Europeanization and de-Europeanization of migration policies in times of crisis: the case of Greece

VASILEIOS PALIGIANNIS s1627848

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Supervisor: Professor Joris Voorhoeve

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring and until September 2015, more than 300.000 refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean sea and entered the European Union and at least 4.000 died trying[1]. The United Nations forecasts that 3,000 migrants a day - many fleeing wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria - will pour into the Balkans, trying to reach Western Europe in the next few months. So far, the burden to absorb them has been unevenly distributed[2].

Migrants and refugees are trying to flee their home countries in Africa and the Middle East in order to avoid war, persecution and poverty. Syrians, Eritreans, Libyans and others are entering the EU by thousands every day. The Mediterranean countries, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain, due to their geographical position, have shouldered most of the responsibility for rescuing, receiving, identifying, recording and providing asylum to all these people.

In 2015, Greece was affected relatively more than any of the counties of the EU from the increasing migratory flows. In the first seven months of 2015, nearly 130.500 migrants were detected at Greece's borders. Only in July a record number of almost 50.000 migrants arrived in Europe through the Greek borders. In the entire 2014, the figure in the Eastern Mediterranean stood at 41.700. By the end of 2015 more than 800.000 refugees and migrants entered the Greek borders[3].

In 2010 Greece underwent a big economic crisis that led the government to seek assistance from the European Union. Since then, Greece receives bailout programs that may have improved the financial data, but caused serious damage to the socio-

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[1] Tara Brian and Frank Laczko, *Fatal Journeys: tracking lives lost during migration*, International Organization for Migration, 2015
[2] Gregor Aisch, Sarah Almukhtar, Haeyoun Park and Jeremy White, *Which Countries Are Under the Most Strain in the European Migration Crisis?*, New York Times, September 3, 2015
[3] FRONTEX, *Record number of migrants enter Greece in July*, 07-08-2015, http://frontex.europa.eu/news/record-number-of-migrants-enter-greece-in-july-dMt39y

economic structures. Minimum wage and pensions were reduced by 20% in 5 years, unemployment rates have reached 20% and youth unemployment increased to 50%[4].

During the first years of the economic crisis Greece adopted new legislation, integrating European directives and the Common European Asylum System, regarding reception policies and asylum services. Namely, in 2010 the Greek government reformed the Citizenship Law and in 2011 changed entirely the asylum procedures. These actions of the Greek government could be seen as a sign of Europeanization.

As the crisis was developing, a lot of pressure was put on Greece to comply with EU instructions on finance and economic policies, which led to the inverted trend of de-Europeanization in other domains, notably in migration policy[5]. The newly elected Greek government, in 2012, decided to take a step away from the common European policies and decided to cancel the 2010 Citizenship Law Reform. Also, Greece moved to actions that seemed to oppose the spirit of the European agreements and policies (Dublin Regulations, Schengen Agreement). Characteristic examples of such actions are the fence at the Greek-Turkish borders and the creation of detention centers for migrants and refugees.

But Greece was not the only case of countries that decided to put aside the EU common policies on migration and asylum and adopt measures to prevent the entrance of refugees and migrants. Hungary, Austria, Denmark and others raised fences and imposed border controls, contradicting the spirit of Europeanization and shifting towards more de-Europeanized policies.

The purpose of this thesis paper is to examine the Europeanization and the de-Europeanization of the migration policies in times of crisis. Greece is an interesting case to examine, since it experiences a deep economic crisis and at the same time is a first entry country that receives large migratory flows.

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[4] OECD stat. https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=AV_AN_WAGE (last accessed: 05/12/2015)
[5] Triandafyllidou Anna, Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of crisis, Journal of European Integration, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2014, p. 410

This thesis paper will try to answer to the following research question: "*To what extent has the economic crisis affected the implementation of the Common European Asylum System and related national policies in Greece (2010-2015)?*".

In order to answer the question, I will form the hypothesis that the economic crisis has negatively affected the implementation of the policies and led to the de-Europeanization of the migration policies. The main variable of the research is the "implementation of the policies".

1.1. METHODOLOGY

In order to answer the research question, I will conduct qualitative research. The findings of the research will be based upon personal interviews with officials from different agencies and organizations. More specifically, I have conducted four interviews with officials of four agencies with a different background and a different perspective on the topic. The agencies that agreed to give interviews are: the Greek Asylum Agency; the Hellenic Coastguard; the Offices of the European Parliament - Athens; and the "PRAKSIS" NGO. All interviews took place in Athens. One interview was recorded and three were not. I also conducted two anonymous interviews. One with an officer of the Coast Guard and one with an officer in the Asylum Agency office in the island of Rhodes. Both officers decided to remain anonymous due to their current positions in their respective agencies

1.2. THESIS LAYOUT

Before proceeding with the paper, it is important to mention how the thesis paper is structured. Chapter 1 (the present chapter) describes the societal relevance of the topic, highlighted the research question and the main hypothesis and briefly refers to the methodological approach. Chapter 2 provides the reader with the theoretical framework. The concepts of Europeanization and de-Europeanization will be analyzed through a literature review and the literature gaps will be described. Chapter 3 presents the institutional framework of the EU and in Greece. The first part presents

the Common European Asylum System through a Europeanization and a de-Europeanization perspective and the second part presents the Greek migration policies from the same perspectives. Chapter 4 tries to make a connection between the economic crisis in Greece and the implementation of the migration policies and presents the findings of the research. Chapter 5 presents some concluding remarks on the thesis paper. Lastly, the transcripts of the conducted interviews can be found in the Annex part of the paper.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is crucial, for this thesis paper, to define and understand the meaning of some concepts. The first concept that needs to be explained, is the concept of "Europeanization", and after that its opposite, the concept of de-Europeanization. These two concepts will be explained in the context of migration policies.

2.1. EUROPEANIZATION

The concept of "Europeanization" first appeared in the late 1980s, when there was a debate regarding the democratic deficit of the EU. The main question was how could the national parliaments control their governments, when the latter were integrating EU regulations and directives to domestic policies[6].

Europeanization has been used in different contexts and policy areas, sometimes in a general way that describes "the process of change of discourses, policies or institutions in different areas of policy and politics that is triggered by European integration"[7]. In that way, Europeanization is presented as a multi-level process that includes institutions, policies, discourses and ideas. It has, also, been used amongst scholars to signify changes within European politics and international relations[8].

Featherstone argues that the concept of "Europeanization" , similarly to that of "globalization", can be used as a starting point to better understand changes that occur in politics and in society. He adds, that it should not be confused with European integration processes but it should mostly be considered as a process of structural change that affects actors, institutions and discourses and closely relates with Europe[9] or the policies of the European Union[10].

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[6] Tapio Raunio and Matti Wiberg, *How to measure the Europeanization of a national legislature?*, Scandinavian Political Studies, Vol. 33 - No. 1, 2010, p. 74

[7] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of crisis*, Journal of European Integration, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2014, p. 409

[8] Featherstone Kevin, *Introduction: In the Name of Europe*, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 3

[9] I believe that at this point, Featherstone, refers to 'Europe' as a concept representing certain values and ideas.

[10] ibid., p. 3

There is an almost 30-year literature referring to the concept of "Europeanization" and, thus, many scholars have provided many definitions of the term. Ladrech was one of the first that defined Europeanization in 1994. Ladrech defined Europeanization as "*a process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC (European Community) political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making*"[11]. According to this definition, the actors (state leaders, government leaders) are those who change or adopt their policies and interests in order to come closer to the policies and interests of the European Union. It is a loose definition, though, as it does not perceive the full extent of the "Europeanization" concept[12].

Lawton proposes that Europeanization is "*the 'de jure' transfer of sovereignty to the EU level*" and not the sharing of power between member states and the EU[13]. On the other hand, Borzel argues that it is more important to see what happens when power has already been transferred to Brussels, defining Europeanization as a "*process by which domestic policy areas become increasingly subject to European policy-making*"[14].

Manners and Whitman related Europeanization with foreign policy cooperation between the EU member states and as a result they defined Europeanization as "*a transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed... in the consequent internalization of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making*"[15]. On the same spirit, Smith highlighted four variables of interior adaptation to EU foreign policy cooperation: elite socialization, bureaucratic reorganization, constitutional change and the increase in public support

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[11] Ladrech R., *The Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France*, Journal of Common Market Studies 32(1), 1994, p. 69-88

[12] Featherstone Kevin, *Introduction: In the Name of Europe*, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 12

[13] Lawton T., *Governing the Skies: Conditions for the Europeanisation of Airline Policy*, Journal of Public Policy 19(1), 1999, P. 91-112

[14] Borzel T., *Towards Convergence in Europe? Institutional Adaptation to Europeanisation in Germany and Spain*, Journal of Common Market Studies 39(4), 1999, p. 573-596

[15] Manners I. and Whitman R. G., (eds), *The Foreign Policies of the European Union Member States* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 245

for the CFSP[16]. These arguments show that the impact of Europeanization spreads in national foreign policies.

Caporaso et al., saw Europeanization from an institutional perspective, arguing that it "*involves the development of formal and informal rules, procedures, norms and practices governing politics at the European, national and subnational levels*"[17]. This definition offers a broad perspective, showing that Europeanization may occur during EU institution building and while a state gains membership in the EU. Opposing Caporaso et al., Knill and Lehmkuhl adopt a more top-down approach. They describe three 'mechanisms' of Europeanization that may produce domestic institutional change. The first mechanism, or "positive integration", appears when member states adjust their domestic policies / institutions in accordance with EU obligations. The second mechanism, or "negative integration", appears when EU legislative acts affect and change interior procedures. The third mechanism, or "framing integration", appears when EU policies affect domestic beliefs and causes institutional adaptation[18]. This scheme, is also related with Schmidt's work, who recognised three key variables of adjustment; the economic, the institutional and the ideational[19].

The work of Schmidt, Caporaso et al. and Knill and Lehmkuhl are based on new institutionalist arguments. Each study examines the '*goodness of fit*' of the EU policies in the domestic level, the '*logic of appropriateness*' in which institutions have an impact in the behavior of the actors and the '*logic of consequentialism*' which is related with the distribution of power[20].

A more insightful definition of Europeanization is presented by Radaelli. According to him, Europeanization consists of "*processes of (a)construction (b)diffusion and (c)institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms,*

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[16] Smith M. E., *Conforming to Europe: The Domestic Impact of EU Foreign Policy Co-operation*, Journal of European Public Policy 7(4), 2000, p. 617-628

[17] Featherstone Kevin, *Introduction: In the Name of Europe*, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 13-14

[18] Knill C. and Lehmkuhl D., *How Europe Matters: Different Mechanisms of Europeanization*, European Integration Online Papers 3(7), 1999

[19] Schmidt V A., *Discourse and (Dis)integration in Europe: The Cases of France, Germany and Great Britain*, Daedalus 126(3), 1997, p. 167-99

[20] Featherstone Kevin, *Introduction: In the Name of Europe*, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 15

styles, 'ways of doing things', and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies"[21]. This definition underlines the importance of political behavior change, includes the domestic integration of EU policy and politics and does not assume that there is an external layer of EU decisions that creates Europeanization[22].

Apart from defining Europeanization, Radaelli studied the related literature and elucidated what elements should not be confused and assimilated with Europeanization. Thus, Radaelli argues that Europeanization is not convergence, because convergence is more of a consequence than a process of Europeanization. Also, Europeanization should not be tangled with harmonisation, as the latter could reduce regulatory diversity. And finally, Europeanization is not political integration[23].

Through this plethora of definitions, which are characterized by a different perspective on the concept of "Europeanization", we can underline some common points. Europeanization is related with the adaptation of institutional settings at different levels, highlights the rise of new policy networks and facilitates the transfer of power between different level of authorities[24].

Leaving aside the definitions of the concept, it is important to see what outcomes can occur due to Europeanization. Radaelli, drawing upon the studies of Borzel[25], Cowles[26] and Heritier[27], refers to four possible outcomes of Europeanization; inertia, absorption, transformation and retrenchment. Inertia is presented as a situation where no change happens, due to the fact that a member state finds EU policies and

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[21] ibid., p. 17

[22] Radaelli M. Claudio, The Europeanization of Public Policy, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 30-31

[23] ibid., p. 33

[24] Featherstone Kevin, *Introduction: In the Name of Europe*, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 20-21

[25] Borzel T., *Towards Convergence in Europe? Institutional Adaptation to Europeanisation in Germany and Spain*, Journal of Common Market Studies 39(4), 1999, p. 573-596

[26] Cowles M. G., Caporaso J. and Risse T., eds. *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change,* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001

[27] Heritier A., *Differential Europe: Administrative Responses to Community Policy*, in Cowles *et al.* (eds), *Transforming Europe: Europeanisation and Domestic Change*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001

structures not to be suitable for domestic practices. Absorption presents change as adaptation and domestic structures are flexible and resilient, as they are able to absorb non-crucial changes and keep their core intact. Transformation is similar to 'paradigmatic change' and happens when there is a fundamental change of political behavior. Lastly, retrenchment implies deviation of a domestic policy from a European policy and can be associated with the concept of de-Europeanization, which will be explained later in this chapter[28].

2.2. DE-EUROPEANIZATION

The second concept that needs to be explained and defined, is the concept of "de-Europeanization". Literature is quite short regarding this concept and scholars usually refer to it with different terms. Some call it de-Europeanization, others normalization and a few refer to it as retrenchment. For the purpose of this paper, the concept of de-Europeanization will include all the above mentioned terms.

It is evident that the member states of the EU participate in an ongoing process of legal, socioeconomic and political integration, especially after the Treaties of Amsterdam and Lisbon, that have paved the way for the development of common European policies in a wide range of policy domains. However, there are still policy areas where the member states are not in a hurry to adopt EU regulations and proceed with their own policy reform[29]. Why does this happen?

Heritier argues that while European integration increases inevitably, it begins to affect policy areas and sensitive issues, for which member states are not willing or prepared to legally commit themselves at EU level or to relinquish competence over to supranational institutions[30]. Papagianni adds that member states have always been

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[28] Radaelli M. Claudio, The Europeanization of Public Policy, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 37-38

[29] Vink M. and Bonjour S., *When Europeanization backfires: The normalization of European migration policies*, Acta Politica 48, 2013, p. 389-407

[30] Heritier A., *New modes of governance in Europe: policy-making without legislating?*, Max Planck Project Group Common Goods: Law, Politics and Economics 14, 2001

trying to find ways to decrease and limit the interventional action of the European Commission and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in domestic issues[31].

Radaelli follows a different direction, as he considers de-Europeanization to be an outcome of the Europeanization, in the form of retrenchment. Radaelli argues that Europeanization can have no effect on national policies, but instead can make a domestic policy less European than in the past. It is a paradoxical outcome, explaining how extreme intervention on behalf of the supranational institutions, can lead to a shift in the domestic policies[32].

Last but not least, Triandafyllidou examines another factor that can lead to de-Europeanization. She argues that in times of crisis (political or economic) the limits and the strengths of Europeanization are being tested. Giving the example of the economic crisis in Greece, Triandafyllidou argues that when a member state is under pressure and is forced to comply with EU instructions on one policy area, then the member state decides to shift away from European norms and regulations in another policy area. In that way, a crisis creates an inverted trend that leads to de-Europeanization of a domestic policy[33].

2.3. EUROPEANIZATION AND DE-EUROPEANIZATION REGARDING MIGRATION POLICIES

It is important to explain first how the term "migration policy" is being understood. A migration policy consists of a set of laws and regulations which determine the reception procedures of undocumented migrants, their identification and the criteria for granting asylum. It is also concerned with the increasing number of asylum seekers, illegal immigrants and the institutional framework that addresses migration. In the EU, an area which is characterized by open borders and freedom of movement, countries are supposed to share the same fundamental values and member states need

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[31] Papagianni G., *Institutional and policy dynamics of EU migration law*, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2006, p. 258

[32] Radaelli M. Claudio, The Europeanization of Public Policy, In: Featherstone Kevin & Radaelli M. Claudio (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 37-38

[33] Triandafyllidoy Anna, *Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of a crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

to have a joint approach to guarantee high standards of protection for refugees and migrants[34].

Literature review shows a gap in the Europeanization studies, as Graziano and Vink note that these studies should be extended beyond European Affairs Committees to a wider range of policies, including the migration policies[35]. This gap in the literature is related to the fact that a European migration and asylum policy is created in a slow pace and that national governments are not willing to transfer power over these issues in Brussels[36]. The institutional framework on the asylum policies is still a domestic matter[37].

Hansen presents the evolution of migration and asylum policies as a path dependent process, based on locked-in past events that are politically difficult to alter[38]. Thus, migration regulation is affected by established national patterns[39].

Borzel argues that a Europeanized migration policy is based on the 'first-mover advantage'. According to this principle, when domestic actors feel that they can formulate not only the policy of their government but also EU legislation, they put extra effort to achieve that goal. In that sense, a member state that adopts certain regulations on a specific policy (migration policy in our case), motivates other member states to adopt similar policies. It is a process that can lead to the transformation of a domestic policy into a Europeanized policy, but it involves coalition-building to ensure its adoption by the Council of Ministers or any other related EU institution[40]. However, literature indicates that this is difficult to happen

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[34] European Commission: DG Migration and Home Affairs, *Common European Asylum System*, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm, (last access: 28/11/2015)

[35] Graziano P. & Vink M., *Europeanization: new research agendas*, London: Palgrave, 2006

[36] Menz George, *Stopping, Shaping and Moulding Europe: Two-Level Games, Non-State Actors and the Europeanization of Migration Policies*, Journal of Common Market Studies, 49(2), Goldsmiths Research Online, London 2011, p. 437-462

[37] Interview with the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament in Athens, Greece, 17/11/2015

[38] Hansen R., *Globalization, Embedded Realism and Path Dependence: The Other Immigrants to Europe*, Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 35 No. 3, 2002, p. 259-283

[39] Cornelius W., Martin P. L. and Hollifield J. F. (eds.), *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, Stanford University Press, 2004

[40] Borzel T., *Member State Responses to Europeanization*, JCMS, Vol. 40 No. 2, 2002, p. 193-214

with migration policy, because it is a highly politicized domain, relating with matters of citizenship, access to labor markets and issues of social policy[41].

In general, migration policy has become increasingly Europeanized over the past decades, although the development and implementation of migration policy is characterized by disagreements between member states and the EU institutions. Despite the process of Europeanization in migration policies, there are some indications of de-Europeanization in this policy domain. Member states have been collaborating on migration and asylum issues outside the EU institutional framework, they have chosen to not involve in their decisions the supranational institutions and they have refused to relinquish their jurisdiction over migration policy[42].

Member states undertake such initiatives because there are legislative acts that present a lack of consensus at the EU level regarding migration policy[43]. For example, Article 79(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that "*this Article shall not affect the right of Member States to determine volumes of admission of third-country nationals coming from third countries...*"[44]. Such provisions allow divergences from Europeanized principles and has led member states to adopt individual measures and policies.

2.4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

During the last three decades research on the concept of Europeanization has been increasing and is generally understood as a process of domestic adaptation to European integration[45]. Olsen described Europeanization as the infiltration of EU

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[41] Menz George, *Stopping, Shaping and Moulding Europe: Two-Level Games, Non-State Actors and the Europeanization of Migration Policies*, Journal of Common Market Studies, 49(2), Goldsmiths Research Online, London 2011, p. 437-462

[42] Reslow Natasja, *Deciding on EU External Migration Policy: The Member States and the Mobility Partnerships*, Journal of European Integration, 34:3, 2012, p. 223-239

[43] Wiesbrock A., *Legal migration to the European Union: ten years after Tampere*, Faculty of Law, Maastricht University, 2009, p. 218

[44] Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Article 79(5), http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=en, (last access: 29/11/2015)

[45] Vink M. and Graziano P. (eds.), *Challenges of a new research agenda*, In: Europeanization*: New Research Agendas*, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 3-20

level institutions and policies into the national system of governance[46]. Borzel and Risse described it as a process of domestic change caused by policies and institutions[47].

Scholars have provided us with a plethora of definitions regarding Europeanization and its implication in the national policies of the member states. However there is still a literature gap in the Europeanization studies. As Graziano and Vink note, this concept has mainly been examined in France, Germany and the UK and there is less attention in peripheral countries. They also, add that the Europeanization studies should be extended beyond European Affairs Committees to a wider range of policies, including the migration policies[48]. There is also limited literature regarding the inverted trend of de-Europeanization.

The purpose of this thesis paper, is to research the Europeanization process in a peripheral country, Greece, and in a policy area that has not been examined adequately as the migration policy. The concept of de-Europeanization will also be examined.

In order to achieve this goal, the concept of Europeanization will be considered as a process of change in national institutional and policy practices that can be attributed to European integration. Also, the concept of de-Europeanization will be considered as the trend of shifting away from European norms and policies.

The next chapter will present the Common European Asylum System and the Greek Migration and Asylum Policy in terms of Europeanization and de-Europeanization.

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[46] Olsen J. P., *Europeanization*, In: Cini M. (ed.), *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 333-348
[47] Borzel T. and Risse T., *When Europe hits home. Europeanization and domestic change*, European Integration Online Papers (EioP), 4(15), 2000
[48] Graziano P. & Vink M., *Europeanization: new research agendas*, London: Palgrave, 2006

CHAPTER 3. EU AND NATIONAL MIGRATION POLICY

3.1. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

During the past two decades, while a growing number of people were applying for asylum in the E.U., there have been attempts to change the venue of the policymaking towards asylum seekers and refugees and transfer it from national capitals to Brussels. As the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was developing, the focus was increasingly on harmonization of national policies and cooperation between member states in matters related with border control, asylum applications management and reception standards for asylum seekers[49].

3.1.1. Through a Europeanization path...

The path that led the EU to the CEAS, which is now in force, begins with the 1951 Refugee Convention signed and ratified by all the countries of the EU[50]. The 1951 Refugee Convention recognizes asylum as a fundamental right which should be protected by everyone[51]. Although universally accepted, the 1951 Refugee Convention contains some gaps that offered the opportunity to the states to tighten their policies on border control, on the procedures that were to determine the refugee status and the conditions that asylum seekers were facing during the process of their applications[52]. It seems that the Refugee Convention let the states to carry out their own measures to prevent refugees from entering their borders.

The EU took the first step to form a common migration policy in the 1990 when the Dublin Convention was signed. It was a first sign of cooperation between the member

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[49] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 1-2
[50] Common European Asylum System, DG Migration and Home Affairs,
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm (last accessed: 19/09/2015)
[51] The full text of the 1951 Refugee Convention can be found here,
http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b66c2aa10.pdf (last accessed: 19/09/2015)
[52] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 7-8

states[53] that agreed to establish an asylum claim, which would be assessed for only one time by the country of first entry[54]. This country was expected to deal with the asylum claim[55]. Most countries harmonized their national policies with that general principle and they often legislated individual reform packages which included measures that were enhancing the asylum claim procedures, limiting the appeal right and restricting the living conditions of asylum applicants during the process of their applications[56]. At that point, there was a common trend developing towards the spirit of the policies but in practice cooperation between states was considered to be minimal, especially in relation to the burden-sharing discussion[57].

The 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam provided the framework for a further harmonization of the migration policies by giving the right to the European Commission to propose legislation and paved the way towards the European Council meeting in Tampere. The 1999 Tampere meeting formed the first stage of the CEAS (the Tampere Programme). The Tampere Programme introduced a number of directives that focused on the harmonization of key elements of asylum and migration policy. The Reception Conditions Directive, the Qualification Directive and the Asylum Procedure Directive are the main legislative acts that were integrated in national legislation, but they only covered specific standards and not the entire concept of the asylum procedure. These directives were introduced with the Dublin II Regulation, which replaced the Dublin Convention and revised the "country of first entry" mechanism[58]. Harmonisation is incomplete and the burden-sharing is still inadequate.

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[53] Oakley S., *Accelerated Procedures for Asylum in the European Union: Fairness versus Efficiency*, University of Sussex, Migration working paper no 42
[54] The 1990 Dublin Convention can be found here, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:41997A0819(01)&from=EN (last accessed: 19/09/2015)
[55] Hatton T. J. & Williamson J. G., *Refugees, asylum seekers and policy in Europe*, NBER working paper, 2004, p. 1-42
[56] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 8
[57] Neymayer E., *Asylum Destination Choice: What Makes Some West European Countries More Attractive Than Others?*, European Union Politics, 5, p. 155-180
[58] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 9

The Kosovo crisis was the reason for the first steps towards burden-sharing to be introduced[59]. First, the European Refugee Fund was created, in 2000. It is a fund whose resources are shared to countries according to the number of asylum applications. Although this is an important initiative that establishes burden-sharing measures, the budget was and remains small in relation to the extent of the problem[60]. Another measure was the adoption of the Temporary Protection Directive which refers to the refugee relocation without, though, providing an explicit plan[61]. Burden-sharing remains controversial as there are no binding conditions for member states[62].

While the Tampere Programme laid the ground for the CEAS, the 2004 Hague Programme involved greater cooperation. The Hague Programme established the FRONTEX agency for a more integrated border control, harmonized the regulations for refugee status determination and increased the European Refugee Fund financial support[63].

The Hague Programme was replaced by the Stockholm Programme in 2012, with the purpose of completing CEAS. The Stockholm Programme established the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) with the task to establish mechanisms for 'supporting states under particular pressure' and to assist the process of relocating refugees[64].

-The current Status

The Stockholm Programme led us to the current form of the Common European Asylum System. New rules and regulations have been agreed among the EU member

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[59] Barutciski M. & Suhrke A., *Lessons from the Kosovo Refugee Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-Sharing*, Journal of Refugee Studies, 14, p. 95-134

[60] Thielemann E., *Symbolic Politics or Effective Burden-sharing? Redistribution, Side-payments and the European Refugee Fund*, Journal of Common Market Studies, 43, p. 821

[61] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 9

[62] Thielemann E. & Duwan T., *The myth of free-riding: Refugee protection and implicit burden-sharing*, West European Politics 29(2), 2006, p. 351-369

[63] Council of the European Union, *The Hague Programme: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union*, 16054/04, Brussels, 13 December 2004

[64] Council of the European Union, *The Stockholm Programme - An open and secure Europe serving and protecting the citizens*, 17024/09, Brussels, 2 December 2009

states, setting new standards and greater cooperation which ensures that refugees are treated equally and fairly[65].

Central to the CEAS is the Dublin 3 Regulation, which was established in 2013. According to the Dublin System, member states agree on a scheme that makes the 'country of first entry' responsible for the asylum seeker[66]. The new Dublin improves the efficiency of the mechanism through an early warning crisis management system, a series of rules that protect the asylum applicants, the possibility for appeals and offers more legal clarity of procedures between member states[67]. However, the Dublin system disproportionately puts the responsibility and the costs of securing the external borders of the EU upon the shoulders of the EU's external border countries[68].

The set of directives that was introduced during the Tampere Programme, is now revised to meet contemporary challenges. The Reception Conditions Directive, set into force in July 2015, establishes common and more harmonized standards of living conditions for the asylum applicants throughout the EU[69]. The Asylum Procedures Directive, set into force in July 2015, creates a coherent and more precise system that ensures more efficient asylum decisions. Simpler rules on how to apply for asylum are set, the procedures are moving faster and member states are not allowed to keep their own rules, as the earlier directive provided[70]. The Qualification Directive sets common grounds to offer international protection. The previously vague standards are replaced with measures that improve access to international protection and ensure the

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[65] Common European Asylum System, DG Migration and Home Affairs, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm (last accessed: 23/09/2015)
[66] Thielemann E. & Armstrong C., *Understanding European asylum cooperation under the Schengen/Dublin system: a public goods framework*, European Security, 22:2, 2013, p. 148-164
[67] Regulation no 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person, 26 June 2013
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R0604&from=EN (last accessed: 23/09/2015)
[68] Thielemann E. & Armstrong C., *Understanding European asylum cooperation under the Schengen/Dublin system: a public goods framework*, European Security, 22:2, 2013, p. 148-164
[69] Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection, 26 June 2013
[70] Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection, 26 June 2013

fair treatment of all applicants[71]. Finally the EURODAC regulation, set into force in July 2015, establishes an EU asylum fingerprint database. This revised regulation facilitates law enforcement by detecting and investigating applicants who are related with crimes or terrorist activities[72].

Apart from the adoption of legislation there has also been established a number of agencies which are involved in the monitoring of the CEAS and in supporting the EU states. The European Asylum Support Office, established in 2010 and full operational since 2011, develops cooperation among EU member states on asylum issues, supports EU states that are under particular pressure through the coordination of teams managing asylum applications and contributes to the implementation of the CEAS by exchanging information on best practices. Through its function, EASO assists member states to fulfill their European obligations in the field of asylum[73]. FRONTEX, the EU external borders agency, was established in 2004 and its task is to facilitate and improve the application of EU measures, related to the management of the external borders. In that way, it contributes to the efficient surveillance of the external borders of the EU[74].

It would be wrong not to mention the Schengen Area, as an important part of the European asylum framework. It is one of the greatest achievements of the European integration, as it creates an area without internal borders and in which citizens, businesses and services can move with no border checks. The Schengen is not part of the migration policies but it is connected with the Dublin Regulation. The Dublin Regulation indicates that the 'country of first entry' is the country responsible to examine the asylum claim of the applicant who enters. If the applicant gets the status

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[71] Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status of refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted, 13 December 2011
[72] Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of EURODAC, 26 June 2013
[73] European Asylum Support Office, *What is EASO?*, https://easo.europa.eu/about-us/what-is-easo/ (last accessed: 23/09/2015)
[74] FRONTEX, Mission and tasks http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/mission-and-tasks/ (last accessed: 23/09/2015)

of refugee, then the refugee, benefiting from the Schengen Area, is free to move to any other EU member state. In that sense Schengen Area is a part of the CEAS[75].

This path that began in the 1990s and continues to evolve until today is a strong sign of Europeanization in migration policies. Throughout this process, EU member states agreed that there is a need to establish a Common European Asylum System and more or less they adopted and implemented the common policies, they harmonized, at least at a minimum degree, their legislation in accordance with the European directives and regulations and they started cooperating with each other so that CEAS is institutionalized as a central European policy.

3.1.2. ...to a de-Europeanization trend

In the light of these institutional developments and legislative convergences it seems that migration policies move in a common Europeanized path, but in practice the outcomes are not as expected. The application of the CEAS directives remains uneven[76]. The European Refugee Fund has been enhanced with additional resources but it remains small and weak[77]. The way CEAS is structured does not lead to the creation of a joint central policy, but instead it creates a solidarity gap among the member states and a sense of mistrust towards the countries that lie in the external borders of the EU. These are due to two specific factors.

The first factor is the burden-sharing of the refugees in terms of asylum applicants and the associated costs. The number of asylum seekers and refugees is unevenly shared[78]. In 2007, the Commission presented the 'Green Paper on the Future of the European Asylum System', as they had realized the need for greater solidarity and more fair and equal distribution of the refugees among the member states[79]. The Paper indicates the

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[75] European Commission, DG Migration and Home Affairs: Schengen, Borders and Visa, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/index_en.htm (last accessed: 23/092015)
[76] Fundamental Rights Agency, *Access to effective remedies: The Asylum Seeker Perspective*, 2010, http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachements/report-access-remedies_EN.pdf (last accessed: 22/09/2015)
[77] Hatton J. Timothy, *Asylum Policy in the EU: The Case for Deeper Integration*, The Australian National University, Centre for Economic Policy Research, discussion paper no. 660, March 2012, p. 10
[78] ibid p. 10
[79] Commission of the European Communities (CEC) (2007a), *Green Paper on the Future of the European Asylum System*, COM (2007) 301 final

weakness of the system to equally distribute the asylum applications. In the past, asylum seekers where choosing their host country being aware of the related national legislation. Under the CEAS and the Dublin Regulation, the 'country of first entry' system is in place, which forces the refugees to apply for asylum in the countries that lie in the external border of the EU. Thus, the burden lies in a few countries which often cannot withstand this responsibility[80] and the rest of the member states do not seem to be interested to discuss standards for relocating or redistributing refugees in the EU[81].

It seems that the Europeanization process through the establishment of such centralized policies has caused the opposite effects by disproportionately placing the responsibility and the cost of securing the EU's borders[82]. The EU's inability to promote a fair and equitable burden-sharing system has led to the second factor.

The second factor is related with restrictive measures that member states individually decided to adopt in order to confront large migration flows, whose dynamic cannot be regulated by the existing key policies.

So far, in 2015, more than 300.000 refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean sea and entered the European Union and at least 4.000 died trying[83]. The United Nations forecasts that 3,000 migrants a day – many fleeing wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria – will pour into the Balkans, trying to reach Western Europe in the next few months. So far, the burden to absorb them has been unevenly distributed[84]. The influx of migrants has de-established Schengen and has worsened the relations between EU member states. Asylum seekers are to seek for help in the country of first entry, most probably Italy or Greece, but because of Schengen it is easy to move from a country

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[80] Thielemann Eiko, *The Future of the Common European Asylum System: in need of a more comprehensive burden-sharing approach*, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, European Policy Analysis, issue 1, February 2008, p. 1-2

[81] Bendel Petra, *The Common European Asylum System: Achievements, Failures, Outlooks and Policy Learning for the EU and Canada*, Centre for European Studies, CETA Policy Brief Series May 2014, p. 4

[82] Thielemann E. & Armstrong C., *Understanding European asylum cooperation under the Schengen/Dublin system: a public goods framework*, European Security, 22:2, 2013, p. 148-164

[83] Tara Brian and Frank Laczko, *Fatal Journeys: tracking lives lost during migration*, International Organization for Migration, 2015

[84] Gregor Aisch, Sarah Almukhtar, Haeyoun Park and Jeremy White, *Which Countries Are Under the Most Strain in the European Migration Crisis?*, New York Times, September 3, 2015

to country and eventually reach the northern countries, which is actually their primary target.

In late 2012, Greece was one of the first countries to impose individual restrictive measures to prevent illegal migration, by building a 10.5 km fence in the borders with Turkey. This decision of the Greek government was criticized by the European institutions as a measure that it could not solve the problem[85].

In the next years more countries undertook measures to prevent the entrance of illegal migrants into their territories. Hungary declared an emergency and Prime minister Orban decided to close the borders with Serbia, to built a wired fence across the borders and passed new, more strict legislation to prevent migrants to enter the country[86].

But the greatest impact was caused by Germany. On September 13th, 2015, Chancellor Merkel decided to re-impose border controls with Austria in order to mitigate the refugee flow. It was a major decision, that could lead to a possible erosion of the Schengen area, and caused a domino of developments. Germany and Austria imposed controls, which restricted movement across the borders of Hungary, which in turn closed the borders with Serbia, that makes it difficult to accept migrants from the FYROM and which restricted its borders with Greece[87].

After that, more countries like Slovakia and the Czech Republic imposed border controls and even more, as Belgium and the Netherlands, are considering to follow the same path. The Eastern European countries, at the same time, refused to participate in the relocation of 120.000 refugees that currently are in Italy, Greece and Hungary[88].

All the efforts put by the European Governments and the European Institutions to form a common centralized migration policy, seem to be submerging, mainly because

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[85] Kathimerini newspaper, *Greece completes anti-migrant fence at Turkish border*, e-kathimerini, 17/12/2012, http://www.ekathimerini.com/147035/article/ekathimerini/news/greece-completes-anti-migrant-fence-at-turkish-border (last accessed: 26/09/2015)

[86] Lancashire Adrian, *Hungary's new laws, razor fence to sharpen refugee control*, euronews, 14/09/2015, http://www.euronews.com/2015/09/14/hungary-s-new-laws-razor-fence-to-sharpen-refugee-control/ (last accessed: 26/09/2015)

[87] The Economist, *Europe's migrant crisis: Shooting Schengen*, issue September 19th 2015, p. 11

[88] The Economist, *Refugee crisis: Europe starts putting up walls*, issue September 19th 2015, p. 23

of the unwillingness of all the member states to participate in the burden-sharing of the refugee crisis.

3.2. GREEK MIGRATION POLICY

Greece, as an external EU border country, has been experiencing great migration flows since the 1990s. The Greek governments tried to deal with this phenomenon with ad hoc initiatives and not with a concrete, comprehensive plan. Some more comprehensive legislative acts were presented in the 2000s but they were lacking vision, prediction of future trends and did not provide the country with a complete management and integration plan of the migrants. In the 2010-2011 period, the government, in order to differently manage the long suffered migration policy and to satisfy pressures coming from the EU, moved important legislative initiatives that enhanced the integration of the migrants in the society, the citizenship concession and the management of asylum applications. It is a period of Europeanizing the Greek migration policies[89].

Many factors shaped the Greek migration policy through the years. In the 1990s foreign policy concerns, due to the political instability in the Balkans, guided the priorities of the migration policy. As the situation was stabilizing and the Greek government realized that the migrants and refugees where here to stay, the variables guiding the Greek migration policy changed in order to integrate migrants as labor force. This was established with the first comprehensive immigration law, adopted in 2001[90]. The 2001 law was influenced by European policies but its effect was limited, as it took into account immigrants only as labor force[91]. Generally, during the 2000s,

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[89] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

[90] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek immigration policy at the turn of the 21st century. Lack of political will or purposeful mismanagement?*, European Journal of Migration and Law 11, no.2, 2009, p. 159-178

[91] Mavrodi G., *Europeanizing National Immigration Policy: The Case of Greece*, Working Paper 8/2005, Centre on Migration, Citizenship and Development, University of Bielefeld, 2005

the Greek government integrated several of the European directives into the national legislation, but the level of implementation was low[92].

At the end of the 2000s decade, the migration issue became more serious as irregular migration flows started pressing the Greek - Turkish land and sea borders. Under the new circumstances, the migration policy was redirected from a 'Greek-centered' to a 'Europe-centered' point of view, as Greece was considered to be a vital player in protecting Europe from threats related to migration[93]. Also, the Greek government started cooperating more actively with the EU member states, adopted policies promoting the 2009 Tampere Programme and put more emphasis on readmission agreements with countries of origin. This new direction demonstrates a clear shift of the Greek migration policy towards the Europeanization of the migration policies[94]. This change, though, was visible only in theory and official statements, as the political elites and the political balances inside the Greek Parliament delayed any legislative initiative[95].

It was only in 2009, when the Socialist Party won the elections, that two very important reforms in migration policy were proposed and adopted; the Citizenship Law Reform and the Asylum Law Reform.

3.2.1. The Citizenship Law Reform (2010)

Greek nationality has been always based on the 'jus sanguinus' (right of blood) principle. The naturalization process was very costly in time and money and was accompanied by an uncertain outcome even for those who fulfilled the legal

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[92] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek immigration policy at the turn of the 21st century. Lack of political will or purposeful mismanagement?*, European Journal of Migration and Law 11, no.2, 2009, p. 159-178

[93] Geddes A. & Lazarou E., *Europeanization of migration policy and narratives of migration management: the case of Greece*, Paper presented at the EPRC Workshop Narratives of Migration Management and Cooperation Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, 18-19 September 2008

[94] ibid.

[95] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek immigration policy at the turn of the 21st century. Lack of political will or purposeful mismanagement?*, European Journal of Migration and Law 11, no.2, 2009, p. 159-178

requirements. Immigrants could apply for citizenship only if they completed 10 years of legally living in Greece[96].

That changed in March 2010, when the newly elected Socialist government moved the procedures to change the citizenship law, in order to facilitate naturalization for immigrants. The Greek Parliament adopted law 3838/2010 on citizenship and naturalization. This law reduced requirements for granting citizenship by decreasing the standard of legally residing in Greece from 10 to 7 years. At the same time, it was introduced a new requirement, a stepping stone to naturalization, that obligated immigrants to first obtain the long term EU migrant status. The services responsible for examining citizenship applications are now forced to reply at a certain time frame and to justify any negative outcome. Regarding the second generation immigrants, the law provides that children born in Greece can become Greek citizens by a simple declaration of their parents, provided that they legally reside in Greece for 5 years. In addition to the reforming processes, the law introduces full local political rights for immigrants residing legally in Greece for 5 years[97].

This shift in migration policy was slow and gradual and was partly due to the fact that party elites understood and accepted the fact that migration was now a stable theme in Greek society. That was also confirmed with the appointment of experts, known for their pro-immigration beliefs, in key ministries and agencies[98].

Europeanization and CEAS had no direct impact on the Citizenship Law Reform and the Reform did not actually implement or transferred any specific European directives into the national legislation. But the Reform contributed to a different kind of Europeanization in the Greek migration policies. Political elites, the Parties that supported the reform and a large part of the Greek society argued that the previous legislation was out of date, inadequate to deal with modern migration challenges and did not fit to a modern European country and an EU member state. The existence of European influences, in terms of references to what other EU member states do, the

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[96] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

[97] Law 3838/2010, *Amendment to the Citizenship and Naturalization Law* (ΦΕΚ Α' 2403/2010, Τροποποιήσεις του Κώδικα Ελληνικής Ιθαγένειας), 24 March 2010

[98] Gropas R. & Triandafyllidou A., *Migrants and political life in Greece: between political patronage and the search for inclusion*, South European Society and Politics 17, no. 1, 2012, p. 45-63

European obligation of protecting human rights and the need to show that Greece is a modern state, characterized by good governance and efficiency led to the political shift in migration policy and the adoption of the Citizenship Law Reform. The feeling of "being European" and "belonging to Europe" was presented as an integral part of promoting equality, ensuring access to the welfare state and fulfilling the country's obligations towards the EU[99].

3.2.2. Asylum Law Reform (2011)

The Asylum Law Reform (law 3907/2011) was adopted by the Greek Parliament in January 2011 and included the establishment of the Asylum Agency and the Agency for First Reception. The most important change that this reform introduces is the transfer of responsibility for examining asylum applications from the Greek Police to the newly established agencies. Apart from that, the new law sets new standards regarding the first reception of irregular migrants, makes a distinction between irregular migrants and asylum seekers and facilitates the process of asylum applications[100].

The Asylum Agency is responsible for assessing the asylum applications, is autonomous and quite decentralized[101]. The Reception Centers are located in areas with notable migration flows. These centers are responsible for receiving migrants when they arrive, distinct them from asylum seekers and refer the latter to the local Asylum Agency. The local Agencies receive the application, they process it, they conduct interviews and issue their decisions within 30 days[102].

This law transfers EU legislation into the national legislation and improves the capabilities of Greece to manage migration flows. Two reasons lie behind the adoption of this law from the Greek Parliament. The first is related to extreme pressures from the European Commission, the European Court of Human Rights and other EU member states towards Greece for respecting its obligations in this policy

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[99] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

[100] Law 3907/2011, *Establishment of Asylum Agency and Agency of First Reception* (ΦΕΚ Α' 2601/2011, Ίδρυση Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου, Ίδρυση Υπηρεσίας Πρώτης Υποδοχής), 26 January 2011

[101] Asylum Agency website, http://asylo.gov.gr/, (last accessed:30/09/2015)

[102] First Reception Agency website, http://www.firstreception.gov.gr/content.php?id=1, (last accessed:30/09/2015)

field[103]. The second is related with the fact that Greece has been receiving harsh criticism regarding its failed asylum system[104]. Greece was under the microscope, because it continuously failed to implement the Dublin Regulation, the directives regarding the effective protection of asylum seekers, and was condemned by the European Court of Justice. Greece lacked the requirements to substantially examine asylum applications and asylum seekers were put in detention[105].

The Asylum Law Reform came to cover this gaps but it also divided the Parliament. Everyone understood the need for the Asylum System to be modernized and to integrate the related European legislation but they also understood that the integration of European legislation was loading Greece with an unfair burden[106].

The Citizenship Law Reform was a result of a soft Europeanization influence, as the European directives did not impact the changing shift of migration policy, but it rather had an impact on feeling of 'being European'. In contrast, the Asylum Law Reform is was directly influenced by European legislation and the need of Greece to transfer the European legislation into the national one[107].

3.2.3. De-Europeanization on Greek migration policy

The year 2012 was a tipping point that shifted the Europeanized spirit, which was built during the two previous years. The change was caused because of the deepening economic crisis, the new political balances in the parliament and the general socioeconomic crisis.

The new government, elected in 2012, introduced a legislative act amending the Citizenship Law Reform, rotating it back to the previous status and the previous standards required for the naturalization process. At the same time, the Council of

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[103] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

[104] Triandafyllidou A. & Dimitriadi A., *The management of asylum in Europe. The reform of Dublin II and the case of Greece*, Public Law Applications 24, no. I, 2011, p. 22-26

[105] ibid.

[106] ibid.

[107] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425

State[108], found the Citizenship Law Reform unconstitutional for two reasons. First, the Constitution could not recognize only local political rights for participating in local elections, but it had to recognize full political rights. Second, the Constitution refers to the need for a "real bond" between the foreigner and Greece, which could not be found in such low requirement standards[109]. Bearing in mind the Council of State's judgment, the government decided to stop implementing the Citizenship Law Reform[110].

Outside parliament, the government took some restrictive measures that were targeting the identification of illegal immigrants that had already entered the country and tried to prevent more refugees trying to enter. All these measures were critically condemned both from the inside and the outside of the country.

In August 2012, the Ministry of Public Order initiated the mission "Xenios Zeus" (Ξένιος Δίας), with the purpose of arresting migrants that illegally entered Greece, remove them from the biggest cities and force them to leave the country. Senior police officers told the press, that the mission would last until every migrant illegally residing in Greece would abandon the country[111]. More than 100.000 migrants were arrested between 2012 - 2013[112]. The majority of them, before driven out of the country, were gathered in the 'Amygdaleza' detention centre[113].

The 'Amygdaleza' detention centre was created to gather illegal migrants and it worked as a sign that the state is able to deal with the illegal migration problem and

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[108] The Council of State (Συμβούλιο της Επικρατείας) is the Supreme Administrative Court of Greece. Its mandate includes, among others, the possibility to decide on the constitutionality of an adopted Law.
[109] The Council of State decision can be found (in Greek) here http://www.aftodioikisi.gr/ipourgeia/ste-olokliri-i-apofasi-gia-tin-antisintagmatikotita-nomou-ragkousi (last accessed: 3/10/205)
[110] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek Migration Policy in the 2010s: Europeanization Tensions as a Time of Crisis*, Journal of European Integration, 36:4, 2014, p. 409-425
[111] Vithoulkas Dionysis, *Mission 'Xenios Zeus'*, To Vima newspaper, 04/08/2012 (in Greek) http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=469724 (last accessed: 03/10/2015)
[112] Greek Police, Illegal migration data 2013 http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=24727&Itemid=73&lang= (last accessed: 03/10/2015)
[113] Souliotis Giannis, *Mission 'Xenios Zeus'*, Kathimerini newspaper, 05/08/2012 (in Greek), http://www.kathimerini.gr/464890/article/epikairothta/ellada/epixeirhsh-3enios-zeys (last accessed: 03/10/2015)

not "idle and unfortified", to quote the then Minister of Public Order[114]. The use of these centers was criticized and condemned by the Greek Ombudsman, as it was not found suitable to offer satisfying living conditions, it did not have the capacity to host many people and the state used to detain the illegal migrants for a time period longer than appropriate[115].

The last measure that was criticized for leading to a de-Europeanization shift of the Greek migration policy was the Evros fence. The newly elected government of 2012, in order to put a stop to the increasing migration flows that were entering Greece through the Greek - Turkish land borders, decided to built a barb wired fence along the borders. At that time, it was estimated that over 50.000 migrants were illegally entering Greece through Evros[116].

3.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter presented the Common European migration and asylum policy and the Greek migration policy. It showed the way they both evolved in time and how they were led from a Europeanization path to a de-Europeanization trend. The next chapter will explain how the Greek economic crisis and the migration policies are connected and the findings of the research will be presented.

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[114] *Reactions on 'Amygdaleza'*, Capital.gr news website, in Greek
http://www.capital.gr/tax/1484288/antidraseis-gia-tin-amugdaleza (last accessed: 03/10/2015)
[115] *Problems in 'Amygdaleza' according to the Greek Ombudsman*, Kathimerini newspaper,
14/08/2013, in Greek http://www.kathimerini.gr/50085/article/epikairothta/ellada/provlhmata-sthn-amygdaleza-diapistwse-o-synhgoros-toy-polith (last accessed: 03/10/2015)
[116] Nielsen Nikolaj, *Fortress Europe: a Greek wall close up*, euobserver, 21/12/2012,
https://euobserver.com/fortress-eu/118565 (last accessed: 03/10/2015)

CHAPTER 4. THE GREEK ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE IMPLEMENTATON
OF TH MIGRATION POLICIES

The purpose of this thesis paper is to examine the Europeanization and de-Europeanization trends in the national migration policy, during the time of the economic crisis. Before referring to the methodology and before analyzing the findings of the research, it is important to refer to the Greek economic crisis and how is it connected with the migration policy and its shift from Europeanization to de-Europeanization.

4.1. DRAWING A GENERAL FRAMEWORK

Greece was at the centre of Europe's debt crisis, after the U.S. banking crisis in 2008. In 2009 and while financial markets were still trying to recover, Greece announced that it was understating its deficit and budget figures in order to be able to take loans at lower interest rates. The Greek government debt was already bigger than the size of the economy. As a result, financial markets were shut down for Greece, forcing the country to seek for another way of refunding the debt. To avert bankruptcy, in 2010, Greece made an agreement with the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund -the so-called troika- and signed its first bailout program[117]. For the last five years, Greece is continuously negotiating with the troika on bailout programs, debt reforms and economic policies. Loans came with bailout programs and harsh conditions that required, among others, tax hikes and spending cuts.

The first bailout program was announced on the 23rd of April 2010 and the agreement was signed between Greece and the troika. The program included tough fiscal and economic measures, relating both to limiting government spending and increasing

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[117] The New York Times, *Greece's Debt Crisis Explained*, November 9 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/business/international/greece-debt-crisis-euro.html?_r=0, (last access: 02/12/2015)

government revenue. Thus, the government should implement the following measures; replacement of extra wages and pensions with lower subsidies; cutting public servants' allowances; VAT increase; increase in excise tax; recruitment freeze in the public sector; cutting in wages and pensions[118].

The second bailout program was voted and adopted by the Greek Parliament on the 12th of February 2012. This program was considered to be even more harsh than the first one, as it included measures like the following; elimination of tax exemptions; increase of VAT on food, healthcare and public services; 22% reduction of the minimum wage; 15% reduction of the pensions; elimination of labor agreements; tenure repeal in the wider public sector services; dismissal of 15000 civil servants; closing of public organizations[119].

The first bailout agreement, that lasted from 2010 to 2011, was considered to be "soft", with no big impact in the society (in relation with the second program). There were no major cuts in wages and pensions and not many people were dismissed from their jobs (especially in the public sector). There are two reasons to explain this; first, during the first program, the government was legislating the agreed measures but there was no actual implementation of the program[120]. Second, there was no strict conditionality on behalf of the troika. In other words, the Greek government was receiving the loan installments, without the troika evaluating the progress of the program[121].

These things changed with the second, "hard" bailout program, that began in 2012 and lasted since 2015. The troika, now, demanded regular evaluations of the program progress. We can see this change in the Eurogroup statements on Greece, where the word 'conditionality' is present in almost every text[122]. We can also identify this in the

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[118] Memorandum of Understanding, 08/05/2010,
http://drupal.antibaro.gr/sites/default/files/mnhmonio2010-gre.pdf, (last accessed: 02/12/2015)
[119] Memorandum of Understanding, 09/02/2012,
http://drupal.antibaro.gr/sites/default/files/mnhmonio2012-gre.pdf, (last accessed: 02/12/2015)
[120] Stergiou Leonidas, *Why Greece failed, when Portugal and Ireland succeeded?* (in Greek),
Kathimerini newspaper, 08.03.2015
[121] ibid.
[122] For example, in these Eurogroup statements in 2012, "conditionality" is the first thing that is mentioned.
file:///C:/Users/%CE%92%CE%91%CE%A3%CE%99%CE%9B%CE%97%CE%A3/Downloads/137092.pdf,

Greek media, which made the arrival of the troika in Greece as very important news and there were continuous reports on the progress of the evaluations[123].

Thus, the government was forced to implement a harsh bailout program, that may has improved the financial data, but has also caused serious damage to the socio-economic structures. Minimum wage and pensions have reduced by 20% in 5 years, unemployment rates have reached 20% and youth unemployment has increased to 50%[124].

It is time now, to put the Greek migration policies in the frame and connect them with the economic crisis. As it was described in the previous chapter, there are two different periods of migration policies in Greece; the one was influenced by Europeanization and the other was characterized by a de-Europeanization shift.

During the first period (2010-2011) there are two very important legislative initiatives on behalf of the government (the Citizenship Law Reform, and the Asylum Law Reform) that changed the Greek migration policy. They were initiatives that modernized the migration policy, harmonized the process of granting asylum in accordance with the CEAS, integrated EU directives and regulations and created a more general feeling of belonging to Europe. In the same period, Greece is in the beginning of the economic crisis and the government is trying to implement a "soft" bailout program, as described above.

During the second period (2012-2015) there is a change in the governmental policy regarding migration and asylum. The Citizenship Law Reform was repealed and the government adopted individual measures in order to restrict and limit the entrance of migrants and refugees to Greece. It is also the period of the second bailout program,

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file:///C:/Users/%CE%92%CE%91%CE%A3%CE%99%CE%9B%CE%97%CE%A3/Downloads/133857.pdf, (last accessed: 02/12/2015)

[123] Characteristic examples: *What is on the troika evaluation - read the full report*, To Vima newspaper, 25/04/2014, http://www.tovima.gr/finance/article/?aid=589506, (last accessed: 02/12/2015), *The evaluation has been completed - the installment will be submitted soon*, Eleftherotipia newspaper, 13/04/2013, http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=357658, (last accessed: 02/12/2015), *The positive evaluation is the only acceptable outcome*, Kathimerini newspaper, 14/03/2013, http://www.kathimerini.gr/483173/article/oikonomia/ellhnikh-oikonomia/monodromos-gia-th-xwra-h-8etikh-a3iologhsh-apo-troika, (last accessed: 02/12/2015)

[124] OECD stat. https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=AV_AN_WAGE, (last accessed: 02/12/2015)

which is more harsh than the first, causes social inequalities and political instability. Table 1 shows the connection between the economic crisis and the Greek migration policy.

| 2010-2011	1st bailout program ("soft" program): No major cuts, small unemployment increase, no conditionality, political stability	Europeanization on migration policy: Citizenship Law Reform, Asylum Law Reform
2012-2015	2nd bailout program ("hard" program): Major cuts, big unemployment increase, strict conditionality, social instability, political instability	De-Europeanization on migration policy: Repeal Citizenship Law Reform, Border fence, Detention centers

Table 1. Economic crisis and the migration policy.

Upon this, a first assumption can be drawn, than can also be related with Triandafyllidou's argument on de-Europeanization. As the crisis was developing, a lot of pressure was put in Greece to comply with EU instructions on finance and economic policies, which led to the inverted trend of de-Europeanization in other domains, notably in migration policy[125].

Apart from connecting the economic crisis with the implementation of the migration and asylum policies, it is important to present the refugee crisis in Greece, so as to understand the magnitude of the problem.

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[125] Triandafyllidou Anna, Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of crisis, Journal of European Integration, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2014, p. 410

In 2015, thousands of migrants and refugees, trying to flee from war zones, entered the EU through the Mediterranean countries. Map 1 shows the entrance points and the magnitude of the migratory flows. By the end of 2015, all Mediterranean countries received almost 1 million refugees and migrants. The vast majority of them, entered the EU through Greece.
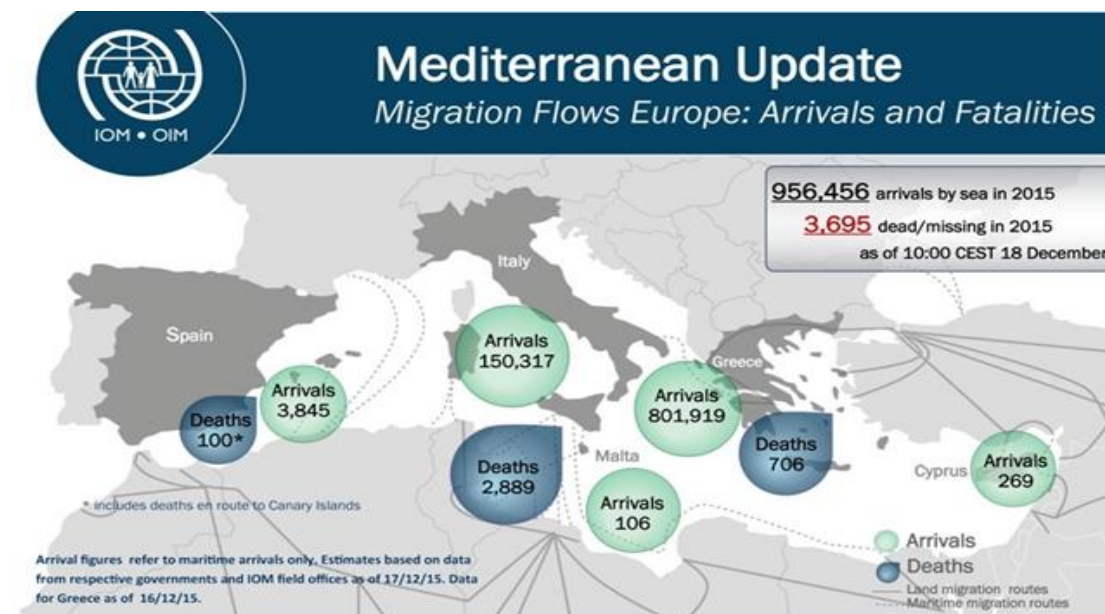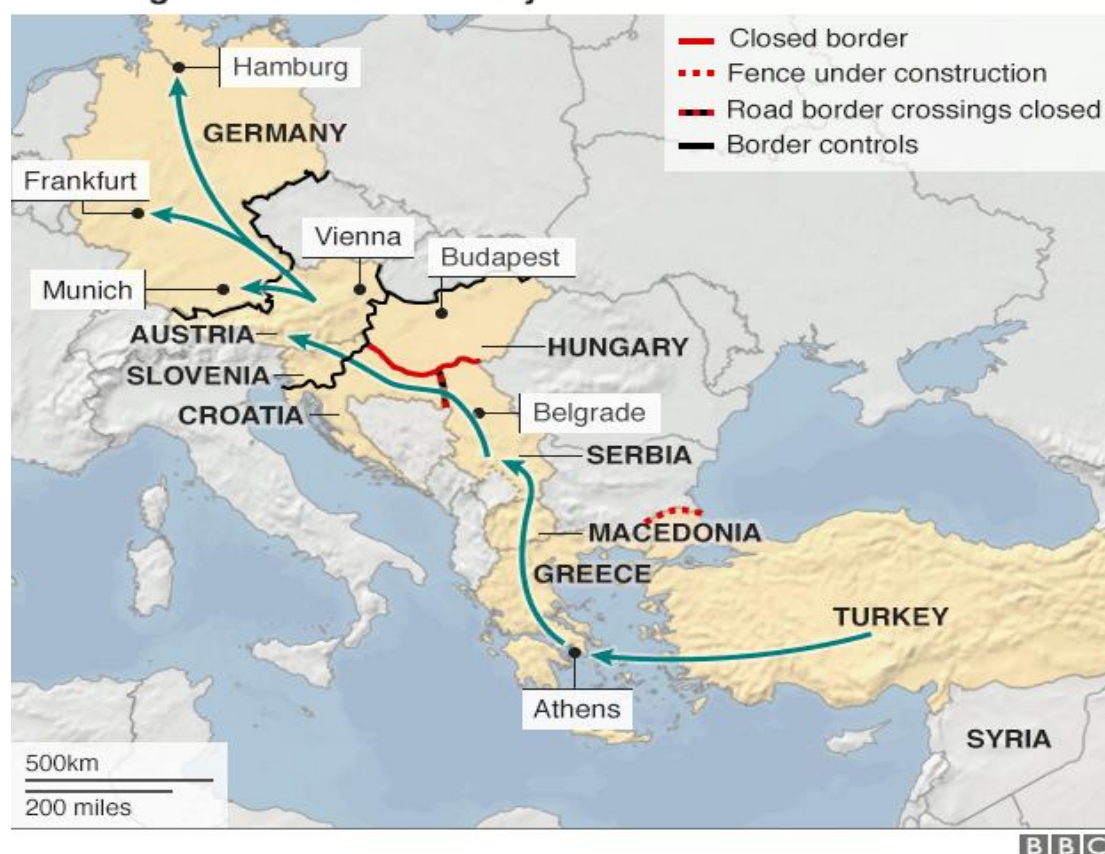

Map 1. Migration flows in Europe (source: IOM)

UNHCR reports of December 2015, indicate that the main entrance points of more than 750.000 refugees and migrants were the eastern Greek islands of Samos, Lesvos and Chios, the islands with the bold colors in Map 2.

Map 2. Entrance points (source:UNHCR)

The majority of the refugees entering the Greek borders do not apply for asylum in Greece. Instead, they try to move north in order to pass the borders and reach the EU countries of the north. Map 3, designed by the BBC, shows the main route used by the refugees. From the Greek islands they transfer to Athens and then they move towards the borders of Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Through F.Y.R.O.M. they pass into Serbia and then into the EU. Refugees enter Hungary and Croatia, to move into Slovenia and Austria and then reach their final destination, Germany or move north to Denmark and Sweden where they apply for asylum. Map 3, also, shows the evolution of de-Europeanization, by indicating the points where the borders are closed or fences are constructed, in order to prevent refugees and migrants from entering the countries, in violation of EU conventions and agreements.

Map 3. Main migrant route (source: BBC)

The 2015 refugee crisis started a big debate regarding the burden-sharing process, i.e. the number of refugees each EU member state should host, along with the relative costs. As we have discussed in the previous chapter, many EU countries raised

concerns on hosting and accepting refugees, refusing to or lifting barriers for participating in the EU relocation program of September 22, 2015. EU ministers approved a plan to relocate 120.000 refugees from Greece and Italy to other EU member states according to their capacities[126]. The program is in motion, but not all member states have fulfilled their commitments. Table 2 shows which EU member states have already exceeded the proposed quota and which have not.
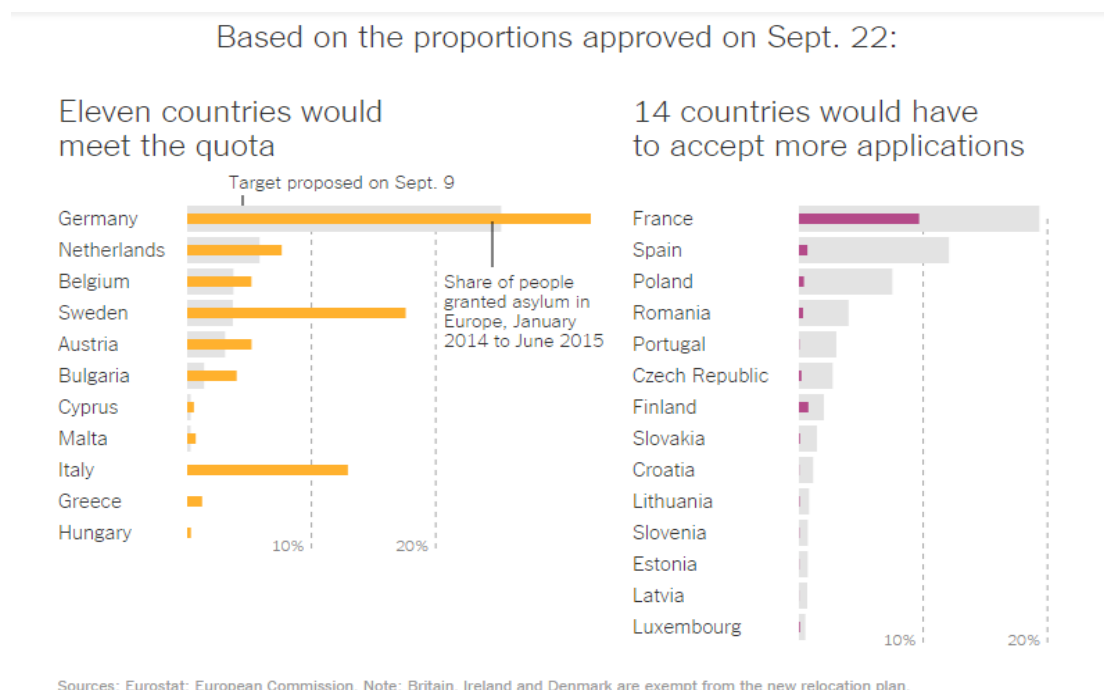

Table 2. List of countries that have met the quota and countries that have to accept more applications (sources: Eurostat, European Commission, NY Times)

The plan is not comprehensive and it was not approved with a consensus. As Mr. Jean Asselborn, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, said "*we would have preferred to have adoption by consensus, but we did not manage to achieve that*"[127]. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia rejected the relocation plan to redistribute 120.000 asylum seekers from first reception states like Greece and Italy to other EU member states. After Germany's pressure the plan was subjected to a qualified majority vote, overriding the disagreements of these four countries. The dispute, though, is still ongoing as Robert Fico, the Prime Minister of Slovakia, decided to

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[126] Aisch Gregor & Almukhtar Sarah, *Seeking a fair distribution of migrants in Europe*, The New York Times, Sept. 22 2015
[127] Aisch Gregor & Almukhtar Sarah, *Seeking a fair distribution of migrants in Europe*, The New York Times, Sept. 22 2015

take the plan to the court[128]. These events explain the differentiations between EU member states, in implementing the relocation plan. Eleven countries have already met the quota proposed by the September relocation plan. Among them are Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium. Fourteen countries, among them the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Poland and France, have to accept more applications in order to meet the proposed quota[129].

Differentiations among EU member states can also be found beyond the relocation plan, in the total number of asylum application each member state receives. Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel, decided to suspend the migration and asylum policies and allow thousands of refugees to enter Germany. Only in September 2015, more than 200.000 refugees were allowed entrance to Germany[130].

According to recent Eurostat data (December 2015[131]) more than 400.000 refugees applied for asylum in Germany and more than 100.000 applied for asylum in Hungary and Sweden[132]. There are also countries, that have received less than 10.000 applications. For example, the Czech Republic received 1.000 asylum applications, Greece received 8.645 and Croatia 140[133]. Map 4 shows the number of asylum claims in EU countries.

[128] Charlemagne, *Point taken, Mr Orban*, The Economist, September 26th 2015, p.27

[129] Aisch Gregor & Almukhtar Sarah, *Seeking a fair distribution of migrants in Europe*, The New York Times, Sept. 22 2015

[130] *Germany's refugee crisis: Merkel at her limit*, The Economist, October 10th, 2015, p. 29

[131] Asylum quarterly report, eurostat http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report#Data_sources_and_availability (last accessed: 09/01/2016)

[132] Migrant crisis: Migration to Europe explained in graphics, 22 December 2015, BBC, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911 (last accessed: 09/01/2016)

[133] Asylum quarterly report, eurostat http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report#Data_sources_and_availability (last accessed: 09/01/2016)
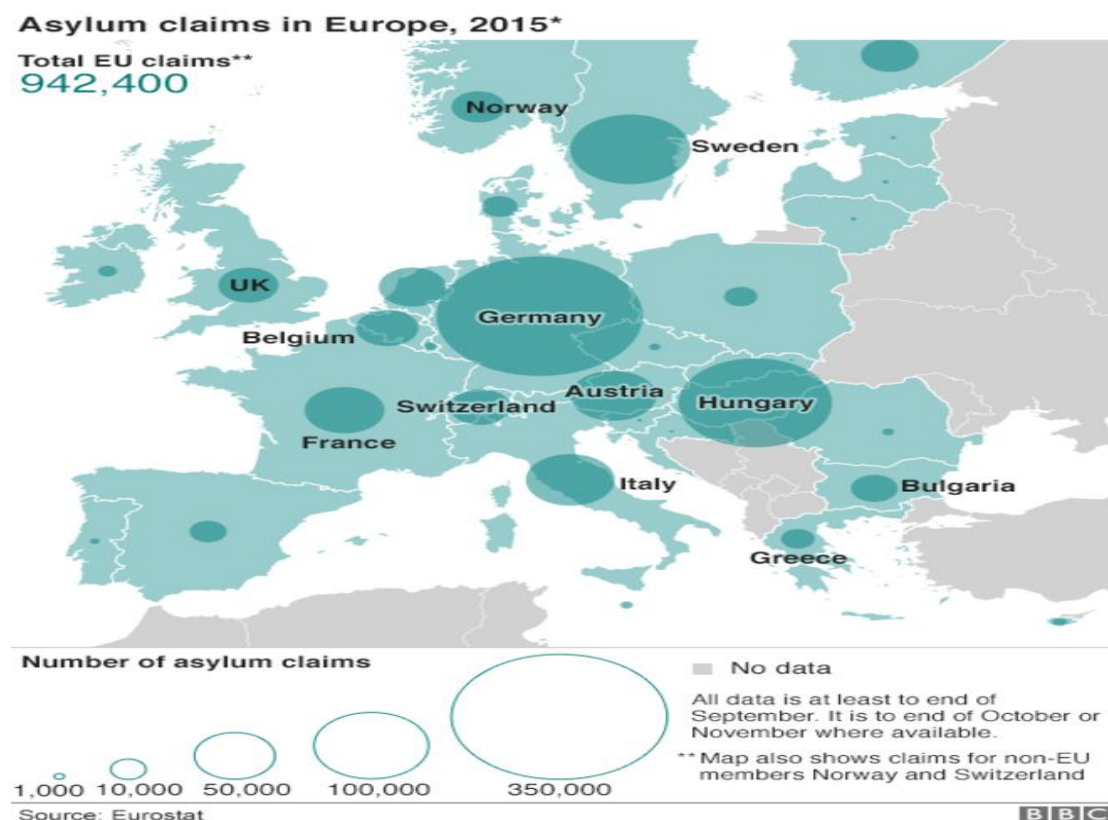
Map 4. Asylum claims (source BBC, eurostat)

4.2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research question of this thesis paper is: "To what extent has the economic crisis affected the effectiveness of the Common European Asylum System and related national polices in Greece during 2010-2015?". In order to answer this question I conducted a qualitative research, based on personal interviews with officials in Athens, Greece. In order to get a more comprehensive view of the issue and receive answers from different perspectives and different ways of thinking, I approached agencies and offices from various fields. I approached Greek state agencies, International Organizations, EU institutions, NGOs and Members of the Greek Parliament, representing the Greek Islands of Lesvos and Chios, which faced the biggest migratory flows during the 2015 summer.

I received permission to conduct interviews with four agencies. Two of them represent the Greek state; the Greek Asylum Agency and the Hellenic Coastguard. One represents the EU institutions; the offices of the European Parliament in Athens.

The last represents civil society; "PRAKSIS" NGO. Before giving further details for the interviews, it is important to mention that I was denied access from the members of the Greek Parliament and I received a negative or no answer from the UNHCR offices in Athens and the Greek Agency of First Reception. These could be considered as limitations for the research. For some future research on the same topic, it is crucial to include the view and the perspective of the Greek Agency of First Reception, because this is the agency that is dealing with the migrants and the asylum seekers at the very first instance, when they enter the country.

The interviews were conducted in Athens between 11 and 18 of November 2015. All interviews were conducted in a very friendly and cooperative spirit and it was clear from the beginning that the interviewees were willing to provide me with their expertise and knowledge on the field.

The first interview took place on the 11th of November in the offices of the "PRAKSIS" NGO, with Mrs. Dina Vardaramatou, Programmes Coordinator of the NGO. "PRAKSIS" NGO's main goal is the design and implementation of humanitarian programs and the elimination of social and economic exclusion of vulnerable social groups, including refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, this interview offered me a more humanitarian perspective, relating the economic crisis in Greece (and all its aspects) with the application of the integrated European directives and the adopted national policies.

The second interview took place on the 13th of November, in the offices of the Greek Asylum Agency, with Mrs. Eleni Petraki, Department of Public Relations and Press. Mrs. Petraki described to me the full details of the process of granting asylum and how it evolved through a Europeanization process. I was also provided with information relating the economic crisis with the capabilities of the state to manage migration flows and implement related policies.

The third interview took place on the 17th of November in the Offices of the European Parliament in Athens, with Mr. Leonidas Antonakopoulos, the Head of the Office. Mr. Antonakopoulos described a more Europeanized approach of the connection between the economic crisis and the application of migration policies.

 The fourth interview took place on the 18th of November in the Headquarters of the Hellenic Coastguard in Piraeus, with Sublieutenant Galanopoulou Evangelia, Department of Operational Cooperation. This Department is responsible for the cooperation with FRONTEX, and the mission "POSEIDON - SEA BORDERS"[134]. The interview was focused on the cooperation with FRONTEX and whether there is a Europeanized approach to deal with the issues through the years of the crisis.

In January 2016 I also conducted two anonymous interviews. The first was with mr. G.C., a Hellenic Coast Guard Officer who has served in the islands of Farmakonisi and Agathonisi in 2008-2009 and now serves in Piraeus port. His interview provides the research with useful information regarding the effects of the economic crisis in the implementation of the examined policies and the actual situation on the ground. The second was with M.T., an officer of the Asylum Agency in the island of Rhodes. His interview provides the research with useful insights on the actual situation on the ground. Due to their official positions, G.C. and M.T. wish to remain anonymous. The names of the interviewees are known to the thesis supervisor.

To support the claims that derive from the interviews I also used statements of governing officials from different EU member states, as well as reports from and interviews found in international press.

The next part of this chapter, presents the findings of the research. The findings are based on the conducted interviews and they try to explain if and how the Greek economic crisis is related with the application of European and national migration policies and whether the economic crisis is leading to a de-Europeanization trend.

4.3. FINDINGS

Two categories of results derive from the conducted research. The first concerns the impact of the economic crisis on the application of the European and national

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[134] The mission aims to implement operational activities at the external sea borders of the Eastern Mediterranean region in order to control irregular migration flows.

migration policies. The second concerns the Europeanization or the de-Europeanization on the Greek migration policy as a result of the economic crisis.

1. The consequences of the economic crisis.

All four agencies were asked the same concluding question; "How has the economic crisis affected the application of the migration policy?". This question was answered in three different ways, which shows that the issue is perceived in a different way when it comes to a state agency, a EU institution and an NGO. These different perspectives will be commented separately as a national perspective, a European perspective and a civil society perspective.

a. The national perspective

Both the Greek Asylum Agency and the Hellenic Coastguard recognized that there are some negative consequences of the economic crisis in the application of the migration policy, at a functional and a funding level.

At a functional level the crisis has affected the function of the agencies in regards to the staff numbers. There is a need for more personnel, that would provide more help for the agencies to function in a more adequate way[135]. Apart from that, the existing staff is working under fixed-term contracts (due to the bailout programs). When the contract comes to an end, there is a period when the job position remains empty until the contract is renewed or a new contract is signed. That practice causes trouble for the agencies and raises difficulties in the application of the policies[136].

At a funding level things differ between agencies. The Hellenic Coastguard does not face an immediate funding problem for two reasons. First, the mission "POSEIDON - SEA BORDER" is funded by FRONTEX[137] and second, the economic crisis and the bailout programs cannot have a direct impact on agencies related with interior or national security, especially in terms of funding. On the other hand, the Greek Asylum Agency has handled things a little different. During the first two years of the Agency's

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[135] Interview with the Hellenic Coastguard
[136] Interview with the Greek Asylum Agency
[137] Interview with the Hellenic Coastguard

existence, its funding was not affected because the Agency was under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Order, so there was state funding provided for reasons of internal security. Since 2013, the Agency is under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior and thus, security reasons cannot justify anymore full state funding. Today, the Agency is funded 50% from the state budget and 50% from European action plans and the EEA countries[138].

The impact of the economic crisis is devastating for the operational capabilities of the Coast Guard according to G.C.. During the economic crisis the manpower of the Coast Guard is limited because of the latest retirement period and the zero-recruitment policy. This lack of personnel is covered by crews from other EU member states, while financially the Agency is supported with EU funds[139].

So, from a national perspective, the crisis has negatively affected the application of the migration policies in terms of functioning and funding. If there was no economic crisis, we can assume that the agencies, namely the Greek Asylum Agency and the Hellenic Coastguard, could implement the related policies more easily or in a more adequate way.

b. The European perspective

The Head of the Office of the European Parliament in Athens, gave a different perspective on the topic. Mr. Antonakopoulos at first recognised the fact that the crisis may have caused some organization troubles in the state and the related agencies. But he also argued that there should be no deeper correlation at this point between the economic crisis in Greece and the refugee crisis in general, as well as the implementation of the migration policies especially. His argumentation was based on two reasons. The first reason is related to the fact that Greece, as a transit country, is actually funded by the EU in order to implement the necessary policies and to facilitate the procedures of admission, identification, asylum application and relocation of the refugees.

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[138] Interview with the Greek Asylum Agency
[139] Interview with G.C., Hellenic Coast Guard Officer, who wishes to remain anonymous.

The second reason lies in the fact that Greece, at this moment, is a transit country. That means, the refugees and the migrants do not want to stay in Greece, but they want to reach western European countries. So, there might be an organizational cost but as long as Greece is a transit country, we cannot assume that there is any direct impact of the financial crisis. He also added, that it is in the interest of Greece to remain a transit country. If Greece transforms into a country where refugees will be staying, then the connection with the economic crisis will be clear and the results will be devastating, because Greece lacks both the economy and the structures to host refugees on a more permanent basis[140].

c. The Civil Society perspective

The "PRAKSIS" NGO had a different understanding on how the economic crisis has an impact on the refugee crisis and the implementation of the policies. Of course, they do agree that there is an impact regarding the organizational level of the state, but Mrs. Vardaramatou raised a more humanitarian perspective. She argued, that Greece has always been receiving migratory flows. Even before the crisis, there were populations that entered Greece, and still then the migrants were not given the adequate treatment and the policies were not applied appropriately. The economic crisis caused many things in the Greek society; intensified the erosion of the Greek welfare state; created poverty and unemployment which in turn created widespread xenophobia; allowed the development of radical right wing political parties and caused political instability. All these developments gave a further excuse for previous governments not to seriously tackle the problem and to not care about any policy implementation. Lastly, according to the "PRAKSIS" NGO, despite the fact that the current government has developed a more friendly approach towards the refugees, it seems they are not able to implement the policies appropriately due to the bailout programs and probable constraints on behalf of the troika[141].

All three perspectives share a common ground regarding an explicit impact of the economic crisis in the application of the migration policies. There is a functional cost which has been intensified by the crisis. If this cost was missing or if the crisis was

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[140] Interview with the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament - Athens

[141] Interview with the "PRAKSIS" NGO

missing, the state and the related agencies would have the opportunity to implement CEAS and the national migration policy in a better or a more adequate or a more appropriate way. Apart from that, there is a disagreement on whether the current status of Greece as a transit country, or the effect of the economic crisis on the society and the politics, can have an impact on the migration policies and the general refugee crisis.

2. Europeanization and de-Europeanization trends

Research also shows some different aspects of Europeanization and de-Europeanization in migration policies. More specifically, research identifies 3 levels of de-Europeanization: At the top level, where government leaders make decisions, there is formal de-Europeanization; at the middle level, where state agencies engage, there is no de-Europeanization; and at the low level, where policies should be put in practice there is strong de-Europeanization.

Beginning with the top level or formal de-Europeanization, lack of solidarity is the main characteristic. The existence of the solidarity gap, especially on behalf of the EU member states, shows a de-Europeanization shift on the migration policies. Mr. Antonakopoulos, the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament in Athens, makes an important distinction on solidarity. He argues, that despite the fact that EU institutions express their solidarity through action plans and their decisions to provide assistance to certain member states, there is a lack of solidarity on behalf of some member states. There are member states that lack the political will to implement CEAS. Asylum and migration policy is still considered to be a domestic matter for the member states and, thus, they still resist in implementing common decisions[142].

This applies mostly for the East European member states, that reject the possibility of opening their borders and receiving migrants and refugees. Viktor Orban, the Hungarian Prime Minister, accused the "*misguided migration policy*" of the EU and considers the imposed border controls and the fence building to be measures protecting the EU from mass migration and big Muslim influx[143]. Poland, the Czech

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[142] ibid.

[143] Traynor Ian, *Migration crisis: Hungary PM says Europe in grip of mad*ness, The Guardian, 3 September 2015

Republic and Slovakia sided with Hungary on that issue and tried to reject the relocation plan proposed by Germany, France and Italy[144]. The new Polish government, formed in November 2015, refused to receive 4.500 refugees as part of the relocation plan. Beata Szydlo, the new Prime Minister stated that Poland was no ready to accept the quota system[145].

On the other hand there are member states, such as Germany and France, that insist on finding a common response to the refugee crisis and help the countries facing the biggest influxes[146]. Jean-Claude Junker, on behalf of the European Commission, made a plea for the member states to implement the common asylum and migration policies and further review the Dublin system, in order to tackle the refugee crisis[147].

Apart from the relocation plan, Germany and France in cooperation with the European Commission proposed the transformation of FRONTEX into a new European border and coast guard with a wider mandate to control the European borders and intervene in a country when needed, even without the approval of the said country. But some member states are not very pleased with that idea. Poland, through its foreign minister, described the proposed border and coast guard as an "*undemocratic structure*", while Greece insisted the ultimate authority should remain in the member states' government[148].

The fact that member states implement CEAS differently every day, is being also raised by Mrs. Vardaramatou, on behalf of "PRAKSIS" NGO. She mentions that "*one day they [the member states] are in favor of the Dublin regulation, the other day they suspend it*" and as a result we see member states adopting individual measures. "*There is a different approach from different countries: Greece is doing everything, while*

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[144] Editorial, *The Guardian view on Hungary and the refugee crisis: Orban the awful*, The Guardian, 6 September 2015

[145] Newton Jennifer, *Poland's new PM says the country will not accept an EU quota of 4,500 refugees in the wake of the Paris terror attacks*, Daily Mail online, 25 November 2015

[146] *Merkel, Hollande urge unified EU response to refugee crisis*, euractiv.com, 25 August 2015, http://www.euractiv.com/sections/global-europe/merkel-hollande-urge-unified-eu-response-refugee-crisis-317034 (last accessed: 20/01/2016)

[147] Marszal Andrew, Foster Peter and Holehouse Matthew, *Junker calls for 'compulsory' redistribution of 160,000 migrants*, The Telegraph, 09 September 2015

[148] *European borders: A real border guard at last*, The Economist, 19 December 2015, p. 32-33

some decide to close their borders and refuse to participate in the relocation program", she adds[149].

The Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, continuously expressed the view that Greece as a transit country has done everything within its capabilities, and called more EU member states, especially those objecting to the redistribution process, to fulfill their commitments and proceed with the relocation plan[150]. He has also called, during a parliament speech, for the European leadership to take decisive steps for resolving the crisis[151].

Once a country adopts individual measures, more countries follow, like a domino effect. Especially in the last two years, many EU member states (Greece among them) put aside CEAS and adopted measures, unrelated with the implementation of the common policies. As a result, CEAS seems to fall apart and seems to be outdated and not appropriately structured to face the current problems[152].

To continue with the second level or no de-Europeanization, it seems that the Greek agencies have largely harmonized their actions with CEAS. To quote Mrs. Petraki, on behalf of the Greek Asylum Agency; "*the majority of the directives and regulations has been integrated*"[153], but the implementation on the ground seems to be difficult as the magnitude of the refugee flows and the population movement are the most massive since the end of the second World War and Greece cannot deal with that flows without help[154]. Because of this, the Greek Asylum Agency is now following a process of granting asylum, which applies to the standard EU procedure, that every EU member state follows[155]. The Europeanization extends beyond the legislative acts, as there is also a standard, Europeanized training process for the employees of the

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[149] Interview with "PRAKSIS" NGO

[150] Statement of the Prime Minister of Greece, Alexis Tsipras, from Chios island, 16/12/2015, http://www.primeminister.gov.gr/2015/12/16/14444 (last accessed: 19/01/2016)

[151] *PM Tsipras: "The Aegean is washing up European culture on our shores"*, To Vima newspaper, 20 January 2015, http://www.tovima.gr/en/article/?aid=749875 (last accessed: 20/01/2016)

[152] Interview with the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament - Athens

[153] Interview with the Greek Asylum Agency

[154] Statement of the Prime Minister of Greece, Alexis Tsipras, during the informal EU Summit on the refugee crisis from Malta, 13/11/2015, http://www.primeminister.gov.gr/2015/11/13/14289 (last accessed: 19/01/2016)

[155] Interview with the Greek Asylum Agency

asylum granting agencies, all over the EU. This process is being facilitated by EASO[156].

We can find these Europeanization trends in other cases as well. There is extended cooperation between national and supranational agencies and institutions in many fields. Apart from the cooperation between the Asylum Agency and EASO, there is the cooperation between the Hellenic Coastguard and FRONTEX. Their cooperation spreads beyond the common mission, as there is common training among the personnel and continuous knowledge and expertise exchange[157]. Especially the cooperation with FRONTEX helps EU member states to better understand the extent of the refugee crisis and, thus, the problem becomes Europeanized. As Sublieutenant Galanopoulou mentioned, "*FRONTEX also works as an information forum. The fact that the mission is here, helps member states to realize the situation*"[158].

Also, during the last two years, while the economic crisis is deepening and the refugee crisis is getting bigger, there is a sign of solidarity towards Greece, that can be interpreted as a sign of burden-sharing and Europeanization. The FRONTEX mission is keep running for almost 7 years with the participation of all member states[159], and the European Commission decided to suspend the Greek financial participation in the NSRF programs, an important relief for the Greek budget[160].

Finally, at the low level of implementation the research finds strong de-Europeanization. The low level refers to the actual and practical implementation of the policies on the ground. Research shows that the agencies and services active on the ground, on the Greek islands, have the will to enforce and implement the related migration and asylum policies. However, that seems impossible to happen due to the magnitude of the refugee crisis and continuously rising number of the refugees arriving through the sea.

The Greek Asylum Agency uses all available means on the ground to implement the policies, but the magnitude of the migratory flows are unprecedented and "*no policy*

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[156] ibid.

[157] Interview with G.C., Hellenic Coast Guard Officer, who wishes to remain anonymous

[158] Interview with the Hellenic Coastguard

[159] ibid.

[160] Interview with the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament - Athens

could withstand such a situation"[161]. No matter the extent of the capabilities and the willingness of the agencies to implement the related EU and national policies, there are not many things that can be done[162]. On behalf of the Coast Guard, G.C. stated that the magnitude of the refugee flows cannot be managed by the Agency. "*It is possible for 3-4 boats to enter our territorial sea at the same time*", which makes impossible for the Coast Guard to guarantee the safety of the people and at the same time implement the related policies sufficiently. Today there is a 24 hour influx of 1.500-2.000 people daily[163].

M.T., working for the Rhodes island Asylum Agency describes the state capacities on the ground as insufficient. Although the refugee and migratory flows are significantly smaller there, there is the need for feeding, clothing and hosting those people. These needs are exclusively covered by individual initiatives "*as the state capacities are limited*". The state agencies on the ground are outnumbered and as a result there can be no actual implementation of the migration and asylum policies. There is a daily need for more than 200 people to apply for asylum, but the state incapacity cannot cope with these numbers[164].

International press has captured that picture with continuous reports on the Greek islands, first recipients of the migratory flows. On the ground, most of the job is done by a group of enthusiastic but inexperienced volunteers, as facilities and structures are inadequate[165]. The poor functioning of the state apparatus has changed the image of the islands receiving the refugee flows. Throughout the summer, the municipal authorities of Lesvos island was officially requesting for governmental support. The governmental planning was slowly implemented and is to be completed at the end of January 2016[166]. The inability of the Greek state to deal with the refugee crisis, is also visible in Athens, where the municipality accuses the government of ignoring the need to protect, offer housing and food to the refugees that have moved to the capital

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[161] Interview with the Greek Asylum Agency
[162] Interview with "PRAKSIS" NGO
[163] Interview with G.C., Hellenic Coast Guard Officer, who wishes to remain anonymous
[164] Interview with M.T., Officer in the Asylum Agency in the island of Rhodes, who wishes to remain anonymous
[165] *Refugees in Winter: Icy Reception*, The Economist, November 28th 2015, p. 27
[166] Papadopoulos Giannis, *Reconstruction efforts in Lesvos island*, Kathimerini newspaper (in Greek), 19/01/2016

city from the islands[167]. The Greek authorities are ill-equipped and under-funded to manage the massive flows passing through the country[168].

This inability is also visible in statements of the Greek government. The Prime Minister has repeatedly referred to the massive magnitude of the refugee flows, that makes the authorities unable to implement the policies[169]. During a common visit in the island of Lesvos with the President of the European Parliament, Mr. Martin Schultz, PM Tsipras referred to the daily efforts of the citizens and the municipal authorities to help the refugees and stated that "*this is a daily battle that exceeds our capacities and everyone should be able to understand that*"[170].

The Deputy Minister on Migration Policies, Mr. Giannis Mouzalas, also speaks of the difficulties Greece is facing. During an interview in Deutsche Welle, the Minister said that "*Greece has not fulfilled every commitment as limited capabilities have delayed, for example, the creation of refugee hotspots in the Greek islands. But this should be perceived as a motive for more help. We have already asked FRONTEX to send more personnel and coastguard ships and for more electronic fingerprint machines, but all of our requests are being hold up. Only Germany has offered some help, but still more is neede*d"[171]. This plea for help is also seen in the fact that mr. Mouzalas, has officially asked from the EU to provide the Greek islands with more ambulances, mini buses, tents, sleeping bags, first aid kits and many other things which are in a lack and are essential for the protection of the refugees on the ground[172].

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[167] Elafros Giannis, *In the mercy... of the state*, Kathimerini newspaper (in Greek), 31/12/2015
[168] Zafiropoulos Pavlos, *Refugee crisis grows in Greece as EU looks on*, Deutsche Welle, 25 December 2015, http://www.dw.com/en/refugee-crisis-grows-in-greece-as-eu-looks-on/a-18936542 (last accessed: 20/01/2016)
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4.4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the findings of the research are presented and an attempt is made to answer the research question and the hypothesis of the thesis paper. The research question is: To what extent has the economic crisis affected the effectiveness of the Common European Asylum System and related national polices in Greece during 2010-2015?" and the hypothesis is that the economic crisis has a negative impact that leads to a de-Europeanization trend.

In theory, it seems that Triandafyllidou's argument is proven to be correct. The economic crisis and the bailout conditions (especially of the second program) that were enforced by the troika have led the Greek state to adopt individual measures in order to tackle the refugee crisis and raise constraints for refugees and migrants to enter Greece[173].

In practice, generally everyone agrees that the economic crisis has caused some problems in the state agencies, regarding their functioning in terms of funding and personnel. We can assume, that if there was no economic crisis, the state agencies could probably implement the related policies in a more appropriate way.

But, also, the conducted interviews showed a distinction between levels of politics. At the top level, where governments and state leaders are engaged, there is a formal de-Europeanization trend. Some member states, including Greece, choose not to implement CEAS and the related policies, they refuse to participate in relocation plans and they adopt individual measures that endanger the existence of European common policies and agreements, like the Dublin regulations and the Schengen agreement.

At the middle level, where EU institutions and state agencies are engaged we can see that there is a more Europeanized spirit. Especially during the years that both the Greek economic crisis and the refugee crisis have been intensified, we can see an extended cooperation between institutions and agencies, in terms of funding, training and expertise exchange.

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[173] Triandafyllidou Anna, Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of crisis, Journal of European Integration, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2014, p. 410

At the low level, where the policies are practically implemented on the ground little, is done. The magnitude of the refugees arriving daily on the Greek islands prevents the agencies from implementing policies.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis paper tried to examine Europeanization and de-Europeanization on the European and the national migration policies, especially in times of crisis. Greece was selected as the case study for two reasons. First, because in the last years, Greece faces a serious economic crisis that has an impact in every policy domain; and second, at the same time Greece lies at the center of a refugee crisis, as it is the country receiving great migratory flows.

The purpose of the paper was to examine whether there is a connection between the economic crisis and the implementation of the migration policies in Greece. So, the research question was formed as follows: "*To what extent has the economic crisis affected the implementation of the Common European Asylum System and related national policies in Greece (2010-2015)?*". The main hypothesis of the paper assumed that the economic crisis has a negative impact in the implementation of the CEAS and the Greek migration policies and, as a result, leads to a de-Europeanization trend.

According to theory, in conditions of normality, an EU member state follows the EU common policies and integrates in its national legislation EU directives and regulations. But if the same country faces a crisis and is forced to implement measures (especially of financial nature), then there is a possibility for it to step away from the Europeanization path and shift towards a de-Europeanization trend, in other policy fields[174].

During the five years of the economic crisis, there are two distinct periods of economic reforms and reforms on migration policies, that seem to coincide. In the 2010-2011period, Greece implements a "soft" bailout program and at the same time proceeds with the reform of the Citizenship Law and the Asylum Law. Both reforms were characterized as a Europeanization process for the Greek migration policies. In the 2012-2015 period, the economic crisis is deepening and Greece is forced to implement a "hard" bailout program, while at the same time we notice the state

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[174] Triandafyllidou Anna, *Greek migration policy in the 2010s: Europeanization tensions at a time of crisis*, Journal of European Integration, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2014, p. 410

leaving aside the former Europeanization period in migration policies. The Citizenship Law Reform is being repealed and the government adopts measures to prevent refugees and migrants to enter the country (fences, border controls, detention centers).

The conducted research and the conducted interviews in four agencies resulted in conclusions that showed there is no simple and generalized answer for the issue. Conclusions are drawn both for the impact of the economic crisis in the implementation of the migration policies and for the assumed de-Europeanization trend that came as a consequence of the economic crisis.

Regarding the impact of the crisis on the implementation of the migration policies, there is a general agreement that the crisis has caused some functional and funding difficulties for the agencies responsible for the implementation of that policies. If there was no crisis, there could be a better or a more adequate implementation of the migration policies. So, in purely economic terms there is an impact of the crisis in the implementation of the examined policies.

But, also, a different outcome results from the research. A different perspective which shows that the economic crisis makes no difference in the implementation of the migration policies for two reasons; First, Greece is considered to be a transit country and not a host country and as a result there is no extra cost for the Greek state. There would be a problem if Greece was transformed into a relocation country for the refugees because Greece lacks both the economy and the structures. Second, even before the crisis, Greece was receiving migratory flows and there was also no adequate implementation of the migration policies. The crisis gave an excuse for Greece, in order to keep not implementing appropriately the related policies.

Regarding the Europeanization and the de-Europeanization of the migration policies, there is a difference in three levels. Top level, where governments and state leaders are engaged, is characterized by a formal de-Europeanization shift. Member states decide not to implement CEAS and the related policies and agreements, they keep violating the Dublin regulations and the Schengen agreement and they adopt individual measures (such as fence building and border closing) in order to prevent refugees and migrants from entering their borders.

Middle level, where EU institutions and state agencies are engaged, is characterized by a no de-Europeanization spirit. State agencies have integrated EU directives and regulations and there is a continuous communication and cooperation between institutions and agencies. The Asylum Agencies apply the same, standard procedure on asylum granting. EASO offers common training for the personnel of the Asylum Agencies of the member states, and there is a continuous knowledge and expertise exchange between FRONTEX and member states participating in its missions.

Low level, where policies are practically implemented on the ground, is characterized by strong de-Europeanization. The agencies have the will to implement the policies, but the actual capabilities are limited due to the big number of refugees arriving daily.

It is not a simple issue to research and the results show that there can be no single, generalized answer or conclusion on whether the economic crisis has negatively affected the implementation of the CEAS and the Greek migration policy and has led to a de-Europeanization trend. Further research is needed.

As the research was in progress, many events were happening simultaneously. In Greece, the economic crisis is being intensified. The Greek government signed a third bailout program, with strict austerity measures further affecting the Greek society, keeping high unemployment rates. The September elections made no difference in the political scenery. Radical right-wing parties kept their place in the parliament, developing an anti-immigration rhetoric, which resulted in extreme xenophobia and racism in the Greek society.

The EU constantly convenes Summits, with the refugee crisis being the main agenda. The member states seem to be divided on how the EU should handle the situation. Some invoke the EU solidarity principle and remind the need for burden-sharing, while others decide not to participate in relocation programs, close their borders and impose strict border controls.

The terrorist attacks in Paris, on November 13 2015, further complicated the situation, as it seems that terrorists took advantage of the inadequate implementation of the migration policies and the asylum processes. Member states are now more reluctant to participate in refugee relocation programs and they question the effectiveness of the

common EU policies and , thus, they proceed with the adoption of individual measures, imposing, among others, stricter border controls. As a result, the Schengen Agreement seems to be suspended creating tremors in the EU architecture.

Can we say, though, that the economic crisis and the refugee crisis are able to lead to a general de-Europeanization of the migration policies and of other policy fields? The Head of the Office of the European Parliament in Athens strongly disagrees with that view. Mr. Antonakopoulos argues, that this is an excessive approach and that the EU should not let these developments undermine the whole idea of Europeanization. Instead, these two crises should be used in order to tackle the social challenges that are rising. Especially regarding the refugees and the migration policies, the inadequate and inappropriate structure of the CEAS should be left aside. It is an opportunity for CEAS to be transformed into a more completed and comprehensive policy, focusing on the integration of the refugees in their new societies[175].

So, to conclude, any future research should take into account these developments, in order for a more comprehensive approach of the issue to be achieved.

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[175] Interview with the Head of the Offices of the European Parliament - Athens

ANNEX

INTERVIEW WITH PRAKSIS NGO, MRS. DINA VARDARAMATOU, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, 11/11/2015, 11:00

1. How is "PRAKSIS" aiding refugees and migrants?

Apart from actions related with moving populations, whether they are refugees, asylum seekers or economic migrants, our philosophy relies on three principles: intervention, prevention, advocacy. All our actions and programs relate with this threefold. Interventions are related with primary healthcare and management of social welfare claims. So, we gather our expertise and many quantitative and qualitative data and we use it for advocacy or to lobby at national and international level. We participate in regular and ad hoc committees of the Greek Parliament, or the European Parliament or the Council of Europe.

2. Is there any state support?

Usually the opposite happens, we support the state. We offer them our expertise, we offer them advice, they come to us for suggestions whereas it should be the other way around. The state should make proposals and suggestions and we should follow. But this is not a criticism. As an NGO, we have a certain flexibility, instant reflexes and we can immediately do some things. The state has to follow certain procedures, so we are the first in line. And due to the fact that we do this for many years we have gathered experience and developed practices. We continuously deal with crisis (not similar to this summers' magnitude), so it is sensible that we know what to do and we offer our knowledge.

Regarding financial support, we don't get funds by the state, but mostly by European programs or European funds (co-funded in a small percentage 0-20% by the state).

3. During the summer you were present both in the Greek Islands and the Greek -FYROM borders. What was the situation there?

And we still are in that places. In smaller islands (where the local governments are more organized) there were not big refugee flows, so the situation was manageable. In Lesvos there was chaos. Everyone working there (NGO volunteers, public servants, police officers) were working 24/7. But the sea was continuously washing up corpses. And when every six minutes, you see a boat with 100 people on it, no matter your preparedness, no matter the

extent of your capabilities, there are not many things you can do. Of course there is a lack of organization. For example, Germany says they cannot manage a specific number of migrants in a year, when at the same time we have to deal we the same number of migrants in a week, on an island.

Our cooperation with the state agencies is very good, we are not opponents in any way. I think that Greece is dealing with the problem very well, mutatis mutandis. To give another example, there were complaints that Leros was not organized enough for that crisis. Leros is a very small island, with very limited capabilities and a very small number of residents. Why should Leros be prepared to (in terms of infrastructures, electricity supply, water supply, food supply) to host 2 or 3 thousands refugees? We must be aware of reality.

4.What is your comment on the EU reaction? Is there EU solidarity?

Well, i believe that the Summits are just meetings. No one wants to deal with the issue and everybody consider it to be Italy's, Greece's and Malta's problem. We celebrated the relocation of 30 refugees to Luxembourg, with a great event where the PM and the President of the European Parliament participated. It should a daily event and it should not be used for politics. One day we are in favor of the 'Dublin', the other day we suspend it, sometimes we consider that FRONTEX will solve the problem, and then some countries close their borders. There is a different approach from different countries: Greece is doing everything, others close the borders and they refuse to participate in the relocation program. Instead, they should participate in the burden-sharing process without a doubt.

5. Do you believe that the economic crisis affected the implementation of the migration policies?

The crisis intensifies the erosion of the Greek welfare state. On the one hand, the numbers are beyond the capabilities and the political willingness of the state and on the other hand, there are some issues which should be dealt differently. In other words, there is a population in Greece, which was keep entering Greece even before the crisis, and even then they did not have the treatment they should. The crisis gave a further excuse to continue the same policy. But even if the government is friendly towards those people (and the current government is) i don't think they can do whatever they want to support them because of the bailout programs, the economic situation and the troika.

INTERVIEW WITH THE GREEK ASYLUM AGENCY, MRS. PETRAKI ELENI, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, 13/11/2015, 14:00

1. The Asylum Agency was created in 2011. What has changed compared to the previous situation?

Before the Asylum Agency was created, the Police was responsible for granting asylum, and the system could be characterized as inadequate. There was no specific service inside the police, but some officers who were dealing with these issues in specific days and hours.

The law 3907/2011 changed everything. The law was adopted in 2011, but due to bureaucratic issues, started operating in 2013.

At the beginning the service was under the authority of the ministry of Public Order. In that way the government could easily fund the agency, using the excuse of public security (the troika could not object to that). Now the agency is under the ministry of the Interior, as happens in the rest of the EU.

The process of granting asylum has also changed and there is specialized training for our personnel and continuous cooperation with UNHCR and EASO. There is a Europeanized way of training.

2. Is this process similar to that of other EU member states?

Yes, there is a standard procedure for all EU member states.

3. Has the Greek migration policy being harmonized with the CEAS?

The majority of the directives and regulations has been integrated. A few more are on the way.

4. According to UNHCR data more than 560.000 refugees entered Greece through the Greek islands. How did you address that pressure?

First of all, i should say that we have offices in Lesvos and Rhodes. In organizational terms we did not face extreme pressure, because from all the people that entered the country, only a few applied for asylum in Greece. Very few wanted to stay here. The biggest pressure was on the Coastguard, the Police and the Agency of First Reception

5. Are the existing (national and European) policies able to manage refugee waves of that magnitude?

The flows we have to deal with now are unprecedented. No policy could withstand such a situation.

For the EU the relocation process that started creates a sense of credibility, and sends a message to the refugees: "be patient, we care for you and you will go where you want. Don't trust the traffickers, we care for you". But the EU is also responsible for Syria and Iraq, they did not predict the flows and now the problem has become European.

6. Do you believe that the economic crisis has affected the implementation of the migration policies?

It is true that due to the crisis there is a lack of personnel. We would like to have more staff, and a big number of our employers are working part time. There is also need for funding our interpretation services. We should say, that we receive funding 50% from the state budget and 50% European action plans.

INTERVIEW WITH THE OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - ATHENS, MR. LEONIDAS ANTONAKOPOULOS (HEAD OF THE OFFICE), 17/11/2015, 11:00

GENERAL COMMENTS

We should not correlate the economic crisis with the refugee crisis. Specifically for Greece, Junker has suspended the participation of Greece in the NSRF programs, among other reasons, because of the big refugee flows.

The country is receiving European funding, because Greece is considered to be a transit country. This is crucial, because in the islands, the residents are friendly towards the refugees, because they know that they won't stay there. Greece should remain a transit country and no transform into a resettlement country. This is a problem for the western Europe.

1. The decision on the relocation of refugees is a sign of EU solidarity? What else should be done in that direction?

Yes, it is a sign of solidarity, it is a sign of strong will on behalf of the EU institutions. It is a burden-sharing effort, started as a Junker and European Parliament initiative.

Beyond that, the institutional framework on the asylum policies is a domestic matter. There are countries still resisting these common decisions. They are the east European countries

mostly, second-transit countries, which implement individual measures of prevention and then a domino effect begins (fences, borders closed).

Solidarity means greater acceptance of the decisions on behalf of the governments and the member states, not only the EU institutions.

2. What do you think of the CEAS? Is it structured in an effective way?

First of all, Schengen is outdated and I am worried what we are doing in practice with Schengen (especially after the Paris attacks). In practice Schengen is suspended, mainly because it is something that can work properly in conditions of normality, and not during times of crisis.

The whole CEAS is also outdated and constructed wrongly. We are continuously moving from one 'Dublin' to the other, without offering any actual help in the countries of first entry. FRONTEX, though, is working well.

Generally, after Paris, there are going to be changes, and in political level member states are going to adopt individual measures.

3. Do you believe that the way CEAS is structured, leads to a de-Europeanization of the national policies?

No, I disagree with that. It is excessive to say that the refugee crisis can work against any integration effort. But it is a social challenge. Europe is full of migrants, that arrived in Europe many years before the economic crisis and the refugee crisis. The question is to what extent are those minorities integrated in societies such as the French society, where minor communities (especially the Muslim communities) live in ghettos; not only because the state is not capable of integrating them, but also because these people are attached to their religion, and they not feel free to integrate in another culture, in another society. That is the social challenge. The EU should grab the opportunity of the crisis, and transform the outdated policies into new structures that will give importance to the proper integration of the migrants and refugees.

4. Do you believe that the economic crisis has affected the implementation of the migration policies?

I don't think so, I don't believe there would be any difference if there was no crisis. Of course there are organizational costs, but we have to understand that Greece is a transit country and should remain a transit country. If Greece transforms into a resettlement country then there will be problems and we will see the crisis affecting the migration policies.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HELLENIC COASTGUARD, SUBLIEUTENANT GALANOPOULOU EVANGELIA, DEPERTMENT OF OPERATIONAL COOPERATION, 18/11/2015, 11:00

1. Tell me a few things about operation "POSEIDON - SEA BORDERS". What is the mission about?

Our service serves as a link with FRONTEX in every level. Our cooperation began in 2008. The coastguard coordinates and organizes the operation since 2008. It is an operation that is lasting for years, in contrast to other mission in other countries that were of shorter duration. In our case there is a continuous flow of migrants and refugees and that is why the operation is still active. Because of this multi annual cooperation, there are now the appropriate structures and the appropriate training from both sides.

In all these years, almost all EU member states participated in the operation, either with staff participation, vehicles or experts.

The mandate of the operation is to protect the sea borders. That does not mean that when we see a boat entering the borders we sink it, but we have to know who's on the boat and why.

2. Is the FRONTEX contribution considered to be positive?

Yes, the contribution is positive. It also works as an information forum. There are member states which do not realize the extent of the problem we face and they believe we exaggerate. The fact that FRONTEX is here, helps member states to realize the situation.

Beyond that, the cooperation between us and FRONTEX, there is an extended knowledge exchange and exchange of best practices.

3. Is the presence of FRONTEX a sign of EU solidarity?

The existence of the mission and the common action is itself a fact of solidarity, but of course, more solidarity is welcome.

4. If there was no FRONTEX presence, do you believe that the Coastguard would face more difficulties?

FRONTEX does not have a decisive role in the protection of the sea borders. Greece was always dealing with migrant and refugee flows, so there is the expertise, the knowledge and the experience to address the situation. What we do with FRONTEX, we also did it before FRONTEX. But of course any extra help is welcome.

5. Do you believe that the economic crisis has affected the Hellenic coastguard?

Given the circumstances we have the support we need. Of course we could use more personnel and more help in general, but the circumstances we function well.

INTERVIEW WITH G.C., HELLENIC COAST GUARD OFFICER. G.C. WISHED ANONYMITY DUE TO HIS CURRENT POSITION IN THE COAST GUARD. THE NAME IS KNOWN TO THE THESIS SUPERVISOR

My answers are based on my experience as a crew member of the Coast Guard in the islands of Farmakonisi and Agathonisi from September 2008 to March 2009.

1. Having experienced the management of similar issues in the islands of Farmakonisi / Agathonisi before the economic crisis, what are the similarities and differences you detect?

The differences are mostly organizational and then there are also differences in the magnitude of the flows. Back then we were facing a new crisis for our country. We had no information or training and we were called to manage a small influx of migrants in Greece. Now, our colleagues are more informed. They are aware for example, of the things these people need or what diseases they could care. Of course, this is also because of FRONTEX, that has a more strong presence. It is obvious of course, that the flows of the migrants is now many times over.

2. What were the differences back then and what now?

The main difficulty was our ignorance, as we did not even know what we should do while we were patrolling the borders. Every time we saw an incoming boat we had to contact the operational centre of the Coast Guard to receive our orders. The orders were always the same; we had to stop the incoming boat (after the entrance of the Greek territorial sea) and lead the occupants of the boat to the nearest port. Now that Coast Guard is more aware of such things and has received the appropriate training, the main difficulty is the magnitude of the flow, which is difficult to manage. Our colleagues, sometimes cannot guarantee the safety of the incoming boats, as it is possible for 3-4 boats to enter our territorial sea at the same time.

3. Has the economic crisis and any possible reductions in structures and personnel affected the management of these situations?

The economic crisis could have seriously damaged the capabilities of the Coast Guard, but the help we receive from the EU is substantial, both in financial level and in manpower. At this moment, crews from several EU member states are patrolling the Greek borders.

4. Under the current circumstances, is the Coast Guard in a position to deal with the refugee crisis?

The Coast Guard, on its own, cannot deal with the current refugee crisis. The manpower of the Coast Guard, after the latest retirements and zero-recruitment, is at its lowest level. The less the manpower the more difficult to face the vast migratory flows.

5. What are the priorities of the Coast Guard in managing these flows?

The first priority of the Coast Guard right now, is to supervise and guarantee a safe passage for the migrants, from the boat to the shore. Back in 2008 we had the luxury to host the migrants on our boats, in order to guarantee their security. Back then we were managing 80-100 people every night (there were now movements during the day). Today there is 24hour influx of about 1500-2000 people daily. The next priority is to register and identify them

before promoting them to the Greek mainland, so as to begin travelling to the country of their choice.

INTERVIEW WITH M.T., OFFICER OF THE ASYLUM AGENCY IN THE ISLAND OF RHODES, M.T.WISHED ANONYMITY DUE TO HIS CURRENT POSITION IN THE ASYLUM AGENCY. THE NAME IS KNOWN TO THE THESIS SUPERVISOR

1. Can you describe the situation in Rhodes Island?

The situation in Rhodes is relatively better, than the one in Lesvos or Chios. The flows in the South Aegean Sea are smaller than the ones in the north, but of course there are still problems. Despite the smaller number of migrants and refugees arriving on the island, there is urgent need for feeding, clothing and hosting the refugees. These needs are taken care from individual initiatives, as the state capacities are extremely limited.

2. Is that situation very different than the one in the northern islands?

The differences are related with the magnitude of the flows. If Rhodes was dealing with flows similar to that of Lesvos or Chios, we would be speaking of a humanitarian disaster, which would be caused due to state insufficiency.

3. Has the economic crisis affected the management of the refugee crisis?

Briefly, reception conditions in Greece can be called as insufficient or inferior to what is described in European or national legislation. This is partly due to the outnumbered staff of the Asylum Agency. Everyday 200-250 people are waiting to apply for asylum. Our offices cannot cope with these numbers. We should also mention, that translation services are not provided by the Asylum Agency but from collaborating NGOs, funded by the European Commission. So, at any time, the Asylum Agency could be lacking translation services.

4. As you have experienced it in Rhodes, is the Coast Guard in a position to manage the crisis?

Under current conditions, the Coast Guard cannot deal with the crisis. If there is no enforcement of the research and rescue capabilities, through increasing manpower we should consider FRONTEX as the best alternative.

5. Do you see the European and national migration policies being implemented?

Greece has tried and has partly succeeded in integrating the related regulations and directives and this is visible in the quality of the asylum granting process. The personnel is quite experienced and well trained. The economic crisis, though, and the lack of resources has affected the quality of the implementation.

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