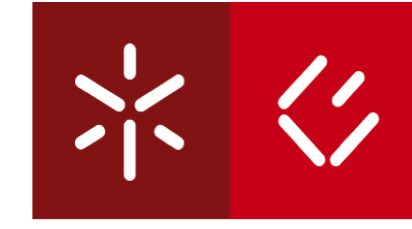


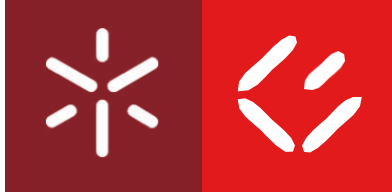


Ana Francisca Portilho de Jesus

The human security of refugee children in
Greece: citizenship and education as
mobilizing instruments- the case of the
NGO The HOME Project

Universidade do Minho
Escola de Economia e Gestão





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Project**

Relatório de Estágio
Mestrado em Relações Internacionais

Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação da
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Finally, to all the people that I had the pleasure to meet in Greece and that I shared this experience with and to everyone that helped me during this journey.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration.

I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Code of Ethical Conduct of the University of Minho.

Sumário executivo

O presente relatório de estágio pretende analisar a segurança humana de crianças refugiadas na Grécia, em particular menores sem acompanhamento, considerando o papel de atores, como ONGs como provedores de segurança. O estágio foi realizado na organização The HOME Project em Atenas, onde foi realizado trabalho de campo de modo a responder às perguntas de investigação elaboradas para este relatório. As respetivas perguntas incluem “De que forma o trabalho da ONG The HOME Project contribui para a promoção da segurança humana de crianças refugiadas em Atenas?”, seguida da pergunta secundária, “De que forma a cidadania e a educação atuam como estímulos na promoção da segurança humana de crianças refugiadas?”. O relatório assenta na Segurança Humana como quadro teórico, seguindo a abordagem ampla do relatório da UNDP de 1994. De modo a analisar a questão da proteção das crianças, é colocado um foco nas dimensões da segurança humana, nomeadamente sanitária, pessoal, comida e comunitária. Adicionalmente, é colocado também um foco em determinados instrumentos, nomeadamente cidadania e educação como estímulos que poderão auxiliar na promoção da segurança. Deste modo é feita uma triangulação com os respetivos conceitos e o quadro teórico da segurança humana. O relatório segue um método qualitativo, sendo que os dados recolhidos durante o trabalho de campo são tratados segundo uma análise de conteúdo. A respetiva análise aborda os mecanismos utilizados pela organização na eventual promoção da segurança humana de crianças refugiadas em Atenas.

Palavras chave: Cidadania; Integração; ONG; Refugiado; Segurança Humana

Executive summary

The present internship report analyzes the human security of refugee children in Greece, particularly unaccompanied minors, having in consideration the role of actors such as NGOs, as security providers. The internship took place at The HOME Project organization in Athens, where it was possible to conduct field work so as to answer the research questions formulated for this report. The referent questions include “How does the work of the NGO The HOME Project contribute to the promotion of human security of refugee children in Athens?” followed by the secondary question “In what way does citizenship and education act as stimuli in the promotion of human security of the refugee children?”. The report builds on human security as a theoretical framework, following the broad approach of the 1994 UNDP report. In order to analyze the issue of the protection of children, a focus is put on the human security dimensions, namely health, personal, food and community. Additionally, an emphasis is also placed on instruments, such as citizenship and education, seen as stimuli that could aid in the promotion of security. Thus, a triangulation is done between the respective concepts and human security as a theoretical framework. The report follows a qualitative method, being that the data collected during the fieldwork are analyzed through content analysis. The analysis addresses the mechanisms used by the organization in the eventual promotion of human security of refugee children in Athens.

Key words: Citizenship; Human Security; Integration; NGO; Refugee

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Abbreviations

EU	European Union
UNDP	United Nations Development Report
UN	United Nations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
THP	The HOME Project
OSCE	Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IOs	International organizations
HS	Human security
CRC	Convention on the rights of the child
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
RABIT	Rapid Border Intervention Teams
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
ESTIA	Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation
AMKA	Social security number
RICs	Reception and Identification Centers
ECTHR	European Court of Human Rights
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ESS	European Security Strategy
EUGS	European Union Global Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

a. Justification and Delimitation of the research

Within the context of migration, the present report will focus on forced migration, those that move in order to seek asylum, in this case in the European Union (EU) that is they move in search of the refugee status. The organization was studied in the period of 2019-2020. The relevance of the topic is set on its humanitarian character and the fact that it is still a present phenomenon within the EU. Concerning the effect that the “crisis” has had within the EU and the different responses taken on part of the Member States, the emphasis is put in the particular situation of Greece, which will be the target of analysis, as it was among the countries most burdened with the arrivals. One of the particularly vulnerable groups in the refugee community and which will be given greater prominence is children, more specifically minors who are not accompanied. In the present context “unaccompanied minor” refers to a person under the age of 18 who arrives in Greece without being accompanied by a responsible adult or by someone who holds custody in accordance with the Greek law. This also includes minors who are left unaccompanied after entering the country (Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic 2018).

The purpose of the present report is to provide a deeper understanding of the situation that children face in Greece, particularly unaccompanied minors, within the context of being under the care of an NGO, in this case The HOME Project (THP). THP is the non-profit organization where the internship took place. It was carried out under the Erasmus program in Athens and the referent organization was considered as the case study for the present report, as it focuses on vulnerable groups (namely children who arrive in Greece unaccompanied). The tasks carried out in the organization involved the provision of education in a non-formal setting, thus having closer contact with this area of intervention. In addition, it was possible to observe the daily routine of one of the shelters operated by the organization, specifically the one for younger children. This allowed for the opportunity to better understand the mechanisms used by the NGO so as to fulfill its goals. The values and strategies followed by THP fall within the human security (HS) approach in the sense that the framework focuses on the security and dignity of the individual, following strategies intended to ensure the safety of people. Moreover the actions taken on part of the organization also allow to illustrate in a sense, the role that civil

society can play in such humanitarian contexts and provide support to migrants under their care.

In analyzing the provision of security on part of the organization, the report will follow a broad HS approach in terms of its theoretical framework, according with the conceptualization provided by the United Nations Development Report (UNDP). The UNDP provides several elements that are identified as threats against HS: economic, food, health, environment, community and political security. Within the present topic, four of these elements will be considered, seen as the most relevant for the target group in question, namely: personal, food, health and community security.

Apart from addressing the provision of security according to such dimensions, other elements are also considered, namely education and citizenship. The relationship between such concepts and its triangulation with the HS framework is also taken into consideration, allowing for an understanding of security as going beyond the provision of basic needs.

b. Research problem

Following the work done during the internship and the respective topic at hand the main purpose of the present report is to provide an answer to the main research question, namely: *How does the work of the NGO The HOME Project contribute to the promotion of the human security of refugee children in Athens?*

In order to understand the elements under analysis a context is provided concerning the insecure environment of the target group, as such three contexts are considered-the (in) security at the moment of departure, during the journey and upon arrival, being the situation of children upon arrival the main focus. The referent contextualization allows for a better understanding of the conditions that children face in Greece. The child is considered here as the central actor, who will have access to certain tools that will facilitate the creation and rehabilitation of a safer environment. The tools under analysis are considered in line with the mechanisms provided by THP on the behalf of the protection and well-being of refugee

children, following the HS dimensions provided by the UNDP.

Following the main research question, a secondary question has emerged: *In what way does citizenship and education act as stimuli in the promotion of human security of the refugee children?* The purpose of the question is to analyze the triangulation of HS, in this case the protection of refugee children with the topics of education and citizenship, considered as relevant dimensions within the provision of security. Education and citizenship are also addressed in the context of the organization; moreover barriers are also included within the referent dimensions.

c. State of the art

The concept of security has been approached from different perspectives, standing thus as a contested concept (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). During the Cold War security was perceived mainly through a more traditional lens, focused on state security, the defense of the territory and the military sector (Biscop 2016; Estevens 2018). However after the end of the war, a new context started to emerge and the narratives of states and international organizations (IOs) started to shift as a new perspective of threats was being contemplated. Moreover, this new panorama also led to an understanding that states can fail in the protection of its citizens or at times be the cause of insecurity themselves (Glasius and Kaldor 2006; Maclean et al. 2006; Newman and Richmond 2001; Biscop 2016).

Along with this new context a security approach centered at the individual started to emerge. The presence of the HS approach can be found within the international system since the 1990s, as it was formulated in 1994 by the United Nations Development Program (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Here is provided the first substantial definition of HS, following the idea of sustainable development as the path to reach peace (MacFarlane and Khon 2006). Within the referent approach the state remains the main actor in terms of providing security of individuals, being that the HS is tied to the role of the state, reinforcing its responsibilities towards its citizens (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

As noted within the literature one of the advocates that has been showing an interest in

the referent approach is the EU, which will be given a focus in this report. The EU has been acting through multilateral institutions in accordance with universal and legal principles. Its interest in the HS approach, particularly outside its borders, is based on an idea that individuals have the right to leave in dignity and safety as well as to help each other when this security falls short. Additionally is the awareness that insecurity can go beyond borders and unsafe environments elsewhere can also have an impact in European society (MacLean et al. 2006; Glasius and Kaldor 2006).

One of the connections established between HS and events that can transcend borders, is the issue of migration. The link between human migration and HS is established in the sense that people either move due to threats on their security or to improve this security (Graham and Poku 200). In the context of forced migration, which will be given an emphasis in the present report, the topic has already received attention among scholars. It is noted that when situations of coercion are in place, forcing individuals to move, the issue of forced migration can thus lead to a threat on the safety of individuals at a global level. Those who have also approached this issue also draw attention on the need to address root causes, including in the countries of origin, transit as well as host countries (Yousaf 2018).

In line with this issue, in the current international panorama, one phenomenon that has received significant attention, including within the literature is the refugee “crisis” along with its impact in the EU. The analysis of the “crisis” in the EU has been addressed by several scholars who made significant contributions within the field. Another issue that has created particular interest within the question of migration is the issue of humanitarian crisis and crisis management regarding asylum seekers and refugees. Among the authors that have approached the topic of the refugee “crisis” along with HS is Marion Boulby and Kenneth Christie (Boulby and Christie 2018)¹. Their contribution includes an extensive analysis on the nexus between Migration, Refugees and Human Security in the Mediterranean and MENA. Thus providing valuable information on different aspects of the refugee crisis, from mechanisms used in order to provide protection, actors involved, roots of insecurity, and the EU’s response to the crisis, to name a few.

¹ The referent book was edited by Marion Boulby and Kenneth Christie and published in 2018. The several chapters written by different scholars offer a significant contribution on the present topic, by addressing several issues regarding the refugee “crisis”.

Another contribution within the literature includes the attention drawn on the situation of unaccompanied minors in Greece and the role that civil society can play, particularly NGOs, in situations of humanitarian crisis. With regards to the situation of unaccompanied minors, their particular vulnerability in the context of the “crisis” is noted. In face of the unsafe environment that children might face in their countries of origin, many arrive in the host country alone while others end up separated from their families during their journeys. Children are considered a constant target on an insecure environment, up until the moment they arrive. This includes the circumstances they face in the host country, in this case Greece. The reality that children face in Greece has also been described as challenging, being noted the capacity or lack of thereof of the Greek system to cope with the arrivals (Fili and Xythali 2017).

Concerning Greek civil society, the movements and solidarity initiatives, also approached within the present report, have also been noted. Such movements gave rise to a more vocal and active society, displaying a key role in terms of supporting vulnerable migrant groups (Kalogeraki 2019). Among the actors within civil society are Greek NGOs. The particular role of NGOs has been considered as beneficial on the promotion of security. As Michel (Michel 2002) indicates, NGOs present certain advantages, including their flexibility and adaptability as well as their understanding when dealing with different local contexts in which they are placed. Such circumstances can facilitate a greater response and participation on part of the population (Michel 2002).

With regards to the role of NGOs in the context of the refugee “crisis” and their actions in the promotion of security, Greek NGOs have received attention in the literature. As noted, they have been active, including in formal and informal settings, in operating as a response to the massive flow of migrants. They can operate in camps as well as on the mainland and they fill at times the gaps of state in attending to the needs of refugees (Tsitselikis 2019; Kalogeraki 2019; Chtouris and Miller 207).

Even though the role that Greek NGOs can play within the refugee “crisis” has already drawn attention from different scholars, the present report offers an empirical and methodological contribution through the field work carried out at THP. In addition, following the vast literature surrounding the refugee “crisis” along with the attention also put on issues

of forced migration and HS, another contribution includes the triangulation of concepts and different areas of study. By focusing on specific concepts (citizenship and education) and triangulating them with HS, as well as offering a triangulation between migration, security and citizenship, the report offers a further theoretical contribution.

d. Methodology

Concerning the theoretical framework supporting the present topic, the analysis will follow the HS approach in line with the protection of refugee children. For this purpose, the theoretical framework is set on a broad approach through a comprehensive strategy that includes the development and promotion of human rights based on values of *freedom from want* and *freedom from fear* (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

The research follows an interpretive stance. Considering that time and context are considered significant elements, the topic under analysis is intended so as to understand specific phenomena that were socially constructed (Rubin 1995). The method will be qualitative in nature, focusing on processes and meanings so as to obtain insights and interpretations about the referent phenomena (Noor 2008).

With regards to the research design, the report follows the case study method, allowing for the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the phenomenon under analysis as well as an opportunity to better understand the processes occurring within the organization, as it provides a holistic and contextual knowledge (Noor 2008). Concerning the collection of the data, and as the research focuses on a particular context, the methods include semi structured interviews and participant observation along with document analysis. As the internship allowed the opportunity to carry the fieldwork in Athens during the period of the internship, participant observation was considered an adequate technique. Within the process of observation it was possible to build a relationship with the community, as it was possible to participate in the daily routine of the shelter, through the tasks carried out, and have a closer contact with members of the organization and the children. The information recorded on field notes included the environment and operation of the shelter and the mechanisms used by the staff to deal with daily situations. Additionally it was also possible to record information outside of the shelter,

for instance by attending events and obtaining additional data on the situation of migrants in Greece. The data collected was then analyzed together with the interviews conducted. Among the limitations encountered in using such method is that some observations were not possible to be documented when confidentiality was asked to be respected.

When it comes to semi structured interviews, they provide a better understanding of the object of study as well as a certain freedom for the interviewees to express themselves (Ketele and Roegiers 1999). In total it was possible to conduct 25 interviews; some were done while on the field and others through Skype after leaving Athens. Interviews were conducted following a previously elaborated script² which was adapted depending on the target group being interviewed; the target groups involved refugees, employees from THP, Greek citizens as well as people working in the refugee field (employees from other NGOs and IOs). Such actors were considered as relevant for the contextualization of the topic and for the referent research questions. Among the difficulties encountered were the language barrier and in finding interviewees, particularly refugees. In terms of the language, there were limitations in the sense that interviewees who did not speak English were not considered, as the use of translators revealed to be a challenge. Thus the choice was made to interview participants that were able to communicate in English. With regards to finding participants, some contacts were made through snowball sampling, including in the refugee category, as it was difficult to reach participants outside the context of the shelter. In addition, the interviews were conducted in line with the required ethical standards.

The data collected through documents include secondary sources, namely books, chapters of books and articles; as well as primary sources, including the operational guide from the organization, EU strategic documents, UN documents, EU commission documents, as well as Greek legislation. Documental analysis is intended to support the understanding of the topic under analysis.

The information collected will be analyzed through content analysis. Content analysis allows for a better understanding on the phenomenon in question (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) as well as the opportunity to carry out a systematic and flexible analysis of the data collected

² The script is displayed at the end of the report, in the appendix

(Schreier 2012). As such, in order to provide an answer to the research questions, a coding frame was established, with the aid of NVIVO software, where categories and subcategories were assigned to better describe the material. The referent categories were chosen according to the topic at hand. Such process was intended so as to reduce the data collected and better arrive at an interpretation of it.

e. Structure

Chapter one offers the theoretical and conceptual framework for the present report, following a concept of security that encompasses the HS approach. The refugee “crisis” is analyzed through a more broad lens according to the UNDP, where the ultimate goal is the security of the individual. The issue of migration, particularly forced migration is presented here as one that can comprise the dimensions of human insecurity. Additionally, the chapter presents the analytical concepts that will be operationalized throughout the report, namely *forced migration, refugee and integration*.

Chapter two provides a contextualization of the “crisis” within the situation in Greece. The context provided is intended so as to understand the root causes of people on the move and the dangers that children can face both in their countries of origins and the journeys. When it comes to their situation upon arrival, it is taken into consideration the situation that refugees face, particularly children along with the impact within the local community, as the context of the “crisis” can also influence locals.

With regards to chapter three, the response to the “crisis” is considered according to the actions taken on part of the EU and the Greek government in terms of their asylum and integration politics. Along with the European and national levels, the local level is here also considered, particularly Athens. When it comes to EU policies, apart from the actions taken so as to respond to the “crisis” the issues within the Member States with relation to EU policies are also addressed. Concerning the response from the Greek government, taking into account that recent changes were made within the government before the start of the internship and throughout, such changes are taken into consideration.

Having contextualized the situation of refugees in Greece and the role of the state, chapter four focuses on civil society and the role it can play in situations of humanitarian crisis. A particular emphasis is put on the role of NGOs followed by the actions taken by THP as the center of the chapter. The mechanisms of the organization are considered in line of the protection of refugee children in Athens following the HS dimensions. Additionally, particular instruments, such as citizenship and education, are also addressed in line with the provision of security.

CHAPTER 1.HUMAN SECURITY AND MIGRATION

1.1.Security

In order to contextualize HS it is relevant to primarily understand the significant changes that the conceptualization of security has undergone. The present chapter will approach such changes within the international community, presenting HS as a theoretical framework as well as placing it in the context of migration.

1.1.1. Shifts in the perceptions of security

Within the international community and throughout discussions in the academic field, the conception of security has been discussed through different perspectives, being that this is a concept that cannot be perceived as neutral. Positioning oneself behind the statement that security is dependent on each individual's perception, it is important to understand the shifts occurring regarding the way that states perceive security (Tadjbaksh and Chenoy 2007). During the Cold War the international arena was characterized through a bipolar dimension with the spotlight on the United States and the Soviet Union. This environment accompanied the perception of security by a traditional lens, where the emphasis was put on state security, territory defense and military-based strategies. This traditional view on security shifted after the end of the Cold War giving space to new perceptions in the respective field requiring the states to adapt. The new context revealed a complex environment characterized by intra-state conflicts, a fear towards the phenomenon of immigration, specially felt from western societies, and the spread of the HIV epidemic (Biscop 2016; Estevens 2018).

The changes in the international context demonstrated a complex image, which stands until today, that phenomena occurring in different parts of the world can affect others. This interdependency was particularly felt for instance within the EU, where new challenges, put under a "threat" label, were given voice, namely terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, illegal immigration and organized crime. Between the reasons behind this increasing interdependence and complex environment were globalization and weak states- exposing the incapacity of some states in providing security to their own citizens. The states themselves were

even at times the cause for their citizen's insecurity (Glasius and Kaldor 2006; MacLean et al. 2006; Newman and Richmond 2001; Biscop 2016). This particular attention given to the security of the individual and to a more human-centric approach will soon be emphasized. These "new" threats were seen as unpredictable, posing a challenge on management strategies, strengthening the idea that states, for instance within the EU, can become dependent on each other's security. This leads to the notion that the security of the EU, being given a particular emphasis in the present research, can be significantly influenced by the (uns-) stable environment of the international system as a whole (Biscop 2016). The events that occurred in the 9/11 reinforced equally the realization that national borders can no longer act as the guarantee of citizen's security. These events together with the new perceptions that occurred within the EU thus created a need to face the new reality through a lens more centered at the individual, backed by a global strategy (Glasius and Kaldor 2005).

1.1.2. Individual at the center

The decision to focus on a broader concept of security more centered on the individual, rather than defense strategies following traditional lens, was deemed necessary in an interdependent world. The focus on the security of the individual has been approached ever since the end of the Cold War, following the realization that this security has been undermined. This context is of significant relevance since the security of the individual can be threatened by the states themselves, as previously mentioned. This can be perceived as a consequence of the increase of internal conflicts, proliferation of weapons, the existence of child soldiers, and the number of refugees seeking to escape the violence occurring in their countries of origin (Glasius and Kaldor 2006; MacLean et al. 2006).

The existence of wars between states and the consequence of casualties within civilians is not a notion that stands strange to the international community; however the current reality brought a new realization when it comes to the suffering of civilians. Civilians were being perceived as casualties in "traditional" conflicts; however the current reality reveals that at

times civilians became the targets of conflicts. Not only the target of states, but also of displacement or by getting killed by another group (Newman and Richmond 2001; Martin and Kaldor 2010).

Considering thus that states are now facing a world with threats that can be interconnected, transnational and that can have a global impact, a collective response based on cooperation becomes necessary in order to act and face the new challenges in a more effective way (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Following this perception of a new complex reality and the challenges that the international community currently faces, the approach of HS comes thus as a necessity within the international relations as well as a need to face the interconnectedness between individuals and states (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Facing the issues that place the individual in an insecure environment is at the center of this approach. Furthermore, placing the person/individual at the center of analysis provides us with a reflection of an interconnection between all the dimensions that security encompasses, considering that security can include the social, political, military, civil, economic and environmental dimensions. We are then faced with an approach that focuses on the security of people within their personal environment and surroundings, creating thus a shift from the traditional perception of security inside international relations from the angle of the state to a more human-centered/individual perspective (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; MacLean et al. 2006; Biscop 2016).

Table 1- Contrasting the concept of security through the lens of the state and the individual

	State-centered security (a neo realist approach)	Human-centered security
Security referent (object)	In Hobbesian world, the state is the primary provider of security: if the state is secure then the ones who live within it are also secure	Individuals are co-equal with the state. State security is the means, not the end.

Security values	Sovereignty, power, territorial integrity, national independence	Personal safety, well-being and individual freedom: 1 Physical safety and provision for basic needs 2 Personal freedom (liberty of association) 3 Human rights; economic and social rights
Security threats	Direct organized violence from other states, violence and coercion by other states and from non-state actors	Direct violence: death, drugs, dehumanization, discrimination, international disputes, WMD ³ , gendered violence. Indirect violence: deprivation, disease, natural disasters, underdevelopment, population displacement, environmental degradation, poverty, inequality, ethnic/sectarian oppression. Threats from identifiable sources (such as states or non-state actors) or from structural sources (relations of power ranging from family to the global economy)

³ Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

By what means	Retaliatory force or threat of its use, balance of power, military means, strengthening of economic might, little attention paid to respect for law or institutions	Promoting human development: basic needs plus equity, sustainability, and greater democratization and participation at all levels. Promoting human rights. Promoting political development: global norms and institutions plus collective use of force as well as sanctions in case of genocide, cooperation between states, reliance on international institutions, networks and coalitions, and international organizations.
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Source: (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007)⁴

For the purpose of the present investigation, the HS approach will now be further developed and presented as the theoretical framework on which the topic will be based.

1.2. Human security as a theoretical framework

Within the field of international relations, HS has received divergent opinions, being invoked as

⁴ The respective author adapted the respective chart from (Bajpai 2000). The table was manually reproduced for the purposes of the dissertation

a new theory, a concept, a new paradigm, or simply a vision of the world (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). For the purpose of this dissertation HS will take the place of a theoretical framework, being thus presented in the following sections.

1.2.1. Human security within the International Relations

“Human security is not a concern with weapons- it is a concern with human life and dignity.”

(UN Human Development Report 1994:22)

Placing the concept of security outside national boundaries meets the notion of HS as an approach that encompasses elements of insecurity that can spill over within different states. (MacLean et al.2006; Biondi 2016; Odutayo 2016). A shift is also revealed from a traditional focus of analysis within the International Relations- where the security of the state is given a primary focus - to a perspective of security where the individual is given a bigger priority. This equally accompanies the complex reality, of a more interdependent and globalized world that is witnessing an increase in civilian casualties through a bigger incidence on internal conflicts (Thomas 2001; Alkire 2003).

The origins of the concept dates back for at least a decade within the international community. The first substantive definition of HS was provided by the UNDP in 1994, based on a sustainable development as the ideal path to reach peace (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; MarFarlane and Khong 2006). Before proceeding to the definition provided by the UNDP it is important to notice that the conceptualization of HS has been present within the academic field, being approached by several scholars, and defined within official reports.

Within the references regarding the HS approach it is important to have a good understanding that the respective approach is seen through both a narrow and a broad approach. Starting with the narrow approach of HS, advocates include countries such as Canada and Norway. Canada in particular has taken a significant leadership role when it comes to operationalizing the HS approach. The definition of HS on which Canada stands focuses

particularly on physical security (*freedom from fear*), putting an emphasis on prevention, democratic structures and promotion of human rights. Together with this, it also puts a focus on distinguishing between human development and HS in order to operationalize the concept through a feasible international agenda that includes preventive operations. Regarding Norway, the country stands behind the same narrow approach of HS, thus supporting Canada on its endeavors. This cooperation is present for instance on the Human Security Network created in 1999, calling together states that cooperate on the promotion of HS through local and international institutions (Oliveira 2009; Alkire 2003; MacLean et al. 2006)

Standing between the narrow and broad approaches is for instance the Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group of 2007. The respective report positions HS somewhere between the narrow and broad conceptualization, connecting it at the same within the context of the EU and its policies. In an attempt to offer a path on the operationalization of HS the report states six principles that can be crucial for this purpose, namely: the promotion of human rights, the use of a bottom up approach, multilateralism, regional focus, legitimate political authority and transparency when it comes to strategic direction (Human Security Study Group 2007; Martin and Kaldor 2010).

Regarding the broad approach of HS, respective references and advocates include the UN Human Development Report of 1994, Kofi Annan, who served as a Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), and the Japanese government. Both the Japanese government and Kofi Annan stand behind a broad conceptualization of HS, in the sense that human beings should be protected from a wide range of threats, and sustainable human development should be seen as a means to achieve this protection (MacFarlane and Khong 2006; Newman and Richmond 2001; Alkire 2003; Oliveira 2009; Bosold and Werthes 2005). Issues concerning the advocates of HS will be analyzed later in this chapter, where a particular focus will be put on the EU.

Concerning the conceptualization within the UNDP in particular, as mentioned previously the 1994 report was the first one to provide the international community with a substantive definition of HS. The present dissertation will follow the broad definition adopted by the UNDP, following two crucial elements, namely *freedom from fear* (freedom from violence) and *freedom from want* (freedom from poverty), focusing on the safety of the

individual as the main priority, which will be placed here as the ultimate goal. These two values are considered relevant elements for the present analysis, in the sense that they are important to ensure the safety of the target group (namely refugee children). Furthermore the UNDP report identifies several elements within the dimensions of HS (Graham and Poku 2000; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; Oliveira 2009; MacFarlane and Khong 2006; United Nations Development Program 1994). The respective elements which will be here identified as threats against HS are summarized below:

- **Economic security** - tackling issues such as unemployment, socioeconomic inequality, and precarious work;
- **Food security** - access to food should be available to all, poor food distribution can be perceived as a cause of insecurity;
- **Health security** - spread of diseases is seen as a cause of insecurity, particularly in poverty areas;
- **Environmental security** - issues include deforestation, pollution and ecosystem degradation;
- **Personal security** - concerns the physical security against violence, either by states or other individuals. A particular emphasis is given to the vulnerability of women and children;
- **Community security** - people should be confident when it comes to sharing their cultural identity. Issues such as ethnic cleansing are addressed within this element;
- **Political security** - issues concerning political insecurity of individuals include political repression by a state, torture and illegal detention;

Considering the threats identified above four will be contemplated for the present analysis, being the most relevant for the respective topic, namely: personal security, food security, health security and community security. These will be considered for the target group under study and within the context of the work of THP, acting here as a security provider. To

tackle the respective threats and eventually provide security to refugees (namely children) it will be important to assess the strategies taken by the NGO. In terms of personal, food, health and community security certain elements within these dimensions will be taken into account such as the provision of services (including food, education, healthcare), the safeguard of their basic rights, the respect for their cultural identity, and the attention paid to the vulnerability and background of the child. To achieve its goal the NGO engages in cooperation with other organizations and maintains a contact with civil society (The HOME Project 2018); these partnerships are important in the sense that collaboration between different actors is a key element within the HS approach (Human Security Unit 2016).

Furthermore it is important to consider the elements identified by the UNDP within a context of interdependency, in the sense that in today's globalized world, threats towards individuals inside a state can easily spread and affect citizens in other parts of the world. Thus in order to face these interconnected and transnational threats, it is crucial to have a cooperative response. The HS approach advocates that in order to achieve effective goals a wide range of actors should be involved, cooperating through a network. These actors would include states, IOs, NGOs, together with the reinforcement of effective multilateralism (Oliveira 2009; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; United Nations Development Programme 1994).

This broad approach also connects security, development and human rights within one single framework, looking to apply comprehensive and integrated policies within the international system. The UNDP however calls attention on the importance of not putting the HS and human development concepts on an equal level, they must be perceived as complementary (United Nations Development Programme 1994; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

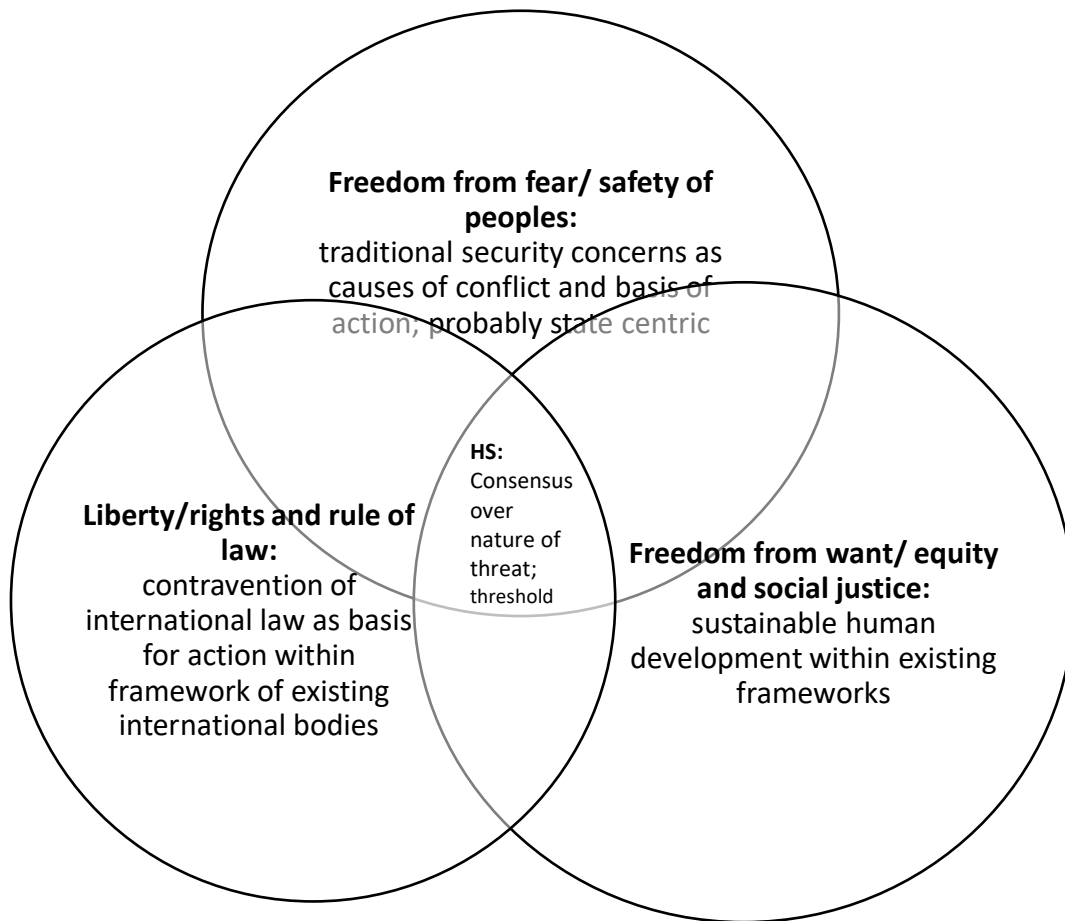
Putting the security and dignity of the individual at the center of its policies, the HS approach can be simplified as an approach that seeks to guarantee that people must have the security to live. Within this context, actors must act through strategies of prevention; protection and *empowerment* of the people, preserving values such as *dignity, equity and*

solidarity (see Figure 2)⁵.

The concept of *empowerment* can be understood as the effort to help people take control over their lives after situations of vulnerability and insecurity. Linked to this idea is the importance of a bottom up approach, beginning with treating people as citizens and empowering them to participate within the society they are involved in (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; MacFarlane and Khong 2006; Glasius and Kaldor 2006). Following the HS approach the respective strategies and values are of significant relevance for the topic under analysis and fall within the work done by THP NGO. The organization seeks to protect the human dignity of refugees and migrants as well as to help fight discrimination, poverty, unemployment and social inequalities (The HOME Project 2018). The mechanisms and areas of intervention used by the organization will be analyzed, being one of the aims of the present report to emphasize on specific elements (namely citizenship and education). These elements will act on behalf of the eventual promotion of HS, in this specific context the protection of the target group (the children) of the NGO.

⁵ Figure 2 provides a better understanding of the relationship between concepts within the human security approach. The diagram was manually reproduced for the purpose of the dissertation.

Figure 1- Relationship between concepts (safety, rights, equity)



Source: (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007)

Concerning the broad approach of HS previously mentioned and realizing the shifts that occurred within the international community along with the term of sovereignty and the current complex context that states are facing, policies regarding security should go beyond the mere security of the state. The security of a country must be complemented by policies that secure the protection of all human beings, as the HS approach translates into the freedom from insecurity that individuals must be entitled to (Glasius and Kaldor 2006).

1.2.2. Actors

HS strategies require an effective coordination of multiple actors within the international community in order to achieve its ultimate goal (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). For the purpose of this research a bigger emphasis will be given on the role of the state and the civil society, particularly NGOs, together with a relevant reference to IOs, within the HS framework.

1.2.2.1. Role of the state

HS presents a close relationship with the state, being that it reinforces its responsibilities and capacities to act towards its citizens. The state stands as the most adequate when it comes to act on the behalf of individual's security. This is due to its capacities, knowledge and credibility inside international forums, such as the UN. The role of the state on acting towards the promotion of HS should be complemented by the actions of non-state actors, thus the state should not be seen as the only actor providing security to individuals. In this context the state is a means on which the security of the individual can be achieved. However sometimes the existence of weak states as well as poor relations between civil society and its respective state reveal that states can at times act as a barrier towards the promotion of HS. Following this idea, the HS approach offers thus a new conceptualization regarding the issue of sovereignty, by giving the state the responsibility to protect individuals and to create an effective cooperation with multiple actors, including non-state actors (Thomas 2001; Glasius and Kaldor 2005; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; Oliveira 2009;).

Despite the barriers that can be identified in the implementation of the HS approach, and which will later be mentioned in this chapter, several political actors (states, NGOs, IOs) have shown an interest in the respective approach. As mentioned previously, advocates of the HS approach include states such as Canada, Norway and the EU, while states such as China and India for instance perceive the HS approach as an attempt on part of the Western society to interfere with the countries' sovereignty. Considering that policies and institutions should guide the implementation of a HS approach, these states have been advocating it through a set of

multilateral institutions along with universal and legal principles (MacLean et al. 2006; Glasius and Kaldor 2006; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). For the purpose of this research a particular emphasis will be put in the actions taken by the EU regarding the implementation of HS.

The role of the European Union

As previously mentioned the state stands as one of the significant providers of the promotion of HS, being that HS reinforces its responsibilities, and as such the efforts made by the EU on the security field are of utmost importance within the international community. The ideas behind the HS approach attract the European public, following the notion that in today's world insecurity can go beyond national borders. This can create awareness that the insecurity of others can affect the security of European citizens. Simultaneously the EU recognizes that it has a responsibility towards citizens outside its borders, basing this obligation on the idea of a *common humanity*. This *common humanity* follows a notion that as dignity and security should be assured to all human beings as an ultimate goal, there is then an obligation for people to help each other when faced with an insecure environment (Glasius and Kaldor 2006).

As the EU asserts itself as an advocate of the HS approach this should be translated into strategies that focus not only on the defense of its borders but also on the protection of all individuals, thus EU's policies should not consider only the security of the state (Glasius and Kaldor 2006). The approach of the EU in making the world a safer place shows that the HS approach has been present in EU speeches. Additionally this can also provide the EU with an opportunity to amplify its coherence, efficiency and visibility within its policies (Martin and Kaldor 2010). Its actions towards the development of its policies and strategies towards security and its goals in facing the challenges that can put citizens in an insecure environment can be seen as particularly active. This role by the EU can be seen in its strategic documents, such as the *European Security Strategy* (ESS) of 2003 or the *European Union Global Strategy* (EUGS) of 2016 (MacLean et al. 2006).

The ESS document mentions the important contributions of the EU in making the world a safe place through good governance, the promotion of human rights, development assistance

and by addressing the roots of insecurity. Regarding migration, the issue is mentioned within the ESS strategy document (Council of the European Union 2003) and further in the report of the implementation of the ESS in 2008 (Council of the European Union 2008), however scholars call attention on the fact that migration is treated on both documents as a by-product of for instance organized crime. Furthermore, no strategic framework is given on how to deal with migration. The EUGS on the other hand, already perceives migration as a challenge associated with the necessity of a balanced approach with respect for human rights, in order to deal with it effectively (Conselho da União Europeia 2016; Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017).

Following the EU's actions, it is also important to address the interpretation of insecurity, that is present and can further condition the policies taken by European states (MacLean et al.2006). Interpretations and perceptions are a crucial element as they can influence the implementation of the HS approach revealing disparities between the different European member states.

1.2.2.2. International organizations

Being that HS entails the cooperation between different actors, it is important to mention not only the role of the state, as it has been previously done, but also the role that the international community can have. The international community can act as a significant supporter of the state by providing resources and helping to respond to crisis situations (Human Security Unit 2016). In order to exemplify the relevance of international actors it will be mentioned the significant role of the UN, as well as other examples of organizations with a regional scope such as Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and their relation with the HS approach.

The role of the UN

The role of the UN within the context of HS is worthy of mention, being a key player in the international system. The UN stands as an important player in the way that it is seen as the

most effective forum when it comes to the achievement of multilateralism within the global agenda (Newman and Richmond 2001). The UN has made considerable efforts when it comes to promote the implementation of a HS approach. Over the years, the UN has been considerably active, funding several programs and projects and holding events, promoting actions to effectively put the HS into practice, as well as to enhance its impact on the field. The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which addresses concerns that fall within the concept and scope of HS (including for instance disease, hunger and violence, among others) can be seen as one of the recent actions taken by the UN in promoting the principles of an approach centered on the individual. With this agenda the UN seeks to show that by following this approach society can become stronger and be protected from potential threats that might affect their livelihood (Human Security Unit 2016, United Nations 2015; UN Trust Fund for Human security n.d).

Furthermore, the HS approach is also useful in the way that it can enhance the UN's support to states. Besides it also provides the analytical ground for the UN to address issues through more developed and integrated responses. As it is characteristic of the HS framework this will ask for cooperation among different actors which will allow the UN to work together with states as well as non-state actors, such as NGOs (Human Security Unit 2016).

Another example of the UN's active role is through the recent COVID pandemic. As different challenges came to light as a consequence of the pandemic (COVID has been identified as having a negative impact within the HS dimensions), the UN reinforced the importance of a HS approach. Following this approach, actions have been taken, for instance by launching programs, to work towards development and assist in the recovery of communities in the context of COVID (Caparini 2021; UN Trust Fund for Human Security 2021).

In addition, UN agencies play an important part when it comes to advocating for a HS approach, particularly due to their capacity for long-term engagement, perceiving their participation as extremely significant. However even the UN at times fails in its endeavors, due in part to political sensibilities and lack of engagement from member states. Moreover its actions can be sometimes affected by the particular interests of certain countries (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; Adelman 2001). Agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR) demonstrate the role of the UN as a key player within the security field. The UNHCR is an agency whose main responsibilities include protecting and supporting the internally displaced. Facing the shifts inside the security field, the UNHCR stood out as the leading humanitarian agency (Adelman 2001). Even though the UNHCR as an agency, is not capable of providing security alone, its role as an international legal protection provider within the international system is crucial (Newman and Richmond 2001)

ASEAN

Aside from the UN, organizations working at a more regional level such as the ASEAN have also adapted to the emergent security concerns that challenge states in today's world. ASEAN stands as an intergovernmental organization whose purposes include regional protection and stability as well as the promotion of cooperation between the member states in dimensions such as security, economic, political, socio-cultural, educational and military (ASEAN 2007).

ASEAN strongly values the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, where the state is the primary actor (associated with the mechanism called "The ASEAN way"), an approach that can be seen as considerably different from a human security one. However while trying to keep up with the shifts that have been occurring within the conceptualization of security, ASEAN has also been considering security concerns that go beyond the traditional ones, thus accepting a HS approach, more centered at the individual level (Huda et al. 2020; Puspita 2019; ASEAN 2015). Mentions of a more comprehensive security have been set up by ASEAN that has also been trying to enhance its cooperation, including also the presence of other actors such as NGOs and the private sector. This approach comes in order to better address the new security concerns that include: transnational crime, piracy, disaster response, terrorism, and environmental concerns (ASEAN 2009, ASEAN 2015; Mohd et al. 2020). One of the issues that directly impact the ASEAN region is natural disasters. Being that this is a problem that can cause severe suffering to citizens, it can then be considered as a problem that falls within the HS framework (Puspita 2019).

Even though the difference between the concept of HS and the traditional ASEAN

mechanism identified as the “ASEAN way” can be a matter of discussion as well as how ASEAN handles its regional issues, especially those that concern human security (Puspita 2019), the relevant point of discussion for the present paper is the evolution of the organization when it comes to approaching new security concerns and the current environment. Taking an interest in issues that concern the security of individuals shows how the HS approach can be of interest for states and how they choose to manage it, as well as its relevance in today’s international context (Huda et al. 2020; Puspita 2019).

OSCE

OSCE is an intergovernmental organization working within the security field. Complying with the UN charter, it seeks to promote values such as democracy, peace and solidarity. OSCE deals with crisis situations regarding its prevention, management and rehabilitation and it is characteristic by following a comprehensive strategy approach (OSCE 1999).

When it comes to the matter of the HS approach, OSCE has been rather familiar to this framework. The security of the individual falls within the perception that OSCE holds of the concept of security. It has also mentioned that efforts must be made to address the new challenges that may affect the region which includes the promotion of security at an individual level. (Oberleitner 2008; OSCE 1999). The relation of OSCE with the HS approach comes from a standpoint that the organization perceives the respective framework as comprehensive as it does with the concept of security itself. The concept thus falls into the organization’s dimensions which are characterized as such: military-political, human, economic and environmental (Titko and Kurtynets 2019; Oberleitner 2008). As previously mentioned the organization searches to address new challenges, these include threats that they might face in the current international environment, such as those that can spill across borders (OSCE Ministerial Council 2003; Debuysere and Blockmans 2019). As such it seeks to follow a comprehensive strategy based on cooperation and effective multilateralism. Much of the organization’s policies and actions can be associated with the concept of HS such as the promotion of human rights, the cooperation with different entities that include the civil society

(for instance NGOs), multilateral measures and initiatives that involve actions of protection and empowerment (Oberleitner 2008; OSCE Ministerial Council 2003).

Despite some limitations that have been pointed to the organization such as for instance the organization's ineffective multilateralism at times, OSCE shows itself as another significant example of the key role that IOs play and the place that the HS approach starts to take in their policies and in today's world. (Oberleitner 2008; Debuysere and Blockmans 2019).

1.2.2.3. Non-governmental organizations

The presence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the international community and in particular in situations of crisis management has shown that they can be crucial actors regarding the promotion of the HS approach (Michel 2002). Authors such as Kenneth Christie provided the definition of non-governmental organizations as:

[...] independent development actors existing apart from governments and corporations, operating on a non-profit or not-for-profit basis with an emphasis on voluntarism, and pursuing a mandate of providing development services, undertaking communal development work or advocating on development issues.
(Boulby and Christie 2018: 118)

Following the relevance of NGOs within HS, it is partly due to their flexibility and adaptability as well as their ability to deal with different contexts at a local level, thus facilitating a more effective response and participation on part of the local community. This proximity with the population and the ability to develop partnerships that allow for a greater combination of resources thus facilitating their action, has also given them a considerable advantage by being given a sort of legitimacy. Moreover NGOs can work within a variety of areas, offering multiple services. Their action regarding the reduction of insecurities also comes from their concern in attending people's physical, economic and social needs, and eventually looking to expand development opportunities (Michel 2002).

Even though NGOs have a clear positive impact they also face barriers that can

significantly affect their work, including problems with funding, conflicts with the government, and difficulties in building effective networks, considered as a crucial element in the promotion of HS. However their place in global governance does not go unnoticed, as they focus on the promotion of human rights and the security of people. These types of non-state actors have on many occasions been key promoters of human rights, in comparison to the government and the UN itself (Michael 2002). NGOs also fill a gap when the government does not have the necessary capability regarding the provision of services, thus they usually work as a complement to the actions of the government regarding the promotion of HS (Boulby and Christie 2018).

1.3. Human security within the conflict analysis

If HS can be perceived as the response to insecurities of individuals within their communities, then the approach can be associated with crisis management, being that insecurity is closely related to crisis (Martin and Kaldor 2010).

A crisis is a 'serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a social system, which-under time pressure and uncertain circumstances-necessitates making critical decisions.

(Rosenthal *et al.* 1989b *apud* Blondin and Boin 2018)

Regarding the concept of crisis, it is important to mention in what terms it will be operationalized in the present report. When addressing the conceptualization of crisis, the term is usually linked to the presence of a threat and a reaction normally done within a short period of time. Additionally, a crisis can also change the relationship between states or lead to a war. Meanwhile the use of the term can have an impact or in other cases, it can lose its meaning, depending on how it is used. This is in the sense that the concept can be used differently to fit personal interests or be used to emphasize a particular situation (Griffiths et al. 2008). With respect to the present topic, 'crisis' has been addressed through different labels,

for instance as ‘migration crisis’ or ‘refugee crisis’. The term can be linked to the presence of migratory flows as the result of crisis, where the insecurity of individuals is in place. However the use of labels can also be controversial, as it is the case for instance of ‘refugee crisis’ as it has been noted that this term can indicate that refugees are the source of the problem (IOM 2012; Dvir et al. 2019). Following the definition of crisis of Rosenthal presented above, in this report the term will be linked to a phenomenon where the insecurity of individuals is involved, leading to the need of a response on part of different states. In other words ‘crisis’⁶ refers to the flow of migrants, particularly asylum seekers in search of the refugee status that reached the EU, leading to the need of a response on its part.

As mentioned above, HS can be linked to crisis management and in considering the latter in the context of dealing with situations of conflict, all strategic elements from prevention to reconstruction should be included so as to be more effective. Thus the roots of insecurity should be tackled so that the international community can implement conflict prevention, considered by the UNHCR as a durable solution, and help society to better deal with crisis (Martin and Kaldor 2010; Odutayo 2016). The international community has been active in addressing challenges concerning HS by facing crisis situations. Nevertheless problems within crisis management reveal at times difficulties in coordination (Acharya 2001; Blondin and Boin 2018). Regarding the specific context of the EU, crisis management and conflict prevention constitute important priorities in EU’s policies (MacLean et al. 2006). Within conflicts and crisis situations, a relevant point of analysis will be made next regarding the difficulties that the EU faces.

Before proceeding to the mentioned point of analysis, it is relevant to reference the example of displaced persons and refugees requesting for asylum within the light of the present topic. Being this indicator one that shows how this particular group can lack security in all the dimensions of the HS approach (Newman and Richmond 2001; Martin and Kaldor 2010). Considering the current reality, today’s conflicts, including situations of ethnic cleansing for instance, can lead to the displacement of people from their homes or sometimes even from their countries of origin. This situation creates insecurity in the sense that displaced people as

⁶ The term appears in inverted commas to keep a distance from different labels and narratives that have been used in public debates.

well as refugees move across borders. Where elements of coercion are present, forcing people to leave their homes, roots of insecurity from which individuals are victims can have an impact at a global level. For this, it is equally important to have in consideration the contexts that forced them to leave, the environment during their journeys as well as the situation upon arrival (Glasius and Kaldor 2005; Yousaf 2018). These particular elements, namely the roots of insecurity, will be considered within the present dissertation. This will help to have a better understanding of the causes that placed children in an insecure environment and the eventual promotion of their security.

In a globalized world, the brutalization of a society, with daily experience of high levels of violence and the cheapening of human security is bound to affect other societies. (Glasius and Kaldor 2005:71)

In addition, the HS approach is of particular use for this specific group since it is human-centered, besides forced displacement due to violence and violation of the human rights are situations that individuals should be protected from. Within this context it is important to mention that among the group children stand as the most vulnerable targets of insecurity, being easily exposed to abuse and exploitation, seeing all the dimensions of their security threatened (Newman and Richmond 2001; Berti 2015; Odutayo 2016).

1.4. Implementation of the HS approach and the criticism on the concept

As it has been previously mentioned in this chapter, interpretations and perceptions are crucial elements as they can influence the implementation of the HS approach, and as such reveal disparities between countries as it happens in the case of the EU.

The idealized HS approach would reveal a dynamic where state and non-state actors cooperate with one another, being that non-state actors would complement the state rather than compete with it, working together on the ultimate goal of promoting HS (Tadjakhsh and Chenoy 2007). However reaching this ideal approach can be deemed extremely difficult as its acceptance and implementation can at times face barriers.

Starting with criticisms against its conceptualization, several scholars pointed to negative aspects within the HS concept. Scholars such as Sabina Alkire mention critics that have been pointed out in the literature, which include that the concept can be perceived as being naïve and idealistic as well as being too wide to provide policy makers with a practical agenda for its implementation (Alkire 2003). Concerning the broadness of the concept it is also brought up that considering several indicators of insecurity can lead states to prioritize certain indicators/elements over others. This is due to a lack of precision within the concept and can be associated with the critic regarding its vagueness and arbitrariness. This particular criticism is important in the way that it can reveal a combination of interests (Alkire 2003). To use the concept of HS as an instrument according to particular interests can be of great concern especially when it comes to humanitarian actions, thus questioning certain principles that are usually behind the nature of these actions (Oliveira 2009).

Another issue that can also be perceived as a criticism regarding the HS approach is the question of sovereignty, in the way that the concept would offer states a new interpretation regarding sovereignty. Following the idea that the safety of the individual should remain as the ultimate goal and that it can be crucial to the achievement of security at a global level, advocates of the approach believe that the concept of sovereignty should then be reexamined in a way that puts the responsibility on sovereign states to protect the lives of all human beings (MacLean et al. 2006). An example of this would be for instance the question of interventions in countries where conflicts are occurring, where the HS approach, particularly by those who stand behind a more narrow approach, would be used as a justification to intervene on the grounds of morality (Oliveira 2009). Despite the critics towards the approach it is however important to have in mind that within the positive effects inside the international community, the HS approach has brought together states, IOs as well as civil society such as NGOs (Oliveira 2009).

Considering that the HS approach requires a consensus within the international community on all levels, including military, political and development, the implementation of the approach can sometimes be difficult to reach due to disparities and unwillingness on part of the states (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Within the context of the EU, even though the EU

makes efforts to advocate for HS and act in the security field as a promoter of human rights; its implementation does not match at times its discourse (Martin and Kaldor 2010). Aside from the restrictive measures that can be originated by different perceptions regarding threats; for instance concerning the question of migration, the lack of coherence between states due to disagreements can lead to ineffective EU policies (Newman and Richmond 2001; Carrera et al. 2015). Furthermore significant discrepancies between the member states can lead to a lack of coordination and multilateralism (it is important to remember that multilateralism stands as an essential element within the HS approach (MacLean et al. 2006)), together with ineffective policies, particularly in crisis situations. This situation can question the legitimacy and the foundations on which the EU stands. Several scholars within the academic field have pointed out problems within the EU's actions and policies within situations of crisis, raising a lot of questions regarding the EU's coherence on its rhetoric (Crawley and Blitz 2018; Blondin and Boin 2018; Biscop 2016; Carrera et al. 2015). The EU's actions and its impact within the HS approach will be further analyzed within the context of the present report.

1.5. Key concepts

After the presentation of the theoretical framework of the present research, the following concepts, seen as crucial for a better understanding of the topic, are now discussed and clarified: *forced migration*, *refugee* and *integration*. Additionally, cosmopolitan citizenship is also introduced as an interesting theoretical framework in terms of its relation with HS.

1.5.1. Forced migration

The term *forced migration*, along with the other concepts presented below, is not a term that has been consensual among academic debates. The respective concept has been used to cover different kinds of movements caused by phenomena such as environmental disasters, conflict or famine. It is a concept that has been seen as open, including groups of people that comprise refugees, asylum seekers or the internally displaced (UNHCR 2016; Castles 2003; Turton 2003;

Estevens 2018). As such the term covers movements both inside and outside countries (UNHCR 2016). Other categories of *forced migration* might also include the trafficking of people across borders (Castles 2003; Estevens 2018).

The distinctions between categories within *forced migration* have been pointed out as inadequate, containing different conceptualizations (Turton 2003). Being a contested term, it is therefore important to lay clearly the definition which will be used for the purpose of the present report. The definition we will use will be the one provided by the UNHCR and the IOM, namely that *forced migration* involves a migratory movement where a person might leave his/her country of origin due to elements of coercion or force. These might be originated by situations such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, or insecurity caused by the state itself. Even though, the respective concept is not an international legal concept as mentioned by the IOM, the term is usually associated with refugee's movements and people that are displaced (UNHCR 2016; OIM 2019). It is equally important to mention that this type of migration, where coercion is present and where consequently the security of individuals is threatened, can have an impact on a global level (Yousaf 2018).

The perceptions towards migration are also an important element to consider within the context of the topic that will be analyzed. Even though forced migration and consequently the presence of refugees and displaced people show clear signs of human rights abuse, migration has been perceived by some states as a political issue. It is crucial to understand that perceptions within states can affect significantly the way that migration is treated and the implementation of a HS strategy. Portraying asylum seekers and refugees as threats can eventually lead to restrictive measures creating barriers on the promotion of HS (Newman and Richmond 2001). Negative perceptions and measures taken by states regarding migration will be seen as crucial elements to be considered for the comprehension of the present topic, particularly within the context of the EU.

1.5.2. Refugee

The concept of *refugee* is rather complex, covering a range of dimensions. Despite the term

being defined as a legal political status by the 1951 Refugee Convention, there has been disagreement over its conceptualization over the years (Estevens 2018; Haddad 2004). One problem within its definition lays in the “blurriness” of the concept. *Refugee* has been often confused with ‘*migrant*’, particularly with ‘*illegal migrant*’. Some authors claim that this is done at times on purpose, that is with a deliberate intention (Newman and Richmond 2001), and also due to the fact that refugees are perceived as not wanted (Duvell 2006). This might also be related to the media. Often, the media imply both terms (refugee and migrant) in an indistinctive manner, leading to the confusion between them, and making any distinction harder to make (Haddad 2004). However, other reasons can also be added, such as the illegal practices that refugees may at times use as a way to make their path, have their application for asylum, and thus avoid deportation (Duvell 2006).

Aside from international law, every country deals with refugee protection through its own legislation and national policies. As such the misuse of both terms can have an impact on the safety of refugees since by not making the appropriate distinction, refugees may not receive the protection they have required, while they support they should receive may be undermined (Edwards 2016).

Another issue to have in mind relates to the concept’s scope. At times, the reasons behind the movements are limited by what is considered “dangerous”. For instance climate change might not be seen as a valid reason to receive the refugee status, as ‘climate refugees’ are not included in international law. This problem, however, is gaining more and more attention from the UN which has addressed this issue recently in 2018. Meanwhile in other places, the term refugee can cover a wider range of categories and thus offer protection to more people, as it is the case of various African countries (Airoldi 2019). Aside from the perceptions around the movements the concept might also been exploited by politicians; in other words used according to the actor’s own interests (Haddad 2004).

For the present report the concept of *refugee* will be defined according to the designation provided by the UNHCR and the international law on this area (particularly the Geneva Convention of 1951). ‘Refugee’ corresponds to a person who due to fear of being persecuted or being the target of serious threats to his/her freedom or physical integrity cannot

return to his/her country of origin (UNHCR 2016). This situation is usually due to natural catastrophes or catastrophes caused by humans themselves, conflicts or persecution in the person's home country. The process indicates that a person seeking asylum eventually becomes a refugee (achieving thus the refugee status) if their claims are recognized and accepted. It is usual for refugees to flee to neighboring countries, where the host government along with other actors provides them with support (Graham and Poku 2000). Within this particular group, children in particular, have been considered one of the most vulnerable targets in conflict situations. Since the 90's that the vulnerability of children in conflict situations has been receiving attention, raising awareness to the child protection issue (MacFarlane and Khong 2006). Within the context of this key concept, children, and particularly unaccompanied minors, will be given a special attention. As one of the most fragile groups, faced often with unsafe living conditions, children become easy targets towards different forms of exploitation: from child labor and sexual violence to recruitment in criminal groups. The poor conditions that both children and the refugee community as a whole face weakens their HS in all levels (Berti 2015).

An important element to consider for the context of the present investigation, and which also falls within realm of *forced migration* is the environment in the countries of origin and which puts these individuals in an insecure context, forcing them to leave. Together with this, scholars who approached the topic also put an emphasis on the importance of evaluating the situations during their journeys, and the process of becoming '*refugees*' where they can become easy targets for abuse and exploitation (Yousaf 2018)

1.5.3. Integration

Together with the previous concepts here presented, *integration* is also a contested term. There is not a universal accepted definition of it and indeed it has been highly debated over time (Hellgren 2015, Craig 2015). It is important to mention that different countries hold different approaches towards *integration* thus having different policies and models. These are also applied to the refugee context, which will be of relevance for the present analysis. The term has been implemented by governments within the refugee issue as part of a goal to

achieve (Craig 2015).

It has also been pointed out the question of responsibility during the process of *integration*. Being often seen as the responsibility of the receiving society, such reading contradicts the idea that *integration* should be seen, and indeed is, a “two way process” where both parts (receiving and sending countries, local and migrant communities) have responsibility and must adapt to each other (Hellgren 2015).

The perspectives and concepts within integration can be diverse. Apart from the attention that can be put either on migrants or on the receiving society, other elements on the process of settling are also approached in the literature. These can include for instance the issue of citizenship or the access to services, such as healthcare and education. However, even these elements can be contested among scholars (Penninx e Mascareñas 2016).

Regarding the previous approach of *integration* as a “two way process” this will be the one considered for the present report; however before defining it more clearly it is also relevant to mention that, aside from the lack of consensus in defining the term, there is also no consensus on the term at a European level, meaning that there is not an agreement on a European model of *integration*. The conceptualization of the term by the European Commission in 2003 differs from the one presented in 2004 through the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy, for instance. The first definition appears to be more open and precise while the latter does not define the target group in detail and perceives immigration as something to be corrected (Martiniello 2006).

Being that the respective term does not have a common understanding and there is even a lack of consensus of a European integration model (Martiniello 2006), the definition to be considered for the purpose of the respective report will be the one provided by the European Commission in 2003, stated as the following:

Two way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant. This implies on the one hand that it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility of participating in economic, social, cultural and civil life

and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity. (European Commission 2003:17).

Following this definition of *integration* by the EU, certain elements have been set in order to provide successful integration policies, backed by a holistic approach, namely: access to the labor market, education and language skills, housing and urban issues, health and social services, the social and cultural environment, nationality, civic citizenship and respect for diversity. It is also relevant to mention, within the scope of the present research, that these strategies should involve the presence of both state and non-state actors (European Commission 2003).

For the purpose of this investigation, the concept of *integration* will be considered within the refugee context. Integration in the local community along with integration strategies should apply to refugees and be presented as a durable solution. As stated by the UNHCR obtaining the nationality of the country of asylum is eventually within the goal of local integration (UNHCR 2006; OIM 2019; Commission of the European Communities 2003).

The previous concepts are of significant relevance within the HS framework and are interconnected each other. When it comes to the concept of *migration*, the concept is interconnected with HS in the sense that people move due to threats to their security or to improve their (sense of) security. Vast numbers of people have been forced to migrate, in this century and the one before, namely asylum seekers and refugees (Graham and Poku 2000) due to lack of security in their home territories. Considering that certain elements of coercion can force individuals to migrate (Yousaf 2018) the term of forced displacement, more particularly refugees, fall under the HS framework by showing a clear absence of it (Newman and Richmond 2001). Following the idea that the respective approach has a perception focused on the individual (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007), it then approaches the factors that threaten its conditions of life and the right to live in dignity (Human Security Unit 2016). For this, it is important to follow an effective strategy in order to operationalize HS. In order to ensure the individual with a sustainable way of life, one of the strategies includes the previously

mentioned concept of social integration (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007; United Nations Development Program 1994).

1.5.4. Human security and cosmopolitan citizenship

Following the values within the HS framework on which individuals must live in dignity, the approach of cosmopolitan citizenship will be considered as a perspective that could help complement the security of people, in this case of migrants. Additionally, it will be mentioned throughout the following chapters so as to offer an interesting perspective within the citizenship dimension.

The concept of citizenship is linked with identity as people belong to a particular political community. In other words, citizens are connected to the nation state where they belong, holding rights and duties connected to that state (Nash 2009; Linklater 1998). However the notion of citizenship has been approached through different perspectives, going beyond its traditional lens.

Among the innovative perspectives is the cosmopolitan version of citizenship. The referent concept will be here addressed as a complement to the HS framework. However before proceeding to identify the operationalization of the concept within the present report, it is important to note that the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship is not consensual.

Within the literature, the concept holds different conceptualizations and perspectives. These include the legal political category and the democratic and normative conception. For the purpose of the report, cosmopolitan citizenship will follow a normative stance, built on an idea that obligations towards people go beyond the borders of the state (Tan 2017). This idea of “care for all individuals” and sense of humanism that is in the basis of the normative stance is seen as relevant in security issues. In other words, to have a concern for Humanity is in the very essence of this concept. Advocates of such idea of citizenship could include diverse actors, including within the global civil society (Linklater 1998; Smith 2007; Nash 2009).

In the present context the issue of security is linked to the situation of migrants, in the sense that cosmopolitan citizenship has the possibility to enhance their HS, through the

Humanism inherent in the concept. The concept holds a close relationship with human rights. For instance, Nash (Nash 2009) addresses this relationship through the different status of citizens and 'non citizens'. This approach allows for an understanding that there is at times a distinction in the treatment that 'non citizens' receive. Within the categories that the author identifies are people that hold a refugee status (Nash 2009). Meanwhile, it is also important to note that cosmopolitan citizenship is seen as an "ideal", an "utopia" that still faces challenges in practical terms. Even though it cannot yet be put into practice, it remains as an interesting theory, especially in the present context in terms of ensuring people's rights, regardless of national boundaries (Chandler 2003).

The link between cosmopolitan citizenship and the issue on migration can also be approached by looking for instance to the integration of migrants in the host country (Isin and Turner 2007). With regards to the refugee "crisis" in particular, cosmopolitan citizenship is considered by looking at the situation that migrants might face (including unsafe environments), for instance within the limits of citizenship. In other words, cosmopolitan citizenship emerges as a concept that could help improve the challenging situations they might encounter in terms of their rights.

1.6. Final Considerations

The present chapter presented the theoretical framework along with the key concepts that will guide the respective investigation. The analysis and operationalization of the concepts together with other elements that might be considered important during the field work will be possible during the period of the internship, where the internee will remain for six months and following the tasks that will be carried out within the context of the organization. Regarding the HS approach as a theoretical framework, the choice was made to follow a broader concept within the framework, considered the most adequate for the purpose of this report.

Despite the criticisms that have been surrounding the HS approach in the academic field and within the international community, mainly related to its broadness and vagueness, the approach has offered a perspective on how to deal with situations in the security field through

a more humanist lens. This is considered of significant relevance since the reality of today portrays a world where threats can cross boundaries affecting deeply civilians from all over the world, as national borders are no longer the only safeguard of a state's security. Furthermore the existence of conflicts where states can become the means to insecurity themselves and where policies taken by states can be influenced by personal interests, demonstrates a bigger need in putting the individual at the center of protection. As such, the concept of HS that will guide the present report will be the broad concept provided by the UNDP of 1994. This will involve an approach of HS where values such as *freedom from want* and *freedom from fear* will be key terms, searching to reach the security of the individual as an ultimate goal. The causes of insecurity within the HS approach to be considered will include the levels identified by UNDP, most particularly food, health, personal and community, seen as the most relevant for the target group (the refugee children) under analysis (United Nations Development Programme 1994).

Regarding the issue of migration, particularly forced migration, the topic has been approached by several scholars within the academic field, as this issue can encompass all dimensions of human insecurity. An area that has created particular interest within the question of migration is the issue of humanitarian crisis and crisis management regarding asylum seekers and refugees. This interest comes from the complex situation that the international community is currently facing, particularly the EU, and that it is still creating a significant impact within the stability of member states. The analysis of the phenomenon of the refugee "crisis" in the EU can be identified in several research papers provided by several scholars, who have made significant contributions within the field; as such one of the limitations considered within the present research was the extensive literature surrounding the topic. However the analysis of HS in the context of the refugee "crisis" will provide a further contribution within the academic field by focusing on specific elements, such as education and citizenship, acting as instruments on the promotion of HS. Focusing on specific elements of analysis will allow the present report to offer an innovative theoretical contribution. Furthermore, an empirical and methodological contribution will be provided through the fieldwork to be conducted in the NGO THP.

The next chapter will proceed to the analysis of the contextualization of the refugee crisis within the EU, with a particular focus on Greece.

CHAPTER 2. CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE REFUGEE 'CRISIS'

Having presented the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the present report, the following chapters will provide the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The results will be contextualized and further discussed so as to give an answer to the research questions leading the study. Additionally the data collected will be displayed *vis a vis* the existing research surrounding the topic in order to place theory *versus* practice.

Starting with the present chapter, it will lay out the contextualization of the refugee “crisis” as an ongoing phenomenon within the EU. It is relevant to have in consideration the reasons behind the intense migratory flows leading to the respective phenomenon as well as to understand its evolution and consequent impact. Within this context a particular focus will put be on the current situation surrounding Greece, being here the object of analysis.

2.1. Root causes of forced migration

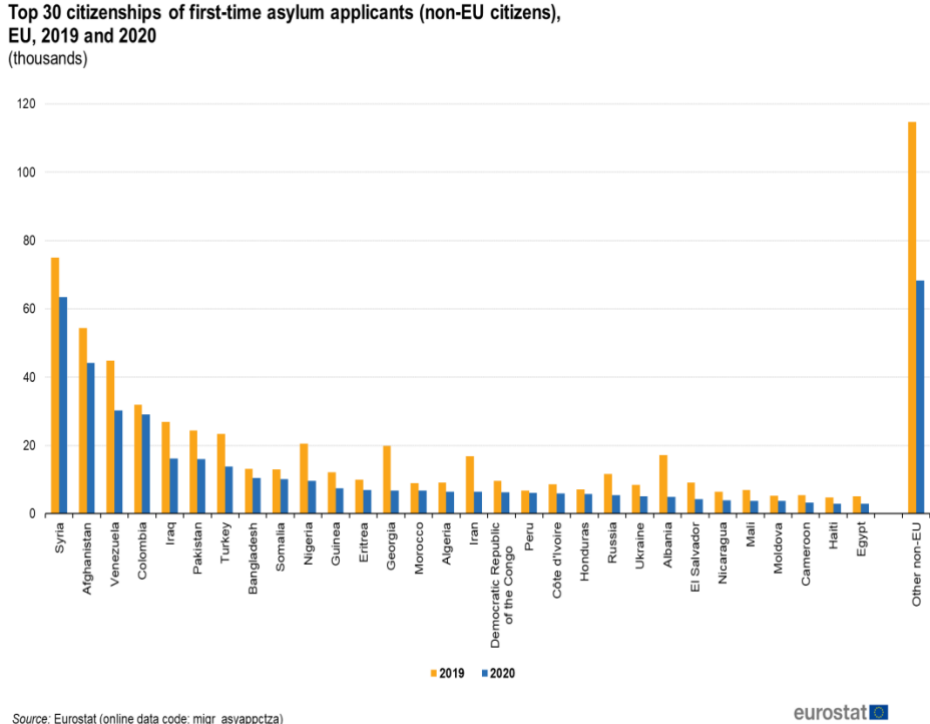
According to a *Global Trend* report by the UNHCR in 2019, within the last decade up until 2019, around 100 million people left their homes to search for refuge in other countries. This forced displacement arose from situations of crisis that were breaking out in several countries, becoming thus a major concern for the international community (UNHCR 2019).

The reasons behind what make people risk their lives to seek refuge vary. Among the causes behind displacement, there is extreme violence, poverty, authoritarian regimes and governance deterioration, political repression and tensions as well as social exclusion or even ethnic persecution of certain groups within society (EASO 2020; Boulby and Christie 2018). Meanwhile people might also be forced to move due to environmental reasons, given that the deterioration of the environment can lead to a lack of natural resources or make impossible even to inhabit (EASO 2020).

When it comes to countries of origin of displaced populations these include Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, among others, as well as African countries such as Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, Nigeria or Libya, to name a few. Within the crisis faced in places like Syria and Iraq, citizens are often exposed to extreme violence, as in the cases of civil war in Syria, as well as to

ethnic and political violence as in Iraq. Some might even face the risk of being persecuted especially when it comes to religious groups and minorities (Guribye and Mydland 2018; Boulby and Christie 2018; Triandafyllidou 2018). In regard to refugees from African countries the dangers they face may be consequence of civil war, of the presence of warlords and religious extremism as well as of ethnic tensions (Triandafyllidou 2018; Boulby and Christie 2018).

Figure 2 – Countries of origin of migrants arriving in the EU (2019-2020)



Source: Eurostat (2021)⁷

The examples above illustrate situations of crisis that some countries are facing while putting their populations in harsh contexts of insecurity, unsafe environments, thus forcing them to leave their home. Meanwhile it is important to notice that people face a context of insecurity not only in their countries of origin, but also during their journeys, for instance in transit countries, up until the moment they reach the host country.

During the journey, people are exposed to several dangers thus aggravating their state of

⁷ Original source: From Eurostat, “Statistics explained”, Accessed 20 July 2021. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics#Main_countries_of_destination:_Germany,2C_Spain_and_France

insecurity. The journey is often described as hazardous with many risking their lives during the process (Boulby and Christie 2018). Many resort to the services of smugglers (being these networks sometimes composed by refugees as well), and are charged with significant amounts of money so that they make the crossings (Vasilakis 2017; Boulby and Christie 2018). Apart from the expensive prices, smuggling routes also present dangers, making the experience of refugees and migrants even more difficult. Such dangers might include exposure to human organs trafficking, sexual abuse, detention, torture, or spending days without water and food. Being that the journey can be such an unsafe process, many do not even survive it (Boulby and Christie 2018).

Another issue worth of attention is the fact that asylum seekers might not wish to stay in their first country of asylum or might be forced to continue their journeys and search for another host country. This is due to the lack of reception conditions and security that some countries might present. For those that end up hosted in camps such issues tend to be more visible, being that some may have a lack of access to services, difficulties to find a job or not even have freedom of movement (Boulby and Christie 2018).

The situation that many refugees face upon arrival can further aggravate their vulnerability and be a consequence of negative responses they encounter in the host country. The fact that a significant number of arrivals can be perceived as a burden in the receiving country, responses such as treating the refugee as the 'other', nationalist attitudes and xenophobia may arise. Such responses can also be a result of the confusion that sometimes exists around the difference between refugees and economic migrants (Boulby and Christie 2018).

Refugee children and unaccompanied minors

Having in consideration that a significant percentage of those that were forced to move are children (UNHCR 2019) and that they are given a particular emphasis within the present report, it is important to consider their insecurity and vulnerability within this context.

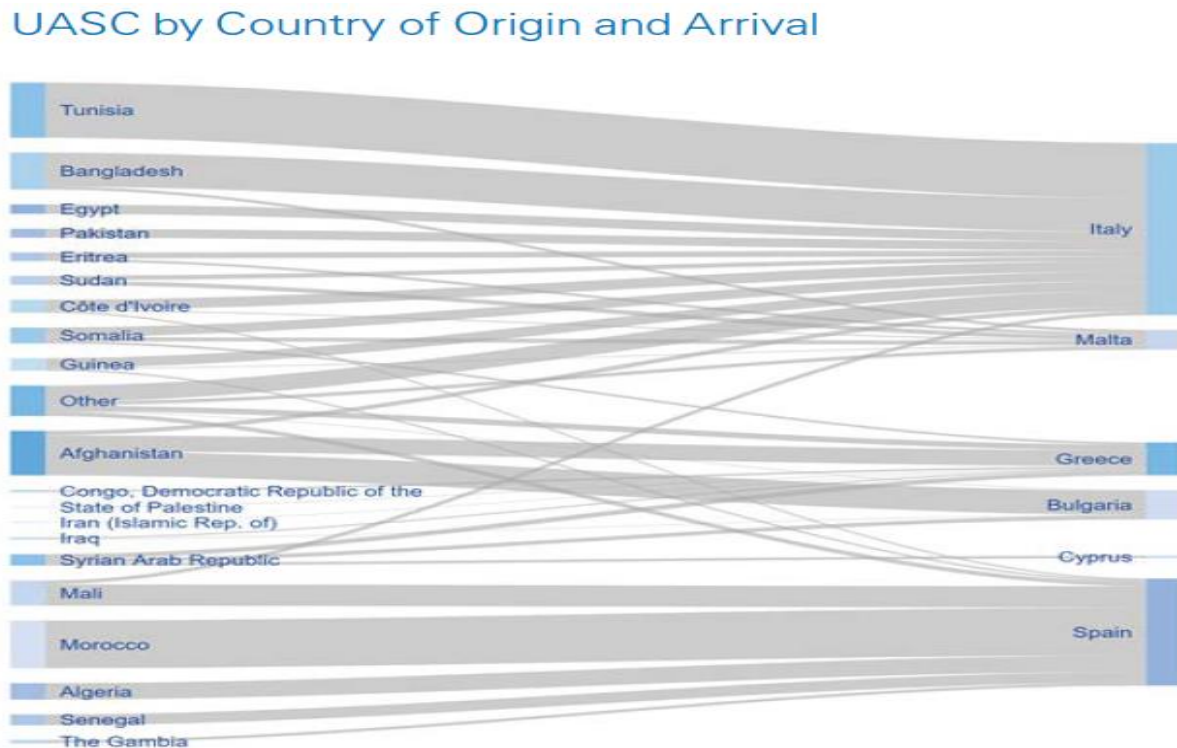
Some children seeking refuge, for instance by trying to reach Europe, arrive unaccompanied while others are on the move with other people but might end up being separated.

Unaccompanied minors from the start who are fleeing from violent conflicts, may have started their journeys alone because they have lost their families in their home country or because those have disappeared. The children sent alone by their parents might be searching for better life opportunities (Boulby and Christie 2018; Fili and Xythali 2017). It might also be the case that some children intend to be reunited with some family member in another country, for instance within the EU (Interview 20).

There is urgency when it comes to the protection of children and in attending to their vulnerabilities. Children that were facing unstable environments may have been confronted with traumatic experiences or situations throughout their journeys that affected their security; as such they are in need of individualized support (Boulby and Christie 2018; Interview 22).

Some of the countries where children come from include Syria, Afghanistan, Congo, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, among others (Kotsiou et al.2018; Fili and Xythali 2017). Even though some children leave home because they are trying to follow a dream, a lot of them are fleeing in order to find security. Furthermore, in some cases the daily reality they face in their home countries can be of a constant uncertainty, meaning that they may not be sure whenever a violent or unsafe incident might happen at any time (Interview 6).

Figure 3 – Countries of origin of unaccompanied and separated children (Year of 2020)



Source: UNHCR, UNICEF AND IOM (2021)⁸

A lot of unaccompanied minors are fleeing from situations of poverty, oppression, political and religious reasons, sexual harassment or incidents where their human rights have been violated (Fili and Xythali 2017; Interview 4; Interview 20; Interview 5; Interview 6). Some children might have had a good life back home however they experienced unsafe situations due to the situation outside their cities that made their conditions change completely (Interview 23). Others could have been deprived of educational opportunities and started working at an early age while girls for instance may have married before the age of 18. To provide an example, Pakistan is a country that is considered to not have an ongoing conflict compared with Syria, however there are children that have lived in poverty and have been deprived of attending school (Interview 4).

⁸ UNHCR UNICEF and IOM. 2021. "Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe Accompanied, Unaccompanied and Separated," *Interagency Factsheet on Refugee and Migrant Children*, no. January-December 2020: 1–8. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/87693>.

As previously mentioned, there is an urgency regarding the protection of children since they are most susceptible to situations that endanger their safety, these being particularly heightened in the case of unaccompanied minors. In addition, their refugee status along with their age can consequently result in them not having a voice when it comes to decision making. As such, components within the HS framework, such as *freedom from want* and *freedom from fear* are critical particularly when it comes to children (Boulby and Christie 2018).

The journeys that refugees go through are usually a perilous process. With regards to the journeys of children, they are often described as distressful and bad, revealing a context of insecurity to which children are exposed to different forms of exploitation. Apart from the risks they might encounter within smuggling networks they can also be victims of sexual based violence and organ trafficking (Boulby and Christie 2018; Interview 15). For those that reach Turkey during their journeys, children have been seen working in the streets in Istanbul and some might try to find jobs in an attempt to support themselves (Boulby and Christie 2018).

Another barrier that can significantly affect their security is the fact that some might lose the citizenship of their country of origin once they move. They may face difficulties also upon arrival because some flee without documentation, thus raising more challenges within the citizenship dimension (Boulby and Christie 2018). The different contexts of insecurity that children face from the moment they leave their countries, the journeys they experience, up to the point they reach the host country, reveal the different dimensions in which their HS is threatened- from physical insecurity to psychosocial and health issues as well as insecurities at a social level (Boulby and Christie 2018).

Regarding the situation that children face upon arrival, this will be further developed in more detail within the specific context of their security in Greece.

2.2. The context of Greece

Having in consideration that Greece was one of the countries that felt the impact of the 'crisis' more deeply and given that the internship took place in Athens, the 'crisis' will thus be contextualized in the particular situation of the country.

2.2.1. Evolution of the “crisis”

Within the context of the present report, the emphasis will be put on the particular situation of Greece, where the internship took place, and on how the country has been dealing with the refugee ‘crisis’. The impact that the ‘crisis’ has had in the country and the current reality that it is facing also helps to better understand the environment that THP is operating on and to contextualizing it as an actor in the promotion of security.

Greece was already facing a fragile situation in terms of its economic landscape. The country was already under international attention due to its struggles with the economic crisis since 2009 (Cabot 2019; Kotsiou *et al.* 2018; Kotsiou *et al.* 2020). The fact that the arrival of refugees coincided with the economic crisis that Greece has been dealing with, aggravated the situation in the country in terms of its response to migrants, revealing significant struggles in the Greek system to deal with the arrivals; as well as the impact created within the host community (Kotsiou *et al.* 2018; Raimondi 2019; Parsanoglou 2020).

Within such context, the country dealt with austerity measures. Many Greek citizens saw themselves in need, lacking provision of social services and facing poverty (Gunst *et al.* 2019; Gabot 2019; Kotsiou *et al.* 2020). The distress caused by this ‘crisis’ added to the turbulent management of the arrivals of refugees both at a national and European level revealed negative responses among locals. (Hangartner *et al.* 2019; Raimondi 2019; Kounani and Skanavis 2018). In the case of Greece, there has been a presence of violent attacks influenced by a xenophobic sentiment towards migrants (Raimondi 2019). However the response within the Greek community is diverse and not entirely negative, as are the impacts of the ‘crisis’ within the community as it will be presented ahead in the chapter

Greece has been at the frontline of the refugee ‘crisis’ (OECD 2018) and it has been considered has a main transit country for the migrants that intended to reach other European countries as many did not wish to stay in Greece. Despite the financial difficulties of the Greek state and the fact that the country was considered as a transit point, many migrants stayed longer than expected particularly in the islands (Kounani and Skanavis 2018; Gunst *et al.* 2019). Here, the arrivals presented many challenges including for the multiple actors that were

working in the field as well as for the Greek authorities. These actors encompassed both individual and institutional actors as well as organizations that were particularly created to attend to the ‘crisis’ (Gunst *et al.* 2019; Parsanoglou 2020).

Figure 4 – Evolution of migratory flows in Greece throughout the years

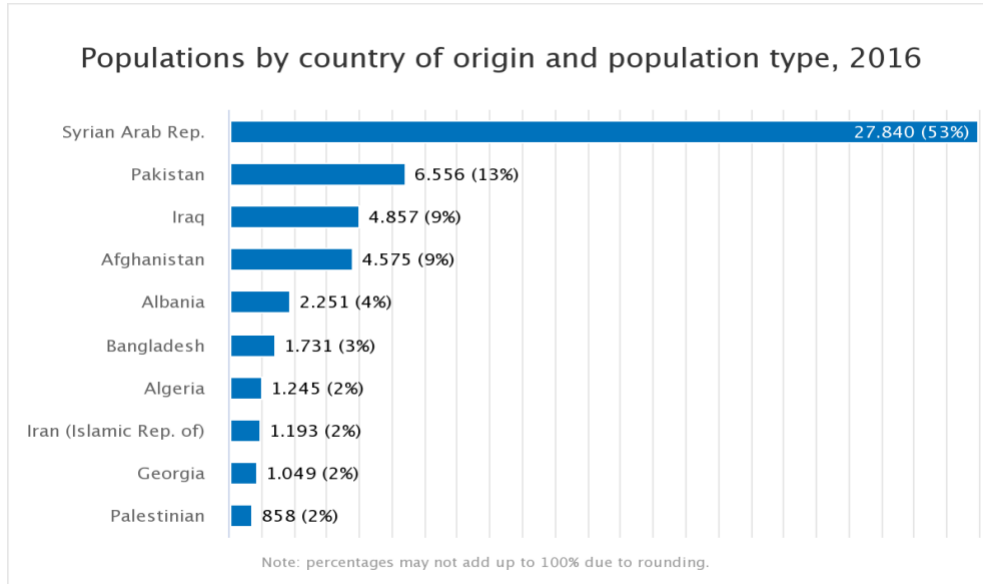
Previous years	Sea arrivals	Land arrivals	Dead and missing
2020	9,714	5,982	102
2019	59,726	14,887	71
2018	32,494	18,014	174
2017	29,718	6,592	59
2016	173,450	3,784	441
2015	856,723	4,907	799
2014	41,038	2,280	405

Source: UNHCR (n.d).⁹

Among the countries whose migrants were submitting applications in Greece, there were Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, Iran and the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo). In the beginning of the ‘crisis’ when flows were significantly heavy the majority of applicants were from Syria, Afghanistan and Congo (Kounani and Skanavis 2018; Gunst *et al.* 2019; Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

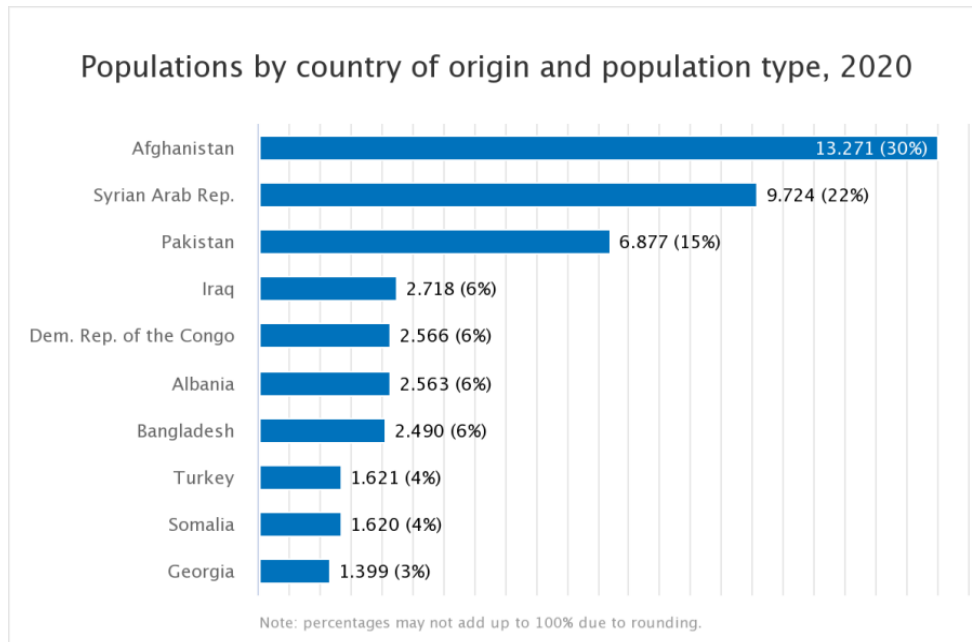
⁹ Original source: From the operational data portal on refugee situations, ‘Mediterranean situation: Greece’, Accessed 17 July. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

Figure 5 – Countries of origin of migrants arriving in Greece in 2016



Source: UNHCR (n.d.)¹⁰

Figure 6 – Countries of origin of migrants arriving in Greece in 2020



Source: UNHCR (n.d.)¹¹

¹⁰ Original source: From the refugee data finder, Accessed 17 July, Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=dWUF62>

Before the period of 2016, the situation in Greece was described through a better organization being that the numbers were lower and it was possible to have a better control in the management of arrivals. Additionally, many people who did not have a right claim for asylum were returned to their country, forced and voluntarily. At the same period the situation in the islands was not that deteriorated compared to the following years, being that refugees were being stranded there, only remaining for a certain period (Boulby and Christie 2018; OECD 2018; Parsanoglou 2020). However, within the upcoming years, the situation in the country has evolved as a result of not only the increase in the flows but also of European approaches and decisions taken at a national level, in order to deal with the 'crisis'. Among the crucial situations that have changed the dynamic within the country are the agreement between Turkey and the EU and the closure of the Balkan route. Such decisions have had an impact in the management of the arrivals. Even though the EU-Turkey deal resulted in a decrease of irregular flows of migrants, this agreement along with the closure of the route made migrants stay longer in Greek territory. A lot of people, including children were stranded in the country which resulted in national facilities being overcrowded (Fili and Xythali 2017; EASO 2020; OECD 2018).

When it comes to the reception procedures and the conditions that were being presented to refugees, the situation was described as a "mess" (Interview 6). The hotspot approach has been crucial in Greece's management of the 'crisis', particularly because the majority of migrants arrived at the islands. However the conditions within the hotspots eventually deteriorated with the pressure of arrivals (EASO 2020). The facilities at the hotspots, the so called RIC (Reception and Identification Centers) felt the impact of the EU-Turkey deal. After the agreement, these facilities became close detention centers for newcomers. Nevertheless due to the criticism that such decision received from national and IOs and given that these centers were difficult to sustain and manage, they eventually became open reception centers (Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

The reception conditions refugees were facing revealed several concerns particularly for children, given their vulnerability. These unsafe conditions have not improved throughout the

¹¹ Original source: From the Refugee data finder, Accessed 17 July, Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=7TyNuM>

evolution of the 'crisis' and refugees felt victims to attacks on part of locals (EASO 2020; Boulby and Christie 2018). Issues have been highlighted concerning the provision of services to refugees, such as medical support, and the lack of hygienic conditions within the hotspots, raising some distress concerning the spread of diseases (Hangartner *et al.* 2019). The healthcare provided to refugees has been a matter of concern given difficulties faced within the Greek health system, already damaged as consequence of the economic crisis (Gunst *et al.* 2019).

Regarding the accommodation facilities, some issues have been pointed out including the lack of a standard procedure on how they operate. Another point of concern is that the access to these facilities is connected to the right of asylum which can complicate the situation of migrants who do not wish to remain in Greece, putting a particular pressure on children (Fili and Xythali 2017). Furthermore, the majority of residential care facilities were being operated by NGOs at the beginning of the 'crisis', however new centers eventually had to be created because such facilities were not prepared for the number of unaccompanied minors that were arriving and there was also a lack of funds putting added pressure in its operation. (Fili and Xythali 2017) Meanwhile, the conditions and support that children were receiving was conditioned by the lack of a qualified staff, considering the emergency character behind the creation of new services (Fili and Xythali 2017).

On the other hand, there is a perception that the current situation in Greece is more positive compared to the first arrivals; this concerns the fact that there is a presence of more shelters as well as more experienced staff within the refugee field. This is particularly positive for children and for those that are unaccompanied in the islands, given that nowadays there are more shelters for all ages (Interview 10).

The Greek reception system has been criticized by several actors, being that Greece had little experience within the reception and integration sectors (Kotsiou *et al.* 2020; Kotsiou *et al.* 2018). Given the significant numbers, camps and services were created (Interview 2; Interview 4). However the conditions offered were also concerning, particularly on the islands, where proper accommodation infrastructure was lacking (Vasilakis 2017). In addition, the basic needs of refugees were not being met, for instance a lack of running water and heating (Interview 2).

With such a scenario, the Greek state tried to adapt to the migratory flow, and changes have been observed through the implementation of different programs, many with the assistance of international actors. Within the first arrivals people did not have the possibility to be provided with monthly cash to cover their basic needs, something which later became possible. Moreover, being able to have access to a shelter could take months and the only state organization responsible for the provision of shelters at the time was the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA). Meanwhile a lot of people were homeless or residing in squats (Interview 15).

The 'crisis' has undoubtedly left a significant impact in the country at different levels. Within the humanitarian dimension, Greece has been described among locals as a "nightmare" (Interview 20) and by the UNHCR as a "humanitarian crisis" (Kotsiou *et al.* 2018); and that the country is facing significant issues particularly when it comes to human rights (Interview 2; Interview 9). For some the current situation is "disheartening", and tenser compared to the first arrivals (Interview 8).

The conditions on the islands have been the main focus of concern, where refugees face inhumane conditions and experience a reality that questions their dignity (Interview 20). In the year of 2018 a big number of migrants were still stranded in Greece as a result of European borders being closed, many facilities remained overcrowded even though a lot were transferred within the following year to the mainland. Another issue was the geographical restriction that refugees were still put through, not being allowed to leave the islands (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; EASO 2020; Kotsiou *et al.* 2018).

The humanitarian urgency that Greece has been facing was not only due to the high number of refugees that arrived at their border but also due to the unpreparedness of the Greek system to deal with such massive numbers (Interview 2), putting the country under great pressure (Kounani and Skanavis 2018). This pressure has been felt since the arrivals around 2015/2016 and Greece received particular attention due to the presence of diverse actors within the field revealing an environment of humanitarian intervention (Fili and Xythali 2017). Furthermore, the fact that some of the organizations that came to work on the field usually operated in humanitarian contexts showed the urgency of the situation that Greece was

dealing with. Another problematic dynamic that accompanied the intense presence of organizations was that a lot of them were acting without a strategic plan and proper coordination to deal with the different actors in play (Interview 2). Within the cooperation of actors working in the field there is also been some disagreements between Greek authorities and IOs, and Greek authorities have been judged for being very bureaucratic and inefficient (Parsanoglou 2020).

Regarding the current reality in Greece, apart from the recently elected government and the new measures it has been implementing, incidents have also evolved including tensions within the Turkish-Greek borders. Such developments occurred within the period that the internship took place. Around the months of February and March of 2020, incidents were observed within the borders particularly around Evros, where refugees, including children, saw themselves trapped at the border, after being incited by Turkish authorities. Following the decision of president Erdoğan of opening the borders and accusing the EU of not keeping its promises in helping to deal with the arrivals of a significant number of Syrian refugees, tensions rose as more migrants reached Greek borders (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Stevis-Gridneff and Gall 2020). The Greek authorities stated that several irregular entries were prevented within this period. However violence increased and allegations were disclosed regarding the use of force, people being pushed back and illegal returns to Turkish territory. Meanwhile the Greek authorities dismissed some of the allegations as “fake news” (Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

As it has been previously mentioned, Greece became in a state of humanitarian urgency, however there were also changes within the political landscape in Greece after 2015 (Raimondi 2019). It is mentioned among citizens that Greece is in a situation of political “crisis” (Interview 9) while others believe that the country is in a more stable situation in terms of political scenery (Interview 24). However the country did assist to a more conservative turn, where it was possible to see the rise of the political party Golden Dawn (Interview 8; Interview 2). Furthermore, the presence of refugees can also lead to the increase in the support for more restrictive measures towards asylum (Hangartner *et al.* 2019).

2.2.2. Security of refugees in Greece

Following the contexts of insecurity that have been mentioned within the present chapter, the situation of refugees upon arrival is also worthy of consideration. Being that refugees face insecurity up until they arrive, their situation in the context of Greece will now be considered.

People that are on the move can be exposed to extremely traumatic experiences being that an environment of displacement can present several risks. Migrants can be subjected to a number of challenging situations that can impact their security. These might include poor living conditions with a shortage of access to the most basic needs, revealing problems such as malnutrition or lack of hygiene; an uncertainty regarding their legal status and whether they will stay in the host country; a lack of financial resources and employment opportunities; becoming victims of racism and discrimination; social isolation; difficulties in communicating due to language barriers and the risk of being deported or detained. Such environment can jeopardize migrant's safety and lead to serious consequences. For instance regarding their physical insecurity, this can result in drug and alcoholic tendencies as well as mental illnesses, including depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, among others. Regarding the issue of addiction, this can also be the result of the traumatic experiences refugees lived, the impact of the loss of their families or unorganized families¹². In the case of Greece not a lot of attention is given to refugee's mental health; meanwhile in terms of the health assessment that migrants go through, Greece is one of the European countries that examines the presence of tuberculosis (Freccero *et al.* 2017; Kotsiou *et al.* 2018; Kotsiou *et al.* 2020).

Many refugees hope to arrive in other European destinations, not wishing to remain in Greek territory. This can come from a perception that the country lacks in resources and that Greek citizens are in need of help themselves (Kotsiou *et al.* 2018; Cabot 2019). The access to services that refugees are presented is also a matter of distress. Starting with reception conditions, there is a lack of access to the basic services, including healthcare. As mentioned previously spread of diseases has been a point of concern, and such issue will be further noted alongside the conditions faced in the islands. Meanwhile the lack of information among

¹² The referent information was also collected during the participation in a training provided by the NGO regarding addiction.

refugees concerning the healthcare system in the country, language barriers, and difficulties linked to the lack of the social security number, a measure implemented by the new government, add to the struggles refugees encounter within the health security dimension (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Kotsiou *et al.* 2018; Hangartner *et al.* 2019; Kotsiou *et al.* 2020). Another relevant point that has been reported is the transportation of refugees to the hospital. Given that refugees can only be moved through private transportation if they hold the international protection application card, sometimes such transportation does not happen¹³ (Kotsiou *et al.* 2018).

The situation that refugees face on the islands is worrying in terms of security, particularly for those with vulnerabilities (EASO 2020). It is important to mention that for the majority of refugees the islands is the first place they encounter once they reach Greece (Interview 13; Interview 10; Interview 4) and the conditions they have to deal with are alarming (Raimond 2019). Among the dangers faced are the exposure to drugs, prostitution, incidents of people being stabbed and attempts of rape (Interview 15; Interview 10). Migrants can also be more prone to contract diseases due to a lack of sanitary conditions, and this risk can also be exacerbated due to the lack of proper hygiene conditions and toilet facilities as well as lack of proper nutrition and access to healthcare in the host country, once they find themselves in the camps (Kotsiou *et al.* 2018). Meanwhile some people even reside outside of the official camps, making their own tents within an area that is described as the “jungle” (Interview 6).

Daily life in the islands can be extremely challenging and people are living with no limits and in a constant state of fear (Interview 13). An example that can illustrate such conditions is Moria, described by locals as a “terrifying site” (Interview 15) or as a “milestone of refugee Greece” (Interview 4). Moria is the biggest hotspot in the country and it is characterized as dangerous, a prison, where conditions are hazardous exposing refugees to situations that threaten their security in different dimensions; from the lack of space in shelters, an atmosphere of discrimination and racist incidents to an unequal provision of services. Women and children, given their vulnerability, constantly face situations that endanger their lives (Raimondi 2019).

¹³ It was also possible to listen to the issues regarding the transportations of refugees during a conference that the author attended to, concerning unaccompanied minors in Greece.

Unfortunately, the conditions within the islands remained dire, being that within the year of 2019 the situation seemed to have gotten worse, leading to a negative impact on refugee's mental health (EASO 2020). Meanwhile, the situation in the camps on the mainland also reveals challenges within the security dimension. Even though it was reported an increase in terms of capacity, the deficiencies within accommodation facilities still created tensions as a result of camps being overcrowded (Greek Council for Refugees 2020). Regarding the provision of services, even though services in the mainland might be easier to access compared to the camps on the islands, some refugees still face barriers concerning health care, especially those with health conditions and with no AMKA (Social Security Number) (Interview 15). Additionally, other issues have also been observed, for instance the fact that the camps are far away from the city center which can create barriers for people to build a network and create connections (Interview 20). This could further lead to obstacles regarding their integration in the country. As regards to the integration of refugees in Greece, this will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Refugee children as a vulnerable group

Children, particularly unaccompanied minors are the most vulnerable within the context of the 'crisis', as such their security upon arrival in Greece is noteworthy. According to EKKA, by September of 2020, 2665 unaccompanied minors were hosted in long term (shelters and supported independent living apartments) and temporary facilities (safe zones, emergency hotels, emergency accommodation sites). However, 1019 minors still remained in insecure housing conditions, including in apartments with others, squats, moving between accommodations while others remained homeless (EKKA 2020). Once children arrive in Greece they are supposed to be taken to safe places, however some remain in places like Moria, characterized as a dangerous and threatening place for their lives (Interview 20). Meanwhile the agreement between the EU and Turkey also had an impact on the situation of children that have to stay on the islands while they wait to be evaluated by Greek authorities (Fili and Xythali 2017). Such restriction exposes children to very bad conditions (Interview 20).

Before the period of 2013/2014, children were suffering from the traumatic experiences they might have experienced in their countries of origin and further incidents lived throughout their journeys. However, when the heavy flow of migrants hit the Greek borders this situation changed. With the existence of camps like Moria, a lot of the trauma that children faced was experienced upon arrival on Greece. Some of the conditions that children were living with on the camps might have been worse than the ones they were living with in their countries of origin (Interview 13). This issue demonstrates that the conditions that children face on the host country can also affect their security in a negative way. For instance, Moria is depicted as a place where incidents between children might happen and they are not being supervised (Interview 4). On the other hand, some children might create strong bonds in the islands, and not be content when transferred in the mainland since they don't adapt in a city environment; as such the situation is not seen as "black and white" (Interview 4).

Upon arrival children are neglected by a system that does not seem prepared to attend to their needs and are victims of human rights violations¹⁴ (Fili and Xythali 2017). There have been concerns regarding the care that children receive. Due to a lack of capacity on national facilities some children might have to wait for long periods to have access to a proper shelter (Frecceri et al. 2017). A lack of accommodation and transit facilities also led to some children being detained and at times for a long period under poor conditions, until they are moved to a proper reception facility. For the unaccompanied minors that are staying under 'protective custody', the conditions can also be alarming; being that custody can last from days up to months. During such period, minors can be restricted in facilities without proper access to services and under circumstances that can be unsafe, including sharing the space with adults (Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

Additionally the circumstances they are living with can endanger their security (Freccero et al. 2017). An example is the unsafe environment that girls are surrounded by in refugee camps. During the first arrivals there were not enough facilities at RIC to be able to separate girls, exposing them to several risks including gender based violence. Many did not feel safe walking alone, particularly during the night. Even though many facilities were created to

¹⁴ Issues within the Greek system are also mentioned during the conference attended by the author regarding unaccompanied minors in Greece.

improve the situation the unsafe environment still remained (Fili and Xythali 2017).

As it has been mentioned, children face several dangers. The situation of children on the move can be aggravated through several circumstances including disruptions in their education, the possibility of being detained, the fact that they can be separated from their family throughout the process as well the exposure to situations that engender their security. Such situations include incidents that affect their physical and mental health, physical harm, recruitment in criminal groups (Heisbourg 2015; Greek Council for Refugees 2020) and labor incidents, being that children might not have documentation or contracts; they might not be able to protect themselves and be subjected to several hours of work for a small amount of money (Interview 15).

Within the health dimension children can be prone to the spread of diseases and several health issues. Health concerns that have been observed include dental problems, skin, respiratory and surgical diseases, as well as malnutrition. With regards to children's mental state, stress and anxiety is regular among minors and their mental health is something that can be impacted through their experiences. Even though children have access to public healthcare they still face barriers within the access to health services, given that the treatment they receive can be influenced by a lack of interpreters, cultural awareness as well as specialization. The vulnerability of the unaccompanied minors with disabilities is a particular point of concern, given that their care might be dependent on the benevolence of staff that might lack experience. On the other hand, children might also fall victims of negligence (Koutsiou et al. 2018; Fili and Xythali 2017; Heisbourg 2015; Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

The current situation in terms of the provision of services reveals a scenario where some minors still lack the basic needs such as accommodation, school and healthcare (Interview 20). The access to services also depends where children are based, being that children staying on the islands might not have the same access compared to children residing on the mainland, where there are more services (Interview 22). With regards to education, this is an important issue for children since the process of being on the move can disrupt their educational path, as previously mentioned. A lot of minors still do not have access to formal education particularly on the islands, where only a limited number has access to public schools (Greek Council for

Refugees 2020). Situations have also been reported concerning the fact that some schools are not friendly to children in the islands¹⁵. Even though the Greek law states that such access may be granted to children, and their enrollment in schools can take place even with incomplete documentation (Greece Law No. 4251/2014), the majority is still out of the educational system (Fili and Xythali 2017). Among the difficulties that creates barriers within this access is the lack of guardians, whose role is crucial for their enrollment in schools, the lack of intercultural schools, that mainly exist in Athens, and the lack of will on part of some minors in attending school since some are more concerned in securing employment (Fili and Xythali 2017).

Considering that a guardian is crucial for the enrollment of children in schools, its role is also fundamental in many other aspects of children's lives since many actions depend on his/hers consent (Fili and Xythali 2017). A law introduced by the Greek state in 2018 set the regulatory framework for the guardianship of unaccompanied minors. The law defined the responsibilities appointed to guardians, crucial for the integration of unaccompanied children (Greece: Law 4554/2018). However since its implementation, the law has not been operating in practice (Greek Council for Refugees 2020). The guardians do lay a critical role for the wellbeing of children and civil society has had an important role in providing this care, as a guardianship network for unaccompanied minors has been created by an NGO called MetaDrasi (Fili and Xythali 2017; METAdrasi n.d). Still challenges remain due to the fact that at times guardians take up a large number of children at once¹⁶.

The situation of children in Greece can also be impacted by other difficulties, particularly regarding age assessment issues and their participation in decision making. Age assessment has been an issue once refugees arrive in Greece (Interview 2). Children may claim to be of a different age for several reasons; these include enjoying certain legal benefits, to avoid being detained for long periods of time, or to simply bypass bureaucracies that might influence their journeys through the EU. Some might also be forced to lie about their ages or background experiences due to bureaucratic issues. As such they might claim either to be adults or minors depending on the information they have received sometimes by other adults or smugglers. This situation can have an impact on their security in the sense that any violation of their rights

¹⁵ The situation concerning schools in the islands is mentioned during the conference assisted by the author.

¹⁶ The referent data was also mentioned during the conference assisted by the author.

might be overlooked¹⁷ (Fili and Xythali 2017).

Another issue that has been noted is the lack of participation from children in terms of decision making. This situation can be aggravated by the fact that some children might show some distrust towards authorities or show difficulties or unwillingness to share their stories in detail. Consequently this can have an impact, being that it can lead to the provision of services that don't properly attend to their needs (Fili and Xythali 2017).

Refugee children have been seen as a generation at risk of becoming lost. The constant uncertainty and state of limbo that children live with can affect their future and lead to further negative behaviors. Feelings of hopelessness and of having no purposes have been observed among children (Fili and Xythali 2017; Freccero et al. 2017; Boulby and Christie 2018).

[...] So if you cannot see an image of yourself in the future then your actions today are meaningless, you know what I mean? So you are just interested in eating and sleeping because if you cannot see a future for yourself you cannot imagine the meaning of your actions today, and that destroys them especially young children. They cannot see themselves; they cannot understand what is the meaning; so you see how many children they don't want to go to school, they don't want to do any actions that will give them a hope because they don't see any hope.
(Interview 20)

The experiences that refugees go through can have an impact on their identity. This identity has been described as ambiguous (Chtouris and Miller 2017), where migrants living under poor conditions start to be treated as mere bodies to care for and as nameless individuals (Raimondi 2019). In addition, refugees end up developing an instinct for survival, where they are only concerned about basic actions such as eating and sleeping, or in a constant concern to secure their safety (Interview 15; Interview 20). Being that people develop an instinct for survival and a lack of purpose, this situation can raise significant concerns regarding their HS; in the sense that security also entails that people must live in freedom and dignity, while developing their human potential (Human Security Unit 2016).

¹⁷ The data surrounding the issue of the age assessment in Greece and that children might lie about their age upon arrival has also been pointed out as part of the data collected in the fieldwork.

In terms of identity, cosmopolitan citizenship comes of interest in this context. As mentioned on the previous chapter, citizenship is associated with identity (traditionally linked to the nation state as citizens are part of a political community) (Nash 2009). In the refugee context, their identity can become ambiguous, as they can face a situation of limbo and be treated as nameless individuals, as previously indicated already. Their situation differs from that of national citizens; thus a paradigm of cosmopolitan citizenship could be beneficial for the promotion of their security. Since cosmopolitan citizenship entails the idea that individuals bring with them rights when they move. As such, and considering its relationship with human rights (Nash 2009), the referent stance could help enhance their security, regardless of citizenship status.

2.2.3. The impact of the arrivals in host communities

Considering the evolution of the ‘crisis’ in Greece and that situations of humanitarian crisis, particularly the one under analysis, can impact on several actors, it will be here considered the impact that the arrivals of refugees have had in the host community and their response to it as well as the exercise active citizenship¹⁸ by the Greeks.

Regarding the response of the Greeks to the arrivals, this response is varied among citizens. It has also changed over time, from the beginning of the “crisis” until the current situation of the country. There is a perception among citizens that the country showed great solidarity, particularly at the beginning, from individual actions to the action of NGOs in the field, whose role will be later be discussed in detail (Cabot 2019; Interview 2; Interview 24).

The solidarity movement in Greece included those who showed a will to get involved in NGOs, IOs and religious groups; and those who individually tried to help in any way they could. Solidarity actions were happening in the islands, where these movements were initially concentrated, with some locals rescuing people from the water and hosting them in their own

¹⁸ Active citizenship is here understood as civic engagement, the active participation in the community. In the present context, active citizenship is considered in the sense that citizens are involved in actions so as to respond to the arrivals of migrants in the country. Having in consideration the active citizenship of Greeks allows to better understand the impact of the arrivals and the role society has been playing throughout the “crisis”.

homes as well as volunteers providing them with dry clothes and food; to other actions in the mainland, such as supporting those that were staying in public places (Cabot 2019; Raimondi 2019; Parsanoglou 2020). Also in the mainland, both citizens and volunteers showed great solidarity, by gathering donations that included food, clothes and toys (Cabot 2019; Triandafyllidou 2018). In addition establishments have been created so as to provide support, namely social kitchens, libraries or social pharmacies for instance (Interview 8).

[...] many people have been very, very helpful and very supportive, the first years even more so but maybe still. There have been organizations, there have been volunteers, there have been social kitchens, refugee libraries, [...] social...pharmacies. I think that people individually responded in a very human and moving way, so there is been a wave of solidarity and support, one part of society. (Interview 8)

Within the active citizenship present in the context of the 'crisis' several efforts have been made in order to support migrants for their rights and fight racism and exclusion. Apart from the creation of establishments such as social clinics, as mentioned above, actions also included logistical help, sea rescue operations and the organization of solidarity camps (Cabot 2019; Raimondi 2019). However there is an interesting dynamic within how citizens have been responding to the 'crisis' in terms of solidarity and on how such solidarity is perceived. As previously noted, Greeks have been active within the realm of its citizenship by choosing to act in the support of refugees arriving in the country, being from volunteering, individual actions to being involved in NGOs. Meanwhile there is another dynamic in terms of solidarity movements recognized among citizens who identify themselves as 'anarchists' (Parsanoglou 2020). People involved in anarchist movements have also been active when it comes to attending to the needs of refugees, being involved in actions such as providing accommodation, access to social services and integration work (Parsanoglou 2020). There is a differentiation between this active citizenship compared to the actions that other citizens are engaged with, being that they show a more radical stance. Actions on their part have been the result of a discontent towards the response of the Greek state, choosing thus to take action in showing support through

alternative options, such is the case of the creation of squats in the neighborhood of Exarcheia, for instance (King and Manoussaki-Adamopoulou 2019). Another relevant stance is also their approach, at times, towards the intervention of NGOs, being that many do not agree with the way they are responding to the 'crisis' following an idea that there is a perception of the refugee issue as a 'problem' in the way they work (Parsanoglou 2020).

Within the response of the Greek community there are also other distinctions. Apart from the difference between the responses of the locals from the mainland, whose example will be later provided through the Athenians, and those from the islands, other dissimilarities within citizen's perceptions will be included. The response within the Greek community is also described as "two different worlds" (Interview 3) and the referent dissimilarities will encompass the older and new generation, and those who are and are not involved in the refugee field.

Despite the great solidarity movement from the citizens, part of the society has also felt the impact of the 'crisis' through a more negative lens. The high number of arrivals at the borders is something that Greeks were not expecting along with the long stay in Greece since some expected that the refugees would want to continue their journeys to other European countries (Interview 24). Some also believe that the presence of refugees might be a burden to the countries or that they are more likely to commit crimes (OECD 2018).

In addition, the perception towards their presence is also affected by the lack of information that some accuse and the way that the media transmits the information regarding the 'crisis' also creates confusion among citizens (Interview 25; Interview 10). The media can give rise to fears within the local community (Maldini and Takahashi 2017) thus it can be of relevant importance in the sense that it can project a negative response on how to perceive refugees, thus increasing xenophobia, or it can impact their willingness to help (Interview 22).

Apart from the role of the media on this issue, the lack of information regarding the vulnerability of refugees is also felt among those who are not involved in the refugee field, given that those involved have more detailed information about the situation (Interview 25). While others simply show a lack of care towards the situation if the problem does not influence their personal lives (Interview 8).

When it comes to the way that the government has been dealing with the 'crisis', the response is in part not satisfactory, being mentioned that the anger that some people show towards the situation might be directed to the way the government has been dealing with it and not the immigrants themselves. This issue is also brought up in the gap between the younger and older generation. The younger generation appears to show a great will to help, even though volunteerism can be perceived as negative, given some mistrust towards NGOs, or even as a "political statement" (Interview 12). There has been some doubts towards their intervention particularly on part of people who are or have been politically engaged (Parsanoglou 2020). Meanwhile the older generation shows a contrast in their response, being that they might feel more insecure due to the fact that they feel neglected by their own government (Interview 12). The situation that the country has faced over the last years might be the cause for this kind of stance being that citizens might feel that certain issues that the country was already facing should instead be prioritized (Interview 21). Additionally the discontent also comes from the belief that the humanitarian response towards the 'crisis' in terms of funds and resources can affect the services provided to citizens (OECD 2018).

When it comes to the hostility towards volunteers this can be seen for instance on incidents happening on the islands, where locals have shown a negative response towards those that were volunteering to support refugees and violent protests have also been incited by Golden Dawn, where volunteers have even been injured (Guribye and Mydland 2018).

The economic crisis put a great burden on the Greek society and consequently on their perception towards the phenomenon that reached their borders. By coinciding with the economic crisis, the refugee 'crisis' found a society that was more weakened, conservative and intolerant towards the 'other' (Interview 8). In addition, the distress also comes from the fear that refugees will come to take their jobs or houses or that it will make the situation worst with their presence, in the part of the society that is more impoverished. On the other hand, others believe that the arrivals do hold some positive impacts such as contributing to the economy in the long term, by creating business and accepting jobs Greeks might reject (Vasilakis 2017; Interview 18).

When it comes to the particular impact of the 'crisis' on the locals from the islands, being

that this is where the situation has deteriorated significantly, this particular impact is worthy of mention. Many locals showed great receptiveness towards the refugees during the first arrivals, welcoming them and showing that they were willing to attend to their needs (Kounani and Skanavis 2018). Islands like Lesbos witnessed the presence of a diversity of actors within the field, including locals, NGOs, IOs, activists, and volunteers, some arriving from abroad. This wave of solidarity was active in everyday activities that were intended to assist the refugees (Parsanoglou 2020).

However a negative response that can come at times accompanied by situations of xenophobia and racism can be perceived as a result of the inhumane and deteriorating conditions that refugees have been living, including children, along with the loss of lives. This situation is something that locals have been observing over the years, making them feel more tired towards the circumstances that didn't appear to improve or even stop (Interview 2). The significant flow of arrivals has agitated the life of those residing on the islands and being more exposed to the arrivals has created a more negative approach towards refugees, being more prone for instance to support protests within schools (Hangartner et al. 2019). Another result of perceiving the refugees as an obstacle might be the impact that the 'crisis' could cause on the tourism industry, the livelihood of many locals (Interview 3); an example of this is how some northern destinations saw tourism become weaker due to the 'crisis' (Guribye and Mydland 2018).

Another point of discontent on part of locals from the islands which was previously mentioned is the burden that the economic 'crisis' has put on the country. Being that Greece was already struggling with a 'crisis', some citizens believe that the country was not ready to deal with such a significant number of arrivals, as such solutions were even mentioned including sending them back to their countries of origin or be hosted by other European countries (Kounani and Skanavis 2018).

Having in consideration that the way the host community reacts to the presence of refugees is important for their future integration, possible negative responses on part of locals can act as barriers to their integration and consequently to their security (Kounani and Skanavis 2018).

2.2.4. Current reality in Athens

In contextualizing the refugee 'crisis' in Greece a particular emphasis will be put in the current reality in Athens. Given that the internship took place in the referent city and it is where the fieldwork took place, a reference will be made regarding the situation of refugees in the city. It will be considered issues of security, access to services, vulnerability of children, and the response of Athenians to the 'crisis', being that the impact of the arrivals in the host community has been considered within this chapter.

Athens is described as a multicultural city (Interview 18), with an environment that is also the center of a lot of tensions, social and political. It is also an active city; described as the center where everything happens (Interview 9). Issues of homelessness (Interview 12) and drug use are visible within the city¹⁹.

Regarding the situation of refugees, for some it is where more opportunities lie, and where services are easier to access compared to those that are staying in the hotspots (Interview 15). When it comes to the provision of services, non-state actors play a significant role. Actors such as foundations, NGOs or for instance volunteers have shown an active presence in providing support. This support has come in different forms, for instance through the presence of volunteers that showed efforts to provide refugees with clothes and food or in offering services like legal support or medical assistance (OECD 2018). This provision can also come from places such as social pharmacies, previously mentioned, which are present in Athens. Social pharmacies seek to provide care not only to refugees but also to other migrants and Greek citizens in need by giving access to medicine and care (Cabot 2019).

For those that are staying in the camps of the mainland, even though conditions have improved compared to the beginning of the first arrivals, some still remain inappropriate, not only due to the state of the facilities but to a set of factors. As it has been mentioned previously, the fact that the camps are not close to the center poses an issue for those residing there (Tsavdaroglou 2018; Greek Council for Refugees 2020). Those that were not hosted in the camps, stayed in insecure conditions around parks and squares, being thus exposed to

¹⁹ During the period of internship it was possible to observe the visibility of the drug issue around the city, particularly in the city center.

several dangers, including the attacks on part of xenophobic groups (Raimondi 2019).

When it comes to the dynamic within the city, the different areas of Athens show big contrasts, being that the center shows a bigger concentration of refugees in comparison to the suburbs, where this presence is very small (Interview 13). Certain places in the city center, such as Victoria Square or Eidomeni, where refugees showed a bigger presence, are described by some locals through negative terms, as “dangerous” and “anarchist” (Chtouris and Miller 2017). Contrary to those that are staying in the camps, refugees residing in the center, like those staying in the so called ‘squats’ are more exposed within the community (Raimondi 2019; Tsavdaroglou 2018). As previously mentioned, squats have been created by anarchist groups; however they are also run by feminist groups, leftist political groups or by refugees themselves (Tsavdaroglou 2018). Such spaces have been hosting several migrants, nevertheless security issues have arisen. Violent attacks towards those staying there have taken place. Such negative responses have occurred as a result of xenophobia or in some cases have been initiated by the police (Raimondi 2019).

An issue that has been noticed recently, is the presence of the police that is more frequent in the city. This situation arises some confusion among citizens regarding the purpose of this reinforcement. It is also mentioned that the focus is put more on refugees on part of the government rather than on issues of drugs and criminality within the city (Interview 12; Interview 9). The reinforcement of police patrols come from a decision on part of the recent Prime Minister, Mitsotakis, under the promise to restore the order. Such presence can be seen for instance in Exarcheia, a neighborhood where tensions between the residents and the police are frequent (King and Manoussaki-Adamopoulou 2019).

Regarding the security within Athens, it was possible during the period of the internship to interact with refugees residing in the city. Athens is considered as a safe city, in comparison with the environment that was lived in the countries of origin. There is a sense of freedom and a possibility for fulfilling one’s potential (Interview 19; Interview 11). It is relevant to notice however, that among the refugees interacted with, there are links with NGOs. In terms of the environment of the city, even though Athens is considered safe there is an agreement when it comes to some areas of the city being perceived as unsafe (Interview 17; Interview 1).

Additionally there is also some distress regarding possible hostility on part of locals, the presence of the police as well as the lack of job opportunities (Interview 11; Interview 14; Interview 16). The impact surrounding the knowledge of the Greek language is also mentioned being that it can make a difference in integration; and it can be a barrier in the access to services, for instance when attempting to go to the hospital (Interview 17; Interview 1).

The particular conditions that children and unaccompanied minors face in Athens is worthy of mention, not only because there are differences in the treatment they receive in the islands compared to that of the mainland, but also because they are exposed to several dangers in a big city like Athens (Interview 4). Regarding the provision of services in Athens, this access is easier due to the significant presence of NGOs (Interview 15). However even though conditions in the mainland present more advantages, many do not have a clear idea of what awaits them in Athens and thus get disappointed once they reach the city (Interview 4). In addition, many children arrive in the city with nothing and the access to NGOs might become more difficult especially for those who find themselves alone. Many children might face months in the street, being that it can take longer to be registered in the system and to receive legal documents, if they manage to do so. Furthermore they need to find their pathway to receive accommodation by trying to get help from organizations that are able to support them (Interview 20).

Having in consideration the vulnerability of children and unaccompanied minors, the dangers they might be exposed to in Athens are diverse. These include involvement in criminal activity such as drugs and prostitution. The fact that many children also face homelessness can also lead to these consequences (Interview 15; Interview 4). The issue of sexual exploitation has been observed in several public places and it has been involving particularly teenage and unaccompanied boys (Kotsiou et al. 2018). These unsafe circumstances are worsened with the fact that certain places around the city have higher levels of criminality, making it easier for children to be exposed to unsafe situations. This insecurity that children face might come from the need to support themselves or at times to send money back to their families. A lot of children might also face situations that they don't even comprehend or where they see that they have no other option but the one they are being presented with (Interview 15; Interview

4).

Within the impact of the 'crisis' in the host community, the response of Athenians is to be considered. The multicultural environment of the city and the fact that citizens seem more used to the presence of refugees appears to have made them more open and tolerant to the present situation (Interview 18).

A solidarity movement has been observed in Greece since the context of the economic crisis. Actions intended to distribute resources have been created to support Greek citizens and refugees, as well as other target populations in need. These networks include soup kitchens, pharmacies and clinics, as well as education centers (Cabot 2019). Efforts were also made on part of volunteers at a certain period, by helping to move refugees to Eidomeni (Chtouris and Miller 2017); however the conditions that refugees were facing in Eidomeni were not appropriate once the borders were closed, leaving people without proper hygiene conditions and accommodation (Chtouris and Miller 2017). Around 2015 people were also being hosted in the city center in empty buildings that certain political groups decided to occupy in order to help migrants in transit (Raimondi 2019).

In contrast, the fear and insecurity on behalf of citizens is again associated with the older generation. The lack of communication with the refugee community and the way criminal incidents are portrayed in the media can be the reason behind negative responses (Interview 10). This response can additionally be influenced by the action of the new government.

The way that Athenians have been reacting to the arrivals of refugees in the country is also dependent on the different areas in the city. This is due to the fact that refugees are usually more concentrated in the center of the city, an area that is considered to be more affordable to live (Interview 13). The solidarity movement present is indeed more felt within the center through the actions not only of activists but also of locals that volunteer to show their support. Exarcheia is one of the areas where activism towards helping refugees is significantly present. It is possible to see the presence of social kitchens, healthcare centers or social centers intended to support those in need (Raimondi 2019).

Even though a lot of Athenians are somehow active in their involvement with organizations within the refugee field, the locals at the center might also show less will to cooperate

considering that they are already dealing with their own economic issues (Interview 13). Incidents in places like Victoria Square can illustrate the negative response on part of locals. Even though there is a presence of NGOs within this area, it has also been considered as an unsafe environment for migrants due to the fact that Greek nationalists reside in this area. Apart from these dynamic, incidents such xenophobic attacks against migrants have also been called into attention (Raimondi 2019).

2.3. Final considerations

The reasons behind forced displacement have endangered the security of many people, forcing them to seek refuge in other countries, doing dangerous crossings at times at the cost of their lives. The fact that within these movements many are children with increasing vulnerabilities, particularly when it comes to unaccompanied minors, reveals the urgency and the relevance surrounding the refugee 'crisis' within the international community.

Having in consideration the significant number of arrivals in countries such as Greece, perceived as a main transit point throughout the 'crisis', and the impact that such arrivals have had, the phenomenon is here contextualized in the particular case of the referent country. Many migrants have lodged their applications in Greece or have entered in the country in an attempt to reach other EU countries. Given such movements, Greece has received considerable attention also with regards to its response and its reception conditions.

In the light of the present research the security of refugees in Greece has been considered in the present chapter, revealing alarming conditions that put into question the human dignity and security of many migrants, from issues in accommodation and provision of services to the response of locals; whose role is also noteworthy given that the 'crisis' has also impacted the Greek community.

In addressing the situation of refugees in Greece and the dangers they can be exposed to, a particular focus is put on the security of children and unaccompanied minors, perceived as the most vulnerable population within the refugee community. The current reality in Athens is

also included, considering that there is where it was possible to carry out the fieldwork. Contextualizing the situation of Greece also helps to better understand the environment in which THP is working in.

Having contextualized the evolution of the “crisis” in Greece, the following chapter will address the responses of the EU in more detail, as well as of the Greek government. This will help to better understand the responses to the “crisis” at both European and national levels, and to better place the response of the Greek state.

CHAPTER 3. ASYLUM AND INTEGRATION: APPROACHES FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC

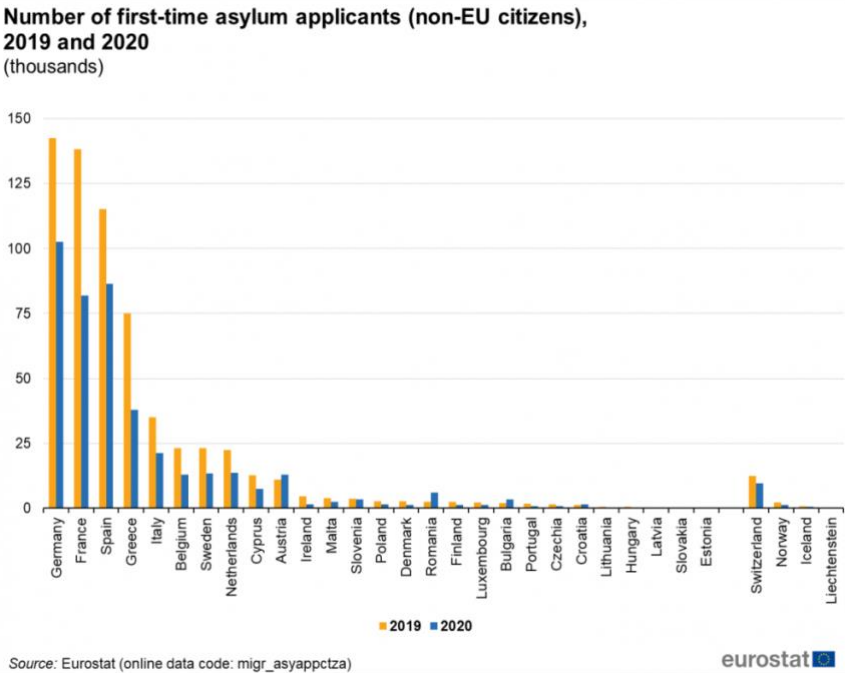
In order to understand better the specific situation of Greece and its current reality, it is important to have into account the overview of the EU context. In this sense, the political responses of the EU regarding asylum and integration will be considered along with its cooperation with Greece throughout the ‘crisis’. The emphasis will then be put on the responses taken by the Government of the Hellenic Republic. Such responses will include the politics of asylum and integration at a national level, including the changes introduced by the new government.

3.1. The political responses of the EU

3.1.1. Response to the arrival of migrants

The refugee “crisis” can be seen as an ongoing phenomenon as asylum seekers arriving at European borders are still being recorded.

Figure 7 – Arrival of migrants in the EU (2019-2020)



Source: EUROSTAT (2021)²⁰

²⁰ Original source: From Eurostat, “Statistics explained”, Accessed 20 July. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics#Main_countries_of_destination:_Germany,2C_Spain_and_France

Throughout the 'crisis' several actors have been involved in the management and response to the migratory flows, including IOs, civil society, private sector, among others. Among those who have been active in finding ways to address the challenges, the EU deserves a particular focus. The response of the EU is relevant as it has attempted to act in a coordinated manner with the EU Member States in order to aid them and to answer to the needs of refugees (Dvir et al. 2019; Hayes *et al.* 2016).

The EU follows values that include the respect for human rights, solidarity, freedom, equality, democracy and the rule of law. These values guide the EU's actions, Solidarity in particular has been one of the values standing behind its policies on migration and asylum (Maldini and Takahashi 2017; Owen 2019). Nevertheless, a critical view can also be addressed to the measures that the EU has been taking to manage the migratory flows. The challenges within its response will be considered throughout the chapter.

Active measures taken by the EU include actions on the access to asylum, in providing financial and technical assistance as well as the management of its borders, involving security measures. In 2015, the EU presented the "EU 10 Point Action Plan" (European Commission 2015), involving the measures to be employed so as to address the 'crisis' (Biondi 2016; Tramountanis 2016; European Commission 2015). These included reinforcing operations; taking action with regards to smuggling networks; deploy teams to Italy and Greece; apply the system of fingerprinting to all migrants; mechanisms such as the resettlement project and the return program; to consider the relocation scheme; cooperation with countries around Libya: and lastly, the employment of Immigration Liaison Officers at certain third countries in order to gather information on migration (European Commission 2015). Within the EU's instruments, a crucial one has been the Schengen Agreement, however in the context of the 'crisis', challenges arose as it conflicted with other European tools such as the Dublin Agreement. The Schengen system enhances cooperation; however within the Dublin regulation states can avoid cooperation, as they can return refugees according to the regulation (Baubock 2018). The referent clash was not the only issue arising throughout the 'crisis', hence it is also important to describe other EU policies, as to contextualize better its response.

In 2015, the EU also presented the “European Agenda on Migration” (European Commission 2015) which introduced the hotspot approach. The approach has been one of the tools of the EU’s response to the ‘crisis’, which purpose involved assistance in the identification, registration and fingerprinting (European Commission 2015). In addition, the approach also entailed that the actors involved would help with the removal of migrants, the asylum and relocation process as well as the investigation of crimes. The EU agencies helping Member States included European Asylum Support Office (EASO), FRONTEX, EUROPOL and EUROJUST (Papoutsi *et al.* 2019; Niemann and Zaun 2018). However, issues have been pointed out within the approach, including that the sites have been used as detention facilities. Additionally, aside from the processes undertaken, migrants also go through procedures of fast-track inadmissibility to see if they are ought to be returned to Turkey. Nevertheless there are concerns in this process, being that there are obstacles with regards to the provision of legal aid (Kourachanis 2018; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019). With regards to children, the agenda also mentions that it is necessary to improve reception conditions and strengthen their fundamental rights; moreover the issue on integration is also noted (European Commission 2015).

Within the same year, the EU resettlement program was also adopted. The program was introduced as voluntary and its aim was mainly to move people in need of international protection from outside the EU to Member States. Another EU measure was the relocation mechanism whose aim was to distribute asylum seekers through the Member States so as to relief the situation of the countries that were dealing with a massive flow of arrivals, such as Greece and Italy. However, the scheme faced difficulties, starting with the controversial response from some Member States towards a compulsory temporary scheme. Furthermore, even though standards should be provided with respect to protection, some states do not follow suit with some basic requirements within their asylum systems. The Commission then made the decision to urge for the establishment of emergency relocation quotas in order to distribute migrants from countries like Greece to other states. The referent quotas were received with resistance, being that there were problems with their acceptance (Maldini and Takahashi 2017; Triandafyllidou 2018; Niemann and Zaun 2018; Tramountanis 2016). Despite proposals from the EU with respect to burden sharing on part of the states, based on indicators

of GDP (Gross Domestic Product), population and territory size, doubts still arose with the distribution process. These included the lack of will some states have shown in sharing the responsibility (Tsavdaroglou 2018; Baubock 2018; Kale *et al.* 2018).

Alongside the measures presented so far, it is also worth mentioning the situation regarding the borders as well as the EU-Turkey deal. Since the 1990s, the EU has established instruments related with the control of its borders. Within the context of the 'crisis', some states had a more restrictive position regarding their national borders and the EU external borders, up to the point of deciding border closure or the installation of fences along the borders. This has been the position, for instance of Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria (Baubock 2018; Ilcan *et al.* 2018; Maldini and Takahashi 2017). Such reactions will be further described when looking the divergences between Member States.

Concerning the EU-Turkey deal it has also had an impact in the handling of the borders by enhancing stronger controls of coastal waters. The statement, adopted in 2016, declared that those entering Greece irregularly after 2016 would be returned to Turkey and in exchange a vulnerable migrant is resettled from a refugee camp in Turkey to an EU state. Within the agreement, a geographical restriction is imposed to those at the hotspots and they are subject to fast track border procedures (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Angenendt *et al.* 2016). Germany played a key role within the agreement which has been influential within the Greek context. Nevertheless, there were some legal barriers with regards to the deal, mainly concerning the return of refugees to Turkey. As such, the decision was made to consider Turkey a safe third country, which was seen as controversial. Furthermore, the deal was considered as not legally binding, and it was adopted by the states individually and not by the EU as a whole. Aside from the issues on the deal, the cooperation with Turkey is also seen as a strategy on part of the EU to externalize its response on handling the migrant flows (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Baxevanis 2018; Kale *et al.* 2018). When it comes to the particular situation of refugees in Turkey, it has been challenging. The government provided Syrian refugees with temporary protection; however their situation in the country is precarious. Even though they are granted with some social rights, their status does not allow them to apply for long-term residence and citizenship. Consequently, refugees can feel tempted to move to other countries, including EU

states, risking their lives in perilous journeys (Baban *et al.* 2017; Ilcan *et al.* 2018; Kale *et al.* 2018).

The situation on the EU's external borders and the impact of the arrivals in Member States has generated a response on part of the EU. Within such response, cooperation is crucial in order to provide an effective response to the 'crisis' and offer protection to asylum seekers, thus it is important that states follow suit with their responsibilities under international law. Nevertheless, the EU faced several challenges in addressing the refugee 'crisis' and the response of the states towards EU policies has been controversial. The responses of the EU lead to exacerbated tensions and the disruption of European values, including principles of unity and solidarity. This was the result of a lack of coherence and coordinated response in issues such as sharing the burden and the resistance on part of certain states to follow decisions made at an EU level led, which led to doubts regarding the functionality and legitimacy of the European system. Additionally the presence of a rhetoric on securitization can also affect the safety of refugees (Maldini and Takahashi 2017; Kanellopoulos *et al.* 2020; Wallascheck 2019; Baubock 2018).

Following such concerns, issues regarding the protection of human rights also arose. Such issues came from distress regarding operations implemented by the EU on the Mediterranean and its external border policy; as well as the impact that the perception of the 'crisis' as a problem or as a security challenge can have in the protection of human rights (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Tsitselikis 2018; Kanellopoulos *et al.* 2020). Another important point within the response of the EU is the reactions among Member States. As previously mentioned, it is important that the states follow suit with their duties, however this has not been the case throughout the 'crisis'. Certain states have failed in fulfilling their obligations towards the situation of refugees and towards the solidarity that is supposed to exist between them. On the contrary, measures were taken to close the borders and there was a rise of populist movements as well as xenophobia and racism, as a result of insecurities and fear towards terrorism (Baubock 2018; Slominski and Trauner 2018; Dirsehan 2017).

The policies proposed along with its implementation are normally under the responsibility of the states to put into action but the response towards EU policies on matters of migration

and within the refugee context have been one of contradiction. It is also important to understand that national governments have their own individual interpretations and approaches on the reception of migrants and on issues with respect to asylum. Amongst such approaches were included the closure of national borders as mentioned above, the increase on patrols both on land and sea as well as return policies. Adopting such restrictive measures on border controls can have negative effects not only on the safety of refugees but also for the economy of the country, given its costs. Furthermore, they go against UN principles with regards to human rights. Meanwhile fear and anxieties were also influenced by conservative elites that stood behind a rhetoric defending the security of the state and its cultural homogeneity; thus leading to predisposition over more restrictive measures (Dirsehan 2017; Angeloni and Spano 2018; Kanellopoulos *et al.* 2020; Skelparis 2017; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019; Kale *et al.* 2018).

Concerning the countries that chose a more closed approach, as it has been indicated, some chose to close their border and build fences. Austria and Hungary also opposed to the relocation scheme and the implementation of quotas. Austria for instance, limited the arrivals of refugees within the country, linking this with the issues of the allocation of quotas. These responses eventually led to other countries along the Balkan route to close its borders, worsening the situation in Greece. Meanwhile, Italy has also been outspoken in its criticism of the measures being taken by the EU (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Angenendt *et al.* 2016; Tsitselikis 2018; Triandafyllidou 2018; Tramountanis 2016; Singh 2018).

On the other hand, countries like Germany showed a more open and welcoming approach towards refugees with a positive stance of "we can do this". Meanwhile a wave of solidarity was present amongst German's civil society. Nonetheless, despite such positive stance and the decisions taken by Germany to open its borders and suspend the Dublin regime later led to some contestation. As tensions surfaced along with criticism from its own electorates, German's approach started to shift under such pressure, being more restrictive regarding its borders and in reducing the number of migrants arriving (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Kanellopoulos *et al.* 2020; Borneman and Ghassem-Fachandi 2017; Slominski and Trauner 2018; Gill and Good 2019).

Even though the EU follows values of unity and solidarity as previously mentioned, the response might also present barriers to the HS. Given that the approach entails cooperation among actors in order to provide an effective response, the divergences between states and resistance to the implementation of EU policies can pose a barrier to the referent framework. Another point of concern is the issue of human rights protection that arose throughout the 'crisis', as well as the perception of refugees as a threat and their treatment as the 'other'. Such context goes against the values that HS is supposed to entail, making the implementation of certain principles within the context of the 'crisis' more challenging (Morrissey 2018; Human Security Unit 2016). On the other hand, the HS framework could boost the sense of a humanitarian responsibility. This responsibility could also be complemented by the sense of morality and "care for the world" found in cosmopolitan citizenship; as advocates might be more active and support issues surrounding human rights protection (Morrissey 2018; Smith 2007; Tan 2017).

Concerning the particular situation of refugee children, the need for a response and standards of protection is emphasized. Their particular situation puts a bigger need with respect to the provision of their care, especially when it comes to unaccompanied minors. Such awareness is noted on the "Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors" (European Commission 2010), where actions are proposed with regards to the protection of children. These actions include tackling root causes of migration and issues of trafficking; financing programs close to their countries of origin to prevent children from taking perilous journeys; reception measures so as to provide standards of protection; and lastly to find durable solutions based on the individual needs of the child, such as return and reintegration in the country of origin; granting of an international protection status and resettlement (European Commission 2010). The measures necessary to attend to the protection of children along with the barriers faced have later been noted by the EU commission on "The Protection of Children in Migration" (European Commission 2017). It is stated that despite the establishment of policies to cover the needs of children and measures implemented within Member States, the significant number of arrivals has put pressure and revealed deficiencies in the protection of children (European Commission 2017).

Cooperation with Greece

The particular situation in Greece throughout the refugee 'crisis' has been quite challenging, and the response to such challenges called for a cooperation that included EU agencies and the presence of other actors, such as IOs who have come into play. The latter actors have been key in providing humanitarian assistance, supporting the state, and acting through different tools so as to ensure the safety of refugees and migrants (Kourachanis 2018; Latifi 2016).

In Greece, the presence of EU agencies came to assist with the management of arrivals. For instance agencies such as FRONTEX and EASO have been involved in the assistance of the Greek asylum system, along with the deployment of personnel from other EU states so as to serve the same purpose (Slominski and Trauner 2018; Angenendt *et al.* 2016). Regarding the FRONTEX agency, actions have also been made within Greece in the context of the 'crisis'. One example of such actions is the RABIT (Rapid Border Intervention Teams) operation, intended to aid Greece in the identification and registration of migrants by increasing the number of sea and land patrols (Frontex 2015). However the operation raised some concerns. In terms of the registration and identification of migrants, the capacity of the Greek authorities improved and the issue concerning informal pushbacks to Turkey was reduced. Nevertheless, issues were identified with regards to the identification process, including the lack of lawyers and interpreters needed for the process, Furthermore, despite the presence of this cooperation, FRONTEX operations also influenced the complex environment on Greek borders, which was also the result of problems with regards to smuggling networks, and national politics (Ulusoy *et al.* 2019).

The assistance provided to Greece also came through the form of financial aid. The EU has provided funding to the Greek state in order to aid in the management of the 'crisis', which then the state redistributes it. The goal of such support was to improve the conditions of refugees in the country; for instance in terms of accommodation and to help in the management of the borders (Latifi 2016; Kale *et al.* 2018). There is a perception that the programs that the EU financed have been beneficial to the situation in Greece, however for

some²¹, the support has been only financial and there could have been a better support when it comes to handling the numbers and making use of the resources in a better way (Interview 24; Interview 8; Interview 4; Interview 22; Interview 6).

Table 2 – EU financial aid to Greece

Funds	Emergency funding	National Programs
AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Organizations:</u> 970.4 million (January 2016 to July 2020) • <u>Greek national authorities:</u> 267.5 million (January 2015 to February 2020)²² 	328.3 million (funding for 2014-2020)
ISF (Internal Security Fund)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Organizations:</u> 17.5 million (January 2016 to September 2019) • <u>Greek national authorities:</u> 112.5 million (January 2015 to June 2020) 	296.2 million (funding for 2014-2020)
ESI (Emergency Support Instrument)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Organizations:</u> 643.6 million (January 2016 to April 2018) 	

Source: Summary of the author²³

Recently, Greece has been described by EU leaders as the “shield of Europe” (Rankin 2020)

²¹ In order to protect the identity of the interviewees a neutrality is considered in displaying the information collected on the field

²² During the referent periods Greece received funding which was awarded both to Greek authorities and IOs or UN agencies (responsible entities)

²³ The summary was done through information provided by a European Commission factsheet. Source: European Commission. 2020. “Managing Migration: EU Financial Support to Greece”. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/202007_managing-migration-eu-financial-support-to-greece_en.pdf.

in the deterrence of migrants and the EU commission's President Ursula Von der Leyen stated that the Greek border is also a European border (Rankin 2020). However the dynamic between Greece and the EU is also seen through a more negative perception as Greece can be seen as the "storage" of Europe, in the sense that refugees are being kept in the country (Interview 13).

With regards to the approaches taken in Greece, the hotspot approach has been one of the main ones. The approach was aimed to support countries in difficult situations, like Greece, considering the burden that has been put in the country from the migratory flows. In this sense, the goal was to set support teams and facilitate the work of EU agencies such as EASO or FRONTEX while operating on the respective sites. Aside from the work done at the hotspots, as described previously through the EU's response, the referent approach could also help in the re-allocation of migrants to other EU countries and to direct them to more orderly channels (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019; Angenendt *et al.* 2016; Gill and Good 2019). Nevertheless, the conditions that refugees faced within the hotspots, mentioned in the previous chapter, were a matter of concern with regards to their security.

Apart from the hotspot approach, another action taken by the EU that has had an impact in Greece concerning the management of the 'crisis' is the already mentioned EU-Turkey deal. The agreement was not only intended to reduce the significant flow of arrivals on Greek borders but also to aid with the asylum process, being that the Greek asylum system was overburdened, as well as reduce smuggling activities. From a European perspective, the deal followed values of solidarity in the attempt to properly control the borders. However, the agreement raised concerns in terms of security and had an impact on those that were active within the hotspots. Meanwhile, the return of refugees to Turkey leads them to a state of insecurity and uncertainty in their lives. Regarding the actors on the field, many, including NGOs, decided to stop working after facing doubts with respect to the autonomy of their work (Carrera and Cortinovic 2019; Baban *et al.* 2017; Kale *et al.* 2018).

The cooperation between Greece and the EU has also been shaped by the establishment of an emergency relocation scheme. As indicated, the response to this mechanism has been controversial and met with some opposition. The respective EU response

had in view to relief the burden in Greece; given that the country has been significantly impacted by the number of arrivals, it stood as one of the countries, along with Italy, that dealt with a greater responsibility within the context of the 'crisis'. Thus, the purpose of the scheme was to deal with such disproportion by relocating migrants to other EU countries (Tramontanias 2016; Singh 2018; Niemann and Zaun 2018). However, even though some countries did their part within the relocation scheme many did not share the burden, which could have helped significantly the situation in the country. Furthermore, there could have been a greater sense of empathy when it came to receiving unaccompanied minors (Interview 15; Interview 22; Interview 6; Interview 4).

Despite the aid provided by the EU, the dynamic within its cooperation faced some difficulties. The support given to the Greek asylum system revealed a lack of sufficient and base support. Moreover, it is mentioned that within the actions taken, there is a lack of coherence within EU's response (Kale *et al.* 2018). Among citizens there is also a perception that the response from the EU has been weak, leading sometimes to an idea that they have been abandoned by Europe; while others believe that Greece has not been left alone in the 'crisis' (Interview 4; Interview 24).

3.1.2. Policies of asylum

According to the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Protection of Refugees, states have an obligation to provide asylum to those in need of protection (UN General Assembly 1951). Even after migrants are granted with a protection status, states still hold a responsibility with regards to those that have been recognized with asylum within the country (Owen 2019).

Considering that a focus is put in the EU regarding the "crisis", the EU's policy on asylum must also be completed. Within the refugee context, it is pertinent to understand the procedures on the asylum system. Nevertheless, it is also worth mentioning that the implementation of such procedures can differ at a national level; thus the processes and standards delivered might not be the same within Member States (Angeloni and Spano 2018). An emphasis is put on Greece, and its asylum procedures will be further mentioned.

A key tool within the EU's asylum record is the establishment of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in 1999. The purpose of the CEAS was to establish an effective asylum system, rooted on the 1951 UN Geneva Convention on the status of refugees. The CEAS incorporates a series of regulations and directives within its legislative framework, including: the Dublin regulation, EURODAC regulation and the qualification, reception conditions and asylum directives. As such, CEAS involves the standards necessary within the asylum procedure. These involve the criteria to decide which state is responsible for an asylum claim; the standards on reception conditions that must be provided in Member States; regulation on who qualifies for international protection and the regulation of the asylum procedure. Additionally, a temporary protection directive was also in place in order to provide the necessary standards in the eventuality of a significant flow of migrants. Meanwhile, the states play an important role on the implementation of such directives as they must be put into practice by the national government (Gill and Good 2019; Nicolescu and Kostas 2017; Owen 2019).

With regards to the Dublin Regulation, it has been a critical EU instrument throughout the evolution of the 'crisis'. The Dublin II Regulation was adopted in 2003 and it entailed that the Member State, regardless whether an asylum claim was made in the country, could choose or not to transfer the asylum seeker to another state (Council of European Union 2003; Maldini and Takahashi 2017). Later in 2013, the regulation was replaced by the Dublin III Regulation, which explained more thoroughly how to determine the Member State responsible for the asylum application (European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2013; Maldini and Takahashi 2017). Around the same period, other changes on the migration and asylum field also took place, including within the CEAS, so as to put into effect a single and more uniform procedure (Gill and Good 2019). Furthermore, EASO was also established in 2010. Its purpose involved strengthening the cooperation between Member States with regards to asylum as well as to improve the implementation of CEAS; provide operational support to states, particularly to those that were under more pressure; and provide scientific and technical assistance with respect to EU legislation with matters related with asylum (European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2010).

When facing the process of asylum, migrants can acquire statuses such as the refugee

status and subsidiary protection. As for the procedure that asylum seekers go through, the application entails that evidence must be presented so as to support the asylum claim. The evidence might be lodged by the migrant himself or collected by the responsible authority. In the case that the asylum application is rejected, migrants can submit an appeal in a European country (Gill and Good 2019). Within the refugee context, migrants might face circumstances that can influence their situation, including the possibility of being deported, returned or detained. In the case of returns, some states have been more outspoken in implementing such measure towards irregular movements (Slominski and Trauner 2018). When it comes to detentions, such measure can have a negative impact particularly on children. When children are detained under the form of administrative detention, for instance, alternative options should be available (European Commission 2017).

Considering the particular situation of children, their best interests must be taken into consideration within the process. A number of measures should be applied to children throughout the procedure, including the access to information; the provision of legal aid; legal representation and guardianship (the guardian is considered to play a crucial role in the protection of the best interests of the child); as well as a right to be heard and be provided with a proper age assessment. There is however recognition that children's process of asylum can take a long time and determining their status should be treated as a priority (European Commission 2017).

EU policies on migration and asylum received less attention until the significant flow of arrivals hit the European borders around 2015/2016. The situation lived within the EU revealed several weaknesses within the legislation regulating asylum and its implementation along with disagreements between Member States. The mechanisms that were set disclosed shortcomings in responding to the needs that the 'crisis' was conveying. The significant flow of arrivals further led to deficiencies in the CEAS (Tramountanis 2016; Maldini and Takahashi 2017; Baxevanis 2018). Meanwhile, other EU instruments also suffered the pressure from the significant numbers, for instance the Dublin regulation was suspended. In addition, the regulation did not assure a fair distribution of asylum claims, leading to some states to be in a more difficult position (Maldini and Takahashi 2017; Singh 2018; Owen 2019). Another issue has been the

response on part of the countries, with regards to the dynamic between those who seek to transfer migrants to other states and those that might feel less receptive to receive them (Slominski and Trauner 2018).

With respect to the reception conditions of migrants, it has been pointed out that there have been asylum seekers that sought asylum in EU countries and have faced poor conditions, lacking the provision of even the basic needs (Chtouris and S. Miller 2017). With respect to the reception of children, their individual needs are not always attended to and there are barriers in the access to services, for instance with health and education. Additionally there is also a lack of qualified staff on the field to properly work with children. Another concern that has been noted is the family reunification procedure; even though they should be put into practice regardless of the child's legal status, they usually start late (European Commission 2017).

Concerning the family reunification framework, the 2003 EU directive (Council of the European Union 2003) presents the conditions for the exercise of the referent framework by third country nationals. The purpose of reunification is to preserve family unit, by allowing the entry and residence of a family member of a third country national in a Member State. For the referent procedure, the application must be submitted to the competent authorities and the necessary documentation to show the family link (Council of the European Union 2003). The directive applies to the Member States with the exception of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and it does not include beneficiaries of temporary or subsidiary protection. The most recent report on the implementation of the respective directive is the one introduced in 2019 by the EU commission. The report notes that even though states have been making efforts in the effective implementation of the directive, some challenges still remain. Amongst the concerns pointed out are the refusals to provide visas or permits; long processing times; access to employment; rejections based on the lack of proof of family ties, among others (European Commission 2019).

As the 'crisis' unfolded, the EU took further actions on reforms within migration and asylum. In 2020, the EU commission presented a "New Pact on Migration and Asylum" (European Commission 2020). The new pact entailed a comprehensive approach, and the points mentioned included: the management of external borders; a new solidarity mechanism; a more

effective and coordinated return policy; to improve the management and implementation of asylum and migration; a stronger response to crisis; supporting integration policies; develop legal pathways; fair and efficient asylum regulations and strengthening partnerships with third countries. With regards to children it is also noted that children should not include in border procedures and that it is important to promote their rights and best interests (European Commission 2020). However, the new pact has received some critics, including the risk of putting a bigger focus on externalization, deterrence, containment and return. Additionally, the pact also seems to attend to the priorities of states, such as Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, which as previously mentioned have had more closed approaches. It is pointed out for instance that the pact allows states to provide to other countries other kinds of support instead of participating in the relocation scheme (Human Rights Watch 2020; Kirişci *et al.* 2020). Alongside the critics made, ideas should be taken from the UN's Global Compact on Refugees. The compact called for the need of host communities to be supported and for refugees to live a productive life. It also entailed for a more equitable responsibility-sharing (Kirişci *et al.* 2020; UN General Assembly 2018).

The situation of refugees can be complex, also from the moment that they arrive in the host country. Once they are granted asylum, they might wish to eventually acquire the citizenship of the state. Nevertheless, their situation can be complicated, since they experience a Common European Asylum System, the access to citizenship can vary (Owen 2019). Given that acquiring the citizenship of the state is a possibility in the refugee context, its dimension will also be considered regarding integration politics.

3.1.3. The EU's politics on integration

The issue on integration is considered here as crucial given its relevance within the HS framework and since it has been considered as important for the safety of refugees, as it might lead them to have access to further rights (Slominski and Trauner 2018). Within the integration process the involvement of both state and non-state actors is instrumental (European Commission 2003), and many actors have been involved in providing support for the

integration of refugees in host countries, such as IOs like UNHCR and IOM (Nicolescu and Kostas 2017). With regards to EU measures in the integration field, some documents will be considered so as to provide a better understanding on European measures. Starting with the “2011 Agenda for the Integration of Third-country nationals” (European Commission 2011), the actions mentioned within the agenda included key points, namely integration through participation, more action at a local level and the involvement of countries of origin (European Commission 2011).

As the ‘crisis’ evolved within the EU, around 2015, integration started to be considered as a more important matter, particularly in host countries with a bigger number of migrants. Meanwhile, policies were being taken to deal with other pressing issues, including on relieving the burden of certain states throughout measures such as the relocation scheme, as previously mentioned. However, actions such as this, as well as the responses within Member States can have an impact on the integration process, as refugees might not want to go to the country appointed and the state might also not be willing to have them (Owen 2019; Maldini and Takahashi 2017).

The support for integration is also mentioned on the “Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals” in 2016 (European Commission 2016), where the ‘crisis’ is referred. The document presents integration as something positive for European society and prioritizes certain measures in order to support integration, namely: pre-departure and pre-arrival measures so as to support migrants at an earlier stage; education and training; integration into the labor market and access to vocational training; access to basic services; active participation and social inclusion. Actions on children are also mentioned with regards to their right on education and the need to deal with barriers children face in early childhood education (an issue that had also been noted in the “2011 Agenda” (European Commission 2016).

Concerning the issue of education and employment both are linked and can have a positive impact on the situation of migrants in the host country with regards to their integration and protection. For instance, access to lessons of the country’s language as well as vocational training could facilitate the inclusion of refugees into the labor market. This could further help refugees being less exposed to situations of exploitation, including facing poor conditions at the

workplace. The access to employment also helps facilitate the integration of refugees in the host country and it can simultaneously have a positive impact for the economy of the state (Carrera and Cortinovis 2019; Barslund *et al.* 2017; United Nations Development Program 1994).

As it has been pointed out education is an important tool in the integration of refugees and it is also considered as a right that citizens are entitled to. However, in the refugee context, given the particular circumstances that people on the move face the access to education is not always given. This situation also leads to concerns within the citizenship dimension. The situation of asylum seekers stands as the most fragile being that they are not considered refugees until they are granted legal status, thus they do not hold citizenship rights during this process (Dvir *et al.* 2019; Gerrard 2017). Meanwhile, it is important to have in consideration that acquiring nationality is among the goal of local integration, and access to EU citizenship should be supported (Owen 2019; European Commission 2003).

With regards to the referent issue of citizenship, as refugees can face insecurities deriving from their legal status and might face extra challenges in securing their rights, as indicated above (Nash 2009; Chtouris and Miller 2017), cosmopolitan citizenship could be beneficial in this context. It could help in the promotion of their security by entailing a concern for the "other" (Linklater 1998) and an idea of citizenship is being bound to a moral obligation towards Humanity (Linklater 1998).

Within the context of integration, migrants might face many barriers including a poor access to services and hostile behaviors on part of the host community. Facing the massive flows of migrants in 2015, civil society was active in supporting those arriving; however negative reactions also evolved amongst citizens, while seeing an increase in populist movements. Other barriers included the fact that migrants might engage in employment within the underground economy while they do not acquire the right to work in the host country. When it comes to the particular situation of undocumented migrants, even though they are usually not included in the policies implemented, they can still receive support at a more local level, for example through local institutions (Borneman and Ghassem-Fachandi 2017; Nicolescu and Kostas 2017; Garcés-Mascreñas and Penninx 2016).

Another significant point is that many refugees, even though they had a prior education and can hold various qualifications and skills acquired in their countries of origin, they might not be able to make use of such experience and they might not be recognized in the host country²⁴ (Nicolescu and Kostas 2017).

The situation of refugees when it comes to the integration process varies within EU countries. Countries such as Germany, considered as one of the main destinations for refugees, implemented positive measures within the integration field, particularly when it comes to access in the labor market. The amount of time that asylum seekers had to wait regarding asylum claims was low compared to other EU countries; additionally a focus was put on education and training so as to support their inclusion into the labor market. When it comes to the response of the German community, as refugees were arriving in the country, citizens were active, trying to get more involved and see how they could aid those that were arriving. However, the situation in Germany started to shift, and amongst the community insecurities began to arise. Within the same period, the government also started to adopt more restrictive measures that influenced the provision of social benefits and claims on family reunification. Despite Germany's good practices on integration, refugees might still face challenges; some included issues of bureaucracies and difficulties in engaging with contact with Germans on a daily basis, making their integration process in the country more difficult (Slomiski and Trauner 2018; Owen 2019; Borneman and Ghassem-Fachandi 2017; Amaral *et al.* 2018). Other challenges might also be found in other countries with regards to measures taken at a national level and the particular situation of the state. In states, such as Spain and Italy, the economic situation in the countries might make integration of refugees more challenging compared to other countries, such as France, Austria and Sweden, who find themselves in a better situation in terms of their economy (Owen 2019).

Concerning the particular situation of children, their integration should be done at an early stage, and measures within this area have been considered as a priority by the EU. One of the most important tools for this process is the early access to formal education as well as to leisure activities in order to enrich language skills, social cohesion and mutual understanding. The

²⁴ The issue surrounding the difficulties refugees might face in making use of their skills/education was also noted during participant observation in Athens.

access to education must be provided to all children, even those that will be returned. Another key measure to an effective integration is providing training to teachers so that they are prepared to work with children from different backgrounds (European Commission 2017).

With regards to the EU's most recent actions, the "Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027" (European Commission 2020) was presented in 2020. The plan acknowledges the challenges that can be faced within the integration field both on part of migrants and on those who have acquired citizenship within the EU. The plan is more inclusive when compared to the one presented in 2016 as it involves migrants and citizens with a migrant background. Integration policies are considered crucial within the asylum and migration systems reinforcing again the idea that integration should be considered as a win-win process in order to benefit society. The measures mentioned within the plan include actions with respect to education (being of particular importance to children), culture, employment, non-discrimination as well as equality (European Commission 2020).

3.2. Response from the Government of the Hellenic Republic

Having presented the contextualization of the 'crisis' within the EU, a focus will be put on the situation in Greece with regards to how the state has been responding to the arrivals of migrants as well as the asylum and integration policies implemented. Considering that shortly before the beginning of the internship Greece went through changes within the government, with a recently elected prime minister, the new measures recently introduced will also be considered, as they are significant in terms of migration and asylum.

3.2.1. Responses from the Greek government

The role of the state along with that of other actors has shown considerable concerns with regards to HS. The HS framework is intended to complement the security of the state and it enhances the responsibility of the state towards its individuals. In the context of international protection, the state has a responsibility towards refugees, even though at times states might

promote their own interests. Such stance on part of the state might lead to the decision of asylum seekers to keep being on the move until they encounter better conditions. When it comes to the situation of children in particular, the responsibility the state holds is further enhanced considering their vulnerability; as such the state must ensure the dignity and protection of children and provide them with tools for their development (Ogata and Cels 2003; Biondi 2016; Lawrence *et al.* 2019).

Regarding the situation in Greece, it is relevant to understand how the state has been responding to the 'crisis' and their role in the provision of security. Upon arrival in the country, many refugees have encountered an unstable environment in terms of their security. The Greek system has been described as having shortfalls in attending to the needs of refugees and in dealing with the intense flow of arrivals. The country was not prepared to accept such a big number of refugees, (Chtouris and S. Miller 2017; Kourachanis 2018; Dirsehan 2017), hence the circumstances in the country were challenging (Interview 3).

It is also mentioned that there is a lack of structure in order to properly support refugees, including children and there is a perception that a state that does not even respond to its obligations towards its citizens cannot cope with those of refugees (Interview 12; Interview 8; Interview 25). An opposite stance addresses that the response from the government might not come from a lack of capacity but from a lack of political will to provide an effective response (Interview 24). Another interesting point mentioned is that they would like refugees to still perceive Greece as a transit place whereas this is not the case anymore (Interview 6).

With regards to the government, the previous one took a more open approach (Interview 1; Interview 6). However its response was not seen as very effective as it still did not manage to control the situation in humanitarian terms (Interview 18). As the 'crisis' evolved along with the economic situation in the country, the mentality of the government shifted, contrasting with the stance hold by the previous government. Within this context the policies regarding the management of migration and the borders became stricter. Meanwhile, the position of the Golden Dawn has been openly hostile towards migrants (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016; Ulusoy *et al.* 2019).

When it comes to the reception of migrants, some difficulties were identified. Apart from

the lack of RICs, those responsible at the field for the registration process did not hold the appropriate qualifications for the task. Meanwhile, within the registration process there has been cooperation with European agencies and the Greek asylum service. For instance, an operation was launched to do the pre-registration of those staying in the reception facilities and include those who arrived in the country. An additional problem within these centers was the situation that children faced, being that RICs are overcrowded and children lacked the appropriate care. Even though many services are provided by NGOs, conditions still lack and at times the registration of children is not done appropriately (Fili and Sythali 2017; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019). The referent reception identification centers are also designated as hotspots and there are various sites across Greece. Besides the registration and identification process, asylum applications also take place on the hotspots. These sites were originally intended as open camps; however this situation changed, alongside the existence of the EU-Turkey deal by keeping refugees at the sites (Angenendt *et al.* 2016; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019).

The situation in the borders and the EU-Turkey agreement are also relevant to describe the situation in the country. Within the Greek borders, in 2012 a fence was constructed by the Greek authorities along the Greek-Turkish border so as to limit illegal movements. An operation was also set in order to manage the borders, designated as operation *Aspida*. Meanwhile in the mainland, actions were also taking place through operation *Xenios Zeus*. This operation initially employed in Athens, conducted raids, inspecting buildings to control the illegal stay of migrants. Such actions raised issues concerning the human rights of migrants and refugees. Later in 2016, the situation in the borders changed with the EU-Turkey deal and the closure of the Greek/Macedonian borders. Such actions forced the Greek system to change its measures (Kourachanis 2018; Vasilakis 2017; Ulusoy *et al.* 2019; Papoutsi *et al.* 2019; Skleparis 2017).

With regards to the dynamic with Turkey, the return of refugees to Turkey was allowed and in 2017 Turkey was considered a safe country. However whether refugees can be granted with the necessary protection, there is a much controversial issue (Angenendt *et al.* 2018; Baxevanis 2018; Slominski and Trauner 2018; Tsitselikis 2018). There is a perception around the EU-Turkey agreement that it is attempting to make the Greek territory, particularly the islands, an “open prison” (Interview 20). Apart from the returns, detention has also been an issue within the

context of the 'crisis'. Even though it is considered as a last resort, the administrative detention of refugees has taken place and under inappropriate conditions. Such measure restricts the freedom of individuals, and this situation can be particularly concerning when it comes to children. Since accommodation capacity can be limited, some children can be placed in what is designated as 'protective custody', under unsuitable conditions. Regarding those detained on police custody there is a lack of provision of services and a lack of information shared so as to understand their situation (The Greek Ombudsman 2017; Gill and Good 2019).

As previously mentioned, accommodation capacity has been an issue, that different programs have trying to tackle, for instance through cooperative networking with actors such as UNHCR, NGOs and municipalities. Migrants have been accommodated in places like shelters, apartments and hotels. An example of such program is the Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation (ESTIA), providing support to vulnerable groups including children (Kourachanis 2018; The Greek Ombudsman 2017; UNHCR 2019). The referent programs along with financial aid show the support Greece has been receiving from the EU- this financial aid is delivered to the Greek state which then allocates the funds to actors on the field (Latifi 2016). Nevertheless it is mentioned that the government does not have a proper mechanism in the allocation of funds, so as to ensure that the funding goes into proper actions and activities and that a lot of the responsibility is given to NGOs instead (Interview 20; 15; Baxevanis 2018).

Concerning the particular of children, their exposure to several dangers renders them considerable targets of vulnerability, thus the states have a responsibility to protect refugee children, even though in practice many challenges remain in terms of their security (Lawrence *et al.* 2019). Every child should receive the appropriate support to be guided through the system of the host country. However in practice children remain vulnerable to exploitation and legal obligations from the responsible authorities fall short on their protection (Fili and Xythali 2017; Human Security Unit 2016). In terms of their care, there is also a provision with regards to foster care, where an NGO called METADrasi is also involved in running a project on unaccompanied minors.²⁵ Even though this provision is in place, in practice up until 2017 the number of unaccompanied minors under foster care was still low (Fili and Xythali 2017).

²⁵ The possibility of minors being placed under the foster care program was possible to be observed during the internship period.

The protection of children in Greece is in line with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) transposed into the Greek law. There is an acknowledgment regarding refugee children in the CRC given their specific situation and care; and that unaccompanied minors shall be granted the same protection as other children who are deprived of a family environment. The process that children go through in Greece might involve being processed by a range of actors, nevertheless, the entity responsible for their best interests, particularly unaccompanied minors, is the public prosecutor, also responsible to appoint them with a permanent guardian (Fili and Xythali 2017; UN General Assembly 1989).

Before the start of the internship, Greece went through changes within the government through the election of a new prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, in July 2019. The new government has been described as more conservative; with a more restrict approach when it comes to migration. Following its election, changes were proposed to deal with the significant arrival of refugees in the country, through measures that included an increase control of the borders. Amongst the new measures introduced are the changes within the ministry, the establishment of new closed centers and the changes regarding the health insurance cards (Deutsche Welle 2019; Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Amnesty International 2020).

Starting with the changes in the ministry, the decision was made to put the Ministry of Citizens Protection in charge, in replacement of the Ministry of Migration Policy. However, later this decision took a step back by re-establishing the Ministry for Migration and Asylum. When it comes to the establishment of closed centers to replace the open camps in the islands, the measure raised concerns about the provision of accommodation within the centers as well as issues on the restriction of movement (Amnesty International 2020). Additionally the centers can also have negative impact on the mental health of migrants (Interview 6). Meanwhile, issues on the new policies with regards to the provision of an AMKA have also been controversial, concerning the treatment of asylum seekers. There have been obstacles regarding the issuing of AMKA. This situation was further aggravated for migrants as in July 2019 the access to AMKA was canceled and replaced by a new temporary insurance card. Even though the provisions for this were introduced later in November, by the end of the year it was still not operating. This context led to migrants not being able to access the public healthcare

system (Greek Council for Refugees 2020). The provision of AMKA can also have an impact in the treatment of migrants in the sense that it is needed to access the labor market and for children to be vaccinated which affects their enrollment in schools (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Interview 15). Meanwhile, while some believe that the government is doing what is necessary to protect their country and citizens, there are also tensions with respect to the strategies adopted and a perception that the referent approach can have a negative impact on migrants (Interview 1; 9; 19).

When it comes to the protection of children, the new prime minister also introduced a plan called “No Child Alone”, which included the creation of more shelters for unaccompanied minors (Human Rights Watch 2019).

3.2.2. Policies of asylum

Regulations within Greek legislation with regards to the recognition of refugees as well as their social rights were introduced until 2008. Meanwhile the regulation of other processes, such as work permits and family reunification cases took a decade to be put into practice. Within the same year, around 2008, European directives on asylum, such as reception and the identification of migrants were also being transposed to the legislation (Slominski and Trauner 2018). In 2011, a new law came into force with regards to asylum, namely law 3907/2011, introducing the establishment of an asylum service (Greece Law No. 3907/2011). Notwithstanding, while the legislative framework was being altered, Greece was still facing challenges. Reforms were happening within the Greek legislation, particularly after 2010, around the time of the suspension of the Dublin Regulation. A result of such measures involved the conditions that Greece was presenting refugees upon arrival. Such concerns were identified by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in 2011 by referring to the inappropriate living conditions, for instance with regards to the ones under detention, as well as to the limitations present within the asylum system (Kale et al. 2018; Slominski and Trauner 2018; Gill and Good 2019; Human Rights Watch 2011). Even so, the issues regarding the poor reception of migrants and the prevention of transfers under the Dublin Regulation could have also had a positive

effect on Greece, in the sense of a relief (Slominski and Trauner 2018).

The record of those applying for asylum in Greece has been described as stable throughout the years. However, such stability shifted around 2015 and 2016. With the evolution of the 'crisis' in the country, the Greek legislation changed as response to the fact that the Greek system was under pressure, challenged with many asylum applications. In 2016, another reform took place with the establishment of Law 4375/2016 and the EU measure designated as the EU-Turkey deal; which led to amendments within the Greek law in order to put the deal into practice in the country. With regard to law 4375/2016, it presented provisions concerning detentions, fast track procedures and asylum regimes on the islands (Greece Law No. 4375/2016). The Greek asylum system has been described as weak and throughout the 'crisis', many difficulties within the system were revealed, as they were feeling overwhelmed. At the mainland, for instance issues arose after the closure of the borders which led to many refugees being stranded in temporary facilities; the situation revealed concerns in the granting of asylum (The Greek Ombudsman 2017; Niemann and Zaun 2018, Kale *et al.* 2018; Baxevanis 2018; Fili and Xythali 2017).

Meanwhile in the islands, where many were being stranded, the response regarding their asylum applications was also limited. For instance, asylum applications were being rejected through the fast track procedure. The complex situation in the islands was also the result of the EU-Turkey deal where several concerns were pointed out. Within the context of declaring Turkey a safe country, applications were rejected without a proper assessment. Additionally, people were being stranded or deported back to Turkey while on the hotspots. Within this context, the procedure involved in the access to asylum, for example with respect to the conduction of interviews, differed between Greek authorities and officials employed by the EU (The Greek Ombudsman 2017; Ilcan *et al.* 2018; Gill and Good 2019). On another note, when it comes to the situation of migrants that arrived along the Evros river, they may have to wait for months or sometimes even years before their applications are registered. For those that are transferred from the islands to the mainland, the access to procedures is somewhat better but the registration still typically takes from five to six months and often documentation is lacking to prove the applicant's legal situation. In Greece there were cases where rejected applicants

were not granted an interview because there were no interpreters in their language and the matter has been referred to the appeal instance (EASO 2020). An issue that has also been pointed out with respect to the role of the state has been the lack of support shown to those that are rejected from the asylum procedure (Tsitselikis 2018).

Considering the circumstances that refugees have faced in Greece, particularly regarding the inappropriate conditions, Greece was considered an unsafe country for asylum seekers. However, this stance shifted by 2017, by making available again the possibility of migrants being returned to the country, as the EU commission considered that Greece was able to provide protection standards (Tsitselikis 2018).

As to the asylum procedure, migrants are dependent on the process undertaken by the government in order to receive a status of international protection. In the case of Greece, there are five different procedures entailed in the process, including regular, border, fast track, accelerated and Dublin procedures; nevertheless, having several operations can lead to certain irregularities. For a migrant to be recognized a refugee, he/she must provide evidence to sustain the claim that he/she needs protection. The process includes an interview in order to assess the claim, which can include questions that normally revolve around their personal story, the reasons for leaving his/her country of origin and their journey to Greece. All the information must be detailed so as to properly sustain the evidence presented. A translator/interpreter must also be present that can speak the language of the child. If the decision is positive, they can apply for documentation, including ID, residence permit and passport. The referent documentation, for instance the passport, allows migrants to travel around Europe but under certain limitations (Interview 25; Interview 15). If the child is under the care of an NGO, it is important to receive preparation for the procedure and the information needed to prepare for the interview and what will be asked of him/her (Interview 6; Interview 4; Interview 25). Even though legal aid is valuable, as it is instrumental for people to proceed with their lives in Greece, some difficulties have been noted, including a lack of interpreters, inadequate legal aid, the formality of the asylum procedures, among others (Gill and Good 2019; Interview 25).

The procedure can also have a negative impact on refugee's mental state as it can take a long time. The registration, the process to acquire legal documents, can take up to months to

de done. When it comes to the dates of the interviews they might occur within three years and in case refugees reach the third degree of the appeal the amount of time is extended where refugees stay without documents, thus being exposed to several dangers (Interview 15; Interview 20). In addition, the asylum procedure is very bureaucratic and it is not a procedure done often, as such Greeks were not aware of it (Interview 2).

Furthermore, the fact that the procedure is lengthy can cause anxieties amongst children as they might feel anxious on a daily basis to circulate without appropriate documentation. Lastly, barriers might also involve difficulties in remembering events, a lack of will to explain their situation in the country of origin, difficulties in understanding once their applications are rejected thus creating anxiety, and lastly the fact that some children believe they are able to express themselves in English, which can influence their application when they fail to do so (Interview 23; Interview 25; Interview 4; Interview 6).

With regards to the assessment of vulnerability can be seen as variable, being at times dependent on the person that is responsible for making the assessment. If a migrant is considered vulnerable, for instance a child or an unaccompanied minor, then he/she is excluded from the fast track procedure. Thus, the vulnerability assessment can have an impact on the asylum process that the migrant goes through (Gill and Good 2019). It is also mentioned that some cases can be a bit rigid due to the fact those responsible might not believe the evidence, sustaining that the person is in danger, and that there are also people seeking protection that might not hold a valid reason on their lives being in danger (Interview 19).

With respect to the experience of refugees with the asylum procedure, some mentioned that in the beginning submitting an asylum application was not difficult as things moved at a decent pace while others stated that since evidence regarding their safety was clear, submission was not complicated (Interview 19; 11). Aside from the waiting time already mentioned, other issues were also pointed out, including communication problems as some staff only speak in Greek, problems with evidence assessment, and the fact that some did not wish to stay in Greece (Interview 17; Interview 1; Interview 14).

Referring to the particular situation in Athens by 2015, the asylum office was accepting a low number of people, thus forcing people to go to the office constantly. Meanwhile, a new

system was adopted, allowing to register asylum applications by using Skype, which was though not spared from limitations and flaws. In addition, while migrants are waiting, they face the risk of being deported or detained (The Greek Ombudsman 2017). As for the referent limitations adults and families trying to have a response might wait for several months, a period spent without appropriate papers. Such process can also lead to people not having access to certain services and reveal certain anxieties, for instance with regards to detention (Interview 15; Interview 23).

It is also indicated that compared to the mainland, cases can move faster on the islands as it is under an emergency setting and migrants can be introduced to the mechanisms immediately; while in Athens for example, appointments can take up to five or six months to be booked, unless any sort of vulnerability can be presented. Furthermore it is referred that on daily basis a big number of interviews can take place and interviews can be rescheduled due to unforeseen events, for instance within the staff (Interview 4).²⁶

Being that some migrants might also intend to be reunited with family members in other EU countries, the family reunification process is also considered. In accordance with the Directive (167/2008), migrants that hold a refugee status can apply for family reunification. This right is particularly applied to children, especially when they are unaccompanied minors and wish to be reunited with a family member. In 2018, a new tool was developed in order to facilitate the requests with regards to unaccompanied minors. When it comes to the procedure in particular, the process involve a series of documents that assess the proof of a family bound, the situation of the relative in the country and if he/she is a recognized refugee, and any other documentation that might be requested that is considered important for the case. In the case that there is lack of documentation, states can request a DNA test. However, such practice should be perceived as a last measure (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Interview 22; Interview 25). In practice, the procedure can present difficulties, for instance the amount of time it takes, administrative barriers and the fact that Member States take into account documentation in English which can make the provision of documentation more difficult. In the particular situation of children, obstacles include deficiencies within the procedure of

²⁶ There was an opportunity to observe the asylum service in Athens. During the visit it was possible to see that the procedures taken within the service were bureaucratic and took some time.

appointing a guardian to minors (Greek Council for Refugees 2020). Recently in Greece, Dublin cases for family reunification have been rejected more often and given the rejected requests, it is believed that rules are becoming stricter (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Interview 22; Interview 23).

Alongside the measures taken by the new government, changes were also undertaken with regards to asylum, through a new law on asylum issued in November of 2019. The referent changes included accelerated asylum procedures, rules on detention and a list of safe third countries. There has been criticism on this approach and the measures proposed, being noted that they can undermine the rights of refugees, particularly when it comes to vulnerable groups, as well as put an extra burden on refugees. In order to reduce the time of asylum applications, one of the changes included rules on accelerated and border procedures. Even though this can be intended as positive, it can have a negative impact as people might need some time to adjust to the circumstances and to understand how the system and procedures work (Interview 6). Other concerns are also pointed out with regards to unaccompanied children not being excluded from accelerated procedures. Additionally, issues are noted concerning the decision to transfer the appeals to a single-judge procedure, a measure that is considered as an exception and that can negatively impact the security of migrants (Amnesty International 2; Amnesty International 2019; Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

Concerning the list of safe third countries, concerns are raised when it comes to relying on the assumption that a respective country is safe and not having in consideration additional factors that can contradict such assumption. Furthermore has tensions arose with the situation with Turkey, has described in the previous chapter, the prime minister also made the decision to suspend asylum applications for one month (Stavis-Gridneff 2020; Interview 22; Amnesty International 2019). It is also important to note that the referent changes can put barriers for those working within the refugee field. For instance, for those responsible for providing legal aid, their work can face difficulties being that deadlines become tighter, leading to more pressure and less time to prepare the cases (Interview 25).

Regarding the particular situation of children, including unaccompanied minors, some reside in camps or in detention facilities under poor conditions. Their vulnerable circumstances

can also be seen through the asylum process, in the sense that some might not lodge an asylum application, either due to personal choice or because they do not have the means to do so, consequently leading them to being more exposed to dangerous situations as they are out of the system (Tsitselikis 2018; Fili and Xythali 2017). For children that are outside a system of care, for instance not receiving the support of an organization, access to legal aid can be a problem (Interview 25). On the other hand, those who remain detained are dependent on the police when it comes to being informed about their rights (Fili and Xythali 2017). It is also mentioned that for the children staying on the islands, issues with legal representation can be challenging, and some are not aware of their rights or on how the asylum procedure works. This can lead to obstacles throughout the process, for example in interviews they might not feel confident in disclosing all their information which can have a negative effect on their applications. Other problems include situations when children have to make an appeal, being that some might not have the proper legal papers or even miss the deadline (Interview 25).

Within the Greek legislation, law 4375/2016 regulates children's access to asylum as well as the detention of minors. It is stated that minors under the age of 15 are only able to submit an asylum application through the support of a representative (Greece Law No. 4375/2016); in the case of children that are over 15, it is acceptable that he/she lodges an application independently. However, regarding guardianship, many children ignore who their guardian is. This is very worrying since the guardian plays a crucial role in the life of the child, as he/she is intended to accompany the child and defend its best interests (Greek Council for Refugees 2020; Fili and Xythali 2017). It is also crucial for children to have assistance as they might not understand what is happening throughout the process and it is important to provide them with information and at times even convince them, for example in the case of teenagers (Interview 6). It is also important that children receive legal support, in the sense that they are not aware of the laws once they come to a new country (Interview 25).

As previously mentioned, migrants might be at risk of being detained and the conditions under detention might put migrants through a more precarious situation, particularly when it comes to unaccompanied minors. The detention of unaccompanied minors is mentioned for instance on Law 3907/2011, stating that minors should be provided with accommodation and

be provided with access to education and other activities while detained (Greece Law No. 3907/2011). Some also remained on what was designated as 'protective custody', as it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, where they waited to be moved to an accommodation facility. However, some have been put under detention through the referent process, for example in RICs and police stations. The living conditions that migrants face in detention centers can have a negative impact on their security, for example when it comes to their mental health, particularly in cases of detentions lasting longer periods of time. In the context of children, it has been pointed out, apart from the challenging conditions, that those remaining in police stations lack access to education and recreational activities (The Greek Ombudsman 2017; Gill and Good 2019; Greece Law No. 3907/2011).

The detention of unaccompanied minors should be considered as a measure of last resort and be applied in exceptional cases, for a short period of time. Provisions with regards to detention are again mentioned on law 4375/2016, nonetheless it is indicated that there is a possibility of children being detained up to 25 days until they are referred to a shelter. The referent period can be extended for up to 20 days more under special circumstances, for example difficulties in moving children to appropriate accommodation (Greece Law No. 4375/2016). Following the new changes within asylum taken by the government, the extended period of 20 days has been revoked; nevertheless many children are still detained under 'protective custody' in detention centers and police stations (Amnesty International 2020; Human Rights Watch 2020).

Having presented the role of the state in terms of its asylum policies, the measures taken with regards to integration are now indicated.

3.2.3. Integration of refugees in Greece

As the HS framework entails, sustainable development involves different strategies, including the social integration of individuals (United Nations Development Programme 1994). As such the integration of refugees can have a positive impact on their security; within this context it is relevant to address the responses from the Greek government in terms of its integration

strategies.

Support in the integration field was not seen as a priority up until 2005 (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016) and within the same year the Greek legislation presented Law 3386 which included the conditions for the integration of third country nationals. Such conditions involved having knowledge of the Greek language and participation in courses related to the history, culture and lifestyle of Greek society, integration into the labor market as well as active social participation (Greece Law No. 3386/2005). The Greek legislation was also further developed with Law 4251 in 2014. The referent law came to address the issue of residence permits, the categories of the permits and their duration. Furthermore the rights of beneficiaries should be respected and culture singularities protected, as well as go in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination (Greece Law No. 4251/2014). In 2015, a reform was also done to the nationality code allowing children who were born or have been living in Greece to acquire citizenship (Christopoulos 2015). The dimension of citizenship along with the requirements needed in Greece will be further developed in the following chapter.

The importance of social inclusion was further mentioned in 2016 through law 4375. The law established a Directorate for social integration aimed at studying, designing and implementing the policy for the integration of those under international protection and migrants in the country. It also established that the beneficiaries of international protection and those who hold a residence permit based on humanitarian reasons must have access to salaried employment, the provision of services or to self-employment under the same conditions as Greek nationals (Greece Law No. 4375/2016). Being that the access to employment can be important in the enhancement of social integration (United Nations Development Programme 1994), beneficiaries of international protection still face precarious conditions in terms of employment in Greece. Such issues can be related with bureaucratic barriers that include acquiring the necessary documents or opening a bank account. Their situation can be further damaged by the fact that many end up being employed in an informal economic sector which consequently has an impact on their access to social security (Skleparis 2018).

An approach that could facilitate the access to the labor market would be for the state to spread refugees across the country and have in consideration their personal skills along with

the jobs available (Nicolescu and Kostas 2017). Despite the legislation described above, there are problems within Greek's integration policies (Skleparis 2018) and a perception that in Greece there is not an integration mechanism to integrate everyone (Interview 15). Additional barriers that migrants might face in the process of social integration in the host country include the uncertainty in the access to accommodation, the waiting time in the process of acquiring asylum as well as hostile reactions on part of the local community such as discriminatory behaviors (Nicolescu and Kostas 2017).

The condition of limbo in which many refugees find themselves, for instance those remaining on the islands, can consequently lead them to be excluded from integration policies. This position can create negative results on their security and their identities. Once displaced from the environments that have shaped their personal experiences, refugees still have to face upon arrival to the host countries, a situation of limbo as far as their status is concerned which delays (sometimes permanently) the building of a new life (Owen 2019; Skleparis 2018). The circumstances under which refugees could achieve a better autonomy in their lives and make long term plans could be facilitated through the process of citizenship considering the opportunities citizenship status can entail (Owen 2019).

Another important tool that can encourage social integration in the host country is education (United Nations Development Program 1994). As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, education and access to the Greek public system should be granted to all refugee children even though many difficulties regarding such issue have been evident (Lawrence et al. 2019). Regarding the response from the state in 2016 a policy paper was presented by order of the Minister of Education. The aim of the paper was to record educational activities in accommodation centers and decide on the ones that can be applied firstly in camps and then in their entirety; to supervise the activities and make recommendations on education and their integration into the educational system during 2016-2017 (Ministry of Education Research and Religious Affairs 2016). Despite the establishment of provisions, practical difficulties remain, including the barriers within the access of AMKA that hinder the access to education, being that children must be vaccinated in order to enroll; and hostile behaviors from the community that can also influence the integration of children by

making them not feel welcomed (Interview 6; Interview 15). Additionally difficulties have been mentioned when it comes to the access of adult refugees in the public system (Fili and Xythali 2017; Skleparis 2018; Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

Apart from the integration policies presented, it is also relevant to address the National Integration Strategies presented by the Greek government being the most recent one published in 2019. The first strategy implemented in 2013 addresses the management of migration and integration of third country nationals in accordance to EU directives (European Commission 2013). The latter strategy of 2019 was further advanced by encompassing areas such as education, access to employment, racism and xenophobia, among others (European Commission n.d.; Greek Council for Refugees 2020). Within the same year, the Greek state also supported the implementation of the HELIOS program by IOM. The referent program aimed at supporting the integration of beneficiaries of international protection in Greek society. This included the provision of services such as integration courses, accommodation, employability support and integration monitoring (IOM 2021; Greek Council for Refugees 2020).

Among the perceptions of the local community on the integration of refugees, it is mentioned that integration might be challenging for refugees and a period of adjustment might be needed. This is in the sense that integration is something that is not within the mindset of the Greek society, and even though refugees might be able to build their lives after a period of time, it might be still be difficult for them to be a part of the community (Interview 24). Some actions are pointed out that could help facilitate such integration, including to aid migrants in the learning of the Greek language and culture; facilitating the inclusion of children at schools; and organize events to provide a better visibility on refugee's culture. Another issue mentioned is the unemployment in Greece, as such it would be helpful to aid refugees in the access to employment and to help enhance the skills that some refugees have acquired in their countries of origin (Interview 12; Interview 21; Interview 7; Interview 8; Interview 9).

[...] one thing that happens already is that children should go to school. And it must, this must continue, and must not be obstructed by any way, by any means, soon as be facilitated. The second is I think they should work, they should be offered jobs [...]
(Interview 8)

Integration in Athens

Even though integration policies are mainly decided at the national level, municipalities can also play an important role in dealing with the reception of newcomers and in contributing to their eventual integration. Municipalities can be responsible for the provision of a range of services and also through cooperation with other entities such as public agencies and NGOs (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016). Local governments, in particular big cities have been active in the development of their own integration policies (Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx 2016).

Being Athens a big city with a high concentration of refugees, the role of the referent municipality is worth addressing. Athens has been active in its approach towards migrants by providing services and different activities, for instance Greek language courses, vocational training and events in order to promote cultural diversity; empowerment; awareness regarding migrant's rights and the promotion of dialogue between the host community, among others (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016).

Regarding children in particular, measures have also been implemented at a local level, for instance through the access to day care facilities where they can have access to services such as healthcare, social and psychological support. Among the difficulties encountered are the barriers for undocumented migrants who are not able to access these facilities. Another illustration of local measures are the presence of programs, such as "Together". The referent program was intended to promote activities between migrant and native children (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016).

Even though the municipalities have tried to make positive efforts to attend to the needs of refugees (Interview 8), some challenges remained. The initiatives taken in order to enhance the integration of refugees also attempted to do this by complementing its actions with national government policies. However the financial framework of integration was limited by several factors, from the impact that the economic crisis has had in the country to the poor administration of EU funds (OECD 2018). The access to services within the municipalities and the issues that refugees might be facing can be addressed by the migrant integration councils, which hold such responsibility. Such councils in Athens have been active while others have

remained inactive (Anagnostou *et al.* 2016).

Apart from the dangers that refugees can be exposed to in Athens, they also face other issues particularly regarding their integration in the city. Many do not wish to stay in Greece, wanting to move to other European countries. One of the reasons that can lead to this decision is the difficulties that some migrants face in a city like Athens, including the lack of job opportunities and of appropriate mechanisms that could make their entry into the job market easier (OECD 2018). Meanwhile, actors such as NGOs can be instrumental in supporting the access to the labor market (Interview 11). The barriers with regard to integration can consequently affect the commitment of refugees when it comes to education and in learning the Greek language (OECD 2018).

Within the context of the field work carried out in Athens, it was possible to address the integration of refugees in the country. For some, integration has been challenging and within the difficulties mentioned, these included language barrier and cultural differences, access to the labor market and hostility on part of some citizens, for example in public services (Interview 1; Interview 11; Interview 19; Interview 17). The situation within public services also been noted by people involved within the refugee field (Interview 15). The issue of language has been considered as important for the integration process as it can facilitate communication with Greek citizens as well as the access to employment, however it might still not necessarily ensure integration (Interview 16; Interview 17). Meanwhile, others believe that the integration has been positive despite difficulties at the beginning. A more positive overview of integration includes feeling welcomed by citizens, the positive impact of creating connections, receiving help from actors such as NGOs as well as age, as younger refugees might find it easier to adapt (Interview 16; Interview 19; Interview 17).

[...] at first difficult, different language, different civilization, different culture, but I am young! I think I can adapt very fast. (Interview 19)

When it comes to the particular issue of language, it can be considered as a significant tool in the process of integration, as such access to education is important as well as the barriers that

refugees might encounter. Aside from the public system, access to education is also made through NGOs and a lot of the educational needs are covered through the provision of non-formal education schemes. When it comes to access through public schools, issues might arise as it has been mentioned that enrollment can be influenced by the discretion of the director (Interview 1; Interview 11; Interview 14; Interview 17; Interview 19; Interview 4). Other issues also include the lack of consistent programs (Interview 20).

[...] being able to speak Greek or at least English is the key to integration. This brings us to a second subject which is the access to formal education because a great part of the education needs of the migrant children is covered by non-formal education schemes, by NGOs, by organizations that provide like two hours class everyday on sides, and goes on [...] (Interview 4)

The importance of accessing education is also pointed out amongst those working on the field, being that education could provide children with better opportunities in the future, help them create relationships with locals and provide a better sense of security as you can communicate better. It would also be relevant to provide children with extracurricular activities and help them develop their personal skills (Interview 15; Interview 20; Interview 6; Interview 4; Interview 23; Interview 22). Meanwhile, while some might feel receptive to learn the Greek language, others might feel less willing to do so. Certain reasons are noted for the latter approach, including the fact that some don't see themselves staying in the country, the uncertainty of their situation while they wait for their asylum procedure, as well as the difficulties of the language and the way that is provided within Greek schools (Interview 20; Interview 6; Interview 5; Interview 4; Interview 22).

[...] if they really want to stay in Greece they have to go to a Greek school and learn Greek. And we have seen such cases and then slowly, slowly they learn Greek and they have like Greek friends [...] (Interview 23)

Table 3 – Political responses regarding children implemented within the “crisis” (in line with human security)

	EU (European level)	Greece (national level)	Athens (local level)
Political responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Importance given to the rights of the child:</u> -alternative options to detention must be presented -provision of legal aid -right to proper age assessment -importance of guardianship (key for the best interests of the child) • <u>On integration:</u> -‘2011 Agenda’ (participation of migrant children in early childhood education) -‘EU agenda on migration 2015’ (approaches integration but also the need to improve standards on reception and reinforce the protection of fundamental rights) -‘Action plan on integration 2016’ (importance of education; need to remove barriers on early childhood education) -‘Action on integration 2021-2027’ • <u>‘EU action on unaccompanied minors’</u> – tackle roots of migration, reception measures, find durable solutions (return, reintegration in the country of origin, resettlement) • <u>‘New Pact on Migration 2020’</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>CRC</u> – Greek legislation is in line with the CRC (the best interests of the child must be primarily considered) • <u>Family reunification</u>- new tool was developed to facilitate the requests of unaccompanied minors • <u>Accommodation:</u> -ESTIA program (support to children) -‘No child alone’ (creation of more shelters for unaccompanied minors) • <u>Law 4554/2018</u> – regulatory framework for guardianship • <u>Education</u>- Policy paper of 2016 (records educational activities, supervises and makes recommendations) • <u>Detentions</u>- considered as a last resort; regulated by Law 4375/2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of activities, Greek language courses, events • <u>Access to day care facilities</u> - psychological, health, and social support - “Together”: program intended to promote intercultural activities between native and migrant children and their families

<p>Limitations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>On reception conditions:</u> -barriers in the access to services (such as healthcare and education) -lack of qualified staff to work with children in reception sites • <u>On family reunification:</u> -the procedure usually starts late, long processing times, rejections, refusal of visas or permits • <u>Detentions:</u> -can have a significant impact on children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>On reception:</u> -lack of RICs; RICs were overcrowded and children lacked the appropriate care -lack of hygiene and access to medical support -problems within age assessment – can lead to the neglect of the rights of the child -people responsible for the registration did not have the appropriate qualifications • <u>On family reunification:</u> - problems in appointing a guardian -cases are being rejected more often • <u>On healthcare:</u> -AMKA was revoked which can hinder access to healthcare -barriers to the enrollment of children in schools (due to vaccination) • <u>On education:</u> -children might feel unwelcomed on part of locals • <u>On guardianship:</u> -guardians might have many children; many do not know who their guardian is • <u>On detention:</u> -administrative detention takes place in inappropriate conditions -lack of services, of access to information and to education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undocumented migrants do not have access to daycare facilities • The financial framework for integration was limited (e.g. the economic crisis and poor distribution of funds)
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Source: Summary of the author²⁷

3.3. Final considerations

The state holds a primary role within the HS framework when it comes to the protection of citizens that should be complemented with the cooperation between several actors.

²⁷ The summary is a brief display of some of the political responses that impact children, according to the different levels

Throughout the present chapter it was possible to have a better understanding of the role that the state can have and its particular response to the refugee 'crisis'. The focus is put on the EU and the actions taken within the Member States so as to respond to the significant flow of migrants that arrived at European borders. The EU has had a significant active role in responding to the needs of migrants while simultaneously putting the attention on its policies with regards to migration and asylum and at revealing the complexities within the system.

Following the EU's asylum measures and the evolution of the 'crisis', it can be interpreted that the EU made an attempt to answer to the pressing needs of asylum seekers through a HS lens and to implement measures that were intended not only to provide an effective response to the migratory flows and entail the protection of migrants but also to aid the Member States that were under bigger pressure (namely those at the borders such as Italy and Greece). Nevertheless, despite the measures implemented, the efforts made were still dependent on the Member States to put into practice. The 'crisis' ended up revealing not only weaknesses within the system but also divergences within Member States and a resistance to implement measures taken at an EU level, consequently putting EU values and foundations into question.

Within the measures implemented, one of the countries where the EU has been active in its cooperation is Greece. Along with the cooperation entailed, the responses from the different Member States can help to better understand the context in the country, in the sense that the referent responses can have an impact on the Greek context. Being that Greece is the focus of analysis within the present report, the response from the Greek government, along with the asylum and integration policies implemented were considered in the present chapter. Given the complex situation in the country, the response of the Greek state has been challenging due to the pressure that was put in country from the considerable number of migrants arriving at the borders. The stance from the government has been shifting, being that the previous government appeared to have a more open approach towards migration compared to the recent government who shows a more conservative perspective. Considering that throughout the period of the internship, Greece went through some changes, as the new prime minister had been recently elected in July of 2019, the new measures proposed by the state and their consequent impact on the treatment of migrants were also be taken into consideration.

In terms of its asylum policies, deficiencies within the Greek system have been pointed out and the recently proposed measures by the new prime minister have been considered as controversial and more restrictive in terms of its approach to migration. The referent measures can have a significant impact on the challenging circumstances that refugees face, as it is given with the example of the provision of an AMKA number. Alongside the asylum policies of the state, integration is also considered given its role within the HS of asylum seekers. With respect to integration, the dimensions of education and citizenship are also worthy of mention, given that education is seen as an important mechanism of integration and citizenship can be seen as an eventual goal within social inclusion.

There were also measures targeting children, specifically considering their vulnerability. The responses were aligned with the principle of keeping the best interest of the child first, including in welcoming practices, family reunification procedures and integration. A summary is additionally provided so as to provide a focus on the political responses concerning children within the different levels (European, national and local) and that impacted their security.

Having contextualized the response from the state and the implementation of its policies within migration and asylum, it is possible to better understand the environment within which the organization THP is working. Furthermore, it can also help to better place its role as a security provider. As such, the following chapter introduces the role that civil society can play in humanitarian crisis and the specific intervention of THP within the 'crisis'.

CHAPTER 4. THE HOME PROJECT

The present chapter focuses on the particular role of civil society and the significant impact they can have in situations of humanitarian crisis, being that the emphasis is put on NGOs as providers of security. Among the data collected, it was also possible to have contact with other organizations on the field and thus have a better understanding of their role when it comes to attending to the needs of refugees. Within this context, the particular actions of THP, where the internship took place, will be analyzed concerning their intervention in the “crisis” by acting towards the protection and well-being of refugee children in Athens.

4.1. Role of civil society

The role of the state in providing security has been already discussed, and it is now time to address the role of civil society. Even though the state holds the primary role in ensuring the dignity and security of its citizens (Human Security Unit 2016) non-state actors can also have a significant impact in humanitarian contexts, as it can be seen through the refugee “crisis”.

HS entails a collaboration of diverse actors in responding to such challenges (Human Security Unit 2016) and civil society can play a significant role in complementing the role of the state or in filling its gaps. Within the context of the “crisis” under analysis, civil society organizations, such as migrant and human rights associations, NGOs, churches, solidarity movements, and a variety of other different actors have been influential and very active. Such actors might engage in cooperation with the government and rely on a network of different agents for the provision of services (Kanellopoulos et al. 2020; Bagavos and Kourachanis 2021). However, being that at times the state might fail to fulfill the needs of refugees and migrants, such gaps might be covered also through the role of citizens themselves and their solidarity movements (Kalogeraki 2018; Mogollón et al. 2020). When it comes to the activism present in such movements, citizens acting on a voluntary basis have been relevant in attending to the needs of refugees and their protection; from the provision of services to contributing to their integration in the host countries. Despite such key role in the “crisis”, the obligations of the state towards refugees remain (Kalogeraki 2018).

In the context of Greece, civil society has been considered weak compared to other

European countries with less developed formal volunteerism (Kalogeraki 2019; Mogollón et al. 2020; Kanellopoulos et al. 2020). However, the impact of civil society in Greece is more evident through its informal sector which can be translated through solidarity actions to support refugees (Kalogeraki 2019; Kanellopoulos et al. 2020; Kalogeraki 2018). Meanwhile, the role of the state, for instance within the social integration area appears not to be significant, being described on occasions as inexistent. Among the actors that have also been key on the protection and assistance of migrants and refugees are activists, human rights defenders and organizations (Brown and Dadu 2018; Kalogeraki 2019; Bagavos and Kourachanis 2021). As it has been mentioned, civil society can be an important agent in the provision of services filling the gaps of the state. When it comes to organizations, they have been influential in considering the interests of migrants and on acting on their behalf (Kalogeraki 2019; Kalogeraki 2018; Bagavos and Kourachanis 2021). Within the impact of civil society, a focus will be put on the particular role of NGOs.

During the period of the internship it was possible to have contact with people working within the refugee field and to understand other actions that have been taken to attend to their needs. In addressing such needs, organizations can operate either on the mainland or camps, or both, and often entail in networks of cooperation with diverse actors for a more effective intervention. With regards to the provision of services, refugees can have access to a range of areas, including accommodation, legal support, education, psychosocial support, among others (Interview 15; Interview 23; Interview 20; Interview 22; Interview 4).

Non-Governmental Organizations

The impact of NGOs' work throughout the "crisis" is worth mentioning since they are able to help in the promotion of HS. In the context of the refugee "crisis" their role in particular has become noteworthy with many deciding to take further actions to respond deeper to the needs on Greek territory. Meanwhile, in addressing the needs of refugees NGOs have engaged in international cooperation and have found new opportunities of funding, which can also turn to be an obstacle to their work, when they get to dependent on it. Other important tools can also

be of value and facilitate their work, for instance in the case of informal organizations the aid from the community and the presence of volunteers along with the cooperation with other entities can facilitate the provision of services (Kalogeraki 2019; Mogollón et al. 2020; The Greek Ombudsman 2017; Bagavos and Kourachanis 2021; Boulby and Christie 2018).

Amongst the services NGOs provide and their contribution to the integration of migrants and refugees in the host country these include: accommodation, healthcare services, education and vocational training, dissemination of information, aid in searching for employment, legal support, among others (Kalogeraki 2019; Fili and Xythali 2017; Nicolescu et al. 2017; Skleparis 2018). Moreover it is indicated that a lot of the integration services are provided through NGOs, filling thus a gap on part of the government in terms of social integration (Bagavos and Kourachanis 2021).

Concerning the Greek context, NGOs have been active, including in formal and informal settings, in operating as a response to the massive flow of migrants. As mentioned, they can operate in camps as well as on the mainland and they compensate at times the inability of the Greek state in attending to the needs of refugees (Tsitselikis 2019; Kalogeraki 2019; Chtouris and Miller 2017). In addition, some organizations even choose to taken on a more outspoken approach by removing themselves from the hotspots as a response to the poor conditions at the camps as well as to make a statement concerning the EU-Turkey deal (Dany 2019).

As noted above, funding can be an issue for NGOs, and organizations have relied on state and European funds, that particularly stand as a significant donor. Many organizations work in collaboration with the EU which provides funds to implement projects on the ground. However, funding opportunities also arose from the private sector; even though this can provide for a better autonomy in their work, it can also create a sort of dependency (Tzifakis et al. 2017; Dany 2019). The particular presence of the private sector can be seen in the context of the organization and the impact of its role will be taken into consideration.

4.2. The HOME Project

The internship took place at THP organization in Athens. It was possible during the internship to observe how the organization has been intervening within the context of the 'crisis' and

attending to the needs of unaccompanied minors. The work of the organization can be considered as significant in line with the contextualization of the phenomenon in Greece, as presented in previous chapters.

4.2.1. Intervention of the organization

For the purpose of the present report, it is important to contextualize the NGO's work and mission within the current reality that the country is facing. Having presented the context of the "crisis" within Greece and the response both from the EU and the Greek government, THP is now contextualized, having been active in attending to the needs of refugees, particularly unaccompanied minors.

THP is a nonprofit organization that was established in 2016, during a time when arrivals in Greece were increasing significantly. Its intervention involves supporting refugees, in particular unaccompanied minors from 12 to 18 years old by taking on a holistic approach in order to help them in their integration in Greece, as well as with their relocation and family reunification cases. For the latter, children are provided with legal support having in consideration their best interests. Additionally, children are also provided with a range of other services intended to attend to their individual needs; while also supporting the Greek community through the creation of jobs and by adding value to the economy through the creation of their homes (The HOME Project 2018).

Within the intervention of the organization the cooperation among different actors also plays a significant part in its work. Such networking is seen as fundamental not only in the sense that it can aid in the provision of services but it can also influence the work done within the shelters, as it can facilitate for instance, the organization of activities within the house (Interview 10; Interview 13; Interview 18; Interview 3). Amongst the contact with other entities, donations also have a significant impact, particularly through the presence of private donors which offer a greater flexibility in terms of intervening and providing the services needed. This was particularly relevant within the complex environment lived around 2016 with regards to the number of arrivals and NGOs on the field (Interview 3; Interview 2; Interview 18).

As mentioned above, organizations can play a significant role in attending to the needs of refugees and given the intervention of the organization in the support of migrants, THP can be an illustration of such role.

4.2.2. The human security of refugee children in Athens

In addressing the promotion of security of refugee children it is also relevant to understand the circumstances that migrants can go through in their countries of origin, during their journeys and upon arrival in the host country. Such contexts have been addressed within the contextualization of the “crisis” in Greece, in chapter two. As it has been mentioned, children can face situations that can significantly threaten their security which can be further aggravated by the dangers they can face in their perilous journeys.

Concerning the situation of children upon arrival, the circumstances for some can still be challenging given the inappropriate conditions they might be exposed to. Having described the situations that refugees have faced in Greece, this allows for a better contextualization of the situation within the country and in a sense of the environment that the organization is working in. As such, the situation that children face upon arrival, specifically in Athens, will be emphasized with regards to the intervention of THP. For this purpose, the provision of security will be considered within the security dimensions provided by the UNDP 1994 report, namely personal, food, health and community security dimensions.

Personal Security

In accordance with the UNDP, personal security involves protection against violence either by states or individuals (United nations development program 1994). Given the vulnerability of children, the referent dimension will consider the actions of the organization in terms of their personal security, according to different indicators.

Starting with accommodation, efforts have been made within this area by actors on the field. However concerns have also been pointed out in previous chapters regarding the situation of minors in Greece as many remain in insecure conditions while others find

themselves homeless. Accommodation is considered here as a relevant indicator in providing security, “which is the step one if you need to protect children, they need to stay somewhere, sleep, eat, and feel safe” (Interview 2). When it comes to the shelters from the organization they provide a safe environment allowing the beneficiaries to stay at the houses until coming of age, giving some flexibility for such period to be extended until six months if “duly justified” (Interview 2). In addition, children are also prepared in case of departure from the shelter (The HOME Project 2018). Another situation that was possible to observe was the transfer of children to another shelter within the organization, which can occur for instance when a child is transferred to a house where the beneficiaries are closer to his/her age and when it is understood that this will better suit the child’s needs.

When the shelter holds an empty spot, usually the organization tries to fill it as soon as possible and bring another child to the safety of the house; this is done in constant cooperation with the responsible entity according to a vulnerability criterion (Interview 13; Interview 18; Interview 2).

The reception a new arrival is done according to the organization’s protocols, being that this entails some preparation including the preparation of the rest of the children at the shelter (Interview 10; Interview 13; Interview 25). On the other hand, an issue that was also addressed by people involved within the refugee field is that the context of shelters and the fact that children might be transferred can be a matter of concern in terms of offering them stability. In such cases the roles such that of the guardian can be significant in the life of the child in the sense that he/she can offer him/her a better sense of stability. Within the organization the role of the guardian is valued²⁸.

By participating in the daily routine of the shelter and also having the possibility to visit other houses, it was possible to see that children are provided with the basic needs and the houses offer the appropriate conditions. In addition, as it was possible to have closer contact with the shelter for younger children, certain rules are implemented within the routine of the house which children must follow so as to respect the smooth functioning of the shelter. Moreover, in terms of accommodation, cooperation is also entailed within this area, being that

²⁸ Such concerns were noted through participant observation during the period of the internship.

some shelters are run in collaboration with another NGO (Interview 2).

Concerning the physical and mental harm, throughout their journeys and upon arrival in the host country children can be exposed to several dangers, as approached in previous chapters, which can threaten both their physical and mental security. In the context of children that are under the care of THP, actions are taken so as to protect them against any physical and mental harm, not tolerating situations that might endanger their security (The HOME Project 2018). Being that at times information might lack with regards to problems that children might have, for instance concerning psychological issues, the actions on part of the organization are taken from the beginning, once children are sheltered. Once in the care of the organization a specific plan is made for the child, also in order to address particular problems as a result of traumatic experiences that the child might have faced (Interview 13; Interview 2; The HOME Project 2018).

Within the approaches taken with regards to protection, one of the responses mentioned within the organization's guide is the importance of having a "positive and calm approach" and to respond to children's requests with kindness, for instance when it comes to medical issues (The HOME Project 2018). Lastly, an issue that is also worthy of mention is how the members of the staff deal with conflict situations. It was possible to observe that children might engage in conflicts between them, leading at times to fights among them, including physical. Given that there is a possibility that fights might lead to injuries, it is relevant to note how the staff deals with such situations so as to secure the protection of the children.²⁹ Amongst the actions taken by staff so as to deal with such situations are: breaking up fights, asking for assistance from another staff member and communicate with the children with the help of someone that can act as an interpreter. In the case of more serious situations, for instance if there is a threat to human life, then the procedure entails that the police must be called (The HOME Project 2018).

When it comes to the care of children's mental health, a psychologist is always present within the shelters, being responsible for managing issues in the everyday life of the shelter and attending to the children's individual needs. In addition he/she assesses the needs of every

²⁹ Some situations of conflict between the children were observed to which the staff reacted immediately so as to put a stop to the conflict and deal with it in the appropriate manner.

child as well as the appropriate care, for instance calling for the presence of a psychiatrist if necessary³⁰ (The HOME Project 2018; Interview 2). Providing children with this kind of support is seen as significant given the experiences they might have faced and that their situation can be seen as unstable and stressful (for instance situations where they receive negative decisions on asylum or tensions regarding their family context³¹) (Interview 18; Interview 2; Interview 25; Interview 3). As such, providing children with psychological support as well as accompanying them individually can be considered as important indicators in terms of protecting them against mental harm. In addition, so as to serve the best interests of the child, the organization also entails in further cooperation by providing services outside the shelter, if such is considered necessary (Interview 2; Interview 10).

The situation surrounding family reunification is also considered here as relevant within the present dimension given the importance of children being reunited with family members. Having approached the family reunification procedure on previous chapters, some concerns have been raised and within the context of the fieldwork undertaken it was possible to note that the procedure can be difficult not only due to bureaucratic reasons but also to the mental health of children.

Being that the procedure can take a considerable time, “all this period it is a gap in their life” (Interview 13) and it can be difficult to understand why they cannot be reunited with family members. Moreover, it can also have an impact on their education in the sense that children might show a lack of will to learn Greek as they don’t wish to stay in the country (Interview 25; Interview 13).³²

One of the services provided by THP is legal aid and as such children are provided with support with regards to their family reunification cases at times through cooperation with organizations in European countries when necessary (The HOME Project 2018; Interview 25). A barrier that can be found here on the work of the organization as a security provider is the impact that family reunification can have as a result of actions taken at a European level. Even though efforts are made to support children in such processes, difficulties in the procedure still

³⁰ It was possible to observe such protocol in action, through the presence of a psychiatrist at the shelter.

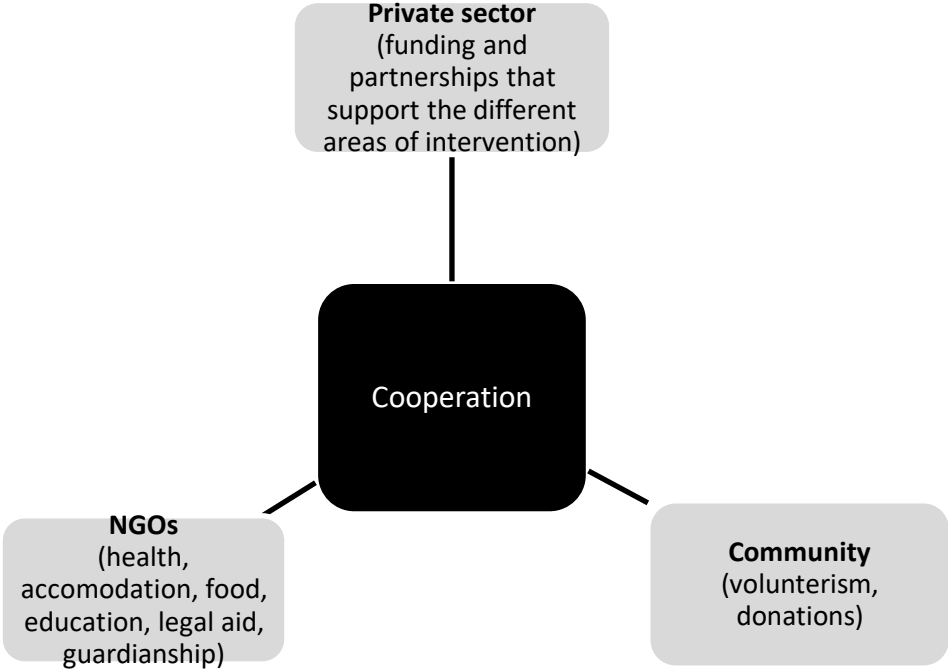
³¹ It was noted that at times the family context of children can have an impact on them, leading them to feel more emotional or anxious.

³² During the period of the internship it was possible to observe the support provided to children on their family reunification cases as well as the difficulties that such procedure can entail, such as the lack of understanding on part of the children when it comes to rejections.

create barriers, and the impact it has on children is still difficult to avoid, standing as an issue that will require greater attention.

Another context that people on the move can be exposed to is the possibility of detention and deportation and it is mentioned that once children reach the age of majority the issue of deportations is something that they can be exposed to. However situations of deportation have not been observed within the context of the organization, thus the referent situation does not apply to the children under their care (Interview 3; Interview 25). With regards to detention, the information collected indicates that children can be placed in accommodation such as detention centers and police stations, being that some of the children hosted by the organization have been moved from such places (The HOME Project 2018; Interview 18).

Figure 8 – Cooperation within the organization’s operation



Source: Author

Food Security

Within the dangers that refugees can be exposed to, the lack of access to basic needs, such as food is one of the challenges that they can face. The situation of refugees can be further aggravated upon arrival, for instance due to the inappropriate conditions that have been described at the hotspots. Issues can include the lack of proper nutrition, as it has been pointed out, as well as the fact that they might have to wait at times for hours to receive food (Interview 10).

With regards to the context within the organization's shelters, children are provided with around five meals per day, including the main meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) as well as snacks. Within the organization's procedures, ingredients must be fresh and hygiene rules are ought to be kept (The HOME Project 2018). It was also possible to observe that the menu prepared in the case of younger children is varied and intended to be nutritious. Apart from having access to food at the shelter, distribution of food was also noted within the context of the school, as children are also provided with meals.³³

According to the procedures of the shelter and as it was possible to also confirm through observation, the children's individual needs are also taken into consideration, including their "dietary/cultural habits and their expressed preferences, always within the measure of what is possible" (The HOME Project 2018). With regards to barriers within the referent dimension, situations were noted where children might show some dislike towards the food or at times refuse to eat. Such situations are transmitted to the staff so that they can communicate with the children and deal with it in the appropriate manner.

Concerning the actors involved within the process, the cook is the one responsible for the preparation of the meals following the appropriate hygienic rules as well as for the preparation of meals that children can take to school. Such work is also done in collaboration with the rest of the team, as it is important to keep a constant communication in the case of an issue that requires the intervention of another member (The HOME Project 2018).³⁴

In addition, it was possible to assess through interviews that other actors can also be

³³ The referent data was collected through participant observation by accompanying the daily routine of the shelter.

³⁴ It was possible to observe the preparation of meals in a regular basis and the communication between the staff with regards to the provision of food.

involved within the food security dimension. As donations can play an active role in the context of NGOs, these can also include food products; these might come from locals or from other organizations (Interview 18). Within the cooperation with other entities, the organization was also involved in projects that were intended to attend to the needs of children in terms of food security, for instance by enhancing healthy habits or through the creation of “urban farms” which allowed them to plant vegetables (Interview 2).

Health Security

Concerning the health security dimension, for those staying at the camps, the access to healthcare has been a matter of concern. As it has been addressed, refugees can also be exposed to other challenges including the spread of diseases that can be aggravated by the lack of hygienic conditions, a lack of proper nutrition and the deteriorating conditions at the camps. Additionally, issues that have posed recent concerns include the new measures taken by the government such as the one surrounding the provision of AMKA.

In the context of the organization, the access to healthcare is secured by the members of the staff, which is also done through networking with other organizations where children can access medical care³⁵. Before children arrive at the shelters, they usually go through a medical examination, a health assessment that includes an examination for tuberculosis and a dermatological assessment. However, the referent health assessment can be influenced by the conditions at the islands (Interview 13; Interview 2). According to members of the staff information regarding the situation of the children, for instance if the child has health problems, both physical and psychological, is significant so that those within the shelters can make an appropriate plan in order to attend to the individual needs of the child. Nevertheless, it can happen that at times, information regarding the social history of the child, including medical background is lacking (Interview 13; Interview 2). Meanwhile, an assessment is also made within the context of the shelter with regards to children’s mental health, namely a psychological and psychiatric assessment (The HOME Project 2018).

Moreover, within the shelters hygiene is something that is taken into consideration, as

³⁵ When children attend doctor appointments they are accompanied by members of the staff.

members of the staff (the cleaning personnel) are responsible on keeping the hygiene of all the spaces, “while training the young guests on how to maintain excellent living conditions” (The HOME Project 2018). Meanwhile the personal hygiene of children is also attended to. Apart from receiving personal hygiene items upon arrival at the shelter, including “toothpaste, shampoo, soap, sheets and towels” (The HOME Project 2018), it was also noted that awareness on the importance of personal hygiene is communicated on part of the staff to the children. In addition, certain habits are also implemented into the daily routine of the shelter where children have a responsibility in following and respecting such habits on a daily basis, for instance keeping a clean room or cleaning the table after finishing meals.³⁶

Among the difficulties mentioned in the access to healthcare, the issue surrounding the provision of a social security number (AMKA) has been mentioned. The recent measure taken by the new government can present barriers within healthcare, for instance as it can limit access to services and people might have to wait a long time for an appointment at hospitals. As such, this can lead to a need to search for medical care through other means (Interview 10; Interview 2; Interview 18). In parallel, this issue could be seen as a limitation also in the sense that it challenges the work of the NGO. In other words, national measures have an impact on the services that THP provides, by making access to healthcare more difficult, eventually leading the organization to search for other alternative options.

As previously mentioned, cooperation plays a significant role in the work of the organization, and it is also present within the health security dimension. Networking with other entities allows the opportunity to have access to medicines and also to provide children with medical care outside of the shelter, which is at times rendered as important (Interview 13; Interview 18; Interview 2).³⁷

³⁶ The referent contexts were observed within the shelter through participant observation.

³⁷ During the internship it was possible to observe the cooperation of the organization in terms of healthcare by accompanying the children to the Red Cross to receive vaccination.

Figure 9 – Médecins du Monde Greece providing a workshop on Covid 19³⁸



Source: The HOME Project (2021)³⁹

Community Security

According to the HS approach when it comes to the community dimension, security can derive from membership in a group where people can share a cultural identity and values. Such membership can come from a family, community, an organization or a racial and ethnic group (United Nations Development Program 1994).

Within the context of the organization, one of the interactions that it was possible to observe was the one between the children. The communication between them is mainly done in the English language, and at times in their native language in the case of children that share it. It was also possible to listen to certain expressions that children use amongst them such as “Speak English”, used in a context so as to make communication more clear to those around them; however it can also be seen as an indication of their integration in the shelter in the sense that English along with Greek are the main languages spoken daily⁴⁰.

By being able to participate in the daily routine of the house it was noted that sometimes arguments occur between the children leading at times to more physical conflicts in

³⁸ It was not possible to observe the response of the organization to address the pandemic as the internship ended before it started. However it is possible to see here that the organization has been responding to the current context in line with the protection of children.

³⁹ Original source: The HOME Project official website. Accessed July 12 2021. Available at: <https://www.homeproject.org/en/on-the-ground/diary/>

⁴⁰ The referent data was collected through participant observation

which the staff intervenes. On the other hand, children also seem to create bonds between each other, as it was observed for instance through the transfer of one of the children to another shelter, to which the others reacted quite emotionally. One of the dynamics also worth mentioning is that children appear to be reactive towards the behavior of others which can happen in situations of crisis, in the sense that the behavior of a child can influence the other creating an agitation between them, which has been described as the “popcorn effect” (Interview 2).

In the case of a new arrival, the presence of a newcomer can also influence the other children as they might experience some anxiety (Interview 10). Nevertheless it was noted that they can assist the newcomer in its adaptation to the shelter, for instance by helping each other mutually when needed, such as introducing him to his bedroom.

With regards to the children’s relationship with the staff, the organization entails that the basic rights of the children must be guaranteed as well as “imitating family-care conditions” (The HOME Project 2018). The communication with the children is done either in Greek or English, at times simultaneously, making use of an interpreter when necessary to facilitate communication (Interview 10). It is important that the communication is clear and that children have the opportunity to express themselves clearly so that the staff can also understand their needs successfully. Moreover, the members of the staff also make an effort to make children feel heard and that they have a voice on situations happening within the house, for instance through the existence of community meetings. During these meetings communication can at times be difficult to establish between the children and as a result between the children and the staff, however they usually allow children the opportunity to discuss problems they perceive as relevant that have happened throughout the week.⁴¹ Meanwhile, when needed the staff also communicates with children in private if they feel more comfortable to do so.

It was also possible to observe that at times children appear to be more reactive towards the staff showing a more agitated behavior. As previously mentioned above within the personal security dimension, the staff reacts following procedures to deal with such situations in the appropriate manner. In assessing the referent dynamic it is important to note that the

⁴¹ It was possible to participate in the community meetings often and observe such interactions.

interaction of children with the staff is significant for their relationships and for the environment of the shelter, as such the importance of creating boundaries and being a role model for the children is noted (The HOME Project 2018).

Apart from the bounds that are created within the shelter, the relationship of children with their family members is also valued, being important to maintain a constant interaction with them. In the case of children that have family members present in Greece, they can receive visitations where they can spend some time together and the importance that children hold on their contact with family is seen as significant. Meanwhile, it was also possible to observe that the contact of children with family members can afterwards have an impact on their behavior which can be a result of the child's family context. The contact with family is also noted when the staff contacts them when it is necessary to deal with a more sensitive issue with the child or for instance when there is a conflict within the house.

Another interaction also considered is the contact that children hold with people from outside the shelter. Within this context, it was possible to observe their contact with people from other organizations, for instance by attending activities outside of the house; the presence of the interpreters, volunteers, as well as the guardians and donors that visited the shelter. In the case of the volunteers the children are usually receptive to their presence and "civilian implication" is seen as important when it comes to social integration (The HOME Project 2018). Such receptiveness is also seen towards the presence of the guardians⁴², considered as "people of reference for the kids" (Interview 3) and the donors, when they visit the house.

At last, the contact of children with the host community is also contemplated, being here approached according to positive and negative. Among the negative interactions conflict situations have been noted with people within the neighborhood as well as with children within the context of school.⁴³ Additionally, perceptions of racism have also been mentioned, an issue that is addressed by the organization through actions intended to raise awareness within the community against such issues (The HOME Project 2018). Amongst the contact with the community, actions include buying products from local shops and hosting open parties for the neighborhood, creating thus an opportunity to communicate and make connections with the

⁴² Within the interactions observed children appeared to have a positive relationship with their guardians when they came to the shelter.

⁴³ The situations described are included in the context of the participation observation held throughout the internship.

locals Apart from such actions, it was also noted that over time locals seem to shift their behavior and appear to be more receptive towards the presence of the children (Interview 2; Interview 25; Interview 3).

Having contextualized the situations of insecurity that children can through, the provision of security is here considered by applying the mechanisms entailed by THP within the HS dimensions identified by the UNDP. The following matrix allows for an illustrated summary of the main findings so as to complement the results.

Table 4 - Provision of security of refugee children in Athens according to the human security dimensions

Dimensions	Quotes	Description
Personal security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Safeguarding and security are offered on a 24-hour basis [...]" (The HOME Project 2018) - "[...] I mean here in the shelter, they have their beds, they have their clothes [...]" (Interview 10) - "The HOME Project protects all those under its care from physical and sexual abuse, abandonment and emotional abuse." (The HOME Project 2018) - "[...] I mean in order to protect the child every time and take it from the camp and bring it in the house, in a home [...]" (Interview 10) - "[...] In our shelters there is always a psychologist [...]" (Interview 2). - "[...] It is very frustrating and very difficult for them to understand why the other country do not want to receive them [...]" (Interview 25) - "[...] I represent all the children upon their asylum or family reunification requests [...]" (Interview 25) 	<p>How the organization protects children against physical and mental harm; along this dimension consider the provision of basic needs, situations of deportation and detention as well as the importance of family reunification.</p>

Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The basic daily meals for the Shelter guests must be necessarily provided (breakfast, lunch and dinner” (The HOME Project 2018) - “[...] they have their food every day, in the camps it is not like that. I mean I have hear that they are waiting many hours for a plate [...]” (Interview 10) - “[...] we have a lot of donations especially clothes, and secondary foods, food products but from different organizations or even from citizens [...]”. (Interview 18) 	To consider how the access to food is provided by the organization and the actors involved within the provision of this service
Health security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “[...] if we know that a child has a problem with his leg or her heart for example as soon as possible we need to book some appointment with the doctors to check it [...].” (Interview 10) - “[...] it concerns the psychological and psychiatric assessment of hosted children.” (The HOME Project 2018) 	How the provision of healthcare is secured by the organization and the procedures entailed within this dimension
Community security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “[...] When one child has a crisis then you will have at least three or four incidents, it is like a popcorn (Interview 2) - “[...] it is very important for us to create a confidential and trustworthy relationship with each child in order for the child to feel you know safe [...]” (Interview 25) - “Civilian implication and occupation in the everyday function of the hospitality shelter constitutes an important factor of social integration for the hosted persons [...]” (The HOME Project 2018) - “[...] we make some community buildings where we invite all the neighbor, all our neighbors and we do something like a bounding, a liaise with them, with all the children who cook and provide food to them, we have music and so it is like very happy environment where we can make relations and as I told you before we can eliminate racism [...]” (Interview 25) 	The context of children within the context of the organization and the different interactions children are involved in. These include their interactions within the context of the shelter to the contact with the host community

Source: Author

4.2.3. Citizenship and education as mobilizing instruments

Having presented the mechanisms used by the organization in attending to the needs of refugee children in Athens and providing security, the focus is now put in particular instruments, namely education and citizenship. The referent dimensions are perceived as catalysts relevant in the promotion of HS and will be considered within the context of the organization.

Education

As it has been approached within the present report, children might have lacked educational opportunities in their countries of origin or their educational paths might have been disrupted concerning their particular context. Apart from the importance that education plays in children's lives, it can also stand as an important tool on integration and further facilitate inclusion into the labor market as well as provide children with better opportunities in the future. Concerning the issue of education in Greece, the role of the state as well as the conditions children face regarding the access to education have been addressed, being that at times children might lack such access, for instance when it comes to those staying in the islands. Meanwhile, education can be provided through organizations, as it is the case with THP.

Children that are under the care of the organization are enrolled in the Greek public system and it is entailed that "the procedure must be completed in as little time as possible" (The HOME Project 2018). Through the enrollment in Greek schools children can have access to the Greek language and culture (Interview 14; 16; 17; 19); moreover given the importance put in education, enrollment at schools also includes those that might not stay in Greece, for instance children that have family reunification cases (Interview 13). Apart from the Greek educational system, education is also provided through partnerships with other entities, from NGOs to the private sector (Interview 16), for instance from providing children with language lessons such as German or English to other extracurricular activities such as gymnastics (Interview 10; Interview 13; Interview 2; Interview 25). Additional help can also be given through the presence of volunteers, which can support them in the learning process of Greek

(Interview 18)

On another note, it is also important to mention that children might face barriers within this context; these might involve resistance on part of children to attend school (reasons behind this include the difficult situation of children that can be heavy on their mental state and issues within the Greek system); difficulties faced regarding the learning process (in the sense that children might have difficulties in understanding lessons at school and consequently feel lost); issues within their enrollment, which can come for instance from bureaucratic issues or barriers presented by school authorities themselves (The HOME Project 2018; Interview 2).⁴⁴

As previously mentioned, the private sector can play a key role in supporting the education of children, and another area in which it is possible to see its role is in the opportunity it allows for the organization to provide children with vocational training. Through such support children can have the possibility to acquire "professional training" (Interview 2) and to enhance their personal skills and abilities which can further facilitate them to find employment according to their preferences (Interview 13; Interview 2; Interview 25).

In order to help children with their individual development and build resilience they are also provided with pedagogical support. The referent support considers the participation in activities as well as helping children to adjust to the routine of the shelter (Interview 10; Interview 18; Interview 2). Aside from the education children receive at schools they also receive additional support within the shelters so as to attend to their educational needs, for instance by helping with homework or providing support, such as through volunteers, to help in case a child has difficulties in a particular subject, as it was possible to note. Pedagogical support is also intended to aid children in their "functional integration into the shelter" as well as to maintain "functional relationships" (The HOME Project 2018). Such support is significant in the sense that it has a positive impact on the behavior of children during the period of time they spend at the shelter.⁴⁵ Being provided with additional help at the shelter, for instance by receiving English lessons can not only be seen as important for their education but also a relevant tool in their integration at the house, as it can further facilitate their communication

⁴⁴ It was possible to observe such barriers through participant observation. Additionally while involved within the context of the shelter it was also possible to note that children are provided with school supplies.

⁴⁵ It was possible to note the integration of children within the shelter and the changes in behavior, for instance by observing the process since a child arrives from the first day.

with the staff and the other children.⁴⁶ In addition the participation in extracurricular activities can also be included within the pedagogical approach.

[...] we carry out multiple and various activities, such as art therapy, games, athletic activities, visiting at the museums, in order to create a nice and environment that can take their minds off and can be engaged with other things [...] (Interview 25)

Having the possibility to have closer contact with this area of intervention, a limitation can be found in terms of educational support in an informal setting. Aside from the enrollment of children in schools, they also receive additional support in the context of the shelter when possible. This support can be seen as important given the barriers they can face in schools which can impact their learning process. Nevertheless, it can be difficult to provide a consistent program, particularly in an informal setting, as the daily routines can be changed and the activities that children attend to might vary. As such maintaining such a consistent program can prove to be difficult, also as it is usually dependent on the availability of other actors.

It is also important to note that education is important when it comes to the social inclusion of children; as such providing children with the same opportunities as Greek students and helping them acquire knowledge of the Greek language and culture can be considered important tools (Interview 13; Interview 18; Interview 2). The enrollment at schools also allows children to “learn in a safer way the ways of the society” (Interview 18) and gives children the opportunities to have contact with other children and with people from different cultural backgrounds (Interview 18; Interview 2; Interview 3).

Apart from education, other actions are also taken so as to support the social inclusion of children, including the respect of children’s cultural diversity by valuing and encouraging participation in the community they belong and by promoting the exchange of “cultural experiences” (The HOME Project 2018). The contact with the community is valued as it can help facilitate their inclusion and also awareness on how the environment around them works (for instance by going outside the shelter and explaining children how to behave in the metro); social gatherings are also an example “to see how the society works, how the society behaves”

⁴⁶ It was observed that the improvement of the English language has a positive impact in terms of communication as well as in the child’s integration in the shelter.

(Interview 18) and a possibility for children to create relationships (Interview 10). On the other hand barriers might also arise when it comes to social inclusion; these might include resistance on part of children which can come from the lack of will to stay in Greece or from cultural differences for instance, as well as difficulties concerning their inclusion within the school (Interview 13; Interview 18). Despite barriers, the actions taken by the organization are intended so as to allow children to gradually integrate in the community and to “train them how is the adult life” (Interview 2) and to become independent.

Lastly, education can also be seen as a tool in terms of empowerment. Empowerment here encompasses a tool within the work of the organization and is associated with education. Education is thus seen as an opportunity for children to gain insights, as “only education and life skills can give you the right [...] to make choices” (Interview 2) and to feel that they have a voice and are respected (Interview 13). As such, the members of the staff also make an effort to encourage and motivate the beneficiaries with regards to education (Interview 2; Interview 18) and the process of children participating in life decisions is valued, it “helps them acquire a sense of control in life and themselves” (The HOME Project 2018).

Citizenship

As it has been addressed, people on the move might lose the citizenship of their country once they leave and their situation can be further aggravated given the fact that some might flee without documentation. In addition, the particular situation of asylum seekers is fragile when it comes to holding citizenship rights due to their legal status.

Having in consideration that acquiring the citizenship of the country of asylum is within the goals of local integration, the citizenship dimension is here to be considered in line with the Greek context. In this sense, the requirements surrounding Greek citizenship are taken into account. In accordance with the citizenship code, the requirements involve requisites such as reaching the age of majority, the issue surrounding pending deportations as well as the conviction of crimes, holding a residence permit and the payment of a fee for the submission of the application. In addition, requirements also include the knowledge of Greek language and culture (Greek nationality code 2004). With regards to the lawful stay of refugees in Greece

however, recent changes have been made stating that refugees can now apply for citizenship after residing in Greece for seven consecutive years (Greek council for refugees 2020).

As noted above, education plays a significant role within the citizenship dimension in the sense that it stands as one of its requirements. This is particularly significant to the case of children, whom according to one of the amendments made to the Greek citizenship code, are allowed to acquire citizenship if they have been born or have been growing up in Greece. In the case of children born in Greece, registration at a primary school is required. In addition, one of the parents must hold a residence permit and parents must have been residing in Greece for a period of five years before the child is born; in the event that the birth took place within this period, the time of lawful residence is extended to ten years. When it comes to the children who have been residing in Greece, they are able to acquire citizenship if they have attended nine years of primary and secondary school or six years of secondary school. Meanwhile, it is also possible to acquire citizenship after three years of having graduated from Greek university or a technological college (Greece: Law 4332).

On the other hand, it is also noted that the procedure to acquire citizenship can be difficult and lengthy, and the examinations entailed within the process have been considered difficult (Interview 25; Interview 3; Greek council for refugees 2020). Still it is also pointed out that the process appears to be easier for refugees compared to those of other migrants (Interview 6). With regards to children in the context of THP, it is mentioned that the perceptions of citizenship are more challenging especially for those who see themselves in a transit period. Meanwhile, as one of the employees stated “we believe that they should be citizens and they have rights” as it is seen through their efforts to encourage children concerning education (Interview 2).

Given the time that the process can entail as “many years have to be carried out in order for them to acquire citizenship” (Interview 25), situations of naturalization have not been observed with regards to the children under the care of the organization; as such the acquirement of Greek citizenship in this case cannot yet be applied.

As mentioned above citizenship can be seen as an eventual goal of local integration and following the concept of integration by the EU, considered within the present report, one of the

strategies that can enhance a successful integration apart from education already approached, is the access to the labor market. Aside from the access to education as well as vocational training by the organization, support in terms of access to employment is also provided (Interview 13; Interview 18; Interview 2) as the final aim of the organization is the “safe independence of its guests by the time they reach maturity” (The HOME Project 2018). The organization provides jobs to both the Greek and refugee community and within the period of the internship it was possible to observe that employment is provided not only to the beneficiaries under their care (Interview 14) but also to the community, in the sense that other refugees can also be employed as staff.⁴⁷

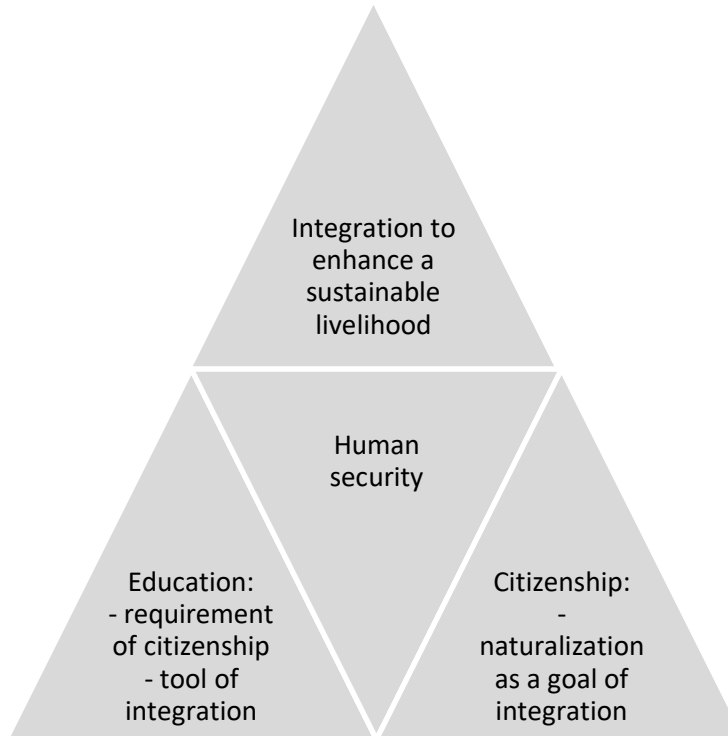
Despite the issues of unemployment in Greece, the staff makes an effort to help those who have reached maturity to find a job and support them throughout the process, for instance by explaining them how the “job system” works in Greece (Interview 18), by helping them to create CVs as well as making sure that they are being provided with the appropriate conditions at the workplace (Interview 13; Interview 18).

[...] now they are financially, they are financially individual and this is something that makes them very stable and makes them that they can have a new life again and they can be on their own, they can stand on their own feet [...] (Interview 25).

Through the results displayed it is possible to triangulate the education and citizenship dimension with the HS framework. As entailed by the HS approach, in order to provide people with a sustainable livelihood, strategies must take place to enhance such development, including social integration (United Nations Development Program 1994). One of the tools identified in social integration is education, which also stands as one of the requirements when it comes to achieving citizenship, as it was seen with the case of Greek citizenship. Given the fact that naturalization is considered within the goal of local integration, its relation to the HS approach can thus be seen as intertwined.

⁴⁷ The information mentioned was collected through participant observation.

Figure 10 – Triangulation between HS and the citizenship and education dimensions



Source: Author

4.3. Final considerations

The provision of HS can entail de collaboration of different actors and within the context of the refugee “crisis” civil society has played a significant role in the support of migrants. As noted in previous chapters, in order to respond to the significant number of arrivals and as the “crisis” evolved, solidarity movements and the intervention of different organizations took place as it can be seen in the case of Greece. Being that the state was not prepared to deal with such numbers, other actions, such as those of organizations, complemented and at times filled the gap of the state.

Having addressed the actions taken on part of the Greek government in the previous chapter, the focus within the present chapter was put in the particular role of NGOs, as they have been taking a more prominent role throughout the “crisis”. In order to illustrate the role that non-state actors can have as security providers, the actions taken by the non-profit organization THP, where the internship took place, fulfills such purpose.

The emphasis was put on the security of refugee children in Athens and the mechanisms used by the organization to achieve such goals. The results allowed for a better understanding of its actions in line with the HS dimensions identified by the UNDP, namely the personal, food, health and security dimensions, considered as the most relevant for the present report. It was possible to understand the holistic approach taken by the organization so as to provide children with a safe environment and a range of services, with the aim to aid their personal development and support them until they reach maturity. Apart from assessing the protection of children according to the referent dimensions, a focus was also put in specific instruments, namely education and citizenship; considered here as tools that aid the provision of security.

With regards to education, it was possible by being involved within the daily routine of the shelter and have a closer contact with this area, to evaluate the importance that is given to education by the organization and the impact it can have on children. Within this dimension, it was seen the support provided by THP through the access to the Greek public system along with other actions so as to complement the children's individual development, for instance through partnerships and the provision of pedagogical support. Meanwhile, education was also considered here as a tool that can empower children and help them take control over their lives.

As social inclusion plays a role within the organization's intervention, education can also facilitate the integration of children within the community. Moreover, being that local integration has been considered as a durable solution, the issue of citizenship, as a goal within integration, was also taken into account. Thus, citizenship was applied here to the Greek context by addressing the requirements around Greek citizenship and the support given by the organization, in terms of treating children like citizens and reaching their eventual autonomy, for instance through the access to employment (considered as a tool in social integration). Even though citizenship was here assessed mostly through a lens that is still very much of that of the modern national paradigm (valuing the access to rights that come traditionally with the fulfillment of criteria of national belonging, whether under a republican-ethno model, or under a liberal-universalist model of belonging), the idea of cosmopolitan citizenship remains here as an interesting theoretical framework that could help promote HS. Since HS focuses on the

protection of all individuals and on their right to live in dignity, not limiting this protection to national boundaries, nor the entitlement to human rights to any specific legal status, cosmopolitan citizenship could help reinforce this concept of security. Indeed this enhancement could be done given its relation with human rights and the idea that individuals have rights beyond borders (Chandler 2003). Additionally, this support of people's rights as human beings and the care for the other could be promoted by actors within the global civil society.

CONCLUSION

a. On the research questions

How does the work of the NGO The HOME Project contribute to the promotion of the human security of refugee children in Athens?

As it was possible to observe through the results displayed, the organization uses different mechanisms (access to different services, networking, and contact with the local community) within its intervention. Considering its actions it can be concluded that the organization contributes to the promotion of human security (particularly in the personal, food, health and community dimensions) of unaccompanied minors. Moreover, within the HS framework, the referent mechanisms secure the human dignity of children and their actions aim at supporting their individual development, thus providing children with a more comprehensive sense of security. Such individual development can also be seen within the education dimension, addressed in the following research question.

Starting with personal security children are taken from different accommodations where they might have experienced challenging conditions, as it is the case with those previously staying in camps, to the safety of the houses where they are provided with the basic needs daily. Once in the context of the shelters children are protected against any physical and mental harm. In order to ensure such safety the staff follows the entailed procedures, cooperating between each other or with actors outside of the shelter when necessary. In the case of mental harm, the fact that the shelter has their own psychologist and a psychiatrist is also involved when required shows that children are provided with constant care.

In terms of detentions and deportations as they were also considered, it was noted that people on the move can be at risk of such possibilities. In the case of detentions, children can be placed in detention facilities, and even though detention should be seen as a last resort such situations still occur and during this time children might face inappropriate conditions. With regards to deportations, even though this is considered as illegal in the case of minors, once children reach the age of maturity they can face such contexts. Within the data collected

however it was not observed any case in which children underwent such situations, and the referent contexts do not seem to apply to those under the care of the organization.

Another indicator that was considered to encompass the provision of personal security was family reunification. Aside from the importance that being reunited with family plays in children's lives, particularly for those that are unaccompanied, the difficulties in the process can have an impact on children's mental state as it was noted, consequently affecting their personal security. In this case, the support given by the organization in this context is done through the provision of legal support, cooperating with other organizations if necessary.

As previously mentioned, children are provided with their basic needs daily, which contrasts with the situations that many migrants face in Greece, including children. In terms of access to such services it is possible to see the actions taken within the food and health security dimensions. In terms of food security, the mechanisms include the presence of a daily cook within the shelter, also responsible for keeping the necessary hygienic conditions in the preparation of meals. Additionally, given the age of the children and the importance of a proper nutrition, the menu is prepared so as to serve such needs. With regards to health security, children are provided with medical care from the moment they are sheltered, acting with emergency in the case they require special care or have a particular condition, and throughout the time they are under the care of the organization. Within the mechanisms used, networking plays an important role, apart from the staff within the shelters, as other organizations can provide children with medical care and examinations.

Lastly, community security is also considered in the provision of HS where it was possible to address the interactions that children hold being in the context of the organization. In assessing such interactions (between children, with family members, with staff and with other entities) the results show the relationships that children can maintain with family members and the bounds that they can also create within the shelter and outside of it. In addition, it is noted the contact with the local community and the impact that these interactions can have, leading to shifts in behavior.

In what way does citizenship and education act as stimuli in the promotion of human security of

the refugee children?

Education and citizenship are here addressed as instruments that can aid in the promotion of security. As the results indicate they can act as stimuli in the sense that they can be beneficial with regards to individual development and as a tool in terms of empowerment (in the case of education) and are associated with social integration, a relevant strategy in the provision of security.

With regards to the education dimension, it was noted through the results that the organization offers more than access to the Greek public school, where children can have contact with the Greek language and culture. Children's needs are also attended to in terms of their individual development through partnerships with other entities, where they can be provided with other educational activities, as well through pedagogical support. The support given to children concerning their educational path can also aid in their social inclusion. Within the context of the shelter children can receive guidance in terms of developing resilience and acquire *life skills*. Apart from the importance and opportunities that education can provide to children, along with its role in social integration, education is also seen as a tool with regards to empowerment.

Empowerment is identified within the HS framework as a useful strategy and it can be seen in the context of the organization as the actions taken can guide children and give them a voice when it comes to the choices made regarding their lives. Education is also associated with citizenship as it stands as one of the requirements of Greek citizenship. The issue of citizenship is also considered here as a tool that can aid in the provision of security, having in consideration the opportunities that citizenship can provide and allow refugees with a better opportunity in their lives and make long term plans. By approaching citizenship as a tool and a goal within integration, the referent dimension allows for an understanding that security entails more than the provision of the basic needs and that other instruments can be influential.

Having presented the contributions of the NGO in the promotion of security limitations are also identified with regards to its work. Firstly, measures and processes taken on a higher level (European and national) can have an impact on the work of the THP. Within the national

level is included the measures taken on part of the government, for instance with regard to the provision of AMKA. On the other hand, as seen by the struggles faced with the family reunification procedure, the European level can also have an impact on the work of the NGO. In this context, the work of the organization as a security provider can face challenges. It can create barriers on the efforts made THP, calling on its adaptability to deal with challenges.

In terms of difficulties within the daily routine of the shelter, there are limits in terms of the consistency of the educational support in an informal setting. Aside from the access to the public school system, support is also provided within the shelter (for instance through the presence of volunteers or by attending activities). Given the barriers that children can face in public schools, the additional support received within the organization can be considered as relevant. Notwithstanding, it is important to consider that children can be transferred between shelters as well as the fact they might attend different activities and show a different receptiveness towards education. In this context, providing children daily with a consistent program can be challenging. Even though this could be done for instance through networking and the presence of volunteers, it is important to note that the availability of these actors can be prone to changes.

b. Theoretical and practical contributions and implications

With respect to the contributions that the present report can offer, the first one considered is regarding the HS framework. It is possible to see through the work of the organization the operationalization of HS, not only by assessing the provision of security through the dimensions identified but also through the strategies implemented, such as empowerment and by acting within the aim of social integration.

The second contribution is done through the fieldwork carried out which allowed to put the topic under study (theory) in contrast with the work done *in loco* (practice). Additionally, focusing on specific instruments, namely education and citizenship, offers insights on the importance that such tools can play in the provision of security and how they triangulate with the HS framework; offering thus a contribution to the already existing literature surrounding the "crisis".

Lastly, the report addresses different areas of study, particularly migration, security and citizenship. As such, a contribution is offered through the triangulation of the different areas thus offering a theoretical contribution and adding value to the literature on the topic.

Nevertheless, the present report also presents limitations. Within the ones identified is the data collected in the citizenship dimension. Citizenship was here considered contemplated in theoretical terms as a tool that can aid in the provision of HS. However, given the time that the citizenship procedure can entail, it was not possible to observe any case where citizenship was acquired; being that the target group under analysis was refugee children. Thus, within the fieldwork carried out it was not possible to further assess the impact of acquiring citizenship.

Another limitation identified is in the fact that it is context specific. Focusing on a specific case study can provide a deeper understanding of the situation under analysis. However, even though THP can be here considered as an illustration of the role that organizations like NGOs can play in situations of humanitarian crisis, limitations can also be identified in this sense. In the case of the referent organization, the private sector plays a key role, giving more flexibility on how the organization operates. Meanwhile in the case of other organizations, despite the significant role they play in the provision of security through the range of services they offer, as it has been mentioned, their actions might be more limited for instance due to funding. As such, the role of these non-state actors as providers of security can vary in terms of how they operate.

Having addressed the contributions and limitations of the present report, future lines of research could include addressing the referent topic in organizations that offer the same flexibility in funding in other Member States. Another possibility could be to address the instruments of education and citizenship as security instruments into greater depth, particularly with regards to citizenship. Such research could be applied to organizations in other contexts.

Other lines of inquiry could involve a comparison with other NGOs in Greece or a comparison with NGOs in other states that are dependent on different sources of funding to operate.

APPENDIX

I. QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS 2020 - DATA

Participant	Gender	Type of interview	Date	Category
1	Feminine	In person	28 November	Refugee
2	Feminine	In person	20 November	THP staff
3	Masculine	In person	8 January	THP staff
4	Feminine	In person	17 January	Organization employee
5	Masculine	In person	18 January	Organization employee
6	Feminine	In person	22 January	Organization employee
7	Feminine	Skype	30 January	Greek citizen
8	Feminine	In person	30 January	Greek citizen
9	Feminine	In person	31 January	Greek citizen
10	Feminine	In person	14 February	THP staff
11	Feminine	In person	12 February	Refugee
12	Feminine	In person	14 February	Greek citizen
13	Masculine	In person	17 February	THP staff
14	Masculine	In person	18 February	Refugee
15	Masculine	In person	19 February	Organization employee
16	Masculine	In person	21 February	Refugee
17	Masculine	In person	26 February	Refugee
18	Feminine	In person	27 February	THP staff
19	Masculine	In person	28 February	Refugee
20	Masculine	In person	3 March	Organization employee
21	Masculine	In person	4 March	Greek citizen
22	Feminine	Skype	16 March	Organization employee
23	Feminine	Skype	18 March	Organization employee
24	Masculine	Skype	24 March	Greek citizen
25	Feminine	Skype	14 May	THP staff

II. Interview script

A. Introduction- understanding the context of the crisis, access to the conception of security, arrival to Greece

1. Starting with a more general question, could you describe a normal day living in Athens?

Planned prompts:

- When did you arrive in Greece
- Country of origin? Could you tell me something about how was the situation in your country before you left?
- Could you tell me what happened after you arrived in Greece? Did you arrive alone? Where did you stay?

2. How would you describe your life nowadays in Greece in terms of security?

Planned prompts:

- What does it mean to you to feel safe/live in safety?
- Do you feel safe in Athens?
- Considering your personal experience, how would you evaluate the response from the Greek government?

B. Understanding the process of asylum and integration in the Greek community

1. What mechanisms are in order in the process of asking for asylum?

Planned prompts:

- What is being done to tackle these issues?
- How would you describe the current situation in Greece nowadays? And the situation in Athens?

2. Being children the most vulnerable group, what kind of help is given to them in this process?

Planned prompt:

- What kind of legal assistance and support do they receive once they reach Greece?

3. After your arrival in Greece how was the process of asking for Asylum?

Planned prompts:

- How long did the process take?
 - What were the main difficulties you faced during the process, if there were any?
4. What are/ what would you consider to be the fundamental mechanisms in the process of social integration?

Planned prompt:

-What kind of actors are involved in this process?

5. Being given access to the Greek language and culture, does this have any significant impact on the integration in the local community? In what way?

Planned prompts:

- Regarding the learning process how could you evaluate it? Is there receptiveness? Difficulties?

6. Could you describe how was your integration in the country and in the local community?

Planned prompts:

- Did you have any kind of access to the greek language? In what way?

- Do you believe that this access helped with your integration? How/ In what way?

- What other aspects do you believe were important for your integration?

C. Evaluate the current reality in Greece and particularly Athens and the response from the Greek government

1. How do you describe the current situation in Greece? And specifically Athens?
2. What is your perception about the way that the Greek government has been dealing with the arrival of refugees?

Planned prompt:

-What is your perception about how the government adapted to the intense flow of refugees (in 2015)?

3. Concerning the new approaches from the new prime minister, are there any changes/what is their impact when it comes to the treatment of refugees?

Planned prompt:

-Is there any measure or specific approach taken by the new minister that stands out significantly?

4. There have been reports from the UNHCR and news from the media about the living conditions of refugees in Greece, how does this situation stand today?

Planned prompt:

-what measures were or are being taken to improve these conditions?

- how does this situation affect the perception of Greece?

5. Being Greece an EU country, how would you describe/evaluate the cooperation and help Greece has been receiving from other countries?

Planned prompt:

- What do you think about the way that the EU has been reacting to the arrival of refugees? And towards the situation in Greece?

D. Analyze the actions taken by the organization The HOME Project and the mechanisms used in order to achieve their goals

1. Do believe that the impact of the arrival of refugees in the country was positive or negative? Why?

Planned prompts:

- What is your perception regarding the capacities of the Greek government to deal with the arrival of refugees?
- Have the new approaches of the new government towards refugees affected in any way the work of the organization?

2. What was the moment that led to the creation of the organization? Was there a specific episode?

3. The organization focuses specifically on unaccompanied minors: how does the process of integration in the shelters work?

Planned prompts:

- How much time does the process of sheltering them take?
- Could you describe the environment that these children were in before they arrive at the shelters, in terms of security?

4. The organization offers a holistic network of services, as soon as the children arrive in the shelters: is there an area that you more urgently act upon? Or is this a simultaneous process?

Planned prompts:

- What kind of mechanisms are used in the different areas? Examples?
- What kind of actors are involved?
- Usually where do the donations come from? Could you describe the kind of impact that these donations have for the organization's humanitarian goal?

5. An important part of the organization's goal is inclusion in Greek society, to help them become new citizens. What are the fundamental mechanisms in the integration process in the local community?

Planned prompts:

- What are the main aspects that help this process?
- In what way is access to education given? Public schools?
- How does the process of looking for a job work?
- Have you been facing any difficulties when it comes to the integration of the children in the local community? Which ones? In what way?

- What measures have been taken to overcome them? What actions do you take to give back to the community?

6. Regarding the Greek community how would you describe the way that greek citizens have been dealing with the arrival of refugees? And citizens from Athens specifically?

Planned prompts:

- In what way have the Greek citizens been active? What stands out?
- How do you describe the Greek solidarity movement?

7. Aside from the contact with the local community, the organization engages in cooperation with other organizations and institutions. What kind of recent projects have brought a positive impact in the organization's work?

Planned prompts:

- Could you give me an example of an organization you are cooperating with at the moment?
- In what way do these partnerships facilitate the organization's work and the achievement of its goals?

E. Analyze the situation of unaccompanied and separated minors

1. Being children the most vulnerable group in this context, how urgent and necessary is it to act when it comes to this group?
2. Could you describe the environment these children were living in before their journey?

Planned prompt:

- Did they face any difficulties trying to reach Greece? Which ones?
- What situation do these children face once they reach Greece? How are they treated?

3. What kind of services do they have access to?
4. Concerning the situation in the islands/hotspots what do you believe are the most concerning aspects when it comes to children?

F. Understanding the impact of the arrival of refugees in the Greek community, response from Greek citizens and possible barriers to integration

1. How would you describe the current situation in the country (political, social, economic,...)?
2. Do you believe that the impact of the arrival of refugees in the country was positive or negative? Why?

Planned prompts:

- What do you think about the capacities of the government? Do you believe that the

government is doing/has done everything that is necessary? Would it be important to have more help from other countries?

3. How would you evaluate the way that Greek citizens have been dealing with the arrival of refugees?

Planned prompts:

- Do you feel like any other measures should be taken to deal with the arrival of refugees in a more effective way?

- What measures/ actions should be taken to help with their integration in the community?

G. Understanding the action of NGO's and international organizations

1. Could you describe what is the mission/purpose of the organization in detail?

2. What kind of mechanisms does the organization use to attend to the needs of refugees and provide them security?

Planned prompt:

- Are there specific mechanisms to attend to the needs of children? Which ones?

3. Does the organization engage in cooperation with other organizations and institutions?

Planned prompt:

-What is this cooperation based on?

-With who do you cooperate with?

4. What is your cooperation with the HOME Project based on? (in case it is a partnership with my organization)

H. Concluding questions

1. What are your plans for the future/ what plans do you have for the future?

Planned prompt:

-Do you plan to stay in Greece

-Do you hope to go back to your home country at any point in the future?

2. Does the organization have any new partnerships or projects in sight for the future?

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