



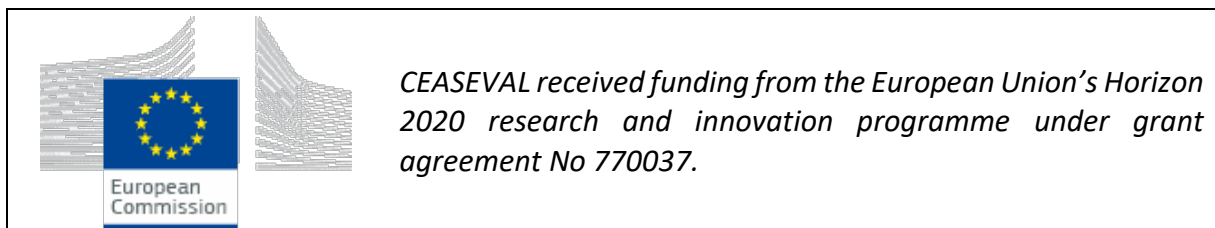
Borders and the mobility of migrants in Greece

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Chemnitz, August 2019

CEASEVAL
RESEARCH ON THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM; Nr. 28

CEASEVAL Research on the Common European Asylum System publishes results of empirical research conducted for the H2020 Project “CEASEVAL” (Evaluation of the Common European Asylum System).



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ISSN 2627-339X

Borders and the mobility of migrants in Greece

Abstract

Entry at the external borders and transit through the Schengen space have changed significantly post 2015. Greece, is undertaking a stricter border control management, returning to an extent to practices of the period 2010-2012, with detention and slow asylum processing function as a deterrent measure for future arrivals. The mobility of migrants thus, has changed, and in contrast to the 2015-2016 period, Greece functions more as a place of strandedness, limbo and immobility for most. The research seeks to show how bordering processes are implemented when confronted with the mobility of migrants at different stages, with a particular focus due to Greece's position at the external border, on interception on entry, and transit or secondary movement from Greece. The report documents the experiences and perceptions of border agents and actors involved in bordering processes, at the external border but also within Greece and of migrants arriving in Greece post 2015; their interaction with the border, their inclusion and/or exclusion in Greece legally and socially and whether and how this impacts their decision to continue their journey onwards or perhaps remain in Greece.

Keywords: hotspots, ESTIA, asylum, detention, pushbacks, Greece, Police, documents

Please cite as:

Dimitriadi, A. and Sarantaki, A.-M. (2019) 'Borders and the Mobility of Migrants in Greece', *CEASEVAL RESEARCH ON THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM*, 28. Available at: http://ceaseval.eu/publications/28_WP4_Greece.pdf

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1. Introduction

1.1. How does this report relate to the broader WP and CEASEVAL project

The aim of WP4 is to investigate the functioning of the EU's internal and external borders in the governance of migrants' mobility. It focuses on how bordering processes are implemented when confronted with the mobility of migrants at different stages, such as interception before entry into Schengen area (i.e. at sea), 'illegal' entry at external borders, 'irregular' transit, and secondary movements across internal borders after making asylum claims or being granted international protection.

Research sought to understand, the interaction between Schengen and Dublin, which for Greece are of importance as an external border of the EU, the drivers behind migrants' transit from Greece to other EU Member States and the interaction between mobility and border processes.

Thus, this report documents the experiences and perceptions of border agents and actors involved in bordering processes, at the external border but also within Greece and of migrants arriving in Greece post 2015; their interaction with the border, their inclusion and/or exclusion in Greece legally and socially and whether and how this impacts their decision to continue their journey onwards or perhaps remain in Greece.

1.2. Context and research questions

The purpose of the report is to understand the mobility trajectories of migrants at different stages in their journey and how it is shaped by migration and border policies.

The border in this context is approached in a dual but complementary manner. First by drawing from the analysis by Anderson (1996), the border is both an institution and a process. As an institution it delineates state sovereignty and rights of citizens. As a process, the border is an instrument of state policy but also of national identity, however this is a continuously changing process since policies shift and border controls (Anderson, 1996:1-3). This analysis is particularly useful in understanding the border processes undertaken by the institutions of the state at the border and their agents. However, bordering takes place not only at the actual frontier or within Schengen but also within the country. Through policies of inclusion and exclusion (See Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013) migrant presence is negotiated and at times produces secondary or transitory movement. By looking at the physical border crossing, but also (im)mobility within the country through the asylum process and housing access, a clearer picture emerges regarding recent arrivals in Greece post 2017.

It is important to note that the timing is important. The research took place with recent arrivals (see methodology below), which means the findings differ from those that have been produced by researches that took place in the period 2015-2016 (see Squire et al, 2016; Dimitriadi, 2017; Crowley et al 2016). Transit and secondary movement are discussed as a potential but in the absence of concrete plans and amidst a drastically different political landscape in Europe, it is worth remembering that migrant agency depends largely on capacity for its manifestation (Carling & Collins, 2018).

1.3. Methodological considerations

Research took place in Athens throughout 2018 with representatives from key actors involved in housing/accommodation including international organisations, the National Center for Social Solidarity, the Reception and Identification Service, one member of parliament, representatives from the Athens Municipality and police officers (see Table 1 below).

Request to access the hotspots was denied by the Ministry of Migration Policy as were all requests for interviews with Ministry officials. It was also not possible to get permission to undertake ethnographic work in the land border, since it coincided with an increase in arrivals. However, permission was granted for limited observation at the Athens International Airport to cover the air

border as well as undertake interviews with police officers there. This allowed for information on the border controls in the Schengen area as well as non-Schengen flights. The empirical research took place at Athens International Airport over a period of two days for seven (7) hours in total. As such, it was limited in scope. The aim was first and foremost to get a sense of the security checks, how border agents approached their job and what was an average day for them. Even though most irregular migrants enter through either sea and land border in Greece, air travel is not uncommon for transiting from Greece, through the usage of fraudulent documents. Points of fieldwork observation included the passport control (non-Schengen) Gate A, first line of security check (intra-Schengen) Gate B, and the duty officer passport control office.

Migrant interviews reflect experiences for land and maritime border entry, but also the experience of being in Greece, focusing mainly on access to housing that is a critical issue for most. This allows for a complementary picture of all three borders and bordering processes in Greece.

Throughout the summer of 2018 interviews took place with 15 migrants selected through a snowballing method. An effort was made to include women in the sample though this proved difficult partly due to the fact that many reside in camps and/or accommodation structures inaccessible to researchers. It had been noted since the beginning of the project that there is significant research fatigue amongst migrants and representatives of civil society organisations since 2016, which remains to this day. This made access problematic. Additional problem was the overlap in many cases between work packages of the CEASEVAL project, which required approaching the same people for different subjects. There is a limited number of officials involved in migration from the local to the national level and as a result in many cases they were unwilling to submit to an interview.

National legislators proved the most problematic, since in Greece these would be the Greek MPs. Research coincided with the vote on the name issue of the Republic of North Macedonia, which made accessibility impossible. This was further compounded by the speculation over national elections and the upcoming Municipal elections across the country, with the MPs either actively campaigning in favour of their party candidates and with little availability to participate to the research.

Table 1: Types of actors interviewed

Topic/category of stakeholder	Profile of interviewee	No. of interviews
Migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, irregular migrants)	Asylum applicants	7
	Refugees	3
	Police notice	2
	Undocumented (unregistered)	3
Border Agents (border guards, police / or NGOs and international organisations)	Border guards/police	5
	Ethnography (airport of Athens 7 hours)	
Legislators at National Level (or EU policymakers, international organisations)	international organisation	1
Legislators at National Level	MPs	1
Actors in the Housing or Labour Market	municipal actors, NGOs	5

2. The legal national framework for the bordering of asylum-seekers and refugees

2.1. Introduction of the chapter

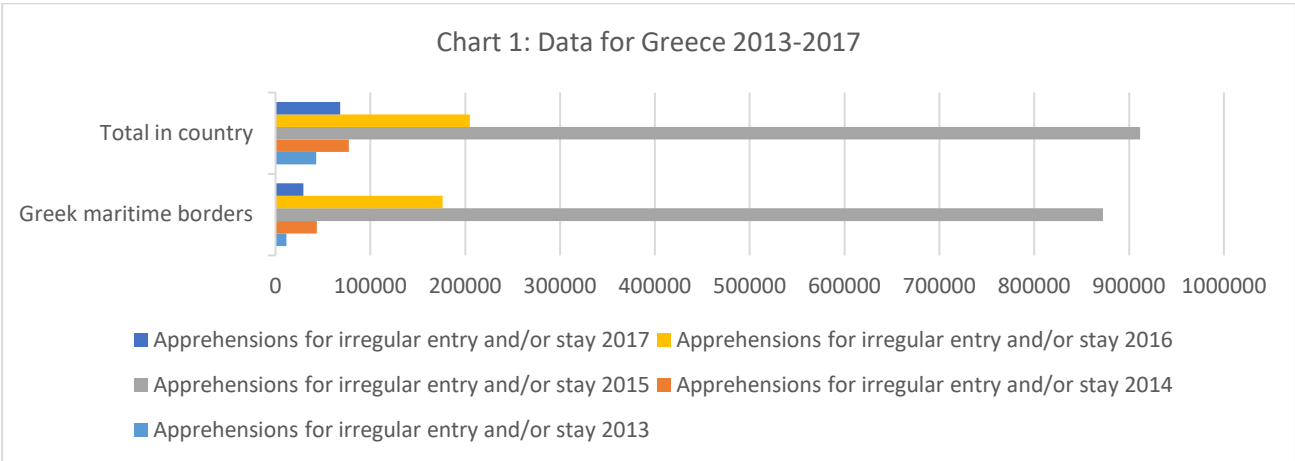
An external border of the EU and the Schengen area, Greece’s geography largely determines the country’s position in the migratory journey (Dimitriadi, 2017). The refugee “crisis” of 2015, was primarily a management crisis for Greece. Coinciding with domestic political and economic insecurity, a referendum on the bailout and the looming threat of Grexit, the arrival of the refugees took a backseat to unfolding political events (see also Report on Greece written within the framework of Work Package 5 of the CEASEVAL project). The implementation of the hotspot approach as per the European Agenda on Migration only begins in late 2015, with the closure of the Western Balkan route in early 2016 and the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016, initiating legal reform in Greece, a different asylum process on the islands and in the mainland and a broader division between the five islands of the north Aegean and the rest of the country as regards reception, asylum processing and services offered to asylum seekers.

2.2. General context

Migrants to Greece, for the past twenty years enter through two main routes; the land border with Albania and maritime and land border with Turkey.

The Greek-Turkish sea border initially (2004-2009) and eventually the land border (2009-2012) received the majority of arrivals originating from Asia and Africa, transiting through Turkey. The largest nationalities- aside from the Albanians -were the Afghans, followed by Pakistanis, Iraqi Kurds, Somalis and since 2014, the Syrians. Despite the increased treatment of irregular migration as a security matter by EU Member States (MS), deterrence policies undertaken by Greece, border patrols and overall difficulty in both reaching and accessing the external borders of the Union, flows decreased only temporarily and spiked once more post-2014 (see Chart 1 below).

Chart 1: Apprehension data for Greece 2013-2016



Source: Hellenic Police, compiled by author; total apprehension data reflect entry through air, land and sea as well as irregular stay. Greek maritime border indicates only apprehensions on the islands including Crete.

In 2015 alone, 856,723 people entered through the Greek maritime border according to UNHCR data. Of those, UNHCR estimates that 88% originated from the top ten refugee-producing countries, with Syrians constituting almost 60% of incoming numbers, followed by Afghans (20%). The qualitative nature of arrivals was also different. There were more families, women with children and

unaccompanied minors that in previous years. Since, arrivals fluctuate with a steady increase noticeable in the land border post 2016, which is outside the EU-Turkey Statement framework.

Table 2: Registered arrivals 2015-2018

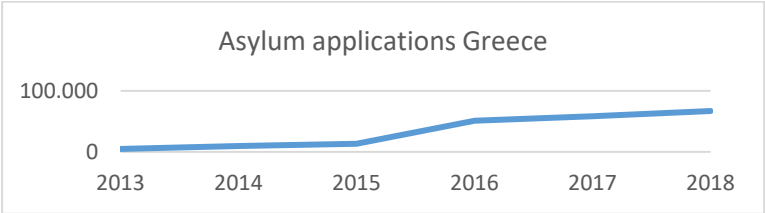
Year	Maritime Border	Land Border
2015	856,723	4,907
2016	173,450	3,784
2017	29,718	6,592
2018	32,494	18,014

Source: UNHCR Data portal, Greece¹

The top three nationalities of these irregular border crossings are mainly Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans for sea border and Syrians, Turkish, Pakistanis for land border (Frontex, 2018). In both cases, namely for the Greek land border and the Greek sea border, migrants use Turkey for transit on their journey to Europe and particularly to Greece. The main exit points from Turkey to Greece are the regions of Çeşme, Bodrum, Ayvalık and Dikili for the sea passage, as these locations are close to Lesbos, Samos, Chios and Kos, and the province of Edirne to the land border in Evros (IOM, 2017; 2016). As far as the air border is concerned, *‘most irregular migrants and asylum seekers arrive from Turkey and Iran, because there are direct flights to Athens airport from these countries’* (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16/07/2018).

Transit from Greece typically took place from the ports of Patras and Igoumenitsa (see Dimitriadi, 2017) until 2013-2014 when the border controls were enhanced with new technology and infrastructure. An already difficult exit became even more dangerous marking a decrease in transit movement from Greece to Italy. Nonetheless, in 2015, the de facto suspension of Dublin by Germany for all Syrians and the “open” borders through the Western Balkans, resulted in a new migratory corridor for transitory movement. Largely uncoordinated by state authorities people were able to transit quickly through the countries on the route to reach their intended destination (Dimitriadi et al., 2015). From the autumn of 2015 and until late February movement was more organised (ICMPD, 2019), with state authorities attempting to coordinate border crossings. The closure of the route in March 2016 kicked off a new phase both for migrants and Greece. The EU-Turkey statement of March 18th 2016, was accompanied by intra-Schengen border controls, transformation of hotspots from screening centres to detention facilities, and strandedness for people already on the move or intended to move. Greece transformed from a place of transit to a final destination, albeit an unintended one for many. This is also evident in the asylum applications from 2013 (when the asylum service becomes operational) till 2018, as seen in Chart 2 below:

Chart 2: Asylum applications 2013-2018



1 Available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>, last accessed 28/03/2019

Source: Greek Asylum Service, 2018, compiled by authors

Regarding asylum applications, in total, in 2018, 66,970 asylum applications were lodged to the Greek Asylum Service. Syrians continue to submit the most applications closely followed however by the Afghans (see Table 2). The presence of Turkish nationals is also relatively new. In the aftermath of the attempted coup in July 2016 in Turkey, Greece has been one of the main recipients of asylum applicants from Turkish citizens with most applications accepted.

Table 3: Main nationalities of asylum applicants, 2018

Asylum data 2018	
Top Countries of Origin	Asylum Applications
Syria	13,390
Afghanistan	11,926
Iraq	09,731
Pakistan	07,743
Turkey	04,834

Source: Greek Asylum Service, 2019.

Overall, a significant number of decisions were issued in 2018 though not necessarily for applications submitted that same year. Inadmissibility reflects largely applications submitted on the islands (a result of the EU-Turkey Statement framework of operation) while pending applications remain significantly high.

Table 4: 1st instance procedure, 2018

1 st instance procedure for 2018	Total
Asylum Applications	66,970
Refugee status	12,626
Subsidiary protection	02,579
Negative in substance	15,563
Inadmissibility	04,842
Withdrawals	10,713
Appeals	01,113
Pending applications	58,793

Source: Greek Asylum Service, 2019

The number of asylum applications based on the registration region manifests that most asylum seekers arrived in the Eastern Aegean islands. The asylum applications that were lodged in 2018 in the Eastern Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos amount to 32,020. Lesbos reached 17,270 asylum applications as opposed to 8,377 in Attica region. For the northern border, 7,369 asylum applications were lodged in Thessaloniki, 4,182 in Fylakio and 2,386 in Thrace (Data provided by the asylum Service, 2019).

There is no accurate figure of the migrant population in the country following the EU-Turkey Statement (including asylum seekers and those pending return). The Ministry of Migration Policy releases daily and weekly a situational picture of arrivals to the islands and of capacity and current number in the hotspots, however there is no equivalent estimate for the land border. However, a rough calculation would estimate the population at 42,000, counting the 15,141 on the five islands (as of 28/03/2019) and the 26,526 individuals in formal housing (see p.26). This estimate only considers registered individuals, however as this report shows many enter undetected and remain unregistered in urban centers making it likely that the actual number of those present is larger. According to estimates based on UNHCR records, over 200 persons have been on the islands since 2016, although this may also include persons who stay there due to lack of alternative options in the mainland. A recent opinion published by the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) notes that ‘the infrastructure and the services

offered in the hotspots are not designed for long-term stay. If people remain in the hotspots for months, it results in interference in a wide array of individuals' rights including right to human dignity, rights of the child and others' (FRA Opinion update 2019).

2.3. National border and asylum/refugee legislation

Greece is a signatory party to the Geneva Convention on Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967) as well as the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). Furthermore, it is bound by the EU legislation on the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which has been incorporated in national legislation. The CEAS framework has been developed so as to harmonise asylum processes and regulate mobility matters for third-country nationals after the abolition of internal border controls within the Schengen area.

The legislative framework for the entry and residence of third-country nationals into the country is outlined in the Law 3386/2005, with Presidential Decree (P.D.) 220/2007 focusing on asylum seekers reception, P.D. 114/2010 on asylum procedures and P.D. 131/2006 laying out family reunification. All legislative changes too place in order to transpose into national legislation the respective CEAS Directives². However, various gaps were detected in the implementation of the national asylum system. In 2011, the European Court of Human Rights and the Court of Justice of the EU found 'deficiencies in the asylum procedure' (ECtHR, 2011; Court of Justice, 2011). These Court judgements brought Greece's condemnation and the suspension of all Dublin transfers to the country.

To remedy the situation, Greece attempted to reform its asylum policy. In this context, it established an Asylum Service for the examination of international protection claims, an Appeals Committee and a First Reception Service (Law 3907/2011). Also, with P.D. 141/2013 it transported into national legislation the recast qualification Directive (Directive 2011/95/EU) and with Law 4375/2016 the recast asylum procedures Directive (Directive 2013/32/EU). Furthermore, in 2014 a new Migration Code (Law 4251/2014) was put in place focusing on third-country nationals' entry, stay and integration. The most recent legislative change is the Law 4540/2018 that restructured the reception system, in order to transpose to national legislation, the recast reception conditions Directive (Directive 2013/33/EU).

Table 5: Competence over migration and asylum policies

Migration Processes	Competent Authority
Migration policy	Ministry of Migration Policy
Asylum Processes	Asylum Service *EASO
Asylum application	
Dublin	
Relocation	
Appeal	Appeals Authority
Second appeal	Administrative Court of Appeal
Deportations, readmissions	Police
Voluntary returns	IOM
Border protection	Police, Coast Guard *Frontex
First reception	Reception and Identification Service, Secretary General for Reception (Ministry of Migration Policy)

2 Council Directive 2003/9/EC; Council Directive 2005/85/EC and Council Directive 2003/86/EC

Labour market	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, Hellenic Manpower Employment Organisation
Housing	Ministry of Migration Policy, UNHCR
Integration	Migrant Integration Centres, Ministry of Migration Policy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity

Source: compiled by authors

In general, once an asylum seeker or migrant enters the country irregularly, the Hellenic Police or the Hellenic Coast Guard conducts an initial identification and referral to a Reception and Identification Centre or Mobile Unit for first reception procedures. After the completion of the Identification procedures, the third-country nationals that request international protection are referred to the Asylum Service.

The Asylum Service, established in 2011, and operational since 2013, oversees the examination of international protection claims. Prior to Asylum Service's operation, Hellenic Police was responsible for processing asylum claims (P.D. No 81/2009). The Asylum Service is composed of the Central Administration as well as Regional Asylum Offices and asylum units where asylum seekers submit their asylum applications. To submit their applications, asylum seekers must first book an appointment via Skype, in order to register in the Asylum Service's database and the EURODAC database. Migrants are exempt from this process if they have already registered with the Hellenic Police (which is standard procedure, for example, in the hotspots). A date will be set for the interview, which is conducted by an Asylum Service case worker. However, this first instance examination particularly for those outside the hotspots and non-Syrians, can exceed two years (UNHCR, 2017). In case of a rejection, the applicant is entitled to submit an appeal to the Appeals Authority, else known as second instance.

The sharp rise in the inflow of asylum seekers and asylum applications created a major administrative challenge for national authorities. To assist frontline EU member states, like Greece that were 'facing disproportionate migratory pressures' (DG Home, 2019), the European Commission introduced in 2015 the 'hotspot' approach (European Commission, 2015) and the relocation scheme (Council Decision, 2015). The 'hotspot' approach refers to the provision of operational assistance from EU agencies to the frontline EU countries in identifying, registering, fingerprinting and debriefing incoming migrants and asylum seekers as well as the organisation of return operations. The relocation mechanism concerned the transfer of asylum seekers at EU level from Italy, Greece to other European states. This programme ended on 26 September 2017, although transfers continued to take place in 2018 that had already been accepted by Member States. In total, 22,822 relocation requests submitted by Greece had been accepted for the transfer of asylum seekers to other EU member states (Asylum Service, 2018).

Since 2016, major variations in the asylum process emerged. An example of asylum divergence constitutes the relocation scheme. The relocation programme was an emergency mechanism. It concerned only third-country nationals that entered Greece after 16 September 2015 from countries for which the rate of granting international protection was over 75% based on Eurostat. The relocation beneficiaries had to submit their application for international protection to the Greek Asylum Service, but, in case of relocation, the application was examined by the authorities of the EU member state to which the asylum seeker was relocated and was granted or denied asylum there. Relocation beneficiaries were transferred by IOM, which also provided pre-departure health assessments and pre-departure orientation.

Greece was asked to establish the hotspots as early as June 2015. Yet, bureaucratic delays and objections from local societies on the islands delayed the project. For the implementation of the 'hotspot' approach, five 'hotspots', or Reception and Identification Centres, were established in the Eastern Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos. The first hotspot, Moria in Lesbos, was introduced on October 2015. The island of Lesbos alone received roughly 140,000 new arrivals between October and November 2015. By the end of November, Samos and Leros were also operational, with the hotspot in Chios opening in February 2016. The last hotspot opened on the island of Kos in the Spring of 2016 (Dimitriadi 2017:79). Initially the hotspots functioned as described in the European Agenda on Migration, as screening centres. However, the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016 altered the role and operation of the hotspots from screening centres to detention facilities (see Section 1 legal framework). The Statement resulted in a new border zone. The islands situated on the Greek-Turkish sea border function to this day as a buffer zone for onward mobility to the mainland and by extension the rest of the Schengen area. In these 'hotspots', the EU agencies, especially EASO, has an 'expanded involvement' and 'instrumental role' (HIAS, 2018) contributing with staff and expertise. However, the role of the EU agencies has raised legitimacy considerations for the 'hotspot' operation (Saranti *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, after the signature of the EU-Turkey Statement (Council of the EU, 2016), a fast-track border procedure has been implemented. The fast-track border procedure is applicable to asylum seekers arriving after 20 March 2016 on the Greek islands. In the fast-track border procedure, the registration of asylum applications as well as the notification of decisions can be conducted by staff of the Hellenic Police or the Armed Forces. Moreover, the asylum interview can be conducted either by Asylum Service or EASO staff. In total, the asylum procedure should be concluded within two weeks (L4375/2016; Greek Council for Refugees, 2017).

To implement the fast-track border procedure, the 'hotspots' transformed into closed detention centres. The EU-Turkey Statement foresees that all migrants who arrived on Greek islands via Turkey or who are intercepted in the Aegean Sea after the 20th of March 2016 will be returned to Turkey, and particularly Syrians. Following that, the newcomers were detained to facilitate returns for those whose asylum application was deemed inadmissible or rejected on merit.

The implementation of the EU 'hotspot' approach and the relocation mechanism as well as the adoption of the EU-Turkey Statement in March 2016, brought significant changes in the asylum process. These changes became consolidated in the asylum system with amendments in the national legislation. In this context, in November 2016 Greece created the Ministry of Migration Policy, separating migration and asylum from the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform (P.D. 123/2016). The Ministry of Migration Policy became responsible for the governance of all migration policy. In March 2016, a Coordinating Body for the Management of the Refugee Crisis was established. This inter-ministerial body, composed by the ministries of National Defence, Citizen Protection, Migration Policy, Infrastructure, Transports and Networks, Marine, and the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace has the task to organise and coordinate the management of migration and the establishment of reception centres (Ministry of National Defence, 2016; Left.gr, 2016).

In April of the same year Law 4375/2016 was adopted to enable the implementation of the 'hotspot' approach and the EU-Turkey Statement. This Law introduced a partial reform of the asylum application processing based on fast-track border procedures (Law 4375/2016³; Respond, 2018⁴). Furthermore, it regulated the organisation and operation of the Asylum Service, the Appeals Authority and renamed

3 Law 4375/2016. Available at <https://www.refworld.org/docid/573ad4cb4.html>

4 Respond (2018) 'Greece-Country report: Legal and policy framework of migration governance', University of the Aegean. Paper 2018/04

the First Reception Service as Reception and Identification Service (Law 4375/2016). It is worth noting that the legal reform of the First Reception Service did not originate as a response to the absence of sufficient reception services but in an effort to implement the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016 (Dimitriadi, 2017a). According to L4375/2016 newly arrived persons should be transferred to a Reception and Identification Centre, where they shall be 'placed under a status of restriction of liberty'. This refers to a 3-day restriction of freedom within the premises of the centre, which can be further extended by a maximum of 25 days if reception and identification procedures have not been completed (L4375/2016). This practice has been replaced by the implementation of geographical restriction. Newcomers cannot leave the island where they were registered until the end of the asylum process, namely throughout the duration of the examination of their asylum application (Greek Council for Refugees, 2018). Even those transferred from the island to the mainland for vulnerability reasons, must return to the island where they submitted their application for the interview and final processing of the claim.

Except from the Eastern Aegean islands, variations in the asylum process also exist in the Greek-Turkish land border in Evros. Newcomers in Evros undergo reception and identification procedures at the Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) in Fylakio, at Orestiada, where they are being subject to a restriction of freedom of movement within the premises of the Reception and Identification Centre. However, asylum applications lodged by asylum seekers in the RIC of Fylakio are not examined under the fast-track border procedure (Greek Council for Refugees, 2018).

The different border procedures as well as the continuous influx of asylum seekers and irregular migrants pose a strain to the national reception capacities. According to estimations, approximately 60,000 refugees and migrants currently live in the country (European Commission, 2018).

Structures for asylum seekers' accommodation can have the following forms or a combination of these forms: accommodation in premises used for the purpose of housing applicants during the examination of an application for international protection made at the border or in transit zones; accommodation centres established in suitably adapted public or private buildings, managed by public or private non-profit organisations or international organisations; and private houses, flats or hotels leased as part of housing programs for applicants, operated by public or private non-profit organisations or international organisations (L4540/2018; Council of Europe, 2018). The competent authority for reception, the Reception and Identification Service under the Ministry of Migration Policy, in cooperation with other state authorities, international organisations or social entities, is responsible for the provision of material reception conditions. The provision of all or part of the material reception conditions depends on asylum seekers' insufficient resources to maintain an adequate standard of living (L4540/2018).

The Greek government developed 30,000 reception places in collective accommodation schemes to respond to the urgent needs of the refugee crisis (Interview with IO representative, 08.06.2018). However, there are still significant shortages in reception, as '*there are not enough reception places in accommodation centres and apartments*' (Interview with Vice Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralisation, Athens Municipality, 22/05/2018) and most housing options are not permanent (Interview with Senior representative of the Municipality of Athens, 31/05/2018). For instance, in December 2018, during winter, over 12,500 people were still living in tents or containers in the islands of Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Kos, and Leros (Amnesty International, 2018). These persons have no access to kitchen or private toilette (Interview with international organisation representative, 08/06/2018). Also, buildings that now function as accommodation centers were not designed to host asylum seekers. On the contrary they operated as military camps or warehouses. This shift in function poses major challenges to their infrastructure conditions and reception standards (Interview with International organisation representative, 08/06/2018).

The 2017 Eurodac annual report shows that out of 633,324 asylum applicants recorded in Eurodac, 257,163 had already made a previous application in EU country (Eurodac, 2017). The rise in the number of persons that attempted to reach northern European countries irregularly with Greece as a transit country has triggered a division within the EU manifested in the discussion over Greece's expulsion from Schengen (Oliveira, 2016), the reintroduction of border controls at internal borders to prevent secondary movements (DG Home, 2019) as well as security checks at German airports on flights from Greece (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16/07/2018; Chrysopoulos, 2017).

The fundamental issue for Greece was and remains the Dublin regulation, which at present functions complementary to the hotspot approach. The latter "restricts" mobility within Greece while the former deters secondary movement within Schengen.

For the migrants, Dublin is understood as a restriction, an obstacle in their journey and less as a concrete policy. Most were aware that their fingerprinting if taken in Greece could result in their return should they reach another country however in itself it did not appear to be a deterrent factor. Rather, as the empirical evidence show (see Ch 4), the journey itself and the experiences in Greece tend to deter some from moving forward irregularly.

1.1. Conclusion of the chapter

The increased migrant flows during the 2015 refugee crisis challenged Greece's capacity to implement the CEAS policy and provide reception services to asylum seekers. The situation worsened in March 2016 after the closure of the Western Balkans transit corridor. The closure of borders signaled that Greece from a transit country for migrants and asylum seekers in their journey to northern European countries became a country of destination or prolonged stay. This change severely strained the country's preparedness to respond to the new migration dynamics and national capacity to process new asylum claims as well provide harmonised reception conditions and services to the asylum seeker population residing in Greece.

3. Empirical research with institutional actors

3.1. Introduction

Greece has two types of institutional border actors. The Hellenic Police, which is responsible for both the external and the internal border as regards irregular entry, stay and/or exit, and the Hellenic Coastguard, which is responsible for the internal and external maritime border as regards irregular entry and/or exit. Other actors are also involved in border controls. The European Border and Coastguard Agency (FRONTEX) has had a presence on the Greek maritime and land border for years, strengthened particularly during the refugee “crisis”. Following the EU-Turkey Statement, a NATO patrol was set up in the Aegean sea, to monitor and collect data for smuggling operations in the Greek-Turkish maritime border.

Operating at the border, though of different capacity is also the European Asylum Support Office, which was deployed in 2016 initially at Idomeni and later in the hotspots to assist with asylum processing. Finally, the Greek Asylum Service, operates both at the borders but also in the mainland and is a significant institutional actor to consider both for secondary movement, transit but also stay in Greece.

Migrants encounter multiple borders and on arrival have to undergo a process of registration/asylum and/or detention that in one way or another are managed by border agents. The focus on this chapter thus is on the institutional border agents, namely the police but also the asylum service since it is perhaps the most critical border agent both for the external but also internal border and most ‘influential’ for regulating the mobility of migrants.

3.2. Institutionalised bordering practices performed by border agents

Since the 2000s, Greece has been — and to this day remains — a critical pathway of entry for migrants crossing from Asia and Africa. The Greek-Turkish sea border initially (2004–2009) and eventually the land border (2010–2012) bore the brunt of arrivals. Between 2013 and 2014 a significant reduction in apprehensions takes place, with a gradual shift from land to sea border once more. When in 2015, the Syrian influx begins, 99% of arrivals enter Greece through the maritime border.

The primary border agent for the sea border is the Hellenic Coastguard. They are responsible for Search and Rescue and for disembarkation, however once migrants disembark in the designated ports, the responsibility shifts to the hands of the Hellenic Police. These were two the border agents that migrants also encountered on arrival. However, in late 2015 and early 2016, as arrivals moved from the islands to the mainland, and onward to Idomeni to continue through the Western Balkan Route, the internal border acquired particularly significance.

It is important to note that post March 2016, there are three different ‘border zones’ in Greece. The islands hosting the hotspots have transformed into a border zone separate from the external border and the mainland, institutionally but also legally. The Greek-Turkish land border has become once more an attractive entry point since 2017 and the air border remains a preferred choice of movement for those who can afford to purchase fraudulent documents or who already have international protection.

The following section seeks to describe the three different processes and institutional actors migrants encounter on arrival to the country. The first pertains to those arriving to the maritime border, and the second to those already in the mainland, undocumented or with expired documents. The final process refers to those entering through the land border.

3.2.1. Maritime border

When in 2015 migrants begun arriving at the islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros, there were no facilities available. Most had shut down in the period 2010-2012 when the overwhelming number

of migrants entered through the land border. The only Reception facility in place in Greece, had opened in 2013 at Fylakio, in the Evros region.

Informal camps were set up to temporarily host the arrivals, however in August of 2015 alone, there were times where on the island of Lesbos 9000 people were estimated to wait for a place on a boat to leave for Athens or Thessaloniki. A similar situation existed on the other islands, with additional boats rented by the Greek government to facilitate the transit of migrants (Souliotis, 2015).

For those entering through the maritime border, the institutional actors responsible are the Hellenic Coastguard for Search and Rescue and disembarkation (in cooperation with FRONTEX if a patrol is in place) and the Hellenic Police for organising the screening and fingerprinting process. However, in the early days of 2015 there was little organisation and coordination of the different actors on the ground. It is not until early September 2015 that additional EURODAC machines are ordered for the islands and temporary transfers from the mainland to the Hellenic Police on the islands

'I was told to go to Leros, and a week later I was there. I had a week to sort out everything, house, finances etc. And when I got there, it was chaos' (Interview, Senior Hellenic Police officer, 24/7/2018)

Registration on the islands was a slow process, partly due to lack of fingerprinting machines, infrastructure, manpower but also sheer number of people arriving. Those registered were issued with a police paper, which allowed them to travel to the mainland and from then on to the land border for the Republic of Northern Macedonia.

The introduction of the hotspot approach and the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016 changed the landscape completely. Search and Rescue followed by disembarkation

For those arriving after 20 March 2016, a different asylum procedure is in place, with the inadmissibility of claims first examined based on the "safe third country" and "first country of asylum" rules. Those whose claims are found inadmissible, or whose asylum has been rejected on merit, are in theory returnable to Turkey. As Turkey does not readmit migrants who moved from the islands to the Greek mainland, those who could potentially be sent back to Turkey are forced to stay on the island effectively trapped pending their return⁵. Even though returns are rare, the hotspots and the Statement are perceived to perform their role.

One of the interviewees noted that it is only after the EU-Turkey Statement that a significant reduction took place because Turkey *'finally decided to start preventing the border crossings to Greece'* (Interview, Senior Hellenic Police officer II, 24/7/2018).

The migrants are able to leave the islands only if they receive international protection or if they are exempt from the border procedure due to vulnerability of family reunification under the Dublin Regulation. Police checks take place at the ports on the islands at a regular basis and since 2017 ticket services are requested to ask for id/passports before issuing tickets, to avoid asylum applicants from leaving the islands. Vulnerability assessment, however, can take weeks or even months and as a recent opinion issued by the Fundamental Rights Agency notes that 'Thousands of asylum applicants including families with small children and other vulnerable people had to live in sub-standard conditions in extended areas of the hotspot. The Greek government implemented since September 2018 a decongestion strategy aimed at transferring those whose geographical restriction was lifted: for

5 A Council of State ruling annulled the 2016 decision of the Director of the Greek Asylum Service imposing a restriction of movement on asylum seekers arriving on the islands. Two days after the ruling, the Greek Asylum Service issued a new decision justifying the geographical restrictions to facilitate the implementation of the EU Turkey statement and the processing of asylum requests. (Decision of the Greek Asylum Service Director No. 8269, Gov. Gazette B' 1366/20.04.2018). The decision was modified in October 2018, exempting vulnerable applicants and family reunification cases under the Dublin Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013.

example, in December 2018, it accelerated the transfers to the mainland, particularly from Samos and Lesbos. Despite all the transfers to decongest the islands, overcrowding remains critical.’ (FRA, 2019: 25).

3.2.2. Mainland border

As the Western Balkan route gradually closed, and the hotspot approach was introduced to the islands, mobility from the external maritime border to the border with the Republic of Northern Macedonia reduced. Before the closure of the W.Balkan route rough 14000 people remained trapped in Idomeni, eventually to be transferred to camps set up in the north of Greece.

The closure of the Western Balkan route was not generally well received in Greece and one of the interviewees echoed the sentiment *‘It was good while the Western Balkan route was open. People could leave Greece and it was good for them but also good for us [he means Greece]’* (interview with Senior Police Officer II, 24/7/2018).

The closure meant that a significant portion of the migrants were transferred to camps but also returned to the urban centers.

The Aliens Division of the Hellenic Police, responsible for irregular entry and exit, is situated in Athens, in Petrou Ralli. The police used to be responsible in the decade 1990s-2000s for asylum processing and became infamous for high rejection rates. Since the establishment of the Greek Asylum Service in 2011 and its official operation in 2013, the police has retained control over document screening (identification, forged papers, etc), trafficking and smuggling, detention and return of undocumented migrants and rejected asylum seekers. It has thus, focused significantly on the internal border and as was noted by interviewees, police operations reflect the need to guard and protect the internal ‘border’. This is achieved primarily through the so called ‘sweeps’, police operations targeting urban centers and areas with significant migrant population. Operation Xenios Zeus of 2012, became eventually mainstreamed into daily police patrols that undertake random stop-and-search operations identifying migrants that cannot produce documents or whose documents are considered to be suspicious. They are then transferred to P.Ralli in Athens or other police stations across the country (depending where the checks are taking place) for identification, detention (if applicable) and in theory deportation.

In practice, this means that persons undocumented or with forged documents are detained initially for a few days or weeks in P.Ralli and depending on whether the arrest is for administrative detention or penal prosecution which requires court, the individual is either transferred to a pre-removal facility (in Athens this is Amygdaleza) awaiting deportation or to a prison awaiting for court appearance. When visiting the facility for interviews in July 2018, it was almost at capacity. Officers showed us around the space, and they explained that precisely because returns are coordinated from there, there is significant bureaucracy involved.

In discussion with a senior P.Ralli officer he explained that most apprehended have entered either through the land and sea border with Turkey or from the land border with Albania [refers specifically to Albanians this route]. He also noted that there is a significant percentage of those who enter from air legally and overstay their visa often for years but this is applicable mostly to those coming in from Georgia and Ukraine [and refers mostly to women who come and work in the informal labour market-domestic work]

‘primarily they come from Turkey and seek to transit from Greece. In the past Italy was the preferred destination, they would cross from Patras to Ancona. For some the journey continues to countries where they have friends and relatives. But increasingly it stops here’ (interview with Senior Police Officer II, 24/7/2018).

This reflection is accurate as the discussion with migrants below will show. Irrespective of the desire to transit, onward movement has become extremely difficult not only because of the closure of the

Western Balkan (which was a very new and temporary route) but primarily because border controls have increased prior to 2015 to the ports of Patras and Igoumanitsa.

4.2.3. Land border

The situation on the Greek islands and the EU-Turkey Statement have led to a resurgence of the land border route from Turkey to Greece. The land border, usually referred amongst migrants and officials as the 'Evros route' (named after the river Evros)

One interview drew a direct link between Turkey's visa policies and irregular entry to Greece

'Most irregular migrants and asylum seekers arrive from Turkey and Iran, because there are direct flights to Athens airport from these countries. Apart from these nationalities, we have many Albanians that use a false entry/exit stamp, as they have the right to remain in the Schengen zone only for 90 days.' (Interview, Police Major Hellenic Police II, 16/7/2018)

Most of the interviewees that participated in this research had sought to enter through the land border. The latter was either as an alternative entry point after failed attempts via sea or as the 'safest' option considering the detention practices on the Greek islands. This finding shows how the Statement and the hotspot implementation in Greece have resulted in shifting migratory flows to the land border once more.

Those entering from the land border are exempt from the EU-Turkey Statement and thus fall under the regular asylum procedure. Upon being apprehended, they are transferred to the local police stations for fingerprinting and registration. In most cases, they are detained for a few days or weeks and released with a police notice that allows them to travel to Athens where they can make an appointment to submit an asylum request (see section on migrants).

The aforementioned practices are not new. In fact, one could argue that they are a return to the border practices of 2012, when apprehension detention and eventual release was the most standard practice. Additionally, and this is also present in some of the migrant experiences shared in this research, there have been several allegations regarding mistreatment by the police, including physical and verbal as well as push backs through the land border. The most recent CPT report highlighted both issues, explicitly stressing that 'the delegation received several consistent and credible allegations from foreign nationals about physical ill-treatment by police and border guard officers or (para-)military commandos in the context of push-back operations' (CPT Report on Greece, 2019:34). Furthermore, there have been (unsubstantiated) findings in this research that describe push-back operations of new arrivals apprehended at the border (see section 4), as well as experiences of detention for unknown lengths of time with little information as to the why and for how long.

Though the Hellenic Police vehemently denies undertaking push-back operations, in fact the experiences described by migrants in this research resemble strongly the border management practices of the period 2010-2012, before the "crisis", when detention and deterrence were the main modus operandi of the institutional actors at the borders (see Angeli *et al.*, 2014).

4.2.4. Air border

Of the three borders, ethnographic observation took place for two days at the International Airport of Athens, both for intra-Schengen flights and for non-Schengen destinations. Interviews were also conducted with police officers at the airport undertaking passport controls. Thus, the present analysis is overwhelmingly based on the ethnographic observation conducted and interviews with police officers at the airport.

Passport officers confirmed that they take additional time with non-EU passports and especially from countries from the Middle East and Asia and overall have a high rate of success in identifying forged documents

'Very few migrants leave from Greece with false documents. Apart from counterfeit documents, there are also many imposters, namely original documents used by another person. This is why we pay extra attention to the photo of the travel document and the physical characteristics of the person.' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major II, 16.07.2018)

Particular attention is paid to families and unaccompanied children, in the passport control and especially on departure. Officers noted that controls tend to be more cautious at the arrival gates, for entry to the country.

'They are many passengers that try to use a counterfeit visa. In this case, we confiscate their counterfeit visas and we declare these passengers as unwanted denying them their entry to the country. Then, the air company schedules their return to their country.' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16.07.2018).

Since there is no passport control within the Schengen area, checks take place at random. First point of control is the scanning of the ticket. At the entrance of Gate B (Schengen) there is a small table where 4 police officers stand, in uniform. At the time of the observation all officers were male. They are there to address any issues with electronic tickets that fail the scan, but also potentially stop anyone for a random passport check.

The second stage of control is luggage check- for liquids, electronic equipment, etc. Passport controls take place should a suspicious item is identified. Otherwise, taking into account, that this is an intra-Schengen zone, the police officers conduct random checks.

Should someone be stopped for a random check, they are asked to provide their travel document and identify their destination. Usually they limit the check to confirming the passport photo matches the person present, however according to one of the police officers that was observed, it depends on the police officer and especially on the experience that the police officer has (Participatory Observation, Athens International Airport, 16/07/2018). Police officers carry a scanner with UV black Light so as to check if the travel document is counterfeit. Should the document prove suspicious, they contact their colleagues at the passport desk and the individual is transferred to a separate office for further checks. Overall, police in the past year has identified *'many forged TDV documents (titre de voyage) issued from Germany or Austria'* (Interview with Hellenic Police Major II, 16.07.2018)

On both days random checks were observed. On the 1st day, during the 3,5 hours present a total of 21 persons were stopped for passport check. Of those, 5 were persons of colour, 9 were clearly of Muslim faith, mostly men and of young age including 3 women, 7 Caucasian people including a family and 2 women.

Of those 9 persons were transferred to the restricted area for further examination of their travel documents (which included Greek identity card, passport, foreign identity card). Mostly they were young men and one young woman with a headscarf.

The random checks of the second day, included 15 persons of Muslim origin (most were men, including a family), 1 person from Asia, 2 Caucasians of which one was female. Most of the young men were transferred to the restricted area for further examination of their travel documents.

One of the main questions during the observation was how passengers are chosen, particularly in the intra Schengen area where passport controls are not obligatory. Police officers stressed they take into account the behaviour and the attitude of the passengers. According to one officer, in this critical position experience is very important:

'We do selective intra-Schengen security checks at different points. In general, we have four checkpoints: in the public transport (train, bus) area, the counters of the air companies, during the entry of the passenger in the intra-Schengen area, and with police patrols at the gates. We select different persons to check based on their behaviour and their outfits. This is a type of profiling and we conduct a police check. We check their travel documents and if the photo matches the person that is the holder of the document. We can also do a short interview with questions. For the intra-Schengen area, the air

companies are responsible for the validity of the travel documents of the passengers. For this reason, we have trained their staff adequately' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major , 16.07.2018)

This type of profiling is not uncommon. Khosravi in the "Illegal Traveller" (2007) describes how his smuggler had forewarned him that border crossing was a performance, however 'if you are self-assured you can cross any border even with the worst passport in your hand. But your body can betray you, and border guards can recognise the tell-tale signs at once (Donnan and Wilson 1999:131). Police officers explained that they do look for signs of agitation, incorrect dressing code (and specifically shoes), etc. Body performance is crucial in crossing successfully the border.

If the document is counterfeit, a criminal case kicks off and they are transferred to the detention facility. Persons can be detained approximately for 3-4 days. This is the time-period that is required for a criminal case to be build, since fake passports and counterfeit documents fall under the scope of trafficking which requires that the detainee is being examined by the investigating magistrate.

In contrast, traveling without documents which falls under administrative detention and deportation (i.e. it is an administrative violation not criminal). In the administrative case, all relevant information *'are forwarded to the Aliens Department, Unit of Returns, of the Hellenic Police. Then, this Department is responsible for the return of these persons. The whole process and the return of these persons can take up to one month'* (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16.07.2018).

Absence of documents is more common within the Schengen where checks for identity documents are random.

3.3. Institutionalised bordering practices performed by EU and national legislators

National legislators are primarily members of Parliament, and originally the aim was to approach representatives from each political party. However, the time of the research coincided with the creation of the European parliament election lists, the vote on the name issue of North Macedonia and the potential for a sudden national election in May 2019. As such, most of those approached either declined or failed to respond.

Thus, only one national legislator was successfully contacted from the party in government, SYRIZA and the views presented appear to be more in line with the party's ideological agenda rather than actual practices on migration governance.

An element that was highlighted was that neither Schengen nor Dublin are performing as planned.

All interviewees, whether border agents, policy makers or migrants in one way or another noted that the Dublin provisions are problematic for Greece and for the migrants.

'Unfortunately, the Dublin arrangements do not help Greece. No migrant or asylum seeker wants to stay in Greece. Instead, Greece constitutes a transit country. If they continue to return these persons, Greece will become a human warehouse'. (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16.07.2018)

This was also confirmed in the discussion with a Member of the Hellenic Parliament (MP) who noted that Dublin needs to be revised on a different basis. He acknowledged that the current system is not functional and that *"It has been deconstructed since the crisis of 2015."* (Interview with MP, 01.02.2019).

He noted that the internal borders have not really been abolished within Schengen, a reference to the various passport checks taking place at airports around Europe for flights originating from Greece. This was also confirmed by the interviews undertaken with police officials.

'Borders are a deterrent to human mobility. Yet, at the same time ... borders are a form of protection for the persons that are inside the borders' (Interview with MP, 01.02.2019).

He discussed how despite the Schengen area, and by virtue of the CEAS there is differentiation between the Greek borders and the EU internal borders, which in his view has resulted in the

entrapment of migrants in Greece. Similar sentiments were echoed by border agents interviewed and it is in line with a broader discussion that has taken place in Greece (See Work Package 5 report of the CEASEVAL project)

'The refugee wave in 2015 abolished the feeling of borders. In a way it showed how the imaginary border line can be crossed by persons that are in need.' The maritime border is in fact more difficult to protect, simply because there is an obligation to undertake search and rescue *'But the media and the use of border as a political tool has augmented the border narrative'* (Interview with MP, 01.02.2019). Interestingly he noted that in recent years, the calls for border protection have increased, which in his view augments a problem that is not as magnified as it appears.

Though not a legislator, it is worth noting that the link between Schengen and Dublin was highlighted also by the police officers, with Schengen and Dublin discussed as two sides of the same coin.

'It seems that Schengen provisions reinforce irregular migration. Unfortunately, Greece is an EU external border and we have near us countries that are in war. Most migrants that arrive in Greece they do not want to stay here. Instead, they want to go to the Scandinavian counties, Germany and the United Kingdom. Some of them will qualify for family unification and go to these countries with the Dublin regulation' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major, 16.07.2018).

In other words, Schengen perpetuates irregular migration and secondary movement due to the abolition of internal border controls and Dublin can facilitate in rare cases departure from Greece, which otherwise functions as a place of transit and/or strandedness. This was one of the surprising findings of the research, the very clear understanding police officers had of the impact of EU policies not only on Greece but also on the migrants.

Greece's vulnerability was highlighted by everyone contacted for this research. It is a vulnerability constructed due to the country's geographical position and nearness to Turkey, but also perpetuated and heightened by the interplay between Schengen and Dublin

'Schengen and Dublin transform Greece into a prison for migrants' (interview with Senior Police Officer , 24/7/2018).

Most voiced a rather common (see Work Paper 5 report of the CEASEVAL project also) complaint in Greece; that the country is asked to ensure the "problem" (i.e. migrants) does not reach the rest of Europe. The country is perceived *'in this is a victim, the gatekeeper of Europe'* (interview with Senior Police Officer, 24/7/2018).

3.4. Institutionalised bordering practices performed by actors in the housing sector

If borders determine one's mobility, while in the country inclusion and exclusion are managed through administrative processes, legislation, access to employment, health care and living conditions to name a few.

Asylum seekers in Greece can work and have the right to issue social security and employment documents. In practice, the economic crisis has crippled both the formal and informal economy. Insufficient language skills, particularly in low skilled jobs that require Greek, further exacerbate an already difficult situation. Bureaucracy is an additional factor, requiring in many cases for NGOs to intervene and accompany asylum seekers in their attempt to issue the appropriate social service number and employment papers.

Asylum seekers have the right to free public health care, and in practice they do though with significant difficulties since hospitals are understaffed and overwhelmed particularly after the economic crisis. Absence of interpreters, medical records and ability to track patient progress (particularly for mobile populations) also affects, though to a lesser extent, access to health care.

Finally, asylum seekers have the right to reside either in an official accommodation facility or to rent on their own though the State is obligated to provide housing support. Renting, requires financial

capital not available to everyone. Formal housing options, until 2015 were extremely limited in Greece and to this day, the accommodation scheme is not implemented by the Greek government but by UNHCR with implementing partners (NGOs).

Housing has consistently been a problem in Greece for asylum seekers, even prior to the refugee crisis of 2015. Until recently official accommodation structures were managed by the National Center for Social Solidarity (NSCC), a social institution which has a Service for the Management of Accommodation Requests of Asylum Seekers and Unaccompanied Minors. There were 14 structures for adult asylum seekers operating consistently over the years at a full capacity. As a result, there were problems of availability for new accommodation requests. As of 2018, the adults' accommodation is no longer the responsibility of the NSCC with competence handed over to the Ministry for Migration Policy. A total of 26 open reception facilities are under the supervision of the Ministry for Migration Policy across mainland Greece. These are separate from the accommodation for minors and other formal accommodation schemes. Open reception primarily refers to camps and, in some cases, hotels spread primarily between mainland and northern Greece (data from Ministry for Migration Policy, December 2018).

The NSCC maintains as of 2019 responsibility over unaccompanied minors and their accommodation, with adult asylum seekers that have registered offered available spaces either in camps or in other accommodation places provided by the ESTIA program (interview with the Director of Social Protection, National Center for Social Solidarity, 06/06/2018 Athens). Though not the focus of this research it is important to note that for minors, the emerging picture regarding accommodation remains gloom. A recent article in Kathimerini (Georgiopolou, 2019) notes that the official figures of unaccompanied minors in Greece are at 3,708 (as of February 15 2019) mostly from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Of those only 923 are in housing accommodation appropriate for their needs and age. Roughly 600 minors are estimated to sleep rough (i.e. on the streets), with 700 still detained in the Reception and Identification Centers alongside adults and another 82 in police centers across the country. This was confirmed by the Director of Social Protection who noted that

'Almost the 2/3 of the children are out of suitable accommodation structures. There are not enough accommodation places and there are problems with the accommodation structures that operate.' (interview with the Director of Social Protection, National Center for Social Solidarity, 06/06/2018 Athens)

In 2018 six guest houses for minors closed, due to delays in funding from the government to NGOs, which in turn relates to limited absorption of EU funding through the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund.

A different situation exists for adult asylum seekers.

It is important to note that although there is some level of geographical dispersion of migrants in the Greek territory, this is not obligatory. The Greek system differs significantly from other EU Member States, in that regions and municipalities do not have competence over migration nor integration and they are not obligated to host accommodation facilities in their area (including refugee camps, rented flats, hotels etc). This means that any geographical dispersion achieved, is the result of the willingness of some regions and municipalities to contribute to the reception and integration of migrants. However, rather than optional as a representative from the Municipality of Athens, the geographical distribution should become compulsory and permanent as a potential also solution to addressing racism and xenophobia in certain areas

'We need to develop a permanent housing policy with a distribution of asylum seekers across the Greek territory so as to avoid any protests from the local societies and the rise of far-right groups. Greeks have been deeply affected by the economic crisis. So, we need to keep a balance between the policies targeting asylum seekers and refugees and those for Greek nationals. This is very important at local level to prevent asylum seekers from feeling marginalised in one geographic region and Greeks from

feeling that there is no money invested for them.' (Interview with senior advisor from Athens Municipality, 31/05/2018 Athens).

Migrants in Athens have experienced this perhaps more than anywhere else in Greece. As noted, *'The city of Athens concentrates 30% of the refugees that live in the Greek mainland. Most of them live in the neighbourhoods of Viktoria, Omonoia, Metaxourgeio and Kypseli. After all, in these areas where there is apartment availability'* (Interview with Vice-Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralization, 22/05/2018, Athens).

These are also the areas where for a period of time in the past decade apartments and houses would fall into disarray due to high maintenance costs. Rather than keeping them vacant, owners opted renting them to undocumented migrants and asylum seekers at exurban costs (in comparison to living conditions offered). This resulted in a type of segregation. In most of these areas, migrants that have been in Greece for many years have opened their own small shops, internet cafes and garment businesses.

The emergence of a ghetto quickly became apparent in the years 2011-2014, with the refugee 'crisis' posing an additional risk as more migrants entered the Greek territory and the urban centers. The population of asylum seekers quickly expanded in Athens. Traditionally migrants live in the area of the 6th Athens city district and initially this the area where UNHCR and its implementing partners sought to identify available apartment space for the ESTIA program⁶. In order to avoid perpetuating segregation, the Mayor of Athens asked the UNHCR to stop renting apartments in the area of the 6th Athens city district and instead expand to other areas.

Nonetheless the aforementioned areas maintain high numbers of migrant population, and these are also the areas where the police sweeps focus on, contributing to the insecurity particularly of the undocumented. Though interviewees did not voice incidents of racism or xenophobia in the urban setting in our interviews, this does not mean it's not present

'The tension from the arrival of refugees seems to be more aggravated in the islands, as in the last years there is rise in xenophobia and racist violence. After all, a big portion of the asylum seekers population is enclosed in the islands, despite the fact that there are not sufficient reception structures there. Regarding the mainland, there are also some incidents of racist violence towards the refugees and asylum seekers ranging from verbal insults to physical attacks.' (interview, International Organisation representative, 08/09/2018).

The absence of compulsory redistribution across the country and the concentration of a significant number of people on five islands, is aggravated by absence of sufficient formal structures.

Interestingly, this is not shared by everyone. For example, the representative of the Reception and Identification Service noted that

'In my opinion, the housing policy and the housing system is sufficient, taking into account that we do not see any refugees or asylum seekers living in the streets. However, the situation in the islands is different. There, the housing system is insufficient. But this is not due to any incompetency of the system. A combination of reasons has led to this problem, such as the inexistent returns and the pace for the asylum application examination.' (Interview, Senior Staff, Reception and Identification Service, 7/6/3028).

However, if the indicator of success is that asylum seekers do not live on the streets, as was the case in late 2015, it is worth noting that for all the spaces rented, demand continues to exceed supply and at least in Athens various squats have emerged in areas of the centre and especially in the

6 Since October 2015, UNHCR operates in the country running the ESTIA accommodation scheme and providing cash assistance. Initially, the ESTIA programme referred to the provision of accommodation to beneficiaries of the relocation programme. However, since 2016, it has been expanded to Dublin family reunification candidates and vulnerable applicants.

neighbourhood of Exarchia (which is considered a safe space from police and Golden Dawn) that have transformed abandoned buildings into reception spaces for migrants. It is also worth stressing that without the assistance of NGOs, most would have been unable to rent on their own accommodation spaces, either due to reluctance of owners to rent to asylum seekers and/or lack of financial capital. Housing is often linked to employment- a work contract requires a residence address. Therefore, even if asylum seekers are entitled to access to the labour market, practical difficulties such as absence of housing can often hinder their possibility of finding work.

Representatives from the Municipality agreed that

'The housing policy that has been adopted is temporary and without a holistic plan' (Interview with Senior representative of the Municipality of Athens, 31/05/2018)

Housing as a crucial step to integration and it is in fact a key indicator to measure integration progress. However, at present the system in Greece does not allow to draw any conclusions on integration largely because the country functioned (and still does to an extent) within an emergency framework. In relation to housing, this meant in practice that NGOs independently, or under the auspices of UNHCR's ESTIA program, Municipalities, civil society (occupied spaces/squats, informal camps) all mobilised to offer reception services, at times entirely outside the official legal framework.

In November 2018 UNHCR had created 26,526 places in 4,427 apartments and 23 buildings, in 14 cities and 7 islands (UNHCR, 2018c). Moreover, since April 2017, 68,110 individuals have received cash assistance ranging from €90 to €550 (UNHCR, 2018f). To implement the ESTIA programme, the UNHCR cooperates with 10 NGOs⁷ and 9 local authorities⁸ (UNHCR, 2018g). It should be noted that ESTIA's regulative framework has been developed by the UNHCR and its partners without the Greek state's involvement. As a result, ESTIA has diverse standard operating procedures and processes than the other national reception structures. This results in important legal shortcomings and heterogeneity with parallel structures and systems for reception that create heterogeneity (Interview with International Organisation representative, 08/06/2018)

On the other hand, accommodation is linked with the asylum application. As one of the interviewees from the Municipality of Athens noted, there are cases of people that reside in the Elaionas refugee camp in Athens for more than a year and half. Despite new arrivals, there are few vacant spaces in either camps or apartments. There are many that have been living under the ESTIA provide accommodation for more than a year. Hence, the period that asylum seekers stay in the accommodation structures depends on the rate of asylum decisions.

All respondents agreed that the absence of sufficient facilities and housing options do play a role in "encouraging" transitory movement however they all agree that the decision to stay in Greece is more personal

'One of the most important dimensions for the integration rests upon the personal decision that the trip has ended here. We see that although the borders have closed and these persons cannot freely choose where they want to live, they still want to go to a country of Northern Europe, which represents for them the "Promised Land"'. (interview with the Director of Social Protection, National Center for Social Solidarity, 06/06/2018)

Choosing to stay or leave rely on a far more complex amalgamation of factors that accommodation, though the latter is important in facilitating one's choice. However, as interviews with recent arrivals showed, the uncertainty over the future, the difficulty on embarking on another journey and the lack

⁷ Praksis, Arsis, Nostos, Solidarity Now, Iliaktida, CRS, Intersos, Metadrasi, Médecins du monde and Greek Council for Refugees.

⁸ Athens, Thessaloniki, Leivadia, Crete, Trikala, Karditsa, Larisa, Nea Philadelphia, Nea Chalkidona and Tripoli.

of clarity regarding asylum may factor over time much more than accommodation (or lack of) in choosing to move onward.

3.5. Conclusion of the chapter

The bordering practices of state institutions and state actors are fairly similar across the three borders, though they differentiate depending on the points of entry and/or exit. On the one hand this is to be expected. On the other, the different operational frameworks between land and sea border increasingly create different categories of arrivals, those who have access to asylum and those who don't, those who can continue to the mainland and those who can't. Similarly, access to asylum and accommodation differs from the mainland, to the islands and the land border as does access to it. What the research shows is a direct link between the border agents responsible for controlling entry and exit, the asylum service and access to formal accommodation spaces. The three institutions and actors form stepping stones, migrants have to navigate in order to be "included" in the services accessible to asylum seekers; without any guarantees that in the end they will be successful.

4. Empirical research with migrants

4.1. Introduction

Empirical research took place with recent arrivals, with most having arrived in Greece since 2018, though there were few exceptions with presence in the country for more than two years. 15 interviews were conducted, many having entered through the land border since 2018. This is significant and has resulted in very different findings than previous similar researches (e.g. Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by boat, 2017). Greece is a completely different country of arrival in comparison to 2015. Onward movement is no longer encouraged nor possible without access to smugglers. The EU-Turkey Statement of March 18th 2016 appears to have functioned as planned, a deterrent for arrivals who shift now to the land border with Turkey.

Research shows that migrants are called to navigate a legal and bureaucratic labyrinth, at times difficult to decode, with little information. More crucially than border crossings, is asylum -access and recognition- that determines overwhelmingly once's experience of Greece.

4.2. Lived experiences of borders and bordering practices upon arrival in Greece

Before arrival to Greece, migrants had to undertake a length and often dangerous journey. Irrespective of their country of departure, Turkey was a consistent point of transit. In the discussions it was clear that borders are approached tautologically, lines separating countries.

The word "border" appears in the empirical research only in relation to the physical border crossings from the country of origin to the countries of transit and eventually for arrival to Greece. Most wanted to narrate their journey to Greece, in terms of events. Border crossings are *de facto* incorporated in the discussion, i.e. there appears to be an inherent understanding that physical borders are crossed but they were discussed mostly without emotional expressions.

In Greece, borders are "managed" and to an extent perpetuated through specific practices, mainly by the Hellenic Police and Coastguard. Overwhelmingly, the interaction of participants was in one way or another with the Hellenic Police that is the main actor appearing in the interviews. Second but perhaps more critical actor that determines (im)mobility, legal status and thus presence in Greece, is the asylum service. The Asylum service constructs and deconstructs for every individual the legal and social border since without registration and documents migrants are at risk of detention, deportation and prevented from accessing basic services. Unlike the journey itself, the interaction with the asylum service in Greece in many cases yielded emotional responses primarily of frustration and anger. Thus, the present section looks at the experiences of participants with these two key border actors on entry.

Hellenic Police/Coastguard

Borders open and close and migrants monitor this process, since it determines their journey

"When the borders closed, we were in Turkey and we knew that people will be trapped in the islands and this is what we expected" (Interview GR01, Male, Afghan, Athens, 14/07/2018)

Two were the border crossings participants used to reach Greece, the maritime border to the islands of northern Aegean with specific reference to Lesbos and the land border with Turkey and Bulgaria in the Evros river borderline. Of the 15 participants, 12 had entered Greece via the land border with the remaining three through the maritime border. This is in line with the apprehension data of the Hellenic Police that indicate a significant increase (in comparison to previous years) of irregular entries through the land border.

The shift, for some of the participants was clearly attributed to the increased border controls on the Turkish side but also on the EU-Turkey Statement and the fact that arrivals remain trapped in the islands. The land border is often discussed as easier in comparison to the maritime border

“from the sea very difficult. But people crossed from the land border and said it was easy, even if police catch you they release you after a while” (interview GR03, Male, Syrian, 03/07/2018)

“it was not difficult. We knew about the islands about people being stuck there, so we asked to go through the river [Evros]” (interview GR11, Female, Afghan, 02/07/2018)

Some participants described variations of harassment and abuse, push-backs and physical harm amongst participants, which characterized the border crossing whether from Turkey or in Greece

“The second time the police fired at us. We were 40-45 persons in the car and the police used the gun to fire at the car” (encounter with Turkish police near sea border, interview GR10, Male, Kurdish (Syria), 14/07/2018)

“[...] they had dogs and they let them come up to us -very dangerous- and this is how they caught us. They apprehended us, they took our clothes, everything we had with us -many times they would just leave us with our shorts and [eventually] they returned us to Turkey” (Encounter in the Bulgarian-Turkey border, interview GR01, male, Afghan, Athens 14/07/2018).

In two cases participants described how they had been misled -by what appears to be from the description Greek police- on where the border zone was. Under the guise of assistance in one case they were guided back to Turkey and in another to Bulgaria.

“We crossed at night, we were a small group. They found us very quickly. They wore masks and dark clothes and they spoke to us in English.” They were asked which nationality they were from and where they were going. Someone in the group said they were Syrians and they were going to Greece. *“One of the men said this is not Greece, you took the wrong way, but we can take you to Greece. I thought this is not right, but they were six of them quite large and I didn’t want to say anything”* (interview GR12, male, Syrian, 03/07/2018). They were guided to what was supposedly the Greek border and told to walk in the direction of what was in fact Turkey.

For others, the border crossing was uneventful, without encountering border agents and without incidents. This is not necessarily positive. For new arrivals to access the asylum service as well as basic rights such as accommodation, they need to register. In the land border particularly, registration takes place by the police, which requires that the migrant is either apprehended or seeks a police station (if possible, depending on one’s location). In that sense, a significant reversal to past years has taken place on how the border crossing and its aftermath unfolds. Prior to 2015, most arrivals sought to evade border agents from fear of being detained indefinitely. In 2018 at the land border, participants did not seek to avoid border agents and for those who successfully arrived and proceeded to move to Athens without being apprehended, lack of registration meant impediments in accessing accommodation, cash-assistance and even the asylum process.

“Until reaching Athens I was not registered anywhere. Here, I went to the police twice to get registered. [...] I told them I need help. I even hoped they would arrest me and put me in detention for two months so I would get registered. [...] but they asked me to leave” (interview GR02, male, Afghan, Athens 15/07/2018).

Their encounters in the Greek, Turkish and/or Bulgarian border were discussed with a certain level of emotional detachment, and as one of the interpreters noted at some point this is to be expected since violence at the border is “business as usual” for irregular migrants.

Differentiated experiences exist also among those apprehended by the border agents. Whether land or sea border, there are differences both in the way of treatment as well as time in detention and registration.

Three of the participants arrived in Greece via the maritime border. The timing of their arrival resulted in differentiated experiences. One of the participants arrived in Lesbos prior to the Statement, while the migrant population was being transferred from the islands to the mainland to prepare for application of the deal. As a result, he was registered and sent to Athens within a few days.

It was an entirely different experience for the participant who arrived on March 2016 just as the Statement was being implemented. He arrived to the island of Chios without being apprehended by the coastguard, where he remained for 8 months.

The third case arrived at the island of Lesbos post March 18th 2016. She described the journey which resulted in them spending hours adrift at sea. When the group finally reached Lesbos they were disembarked by a group of volunteers (though not entirely clear from description, it could also be coastguard)

“they took us and just put us in the land and they just put us there. They told us we had to stay until the morning. But I was pregnant at the time... we are talking about a pregnant woman... because I was in the water, I got very tired” (interview GR07, Iraqi, female, Athens 18/06/2018). The next day she and the group were transferred to the Moria Registration and Identification center (hotspot). Despite her pregnancy she remained there with her husband for 2 ½ months. The experience of Moria, combined with the rejection at first instance of their asylum claim, resulted in their attempt to flee the island twice.

Despite recognizing that the manner they sought to leave the island was illegal, she highlights in her description that the way the police reacted was disproportionate to the act:

“we tried to get out of there illegally two times. One time from the airport, one time from the port. In the airport they took us to the police station. It was very... it was something special when they took us, like we were doing something very bad. They were making interview with us but talking in their language for hours. We didn’t understand anything. From the police station, they sent us back to the camp. Walking...!” (GR07, female, Iraqi, Athens 18/06/2018).

We use the term ‘fleeing’ from the island because it is the most fitting. The situation in Moria, well documented in the past few years in the media but also by NGOs, combined with the geographical restriction of movement imposed on arrivals makes for a particular type of limbo: physical immobility is combined with an unknown and lengthy asylum process, whereby claims are usually rejected at first instance only to enter a protracted assessment under appeals.

“I think you know about Moria. Its like hell. I don’t know how to explain it to you, it was really bad. They put us in a small tent. We were 14 persons in this tent [...] There was no place, it was full, where would I sleep? [...] There was no place I could wash myself and go to the toilet” (GR07, female, Iraqi, Athens 18/06/2018).

What she describes has been well documented in various reports, with women increasingly fearful of harassment particularly at night when they need to leave the section to use the public facilities.

Eventually she was transferred to Section A for vulnerable groups, which was slightly better though still not in line with the required standards.

The description of detention, whether land or sea border, remains most vivid in the description of the journey, usually reflecting a lack of facilities and services

“When we arrived they took us to a prison for 2 days and then they took us to another prison for 1 month, then 2 days in a camp there and then again prison then again in a camp in Drama which is also a closed facility because you could only exit your room not the camp [...] There was a yard that you could go out to but you could not leave the facility. They would not even take you to a doctor. They did not have any interpreters in the beginning... so we would communicate anyway we could. However, even though I asked for 15 days to go to the hospital, they would not take me” (interview GR03, Afghan, male, 15/07/2018).

Sometimes even more critical than mistreatment and absence of facilities was the way participants were treated by the police

“more than anything, they were indifferent towards us” (interview GR05, male, Afghan, 16/07/2018).

This indifference is a recurrent theme amongst those detained, exemplified best in the absence of medical care but also complete absence of information

“After leaving [the detention facility] we took a train and came here [to Athens]. But now we have regret it, because it is very difficult. They did not tell us anything- they said go wherever you want.” (interview GR03, male Afghan, Athens, 15/07/2018)

Most learn through their network that they need to reach the Asylum Service. Other times they are informed by the police officers on release. In both cases however, information is vague and unclear.

Asylum Service

Beyond the experiences of the physical border crossing and detention, there is also the interaction with the Asylum Service. Encounters can take place at the border, or in Athens, and in some cases never despite repeated attempts. However, as previously mentioned, one's document determines whether they will be able to access housing, cash assistance, register for a social insurance number and even find employment. Lack of registration renders one invisible to the bureaucracy and by default 'illegal'.

The Service itself is known increasingly by its address, “Katechaki” (similar to P.Ralli in the past)

‘they told us to come to Athens and we did. And then someone said go to Katechaki. We showed the paper and they said you need to make an appointment but so many people wait there’ (GR14, male Syrian, 05/07/2018).

Accessing the asylum service is less straightforward than expected.

If one is apprehended on the islands, then the hotspot approach is implemented. This means an asylum interview (if one requests to apply) is scheduled very often on the same day.

“when we sit down they made interviews with us. In the beginning!! They did not let us drink some water, take a break. We didn't know what we were saying. I did not know what I should say. I just said ‘my name is this’. It's like an accident when you arrive and they make an interview with you directly”. (GR 07, Iraqi, female, Athens 18/06/2018)

Interviews take place with the asylum case officer and often with an EASO representative. The standard approach is to reject particularly Syrian applications as inadmissible in order to implement the EU-Turkey Statement. On appeal most are either pending or overturned, however the process takes a long time with cases sometimes lasting two years.

For those that arrive on the islands without encountering border agents the process is more complex. To enter the hotspot they need to register and on the island of Chios, for example, the regional asylum office is not in the camp.

“To enter the camp you need to register yourself but no one can do that so you have to take the bus and go by yourself. Only people that have friends and have the power can enter and register themselves” (GR10, Kurd, male, 14/07/2018). The reference to power and/or knowing the right people is something that is indirectly often discussed by participants particularly as regards navigating legal and bureaucratic processes.

The informant (GR10) is a Kurdish national from Syria and he arrived with his family to Greece to the island of Chios. Technically stateless, he posed a particular challenge for the asylum process

“they did not do anything with us. Because we were from a country without any papers and nationality, so it was difficult for them to deal with our case because we didn't have any legal papers.” The only person who was allowed to submit an asylum application initially was his mother who held a Syrian

passport but instead his father was called for an interview. He described a rather disorganized process with the asylum staff asking questions *“that should not be asked to a person who run away from his country”* and a bureaucratic procedure which felt dehumanizing

“For them we were not names for humans, we were numbers. When they announce someone, they would say their number not their name” (GR10, Kurd, male, 14/07/2018).

An entirely different experience was shared from those who entered via the land border. With no regional asylum office in the area, all arrivals are redirected to Athens. However, for one to get an appointment with the asylum service they need to have registered first on arrival. Those that the police did register, can in theory make an appointment and get the threefold (asylum receipt of application).

“it was easy. I went there, they put my name on a list. Then I went to an office and they gave me the threefold. I went at the Asylum service at 6 am and left at 4pm. Most of the time everyone was just waiting around” (GR04, male Afghan,15/07/2018).

“The queues are so long I went there four times and nothing. I gave up. I went to GCR and said I am Syrian I am refugee you need to get me an appointment. They said they will try but it will take some time.” (GR15, male Syrian, 09/07/2018)

Without registration, applicants they cannot access the asylum service directly and must request an appointment via Skype. Thus, border encounters shape a significant portion of the migrants' experience in Greece.

“it took me two months to make an appointment through skype. They gave me an appointment and I had to go to take this official document from the asylum service. In this paper they gave me an appointment for an interview in 6 months!” (GR08, male Syrian, 11/06/2018).

Date of appointment differentiates depending on nationalities. Syrians are prioritized, whereas Afghans are pushed back, with one of the participants being a case in point having received an appointment for asylum 20 months from the date of application which was approximately in April 2018 (GR05, Afghan male, 16/07/2018). For others, the different information mean they had yet to apply for asylum, unable to get in the Asylum Service or book an appointment via skype.

Overall, entry points, nationalities, gender and family status (single, with children) as well as period of arrival to Greece tend to determine one's experience both in the border crossing but also in relation to the representatives of the border, physical and legal. In fact, this is the most critical aspect of the journey to Greece- acquiring the legal status to access, where possible, housing, cash assistance, health care and other services necessary. The asylum service in that sense, is a far more significant contact point than the border guards and access to it has far yielding impact on the individual.

4.3. Everyday lived experiences of borders and bordering practices in the housing sectors

Housing is integral both regarding first reception, i.e. on arrival but also in relation to integration. The structure of the accommodation system has been covered in this report as well as in the national report produced for the Work Package 3 of the CEASEVAL project. It is also one of the most problematic aspects in the Greek asylum system.

The Greek Asylum service has no competence over accommodation and can only provide referrals for vulnerable persons and unaccompanied minors to the NSCC and the Ministry of Migration Policy. On the other hand, housing spaces depend on asylum decisions. Since recognised refugees are not eligible for accommodation, for space to become available a final decision positive or negative must be issued. With delays as long as two years, in practice this means a significant number of asylum applicants are not accommodated in designated facilities. Camps in the region of Attika exist on the outskirts, e.g. Skaramagka camp, with only one facility available in Athens -Elaionas.

To access the camps, or the ESTIA housing, one must be registered by the asylum service with their application either pending for examination or with an appointment date for an interview. As facilities are at capacity, there is significant waiting time of months for someone to find accommodation space:

'I could not live in the camp... you have seen the camps. We did register our names in the camps but nobody called us until now. I went to Elaionas and told I would like to stay here. They registered our names and they said they will call but nobody called.' (GR08, male Syrian, Athens 11/06/2018)

Two of the informants (GR15 and GR10), succeeded in bypassing the system, acknowledging that it can be far more influential to know the right people. One of the informants explained that though he is residing in one of the camps, he is not officially registered there. A co-ethnic who is employed with one of the NGOs as an interpreter gave him access to the camp and a place to stay in one of the tents. Though he had not applied for asylum he was registered and was eligible for camp accommodation. However, he was unconvinced the formal route would have yielded similar results

'you know how many are waiting for somewhere to sleep? Why wait when I can get myself in the door? I wanted to stay there only a few nights but it has been difficult finding a flat so some days I sleep with friends and others I go back to the camp. [...]Its difficult in Athens, I know there is this option with the NGO flats? [ESTIA program] but you need to have asylum and I don't' (GR15, Syrian male, Athens, 09/07/2018).

Due to the location of the camps on the outskirts of Athens, residents are in fact removed physically from the urban center which they nonetheless must access for the various services. The cost of public transport (roughly 3 Euro one way) is not feasible for everyone to pay particularly for families. This is also problematic for those unable to stay in flats and in search of available spaces in the camps. In many cases, they must travel themselves there to directly ask if there is availability. Doing so, comes at a financial cost. In contrast, those who reside in rented apartments in Athens stay throughout the city and are able to both move easily within the city but also access services.

Vulnerable persons are, in theory, prioritised for accommodation however this is not always implemented. A female participant, mother of two of which one son is 17 years old, registered for the ESTIA program and the cash aid program and was waiting for a response at the time we interviewed her

'I have registered myself for the apartment program [ESTIA]... its been 10 months. Until now they did not call me. I have registered my name in 3 organisations to get a salary [cash aid]. There is the Caritas organisation... its been 6 months now' (GR09, Female Syrian, Athens, 04/07/2018).

'When I first arrived, for a week I slept on the streets, then for a month I was sleeping outside the camp in order to register there. Then after 3 months I was transferred to an apartment with many difficulties' Though injured (and thus vulnerable), he was accepted at the camp only following UNHCR's intervention. At the time of the interview he resided in an apartment offered by ESTIA program with three more persons and he received cash-aid. But he noted that things have significantly deteriorated for new arrivals *'a lot of people sleep outside or live under difficult circumstances in the camps'* (GR01, male Afghan, 14/07/2018).

Homelessness is in fact a reality for many who are registered but have yet to submit a formal asylum application

'I went to the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR), they put me on the list and told me that they would call me for an appointment, I am here for 2 months now and I sleep here, in the square. [...] I am very tired, I stay in the street in very difficult conditions, I do not have money for anything [...] GCR told me it will take 2-3 months ' (GR02, male Afghan, Athens 15/07/2018).

Beyond formal structures, and largely as a response to the absence of sufficient accommodation places, squats emerged in Athens and specifically in the center of the city (around the Exarcheia neighborhood and Victoria Square). The locations of squats are important. Exarcheia is the anarchist neighborhood. Police presence is minimal and Golden Dawn supporters (the neo-Nazi party) usually

refrain from entering the area. It has traditionally been a safe haven for undocumented migrants and it is where a lot of abandoned or derelict buildings were occupied in the past by migrants and leftist anarchists. Victoria Square is a neighborhood with a visible migrant presence, where for the past few years businesses, shops and restaurants of different communities have emerged significantly altering the neighborhood landscape to a multiethnic one. Victoria Square is also the area where most migrants choose to spend the night. One of the participants referred to the area as the camp because *'it is a bit like a camp, so many people sleep here at night'*. He himself had tried to find formal accommodation through NGOs and UNHCR but was unsuccessful. He spends the night at Victoria Square, and his days *'walking around. There is a place nearby that gives us fish for free and sometimes NGOs come also with food. I hope they will find a space for me'* (GR05, male Afghan, Athens 16/07/2018).

He sought to find a job, which first required registering for a tax id and social security number. However, for both, a permanent address is needed. He was successful only because an NGO assisted by giving an address for him to use on paper in order to get a tax id. Although NGOs have found ways of bypassing the bureaucratic hurdles, they are not always successful nor is it always feasible, which places an additional burden on formal accommodation spaces that acquire a dual role. They not only function as spaces of accommodation but also of means to access social and labour rights. Accommodation in that sense, can be a social type of border that some navigate successfully, and others remain stranded and in limbo waiting.

This limbo, students, volunteers, and migrants sought to address through the occupation of abandoned buildings in and around Exarcheia and Victoria Square. City Plaza in Victoria Square quickly became a model for future occupations. Structured around the notion of solidarity and hospitality, City Plaza sought to show that without governmental or EU funds, decent accommodation spaces can exist for asylum seekers. However, precisely because of its success, it is the most sought-after location in Athens after formal accommodation.

The family from Iraq was eventually sent from Moria (GR07, female Iraqi, Athens 18/06/2018) to Athens without a referral to shelter, despite being pregnant and thus vulnerable. She spent two weeks on the streets with her husband and eventually an NGO suggested she reach out to City Plaza because they tended to prioritise vulnerable cases. They were accepted and have been staying there since. Technically, occupations/squats are illegal, however NGOs tend to refer vulnerable cases off-the-record when unable to find alternatives in the official system. Interestingly, despite its visible presence but also illegal occupation, City Plaza and other similar collective squats, have not faced prosecution, which is seen by many as a silent nod of the government to the informal reception spaces that have emerged.

Financial capital is a key determinant on the level of reliance to formal housing options. One of the informants acknowledged that having financial capital not only facilitated his journey but also his stay in Greece. Having been able to stay in hotels allowed him time to familiarise with Athens and choose his options

'I went to a place... its name is 'Steki' near Exarchia. There I started learning the English language, but between me and my teacher we become a nice community. I stayed with him for two months' (GR06, Iraqi, male, Athens 18/06/2018).

From there he met one of the organisers of the City Plaza and was offered accommodation there. He has been staying at City Plaza for over a year, while attending language courses offered at the squat.

Some of the informants in this research, could afford to stay in apartments already rented by friends or an extended social network they acquired in Greece. However, even in these cases there was no longer term planning on what would happen in a few months, when financial capital would be exhausted. For some, accommodation is critical in motivating them to continue the journey onwards, while for others, the overall experience of Greece functions as a deterrent to undertake a new journey.

4.4. Lived experiences of im/mobility

Greece was not the intended destination with the exception of one interviewee from Syria (GR14), however he seemed to be fairly well informed about the situation in other EU Member States through his social networks, likely a factor in his decision to stay in Greece.

'No, we wanted to come to Greece. They like Syrians and it is close to home. Someday we may even return who knows. I don't want to go to Germany or Sweden, we have friends there and they are not happy [...] but it would be good to have a job here' (GR14, Syrian male, 05/07/2018).

Of the 14 remaining participants, eight (8) indicated that their original intent was to reach Germany, two (2) wanted to go to Sweden, one (1) in the Netherlands, two (2) to Italy and one (1) to the UK.

Original intent changes, often as a result of the interaction with structural obstacles and opportunities with the experience in Greece colouring the expectations of the destination. Lack of assistance, difficulties in communication, delays in the asylum system all impact how Greece is seen and result in most cases in a feeling of frustration and at times despair.

'I cannot move to another country. It's like... enough! I have to get my documents here. Because now, here in Greece, I have a general picture of Europe. Because I am afraid if I go to Germany now, it will be the same. Everywhere it will be like that' (GR07, Female Iraqi, Athens 18/06/2018).

'after coming here, I realized I won't be able to reach Italy. I have applied for asylum here, I will stay here' (GR05, male Afghan, Athens 16/07/2018).

Intent can also change because of positive experiences in the transit country. Despite having a brother in Germany, which was his intended destination his current plan is to stay in Greece for the next three years to complete his education

'I started to like the city, so I decided to stay here. I will see my situation in the school, see how will I go with the school. If I don't find a solution-like to study more, I will try to find it somewhere else' (GR06, male Iraqi, Athens 18/06/2018). He is the case study that stands out for being able to access college, get a certificate and potentially a job.

For most, Greece functions as a one-way door particularly post 2016. Immobility is acknowledged as is the feeling of being trapped in Greece

'The thing is that the way things are now, I cannot even get there [Germany]. I am trapped here. I have heard that everywhere but here is better, even if you go to Serbia. At least you are not hungry, you will find somewhere to stay' (GR02, male Afghan, Athens 15/07/2018).

Four (4) of the respondents acknowledged that they would like to leave Greece, however they want first to get their refugee passport. The passport is an object of "fetishization" (Gordillo, 2006) and at the same time critical in undertaking also secondary movement since it will take place in a legal manner. For some, no concrete plan is in place, which makes immobility as likely as mobility in the future

'Here life is difficult. You have to live with 150 Euros per month, you live in insecurity... if you find a job you might end losing your house⁹... I don't know, I will receive my passport and then think' (GR01, Afghan male, Athens 14/07/2018).

For others, secondary movement is presented as a more concrete goal. Having sent one son to Germany and another one on the way (during the interview she explained her son was *en route*), the

9 He is referring to the cash aid restriction; once the recipient finds a job they stop receiving financial assistance. Similarly if they become financially independent, in theory they should not reside in the formal accommodation spaces.

participant explained that she was planning to wait for her papers from the asylum service and then head to Germany

'I will try to bring my family again together. We will say to them [the German asylum service] "ok we don't have a father, but we do have a mother so let's bring our family again together"' (GR09, Syrian female, Athens 04/07/2018).

Nonetheless the prevailing feeling is one of uncertainty, and of 'waiting', waiting for the interview with the asylum service, waiting for papers, waiting for accommodation space, waiting to decide whether to stay or leave

'My brother said not to go because they will send me back to Greece. [...] My mother is tired and does not want to do this again [the journey]. But if I go to Sweden then it will be easier for them to come. I would like to fly but it is very expensive so we will wait and see. Maybe I will stay here. We will see' (GR11, female Afghan, Athens 02/07/2018).

'I have an uncle in London, I want to go there but I don't know how [...] I have not decided yet, I just came here' (GR03, male Afghan, Athens 15/07/2018).

At times, attempted onward movement is thwarted, which also results in immobility and the decision to remain in Greece.

'No not anymore. I tried once I don't want to do that again. I will stay here and get a job. My friends tell me there is work on the islands in the summer, maybe I will go there for a while' (GR13, male Syrian, 05/07/2018).

A couple of Syrian origin (GR08, male Syrian, Athens 11/06/2018) sought twice to undertake secondary movement having already received asylum in Greece. The first time they were apprehended at the airport in Athens and were detained. The second time, they travelled to Austria using ID cards issued by the Greek asylum service and their own Syrian passports. While in Austria, they bought fake British passports, and were apprehended by the Austrian police at the airport.

'my passport was a good a one, that is why I passed by the police, but they caught my wife. We came back because of her' (GR08, male Syrian, Athens 11/06/2018).

They were transferred to an asylum center where they spent five months. They were apparently given the choice to apply for asylum in Austria or be returned to Greece and they opted to apply. However once the information was sent from the Greek Asylum Service that they had asylum in Greece their application was rejected. Given the option to appeal or return to Greece, they decided to return to Athens

'I told them you know the situation in Greece, there is no place to stay, no salaries' (GR08, male Syrian, Athens 11/06/2018).

For those seeking to leave Greece irregularly, one of the old routes is from the ports of Patras and Igoumenitsa to Ancona in Italy. The ports were popular transit points in the period 2008-2012, however they have been upgraded technologically and border controls reinforced making transit from Patras extremely difficult and dangerous. One of the participants sought to transit from Patras to Italy and his experience at the border influenced his decision in the end to stay in Greece

'if the police catch you there, they beat you very much. Then they put you in a car and they bring you here [in Athens]. I have tried many times but did not manage to cross. [...] Sometimes they keep you in for 24 hours without water, without anything. Last time I tried was 5-6 days ago... most probably I won't leave because I have already tried. They caught me, they returned me, I will probably stay here... I went to the camps looking for somewhere to stay but I didn't find anything [...]. I want to stay here but I need a place to stay. And I cannot stand living in the streets' (GR04, male Afghan, Athens 15/07/2018).

It is unclear to what an extent absence of accommodation and overall assistance contributed to the decision to transit, nonetheless they play a role as with most migrants that either seek to leave or remain stranded in Greece.

4.5. Conclusion of the chapter

The journey is a process that requires negotiating borders and bordering practices, external and internal. For migrants trying to reach Greece experiences vary. For some, violence-physical and verbal- is associated with border crossings. For others, the crossing is uneventful and surprisingly smooth. However, almost all encounter on arrival different type of obstacles, mostly structural in nature, stemming from poor management and bureaucracy. They are then asked to negotiate their way through legal and social “borders” beyond the physical borderline. For many the experience of living in Greece appears fluid and unclear, partly due the way their presence is negotiated in the country. The Asylum Service emerged from the interviews as the most critical actor, more so than border agents on arrival, determining not only one’s legal status in the country but by default one’s access to accommodation, employment, cash aid etc. Even then, none of the aforementioned services are guaranteed, leaving many depleted emotionally and financially, motivating some and deterring others for onward movement.

5. An analysis of the links, or the lack thereof, between the management of mobility and that of borders

5.1. Introduction

There is a direct link between borders and management of mobility, as evident in all the interviews conducted for this research. The external border is explicitly discussed as the 'gatekeeper' and/or the 'buffer zone' of Schengen by all representatives of organisations interviewed. The internal national border also seeks to distribute migrants in specific geographical spaces (islands, mainland) and prevent their transit to other EU Member States, i.e. Italy. Simultaneously for those in the country, multiple border zones emerge, depending primarily on the documents they hold, that determine the extent of their (im)mobility and irregularity. The latter is a condition that 'any given individual can flit in and out of depending on the relation between his or her movements and activities and the movements and activities of national, international, and transnational agencies' (Squire (ed) 2001: 7). Similar, however, is (im)mobility; most individuals can and will shift in and out of immobility and mobility phases that involved crossing borderlines but also artificial borders of social, and legal construct. Irregularity can produce mobility as well as immobility and the experiences of migrants show that in both cases, a continuous interplay between the individual and structural obstacles unfolds shaping and reshaping the decision-making process. Though the physical external borders remain fixed for everyone, the internal borders change depending on one's status.

5.2. Mobility of migrants and borders in Greece

Greece is undertaking management of mobility through border controls and this is perhaps clearest when looking at the borderline of entry and exit. Controls carried out by border agents are key in the management of mobility of persons and this was reflected in the interviews with border agents that acknowledged that the border is important in filtering people.

At the same time, one of the interviewees noted that *'the refugee wave in 2015 abolished the feeling of borders, given that it showed that the imaginary borderline can be crossed by persons that are in need.'* (interview, Member of Parliament, 01/02/2019).

Borders are extremely important internal and external and due to borders *'someone always attempts to enter unauthorised or exit unauthorised. In both cases the border is violated'* (interview with Senior Police Officer I, 24/7/2018).

There were slightly diverging opinions regarding the effectiveness of border patrols, however this was to be expected. The official discourse is that Greece successfully patrols and guards the external borders and thus Schengen. Secondary movement from Greece has reduced drastically and all respondents stressed that. They all agreed that border controls help and that borders are needed

'In general, border controls help. They protect the borders of the country' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major II, 16/07/2018)

'We make effective border controls. We manage very effectively our borders. Very few migrants leave from Greece with false documents' (Interview with Hellenic Police Major I, 16/07/2018).

However, beyond the official discourse on interviewee noted that

'borders exist and yet not for Greece. Greece has maritime borders, impossible to patrol fully' (interview with Senior Police Officer I, 24/7/2018). He further noted that for Greece the problem lies in the way the external borders of the Union are managed. Greece has to both guard entry and exit to prevent secondary movement.

'We need borders, the same way we need doors and windows in our houses. The country is the extended home of citizens. If we don't need borders, we also don't need doors and windows.' However, when asked if he thinks borders are effective in managing migration he responded negatively

'when on the other side desperate people wait to cross, it is not possible to prevent entry' (interview with Senior Police Officer , 24/7/2018). This view deviates from the official line which argues that it is possible to prevent entry, however it also reflects an understanding that particularly the maritime border with its fluidity is impossible to guard a hundred percent.

However, not all borders can effectively be controlled.

The land border is less porous than the sea border and can even be “protected” if a country is willing to undertake extreme measures. In one of the discussions with a Senior Police Officer he noted that

'Countries like Hungary with only land borders can raise walls and fences and deal with the problem. What can Greece do at the maritime border?' (interview with Senior Police Officer , 24/7/2018).

Though the case of Hungary is not endorsed, and Greece has been very vocal in criticizing the Hungarian policies, the example is useful when contrasted with the case of Greece. Unlike Hungary, Greece, by virtue of its geographical position must effectively guard three types of borders: air, sea and land borders. Of the three, the maritime border is the hardest, not only because it is fluid but because it involves search and rescue operations and 2015 showed that ‘border protection at sea’ is not entirely feasible ‘as there is an obligation for the rescue of these people’ (interview, Member of Parliament, 01/02/2019). The Dublin Regulation adds additional pressure to the border management efforts since those rescued and disembarked must also be processed in the country of first arrival. The land border, in the region of Evros is a dangerous border crossing for migrants but the geography of the landscape allows for detection of arrivals. The air border is perhaps the easiest in terms of border management, due to the significant assistance of information technology.

Sorting of migrants and travelers takes place through information systems as well as physical controls. The air border is an example of this. Ethnographic research at the International Airport of Athens ‘Eleftherios Venizelos’ showed that for intra-Schengen mobility, which is particularly importance for EU Member States, absence of passport checks is countered through random (and often times racially selected) passenger checks that are asked to produce their passports/id documents and/or Schengen visa. For those deemed “suspicious”, these checks take place separate from other passengers, removed temporarily from the airport terminal/gate in a separate room where data are filtered through information systems.

On the other hand, border controls are not as organized and systematic as they are presented or discussed by border agents. Some of the participants in the research entered undetected and remained unregistered at the time of the interview. Some were apprehended and pushed back to the country of entry (Turkey or Bulgaria) detained and released without any documents, while others were detained for an extensive period of time only to be released with the coveted police notice. Different experiences in the same border crossing show that mobility is regulated at the external border but does not result in deterring and/or preventing entry.

Finally, it is important to note that post 2016 a different re-bordering has taken place within Schengen. Greece technically remains a member of Schengen, but flights from Greece landing in Belgium, Germany, Sweden and other “popular” migrant destination countries, are screened with passport controls taking place on exit from the airplane. The fact that the internal borders have not been entirely abolished, was highlighted by most police officers and the member of parliament. The potential of transforming Greece from an external border to a buffer zone for the Schengen area was also stressed, highlighting the impossibility of preventing entry while saving lives particularly at sea.

In fact, the very nature of those mobile, i.e. mixed migratory flows including asylum seekers, necessitate that the border controls screen, filter but still allow entry. This was, after all, the initial purpose of the hotspot approach implemented on the Greek islands.

Thus, mobility is screened at the external border, but it is far more controlled internally, within Greece, with the emergence of multiple “borders” or “border zones” migrants have to navigate.

A multi-actor framework of managing mobility has emerged in Greece post 2015. The Hellenic Police and Coastguard control entry but also attempted exit. The closure of the Western Balkan route has redirected migrants to an old route, through the ports of Patras and Igoumenitsa, with new exit points emerging along the Peloponnese coast overseeing the Ionian Sea. The Hellenic Police is also responsible for the eventual deportation of rejected asylum seekers and irregular economic migrants. FRONTEX is also deployed at the external border, reinforcing the border management efforts of Greece. The Hellenic Police also participates in the internal re-bordering of migrants through chance detection through street, areas with migrant businesses and shops, workplace raids, and immigration checks after requests from civilians and services.

The Asylum Service is the key actor in managing the inclusion/exclusion process and thereby participating in the internal re-bordering taking place in Greece. Asylum seekers and recipients of international protection are free to move within the country, can reside (in theory) wherever they wish, can access employment, social services and benefits. Without asylum papers, none of the above options are available. However, to apply one must first access the asylum service.

Those on the islands do so quickly, but remain immobile, trapped due to the geographical limitation and in limbo waiting for months and even years for the application to be reviewed. In this case, one's nationality will inevitably determine his/her mobility. Syrians leave faster the hotspots than Afghans for example, with the former being considered either at first instance or on appeal refugees and the latter treated on an individualised basis, which takes time. Asylum thus, functions as a process of inclusion and exclusion depending on one's nationality and mimics the border, in that it filters applicants, being open for those deemed "in genuine need" and closed for those deemed unwanted or difficult to integrate.

Those who enter through the land border, depend on the Hellenic Police and their registration. Without the police notice, accessing the asylum service becomes an impossible challenge for most, since it can only be done through a Skype appointment. For most of our informants, this was constant point of frustration. Those who do end up with the police notice, have likely been detained at the border areas for weeks and sometimes months. They still need to access the asylum service by queuing at the headquarters or the regional office in Piraeus. A simpler process than skype, it is still time consuming and frustrating.

What emerges however from the interviews is that documents are critical, including the police notice, not only to prevent detention for the purpose of deportation but to function as a stepping stone for the eventual access to services and inclusion to life in Greece. Nonetheless, even this is not guaranteed, as the empirical research with asylum applicants showed. They may be unable to find housing, employment or even interpretation and end up reconsidering their presence in the country.

Accommodation thus, is often more critical than employment in Greece, precisely because it is scarce *'The housing conditions have a decisive role in the asylum seekers and refugees decision to stay or move to another country. After all, refugees need and require protection. [...]However, in Greece there is no general social and accommodation policy. As a result, specific programmes that are developed for the refugees and the asylum seekers define also their options regarding their stay in or departure from the country'* (interview, International Organisation representative,08/06/2018).

This has been a commonly cited reason (see Kuschminder 2017, Kuschminder & Koser, 2018) and for transit from Greece amongst asylum seekers. Thus, reception conditions can define secondary movement provoking it or deterring it.

5.3. Conclusion of the chapter

There is a direct link between borders and mobility, particularly in Greece, which is currently undertaking border management and controls as an external border but also internally within Schengen to prevent secondary movement. This has a spillover effect on the processes in the country that determine migrant inclusion or exclusion. The latter is not a clear dichotomy. Asylum applicants

may be allowed to access a host of services and rights but in practice remain excluded from them due to the bureaucratic and practical realities on the ground, whereas those without an asylum claim may be able to negotiate their place in the society (albeit temporarily) through social networks.

6. Final conclusion

Four years after the refugee “crisis”, Greece is in a unique position in the migrant journey. The policies implemented at the border with Turkey (EU-Turkey Statement), the closure of the Western Balkan route and the return to normal border checks, as well as the relatively successful control of the exit to Italy, result in the strandedness of asylum seekers and refugees that continue to perceive Greece as a transit destination.

Significant legal reforms have taken place post 2015 resulting in a unique situation, whereby Greece currently implements two different asylum procedures, one at the maritime border and one in the land border and mainland.

Border processes are also different. Though irrespective of point of entry registration and screening take place, there is divergence between land, air and sea border. Islands are geographically remote from the mainland which makes it likely for arrivals to be registered and access the asylum service. The land border is different, less permeable than the sea border but with multiple scenarios unfolding for migrants: detection and detention, detection and registration with release, detection but no registration, entirely undetected and undocumented movement. The different options show that despite the border controls and different border agents in place, mobility cannot be entirely controlled at the border. Perhaps the most clear-cut case of successful border management of mobility is the air border, due to the usage of technology and the continuous filtering of passengers that take place at the gates, before boarding and in the waiting areas.

For those outside the hotspots and in mainland Greece, accommodation is the immediate challenge. Those that have not registered with the Hellenic police and/or asylum service are excluded from formal accommodation. Those registered, are entitled to access, however limited availability results in many experiencing homelessness or being reliant on their social networks for housing. Despite the setup of a formal accommodation schemes, either through camps or the ESTIA program, the demand for places continues to exceed availability and this once more linked to the delays in the asylum system. While applications are examined, asylum seekers remain in the formal accommodation spaces. At the same time, even if one’s application is accepted or rejected, interviewees noted that on average migrants remain in the accommodation for at least a year. Eviction will result in them being homeless and is not a realistic option for NGOs. In practice, this means that those who have arrived in recent months through the land or air border, are unlikely to find places in the formal accommodation scheme.

It is important to note that the ESTIA program was initially set up to house those who would be relocated, i.e. targeting a vulnerable population that would move swiftly from Greece to other EU Member States. This did not happen in practice, with relocation unfolding at a painstaking pace. It is worthwhile noting that interviews with officials and migrants did not mention the relocation scheme. This is partly due to the period of the fieldwork, with relocation having concluded and the scheme formally closed. It is also though reflective of how relocation was seen amongst representatives of institutions; a policy that was not entirely successful considering that of the target of 66,400 asylum seekers to be relocated from Greece, 21,731 had been transferred as of 28 January 2018, which marked the conclusion of the program for Greece.

Service provision, and access to asylum, remain the two key issues put forth by migrants as regards Greece. However, unlike the past (2008-2012) transit is not an immediate option. Fatigue, concerns over the reception of refugees in Europe, information from their social networks and lack of clarity over their asylum process, lead many to reconsider their mobility. Even if the aspiration remains to reach the initial destination, most acknowledge that mobility is now heavily regulated by border controls, closed borders, and an unknown period waiting for the asylum decision. It is thus, worth considering that asylum in this context functions as a critical legal process in determining and controlling (inadvertently) the mobility of migrants. For the Greek context, this is a complete reversal to the past, where asylum -or absence of asylum- drove forward transitory movement and border crossings. Thus, post 2016, Greece is for the first time adopting a broad migration management policy,

targeting entry and exit from the borders, focusing on deterring intra-Schengen secondary movement for recognized refugees, geographically limiting mobility within the country through the hotspots but also through detention at the land border, and limiting access to services for those unregistered (or that have been unable to register!) but also for those who arrive post 2018.

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8. List of Abbreviations

CEAS – Common European Asylum System

EU – European Union

EURODAC- European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database

ESTIA- Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation

FRONTEX- European Border and Coastguard Agency

NGO- Non governmental organisation

RIC- Registration & Identification Centre

9. List of Institutional Actors interviewed

Institutional Actors				
Participant pseudonym	Institution Name (Do not fill out if anonymization level is D or higher)	Role (Do not fill out if anonymization level is C or higher)	Department (Do not fill out if anonymization level is C or higher)	Date of interview
GR_BA_O1	Hellenic Police	Senior police officer	Hellenic Police	24.07.2018
GR_BA_O2	Hellenic Police	Senior police officer II	Hellenic Police	24.07.2018
GR_LEG_01	Hellenic Parliament	Member of Parliament		01.02.2019
GR_Municipality_01	Athens Municipality	Vice – Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralization (former)	Vice – Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralization	22.05.2018
GR_Municipality_02	Athens Municipality	Senior Advisor		21.05.2018
GR_RIS	Reception and Identification Service	Senior	International & European Cooperation	07.06.2018
GR_NCSS	National Centre for Social Solidarity	Director of Social Protection	Director of Social Protection	06.06.2018
GR_BA_03	Hellenic Police	Captain	N/A	16.07.2018
GR_BA_04	Hellenic Police	Police Major	N/A	16.07.2018
GR_BA_05	Hellenic Police	Police Major II	N/A	16.07.2018
GR_IO_01	International organisation	Senior	N/A	08.06.2018

10. List of Migrants interviewed

Migrants								
Participant pseudonym	Nationality	Age	Time in Host Country	Gender	Marital Status	Multiple Migrations	Considers secondary movement	Date of interview
GR_01	Afghan	17	9 months	Male	Single	Iran, Turkey, Bulgaria	Maybe [unspecified]	14.07.2018
Gr_02	Afghan	20	3 months	Male	Single	No	Germany	15.07.2018
GR_03	Afghan	21	3 months	Male	Single	No	London	15.07.2018
GR_04	Afghan	24	4 months	Male	Single	No	Italy (attempted)	15.07.2018
GR_05	Afghan	27	4 months	Male	Single	No	No	16.07.2018
GR_06	Iraqi	22	2 years	Male	Single	No	Maybe-no specific destination	18.06.2018
GR_07	Iraqi	30	2 years	Female	Married	No	No	18.06.2018
GR_08	Syrian	60	1 ½ years	Male	Married	No	Tried twice-no future plans	11.06.2018
GR_09	Syrian	46	1 ½ years	Female	Widowed	No	Maybe-Germany	04.07.2018
GR_10	Kurdish (Syria)	26	3 years	Male	Single	Yes (TR-GR twice)	No	14.07.2018
GR_11	Afghan	22	4 months	Female	Single	Yes (Iran, Turkey)	Yes-Austria	02.07.2018
GR_12	Syrian	21	2 months	Male	Single	No	Maybe Germany	03.07.2018

Migrants								
Participant pseudonym	Nationality	Age	Time in Host Country	Gender	Marital Status	Multiple Migrations	Considers secondary movement	Date of interview
GR_13	Syrian (Kurdish)	22	3 years	Male	Single	No	No	05.07.2018
GR_14	Syrian	32	6months	Male	Married	No	No	05.07.2018
GR_15	Syrian	23	7 months	Male	Single	No	No	09.07.2018



The research project CEASEVAL (“Evaluation of the Common European Asylum System under Pressure and Recommendations for Further Development”) is an interdisciplinary research project led by the Institute for European studies at Chemnitz University of Technology (TU Chemnitz), funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 770037.) It brings together 14 partners from European countries aiming to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the CEAS in terms of its framework and practice and to elaborate new policies by constructing different alternatives of implementing a common European asylum system. On this basis, CEASEVAL will determine which kind of harmonisation (legislative, implementation, etc.) and solidarity is possible and necessary.

