



H.F.R.I.
Hellenic Foundation for
Research & Innovation

Description of the funded research project
1st Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects to Support Faculty
Members & Researchers and Procure High-Value
Research Equipment

Title of the research project:

The perspective of a permanent refugees' and immigrants' settlement in Greece: revealing the demographic and socio-economic consequences and their importance for the Greek society's acceptance

Principal Investigator: Kostas Rontos

Reader-friendly title: FAIR

Scientific Area: Social Sciences

Institution and Country: University of Aegean - Greece

Host Institution: University of Aegean

Collaborating Institution(s):

1. Univerisy of Athens
2. National Centre for Social Research
3. German Jordanian University

Project webpage (under construction)

[\(http://prosfygiko-elidek.aegean.gr/\)](http://prosfygiko-elidek.aegean.gr/)



Kostas Rontos

Budget: 139.700,00 €

Duration: 30 Months

Research Project Synopsis

Population movements occurred very early in human societies and it is a key factor in shaping today's world. Greece in particular has faced several migratory and refugee flows for over a century towards both destinations. It should be underlined that movements of refugees and immigrants display intensive and unpredictable variations and extensive socioeconomic and demographic consequences that stress the need to continuously monitor scientifically all the manifestations of this multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon. The efficient exercise of migration policy towards the direction of institutional and social integration of these people should be conducted with the help of valid empirical tools that relentlessly record the migration issue. Since 2015 mass refugee and immigrant populations attempt to enter Europe through specific gateways of its South part with enormous consequences for both origin and destination areas. Greece is in the epicenter of these developments. The focal point of the current research work is to examine the prospect of permanent settlement of a significant part of the aforementioned populations as emerges from recent configurations. The investigation of related themes will take place through thorough synthesis of existing knowledge, secondary analyses and conduction of primary quantitative and qualitative research in the Greek society and policy-making agents, respectively. Particular emphasis is placed on applied policies with the objective to integrate smoothly refugees and immigrants in host communities in addition to the manner that the Greek society responds to this prospect. Following a multidisciplinary approach, the final aim of current research is to configure a comprehensive plan dealing with the recent immigrant/refugee issue on the basis of mitigating xenophobic tendencies, prejudice and stereotypical behaviors as well. Expected research output will further assist host regions to cope with the foregoing challenges in addition to the wide applicability of suggested strategies at local, national, European and international level.

Project originality

The implementation of primary surveys within the framework of current research ensures the production of new data and the extraction of original results regarding the themes under investigation and their various consequences. In light of these aspects and in the direction of social integration of recently arrived refugees and immigrants, a set of factors will be investigated using innovative approaches and concepts deriving from current cutting-edge research. State intervention as a basic tool for shaping conditions conducive to the harmonious living of immigrants will be examined. A cohesive policy that takes into consideration local needs, national goals and the broader European framework while respecting immigrants' rights constitutes the most effective means to advance a viable solution. Moreover, the need to bridge cultural gaps and social inequalities necessitates the study of different worldviews, life-styles and values of both hosting communities and immigrants on the basis of mutual respect. In addition, policies of integrating immigrants should be falling under the broader scheme of integration of third country citizens as those applied at the European Union level. The current research project will take these integrative schemes into account and will employ a comparative multidisciplinary approach with the aim to promote inclusive good practices by mapping out and utilizing existing ones and developing and disseminating new ones. Furthermore, the beliefs and attitudes of host communities and incoming immigrants will be taken into consideration in an effort to configure and develop cultural venues of trust as a vital prerequisite for a smooth inclusion process. The FAIR project aspires to offer invaluable insight and significantly contribute to existing knowledge in the field with a view to design new tools, promote and maintain institutional measures for the more efficient integration of immigrants in order to address the role of concrete state agencies in this process.

Expected results & Research Project Impact

One of the key aspects of the FAIR project is to stimulate and diffuse innovative research material to better cope with anti-immigrant attitudes, tackle ethnic discrimination and increasing inequalities. It is envisaged that research will have a significant impact not only on the practical issues but also on the requisite change in the respected value systems, which is needed for a smooth transition towards a sustainable and inclusive society. This research, which focuses on vulnerable social groups, will contribute to the formulation of policy recommendations and implementation of tools in order to facilitate and stimulate intercultural competence and reduce barriers that hamper long-term settlement. Through a better understanding of the mechanisms driving this phenomenon, current research will contribute to the agenda setting regarding interventions and innovation strategies in order to reduce the risk of social exclusion and isolation. In addition, the project through publications, conferences and largescale workshops, among others, will advance scientific knowledge in the field and aspires to become a reference point grounded on evidence-based policies. Research outcomes will further advance and deepen knowledge on specific aspects linked to the aforementioned issues and are also expected to build public support for the applicability of relevant policies. These objectives should be pursued through the support of participatory structures and engagement opportunities as well as the development of competences and skills so as to explore cross-cultural linkages, enhance trust and facilitate dialogue. Expected research output will further assist host regions to cope with the foregoing challenges in addition to the wide applicability of suggested policies at local, national, European and international level. It is anticipated that research findings should provide key stakeholders active in host regions with important insights propelling public debate and policymaking so as to secure a solid basis needed for cooperation in the associated field.

The importance of this funding

The work plan contains deep theoretical documentation and costly primary and secondary quantitative research, whereas feasible progress between work phases could be accomplished only through appropriate funding. Moreover, the research project is supported by a multitudinous research team following an interdisciplinary approach consisted of seasoned scholars specializing in different fields of expertise. In particular, they will direct the research actions of the project and they will deal with the subjects that require advanced knowledge. The scientific, technical and administrative staff will cover the needs of the research project regarding the theoretical and empirical elaboration of the objectives, which are set. Furthermore, the project's research infrastructure concerning the validation and electronic diffusion of the results should be supported. Communication and dissemination actions included, among others, are key factors not only for the project itself but for social purposes as well and the successful contribution of the project at the policy level.



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