Refugee Integration in Greece

An analysis of how the International Organization for Migration and Greek state and civil society actors facilitate refugee integration through education and labor market opportunities in Greek society (2018-2020)

Aikaterini Galanopoulou

s2594854

s2594854@vuw.leidenuniv.nl

January 3, 2021

MA Thesis

Wordcount: 13.253

Abstract

A vast number of people have come to Greece as a consequence of the recent war in Syria. Of those, beneficiaries of international protection have the right to be integrated into the Greek society. Therefore, amplifying the efforts regarding refugees being socially included, given a chance to live in a safer and stable environment and feel incorporated in Greece's social structure is imperative. This study has an exploratory aim and qualitative research on this topic highlights various theoretical and practical implications of the challenges in the integration process, the uncovering of current gaps and the levels of cooperation between three substantial actors involved; the Greek state, Greek civil society actors, and the International Organization for Migration.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

CNI - Cities Network for Integration

GCR - Greek Council for Refugees

HELIOS - Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection

IOM - International Organization for Migration

ILCs - Integration Learning Centers

IRC - International Rescue Committee

MLG – Multilevel Governance

NGOs - Non-governmental Organizations

UNHCR - United Nations Refugee Agency

1.   **Introduction**

The years 2015-2020 marked a massive change in the unraveling of the phenomenon of migration in Greece (Dianeosis, 2020). Greece is located on the European Union's external borders, at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe, thus served as a station for many immigrants' routes and one of the first European countries to receive a large number of refugees. In light of the Syrian refugee crisis, hundreds of people try to cross Europe's borders every day, most of them aiming to end up in other European countries. The continuous influx of those seeking international protection from the Middle East, the war zones of Asia and Africa into the Greek islands via Turkey has led to the excess of the limit of hospitality that can be offered by a country with a recessionary economy, multiple internal and external problems and fragile political balances. As reported by the IRC (2020), there are over 50,000 refugees in Greece, with 38,000 of them on the mainland and 11,000 on islands such as Lesvos and Chios.

In 2010, Greece dived into a debt crisis, which subsequently developed into a profound economic and social one. For the last ten years, unemployment and poverty rates have increased rapidly, resulting in the migration of a big part of the Greek population due to the low living standards and income (Stasinou, 2019). During the last five years, the population in Greece has decreased by about 400,000 (Newsroom Iefimerida.gr, 2015). This paper refers to a "*humanitarian crisis*" coinciding since 2015, which is undoubtedly exacerbated by the country's existing trouble. The economic and social crisis Greece has been undergoing for the past years, has led to multiple instances of exclusion of refugees, ofter treated as "*pseudo-citizens*" (de Corbion et al, 2013). Refugees face enormous challenges in accessing basic services in the host society, while becoming targets of racist attitudes. Repatriation is not a viable option for those seeking asylum, at least not until returning home makes for a safe choice for them and their families (European Commission, 2017)**.** In an effort to create durable solutions for refugees to make a dignified living, the international community considers either the option of local integration or that of resettlement to a third country. Due to several technical issues entailed, the latter is not an option either. Therefore, a European Union member state devoted to defending human rights, such as Greece, can react to the ongoing situation is by forming an integration action plan that substantially improves the situation refugees are in (Europa.eu, 2019).

The organization of a resourceful reception and asylum system for handling refugee flows at the earlier stage and forming a coherent system at the integration stage was not a top priority for the Greek government for quite some time. Effective policy implementation regarding the latter has proved to be a challenging task for Greek governments over the years. However, due to its geographical location, Greece is now in urgent need of an intense plan and a more articulated social integration strategy. Refugees – *"people who have been recognized under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees to be a refugee"* (Phillips, 2015) - situated in Greece after 2015 are the focus of my research, since they still face obstacles when it comes to access to the educational system and the labor market, therefore in the overall pool of opportunities for their gradual integration (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2018). The topic of integration is of major societal importance, considering the number of people applying for asylum in the EU, which has skyrocketed. Different countries perceive integration differently, while there is no homogeneity in policy implementation. Along with the increased migration flows to the country, warnings of the international community increase as well, claiming that the integration of people who receive international protection into the Greek society will be one of the most important challenges for Greece in the coming years (Koukakis, 2019).

I chose to conduct my research on the years 2018-2020 because only then there have been considerable efforts with empirical evidence with regard to facilitating the integration of refugees of the 2015 crisis in Greek society. The research question that guides my analysis is: How do the International Organization for Migration and Greek state and civil society actors facilitate refugee integration in Greek society through education and labor market opportunities (2018-2020)? Academic and theoretical insights are considered in order to apply the theories of integration and multilevel governance and understand how these actors respond to the task. I argue that refugee integration in Greece could be further facilitated using a multilevel type of governance that involves joint coordination of the IOM, the Greek state and Greek civil society actors in their provision of education and labor market opportunities. Analyzing this topic will deepen our understanding of the impact of these three actors' policies and actions to make refugees' lives relatively easier. My research scope focuses on the exploration of how these different but interconnected actors have collaborated to respond to the challenging task of refugee integration from 2018 until 2020. Identifying possible explanatory variables can contribute to our understanding of this fragile and constantly changeable situation.

First, I review the existing literature on practices and theories surrounding refugee integration. We treat the task of integrating refugees through education and labor market introduction processes as a social integration problem. Therefore, investigating social integration-inspired literature helps identify and analyze possible domains where the IOM, Greek state authorities and civil society actors are active from 2018 until 2020. I then introduce the theoretical framework formulated through insights provided by the literature, as well as the methods used and limitations encountered in my conducted research. Afterward, I go through the findings of my research while offering a discussion on the matter. Next, I put forward my argument regarding the way the IOM and Greek actors' practices and initiatives have been formed to respond to the task of integrating refugees in the Greek society. The answers to my research query will be elaborated upon and their theoretical and practical implications will be discussed. I conclude with directions for future research on the field of social integration of refugees.

To the best of my knowledge, there is a research gap when it comes to Greece's response to the need of integrating refugees of the 2015 crisis, and specifically in the timeframe 2018-2020. Until this point, I have come across research focused on preliminary stages of refugee integration, such as the analysis of housing predicaments, and in different timeframes than the chosen in this study. There is a lack of empirical research on further stages of refugee integration in Greece, henceforth this study places an exclusive importance on the current situation of educational advancement and labor market opportunities. With this thesis and its topic, I intend to contribute to a theoretical development specifically in the context of the actors' interrelations, as well as multilevel governance in refugee integration, a topic less studied when it comes to Greece, partially due to the novelty of the refugee crisis and its repercussions.

2.   Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

2.1. The academic approach to refugee integration attempts

This study aims to investigate what policies and practices are taking place in Greece regarding refugee integration since 2018; therefore, stating relevant scholarly literature is imperative. Literature stood significant in order to craft hypotheses on a matter that will hold a central position in future discussions and policy-making procedures. It is crucial to address the educational and labor market domains of integration properly and also challenges

detected when it comes to refugees' experiences in other European countries. Additionally, the impact of current European integration policies regarding the two aforementioned domains is also of great importance to mention.

Ager and Strang (2008) managed to elucidate on this issue by coming up with a conceptual framework regarding ten core domains of integration in resettlement settings with the goal to facilitate future work of researchers and policymakers. Field work in London and Glasgow refugee settings led to a proposed framework for carrying out a *successful* integration divided in four main fields, respectively dubbed as *markers and means* (consisting of employment, housing, education and health), *social connection* (sense of belonging and relationship with host communities and government services), *facilitators* (cultural knowledge and safety level) and *foundation* (rights and citizenship). This proposed framework is not to serve as a panacea since characteristics such as longer periods of residing in the host country, can play a crucial role in their practical and theoretical implications of refugee integration studies. Pozzo and Nerghes (2020), carried out a network study with young refugees in the Netherlands was conducted with the mission to discover the effectiveness of integration policies solely focused on language acquisition. The findings were surprising, since they point out how learning the Dutch language does not actually guarantee integration in Dutch society. Refugees are left with the task of building their social lives pretty much unassisted, while the Dutch civic integration program holds strict and pressuring standards regarding the fulfillment of the requirements to become a "*good citizen*". Mandatory separate classes highlighted a sentiment of exclusion in relation to the Dutch people and restricted refugees' chances of connecting with them.

A large part of broader literature is dedicated to the challenges of new refugees in various countries. Notably, Morville and Jessen-Winge (2019) present a variety of challenges asylum seekers face in order to achieve inclusion in a society that they have no prior knowledge about. Specifically highlighted are instances of injustice and marginalization by the host society. She identifies three components that constitute social inclusion – *objective conditions* (financial resources and accessibility), *subjective experiences* (personal feelings of safety, trust, opportunities to grow), and *connection between people*, while also presenting an asylum seeker's perspective on enabling social inclusion within asylum centers in Denmark. His proposals varied from enabling refugees with opportunities to grow within the host country's cultural context, in order to create bridges between them and the locals to creating *"an information platform for building a social network, ...creating opportunities for social*

inclusion and enhancing people's sense of connection". A similar study was executed by Alencar and Tsagkroni (2019), during which another newcomers' perspective on the inclusion framework introduced by the Netherlands was offered. Much emphasis is also put on the role media plays in offering information about refugee integration and most importantly the refugees' portrayal in the larger public.

The significance of exploring challenges to refugee integration from the refugee perspective has also been significantly underlined in academic literature. In a report concerning Congolese refugees in Britain and the United States, an interpreter who came in contact with them has claimed that the basic barrier faced in the process of integration is not knowing the local language and systems. Refugees are unable to communicate therefore facing difficulties in finding jobs, connecting with people and essentially integrating. With regard to the case of the United States, it is noted how refugees cannot access the free healthcare system they are eligible for eight months after their arrival, since they are not able to communicate in English or deal with the rules of a foreign healthcare system for that matter (Kayembe, 2019).

Among scholars focused on the inability of national educational systems to adjust to the refugees' needs and their integration process, Tsimouris (2009) mentions that education is directly related to *"interculturalism"*, hence the interaction of locals with the refugees. The central idea of the term is communication between cultures. This educational model, also proposed by the Greek government, emphasizes the importance of social cohesion and inclusion and to test how it applies to reality Tsimouris conducted research based on 15 interviews with professors in two *intercultural* schools in Greece. The findings demonstrate the urgent need for change in regard to the ongoing policy of this program since major inconsistencies such as lack of trained personnel and appropriately designed educational material expose obvious gaps in the efforts of making refugees feel included. A need for a *"holistic intervention"* of Greece's educational system is noted as much needed, considering the continuous arrivals of refugees. Greek NGOs actively work towards the inclusion of young refugees in this system and a case study performed by Louka and Maragou (2018) addresses the lack of psychological, social and cultural elements in the process, when refugees are being introduced to a new environment, both socially and learning-wise. The authors make a useful contribution in terms of future actions, some of which include a more multiculturally oriented teaching process, the advancement of skills and methodology of teachers, encouraging collaboration between all students, and raising awareness around the

basis of what constitutes a multicultural society. Imperative seems to be the assessment of illiteracy and language levels of refugees at the earliest stage in order for the implementation of more accurate policies and initiatives that focus on the needs of all and integration is not hindered due to technical issues (Kayembe, 2019).

The nature of the co-existence of refugees and the local population forms a decisive factor in integration policies. As seen in the case of French Canada during the years 1840-1960, how immigration is perceived from the eyes of the locals either favors or condemns the course of refugee integration processes. Specifically, French Canadians saw non-Catholic and non-francophone immigrants as *"a threat to their cultural survival"* and therefore *"undesirable"* (Frenette, 2019). Adapting to a new environment through successful integration seems highly dependent on the interaction between society's two ends (Losoncz, 2015). The lack of social support seems to be one of the basic barriers refugees face in their integration process, affecting their mental health heavily. As a case study about experiences of young Middle-Eastern refugees in Melbourne has shown, governmental policies can result in a somewhat hostile socio-political climate formed between them and the locals, therefore imposing the creation of strong social connections between them. Not only that, the study's participants mentioned that not knowing the English language is a sure precondition to failing in engaging in relationships with locals (Liamputtong & Kurban, 2018). Akua-Sakyiwah (2020) has demonstrated refugees' fear of rejection by host societies, while analyzing the impact of social relations in refugee educational access. Through interviews presented, difficulties in interactions with locals were documented.

The way European integration policies have been formed regarding refugees has long been under the microscope, since there is variation according to country. Pulinx and Van Avermaet (2017) underline how Belgian integration programs impact refugees' lives, concerning social participation and networking indicators. Through small-scale qualitative research, they came up with a decisive factor, which eliminates the assumption that refugees can create social links and be integrated within the host society after just being part of integration courses. As highlighted by the authors, *"facilitating social relations (bonding, bridging and linking relations) is an essential part of an "active" policy aiming at social participation and active citizenship of all members of society"*. This inevitably leads our study towards the realization that refugee integration cannot be achieved just by implementing an integration programme. It is a shared process between both ends of society, one that requires time and effort (Ziersch et al, 2020).

Carrera (2006) has underlined the importance of host countries' governments and their actions in the process of integrating refugees and highlights the need for the establishment of viable policies actively promoted and operationalized by them. He has argued that most national programmes of integration within the European Union share a common strategy which includes language and civic courses focused on cultural familiarisation and labor market orientation, while stating that most of those are mandatory. Indeed, there is a need for governments to invest in the integration process of refugees, to essentially make sure that refugees are handed with the basic tools to construct their new life. Scholars and policymakers are divided as regards the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of integration strategies employed by different governments. In light of this, Penninx (2005) has made a useful contribution to integration focused literature by providing an insightful discussion in defining integration as well as encountering elements crucial to this *"process of becoming an accepted part of society"*. His typology of integration policies distinguishes three aspects of citizenship. Those are the *legal/political* one, the *socio-economic* one and the *cultural/religious* one. The author himself acknowledges the primary pressure for policy convergence among European countries in order to form laws and directives that abide by theories of equality and standards of non-discrimination. Nonetheless, it seems as though anything that has to do with social benefits and provisions provided by the state, such as housing and social assistance do form the most challenging part of the integration process. Furthermore, a case in point is South Sudanese refugees resettled in Australia that underscores that the lack of commitment from the part of governments to essentially support refugees through the provision of means to achieve social integration. In effect, the South Sudanese Australian community experiences social exclusion, thus discouraging its majority from trying to participate in any form, socially (Losoncz, 2015).

A description of the challenges regarding integrating refugees into host countries' labor markets comes from Desiderio (2016) who managed to underline elements crucial for policymakers to reevaluate when designing integration programmes for refugees. Among those, Desiderio distinguishes the need for a coherent plan on helping refugees through all stages of integrating, for improving coordination between local actors and agencies, as well as applying appropriate integration strategies for groups of refugees, acknowledging that there can be no *"one-size-fits-all solution"* and *"...that different subgroups may need different set of policy measures and length of support"*. A similar study for the EMPL Committee reported that *"what works in refugee integration"* is a significantly under-

researched topic. In order to come up with effective strategies for a smooth integration process in host countries' labor markets, it is imperative to get familiar with the available policies and projects directed to that. Research and investigation in this sector should be encouraged for the establishment of a more articulate future policy (European Parliament, 2016). In light of this, the Australian government's resettlement policies with the goal of integrating refugees in South Australian rural settings are of particular importance. A recent research article revealed that refugees from Southeast Asia and Africa often find themselves subject to social isolation because of these policies. Specifically, refugees usually experience underemployment due to the lack of mechanisms directed to recognising previous qualifications and academic knowledge and of course the language barrier. That way, refugees' choice of labor is limited to low-pay opportunities that fill the need of working hands in these areas (Ziersch et al, 2020). Through literature, emphasis is placed on the importance of various vocational training opportunities available for refugees. The German vocational education and training system (VET) in particular has received negative feedback for its inability to achieve its purposes. Hamburg and Munich's cities being the focus of the related study have showcased a low quality of staff, lack of language support and institutional discrimination among the most important failure factors (Korntheuer et al, 2018).

Among migration scholars, highly contested stands the concept of multilevel governance, since different institutions, organizations and state actors participate in integration policy implementation and coordination. Firstly introduced by Gary Marks in the 1990s, its theoretical foundations lie among an *"actor-centered"* approach in decision-making processes, with emphasis on non-state actors, whose contribution is imperative and their collaboration essential (Caponio and Jones-Correa, 2017). Interdependence and actor interaction stands crucial. The case of Odense, Denmark brings light to the success story of multilevel governance, facilitating continuous interaction between municipal and other governmental levels and managing refugee integration in a satisfactory way. Cities are granted autonomy and the government guarantees financial coverage so that refugees are given opportunities to evolve, such diversity promotion activities and debates (Careja, 2018). Javadi et al (2017), on the other hand, highlighted the detrimental effects of an absence of coordination and monitoring refugee integration. At the same time, the authors underlined the need for further research on actors cooperation, as its elements vary across countries, processes and contexts entailed. Trein et al. (2019) has described the linkage between multilevel governance and policy-making in the EU, highlighting their problem-solving

elements in crises. Accordingly, the multitude in levels, essentially, strengthens both governmental institutions and their legitimacy in different structural dimensions of integration. Bisong (2019) has discussed how power relations in actors cooperation play a major role in the success of attempting migration governance. By focusing on two institutional actors - EU and ECOWAS – and their level of collaboration, the author concludes that multilevel governance is an emerging concept influencing *"policy diffusion and interlinkage among thematic areas"*. For example, Dustmann et al. (2016) have insisted that, specifically, labor market integration of refugees indicate a need for *"strong, coordinated policy response"* based on a regulatory framework proposed by EU member-states.

The lessons learned from the literature vary in context, as this is an ambiguous topic with various implications for policymakers and respective target groups. The findings in the literature signal the need for further research on refugee integration policies in Greece. In the following section, a conceptual map to refugee integration and multilevel governance as part of a proposed typology is elaborated upon.

2.2. The theoretical approach to refugee integration attempts

It is essential to carve out this study's theoretical framework, which serves as a cornerstone for answering the research question. If the literature review serves as the foundation of this study in academic terms, the theoretical framework assists significantly in formulating the empirical research puzzle. There is a vast and growing literature when it comes to theories of integration and factors that define it. In practice, social integration as a concept, theory, or policy objective has always been a term with various meanings, making its application to real-life events puzzling. A framework on multilevel governance of integration is used in this study, in order to understand how refugee integration is attempted in Greece through the provision of education and labor market opportunities. A conceptualization of both terms is executed, in order to facilitate the analysis of this paper.

Penninx (2005) has provided a rationale for integration as *"the process of becoming an acceptable part of society"*. With respect to this, two points are highlighted. The term underlines the procedural elements of the definition while not encompassing important technicalities regarding requirements for successful integration set by host societies and their governments. Essentially, this definition leaves room for studying integration processes at the

empirical level with regard to the context of each country. Another comprehensive description is given by Silver (2015), who claims that social exclusion and inclusion are context-dependent concepts while the ideal of an inclusive society varying by country and by region, by different histories, cultures, institutions and social structures. In light of this, wide differences between national integration models are detected throughout research. Notably, French and German policies draw influence from historical concepts that emphasize identity and belonging. Others, such as Dutch policies, highlight the multiculturalist element of a liberal cultural approach (Penninx & Scholten, 2016). These elements seem vital to be addressed when attempting social integration since they signify that these can be spatially uneven. Silver also lays emphasis on the ongoing debate about discourses and terminologies concerning the term, which vary from *solidarity* to *inclusion*, *cohesion* and *social capital*.

What I essentially do in this study is benefit from Penninx's contribution in using the concept of integration as an analytical tool and developing a heuristic model that can *"serve to map and look critically at integration research"*. Refugee integration policies and processes are my main focus; therefore, I proceed to a necessary categorization. Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016) divided the definition of integration into three distinct dimensions. This thesis is focused on the socio-economic dimension of refugee integration, which is subsequently analyzed by examining refugees' access and participation in certain domains. Strongly influenced by Ager and Strang's attempt to conceptualize integration domains, effective integration of refugees should include initiatives stemming from social, cultural and professional elements. Guided by literature, I declare the necessity of learning the native language of the host country, as well as refugees getting introduced to the country's cultural context as key components of integration. These play a significant role in ensuring that refugees develop skills and assets that will offer them more prosperous life-chances. Refugee integration also includes their introduction to the host country's labor market opportunities and regulations. Thus, education also in the form of vocational training acts as the core of integration (Koulouris, 2019). The refugees and the receiving society are the relevant parties of this process, posing the interaction between them as a major determinant in the outcome, with exceptional emphasis put on the host society's role and reaction towards the newcomers. The basic levels in measuring integration processes are the individual, both refugees and locals, and the institutions involved, consisting of all *"the institutional arrangements of a political system"*, such as regulations and policies. Both levels are crucial in structuring refugee integration opportunities.

Focusing on the policy aspect of refugee integration, an essential part of this study is seeing how the involved actors perceive it through their framed policies, something that also highlights what should be done further. This brings us closer to the notion that policy documents do not essentially lead to policy practice. For this purpose, I choose to look thoroughly into refugee integration policies and practices in place and identify their implications, challenges, resources and goals. How these are organized tells a lot about their feasibility. Fundamentally, the focus of this study is shifted from government to governance as international and non-governmental organizations are also involved. Bearing this in mind, our overarching framework relies on the concept of multilevel governance of integration.

Penninx and Scholten (2016) have elaborated on the importance of widening the scope of integration research by exploring the ways different actors deal with the task and their relationships entailed. In this context, a typology concerning their level of collaboration is proposed. The *centralist* type corresponds to a core institutional, top-down approach, involving a clear hierarchy in the coordination of actors in refugee integration processes. Studies have shown that this is the least applicable model, considering nowadays' integration policies in most European countries (Penninx and Scholten, 2016). The *localist* type includes a bottom-up approach putting local governments at the forefront of the integration process and policy competencies. *Decoupled relations* refers to an absence in worthwhile coordination of actors, as well as occasional friction between them. Finally, *multilevel governance (MLG)* involves a joint coordination of actions in refugee integration, with no dominant actor, and with mutual interaction at all times. MLG is of particular importance for this study, since it is characterized by *"formal or informal vertical interaction between various government levels"* (Caponio and Jones-Carrera, 2017). Other scholars have underlined that it essentially involves *"government policies formulated and implemented with flexibility to ensure appropriateness".* In effect, this is achieved by mobilizing civil society and non-state actors, as well. Coordination plays the biggest role in MLG, as a coherent approach to integration policy issues is highly demanded. This study focuses on the conceptualisation of MLG as the pusruit of coordination of both state and non-state actors in policy-making and implementation being the goal (Caponio and Jones-Carrera, 2017).

The Greek government is one of the main actors of this puzzle. Penninx (2005) has detected the various difficulties of states to provide refugees with opportunities to access socio-economic domains, such as education and labor market opportunities. To assist in this challenge, international and non-governmental organizations have joined and amplified their

efforts to provide the government and refugees with some support. Scholars and policy makers have tried to work through the vagueness of the term of civil society. For the purpose of this study, I identify civil society under the scope of *"ethical and social solidarity ...with respect to ideals of society, politics and the human good"* (Jensen, 2006). This concept encapsulates a kind of *"socio-political ideal"*. According to Evers (2013), civil society is often described as the '*third sector'*, which in essence means nongovernmental, non-profit and voluntary organizations and forums separate form the State and the market. The International Organization of Migration also is one of the focus groups of my research puzzle. Since its establishment in 1951, it is one of the most prominent intergovernmental organizations, whose work is dedicated to facilitating in many areas of migration management. In our case, the IOM's Office in Greece plays a crucial role, since it has proceeded to the implementation of projects that focus on the assistance of beneficiaries of international protection recognized with the refugee status after 01/01/2018. As the head of the IOM Greece, Gianluca Rocco, has claimed; *"according to Greek, European and international law, these are people who have the right to stay in Greece, this means that the state has an obligation to help them so that they can live here"* (Newsroom Iefimerida.gr, 2020).

Essentially, the goal is combating social exclusion, a *"complex and multi-dimensional process"*, which *"involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole"* (Levitas et al., 2007). By adopting a constructivist approach, opportunities of participation in education and vocational training to facilitate accessibility to the labor market and opportunities to connect to the host society play the biggest role. I choose to investigate what policies and initiatives are put in place since 2018 by Greek state authorities, the IOM as well as civil society actors in Greece, in order to analyze their premises, what is there and what is not, what challenges derive from the ongoing efforts for refugee integration, what should be done to strengthen them. These are the empirical examples I use to demonstrate how these actors respond to the task of integrating refugees in a country with several internal socio-economic issues. I argue that refugee integration in Greece could be further facilitated using a multilevel type of governance that involves joint coordination of the IOM, the Greek state and Greek civil society in their provision of education and labor market opportunities.

3.   Method and Limitations

This study's scope focuses on 2018-2020, since that was only the time when structured and organized refugee integration efforts for refugees of the 2015 crisis started operationalizing in Greece. This qualitative research study has an exploratory research aim. Textual data are presented in summaries, while links between those and my research objectives are developed. Likewise, I identify processes evident in the accessible data to support valid findings.

This is a single case study, with a single unit of analysis chosen and subunits investigated. I apply theoretical insights on refugee integration and multilevel governance in Greece's case of refugee integration initiatives and policies. Yin (2009) has elaborated on the dynamics in deploying an *"embedded case design with multiple units of analysis"*. This analysis serves as a plausibility probe (Levy, 2008), aiming to construct a theoretically insightful argument *"by providing a concrete example of its application... and identifying at least one relevant case"*. Plausibility probes provide details with regard to the analysis of an issue and eventually lead to crafting a broader theoretical argument (Eckstein, 1975).

After examining literature focuses on refugee integration research, I collect empirical data for my case. I select existing material provided by each of the three actors (IOM, Greek state and civil society actors) involved in Greece's refugee integration efforts. Hence, I conduct document research focused on the services centralizing educational and labor market opportunities provided, while investigating their basic components. To examine the Greek government's stance, I look at primary sources such as press releases, public records, official statements and declarations, dating from 2018 until late 2020. To test my arguments, I proceed to a critical discourse analysis of the aforementioned, in order to understand the ways through which the Greek state has influenced refugee integration in the chosen timeframe. Also, I examine secondary sources, such as procedural, outcome and conference reports and policy papers published by the organizations involved, to gain necessary insight into their work, conduct an evaluation on possible outcomes, and detect deficiencies in their overall approach.

Due to present inconveniences amid the COVID-19 pandemic, field research with face-to-face interviews was not feasible. Nevertheless, documentary research enables us to reflect on the ongoing situation in a somewhat satisfactory way. It is useful to look further

into published stories of refugees included in some of the mentioned in my study integration projects, so that I form a more holistic view about their impact in refugees' lives. This way, several viewpoints are presented and assessed. Finally, I am conducting thematic analysis of interviews and further related secondary data.

A contextual analysis is held, with the premise of conducting a sort of reality check, assessing the extent to which the chosen initiatives apply to our theoretical model analyzed in the previous section of the study. In other words, I translate the theoretical insights into recommendations taking into account the specific context of the country in this case study. For that, I consider relevant factors such as the country's current economic state, the cultural context as well as other interrelated factors. Therefore, I am going through newspaper articles, speeches, news broadcasts and statistics that can help me illustrate possible factors that affect the possibilities of achieving refugee integration in Greece during the chosen years, in the context of initiatives available by the three main actors.

I use a various data sources to reduce the possibilities of false understandings and weakened the validity of the results (Mohajan, 2017). Concretely, triangulating data from across three different actors involved in refugee integration in Greece is attempted for a clearer, more comprehensive extrapolation of a conclusion regarding their contributions. As all studies have limitations, this one, in particular, contains instances of a lack of available data. This substantially affected the scope of my analysis, since I believe the offering of primary data in the form of interviews conducted with refugees and workers involved in the integration process would present a more authentic representation of the outcomes. Instead, I relied on data already collected and presented through official webpages of the integration actors involved. This can be taken into consideration for further research on this topic and field. I acknowledge the limitations with regard to an occasional narrow amount of information provided about the topic, since refugee integration policies, in general, constitute a recent addition to Greek governments' scope. Gathering data was met with obstacles particularly because of the newness of the topic. For the sake of this thesis' size, I chose to analyze a specific amount of integration projects, actors and institutions with the goal of examining their components as accurately as possible. With regard to choosing a single case study certain criticisms may arise as part of its limitations. Concerns may include generalisability, reliability and replicability components of single case study analysis. Therefore, *"in all social science research and all prediction, it is important that we be as*

explicit as possible about the degree of uncertainty that accompanies our prediction"(King et al, 1994).

4.   Analysis

4.1. The Greek government's response

Greece has been mainly considered a transit country for immigrants; thus its transformation into a host country is a relatively new phenomenon (Toktaύ et al., 2006). The issues concerning refugee integration were not high on the political agenda and a structured, holistic approach has not been developed (EESC, 2020). Examining how refugee integration efforts in the realm of education and professional orientation are put in practice is a troubling task to carry out, especially when the country in question is recently introduced to the issue. Greece is not equipped with the essential tools to cope with it adequately both in financial and human capacity terms. Obvious stands each government's responsibility to come up with a plan that facilitates refugees' introduction to their new reality. Therefore, I weigh in on the elements of the Greek state's initiatives and practices, if there are any, regarding refugees' assistance in being integrated *'successfully'*. That being so, I consequently extract challenges pertaining to the Greek state's stance on the matter so far.

In July of 2018, the Greek government pinpointed the need for a fundamental revision of the *"National Strategy for Integration"* put in place in 2013, in consideration of new needs arising from international and domestic circumstances. The new strategy was crafted by a working group set up by the Minister of Migration and Asylum and assisted by the Department of Social Integration at the time. It is explicitly stated how *"the state's intention to integrate applicants and beneficiaries of international protection into the Greek society is also in line with the country's international and European obligations to safeguard and ensure a dignified living"* and that it constitutes a *"is a key priority and challenge for the Greek State"* (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2018). It is underlined that the strategy is based on five constitutive pillars and relies on humanitarian values, real data and set realistic goals. In brief, those pillars focus on reform of the current legal framework with the aim of restoring legal access of refugees to the labor market and basic services and goods, formulation of horizontal policies, and harmonization of existing actions and goals of the Ministry of Immigration Policy (Gov.gr, 2018).

What signals a differentiation in regard to this new strategy could be the proposal that the Ministry of Immigration Policy, local government and public bodies would be the ones actively striving for the implementation of refugee integration policies, instead of international organizations and NGOs, which were the only ones prominent with respect to this task up to that point. From now on, the government aimed to grant municipalities the ultimate responsibility as the core bodies of implementing policies, with key factors being raising awareness and engaging with local communities. This strategy has been used in other European countries mostly during the last ten years, usually funded by the European Commission (Penninx and Scholten, 2016). The Greek version explicitly stands for the *"integration"* and not the *"assimilation"* of refugees in the Greek society, endowed with *"respect towards both the values of host society and cultural diversity, in terms of mutual recognition and creative coexistence in an environment of equal relations, opportunities and rights"* (Gov.gr, 2018).

The national strategy pledges to ensure refugees' access to education and labor market domains. This would entail the provision of special projects**,** the implementation of language acquisition programs for adult immigrants, the modification of the framework for the recognition of qualifications and promotion of access to higher education. The appropriate training of teachers**,** but also the sensitization of the local community are stated as core factors in order to promote the harmonious intercultural coexistence. Some substantive remarks on labor market initiatives promoting refugee integration include mapping out previous individual background regarding work experience and professional skills of refugees, connecting appropriate skills with relevant services, promotion of employment in the Greek rural economy, as well as mentorship and training focused on facilitating refugees' introduction to the labor market and micro-entrepreneurship (Gov.gr, 2018).

Some comments on the actuality of these provisions underpin the strategy document as problematic. Its mission left many with an array of unanswered questions. It is necessary to point out how there is no reference whatsoever to the radical significance of civil society and other support organizations during this multifaceted process. On the other hand, strongly emphasized is the need for local communities to further invest in the integration of refugees. Their different views of integration policies as well as possible tension in coordination of those, though has not been taken into account. Some may focus on matters of antidiscrimination, others on participation and opportunity offering and others on citizenship (Penninx and Scholten, 2016). Mechanisms for combating future frictions are not mentioned

in the document**.** Considerable concern should also exist regarding several incidents, such as delays to initiations of integration classes, the amount of school dropouts mainly at older ages, and bureaucratic obstacles detected even before the enrollment stage. The strategy does not contain a thorough analysis regarding these problems and future solutions to be given, thus it exerts limited legitimacy. It seems to express only wishful thinking, without systematic mapping of the current conditions delineating what is achievable and what is not (Gov.gr, 2018). Reporting and elaborating on the current level of needs is important but without operational planning and linkage to financial resources and action plans available, any initiative will continue to be faced with multiple obstructions (Gov.gr, 2018).

What has sparked further criticism is the clear suggestion that the ultimate factor facilitating the *"smooth integration into the labor market of people entering the country legally is their employment in jobs that are not fully covered by the domestic workforce"* (GCR, 2019). This statement certainly disaffirms the stated goal of the strategy - *"the integration and not the assimilation of immigrants",* which demonstrated respect for cultural diversity and allowing creative coexistence (Biniari, 2019). Last but not least, other bodies whose involvement is crucial in this process such as the Ministry of Labor are also not mentioned meticulously in the document.

It seems as though the Greek government has been continuously contradicting itself. Notwithstanding the variety of released statements by Ministers and crafted promises about the prioritisation of refugee integration, the Greek government has made some rather questionable moves in hindsight. Notably, in 2019, the Ministry of Immigration Policy was abolished, and shortly after its responsibilities and tasks merged under the Ministry of Civil Protection's jurisdiction. This can clearly be viewed as a purview from the part of the Greek state that the management of the refugee crisis, forms part of the national security agenda and its handling does not stand next to terms like solidarity, advocated by international treaties (Avgi Newsroom, 2019). This ambiguous governmental action was characterized as a regression towards the notion that refugee issues are only a matter of border control and refugees should be treated as intruders to an obtuse Greek society.

All in all, this strategy appears to be putting too much emphasis in the early stages of refugee integration without taking into consideration the long-term scope. A thorough analysis of the current situation is missing while the financial basis on which the proposed actions would be implemented is absent. A mere reference to *"indicative funding"* to be used

in the future cannot ensure their steady implementation (Biniari, 2019). This can also act as a desicive factor in creating tensions at the local level which is ultimately the place where this strategy would be implemented. The government has seemed to ignore provision of data collection to estimate how many refugees could eventually be integrated in Greece. Without tangible evidence in terms of statistical data, it will remain extremely difficult to develop sustainable integration strategies feasible in actuality (EESC, 2020).

4.2. The IOM's response

The International Organization for Migration holds a paradoxical status among wider literature. Peculiarly, it has been a quite overlooked research topic. The organization seems to function in a variety of ways, something that poses difficulties in specifying its work (Pécoud, 2017). The truth is that it has faced significant growth over the last decades, which can be traced back to its specific characteristics that combine its technical nature along with effective and flexible operational work (Pecoud, 2017). The IOM seldom crosses the line of sovereignty regarding countries, since it collaborates with them with high regards of respect. While not being particularly influential in domestic politics, it manages to exert power through its unmatched knowledge on the field of migration that includes a plethora of training programs and capacity building techniques. Besides, its slogan calls for the *management* of migration displaying a cost-benefit approach when designing migration related projects and initiatives. Ultimately, the IOM acts on the premise of entrepreneurialism, in a way that transforms migration from the commonly thought of *burden bearing* process to a beneficial virtue for countries (Geiger and Pécoud, 2010).

In the case of Greece, in 2018, the *Hellenic Integration Support for beneficiaries of international protection* project (HELIOS) was presented to the wider public through a press conference. The project, serving –partially- as a reflection of the national integration strategy, would officially start in June of 2019 and would be terminated at the end of November of 2020 (Ministry of Immigration Policy, 2018). Funded by the European Commission's Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs, HELIOS has been presented as an *"innovative program building on already implemented and established measures as in education, financial assistance, housing, and combining those with new supporting actions related to working life, social ties and social participation."* (IOM Greece, 2020b) The project has been met with feelings of content, since an earnest need for a mechanism

depicting an optimistic development upon the refugee issue has been evident in the last two years. Of course, refugee integration is not a process specifiable regarding its duration or expected outcome. However, the HELIOS project seemed at the time to be a sign of progress.

Considering that while this study is taking place, the project is still under implementation, its results have not been thoroughly discussed in public. For the theoretical and empirical purposes of this study I do not critically reflect on the project's services regarding independent living and rental financing. However, some of its basic characteristics, which include a monthly rent allowance for six months and facilitating the procedure in granting leases for refugees' own apartments, mainly by contacting home owners in the Greek mainland. The Minister of Migration and Asylum has clarified that HELIOS is one of the Greek immigration policy's main pillars and *"one of the most complete programs dedicated to refugee inclusion operating in the European Union"* (IOM Greece, 2020c, Newsroom Iefimerida.gr, 2020).

The European Website on Integration has accredited HELIOS as a major enhancing mechanism in support of the current integration system of Greece (European Commision, 2020). Apart from the active promotion of independent living and self-reliance, integration courses as well as employability support among integration monitoring are provided, as long as refugees meet certain criteria and they make the choice of enrolling (IOM Greece, 2020a) By setting up *Integration Learning Centres (ILCs)*, refugees over 16 years old can take part in integration courses offered. The ILCs take effect in the form of six-month courses modules of Greek language and basic soft skills in order to generate job readiness and cultural familiarization. Concerning vocational training, the project provides individual job counseling sessions and seminars as to facilitate accession to specific jobs according to individual certifications along with networking opportunities with potential employers. What cannot be left out of account is that the project aims directly at the sensitization of the Greek local population highlighting the substance of refugee integration by actualizing a national media campaign and organizing workshops and events intended to bring refugees and locals closer. Reported by the IOM, the project is deemed successful based on data confirming that close to half of its target group's amount was reached, during the limited amount of time that the project is implemented. Concretely, by July 2020 –a year in the project- 12.519 beneficiaries of international protection have been enrolled, of which the 34 per cent includes refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and 30 per cent from Afghanistan. By October 2020, the enrollments reached up to 19.000 (Newsroom Iefimerida.gr, 2020).

At this point, documentation of refugee experiences is provided. As mentioned above, this study initially aimed to include semi-structured interviews conducted with refugees taking part in the HELIOS project. Nevertheless, the IOM's official site can contribute to our attempt of unveiling practical implications through the lens of those who directly get affected by it (IOM Greece, 2020d). The site features personal stories of multiple refugees now residing in mainland housing structures with the majority of them wishing to remain in Greece, partly due to the HELIOS project's implementation. Indicatively, Karim from Iran stated *"At this stage in my life, the IOM offers me the confidence I lacked and acts as a safety net, something I desperately need."*. Nwanyen from Cameroon claimed *"all I want to achieve is becoming again the useful person I remember being. To work and to produce as I always did. The support of the people of IOM has been enormous"*. Ali has been attending Greek courses together with job counselling sessions and declared that with the support of the IOM is now in search of interpreter jobs; *"It is very challenging, I acknowledge that, but I really want to find a job here"*. Lastly, Masumeh and Gulnesah, two single mothers from Afghanistan, admitted their resilience for starting language and integration courses as soon as possible; *"it is very important for us and our children to start working soon. Finding a job is the most sustainable solution towards independent living"* (IOM Greece, 2020d). Most refugee stories underline the significance refugees put in becoming a useful part of society, gaining back lost confidence in their skills and knowledge in addition to feeling supported throughout the way, something that the HELIOS project has been focused on.

A second IOM led project focused on refugee integration is the *Cities Network for Integration*, a local authority initiated action aimed at developing necessary mechanisms for the long-term. Its ultimate goal lies is the achievement of social cohesion among the Greek society, which now more than ever has accumulated a big portion of third-country nationals (IOM Greece, 2020e). In this context, the IOM has constructed a valuable support system in order to ensure the feasibility of the project's overarching strategy, which places Greek municipalities in the foreground of dealing with refugee populations in various levels. The IOM works closely with local authorities in envisioning local strategies, organizing training sessions for municipal staff in addition to consultation workshops. Together, they aim to create an inter-municipal platform for sharing thoughts and problems that enable members of the project to actively participate in decision-making processes regarding refugee integration. The municipalities of Athens and Thessaloniki were the first ones to take part in this project, initially implemented in January 2018. Since then, eleven more municipalities have invested

in this project, showing their willingness to pave the way for a common, more organised framework at the regional and local levels. This form of cooperation aimed at a *bottom-up* approach enables capacity building, fundraising and programming at the local level as well as joint policy-making with regard to refugee integration.

In June 2020, a process of identifying and assessing needs with regard to refugee integration was realized. Completed by a coordination team of ten municipality members, some key areas in need of additional support for implementing effective and joint integration actions emerged. Some of those included training and empowerment of refugees with a view to integration into the Greek labor market, raising awareness of the importance of integration, providing information and encouraging active participation of local communities. Finally, the need for certain crucial changes at the institutional-governmental level were viewed as main priorities during this evaluation. Considering the fact that the Greek government's strategy for integration allocates primary responsibility to local actors, this project signifies one of the first cohesively conducted efforts to correspond to this need with durable, local strategic plans. For this to be achieved, the IOM encourages municipalities to work closely together, hold regular meetings and extrapolate a plan with detailed guidelines as to what is precisely needed (Athens Partnership, 2018).

In the realm of labor market and educational opportunities, this project has implemented a pilot initiative based on interconnection between urban centers and rural areas, with the aim of promoting the labor market integration of the refugee population. A distinct example is the municipality of Karditsa, which as of July 2020 has undergone an immensely insightful process that links two decisive factors in facilitating labor market opportunities. These include getting in contact with local agricultural corporates and farmers and mobilizing refugees through information sharing meetings and tailored, individual interpreting sessions. Moreover, refugees expressing interest get additional information about Greek public services and are advised to exploit such opportunities that will hand them valuable tools for integrating in the local Greek community (UNHCR, 2020). Additionally, refugees taking on Greek language lessons provided by the city's intercultural center is greatly to be desired. The center in question, going by the name "*Stavrodromi*" offers various educational and cultural activities, where refugees get the chance to contact locals, while putting their own twist in organizing future events by the center. Among other things, IT and skills development workshops are offered. The center works with the support of the UNHCR

and relies on the funding of the European Union Asylum, Immigration and Integration Fund (Anka, 2020).

4.3. The Greek civil society actors' response

The role of non-governmental organizations in refugee integration in Greece is deserving of serious consideration. Smaller or larger groups of volunteers from Greece and abroad stand as the backbone of the *informal* process of refugee integration, since there is a lack of cogent policies by Greek governments (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2018). However, it is not uncommon for local governments to collaborate with NGOs on several actions related to refugee integration, some of which are discussed later in this section. Essentially, what organizations strive for is to seek inclusion sensibility and interethnic solidarity (University of the Aegean, 2020). However, NGOs alone cannot serve as deus ex machina to fix such a multifaceted issue.

Greek NGOs were among the first actors to point out the lack of offering in language courses for refugees and of an assessment mechanism placing refugees in categories in terms of their level of language knowledge and academic background. Immediately, they acted on the matter by providing some small-scale language acquisition courses, in a way that exaggerated the need for a more holistic effort that would originate from the state. The lack of vocational training opportunities has been identified as one of the main problems from the part of NGOs. An outstanding amount of refugees continue being unaware of their working rights, experience a gap in their proper briefing about important deadlines they should meet, not knowing what the future holds for them. In their effort to bridge gaps like these, NGOs have proceeded in what could be characterized as a scattered provision of employment services and interpreting and language courses, supporting refugees as they enter a new and unknown labor market. Their ultimate goal is secured, paid employment. Their services include granting necessary bureaucratic information about the Greek job market conditions, development of skills through enrollment in vocational training seminars, as part of which employment counselors facilitate refugees in landing a job through services with connections in the Greek labor market (EESC, 2020).

Most initiatives like the aforementioned lack coordination with state actors, both in terms of action implementation as well as provision of funding (EESC, 2020)**.** Usually, it is the case that NGOs are projected as necessary collaborators, while often getting accused for a

variety of issues like their *"suspicious"* role especially in regard to the general economic crisis occurring in Greece in the last years (GCR, 2020b). To that end, their work is not catholically recognized and governments do not seem to put trust in their actions. Rarely do they offer help in regard to specific NGO-originated refugee integration initiatives and events. For the most part, those rely on EU funding, something not always secured due to bureaucracy and transparency issues. Consequently, the relationship between NGOs and the Greek state is somewhat problematic. The biggest issue in concern seems to be the absence of mutual recognition by both parties.

NGOs often find their pleas for cooperation largely unanswered by respective Ministries. Contacts made to directly reach out to municipalities and local authorities quickly revealed the limited role and responsibilities the latter have acquired in refugee integration thus far. With respect to the above, cooperation between the state sector and the civil society has so far been *"fragmented and uncoordinated"* between the Ministries responsible for integration (GCR, 2020). This has resulted in a disruption of actions implemented by NGOs, an irrational distribution of resources both in human and financial capacity, and an asymmetric geographical distribution of NGOs in different parts of the country. With reference to this, the UN Special Rapporteur Francois Crepeau has expressed his support towards civil society initiatives and their commitment to refugee integration and endorsed that *"both Greek authorities and the EU boost their support to NGOs"*, putting specific emphasis on the deterrence of multiple administrative push-backs and significant *"under-utilisation of existing funds in support of NGO initiatives" (*de Corbion et al, 2013).

On the other hand, NGOs have found cooperation between them and international organizations in fact running smoothly. Many implemented projects have been crafted as a product of this fruitful collaboration, one of those being the HELIOS project analyzed later. Indicatively, SolidarityNow, an NGO with the aim *"to improve vulnerable people's lives by pursuing a better future with dignity and perspectives"* began its partnership with the IOM in 2019. The most crucial objective of this collaboration was *"to design and implement a large-scale integration program for recognized refugees"* (SolidarityNow, 2020). To that end, greek language, life skills courses and support for access to the labor market are staple components of the program, upholding the notion for a necessity of giving the target population the knowledge and skills required to not only survive but essentially build a dignified life in Greece.

The Greek Council for Refugees (GCR), an NGO active in the field of asylum and human rights since 1989 has also subscribed to the implementation of the project. It has served as a long-term operative partner of the UNHCR and its holistic approach has always supported an "*open door policy*" which indicates daily support to refugees in adjusting through special services and authorities (GCR, 2020). This organization's unique input is that apart from offering cultural orientation, language and work skills courses, it is largely involved in monitoring the long-range process of refugee integration by implementing evaluation mechanisms. Not only that, it exhibits its commitment to wider awareness raising on the matter of integration by forming nationwide information campaigns that illustrate opportunities for further interaction of refugees with host communities. Lastly, worthy of mentioning is the intercultural centre *Pyxida*, equipped with Greek language educators and volunteer teachers, which not only provides open lessons to adults but issues help regarding consultations about liaising with public services (GCR, 2020).

Metadrasi, another NGO firmly committed to refugee development serves the mission to facilitate their overall long-term integration. In light of this, METAdrasi joined forces with the IOM in January 2020 by commencing the activity of an Integration Learning Center, through which both Greek language as well as soft skills courses are offered. METAdrasi believes in the employment of innovative ideas and projects that deal drastically with long-standing issues, suggesting that the establishment of a mechanism that promotes refugee independent living should become the norm for integration led approaches (Metadrasi, 2020).

Summing up, the role of the civil society is different and distinct from that of the state. It has been clarified that NGOs do not exist to replace the organized State in terms of its responsibilities. In contrast, it is the state's obligation to safeguard what refugee integration entails in terms of implications and components. In the case of Greece, this happens with restrictions in NGOs' actions, while the Greek state has not positioned NGOs and their subsequent roles in the refugee issue, in terms of the extent to which it seeks their assistance (GCR, 2020b).

5.   Discussion

In this final section of this thesis, I present a summary of the empirical chapters' findings, and link them to important aspects in policy-making and implementation. Moreover, I outline certain recommendations as to better the current situation of actors' coordination.

The above allows for further discussion on the challenges faced in these integration-led initiatives taking place in Greece.

5.1. Challenges encountered when attempting refugee integration in Greece

Throughout the years, several policymakers and scholars have questioned the feasibility of integration policies based on social segregation. In Greece's case, it is evident how societal norms and characteristics interfere in this process. The severe economic crisis of 2010, the delimited job offering and the noticeable lowering of the quality of life are not left unnoticed. However, successful social integration, as explained in the theoretical framework, entails connection to host society playing a crucial role for a positive outcome. Under the current state of the Greek social fabric, endowed with elements of inequality and social polarization, refugees find it even harder to associate with these new living prospects (Cerednicenco, 2020). Ethnic groups tend to get separated by locals, something usually coordinated with a form of spatial separation in terms of housing conditions. Cases of certain municipalities, such as the center of cities, being indicated for refugee housing, while others, such as the northern outskirts, usually meant for Greek natives (Arapoglou & Maloutas, 2011). That way, relations between different groups get prevented, often led by feelings of mistrust (Cerednicenco, 2020). Accordingly, social distance is aggravated, affecting networking, job-seeking and long-term social cohesion decisively. Following this train of thought, Penninx (2016) has argued that policies that follow through on notions of social segregation can act only as "*a recipe for disaster*", since they do not offer viable solutions for "*communal entities*".

The language barrier is also noted as an important obstruction in the overall integration process, thus negatively affecting professional growth (Voutsina, 2019). A serious matter is the lack of more systematic attempts in bridging gaps between refugees and the locals, in the sense that most projects available usually only focus on the provision of housing opportunities. As examined within the empirical chapters, little has been done to bring refugees and locals closer, apart from some limited NGO-initiated actions. Evidence has suggested that a percentage of Greeks think that migrants -including refugees- increase crime, unemployment rates and have a negative economic impact on the country in general, while not *"helping in solving the Greek demographic problem"* and do not *"enrich the culture"* (News 24/7, 2020). The distance created is manifested throughout these statistics, making

coexistence the main cause of uneasiness among them (Cerednicenco, 2020). It is argued that most groups of society do not know or sometimes do not care to know more regarding integration. As an indispensable component in achieving social cohesion, cultural education could seem as a viable solution to this issue.

When it comes to the IOM's work, attention should be brought to certain issues. The HELIOS project, in particular, based on a voluntary element, means that refugees themselves have to register to the program while not having adequate information beforehand. People working on the project stated how they *"were knocking on the doors of refugees and informing them about the program. People were showing their mistrust to the program."* Often, the project was characterized as *"small ...with limited sources"*, while it was claimed that *"people were left on their own, without the knowledge of language to go to public services... That's why I saw people leaving the program"* (Cerednicenco, 2020). As part of expressing its own concerns about the project, UNHCR has made sure to draw attention to the need of ensuring that refugees receive overall adequate, continuous support in their transition to autonomy (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020). Additionally, SolidarityNow has expressed the belief that the program has partly failed, mainly because of the state's inability, since *"it does not offer what it should, instead leads people to institutionalization".* The NGO has argued that education-focused initiatives and access to the labor market should be the two basic elements of integration strategies, before granting refugees cash benefits or accommodating them in making leases for apartments (Euronews, 2020). It has often been the case that refugees registered to projects like this, not with the end-goal of receiving the benefits of available education and labor market opportunities, but only to be compliant with the accommodation scheme included (Cerednicenco, 2020). Additionally, NGOs have been persistent in their argument that national economies can only gain by giving refugees opportunities to enter the labor market. The real issue, as SolidarityNow's Head of Advocacy Papagiannakis has put it, is *"if refugee integration is really what is wanted"* (Euronews, 2020), for a case in point is that countries like Germany or the United States have proceeded to actions like the recognition of academic degrees and language acquisition initiatives in an extremely short amount of time, especially compared to Greece (Penninx, 2005).

5.2. The role of actors in responding to refugee integration challenges

In a broader context, the Greek case of refugee integration policies and initiatives can operate as a compass for important theoretical implications on the role distinct actors hold on the matter. In the case of governments, Penninx (2016) supports the idea that they are the ones paving the way towards effective and impactful refugee integration policies. During the last three decades, some have had an *"ad hoc, reactive and control-oriented character"* instead of being *"more explicit, proactive"*. Countries like Canada, Australia, and the United States have capitalized upon the *"element of growth"* refugees can bring to the table as newly added parts of their societies. In the case of Europe, principles of *"non-acceptance"* have been more prominent. Integration policies in Europe have been characterized as ambivalent, as they do not fall under the European Commission's jurisdiction, thus are placed among the individual competence of states (Penninx, 2016). As a result, they differ in context and are usually non-binding, in accordance to each country's decisions. For example, policies display a type of dichotomy when it comes to diversity. Some support it, going by a primarily multiculturalist approach, while others function on the premise of assimilation. As expressed by Penninx (2016) *"the basic premise of multiculturalism – defined as a set of normative notions on how to shape a multicultural society politically – is that immigrants cannot become equal citizens unless the state and society accept that both individuals have the right to be culturally different."* In our case, the Greek government has demonstrated through not its discourse that it firmly stands by the notion of multiculturalism, while at the same time generated actions have proposed that refugees are not valued a important contributors to society, since no relevant provisions have been established through its strategy for integration.

To effectively address issues arising, such as the challenges of social segregation, the language barrier and lack of information around refugee integration, well-established relations between actors involved on the basis of cooperation should reign in forming policies and implementing integration projects (OECD, 2018). This is not the case with regard to NGOs and state authorities, where the decoupled relations type of governance is observed. Their coordination in actions has proved problematic as most NGOs argue for not having received adequate support for their work and additionally not being recognized as a valuable contributing actor in the process. Trust is continuously missing in the relationship between the two actors in a way that any integration initiatives' efficiency is often jeopardized. NGOs often express their discontent about not being equal partners, instead feeling used by the state whenever a crisis occurs. At this moment, no structured integration system involving NGOs,

and including coordinated activities focused on education and labor market opportunities is carried out. Any implemented project thus far has not included a follow-up one or written documentary reports that elaborate on possible lessons learned and discussions of experiences. Consequently evidence-based policy making for the future is not possible (OECD, 2018).

At the same time, a key mechanism in facilitating refugee integration in both sectors of education and labor market lies in the adoption of more positive narratives on integration is partly done through HELIOS's national sensitization campaign. That way, social distance as part of the social segregation circumstances between both groups of society could be imposed, to the point that refugees are no longer thought of as different, as the *"other"*. As discussed above, the primary reason host populations expose tensions in their relationship with the newcomers is the fact that they know little or nothing about them, inevitably leading to mistrust and sometimes hostility towards them. Incorporating essential elements that not only benefit the local population, but more importantly, encourage their frequent interaction with refugees is imperative. Refugees, from their part, participate in integration projects available, and bear the fruits of such initiatives.

Strategies on educational and employment opportunities for refugees need to be further expanded, seeking primarily policy coherence and actor coordination (OECD, 2018). At the moment, there is no assessment or validation mechanism for refugees' practical skills and previous certifications introduced by the Greek state (UNHCR, 2013). Language and cultural acquisition projects are only offered by NGOs in collaboration with the IOM, with limited practical help in the early procedural stages of independent living. Wider amount of employability and social and educational programs that promote shying away from sentiments of xenophobia should serve as the basis for future integration strategies (University of the Aegean, 2020). Instances of poor coordination among actors involved in providing the above have affected refugees in a number of ways, such as causing confusion with regard to their employment rights, as well as benefits they are worthy of (UNHCR, 2013).

As Greek NGOs have paved the way for the provision of most initiatives, a holistic, new approach to this process should indispensably involve them. What is substantially suggested in this study is that being and feeling part of a wider social network in the host society contributes immensely in the refugees' efforts to meet their needs (UNHCR, 2006).

Academic literature features compelling claims about key concepts endowed in the process of integration indispensably involving both parties of society, specifically *"the immigrants with their own characteristics and differing levels of effort and adaptation, and the receiving society with its characteristics and varied reactions to these newcomers"* (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016). Creating and establishing an enabling environment for the long-term for both refugees and the local population to co-exist and interact is of great importance. Refugees need opportunities to participate in an intercultural dialogue with the locals, learn about how they are perceived and vice versa (Kayembe, 2019)**.** The IOM in collaboration with NGOs have proven their commitment to the above, by raising awareness on the importance of integration, through IOM's nationwide sensitization campaign on refugee integration, the establishment of Integration Leaning Centres as well as initiatives of interconnection such as the interculturalist centre *"Stavrodromi"*. Therefore, collective efforts in facilitating the development of networks between refugees and locals could be the centre of future policies by the Greek state (UNHCR, 2006, UNHCR, 2013).

This brings us back to the significance of the state's role. By means of its national strategy for integration, the Greek government aimed for the localist type, however, a clear structural connection between important actors is not provided. The empirical chapters showcased that most policy competencies are handed to local governments, but practically little has been done to provide them with resources, both financial and structural. The Greek government and its Ministries have somewhat failed to effectively establish communication in terms of needs and transparency about funds to be allocated in integration activities (EESC, 2020). Here, what we observe as the norm is that civil society actors have created the majority of integration initiatives available, while attempting to come in contact with and pressure the government to actively interfere, what has been called the *"third model of integration policies"* (Penninx and Garces-Mascarenas, 2016). Officially incorporating NGOs in national refugee integration policy schemes has not happened yet, thus their expertise as professionals is not guaranteed through official contracts that ensure more concise and organized actions (EESC, 2020). Even though *"a harmonization in actions and formulation of horizontal policies"* is the noted goal, practical examples of how this can be achieved are not elaborated upon. This only poses further problems in local governments' relationship with NGOs, since their cooperation in total has been fragmented without clear communication on the division of labor, what is needed and what is not. Distribution of funding also remains an issue, since little is stated about it. Governments need assistance and

guidance in issues like this and in the case of Greece, there is a need for additional help from experienced actors on refugee matters.

Concretely, integration strategies' effectiveness would be boosted if proceeding to fragmentary types of projects was left behind. Instead, governmental institutions should use their strategic role that enables them to achieve multilevel governance. Policy-making and implementation lacks coordination at this moment, with governmental and non-governmental actors not aligned in the provision of necessary educational and labor market initiatives. The IOM, on the other hand, has been pretty impactful in its work with systematic efforts towards achieving this, putting forward its expertise on migration issues, and manifesting an *"open method of coordination".* The organization has used its mediating role to incorporate Greek NGOs' contributions in its projects by officially collaborates with them to provide language and labor market skills in the *HELIOS* project. Also, it strengthens local governments' impact in refugee integration through projects like *Cities Network for Integration*. European programmes focused on refugee integration, in general, have been narrowed down to the formation of closer ties with cities, since they get affected most by the absence of social cohesion between refugees and locals, while also forming the centre of refugees' development at the educational, professional and social level (Penninx and Scholten, 2016). Various scholars have pointed out that making a local turn towards integration policies and initiatives makes more sense, considering the practical need in achieving smooth ethnic diversity (Penninx and Scholten, 2016). The IOM has detected these aspects and merged the localist type in the multilevel governance of integration by actively enabling municipalities to start forming their own responses to the matter and achieve cross-national horizontal forms of cooperation with other municipalities and local elements. Through *Cities Network for Integration*, it is possible to exchange views and knowledge on educational and labor market opportunities for refugees in a way that develops cities' roles substantially. Each time and with each effort, lessons will be learned, the level of knowledge will be augmented and future projects will reach the desired level of success. The findings including experiences from refugees themselves have also provided evidence that such initiatives positively affect their lives. However, it has to be noted that these efforts have just been initiated, with the framework of multilevel governance only just starting out to show its true colors in the spectrum of refugee integration in Greece (Penninx and Garces-Mascarenas, 2016).

6.   Concluding Remarks; What the future holds

This study aimed to look at refugee integration processes in Greece in the years 2018-2020. With the goal of answering the research question of how the IOM, Greek state and civil society actors facilitate refugee integration through education and labor market opportunities, conclusions were made. An exploration of the dynamics in relationships between the three actors led to realizations that there is a lack of comprehensive national integration policies for refugees in combination with a lack of coordination in actions and cooperation among the state and civil society actors. Through our literature review, it became obvious that refugee integration is a time-consuming, shared process involving both the newcomers and the host society. By using both theories of integration and types of governance, I argued that multilevel governance including the IOM, Greek state and civil society actors has significant potential in establishing more efficient refugee integration policies and initiatives. With this thesis, I attempted to deepen my understanding in refugee integration's two specific dimensions; educational and labor market opportunities, while giving an overview of the bigger picture in the context of Greece, through highlighting the interrelations of actors involved.

Multilevel governance settings represent a growing field in integration policy-making research and this case study can be used for future lessons on the importance coordination in such matters (Caponio and Jones-Carrea, 2017). A multitude of actors have become involved in the wider refugee integration process, facilitating it substantially, therefore, *"multilevelness"* will hold a central position in future research (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2019). With regard to that, a differently designed method for gathering data measuring the efficiency of integration projects and initiatives is needed. The field of refugee integration has long been lacking extensive comparative research as well as a thorough investigation from different levels and scopes (Penninx & Mascarenas, 2016). Scholars and practicioners addressing this particular issue could focus on the documentation of various views on integration activities and their outcomes, using in-depth interviews with respective actors.

The Greek case of refugee integration between 2018 and 2020 has manifested the need for competent governments that deliver a coherent plan offering refugees adequately formed opportunities that allow them to develop their full potential and get past binding societal barriers, such as the language and social distance (NGO Pulse, 2011). European

involvement cannot be left out of the picture, since international actors possess necessary tools, knowledge and financial resources that strengthen work on the ground, while Greek civil society actors work tirelessly towards addressing refugees' needs and boosting integration strategies' perspectives. So far, multilevel governance seems to be the way to go, as the exclusively localist type the Greek government has been striving for has not born fruits. Its role is important in ensuring national strategies' full potential, possible to be achieved by highlighting the usefulness of multilevel governance, and taking into consideration both the International Organization of Migration and civil society actors' influence and undeniable input in refugee integration initiatives and policy sectors.

7.   References

Ager, A., Strang, A. (2008): Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework. In: Journal of Refugee Studies 21(2), 166–191.

Akua-Sakyiwah, B. (2020). Intersecting social structures and human actors: Ganfoso refugees' settling experiences and impact on children's education. *Comparative Migration Studies*, *8*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-00202-4

Alencar, A., Tsagkroni, V. (2019). Prospects of Refugee Integration in the Netherlands: Social Capital, Information Practices and Digital Media. *Media and Communication*, 7(2), 184–194. https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v7i2.1955

Anka. (2020). *Διαπολιτισμικό κέντρο Σταυροδρόμι*. Anka.gr.
https://www.anka.gr/index.php/el/ypati-armosteia-ellada-6/diapolitismiko-kentro-stavrodromi-2

Arapoglou, V., Maloutas, T. (2011). Segregation, Inequality and Marginality in Context: The case of Athens. Επιθεώρηση Κοινωνικών Ερευνών, 136(136), 135-155.
doi:https://doi.org/10.12681/grsr.47

Athens Partnership. (2018). "*Cities Network for Integration" convenes in Athens City Hall: 12 municipalities join forces to promote the smooth integration of refugees into local communities*. ATHENS PARTNERSHIP. https://athenspartnership.org/news/accmr-cities-network

Avgi Newsroom. (2019). *Δημήτρης Βίτσας: Η κατάργηση του υπουργείου Μεταναστευτικής Πολιτικής είναι μεγάλη οπισθοδρόμηση*. Avgi. https://www.avgi.gr/politiki/318669_dimitris-bitsas-i-katargisi-toy-ypoyrgeioy-metanasteytikis-politikis-einai-megali

Biniari, F. (2019). *Οι παρατηρήσεις του ΑΣΕΤ για την Εθνική Στρατηγική για την Ένταξη*. Generation 2.0. https://g2red.org/el/aset-s-observations-on-the-national-integration-strategy/

Bisong, A. (2018). Trans-regional institutional cooperation as multilevel governance: ECOWAS migration policy and the EU. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *45*(8), 1294–1309. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2018.1441607

Caponio, T., & Jones-Correa, M. (2017). Theorising migration policy in multilevel states: the multilevel governance perspective. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *44*(12), 1995–2010. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2017.1341705

Careja, R. (2018). Making good citizens: local authorities' integration measures navigate national policies and local realities. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *45*(8), 1327–1344. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2018.1441613

Carrera, S. (2006) A Comparison of Integration Programmes in the EU: Trends and Weaknesses. CEPS CHALLENGE Papers No. 1, 1 March 2006. UNSPECIFIED.

Cerednicenco, A. (2020). "*Trapped" in a new future: Case of Athens, Greece Social and spatial segregation of municipality of Athens and possible solutions* (Thesis). Malmo University.

Dustmann, C., Fasani, F., Frattini, T., Minale, L., & Schhnberg, U. (2016). On the Economics and Politics of Refugee Migration. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1–53. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2900917

de Corbion, A., Soova K., & LeVoy, M. (2013). *The Silent Humanitarian Crisis in Greece: Devising Strategies to Improve the Situation of Migrants in Greece*. PICUM, PROGRESS FUND.

Desiderio, M. (2016). *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets: Challenges and Policy Options*. Transatlantic Council on Migration, Migration Policy Institute. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options

Dianeosis (2020). *Συγκριτική Ανάλυση Ένταξης Μεταναστών και Προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα.*

Eckstein, H. 1975. Case studies and theory in political science. In Greenstein, F., and N. Polsby, eds. Handbook of political science, vol. 7, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 79–138

EESC. (2020). *Ομάδα μελέτης «Μετανάστευση και ένταξη» της ΕΟΚΕ : Έργο σχετικά με το ρόλο των οργανώσεων της κοινωνίας πολιτών στην εξασφάλιση της ένταξης μεταναστών και προσφύγων*. European Economic and Social Committee.

Euronews. (2020, June 3). *SolidarityNow: Αν δε ληφθούν μέτρα ενίσχυσης των προσφύγων, το πρόγραμμα αποχωρήσεων θα αποτύχει*. https://gr.euronews.com/2020/06/03/solidarity-now-prosfyges-metanastes-evictions

Europa.eu. (2019). *Human rights and democracy*. European Union. https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/human-rights_en

European Commission. (2017). *RELOCATION – SHARING RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE EU*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20170906_relocation_and_resettlement-sharing_responsibility_and_increasing_legal_pathways_to_europe_en.pdf

European Commission. (2020). *HELIOS Project*. European Web Site on Integration. https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/intpract/helios-project

European Parliament. (2016). *Labour Market Integration of Refugees: Strategies and good practices*. Directorate General For Internal Policies.

Evers, A. (2013). The concept of "civil society": different understandings and their implications for third sector policies. Voluntary Sector Review, 4(2), 149–164. https://doi.org/10.1332/204080513x667800

Frenette, Y. (2019). National minorities, immigration, and responsibility: French Canada as a case study, 1840–1960 81 [E-book]. In Kehoe, Alisic, & Heilinger (Eds.), *Responsibility for Refugee and Migrant Integration* (pp. 81–97). DE GRUYTER. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110628746

Geiger, M., & Pécoud, A. (2010). *The Politics of International Migration Management (Migration, Minorities and Citizenship)* (2010th ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Gov.gr. (2018). *Εθνική Στρατηγική για την Ένταξη*. Ελληνική Δημοκρατία Κυβέρνηση. https://government.gov.gr/ethnikistratigiki-gia-tin-entaxi/

GRC. (2019). *Έκθεση πεπραγμένων 2019*. Greek Council for Refugees.

GCR. (2020). *GCR - Integration*. Greek Council for Refugees. https://www.gcr.gr/en/our-programs/itemlist/category/61-integration

GCR. (2020b). *GCR - ΜΚΟ και προσφυγική κρίση*. Greek Council for Refugees. https://www.gcr.gr/el/news/press-releases-announcements/item/550-mko-kai-prosfygiki-krisi

IOM Greece. (2020a). *Project Regulations Handbook - HELIOS*.

IOM Greece. (2020b). *Supporting the 'Cities Network for Integration.'* International Organization for Migration. https://greece.iom.int/en/supporting-%E2%80%98cities-network-integration%E2%80%99

IOM Greece. (2020c). *Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International*. International Organization for Migration. https://greece.iom.int/en/hellenic-integration-support-beneficiaries-international-protection-helios

IOM Greece. (2020d). *Πυλώνας της εθνικής μεταναστευτικής πολιτικής το πρόγραμμα "HELIOS."* International Organization for Migration.

IOM Greece. (2020e). *Migrants Stories*. International Organization for Migration.

IRC. (2020). *Greece crisis briefing*. https://www.rescue.org/country/greece#what-are-the-main-humanitarian-challenges-in-greece

Javadi, D., Langlois, E. V., Ho, S., Friberg, P., & Tomson, G. (2017). Intersectoral approaches and integrated services in achieving the right to health for refugees upon resettlement: a scoping review protocol. *BMJ Open*, *7*(8), e016638. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-016638

Jensen, M. N. (2006). Concepts and conceptions of civil society. *Journal of Civil Society*, *2*(1), 39–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/17448680600730934

Kayembe, D. (2019). Understanding the challenges of integration from the refugee perspective. In Kehoe, Alisic, & Heilinger (Eds.), *Responsibility for Refugee and Migrant Integration* (pp. 41–50). De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110628746

King, G., Keohane, R. O. and Verba, S. (1994) Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research. Princeton University Press: Chichester

Korntheuer, A., Gag, M., Anderson, P., & Schroeder, J. (2018). Education of Refugeebackground Youth in Germany: Systemic Barriers to Equitable Participation in the Vocational Education System. In S. Shapiro, R. Farrelly, & M. J. Curry (Eds.), *Educating Refugee-background Students: Critical Issues and Dynamic Contexts* (pp. 191–207). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/SHAPIR9979

Koukakis, T. (2019). "Στα 'Χαρτιά' η Εθνική Στρατηγική Για Την Ένταξη Των Μεταναστών." CNN.gr. https://www.cnn.gr/oikonomia/story/192268/sta-xartia-i-ethniki-stratigiki-gia-tin-entaxi-ton-metanaston.

Koulouris, G. (2019). *Η εκπαίδευση ως εργαλείο ένταξης μεταναστών και προσφύγων στην Ελλάδα*. HuffPost Greece. https://www.huffingtonpost.gr/entry/e-ekpaideese-os-eryaleio-entaxes-metanaston-kai-prosfeyon-sten-ellada_gr_5da85478e4b034f1d69e17e1

Levitas, R. & Pantazis, C. & Fahmy, E. & Gordon, D. & Lloyd, E. & Patsios, D. (2007). *The Multi-Dimensional Analysis of Social Exclusion.*

Levy, J. S. (2008). Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference. Conflict Management and Peace Science, *25*(1), 1 18. https://doi.org/10.1080/07388940701860318

Liamputtong, P., & Kurban, H. (2018). Health, social integration and social support: The lived experiences of young Middle-Eastern refugees living in Melbourne, Australia. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 85, 99–106. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.12.020

Losoncz, I. (2015). Goals without Means: A Mertonian Critique of Australia's Resettlement Policy for South Sudanese Refugees. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, fev017. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fev017

Louka P., Maragou E. (2017). Exploring the supporting mechanisms in shaping the lives and future of immigrant youths in Greece. In Brown (Ed.), *The Shifting Global World of Youth and Education* (pp. 120–129). Routledge.

Metadrasi (2020). *HELIOS PROJECT – Integration Learning Center*. https://metadrasi.org/en/campaigns/helios-project-learning-center/

Ministry of Immigration Policy. (2018). *Presentation of the HELIOS program for the social integration of refugees and immigrants*. Gov.Gr. https://government.gov.gr/parousiasi-programmatos-helios-gia-tin-kinoniki-entaxi-prosfigon-ke-metanaston/

Ministry of Migration and Asylum. (2018). *Εθνική Στρατηγική Για Την Ένταξη*

Mohajan, H. K. (2017). TWO CRITERIA FOR GOOD MEASUREMENTS IN RESEARCH: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY. *Annals of Spiru Haret University. Economic Series*, *17*(4), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.26458/1746

Morville, A.-L., & Jessen-Winge, C. (2018). Creating a bridge: An asylum seeker's ideas for social inclusion. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 26(1), 53–64. https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2018.1500933

Newsroom Iefimerida.gr. (2015, April 7). *BBC: Η Ελλάδα βιώνει ανθρωπιστική κρίση -Εννέα αποκαλυπτικά γραφήματα [εικόνες]*. Iefimerida.Gr. https://www.iefimerida.gr/news/218032/bbc-i-ellada-vionei-anthropistiki-krisi-ennea-apokalyptika-grafimata-eikones

Newsroom Iefimerida.gr. (2020, October 14). *«Helios»: Καμπάνια ευαισθητοποίησης για το ενταξιακό πρόγραμμα για πρόσφυγες - Στους 19.000 οι εγγεγραμμένοι*. Iefimerida.Gr. https://www.iefimerida.gr/ellada/helios-kampania-entaxiako-prosfyges-19000

NGO Pulse. (2011). *A Bundle of Belongings isn't the Only thing that a Refugee Brings to Our Country*. NGO Pulse. http://www.ngopulse.org/press-release/bundle-belongings-isn-t-only-thing-refugee-brings-our-country

News 24/7. (2020). *Το 58% των Ελλήνων θεωρεί τους μετανάστες 'απειλή για την εθνική μας ταυτότητα' - Κοινωνία*. https://www.news247.gr/koinonia/ereyna-dianeosis-58-ellinon-theorei-metanastes-kindyno-alloiosis-ethnikis-taytotitas.7567393.html

OECD (2018), Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees, OECD Publishing, Paris. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264085350-en

Pécoud, A. (2017). What do we know about the International Organization for Migration? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(10), 1621–1638. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2017.1354028

Penninx, R. (2005). Integration of migrants. Economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. In Penninx, Macura, Haug, MacDonald, & A.L (Eds.), *The new demographic regime. Population challenges and policy responses* (pp. 137–152). United Nations.

Penninx, R. & Garcés-Mascareñas, B. (2016). The concept of integration as an analytical tool and as a policy concept. In B. Garcés-Mascareñas, & R. Penninx (Eds.), Integration Processes and Policies in Europe: Contexts, Levels and Actors (pp. 11-29). (IMISCOE research series). Springer Open. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21674-4_2

Penninx, R. & Scholten, P. (2016). The Multilevel Governance of Migration and Integration. In B. Garcés-Mascareñas & R. Penninx (Eds.), *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe: Contexts, Levels and Actors* (pp. 91–108). Springer.

Philips, J. (2015). *Asylum seekers and refugees: what are the facts?* Parliament of Australia. https://www.aph.gov.au/about_parliament/parliamentary_departments/parliamentary_library/pubs/rp/rp1415/asylumfacts

Pozzo, M., & Nerghes, A. (2020). Dutch without the Dutch: discourse, policy, and program impacts on the social integration and language acquisition of young refugees (ages 12–23). *Social Identities*, *26*(6), 842–860. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2020.1814721

Pulinx, R., & Van Avermaet, P. (2017). The impact of language and integration policies on the social participation of adult migrants. In J. Beacco, H. Krumm, D. Little, & P. Thalgott (Eds.), *The Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants L'intégration linguistique des migrants adultes* (pp. 59–67). De Gruyter. https://rm.coe.int/the-linguistic-integration-of-adult-migrants-lessons-from-research-l-i/168070a67f

Silver, H. (2015). The Contexts of Social Inclusion. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1–32. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2641272

SolidarityNow. (2020). *Πρόγραμμα HELIOS: Ένταξη μέσω της Εκπαίδευσης*. SolidarityNow. https://www.solidaritynow.org/helios/

Stasinou, N. (2019). *2010-2019: Η δεκαετία των ανατροπών σε οικονομία και πολιτική*. Naftemporiki.Gr. https://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/1546850/2010-2019-i-dekaetia-ton-anatropon-se-oikonomia-kai-politiki

Toktaú, S., Papadopoulou, A., Paspalanova, M., & Vrecer, N. (2006). Transit and Receiving Countries: Refugee Protection Policies in Belgium, Slovenia, Greece, and Turkey. *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, *5*(1 & 2), 1–31. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/19477

Trein, P., Thomann, E., & Maggetti, M. (2019). Integration, functional differentiation and problem-solving in multilevel governance. *Public Administration*, *97*(2), 339–354. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12595

Tsimouris, G. (2009). *Πρακτικές διαπολιτισμικότητας στη ελληνική δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση: Η εμπειρία των εκπαιδευτικών.* Αθήνα: Κριτική.

https://www.academia.edu/17162432/Πρακτικές_διαπολιτισμικότητας_στη_ελληνική_δευτεροβάθμια_εκπαίδευση_Η_εμπειρία_των_εκπαιδευτικών.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020). *Greece must ensure safety net and integration opportunities for refugees –*. UNHCR. https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2020/6/5ed603924/greece-must-ensure-safety-net-integration-opportunities-refugees-unhcr.html

UNHCR. (2006). *Rights of Refugees in the Context of Integration: Legal Standards and Recommendations*. Http://Www.Unhcr.Org/. http://www.unhcr.org/

UNHCR. (2013). *A NEW BEGINNING; Refugee Integration in Europe*. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

UNHCR. (2020). *Δίκτυο Πόλεων για την Ένταξη*. UNHCR.org.

University of the Aegean. (2020). *Integration Policies, Practices and Experiences; Greece Country Report*. University of the Aegean, Horizon 2020 Programme of the European Union. https://www.respondmigration.com/

Voutsina, K. (2019). Living for years in the Transitory Home: A Case study of Refugees in Town: Athens, Greece. Retrieved from Refugees in Town website: https://www.refugeesintowns.org/athens#about-author-voutsina

Yin, R. K. (2009) Case Study Research: Design and Methods. SAGE Publications Ltd: London.

Ziersch, A., Miller, E., Baak, M., & Mwanri, L. (2020). Integration and social determinants of health and wellbeing for people from refugee backgrounds resettled in a rural town in South Australia: a qualitative study. *BMC Public Health*, *20*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09724-z