



UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
AND HUMANITIES

PROCEEDINGS

4th International Conference
Education Across Borders

**Education in the 21st Century:
Challenges and Perspectives**

Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Eleni Griva
Angeliki Lithoxoidou
Alexandros Amprazis
(Editors)

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Education Across Borders

Education in the 21st Century: Challenges and Perspectives
Florina, 19-20 October 2018

Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Eleni Griva
Angeliki Lithoxidou
Alexandros Amprazis
(Editors)



UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA
Faculty of Social Sciences and
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The authors were asked to produce updated versions of their papers and take into account the discussion that took place after the presentation and the suggestions received from other participants at the Conference. On the whole, the e-Proceedings present a comprehensive overview of ongoing studies in Education Research in Europe and beyond.

The editors carried out a review of the updated versions of the papers that were submitted after the Conference. The editors do not necessarily endorse or share the ideas and views presented in or implied by the papers included in this book.

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It is our pleasure to present this volume consisting of selected papers based on oral and poster presentations from the 4th International Conference *Education Across Borders*, held on 19th -20th October 2018, at the University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece.

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We would like to extend our gratitude to the international and national scientific committee for their valuable contribution to organizing the 4th International Conference Education Across Borders. The members of the Scientific Committees have offered their scientific expertise and provided support on the process of reviewing papers.

We would also like to give special thanks to conference presenters and participants/audience members, as well as we wish to thank our undergraduate and postgraduate students who greatly contributed to the organization and success of the Conference.

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OPENING CEREMONY SPEECH

Dear representatives of the national and international authorities,

Dear colleagues and students from the co-organising Universities of the three neighbouring countries, the UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA, the «ST KLIMENT OHRIDSKI” UNIVERSITY – BITOLA & UNIVERSITY OF «FAN S. NOLI” – KORÇË,

Dear participants from Cyprus, Athens, Thessaloniki, Patra, Corfu and other Greek universities,

You are very welcome to the Faculty of Education in Florina!

We consider ourselves privileged to represent the host institution of this International Conference for a second time. Please, give me the opportunity to remind you that the idea of “Education across Borders” was born in the Faculty of Education in Florina, with professor Lemonidis being the godfather of it. I can see him here, among the audience.

Thanks to this Conference, and while being located in the most distant North West corner of Greece, our Institution has the opportunity to share interests in academic study and fieldwork with the aforementioned universities, thus creating a common ground for academic research, scientific knowledge, communication, as well as exchange of ideas and culture.

Such an initiative

- connotes multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in the Balkans,
- increases the degree of transparency and compatibility among higher education in the area,
- facilitates the development of innovative practices in education and training,
- supports the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practices for lifelong learning
- develops multi/interdisciplinary approaches and
- contributes to the creation of sustainable learning communities.

Above all, such an effort is made to promote interaction among participants with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds on both personal and institutional level.

Apparently this initiative contributes to academic and personal benefits for the participants. It introduces the idea that borderlands cannot be inferred or deduced only from the defined political and economic structures of the neighbouring countries.

Considering the human factor, we can realize that the lives of people living and working at the borders are part of the border cultures; these people coexist on the same or the other side of the legal state demarcation, the borderline; and they share forms of particular conceptualisation with other borderlanders.

These characteristics underpin the core concept of this Conference. Above all, they constitute fundamental strands of both cooperation and interaction among the three neighbouring countries and even the whole Balkan area.

So, I am happy to announce the beginning of the 4th International Conference. We would like you to

share your thoughts and ideas being derived from the Conference and we wish you a pleasant stay in Florina!

Florina, 19th October 2018

Prof. Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
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REFUGEE STUDENTS IN GREEK SCHOOL: MAPPING THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN MACEDONIA, NEEDS AND SUGGESTIONS

ROUND TABLE

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Abstract

The region of Central and Western Macedonia embraced the refugee and asylum seekers from the very first moment they arrived in our country, trying to implement the educational measures which are set by the Ministry of Education, to meet the needs of this new population in the direction of respect, human rights and dignity for every human being.

Keywords: Refugee Education, Asylum Seekers, Refugee Education Coordinators, Intercultural Education

1.Introduction: Humanitarian Crisis and the emerging needs to support Refugee populations

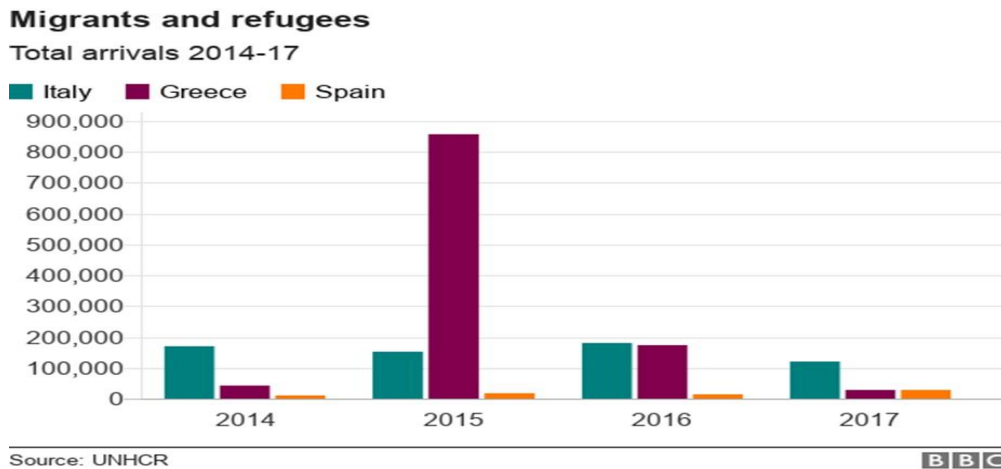
- Humanitarian Crisis is defined as a situation in which there is an unusual and widespread threat to human life, health or living, according to UNHCR (2007). Such crises usually occur in the context of an existing lack of protection, where a number of pre-existing factors (poverty, inequality, lack of access to basic services) are getting worse by a natural or technological disaster or an armed conflict, multiplying the disastrous consequences. The result of the above is the creation of human flows with a specific: *purpose, way, goal* and *path* (IOM's Migration Flows Europe). Refugees and Asylum seekers are the terms we use to define those populations suffering from the Humanitarian Crisis (UNHCR, 2007).

According to the United Nations refugee Convention (1951), "the difference between refugees and asylum seekers is clear. An asylum seeker has left their country and is seeking protection from persecution. A refugee has already received such protection. Refugees have the right to international protection while seeking asylum, which means everyone should be allowed to enter another country to seek asylum".

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines “a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state regardless of legal status, whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary, what the causes for the movement are, and what the length of the stay is”.

We are now witnessing the highest levels of movement nowadays. About 258 million people, or one in every 30, were living outside their country of birth in 2017. The latest estimation is that there will be 405 million international migrants by 2050 (United Nations, 2017). Even those figures, however, fail to capture the full reality. There were 25.9 million refugees and asylum seekers in mid-2017 (United Nations / Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017). But registered refugees represent only a fraction of all those forced to leave their homes for reasons spanning from war to environmental crisis (UNHCR, 2007). In total, at least 66 million people globally are experiencing forced displacement – approximately 40.3 million of whom are IDPs (Internally displaced people) (UNHCR, 2016). Some of the world’s poorer and often less stable countries –such as Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and Uganda– are now the long-term hosts to the world’s largest populations of refugees. Turkey is currently the leading host of refugees, with 3.5 million, followed by Uganda and Pakistan, which both host about 1.4 million, according to UNHCR (2016), the UN refugee agency. In all, 57% of refugees come from just three countries: Syria (6.3 million) Afghanistan (2.4 million) and South Sudan (2.3 million). Meanwhile, Colombia hosts the greatest number of internally displaced people – 7.6 million as of 2017.

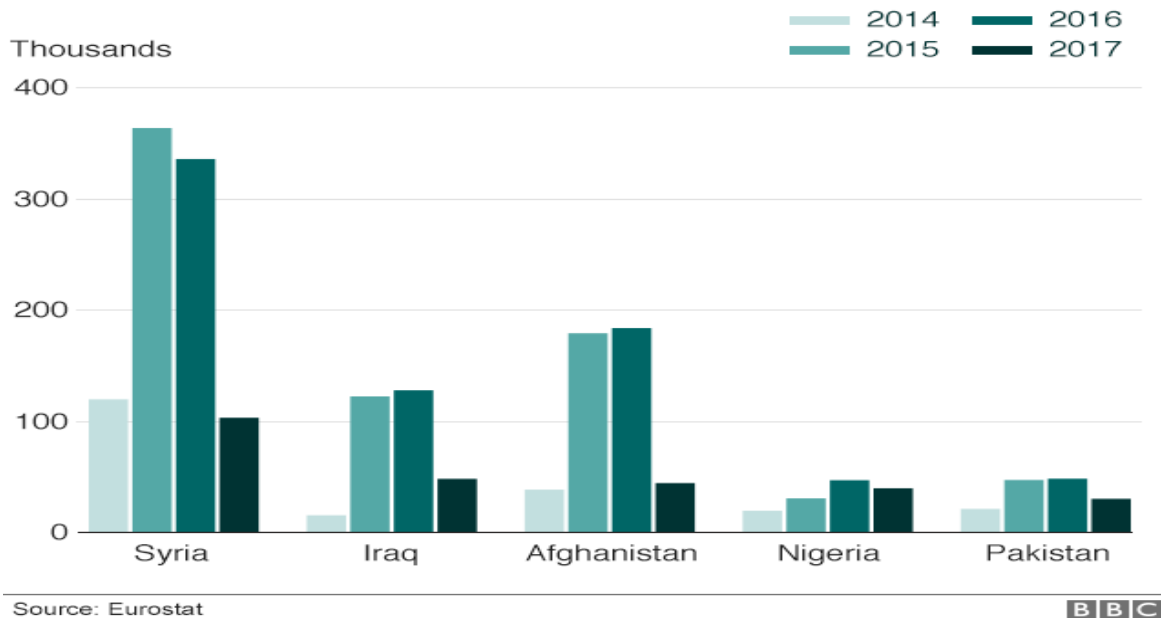
A question posed here is, how many people are arriving now, where are they from and what is happening to those who have arrived in the EU in previous years?



Graph 1. Migrants and Refugees- total arrivals (2014-2017) retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44660699>

According to Graph 1, A total of 20.760 have arrived in Greece so far this year, bringing the total number of arrivals in the EU in 2018 to just over 76.000.

Asylum applications by country of origin



Graph 2. Asylum applications by country of origin (2014-2017) retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44660699>

Syria is still the most common country of origin of those arriving in Greece. Arrivals from Iraq and Afghanistan are also among the top countries of origin.

2.The Education of Refugee Children: the case of Greece

The right to education is a particular aspect of the rights of the child and is defined at two basic official documents: Article 16 of the Constitution and Article 28 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989).

According to article 38, Law 4415/2016 (Intercultural Education) the Education and Finance Ministers are authorized to establish *reception structures* for the education of refugees, to define the organization, operation and education programmes in specific structures providing training.

In accordance with this provision, the Joint Ministerial Decision establishes **Reception Facilities for the Education of Refugees** (RFER)⁴⁷ from the school year 2016-17, which operate within the school units and provide education to refugee children. The Ministry of Education, consistent with its obligations to provide refugee education, has initiated, according to the recommendation of the Scientific Committee (2016), the design of an educational program that started its implementation in 2016-2017, for refugee children.

⁴⁷ From October 2016 until 2017, 111 (in total) structures have been functioning at 13 districts of Education. Approximately 2.643 refugee students attended the lessons μαθητές (Scientific Committee for the Support of Refugee Children, 2017).

This training program concerns children residing in hospitality centers and has as its primary objective the transition of these children from life to camps to school regularity and eventually their successful integration into school culture.

Therefore, by a Joint Ministerial Decision (no. 152360/CD4), Refugee Training Host Structures were established, operating within primary and secondary schools of compulsory education.

Within the frame of these structures a twenty hour weekly training program (four hours per day) is being implemented during afternoon hours (2 - 6 p.m.) aiming either to integrate children into the Greek education system from the next school year, or joining the school system of another European country if their family is relocated.

For a smooth functioning, the necessary funds from the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) have been secured, while the necessary funding has been provided to cover the cost of transporting children by bus and escorts from hospitality structures to neighboring schools.

2.1.The Situation in Central Macedonia

Support and Training Refugee Structures at the District of Central Macedonia:

- Primary Compulsory Education: 11 (349)
- Secondary Compulsory Education: 7 (147)
- Early Childhood Education: 8 (149)

Refugee children, age 6-15 years old, living in dispersed urban settings –such as relocation accommodation, squats, apartments, hotels, and reception centers– go to schools near their places of residence, they enroll in the morning classes together with Greek children, at schools which are selected by the Education Ministry.

During school year 2017-2018, amongst first steps were the operation of pre-school facilities within camps, the reception classes at the morning school program for children 7-15 years old. This school year, many refugee children were attending general education/mainstream schools, where in Reception Classes they were taught the Greek language and Greek culture elements. Specifically, as follow:

- 146 Refugee children at Early Childhood Education (11 Classes)
- 1039 in Primary (98 Reception Classes)
- 203 in Secondary Compulsory/ Gymnasium (29 reception Classes)
- 91 in Upper Secondary/ Lyceum and Vocational High Schools (13 R.C.)

2.2.The Situation in Western Macedonia

Approximately 900 refugees have already settled in Grevena region, while 40 unaccompanied girls are expected⁴⁸ at the municipality of Voion.

Currently, there are two hosting structures in Western Macedonia for 65 unaccompanied asylum seekers, between 14 to 18 years old. The first hosting structure is located in Aiani, a village about 20 kilometers away from Kozani, while the second one is in Kastoria.

Until now, NGOs –i.e. *Arsis* in Aiani and *Ilihtida* in Kastoria– have undertaken refugee education at a non–formal context. They provide Greek and English language lessons to asylum seeker children. Moreover, they organize several activities, such as excursions and cultural events, in order refugees to become acquainted with the local communities and the customs.

2.2.1.Aiani Hosting Structure

30 asylum seekers are staying at a hotel located at the village of Aiani. Most of them come from Pakistan, 1 from Bangladesh and 1 from Afghanistan. They have first arrived in Aiani on the 16th of April 2018. Twenty asylum seekers have been attending Aiani’s school structure, where:

- They study Greek and English language, mathematics, computer science and gymnastics. They can also participate in cultural and environmental activities.
- 11 asylum seekers attend the Reception Class at the 4th Evening Vocational School of Kozani.
- They are currently studying Greek language for 15 hours per week and mathematics for 3 hours. English language courses, Information Technology and Physical Education are going to be integrated into their daily curriculum in the near future.
- All refugee students who attend DYEP classes are able to attend regular classes under the condition that they can communicate in Greek.
- The 11 asylum seekers were selected to attend the vocational school on the basis of their ability to communicate in Greek –at least to some extent– and their willingness to participate in the Greek educational system. The main motivation for their decision was better qualification for joining into Greek and European communities.

⁴⁸ These data came from the organized structures that are already functioning in Western Macedonia, since there aren’t enough figures concerning new arrivals. The informant for the hosting structures in Western Macedonia is Mrs Soula Patsiou, one of the Refugee Education Coordinators at Western Macedonia.

It would be worth mentioning that today by end of 2019, 18 refugees had attended school at their homeland for over 8 years, 5 from 5 to 7 years and 7 refugees less than 4 years. These 11 vocational school students at least had a prior 5–year educational experience in the countries of their origin.

2.2.2. Kastoria Hosting Structure

According to internal data, 35 asylum seekers are staying at a hotel near the town of Kastoria. Most of them come from Afghanistan. They can hardly speak either Greek or English. Six of them had attended school for 8 years or more, 10 boys from 5 to 7 years and 13 for less than 4 years and 4 teenagers had no educational experience in the countries of their origin. Their lack in Greek and English language skills led us to decide that they should attend the DYEP in Kastoria and not a vocational school.

3. Description of XENIOS ZEUS European Programme: Teachers’ training, free education material for Refugee children

XENIOS ZEUS European Programme –Erasmus+/School Education Section– was implemented for 24 months (from 01-09-2016 until 31-08-2018) with the title: “Managing the refugee and migrant flows through the development of educational and vocational frames for children and adults”.

The Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia was the leader, with partners: 1) Aristotle University (Department of Primary Education and School of Modern Greek Language), 2) **University of Western Macedonia (School of Education)**, 3) Aix-Marseille University in France (ESPE), 4) H.R.Y.O. in Italy (N.G.O. for Human Rights in Youngsters), 5) Paionia Municipality (Polycastro Kilkis), 6) Delta Municipality (Diavata), 7) Diktyo Alpha (Centre for Psychosocial Health in Western Thessaloniki) and 8) Archives of Ordnance Heritage of State’s General Archives

Diavata refugee camp is located 7,5km away from the centre of Thessaloniki in an industrial outskirt. It is one of the three refugee accommodation sites in mainland Greece that were established by law (in November 2016). An ARSIS programme providing legal advice and social support to the camps’ residents has ended recently in 2018. Meanwhile, according to the UNHCRs’ protection monitoring tool of September 2018, no special services for victims of torture were available on site.

The area of Central Macedonia, in particular, the region of Kilkis, was heavily affected by a large influx of refugees transiting through Greece on the way to the other EU countries. According to UNHCR data (2016), between 1 July 2015 and end of December 2015, 687,047 people crossed the border area between Idomeni and Gevgelija. There were 27,594 asylum applications submitted in Central Macedonia in the period 2015-2018, with the rising trend in asylum claims after the EU-Turkey agreement. Concerning the number of persons situated in Central Macedonia, in September 2018, approximately 9,600 individuals were located in this area, out of which 4,271 persons were accommodated in open reception facilities.

One of the main objectives of the project were raising awareness, with relevant actions, through three main priority axes:

1. Creation and development of a toolbox for refugees / migrants as well as for their teacher-trainers: new material, organization of workshops aimed at children, teenagers and adults. This material can be enriched and used by future users.

2. The organization and implementation of workshops from the Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia in Greece, Italy and France, as well as from the University of Western Macedonia at the School of Education. These workshops were addressed to educators, researchers and stakeholders to take action on the issue of refugee / migrant education in order to exchange good practices.

3. The use of the toolkit⁴⁹ by future users to assess the overall programme, based on the needs of refugees / migrants in each partner country of the program, tailored to the changing needs.

The ultimate goal is to disseminate and give publicity to the project's results through all involved actors and decision-makers across the broader region of Macedonia and throughout Greece, as well as to decision-makers, aiming at raising awareness of the local communities towards refugees / immigrants and their children.

New data, therefore, require new designs in curricula, textbooks and educational materials. At the panel-round table the main question is:

How prepared are educational systems, especially Universities, to face this challenge? In particular, what are needs in the broader area of Macedonia?

4. Concluding points

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

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

⁴⁹ For free education material "Welcome guide", "Language Supportive material) please visit the official sites: http://xenioszeus.uowm.gr/el/perigrafh_programmatos/ (In English and in Greek) and <http://xenioszeus.kmaked.eu/index.php/el/produced-material-gr>

At the local level, few municipalities have developed so far an integrated action plan for asylum seekers and refugees in Central and Western Macedonia, with the exception of the city of Thessaloniki (Integrated Action Plan for Integration of Refugees Municipality of Thessaloniki)

There is a variety of educational programmes offered by different organisations, especially NGOs dealing with migration. However, more effort is needed to engage and involve newly arrived migrant populations in training programmes, especially those who are over 15 years old. Thus, another significant dimension is related to vocational training, i.e. training for new skills, especially for this age group (15 plus).

Future research according to ESPON (2019) should involve a better understanding of the ‘value chain’ from reception to integration countries, requires more data and evidence such as employment patterns, demographic changes and economic transformation.

Especially in Central and Northern Macedonia, there is need for developing additional flexible educational programmes which will serve to the needs of the refugee children who are in a constant movement with their families either within Greece territory or towards other European countries.

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