



Perceptions of Cypriots about Refugees, Asylum-seekers and Migrants

**An opinion poll conducted by the
University Center for Field Studies (UCFS), University of Cyprus**

**On behalf of
UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in Cyprus**

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ADDRESS: University House "Anastasios G. Leventis"

1 Panepistimiou Avenue

2109 Aglantzia, Nicosia

P.O. Box 20537, 1678 Nicosia, Cyprus

Tel.: +357 22 894 000

Web: www.ucy.ac.cy/pakepe



Research Team:

Dr. Charis Psaltis

Professor of Social and Developmental Psychology

Department of Psychology, University of Cyprus

Andrea Nicolaou

Project Executive

Department of Psychology, University of Cyprus

Maria Perivolaraki,

Project Assistant,

Department of Psychology, University of Cyprus

Eleni Anastasiou

Project Assistant

Department of Psychology, University of Cyprus

Mikaella Maria Karakondylou

Project Assistant,

Department of Psychology, European University Cyprus

Vaggelis Georgiou

Project Assistant, External Collaborator

The UNHCR Country Office in Cyprus



Cyprus

Mail:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Website:

FB & Twitter:

P.O.Box 25577, 1310 Nicosia, Cyprus

+357 22 359 057

+357 22 359 037

cypni@unhcr.org

www.unhcr.org/cy

@UNHCRcyprus

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1. Executive Summary

This study was undertaken by the University Center for Field Studies (UCFS), University of Cyprus, for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cyprus between September and December 2022. In recent years, Cyprus has been experiencing increases in the numbers of arrivals of asylum-seekers, while the media have been shown to represent migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, unfavorably, primarily as a threat to security, the local economy and the nation's existence and culture (Avraamidou et al., 2017; Kadianaki et al., 2018). A more recent qualitative study revealed that the Greek-Cypriot newspapers represented Europe as unable or unwilling to deal with the 2015 refugee crisis that itself to some extent caused or reproduced a xenophobic climate (Avraamidou et al., 2019). The same research also revealed that in media representations, the contemporary European citizen was depicted as individualistic and xenophobic (Avraamidou et al., 2019). UNHCR's aim with the present study was to assess the current norms and public opinions towards refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as to identify any trends or shifts in public opinion since the last comparable surveys were conducted in 2015 and 2018.

The present study was done through an analysis of public opinion of the population residing in the areas controlled by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. A new topic of interest in this survey was the focus on refugees and asylum-seekers specifically, instead of refugees and migrants, which was the focus of the 2018 survey. UNHCR will use the findings to develop specific and informed strategies in their ongoing protection and advocacy work on the island.

The study consisted of two phases. In the *qualitative phase* three focus groups were conducted in the Greek-Cypriot community (hereinafter *GCC*). The focus groups were heterogeneous in composition and included participants from various backgrounds in terms of age, city of residence and profession. Findings from the focus groups, as well as from the existing literature in the field of migration studies, were used as guidance to develop the questionnaire used in the quantitative phase of the study. The *quantitative phase* included a large-scale telephone survey in the GCC. In total 1,057 responses were collected from the general population. The data collected via telephone interviews were analyzed using quantitative methods.

Compared to the 2018 survey results, the main findings of the present study suggest that the perceptions regarding the countries of origin of refugees and asylum-seekers coming to Cyprus have changed. African countries are now regarded as the main countries of origin followed by Middle Eastern countries. Back in 2018, refugees and migrants were mostly perceived as originating from Middle Eastern countries and less so from Africa. Despite the recent arrival of a large number of refugees from Ukraine in Cyprus, it is clear from these findings that these newcomers from Ukraine are not considered asylum-seekers by the participants in our study and do not readily fit the image of the refugee that participants have in mind.

An increase in the estimation of the number of refugees currently thought to reside in Cyprus since the 2018 report is observed as well. It is notable that the estimation of the numbers of

asylum-seekers in the 2022 report represents a lower number compared to the estimated number for refugees.

The needs of refugees and asylum-seekers continue to be recognized in 2022 by the majority of the respondents. However, compared to 2018 the current study showed a decrease in the percentage of people who support those needs today, with the need for governmental financial aid being the least acknowledged. It is further noted that the monthly allowance that asylum-seekers are entitled to was overestimated by participants. In terms of daily contact with refugees, it seems that over time the public come into more frequent contact and communication with refugees compared to 2018, although today they state that the contact they have is not as pleasant compared to that reported in 2018. It should be noted, however, that most of those participants who do have contact report mostly pleasant feelings during contact; this finding underlines the beneficial effects of contact as predicted by the contact hypothesis.

The most notable change between 2018 and 2022 appears to be in the public's views on integration. The obstacles to integration are regarded as characteristics that emanate from the local population, i.e., xenophobia and racism; this indicates an increasing awareness among the public of negative norms. However, a significant number of participants also tended to blame refugees and asylum-seekers themselves for their perceived lack of willingness to integrate. It appears that the idea that refugees and asylum-seekers themselves do not want to integrate in Cypriot society is working as an ideological moral disengagement strategy, shifting the responsibility for integration to refugees and asylum-seekers. This is further evidenced, based on the findings, by the belief that refugees and asylum-seekers prefer to interact only with members of their own ethnic communities, a notion that was prevalent among the participants of this study. This finding adds further support to the notion that the public is shifting the responsibility for integration to refugees and asylum-seekers themselves.

The small size of Cyprus, the possible changes in the island's demographics and the fear of criminal/violent behavior continue to constitute the main concerns the public has regarding refugees and asylum-seekers, as evidenced in both in the 2018 and 2022 research. Not surprisingly, and consistent with previous findings on fears, there is a preference towards the idea of introducing a limit to the number of refugees and asylum-seekers that Cyprus can receive. The argumentation that Cyprus does not have the capacity to accept more asylum-seekers, nor be able to cope with increased arrivals is also reflected in the findings.

Another important shift recorded concerns the integration process and living conditions. The expressed preference is for camps as a way of accommodating and managing refugees and asylum-seekers, rather than their integration in society. It could be argued that there is a trend favoring isolation rather than integration. It should be noted though that in 2018 the focus of the research was on refugees and migrants, whereas in 2022 the questions refer to refugees and asylum-seekers, which could partially explain the negative 2022 shift.

Another important finding in the present research is that there is clear recognition of the difficult conditions refugees and asylum-seekers are facing in reception centers, which are considered

unsafe and unsuitable for habitation. A positive response to calls for donations of food, clothes, money, and other forms of support in daily life situations for refugees and asylum-seekers was expressed by the majority of the population. What is also encouraging is the expression of intention to continue offering this kind of support in the future. It appears that the general public finds it more acceptable to support refugees through charitable donations than providing asylum, integration in society and eventually granting citizenship.

There is a general awareness of some of the organizations helping refugees in Cyprus, including KISA, Red Cross, UN, UNICEF and Hope for Children. While UNHCR was mentioned less frequently in free association questions, when participants were directly asked whether they had ever heard of UNHCR before, this percentage increased. This difference suggests that while people know about the organization, they do not recall it spontaneously, perhaps considering UNHCR as not being 'on the frontlines' as other organizations that have a different role and care for immediate needs like food and clothes.

Media play an important role in the communication of information regarding refugees. Cypriot TV was cited as the main source of information regarding migration and asylum issues. Despite the criticism the media in Cyprus have received, especially in the way the 'other' – refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants – is portrayed, it appears that Cypriots have a tendency towards trusting the media on their depictions of these issues. Another indication showing that a considerable part of the population is misinformed is the perception that financial resources devoted to the development and implementation of projects regarding refugees are equally coming from the EU and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

As for the terms *refugee*, *asylum-seeker* and *migrant*, and whether participants are aware of the differences between these terms, the findings suggest that when comparing the references for the three groups, the most negative representation is that of asylum-seekers while the most positive is that of refugees, with migrants falling somewhere in between. Additionally, the open question regarding the awareness participants have of the difference between refugees and asylum-seekers also provides valuable insight: the distinctive feature between the two is the existence of war in the countries of origin of refugees and asylum-seekers. According to respondents, asylum-seekers leave on a voluntary basis, in comparison with refugees who are forced to flee mainly due to war. These findings suggest that there is a great need to educate the public about similarities and differences between refugees and asylum-seekers.

The general attitude towards the arrival of refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus was significantly related to some demographic variables tested, namely educational level and income level. Participants with higher levels of education and higher levels of income have a more positive attitude compared to the rest of the sample. Some social psychological variables tested, such as threats and the number of friendships with refugees and asylum-seekers, were found to

be significantly related to attitudes towards immigration. Realistic threats¹ relating to demographic change, crime and losing jobs play a negative role. The public's perceptions of such threats could be linked with recent increases in xenophobic statements by politicians and negative media coverage.

Finally, an important insight of this research is the heterogeneity of profiles identified in our sample spanning the ideological spectrum between humanism and xenophobic attitude. In particular four group profiles were identified. The first group (28,54%) expressed a clear xenophobic stance and wanted a limit imposed on new arrivals; expressed strong views against immigration and integration, and against granting citizenship after years to those who request it. On the other end of the ideological spectrum a pro-humanitarian group (16.26%) was against setting up a limit on the numbers of new arrivals and expressed pro-immigration and pro-integration views and are in favor of granting citizenship to those who request it after five years of residency in Cyprus. The largest of the four groups (30.05%) was in favor of setting an upper limit in the numbers of new arrivals but was both pro-immigration and pro-integration with moderate views on offering citizenship after five years of residency in Cyprus. The fourth segment of the sample (25.13%) was in favor of setting an upper limit in the numbers of new arrivals, and against both immigration and offering citizenship, but was in favor of integration. Probably the rationale here is one in favor of an assimilationist stance towards those migrants who are already in Cyprus and formed on the basis of the belief that these people should not be kept in ghettos "causing problems." The pro-integration groups comprise the majority of the population and their attitudes could be entry points for UNHCR to further promote its cause.

2. Introduction

This report presents the findings from a study designed and implemented by the University Center for Field Studies (UCFS) of the University of Cyprus on behalf of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cyprus. This study, in comparison with the previous study conducted in 2018, focused mainly on refugees and asylum-seekers, instead of refugees and migrants, which was the focus of the previous survey. The present study examined the perceptions among the Greek Cypriot community about refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus; their relationships with refugees and asylum-seekers and their attitudes towards matters of integration and support. The aims of the present study are to gather reliable information about current public opinion regarding refugees and asylum-seekers, and on asylum and migration issues in Cyprus.

In particular, this study examined whether and to what extent the prevailing narrative on asylum and migration has affected public perceptions. A segment of the media and some politicians

¹ According to Intergroup Threat Theory (Stephan, Ybarra, & Rios, 2015), perceived threats from outgroups can be categorised into realistic threats – to the ingroup's power, resources, or well-being, and symbolic threats – to the ingroup's values, identity, or way of life.

present refugees as a threat to the economy, public security and order, and focus on the increase in arrivals rendering Cyprus unable to cope; this in turn shifts the focus away from the discussion on the improvement of reception conditions and integration prospects. Moreover, the present study aims to compare today's findings with those of 2018 and identify shifts, if any, in public perceptions and opinions. UNHCR will incorporate these insights into developing informed advocacy and public information strategies within their mandate for the protection of the rights and dignities of refugees and asylum-seekers accordingly.

In this report, the reader can find a detailed description of the methodology followed for the purposes of the study; an overview of the main findings; a technical analysis and a short recommendations chapter. Finally, the report includes annexes with the questionnaire in English that was used for the study. The questionnaire includes both open and closed questions. First the respondents were called upon to state what they think of when they hear the words "refugee" "asylum-seeker" and "migrant." They were then asked about their opinions on the numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus; countries of origin; needs; level of contact; the financial resources that support refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, and their living conditions. There are additional questions about the support of the Government of Cyprus; the ways to help refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants and media-related questions. Meanwhile, reference is made to the obstacles for integration of refugees and asylum-seekers into Cypriot society, the public's concerns regarding refugees and asylum-seekers and their opinions about the reasons why people seek asylum in Cyprus. Additionally, there are questions about the Pournara First Reception Center in Kokkinotrimithia and whether refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants positively affect the economy and culture of Cyprus.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in the areas controlled by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) and consisted of a qualitative phase and a quantitative phase. In the qualitative phase of the study, three focus groups were conducted. The groups were heterogeneous in nature and included participants from various backgrounds in terms of age, city of residence and profession. Findings from the focus groups, as well as existing literature in the field of migration studies, were used as guidance to develop the questionnaire used in the quantitative phase of the study.

3.1. Qualitative phase

The focus group guide was developed by UCFS in collaboration with UNHCR in English (see Annex B) and was then translated into Greek. The aim of the focus groups was to gain an in-depth perspective on Cypriots' attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers and related issues such as migration policies. The focus group findings, along with the existing literature in the field of migration studies, provided valuable information for the construction of the questionnaire for

the second phase of the study. All focus groups were conducted in the Greek language. The participants in the first group were heterogeneous in age, educational level and occupational background. The other two focus groups were homogeneous in terms of age. The first group consisted of participants aged 18-40, while the second group consisted of participants above age 40. The focus group discussions took place in October 2022. Overall, 19 persons participated in the focus groups.

The 2018 data analysis of the focus group discussions revealed that the terms “refugee” and “migrant” were confused by many participants (Psaltis et al., 2019). In contrast, the 2022 data revealed that participants had somewhat more awareness of the differences between the terms “refugee” and “migrant,” which might be attributed to the recent prominence of “refugees” in public discourse because of the war in Ukraine. However, participants showed considerably less knowledge about the definition of the term “asylum-seeker.” Moreover, in line with the findings of the 2018 report, participants acknowledged that there is a distinction between migrants from European countries and migrants from the Middle East and Africa (MENA) region. Specifically, it was mentioned that European migrants are more welcomed in Cyprus and have more work opportunities. In addition, some participants pointed out the differential treatment of refugees from Ukraine in comparison to refugees coming from the MENA. These findings demonstrate that the barriers faced by refugees are potentially related to the maintenance of structures of white privilege.

3.2 Quantitative phase

The quantitative phase included a large-scale telephone survey that was conducted in the areas controlled by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. In a total of 1,057 responses received from the sample, male participants constituted 46,7% and female participants 55,3%². Participants were drawn from both urban and rural areas in each district. Those eligible to participate in the survey were Greek Cypriots and members of the Armenian, Latin and Maronite communities and Turkish Cypriots who reside in the Government-controlled areas of the Republic of Cyprus and who were over 16 years old. The telephone interviews were conducted with the use of NIPO/CATI software. Landlines and mobile phone numbers were used. The phone survey commenced on 3rd November 2022 and was completed on 27th November 2022. The collection of the data took place over 25 days. The calls were conducted on both weekdays and weekends between 14:30 and 20:30. The data collected via phone interviews were analyzed using quantitative methods.

The questionnaire was constructed in English and was then translated into Greek and is comprised of five sections. The **first section** aimed at understanding the perceptions and/or misconceptions of the public regarding refugees and asylum-seekers. In three open questions, participants were asked to say the first words that came to mind associated to: a) refugees;

² Percentages after the application of poststratification weights were 51.8% were female and 48.2% male.

b) asylum-seekers and c) migrants. An additional question was whether participants were aware of the difference between refugees and asylum-seekers. The public's perceptions regarding countries of origin, numbers, reasons, and needs for support for refugees and asylum-seekers were also addressed in this section, as well as the support received from the Government and the sources of financial aid towards these groups. The **second section** was comprised of questions that examined the attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers, specifically the social relations between the local community and refugees and asylum-seekers; whether there is contact between them and how this contact is evaluated. Additionally, obstacles to integration, concerns regarding the integration process of refugees and asylum-seekers and general attitudes towards the phenomenon of migration were examined. The **third section** included questions regarding respondents' attitudes towards migration, integration and social support to refugees and migrants. The **fourth** section addressed questions related to UNHCR's visibility among the population and questions regarding media use and levels of trust in the media. Finally, in the **fifth** section of the questionnaire demographic information was included. Please refer to Annex II for the English version of the questionnaire.

4. Overview of Findings

The majority of the participants believe that refugees and asylum-seekers come primarily from African countries followed by Middle Eastern countries, while Asia and Europe as the origins of people on the move received a smaller share. This is one of the first shifts observed in comparison with the 2018 report where the majority stated their perception that refugees were mainly arriving from Middle Eastern countries and less from Africa.

Regarding the numbers of refugees currently living in Cyprus, over 90% of respondents estimate that the number of **refugees** currently residing in Cyprus is more than 10,000. In particular, "more than 50,000" was mentioned by 30,9% of respondents; "more than 20,000" was mentioned by 33% of respondents and "more than 10,000" was mentioned by 30,2% of respondents, while only 15,3% mentioned "fewer than 5,000." There is a significant difference in perceptions about the numbers of refugees believed to be residing in Cyprus compared to the findings of 2018. Specifically, the 2018 findings revealed that only 17,7% of respondents mentioned that there were "more than 50,000" refugees in Cyprus and 21,7% mentioned that there were "more than 20,000." In addition, "more than 10,000" was mentioned by 38,4% of respondents while "fewer than 5,000" was mentioned by 22,2% of the participants in 2018. Overall, participants in 2022 estimate that the numbers of refugees currently living in Cyprus have increased as compared with results from the 2018 report. Moreover, concerning **asylum-seekers**, 85% of respondents believe that the number of asylum-seekers currently residing in Cyprus is more than 10,000. More specifically, 40,3% of respondents reported that asylum-seekers in Cyprus are "more than 10,000" while 16,5% reported that asylum-seekers are "more than 50,000." Another 27,8% reported that they are "more than 20,000," while only 15,3% reported that asylum-seekers in Cyprus are "fewer than 5,000." Comparing estimations about the numbers of refugees and

asylum-seekers, the majority of participants (63,9%) believe that refugee numbers are higher than 20,000. In estimations about the numbers of asylum-seekers, 40,3% of the sample estimate that there are more than 10,000 asylum-seekers in Cyprus.

According to participants' responses, two main reasons for which refugees and/or asylum-seekers come to Cyprus are: a) seeking protection/asylum/refuge and b) finding work. Other reasons cited by participants were: "They use Cyprus as a passage to go to other countries (especially EU);" "Social benefits;" "Better life/conditions;" "Financial & Political reasons" and that, "They are sent deliberately by Turkey/ Islamists."

The majority of the sample recognized that refugees and asylum-seekers need a fast and fair way for their asylum applications to be examined and processed and that help is needed in order for persons to be transferred to other EU countries. The majority of participants also acknowledged the need to have opportunities for refugees and asylum-seekers to participate in programs that facilitate their integration into Cypriot society, for example learning the language; adapting to the culture; developing relevant coping skills and finding a job. Participants recognized, though to a lesser extent, the need to have more support in finding a job and/or developing work-related skills as well as in finding and securing housing. Some other matters are not considered as important by participants, such as access to the National Health System, legal advice and various social networking and friendship opportunities. Regarding the issue of financial support from the Government, participants' perspectives differed. The lowest percentage of agreement related to the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers for financial support by the Government.

Even though the percentages of agreement regarding the necessary steps for refugees and asylum-seekers to meet their needs are generally high in the 2022 study, as was the case in the 2018 study, there is a decrease in these percentages from 2018 to 2022. In particular, the only recognition of need that has increased from 2018 to 2022 is for housing support (from 50.6% to 61.6%). From 2018 to 2022 there are significant decreases in levels of recognition of the needs for financial support from the Government (from 71.2% to 38.2%); legal advice (from 73.2% to 56.9%); support to find a job and/or develop work-related skills (from 86.3% to 67.9%) and social networking and friendship opportunities (from 79.1% to 49%). Overall, there is a significant reduction in the sensitivity levels of the public on the recognition of the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers.

The respondents also expressed their opinions about the Pournara First Reception Center. Specifically, participants do not have positive impressions of the Center, especially regarding the living conditions and its security. This shows that participants acknowledge the hardships refugees and asylum-seekers are facing in reception centers as they are considered neither safe nor suitable.

More than half of the respondents (56,6%) stated that they agree with the Ministerial Order regarding the employment sectors that asylum-seekers are eligible for. Those participants that expressed their disagreement (24,4%) were further asked whether they wished for more, or less, sectors of employment. Half of those respondents who expressed their disagreement with the

current ministerial order would prefer to increase the permitted employment sectors, while the other half would prefer to see a decrease of employment sectors for asylum-seekers.

Regarding the monthly state aid for asylum-seekers, the options offered in the questionnaire were: 'below 300 Euros;' '300-400 Euros;' '400-500 Euros;' '500-600 Euros;' '600-700 Euros;' '700-800 Euros' and 'more than 800 Euros.' One in five respondents believe that €800 or more is provided to an asylum-seeker for the material reception conditions on a monthly basis.

Almost seven out of ten participants stated that they know the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker. However, the qualitative analysis and participants' answers to other sections of the questionnaire suggest that the actual percentage of those who are aware of the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker is much lower. Out of the 743 references stating the difference between refugees and asylum-seekers, 539 references, making up 72,5% of the references, mentioned that the distinctive feature between the two is the existence of war in their home countries and whether conditions forced them to leave or not. According to respondents, asylum-seekers leave on a voluntary basis, in comparison with refugees who are forced to flee. However, it was recognized that even without a war, asylum-seekers are often persecuted due to political situations in their countries and thus flee their countries. These findings suggest that the public needs to be better informed about the definition of an asylum-seeker.

Regarding attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers, almost half of the participants stated that they have never had contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers, but importantly those who do have contact, in their majority find the contact to be pleasant. Regarding the number of friendships established with refugees and/or asylum-seekers, the majority (some 70%) stated that they do not maintain any form of friendship with refugees and/or asylum-seekers. In terms of daily contact with refugees, it seems that over time local citizens come into more frequent contact and communication with refugees, as compared to 2018. However, they state that the contact they have is not as pleasant as they stated it to be in 2018; this could be another indication that sensitivity to the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants is decreasing.

The most notable change in opinions between 2018 and 2022 appears to be related to integration. On the one hand, some participants recognize that xenophobia and racism among the local population are obstacles to integration. This indicates that there is an increasing awareness of the negative consequences of the norms in society. On the other hand, some participants tended to find refugees and asylum-seekers responsible due to their own perceived lack of willingness to integrate in the local society. There is also a significant number of participants (76.2%) that perceive refugees and asylum-seekers as being dangerous, and thus hindering their integration in the host society. It appears that the idea that refugees and asylum-seekers themselves do not want to integrate in Cypriot society is acting as an ideological moral disengagement strategy, shifting the responsibility for integration to refugees and asylum-seekers themselves. This idea is also aligned with the view that refugees and asylum-seekers prefer to interact only with their own ethnic groups, which is considered as a third obstacle to

integration. Feeling unwelcome in Cyprus is also seen as part of the integration challenge. This finding is in line with existing research that demonstrates that migrants and asylum-seekers are often represented as uninvited in their host countries (Hanson-Easey & Augoustinos, 2010; Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2017). This indicates a high level of reflectivity on the issue of xenophobia and racism, but at the same time suggests that negative feelings have become normative. According to participants, differences in cultures pose further obstacles to integration. Despite that, participants did not perceive the color of refugees and asylum-seekers to be an obstacle for their integration, which could indicate a shift from biological forms of racism into its cultural form in more recent years.

In general, the participants in 2022 recognize that obstacles to integration stem from both the local community and refugees and asylum-seekers themselves. For example, 73.2% of participants believe that there is xenophobia and racism in Cypriot society that prevent refugees and asylum-seekers from integrating into society, thus showing high levels of awareness regarding xenophobia and racism. Furthermore, 78.6% of participants also believe that refugees and asylum-seekers do not wish to integrate. In 2018, the public tended to recognize some additional factors that acted as obstacles to the integration of refugees into society, such as differences in language (72.6%) and color (46.4%). Compared to the 2022 opinion poll, these percentages dropped to 58,1% for different language and to 39.3% for color. The majority (75.3%) of participants in 2022 stated that they prefer refugees and asylum-seekers to interact with their own ethnic groups, while in 2018 this percentage for migrants and refugees was much lower at 51%. However, when interpreting these findings, it should be noted that the 2018 question referred to migrants and refugees, while in 2022 the question asked referred to refugees and asylum-seekers. Nevertheless, there are some commonalities regarding the obstacles to integration for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants e.g., the perception that they are dangerous; the perception that they do not want to integrate; that it is difficult for them to find work; xenophobia; cultural differences and feeling unwelcome.

Concerns among participants regarding refugees and asylum-seekers who come to Cyprus focus primarily on the small size of the island (26.5%) while fear of violence and/or criminal behavior by refugees and asylum-seekers is the second concern according to our sample (20.5%). This finding is in line with past research demonstrating that migrants and asylum-seekers are often represented as violent and criminal (Figgou et al., 2011; Pavlou, 2001). The third concern relates to the possible changes to the demographics of the island (16,5%). This finding is in line with previous research indicating that the Greek-Cypriot press represents migrants as a threat, through the distortion of the country's demographics (Avraamidou et al., 2017; Kadianaki et al., 2018). Concerns over public health are the fourth with a respective percentage of 12.3%. A small percentage (8.8%) of participants reported being concerned that refugees and asylum-seekers will take away job opportunities from the local population.

Comparing the sample's concerns to the findings of 2018, there are no major differences over time. The public's focus is mainly on the small size of Cyprus, which, in their opinion, makes the country incapable of hosting "so many" migrants – with percentages of 61.8% and 57.3% in 2018

and 2022 respectively. There also appears to be a small increase from 2018 to 2022 in concerns about possible changes in the island's demographics (34.4% to 39.3%) and fears of criminal/violent behavior have also increased (35.9% to 42.5%).

Overall, participants' opinions about the effect of refugees' and asylum-seekers' presence on the island's economy are quite negative. Likewise, existing research in the Republic of Cyprus also shows that the press represents asylum-seekers and migrants as a threat to the local economy (Avraamidou et al., 2017; Kadianaki et al., 2018). As can be seen from the findings, the majority of respondents (60,1%) believe that refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live in Cyprus are bad for the economy. The same pattern can be seen regarding cultural life as well: more than half of the participants (55,4%) believe that the island's cultural life is undermined, while less than a quarter of the participants (23,9%) believe that cultural life in Cyprus is enriched by refugees and asylum-seekers. Again, this finding aligns with existing literature supporting that the Greek-Cypriot press represents asylum-seekers and migrants as a threat to the nation's existence and culture (Avraamidou et al., 2017; Kadianaki et al., 2018).

In the 2018 survey, two similar questions were asked regarding the impact on the economy and the impact on cultural life. However, the main difference is that the questions in the 2018 survey referred to "people that come to live here from other countries," hence measuring general attitudes towards integration, and not to the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers specifically, which was the main focus of the current survey. In 2018, 36,8% of respondents mentioned that the impact of integration was bad for the economy, as compared with 59.1% in the current survey. Some 29% remained neutral in 2018, as compared with 22.7% in the current survey; some 34,2% saw integration as good for the economy in 2018, as compared with 18.3% in the current study. As for cultural impact, in 2018, 38,3% mentioned that the impact of integration was bad for cultural life, as compared with 56.3% in the current study. Meanwhile 24,3% remained neutral in 2018, as compared with 19.9% in the current study; some 37,5% saw integration as good for the enrichment of cultural life in 2018, as compared with 23,8% in the present survey. This deterioration of attitudes could be attributed both to the worsening xenophobic climate and the inclusion of a specific target group (asylum-seekers) in the 2022 study, which according to the qualitative findings often evokes negative thoughts and attitudes.

Regarding participants' attitudes towards financial support for integration and support for refugees and asylum-seekers, just over half (51,1%) believe that financial resources devoted to the development and implementation of projects regarding refugees equally come from the EU and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, showing that a considerable segment of the population is misinformed.

As for accommodation, 42,3% of the participants stated that they would prefer that refugees and asylum-seekers lived integrated in the society while 39,8% prefer that they remain in a camp. In case participants did not agree with the two choices provided, they had the opportunity to make their own recommendation under the category "other." Interestingly, participants' suggestions emphasized the need for better humane living conditions; the creation of communities where

people are separated either by country of origin and/or race and/or religion and/or recognition of conflicts among groups, and/or a combination of two solutions i.e., to be first accommodated in camps, and following examination of their asylum claims to then be integrated in society.

In the 2018 study a similar question was included, which referred only to refugees, whilst in the 2022 study the question referred to both refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2018, the majority of the participants (61,8%) stated that they would prefer that refugees lived integrated in society. In contrast to this finding, the percentage favoring integration dropped to 42,3% in 2022 for both refugees and asylum-seekers. Regarding refugee camps, in 2018, one in four (25,2%) favored the option that refugees remain in camp or reception facilities while in 2022, this percentage increased to 39,8%. It could be argued that there is a trend towards isolation rather than integration. At this point, it should be noted that the populations which were compared in the two studies were different i.e., refugees in 2018, refugees and asylum-seekers in 2022. Regarding the creation of new reception centers the results were more ambiguous: about 1 in 2 of the participants would not object to the creation of a reception center in their area, while the same percentage would object to a new reception center being set up in their area of residency.

The majority of the participants agreed/strongly agreed with the idea that Cyprus should introduce a limit to the number of refugees and asylum-seekers the country receives (86,5%). Furthermore, half of the participants agree that refugees and asylum-seekers should return to their home countries (51,5%). There seems to be a preference for solutions that either restrict their entry or remove them from Cyprus, such as by transferring them to other countries (44,3%). In addition, the majority (54,5%) of participants disagree with the idea of allowing refugees to obtain Cypriot citizenship if they reside in the country for more than five years, with only 28,5% supporting this option. Many participants oppose the idea of allowing refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus to make Cyprus their home (43,9%) and only 29,5% support this idea. Since 2018, an increase of support for policies that control and/or restrict or allow Cyprus to be relieved from the “burden of refugee influxes” and a decrease in support for integration policies were noted. In the 2018 study, this question referred only to refugees, whilst in the 2022 study, it referred to both refugees and asylum-seekers. In particular, out of five items, only one item *“Given they want to, refugees should be able to obtain Cypriot Citizenship if they have lived in Cyprus for five years”* is directly comparable as it refers only to refugees.

Regarding the levels of acceptance of refugee and asylum policies, there is an increase from 2018 to 2022 in the percentage of the public agreeing with policies suggesting the return of refugees to their countries of origin, from 50.9% to 57.4%. There is also an increase in the percentage, from 37.8% to 49.8%, of the public agreeing with the transfer of refugees to other countries and on maintaining a cap on refugee entries – from 80.4% to 86.6%. Furthermore, the acceptance rate of allowing refugees who have resided in Cyprus for five years to obtain Cypriot citizenship has dropped from 33.6% to 26.9%. The acceptance rate of allowing refugees to stay in Cyprus if they wish has also dropped from 42.4% to 27.8%.

A large percentage (83.4%) agrees that the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not have the capacity to accept more asylum-seekers or deal with increased arrivals. Less than half of the participants agree that providing support and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers living on the island is the responsibility of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, while more than half seem to have a different opinion, agreeing with the statement that the Government of the Republic of Cyprus is doing enough to support and help refugees and asylum-seekers living on the island. When asked whether they have provided or currently provide assistance/aid to refugees and asylum-seekers, half of the participants replied positively. Also, 50.4% of participants reported that they currently, directly or indirectly, help refugees and/or asylum-seekers. Approximately half of the respondents have donated food and clothes (52.5%) while monetary donation was the second most prominent way of offering humanitarian aid/support to these populations (21.4%). Additionally, 10.3% of participants have helped a refugee with information for services and daily life and 3.4% have volunteered with an NGO. Another 3.4% of participants mentioned that they have previously offered temporary accommodation; driven somebody to his/her destination; completed application forms and/or other kinds of administrative paperwork, and offered free teaching. The majority of the respondents (81%) who have helped in the past or currently help stated that it was possible that they would help again in the future.

The main organizations providing help to refugees in Cyprus which were mentioned are: Hope for Children (3.4%), UNICEF (5.7%), UN (6.4%), Red Cross (17.1%) and KISA (18%). UNHCR was mentioned spontaneously by 12.9% of participants as compared to 14.4% in 2018. Even though UNHCR was spontaneously mentioned less frequently as compared to the 2018 results, when participants were directly asked whether they had ever heard of UNHCR before, this percentage showed a significant increase, reaching 91.8% of participants in 2022 from 52.8% in 2018. Thus, it is evident that UNHCR's visibility and/or recognition has increased significantly since 2018. Of those participants who mentioned that they knew of UNHCR, 21.4% have never visited UNHCR's websites or social media pages, while 31.3% reported that they visit their online sites, but only do so rarely. From those who are aware of UNHCR, only 17.7% visit UNHCR's websites often or very often. Visits to UNHCR's website and social media have also increased in comparison to 2018: while the majority of participants (81.9%) stated that they never or rarely visited the website and social media back in 2018, this percentage dropped to around 50% in 2022.

The survey shows that the media play an important role in the communication of information regarding refugees. Over a third of participants (36%) report that they are informed through Cypriot television (TV). Social media and websites in general were the second most used source of information (27.8%), while newspapers, both online and offline, are used by a much smaller percentage of people (7.1%). An even lower percentage (3.1%) rely on the radio and international media (3.9%). Regarding people's trust in national media coverage such as TV, radio and press on refugees and asylum-seekers, it appears that more people seem to trust the local media (44.6%) than those who feel distrustful (25.9%).

5. Qualitative findings – Focus Groups

5.1 Data Analysis

The data collected from the focus groups were first transcribed and then analyzed using qualitative techniques. The researchers initially read the transcribed data and noted any observations and patterns. The next phase involved generating an initial list of ideas about the data and what was interesting about them and afterwards the data were organised into meaningful clusters. The researchers worked systematically through the entire data set and identified interesting features in the data that formed repeated patterns across the data set. Coding was carried out manually by writing notes next to the transcribed excerpts. Data extracts were coded and then collected and combined with each code. Then, the coded extracts were sorted into candidate themes using mind-maps (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Tuckett, 2005).

During the next phase, the themes were reviewed and refined, while ensuring that they formed a reasonable pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this point, any sub-theme that did not fit in was discarded, and its extracts were collated with an already existing theme. The validity of the individual themes and the accuracy of the candidate thematic map was then considered. The next phase began when it was deemed that the thematic map of the data was satisfactory. During this phase, the themes were further defined and refined, as well as their meaning. **Figure 1 shows the final thematic map.** The last phase involved the final analysis and write-up of the findings, which are presented in the next section.

5.2 Findings

The thematic analysis of the data revealed four main themes with fifteen sub-themes as illustrated in **Figure1** below. The first main theme of ***Perceptions about the State and Politicians*** summarised the criticisms of participants about the State and politicians regarding the migration and refugee crisis and the way the problem is handled. It includes three sub-themes: a) negative representations of refugees and racist remarks; b) corruption and political gains; and c) state decisions and responses. These sub-themes reflect the specific examples of negative evaluations of the State and politicians, as discussed by participants.

The second main theme of ***Racism*** encapsulated participants views, opinions and experiences concerning racism against refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in Cyprus. It includes five sub-themes: a) media misinformation; b) misconceptions and fallacies; c) criticism against xenophobia and racism; d) exhibiting xenophobic and prejudiced remarks and e) discrimination.

The third main theme of ***Challenges and Gaps*** summarised participants' views and perceptions regarding the challenges and gaps in managing migration and asylum issues in Cyprus. This theme included three sub-themes: a) lack of a humane approach and solidarity; b) complex bureaucratic procedures and c) service gaps.

Finally, the fourth main theme of **Recommendations for Improvements** concerned participants' suggestions to improve the lives of migrants and refugees in Cyprus. It included four sub-themes: a) the State's decisions and responses; b) education, raising awareness and combating racism; c) integration programs and d) need for understanding, empathy and solidarity. The themes and sub-themes are discussed below.

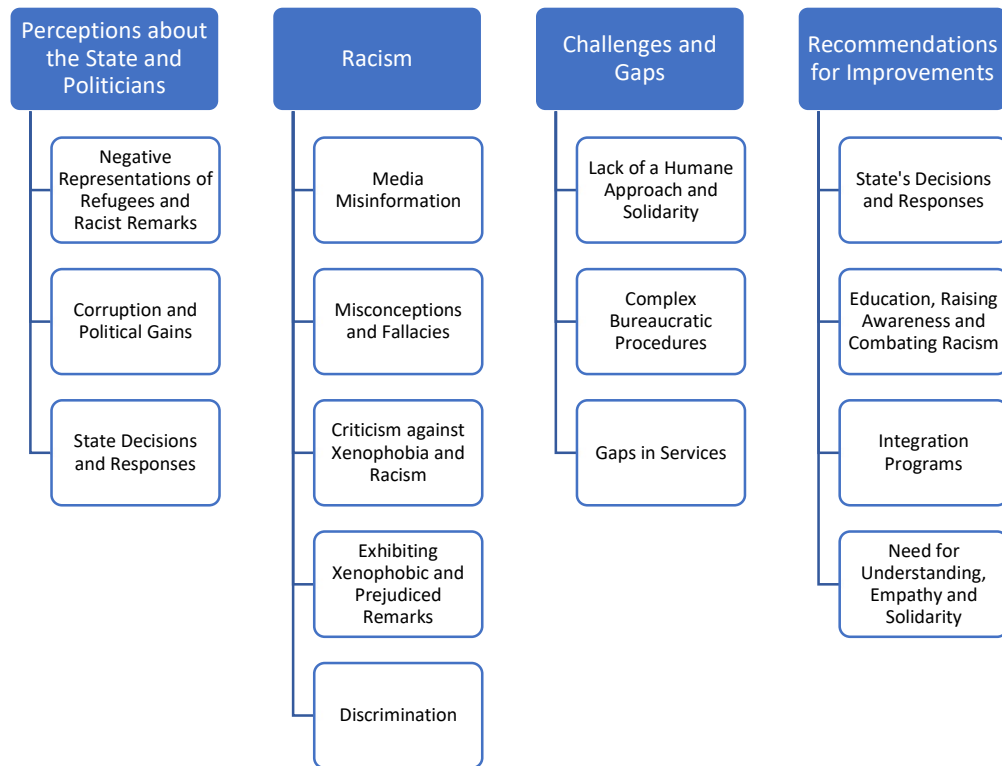


Figure 1: Thematic Map

Theme 1: Perceptions about the State and Politicians

Most participants, particularly those in the heterogenous pilot focus group and the second focus group (ages 18 to 45) expressed their disapproval of the State and politicians. Specifically, three sub-themes emerged: (i) negative representations of refugees and racist remarks; (ii) corruption and political gains; and (iii) State decisions and responses.

The first sub-theme, *Negative representations and racist remarks*, came through the discussion about the State and politicians, where several participants viewed the State and politicians as racist. Specifically, they were critical of politicians representing refugees as ‘bogus’ and ‘opportunistic,’ noting their racist remarks and microaggressions on various occasions. Regarding the sub-theme of *Corruption and political gains*, participants from all three focus groups accused the State and politicians of corruption and criticised their actions as only serving their own

political and personal interests. The State was also considered as not using the funds they receive from the European Union for refugees efficiently, and participants expressed the view that the State is using migration to cover up corruption. The third sub-theme, *State decisions and responses*, encapsulated participants' perceptions and criticism about the State's decisions and responses to the migration and refugee crisis, where the conflicting roles of various ministries on migration is seen as indicative of a lack of cohesion within the Government. Participants were also critical of the Government's measures in attempting to control migration flows and specifically mentioned the pushbacks and the money spent on security. Other criticisms included the Government's restrictive laws regarding asylum-seekers' rights to employment; the lack of integration policies; welfare as a safety net for these populations, and delays in the system, such as with the examination of asylum applications.

Theme 2: Racism

The theme of "Racism" includes the following sub-themes of: (i) media misinformation and disinformation; (ii) misconceptions and fallacies; (iii) criticism against xenophobia and prejudice; (iv) exhibiting xenophobic and prejudiced remarks; and (v) discrimination. In the first sub-theme, *Media misinformation*, the views expressed revolved around the media's responsibility in producing and spreading misinformation. Specifically, participants expressed that the media are controlled by the State and hence reinforce the State's narrative. The media are perceived to target migrants based on their ethnicity, without respecting their privacy. For example, when crimes are reported in the news, the citizenship of the alleged offender is usually omitted when the offender is Cypriot. On the other hand, in the case that the offender is not Cypriot, reference to their country of origin is made by the media. Additionally, social media facilitates the distribution of information about their personal life and personal details.

Regarding the sub-theme of *Misconceptions and fallacies*, one of the key misconceptions that was mentioned in all three focus groups was the assumption that migrants coming to Cyprus are not willing to work. Some participants also believe that migrants are coming to Cyprus solely to "abuse" the system by receiving benefits. It seems that it is also believed that the benefits asylum-seekers and refugees receive are especially high. Furthermore, some participants expressed that Cypriots are being unfairly treated by the State, either by receiving less or no benefits at all and due to their low wages.

Regarding the sub-theme of *Criticism against xenophobia and prejudice*, participants raised their concerns regarding the phenomena of xenophobia and prejudice that persist in Cyprus. The sub-theme, *Exhibiting xenophobic and prejudiced remarks* is characterised by an 'Us vs. Them' view with comparisons made by participants between Cypriots and migrants. Some prejudiced and xenophobic statements were expressed, while race and the status of migrants (i.e., asylum-seeker; refugee; undocumented migrant) were recurrent topics in the discussion. Participants' statements particularly targeted persons of African origin, asylum-seekers, and other migrants, who were often referred to as "illegal." In the last sub-theme of *Discrimination* participants spoke about the differential treatment in the reception and integration of diverse refugee groups,

noting in particular refugees from Ukraine and other refugee and asylum-seeking groups. In addition, references were made to the discrimination asylum-seekers and refugees face in the job market.

Theme 3: Challenges and Gaps

Most participants talked about specific challenges and gaps in managing migration and refugee flows in Cyprus. Participants identified: the (i) lack of a humane approach and solidarity; (ii) complex bureaucratic procedures; (iii) service gaps and (iv) integration as major issues.

The first sub-theme of *Lack of a humane approach and solidarity* was regarding the lack of a humane approach and solidarity in responding to issues related to migrants and refugees and the way people are being degraded by being placed in Pournara where conditions are inhumane. The need to improve the *Complex bureaucratic procedures*, such as the long asylum-application examination processes, or the complex procedures to access health and social welfare services, are perceived as negatively impacting refugees' lives and integration. Finally, participants identified *Service gaps* in the existing service provision for refugees and particularly in regard to the Pournara First Reception Center, as well as the Social Welfare System. Both are perceived to be struggling with minimum staff to meet the needs and demands of the refugee populations in Cyprus, while the lack of a person-centered approach in services, and specifically the Asylum Service, was also noted. As for Pournara in particular, the discussion centered on the living conditions for residents, as well as to the limited staff members who are often overburdened, which is perceived to negatively impact their quality of work.

Theme 4: Recommendations for Improvements

The final main theme of “**Recommendations for Improvements**” emerged from the analysis and concerned participants' suggestions for systemic improvements regarding migrants and refugees in Cyprus. Participants provided information to support the sub-themes of **the State's decisions and responses; education, raising awareness, and combating racism; integration** and the **need for understanding, empathy and solidarity**.

The first sub-theme of *the State's decisions and responses* included suggestions for improvements, such as in the conditions at the Pournara Reception Center, rather than placing asylum-seekers in hostels or hotels; speeding up the procedures, and treating them with respect to be in line with the European Convention of Human Rights. Participants also made recommendations for education tailored for both refugees and locals, that would help in raising awareness and combating racism and discrimination. In the sub-theme of *Integration* participants recommended the establishment of an integration framework for refugees in the Cypriot society to replace assimilation, noting in particular the introduction of a national integration plan. Participants noted that a proper examination of the qualifications of refugees and asylum-seekers would allow Cyprus to find qualified persons and offer them work, thus contributing to the economy. Another suggestion was for Cypriot society to become more open and accepting towards “others” and showing more respect for different languages and customs

that would facilitate their integration. Participants noted that integration entails refugees and migrants becoming more accepted in Cypriot society, both as individuals and as groups. Discussions around the sub-theme of the *Need for understanding, empathy and solidarity* highlighted the need for understanding, empathy, solidarity and humane treatment across society.

Comparison to the previous qualitative research of 2018-2019

The previous analysis of the focus group discussions revealed that the terms “refugee” and “migrant” were confused by many Greek-Cypriots (Psaltis et al., 2019). In contrast to this finding, the analysis of the 2022 data revealed that participants had somewhat more awareness on the differences between the terms “refugee” and “migrant.” However, participants knew much less about the definition of the term “asylum-seeker.” In line with the findings of the 2018 study, participants acknowledged that there is a distinction between migrants from European countries and migrants from the Middle East and Africa (MENA) region. Specifically, it was mentioned that European migrants are more welcomed in Cyprus and have greater work opportunities. In addition, some participants pointed out the differential treatment of refugees from Ukraine in comparison to refugees coming from the MENA. These findings demonstrate that the barriers faced by refugees are potentially related to the maintenance of structures of white privilege.

6. Quantitative findings

6.1 Statistical methodology

For this study, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 27.0 and Microsoft Excel 2016 were used for the statistical analysis and for the creation of tables and graphs. Specifically, through descriptive statistical analysis, diagrams and tables were created and a frequency analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire was also conducted. In addition, the “bootstrapping” method was carried out to address any possible bias in the data sample. This method is known as the “robust method” because it is “resistant” to assumptions and extreme values. Bootstrapping works by sampling, replacing the data sample by drawing a large number of smaller samples, each of which is the same size. Post-stratification (PS) weights were applied in the sample on the combination of the distribution of the age group, the district, the area of residence and gender according to the data from the Statistical Service of Cyprus (Census 2011). The present study presents weighted and unweighted results (see Appendix - Supplementary material), so that the conclusions can be compared. All the tests of this study were performed at a level of statistical significance of 5%.

SECTION DEMOGRAPHICS: Demographic characteristics of participants

Gender distribution

Of the total of 1,057 responses received from the general population, 51.8% were female and 48.2% male as illustrated in the pie chart below (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Gender Distribution

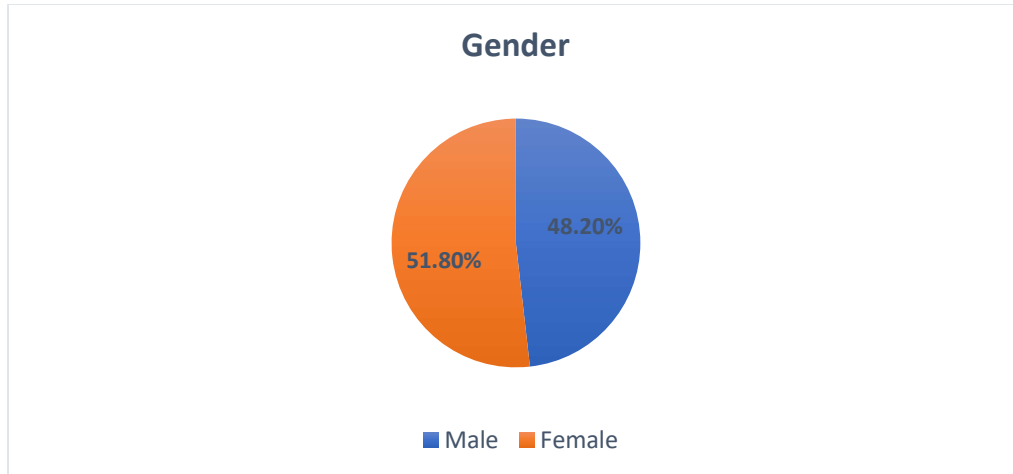


Figure 2: Distribution by Gender

Distribution by district

Regarding the distribution by district, the Nicosia district represented the largest percentage (39.2%), followed by Limassol (28%) and Larnaka (16.9%). A further 10.5% of the sample was from the Pafos district and lastly 5.4% of participants represented the Famagusta district (**Figure 3**).

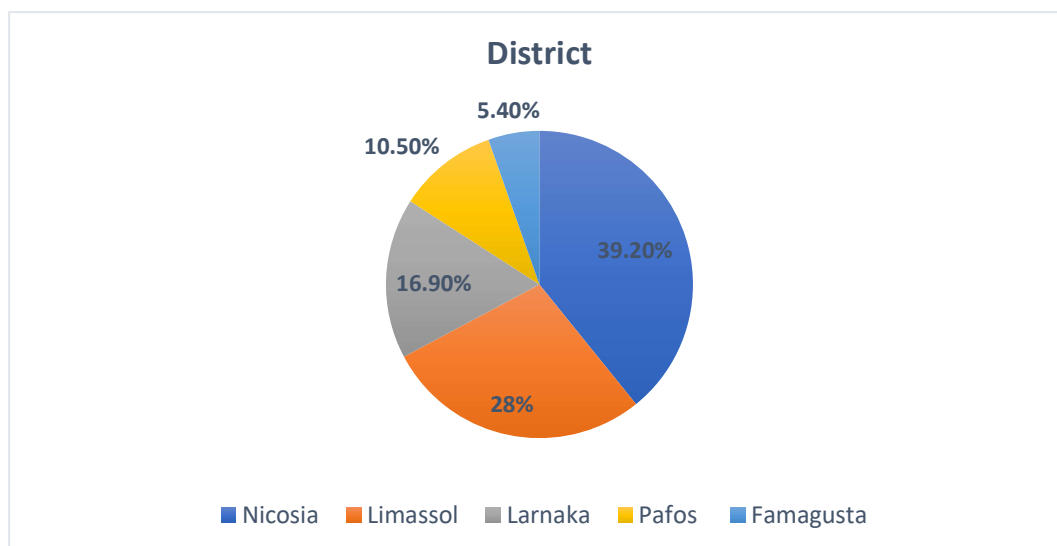


Figure 3: Distribution by district

Area of residence

As for the area of residence (urban vs. rural), 67.6% of respondents stated that they reside in an urban area, while the corresponding percentage in rural areas was 32.4% (**Figure 4**). The percentages of distribution by district and the area of residence correspond to the general population.

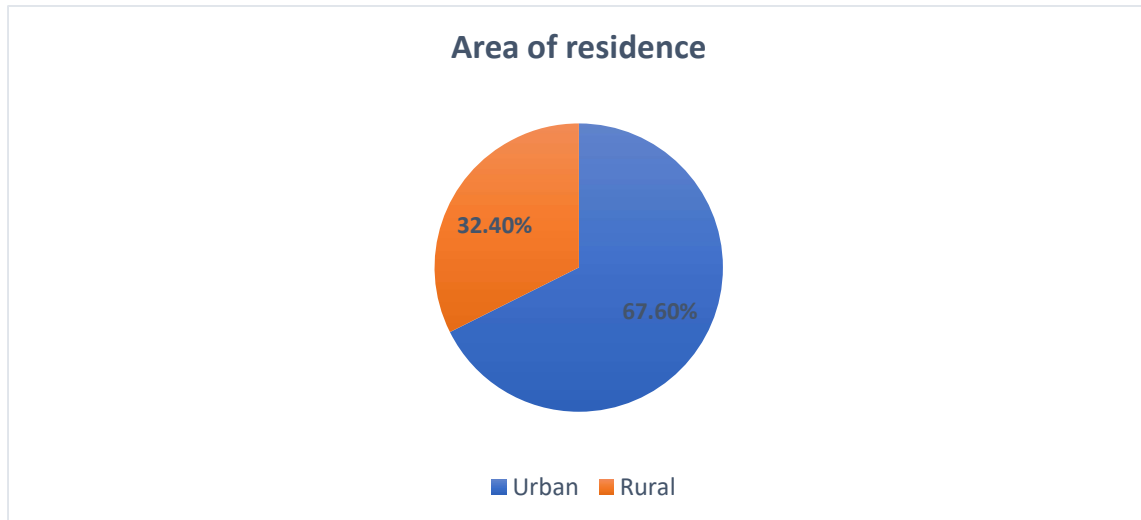


Figure 4. Distribution by area of residence

Educational level

Concerning the highest level of education obtained by the participants, 69.1% stated that they had a high level (over 12 years) of education and 26.5% had secondary level (between 6 to 12 years of education) (**Figure 5**).

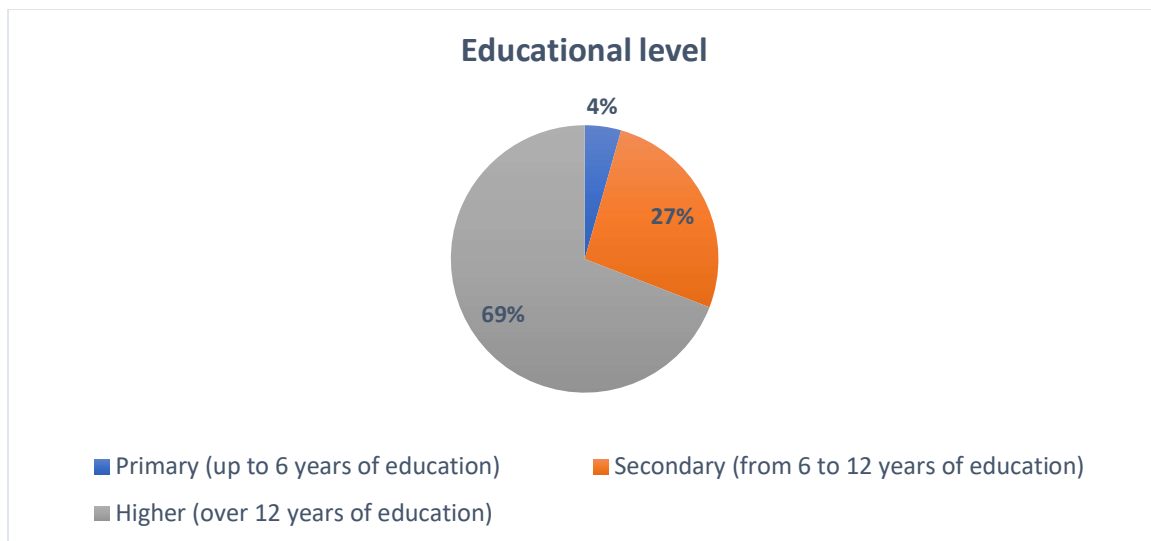


Figure 5: Distribution by educational level

Age Groups

The highest response rate was in the 35-44 age group at 32.9%. Then, the 45-64 age group had 29.2% and the over 65 years age group had a rate of 15.6% (**Figure 6**).

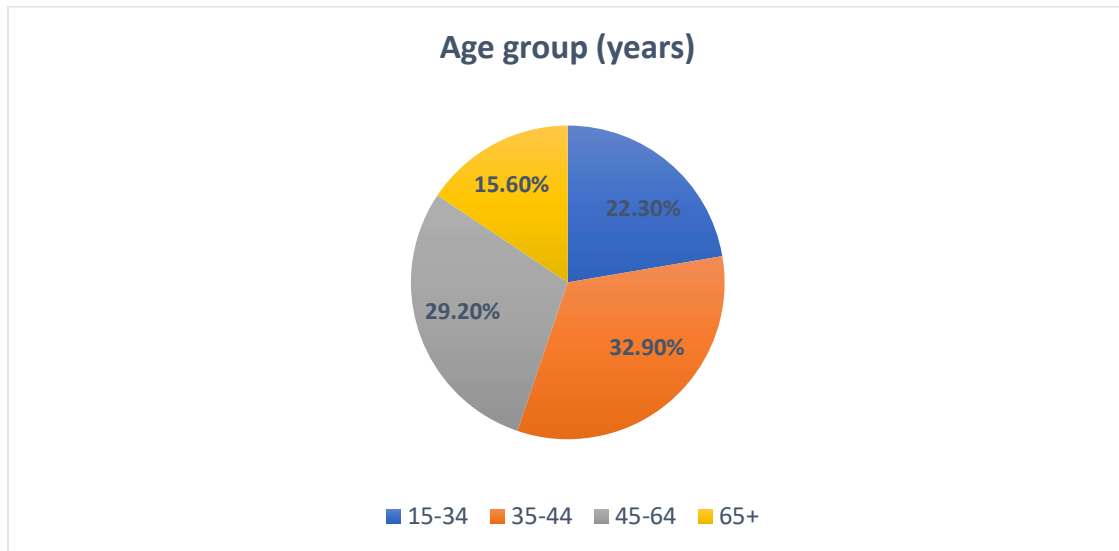


Figure 6: Distribution by age

Income level

The following question refers to the financial situation of the participants. Almost 1 in 10 participants (12.5%) declared a net monthly income between € 250-800; 21.7% from € 801-1,300; 17% from € 1,301-1,700 and 16.6% from € 1,701-2,100, while 8.4% stated that they had no income. Finally, some 1 in 4 participants (23.8%) declared a net monthly income over € 2,100 (**Figure 7**).

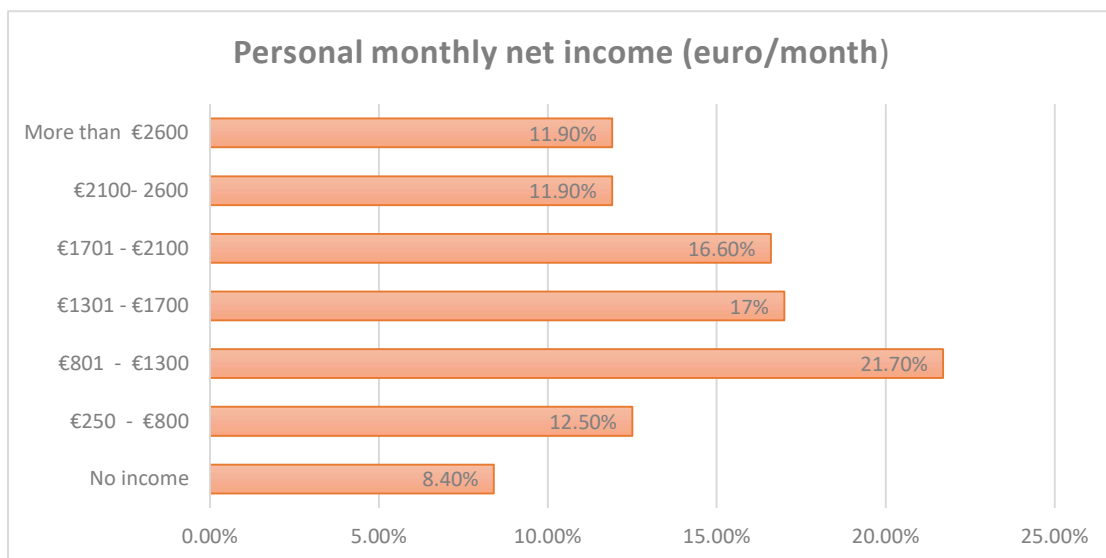


Figure 7: Distribution by personal net monthly income

Sector of employment

Regarding the sector of employment, the largest percentage stated that they were working as private employees (43.8%), while approximately 1 in 4 participants (23%) worked as a public employee / civil servant. Finally, 16.2% declared that they are retired and 10.5% unemployed (Figure 8).

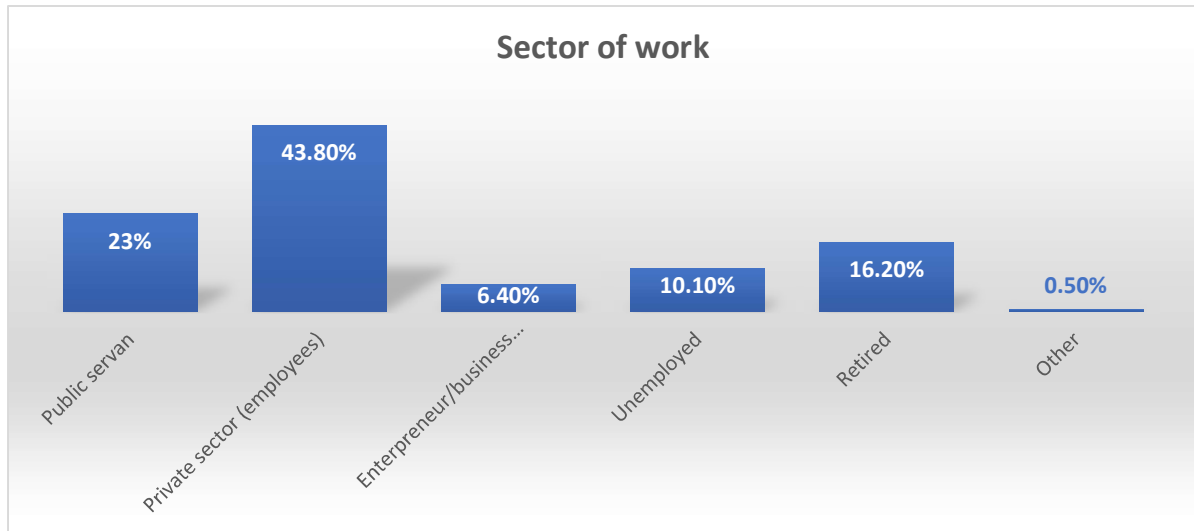


Figure 8: Distribution by sector of work

Citizenship

The following questions are related to the origin of the participants. The majority of participants have Cypriot citizenship at a rate of 94.5%, while 1 in 2 participants (50.2%) have lived abroad for more than 1 year (Figure 9).

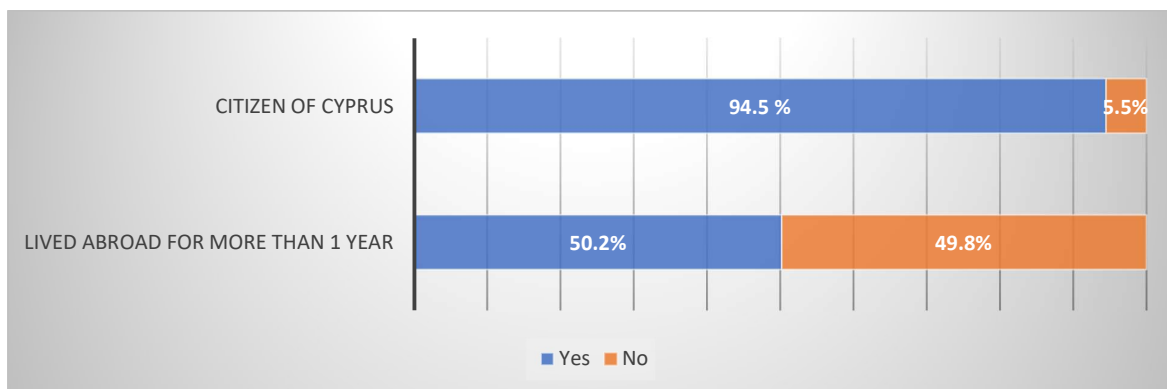


Figure 9: Distribution by citizenship

Community

A final question in the demographics section asked participants to state in which community they belong. A percentage of 95.5% stated that they belonged in the Greek-Cypriot community. A small percentage (4.5%) stated 'other' (**Figure 10**).

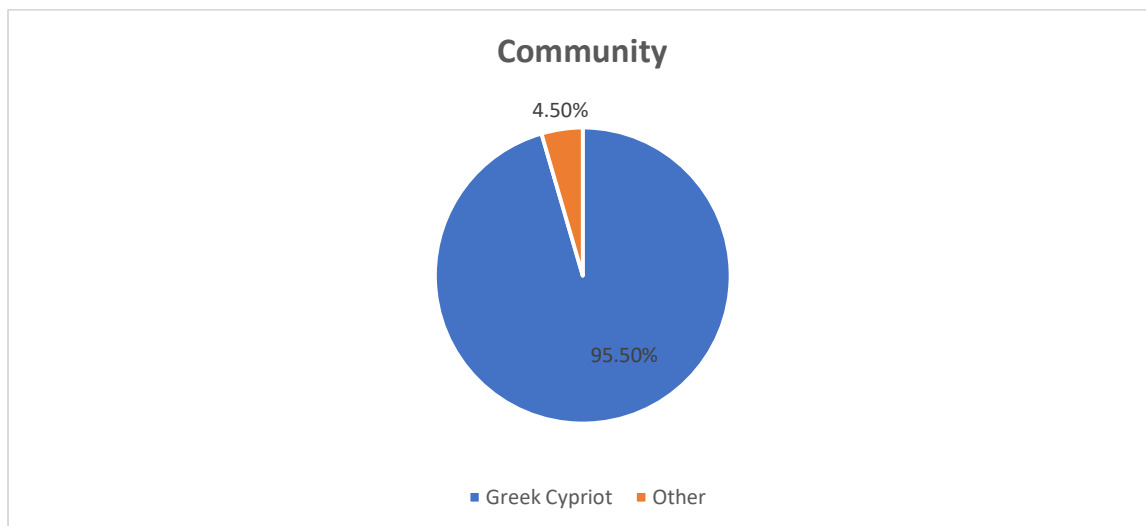


Figure 10: Distribution by community

SECTION A: Understanding of the terms 'refugees,' 'asylum-seekers' and 'migrants'

In this section, a detailed analysis of the study is provided, which is divided into four main sections: a) Understanding and perceptions of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants; b) Attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers and the phenomenon of migration; c) Attitudes towards integration and support of refugees and asylum-seekers and d) UNHCR's visibility among the Cypriot population.

In contrast to the study conducted in 2018 where the focus was on refugees and migrants, this survey was focused on refugees and asylum-seekers. First, attention was given to Cypriots' estimations regarding the number of refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus and their origins (A.1). Next, people's perceptions about the reasons that refugees and asylum-seekers come to Cyprus were explored (A.2). Then, the focus shifted to Cypriots' perceptions on refugees' needs for support (A.3). A new question was added, compared to the 2018 survey, regarding the support offered at the Pournara First Reception Center (A.4). As the issue of the integration of asylum-seekers is of great significance to Cypriot society, two new questions were added: one regarding the employment opportunities that asylum-seekers currently have (A.5) and the perceptions of the local population regarding the benefits asylum-seekers are receiving (A.6). Attention was then shifted to examine whether there is a difference in the public's perceptions of refugees and asylum-seekers (A.7). Finally, a qualitative understanding of the terms "refugee," "asylum-seeker" and "migrant," based on Cypriots' perceptions is presented (A.8).

A.1. Perceptions of origins and number of refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus

The next questions addressed participants' perceptions about the origins of refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus and their estimated numbers. Specifically, participants were asked to state the country of origin that they believed most refugees and asylum-seekers come from and their estimated numbers. These questions provided valuable information on the misconceptions held by the Cypriot public.

Regarding the country of origin that most refugees and asylum-seekers come from, the majority (46.5%) of the participants believe that refugees and asylum-seekers come from African countries, followed by Middle Eastern countries (32%). On the other hand, Asia and Europe as the origins of people on the move received a smaller share of 5.5% and 1.5%, respectively. Interestingly, the option "Other" was chosen by 4.1% of the participants, suggesting that they come from a combination of countries in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Additionally, 10.4% stated that most refugees and asylum-seekers come from countries from all over the world (Figure 11).

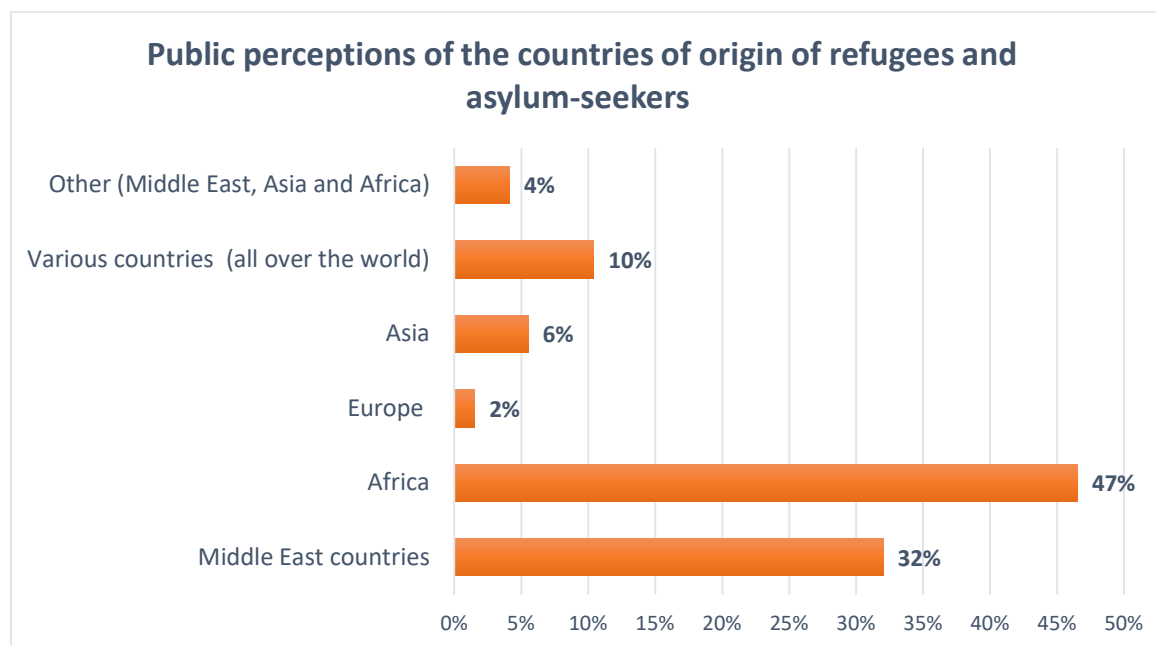


Figure 11: Origins of the majority of refugees and asylum-seekers, as perceived by participants

When asked about the number of **refugees** living in Cyprus, 5.9% of the respondents stated that they believe there are fewer than 5,000 refugees currently residing in Cyprus. The option "More than 10,000" refugees was selected by 30.2% of the sample; "More than 20,000" was selected by 33% of the sample, while "More than 50,000" was selected by 30.9%. Overall, 90% of respondents believe that the number of refugees currently residing in Cyprus is more than 10,000.

Additionally, regarding **asylum-seekers**, 15.3% of respondents believe that fewer than 5,000 asylum-seekers are currently residing in Cyprus. The option “More than 10,000” was chosen by 40.3%; “More than 20,000” was selected by 27.8%, while “More than 50,000” was selected by 16.5%. Overall, 85% of respondents believe that the number of asylum-seekers currently residing in Cyprus is more than 10,000 (**Figure 12**). As illustrated therefore in **Figure 12**, the majority of participants estimate that the number of asylum-seekers in Cyprus is around 10,000-20,000, whereas the majority of participants estimate that the number of refugees is between 20,000-50,000.

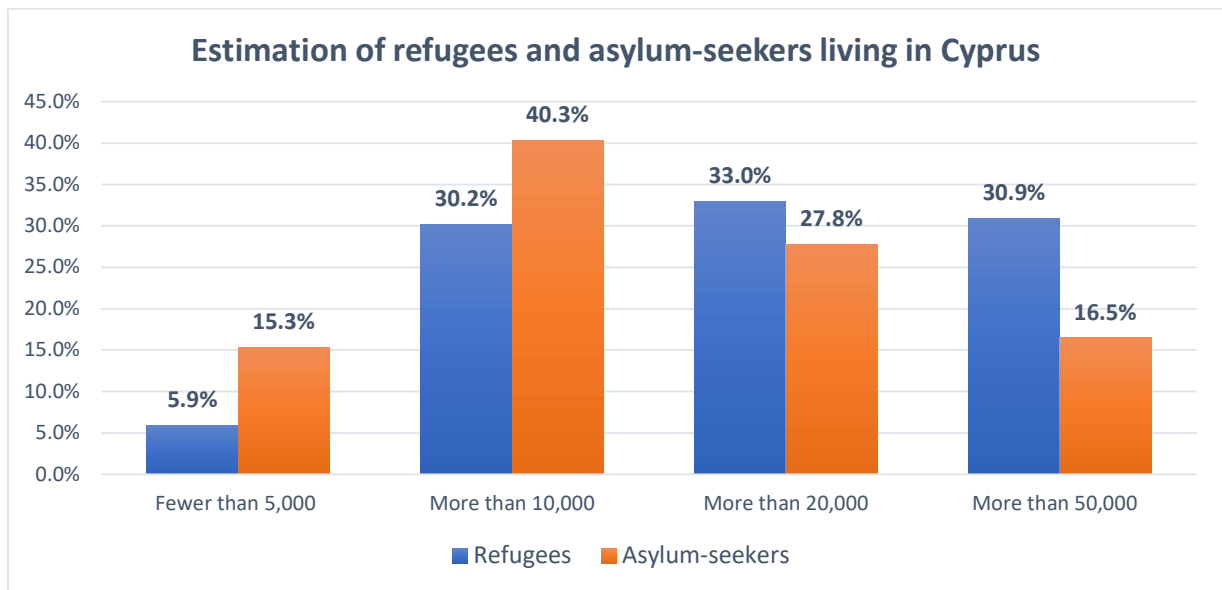


Figure 12: Distribution of estimation of number of refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus

A.2. Perceptions of reasons refugees and asylum-seekers come to Cyprus

In order to gain better insight on how Greek-Cypriots perceive refugees and asylum-seekers, participants were asked to state one main reason out of six they believe motivates refugees and asylum-seekers to come to Cyprus, i.e., work; studies; join a family member; to get married; to seek protection/asylum/refuge; other.

More than a third of participants (34.4%) stated that seeking protection/asylum/refuge is the main reason that refugees and/or asylum-seekers come to Cyprus. Another 23.5% stated that finding work is the main reason refugees and/or asylum-seekers choose to come to Cyprus. A large percentage, (38.5%) stated “Other reasons.” The most prevalent open-ended responses were: “They use Cyprus as a passage to go to other countries (especially EU)” (5.7%); “Social benefits” (4.2%); “Better life/conditions” (7%); “Financial & Political reasons” (2.5%) and “They are deliberately sent by Turkey and Islamist groups” (1.4%) (**Figure 13**).

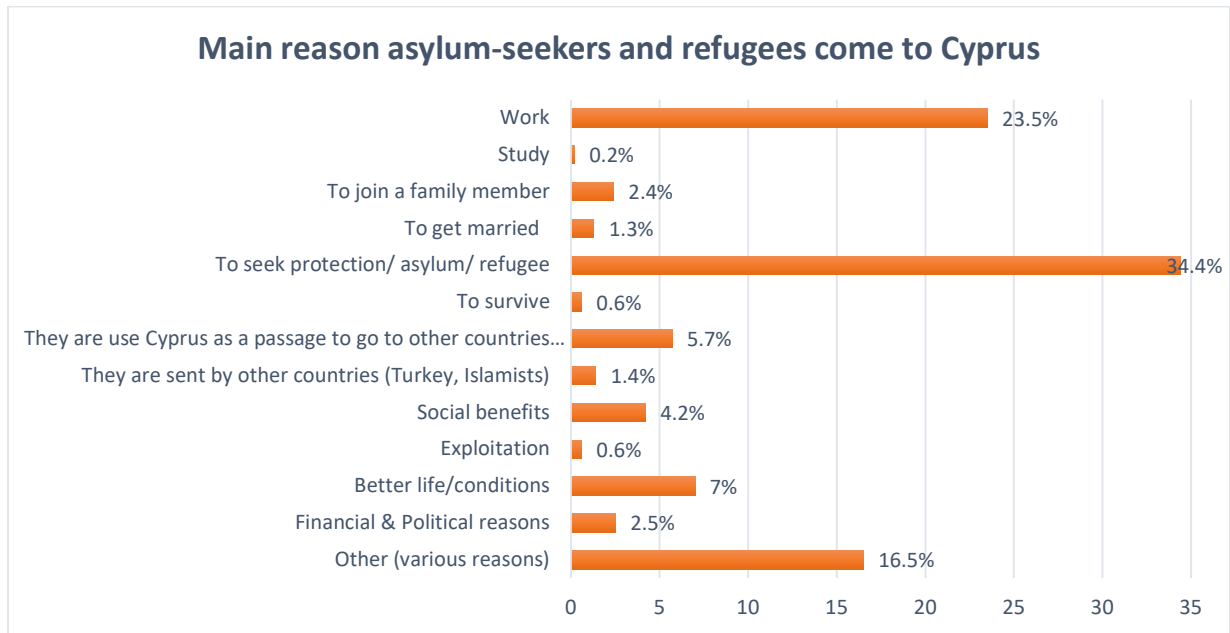


Figure 13: Main reason asylum-seekers and refugees come to Cyprus

A.3. Refugees and asylum-seekers and their need for support

Participants were asked whether they agree or disagree with statements regarding refugees and asylum-seekers’ need for support. Specifically, the statements included the need for support in the following areas: finding a job; financial support; social networking and accessing healthcare. Respondents answered on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 meant “absolutely disagree” and 5 meant “absolutely agree.”

The majority of the sample (86.7%) agreed that refugees and asylum-seekers need a fast and fair way for their asylum applications to be examined, while a high percentage (71.9%) of the participants agree that refugees and asylum-seekers need help to be transferred to other EU countries. Additionally, 71.1% agreed that refugees and asylum-seekers need to have opportunities to participate in programs that facilitate their integration into Cypriot society, i.e., learning the language; becoming familiar with the culture; developing relevant coping skills; finding a job. Many participants (68.1%) agreed that refugees and asylum-seekers need to have more support in finding a job and/or developing work-related skills (68.1%) and in finding housing (61.7%).

Some other matters were considered less important by participants, such as access to the National Health System (GHS) (58.8%); legal advice (58%) and various social networking and friendship opportunities (50%). Regarding the provision of financial support from the Government, 34.6% of participants disagreed with the statement that refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus need financial support from the Government whilst 38.9% agreed. Considering all needs together, the lowest level of agreement was regarding the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers for financial support by the Government. (Figure 14).

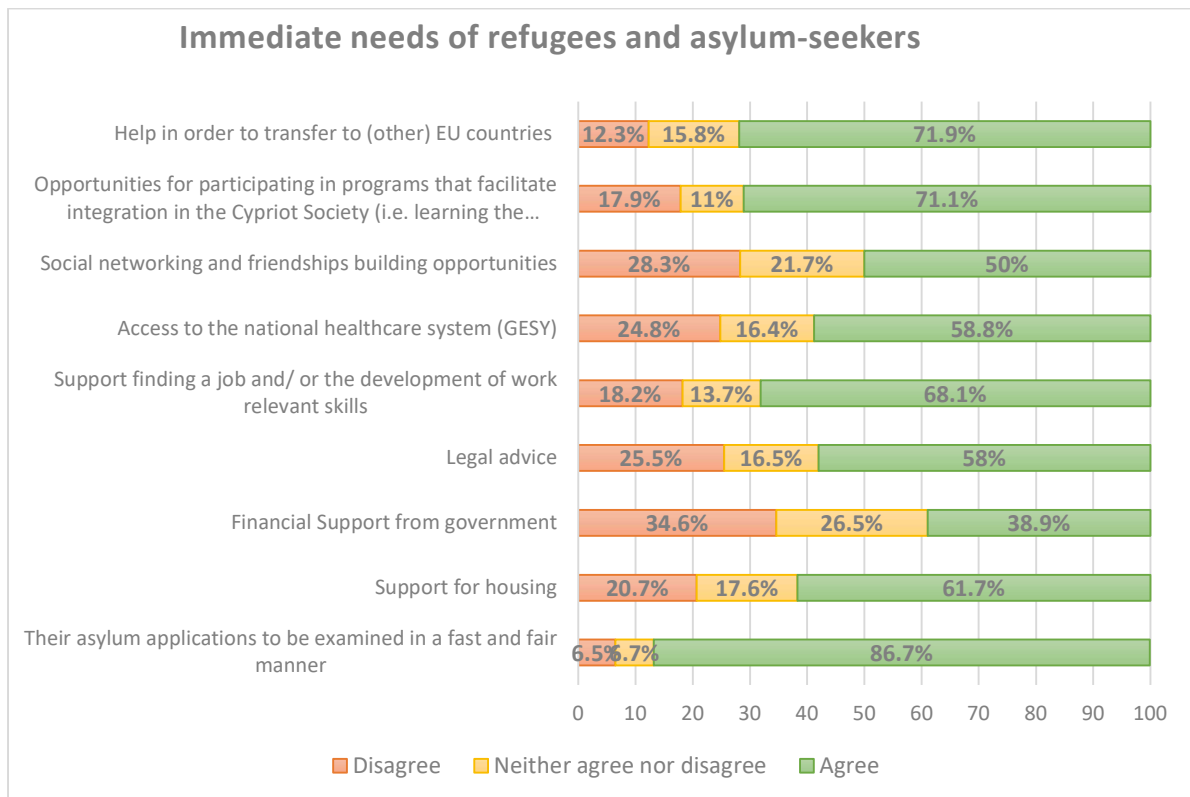


Figure 14: The perceived immediate needs of refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus

A.4. Reception Conditions and the Pournara First Reception Center

Several discussions in the public sphere center on whether Cyprus can host more refugees and asylum-seekers and the conditions in reception/emergency centers such as Pournara. Participants were asked to state whether they agree or disagree with statements relating to the living conditions in the center, safety and services provided on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 5 (absolutely agree).

Based on the results, it is clear that participants do not have a positive impression of the living conditions or of the security at the Pournara First Reception Center. This is a clear indication of participants' acknowledgment of the hardships refugees and asylum-seekers are facing as this center is considered neither safe nor suitable.

Specifically, 54.5% disagree/absolutely disagree that the center provides specialized services to vulnerable people, including unaccompanied minors, pregnant women and survivors of torture. Moreover, 67.8% disagree/absolutely disagree that the living and accommodation conditions in the center, including hygiene and sufficiency of space are suitable. Additionally, 72.4% of participants disagree/absolutely disagree that the center is generally safe for vulnerable people, including unaccompanied minors, pregnant women and survivors of torture (**Figure 15**).

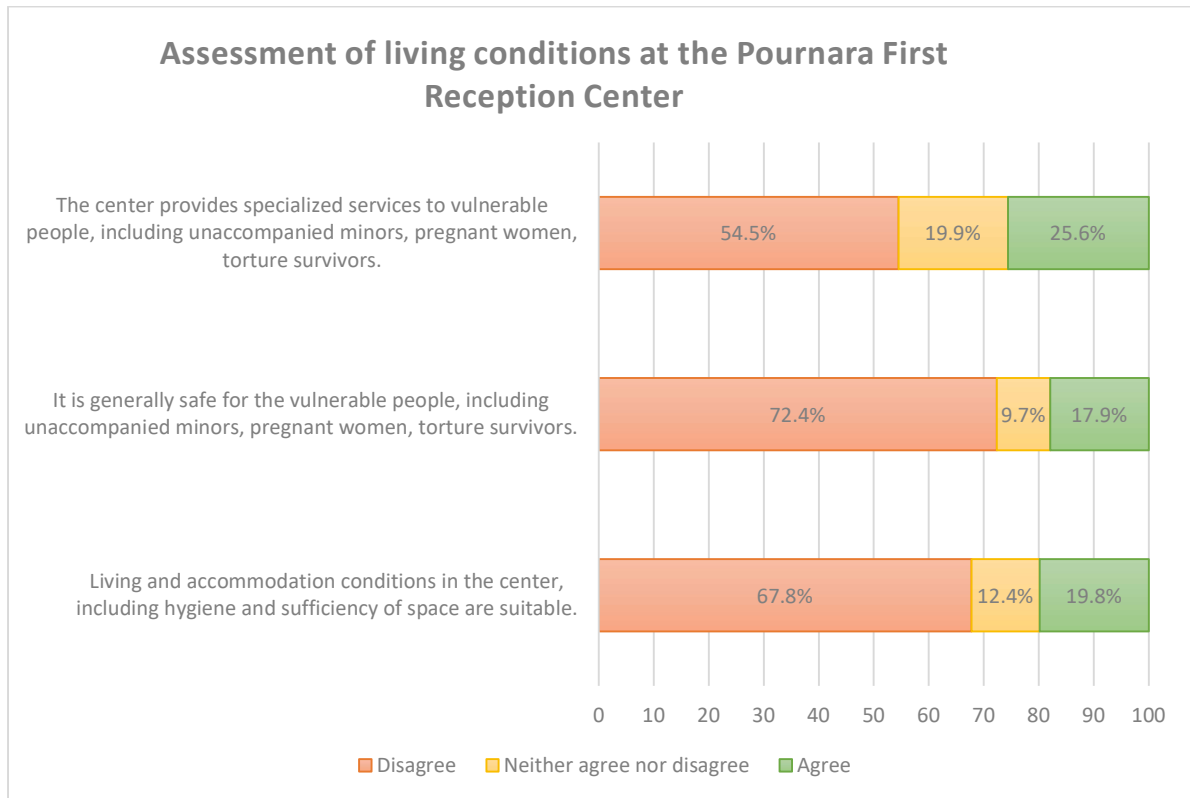


Figure 15: Assessment of living conditions at the Pournara First Reception Center

A.5. Asylum-seekers and their need for support: Employment sectors

The perceptions of the local population about employment opportunities for asylum-seekers were also investigated. Participants were first informed about the sectors of employment in which asylum-seekers can get a job according to the Ministerial Order. The permitted fields of employment for asylum-seekers in Cyprus include agriculture/animal husbandry/fishery; animal shelters and pet hotels; processing (e.g., animal feed production laborer; dairy production night-shift laborer; bakery); waste management (e.g., sewerage); trade-repairs (e.g., petrol station and carwash laborer); service provision (e.g., food delivery) and as kitchen aides and cleaners. Then, they were asked whether they agree or disagree with the current decree. In case participants answered that they disagreed/absolutely disagreed, then a follow up question was posed asking them whether they would wish that the sectors of employment would increase or decrease.

Table 1 below shows the opinion of the participants regarding the current Ministerial Order, which includes the sectors where asylum-seekers can be employed. More than half of the respondents (56.6%) stated that they agree/strongly agree with the Ministerial Order while 24.4% disagree/strongly disagree. Of those participants that expressed their disagreement, 52.4% would prefer to increase the permitted employment sectors.

Table 1. Opinion of respondents about the Ministerial Order of the permitted fields of employment for asylum-seekers in Cyprus

Opinion of respondents about the current Ministerial Order of the permitted fields of employments for asylum-seekers in Cyprus				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
14.6%	9.8%	19.1%	28.4%	28.2%
24.4%		19.1%	56.6%	
Prefer that the sectors of work/permitted fields of employment would increase or decrease				
Decrease	47.6%			
Increase	52.4%			

A. 6. Perceptions on benefits/allowance for asylum-seekers

Monthly state aid for asylum-seekers includes rental and utilities allowance, food and clothing/footwear allowance and is provided in the form of cash-based assistance. One in five respondents (21.3%) believe that this amounts to €800 or more on a monthly basis; It is noteworthy that the largest proportion of participants chose the highest amount available from the options given. Some 17.5% believe the monthly allowance to be 400-500 Euros, while 16.9% believe the amount to be 500-600 Euros. Only 16.4% believe the amount to be 300-400 Euros (16.4%), while 8.3% of participants stated that asylum-seekers are provided with an amount below 300 Euros (**Figure 16**). It is therefore apparent that most of the population is misinformed on this subject (**Figure 16**).

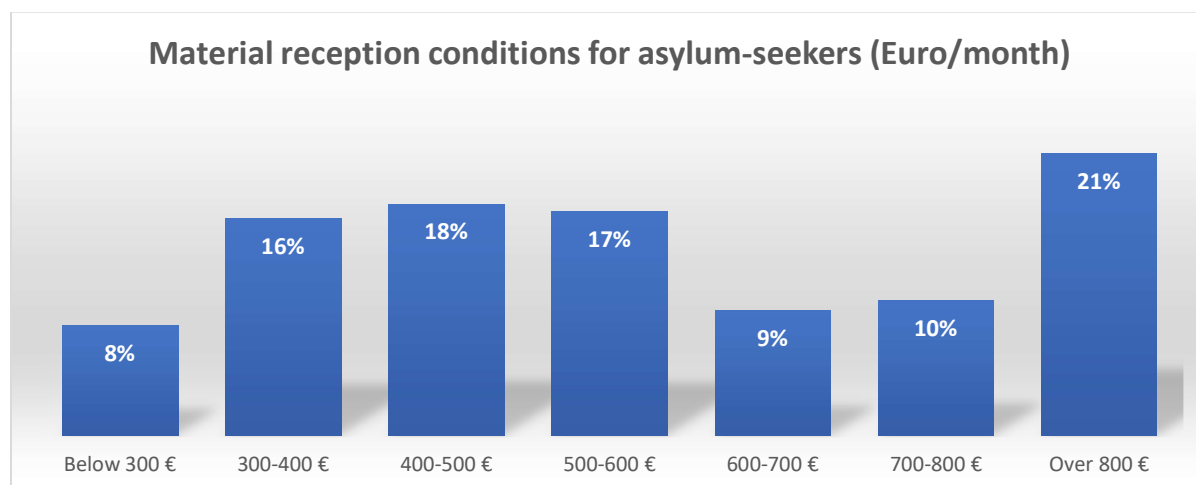


Figure 16: Material reception conditions for asylum-seekers (Euro/month)

A.7.1 Awareness of the difference between refugee and asylum-seeker

The terms “refugee,” “asylum-seeker” and “migrant” are often used interchangeably in public discourse. Participants were directly asked if they knew the difference between the terms *refugee* and *asylum-seeker* and had to respond with either *yes* or *no*. For those who answered positively, an open question followed asking them to describe shortly the difference between the two terms. Almost 7 in 10 participants (68.3%) stated that they know the difference between the terms refugee and asylum-seeker (**Figure 17**). About a third (31.7%) of the sample population stated that they do not know the difference between the two terms. However, the qualitative analysis and participants’ answers to other parts of the questionnaire suggest that the actual percentage of those who understand the correct definition of an asylum-seeker is much lower.

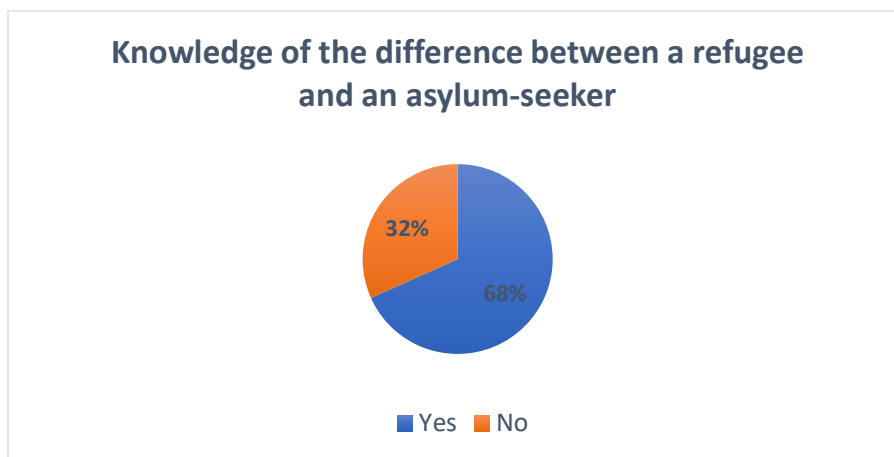


Figure 17: Knowledge of the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker

A.7.2. Awareness of difference between refugee and asylum-seeker – Open question

Those participants who stated that they know the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker were further asked to describe that difference. Overall, 743 answers were retained for analysis. From the thematic analysis, six themes emerged, as illustrated in **Figure 18** below.

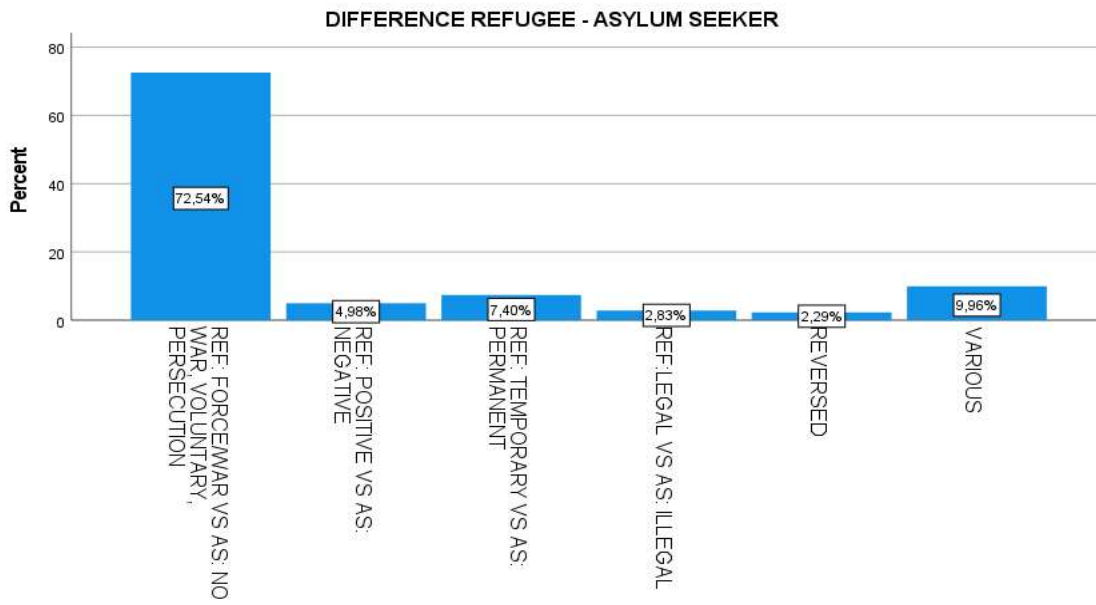


Figure 18: Difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker

This first theme ‘*Refugees forced from war vs asylum-seekers no War/Voluntary/Persecution*’ included the majority of responses (72.5%) with the main difference between refugees and asylum-seekers, according to participants, being the existence of war in their home countries and whether conditions forced them to leave or not. According to respondents, asylum-seekers leave on a voluntary basis in comparison with refugees who are forced to flee. However, it is recognized that even without war, asylum-seekers are often persecuted and thus forced to leave their countries. Some of the most frequent expressions used to describe the differences were the following: “refugees escape war while asylum-seekers escape personal danger: e.g. due to their sexuality;” “refugees leave because of war, asylum-seekers leave due to possible oppression from their own Government;” “war is the difference between the two;” “asylum-seekers aren't (leaving/coming) from war;” “the Turks send them to us;” “refugees were driven away/forced to leave;” “asylum-seekers came on their own, while refugees are trying to escape;” “asylum-seekers are scared of a crime;” “an asylum-seeker is trying to save his life because he is persecuted;” “an asylum-seeker needs to be protected here;” “an asylum-seeker is persecuted because of his political beliefs or because of war.”

The second theme ‘*Various*’ included references (10%) that did not make clear any distinction between the two terms. Some examples of expressions used were the following: “they are all refugees and they make applications to stay;” “there is no difference;” “refugees and asylum-seekers are the same thing;” “a refugee has received asylum protection while an asylum-seeker applies for asylum.” Additionally, there were references marking legal distinctions, for example: “they don’t have the same rights;” “they come as refugees and then become asylum-seekers;” and “a refugee is someone without many rights while an asylum-seeker is being helped

somewhat until her/his asylum application is examined.” Another group of references included in this theme were related to economic differences, i.e., “refugees cannot find work;” “a refugee comes for other reasons while asylum-seekers come for economic reasons;” “refugees leave for better living conditions.” The last group of references with varying argumentation included the following: “refugees can be in their country of origin too while an asylum-seeker is from a different country;” “refugees are Cypriots;” “immigrants choose to leave;” “depends on what country they come from;” “anybody.”

The third theme ‘*Refugees Temporary vs Asylum-seekers Permanent*’ (7.4%) included references to the difference relating to duration of stay in Cyprus. According to respondents, refugees can go back to their countries when the war will be over, while asylum-seekers either do not want to go back or cannot go back due to persecution. Examples of expressions used included: “The refugees, when their place is safe will go back – asylum-seekers want to stay permanently;” “Refugees stay temporarily – asylum-seekers stay permanently;” “Refugees want to go back – asylum-seekers want to stay.”

The theme ‘*Refugees: Positive vs Asylum-seekers: Negative*’ included 5% of the references and refers to positive evaluations and/or references for refugees and negative evaluations for asylum-seekers. Examples of the expressions used were: “refugees have problems in their country while asylum-seekers come and bring problems;” “Ukrainians who are driven away/forced to flee war are refugees – those in Pournara aren't refugees and we don't want them;” “there are refugees who are asylum-seekers but asylum-seekers are those who exploit the system and EU's legislation and come to earn something unfairly;” “a refugee leaves and goes elsewhere for a better life, while an asylum-seeker asks for protection for something that he did;” “a refugee is something more positive: he lost his property, but an asylum-seeker might be demanding something that isn't his own;” “a refugee goes to another country for his future, asylum-seekers sit and get paid and create problems.”

Another thematic entitled ‘*Refugees Legal vs Asylum-seekers illegal*’ (2.8%) includes references where refugees and asylum-seekers were perceived by participants to differ relating to their status. Refugees are perceived as ‘legal,’ while asylum-seekers on the other hand are perceived as ‘illegal.’ Examples of the expressions used were: “Refugees are legal, asylum-seekers are illegal;” “refugees leave their homes, asylum-seekers come illegally,” “a refugee comes legally, asylum-seekers come illegally.”

In some references, the difference between asylum-seekers and refugees was reversed compared to the general trend mentioned above. According to these references, asylum-seekers who leave due to war are legal and forced to leave, while refugees leave on a voluntary basis, and have not faced war and are ‘illegal’: “Refugees without application and asylum-seekers are legal;” “asylum-seekers qualify to stay in a foreign place;” “a refugee leaves voluntarily, while an asylum-seeker leaves forcefully.” These references are included in the theme named ‘*Reversed*’ (2.3%).

A.8 Free word-association for the terms “refugee,” “asylum-seeker” and “migrant”

In a free word-association task, the participant is asked to state the first words that come to mind in response to a stated word, image, or other stimulus. Free word-associations give access to the cognitive connections that exist for the specific concepts without limiting the participants' answers to particular options that are provided by the researcher in the nature of multiple-choice questions. Thus, they give the researchers a comprehensive image of peoples' understanding of the notions in question and more immediate feelings and thoughts.

The first section of the questionnaire included three open-ended questions where participants were asked to state the first three words that come to mind when thinking about the terms *refugee*, *asylum-seeker* and *migrant*. Participants responded with a variety of words. To analyze these qualitative data, after going through a reading of the words named by the participants, the words were grouped together according to their meaning.

As similar questions for “refugee” and “migrant” were included in the 2018 study, comparisons were also made in the results to examine whether the same categories would emerge. Following the basic premises of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the first groups of words with similar meaning were identified and then a more abstract categorization of the groups was created. Thematic analysis is a qualitative form of analysis which focuses on the recognition of patterns that exist in the data. As a qualitative approach, it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the research questions. Even though the following analysis of the free word-association task is focused on a qualitative analysis, in an attempt to explore more the subtle nuances between the three terms, *refugee*, *asylum-seeker* and *migrant*, a quantitative analysis was also conducted in order to measure the prevalence of each theme and sub-theme between the three terms.

REFUGEES

For **refugees** 2,008 references were recorded. Word associations mentioned by participants in the case of refugees (GR: πρόσφυγας) generated five main themes: **General Suffering; Responses relating to Cyprus in 1974; Practicalities; Negative/Threat** and **Tautology**. These main themes are illustrated in **Figure 19** below.

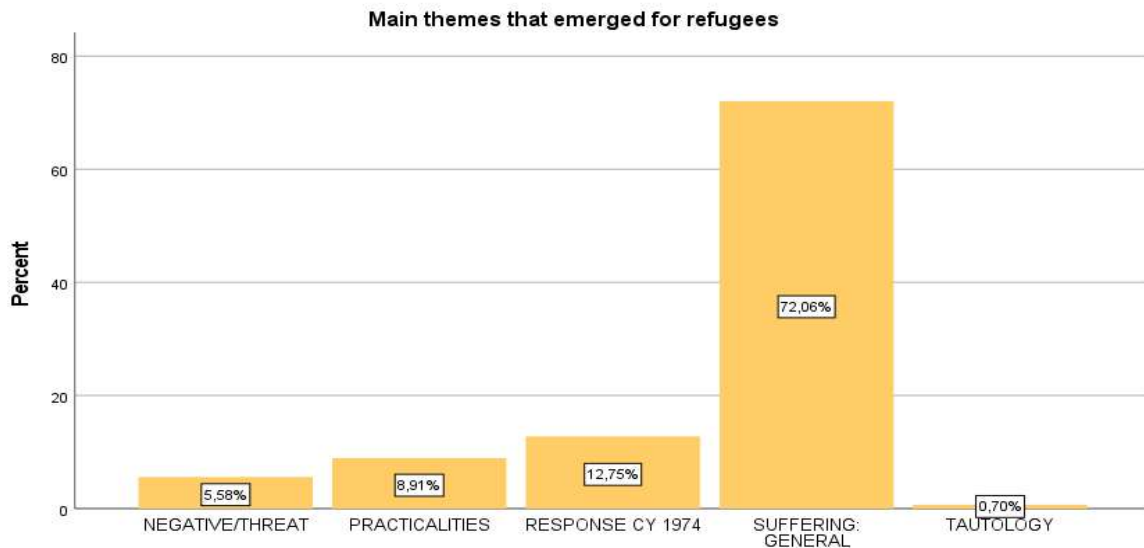


Figure 19: Main themes that emerged for refugees

General Suffering (1,447 responses, 72.1%)

The theme “General Suffering” contained words that focused on being forced to leave one’s home and country, and persecution i.e., “escapes death/violence;” “safety (look for);” “survival;” “uprooting;” “by force;” “taken from home by force;” “lost home by force;” “forced to leave home/country;” “persecution;” “displacement;” “escape.” Participants also referred to words such as “war;” “war zones;” “death;” “desolate;” “desperate;” “sad/sadness;” “sorrow;” “pity;” “hardships;” “goosebumps;” “hopelessness;” “violence;” “pain;” “struggle;” “hardships;” “difficulties;” “poverty;” “poor;” “homelessness;” “misery.” They also included references to the sea; boats and tents; people on the move and the bad conditions refugees are facing i.e., “Bad conditions/life/standard of life.”

Responses relating to Cyprus in 1974 (256 references, 12.7%)

The word associations for *refugees* brought up many references to the events of 1974 in Cyprus i.e., “war 1974;” “Cyprus refugees;” “us in 1974;” “invasion 1974;” “I am/we are also refugees;” “reminds our own;” “1974;” “Turkish invasion;” “Turks;” “Turkey;” “occupation;” “(personal) memories;” “my parents;” “my family;” “myself;” “we suffered in our land.” References to Cyprus 1974 were much more frequent for the term *refugee* (12.7%) as compared to the term *migrant* (0.90%).

Practicalities (179 references, 8.9%)

This theme includes references to practical issues of daily life and the status of refugees. Specifically, they included references to (1) work i.e., “job market;” “unemployed;” “employment;” “look for work/job;” (2) the future of those people i.e., “looking for better life;” “better future;” “integration;” “rehabilitation;” “better standard of living;” “law;” “opportunity for a better future/life;” (3) economy i.e., “economy;” “economic insufficiency;” “economic

crisis/migrant/problem/misery/help;” “without money;” and (4) difficulties refugees are facing i.e., “home loss;” “homeless;” “look for home;” “need home.”

Negative/Threat (112 references, 5.6%)

Negative evaluations or references about refugees being perceived as threatening were included in this theme i.e., “illegal migrants;” “illegality;” “blacks;” “burden;” “Erdogan;” “guided;” “having a good time;” “fuss;” “all lies;” “criminality;” “crooks;” “failure of the Government;” “disrespect;” “don’t fit in our country;” “pretending;” “organized;” “burqa;” “exploitation;” “minority;” “fake refugees.”

Tautology (14 references, .7%)

In this theme words and phrases that demonstrate the “otherness” of refugees emerged i.e., “foreigners;” “foreign country/language/people.”

As shown in **Figure 19** above, the theme “General Suffering” included the majority of references. Therefore, in order to examine the nuances of this general theme further, it was broken down into sub-themes, which we will explore below, and as seen in **Figure 20**.

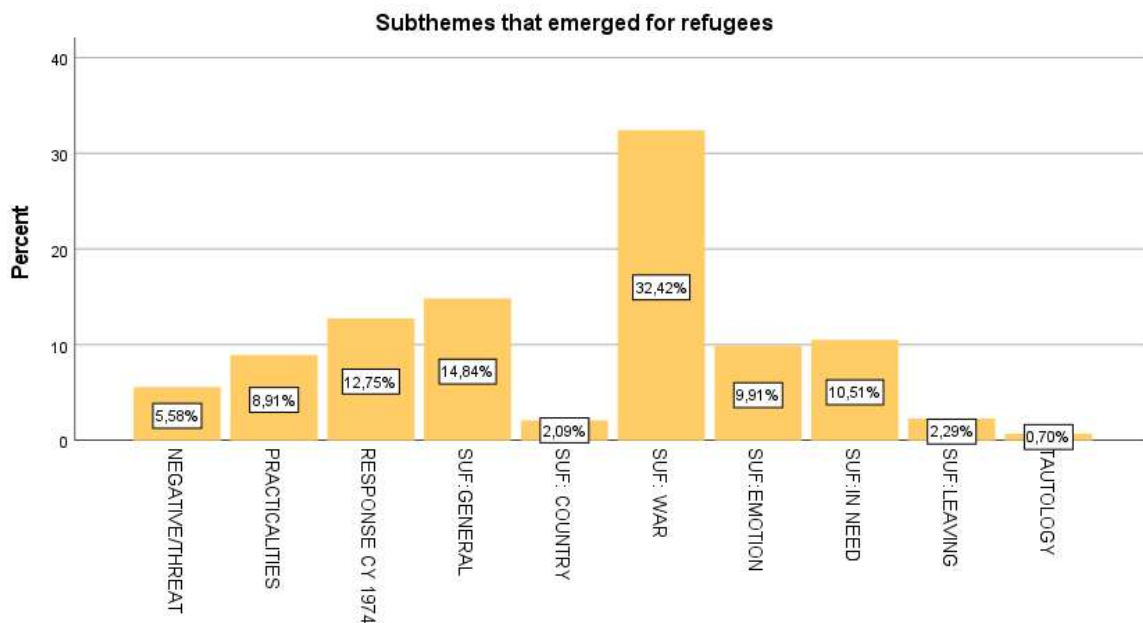


Figure 20: Sub-themes that emerged for refugees

Suffering: War (651 references, 32.4%)

Words that referred directly or indirectly to war conditions were included in this sub-theme i.e., “death;” “war(situations);” “escapes from violence and/or persecution;” “loss (of home and/or country and/or family);” “war zones;” “by force;” “persecuted (by enemies);” “displacement

(forced);” “weapons;” “coercion;” “running for life/safety;” “forced/coerced/pressured to leave;” “against their will;” “danger;” “conflicts;” “bombs;” “blood covered.”

Suffering: General conditions (256 references, 14.8%)

In this sub-theme, references to the difficult conditions refugees are facing where included i.e., “Bad life;” “bad living conditions/standard of live;” “big injustice;” “ships;” “tragic situation;” “tragedy;” “hardships;” “racism;” “reunion with family;” “difficulty/ies;” “drawing at sea;” “came without anything;” “children (in need);” “uncertain future;” “tents.”

Suffering: In need (211 references, 10.5%)

In this sub-theme, references that demonstrate the needs of refugees are included i.e., “safety;” “place to live;” “necessity;” “help;” “poor/poverty;” “hunger;” “(need for) help;” “without money and/or food and/or roof;” “protection;” “without the necessary;” “protection;” “have no clothes.”

Suffering: Emotions (199 references, 9.9%)

In this sub-theme, references that demonstrate the emotions that people express for refugees are included i.e., “despair;” “sad/sadness;” “sorrow;” “pain;” “compassion;” “fear;” “welcome;” “unspeakable pain;” “loneliness;” “pity;” “anguish;” “willingness to help;” “love;” “sorry for;” “sympathy;” “support.”

Suffering: Leaving (46 references, 2.3%)

In this sub-theme, references to persons having to leave their home country or to being on the move are included i.e., “movement;” “change of country;” “left their country/homeland;” “cannot return;” “leave the land/country;” “left;” “abandonment of country/home.”

Suffering: Countries of origin (42 references, 2.1%)

This sub-theme includes references to specific countries of origin of refugees i.e., “Romania;” “Ukraine/Ukrainians;” “Africa;” “Asia Minor;” “Syrians/Syrian;” “Bangladesh;” “Arab countries;” “Afghanistan;” “Russia.”

ASYLUM-SEEKERS

For **asylum-seekers** (GR: *Αιτητές Ασύλου*), 1,698 references were recorded. Word associations mentioned by participants generated five main themes: **Suffering; Negative/Threat; Tautology; Better Life** and **Work and Economy**. **Figure 21** below illustrates these main themes for asylum-seekers.

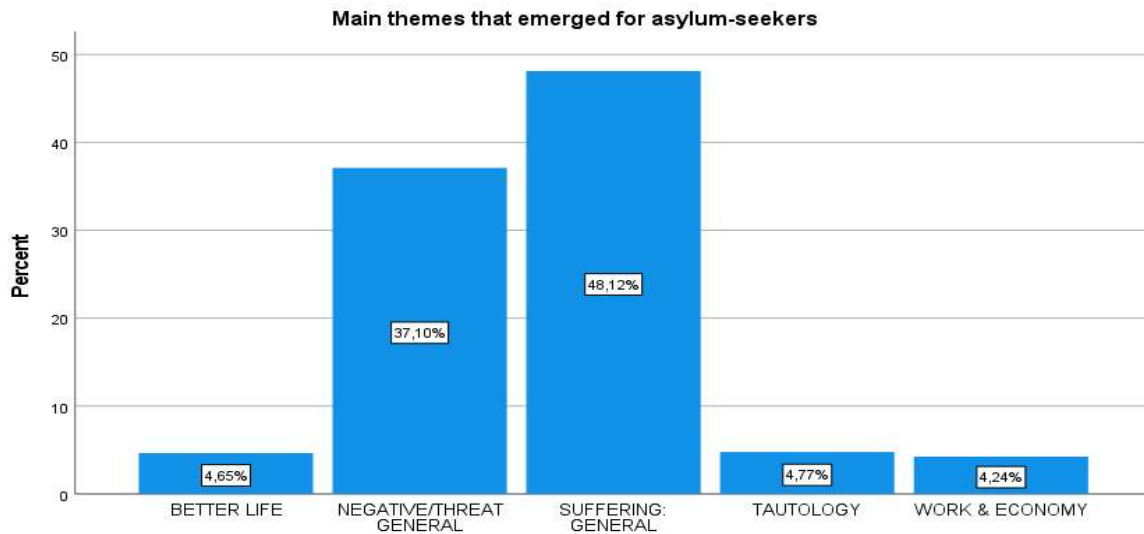


Figure 21: Main themes that emerged for asylum-seekers

Suffering (817 references, 48.1%)

The general theme of “Suffering” contained references to being forced to leave one’s home, country, home place and persecution i.e., “danger (for life);” “coercion;” “civil war;” “war (escape);” “violence;” “persecution;” “uprooting;” “safety;” “oppression;” “tortured;” “dictatorships;” “political refugee/reasons/problem/persecution;”. Participants also referred to words such as “leave their country;” “change of country;” “boats;” “sea;” “poverty;” “necessity;” “hungry;” “home(less) / home need;” “help;” “protection;” “Pournara;” “survival;” “troubled people;” “refugees;” “ask for refuge;” “hardships;” “bureaucracy;” “injustice;” “insecurity;” that also are included in this theme.

Negative/Threat (630 references, 37.1%)

All negative evaluations and or references where asylum-seekers are perceived as threatening were included in this theme i.e., “wants to stay in Cyprus/EU;” “visa;” “passport;” “unfair for the land;” “they don’t work;” “allowance;” “exploit/exploitation/exploiters of the system/ of Government;” “on purpose;” “take money from the State;” “not always in real need;” “they like to sit and profit from allowance;” “mafia;” “organized crime;” “crooks;” “in expense of Cyprus;” “change of demography;” “trick.” It is noteworthy that in the case of asylum-seekers, mentions of threat are more frequent as compared to migrants and far more frequent as compared to refugees.

Tautology (81 references, 4.8%)

In this theme, words and or phrases that demonstrate the “otherness” of asylum-seekers were included i.e., “migrants;” “foreigners;” “from third countries;” “asylum-seekers;” “looking/asking for asylum;” “asylum requests.”

Better Life (79 references, 4.7%)

The theme of *Better Life* focused on migrating in order to have a better or a second chance, to have better living conditions, or to change something unpleasant in one’s life i.e., “better way to live;” “better tomorrow/future;” “better political situation;” “better live/ standards of living.”

Work and Economy (72 references, 4.2%)

Finally, *Work and Economy* included topics of micro and macro economy and job opportunities i.e., “find/search for work/job;” “workers;” “work/ in Cyprus;” “economy;” “right to work;” “new life;” “new opportunities;” “economic reasons;” “economic problems;” “economic necessity and or issue;” “economic independence/improvement/help/migrants/ difficulties.”

As illustrated in **Figure 21** above, the majority of references fall into two main themes: *Negative/Threat* and *Suffering*. In order to examine the nuances in these broad themes further, they were broken down into sub-themes. The theme of “Negative/Threat” was broken down into “Negative/Threat: Expense;” “Negative/Threat: General;” “Negative/Threat: Deception.” The general theme of “Suffering” was broken down into “Suffering: Conditions;” “Suffering: War;” “Suffering: In need;” “Suffering: Emotion;” “Suffering: Political;” “Suffering: Leaving” and “Suffering: Country of origin” and New sub-themes and previously mentioned main themes are summarized in **Figure 22** below.

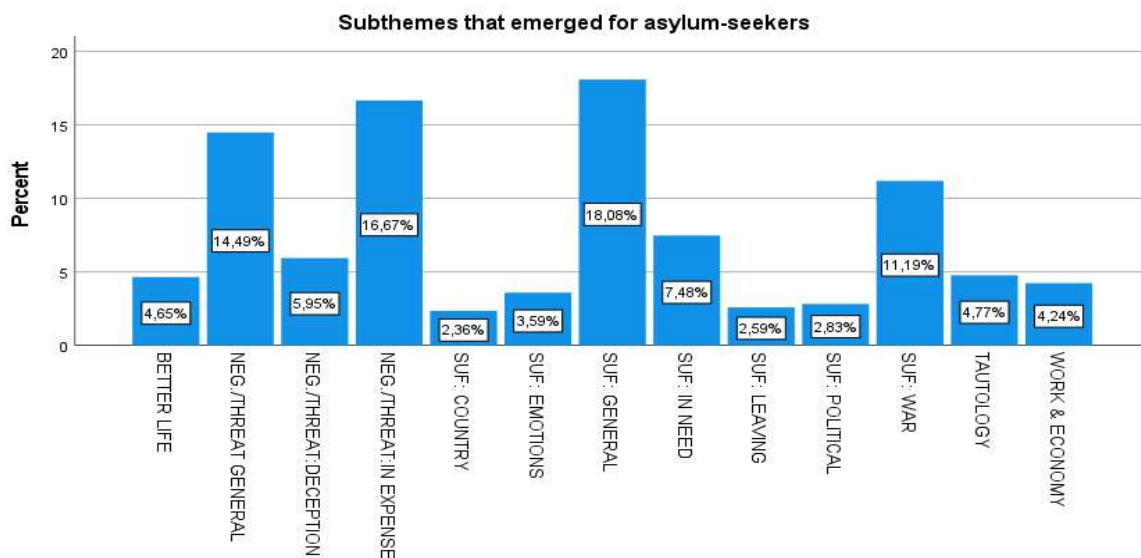


Figure 22: Sub-themes that emerged for asylum-seekers

Negative/Threat: Expense (283 references, 16.7%)

In this sub-theme all references that were negative and or expressed feeling threatened, but also mentioned that the presence of asylum-seekers is at the expense of Cypriots, Cyprus and/or the EU were included here i.e., “wants to stay in country;” “they take funds/allowances;” “they don’t work;” “they are used to the money;” “Cypriots are paying for them;” “residency in

Cyprus/EU/other countries;" "passports;" "payment from the State;" "opportunistic;" "on purpose;" "on expense of others;" "money (they come/they want/they are used to);" "enjoy benefits;" "injustice for Cypriots;" "exploit/exploitation/exploiters."

Negative/Threat: General (246 references, 14.5%)

This sub-theme includes negative evaluations and or general references where asylum-seekers are perceived as threatening i.e., "we will be lost as Cypriots;" "we are not able to do much;" "we should be cautious;" "burden;" "vice/coldness;" "Turkey;" "occupied areas;" "too many in Cyprus;" "threat;" "they will destroy us;" "they only create problems;" "they should go back;" "terrorists;" "terror;" "something ugly;" "organized crime;" "our mistake to accept them;" "lazy;" "illegals;" "illegal entrance;" "gypsies;" "ghettos."

Negative/Threat: Deception (101 references, 5.9%)

This sub-theme includes all references that were negative and/or expressed feeling threatened, but also mentioned that Cypriots are being deceived by asylum-seekers i.e., "to stay forever;" "lie(s)/liars;" "they are exaggerating;" "mafia;" "not always with good goal;" "guided;" "fraud;" "fake statements/marriages;" "deceit/deception;" "crooks;" "hypocrisy."

Suffering: Conditions (307 references, 18.1%)

In this sub-theme references to the difficult conditions asylum-seekers are facing were included i.e., "Pournara;" "victims of diplomats;" "troubled people;" "refugees;" "bureaucracy;" "hardships;" "problems general;" "difficulties;" "injustice;" "social exclusion;" "restrictions."

Suffering: War References (190 references, 11.2%)

Words that referred directly or indirectly to war conditions were included in this sub-theme i.e., "dangers and difficulties;" "danger for life/ in their country;" "danger from regime;" "coercion;" "civil war;" "war zones;" "escape (from war);" "war crimes;" "war;" "violence;" "persecution (in their country/by regime/for political reasons;" "safety;" "oppression;" "tortured;" "dictatorships;" "forced (to leave)."

Suffering: In need (127 references, 7.5%)

In this sub-theme, references that demonstrate the difficult conditions and the needs of the refugees are included i.e., "poverty;" "need to live;" "necessity;" "hunger;" "housing;" "home(less);" "need for help;" "help;" "protection;" "food."

Suffering: Emotion (61 references, 3.6%)

In this sub-theme, references that demonstrate the emotions that people express for refugees are included i.e., "sorrow;" "solidarity;" "loneliness;" "pain;" "hope (for future);" "honesty;" "sad/sadness;" "pity;" "poor people;" "suffering people;" "support;" "desperate."

Suffering: Political (48 references, 2.8%)

In this sub-theme all references to hardship related to politically unstable situations were included i.e., “political refugee;” “political persecution/problems/instability;” “political;” “political asylum;” “unstable political situation;” “dictatorships.”

Suffering: Leaving (44 references, 2.6%)

This sub-theme includes references that indicated that somebody had to leave her/his country and/or is on the move i.e., “left their homes/countries;” “left for some reasons;” “transportation;” “to live elsewhere;” “boats.”

Suffering: Country of origin (40 references, 2.4%)

This sub-theme includes references to specific country names, indicating the countries of origin of asylum-seekers i.e., “Ukraine/Ukrainians;” “Syria/Syrians;” “Iraqis;” “Indians;” “Iranians;” “Arabs;” “Africa (countries);” “Asia;” “Nigerians;” “Congo;” “Somalia;” “Pakistan;” “Greece;” “Filipino.”

MIGRANTS

For **migrants**, 2,082 references were recorded. The word associations mentioned by participants for migrants (GR: *μετανάστης*) generated six main themes: **Hardships; Negative/Threat; Work and Economy; Better Life; Tautology** and **Responses relating to Cyprus in 1974**. Three of these main themes were also identified in the 2018 report, namely: *Hardships; Better Life* and *Work and Economy*. However new themes have emerged, as illustrated in **Figure 23** below.

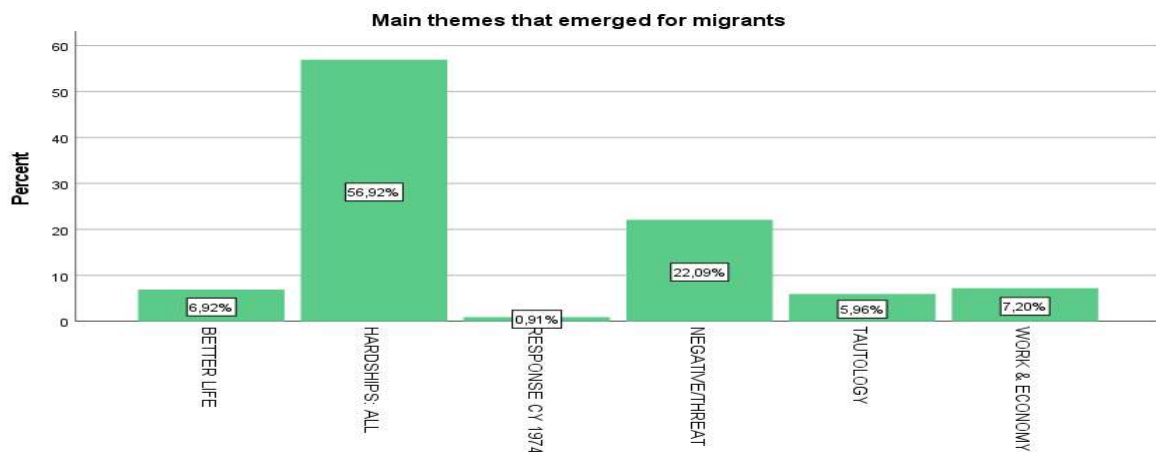


Figure 23: Main themes that emerged for migrants

Hardships (1,185 references, 56.9%)

The theme '*Hardships*' included references depicting the difficult conditions migrants face, for example, during their travel; the reasons forcing them to leave; feelings towards migrants and the perceived difficulties that migrants face in general i.e., "countries of origin;" "civil war;" "war;" "displacement;" "conflicts;" "persecution/persecuted;" "survival;" "uprooting;" "oppression;" "violence;" "abandoned/left their home country;" "left their life behind;" "movement;" "abroad;" "loses their homes/land;" "journey;" "broke;" "help;" "poor/poverty;" "protection;" "food/hunger;" "home/homeless;" "in need of help/support;" "unemployment;" "necessity," "insecurity," "pain," "sadness," "misery," "Pournara."

Negative/Threat (460 references, 22.1%)

Negative references about migrants being perceived as threatening were included in this theme i.e., "annoying;" "arrogance;" "allowances;" "brought from Turkey;" "burden;" "crime increase/criminality/organized crime;" "costs;" "crooks;" "damage/destruction to economy/demography;" "danger;" "disrespect;" "frustration;" "illegal;" "blacks;" "diseases;" "AIDS;" "drugs;" "exploitation;" "lazy;" "invasion;" "fear;" "fuss;" "problems;" "uncivilized storm in Cyprus;" "liars;" "we are full;" "Muslims;" "nausea;" "terrorism;" "taking peoples' jobs;" "trespassing."

Work and Economy (150 references, 7.25%)

Work and Economy includes references to economy and job opportunities i.e., "economic migrant/reasons/problems/crisis/comfort;" "work;" "work necessity;" "look for work/job;" "work opportunities;" "employee;" "money."

Better Life (144 references, 6.9%)

The theme of *Better Life* included references to migrating in order to have a better or a second chance, to have better living conditions, or to change something unpleasant in one's life i.e., "better future;" "better job;" "better life;" "expectancy of better life;" "safety;" "comfort;" "looking for a safer place;" "looking for better conditions;" "better tomorrow;" "freedom;" "new opportunities."

Tautology (124 references, 6%)

In this theme words and or phrases that demonstrate the "otherness" of migrants were included i.e., "non – Cypriots;" "immigrants;" "foreigners;" "foreign people;" "foreign language;" "foreign country;" "foreign residents."

Responses relating to Cyprus in 1974 (19 references, 0.9%)

Words and or phrases that made direct or indirect reference to the war in Cyprus in 1974 were included in this theme. i.e., "Cypriots/1974;" "ourselves;" "Cypriots too;" "Cypriot refugees;" "1974;" "we have been through it;" "Cypriots in Australia/England/Alexandria."

As shown in **Figure 23** above, the general theme “Hardships” included the majority of references. In order to examine the nuances of this general theme further, it was broken down into sub-themes, which we will explore below. As the number of references and percentage remains the same for the rest of the main themes as mentioned above, only the references and percentages for the sub-themes emerging from main theme ‘Hardships’ will be presented here.

When breaking down the general theme of “Hardships” the following six sub-themes emerged: **Hardships: General; Hardships: In need; Hardships: War; Hardships: Leaving; Hardships: Emotions** and **Hardships: Countries of origin** as illustrated in **Figure 24** below.

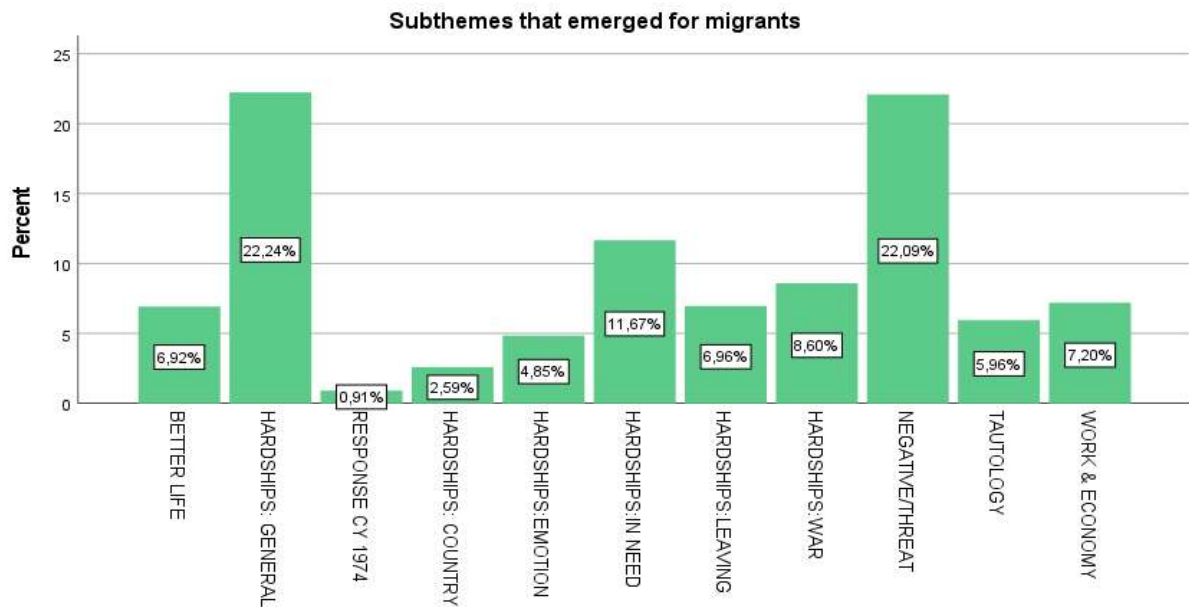


Figure 24: Sub-themes that emerged for migrants

Hardships: General (463 references, 22.2%)

In this sub-theme, general references to the difficult conditions migrants are facing included: “bad living conditions;” “boat(s);” “children without home;” “difficult life;” “difficulties;” “hardships;” “alone;” “Pournara;” “loss;” “requesting asylum;” “refugees;” “removal from family;” “without motherland and money;” “tragedy;” “difficulties in employment;” “human trafficking;” “survival.”

Hardships: In need (243 references, 11.7%)

In this sub-theme, references to the difficult conditions and the needs of migrants are included i.e., “broke;” “help/helpless;” “in need for help;” “poor/poverty;” “protection;” “necessity;” “residency;” “homeless;” “hunger;” “support;” “insecurity;” “unemployed;” “without future/a job;” “survival issue/problem;” “healthcare.”

Hardships: War (179 references, 8.6%)

This sub-theme included words that referred directly or indirectly to war i.e., “war;” “civil war;” “war in their country;” “conflicts;” “hunted;” “persecuted/persecution;” “people who want to escape;” “forced to leave;” “uprooting from home country;” “slavery;” “oppression;” “violence;” “fugitive.”

Hardships: Leaving (145 references, 7%)

In this sub-theme, references that indicated that a person had to leave their country and is on the move included: “another country;” “borders;” “come from another country;” “change of place;” “from other countries;” “leaves;” “left his/her country/home;” “abandonment/abandon his/her country;” “journey;” “movement;” “abroad.”

Hardships: Emotions (101 references, 4.9%)

This sub-theme, included references that demonstrate the emotions that people express for migrants i.e., “concern;” “despair;” “desperate;” “hope;” “pity;” “suffering/people;” “pain;” “sad/sadness;” “compassion;” “misery;” “anger that some don’t help them;” “sympathy.”

Hardships: Countries of origin (54 references, 2.6%)

This sub-theme included references to specific country names, indicating the countries of origin of migrants, i.e., “Asians;” “Congo;” “Middle East;” “Nigerians;” “Non-Europeans;” “Syrians/Syria;” “Ukraine/ Ukrainians;” “Eastern countries;” “Afghanistan;” “Africa.”

Based on the above analysis, when comparing the three groups *refugees*, *asylum-seekers* and *migrants*, the most negative representation is that of asylum-seekers (630 references [37.1%] out of 1,698). Migrants recorded 460 references (22,1%) out of 2,082 while the least negative is that of refugees (112 references [5.6%] out 2,008). This may be attributable to many Cypriots identifying themselves as refugees following internal displacement in 1974. There were 256 (12,7%) out of 2,008 references to the war in 1974 in Cyprus for refugees. In comparison, migrants received 19 references (0.9%) out of 2,082. No direct or indirect references to 1974 were detected for asylum-seekers.

Apart from the general reasons/threats/fears relating to Cyprus’ small size, the increasing numbers of asylum-seekers and negative stereotypes, participants also expressed the fear of being deceived and of exploitation by asylum-seekers. In particular, there were 283 references (16,7%) out of 1,698 references to feeling threatened and/or that the presence of asylum-seekers is at the expense of Cypriots, Cyprus and/or the EU, while there were 246 (14,5%) out of 1,698 negative evaluations and or references where asylum-seekers are perceived as threatening. Finally, there were 101 references (5,9%) out of 1,698 expressing fears and/or concerns that Cypriots are being deceived by asylum-seekers.

It is worth mentioning that references relating to the hardships and suffering of these people are prevalent in each of the three groups, which is an acknowledgement of the difficult conditions they are facing. Specifically, 1,447 (72.1%) out of 2,008 references were made to various forms of suffering experienced by refugees; 630 (37.1%) out of 1,698 for asylum-seekers and 1,185 (56.9%) references out of 2,082 for migrants. Again, most references made regarding suffering are detected when participants referred to refugees. Major sources of suffering or hardships stem from the existence of war, including losing their home or their family; being persecuted; being forced to leave while not having the means and/or having grave difficulties setting up a new life and forging a new beginning.

All in all, a scale of suffering in descending order is formed where the following pattern emerges:

- 1) Refugees
- 2) Migrants
- 3) Asylum-seekers

In contrast, as expected, a scale of threat in descending order emerges as follows:

- 1) Asylum-seekers
- 2) Migrants
- 3) Refugees

SECTION B - Attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers

The analysis of the data relating to attitudes among Cypriots towards refugees and asylum-seekers is divided into three parts: B.1) social relations with refugees, and/or asylum-seekers; B.2) integration obstacles, concerns and threats and B.3) attitudes towards the phenomenon of migration.

B.1 Social relations with refugees and/or asylum-seekers

Another element that was examined was the contact that Cypriots have with refugees and/or asylum-seekers. Participants were asked: first, to answer whether they have/have had contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers; secondly, to evaluate that contact and, thirdly, to mention the number of friendships they have with refugees and/or asylum-seekers.

A large percentage of participants (42.7%) stated that they have never had contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers, while one in four (25%) seem to have contact very often (12.9%) and often (12.1%). Moreover, 15.5% of the sample mentioned that they sometimes have contact, while 16.3% stated that they rarely have contact. **(Figure 25)**

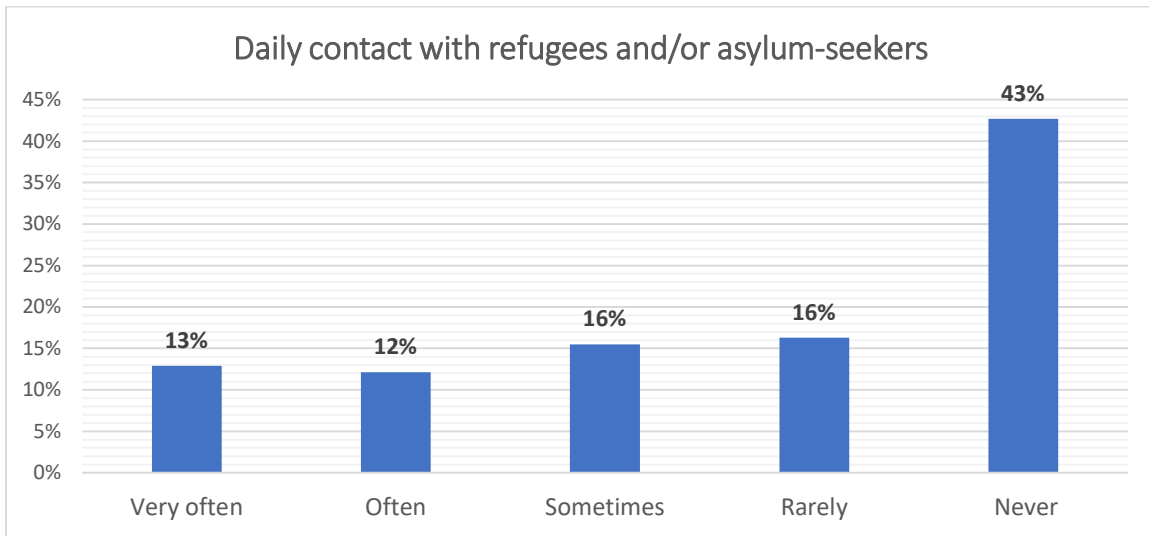


Figure 25: Daily Contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers

Regarding participants' evaluation of the quality of their contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers when it actually takes place, 15.3% find the contact 'not pleasant at all' and 20.2% find the contact to be 'a little pleasant.' The largest proportion of the sample (44.2%) find the contact to be 'somewhat pleasant' while 20.2% find the contact to be 'very pleasant' (Figure 26).

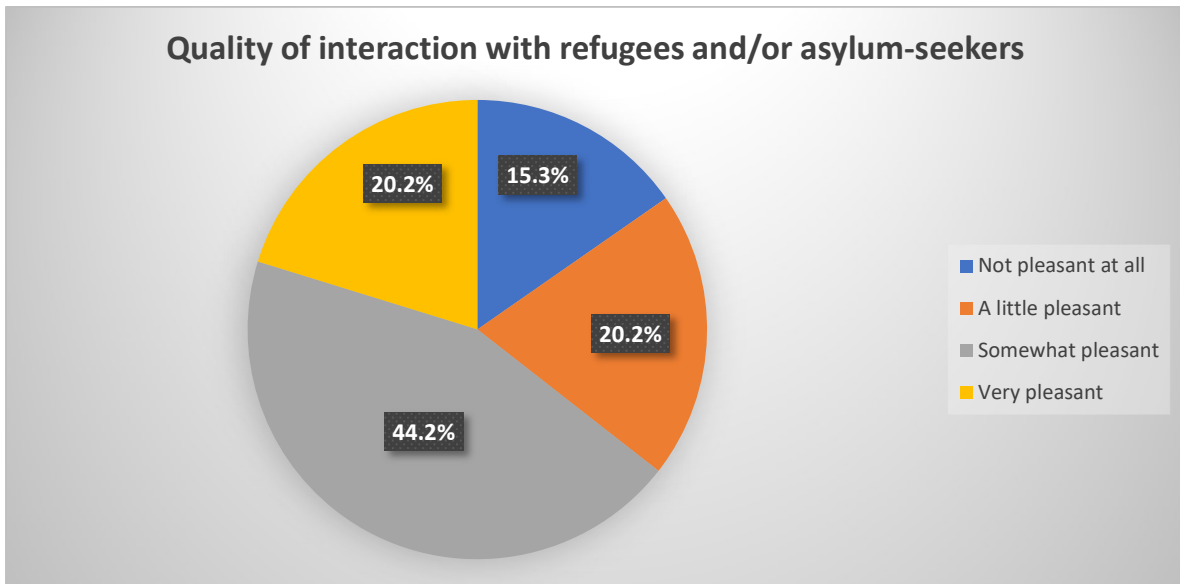


Figure 26: Quality of interaction with refugees and/or asylum-seekers

Regarding the number of friendships established with refugees and/or asylum-seekers, about 70% stated that they do not maintain some kind of friendship with refugees and/or asylum-seekers. Some 13.5% state that they have one-to-two friends who are refugees and/or asylum-seekers, while 10.2% state that they have three-to-five friends who are refugees and/or asylum-seekers. Only 2.4% state that they have six-to-ten friends who are refugees and/or asylum-seekers (Figure 27).

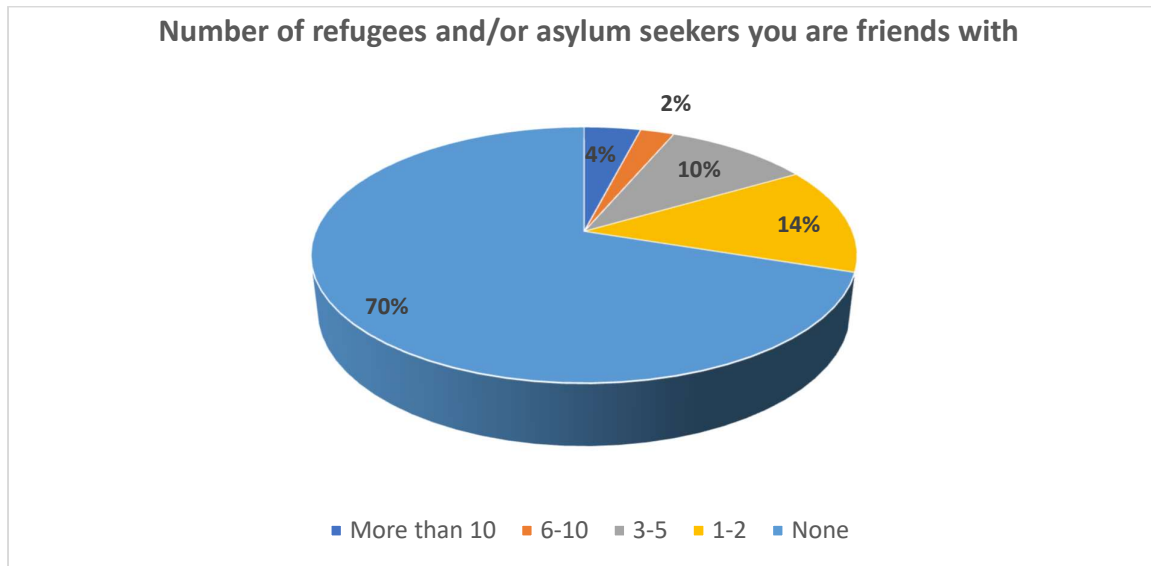


Figure 27: Number of refugees and/or asylum-seekers you are friends with

B.2. Integration obstacles, concerns and threats

Regarding Cypriots’ beliefs about refugees, participants were presented with a series of statements to evaluate whether these were perceived as obstacles to refugee integration in Cypriot society.

The figure below shows that participants recognize as obstacles to integration, characteristics that emerge from the point of view held in Cypriot society, i.e., xenophobia and racism, which indicates an increasing awareness of the negativity of societal norms. However, there is also the tendency to blame refugees themselves for their perceived lack of willingness to integrate (73.3%). There is also a significant number of participants (76.2%) that perceive refugees as “being dangerous,” which presents another obstacle to their successful integration in society. It appears that the idea that refugees do not want to integrate in Cypriot society is working as an ideological moral disengagement strategy, shifting the responsibility for integration to refugees themselves. This is aligned with the view that refugees prefer to interact only with their own ethnic groups that was also reported as a third obstacle to integration by 70.5% of participants.

A large percentage (70.8%) consider “not feeling welcomed in Cyprus” as part of the problem to integration. We can see a high level of reflectivity on the issue of xenophobia and racism (71.9%), which at the same time suggests that negative feelings have become normative. The issue of difference in culture is perceived as an important obstacle (72.7%), while difference in language is considered as less of an obstacle for refugee integration (57.9%). It is interesting however that only 38.9% of participants consider difference in color as an issue for refugee integration, which probably indicates a shift from biological forms of racism into its cultural form in more recent years (**Figure 28**).

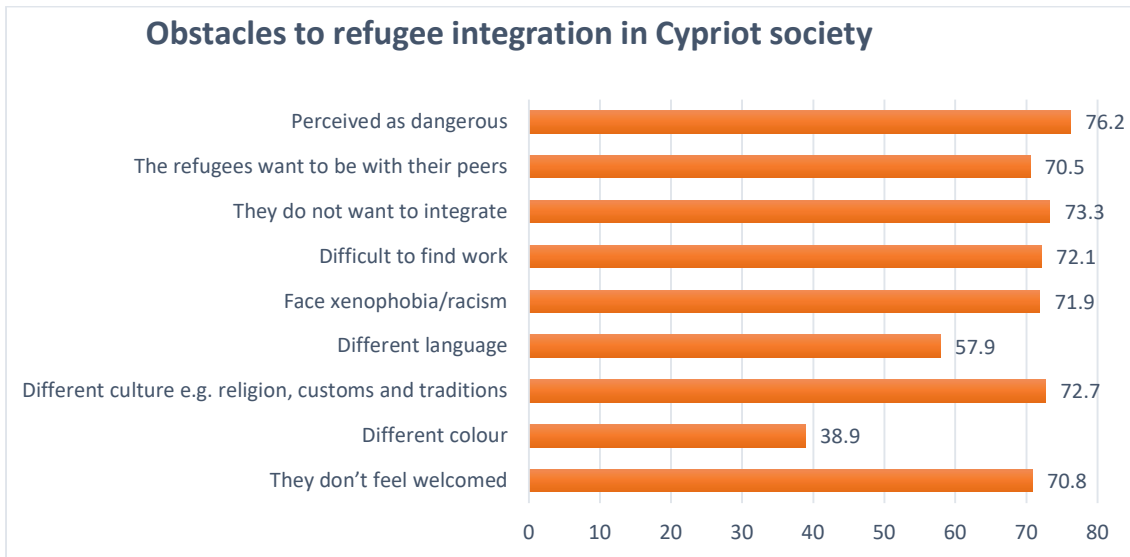


Figure 28: Obstacles to refugee integration in Cypriot society

Furthermore, regarding possible concerns that Cypriots have regarding refugees and asylum-seekers who come to Cyprus, participants mainly focused on the small size of Cyprus that in their thinking makes the country unable to host “so many” refugees and asylum-seekers. Cyprus’ small size was reported by 26.5% of respondents, while fear of violence and/or criminal behavior by refugees and asylum-seekers is the second concern (20.5%) according to the sample. The third concern (16.5%) relates to the possible changes to demographics of the island with health concerns (12.3%) being the fourth concern expressed by participants. The last concern (8.8%) is that refugees and asylum-seekers will take up jobs from Cypriots. Finally, 11.1% of the sample mentioned that they do not have any concerns regarding refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus (**Figure 29**).

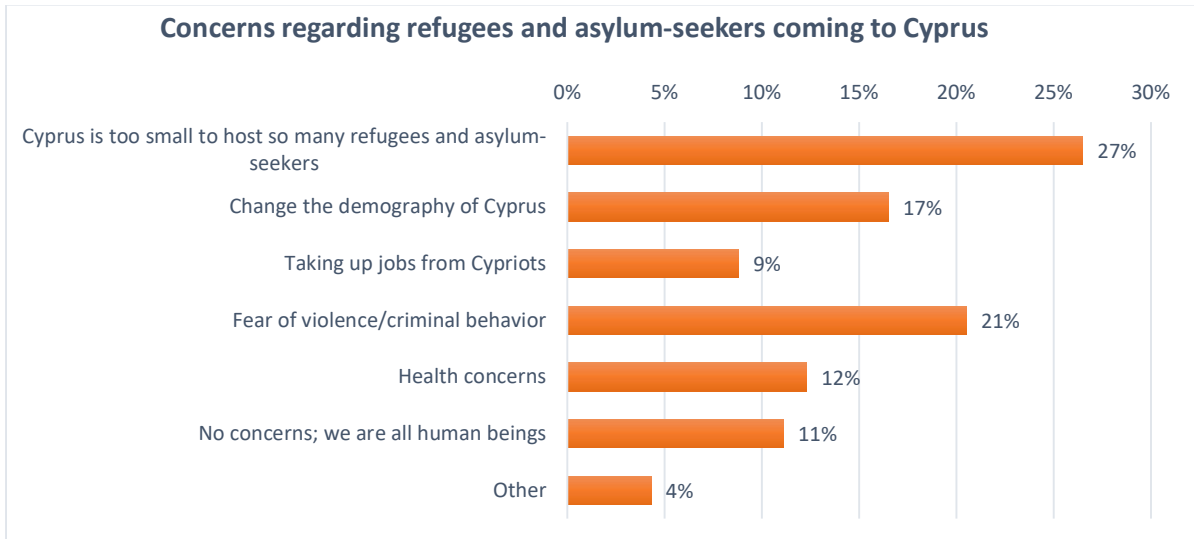


Figure 29: Concerns regarding refugees and asylum-seekers coming to Cyprus

B.3. Attitudes towards the phenomenon of migration

In order to examine the attitudes towards migration, two items were used: a) an evaluation of whether participants thought that Cyprus’ cultural life is enriched or undermined by refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live here from other countries and b) whether participants thought that it is good or bad for the economy that refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries come to live here. The scale ranged from zero (strongly negative) to ten (strongly positive) with five being the mid-point of the scale. These questions were adapted from the European Social Survey (ESS), which is a comparative study between many EU countries that takes place every two years.

Participants’ opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on the island’s economy were on average negative ($M=2.99$, $SD=3.0$)³. Only 18.6% of respondents positioned themselves on the positive spectrum of the scale and 60.1% on the negative, which indicates that the majority of respondents believe that refugees and asylum-seekers are bad for the economy of Cyprus, while 21.3% remained neutral (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Participants opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on the local economy

Opinion on whether it is bad or good for the Cypriot economy that refugees and asylum-seekers are coming to live here										
Bad for the economy										Good for the economy
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
41.0%	4.0%	3.9%	6.3%	4.9%	21.3%	4.5%	5.1%	4.6%	0.9%	3.5%
60.1%					21.3%	18.6%				

Furthermore, most participants report that the cultural life of Cyprus is negatively affected by refugees and migrants ($M=2.6$, $SD=1.37$)⁴. Specifically, 55.4% of participants believe that the cultural life is undermined and less than one in four (23.9%) of the participants believe that the cultural life in Cyprus is enriched by the refugees and asylum-seekers who come to live here. Finally, 20.7% of respondents remained neutral (**Table 3**).

³ M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

⁴ M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

Table 3: Participants’ opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on the island’s cultural life

Opinion that Cyprus’ cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by refugees and asylum-seekers who come to live here										
Cultural life undermined										Cultural life enriched
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
36.2%	4.8%	4.0%	5.8%	4.6%	20.7%	4.3%	5.2%	5.6%	1.4%	7.4%
55.4%					20.7%	23.9%				

Predicting attitudes towards immigration from demographic and social-psychological variables

An index from the two variables presented in **Tables 2 and 3** above was formed capturing attitudes towards the arrival of refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus. This index was called “positive attitude towards immigration” and was used as the outcome variable in a hierarchical regression model so that important demographic predictors and social-psychological variables (i.e., contact, friendship, threats) could be explored as possible predictors of this outcome. A model explaining 28% of variance in the outcome measure indicated that from the demographic variables tested (i.e., age, educational level, income, urbanisation, working status, having lived abroad) only educational level and income played a significant and positive role. From the social-psychological variables tested (i.e., threats, contact and friendships) the number of friendships with refugees and asylum-seekers and a humanitarian stance that negated threats played a positive role, whilst realistic threats related to demographics, crime and losing jobs played a negative role.

SECTION C. Attitudes towards integration and support for refugees and asylum-seekers

This section focuses on Cypriots’ attitudes towards the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers in local society (C.1), and their levels of active support towards refugees and asylum-seekers (C.2).

C.1.1. Attitudes towards integration

In order to examine whether there are misconceptions regarding refugees’ and asylum-seekers’ monthly financial aid and its sources, participants were asked to state the source of financial aid for refugees. As illustrated in **Figure 30** below, 51.1% of participants believe that financial resources devoted to the development and implementation of projects for refugees are equally

sourced from the EU and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, while 36.1% think the resources are mostly from the EU. A much smaller percentage (12.6%) think that the resources come mainly from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, indicating that a part of the population is misinformed.

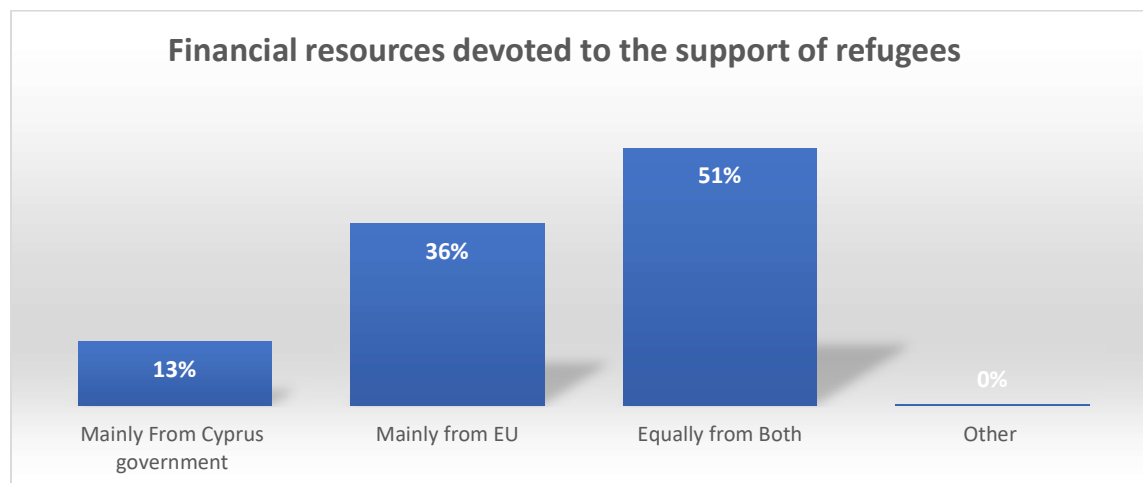


Figure 30: Financing of the development and implementation of projects for refugees

In this section, descriptions of Cypriots' attitudes, feelings and opinions towards, refugees and asylum-seekers are provided. First, the focus is on Cypriots' frequency and quality of contact with refugees/asylum-seekers. Secondly, the factors which act as obstacles to refugee integration according to Cypriots are also presented. Thirdly, Cypriots' concerns regarding refugees and asylum-seekers are summarized. Furthermore, the opinions of the Cypriot public regarding the immediate needs of refugees and asylum-seekers are also summarized, as well as their views on the Government's positions on asylum-seekers. Finally, Cypriots' attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers as whether they positively or negatively affect their society with regard to the economy and cultural life, as well as the social distance among Cypriots are presented.

The issue of the living conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers was also addressed. Participants were asked to choose where – either in camps or integrated in society – they believed refugees and asylum-seekers should live. Concerning accommodation, 42.3% of participants stated that they would prefer that refugees and asylum-seekers lived integrated in society, while an almost equal percentage (39.8%) prefer that they remain in a camp setting. In cases where participants did not agree with the two choices provided, they had the opportunity to mention their own suggestion under the category "Other." Interestingly, participants' suggestions emphasized the need for better and more humane living conditions, creation of communities where people are separated either by origin and/or race and/or religion and/or recognition of conflicts among groups, and/or a combination of two solutions, i.e., first in camps and after examination to be integrated in society. (Figure 31).

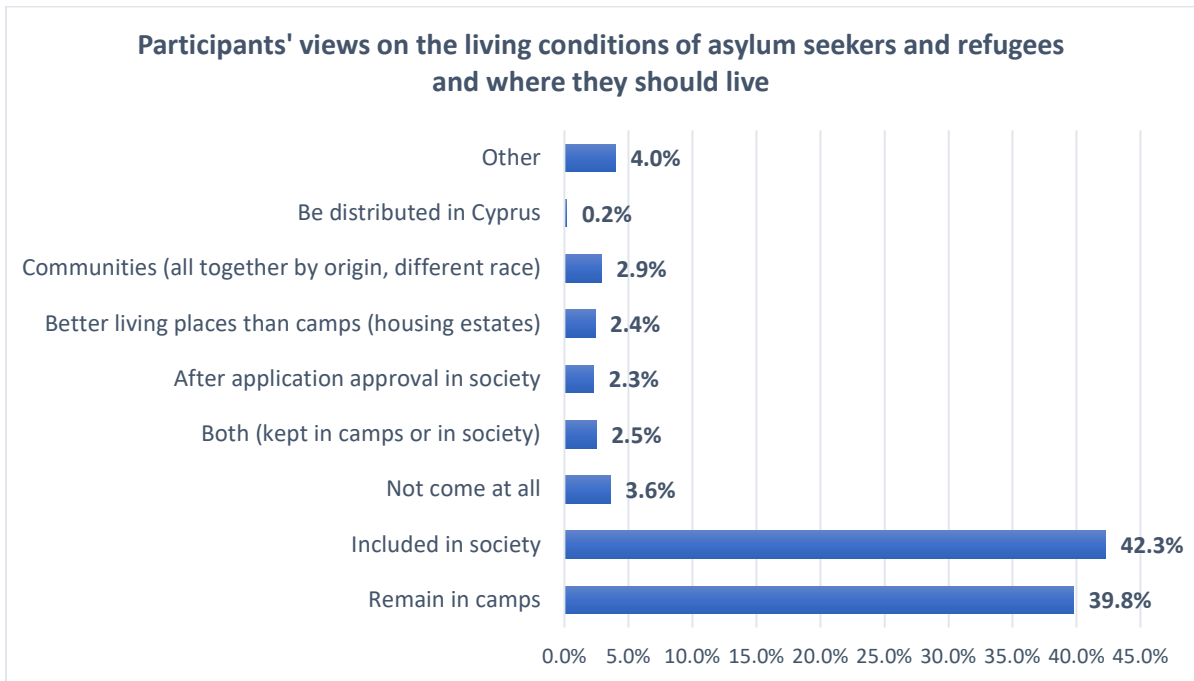


Figure 31: Participants' views on the living conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers and where they should live

Another question was related to welcome/reception centers for refugees and asylum-seekers. Participants were asked whether they would object to the creation/construction of a new welcome/reception center for refugees and asylum-seekers in their area of residence. Public opinion was split on this question. About 47.4% would not object to the creation of a reception center in their area, while about 52.6% would object to the creation of a new welcome/reception center in their area of residency (**Figure 32**).

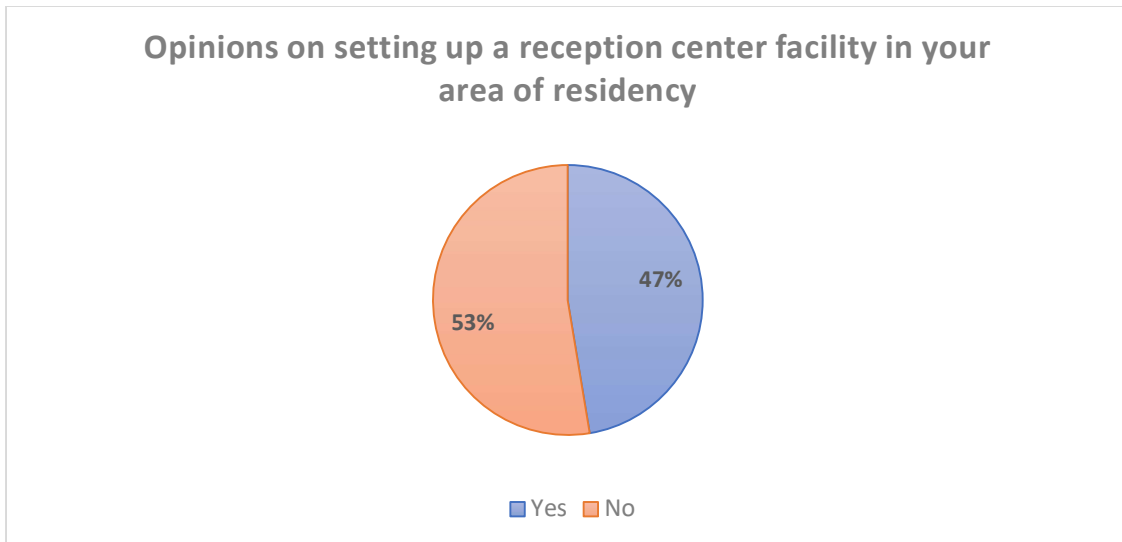


Figure 32: Opinions on setting up a reception center facility in your area of residency

Participants were asked about various policies regarding refugees and asylum-seekers. In particular, they were asked whether refugees should be allowed citizenship after living in Cyprus for five years; whether refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus should return back to their home countries; whether refugees and asylum-seekers should be allowed to stay in Cyprus; whether refugees and asylum-seekers should be transferred to other countries and whether Cyprus should introduce a limit to the number of refugees and asylum-seekers the country can accept. Participants replied on a five-point Likert-style ranging from one (1) *absolutely disagree* to five (5) *absolutely agree*.

The majority of participants (86.5%) agreed/strongly agreed with the idea that Cyprus should introduce a limit to the number of refugees and asylum-seekers the country receives, while only 5.3% of the participants disagreed or absolutely disagreed with this policy. Half of the participants (51.5%) agree or absolutely agree that refugees and asylum-seekers should return to their home countries compared to the 22.5% of participants who disagree or absolutely disagree with this statement. Some 44.3% of the participants supported the idea of transferring refugees and asylum-seekers to other countries, while 29.2% rejected this notion. A large proportion (43.9%) also disagree/absolutely disagree with the idea that refugees and asylum-seekers should be allowed to stay in Cyprus if they wish to and only 29.5% of participants agree or absolutely agree with this statement. A relatively low percentage of the participants (28.5%) agreed that refugees should be allowed Cypriot citizenship if they live in Cyprus for five years, whilst more than half of the sample disagreed with this total integration measure (54%) (**Figure 33**).

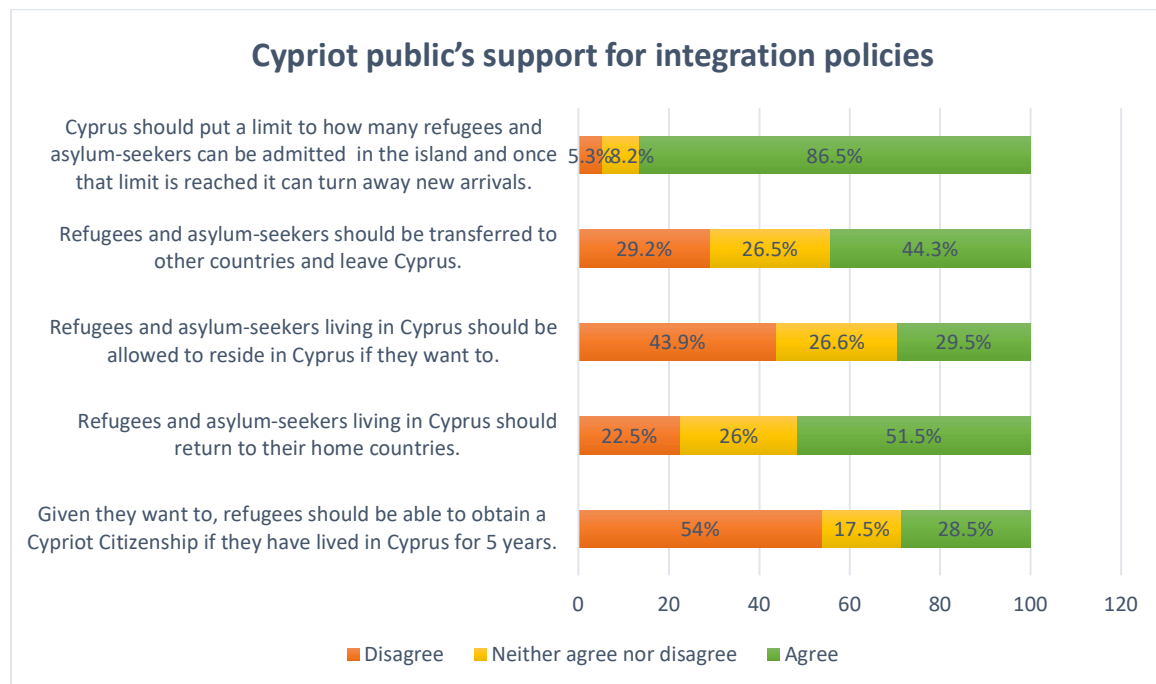


Figure 33: The Cypriot public's support for policies regarding refugees' and asylum-seekers' rights to stay

Participants were then asked to state their level of agreement or disagreement with statements concerning the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and its responsibilities towards refugees and asylum-seekers. Respondents replied on a scale from one (1) to five (5), where one (1) meant *absolutely disagree* and five (5) meant *absolutely agree*.

The majority of participants (83.4%) agreed that the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not have the capacity to accept more asylum-seekers or deal with increased arrivals. Nearly half (45.8%) of the sample agreed and strongly agreed that providing support and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers living on the island is the responsibility of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, while 56.7% agreed that the Government of the Republic of Cyprus is doing enough to support and help refugees and asylum-seekers living here (**Figure 34**).

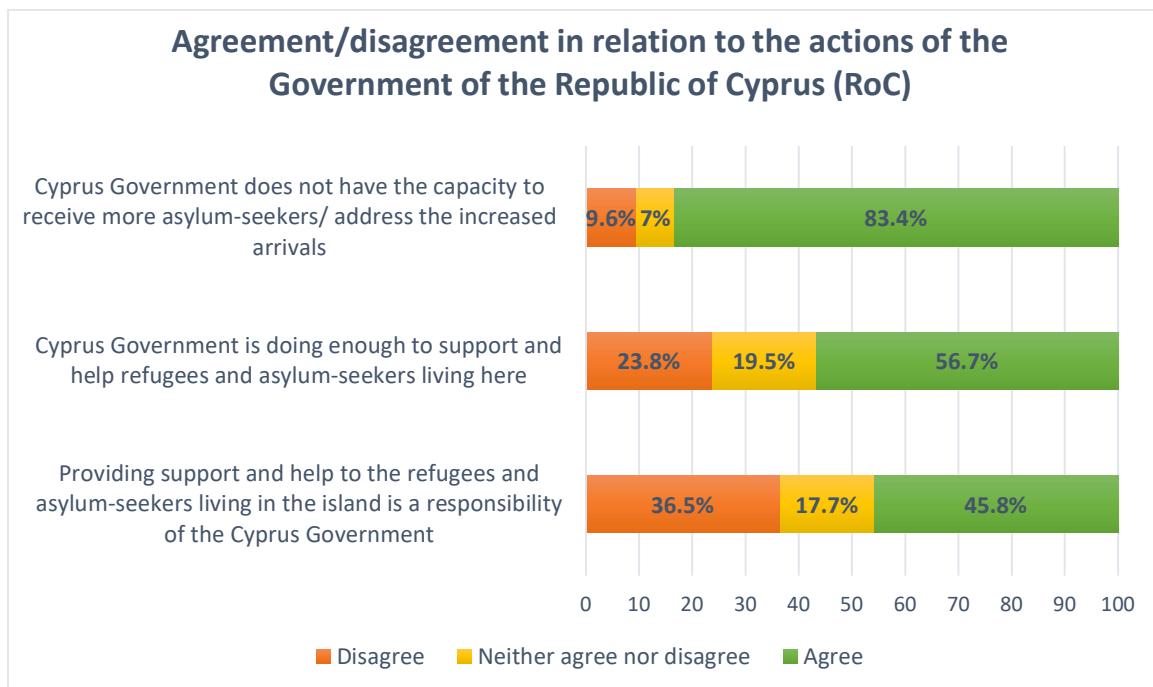


Figure 34: Agreement/disagreement in relation to the actions of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus towards refugees and asylum-seekers

C.1.2. The four profiles of participants in relation to attitudes towards integration and immigration

The combination of the following four dimensions a) the numbers of refugees and/or asylum-seekers allowed in Cyprus; b) attitudes toward immigration; c) attitudes towards integration and d) offering citizenship, provide a variety of attitudes towards integration and immigration. When proceeding with Two Step Cluster analysis, four distinct profiles or rationales were in our sample as shown in **Figure 35** below.

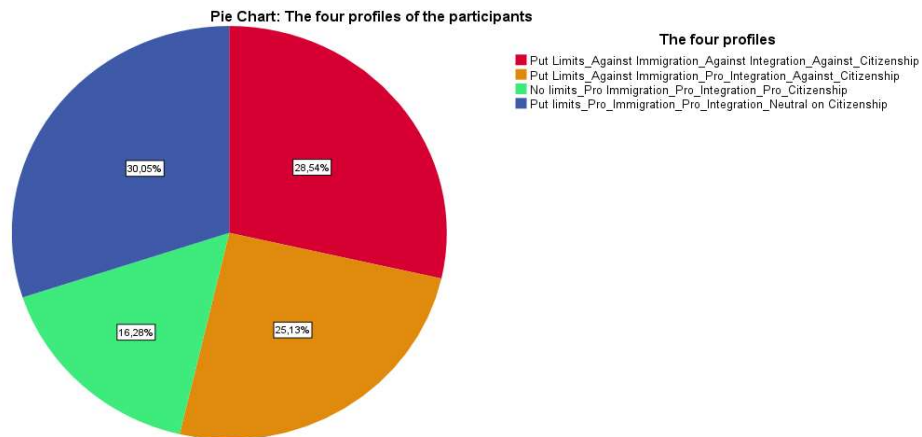


Figure 35: The four profiles of participants

The first group (28,54% of the sample in red color in **Figure 35**), expressed a clear xenophobic stance, wanted a limit imposed on new arrivals, was strongly against immigration and against integration and against granting citizenship after five years of residency to those who request it.

On the other end of the ideological spectrum a pro-humanitarian group (16.26% of the sample in green in **Figure 35**) was against setting up a limit to the numbers of new arrivals and expressed pro-immigration and pro-integration views; this segment of the sample was also in favor of granting citizenship to those who request it after five years of stay in Cyprus.

The larger of the four groups (30.05% blue color in **Figure 35**) was in favor of an upper limit in new arrivals, but was both pro-immigration and pro-integration with moderate views on offering citizenship after five years of stay in Cyprus.

One fourth of the sample (25.13% in orange color in **Figure 35**) was in favor of setting an upper limit in the numbers of new arrivals and expressed views against immigration and against offering citizenship, but was in favor of integration. It seems that the rationale here was mostly in favor of an assimilationist stance towards those persons who are already in Cyprus on the basis of a belief that these people should not be kept in ghettos “causing problems.” The pro-integration groups comprise the majority of the population and their attitudes could be entry points for UNHCR to further promote its cause.

C.2 Active support offered to refugees and asylum-seekers

When asked whether they have offered assistance/aid to refugees and asylum-seekers, half of the participants replied positively. Just over half (50.4%) of participants directly or indirectly help or have helped refugees and/or asylum-seekers. For the participants that answered positively, a follow-up question was asked regarding the ways in which they have helped refugees and asylum-seekers. The most common kind of support is the donation of food and clothes (52.5%), while donating money was second (21.4%). Helping refugees and/or asylum-seekers with information about services and daily life was reported by 10.3%, while volunteering with an NGO was reported by 3.4%. Some 12% chose “other,” which includes either a combination of the choices given in the questionnaire or providing support such as offering temporary accommodation, driving somebody to his/her destination, completing application forms and/or other kind of administrative paperwork and offering free language tutoring (**Figure 36**).

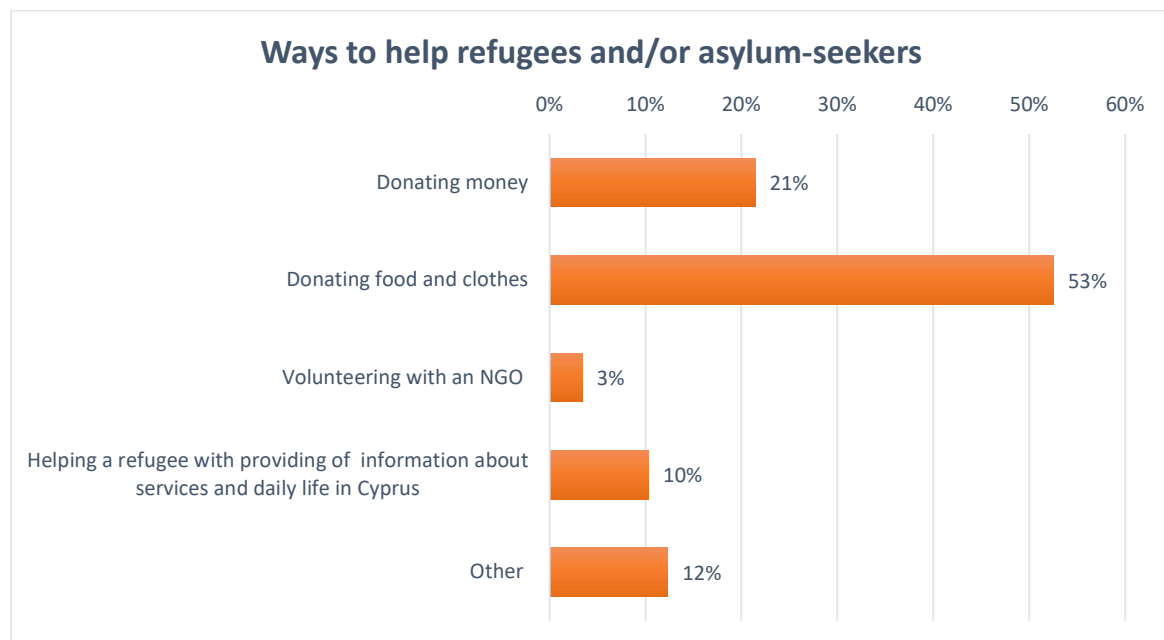


Figure 36: Offering support to refugees and/or asylum-seekers

Participants who answered positively were asked a follow-up question to examine their intentions to help in the future. As such, 33.8% of participants stated that they would definitely be interested to help in the future, while the largest proportion of the respondents (49.3%) stated that it was possible that they would help in the future. Only 17% were negative about helping refugees and asylum-seekers in the future (**Figure 37**).

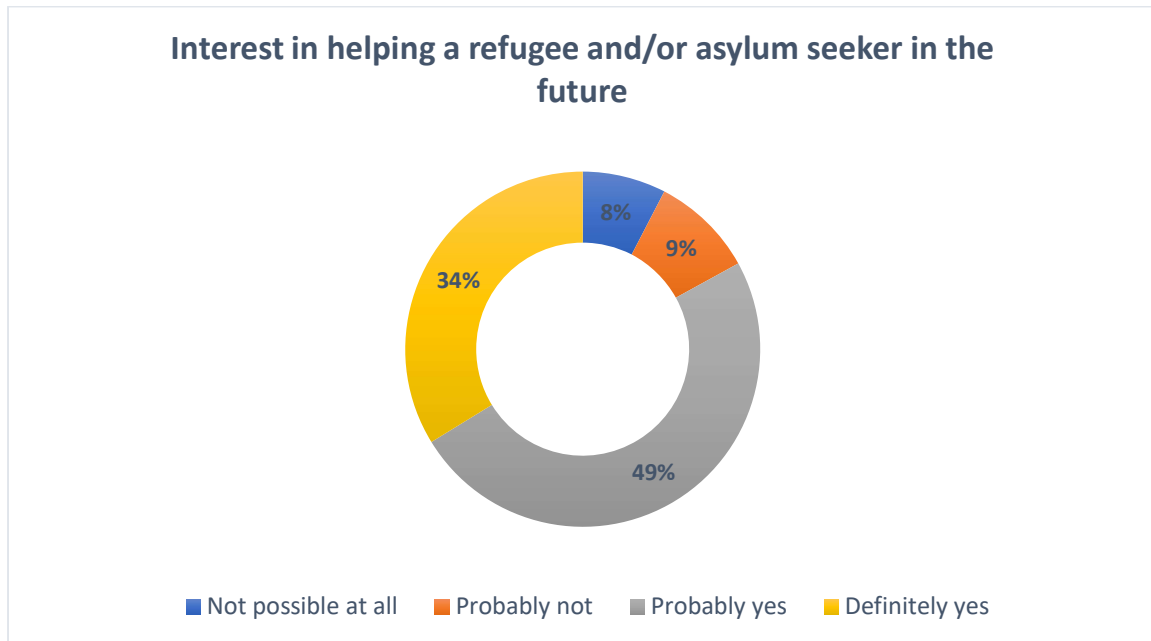


Figure 37: Interest in helping a refugee and/or asylum-seeker in the future

SECTION D. Visibility and Media

Another important issue is whether UNHCR and other organizations helping refugees and asylum-seekers have visibility in the public sphere and how the media is operating with regard to public information on the topic of migration in Cyprus.

D.1. UNHCR's visibility amongst Cypriots

Participants were asked to mention which organizations they were aware of that offer support to refugees in Cyprus. The organizations mentioned were: Hope for Children (3.35%), UNICEF (5.7%), UN (6.4%), Red Cross (17.1%) and KISA (18%). UNHCR was mentioned by 12.9% of participants. However, when directly asked whether they had ever heard of UNHCR before, this percentage increased to 91.8 %. In comparison with 2018, there is a decrease in the spontaneous answers as 14,4% mentioned UNHCR in 2018. However, the percentages when directly asked whether they had ever heard of UNHCR before almost doubled compared to 2018. In 2018, some 52,8% answered positively while in 2022 this percentage increased to 91.8% (**Figure 38**).

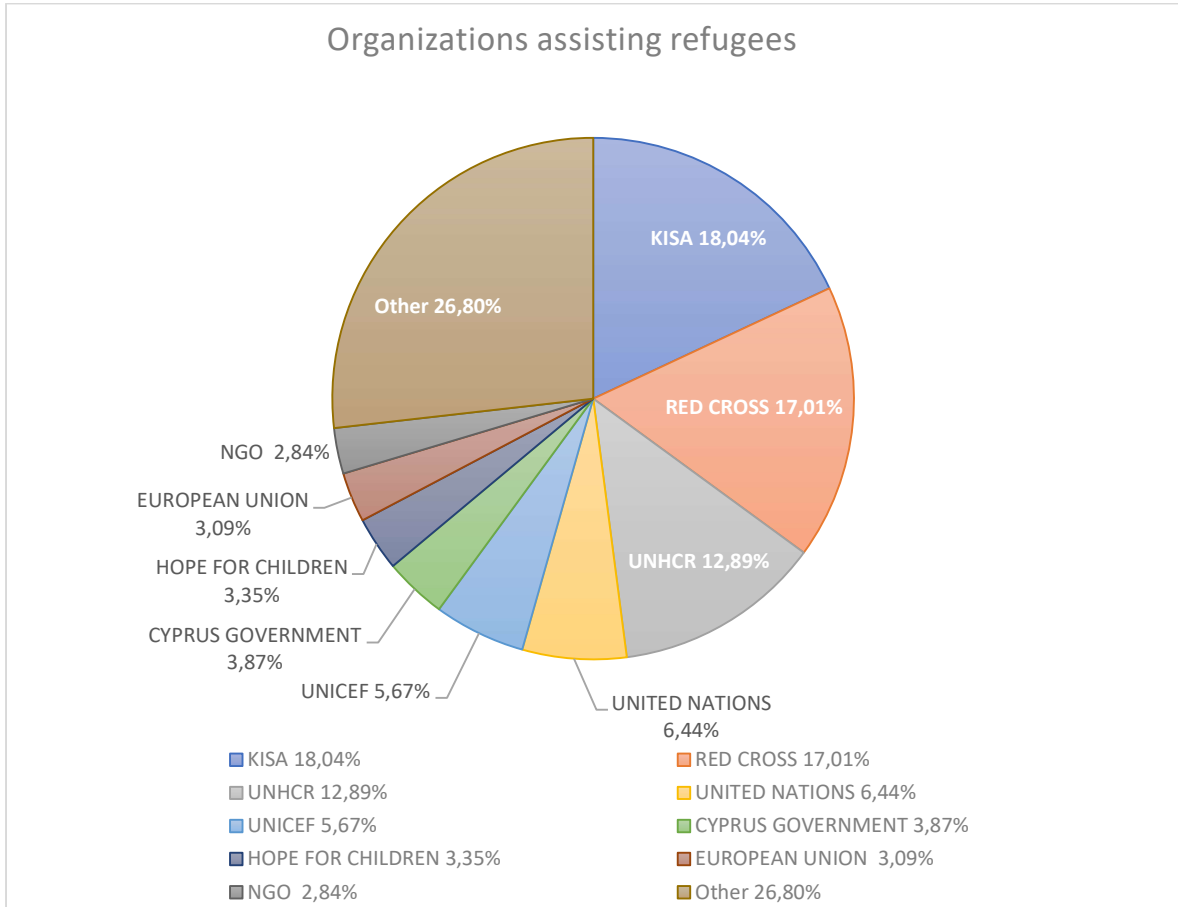


Figure 38: Organizations assisting refugees, according to public perceptions

Participants who spontaneously mentioned or reported to have heard of UNHCR before were asked how often they visit the organization’s website and social media profiles. Of those who mentioned that they knew UNHCR, 21.4% have never visited UNHCR’s websites or social media pages, while 31.3% of participants do visit their pages, but only rarely. From the people who are aware of UNHCR, only 17.7% of participants visit UNHCR’s websites often or very often (**Figure 39**).

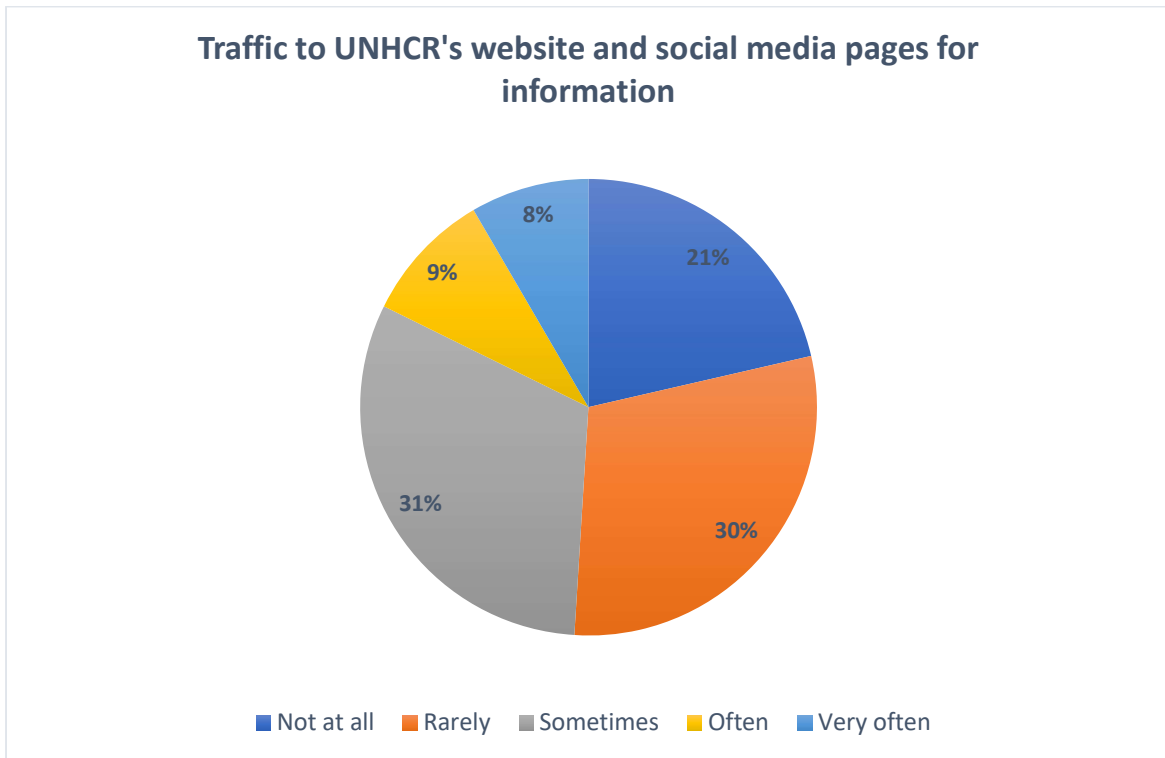


Figure 39: Visits to UNHCR’s website and social media pages

D.2. Media

As media play a key role in disseminating information, participants were called to state where they mainly get their information about asylum issues from. A relatively high percentage (36%) report that they are informed through Cypriot TV stations. Social media and websites (27.8%) were the second predominant source of information for the participants, while Cyprus newspapers, both online and printed, are used by a small percentage (7.1%) of participants. Radio is used by an even lower percentage (3.1%) as well as international media (3.9%). The choice “other” (17.9%) includes references where participants indicated more than one choice (**Figure 40**).

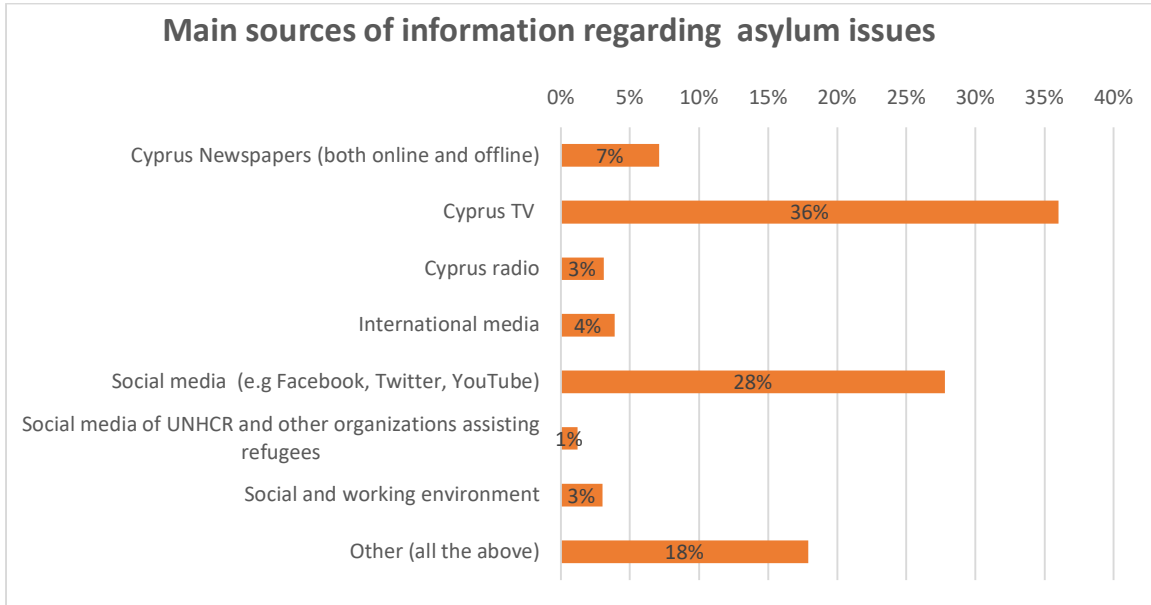


Figure 40: Main sources of information for participants to gather information about asylum issues in Cyprus

Regarding trust in the national media’s coverage of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, it appears that the public has a tendency towards trusting the media (44.6%), since those who show trust are double compared to those who feel distrustful (25.9%) (Figure 41).

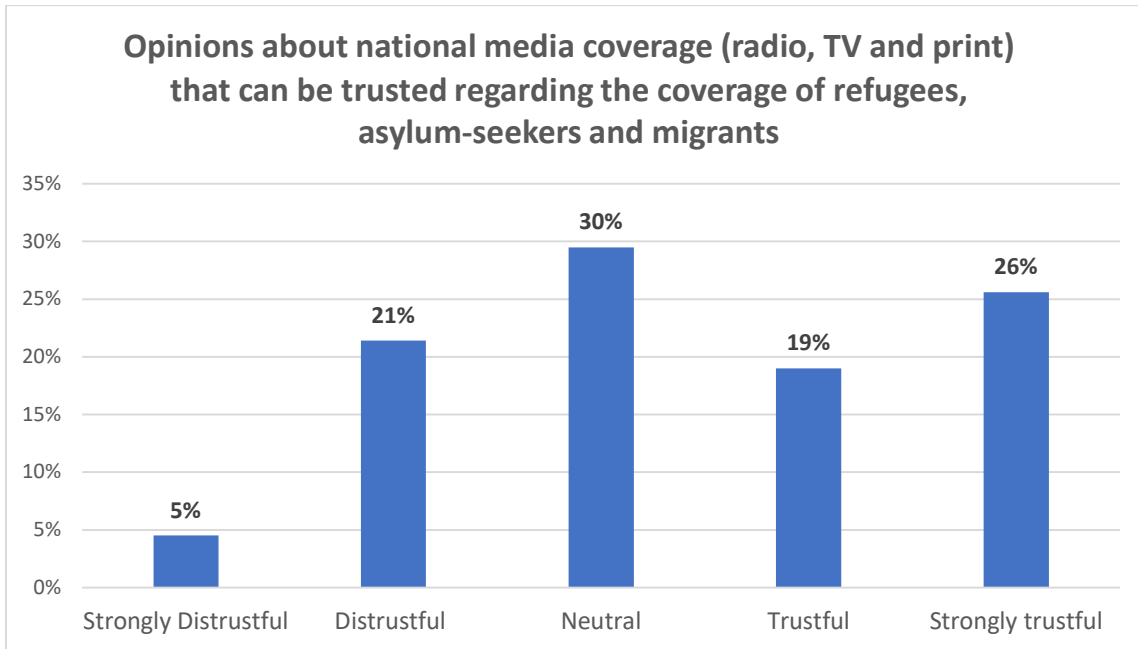


Figure 41: Opinion about national media coverage (radio, TV and print) that can be trusted regarding the coverage of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants

SECTION E. Differences over time in the opinions of respondents about refugees from 2018 to 2022

This section illustrates how public opinion has shifted over time, specifically between 2018 and 2022. The first question examines participants' knowledge of the countries of origin of refugees coming to Cyprus. In 2018 most believed that the majority came from Middle Eastern countries (62.2%), while in 2022 public opinion shows that 46.7% believe the majority come from African countries (**Figure 42**).

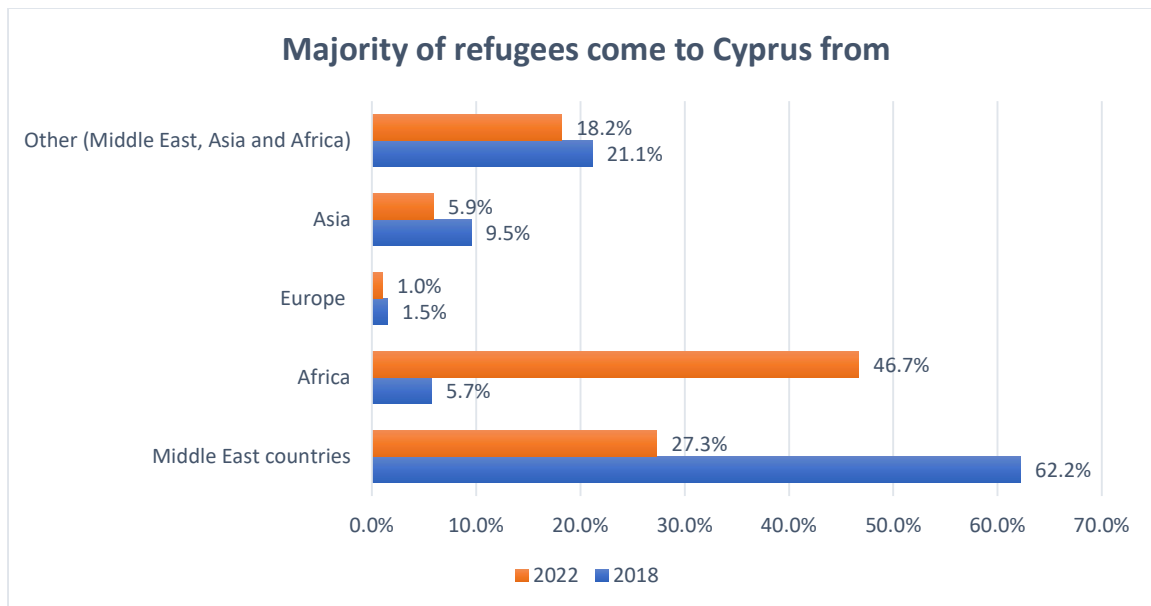


Figure 42: Differences in perceptions over time in terms of where refugees come to Cyprus from

Furthermore, there is a difference in the estimated number of refugees that people believe live in Cyprus today. Participants state that the number of refugees has greatly increased in the last four years. In 2018 only 21.7% of participants stated that the number of refugees was more than 20,000, while in 2022 this percentage has increased to 32.4%. In the 2018 report only 17.7% stated that more than 50,000 refugees were residing in Cyprus, while in the present study 33.3% of participants estimate that the number of refugees is more than 50,000 (**Figure 43**).

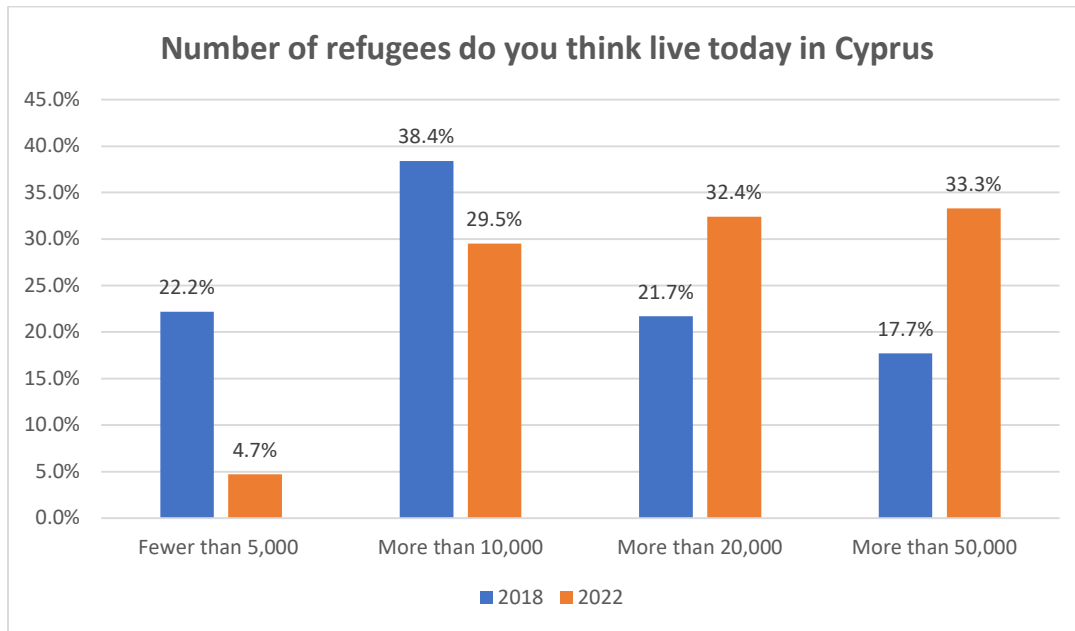


Figure 43: Differences over time in terms of the number of refugees the public believes live in Cyprus

As illustrated in **Figure 44** below, public opinion on the immediate needs of refugees over time (from 2018 to 2022) has shifted and it seems that agreement about the needs of refugees that must be covered by the State has decreased considerably. Even though the percentages on the agreement regarding steps to meet their needs are generally high, in comparison with the 2018 survey results, there is a decrease in the percentage of agreement on these needs, with the exception of the public’s perception of the need for housing support, which has increased from 50.6% to 61.6%. For example, there is a notable reduction in the recognition of the need for financial support by the Government for refugees and asylum-seekers (from 71.2% to 38.2%); for legal advice (from 73.2% to 56.9%); for support to find a job and/or develop work-related skills (from 86.3% to 67.9%) and for social networking and friendship opportunities (from 79.1% to 49%). Overall, there is a significant reduction in the public’s sensitivity levels in terms of recognizing the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers and specifically about measures that would facilitate their integration.

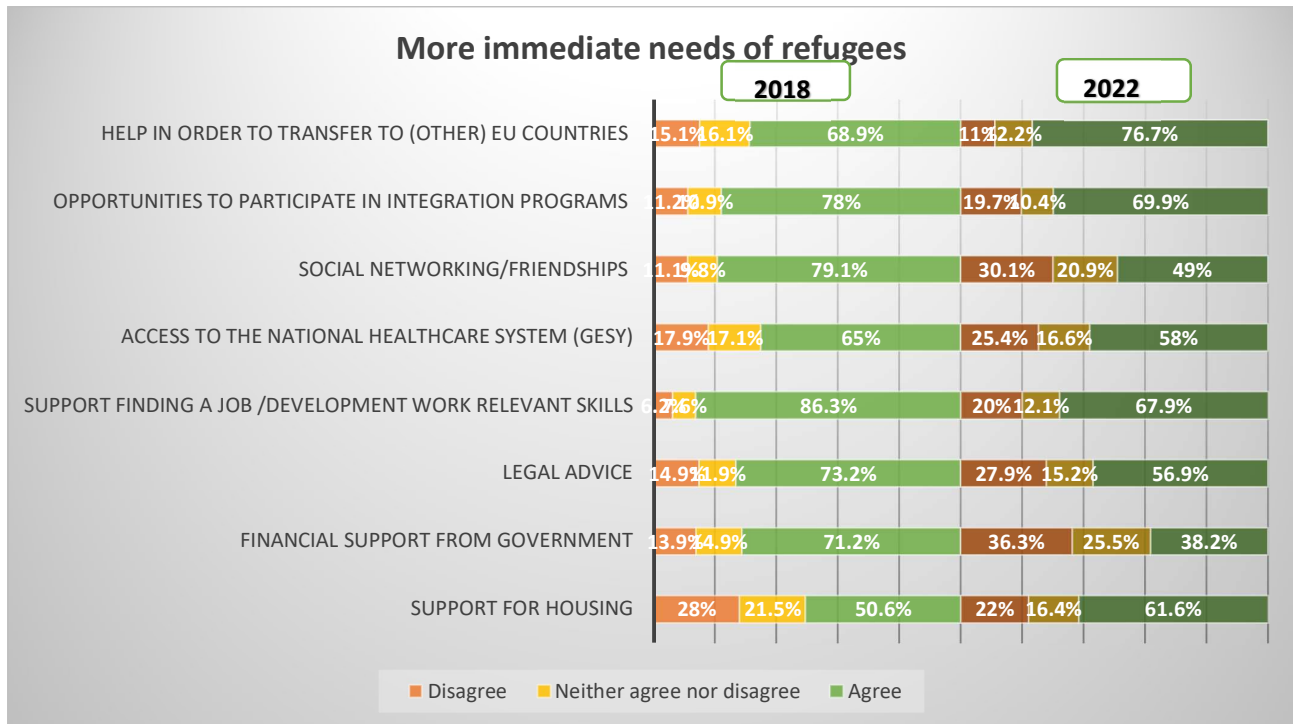


Figure 44: Differences over time in terms of immediate needs of refugees

In terms of estimating the balance of sources of funding devoted to supporting refugees there seems to be no difference over time (Figure 45) with most believing that funding comes equally from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the EU.

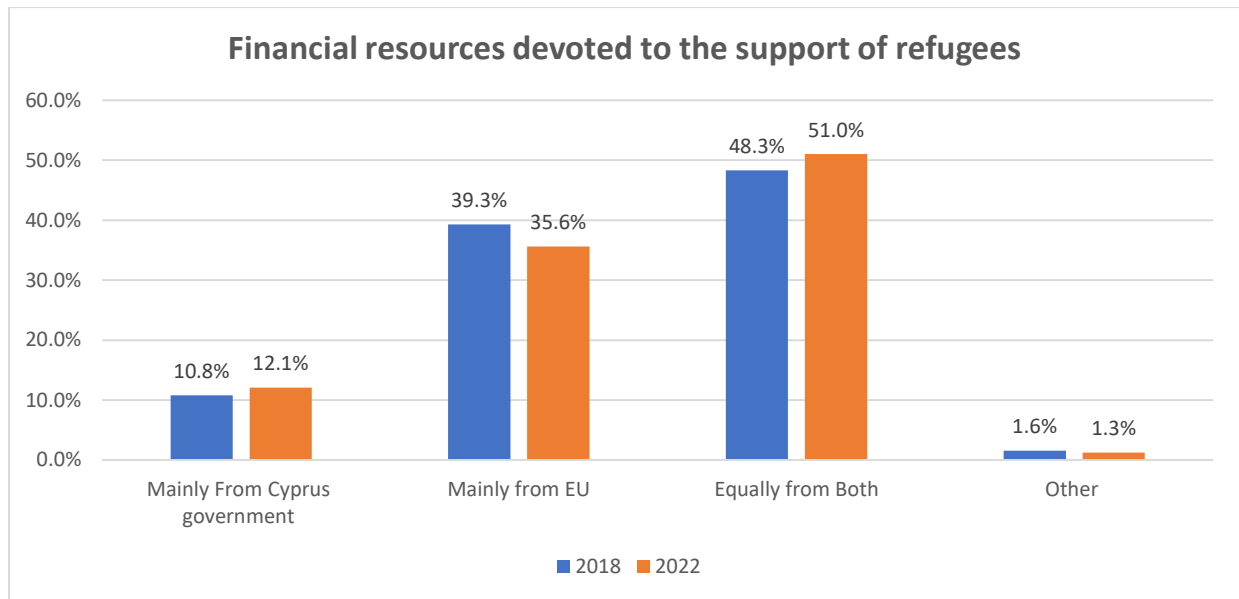


Figure 45: Differences over time in terms of financial resources devoted to the support of refugees

In the 2018 study, a question was included that investigated public opinion about the accommodation conditions of refugees and specifically whether they should remain in camps

or be included in society. The 2022 study asked the same question about both refugees and asylum-seekers. A huge decrease in pro-integration views is obvious when comparing the numbers and the preferences between 2018 and 2022. In 2018, the majority of participants (61.8%) stated that they would prefer that refugees lived integrated in society. The percentage favoring integration drops to 42.3% in 2022 for refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2018, one in four (25.2%) favored the option that refugees remain in camps or reception facilities, while in 2022, 39.8% favor the option that refugees and asylum-seekers remain in camps. It could be argued that there is a trend favoring isolation rather than integration. It should be noted that the target populations of the question were different at the two different timepoints – refugees in 2018 and refugees and asylum-seekers in 2022 – which might explain some of the negative shift, given the more negative perceptions of asylum-seekers that is apparent from the current research (Figure 46). However, this seems to be part of a broader deterioration of attitudes towards migration that is generally observed in 2022.

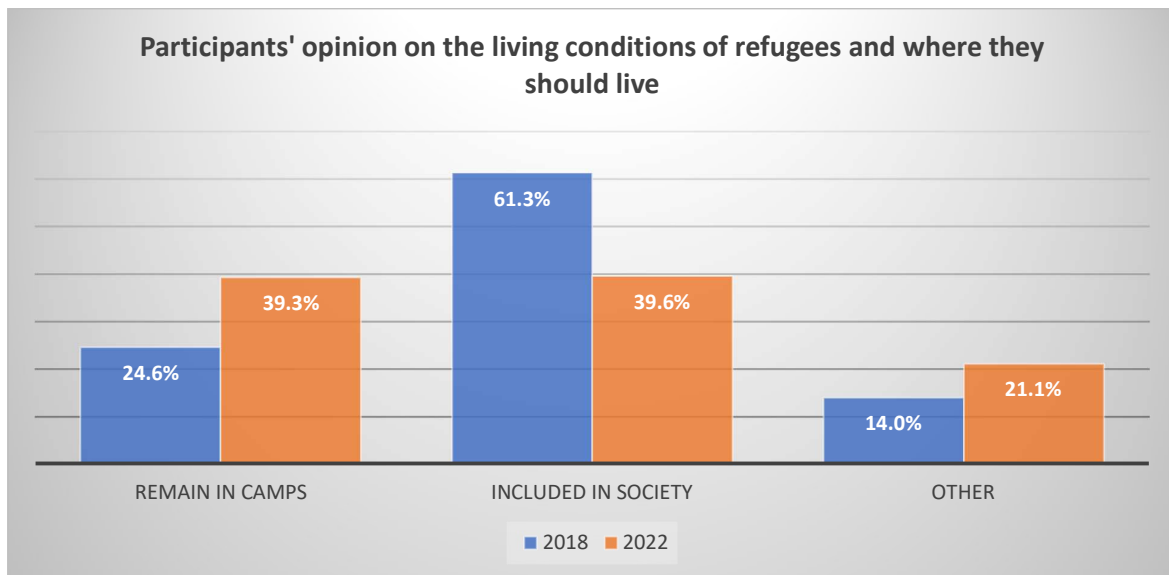


Figure 46. Differences over time in terms of participants' opinion on the living conditions of refugees and where they should live

Regarding people's acceptance of refugee and asylum-seeker policies, over time from 2018 to 2022, there is an increase in the percentage of people agreeing to policies where refugees should return to their countries of origin (from 50.9% to 57.4%); supporting the idea of transferring refugees to other countries (from 37.8 to 49.8%) and also supporting the idea that Cyprus should maintain a cap on the number of refugee entries (from 80.4% to 86.6%). Meanwhile, there is a decline in acceptance of the policy to allow refugees to acquire Cypriot citizenship if they stay in Cyprus for five years (from 33.6% to 26.9%), as well as that refugees should be allowed to stay in Cyprus if they wish (from 42.4% to 27.8%) (Figure 47).

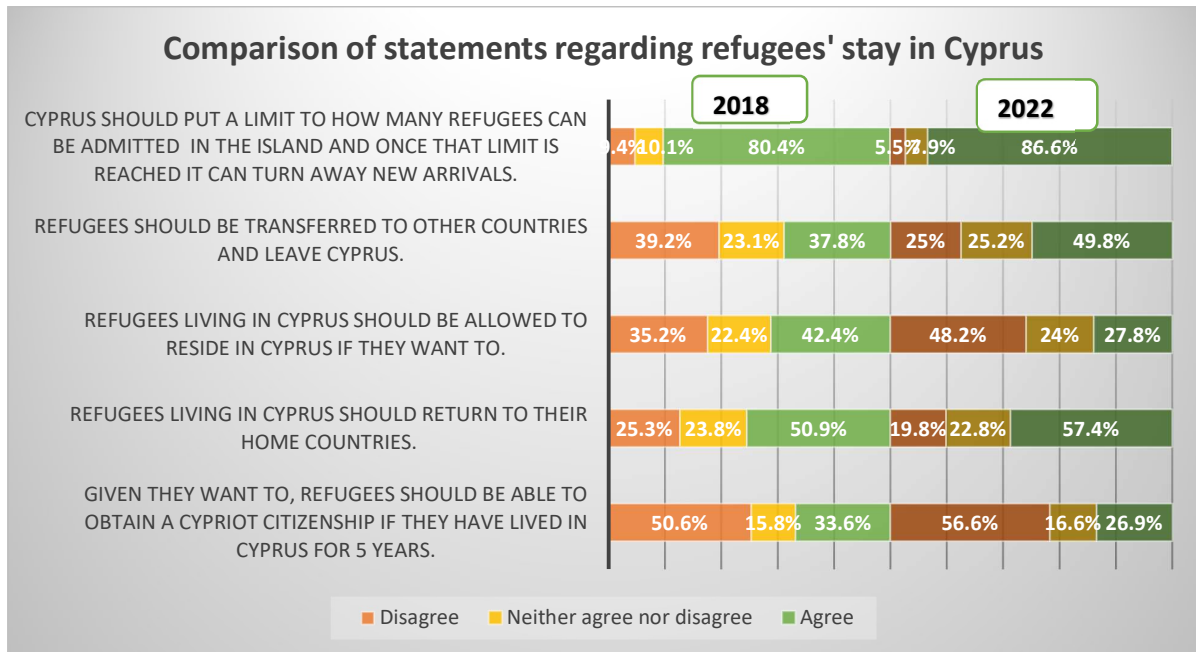


Figure 47: Differences over time in terms of statements about refugees regarding their stay in Cyprus

Participants recognize as obstacles to integration, characteristics that emerge from both the point of view of Cypriot society, i.e., xenophobia and racism, which indicates an increasing awareness of the negativity of norms, but they also tend to “criminalize” refugees and asylum-seekers for their perceived lack of willingness to integrate. There is also a significant number of participants (76.2%) that perceive ‘being dangerous’ as an obstacle to refugees’ and asylum-seekers’ integration. It appears that the idea that refugees and asylum-seekers themselves do not want to integrate in Cyprus is working as an ideological moral disengagement strategy, shifting the responsibility for integration to refugees and asylum-seekers; this aligns with the view expressed that refugees and asylum-seekers prefer to interact only with their own ethnic groups as being a third obstacle to integration. Not feeling welcome in Cyprus is seen as part of the problem to integration. This indicates a high level of reflectivity on the issue of xenophobia and racism, but at the same time suggests that negative feelings towards refugees and asylum-seekers have become normative. The issue of differences in culture is perceived as an important obstacle. It is noteworthy however that participants did not perceive color as an obstacle to integration, which probably indicates a shift from biological forms of racism into its cultural forms in more recent years.

In general, participants in 2022 recognize as obstacles to integration, characteristics that stem from both the local population and from refugees and asylum-seekers themselves. For example, 73.2% of participants believe that there is xenophobia and racism in Cypriot society that prevents refugees and asylum-seekers from integrating into society, thus showing a high level of concern on the subject, while 78.6% of participants also believe that refugees and asylum-seekers do not wish to integrate. In 2018, the public tended to recognize some additional factors that acted as

obstacles to the integration of refugees in society, such as different language (72.6%) and difference in color (46.4%), something that is not completely true now. Regarding different language, the percentage has dropped to 58,10% and for color to 39,3% in 2022.

The majority (75.3%) of participants in 2022 stated that refugees and asylum-seekers prefer to interact with their own ethnic groups, while in 2018 this percentage for migrants and refugees was much lower at 51%. However, comparing the two years there are some similarities regarding the obstacles to integration for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, specifically that they are perceived as dangerous; as not wanting to integrate; having difficulties finding work; xenophobia in the local society; differences in culture and feeling unwelcome (**Figure 48**).

Perceived obstacles to integration in Cypriot society

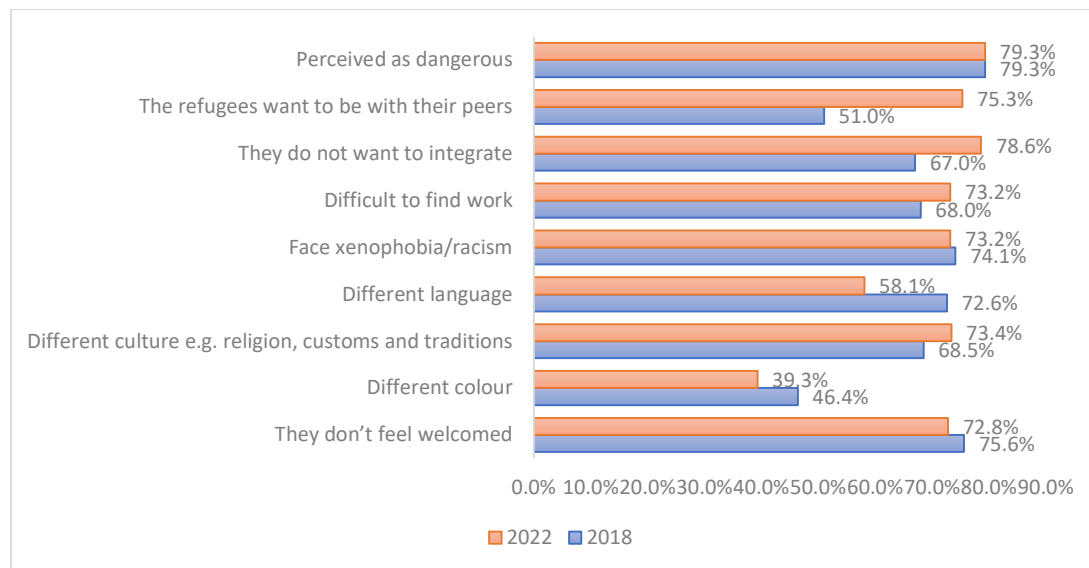


Figure 48: Differences over time: obstacles to refugee integration in Cypriot society

In comparison to 2018, there are major differences over time regarding Cypriots’ concerns about refugees. Specifically, participants focus mainly on the small size of Cyprus which, in their opinion, makes the country incapable of hosting “so many” migrants, in both 2018 and 2022, with percentages of 61.8% and 57.3%, respectively. There also appears to be a small increase from 2018 to 2022 regarding concerns over possible changes in the island's demographics (34.4% and 39.3%, respectively) and fear of criminal/violent behavior (35.9% and 42.5%, respectively) (**Figure 49**).

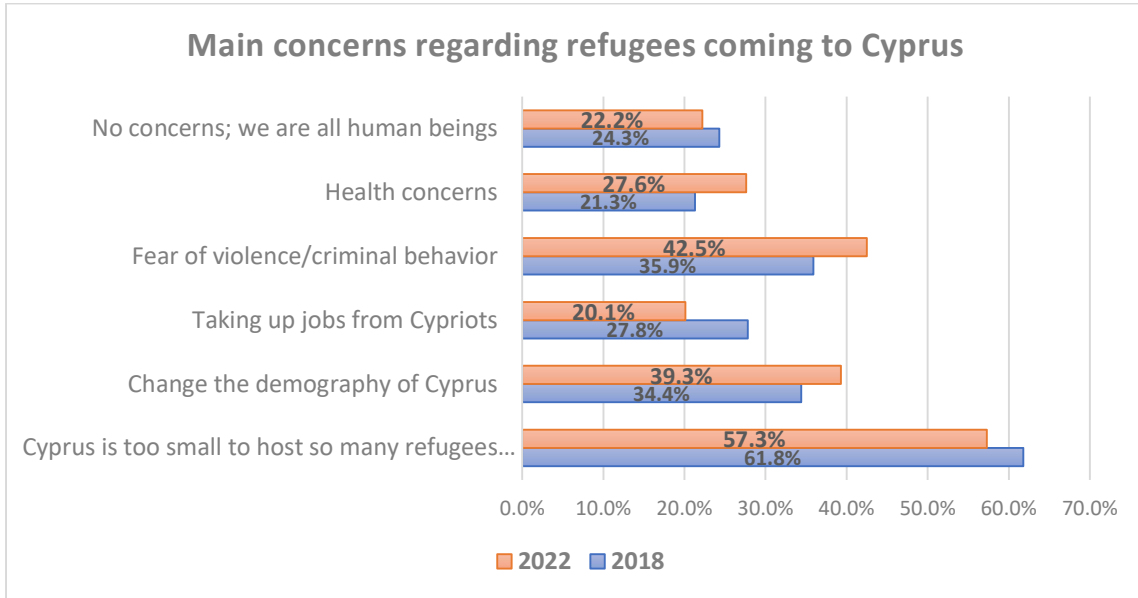


Figure 49: Differences over time in terms of main concerns regarding refugees coming to Cyprus

In terms of daily contact with refugees, it seems that over time the public comes into more frequent contact and communication with refugees (Figure 50). Nevertheless, in the present study participants stated that the contact they have is not as pleasant as they stated it to be in 2018, which could be another sign of the decreasing sensitivity towards the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants witnessed in the 2022 research. (Figure 51).

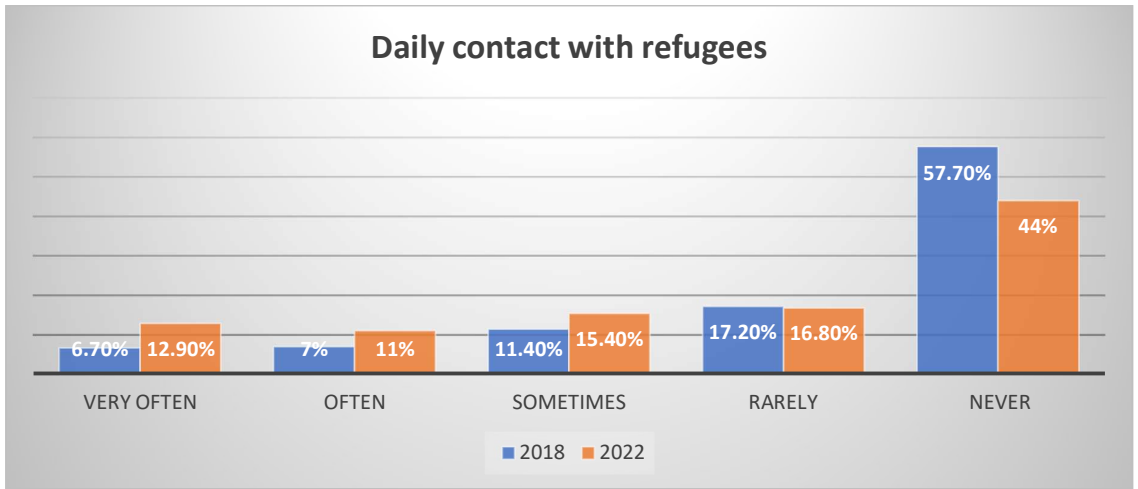


Figure 50: Differences over time in terms of daily contact with refugees

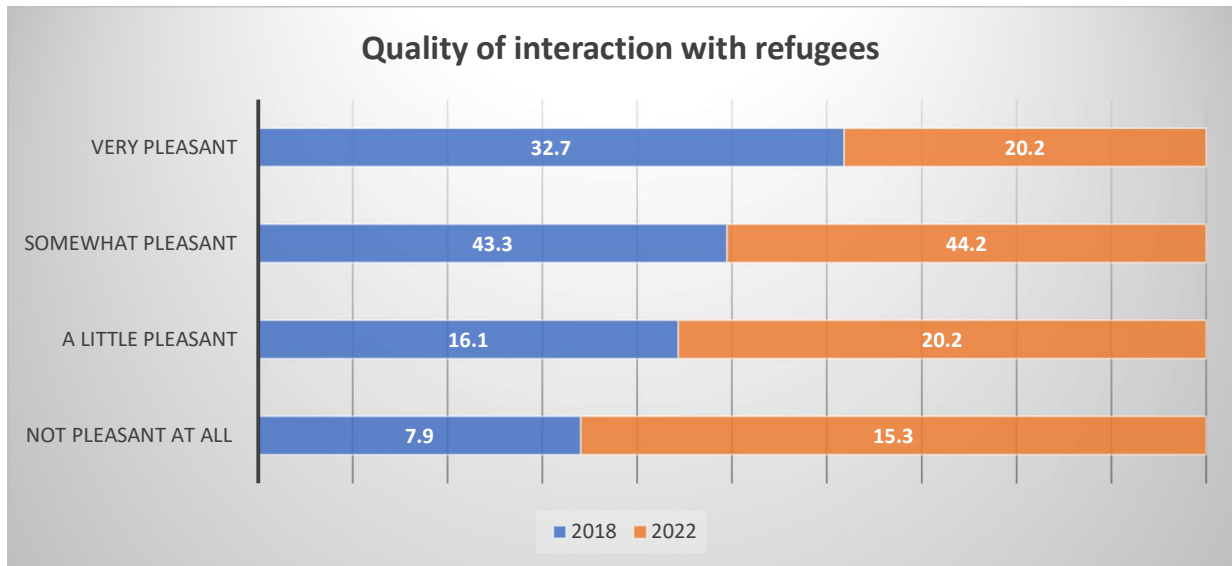


Figure 51: Differences over time in terms of quality of interaction with refugees

Participants’ opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on the economy are quite negative overall. In particular, the majority of respondents (60.1%) believe that refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live in Cyprus are bad for the economy (**Table 4**). The same pattern can be seen regarding cultural life as well. More than half of the participants (55.4%) believe that cultural life is undermined and only a small percentage of participants (23.9%) believe that culture life in Cyprus is enriched by the refugees and asylum-seekers who come to live here (**Table 5**).

In the 2018 survey, two similar questions were asked regarding the impact on the economy and on cultural life. However, the main difference is that the questions in the 2018 survey referred to “people that come to live here from other countries,” measuring general attitudes towards integration, as opposed to refugees and asylum-seekers, which was the focus of the 2022 survey. In 2018, 36.8% mentioned that the impact of integration was bad for the economy, while 29% remained neutral and 34.2% saw integration as good for the economy. The corresponding percentages for 2022 were 59.1%, 22.7% and 18.3%, respectively. As for cultural impact, in 2018, 38.3% mentioned that the impact of integration was bad for cultural life, while 24.3% remained neutral and 37.5% saw integration as good for the enrichment of cultural life. The corresponding percentages for 2022 were 56.3%, 19.9% and 23.8%, respectively.

Table 4: Differences over time in terms of participants' opinions about refugees' impact on the economy

TIME	Opinion on whether it is bad or good for the Cypriot economy that refugees and asylum seekers are coming to live here										
	Bad for the economy										Good for the economy
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2018	20,8%	5,4%	3,6%	3,8%	3,2%	29,0%	6,6%	5,7%	7,9%	2,0%	12,0%
	36,8%					29,0%	34,2%				
2022	41,1%	4,2%	3,6%	6,2%	4,0%	22,7%	3,9%	5,5%	4,2%	1,1%	3,6%
	59,1%					22,7%	18,3%				

Table 5: Differences over time in terms of participants' opinions about refugees' impact on cultural life

TIME	Opinion that Cyprus' cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live here										
	Cultural life undermined										Cultural life enriched
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2018	19,2%	6,4%	4,5%	4,3%	3,9%	24,3%	6,0%	6,4%	6,2%	3,0%	15,9%
	38,3%					24,3%	37,5%				
2022	38,0%	4,6%	4,4%	5,1%	4,2%	19,9%	4,2%	5,3%	5,4%	1,4%	7,5%
	56,3%					19,9%	23,8%				

7. Implications and Recommendations for UNHCR

The aim of this report was to assess the current norms and public opinions towards refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as to identify any trends or shifts in public opinion since the last surveys, which were conducted in 2018 and 2015. UNHCR will use this analysis for monitoring and planning purposes, and to apply informed strategies to facilitate their ongoing advocacy work.

Regarding the visibility of UNHCR, results have shown that even though UNHCR was spontaneously mentioned less frequently than in 2018, when participants were directly asked whether they had ever heard of UNHCR before, this percentage has now increased considerably reaching 91.8% of participants in 2022. This percentage was 52.8% in 2018. Thus, it is evident that UNHCR's visibility has increased since 2018. Possible reasons why UNHCR is not mentioned more frequently in the spontaneous question might be related to the way the question was formed. Asking about organizations helping refugees (in Greek language: βοηθούν πρόσφυγες) might have led to priming other organizations which are associated with responding to calls for immediate assistance covering basic needs such food, clothes and housing. A possible explanation would be that UNHCR is perceived to have a different role than other organizations more frequently mentioned and was not easily recalled when hearing the word 'helping' (in Greek βοηθούν). In case of a follow-up survey, it would be useful to revise the question or specific wording used.

Visits to UNCHR's website and social media pages have increased since 2018. While the majority of participants stated that they never or rarely visited the website back in 2018, this percentage dropped to only half of the participants in 2022. Cyprus television continues to be the primary source of staying informed regarding issues related to migration even though social media has its share in the distribution of information. Given that these are the primary and secondary sources for the general public to stay informed, UNHCR could make use of those media more in their campaigns. UNHCR may also consider investing in the production of a TV media campaign premised on the principles of direct, indirect and para-social forms of contact where refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants could have the chance to come in contact with Cypriots and discuss the problems they are facing and offer their perspectives (see Shappa et al, 2005; Amichai-Hamburger et al, 2006; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Liebkind et al., 2014; Wright et al. 1997; Zhou et al, 2018).

As the local media are the primary source of information regarding migration issues, it is important for UNHCR to enhance its outreach to journalists and offer specific trainings that would provide information on the asylum and migration topic, including on the basic differences between the terms *refugee*, *asylum-seeker* and *migrant*. Word associations for all three groups include very strong and recurrent associations with words that highlight suffering, hardship and pain. Excess attention on the suffering and hardships of those populations tends to create a profile of a victim that is powerless. UNHCR could continue seeking to strike a balance in presenting refugees as ordinary people who do not lose hope despite having been forced to flee on the one hand, and as people faced with hardships and insurmountable challenges, on the other.

It is also important to face the changes in technology, media and society through a critical reconstruction of education to an educational system which produces pedagogies that provide media literacy and enables students, teachers, and citizens to discern the nature and effects of media culture and empowers students and citizens to adequately read media messages and produce media themselves in order to be active participants in a democratic society (Kellner, 1995; Kellner & Share, 2005). Critical Media Literacy (CML) helps people to discriminate and evaluate media content, to critically dissect media forms, to investigate media effects and uses, to use media intelligently, and to construct alternative media (Kellner & Share, 2007). Therefore, it is recommended that UNHCR invests further in critical media literacy trainings and in the possibility to have further trainings with additional groups such as journalists and the refugee community. This will offer opportunities to set up projects in the future that will focus on the opening up of new spaces from within which traditionally marginalized and excluded voices may speak (Sholle & Denski, 1995).

As we have seen, asylum-seekers are perceived more negatively compared to refugees and migrants. Due to the events of 1974 in Cyprus, and Cypriots' identification with refugees, the latter group is more positively regarded. Trainings regarding the role of media in forming public opinion towards these groups (especially asylum-seekers) should be on an ongoing goal for

UNHCR. Journalists need to be informed of the great negative impact the use of threat frames in their reporting has on attitudes towards the integration of refugees and migrants. On the contrary, when humanitarian frames are used the impact has been found to be positive. Further presence on social media should be considered by UNHCR, having in mind the increasing visibility and awareness that is recorded in the present report.

As in the previous report, concerns among the Cypriot public regarding migration focus mainly on the small size of Cyprus, which, in their opinion, makes the country incapable of hosting “so many” migrants. Not surprisingly, and consistent with previous findings on fears, there is a preference towards the idea of introducing a limit to the number of refugees and asylum-seekers that Cyprus can receive. The argumentation that Cyprus does not have the capacity to accept more asylum-seekers or deal with increased arrivals is also reflected in the findings. Additional concerns that are gaining ground are of possible changes in the island's demographics and fear of criminal/violent behavior. As it was suggested in the previous report, special attention should be given to deconstructing the representation of Cyprus as densely populated, and being under constant threat of foreign exploitation, which has already been noted by other authors in the past, in particular as they relate to representations of the Cyprus issue (Trimikliniotis & Demetriou, 2006; Trimikliniotis, 2013; Kadianaki et al. 2018). The coupling of this representation with ideas about the “need for a ceiling” in numbers are alarming.

On a positive note, there is clear recognition of the difficult conditions refugees and asylum-seekers are facing in reception centers, which are considered unsafe and unsuitable for habitation. Additionally, there is a positive response to calls for support and donations of food, clothes, money and other forms of support in daily life situations for refugees and asylum-seekers, which was expressed by a majority of the population. What is also encouraging is the expression of intention to continue offering this kind of support in the future. It appears that the general public finds it more acceptable to support refugees through charitable donations than granting them asylum, integrating them in society and eventually offering citizenship. In terms of daily contact with refugees, it seems that over time local citizens come into more frequent contact and communication with refugees as compared to 2018. However, they state that the contact they have is not as pleasant as they stated it to be in 2018; this could be another indication that sensitivity to the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants is decreasing.

Overall, UNHCR could build on the helpful attitudes and extend them in topics where such positivity is lacking. One of the major policy interventions shown to be effective is related to the contact hypothesis. Any programmes aiming to bring the local population in contact with refugees and migrants will certainly help in alleviating some of the fears (both realistic and symbolic) that lead to prejudice and resistance to policies that support refugees. Last but not least, there is a great need to bring the “integration agenda” back to the fore of public discussion and policy.

8. References

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9. Annexes/Appendices

APPENDIX A. Unweighted descriptive tables and figures of questionnaire

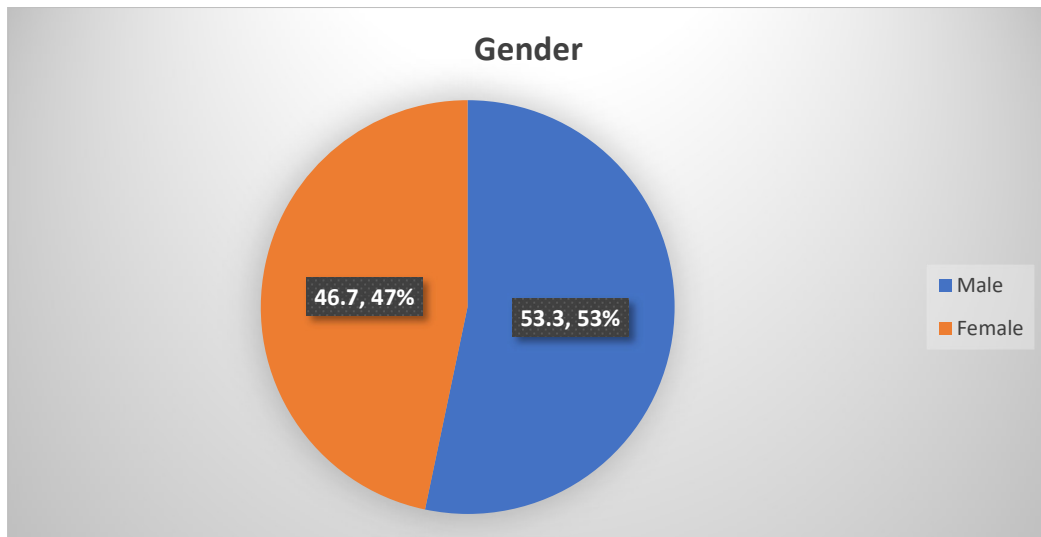


Figure 1. Distribution of gender (unweighted)

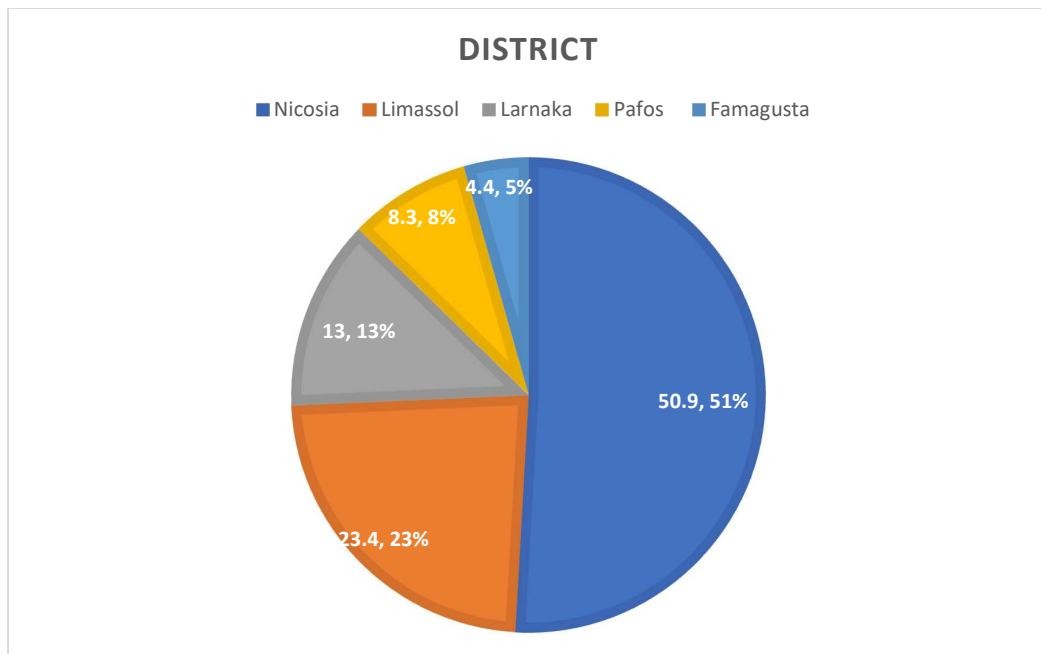


Figure 2. Distribution of district (unweighted)

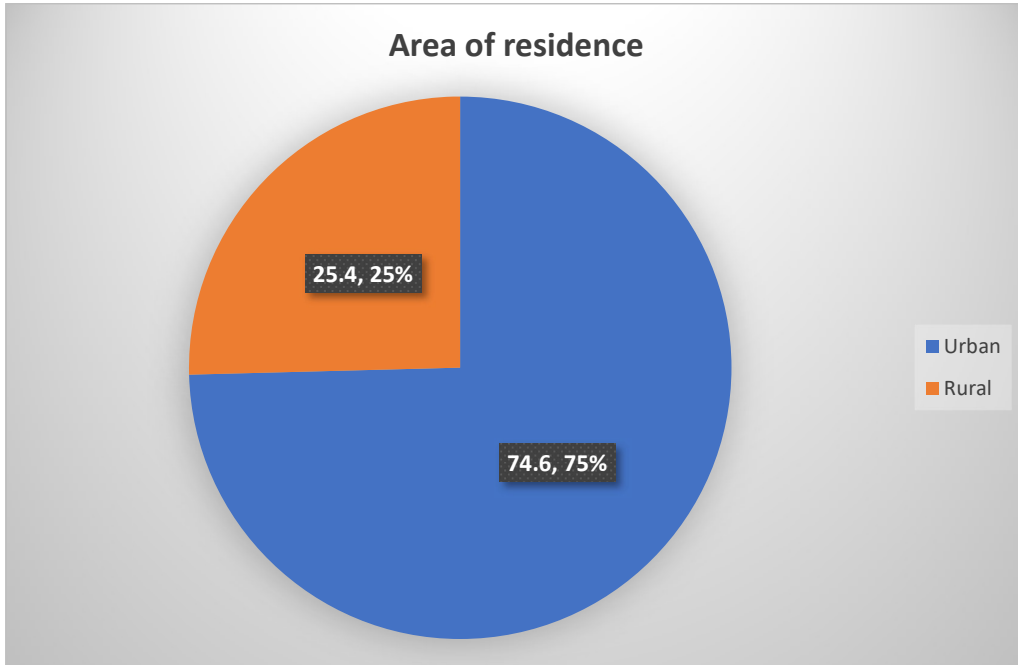


Figure 3. Distribution of area of residence (unweighted)

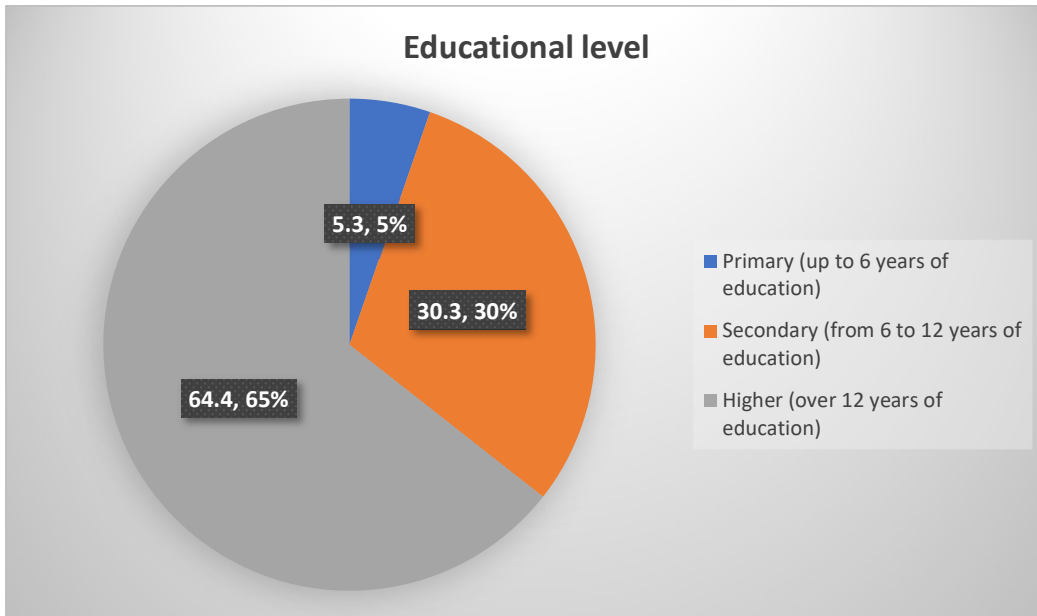


Figure 4. Distribution of educational level (unweighted)

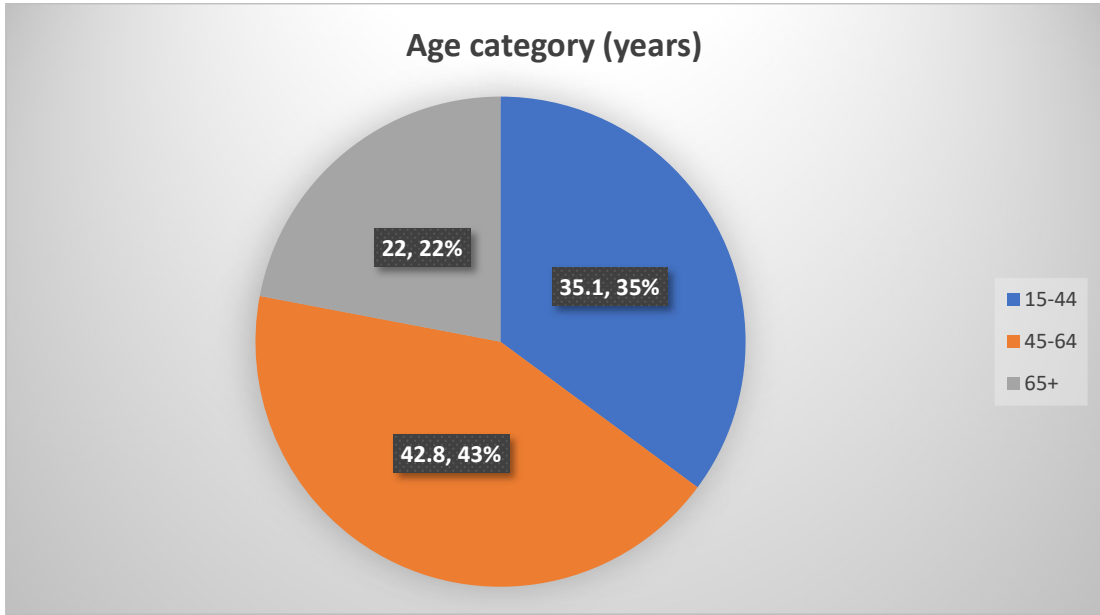


Figure 5. Distribution of age group (unweighted)

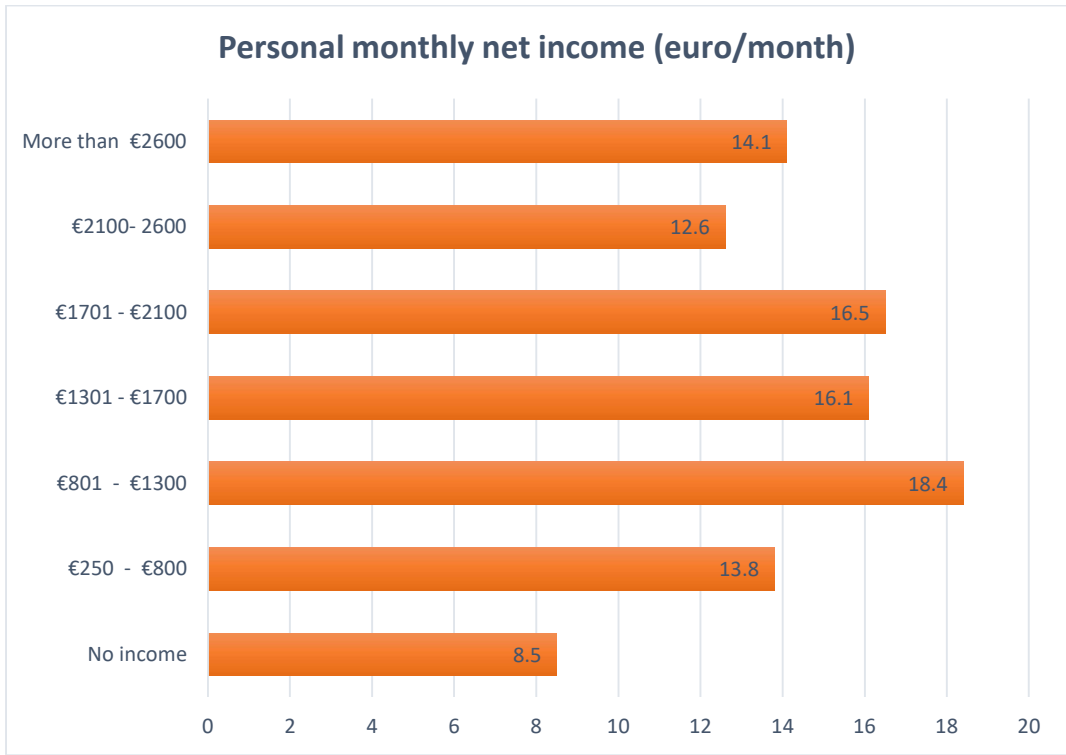


Figure 6. Distribution of personal net monthly income (unweighted)

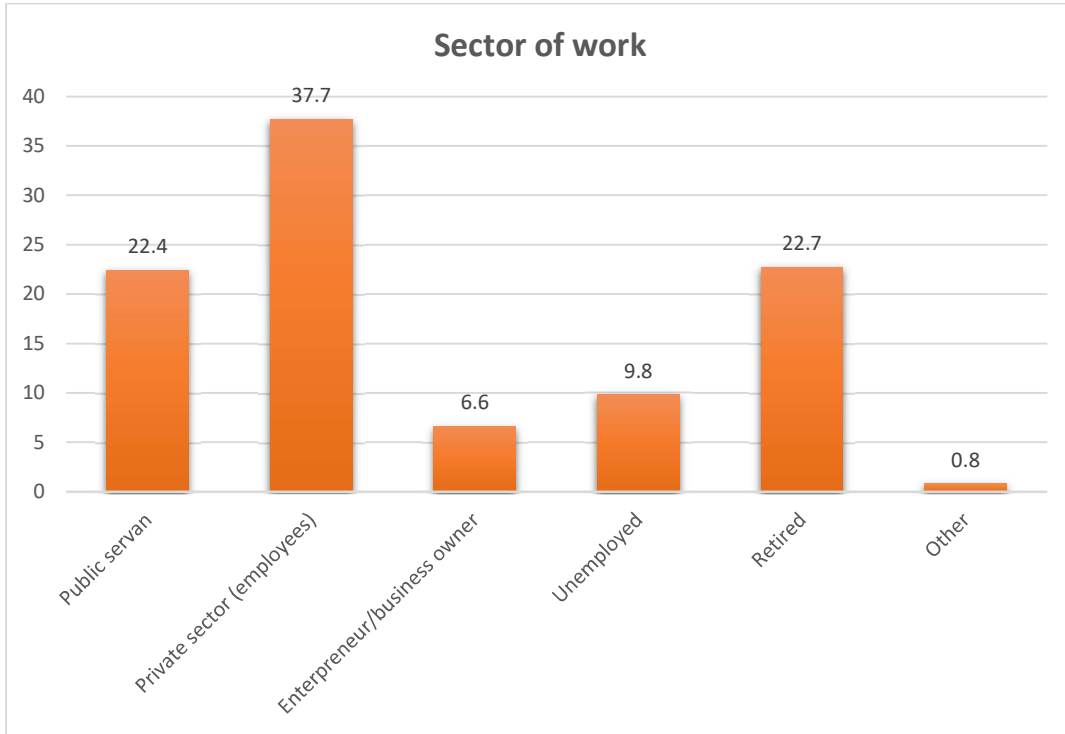


Figure 7. Distribution of sector of work (unweighted)

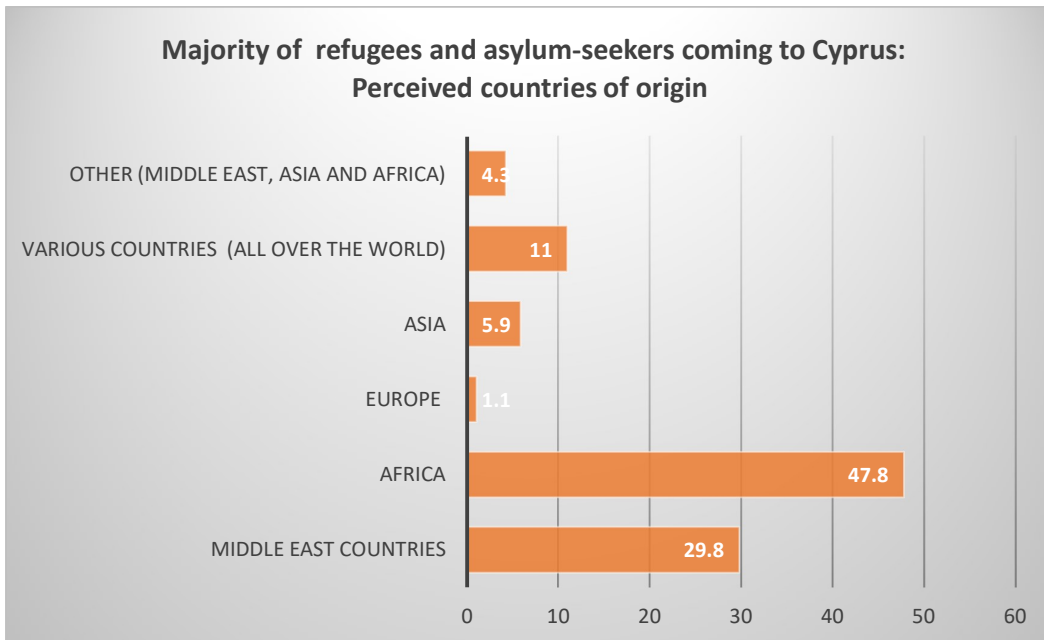


Figure 8. Distribution of country of origin of refugees and asylum-seekers (unweighted)

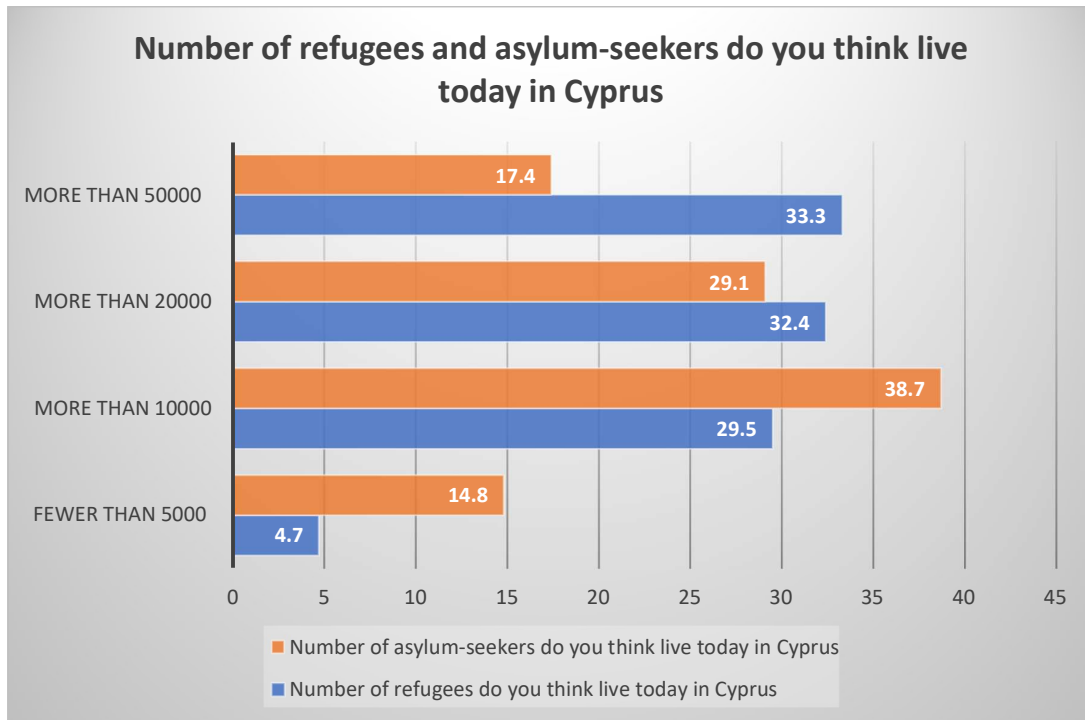


Figure 9. Distribution of estimation of numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus (unweighted)

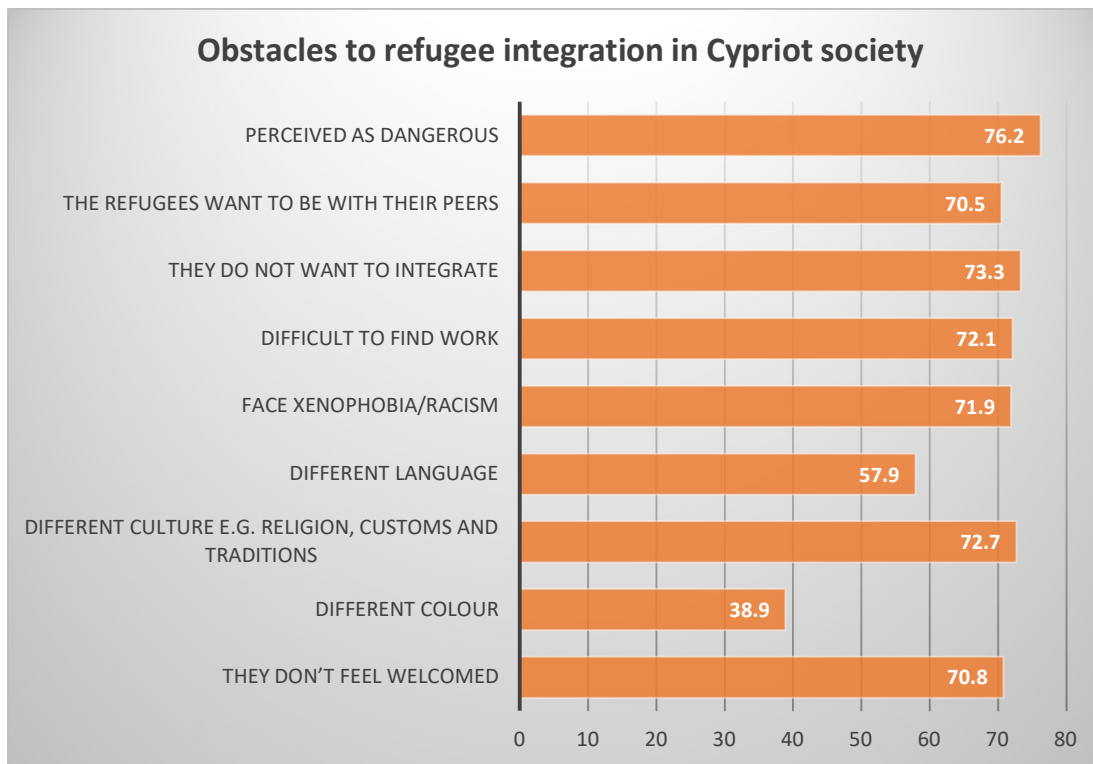


Figure 10. Obstacles to refugee integration in Cypriot society (unweighted)

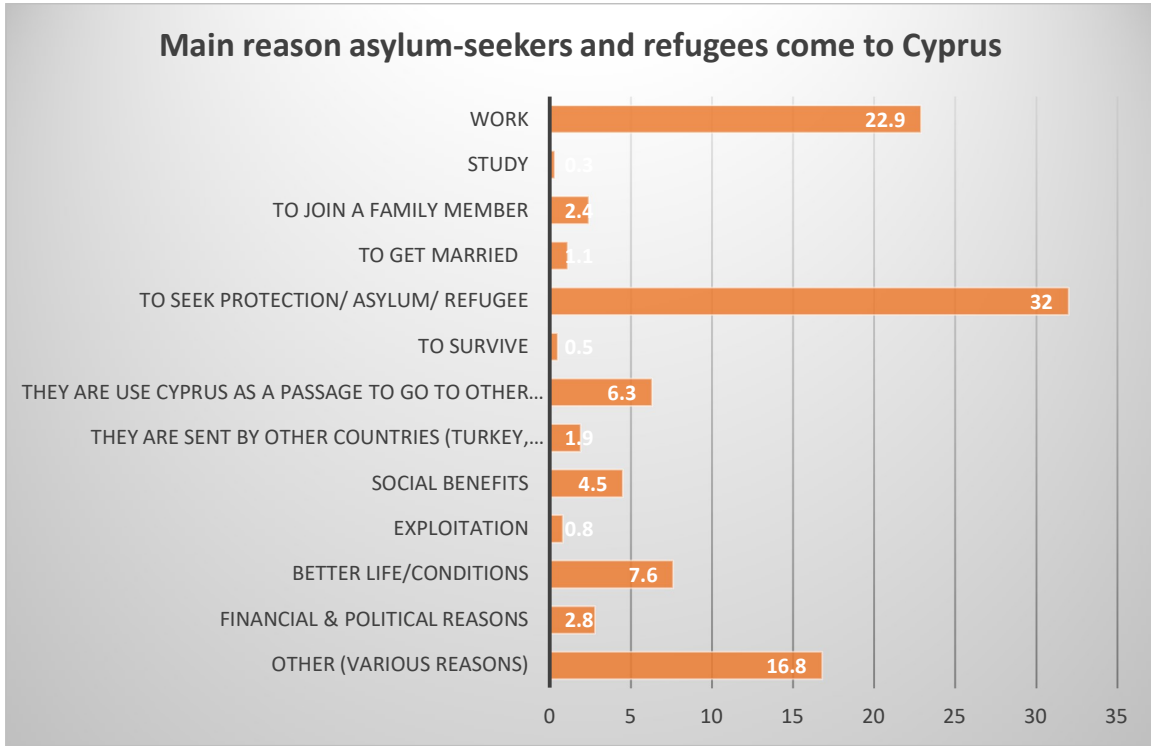


Figure 11. Main reason asylum-seekers and refugees come to Cyprus (unweighted)

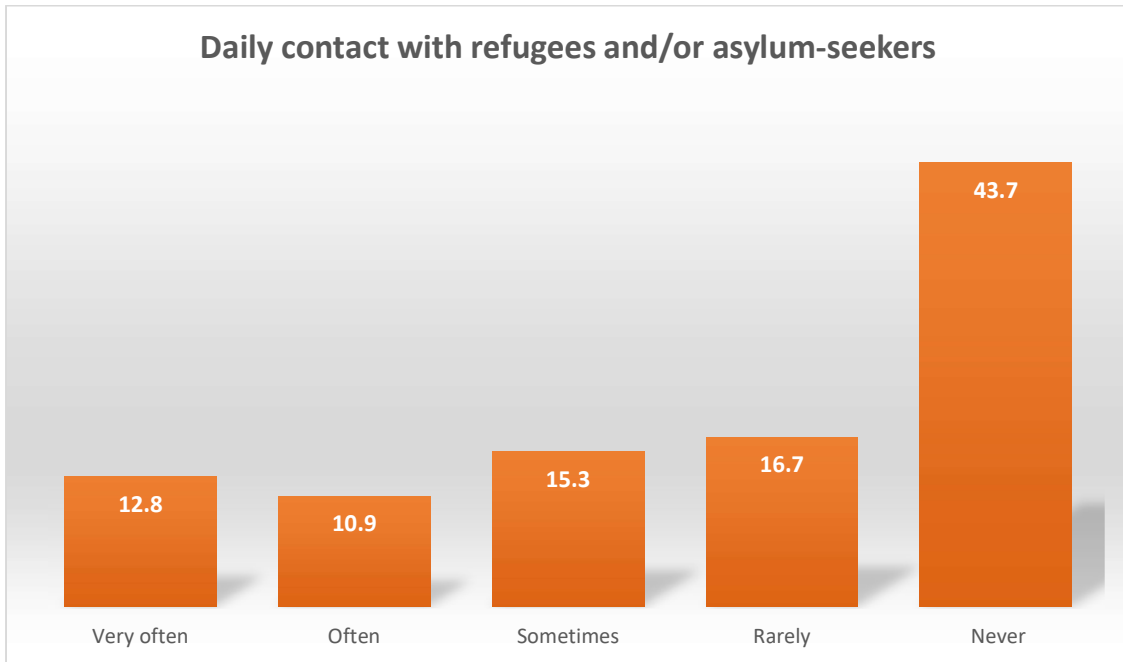


Figure 12. Daily contact with refugees and/or asylum-seekers (unweighted)

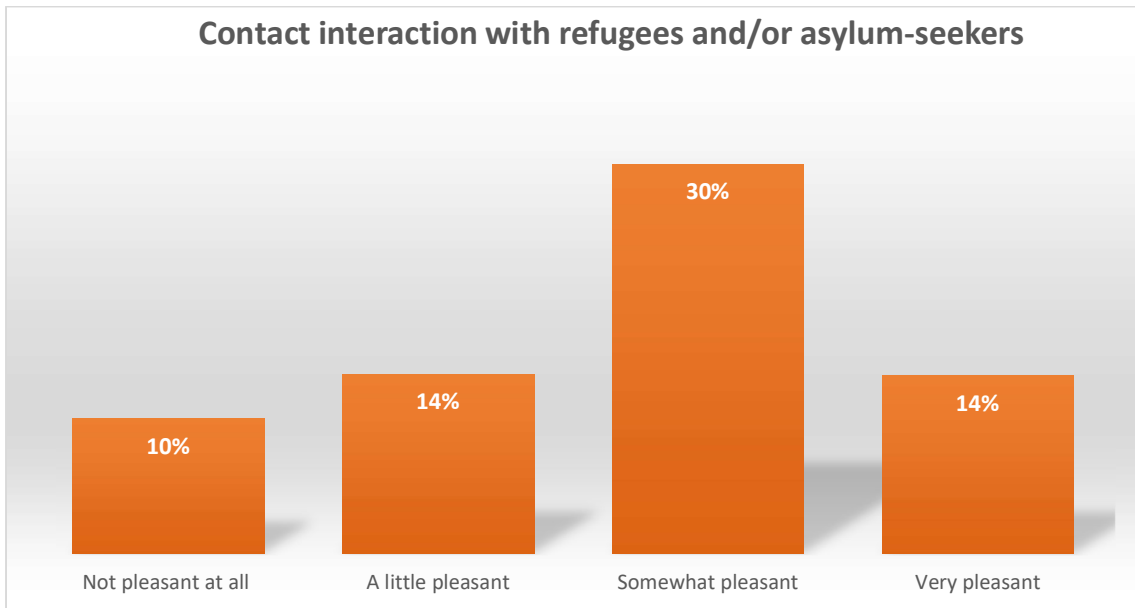


Figure 13. Contact interaction with refugees and/or asylum-seekers (unweighted)

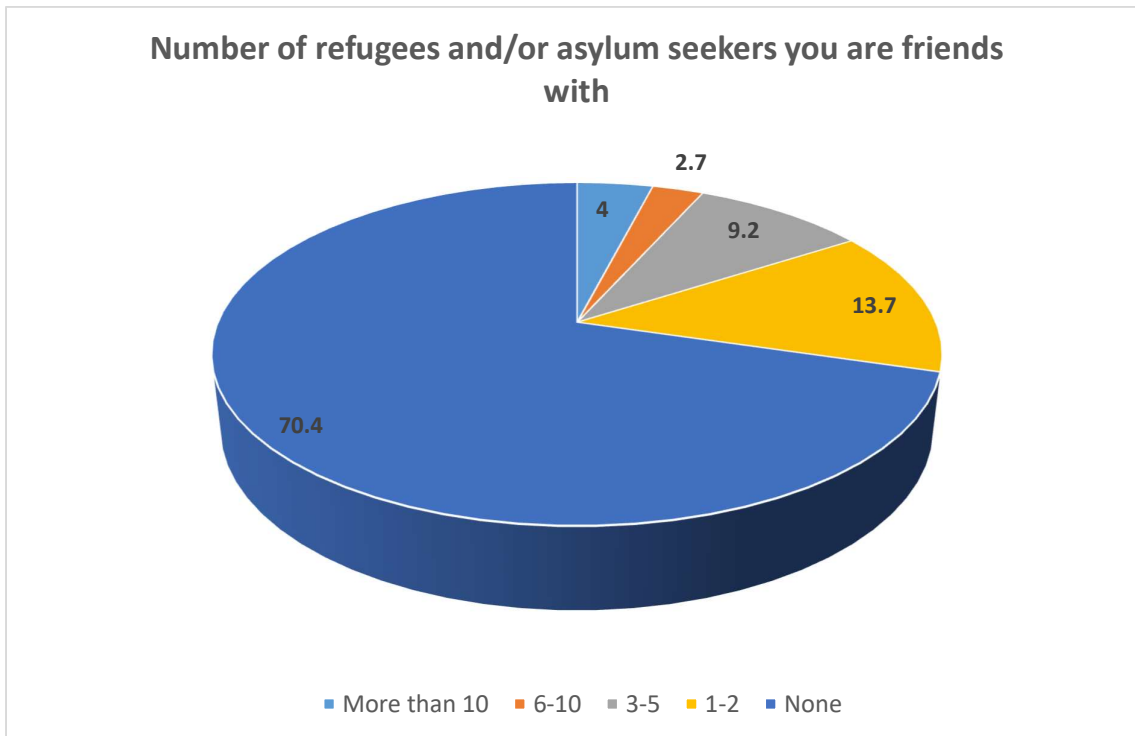


Figure 14. Number of refugees and/or asylum-seekers you are friends with (unweighted)

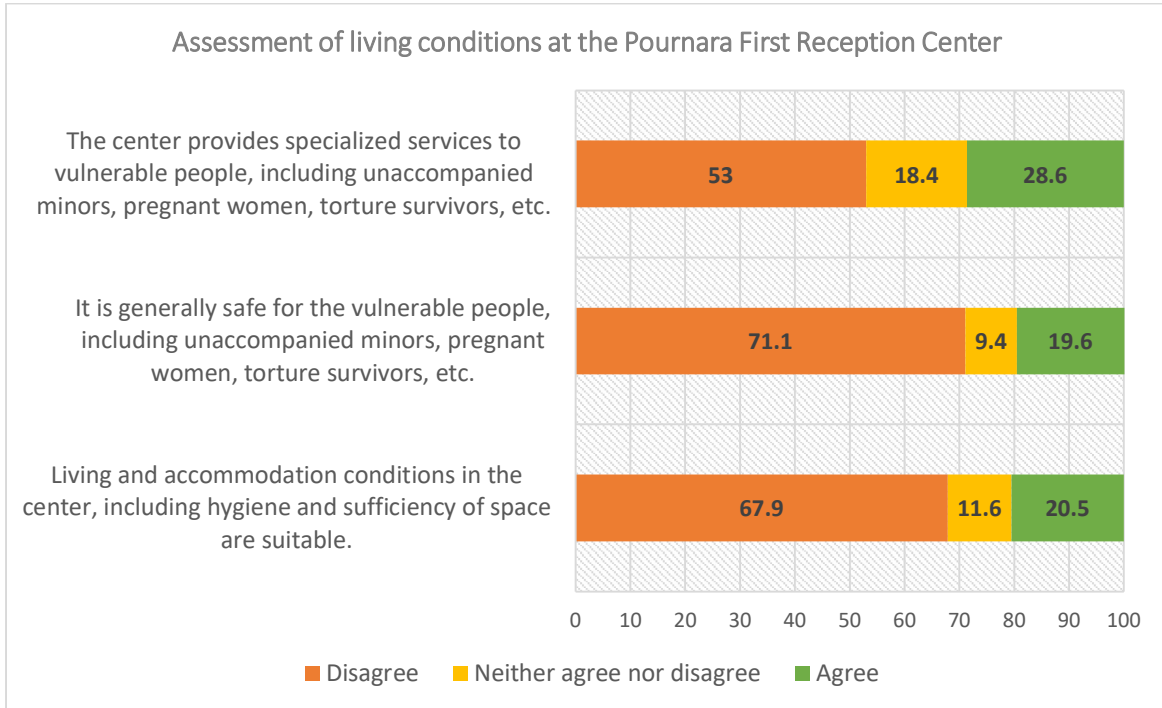


Figure 15. Assessment of living conditions at the Pournara First Reception Center (unweighted)

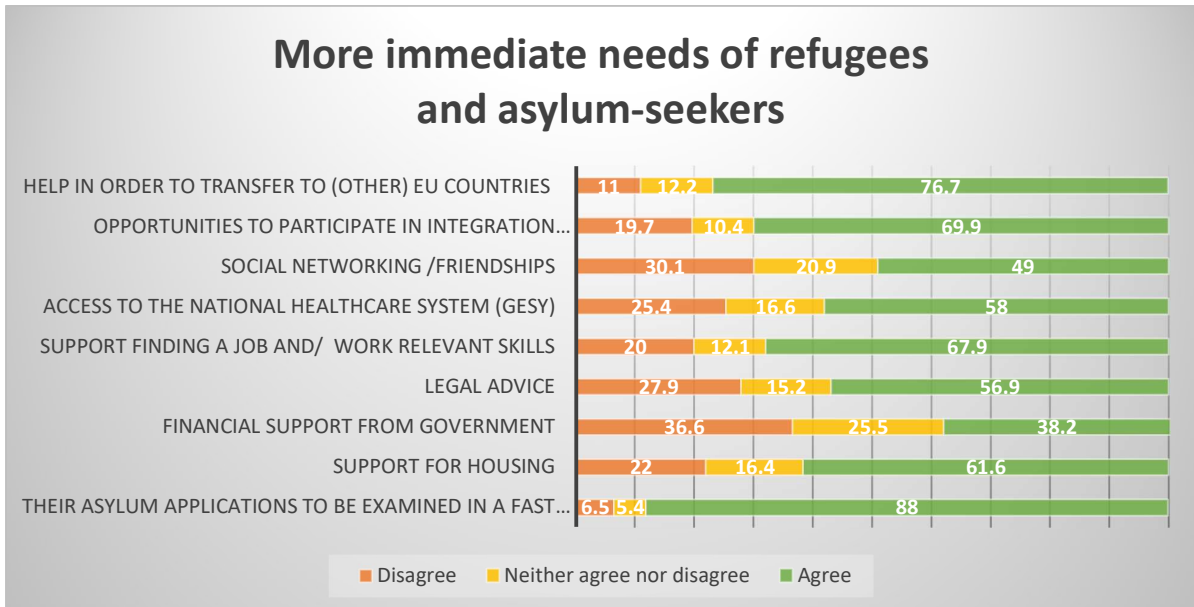


Figure 16. More immediate needs of refugees and asylum-seekers (unweighted)

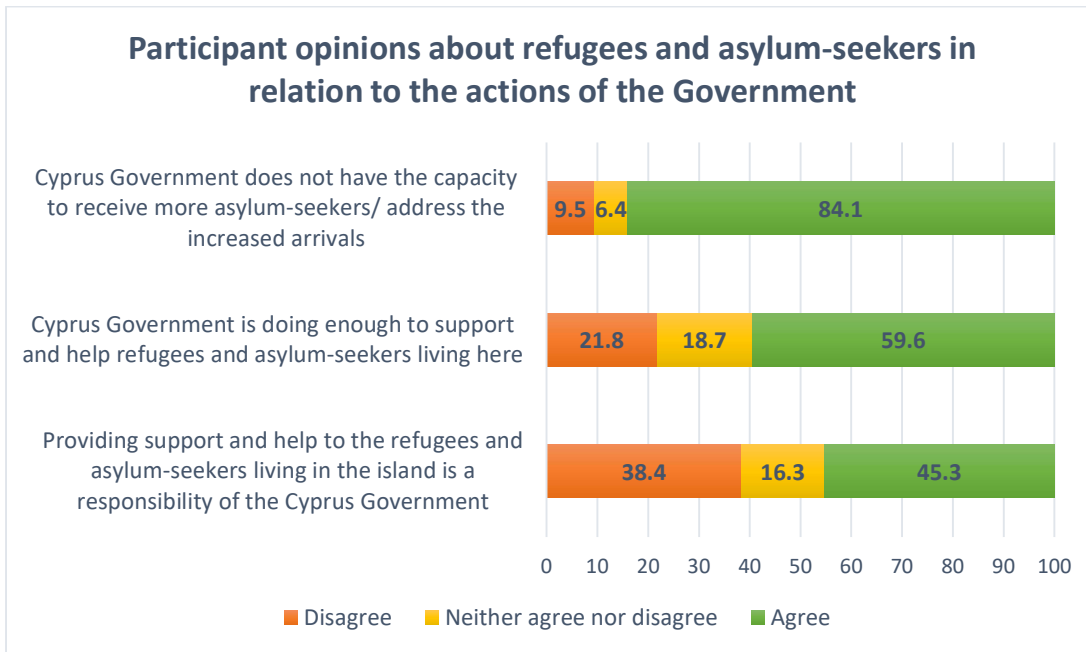


Figure 17. Opinion of GCs about refugees and asylum-seekers in relation to the actions of the Government (unweighted)

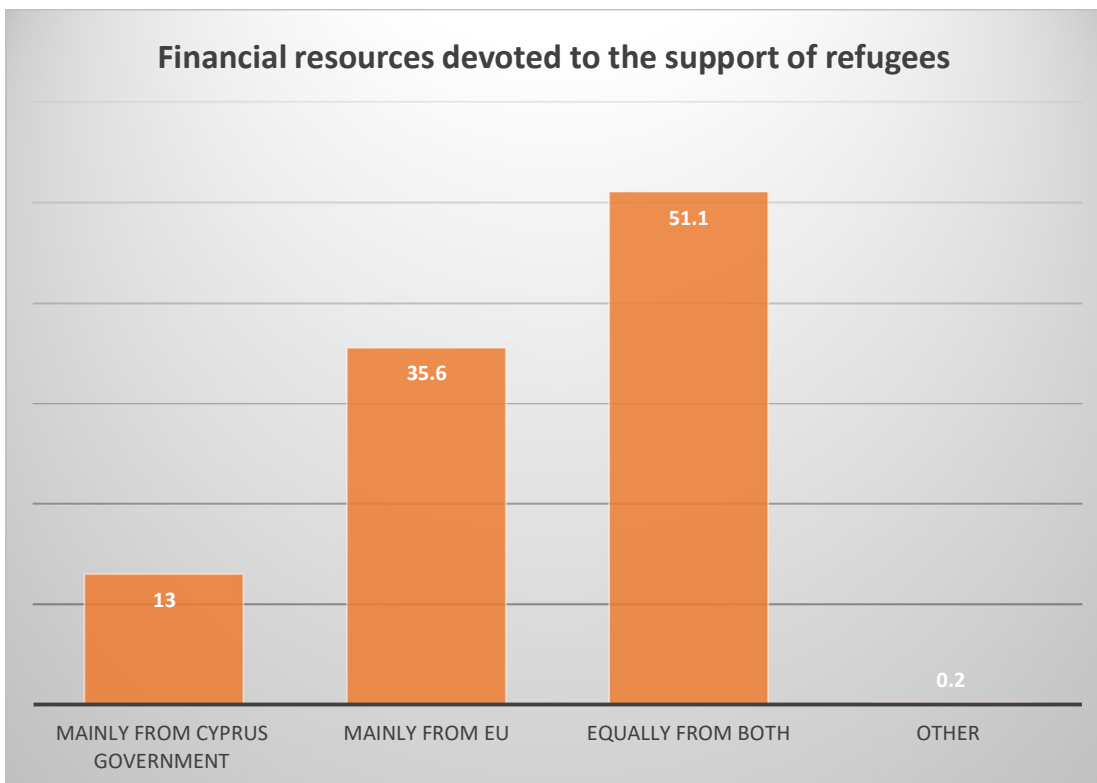


Figure 18. Financing of the development and implementation of projects supporting refugees (unweighted)

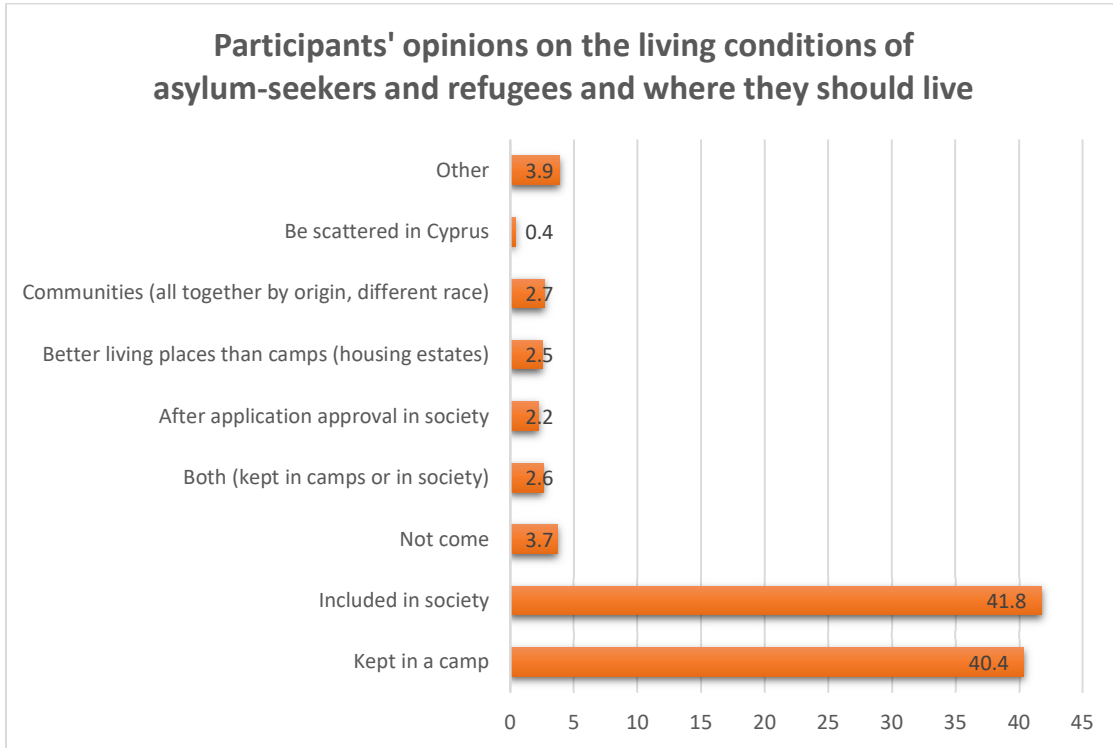


Figure 19. Participants' views on the living conditions of asylum-seekers and refugees and where they should live (unweighted)

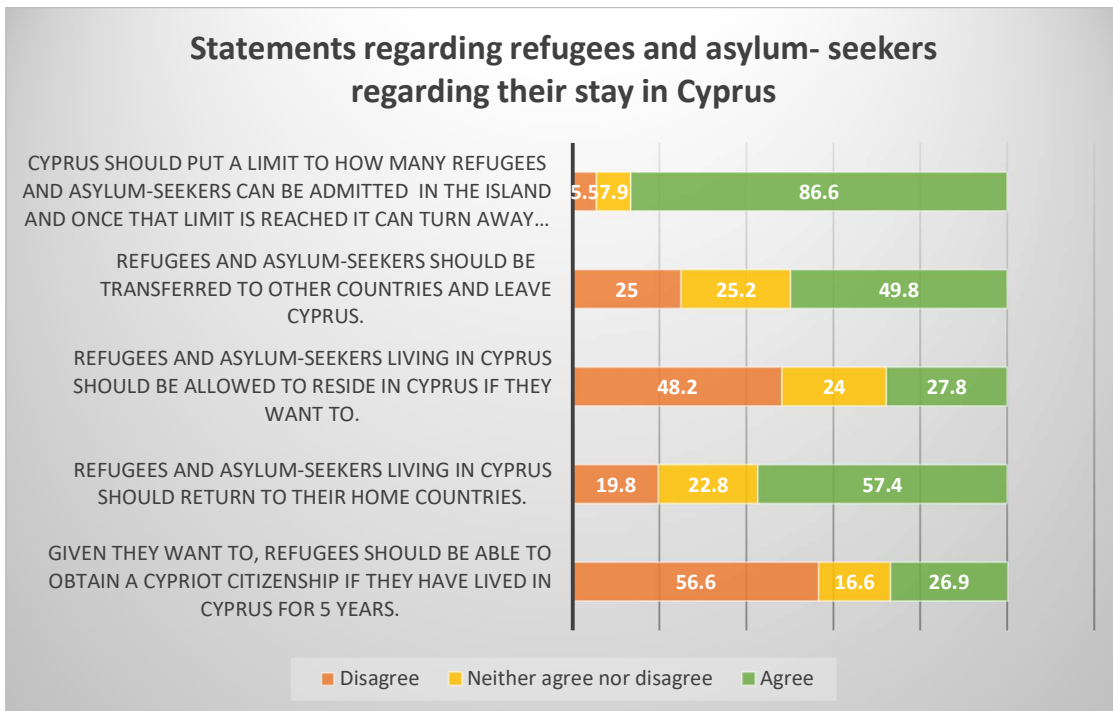


Figure 20. Participants' support for policies regarding refugees' stay in Cyprus (unweighted)

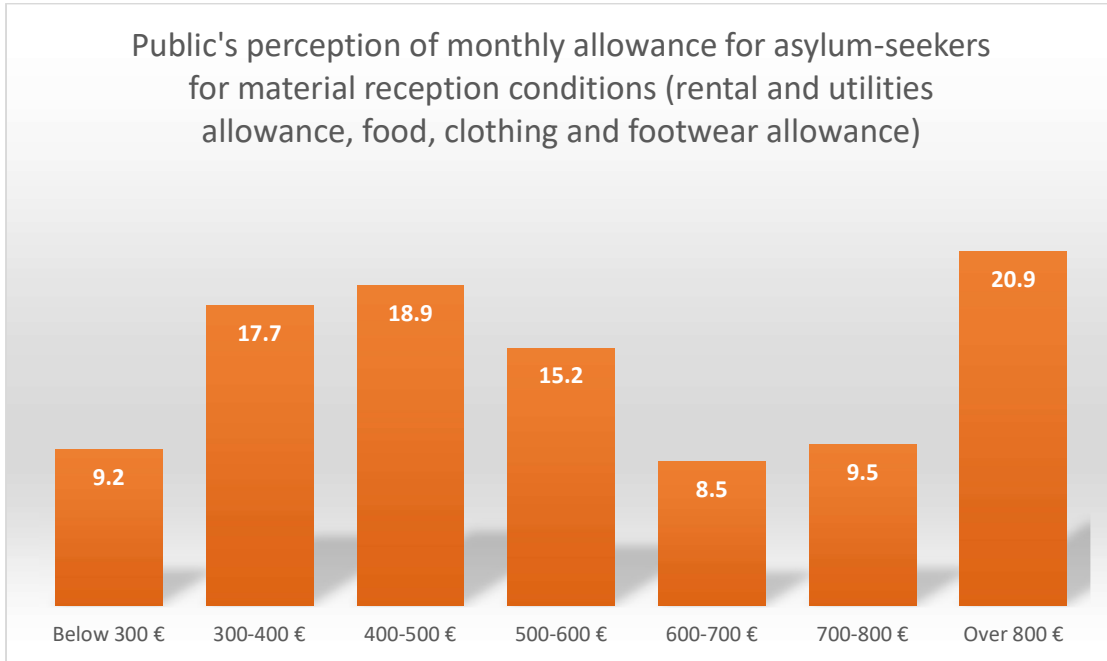


Figure 21. Public's perception of the monthly amount granted to asylum-seekers for material reception conditions (euros/month) (unweighted)

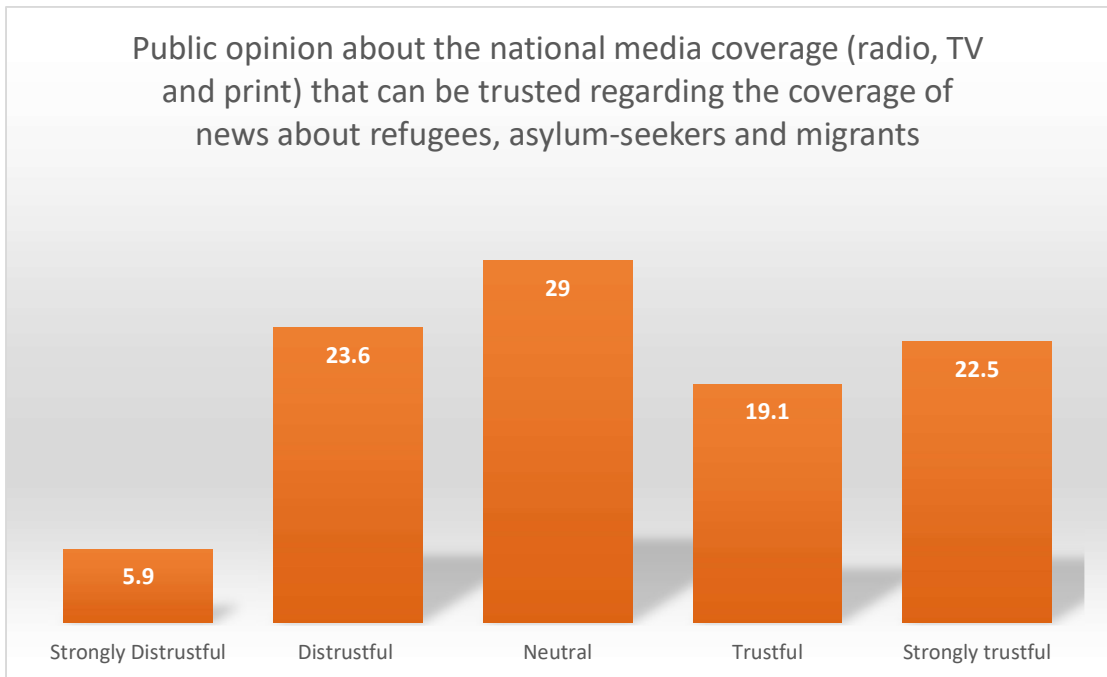


Figure 22. Public opinion about the national media coverage (radio, TV and print) that can be trusted regarding the coverage of news about refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants (unweighted)

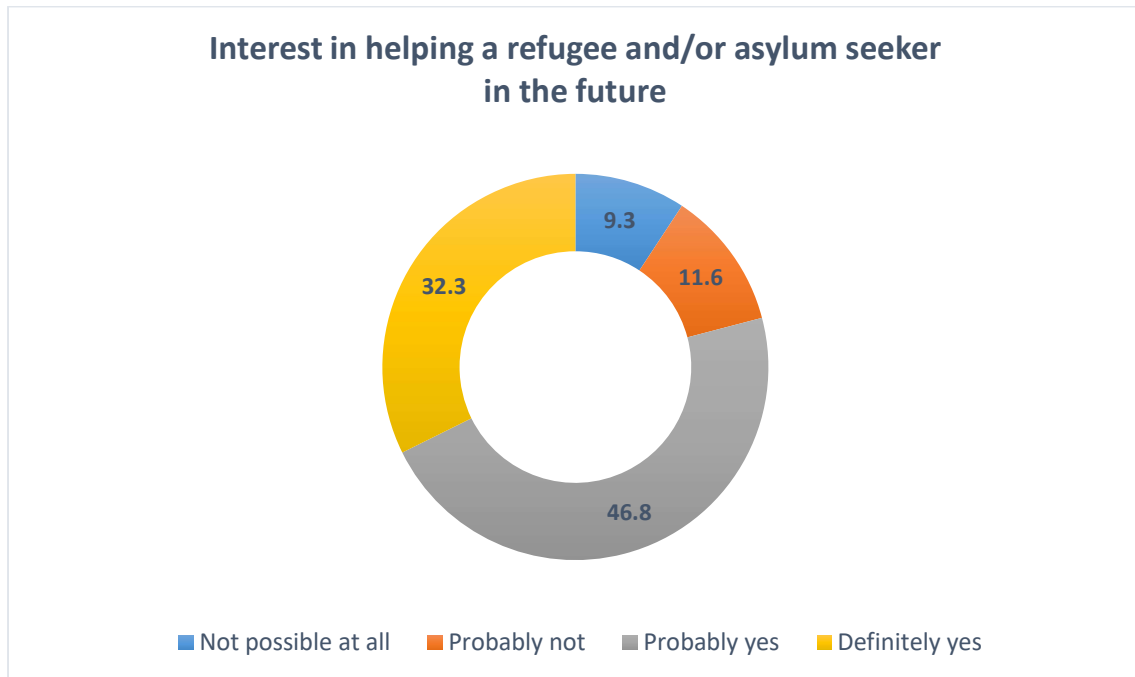


Figure 23. Interest in helping a refugee and/or asylum-seeker in the future (unweighted)

Table 1A. Participants' opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on the economy (unweighted)

Opinion on whether it is bad or good for the Cypriot economy that refugees and asylum-seekers are coming to live here										
Bad for the economy										Good for the economy
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
41,1%	4,2%	3,6%	6,2%	4,0%	22,7%	3,9%	5,5%	4,2%	1,1%	3,6%
59,1%					22,7%	18,3%				

Table 2A. Participants' opinions about the impact of refugees and asylum-seekers on cultural life (unweighted)

Opinion that Cyprus' cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live here										
Cultural life undermined										Cultural life enriched
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
38%	4.6%	4.4%	5.1%	4.2%	19.9%	4.2%	5.3%	5.4%	1.4%	7.5%
56.3%					19.9%	23.8%				

Table 3A. Opinion of respondents about the Ministerial Order of the permitted fields of employment for asylum-seekers in Cyprus (unweighted)

Opinion of respondents about the current Ministerial Order of the permitted fields of employment for asylum-seekers in Cyprus (agriculture-animal husbandry-fishery, animal shelters and pet hotels, processing, bakery, dairy production night-shift, waste management, trade-repairs, service provision)				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
13.7%	10.7%	17.9%	29.5%	28.1%
24.5%		17.9%	57.6%	
Prefer that the sectors of work/permitted fields of employment would increase or decrease				
Decrease	49.6%			
Increase	50.4%			

APPENDIX B: Focus Groups Guide

Focus Group Guide

Duration: 90 - 120 minutes

Participants: 6-8

Introduce participants to the focus group (10 minutes)

(Use the Cypriot dialect throughout the focus group)

1. Salute and introduce yourself and your role as a moderator (facilitating the discussion). If there is a second person assisting you or observing the focus group, clearly explain their role (i.e., they will be taking notes for research purposes, do not worry about them, etc.).
2. Explain that this discussion that you are having today, is being held in the context of a bigger research project conducted by UCFS (ΠΑΚΕΠΕ) that studies how Cypriots understand the notion “migrants,” “refugees,” “asylum-seekers”. So today you will discuss together the situation around migration and **refugees and asylum-seekers**.
3. Assure them about anonymity and confidentiality. Inform them that if any question brings them in a difficult position, they have the option of not participating in the discussion around that question.
4. Ask them to express themselves freely and remind them that there are no wrong or right answers. The aim is to have a discussion between each other and to interact with the others. During the focus group, whoever wants to talk can do it without the need to take turns. There is no special knowledge required and that the questions and topics will be simple.
5. Ask them to be respectful towards each other and talk politely.
6. State that the discussion is being recorded for research purposes, in order for the researchers to be able to go back and listen to what has been said when analyzing their data. As explained before, their identity remains anonymous.
7. Handle the consensus form and ask them to read it and sign it if they are ok with what you have mentioned and what is written in the form.
8. Ask if they have any question before you start.
9. Each person introduces themselves briefly before moving to the focus groups questions.

Warm-up question (relevant to understanding concepts) (10-20 minutes)

Basically in the first section, we will try and see whether terms have the same meaning to participants or they can make distinctions between various groups – how and when their status changes.

-Starting with our discussion, could we discuss a bit on who do you think a “**migrant**” is? - What is your opinion about who is a “**refugee**”? - What is the difference between a **refugee and an asylum-seeker**, do you think?

-Prompts to help you advancing the discussion: What about their country of origin? What about their **reason** for leaving their country? What do they do in the countries they move to? Are there any characteristics that refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers (depending on the question) share as a group? How are the two terms similar or different?

-NOTES: If it comes up that the word refugee is associated with 1974 displaced people, allow them to elaborate, but before moving to the next section, make sure you clarify that in this case by refugee we mean....

Main Body (understanding profiles and needs) (40-60 minutes)

Understanding of the situation in Cyprus.

-What do you think is the situation in Cyprus with refugees?

*Probes: how many refugees live in Cyprus, where are they from, what do they do here, where do they live, how is the Government treating them, how is society treating them, what do they do for living, is the situation different in other parts of the world? How?

-How do you feel about this situation? (elaborate) NOTE: it is possible that participants will cover these two questions already from the previous question. If they do, no need to pose the questions again. You can simply ask for further clarifications/elaborations if needed.

-In your opinion, how is Cyprus affected by refugees? (Is Cyprus as a country gaining/loosing from refugees?) (elaborate) NOTE: it is possible that participants will cover these two questions already from the previous question. If they do, no need to pose the questions again. You can simply ask for further clarifications/elaborations if needed.

Perspectives:

-What do Cypriots think of refugees? What do Cypriots think of asylum-seekers? What do Cypriots think of migrants? What do Cypriots think of irregular migrants? (παράτυποι μετανάστες, χωρίς χαρτιά)

Additional suggested questions: Is there a different treatment to groups of refugees based on characteristics such as, nationality, gender and age? Amid the recent war in Ukraine, what do Cypriots think of refugees from Ukraine?

Perspectives on integration: Refugees' integration refers to integration within multiple contexts, including health, education, economy and labor market and social life. Do you think refugees are provided adequate support to be able to integrate in the Cypriot community?

Imagine you had to flee your home country due to war or violence or persecution and had to cross an international border to find safety in another country. What would you need after leaving everything behind? What are the reasons refugees may not manage their difficulties? What do you feel helps refugees manage their difficulties?

Perspectives on Government's obligations:

In your opinion, does the State has any legal obligations towards refugees? (Prompt: legal duties include performing actions which are enforced by a court of law). **are prescribed by international and EU law, including safeguarding the right to seek asylum, ensuring dignified living conditions for asylum-seekers and supporting refugees to integrate in the economic and social fabric of the hosting country....**

In your opinion, does the State have any moral obligations towards refugees? (Prompt: a moral obligation arises out of considerations of right and wrong).

MEDIA COVERAGE

Elaborate also on media coverages on issues of migrants – how do they feel about it every time they see e.g., a beating taking place, a demonstration, scenes from Pournara. How about the Government, the way its position is being communicated?

Perspectives on Pournara First Reception Center:

What is your opinion about “Pournara” the first reception center in Kokkinotrimithia? (Prompts: in terms of the center’s premises and infrastructure, living and accommodation conditions, vulnerable populations, staff-beneficiaries’ relationship). How local populations (near Pournara or other centers) are affected?

Cool-down (actors and actions, policies) (10-20 minutes)

Now if we were to discuss the future and different possibilities, -Firstly, do you believe that the situation needs to be improved or is it fine as it is currently? - How can the situation be improved?

*Prompts: what can the Government do? What can Cypriots do? What can immigrants/ refugees do? What do refugees/migrants need? Are there any other actors (NGOS, groups, etc.) that should be taking action? Who? What action? Should migrants/refugees stay? Should they leave? What does the Government want? What do refugees, and migrants want? What can be done differently? What should we continue doing?

NOTE: In this question we do not specify if we refer to migrants and/or refugees. Let them discuss on their own and see if they make themselves the distinction. If not, introduce a question, at some point, to ask them if they think there should be different things happening for the two groups or not.

Closing (5 minutes)

1. Inform the participants that you are done with the questions.
2. **Ask them if there is anything that they would like to add that WAS NOT TOUCHED UPON DURING THE DISCUSSION – IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE WORTHY OF DISCUSSION?**
3. Thank them for participating and for sharing their thoughts, feelings and knowledge with each other
4. Stop the recorder
5. Sometimes participants will continue discussing the topic after the recorder is stopped. Allow this conversation to happen and be attentive to it. If something interesting comes up, take notes on what happened once you are alone. Remember to also take some notes of things that captured your attention during the focus group and could not be captured by the recorder (i.e., some group dynamics, face expressions, conflicts).

APPENDIX C: Questionnaire in English language

Good morning / Good evening. My name is and I am calling you from the University Research Center for Field Studies of the University of Cyprus. We are conducting a survey of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus and we would like to listen to your opinion. The questionnaire is ONLY 20 minutes long and all information is anonymous and confidential. Could you help us with our research?

YES/NO

If NO, end the research.

Let us also inform you that at any point in the research you can stop if you wish and your answers will be deleted. In addition, even at the end of the survey, you can still ask for your answers to be deleted by phoning 22895257

YES/NO

If NO, end the research.

Q1. As we mentioned, our research is about migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus but because these terms are often used interchangeably, we would like first to ask you : Thinking of the word “migrant” what are the three first words that come to your mind?

Interviewer: SPONTANEOUS ANSWERS

1
2
3

CODING: 3 OPEN QUESTIONS

Q2. Thinking of the word “refugee” what are the three first words that come to your mind?

Interviewer: SPONTANEOUS ANSWERS

1
2
3

CODING: 3 OPEN QUESTIONS

Q3. Thinking of the word “asylum-seeker” what are the three first words that come to your mind?

Interviewer: SPONTANEOUS ANSWERS

1
2
3

CODING: 3 OPEN QUESTIONS

Q4. Referring to refugees and asylum-seekers, do you know the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker?

Yes	1
No	2
NA/DK	99

CODING: IF “YES”, THEN PROCEED TO Q4. IF NO, THEN PROCEED TO Q.6

Q5. Can you describe the difference between a refugee and an asylum-seeker, in one sentence?

--

CODING: OPEN QUESTION.

Q6. Where do you think that majority of refugees and asylum-seekers coming to Cyprus* mainly come from? **Interviewer: READ OUT OPTIONS -ONE ANSWER ONLY**

1	Middle East countries	
2	Africa	
3	Europe	
4	Asia	
5	Other (please specify) OPEN QUESTION	
99	DK/NA	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q7. How many refugees do you think live today in Cyprus?

Interviewer: READ OUT OPTIONS -ONE ANSWER ONLY

1	Fewer than 5000	
2	More than 10000	
3	More than 20000	
4	More than 50000	
99	DK/NA	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q8. How many asylum-seekers do you think live today in Cyprus?

1	Fewer than 5000	
2	More than 10000	
3	More than 20000	
4	More than 50000	
99	DK/NA	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q9. Now, I will read some statements to you regarding asylum-seekers and refugees and on a scale from 1-5 where 1 means I Absolutely Disagree and 5 means I Absolutely Agree, to what extent to you agree or disagree with these statements **Interviewer: READ STATEMENTS AND REMIND SCALE**

ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND REFUGEES IN CYPRUS NEED...

		Absolutely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree	DK/NA
1	Their asylum applications to be examined in a fast and fair manner	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Support for housing	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Financial Support from Government	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Legal advice	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Support finding a job and/ or the development of work relevant skills	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Access to the national healthcare system (GESY)	1	2	3	4	5	99

7	Social networking and friendships building opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	99
8	Opportunities for participating in programs that facilitate integration in the Cypriot Society (i.e., learning the language, culture, developing relevant coping skills, finding a job, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	99
9	Help in order to transfer to (other) EU countries	1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q10. Now, I will read some statements to you regarding Government and on a scale from 1-5 where 1 means I Absolutely Disagree and 5 means I Absolutely Agree, to what extent do you agree with these statements? **Interviewer: READ STATEMENTS AND REMIND SCALE**

		Absolutely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree	DK/NA
1	Providing support and help to the refugees and asylum-seekers living in the island is a responsibility of the Cyprus Government	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Cyprus Government is doing enough to support and help refugees and asylum-seekers living here	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Cyprus Government does not have the capacity to receive more asylum-seekers/ address the increased arrivals	1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q11. Relevant to the financial resources devoted to the support of refugees, where do you think these resources *MAINLY* come from?

Interviewer: READ OPTIONS – ONE OPTION

1	Mainly From Cyprus government	
2	Mainly from EU	
3	Equally from Both	
4	Other (please specify)	
99	DK/NA	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q.12. Regarding **asylum-seekers and refugees'** living conditions, where do you think that refugees should be living?

Interviewer: READ OPTIONS – ONE OPTION

Kept in a camp	1
Included in society	2
other (please specify)	3
DK/NA	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q13. Now, I will read some statements to you regarding **refugees and asylum-seekers** and on a scale from 1-5 where 1 means I Absolutely Disagree and 5 means I Absolutely Agree, to what extent do you agree with these statements?

Interviewer: READ STATEMENTS AND REMIND SCALE

		Absolutely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree	DK/NA
1	Given they want to, refugees should be able to obtain a Cypriot Citizenship if they have lived in Cyprus for 5 years.	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus should return to their home countries.	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cyprus should be allowed to reside in Cyprus if they want to.	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Refugees and asylum-seekers should be transferred to other countries and leave Cyprus.	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Cyprus should put a limit to how many refugees and asylum-seekers can be admitted in the island and once that limit is reached it can turn away new arrivals.	1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q14. Which organizations assisting refugees are you aware of?

INTERVIEWER: SPONTANEOUS AWARENESS (if none, write none)

CODING: OPEN ANSWERS. FILTER IF UNHCR IS NOT MENTIONED IN Q.14, THEN GO TO Q.15. IF UNHCR IS MENTIONED IN Q.16.

Q15. IF UNHCR IS NOT MENTIONED: Do you know the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)?

Yes	1
No	2

CODING: OPEN ANSWERS. FILTER IF YES GO TO Q.12. IF NO GO TO Q.13

Q16. IF UNHCR mentioned OR if UNHCR is known to them: How often do you visit UNHCR's website and social media pages for information?

INTERVIEWER: READ SCALE

Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
0	1	2	3	4

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q17. What is your **main** source of information regarding asylum issues?

INTERVIEWER: READ OPTIONS – ONLY ONE ANSWER ACCEPTABLE

1	Cyprus Newspapers (both online and offline)	1
2	Cyprus TV	2
3	Cyprus radio	3
4	International media	4
5	Social media (e.g Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	5
6	Social media of UNHCR and other organizations assisting refugees	6
7	Other (specify)	7
99	DK/NA	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE

Q18. Are you helping a refugee/refugees and/or asylum-seekers or have you been involved into helping them in the past?

Yes	1
No	2
NA/DK	99

CODING: If yes, then GO TO Q14.1, IF NO GO TO Q 15

Q19. In which ways have been helping refugees and/or asylum-seekers?

INTERVIEWER: READ OPTIONS, MULTIPLE ANSWERS

Donating money	1
Donating food and clothes	2
Volunteering with an NGO	3
Helping a refugee with providing information about services and daily life in Cyprus	4
Other (please specify) OPEN QUESTION	5
NA/DK	99

CODING: MULTIPLE CHOICE

Q20. Would you be interested in helping a refugee and/or asylum-seekers?

in the manner described above or other?

/ Not possible at all	Probably not	/ Probably yes	Definitely yes
1	2	3	4

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q21. To what extent do you believe the following reasons are **being obstacles to refugees' integration** in the Cypriot society?

INTERVIEWER: READ STATEMENTS AND YES/NO ANSWER

		YES	NO	DK/NA
1	They don't feel welcomed	1	2	99
2	Different color	1	2	99
3	Different culture e.g., religion, customs and traditions	1	2	99
4	Different language	1	2	99
5	Face xenophobia/racism	1	2	99
6	Difficult to find work	1	2	99
7	They do not want to integrate	1	2	99
8	The refugees want to be with their peers	1	2	99
9	Perceived as dangerous	1	2	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q.22. What is your biggest concern regarding refugees and asylum-seekers coming to Cyprus? **READ OUT - MULTIPLE ANSWERS ALLOWED**

Cyprus is too small to host so many refugees and asylum-seekers	1
Change the demography of Cyprus	2
Taking up jobs from Cypriots	3
Fear of violence/criminal behavior	4
Health concerns	5
No concerns; we are all human beings	6
Other (specify)	7
DK/NA	99

Q.23 Now, I will read some statements to you regarding the Pournara/ Kokkinotrimithia Emergency Reception Center (First Reception Center) and on a scale 1-5 where 1 means I Absolutely Disagree and 5 means I Absolutely Agree, to what extent do you agree with these statements?

Interviewer: READ STATEMENTS AND REMIND SCALE

		Absolutely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree	DK/NA
1	Living and accommodation conditions in the center, including hygiene and sufficiency of space are suitable.	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	It is generally safe for the vulnerable people, including unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, torture survivors, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	The center provides specialized services to vulnerable people, including unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, torture survivors, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q24. Would you oppose the creation of a reception center facility in your area?

Yes	1
No	2
NA/DK	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER PER ITEM

Q25. On a scale from Zero to Ten where Zero means **Bad for the economy and Ten means **Good for the economy**, would you say it is generally bad or good for Cyprus economy that refugees and asylum-seekers come to live here?**

Bad for the economy											Good for the economy	(Refusal)	(Don't know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	77	88	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q26. On a scale from Zero to Ten where Zero means **Cultural life undermined** and Ten means **Cultural life enriched**, would you say that Cypruss' cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by refugees and asylum-seekers coming to live here?

Cultural life undermined											Cultural life enriched	(Refusal)	(Don't know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	77	88	

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q27. The following questions concern your daily contact with **refugees and/or asylum-seekers**. Please answer the questions based on your personal experiences. Thinking of your daily interactions with other people, how often do you have contact with **asylum-seekers and/or refugees**—that is, actual communication, not only seeing but talking to?

INTERVIEWER: READ SCALE

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	NR
1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q28. IF and When you interact with **refugees and/or asylum-seekers**, to what extent do you find the contact pleasant? **INTERVIEWER: READ SCALE**

Not pleasant at all	/ A little pleasant	/ Somewhat pleasant	/ Very pleasant	/ No contact	DK/NA
1	2	3	4	5	99

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q29. With how many **refugees and/or asylum-seekers**, do you maintain, at this moment, some kind of friendship? **INTERVIEWER: READ SCALE**

None	1-2	3-5	6-10	More than 10
1	2	3	4	5

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q30. Monthly state aid for asylum-seekers includes rental and utilities allowance, food, clothing, and footwear allowance which is provided in the form of cash-based assistance. How much do you think one asylum-seeker is provided for these material reception conditions on a monthly basis?

1	Below 300euros
2	300-400euros
3	400-500euros
5	500-600euros
6	600-700euros
7	700-800euros
8	+800 euros
99	NA/DK

CODING: ONE ANSWER

Q31. Currently, the permitted fields of employments for asylum-seekers in Cyprus include agriculture-animal husbandry-fishery, animal shelters and pet hotels, processing (e.g., animal feed production labourers, bakery, and dairy production night-shift labourers), waste management (e.g., sewerage), trade-repairs (e.g., petrol station and carwash labourers), service provision (e.g., food delivery) and as kitchen aides and cleaners. To what extent do you agree with the current Ministerial Order on a scale from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree?

1	Strongly disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly agree
99	NA/DK

FILTER IF 1,2,3 GO TO 31A. IF 4,5,99 GO TO G32

EP31.A. You have told us that you do not agree with the above-mentioned orders. Would you like/prefer that the sectors of work/permitted fields of employment would increase or decrease?

1. To decrease
2. To increase
99. DK/NA

Q32. In your opinion, what is the main reason asylum-seekers and refugees come to Cyprus?

1	Work
2	Study
3	To join a family member
Q	To get married
5	To seek protection/ asylum/ refuge
6	Other (please specify) OPEN QUESTION
99	NA/DK

Q 33. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means Strongly trustful and 5 means Strongly distrustful, to what extent do you think that the national media coverage (radio, TV and printed) can be trusted regarding the coverage of migrants' refugees and asylum-seekers?

1	Strongly trustful
2	Trustful
3	Neutral
4	Distrustful
5	Strongly Distrustful
99	NA/DK

Demographics

Dem1. Sex

Male	1
Female	2

Dem2. DISTRICT

NICOSIA	1
LIMASSOL	2
LARNAKA	3
PAFOS	4
FAMAGUSTA	5

Dem3. In what area do you live?

URBAN	1
RURAL	2

Dem4. What is your age group?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99
16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	66-74	Over 75 years	DK/NA

Dem5. Level of Education (highest level completed)

Can read and write	1
Completed primary school	2
Completed lower secondary	3
Completed upper secondary	4
Completed college	5
Completed University degree	6
Completed post graduate university degree	7
DK/NA	99

Dem 6. Can you please tell us about your monthly personal net income?

€250 - €800	01
€801 - €1300	02
€1301 - €1700	03
€1701 - €2100	04
€2100- 2600	05
€2601 - €4300	06
€4301 - €6000	07
More than €6000	08
No income	09
NA	99

Dem7. Working status

Public servant	1
Private sector (employees)	2
Entrepreneur/Business owner	3
Unemployed	4
Person responsible for household	5
Retired	6
Student	7
Other (please specify)	8
DK/NA	99

Dem8. Have you ever lived abroad, other than Cyprus, for more than 1 year?

Yes	1
No	2

Dem9. What is your Citizenship:

Dem 10. What is your Community?

Greek-Cypriot	1
Turkish-Cypriot	2
Maronite	3
Latin	4
Armenian	5
Other (please specify)	6
DK/NA	99

We have concluded our research! We would like to thank you for your time and attention!