GREECE NATIONAL REPORT ON MIGRATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Activity 1.1.1: Audit on migration, sustainability and development education

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Written and compiled by KMOP
(contact person: Antonia Torrens, torrens@kmop.gr, tel. +30 210 3637547)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale behind

Modern Greece has undergone several emigration waves. The first of the latest two took place during the 1960s and 1970s, when mainly unqualified workers immigrated to countries such as Germany and Australia in order to escape the poverty that resulted from WWII and the Greek civil war. The second most recent emigration wave is ongoing and it is mostly highly skilled young professionals who leave Greece due to lack of job opportunities, resulting from the economic crisis (Bank of Greece, 2016). In the period between these two emigration waves, the collapse of the eastern bloc in 1989 signalled a change in the migration patterns taking place in Greece, which became a destination and host country to many immigrants – from 1989 through the mid-2000s – mostly from those countries.[1]

Meanwhile, the global situation concerning displaced people has changed substantially in the past twenty years (from 33.9 million displaced people in 1997, 65.6 million in 2016) (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016). A local manifestation of this global situation is that in the past six years, large numbers of displaced people, originating mostly from Syria but also Afghanistan, Iraq and other Asian and African countries, have crossed the Mediterranean in an attempt to enter Europe. In 2015 alone, over 800,000 displaced people reached Greece via the Mediterranean, most of them while moving to other European destinations. Although the numbers of incoming migrants are smaller nowadays, the trend of reaching Europe via the Mediterranean continues to date, and it is estimated that over 60,000 refugees are going to stay in Greece for the long term.[2]

Massive movements of populations are usually triggered by unsustainable conditions at home – for environmental, economic or (interlinked?) social reasons. By the same token, the notion of sustainable development and the influx of immigrants into a region – especially in large numbers – are thought to be connected in a straightforward manner: on occasions, immigration may be necessary for maintaining sustainable development in the destination country, but when immigration is done in irregular or uncontrollable ways, the situation in the host country may become unstable and eventually even unsustainable. However, a closer look at the issue reveals that the relation between sustainability, development and migration is complex. The significance of the ways people view this relation may have tangible implications on many areas, ranging from day-to-day activities, such as the ways a community treats migration, to policymaking and policy decisions, such as the type of legislation a government will impose, and to how a state as a whole may

[1] At the same time, there had been significant numbers of migrant Pakistanis, Iraqis, Egyptians and Nigerians who entered Greece in order to move to other European countries.

[2] Neither the exact number of refugees who are currently in Greece is exact (the estimates vary from UNHCR's 45,614 (UNHCR, 2017) to IRC's 62,000 (IRC, 2018)), nor is the exact number of those who are going to stay for the long run known. However, given the current situation at the Greek boarders, both with Turkey and with the rest of Europe, and given that the number of refugees within them is unlikely to decrease—given the continued influx of refugees from the eastern borders and the comparatively small number of relocated refugees—the estimate above gives a plausible number.

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regulate migration. Greece's history of migration, with influx and outflow of migrants, constitutes a striking and ongoing case study of the relations between migration and sustainable development and the impact that a better flow of information might have on policies, sustainable development and related issues.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of the Greek national report on migration, sustainability and development education is to identify how deeply the knowledge and understanding of the relations between migration and sustainable development goes in the country, and what role development education plays or will have to play in Greek education and beyond. The report comprises two parts, a literature review and field research. The literature review contains information about the comprehension of the aforementioned issues by the society in general, but also by Greek educators and Greek academics. In the same vein, the field research involved experts from the field of education and experts in all the other fields involved, including migration, political economy and sustainable development, and their involvement offered the possibility to assess the depth of the relevant knowledge and understanding by the respective participants. However, most helpful – for the later stages of the project – is the exposure of the lack of information, knowledge and understanding that the report offers as well as of the gaps that need to be covered, and this was yet another of the report's aims.

1.3 Available data and resources

The focus of this report is on sustainable development and development education *in relation* to migration and in the context of present day Greece. However, migration has yet to be recognised and appreciated as one of the key elements for sustainable development in Greece, and for this reason the data accessed for this report concerns mainly migration and, separately, sustainable development. This is highlighted by the findings and analysis below. The notion of economic sustainability has surfaced in recent years in relation to the ailing Greek economy, but sustainable development in general has been linked mostly to the environment but not to the other aspects described by the sustainable development goals of the UN, and certainly not at all to migration. Opinion polls and opinion surveys that have been conducted in Greece over the past ten years with the exacerbation of the refugee crisis are a valuable source recording the tendencies among the population of the country. Other resources used in the report comprise press, educational and scholarly publications (printed and online), as well as numerous reports from UNHCHR, research, policy and financial institutions.

1.4 Limitations

Like in many other countries with highly irregular migration, Greece does not have available detailed data on all types of migration. Thus, although the official data concerning regular migration are accurate and so are the large numbers of irregular migrants who have applied or intend to apply for international protection, the actual total numbers of immigrants

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through and in Greece are not known with precision. Another limitation is that although the socio-economic sustainability has been discussed a lot in Greece in recent years, the discussions concern almost exclusively the internal conditions and not the sustainable development goals of UN. A last limitation arises from the fact that development education is also very little known in Greece and it is mostly associated with education in relation to environmental sustainability.

2. Literature review

2.1 Public opinion polls

Since 2009 and the start of the financial crisis, the GDP of Greece has shrunk by 24% while the unemployment rates rose from 9% in 2009, to approximately 28% in 2013, before dropping to 21% currently. One of the consequences of the crisis has been the aforementioned wave of emigration from Greece, which has all the characteristics of brain drain with an estimated 427,000 mostly highly skilled individuals leaving the country between 2008 and 2013 (Karakasidis, 2016). Adding to the brain drain the already existing immigrants that account for over 8% of the population of the country[3] and the refugee crisis that culminated in 2015 with over 800,000 refugees and immigrants crossing the Greek borders, the issue of migration for Greece ought to consider all three aspects affecting Greece. The first, chronologically, concerns the immigrants whose presence in Greece is already decades long, the second concerns the Greeks who left Greece due to the financial crisis, and the third concerns the refugees that have reached Greece during the last years.

According to polls by the Public Issue (Public Issue Surveys, 2008; 2009; 2010) the general view of immigration and its effects on the society in general and more specifically on the economy and crime are negative (see table 1). Unfortunately, the poll questions over the years changed and consequently so did the data for the years following 2010.

Table 1: Opinion Polls on Immigration

	General View of Immigration		Consequences of Immigration on Economy		Consequences of Immigration on Crime	
Year	Rather Harmful	Other	Rather Harmful	Other	Causes Increase	Other
2008	58 %	42 %	48 %	52 %	71 %	29 %
2009	62 %	38 %	52 %	48 %	76 %	24 %
2010	59 %	41 %	59 %	41 %	75 %	25 %

Although quite a lot of Europeans and some Greeks believe that the immigrant and refugee influx in their respective countries brings about the threat of terrorism (Eurobarometer, 2016), and some news articles focus on the possible relation between migration and

[3] According to the 2011 census, in Greece there are 912,000 in a population of 10,816,286, or 8.4% of the population.

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terrorism (Mastrogeorgiou, 2016; To Vima, 2016), survey results from 2017 show that the threat felt by some Greeks does not concern terrorism, but rather potential negative economic and cultural impacts. In particular, a recent survey by EKKE reveals that 65% of the responders (827 in total) believe that the immigrants have negative effects on the Greek economy, whereas 57% believe the cultural life of the country deteriorates due to the presence of immigrants in it.[4]

In 2011, when asked whether a border fence at the border between Greece and Turkey would deter immigrants from entering the country, the majority (56%) agreed (Public Issue, 2011), whereas most agreed with the construction itself of such a fence (46 – 73% depending on the poll (Karasavaidou, 2014)). From 2015 onwards, the attention of the public and the polling agencies shifted towards the ongoing refugee crisis, which was the biggest current wave of migration. The polling showed that the majority of the population (65%) believed that Greece should not accept refugees for permanent residence in Greece, 68% believed that the refugee crisis was not a passing phenomenon, and that Greece should either accept all or most refugees (27%) or consider this option depending on the conditions (26%) (Public Issue, 2015a). However, 53 % of the responders believed that refugees constituted a threat for the country (Public Issue, 2015b). By 2016, people believed that the refugee crisis was a rather permanent phenomenon (65%), that the United States, European Union and Russia were responsible for the crisis (54%). In addition, that the government and local authorities were doing well or very well in dealing with the massive influx of migrants (58%), but that the NGOs were doing much better (72%) and the army and the navy's response were excellent (78% and 94% respectively). Very positive were the view of the islands local communities' response to the migrants' arrival (96%), while the view of the EU's stance towards Greece and the crisis was regarded mostly as negative (92%) (Dianeosis, 2016).

Noteworthy is that UNHCR acknowledged the "generous response of Greek civil society, in a difficult context, [that] should be recognised and supported" (Spindler, 2015). In addition, that in 2016 the High Commissioner of UNHCR praised Greece for the solidarity it demonstrated during the refugee crisis. Also noteworthy is the fact that the emotions towards refugees were mostly positive (67%) and sympathetic (84%), despite the fact that throughout 2016, people believed that the refugees could not be integrated in Greece (53% in September (Public Issue, 2016a), 57% in October (Public Issue, 2016b), and 69% in November (Public Issue, 2016c)).

The conflicting views continue to the present day. In 2017, the Observatory for Refugees and Immigrants of the Municipality of Athens commissioned to Public Issue a survey that recorded all the refugees at the Municipality's Refugee Hospitality Centre of Eleonas in Athens, and tracked the opinions of citizens of Athens on the visibility and integration of refugees as well as the interaction with them (Public Issue, 2017). Citizens reported that immigrant and refugee residents do not cause any trouble (80%), and that the

[4] Given that this research is ongoing, its results come from secondary sources, i.e. reports in the press (e.g. Lifo, 2017; Newsroom, 2017).

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accommodation of refugees in their neighbourhood has not created any problems (66%). Of those who reported problems with the adjacency, 55% mentioned crime and 40% mentioned cleanliness. Regarding the integration of refugees, the trend recorded in 2015 continued in 2017, with 54% believing that the refugees cannot be integrated even though they believe that their children should go to school (72%) or to day nurseries (65%). Importantly, 57% of respondents reported having done something to help refugees in the past year.

This attitude may be explained, even if offhand, by the following considerations. On the one hand, seeing the refuges crossing the Mediterranean in difficult conditions, many of whom being women and children, created very strong feelings of compassion in the public, both Greek and global, as the immediate human and humane reaction to this is to help others who flee war and are in need. On the other hand, "host societies (including the Greek society) are not prepared and receptive to changes that are brought about deterministically by the more or less sudden settlement of a large number of foreigners, are unable to capture the major implications of this settlement, and have difficulties contributing to the mild absorption of the vibrations that this settlement causes in the social structure of the host society and to its transformation." (Tsigganou et al. 2009). Thus the tension: the feelings of compassion stirred by the plight of the refugees clash with the pre-existing views of immigration as negative for the country, especially at this junction that Greece's economy and citizens still feel the impact of the most recent crisis. To reaffirm the main premise of *InterCap*, one may take this plausible explanation of the evident tension further and suggest the following. If additional information was communicated to the public, that is, information based on facts about the actual positive impact of migration on the host country and its contribution to the country's sustainable development, then the public's pre-existing negative views would be dispelled and they would be positively predisposed towards the subsequent integration of migrants and refugees.

There are no opinion polls or surveys on sustainable development. There are articles in the press, though, as well as on various websites, and lengthier publications on environment and environmental education that deal with the notion of sustainability, albeit restricted to sustainability in relation to the environment (see below). Similarly, development education as a distinct education subject matter is non-existent in Greece,[5] although mentions of it have appeared in the press since 2000.[6] Hence, it should come as no surprise that there are no surveys or opinion polls mentioning it.

2.2 Media response

Naturally, the entirety of the Greek press point out the negative – for the country – fact that over 400,000 mostly highly qualified young (25-39 years of age) professionals left the country between 2008 and 2013. However, at one end there are those who use emotionally

[5] Only recently the subject matter has made an appearance in civil society, with Action Aid's advocacy for sustainable development education (Diroyianni, 2010) and Green Arc's seminars on environmental sustainable development (Πράσινη Κιβωτός, 2017). But more on this in what follows.
[6] Despite the fact that the first advocates of development education appear to have been active in Greece since the 2000s (Lakasas, 2006).

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charged language, for example, declaring a *shocking mass wave of flight* from the country (Newsbomb, 2016) while on the other, the language becomes more sober when merely presenting the facts, and when parallels with the past are drawn (Karakasidis, 2016; Kapaktsis, 2016) to facilitate a better understanding of the phenomenon. This might be because the presentation of the issues by the media may be influenced by the personal views of the involved journalists as well as by the agendas of certain publications, which may vary from recognizable political agendas to the need to sell more. Taking this disclaimer into consideration, it comes as no surprise that migration has been presented from strikingly different perspectives in the Greek press and the overtones vary.

Some propose a number of possible positive measures that could be taken to counterbalance that situation such as the development of scientific centres of excellence, fostering conditions for Greek scientists to remain in Greece and for those abroad to return, and creating a sustainable economic situation in Greece through entrepreneurship (News 247, 2017; EPT 2017; Kanellos, 2017).

When writing about immigration, also about the recent refugee crisis, the situation is similar, in the sense that the way facts are presented by the press varies from one publication to the next. The issue of significance, though, is that in some cases the emotional rhetoric reaches xenophobic and racist overtones (Penesi, 2017; Εθνική Εφημερίδα Εμπρός (National Newspaper Empros), 2017) that apart from altering or misrepresenting the facts, they sometimes reach the level of advocating conspiracy scenarios (Dimopoulou, 2017; Free World (Ελεύθερος Κόσμος), 2017). It should be noted, however, that the large portion of the press present the issues either more objectively—sticking to the facts—or with a humane and positive outlook (McCollum & Antoniou, 2016; Proto Thema (Πρώτο Θέμα), 2017; CNN Greece, 2017).

On the other hand, some recent reports on academic events often advocate the positive impact of migration on sustainable development, in particular events to which high-profile Greek academics and politicians participate. Thus, there are reports on talks that highlight the positive impact of migration on economic development (Lionakis, 2013; Poutetsi, 2007); popularised science articles advancing the US model on migration (Capital.gr, 2012); and articles presenting the importance of this discussion even for the 2016 G20 meeting (Διάλογος (Dialogos), 2016). The global academic community has studied the implications of migration on the economy of both the countries of origin and the host countries and the impact on their sustainable development for quite a few decades now (see below). The press has been following the main themes and conclusions, to some extent, and the terms ‘migration’ and ‘development’ sometimes appear together in publications that discuss the issue of environmental migration—i.e. mostly emigration due to the fact that the environment in the country of origin has been destroyed or badly affected by human intervention. It should be noted that in the Greek press, the concept of sustainablity became very pronounced almost as soon as the national economic crisis started making the headlines, circa 2009. However, in this context, sustainability concerns the GDP and its growth in general, and not the specific factors that may affect it, such as the influx and

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subsequent settlement of tens of thousands of refugees in the country, or the emigration from the country of hundreds of thousands of highly qualified workers.

In the Greek education system, environment, ecology and sustainable development in relation to them have been topics of discussions since 1991, when a law passed introducing environmental studies at the primary and secondary education. Therefore, although development education as a separate subject has yet to make an appearance in the educational system and in the press, the concept of sustainable development in relation to the environment has been discussed in Greek schools for almost three decades now. This means that a whole community of school and high-school teachers, as well as their trainers and teachers—academics and other—have been discussing, teaching and writing on the subject matter for the same period of time. In addition, so has the press. The publicity on the subject is only positive.

The lacuna in the reporting and commentating of the relations between migration, sustainable development and development education that is revealed by the opinion polls and the research on the media response indicates that there is ground to be covered in both the training (of teachers' trainers and teachers) and the awareness raising activities that will be planned. An encouraging fact is that the lack of representation is not due to lack of interest from the media but due to lack of information, which is easy to overcome.[7] Another encouraging fact is that despite the variations in their responses on the themes of migration, sustainable development and development education, the overall disposition of the Greek media towards migration may be regarded at least as composed if not as positive, which will be helpful in the attempts to promote the core idea of *InterCap*.

2.3 Research and project production

The interest of Greek scholars in migration is longstanding and continuous, arguably due to the various migratory waves that have characterised modern Greece. Indicative to the research on migration that has taken place in Greece in the period 1993-2003 is a working paper by Stratoudaki (2008), who discusses the main axes of research in Greece, it summarises the research results and examines critically the quality of the research while pointing out the weaknesses and the things that needed to be improved. More specifically, the main axes of research at the time were three: social and economic integration, reception of immigrants by the Greek population, and the significance of mass media. The weaknesses lied mainly in the methodologies employed, which were mostly qualitative and exploratory rather than quantitative and data-driven. The existence or not of sufficient funding was affecting the kind of data that could be extracted and used, of course, and the governmental priorities dictated to a large extent the direction of the research, because where there were needs there was also funding. Another factor influencing the direction of the research was the funding that was coming from the EU, which also dictated directions through its own priorities.

[7] The literature review below will reveal a lack of academic work on the relation between sustainable development and migration too.

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Since then, the issue of integration of immigrants into the Greek society has continued to preoccupy the Greek scholars. This can be seen in the production of research in the years after 2003. Thus—indicatively only—, the following work that has been published since is being briefly presented. In their paper, Christopoulos and Pavlou (2004) examined integration from the point of view of social participation and interaction. The volume touches on the relation between migration, racism and nationalism in Greece, on issues that the second generation of immigrants faces, as well as on the protection of immigrants.

As years went by, scholars continued to examine the issue of integration, but more and more they would take into consideration additional factors that affect it. Thus, in a collective volume, Kasimis et Al. (2012) attempt to offer an understanding of the issue of immigration through the analysis of the general economic and institutional framework of integration of migrants into the labour market, reflecting on the local dimensions of employment, as well as on the mobility of migrants in different regions of the country. Adding the factor of social policy, Moysides & Papadopoulou (2011) tackle the issues of integration and social policy in the context of employment, education and identity. Legislation in relation to migration, in general, and to citizenship, in particular, is another issue that comes to the fore, because approximately 20 years after the immigration wave from the 1990s, a second generation immigrants are coming of age in Greece. Works like the edited volume by Maroukis & Triantafylidou (2010) examine migration from a national and European legislative point of view. Whereas other researchers, like Christopoulos (2012) examine the notion of citizenship and the process of naturalization from the beginning of the Modern Greek state until the early 21st century. This change in the themes in the published works indicates that, by the 2010s, it is not the needs of the Greek state directed the direction of the research leading to those publications but, rather, what the academic community had identified as the needs of the immigrants themselves.[8]

Other lines of research follow sociological questions and methodologies. Indicative of that is the book of Papandreou (2013), in which the author presents the results of sociological research on migrant youth from countries of the eastern bloc who inhabited the centre of Athens in the 1990s, and their interactions with local youth.

Finally, very recently and as a response to the refugee crisis, scholarly work has started exploring the issues revolving around the reception of the refugees by the Greek society and state. In this vein, Nagopoulos & Panagos (2017) focus their research on the interactions between local communities and the hundreds of thousands of refugees who arrived at the island of Lesvos, after crossing the sea often in treacherous conditions.

The literature review reveals that in Greece, the academic research on migration does not meet sustainable development for the time being, except in an educational publication on sustainable development, designed and produced by university students for the use of

[8] As we will see shortly, the Greek legislation concerning citizenship and naturalization of third country nationals changed only a few years later, in 2016.

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university students who are interested in an introduction on the subject matter (Goniadis, 2015). Though the research on the relations between the two may be in its infancy in Greece, given the importance of the two and the relevant research that is being done abroad, it should be only a matter of time until the Greek academics catch up. What is more, the discussion of development education is very restricted too, with one notable exception, namely an introduction to global development education by Kanakidou & Papagianni (2010).

In terms of projects, nowadays in Greece prevalent is the implementation of projects mostly related to refugees, due to the recent and ongoing refugee crisis, and the need to either host them until they are relocated or integrate them. The projects are funded by the European Union,[9] various countries such as Denmark and Norway, charitable foundations and so on. Indicatively, it is noted that the UNHCR has implemented a number of projects funded from the European Union and others,[10] in an attempt to respond to the crisis of the massive influx of migrants to Greece through its eastern—mostly sea—borders, aided both by large NGOs with global impact, such as the International Rescue Committee, the Danish Refugee Council, Medicines Sans Frontiers, and local NGOs such as Praksis, the Greek Refugee Council, Medical Intervention, Metadrasi, etc.

A plethora of projects have also been undertaken by various municipalities across Greece, which host refugees and make the best they can, not only in order to provide for their new residents but also to help them become an integral part of the hosting societies. As indicative, we mention the various hosting facilities that have been provided in a lot of municipalities, including Athens, Piraeus, Thessaloniki etc., and the initiative of the City of Athens Coordination Centre for Migrant and Refugee issues, the first of its kind that brings together all the stakeholders involved, including state, city and civil society groups.[11]

In a sense, some of the projects being implemented in Greece right now are projects related to migration and sustainable development. After all, the refugee and migrant integration touches on a number of the UN's SDGs such as No Poverty (#1), Quality Education (#4), Clean Water and Sanitation (#6), Decent Work and Economic Growth (#8), Reduced Inequalities (#10), and Sustainable Cities and Communities (#11). Therefore, although the various projects of Greek municipalities hosting refugees do not specifically address any of the aforementioned SDGs, by providing –or trying to—decent accommodation to refugees they address SDGs #6 and 10. NGOs such as IRC that try to help refugees find jobs address SDG #1, 8 and 10, other NGOs and the state in their efforts to provide schooling to refugee children address SDG #4, whereas all these efforts address indirectly SDG #11.

[9] For example, the EU has contracted 440,000,000 euro to humanitarian aid partners (https://ec.europa.eu/echo/aggregator/sources/5_fr)

[10] For example, between 2015 and January 2018, UNHCR has spent over 200,000,000 USD for their operations in Greece (https://data2.unhcr.org/es/documents/download/61705).

[11] The website of the centre: http://www.accmr.gr/en/

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An initiative in the direction of promoting international development cooperation and development education is the Hellenic Platform for Development,[12] which was established in 2015 and aims to do so through the coordination of NGOs performing in relevant fields. Ultimately, its main goal is to influence the decision-makers in Greece, in the EU and internationally, for the improvement of policies and practices for sustainable development and to provide education, development of skills, and training and sharing of information among Greek NGOs on the issues concerning sustainable development.

As mentioned above, development education as an individual educational subject in Greece has yet to reach schools and, further, universities. The civil society is the frontrunner in this case, and two attempts in this direction that have taken place in Greece so far come from it (Diroyianni, 2010; Πράσινη Κιβωτός (Prasini Kivotos), 2017). The first attempt is under the auspices of ActionAid and appeals to school children, whereas the other effort has been supported by the academic community. Specifically the seminars that are run by Prasini Kivotos, a CSO, have been commissioned to it by the Research Commission of the University of Thessaly in the context of a European Rural DEAR Agenda – EYD 2015 project, thus displaying collaboration between civil society and the academia. What is more, this project shows that the European Union's commitment to development education has started yielding positive results.

Finally, it should be noted that with regards to environmental sustainability there are several publications addressed to students (such as Kaila et Al 2005; Dimitriou, 2009; Flogaiti, 2011 etc., but also a plethora of publications that may be found on the website of Sustainable School (Αειφόρο Σχολείο),[13] and they are worth noting because environmental sustainability is also among the UN's SDGs, even though it is not covered individually.[14]

2.4 Case studies of good practices

Given that the relation between sustainable development and migration has yet to become an issue that will attract the national attention, there have not been any attempts to raise awareness in this direction. Having said that, we may consider projects such as the Hellenic Platform for Development and initiatives like that of ActionAid and Prasini Kivotos to constitute good practices in this direction, although strictly speaking their goals are multiple and the awareness raising element is only partially if not indirectly associated with them.

2.5 Migration policies and sustainable development

Given that there is very little on the relation between migration and (sustainable) development in the Greek public discourse, it comes as no surprise that there is nothing in

[12] The website of the platform: http://hellenicplatform.org/?lang=en
[13] For a review on the education on sustainable growth in Greece after 2015, the interested reader may consult Delari (2015). The site of Sustainable School: http://www.aeiforosxoleio.gr/
[14] Factors affecting the environment can be found in SDGs with number 7, 13, 14, & 15.

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the legislation either. However, if assuming that certain aspects of dealing with migration are related to sustainable development, even if indirectly, then there is legislation and policies in this direction that have been advanced in recent years. The most obvious such aspects include the naturalisation of third country nationals, and the refugee status and relocation, but also changes in the policies of schools across the country that have been called to accommodate newly arrived migrant or refugee students.

The issue of the naturalisation of third country nationals has been debated for long in Greece, in particular, a decade or two after the country became a significant destination for migrants in the 1990s, when the second generation of immigrants started coming of age. Although this issue has not been associated with sustainable development, it can certainly be asserted that a solution to the problem of those children and sustainable development go hand in hand, not only for their future in Greece, but also for the future or Greece as a country with a demographic problem. Thus, after years of discussions and debates, in 2015 a law that would allow for the naturalisation of great parts of the immigrant population of Greece was published, with positive responses from the people most affected by the pre-existing state of affairs (LawSpot, 2015; Gaglias, 2015).

The legislation and regulations concerning refugee status and relocation changed in Greece in 2016, thus expediting processes, which have as a consequence a faster path to integration for those who will stay in Greece (GR law 4375/2016; CNN Greece, 2016; Georgiopoulou, 2017).

Finally, so far as primary and secondary education are concerned, a large number of fast steps have been taken since 2015, in order to offer all newly arrived children a chance to complete their primary and secondary education.[15] A lot of what has been done concerns the accommodation of children who do not speak the language and at first it was restricted to children age 6-15 but recently the legislation has also included children 15-17. The production of new regulations continues as the needs are continuously assessed and are covered one after another.

2.6 Migration policies and international commitments

At this juncture, Greece is in the process of tackling two major issues: the first concerning the state of its economy and the second concerning the refugees who have settled in Greece or continue to arrive. Each of these two issues is a challenge of its own for any country, let alone one that saw its GDP being reduced by almost 25% in the past eight years. This does not mean that the country can or will try to avoid its international commitments. On the contrary, the commitment of the Greek state to the UN's SDGs is reflected in a number of regulations and projects related to environmental sustainable development – ranging from the promotion of production of energy through renewable

[15] For all the relevant policies that are already in place see the designated site of the Greek Institute of Educational Policy: http://iep.edu.gr/el/component/k2/content/5-ekpaidefsi-prosfygon

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sources and further promotion of green growth to protection of aquatic environment and paying attention to regional planning[16], as well as in the publicising of the SDGs for a while now.[17]

However, the point of fact is that even prior to the refugee crisis – although admittedly in the midst of the economic one – the Greek state had not done much to comply with European Union commitments to SDGs and Policy Coherence for Development. As the 2013 and 2015 Reports on Policy Coherence for Development of the European Commission reveal, Greece had either done very little (by 2013) or was omitted altogether from the report (2015). All these may imply that at this particular juncture with its challenges, the Greek state may have to solve the two equations concerning development, and the refugee crisis and migration rather independently from one another.
O
n the other hand, the civil society, the academic community and the community of teachers have a lot at their disposal and may well play an important role in the direction of raising awareness first and of effecting essentially the national legislation in the future so that it does reflect even more international commitments to sustainable development, in general, and to sustainable development in relation to migration, in particular.

3. Field research

3.1 Introduction

Two focus groups were conducted in order to collect information regarding the topic at hand from experts and enrich the findings of the literature review. Group I comprised six stakeholders from the fields of migration, sustainable development and global education. The stakeholders were chosen on the basis of their area of expertise and active roles in the national and European academic and political life in relation to the fields of sustainable development, global education and migration. Their specific areas of expertise are as follows: an expert on global sustainability, former Senior Advisor and Acting Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Global Sustainability Panel, and in this capacity one of the people who formulated the SDGs; a Greek researcher at the University of Geneva with expertise on social policy, welfare states in comparative perspective, Social Europe, open method of coordination, soft Europeanisation, and European integration, and Senior Researcher at UN; a professor at the University of Peloponnese with expertise on international economic relations, former development policy adviser for a parliamentary party; a researcher at the Greek Centre of Planning and Economic Research who specialised in international political economy and migration; a university professor of global political economy, founding member and former president of the Hellenic Development

[16] For detailed information on the sustainable development policy and its specific applications by the Ministry or Environment, Energy and Climate Change, the interested reader is directed to the Ministry's site: http://www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=230&locale=en-US&language=el-GR
[17] The designated page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: https://www.mfa.gr/exoteriki-politiki/pagkosmia-zitimata/stokhoi-biosimes-anaptuxes.html.

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Platform; and an adviser to the Minister of Economics and Development with expertise on political economy and development policies.

Group II comprised six stakeholders from fields associated with education. The stakeholders were chosen on the basis of their area of expertise and active roles as educators and education administration in the national education sector in the region of Central Macedonia. Their specific areas of expertise are as follows: the director of the Municipal Directorate of Secondary Education of Imathia; a state school adviser on teaching and pedagogical issues to the Greek language teachers; a junior high school headmaster; the Director of a Teacher Training Centre in Thessaloniki; a member of the Working Group for the Management, Coordination and Monitoring of Refugee education in Northern Greece; a university lecturer on computer science and logistics, with long experience on for the design and development of regional operational programs and collaboration with educational institutions in Central Macedonia on the implementation of European Commission and national funding mechanisms in national and regional level.

The sampling procedure included contact with relevant stakeholders and institutions through the organisations' contacts to select experts in the field of migration, sustainable development and development education. In both focus groups the conversation was inspired by a number of questions dictated by the agenda. Apart from the questions on the agenda, additional issues were also discussed in each group, depending on the interests, knowledge and question of the participants. The conversation was digitally recorded only in Group II. The reason for not recording the conversation in Group I is that one of the participants in it is a government official, and he agreed to participate in the group on the condition of anonymity.

3.2 Awareness about international migration and sustainable development

The two groups were uneven with respect to the depth of their knowledge on the UN document of SDGs, the Paris Agreement, Habitat III and the EU's Policy Coherence for Development. The participants in Group I were very well versed with the content of the aforementioned documents/initiatives/strategies as well as the complexity of the relations between sustainable development and migration. Group II, on the other hand, was mostly aware of the more narrow relation of sustainable development to the environment and climate change. That gave a variability and diversity in the responses, which is required when one targets general and specific knowledge on the topic at hand.

Moreover, both groups were well aware of the global implications of the migration issue, as well as of its links to economy, environment, the society and governance, although each group used its own terms to talk about these issues. In addition, both groups noted that Greece appears to be lagging behind with respect to its international and European commitments to sustainable development and policy coherence respectively.

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The fact that the educators-participants in Group II were less well informed on the various agreements and policy commitments than the participants in Group I may be attributed to limited information on such issues from the media and the press. After all, the media are the source of all new information for non-professional and non-academics who are not involved in such issues professionally. This disparity indicates that there is certainly need for offering more information to the educators about SDGs, Paris Agreement, Habitat III etc. and possibly need to bring back these agreements and commitments to the public eye in the awareness raising events.

3.3 Link between migration and sustainable development

The discussion regarding the link between migration and sustainable development was extensive in both groups, despite the different perspectives of the two groups and the fact that the knowledge on the issue of the two groups was uneven. The discussion in Group II focused on what –through the Greek experience of emigration in the 1990s and 2000s— were perceived to be the negative aspects of migration on development and social cohesion, and certain stereotypes were exposed and analysed critically. Focus group participants stressed that more scientific research is necessary, in order to shed light on the actual impacts of migration on society, and that this research should reach the general public.

Group I analysed in depth the relation between sustainable development and both aspects of migration, namely emigration, and immigration. They proposed that sustainable development may be examined from two points of view: as the result of immigration or as the result of emigration. For example, regions that are poor may benefit from emigration in more than one way: the unemployment may be reduced as a result of the outflow of working-age people, while the money available to the local economy may increase as a result of remittances flowing in from emigrants who help their families, whose fortune, conditions and prospects may improve even in sustainable ways. As a result, emigration may contribute to the development of the area. On the other hand, an economy and society may improve their odds for sustainable development thanks to immigrants. For example, it is known that the influx of immigrants in the 1990s and 2000s in Greece rescued the social security system (pensions and healthcare) as a large number of young workers changed the demographics. The opposite possible effects on sustainable development of both immigration and migration were also discussed. In concluding this discussion, the participants in this group stressed the need for better data, which will strengthen further certain ideas that highlight the positive impact of migration on development.

3.4 Insecurity

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Both groups identified similar reasons why societies may feel insecure, but each group laid different emphasis on different aspects. Hence, Group I highlighted the socio-economic conditions, economic disparities, job insecurity and migration, whereas Group II focused mainly on the Greek society and identified the reasons to feel insecure as health, the outbreak of epidemics, the religion, and then criminality and, lastly, availability of jobs. This difference of perspective may be attributed to differences in the professional focus of the participants in the two groups. Thus, the educators (Group II) deal with students and their family situation, hence their perspective is associated with the atoms comprising a society, whereas the experts (Group I) who deal with concepts, ideas and policies are more inclined to look at things at the level of society and the state.

The insecurity that host societies develop due to the influx of immigrants was discussed in both groups at length. Group I delved into the complexities of the relations between insecurity and migration and pointed out that insecurity in the socio-economic and environmental conditions in a county/region is typically associated with outflow, hence emigration; whereas security in the corresponding conditions in a country/region is associated with inflow, hence immigration. However, they, too, noted that inflow-immigration may (and usually does) cause insecurity to the host population. On the same issue, Group II pointed out that insecurity in the society is increased by mass media and social media misrepresentation of incidents involving immigrants. They also discussed yet another aspect of insecurity, caused by the emigration of young well-educated Greek people, who migrate to other developed countries in order to find a job, or a better-paid job, because of the economic crisis in Greece.

Finally, both groups agreed that the Greek society does not feel threatened by terrorism as connected to migration.

The particular ways in which the Greeks might feel threatened by migration indicates that better information about the positives of migration of both the educators as well as the public would not go amiss. For, such information would dispel unfounded fears.

3.5 Main factors shaping public opinion and instruments shaping public discourse

Both groups agreed that the factors shaping the public opinion include the mass communication media, with special emphasis to the press, and the academic community, but they diverged in the importance that laid on the role of social media, with the group of educators placing them at the top of the influencers, and the role of the policy makers, with the group of experts giving them prominent role in how the future will be shaped. The same group also included the Non-Governmental Organisations, groups of citizens and the public discourse expressed by people.

Both groups also considered the role of education and hence the role of the educational community to be of particular importance. Group I pointed out that even the academic

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community would benefit from being educated on issues revolving around the relation of migration and sustainable development as these have surfaced in recent years and hence many members of that community may still be unaware of it. However, both groups discussed possible ways in which education at other levels would enable students and adults comprehend the positive influence of migration on development. Group II asserted that the education community could play a very active role through awareness raising campaigns that could involve from groups of experts to social media campaigns, targeting not only students but also parents and the local community. Such campaigns are sometimes run centrally, by the relevant Ministries.

Finally, the role of experts was also discussed in both groups, with Group I highlighting the importance of popularization of complicated issues, like the relation between migration and development, while Group II voiced the need for experts to step up in order to fill in the gaps in information in accurate and scientific ways.

3.6 Gaps of information and instruments to fill the gaps

The outline of the discussions that took place in each of the focus groups is the same: there was consensus that the majority of the Greek public are not informed about the relation between sustainable development and migration, nor are they adequately informed about facts concerning migration and, separately, sustainable development. The gaps in information can be filled by all the instruments that affect public opinion, which have been presented above. However, the group of educators emphasised that the issue needs to be treated in an interdisciplinary and experiential way through all the school subjects and not through isolated actions. Thus, they laid out a roadmap for all the stakeholders involved in education, ranging from schools and refugee management teams to regional teacher training centres and universities that may be followed if particular activities are planned.

3.7 The role of education systems

The role of education systems was deemed very important by both groups, as education constitutes the foremost weapon against ignorance, and thus it helps dispel fear. It was pointed out that education in this context concerns all levels, from educating the academic educators, to university to school to society and lifelong learning. Tertiary education's role is of particular importance in informing and training teachers and through them the societies. Also significant is the other role played by universities: the production of new and important-because informative-research on issues previously unexamined.

Group II emphasised also the fact that in order for the teachers to play their crucial role in society, they need to be continuously trained. This training needs to be organised by state institutions, such as the Teacher Training Centres, in collaboration with the Greek Institute for Educational Policy and the Municipal Directorates of Secondary Education, so that there is greater impact. They also pointed out that of great importance in this context are the European programmes, as they can greatly contribute to expanding the knowledge,

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developing techniques, applying practices and exchanging ideas, so that migration can be connected to sustainable development most effectively. And this is also understood by the communities and the societies.

Both groups agree, therefore, that the educational system has a very significant role to play in educating the students (through formal and non-formal education) and the public (through lifelong learning etc.); but they also stress that even the educators themselves have to be trained. The group of experts pointed out that even the university teachers ought to be educated, as the concepts and issues involved in sustainable development and its relation to migration are new—they had not arisen or taken such a central stage when the current academics were educated.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Although the sample was small the variable expertise of the participants, including a government official proved invaluable. With regards to recommendations, given the complexities of the relation between migration and sustainable development, the research above point to a well-supported recommendation that the Greek state and society need better information and more accurate data, from which sound conclusions concerning that relation may be drawn and which will lead to recommendations, policies and actions that will benefit the society, the state and the world. However, accepting the fact that migration is eminent nowadays, and assuming that migration is a necessary characteristic of sustainable development in the global society, regardless of the particulars of their relation, there is a number of suggestions that could still be made.

4.1 National and local level recommendations for NGOs

The role of organisations in sustainable development education that takes into consideration the role of migration is restricted mostly to civil society. Indeed, as discussed above, it is an NGO—Action Aid—that has initiated sustainable development education with reference to migration in Greece, and this is certainly a role that may be played effectively by more NGOs. In particular, NGOs that deal with migration and/or education, especially those maintaining a positive view about the relation between sustainable development and migration, could expand their scope and reach out to the society at large, in order to raise awareness of the issue and of the positive impact of migration to sustainable development.

Another contribution some NGOs may make is to help develop practices whereby immigrant communities contribute positively to the development of the greater local communities that host them. That is to say, by helping immigrants to find employment or to engage in entrepreneurial activities, they would create success stories that would constitute the best publicity for the issue at hand.

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4.2 National and local level recommendations for governmental institutions

As stated above, the information that is currently available about the relation between sustainable development and migration is incomplete, and, therefore, it is too early to make specific recommendations to governmental institutions in relation to it. However, it may not be too early to suggest that since at the global level migration is here to stay, a state would be better off if it gave migration a central role in fulfilling its commitment to SDGs.

One recommendation that would not go amiss, however, is that the Greek state as a whole ought to honour its European and international commitments with regards to sustainable development and policy coherence for development. More specifically, it should heed to the advice stated in the 2013 EU report on policy coherence for development, for example, and develop specific strategies for reaching specific SDGs.

Another recommendation is to make the SDGs and the PCD commitments something that goes over and above specific political parties, by reaching political consensus on these issues.

4.3 Local level recommendations for municipalities

The disclaimer stated above also holds for local government. However, two recommendations that can be made to the municipalities are, first, to facilitate the integration of all newly arrived immigrants and refugees, and, second, to help raise awareness about the situation of the migrants, in particular the newcomers, and foster a positive attitude towards migrants and their integration in the society. For, integration of immigrants in the host community is a *sine qua non* for sustainable development and, arguably, for development also.

4.4 National and local level recommendations for educational institutions

Educational institutions could, and indeed should play a pivotal role in awareness raising about UN's SDGs and the other analogous commitments that our country should adhere to. With regards to the relation between sustainable development and migration, starting from the universities, the recommendation is for more research on the relation between sustainable development and migration, for the development of courses and programmes that would educate the educators first and then the school students and the public, and for outreach of the educators to the entire society including Open Universities for the public in the municipalities and the administrative peripheries. Ways in which this might be done include studies at the undergraduate and graduate university level, seminar meetings at regional and national level, change in school curricula, local civil society mobilization with lifelong learning seminars and programmes etc. And of course the coordination and

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collaboration of the institutions of the Ministry of Education involved in lifelong teacher training on issues related to migration and sustainable development would constitute the most important factor in improving the sensitisation of the societies on these issues, as well as in developing a secure framework that will connect effectively the international migration with sustainable development.

Alongside the local government bodies, the educational institutions should also contribute to awareness raising about the situation of the migrants, in particular the newcomers, and fostering a positive attitude towards migrants and their integration in the society.

4.5 Recommendations for future research areas

The power is in the numbers, which do not lie. It is for this reason that, as mentioned above, more and more accurate data about migration and its impact on the society, economy, crime, development etc. has been requested time and again. This, therefore, is a significant, even if broadly defined, area for future research.

Another broad area for research that has been identified by the present research concerns the particulars of the intricate relation between migration and sustainable development. Turning our attention to Greece, three aspects of migration have played a role in shaping the current situation of the country, namely immigration in the 1990s and 2000s, emigration with brain drain in the 2010s and a crisis with incoming refugees since 2015. Defining sustainable development targets in relation to migration in Greece requires probing into the details of how the various kinds of migration are affecting and being affected by the social, economic and environmental factors associated with development, and this opens up a research area that should be explored by various scientists from a number of disciplines.

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