

REPORT

1ST EUROPEAN POLICY DIALOGUE FORUM ON REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

UNDERSTANDING CURRENT CHALLENGES
OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN EUROPE

20-21 OCTOBER 2019
ATHENS, GREECE

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1.



Executive summary

Held in Athens, Greece, from 20-21 October 2019, the 1st European Policy Dialogue Forum on Refugees and Migrants brought together grassroots activists from the KAICIID-supported platform Network for Dialogue, as well as policymakers, religious leaders and academics working on the social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe. Sixty international participants discussed the challenges of effective integration, both on the ground and at the policymaking level, under the theme of “*Understanding current challenges of refugees and migrants in Europe*”, addressing the fundamental challenge of “*What can we do?*”. As part of the Policy Dialogue Forum, policymakers and grassroots actors engaged in round table discussions where they sought more effective ways to cooperate. Topics included the growing diversity and complexity of migration flows and migration dynamics, the need for new and different approaches in the field of integration, and the extent to which academic research and grassroots experience can contribute to the work of policymakers.

As part of the Policy Dialogue Forum, policymakers and grassroots actors engaged in round table discussions where they sought more effective ways to cooperate.





Aim

The Policy Dialogue Forum aimed at building on the expertise of speakers and participants to better comprehend the current directions of refugee and migration policies in Europe and the various perspectives concerning these. This understanding will feed into the forward-looking processes needed to further establish collaboration between policymakers, religious leaders and scholars, and Network members, in coming up with useful policy recommendations in the future.



Methodology

The Policy Dialogue Forum applied an interactive and participatory approach and included a diversity of actors who shared their experiences and expertise in the field of integration of refugees. These dialogue encounters were considered an innovative conference approach where participants shared different perspectives in order to find more effective ways to cooperate. The Policy Dialogue Forum included six input speakers and four working sessions where participants, based on the input received from speakers and the round table discussions, presented the findings and developed joint recommendations.



Conclusions

Participants of the Policy Dialogue Forum called for faith-based and secular institutions to coordinate an urgent response to rising displacement in order to uphold the fundamental dignity and rights of people seeking refuge. Participants further confirmed their commitment towards the sustainability of the Policy Dialogue Forum and their willingness to contribute in relevant activities in the future. Following positive feedback from partners and participants, KAICIID shall continue to explore new opportunities to organize outreach and follow up activities and will plan to hold its second Forum in 2020.

Recommendations

Recommendations were provided regarding the topics of inclusion, understanding, dialogue and collaborative approaches:

1. Coordinating local, national and European level policies based on comprehensive and inclusive approaches aiming to create more coherent integration policies;
2. Changing narratives on migration to foster positive and realistic worldviews towards the phenomenon;
3. Enhancing the participation of refugees and migrants in democratic processes and in the formulation of inclusion policies;
4. Promoting dialogue within policymaking and the participation of faith-based institutions in the field of refugee inclusion in Europe;
5. Co-creating sustainable practices by linking research and policy;
6. Fostering mutual cultural understanding between migrants and host communities, and the adoption of customised and collaborative approaches.



2.



The Network for Dialogue



The Network for Dialogue was initiated by the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) in order to bring together local faith and dialogue actors from a wide range of European countries to empower interreligious and intercultural action for people seeking refuge and migrant inclusion. This initiative is based on recommendations from an Expert's Workshop on Interreligious Education in Europe, co-hosted in 2017 by KAICIID and the European Commission Representation in Vienna, Austria. In September 2018, based on the Expert's Workshop, a core group of 11 founding Network members met in Hinterbrühl, Austria, to determine a collaborative forward-looking approach.

Since the official launch of the Network for Dialogue in Bologna, Italy, in March 2019, the Network has expanded to include 23 members from 10 countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and



The Network is a European-wide platform that engages faith-based and secular organizations, as well as religious leaders and scholars working in the field of migration and religious studies who are striving in their local contexts to achieve a common goal: to use a dialogical approach in assisting and supporting the integration of newcomers in host societies.



The Network for Dialogue members at the meeting held in Athens, Greece, 18-20 October 2019

the United Kingdom). The Network plans to expand its membership to other European countries.

The Network for Dialogue organizes regular bi-annual meetings in a workshop format, and coordinates webinars, training sessions, conference panels and publications in order to exchange knowledge and tools, share expertise, and facilitate the development of fresh approaches. By identifying gaps in the migration field, the Network uses interreligious and intercultural dialogue to reduce hate speech and prejudice towards migrants and refugees in Europe.

Network members share diverse and rich grassroots-level experiences in order to develop recommendations for policymakers working with refugees and migrants at the local, national and European level. By assisting and supporting the social inclusion of people seeking refuge in their new host so-

cieties through various local initiatives, the Network for Dialogue is building strong interpersonal bridges around Europe. Network membership is open to all individuals working with refugees and migrants who promote interreligious or intercultural dialogue, tolerance, and respect the diversity of cultures and freedoms of religious belief.



3.



Introduction: What we aim to achieve

From 20-21 October 2019, the 1st European Policy Dialogue Forum on Refugees and Migrants, hosted by KAICIID, was held in Athens, Greece. The Policy Dialogue Forum is a key milestone in the first engagement between policy and Network members, as it allowed for joint learning among Network members and gave room for further input on the use of dialogue in the field of social inclusion of refugees.

The theme of the Policy Dialogue Forum was “Understanding current challenges of refugees and migrants in Europe” and examined the fundamental question: What can we do?

The theme of the Policy Dialogue Forum was *“Understanding current challenges of refugees and migrants in Europe”* and examined the fundamental question: *What can we do?* The time has come for all involved actors to ensure that solutions will be identified, that the understanding of the issue of migration will be deepened, and that international cooperation will be strengthened. As such, The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) provided the platform through the Policy Dialogue Forum to allow grassroots and civil society organizations, as well as scholars, religious leaders, and policymakers, to address the current directions of refugee and migration policies in Europe, as well as to focus on the challenges faced by policymakers at the grassroots and European Union (EU) levels.

Network for Dialogue members at the 1st European Policy Dialogue Forum in Athens.



The Forum focused on the following thematic areas:

1. Current developments around Europe: policy directions;
2. Challenges in implementing policies in different European countries;
3. Ways forward on promoting dialogue within policymaking in the field of the social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe;
4. How to enhance potential networks and collaboration between policymakers, scholars and practitioners.

Understanding of dialogue

By providing a space for dialogue, the Policy Dialogue Forum aimed at building on the expertise of speakers and participants, and on their perspectives regarding the current directions of refugee and migration policies in Europe. This understanding will then feed into the way forward and aid in furthering the collaboration between policymakers, religious leaders, scholars and Network members, as well as fostering policy recommendations targeted to the field.

For KAICIID, **dialogue** is a means to foster an attitude of openness and to increase the understanding of diversity in today's world. The power of dialogue lies in strengthening tolerance, respect and mutual understanding, thereby minimising prejudices and stereotypes, and preventing hate speech. Contrary to many beliefs, dialogue does not necessarily mean that one needs to accept or agree with

someone else's point of view, but rather to acknowledge and recognise it.

Dialogue can take place in both formal and informal settings. That is why we often use the term “**dialogical approach**” when referring to the informal use of dialogue. Dialogical approaches are inclusive, creative, and empowering processes, where participants feel “safe”, thus enabling them to be transparent and willing to “take risks”. For example, in order to take a long-term view of the issues being discussed, one should be open to what others have to say.

Applying dialogical approaches at the grassroots level (with migrants and refugees in everyday communication) is an important element in building more inclusive societies.

Partnerships between faith-based organizations and secular institutions can greatly improve integration conditions for migrants and people seeking refuge. When state actors and supranational entities involve religious representatives to address migration processes and policies, KAICIID believes that together they can advocate for migrant and refugee rights. Therefore, they can expand the protection of refugees and migrants which effectively helps to combat xenophobia and reduce tensions.



Aristidis Psarras from the European Commission addressed the situation in Greece and Europe overall



Religious leaders, due to the dynamics of cultural traditions connected to spirituality, can contribute to a better understanding of the needs of migrants and bridge the potential cultural and religious difficulties they encounter when integrating into European societies.

Discussions built upon four key principles from the Programme for the Social Inclusion of People Seeking Refuge in Europe:

- Successful integration requires local engagement;
- Effective dialogue requires a certain set of skills and attitudes, which can be taught and learned;
- Human rights are individual, universal, interdependent and interrelated;
- Mainstream dialogue must be integrated into existing institutional frameworks to foster a positive and impactful culture of dialogue.



Amb. Teresa Indjein, Head of Cultural Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs exchanging views on the use of dialogue to strengthen the social inclusion of refugees

4.



The present challenges in Europe

In this process, dialogue can help foster mutual understanding and a two-way integration.

The United Nations identifies 272 million people worldwide as international migrants, defined as those living in another country than their country of birth.¹ Around 70 million people are displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations, whereby 30 million have fled to a different country as refugees and asylum seekers.² When taking a closer look at the migration trends in Europe, the continent hosts a large number of migrants, mostly from other EU countries. In contrast, Europe is not the major receiver of asylum seekers and refugees.³ In the first nine months of 2019, more than half a million asylum applications were lodged in the EU+ countries,⁴ reversing a trend of decreasing numbers over the previous three years since 2015, when Europe witnessed a peak of people seeking refuge arriving from war-torn countries.⁵ Between mid-2018 to mid-2019, asylum seekers mostly came from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Venezue-

1 UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (17 September 2019). The number of international migrants reaches 272 million, continuing an upward trend in all world regions, says UN. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/international-migrant-stock-2019.html>

2 UNHCR (2019). Global trends: Forced displacement in 2018. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>, p. 2.

3 82.5% of the world's refugees and asylum seekers were based in the Global South at the end of 2016. Source: UN-DESA (2017). Migration report 2017. Available at: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf, p. 7.

4 The EU+ countries are the 28 member states as well as Norway and Switzerland. Source: EASO (15 November 2019). Latest asylum trends: September 2019. Available at: <https://www.easo.europa.eu/latest-asylum-trends>

5 EASO (2019). Annual report on the situation of asylum in the European Union 2018. Available at: <https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/easo-annual-report-2018-web.pdf>, p. 11.



la and Pakistan.⁶ The main countries of destination for asylum applications were Germany, France, Spain, Greece and the UK.⁷

The shortcomings and complexity of the European asylum system have led to major administrative, reception, border protection and financial challenges in several EU countries.⁸ The political and social environment for people seeking refuge has changed immensely over the past three years, as the irregular migration inflows necessitated urgent changes to national and European migration-related policies, institutions and tools. This, in turn, made it harder for asylum seekers to become integrated into society as restrictions were placed on the labour rights of refugees and asylum seekers and partially suspended

their border-free travel within the intra-EU Schengen travel area. Although migrant arrivals to the EU continue to drop, the issue remains divisive across society and the political spectrum.⁹

This is precisely why implementing holistic policies remains of paramount importance. Policies determine whether people seeking refuge can settle down permanently, enjoy rights equal to those of other citizens and are able to start a new life. In this process, dialogue can help foster mutual understanding and a two-way integration. Some local and national initiatives can become positive examples for other countries to learn and embrace opportunities that help immigrants enjoy equal rights and boost their integration outcomes in many areas of life.

6 Eurostat (16 September 2019). Asylum quarterly report. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report.

7 Eurostat (16 September 2019). Asylum quarterly report. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report.

8 European Parliament (2018). EU funds for migration, asylum and integration policies, Budgetary Affairs, Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs, p. 8.

9 European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2019). FRA Annual Report 2019, p. 127.

People seeking refuge face numerous hurdles to their social, economic and educational integration, especially because policies do not always adequately distinguish between the needs of specific groups versus the unique needs of each individual. Newcomers and members of host societies need to have more contact points and shared spaces in order to effectively move forward towards successful integration. Oftentimes, people seeking refuge do not have access to information about their rights in their host societies and do not receive adequate support in accessing the legal system, a reality which is directly linked to the limited powers and capacity of relevant policymakers and grassroots actors.



According to Eurobarometer surveys, in the wake of the rising inflow of people seeking protection into the EU in 2015, immigration has become a challenge of great concern to EU citizens, along with the fear of terrorism.¹⁰ Negative perceptions were further exacerbated by the media,¹¹ as well as by populist leaders who have stoked fear around the migration issue. Some 4 out of 10 Europeans consider immigration a problem rather than a solution, and over half tend to overestimate the amount of irregular migration in their respective countries.¹²

Popularised misperceptions give the impression that migrants, and particularly people seeking refuge, pose a threat to fundamental European values such as freedom of religion (and from religion), democracy, and gender equality.¹³ Anti-discrimination laws have spread across Europe, but they remain relatively new and underresourced;¹⁴ discrimination against religious minorities continues to be a major concern in Europe. These results imply that European communities are not well aware of the positive aspects that migration can bring forth, a misconception that needs to be adequately addressed to achieve the integration and migration agendas.¹⁵

In this context, KAICIID was established as an intergovernmental organization to promote the use of dialogue and to address the wide array of challenges confronted by all, regardless of national, ethnic or religious background. The current situation in Europe is proving just how vast this challenge continues to be and, thus, promoting interreligious and in-

10 Batsaikhan U., Darvas Z. & Concalves Raposo I. (2018). People on the move: Migration and mobility in the European Union, Bruegel p.24.

11 KAICIID (2019). Inclusion through dialogue: Promising practices or the integration of refugees and migrants in Europe, p. 6. Available at: <https://www.kaiciid.org/publications-resources/inclusion-through-dialogue>

12 European Commission (April 2018). Special Eurobarometer 469, Integration of immigrants in the European Union, Summary, p.15.

13 European Parliament (2016). Briefing: Growing impact of EU migration policy on development cooperation. Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI\(2017\)_614577](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2017)_614577)

14 European Commission (2018). Global approach to migration and mobility. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/internationalaffairs/global-approach-to-migration_en_27

15 European Agenda on Migration (2019). European agenda on migration. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration_en

Terminology

- A **refugee** is an individual who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country”.¹
- The definition of **migrant** varies among different sources and laws. Migrants are generally understood as foreign-born or foreign nationals currently residing in a country other than their country of origin.
- An **asylum seeker** is a person who has applied for asylum to seek safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his/her own and awaits a decision to obtain refugee status under relevant international and national instruments.²
- **People seeking refuge or people on the move** include people who are leaving their country irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular. This group of people encompasses refugees, asylum-seekers and economic migrants.

1 Article 1 A (2), 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

2 IOM (n.d.). Key migration terms. Available at: <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

tercultural dialogue for the social inclusion of migrants and refugees is an important way forward. According to the words of Faisal bin Muaammar, Secretary General of KAICIID, during the opening of the Policy Dialogue Forum, “In 2015, when the migrant inflows into Europe increased dramatically, we, at KAICIID, saw that we must rise up to this

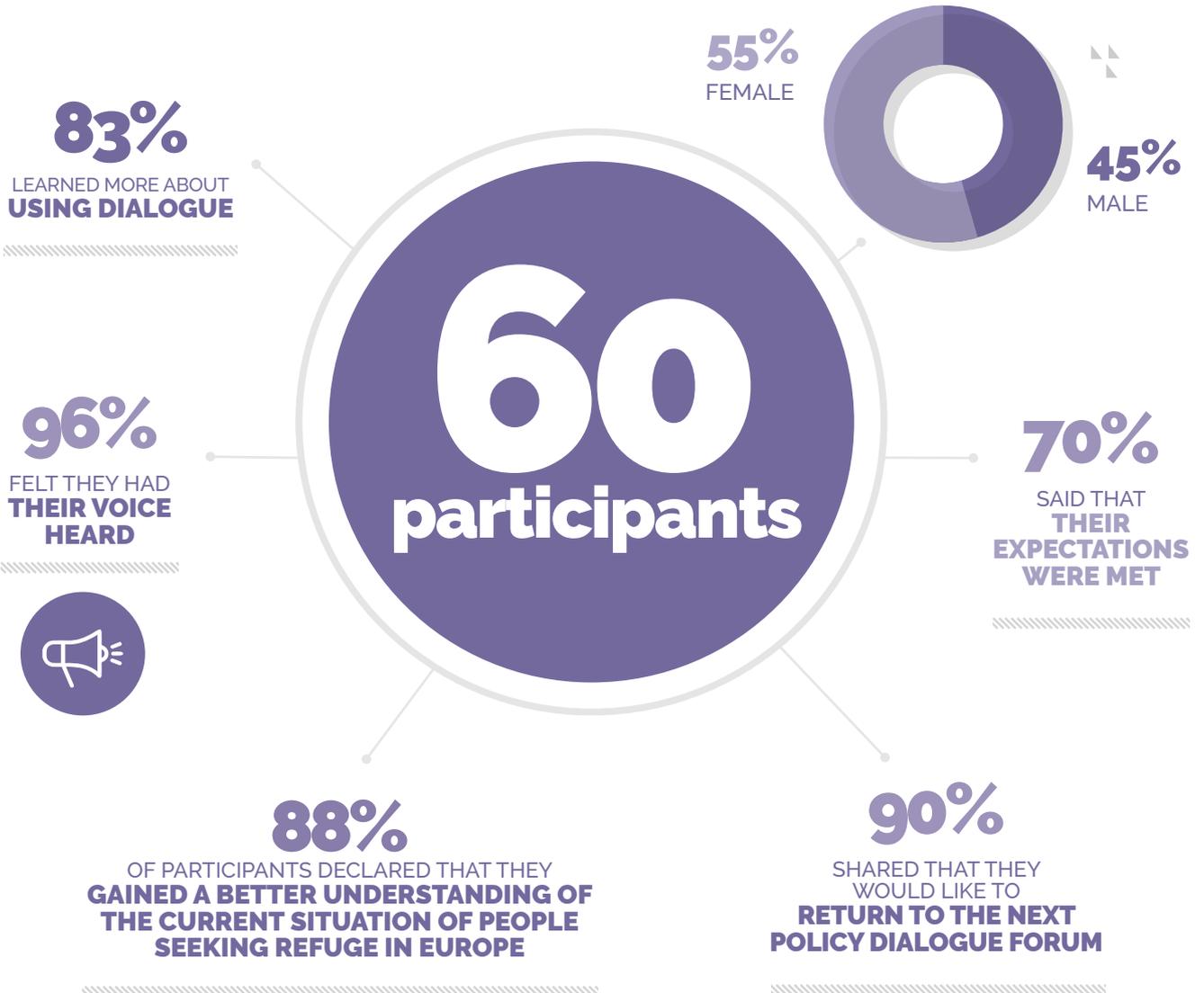
challenge. We asked ourselves, how we can support the host societies that were welcoming large numbers of refugees and migrants? Equally, we asked ourselves, how we can best support those who have arrived in a new homeland, who have had to face new and unexpected challenges ranging from the practical to the cultural?”

“KAICIID can be considered a case study in how interreligious organizations can affect policy at the highest level and establish sustainable solutions to promote dialogue. At the Centre, we are convinced that cooperation between policymakers, religious leaders, and the civil society is effective in pushing back prejudice and building social cohesion because it is a methodology that can be used anywhere and at comparably low costs. Also, the approach can be owned by the communities themselves. When used effectively, it profoundly reveals the common values held by all communities.”

Faisal bin Muaammar, Secretary General of KAICIID



5. Participants



Residence of participants

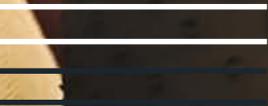
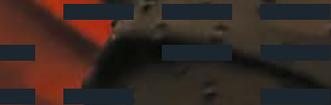
Austria	Moldova
Belgium	Netherlands
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Poland
Croatia	Portugal
Finland	Serbia
France	Spain
Germany	Sweden
Greece	Turkey
Italy	United Kingdom

18
European
countries



During the European Policy Dialogue Forum, there was balanced representation from the local to the European level and from different sectors: policymakers, policy advisers, religious leaders, academics, as well as secular and faith-based civil society organizations, and officials from UNICEF, UNHCR, the EU, IOM, and global NGOs (among them Arigatou International and the International Federation of Red Cross).





6.

Take-aways from participants

The Forum aimed to provide an interactive and participatory approach, and to include a diversity of actors to share their experience and the expertise they brought in the field of integration of refugees. As emphasised from the received feedback, the conference succeeded in the latter aim, as the methodology and participatory format of the conference enabled table discussions and dialogue encounters among the participants, allowing for creative and engaging collaboration.

"The sustained and engaging dialogue among the participants was unique and important for building relationships".

ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK
IN THE EVALUATION

"The Policy Dialogue Forum seeks to address and discuss the current direction of refugees and migration policies in Europe, and the challenges that both policymakers in the EU and grassroots actors are facing. It seeks to increase engagement between these two levels and share different perspectives and ways to cooperate more effectively".

Faisal Bin Muaammar, KAICIID SECRETARY GENERAL

"The voices and insights of religious leaders, politicians, EU stakeholders, academics and grassroots organizations officials were represented in the plenary meetings and served as basis for the working group discussions while bringing out some of the more complex issues dealt in the European arena".

ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK IN THE EVALUATION

"To me, the Policy Dialogue Forum is a platform that brings together people who are really concerned about this topic, and who are aware that all issues related to it should be dealt with locally, nationally, and globally. Here, we are not just talking about refugees, we are talking about the work that we do with refugees. I believe this is what makes this event successful". **Prof. Míriam Díez-Bosch, DIRECTOR AT THE BLANQUERNA OBSERVATORY ON MEDIA, RELIGION AND CULTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY RAMON LLULL IN BARCELONA.**

A highlight of the Policy Dialogue Forum was the diversity of actors who were invited to deliver input speeches and present concrete and holistic perspectives and facts regarding countries, challenges, and practices undertaken at all levels (local, national, and European, as well as within different affiliated sectors). The participants mostly appreciated that instead of Q&A sessions, time was allocated to actively converse about the issues in smaller groups as this provided an opportunity to further enquire about addressed topics and to benefit from the openness of speakers willing to engage in dialogue.

7.



Conference proceedings

Day 1: SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER 2019

Opening of the Forum

The official opening began with the welcoming remarks of Faisal Bin Muaammar, Secretary General of KAICIID, who highlighted the tremendous challenges that Greece, the Policy Dialogue Forum's host country, has hitherto faced, given it serves as a main point of entry for refugees and migrants into Europe. "Greece, a country known for its ancient tradition of hospitality to foreigners, has witnessed a 200% increase in the number of refugee arrivals over the recent months. However, we tend to become so dulled by numbers and figures that we forget the human stories behind them", he said. According to the October 2019 reports from the UNHCR, the number of refugees in the camps on the Greek Aegean islands has climbed

"Dialogue helps us understand complex issues, causes, and consequences. It is a discipline, to think without walls. In order to change the way migrants and refugees are commonly seen, grassroots work is needed now more than ever before."

Opening of the Forum by Faisal Bin Muaammar, Secretary General of KAICIID





“The cultural and religious domains need to be considered, since values, culture, religion and education are the areas of integration.”

Ambassador Indjein called in her keynote speech to use dialogue for a holistic integration effort and a place for learning.

to over 30,000 (with overcrowded reception centres witnessing a shortage of housing and medical care). “Greece and other southern European countries need our solidarity, but our solidarity and support is needed even more by those who are arriving on Europe’s shores in search of a safe haven, carrying nothing but a backpack full of dreams”, Secretary General Muaammar said.

The Secretary General called on participants to invest in dialogue to reduce fear and anger, as through dialogue, we gain first-hand experiences of other cultures. “Dialogue helps us understand complex issues, causes, and consequences. It is a discipline, to think without walls. In order to change the way migrants and refugees are commonly seen, grassroots work is needed now more than ever before. At the same time, however, it is also crucial to seek the structural changes that can only come from policymakers”.

Ambassador Teresa Indjein, Head of Cultural Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered keynote remarks, entitled “The Art of Dialogue: Building Hope, Creativity and a Sense of Belonging” Ambassador Indjein began by raising awareness about the seeds of violence, which can develop deep roots

and thereafter be used for political gains. Fear can become a political currency. To tackle such fear, dialogue can be used as it helps “relations to become an indispensable resource that guarantees social cohesion and coexistence in a society”. As such, she described dialogue as a “synonym of hopes and sacredness in a way that it encloses the promise of peaceful roads and mutual learning and has the potential for good solutions”.

Ambassador Indjein also stated that “the cultural and religious domains need to be considered, since values, culture, religion and education are the areas of integration.” She shared two positive national examples for practicing the model of integration, namely Together:Austria (ZUSAMMEN:ÖSTERREICH), initiated in 2011 under the slogan “Reduce prejudice, build up motivation” (showcasing more than 350 successful examples of migrant integration), and “Courses on Values and Orientation”, which were developed according to the advice of the Austrian Independent Council of Experts on Integration to help people entitled to asylum (with more than 64,300 participants since 2015).

Dialogue is an action of learning in which differences should not be suppressed or hidden.

Ambassador Indjein underscored the need for holistic integration, one that goes beyond helping individuals find a job or gain a high level of education and one that promotes the feeling of belonging. For this to take place, the successful dialogue recipe requires “a secure environment for all participants” to enable them to come together and foster active listening skills to allow for a level of connection that “grows to a point where the common human identity emerges above all other identity components.”

As such, “even a small group, if it can reach top-level policymakers” can have an enormous impact on society. This is because “dialogue can reduce tensions, it can solve conflicts, moving from peace-making to post-conflict resolution and beyond, in the transformation from political reconciliation to human healing”. The effect is indeed extraordinary, as the long-term use of dialogue can “guarantee to prevent a relapse into an earlier cycle of violence”. This important application of dialogue is never stressed enough.

“There is no way out of the vicious circle of violence unless there is a conscious choice to prioritise communication through dialogue with a variety of others.”

Ambassador Indjein

The first day concluded with Aristidis Psarras, Team Leader of the Greece Migration Team of the European Commission, who discussed in his introductory remarks, “Migration Management and Integration in Greece and in Europe”, the recent trends and facts regarding migration flows in Greece. Psarras addressed the situation in reception centres on the Greek islands and the growing number of arrivals



Aristidis Psarras of the European Commission discussed the situation in Greece and the European perspective on refugees

from people seeking refuge coming via Turkey. He presented the efforts and work of the supra-national European bodies in responding to the needs of Greece in the integration processes.

In the second part of his presentation, Psarras addressed the opinion of EU citizens regarding migrants and refugees, based on the results of a Eurobarometer survey. According to the survey, 95% of EU citizens agreed that it is important for newcomers to speak the local language in order to achieve successful integration and to be fully invested in their new host country. Furthermore, people seeking refuge face many challenges, e.g. a much lower employment rate (57% vs. 73%) and a higher risk of poverty (49% vs. 22%). Immigration no longer stands in the top two policy priorities for EU citizens, but many Europeans continue to overestimate the number of immigrants residing in their country, placing the average perceived number 2.3 times higher than the actual level. Psarras finished with an appeal to see migration as an opportunity, although many Europeans continue to see it as more of a problem.

Day 2: MONDAY 21 OCTOBER 2019

Panel Discussions and Working Sessions

The second day started with welcoming words from His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, a member of the KAICIID Board of Directors, who presented examples of civil action and touched upon the meaning of the term ‘hospitality’. He called for participants to combat phobias and find ways where religion can help build bridges and unite people.



Metropolitan Emmanuel reminded participants about the importance of the human dignity of people seeking refuge.

Johannes Langer, KAICIID Programme Manager presented on the Centre's Programme for the Social Inclusion of People Seeking Refugee in Europe which supports the Network for Dialogue. After the introduction session, the Forum was divided in four sequential sessions, focusing on the following topics:

1. Current developments around Europe: policy directions;
2. Challenges in implementing policies in different European countries;
3. Ways forward on promoting dialogue within policymaking in the field of the social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe;

4. How to enhance potential networks and collaboration between policymakers, scholars and practitioners.

As part of the Forum, policymakers and grassroots actors engaged in round table discussions designed as spaces to share different perspectives and foster the finding of more effective ways of cooperation. Topics included the growing diversity and complexity of migration flows, migration dynamics, and the need for new and different approaches in the field of integration. The extent of these topics enabled academic research and grassroots experience to contribute to the work of policymakers.

SESSION 1: Current developments around Europe

POLICY DIRECTIONS: UNDERSTANDING DIRECTIONS OF POLICIES ABOUT
MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL;
POLICY DYNAMICS FROM THE LOCAL TO THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

Mufti Aziz Hasanović, *President of Meshihat of the Islamic Community in Croatia*

FULL INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES THROUGH THE PRISM OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Ambassador Pekka Metso, *Ambassador-at-Large for Intercultural and Interreligious*

Dialogue Processes of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND COMMUNITIES IN HUMAN CRISIS

Prof. Katarzyna Górak-Sosnowska, *Associate Professor of SGH Warsaw School of Economics*

THE (NOT SO GREAT) DIVIDE: THE REFUGEE QUESTION IN THE 'OLD' AND 'NEW' EU MEMBER STATES

Mufti Aziz Hasanović

President of Meshihat of the Islamic Community in Croatia

FULL INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES THROUGH THE PRISM OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

To tackle the current migrant crisis, the Meshihat of the Islamic Community in Croatia aims to generate and advocate legal and strategic solutions to promote the use of interfaith and interreligious dialogue, while building and strengthening capacities for a more sustainable society in Croatia. The political level focuses on the development of strategic solutions that complement already existing solutions, such as the monitoring

and evaluation of programmes for refugees in counselling and informational services. Mufti Hasanović added that “in order to secure long-term and sustainable results, they cooperate with all levels of authorities in Croatia as well as local authorities”. The implementation level aims to put all decisions into practice, whether in education, humanitarian work, intellectual work or other integration programmes.



Mufti Hasanović is getting ready for his intervention on Croatia and its approach to integrating refugees

“in order to secure long-term and sustainable results, they cooperate with all levels of authorities in Croatia as well as local authorities”.

Only through simultaneous work pursued in both directions can successful integration for the social inclusion of refugees be achieved within society. Mufti Hasanović rhetorically asked, “If we won’t do it – who will? And if not now – then when?” Only with a strong will and through joint efforts, together in dialogue, can the process be smoothed. For this reason, he acknowledged that “Croatia has developed a sustainable and sensitive legal framework, which is one of the well-functioning in EU.”

Ambassador Pekka Metso

*Ambassador-at-Large for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue
Processes of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland*

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND COMMUNITIES IN HUMAN CRISIS

Ambassador Pekka Metso spoke about the perspectives of the country of Finland, which held the EU Presidency in the second half of 2019. He made important comments about recent questions related to migration, mentioning that “the question is not whether or not to engage with religious organizations and actors; but rather, how to engage in the best way.” The positive capacity of religious actors is clearly demonstrated across different parts of the world in the humanitarian context and in the integration of refugees in the countries of asylum or destination.

Established religions, in all their variety, easily represent the most extensive networks within civil societies. The question whether or not to engage in this work with religious organizations and actors is irrelevant: the real question is how to engage in the best way. Faith-based organizations are necessary to help understand the institutional multiplicity that exists in the countries where humanitarian action is taking place. In a nutshell, the overall work has to be guided

by the axiomatic principle that humanitarian aid has to go to those most in need.

Religious actors, including leaders, local networks and different faith- or religion-related organizations are well informed about the needs of the people, which is an essential aspect for any successful intervention. Governments and multilateral actors alone cannot galvanise the global commitment to assure refugee protection and assistance. To tackle this huge task, there is the need for broad collaboration with and between religious actors and communities, civil society and the private sector.

“Concerning migration, Finland is a supporter of a European, coordinated solution based on a comprehensive approach. It is important that the foreign policy action is a coherent and target-oriented one under the different policy areas and budget headings. We need to be more determined to tackle the root causes of migration and enhance good co-operation

with the countries of origin and transit. It is only through joint action at the global level that we can ensure that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner.”

“the question is not whether or not to engage with religious organizations and actors; but rather, how to engage in the best way.”



Ambassador Metso presented the Finnish model as one from which other countries can learn

Prof. Katarzyna Górak-Sosnowska

Associate Professor of SGH Warsaw School of Economics

THE (NOT SO GREAT) DIVIDE: THE REFUGEE QUESTION IN THE 'OLD' AND 'NEW' EU MEMBER STATES

Two heterogeneous approaches could be identified during the 2015 refugee crisis in Europe. One is that of the ‘old’ EU Member States willing to help and face this challenge, and the other is that of the ‘new’ Member States (NMS) showing reluctance to accept refugees. Strong emotions have been generated, including a general fear of Muslims. While NMS have hardly been touched by the refugee crisis or the challenges related to the integration of local Muslim communities, they still demonstrate a high reluctance to deal

with this issue. Prof. Katarzyna Górak-Sosnowska attempted to provide three possible answers to this division: 1) NMS are just learning multiculturalism “by a dry run”; 2) the rise of nationalism, which is linked to how the idea of nation is defined; and 3) rebelling against the EU in terms of power-sharing.

In the first instance, multiculturalism learned “by a dry run” is strongly correlated to the idea of geographical alienation. People from the Middle East and Africa are at a distance from Europe, and this lack of contact dictates how the information about them is assessed and disseminated (giving room to “Orientalist clichés”). The second instance then pushes the discourse to nationhood and national identity. “The refugee’ or ‘the Muslim’ became a useful enemy to fight against”, with the classical dichotomy of “us vs them” quickly re-enacted because of fear against Muslims and refugees (notions often used interchangeably) as “fuel in populist politics.”

Lastly, the third perspective sums up the power-sharing struggle within the EU. At the beginning, NMS had a “willingness to belong to the club of the better” but later these countries used the 2015 crisis to



Prof. Górak-Sosnowska addressed the situation in Central and Eastern Europe and the narratives about refugees in this region

show its growing lack of conformity because they perceived the arrival of refugees “as a sign of moral decay caused by multiculturalism, political correctness and liberalism”. In conclusion, the three perspectives show-

case some of the reasons behind the divide amongst the old and new EU Member States. “It seems that economic convergence does not automatically translate into sharing the same set of European values”.

SESSION 2: Challenges in implementing policies in different European countries

GROWING DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITY OF MIGRATION FLOWS; COOPERATION
WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
WORKING WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Ilion, Acharnes and Petroupolis, *President of the Integration Centre for Migrant Workers - Ecumenical Refugee Program (KSPM-ERP) of the Church of Greece*

“PROTECTING” REFUGEE PROTECTION: IS THIS EUROPE’S MAJOR CHALLENGE TODAY?

Prof. Erin Wilson, *Associate Professor at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Groningen*

FEAR OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF DISPLACEMENT

Msgr. François Yakan, *Apostolic Administrator of the Chaldean Catholic Archeparchy of Amida in Turkey*

**ALARM BELLS ARE SOUNDING ALL OVER THE WORLD BECAUSE IN THIS
WORLD ALL OF US ARE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

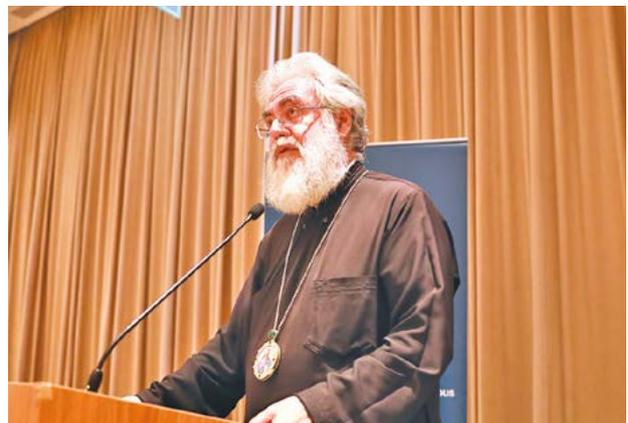
Metropolitan Athenagoras

*President of the Integration Centre for Migrant Workers -
Ecumenical Refugee Program (KSPM-ERP) of the Church of Greece*

“PROTECTING” REFUGEE PROTECTION: IS THIS EUROPE’S MAJOR CHALLENGE TODAY?

European policies on migration, while based on the protection of human rights as a fundamental principle of the EU, have been increasingly focused on the control of external borders as a means of reducing migration flows. However, the implementation of these policies has not only proven to be insufficient in containing the migration waves but has also resulted in the creation of dangerous and unacceptable conditions for newcomers, endangering thus the very concept of protection. “The large influx of refugees and migrants during 2015 and 2016 hasn’t changed the EU policies”, as established in the last 20 years, “as they continue to focus on the closing and surveillance of the external borders as well as the distinction between refugees and migrants”.

Metropolitan Athenagoras asked, “Isn’t it time for Europe to change the way it deals with the refugee and migrant influx? Isn’t it time we re-examined



Metropolitan Athenagoras addressed the situation of refugees in Greece

our policies, focusing not on the negative preventive practices, but rather on the essential respect of human rights on which the EU has built its common and universal principles?” Greece in particular, because of its geographical position, has been burdened with overwhelming pressure of being a first reception country. Even though the Greeks, in their majority, have shown admirable solidarity and compassion, the country is at risk of becoming Europe’s “hot spot”. As such, Metropolitan Athenagoras concluded that “The Church of Greece, as an institution of love and support, has been tirelessly working through its specialised organizations in the field of human rights’ protec-

tion, and believes that it is high time Europe reclaimed its core values in tackling the issue on refugees and migrants”.

“Isn’t it time for Europe to change the way it deals with the refugee and migrant influx? Isn’t it time we re-examined our policies, focusing not on the negative preventive practices, but rather on the essential respect of human rights on which the EU has built its common and universal principles?” Metropolitan Athenagoras

Prof. Erin K. Wilson

Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Religion, Conflict and the Public Domain at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Groningen, Netherlands

FEAR OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF DISPLACEMENT

Prof. Erin K. Wilson shared three key messages with the audience. First, fear is a central part of the politics of migration. Second, secular frameworks are the sources generating political fear, contributing to the devaluing of some lives through the creation of hierarchies between secular and religious entities. Finally, Prof. Wilson made an important call that we need to be braver if we don’t want to be losing the battle over the stories of migrants.

The fear of migrants has always been present in collective polities as a way of creating a unified identity. Reasons to fear migrants include job scarcity, pressures on the welfare state, the incompatibility of cultures, values and lifestyles, and the threat of violence. One factor that has become central is the assumed religious identity of migrants, which, in the European context, is most often ascribed as Muslim.

To a large extent, the dominance of secular frames or secular ways of wording contributes to the fear of religion in general, and fear of Islam in particular. In Europe, religion is something to be suspicious



Prof. Wilson providing a strong message of addressing fear and see the humanity in refugees

of because it is viewed as unpredictable, potentially violent and chaotic. There is little sophistication to this narrative, few distinctions are made between religious institutions, beliefs, rituals, individuals and collectives. Within the category of “religion” itself, additional hierarchies exist. The most threatening religion is perceived as Islam in contemporary European politics, entangled with broader narratives around the War on Terror and countering violent extremism.

Fear of migrants is “lazy politics”. It is not the fault of migrants that their home countries have been impoverished through centuries of colonial exploitation. It is not the fault of migrants that global powers are fighting proxy wars in their home countries, nor that they are suffering the effects of climate change, rising unemployment and job insecurity. These are failures of governance and political leadership, not the consequence of vulnerable people seeking asylum.

Migrants are often not seen as human beings. Fostering connections between people who have been displaced and people who have long been residents in host countries is necessary, cultivating a sense of shared identity and commitment to shared values, not just placing the onus on displaced people to adapt and change.

Msgr. François Yakan

Apostolic Administrator of the Chaldean Catholic Archeparchy of Amida in Turkey

ALARM BELLS ARE SOUNDING ALL OVER THE WORLD BECAUSE IN THIS WORLD ALL OF US ARE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

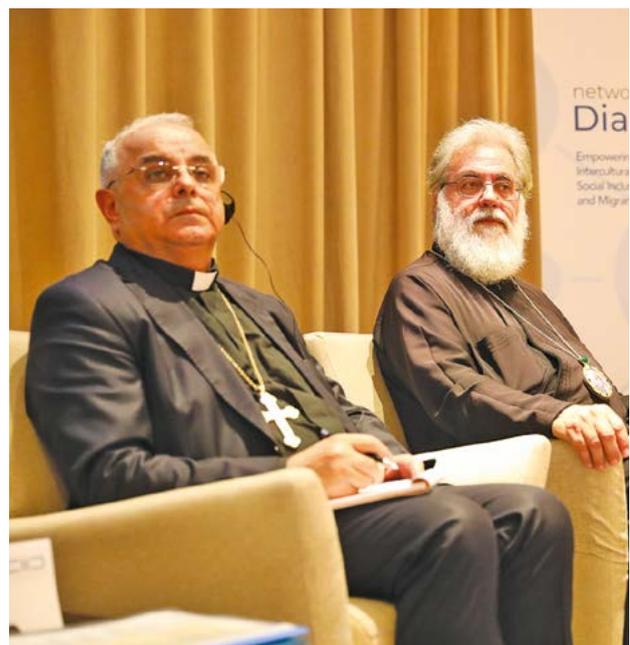
“There are two fundamental problems of the 21st century, which humankind needs to concentrate on”, emphasised Msgr. François Yakan. “If we wish to protect the future of humankind and prolong it, we must focus on climate change and global warming, and the question of refugees and migrants. As the world is mostly focusing on misunderstandings and short term-solutions, we are currently lacking a vision and understanding of the future”. Both problems, global warming and the refugee and migrant crisis, are brought about due to trade wars.

According to the UN reports, it is estimated that more than 200 million people will migrate, and millions of others will need to leave their living and working environment by 2050 due to climate change. Refugee crises are always complex, with various factors contributing to the dynamics at play. International refugee law and human rights law are among the main tools we possess for managing the ongoing refugee crises. While the number of Syrian refugees has reached 3.6 million people in Turkey, very important steps were and are still being taken in furthering the education, employment and social care services for refugees. Msgr. Yakan finished with a call that “refugees should be seen as a cultural wealth. The

alarm bells are sounding all over the world, and in this world, indeed, we are all refugees and migrants.”

“Refugees should be seen as a cultural wealth. The alarm bells are sounding all over the world, and in this world, indeed, we are all refugees and migrants.”

Msgr. Yakan



Msgr. Yakan before providing his speech arguing that refugees should be seen as a cultural wealth



8. Results and outputs



The Policy Dialogue Forum served as a platform for dialogue and a networking opportunity for experts to exchange best practices and lessons learned from their work regarding the integration of migrants and the promotion of social cohesion. The keynote speech, panel discussions and sequential working group discussions addressed the four sub-topics and ensured a deeper understanding of the ongoing challenges:

- Understanding the directions of migrants and refugees' policies at the European level; policy dynamics: from local to European level;
- The growing diversity and complexity of migration flows; cooperation with civil society and faith-based organizations that are working with migrants and refugees;
- Understanding the migration dynamics and the place of dialogue; learning from experiences: grassroots initiatives of dialogue in the social inclusion of refugees and migrants;
- Approaches needed to make implementation policies more dialogical and holistic; contributions of academic research and grassroots experiences to policymakers by bringing new insights and bottom-up perspectives.

After the discussions and working group engagement, the participants identified the following common challenges in implementing policies in different European countries:

1. The lack of political will or "lazy politics", where politicians use politics of fear or populist strategies;
2. The indifference of the local population and the lack of interest in engaging with refugees;
3. Negative stereotypes and discourses in the media against refugees;
4. The short-term thinking of funders and policymakers;
5. EU regulations not fitting the national level or not being implemented.
4. Promote dialogue with policymakers and include faith-based institutions in the processes of refugee integration in Europe;
5. Co-create sustainable practices by linking research with policy;
6. Foster mutual cultural understanding between migrants and host communities and adopt customised and collaborative approaches.

Sessions 3 and 4 focused on ways forward for promoting dialogue within policymaking in the field of the social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe. The participants shared the following recommendations:

1. Coordinate local, national and European level policies based on comprehensive and inclusive approaches;
2. Change and shape narratives on migration to ones of positive and realistic worldviews;
3. Enhance the participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies;

The participants of the Policy Dialogue Forum established connections with the Network for Dialogue members to promote joint learning, advocacy, and future collaboration. This exchange between the Network for Dialogue and the participants of the Policy Dialogue Forum was initiated in order to develop recommendations for the better social inclusion of migrants and refugees in Europe.

In this respect, the participants of the Policy Dialogue Forum called for faith-based and secular institutions to coordinate an urgent response to rising displacement, in order to uphold the fundamental dignity and rights of people seeking refuge. Participants also affirmed their commitment towards the sustainability of the Policy Dialogue Forum and their willingness to contribute to relevant activities in the future. Following the positive feedback received from its partners and participants, KAICIID shall explore further opportunities to organize outreach and follow up activities and to hold its second Policy Dialogue Forum in 2020.



The participants, based on the input received from speakers and the working table discussions, presented the following findings that were divided into emerging, established and concluded developments at the local, national and European levels:

Table 1. Findings from the participants of the 1st European Policy Dialogue Forum in terms of emerging, established and concluded developments at the local, national and European level.

Raw data of findings from participants on current developments in the area of migration in Europe

<h2>LOCAL</h2>			
EMERGING		ESTABLISHED	ENDING
POSITIVE	NEGATIVE		
<p>Welcoming culture: Hospitality attitude? Honeymoon? Shift of attitude? Spain's example of positive welcoming practices</p> <p>Sources of migration: climate change, conflict etc.</p> <p>Education: refugee children are doing well at schools</p> <p>Role of civil society: needs to be empowered</p>	<p>Misperceptions: mistrust towards Muslims and lack of trust in building mechanisms</p> <p>Sustainability: no long-term plan or responses to the issue of migration and integration</p> <p>Protection: lack of integration instruments, informal squads, lack of information</p>	<p>Tools: KAICIID toolkit on integration to be utilised at local level</p> <p>Xenophobia: rising in Greek islands and non-urban areas</p> <p>Role of faith-based organizations: first to respond to human crisis</p> <p>Funds: regulations that prevent EU and state funds to be given to faith-based organizations</p> <p>Media: hostile narratives</p> <p>Volunteers: decrease in supporting refugees</p> <p>Integration: will has to come from both sides</p> <p>Lack of information: ignorance of rights and laws</p> <p>Positive practices: through art and artistic approaches implemented in Serbia</p>	

NATIONAL

EMERGING		ESTABLISHED	ENDING
POSITIVE	NEGATIVE		
<p>Education: access to school; media</p> <p>Role of civil society: slowly appreciated</p> <p>Politicians: gap between theory and practice, playing with emotions</p> <p>Integration Projects: such as language exchanges (in Germany)</p> <p>Protection: at risk, countries such as Greece are not offering social security except in cases of emergency</p> <p>Dialogue: among people of different perspectives</p> <p>Public support: for unaccompanied minors threatened with deportation, there is a potential for development</p>	<p>Employment: increase in number of unemployed</p> <p>Border security: lack of focus from authorities to secure borders</p> <p>Funds: lack of resources, failure from EU to distribute funds</p> <p>Asylum law: laws should be amended to learn from practices of other states; inconsistencies of implementation in existing regulations</p> <p>Political parties: rising popularity of far-right political parties</p> <p>Stereotypes: still present</p> <p>Language: lack of proper integration mechanisms through language courses</p>	<p>Frontier safety in Europe: requires improvement and refugee camps need to have better conditions</p> <p>Media: narrative against migrants</p> <p>Social media: used to connect people with marginalised communities (such as UNICEF's U-Report)</p> <p>Unaccompanied minors: enhance protection mechanisms, need to break isolation, have access to schools, and develop relationship with locals</p> <p>Crisis: reduced inflow of people seeking protection</p> <p>Integration: to become two-sided, at the moment there are no concrete integration plans</p> <p>Labour: restrictions in accessing market and work in lower quality professions than their background</p> <p>Civil society: role essential in housing, labour integration, education</p> <p>Health system: restrictions in accessing it</p> <p>Italy: positive role of religion, encouraging messages from Pope</p> <p>Asylum processes: slow</p> <p>Funds: lack of stability and coordination</p> <p>Greece: the first Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection (HELIOS)</p>	<p>EU Asylum Policy: Overcoming the Quota Impasse</p>

EUROPEAN

EMERGING		ESTABLISHED	ENDING
POSITIVE	NEGATIVE		
<p>Religion: multi-religious cooperation on integration</p> <p>Populism: rise in the EU, however there is a lot of support towards green and liberal parties</p> <p>Youth: emergence of youth climate activists</p> <p>Awareness: on relevant challenges, getting prepared to handle integration</p> <p>EU Parliament: upholds value of search and rescue operations and saving lives close to the seashore</p> <p>EU Commission: taking on the language of civil society organizations and providing funding for more local or community building initiatives through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</p>	<p>Administration: slow process; in the European Parliament almost 25% of parties are populist</p> <p>Funds: funding shortages force NGOs to discontinue/reconsider the crisis and projects have to close</p> <p>Responses: lack of evidence-based evaluation of faith actors and their collaboration with civil society</p> <p>Youth: lack of engagement</p> <p>Global: lack of global approaches and solutions</p>	<p>Funds: no proper allocation of funds</p> <p>Media: stereotypes in media reports</p> <p>Integration: should start with transit countries</p> <p>Education: no quality and no response to the needs of the newcomers</p> <p>Systemic failure: no mechanism to redistribute the newcomers in EU</p> <p>Host communities vs. migrants: limited interaction, feeling of superiority</p> <p>Administration: lack of shelters, facilitators; and time-consuming processes for obtaining asylum</p> <p>Xenophobia: hate speech, rise of fear, scepticism against migrants in combination with religious and cultural diversity</p>	<p>Non-continuation of relocation programme that aimed to move people out of hotspots in Greece and Italy</p>

9. Recommendations

This section presents the key Policy Dialogue Forum outputs and recommendations about the way forward for faith-based and secular institutions to engage with policymakers in Europe from the local to the European level. These recommendations are a first step to outline areas of potential areas of improving current policies towards refugees and migrants to further strengthen their social inclusion in their host communities.

1. Coordinating local, national and European level policies based on comprehensive and inclusive approaches aiming to create more coherent integration policies

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

The Policy Dialogue Forum participants stressed the need to follow a bottom-up approach in ensuring ‘integration through participation’ that includes support for language learning. Moreover, more efforts in the educational system are necessary to respond to the needs of pupils with a migrant background. To share the global task of hosting people seeking refuge, host countries need support while also reviewing their integration policies, avoiding ad-hoc, one-off solutions. The EU could create a more controlled way to ease migration pressures that would also demonstrate solidarity towards the countries receiving large numbers of people seeking refuge.

TYPES OF ACTION:

1. The EU should continue providing financial and structural support for campaigns that raise awareness regarding the migrant inclusion of Member States;
2. Establishment of an EU-wide resettlement system with sufficient financial incentives and the initiation of cross-sectoral cooperation between NGOs and universities;
3. Identification of complementarities across relevant policy sectors by municipalities in order to develop local and coherent approaches to integration;
4. Introduction of critical thinking attitudes in learning processes and multiplier trainings in this area.

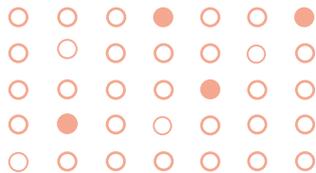
EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Enhancing the benefits of migration through more coherent migration policies;
- Access for people seeking refuge to institutions, and public and private goods and services equal to that of national citizens;
- Inclusive integration approach: towards bottom-up, cross-sectoral and multi-level practices;
- Coherent integration policies at local, national and European level.

2. Changing narratives on migration to foster positive and realistic worldviews towards the phenomenon

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

The participants identified that the way communities collectively discuss migration may have an impact on the development of relevant policies and the responses aimed at addressing them. Despite misguided and stereotyped narratives on migration, be it social or political discourses and/or stemming from the media and press, communities can certainly affect political processes across the continent, influence perceptions at all levels, and have an effect on the attitudes towards migration and the integration of migrants in our societies. Many participants acknowledged that the challenge is to identify the root causes and patterns of such a culture, assess the relevant consequences of such practices and measure the ethical implications at large. Adding a human element to the representation of migrants may improve public engagement with the issue.



TYPES OF ACTION:

1. Awareness raising campaigns at the local level to counter stereotypes and prevailing public misconceptions about people seeking refuge;
2. Provide social media tailored training on inclusion and tolerance;
3. Develop inclusive workshops with role playing activities and dialogical approaches;
4. Build expertise in social media work to balance messages on refugees and migrants and to foster integration within host communities;
5. Educate youth in schools to understand what it means to be a refugee and a migrant in their country, and how to understand diversity in their societies.

EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Increase the understanding of the role of social media in the delivery of information;
- Realistic and knowledgeable exchanges and debates on migration in European societies;
- Offer counteractive, human-oriented images of migration and asylum processes.

3. Enhancing the participation of refugees and migrants in democratic processes and in the formulation of inclusion policies

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

Although integration is considered a two-way process as the relevant policies and activities should target both the host communities as well as the migrants and refugees, the reality is different. Generally speaking, minority voices are not heard and are underrepresented. It is thus essential to foster a two-way dialogue between the majority and the

minority to avoid a one-sided and non-inclusive process. To ensure accuracy and the division of specific policies based on the real needs of people seeking refuge, public authorities should gather and use quality statistics, data and research on the patterns and attitudes of the receptive societies towards the phenomenon.

TYPES OF ACTION:

1. Granting voting rights as a means to increase the ability of people seeking refuge to participate in civic life;
2. Introduce a mandatory inclusive dialogue among refugees and governmental structures (local and national level);
3. Creation of platforms for structured exchanges with migrants and promoting the inclusion of active migrants' associations;
4. Participation and representation of refugees in local activities like meetings, conferences and events;
5. Strengthen anti-discrimination policies and

- practices using a bottom-up approach;
6. Organization of intercultural events (e.g., exhibitions, festivals) to enhance tolerance and respect towards different cultures and facilitate migrants' integration in society.

EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Making more effective and democratically legitimate decisions on policies affecting a diverse population;
- Increase the level of engagement of refugees and migrants in policy recommendations and other relevant integration strategies.

4. Promoting dialogue within policymaking and the participation of faith-based institutions in the field of refugee inclusion in Europe

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

The partnership between faith-based organizations and secular institutions can greatly improve the integration conditions for migrants and people seeking refuge. Policymakers have yet to fully capitalise on joint initiatives with religious leaders on migrant and refugee rights. Religious leaders, due to the dynamics of cultural traditions connected to spirituality, can contribute to a better understanding of the needs of migrants and bridge the potential cultural and religious difficulties they encounter when integrating into European societies. Places of worship are welcoming places for the integration of migrants and the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Faith-based organizations are necessary to help understand the institutional multiplicity existing in the countries where humanitarian action is taking place.

TYPES OF ACTION:

1. Creation of campaigns to communicate the potential of faith-based organizations, faith communities and religious leaders to tackle ongoing issues;

2. Publish academic research and present an analysis of projects by faith-based organizations and the impact of their initiatives on refugees and migrants;
3. Enrich existing platforms (such as the Network for Dialogue) with scholars, faith representation, and civil society organizations;
4. Promotion of activities that support the relationship between human rights and religion;
5. Organize public debates about migration, integration, diversity, equality and human rights, within all relevant public policies.

EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Acknowledge faith actors' experience and consider their inclusion in the design and implementation of policies;
- Use a more open dialogue at the policy level between stakeholders in addressing the integration processes;
- Improve public discourse to include faith-based organizations when they address civil society enrolment to gain refugee and migrant related support.

5. Co-creating sustainable practices by linking research and policy

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

The flow of people seeking refuge across Europe has led to emergency responses and the extensive mobilisation of resources for actions in both in policy and research. There is a significant need to share quantitative and qualitative methods regarding best practices and lessons learned from the numerous tools, instruments and actions funded, in policy as well as in research. Configuring “research & policy” relationships and an assessment of the types of practices carried out to address integration challenges could lead to concrete and realistic policy recommendations from which the national, regional and local systems can draw. A mixture of scientific evidence and storytelling research is needed to identify current trends regarding this phenomenon to challenge top-down state powers and supra-national political entities on migration governance.

TYPES OF ACTION:

1. Support cross-sectoral cooperation between grassroots and educational organizations through operational policy decisions at the national level;
2. Systematisation of data review, best practices and lessons learned;
3. Utilise local institutions as experts in their ad-

vocacy work with people seeking refuge and as knowledge hubs in dialogue processes:

- a. Analyse available data and provide migrants with relevant information;
 - b. Support policymakers in planning and taking decisions on migration issues;
4. Apply participatory techniques to extract policy implications from research findings; dissemination of findings through media and social media;
 5. Establishment of regular follow-up mechanisms and potentially online platform structures to allow for visibility across Europe;
 6. Enhance effective access to quality education for all residents; support teachers and parents’ associations to develop resilience against discriminatory discourses.

EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Complementary and inclusive actions coming from different levels of governance and across sectors;
- Coordinated practices for all involved stakeholders, policies and strategies;
- Dissemination of knowledge between researchers, practitioners and policymakers across Europe;
- Provision of research results and recommendations to be included into policies and strategies.





6. Fostering mutual cultural understanding between migrants and host communities, and the adoption of customised and collaborative approaches

SPECIFIC CHALLENGE:

The growing cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity, and the socio-economic inequalities in Europe are making the integration of refugees and migrants a pressing issue. Europe is undergoing a demanding period in which the public and media are openly questioning multiculturalism and ethnic diversity, and social cohesion is widely thought to be irreconcilable. Therefore, the recipient countries should leave behind standardised processes and adopt customised approaches towards the phenomenon at large. The challenge then is to identify ways in which refugees and migrants can be publicly represented and their civil responsibilities harnessed for a constructive democratic engagement. Moreover, it is crucial to improve cultural experiences to enhance participatory and collaborative approaches to foster mutual understanding and resilient strategies.

TYPES OF ACTION:

1. Improve public authorities' intercultural competence and communication with people seeking refuge like social exclusion, diversity and religion;
2. Provide adequate information to people seeking refuge about the culture and system of the receiving country through the support of public authorities;
3. Develop municipal-led forums for dialogue and local support mechanisms and use existing platforms to promote mutual understanding, trust and common action;
4. Undertake pro-active citizenship attitudes, ethics and practices that go along with the motto, "I am a person, we are a community";
5. Promote dialogue and positive social interaction between ethnic groups and local communities.

EXPECTED IMPACT:

- Ensure civic participation among migrants, where the voices of minorities are heard and included in the decision-making processes;
- Equip public authorities with the necessary skills to facilitate the integration of refugees and migrants into the host communities;
- Strengthened equality bodies in monitoring discrimination on the grounds of nationality, visible diversity, gender identity, religion and language.



10.

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The way forward

- Explore new opportunities to institutionalise the organization of KAICIID's European Policy Dialogue Forum on Refugees and Migrants on an annual basis, as a dialogue platform among organizations operating in the area of social integration of refugees and migrants in Europe.
- Start with joint initiatives for developing new policy directions, based on recommendations, conclusions and proposed actions from the Policy Dialogue Forum participants that will enable better social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe.
- In its capacity and mandate, KAICIID will ensure the visibility of the outputs of the Policy Dialogue Forum so that stakeholders active in the area of the integration of refugees can benefit from the results of the Policy Dialogue Forum and take into consideration all the relevant recommendations.
- Strengthen and provide spaces for dialogue through the PSR Programme between policymakers, religious leaders, academics and civil society who can jointly contribute to a positive change and support social inclusion of refugees and migrants from the local to the European level.
- Pick up the recommendations which were developed from the Policy Dialogue Forum with Network for Dialogue members in different European countries.

11.



Booklet of promising practices

The Policy Dialogue Forum served as a basis for the official launch of the 60-page booklet, “Inclusion through Dialogue: Promising Practices for the Integration of Refugees and Migrants in Europe”, the first joint publication of the KAICIID-supported Network for Dialogue. Presenting the initiatives of the Network members, the publication offers concrete examples of how using interreligious and intercultural dialogue in the social inclusion processes of migrants and refugees can connect local faith-based and secular organizations with scholars and practitioners.

This booklet offers readers diverse examples from these grassroots projects with refugees and migrants, which can bring forth a better understanding of culturally and religiously sensitive questions. This is instrumental for those wanting to have a dialogical approach when engaging with people seeking refuge in Europe and beyond. By presenting eleven case studies from Austria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Serbia, Spain and Sweden, the booklet evokes interreligious or intercultural dialogue as one of the potential approaches for better social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe.

As such, each case study encompassed a specific promising practice, defined in a local context. By utilising dialogical approaches at the grassroots level with migrants and refugees in everyday communication, we can build more inclusive societies and implement empowering processes where participants feel “safe” to be transparent and to take “risks”.

Led by the Network for Dialogue Coordinator, Aleksandra Djuric-Milovanovic, the booklet was presented to the audience with the interventions of three Network for Dialogue members, Prof. Míriam Díez-Bosch, Atallah Fitzgibbon and Marina Liakis, who presented their case studies and talked about the applicability of the booklet.



The Booklet can be downloaded online for free at KAICIID's website at <https://www.kaiciid.org>



"Project Integration through Dialogue" Toolkit

An additional resource of KAICIID's refugee programme is the "Project Integration through Dialogue" Toolkit that includes a collection of dialogical methods and materials based on 13 modules to strengthen the social inclusion of people seeking refuge.

The Toolkit can be downloaded for free at <https://www.kaiciid.org> in both English and German.



A group photo with the majority of participants of the 1st European Policy Dialogue Forum on Refugees and Migrants in Athens.

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