

THE ISSUE OF IMMIGRANT-REFUGEE CRISIS AND MANAGING POLICIES: FIELD RESEARCH

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Abstract

Greece is one of the main gateways for refugees and immigrants from third countries to Europe due to its geographical location at the EU's southeastern border. It is a transcontinental country at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa. The socio-political and economic instability and ongoing conflicts in third countries, especially in the Middle East, have led to a massive population shifting, which our country, as the first host country, is called to manage. The passage of mixed migratory flows from unregulated points of the country's maritime borders has been taking place mainly during the last two decades. In particular, from 2015, due to unfavorable geopolitical developments, this phenomenon has taken on huge dimensions in the eastern Aegean islands. Intense migratory-refugee flows of third-country nationals have entered Europe through the eastern maritime borders and national territorial waters of our country. In the present study, an attempt is made through a field study to investigate particular aspects of the issue of the immigration-refugee crisis and relevant proposals at the level of appropriate and effective management policies.

Key-words: *Immigrant-Refugee Crisis, E.U., Managing Policies, Field Research*

Introduction

The phenomenon of immigration is a timeless phenomenon whose management resembles that of running water, whose proper channeling produces favorable results. "The definition of immigration is a difficult issue, as it is influenced by various ideological, political and social factors and theoretical conditions" (Vlachadi M., 2017). At the beginning of the 90s, the first immigration waves appeared at the door of the states of Eastern Europe, a fact that led both the European Union and affected states of the region to make decisions about the management of the various challenges that arose. The present study is historically divided into two main periods, namely the period from 1990 to 2015, when Greece saw the largest flow of irregular immigrants, who attempted to cross the external borders illegally, with the aim of entering Greece and continuing their journey to other EU Member States. The second period refers to the period between 2015 and 2021, during which both the EU and a number of Member States were forced to review their migration policy, as well as strategies and practices immigration management. Reference is made to the immigration situation during the first period, i.e. the period 1990 – 2015, in the immigration policy of the EU and Greece. Next, the decisions of the EU are presented in relation to the drawing up of a new immigration management policy during the period 2015 – 2021. Reference is also made to the creation and operation of competent Organizations, specifically the Frontex Agency whose mission is to coordinate the operational activities of the states members to guard the external borders, as well as to EASO, which coordinates the actions of EU member states in relation to refugees. Finally, the results of a survey are presented, which was carried out with the aim of gathering information from competent officials, with the aim of identifying and defining best practices for dealing with and/or managing the immigration and refugee problem.

The phenomenon of Immigration

According to article 1 of the Geneva Convention of 1951, a refugee is a person who has been forced to leave his country and cannot return to it for justified fear of "...persecution due to race, religion, nationality, social class or political beliefs and is outside the country of which he is a citizen and is unable, because of this fear, or does not wish to enjoy the protection of that country, or if he does not have the nationality of that country and as a consequence of such events is outside the country of the former habitual residence, cannot or, because of this fear, does not wish to return to this"

(http://www.minocp.gov.gr/asylo.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=3474).

In light of the U.N. a short-term movement is not considered migration. Consequently, a migrant is defined as the subject of immigration (https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/en?file=2020-09/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf).

The refugee leaves his country because his life is in danger, while the immigrant moves seeking to improve his living conditions (https://www.huffingtonpost.gr/aref-alobeid/-4748_b_9521404.html). Second category immigrants are subject to a special procedure for entering and staying in the country, a procedure regulated by special legislation (<http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Alvafitari.pdf>).

In contrast to legal immigration, irregular migration refers to entry, residence and/or work without fulfilling the required legal provisions established by each state for immigrants. In the current legislation, irregular immigration is defined as "the presence in Greek territory of a citizen of a third country who does not meet, or has ceased to meet, the conditions for entry, as defined in article 5 paragraph 1 of Regulation 562/2006 (Schengen Border Code) or the other conditions of entry, stay or residence of the existing legislation" (<http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Alvafitari.pdf>).

According to the definition provided by the Greek Ministry of Citizen Protection: "Asylum is a type of international protection granted by a country to a person who has left their country because they fear persecution. It is granted in accordance with the provisions of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. To be recognized as a refugee, someone must have left their country and cannot return because there is a well-founded fear of persecution"

(http://www.minocp.gov.gr/asylo.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=3474).

From the moment of registration and while the request is pending, the foreigner remains legally in the country. If the request is accepted, the foreigner is recognized as a refugee or beneficiary of subsidiary protection, while if rejected, the status of the applicant ceases and the foreigner is often asked to leave the country" (http://www.minocp.gov.gr/asylo.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=3474). The refugee is obliged to apply to the competent asylum service of the first host country in the EU. and then, if he receives a positive decision, i.e. that he meets the conditions/specifications, then only he falls under refugee status

(<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/el/headlines/society/20170629STO78630/prosfugiki-krisi -kai-ee-stoicheia-kai-arithmoi>).

Based on the duration of migration, the following categories of immigrants are recorded: permanent, temporary and seasonal, while based on the purpose of migration, they are categorized into: immigrants - students, workers / employees, entrepreneurs and travelers (P. Xirouhakis, 2011, .p. p.18). After the Second World War and during the Greek civil war, many Greeks leave their economically impoverished and not only their country, to immigrate to northern European countries, such as Belgium, Switzerland, France, Sweden, the Netherlands and mainly in Germany, with which Greece signed the Greek-German agreement "On the employment of Greek workers in Germany" (O. Sultani, 2018, p.11).

However, since the 1970s, this type of immigration begins, gradually, to stop, given the inability to further absorb new labor force, especially after the economic crisis of 1973 (I. Papageorgiou, 2014, p. 74). The case of Egypt and the policy of President Nasser for the homogenization of his country is also noteworthy, which pushed the Greeks to leave it in the late 1950s and early 1960s (L. Mousourou, 2003, p.36). The policies of liberalizing the economies of some socialist countries, initially of Poland and then of Bulgaria and Romania, increase the migration flows to Greece (Th. P. Lianos, Tz. Kavounidis, 2012, p.114).

In general, all immigrants, illegal or not, were the main cause of the country's population growth, as found in the 2001 census, while it is noteworthy that the majority of them belong to the population range of 15-64 years. It is therefore an economically active population. The majority of a total of 762,000 foreigners registered in 2001 were Albanians, followed by Bulgarians, Georgians, Romanians, etc. (A. Karkouli A., 2016, p.40-41). In this decade of the 80s, immigrants also appeared in Europe and Greece from African countries, which suffered from civil strife, as well as from Iraq, due to the first Gulf War.

Furthermore, immigrants from Central Asian countries were also presented, in which the socio-economic conditions did not allow part of their population to stay (A. Dimitriadis, 2012, p.25). Law 2130/1993 makes an attempt to legalize them and defines the concept of "returning Greek". In the coming years, with legislative initiatives, a process will be started for the quick provision of Greek citizenship to the Greeks of the former USSR. Those who did not have time to take advantage received a special permit from the Ministry. Public Class. However, apparently the granting of Greek citizenship to expatriates of the former USSR. it was not followed to an extent with transparent procedures. By 2004, it is estimated that around 350,000 expatriates had received Greek citizenship or the three-year expatriate card, but in the absence of data nothing can be proven (Baldwin M., Kyriakou I., 2004).

At the same time, based on Kjaergaard (1993), the EU was concerned with the fortification of the external borders of the EU member states and at the same time security within the single European market. During the 1980s, the European Community formed various intergovernmental bodies with the aim of implementing measures to implement the "fourth freedom" of the Single European Act, namely the free movement of persons. Among other things, the measures related to the definition of the external borders of the single European area in order to manage migration flows, including the wave of refugees.

At the same time, the measures also concerned the effective control of the trafficking of foreigners (Bunyan T., 1993). It is worth adding to the above causes the outbreak of the "Arab Spring". It started in Tunisia in 2011 and has grown to great proportions within the Arab countries. Of particular importance was the case of General M. Gaddafi's Libya, which while the E.U. financed it to contain the refugee flows, the outbreak of the "Arab Spring" plunged the country into chaos and led a large number of refugees and immigrants to move towards Europe (A. Karkoulis, p.48-49).

International conventions

The rights of the nationals of third countries located in the territory of the member states of the European Union, fully from international conventions which are mainly based on the framework of the United Nations Organization and the Council of Europe concerning the protection of human rights. The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, known as the Rome Convention (1950) (https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/convention_ell.pdf).

In relation to the implementation of the provisions in the said convention, institutions such as the European Commission of Human Rights, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights were established. Important are the articles concerning the extradition and deportation of foreigners, which explicitly state that it is not allowed to submit to torture, or any inhuman and degrading treatment of any person. It is noted that Greece has ratified the Convention with Law 2329/1953 and the additional protocol with Law 53/74. The Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), (<https://www.unhcr.org/gr/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2018/01/04-symvasiprotokollo.pdf>) as supplemented by the New York Protocol (1967). Article 1(A) of the Convention defines the persons who are entitled to the recognition of refugee status. Article 31 expressly prohibits the punishment of a refugee for illegally entering the state where he submitted the asylum request, while at the same time Article 33 establishes the principle of non-refoulement of a refugee in a country where, according to him, he is threatened his life or his liberty. The Convention has been ratified by all the then member states of the EU, including Greece with Law d 3989/1959 and the Protocol with Law 389.1968. The European Social Charter (1961 – ratified by Greece with n. 1426/1984) (<https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/diplomatiki-nomothesia-diethneis-organismoi/nomos-1426-1984-phek-32a-21-3-1984.htm>) and the European Convention on Establishment (1955, ratified with n.d. 4429/1964), the provisions of which protect nationals legally settled in the contracting states of third countries during the exercise of their civil and individual rights, providing them with judicial and administrative guarantees for their uninterrupted stay and activity in the host country. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Educational Rights (New York, 1966 – ratified by Greece with Law 1532/85) (<https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/diethneis-sunthekeis/nomos-1532-1985-phek-45a-19-3-1985.html>).

Conventions No. 97 and 143 of the International Labor Organization on Illicit Migration and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers which provide protection to all migrant foreign workers without distinguishing between illegal

immigrants. International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (Safety of Life at Sea - SOLAS) The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) is perhaps the most important international convention of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) concerning safety of merchant ships. A first attempt to create a normative text concerning the safety of life at sea was made by the International Maritime Commission in 1914 on the occasion of the sinking of the Titanic. This convention underwent several amendments from 1960 to 1973 and was finally adopted in 1974. It entered into force in 1985 after ratification by 2/3 of the contracting countries and after the International Maritime Organization (IMO) updated the convention and incorporated into it all the new technological developments of the time. Since then, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea has been constantly amended in accordance with the innovations in the field of shipping. In Greece it was ratified by Law 1045/1980 (Government Gazette 95, section A') and has since been amended by the P.D. 199/2005 (<https://www.elinyae.gr/index.php/ethniki-nomothesia/pd-1992005-fek-239a-4102005>) and with the P.D. 137/2007.

The Convention defines search and rescue issues as well as the obligations of each master. It is characteristically stated that: "the master of the traveling ship who is in a position to provide assistance, upon receiving information from any source that persons are in danger at sea, is obliged to sail at full speed to the aid of those, informing them, if possible, or the search service and rescue" (SOLAS/1974 Chapter V, Regulation 33) (<https://www.isalos.net/knowledge/diethneis-symvaseis/solas-1974>). Also, the obligation of the contracting states is defined: "to ensure that the necessary measures have been taken for emergency communication and coordination in their area of responsibility and for the rescue of persons at risk in the sea around their coasts. These provisions shall include the establishment, operation and maintenance of such search and rescue facilities as are considered practicable and necessary" (SOLAS/1974 Ch. V, Regulation 7) (<https://www.isalos.net/knowledge/diethneis-symvaseis/solas-1974>).

The Hamburg International Convention on Marine Search and Rescue (Search and Rescue – SAR) The Hamburg International Convention on Marine Search and Rescue of 1979 (International Convention on Marine Search and Rescue) regulates search and rescue procedures in the event of a maritime accident and is known by the international name SAR. The contract in question entered into force in 1985, while in Greece it was ratified by Law 1844/1989 (Government Gazette 100, section A') (<https://www.et.gr>). The aim of the Hamburg Convention is the cooperation of the member states in the field of search and rescue and the implementation of an internationally accepted plan, so that the rescue of persons in emergency at sea is coordinated and carried out by a single search and rescue service. This cooperation is encouraged by the aforementioned International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea - SOLAS/1974 as it is emphasized that states should ensure the necessary arrangements for the control and monitoring of their coasts. In the Convention it is stated that the contracting states are required "to ensure the provision of assistance to any person in distress at sea. They will do this regardless of the nationality or the condition of the person or the circumstances in which the person was found" (SAR Chapter 2.1.10) and to "[...] initially provide those at risk with medical or other care and transport them to a place of safety" (SAR Chapter 1.3.2). United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) The third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (1973-1982) (https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Documents/RescueatSea_GuideENGLISH.pdf) resulted in the signing of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 10 December 1982. UNCLOS entered into force on 16 November 1986 and has been ratified by 158 countries. In Greece, it was ratified by Law 2321/1995 (Official Gazette 136, section A) (<https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/diethneis-suntheikes/nomos-2321-1995-phkek-136-a-23-6-1995.html>).

According to the Convention, it was recognized that all problems related to the maritime space are the responsibility of all countries and at the same time are the "common heritage of humanity". Thus, UNCLOS contains provisions that express the former customary law (littoral zone regime, freedoms of the high seas, continental shelf regime) but at the same time it also introduces new institutions of the Law of the Sea, most importantly the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which extends to 200 nm from the coasts of the base and constitutes a "suigeneris" sea zone in which the coastal state exercises extensive, economic powers. Furthermore, it established the general legal framework for all activities in or on the oceans and seas, established detailed rules governing all uses of the oceans, and defined 7 the rights and responsibilities of each state (https://www.un.org/Depts/los/doalos_publications/publicationtexts/E.12.V.10.pdf).

In summary, the UNCLOS Convention covers, among others, the following issues: - Limits of maritime zones, such as territorial waters, the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf. Special emphasis is placed on the issues of search and rescue of life in danger in the sea. Specifically, in Article 98 of the Convention, the obligation to provide assistance is explicitly stated: "Each State shall require the master of any ship flying its flag, if he can do so without seriously endangering the ship, crew or passengers: (a) To render assistance to any person who is at sea and is in danger of drowning. (b) To sail with the greatest possible speed to the rescue of persons in distress, if he has been informed that they are in need of assistance and if such assistance can be expected of him. It is further emphasized that: "Each State must ensure the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective service, search and rescue at sea and, where circumstances so require, cooperate with neighboring States for this purpose within the framework of regional arrangements" (https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/part7.htm). After the ratification of the above conventions, their provisions immediately become part of the internal law of each contracting state. Consequently, each aggrieved person has the right to appeal to national and even international Courts to seek protection or vindication. It is pointed out that, during the 1990s, the democratic and peaceful perspective of the world sought the drafting of a "global social contract" that would implement the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and see Article 28 which provides that "all a person is entitled just as an order prevails in the social and international field, in relation to the rights and freedoms of each person" (<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>).

Furthermore, according to Keane, (1988) society expected, in the light of this anthropocentric approach, classic concepts of traditional international law, such as absolute national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the recognition of legal personality exclusively in states and in intergovernmental bodies, need critical review and revision.

RESEARCH PART

Research methodology

This research aims to examine the issue of immigrants, refugees as it is presented from the first moment of their entry into Greece. The issue of immigration is sensitive, especially in times of particular charge, such as the modern era, due to the continuous immigration flows to the country, which is the gateway to the west. The most appropriate research method is judged to be the qualitative method.

The field research highlights in-depth issues related to the problem being examined in order to draw accurate conclusions. The purpose of this qualitative research is to investigate the opinions of employees in public institutions regarding the management of the

immigrant/refugee phenomenon and to record any shortcomings of the state mechanism regarding its proper treatment in the most effective way. According to Isaris and Pourkos (2015) in Greece, qualitative methods have attracted the attention of the academic community in the field of Education as well as in the wider field of social sciences (Creswell J, 2016). In qualitative research problems must be explored to ensure a deep understanding. The researcher seeks to investigate the specificity of the phenomenon that interests him. Therefore, qualitative research methods help to explore issues with which the researcher comes into contact for the first time.

The qualitative method is judged to be the most suitable for issues that have not been sufficiently investigated. This specific study will be an important tool through the results of qualitative research by employees in public institutions, who are called to manage issues of immigrant / refugee management in modern conditions. The specific views are considered particularly useful and important due to its criticality due to the immigration/refugee crisis.

Sample Survey

In the context of conducting qualitative research, the researchers themselves choose the location and the participants who can help, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the central phenomenon being investigated. The sample was selected using the sampling strategy of purposive sampling where the qualitative researcher selects people on purpose in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon he is studying and to obtain useful information (Creswell J. 2016).

According to Robson (2002), interviewing is a flexible and adaptive way to learn things. In qualitative research, researchers are not concerned with the statistical representativeness of the sample, while their attention is focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the perspective of a small sample of subjects. A major advantage of the qualitative interview is its adaptability, while the answers to the questionnaires are taken into account as they are, a response to a qualitative interview is decoded and interpreted. Bell (1999) also notes three important limitations of qualitative interviews which are that they consume a lot of time and therefore cannot be addressed to a large sample of the population, possess a high degree of subjectivity which involves the risk of bias and the research findings do not allow generalization (http://ejst.uniwa.gr/issues/issue_53/euaggelou_53.pdf).

Researchers and subjects co-create a reality through interaction based on this view, the research process is driven by the respondent while it is more of a conversation, giving the participant the opportunity to freely express their views and experiences (Kiriazi, N., 2011). The target population of the present study consists of employees in public institutions responsible for the implementation of migration management policies towards the other Balkan countries (Burke, M., Kraut, R., Marlow, C., 2011).

The open-ended questionnaire - Semi-structured interview

It includes a series of structured questions, to which the respondent is asked to answer in writing and in a specific order. With open-ended questions, data is collected following suggestions or responses to the same set of questions. They are usually used in the context of a research strategy, in order to collect descriptive and explanatory data on opinions, behaviors, characteristics, attitudes, etc. Although there are various definitions, semi-structured interviewing is used as a general term that includes data collection techniques where each respondent answers the same set of questions, in a predetermined order. The open questionnaire is the means of communication between the researcher and the respondents, in a

direct or indirect way, depending on the method of data collection (<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/open-ended-questions/>).

The structure of the open questionnaire, due to the properties it has, is the most critical and delicate work, of decisive importance for the success of a statistical investigation. In a survey, if an effective sampling design or even the most appropriate data analysis is applied, it is not possible to draw correct conclusions if non-comparable responses are obtained from an inappropriate questionnaire with vague questions. For the needs of this work, the use of anonymous questionnaires was chosen due to the advantages that were prescribed.

As presented in the open Questionnaire attached to this work, the questions asked mainly related to the description of the current situation regarding the immigration-refugee issue, as well as the problems that may be created by this phenomenon. Furthermore, questions are raised regarding the training of employees related to the immigration and refugee issue, among which the necessity of carrying out such programs, on the agenda, human rights, etc. In addition, questions related to legislation, strategies and good practices for the effective management of the modern situation are also included.

Research results

Fifty (50) employees working in public institutions participated in the survey. The profile of the members who responded to the questionnaires is 70% male, 20% female and 10% unspecified, as the respondents did not fill in the gender. In addition, 50% concerns people aged 40-50, having 20 to 30 years of experience, 30% concerns people aged 30-40 with 10 to 20 years of experience, while the remaining 20% concerns newly appointed people with little professional experience. It is mentioned that as it emerged from the answers, the more professional experience the respondents had, the more detailed and substantiated their answers were.

In the first question, which concerns the general description of the modern situation on the immigration-refugee issue, 90% of the respondents indicated that during the last decade, a significant increase in the arrival of irregular immigrants in Greece was observed. This fact was observed, they reply, by the increase of secondary flows to the North through the Balkan route. The largest number concerns Muslim nationals of third countries in which there is a war situation or an unstable political environment, while at the same time a large number of them concern economic migrants who are looking for a better standard of living, using the refugee profile as a pretext in order to achieve their relocation. In relation to the problems created by the presence of immigrants in Greece, or in relation to the management / control of immigrants during their crossing of the border, or their stay in the territory of the country, the following problems were mentioned: Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents state that the effort and will shown by the security forces for the better management and adaptation of immigrants to their new environment, with the aim of their effective integration, did not help the whole condition. In particular, the institutional framework created from 2010 onwards regarding the management - detention - transport and accommodation of the arrested foreigners by the Departments of Border Protection and Immigrant Management in various places, ultimately does not seem to be sufficiently capable to produce the desired results.

Through the questionnaire (82% of the respondents), a negative result is observed regarding the better integration and integration of immigrants and in the views of the employees, where there is an obvious lack of either interest or knowledge of the existence of specific practices. Many are not aware of the existence of structures for vulnerable social groups, among whom are immigrants or the latter who wish to leave immediately for the capital or other countries, while some of them are looking for a different kind of help, perhaps only of a subsidized type and provision of services and not dynamic participation of

themselves in the spectrum of their full integration socially despite the humanitarian side of the workers towards immigrants, legal and illegal. The absence of an organized plan for the integration of immigrants arriving in the region is one of the most basic conclusions, with the representatives of the security forces citing this, highlighting their weaknesses, as will be seen below. Likewise here where there is a reference to the inability to provide essential services to immigrants mainly due to the absence of a specific management and integration plan and indirectly due to an insufficient number of staff. Interoperability of Services: There are conflicting opinions on the issue of coordination and interoperability between Services, Municipalities, Associations and NGOs. In one case, there is even a strict criticism of the local government for its relations with other Services, but also more generally for the practices and policies that are followed for reasons of vote hunting. There is therefore an absence of coordination and a framework of organized action and will with selfless intentions from the municipality alongside the existence of the voluntary structure. Staff shortages and sloppiness in planning are also reported in neighboring areas. Obtaining a work permit and in general the existence of legalization documents for each immigrant, as mentioned in almost all the answers, is a basic condition for their smooth living at the initial level. The legislation is clear and indisputable. Each migrant-refugee must first be registered before starting any process of integration or other assistance. Arrests that take place have decreased significantly in the last two years, according to official statistics, but from the moment of arrest and registration there is considerable room for improvement in procedures which are still time-consuming. The procedures that take place in the police services have to do with the "pure" procedural part of their registration, while in no case is information given about the possibilities given to immigrants from there on. Under these conditions, immigrants remain detained in the police services for a long time until someone decides on their fate. Their funding problem is particularly worrying since they typically reported that the only thing immigrants in police detention centers are entitled to is a small compensation for food of approximately six (6) euros per day. But what if medical care is required? Performing preventive diagnostic tests for the Corona virus? or other regular medication?. The problems presented in combination with the long period of their stay in the detention centers pose security risks for both the workers and the immigrants. The issue of housing unaccompanied minors is very sensitive. It is obvious that this category needs more care and welfare policies. This is supported by European funding and the partnership of institutions and NGOs. Recently, positive steps have been taken in the management of unaccompanied minors, especially after the repeal of the anachronistic article of Presidential Decree 141/1991 which obliged the police services to "hold", under the regime of protective custody, minors brought in without any real welfare for a decent living. The police detention centers full of foreigners and the problem of this hospitality, push the immigrants to disorderly disobedience and indiscipline in the sight of the police. In particular, they try to avoid the police services and the various roadblocks in every way in order not to be noticed on their journey. Exploitation by illegal migrant smuggling rings is evident and was recorded in some questionnaires. As far as the issue of employee training is concerned, it appears that the situation is problematic there as well. 96% of the respondents answered that in the last five (5) years they did not participate in any training program related to immigrant/refugee management. Only two questionnaires recorded relevant training in the control and identification of migrants, while the absence of training in other management procedures (de-identification, recording of itineraries, transit countries, interviews, etc.) is evident. This fact poses significant problems that affect the reduction in time of the entire process of identifying an immigrant, but also potential problems that touch national security and have to do with the identification of foreign fighters. Two barely trained foreigner screening and identification workers certainly doesn't help the whole process. But even after the identification of the arrested foreigners,

difficulties arise regarding the number of employees. In a questionnaire, the entire procedure followed was generally recorded. In summary, if the foreigner belongs to countries where return is not possible (e.g. Syria, Afghanistan, etc.) and does not request asylum, he is released after the completion of the procedure, which usually takes one to two weeks, without to be informed about who can assist him in terms of housing, food or integration after his release. If he applies for asylum, the competent police bodies should run the asylum procedure, cooperating to this end with the Asylum Services, which may accept the immigrant for further registration as soon as possible within one month from the submission of the application. If, again, a foreigner belongs to the countries that allow return, then the process of forming a health file is initiated in order to decide on his transfer to a closed accommodation structure. All these procedures and the frequent transfers to the health structures require resources, both in human resources and in means, which as recorded do not exist. Problems were also recorded during the foreigners' stay in the police detention centers in terms of not providing them with basic necessities such as (shampoo, soaps, blankets, sheets, clothing, etc.). Nor did it appear from the questionnaires that they know where they can go if their services do not provide them with the necessary means. The need and desire for their training, in matters of immigrant-refugee management, is particularly evident and was reflected in all the questionnaires that were given (over 90%). In almost all the questionnaires, the absence of targeted training regarding the process of bringing and registering foreigners to the departments as well as during their stay and further assistance to foreigners was recorded. The training stage also for the post-liberation of foreigners is non-existent, in the sense of the lack of knowledge on the part of the workers of the directions that can be given to an immigrant to facilitate his integration. Another issue that emerged from the questionnaires has to do with the lack of an integrated plan to prevent and deal with migrant and refugee flows, which flock to the land areas bordering the Balkan States. A large number of foreigners are trying to leave the country's borders, towards the Balkan States. And many of them, either possess legalizing documents to stay in our country, or have temporary residence permits with a parallel obligation to leave the country within a set deadline, which means that they have been registered in the past, or have received some form of temporary permit and are awaiting the final answer. In these cases, the tactic followed lies in the removal of foreigners from the exit points to the interior of the country. The problem lies here in the fact that foreigners are pushed into the interior of the country without being able to know if any other service or body is taken over to manage these cases from an integration point of view. However, the questionnaires show that the respondents do not know what happens during their promotion in the interior of the country.

Questionnaire summary and suggestions

Based on the results of the analysis of the answers to the questionnaire mentioned above and the further processing, ultimately, the recommendations concerning the following are considered as best practices: Strengthening human resources: In the area related to human resources, the majority of the respondents submitted suggestions regarding the immediate need to strengthen the human resources employed in the field of guarding the external borders, but also the management of immigrants, including refugees. Personnel training: Through the answers to the questionnaire, the suggestions regarding staff training are highlighted as important. Specifically, training is required in the field of external border control, identification and country of origin procedures, procedures for interviewing and questioning suspected immigrants, asylum issues, taking fingerprints, and removal and repatriation procedures for irregular immigrants. Provision of appropriate logistical equipment: In relation to equipment, suggestions were made for the need to secure equipment for monitoring the

external borders (binoculars, night binoculars and general green line surveillance systems), equipment for taking fingerprints and comparing them, both during patrolling and especially when bringing them to the police stations in order to achieve their identification. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the security forces in motorized vehicles, both for border surveillance and for the transport of migrants. Also important is the immediate reinforcement / improvement of the building facilities and the countries of detention of irregular immigrants, so as to facilitate the entire process of registration and identification of foreigners in accordance with Greek and European legislation. In addition, the authorities should be given the opportunity to carry out the required checks and investigations on issues related to terrorism, foreign fighters and organized crime. At the same time, their temporary residence must meet the provisions related to the respect of human rights, both in terms of building facilities and basic necessities. Definition of immigration/refugee issue management procedures: The preparation of an operational plan that concerns the procedures of control, registration, etc. of arriving immigrants, as well as those who attempt to leave the country to other member states via the Balkan route, is considered of utmost importance. Furthermore, it is required that basic procedural plans be prepared for the issues of return and removal of irregular immigrants, so that the procedures take place as soon as possible with the ultimate goal of keeping foreigners in police custody for a few days and at the same time observing the health protocols related to the covid pandemic – 19. Immigrant integration procedures and programs: The integration of immigrants who are either impossible to return, or who have a refugee profile, is considered necessary and of the utmost importance, so as to prevent the creation of social problems, such as ghettoization, criminality and, most importantly, radicalization. Therefore, the state should immediately proceed with the adoption of special programs for the integration of the above persons. Interoperability of Services: The interoperability of the competent services in all matters related to immigration is believed to bring about more appropriate and effective control of migrants and help to speed up the procedures, which will result in the return of a greater number of irregular migrants. Procedures for repatriation and return of irregular migrants: It is necessary to draw up a specific policy of the state regarding the removal and repatriation procedures of irregular immigrants. This policy should refer to the development of bilateral relations with third countries which either concern countries of origin of immigrants, or are countries of transit, so that the return of immigrants becomes possible. Furthermore, it is necessary to develop cooperation with competent organizations, including IOM, Frontex, UNHCR, etc.

Limitations of the Research

The sample of this research consists of employees who serve in immigration management services and are responsible for the adoption and implementation of management policies. The lack of further representativeness of the sample in a period of covid-19 crisis, the narrowness of the time of conducting the research in question, does not allow the conclusions to be generalized. It is worth noting that the element of subjectivity of the researchers who conduct the research is also taken into account.

Proposals - The Future of Research

It is suggested that this research be extended to a larger sample of workers who serve in immigration management services, in order to have an even more comprehensive approach to the social issue being studied. Also, it would be particularly interesting to explore the views of a larger number of workers serving in immigration management services across the Region,

so that generalization of the results is permissible. In the future, triangulation is proposed as a research method for greater reliability and validity of the study in question.

Conclusions

Immigration has existed since the beginning of the creation of organized forms of society. Historically, the need to survive and improve living conditions has resulted in the perpetual movement of large population groups. In the years of modernity, the excessive changes at the global level (social, economic, political) created many migratory currents. Overseas movements and any kind of environmental change brought about a cultural exchange and several demographic ferments. Greece, as mentioned in the above chapters, from being a sending country for immigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries, in the late 80s and especially in the early 90s, turned into a receiving country. The collapse of the USSR and the communist regimes, combined with the proximity to the Balkan countries and the economic boom experienced by the country in a sense, made it seem like an ideal destination for a large number of immigrants from these countries. At the same time, a legislative framework began to be created to deal with this phenomenon, with several omissions and weaknesses, of course, but it cannot be said that it was in the right direction (<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/collapse-soviet-union>).

The regulation of immigration issues through legal decrees etc. is a point of constant consultation, action until today especially with the new migration flows due to the political data and the displacement of conflicts towards North Africa and the Middle East mainly. The Mediterranean basin is a combustible field in the south and mainly in its eastern parts. Unfortunately, its seas are almost every day the wet grave of dozens of people who travel with the hope of a better tomorrow (<https://www.oecd.org/dev/pgd/46923664.pdf>).

Immigration is a big challenge for the Greek and European data, on the one hand it is a source of serious problems but on the other hand it offers great opportunities to be exploited. It is therefore understandable, how useful is the planning and creation of new integration policies for the immigrants who are flooding Europe and Greece. The legislation is indeed a positive sign, but efforts are needed for further actions. Many times, the bureaucratic procedures bring the opposite results from the desired ones, which combined with chronic pathologies of the Greek state, create problems for the immigrant population and nullify the work that has been done. Also, the legislation must be on the side of the citizen and the immigrant without giving off the feeling of discrimination and aiming for social cohesion. The role of local government is deemed necessary to be upgraded and to assume many responsibilities in various issues of society, one of which is the issue of social integration of immigrants. The contact with the institutions at the local level, as well as with people who work in NGOs, organizations etc. or volunteer their time in associations, i.e. the whole part called Civil Society, gives the opportunity for a safe and valid export conclusions (https://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc891_en.pdf).

The employees in responsible agencies, having purely altruistic motives and feelings of solidarity towards those who belong to the vulnerable social groups, were the main source of information for this research. Substantial inclusion does not occur to a satisfactory degree. When we talk about inclusion we mean official political intervention at the state level and then at the regional and local level. It is therefore understandable that there can be no talk of managing and integrating immigrants, nor can the state be replaced by collective individual volunteering actions. At this point, of course, the action of the Civil Society that moves in this direction with the organizations is mentioned. The offers of food, hygiene items and other things that are necessary for the daily life of the immigrants are a sign of their will. Sponsorships in general are a great weapon in the effort to improve the daily life of

immigrants, as they highlight characteristics such as solidarity, humanity, volunteerism and contribution to fellow human beings. The local community shows dynamism in several cases and seems to replace the state presence as much as possible by staying close to the vulnerable population. As concluded through the research, it is necessary to make decisions in relation to specific areas, such as strengthening the human resources of the competent services, training and further specialization in matters of identifying and determining the country of origin of immigrants, identifying immigrants who are likely to pose a threat for public order and national security, guarding the borders, managing the examination of asylum applications, issues of integration and return and removal of irregular immigrants.

Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen the competent services with material and technical equipment, such as motor vehicles and related equipment for guarding the borders, motor vehicles for the transport of immigrants, improvement and/or creation of building infrastructure for the detention or accommodation of irregular immigrants. It is considered important to improve the national immigration policy as well as the strategy for the management of all procedures related to the examination of applications, with the ultimate goal of removing and repatriating irregular immigrants (European Commission, 2023-24). The development of bilateral cooperation with EU member states as well as with third countries is highlighted, so that a greater number of returns of irregular migrants can be achieved. In addition, in the context of migration policy regarding its future developments, welfare policies - strategies should be included, which strengthen the role of Frontex and EASO in matters of staff training, in support of cooperation with third countries, in the coordination of activities between EU member states and Greece, especially in the field of returns.

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