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## **MSC IN MEDIA & REFUGEE / MIGRATION FLOWS**

### **Dissertation**

**Title: “European immigration policy. How it is formed and which are the latest developments: The case of Greece”**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the developments that took place in the migration policy of Europe, the first treaties and declarations that were signed and how they have changed till now. The case of Greece is also presented as the latest example of a country that had to deal with intensive migration flows and had adopted and implemented several actions, regulations and policies regarding the integration and inclusion of migrants to the Greek society. It gives an emphasis on the way that migration policy was formed in the years after the migration crisis of 2015. Migrants very often are becoming victims and their human rights are disappearing and this is something that indicates that European migration policies do not succeed to address the refugee/migration crisis adequately regardless of the power that Europe has as a union. Moreover, the legal framework of human rights and the migration policies that EU has taken up in the direction of human rights are also presented, as well as the new pact on migration which has given birth to hope for better cooperation between European countries and therefore for a better and more adequate response to immigration.

The researcher has taken into consideration the literature review and also some interviews that were conducted, and has used the qualitative method in order to answer the research questions. In the thesis there are presented three main points: first of all the historical background of the agreements that have been created all these years and the influence they have on immigration issues, the changes that have taken place as well as the latest agreements that have been created nowadays in order to improve the management of immigration. Additionally, the evaluation of the EU's migration policy towards human rights of migrants is being presented. Secondly, the European policy on migration and the impact that it had on the national policy of Greece is examined and finally the European funds and grants and the programs existing in Greece, regarding the integration and inclusion of migrants/refugees.

In the last chapter, the researcher presents the findings mostly in national level but also in European and states some future recommendations for a more effective European migration policy that will promote inclusion for all and will respect the human rights.

**Keywords:** Human rights, migration, social inclusion, integration, migration policies, EU funds.

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## INTRODUCTION

Migrations was, is and will be a well-known and timeless phenomenon that has affected over the years many civilizations and countries and had caused changes, problems but also developments to societies. It is a multidimensional phenomenon that can happen due to various reasons, such as climate change, war, financial crisis etc. and can affect either positively or negatively several fields.

The century we are going through, has been characterised as “the century of the migrant”. It is a century that is characterised by a continuous human mobility. Some people become migrants and they are moving for reasons of work, others due to the intensive problems that the climate change causes in some areas, other people are forced to leave their countries due to inhumane actions and wars and there is also a last category which consists of the people moving just for amusement, the tourists. So many different people with so different characteristics but they can all somehow be called migrants (Castles, S., De Haas, H., J Miller, M., 2013).

Migrants usually live in terrible conditions, work under pressure and become victims due to their vulnerability. It is very easy for these people to face discriminatory attitudes, to face marginalization and exploitation and lose their basic freedoms and the rights that we are all entitled with. Unfortunately, people that are constantly moving seem to local population less powerful and due to the fact that there is global inequality that differentiates people regarding their country of origin, colour, race class and very often gender it is more difficult for these people to have a normal life (Costello, 2014). This inequality has led to the creation of increased migration flows.

As it is known the European history consists of various migration crises. It is something that happens quite regularly and for which countries should have developed strong institutions and programmes in order to be able to predict when a crisis is to happen, to be prepared to deal with it on time and with correct way and thus to avoid the mistreatment of the vulnerable people that arrive in the European countries and they easily become victims of exploitation.

So, regardless of the knowledge that exists because of the migration history in Europe, in the most recent refugee crisis that occurred in 2015, we saw that Europe was not able to manage this massive influx of people who entered its borders and the existing immigration policies seemed ineffective.

Our country has not managed to remain unaffected by migratory flows. In fact, although in the past and for a long time Greece was a country that mostly sent immigrants to other countries to find work, recently it has been transformed from a country of dispatch to a country of reception of immigrants and refugees, more specifically we could say that it is for these people a gateway to enter Europe. However, Greece was unprepared to manage this new situation. There was no infrastructure, no adaptation programs for newcomers and basically, there were no appropriate immigration policies to deal with this rapid influx of people entering the country. So Greece had to legislate according to European standards, but these too proved to be insufficient. In this thesis we attempt to provide an overview of the

existing migration policies, both nationally and internationally, their history and development in the recent years and also an overview of the legal framework regarding the human rights of migrants/refugees. We will also attempt to present the extent to which is the national policy for the integration of migrants/refugees inclusive or not in the field of labour market and education and also the extent to which EU and national programs about refugees/migrants in Greece contribute to their social integration in the Greek society.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Savvato Tsolakidou for her helpful comments, the guidance and support that she provided. All the participants in the research who dedicated their time to complete their interview and the last and biggest thank you, is devoted to my family who was always by my side to the ups and downs of this thesis and who eagerly and proudly awaited its completion.

## **Part I LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Chapter 1 THE EUROPEAN UNION A PLACE FOR PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS**

#### **1.1 The development of the EU**

The war of 1945-1991, known as the Cold War, had caused severe and catastrophic effects. Europe was completely damaged after this war, morally, economically and politically. The need for peace and cooperation between Member States was imperative. So steadily, the first conditions for the unification of Europe began to emerge. The first “big” step to the unification of Europe was the establishment by six countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Luxemburg and the Netherlands) of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950, which began to unite European countries economically as well as politically in order to secure lasting peace and it was followed by the European Atomic Energy Community (1957) and the European Community in 1958, which was one of the most important steps in the history of European Union. The 1960-1969 period is characterized by a significant economic growth. Charge of custom duties stopped among those EU countries when trading with each other and also in order to assure that there was enough food for everybody, an agreement of joint control over food production was established (European Union, accessed 12 December 2021). Moving on, in the 70’s decade the first enlargement of the community took place. This enlargement continues till today. In 1986 the Single

European Act is signed. Its goal is to unravel and clear up all the problems that had appeared in the free flow of trade across EU borders. Due to the Single European Act the "Single Market" was created. The Single Market consists of four freedoms: the freedom of movement of services, money, goods and people, but it was actually completed in 1993. Finally, 1990-1999 was the period that EU came into its current format and two important Treaties, the Treaty of Maastricht and the Treaty of Amsterdam were signed (European Union, accessed 12 December 2021).

With the treaty of Maastricht, EU rejected its purely economic character, and adopted elements of a political Union, but this Treaty - like the next two (Amsterdam and Nice) - did not repeal the previously signed ones but was in force at the same time. Consequently, the core of Community law consisted of a multitude of provisions scattered throughout more than 5 different texts. As a result, legal certainty was contentious, while it was also impossible for the citizens to monitor and understand the primary law of the EU. Thus the idea of creating a single text that would abolish the rest, and would henceforth be the only fundamental law in the EU legal order was born: the European Constitution. The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was adopted by the European Council on 18 June 2004 and it was signed in Rome. It aimed at simplifying and modernizing the EU legal and institutional framework in order for the Union to be more efficient, transparent and coherent in its external actions, to meet the needs of the latest enlargement and the demands of the new era of globalization; of high technology. However, its constitutional nature gave the impression that it was creating a new "federal" state structure, which frightened some Member States and their citizens, with the result that the Constitutional Treaty was not ratified by one third of the Member States of the Union (Κανελλόπουλος, 2008). However, it has not been ratified by all 27 Member States and thus it never came into force. Following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty, the Member States began the process of drafting the Treaty of Lisbon (European Parliament). The Treaty of Lisbon replaces the abandoned "European Constitution", in particular by amending the existing Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community.

Lisbon Treaty distributes competences in various policy areas (Pavy, 2021). There are:

- **The exclusive competence.** The Union has exclusive competence to make directives and conclude international agreements on: Common Commercial policy, the customs Union, establishing of the competition rules necessary for the functioning of the internal market etc.
- **Shared competence.** The Union in the context of governance co-decides with the Member States on policies such as, the internal market, the Environment, the consumer protection, the refugee and migration policy etc.
- **Supportive competence.** Policies on, the protection and improvement of human health, education and sport, tourism etc.

The European Union in General can be considered as a place of security and peace. Its main goals are to promote sustainable growth based on the price stability, on a competitive full-time market economy and social progress, and on a balanced economic growth as well as the environmental protection. It also aims to promote specific values, the well-being of its citizens and peace and to offer security, freedom and justice without the existence of internal borders. Furthermore, EU promotes technological and scientific progress, tries to strengthen territorial, social, economic cohesion and solidarity among Member States. It fights against social exclusion and discrimination and respects its cultural and linguistic diversity (European Parliament, 2021).

Member States not only implement national policies to manage migration flows, but they also try to develop a common migration policy. Immigration policy can be considered one of the biggest challenges for the common European policy. In order to achieve an efficient implementation of the EU's migration policy, a harmonization between national immigration and asylum policies was necessary. The same harmonization was required to limit the secondary movement of asylum seekers and the so called "asylum shopping". According to this term, third-country nationals apply for asylum and international protection in more than one countries, in order to finally migrate to the one that offers the best living conditions and also higher possibilities of international protection and recognition (European Commission, 2008).

Migration in general has both positive and negative effects and the EU is constantly trying to create a common migration policy among the Member States in order to effectively manage the extensive migration flows and the challenges that States face. According to Sabatakou (Σαμπατάκου, 2010, σ. 59) migration policy is *“the policy that focuses on regulating migration flows to a country and the control of foreigners in that country and the integration of settled migrants, as evidenced by national immigration policies, mainly in European countries”*

The cooperation between the member states was and still is necessary, so during the years, EU has signed many treaties, regulations and declarations to manage migration, which are going to be analyzed in this chapter.

### **1.1.1 European Union, its creation, evolution and competences**

What exactly is the European Union and what are the main agreements and Treaties of which it consists and which contribute to its maintenance will be analyzed below. First of all, EFTA (European Free Trade Association) comprising 4 European countries (Iceland, Lichtenstein Norway, and Switzerland), they are competitive in several sectors (pharmaceutical, new technologies and renewable natural resources) score among the highest in the world in competitiveness, wealth creation per inhabitant, life expectancy and quality of life. They have signed agreements in association with the Schengen countries. EFTA was established in 1960 and it had as aim to promote the free trade and economic integration for the benefit of its members.

The Schengen agreement was signed on June 14, 1985. It is a treaty that was signed in order to create a space where the free crossing of internal borders by all nationals of Member States and also the free movement of goods and services will be allowed. It was actually the cornerstone of creating a space for free movement. Although it appeared much earlier, the contract finally came into force in 1995. In addition to the abolition of internal border controls and the harmonization of rules on external border control procedures, it also includes the common visa policy, common rules for the return of illegal immigrants, police, customs and judicial cooperation, as well as the operation and establishment of common databases (Παπακωσταντής, 2016).

Moving on is, the European Economic Area (EEA). There are 30 EEA countries, 27 EU countries and Iceland, Lichtenstein Norway. As in EU, it is an area of free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.



A Monetary Union (Eurozone) was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 Member States which use the euro currency. The rest of the 8 countries use their own currency (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden).

#### **1.1.1.1 Treaties and their relation with migration**

##### ***Maastricht Treaty***

The Maastricht treaty was concluded in 1992 and is considered as the most significant in Europe because it consists of important cultural, political, financial and social issues and it was also called Treaty of the EU.

What is unique about this Treaty is that it introduced the pillar system (3 pillars), where the first pillar refers to the European Community, the second to the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the third to the Justice and Home Affairs. It is clear that in case of conflict the Community law takes precedence over the national law.

Moreover, the Maastricht Treaty puts a lot of emphasis on the issue of human rights. On its exordium it sets out its basic principles and goals and also makes reference to the human rights, which Member States should fully respect. The provisions of the exordium are primarily symbolic (Ssenyonjo, 2010).

According to article 6 paragraph 2 of the Treaty, “The Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on November 4, 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law” (EUR-lex-TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION (92/C 191 /01 ), accessed 12 December 2021).

According to this treaty legal migration is mainly acceptable in cases of family reunification and in cases of residence for humanitarian reasons. Immigration and asylum policy has become the center of the third pillar «cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs» (Βαρβιτσιώτης, 2006). Member States should co-operate on entry and residence issues, on measures to tackle illegal immigration and short residence and finally on issues related to the illegal work activity of third-country nationals. The truth is that the Maastricht Treaty did not actually evolve the European immigration policy. However, the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty were the starting point of a united immigration policy, which until then had been based on the principle of solidarity between Member States.

##### **THE TREATY OF AMSTERDAM**

The Treaty of Amsterdam although it was voted in 1997, it came into force in 1999. The aim is to create an area of security, freedom and justice. This goal replaced the previous one introduced by the Maastricht Treaty on the establishment of an area of justice and home affairs. It has explicitly stated that EU is based on Human Rights

and Democracy. "Union is based on the principles of freedom, Democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States (EUR-lex-Treaty on European Union (consolidated version), accessed 12 December 2021)." The Amsterdam Treaty reformed article 6 so as to consolidate the principle of respect for human rights. New provisions were introduced concerning equal treatment of men and women. Finally there were also some reports of the abolition of the death penalty, respect for the status of churches and/or non-denominational organizations, as well as the needs of disabled persons (EUR-lex-treaty of amsterdam (97/c 340/01), accessed 12 December 2021).

What is happening referring to migration issues? According to article 63, paragraphs 3&4, immigration policy is responsibility of the European Union. The responsibility for policy development that originally belonged to the third pillar eventually joined the first.

It promotes the harmonization of the policies of the Member States involved in the areas of asylum, migration, law and control of the external border, within a period of five years after the beginning of the Treaty.

According to this Treaty, States remain sovereign in protecting their internal security and they can set out new national rules and regulations, if these rules do not contradict with the EU Treaty or other international Conventions. In case a State considers that there is danger or an emergency situation due to a sudden influx of third-country nationals it has the capability of taking temporary measures lasting maximum six months.

### **The Treaty of Nice**

The Treaty of Nice is considered to be the first official move in the relationship between the EU and the Human Rights. It was signed in 26 February 2001 and finally came into force in 1<sup>st</sup> February 2003 (European Parliament-Treaty of Nice, accessed 12 December 2021).

What is important in the Treaty of Nice in terms of its relation to Human rights is the amendment of article 7 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and the introduction for the first time of the Charter of Human Rights. The Charter of Human Rights is an extensive list of individual freedoms and rights and also of political, social, civil and economic rights. Nevertheless, it proved to be hard to develop the necessary consensus among the Member States on the binding nature of the Charter. So, Member States decided not to make the map binding and to give it the form of a non-binding declaration on the EU and its member's commitment to human rights. (Heffernan, 2002).

Article 7 of the Treaty of Amsterdam provides for sanctions from the European Community against Member States that infringe on Human Rights. According to the Council, a serious breach of the Fundamental Rights principles by a State referred in Article 6 of the Treaty of Amsterdam can be determined "unanimously after a proposal of 1/3 of the Member States or by the Commission and after the assent of European

parliament". However, this was practically an extremely difficult procedure and it did not have the expected results (Twomey, 1999).

### The Treaty of Lisbon

The Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community was signed at 13 December 2007 and came into force in 2009 (EUR-Lex-Treaty of Lisbon 07 c/ 306/01, accessed 12 December 2021). The Lisbon Treaty not only introduced new rights but also preserves the already acquired ones. In particular, the Treaty guarantees the principles and freedoms set out in the Charter of the Fundamental Rights and makes the provisions of that Charter legally binding in regard with political, social, civil and economic rights. This Treaty incorporated the Charter of Fundamental Rights in EU primary law.

According to article 62 EU's migration policy has three main goals:

- a) To ensure the control of persons crossing the external borders.
- b) To eliminate when crossing internal borders the control of persons regardless of their nationality.
- c) To set up an external border management system

Member States have jurisdiction over the geographical delineation of their borders in accordance with the international law.

By this Treaty, the Council and the European Parliament are able to take measures which refer to:

- a) The entry and residence of illegal migrants, as well as measures for their deportation and repatriation.
- b) The establishment of the rights of third country nationals who are legally residing in Member-States, such as the right of free movement within the EU.
- c) The fight against human trafficking. A main goal is the protection of vulnerable children and women.
- d) The conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals and also rules concerning long-term residence and family reunification.

The Treaty of Lisbon covers almost all the dimensions of migration and sets their implementation as the goal of the Union. The only aspect of migration that remains the sole responsibility of the Member States is the determination of the number of legal third-country nationals entering EU in order to find work.

### 1.1.2 Human rights

The EU has indeed committed itself to promote democracy, the rule of law and human rights (Lerch, 2021). So, some of the main goals are, first of all to promote political, social, economic and cultural rights. The second goal is to oppose to the death penalty, human trafficking and torture and also discrimination. No one has the right to mistreat, expose, and hurt someone with any possible way and to end someone else's life. Furthermore, another EU goal is to defend the Universal character of human beings by developing active and continuous cooperation with international organization and regional as well, partner countries and also associations and groups that are representative of the whole society (European Union-Human rights and democracy, accessed 12 December 2021) and finally to promote the rights of children, women displaced persons and minorities. European Union focuses on vulnerable groups and tries to support them with any possible way and preserve their dignity, health and normal way of living. It also tries to diminish discriminations and racists attitudes towards those vulnerable groups.

EU reports present that protecting and promoting human rights, should be a top priority worldwide and EU law itself is committed and working hard for this goal to be achieved in the Union.

So, as it has been already pointed out, the protection and promotion of rights is in some way guaranteed among residents of different Member States of the Union.

Rights such as:

- i. The right to vote and be voted in the European Parliament elections and also in the elections of municipalities in their Member States.
- ii. The right of free movement and residence in a Member State.
- iii. The right to be referred to the European Parliament, to be addressed to the advisory and institutional bodies of the Union in one of the languages of the Treaties and also receive a reply in the same language, and the right to appeal to the European Ombudsman.
- iv. The right to enjoy in the territory of a third country, in which it does not represents the Member State of which they are a national, diplomatic and consular protection of each Member State, under the same conditions which also apply to nationals of that State (EUR-lex-Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union 2012/C 326/01, 2012).

However, as migration movements increase it is of great significance to study and present the human rights that are guaranteed to third country nationals.

The last few years, a very crucial issue that concerns the EU and pertains to the field of human rights is the issue of massive migration flows that enter the territory of European Union. The problem with these migratory flows is that they are irregular and illegal and so, the Member States that are hosting these people are facing serious problems with the implementation of human rights. These people have an urgent

need to secure their rights, as they often face behaviors of violence, racism, nationalism, intolerance and social discrimination.

Articles 1, 14, 31, 35, 47 of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of EU ensure the fundamental rights that must be fully respected by all Member States (Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union 2012/c 326/02, accessed 12 December 2021). Those rights include services such as health care, access to health services and also care especially for pregnant women and children, provision of necessary medicines and access to the educational system (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2011).

- **Article 1:** Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected.
- **Article 14:** 1) Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training, 2) this right includes the possibility to receive free compulsory education, 3) the freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles and the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children in conformity with their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions shall be respected, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of such freedom and right.
- **Article 31:** 1) every worker has the right to working conditions which respect his or her health, safety and dignity. 2) Every worker has the right to limitation of maximum working hours, to daily and weekly rest periods and to an annual period of paid leave.
- **Article 35:** Everyone has the right of access to preventive health care and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all the Union's policies and activities.
- **Article 47:** Everyone whose rights and freedoms guaranteed by the law of the Union are violated has the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal in compliance with the conditions laid down in this Article. Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal previously established by law. Everyone shall have the possibility of being advised, defended and represented. Legal aid shall be made available to those who lack sufficient resources in so far as such aid is necessary to ensure effective access to justice (EUR- Lex, 2012).

In most cases, illegal immigrants cannot make use of these rights, as they are more directed at legal immigrants. Furthermore, in the majority of the EU Member States the irregular migration control mechanism is linked to the provision of social services and this creates a fear among irregular migrants that interaction with the public authorities of the host State may lead to their arrest and deportation.

As a result, irregular migrants continue to live for years in miserable living conditions, in an irregular situation and they often become victims of violence and exploitation.

### **1.1.3 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its relation with the European Union and migrants**

The Universal Declaration of Human rights was adopted on 10 December 1948 and includes issues about human rights. Actually, it is a milestone document in the history of the human rights and it has been translated into hundreds of languages (United Nations). The UN Charter which was signed on 1945 had as aim to respect and promote human rights and freedoms without distinctions as to religion, race, language and sex but it had never mentioned and never elaborated on what really constitutes human rights. Thus, it was deemed crucial after the entry into force of the Charter to draft an international bill of rights. However, at that point there were some crucial issues, such as the escalation of the Cold War that led to the decision to draft a non-binding document that would be later accompanied by a legally binding covenant (European Parliament, 2018). This Declaration became the first global document on human rights, setting a common standard for all nations, worldwide. The Declaration supports the inalienable character of individual human rights.

Generally it includes political, economic, civil, social and cultural rights. To name some of them, the right to free speech, social security, liberty, education, life, health and privacy.

Although, the document does not have a binding character, the rights contained in the document have been organized in a series of international human rights conventions. However, in many countries their implementation is considered to be imperfect and there are also other countries that have not yet ratified them. Not all rights are vested by the Declaration, but a significant part of them and these rights generally represent international law and so they are universally binding. The UN General Assembly supports this statement by citing that all UN member states should protect and also promote the fundamental freedoms and the human rights, exactly as they are elaborated in the Declaration.

The drafters of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the so called ECHR which was signed in November 1950, used the Declaration as their main reference. The EU is obliged to accede to this Convention through its Treaties. Many articles of the ECHR usually refer to the Declaration and also the Declaration is referred in the preamble of ECHR.

The Declaration plays a unique role in guiding EU external policies and in organizing the way EU deals with fundamental rights. The relationship between the Declaration and EU is obvious in article 21 of the Treaty of the European Union which mentions that EU external policies have to encourage the universality, which as we already know is the heart of the Declaration. EU has made great progress on human rights, many

articles have been banned and others have been added. Examples of such rights are the ban on cloning the human body, the prohibition of the death penalty, the right to personal data protection.

The extension of all these articles of the Universal Declaration to vulnerable social groups, such as migrants or even people with disabilities, has proven to be an extremely tough procedure. Especially for migrants, the recognition and approval of their human rights faces a lot of resistance and we could even say that all these efforts made by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be considered as incomplete.

Nowadays, migration flows are very common and very common as well are the violations of migrants' rights. The legitimate application of the human rights regulations to non-citizens, in many countries is generally insufficient and it becomes even more serious and inadequate in cases referring to illegal migrants. The most common current phenomena include incidents of exploitation, abuse, extensive violence and also malevolence towards migrants (Appleyard, 2001).

The legal framework exists and the EU itself has created various Treaties and regulations that refer to the rights of these people but, as it is obvious all of these laws are not really into force. More specifically the problem of their implementation lies to the national law of each Member State.

Taking as an example Greece, where the procedures of granting asylum are extremely slow, we understand that all these people who live in Greece while waiting for their residence permit and asylum to be approved, are actually living in an illegal environment and they can be easily mistreated and can experience the violation of their basic human rights.

There are also cases where migrants/refugees, have succeeded to cross borders, however, due to their fear of being deported, they do not address to the authorities and they do not dare to assert on their rights (FRA- Οργανισμός Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης).

Furthermore, in Greece the majority of asylum seekers and migrants stay temporarily in camps where the living conditions are awful. What are the main rights that those people do not have access to?

Firstly, the right to be educated. Children of migrants do not have access to the national educational system of Greece. Even in cases that the parents have granted their residence permits or asylum and the children are getting accepted to the official education system of Greece, they often face difficulties in being accepted by their classmates and when they finally succeed to go to the school they become victims of racism and they give up. Hopefully, the last few years NGOs or other organizations organize classes of Greek language or other important lessons so as to make the integration of these children easier. The aim is to learn basic words in the language of the host country in order to be able to communicate with their peers, because when people face difficulties in communicating then it is very possible racist reactions or mistreatment to rise towards them.

Articles 28 and 29 of the UN focuses on the rights of the child. More precisely, they claim that every child has the right to be educated and get a high quality education (UNICEF).

Secondly, the right to justice. There are a lot of irregular migrants that are not getting paid in their jobs or are physically abused. These migrants have to deal with various problems; they face difficulties in going to courts or other justice services as most of the times their work is not declared, due to the fact that they do not have the appropriate documents. Thus, they continue to be victims of exploitation.

Finally, there is also the right of access to health care. In many countries, as well as in Greece, some health services are free for the legal residents of the country, so in many cases irregular migrants have to pay, in order to receive health care, even if it is an emergency. If they do not have the money, they cannot receive health care. However, this is in contrast with Article 24 of the United Nations Treaty and Article 12 of the United Nations Convention, which refer to specific age group (children) and conditions (pregnant women). Hopefully, in the case of Greece health care is provided to migrants (UNHCR).

## **1.2 European policy on migration and its impact on national policy**

One of the main aims of the European Union is to have an actual and comprehensive migration policy that will be based in solidarity. Migration policy in general, aims to establish a balanced approach that will deal not only with legal but with irregular migration as well (Schmid-Drüner, European Parliament, 2021). However, EU makes an effort to define a balanced approached regarding immigration. This means that it attempts to manage with a balanced way regular migration and in the meantime fight irregular migration.

In the EU which is considered to be an area in which Member States share the same fundamental values and also a joint approach to assure high standards of protection for refugees, EU countries have to welcome asylum seekers and make sure that they are treated in a fair way and their cases are being examined under the defined standards. This is a shared responsibility among Member States and it ensures that wherever an asylum seeker applies the outcome will be alike and the procedures will be implemented in an effective and fair way throughout the EU. Also, EU promotes the collaboration with non- EU Member States in various fields, in order to combat irregular migration and prevent actions of smuggling and trafficking.

Migration is a field which most of the times is related with “multi-level governance” on the EU (Marks G., Scharpf F., Streek W. and Schmitter P. , 1996). Migration policy was never constricted to single national ministries as it affects a great variety of policy areas, such as: social and foreign affairs, economics and labour. Generally, decisions



concerning the entry and stay of refugees/migrants are usually taken at national level. However, there are many problems, as many times the division of responsibilities in different ministries is not done in the right way and so the implementation of the respective policies is not successful.

More precisely, before 2009 there were a legislative framework but there was not an actual migration policy. The need to create an immigration policy became imperative after the financial crisis of 2008 and more specifically after the migration crisis which took place in the Mediterranean in May 2015. The truth is that even nowadays migration policy may not be helpful but it is convergent and a lot of effort is made to establish a common policy among Member States. This chapter puts emphasis on the latest developments of migration policy in Europe and also it presents the way these developments affect Member States and more specifically Greece.

### 1.2.1 The Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

Since 1999, the EU has established a common European asylum system. However, in 2020, the European Commission proposed to reform this system through an inclusive approach to asylum policy and migration based on three main pillars: 1. Solidarity & fair share of responsibility, 2. efficient asylum & return procedures, 3. strengthened partnerships with third countries. This common system was established under the shared responsibility that EU countries have in order to welcome asylum seekers, ensure a fair treatment towards them and ensure that their case is examined properly (European Commission-Common European Asylum System, accessed 12 December 2021).

CEAS intends to create collaboration and specific standards to make sure that all asylum seekers are treated equally and fairly wherever they apply. This system is consisted of five main instruments and one agency. These are:

1. **THE RECEPTION CONDITIONS DIRECTIVE:** Guarantee that common standards for reception conditions, such as food, accommodation, education, health care etc., are given for asylum seekers throughout Europe to guarantee a good standard of living in agreement with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.
2. **THE DUBLIN REGULATION:** It intensifies the protection of asylum seekers throughout the operation of indicating the State responsible for examining the application, and defines the basic rules governing the relations between states. A system that detects early problems in national reception or asylum system is constructed and it also directs their root causes.
3. **THE ASYLUM PROCEDURES DIRECTIVE:** Its goal is to create the appropriate conditions for rapid and equitable asylum decisions.
4. **THE EURODAC REGULATION:** It holds up the resolution of the Member State that is considered to be responsible under the Dublin Regulation, it permits law enforcement authorities to entry the EU database of fingerprints of asylum

seekers. This access is allowed only under specific circumstances, so that serious crimes and actions of terrorism could be prevented.

5. **THE QUALIFICATION DIRECTIVE:** It explains the reasons for granting international protection. Another field to which it implies is the provision of access to rights and integration measures.
6. **THE EUROPEAN ASYLUM AND SUPPORT OFFICE:** Assists to the implementation of the CEAS by Member States, by implementing trainings, providing emergency assistance, information and third country collaboration activities.

### 1.2.2 Dublin Regulation

The Dublin Regulation is a European law that controls which member state is in charge of the examination of an application for asylum that has been submitted within the EU. It is considered to be the cornerstone of the Dublin System. The Dublin System consists of the Dublin Regulation and also the Eurodac Regulation, that sets up a fingerprinting database for unauthorized entrants to the EU that is available to all member States.

#### **Dublin Convention (Dublin One):**

On 15 June 1990 the Dublin Convention was signed but it actually came into force in 1997 for the first 12 signatories. However this Treaty was not only extended to other EU member States but also to some other countries outside the European Union. Nevertheless the Dublin Convention was replaced after some years, in 2003 by Council Regulation (Dublin II Regulation, Regulation (EC) No 343/2003, accessed 12 December 2021).

#### **Dublin II Regulation**

The new regulation set up the basic principles and specific criteria and mechanisms that determine which Member State has the responsibility to deal with the asylum application of a specific person. It also forms the principle that only one Member State is responsible for examining an application. The goal is to ensure that an asylum seeker will not be sent from one country to another and that the system will not be abused by the submission of more than one applications by one person.

So there are some determined criteria that should be applied in a certain order, exactly as they are presented in the Regulation and also on the basis of the state existing at the time that the person seeking asylum first lodged his application with a Member State. Those criteria are:

- The principle of family unity
- The Issuance of residence permits or visas
- Illegal entry or stay in a Member State

- Legal entry in a Member State
- Application in an international transit area of an airport (EUR-Lex-Dublin II Regulation 343/2003, 2011)

### **Dublin III Regulation**

The whole idea of the “Dublin” system relies on the fact that the asylum practices and laws of the EU Member States are based on the same common standards. Asylum seekers have the opportunity to enjoy equal levels of protection in all Member States. Nevertheless, the truth is that asylum practice as well as asylum legislation vary a lot among different Member States and so, asylum seekers are not treated in the same way everywhere.

So the absence of harmonization led to a reform of the Dublin II. Firstly, it must be pointed out that in an evaluation of the Dublin II in 2008, the European Parliament observed that due to the aforementioned lack of harmonization, *“the Dublin system will continue to be unfair both to the asylum seekers and to Member States”* (UNHCR). Thus, in December 2008 the European Commission proposed some modifications to the Dublin Regulation.

The Dublin III was approved in 2013. The principle saying that the first Member State where an asylum claim is lodged or the fingerprints of an asylum seeker are stored, is the one that is responsible for a certain asylum application is valid in all three regulations. It contains the laws of Dublin II that refer to not transferring to a country, where the asylum system has fainted. It has the same words as the current case law about Greece, so it does not widen the principle, but it does not try to back away from it either (Swinfen, 2013). Actually there are not a lot of differences, but Dublin III includes some improvements from the point of view of the asylum seeker.

To begin with, there are some new rules that refer to how asylum-seekers have to be treated under the Dublin process. They should always be informed about the process before it begins and then they will have a formal interview. During the interview an interpreter can help them if needed. Moving on, with Dublin III the asylum seeker has the right to appeal against a Dublin decision. It is an innovation that did not exist in the previous regulations.

For the first time, a general rule about detention is presented in Dublin III. According to this rule people should only be detained if there is a “significant risk of absconding”. Another innovative change is that the time period of waiting within a country in order for an asylum application to be examined has faced a reduction. In the past people were waiting for long periods and this was making them more vulnerable and more often victims of exploitation and bad treatment as they did not have legal papers and so they were not able to stand to the society as the locals, they were presented as not having rights and treated like they were not human beings. With this time-frame reform, this is exactly what the authorities want to ameliorate: To protect them and provide them with more humane treatment.

In July 2017, the European Court of Justice confirmed the Dublin Regulation, announcing that it still stands despite the high migratory influx of 2015. Member States have the right to move migrants to the first country of entry to the EU. However, this regulation sometimes can be proved to be a little bit problematic, as countries such as Italy and Greece that receive many migratory flows and are actually the first countries of entry have gathered a lot of migrants in their territory and they are facing problems dealing with these huge numbers of migrants, while the other EU Member States refuse to undertake and accept some of these people.

#### 1.2.2.1 Eurodac

The Dublin Convention which declares that asylum application should be formed in the first country of entry into the EU, was created in 1990, after two years Germany decided to establish a fingerprint database of people requesting asylum in different parts of Germany. This means that even 10 years before the establishment of Eurodac, the idea of “asylum shopping” was identified and needed to be solved as it was actually a very serious problem for Member States (THALES, 2020).

So, Eurodac creates an EU asylum fingerprint database. By this way it enables Member States to contrast the fingerprints of people that have apply for asylum, so that they can check if those people have previously entered the EU irregularly via another EU Member State or they have applied for asylum in another country. Eurodac is considered to be one of the most significant tools for the Dublin Regulation, as the fingerprints included in the database can provide all the necessary information about the moves of a specific person and thus it is easier for EU countries to determine responsibility for examining an asylum application.

Generally the data included in the Eurodac database are secure and protected. However, for purposes of prevention or investigation of important crimes and terrorist acts and of course under strict circumstances, the fingerprints of Eurodac are given to Europol and also to EU Member States’ law enforcement authorities, so that they will be able to contrast the fingerprints with others that are linked to criminal investigations.

The transmission of the fingerprint data has certain time limits. This happens in order to ensure that a person or an asylum seeker that was arrested in connection with the irregular crossing of the external borders is registered on time in Eurodac (European Commission).

Except of fingerprints in terms of Eurodac biometrics are also used. “Biometrics allows a person to be identified and authenticated based on recognizable and verifiable data, unique and specific” (THALES , 2021).

### 1.2.3 European Agenda on migration

The European Agenda on Migration was published by the European Commission in May 2015. This Agenda tried to control some immediate challenges and provide the EU with some necessary tools in order to be able to manage migration in a more efficient way.

European Agenda on migration was created in order to manage the migration crisis, in the means of solidarity and share responsibility between the member states. What the agenda depicts is the significance of saving the human lives of migrants, which are daily in risk.

The agenda has two main key actions:

- i. It proposes a perpetual European system for the relocation of emergencies. In more details it proposes that all member states should be able to collaborate and share responsibility when it comes to humanitarian issues and to the international protection of people such as migrants.
- ii. This Agenda is considered to be a document that restricts the migration challenges and also puts emphasis on the importance of creating a comprehensive European approach that can add together external and internal policies.

In April 2016 the commission published the guidelines of this agenda on asylum and on regular migration. There are four main strands to the guidelines as regards regular migration policies:

- a. Putting limits to the motivation of irregular migration, an effort to find out the push factors that lead people to leave their countries and also strengthening cooperation with the key countries of origin, with a view to ensuring legal pathways to the EU while at the same time improving returns of those who have no right to stay and better manage the borders
- b. An effective border management. FRONTEX plays a vital role to the securitization of the external borders. It has a double role. First of all it helps saving migrants lives at sea and secondly it provides border support to the member states
- c. Revising the Blue Card Directive. New policy on legal migration and more specifically an effort to attract highly qualified people.
- d. A common asylum policy, creation of better reception conditions. The whole procedure for the asylum will have to get renewed (Schmid-Drüner, European Parliament , 2021).

### 1.2.4 The role of Frontex

Frontex is the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and it can be considered as one of the most vital parts of Europe that help to safeguard the area of freedom, justice and security. It was created in 2004 and it provides help to the surveillance of external borders and organizes the cooperation in the field of border management.

The support that Frontex provides to the external borders assists to guarantee free movement without internal borders.

The main goals of Frontex are to: 1. guarantee safe, secure and well-functioning EU borders, 2. reduce vulnerability of the external borders based on comprehensive situational awareness, 3. plan and maintain European Border and Coast Guard capabilities.

The last years it has its own border guards and equipment and thus it constitutes a reliable partner for the national authorities of EU Member States. It helps them deal with a variety of serious challenges at their borders but also it plays a supportive role to new emergency circumstances.

Frontex has as aim to monitor whatever is happening on the external borders of a country, to find out where support is needed and finally to know how to deal with every single circumstance. It does not act as a single entity but in order to take action it always cooperates with national authorities, EU institutions and other organizations and agencies (Leggeri, accessed 12 December 2021).

Greece cooperates with Frontex with an operation called Poseidon. This Operation supports Greece with registration and identification capacities, border surveillance, combating of cross-border crime and also saving lives at sea. This specific Operation covers the areas of the Greek sea borders with Turkey and the Greek islands; however, Frontex was also present and offered its help in the events that took place on the Greek borders of Evros in 2020.

In the past some organizations criticized Frontex about the detention facilities that it has on the Greek-Turkish borders but in response the agency created a Consultative Forum on Fundamental rights. In regard to this, Frontex was able to communicate to the European Commission the existence of any irregularity and violation of fundamental human rights.

### **1.2.5 New pact on migration and asylum**

On 13 September 2020 the Commission presented a new pact on migration and asylum, which would make the procedures of those two faster and fairer. This Pact addresses border management and ensures more coherence to integrate all dimensions (Internal and external) of migration policies. It also sets in balance the principles of fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity. With this pact, people would not have to wait for long periods of time under uncertain and harmful, inhumane conditions. Changes would also take place in the legislative frameworks and in administrations.

Differentiation starts from the borders as there would be a pre-entry screening procedure, an asylum and if possible a return procedure. The common EU returns system, aims to support the integration and return sponsorship solidarity measures but to this point, is important for member States to have links with third countries.

The new EU Agency for Asylum will provide support and assist the procedure of monitoring the asylum systems and will cooperate with FRONTEX and the Fundamental Rights Agency while, the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation will 'push' Member States to present some national strategies, according to the migration management. Additionally, a new screening regulation will exist, that will ensure the identification of persons and include health and security checks. The operations of Eurodac database will work as usual. The whole procedure for the asylum should be completed in a period of 5 days maximum, this is really in contrast with the procedures that have been followed before this pact. With the new pact, once the procedure has finished (in maximum 5 days) the asylum seeker/migrant would be immediately informed of the decision.

Moving on, a very important role in the future migration management would play the screening procedure, which would use monitoring procedures and guarantee the compliance of the fundamental rights. For this scope, an installation of an independent monitoring mechanism that will be part of the governance is necessary.

Every year, it will be published by the commission, the annual Migration Management Report. This would present results and if necessary propose improvements. For the success of the new migration management various fields and tools of the EU will be included (European Commission, 2020).

With the entry into force of this program and if it will operate according to all its principles and regulations, it is expected that it will be quite beneficial for Greece, which for many years has been facing serious problems due to the intense migration flows.

### **1.3 The European funds and grants for the integration of migrants in Greece**

The effective integration and inclusion of migrants in the EU is considered to be an economic and social investment that can make the European Societies more prosperous, cohesive and resilient. For this reason, on 24 November 2020 the European Commission proposed an action plan on integration and inclusion. This new plan does not only cover third country nationals but migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background as well. Its basic principle is "*inclusion for all*".

Moreover, EU tries to help migrants and the host countries as well in any possible way and thus, it has created some important institutions, organizations and programs that have as aim to manage the funding procedures. EU funds supporting initiatives related to migrant integration are available to various stakeholders.

#### **1.3.1 Evolution of the Greek migration and asylum policy**

Greece is located at such a point that it is the connecting road of Europe with the refugees coming from areas such as Syria, Afghanistan, etc. Greece is the first country of reception for the majority of migrants/refugees.

In the period of 90's migration in Greece was considered to be something illegal that could be considered as criminal/cruel action. Thus the authorities considered that a good way in order to reduce this criminal action was to set a penalty of imprisonment for the people that tend to enter the country illegally and work unofficial. This penalty had a duration of up to five years (lafazani, 2018).

After some years, in 1998 Greece took the decision to legalize some migrants and allow them to work and reside in Greece, but with the hope that this will last for a short period of time and then they will be sent to other European countries. Regarding this decision, the Greek government created a three year action plan which referred to the social inclusion and integration of migrants and was advocated by the European commission and the European social fund. This plan aimed to the integration of migrants especially into the labour market and the provision of medical care.

This plan succeeded a lot of improvements in the field of migration as it made the conditions of family reunification easier and moreover, it tried to prevent migrants from smugglers and victimization, by creating a new law which settles strict punishments for the smugglers (2910/2001, 2001). The law itself was very complicated and in combination with the lack of appropriate personnel it was difficult to be implemented. For this reason in 2005 a new law for managing migration issues came up. The law 3386/2005 which dealt with issues such as the social inclusion of migrants and their residence. In accordance with this law many people got short period residence permits.

Although Greece has faced various times the entry of migrants and refugees in 2015, the country faced a massive influx and unfortunately it wasn't ready to deal with it. The whole situation was more difficult because of the financial crisis that the country was also facing. However, regardless of the inefficiencies the country tried to provide the new comers with all the essentials (medical care, temporary residence, instructions about social programmes etc.) In this difficult situation Greece was financially supported by the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), the Internal Security Fund (ISF) and the Emergency Support Instrument (ESI).

Local authorities, national and international organizations and the government attempted to set up as fast as possible accommodation and reception facilities and provide migrants with important items such as hygiene products, food and clothing in order to protect them.

In the following paragraph we will analyse the procedure of the integration and inclusion of migrants and the main areas of intervention.



### 1.3.2 Integration and Inclusion of migrants and the main areas of intervention

Supporting anyone who is part of a society (e.g. local people) or tries to be part of a society (e.g. migrants), can be beneficial not only for these people but also for the EU societies. This idea promotes a basic EU principle “an inclusive way of life”. This means that all people, considering the disadvantaged ones should be treated equally, their rights should be respected and they have to participate in community and social life, regardless of the background and in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights. Integration and inclusion can, and should be a win-win process that will benefit the whole society. However, the integration process does not include only efforts and procedures by the host country but by the migrants themselves as well.

The new action plan on integration and inclusion 2021-2027 proposes some measures by which the EU and its Member States in general will be able to bring most added values and have a greater impact. These actions complement the ones that are included in the recent equality strategies (EUR-Lex, 2020). The main actions in the plan are:

#### **i. Inclusive education and training**

From early childhood education and care to tertiary and adult education and non-formal education is the foundation for successful participation in society and one of the most powerful tools for building more inclusive societies. It is the most efficient way of integration both for children and their families. So countries are constantly trying to increase the participation and include more and more migrant children in their educational system. For this reason they ensure that the programs that refer to these children are properly equipped to serve culturally and linguistically diverse children, with the hope that all these efforts will lead to a positive impact firstly on their future educational achievement, which include learning of the host country’s language and secondly to the easier integration of their families and parents. Children are able to learn easier new things and for this reason they are considered to be capable of helping the older members of their families integrate, by teaching them basic words or important information about the host country that they themselves have learnt during the supportive educational programs.

The teachers selected for this purpose are able to teach to multilingual and multicultural environments and give more emphasis and attention to refugee children who are starting an acquaintance with a completely new language and a new culture. In order for the education system to be more inclusive, teachers try to foster the interaction between local and migrant children and to fight exclusion.

Local authorities also make easier the recognition of qualifications received in third countries, they promote their visibility and increase their compatibility with the ones acquired by EU institutions. Complementary classes are promoted to migrants in order to be easier included into the labor market and to be able to use their skills.

#### **ii. Improving employment opportunities and skills recognition**

Over the years, migrants have been an important part of EU's workforce. They are equipped with specific skills that are needed in the labor market of the host country, however, very often they face significant difficulties in finding jobs and having their skills recognized and appreciated. Women migrants, as well as migrants with disabilities face more obstacles in finding a job and it is crucial to address these obstacles and create equal chances for every person.

Nowadays, some Member States have developed some innovative tools in order to quickly assess the skills of migrants; this quick assessment leads to a more quick integration. Migrants entrepreneurs with their special skills can create beneficial for the country jobs and contribute to its economy. Nevertheless, due to the lack of knowledge of the financial and the regulatory framework they face several difficulties such as difficulties in accessing credit and lack of networks. So, it is essential to provide migrants with all the financial information needed.

Moreover, in order to have effective inclusion of migrants into the labor market, an active cooperation of various actors is required. In these actors are included civil organizations, public authorities at local, European, national and regional level, social and economic employers and partners. A helpful tool for the inclusion in the labor market could be the Vocational Education and Training.

### **iii. Promotion of access to health**

Insufficient access to health is considered one of the most crucial obstacles to integration and inclusion, due to the fact that it can affect various others fields, such as education or employment.

### **iv. Access to housing**

Countries give access to migrants, to adequate and affordable housing. When the housing conditions of migrants are good, then their integration is easier and also it helps them to better interact and communicate with the host communities. On the other hand when the housing conditions are not good migrants have fewer opportunities to education, labor market and interaction with the host communities.

#### **1.3.2.1 Integration and inclusion- the case of Greece**

Greece has its own National strategy for migration and in July 2019 it proposed a new model of integration and inclusion that has its basis on the social model of integration and is adjusted to the dynamics and oddities of the Greek state and society. The ultimate goal of this model is to promote the principle of interculturalism.

The main question here is, to what extent is the national policy for the integration of refugees who have been granted asylum is inclusive or not in the field of education and the labor market?

### **a) Promoting integration in education**

The integration of the children of migrants, applicants and beneficiaries of international protection in the education system, the non-formal learning of children and the lifelong learning of adults are key priorities of the Greek National Strategy for integration.

The integration of migrant children in the education system of the country is supported by the institutionalization and the strengthening of the operation of intercultural schools (N. 2413/1996 και N. 4415/2016) and the establishment and operation of reception classes and tutoring departments, as well as the Reception Structures for Refugee Education (Governmental decision – Φ10/20/Γ1/7-9-99, N. 3879/10, Υ.Α. Φ1/63691/Δ1/2017). Adults are able to attend the so called “second chance schools”, in order to obtain a degree that is equivalent to the diploma of high school. After this, they are able to continue their studies at the next level.

A project called “Education of immigrants in the Greek language, Greek history and culture -Odysseus” was organized by the Foundation for Youth and Lifelong Learning of the Ministry of Education and had as aim the acquisition of language skills and intercultural skills to achieve linguistic and cultural understanding. This project refers to both EU citizens and third-country nationals.

The last few years, Greece faces a new challenge that refers to the inclusion in the official education system both of adults and minors. For this reason the ministry of education has created a group that is responsible for the coordination and organization of educational programs that refugees attend and it has also created a Special Scientific Committee which aims to support young children.

In addition to the programs created by the state, many NGOs and other organizations play a key role in educating refugees, as they include in their actions educational programs. More specifically NGOs try to teach and educate refugees mostly by non-formal learning activities, such as recreational activities, knowledge games and other projects which are more relaxing but can promote learning. So, all NGOs nowadays include in their teams tutors, educational advisors, teachers, group animators etc.

Summing up, the measures recommended by the state refer to:

- The implementation of language learning programs
- The appropriate information and training of teachers and also raising the awareness of parents and students and the local community in general. It aims to promote harmonious intercultural coexistence inside and outside school
- ensuring access to all levels of education
- The modification of the framework for the recognition of qualifications as well as to the promotion of the integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection into the education system (Υπουργείο Μετανάστευσης και Ασύλου, 2019).

Significant progress has been made in the field of education; however, there are still a number of problems related to delays in the opening of reception classrooms and school dropouts mainly in higher classes. Another problem is the recognition of diplomas, which despite being proposed has not yet entered into force.

#### **b) Promoting labor market integration**

Finding a job is fundamental in order to participate in the economic and social life of the country, thus, employment is a key element of the integration process. Facilitating migrants to access the labor market, improves its economy and has a positive impact on the viability of the insurance system, the workforce as well as the welfare system. In order to avoid conflicts in social cohesion issues, it is necessary to properly match the skills of immigrants with the needs of the labor market.

In accordance with the Greek law, one of the basic conditions for smooth integration into the labor market of individuals legally entering the country is employment in jobs that are not covered by the domestic workforce. Moreover, third country nationals have the opportunity to take part in educational programs for adults that have to do with the vocational training and employment, under the same conditions that apply for the locals, if they possess a valid residence permit.

The state has also created specific programs that support entrepreneurship. It promotes the contribution of third country nationals to the economy, through their participation in the labor market by accessing microcredit programs as well as the possibility of participating in businesses and programs in the context of the socially solidarity economy.

The national strategy of integration, aims to promote the employment of migrants in rural areas work, for which they are occasionally recruited farm workers from neighboring countries. It also promotes employment in processing services. The main aim of this action is empower beneficiaries by enhancing the chances of a decent living and generally their smooth integration in the Greek society, by supporting in the same time the local agricultural cooperatives, which meet their seasonal needs by inviting temporary staff from other countries.

Migrants are mostly employed in jobs that are not covered by locals. This can create an environment of discrimination and contradiction.

#### **1.3.3 EU funds and their contribution to inclusion and integration**

One of the priorities of the European Commission is to support EU Member States' action in integration and inclusion by providing them some EU funds. These funds are divided in two main categories. On the one hand there are the funding instruments under shared responsibilities. These instruments include the Asylum Migration and

Integration Fund (AMIF) and also the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). On the other hand, there are the direct management (competitive programs) which includes for example, Erasmus+ programs, the EU program for Employment and Social Innovation, the Health for Growth program etc.

Refugees/migrants are not the first to receive this funding. The direct beneficiaries most of the times are State or federal authorities, NGOs, international public organizations or public/private sector entities, regional and local public bodies, education and research organizations etc.

### 1.3.3.1 EU Funds for migrants in Greece

In Greece as in many other European countries the EU funds are its basic tool to deal with the extensive migratory flows. During the period 2014-2020 according to the European Structural and Investment Funds Open Data Portal Greece had a total budget of 27.87 billion Euros, with a national contribution of 4.88 billion Euros (European Commission, 2021). Some basic funds are:

- i. **ESF (European Social Fund):** The main aim of ESF is to help people find the best job for them, to reduce equality and promote social and economic cohesion and to ensure fair job opportunities and living standards for every person, disadvantaged or not.
- ii. **AMIF (Asylum Migration and Integration Fund):** Greece has granted 1.18 billion Euros from AMIF to better manage migration flows in the fields of integration, asylum legal migration and returns (European Commission, n.d.).
- iii. **ISF (Internal Security Fund):** It helps to better protect the safety of the EU's external borders and the security of its citizens as well. Greece has granted 415.4 million Euros from ISF.
- iv. **ESI (Emergency Support Instrument):** It provides support to large humanitarian needs when a Member State is incapable to take action. Greece has benefited 643.6 million Euros (European Commission, 2020)

According to the Status of the beneficiary, these people are able to receive support in different type of actions under the three main funds (AMIF, ESF, FEAD) but the support varies according to their status.

For example, people that just arrived in the Union has no access to ESF support, receive food and basic material assistance by FEAD and a great variety of benefits from AMIF, such as, food, clothing, assistance at the border, accommodation, education, language training, counseling on asylum procedures etc. While beneficiaries of international protection receive training, counseling and coaching support from ESF, preparatory actions to facilitate access to the labor market, training, self-empowerment from AMIF and food assistance, basic material assistance and social inclusion actions from FEAD.

As a conclusion, it is noticeable that EU supports Greece financially through its institutions so as to deal with migration and provide equal opportunities to all migrants/refugees in order for them to be more easily integrated in the host society and have all the essential goods in their new beginning.

### **1.3.3.2 The new program of EU funds for migrants' integration for the period 2021-2027**

EU did not only proposed a new pact for migration which creates new “rules” in the field of migration management but it also proposed changes to EU funds supporting integration. These changes refer to the implementation of EU budget over a period of seven years 2021-2027. So what are the changes to be made?

First of all changes will take place to the AMIF. AMIF will be renamed to Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF) and is going to have an expansion in the amount of the available funding. The main area, to which it will focus the most, will be the measures that will be implemented in the early phases of integration, but with a special contribution to the civil society, as well as to the regional and local authorities (EUR-Lex-Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 COM/2020/758 final, 2020). Transnational projects will be allowed to be financed only in cases that the funding is directly managed by the commission. The funding will be distributed to a specific EU country through the National Programs that States implement.

Changes will also take place to ESF, which will be renamed ESF+ after it will be fused with the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the EU Program for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), the Health Program and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). This fusion will take place in order to make the access to funds easier. 25% of ESF+ funds are expected to be routed for initiatives on social inclusion and fighting poverty, as well as to a general focus on labor market integration. So this will lead the ESF+ to become the primary source for medium- and long-term integration initiatives (European Commission-EU funds for migrant integration in the 2021-2027 period, accessed 12 December 2021). ERDF assists inclusion through access to services in education, infrastructure, social health, equipment, housing and child care.

Generally, the regional and the local authorities have a major role in the integration process of migrants/refugees, however, a lot of times they face problems to implement and take integration measures as they lack of resources or they do not have the appropriate access to the EU funding.

So, what is the actual aim of this new program? First of all, the European Commission wants to make the potential beneficiaries more aware of the funding opportunities for integration at the EU level. It also aims to reinforce partnerships with local and regional authorities or even other specific stakeholders in programming and

implementing EU funds. The process of accessing EU funding is going to be simplified and innovative tools will be used for financing integration activities.

## Part II METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

### CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Research purpose and sub-objectives

The purpose of this dissertation and research is to study the migration policies that exist and are implemented both at European and national level in Greece and also the extent to which these policies are in accordance with the humanitarian standards and we will try to analyse basic EU concepts and programs in the aspect of human rights .In particular the aim is to present educational, vocational training and other types of programs that help to the integration of immigrants into the host society and to analyze, the extent to which the European Union provide financial support for the implementation of these programs. Greece is a very important country for the migration issue, as its position makes the country one of the main entrances of migrants in Europe. So our research will focus mainly in the case of Greece.

The main motivation that led to the choice of this issue was the continuous migration flows arriving in Greece and more specifically, the fact that for many years now it has not been possible to provide an appropriate and truly efficient solution to such an important problem of humanitarian importance.

First of all, the research focuses on three main research questions which are the following:

**RESEARCH QUESTION 1-** How the European policy is formed for refugees/migrants and to what extent does the European Union's policy ensure the protection of migrants under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2-** To what extent is the national policy for the integration of refugees who have been granted asylum inclusive or not in the field of education and the labor market?

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3-** To what extent EU and national programs about refugees/migrants in Greece contribute to their social integration in the Greek society?

The main aim of this research is to explore and analyse the perceptions of the interviewees regarding the living conditions of migrants and refugees in Greece. Their thoughts about the reasons that led those people to flee their countries and about the national policies and the programs that exist and take place in order to manage the integration and social inclusion of these people into the Greek society. Another field of interest that will also be analysed is the protection of migrants' rights, especially under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Are those rights ensured and protected or not?

### **2.1.1 Importance of research**

As the literature review has shown over the years and as migration is a timeless phenomenon, they have been created and it is easy to identify them, many laws relating to immigration policy, many articles and amendments which refer to the protection of the human rights and from time to time, many funds and other funding bodies have been set up for newly arrived refugees, aiming at their faster and smoother integration into the new society.

The importance of this research, the aims of which have been mentioned above, lies in the fact that it presents in detail the majority of the developments that have taken place and also tries to present the problematic points and the reasons that may delay the integration of immigrants or create progressively new distinctions (e.g the integration of immigrants into jobs not usually covered by locals and not in jobs for which they have the needed skills).

The present study therefore wants to focus on existing policies and programs, identify areas for improvement and, after talking to people who have daily friction with refugees, suggest solutions and ideas for future changes.

### **2.1.2 Research method**

The method adopted for conducting a research depends on how suitable it is for the object to be studied (A. Strauss, J. Corbin, 1998). Thus, the qualitative method was used to achieve the purpose and sub-objectives of this dissertation, because it was considered the most appropriate for the collection of information and data regarding the development of specific events and the daily life of people (mainly immigrants).



Important features of qualitative research are that it has a normal flow and to a large extent is not directed by the researcher. The researcher who follows the qualitative method observes, interviews and records facts and data exactly as it is in reality (E.A Παρασκευοπούλου-Κόλλια, 2008). In addition, through qualitative methods, the researcher can aim at what the experience they are talking about means to the interviewees. This means that it can make them go deeper into the subject. The qualitative approach therefore concerns the observation and interpretation of the reality of the subjects. In other words, it deals with the way in which social reality is experienced and formed.

The researcher who follows a qualitative method interviews, observes, takes notes, describes and interprets the phenomena exactly as they are. When working on the field under study, the researcher is always active, because quality methods require the use of all those elements that the researcher encounters. That is, comments from those who have something to do with the subject, the way people sit or talk, as well as other things that only he observes (Eisner, 1991). The purpose of the research during the qualitative approach is not the control of already formulated questions but the discovery of the dimensions and aspects of the examined phenomenon-object and its in-depth understanding (Τσιώλης, 2011).

### **2.1.3 Interview type, questions and sample**

In this research paper the semi-structured interview and the open-ended questions have been used. This method was chosen as it was considered more appropriate for there to be an interaction between the researcher and the respondent, as the interview will not be strictly structured. It is the most flexible form of interviewing and allows one to delve deeper. According to Tuckman, interviews give the opportunity to "enter" what is going on in the mind of each respondent (Tuckman, 1972). The interviews show the knowledge and information that the respondent possesses on a specific topic, what are his preferences and values, what he likes and what he does not and most importantly, what he thinks, what exactly are his ideas and perceptions. It also allows the researcher to draw in-depth information especially in the case of social attitudes, values and behaviours, as well as to explore issues that were not previously defined due to the immediacy that existed (Ιωσιφίδης, 2008). As for the questions posed in the interview, they were open-ended and were intended to set the respondent free and without any pressure to answer the questions asked. These types of questions are used in both structured and semi-structured interviews. In the present research, no guiding questions were used, which would force the respondents to agree with the researcher's point of view, nor any other questions, which could offend the respondent's values.

One of the most important parts in a research is the choice of the participants. By them the researcher is able to collect valid information and data and moreover to interpret the findings and the meanings of their actions and experiences. In qualitative research there are many different types of samples, such as purposive and convenience sampling, the snowball and quota. Each time, the size and the type of the sampling depends on the researcher, his needs and the things that he would like to examine.

In this dissertation, the researcher selected the purposive sampling in order to be able to collect as much information as possible about, the human rights of migrants and whether they are sufficiently protected or not in the host countries, the extent to which migrants can be integrated to the educational system of Greece and the labor market and also to collect data about the existing programs for the inclusion of migrants and the actions that should take place in order to make the integration of these people easier. It is a method where the researcher can rely on his judgement for the selection of participants and it is also used in cases where only a few individuals are aware of the situation and can provide information about it (Dudovskiy, n.d.)

The sample we chose for the survey consisted of 10 individuals who came from different backgrounds but who are all related with migrants and in daily contact with them. People who work in fields related to migration and also volunteers who helped migrants in various detention centers during their arrival and their first stages of integration in the new society. The selection of participants from different work fields and positions were made purposely because we wanted to have a more comprehensive image of the subject and we also wanted to compare the different views that may exist.

**Demographics of participants:**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>WORKING FIELD</b>	<b>RELATION WITH MIGRANTS</b>
Participant no.1 (p1)	Male	Border guard	Daily contact with migrants/refugees
Participant no.2 (p2)	Male	Civil servant	work in a public body dealing with immigration
Participant no.3 (p3)	Male	NGO worker	Coordinator of Escorts of Unaccompanied Minors and Victims of Sexual Violence

Participant no.4 (p4)	Female	Private employee	Volunteer at a refugee reception centre
Participant no.5 (p5)	Female	Lawyer	Volunteer at a refugee reception centre
Participant no.6 (p6)	Female	Freelancer	Volunteer at the Malakasa Hospitality Center
Participant no.7 (p7)	Female	Municipal employee	Data Management Officer and Communication Officer in the “ESTIA” program
Participant no.8 (p8)	Female	Intercultural mediator	Work in a refugee and immigrant reception centre
Participant no.9 (p9)	Male	Border guard	Work in a pre- departure detention centre for foreigners
Participant no.10 (p10)	Female	Social worker	Work in camp

The interviews took place either via mostly via emails except of two that were conducted with a skype meeting due to the fact that some of the interviewees were far from the place of residence of the researcher and also because of the covid-19 and the fear that some interviewees had. Email interviews were easier as the researcher did not need to record them, as the answers were in printed form but unfortunately many times the answers were short or even one-word answer. Another obstacle that we faced was the fact that many of the participants answered with a delay.

#### 2.1.4. Ethic issues

The anonymity of the participants is the first priority in order to keep their personal data protected. Although it was clear from the first time from the researcher that there will be anonymity, the majority of the participants asked for it as well. It is very

crucial for the researcher to take into account the ethical issue that can appear during every research, at the time of the analysis, the data collection and generally in every step of the research.

#### **2.1.5. Research limitations**

In this specific research, the researcher came across these limitations:

- a. The small sample size, with only 10 participants. This sample size is quite restrictive, as it cannot be considered representative of the total population and as a result the researcher is not able to make generalizations and find more information.
- b. The short answers in the interview questions that made it difficult to draw conclusions and analyse the answers.

The researcher is obliged to inform the readers about the limitations existing in the research and also make clear the way that these limitations could harm and affect the conclusions of the research conducted (Olufowote, 2017). It is very likely that when there are research limitations the results and conclusions can alter regarding these limitations.

## **PART III DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Chapter 3 RESULTS AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.1 DATA ANALYSIS/RESULT ANALYSIS**

In this last chapter, we are going to analyze the findings of the data that we have collected. We are going to interpret the results, draw conclusions and finally present some future recommendations.

Due to the fact that for this interview we have access to interview transcripts we decided to use the thematic analysis for the interpretation of our results and the better understanding of our interviewees' opinions. This method can be used in order to give more data and examine different aspects of one subject regarding the participants' sayings and can also be used in order to make a comparison between the views of the participants (Boyatzis, 1998). It is in addition to the researcher's pleasure to change the research procedures, according to the needs that arise at any given time. The thematic analysis is considered more usable for those who are not used with qualitative methods (V. Braun and V. Clarke, 2006). The researcher read carefully the answers of the questionnaires and tried to analyze the results by creating codes and themes. As Braun and Clarke (2006) have mentioned in their work, the researcher after having defined and named the themes and codes, continued with the production of the report, the presentation of the results of the data that have been interpreted and the definition of the codes.

## European migration policy and the protection of migrants' human rights

What it is presented in the first part of the research, is the results that derived from the first research question of this dissertation which referred to the way that the European policy is formed for refugees/migrants and to the extent to which this policy ensures the protection of migrants under the universal declaration of human rights. In the first table, there are presented the thematic categories and the codes that the researcher used for the answers of the questions 1-4. We also present the frequency, which derives from the incidence that a code appeared in an answer.

**TABLE 1: Codes and thematic categories of research question 1**

<b>EU MIGRATION POLICY &amp; HUMAN RIGHTS</b>	<b>FREQUENCIES</b>
Human rights are not sufficiently protected	10
Migration is the way to survive	8
The inclusive way of life in EU does not really exist	7
Changes should occur to the legal framework	7
Human rights are protected under the EU's legal framework	5
Migrants' human rights are being violated but migration is their only hope	5
Many migrants do not have a serious reason to migrate	5
Dublin regulation is innovative but has also a lot of insufficiencies	4
The New Pact on Asylum and Migration has not yet any results but has raised hope	3
Reception, repatriation and return system is lacking	3
Lack of shared responsibility	3

Contradiction between the existing legal framework and reality	2
Greece is considered only as a transit country	1
Greece designs policies that don't persuade migrants to reside permanently	1
Not only migrants but the host society as well has rights that we should not forget	1

According to the answers that we received, the majority of the participants claim that the migrants' human rights are not sufficiently protected in general. However, there were some participants answered that they are protected under the Dublin Regulation and the New Pact on Asylum and Migration, but they made it clear that changes should occur to the existing framework in order to be more sufficient. Although there were a lot of similarities there were some details that differentiate the participants.

**The first participant (p1) tried to give more "safe" answers due to the field that he works and preferred to mention that the people that work with refugees respect and protect migrants' rights:**

P1: "I consider that every employee in any pre-departure center or detention center respects human rights under the agreements."

**The second participant (p2) agreed with the first in terms of the protection of human rights and also gave us some more details regarding the Dublin Regulation and made a distinction between its positive and negative aspects:**

P2: "the human rights of refugees are adequately protected under the EU framework, but the Dublin Treaty has two aspects, the positive and the negative. The positive aspect is that these people are being identified and continue to enjoy the full rights that an immigrant may have in a foreign country at all levels. However, the negative aspect of this treaty is that it traps migrants in the EUs' first host country, which most of the times is Greece. [...]However, this has the effect of stacking large numbers of immigrants in a small country such as Greece and not being evenly distributed in all EU countries. It is not possible for a country of 10 million to have three million immigrants!"

**Participants 4, 5, 6 claimed that the rights of migrants are not adequately protected. Although their answers had some similarities, all participants gave different justifications and other details regarding their knowledge. Also (p5) and (p6) agreed**

**with (p2) in the idea that the Dublin regulation is innovative, has offered a lot of benefits but they also it creates obstacles and changes should be made as it does not give the freedom to migrants to move and live at the areas that they want. It seems that it doesn't protect them as they are trapped and forced to live all together:**

P5: "I don't believe that are treated as humans and that their rights are protected. [...] On the other hand, the new pact on Asylum and Migration is something new that has brought hope, both to the countries that all these years have had to deal with the great amount of migrants coming to their territory and for the migrants as well, as it presents that from now on there will be a shared responsibility among EU member States, and thus people will not have to stay in one and only country (such as Greece) and endure living in the camps."

**(P7) Put more emphasis on the New Pact, claiming that it hasn't brought the expected changes to the existing legal framework:**

P7: "Although I believe that the primary objective of the new Immigration and Asylum Pact was to improve policies and address the gaps and disproportionate obligations that have been identified over the years between EU Member States, I do not consider that the rights of refugees are adequately protected. I am talking mainly about the part of the reception of the newly arrived population, their returns and repatriations."

**(P8) Agreed that their human rights are not protected and also pointed out the humiliation and the violation of their rights:**

P8: "When migrants come to Greece or to every EU country that they end as migrants, most of the times they become victims. [...] Also these people mainly live in terrible conditions in the camps, in tents, enduring the cold and lack of a real home environment."

**The answer of the ninth participant (p9) was closer to (p1) as he mainly referred to the people that work with migrants and the respect that they give to their rights under the existing policies. Regarding the New Pact on migration he claimed that we are not able to judge it, as it is something brand new:**

P9: "Based on my work experience and the attitude of my colleagues towards immigrants, I could say that their rights are protected under the agreements. Everyone, working in every field that deals with migration respects the human rights of these people and try to help them with every possible way. The New Pact on Asylum and Migration is something completely new for everyone, so we cannot judge if it is something that will work successfully and provide solutions."

Furthermore, the research showed that there is a contradiction between the participants regarding the reasons of migration. The great majority referred to migration as a way of survival but there are also others who claimed that behind

migration there are other reasons as well that they are not clear but lead people to flee their countries regardless of the conditions that they will face in the host country and they justified their answer by giving examples as the fact that the majority of migrants are men and also that they are not coming from countries that they are in war.

Also, in the most frequent answers we found out that one of the main EU principles "*an inclusive way of life*" doesn't really apply regarding the existing policies. Migrants seem to be excluded from the society and they should put a lot of effort in order to come over the racist attitudes and the burdens that did not allow them to take part in the social life.

**The first participant (p1) claimed that migrants come to Greece because of the hard conditions in their countries, however, Greece has its own problems and so it is not the perfect destination:**

P1: "Due to living conditions in all third world countries, these people seek better living conditions through immigration. But due to the hard economic situation that Greece as a country faces, is difficult to offer them what they need, so it is not the best choice for them".

**(P2) & (P3) agreed on the fact that the reasons behind migration are complex and that many people do not have an "excuse" to migrate, as they do not live in war countries:**

P2: "I believe that the vast majority of illegal immigrants have no reason to leave their country as they are not in a state of war except for a few exceptions such as some areas of Syria. [...] Other reasons why many of these people immigrate are that they have committed a criminal offense in their home country and since the legal framework for sentencing is strict, they leave to avoid arrest. In conclusion, there are countries that are really affected by the war and the immigrants from there have a reason to flee and that is why their asylum application is almost always approved.

P3: "Asylum seekers do not leave their countries in order to be detained in pre-departure detention centers or open structures. I think the causes of refugee and migration flows are much more complex".

**Participants 4, 5, 6 & 7 believe that these people made the correct choice to migrate because it was their only chance to be saved. Moreover (p7) emphasize on the poor living conditions and the ongoing conflicts in their countries:**

P7: "No refugee has chosen to leave his country of origin. Instead, they were forced to leave their homes behind due to poor conditions, ongoing conflicts in their regions and fear of death for themselves and their families".

**Participant 8 agreed with the previous 8 but highlighted the conditions that migrants live in the host society in order to present their need to survive and migrate:**



P8: “The choice for someone to leave a country where their life is in constant danger is always right in my opinion. But certainly the conditions in the Identification Centers and Camps are not good. We could say that main human rights are humiliated.” [...]

**Participants 9 and 10 support that of course there are people in need but there also other who could have avoid migrating due to the lack of serious reasons:**

P9: “In most cases it was a solution of necessity so that people could survive. So such a choice cannot be considered wrong even if the conditions in which these people live are not ideal. Of course, among this large number of people entering the country there are many who do not take immediate risks and choose the path of migration for other reasons that are unfortunately not clear, but certainly for them it's not a solution of necessity”.

**Moreover, participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 all support the idea that the inclusive way of life is unknown:**

P8: “it is applied to the minimum extent. Powerful European countries that could help refugees close their borders and refuse to accept, to protect and receive those people who are really in need [...].The whole system lags behind in many areas and certainly the existing policies need to be reviewed and made more practical.”

**On the contrary, participants 2, 7, 10 agreed that this principle applies to a large extent and migrants are included in the European world:**

P2: “In an equal society governed by equality, egalitarianism, parity, everyone should be treated the same. The host country should respect and socially assimilate the immigrants, but the immigrants should also adapt to the new data in the new laws and customs of the place without demanding from the host society to change as they are hosted there! [...]I think this applies to a large extent.”

This answers with the lower frequency are part of complementary details that participants added to their answers.

## **THE NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND LABOR MARKET**

In this part, we are going to analyse the answers given for the second research question, which referred to the national policy for the integration of refugees and the extent to which this policy is inclusive in the field of education and the labour market. Table 2 presents the codes and frequencies of the answers regarding the questions 5-6.

**TABLE 2: national policy and inclusion in education and labour market**

The national policy is not inclusive	10
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An improved national policy	9
Learning the Greek language is essential	9
Personal will should exist	3
Improvement due to self-organization	3
The state does not pay attention to the education of migrants	2
The “imprisoned” migrants and an environment with few opportunities	2
A strict national policy	1
Migration during pandemic	1

Regarding the second research question, all the participants answered that a lot of improvement and many changes have taken place over the years to the migration policy of Greece. The asylum procedure has become faster and as we mentioned in the literature review, Greece nowadays has a well-organized action plan regarding the inclusion and integration in comparison with the policy during the pick of the refugee crisis in 2015-2016. However all participants agreed that despite the changes that have been made the policy is not inclusive or we could say it was created to promote inclusion but it is not implemented in the right way. More specifically:

**(P3) claimed that migrants are unable to join the labour market or the education system due to the conditions that they live:**

P3: “Progress has been made solely on the entry of some funds through the UN and the EU that have enabled substandard infrastructure. [...] Migrants are mainly “imprisoned” in the camps so they do not have the opportunity to find a job or for the children to attend school as the local children. So we can say that more progress should be made and that we are still far from the inclusion of these people.

**The tenth participant (p10) has the same idea, he presents the changes in the asylum system but claims the living conditions for the lack of inclusion:**

P10: “I don’t believe the living conditions are better and the national policy is inclusive. How can we refer to an inclusive policy when thousands of people are closed in camps and pre-departure centers?”

**The second participant (p2), although he claims the improvements and the experience that the Greek state has made, he refers to the large number of migrants and supports that this is the reason that the national policy can’t be totally inclusive:**

P2: “The Greek Government is clearly more experienced and tolerant than in the past. [...]The quality of life is inversely proportional to their number. As a reference, the

asylum process is clearly less time consuming and a bit stricter than in the past. As for their integration and inclusion in education and the labour market, progress has been made mainly in the labour market not so much in the field of education.

**The fifth and fourth participants (p4, p5) agreed to the point that if there wasn't the self-organization of the migrants who are organizing by themselves educational and other type of activities these people will never have done anything as the state does not give them much attention:**

P4: "There are a lot of migrant communities who organize lessons or other recreational and vocational activities in order to get closer to the culture of the host country but all these do not happen because of the national policy but, due to the effort that the migrants themselves put on, in order to feel that they are part of our society."

**The seventh participant (p7) told us that the Greek policies do not aim to an effective inclusion. She made reference to the benefits of learning the Greek language as well as to the HELIOS program which supports integration and also the ESTIA program which offers normal living conditions to migrants and finally pointed out that the participation in such programs depends on the personal will of migrants as well. At this last point about the personal will the (p9) also agreed:**

P7: "I do not think that the policies implemented by Greece are oriented towards the effective integration of refugees and especially those who have been granted asylum. The only integration program for recognized refugees is the HELIOS program, which is at the discretion of the refugees themselves whether or not they will join it [...]. Learning the Greek language for adults should start from the first days of their reception and living whether they are in a camp or in a program like ESTIA."

**The second participant (p2) referred to the learning of the Greek language as a priority for the easier inclusion and integration:**

P2: "The learning of the Greek language, culture and history should be taught to immigrants in order to be able to better embrace and assimilate the Greek culture that will have as result their assimilation by the Greek society as a whole. Unfortunately, such actions are not done to the extent and with the gravity that should be done. Learning the Greek language should be a priority!"

**Participants 6, 8 and 10 claimed that not only educational activities such as the learning of the Greek language and other similar classes should be organised, but there should also be organised other vocational and recreational activities that help migrants to connect with the local people:**

P6: "Greek language learning programs are very important, because they help in their integration. However, there are not the only. Many other activities can take place, one of them is that these people can participate in programs and actions either cultural or

environmental (e.g. walks in nature or historical places with tour guides or tutors), that way these people will feel more welcome, will learn easier about the way of living of the host society and their integration will be a lot more easier.”

### **EU AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN THE GREEK SOCIETY**

In this last part the researcher is going to present the answers for the third and last research question, which was about the national and EU programs and the way that these programs contribute to the integration of migrants/refugees in the Greek society. Questions 7-10 were related to this research question and the table 3 presents the codes for the most frequently answered themes.

**TABLE 3: INTEGRATION IN THE GREEK SOCIETY (SUPPORTING PROGRAMS/FUNDS AND COOPERATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS AND STATES)**

Better migration management under the cooperation of EU / International organizations and States	10
Education as a key to integration	10
ESTIA fully supports integration	6
The need of job opportunities	6
Not fair distribution of EU funds	5
AMIF and its vital role	3
Right management of EU's migration funds	2
A strong migration policy in Greece	1
Local population should not be set aside	1

The two most frequent answers showed that EU already cooperates and should continue to cooperation with international organizations and all the EU member states in order to better manage the migration issue and all these flows that constantly enter its territory. However, many participants, pointed out that a lot of changes should occur and that the existing policy and the way these institutions collaborate it's not sufficient and totally beneficial for the migration issue. Also they made reference to the education and more specifically to programs for learning the Greek

language and highlighted that this is the key for their integration. Education is the most beneficial tool!

Many participants also claimed that except from the education, the provision of more job opportunities is necessary in order to include these people to our society and way of life. Although there are a lot of insufficiencies and many things should change some important programs exist that fully supports and promotes integration with the services and all the things that they provide (ESTIA fully supports integration-6times, AMIF and its vital role-3times) and these programs really help the public entities and Stated to overcome burdens and better manage migrants and their needs. Finally, regarding the question for the distribution of EU funds and if this distribution is done correctly and help migration management and integration, the majority of the participants answered that it is not fairly done and more improvements should be made (Not fair distribution of EU funds-5times).

The lower frequent answers, depict the unique thoughts that some participants had. First of all only two of them consider that the EU funds are fairly distributed and the institutions and organizations that receive these funds really help migrants and offer them opportunities for a better future. Also there are two one-time answers, the first is from p7 who claimed that Greece has built a strong migration policy over the years, and the other from p9 who insists that the needs of the local population should not be overlooked due to the large waves of migrants entering and the attention they receive to meet their needs.

**The first participant just mentioned that EU do not need to collaborate with international organizations:**

P1: "EU do not have the need to collaborate with international organizations. What it really needs is the collaboration with the state organizations."

**The second participant put emphasis not only to the collaboration but also to the secure of a sustainable funding:**

P2: "[...] EU needs a lot of funds, thus it is necessary to receive help from other organizations so that it can ensure the existence of these funds."

**The third participant focused on the role that the cooperation with international organizations can play during emergency cases:**

P3: "States are not able to undertake this difficult situation on their own. So collaboration between many entities is mandatory. Cooperation between international organizations and states can ensure faster and more efficient solutions to emergency situations such as migration crisis."

**Participants 4-5 focused on the role of funding. More specifically the fifth participant pointed out that States should create common rules, which will help them cooperate and manage better migration:**

P5: “[...] A way to achieve this cooperation is the creation of common rules and laws that will be respected from all the cooperating members.”

**The sixth participant mentioned that shared responsibility between countries is necessary and the only way to achieve their cooperation:**

P6:” this cooperation will be achieved with the shared responsibility among member States. As long as countries such as Greece will have to deal with big number of migrants, while others don’t. There won’t be trust between countries and other organizations as well and as a result this cooperation will never be successful.”

**The seventh participant talked about a national policy of Greece and the assistance that Greece needs due to the various issues that has faced the latest years:**

P7: “[...] This country has built a strong migration policy with a lot of rules and regulations, but because of the economic crisis that Greece was facing during the pick of the migration crisis, as well as because of the very big amount of people arriving every day in Greece it is necessary for this country, to have a strong cooperation with international organizations which will help to migration management and also receive the support from the EU and its funds.”

**The last participant (p10) talked about the assistance that international organizations have already provided so that they could ensure safe living and the better integration of migrants and he also made reference to the need of funding from these organizations and a total cooperation:**

P10: “. Some international organizations have helped very much willing to ensure safe living and integration conditions. This help should not be interrupted. Funding from the stronger organizations to the weaker countries and their administrations is necessary in order have the best results.”

Regarding the integration of migrants/refugees and the actions that should be taken in order to be faster and more effective, all participants mentioned that educational activities and more specifically lessons for learning the Greek language should be organized. Also there were many who talked for more job opportunities and others that mentioned housing and better provision of better living conditions in general, in order to make them feel more welcome.

**Participant 6 and 10 claimed that education is the most important tool for integration. P10 said that is should be a priority, while the sixth participant highlighted that we shouldn’t speak only for children education but for adult education as well. She also mentioned something that nobody else thought about, the psychological support that we must provide to some migrants in order to free them from the traumatic experiences they may have suffered, which do not allow them to be liberated and feel part of our society:**

P6: "A lot of emphasis should be given in the education, not only for the children but for the adults as well. Education in all stages in order to broaden their horizons. Something else that should be provided, is the psychological support to the persons that have faced traumatic experiences and although they may be provided with all the necessary things that one may need in order to better get integrated, they face difficulties because they refuse to accept the existing situation and they live with a constant fear."

P10: "Education! It should become the priority of the Greek state [...]."

**The ninth participant also supports education but told us that the state is absent in the organization of such programs and hopefully there are some NGO's which really help to this field:**

P9: "The creation by the state of effective educational programs for both adults and children of refugees. Unfortunately, to date, such programs are created only by NGOs and the state is in obscurity, it is as if there is no real state care for refugees."

**The eighth participant focused more in the job opportunities for migrants and not so much to education, claiming that proper jobs can motivate them to be part of our society and it will make them feel more welcome:**

P8: "Programs that motivate the integration of these people in Greek society, that prepare them properly to enter the labour market and be able to claim working positions that match their skills and not inferior jobs."

**Finally four participants (p7, 4, 5 and 3) referred to housing, however, p4 gave us the more interesting idea, that we should not provide shelter and houses to migrants away from the big centers and cities, but we should include them to our neighbourhoods:**

P4: "It is very important to provide these people with housing not in the rural areas, but in the neighbourhoods together with the local people in order for them not to feel excluded."

Participants were also asked about existing programs that help to migration management. As a result, the majority pointed the ESTIA program as the most important of all while a few said that AMIF has a very crucial role in migration management. The program HELIOS was also mentioned by two participants but it is not so well known and effective as it is up to migrants' personal choice whether they will take part on it or not (P7, P8). Moreover there were also two participants who weren't aware of the existing programs that help to the integration of migrants.

**As for the funds coming from the EU the majority of the participants claimed that are not fairly distributed and that changes in their management should occur.**

**Participant 2 talked about unfair fund distribution and provided examples such as the bad services that we provide to migrants:**

P2: "I consider that unfortunately the funds provided by the EU to the Member States are not reimbursed and distributed fairly and correctly and the majority of them are absorbed by NGOs and individuals related to the reception of refugees whether it is food and basic goods or health and others. This is also distinguished from the often cheap and opportunistic means or materials used in the structures for housing and other services, from the means used by the Greek police to protect / monitor these structures which are also lacking."

**Participants 1 and 7 were the only ones who talked about a correct funding management. The seventh participant presented the beneficial action of NGO's and other organizations and municipal services:**

P7: "Based on my experience and involvement in a service that manages the reception of refugees, I consider it important that in this area are mainly involved municipal services, but also some NGOs, who have properly managed the money given to refugees and for actions related to both their housing, their health and other actions that promote their integration into society. [...] The involvement of stakeholders, especially state and municipal bodies, is necessary in the management of Community funds, as they also gain experience in crisis management, they know better than anyone the needs of their areas and their problems, improve their social structures by filling gaps and focusing on people without discrimination. Finally, due to the bureaucratic procedures of the public, there is more transparency in the management of money. I believe that refugees are not the direct beneficiaries of funding, as they do not have the judgment and knowledge to manage money properly to help them plan and integrate into society."

**Finally participant 3 did not have an opinion regarding this issue, while the eight participant seemed confused and undecided on the specific issue:**

P8: "On the issue of funding, there have been occasional cases of irregularities and mismanagement of resources, but in my experience, many NGOs as well as other bodies have done a considerable amount of work on the refugee issue."

### **3.2. INTERPETATIONS OF THE RESULTS/ CONCLUDING REMARKS**

In this final chapter, we will present the findings to answer the research questions of this thesis. It can be considered as the most important part of the thesis due to the final conclusions and the more in depth interpretation of the results.



## EU's policy and the protection of migrants' Human rights

We started this thesis by making an overview of the EU's creation and the evaluation of its migration policy through the main Treaties and agreements that were created. It was clear through our analysis that the Union wasn't dealing effectively with asylum and migration issues. The first treaty (Maastricht) that dealt with asylum procedures, very soon after its implementation was presented as insufficient as its policies weren't binding and almost nobody followed them. Although its provisions were the starting point of a united migration policy, based on the solidarity between EU member States, finally it didn't really evolve the European Migration policy.

Amsterdam Treaty has stated that EU is based on human rights and democracy (EUR-lex-Treaty on European Union (consolidated version), accessed 12 December 2021). It promoted the harmonization of the policies of the Member States involved in the areas of asylum, migration and external border control and tried to impose monitoring instruments to safeguard migrants' rights but there was a deficiency. It also introduced the solidarity mechanism, but states did not present any solidarity especially during the big refugee crisis.

Moving on, the Charter of fundamental rights had as aim to respect human rights and freedoms without any distinctions. Although it imposes the principle of solidarity to all member states and has as a rule that, If a country does not respect this principle it can be excluded from the Union, however, as we observed the majority did not follow it, even in periods of refugee crises and so, the charter itself did not succeed to impose its regulations, as it had a non-binding character.

The Declaration of Human Rights which followed the Charter, includes a variety of human rights, which set a common standard for all nations. However, many countries have not ratified them and in others their implementation is incomplete.

From the interviews that we conducted it was clear that the human rights of migrants are constantly being violated and are not respected.

**For example the seventh participant mentioned that their rights are not protected and changes should occur in many fields. She also mentioned the shared responsibility among EU Member States and its significance.**

*P7: "The human rights of migrants/refugees are not adequately protected. Initially, care should be given to improve their reception conditions in all Member States, abolishing detention centers and giving migrants access to facilities and services that directly assist them in asylum examination and integration into society. In addition, asylum procedures should be redefined, protecting their right to claim asylum in a country without the fear of being rejected, returned or deported. The issue of equal distribution of the population in all EU Member States should be reconsidered and finally support integration through access to long-term establishment and the related rights by implementing the forthcoming EU integration and Inclusion Action Plan at national and local level"*

As we have observed the legal framework exists and the Universal Declaration of Human rights has done a lot of efforts to protect migrants' rights, but everything becomes more difficult when talking about cooperation between States. EU tries to promote the protection of human rights, solidarity and shared responsibilities but States do not seem to follow the same idea.

**The third's participant answer was exactly related to what we mentioned in the previous paragraph:**

**P3:** *"I believe that the legal framework exists and protects the human rights of migrants and refugees, the issue is that in most reception countries, the number of migrants gathering is so huge and the countries are actually unable to host them and provide them with adequate and suitable accommodation and other goods, and as a result in real life these rights are not respected and protected. Not intentionally, but this is the reality!"*

The Agenda of 2015, focuses more on the States' security than on the human rights of migrants. The accommodation and other services provided to migrants/refugees are disappointing, the conditions in hotspots are awful. We cannot talk about human rights when migrants are forced to live in such conditions.

Generally the majority of participants answered that the living conditions and the way States treat migrants offend their human existence and their human rights. In most of the cases their human rights are invisible and as a result we have their victimization. Only four answered that their rights are protected. More specifically two participants claimed that their rights are protected but changes should take place in the Dublin regulation and the way it acts and the other two mentioned that they are protected adequately and nothing should change. Maybe this differentiation derives from the work positions of the participants and of course their knowledge to the subject.

#### **The national policy for integration (inclusive or not in education and labor market?)**

Many refugees/migrants enter Greece daily, they consider it most as a transit country but nowadays Greece hosts millions of migrants. In the beginning Greece didn't have the appropriate means to deal with these influxes, but finally it gained experience and developed a strong migration policy. Greece has its own National strategy for migration and in July 2019 it proposed a new model of integration and inclusion that has its basis on the social model of integration and is adjusted to the dynamics and oddities of the Greek state and society. The ultimate goal of this model is to promote the principle of interculturalism.

The results of our research showed that Greece has indeed made a lot of progress in the migration field and more specifically in the field of asylum. However, the majority of the participants pointed out that the national policy is not inclusive to a great extent.

**As an example we took the answer of the tenth participant:**

**P10:** *“Nothing is the same, the asylum procedures that used to last for a long time, are now shorter and more efficient. There are some exceptions, but I don’t believe the living conditions are better and the national policy is inclusive.”*

Regarding the fields of education and the labor market it has made a lot of progress as many migrant children have the opportunity to join the national educational system, but also adults can join the so called “second chance schools”. It is something innovative and need many changes and improvements but the basic rules for integrating these people have been set.

Furthermore, people that have been granted asylum are able to join the labor market, either in agricultural jobs or via opening their own shops. Of course there are not the same conditions for everyone and there are a lot of people with special skills who still face discrepancies, but the legal framework exists and if they, themselves have also the personal will to join our society, gradually they will succeed it.

Our literature review though had some discrepancies with the research that we conducted, as the majority of the respondents mentioned that the Greek State is “invisible” and do not put a lot of effort in the field of migrant integration. On the contrary, only NGO’s and migrants themselves try to create programmes aiming to integration. Only two of the participants mentioned the efforts that the Greek State has done.

Some participants talked about self-organization from the migrants and the actions that they take in order to organize activities or even lessons for learning the Greek language.

**Participant five talked about non-inclusion in the field of education and labour market and highlighted the fact that migrants by themselves organize activities that can help them integrate more easily:**

**P5:** *“living conditions in some cases are somehow improved, mainly due to the self-organization of the refugee communities, also there are institutions and programs that help to the education and inclusion of migrants to the labour market. I believe that the national policy is not completed and we can notice this by the fact that many migrant children are not able to join the Greek educational system and also many adults are not able to find a job.”*

National policy needs to become more effective and targeted. The existence of laws and rules is not enough when, they are not implemented or they are partially implemented. The fact that the Greek policy is better from the one that existed in the past is true but progress still can be made.

### **EU funds and their contribution to the integration of migrants in the Greek society**

As we have already presented, the effective integration and inclusion of migrants in the EU is considered to be an economic and social investment that can make the European Societies more prosperous, cohesive and resilient. It is necessary for member States to cooperate not only with each other, but with EU and international organizations as well, in order to receive appropriate funding for the migration management.

Greece as a country with the most migrants, has got a lot of support mainly from the AMIF which plays a vital role and supports integration by providing funds for accommodation, education, labor market and other essential needs of the migrants, and from other institutions as well, like the Internal Security Fund (ISF) and Emergency Support Instrument (ESI) for EU long-term funding and EU short-term funding have already been shared either to international organizations or Greek authorities to support the refugee management. The new program introduced of EU funds for the period 2021-27 showed that this funding will remain, so that it can help migrants integrate. As we mentioned in the literature review, there is need to develop long-term integration policies in the areas of education, health, employment and housing through AMIF and new versions of Cohesion Policy Funds (ESF+, ERDF, Erasmus+, etc.). This way Greece will respond more effectively to refugee issues and will be more able to give solutions and protect these vulnerable people.

The answers we received from the interviews showed the significance of the cooperation with international organizations and EU institutions.

#### **As an example for the need of cooperation we present the answer of the tenth participant:**

*P10: "EU in general should cooperate, both with international organizations and each EU country that receives migrants separately in order to deal effectively with this phenomenon and provide all the necessary solutions. Some international organizations have helped very much willing to ensure safe living and integration conditions. This help should not be interrupted. Funding from the stronger organizations to the weaker countries and their administrations is necessary in order have the best results."*

People over the years have made such an effort to create an organized Union, but do we really succeeded it? Member States deny to cooperate and they act on their own, so there is a big deficiency.

Our participants presented important programs that act in Greece for the integration, the majority pointed out AMIF, but there were others who claimed the ESTIA program which supports migrants by giving them accommodation and also the HELIOS program which assist migrants to enter the labour market.

**We can present the answers of the ninth participant who talked about the importance of AMIF, and the seventh who gave us information regarding the ESTIA and HELIOS programs, as examples:**

**P9:** “I consider AMIF to be one of the most important, as it offers significant funding to the country for the management of migrants and refers to many areas. It does not focus on anything specific but tries to provide support where needed.”

**P7:** “the ESTIA program contributes significantly to the integration of refugees, as the beneficiaries live in the same conditions as the Greeks, while the contact and coexistence with the local population is immediate, removing prejudices and negative emotions. The HELIOS program is also a program that helps significantly in integration as it enables them to learn the language and make the first contacts for work, etc. Any program currently running in Greece and involving all four sectors is quite important for integration, while the state's priority should be to claim various programs and collaborations with other European countries that support refugees in all of the above areas.”

Such programs are really important and we should always support their existence and actions.

Finally, we asked our participants about the funding distribution and whether it occurs correctly, having in mind that the migrants are not the first to receive these funds. To this answer the majority answered that it is correct, because migrants do not have sufficient knowledge of how to invest them for their benefit while stakeholders and states have a more organized action plan.

**P9:** “I do not know exactly how the management of funds by the respective bodies and organizations works. I think it is good that these funds are not given directly to immigrants because their misuse is avoided and logically the state and all other organizations have a more targeted action plan and see the problem from all sides so, they are the ones who should have control of the money.”

### **3.3. FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The New pact on Migration and Asylum introduced on September 2020, was created in order to make the asylum procedures faster and more efficient. Shared responsibility between Member States will be the key for a better future from now onwards and will really help to assist countries such as Greece which receive the most of the migrants, to better manage migration and respond to asylum applications.

It can also make a lot of progress in the field of Human rights’ protection, especially throughout the asylum procedure and generally. Recognized refugees would be more eligible to grant long-term resident permits and legal status. It is necessary for EU to put the respect and protection of Human rights in the top of the list of its priorities, to be more tolerant in terms of migration and to not forget the values that it has since its creation.

EU's policies should be more binding, the rules that it poses should be followed by everyone otherwise there should be sanctions that will be strict and that will be implemented. It is not enough to have just written regulations and punishments for not following these regulations. Everything should be implemented regarding each case.

It is important to manage to control migration as it has gain a non-stop character and also it is compulsory to protect the vulnerable people, support the human dignity and enforce the cooperation among member States.

As a conclusion of this thesis, we should mention the great need that exists, which refers to the States. It is the need to share the reception of the migrants, to distribute them equally to all States and to not close the borders anymore. One or two countries are not enough to deal with this great number of people. Also the reception and accommodation facilities should be improved, regarding the humanitarian standards.

Our research showed that despite the legal framework, there are a lot of insufficiencies and fields that need changes and improvement. In that case we should propose that a nice topic for a future analysis will be the results and changes that the New Pact on Asylum and Migration has created and to make a comparison with the previous migration plans.

### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

Taking into consideration the literature review, the research that occurred during the implementation of this dissertation and also the experience gained from the daily life it is obvious that the idea of the European Union in general has failed and more precisely in the field of migration. However, we should always take into consideration the efforts that Greece and other countries like Greece that constantly receive the majority of migrants have done over the years. Their effort to deal with the huge migration influxes and create the appropriate living conditions. But the truth is that, although such countries have done efforts and talking more precisely about Greece which has done a lot of progress, we must point out that the funding that it receives from the EU and other organizations has not been invested wisely. As an example we can take the accommodation of migrants, a lot of money over the years have been wasted in order to create containers, which in their majority are not so convenient and the have costed a lot of money, while the creation of block apartments would have cost the same amount of money, many more migrants could have found shelter in there and the houses could be more humane and convenient.

Moreover, over the years we have noticed several NGOs taking actions in the field of migration but here as well there are some exceptions. Not every NGO tries to help migrants and provide them with a better future. There were a lot of cases that NGOs took action only aiming at their recognition and their profit, without really taking

into consideration the problems of these people and how they can make their life but also the locals' life easier.

A lot of effort and changes should still occur to the migration policies of the countries and of course of the EU, as all of these year nothing was beneficial and acted positively. We all know that the cooperation among all countries is essential but we could also say that to an extent this cooperation is impossible to occur due to the contradictory interests.

Any time, before taking any action regarding migration we should try to put ourselves in the position of the migrants, the events and the difficulties they face and the way they feel, only this way we could evolve and find the more efficient way to deal with such issues.

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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender:

Age:

Profession:

Do you have any relation professional or social with migrants and refugees?

**RQ1:** How the European policy is formed for refugees/migrants and to what extent does the European Union's policy ensure the protection of migrants under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

- 1. Taking into consideration the reception and identification conditions in the Reception and Identification centers (Hot spot), as well as the living conditions of migrants/refugees in the camps or in the pre-departure centers, do you think that their decision to leave their countries and come to Greece was correct and why? Substantiate your answer with examples.**
  
- 2. Do you think that the human rights of migrants and refugees are adequately protected under the existing institutional framework of the European Union and in particular the agreements of the Dublin Regulation and of the New Pact on Asylum and Migration?**
  
- 3. Do you think that the current legal framework mentioned above protects the human rights of refugees / migrants and what else do you think should change?**
  
- 4. A main EU principle is the following: “an inclusive way of life”. That means that all people, taking into consideration the disadvantaged, must be treated equally, their rights must be respected and they must participate in community and social life, regardless of their background and in accordance with the European Pillar of Social Rights. To what extent do you consider this principle to apply in the case of immigrants?**

**RQ2:** To what extent is the national policy for the integration of refugees who have been granted asylum inclusive or not in the field of education and the labour market?

- 5. Based on your experience and as the years go by and the Greek society may have become more tolerant and the Greek Government has gained some "experience" in the phenomenon of managing refugee / migration flows, Do you think that the living conditions of migrants/refugees are better and the procedures for granting asylum easier or remain the same as in the period of the peak of the refugee crisis in 2015-2016? Can the existing policy in Greece be considered as inclusive for those who have been granted asylum?**

- 6. Do you think that the current policy is aimed at integrating refugees who have been granted asylum? To what extent do you believe that Greek language learning programs and other educational activities help the integration of migrants/refugees who have received an asylum card?**

**RQ3: To what extent EU and national programs about refugee/migrants in Greece contribute to their social integration in the Greek society?**

- 7. Do you think that the EU should cooperate with international organizations in order to make the process of integration of migrants easier and more efficient both in Greece and in other European countries? How do you think such a cooperation could be achieved in order to create more favourable living conditions for the newcomers?**
- 8. Do you know if there are any European or national programs that help with the integration of migrants/refugees? If so, which ones are most important, those related to housing, education, work, health or other areas?**
- 9. What actions do you think could be implemented in the context of national policy to make the integration of migrants/refugees easier?**
- 10. One of the European Commission's priorities is to support EU Member States' action regarding the inclusion/integration, by providing them with some Community funding. However, refugees / migrants are not the first to receive this funding as the direct beneficiaries are most often state or federal authorities, NGOs, international public or private / public sector bodies, regional and local public bodies, etc. Do you think that these funds are managed properly by these bodies or are there cases where the money that was originally intended for the needs of the refugees, was eventually transferred to other actions, thus hindering the integration process? Explain with examples.**