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Individual Attitudes and Settlement Perspectives of Refugees in Greece: The Case of Samos Island

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Abstract: Expanding refugee influxes have involved a rising number of European countries in recent years. In this context, our study investigates attitudes of international protection seekers regarding their prospects of staying permanently in a transit country such as Greece. This research was based on primary statistical data collected through the dissemination of structured questionnaires from a sample of refugees from the Closed Controlled Facility of Samos island, Eastern Greece, one of the most attended gates allowing access to Europe from Turkey and the Middle East. Descriptive and non-parametric statistics and results from a logistic regression contributed to the examination of factors that simultaneously determine the will of the refugees to stay in Greece instead of moving to another country. The main reasons they want to stay in Greece are primarily for employment opportunities and a better quality of life. They aspire to learn Greek to integrate better into the local society, actively seeking this skill from their initial arrival. However, their social integration into the local host community cannot be achieved effectively at the current time due to the absence of appropriate strategies at the local/regional levels. The need for employment (expressed by attempts to find work), the quality of life (access to public and private services), the country of origin, marital status and, finally, the sense of safety based on the existence (or, conversely, lack) of xenophobic and racist incidents are the main reasons that simultaneously determine their decision to stay permanently in Greece.

Keywords: social integration; refugees' settlement; third-country nationals; closed controlled facility

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1. Introduction

The issue of migration has emerged in recent years as a matter of major importance worldwide. The phenomenon of migration has been particularly familiar in Greek society from ancient times to the present. The Greek population has been forced to migrate to other countries several times due to economic, social, and political conditions of different times. However, in the early 1990s, Greece became a receiving country for migrants from countries such as Albania, Bulgaria, Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Serbia, and Egypt. The social integration of refugees and national policies facing migration patterns and trends may clearly benefit from a thorough assessment of refugee migration, since immigration influences not only the total population of a country but also the spatial distribution of the regional population, as most immigrants and refugees settle within urban areas (Schmidt et al. 2020; Fent 1989). In Greece, according to the 2001 population census, 324,167 immigrants out of 413,201 (78.5%) settled in urban areas. Additionally, 60.6% (196,392 immigrants) concentrated in metropolitan Athens. The same data source revealed that a total of 2920 migrants self-declared as refugees, of whom 2764 (94.6%) settled in urban areas. The population census of 2011 gave the same background picture. Out of 329,556 foreigners settled in Greece during 2006–2011, 244,410 (74.2%) concentrated in urban areas. The redistribution of the regional population that immigration movements

cause is obvious from the above statistical data concerning Greece. Nevertheless, over the last decade, especially since 2015, Greece has once again experienced a significant arrival of refugees, primarily on the islands of the Eastern Aegean and in the Evros region, because their geographical locations are at the border with Turkey. Due to civil conflicts and wars in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, among others, thousands of people have attempted to cross the borders from Turkey to Greece. The ongoing increase in movements to Western societies has led to political conflicts both within each country and among European Union countries regarding the policies to be implemented (European Commission 2020). The agreement among member states for the effective management of migration movements can contribute to the benefit of the states, provided it ensures their successful integration (Wolleghem 2017, p. 2).

The social integration of immigrants refers to a process associated with inclusion into institutional and social frameworks of the host countries and concerns both the social recognition of different population groups and their equal treatment during their temporary or permanent settlement in the host society (Sarris Nikos and Tsakiridis 2012). The national social integration policy in Greece is in line with the "Common Basic Principles for the Social Integration" of the EU towards a dynamic and two-way process (European Commission 2020). This includes a mutual compromise between migrants and refugees based on the observance of the fundamental values of an intercultural society, with emphasis on different policy measures required by the specificity of a given country (Korac 2003; Stavrinoudi 2007; Scholten et al. 2015). On this basis of common values, the axes of a common policy of social integration of migrants and refugees, from which the degree of success is judged, are their inclusion into the labor market and the education system, the acquisition of a basic knowledge of the Greek language, the history and institutions of the country, their access to institutions, intercultural dialogue, and the practice of various cultural and religious practices (Moisidis and Papadopoulou 2011; Leontitsis et al. 2020). The existence of integration policies and measures into all relevant policies at all levels of administration and public services is a key element for political decision making and its implementation. Also, the development of clear objectives, indicators, and evaluation mechanisms is foreseen as necessary to adjust policies, measure progress in the field of integration, and improve effectiveness in information exchange (Nagopoulos et al. 2022).

The achievement of the above objectives encounters administrative issues for the treatment of migrants and refugees by the Greek state, as the relevant measures taken are incomplete and are checked for their quality. They concern overall terms of institutional recognition, which is judged by the extent of the existing bureaucracy, the absence of reliable data, and the difficulties of adaptation and compliance of immigrants with the prevailing standards set. As a result of the aforementioned difficulties, refugees spent on average two years obtaining legal recognition (Casalis et al. 2023). All the above, with the absence of necessary measures and institutional linkages in terms of promoting and consolidating social cohesion, often result in the limited and fragmented scope of interventions and the weakening of any objectives set in the context of effectively addressing problems.

The main conclusion of a recent contribution is similar, as shown by the analysis of a focus group with professionals in the field (Nagopoulos et al. 2022). It indicates that the lack of coordination bodies/reference points from the state complicates all the long-term prospects for the integration of refugees and immigrants and complicates the conditions for coexistence with the local communities, often creating unnecessary tensions and disputes on both sides. The absence of a holistic intervention with individualized characteristics in reference groups is expressed through a series of problems in the daily lives of asylum seekers and refugees (Savvakis et al. 2022). The problem needs immediate measures following an integrated strategy, as the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Greece's UNHCR progress database rose to 98,014 individuals in November 2021 (Casalis et al. 2023, p. 4; European Union Asylum Agency "EUAA" 2022).

Based on these premises, our study examines attitudes of international protection seekers regarding their prospects of staying in Greece. The factors that simultaneously

determine the intention of the refugees to stay in Greece are examined using an appropriate statistical method. The analysis is based on primary statistical data, involving the collection and processing of structured questionnaires from the population residing in the Closed Controlled Structure of Samos island (CCS). The CCS of Samos was inaugurated in September 2021, with a capacity of 3000 residents, located approximately 10 km from the town of Samos. In previous years, asylum seekers were hosted at the Reception and Identification Center located near the town of Samos, with a capacity of about 650 individuals, which, during a specific period (2018–2019), was forced to accommodate over 7000 refugees. The recorded population of the island's residents, according to the 2021 census, was estimated at 32,642 inhabitants, with the town of Samos having only 5951, i.e., fewer than the population of the above-mentioned foreign residents. When compared with the other Greek islands, Samos is the closest to Turkey (less than two kilometers), facilitating the easy passage of irregular incoming migrants and refugees. Samos and the other Greek islands of the Eastern Aegean Sea have received, since 2015, a great number of refugees and migrants from Turkey's shores, living in CCSs in several places on the islands under difficult conditions and experiencing ghettoization. After calls from the Greek Government, UNHCR's Accommodation Plan, which is part of the ESTIA (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation) Program of the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund of the European Union, forwarded refugees to the continental country, to specific buildings of common living (e.g., hotels) or to autonomous apartments, improving their living conditions and reducing the phenomenon of ghettoization. By the end of August 2019, 25,404 accommodation points had been set up under the ESTIA program. These were located in 4442 apartments and 15 buildings, in 14 cities and 7 islands throughout Greece. The major cities of Athens, Ioannina, and Iraklio (Crete), participated in the program. In total, since November 2015, 60,175 people have benefited from this housing program (Nagopoulos et al. 2022).

Regarding the concept of attitude, which constitutes a central point of study in this work, it refers to an individual's perceptions and beliefs about social phenomena. In other words, it is how one can perceive and adapt one's behavior to the current environment and society. Attitudes are the way we evaluate an object, a person, or a group of people. They are formed from an early age, primarily through family, school, friends, and society, influencing the social thinking and behavior of individuals. This is achieved through reactions that can involve changes in behavior, emotions, and beliefs. The three elements that constitute attitude are emotional, cognitive, and behavioral (Mavtomati 2020).

The factors influencing people's attitudes are based on the theory of real (realistic) conflict and the theory of social identity (Rontos et al. 2022b). The theory of real conflict has as its basic principle the competition between different groups (Smith and Bond 2011, p. 65). This can result in social inequality, tension, exploitation, and marginalization (mostly economic and social). The theory of social identity refers to individuals who (compared with other groups) choose to belong only to the group with positive social identity (cultural and social). Smith and Bond (2011) argue that an individual's social identity is determined by the group to which he/she belongs. The individual adopts the behavioral pattern of the respective group. Expectation is defined as the fulfillment of each person's future goals, which may vary in each period depending on the specific situation (Koutelekos and Haliasos 2014, p. 134). Expectations can have positive or negative outcomes.

From the perspective of host societies, the personality of each individual and external environmental factors can influence attitudes toward migration. Studying whether migration would be an economic burden on their society, the results of an empirical research carried out in Denmark (Dinesen et al. 2016) showed that residents with higher conscientiousness believe that their society is economically burdened by immigrants with low skills. They pay more attention to the skills possessed by immigrants than to their country of origin. People evaluate migration issues according to their perceptions of the impact on their country's economy (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). Studies developed around the level of education of native residents in relation to attitudes toward the immigrant

population showed a positive correlation among them, but they are not supported by the theoretical framework. The level of university education of residents is a strong factor in generating positive feelings toward migration (Chandler and Tsai 2001). People with university degrees have a more positive attitude toward immigrants than those with low education. The personality traits of each individual influence attitudes toward immigrants (Gallego and Pardos-Prado 2014).

The way migratory influxes have been initially addressed created negative feedback in the majority of the population, manifested by intense fear and prejudices. The distribution of refugees, only in specific areas, created tensions and various reactions due to different perceptions and attitudes of local community residents (Rontos et al. 2022a). Opinions such as the elimination of the national identity of Greeks and the alteration of morals and customs of local communities dominated in relation to the view of the contribution of refugees and immigrants to the development of the country. Local authorities should participate in the design and organization of strategies coping with migrants/refugees in collaboration with policy makers of central administrations and non-governmental organizations. From this perspective, the activation of local authorities to enhance interaction between the indigenous and migrant population and to combat xenophobia, isolation, and urban segregation of migrants in deprived neighborhoods is mandatory. The effective activation and involvement of local actors (civil society organizations and local and regional authorities and public services) is desirable and, in some cases, necessary to establish and implement, at both institutional and social levels, good and sustainable integration practices (Rontos et al. 2017, 2019; Glorius and Doomernik 2020; Arvanitidis et al. 2021).

The mitigation of the above negative attitudes, at least on the part of local communities, depends on the corresponding attitudes of refugees/migrants regarding their prospects for integration into Greek society to achieve harmonious coexistence within the framework of an intercultural society (Dianeosis 2020; Maragoudakis Manousos et al. 2022a). For this reason, and also because research on the attitudes of incoming populations is basically occasional, the contribution of this research is considered meaningful to both science and policy. According to the international literature, especially a qualitative study on young refugees from Sudan and Somalia (Tlhabano and Schweitzer 2007), refugees had high professional ambitions despite the difficulties they faced. Difficulties included not completing all educational levels in their country and language difficulties (learning English to integrate into the new country (namely Australia)). The war situation in their countries resulted in the interruption of their school education and their move to safer countries.

The results of the research by Nunn et al. (2014) on adults (18–27 years old) who were refugees since adolescence showed the strong interaction between family obligations, educational opportunities, and social networks in their professional restoration. These factors can influence individuals' decisions and hinder their realization. Family and education are among the most important factors influencing the achievement of professional goals. It is concluded that there is a great need to support both adolescents and their families in educational processes to fulfill their ambitions. Strengthening language skills can yield positive results. However, the main reason for the movement of all refugees is for a better quality of life.

Dimitriadi's study (2017) on refugees from Afghanistan revealed that the primary reason for their movement to other countries was the need for security and, secondly, education and employment. According to Zacher (2019), education and employment were the key factors for the successful integration of refugees. A survey of a sample of 500 refugees in Greece concerning their professional status revealed that most of them were unemployed and looking for work (39.4%), while 7.2% were attending school (Skleparis 2018). Most respondents aimed to go to Sweden, Germany (Nanette 2016), or England, with a smaller percentage declaring to be directed to Austria, Denmark, and the Netherlands. However, Greece remains the gateway to Europe for refugees. A large number of refugee arrivals to Greece had the ultimate goal of a secondary move. In the following sections, the methodology of the survey is described (Section 2), the results are presented in detail (Section 3),

followed by an extensive discussion and policy conclusions (Section 4). Additionally, we formulated a proposal for the continuation of the research related to the overall structures providing hospitality in the country. This aims at drawing more general conclusions about demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, as well as the attitudes and expectations of the populations entering the country.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Reference Population

The study was conducted in the Closed Controlled Facility in Samos, Greece, from 21 November 2022 to 4 December 2022. Respondents were limited to adults, both women and men of all nationalities, who had reached the age of 18. Unaccompanied minors (non-separated) and separated minors were excluded from the study. The population in the Closed Controlled Facility changed daily due to new arrivals from the Turkish shores and their organized or unorganized movements inland.

2.2. Data Collection

This is a quantitative study using a structured questionnaire and on-site observation. On-site observation emphasizes body language, which can reveal more than a simple written response. Most questions are closed-ended, but there are some open-ended questions for a better approach to certain answers. The questionnaires are anonymous, and responses are confidential. To conduct the research, a letter was sent, along with the questionnaire, to the administrator of the Closed Controlled Facility in Samos to obtain the necessary permission for the research and the collection of questionnaires. Individual meetings were held with each male and female respondent separately to complete the questionnaire. The communication language was English, and in cases where there was a communication problem, someone who spoke the refugee's language assisted. The questionnaire was written in Greek, English, and Arabic. It was not translated into other languages for several reasons as follows: (a) the majority of the population speaks Arabic, (b) many speak English beyond their native language, and (c) some individuals do not know how to read and write. The questionnaire was not extensive, consisting of 25 questions, to avoid overwhelming respondents and to maintain their interest throughout. Demographic information was placed in the first section to establish greater familiarity between the respondent and the researcher, creating an atmosphere of mutual trust. Knowing the respondent better (through personal information) allows the researcher to anticipate any questions that might provoke refusal, anger, sadness, or even falsehood. The sequence of questions in a questionnaire is crucial for the better response of the surveyed population (Rontos and Papanis 2006).

2.3. Sampling

The 21st of November 2022 was set as the reference date to calculate the total population of the Closed Controlled Facility (CCF) in Samos. At that time, the population of third-country nationals residing in the facility was 1092. Of this population, 74.9% were men, 15.7% were women, and 9.4% were minors. Stratified random sampling was employed for a more accurate estimate of population parameters and precise results for subpopulations to ensure the representativeness of each sample. Specifically, proportional stratified sampling was used because the proportion of each subpopulation in the total population was known in advance. The sample was randomly selected from two different points within the CCF in Samos.

Each stratum consisted of homogeneous groups with the general characteristics of the country of origin. The first subpopulation included applicants from Palestine, Syria, and Iraq, while the second subpopulation included individuals from Somalia, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Ghana, and other African countries. A total of 140 international protection applicants (aged 18 and above), representing 12.8% of the population, participated in the research. The number of sample units to be taken from each stratum amounted to 75 individuals from Syria, Palestine,

and Iraq, and 65 individuals from African countries (Table 1). Finally, the number of respondents in the survey from stratum 1 was seventy-eight, and from stratum 2 was sixty-two. Our sample cannot constitute a statistically significant sample to generalize that the results below apply to all international protection applicants in Greece; however, it serves as a data source for the attitudes and opinions of refugees who seek refuge in Greece, data that are scarce in the international literature. For the entire population of the Closed Controlled Structure of Samos, the sampling error in estimating their prospects of staying in Greece with a 95% probability was approximately 6.8%.

Table 1. Table of proportional stratified sampling.

Layer	Number of People	Sample
1	N1 = 581	n1 = 75
2	N2 = 511	n2 = 65
Sum	N = 1092	n = 140

2.4. Data Processing and Analysis

After completing all meetings and the primary collection of statistical data (completion of questionnaires), data were entered into the statistical package SPSS for processing. Initially, for continuous variables, the mean, standard deviation, and variance were examined. For discrete variables, Pearson's chi-square correlation was performed with a significance level of $p < 0.05$ (alpha = 5%). For categorical variables, additional cross-tabulation tables were created, and the Chi-square test was applied to investigate statistically significant differences in the individual characteristics of refugees.

To examine the factors that simultaneously determined the intention of the refugees to stay permanently in Greece, a binary logistic regression was employed. The maximum likelihood approach and the Wald forward stepwise procedure were adopted (Bishop et al. 1975; Nerlove and Press 1973; Cox and Snell 1989). The statistical significance of "b" coefficients was tested using the Wald statistic, which is equal to the square of the well-known Student "t-statistic", as it is preferred in the case of logistic analysis. Omnibus X^2 tests of model coefficients were run. The model's overall goodness of fit was tested using (i) -2LL ratio test statistic, (ii) Cox and Snell R^2, and (iii) Nagelkerke R^2. The model's goodness-of-fit was also tested by the non-significance of the Hosmer and Lemeshow statistical test.

By applying logistic regression models, which provided a significant relationship between the intention of the refugees to stay permanently in Greece with certain explanatory factors, we can predict the probability of a holder of certain characteristics to answer that he/she intends to stay in Greece using Equation (1).

$$P(Y = 1) = F(b) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(b_0 + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + \ldots + b_n X_n)}} \quad (1)$$

The predicted probability was estimated for the sample as a total and for some of them with specific characteristics.

2.5. Research Limitations

When carrying out the survey, no major problems arose between researchers and the respondents. This particular population of respondents exhibited many peculiarities due to the unfortunate events that occurred in their home country or even to themselves. Initially, most of them were very cautious and somewhat hesitant to participate in this research. The reason they hesitated to participate and tell the truth in the survey was solely to avoid influencing the process of their asylum case with the asylum service. Some felt more comfortable completing the questionnaires themselves and answering open-ended questions while writing in the Arabic language.

A pilot survey was conducted with five international protection applicants to determine whether the questionnaire was properly designed and whether the translation into Arabic and English was understandable. Testing the questionnaire on a small number of respondents (namely the "pre-test" phase of any survey) can help avoid any error and deficiency in both the questions and the investigated topic (Rontos and Papanis 2006). A significant difficulty was encountered in question 17 (where in Greece would they like to go to find work), which was then removed from the questionnaire, since the only place in Greece they were familiar with was Athens, based on information from their friends living there. Also, in question 24 (suggestions for their customs and traditions), it was observed that they struggled to think about and propose what they would like to happen to preserve their traditions upon entering a foreign country while simultaneously coming to know them in other cultures.

3. Results

3.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Refugees

In the present study, a total of 140 applicants for international protection participated, specifically 106 (75.7%) males and 34 (24.3%) females. The youngest respondent was 18 years old, while the oldest was 55 years old. The mean age was 26.1 years, the standard deviation was 6.3 years, and the median was 25 years. Half of the respondents were aged up to 25 years, while 62.1% of the sample was aged 18–26 years, and 30.7% was aged 27–35 years, indicating a youthful population. The normality checks of this variable showed that the sample did not come from a population that follows a normal distribution, according to the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test (K-S statistic = 0.15, df = 140, $p < 0.001$) and Shapiro–Wilk test (S-W statistic = 0.89, df = 140, $p < 0.001$). However, the order of observations of the "Age" variable above and below the median was demonstrated to be randomly distributed, according to the relevant test ($Z = -0.254$, $p = 0.8$).

Most of them were unmarried, accounting for 64.3%, which can be linked to their young age. Only 33.6% of the respondents were married. To the question "how many children do you have", respondents answered for all the children they had and not just for the children living with them (Table 2). Only 35% of the respondents had children (minors). Nevertheless, due to the high fertility of these populations, there were a total of 118 children in the sample. It should be noted that, during the survey period in the Reception and Identification Center (ΚΕΔ) of Samos, there were few children, constituting only 9.4% of the total population.

Table 2. Number of refugee children.

	Frequency	Frequency %	Accumulative Frequency %
0	91	65.0	65.0
1	13	9.3	74.3
2	15	10.7	85.0
3	15	10.7	95.7
4	2	1.4	97.1
5	3	2.1	99.3
6	1	0.7	100
Total	140	100	

3.1.1. Education and Employment

The educational level of the surveyed population was not particularly high. A significant proportion of applicants, approximately 60%, attended school for up to 6 years. Palestinians and Syrians attended school for more years compared with nationals from African countries. There was differentiation between the countries of origin and the level of education ($\chi^2 = 46.8$, df = 6, $p = 0.001$). The majority (56%) of respondents were not employed before coming to Greece. The reasons may vary as follows: (i) either the war started, and they lost their jobs; (ii) due to their young age, they did not have the oppor-

tunity to find employment; (iii) there were no job opportunities in their home country; (iv) finally, due to discrimination and persecution, they could not find work. There was no differentiation between the variables "country of origin" and "employment in their home country" after independence testing (χ^2 = 2.96, df = 1, p = 0.085). Of course, the reason for foreigners' movement to another country differs between economic migrants and refugees/asylum seekers, but integration in the host country concerns both, especially those of the latter category who want to settle permanently in the host country. Economic integration is a crucial dimension for refugees and asylum seekers, playing a serious role in the decision about their final destination. Our analysis reveals that these people considered their employment situation as a very important factor regarding their decision to permanently settle in Greece. Additionally, other studies highlight the low levels of employment within this group, suggesting the appropriateness of more effective and impactful policy actions (Casalis et al. 2023).

3.1.2. Origin and Motivation Underlying Migration

The majority of the total population of the Reception and Identification Center (CCF) in Samos consisted of Palestinian nationals. This was reflected in the sample, with 47.9% from Palestine, 13.6% from Sierra Leone, and 12.9% from Eritrea (Figure 1).

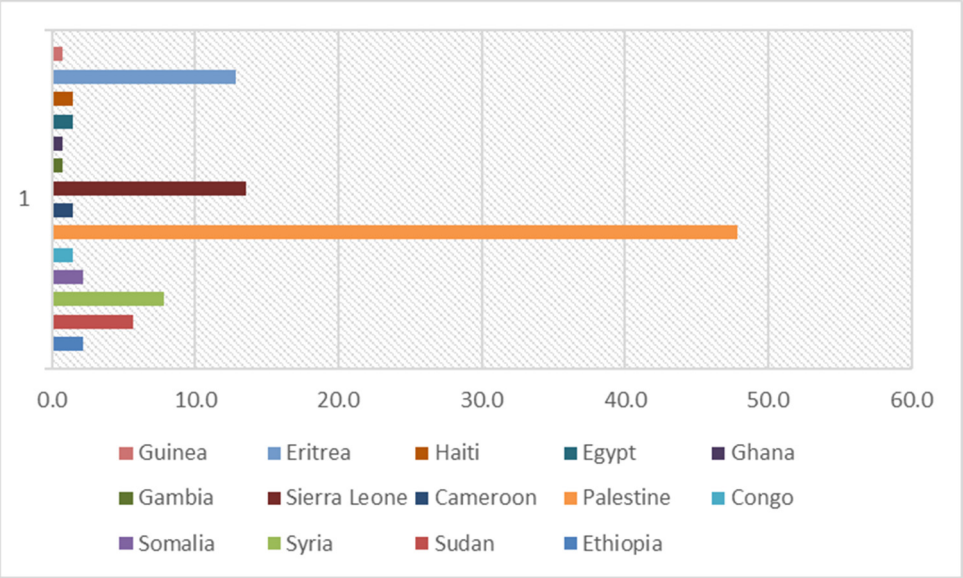


Figure 1. Refugees' country of origin (percent share in total population).

War was the primary reason for moving from their country, reported by 40% of the respondents. This was followed by 32.9% citing persecution (racial, religious, political, etc.), 16.4% internal conflicts, and, finally, 10.7% economic problems. By converting the variable "country of origin" into two categories, where the first included Syria and Palestine and the second included African countries, a significant differentiation was observed in the independence test for the "reason for migration", indicating a variation between the countries (χ^2 = 46.1, df = 3, p = 0.001). Most applicants from African countries were displaced due to racial, religious, and political beliefs, compared with Palestinians who moved because of the war (Table 3).

In the case that conditions improved, and there was no well-founded fear, 82.1% of the respondents did not want to return to their country. Specifically, among the 25 respondents who would like to return to their country when the danger subsided, 22 were Palestinians, and only three were from African countries. There was a significant differentiation between the countries of origin regarding their potential return (χ^2 = 12.85, df = 1, p = 0.001). However, there was no differentiation between genders on this question (χ^2 = 0.304, df = 1, p = 0.581).

Table 3. Reason for leaving their country of origin by group.

Countries of Origin	War	Internal Conflicts/Riots	Economic Problems/ Employment Search	Persecutions Racial/ Religious/Political	Total
Syria/Palestine	50	10	2	16	78
African countries	6	13	13	30	62
Total	56	23	15	46	140

3.1.3. The State of the Refugees Today

More than six out of ten respondents expected a decision from the asylum service, a fact that is due to the 65.7% residing in the CCS (Closed Controlled Structure) of Samos for less than three months. They had recently arrived and had not managed to finish all their administrative procedures. They mostly received refugee status, the Palestinians being the majority of CCS population. They were followed by Eritreans, Syrians, and people from other countries. There was also a small percentage, 3.5%, of respondents who had been in CCS for over a year. This usually happens when they receive negative decisions.

3.1.4. Attitude of Refugees towards Permanent Residence in Greece

One hundred and four refugees who participated in survey, approximately 74.3%, wanted to stay in Greece, while the other thirty-six (25.7%) wanted to move to another European country, mainly Germany. There was intention for secondary movement, but the majority of the refugees wanted to stay in Greece (Table 4).

Table 4. Intention to stay in Greece.

	Frequency	Frequency %	Accumulative Frequency %
Yes	104	74.3	74.3
No	36	25.7	100.0
Total	140	100.0	

By grouping countries into two categories (Syria/Palestine and African countries) and conducting an independence check with the variable "intention to stay in Greece", it was observed that there was differentiation between the responses given by the first group and the second group ($\chi^2 = 5.35$, df = 1, $p = 0.021$). The first category showed a greater desire to move to another European country (Table 5).

Table 5. Intention to stay in Greece and countries of origin by group.

Countries of Origin	Want to Stay in Greece		Total
	Yes	No	
Syria/Palestine	52	26	78
African countries	52	10	62
Total	104	36	140

It was observed that there was no differentiation between the responses given by women and men regarding their intention to stay in Greece ($\chi^2 = 1.53$, df = 1, $p = 0.216$). Respondents who stated that they did not want to stay in Greece prefered, to a large extent, to move to Germany. Other countries they would like to stay in included Belgium, Sweden, and the Netherlands. Finally, out of the 36 individuals who answered that they did not want to stay in Greece, 47% wanted to leave to find work, 42% had relatives/acquaintances in other countries, 8% sought a better life, and 3% cited economic reasons. In contrast, the primary reason for staying for those who wanted to remain in Greece was finding work/improving their finances (69.3%), protection/security (18.6%), a better quality of life (6.4%0, and education (5.7%).

More than half of the sample was not actively seeking work in Samos, while 48.6% were looking for employment. Typically, those who stay on the island for an extended period until their decision is made want to work mainly for economic reasons to cope with the new living conditions. It has been observed that individuals from African countries find employment more easily in tourist accommodations during the summer months, while Arabic speakers (Syrians, Palestinians) find employment in the agricultural sector. "Language" is a significant factor that can determine their work in the first few years. Regarding the professional orientation of respondents regarding the type of work they would like to find (whether they were searching during this period or plan to search in the future), 20.7% would like to engage in agriculture or animal husbandry, 23.6% in construction work, 8.6% in education, and 11.4% to start their own business.

In response to the question of whether they wanted to continue their education (secondary) or studies, 57.1% answered positively (Table 6). Equally important for their prospect of staying in Greece was their willingness to learn the Greek language. A significant percentage (62.1%) of respondents had started learning Greek. In a previous question, it was stated that only 34.3% had been in CCF for over three months, meaning that applicants who wanted to stay permanently in Greece were trying to learn Greek for better social integration from the first months of their arrival, without knowing whether they would be accepted in this country or not.

Table 6. Intention to continue education/studies in Greece.

	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Yes	80	57.1	57.1
No	60	42.9	100.0
Total	140	100.0	

Prospects for continuing their education or studies, and the initiation of learning the Greek language, differed (there was statistically significant difference) among the countries of origin in these questions ($\chi^2 = 8.68$, df = 1, $p = 0.003$) and ($\chi^2 = 6.86$, df = 1, $p = 0.009$), respectively. From Tables 7 and 8, it was observed that respondents from African countries showed a greater intention to continue their education and had already started learning the Greek language.

Table 7. Countries of origin and continuation of education.

		Countries		Total
		Syria/Palestine	African Countries	
Want to continue your education	Yes	36	44	80
	No	42	18	60
Total		78	62	140

Table 8. Countries of origin and learning the Greek language.

Question		Countries		Total
		Syria/Palestine	African Countries	
Do you learn Greek?	Yes	41	46	87
	No	37	16	53
Total		78	62	140

Additionally, the continuation of education differed (there was a statistically significant difference) between genders ($\chi^2 = 11.6$, df = 1, $p = 0.001$). According to the above Table 9, women, at a higher percentage, expressed a desire to continue their education.

Table 9. Countries of origin and continuing education.

		Gender		Total
		Man	Woman	
Want to continue your education?	Yes	52	28	80
	No	54	6	60
Total		106	34	140

3.1.5. Interaction with the Local Community

More than half of the respondents answered that they have friendly relationships with individuals from the local community (Table 10).

Table 10. Friendly relationships with people from the local community.

	Frequency	Frequency %	Cumulated Frequency %
Yes	77	55.0	55.0
No	63	45.0	100
Total	140	100	

Additionally, a Chi-square test was conducted on the variables "trying to find a job" and "having friendly relationships with individuals from the local community" regarding the grouped variable "country of origin". It was found that there was no differentiation in the responses between the first (Syria/Palestine) and second (African countries) groups (χ^2 = 1.962, df = 1, p = 0.161) and (χ^2 = 1.966, df = 1, p = 0.161), respectively. However, the majority of respondents (59.3%) did not feel that they belonged or were connected in any way to the local community. They argued that the local community did not support them (65.7%) through actions during their stay. Regarding the question "Do you have any suggestions regarding your customs and traditions", a large percentage of respondents did not answer. Those who responded suggested the organization of events in which everyone, regardless of origin, can participate, and a place where they can taste traditional foods from their homeland. The responses to the question about the existence of xenophobia and racism indicated that third-country nationals mostly had not experienced acts of racism and xenophobia (Table 11). By constructing a crosstabulation between contact/no contact and racism/no racism, we found that the association was close to statistical significance (χ^2 = 3.5, df = 1, p = 0.061), with the majority of those who had no contact with the local community had not faced racism and xenophobia (77.1%).

Table 11. Existence of xenophobia and racism in the local host community.

Answer	Frequency	Frequency %	Cumulated Frequency %
Yes	25	17.9	17.9
No	115	82.1	100.0
Total	140	100.0	

3.1.6. Satisfaction Level with Their Interaction with Private and Public Services

As part of the research, respondents evaluated their satisfaction with access to and service in stores, public transportation (buses), public services, offices/methods of job search, private doctors, public hospitals, and public education (Figure 2). The satisfaction level was measured on the following scale:

1. Not satisfied at all;
2. Slightly satisfied;
3. Moderately satisfied;

4. Quite satisfied;
5. Very satisfied.

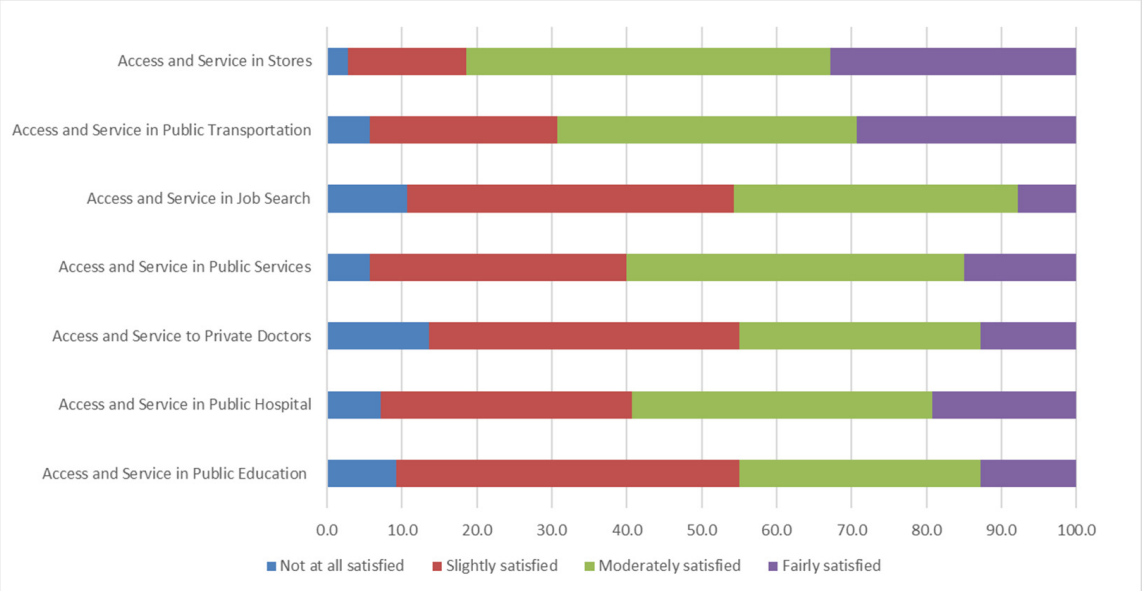


Figure 2. Daily access and service utilization in services.

Value 5 did not receive any response from the respondents because, according to their opinion, none of them were very satisfied.

Regarding public education, private doctors, and job search, the majority responded that they were slightly satisfied. Stores (32.9%) and buses (29.3%) had the highest percentage of positive service and access (quite satisfied) among all. Many tended towards moderate satisfaction in all of the above. The above results were verified by the calculation of median value for the services in concern. The respondents presented median value 2 (slightly satisfied) for public education, private doctors, and job search, while the satisfaction regarding services in public hospitals, public agencies, public transportation, and stores was higher (median = 3; moderately satisfied).

Table 12 presents the satisfaction level regarding access and service in relation to gender and origin (by group). Men seemed to be less satisfied regarding public hospital services in relation to women, as 47.1% of the former were not satisfied at all or were slightly satisfied, while 20.6% of the latter declared this satisfactory. Furthermore, the median value of the two genders was not different concerning this service. Similar were the comparison of genders concerning satisfaction from private doctors; 61.3% of the men were not satisfied at all or were slightly satisfied, with the corresponding percentage of women being 35.3%. Additionally, the median value of satisfaction regarding private doctors was 2 for men and 3 for women. Concerning the satisfaction regarding public transportation, Syrians and Palestinians were more dissatisfied (41% were not satisfied at all or were slightly satisfied) than Africans (17.7% in the same categories). The median was also 3 for both groups of origin. Public hospitals and private doctors differed (there was a statistically significant difference) between genders, while public transportation differed between the two different groups of origin. In the remaining questions, there was no differentiation between the responses given by men/women and Palestinians/Syrians/Africans.

Table 12. Refugees' satisfaction differences for the quality of services by gender and country of origin; Chi-square tests; bold indicates statistical significance.

Kind of Service	Gender			Origin/Groups		
Public Education	$\chi^2 = 5.51$	df = 3	$p = 0.138$	$\chi^2 = 5.99$	df = 3	$p = 0.112$
Public Hospitals	**$\chi^2 = 7.94$**	**df = 3**	**$p = 0.047$**	$\chi^2 = 6.68$	df = 3	$p = 0.083$
Private Doctors	**$\chi^2 = 8.29$**	**df = 3**	**$p = 0.040$**	$\chi^2 = 2.12$	df = 3	$p = 0.54$
Public Services	$\chi^2 = 2.36$	df = 3	$p = 0.502$	$\chi^2 = 1.64$	df = 3	$p = 0.65$
Job Search	$\chi^2 = 4.00$	df = 3	$p = 0.261$	$\chi^2 = 1.86$	df = 3	$p = 0.601$
Public Transportation	$\chi^2 = 2.65$	df = 3	$p = 0.449$	**$\chi^2 = 8.85$**	**df = 3**	**$p = 0.031$**
Stores	$\chi^2 = 5.77$	df = 3	$p = 0.123$	$\chi^2 = 6.79$	df = 3	$p = 0.079$

3.2. Factors Determining the Permanent Settlement of Refugees in Greece Using Logistic Regression

The dependent variable in the logistic regression models was the "intension of the refugees to stay in Greece (exact question in the questionnaire: do you want to stay in Greece?)" with the dichotomous response "Yes = 1/No = 0". The categorical independent variables tested in the model and their values are presented in Table 13. Observing the values here, in comparison with the previous analysis, we noticed that they were reduced in order for frequencies to be higher in each value and thus the model to be more reliable. In addition, a continuous variable expressing the satisfaction of the refugees from (a) the access they had to several public and private agencies and (b) the quality of the services they had in these agencies was employed. In this model, the above variable represented the quality of life that the refugees experienced in Greece according to their opinion. The values of that variable resulted from the sum of the values to the seven agencies/services mentioned in Table 12. In each of these agencies, the satisfaction was measured by a Likert scale, with values as mentioned in Section 3.1.6.

Table 13. Categorical variable coding.

		Frequency	Parameter Coding		
			(1)	(2)	(3)
Education level	Illiterate	11	1.000	0.000	0.000
	Attended or completed elementary school	72	0.000	1.000	0.000
	Attended or completed high school	43	0.000	0.000	1.000
	University graduate	13	0.000	0.000	0.000
Number of children	0	91	1.000	0.000	0.000
	1	13	0.000	1.000	0.000
	2	14	0.000	0.000	1.000
	3+	21	0.000	0.000	0.000
Age group	18–26	87	1.000	0.000	
	27–35	42	0.000	1.000	
	36+	10	0.000	0.000	
Marital status	Single	48	1.000		
	Married	91	0.000		
Exposure to xenophobia and racism in Greece [1]	No	115	1.000		
	Yes	24	0.000		
Trying to find work in Greece [2]	Yes	68	1.000		
	No	71	0.000		

Table 13. *Cont.*

		Frequency	Parameter Coding		
			(1)	(2)	(3)
Feeling that they belong or have some connection to the local community	Yes	57	1.000		
	No	82	0.000		
Existence of friendly relations with people from the local community	Yes	77	1.000		
	No	62	0.000		
Desire to continue education (in Greece) [3]	Yes	79	1.000		
	No	60	0.000		
Region of origin	African countries	61	1.000		
	Syria/Palestine	78	0.000		

[1] Question in the questionnaire: have you been exposed to incidents of xenophobia and racism in Greece? [2] Question in the questionnaire: are you trying to find a job in Greece? [3] Question in the questionnaire: do you want to continue your education/studies?

The goodness-of-fit tests and general elements of each model are presented in Tables 14 and 15. First, the forward stepwise procedure needed 1–5 steps for the final results. Also, the model was highly significant (p-value = 0.0) at all steps, particularly the last one, as indicated by the omnibus test of model coefficients (Table 14).

Table 14. Omnibus test of model coefficients.

		Chi-Square	Df	Sig
Step 1	Step	13.299	1	0.000
	Block	13.299	1	0.000
	Model	13.299	1	0.000
Step 2	Step	10.680	1	0.001
	Block	23.978	2	0.000
	Model	23.978	2	0.000
Step 3	Step	9.788	1	0.002
	Block	33.767	3	0.000
	Model	33.767	3	0.000
Step 4	Step	8.180	1	0.004
	Block	41.946	4	0.000
	Model	41.946	4	0.000
Step 5	Step	3.804	1	0.051
	Block	45.750	5	0.000
	Model	45.750	5	0.000

Table 15. Model summary.

Step	−2 Log Likelihood	Cox and Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	143.577 [a]	0.091	0.135
2	132.898 [a]	0.158	0.234
3	123.109 [a]	0.216	0.319
4	114.930 [b]	0.260	0.385
5	111.126 [b]	0.280	0.415

[a] Estimation terminated at iteration number 5 because parameter estimates changed by less than 0.001. [b] Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than 0.001.

According to the model's step 0 (constant: b = 1.089, df = 1, $p < 0.001$, Exp(b) = 2.971), the sample as a whole was three times more likely to stay in Greece than to not stay, according to the above Exp(Bo) value.

In the last step, the model explained a moderate amount of the trust's variance among the sample, according to the Cox and Snell R^2 and Nagelkerke R^2 (Table 15). This value indicates a moderately strong relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable, but pseudo-R^2 in logistic regression does not have the power it does in linear one and it should not be overtly emphasized. The goodness-of-fit for the model was also reflected in the non-significance of the statistical test of Hosmer and Lemeshow (1989) at all steps, especially the last one, as presented in Table 16.

Table 16. Hosmer and Lemeshow test.

Step	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1	0.000	0	-
2	12.319	8	0.138
3	9.862	8	0.275
4	6.047	8	0.642
5	4.430	8	0.816

−2 LL fell from step 1 to the last step 5 (Table 15), a fact indicating that the last step model fit the data better than those of the previous steps. Summarizing the evaluation tests, we could conclude that the model had a good performance, and we can move on to the main results indicating the factors that influenced the intension of the recent foreigners to stay (permanently) in Greece than to be moved towards another country after their recognition as refugees (obtaining asylum).

The quest for α job (Wald = 16.661, df = 1, p = 0.00), the quality of life as expressed by their satisfaction from the services providing to them by several bodies (Wald = 5.8, df = 1, p = 0.016), the country of origin (Wald = 8.7, df = 1, p = 0.003), the marital status (Wald = 5.9, df = 1, p = 0.015), and, finally, the sense of safety based on the existence or absence of xenophobic and racist incidents (Wald = 3.8, df = 1, p = 0.052) seemed to be the significant determinants of the foreigners' intention to stay in Greece at the final step 5 of the model (Table 17). The variables were entered in the model with the above order.

Table 17. Variables in the equation.

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 [a]	You are trying to find a job in Greece (1)	1.527	0.449	11.569	1	0.001	4.602
	Constant	0.488	0.244	3.990	1	0.046	1.630
Step 2 [b]	Access to services—sum	0.156	0.051	9.359	1	0.002	1.169
	You are trying to find a job in Greece (1)	1.617	0.468	11.939	1	0.001	5.038
	Constant	−2.395	0.963	6.181	1	0.013	0.091
Step 3 [c]	Region of origin (country grouping) (1)	1.492	0.508	8.605	1	0.003	4.444
	Access to services—sum	0.163	0.054	9.309	1	0.002	1.178
	Trying to find a job in Greece (1)	2.025	0.520	15.188	1	0.000	7.579
	Constant	−3.219	1.074	8.979	1	0.003	0.040
Step 4 [d]	Country of origin—grouping (1)	1.585	0.532	8.882	1	0.003	4.882
	Marital status in groups (1)	1.535	0.584	6.903	1	0.009	4.642
	Access to services—sum	0.143	0.057	6.279	1	0.012	1.154
	You are trying to find a job in Greece (1)	2.179	0.550	15.692	1	0.000	8.836
	Constant	−3.360	1.144	8.626	1	0.003	0.035
Step 5 [e]	Country of origin grouping (1)	1.607	0.545	8.701	1	0.003	4.990
	Marital status in groups (1)	1.441	0.595	5.866	1	0.015	4.223
	Access to services—quality of services	0.140	0.058	5.805	1	0.016	1.150
	You are trying to find a job in Greece (1)	2.383	0.584	16.661	1	0.000	10.839
	Xenophobia and racism from local community (1)	1.178	0.608	3.762	1	0.052	3.249
	Constant	−4.301	1.303	10.892	1	0.001	0.014

[a] Variable(s) entered on step 1: you are trying to find a job in Greece. [b] Variable(s) entered on step 2: access to services—quality of services. [c] Variable(s) entered on step 3: country of origin. [d] Variable(s) entered on step 4: marital status in groups. [e] Variable(s) entered on step 5: xenophobia and racism from the local community.

All independent variables were positively associated with the dependent one, as indicated by the positive value of b coefficients (Table 17). According to that, persons with higher satisfaction from the services provided to them in public and private bodies were more likely to stay in Greece. Also, those who had the actual intention (quest) to find work, were from African countries, were not married, and felt safe in Greece (had no incident of xenophobia or racism) were more likely to stay in Greece. More precisely, according to the odds ratio [(Exp(b) column] of Table 17, those who

(i) Had the actual intention (quest) to find work were 10.8 times more likely to stay in Greece in comparison with those who had no quest to find a job;
(ii) Were from African countries were 4.990 times more likely to stay in Greece in comparison with those from Syria/Palestine;
(iii) Were not married were 4.223 times more likely to stay in Greece in comparison with those who were married;
(iv) Felt safe in Greece were 3.249 times more likely to stay in Greece in comparison with those who did not feel safe.

We should mention that, according to the logistic regression properties, the above factors simultaneously influence the intention of foreigners to Greece and provide the opportunity to predict the probability of a sample unit (refugee) to stay in Greece. First, the total sample has a probability of 98.6% to stay in Greece. Then, using formula (1) we can predict the intention of a refugee having certain values (characteristics) of the significant variables to stay in Greece after obtaining international protection from the Greek authorities. In Table 18, we can see the characteristics of a refugee who had a very low probability to stay in Greece against a middle or high probability of this kind.

Table 18. Probabilities of a refugee with certain characteristics to stay in Greece according to the predicted logistic regression model.

Refugee Characteristics	Probability %		
	99.5	51.0	6.8
Marital status	single	married	married
Exposure to xenophobia and racism in Greece	no	yes	yes
Trying to find work in Greece	yes	yes	no
Quality of life (access to agencies and quality of services)	22	14	12
Region of origin	African countries	Syria/Palestine	Syria/Palestine

According to the results of the model, marital status, safety, and quality of life distinguished refugees with a very high probability of staying in Greece from those with a medium or low probability of this kind. Finally, the age, education level, intention to continue studies, and (inter)connection with the local community seemed not to be significant for the refugees to stay in Greece in this model.

4. Discussion

The aim of the study was to explore the expectations and attitudes of irregular immigrants towards their permanent residence and social integration. A total of 140 asylum seekers were investigated in November 2022, residing at the time in the Closed Controlled Structure (CCS) in Samos. For the first time, information was collected about their attitudes and expectations regarding the prospect of permanent residence in Greece. According to the research results, the majority of respondents (three or four) wished to stay in Greece. This finding was particularly evident when compared with those found by the results of a survey (Casalis et al. 2023) published in December 2023 (one or two of the respondents).

Specifically, while residing in the facility and awaiting asylum decisions, they tried to build friendly relationships with people from the local community, learn Greek, and

continue their education or studies. However, their social integration at the current time could not be achieved properly because suitable strategies were lacking at the local level. The majority of respondents felt that they were not adequately supported by the local community, and their satisfaction with access to services, transportation, hospitals, and stores was considered moderate. Nevertheless, they mostly did not feel racist or xenophobic tendencies from the local community. The low xenophobic attitude in society was attributed to the overall positive stance towards refugees, a fact that holds true in Greece (Chtouris et al. 2014). The information gathered about the employment sector can provide specifications for appropriate education and training, even for specific geographic locations where they should be settled. For example, agricultural workers should not be relocated to urban centers for accommodation.

The respondents who were present during the research period at CCS Samos had left their countries due to wars, persecutions, discrimination, and acts of violence occurring in their home countries. Economic problems and finding employment were not among the main reasons that had led them to go to Greece. Most in the general population, as well as in the sample, were men, unmarried, and under 27 years old. Most women left due to acts of violence they had suffered in their countries. Palestinians moved primarily due to the war situation in their country, while citizens of African countries moved due to persecutions (political, religious, racial).

Of the 25 respondents who stated that they would like to return to their countries, 22 were Palestinians. The relative statistical analysis showed differentiation among refugees from different countries of origin regarding the desire to return to their home country. More than two-thirds of third-country nationals applying for asylum in Greece stated that they wanted to stay in the country. Regarding this question, Palestinians showed a greater intention to move to another country compared with respondents from African countries. Those who answered that they did not want to stay in Greece preferred, to a large extent, to move to Germany. Other countries they would like to stay in included Belgium, Sweden, and the Netherlands. In Dimitriadi's research (2017), most respondents aimed to go to Sweden, Germany, and England, showing compatible results in both studies. Answers to this question might change significantly if the research were conducted outside the confines of the CCS in Samos due to fear and concern about the asylum application process in Greece. It was observed that some did not answer based on their real intentions and goals. In general, the decisions of immigrants/refugees regarding the choice of settlement and successful social integration are closely linked to the education and employment prospects provided to them, in accordance with the relevant studies presented in the introduction (Chandler and Tsai 2001; Tlhabano and Schweitzer 2007; Jacobs and Rea 2007; Gallego and Pardos-Prado 2014; Zacher 2019; Maragoudakis et al. 2022b; Nagopoulos et al. 2022).

Their intention for secondary movement was not related (there was no statistically significant relationship) to their waiting time in the CCS Samos. If this specific study had been conducted three years ago in the previous facilities of the center and under the conditions prevailing at that time, their intention for secondary movement might have been different and possibly connected to the waiting time for their decision. There were several during that period who decided to return to their homeland (voluntary return) due to the long wait at the center. Gender and age demographic characteristics did not show a statistically significant relationship with their intention to stay in Greece. The same was observed with the social characteristics of the respondents (family status, country of origin, and education), meaning there was no statistically significant differentiation with their intention.

The learning of the Greek language, finding employment, continuing education, and the relationships they built with individuals in the local community indicated their intentions to integrate into the local community. Out of the sample of 140 individuals, only 43 received refugee status. Several individuals with a refugee profile were not included because they voluntarily left the center once they made the decision. More than 50% of the recognized refugees in the survey started learning Greek, were seeking employment,

and had friendly relationships with people in the society. The continuation of education and the learning of the Greek language varied depending on the country of origin, with respondents from African countries showing a greater intention to continue their education.

The perceptions of most regarding the local community were assessed with moderate satisfaction regarding their access to and service from public services, public hospitals, transportation, and stores. Less satisfaction was recorded regarding job search, private healthcare, and public education. Access to public hospitals and private doctors varied between men and women, while satisfaction regarding access to and service from public transportation differed between the two categories of different origins. They felt a sense of connection with the local community and had not been exposed to incidents of xenophobia or racism.

According to the research results, their stay in Greece did not depend on their perceptions of the local society in Samos. However, their attitude towards the local society in Samos did not imply that it would be the same for local societies in the rest of Greece. Gender and age, for the most part, did not influence their attitudes towards local society. The only statistical significance appeared in the variables "gender" and access to "public hospitals" and "private doctors". There was a statistically significant differentiation between men and women in terms of access to and service from doctors in both the public and private sectors.

The logistic regression model indicated that marital status, the need for employment, the experience regarding the quality of services they received, and the need for security were the positive reasons for their intention to stay in Greece that were compatible with previous surveys (Nunn et al. 2014; Zacher 2019). However, other surveys do not confirm most refugees' intent to stay in Greece but that they have in mind to move towards other European countries, mostly in central and northern Europe (Dimitriadi 2017). Single Africans who had experienced a good and safe life up to now in Greece seemed to have a high intension to stay (permanently) in Greece.

The reception societies are tasked with the stage of receiving international protection applicants. Specifically, closed controlled structures ensure that everyone receives special care and protection, providing shelter, food, medical care, psychosocial support, access to public health facilities, access to public schools, and financial aid during the completion of their procedures. The completion procedures are carried out in a short period for those who will receive refugee status. This implies that they do not have time to be transferred to mainland Greece. For this reason, the local reception society must also be a society of integration. There should be special offices (one-stop-shops) guiding these people correctly, providing all the services they need, and ensuring job and housing placement. Psychological support is deemed necessary for a long period. As in other European countries, there should be specific integration programs that must be mandatory for them to follow. However, there should not only be rights but also obligations that need to be implemented to avoid negative consequences in the harmonious coexistence of the two sides.

Equally important is their settlement in specific areas determined by local authorities throughout the country. After the decision is issued, everyone gathers in major urban centers because there is better networking among them. Noteworthy is the action by local authorities to sensitize the indigenous population through various actions and programs for their immediate social integration. They should not perceive them as a threat to their place (Maragoudakis et al. 2022b). Therefore, social integration can only be achieved if integration strategies are determined and implemented by both local communities and central authorities. The Greek integration model seeks to maintain an inclusive society that respects diversity and supports acceptance and social cohesion through interculturalism.

In conclusion, population movements, whether migratory or refugee, create significant disruptions worldwide. The ongoing increase in arrivals in Western societies can positively contribute to the challenges faced by the European Union, especially regarding the aging population, which is one of the major issues in Western societies. The percentage of retirees

in EU countries is increasing at a faster rate than the growth of its labor force. Migration can also yield positive economic results for the European Union by effectively utilizing the new workforce. The efficient management of migration arrivals can contribute to the benefit of states, as long as successful integration is ensured (Wolleghem 2017; Huddleston et al. 2013). Social sciences can shape integration processes and formulate new governmental policy strategies. Social research contributes by providing measurements to assess the situation over different periods.

5. Conclusions

The characteristics, attitudes, and opinions not only of local communities regarding refugees but also of foreigners regarding their prospects of staying in Greece are considered crucial for the best possible handling of the refugee/migration issue and the implementation of policies for their social integration. For this reason, primary research in populations residing in all closed controlled structures and in reception and identification centers should be expanded to capture the views, attitudes, and problems faced by populations in these different areas. It is also important to conduct primary research in controlled structures within the country to explore their level of integration and their perceptions of these societies. Their perceptions vary significantly from the moment of their arrival (in closed controlled structures) until their movement to the inland (controlled structures).

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