to address urgencies connected to the presence of refugees and migrants in the country. The purpose of this thesis is to understand how solidarity associations, in the form of refugee and migrant-led organizations, can impact the comprehensive resettlement of refugees and migrants in Greece. For this purpose, I step away from state-constructed perceptions of integration and seek alternate approaches that are based on the participatory parity of refugees and migrants in society. Accordingly, the theoretical underpinnings of this study encompass Willem Schinkel’s critical approach to integration and Nancy Fraser’s theory on social justice, focusing primarily on the notion of participatory parity and recognition. Furthermore, this study is developed based on six semi-structured interviews conducted with leaders and members of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Athens, Greece. For the analysis of the collected data, Reflexive Thematic Analysis as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2022) was employed, and resulted in the development of four main themes; “It’s possible only for white people”, “A dog was helping us”, “If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are also necessary in Omonia”, “You have to move in quicksand without sinking”. Underlying all four themes is the understanding that the subordination of refugees and migrants as social actors in Greece originates primarily from the negation of the Greek state to accept that refugees and migrants reside permanently in the country, and thus that the composition of Greek society is and will continue to change. In this light, I argue that the presence of refugee and migrant-led organizations is essential for the comprehensive resettlement and the enhancement of participatory parity of refugees and migrants in the country.

Key words: integration, refugee-led organizations, migrant-led organizations, social justice, participatory parity, recognition



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Dedicated to the members of the migrant and refugee-led organizations who have contributed with their participation and meaningful insight to the development of this thesis.

## Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DG HOME	Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (European Commission)
EU	European Union
GD	Golden Dawn
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MIC	Migrant Integration Council
MLO	Migrant-Led Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RLO	Refugee-Led Organization
TA	Thematic Analysis
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introductory Context

Philoxenia, the Greek word for hospitality is considered to be an essential virtue of the Greek culture. It is portrayed as “part of our DNA”, that stems from ancient Greece and generates a sense of pride among the Greek population (Newsroom, 2021). In its ancient understanding, philoxenia pertained to the ethical obligation to welcome and treat all foreigners, independent of social status, with dignity (Michailidou, 2021). To this day, it is often employed by Greek institutions to negate the existence of racism and xenophobia in the country. An emblematic example of this application is a speech given by former Prime Minister of Greece, Antonios Samaras in 2013:

[..] Greek culture is an opponent of racism [..] From the depths of the centuries...For the Greeks, their common identity was above all a community of Education and Culture. Thus, racism was never part of the Greek identity! [..] Because their tradition does not allow it. Because there are very strong antibodies in our DNA, in our genes, that fight this "virus". (TA NEA, 2013)

Nevertheless, the Greek state has encountered a severe amount of backlash both internationally and locally for the way it has addressed the presence of refugees and migrants within its borders, particularly since the so-called refugee crisis of 2015 (Amnesty International, 2021; Greek Council for Refugees, 2023). Indeed, philoxenia has been employed by the state to justify the practices undertaken to manage the arrival and settlement of migrants and refugees in the country (Cheliotis, 2013, p. 738). Notwithstanding the benevolent connotation connected with the term, Rozakou argues that philoxenia espouses implicit ethnocentrism by producing a hierarchical classification between the “host” and the “guest” (2012, p. 565). This categorization aims at controlling the latter by positioning them in a state of moral debt to mimic the identity of the host as an act of gratitude for their hospitality (Rozakou, 2012, p. 565). In the case of refugees and migrants their heterogenous identity is tolerated as long as they do not assert claims for recognition within the “host society” (Papataxiarchis, 2014, p. 49). However, when they decide to settle in society, this conditional acceptance of their diverse identity is followed by a demand for integration, that rather resembles what one could call

assimilation. Thus, Papataxiarchis argues that philoxenia and xenophobia in Greece constitute “two sides of the same coin” (2014, p. 49).

By and large, in Europe the concept of integration is widely employed in policy discourse related to issues pertaining to the resettlement of people, who arrive in the region under the label “refugee” or “migrant”. The normative perception of the concept calls for sufficiency within the domains of employment, accommodation, education, and health, through the implementation of a “two-way approach” creating rights and obligations for the state and the individual (European Commission, 2020). Nevertheless, states employ diverse requirements for integration based on their socio-economic background (Rytter, 2019, p. 680). These manifold interpretations lead to conspicuous readings of the concept (Grillo, 2011, p. 266) and delineate the ambiguity of the practices of the European countries. Moreover, the feature of the “two-way approach” that demarcates integration from assimilation, does not materialize in practice, if one considers that the statistical indexes often used to measure integration and the integration programs that are applied in many European countries do not take into account the population that has already been residing in the country. In the words of Willem Schinkel what this signifies is that the measurement of integration does not produce distinctions between persons “‘well integrated’ and persons “not well integrated”, but between *those for whom “integration” is an issue at all and those for whom it is not*” (Schinkel, 2019, p. 103).

In Greece, the aforementioned discourse regarding philoxenia, albeit the hegemonic perceptions implicit in Greek society about the “the host” and “the guest”, also annotate an element of temporality, which I wish to develop further later in this thesis. What is important to highlight for now is that the national Greek identity plays a fundamental role in understanding the dynamics of migration in Greece, as it annotates practices pertaining to the criminalization of migration, e.g., the Evros fence on the border to Turkiye (Grigoriadis & Dilek, 2019) and sheds light on the rationale behind the critical delay on behalf of the Greek state to take action concerning the settlement of refugees and migrants, despite their presence in the country for many years, particularly after the early 1990s (Kalogeraki, 2020, p. 782).

By cause of this delay, the field of migration has been highly influenced by the emergence of “a rich, active, and increasingly vocal civil society” (Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2009). These organizations have gradually transformed into a substitute for the Greek state aiming to address urgencies associated with the presence of refugees and migrants in the country referring particularly to their social inclusion; support; protection of rights; and confrontation of racist and xenophobic sentiments in the country (Skleparis, 2015). This transformation is embedded in the accessibility to EU funding, as well as the mobilization of these organizations in the early 2000s (Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2009).

Over the years, the salience of certain associations has contributed to the establishment of a conspicuous taxonomy of civil society organizations (CSOs). More specifically, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are considered essential within the field of migration because of their operation as intermediary bodies between migrants and the state (Varouxi, 2008, p. 43) and due to their efforts to shift the public discourse around migration in the country (Harokopio University, 2009, pp. A11–A12). Conversely, refugee and migrant-led organizations (RLOs and MLOs) are not accredited to the same prominence. Their dynamic is contingent on the structure and operation of the state (A. G. Papadopoulos et al., 2013, p. 344). Hence, the measures and practices of securitization adopted by Greece, not just after 2015 but since the early 1990s, as well as the exclusionary discourse, employed by government officials against refugees and migrants (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2023; vouliwatch, 2020), contest the competency of RLOs and MLOs in the country.

Accordingly, scholars who work within the field of migration in Greece, when analyzing the dynamism of civil society organizations, tend to focus on the asymmetries between the different organizations, NGOs and refugee and migrant-led organizations, focusing largely on their efficacy (Harokopio University, 2009; A. G. Papadopoulos et al., 2013), and gravitating away from examining the bedrock of the operation of these organizations, which embodies a complex architecture of policies, values, and preconceptions related to integration. In this light, there is a need to reflect upon the discourse promoted by the Greek state regarding integration and what this entails for the participatory parity of refugees and migrants who reside in the country. Thus, in this

thesis, I aspire to explore the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations regarding the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece through a different lens, by understanding integration as an apparatus to support the preservation of the homogenous Greek identity and a tool to impede the flourishing of diversity within the country.

This journey is guided by Willem Schinkel's critical approach to integration and Nancy Fraser's theory on participatory parity and recognition. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention that this thesis is largely informed by the thought-provoking conversations I had with the participants of this study. Therefore, in Chapter 5 I have consciously opted for including extensive quotes expressed by the interviewees as a form of respect to their work and effort in the challenging societal fabric of Greece.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Study & Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to understand how solidarity associations, in the form of MLOs and RLOs, stemming from people who have had similar experiences migrating to Greece, can facilitate the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country. Thus, it is crucial to examine the context within which these forms of comradeship develop and sustain themselves within the centralized Greek system (Papadopoulos et al., 2013, p. 344). Furthermore, with this research, I seek alternate perspectives to integration contrary to the way, it is currently illustrated by the Greek state, by highlighting the component of participatory parity of refugees and migrants in Greek society. In this light, the study's relevance to human rights and multiculturalism lies in the exploration of diverse ways to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights of refugees and migrants living in Greece, through emancipatory initiatives in the form of organizations, that also contribute to the enhancement of pluralism in Greek society.

Accordingly, the research questions that inform this thesis are:

1. How can the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations impact integration of refugees and migrants in Greece, through their operation and their interaction with the state on a local and national level?
2. How do migrants and refugees perceive the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations in terms of integration in Greece?
3. How do refugee and migrant-led organizations affect the participatory parity of migrants and refugees in Greece?

Lastly, the main objective of this thesis is to contribute to the inauguration of a meaningful and honest dialogue between actors in Greek society about the strengths and frailties within, and the pressing need to be more open and receptive to difference.

### 1.3 Definitions

Before proceeding with the study, it is essential to provide clarifications of some key-terms, prevalent throughout this thesis.

**Refugees and Migrants:** In the international protection regime, the terms “refugee” and “migrant” imply two separate classifications of people who cross borders. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2016b), the two terms are dichotomized based on the nature of the movement; whether it is characterized as “forced” due to persecution or “voluntary”, predicated on financial grounds. Nevertheless, scholars within migration studies acknowledge that this rigorous binary classification of people into two clusters, given today’s migration flows, does not encompass the reality of movement beyond borders, considering that relocation is not a static process neither is the justification behind it (Abdelaaty & Hamlin, 2022, p. 234). Moreover, taking into account Zetter’s understanding of labels, and the inherent power structures within, the terms “refugee” and “migrant” are employed in this study to highlight that, even though labelling is inevitable in public policy (Zetter, 1991, p. 59), there is no implicit hierarchical structure that considers people who belong to one category as superior or “more deserving” than the other within a society. (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 60)

**Refugee and Migrant-Led Organizations (RLOs & MLOs):** These terms are employed to provide an operational definition for the organizations, whose members participated in this research project. I consider as RLOs and MLOs all the organizations, that have been created by refugees and/or migrants in Greece, regardless of status (formal or informal) and nationality of members. Nevertheless, it is important to give prominence to the terminology that some of the participants employed to identify their organizations. They referred to them as community-based, on the grounds that when they were established, the primary focus was to support people coming from their own country of birth, independently of the status with which they came to Greece, i.e., as refugees or migrants.

However, considering that not all of the participants identified their respective organizations with this term, I have chosen to apply the terminology “refugee and migrant-led organizations” to refer to all, as I believe that they can also be considered community-based entities.

**Integration:** My understanding of integration is informed by Willem Schinkel as a framework that reinforces an image of society as a homogenous entity, by contributing to the construction of a boundary that generates hierarchies within the population and separates society from its outside (2018, p. 66). Simultaneously, I understand integration as a normative domain, which signifies the resettlement of people, who have arrived in Greece as refugees or migrants. Acknowledging that this binary understanding can be controversial, in the thesis I argue that Greece has not addressed the resettlement of refugees and migrants as it ought to, and thus I use this term to also signify the accommodation of refugees’ and migrants’ rights in Greece, rather than endorse the exclusionary character of the concept when used by the state to ostracize people from society.

**Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):** Even though it is an ambiguous concept, in this thesis I use the definition of CSOs provided by the UN, which incorporates entities that do not prioritize profit and includes a variety of organizations, from community-based organizations to NGOs (UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework, n.d.).

## 1.4 Methodology

To address my research questions; how can the work of RLOs and MLOs impact the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece, through their operation and interaction with the state on a local and national level, how do refugees and migrants perceive the role of these organizations in terms of integration in Greece, and how do refugee and migrant-led organizations affect to the participatory parity of migrants and refugees in Greece, I conducted semi-structured interviews with six members of such organizations in Athens. Even though there was no limitation in this project for the participants to be either refugees or migrants, all six interviewees happened to have arrived in Greece in ways that could be allocated under the broader definition of these two terms. For the analysis of these interviews, I employed Reflexive Thematic Analysis, approached by Braun and Clarke (2022), to develop the themes that inform this thesis. An in-depth



analysis of the methodology employed in this study is given in Chapter 4. Finally, the complete project was approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (Sikt).

## 1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is developed in six main chapters in order to understand how the work of RLOs and MLOs can impact the integration and participation of refugees and migrants in Greece. In light of this, the chapters of this study are outlined as follows; Chapter One provides a general overview of the study, by including a background within which the research topic is analyzed, its purpose and research questions, the methodology employed, and operative definitions of essential terms that are used in this thesis. Chapter Two encompasses the literature review and illustrates key perspectives to integration, prevalent in Europe. It also encompasses an account of the Greek context within which refugee and migrant-led organizations are required to operate and an overview of the civil society frame in Greece. Chapter Three outlines the theoretical foundation of this thesis, which embodies Willem Schinkel's approach to critical integration in conjunction with Nancy Fraser's theory on Recognition and participatory parity. Chapter Four offers an in-depth analysis of the methodology adopted for this research. Chapter Five includes the findings and analysis, and Chapter Six formulates the final section of this thesis and includes concluding remarks.

## 2 Literature Review

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the literature addressing aspects that I consider to be essential in supplementing the topic of this thesis. In this regard, this section begins with the illustration of diverse understandings of the concept of integration; from multicultural and more mainstream to more critical approaches. Furthermore, it provides an overview of the Greek context, which is crucial in order to understand the background within which refugees and migrants, and subsequently, refugee and migrant-led organizations are required to operate. Lastly, in this section I present the main actors that support the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country, emphasizing on the existing literature referring to refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greece.

### 2.1 Key Perspectives on Integration

The concept of integration has been vastly employed in European academic and public discourse regarding migrants and their existence in European societies. Being closely connected to assimilation, integration has been perceived as “the lesser of two evils”, because it is perceived to provide the possibility to preserve a person’s integrity, which is not feasible in the process of assimilation (Sayad, 2004, pp. 221–222). Given the extensive research that has been done on integration, it is considered to incorporate a variety of meanings and interpretations, depending on the context it is applied to, which makes it “exceptionally unclear” at its core (Rytter, 2019, pp. 680, 682). In this context, Adrian Favell points out:

The concept encompasses a very wide range of policy interventions and legal mechanisms including formal naturalization and citizenship processes, the incorporation of associations and third-sector organizations, anti-discrimination and equal opportunities in education and the labour market, inclusion in housing and social policy, law and order issues, as well as policies promoting cultural diversity. (2022, p. 8)

Integration has also been debated from a multicultural perspective. For instance, Will Kymlicka, as well as Tariq Modood, discuss integration in a broader context, concerned with minority claims in a majoritarian society. Kymlicka (2018), as a liberal

multiculturalist, perceives integration as one of the processes to accommodate minority claims. In his approach, he argues that diverse minority rights should not be addressed with one policy but separately, depending on the “particular political process” that led to the sovereignty of the state over a particular minority group (Kymlicka, 2018, p. 84). Thus, he accentuates the role of the state in its relation to the minority groups residing in it (2018, p. 82). He argues that “We can only identify legitimate minority claims [...] if we first have some workable account of the state [...]” (2018, p. 82). He suggests a two-way approach, based on “individual autonomy and responsibility”, to be applicable in all forms of state-minority relations (Kymlicka, 2018, p. 81). To be more precise, the author suggests that “liberal multiculturalism rests on a moral division of labour”; where the individual’s right to culture, language, and identity is recognized, and at the same time, responsibilities for both the state and the individual are generated (2018, p. 81). In accord with this, Kymlicka proposes a “normative theory of minority rights”, which emphasizes the connection between the state’s initiatives to ensure minority claims and the legality of the “particular political process” that justifies the state’s domination over the respective minority (2018, p. 84). As an example, he discusses the claims for indigenous rights, acknowledging the severe impact that colonization has inflicted upon indigenous peoples. Against this backdrop, a normative theory would have to address these claims with reference to the multiple ways in which colonialism impaired the indigenous peoples’ lives, amongst which one should consider the acquisition of territory, subordination, and extinction (2018, p. 84). Concerning migrants’ rights, Kymlicka argues that the “particular political process” differs, thus, the claims cannot be the same as those of indigenous peoples (2018, p. 85). He states: “Enabling immigrants to assert self-governing rights over a particular chunk of state’s territory would in effect be allowing them to colonize a part of the territory of the state” (Kymlicka, 2018, p. 85). Therefore, he proposes to ensure migrants’ claims through “the fair terms of multicultural integration into the host society”, in which the state will have the responsibility “to recognize and accommodate the identities and practices of immigrants” (2018, p. 85). Drawing from this, Kymlicka’s approach to minority rights (in which he includes migrant rights), accentuates the position of the state and the evaluation of its sovereignty over a minority before attending to the claims of the group in question. Simultaneously, he

argues for the individual autonomy of each person within a state concerning their access to cultural rights.

Tariq Modood (2013) also suggests a two-way process of integration, which is not, however, emphasizing immensely the position of the state. He acknowledges the plurality in groups, identities, and forms that can exist in a particular society and argues that a “single sociological model” would not suffice to comprehend the plethora of identities in a multicultural society (Modood, 2013, p. 42). Thus, in his approach, integration should endorse the diversity existing in the different groups that reside in society and simultaneously create “new forms of belonging to citizenship and country” by incorporating minority practices into the ones already formulated by the majority in the society (2013, pp. 44–45).

Contrarily to Kymlicka’s understanding, which focuses more on individual autonomy and responsibility, Modood accentuates the preservation of groups’ identities in the “host” society. In light of these approaches, Willem Schinkel brings a more critical perspective concerning the European setting. He suggests that a lot of research pertaining to integration in Europe is built upon a failed attempt to implement multicultural policies (Schinkel, 2019, p. 6). However, he argues that multiculturalism was never realized in Europe and consequently, the concept is only utilized to justify the problematization of migrants residing in the region. Thus, for Schinkel, integration operates as a contributing factor to the “hegemonic constructions of national society versus non-belonging cultural aliens” (2019, p. 6).

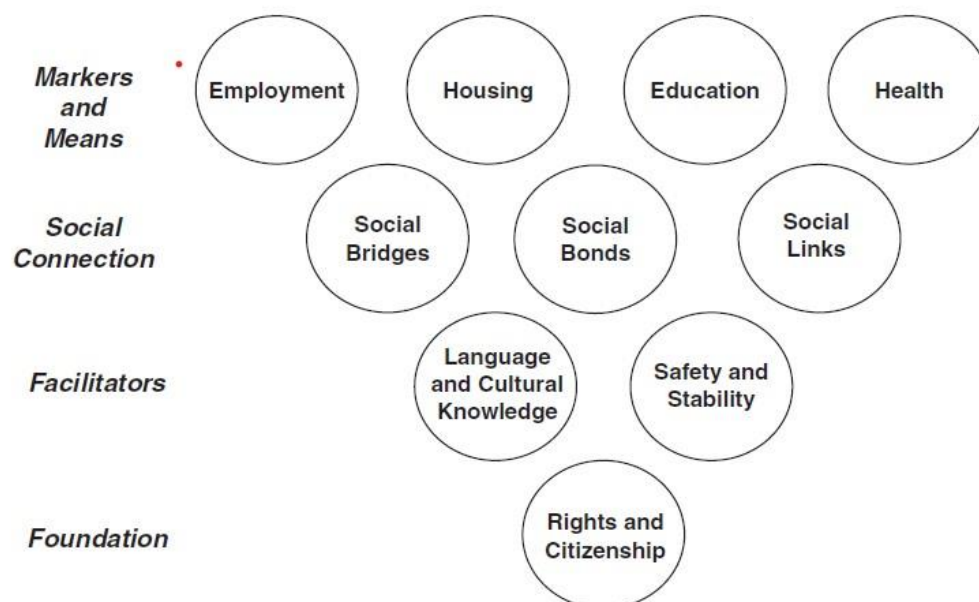
Conversely, Ager and Strang (2008) look at integration in a more policy-oriented fashion. They have developed a model, which they call the “conceptual framework of integration”, that operates as a “middle-range theory” to provide a comprehensive, normative understanding of integration (2008, p. 167). Their model incorporates ten domains, which are considered essential for successful integration and are presented in the shape of an inverted pyramid as shown in Figure 1.

Notwithstanding the extensive prevailing literature on integration, I have chosen to include this framework, because it has played an important role in policy formulation in the UK and Europe in general (2008, p. 185). However, it is important to point out that

for the sake of brevity, I am not going to analyse this framework in depth. Rather, I wish to shortly outline the four broader categories that incorporate the ten domains of the pyramid.

**Figure 1.** *A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration*

**A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration**



*Note.* Adapted from “Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework,” by A. Ager and A. Strang, 2008, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(2), p. 166–191 <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fen016>.

In this model, Ager and Strang have illustrated the ten factors that they consider to be the core elements of a successful integration policy, divided into four larger groups (2008, p. 166). Starting from the bottom, “Foundation” includes domains related to the legal recognition of migrants in society (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 173). Underlying an effective policy on migration is the definition of the notions of nationhood and citizenship by the state, which in turn delineate the rights of migrants in that country (2008, p. 175). Above “Foundation”, the authors have placed “Facilitators” and “Social Connection”. The former entails domains that facilitate the elimination of “barriers” to integration, pertaining to cultural elements and the quality of life of migrants in society (2008, p. 181). The latter incorporates elements that “drive the process of integration”, through the connections that migrants develop on a local level with the community, family, and the state. The

authors indicate that “Facilitators” and “Social Connection” operate as “connective tissue” between the two ends of the pyramid (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 177). Lastly, at the top of the pyramid, Ager and Strang have placed the “Markers and Means”, which describe four “key areas of activity” that, according to the researchers, can facilitate “successful integration”; namely, employment, housing, education, and health (2008, p. 169). The authors argue that the framework can be widely applicable due to the fuzzy nature of the suggested domains and can also be intertemporal, by using different “indicators for domains, as appropriate – in a single setting over time” (2008, p. 185).

Reflecting on this framework, Adrian Favell has emphasized that it is employed to “measure the behaviour or performance of new migrants against established populations” (2022, p. 9). Moreover, he argues that, even though society is portrayed as a pre-existing entity compared to the migrants who arrive in the country, the meaning of the notion of society is not clearly stated, and the researchers neglect to address “the kind of state and political power necessary to imagine governing institutions able to create a functioning society” (Favell, 2022, p. 9). Lastly, Favell suggests that the framework is created for the evaluation of integration policies by state institutions and that within academia, it contributes to the establishment of a “‘normal science’ of immigrant integration that fills migration studies and increasingly mainstream social science journals” (2022, pp. 9–10).

The perspectives presented in this section differ from the approach I have chosen for this thesis. Given the scope of this study to explore the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations, I argue that it is essential to take a step back from the state-structured conceptions of integration, and look for alternate approaches to the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the society, that also entail a rigorous analysis of the society within which they reside. Therefore, in this thesis, I apply Willem Schinkel’s approach to integration; as a coordinating concept that contributes to an imagination of society as a whole consisting of parts, that is also distinctive to its outside (Schinkel, 2019, p. 43).

## 2.2 Greece & Migration

### 2.2.1 The “Greekness” effect

Migration in the context of Greece has taken many shapes and forms. Ample literature indicates that the country was not concerned with the vast movement of people until the end of the Cold War. More specifically, it is characterized as an “emigration country” until the beginning of the 1990s, when it gradually transformed into a “migration country”, due to the observed increase in the number of people arriving primarily from Albania and Eastern Europe (Labrianidis et al., 2004, p. 1184; Maroukis, 2005, p. 214; Sapountzis et al., 2013, p. 351).

The country’s geographic position is accentuated when analysing the backdrop of migration, portraying it as a unique case within Europe (Cheliotis, 2013, p. 726; Hatziprokopiou, 2006, p. 49). In this regard, scholars have suggested that Greece holds a superior geopolitical post to its neighbouring countries in the Balkan region by stating that it plays “[..] the function of the “North” in the Balkans, while at the same time remaining the “South” for the “North” [..]” (Labrianidis et al., 2004, p. 1203).

This element of “uniqueness” is a big part of the national Greek identity, fabricated on the components of language, culture, religion, and genealogy that have been employed to underline its unity, since the country gained its independence in 1830 (King et al., 2000, p. 190). It is then precisely this imagination of the Greek nation that almost naturally constructs a nexus between “Us” and “Others”. Triandafyllidou argues that when the “Others” are present within the country’s territorial borders, particularly in the form of migrants, this element of uniqueness is set into motion and becomes actively reaffirmed to ensure the unity of the nation (King et al., 2000, p. 189).

The perception of the migrant as a “threat” has been continuously analyzed in public discourse about the securitization of migration in Greece. Papatzani identifies that already in the beginning of the 1990s, the arrival of people from Albania and Eastern Europe was characterized by their portrayal as the dangerous “Other” both in media and in political discourse (2021, p. 65). Accordingly, Karyotis highlights the instrumentalization of migrants to justify the upsurge in unemployment and criminality

in the country during the same period (2005, pp. 148–153). Furthermore, Karyotis and Skleparis underline the fortification of the borders and the protection of the national identity as the primary concerns expressed in the political arena around the same time (2014, p. 689). In addition, a more recent study looking into this phenomenon in the time frame from 2011 to 2019 actively shows that the preservation of the Greek identity is still at the forefront of the dominant political discourse regarding migration in the country (Dimari, 2020, p. 9).

The development of the Greek law about migration further depicts the othering of refugees and migrants in Greece. Hatziprokopiou underlines that the legal framework in effect when people started arriving in Greece in the early 1990s, dated back to 1929 (2006, p. 54). In 1991, the government adopted a new policy rooted in Law 1975/1991, which failed “to address the new situation realistically, as there were no provisions for the legalization of migrants already present in the country” and consequently, further exacerbated the already vulnerable position of thousands of people (Hatziprokopiou, 2006, p. 54). Karyotis and Skleparis argue that the provisions of this law further contributed to the criminalization of migrants, by excluding them from welfare services and proscribing any form of solidarity stemming from the private sector (2014, p. 689). Furthermore, Karydis (1996) demonstrates that the substance of the law influenced the depiction of migrants and refugees as “illegal” criminals, which was fortified through the use of mass arrests and deportations, referred to as “skoupa” [broom] (as cited in Hatziprokopiou, 2006, p. 54).

Underlying this law, is the understanding that refugees and migrants were present in the country before the 1990s but the Greek state refused to take action until the numbers indicated the eminence of the issue. Nevertheless, the first Asylum Service in Greece was not founded until 2011 under Law 3907/2011 (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021c), which further indicates the neglect of the Greek state about the precarious situation that thousands of people were experiencing within its borders. Eight years after the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, Greece continuously employs “a state of exception” (Agamben, 1998, p. 170) with respect to the protection of the rights of refugees and migrants who reside or attempt to enter the country from countries of the Global South (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Simultaneously the Greek state actively



displays an enhanced stance towards people arriving from Ukraine since the beginning of the war in February 2022 (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2022b).

It goes without saying that the securitization of migration has cultivated extreme violations of the human rights of migrants and refugees in the country. Nevertheless, understanding how the imagination of the homogenous Greek identity operates vis-à-vis the presence of migrants in Greece is imperative for the discussion of the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greek society, particularly with reference to their work regarding the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country. Thus, in the next section I further illustrate how this identity is epitomized in Greek politics by providing an overview of the country's trajectory towards extreme right-wing ideologies.

### 2.2.2 The rise of right-wing extremism in Greece

The fixation on the “uniqueness” of the Greek nation became more prevalent with the eruption of the financial crisis in the country after 2008. Extreme right-wing populism emanated in the Greek political arena, through the emergence of parties like the Popular Orthodox Rally, Independent Greeks, and Greek Solution. Together with New Democracy, which is currently in power, these parties have contributed to the “normalization of racist discourses in institutional politics and media coverage” in the country (Papatzani, 2021, p. 62).

Among other repercussions of the economic crisis was also the resurgence of the neo-Nazi organization Golden Dawn (GD), whose presence explicitly reinvigorated fascism through the practices and symbols it embraced (Toloudis, 2014, p. 39). Before delving into their influence in Greek migration discourse, it is important to accentuate that in October 2020, GD was proscribed as a criminal organization, following charges for the assault against Egyptian fishermen in the area of Perama, the murder of anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas, and the assault against the Trade Union Front PAME (Smith, 2020; Tessi, 2020). Thus, henceforth, in this thesis, I choose to refer to Golden Dawn as a criminal Neo-Nazi organization.

Despite its existence since the 1980s, Golden Dawn, by exploiting the repercussions of the economic crisis, introduced itself as an alternative solution within

the Greek party system (Lefkaditou, 2017, p. 330; Toloudis, 2014, p. 40), and culminated in becoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> strongest political party in the Greek parliament by 2013 (Koronaïou & Sakellariou, 2013, p. 332). Plenty of existing literature points to the tactics, employed to portray GD as the savior of the Greek people, e.g., distribution of food to poor Greek families and organization of blood donations “only for Greeks” (Koronaïou & Sakellariou, 2013, pp. 333–336). A big part of their discourse and activity throughout the years was connected to radical anti-immigrant sentiments which in many cases were followed by attacks and murders of migrants in the country, e.g., the murder of Shehzad Luqman, a Pakistani 27-year-old man, stabbed by members of Golden Dawn in the area of Petralona, Athens in 2013 (BBC News, 2014). Moreover, the neo-Nazi criminal organization employed rhetoric accusing migrants and refugees for the high unemployment rates in the country using slogans like “Every foreign worker is a Greek unemployed” (Koronaïou & Sakellariou, 2013, p. 335), thus utilizing migrants as scapegoats for the repercussions of the financial crisis.

Considering that GD remained in parliament until 2019, the influence that it has had in the cultivation of radical racist attitudes in the country goes without saying. However, Golden Dawn aside, the Greek political arena appears at large to subscribe to analogous ideologies propagating racist underpinnings in Greek society, through the normalization of practices that defy the country’s legal obligations under international law regarding the protection and promotion of the right to life, equality before the law, non-discrimination etc. An indicative example is the Xenios Zeus program, operated by the Greek police, which targeted and transferred migrants from the streets to the police station for identification purposes, during which “both verbal and physical racist violence [...] was recorded, ranging from the destruction of documents to abuse and beatings” (Papatzani, 2021, p. 66).

Against this backdrop, the practices of Golden Dawn do not constitute an isolated articulation of radical anti-immigrant sentiments in Greek society. These are rather peripheral in the synopsis of institutional and non-institutional practices that exacerbate the position of refugees and migrants, and consequently of the organizations they establish in Greek society, which continue to be implicitly condoned by the Greek state.

In this light, the situation that erupted in Greece after 2015 further illustrates the position of the Greek state regarding migration.

### 2.2.3 The aftermath of 2015

Developments in the international stage led to 65.3 million people being displaced by war and persecution in 2015 (UNHCR, 2016a, p. 2). Out of these; 21.3 million were considered to be refugees, approximately one million of them arrived in Europe (Italy and Greece), while the majority resided in Turkiye, Malaysia, and Jordan (UNHCR, 2016a, p. 40).

Greece has ratified the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol, nevertheless, it belongs to the countries of the Global North, that, as Almustafa (2021) suggests, hesitate to fulfill the commitments they have undertaken regarding refugee protection. Instead, they create frameworks to contain them in their own regions and impede their entrance into Europe, through the implementation of subordinating practices pertaining to “externalization, containment and deterrence” (2021, p. 7).

Particularly after 2015, one can identify all three of the aforementioned practices in the Greek paradigm. The conditions in the camps, established on the islands at the border with Turkiye, e.g., the Moria camp in Lesvos (Edwards, 2016), the new “Closed Controlled Access Centres of Islands” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2020a) that have been created to replace the corresponding camps, as well as the reports of international organizations accusing Greece for the execution of pushbacks (Amnesty International, 2021; UNHCR, 2021b), are only a few instances able to provide an overview of the Greek state’s agenda regarding migration.

In light of this, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing social injustices worldwide (Mezzanotti & Kvalvaag, 2022, p. 277). In Greece, the precarious situation that refugees and migrants were facing, deteriorated severely. Notwithstanding, the scandalous living conditions, that they were experiencing before the pandemic, a study made by Kondilis et al. shows that the vulnerability of the refugee and migrant populations, especially on the Greek islands, was increased due to “severe overcrowding [...] the substandard living conditions and inadequate sanitation services”

in the Reception and Identification Centers (2021, p. 5). Moreover, during that period all asylum procedures were suspended and measures were applied in a discriminatory manner in comparison to the Greek population (Kelaraki, 2021, p. 1).

#### 2.2.4 National Strategy on “Integration”

In this frame, issues concerning the establishment of migrants in Greece has not been a priority for the Greek government (EESC Study Group on Immigration and Integration, 2020, p. 7). The state has surely taken certain steps in this direction, however, as discussed in the following section, these have often not been fully implemented, are lagging behind, or were terminated by the state for various reasons.

To begin with, Greece has published three versions of a National Strategy on “Integration”, in 2013, 2019, and 2021 (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, n.d.). The latter, which is officially called the “National Strategy for social integration of asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries” is based on the “EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a). Briefly, the goal of the strategy is two-fold; “it includes the protection of human rights, with the parallel creation of jobs in critical sectors of the Greek economy and an increase in GDP, in order to benefit Greeks citizens and refugees” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a, p. 2). The plan endorses the rationale of a two-way process, involving both refugees and society. However, it also implies that Greece continues to be a “transit country”, by stating that asylum-seekers and refugees should lead a dignified life “for the time that they are staying in the country[.]” (2021a, p. 1). It is further important to highlight that even though the title of the document suggests the formulation of a process that would facilitate the resettlement of people in the country, the plan does not include any definition regarding what “social integration” means for the Greek state, nor does it include any practical steps or suggestions on how to implement the goals that are set in the strategy.

In addition, the strategy is based on four pillars pertaining to the “pre-integration of asylum seekers”, “social integration of refugees”, “prevention of and protection against violence, exploitation and maltreatment”, and lastly the “measurement of immigrant integration” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a, p. 2). The first two

pillars are also concerned with the “promotion of the European way of life”. Specifically, in the pillar “pre-integration of asylum-seekers”, the promotion of the European way of life constitutes a separate aim, which entails, among other things, the familiarization of asylum-seekers with “democratic institutions and the rule of law”, the promotion of the principle of non-discrimination, and the development of everyday-skills, like cooking, use of public transport, and behavior on the streets (2021a, pp. 9–10). These elements illustrate what Schinkel has suggested regarding the instrumentalization of “integration” as an apparatus employed to classify society from its outside (2019, p. 72). By including provisions regarding migrants’ “familiarization with democratic institutions” and classes about cooking and use of public transport, the Greek state portrays migrants as inferior individuals in need of learning how to perform every-day tasks in the “European way”.

Regarding the initiatives taken to facilitate the establishment of migrants in Greece in practice, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum states that it focuses on various domains, including “accommodation support”, “education”, “professional counseling”, and “civic participation” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2020b). The first three domains are primarily contingent on the HELIOS project (Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection and Temporary Protection), which is organized by the IOM in collaboration with international and Greek agencies, NGOs, and the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (IOM Greece, n.d.). The project is being implemented since June 2019 and provides support primarily to refugees through different activities, such as “integration courses”, “accommodation support”, and “employability support” (IOM Greece, n.d.). It also includes “integration monitoring” to assess the progress of beneficiaries of the project <sup>1</sup>. HELIOS has been scheduled to end on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2023.

Moreover, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, under Law 4368/2016, has established the Migrant Integration Centers (MIC), which take place in ten different municipalities around Greece <sup>2</sup> as part of the respective Community Centers in those regions. Their responsibilities include but are not limited to the provision of certain

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<sup>1</sup> The HELIOS project was funded for approximately 2.5 years by DG Home, but from the start of 2022 the funding falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> According to the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, there are currently 11 Migrant Integration Centers in 10 municipalities of Greece, namely in Athens, Piraeus, Kallithea, Thessaloniki, Kordelio Evosmos, Thiva, Lamia, Andravida Killini, Iraklio and Lesbos (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2020c).

services pertaining to education, e.g., Greek language and culture lessons, as well as, professional counseling and intercultural activities (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2020c). According to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Report published by the Intercultural Mediation Department (2022), which is responsible for the proper functioning and effective organization of the MICs, these are inadequately staffed, which consequently impacts their capacities and work (2022, p. 5,7). Moreover, regarding the assistance that they should provide in terms of education, intercultural activities and professional counseling, only one out of eleven MICs provides assistance in all three domains (the Migrant Integration Center of Athens), whereas four do not offer any type of services, mainly due to financial reasons (Intercultural Mediation Department, 2022, pp. 14–15). Furthermore, even though it was not included in the chapter of the report concerning the issues of these centers, it is important to also mention that Intercultural Mediation, which is one of the responsibilities of the Migrant Integration Centers, is reported to be the least employed of all the facilities that MICS offer (only 40% of the total MICs work with it). Lastly, it is also noted in the report that the persons currently working as Intercultural Mediators are predominantly Greeks (Intercultural Mediation Department, 2022, pp. 6–10).

Regarding the domain of civic participation, the Greek state, based on article 78 of Law 3852/2010, has established the Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils (MRIC), which operate “by decision of the Municipality council”, as “a counseling body on migration and refugee issues” (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021b). Based on article 79 of Law 4555/2018, the MRICs are comprised of 11 members, 6 of whom are municipality counselors, and 5 are representatives of refugees and migrants, who reside in the municipality, and/or representatives of civil society organizations that work on issues pertaining to the support and integration of migrants and refugees (Department of Socio-Economic Integration, 2022, p. 7). Drawing from a report published by the Department of Socio-Economic Integration, despite the presence of this possibility since 2010, there is a limited number of municipalities that have organized MRICs, and the number of meetings they have conducted is correspondingly low (2022, pp. 10, 14). In terms of the agenda discussed in the meetings of the councils, this pertains mostly to the “identification and examination of integration issues” (Department of Socio-Economic Integration, 2022, p. 14).

Considering challenges that encumber the operation of the MRICs, the municipalities identified the lack of entities representing refugees and migrants on a municipality level and their lack of interest, as the main problems (Department of Socio-Economic Integration, 2022, p. 16). They also indicated, among other elements; the language barrier, the lack of funding of the municipalities and the limited responsibilities given to the municipalities by the state regarding the integration of migrants and refugees, as essential matters that impede the work of the Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils in the country (Department of Socio-Economic Integration, 2022, pp. 16–17). Accordingly, the municipalities endorsed the construction of more migrant and refugee representative bodies and the reinforcement of their position and representation in the MRICs, as indicative solutions to the aforementioned problems (2022, p. 17). Overall, the majority of the municipalities (74%) recognized the importance of the contribution of the MRICs regarding the integration of migrants and refugees in the local communities (Department of Socio-Economic Integration, 2022, p. 18).

In terms of accommodation, another project of significant value has been “ESTIA” (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation). As of December 2022, the program is no longer in effect, however, I find it important to include it in this thesis, because alongside HELIOs, these two projects constituted the two most predominant initiatives for the provision of accommodation for refugees and migrants in Greece.

ESTIA started in 2015 through an initiative of the UNHCR, aiming to address the severe housing problem that erupted in Greece at that time, by providing accommodation initially for asylum-seekers who were supposed to be relocated in Europe, and later for vulnerable asylum-seekers in urban areas of Greece (UNHCR, 2021a, p. 4). The program also provided services “such as psychosocial and mental-health support, interpretation, and referral to medical actors” (UNHCR, 2021a, p. 4). After 2017, the project also included another component, the “ESTIA Cash”, which provided financial support to all asylum-seekers in Greece (2021a, p. 2). For the implementation of the project, UNHCR collaborated with international and Greek NGOs, as well as the Greek government, which after September 2021 took over both components (accommodation and financial support) and the program was renamed “ESTIA II” (UNHCR, 2021a, p. 3,8). Until then, ESTIA was co-funded by UNHCR and the EU (2021a, p. 3). Five months later,

the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (2022a) announced that, starting from April 2022 the total participants of “ESTIA II” would be reduced from 27.000, that were included in the program in 2021, to 10.000, “due to the improved situation in migration management” in the country and indicated the definite completion of the program by the end of the year.

In this regard, the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) published a press release in the end of November 2022, stating that the decision of the Greek state to end the project has already had detrimental consequences for the beneficiaries of the program, including among other issues, the loss of jobs, education opportunities for children and social bonds with the local community (Greek Council for Refugees, 2022, p. 1). Given that many people become homeless or have been moved to camps and closed facilities, the end of ESTIA II contributes to their further exclusion from the Greek society, as these facilities are situated far from the urban areas of the country and the living conditions in them are still severely substandard (Greek Council for Refugees, 2022, pp. 1–2). The GCR also questioned the necessity of this measure, given that, according to statistics published by the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, the persons residing in the national reception system comprise only 0.17% of the population of the country (Greek Council for Refugees, 2022, p. 2).

In light of the above, the study group on Immigration and Integration of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has indicated that Greece does not have “a holistic approach to immigrant integration” (EESC Study Group on Immigration and Integration, 2020, p. 8). Moreover, the outcome of both the HELIOS project, and ESTIA and ESTIA II, indicates that the transfer of the responsibility of the programs from international and regional organizations to the Greek state have resulted in the degradation and eventually termination of the programs, creating severe consequences for the people who are in need of this support (ECRE, 2022; MacGregor, 2022). Thus, even though, the Greek state appears to take initiatives, or contribute in the initiatives of international organizations pertaining to integration, civil society organizations are often required to take responsibility to address these issues. It is within this context that the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations is explored in this thesis. The following section pertains to the existing literature regarding the operation of civil society



organizations in Greece, encompassing primarily NGOs and refugee and migrant-led organizations.

## 2.3 Actors in Integration

Within the “dominant humanitarian model”, there is a binary that classifies international organizations and NGOs as providers of humanitarian assistance and refugees or migrants as passive recipients of support (Betts et al., 2018, p. 1; Robinson, 2003, p. 162). Nevertheless, growing scholarship indicates the significance of organizations, created by refugees and migrants, which assist others in their regions (Griffiths et al., 2005, p. 4).

The World Humanitarian Summit, that took place in Istanbul in May 2016 emphasized the need “to reinforce local leadership and ownership” and to include refugees and migrants further in decision-making processes (General Assembly, 2016b, p. 10). During the same year, the UN General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which inaugurated a procedure for the development of two compacts; the Global Compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration, and the Global Compact for Refugees (General Assembly, 2016a, p. 12,21). Moreover, the Declaration encouraged the further inclusion of refugees and migrants as stakeholders in international cooperation throughout various sections of the document, e.g., § 15,39,54,61, and 69 (General Assembly, 2016a). Both frameworks, stemming from the New York Declaration, were adopted in December 2018 (General Assembly, 2018; United Nations, 2018). They are of particular interest for this thesis due to the fact that they foster the notion of self-reliance of refugees and migrants as active members in society (General Assembly, 2018, p. 24, Objective 16; United Nations, 2018, p. 4).

However, in the “international humanitarian system”, organizations created by refugees and migrants are often perceived as “operating partners” of the UNHCR, which signifies that in comparison to international and national NGOs, which are considered as “implementing partners”; they play a nominal role and do not get direct funding to provide services to refugees (Betts et al., 2018, p. 4). Poole (as cited in Robillard et al., 2021, p. 12) has indicated that historically very limited funding (less than 0.3%) has directly been transferred to local actors from the international sector. Hence, refugee

and migrant-led organizations are prevented from efficiently helping migrants and refugees within this “formal humanitarian system” and are often driven to work around it (Betts et al., 2018, p. 5).

Different solutions have been suggested to this issue. To name but a few, Betts et al. propose the establishment of a “global policy framework” to retain a unified approach in the cooperation of international organizations with RLOs (2018, p. 5) and the transformation of the “formal humanitarian system” to a more participatory one, which would include RLOs that would be trained by international organizations and contribute in tasks such as “consultation, consent, co-design, delegation of decision-making authority, self-governance”, but would not be involved in the refugee camps (2018, p. 6). The latter could fall under the umbrella of “the localization of humanitarian assistance”, which has been introduced in connection with the restructuring of the “formal humanitarian system” by empowering more local actors to participate in emergency responses (Roepstorff, 2020, p. 287). Nevertheless, it should be underlined that this approach has been criticized as paternalistic and neocolonial because even though it acknowledges the value of local actors, these are perceived from an outsider’s perspective as a homogenous entity, overlooking the diversity, dynamic and power hierarchies that can exist within the “local” context (Robillard et al., 2021, pp. 14–15). Thus, “localization” in its mainstream approach can run the risk of perpetuating the marginalization of certain actors and the power imbalances that can exist within the humanitarian system (Roepstorff, 2020, p. 288). Lastly, it is important to stress that “localization” can overlook the role of diasporas in this frame, which can be of important value, considering that these groups are not in close proximity to the people in need of their assistance physically, but can share a sense of belonging with them, which can make them more reliable than other groups that are in the same region or country (2021, p. 15).

Leaving the impact of the “localization of humanitarian assistance” aside, refugee and migrant-led organizations are essential in terms of the assistance that they provide to refugees and migrants especially in the long term, when the latter decide to settle in a specific country. Ambrosini and Van der Leun illustrate that civil society organizations immerse in “liminal service provision”, as they offer support to people independent of the status they have been given by the state (2015, p. 106), e.g.; “asylum-seeker”;

“refugee”; “migrant” etc. Simultaneously, the state retains its sovereignty and regulates migration through the policies and initiatives it undertakes. Hence, the two sustain a condition of interdependence between them (2015, p. 107).

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic constituted an indicative circumstance where refugee and migrant-led organizations undertook a substantial role in the assistance of refugees and migrants in their respective areas, by providing among other things “information and training, food distribution, legal support and transportation for those in need of medical care[.]” (Alio et al., 2020, p. 77). These initiatives encompass political actions “motivated by the desire to pursue livelihoods and education for their children and by grievances about treatment by host government authorities, the public, or international humanitarian agencies” (Jacobsen, 2019, p. 26). In this regard, refugees and migrants participate in political action in their new societies “conventionally” or “non-conventionally” (Jacobsen, 2019, p. 27), “formally” or “non-formally” (Bekaj & Antara, 2018, p. 23). In this framework, the “formal” or “conventional” type of political participation entails primarily refugees and migrants’ access to electoral rights and standing as candidates in elections in the country they live (Jacobsen, 2019, p. 27). Notwithstanding the access to electoral participation at the local level, given by some states, i.e., Sweden, (Bekaj & Antara, 2018, p. 35), many others, including Greece (Constitution of Greece, 1975, Art. 51), posit the condition of citizenship for individuals to vote or stand as candidates in any elections. Conversely, other forms of political action that do not entail such legal prerequisites are characterized as “non-conventional” or “informal” and include but are not limited to: participation in consultative bodies, CSOs, protests and grassroot initiatives (Bekaj & Antara, 2018, pp. 25, 49–50), membership in voluntary associations, submitting petitions, forming interest groups (Jacobi, 2021, p. 3), demonstrations, sit-ins, and hunger strikes (Jacobsen, 2019, pp. 27–28).

The engagement of civil society organizations in the resettlement of migrants and refugees in Greece has been illustrated in the previous section of this chapter, through their contribution in projects concerning employability support and accommodation. Moreover, the study group on Immigration and Integration of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) indicates that CSOs in Greece take initiatives “where integration measures are lacking” (2020, p. 8). By connecting the former with domains

such as “employment”, “education”, “housing” and “healthcare” (pp. 8–17), the group argues that these organizations substitute the government to a certain degree by providing language courses to refugees and migrants, thus contributing to their chances of finding a job in the country (p. 8). On a local level, it has been suggested that the municipalities also depend a lot on NGOs to handle issues pertaining to migration in their region (Sabchev, 2021, p. 1444). This happens particularly because of the “centralized Greek administrative system” and the reduced funding given to municipalities from the central government, which have consequently resulted in the attribution of limited power and capabilities to the municipalities, affecting their initiatives regarding migration (2021, p. 1436). Overall, migration is considered to challenge the set norms within a new country of residence, especially regarding the national identity and the reassurance of the right to equal treatment for all (Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2009, p. 4).

### 3 Theoretical Framework

This section of the thesis is concerned with the theories, employed to analyse the findings stemming from the six semi-structured interviews conducted with members of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Athens, Greece. As it was mentioned earlier, this thesis aims to explore the impact that such associations may have regarding the integration of refugees and migrants into Greek society and it attempts to do so by looking at the operation and the interaction that they have with the state on a local and national level. In addition, the study brings to the fore the perceptions that refugees and migrants hold regarding the role of these organizations in Greece and inquires into the contribution of the latter to the participatory parity of migrants and refugees in the country.

In this process, the selected theories that inform this study are Willem Schinkel's conception of integration in combination with Nancy Fraser's theory on recognition and "participatory parity". Reflecting upon the extensive scholarly work that both academics have developed in their respective fields, it is essential to underline that I am employing only a limited segment of those, to inform the topic of this study and explore different aspects of the position of refugees and migrants in Greek society. In light of this, I begin this chapter by discussing integration, illustrated by Schinkel, to outline the image that the Greek society has developed for itself and the impact this has on the operation of RLOs and MLOs in Greece. Subsequently, I present Nancy Fraser's theory on recognition and participatory parity to explore the work of these organizations in the country. In conjunction, the two theories will contribute to the comprehension of this topic from different perspectives, examining not just how RLOs and MLOs operate in Greece but also the context within which they are required to do so.

#### 3.1 Critical perspectives to Integration

In his proposition, Schinkel addresses the relationship between integration and society and especially the use of the former as a defining conceptualization of the latter (2019, p. 5). He draws primarily on the paradigm of the Netherlands, as a Western European country with a vast colonial history, that has been considered to transform

“from a tolerant to a rigorously assimilationist country” (2019, p. 16) within the frame of European multiculturalism. In this context, he argues that the discussion around immigrant integration in Europe came as an answer to a “failed multiculturalism”, which never truly existed. Instead Schinkel introduces the term “multiculturealism” as a “rhetoric that insists that there was a multiculturalism, which failed, and that we should be realists about this instead of politically correct” (2019, p. 6).

Keeping in mind that Greece and the Netherlands do not share similar characteristics nor history, I choose to apply Schinkel’s theory to this study, as he undertakes the concept of “immigrant integration” without examining the ways in which refugees or migrants can integrate into society (Schinkel, 2019, p. 5). Rather, the author analyzes “immigrant integration” in relation to the construction of a specific imagination of “society”, which I firmly believe is applicable also in the case of Greece, due to its continuous self-depiction as a country that its people should be proud to be part of, because of its rich culture, stemming primarily from its ancient history. In order to address this connection between immigrant integration and society, it is important to start the analysis from the foundation of these notions.

Schinkel observes that the current concepts of “integration” and “society” are shaped based on the tradition of “organicism”, that rose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (2019, p. 35). In this doctrine, society was understood as a hierarchical order “that expresses and corresponds to a hierarchy in the cosmos” and that the groups constitutive of this hierarchy were simultaneously considered complementary to each other and classified depending on the level of dignity attributed to them (Taylor, 2004, p. 9). Moreover, it should be underlined that these orders were not contested but rather considered as normal. Taylor states explicitly: “That the feet are below the head is how it should be” (Taylor, 2004, pp. 11–12).

Schinkel argues that remnants of organicist thought still exist and have been conveyed in the prevailing portrayal of society “as a bounded whole, consisting of individual parts, which has a more or less clearly demarcated order and identity” (2019, p. 36). In light of this, the author highlights the dual understanding of “society” in Western thought; as a well-rounded entity comprised of parts (“assembling concept”) and simultaneously as a united whole, distinctive to whatever exists outside of it (“container

concept”) (Schinkel, 2019, p. 36). At the same time, society’s feature of “wholeness” is also illustrated in its interpretation as a “collective assembly” whose members share an abstract feeling of companionship that distinguishes them and consequently the society, as a whole, from others who do not share the same features or values. Thus, drawing from these interpretations, Schinkel argues that society is portrayed in a specific way, namely as “some kind of entity with an identity, and [...] some form of nationalized order with a border” (2019, pp. 38–39).

In this context, the normative approach to immigrant integration identifies society as a signifier, i.e., a fixed entity that demarcates how and under what circumstances the integration of refugees and migrants is supposed to take place (Schinkel, 2019, p. 37). Conversely, Schinkel highlights that it is the concept of “integration” that frames the aforementioned image of society as a whole consisting of parts, by operating as a “coordinating concept” between them (2019, p. 37). Historically, the author comments that such a concept has always been prevalent in western social and political thought, as it provided balance and illustrated society as “self-productive” (2019, p. 43). Nowadays, it is “integration” that embodies the designated “coordinating concept”, concerning “how to incorporate the in-dividual [...] into the social whole” (2019, p. 43).

That being said, the author indicates that immigrant integration is a concept closely connected to colonialism (Schinkel, 2018, p. 10). Nevertheless, he argues that many European countries today disregard this relation when addressing immigrant integration, and rather define themselves as “post-racist” (Schinkel, 2019, p. 71). Even so, the measurement of immigrant integration operates in the same manner as “moral monitoring” did for people in the Dutch East Indies; distinguishing those who counted as “real Europeans” from everyone else (2019, pp. 70–71). In addition, the prevailing “whiteness” that is evident nowadays in the research community that works within the social science of immigrant integration perpetuates the power hierarchy, that can be traced back to colonial history (Schinkel, 2018, p. 12). Hence, Schinkel calls the measuring of immigrant integration “a thoroughly neocolonial practice” (2018, p. 12) that focuses on the difference between “society” and its outside and provides the former with an identity, which is thus illustrated as unproblematic. In this way, society and those who

are considered to belong to it are never marked by statistical measurements of their integration. However, integration remains an issue for everyone else. Individuals, who are not considered as belonging to society, are held responsible for their “lack of integration” due to their culture or ethnicity (2019, p. 101). Schinkel calls this “the dispensation of integration” and states that:

[..] the crucial difference that the observational form of “integration” entails is not that between persons “well integrated” and persons “not well integrated”, but between *those for whom “integration” is an issue at all and those for whom it is not.* (2019, p. 103)

In light of this, the author indicates that immigrant integration is only one possible way to exacerbate divisions within society (Schinkel, 2019, p. 43). “Integration” has become the broader lens through which we look at anyone who “does not fit” into the fixed self-image of society, e.g., “the unemployed, the poor, the young, the elderly, those who do not use computers, those convicted of crimes, and those in mental institutions [..]” (2019, p. 62). Thus, drawing from the organicist tradition mentioned earlier, Schinkel compares society to a person suffering from “social hypochondria”; they are concerned about their well-being and fixate on possible “diseases”, which would infiltrate them from the outside (2019, p. 62). However, exploring society through this organicist perspective also indicates that it has a limited lifespan, which the author argues that it attempts to negate by constantly problematizing itself and its surroundings. In that way, the imagination of society as a “bounded, national” unity is indefinitely prolonged (Schinkel, 2019, p. 65). Taking this into account does not imply a nihilistic rejection of the concept of “society” but instead brings to the fore the need:

[..] to acknowledge the productive ways in which the imagination of society enacts power differentials by hierarchizing populations, by dividing them, by establishing asymmetries, by attributing membership of “society” only to those occupying dominant positions, and by problematizing as “unintegrated” those who do not. (Schinkel, 2019, p. 66)

Drawing from the above, in this thesis, Schinkel’s understanding of integration operates as a medium to explore the configuration of the relation between the pre-existing Greek society and the refugees and migrants who resettle in it; and by consequence the relation of the former with the refugee and migrant-led organizations that operate in Greece. In



this process, I consider this relation to be intrinsically shaped by the agenda of the Greek government, therefore I also apply Schinkel's approach to examine the initiatives employed by the state to address the integration of refugees and migrants in the country.

### 3.2 Recognition and Participatory Parity

In her work, Nancy Fraser highlights the evolution of the notion of social justice as parallel to important global developments of our time. Hence, the struggle for justice has originally been oriented within country borders, incorporating redistribution and recognition as the two "major families of justice claims" (Fraser, 2008, p. 12). Influenced by international events, the author's understanding of social justice has progressed, incorporating a third element; "representation" (2008, p. 17). Nevertheless, in this thesis, primary focus will be given to the paradigm of recognition and the notion of participatory parity to explore the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greece.

In normative discourse, the two paradigms of recognition and redistribution are considered as "dissociated" and mutually exclusive from each other. Fraser contests this dispute and observes that, even though claims for recognition have taken a prevalent position over claims for redistribution, due to global developments, such as the advancement of capitalism, *both* are necessary to achieve justice (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 8–9). Nevertheless, their association with established social movements (recognition with "identity politics" and redistribution with "class politics"), has restricted their capacity to address issues of social justice (2003, p. 11).

Taking this into account, Fraser reflects on recognition and redistribution from an alternative frame. Namely, she considers them as "distinctive perspectives on social justice", that can be employed to shed light on issues of injustice in modern society (2003, p. 12). Despite their differences, especially regarding the contrasting approaches to what constitutes injustice and its potential remedies, she examines their incorporation under one "comprehensive framework", making them applicable to a wider range of social divisions, that cannot be addressed by employing only one paradigm, which she refers to

as “two-dimensional social divisions”<sup>3</sup> (2003, p. 19). Correspondingly, “race” falls under this category because it produces both issues of maldistribution and misrecognition (2003, p. 22). As an example, the author brings the case of migrants and ethnic minorities, who reside in society and are often required to deal with various challenges, e.g., economic exploitation and low wages, and simultaneously face various forms of oppression, which originate from the power hierarchies created by Eurocentric values, leading to the construction of migrants and minorities “as deficient and inferior others who cannot be full members of society” or enjoy the same rights as the citizens of that society. In this regard, both recognition *and* redistribution are necessary to combat the injustices of racism (2003, p. 23).

To enhance the feasibility of subsumption of both paradigms under a “single comprehensive framework”, Fraser considers recognition as a matter of justice by connecting it to the “relative standing” of persons in society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29). She introduces the “status model of recognition”, according to which “institutionalized patterns of cultural value” determine actors’ social status (2003, p. 29). Accordingly, when these patterns facilitate the participation of all actors on a par with each other, it designates “reciprocal recognition and status equality” (2003, p. 29). Contradicting the Hegelian understanding of the term, which endorses recognition as an ethic driven claim for self-realization and the achievement of good life, depending on the social context it is applied to, the author proposes to look at recognition as a universally binding notion, irrespective of context, responding to the question of “what is right” rather than “what is good” (2003, p. 28). Therefore, misrecognition is not perceived as “an impediment to self-realization”, but as an act of subordination and injustice. This entails “institutionalized patterns of cultural value”, producing power hierarchies within society, and consequently constructing classifications, conditional to the set cultural norms, which denote certain actors as inferior and impede their full participation in social interaction (2003, p. 29). The objective of this approach is then to “*deinstitutionalize patterns of cultural value that impede parity of participation and to replace them with patterns that foster it*” (2003, p. 30).

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<sup>3</sup> Fraser indicates that “all real-world axes of subordination” are “two-dimensional” because in reality social divisions are not autonomous, they intersect in different ways and thus call for a “two-pronged politics of redistribution and recognition”. (2003, p. 26)

With a view to transcend the discrepancies among the two paradigms of redistribution and recognition, and incorporate them under a consolidated framework of social justice, Fraser puts forward the notion of “participatory parity” (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 36). Marked as fundamental to the struggle for social justice, participatory parity indicates that “justice requires social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life” (Fraser, 2008, p. 16). The attainment of participatory parity then calls for the realization of two conditions; the “objective” and the “intersubjective” (2003, p. 36). The former is connected with claims for redistribution and embodies the “distribution of material resources” in a way that facilitates the emancipation of all social actors, consequently excluding “social arrangements that institutionalize deprivation or exploitation” (2003, p. 36). The latter is associated with claims for recognition and encompasses the promotion of “institutionalized patterns of cultural value” that provide individuals with “the status of full partners” in society, thereby excluding those that encourage “status inequality or misrecognition” (Fraser, 2008, p. 16; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 36). Both conditions, affiliated with the paradigms of redistribution and recognition, are considered necessary for the realization of participatory parity, and thus for the achievement of social justice.

Nevertheless, not all claims for recognition or redistribution can be justified (Fraser, 2001, p. 32). In this light, participatory parity operates as an “evaluative standard” to deontologically assess claims pertaining to either paradigm of justice (Fraser, 2001, p. 32; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 38). Subsequently, to justify a claim for recognition, parity of participation is applied on two levels; the “intergroup” and the “intragroup” level (Fraser, 2001, p. 34). On an intergroup level, “claimants must show that institutionalized patterns of cultural value deny them the necessary intersubjective conditions” that would enable them to interact as peers on a par with others in society (Fraser, 2001, pp. 31–32; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 38). Simultaneously, on an intragroup level, they must demonstrate that the “socio-cultural institutional changes they seek” will enhance parity of participation in society, without impeding or aggravating further the participation of others (Fraser, 2001, p. 33; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 39). In this way, conversely to identity politics that perceive recognition as a matter of self-realization, the status model moves beyond the parameter of ethical evaluation. Participatory parity carries out the appraisal of claims for recognition “under modern

conditions of value pluralism” (Fraser, 2001, p. 35; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 42). That being said, a claim for recognition can only be evaluated “dialogically and discursively, through democratic processes of public debate” within society, where every viewpoint or joint agreement can be encountered with contestation (2003, pp. 43–44). Thus, participatory parity entails that all actors participate equally in social interaction in order for claims for recognition to be assessed. Fraser acknowledges the circularity that this model embodies and argues that

it faithfully expresses the reflexive character of justice as understood from the democratic perspective. In the democratic perspective, justice is not an externally imposed requirement, determined over the heads of those whom it obligates. Rather, it binds only insofar as its addressees can also rightly regard themselves as its authors. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 44)

In this study, Fraser’s theory on the status model of recognition and the norm of participatory parity are employed to explore the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations, as entities initiated by people who arrived in Greece as refugees or migrants. The position of the RLOs and MLOs within the established framework of “integration” is assessed through the notion of participatory parity. The practices and policies, taken by the state to address integration are perceived in this thesis as institutionalized patterns that impact the position of refugees and migrants, and consequently the refugee and migrant-led organizations that operate in Greek society.

## 4 Methodology

This chapter of the thesis encompasses the methodological framework employed to answer the research questions of this study; “how can the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations impact the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece, through their operation and their interaction with the state on a local and national level?”, “how do refugees and migrants perceive the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations in terms of integration in Greece?”, and “how do refugee and migrant-led organizations affect the participatory parity of migrants and refugees in Greece?”. Therefore, in this part of the thesis I illustrate the epistemological foundation of this study as well as the qualitative research methods that have been applied, pertaining to semi-structured interviews with members of RLOs and MLOs in Greece, and the use of Reflexive T.A, introduced by Braun and Clarke (2022) to analyse my findings.

Moreover, understanding that “knowledge creation is embedded with power relations” (Håndlykken-Luz, 2022, p. 90; Quijano, 2007, p. 169), this section also reflects upon the course taken for this thesis, the ethical considerations, limitations and my own positionality, considering the inherent power dynamics that are at play when a person like me, who is neither a refugee or a migrant in Greece, chooses to research the work of people who have been perceived as outsiders in Greek society.

### 4.1 Epistemological Foundation

The epistemological foundation of this study is interpretivism. Contrary to positivism, this approach to knowledge-production entails an essential understanding of the distinction between social and natural sciences (Bryman, 2012, p. 28). Interpretivism is established on the connection between social reality and human action, in the sense that the latter attains meaning based on how humans perceive social reality (2012, p. 30). Employing interpretivism in one’s study does not only involve a description of how people understand social reality, but also calls for the placement of these “into a social scientific frame”; hence, how the researcher perceives people’s interpretations also plays a role in the outcome of the study (Bryman, 2012, p. 30). Considering that the aim of this thesis is to understand how organizations created by refugees and migrants can impact

integration and how these organizations are perceived by individuals, I consider interpretivism to be more compatible with the nature of this research project.

## 4.2 Participant Recruitment

In this study, I wished to recruit participants who would be connected to refugee and migrant-led organizations, therefore, I decided to apply purposive, non-probability sampling, as it entails that sampling is conducted “in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed” (Bryman, 2012, p. 418). Nevertheless, a few challenges emerged in the process.

Limited literature regarding the topic in the context of Greece led me initially to reach out to two organizations before starting the recruitment process in order to get further insight into their work. Out of the two organizations, interest in the study was expressed by one director. We scheduled an informal conversation via Zoom, that lasted for almost two hours and was conducted in Greek. The conversation was deeply enlightening and contributed to the shaping of this thesis. One of the topics discussed was the contradiction in the communication that these organizations have with the local government in comparison to the national. It was a very important aspect that I hadn't reflected on until then and chose to incorporate into the study as part of my first research question. I later reached out to the director again via e-mail to ask them whether they would be interested in participating in the study. In the e-mail, I introduced the updated research questions, the purpose of the study, my trip to Athens, including the specific dates that I would be there to conduct interviews, and the guaranteed anonymity, in case they wished to participate. Their positive response contributed to the arrangement of our appointment in Athens.

In the first meeting in person, we discussed the topic a bit further and the director agreed to bring me in contact with other members and leaders of relevant organizations, by sending out an e-mail, informing potential participants about my study. They provided me with the e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of the people they had contacted. In total, they brought me in contact with nine possible participants, out of whom, five expressed an interest in participating in the study. Aside from these participants, it was challenging to find more people to participate. I attempted to contact independently four

more organizations through Facebook and e-mail but received no response. Hence, in total, I conducted six semi-structured interviews.

To recruit participants for this study, I had three criteria; they would need to be over the age of 18, to be active members of refugee and migrant-led organizations, and to speak English or Greek. As mentioned earlier, I managed to recruit six participants altogether, one of whom was female, and five were male. All participants migrated to Greece for different reasons and in different ways. Their age ranged from 32 to 48 years and the countries of birth included Afghanistan<sup>4</sup>, the Ivory Coast, Ukraine, Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the time of the interviews, the participants had lived in Greece for a period between approximately 2 to 37 years, which is significant in this study as it reflects their insights about the nature and characteristics of Greek society. Their observations provided further comprehension of the developments that have taken place within migration discourse in Greece since the 1980s.

### 4.3 Data Collection

In this study, I decided to employ semi-structured interviews, as it provides the researcher with more flexibility regarding the structure of the interviews they want to conduct and allows for a deeper focus on the perspectives of the participants (2012, p. 470). This was also the rationale I adopted for this research. My choice to inform this thesis with semi-structured interviews was primarily based on my wish for this study to convey the perspectives of the participants regarding Greek society and the role that refugee and migrant-led organizations could have in it. Therefore, I preferred to apply a method that would allow the participants to expand on their responses as much as they wished and that the conversations would not have to follow the interview guide in a strict manner.

My decision not to have an interpreter present in the interviews for reasons of confidentiality led to the realization of the interviews in Greek and English. Interviews were held in both languages; three of them were conducted in Greek and three in English. Out of the ones done in English, two participants expressed that they preferred to do the

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<sup>4</sup> Two of the participants mentioned Afghanistan as their country of birth.

interview in this language because they were not equally comfortable speaking in Greek. Furthermore, three of the interviews were conducted in a physical location that each participant chose in the city of Athens, and three were done on Zoom, primarily due to the busy schedule of the participants.

All participants received an information letter prior to the interview, that also included the consent form, approved by Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research<sup>5</sup>. Considering that there was an option to conduct the interview in either English or Greek, I originally made the information letter, the consent form, as well as the interview guide in English, which, following the approval from Sikt, I translated directly to Greek to ensure that all the participants had a clear understanding of the aim of the study and what their participation entailed. Furthermore, before starting the recording of each interview, I asked the participant whether they had questions pertaining to the interview and made sure to inform them again of their rights during this process. Regarding the three interviews that were conducted via Zoom, the participants received the aforementioned documents via e-mail and later expressed their consent to participate. Regarding the duration of the interviews, these lasted from 1 to 2.5 hours. The interview guide, following the research questions of the study, was divided in four broader sections; introduction, personal experience, operation of the organization in Greece, and interaction with the state. The guide was used as a point of reference, but was not strictly followed in all the interviews. None of the participants declined to answer any of the questions asked.

Regarding the management and storage of the data collected from these interviews, I initially used Nettskjema [Online form], which is a service provided by the University of Oslo, in combination with Nettskjema – diktafon. Later, I transferred all the recorded files from Nettskjema to the OneDrive cloud storage space, provided by the University of South-Eastern Norway. All personal data was anonymized in the process, the participants names were replaced with numbers and the file including all the

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<sup>5</sup> Until 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2023, the organization responsible for the assessment of the “Notification form for Personal Data” was called Norsk senter for forskningsdata (NSD) [Norwegian Center for Research Data]. (*About Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research | Sikt, n.d.*)



information pertaining to the individuals was stored separately from the recorded interviews to ensure their protection.

## 4.4 Data Analysis

The next step after the end of the interview process encompasses the analysis of the data that has been collected. Bryman has indicated that the extensive character of the data usually collected in qualitative research constitutes a significant challenge in this type of study (2012, p. 565). For this particular research project, despite the limited number of interviewees, the discussions with the participants produced a considerably broad dataset that required a suitable method to be analyzed and interpreted. Notwithstanding other methods that could be appropriate in this regard, e.g., grounded theory, I decided to employ Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA), developed by Braun and Clarke (2022). The main reason why I chose this method lies in the component of reflexivity that is the underpinning of this approach regarding the position of the researcher within the study (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 8). Against this backdrop, my research and analysis on refugee and migrant-led organizations is inherently shaped by my own identity.

I applied the six-phase analytic process that is indicated by Braun and Clarke to interpret and analyse the data, namely; (1) “Dataset familiarization”; (2) “Data coding”; (3) “Initial theme generation”; (4) “Theme development and review”; (5) “Theme refining, defining and naming”; and finally (6) “Writing up” (2022, p. 6). Before delving into the presentation of the specific approach I took to analyse the data, it is important to emphasize the flexible nature of this method. Braun and Clarke note that these phases are not rigid steps to be taken the one after the other, rather they consider this approach to Reflexive TA to entail pliable guidelines that facilitate the data analysis in a “progressive but recursive process” (2022, p. 34,36).

The first phase of the analysis, “Dataset familiarization”, involves three different processes; immersion, critical engagement and note-making (Braun & Clarke, 2022, pp. 42–43). In this stage I listened to the recordings and created orthographic transcripts of the interviews. I then reviewed the transcripts by listening to the original recordings anew and comparing them against each other. The final transcripts did not include pauses and

breaks that might have occurred during the interviews, however, given the conditions in which some of these conversations took place, context was often given in brackets when deemed necessary, e.g., [the recording stopped due to another person entering the room].

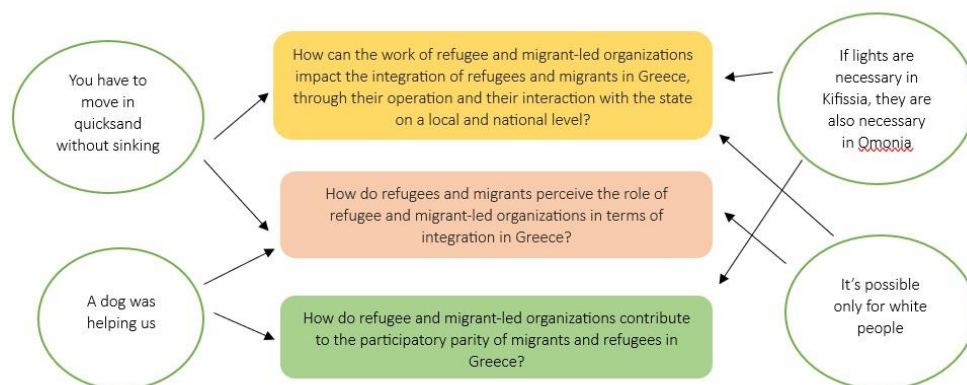
Apart from transcribing, immersing in the data for this project meant actively listening to the audio recordings of the interviews and recalling the conversations I had with the participants, particularly regarding uncharted details which would not be evident from the audio recordings, such as facial expressions and reactions. It also meant identifying interesting features that were brought up during the conversations. Moreover, immersion and critical engagement happened concurrently; I engaged with the dataset as I was listening to the recordings, and tried to reflect upon what the participants were telling me in combination with my own position and how, for instance, we have experienced living in the Greek society. In this context I also made notes related to the elements I wished to explore further in a later stage.

The second phase, “Data coding”, included delving into the transcripts of the interviews and systematically working through them to apply different code labels to segments of the text that produced meaning potentially relevant to the research questions of this study (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 52). This part of the data analysis required more time than expected, considering that the coding process was inductive; driven by the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 56), and that there were segments that produced multiple meanings, consequently leading to several rounds of coding. Furthermore, it is important to note that, I initially started this process with three research questions, which were concerned with the impact of refugee and migrant-led organizations in the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece, their operation in the country and their interaction with the state, on a local and national level. Based on these, in the first round of coding, I developed 146 semantic code labels, which were explicitly based on the utterances of the participants (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 57) and which I divided by a color I had attributed to each research question. For clarity purposes, I transferred the codes to an Excel sheet and reassessed them, which led me to the realization that a lot of the codes I had created were recurrent, thus I edited and condensed them from 146 to 93.

Moving on to phase three, I attempted to develop the initial themes for the analysis. These included; “work”; “importance of refugee and migrant-led organizations”; “perceptions”; “systemic issues”; and “integration means”. Nevertheless, I understood that this classification did not encompass groups with a shared meaning but were rather developed around a shared topic, thus constituting “topic summaries” (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 77) instead of themes.

In phase four, I decided to return to the dataset and review the themes, as well as the codes that I had previously created. Working my way through the data again, I understood that my codes were semantic and attempted to revise them, looking for more implicit meaning. Thus, I went back to phase 2, where I eventually arrived at 99 codes. In this process I reshaped some of the previous codes, created new ones and deleted some, which I understood were more descriptive than “latent” (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 57). Consequently, this process stimulated the development of new overarching themes based on different “central organizing concepts”, pertaining to discrimination, challenges, economic disparity, and neglect. Lastly, in phase five I refined and named the themes. I decided to employ quotes, that had been communicated by the participants, because as I stated earlier, I wish for this thesis to encompass the experience of the participants as much as possible. Thus, the final themes that inform this thesis are: “It’s possible only for white people”; “A dog was helping us”; “If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia”; and “You have to move in quicksand without sinking”. Figure 2 illustrates how the final themes were connected to the research questions.

**Figure 2.** *Final Themes and Research Questions*



## 4.5 Ethical Considerations

This type of study can entail various elements for ethical consideration with particular reference to my own positionality in relation to the people I chose to interview. Accordingly, in this section I wish to provide an overview of those concerns that have been prominent from the beginning of this research project, related to conducting research with people who are members of grassroots initiatives, like RLOs and MLOs in Greece.

Critical to this thesis is the recognition of the underlying vulnerabilities that exist in academic discourse, which can contribute to the further inclusion or exclusion of refugees and migrants, regarding support and accommodation of their needs on a local or national level (Hruschka & Leboeuf, 2019). Understanding that a systematic conception of migrants' vulnerabilities is not possible because vulnerability is considered to be "relational and situated" and thus can only be understood within the specific context that it is examined (Mezzanotti & Kvalvaag, 2022, p. 280), I was initially faced with a dilemma of how my perception of the participants would affect the outcome of this research, considering also that I am a novice researcher in this field.

In this picture, reflexivity upon my own position and perception of the participants that I wished to interview as well as my understanding of Greek society, as the context within which RLOs and MLOs operate, helped me solve this quandary. Accordingly, I tried to avoid stereotypical classifications, e.g., victimization, that could lead to a distorted image of their presence and activity in the country by prioritizing to ask about their experience residing in Greece as the first part of the interviews.

Furthermore, following Montero-Sieburth who indicates that "even with the best intentions, research actions may go awry, infringing upon the rights of migrants to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity" (2020, p. 282), I exercised great caution to secure all three elements throughout this study. More specifically, before conducting the interviews, my project received approval from the NSD, which also set out the guidelines to ensure that the project was developed in accordance with Norwegian data protection legislation. Thereafter, I ensured that the people who wished to participate gave their informed consent, by providing them with a clearly formulated information letter that

included details regarding the purpose of the study, the research questions, the data management plan, and the participants' rights, including right to anonymity and withdrawal of consent without any negative consequences for the participants. Moreover, drawing from Bryman (2012, p. 138), before starting each interview, I also made sure to remind the participants of their rights and ask if they had any questions regarding the research process. To ensure their anonymity, the names of all of the participants were deleted. Furthermore, although I am aware of the possibility to replace the participants' names with others in the analysis of the data collected from the interviews, I chose to abstain from doing so, as the quotes that are presented in this thesis are thoughts expressed by specific individuals with names of their own. Instead, I have decided to present their contributions with the title "Participant 1", "Participant 2", etc. In doing so I wish to respect their agency and not connect their opinions and experiences with other people who might share these new potential names, that I would give them, as that could perpetuate the hegemonic nuances that are often implicit in the relationship between researcher and participants, when they come from different groups within society (Carling et al., 2014, p. 38). In this respect, I also wish to highlight that for me as a researcher anonymization is also not a preferred practice. Even though I am aware of its importance for safety purposes, I also agree with Sinha and Back that the anonymization of participants "can be limiting because it makes qualitative researchers less able to develop new forms of collaborative authorship and research craft" (2014, p. 485).

Lastly, I find it important to point out that in this thesis, my understanding of Greek society is widely affected by my own experience growing up and living in the country. I am discussing this more in depth in section 4.6, however, I wish to underline that my reflection upon Greek society and how it affects refugees and migrants is not a way for me to negate this part of my identity or to promote or endorse any anti-Greek sentiments, that could be a potential contestation within this thesis. Rather, it is my intention to create room for meaningful dialogue, in hope for a more open society that fosters participatory parity of all actors.

## 4.6 Positionality

When researching and writing about migration in Europe, the majority of the researchers and scholars, including myself, hold the status of the “outsider”, which means that we are not part of the population, with whom we are conducting our research (Carling et al., 2014, p. 36). However, I consider this divide between the “inside” and the “outside” of research to be insufficient for the development of this thesis, because our identities -in this case, mine and the participants of my study-, are multidimensional, and thus assuming that we belong to two distinct but homogenous groups, is an oversimplification. That being said, I am aware that this field of study can certainly perpetuate hegemonic power relations between the participants and the researcher (Dahinden et al., 2021, p. 536), thus I consider the exploration and understanding of my own positionality in this study and how it affects knowledge production to be of crucial importance.

Reflecting upon my own situatedness, being a half Greek woman and having lived in Greece for the majority of my life has certainly influenced my understanding of the society, that I am considering in this thesis. Having lived in Athens for eight years has also equipped me with a more in-depth understanding of the context and details that are being discussed by the participants in this study about the capital of the country and the power relations that are embedded within, which would not necessarily be perceived in the same way by someone who has not lived there. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that my position is very different to that of the people who have participated in this study. Even though I was not born in Greece, I did not arrive there as a refugee or a migrant and I did not experience navigating the extremely bureaucratic and stringent system in a foreign language. Accordingly, the fact that Greek is my mother tongue has not only facilitated my experience living in Greece but has also influenced this study in multiple ways, including most importantly the interviews, which constitute a big part of this research project. Furthermore, my experience of being employed within the Greek public sector could posit a controversy for this study, as I am looking into the potential of non-state, grassroots movements. However, it has also provided me with a deeper understanding of the operation of the Greek state and given me a unique opportunity to explore this topic from multiple sides. Lastly, I acknowledge that the aforementioned elements, as well as

others that have not been mentioned, situate me in a dominant position to the participants of this study. Nevertheless, as a person, who is not only influenced by their origin and work but also personal belief system, my intention with this thesis is not simply to present the experiences of people who arrived in Greece as refugees and migrants and have managed to create coalitions to fight for their rights in that country, but rather, from this position to understand and engage in initiating a dialogue for the parity of participation of everyone in the society.

## 4.7 Limitations

For the purpose of this thesis, even though I am aware of the plethora of possible angles to explore migration issues in Greece, the focal point of my research is integration, because I consider it to be a concept in need of critical reflection, and also a component of migration that has been neglected so far in Greece. Furthermore, within the domain of integration, I have chosen to explore solely the roles and capacities of refugee and migrant-led organizations, albeit other civil society organizations in the country have also engaged in the accommodation of refugees and migrants' needs. In addition, I am only focusing on their operation as entities in Greece, and not on their possible transnational affiliations to diaspora groups globally. Accordingly, I have conducted interviews only with organizations that are situated in Athens, which might posit a limitation of my study, as the experience of living in the capital city in comparison to a remote area in Greece is deeply contrasting.

Moreover, limitations can also be found in the interview process, particularly with regard to the language employed in the conversations. Considering that I do not speak the mother languages of the participants and in view of the lack of an interpreter in the conversations for confidentiality purposes, the interviews were conducted in English and Greek. This constitutes an evident limitation of this study, as there is a high possibility that the participants would have expressed themselves in a very different manner, if our conversation took place in their respective mother languages. In addition, there is another apparent limitation pertaining to the unequal representation of women and men in my study, which I sought to change by attempting to get in touch with more women and asking them to participate, but failed to get any further responses. Reflecting upon

this element now, I understand that additional women's perspectives would have certainly enriched the study's outcome.

## 4.8 Trustworthiness of the study

Considering that this study is based on qualitative research methods, it is often suggested to employ the criteria of trustworthiness, in order to better assess the quality and usefulness of a study. In this regard, drawing from the approach of Lincoln and Guba, I decided to employ the evaluative standard of trustworthiness, including the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to appraise the consistency of this thesis (Schwandt et al., 2007, p. 18).

As mentioned earlier, in this study, I chose to apply Reflexive Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2022) to engage with the dataset that originated from the semi-structured interviews I conducted with members of RLOs and MLOs in Greece. The flexible nature of this method constitutes one of the primary reasons why I chose to employ it to analyse the data. However, this element of flexibility in T.A. can also compose a disadvantage, leading to "inconsistency and a lack of coherence" in the study (Holloway & Todres, 2003, p. 346). Hindering this trajectory entailed taking certain steps along this process, following the six-phase analytic process of Reflexive T.A. (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 6), which have already been discussed earlier in this study. However, in my view the rigorousness of this thesis is also expressed in the other parts of this chapter, where I attempt to document in detail the steps I employed throughout the entirety of this research project, initially with participant recruitment and concluding with my own positionality and limitations of the study. Nevertheless, I recognize that it is impossible to give an exhaustive account of the various elements to be taken into consideration but I consider to have included the majority of those that are relevant to my research project.



## 5 Findings: Analysis & Discussion

This chapter delves into the themes generated from six semi-structured interviews I conducted with leaders and members of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Athens. Following the research questions of this study, the application of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) brought about four themes; “It’s possible only for white people”, “A dog was helping us”, “If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are also necessary in Omonia”, and “You have to move in quicksand without sinking”.

All four themes embody different facets of the operation of refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greek society, focusing primarily on their work regarding the comprehensive resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country. The themes entail the efforts of the RLOs and MLOs in relation to the policies and practices of the Greek government on a local and national level. Furthermore, the participants’ own perceptions of these efforts were fundamental for the development of this thesis. Thus, as indicated in Section 1.1, in this chapter I have decided to extensively incorporate quotes expressed by the participants to inform this analysis. Considering that it is largely through these interactions with the participants that this thesis has developed, including their statements as comprehensively as possible was very important to me. Their views, efforts and insights have truly shaped this thesis and thus I find it important to acknowledge and highlight their thoughts on the topics that were discussed throughout our conversations.

### 5.1 It’s possible only for white people

Willem Schinkel, in his book “Imagined Societies: A Critique of Immigrant Integration in Western Europe” considers immigrant integration to be a tool one can employ to look at society and examine its main components (2019, p. 73). In Western thought, he argues, that society is simultaneously regarded as “an assembling and a container concept” that unites people and creates an “image of an inside and an outside” between those who do and do not belong to it. In this context, Schinkel argues that integration, rather than facilitating inclusivity, further exacerbates this perception of society as a pre-existing, unproblematic entity contested through the presence of those “who do not belong” (2019, p. 36).

This theme incorporates the challenges that the participants discussed during the interview process regarding integration in the context of Greek society. Before all else, however, I find it necessary to start this analysis from the perceptions that the participants shared with me regarding what integration meant to them. The answers varied; some participants perceived integration as familiarizing themselves with the Greek system, while others divided integration into categories. However, all participants expressed the need for refugees and migrants to be independent and active members of society.

In this regard, Participant 4 talked about allocating integration into the areas where a person spends their life, starting from integrating into the neighbourhood and eventually into society as an independent person that can also help others, while Participant 2, whose answer focused more on the welcoming system of Greece, highlighted the differential treatment that has been present in the welcoming of Ukrainian and other refugees in Greece: “In the same way that we welcome the Ukrainian refugees is the same way that we should welcome everyone. This means integration to me. The same way”.

Concerning the challenges of integration in Greek society, the participants brought to the fore various issues. All participants expressed that the Greek state generally holds a negative stance toward the integration of refugees and migrants into Greek society. Participant 1 mentioned that the Greek state is indifferent to creating and sustaining a strategic plan about integration and accentuated the temporality of the ones that have been created in the past, i.e., “For example, the SYRIZA government in 2015 that came in, did make an effort in the end. It wrote an integration policy but the next government when it came in threw it away.”<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Participant 6 pointed out that the government does not push for integration but rather promotes a negative narrative about refugees and migrants that increases “separation into the society”. This argument was also expressed by Participant 4, who said:

When they put you in camps closed with walls and stuff like that and call you "migrant, refugee, illegal immigrant" how, they keep saying it through the media,

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<sup>6</sup> Για παράδειγμα η κυβέρνηση ΣΥΡΙΖΑ το 2015 που ήρθε όντως έκανε στο τέλος μία προσπάθεια. Έγραψε μία πολιτική ένταξης αλλά η επόμενη κυβέρνηση όταν ήρθε τα πέταξε στα σκουπίδια.

they keep saying "migrant", "illegal immigrant" this and that [...] And they keep them between the walls. That's not integration. That is called exploitation.<sup>7</sup>

Schinkel points out that society, over the years, has turned it into “some kind of entity with an identity, and some form of nationalized order with a border” (2019, p. 39). It is also evident in the case of Greece. The promotion of narratives, like the ones mentioned above, by the state and the media, amplifies a specific image produced about Greek society throughout the years, which creates hierarchical power relations between the “national society” and the refugees and migrants that reside in the country.

Furthermore, during the interviews, participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 argued that instead of integration, the Greek state presses for the expulsion of refugees and migrants from the country. In fact, Participants 1 and 6 argued that the current Greek government portrays the country as a passage rather than a final destination for the refugees and migrants that enter Greece:

The state, because we have a government at the moment that doesn't care about integration, has a discouraging policy to say about immigrants. They are against integration so to speak. It has a policy that here Greece is as a country where they come and go. They don't want to stay here but the state is somehow chasing them away. Those who are here should leave and others should not come.<sup>8</sup> - Participant 1

Yeah, for now the word integration does not mean anything to the Greek authority unfortunately. The integration, from the integration plan that they published is a kind of preparation of a newcomer to go to another country or to return to his home-country but it's not actually, there is no perspective of living in Greece. [...] So, the state is considering us as passengers. So, we are just people that will stay for, you know, a short period of time, and we will move for another place. So, unfortunately, this is the concept of integration. - Participant 6

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<sup>7</sup> Όταν σε βάζουν σε camp κλειστά με τοίχους και τέτοια και να σε ονομάσουν «μετανάστης, πρόσφυγας, λαθρομετανάστης» πώς, συνέχεια το λένε μέσω ΜΜΕ, συνέχεια το λένε «μετανάστης», «λαθρομετανάστης» το ένα, το άλλο [...] Και τους κρατάνε ανάμεσα στους τοίχους. Αυτό δεν είναι ένταξη. Αυτή η κίνηση ονομάζεται εκμετάλλευση.

<sup>8</sup> Το κράτος επειδή αυτή τη στιγμή μία κυβέρνηση που έχουμε που δεν τους νοιάζει η ένταξη, έχει μία πολιτική αποθαρρυντική να πω για τους μετανάστες. Είναι εναντίον της ένταξης να πούμε. Έχει μία πολιτική ότι εδώ η Ελλάδα είναι ως μία χώρα που έρχονται και φεύγουν. Δεν θέλουν να μείνουν εδώ αλλά η πολιτεία είναι κάπως που να τους διώξει. Αυτοί που είναι εδώ να φύγουν και άλλοι να μην έρθουν.

Participant 2 suggested that push-backs and deportations are prioritized over integration from the Greek government:

They don't consider integration. They consider push-backs and they consider deportations. So, there is no integration in Greece. I never hear or understand what that means for the Greek state. I know what they say all the time is this: deportation is push-back from the FRONTEX. So, for the state I don't know, I don't have answer for this.

In their answer, Participant 5, on the other hand, included not only their perception regarding the government's stance towards refugees and migrants but regarding all persons who reside in Greece and have an identity that does not align with the government's objectives.:

The best integration in the Greek state is for everyone to leave the country. Communists, immigrants, refugees, anarchists, gays, half the women who are not Christians, everything, that's integration. Anyone who is not good for the country, leave. But right now, the Greek government is saying that the Greek state is integrating refugees and migrants. It gives legal documents to refugees and says to them "take your identity card and leave". Without thinking about the consequences of this.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, integration does not only pertain to refugees and migrants. Rather it becomes a "master concept identifying all who in one way or another appear "unadjusted to society"" (Schinkel, 2019, p. 62).

These excerpts call into question the initiative that the Greek state has taken based on the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 (European Commission, 2020). As mentioned in section 2.2.4. "National Strategy on 'Integration'", in 2021 Greece adopted its third strategy regarding integration, namely the "National Strategy for social integration of asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries". When asked about the strategy, many participants mentioned that they

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<sup>9</sup> Η καλύτερη ένταξη στην ελληνική πολιτεία είναι να φεύγουν όλοι από τη χώρα. Κομμουνιστές, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, αναρχικοί, οι γκέι, μισές γυναίκες να φύγουν που δεν είναι χριστιανές, όλα, αυτό είναι ένταξη. Όποιος δεν είναι καλός για τη χώρα, να φεύγει. Μα αυτή τη στιγμή το ελληνικό κράτος λέει, κάνει ένταξη το ελληνικό κράτος στους πρόσφυγες και στους μετανάστες. Δίνει νομιμοποιητικά έγγραφα στους πρόσφυγες και τους λέει «πάρε και την ταυτότητά σου και φύγε». Χωρίς να σκέφτεται το ελληνικό κράτος τις συνέπειες αυτού του πράγματος.

overlooked it as they were skeptical about its pragmatic validity. Participant 2 also highlighted the language barrier, as the National Strategy was published in Greek:

For me, it's very easy to do things like you speak from far, this is not good. You need to call people in the same table, to listen. Anybody can write what they want to write, you don't see them. So, this will be good. And also, we are not Greek, we don't all speak Greek. So, they should have flexibility to accept, to have tradition, like the interpreter, in some meeting, that it happened in different countries. [...] We cannot force people to speak Greek language. Speaking Greek language doesn't mean that you are integrating in the society. Even the people who are born here in Greece, they speak Greek language perfectly but they are excluded. So, this doesn't have to be condition for people to be heard. But this integration national strategy, I saw it, I think they shared, they shared something by e-mail, but I don't speak Greek, I don't write Greek, I cannot say something. But, of course, if we are sitting on the same table, I have more ideas to give. And we can see people and we can understand what they have in their mind also.

This could relate to what Nancy Fraser identifies as “institutionalized patterns of cultural value” which can impede the full participation of certain individuals or groups of people on a par with others in society (2003, p. 29). Accordingly, goals such as “the promotion of the European way of life” incorporated in the National Strategy of 2021 (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a, pp. 9, 15) do not encourage the inclusion of refugees and migrants into Greek society but rather contribute to the disassociation between the society and those who supposedly do not belong to it. In fact, during the interviews, most participants seemed frustrated regarding this goal. Many questioned its meaning, stressing that there is no homogenous way of life in Europe, since every country they have visited seems to be different. Participant 5 stated:

What is the European way of life? To accept that the Europeans can intervene wherever they want, together with the other great powers. Where the big powers converge, okay we can intervene, see Syria etc. Where these interventions do not converge, [...], it is not the European way of life. What constitutes Europe? The Europe that says that from the 24<sup>th</sup> of February onwards Dostojevskij films cannot be shown in Greece? Is that the European way of life? So, you have the greatest writers, you accept them because they were the best. They have produced huge

plays, and suddenly there is a minister, Mendoni, that everything that has been planned and funded, people have been paid for their rehearsals, they are prepared, the shows will not go up because he is Russian? What is this?!<sup>10</sup> [..]

At this point, just to make a point, let's go to all the European museums, let's see which European museums have exhibits from European countries? From which European countries and what percentage of them have to do with Europe?<sup>11</sup>

From another perspective, Participant 3 pointed out the responsibility of the state regarding the implementation of the aforementioned goal:

And if you have to integrate people or bring them to European values, what you have to do is to provide the European values, or provide European level of standard of living for them and if people live in “ipogio” [basement], that’s not the European values. [..] treat them as equal and provide decent conditions for life yeah?

Schinkel compares society to a person suffering from social hypochondria; “constantly touching itself, looking for spaces of lacking “integration”” (2019, p. 62). In the case of Greece however, integration becomes a challenge, not because of the refugees and migrants that reside in the country, who are irreversibly different to the Greek society, as it is portrayed by the Greek media and government. The issue lays with the latter, which appears to strongly deny the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country. Even more so when these refugees and migrants do not come from European countries. Accordingly, the National Strategy of 2021 (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a) is another indication of the same rationale. It is a document created by the Greek government only to show compliance with the initiatives taken at the European level. It does not facilitate integration. It accentuates the differences that exist between what is

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<sup>10</sup> Ο ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής ποιος είναι; Να αποδεχτούμε ότι οι Ευρωπαίοι μπορούν να κάνουν επεμβάσεις όπου θέλουν, μαζί με τις άλλες μεγάλες δυνάμεις. Όπου συγκλίνουν οι μεγάλες δυνάμεις, οκ μπορούμε να κάνουμε επεμβάσεις, βλέπε Συρία κτλ. Όπου δεν συγκλίνουν αυτές οι επεμβάσεις[..], δεν είναι ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής. Η Ευρώπη ποιά είναι; Η Ευρώπη η οποία λέει ότι από τις 24 Φεβρουαρίου και μετά δεν μπορούν να παίζονται ταινίες του Ντοστογιέφσκι στην Ελλάδα; Αυτός είναι ο ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής; Δηλαδή έχεις τους μεγαλύτερους λογοτέχνες, τους αποδέχεσαι γιατί ήταν οι καλύτεροι. Έχουν βγάλει τεράστια έργα, και βρίσκεται ξαφνικά ένας υπουργός, η Μενδώνη, ότι ο,τι έχει προγραμματιστεί και έχει χρηματοδοτηθεί, οι άνθρωποι έχουν πληρωθεί για τις πρόβες τους, είναι προετοιμασμένοι, δεν θα ανέβουν οι παραστάσεις επειδή είναι Ρώσος; Τι είναι αυτά;!

<sup>11</sup> Στο σημείο, για να το σημειώσω κι αυτό, να πάμε σε όλα τα ευρωπαϊκά μουσεία, να δούμε ποιά ευρωπαϊκά μουσεία έχουν εκθέματα ευρωπαϊκών χωρών; Από ποιές ευρωπαϊκές χώρες και σε τι ποσοστό έχουν να κάνουν με την Ευρώπη;

considered as the “homogenous” Greek society and the people entering it. Following Fraser, it is an institutionalized pattern of cultural value that impedes the parity of participation of refugees and migrants in society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29). In light of this, the challenge is not to figure out how to integrate people into Greek society, but rather to reconsider the functionality of the current system that is in place dictating who does and does not belong to the so-called “Greek society”.

## 5.2 A dog was helping us

The broader agency of the refugee and migrant-led organizations in the context of the Greek society was a recurrent topic expressed by the participants. The majority of the people I interviewed referred to the establishment of these organizations as an act of solidarity towards other people who arrived in Greece as migrants or refugees. In this light, almost all of the participants identified their own personal experience residing in Greece as the driving force behind their decision to establish or participate in these organizations. More specifically, Participants 1 and 4 discussed how the inadequacy of the welcoming system at the time of their arrival led them to engage in their respective organizations:

I came as an asylum seeker here in Greece. When I came here in Greece there was no reception service or reception centre, what we call reception or camp, that kind of thing. I was sleeping in Pedion Areos, one. And secondly, I was looking for where to ask where to go to apply for asylum because I came to Greece. I was one of the very few people who didn't want to leave Greece, I came for Greece but I couldn't even find an asylum service to go and apply for asylum and secondly, I saw this daily suffering of hundreds of asylum seekers in the centre of Athens in the parks, who were exploited by many people, by traffickers.<sup>12</sup> – Participant 1

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<sup>12</sup> Η ανάγκη, εγώ ήρθα ως αιτών άσυλο εδώ στην Ελλάδα. Όταν ήρθα εδώ στην Ελλάδα δεν υπήρχε καμία υπηρεσία υποδοχής ή κέντρο υποδοχής, αυτό που λέμε reception ή camp, τέτοια. Εγώ κοιμόμουν στο Πεδίον Άρεως, ένα (πρώτον). Και δεύτερον έψαχνα πού να ζητήσω να πάω να κάνω αίτηση για άσυλο γιατί ήρθα για την Ελλάδα. Εγώ ήμουν απ'τους πολύ λίγους που δεν ήθελα να φύγω απ'την Ελλάδα, ήρθα για την Ελλάδα αλλά δεν μπορούσα να βρώ ακόμα και μία υπηρεσία ασύλου να πάω να ζητήσω άσυλο και δεύτερον έβλεπα καθημερινά αυτή την ταλαιπωρία των αιτούντων άσυλο, κατά εκατοντάδες στο κέντρο της Αθήνας στα πάρκα, που ήταν θύματα εκμετάλλευσης από πολλούς, από διακινητές.

[...] when we first came to Greece there was no organization, no community, no club, no group that spoke my language [...] There was no point of reference and at the same time no point where either I or someone else could have some information about the society they arrived in. That is, in Greece, I had personally suffered very much, this thing. [...], I slept for 2 months in a park, winter season so? And very, very difficult, and food and there was no housing, no clothes. Even the toilet we were struggling, we didn't know where to go, imagine when there's no ceiling over your head and you don't know what to do and where to go. Based on that, from a young age I tried to be able to help compatriots, people in general and compatriots where they could at least find a place to stay. Or have a hot plate of food, so to speak.<sup>13</sup> – Participant 4

The total of participants conveyed an overall positive impression of the operation of RLOs and MLOs, particularly emphasizing the emotional support provided by the organizations. Some participants brought to the fore the element of community that is created with the people who reach out to them. Moreover, Participants 1, 3, and 4 underlined the sense of safety created between the respective organizations and the people who reach out, particularly emphasizing the feeling of closeness, driven by factors such as mutual customs and shared language:

First when they come in, either they register or they don't register, they come here. They feel safe because this is their space. We know their language, we know their culture [...] We, for example, there are the camps, we go on visits to the camps, we talk to people in there, we record their problems. Although now the government now doesn't officially let us in and that's why we never ask the

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<sup>13</sup> [...] γιατί όταν πρωτοήρθαμε στην Ελλάδα δεν υπήρχε κάποια οργάνωση, κάποια κοινότητα, κάποιο σύλλογο, κάποια ομάδα που να μιλάει στη γλώσσα μου [...] Δεν υπήρχε σημείο αναφοράς και παράλληλα σημείο που να μπορέσω είτε εγώ είτε κάποιος άλλος να έχει κάποιες πληροφορίες για την κοινωνία που βρέθηκε. Δηλαδή στην Ελλάδα, είχα προσωπικά ταλαιπωρηθεί πάρα πολύ, αυτό το πράγμα. [...], κοιμόμουν 2 μήνες σε πάρκο, χειμώνας εποχή έτσι; Και πάρα πολύ δύσκολη, και τρόφιμα και δεν υπήρχε στέγαση, ρούχα. Μέχρι και την τουαλέτα ζοριζόμασταν, δεν ξέραμε πού να πάμε, φανταστείτε τώρα όταν δεν υπάρχει ένα ταβάνι πάνω στο κεφάλι σου και δεν ξέρεις τι να κάνεις και πού να πηγαίνεις. Με βάση αυτό, από μικρός προσπάθησα να μπορέσω να βοηθήσω τους συμπατριώτες, τους ανθρώπους γενικά και τους συμπατριώτες πού να βρίσκουν τουλάχιστον ένα μέρος που να μπορέσουν να μείνουν. Ή να έχουν ένα ζεστό πιάτο φαγητό ας πούμε.



government for permission, because the people who are in there are our people.<sup>14</sup> – Participant 1

So, it's a point where can they get information about what to do, for example, when they come within the first week of their arrival in Greece, and then like where to go, what to do, what are the things that they can get here [...] This information is provided to them in their language. You know, so this is important. And also, they can be more open with their emotions I would say because what I noticed, when people are visiting an organization, even the organization provides help but they try to be more reserved and coming to us, they can be themselves and they, you know? In your country you know the rules, what is, how it is, how it is not, how to behave and what it means, you know, you know how to interpret these signs. And then you're in another country, you don't know. And you think you will be judged for every move. So, maybe in our place, they can be themselves. I mean good or bad, but they can feel that they are like okay [...] – Participant 3

And, of course, in my opinion it is obligatory to have this kind of association or community for the people themselves because it will be a reference point and at the same time people can get along. Organizations exist, yes, whether Greek or foreign, but it's another thing to come and speak the language, to understand, to understand exactly. It is another thing to go through an interpreter [...] in many cases there is no interpreter. They try to express their pain and can't, and a lot is lost in between. A lot of information and a lot of words. And the feeling plays a lot. That is another thing, that we speak now as we speak so easy, we understand each other, and the expression of the face, the hands [...]. You convey, let's say, what you've done, what has happened to you.<sup>15</sup> – Participant 4

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<sup>14</sup> Πρώτα όταν μπαίνουν, ή καταγράφονται ή δεν καταγράφονται, έρχονται εδώ. Νιώθουν ασφαλείς γιατί αυτός είναι ο χώρος τους. Ξέρουμε την γλώσσα τους, ξέρουμε τον πολιτισμό τους [...] Εμείς για παράδειγμα υπάρχουν τα camps, πηγαίνουμε επισκέψεις στα camp, μιλάμε με κόσμο εκεί μέσα, κάνουμε καταγραφή των προβλημάτων τους. Παρόλο που τώρα η κυβέρνηση τώρα δεν μας αφήνει επίσημα να μπορούμε και γ'αυτό δεν ζητάμε ποτέ άδεια από την κυβέρνηση, γιατί οι άνθρωποι που είναι εκεί μέσα είναι δικόι μας.

<sup>15</sup> Και, εννοείται ότι κατά τη γνώμη μου είναι υποχρεωτικό να υπάρχει ένα τέτοιου είδους σύλλογο-κοινότητα ή κοινότητα για τους ίδιους τους ανθρώπους γιατί θα είναι σημείο αναφοράς και παράλληλα οι άνθρωποι μπορούν να συνεννοούνται. Οργανώσεις υπάρχουν ναί μεν, είτε ελληνικά είτε ξένα, αλλά άλλο αυτό που έρχεσαι και μιλάς τη γλώσσα, κατανοείς, καταλαβαίνεις ακριβώς. Άλλο που πας μέσω διερμηνέα

Cantat indicates that these solidarity initiatives that are created by refugees and migrants have the potential to move beyond their situatedness and contribute to the generation of “alternative ways of struggling together” (2018, p. 12). In line with this, the participants also referred to initiatives, taken by the RLOs and MLOs, that have transcended the scope of their initial aim to support refugees and migrants and have contributed to the handling of issues that affect the Greek society as a whole. In this light, Participant 1 discussed the presence of their organization in events that have impacted the country as a whole:

Of course, and even our agenda always changes according to the problems, because Greece is a place or a country where we always have crises. One crisis after another: migrant-refugee crisis, then covid crisis, Ukraine crisis, one after the other and in all...fire crisis in the country in the summer. In all of them we are present. We have to be there and we have to be active. For example, our organization was the first organization in the crises of 2015. The so-called crisis, refugee crisis, it was, we were present where we could. With our mediators, with our community workers, everything. And with covid we had, we had a covid crisis response. Volunteers in people's homes, information, food parcels, collecting donations, all of that. And in Ukraine, on the Ukraine issues, we were the first to get the Ukrainian communities together, we organized this...the committee of Ukrainian organizations, together how to respond. [...] And in natural disasters here in Greece, the communities, we always organize the communities to be present, we are always when there is a fire or something else and we see the disaster, we are present there to help in all of this as well.<sup>16</sup>

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[..] σε πολλές περιπτώσεις δεν υπάρχει και διερμηνέας. Πάει να πει τον πόνο του και δεν μπορεί και εκεί ενδιάμεσα χάνονται πολλά. Πολλές πληροφορίες και πολλές λέξεις. Και το αίσθημα παίζει πολύ. Δηλαδή άλλο που μιλάμε τώρα όπως μιλάμε τόσο εύκολο, συνεννοούμαστε και αυτά, και δίνεται και η φράση του προσώπου, των χειρών [..]. Μεταδίδεις ας πούμε αυτά που έχεις κάνει, αυτά που τραβάς.

<sup>16</sup> Εννοείται και πάντα ακόμα και η ατζέντα μας αλλάζει σύμφωνα με τα προβλήματα, γιατί η Ελλάδα είναι ένας χώρος ή μία χώρα που πάντα έχουμε κρίσεις. Μία κρίση μετά την άλλη: μεταναστευτική-προσφυγική κρίση, μετά κρίση covid, κρίση Ουκρανίας, το ένα το άλλο και σε όλα...κρίση της φωτιάς στη χώρα το καλοκαίρι. Σε όλα είμαστε παρόν. Πρέπει να είμαστε και αυτό πρέπει να είμαστε ενεργοί. Για παράδειγμα η οργάνωση μας ήταν η πρώτη οργάνωση στις κρίσεις του 2015. Ονομαζόμενη κρίση, προσφυγική κρίση, ήταν, ήμασταν παρόν εκεί που μπορούσαμε. Με τους διαμεσολαβητές μας, με τους community workers, τα πάντα. Και με τον covid είχαμε, είχαμε covid crisis response. Εθελοντές στα σπίτια των ανθρώπων, ενημέρωση, πακέτα φαγητού, να μαζεύουμε δωρεές, όλα αυτά. Και στην Ουκρανία, στα θέματα της Ουκρανίας ήμασταν οι πρώτοι που μαζέψαμε τις ουκρανικές κοινότητες, που οργανώσαμε αυτό το..την επιτροπή των ουκρανικών οργανώσεων, μαζί πώς να αντιδράσουμε. [...] Και στις φυσικές καταστροφές εδώ στην Ελλάδα, οι κοινότητες, πάντα οργανώνουμε τις κοινότητες να είμαστε παρόν, είμαστε πάντα όταν υπάρχει φωτιά ή άλλο και βλέπουμε την καταστροφή, είμαστε παρόν εκεί να βοηθήσουμε και εμείς σε όλα αυτά.

Moreover, Participants 1 and 5 also mentioned their effort to eliminate racism and xenophobia on an institutional level in Greece, through various initiatives undertaken over the years, e.g., the inauguration of the Racist Violence Recording Network in Greece and their contribution to the dissolution of the criminal Neo-Nazi organization, Golden Dawn. Particularly, Participant 5 pointed to the reignition of Golden Dawn within the broader political tendencies of Greece in the past decade towards right-wing ideologies:

[..] today in Greece we have something that didn't exist in 1985. We have a political situation in Greece where [...] 15% of the Greek society is in the grip of extreme right-wing logics. We had a fascist, Nazi, not even neo-Nazi, Nazi party which, with its dissolution and with many, many efforts made by the immigrants and refugees alone, not by the rest, who in the end appropriated the whole effort. Because let's not forget that in Greece whatever happened, it happened after the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, while other murders had preceded it. So, the challenges are ahead of us. Today we have, based on the polls that have been coming out [...] in the last 4-5 days, various polls have come out, which relate to the way public opinion politically wants to deal with or sees things. Well, according to most of the data that comes out the right and the far-right go hand in hand with a very high percentage.<sup>17</sup>

Drawing from the above, the refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greece appear to provide emotional support to refugees and migrants who reside in the country, and simultaneously contribute to the society as a whole, through the initiatives they take to contest social injustices that impede the parity of participation of various actors in Greek society.

Following Schinkel's understanding of integration, culture is a "program" that contributes to the construction of a specific illustration of society (2019, p. 100).

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<sup>17</sup> [..]σήμερα στην Ελλάδα έχουμε κάτι το οποίο δεν υπήρχε το 1985. Έχουμε μία παγειωμένη κατάσταση πολιτική στην Ελλάδα όπου [...] το 15% της ελληνικής κοινωνίας άγεται και διάγεται με ακροδεξιές λογικές. Είχαμε ένα φασιστικό, ναζιστικό, ούτε καν νεοναζιστικό, ναζιστικό κόμμα το οποίο με τη διάλυσή του και με πολλές πολλές προσπάθειες που έγιναν από το χώρο των μεταναστών και μόνο και των προσφύγων, όχι από τους υπόλοιπους που οικειοποιήθηκαν στο τέλος όλη αυτή την προσπάθεια. Γιατί μην ξεχνάμε ότι στην Ελλάδα ο,τι κι αν έγινε, έγινε μετά τη δολοφονία του Παύλου Φύσσα ενώ είχαν προηγηθεί άλλες δολοφονίες. Άρα οι προκλήσεις είναι μπροστά μας. Σήμερα έχουμε, βάσει των δημοσκοπήσεων που βγαίνουν [...], τις προηγούμενες 4-5 μέρες, έχουν βγει διάφορες δημοσκοπήσεις, οι οποίες αφορούν τον τρόπο που η κοινή γνώμη πολιτικά θέλει να αντιμετωπίσει ή βλέπει τα πράγματα. Ε τα περισσότερα στοιχεία τα οποία βγαίνουν, βγαίνουν ότι η δεξιά και η άκρα-δεξιά πάνε χέρι χέρι με ένα πολύ ψηλό ποσοστό.

Simultaneously, the same “program”, when considering the “integration” of refugees and migrants, is portrayed as an impediment to their participation in social interaction, because there is a conceptualization of a pre-determined culture connected with that society, and thus anyone who does not share the same culture is considered as existing “outside of society” (Schinkel, 2019, p. 101).

In Greece, refugee and migrant-led organizations are not recognized as equal partners in Greek society (A. Papadopoulos & Fratsea, 2014, p. 71), despite their efforts to also address issues that affect society as a whole. The work of RLOs and MLOs cultivates a sense of closeness deriving from language and customs, which is distinct to the conventional mold of “Greek culture”. In this sense, the diverse cultural backgrounds supported by the organizations are being problematized and are perceived as constituting an impediment to the participation of refugees and migrants, and consequently of the organizations they create in society. However, according to Fraser, the failure to recognize an individual or group as an equal actor in social interaction is connected to the institutionalized patterns of cultural value which influence parity of participation in society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29). In this way, it is not the support of different cultural elements by refugee and migrant-led organizations that constitutes the problem of them being perceived as “not belonging” to society, but rather it is the institutionalized concept of “integration” that impedes their participation on a par with other actors in society. Therefore, following Fraser’s theory, to overcome subordination, the effects of the concept of integration in Greek society need to be evaluated in public debate with the joint contribution of all subjects of society.

### **5.3 If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are also necessary in**

#### **Omonia**

Gropas and Triandafyllidou argue that the increase of refugees and migrants in a society “raises entitlements and rights that are associated with the way democracies respond to change, accommodate new claims, and make space to represent and include the interests of all its constituent parts” (2009, p. 4). Accordingly, the participants frequently addressed the rights that refugees and migrants hold in Greece, particularly emphasizing the right to participate in public affairs. The acquisition of this right was considered imperative for refugees’ and migrants’ comprehensive resettlement in the

country and for their recognition as equal members in society. Participant 1 highlighted the need to create a sense of belonging for refugees and migrants in Greece, which is not possible unless they share the same rights as the citizens of the country and are taken into account in the practices pertaining to their integration:

Integration means integration at all levels. It means inclusion at all levels. If you don't have political inclusion, political rights it always means you are inferior. That is, if you don't have access to decision-making processes, it means that others decide for you and you are always at the bottom. It means that there is never what we call "inclusive society", what we call "democratic society" never exists if I don't have the right to be elected in the government for example, or the municipality or if I don't actively participate in everything.<sup>18</sup>

[..]

For a proper and smooth and comprehensive integration, [...], first of all, migrant and refugee communities must be organized and secondly, migrants and refugees must be stakeholders in the decision-making process and even in the formulation of integration policies. It is obvious, the other person comes to talk about me, to integrate me into society without asking me how I want to integrate, what are my requirements and what are my characteristics. It is not possible.<sup>19</sup> – Participant 1

Bekaj and Antara consider the stipulation of electoral rights to refugees and migrants, as the predominant course to achieve formal political participation (2018, p. 25). Nevertheless, the majority of countries have demonstrated the acquisition of citizenship as a precondition to permit participation in any level of elections (Bekaj & Antara, 2018, p. 25). Correspondingly, article 51 of the Constitution of Greece (1975) guarantees electoral rights only to citizens of the country.

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<sup>18</sup> Η ένταξη σημαίνει ένταξη σε όλα τα επίπεδα. Σημαίνει inclusion σε όλα τα επίπεδα. Αν δεν έχεις πολιτική ένταξη, πολιτικά δικαιώματα σημαίνει πάντα ότι είσαι κατώτερος. Δηλαδή αν δεν έχεις πρόσβαση στις διαδικασίες αποφάσεων, σημαίνει ότι άλλοι αποφασίζουν για εσένα και εσύ πάντα είσαι από κάτω. Σημαίνει ότι ποτέ δεν υπάρχει αυτό που λέμε "inclusive society", αυτό που λέμε "democratic society" ποτέ δεν υπάρχει αν εγώ δεν έχω δικαίωμα εκλογής στην κυβέρνηση για παράδειγμα, ή του δήμου ή αν δεν συμμετέχω ενεργά σε όλα.

<sup>19</sup> [...] για μία σωστή και ομαλή και ολοκληρωμένη ένταξη, [...], οπωσδήποτε καταρχήν πρέπει να είναι οργανωμένες οι μεταναστευτικές και προσφυγικές κοινότητες και δεύτερον πρέπει να είναι συμμετοχοί στην διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων και ακόμα διαμόρφωση πολιτικής ένταξης πρέπει να είναι συμμετοχοί οι μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες. Είναι φανερό, δηλαδή ο άλλος έρχεται να μιλάει για μένα, για να με εντάξει στην κοινωνία χωρίς να ρωτήσει εμένα ότι εγώ πώς θέλω να ενταχθώ, τι είναι οι απαιτήσεις μου και τι είναι τα χαρακτηριστικά μου. Δεν γίνεται.

Nevertheless, the majority of the participants called attention to the significance for refugees and migrants of acquiring the right to vote at the local level. Participant 1 provided cases of other countries which have stipulated the right to vote on a municipality level for third-country nationals, e.g., Norway and Ireland. Moreover, the contribution of refugees and migrants to the Greek state, particularly to the Greek economy, was highlighted by the majority of the participants in relation to their claim for formal political participation in the country. Indicatively, Participants 3, 4, and 5 mentioned:

Yes so, I mean just because these people they don't have the power to vote [...] I'm not talking about these high levels but in the city council or something or city-level, so that, you know who cares about the lights, proper light in the streets of Omonia? Nobody, because they don't vote. People who live there they don't vote. And then these areas get more and more neglected [...] this is the city-center, yes we do have a lot of population, yes we don't own as much money as people in Kifissia but they do live there and if you have lit streets and it will provide security – Participant 3

When you dream, when you speak Greek and dream in Greek, you are part of the country. When you suffer for them and you participate in the taxation, in the economy, in the humanitarian issues, let's put the political in here too, it means that you are fully integrated into the society. Then you must have rights equal to a Greek.<sup>20</sup> – Participant 4

You know that in 2023 we have national and municipal elections. And in 2024 we have European elections. Here in Greece, we have been fighting for the last 30 years so that the citizens who live in a city have the right to vote who will collect, who can collect their garbage better. Not which party. Who will be the mayor who will pick up our garbage. It is not possible that I am subjected to taxes, municipal

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<sup>20</sup>Όταν ονειρεύεσαι, όταν μιλάς ελληνικά και ονειρεύεσαι ελληνικά είσαι κομμάτι της χώρας. Όταν πονάς γι'αυτά και συμμετέχεις στα φορολογικά, ξέρω 'γω στην οικονομία, ξέρω 'γω στο ανθρωπιστικό, ας το βάλουμε και το πολιτικό εδώ μέσα, πάει να πει ότι έχεις πλήρη ενταχθεί στο κομμάτι της κοινωνίας. Τότε πρέπει να έχεις δικαιώματα ίσα με έναν Έλληνα. Το κάτι που σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές.., μην πάω πάρα πολύ μακριά, να πάμε στις βαλκανικές χώρες, που έχουν ισότητα. Πάμε στις άλλες γειτονικές χώρες, όπως Αλβανία, όπως Βουλγαρία, κτλ κτλ. Σου δίνουν το περιθώριο και σου δίνουν τα δικαιώματα, όμως Ελλάδα κρατάει, δεν ξέρω, πώς να το ονομάσω; Κρατάει μία απόσταση, σαν να φοβάται για πολλά πράγματα.

taxes, etc. etc. and I don't have...I mean right now Athens has 10% of the population participating in the economy of the country, in the activity of the city, [...], the immigrants kept the city standing! It is the least shops that closed during the economic crisis, or most of the shops that opened were small shops of immigrants and to say now to all these people you don't have the right to vote? Where? So, we don't have the right to say that the street is dark?<sup>21</sup> – Participant 5

Moreover, Participant 5 also brought attention to Law 3838/2010, which stipulated electoral rights to third-country nationals that had resided in the country for more than a decade to participate in local elections (Law 3838/2010, Art. 14-21). Drawing from the decision 350/2011 of the Council of State, which held these provisions unconstitutional (Council of State, 2011), the Participant brought attention to the obsolete nature of the Greek constitution.

With respect to informal political participation (Bekaj & Antara, 2018, p. 49), the Greek state, under Law 3852/2010 has established the formation of Migrant Integration Councils (MICs) as consultative bodies, operating in every municipality to support the integration of refugees and migrants in the local communities (Law 3852/2010, Art. 78). According to Law 4555/2018, Art. 79, which repealed and replaced Art. 78 of the aforementioned law, these bodies are required to have eleven members; six municipal councilors and five representatives of formal bodies, operating for the collective representation of migrants and refugees (Law 4555/2018, Art. 79).

When asked about the impact of these consultative bodies in the comprehensive resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country, the participants' perceptions appeared to be positive, although the need for further progress was underlined. More

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<sup>21</sup> Ξέρεις οτι το 2023 έχουμε εθνικές και δημοτικές εκλογές. Και το 2024 έχουμε και ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές. Εδώ στην Ελλάδα δίνουμε μάχη τα τελευταία 30 χρόνια προκειμένου οι πολίτες που ζουν σε μία πόλη να έχουν δικαίωμα να ψηφίσουν ποιος θα μαζεύει, ποιος μπορεί να μαζεύει καλύτερα τα σκουπίδια τους. Όχι ποιο κόμμα. Ποιος θα είναι ο δήμαρχος που θα μαζεύει τα σκουπίδια μας απ'έξω. Δεν είναι δυνατόν εγώ να φορολογούμαι, να υπόκειμαι σε δημοτικά τέλη κτλ κτλ και να μην έχω..Δηλαδή αυτή τη στιγμή η Αθήνα έχει ένα 10% του πληθυσμού που συμμετέχει στην οικονομία της χώρας, στη δραστηριότητα της πόλης, κρατάει πραγματικά, οι μετανάστες κράτησαν την πόλη όρθια! Είναι τα λιγότερα μαγαζιά που κλείσανε την περίοδο της οικονομικής κρίσης ή τα περισσότερα μαγαζιά που ανοίξανε ήταν μικρά μαγαζιά μεταναστών και να λέμε τώρα σε όλους αυτούς τους ανθρώπους δεν έχετε δικαίωμα να ψηφίσετε πού; Να μην μπορούμε να πούμε ότι είναι σκοτεινός ο δρόμος;

specifically, Participants 1 and 6 referred to the MICs as the only opportunity currently to bring refugees and migrants on the same table with the local government to discuss issues pertaining to their integration in the community. Furthermore, Participant 6 noted that the possibility to participate in the MICs, contributes to greater structure internally in the RLOs and MLOs as well. Nevertheless, the majority of the participants also brought to the fore concerns related to the efficacy of these consultative bodies. Participants 2, 5, and 6 discussed the limited power of the MICs. Moreover, Participant 2 underlined the issue of language, as the meetings of the MICs are provided only in Greek, which excludes substantially the participants in the meetings who do not know the language. Lastly, Participant 1 highlighted that many municipalities do not wish to establish a Migrant Integration Council in their region. Moreover, they referred to the lack of support for the RLOs and MLOs to participate in the MICs and the token role they have in the councils due to the larger influence of the municipality councilors.

Drawing from the above, the participation of refugees and migrants in public affairs in Greece appears to be restricted. Following Fraser's theory on the status model of recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29), the institutionalized patterns existing in Greece do not permit the full participation of refugees and migrants in society. The only opportunity they have to discuss issues pertaining to their resettlement in the country with the government is provided through the Migrant Integration Councils, which also have limited capacities and do not allow for the participatory parity of refugees and migrants as equal members in the meetings. Moreover, the adjudication to hold an initiative to stipulate electoral rights on a local level for refugees and migrants as unconstitutional, further exacerbates their subordination as actors in society. Schinkel argues that "when persons of different socialization gain political membership, a rift in the seamless overlap between state and nation and thereby between state and society appears" (Schinkel, 2019, p. 197). Thus, citizenship is employed as a program that contributes to the illustration of "society" vis-à-vis the "other" (Schinkel, 2019, p. 193). Nevertheless, according to Fraser, all actors who are subjected to a certain structure of governance, are considered subjects of justice, "regardless of political citizenship" (Fraser, 2008, p. 96). Considering their activity, the participation of refugees and migrants in the refugee and migrant-led organizations also constitutes a form of political participation. Nevertheless, refugees and migrants have the right to participate on a par



with others in society in every level, including participation in public dialogue about the issues pertaining to the country as a whole.

## 5.4 You have to move in quicksand without sinking.

Papadopoulos and Fratsea indicate that the role and capabilities of CSOs depend substantially on the system within which they are operating (2014, pp. 70–71). In Greece, the state-centred system inhibits the power of refugee and migrant-led organizations regarding their work to facilitate the resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country and restricts their recognition as equal partners in Greek civil society (A. Papadopoulos & Fratsea, 2014, p. 71). According to Fraser, recognition is a matter of justice, connected to social status (Fraser, 2001, p. 24; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29). She argues that, in order to assess a claim for recognition, one has to examine the effects that institutionalized patterns of cultural value have on the status of the actors in question (Fraser, 2001, p. 24; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29).

Accordingly, this theme explores the asymmetries identified by the participants in the interviews pertaining to the endeavours of RLOs and MLOs to facilitate the resettlement of refugees and migrants in Greece vis-a-vis the practices of the state towards them. In this picture, the assistance they offer has been divided based on the participants' responses, into two broader categories; regarding their interpersonal interactions with people seeking their help and the advocacy work that many participants highlighted in the interviews.

On an interpersonal level, participants referred to the support they offer to refugees and migrants from various aspects. More specifically, Participant 4 mentioned that their organization offers, among other things, language and IT courses, while Participant 3 referred to the provision of necessities to those who approach them and the arrangement of intercultural activities that bring people together. They also gave prominence to information sharing by using social media as a tool to assist people navigating through the Greek system, aiming at facilitating their everyday lives in Greek society:

So, integration from my point of view, like the role of us in the integration is mostly explaining to them, you know, that it's not something..., it's the system, it's how it works, don't take it personally. It's how generally the system works here

in Greece and don't get offended by something, because they are as bad to you as to us. [laugh] So, I mean, like, you know, just trying to explain these things. We also have, this is part of... we have the information channel, like, you know, the different messengers. [...] So, and we have this "Telegram" where we just give some tips. What is "laiki" for example? It's better to come after, in the afternoon to laiki, because the price is lower. So, this is some tips, survival tips. How to get to the hospital. So, you just have to google "hospital on duty" [...]. And you can say it's integration, you can say it's survival [laugh]. Survival guides, guidelines.

Correspondingly, Participant 6 discussed the arrangement of info-sessions with refugees and migrants to communicate different topics relevant to their resettlement in Greece:

So, we tend not be very efficient as we would like, since the integration is the responsibility of the state, but we managed to provide some good practices to newcomers, to refugees-communities, to provide them knowledge and information. And also, strategies that any newcomer can apply in order to be integrated into society. [...]. It's also same thing in the health sector, where we are implementing different projects in order to raise awareness of the health issues, not only the physical issues, but mental issues as well.

Moving beyond the provision of information, Participant 2 illustrated a plethora of different activities their organization pursues to facilitate the lives of refugees and migrants in the country, including support on more personal events, e.g., weddings and births:

What we are doing as a community is what I said before, we are here to support our community members to not face the same problems that we face when we came to Greece. It is to give them tools, to give them power to be independent from the beginning and after. So, when our community members don't know how to apply for asylum, what is the process for asylum or asylum process or how to apply to have a residence permit. We give them this information. Or where they want to sleep, they don't know the place where they want to stay tonight or they don't have food, or they don't have clothes or they want to meet new members or they're looking for jobs. Or they're in detention camp or they are in hospital or even for the good things also. If they want to make a wedding or they have babies, they need people to celebrate together. Yeah, so, for many we are working in

different levels. We don't have specific things to do. Everything that comes to our table, we try to find solution.

With regard to the initiatives employed to advocate for refugees' and migrants' rights, Participants 1 and 4 discussed the activities they arrange within society to raise awareness for issues pertaining to racism and xenophobia, e.g., speeches at universities and participation in antiracist festivals. Participant 5 talked about their efforts through media activism and inclusion of persons of colour in Greek TV (Participant 5). Furthermore, Participant 1 also talked about their practices on an international, national, and local level by noting that:

We do advocacy work with numerous networks in Europe. [...] I always represent, I advocate that in all of this, migrants and refugees themselves should be involved as part of European society. We cannot exclude migrants and refugees. They are the ones who have to be at the table.<sup>22</sup>

[..]

At the Greek level, for example, we have been trying since the day we established the communities, we have been trying and pushing the Greek state, that is, all along, to create a migration policy, a policy for integration, a strategy for integration to exist centrally from the state. Unfortunately, it does not exist.<sup>23</sup>

[..]

But at the level of local government, local state, so to speak, there are some laws, there are also some needs. Needs because right now they have immigrants and refugees and whatever the municipalities do, they have immigrants and refugees as citizens. So necessarily they have to do something for them. So that there will not be a problem. And that's why they call us, we cooperate with the

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<sup>22</sup> Κάνουμε advocacy δουλειά, με πάρα πολλά network στην Ευρώπη. [...] Εγώ εκπροσωπώ πάντα, κάνω advocate ότι σε όλα αυτά πρέπει να είναι και συμμετοχοί οι μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες οι ίδιοι, ως κομμάτι της Ευρωπαϊκής κοινωνίας. Δεν μπορούμε να βγάλουμε απ έξω τους μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Αυτοί είναι που πρέπει να είναι στο τραπέζι.

<sup>23</sup> Στο ελληνικό επίπεδο για παράδειγμα έχουμε προσπαθήσει από την ημέρα που ιδρύσαμε τις κοινότητες, που προσπαθούμε και πιέζουμε το ελληνικό κράτος, δηλαδή διαχρονικά, για δημιουργία μίας πολιτικής μετανάστευσης, μία πολιτική για την ένταξη, μία στρατηγική για την ένταξη να υπάρχει κεντρικά από το κράτος. Δυστυχώς δεν υπάρχει.

municipalities, with the local government we always do. The communities have a better relationship in comparison to the central government. That's how it is.<sup>24</sup>

During the interviews, the participants also discussed issues pertaining to their status as stakeholders in the Greek civil society, operating within the field of integration. In this light, the majority of the participants indicated that they have gratifying relations with other grassroots initiatives, like RLOs and MLOs, and that they also cooperate well with NGOs and INGOs in the country. However, in relation to the state, all participants brought to the fore challenges, that situate them in a subordinate position. Fraser perceives the notion of participatory parity to be the “evaluative standard” to review claims for recognition (Fraser, 2001, p. 32; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 38). For a claim to be justified, a claimant is required to demonstrate that institutionalized patterns of cultural value “constitute them as inferior” and prevent them from participating fully on a par with others in society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 29). In this light, Participant 1 mentioned that the relation of the organization to the state is contingent on the will of the latter:

We do not agree on many things. That's the relationship, but it's always related to the state. It doesn't depend on the communities. The communities are very clear about what they want. The question is what the state wants. [...] Many times, with some governments they have actually asked us and we have worked very well together. But with some they don't want to so it's not possible, it's too difficult. I am not saying they are hostile but there is...sometimes they are good, sometimes they are not so good with us.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, Participants 2 and 4 pointed to a sense of neglect on the part of the state, including the lack of funding. Specifically, Participant 2 argued that the government does not know that the organization exists, while Participant 4 talked about the lack of rights

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<sup>24</sup> Αλλά στο επίπεδο της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης, τοπικό κράτος να πούμε, εκεί υπάρχουν κάποιες νομοθεσίες, υπάρχουν και ανάγκες. Ανάγκες επειδή αυτή τη στιγμή έχουν μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες και ότι και να κάνουν οι δήμοι έχουν ως δημότες μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Άρα αναγκαστικά αυτοί πρέπει να κάνουν κάτι γι'αυτούς. Για να μην δημιουργηθεί πρόβλημα. Και γι'αυτό καλούν εμάς, έχουμε συνεργασία με τους δήμους, με την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση πάντα έχουμε. Οι κοινότητες έχουν καλύτερη σχέση σχετικά με το κεντρικό κράτος. Έτσι είναι.

<sup>25</sup> Σε πολλά πράγματα δεν συμφωνούμε. Αυτή είναι η σχέση αλλά πάντα σχετίζεται με το κράτος. Αυτό δεν εξαρτάται από τις κοινότητες. Οι κοινότητες είναι πολύ ξεκάθαρες τι θέλουν. Το θέμα είναι τι θέλει το κράτος. [...] Πολλές φορές με κάποιες κυβερνήσεις πραγματικά μας έχουν ζητήσει και έχουμε συνεργαστεί πάρα πολύ καλά. Αλλά με κάποιες δεν θέλουν άρα δεν γίνεται, είναι πάρα πολύ δύσκολο. Δεν λέω ότι είναι εχθρικοί αλλά υπάρχει...πότε είναι καλά, πότε είναι όχι τόσο καλά με εμάς.

and funding towards smaller RLOs and MLOs. Additionally, Participants 5 and 6 discussed that the government holds a hostile stance towards these organizations in the country:

The Greek state is hostile towards organisations that have an identity that does not suit the current government. In this case, the Greek government, and note this, is hostile to all organizations that work on issues of integration, aid, migrants, refugees, vulnerable groups, all of them. Don't even talk about issues concerning identity, hopeless!<sup>26</sup> – Participant 5

Actually, how can I explain it, it's, if you are using a very aggressive term for migration actually, so, automatically people that are working to support those migrants to be integrated into the Greek society, they will be seen as enemy of the state. This is what I want to explain, directly you may not see connection, but you can see step by step some elements in the states, in the government, that are not helping at all refugees-led organizations. Because, first of all, we are talking about human beings. So, if those human being are considered somehow as a threat, it was expressed by different personality of the government, so, this will push somehow the population to see those people as a kind of danger of the society. So, refugee-communities that are working to support the integration of those people, they will be seen very negatively. – Participant 6

Moreover, all participants highlighted that refugee and migrant-led organizations are not taken into consideration in policy-making on a national level. More specifically, Participants 1 and 5, respectively, pointed out:

Yes, they do not consider them necessary to formulate a policy for migrants - refugees. Just because their policy is very clear that "we don't care about migrants and refugees" they just want them out of here. They don't care at all. So, the presence of communities is not necessary. "You don't bother us " but as much as it is annoying to the other organizations, it is annoying to us. Generally, a policy of, how to say, criminalization of NGOs and all that is here for those who work for

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<sup>26</sup> Το ελληνικό κράτος είναι εχθρικό προς τις οργανώσεις, οι οποίες έχουν ταυτότητα που δεν βολεύει την εκάστοτε κυβέρνηση. Στην προκειμένη περίπτωση η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, και να το σημειώσεις, είναι εχθρική απέναντι σε όλες τις οργανώσεις που λειτουργούν για θέματα που αφορούν ένταξη, ενίσχυση, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, ευάλωτες ομάδες, όλες. Μην πας και πεις για τα θέματα που αφορούν τα θέματα ταυτότητας, άστα!

migrants and refugees. That's how they treat us. We have no special or bigger problem than the others here.<sup>27</sup> – Participant 1

Of course not. No. No. They don't. Nor do they care, in the consultation, in the bill submission process, if you look at it closely, the bills that have to do with the specific issues, I repeat horizontally: empowerment, empowerment of vulnerable groups and organizations that deal with these issues, it is as if they don't take anything into account. Nothing! Zero. Zero. Zero. Nothing. Even in the meetings, or in the comments or in the remarks you can make through the website...they don't even take into account, none!<sup>28</sup> – Participant 5

Lastly, both Participants 5 and 6 highlighted that, despite the degrading treatment they face from the government, RLOs and MLOs are required to substitute for the state and other civil society organizations, to protect and promote the rights of refugees and migrants in the country:

And what refugee and migration organisations are called upon to do is to operate smoothly in this context. That is the big gamble. And without straying from their core operational role. [...] So you have to move in a quicksand without sinking. It's stepping on eggs without breaking them, you can't do otherwise. But organisations are called upon to take on the bulk of the work that the state does not do and does not want to do. Integration is entirely the responsibility of the organisations unfortunately. Health care is on the organizations, unfortunately. The migration and refugee organisations, not all civil society organisations.

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<sup>27</sup> Ναι, δεν τους θεωρεί αναγκαίους για να διαμορφώσει μία πολιτική για τους μετανάστες- πρόσφυγες. Επειδή ακριβώς η πολιτική τους είναι πολύ ξεκάθαρο ότι «δεν μας νοιάζει οι μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες» απλά θέλουν να φύγουν από εδώ. Δεν τους νοιάζει καθόλου. Άρα δεν είναι αναγκαία η παρουσία των κοινοτήτων. «Δεν μας ενοχλείτε κιόλας» αλλά τόσο που είναι ενοχλητικό για τις άλλες οργανώσεις, τόσο είναι και για εμάς. Γενικά μία πολιτική, πώς να πούμε, criminalization of NGOs και όλα αυτά υπάρχει εδώ που δουλεύουν από τους μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Έτσι αντιμετωπίζουν και εμάς. Δεν έχουμε ιδιαίτερο ή μεγαλύτερο πρόβλημα από τους άλλους εδώ.

<sup>28</sup> Όχι βέβαια. Όχι. Όχι. Δεν θέλουν. Ούτε στη διαβούλευση, κατά τη διαδικασία υποβολής νομοσχεδίων τους ενδιαφέρει, άμα παρατηρήσεις, τα νομοσχέδια που έχουν να κάνουν με τα συγκεκριμένα θέματα, επαναλαμβάνω οριζόντια: ενδυνάμωση, ενίσχυση ευάλωτων ομάδων και οργανώσεις που ασχολούνται με αυτά, λες και δεν λαμβάνουν υπόψη τους τίποτα. Τίποτα! Μηδέν. Μηδέν. Μηδέν. Τίποτα. Ακόμα και στις συναντήσεις, είτε στα σχόλια ή στις παρατηρήσεις που μπορείς να κάνεις μέσω της σελίδας..Δεν λαμβάνουν καν υπόψη τους, καμιά!

Funding is non-existent. They are directed. [...] Directed and excluding organisations from funding.<sup>29</sup> – Participant 5

So, we believe that integration should be the responsibility of the state. So, if it's not, so, different issues will be managed by organizations, by NGOs, by community in the lowest level. So, we have to face different issues in the legal part with the higher, very high number of people, undocumented person. [...] Since people cannot, they don't have any document that would be very difficult for those people to have proper access to the health system. And we have to face also the housing system. So, the program of HELIOS will just, no ESTIA, ESTIA will close. So, leaving many people on the streets, it's very hard. So, we have to find solutions in the communities-level and in the x level. We also have to face, one of the biggest problem is the negative narrative of refugees and migrants, which is increasing the fear in the society and hatred towards migrants and refugees. And this situation is also creating a war between refugees, migrants and Greeks. So, we have to face the situation and provide some approaches to be able to reduce the impact of those challenges. – Participant 6

In light of the above, refugee and migrant-led organizations contribute substantially to the accommodation of refugees' and migrants' needs in the country in multiple ways. Nevertheless, the overall stance that the government holds against integration, also seems to affect their position as actors in the country, given the state's practices, indicated in the segments of the interviews above. In this regard, based on Fraser's understanding of recognition (Fraser, 2001; Fraser & Honneth, 2003), even though refugee and migrant-led organizations in Greece contribute largely to the resettlement of refugees and migrants and also substitute for the state, the latter restricts their participation, and thereby the participation of refugees and migrants as equal actors in

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<sup>29</sup> Και αυτό που καλούνται οι προσφυγικές και μεταναστευτικές οργανώσεις είναι να λειτουργήσουν ομαλά στο συγκεκριμένο πλαίσιο. Αυτό είναι το μεγάλο στοίχημα. Και χωρίς να ξεφεύγουν από το βασικό ρόλο της λειτουργίας τους. [...] Άρα πρέπει να κινείσαι σε μία κινούμενη άμμο χωρίς να βουλιάξεις. Είναι να πατάς πάνω σε αυγά χωρίς να τα σπάσεις, δεν γίνεται διαφορετικά. Οι οργανώσεις όμως καλούνται να πάρουν πάνω τους το μεγαλύτερο όγκο της δουλειάς που δεν κάνει και ούτε θέλει να κάνει το κράτος. Η ένταξη είναι αποκλειστικά ευθύνη των οργανώσεων δυστυχώς. Η ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη είναι στις οργανώσεις, δυστυχώς. Τις οργανώσεις τις μεταναστευτικές και προσφυγικές, όχι όλες τις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών. Οι χρηματοδοτήσεις είναι ανύπαρκτες. Κατευθυνόμενες. [...] Κατευθυνόμενες και αποκλειόμενες οργανώσεις από τις χρηματοδοτήσεις.

society. Thus, stepping away from the inferior position that refugees and migrants are placed by the government, participatory parity needs to be applied “dialogically and discursively” within society to deinstitutionalize those patterns that contribute to their subordination (Fraser, 2001, p. 41; Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 43).



## 6 Concluding Remarks

The aim of this thesis was to explore the role of migrant and refugee-led organizations (RLOs and MLOs) considering their work for the comprehensive resettlement of refugees and migrants in Greek society. In this regard, the main research questions taken into consideration were: how can the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations impact integration of refugees and migrants in Greece, through their operation and their interaction with the state on a local and national level, how do migrants and refugees perceive the role of refugee and migrant-led organizations in terms of integration in Greece, and lastly how do refugee and migrant-led organizations affect the participatory parity of migrants and refugees in the country. Applying Willem Schinkel's approach to integration and Nancy Fraser's theory on recognition and participatory parity, this thesis deliberated on the three-fold relationship between the work of the refugee and migrant-led organizations, the Greek society, and the institutionalized concept of integration, endorsed by the Greek state. This exploration drew heavily on six interviews, conducted with leaders and members of migrant and refugee-led organizations in Greece.

The themes developed from these conversations; "It's possible only for white people", "A dog was helping us", "If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are also necessary in Omonia", and "You have to move in quicksand without sinking", provided fertile ground for the analysis of the aforementioned nexus. Considering the eminence of the Greek national identity at the core of the Greek society, I argue that the concept of integration, in the perspective that has been promoted by the Greek government, does not stand in solitude from society. Rather, it is a framework, instrumentalized by the Greek state to reinforce the illustration of the homogenous national identity and perpetuate the marginalization of refugees and migrants from society. Following Nancy Fraser's theory on recognition and participatory parity, I have argued that this constitutes not only an impediment to the self-realization of refugees and migrants, but more importantly an act of injustice, as it fails to recognize a large part of the population as equal partners in society.

In this regard, the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations is exceedingly challenging. These associations support refugees and migrants in their regions through

various practices; by providing necessities and language courses, information on essential matters, e.g., applying for asylum or navigating through the Greek system, raising awareness in Greek society about issues of racism and xenophobia, contributing to national emergencies, and advocating about migrant and refugee rights on a local, national, and international level. Moreover, considering that many of these organizations have been created by people who have personal experience migrating to Greece, the refugee and migrant-led organizations are remarkably relevant to the people they help. Sharing the same language and/or culture makes these associations exceedingly more approachable to the people who ask for their help and provide a sense of safety and familiarity, which I argue is not necessarily equally possible through other actors operating within the framework of integration. Nevertheless, their efforts go highly unrecognized.

Regarding their engagement in public affairs, migrant and refugee-led organizations participate in local consultative bodies, through the Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils (MRICs). However, to this day, these bodies do not exist in every municipality of Greece and in their formation, they do not facilitate the participation of the migrant and refugee representative entities as equal stakeholders compared to the other council-members. Moreover, the exclusive use of Greek language in the MRICs' meetings impedes the meaningful participation of the members who do not speak Greek.

In addition, in this study I have argued that the relation of the refugee and migrant-led organizations with the national government is very limited. Communication between them is scarce and cooperation predominantly depends on the disposition of the said government. What is more, these organizations hold the lion's share regarding the comprehensive resettlement of refugees and migrants in the country but do not receive the required support to accommodate for the people who need their help. Connecting the concept of integration to the illustration of Greek society as a homogenous entity, I have argued that the assistance offered by refugee and migrant-led organizations, particularly regarding the provision of a sense of safety driven by shared elements such as language and culture, is instrumentalized to further highlight discrepancies between the pre-existing society and the refugees and migrants who reside in the country, adding to their misrecognition as inferior members of society.

Lastly, attention has also been drawn to the political participation of refugees and migrants in Greece. In this thesis, I have argued that the RLOs and MLOs influence refugees and migrants to engage further in the society through participation in the organizations themselves, through the engagement in the Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils, and through advocacy for their rights in Greek society. Nevertheless, there is a gap regarding their formal participation in the country, which I argue would contribute substantially to their comprehensive resettlement in Greek society. Considering the pronouncement of Law 3838/2010, which stipulated electoral rights to third-country nationals on a local level as unconstitutional by the Council of State, further indicates the presence of structural impediments that restrict the participation of refugees and migrants in the country. Thus, I suggest that providing refugees and migrants with the right to vote initially at the municipality level, could be a step in the right direction, enhancing their participatory parity in Greek society.

Despite the limited relations of the refugee and migrant-led organizations with the national government, I argue that their work is highly impacted by the policies and practices adopted by the Greek state regarding integration. For the time being, taking into account the concerns voiced by local and international actors about the initiatives taken by the Greek government to address issues of migration, I consider that the state does not want for refugees and migrants to settle in society. Notwithstanding, that phenomena of migration have been prevalent in the country for more than thirty years, I argue that Greece continues to present itself as a transit country, securitizing migration and violating extensively the human rights of people who attempt to cross its borders.

In this light, the operation of any form of organizations that seek to accommodate refugees' and migrants' needs in Greece is highly overburdened. Nevertheless, given what has been analyzed in this thesis, I contend that the work of refugee and migrant-led organizations is imperative for the comprehensive resettlement and enhancement of the participatory parity of refugees and migrants in the country. In order to do so, a true two-folded approach must be implemented in Greek society. The Greek state should acknowledge the gradual transformation of the country from a homogenous entity driven by national sentiments, to a more multicultural one, starting by the initiation of an open dialogue, in which all actors of society are included and which can lead to the

deinstitutionalization of practices and concepts that impede the parity of participation of certain groups in society. In this light, further research amplifying the participatory parity and the voices of refugees and migrants in reimagining the discursive space on integration in Greek society remains paramount. And lastly as Paulo Freire iterates:

“Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.” (Freire, 1970, p. 45)

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: Letter of Consent in English

## **Are you interested in taking part in the research project**

### ***“The dynamic of refugee-led organizations in Greece”?***

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to examine the role and capabilities of refugee-led organizations, that operate within the field of integration of refugees and migrants in Greece. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

#### **Purpose of the project**

This research project constitutes my thesis for the Master Program “Human Rights and Multiculturalism” at the University of South-Eastern Norway. It is a study that focuses on the work of refugee-led organizations (RLOs) with regard to the integration of refugees and migrants into the Greek society.

In Greece, issues of refugee and migrant-integration have only recently come to the fore in public discourse, however RLOs, that are working in this field have existed in the country for many years. In spite of this, their work is rarely highlighted in the public sphere. This is why, with this thesis, my aim is to look at the work of refugee-led organizations, that are established in Greece and attempt to understand the dynamic they carry as active agents in the context of migration, not only in the present but also in the future.

Drawing from the above, the main question that this thesis will explore is: “**How can the work of refugee-led organizations positively impact integration of refugees and migrants in Greece?**”

Additionally, in order to answer this question, this research study will also examine the following sub-questions:

- How do refugee-led organizations operate in Greece?
- What is their interaction with the state, on a local and national level?

#### **Who is responsible for the research project?**

The institution responsible for this project is the University of South-Eastern Norway.

#### **Why are you being asked to participate?**

Eligible participants for this research project can be individuals, irrespective of gender or ethnicity, who are over the age of 18, live in Greece and are actively participating in refugee-led organizations that focus on the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece.

Total number of participants for this project will be 20 and participants are required to speak Greek or English.

#### **What does participation involve for you?**

If you choose to take part in the research project, this will involve that you participate in an individual interview. It will take approximately 1 hour. The interview includes questions about your personal experience living in Greece and participating in a refugee-led organization, as well as about your opinion regarding the operation of refugee-led organizations in general and their interaction to the Greek state. Your answers will be recorded electronically.

### **Participation is voluntary**

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

### **Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data**

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

In connection with the University of South-Eastern Norway, your personal data will only be accessible to the student/ researcher, Eleni Kelaraki, and the assigned supervisor for this research project, namely Gabriela Mezzanotti. To ensure that that no unauthorized persons will have access to your personal data I will replace your name and contact details with a number. The list of names, contact details and respective numbers will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data. Moreover, I will record and manage the interviews through “Nettskjema” (“Online Form”), a secure service provided by the University of Oslo and I will store the data in an external data processor. Lastly, I will delete all digital recordings after I have completed their transcription.

As a participant you will not be recognizable in the master thesis or publications related to it.

### **What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?**

The project is scheduled to end on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. All personal data will be anonymized at the end of the project.

### **Your rights**

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

### **What gives us the right to process your personal data?**

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the University of South-Eastern Norway, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

### **Where can I find out more?**

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- The University of South-Eastern Norway via Eleni Kellaraki (the student/researcher) by e-mail [kelarakie@gmail.com](mailto:kelarakie@gmail.com) or by telephone +306979026585. You can also contact the assigned supervisor for the project, Gabriela Mezzanotti by e-mail [Gabriela.Mezzanotti@usn.no](mailto:Gabriela.Mezzanotti@usn.no).
- Our Data Protection Officer: Paal Are Solberg by e-mail [Paal.A.Solberg@usn.no](mailto:Paal.A.Solberg@usn.no)
- Data Protection Services, by email: ([personverntjenester@sikt.no](mailto:personverntjenester@sikt.no)) or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader  
(Researcher/supervisor)

Student (if applicable)

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## Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project “The dynamic of refugee-led organizations in Greece” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in an individual interview, which will be recorded electronically

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

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(Signed by participant, date)



**Ενδιαφέρεστε να συμμετάσχετε στην ερευνητική μελέτη «Η δυναμική των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων στην Ελλάδα»;**

Η παρούσα επιστολή αποτελεί πρόσκληση για συμμετοχή σε μία ερευνητική μελέτη, ο βασικός σκοπός της οποίας, είναι η εξέταση του ρόλου και των δυνατοτήτων που κατέχουν όσες προσφυγικές οργανώσεις δρουν στον τομέα της ένταξης μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα. Σε αυτή την επιστολή θα σας δώσουμε πληροφορίες σχετικά με το σκοπό της μελέτης και το τι θα περιλαμβάνει η συμμετοχή σας.

**Σκοπός της εργασίας**

Αυτή η ερευνητική μελέτη αποτελεί τη διπλωματική μου για το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα «Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα και Πολυπολιτισμικότητα» στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Νοτιοανατολικής Νορβηγίας. Πρόκειται για μια εργασία που εστιάζει στο έργο των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων (refugee-led organizations/ RLOs) σχετικά με την ένταξη των προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην ελληνική κοινωνία.

Στην Ελλάδα, ζητήματα αναφορικά με την ένταξη μεταναστών και προσφύγων έχουν έρθει πολύ πρόσφατα στο προσκήνιο στο δημόσιο λόγο, ωστόσο προσφυγικές οργανώσεις που εργάζονται πάνω σε αυτό το κομμάτι, υπάρχουν στη χώρα εδώ και πολλά χρόνια. Παρόλα αυτά, το έργο τους σπάνια αναδεικνύεται δημόσια. Για το λόγο αυτό, με αυτή τη μελέτη, στόχος μου είναι να εξερευνήσω το έργο των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων που εδρεύουν στην Ελλάδα, και να επιχειρήσω να κατανοήσω τη δυναμική που φέρουν ως ενεργοί συντελεστές στο πεδίο της μετανάστευσης, όχι μόνο στο παρόν αλλά και στο μέλλον.

Αντλώντας από τα παραπάνω, το κύριο ερώτημα που θα διερευνήσει αυτή η διπλωματική είναι: **«Πώς μπορεί το έργο των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων να επηρεάσει θετικά την ένταξη των προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα;»**

Επιπλέον, για να απαντηθεί αυτό το ερώτημα, η παρούσα ερευνητική μελέτη θα εξετάσει επίσης τα ακόλουθα υποερωτήματα:

- Πώς λειτουργούν οι προσφυγικές οργανώσεις στην Ελλάδα;
- Ποια είναι η αλληλεπίδρασή τους με το κράτος, σε τοπικό και εθνικό επίπεδο;

**Ποιος είναι υπεύθυνος για την ερευνητική μελέτη;**

Το ίδρυμα που είναι υπεύθυνο για αυτή τη μελέτη είναι το Πανεπιστήμιο της Νοτιοανατολικής Νορβηγίας.

## **Γιατί σας ζητείται να συμμετάσχετε;**

Κατάλληλοι συμμετέχοντες για την παρούσα ερευνητική μελέτη μπορούν να είναι άτομα, ανεξαρτήτως φύλου ή εθνικότητας, που είναι άνω των 18 ετών, ζουν στην Ελλάδα και συμμετέχουν ενεργά σε προσφυγικές οργανώσεις που επικεντρώνονται στην ένταξη προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα. Ο συνολικός αριθμός συμμετεχόντων για αυτό το έργο θα είναι 20 και οι συμμετέχοντες πρέπει να μιλούν την ελληνική ή την αγγλική γλώσσα.

## **Τι περιλαμβάνει η συμμετοχή σας στην παρούσα μελέτη;**

Εάν επιλέξετε να συμμετάσχετε στην παρούσα μελέτη, αυτό θα περιλαμβάνει τη συμμετοχή σας σε μία ατομική συνέντευξη, η οποία θα διαρκέσει περίπου 1 ώρα. Η συνέντευξη περιλαμβάνει ερωτήσεις σχετικά με την προσωπική σας εμπειρία από τη διαβίωσή σας στην Ελλάδα και τη συμμετοχή σας σε μια προσφυγική οργάνωση, καθώς και τη γνώμη σας σχετικά με τη λειτουργία των προσφυγικών οργάνωσης γενικότερα και την αλληλεπίδρασή τους με το ελληνικό κράτος. Οι απαντήσεις σας θα καταγραφούν ηλεκτρονικά.

## **Η συμμετοχή είναι εθελοντική**

Η συμμετοχή στο έργο είναι εθελοντική. Εάν επιλέξατε να συμμετάσχετε, μπορείτε να ανακαλέσετε τη συγκατάθεσή σας ανά πάσα στιγμή χωρίς να αναφέρετε κάποιο λόγο. Όλες οι πληροφορίες για εσάς θα γίνουν ανώνυμες. Δεν θα υπάρξουν αρνητικές συνέπειες για εσάς εάν επιλέξετε να μην συμμετέχετε ή αργότερα αποφασίσετε να αποσυρθείτε.

## **Το προσωπικό σας απόρρητο – πώς θα αποθηκεύσουμε και θα χρησιμοποιήσουμε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα**

Θα χρησιμοποιήσουμε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα μόνο για τους σκοπούς που καθορίζονται σε αυτήν την ενημερωτική επιστολή. Θα επεξεργαστούμε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα εμπιστευτικά και σύμφωνα με τη νομοθεσία περί προστασίας δεδομένων (ο Γενικός Κανονισμός για την Προστασία Δεδομένων και Νόμος για τα Προσωπικά Δεδομένα).

Σε σύνδεση με το Πανεπιστήμιο της Νοτιοανατολικής Νορβηγίας, τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα θα είναι προσβάσιμα μόνο στην ερευνήτρια, Ελένη Κελαράκη, και στην αρμόδια επιβλέπουσα για αυτό το ερευνητικό έργο, δηλαδή την Gabriela Mezzanotti. Για να διασφαλίσω ότι κανένα μη εξουσιοδοτημένο άτομο δεν θα έχει πρόσβαση στα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα, θα αντικαταστήσω το όνομά σας και τα στοιχεία επικοινωνίας σας με έναν αριθμό. Η λίστα με τα ονόματα, τα στοιχεία επικοινωνίας και οι αντίστοιχοι αριθμοί θα αποθηκευτούν χωριστά από τα υπόλοιπα δεδομένα που συλλέγονται. Επιπλέον, θα ηχογραφήσω και θα διαχειριστώ τις συνεντεύξεις μέσω του «Nettskjema» («Διαδικτυακή Φόρμα»), μια ασφαλής υπηρεσία που παρέχεται από το Πανεπιστήμιο του Όσλο και θα αποθηκεύσω τα δεδομένα σε έναν εξωτερικό επεξεργαστή δεδομένων. Τέλος, θα διαγράψω όλες τις ψηφιακές εγγραφές αφού ολοκληρώσω τη μεταγραφή τους.

Ως συμμετέχων/ -ούσα/ -ον δεν θα είστε αναγνωρίσιμοι/-ες/-α στη μεταπτυχιακή εργασία ή σε δημοσιεύσεις που σχετίζονται με αυτήν.

### **Τι θα συμβεί με τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα στο τέλος της ερευνητικής μελέτης;**

Το έργο έχει προγραμματιστεί να ολοκληρωθεί στις 30 Ιουνίου 2023. Όλα τα προσωπικά δεδομένα θα είναι ανώνυμα στο τέλος του έργου.

### **Τα δικαιώματά σας**

Για όσο διάστημα είστε αναγνωρίσιμοι/ -ες,/ -α στα δεδομένα που συλλέγονται, έχετε δικαίωμα:

- πρόσβασης στα προσωπικά δεδομένα που σας αφορούν και που υποβάλλονται σε επεξεργασία στην παρούσα εργασία
- να ζητήσετε να διαγραφούν τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα
- να ζητήσετε τη διόρθωση λανθασμένων προσωπικών δεδομένων που σας αφορούν
- να λάβετε αντίγραφο των προσωπικών σας δεδομένων (φορητότητα δεδομένων) και
- να στείλετε ένα παράπονο στον Υπεύθυνο Προστασίας Δεδομένων (Data Protection Officer) ή στη Νορβηγική Αρχή Προστασίας Δεδομένων (The Norwegian Data Protection Authority) σχετικά με την επεξεργασία των προσωπικών σας δεδομένων

### **Τι μας δίνει το δικαίωμα να επεξεργαστούμε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα;**

Θα επεξεργαστούμε τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα με βάση τη συγκατάθεσή σας.

Βάσει συμφωνίας με το Πανεπιστήμιο της Νοτιοανατολικής Νορβηγίας, οι Υπηρεσίες Προστασίας Δεδομένων εκτίμησαν ότι η επεξεργασία προσωπικών δεδομένων σε αυτή τη μελέτη είναι σύμφωνη με τη νομοθεσία περί προστασίας δεδομένων.

### **Πού μπορώ να μάθω περισσότερα;**

Εάν έχετε ερωτήσεις σχετικά με το έργο ή θέλετε να ασκήσετε τα δικαιώματά σας, επικοινωνήστε με:

- Το Πανεπιστήμιο της Νοτιοανατολικής Νορβηγίας (University of South-Eastern Norway) μέσω της Ελένης Κελαράκη (η φοιτήτρια/ερευνήτρια) στο e-mail [kelarakie@gmail.com](mailto:kelarakie@gmail.com) ή στο τηλέφωνο +306979026585. Μπορείτε επίσης να επικοινωνήσετε με την αρμόδια επιβλέπουσα για το έργο, Gabriela Mezzanotti μέσω e-mail [Gabriela.Mezzanotti@usn.no](mailto:Gabriela.Mezzanotti@usn.no) .
- Τον Υπεύθυνο Προστασίας Δεδομένων του Πανεπιστημίου: Paal Are Solberg μέσω e-mail [Paal.A.Solberg@usn.no](mailto:Paal.A.Solberg@usn.no) .
- Τις Υπηρεσίες Προστασίας Δεδομένων, μέσω email: ([personverntjenester@sikt.no](mailto:personverntjenester@sikt.no) ) ή τηλεφωνικά: +47 53 21 15 00.

Με εκτίμηση,

Η επιβλέπουσα

Η μαθήτρια

(Researcher/ Supervisor)

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## **Φόρμα Συγκατάθεσης για Συμμετοχή στην Ερευνητική Μελέτη**

Έχω λάβει και κατανοήσει τις πληροφορίες που μου έχουν δοθεί για την ερευνητική μελέτη «Η δυναμική των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων στην Ελλάδα» και μου δόθηκε η ευκαιρία να κάνω ερωτήσεις. Δίνω συγκατάθεση:

- για τη συμμετοχή μου σε ατομική συνέντευξη, η οποία θα ηχογραφηθεί ηλεκτρονικά

Δίνω τη συγκατάθεσή μου για την επεξεργασία των προσωπικών μου δεδομένων μέχρι την ημερομηνία λήξης του έργου, περ. 30 Ιουνίου 2023.

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(Υπογραφή συμμετέχοντος/-ουσας/-οντος, ημερομηνία)

## Annex 3: Interview Guide

### Introduction

- Purpose of the project
- Information about confidentiality & right to withdraw
- Consent form - Questions
- Permission to record audio
- Demographic information

### Interview with members of Refugee-Led Organizations

#### Personal Experience

- How long have you lived in Greece?
- How long have you been part of a refugee-led organization?
- Why did you want to join a refugee-led organization?
- How does participating in a refugee-led organization make you feel?
- How has it been living in Greece?
- What does integration in the Greek society mean to you?
- Is being politically active in Greece important to you? Why/ Why not?
- Would you like to be able to vote in Greece?
- Do you think that acquiring the right to vote, for people who come to Greece as refugees or migrants, would facilitate their integration into society?
- In your opinion, can grassroots initiatives, that emerge from people who have come to Greece as refugees or migrants, effectively impact integration in Greece? Why/ Why not?
- What are the main challenges you have identify while engaging/working at RLO? Please give concrete examples
- How has your engagement with the RLO impacted your life in Greece? Your family? Friends?
- How would you define the social relevance of RLO to refugees in Greece?

#### Operation of Refugee-Led organizations in Greece

- What is your experience creating/ maintaining a refugee-led organization in Greece?
- Can a refugee-led organization facilitate the integration of refugees and migrants in Greece and if yes, how?
- What does a refugee-led organization in Greece, that focuses on integration, do?
- How does a refugee-led organization in Greece interact with individuals that reach out to them?
- Do refugee-led organizations collaborate with each other? If yes, how?
- Do refugee-led organizations cooperate with other agents engaged in integration? If yes, how?

- In your experience, do Greek citizens join or show support to the causes of refugee-led organizations in their area?
- How would you explain, in your experience, the relations between RLO and diasporas?
- How would you relate the work of RLO to Human Rights and the rights of migrants and refugees more specifically? Please give concrete examples

### **Interaction with the State**

- In your experience, what does the Greek state consider as integration?
- How does that differ from your own understanding of integration?
- In your experience, does the Greek state, through the initiatives and policies it adopts, promote integration?
- In your experience, does the state facilitate the operation of refugee-led organizations in Greece?
- In your experience, how does the Greek state perceive refugee-led organizations?
- In your experience, does the Greek state include refugee-led organizations in policy-making related to integration on a national level?
- What are your thoughts on the “National strategy for the social integration of asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries”?
- The National Strategy for the social integration of asylum seekers and international protection beneficiaries includes a goal regarding the “promotion of the European way of life”. What do you think about that?
- According to Greek legislation, every municipality in Greece has a Migrant Integration Council, that operates as a consultative body for the intensification of integration of refugees and migrants in that region. In these councils, 5 out of 11 members belong to recognized entities representing refugees and migrants in that specific municipality. In your experience, how does participation in such consultative bodies impact integration?
- In your experience, is there room for further communication and/or cooperation between the state and grassroots initiatives?
- In your experience, how can refugee-led organizations contribute to a more comprehensive and effective mode of integration of refugees and migrants into the Greek society?

## Annex 4: Interview Guide in Greek

### Οδηγός Συνέντευξης

#### Εισαγωγή

- Σκοπός της μελέτης
- Πληροφορίες σχετικά με το απόρρητο και το δικαίωμα ανάκλησης συγκατάθεσης
- Έντυπο συγκατάθεσης – Ερωτήσεις
- Άδεια εγγραφής ήχου
- Δημογραφικές πληροφορίες

#### Συνέντευξη με μέλη Προσφυγικών Οργανώσεων

##### Προσωπική εμπειρία

- Πόσο καιρό ζείτε στην Ελλάδα;
- Πόσο καιρό είστε μέλος προσφυγικής οργάνωσης;
- Γιατί θέλατε να γίνετε μέλος μιας προσφυγικής οργάνωσης;
- Πώς σας κάνει να νιώθετε η συμμετοχή σας σε μια προσφυγική οργάνωση;
- Πώς είναι το να ζείτε στην Ελλάδα;
- Τι σημαίνει για εσάς αυτό που λέμε «ένταξη στην ελληνική κοινωνία»;
- Είναι σημαντικό για εσάς να είστε πολιτικά ενεργός/-η/-ο στην Ελλάδα; Γιατί/γιατί όχι?
- Θα θέλατε να μπορείτε να ψηφίσετε στην Ελλάδα;
- Πιστεύετε ότι η απόκτηση του δικαιώματος ψήφου, για άτομα που έρχονται στην Ελλάδα ως πρόσφυγες ή μετανάστες, θα διευκόλυνε την ένταξή τους στην κοινωνία;
- Κατά τη γνώμη σας, μπορούν οι πρωτοβουλίες (grassroot initiatives), που προκύπτουν από άτομα που έχουν έρθει στην Ελλάδα ως πρόσφυγες ή μετανάστες, να επηρεάσουν αποτελεσματικά την ένταξη στην Ελλάδα; Γιατί γιατί όχι?
- Ποιες είναι οι κύριες προκλήσεις που έχετε εντοπίσει κατά την ενασχόληση/εργασία σας στην προσφυγική οργάνωση; Δώστε συγκεκριμένα παραδείγματα
- Πώς έχει επηρεάσει τη ζωή σας στην Ελλάδα η ενασχόλησή σας με την προσφυγική οργάνωση; Την οικογένειά σας? Τους φίλους σας?
- Πώς θα ορίζατε την κοινωνική σημασία των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων για τους πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα;

## Λειτουργία προσφυγικών οργανώσεων στην Ελλάδα

- Ποια είναι η εμπειρία σας από τη δημιουργία μιας προσφυγικής οργάνωσης στην Ελλάδα;
- Μπορεί μια προσφυγική οργάνωση να διευκολύνει την ένταξη προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα και αν ναι, πώς;
- Τι κάνει μια προσφυγική οργάνωση στην Ελλάδα, που εστιάζει στην ένταξη;
- Πώς αλληλεπιδρά μια προσφυγική οργάνωση στην Ελλάδα με άτομα που την προσεγγίζουν;
- Συνεργάζονται μεταξύ τους οι προσφυγικές οργανώσεις; Αν ναι, πώς;
- Συνεργάζονται οι προσφυγικές οργανώσεις με άλλους φορείς που ασχολούνται με την ένταξη; Αν ναι, πώς;
- Από την εμπειρία σας, οι Έλληνες πολίτες συμμετέχουν ή δείχνουν υποστήριξη στους στόχους/ αγώνες των προσφυγικών οργανώσεων στην περιοχή τους;
- Ποια θα λέγατε, από την εμπειρία σας, ότι είναι η σχέση μεταξύ προσφυγικών οργανώσεων και της διασποράς;
- Πώς θα συσχετιζατε το έργο της προσφυγικής οργάνωσης με τα Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα και πιο συγκεκριμένα, με τα δικαιώματα των προσφύγων και των μεταναστών; Παρακαλώ δώστε συγκεκριμένα παραδείγματα

## Αλληλεπίδραση με το κράτος

- Από την εμπειρία σας, τι θεωρεί η ελληνική πολιτεία ως ένταξη;
- Πώς διαφέρει αυτό από τη δική σας κατανόηση του όρου ένταξη;
- Από την εμπειρία σας, το ελληνικό κράτος προωθεί την ένταξη, μέσω των πρωτοβουλιών και των πολιτικών που υιοθετεί;
- Από την εμπειρία σας, το κράτος διευκολύνει τη λειτουργία προσφυγικών οργανώσεων στην Ελλάδα;
- Από την εμπειρία σας, πώς αντιλαμβάνεται το ελληνικό κράτος τις προσφυγικές οργανώσεις;
- Από την εμπειρία σας, η ελληνική πολιτεία συμπεριλαμβάνει τις προσφυγικές οργανώσεις στη διαδικασία χάραξη πολιτικής σχετικά με την ένταξη σε εθνικό επίπεδο;
- Ποιά είναι η γνώμη σας για την Εθνική Στρατηγική για την κοινωνική ένταξη των αιτούντων άσυλο και των δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας του 2021;
- Η Εθνική Στρατηγική για την κοινωνική ένταξη των αιτούντων άσυλο και των δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας περιλαμβάνει σε διάφορα σημεία τον στόχο/ επιδίωξη «Προώθηση του ευρωπαϊκού τρόπου ζωής». Ποιά είναι η γνώμη σας πάνω σε αυτό;
- Σύμφωνα με την ελληνική νομοθεσία, κάθε δήμος στην Ελλάδα διαθέτει ένα Συμβούλιο Ένταξης Μεταναστών, το οποίο λειτουργεί ως συμβουλευτικό όργανο για την εντατικοποίηση της ένταξης προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην περιοχή αυτή. Σε αυτά τα συμβούλια, 5 από τα 11 μέλη ανήκουν σε αναγνωρισμένους φορείς που εκπροσωπούν πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες στον



συγκεκριμένο δήμο. Από την εμπειρία σας, πώς επηρεάζει την ένταξη η συμμετοχή σε τέτοια συμβουλευτικά όργανα;

- Από την εμπειρία σας, υπάρχει περιθώριο περαιτέρω επικοινωνίας ή/και συνεργασίας μεταξύ του κράτους και των πρωτοβουλιών βάσης (grassroot initiatives);
- Από την εμπειρία σας, πώς μπορούν οι προσφυγικές οργανώσεις να συμβάλουν σε έναν πιο ολοκληρωμένο και πιο αποτελεσματικό τρόπο ένταξης των προσφύγων και των μεταναστών στην ελληνική κοινωνία;



## Annex 5: Final Codes

Themes	Codes	Quotes
"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"	Collaborating with the local community	Int. 1: δεν γίνεται μία κοινότητα και μία προσφυγική-μεταναστευτική οργάνωση να πάει μπροστά, αν δεν έχει μέλος του και συνεργασία με την τοπική κοινωνία
	Right to vote	Int 1: Αυτό για μένα τώρα πια είναι το κύριο ζήτημα. Δηλαδή, η ένταξη κατ'αρχήν, όταν μιλάμε για συμπερίληψη και ένταξη, σημαίνει ότι πρέπει να δημιουργηθεί αυτή η αίσθηση του «ανήκω κάπου», δηλαδή αυτό το "sense of belonging" που λέμε. Το "sense of belonging" δεν μπορεί να δημιουργηθεί αν δεν νιώθεις ίσα με όλους τους πολίτες στην κοινωνία. Δηλαδή δεν πρόκειται εσύ, δεν νιώθεις ίσος με τους άλλους, όταν ο άλλος έχει δικαίωμα να πάει να εκλέξει τον δήμαρχο, κι εσύ που ζεις εδώ, που χρόνια δουλεύεις εδώ, που προσπαθείς σε αυτή την κοινωνία αλλά δεν έχεις αυτό το δικαίωμα. Και ιδιαίτερα στην Ελλάδα αυτό είναι το μεγάλο πρόβλημα. Για μένα η πραγματική ένταξη είναι όταν έχεις δικαίωμα πολιτικό. Είναι δικαίωμα στον ψήφο, δικαίωμα του εκλέγειν και του εκλέγεσθαι, αυτό που λέμε δηλαδή και να ψηφίσεις και να είσαι

		<p>υποψήφιος. Int. 2: Of course, the right to vote is always important for everyone. Int. 6: It's important to be, to have the right, to have this aspect of political integration, because it's a way to offer representation in the State. So, refugees are first of all human beings and they can offer services in the country and they have to live according to the law of the country. So, it is important that people to contribute to that decision-making process and to be able to vote to select the people that will run the country, that will run the municipality actually.</p>
<p>"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"</p>	<p>Participation of all</p>	<p>Int. 1: Αλλά γενικά όταν, αν θέλουμε μία πραγματική, αποτελεσματική συνύπαρξη και συμπερίληψη των όλων στην κοινωνία και να έχουμε μία συμπεριληπτική κοινωνία, δηλαδή δημοκρατική κοινωνία, άρα χρειάζεται η συνεργασία όλων των εμπλεκόμενων. Δεν μπορεί να γίνει αυτό μόνο με τις προσφυγικές-μεταναστευτικές κοινότητες. Δεν μπορεί να γίνει αυτό μόνο με το κράτος. Δεν μπορεί να γίνει μόνο με δήμους ή δεν μπορεί να γίνει μόνο με άλλες οργανώσεις. Όλοι αυτοί είναι stakeholders, δηλαδή όλοι πρέπει να συνεργάζονται, ένα πεδίο συνεργασίας πρέπει να υπάρχει, να συνεργάζονται όλοι για να</p>

		δημιουργηθεί ένα πλαίσιο που να παράγει πραγματικά ένα αποτελεσματικό έργο προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση.
"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"	Archaic constitution	Int. 5: και ναι το Συμβούλιο της Επικρατείας δέχτηκε ότι το ελληνικό σύνταγμα δεν επιτρέπει στους μετανάστες να συμμετέχουν σε τέτοιου είδους διαδικασίες. Για να καταλάβετε πόσο αναχρονιστικό είναι! Και ο πολίτης δεν το ξέρει αυτό το πράγμα.
	Right to be unemployed	Int. 5: Ένταξη λοιπόν είναι, για 'μας που το έχουμε δει, που δουλεύουμε όλα αυτά τα χρόνια, σε πρώτη φάση πρέπει να οριοθετηθεί νομοθετικά. Εδώ είναι ένα πράγμα το οποίο, υπάρχει ένα πολύ μεγάλο πεδίο για τα επόμενα χρόνια να παλέψουμε, έτσι ώστε να φτιαχτεί ή να οριοθετηθεί από την κυβέρνηση ένα Υπουργείο Ένταξης, γιατί ένας μετανάστης, ένας πολίτης τρίτων χωρών έχει δικαίωμα και να είναι και άνεργος και να είναι άστεγος και να είναι και τοξικομανής και να μένει στην πιο ακριβή περιοχή της χώρας.

"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"	Hesitation	Int. 5: Υπάρχουν δηλαδή, προσπαθούμε να πείσουμε όλα αυτά τα χρόνια να μην υπάρχουν συμβολικές συμμετοχές στη συμμετοχή των μεταναστών στα πολιτικά κόμματα αλλά να είναι ουσιαστικός. Αυτό δεν μπορεί να γίνει μόνο επειδή εγώ το θέλω να συμμετέχω. Πρέπει να θέλει και το πολιτικό κόμμα να δώσει και το ρόλο αυτό.
	Part of society	Int. 1: Εγώ έλεγα ότι εγώ είμαι κομμάτι αυτής της κοινωνίας , αυτή είναι η χώρα μου και εγώ θέλω να κάτσω σε αυτή τη χώρα.
	Inclusive society	Int. 1: Για μένα, η ένταξη και η συμπερίληψη σημαίνει μία ενεργή και ίσια συμμετοχή όλων των κομματιών της κοινωνίας στην κοινωνία
	Limited access to services	Int. 6:
	Fight for equality	Int. 1:
	Decent standard of living	Int. 3: And if you have to integrate people or bring them to European values, what you have to do is to provide the European values, or provide European level of, standard of living for them and if people live in ipogio (basement), that's not the European values.
	Communicate as equals	Int. 3: They have to communicate but again to communicate as equals.

<p>"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"</p>	<p>More cooperation with the state</p>	<p>Int. 1: Πάντα υπάρχει, και εμείς πάντα προσπαθούμε για να γίνει αυτό. Και προσπαθούμε να προσεγγίσουμε το κράτος γιατί είναι υποχρέωσή μας. Οποιοδήποτε κράτος και να ναι, προσπαθούμε να έχουμε συνεργασία, να μιλήσουμε να συζητάμε πράγματα.</p>
	<p>Conservative government</p>	<p>Int. 5: Το 2022 έχοντας συντηριτική κυβέρνηση, με την πραγματική έννοια του όρου συντηριτική κυβέρνηση. Δεν είναι ούτε προοδευτική, ούτε φιλελεύθερη. Είναι συντηριτική. Έχει 5 υπουργούς, οι οποίοι είναι ακροδεξιοί, φασιστογενείς και φασίστες.</p>
	<p>Effort to be recognized</p>	<p>Int. 5: Οι προσπάθειες γίνονται, όμως αυτό το οποίο λείπει για να μπορέσει να γίνει καλύτερα ή να γίνει πιο ουσιαστικά είναι και η αναγνώριση από τους θεσμικούς φορείς. Σας είπα και πριν ότι υπάρχει μία αντίσταση από τα πολιτικά κόμματα, επαναλαμβάνω ότι και από τα κόμματα τα οποία είναι φιλικά προσκείμενα στο χώρο, στους μετανάστες, για να μη το θέσω διαφορετικά.</p>
	<p>Fight for rights and access to services</p>	<p>Int. 6:</p>
	<p>Advocating for everyone</p>	<p>Int. 2: I mean there is no difference between refugee rights and human rights. They are the same rights. So, we are advocating for all the rights. When we advocate for example for housing,</p>

		<p>it's not only for refugees and migrants. Even for the Greek people, who are sleeping outside. So, we advocate for all the rights. So, for us right is right. There are no differences.</p>
<p>"If lights are necessary in Kifissia, they are necessary also in Omonia"</p>	<p>Only opportunity to talk with local government</p>	<p>Int. 1: η μοναδική ευκαιρία που μας έχει δοθεί είναι τα Συμβούλια Ένταξης Μεταναστών, που είναι υποχρεωτικά από το νόμο, ότι κάθε δήμος πρέπει να έχει Συμβούλια Ένταξης Μεταναστών. Εμείς το παίρνουμε σαν αφορμή, σαν μία ευκαιρία για εμάς, η μοναδική ευκαιρία, θεσμική ευκαιρία για εμάς που πάμε στους δήμους και λέμε ότι «να είναι ο νόμος, αν δεν έχεις, θα έχεις πρόβλημα». Άρα βοηθάμε, συνεργαζόμαστε με τους δήμους να οργανωθούν αυτά τα Συμβούλια Ένταξης Μεταναστών και μέσω αυτών φέρνουμε τους μετανάστες και τους πρόσφυγες να είναι πάνω στο τραπέζι μαζί με τους δημοτικούς συμβούλους και δημοτικά εκλεγμένα όργανα, να μιλήσουν για την πόλη, για τα προβλήματα, για την ένταξη, για όλα αυτά. Είναι πάρα πολύ σημαντικό.</p>
	<p>Migrant Integration Coucils cannot make policy, only advice</p>	<p>Int. 6:</p>



"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Bring communities together	Int. 1: Ο ρόλος μας είναι ότι προσπαθούμε να τους φέρουμε πάνω στο τραπέζι. Δεν είναι δουλειά μας και δεν πρέπει να..δεν προσπαθούμε και πρέπει να είναι οπωσδήποτε μία κοινότητα. Αυτή είναι και μία δημοκρατία.
	Basic necessities	Int. 3: And so, we were providing people with some basic needs and some basic food, like some, I don't know, lentils, rice, pasta and also some tint food and ok, hygiene products, because something that like you need and yeah
	Exchange experiences	Int 6: So, it's actually a good opportunity to be able to advocate for refugees and also to benefit from experiences of others community representatives that are living in Greece. They have their activities in Greece, so we can advocate in the Greek level, and we can also advocate in the European level.
	Organize museum visits	Int. 3: And we like organize these meetings, like walk in the National Garden or special tour at Stavros Niarchos or like we went to this museum, the Historical Museum and [...] Museum.
	Unaware the organization exists	Int. 2: I don't believe they know that it exists, so I don't know. Because to perceive it you have to know that the

		community organization, it exists. So, I don't know if they know that our organization exists.
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	No power	Int. 2: Part a: We try to have some meeting with the municipality of Athens. We are a member of one integration things there. But just by the name, it's not really working, not really changing anything Part b: this integration council, I don't see that it's changing things. For me it's like, we create something, we give name and we block people to not speak about integration. Because when we were in this meeting, sometimes when we ask things, they cannot do much things. They just...they cannot do nothing, you know, so they don't have power. It is just to listening and finish.
	Not ready	Int. 5: Part 1: Ο χώρος, ο κοινωνικός χώρος που αγκαλιάζει πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες στην Ελλάδα συνεχίζουμε και κάνουμε λάθη τακτικής. Γιατί δεν είναι μόνο πώς εγώ θέλω να αυτοπροσδιορίζομαι, είναι στο πώς η Ελένη είναι έτοιμη να με δεχτεί. Part 2: Κατανοούμε λοιπόν, πώς αυτή η κοινωνία θέλει να ακούσει τι μπορεί όμως να επεξεργαστεί απ' αυτά που της λες; Αμα της πεις κάτι άλλο που δεν θέλει, που δεν μπορεί να το ακούσει, εσύ είσαι το πρόβλημα που δεν

		κατανοείς την κοινωνία, δεν είναι η κοινωνία έτσι.
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Legality	Int. 5: αρχίζουμε και αντιλαμβανόμαστε το ότι τότε υπήρχε και η σύνδεση, όπως και σήμερα, της νομιμότητας των γονέων με τη νομιμότητα των παιδιών. Άρα, αν οι γονείς είναι νόμιμοι, είναι νόμιμα και τα παιδιά στην Ελλάδα.
	Social media	Int. 3: We also have, this is part of... we have the information channel, like, you know, the different messengers. Yeah, but we have in Ukraine, quite popular is "Telegram". It's not that popular in Western Europe or in European countries, it's on the territory of Ukraine or Russia as well. So, and we have this "Telegram" where we just give some tips. What is "laiki" for example? It's better to come after, in the afternoon to laiki, because the price is lower. So, this is some tips, survival tips, how to get to the hospital.
	Bring people together	Int. 3: And also, these activities, different activities they make people, bring people together.
	Advise municipalities	Int. 1

"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	No communication	Int. 4: Κοιτάζετε, με βάση το νόμο, υπάρχει αυτό το Συμβούλιο Ένταξης Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα, έτσι; Αλλά δυστυχώς αυτό δεν, δεν επικοινωνεί καθόλου. Το κράτος πάει, ψηφίζει ένα νομοσχέδιο, μετά εμείς μαθαίνουμε «Ααα ψηφίστηκε αυτός ο νόμος.» Αλλά αυτός ο νόμος που ψηφίστηκε, το νομοσχέδιο αυτό, δεν έχει τα κριτήρια που έχουνε, που πρέπει να έχουνε οι άνθρωποι που βρίσκονται στην Ελλάδα.
	Support	Int. 2: we are here to support our community members to not face the same problems that we face when we came to Greece. It is to give them tools, to give them power to be independent from the beginning and after
	Raise awareness against racism and xenophobia	Int. 1: Στο κομμάτι του ρατσισμού και της ξενοφοβίας έχουμε κάνει πάρα πολλή δουλειά. Παρόλο που δύο φορές τα γραφεία μας επιτέθηκαν πάρα πολύ άσχημα από τη Χρυσή Αυγή και από τους ακροδεξιούς, έτσι να πούμε, αλλά δεν το αφήσαμε κάτω. Είπαμε οπωσδήποτε πρέπει να μιλήσουμε για τη βία που υπάρχει στην κοινωνία, για την ξενοφοβία, τον ρατσισμό.
	Point of reference	Int. 4: σκέφτηκαν ότι χρειάζεται να υπάρχει μία τέτοιου είδους σύλλογο ή κοινότητα για τους συμπατριώτες, για

		να μπορέσουν να έχουν ένα σημείο αναφοράς
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Feature refugee rights	Int. 5: Ξαναρχόμαστε στο αρχικό στάδιο, το ότι εμείς προσπαθούμε πάντα με θετικές δράσεις να αναδείξουμε τα δικαιώματα. Δηλαδή βλέπουμε στη συμμετοχή των πολιτών τρίτων χωρών να συμμετέχουν σε πολύ μικρές και ωραίες δράσεις, στην τηλεόραση, σε ένα σίριαλ. Ταυτίζεται ο άλλος πολύ εύκολα. Και είναι μετά εξαιρετικά δύσκολο να μην μπορείς να συζητήσεις με μεγαλύτερο αριθμό ατόμων για τα δικαιώματα των μεταναστών και των προσφύγων, δεδομένης ότι ήδη υπάρχει πρόβλημα στο δημόσιο λόγο.
	Inclusion of actors of African origin on Greek TV	Int. 5: Δεν είναι τυχαίο και για την Ελλάδα δεν είναι και δεδομένο ότι σήμερα μπορεί να βλέπουμε και στην τηλεόραση Αφρικανούς. Μπορεί να βλέπουμε από άλλες χώρες, αλλά είναι μία προσπάθεια η οποία δόθηκε με πολύ μεγάλη μάχη. Και σε ένα σημείο ναι, το έχουμε καταφέρει. Δηλαδή, είναι ένα έργο το οποίο το πιστώνεται και ο φορέας αλλά κυρίως και οι άνθρωποι οι οποίοι δούλεψαν εκείνη την περίοδο.

<p>"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"</p>	<p>Advocacy on a European level</p>	<p>Int. 1: το Χ είναι από τις οργανώσεις στην Ευρώπη που είναι refugee-led organization που συμμετέχουμε σε διάφορες συζητήσεις. Κάνουμε advocacy δουλειά, με πάρα πολλά network στην Ευρώπη. Η πρώτη προσφυγική οργάνωση που πήραμε ακόμα και τα μεγάλα πρότζεκτ να υλοποιήσουμε παρόλο που δεν είμαστε project based organization αλλά μία advocacy δουλειά που κάναμε στο ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, πώς να έχουμε εμείς πρόσβαση στα funding, στα ευρωπαϊκά funding και τέτοια. Κάνουμε, δηλαδή είμαστε leaders σε ένα μεγάλο ευρωπαϊκό προτζεκτ που κάνουμε leader διάφορες άλλες χώρες μαζί</p>
	<p>Push for an integration-policy</p>	<p>Στο ελληνικό επίπεδο για παράδειγμα έχουμε προσπαθήσει από την ημέρα που ιδρύσαμε τις κοινότητες, που προσπαθούμε και πιέζουμε το ελληνικό κράτος, δηλαδή διαχρονικά, για δημιουργία μίας πολιτικής μετανάστευσης, μία πολιτική για την ένταξη, μία στρατηγική για την ένταξη να υπάρχει κεντρικά από το κράτος.</p>

<p>"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"</p>	<p>Expectations</p>	<p>Και αυτό που καλούνται οι προσφυγικές και μεταναστευτικές οργανώσεις είναι να λειτουργήσουν ομαλά στο συγκεκριμένο πλαίσιο. Αυτό είναι το μεγάλο στοίχημα. Και χωρίς να ξεφεύγουν από το βασικό ρόλο της λειτουργίας τους. Ξαναλέω ότι η σύγκρουση αυτή τη στιγμή ευνοεί μόνο και με ταξικούς όρους τον εχθρό. Το κράτος, που λειτουργεί εχθρικά απέναντι στον οποιοδήποτε πολίτη. Η σύγκρουση. Όποια κι αν είναι αυτή η σύγκρουση. Είτε νομικά, έχουν κατοχυρώσει και έχουν θεσμοθετήσει ένα νομικό οπλοστάσιο το οποίο είναι μόνο για να κυνηγήσει και ενδεχομένως και να κλείσει και τις οργανώσεις αν χρειαστεί. Το τελευταίο διάστημα συμβαίνει κατά κόρον, έτσι;</p>
	<p>Carry out the government's work</p>	<p>Int. 5: Άρα πρέπει να κινείσαι σε μία κινούμενη άμμο χωρίς να βουλιάξεις. [...] Οι οργανώσεις όμως καλούνται να πάρουν πάνω τους το μεγαλύτερο όγκο της δουλειάς που δεν κάνει και ούτε θέλει να κάνει το κράτος. Η ένταξη είναι αποκλειστικά ευθύνη των οργανώσεων δυστυχώς. Η ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη είναι στις οργανώσεις, δυστυχώς. Τις οργανώσεις τις μεταναστευτικές και προσφυγικές, όχι όλες τις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών. Οι</p>

		<p>χρηματοδοτήσεις είναι ανύπαρκτες.</p> <p>Int. 6: So, we believe that integration should be the responsibility of the state. So, if it's not, so, different issues will be managed by organizations, by NGOs, by community in the lowest level. [...] So, the program of HELIOS will just, no ESTIA, ESTIA will close. So, leaving many people on the streets, it's very hard. So, we have to find solutions in the communities-level [...]</p>
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Capacity to advocate	<p>Int. 1: Και εμείς αυτό το capacity τώρα πια το έχουμε, την δυνατότητα να κρίνουμε, να ενθαρρύνουμε, να πούμε αυτό είναι καλό ή κακό</p>
	Courses	<p>Int. 4: Και έχουμε διάφορα μαθήματα: ελληνικά, υπολογιστών, αγγλική γλώσσα. Παλιότερα είχαμε γερμανικά, γαλλικά κτλ.</p>
	Cooperating with the local government	<p>Int. 1: Αλλά στο επίπεδο της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης, τοπικό κράτος να πούμε, εκεί υπάρχουν κάποιες νομοθεσίες, υπάρχουν και ανάγκες. Ανάγκες επειδή αυτή τη στιγμή έχουν μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες και ότι και να κάνουν οι δήμοι έχουν ως δημότες μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Άρα αναγκαστικά αυτοί πρέπει να κάνουν κάτι γι'αυτούς. Για να μην δημιουργηθεί πρόβλημα. Και γι'αυτό καλούν εμάς, έχουμε συνεργασία με τους δήμους έχουμε, έχουμε με την</p>



		τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση πάντα έχουμε. Οι κοινότητες έχουν καλύτερη σχέση σχετικά με το κεντρικό κράτος. Έτσι είναι.
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Interact with different organizations	Int. 6: So, in Greece, there are many organizations specializing in different domains. And in order to structure properly a community, you need interaction with different organizations. So, we, many communities interact with NGOs, in order to access a certain service, according to the specialties of that NGOs, and we can also interact with the state using the "SEMP", which is the Council for the integration of Migrants and Refugees. [...] So, there are also communities that interact with international organizations, since we can also learn from others countries. They may face a certain situation; they may solve that situation or they may have a certain approach that works and we can import this knowledge. We can learn from them. So, this is why we have also integration and interaction with international organization.
	Lack of information	Int. 1: Γιατί ένα απ'τα προβλήματα, εγώ λέω, μία από τις προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουμε εμείς με τις κοινότητες είναι ότι πραγματικά υπάρχει μία έλλειψη ενημέρωσης σχετικά με την ένταξη και την

		συμπερίληψη στους ίδιους, στις ίδιες τις κοινότητες.
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Hands tied	Int. 4: Το μεγαλύτερο πρόβλημα, που είναι σε επίπεδο παγκοσμίως, ήταν ο κορωνοϊός, που μας έδεσε τα χέρια και δεν μπορούσαμε να κάνουμε τίποτα.
	No interaction	Int. 3: Hmm I think it's organizations that, other organizations that help, not much help from the state. We almost never got in touch with the state.
	Tense cooperation	Int. 1: Άρα υπάρχει συνεργασία που πάντα είναι σε μία ένταση. Αναγκαστικά όλοι καθόμαστε πολλές φορές πάνω στο τραπέζι να μιλήσουμε αλλά δεν συμφωνούμε σε πολλά πράγματα.
	Misconception	Int. 5: Υπάρχει πολύ μεγάλη παρανόηση από το δικό μας το χώρο. Ο χώρος των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, των κοινωνικών δικαιωμάτων κτλ πάντα κατανοεί εντελώς διαφορετικά τι σημαίνει ένταξη για ένα μετανάστη.
	Cooperation depends on the state's intentions.	Int. 1 part 1: Πάντα υπάρχει μία συνεργασία του κράτους με τις κοινότητες. Υπάρχει μία συνεργασία και αυτή κάποτε είναι καλύτερη κάποτε είναι χειρότερη. Έτσι είναι. Τι θέλει το κράτος πολλές φορές, Int. 1 part 2: προσπαθούμε να προσεγγίσουμε το κράτος γιατί είναι υποχρέωσή μας. Οποιοδήποτε κράτος και να ναι,

		<p>προσπαθούμε να έχουμε συνεργασία, να μιλήσουμε να συζητάμε πράγματα. Περιθώριο υπάρχει αλλά πολλές φορές, δεν λέω ότι πάντα από εμάς γίνεται τέλεια αλλά φταίει το κράτος, αλλά και εμάς πολλές φορές δεν προλαβαίνουμε, δεν έχουμε τη δυνατότητα να κάνουμε πολλά πράγματα αλλά και το κράτος δεν βοηθάει προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση αλλά περιθώριο υπάρχει πάντα, πολύ</p>
<p>"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"</p>	<p>State structure makes communication impossible</p>	<p>Int. 5: Όπως είναι σήμερα τα πράγματα επαναλαμβάνω όχι, γιατί το κράτος είναι τα πολιτικά κόμματα. Η Ελλάδα δεν είναι ένα κράτος σύγχρονο. Είναι ένα κράτος μεταξύ Ευρώπης, Ανατολής, Αφρικής και πουθενά. Η δημόσια διοίκηση δεν λειτουργεί με αυτοματοποιημένες διαδικασίες, με αποτέλεσμα ότι αυτό δυσκολεύει.</p>
	<p>Lack of support</p>	<p>Int. 1, part 1: ένα από τα προβλήματα που υπάρχουν στις κοινότητες που πιστεύω ότι μπορούν να αντιμετωπιστούν είναι ότι ποτέ δεν υπάρχει καμία στήριξη για τις κοινότητες. Int. 1, part 2: πολλές φορές δεν υπάρχουν δυνατότητες από τις κοινότητες να το κάνουν αυτό, γιατί όπως σας είπα δεν υπάρχει καμία στήριξη στις κοινότητες να οργανώθουν καλύτερα πάνω σε αυτό. Int. 2: First of all, we have lack of</p>

		funding. We don't receive funds to run our activity, lack of time, because with our staff, we do it voluntary. I have to be at work, members of my community have to be at work, cannot be going to the different meetings with the state.
"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"	Token role	Int. 1: Δηλαδή ότι λένε οι παρατάξεις, οι δημοτικές παρατάξεις τότε αυτό γίνεται, υπάρχουν σαν συμβολικό ρόλο ότι υπάρχουν οι μετανάστες και οι πρόσφυγες. Ευτυχώς που πάλι αυτό υπάρχει, αλλά είναι προβληματικό που είναι 5-6 δηλαδή είμαι μειοψηφικό οι κοινότητες σε αυτά τα συμβούλια ένταξης μεταναστών.
	Not recognized by the state	Int. 4: Οι σύλλογοι, οι κοινότητες ας πούμε. Δεν έχουν κάποια δικαιώματα. Δεν μπορούν να γραφτούν σ' αυτό το μητρώο οργανώσεων κτλ. Ωραία. Εννοείται θα μπορούσε να είναι αποτελεσματικό από τη στιγμή που δοθούν δικαιώματα σ' αυτές τις οργανώσεις και σε αυτούς τους συλλόγους. Αν δεν υπάρχουν αυτά, η ύπαρξη τους δεν είναι..
	Not taken into account in policy-making	Int 5: Χωρίς αυτό δεν κάνει (γέλιο). Όχι βέβαια. Όχι. Όχι. Δεν θέλουν. Ούτε στη διαβούλευση, κατά τη διαδικασία υποβολής νομοσχεδίων τους ενδιαφέρει, άμα παρατηρήσεις, τα νομοσχέδια που έχουν να κάνουν με τα συγκεκριμένα θέματα, επαναλαμβάνω

		<p>οριζόντια: ενδυνάμωση, ενίσχυση ευάλωτων ομάδων και οργανώσεις που ασχολούνται με αυτά, λες και δεν λαμβάνουν υπόψη τους τίποτα. Τίποτα! Μηδέν. Μηδέν. Μηδέν. Τίποτα. Ακόμα και στις συναντήσεις, είτε στα σχόλια ή στις παρατηρήσεις που μπορείς να κάνεις μέσω της σελίδας..Δεν λαμβάνουν καν υπόψη τους, καμία!</p>
<p>"You have to move in quicksand without sinking"</p>	<p>Provide information</p>	<p>Int. 3: Part 1: we share the information about the rights here, about the services available and try to gather maybe some worries or concerns. And then if we know that there are some challenges, we either refer them to organizations who have advocacy teams Part 2: Although, I mean, there are a lot of organizations who help and we provide the information channels, we provide the information for them, for people, that this organization is [...] a training course on how to open your business, or this organization provides information on how to, I don't know, find a job and employability or this organization is providing the [pause], yeah, on some, on different psychosocial support or like Greek language courses for free, English courses for free.</p>

"It's possible only for white people"	Language barrier	Int. 2: Speaking Greek language doesn't mean that you are integrating in the society. Even the people who are born here in Greece, they speak Greek language perfectly but they are excluded. So, this doesn't have to be condition for people to be heard. But this integration national strategy, I saw it, I think they shared, the y, they shared something by e-mail, but I don't speak Greek, I don't write Greek, I cannot say something.
	Only for white people	Int. 2: First, good welcoming, accommodation, a job, documents, financial support, open doors, everything. This is integration. This is what we were waiting for everyone for so long years and now we see that it's possible but it is possible only for the white people.
	Structural Discrimination	Int. 1: αυτό που λέμε structural discrimination, αυτά που υπάρχει κανονικά είναι το σύστημα, το πως έχει δημιουργηθεί που δημιουργεί το ρατσισμό, το φασισμό στην κοινωνία. Δηλαδή αυτό να λυθεί.
	Only on paper	Int. 1: Εγώ θεωρώ ότι δεν υπάρχει Εθνική Στρατηγική. Εθνική στρατηγική υπάρχει στα χαρτιά γραμμένα από το κράτος
	Independent	Int. 4: Ναι και φτάνουμε σε επίπεδο, το οποίο ο καθένας φτάνει σε ένα σημείο

		το οποίο εκεί είναι και το, που μπορεί ας πούμε να κάνει όλα μόνος του και να μπορεί να βοηθήσει και τους άλλους.
"It's possible only for white people"	Transit country	Int. 1: Part 1: Η εθνική στρατηγική είναι ότι η Ελλάδα να παραμένει μία χώρα περάσματος, Part 2: Το κράτος επειδή αυτή τη στιγμή μία κυβέρνηση που έχουμε που δεν τους νοιάζει η ένταξη, έχει μία πολιτική αποθαρρυντική να πω για τους μετανάστες. Είναι εναντίον της ένταξης να πούμε. Έχει μία πολιτική ότι εδώ η Ελλάδα είναι ως μία χώρα που έρχονται και φεύγουν. Δεν θέλουν να μείνουν εδώ αλλά η πολιτεία είναι κάπως που να τους διώξει. Αυτοί που είναι εδώ να φύγουν και άλλοι να μην έρθουν. Int. 6: The integration, from the integration plan that they published is a kind of preparation of a newcomer to go to another country or to return to his home-country but it's not actually, there is no perspective of living in Greece.
	Leave Greece	Int. 5: Η καλύτερη ένταξη στην ελληνική πολιτεία είναι να φεύγουν όλοι από τη χώρα. Κομμουνιστές, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, αναρχικοί, οι γκέι, μισές γυναίκες να φύγουν που δεν είναι χριστιανές, όλα, αυτό είναι ένταξη. Όποιος δεν είναι καλός για τη χώρα, να φεύγει. Μα αυτή τη στιγμή το

		<p>ελληνικό κράτος λέει, κάνει ένταξη το ελληνικό κράτος στους πρόσφυγες και στους μετανάστες. Δίνει νομιμοποιητικά έγγραφα στους πρόσφυγες και τους λέει «πάρε και την ταυτότητά σου και φύγε».</p>
<p>"It's possible only for white people"</p>	<p>Hostile</p>	<p>Int. 1: Γενικά μία πολιτική, πώς να πούμε, criminalization of NGOs και όλα αυτά υπάρχει εδώ που δουλεύουν από τους μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες. Έτσι αντιμετωπίζουν και εμάς. Δεν έχουμε ιδιαίτερο ή μεγαλύτερο πρόβλημα από τους άλλους εδώ. Int. 5: Το ελληνικό κράτος είναι εχθρικό προς τις οργανώσεις, οι οποίες έχουν ταυτότητα που δεν βολεύει την εκάστοτε κυβέρνηση. Στην προκειμένη περίπτωση η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, και να το σημειώσεις, είναι εχθρική απέναντι σε όλες τις οργανώσεις που λειτουργούν για θέματα που αφορούν ένταξη, ενίσχυση, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, ευάλωτες ομάδες, όλες. Int. 6: We are living from 2019 to now, it's continuing this system, where we can see a, by how to say, it's a criminalization of organization, every organization working for, in the refugee-sector, being criminalized somehow. And we have also a case of attacks and this is due to the fact of this narrative, negative narrative that some</p>



		<p>authorities are using to describe migration. So, if migration is described using very negative words, people working to support integration of refugees and migrants will be seen as enemy of the states. So, this is the reality unfortunately.</p>
<p>"It's possible only for white people"</p>	<p>Not asked how to be integrated</p>	<p>Int. 1: Είναι φανερό, δηλαδή ο άλλος έρχεται να μιλάει για μένα, για να με εντάξει στην κοινωνία χωρίς να ρωτήσει εμένα ότι εγώ πώς θέλω να ενταχθώ, τι είναι οι απαιτήσεις μου και τι είναι τα χαρακτηριστικά μου. Δεν γίνεται.</p>
	<p>Narrative of fear</p>	<p>Int. 6: Promoting integration is having some actions that can reduce the distance between migrants, refugees and locals, it's so simple as that. So, by using a certain narrative that increase fear, increase separation into the society, we cannot talk about support on the integration. Int. 4: Υπάρχει βέβαια «Α ένας ξένος!» σε κάποιες γειτονίες, αλλά σε γενικές γραμμές με όλες αυτές τις αλλαγές, με το ένα το άλλο που έχουν γίνει από την πλευρά του ελληνικού κράτους, δυστυχώς δεν υπάρχει περιθώριο να μάθει ο κόσμος ότι «Ρε παιδιά κι αυτοί είναι άνθρωποι. Κι αυτοί αναπνέουνε σαν εμάς. Κι αυτοί πρέπει να έχουν τα ίδια δικαιώματα...[..]</p>

	<p>Integration in numbers</p>	<p>Int. 6: So, if you can see on the publication different information provided, by the way, this way, we can see that the indicators of performance of the ministry are actually the number of centers that stay closed for example, how they managed to decrease the number of asylum applicants, for example, which are nothing to do with integration actually. So, we can see that the understanding of their integration is very different from our understanding.</p>
<p>"It's possible only for white people"</p>	<p>Institutional issue</p>	<p>Int. 5: Ξέρετε τι σημαίνει πρακτικά αυτό; Όσο εγώ, έχω την οικογένειά μου, έχω προχωρήσει σε αυτό που θα μπορούσε να πει κάποιος ένταξη, εκείνη τη στιγμή ακυρώνεται. Ακυρώνεται στην πράξη. Γιατί έχει να κάνει με το πώς θα με μεταχειριστεί το σύστημα, θα με μεταχειριστεί με ευγένεια ή με μερικές φάπες; Ποια θα είναι η ψυχική μου διάθεση από εκεί και μετά; Και η κοινωνική μου διάθεση να προχωρήσω παραπέρα, δηλαδή θα έχω ένα εχθρικό κράτος που εκφράζεται με αυτόν τον τρόπο; Και εγώ πώς θα στέκομαι απέναντι σ' αυτό;</p>

<p>"It's possible only for white people"</p>	<p>Unwilling to create an integration policy</p>	<p>Int. 1: Part 1: Στη χώρα πρέπει να υπάρχει βούληση από την εκάστοτε κυβέρνηση για την ένταξη. Δυστυχώς αυτό δεν υπήρχε στην Ελλάδα. Part 2: Το κράτος επειδή αυτή τη στιγμή μία κυβέρνηση που έχουμε που δεν τους νοιάζει η ένταξη, έχει μία πολιτική αποθαρρυντική να πω για τους μετανάστες. Είναι εναντίον της ένταξης να πούμε. Έχει μία πολιτική ότι εδώ η Ελλάδα είναι ως μία χώρα που έρχονται και φεύγουν. Part 3: Για παράδειγμα η κυβέρνηση ΣΥΡΙΖΑ το 2015 που ήρθε όντως έκανε στο τέλος μία προσπάθεια. Έγραψε μία πολιτική ένταξης αλλά η επόμενη κυβέρνηση όταν ήρθε τα πέταξε στα σκουπίδια.</p>
	<p>Inferior</p>	<p>Int. 1: Δηλαδή αν δεν έχεις πρόσβαση στις διαδικασίες αποφάσεων, σημαίνει ότι άλλοι αποφασίζουν για εσένα και εσύ πάντα είσαι από κάτω</p>
	<p>Categories of integration</p>	<p>Int. 4: Ένταξη είναι από τις γειτονιές, ένταξη είναι λίγο πιο μεγάλο από την περιοχή που μένεις και ζεις και ακόμα πιο πέρα που είναι η πόλη σου, η περιφέρειά σου και τη χώρα.</p>
	<p>Ukraine</p>	<p>Int. 2: But it means that we welcome people in the country with a very good system, welcoming system, not discriminating people. In the same way that we welcome the Ukrainian</p>

		refugees is the same way that we should welcome everyone.
"It's possible only for white people"	Exploitation	Int. 4: Όταν σε βάζουν σε camp κλειστά με τοίχους και τέτοια και να σε ονομάσουν «μετανάστης, πρόσφυγας, λαθρομετανάστης» πώς, συνέχεια το λένε μέσω ΜΜΕ, συνέχεια το λένε «μετανάστης», «λαθρομετανάστης» το ένα, το άλλο, το παράλλο. Ωραία; Και τους κρατάνε ανάμεσα στους τοίχους. Αυτό δεν είναι ένταξη. Αυτή η κίνηση ονομάζεται εκμετάλλευση.
	Pushback	Int. 2: They don't consider integration. They consider push-backs and they consider deportations. So, there is no integration in Greece.
	Disintegrated	Int. 5: Η καλύτερη ένταξη στην ελληνική πολιτεία είναι να φεύγουν όλοι από τη χώρα. Κομμουνιστές, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες, αναρχικοί, οι γκέι, μισές γυναίκες να φύγουν που δεν είναι χριστιανές, όλα, αυτό είναι ένταξη. Όποιος δεν είναι καλός για τη χώρα, να φεύγει. Μα αυτή τη στιγμή το ελληνικό κράτος λέει, κάνει ένταξη το ελληνικό κράτος στους πρόσφυγες και στους μετανάστες. Δίνει νομιμοποιητικά έγγραφα στους πρόσφυγες και τους λέει «πάρε και την ταυτότητά σου και φύγε». Χωρίς να σκέφτεται το ελληνικό κράτος τις συνέπειες αυτού του πράγματος

"It's possible only for white people"	Double Standard	Int. 5: Ο ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής ποιος είναι; Να αποδεχτούμε ότι οι Ευρωπαίοι μπορούν να κάνουν επεμβάσεις όπου θέλουν, μαζί με τις άλλες μεγάλες δυνάμεις.
	Responsibility	Int. 3: And if you have to integrate people or bring them to European values, what you have to do is to provide the European values, or provide European level of standard of living for them
"A dog was helping us"	First-hand experience	Int. 2: So yes, our community, the grass-root organizations are very important to be part of the discussion, because we are on the ground and we know everything. We are the one benefiting from the whole policy, we are the one who are impacted by the policy. So, we have things to say about the policy. That is why it's very important to be sitting in the same table to talk.
	Crisis	Int. 1: η Ελλάδα είναι ένας χώρος ή μία χώρα που πάντα έχουμε κρίσεις. Μία κρίση μετά την άλλη: μεταναστευτική-προσφυγική κρίση, μετά κρίση covid, κρίση Ουκρανίας, το ένα το άλλο και σε όλα, κρίση της φωτιάς στη χώρα το καλοκαίρι. Σε όλα είμαστε παρόν.
	Feel safe	Int. 1: Πρώτα όταν μπαίνουν, ή καταγράφονται ή δεν καταγράφονται, έρχονται εδώ. Νιώθουν ασφαλείς γιατί

		αυτός είναι ο χώρος τους. Ξέρουμε την γλώσσα τους, ξέρουμε τον πολιτισμό τους
"A dog was helping us"	Benefit the state	Int. 6:
	Changed lives	Int. 2: I feel proud of me because I have built something important that change life of thousands of people, refugees and migrants from my community in general.
	Extremely relevant	Int. 3: but it is relevant for, of course, people come for distribution, for food distribution and for things like this. The first need and then...but also it is the need for communication, for getting information in your own language. And you also get maybe give some tricks or tips how to get it faster or like to open bank account.
	Dissolution of Golden Dawn	Int. 5: Είχαμε ένα φασιστικό, ναζιστικό, ούτε καν νεοναζιστικό, ναζιστικό κόμμα το οποίο με τη διάλυσή του και με πολλές πολλές προσπάθειες που έγιναν από το χώρο των μεταναστών και μόνο και των προσφύγων, όχι από τους υπόλοιπους που οικειοποιήθηκαν στο τέλος όλη αυτή την προσπάθεια.

<p>"A dog was helping us"</p>	<p>More expressive</p>	<p>Int. 2: This information is provided to them in their language. You know, so this is important. And also, they can be more open with their emotions I would say because what I noticed, when people are visiting an organization, even the organization provides help but they try to be more reserved and coming to us, they can be themselves and they, you know? Int. 4: κατά τη γνώμη μου είναι υποχρεωτικό να υπάρχει ένα τέτοιου είδους σύλλογο-κοινότητα ή κοινότητα για τους ίδιους τους ανθρώπους γιατί θα είναι σημείο αναφοράς και παράλληλα οι άνθρωποι μπορούν να συνεννοούνται. Οργανώσεις υπάρχουν ναί μεν, είτε ελληνικά είτε ξένα, αλλά άλλο αυτό που έρχεσαι και μιλάς τη γλώσσα, κατανοείς, καταλαβαίνεις ακριβώς. Άλλο που πας μέσω διερμηνέα, μιλάει, σε πολλές περιπτώσεις δεν υπάρχει και διερμηνέας. Πάει να πει τον πόνο του και δεν μπορεί και εκεί ενδιάμεσα χάνονται πολλά. Πολλές πληροφορίες και πολλές λέξεις. Και το αίσθημα παίζει πολύ.</p>
	<p>Contribute more than the government</p>	<p>Int. 2: We can contribute because we have the knowledge. We have the experience. We have the tools, we have the information, we know what integration means, really, and we know</p>

		what we want. So, with all those things, we can contribute a lot. More than the government, more than the person who is sitting in the integration places.
"A dog was helping us"	Benefit mentally	Int. 3: And when you think okay, there are people, you go to work you think about these people, you don't read what happened there. It helps people to be busy, to have busy minds or something and some practical doing, like folding clothes, or something and because also we buy something.
	Dignity	Int. 3: But they still want to feel that they are people, they want to come to an excursion. You know, to feel that they have life, a bit of life they used to have
	Less alone	Int. 3: Part 1: And then you're in another country, you don't know. And you think you will be judged for every move. So, maybe in our place, they can be themselves. Part 2: Yeah, so the organization is very important [...] they are not on their own. So, they want to be helped. So, I mean, despite there is not much help here, they want feel that they are, you know, that somebody cares
	Happy to help	Int. 4: Και αυτό με χαροποιεί πάρα πολύ που βρίσκομαι σε αυτή τη θέση αυτή τη στιγμή και μπορώ να βοηθήσω τους ανθρώπους γιατί δεν βοηθάμε



		μόνο τους δικούς μας ανθρώπους, βοηθάμε και από άλλες εθνικότητες και τους Έλληνες και πολλά άλλα παράλληλα.
"A dog was helping us"	Positive feedback	Int. 1: Αλλά παρόλα αυτά από πολλούς δήμους έχουμε πάρα πολύ καλές και θετικές αντιδράσεις και θέλουν και μία βούληση από τους δήμους να οργανωθούν αυτά και να γίνουν σωστά.
	Empowering	Int. 2: In Africa and also, we have this big International Ivorian Diaspora coordination group, that Ivorian community is member. And yeah, we used to have contact with some other organization in Russia, in Italy, in [...]. So yes, it is good because we see different things happening around the world, we learn and it makes us more strong and gives us more tools.
	Initiative	Int. 1: σίγουρα έχεις ακούσει αυτό το Δίκτυο Καταγραφής Περιστατικών Ρατσιστικής Βίας, κανονικά ξεκίνησε απ' την κίνηση που κάναμε εμείς
	Sense of belonging	Int. 2: It is very powerful to other refugee and migrant organization. Because first, our members, our people from our community, when they come to Greece, the first thing that they're looking for, it is their people. Where are people from my country? This is first. And the second, those people what

		they can give me as information to help me in my beginning, because we have all the information. And we give this information. This information is power. When we have the information, we have the power.
"A dog was helping us"	Contributors, not part of the problem	Int. 1: Εμείς πάντα λέμε ότι πρέπει να αλλάξει αυτό. Να μην αντιμετωπίζουν πάντα εμένα ότι εγώ είμαι ο καημένος που χρειάζομαι βοήθεια. Οχι. Εγώ σαν contributor, σαν αυτός που συμβάλλει. Κομμάτι της λύσης. Ελα για την λύση να συζητήσουμε. Μη με βάζεις πάντα στο κομμάτι του προβλήματος.
	Help their people	Int. 1: Εμείς για παράδειγμα υπάρχουν τα camps, πηγαίνουμε επισκέψεις στα camp, μιλάμε με κόσμο εκεί μέσα, κάνουμε καταγραφή των προβλημάτων τους. Παρόλο που τώρα η κυβέρνηση τώρα δεν μας αφήνει επίσημα να μπορούμε και γι' αυτό δεν ζητάμε ποτέ άδεια από την κυβέρνηση, γιατί οι άνθρωποι που είναι εκεί μέσα είναι δικοί μας.
	Taken seriously	Int. 1: Δηλαδή, παρόλο που δυσκολευόμαστε πολλές φορές, αλλά το Υπουργείο, το κράτος, όλα αυτά μας παίρνουν στα σοβαρά
	Proud	Int. 1: Μπορώ να πω ότι είμαι περήφανος που οι κοινότητες είναι πιο οργανωμένες