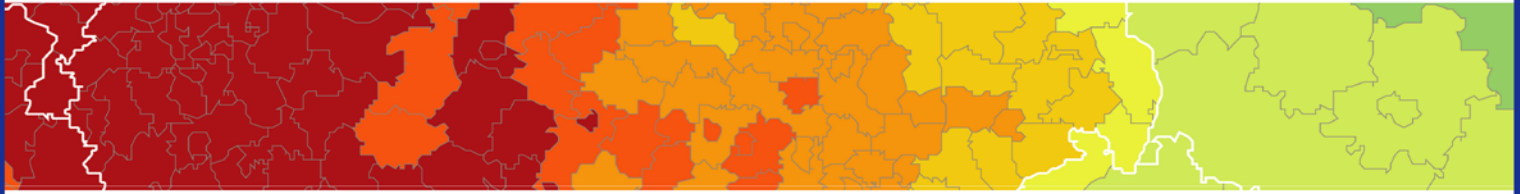


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

Applied Research

Case study – Local initiatives of OMNES Voluntary Organisation in Kilkis (Greece)

Version 18/07/2019

This applied research activity is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

This delivery does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the members of the ESPON 2020 Monitoring Committee.

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Technical Support

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Acknowledgements

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Contact: info@espon.eu

ISBN: 978-2-919795-16-1

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Abbreviations

AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DOY	Greek Tax Authority Office
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EC	European Commission
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
EKKA	The National Centre for Social Solidarity
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI	Emergency Support Instrument
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
ESTIA	Emergency Support to Integration & Accommodation
EU	European Union
EUSF	European Union Solidarity Fund
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GVA	Gross Value Added
HELIOS	Hellenic Integration System
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Internal Security Fund
KEELPNO	Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
KEP	Citizens' Service Centres
KEPOM	Central Operational Migration Body
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NORCAP	Norwegian Refugee Council's global provider of expertise
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OAED	Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization
OMNES	OMNES Voluntary Association
PHILOS	Emergency health response to refugee crisis
RIC	Reception and Identification Centres
RIS	Reception and Identification Services
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive summary

This case study focuses on local initiative of OMNES Voluntary Organisation in the municipality of Kilkis. This municipality belongs to the regional unit of Kilkis (NUTS 3) and it is part of Central Macedonia (NUTS 2) that is one of thirteen administrative regions (Periphery) in Greece.

Socio-economic context

The municipality of Kilkis is located between Thessaloniki, the capital of Central Macedonia, and the border with the Republic of North Macedonia, with a distance of 40km away from both places. It belongs to the regional unit of Kilkis which has been classified as a Cluster 6 "Lagging behind and depopulating regions" under Task 5 of the study. It is a rural area with negative demographic (e.g. decline of population, high old dependency ratio) and economic trends (e.g. GDP per capita below the national average, high unemployment rate).

Current stock and flows of asylum seekers and refugees

The geographic location positioned Greece as the main entry and transit point to the EU during the refugee crisis of 2015, which recorded almost one million irregular entries and stays in 2015 of the incoming third-country nationals coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, but from other countries as well. The area of Central Macedonia, in particular, the region of Kilkis, was heavily affected by a large influx of refugees transiting through Greece on the way to the other EU countries. According to UNHCR data, between 1 July 2015 and end of December 2015, 687,047 people crossed the border area between Idomeni and Gevgelija. There were 27,594 asylum applications submitted in Central Macedonia in the period 2015-2018, with the rising trend in asylum claims after the EU-Turkey agreement. Concerning the number of persons situated in Central Macedonia, in September 2018, approximately 9,600 individuals were located in this area, out of which 4,271 persons were accommodated in open reception facilities (765 persons in Nea Kavala camp, the region of Kilkis), 370 persons were living in apartments provided by EKKA, and near 5,000 in accommodation provided by UNHCR through ESTIA program (571 persons in the region of Kilkis).

Challenges, opportunities and impacts

A large-scale inflow of third-country nationals of mid-2015 poses governmental, economic and social challenges across Greece, particularly in the region of Kilkis. In March 2016, about 50,000 third-country nationals were stuck in Greece which put high pressure on the Greek reception system. The region of Kilkis was most affected from August 2015 until May 2016, when several thousand (at one point around 23,000) third-country nationals were situated in this region. There is pressure on public service delivery to asylum seekers and refugees, as well as an issue of asylum seekers' and refugees' integration in the labour market, particularly in the regions lagging behind, as Kilkis.

The refugee crisis has produced impact on the Greek public spending (e.g. about 0.3% of GDP in 2016). As of 2015, different donors provided humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in Greece among which the European Commission was the main contributor (EUR 644.5 million granted under ESI from 2016 to 2018). Further, there is a low labour market participation of asylum seekers and refugees, but there is an evident increase of the workers operating in government's authority, international and local non-governmental organizations. In regards to social impact, crude rate of net migration increased significantly between 2015 and 2016 at the national level and in the region of Kilkis. There were social tensions and protests of asylum seekers against the regime of geographical restriction on the Aegean islands, overcrowded and inhuman conditions in the reception and identification centres and open reception facilities in mainland (several protests in Idomeni).

Legal framework and reception policy

As response to the large-scale arrivals of 2015, the “hotspot approach” was applied in Greece, according to which five hotspots in the Eastern Aegean islands (Lesvos, Kos, Chios, Samos and Leros) were established. After the activation of the EU-Turkey Statement, several laws and regulations were adopted, which modified the work of five hotspot facilities (reception and identification centres - RIC) and put geographical restrictions on the movements of asylum seekers. As a consequence, Greek islands face overcrowding of reception facilities with critical living conditions. In addition to RICs, as of September 2018, there were 28 open reception facilities (26 in mainland, two in islands) run by different administrative authorities, mainly Hellenic Army, Ministry of Migration Policy and RIS, but also regional and local governments. The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) is a referral network of accommodation centres run by EKKA and several NGOs where around 70% of total places are dedicated to unaccompanied minors. In addition, accommodation places are provided by UNHCR through the ESTIA programme funded by the EU. This UNHCR accommodation scheme is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Migration Policy through the partnership with nine NGOs (e.g. OMNES) and 10 local self-governments in Greece.

Objectives and logic of intervention of OMNES initiative

In March 2016, after the closure of this route and the EU-Turkey agreement, 23,000 third-country nationals ended up being stranded in the region of Kilkis. A group of volunteers was invited by the municipality of Kilkis to help in Cherso camp. Having realized that emergency response was inadequate, the group of volunteers found an alternative way to respond to the refugee crisis, by hosting 75 families from Cherso camp in the houses of the local population in Kilkis. In October 2016, this group of volunteers established a non-governmental grassroots organization called OMNES Voluntary Association (OMNES) with an aim to provide an inclusive and integrated programme for asylum seekers and refugees through a human-centred and rights-based approach.

OMNES' initiative is composed of three pillars: housing programme, social inclusion centre and livelihood. Housing programme provides accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees in the region of Kilikis, as part of the UNHCR ESTIA programme. In the centre of OMNES effort is the provision of relevant services to each asylum seeker or refugee family that are hosted in the housing unit, with the aim to facilitate their inclusion into the local community. Therefore, OMNES established the Social Inclusion Centre that provides different service support to asylum seekers, refugees and local vulnerable groups. This centre provides legal support, formal and non-formal educational and vocational courses, support to children's access to education, as well as different social activities aimed to bring together asylum seekers, refugees and the local population. OMNES is currently developing and testing the livelihood component of its initiative, based on the concept of social and solidarity economy, with the aim to ensure the sustainability of the housing programme. In this regard, OMNES piloted several organic and natural product lines such as wheat straw, organic cotton, hemp production, wheat-made plates and cups, organic clothing line, agricultural products, etc. The idea is that the housing programme is funded from the profit of the social cooperatives, and at the same time to create jobs for asylum seekers, refugees and the local population.

Outcomes, impacts, and results of OMNES' initiative

During the three years since its establishment, OMNES supported over 1,300 asylum seekers and refugees in the region of Kilikis and attracted over four million euros in this region. OMNES supported local vulnerable groups that benefited from the services provided by Social Inclusive Centre. OMNES also supported local business and local population during the implementation of its initiative. Moreover, OMNES became well known for its monitoring mechanism which allows communicating real facts about refugees and accommodation planning and decision making for OMNES, local authorities of the region of Kilikis.

Dispersal policy

In regards to dispersal policy, OMNES advocates that a national or regional plan should be developed to fairly distribute refugees across the country based on the absorption capacities of each community. OMNES developed a Guide Housing Refugees that propose equal distribution per municipality in Greece. OMNES participated in the public consultations during the development of the "National Integration Strategy" and proposed that some of their practice scale up to the country level.

Lessons learned

The following summarised the key lessons that have been learned through the implementation of the project: the developed monitoring mechanism of OMNES led to effective implementation of housing programme; joint vision and proactive approach of OMNES team contributed to better inclusion of asylum seekers in Kilikis community; and the

hosting asylum seekers and refugees in apartments, in line with the absorption capacity of municipalities, can have positive impact on local development.

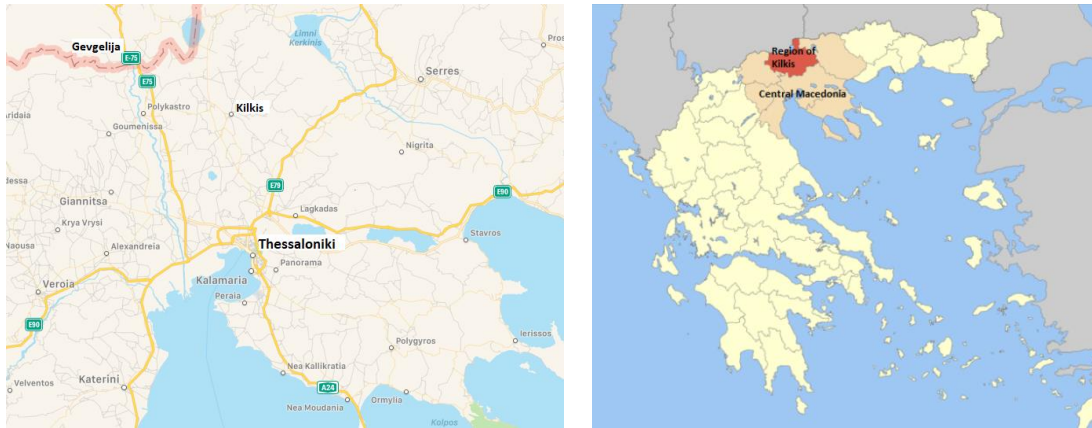
1 Profile of the area

This case study focuses on local initiative of OMNES Voluntary Organisation in the municipality of Kilkis. This municipality belongs to the regional unit of Kilkis (NUTS 3) and it is part of Central Macedonia (NUTS 2) that is one of thirteen administrative regions (Periphery) in Greece. This section provides an overview of the socio-economic context, the inflows and distribution of asylum seekers and refugees across the Kilkis and Central Macedonia. It also discusses the challenges, opportunities and impacts of those inflows, as well as policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees.

1.1 Socio economic context

The municipality of Kilkis is situated in the northern area of Central Macedonia as part of the region of Kilkis. It is located between Thessaloniki, the capital of Central Macedonia, and the border with the Republic of North Macedonia, with a distance of 40km away from both places. With a population of 80,419 inhabitants, out of which 51,926 live in the municipality of Kilkis, Kilkis is the smallest regional unit of Central Macedonia.¹ It is a rural area with negative demographic and economic trends. As such, it has been classified as a Cluster 6 "Lagging behind and depopulating regions" under Task 5 of the study.

Map 1: Location of the municipality of Kilkis, region of Kilkis and Central Macedonia



Source: Maps are based on <https://satellites.pro/> and <https://bit.ly/2BWrH6L>

Between 1991 and 2001, the region of Kilkis experienced a population increase of 14%, the highest recorded increase among the seven regions of Central Macedonia. However, in the last intercensal period (2001-2011), the population has declined by 7%. In addition, the crude rate of natural change of population declined in the period 2006-2016. Region of Kilkis has

¹ Hellenic Statistical Authority (2011). Statistical data on demographic characteristics. Available at <http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SAM03/>

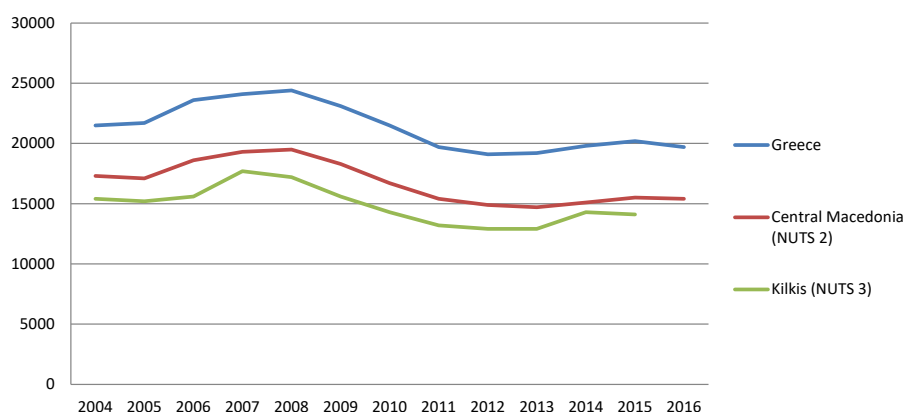
also recorded a high old dependency ratio of 42.5² in 2017, although it decreased compared to 2014 (43.5). In regards to fertility rate, this indicator for the region of Kilkis increased to some extent in 2016, at a level of 1.48 children per woman which is higher than the national average (1.38). Among the regions of Central Macedonia, the region of Kilkis had the highest crude rate of net migration in 2016 (13.6), while before 2016 it was at the level of 2.2.

As regards the economy's production, in the period 2006-2016, Central Macedonia contributed 14% at average to the Greek Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Region of Thessaloniki, as the engine of economic growth, contributed the most (65%) to the GDP of Central Macedonia, while region of Kilkis produced 4% (EUR 1,046 million) of this GDP.

The economic crisis of 2008 significantly affected Central Macedonia, as well as the region of Kilkis. In the period before the crisis (2005-2007), the region of Kilkis had the average GDP rate of 7.13%, while in contrast to this, during the period 2008-2013 GDP of this area was - 5.3% on average. In the last few years (2014-2016), the average GDP rate increased by 0.7%.

Central Macedonia is constantly lagging behind the national average in terms of GDP per capita. In 2016, GDP per capita of this area was EUR 15,400, which corresponds to 53% of the average GDP per capita in EU28. During the period 2004-2016, the region of Kilkis recorded GDP per capita below the average of Central Macedonia and in 2015 it was at 49% of the average GDP per capita in EU28.

Figure 1: Gross domestic product per capita at current market prices of the region of Kilkis, Central Macedonia and Greece



Source: Hellenic statistical authority

Region of Kilkis has a relatively large share of manufacturing sectors (22.7% in 2016) in the total Gross Value Added (GVA), which is greater than the national level. In addition, the public services have a significant share of the total GVA (22.4%), while the agricultural sector was reduced from 17.7% in 2005 to 9.2% of total GVA in 2016.

² 42.5 individuals aged 65 and over for 100 persons of working age; 33.6 national average.

Regarding the labour market situation, Central Macedonia is among the regions with the highest unemployment rate in Greece, as well as in the European Union. The unemployment rate has drastically increased during the economic crisis, from the average 9.9% during the period 2005-2007 to 18.1% for the period 2008-2014, and continued to rise in the period 2014-2017 to 25.5%. The unemployment rate in this area reached 22.9%³ in 2017, while female unemployment rate was 28.2%.

1.2 Current stock and flows of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in the area of analysis

In early 1990s, Greece recorded a massive immigration when the majority of migrants came from Central and Eastern Europe (with the largest group of Albanians). Census data showed that the share of third-country nationals in total population significantly increased from 1.65% in 1991 to 7.27% in 2001, and reached 8.43% in 2011.⁴ According to the 2011 Census, Central Macedonia recorded near 117,000 foreign nationals (6.2% of its population), with the majority from European non-EU countries (near 60% from Albania). Out of this number, 60% had a residence in the regional unit of Thessaloniki, and only 3.4% were situated in the region of Kilkis.

The geographic location positioned Greece as the main entry and transit point to the EU during the refugee crisis of 2015⁵, which recorded almost one million (911,471) irregular entries and stays in 2015 of the incoming third-country nationals coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, but from other countries as well.

The area of Central Macedonia, in particular the region of Kilkis, located along the border of Greece and North Macedonia, was heavily affected by a large influx of refugees transiting through Greece on the way to other EU countries. At the end of 2014, several hundred people were already gathering in the local community Idomeni near the border, attempting to cross the border with North Macedonia. The number of people was quickly increasing until the situation become critical in August 2015, when around 9,000 people were stuck at the border in extremely difficult living conditions, due to the closure of the border for the first time.

³Eurostat (2018) News release 73/2018 Unemployment in EU regions in 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2FFZMsH> (accessed 30 March 2019).

⁴ Fouskas, T., Hatzopoulos, V., Grigoriou, P., Karabelias, G., Tsobanoglou, G., de Maio, A., Kazanas, K., and Mine, M., (2018). European Migration Network: Focused study 2018: Labour market integration of third country nationals in EU Member States. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/Hellenic Ministry for Migration Policy/European Commission/European Migration Network.

⁵ The Hellenic Police (2015). Statistics on illegal entry and stay: <https://bit.ly/2vbYMZ3> and <https://bit.ly/2OBkv4u>.

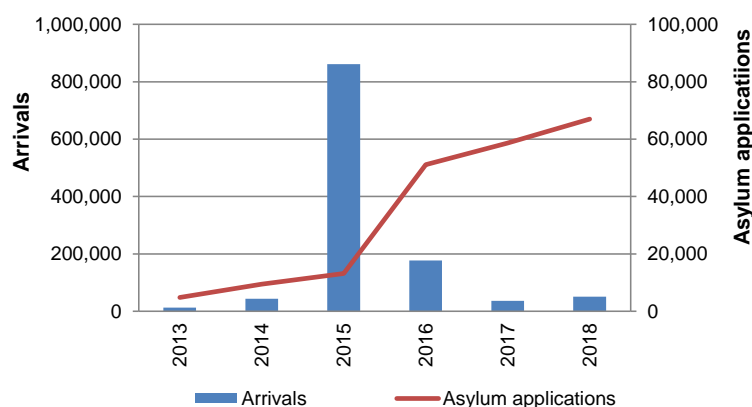
According to UNHCR data, between 1 July 2015 and end of December 2015, 687,047 people crossed the border area between Idomeni and Gevgelija.⁶

In November 2015, the countries on the “Balkan route” allowed entry to people coming from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan that was followed by the closure of this route and the EU-Turkey agreement in March 2016. Those events created pressure on Greece to deal with a high number of people stuck in Central Macedonia and other regions as well. This was reflected in the decrease in the number of arrivals in Greece and the significant increase in asylum applications (Figure 2).

From 2015 until the end of 2018, a total of 1,125,715 arrivals were recorded in Greece, out of which 76.5% were in 2015. The number of arrivals between 2015 and 2017 sharply decreased (95%), and then in 2018 it was increased compared to the previous year (at the level of 5.9% of the number of arrivals in 2015). In 2015 and 2016, the sea border, mainly the Eastern Aegean islands, was a major entry point (almost all arrivals by sea), whereas the number of arrivals through the land border (Evros region) started to increase from 18% in 2017 to 35.6% in 2018.

Contrary to the declining trend of the number of arrivals after the EU-Turkey deal, there was a sharp rise in asylum applications. Between 2015 and 2018, 189,852 asylum applications were submitted to the Greek Asylum Service, with the highest number recorded in 2018 (66,970).

Figure 2: Number of land and sea arrivals and the number of asylum applications



Source: UNHCR data, available at: <https://bit.ly/2HMT1JQ>, <https://bit.ly/2HPyHaR> and <https://bit.ly/2q47UKZ>

In Greece, there is a strong difference between distributions of asylum seekers across the territory. For example, in 2018, asylum seekers were mainly registered in four regions: the Northern Aegean/Voreio Aigaio (42%), the Attika (22.3%), the East Macedonia and Thrace (11.6%) and the region of Central Macedonia (11.0%), as presented in Annex IV. When

⁶ M. Anastasiadou, A. Marvakis, P. Mezidou, and M. Speer (2017) From transit hub to dead end. A Chronicle of Idomeni, Bordermonitoring.eu. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UzIK6q>.

looking at the proportion of applications compared to the total regional population, enormous pressure is on the Northern Aegean compared to other regions since the asylum claims were registered exclusively on the islands from 20 March 2016 to 11 June 2017⁷. As a result, the total number of asylum applications was equal to 31.8% of the Northern Aegean population in the period 2015-2018.

In regard to Central Macedonia, the number of asylum applications in this period was equal to 1.5% of its population, which is slightly below the national level (1.8%). There were 27,594 asylum applications submitted in Central Macedonia in the period 2015-2018. The rising trend in asylum claims was recorded after the EU-Turkey agreement, as noticed at the national level. In 2016, there were 11,410 asylum seekers, compared to 1,190 in the year before. Later, the number of asylum seekers continued to increase to above 7,000 in 2017 and 2018.

The statistics on foreigners apprehended for irregular entry or stay shows that, from 2015 until the second half of 2018, 22,467 persons arrived in Central Macedonia, out of which around 2,600 in the region of Kilkis (at the average 650 per year).⁸

Concerning the number of persons situated in Central Macedonia, in September 2018, approximately 9,600 individuals were located in this area. Namely, during this month, there were 4,271 persons accommodated in open reception facilities, out of which 765 persons in Nea Kavala camp in the region of Kilkis.⁹ In addition, there were 370 persons living in apartments provided by EKKA, and near 5,000 in accommodation provided by UNHCR through ESTIA program (571 in Kilkis).¹⁰

There is no available data on characteristics of asylum seekers at the regional level (NUTS2), however, the national data can be used as a proxy. In the period 2015-2018, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan are the main countries of origin of asylum seekers. Statistical data of the Greek Asylum Service show that asylum claims from Albania are constantly among the top six countries of origin, and the number of asylum applications from Turkey rose significantly between 2016 and 2018 (from 189 to 4,834). Asylum seekers are mostly men, aged between 18 and 34 (50.0% in 2018) with a significant proportion of children aged below 14 (24.3% in 2018). In the period 2015-2018, an average of 3.7% of all asylum claims came from unaccompanied minors.

⁷ Hellenic Republic Ministry of Migration Policy. Press Release: Four years since the Asylum Service became operational. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2vfRGTF>.

⁸ Hellenic Police (2018). Statistical data on illegal entry and stay. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2TtZVIG> and <https://bit.ly/2J4kiIH>.

⁹ UNHCR (2018). Site profile for Greece, Aug-Sep-2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UiXMNj>.

¹⁰ EKKA (2018) Accommodation Capacity for UAM, September 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Uhxdb3>, and UNHCR (2018) UNHCR ESTIA Accommodation Capacity, September 2018. Available at <https://bit.ly/2C3dV25>.

As regards the recognised refugees and subsidiary protection in Greece, the average recognition rate¹¹ was 43% in the period 2015-2018. During this time, 28,030 persons received refugee status and 4,220 were granted subsidiary protection. There was a significant increase in the number of positive decisions on asylum claims in 2017 and 2018 compared to previous years. In the same period there were 44,543 inadmissible decisions and 22,151 withdrawals of asylum claims.

1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts

Challenges

A large-scale inflow of third-country nationals of mid-2015 poses governmental, economic and social challenges across Greece, especially in the Northern and Eastern Aegean island, the Attika region, border regions Central Macedonia and the East Macedonia and Thrace.

There is a high pressure on the Greek reception system. The unprecedented number of arrivals in 2015, the introduction of border restrictions and later the closure of the Western Balkan route in March 2016 caused issues concerning reception of asylum seekers in Greece. At that time, about 50,000 third-country nationals were stuck in Greece where the national and local authorities had a limited capacity to provide an adequate humanitarian response. In mainland, the majority of camps have not been officially established, that results in the lack of central site management by the government.¹²

The overcrowding and poor living conditions of the camps in Aegean islands and many mainland camps are on-going challenges. The most urgent situation is in overcrowded reception and identification facilities (RICs) in Aegean islands. For instance, in July 2018, 7,569 migrants were situated in and around the Moria centre (Lesvos) that has capacity of 3,100 places.¹³

The region of Kilkis was most affected from August 2015 until May 2016, when several thousand (at one point around 23,000) third-country nationals were situated in informal camps in Idomeni, stuck on the Greek-North Macedonian border. During May 2016, this informal camps were evacuated and people were moved to different reception facilities in Kilkis and

¹¹ According to the Greek Asylum Service, calculation of recognition rate was based only on decisions in substance (Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection, Negative in substance).

¹² Refugee.Info (2018). Blog: Accommodation shortage in Greece: Why it's happening, July 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2OnvXzV>.

¹³ Ekathimerini.com (2018). News: Greek gov't planning new approach to migration crisis, July 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2O1TjeV>.

across Central Macedonia (Cherso; Nea Kavala, Diavata, Giannitsa and Veria), most of them with very poor infrastructure and a lack of opportunities to apply for asylum or relocation.¹⁴

There is pressure on public service delivery to asylum seekers and refugees. During the refugee crisis, there was an increasing need for hiring new employees (e.g. asylum officers, social workers, doctors, nurses, policemen, translators, teachers, etc.). Since Greece froze recruitment of public civil servants, due to the economic crisis, new employees were engaged only on short-term bases. This has put pressure on service delivery to asylum seekers and refugees, especially in the Aegean islands.

Another challenge is the labour market integration of asylum seekers, refugees and persons with subsidiary protection. They faced several obstacles in accessing labour market, such as: difficulties in obtaining the provision of Tax Registration Number which is needed for the registration with the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), high unemployment rates in Greece, language barrier, etc.¹⁵ The problem of registration in OAED is overcome in 2018, since the certificate issued by temporary accommodation facilities or certificate of residence in a concession or concession contract are now accepted as a proof of residence of unemployed asylum seekers/refugees. However, there are still many other obstacles.

Different studies on labour market integration show that the third-country nationals usually work in an informal economy that is characterized by low wage jobs, without proper social security and labour law protection.¹⁶ They are mainly engaged in low-skilled jobs as manual labour, construction, crafts, agriculture, cleaning, etc. In addition, the unemployment rate for foreigners is much higher than this rate for nationals (23.4%; 18.0%, respectively for 3rd Quarter of 2018).¹⁷

The labour market integration of asylum seekers, refugees and persons with subsidiary protection is even more challenging in the regions lagging behind. Central Macedonia is one of them, with labour market significantly affected by the economic crisis of 2008. In the 3rd Quarter of 2018, the unemployment rate for this region was 20.1%, which was higher than the national level (18.3%). However, asylum seekers and refugees have an even higher unemployment rate than local citizens.

Financial Impact

¹⁴ M. Anastasiadou, A. Marvakis, P. Mezidou, and M. Speer (2017) From transit hub to dead end. A Chronicle of Idomeni, Bordermonitoring.eu. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UzIK6q>

¹⁵ Asylum Information Database (2018). Country Report: Greece. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2G5vKP2>.

¹⁶ Fouskas, T., Hatzopoulos, V., Grigoriou, P., Karabelias, G., Tsobanoglou, G., de Maio, A., Kazanas, K., and Mine, M., (2018). European Migration Network: Focused study 2018: Labour market integration of third country nationals in EU Member States. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/Hellenic Ministry for Migration Policy/European Commission/European Migration Network.

¹⁷ Hellenic Statistical Authority, Labour Force Survey (2018). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2DVZrIX>.

The refugee crisis has produced different financial, economic, social, political and institutional impacts on host areas across Greece. There is no available data that reflect the impact of asylum seekers and refugee flows on public revenues, while most of the interlocutors indicated that this impact is neutral in the country. On the other side, the effect on public spending is evident. According to the Ministry of Migration Police, the estimated costs of public spending for 2016 was about 0.3% of GDP (approximately EUR 600 million), with more than half of this spent on open reception facilities and first reception facilities.¹⁸ In 2015, Greece spent 0.17% of GDP (EUR 300 million) as stated by the International Monetary Fund.¹⁹

Different donors provided humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in Greece among which the European Commission was the main contributor. For instance, from 2016 to 2018, a total amount of EUR 644.5 million was granted by the Emergency Support Instrument (ESI), out of which 42% (EUR 273 million) was allocated to the shelter & settlement (including rental accommodation under ESTIA program).²⁰ A total amount of EUR 25 million under the ESI funding was allocated to education in emergency, as well as EUR 32 million to healthcare provision in Greece. The majority of projects (21 out of 29 projects) funded under ESI were implemented in the area of Central Macedonia. The European Commission provided support through various other instruments such as: UCPM, AMIF, ISF, EUSF, ESF, ERDF, FEAD, and the Health Programme.

As regards to regional and local public spending, the local and regional authorities that received most of the refugee influx experienced pressure to their budget due to provision of reception and integration services (e.g. a health care, social services, housing services), as well as of basic infrastructure for reception facilities such as electricity, water and waste.

Economic impact

The economic benefit of asylum seekers and refugee flows depends on their labour market participation. There is no labour market statistics on the number of asylum seekers and refugees that are employed, unemployed or inactive in Greece. However, previous research and studies show that foreigners are facing a higher unemployment rate than local citizens, they often work in informal economy and in low wage jobs.²¹

¹⁸ Yannis Stourmaras (2015). Power point presentation "The impact of the refugee crisis on the Greek and wider EU economy", presented on ECB General Council Meeting, 17 December 2015.

¹⁹ Greek Reporter (2016). News: IMF: Refugees Cost Greece €300 Million in 2015, January 2016. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2ROI3DH>.

²⁰ EU Commission (2018), DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Dh7EQ3>.

²¹ Fouskas, T., Hatzopoulos, V., Grigoriou, P., Karabelias, G., Tsobanoglou, G., de Maio, A., Kazanas, K., and Mine, M., (2018). European Migration Network: Focussed study 2018: Labour market integration of third country nationals in EU Member States. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/Hellenic Ministry for Migration Policy/European Commission/European Migration Network

On the other hand, the asylum seekers and refugee flows influenced the increase of workers operating in government's authority, international and local non-governmental organizations that provide different support to asylum seekers and refugees. For instance, 4,139 social workers were employed in refugee-hosting structures through two social work projects funded by the European Social Fund and the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization fund.²²

In addition, areas that received large number of asylum seekers and refugees experienced a negative impact on tourism (e.g. Aegean islands). Also, the cross-border areas of Greece (e.g. Kilikis region) had disruptions in the cross-border trade.

Social impact

A large-scale inflow of asylum seekers and refugees since 2015 influenced the net migration change in Greece. Among EU Member States, Greece recorded the highest number of first-time applicants per capita in 2017 (5,295 first-time applicants per million inhabitants). This indicator of first-time applicants per million inhabitants was at level of 4,625 in 2016 and 1,047 in 2015.²³ In accordance with this, Greece crude rate of net migration increased significantly from -4.1 to 1.0 between 2015 and 2016. In the case of the region of Kilikis, this rate was changed enormously from 2.2 to 13.6.

The negative social impact was present in regions with the highest asylum seekers and refugee population in Greece. For example, there were social tensions and protests of asylum seekers against the regime of geographical restriction on the Aegean islands, overcrowded and inhuman conditions in the reception and identification centers and open reception facilities in mainland. Very high number of hosted refugees per inhabitant in the Aegean islands resulted in social tensions among right-wing and left-wing activists.²⁴ From August 2015 until May 2016, several protests were organized in Idomeni (Kilikis region) by third-country nationals who were demanding to be allowed to cross the border and continue their movement along the Western Balkan route.

Hand in hand with the increase of social tensions, the public opinion obtained a large percentage of negative perceptions toward immigrants. The special Eurobarometer survey 469 on "Integration of immigrants in the European Union" shows that the majority of Greeks (more than 70%) believe that immigrants are a burden on welfare system, worsen the crime problem in the country, and take jobs away from Greek workers.²⁵

²² Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media (2018) Newsletter: On the Refugee-Migration, Issue No 2, June 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2nKvGf2>.

²³ Eurostat news release (2016, 2017, 2018). Asylum in the EU Member States. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2rFprv5>, <https://bit.ly/2SIImMGA>, <https://bit.ly/2u9hZMU>.

²⁴ The Telegraph (2018) News: Migrants on Greek island of Lesbos attacked by far-Right extremists shouting 'burn them alive', April 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2P85NT8>.

²⁵ Special Eurobarometer 469 (2017). Integration of immigrants in the European Union. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2TBgejU>.

1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees

Legal framework and reception policy

As a response to the large-scale arrivals of 2015, the European Commission developed the “hotspot approach” as a way to assist EU Member States along the external EU border (Italy and Greece). Five hotspots in the Eastern Aegean islands of Lesbos, Kos, Chios, Samos and Leros were established by the Joint Ministerial Decision, under the legal form of First Reception Centres (now Reception and Identification Centres - RIC).²⁶

After the activation of the EU-Turkey Statement on 20 March 2016, the Law 4375/2016²⁷ was adopted, which modified Greek asylum system by regulating the functioning of Asylum Service, Appeals Authority and modifying the First Reception Service into Reception and Identification Services (RIS). According to this Law 4375/2016, five hotspot facilities (RIC) have turned into detention centres. At the beginning, newly arrived persons were not allowed to leave RIC in the Aegean islands until their case is examined according to a fast-track border procedure. In 2017, the restriction of movement has been replaced by the so-called geographical restriction, limiting asylum seekers’ freedom of movement to the respective island. In 2018, the new Law 4540/2018²⁸ was adopted which provides the possibility of geographical restrictions on the movements of asylum seekers by a decision of the Asylum Service. As a consequence, Greek islands face overcrowding of reception facilities with critical living conditions, as well as increase of social tensions among communities and between asylum seekers.

In addition to the RICs, the Greek authorities also provide open reception facilities (camps) across Greece. As of September 2018, there were 28 open reception facilities (26 in mainland, two in islands) run by different administrative authorities, mainly Hellenic Army, Ministry of Migration Policy and RIS, but also regional and local governments. Only a few have been officially established under RIS, while others are run under emergency modalities.²⁹ Conditions in most of those facilities are not suitable for long-term accommodation. As of September 2018, 4,271 persons were staying in eight open reception facilities in Central Macedonia, out of which 765 in Nea Kavala camp in Kilkis.³⁰

²⁶ The first reception centre was established in Fylakio (Evros region) in March 2013. This RIC was not included in the “hotspot approach”, which means that people arriving through the Evros border are not subject to the EU-Turkey Statement and the fast-track border procedure.

²⁷ L 4375/2016, Gov. Gazette 51/A/3-4-2016. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2kKm2cu>.

²⁸ L 4540/2018, Gov. Gazette 91/A/22-5-2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2DrYq3P>.

²⁹ UNHCR (2018). Site profile for Greece, Aug-Sep-2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UiXMNj>.

³⁰ Ibid.

The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) is a referral network of accommodation centres run by EKKA and several NGOs (ARSIS, Praksis, Nostos, Iliaktida, Metadrasi, Hellenic Red Cross, Medical Intervention, etc.). Around 70% of total places are dedicated to unaccompanied minors. There is no sufficient number of available places in the EKKA network for asylum seekers and there is a waiting list for placement in those centres.³¹ European Commission stated in the Country Report on Greece 2019 that “adequate housing remains a major challenge and it is estimated that there are twice as many unaccompanied minors awaiting a place in a shelter as places currently available”.³² As of December 2018, 445 places were available for unaccompanied minors in Central Macedonia.

In addition, accommodation places are provided by UNHCR through the ESTIA programme funded by the EU. This UNHCR accommodation scheme is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Migration Policy through the partnership with nine NGOs (Praksis, Nostos, Catholic Relief Services, Iliaktida, Solidarity Now, Arsis, Intersos, Terre des Hommes, OMNES) and 10 local self-governments in Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki, Trikala, Livadia, Larissa, Nea Philadelphia - Nea Chalkidona, Karditsa, Tripoli, Piraeus and a consortium of municipalities in Crete). As of December 2018, in total 5,245 refugees and asylum seekers have benefitted from the UNHCR accommodation scheme in Central Macedonia, out of which 650 in Kilkis. This UNHCR accommodation scheme was implemented in Kilkis under the partnership of Iliaktida and OMNES Voluntary Organisation until 2019 when OMNES started to cooperate directly with UNHCR.

Since the mid-2015, there were several informal camps settled across Greece. The largest informal camp was set up in Idomeni near the Greece-North Macedonia border. Hundreds of third-country nationals seeking international protection were living in informal settlements in the area of Mytilene (Lesvos), Athens, Piraeus and Patras. Most of the informal settlements were cleared and people were moved to official camps or situated under the UNHCR and EKKA accommodation scheme. However, there are still persons living outside the Greek reception system.

Other policies

In the previous period, Greece was lacking an overall integration strategy targeting asylum seekers and refugees. As a consequence of the refugee inflow, the Ministry of Migration Policy prepared the “National Integration Strategy” for refugees and immigrants that was adopted in July 2018 by the Governmental Council of Social Policy. The new strategy

³¹ Asylum Information Database (2018). Country Report: Greece. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2vQXrWS>

³² European Commission (2019), Country Report Greece 2019. Available at <https://bit.ly/2HeCnAX>.

highlights the role of local and regional authorities in shaping the integration policies and implementation of these policies along with the inclusion of local communities.³³

In addition, The National Strategic Reference Framework (2014-2020) includes actions of integrations of asylum seekers and refugees in the area of housing, employment, education and health. These actions are aimed at providing better housing conditions, ensuring a decline of school dropouts, improving the provision of health and welfare services, providing individual empowerment, vocation trainings and mentoring, as well as increasing employment and social entrepreneurship.³⁴

At the local level, few municipalities developed an integrated action plan for asylum seekers and refugees, among which the city of Thessaloniki (Integrated Action Plan for Integration of Refugees Municipality of Thessaloniki) and Athens (A Strategic Action Plan for Refugee and Migrant Integration of the Athens).

Furthermore, there are several sectoral policies/programmes focused on the following areas:

Cash assistance: Multipurpose cash assistance is provided to asylum seekers and refugees through the ESTIA program, funded by the European Commission. UNHCR works with the Greece Cash Alliance partners the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Catholic Relief Services. According to the interviews, it is currently under discussion how to integrate ESTIA beneficiaries into the national Social Solidarity Income programme run by the Greek Government. In January 2019, 63,853 asylum seekers and refugees received cash assistance.³⁵

Health care: PHILOS programme (Emergency health response to refugee crisis) is aimed at ensuring the sanitary and psychosocial needs of people living in the open camps in mainland Greece (Attica, Northern and Central Greece), Eastern Aegean islands and Dodecanese. This programme is implemented by the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELPNO) and funded by the European Commission (AMIF). In the Greek mainland, the primary health care is provided in cooperation with NGOs active in this field (Doctors Without Borders, Red Cross, Doctors of the World, The World Health Organization, etc.), while in the five RICs in islands, KEELPNO is the main provider of these services.³⁶

³³ Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media (2018) Newsletter: On the Refugee-Migration Issue No 3, August 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2FCuXVU>.

³⁴ Hatzopoulos, V., Fouskas, T., Grigoriou, P., Karabelias, G., Kazanas, K., Mine, M., de Maio, A., Novak, C. and Pechlidi, G. (2017). European Migration Network: Annual Report 2017 on Migration and Asylum in Greece: National Report: Part 2. Athens: European Public Law Organization (EPLO)/Hellenic Ministry for Migration Policy/European Commission/European Migration Network. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Tsvm6k>.

³⁵ UNHCR (2019), Cash Assistance Update: January 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2tSxAgF>.

³⁶ Website of the PHILOS programme, available at: <https://bit.ly/2KIn2Xq>.

Education for the children: Since 2016, The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs has implemented the refugee education programme for all children aged between 4 and 15.³⁷ New refugee pupils attend an afternoon educational twenty-hour training program (called Reception Structures for Refugee Children Education). In addition, there is also a more intensive program of the Greek language, alongside standard class lessons (the Reception Classes). Both classes have been organized in public schools, neighbouring camps or places of their residence. In total 7,316 refugee children were enrolled in an education program during the school year of 2017-2018. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs runs the programme “European Qualifications Passport for Refugees”.

Language courses: Since 2018, there is a Greek language program targeting refugees and migrants of over 15 years of age. In addition, language courses are provided within the pilot project HELIOS (Hellenic Integration System). This project is related to migrant and refugee integration run by the Ministry of Migration Policy, the municipality of Thebes and Livadeia and IOM. Beside language courses, this project provides services such as psychosocial support, vocational guidance and registration of skills.

Labour market integration: The Hellenic Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) is the main actor in providing access to labour market integration for asylum seekers and refugees. In order to access the labour market, refugees should hold a valid residence permit, while asylum seekers should have their application registered and a valid asylum card.

The main actor of the asylum seekers’ and refugees’ integration policies

Numerous actors have been involved in policies and interventions aimed at supporting the reception and integration processes of asylum seekers and refugees in Greece.

There are three national bodies in charge of asylum procedures: the Asylum Service (First instance procedure); the Appeals Authority (first appeal) and Administrative Court of Appeal (Second/onward appeal). In respect of the reception services, Reception and Identification Service provides: registration, identification and data verification procedures, medical examination, identification of vulnerable groups, provision of information related to protection and return procedures, temporary accommodation and further referral to competent services for their further administration procedures.³⁸

European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has an important role within the fast-track border application procedure that is applied to applicants subject to the EU-Turkey statement in the Reception and Identification Centres established under the “hotspot approach” (Lesvos,

³⁷ Asylum Information Database (2018). Country Report: Greece. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2G5vKP2>

³⁸ Hellenic Republic Ministry of Migration Policy. Website of the Reception and Identification Services. Available at: <http://firstreception.gov.gr>.

Chios, Samos, Leros, and Kos). Other EU Agencies such as Frontex, Europol, and Eurojust work with the national authorities in Greece on identification, reception or return procedure.

Other national and bureaucratic actors involved in humanitarian protection are: the Ministry of Migration Policy, the Central Operational Migration Body (KEPOM) (manage the process of migration); the Ministry of Interior, the Hellenic Police (security, identification and verification of nationality of new arrivals); the Ministry of National Defence, National Coordination Centre for Border Control, Immigration and Asylum (coordination of agencies at national level); the Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications & Media (communication), Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity (social protection of asylum seekers and refugees, particularly vulnerable groups); the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (education); the Ministry of Economy and Development (investments in the regions that are affected by refugee crisis); the Ministry of Health; the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELPNO) (healthcare); the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) (reception); the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) (access to labour market); the National Statistics Offices (data collection), etc.

Regional authorities that have been most affected by inflows of asylum seekers (e.g. the Regional Authority of the Northern Aegean) and their Association of Greek Regions have collaborated with different national and international actors in providing an adequate response to refugee inflow. The Migrant Integration Councils, from the municipalities where large asylum seekers and refugees are concentrated (e.g. Athens, Thessaloniki) have an active role in informing the local government about problems faced by migrants, advising about the actions aimed at the integration of the migrants, and assisting migrants in accessing the municipal services.³⁹ Several local governments have provided temporary accommodation to asylum seekers and refugees, vocational training as well as social and healthcare services. Many international organisations and local NGOs are active in supporting asylum seekers and refugees by providing cash, accommodation, legal support, healthcare, etc. A detailed list of the actors is presented in Annex II (Table 5).

³⁹ Anagnostou, Dia & Kontogianni, Aimilia & Skleparis, Dimitris & Tzogopoulos, Giorgos. (2016). Local Government and Migrant Integration in Greece. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2MXtqwU>.

2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges

2.1 Topic and motivation

Kilkis is a small city located 40 km from the Greek border with the Republic of North Macedonia. In November 2015, when Croatia, Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia decided to close their borders and modify their entry conditions, thousands of asylum seekers ended up being stranded in the surrounding areas. They stayed in informal and formal camps with inhuman conditions, lacking the basic needs. Capitalising on previous hospitality practices of the country in welcoming displaced populations, families in Kilkis stepped in to provide asylum seekers with water, food, clothes, and hygiene products and medical care, and opened their doors to asylum seekers. A three-step pilot project was implemented by the OMNES volunteer association. The project aimed to provide dignified housing for the vulnerable groups, support income and skills generating activities to promote social and economic inclusion of the asylum seekers as well as the development of the local area. The OMNES initiative is known as an outstanding example of supporting asylum seekers in the inclusive approach.⁴⁰

2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention

As of 2014, the municipality of Kilkis, situated near the Greece-North Macedonia border, became a gateway on the Balkan route for third-country nationals trying to reach Western Europe to seek humanitarian protection. At the end of 2014, several hundred people were already gathering in Idomeni, a small bordering village of 154 inhabitants, attempting to cross the border with the Republic of North Macedonia. During the second half of 2015, almost 700,000 people passed through Idomeni.⁴¹ In March 2016, after the closure of this route and the EU-Turkey agreement, 23,000 third-country nationals ended up being stranded in the region of Kilkis that have 80,419 inhabitants. In response to this emergency situation, two military-run camps were opened (Cherso and Nea Kavala), each hosting 4,000 persons. In addition, there were three informal camps that temporarily hosted 15,000 persons.

A group of volunteers was invited by the municipality of Kilkis to help in Cherso camp. Having realized that emergency response was inadequate, the group of volunteers found an alternative way to respond to the refugee crisis. In a short period of time, this group of people succeeded in hosting 75 families from Cherso camp in the houses of the local population in Kilkis. The group has started to mobilize donations and international funds to cover the rents,

⁴⁰ Fontana Valenti, C. (2018). Refugee reception and housing practices in Greece. Notes from a workshop on inclusiveness and development planning. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2K28JSq>.

⁴¹ M. Anastasiadou, A. Marvakis, P. Mezidou, and M. Speer (2017) From transit hub to dead end. A Chronicle of Idomeni, [Bordermonitoring.eu](http://bordermonitoring.eu). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UzIK6q>.

utility costs, as well as to provide clothing, hygiene kits and vouchers for hosted people. In October 2016, this group of volunteers established a non-governmental grassroots organization called OMNES⁴² Voluntary Association (OMNES).

OMNES aims to provide an inclusive and integrated programme for asylum seekers and refugees through a human-centered and rights-based approach. Their initiative is seeking a sustainable locally based solution which is beneficial for asylum seekers and refugees, but also the local population of the region of Kilkis.

OMNES' programme is composed of three pillars:

- Housing programme. OMNES has focused on the provision of dignified housing for asylum seekers and refugees, mostly families and vulnerable groups, in two municipalities of the region of Kilkis (Kilkis and Paionia). This housing programme is run under the UNCHR ESTIA programme, funded by the European Commission (European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid).
- Social Inclusion Centre. As stated by OMNES, their initiative goes beyond just housing people. "This is about inclusion, this is about rebuilding people's lives in times of social crises". Therefore, as a complement to the housing project, OMNES has established an inclusion centre that provides different service support to asylum seekers, refugees, and local vulnerable groups. Social Inclusion Centre is a platform for community engagement, funded by the Help Refugees.
- Livelihood. This component is currently under development, and it will be based on the social and solidarity economy. OMNES is developing an social-economic initiative based on local resources and development potentials through the use of new technologies and concepts, such as organic agriculture and organic clothing.

OMNES has faced several social and economic challenges related to the development of the region of Kilkis that might affect the programme implementation. Specifically, the economic crisis significantly affected the development of Kilkis that faces a high unemployment rate, a high outflow of younger population, and the decline of local businesses. Moreover, there is a significant percentage of far-right voters (13.05%), and a lack of social and healthcare services (only one hospital).

In order to overcome these challenges, OMNES communicated with the local population by arguing that the arrival of asylum seekers and refugees will bring benefits to local community, such as the inflow of the EU and international funds, the investments in public hospital, the boost of local businesses, as well as the increase of rental income for citizens. OMNES also counted on the refugee roots of a large percentage of population of Kilkis which were forced to move to Kilkis, during the population change between Greece and Turkey in 1923.

2.3 The actors

OMNES is the main actor in asylum seekers' and refugees' inclusion into the region of Kilkis. In regards to the provision of accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees, OMNES has

⁴² "Omnes" is the latin word that means all people or everyone.

established cooperation with UNHCR, as its housing programme has been run under the UNCHR ESTIA programme. Since its establishment until the end of 2018, OMNES collaborated with UNHCR through the partnership with Iliaktida AMKE, and as of January 2019, OMNES has become a UNHCR's direct accommodation partner.

OMNES has intensive cooperation with the inter-municipal development agency of the regional unit of Kilkis. This regional agency coordinates communication and activities between OMNES and the municipality of Kilkis and the municipality of Paionia.

In regard to the inclusion centre, the Help Refugees is the main partner that 100% has financed the work of OMNES legal department. In addition, the Help Refugee funded the accommodation provision of local vulnerable families in 10 housing units. OMNES legal department communicates with the Thessaloniki Regional Asylum Office.

In the area of children's access to education, OMNES collaborates with local schools and the Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia by acting as a mediator between asylum seekers, refugees and educational actors. In addition, OMNES communicates with the local hospital that provides healthcare service to asylum seekers and refugees included in the housing programme, as well as with Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELPNO).

Language and vocational courses are provided in cooperation with various actors: INTERSOS (IT certificates); Epimorfotiki LLL Center (certified training exams for ECDL); Lifelong Learning Center (Greek Intensive courses); Goethe Institut in Greece (German classes); Thessaloniki University Pontian studies (Pontian Dialect course); Red Cross (Red Cross trainings); Terre des Hommes (Translation & Interpreting Training Course); as well as with the Centre of Greek Language in collaboration with BLUE Refugee Centre, Solidarity Now (Greek Language Examination), and etc.

The Livelihood component of OMNES' initiative has been developing in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and the Agricultural Association of Kilkis, along with the Clothing Design and Technology department of Kilkis, and other local businesses.

OMNES has various advocacy and communication activities with relevant ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Migration Policy, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and international and national organisations. Also, OMNES established good relations with non-governmental organisations (e.g. the Open Culture Centre, Clowns without Borders, Crossroads Thessaloniki, the Greek Council for Refugees, ARSIS, and Solidarity Now) and it is a member of the Greek Network for the Right to Shelter and Housing. Since its establishment, OMNES has participated in numerous national and international events, and it has communicated with the international representatives from UNHCR, ECHO, IOM, NORCAP, etc. Also, OMNES communicates with other institutions (e.g. Greek Tax Authority Office (DOY), Citizens' Service Centres (KEP), and the Kilkis Public Central Library), local businesses, local organisations, volunteers and experts (e.g. social workers, psychologists,

doctors, interpreters, teachers, lawyers). A summary of the actors and their roles are presented in Annex III Network analysis.

The following graphs represent relations of OMNES (EGO Network) with the other main actors in the programming and the implementation phases of OMNES initiative. Both programming and implementation phase involve different type of actors at international, national, regional and local level. In particular to the programming phase international, national and local public institutions are represented together with experts, special-interest and diffused interest actors working at regional level.

Figure 3: Relationship matrix – Programming phase

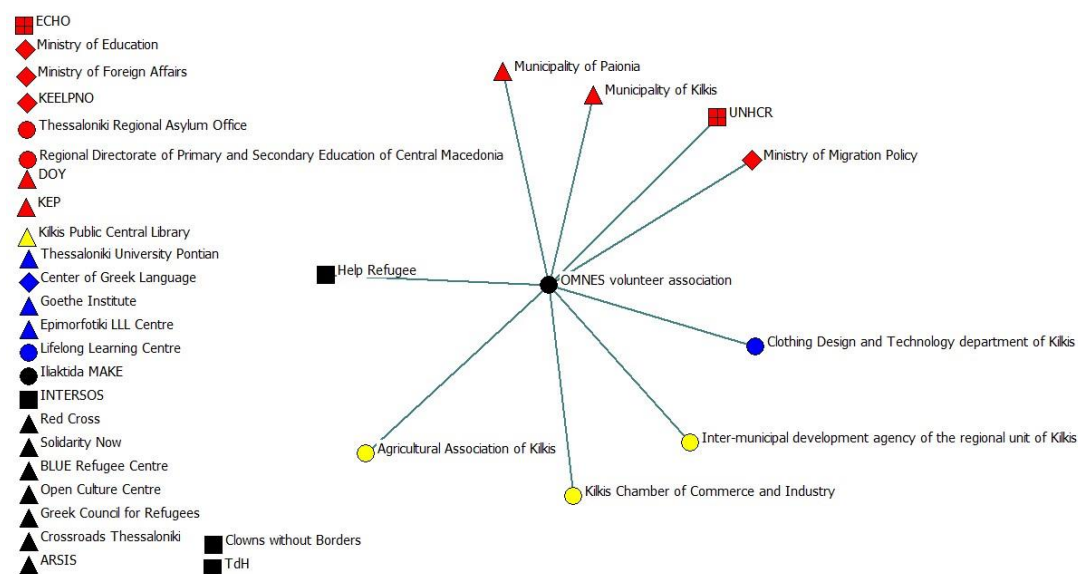
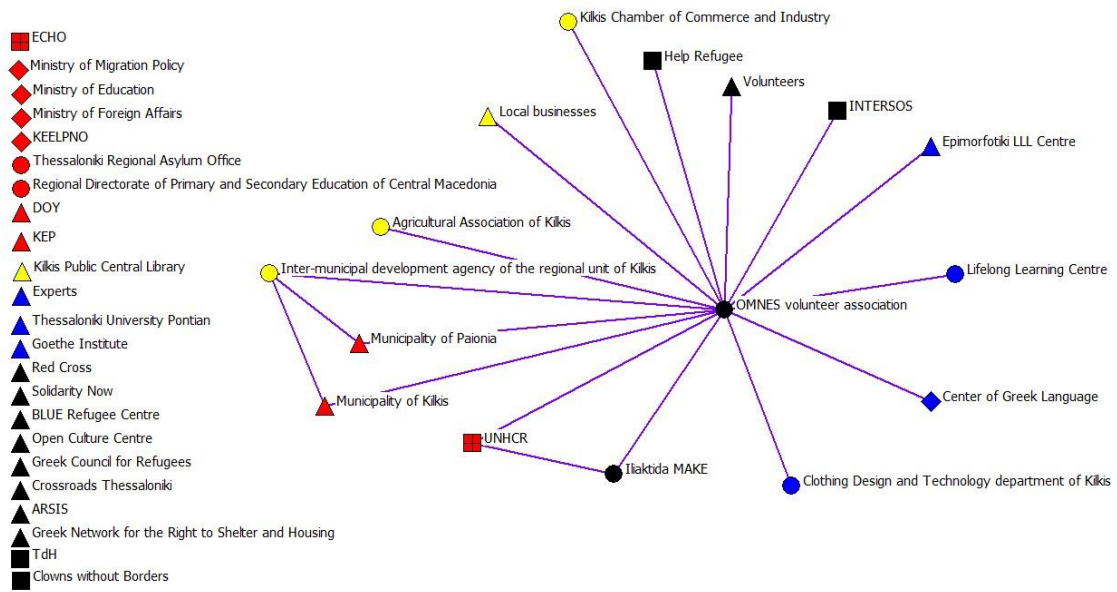


Table 1: Graph Labels

Type of actor (Colour)	Central or secondary actor based on betweenness (Dimension)	Territorial (Shape)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bureaucrats ● Politicians ● Experts ● Special Interest ● Diffused interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central actor ○ Secondary actor <p>In each graph all the actors involved in the programming or implementation phase of the project/policy are represented, even if isolated (usually top left) in one of the phases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International National Regional Local

The implementation phase involves a higher number of actors related to OMNES: they are mainly NGOs acting at different territorial level, regional experts and special interest actors.

Figure 4: Relationship matrix – Implementation phase



2.4 Implementation

OMNES work is led by a vision to promote self-reliance, peaceful coexistence, and equal opportunities for all. As of March 2019, OMNES has around 60 employees that support the implementation of three main components of OMNES initiative: housing program, social inclusion centre and livelihood.

The management structure of this organisation is as follows: OMNES Board, Project Manager, Coordination Department, Financial Department, MEAL-Communication & Networking Department, Reception/Administration, Legal Department, Medical Department, Transportation Department, Housing & Logistic Department, Psycho-Social Department, and Interpreters Department. In the centre of their effort is the provision of relevant services to each asylum seeker or refugee family that are hosted in the housing unit, with the aim to facilitate their inclusion into the local community.

The housing programme

In March 2016, the idea of the housing programme emerged as an alternative solution to hosting people in camps in mainland Greece. Realizing that a different response to the humanitarian crisis is needed, a group of volunteers from Kikis provided short-term accommodation to 75 families from nearby camp Chreso. In July 2016, this group of volunteers led the pilot housing project hosting 18 families in individual apartments in the municipality of Kikis.

During the pilot phase, OMNES developed a study that proposes a more equal distribution of asylum seekers across Greece⁴³. The number of asylum seekers per municipality was defined by taking into account various local social and economic indicators such as the number of local population, the price of renting an apartment, labour market needs, the number of hospitals and schools, etc. According to this study, the cost of hosting asylum seekers in apartments, in line with the absorption capacity of municipalities, is less expensive than the cost of their accommodation in camps.

The study results were presented to different types of stakeholders such as municipalities, national authorities, NGOs and international organizations. As a result, in November 2016, UNHCR started to support OMNES initiative in the region of Kilkis. Their housing project was included under the ESTIA programme through the partnership between OMNES and Iliakida AMKE. Since 2019 OMNES cooperates directly with UNHCR.

As of July 2018, 1,277 individuals, mostly asylum seekers have been hosted in 106 apartments in the region of Kilkis, out of which 78 in the municipality of Kilkis. Moreover, from June 2017 until February 2018, OMNES provided 10 housing units for the local families in risk of social exclusion, funded by the Help Refugees. In February 2019, 660 individuals have been hosted under this housing programme.

OMNES has developed a special management and monitoring system which displays efficiency of use of housing units in real time. The housing project boards provide basic information on individuals hosted in each housing unit, like the number of persons, gender structure, the number of children, language skills, healthcare conditions, legal status, date of entry in the programme and apartment, etc. These boards give an overview of persons responsible for the provision of services such as house supervision, social work, legal advising, nursing, and interpretation (see Annex V). The monitoring system of OMNES will be explained in details in Section 2.5.

It is important to emphasize that the hosted individuals have been accommodated in the apartments located throughout the municipality. OMNES has ensured that asylum seekers and refugees have not been situated in isolated buildings and settlements. In addition, OMNES team handles any issue that might arise from living in the apartments (e.g. noise in inappropriate hours). Thanks to OMNES management and monitoring approach that follow each housing unit, there were no major issues among the local population and asylum seekers that have been living in the same buildings.

Box 1: Results of OMNES' survey: the profile of the hosted individuals in the region of Kilkis within the housing programme

OMNES conducts the survey of the hosted asylum seekers and refugees on a regular basis. The purpose of the survey is to get a basic understanding of the profile of the hosted individuals, in order to better address their needs.

⁴³ Municipalities under 20,000 inhabitants were excluded from the calculations.

According to the results of the survey in 2018, most respondents are married (70%) and live in families that have on average three children. As for gender, there is 57% female to 43% male. Most of the hosted individuals are the following nationality: Syrian (60%), Iraqi (13.5%), Palestinian from Syria (8%), and Afghan (6.5%). Arabic is a widely spoken mother tongue among the hosted individuals (60%). Results show that 59% of all respondents speak only mother tongue, whereas 27% of them speak two languages (35% Arabic, 10% English). Individuals with primary education account for 43%, secondary education 20%, while individuals without education background amounted to 18%.

The hosted individuals positively evaluate their acceptance by the Greek community. Moreover, 80% of them stated that they have a friend in the Greek community, and the majority established multicultural friendships. However, the major difficulty in everyday life is the language barrier. Therefore 38% of respondents are learning Greek while 39% are planning to attend Greek classes.

The hosted asylum seekers and refugees are not present at the Greek labour market since only 1% of them stated that they are employed. Half of the respondents (54%) have the intention to seek work in Greece, 9% of them are physically unable to work, while 31% of them do not have the intention to work in Greece (mostly females). Although the majority of respondents are willing to work in Greece, only a small percentage of them stated that they are actually planning to stay in Greece.

An interesting fact is that the majority of surveyed individuals lived in an urban settlement in their country of residence, while they are currently situated in the small municipalities of the region of Kilkis. This is reflected in the result that almost 80% of them stated that they prefer living in an urban environment, as big as Thessaloniki, than in small municipalities as Kilkis.

Social Inclusion Centre

As complementary to the housing program, OMNES has established the social inclusion centre to ensure smooth inclusion of the hosted asylum seekers, refugees and local vulnerable groups into the communities of the region of Kilkis.

Social Inclusion Center is situated in the municipality of Kilkis and consists of several well-equipped functional spaces such as classrooms, computer lab, free Wi-Fi area, library, kitchen, counselling departments, children space, etc. This centre is run by an inclusion multisectoral team composed of 20 local professionals, majority full-time employees. Its legal department provides support to the hosted individuals in order to effectively proceed with their claims (family reunification or asylum in Greece). Moreover, social inclusion team is supporting their beneficiaries in getting a resident permit, tax registration number, social security number, unemployment card, as well as access to the educational system. The work of the legal centre is supported by the fund of the Help Refugees.

The inclusion centre offers formal and non-formal educational and vocational courses and recreational activities that are available to everyone. This centre offers Greek and English courses at beginner's level, as well as an intensive certified Greek courses (level A1, 120 hours) in collaboration with the Life Long Learning Centre. For a certain time, German language course (level A1) was available for those who were granted family reunification to Germany. This course was organized in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Griechenland.

According to OMNES experience, asylum seekers and refugees are more motivated to learn English than Greek language. In the period September - December 2017, the average number of people that attend English classes was 66, while 44 of them completed the course. In the same period, on average 55 people attended Greek language courses, and 22

completed the course. Language courses are attended by the hosted asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants (e.g. Albanians). Furthermore, the inclusion centre provides IT lessons at beginner and intermediate level, which are also attended by the local population. Thanks to collaboration with Epimorfotiki LLL Center, OMNES delivers certified training exams for ECDL. There are numerous other volunteering, mentoring and awareness-raising activities provided with the aim to ensure a holistic approach to social inclusion (e.g. health care, psychosocial support, culture, history, civic engagement, social solidarity economy). Also, the inclusion centre serves as a platform for community engagement that brings together asylum seekers, refugees and the local population by organizing cultural events.

OMNES inclusion centre is paying special attention to the situation of refugee and asylum-seeker children's access to education. In the region of Kilikis, local schools provide the program called "Reception Classes" for refugee and asylum seeker children, and afternoon educational program for new pupils in line with the education policy of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. In order to ensure equal education access to all, OMNES established a monitoring system that provides monthly data on total eligible and occupancy places per each school in the region. These monitoring data enable public schools to improve access to education for refugee and asylum-seeker children (Annex V). As a result of OMNES support and its collaboration with the local schools, the school enrolment rate of refugee and asylum-seeking children is high (87%) and the attendance rate is very good. In February 2019, 160 children residents of OMNES housing programme were enrolled in 28 public schools in the region of Kilikis.

Livelihood

Seeking a holistic response towards social inclusion, OMNES is currently piloting the livelihood component. Thereby, OMNES looks for alternative income-generating activities based on the concept of social and solidarity economy. This component is being designed to support the organic and natural primary sector production, having in mind that this sector is growing and consumer demand for organic and natural products is increasing.

One of the natural products that OMNES is piloting is a 100% compostable wheat straw that is called "Staramaki". They stated that the Greek population together with tourists dispose approximately one billion plastic straws at the annual level. On the other side, European Parliament voted for a ban of various a range of single-use plastics across the union, and in Greece, there are steps towards gradual abolishment of plastic straws.⁴⁴ Having in mind that the region of Kilikis is well-known for its production of wheat, OMNES has started to collaborate with the Agricultural Association of Kilikis to research the possibility of local

⁴⁴ Packaging insights (2019) News: Earth is our production machine: All-natural wheat straw brings hope to Syrian refugees, January 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2CnpWj0>.

production of natural wheat straw. According to the OMNES research, the processing of this straw requires just cutting and sterilization, and it excludes the use of any chemicals.

Moreover, OMNES is developing several other product lines such as organic cotton and hemp production, wheat-made plates and cups, organic clothing line, that are mainly aimed for export. For this purpose, OMNES is collaborating with the local businesses, the chamber of commerce of Kilkis and existing local scientific institutions (e.g. Clothing Design and Technology department of Kilkis, as part of the Technological Educational Institute of Central Macedonia).

The main aim is that profit from “Staramaki” and other production lines goes towards financing the housing programme of OMNES that would ensure the sustainability of this programme without depending on external funding and donations. OMNES believes that this livelihood component of their initiative will boost local economic development and create new jobs for the local population, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants.

2.5 Outcomes, impacts, and results of the specific policy

Since its establishment, OMNES has been paying close attention to accountability and transparency of its initiative. With this purpose, OMNES established a monitoring system composed of a data collection platform and graphic visualisation, which provides insight into the situation of asylum seekers' and refugees' integration, and shows the financial impact of its work on the local economy.

On a daily basis, OMNES is collecting data on the number of people that enter or exit the housing project, their demographic characteristics, legal status, as well as integration monitoring data (housing project boards, household consumption, educational monitoring, number of registered people in the inclusion centre, etc.). OMNES is using graphic visualisation as a way to communicate its results with stakeholders and the general public (Annex V).

Until March 2018, 1,164 asylum seekers and refugees have been hosted in 116 apartments in the region of Kilkis (municipality of Kilkis and Paionia), out of which 662 left the apartments. Most of them (65%) exited the programme due to their relocation, 18% due to reunification, 8.6% were transferred to other facilities, while 6.8% abandoned the accommodation. Top five destination countries are Germany (89 persons), Sweden (52 persons), France (32 persons), Finland (22 persons) and Netherlands (16 persons). In March 2018, 502 asylum seekers and refugees were accommodated in the region of Kilkis, out of which 345 in the municipality of Kilkis. OMNES monthly data for March 2018 show that 59% of the hosted persons came from Syria, 16% from Iraq and 6% from Afghanistan. The beneficiaries of OMNES housing programme are mainly families, and 57% of all beneficiaries are children. In February 2019, 660 people, mostly asylum seekers were accommodated within OMNES housing programme.

Besides, OMNES is conducting a survey with asylum seekers and refugees in order to better address their needs. The survey refers to the set of questions such as demographic background, language skills, and level of education, work experience, technical skills, residence and employment in Greece, perception of acceptance by the local community, residential preferences and future plans. A short summary of survey results is presented in the Section 2.4. OMNES is using survey results to adequately modify and plan its activities and services that support asylum seekers and refugee inclusion. This survey is conducted on a quarterly basis.

In addition, OMNES created the housing project boards as a tool to gather basic information on individuals hosted in each housing unit, and persons responsible for the provision of services to them (house supervision, social work, legal advising, nursing, and interpretation). The example of one housing project board is presented in Annex V. Numerous organisations and governmental authorities who visited OMNES have acknowledged that OMNES monitoring system of housing is an example of best practice in this field.

In order to improve the internal exchange of information and to provide data sharing with local authorities and UNHCR, OMNES developed an online platform in line with the existing form of the housing project board. This "House Capacity and Occupancy" platform gives up-to-date information regarding the hosted asylum seekers and refugees under the housing programme supported by ESTIA. As stated by OMNES this platform "gives an efficient housing provision and monitoring, currently enabling to match the housing availability with the requirements of referring partners and residents' needs as well as monitor the efficiency of the housing program at a time and to give real time information".⁴⁵ This platform has been offered to the other partners of UNHCR ESTIA programme, and it has been upgraded in a way that different housing and service providers are enabled to use it.

In regard to OMNES initiative impact, in the period from November 2016 to January 2018, OMNES attracted EUR 1,834,475 of EU funds to the region of Kilikis. Out of this, almost 40% (EUR 710,988) was spent for services of local businesses and local supermarkets, 20.8% on local employee salaries, 18.4% on insurance and taxes, 11.1% on service of general interest and 10.9% on renting 106 apartments. Until February 2019, OMNES has attracted EUR 4.63 million in the region of Kilikis. These financial data indicate that OMNES initiatives significantly contributed to the local and regional economy.

In terms of social impact, this initiative enables asylum seekers and refugees to feel accepted in the region of Kilikis, even though there is a significant percentage of far-right voters (13.05%, the Golden Dawn party). OMNES organized different social activities aimed to bring together asylum seekers, refugees and the local population. For instance, OMNES organized sports activities in cooperation with the local football club, children's events, cultural events

⁴⁵ OMNES (2018), Brief profile.

and workshops. They also organized a "Pontian Dialect Learning" classes for the local population in order to remind them of their refugee roots.

Moreover, this OMNES work might have a significant environmental and wider local economic development impact, as a result of its livelihood component and organic and natural production lines.

3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

OMNES is a grassroots association that was established by the local citizens who have built strong social bonds during several years of their social engagement in the community of Kilikis. The developed social connection among OMNES team and joint vision to respond to the humanitarian and social crisis in an alternative way, led to good results in the effectiveness and influence of its initiative. During the three years since its establishment, OMNES supported over 1,300 asylum seekers and refugees in the region of Kilikis and attracted over EUR four million in this region. OMNES supported local vulnerable groups that benefited from the services provided by Social Inclusive Centre. OMNES also supported local business and local population during the implementation of its initiative.

In addition, OMNES has become well known for its monitoring mechanism which allows communicating real facts about refugees and accommodation planning and decision making for OMNES to local authorities of the region of Kilikis. This mechanism provides the possibility for “supporting a wider integration strategy design according to local capacity and intentions expressed by the newly arrived population, could be facilitating integration of new comers while respecting service capacities of local areas and thus facilitating the overall social cohesion.”⁴⁶ It is important to say that several municipalities and regional development agencies contacted OMNES in order to apply the approach to housing asylum seekers and refugees that takes into account the local absorption capacity. One of them is Heraklion Development Agency (region of Crete) that is also a partner in UNHCR ESTIA programme.

During its work, OMNES has faced several political, social and economic challenges. Currently, OMNES is facing an issue in providing housing for recognised refugees. The Greek national welfare system does not have an operational accommodation programme for refugees since the new National Integration Strategy is waiting to be voted by the Parliament. However, the Greek Ministry of Migration Policy announced that, as of 31 March 2019, “it is expected that people hosted in the ESTIA programme for more than 18 months will begin “exiting” the programme, without provision of further accommodation”.⁴⁷ Having in mind that this situation might lead to increase of homelessness among refugees, OMNES, as well as other members of the Greek Network for the Right to Shelter and Housing released a joint declaration together with the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA). The declaration calls on the European Commission and the Greek Government to continue to host refugees under ESTIA program until an operational accommodation and integration measures are in places.

⁴⁶ OMNES (2018), Brief profile

⁴⁷ FEANTSA and the Greek Network for the Right to Shelter and Housing (2019). Declaration “A home for refugees: The need for housing throughout asylum procedures and beyond”. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2UI6fzr>.

Principle of sustainability

OMNES team is putting effort to ensure sustainability principle in its initiatives. OMNES is currently developing and testing livelihood component of its initiative with the aim to ensure the sustainability of the housing programme for asylum seekers and refugees. In this regard, OMNES piloted several organic and natural product line such as wheat straw, organic cotton, hemp production, wheat-made plates and cups, organic clothing line, agricultural products, etc. The idea is that the housing programme is funded from the profit of the social cooperatives, and at the same time to create jobs for asylum seekers, refugees and the local population.

Dispersal policy

OMNES argues that a national or regional plan should be developed to fairly distribute refugees across the country based on the absorption capacities of each community. OMNES developed a Guide Housing Refugees⁴⁸ that proposes an equal distribution per municipality in Greece. According to OMNES, the inter-municipal regional development agencies can have the main role in the implementation of dispersal policy. OMNES participated in the public consultations during the development of the “National Integration Strategy” and proposed that some of their practices scale up to the country level. The “National Integration Strategy” is adopted by the Greek government but at this moment it still pending to be adopted by the Greek Parliament. It is evident that Greece is working toward the decentralisation of reception and accommodation for refugees, as part of a national effort to bring together inclusion and development. However, the further development of this policy will depend on the political situation and upcoming elections in Greece.

Lessons learned

The following points summarise the key lessons that have been learned through the implementation of the project:

- The developed monitoring mechanism of OMNES led to effective implementation of housing programme;
- Joint vision and proactive approach of OMNES team contributed to better inclusion of asylum seeker in Kilkis community;
- The hosting asylum seekers and refugees in apartments, in line with the absorption capacity of municipalities, can have positive impact on local development.

⁴⁸ <https://www.omnes.gr/>

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List of interviewees

Type of organisation	Organisation
NGO	OMNES Voluntary Association (six interviews were conducted with various members of OMNES)
Civil society organisation	HumanRights360

List of Annexes

Annex I Impacts

Table 2: Financial impacts and their indicators - regional/local level

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Source	Regional / local***
Public revenues	Average social security contributions and taxes (payroll/business) per employed refugee ⁴⁹ ⁵⁰	No available data on the national level			Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or portion of national studies	Regional/National
Public revenues	Consumption tax on spending of refugees per refugee ⁵¹	No available data on the national level			Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or portion of national studies	National
Public spending	Spending on integration and initial reception measures ⁵² per refugee	“According to the Ministry of Immigration Policy and a report from the Bank of Greece the estimated cost of the refugee crisis to public expenditure for 2016 was about 0.3% of the country's GDP (i.e., about EUR 600 million), and 35.7% of this sum was spent on open reception facilities, 26.3% on research and rescue operations, 20.6% on first reception facilities, 8.1% on transfers, 6.5% on			Report “Impact of the Refugee Crisis on the Greek Healthcare System: A Long Road to Ithaca”, published in International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. https://bit.ly/2D8aQ1Y	National

⁴⁹ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁵⁰ Calculated by average values for the active population with a discount for immigrants from literature.

⁵¹ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁵² Housing, sustenance, language course, employment integration courses other integration courses

		<p>asylum and relocation, and 2.8% on returns.”(2016)</p> <p>The fiscal cost of refugees to Greece was EUR 300 million, or 0.17% of GDP, according to an International Monetary Fund report. (2015)</p> <p>A total amount of EUR 644.5 million was granted by the ESI for 29 project aimed at tackling the humanitarian crisis in Greece. Out of total amount of the ESI spending, 42% (EUR 273 million) was allocated to the shelter & settlement (including rental accommodation, ESTIA program included)</p> <p>Other funds: UCPM, AMIF, ISF, EUSF, ESF, ERDF, FEAD, and the Health Programme support Greece</p> <p>Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : National public spending (--) Allocated EU funds 2014-2020 (+++)</p>		<p>https://bit.ly/2ROI3DH</p> <p>EU Commission, DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union (https://bit.ly/2Dh7EQ3)</p>	
Public spending	Extra spending on integration into education system (per refugee pupil)	A total EUR 25 million under the ESI budget was allocated for education in emergency (2016-2018)		EU Commission, DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union (https://bit.ly/2Dh7EQ3)	National

Public spending	Education spending per pupil per year in country (total population ⁵³)	Data are not available at the national level			Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	National
Public spending	Health care spending per person and year in the country (total population ⁵⁴)	<p>A total EUR 32 million under the ESI budget was allocated to healthcare (2016-2018)</p> <p>Through PHILOS programme – Emergency health response to refugee crisis⁷ was allocated EUR 24,180,928, fully funded AMIF (from 2017)</p> <p>No exact cost for refugee health expenditure was made available by the Greek government.</p>			<p>EU Commission, DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union (https://bit.ly/2Dh7EQ3)</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2D8aQ1Y</p>	National
Public spending	Housing subsidies per person and year in the country (total population ⁵⁵)	<p>Income support</p> <p>A total EUR 122 million under the ESI budget was allocated to basic needs assistance through multipurpose cash transfers (at the beginning in kind and later by ESTIA multi-purpose cash scheme) (2016-2018)</p> <p>Under ESTIA program cash assistance is from EUR 90</p>			<p>EU Commission, DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union (https://bit.ly/2Dh7EQ3)</p> <p>UNHCR provides monthly statistics on the cash assistance distribution according to the number of</p>	Regional

⁵³ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁵⁴ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁵⁵ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

		<p>to EUR 150 for individuals and from EUR 330 to EUR 550 for families with 7 members</p> <p>The Social Solidarity Benefit (KEA) is introduced in February 2017. EUR 200 per month for each household, plus EUR 100 per month for each additional adult of the household and EUR 50 per month for each additional child of the household</p>			<p>beneficiaries, gender, age, origin and location (region). Data are available online: https://bit.ly/2nnIKln https://bit.ly/2m20bfF https://bit.ly/2G5vKP2</p>	
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Table 3: Economic impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data source	Regional / local** *
Employment (rate)	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (at arrival)	<p>There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive, due to the fact that there is no distinction between foreigners and those categories.</p> <p>Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : -</p>			Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (within 5 years)	<p>There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive, due to the fact that there is no distinction between foreigners and those categories.</p> <p>Assessment from the interviews</p>			Case studies Past studies	Regional

		stated in Country Fiche : -				
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (in the longer terms)	High unemployment rate of foreign nationality (35.5%), while it is 25.5% in case of people with Greek nationality (1st Quarters 2018) Asylum seekers and refugees work in informal sector (low wage works, without social security and labour law protection)	"The integration of people benefiting from international protection into Greek society and the labour market will continue to be a major challenge for Greece in the coming years" EC (2019)		European Migration Network Focused Study: Integration of Beneficiaries of International/Humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market: Policies and Good Practices. EMN Focused Study 2015 https://bit.ly/2B2eefK European Commission (2019), Country Report Greece 2019, page 33, available at https://bit.ly/2HeCnAX	Regional
	Number of workers operating in government's authority and international and local organisations	Increasing number of workers operating in government's authority and international and local organisations that deal with asylum seekers/refugee support. Through the Ministry of Labour Social work project, 4,139 social workers were employed in refugee hosting structures in support of ESF and national funds. Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : +			http://asylo.gov.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Dashboard-01.2019.jpg https://bit.ly/2nKvGf2	
Entrepreneurship	Number and proportion (% of self-employed amongst those finding a job) of new enterprises	There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive			Case studies Past studies	National

	founded by refugees ⁵⁶					
Underemployed or not employed low skill workers	Number and proportion of long-term unemployed refugees ⁵⁷	There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive			Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion of underemployed refugees ⁵⁸	There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive			Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion of precariously employed refugees ⁵⁹	There is no statistics on the number of asylum seekers/ refugees that are employed/unemployed or inactive			Case studies Past studies	Regional

Table 4: Social and political impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data sources	Regional / local***
Demography	Impact on dependency ratio	Among EU member states, Greece recorded the highest number of first-time applicants per capita in 2017. (5,295 first-time applicants per million population) However, Greece is a transit country and asylum seekers are trying to leave the country, there is no major impact on repopulation. Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : +			https://bit.ly/2u9hZMU	National
Cultural diversity	No quantitative				Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or	

⁵⁶ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁵⁷ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁵⁸ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁵⁹ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

	indicator				local sections of national studies	
Security	Impact on crime rate (of refugee/total population)	<p>There were social tensions between migrants due to the overcrowding of the RIC (Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Kos and Rhodes) and emergency centres in mainland.</p> <p>In addition, there were social tensions among local communities as a result of very high number of asylum seekers per local population in Aegean islands</p> <p>Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : - -</p>			https://bit.ly/2P85NT8	Regional
Perception	Perception rates for immigration as a problem	<p>According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index, during the economic crisis, there was a high rise of anti-immigrant attitudes in Greece. "Only 41% saying GR is a welcoming place and >2/3 saying immigrants do not contribute economically or culturally."</p> <p>The Migrant Acceptance Index score for Greece was 3.34 (top possible score is 9.0)</p> <p>According to the latest Eurobarometer, the majority of Greeks believe that immigrants are a burden on welfare system, worsen the crime problem in the country, take jobs away from Greek works (2018)</p>			<p>http://www.mipex.eu/greece</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2QtfzPS</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2TBgejU</p>	National
Political tensions caused by migration	Relevance of immigration in political	There were political tensions between Right-wing and Left-wing			https://bit.ly/2P85NT8	National

	debates and elections	activists Assessment from the interviews stated in Country Fiche : - -				
	Risk of poverty	"Social indicators show huge gaps between Greek born and non-EU born. 43.1 % of non-EU born were at risk of poverty in 2017 against 17.4 % for Greek natives, a figure well above the EU average for non-EU born (30.8 %)."			European Commission (2019), Country Report Greece 2019, page 33, available at https://bit.ly/2HeCnAX	

Annex II Policy and actors classification

Table 5: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at Country and local level

Category	Types	Country-level policies targeting:		Regional or local-level policies targeting:		Assessment*
		Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	
Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency housing Emergency health care Basic subsistence needs Reception and recognition provisions Residence permits Family reunification Settlement restrictions Referrals <p><i>Distinguishing between exceptional and ordinary reception procedures</i></p>	National 2	National 2	Local/ Kilkis 3	Local/ Kilkis 3	
Housing / accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing/accommodation Housing support ... 	3	2	Local/ Kilkis 4	Local/ Kilkis 2	
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency/urgent healthcare Full health care ... 	2	2	3	3	
Social assistance and income support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social assistance services Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits ... 	ESTIA programme 3	2	3	2	
Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School enrolment and attendance Adult education Vocational education and training ... 	3	3	3	3	
Labour market access/integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills assessment/validation Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks) Grants and preparatory courses Employment subsidies, apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work Unemployment benefits ... 	2	2	3	3	
Social and political integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.) Integration programmes such as sport, culture, 	2	2	3	3	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversity promotion • Political participation (local level) • Residence and religion rights • ... 					
Other	•					

Table 6: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at Country level

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	<p>The European Commission:</p> <p>DG ECHO - Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</p> <p>DG HOME - Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs</p> <p>DG REGIO Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy</p> <p>the European Commission Structural Reform Agency</p> <p>the Council of Europe</p> <p>EASO</p> <p>Frontex</p> <p>EUROPOL</p> <p>Eurojust</p> <p>European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights</p>	<p>The European Parliament</p> <p>Group of the European People's Party - Christian Democrats)</p> <p>Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left</p> <p>the European Conservatives and Reformists group</p> <p>Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament</p>	<p>Eurostat</p> <p>European Migration Network</p> <p>European Research Council</p>	<p>Trade Unions</p> <p>Employers' organization</p> <p>Migrants/refugees representatives and networks</p> <p>International umbrella associations</p>	<p>ActionAid Hellas</p> <p>Caritas Hellas</p> <p>Danish Refugee Council</p> <p>Samaritan's Purse,</p> <p>International Rescue Committee IRC</p> <p>Médecins du Monde</p> <p>Catholic Relief Services CRS</p> <p>Mercy Corps</p> <p>Médecins Sans Frontières</p> <p>Norwegian Refugee Council</p> <p>Oxfam</p> <p>Save the Children</p> <p>The SOS Children's Villages</p> <p>Terre des Hommes</p> <p>WHO (World Health Organisation)</p>

	<p>UNHCR</p> <p>UNICEF</p> <p>IOM</p> <p>ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross</p> <p>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</p>				
National	<p>The Asylum Service is a specialised body in charge of examining an application for international protection.</p> <p>Independent Appeals Committees (Appeals Authority) is in charge of the first appeals against negative decisions on applications for international protection issued by the Asylum Service.</p> <p>Administrative Court of Appeal is in charge of the second (onward) appeal.</p> <p>The Ministry for Migration Policy was established in November 2016 in order to manage the process of migration.</p> <p>Reception and Identification Service that</p>	The Hellenic Parliament	<p>Hellenic Statistical Authority is in charge of conducting statistics on migration.</p> <p>the Research Centre for Gender Equality</p> <p>The National Health Operations Centre</p> <p>The Centre of Control and Prevention of Diseases (KEELPNO)</p> <p>the Hellenic National Academic Recognition Information Centre</p> <p>The Association for Regional Development and Mental Health</p> <p>The National Museum of Contemporary Art</p>	<p>Association of Greek Regions</p> <p>Central Union of Greek Municipalities</p> <p>Greek Forum of Refugees</p> <p>Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government</p>	<p>ARSIS</p> <p>ANTIGONE</p> <p>APOSTOLI</p> <p>Greek Association of Paraplegic Persons</p> <p>Greek Council for Refugees</p> <p>Hellenic Red Cross</p> <p>Iliaktida</p> <p>Intersos</p> <p>Kivotos tou Kosmou</p> <p>Metadrasi</p> <p>National Confederation of Disabled People</p> <p>Network for Children's Rights</p> <p>Nostos</p> <p>Oikopolis</p> <p>Organisation Earth</p> <p>Praksis</p> <p>Solidarity Now</p> <p>Diotima</p>

	<p>provides: registration, identification and data verification procedures, medical examination, identification of vulnerable groups, the provision of information related to protection and return procedures, the temporary accommodation, etc.</p> <p>The Central Operational Migration Body (KEPOM)</p> <p>The Ministry of Interior</p> <p>The Hellenic Police,</p> <p>the Ministry of National Defence</p> <p>National Coordination Centre for Border Control, Immigration and Asylum with main task the coordinating of actions of all the agencies at national level on issues of immigration and asylum;</p> <p>Ministry of Digital Policy,</p> <p>Telecommunicatio ns & Media</p> <p>Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social</p>				
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	<p>Solidarity – is a competent authority for social protection of asylum seekers and refugees, particularly vulnerable groups;</p> <p>The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs is in charge of education of asylum seekers and refugees;</p> <p>The Ministry of Economy and Development provides investments in the regions that are affected by refugee crisis;</p> <p>The Ministry of Health is in charge for provision of primary and secondary healthcare;</p> <p>The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) – in charge for reception centres for asylum seekers;</p> <p>The Hellenic Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) – related to asylum seekers and refugees right to access to labour market;</p>				
Regional	Prefectural	Politicians			NGOs involved in







	<p>Authorities of Greece (13)</p> <p>Development agency of the regional units</p> <p>Regional Asylum Offices receives and processes the asylum applications (Attica, Lesvos, Thrace, Rhodes, Thessaloniki, Samos, Western Greece, Leros, Chios, Crete, Piraeus and Alimos).</p> <p>the Reception and Identification Regional Services</p>				humanitarian aid/reception/integration
Local	<p>Local authorities (325) provide temporary accommodation, social assistance, Greek language learning, vocational training and health services.</p> <p>the Municipality Counselling Centres</p> <p>The municipal Migration Integration Centres (KEM)</p> <p>Municipality's Social Services</p> <p>Reception and Identification Centres (Fylakio, Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros,</p>	<p>Mayors</p> <p>Other local politicians</p>	<p>Technical agencies</p> <p>Research centres</p> <p>Consultants/professionals</p>	<p>Migrant Integration Councils (MICs) - in the 325 Municipalities of the Greece, are entrusted with a consultative role on issues related to migrant integration in local communities.</p> <p>The Athens Coordination Centre for Migrant and Refugee</p>	<p>OMNES voluntary association</p> <p>NGO ZAATAR</p> <p>The Emergency Response Centre International (ERCI)</p> <p>Lighthouse Relief</p> <p>The Heraklion Initiative for the Refugees</p> <p>The Social Support Centre for migrants in Chania</p> <p>Sunday School for migrants in Athens</p> <p>The Medical Centre of Social Solidarity</p> <p>the Social</p>

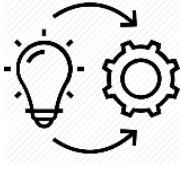


	<p>and Kos)</p> <p>the Reception and Identification Mobile units</p> <p>The asylum units (Amygdaleza, Xanthi, Korinthos, Fylakio, Kos, Athens, Kalochori and Tavros)</p>				<p>Solidarity Network</p> <p>Alkyoni</p> <p>Solidarity Kos</p>
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Annex III Network analysis

The following infographic summarizes the actors and their roles in the region of Kilkis. The biggest characters represent central actors while the smallest ones have a secondary role in that role/function.

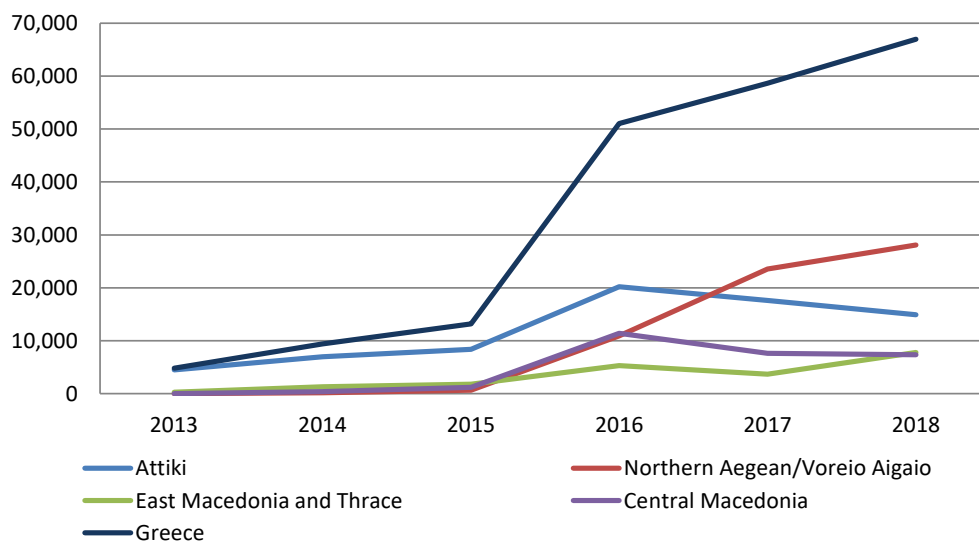
Table 7: Mapping the actors and the roles

Roles	Actors
Setting Legal Framework 	Ministry of Migration Policy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Political Responsible 	Ministry of Migration Policy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Municipality of Kilkis, Municipality of Paionia
Technical Responsible 	KEELPNO, Thessaloniki Regional Asylum Office, Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia, DOY, KEP
Financing 	ECHO, Help Refugee
Programming the Intervention 	UNHCR, Ministry of Migration Policy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia, Kilkis Chamber of Commerce and Industry, OMNES
Coordinator in the implement. 	UNHCR, TDH, Inter-municipal development agency of the regional unit of Kilkis, OMNES, Iliaktida MAKE

<p>Policy implementer</p> 	<p>Clowns without Borders, Inter-municipal development agency of the regional unit of Kilikis, Municipality of Kilikis, Municipality of Paionia, DOY, KEP, Kilikis Public Central Library, Clothing Design and Technology department of Kilikis, Thessaloniki University Pontian studies, Center of Greek Language, Goethe Institute, Epimorfotiki LLL Centre, Lifelong Learning Centre, Kilikis Chamber of Commerce and Industry, OMNES, INTERSOS, Red Cross, Solidarity Now, BLUE Refugee Centre, Open Culture Centre, Agricultural Association of Kilikis, Greek Council for Refugees, Crossroads Thessaloniki, ARSIS, Greek Network for the Right to Shelter and Housing, Volunteers, Local businesses, Experts</p>
<p>Monitoring and data</p> 	<p>OMNES</p>
<p>Resources mobilization</p> 	<p>OMNES</p>

Annex IV Distribution of asylum applications in Greece

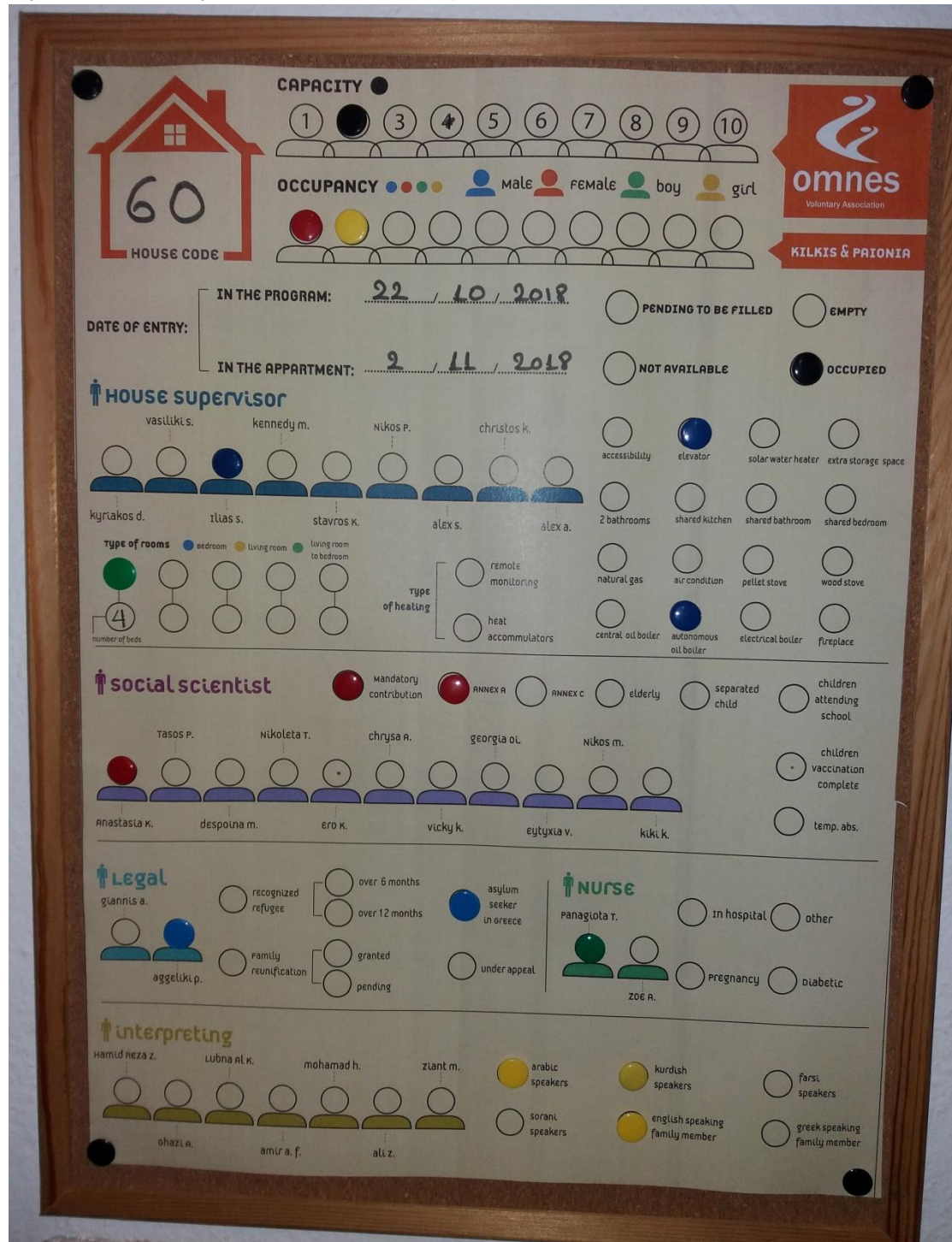
Figure 5: NUTS 2 regions with the highest number of asylum applications in the period 2013-2018



Source: Greek Asylum Office, available at: <https://bit.ly/2Mt2CEw>

Annex V Monitoring

Figure 6: The housing project board developed by OMNES



Source: The picture was taken during the visit to OMNES office in Kilkis.

Figure 7: Educational monthly monitoring form developed by OMNES

Educational Monthly Monitoring

kilis

SCHOOL NAME: _____

DIRECTOR'S NAME: _____

CAPACITY: ● ●

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

TRANSPORTATION:

boy girl

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫ ⑬ ⑭ ⑮ ⑯ ⑰

LANGUAGES: ARABIC FARSI DARI SOHWI SOMALI RIJHANTJI

MEETING: MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE

DIRECTOR: _____

TEACHER: _____

EMERGENCY: _____

PARENTS: _____

OCCUPANCY / ENROLLMENT

DEPARTURES PRIOR MONTH(S)

PENDING ENROLLMENT(S)

EXPECTED DEPARTURES

March 2018

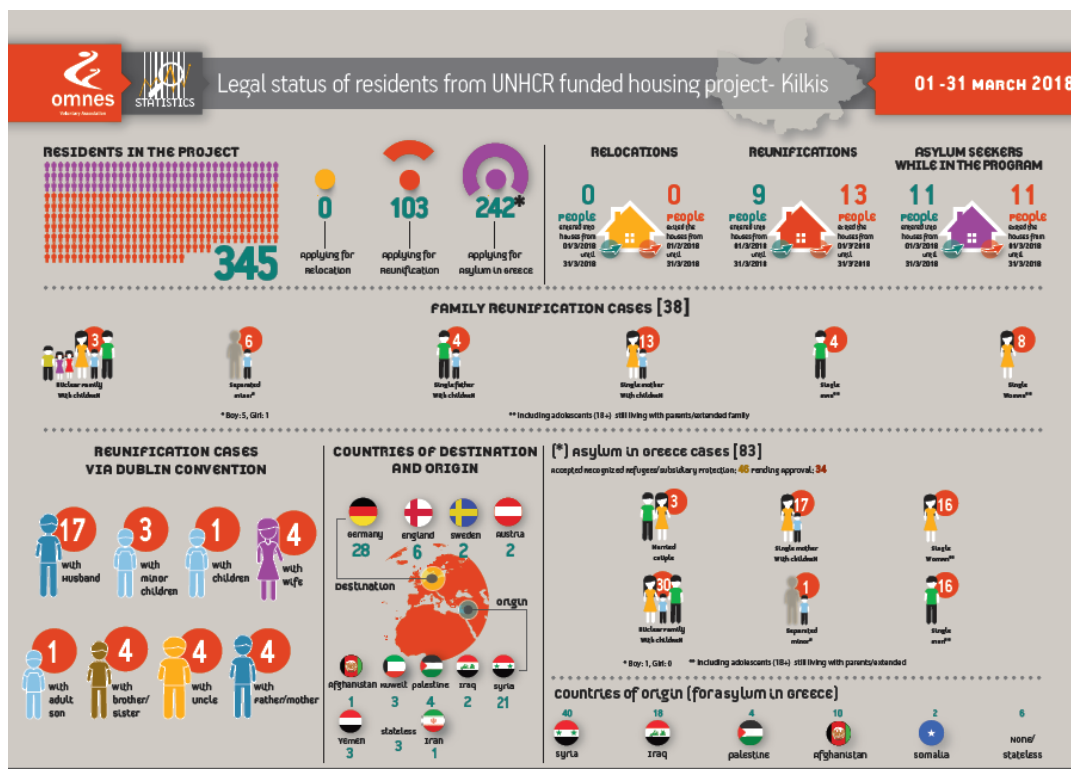
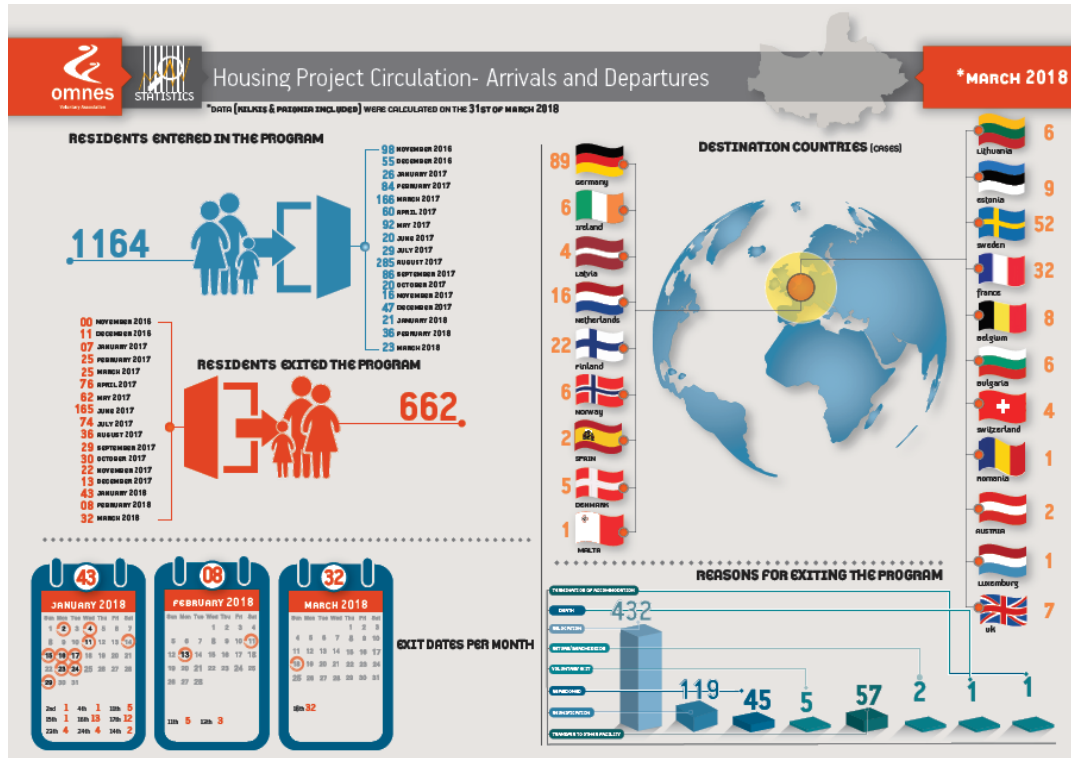
	FULL ATTENDANCE:				
class/week	1	2	3	4	5
reception class	<div style="background-color: #27ae60; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> 45 (M) </div>				
DAYS OF PRESENCE	<div style="background-color: #f1c40f; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> 2-3 (M) </div>				
MC	<div style="background-color: #e74c3c; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> 8-1 (M) </div>				

Source: A presentation received from OMNES.

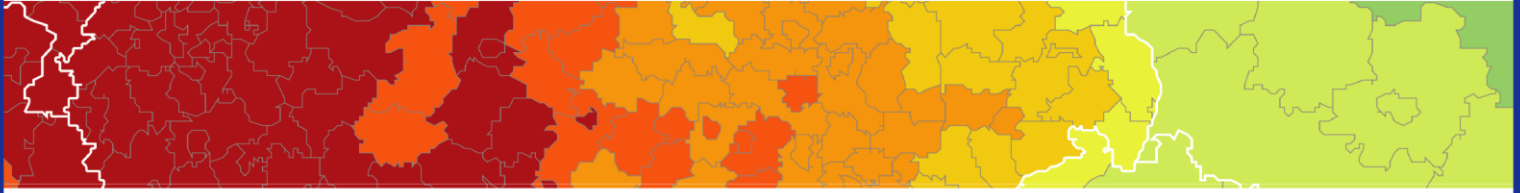
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Figure 8: Data visualisation of OMNES results



Source: A presentation received from OMNES.



ESPON 2020 – More information

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The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.