



SIRIUS

Skills and Integration of Migrants,
Refugees and Asylum Applicants
in European Labour Markets

Civil society enablers and barriers

WP4 report

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List of Acronyms

ACCMR	The Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees
ASGI	Associazione di Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione (Association on Immigration Juridical Studies)
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CARA	Centri di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo (Centre of Reception for Asylum Seekers)
CAS	Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria (Emergency Accommodation Centre)
CDA	Centri Di Accoglienza (Centre of Reception)
CEFAM	Centre de rencontre et de formation pour femmes migrantes (Meeting and training center for migrant women)
CPIA	Centro Provinciale per l'Istruzione degli Adulti (Provincial Center for Adult Education)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Centres sociaux protestants, Genève (Protestant Social Center)
DA	Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening (Danish Employers' Confederation)
DI	Dansk Industri (Danish Industry)
DRC	Danish Refugee Council (Dansk Flygtningehjælp)
EEA	European Economic Area
EKS	Evropská kontaktní skupina (European Contact Group)
EPER	Entraide Protestante Suisse (Swiss Protestant Aid)
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
IGU	Integrationsgrunduddannelsen (Basic Integration Education)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISMU	Iniziative e Studi sulla Multiethnicità (Initiatives and Studies on Multiethnicity)
KEM	Migrant Integration Centre (KEM) of the city of Athens
KELA	Kansaneläkelaitos (The Social Insurance Institution of Finland)
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LMI	Labour Market Integration
LO	Landsorganisationen i Danmark (Danish Confederation of Trade Unions)
MRAs	Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers
NGO	Non-governmental organization

NEET	Not in employment, education and training
OAED	National Employment Service Organisation (in Greece)
TE-Office	Employment and Economic Development Office/ Public employment service
SPRAR	Sistema di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati (National system of protection for asylum seekers and refugees)
STEA	Sosiaali-ja terveysjärjestöjen avustuskeskus (Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations)

About the project

Despite the polarization in public and policy debates generated by the post-2014 fluxes of refugees, asylum applicants and migrants, European countries need to work out an evidence-based way to deal with migration and asylum rather than a prejudice-based one. SIRIUS, Skills and Integration of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Applicants in European Labour Markets, builds on a multi-dimensional conceptual framework in which host country or political-institutional, societal and individual-related conditions function either as enablers or as barriers to migrants', refugees' and asylum seekers' integration via the labour market.

SIRIUS has three main objectives: A descriptive objective: To provide systematic evidence on post-2014 migrants, refugees and asylum applicants especially women and young people and their potential for labour market employment and, more broadly, social integration. An explanatory objective: To advance knowledge on the complexity of labour market integration for post-2014 migrants, refugees and asylum applicants, and to explore their integration potential by looking into their spatial distribution (in relation to the distribution of labour demand across the labour market), while taking into account labour market characteristics and needs in different country and socio-economic contexts. A prescriptive objective: To advance a theoretical framework for an inclusive integration agenda, outlining an optimal mix of policy pathways for labour market integration including concrete steps that Member States and other European countries along with the EU can take to ensure that migrant-integration policies and the broader system of workforce development, training, and employment programmes support new arrivals' access to decent work opportunities and working conditions.

SIRIUS has a mixed methods approach and innovative dissemination plan involving online priority action networks, film essays, festival, job fair and an applied game along with scientific and policy dialogue workshops and conferences.

Executive Summary

The SIRIUS research project explores the enablers and barriers of labour market integration for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (MRAs). Our research is organized into several work packages, and this report details the findings of the fourth SIRIUS work package, focusing on the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the labour market integration (LMI) of MRAs. Our report examines the positions of CSOs and their perception by MRAs in the SIRIUS partner countries, namely the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Finland, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, and thus our findings reflect experiences across a wide variety of different national contexts.

Our findings suggest that CSOs can work as important actors enhancing not only integration into the labour market but also integration through the labour market. CSOs are important language course providers, and thanks to their social, legal, and administrative guidance, CSOs help MRAs in overcoming ineffective administrative and legal structures. These activities are provided by the majority of CSOs across SIRIUS countries. Several CSOs in these countries also assist MRAs with the recruitment process, providing courses and advice on how to prepare for an interview, how to write a CV, or how to draft a cover letter. Furthermore, CSOs also assist MRAs in their efforts to have their skills and qualifications recognised. Moreover, by providing mentorship, training programmes, volunteering, or even direct employment, CSOs contribute to the development of MRAs' skills and competencies and provide platforms to enhance the agency and autonomy of MRAs. However, such a capacity is unevenly spatially distributed, it is rather rare in the Czech Republic and Denmark, it is somewhat developed in the United Kingdom, and more strongly developed in Finland, some areas of Italy, among the solidarity movement organisations of Greece, and in the Canton of Geneva in Switzerland. Moreover, CSOs either individually or collectively, frequently raise the problematic situation of illegal practices on the part of employers, exploitation, human trafficking, or underpaid wages. Last but not the least, CSOs help to mitigate and, often together with MRAs, struggle against the hostile context of a widespread atmosphere of xenophobia.

By analysing the empirical evidence in seven SIRIUS countries, we have identified five different CSO positions which differ in their autonomy and dependence on the state, their capacity to instigate MRA agency, and their participation in decision-making processes, lobbying, or advocacy. Taking into account the heterogeneity of CSOs across and within national contexts, we view these five different CSO positions as (1) uncritical extenders, (2) pro-active service providers, (3) autonomous co-producers, (4) innovative and creative CSOs, and (5) alternative CSOs. First, CSOs are in a position as extenders of national integration policies. Working as extenders, CSO involvement in labour market integration is often determined by the funding provided by the state, which co-opts the CSO migration-focused sector. CSOs uncritically approach state-driven policies in this case. Second, similar to uncritical extenders, pro-active service providers remain significantly dependent on the state; however, their autonomy and critical capacities are higher. On the one hand, these CSOs are heavily dependent on public funding and provide a spectrum of services defined by the state. However, in their everyday operation, they are sensitive to human rights and sociocultural matters and situate labour market integration in the context of broader societal integration. Third, some CSOs operate as autonomous co-producers of labour market integration services. These CSOs still benefit from public funding; however, they can operate with greater autonomy and are more actively engaged in defining the labour market integration agenda. Similar to pro-active service providers, they embrace the holistic vision of integration, and the labour market represents just one sphere in which integration takes place. Fourth, another type of CSO, established especially in the recent post-2014 context, are innovative and creative CSOs. These CSOs view MRAs as active actors, as partners, and they push MRAs toward social and economic innovations. MRA agency here is significantly reinforced. These organisations are highly autonomous, independent of the state, and commonly economically

self-sustainable. Finally, alternative CSOs deliberately operate with autonomy, independent of established institutional structures. Their financial independence is very similar to creative and innovative CSOs. However, they work against rather than alongside the public administration and the state.

We have identified several external enablers facilitating the role of CSOs in MRA labour market integration initiatives. First, an important role is played by the state, which in all SIRIUS countries significantly subsidises a number of guidance and educational services provided by CSOs. Second, CSOs commonly benefit from funding and expert-driven support from transnational governmental and inter-governmental institutions. Third, existing and newly developed transnational horizontal networks between national and civil society transnational actors serve as an important resource for knowledge and information exchange as well as a tool for sharing innovative practices. Lastly, the context of developed cooperative and social entrepreneurship culture often enhances the effectiveness of integration programmes.

CSOs have the potential to enable the labour market integration of MRAs through their internal capacities in ten clear ways that we can identify. First, flexibility and a lower degree of bureaucratisation compared to public administration allow CSOs to account for the specific needs, aspirations, and experiences of individual MRAs. Second, compared to public services, CSOs frequently have stronger potential to understand the personal needs of MRAs. Third, CSOs work as important enablers of labour market integration due to their networking capacity. CSO representatives function as brokers who help MRAs connect with public officials, employers, trade unions, politicians, and even with (although very rarely) journalists. Fourth, in addition to social networking, CSO representatives ensure cultural mediation, supporting MRAs both culturally and linguistically. Fifth, CSOs provide space for the involvement of MRAs in the organisation which fosters their agency. Sixth, MRAs appreciate the psychological benefits which come with the personalised approach taken by CSOs. Seventh, some CSOs provide expert knowledge, gather evidence, and participate in research projects. Eighth, a number of CSOs apparently provide MRAs with valuable sources of soft knowledge and enhance their orientation on the labour market. Ninth, CSOs are important as reflexive actors in the policymaking process, providing input that is however only taken into consideration sporadically rather than systematically, but can still generate policy change through advocacy. Finally, CSOs also contribute towards the protection of the rights of MRAs by articulating issues such as human trafficking and the illegal conduct of employers.

In their work with labour market integration, CSOs do not function exclusively as enablers; their functioning is determined by external pressures and can be limited due to internal restrictions which hinder their integration initiatives. CSOs, in their labour market integration initiatives, encounter eight clear barriers that we have identified. The first barrier is related to public funding. Considering the instability, temporality, and uncertainty of the state support of CSOs, the dependence on funding influences the very existence of civil society organisations. A second barrier is how the subsidising of CSOs by public administrations influences their agenda, defines the target groups, or determines the nature and spectrum of the provided services. Third, some CSOs highlighted the problem of co-optation of the originally non-governmental nature of integration services of the state. Fourth, the sphere of CSOs can sometimes similarly be co-opted and strategically misused by private business providers. Fifth, the distrust and suspicion of MRAs would also suggest there are a series of sociocultural barriers influencing the interaction between CSOs and MRAs. Sixth, the insufficient use of CSO services is also determined by culturally-based individual perceptions, some MRAs would perceive a free service as a symptom of their own personal failure. Seventh, some MRAs would understand the CSO guidance on offer as lacking expertise and being 'insufficiently professional'. Finally, the success of integration programmes is hindered by the fact that NGOs are awarded very little recognition from policymakers.

As regards the internal barriers hindering CSO labour market integration, we have identified seven distinct hurdles. First, the effectiveness of integration services can suffer from the low engagement of MRAs in CSOs. Second, labour market integration services have been

hindered due to the lack of experience and know-how of some CSOs. Third, some CSOs and their employees tend to operate in a 'professional bubble', which prevents them from considering the individual situations of MRAs holistically. Fourth, the excessively professionalised ethos of CSOs is sometimes closely intertwined with the implementation of accountability measures, based on quantification and inadequate attention given to the nature of activities. Fifth, the capacity of CSOs to understand the personal needs of MRAs and to foster their agency is marginalised by the pressures of bureaucratisation and institutionalisation. Sixth, the previously mentioned dependence on external funding can influence the internal nature of CSOs and undermine the contentious and transformative character of organisations. Finally, the manifest example of internal barriers is represented by CSOs who embrace perspectives opposing integration. In fact, the post-2014 context contributed to the emergence of CSOs with anti-migration perspectives.

Part I – Comparative report

1 Civil society enablers and barriers – Comparative Approach

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1.1 Introduction

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a crucial role in the labour market integration (LMI) of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers (MRAs). CSOs assist MRAs in their orientation of the labour market, enhance their preparedness in terms of linguistic and working skills, and help them to deal with contractual matters and problematic employment situations. CSOs thus represent an important integration vehicle (Greenspan, Walk, & Handy, 2018; Ruiz Sportmann & Greenspan, 2019) and extend the provision of the labour market assistance offered by the state, particularly for asylum seekers and refugees (Matikainen, 2003; Mayblin & James, 2019; Sunata & Tosun, 2018; Vandevoordt, 2019). In general, the contribution of CSOs to labour market integration is twofold: They provide individually targeted services, and they are involved in collective action by participating in decision-making processes and advocating for the rights of MRAs vis-à-vis the state or employers.

The importance of CSOs, following the so-called migration crisis, has even increased since 2014 as the public sector struggled to satisfy the increased demand for labour market integration services. The post-2014 era contributed to a higher diversification of civil society organisations and, in particular, to the emergence of transnational solidarity movements (Pries, 2018; Vandevoordt & Verschraegen, 2019) operating independently of the institutionalised systems of integration, national funding, and transnational intergovernmental organisations. The relatively autonomous position of solidarity movements allows them to provide creative, flexible solutions when facing the challenge of integration, thus opening new innovative integration pathways (Galera, Giannetto, & Noya, 2018).

Box 1: The Description of Sirius Project

The **SIRIUS** research project looks at the enablers of and barriers to the labour market integration of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers (MRAs). Our research is organised into several work packages, and this report details the findings of the fourth work package, building on our previous research in the first three work packages: Work Package 1 analyses the labour market position of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the SIRIUS countries. Work Package 2 details the legal framework of each SIRIUS partner country relevant to inhibiting or enabling integration. Work Package 3 focuses on migrant labour market integration (MLI) policies and services. Work Package 4 analyses the role of civil society organisations as enablers of and barriers to labour market integration.

Our focus here is to analyse the role of those CSOs which are potentially facilitating labour market migration. The position of social partners will be systematically analysed in a separated Work Package 5 of the SIRIUS research project. We therefore give only limited attention to social partners, such as trade unions, employers' associations and confederations,

representing CSOs. Moreover, the role of right-wing populism movements and emergent patriotic national movements has not been systematically scrutinised. However, this does not mean that these two types of CSOs were totally marginalised in the analysis provided by the SIRIUS project

Our theoretical understanding of CSOs is inspired by the definition¹ of Salamon et al. (2003, pp. 7–8), focused on organisations which *‘have some structure and regularity to their operations, whether or not they are formally constituted or legally registered’*. They go on to state, *‘This means that our definition embraces informal, i.e., nonregistered, groups as well as formally registered ones. What is important is not whether the group is legally or formally recognized but that it has some organizational permanence and regularity as reflected in regular meetings, a membership, and some structure of procedures for making decisions that participants recognize as legitimate’* (2003: 7–8). Therefore, we included all organisational forms, regardless of their formal recognition and legal registration, in other words, organisations and groups providing labour market integration services, often subsidised by the state; entities involved in advocacy work, lobbying, and participating in decision-making processes; and associations involved in contentious actions, those involving offline and online campaigning, and even networks participating in research.

Overall, the scholarship dealing with CSOs and the labour market integration of MRAs is rather sparse and not systematically developed. As Garkisch, Heidingsfelder, and Beckmann (2017, p. 1858) summarised in their systematic review, CSOs are important providers of language courses, translation services, as well as legal, social, and economic counselling. CSOs assist MRAs in the recruitment process. They are also involved in the provision of training so as to enhance migrant employability; they provide skills training targeted at migrants with low education or oriented at the development of skills. MRA labour market integration is further facilitated through the direct employment of MRAs in CSOs or through traineeship, internship, or volunteering programmes. Moreover, CSOs are involved in public, political, and legal advocacy (Garkisch et al., 2017). They can also operate as actors who help in setting standards and developing and testing knowledge (Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987). Finally, CSOs can provide expert knowledge and evidence often rooted in international contexts from which the local policy is disconnected (Čada & Ptáčková, 2014).

Although the existing research was primarily focused on the capacity of CSOs to stress the sociocultural and human rights dimensions of integration, several scholars suggested that the role of CSOs cannot be idealised. In other words, the positive impact of CSOs for labour market integration (and integration more broadly), regardless of their programmatic aims, cannot be taken for granted. In this vein, although recognising the general importance of civil society sectors, some authors called for a more complex understanding of CSOs and discussed some of the ambiguities related to their position as well as the unintended consequences of their involvement in labour market integration initiatives. Through the lens of more critical accounts, CSOs not only assist MRAs on the labour market or with broader, societal integration, but they also contribute to (a subtle) reproduction of otherness, especially

¹ For the sake of conceptual clarity, we should add that the concept of a civil society organisation (CSO) embraces the terms non-governmental organisation (NGO) or third sector organisation (TSO), all commonly viewed as institutionalised and legally recognised bodies. The concept of a CSO provides a broader understanding of civil society and permits us to consider informal and community-based social networks.

in those national contexts where MRA involvement in CSOs is rather weak. CSOs do not necessarily develop MRA agency and autonomy; by approaching refugees and asylum seekers as recipients of services in need of assistance in particular, they risk developing or deepening the passivity of MRAs (Szczepaniková, 2009). In fact, although CSOs act as cultural and linguistic mediators, they cannot fully substitute the voice of migrants (Lester, 2005). Furthermore, some authors have recently suggested that the label 'CSO' does not necessarily embrace the non-governmental ethos and that the post-2014 crisis has '*attracted a growing number of un-experienced and sometimes self-interested actors, including conventional enterprises and organisations that use the legal forms of the third sector in an opportunistic way*' (Galera et al., 2018, p. 31).

Notwithstanding several accounts focusing on the role of CSOs in labour market integration, their role in integration policies, services, and advocacy still remains rather unexplored. Against this backdrop, the aim of this report is to analyse the role of CSOs across seven European countries (the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Finland, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom) and compare the role of CSOs across these different national contexts. More specifically, the objectives of the analysis were as follows:

- (a) to explore the views of CSO representatives concerning recent migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers and their employability and integration potential;
- (b) to analyse the role of civil society organisations from the viewpoint of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers;
- (c) to identify the transnational links between national organisations and foreign and transnational CSOs, including international institutions and structures (the EU, UN, etc.);
- (d) to analyse the importance of integration in the context of perspectives opposing integration, such as anti-migration perspectives; and
- (e) to analyse the reaction of CSOs to the post-2014 migration flows and their ability to respond to the negative perceptions of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in Europe.

Our report analyses the role of CSO policies in the SIRIUS partner countries, and thus, we present a wide variety of different national contexts. Particular emphasis was given to the perspective of MRAs. The aim was thus to understand both the demand and supply expected from and provided by CSOs in the area of labour market integration services. In other words, in our research, we focused not only on how CSOs react to the needs of MRAs but also on what MRAs expect and get from them.

Based on the research described above, each national team produced a country report. These national reports can be found in part II of this report. The research in each SIRIUS partner report was based on common guidelines. The analysis of this integrated comparative report is based on the findings of these national reports.

The purpose of the integrated report is to summarise and compare the findings of the national reports, to discuss the role of CSOs in labour market integration, to identify the main agenda of CSOs, to capture the diversity of CSOs, and to analyse the main enablers of and barriers to CSO engagement in labour market integration. In order to provide a complex understanding of CSOs, this report draws upon extensive data collection carried out in seven European countries as well as empirical evidence from four different types of sources.

First, a review of existing academic literature and available documents helped us to prepare an overview of CSOs operating in each country. Although our focus was primarily on migration-focused CSOs, labour market-focused CSOs, which significantly influence the integration agenda, were also considered. Second, an organisational analysis was conducted through semi-structured, qualitative interviews with CSO representatives who were either identified as key players during the review of existing documents or who were mentioned as important actors during interviews with MRAs. In fact, semi-structured interviews with pre- and post-2014 MRAs who had personal experience with CSOs were carried out in each country to capture and decipher the role of civil society organisations from the perspectives and experiences of pre- and post-2014 MRAs—our third source. The interviews were focused on issues relating to how CSOs hinder or foster the social and labour market inclusion of diverse groups of MRAs. In total, 134 semi-structured interviews with CSOs and 173 semi-structured interviews with MRAs were performed. Fourth, a triangulation of data was conducted via regular diaries collected by a CSO, registering weekly its activities and reflections.

The report is structured as follows. First, drawing on the broad academic literature, we discuss the similarities and differences of civil society in the SIRIUS partner countries, and we situate migration-focused CSOs in the broader historical, political, and societal context. Second, after presenting a detailed account of methods, data collection tools, and their analysis, we provide, third, an overview of migration-related CSOs operating in the area of labour market integration. Fourth, we discuss the position of CSOs, in particular as regards their funding, agendas, and the target groups they address. Special attention is given to the post-2014 context. Fifth, we then provide an overview of the enablers and barriers facilitating and hindering the position of CSOs in the area of labour market integration. Sixth, the overview of enablers and barriers is presented to provide a typology of CSOs, focusing on the level of independence and their capacity to foster MRA agency. The final conclusions summarise the key findings and discuss several policy implications.

1.2 The Role of CSOs through Academic Lenses

The third sector is one of the main partners for European governments in migration policy development and implementation. In order to understand the position of the non-governmental sector in the labour market integration of non-EU MRAs, it is useful to review the evolution the third sector has experienced in recent decades.

As Brandsen and Johnston (2019, pp. 311–12) sum up, the 1980s were marked by the increased use of the market to provide service delivery solutions. However, the market-based solution failed to address the increasing complexity of societies and, by the mid-1990s, there was a general recognition that more collaborative working among different societal sectors, including CSOs, could provide a more sustainable and effective means of addressing socio-economic challenges. The development of the last decade, on the other hand, has been marked by an emphasis on budgets cuts and austerity policies.

Despite of the same European context, relationships between the state and the third sector has evolved differently in the countries participating in the report. It has resulted in a strong level of marketisation in the United Kingdom, welfare co-production in the Nordic countries, informal civil society and professionalisation third sector in Greece, and very strong third sector professionalisation in the Czech Republic.

In the United Kingdom, after 2010, one central strategy of the ruling Conservative Party manifesto was that of the 'Big Society' (Kisby, 2010). The key values of the Big Society were to be manifested through a greater level of voluntarism, including paving the way for charities, private enterprises, and social enterprises to be much more involved in the running of public services. In practice, under the Big Society, public authorities engaged in more contractual relationships with CSOs, but this was complemented by sharp cuts to the budgets of public services (Wiggins 2012; LVSC 2013a; UNISON 2014; NCIA 2015). Spending cuts have resulted in a great level of voluntarism combined with marketisation of third sector providers (Zimmermann et al., 2014; Han 2017). Reductions in resources and a more prominent focus on contracting also meant that there has been scarce residual capacity for engagement in policy activity (Ware, 2017).

Finnish and Danish civil society is considered similar to that of other Nordic countries. Characteristic of the Nordic model, there is a close and firm connection between civil society and the state but, nonetheless, a clear division of labour between the two (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 10). In recent years, due to the outsourcing of government services and a tightening of municipal budgets (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, p. 24), the third sector, with the help of the state and municipalities, has had a somewhat larger role in organising certain welfare services (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 11.). This has shifted the emphasis of the third sector away from advocacy (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 14; Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 26, 31). In Denmark, CSOs are 'structurally tied to government' (Henriksen and Bundesen, 2004, p. 622) facilitating the functions of the welfare state (Torpe, 2003). According to Henriksen, the recent discourses of the Danish welfare state relies on 'increased mutual cooperation' between public authorities and CSOs (2015, p. 19) which might be described as a partnership, welfare pluralism, co-production [and] co-creation (Evers, 2005; Henriksen, 2015, p. 19).

In addition to the Nordic countries, Switzerland also has a prominent civil society sector with strong historical ties. 'Voluntary and civil society work in Switzerland are often considered complementary to government services and as desirable services for the society' (Dannecker, 2017; p.58). While a significant number of CSOs rely on public subsidies and display considerable professionalisation and formalisation, protest-oriented CSOs, on the other hand, are found to be less institutionalised, to work mainly on a voluntary basis, and to do so without the receipt of any subsidies due to ideological reasons (Fernández and Boursier, 2016; pp. 42; 247).

In contrast to the United Kingdom, Finland, and Denmark, the institutionalised civil society of both Greece and the Czech Republic can be characterised as weak (in the Czech case, see Fagan, 2005; for the Greek case, see Kalogeraki, 2019) and, for Greece in particular, underdeveloped (Huliaras, 2016). The similar condition of both states has resulted in different consequences. Whereas in the Czech Republic the answer has been an increase of professionalised organisation (Jantulová 2005), in Greece, it has resulted in an active informal civil society sector (Sotiropoulos 2004).

In the Czech Republic, economic stability accompanied with a relatively low number of MRAs has brought about a system in which CSOs represent crucial actors in social policy processes and key partners of local, regional, and central governments in social policy implementation. Service-providing CSOs are usually highly formalised and actively employ expert knowledge hand in hand with the provision of specialised services based on specific skills and knowledge, education, and experience (Szczepaniková, 2008; Nešporová, Svobodová 2006, Topinka et al 2013, Fišarová, 2018). Although NGOs are recognised as important, if not essential actors

in MRA integration, it has been argued that their role is undermined due to a lack of financial resources (Bauerová 2018).

On the other hand, in Greece, the combination of the economic downturn with the refugee crisis has led to the activation of a large spectrum of civil society in order to manage the humanitarian crisis (Chtouris and Miller, 2017). The refugee crisis has resulted in an upgrade of the role NGOs (Sotiropoulos, 2017) have in actions of social solidarity, education, employment promotion, and so forth (Kourachanis, et al., 2018) as well as an increase in institutionalised and atypical civil society organisations seeking to meet the needs of asylum seekers and refugees (Kalogeraki, 2019).

Within civil society organisations, migrant organisations and associations have a specific position. With respect to this group, at least three models can be identified: (a) migrant associations as representatives of local communities, (b) migrant associations as specific services providers, and (c) migrant associations as cultural entities. The first model is associated with the UK case, the second with the Finnish case, and the Czech Republic represents the third model.

In the United Kingdom, BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) organisations, including diasporic and immigrant organisations; refugee and asylum seeker organisations; and faith-based organisations, represent a distinctive sector (McCabe and Phillimore, 2017). The BAME third sector has been identified as a response to the lack of appropriate service provision by the state and established CSOs (Mayblin and James, 2019). However, their development has lagged behind because of an increasing diversity of communities (McCabe and Phillimore, 2017) and institutional racism (Craig, 2011; Ware, 2017). In contrast to other CSOs which have benefited from state financial support to provide services, the funding opportunities of non-profit organisations dealing with BAME communities and, in particular, asylum seekers and refugees have been reduced over time (Mayblin and James, 2018).

In the second model, based upon the Finnish case, migrant organisations provide services for migrants and work hand in hand with officials in many different sectors including, for example, integration, youth activities, and labour market integration (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 52). Integration guidance, peer support, and language learning are some of the most common services offered by migrant organisations (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 27).

On the other hand, in the third model embodied by the Czech Republic, migrants are officially represented through national minority associations which usually focus on convening cultural events (see Leontiyeva 2006). There are 12 officially recognised national minorities (Belarusians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Germans, Poles, Roma, Russians, Rusyns, Serbians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, and Vietnamese). Their activities are funded by a special part of the state budget (Marková, 2012); other minorities often establish associations as well, but their access to financial resources is limited. Although the migrant associations represent an important part of civil society organisations, their role in labour market integration remains limited at the expense of the attention given primarily to folk and religious traditions (Sulitka, 2008, 2015). In contrast to the United Kingdom, where migrant associations represent local communities, migrant associations here are tied much more to the historical, legal, and institutional tradition in the Czech Republic.

The academic literature reflects the diversity of CSO models and different institutional traditions across the cases involved in the report. However, there are similarities among the cases as well. First of among them is the threat posed to the diversity of organisations and

provided services via budget cuts and austerity policies. Reductions in budgets and a more prominent focus on contracting shift the emphasis of the third sector away from advocacy and limit the possibilities for broader political engagement.

1.3 Methods

For WP4, national teams collected 134 interviews with representatives of CSOs and 173 with MRAs. Data was collected in the form of semi-structured qualitative interviews. The interview schedule was developed in collaboration with all the teams so that the questions were relevant in the contexts of all countries. While the interview structure for the MRAs pays attention to a detailed description of their experience with CSOs, the structure for CSO representatives covers many issues connected with the management of the organisation (goals, everyday operations, cooperation with other bodies, the migration crisis, etc.). Interview guidelines can be found in Annexes 1 and 2.

National teams chose different strategies to recruit interviewees. The sampling of CSOs was based on CSO inventories which were collected in each country individually, providing an overview of the field. Teams selected interview partners from the inventory to cover the heterogeneity of CSOs in every country and the criteria was different. In Greece, both institutionalised CSOs and anti-system associations were included in the sample, but this cleavage was not relevant in other countries where the sample was constructed to include CSOs of various sizes. In the Czech Republic, the sample reflected the high number of CSOs concentrated in the capital. On the other hand, in Italy, Finland and Switzerland, the number of CSOs is very high and they are often based locally; therefore, both teams covered only a specific region (north and central Italy and the Canton of Geneva) and nation-wide organisations.

The samples of MRA interviewees are even more heterogeneous because they reflect the migrant population in each country—refugees and asylum seekers comprised at least one-third of all samples. For example, in Italy, they came mostly from sub-Saharan Africa. In Greece, Afghans and Syrians were the dominant group. Groups of non-refugee migrants were also diverse. In Finland and the Czech Republic, Russians were the dominant group, while in Denmark, the biggest group of non-EU migrants were US citizens. The sampling was driven by an objective to achieve empirical saturation and capture the plurality of experiences within SIRIUS countries.

The Greek and Swiss teams recruited the interviewees partly through CSOs. Experience with CSOs was the main selection criterion for interviewees but, in the case of the Czech Republic and Finland, this condition turned out to be problematic. Since migrants were often not familiar with the concept of the non-governmental sector, their experience with CSOs was minimal; however, these interviews were included in the analysis because they uncover biases of certain migrant groups towards NGOs and help us to understand the obstacles CSOs face in reaching certain groups.

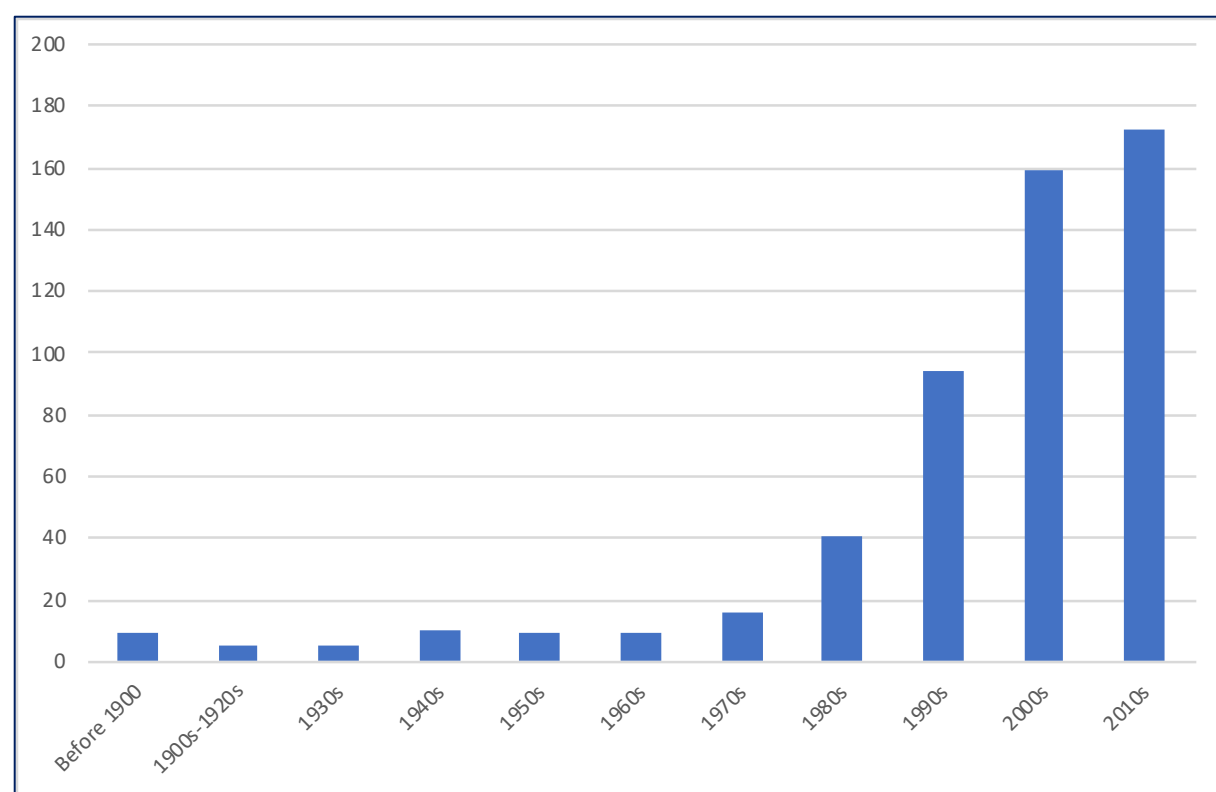
1.4 Overview of CSOs

Our overview and categorisation of CSOs includes organisations which provide activities related to the employability of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, such as language

courses, employability services, or policy-advocacy related to employment. The overview covers both local and nationwide organisations and reflects the different institutional contexts of the involved countries as well as the huge diversity of organisations supporting migrant employability in the European Union. National reports identified altogether 556 CSOs which focus on the labour market integration of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers: 285 in the United Kingdom, 66 in the Canton of Geneva in Switzerland, 62 in Finland (local organizations from Jyväskylä and large national organizations), 54 in Greece, 36 in Italy, and 25 in the Czech Republic.

Figure 1 presents the number of new organisations focusing on MRA labour market integration across each decade since the beginning of the century. It reveals that 80 % of the organisations still active today were created after the 1990s; 33 % of the total number of organisations were founded between 2000 and 2019. Relatively high numbers of organisations founded before 1990 can be found in Denmark (32 %), Italy (31 %), Switzerland (31 %), Greece (29 %), and Finland (28 %). In the UK, 13 % of the organisations were established before 1990. In the Czech Republic, there was no organisation with such a tradition thanks to the refusal of the communist regime to permit these types of organisations.

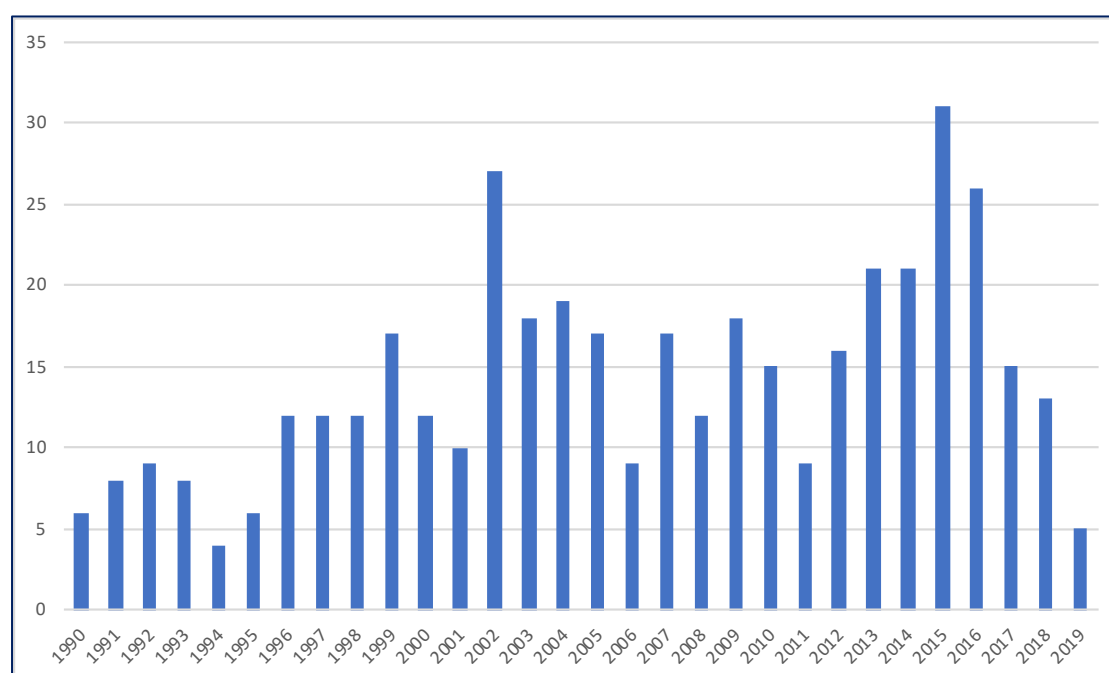
Figure 1: Number of CSOs focusing on MRA labour market integration and their year of establishment



Source: SIRIUS Project

The number of organisations established since 1990 is depicted in Figure 2. These numbers reflect the effect of the so-called refugee crisis. Interestingly, this effect is most visible in the Swiss sample, in which 32% of the organisations were established after 2013. Italy, Denmark, and the United Kingdom scored between 20% and 25%, close to the average share of 21%. Relatively low proportions of post-crisis organisations were identified in Finland (15%), Greece (7%), and the Czech Republic (4%).

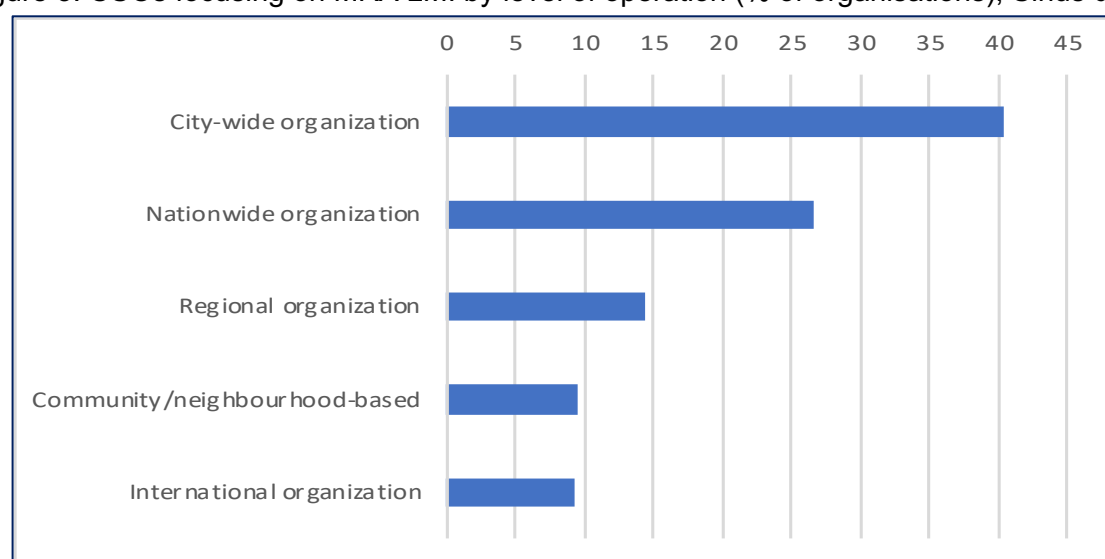
Figure 2: Number of CSOs focusing on MRA LMI and the year of establishment since 1990



Source: SIRIUS Project

The geography of CSOs reflects the density of populations in the major urban areas of each country. As reported in Figure 3, 40 % of the organisations provide their services to an entire urban area, 27 % are nationwide organisations, and 14% are regionally-based organisations. Only 9 % can be defined as community-based organisations while international organisations have a similar share. The highest share of community-based organisations is in the United Kingdom and Switzerland. On the other hand, nationwide organisations are more significant in Greece, Denmark, and Finland.

Figure 3: CSOs focusing on MRA LMI by level of operation (% of organisations), Sirius data.

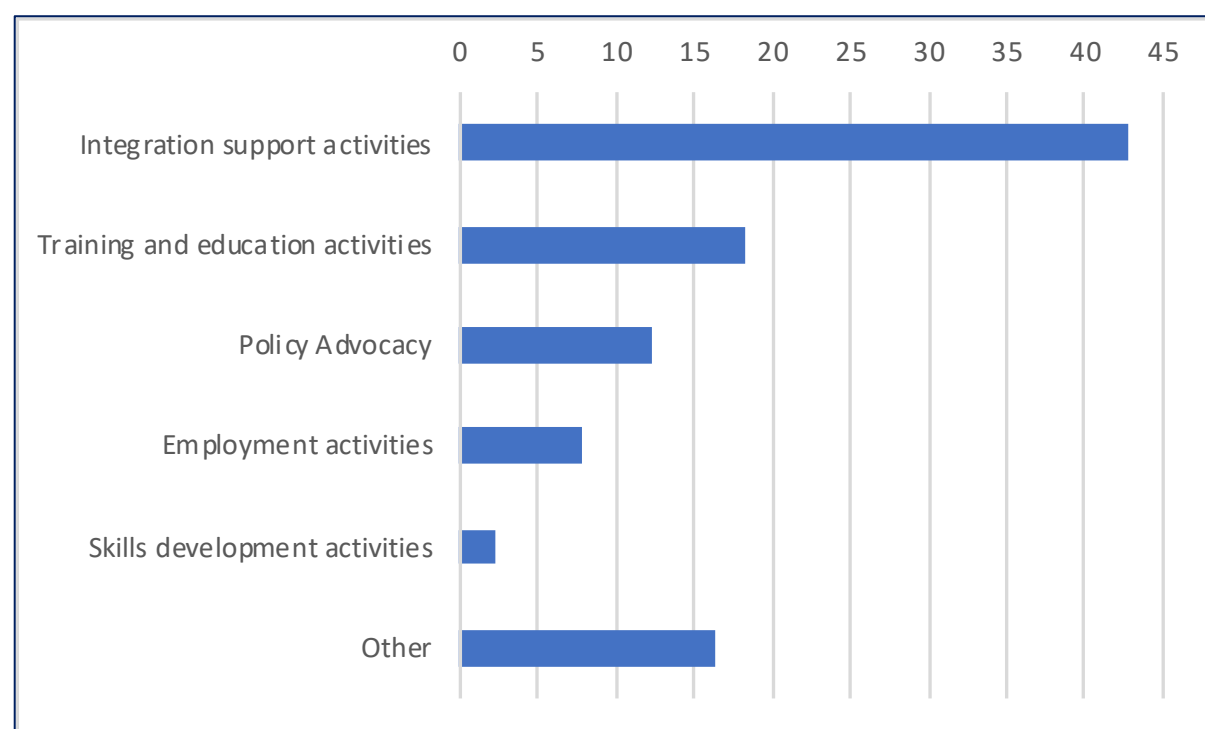


Source: SIRIUS Project

Our analysis of the CSOs classify the activities undertaken in relation to the labour market integration of MRAs across five different lines: (1) employment activities (services providing a match between companies and beneficiaries, migrant-led organisations employing MRAs, and CSOs supporting MRAs to start businesses), (2) integration support activities (services providing a holistic integration service in which employment is aligned with advice based programmes concerning housing, welfare benefits, or health), (3) education and training activities (mainly language courses), (4) skills development activities (courses for developing skills related to specific jobs), and (5) policy advocacy activities (advocating for the rights of MRAs).

As presented in Figure 4, the majority of organisations in our dataset provide integration support services (43%) and training and education services (18%). We can observe that 12% of CSOs promote policy advocacy related to employability while only 8% provide employability services and 4% invest in skills development activities. From this perspective, it is clear that the main activities CSOs undertake are related to language provision on the one hand and a holistic approach to integration on the other. Employment services and skills development activities seem to be only residual in terms of the range of activities that CSOs provide, and they are often aligned with other types of services.

Figure 4: Number of CSOs and their dominant area of activities (percentages of organisations)



Source: SIRIUS Project

1.5 CSOs and Labour Market Integration

As has been previously stated, the context in which CSOs operate differs in each country. Different institutional contexts affect the services provided by CSOs and their policy work differently. The funding of CSOs represents the most important contextual factor. However, funding is not the only factor influencing the CSOs' agendas. Contextual factors coincide with internal factors, such as target groups and their participation or strategic decisions on their

relationship to the state and public authorities. Last but not least, besides the mentioned factors, external shocks disrupting the established network of actors also play a crucial role. With regard to migration, the impact of the so-called refugee crisis is discussed in particular.

1.5.1 CSO Funding

Across all countries, the public sector is the main source of funding for CSOs; other sources (private or EU funds) are only supplementary. Therefore, CSOs are providers of services funded by the state and a vehicle through which states integration policies are implemented. The dependency on public funding affects CSOs in following ways: (1) It creates structural interconnection in integration policy implementation; (2) it affects the critical capacity of CSOs; and (3) the dominance of public sources makes CSOs vulnerable to and endangered by budget cuts and austerity policies.

In terms of shared responsibility over integration policies, there are different models of how CSOs work interferes with the state. In Italy, Denmark, and Finland, CSOs either run facilities for asylum seekers or provide services offered in official institutions. These services vary from immediate crisis assistance to services targeted at labour market integration (language courses, counselling, managing traineeships). In the Czech Republic and Switzerland, a contracting model prevails. Public bodies on national, regional, or local levels hire CSOs to provide services externally, such as employment counselling or language courses.

The critical capacity of CSOs relies on further democratic and political traditions. In the Nordic model, with its strong tradition of social dialogue, CSOs are an established partner of the state, participating in the debate over integration policies. In Denmark, some CSOs even challenged the government rhetoric representing migrants as a burden to the social system. In Italy and the Czech Republic, even though there have not been established institutional channels of social dialogue as in the Nordic model, the representatives of CSOs are critical towards integration policies which they are delivering and how they must move within the limits set by these policies. Umbrella organisations play an important role in strengthening this critical capacity.

In Greece, on the other hand, one can see a sharp distinction between collaborative and critical CSOs. Organisations rooted in the values of solidarity reject funding from public sources as well as from the EU institutions since they see them as responsible for inhumane restrictions on refugees and asylum seekers. Accepting money from them means direct participation in their policies and the legitimization of them. These 'solidarity groups' work mostly on local levels and are able to cover their costs by individual or international donations.

The biggest challenge however resulting from the dependency on public funds was not the limited possibilities to exercise criticism of state policies but fixed and short-term financing. This vulnerability has been further reinforced by recent austerity policies. NGOs must customise their projects to existing calls, and the continuation, even of a successful project, is very often more than uncertain. It also intensifies uncertainty in the management of NGOs—especially in Switzerland and the Czech Republic, where organisations are fully professional and do not rely on volunteers. CSO adaptation to budget cuts and new financial policies stem from the broader civil society context and possible opportunities. While CSOs in the United Kingdom were able to obtain other sources of funding (charities or EU funds), in the Swiss cantons, CSOs put more effort into further negotiation with public bodies and private funding sources.

The lack of state support and austerity policies force CSOs to look for new territories and social entrepreneurship may be one of those. In Greece, solidarity networks, which reject public funding, run social cooperatives where MRAs, for example, buy and sell crops from local farmers. Cooperative work can be found in Italy. Social entrepreneurship, meanwhile, was mentioned as a possible solution to funding uncertainty in the United Kingdom.

1.5.2 CSO Agendas

CSOs are important language course providers, and thanks to their social, legal, and administrative counselling, CSOs help MRAs in overcoming ineffective administrative and legal structures. These activities are provided by the majority of CSOs across SIRIUS countries. Several CSOs in these countries also assist MRAs with the recruitment process, providing courses and counselling on how to approach an interview, how to write a CV, or how to draft a motivation letter. Furthermore, CSOs also assist MRAs in their efforts to receive recognition of skills and qualifications. Moreover, by providing mentorship, training programmes, volunteering, or even direct employment, CSOs contribute to the development of MRAs' working skills and competencies and provide platforms to enhance MRA agency and autonomy. This capacity is not equally distributed, and it is rather rare in the Czech Republic and Denmark, occasionally developed in the United Kingdom, and more strongly developed in Finland, some areas of Italy, among the solidarity movement organisations of Greece, and in the Canton of Geneva in Switzerland. Moreover, CSOs frequently, either individually or collectively, raise the problematic situation of illegal practices on the part of employers, exploitation, human trafficking, or underpaid wages. Last but not the least, CSOs help to mitigate and, often together with MRAs, struggle against the hostile context of a widely diffused xenophobic atmosphere.

1.5.3 CSO Service Target Groups: Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers

In all countries, differences in service usage between asylum seeker, refugees, and migrants were reported. Refugees and asylum seekers use the assistance of NGOs more often, and there might be different reasons. Asylum seekers spend at least part of their stay in reception centres, and they are often either run by CSOs (Italy, Finland) or CSOs provide services in the centres (Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland). In countries where the relationship between state and NGOs is close, refugees either have a problem distinguishing between state bodies and CSOs (Czech Republic), or they may not trust the CSOs because they see them only as proponents of state policies (Denmark).

Conversely, migrants have more limited access to services targeted at refugees and asylum seekers even though they have similar needs. This is the case in Greece, where CSOs were reacted strongly to the migrant crisis, and in Italy, where CSOs are concentrated mostly on humanitarian aid for asylum seekers and refugees. On the other hand, in Finland, most services by CSO are in fact targeted at migrants already living in the country and not asylum seekers.

In other countries labour migrants might not be aware of the support possibilities offered by CSOs, or their services cannot target the challenges of the labour market (such as a lack of social contacts). This is especially the case for educated migrants as was described in Denmark or Finland. The Czech report also identified a mechanism whereby there is a cultural barrier between ethnic communities and NGOs. Furthermore, CSOs there are better equipped

to support foreigners with low skills or aspirations. However, refugees are supposed to accept these services and curb their aspirations in situations where their ambitions are higher.

Women were identified as a group with specific needs in all countries; however, these needs were not reflected in the services provided in all countries. The specific needs are usually connected with care. Women need childcare to attend LMI services such as requalification or language courses. Care also played a role in the job seeking process as part-time jobs or day care are not accessible in all countries. Additionally, the cultural background of women in traditional roles which expect women to stay at home are strong in certain communities. These are specific challenges women must face when seeking a job, and that includes struggle in general with the same type of problems as native women (lack of care or part-time jobs), but they are even more sensitive to inequality on the labour market.

Direct migrant participation in CSO activities vary. The diversity can be explained mostly through the values and structures of the individual organisations. Participation can range from volunteering and professional work to active involvement in decision-making procedures. Volunteering is considered by CSOs and MRAs to be a valuable source of skills and social bonds. The involvement of MRAs in decision-making is affected by the level of CSO professionalisation.

In the countries where the sector is more professionalised (Czech Republic and Switzerland), MRAs were employed as translators or intercultural social workers, but they did not hold key positions in CSOs. On the other hand, in informal solidarity movements in Greece, MRAs collaborating as volunteers participated directly in the decision-making. This is also true for CSOs which mediated direct integration to the labour market in the United Kingdom in comparison with those organisations focused on other aspects of integration.

One specific position were organisations founded by migrants themselves. LMI organisations founded or run by migrants were interviewed in Finland and Switzerland. Although the migrant experience is seen as valuable in understanding the needs of MRAs, the Swiss example shows us that migrant organisations may struggle to find a place among established professional CSOs. On the other hand, in Finland, many of the migrant established CSOs, especially the national ones, were in fact already established professional ones similar to other large national CSOs.

1.5.4 CSOs as Advocacy, Lobbying, and Policymaking Actors

To some extent, the non-governmental sector was active within the policymaking process of all countries; however, their involvement reflects their relations to the state (see above), which is both defined by the long term position of the third sector and shaped by contemporary politics driven by the attitudes of political actors during the migration crisis and the position of migration as a topic of public discussion in general.

CSOs participated differently in the policymaking efforts of each country. Only a minority of organisations typically focused on advocacy in labour market integration. In the United Kingdom, this was 14% of the total number of NGOs, while in the Czech Republic, two organisations out of twenty-four performed these activities. In Italy, where labour making integration is in charge of regional governments, CSOs were usually active only on the local level and few (often international) organisations participated in policymaking on the national level.

The key players in advocacy efforts are umbrella organisations. However, the method in which umbrella organisations operate is not universal. In the Czech Republic, the majority of integration NGOs are grouped in one dominant umbrella organisation which is able to represent the whole third sector. In Switzerland, there are competing umbrella organisations operating and some CSOs even refuse to participate.

Regarding the relationship to the state, one side of the spectrum can be represented by Denmark, where CSOs work as consultants to state integration activities and participate regularly in the policymaking dialogue. On the opposite end is Greece, in which state interventions were not developed and only recently has the government taken over responsibilities, adopting strategies developed by CSOs earlier. Nevertheless, between CSOs in the consensus-based Danish political system, there is a cleavage caused by the more stringent rhetoric of recent governments.

The other countries are in between these opposite cases, and the role of CSOs in policymaking is being negotiated. In the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic, CSOs are part of policymaking processes, participating in discussions about new integration measures; however, their outcomes are not guaranteed and strictly institutionalised. Despite this, interviewees in both countries claimed the situation is getting better. In the Czech Republic, personal relationships between public officers and NGOs improved, and in Scotland, the New Scots strategy was mentioned as a successful example of fruitful collaboration.

Besides direct participation in policy making, CSOs also influence the attitudes of policymakers through public campaigning. While it is a regular strategy in the UK (for example, the Lift the Ban campaign), in other countries, CSOs are divided over the use of such strategies and opportunities to effectively tackle public attitudes. In the Czech Republic and Italy, for instance, both countries with relatively high anti-migrant attitudes, CSOs influence public opinion only on a local and small scale.

1.5.5 CSOs in the Post-2014 Context

The migration crisis affected NGOs in all countries through both the (1) direct effects of the migrant crisis and (2) the indirect effects of changing discourse.

In countries directly affected, the role of CSOs has changed dramatically. In Italy and Greece, CSOs became providers of immediate humanitarian assistance and labour market integration services tend to be overlooked in comparison with urgent need assistance, such as the distribution of food or shelter. In Greece, where the state was not ready to care for asylum seekers, the crisis was the stimuli for the development of a formal and informal non-governmental sector, using funding mostly from the European Union, which could supply the services instead of the state. In Italy, CSOs capitalise on new opportunities, such as running asylum centres overlooked by the state.

In other countries, with the exception of the Czech Republic, the number of asylum seekers significantly increased, but the combined capacities of NGOs and governments were able to cover their needs. However, CSOs did meet with the consequences of indirect effects. The discourse evolving around the migration crisis worsened the public image of the third sector and gave rise to verbal attacks on individual organisations. In Czech Republic, Finland, and the United Kingdom, CSO staff experienced verbal attacks on social media as well as during public events.

The worsening attitude towards MRAs and NGOs also affected legislation and integration policies. CSOs in the United Kingdom and in Italy, despite the arrival of new groups of asylum seekers, had to deal with cuts in funding. In Denmark and Italy, CSOs have had to react to recent legislative initiatives which worsen the conditions of labour market integration, especially for asylum seekers and refugees.

1.6 Interaction between CSOs and MRAs: A Typology of CSOs

CSOs within and across SIRIUS countries are not homogeneous. Interaction between CSOs and MRAs is a product of complex dynamics, dependent on the country of origin of MRAs as well on the destination country. The role of CSOs and their capacity to work as enablers is determined by the availability of public funding and even by the willingness of CSOs to rely on public funding. Furthermore, the role of CSOs at a national level is influenced by the historically established position of the non-governmental sector and its connections to social policies.

By analysing the empirical evidence in seven SIRIUS countries, we have identified five different CSO positions which differ in their autonomy and dependence on the state, their capacity to instigate MRA agency, and their participation in decision-making processes, lobbying, or advocacy. Taking into account the heterogeneity of CSOs across and within national contexts, we view these five different CSO positions as (1) **uncritical extenders**, (2) **pro-active service providers**, (3) **autonomous co-producers**, (4) **innovative and creative CSOs**, and (5) **alternative CSOs**. These positions can be understood as ideal types, and they do not have their exact empirical correlates in social reality. However, the ways in which they operate can more or less overlap with the theoretical typology, although the empirical distinctions between different cases are not that sharp.

First, CSOs are in a position as **extenders** of national integration policies. Working as extenders, CSO involvement in labour market integration is often determined by the funding provided by the state, which co-opts the CSO migration-focused sector. CSOs uncritically approach state-driven policies in this case. However, the state-driven LMI policies are not understood *per se* as insufficient and ineffective. For example, in some contexts, the narrow link between the state and extender CSOs can work in favour of employment skills developments. On the other hand, the limits of CSOs as extenders become apparent when state policies embrace a narrow understanding of integration, strictly focused on integration *in* the labour market rather than on broader societal integration *through* labour market integration. Therefore, extender CSOs risk to dispense very little autonomy and their operation is often instrumentalised, as happens with some organisations in Denmark. CSOs as extenders of national integration policies are not involved in advocacy work or in lobbying. Their participation in decision-making processes, if any, is rather symbolic. These CSOs manage only rarely to develop the agency and independence of MRAs. CSOs as uncritical extenders are not interested in developing MRA skills and employment potential unless they are focused on highly qualified groups of migrants, perceiving them as ‘pools of talent’. CSOs services run the danger of becoming a tool of surveillance and control.

Similar to uncritical extenders, **pro-active service providers** remain significantly dependent on the state; however, their autonomy and critical capacities are higher. On the one hand, these CSOs are heavily dependent on public funding and provide a spectrum of services defined by the state. However, in their everyday operation, they are sensitive to human rights and sociocultural matters and situate labour market integration in the context of broader

societal integration. On the other hand, institutional pressures and their reliance on public subsidies do not allow them to fully develop their holistic vision of integration. Compared to CSOs working as extenders, pro-active service providers are not overly uncritical; yet, their operational activities and agenda are significantly determined by externally provided funding. These organisations suffer from their precarious *modus vivendi*, participating in temporarily confined projects, struggling to accumulate know-how and transfer knowledge in time. These CSOs are occasionally involved in lobbying and advocacy practices. CSOs, as pro-active service providers, are sometimes invited to participate in the decision-making process. However, their participation is often tokenistic and the CSOs problematise these highly formalised forms of involvement. The contribution of these CSOs towards the development of MRA autonomy is also rather limited due to their primary focus on linguistic services and employment counselling. A number of organisations in the Czech Republic and in the United Kingdom would fit this role as pro-active service providers.

Some CSOs operate as **autonomous co-producers** of labour market integration services. These CSOs still benefit from public funding; however, they can dispense higher autonomy and are more actively engaged in defining the labour market integration agenda. Similar to pro-active service providers, they embrace the holistic vision of integration, and the labour market represents just one sphere in which integration takes place. Their participation in decision-making processes contributes to shaping the public agenda. The public sector recognises the experience and knowledge these CSOs possess. Compared to pro-active service providers, CSOs as autonomous co-producers are even more emancipated and independent. CSOs as autonomous co-producers provide more space to develop the agency of MRAs hand in hand with opening opportunities for internships, volunteering, and occasionally also for employment. A number of organisations in Finland and Switzerland embody many characteristics of CSOs as autonomous co-producers.

Another type of CSO, established especially in the recent post-2014 context, are **innovative and creative CSOs**. These CSOs view MRAs as active actors, as partners, and they push MRAs toward social and economic innovations. MRA agency here is significantly reinforced. These organisations are highly autonomous, independent of the state, and commonly economically self-sustainable. This innovative type of CSO would embrace three different modalities: (a) They contribute to labour market integration via *digital technologies*, providing national or even transnational online job-matching tools coupled with employment counselling. These CSOs provide MRAs a plethora of counselling services for free, dispensing with revenues from paid services they provided to employers. (b) Creative CSOs are also often created from below and in areas with strongly developed civil society. These organisations significantly contribute to the embeddedness of MRAs in local communities through their participation in *cooperatives* and *social enterprises*. (c) Finally, *ethnic minority organisations* have an important role in labour market integration. The role of these CSOs is primarily cultural and social; these organisations are primarily focused on the organisation of cultural or gastronomical events, thus contributing to the maintenance of diasporic identities. Although labour market integration is not their primary focus, it remains however an important by-product and natural outcome of their initiatives. *Ethnic minority organisations* operate as platforms for information and knowledge exchange. These organisations are important particularly among those MRA groups who distrust CSOs and often conflate their position with public administration; this is notably the case for MRAs from countries which lack a tradition of civil society.

Finally, **alternative CSOs** deliberately operate with autonomy, independent of established institutional structures. Their financial independence is very similar to creative and innovative CSOs. However, they work against rather than alongside the public administration and the state. These organisations refuse any funding from national or European institutions, arguing that these institutions are responsible for the migration crisis. These initiatives are created through a bottom-up logic, from below, established by citizens and with the important participation of MRAs. Not being tied to bureaucratic measures and structural top-down pressures, these CSOs are very flexible and able to understand and respond to the needs of MRAs. Among these CSOs are, in particular, the solidarity movements of Greece.

1.7 CSOs and the External and Internal Barriers and Enablers of Labour Market Integration

In the following section, we discuss the enablers and barriers facilitating and hindering the position of CSOs in the area of labour market integration. The primary aim here is to provide an overview of the barriers and enablers explored and identified in SIRIUS countries. In line with the qualitatively driven nature of the research, the objective is to capture their emergence. In other words, the enablers and barriers of CSOs discussed below are not necessarily present in all national contexts and do not function with the same significance. However, they appear to influence MRA integration.

To conclude, CSOs represent key actors who contribute to labour market integration. The aforementioned barriers and enablers are not equally distributed across all countries; however, they provide a list of possible processes hindering and facilitating the integration processes.

1.7.1 CSOs and Labour Market Integration Enablers

Empirical evidence from all observed countries suggests CSOs potentially work as important enablers of MRA labour market integration, especially in those areas not covered by public policies. The following sections provide a more in-depth account of key external and internal enablers facilitating the position of CSOs in the area of labour market integration and, consequently, the position of MRAs on the labour market as well.

1.7.1.1 External Enablers Facilitating CSO Labour Market Integration

When it comes to the material and financial support of CSOs, one of the most important external enablers facilitating labour market integration initiatives is **the state, which in all SIRIUS countries significantly subsidises** a number of counselling and educational services provided by CSOs.

In addition to national state support, CSOs commonly benefit from funding and expert-driven support from **transnational governmental and inter-governmental institutions**. In this regard, important roles are played by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) as well as by country offices of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Similarly, the European Migration Forum and the Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship (SOC) at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) sometimes enable national initiatives.

Other external enablers are the **existing and newly developed transnational horizontal networks** between national and civil society transnational actors, which on several occasions served as an important resource of knowledge and information exchange as well as a tool **for sharing innovative practices**.

Lastly, a favourable external context and developed **cooperative and social entrepreneurship culture** enhances the effectiveness of integration programmes in several countries, in particular Italy, Finland, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. This favourable culture of collaboration enhances the emergence of new partnerships between CSOs on the one hand and **cooperative and social entrepreneurship culture** on the other hand. This can also be seen in the case of Danish networking organisations, which manage to build links between employers and MRAs or between states and MRAs. Thanks to the collaboration with cooperatives and social entrepreneurs, MRAs have a number of volunteering, mentoring, or internship opportunities that are valuable in stimulating the autonomy and agency of MRAs.

1.7.1.2 Internal Enablers Facilitating CSO Labour Market Integration

CSOs have the potential to enable the labour market integration of MRAs through their internal capacities in several ways. First, **flexibility and a lower degree of bureaucratisation** compared to public administration allow CSOs to account for the specific needs, aspirations, and experiences of individual MRAs.

Second, this personalised approach is linked to the capacity of CSOs to grant MRAs some agency in their integration efforts and to determine their own path to integration. Compared to public services, CSOs frequently have stronger potential to understand the **personal needs of MRAs and to foster their agency**. In addition to MRAs in general, this focus concerns more specific groups, such as youth and women migrants, as has been emphasised in Finland.

Third, CSOs work as important enablers of labour market integration due to their **networking capacity**. CSO representatives function **as brokers** who help MRAs connect with public officials, employers, trade unions, politicians, and even with (although very rarely) journalists. Collaboration with the mass media is primarily focused on alternative and marginal rather than mainstream or tabloid media.

Fourth, the role of networking is not only social, providing MRAs with access to social networks which they could not access otherwise, but also cultural; **CSO representatives ensure cultural mediation, supporting MRAs both culturally and linguistically**. More specifically, CSOs can provide MRAs with information about national cultures and norms and assist them with translation. Therefore, CSO representatives connect actors who would otherwise remain disconnected. Furthermore, CSOs have the capacity to understand and perceive the needs of MRAs and articulate them towards the state, employers, and other relevant external stakeholders.

Fifth, and in a related way, the agency of MRAs in some national contexts is enhanced thanks to the **provide space for involvement of MRAs in CSOs**, either through professional work or through volunteering, often participating in language counselling services. In the Finnish context, for example, CSOs work as important job providers. Moreover, in some national contexts (e.g. Finland, the UK, Switzerland) migrants themselves actively establish organisations with explicit integration objectives.

Sixth, MRAs appreciate the **psychological benefits** which come with the personalised approach taken by CSOs. This personalised method can help **foster the self-confidence of MRAs and prevent their alienation** not only during the process of job-searching but in integration more broadly. Several MRAs also appreciated that the non-profit ethos, differentiated from the public administration, helps to avoid the stigmatisation of MRAs commonly diffused among public officers.

Seventh, some CSOs provide **expert knowledge, gather evidence, and participate in research projects**.

Eighth, a number of CSOs apparently provide MRAs with **valuable sources of soft knowledge** considering labour market integration services and enhance their orientation on the labour market. More specifically, they provide MRAs with important, simple, but not always available answers to the following questions: Where to go? What service to use? And whom to contact and how? Furthermore, CSOs provide assistance in the administration of work permits and work contracts, which, as suggested in the WP4 report, is currently complicated and bureaucratised.

Ninth, CSOs are important as reflexive actors in the policymaking process, providing input, although only taken into consideration accidentally rather than systematically, for **policy change through advocacy**. In this vein, CSOs locate the importance of labour market integration in the broader context, articulating a more holistic vision of integration. Therefore, they remind that labour market integration cannot work on its own, in a separate work-related bubble, but that labour market integration must also be developed hand in hand with broader social and cultural integration. In other words, CSOs can work as discursive shifters, as subjects who can potentially correct somewhat limited mainstream national integration policies where integration has a very narrow meaning. Through their advocacy capacities, CSOs also contribute to **protect MRA rights by articulating issues such as human trafficking and the illegal conduct of employers**.

1.7.2 CSOs and Labour Market Integration Barriers

While CSOs act as important enablers of MRA labour market integration, their position and role should not be idealised. In their work with labour market integration, CSOs do not function exclusively as enablers; their functioning is determined by external pressures and can be limited due to internal restrictions which hinder their integration initiatives. The empirical evidence from seven SIRIUS countries suggests that CSOs face several external barriers in their work and that, moreover, the nature of the CSO itself does not necessarily favour integration processes, it can also undermine them.

1.7.2.1 External Barriers Hindering CSO Labour Market Integration

CSOs, in their labour market integration initiatives, encounter several barriers. The first barrier is related to public funding. Considering the **instability, temporality, and uncertainty of the state support of CSOs**, the **dependence on funding** influences the very existence of civil society organisations. Their dependence on public funding therefore hinders the contribution of CSOs to labour market integration objectives. A number of CSOs across SIRIUS countries suggested that the public funding they have recently received was temporal, precarious, uncertain, and significantly affected by austerity measures and the changing political climate. CSOs in all SIRIUS countries, in fact, face a hostile national political environment sometimes accompanied with the establishment of national and transnational anti-migration CSOs.

This uncertain funding influences the economic sustainability of CSOs and disrupts the continuity of their involvement in labour market integration services. Moreover, due to the project-driven and dispersed nature of the funding, the integration initiatives provided by CSOs are undermined due to the lack of coordination, notably where CSOs act as labour market integration service providers. In the context of missing coordination, the heterogeneous needs of MRAs are hardly being met.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence from SIRIUS countries suggests that the precarious nature of funding leads to situations in which accumulated know-how and evidence remains unused and not further developed after the termination of projects which CSOs initially established. Moreover, the limited funding provided to the non-governmental sector can undermine the collaborative spirit within the sector itself; CSOs in a variety of national contexts act not only as collaborators in service provision but also as competitors who struggle over the limited volume of public funding.

A second barrier is how the subsidising of CSOs by public administrations **influences the agenda of NGOs, defines the (un)desired target groups, or determines the nature and spectrum of the provided services**. National funding can also be used as a tool to subsume integration services under the principles **of migration securitisation**. More specifically, access to integration programmes is conditioned by detailed monitoring of MRA participation in these programmes. Such monitoring can have other functions beyond simple compliance with accountability principles. More specifically, the CSOs' adherence to accountability principles risks being used as a tool for monitoring and the surveillance of the migrant population. As a consequence, integration initiatives run by CSOs can be instrumentalised as tools of surveillance.

Third, some CSOs mentioned the problem of **co-optation of the originally non-governmental nature of integration services of the state**. The process of co-optation results in the exclusion of CSOs from the arena they (co-)created and in which they operated. In other words, in cases of co-optation, CSOs would open a new path of integration policies, establish integration courses, or start implementing mentoring services. However, once established, the provision of these services would lose state support and become secured exclusively by public administrations. The co-optation of ideas can sometimes be accompanied with the co-optation of CSO personnel—original NGO employees become state employees.

Fourth, the sphere of CSOs can sometimes similarly be **co-opted and strategically misused by private business providers**, as happened in the United Kingdom or Greece. This idea emerged notably in national contexts where the number of emergency ad hoc services introduced in response to the so-called 'migrant crisis' in 2014 attracted a number of actors with opportunistic business driven interests rather than a non-profit spirit. This co-optation can also be strongly developed in those national contexts where funding preferences prioritise established, usually bigger, and financially stable organisations; in particular, in the UK context, this means favouring even for-profit companies.

These companies would use the legal forms of the non-governmental sector in an opportunistic way and take advantage of public funding so as to pursue their business interests. Similarly, in these contexts, the stereotypical understanding of CSOs would be, though rarely, related to **the suspicion that the free provision of services could work as a strategic tool to acquire clients for future profit activities**.

Fifth, the distrust and suspicion of MRAs would also suggest there are a series of **sociocultural barriers influencing the interaction between CSOs and MRAs**. These barriers prevent MRAs from stronger use of CSO services. In particular, these circumstances have been observed in relation to closed ethnic and national communities who have established their own networks that provide the same functions otherwise ensured by NGOs. These communities approach CSOs only rarely, perceiving them as formal organisations and often conflating their position with the position of the public service. Viewing CSOs as 'official' and 'formal' organisations, they struggle to develop trustful relationships. The conflation of CSOs with the state also occurs due to the low visibility of civil society organisations and the low familiarity of MRAs with the services provided by CSOs.

Sixth, the insufficient use of CSO services is also determined by culturally-based **personal honour**; some MRAs would simply not approach CSOs as a matter of personal honour, perceiving a free service as a symptom of their own personal failure.

Seventh, this fact that the service of CSOs is provided for free would further increase the distrust of some MRAs, who would understand the counselling as **lacking expertise and being 'insufficiently professional'**, regardless of the know-how, experience, and education of CSO volunteers and employers.

Eighth, the success of integration programmes is hindered by the fact that NGOs are awarded **very little recognition from policymakers**, and their recognition remains only tokenistic, as observed in the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. In other words, some CSOs viewed the space provided by public authorities to them as a formalistic tick-box exercise. The problem has already been identified in previous scholarship, arguing that '*principles and practices of consultation, based on a dialogue that still stands out of the policy-making process*' (Mezzetti & Ceschi, 2015: 335).

1.7.2.2 Internal Barriers Hindering CSO Labour Market Integration

First, the effectiveness of integration services can suffer from the **low engagement of MRAs in CSOs**. Some CSOs would explicitly suggest that the key objective of NGOs is to provide professional services, regardless of the participation of MRAs in CSOs everyday activities. However, the low participation of MRAs can reinforce the processes of othering and objectification; MRAs are therefore a priori understood as passive and somewhat incompetent actors with deficits. This approach hinders the development of autonomy and the independence of MRAs, and at the same time, it risks strengthening their dependence on CSO services or welfare systems more broadly.

Second, labour market integration services have been hindered due to **the lack of experience and know-how** of some CSOs, in particular those founded in an emergency context as a reaction to the so-called migrant crisis. The operational capacity of these newly established CSOs was further limited (although not necessarily) due to limited networking capacities, undermining the possible role of CSOs as brokers mediating the relations between MRAs and employers or the public administration. This lack of experience also occurs as a consequence of the precarious position of CSOs, which exposes CSO staff to precariousness as well. This precariousness and personnel discontinuity hinders information exchange, knowledge transfer, and the accumulation of expertise—much needed for efficient labour market integration.

Third, some CSOs and their employees tend to **operate in a 'professional bubble'**, which prevents them from considering the individual situations of MRAs holistically as well as

understanding their sociocultural expectations. An inordinate focus on the professional identity of CSO social workers accompanied with excessive expertisation and prioritisation of technical skills can undermine the sociocultural potential of CSOs. Some professional service workers involved in integration programmes stressed that their organisation does not need to have MRAs at all costs, stressing the “*professional*” approach is a priority for them.

Fourth, the excessively professionalised ethos of CSOs is sometimes closely intertwined with the implementation of accountability measures, based on **quantification and inadequate attention given to the nature of activities**. The approach prioritising statistical evidence instead of experience can, for example, contribute to the fact that CSOs act as actors who extend the state’s pressure on MRAs to get a job at any cost instead of considering the position and experience of MRAs.

Fifth, the capacity of CSOs to understand the personal needs of MRAs and to foster their agency is marginalised by the pressures of **bureaucratisation and institutionalisation**. Similar to the excessive emphasis given to expert knowledge, the bureaucratisation and institutionalisation of CSOs undermine the flexible nature of organisations and foster their more or less deliberate reluctance to take into account the specific experiences and skills of individuals.

Sixth, the previously mentioned dependence on external funding can influence the internal nature of CSOs and **undermine the contentious and transformative character of CSOs**. The dependence on funding can therefore marginalise critical voices within CSOs, leaving the contribution of CSOs towards integration to rest on individualised service provision rather than collective action. An excessive alignment with state integration policy, embracing a narrow understanding of integration, is apparent in Denmark, where refugee and asylum seekers commented that CSOs tend to repeat state discourses and simply put into practice state policies.

Seventh, the manifest example of internal barriers is represented by CSOs who embrace perspectives opposing integration. The post-2014 context contributed to the emergence of **CSOs with anti-migration perspectives** and which would explicitly resist any integration effort.

1.8 CSOs and Labour Market Integration Barriers and Enablers: Conclusions

CSOs can work as important actors enhancing not only integration *in* the labour market but also integration *through* the labour market. Previous research conducted as part of the SIRIUS projects suggested an occurrence of similar barriers across SIRIUS countries, summarised in the previous WP3 report as follows:

The main barriers to labour market integration of migrants are similar across SIRIUS countries, and include lack of language skills, ineffective administrative and legal structures, lack of recognition of (home country) skills and qualifications, lack of needed skills and competences, lack of networks, discrimination, exploitation, general atmosphere of xenophobia in society and (perceived) cultural barriers. (Bontenbal & Lillie, 2019: 47)

Against this backdrop, CSOs significantly contribute to mitigating and overcoming these barriers. They are important language course providers and, thanks to their social, legal, and administrative counselling, CSOs help MRAs in overcoming ineffective administrative and legal structures. CSOs also assist MRAs in their effort to receive recognition of skills and qualifications, accompanied by individualised efforts with advocacy work and campaigning. By providing mentorship, training programmes, volunteering, or even direct employment, CSOs contribute to the development of the work skills and competencies of MRAs and provide platforms to enhance their agency and autonomy. Furthermore, CSOs overcome the lack of networks by acting as brokers and mediators in the relationship between MRAs on the one hand and the state or employers on the other hand. Moreover, CSOs frequently either individually or collectively raise problematic situations of illegal employment practices, exploitation, human trafficking, and underpaid wages. Last but not the least, they help to mitigate and struggle against, often together with MRAs, the hostile context of a widely diffused xenophobic atmosphere.

These are all significant contributions of the civil society sector, whose role cannot, however, be overestimated due to the number of internal and external barriers which CSOs face, as we have discussed above.

Last but not least, our research suggests a high degree of differentiation among CSOs, not only across states but also within states, determined by the tradition of civil society in host countries as well as the diversity of MRA groups and depending on their familiarity and experience with civil society. The heterogeneity of CSOs includes organisations highly dependent on state funding and agendas as well as highly independent and solidarity movements. More specifically, we have identified five different CSO positions which differ in their autonomy and dependence on the state, their capacity to instigate MRA agency, and their participation in decision-making processes, lobbying, or advocacy. Taking into account the heterogeneity of CSOs across and within national contexts, we view these five different CSO positions as (1) uncritical extenders, (2) pro-active service providers, (3) autonomous co-producers, (4) innovative and creative CSOs, and (5) alternative CSOs. First, CSOs are in a position as extenders of national integration policies.

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Part II – Country reports

2 Czech Republic

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2.1 Introduction

This report is focused on the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the labour market integration (LMI) of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers (MRAs) in the Czech Republic. The non-governmental sector plays a strong role in labour market integration and its importance has increased in recent decades hand in hand with the low activity of the state in this area.

Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with MRAs and complemented with desk research of available sources on the topic of non-governmental organisations, the report is structured as follows. First, the existing academic reflection on the role of CSOs in LMI is briefly summarised. Second, an overview and categorisation of CSOs active in the Czech Republic within the LMI area is provided and supported with an inventory of non-governmental organisations (CSOs) active in the same field. Third, the methods section provides a description of the methods used to collect the data analysed in the two major empirically-driven chapters which follow, titled ‘How do CSOs react to migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees?’ and ‘What do migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers request and get from CSOs?’. The final conclusions summarise the main observations and discuss interactions between CSOs and MRAs.

2.2 The Role of CSOs Through Academic Lenses

The Czech government recognises CSOs as a crucial player contributing to the integration of MRAs into the labour market, in particular through social counselling and language courses (Czech Government, 2015). However, the area of services for MRAs is affected by the general lack of evidence-based policy and low level of public participation in policymaking (Veselý et al 2016). Integration is understood narrowly, without adequate attention being paid to sociocultural integration and the broader living conditions of MRAs in the Czech Republic and without sufficient support to deal with difficult life situations.

CSOs are understood as subjects of private law existing for some other purpose than profit-making. The representatives of civil society usually use a narrow definition of CSOs which covers the legal forms of civil associations, foundations, foundation funds, public benefit corporations, churches, and religious societies. Generally speaking, Czech CSOs are predominantly funded from public resources: the state regional and municipal budgets and

European funds (see Czech Government 2017). The biggest state donors are the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, which supports sports associations and clubs, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which supports social service providers.

Although the number of CSOs has increased in the post-socialist era (Frič and Pospíšilová, 2010), civic engagement outside the sphere of leisure is rather low (Fagan, 2005) — a trend also mirrored in the area of migration. Considering the relatively low number of MRAs living in the Czech Republic, CSOs dealing with these target groups represent only a small minority of third sector organisations, and consequently, very little has been written about their role in migration policies.

The existing literature suggests that the involvement of civil society organisations in relation to MRAs issues is threefold and related to the provision of (1) social services, (2) advocacy and activism, and (3) migrants and ethnic associations. As Čaněk and Čížinský (2011) describe, in the field of asylum and migration CSOs were originally developed as refugee-assisting organisations supported by the UNHCR and only subsequently as organisations assisting other groups of migrants. Moreover, for a number of years, CSOs were services-oriented rather than performing advocacy work (Szczepaniková, 2008).

CSOs represent crucial actors in social policy processes and key partners of local, regional, and central governments in social policy implementation. Service-providing CSOs are usually highly formalised and actively employ expert knowledge. Hand in hand with the provision of specialised services based on specific skills and knowledge, education, and experience, the MRA-focused civil sector is professionalised, thus reflecting a broader process in Czech civil society (see Jantulová, 2005). Following the so-called refugee crisis, several scholars reflected upon the emergence of solidarity movements providing humanitarian aid. These informal initiatives based on volunteering organised material collection for refugees and could be understood as an alternative to established professional CSOs (Křeček, 2016, Pixová and Novák 2016, Novák and Kuřík 2019). However, there had been some informal activities before the migration crisis.

Čaněk (2016) mentioned the Initiative for the Rights of Migrant Workers (IRMW), founded as an informal organisation in spring 2010 to promote the migrant workers' rights. The initiative comprised various kinds of political activism ranging from trade unions through migration and migrant rights CSOs and to informal anti-racist and migrant rights groups.

In relation to services provided to MRAs, CSOs most often offer social counselling and language education (Nešporová, Svobodová 2006, Topinka et al 2013, Fišarová, 2018). A total of 82 registered Czech CSOs have declared that the social services they provide are open to MRAs. However, the topic of migration does not represent an agenda priority for these organisations, which are predominantly focused on different target groups, such as people at risk of poverty and social exclusion and disadvantaged groups in the labour market (Fišarová, 2018). The services are frequently provided only in Czech, and it is impossible to use them without an interpreter. For example, CSOs only rarely hire persons speaking Vietnamese, and their services are rarely used by the Vietnamese community, the second largest migrant group in the country (Kušniráková, Plačková and Vu 2012).

Furthermore, the services oriented towards migrants are not evenly distributed—most service-oriented CSOs operate in the two largest cities of the Czech Republic: Prague and Brno (Bauerová, 2018; Blažejovská, 2012, Topinka et al., 2013). Moreover, migrants have access only to a limited spectrum of social services. While social counselling services are available in

all major cities, subsequent services important to successful labour market integration, such as social housing or street work, are provided almost exclusively in major cities or only in the Czech language (Fišarová, 2018; Klinecký 2012).

The services provided in Prague have several further shortages: (1) low awareness of social services among migrants themselves—information is not sufficiently distributed among migrants; (2) lack of continuity—new projects are not sufficiently linked to successful, already implemented projects; and (3) the financial insecurity of social service providers (Klinecký 2012). Financial insecurity also generates problems in the employment of qualified professionals and the continuity of services offered (Valentová 2012). What is more, the financial situation is not a problem limited to Prague. Although CSOs are recognised as important, if not essential actors in MRA integration, it has been argued that their role is undermined due to the lack of financial resources (Bauerová 2018).

Second, several studies mentioned the role of advocacy-oriented CSOs (see Císař, 2010). These organisations are particularly significant and specific to the post-socialist context (Petrova and Tarrow, 2007). Without having a massive membership base, these CSOs are able to engage themselves and other relevant actors in democratic processes and participate in public policymaking. They are mostly formalised, professionalised, and employ expert knowledge. Similar to other human rights initiatives (Císař and Navrátil, 2015) also engaged in the area of migration, transactional activists are dependent on EU funds, they are very often a part of a transnational networks, and together, they create policy networks. In recent years, the most contentious issues have been asylum seeker policies, health insurance for foreigners, and new amendments of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals living in the Czech Republic (see e.g. Dohnalová, 2012; Drbohlav, 2003).

Third, in addition to registered social services, migrants commonly take advantage of informal migrant self-help groups. Kušniráková, Plačková, and Vu (2012) mentioned the importance of such groups among Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic. These groups were often formed on the basis of region of origin. The role of informal intermediaries offering paid services plays an important role among Vietnamese migrants. The Vietnamese prefer paid services, which they consider trustworthier than free services provided by CSOs (Kušniráková, Plačková and Vu 2012). The informal system of services has also been extensively used among Ukrainians (Nekorjak, 2006; Leontiyeva, 2010; Topinka 2016).

The quantitative survey conducted among foreigners in Prague (Leontiyeva et al. 2018) proved the preference for paid services over public ones, including in the area of language training among migrants who came to the Czech Republic relatively recently (up to five years). The study also revealed a low level of awareness of services offered by CSOs among new migrants (up to five years).

The role of CSOs in providing services for asylum seekers and refugees was critically explored by Sczepanikova (2008, 2009). She underlined the feminised character of CSO assistance, the depoliticisation of assistance, and the dependence of CSOs on funding from the Ministry of the Interior.

Migrants are officially represented through a national minority association, which usually focus on convening cultural events (see Leontiyeva 2006). There are 12 officially recognised national minorities (Belarusians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Germans, Poles, Roma, Russians, Rusyns, Serbians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, and Vietnamese). Their activities are funded by a special part of the state budget (Marková, 2012), but other minorities often establish

associations as well. Although the migrant associations represent an important part of civil society organisations, their role in labour market integration remains underexplored at the expense of the attention given primarily to folk and religious traditions (Sulitka, 2008, 2015).

In the Vietnamese diaspora, the Association of Vietnamese Entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic (Svaz vietnamských podnikatelů v ČR) has a specific position, however, its activities are focused more on economic cooperation with Vietnam and Vietnamese citizens in the Czech Republic than on integration in the Czech society (Kocourek 2006).

To sum up, research on CSOs focusing on migration has mostly dealt with the provision of social services. The majority of research studies were descriptive; rather than providing a systematic and critical account of the role of MRAs, they frequently provided anecdotal evidence about the role played by CSOs. Moreover, less attention has been paid to CSOs as advocacy or policymaking organisations. Against this backdrop, more research is needed not only into the academic context but also much needed evidence so as to inform evidence-based policy. The following chapters provide this type of account, empirically informed by interviews with CSO representatives and MRAs and focused on the specific involvement of CSOs in the area of labour market integration.

2.3 An Overview and Categorisation of CSOs

There are currently 25 organizations² dealing with the integration agenda in the Czech Republic. For CSOs, the topic of labour market integration issues does not necessarily represent a key area of interest; however, it is an important part of their wider agenda. CSOs involved in the integration agenda have a relatively homogenous offer of services or approaches. At the same time, they differ in scale from organisations with three employees to those of more than 50. The majority of CSOs are involved in the provision of direct services and working with individual clients. They are also heavily dependent on public funding. Only a limited number of CSOs are active political actors whose aim would be to shape the current integration landscape through advocacy and participation in policymaking.

The majority of CSOs are involved principally in service provision, offering direct services to foreigners—the most widespread of which are individual social and legal counselling, followed by language courses, and the organisation of social events both for migrant communities and the wider public. Specific services for labour market integration are not very widespread. The everyday labour market agenda is part of the individual short term counselling service and only several organisations run long-term skills development courses. Direct services are core activities of the majority of organisations. Moreover, other several actors specialise in a given

² CSOs which provide services to foreigners as the main target group were identified as part of internet-driven desk research. In particular, there were two key sources: first, the 'List of Organisations Providing Assistance to Foreigners', available on the website of the Ministry of the Interior (<https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/kontakty-na-organizace-ktere-vam-poskytnou-bezplatnou-pomoc-ci-poradenstvi.aspx>), and second, the list of member organisations of the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations (<http://www.migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/kdo-jsme/#clenskeorganizace>). These sources of information were further verified over the course of fieldwork consisting of interviews with CSO representatives as well as participation at relevant migration-related forums, including public debates, conferences, and roundtables.

field of expertise that is developed through specific projects. Examples would be the Centre for Integration of Foreigners (*Centrum pro integraci cizinců*), which specialised in labour-related counselling and running long-term courses, permitting MRAs to acquire labour related skills, or META, which specialises in the field of migrant inclusion in public education.

The involvement of religious organisations in integration issues is weak³ and reflects the low religiosity of the Czech Republic; Charita (a catholic organisation) and Diakonie (an evangelical organisation) are two of the most important providers of services for foreigners.

The CSOs are highly professionalised, subsidised by the state, and only rarely based on volunteering. Only during the so-called migrant crisis were several rather informal initiatives born (e.g. Pomáháme lidem na útěku [Help for people on the run], Iniciativa Hlavák [The main train station initiative]). However, they were established largely as an attempt to overcome the crisis period, to provide migrants with immediate humanitarian aid, and to help them secure basic existential needs. Although the very emergence of these initiatives stimulated a mainstream debate about MRAs, none of these initiatives would systematically contribute to the integration of MRAs into Czech society.

The involvement of CSOs in the Czech Republic active in the area of LMI is not limited to service provision and everyday contact with migrants. There are a minority of organisations which are focused on campaigning, policymaking, research, or the development of information and communication platforms. Among these organisations are the Migration Awareness Programme of People in Need (*Středisko migrace Člověka v tísní*), the Multicultural Centre (*Multikulturní centrum*), and the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations (*Konsorcium organizací pracujících s migranty*).

People in Need is one of the biggest CSOs in the Czech Republic. The primary focus of People in Need is social care and development; however, the organisation runs also the Migration Awareness Programme, which specialises in campaigning and education by addressing the mass media and the wider public as well as by organising educational workshops⁴. Furthermore, as part of the programme, the organisation People in Need is part of the Visegrad Countries National Integration Evaluation Mechanism, targeted at expert stakeholders and aiming to improve the integration of refugees and beneficiaries of international protection. The Multicultural Centre, for its part, runs a website *Migrace Online* (www.migraceonline.cz), which provides information about migration for experts and conducts research especially in the field of labour migration and the rights of migrants.

The most significant advocacy initiatives are run by the umbrella organisation Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations⁵, which is active in policy-making and represents the whole sector in negotiations with state bodies. The consortium organises policy roundtables and conferences and has always warned against the dangers of a technocratic, instrumental, and securitised understanding of migrants. More recently, the consortium has called for stronger

³ The involvement of religious organisations is also weaker due to the anti-migration sentiments shared by some Czech representatives of the Catholic Church (see Čada, HOření, Numerato 2019).

⁴ Among the educational projects run in 2019 were the following: 'People between the lines: Building skills for quality migration coverage', targeting students of journalism, and 'Stay in the Picture' (*Být v obraze*), addressing secondary school students.

⁵ A list of participating organisations is available at <http://www.migracnikonsorcium.cz/en/who-we-are/>

involvement from actors who have only rarely joined the integration debates and initiatives, such as local political representatives and employers. The consortium's members are involved in research projects and publish policy papers, such as the *Integration of Foreigners in Czechia through the Lenses of CSOs (Integrace cizinců v Česku z pohledu neziskových organizací*, 2019) or an evaluation project focused on activities financed through the European Social Fund. Last but not the least, in 2019, the consortium published an overview of changes in the Act on Residence of Foreigners (*Shrnutí změn, které přináší novela cizineckého zákona*, 2019).

Not all CSOs are focused primarily or exclusively on an MRA-related agenda. Some organisations address wider social issues or have a wider target group. The organisation Nesehnutí is broadly focused on a human rights agenda, and similarly, META organises educational workshops for schools. La Strada is focused on violence against women and therefore also involved in issues of human trafficking. La Strada is also active within the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations.

Furthermore, labour market integration has been fostered by several CSOs who had not targeted MRAs previously. These CSOs are specialised in labour counselling more broadly and make use of the funding opportunity targeted at migrants. In this vein, several single projects targeted at foreigners have recently been introduced and prepared by two organisations, namely the European Contact Group (Evropská kontaktní skupina; EKS) and Contact Line. The EKS ran several projects targeted at labour market orientation and the skills development of migrants between 2008 and 2016 but is not currently active in the field and integration is not mentioned in the materials of the organisation as a relevant field. Contact Line is active in the Ústecký region in northern Czech Republic, and it runs projects for vulnerable groups of migrants. Among its projects is one entitled 'Education—work—integration' ('Vzdělání—práce—integrace') targeted at foreigners.

2.3.1 Geography and History

The majority of organisations reside in Prague, and around half of them are active in Prague only. On the one hand, the focus on Prague corresponds to the Czech capital having the biggest and most diverse population of foreigners. On the other hand, the distribution of CSOs in the Czech Republic does not reflect the distribution of MRAs within the Czech territory. There were no CSOs active in major industrial cities, such as Liberec or Ostrava. The integration services in these cities are provided by the Centre for Support of Integration of Foreigners, and, by offices of Prague-based organisations. The Centres for Support of Integration of Foreigners are a network which has been established gradually in all regions—run and financed by the state. The situation is complicated by the fact that in some regions the centres are run by CSOs (Hradec Králové, Ústí nad Labem) or have the status of an CSO (Integration Centre Prague, for example, is run by the municipality). Moreover, there are a few CSOs operating in smaller towns without a significant population of foreigners, such as Žebřík in Prostějov or F Point in Jihlava.

Among the CSOs focused on migration, there is only one organisation providing truly nationwide services: Migration Center (*Středisko migrace*), adhering to the church organisation Charita Czech Republic (Caritas). This CSO oversees a network of services provided to MRAs in seven locations in the Czech Republic and the geographical distribution of the centres across the whole country ensures foreigners can be redirected to a centre in the network. Other CSOs provide their services physically only in Prague, although they have

their national reach enhanced through information websites or hotlines. Some CSOs have opened offices outside of Prague, such as the Centre for Integration of Foreigners (with offices in central and northern Bohemian industrial centres) or Poradna pro integraci (offices in Kadaň and Ústí nad Labem). The regionalisation of the services has emerged in a reaction to new funding opportunities arising from Prague and is also connected to the surplus of services provided in the capital city.

The diversification of clients and funding mentioned above is especially typical for the few organisations based out of Prague. The activities of Most Pro, in Pardubice, are predominantly oriented towards foreigners, but the organisation is also running social counselling services for the general public in a smaller city in the region. F Point, in Jihlava, provides services for foreigners only as a complement to a more diverse range of social services. The diversification of services and target groups might be a strategy to overcome uncertainty given the short-term financing of projects. For example, Žebřík, based in Prostějov and running social-related counselling and language courses, does not have any project targeted at foreigners at the moment. However, foreigners are an important share of the clients using other community services, such as family events or workshops; therefore, the organisation still targets the goal of integration.

Due to the relative isolation of the Czech Republic from the so-called migrant crisis, the post-2014 period did not cause any significant changes in the migrant-related CSO landscape. Almost half of the CSOs involved in integration in the Czech Republic were established well before the crisis, during the 1990s (13), ten were established in the 2001–15 period, and only one afterwards (and this organisation develops its older activities under a new name and status).

2.3.2 Beyond the Institutionalised CSOs

In addition to the institutionalised and established CSOs, there is a whole range of migrant associations (cultural, business, social) whose role in labour market integration cannot be overseen. Their activities and events provide MRAs with space for networking, necessary for their labour market integration, and can serve as a source of informal legal and employment advice. The variety of events can contribute to informal forms of employments and legal consultations.

The consultancy void is further filled by a broad spectrum of private and paid services for foreigners outside the sphere of civil society. This is especially the case for the Russian and Ukrainian speaking communities; a number of intermediaries offers services similar to those provided by CSOs—individual legal counselling, in particular—but they also offer commercial health care insurance. Similarly, organisations and intermediaries active in the Vietnamese community especially offer counselling or translation services needed for running a business. These forms of support for migrants were not reflected in the research design but, according to the data, this field might be bigger than the non-governmental sector.

2.4 Methods

The desk research, based on a review of available documents and relevant material, was further complemented with semi-structured interviews carried out with CSO representatives and MRAs. More specifically, 15 interviews with representatives of non-governmental

organisations and 29 interviews with migrants with various ethnic and educational backgrounds, legal statuses, and different lengths of stay in the Czech Republic were collected to understand not only the barriers but also the enablers to the integration of MRAs into the Czech labour market.

The sampling was driven with by an effort to achieve empirical saturation and to gather a plurality of experiences of both CSOs and MRAs. As regards the CSOs, the sample is dominated by interviews with representatives of Prague-based organisations. However, it also includes several interviews with organisations from other Czech regions and municipalities. This focus reflects the geographical distribution of CSOs in the Czech Republic. Interviewees represent different levels of management varying from directors to social workers, with a particular focus on those who are specialised in the area of labour counselling.

As regards MRAs, the sample of interviewees reflects the structure of foreigners in the Czech Republic. The interviewees are between 22 and 51 years of age. These interviewees came to the Czech Republic between the years 2008 and 2018.⁶ Nearly half the interviewees were women (13). The labour migrants among the interviewees come mostly from post-Soviet countries (Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Vietnam). Refugees came from various countries (Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Cuba, Ukraine, and Myanmar), and this diversity reflects the asylum process in the Czech Republic; there has been no dominant group in the last decade. Considering the specific significance of CSOs in labour counselling, as identified during the course of the research, the group of refugees is overrepresented in the sample in comparison to their share within the migrant population in order to understand the specific needs of this group.

Although the interviews were carried out primarily with respondents with secondary or higher education, two respondents in the sample have primary or no formal education. Considering the very low engagement of CSOs outside of Prague and Brno (because the majority of CSOs reside in Prague and, in many regions, there are no active CSOs), the sample includes MRAs living in these areas.

2.5 How Do CSOs React to the MRAs Need?

CSOs represent the most significant pillar in the provision of LMI-related services. Their significance has constantly increased hand in hand with the increasing number of MRAs.⁷ This chapter gives an overview of CSO involvement in the field of labour integration based on the perspective of CSO representatives. The main topics which were covered in the interviews and which are analysed here are labour market integration services, CSO involvement in policy-making processes, advocacy, and the relationships of CSOs with other relevant

⁶ There is only one exception of a woman who came as a teenager in 2003 and who established her own business as a job intermediary; her story helped us understand how her services are used within the migrant community.

⁷ While at the end of 2004, there were 255 917 MRAs in the Czech Republic, by 31 December 2018 their number amounted to 566 931 (Czech Statistical Office, 2019). In the same period, the number of CSOs working with migrants increased from 15 to 25, and according to the majority of interviewees, CSO staff numbers have increased as well.

stakeholders; particular attention has been given to how the positions of CSOs were influenced by the so-called migrant crisis.

CSOs act as service providers in the area of MRA labour market integration through legal, social, and employment counselling. Furthermore, they provide language courses and, occasionally, employment skills development courses as well. The majority of migrants arrive to the Czech Republic already with a valid employment permit. Thus, on the one hand, CSOs are providing only limited assistance to MRAs in job searching considering the currently low unemployment rates in the Czech Republic⁸. Only a few organisations facilitate the orientation of migrants in the area of labour rights by means of interactive workshops about labour market legislation or long-term skills acquisition courses, which, for example, help them to practice a job interview or write a CV.

On the other hand, their role in the provision of language courses is fundamental and similar to their involvement in individual counselling, in particular, those provided to refugees and asylum seekers. Moreover, the role of CSOs is vital as regards the assistance of MRAs with the administration of their employment contracts or their support in dealing with the illegal practices of employers. These initiatives are sometimes behind individualised social work. In this vein, CSOs exchange and share information about untrustworthy employers and help MRAs to orient themselves on the labour market as well as warn them of exploitation and the possible risks of illegal behaviour. Occasionally, CSOs deal with injustice in the labour market, such as tackling insufficient security conditions at a workplace, underpayments, or unpaid wages. CSOs help the most vulnerable MRAs in debt recoveries, in particular, situations where MRAs' existential dependence is predicated upon one specific employer. As one CSO representative estimated, these activities might have contributed to the recovery of tens of millions of Czech crowns (around 400 000 EUR).

2.5.1 Funding

The services provided by CSOs depend on funding from a variety of public resources. The funding is provided by ministries, regions, and municipalities. Several CSOs benefit from EU funding, such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Individual CSOs are successful in securing resources from other international funding schemes such as the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norway Grants. Funding from private donors represents only a small share of the finances available to CSOs.

Notwithstanding the variety of funding opportunities, the position of the total majority of CSOs is precarious, unstable, and uncertain. This regards not only the position of organisations themselves but also the position of employees working for these organisations. The precarious situation of CSOs is reflected by the flexible nature of working positions; many lecturers, translators, or social workers are employed on a part-time basis. Similar to the broader context of Czech society, these flexible positions primarily attract women. Long-term employment contracts in the third sector are rather rare; representatives of all organisations frequently discussed the disadvantages related to shortages in the workload, the necessity to introduce project-based contracts, or contracts for limited periods.

⁸ Since 2015, the Czech Republic has the lowest unemployment rate within the European Union; in July 2019, it reached 2.1% (Eurostat, 2019). Moreover, it also has the highest employment rate among non-EU citizens (Eurostat, 2017)

CSOs offering MRAs social counselling are often registered as social services. The basis of their funding is therefore primarily secured by the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Although the overall volume of public funding allocated to CSOs has remained stable in recent years, individual CSOs must apply for funding annually. The lack of continuous funding not only represents an existential challenge for CSOs, but it also influences their agendas. The existing funding opportunities constrain CSOs to be active in those areas of service which are publicly funded. The public funding, in general, provides CSOs with resources to secure wages, but adversely, it does not permit them to develop long-term programmes and strategies.

The precarious position of CSOs is further strengthened by the fact that the payments for service provisions are not anticipated, and CSOs receive the funding only in the first half of the year. As the director of a regional services provider put it upon taking out a loan to cover wages until April: *'I was shivering that the money wouldn't come on time, and there was no chance I would get a second loan. It was hard to tell my staff that maybe the wages would arrive late in April, especially when you know that many of my colleagues have children, and they are often struggling to make ends meet'* (7_CS0_CZ).

These precarious conditions prevent CSOs from developing specific know-how and from providing a continuous specialised service based on accumulated knowledge. A representative of an CSO specialised in research and campaigning in this regard commented on the lack of funding opportunities preventing them from running projects: *'We have many great ideas but no ways to make them happen'*(6_CS0_CZ). Notwithstanding this situation, some CSOs still succeed in developing specialised areas of expertise and benefit from long-term EU funding, among which is a small CSO, able to build a community centre using a grant from the EEA and Norwegian funds⁹.

CSOs are important providers of free language courses, helping migrants to overcome one of the main barriers to labour market integration: poor language knowledge. However, the capacity of language courses provided by CSOs is limited and cannot meet the demand of MRAs due to the lack of funding, an insufficient number of lecturers, and teaching rooms. As suggested through critical observation in one of the interviews, the capacity of services is inadequate: *'We would need a whole new building to accommodate all the courses and activities'* (5_CS0_CZ).

The majority of interviewed organisations do receive some form of financial support from municipalities. However, the funding does not necessarily serve its purpose, especially when it is low and allocated to cover expenses for specific events. One of the important organisations operating in Prague applies annually for funding not because of economic reasons but in order to maintain good relationships with the city council. As its representative suggested, *'The received funding does not even cover the time for staff to write the application and the report'* (1_CS0_CZ). The financial support can, however, play a more important role for CSOs from smaller towns, as suggested by one of its directors, who commented, *'I wouldn't*

⁹ The Czech Republic is a beneficiary of the EEA and Norway Grants. They are administered by the Czech Ministry of Finance but financed by Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. The purpose of the grants can be wide and the integration of foreigners is not the main focus.

find the money on the street, would I?' (12_CSO_CZ) fully aware that even this financial resource is uncertain from a long-term perspective.

Only a small share of financial support comes from private donors. Czech CSOs struggle to attract private funding for any projects related to MRAs due to the xenophobic context and public sensitivity concerning the topic. The hostile national context would also explain why one of the rare non-profit initiatives in the area of MRA labour market integration is actually supported by foreign capital. An interviewee commented on a rather unique educational project targeted at migrant students and financed by a private foundation: *'I think it's because this is a foreign company. Therefore, they are willing to finance these kinds of activities'* (5_CSO_CZ). Both a nationwide service provider and a CSOs based in a small city used to have a fundraiser for a short period in order to increase funding from private sources. However, these attempts were not successful, and the introduction of a fundraiser did not generate any additional funding.

2.5.2 CSOs and Public Administration

Interaction between CSOs and public administration is inevitable considering the state provides the majority of funding addressed to CSOs in support of their integration initiatives. Although the CSOs receive financial support from public sources, they can hardly be viewed as actors who are uncritically extending the integration policy of the state. Some representatives of civil society in fact contribute a critical perspective to the debate over integration in the Czech Republic, and their representatives and social workers in their day-to-day operations critically reflect upon the often instrumental and securitised understanding of integration promoted by public bodies with an aim to foster a more in-depth understanding of the sociocultural needs of MRAs and they emphasise questions of human rights. For example, one social worker, working with refugees as a part of the State Integration Programme, criticised how the programme makes them dependent on benefits: *'They quickly learn what kind of benefits they can have, and there is no motivation to find a work'* (14_CSO_CZ). This statement needs to be read carefully as it could be easily misinterpreted and contribute to blaming refugees for not working, draining the welfare system and misusing the social benefits. However, the lack of motivation to work is not related to pre-existing individual misconduct but derives from the established relationship of dependence which permits such conduct. Against this backdrop the interviewee called for a system of support that would progressively develop the autonomy of refugees rather than reinforcing their dependence on the welfare system.

CSOs operating in the area of migration have established strong collaborative networks which are most visibly materialised through the already mentioned Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations, founded in 2003. The consortium currently gathers 18 CSOs active in the area of migration and represents them in their advocacy initiatives. The representatives of the CSOs in fact stressed that they do not attempt to influence the policymaking process separately and that they prioritize, thanks as well to common agenda perspectives concerning MRAs, the representation of CSOs voice through the consortium. Such an approach helps them to not conflate their service provision initiatives, which requires a certain degree of alignment with the state, with more critical, advocacy-driven initiatives.

The role of the consortium is also informational. The importance of the umbrella organisation was recognised in particular by representatives of the non-Prague CSOs. They viewed the consortium as a valuable source of information about legislative changes, migration policy,

and the activities of other organisations; as such, the umbrella organisation has an important networking function and is the source of shared inspiration.

Contrasting with the collaborative atmosphere among CSOs are the external relations with the Centres for Support of Integration of Foreigners, which have gradually been established in every Czech region over the last decade. All the support centres are governed and overseen by the Refugee Facilities Administration, which also runs some of the support centres. Some of the support centres are operated by local CSOs, however, they still adhere to and follow the regulations defined by the Refugee Facilities Administration, for example, as regards target groups and the offer of provided services.

One director of a local small-town organisation explained that when the regional support centre started to offer free language courses, the organisation was forced to close already existing courses. Furthermore, she complained about the excessive bureaucratisation of the service provision, especially when it came to event management and accountability procedures: *'I do not like to cooperate with them. It takes so much time just to approve a leaflet. I'm used to a different work style'* (7_CS0_CZ).

Moreover, the staff of local service providers hailing from a bigger industrial centre are worried about what could happen when the local support centre starts providing services to EU-migrants as well (until now, they have only been able to work with third countries nationals). The interviewees also recalled that cooperation with the support centre has not always been smooth, without, however, being willing to specifying the reasons for such an assessment. This low level of willingness to describe their experience with the support centres could be observed only in regions outside of Prague and Brno, where the demand for integration services is limited and the opening of the support centres creates uneven competition.

The Centres for Support of Integration of Foreigners are also responsible for the creation of regional platforms which gather relevant actors involved in the area of MRA integration. The experience with these networks differed across regions. On the one hand, CSOs in Prague and Brno, the two biggest cities of the Czech Republic, were positive about the support centres and praised their regional platform for being an important source of information and contacts. The intensified interaction between CSOs and the municipalities of Prague and Brno contributed to the development of trusting relationships and mutual understanding.

On the other hand, cooperation with municipalities in smaller cities was viewed as problematic. Some CSOs viewed the support provided by municipalities as a tokenistic, tick box exercise, as is well-illustrated by the following statement made by a representative of one the regional organisations: *'The municipality thinks that by giving money to a CSO, the issue of integration is solved. We also feel a distance or aversion to foreigners from officers in general'* (7_CS0_CZ).

Several interviewees mentioned a good relationship or cooperation with other public bodies, in particular with the State Labour Inspection Office and the Czech School Inspectorate, which was praised a 'good partner' thanks to its contribution to the debate about the inclusion of migrant children in Czech schools.

Furthermore, several interviewees mentioned that communication with the Ministry of the Interior had improved over the last few years, explaining this progress as a result of personnel changes. The changes resulted in more frequent meetings and less conflict-laden communication between the ministry and the non-governmental sector. At the same time,

CSOs admitted that they have only a limited role in influencing the agenda or everyday praxis of these institutions, for example, as regards their demands to reinforce the education provided to migrants or to execute less restrictive controls in the case of the labour inspectorate.

The limits to the cooperation between CSOs and state bodies are also visible in the case of the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organisations. During the drafting of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in 2018–2019, the consortium actively criticised some restrictive changes, in particular the harshened conditions under which short-term labour migrants could change their employers. However, the criticism shared during political meetings did not result in revisions to the planned amendment, in force since July 2019. At the same time, CSO representatives acknowledged some changes brought about by the amendment and positively recognised the introduction of mandatory sociocultural integration courses for migrants staying longer than one year. The courses are inspired by the proved praxis introduced by CSOs; in fact, one of the CSOs active in the area of labour market integration Slovo 21 will provide the courses.

2.5.3 Communication with the Public after the Migration Crisis

Similar to other European countries, the initiatives of Czech CSOs were affected by the so-called migrant crisis. Although the immigration trends in the Czech Republic remained almost unchanged even during and after the crisis, the Czech CSOs had to face the indirect effect of the crisis and, more specifically, the hostile attitude towards non-governmental organisations. This also regards the nature of interactions with public institutions; although the quality of interactions between CSOs and single representatives of public bodies or local politicians improved at the micro-level, since the so-called migrant crisis, the approach towards integration has worsened at the meso-institutional and macro-societal levels.

The public image of CSOs together with the lack of secure funding represents a double burden for CSOs in their attempt to promote and facilitate labour market integration. The negative impact of the public debate can be documented well through a remark made by a director of a CSO significantly engaged in service provision: *'It is uncomfortable. Our clients are often people in difficult situations, so it is hard work—and dealing with attacks from the public at the same time. We are also worried what will happen if some political subjects, who are calling for the destruction of the civil sector, are successful in the election'* (1_CS0_CZ). All the interviewees admitted that they have experienced verbal assaults and symbolic gestures. Prague-based organisations experienced hate speech on their Facebook sites. Moreover, the negative attitudes towards CSOs were not expressed only online. For example, a local services provider's office door was glued with 'anti-refugees' stickers in broken Arabic. Similarly, members of another organisation found a hangman figure on its entrance door.

Although several CSOs initially aimed to actively contribute to the public debate with the objective of facing the hostile context and changing the public opinion about migration, they have progressively abandoned these aims. Having no resources and capacities to contest the negative stereotypical image of CSOs, sometimes legitimised and even diffused by the highest political representatives, they have decided to focus almost exclusively on less visible initiatives.

Within this context, the majority of CSOs do not view communication with the public about integration and migration as their main goal and tend to work in anonymity. As a director of a local service provider suggested, *'Publicity never brought us any good'* (7_CS0_CZ). Her

colleague from a city wide organisation said that this is a task for other organisations specialised in public relations and that *'their work should speak for itself, and those who matter will find out about it'* (8_CSO_CZ). This also explains the relatively low involvement of CSOs in transaction activism and their primary focus on service provision. As was argued by a social worker in an organisation that bears the term 'refugee' in its name,¹⁰ *'Our office moved two years ago and we decided not to put the full name of our organisation anywhere around the doors'* (14_CSO_CZ).

Events for the wider public usually celebrate the different cultures of migrants (e.g. cultural or culinary events) rather than bring attention to the problems of integration and, more specifically, the precarious position of migrants on the labour market. CSOs also organise lectures for schools about migration in the Czech Republic. These activities are often covered in local media, but the CSOs are not very visible themselves in the mainstream media. The consortium is the only one that consistently produces policy papers criticising the administration of labour migration to the Czech Republic, but its voice is marginalised, as was the case in the recent aforementioned debate over the amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals.

2.5.4 Capacity Building and Knowledge Transfer

Considering their precarious position, CSOs have only little space to systematically develop their know-how. In general, the experience based on praxis is valued and trusted by CSO representatives more than research. International organisations have historically played an important role in the foundation and development of migration-focused civil society in the Czech Republic, in particular through Czech branches of transnational organisations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

However, the international cooperation of Czech CSOs is, at the moment, occasional rather than continuous and systematically developed. On the one hand, all the interviewed representatives of Czech CSOs had experience participating on international projects or attending international conferences. Although they believed that these encounters provided them with valuable insights into how integration is organised in other countries, through a somewhat domestic Czech lenses, they argued that they could hardly apply the international and transnational know-how from abroad considering the specificity of the Czech Republic.

2.5.5 The Involvement of MRAs in CSOs

The participation of MRAs in Czech CSOs is low and limited to their involvement in positions as translators and intercultural workers, often recruited among former clients of CSOs. The debate about inclusion has always comprised part of the development of these CSOs, and although the importance of MRA participation in CSOs was emphasised on a number of occasions, MRA involvement remains the exception rather than a trend.

¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that interviewees presented these examples as a normal part of their work—they tend to downplay its importance rather than bring attention to these attacks.

Some CSO representatives would suggest that this limited approach means the perspective of MRAs is ruled out. They suggested that they pro-actively seek and take into consideration the views of MRAs by pointing out the importance of feedback, collected more or less informally by social workers, concerning their services: *'We asked the people who are attending the parting groups what they are interested in, and we added, for example, a lecture about cyberbullying to our programme'* (14_CS0_CZ).

At the same time, the majority of interviewees did not see the growth of MRA participation as necessary or vital. This can be explained by a narrow understanding of professional work and the low interest of MRAs in being an active part of CSOs. First, the idea of the professionalisation of social work assumes that CSO employees are somewhat neutral experts who possess professional knowledge, independent of ethnic origins or sociocultural meanings. Such a neutral professional understanding of social workers tends to maintain a clear distinction between a CSO's staff and its professional authority and their 'clients'. In other words, MRAs are labelled as 'clients' and are perceived as recipients of services, not as actors who contribute to the co-production of the services or those who would actively shape the decision-making process within organisations.

Furthermore, some interviews would argue that the low MRA involvement also suggests that only small and specific groups (such as women on maternity leave) have time to participate in the long-term programmes of CSOs and to build a stronger relationship with the organisation. The majority of migrants are labour migrants coming to CSOs only to solve acute issues without any willingness to participate in the initiatives of CSOs.

2.6 What do Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers Get from CSOs?

In addition to the interviews with CSO representatives, MRAs were interviewed in order to explore their relationship with non-profit organisations. As suggested in the methods section, the recruitment of the interviewees was complicated due to the low level of experience MRAs have with CSOs. The majority of migrants in the Czech Republic either do not know any CSOs or do not trust them; as a consequence, they do not use their services.¹¹ Already, the process of recruitment, thus, proved to be an important source of data by providing information not only about what CSO services MRAs seek and receive but also what services MRAs do not expect from CSOs and why. Moreover, many MRAs do not understand the specific position of CSOs and interchange third sector organisations with private and public stakeholders.

The analysis of the interviews in the following sections is structured as follows. First, attention is given to the experience of MRAs with legal, employment, and social counselling. Moreover, the importance of language courses is discussed. The two other sections which follow pay special attention to refugees and asylum seekers on the one hand, and women on the other hand, as two groups.

¹¹ According to the representative survey of third country nationals carried out by the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, titled *How services for foreigners work?*, 80% of respondents declared that they had never approached bodies which offer free services or consultations for foreigners and instead trusted family members or fellow nationals (Schebelle, Kubát, Kotíková, & Vychová, 2014).

2.6.1 Legal, Employment, Social, and Linguistic Support

The majority of interviewees do not contact CSOs to seek assistance with job seeking. In the context of high employability, MRAs feel they are able to find the work easily themselves using job sites or personal networks. The interviewees contacted CSOs for specific matters, usually after at least a one-year stay in the Czech Republic. These issues were often connected with labour market integration in a wider sense: MRAs sought advice in situations where they had changed their purpose of stay, their visas were not prolonged, or they had started a business.

CSOs are important providers of legal counselling, mostly connected with administrative procedures at the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy. While seeking legal advice, MRAs do not rely exclusively on CSOs; they commonly address CSOs simultaneously with private intermediaries. In this vein, CSOs provide a complementary or alternative point of view to the perspective and advice provided by a professional service. Employment intermediaries and private services offer their services online by actively engaging on social networking sites, which also provide an important source of information for MRAs.¹²

Even those migrants who are familiar with the provided services tend to prioritise private services. The low degree of CSO service use is due to several reasons, such as personal honour and stereotypical representations of CSOs as well as due to cultural barriers preventing the establishment of trustful relationships.

First, the reluctance of migrants to consult CSOs concerning labour market issues could be a matter of personal honour as argued by an interviewee from Kazakhstan, a professional in logistics who studied in the Czech Republic. As she suggested, approaching a CSO would mean a failure for herself, emphasising that she 'has always been able to find everything on the Ministry of the Interior website', adding, *'If you always bring all the documents on time, there is no reason why one would get into trouble'* (23_MRA_CZ).

Second, the preference of private services over CSOs was supported by a common understanding of CSOs as less effective and sometimes even as less professional compared to paid services. These somehow mythical and stereotypical assumptions were not necessarily supported by personal direct experience. This approach could be well illustrated via a 28-year-old interviewee from the United States; she was 'desperately' looking for legal advice after she got expelled in 2015, and she had an impression that a private agency could be more effective. Similar to other migrants, she also explained her reluctance to use CSO services by referring to the allegedly long waiting times for services. A similar reason was mentioned by a graphic designer from Russia who prioritised private consultancy notwithstanding the fact that he sent his queries to a CSO by email and received satisfying and helpful advice within a few days.

Third, deeply rooted cultural barriers and expectations represent another reason for rather rare usages among some specific national and ethnic communities. Cultural barriers sometimes prevent the establishment of trustful relations; this is particularly the case for Vietnamese community.

¹² MRAs focus their attention towards expat groups on Facebook, while Russian speaking migrants use the network VKontakte.

Interviewees of Vietnamese origin suggested that CSO knowledge about Vietnamese culture and language is unsatisfactory. A positive experience would not necessarily change such an understanding of CSOs from the Vietnamese perspective, as could be documented through the experience of a Vietnamese interviewee who had a direct and satisfying experience with a translator who helped her to find a school for her children and accompanied her to various meetings with the director of the school. However, this positive experience did not change her general negative attitude towards the non-governmental sector. Similar to other interviewees from Vietnamese communities, she viewed non-profit organisations' initiatives with suspicion, believing that the free provision of services could work as a strategic tool to acquire clients for future profit activities.

Cultural barriers similarly prevent more intensive usage of CSO services among Ukrainians. This is illustrated well by a representative of one of the Ukrainian associations in the Czech Republic, who argued, *'The "catch your migrant" approach as a typical problem for a CSO is not a topic for us. We are Ukrainians. We can play and sing. I know what it means to be from Western Ukraine and that there is a difference to someone from Ivano-Frankivsk'* (11_CSO_CZ). Although the association does not provide any counselling, it is well known and trusted, and therefore Ukrainians commonly address the association when dealing with employment matters dealt with also by CSOs.

Cultural barriers not only derive from national differences. At the same time, they can arise as a matter of cultural preferences, tastes, and lifestyles as well, in particular among middle-class migrants. In this vein, a translator working in Prague was discouraged by the graphic style of a CSO's leaflet, stating that they *'look like an advertisement for some cheap restaurant'*, further commenting that, *'I have always been proud that I haven't needed their help'* (25_MRA_CZ).

CSO representatives for MRAs commonly work as important linguistic and, occasionally, cultural brokers. MRAs take advantage of CSO assistance in order to communicate with public offices, and language courses help them in overcoming one of the principal barriers of MRA integration on the labour market. Although there is apparently a demand for language courses, the provision of courses still encounters several barriers, such as insufficient capacity and scarce resources preventing CSOs from hiring more staff members or renting more classrooms. The MRAs also missed having more courses available outside of working hours or childcare services during the language classes. The lack of continuity and absence of more advanced courses represent another barrier, as suggested by a refugee from Cuba who used four hundred lessons provided in the State Integration Programme but could not find another course afterwards.

2.6.2 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The services of CSOs are used by refugees more often than by labour migrants. It is because they have a specific integration path. Thanks to the long process of applying for international protection, asylum seekers are necessarily in contact with a variety of organisations who provide services in reception and residential centres. Many asylum seekers thus establish cooperation with CSOs which continues after they receive their refugee status. The cooperation is accompanied with more in-depth personal knowledge of CSO staff. Thanks to this experience, refugees are frequently familiar with CSOs and public institutions providing language services and, at the same time, find themselves in a different position to develop trustful relationships at a personal level. This can be documented well through a remark made by a communication manager from Syria, who started to work as a cook and who argued,

'Well, I know the Organisation for Aid to Refugees, Miss Mary from the Integration and Asylum Centre, Miss Lucie from Caritas, the Ministry of the Interior but also the Foreign Police. They have helped me a lot' (7_MRA_CZ). In her comment, she first recalled the name of a contact person and was never sure about the organisation. In accordance with other findings, she was also mixing CSOs, public integration services, and public bodies.

The specific position of refugees leads also to a long-term dependence on the social services of the state (and as such, on support from CSOs who mediate contact with the public administration). Refugees were often clients of the Labour Office, which was not the case for any other group of migrants (who are often not even entitled to use the services of the Labour Office or its benefits).

The refugees also receive the extensive support of CSOs in searching for a job. Notwithstanding higher levels of education, they hardly manage to take advantage of their qualifications, such as in the cases of a communication manager and a journalist from Syria. However, although the support in itself can also have social and emotional dimensions, its role is primarily formal and administrative, most commonly based on assistance with administration in the Labour Office. Occasionally, CSOs assist refugees in finding requalification courses, although these are only for low-skilled positions.

6.3 Women and Barriers on the Labour Market

Another group using the integration services provided by CSOs were frequently women on maternity leave or without a full-time position after joining their husbands, who are labour migrants. In this regard, two educated women from Georgia and Serbia who were struggling to find a full-time job in their field attended a variety of courses focused on labour market integration, gaining skills in how to write a CV or how to approach a job interview. Thanks to their motivation and the time dedicated, they managed to build a deeper relationship with the CSOs¹³, even at an individual level; they became friends with staff and other clients, and therefore, they evaluated the work of CSOs positively. However, in neither case did these activities lead to finding full-time, qualified work. This is typical for all educated migrants who were primary caregivers for their children and whose opportunities were therefore limited.

The vulnerability of women and their specific needs were neither recognised by some CSOs. Their representatives often rejected the possibility of services targeted at women. Although not conceived as such, some services were used almost exclusively by women, such as a job skills course in Prague. The director of the organisation gave the explanation that women are more likely to be open about their problems on the job market and appreciated the socializing opportunities during the courses. Few organisations have services targeted at women. These organizations operate as leisure clubs; if women acquire new skills or knowledge, it is rather a by-product of these initiatives. These leisure platforms can provide migrant women with an opportunity to share experiences and enrich them with new social contacts and emotional support that they needed during the frustrating process of searching for a job.

¹³ The relationship could have also been facilitated by the fact that they were not coming from a very different cultural background, speak English, and quickly learned Czech.

2.7 Czech Republic: Conclusions

Czech CSOs are the key stakeholders in the area of labour market integration. First, they secure the provision of labour market integration services, subsidised and framed by public funding. In this vein, they are among the most important providers of administrative, legal, social, and employment counselling. Furthermore, they provide language and sometimes also employment skills development courses. Second, CSOs play a critical role in dealing with the dark sides of the labour market. By emphasising the importance of human rights, some CSOs, through their less visible and less publicly recognised initiatives, address topics such as human trafficking and the illegal practices of employers and job intermediaries. By assisting MRAs in their orientation on the Czech labour market, CSOs help to identify and contrast illegal activities and prevent the exploitation of MRAs. Third, CSOs are involved in policy-making, albeit their voice in the decision-making process is rather marginal.

The state delegates the provision of labour market integration services to CSOs, who are the main and most important providers. Czech CSOs therefore inevitably operate in a close relationship with the state as it represents the main funder of CSO services. The financial support provided by the state mainly covers the day-to-day operations of CSOs. CSOs are dependent on agendas defined by funding-scheme calls commonly articulated at the EU level. CSOs, therefore, cannot flexibly react to newly developing circumstances, such as when they identify a newly emerging group or a need and would like to introduce new programmes to target them.

The dependence on public funding also undermines sustainability and continuity of some programmes confined by a project time span. CSOs are heavily dependent on the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and municipal budgets. Through the funding system, the state determines the agenda of CSOs. CSOs work in uncertain conditions in which their existence is endangered by permanent risk of budget cuts and the anti-migration political discourse. Even though CSOs cooperate closely with individual public officers on national and local levels, this cooperation relies on political circumstances and might change with a change of political leadership.

The provision of funding does not necessarily imply the full colonisation of civil society by the state. CSO representatives remain critical and reflexive towards state integration policies in their everyday operations. Moreover, the critical position of CSOs is embodied mostly by the Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations, which is, as an umbrella organisation, the most vocal critic of state policies and an advocate of migrants' rights. The importance of the criticism of the umbrella organisation is striking especially in comparison with individual organisations which reject policy-making efforts. With respect to the strong dependency of CSOs on the state, the umbrella organisation might serve as a shield, protecting individual organisations not in direct conflict with governmental policies and institutions.

There are also other reasons explaining the relatively low level of criticism from the non-governmental sector in the Czech Republic. CSOs work as fully professional organisations, treating migrants primarily as 'clients'. Volunteering or grassroots participation in Czech CSOs is not widespread, and this is even more striking in the field of migration, which is viewed negatively by a majority of the population. CSOs also work hierarchically and do not support the active participation of migrants in decision-making processes. Conversely, direct

experience from the field and informal knowledge are valued more than research or expert knowledge.

Box 2: Examples of CSOs Activities in the Czech Republic

Consultancy: *Perspektiva* (Perspective) is the name of a long-term programme of the Centre for Integration of Foreigners (Centrum pro integraci cizinců) which works with unemployed migrants. The programme offers clients language courses and monthly 'job clubs' during which MRAs are trained in communication or writing a CV. Furthermore, the clubs provide a platform to share migrant experiences. Last but not the least, the programme helps migrants who are vulnerable on the labour market or would like to find work that would suit their educational level. In 2018, 13 out of 41 clients found stable work.

Education: A unique one-year preparation course for secondary school is arranged by the organisation *META*. 24 students learn the Czech language intensively, especially scientific vocabulary needed for academic subjects studied at secondary schools. As such, the project overcomes barriers for migrant students failing to finish their secondary education and therefore have limited chances on the labour market. The programme is financed by a private foundation, but its results are closely followed by the Czech School Inspectorate, which initiated a debate about establishing such long-term courses in formal education.

Information: *The Christian organisation Diaconia* (Diakonie) maps the lodging houses for low skilled workers across the whole Czech Republic in order to analyse the needs of the most vulnerable group of migrant workers, who do not often use integration services and are working in precarious conditions. As such, the programme provides unique data on labour migrants. These are shared with other integration service providers in the region who can offer support to municipalities or individual migrants. The programme is financed by the Ministry of the Interior.

Funding opportunities outside the public realm are very limited, and this situation contributes to the uncertain and precarious situation of CSOs and their employers. Private donors are extremely prudent in their support of the integration agenda considering the topic of migration has become highly contested in the Czech public sphere, significantly proliferated by hostile and xenophobic positions. Moreover, Czech CSOs focusing on labour market integration do not pro-actively seek or create alternative and innovative tools for funding.

On the one hand, the CSOs are the main providers of labour integration services. On the other hand, even in the situation when municipalities or the state provide only limited services, CSOs succeed in addressing only small share of MRAs due to their limited capacities and cultural barriers. A more nuanced look at the perspective of MRAs also suggested that many MRAs have no or very little awareness of CSOs and their integration services, partly due to the limited CSOs' capacities. MRAs address CSOs only under specific circumstances and their cooperation with CSOs tends to be ad hoc. The knowledge of the non-governmental sector (both about its role and contacts for individual CSOs) is low, and migrants get to know them only in that later stage of their stay. When seeking support, MRAs prefer various self-help

groups (active especially on Facebook), family networks, or private intermediaries. While the educated migrants working in skilled position do use services of private companies as a substitution of CSOs services, the low skilled migrants use services of intermediaries involved in illegal practices or participate on their exploitation. The both group might benefit from the growth or CSOs services.

The reluctance to make use of CSO services also derives from deeper cultural reasons. Many MRAs are not familiar with the concept of the non-governmental sector. Sometimes, they perceive CSO services provided for free as being less effective, and a number of MRAs would also understand the use of CSO services as a kind of humiliation; many MRAs would prefer to pay for employment services, especially if provided by their trustworthy fellow nationals.

These remarks do not imply that the importance of CSOs for MRAs can be marginalised or obscured. A number of examples of good practices and the recognition of CSO services suggest CSOs can serve as significant mediators between the state and employers on the one hand, and migrants on the other hand. Of high importance is also the aforementioned role of CSOs in tackling the dark sides of the labour market.

CSO support is fundamental in the case of the most vulnerable groups of asylum seekers and refugees. These groups are in contact with CSOs from the beginning of their stay in the Czech Republic. In situations where a family or kinship network is absent, they tend to be in more intensive and long-term contact with CSOs, often as part of the voluntary State Integration Programme, which is conducted in cooperation with CSOs.

Notwithstanding the number of counselling services provided by CSOs, MRAs face a number of difficulties on the labour market. More specifically, they are commonly employed in jobs that do not correspond to the education level or are precarious. Although CSOs provide relatively complex assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, the integration services are not apparently sufficient to break the barriers of the labour market. Refugees struggle to find a stable position or a position in accordance with their qualifications; moreover, highly-educated refugees frequently resign their employment aspirations.

CSOs are sometimes unwillingly and inevitably complicit in the reproduction of integration barriers rather than contributing to overcoming them. Our interviews collected testimonies of MRAs who were recommended to attend requalification courses by social workers. Among these was the emblematic example of cooking requalification courses, which allegedly provide MRAs with higher chances of finding work in ethnic restaurants. This praxis supports segregation in the labour market in which educated migrants of all legal categories struggle to find an adequate position and are not using their potential fully. CSOs can assist migrants with lower aspirations via services such as job interview training or a basic language course, but they lack the capacity to assist educated migrants in overcoming the more nuanced challenge of finding a skilled position.

The Czech Republic is supporting short-term circular migration and, in the current low unemployment situation, the labour integration of migrants is not a discussed topic. The majority of migrants arrive to the Czech Republic for work, and often, they do not have high aspirations. In case of necessity, they do not struggle to find a new job. However, difficulties arise when MRAs aspire towards higher demanding positions. In these circumstances, CSOs struggle to provide them with services which would target their barriers. The research confirmed the previous findings of the 'Sirius' project, which uncovered other barriers to labour integration, such as the legal system and precarious work. Although there are vulnerable

groups of migrants on the labour market (refugees, chronically ill or1 elderly), the groups are not sufficiently numerous yet to become targeted by specific services or programmes on a larger scale.

The existing balance between the state and employers, which recruit labour forces from abroad, and CSOs, which provide basic integration services, can be threatened by economic predictions. The current need for a workforce is the result of a strong manufacturing export sector. According to the latest prediction, this sector is under threat of a new crisis (European Central Bank, 2019). During the last crisis, in 2007, the Czech Ministry of the Interior tightened the issuing of visas and introduced a 'voluntary return' programme to control migration, but according to evidence, many foreigners tried to stay in the Czech Republic regardless and entered the informal labour market (South Moravian Region, 2011: 32). Furthermore, since 2007, the number of foreign nationals with permanent residence has surpassed those with temporary visas (Czech Statistical Office, 2019).

In a potential economic crisis, the barriers for migrants will become more visible and more services targeted at labour market integration will be needed. The CSOs have developed knowledge and praxis to assist in that situation, but they are dependent on public funding and therefore on solutions provided at the state level.

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3 Denmark

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3.1 Introduction¹⁴

This report identifies and analyses the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) as barriers or enablers to the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (MRAs) into the Danish labour market. Contextually, we argue that the role of CSOs in the formulation and implementation of public policy on the Danish labour market is largely institutionalized. This (institutionalized) role, began with the restructuring of the Danish labour market in 1899 as part of the “September Compromise” (Jørgensen, 2015). The “Compromise” centralized negotiation and conflict resolution processes on matters related to the Danish labour market. More importantly, for our purposes in this report, it accorded non-governmental entities the role of key stakeholders in the labour market with the primary responsibility of regulating relevant (labour market-related) matters which include wage levels and working conditions¹⁵. A second factor that has led to the institutionalization of the central role of CSOs in matters relating to MRAs’ labour market integration is the consensus-based nature of the Danish political system (Einsiedel et. al., 2001) that typically involves a multiplicity of (non-governmental) stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of public policy. Further, beginning in the twentieth century, Denmark witnessed a greater involvement of interest-based organizations in public policy formulation and implementation and intensive consultations with and involvement of non-governmental entities has now become an important facet of law-making – not least in relation to MRAs’ labour market integration (Christiansen et al., 2010).

With this contextual background in place, in this report we categorize the services provided by CSOs under two broad headings. First, CSOs operate as consultative bodies that provide consultation services to governmental and non-governmental entities. Second, CSOs are also service providers as they operate as a “stop gap” and are often hired by public authorities to provide (public) goods and services (Boje, 2015), not least for MRAs. These services include language services and some CSOs are also hired by the Danish state as responsible agents of the everyday welfare of asylum seekers at Danish asylum centres, awaiting a decision on their asylum applications. Additionally, CSOs engage in lobbying activities in relation to existent and soon-to-be implemented labour market integration policies that draw on their experience as service providers as well as their familiarity with the socioeconomic and cultural

¹⁴ In this report “refugees” refers to the category of migrants who have been granted asylum in Denmark. This includes those who have been granted family reunification on the basis of a family member being granted asylum in Denmark. “Asylum seekers” refers to those who are still awaiting a decision on their asylum application. Finally, “non-refugee migrants” refers to the category of migrants who have arrived in Denmark for purposes *other than* asylum. This includes migrants and their family members.

¹⁵ Agreements regarding rules on wages, working hours, workplace, overtime pay, holidays, pensions and other aspects of working conditions are made through negotiations between confederations of employers as well as the confederation of trade unions. On occasions – as in regard to the labour market integration of MRAs – social partners have a consultative role in these negotiations.

challenges faced by MRAs. CSOs deliver essential voluntary services as well and provide pro bono legal assistance on matters related to asylum applications and appeals, asylum interview preparation, family reunification and translation services in relation to legal procedures. CSOs also provide networking services that assist MRAs build their social and professional network in Denmark, with the hope that this would eventually help them secure employment in Denmark via “someone they know” (Sen, Bjerre and Pace, 2019, 29).

Finally, in this report we analyse CSOs’ perspective on the labour market integration of MRAs and the perspective of MRAs themselves on the role of CSOs in view of the enablers and barriers they face while attempting to secure a job in Denmark. Accordingly, we categorized CSOs’ perspectives under two broad headings. First, interviewed CSOs considered their role to be that of facilitators of the labour market integration of MRAs. Some representatives of CSOs conceptualized this role as an extension of their understanding of labour market integration synonymous with integration in general. Others ascribed to what we have described as the “burden perspective”, as they considered MRAs to be a potential burden on the Danish welfare state. Accordingly, they saw MRAs’ swift labour market integration as a way of minimizing the possibility of migrants becoming dependent on welfare benefits. Still others have an instrumental take on MRAs’ labour market integration and consider migrants in general to be an important “pool of talent” that is underutilized in the Danish labour market. Therefore, by facilitating their labour market integration, often through professional networking services, they considered their role as adding value to the Danish economy and knowledge society. Second, a smaller cohort of CSOs considered their role as entities that challenge the ““Work First” integration policies. They consider the narrow focus on labour market integration as synonymous with integration in general as problematic since it ignores the multiplicity of other facets (besides employment) that determine the nature of MRAs’ integration into Danish society. Accordingly, through activities that range from programs that pair refugees with local (Danish) volunteers in order to assist them in better understanding the social and cultural norms of Danish society to cultural and lobbying activities that specifically challenge the narratives that underlie the “work first” integration policies – these organizations consider themselves to be working “against the tide” as a mechanism of checks and balances against the Danish government’s overt focus on labour market integration.

Drawing on interviews with beneficiaries of CSO programs, in this report we have also categorized the MRAs’ perspective (on CSOs as enablers and/or barriers to labour market integration) in two ways. First, many interviewed MRAs questioned the (political) positionality of CSOs. While non-refugee migrants claimed to rarely avail themselves of the services of CSOs, refugee and asylum seeker interviewees noted that such organizations often simply repeat the discourses of the state and put into practice state policies. For this reason, our refugee and asylum seeker interviewees considered CSOs as problematic stakeholders that often belie the (expected) role of CSOs as critical partners (of vulnerable peoples) who act as intermediaries between the state and citizens. The consequence of this, our interviewees further argued, was the inflexible manner in which CSOs designed their labour market integration programs. Our refugee interviewees noted that, in their programs, CSOs are reluctant to take into account the specific experiences and skills of individuals. Second, MRA interviewees (refugee, asylum seekers and non-refugee alike) argued, however, that networking organizations, including professional networking and diaspora organizations, that help build their social and professional network in Denmark are particularly beneficial. For one thing, they insisted, such organizations have less of a bureaucratic structure and their flexibility allows them to account for the specific needs, aspirations and experiences of individual MRAs.

More importantly, such organizations allow MRAs to determine their own path to integration, thus granting individuals some agency in their integration efforts.

In the end, we conclude that the population of CSOs in Denmark includes those organizations that facilitate the state-led processes of labour market integration, while others pursue programs and efforts that practice a far more multifaceted conception of integration. Yet, as is evident from interviews with MRAs, the bureaucratization (and institutionalization) of labour market integration processes doesn't allow the beneficiaries of CSO services to integrate in a way that best accounts for their qualifications, experiences and skills. Accordingly, we recommend that CSO programs would need to be more flexible and include formal and informal programs geared towards the successful integration of MRAs into Danish society. This would grant MRAs greater agency in shaping their personalized path to employment and allow them to access the Danish labour market in a way that is best suited to their skills and qualifications. Doing so, we argue, would allow Danish society and economy to benefit from the full (economic, social and cultural) potential of MRAs and in turn ensure that, for MRAs, labour market integration is a process that is not a barrier but an enabler of their professional (and social) aspirations in Denmark.

3.2 The Role of CSOs Through Academic Lenses

The *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics* defines civil society as a “set of intermediate associations” that operate in between the state and society (McLean & McMillan, 2009, p. 81). In terms of their function, Muller argues that CSOs limit the (undemocratic) expansion of state power, grant legitimacy to (or delegitimize) state policies, facilitate the participation of citizens in the public sphere and provide “room for the reproduction of shared symbols, values and norms” (Muller, 2006, p. 319). In this sense, the likes of Boje (2009) and Salamon et. al. (2017) have rightly argued that civil society plays a central role in the making and functioning of the democratic state. And, inspired by Alexis Tocqueville and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's “romanticization of ‘the people’ as a force for collective good”, Diamond characterizes civil society as involving “citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable” (1994, 4–5).

In keeping with this understanding, CSOs in Denmark have played a central role in negotiating the relationship between the political system and citizens, which has in turn led to high levels of political trust in public institutions (Newton, 2001, p. 211). Historically, Kaspersen argues, the development of Danish civil society finds its roots in the 16th century in response to the introduction of absolutism in Denmark in 1660 when the Danish king “outmanoeuvred the nobility” to make himself the “sovereign active subject” and the society the “passive object” (2002, p. 4). However, the institutionalization of civil society as a mechanism of checks and balances against the “tyranny” of the state came with the first constitution of Denmark in 1849. Article 92 of the constitution stipulates that citizens are “free to form associations for any lawful purpose” without prior permission. Article 93 further adds that citizens are allowed to “assemble unarmed” without prior permission (Danish Constitution, 1849)¹⁶. CSOs in Denmark today can be considered “structurally tied to government” (Henriksen and Bundesen,

¹⁶ The rights of the civil society has been codified in subsequent versions of the Danish constitution as well. It is articulated in Part VIII of the current constitution (adopted in 1953).

2004, p. 622) and help facilitate the workings of the welfare state (Torpe, 2003). Moreover, Henriksen notes that the current discourses of the Danish welfare state insist on the “increased mutual cooperation” between public authorities and CSOs (2015, p. 19). This cooperation is often referred to as a “partnership, welfare pluralism, co-production [and] co-creation (Evers, 2005; Henriksen, 2015, p. 19).

Against this general contextual background on the development of civil society in Denmark, the role of CSOs in the labour market integration of MRAs can be understood in two ways:

First, the centrality of CSOs as key decision-makers in matters related to the Danish labour market has its origins in the “September Compromise” that was signed in 1899 by the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) and the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), after four months of conflicts following a lockout by Danish employers. The agreement led to the still-prevalent “Danish Model” of industrial relations (Jørgensen, 1999) that entails a centralization of negotiation and conflict resolution on matters related to the labour market. More importantly, the “September Compromise” also institutionalized the “practice of leaving it to the labour market parties themselves to regulate most matters concerning the labour market” (Larsen, 2004, p. 140; also see Due et al., 2000). This means that in key matters such as wages and working conditions – matters that determine the nature of MRAs’ access into the Danish labour market – there is minimal governmental interference and legislation. Instead, it is the responsibility of the likes of LO, DA and social partners (namely, consultative, interest-based organizations) to regulate such issues on the basis of a “collective agreement”. To this end, Trejo argues that collective agreements between organizations that represent employers and those that represent employees, despite the minimal involvement of governmental authorities, have typically led to better working conditions, especially with regard to working hours. The author adds that collective agreements have led to a decrease in “substantial overtime” and there has been an increase in “overtime compensation” (Trejo, 1993, p. 276). However, in Denmark, a substantial section of the private sector is not covered by collective agreements. Therefore, Scheuer argues, one cannot assume that such private sector entities would voluntarily adhere to the principles of collective agreements, leaving ordinary employees in general and vulnerable employees (especially, MRAs) in particular, susceptible to unfair working conditions (1999, p. 478). Despite this, CSOs remain key stakeholders in efforts directed towards the labour market integration of MRAs. Most recently, this was evident when the then newly-elected Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen declared that Danish integration policies would be focused on integrating MRAs in general and refugees in particular to the labour market immediately after their arrival in Denmark (Nielsen, 2015). CSOs were key participants in this policy debate and helped formulate the agreement that followed¹⁷. Eventually, the Tripartite Agreement, meant to strengthen “efforts to ensure better integration into the labour market of refugees and reunified family members” (Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering, 2018) was negotiated and signed by the Danish Ministry of Finance (representing the government), LO and DA, with social partners playing a consultative role (Sen, Bjerre and Pace, 2019).

¹⁷ Admittedly, participation in the formulation of the Tripartite Agreement and the subsequent labour market integration policy-making was not open to all CSOs. The Danish government specifically invited social partners like Forening Nydanske, LG Insight and Cabi (see Section 3) that have a long professional history as organizations who have worked closely (as consultative bodies) with state and municipality authorities on (labour) market integration issues.

Second, CSOs' important role in matters regarding the labour market integration of MRAs is also a consequence of the consensus-based nature of the Danish political system. Historically, the importance of developing a consensus in Danish society draws on the 19th century "tradition for 'people's enlightenment'". During this period, increasing importance was placed on "adult education and local debate" as a central facet of politics and culture in Denmark (Einsiedel et. al., 2001, p. 85). Specifically, here one must recognize the role of the Folk High School system in facilitating the consensus-based nature of Danish society and politics. This system was inspired by the work of the Danish bishop Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) who believed that while universities were limited by the "ideology of rationalism", Danish "cultural heritage and national spirit" could only be restored through a medium of education that catered to the "common people [or] the 'folk' of the nation" and focused on "music, poetry, myths, informal lectures, and community meetings". And, away from an elite education, Grundtvig conceived the Folk High School as the "school for the people" that would "intellectually and spiritually" equip peasants to actively participate in Danish society. While Grundtvig himself did not establish a folk high school, the proliferation of such schools across Denmark (and later across Scandinavia) is often seen as key to instilling principles of active "citizenship and democratic participation" in the country (Bagley & Rust, 2009, pp. 282–283). Against this background, since the twentieth century, Denmark has also witnessed a greater involvement of interest-based organizations in the "preparation and implementation of public policies" (Christiansen et al. 2010, pp. 22–23). Incidentally, "consensus conferences" were invented in Denmark as advisory forums where "lay citizens can participate in public consultations on complex policy issues" (Dryzek and Tucker 2008, p. 864; also see Horst and Irwin 2010). Moreover, the involvement of interest groups in general and CSOs in particular in policy-making and implementation has been institutionalized since the second half of the twentieth century (Christiansen et al. 2010, p. 23).

Against this background of the historical role played by CSOs in the Danish political landscape, such organizations have played an even more significant role in the wake of the so-called European "migration crisis". As mentioned earlier, CSOs – specifically social partners (see footnote 3) – played an important consultative role in negotiations which led to the signing of the "Tripartite Agreement". Additionally, as Toubøl notes, the 2015 influx of refugees resulted in a significant level of mobilization of a wide variety of civil society organizations that included "activists from Christian and Jewish congregations, networks of left-wing radicals, groups of queer activists, large national NGOs, and local community groups". These organizations engaged in humanitarian activities "such as collecting and donating items and money", participating in public protests, organizing "petitions and donations" and helping transport "refugees across the border to Sweden or Norway" (Toubøl 2019, p. 1202). Structurally, CSOs also became increasingly involved in the provision of public integration services¹⁸. Cuts to municipality budgets under the Lars Løkke-led Danish government alongside a greater demand for social services for the newly arrived asylum seekers, has meant that Danish municipalities have increasingly sought partnerships with CSOs as "co-producers of public services" in the area of integration (Fehsenfeld and Levinsen 2019, 422). In June 2019, a new Danish center-left government led by the Social Democrats was elected. There has yet to be a significant (official) shift in the role of CSOs in matters related to the labour market integration of MRAs. However, the arrival of a left-leaning government has been seen as a positive development by some CSOs. When asked about the impact of the 2019 elections on CSOs,

¹⁸ This is in keeping with our discussion in Section 3 of CSOs as service providers in Denmark.

a representative of a large Danish CSO, contracted by the Danish state to provide integration services, said, *“It is a bit early to tell. But I have to say that the relationship between our organization and other CSOs and the Danish state was at the lowest level with the previous government. Yes, we are contracted to provide some services on behalf of the Danish state. But historically we have always tried to maintain a critical eye and have lobbied to change practices that we believed to be against our values. But with the previous government there was no conversation. They did not care about the civil society. With the new government we are hopeful that things will be different”* (17_CS0_DK).

3.3 An Overview and Categorisation of CSOs

The consequence of the above-described institutionalization of interest-based organisations in the making and implementation of public policies in Denmark is that CSOs are actively involved in a wide variety of policy areas (Arter, 2006; Greve, 2007; Lijphart & Crepaz, 1991). And, their institutionalized, state-mandated involvement in labour market integration matters also allows them, in terms of areas of action, to operate as both consultative bodies and service providers.

CSOs as Consultative Bodies: That CSOs play an important role as consultative bodies was evident in the framing, making and implementation of “employment first” focused integration policies introduced in 2016. For instance, long before the Danish Prime Minister public announced the same, it was employers’ organizations like DA and Dansk Industri (DI), trade union confederations like LO and CSOs like the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) who had collectively stated the need to provide MRAs with swift access to the Danish labour market. Labour market integration was also termed as a collective effort involving not just the government and municipalities but also key interest groups representing labour unions and employers (Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019, p. 9). This, in part, is an outgrowth of the earlier discussed norms of Danish industrial relations established since the “September Compromise” of 1899 that requires that labour market parties participate in negotiations on policies regarding the labour market. But the implementation of “employment first” integration policies has equally involved social partners. Organizations like DRC, Foreningen Nydansker, LG Insight and Cabi currently participate, along with municipal job centres, in a partnership called “Sammen om Integration” (or “Together on Integration”) that collectively works to facilitate refugees’ integration into the Danish labour market. Foreningen Nydansker (or Association of New Danes), for example, provides courses, training and consultancy services to Danish businesses on the implementation of diversity programs and strategies that ensure the successful integration of MRAs in a Danish work environment¹⁹. Further, they advise private companies and municipalities on how cultural differences and diversity in the employee cohort can be managed and nurtured as a “value added resource” (see: <https://www.foreningen-nydansker.dk>). Foreningen Nydansker also operates a mentorship program that pairs unemployed MRAs with business mentors who assist their mentees with their integration and re-integration (following a period of unemployment) into the labour market (see: <https://www.foreningen-nydansker.dk>).

¹⁹ In the Danish government’s view, successful integration in the workplace (and labour market, in general) is synonymous with MRAs’ overall integration into Danish society (see discussion in Sen, Bjerre and Pace, 2019).

For its part, Cabi focuses on the labour market integration of vulnerable groups in general and advises/consults with managers, human resource departments and recruiters on active employment policies. That said, a key facet of their work is focused on the labour market integration of MRAs. To this end, the organization advises case handlers at municipal job centres on how best to define their role and duties to ensure that the process of “matching” MRAs with jobs is less conflict-prone. Like Foreningen Nydansker, Cabi also consults with companies that have hired (or intend to hire) MRAs and advises them on balancing their expectations as employers with the challenges faced by MRAs with regard to integrating into the Danish workplace. This balancing of expectations vis-à-vis challenges faced by MRAs, according to Cabi, is key to retaining MRA employees. Cabi also advises MRAs on how to successfully integrate into the Danish labour market and workplace. Specifically, it provides strategies for finding a job in Denmark, tactics for improving Danish language proficiency and strategies for avoiding (cultural) misunderstandings in the Danish workplace (see: <https://www.cabiweb.dk/>).

Similar services are provided by Integrationet, a consultancy company operating under the auspices of DRC. They provide courses and “tailormade” solutions to municipalities on challenges relating to MRAs’ labour market integration. Further, they aim to “bridge the gap” between the needs of the Danish labour market and the competencies of unemployed MRAs (see: <https://flygtning.dk/danmark>)²⁰. Finally, LG Insight provides research, analysis and consultancy services to private companies and public sector institutions. In terms of activities, the organization, for instance, participates in network meetings with Danish municipalities that focus on the formulation and implementation of successful integration policies. It has also conducted research for the Ministry of Immigration and Integration on best practices ensuring the integration of refugee children. With regard to labour market integration of MRAs, LG Insight advises municipalities on how best to “match” MRAs with jobs in the private sector. Further, LG Insight provides labour market integration and diversity management courses that municipal job centre employees can follow together with private-sector human resources managers (see: <https://lg-insight.dk>).

CSOs as Service Providers: CSOs in Denmark provide integration services for MRAs. This, in a way, is a facet of CSOs’ institutionalized role as consultative bodies who advise on the formulation and implementation of public policy. But, as we have mentioned earlier, CSOs in Denmark are also structurally tied to the Danish state (Henriksen and Bundensen, 2004, p. 622). Moreover, in recent years, CSOs have played the role of stopgap in Denmark, assisting the public sector with service provisions, especially to marginalized sections of the society, because of the “failure of New Public Management strategies and market-driven solutions concerning the provision of public goods” (Boje, 2015, p. 27). It follows that, the services provided by CSOs can also be considered in part to be an extension of the integration services of the Danish state. Accordingly, we have identified and described several broad areas (highlighted below) of service provision:

²⁰ While Integrationet operates as a private, for-profit consultancy company and does not strictly “fit” the definition of a civil society organization, it is mentioned here due to its close association with the DRC. The company claims to be shaped by values of the organization and actively works with/contributes to the Center for Udsatte Flygtninge (or the Center for Vulnerable Refugees), the knowledge centre of the DRC.

CSOs in Denmark provide language education services to MRAs. The DRC, for example, provides Danish language education services through its *Lærdansk* program. The organization, at the outset, characterizes the program as defined by DRC's common vision – namely that “No refugee must be in want of help to find protection and durable solutions. And nobody who wishes to be integrated into Danish society must be in want of help to do so. We want to be the best problem-solver in regard to displacement and integration” (see: <https://flygtning.dk/danmark>). Further, DRC considers Danish language proficiency as critically important for ensuring refugees' “job satisfaction and productivity”. The *Lærdansk* webpage thus adds that for refugees to be “well-functioning and well-integrated citizens” they need to be integrated into the Danish labour market. Therefore, the courses provided by *Lærdansk* focus on “job searching and Danish language and culture in the workplace” and strive to integrate refugees into the local community through collaborations with schools, universities and local businesses (see: <https://laerdansk.dk>). Currently, *Lærdansk* is contracted by Danish municipalities to collaborate on language education and integration programs – initiatives that municipalities are, by law, required to undertake. *Lærdansk* has secured these contracts through a competitive tender process and is currently hired by municipalities in Aarhus, Assens, Favrskov, Herning, Ikast-Brande, Middelfart, Nordfyn, Nyborg, Næstved, Odense, Ringkøbing-Skjern, Ringsted, Sorø, Svendborg, Syddjurs, Vordingborg and Ærø (see: <https://laerdansk.dk>). As a private enterprise, DRC's language education services that cater for non-refugee migrants are also offered to a vast array of other private and public sector clients. These include large Danish companies like Vestas and Danpo which are interested not just in developing a Danish language proficiency among their international staff members/cohort but also in familiarizing them with Danish society and (work) culture. *Lærdansk* also collaborates with Aarhus University and the University of Southern Denmark and provides in-house language education to their international academic and administrative staff as well as to their international students.

Like DRC, the Danish Red Cross is contracted by immigration authorities to be responsible for the everyday welfare of asylum seekers in asylum centres. Specifically, the organization is involved in the daily workings of asylum centres and the bureaucratic process of securing asylum in Denmark. Representatives of the Red Cross maintain close contact with asylum seekers and collect all the necessary information and documentation required for the (asylum) application process. Another critical facet of this task is to ensure that residents of asylum centres have access to healthcare services.²¹ More recently, the Red Cross has initiated sports programs for children and young asylum seekers. The organization has partnered with DGI Nordsjælland to train local volunteers to initiate sports activities for young residents of asylum centres (see: <http://www.rodekors.dk/>). Finally, on the basis of its understanding of and experience with the everyday lives of asylum seekers, the Red Cross also engages in lobbying activities. It communicates the needs of individual asylum seekers to the relevant

²¹ It is important to note here that deportation centres, where residents are in need of the same services provided by the Danish Red Cross in asylum centres, are administered by the Danish Prison and Probation Service. The centres operate “like open prisons, deliberately with very few activities, to put pressure on people to give up and go home”. The consequence, however, is that asylum seekers “go underground or travel illegally to neighbouring countries” (Bendixen, 2018).

immigration authorities and lobbies for/against new legislation that may affect the lives of those seeking asylum in Denmark.

Alongside services for refugees and asylum seekers delivered on behalf of the Danish state, CSOs in Denmark also provide essential voluntary services. An organization like Refugees Welcome provides refugees with legal help regarding asylum applications and family reunification. The assistance and information provided through the organization's website have been translated into 9 languages. In-person assistance is provided in Farsi, Dari, Arabic and Tigrinya. Refugees Welcome also prepares asylum seekers for interviews with immigration services, recommends lawyers before asylum applicants appear before the Refugee Appeals Board and, on occasions, is able to "help with a complaint" if an asylum application has been rejected (see: <https://refugeeswelcome.dk>). Similar pro bono services are offered by DRC to asylum seekers. These include personal and legal counselling as well as assistance regarding "procedures, rules and regulations of the [Danish] asylum system" (see: <https://flygtning.dk/danmark>). DRC provides "legal advice to newly arrived asylum seekers at asylum seeker courses" at the Sandholm asylum centre. Asylum seekers can also set up an appointment for legal advice via video conferencing or receive in-person counselling (every Wednesday between 10am and 1pm) at the DRC office in Copenhagen. Rejected asylum seekers can receive legal counselling "about their status, rights and obligations in Denmark and counselling about return and reintegration possibilities" (see: <https://flygtning.dk/danmark>).

Various formal and informal CSOs also provide networking services, meant to assist refugees (and their family members) build a social network in Denmark. These services build on the understanding that successful integration into Danish society is often contingent on the ability to establish a social network – not least because employment tends to be network-based and Danish employers often hire "someone they know" (Sen, Bjerre and Pace, 2019, p. 29). To this end, diaspora organizations like the Ayad-Afghan Youth Association in Denmark, the Somali Women's Association in Denmark, the Danish-Afghan Cultural Association and The Syrian Cultural Institute in Denmark organize events that promote cultural exchange between Danes and refugees and other events that focus on the development of skills and competencies necessary for successful labour market integration²² in Denmark. Additionally, an organization like The Syrian Cultural Institute actively cooperates with public institutions and municipal authorities to facilitate the integration of recently arrived refugees in Denmark (see: <http://syriskkulturinstitut.dk>). Also recognizing that a social and professional network can help facilitate refugees' integration in Denmark, the Red Cross and DRC collaboratively operated the "Venner Viser Vej" (or "Friends Showing the Way") program until 2018, that offered a volunteer "friend" to refugees in Denmark. This "friend" is offered after a refugee is granted residency. While there were no strict parameters regarding the premise of the relationship between the refugee and her/his "friend", volunteers were expected to assist refugees and their families with everyday matters that could include learning Danish, understanding the bus schedule or reading letters from Danish authorities (see: <https://www.rodekors.dk/bliv-frivillig/venner-viser-vej>).

²² These include language education, professional etiquette, CV and covering letter preparation, interviewing skills and knowledge about the Danish labour market and workplace culture.

At this juncture it is important to note that the vast majority of integration services provided by CSOs cater for asylum seekers and refugees. This is primarily because the entry of individuals from non-Nordic, non-EU and non-EEA states into Denmark is conditional upon them securing a job *before* their arrival in the country. Therefore, such individuals do not require assistance with accessing the Danish labour market. Furthermore, the current work permit schemes most commonly used by such migrants are aimed at attracting individuals who are highly skilled (and often, highly paid) – meaning that they typically do not need to access the integration services offered by CSOs (Pace, Sen, Bjerre, 2018). That said, there are some voluntary organizations focused primarily on the labour market integration of the spouses of these workers from non-Nordic, non-EU and non-EEA states, who have accompanied their partners and families and are in search of gainful employment *after* their arrival in Denmark. For instance, the International Dual Career Network (IDCN) was collaboratively established by the DTU-Technical University of Denmark, the University of Copenhagen, Mærsk, Novo Nordisk and Vestas in order to ensure that spouses/partners of their employees are also able to secure employment in Denmark. Recognizing that “international staff are more likely to stay long term when their partners and families become a valued part of the community”, IDCN Copenhagen aims to connect spouses with its corporate members through career events and a Talent Management Platform database where members can upload CVs and personal profiles (see: <http://www.idcn.info/our-locations/copenhagen-denmark.aspx>). Similarly, the Spouse Community Aarhus is run by international spouses and organizes social and meet-and-greet events, family events and professional networking opportunities (see: <https://internationalcommunity.dk/en-US/Spouse-Community-Aarhus>).

In all, CSOs can be considered important facilitators of integration mechanisms in Denmark. This, as we have argued, is in part a consequence of the manner in which they are structurally tied to the Danish state and responsible for the provision of public goods. That said, as consultative bodies that both advise public institutions and engage in advocacy activities, they also negotiate the relationship between the state and its citizens. With these facets of their role in Denmark in place, below we discuss the manner in which CSOs react to the needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as well as the way MRAs access (and experience) the services provided by CSOs.

3.4 Methods

Data for this report was collected through 54 semi-structured interviews conducted between September 2018 and August 2019. As we have described in Section 3, the category of CSOs in Denmark includes vastly different organizations that are involved in a wide variety of labour market integration activities that include service provision, consultation, networking and advocacy. Specifically, for this report, 23 interviews were conducted with 4 national CSOs, 2 labour unions, 1 confederation of labour unions, 1 confederation of employers, 2 civil society organizations involved in cultural activities, 3 networking voluntary organizations, 1 diaspora organization, 2 local community-based organizations and 4 social partners who are consulted by governmental and municipal agencies on matters regarding the labour market integration of MRAs²³.

²³ The tally of 23 interviews includes 3 follow-up interviews carried out with three organizations.

Interviews were also conducted with past and present MRA beneficiaries of integration services provided by CSOs. Interviews were conducted with refugees (including asylum seekers) as well as non-EU, non-refugee migrants. A majority of interviews were conducted with individuals from the two largest national groups from each category of MRAs (i.e. refugees and non-refugees). However, additional interviews were also conducted with individuals with other nationalities. This was done as a way of triangulating the data collected from interviews with the largest refugee and non-refugee national groups. Furthermore, this additional data ensured that the findings of the report are not ethnocentric and have cross-national validity (Bloch, 2004; Billiet & Meuleman, 2012; Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). With regard to non-refugee interlocutors, interviews were conducted with migrants from the US and India, the two largest national groups, in terms of yearly flows (Statistics Denmark 2019). Interviews were also conducted with Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Russian non-refugee migrants. In total 16 interviews were conducted with interlocutors from this category of migrants. These included 6 interviews with Americans, 7 interviews with Indians and 1 interview each with Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Russian respondents. Interviews with American and Russian interlocutors were conducted in English, while interviews with Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani migrants were conducted in Bengali, Hindi and Urdu, in accordance with the preferences of the interviewees²⁴.

With regard to refugees and asylum seekers interlocutors, interviews were conducted with 6 Afghan and 4 Iraqi refugees – the two largest national groups among refugees until 2014. Interviews were also conducted with 4 Syrian refugees and 1 Eritrean asylum seeker as Denmark has, in recent years, been host to an influx of asylum seekers from Syria (since 2012) and Eritrea (since 2015)²⁵. Interviews with Syrian, Eritrean and Iraqi refugees were conducted in English. Interviews with Afghan refugees were often conducted in Hindi/Urdu as many had learned the language during their stay at refugee camps in Pakistan. Here, based on our field research combined with our awareness of the Danish context, we would argue that the experiences of refugees with CSOs does not vary on the basis of an individual's country of origin. To this end, an Iraqi interviewee said, *"It doesn't really matter where you come from. Organizations only care that you are a refugee"*²⁶. *They don't care if you have a PhD or you are a taxi driver. They have fixed model for how they treat us, and they just follow that"* (1_MRA_DK)²⁷.

²⁴ Somdeep Sen (co-author of this report) speaks Bengali, Hindi and Urdu.

²⁵ It is however important to note here that restrictive immigration measures targeting asylum seekers have ensured that only a limited number of refugees have applied for asylum in Denmark in the recent years. To this end, while Denmark saw a peak in the gross number of asylum applications in 2015 with 21,315 applicants, this number has steadily decreased to 3,559 in 2018 ([Statistics Denmark](#), 2019).

²⁶ Meaning the label of/as "refugee".

²⁷ As we go on to demonstrate in Section 6, many non-refugee migrants enjoy a relatively privileged socio-economic and legal status in Denmark. As a consequence, they rarely avail the labour market integration services of CSOs. But while outside the scope of this report, our fieldwork data shows that ethnicity, religious background and country of origin do have an impact on non-refugee migrants' experience of job recruitment processes and every day interactions in the Danish workplace.

Contact with CSOs was established following a thorough analysis of the relevant stakeholders involved in policymaking, policy implementation, service provision and advocacy activities related to the labour market integration of MRAs. Accordingly, relevant CSOs to be interviewed were identified on the basis of interviews conducted with national experts (Pace, Sen & Bjerre 2018), an inventory of relevant CSO stakeholders as well as an overview and categorization of CSOs active in matters related to the labour market integration of MRAs (Section 2). Once the potential interviewees were identified, direct contact was made with relevant employees of the CSO. “Snowballing sampling” (Noy 2008; Handcock & Gile 2011) was not employed with CSOs as most CSO interviewees were largely concerned with the operations of their own organization. Yet, on occasions, we were referred to other potential interviewees within the same organization. “Snowball sampling” was, however, the primary method for the recruitment of MRA interviewees. Contact was first made with interlocutors we had already interviewed during previous field studies. These individuals then acted as gatekeepers, often granting us access to interviewees of their own nationality. While an efficient way of gaining access in the field, this “method” of recruitment also allowed us to gain the trust of our interviewees who are often faced with precarious residency statuses in Denmark and are fearful of their residency status being jeopardised for criticizing the policies of their host country.

Interviews with MRA interlocutors took two forms. The first were one-on-one interviews. In these interviews, respondents were first asked to describe “their world” (Westby 1990, 106). They were asked to describe their journey to Denmark, their initial and subsequent interactions with state/municipal authorities and the general trajectory of their efforts to integrate into the Danish labour market. With this “story” in the background, interviewees were subsequently asked to describe their experiences with and expectations from CSOs. Additionally, interviewees were asked to compare their CSO experiences/expectations with their interactions with state/municipal authorities, in order to gain a “sharper” understanding of how they conceived the role of CSOs in matters related to the labour market integration of MRAs. Alongside one-on-one conversions, interviews with MRAs were also carried out through focus group meetings. Conducted during the regular monthly meetings of networking organizations catering for non-refugee migrants and diaspora organizations targeting refugees, these focus group interviews were conducted with 3-5 interviewees. They began with individual interviewees briefly introducing their current immigration and employment status. Subsequently, we asked pointed questions about the role of CSOs in the facilitation of MRAs’ labour market integration. This usually led to a free-form interview wherein interviewees followed an unstructured discussion. At regular intervals follow-up questions were put forth in order to guide (and give direction) to these discussions. In general, this interview format empowered our MRA interviewees to a certain degree as they were given agency in deciding the direction of the discussion. And, while still guided by the interviewers’ questions, the presence of other interviewees created a far more informal (interview) environment, thus allowing interlocutors to speak more openly in their responses to interview questions (Kitchen, 2013; Suter, 2000; Agar and MacDonald, 1995). Interviews with CSO representatives began with questions that required interviewees to, in a general sense, reflect on the role of non-governmental institutions in facilitating the labour market integration of MRAs in Denmark. This gave us a general sense of CSOs’ self-perception as stakeholders in matters related to the integration of migrants in Denmark. Subsequently, they were asked to specifically describe activities of their own organizations and reflect on how they contributed to the (labour market) integration of MRAs. Reflecting on their own work also allowed us to better understand not

just their own responsibilities but also how they interpreted the duties and obligations of MRAs in regard to facilitating their own path towards labour market integration.

3.5 How Do CSOs React to MRAs Needs?

Below, on the basis of interviews conducted with 20 CSOs, we describe and analyse the manner in which such organizations in Denmark interpret and respond to the labour market needs of MRAs. Mirroring our discussions in Sections 2 and 3, interviewed organizations – in their responses – varied between those that saw their role as facilitators of Danish public policy focused on the labour market integration of MRAs and those that challenged the state's narrow focus on labour market integration by providing services that aim to far more substantially integrate migrants into Danish society. Thematically then our findings can be categorized under two headings: 1) Facilitating Labour Market Integration and 2) Challenging "Work First" Integration Policies.

3.5.1 Facilitating Labour Market Integration

In keeping with our earlier described role of CSOs as service providers who assist the Danish public authorities in the provision of (labour market) integration services, a significant number of our CSO interviewees considered themselves to be facilitators of the state-led efforts to ensure the swift integration of MRAs into the Danish labour market. Expectedly, many of these organizations have been key stakeholders in the formulation of the "Tripartite Agreement" and the subsequent efforts of the Danish state to implement labour market integration policies. These interviewees thus contradicted the commonly held understanding of CSOs (see Section 2) as entities that "make demands" of the state and hold the "state accountable". Instead, they reflected the far more institutionalized role of CSOs in Denmark wherein (often as service providers) they operate as extended *fonctionnaires* of public authorities (see Section 3). In interviews, however, CSOs rationalized this (self-)conception as facilitators of MRAs' labour market integration in three ways:

First, some interlocutors considered labour market integration as synonymous with integration in general. In the discourse of the Lars Løkke Rasmussen-led Danish government, this synonymy was already implied in the policy focus on MRAs' labour market integration (Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019, p. 26). Mirroring a similar perspective, a representative of a large CSO that is contracted by the Danish state to deliver integration services, began by first insisting on the importance of employment to an individual's identity. He said, *"You have to understand that Denmark is very different from other countries that some of the immigrants in this country come from. It doesn't matter if you are a refugee or an educated person, most places in the world don't consider having a job that important. Here in Denmark we see the question 'what do you do?' very important to our identity. Having a job is having an identity and it allows you to be a functioning member of the society"*. Then, focusing on the specific case of MRAs' labour market integration, he added, *"Refugees and other immigrants that come here must find a job quickly. In our programs we focus on language skills and interviewing skills. We do this because we understand how important it is to have a job to become integrated. We tell immigrants that employment is the only way you can become a part of Danish society. In everyday life the job will define who you are. But more importantly you learn about Danish society, Danish culture and Danish language. Having a job will mean you are integrated"* (1_CSO_DK).

Similarly, a representative of a social partner organization that participated, in a consultative role, in the negotiations that lead to the Tripartite Agreement said, *“I can see that for some people it may be strange to focus so much on having a job. Clearly other things like learning a language, having an understanding of Danish culture are also important parts of being integrated. But in Denmark we have a welfare state and we pay high taxes. But by paying taxes and contributing to the welfare state you become a member of this society”*. Then, specifically addressing the organization’s programs, she said, *“we work to encourage immigrants to understand that if they come to this country and don’t work they can’t become part of this society. You need to work and pay taxes. This is what will make you integrated. Everything else: language, culture, will come later”* (2_CS0_DK). Finally, a spokesperson of a community-based local organization contracted by a municipality to provide professional skills-development services²⁸ to MRAs, himself a non-refugee migrant, also insisted on the synonymy between labour market integration and integration in general. Yet, he began by relaying his own efforts in trying to secure a job in Denmark. He said, *“I came to Denmark as a university student. So, I had a network of friends and colleagues, but this wasn’t a real network. Everything was inside the walls of the university campus. But, when I graduated and started looking for a job I realized that I was disconnected from Danish society. I had no bearings in Denmark. In political terms you can say that I was not integrated”*. Then, elaborating how labour market integration can secure a migrant’s overall integration in Denmark, he added, *“When I found a job, I found a real network of colleagues and friends. I learned the language quicker and I felt like I was integrated. I always bring up this experience to the immigrants I meet at the organization. I tell them that if you have a job, you will become part of Danish society”* (3_CS0_DK).

Second, another cohort of interviewees rationalized their role as facilitators of the Danish state’s labour market integration policies by ascribing to a “burden perspective” on migrants – a perspective that considers MRAs to be a (potential) burden to the Danish welfare state. Further, they considered their organizations’ programs and initiatives as ways of ensuring that MRAs become tax-paying members of Danish society. To this end, these interviewees once again reflected the way the notion of migrants as a “burden” to the resources of the welfare state was a central factor triggering the Danish integration policy-shift in 2015 towards labour market integration. This policy shift was justified on the basis of a statement released in 2015 by the Ministry of Finance which stated that it expected “increased expenses in connection with the recent influx of asylum seekers”. Additionally, the ministry published a report the same year that stated that due to low employment rates, “non-western immigrants and descendants costed Denmark 33 billion DKK in 2014, while immigrants from western countries contributed a total net amount of 6 billion DKK to the Danish economy” (Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019, pp. 6–7; The Ministry of Finance, 2016; The Ministry of Finance, 2017).

However, the conception of MRAs as a “burden” also draws on the manner in which the welfare state and its workings are treated as sanctimonious (Nannestad, 2004). For one thing, the welfare state is considered a unifying force as “all facets of Danish society, economy and politics” are considered as being under the auspices of “universal welfare schemes” (Pace, Sen & Bjerre, 2018, p.28). Further, it is assumed that the welfare state leads to a form of “natural unity” wherein a largely (ethnically, linguistically and culturally) homogenous citizenry has a “mutual interest in compromise” (Johncke, 2011, pp. 37–38). But, ethnic diversity is

²⁸ These include CV preparation, cover letter writing training and (job) interview training.

considered a threat to this “natural unity” since immigrants “have not been socialized under the universal schemes of the welfare state” (Pace, Sen & Bjerre, 2019, p. 28; Einhorn and Logue, 2003, p. 311). Therefore, while a large majority of migrants may in fact be productive members of society, the perception remains that non-Danes seek “to exploit the collective generosity of the Nordic countries” (Einhorn and Logue, 2003, p. 312; Fietkau & Hansen, 2018)

So, whether informed by the contemporary discourse on migrants as a “burden” due to their low levels of employment or due to a historical notion of migrants as a threat to the “natural unity” of the welfare state (and society) – interviewed CSOs considered their task to be that of a mitigator of a burdensome influence of Danish society. Accordingly, a representative of a confederation of employers that is a signatory to the “Tripartite Agreement” said, *“The problem is that many of the refugees have had to focus on language education, cultural education [in the past]. This also means that they keep spending all this time preparing to find a job. But they don’t actually have any form of employment”*. He then added, *“After many years in this integration bureaucracy they lose all their skills and don’t have the will to go out and look for a job and make money when they get welfare benefits...we are creating inactive citizens who do not contribute to the state finances and instead demand benefits from the state”*. Then referring to the 2016 policy shift towards labour market integration he said, *“this is why we strongly support the government’s focus on labour market integration. In fact, before the government made this policy we had carried out extensive studies that show that a large majority of refugees who come to Denmark stay unemployed for many years after their arrival in Denmark. So, we helped the government formulate and negotiate the labour market integration policy with labour unions. But we also encourage our companies to hire migrants”* (4_CS0_DK).

Another representative of a community based CSO was far more explicit in her espousal of the “burden perspective”. She began by first outlining the initiatives of her organization: *“In a way you can call us a CSO. We are like a CSO because of the ethical approach to our work. We help refugees and all kinds of immigrants find short term work in Denmark. We work with companies who are our clients and when they need someone to help them with short-term work, we train immigrants to match their needs. But we are not partners with all companies. Yes, they hire us, but we also make sure that they treat their employees ethically. In this sense I would say that we are a profit-making organization, but we are ethical like a CSO”*. However, when asked about MRAs’ response to being offered short-term employment as opposed to a permanent job, she criticized the work ethic of migrants and the threat it poses to the workings of the Danish welfare state. She said, *“It is a problem when immigrants come to Denmark and think that all their problems will be solved right away. There are many who are not happy with short-term jobs and just say no to jobs we offer them. They want to just be at home, get free benefits and wait for the best job to fall on their lap. Sorry to say, but many immigrants, especially refugees are lazy like this and expect that they have the right to just be given a permanent job. For the Danish state and the municipality, it is a huge problem. This is very costly to their finances. So, through our work we are trying to change this bad work ethic and we try to tell immigrants work is work. This will make you independent and then you don’t have to be dependent on others”* (5_CS0_DK)

Third, some CSO interviewees also rationalized their role as facilitators of MRAs’ labour market integration by displaying an instrumental perspective during interviews whereby MRAs were seen as a mere (underutilized) “pool of talent” that could be “exploited” to the benefit of

Danish employers (and the Danish economy). To this end, expressing his support of the employment-focused integration policies targeting refugees, the representative of the confederation of employers mentioned earlier said, *“In this organization our main goal is to make sure that Danish employers have a diverse labour market to choose from”*. When asked what “diverse” means, he said, *“This could mean the IT sector where many Danish companies need qualified people. But this could also mean the cleaning sector where there is a shortage”*. Then insisting that this perspective is not a political stance, he added, *“We are not a political organization. We care about the interests of our members [i.e. employers]. It is up to the government to decide if or when the refugees should be sent home. While they are in Denmark they have to work and be of value to Danish companies”* (4_CS0_DK). A representative of a confederation of labour unions, that is also a signatory to the “Tripartite Agreement”, presented a similar perspective and began by insisting that the primary concern of his organization is the interest of its members (i.e. unions). He said, *“We care about Danish workers. That is why we are very involved in the political discussion on the labour market integration of foreigners. If they are not integrated in the right way they will negatively affect the working conditions of Danish workers”*. Then, specifying the “value” that migrants can add to the Danish economy, he said, *“There is a misconception about the qualification of many migrants, especially refugees. Some people say that they are highly educated people and we are not making full use of their qualifications. But in my experience most have minimal education. Even that has value in Denmark. We have a big demand for workers in the cleaning sector, hospitality and restaurants and refugees can fill a gap. That way they contribute to the Danish economy and at the same time they are not a threat to Danish workers”* (6_CS0_DK). Finally, a representative of a social partner that played a consultative role during the negotiations that resulted in the “Tripartite Agreement”, began the interview by emphasising, *“Our main interest is the goals and aspirations of the migrants. We are interested in facilitating their labour market integration. Part of our job is making migrants job-ready and helping them with CVs, interviews etc. The other part of our job is convincing Danish employers to hire non-Danes”*. Yet, when asked how the organisation was able to “convince Danish employers”, she said, *“Money talks. We cannot appeal to the goodwill of employers. They have a business to run and they need to be profitable. Also, charity is something that is not sustainable. We realized early that we need to show that having migrants at work is good for business. So, when we talk to Danish companies we tell them that migrants bring experiences and knowledge that is good for their business. Many have specialized skills that Danes don’t have. Some have experiences and educational backgrounds in fields that there is a shortage. So, when we talk to employers we tell them that they should be open to hiring foreigners because this can be profitable for their business in the long run”* (7_CS0_DK)

3.5.2 Challenging “Work First” Integration Policies

A large majority of CSO representatives interviewed for this report displayed a self-conception as facilitators of MRAs’ labour market integration. Yet, a smaller cohort of interviews challenged the previous government’s²⁹ overwhelming focus on labour market integration and insisted that it ignores other important facets (besides employment) that determine the nature of an individual’s integration in Denmark. These organizations where to a lesser degree “tied”

²⁹ On 5th June 2019, a new Danish government, lead by the Social Democrats was formed. At time of writing this report, it is unclear as to the extent to which the policy priorities of the previous conservative government, led by Venstre, Denmark’s Liberal Party, will be maintained.

to the Danish state and its integration efforts. And, interviewees representing these organizations mirrored the “classical” understanding of CSOs as “intermediate organizations” who operate as a mechanism of checks and balances against the Danish government policy focus. A critical perspective on the labour integration policies of the Lars Løkke Rasmussen government was palpable in an interview with a representative of a national CSO contracted by the Danish municipalities to assist with the delivery of integration services. However, our interviewee worked largely with the organization’s voluntary services. When asked why labour integration has now become the sole focus of integration public policy, she said, *“One reason is the broader thinking [in Danish society] of how much employment is a value for most people...[in] people’s everyday thinking about their life, and there is a lot of identity value. I think it’s a lot of worth you put in having a job”*. However, she went on to criticize the political reasoning that drives labour market integration efforts in Denmark and added, *“there is the whole way the public opinion is being shaped by politicians. And the story that is being told [is that] immigrants are a burden. [But] it is a quick fix to think of that [employment] as the main issue and of course for a lot of refugees, a lot of immigrants, employment would also be part of the solution; also, as a pathway to social integration of sorts...From my perspective, you also know that you can easily work as an immigrant and still not be socially integrated. Work places can also be segregated”* (8_CS0_DK; also cited in Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019).

A similar view was apparent in an interview with a volunteer member of the board of directors of a networking national organization focused on building positive relations between refugees and their local (host) communities. When asked about the role of CSOs in matters related to the labour market integration of MRAs, he said, *“The public sector is stuck. The state is inflexible. They can’t change any rules. They are bounded by the law and law, as you know, takes a long time to change. So, organizations like us act as an important part of the system. We act in ways that the state cannot act, and we do things in a much more informal way. Civil society is not limited by the law”*. Then specifically addressing MRAs’ labour market integration, he said, *“This is a problematic focus. Having a job is important. But that doesn’t mean that you feel part of Danish society. Isn’t feeling like you are an integral part of Danish society the most important thing here? But there are many immigrants who are employed and don’t have any Danish friends and are not connected to Danish society. How is this a good way to integrate people?”* We then asked if/how his organization took an alternative approach to integration. He replied, *“We stay away from formal programs of the municipality. Instead our focus is on making foreigners build a Danish social network. We have cafes where we pair migrants with normal (sic.) Danes. They [migrants] could end up being trained or helped with getting a job. It could help migrants with learning the language. Or, sometimes people just build a friendship. The point only is that many things together make integration and we just want to make sure that foreigners (sic.) in Denmark have the option of accessing all these things”* (9_CS0_DK).

Finally, during an interview with a CSO involved in cultural activities that provide young MRAs the opportunity to relay their experience of integrating into Danish society, in an artistic form³⁰, our interviewee simply dismissed our questions on labour market integration of MRAs. She said, *“I am not sure what to say to you. As an organization, we don’t really think about what the government is saying on labour market integration at all. So, I don’t have an answer to*

³⁰ This includes music, theatre and spoken word.

you". On our insistence she replied, *"Do you know what we do with integration? We have young refugee volunteers who go to different companies and different organizations. These are places where people say that refugees should have a job right away. Our volunteers give presentations about what integration has done to their lives. Not in a positive way. But they show how they have been burdened by institutions and rules in the integration process. They talk about what integration means to them"* (10_CS0_DK). Evidently this perception of integration is in stark contrast with those of the earlier organizations that considered themselves as facilitators of the Danish state's labour market integration policies. So, in a follow-up interview, we asked her to reflect on this difference (of perceptions of what integration stands for) among CSOs. She said, *"You have to remember that we have many programs that are funded by the municipality. But these other organizations are much more involved with the Danish state. They have bigger budgets. They have bigger contracts. Organizations like the Red Cross are also written into the budget of the Danish state. So, obviously they will present a perspective that is close to the official party line. We have a little more flexibility"* (18_CS0_DK).

3.5.3 Concluding Remarks

Integration is a long-term and multifaceted process (Pace, 2017; Pace & Simsek, 2019). So, at this juncture, with labour market integration policies having been in place only since 2016, it is very difficult to adjudge to what extent such policies have indeed been successful in substantially integrating MRAs into the Danish society. What we have demonstrated in this section of the report is that our interview data largely reflects the manner in which we have contextualized the role of CSOs in the Danish political landscape. The highly institutionalized role of CSOs in public policy matters and historical ways in which such organizations have been tied to the Danish state, is very much reflected in the way a large majority of interviewed CSOs considered themselves to be facilitators of the labour market integration of MRAs. Still, a smaller cohort of CSOs reflected a far more classical understanding of non-governmental entities as they actively challenge the underlying logic and policy focus (on labour market integration) of the government. While we provide concrete policy recommendations in the Conclusion to this report it is nonetheless important to notice that for a large majority of CSOs' focus on integration is not driven by the needs of MRAs themselves. They are either driven by an understanding of MRAs as a burden to the welfare state, the view (held by CSOs and government authorities) that labour market integration is synonymous with integration in general or the notion of MRAs as "pool of talent" meant to be used for the benefit of the Danish state and economy. To this end, such a policy focus challenges the existent academic literature that argues that integration is a multifaceted process that requires both a commitment from migrants themselves and the host society (Simsek, 2018). Accordingly, in the next section then we outline the perspectives of migrants as we asked them how they conceived the role of CSOs in integration matters. Subsequently, we present policy recommendations that strive to bring both the perspectives of the host society (and the existing integration bureaucracies) and those of MRAs into sharper focus.

3.6 What Do MRAs Get and Seek from CSOs?

Below, on the basis of interviews conducted with 31 MRAs, we describe and analyse the manner in which our interviewees interpret and conceptualize the role of CSOs and their labour market integration initiatives and programs. In all, we demonstrate that our respondents' conception of CSOs mirrors our findings in Section 5. For one thing, our MRA interviewees were critical of the way CSOs often operated as an extension of the Danish state as they helped facilitate the government's policy focus on labour market integration. Meaning, in terms of their initiatives, our interviewees insisted that CSOs were inflexible, keen on "pushing" MRAs to take on *any* job and rarely take into consideration the individual's skills, experiences and qualifications. Yet, our MRA interviewees presented a positive outlook on CSOs who were flexible in their programs. And, instead of simply facilitating the Danish state's labour market integration efforts, they gave MRAs the agency to shape a path to labour market integration that "matched" their profession and social aspirations in Denmark. Thematically then, our findings can be categorized under two headings: (1) A Critical Perspective on CSOs as facilitators of labour market integration and (2) Networking Services and MRA Agency.

3.6.1 A Critical Perspective on CSOs as Facilitators of Labour Market Integration

As mentioned in Section 4, an (often-critical) deliberation of the role of CSOs in interviews with MRAs frequently began with a discussion of their interaction with/experience of public sector integration services. This allowed us to gain a better understanding of MRAs' view of the specific role of CSOs (as opposed to state/municipal authorities) as barriers/enablers of their labour market integration. To this end, many of our non-refugee and refugee interviewees began by saying that, when possible, they avoided accessing the integration services provided by the Danish state. Referring to the services of the municipality job centers, a Bangladeshi non-refugee migrant, who has a master's degree in development studies and worked as a research assistant prior to her arrival in Denmark, said, *"I followed my husband to Copenhagen. He was offered a PhD position. When I arrived I first spent some time settling in and trying to understand this country and society. But I have never been the kind of person who just sits at home. I needed to work. So, very soon afterwards some neighbours said to me that the municipality job centre helps foreigners find jobs in Denmark. So, I decided to talk to them"*. Then elaborating on her experience with the case handlers at the municipality's job center, she said, *"Today I tell people that going to the municipality [job centre] is a waste of time. It is totally depressing. They are not there to help you. They don't care what your experiences are, what your educational background is. To me they said they can only help me if I wanted to work in the back of a restaurant or if I wanted a cleaning job"*. She ended by saying, *"I can do any job you give me. But the point is that they don't seem to care what I want"* (2_MRA_DK) .

A refugee from Iraq, who was a journalist and left his home country in fear of being persecuted because of some of his writings that criticized the government's policies, relayed a similar experience at a municipality job centre. He said, *"when I first met my case handler, she had already started to look for cleaning jobs for me. I said to her that I am a writer and I have a master's degree [in English literature]. At the least I can start with high school again. She said that getting an education in Denmark is too difficult and my education and career from my home country does not matter. The easiest thing for me was to get a cleaning job. When I*

insisted on doing something related to my work, she made me take a writing class. But this class was for people who had barely any education. Eventually, I was able to find a university programme on my own". Then, while reflecting on this experience, he added, "The problem here is not that we have to deal with the integration processes. It is that the authorities here assume that I am useless. They don't look at your experience or education. All they want to do is push you out of the system by getting you a job. They don't care what kind of job" (3_MRA_DK; also cited in Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019). Finally, a non-refugee migrant from Russia who worked as a medical assistant in Moscow and is currently living in Aarhus said, "I have a degree in neuroscience from Moscow and I came to Denmark on a family reunification visa to join my Latvian husband. He works here in an IT company. Finding a job has been so difficult. Part of the problem is that I need to learn Danish to do anything in my field. But I have received no assistance from the Aarhus municipality. They have a separate department for assisting spouses but it is not helpful. All they do is offer cleaning and restaurant jobs. There are no services that are specifically tailored for people like me" (4_MRA_DK).

Most of our MRA interviewees expressed similar concerns regarding the integration services provided by Danish public authorities. Yet, there was a clear distinction between refugee/asylum-seeker interviewees and non-refugee interlocutors in terms of the way they availed the services of CSOs (if, at all), as an alternative to the publicly funded integration services. Among non-refugee interviewees, an IT specialist from India said, *"I don't have any particular relationship with CSOs. I came to Denmark on the greencard scheme³¹. We were given the impression that it would be very easy to find a job in Denmark. So, I quit my job in Hyderabad³². I know now that it is not easy. I probably sent out close to a hundred applications before I got an interview. Eventually, I got the help of a networking organization (see discussion in 6.2). But I didn't need to ask for help from some NGO. Those organizations mostly help refugees. I needed a different kind of help getting a well-paid job in my field" (5_MRA_DK). Similarly, noting that she never felt the need to seek the labour market integration services provided by CSOs, an American employee at a Danish public university said, "When I got the job here it was a fairly easy move from the US to Denmark. Because I was hired by a university and as a tenured Associate Professor, I was put on a fast-track visa scheme and all the bureaucracy was taken care of within a month. When I came here, the university helped me with taxes, language classes and getting an apartment. I have a good network of friends through my job and I know that if I want to move to another university, I can find a job through my network. So, you can say I am quite privileged which is why I have never needed any help from CSOs. I know that this is not everyone's experience in Denmark and refugees and asylum seekers do need help from these organizations" (6_MRA_DK). Similarly, when asked about his experience integrating into the Danish labour market, an American IT specialist working for a Danish start-up said, "I have a very specific set of IT skills that very*

³¹ The Greencard scheme is a now-discontinued visa programme that allowed high-skilled non-EU migrants to live in Denmark (initially for a period of two years) without having to secure a job before entering the country. This two-year period was meant to allow Greencard visa-holders to search for a job while in Denmark. However, the scheme ended when most visa-holders were unable to find employment in a high-skilled sector related to their skills and qualifications. Instead, most took on low-skilled forms of employment in order to fund their stay in Denmark.

³² This interviewee later explained to me that he expected to receive a higher pay in Denmark and hoped to gather some international experience that would help his career progression when he eventually returned to India.

few people have here in Denmark. So, when I applied for a job there were many offers. Also, I work in start-ups where the language is global. So, for an American it is very easy". With regard to his experience with Danish CSOs, he said, "I have never tried to get any help from them. Absolutely not. All the help I need I can get at my company". He paused, "The only time I had to deal with integration issues was when I moved from Copenhagen to a municipality outside the city. The municipality authorities saw that I was a foreigner and they called me and said I should make an integration agreement with them and then meet some local NGO for integration help. I never went" (20_MRA_DK). Finally, a currently unemployed Pakistani non-refugee migrant who had received a bachelor's degree from a university in Copenhagen said, "I am educated and have a university degree from a Danish university. Of course it is difficult these days because I don't have a job. But organizations cannot help me. The help they provide is for refugees and I can understand why. The government has made life so difficult for them and NGOs are doing what the government is not" (7_MRA_DK).

Evidently, our non-refugee interviewees were able to choose not to access the services of CSOs. However, our refugee and asylum seeker interviewees often found that they were compelled to access the services of CSOs. As we have discussed earlier, CSOs in Denmark have an institutionalized role in the implementation of public policies. Meaning, CSOs often provide (labour market) integration services for the Danish state. The consequence is that many of our refugee and asylum seeker interviewees considered this to be a problematic positionality. They criticized that instead of operating as a mechanism of checks and balances against the Danish state, CSOs in Denmark often functioned like an extension of the state. As a consequence many levied a criticism of CSOs in a way that mirrored their (above-mentioned) critique of public authorities. Accordingly, a refugee interviewee from Iraq who was a journalist and activist in his home country and is currently a student in Denmark said, *"I came to Denmark with a very different understanding of [the] civil society. I was an activist in Iraq and in Iraq civil society organizations were partner organizations that support activists who are attacked by the state. In Denmark I get the impression that these organizations are part of the state and they do what the state tells them to do".* Then specifically addressing the operations of CSOs he said, *"I also have a problem with how they operate. And, I feel like what they say and do is not very different from the government. Like the government, all they talk about is labour market integration. I don't think they have ever asked me what I want to do. They don't know what my experiences and skills are. All they want me to do is get a job quickly because they think we will just stay home and live off welfare benefits" (8_MRA_DK).*

An Eritrean asylum seeker who was a government employee in his home country presented a similar perspective when he said, *"In the asylum center we often get visits from Danish organizations. They are apparently there to help us. But the day these organizations' representatives come you always get the sense that it's not a civil society organization. It is a representative of the government. You also see this in the way they talk to us. In fact, there is very little conversation between us and them. They are there to just tell us all the rules and regulations and how we have to live our lives according to Danish laws. Sometimes they just repeat the official line of the government and these days they keep telling us that we should prepare to go back to our home country. They also say that if our [asylum] application is approved we need to just find a job, any job. They don't ask us what kind of job we want. Some of us want to get an education in Denmark. But the government's position is that we need to get a job, so they just repeat this rule. Sorry to say, I don't have a very good impression of the civil society in Denmark" (9_MRA_DK).* Finally, also expressing a critical impression of CSOs, an Afghan refugee, who was a prominent businessman in Afghanistan and currently a

master's student, said, *"I think civil society organizations are an important part of a democratic society. They are supposed to be critical of the government and in Afghanistan it is an important part of the democratization process. So in Denmark I feel that these organizations play a very important role in our integration into Denmark. But I have to say that besides Afghan organizations (see discussion in 6.2) I have not tried to get their help. This is a personal problem but I feel like that they have a very narrow understanding of refugees. In fact, I don't even like to be called a refugee. But these organizations see us as helpless people and their job is to make sure we follow the government's rules. You asked about labour market integration but we don't have a say in what kind of jobs we get and they don't care about our career goals. They just want us to go to the municipality and get whatever job is offered to us"* (10_MRA_DK).

3.6.2 Networking Services and MRA Agency

As is evident above, a large majority of our MRA interviewees presented a very critical perspective on CSOs and their role as enablers of labor market integration in Denmark. Yet a small cohort of interviewees also indicated the importance of the networking services provided by some CSOs. For one thing, they echo the prevalent perspective that social networks are key to succeeding professionally in Denmark. To this effect, an American academic said, *"I moved here from the UK. I was told that here they have a very transparent work culture and things tend to be fair. But I quickly realized that here it is all about who you know. Around me I can see that promotions and opportunities are only given to people you know. Everyone has their network already and for a foreigner like me it is very difficult to get into these networks"* (11_MRA_DK; also cited in Sen, Bjerre & Pace, 2019). Similarly, an Indian non-refugee interviewee working in a consultancy firm said, *"In India you get a job on the basis of your CV. In Denmark it is about networking"*. Then elaborating on the networking services of CSOs, he said, *"I became a member of a networking organization that partners with private companies. They have programs where you meet private companies and you get a sense of what kind of employees they are looking for. On the other hand you as a potential employee also take part in programs where you work on fixing your CV for the Danish labour market, you learn how to write an application and we practice interviewing. The best part of all of this is that we are somehow able to plan our own career in Denmark. If I went to the municipality they would just give me a cleaning or a driving job. I don't have a choice in this matter. In the networking organization I can try and find a job that matches my own career goals. Also, I have the added benefit that I meet people who are going through the same struggles as me"* (12_MRA_DK).

In a similar vein, an American employee at a marketing firm said, *"I moved to Denmark because of my Danish husband. So through my husband I found out about the importance of networking in Denmark. These [networking] organizations have been a very important way for me to find a job in Denmark. What is important for me here is that they take your qualifications and your skills seriously. This wouldn't happen if I went to a municipality job center. In these networking organizations they try to match people with jobs that work best for them. Also we learn about Danish work culture, the work-life balance in Denmark. And all of these things help to not just get a job but also keep a job"* (13_MRA_DK). An Indian non-refugee migrant, who is currently unemployed³³ and a volunteer at a networking organization catering for highly

³³ This interviewee has a degree in electrical engineering.

skilled migrants in Denmark also said, *“It is a tricky situation for immigrants who are not refugees. Many [immigrants]...come here with a job. So, if this is the case life in Denmark is easy. But if you come here on a green card, family reunification visa or as a student and have to find a job after coming to Denmark it is very difficult. The municipality and many NGOs will treat you in a way that is very similar to a refugee. They will ignore all your skills and education. That’s why we work for highly skilled migrants to make sure that in Denmark they can pursue the kind of career they want”* (14_MRA_DK). While lauding the networking services of a diaspora organization, an Afghan refugee also said, *“You can say that refugees are very restricted in the options that are given to them. Sometimes people think that being a refugee means that you are here to exploit Danish society. You get this feeling in municipalities and sometimes with NGOs. That’s why I work with an Afghan organization. Here we meet people from our own community and learn from each other on how to find a job and be professionally successful in Denmark. Because you have a cultural connection with the members you feel that people care about your goals and they try to help us find a job”* (15_MRA_DK). Another Afghan refugee who is currently a bachelor’s student, said the following regarding diaspora networking organizations: *“I have had very good experiences with networking organizations. I feel more comfortable. They don’t push me to do something because the Danish government said so. It is my own people. So, I feel they understand me better, they give me freedom and I can plan my career the way I want to.”* (23_MRA_DK) Finally, while not referring to a formal networking organization, an Afghan refugee and bike shop owner said, *“Officially I didn’t get any help from the government or municipality. No organization helped me. But friends, normal Danish people and normal Afghan friends helped me. My network [of friends] helped me.”* (24_MRA_DK)

3.6.3 Concluding Remarks

The manner in which our MRA interviewees conceptualized and analyzed the role of CSOs in their intergration into the Danish labour market mirrors the self-conception of such organizations outlined in Section 5. Responding to the role of CSOs as facilitators of the Danish government’s focus on labour market integration, our interviewees considered the positionality of such organizations as problematic. For one, they considered Danish CSOs’ institutionalized role as an extension of the Danish state as contradicting the “classical” understanding of CSOs as a mechanism of checks and balances that monitors and, when necessary, challenges the state. Further, as these organizations often simply implement labour market integration policies of the Danish state without taking into consideration their particular skills, experiences and goals of MRAs, many of our interviewees considered CSOs as not facilitating their social and professional aspirations in Denmark as expected – not least, because a stringent (state-mandated) bureaucratized path to (labour) market integration allows little by way of agency to MRAs. Accordingly, some of our interviewees displayed a positive outlook on networking CSOs that allowed refugee and non-refugee migrants to structure and plan their own path to labour market integration. To this end, many highlighted the benefits of being able to participate – under the auspices of networking organizations – in networking activities with potential employments and skills development programs.

In the end, however, our discussions in Sections 5 and 6 reveal a significant “gap” between the way CSOs conceive their role in efforts to integrate MRAs into the Danish labour market and MRAs’ own expectations of CSOs. In the following section we will attempt to bridge this gap through policy recommendations that both allow for some aspects of the (highly bureaucratized) state-mandated path towards labour market integration and grant agency to

migrants in order for them to structure their own “ideal” path to integration that takes into account their professional and social aspirations.

3.7 Denmark: Conclusions

In this report we presented the perspectives of both CSOs as well as MRAs in terms of the role of civil society in facilitating labour market integration of MRAs in Denmark. Most interviewed representatives of CSOs considered themselves to be facilitators of the Danish state’s policy focus on labour market integration. Expectedly, this cohort of interviewees is largely represented by organizations that have been involved in the formulation and implementation of labour market integration policies. Accordingly, large CSOs contracted by the Danish state to implement integration services, social partners who played a consultative role during the policy negotiations that led to the “Tripartite Agreements” and smaller local/community-based CSOs contracted by municipalities to provide labour market integration services rationalized their role as facilitators of MRAs’ labour market integration as a confirmation of their adherence to the Danish government’s conception of labour market integration as synonymous with integration in general. Others, including a representative of a confederation of employers that is a signatory to the “Tripartite Agreement” and a community based organization that “matches” MRAs with short-term employment in private companies considered MRAs to be a burden to the Danish society and, for them, labor market integration was a way of diminishing the possibility of MRAs draining the resources of the welfare state. Still others considered MRAs as simply a “pool of talent” that should be instrumentally utilized for the benefit of the Danish economy. This included interviewees representing the confederation of Danish employers concerned with ensuring that Danish companies have a diverse workforce available to them, a representative of a confederation of labour unions keen on protecting the interests of Danish workers and a representative of a labour market integration-focused social partner that participated in the negotiations leading to the “Tripartite Agreement” in a consultative role. A smaller cohort of interviewed CSOs however challenged the Danish state’s overwhelming focus on labour market integration. These largely included organizations that provided voluntary services as well as professional and diasporic networking organizations that, compared to the above-mentioned cohort of CSOs, are, to a lesser degree (financially) tied to the Danish state. They considered their role as critical entities who employ programs and take initiatives that pursue a substantial understanding of integration wherein labour market integration is only one facet of their broader efforts to integrate MRAs into Danish society. Our MRA interviewees were, however, critical of the way CSOs often operated as an institutional extension of the state and in how they played a central role in the implementation of Danish public policy – not least in the policy area of labour market integration. Moreover, they considered the manner in which such CSOs implemented labour market integration programs as inflexible and rarely took into consideration the skills, experiences and aspirations of MRAs. Finally, our MRA interviewees displayed a positive outlook on networking organizations as they “matched” MRAs with potential employers in accordance with a particular individual’s professional aspirations in Denmark while also giving them the agency in structuring the manner in which they are integrated into the Danish labour market in particular and Danish society in general. Accordingly, we propose two policy recommendations:

First, we consider the significant portion of the Danish civil society active in the labour market integration of MRAs as having a “discursive problem”. For one thing, the conception of labour market integration as synonymous with integration in general and the conception of MRAs as simply a burden/”pool of talent” presents a fairly stringent understanding of integration among members of the Danish civil society. Firstly, such a perspective entirely ignores the particular aspirations of MRAs in terms of how they hope to settle into Danish society. Furthermore, integration is presented as a highly bureaucratized procedure that is simply imposed on MRAs. Here we recognize that the historically institutionalized role of CSOs as key stakeholders of public policy formulation and implementation – one that lends itself to a highly bureaucratized (civil society) understanding of integration – cannot be altered. What can be changed, however, is the way in which CSOs (discursively) position themselves whereby they consider integration to involve both host society *and* migrant communities as stakeholders. On the one hand CSOs should position themselves as operating in the interest of the host society. Yet, migrant communities should also be regarded as equal partners and stakeholders who have the ability to shape the nature and outcome of integration processes. Such a discursive shift, we believe, will position CSOs as entities that are able/willing to address a wide range of issues related to integration that include “employment, housing, education, health...social bridges, social bonds, social links, language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability as well as rights and citizenship” (Pace and Simsek 2019, 5). This in turn would encourage MRAs to seek the services of CSOs and their involvement in civil society – a key facet of their socialization into the democratic fabric of Danish society.

Second, and in terms of the nature of the services provided by CSOs, we recommend a far broader and multifaceted understanding of integration. A significant aspect of this understanding can indeed remain focused on the labour market integration of MRAs. This focus can include the development of “hard skills”, specifically driven to ensure the swift securement of employment. Yet, the development of these skills should be paired with far more informal (non-labour market-focused) integration initiatives that permit MRAs greater “space and fluidity to adapt to the host culture” (Pace, 2018, p.18). These initiatives could include a wide variety of educational, cultural and/or artistic programs. Yet, their informality and fluidity would allow MRAs some agency on the path towards integrating into Danish society in way that allows them to incorporate their own specific social and professional aspirations while in Denmark. To this end, we would argue that the professional and diaspora networking organizations are best suited to provide such a brand of (multifaceted) integration services. As such organizations allow MRAs themselves to dictate their path towards integration, the informality of their organizational set-up would allow members to both pursue the development of “hard skills” that they consider necessary for their labour market integration as well as develop “soft skills” focused on better understanding the socio-political, cultural and economic context of their host society.

Box 3: Venner Viser Vej (DK)

Venner Viser Vej (“**Friends Show the Way**”) program was an integration initiative established by the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council in 2016. The program “pairs” refugees in all Danish municipalities with a volunteer who can help the refugees with their integration into Danish society. The foundational logic of the initiative is that since volunteers *choose* to participate in this program, they can establish a trust-based relationship with a refugee (family) in a way that municipal authorities cannot. These volunteers are therefore best suited to assist refugees and their families with their everyday

challenges, which include accessing public transportation, learning the Danish language and/or understanding official letters from Danish public authorities. Further, the volunteer could help refugees and their families become active in their local community. The assistance provided by the volunteer is based on the needs of refugees and therefore it is the refugee participant who determines the nature of the relationship with the volunteers. The “Venner Viser Vej” program ended in 2018. An evaluation of the program showed that the initiative was adopted by 93% of Danish municipalities and more than 7000 refugees were “paired” with a volunteer. 96% of Danish municipalities expressed their interest in extending the “Venner Viser Vej” program. A majority of participating refugees reported that their volunteer “friend” helped them better understand the culture at the Danish workplace and supported their efforts to secure a job in Denmark. 85% of Danish municipalities reported that refugees who were “paired” with a volunteer had a better grasp of the Danish language. They further reported that the opportunity to learn Danish *outside* a language school was the primary motivation for the progress made in learning the language. 89% of municipalities reported that refugees with volunteers showed a better understanding of Danish culture, values and norms. Refugees who participated in the program further noted that their (increased) knowledge of Denmark and Danish society was a result of observing their volunteer “friends”. Finally, 91% of municipalities reported that the program helped refugees establish a stronger network in Danish society, which in turn will help them become active citizens.

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4 Finland

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4.1 Introduction

In this report, we look at the role of CSOs in the integration and specifically labour market integration of migrants in Finland. We interviewed migrants (40) and CSO representatives (20). Official government-organized integration training programs have a significant role in the integration of migrants in Finland. Unemployed job-seeking migrants can attend integration training, which is generally organized in the form of active labour market training and language learning, for up to 3-5 years. Migrants generally regard state-run entities such as the employment office (TE-office), local governments (municipalities), and the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela), as their main source of labour market integration support. CSOs have a secondary role, and although migrants recognize their integration support especially in language learning, learning about Finnish culture and norms, and in making Finnish acquaintances, CSOs have a much lower profile in labour market integration in the eyes of migrants. CSOs themselves have however become more active in supporting the labour market integration of migrants. These include both organizations established by native Finns, as well as those established by migrants. These organizations now offer support such as job brokerage, labour market information classes and job search assistance. It seems however, that compared to the official programs, few migrants are aware these CSO activities.

Most interviewees have some contact with CSOs but only few participate actively. Those participating actively also tend to participate more in CSO labour market activities. Many migrants however had no contact with CSOs at all. In relation to labour market integration, the CSOs most important role was in supporting migrants, such as asylum seekers, who are ineligible to take part in official integration programs.

4.2 The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Finland

The Finnish system is characterized by consensus and collaboration between state and civil society (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 25). Finnish civil society is generally considered to be similar to that of other Nordic countries. Characteristic of the Nordic model is a close and firm connection between civil society and the state, but nonetheless a clear division of labour between the two. (Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 10.) Welfare services have largely been organized and delivered by the state, which is why the third sector (i.e. CSOs) has traditionally not had a significant role in this (Salamon & Anheier, 1999, pp. 229). In Finland, the state centred welfare system has however not been as complete as in the other Nordic countries. Thus, the third sector, with the help of the state and municipalities, has had a somewhat larger role in organizing certain welfare services. (Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 11.)

In the Nordic countries, the third sector has traditionally had a prominent advocacy role as a vehicle for the expression of political, social and recreational interests (Salamon & Anheier, 1999, pp. 229). This is also the case in Finland, where third sector associations are interest-based and have a representative role in decision-making (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 24, 25). Setting up association and participating in them are important forms of civil participation (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 11). Through this, various minorities gain opportunities to realize, maintain and define their own cultural, political and religious traditions (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 283). In Finland, immigrants have the right to practice and retain their cultural heritage and organize themselves along ethnic and religious lines (Pyykkönen, 2007a, pp. 207). Finnish multicultural policy has thus far acknowledged the importance of the language, culture and religious identity to minority groups, and the maintenance of minority identity has been recognized as beneficial to integration into society (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 284).

The Finnish Associations Act (26.5.1989/503) defines what associations are and e.g. how an association can be established³⁴. An association is defined as a non-governmental actor that does not aim to make profit or provide other financial benefit to its members. The purpose and activities of the organization cannot be primarily financial. According to legislation, everyone, including migrants, has the right to join associations. Members may be private individuals, corporations and foundations. However, if the primary purpose of the association is to exercise influence over state affairs, private individual members must be Finnish citizens or foreigners residing in Finland. Registered associations have a recognized position in Finland (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 283). When an association is registered it can, amongst other things, make commitments, own real estate, trade, take donations and appear in court or before other authority as a party. The members of a registered association are not personally liable for the commitments of the association. (Finnish Patent and Registration Office, 2019.) Besides registered associations, there are however a large number of unregistered non-governmental organizations that function in Finland. Religious communities in Finland form a separate type of organization, that nonetheless is similar to that of registered associations. Numerous new communities representing various religious traditions have formed in Finland since the late 1980s (Ketola et al., 2014). Although secularization has been the general trend, the field of religious organizations has diversified, especially due to migrants setting up new religious communities. The role of religious organization in labour market integration remains limited however.

Although the primary responsibility for the implementation of practical integration measures in Finland is with the municipality and the TE-office, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment recognizes that associations have an important role in promoting the integration of migrants. The Finnish integration legislation reform of 2011 delegated various responsibilities to migrant organizations (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 56), and highlighted the importance of the third sector (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 26; Lautiola, 2013, pp. 15). There are various CSOs on the national and local level that participate in the reception of asylum seekers and offer integration support. CSOs, mostly run by native Finns, also have a central role in the running of asylum centres (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 52). Both migrant led and non-migrant lead organizations run integration activities. Migrant organizations work together with officials in many different sectors including e.g. integration, youth activities and labour market

³⁴ When establishing an association in Finland, a charter has to be drawn up, which must include the rules of the association. The charter has to be dated and signed by three or more persons joining the association. A natural person as a founder has to be 15 years of age or older.

integration (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 52). Guidance in integration, peer support and language learning are some of the most common services offered by migrant organizations (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 27). Many of the official integration services, such as information desks providing migrants with information about Finland, labour market issues, and various language classes, are also outsourced to CSOs. Moreover, the national curriculum governing integration training also encourages the organizers of the training to collaborate with the third sector (Lautiola, 2013, pp. 20).

The role of CSOs in integration is important, since organizations have the possibility to recognize grass-root level needs and to reach certain target groups more efficiently (Lautiola, 2013, pp. 56). CSOs are also often able to take into consideration individual needs and can often offer low-threshold participation opportunities. Some MRAs find it easier to contact CSOs than public officials. (ETNO, 2008, pp. 10.) Especially the activities that are offered to newly arrived migrants, it is important to offer services in the migrants' own language (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2019).

The non-profit sector in the Nordic countries has traditionally not had a significant role in providing employment opportunities, because most work is done by volunteers. (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 51; Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 28; Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 10; Salamon & Anheier, 1999, pp. 241.) The activity level of volunteering in Finland has been average in comparison with other EU-countries (Helander & Laaksonen, 1999, pp. 66). Volunteers do not have a special legally defined status in Finland and there is no distinct legislation about volunteering (Seppo, 2012, pp. 20). The role of the third sector as an employer has however been growing fast, especially in social service organizations (Ruuskanen et al., 2013). Compared to natives, however, for MRAs, CSOs offer significantly greater employment opportunities, and serve the role of being a first experience in the Finnish labour market (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 52; Ekholm, 2015, pp. 33). However, since many of the paid jobs in the third sector are based on temporary projects, these are also precarious positions (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 28).

An increase in third sector paid work has been driven by its increased role in providing services, due to outsourcing of the government services, and tightening of municipal budgets (Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 24). This shifts the emphasis of the third sector away from advocacy (Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 14; Pirkkalainen et al., 2018, pp. 26, 31), which means that CSO now spend more of their resources on providing services, than on advocating issues central to their objectives. However, especially for migrant organizations, service provision is difficult and only few have been able to step into the role (Ekholm, 2015). This is because migrant organizations are mostly run by voluntary participation and they can have shortages in the general management of association activities (Pirkkalainen, 2015, pp. 56). Going into service provision requires knowledge about pricing of services and the ability to productize expertise (Lautiola, 2013, pp. 35), which suggests that CSO require more professionalism than volunteers can provide.

The **Finnish third sector** is largely funded by grants from the ministries and the municipalities. Only registered associations can apply for funding. Most of the organizations interviewed for this study are largely dependent on external funding, mainly in the form of subsidies/grants from municipalities, ministries, STEA³⁵ and other private foundations and institutions. Some

³⁵ Before the Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) had a significant role as a funder of the third sector. In 2017 however the funding operations of the RAY were transferred to a newly established

have also received funding from the EU. Grants are generally for specific fixed term projects or activities. The aim has been to mainstream funding related to the integration of migrants into other types of funding that CSOs in Finland receive to organize their activities (Lautiola, 2013, pp. 47). There are thus generally no specific quotas for migrant support activities in the funding procedures (Pirkkalainen et al., 2015, pp. 1267). Some of larger, more established CSOs have managed to secure long term funding; large, well known organizations tend to get funding more easily than unknown organizations (Pyykkönen, 2007c, pp. 112). CSOs are also funded through membership fees, but these are normally insufficient to cover all their expenses (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2012, pp. 291.) Cities and municipalities support CSOs in kind, such as by offering them free of charge or subsidised spaces to use (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 42).

4.3 An Overview and Categorization of CSOs

Currently there are about 100 000 registered associations in Finland (Finnish Patent and Registration Office, 2019) and up to 80 % of the population belong to at least one association (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 9). In international comparison, proportional to the size of the population, the amount is considerable. Moreover, according to estimates there are also about 20 000-30 000 unregistered associations/CSOs in Finland (Seppo, 2012, pp. 9). A common trait of Nordic associations is close and hierarchical relations between the umbrella organizations and their local organizations (Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 18; Helander & Laaksonen, 1999, pp. 33). There are national ethnic associations, such as *the Finish Russian speaking confederation (FARO ry)*, and municipal level umbrella organizations, such as e.g. *Moniheli* in Helsinki or *Wari* in Jyväskylä (Laitinen, 2012, pp. 9, 11). The belonging of local organizations to central organizations has however been declining (Siisiäinen, 2003, pp. 20). Another basic character of the Finnish third sector is that it has traditionally been divided into Finnish and Swedish associations, the two official languages of Finland (Saukkonen, 2013, pp. 11).

In overview of CSOs, local level organizations from Jyväskylä and national level organizations that function in the field of MRA integration are listed. The inventory indicates that integration related support is largely organized by local level organizations but that also large national umbrella organizations have an important role. When we compare this list of local organizations to the one made by Seppänen in 2010 we note that many of the local level organizations in Jyväskylä remain the same. However, many organizations have also been taken off the list since information about them could not be found anymore. The inventory also indicates that the so-called migration crisis has not significantly affected the establishment of new CSOs focusing on MRA issues. It seems that existing CSOs have taken on new roles after the increase in arrival of asylum applicants since 2015.

Immigrants have been active in setting up their own associations, contributing to the diversification of the Finnish civil society (Pirkkalainen, 2018, pp. 26). The number of immigrant associations increased especially after the mid-1990s, with the increasing number of immigrants (Pyykkönen, 2007a, pp. 204). In the first half of the 1990s, immigrant associations were mostly not formally registered and thus they were not easy to interact with and beyond the reach of law and administrative practices (Pyykkönen, 2007a, pp. 211). According to estimates by the Finnish Government, there are c. 700-1000 organizations that are established

Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) operating in connection with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

by migrants (Finnish Government, 2015). The activity of migrant organizations however differs greatly according to locality and activity is high especially in areas where there are many migrants and the population is heterogeneous (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 50). A disproportionately high number of migrant organizations in Finland are established by refugees (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 286). Pyykkönen attributes this to the fact that refugees often come from areas in which culture and people's appearances are different from that of native Finns, which can often mean that also the feeling of otherness and foreignness in the host country are stronger (Pyykkönen, 2007c, pp. 72). Individuals coming from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Former Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Former Soviet union, Russia and Estonia have been especially active in setting up organizations (Pyykkönen, 2007c, pp. 72).

Most migrant organizations have integration related objectives and help their members integrate while maintaining their ethnic identity (Saksela-Bergholm, 2011, pp. 92). Participation in CSOs is promoted as a component of 'active citizenship,' through which participating MRAs can familiarize themselves with Finnish society (ETNO, 2008, pp. 9). According to Pyykkönen, migrant associations in Finland can be divided into nine categories: ethno cultural associations, multicultural associations, religious associations, women's associations, youth associations, sport associations, art associations, integration associations and coalition associations (Pyykkönen, 2007a, pp. 204). Ethnic associations organize activities mainly for their own ethnic community and their main objectives are often maintaining the cohesiveness of the ethnic community and its culture. Multicultural associations on the other hand target their activities to more than one cultural group. Often both migrants and natives participate in multicultural organizations. (Pyykkönen, 2007c, pp. 81, 88.) Pyykkönen notes that the number and significance of integration organizations has grown. Integration associations are not targeted toward the ethnicity or culture of migrants but instead aim to integrate migrants into the Finnish society, mainly focusing on social integration, through organizing social activities and creating social contacts. Although in the past these organizations have been less involved in labour market integration, in recent times they have become to be more involved in labour market integration (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 290). Compared to other types of organizations, organizations focusing on integration are more likely to be undertaken in cooperation with projects and partnerships with public officials (Pyykkönen, 2007c, pp. 107).

Common activities of migrant organizations include festivals, seminars, discussion events, cultural and sport activities, presentations, guidance services, media activities and making statements on behalf of the community. Migrant organizations are also more active than before in diaspora activities, business relations, trade, helping migrants set up their own businesses, networking activities and collaboration with public officials. Other common activities include info orientation sessions in the MRAs' own languages, and various visits organized in cooperation with public officials to public agencies (ETNO, 2008, pp. 10). Saksela-Bergholm (2011) divides the labour market integration activities of migrant organizations in Finland into three categories: informing migrants about labour conditions in Finland, educating migrants about the Finnish labour market and job-seeking/labour brokerage (Saksela-Bergholm, 2011). Most migrant organizations working on labour market integration focus on providing guidance in planning education and in conducting a job search. Contacting a workplace can be difficult for those lacking language skills. Because of this, some organizations assist migrant job seekers by calling workplaces on their behalf and setting up meetings (Saksela-Bergholm, 2011, pp. 90). Migrant established organizations that focus purely on labour issues are rare, so for migrant run CSOs that offer labour market integration support, this is generally only one activity among many. Besides participating actively in migrant organizations, migrants also

participate in organizations that are established by the majority Finnish population. Migrants that have been in Finland for a longer time are more strongly attached to social, political and cultural networks that are based on other than the common migration experiences and a common country of origin (Pyykkönen & Martikainen, 2013, pp. 288).

There is a large number of CSOs in Finland which are involved in supporting job search activities, and improving the employability of the unemployed. Since the 1990s, the third sector has been saddled with a growing number of expectations regarding reducing mass unemployment (Helander & Laaksonen, 1999). Each municipality or city tends to have its own CSOs related to unemployment and finding work. Besides local organizations, there are also national organizations working in this field, such as the *Työttömien Keskusjärjestö ry*, (Central Organization for the Unemployed). Most organizations that are formed around finding work and supporting unemployed individuals are established and run by native-born citizens. There are two types of Finnish- established and run unemployment and job-search CSOs: General support organizations that also include migrants in their activities, and smaller niche organization such as “Mothers in business ry” or “Piilo-osaajat ry” that have mainly attracted native-born citizens. The language barrier often prevents MRAs from participating in the niche organizations, since the activities, webpages and social media channels of these smaller organizations are generally only in Finnish. However, since the labour market position of migrants is generally poor compared to that of native born citizens, they often actively participate in general organizations that support the unemployed. The general organizations function locally and provide job-search support, help handling the social welfare system and promote the general wellbeing of the unemployed. Besides CSOs that are primarily established around unemployment, also other CSOs, both native and migrant established, that do not have unemployment related issues as their main focus, offer services and support activities for the unemployed and for the job-search. These are generally small-scale activities, organized locally as part of a fixed period projects.

4.4 Methods

For this national report, 40 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and 20 CSO representatives were interviewed. All the MRA interviews were done face-to-face in Jyväskylä or in Kuopio, which are small cities in central and eastern Finland, respectively. The questions were translated into languages of the interviewees by the research assistants who conducted the interviews, so that many of the interviews were conducted in the native language of the interviewees. The data collection process benefitted from having interviewers with a migrant background, whose help was used specially to find MRA interviewees. This greatly contributed to our ability to reach migrants with a wide variety of backgrounds, as well as increasing the quality of the interviewees’ responses. Having interviewers with migrant backgrounds likely also contributed to the willingness of interviewees to participate and to the trust-building between interviewer and interviewees.

Most of the MRA interviewees arrived in Finland in 2014 or later. Most interviewees have thus already lived in Finland for several years and taken part in the official integration training. A few of the interviewees had arrived very recently. Moreover, we tried to interview mainly migrants who had at least some experience with CSOs in Finland. This turned out to be difficult, since during the interviewing process, it became apparent that many MRAs have little

experience with CSOs. These interviews were nonetheless also included in the analysis since it was important to find out why many migrants in Finland do not participate actively in CSOs.

MRAs from 15 different nationalities (Russia, China, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nepal, Iraq, Columbia, Syria, Pakistan and Iran) were interviewed. Individuals with a Russian background are the most populous migrant group in Finland and therefore more interviews were done among this group than the other migrant groups. The first idea was to interview migrants from the ten largest migrant groups in Finland, but due to the difficulty reaching enough of these migrants of other nationalities were also included. The reasons for migration to Finland, among the interviewees, are diverse: 14 have come as asylum seekers, 11 through family reunification, 5 through marriage to Finnish person and 7 as students. Some of the Russian interviewees came to Finland because of Finnish family roots.

The interviewees were all between 20 and 55 years old. Most were either students or unemployed. This is related to Finnish integration policy, which tends to steer people towards re-education rather than recognizing previous skills and qualifications (see Finnish report for SIRIUS work package 3 for more on this). Very few of the interviewees were working in the field in which they have received their education in their country of origin, despite most having a higher education degree from their country of origin. Of those that had work experience in Finland, most of it was in internships and work trials, rather than regular employment. Many interviewees noted that after finishing their current educational program they would like to either continue their studies or find permanent employment.

The CSO interviews were conducted in Jyväskylä and in Helsinki. Local level organizations that organize activities for migrants regarding labour market integration were targeted. Also, national level organizations working in the field were interviewed, mostly in Helsinki. The representative to be interviewed from each CSO was selected based on their role in the organization and especially their involvement in MRA and labour market integration related activities. Both migrant established and led as well as native led organizations were interviewed. CSO representative interviewees were mainly reached through email and the interviews were mostly conducted in Finnish.

Both the CSO and MRA interviews were transcribed and coded. Direct quotations from interviews are used in the analysis to preserve the interviewees' voices and to justify the analytical points we make. All quotes are direct quotes, although major grammatical mistakes are fixed and repetition words reduced. Clarifications by the authors are in [brackets]. "– –" stands for a section of interview being left out, which is done in order to shorten the quotations in such a way that they only bring out the essential.

4.5 How Do CSOs React to MRAs' Needs

4.5.1 Labour Market Integration Support Offered by CSOs

All the CSOs we interviewed were somehow involved in the labour market integration of MRAs, since this was one of the selection criteria. However, for most of the interviewed organizations, **labour market integration related activities are not their main focus** area. Instead, labour market integration related activities are often only one of many other activities that CSOs organize for MRAs. Others common areas of activity include social integration, cultural integration and housing. This finding is verified by the inventory and categorization of CSOs

done for this work package, which e.g. illustrates that there are not that many organizations that focus purely on the labour market integration, although there are a few CSOs that have labour market integration as their main focus. Among the CSOs that were interviewed, labour market integration activities were generally offered to small groups (c. 5–30) of migrants as fixed-period projects. Many of the CSO representatives interviewed noted that the **significance and quantity of their labour market integration related activities has been growing**. Several reasons are given for this, which mainly have to do with the importance that labour market integration is understood to have in the overall integration of migrants.

“Although employment related activities are not our main objective, but because employment is such an important part of people’s lives and especially for migrant’s employment, it is in my opinion the best way of integrating.” (6_CS0_FI)

The CSO representatives interviewed note that there are several issues in which MRAs need help regarding labour market integration, such as a lack of knowledge about the labour market, a lack of knowledge of Finnish working life and culture, a lack of networks, a lack of language skills and a lack of the certificates and degrees which Finnish employer demand. To overcome these barriers the CSOs interviewed organize a variety of activities. Although the practical details differ, CSOs tend to **organize activities that are broadly similar**.

“Although, many organizations do similar kind of work and respond to same needs, that is not a problem since there is so much demand for these.” (17_CS0_FI)

Most of the activities are organized locally on a small scale. However, the few CSOs that focus solely on the labour market integration of migrants have a wider assortment of labour market related activities, and also offer specifically labour market related support to a larger target audience. **Several commonly organized activities can be identified:**

- Helping write CVs
- Helping prepare for job interviews
- Contacting employers on behalf of the migrant
- Matching employers and employees, job brokerage
- Help in applying for various wage³⁶, work and study related subsidies and benefits
- Helping with bureaucratic demands such as applying for tax numbers and social security
- Assistance in having foreign qualifications and skills recognized
- Helping migrants acquire needed qualifications such as e.g. hygiene passport and occupation safety cards by e.g. paying and/or organizing needed courses
- Help with setting up their own business (theoretical knowledge + helping with testing idea)
- Assisting with networking
- Helping with adjusting to the workplace (support for both employees and employers)
- Providing information about Finnish working life, labour market, labour legislation etc.

³⁶ Wage subsidies are a part of Finnish employment policy. In practice they mean pay subsidies offered by the employment office to employers, the purpose of which is to advance the employment of jobseekers on the open labour market.

- Facilitating and helping with finding internships and short-term work trials
- Mentoring (Both individual and group, usually native person mentoring MRAs)
- Organizing visits to companies
- Training (individual and classroom setting)
- Offering internships and work trials at the CSO.

One central fact mentioned by many of the representatives is that migrants are often not familiar with the Finnish labour market and working life. Migrants thus need help **finding information and learning about work practices**. Several interviewees also noted that migrants need help in “opening doors”. Also, the various bureaucratic regulations that regulate work and the labour market in Finland are seen as difficult for migrants to comprehend. Thus, help is offered in taxation issues, bank account related issues and social security issues. In Finland, there are various state benefits offered to enhance the employment prospects of long term unemployed. However, the application forms for these can be difficult to comprehend, especially in a foreign language. The CSOs help migrants to figure out what wage subsidies, work trials opportunities and studying subsidies they should apply for, and how to apply for them.

“In different cultures working life is different. It takes a lot of know-how and people that can help and open doors for them to get one’s foot in the door - -.” (4_CS0_FI)

“We go over all the basic information in the migrants own language about Finnish working life: what are the responsibilities of the employer, what are the responsibilities of the employee, what is Finnish working culture like, why you need to be on time, what your contract should state, how salary is paid and generally how to behave in the work place.” (7_CS0_FI)

Many CSOs working with MRAs offer support with language learning, and the CSO interviewees often identified acquiring **language skills** as a first step for getting employment. In fact, some of the CSO representatives described that sometimes it is useful for them to be in contact with the employers, instead of the migrants themselves, when setting up interviews or discussing work assignments.

Language deficits combined with cultural differences may also make it difficult for the job seekers to **produce suitable CVs**. Many of the CSO representatives noted that their organizations are involved in organizing activities related to this. For example, CSOs organize CV workshops, but some interviewees also noted that they helped migrants personally write their CV or even wrote them in their behalf. Practical help is also given in learning how to use computers, setting up an email and using the social service system online.

“We constantly have CV-workshops and writing of applications going on. Sometimes we practice interviews, in other words answering the general questions that are asked when someone goes to a job interview and how to prepare for the interview.” (6_CS0_FI)

“Sometimes we do have to do quite a lot of things on their behalf. I have even had to write a CV on the behalf of someone who dictated it to me and then I wrote it. This is how it often goes in career counselling, even though it should not go this way. But it is just a necessity if the person does not know how to write.” (4_CS0_FI)

Several of the organizations have **labour brokerage** activities in which they help companies find suitable employees and migrants find employment. This activity is organized especially by those CSOs that have employment related issues as their main activity. Some of the CSOs

also have an emphasis on helping MRAs set up their own businesses. They provide information and support in this.

“Therefore, being an entrepreneur myself, we direct them to right areas, networks and people. We help them to buy a new business or open their own.” (15_CSO_FI)

“Different people who are interested in starting their own business share their difficulties, challenges and ask for advice. Everyone was supposed to share their own business ideas and the counsellor makes us aware about how businesses are run in Finland.” (29_MRA_FI)

The help that CSOs offer does not stop when migrants become employed. Several of the CSOs interviewed, bring up that it is important to **continue supporting both the employee as well as the employers after the migrant start working**. In practice this means that some of the CSOs offer various support services to employers and employees to ease the integration of (new) migrant employees into the workplace. For the employers this can include information sessions about how to handle and mitigate cultural differences and how to continue supporting language learning. For the employee this can include help with signing employment contracts and offering information about how to integrate into a specific workplace. Besides finding employment opportunities and easing integration into the workplace, many of the CSOs **offer internship and work trial positions** within their own organization. In most of the interviewed CSOs, there are at least a couple of interns working constantly. According to the interviewees, offering internship opportunities is an important service, which can help migrants to familiarize themselves with Finnish working life.

“We have this kind of database from which we look for those suitable employees. When companies are in contact with us and they have certain requirements, we can find the people through this data system.” (7_CSO_FI)

“We offer support when people go to their new employment, for the company on how to integrate them and if there are some issues we solve them together. We in a way soften the entry into the labour market.” (9_CSO_FI)

“We help women find work and internships and work practices. Many women have first been in our Finnish language classes and after that they come work for us as interns and then through the wage subsidy programme.” (1_CSO_FI)

Based on the interviews, it seems that working as **service providers/contractors on behalf of public organizations** is not common for CSOs working on MRA issues. Only a couple of the CSOs interviewed have a role in public service provision, generally overseen by the TE-office. Some of the CSOs mentioned however, that this is something that they might be interested in, in the future. Some of the CSOs brought up that in their integration work they have come up with good practices regarding integration, which should be mainstreamed and taken into use on a larger national scale.

Almost all of the labour market integration services offered by CSOs to MRAs are free of charge for the MRAs. For specific regulated courses such as for the hygiene pass or work safety card, CSOs charge a small fee.

4.5.2 Target Groups of CSO Labour Market Services

The CSOs labour market activities generally have a **wide target group**, often including all migrants that need the services. Those CSOs receiving municipal funding mainly target residents of their own municipal area. Some CSOs provide services especially **targeted at**

individuals who have already been through the official integration programme and who need further services, or those who are not yet in the official program, such as **asylum seekers**. Several CSO representatives noted that since the official integration training programs only last up to 3 years (which can be extended to 5 years, for various reasons), this time is not always sufficient enough for everyone to integrate and find work, which is why the CSOs offer additional help and support. Those organizations focusing especially on helping those asylum seekers that are not yet part of the official integration support programs emphasize that integration is important from “day one” and that it is problematic that asylum seekers are not eligible for official integration services. Some of the migrant led ethnic organizations interviewed noted that due to cultural factors and language issues they mainly offer services to MRAs from their own country of origin.

Besides asylum seekers and those who are no longer part of the official integration training, also **NEET (Not in employment, education and training) young** persons are a special target group of certain CSOs. Since the majority of migrants are young, services that suit their needs are regarded by CSO staff as particularly important. Youngsters are more active participants in CSO activities, but they are mainly interested in activities involving their peers.

The **special needs of women** in integration are recognized by CSOs. Many of the interviewed CSOs offer tailored services for women, such as language courses only meant for women. Courses also are offered to which women can take their children with them. In some cases, childcare services are offered for the duration of the language classes or labour market information sessions. Sometimes home visits are also organized. One interviewee noted, that compared to men, women more often need help finding part time work opportunities.

“We have Finnish language teaching for stay at home mothers once a week with the mentality of take your baby with you.” (3_CS0_FI)

“Sometimes women have the need for an own group. There may be subjects that they want to discuss only among women or due to cultural or religious customs it may not be meaningful to participate in mixed groups.” (5_CS0_FI)

4.5.3 Effects of Post-2014 Increase of Asylum Seekers on CSO Work

Most of the CSOs reported that the sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers since 2014/2015 has affected their work. Many of the organizations, especially those working explicitly with asylum seekers and running asylum reception centres, had to **adapt to a growing number of customers**. For some CSOs this caused positive changes, since also the number of donations and volunteers grew rapidly. The organizations were strained in figuring out how to most effectively put all their resources to use.

Besides practical organizational challenges, many of the interviewees noted that the **atmosphere regarding MRA issues has become tenser** and xenophobia has become more visible in society after the increase in asylum applicants. Some also note that the political climate and especially the nationalistic True Finns party have contributed to this. In practical terms, the increase in xenophobia has affected the work of the CSOs in several ways: it has made fund raising more difficult, security has had to be tightened at events, and there has also been more negative public feedback in the form of, for example angry phone calls, angry messages and negative social media comments.

"It actually does not matter what we say publicly on social media, we get a least one troll commenting negatively. It is so mundane to us that we do not even register it that strongly anymore." (9_CS0_FI)

The tightening of the general atmosphere in society, is also related to **legal changes** made in recent years, regarding the abolishing of humanitarian based protection and tightening of family reunification regulations. These tightening legislative restrictions are according to some of the interviewees making it harder for MRA advocacy organizations to reach their goals.

"A challenge is that the whole atmosphere is getting worse. It concerns all of us and our members. And because there are many undocumented migrants and they constantly come to our office asking for help and we cannot do much. That is a bit challenging." (6_CS0_FI)

"The political atmosphere affects us, in the way that our prerequisites for operation or receptiveness for constructive solution has been weaker during the last government." (9_CS0_FI)

All of the interviewed organizations emphasize that they are politically non-aligned. Notwithstanding, most of the interviewees reported that their organizations **do try to affect political outcomes and influence the public debated** regarding MRA issues. The CSOs interviewed advocate for the rights of their interest groups, which are in this case mainly MRAs. They do this by speaking out about issues that matter to them in social media and through press releases, drafting and signing petitions, by lobbying political decision making, by giving statements and by acting as advising entities on boards and committees. The interviewed organizations have advocated on following issues: family reunification regulations, the right of refugees to work, changing the conditions of forced return of asylum seekers, integration services, asylum reception conditions, the unemployment sanctioning activation model³⁷, as well as promoting the adoption of anti-discrimination and anti-racism policies and legislation.

"We do not really try to affect political decisions but we do speak out when we see grievances." (5_CS0_FI)

"Our mission is to act as guardian of interests. We are a migrant organization and constantly when migrants are being discussed, what they do and what crimes they do and all this pertains us directly and then we have to take part in the discussion." (6_CS0_FI)

Some of the interviewees complained that third sector innovations in best practices in labour market integration measures are very seldom adopted by the official integration services. This means that once a third sector project ends, the results disappear and new projects have to start from the beginning. A couple of interviewees especially were very critical about the lack of interest from municipalities to capitalize on good practices developed during projects. Some noted that there should be special separate funds to enable the continuation and institutionalization of good practices.

"The municipality does not commit to such cooperation which would take root in their practices, although projects specifically develop activities for cities and municipalities." (13_CS0_FI)

"How to enable the continuation of our great results and good practices is a huge challenge, especially for small organizations that do not have constant funding." (17_CS0_FI)

³⁷ According to the activation model adapted since January 2018, unemployed persons can lose a part of their unemployment benefit if they do not meet the set requirements for actively applying for work.

Many of the CSO representatives brought up that since much of their funding is project based, they can only plan activities for a set period of time and that there is thus always an uncertainty about continuity. Similar challenges have also been noted in the research literature (see e.g. ETNO 2008, pp. 11). According to Lautiola (2013), especially the activities organized by CSOs that have to do with maintaining a migrant's own language and culture are at risk of being left without funding (Lautiola, 2013, pp. 61). Based on the interviews it seems that public funding has a significant enabling role for integration activities organized by CSOs. Only one of the interviewed CSOs had significant private sector funding in the form of donations and pro-bono work.

"We receive funding but it is not permanent and it changes from project to project and that is a challenge that we do not have permanent services to offer - -. Projects and employees come and go and then we start again from the beginning - -." (4_CS0_FI)

4.5.4 CSO Channels for Reaching MRAs

The CSOs interviewed have at times had challenges reaching target audiences and participants. Some of the CSOs noted that recently it has been more difficult than before to get people involved in employment related activities. Some organizations would thus have more capacity to involve people that what they are currently doing. CSOs use various channels to reach their audience, participants, volunteers and customers. The use of channels varies according to the aim.

Central channels in reaching MRAs include:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| • Word of mouth | • Email lists |
| • City/municipality/TE-office contacts | • Phoning/ "Cold calling" |
| • Key contact persons | • Webpages |
| • Other CSOs | • Networks of people |
| • Schools and education facilities | • working/volunteering in CSO |
| • Social media channels (Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook) | • Asylum seeker reception centres |
| | • Printed paper leaflet |

The interviewees note that to reach their target audience they generally have to use various channels simultaneously. An especially important channel to reach MRAs is other migrants through **word of mouth**. Successful practices in labour market integration function as important advertisements. Several of the CSOs interviewed also have an employee whose responsibility it is to take care of publicity and communication. Migrants may not always be willing to become official members of an organization due to their prejudices or fears about participation in association activity (Ekholm, 2015, pp. 45). As one of the CSO representatives brought up, Finns are generally very active in the third sector. Migrants however have more challenges with this, since they may not have experience of participating in CSOs in their country of origin, due to there not being an active third sector or due to participation being illegal or dangerous.

"If we find a key person from a migrants organization such as e.g. the chair of the organization who can help spread word." (3_CS0_FI)

“The best marketing mean is that someone is satisfied and tells her/his friends that this kind of activity exists.” (3_CS0_FI)

“We have many followers and for media we have an employee who does not do anything else besides constantly updates, and through this we get a lot of publicity, also with native Finns, public officials and the ethnic community.” (6_CS0_FI)

The CSO representatives note, that **some groups are more difficult to reach** than others. Language is a central barrier for those CSOs not based in a specific ethnic group/nationality. If the migrant does not yet speak Finnish, it may be difficult for mainly Finnish speaking organizations to reach them. Moreover, those migrants who have come to Finland as partners, and who are stay at home parents (generally mothers) can be difficult to reach. Also, those individuals who have not found employment but who also are no longer part of the official integration programme due to having been in Finland for over three years can be difficult to reach.

“How do we reach those people who are just at home?” (9_CS0_FI)

Almost all of the CSOs interviewed, both those established by migrants as well as those established by natives, **employ migrants**. Many of the CSO representatives interviewed were in fact migrants themselves. Many of the interviewees noted that people with a migrant background bring important added value to the work, especially the cultural knowledge, language skills and networks of migrant employees which are seen as important for the work of CSOs. In addition, the experience that migrants have regarding the migration process and in some cases the asylum application process is valued. In many of the CSOs, migrants also participate as **volunteers** in e.g. language teaching and mentoring. A majority of interviewees noted that volunteers have an important role in their organizations. Those with a migrant background as well as native born citizens participate as volunteers.

“Because in our work we need that people can speak several languages and also the cultural knowledge is pretty important. It is a kind of knowhow advantage in this work.” (9_CS0_FI)

“Often it is also easier for migrants, when they have some problem, for example with their salary, to call our coordinator who speaks the same language and ask for help in figuring it out, than to call his/her boss and try to explain.” (7_CS0_FI)

All of the interviewees emphasise the **importance of cooperation**. Most commonly CSOs cooperate with other CSOs and with public officials such as the municipality and the TE-office. These partners are for some CSOs also important **contacts for reaching MRAs**. Officials also guide migrants to CSOs for additional services. Although some of the interviewed organizations also have very strong ties with the private sector, this type of cooperation is less frequent among the CSOs interviewed. Some of the CSOs also have cooperation with labour unions and they e.g. help them find employees for the sectors that they represent.

“We reach a lot of people through the public service system, in other words for example through social services we get a lot of support request.” (9_CS0_FI)

“It is emblematic for organizations or voluntary work in general, that competition specifically is intendedly averted because the goals are something that are common good.” (5_CS0_FI)

“We cooperate closely and share information and invite them here as experts sometimes and if we have concerns or a problem concerning the community then we invite officials here and visit their offices.” (4_CS0_FI)

4.6 What Do MRAs Get and Seek from CSOs?

4.6.1 MRA Participation & Experiences in CSOs

Most of the MRA interviewees participated in CSOs activities during their stay in Finland, but for many this participation was infrequent. Many of the interviewees assumed initially that only volunteering or working in a CSO counted as “participation.” However, once we explained to them that participation in CSO activities, or receiving services from CSOs also counts as participation, many reported interacting with CSOs for various reasons. Most often the interviewees took part in activities organized by local multicultural centres, or by organizations representing their own ethnic group. Russian interviewees were particularly active in Russian organizations. However, interviewees also reported taking part in a variety of different types of CSO, such as student organizations, sports organizations and cultural organizations. Some of the interviewees also reported volunteering at or even working for CSOs.

“Well, not really any kind of particular organizations. I have been to Gloria [a multicultural centre] sometimes. I have attended some kinds of immigrant's programs there. But not really into any specific NGO's.” (12_CS0_FI)

“Yes! Aha! Yes! Hmm maybe I understood wrongly. I visited Gloria Multicultural centre twice or many times. There they help people.” (6_CS0_FI)

Reasons for not participating actively in CSOs include, for example, living far away in the countryside where there are no activities, not having enough time after work, language barriers and not knowing about the CSOs and their activities. Some interviewees also noted that they did not know that there are CSOs in Finland in which they could participate.

“I cannot say, that I am an active member of civil society organizations, as I live in the country and do not drive a car, that's why my participation in the work of organizations, which are in the city is very restricted.” (2_CS0_FI)

“I want to volunteer myself in the Finnish Red cross as well in UNICEF, but I don't know, may be because of language barrier it has not been possible for me to communicate and discuss with them that I want to volunteer.” (11_CS0_FI)

“I did not participate, because I didn't know how to find these organizations, I just heard about that from you now for the first time and no one told me about them before.” (21_CS0_FI)

“I hope there is much more cooperation between social workers, the TE office and organisations. - - I heard there is much more than 30 organisations or more, but no one told us about that, and no one told us that we can go there, and we can have some help or something.” (30_CS0_FI)

The interviewees who reported participating in CSOs **found these CSOs** through a variety of channels. Some reported receiving information about CSOs and their activities during official integration training, from municipality employees and TE-office [public employment services] employees. Others on the other hand reported that the multicultural information centre, which is organized by a CSO, directed them towards finding other CSOs as well. Many interviewees also reported that they heard about CSOs from their acquaintances and friends. Also, teachers and schools have directed interviewees towards CSOs to e.g. enhance language skills and to receive support in studies. Moreover, many found information about the CSOs from the internet

and especially through social media channels. Some interviewees described that they had already looked into possible CSOs to contact in Finland, before their migration.

“Well, some acquaintances of mine told me about them and I found some information in the Net.” (3_MRA_FI)

“I had already knew about it before, in Vietnam, and when I came here, I thought that maybe I can join it.” (14_MRA_FI)

“When I was waiting for the Finnish course, social workers told me that there is the possibilities to visit there [the CSOs].” (6_MRA_FI)

Most of the interviewees expressed their interest in **participating in CSOs in the future** as well. Some also noted that they would like to volunteer in the future. After having done the interview, some MRAs noted that they could now also seek more help from CSOs regarding labour market integration, which they did not know to do before. In this sense, the interviews also had an informing role, which also confirms our finding that many MRAs are in fact not aware of CSO activities, especially related to employment.

“In the future, if I need to ask about school and job opportunities, I know where to go and ask for help when needed and see what they will offer.” (5_MRA_FI)

“Well, now I know to whom I can apply in case of necessity and, if I need, I can go and ask for help.” (16_MRA_FI)

4.6.2 MRA Participation in Labour Market Integration Related Activities Organized by CSOs

Most of the interviewees had **not received or sought support from CSOs in labour market related issues** such as support in the job search. Many of the migrants were not aware that CSOs could help them in finding employment. Some reported that they had sought assistance but were not able to use it because of language barriers, or not finding the right person to contact. Overall the MRAs who were interviewed did not regard the role of CSOs in labour market integration as important when compared to the role of other stakeholders such as government employment services.

“When I went to X organization to apply for a safety card ³⁸—, they told us they will inform us in a few weeks, but they did not inform me. I thought I can join them, there is some exam and a few hours, then I can get this card, but they didn't really reply to me.” (19_MRA_FI)

“Not yet. An acquaintance of mine gave me a list of the e-mail addresses of organizations, which are supposed to help in search of work and, when I finished the professional college, I send them my CV and filled an application form but got no answers.” (16_MRA_FI)

³⁸ The Occupational Safety Card training provides basic information about the dangers within a working environment and occupational health and safety in shared workplaces. An occupational Safety card is granted to persons who successfully complete the training. The personal card is valid for five years. (The Centre for Occupational Safety, 2019)

“No, no. I have never been in that. I have never gotten any opportunities. When I go to the website there are different opportunities offered in Finnish. But as I said earlier, as long as you can't understand Finnish it is difficult.” (11_MRA_FI)

“But I have been part of these counselling and trainings and workshops which are designed to help people find work on the other side. I mean I have been part of arranging these rather than receiving those services.” (32_MRA_FI)

In general, **this reflects the system in Finland**, which puts officials, mainly at TE-offices, in charge of labour market integration of migrants. All unemployed migrants, irrespective of whether they have come to Finland as refugees, through family reunification or as economic migrants originally, have the right to participate in integration training organized by either the TE-office or by the municipality for up to 3-5 years after their arrival. Integration training at the TE-office is mainly organized as active labour market policies and thus migrants have little need to turn to CSOs for support in labour market integration. The activities organized by CSOs are often supplementary services targeted at those no longer participating in integration programmes or who are not yet eligible for it, such as asylum seekers. When the interviewees were asked whether they had received any support in labour market integration from CSOs or organization many answered that they received help from the TE-office. **The division between third sector actors and official actors does thus not seem to be clear** for many migrants.

“I have used the TE-services. TE-office has helped me in many ways. For example, if I do not have anything to do, then I can talk freely with them, and they give really good suggestions.” (13_MRA_FI)

“I know that for finding a job in Finland, there are a lot of different firms, but I am not assured of their legal honesty – –.” (1_MRA_FI)

“But I didn't ask this kind of services from Matara [a local multicultural centre] concerning jobs. It is possible to receive necessary support from the Employment & Economic Development Office.” (6_MRA_FI)

Those interviewees that had received and sought **support from CSOs in labour market integration** reported that they had received help in things such as writing CVs, career planning and education related planning. Some also noted that in fact the language classes that CSOs organize can also help in labour market integration, since language skills are often an important prerequisite for finding employment. Some interviewees noted that they had also gained important work experience by participating in activities and projects organized by CSOs. Some interviewees described that CSOs had helped them find internship opportunities.

“They offer a lot of guidance. If you ask them something, they tell you some solutions and about the future: resumé writing, how you can learn Finnish, and how you can learn whatever you are interested in.” (9_MRA_FI)

“In the multicultural centre, I used a lot of classes there to learn Finnish; they have a variety of Finnish classes from speaking to writing, so it could help me find work in Finland where it is required to have good level of speaking in Finnish.” (15_MRA_FI)

“Then I told them I would like to be a doctor or something. Afterwards, they counselled me that if I am interested in that fields and eager to find a job much faster practical nurse might be a good option.” (26_MRA_FI)

"We emailed, when I needed a place for internship. I also know one woman, who works in Mosaiikki and she offered her help, when I just moved to Finland." (2_MRA_FI)

"But they [the CSOs] help how to fill an application, where to find information and open vacancies. But the challenge is that companies never respond to job applications." (6_MRA_FI)

"So, I feel that such organizations give an exposure to different things like how taxation works in Finland, labour market etc. I think such organizations are sources of information for someone like me who gets little exposure to Finnish society due to many varied reasons." (18_MRA_FI)

"At the NGO X they teach me a lot about working life, like activities, like how to make a CV, how to be in the interview, which pages we apply, where to look to information, how to look for jobs... So I get a lot of information" (20_MRA_FI)

Overall, however, most of our interviewees have not received or sought labour market integration help from CSOs. Instead the interviewees reported receiving help from the TE-office and **from acquaintances, friends and teachers**. However, some interviewees also describe that they value the information received from CSOs differently than the information they receive from friends. The information provided by CSOs is often considered more official and certain.

"It is usually done with the help of acquaintances. Once my teacher helped me and then other acquaintances did." (4_MRA_FI)

"Well, I tried to find a working place myself and failed. I went to the short-time courses for entrepreneurs in Gradia [a local vocational school]." (5_MRA_FI)

"No. If I have some things to ask, I ask my teachers and friends." (10_MRA_FI)

"I think the information I have gotten from organizations is much better than that from friends." (9_MRA_FI)

"But I think it is good if they support in the process of job searching and finding studies places. Organizations know better information than I know in this kind of processes." (8_MRA_FI)

4.6.3 Reasons for Participating and Additional Value Provided by CSOs

Many of the interviewees emphasised that in fact CSOs have helped them in various integration issues but not that much in issues related to labour market integration. The interviewees report that CSOs provide them information about Finnish culture, norms and legislation. Some of the interviewees also noted that CSOs provided them opportunities to participate when they had small children and due to this were not able to participate in official integration training.

"They didn't help me in the job searching process. It is only in the integration." (7_MRA_FI)

"Here I haven't participated in the activities related to finding work. But for integration there are some conferences, when I go to other cities and stay there for some days, where we can enjoy some cultural stuff like sauna and Finnish food." (14_MRA_FI)

"I learn Finnish language, culture, Finnish communities, Finnish laws and all things from them." (9_MRA_FI)

CSOs however have greater role in supporting Finnish **language** learning than in other aspects of integration. The interviewees noted that CSOs provide them opportunities to learn the

language in classroom settings as well as in unofficial settings by providing interaction between native citizens and migrants. Moreover, CSOs not only support Finnish language learning, but as some interviewees brought up, they can also have an important role in preserving the native language of the migrants and especially their children.

“When I came here, I started to learn even the way how to talk to Finnish people and what is the easiest way to open communications with them and to know more about Finland.” (19_MRA_FI)

“Many of them have been living in Finland since years, so we often end up practicing languages together. – – There were also some Finnish people, and there I got chance to use my language skills more than before. So, basically these activities help me in improving my language and getting to know more about Finnish culture.” (12_MRA_FI)

“But Phoenix [a local CSO] and Russian theatre on the contrary help to preserve our own Russian language. We are very grateful to the theatre, that our children have the opportunity to perform in Russian, they learn poems.” (3_MRA_FI)

“When my daughter began to answer in Finnish my questions in Russian language, I felt panic and understood, that when she grows, she will not be able to speak Russian properly, if we don't study Russian. For that reason we started visiting that club – –.” (5_MRA_FI)

Besides language learning, the interviewees also emphasise the role that CSOs have in **bringing together native citizens and migrants**. Many report that they have met and befriended Finns during CSO activities. Meeting people from different backgrounds and cultures is also noted by some as an advantage in CSO participation.

“And you can find friends, who wish to help and even meet with you out of classes in their free time.” (1_MRA_FI)

“I have Finnish friends, because I sing in the Finnish choir.” (4_MRA_FI)

“I have gotten advantages that government can't provide: Practicing language, meet people which could help you in the integration, and people from different countries.” (7_MRA_FI)

4.7 Finland: Conclusions

Based on analysis and especially the CSO representative interviews, we find that CSOs in Finland organize various types of labour market integration support. Both migrant established organizations and native established organizations have a role in this. There are however not that many migrant led CSOs that focus solely on labour market integration, and services related to this are thus generally offered as part of or alongside other activities and services. Common labour market integration related activities organized by CSOs include job seeking support such as CV writing and preparing for interviews, guidance, mentoring, and job brokerage in which employers looking for employees are matched with migrants looking for work. Many of the interviewed local CSOs offer these types of labour market integration activities locally and on a small scale. Although there is co-operation between CSOs, there is not much coordination, but rather each CSO offers those services that they are interested in and capable of offering. The lack of coordination can partly be explained by the weakening relationship that CSOs have with umbrella organizations. Most of the CSOs also offer internship opportunities within their organizations or help MRAs find internship opportunities elsewhere. Several CSO representatives emphasised the role that internships have in labour

market integration and offering internship opportunities is thus by many seen as an important service. We find that only a few of the interviewed CSOs have gone into bidding for contracts for public service provision.

However, the interviews with the MRAs illustrate that not that many have in fact used the labour market integration services offered by CSOs. Only a few of the interviewees reported having received support from CSOs in labour market integration and many in fact believed that CSOs couldn't help them that much in this. Those who received labour market integration related support from CSOs found the services useful and have trusted the information that they had gained more than the information from friends and acquaintances. Based on the interviews, it seems however that migrants regard official integration programs as the primary source of labour market integration support. In addition, acquaintances and education institutions are found to be central channels for receiving information and support in labour market integration. While we find in the interviews that CSOs offer various services and are interested in supporting labour market integration, many migrants still do not seem to be aware of these services or have experience with them.

However, there is no reason to believe that there is a bias in the interviewing towards those that just do not happen to participate in labour market related activities organized by CSOs. In fact, the focus on the MRA interviews was especially on those that have at least some kind of experience with CSOs. The analysis illustrates that there seem to be those that are very active in CSOs and that also at times have received help from them in labour market integration and that on the other hand there is the majority that participate in CSOs infrequently and have not sought support in labour market integration from CSOs. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that labour market integration support is something that has only recently become an important part of CSOs' activities. Many of the CSO interviewees bring up that they have only in recent years started to expand their labour market related support activities.

The capacity of local CSOs to provide labour market support to MRAs is limited by the short-term nature of their project funding, which also likely contributes to the migrants viewing government authorities and personal networks as more important. Although the target audiences of CSO labour market activities have been quite wide and almost anyone asking for help can get it, in practice most activities are organized independently and on a small scale. The labour market integration services offered by CSOs have generally not been stable and continuing, due to short term funding and the difficulty of rooting well-established practices. Specific projects offered by CSOs regarding labour market integration generally last a couple of years, after which the services are no longer available but instead new projects are established that often start from scratch.

The activities of CSOs specifically focused on labour market integration services are, when compared to others, offered to larger target groups, and have a greater overall impact. However, CSOs with highly specific target groups, such as asylum seekers who have not received their residence permits yet, serve an important niche role, in compensating for gaps in the official programs. Similarly, specialised CSOs labour market integration services can be important for other groups such as stay-at-home parents, usually women, who are not well-served by official integration services. Offering childcare services during labour market information sessions and language courses, for example, extends the participation to underserved groups. Although these services are already offered by some CSOs, the possibility to mainstream this type of support into all activities organized by CSOs should be further considered, by, for example, adopting successful practices into officially run programs. Some

CSO representatives also brought up the option of organizing home visits for those mothers who find it difficult to come to meetings due to various reasons. Although this type of activity is resource consuming it could more often be used as a tool to engage with those that are hard to reach and generally outside all integration services.

Besides offering practical labour market integration services, the CSOs are also found to have an important advocacy role. CSOs have an important role in promoting the interests of MRAs in the labour market through e.g. shaping policy outcomes and affecting the public debate. We find that recent changes in legislation (e.g. regarding family reunification), employment policy (such as the activity model) and shifts in the general societal/political climate have however made it more difficult for CSOs to advocate the interests of migrants.

Although many of the CSO interviewees report that the labour market situation for migrants has been improving, the unemployment percentage is still much higher among migrants than among native born citizens. The official services are thus not working effectively enough for everyone to find employment. Many CSOs are doing an important job supplementing these services. However, based on the interviews, it seems that there is need for even more activities by CSOs, so that more migrants could participate. Moreover, there also seems to be work to be done in informing migrants about the opportunities that are already available, since many of the interviewees were in fact sceptical about whether CSOs could help them in labour market integration. With thus recommend that CSOs should engage more in awareness raising activities regarding the services that they can offer.

Box 4: Examples of CSOs Good Practices in Finland

Job brokerage between unemployed migrants and employee seeking companies. This is done through e.g. job fairs, company meetings and the creation of job seeker databases.	"So, either we contact companies, or they contact us. Our recruiting works in such a way that we have done a mapping of skills with the job seekers and thus we have their information and when we receive as accurate as possible job descriptions from companies, what they are looking for, then we do a pre-recruiting through our system: We go through all the suitable jobseekers and call them. We check that they have all the required skills and qualifications for the job and then together with the company we set up a job interview. " (4.b.7)
Providing internship opportunities that offer MRA opportunities to get to experience Finnish working life and familiarize with different tasks. They are also important channel for MRA to gain work experience which is valued when applying for work. Besides internship opportunities also volunteering can offer	<p>"I think that in finding employment it is very central that first of all you understand society and know how to work and get work experience. No matter whether the work experience comes through volunteering, internships or something else like this in the beginning, it is very important to get experience how things are done. That kind of silent knowledge about how workplaces function and so..." (4.b.3)</p> <p>"I tried to look my best for somethings but as said earlier it was very difficult for me to apply for some kinds of jobs that I believe have qualities and skills due to language barriers. So, I tried my best to do some kinds of volunteer jobs (4.a.11)</p>

opportunities to gain work experience.	
Organizing information session and guidance session about the Finnish labour market and its customs, rules and norms.	<p>"It is a very bureaucratic country, very bureaucratic. It is not easy to overcome it as a migrant. You need to take of tax cards, the social security, living benefits and inform the TE-office. And now we have the activity model and you have to make sure whether you fulfil the activity requirements or not. There are a lot of things you need to figure out. And what kind of knowhow do I need to find work and which work suits me and in which sector I might find employment and which schools I should attend. These are all things we go over and figure out together." (4.b.4)</p> <p>"If you ask them something, they tell you some solutions and about the future: resume (CV) writing, how you can learn Finnish, and how you can learn whatever you are interested in." (4.a.9)</p>
Continuing support when MRA find employment by making sure e.g. that contracts are drawn legally, that employees rights are preserved, the MRA have the needed qualifications/courses, that MRA know the basic rules and norms of working life and that there are no cultural clashed in the workplace.	<p>"Actually after the recruitment decision has been made, our biggest job begins. One valuable thing that we do during our recruitment is that when the company has decided to hire a person we help that person and employer in all ways possible. For example if the person is missing his/her tax cars we go to the tax office and get it, if they do not have a bank account we arrange one and if the employer wants the work permit to be checked from the migration office before signing the contracts we take care of it on their behalf. And if the person is missing the hygiene pass or work safety card, we can at this stage have influence on attaining them, either through translating, helping with studying or by organizing the work safety or hygiene pass courses (4.b.7)</p>

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5 Greece

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5.1 Introduction

The 2015 refugee crisis marks a kind of turning point in the role of CSOs as service provider for migrant population in Greece. Although the increasing immigration flows of the 1990s led to the development of CSOs related in a direct or indirect way to migration, the refugee crisis has significantly affected CSOs and NGOs in particular in terms of the knowledge from technical assistance programs coming from International Organizations, of the closer connection between priorities and funding, of the variety of their activities and of the effective management of their increasing staff. In this context NGOs have been overseeing a majority of services such as the provision of language courses, skills development training and employability programs related to MRAs integration into the labour market. The focus is mainly concentrating on job searching techniques and curriculum vitae improvements rather than actually finding a job position for the persons of concern. This is probably because, NGOs cannot act as national employment services and furthermore, given the longstanding economic recession in Greece, employment opportunities are quite scarce not only for MRAs but for native population as well.

5.2 The Role of CSO Through Academic Lenses

In the scientific literature, it has been noted that the Greek civil society has characteristics of underdevelopment (Huliaras, 2016). The relatively low number of NGOs and the limited civic engagement as compared to other European countries seem to indicate a weak (normative-formal) civil society sector (Kalogeraki 2019). But on the other hand, it is considered that there is a vibrant non-normative civic engagement which can be seen as a sign of a very active (informal) civil society sector (Sotiropoulos 2004).

In general, there is little interest in the Greek academic community for issues related to Greek civil society. This is even more pronounced when it comes to more specific aspects, such as the role of CSOs in integrating MRAs into the Greek labour market. Therefore, the relevant analyses of scientific literature on such issues are relatively limited for the Greek case.

The role of civil society until the outbreak of the 2008 economic crisis was rarely analyzed by the academic literature, since Greek civil society had mild and atrophic characteristics (Sotiropoulos, 2004). On the other hand, social policy in Greece, during its short-lived upswing in the post-dictatorship period (1974-2009), failed to adequately incarnate its academic values. Over the years, an effective range of social services has been formed with strong characteristics of inequality through different professional and social groups (Venieris, 2013). The multiple inadequacies of the Greek social protection system were very often replaced by the informal solidarity of the family institution.

In this context, the role of CSOs and NGOs in migration issues and broadly in social policy, until the onset of the crisis, was not a prominent one. Their stronger involvement in the management of social problems has been observed since the 1990s (Arapoglou, 2004), a period during which the absence of state intervention in a number of vulnerable social groups, migrants included, has become more visible (Kourachanis, 2017). In addition, the late activation of public policy on the social integration of immigrants (Pavlou and Christopoulos, 2004) has shaped the need for collective interventions by civil society actors. The mass immigration influx into Greek territory during the 1990s was the basis for social integration initiatives by NGOs (Bagavos et al., 2006).

The emergence of the economic crisis leads to a serious worsening of social problems and, at the same time, the austerity measures bring about widespread cuts in social spending (Dimoulas and Kouzis, 2018). The deterioration of the welfare state leaves unwarranted gaps in the social protection system (Venieris, 2013) and at the same time weakens the effectiveness of social protection (Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013). Thus, the refugee crisis of 2015 takes place at a time when the Greek state cannot cope with multiplying social problems (Spyropoulou and Christopoulos, 2016). The combination of the economic downturn with the refugee crisis has led to activate a large spectrum of civil society in order to manage the humanitarian crisis (Chtouris and Miller, 2017). In addition, the refugee crisis has resulted in upgrade the role of NGOs (Sotiropoulos, 2017) in actions of social solidarity, education, employment promotion, etc. (Kourachanis, et al., 2018) and in increase in institutionalized and atypical civil society organizations seeking to meet the needs of asylum seekers and refugees (Kalogeraki, 2019).

The great amount of international and European funding that is being channeled to Greece has resulted in the significant development of existing NGOs and the creation of new targeted to migration management. The focus of their interventions in emergency situations is, by an overwhelming majority, the development of humanitarian actions (Kourachanis, 2018a). Because of the urgent necessity to meet humanitarian needs, both NGO actions and related scientific literature have largely addressed the humanitarian dimensions of MRAs (Skleparis and Armakolas, 2016; Gkionakis, 2016; Tzifakis et al. 2017). Despite the large-scale development of NGOs, particularly in terms of humanitarian support, migrant and refugee communities and organizations remain extremely weak. As a result, they are unable to adequately support their integration into the Greek labor market (Papadopoulos and Fratsea, 2017).

At the level of study of the issue of the role of CSOs for the integration of migrants in the labor market during the crisis in particular, the domestic scientific literature is extremely limited. A seminal study is the Kapsalis monograph (2018), which deals with labor relations and immigration policy at the time of the economic downturn. However, even this study is more concerned with the scientific analysis of public policy rather than the role of NGOs. In the context of asylum seekers and refugees, the scientific literature highlights the crucial role of fundamental dimensions for the social integration of refugees. Such dimensions are access to the labor market, health care and social services as well as education and training programs (Tsitselikis, 2018; Skleparis, 2018).

Financial constraints for the development of social actions other than humanitarian interventions are a serious obstacle to shaping a coherent range of social inclusion policies for asylum seekers and refugees from NGOs (Mascall, 2018). At the moment when state policy shapes a range of anti-social policies for asylum seekers (Kourachanis, 2018a), any margin

for the development of social integration policies lies with NGOs. Besides, this repressive refugee management functions as a preparatory phase for the allocation of refugees to low-status jobs.

It has emerged from various scientific studies that any MRAs social integration actions in Greece derive from NGOs. However, these studies suggest that the range of these interventions is extremely inadequate and focused at the local level. These are social interventions that take place on the territory of the NGOs. Such actions are particularly supportive to prepare for the integration of MRAs into the labour market, but cannot be considered adequate, without being framed by a central public policy strand (Kourachanis, 2018b).

Based on the above considerations, many NGOs offer courses of learning the Greek language to asylum seekers and refugees. Equally, many NGOs are transformed into a vehicle for the employment of asylum seekers and refugees as interpreters (Sarter and Karamanidou, 2018). The role of NGOs in supporting MRAs in health services (Gunsta et al., 2019), but also in conducting educational activities in camps (Kalpaki, 2018) is also important. However, there are important gaps in the literature on how NGOs seek to integrate MRAs into the labour market, the employment policies they are developing, and, above all, the quality of jobs that promote MRAs.

The absence of scientific studies on the integration of asylum seekers and refugees into the Greek labour market is a paradoxical finding. Its paradox is due to the fact that their social integration is strongly identified with entering the labour market. The following subsections analyse the role of NGOs in the labour integration of MRAs empirically, through interviews with the actors involved.

5.3 An Overview and Categorization of CSOs

It is quite evident that the 2015 refugee crisis marks a kind of turning point in the role of CSOs as service provider for migrant population. Although the increasing immigration flows of the 1990s led to the development of CSOs related in a direct or indirect way to migration, the refugee crisis has significantly affected CSOs in various ways. Given the unpreparedness of the public authorities to deal with the unprecedented refugee flows, CSOs and NGOs in particular, were invited, to some extent, to greatly contribute and respond to migrant's needs. This development led to increase the collaboration of national CSOs with international entities, which in turn has resulted in transferring knowledge from technical assistance programs coming from International Organizations, the European Union and international networks and organizations to national CSOs. It has also affected the priorities of the CSOs and NGOs in particular, since those priorities were more closely related to funding, coming mainly from the European Union. In addition, although refugee crisis did not necessarily affect the number of the new NGOs funded over that period, it has had an impact on the variety of their activities and on the number of the employed persons. All those developments have risen questions on what extent formal CSOs and NGOs activities in particular exclusively remain or not in the sphere of solidarity or tend to move towards market activities. In any case, it seems that in the first stage of refugee crisis, solidarity actions were provided by informal organizations, whereas after the closure of the Balkan route and the EU-Turkey deal, formal organizations became the main providers of services to refugees (Oikonomakis 2018).

One of the main features of CSOs is that they are mainly based in Attica, very likely because of the geographical concentration of migrant population and of public service availability. Activities conducted by CSOs (church organizations included) are related to humanitarian aid, human rights, human trafficking, legal and administrative assistance, advocacy work, accommodation and housing, dissemination and information, socio-economic integration and culture. In practice, mostly CSOs are trying to handle the governmental gap of a designed migration policy that focuses on the integration of MRAs. In this context CSOs and NGOs in particular have been overseeing a majority of services such as the provision of language courses, skills development training, and employability programs which are related to the integration of MRAs into the labour market.

CSOs are active in the area of language learning. Several formal and informal organizations such as Metadrassi, Steki Metanaston, Solidarity Now, Greek Council of Refugees, Generation 2.0, Arsis, Elix, are providing Greek language lessons whereas the later NGO is providing courses also of other European languages such as English, French and German. Unfortunately, given the limited role of public administration for providing language courses, the development of adults MRAs linguistic skills risk being a fragmented and therefore an ineffective process since, CSOs involvement in these activities is very often related to specific actions for a limited period of time. In fact, the role of the state was weak in this sector although more recently the state has taken initiatives in order to increase its impact. For example, in 2018 the Greek Secretary General on Immigration Policy announced that the Ministry of Migration Policy has designed in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, a comprehensive language programme for asylum seekers, immigrants, and refugees. However, the implementation of this program has been significantly delayed due to bureaucratic difficulties.

Various NGOs are providing Employability Programs such as the program “Employment enhancement and social services integration in Athens Municipality” implemented by the NGO PRAKSIS since 2016 or the Employability & Work Counselling Service at Solidarity Now’s Blue Refugee Center in the area of Thessaloniki or the program “Facilitating the access to the job market for vulnerable population in Athens” implemented by Generation 2.0 with the support of the International Rescue Committee. However, the focus is mainly concentrating on job searching techniques and curriculum vitae improvements rather than actually finding a job position for the person; NGOs cannot act as national employment services and furthermore, given the longstanding economic recession in Greece, employment opportunities are quite scarce not only for MRAs but for the native population as well.

Regarding skills development trainings, NGOs have been an important provider. They provide computer skill programs whereas public instruments such as OAED (National Employment Service Organisation) has done very little in this sector. In the context of a more united migration policy coming from the State and the promising function of the Community Centers (KENTRA KOINOTITAS): since February 2019, for example migrants and refugees can attend free computer classes at the Migrant Integration Centre (KEM) of the city of Athens with the support of UNHCR. As the Vice –Mayor for Migrants and Refugees stated “These classes aim to built skills and create professional opportunities for migrants and refugees and the support of UNHCR constitutes the culmination of our cooperation since the beginning of KEM’s operation”.³⁹

³⁹<https://www.unhcr.org/gr/en/11138-athens-migrant-integration-center-offers-free-computer-classes-for-refugees-and-migrants-with-the-support-of-unhcr.html>

In general, although NGOs are key actors in the provision of employability services, public offices are trying to establish a much more active role in this area. The initiative of Athens Coordination Centre for Migrants and Refugee issues is aiming to create a general coordinating instrument that will help the integration of migrants and refugees to the society and the maintenance of social cohesion. At Community Centers one can attend sessions of job counseling as well as other services such as Greek and English Language courses. Those initiatives are part of a more global effort towards the social integration of MRAs and therefore they are expected to be more effective than the fragmented actions undertaken by the NGOs.

The trend toward a greater involvement of public authorities in the socio-economic integration of MRAs is also reflected in the skills recognition activities. Although NGOs have played a significant role in actions related to skill records, skill validation remain a task that has to be carried out by public actors. In that respect, probably the most typical example is the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees aiming at assessing refugees' education level, work experience and language proficiency in absence of full documentation thanks to a tested methodology and a structured interview. Started in 2017 as a pilot project under the responsibility of the Council of Europe, it involves several national and international actors, and in particular the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. Although, NGOs are not fully involved in this action, they facilitate the process; candidates who do the interview on Skype need to get in contact with a UNHCR protection team or an NGO in their area that can verify their ID information⁴⁰.

Greece integration policy has been absent and fragmented. Civil society organizations have been overseeing the majority of the tasks, such as language courses and employability programs. The state has been reacting to the mass migration flows since 2015 in an emergency context leaving integration services aside. Since 2017 the need for a much more organized integration policy deriving from public actors has emerged. Municipalities with the newly established Community Centers are now coming at the centre of attention although there are much more that are needed to be done.

Box 5: Examples of CSOs Good Practices in Greece

The Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees (ACMR) functions as a coordination hub for the fruitful exchange of good practices and know-how between local and international NGOs, international organizations and municipal bodies on issues ranging from temporary accommodation to integration of newcomers. The Center aims mainly to encourage the development and implementation of innovative tools and initiatives which promote integration, while also liaising with potential donors for funding. The ACCMR has developed a Strategic Action Plan for the smooth integration of migrants and refugees. Importantly, ACCMR in collaboration with key stakeholders has produced the first Guide for the development of a 'Preparedness and Response Mechanism' for effective contingency planning in the event of refugee-related emergencies in Athens. The Center is liaising with other municipalities in order to exchange and transfer know-how and experience

Website: <https://www.accmr.gr/en/>

⁴⁰ <https://blog.refugee.info/european-qualifications-passport/>

Solidarity for All is an initiative created during the period of austerity to mitigate the consequences of the humanitarian crisis. It consists of citizens who mainly belong in the political area of the left. Solidarity for All concerns the provision of basic material support (clothing, food, medicine) or the transfer of know-how to build solidarity tools and infrastructures for other activists. Among the infrastructures it has built are social cooperative actions aimed at employing vulnerable groups. During the 'migration crisis', solidarity for all expanded its activities in support of refugees to improve their host conditions.

Website: <https://www.solidarity4all.gr>

5.4 Methods

Field research on CSOs was accomplished with qualitative research methods. The research was conducted in Athens, as it is the city that gathers the vast majority of civil society organizations operating nationwide or locally. Due to the fact that there is no strong activation of support actions for the employment integration of MRAs by civil society actors outside Athens, the research focused on the geographical boundaries of the capital of Greece. In particular, interviews based on WP4 CSOs interview guide were conducted on civil society actors developing social support actions for vulnerable groups in general or support actions to integrate vulnerable groups into the labor market or to organizations and groups involved in the social and employment integration of MRAs. Civil society organizations were selected on the basis of a) those mentioned as important by MRAs and b) the previous experience undertaken during WP3. Priority was given to central/key players and to representatives who have the competencies most relevant to labour market issues.

More specifically, 16 interviews were conducted: eight interviews were conducted with NGOs (four promoting social interventions for vulnerable social groups more widely and four targeting specifically MRAs). Four interviews were also conducted with solidarity initiatives on left-wing activists supporting MRAs. Finally, four interviews were conducted with social cooperatives developing employment actions for vulnerable social groups, including MRAs.

Previous experience undertaken during WP3 and pilot survey for the current WP have shown that migrants have an extremely limited experience with CSOs. Given that GSOs and NGOs in particular were mainly developing impressively in the refugee crisis, it has been decided to concentrate our research on recently arrived refugees or asylum seekers and to not engage with economic migrants. In this respect, 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted at the city of Athens since it is the place that a large number of refugees and asylum seekers are living and the main field of civil society organizations actions. Personal experience of refugees and asylum seekers with CSOs was the main criterion of selection. The interviewers have been reached through civil society organizations and through contacts and acquaintances. The large majority of interviewers are either asylum seekers or refugees. Seven of them are from Afghanistan, five of them are from Syria, three of them from Iran, two from Iraq, one from Pakistan and one from Chad. Regarding the gender, women are under-represented constituting a small portion of the sample, just two out of eighteen. This is explained by cultural as well as social factors such as the position of women in the society and their role at the family. Moreover single mothers are facing difficulties when it comes to attend integration programs as they do not have someone to take care of their children.

5.5 How do CSOs React to MRAs' Needs

The purpose of this section is to examine the role of civil society on integrating MRAs into the Greek labor market. This is being done through interviews with the main civil society actors involved in the labor market integration services of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Greece (mainly NGOs and collective solidarity initiatives).

It should be noted that there are fundamental differences in the philosophy of interventions of different civil society actors - which has an impact on the ways in which labor integration is sought for MRAs. For example, NGOs through interconnections and partnership agreements are primarily aimed at rooting the beneficiaries to private sector companies most of the time as unskilled workers. On the contrary, solidarity initiatives give emphasis in the development of a solidarity culture in a sense that they channel those who benefit from interventions into employment areas that promote social solidarity, such as the Social Cooperatives.

The refugee crisis has significantly affected the role of civil society organizations. Since 2010, Greek society has been experiencing a major economic crisis with extensive cutbacks in the social protection system and significant worsening of social problems (we have discussed this extensively under the Sirius WP3 report for Greece). Because of tough austerity measures, the Greek state cannot adequately respond to the social support needs of MRAs. Within a wider context of deregulation of the Greek labor market - with widespread unemployment affecting particularly young people - the prospect of developing targeted employment policies for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers seems impractical.

Refugee crisis led to bifurcation field of civil society with the difference, in terms of actions, service provision and scope of the intervention, between NGOs/CSOs on the one hand, and the informal solidarity movement on the other. In reality, informal solidarity movements and non-governmental organizations are being mobilized in different ways to support refugees. The focus of this activation is mainly the provision of humanitarian aid rather than the development of employment actions. The majority of NGOs are developing impressively in the refugee crisis because of at least two factors. The first is the EU-funding they receive for the implementation of social policy programs. The second is the high level of knowledge that transferred to CSOs/NGOs from technical assistance programs coming from International Organizations, the European Union and international networks and organizations. *“Our organization has grown impressively because of the refugee crisis. Indeed, our growth was so steep that at first we feared it would be uncontrollable. From 2015 until today, our organization has more than doubled its staff. Through the technical knowledge provided by the UNHCR and the EU, we have succeeded in evolving the context of our actions at very high levels”* (5_CSOGR).

On the contrary, solidarity movements with a left-wing political orientation attempt to support refugees with a different philosophy of intervention. On the one hand, they aim at providing better living conditions than those in the camps. On the other hand, they seek to highlight the EU's deadlocks and anti-social immigration policy by proposing an alternative model of living with the culture of solidarity. In the context of interventions of these groups there is a refusal to receive financial support from the EU, as they consider it to be responsible for the landscape of the economic and refugee crisis. *“The aim of our interventions is to point out that the EU's immigration policy violates human rights. We also want to propose alternative living standards,*

based on solidarity and mutual support. We do not want any institutional or informal relationship with actors choking people in the Aegean" (11_CSO_GR).

Through the interviews, at least two major controversies regarding the labor integration of refugees and asylum seekers are highlighted. The first concerns the unfavourable landscape created by the overall high unemployment rate which increased from 10% to 20% between 2009 and 2018. The second concerns the tendency for refugees and asylum seekers to be used as cheap and unskilled labour without taking into account the specific skills they may have.

On the first issue, high unemployment rates are a daunting factor for targeted job creation for MRAs since the priority is mainly given to the fight against the overall unemployment. Additionally, because of the economic downturn migrants' employability in sectors such as construction, retail, cleaning, private care and domestic services has been negatively affected. Regarding the second issue, NGO representatives' testimonies show that any prospects of their beneficiaries is related to jobs in cleaning, rural or unskilled jobs in the tourism sector. *"It is very difficult to find a job for an immigrant when there are so many unemployed Greeks. It is also difficult to manage this situation. Many unemployed people, when they see work finds refugees complaining. Poor management of this issue can lead to an increase in racism"* (Representative of an NGO, Interview 6). *"From our organization many beneficiaries have managed to find a job as employees either in cleaning shops or as workers in restaurants in tourist areas or in the agricultural sector. Also, many of them are working as interpreters"* (7_CSO_GR).

The beneficiaries of civil society organizations that we have interviewed are very often involved in the various activities of those organizations. In the case of NGOs, refugees and asylum seekers are only included in the implementation stage of their actions. They are used either as professional staff (interpreters, cultural mediators etc.) or as volunteers for approaching their co-nationals. However, they are not included in the consultation or decision-making processes, or in the planning of social interventions. *"Our organization has managed to transform a remarkable part of our beneficiaries as employees. They are mainly employed as interpreters and cultural mediators. They are generally channeled into the implementation of the actions. We would like some of them to be included in the planning of our programs, but they still do not have such skills"*. (8_CSO_GR).

By contrast, in solidarity initiatives of activist groups, refugees and asylum seekers are perceived as equal members of the community. Therefore, they participate equally in the discussions that take place in the shaping of their actions, as well as in their implementation. As a result, refugees and asylum seekers in these groups have the same employment prospects as the Greeks. *"For us, an immigrant or a refugee is the same as any other member of our initiative. Therefore, we participate equally in everything. And in the discussions we make to decide the next steps and their implementation"* (9_CSO_GR).

Differences are found in the ways in which NGOs and solidarity initiatives seek to achieve the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. On the one hand, NGOs adopt a model of active social policies based on established patterns of employment policies. Such ways are counselling, actions for the preparation of a CV and the preparation of the beneficiary for a job interview, information on employment services of the Greek state and private agencies which promote the employment, the creation of a business register wishing to recruit refugees and asylum seekers for employees (active matching), seminars on labour rights, as well as the organization of events and festivals promoting employment with the participation of employers

and the unemployed. *“Our organization does a lot of things for the employment of MRAs. We learn them to make a CV, prepare them for an interview, point out jobs to them. In general, we try to empower them to learn how to find a job on their own”* (1_CSO_GR).

On the other hand, solidarity initiatives develop employment opportunities in the field of the social and solidarity economy. In this area, social cooperatives become the main means of employment. These basic occupational activities are the areas of fundamental human needs such as nutrition and clothing. *“We are trying to guide our members to create solidarity cooperatives to meet basic human needs. Here workers are equal among them, without hierarchies. For example, they are making a cooperative that has the purpose of providing food without intermediaries. They go to some farmers and receive a small income in cash and also get agricultural products from their crops. Then they sell their agricultural products at low prices in the cities”* (13_CSO_GR).

The interviews show that for NGOs the dimension of funding is a key factor in prioritizing their actions. On the other hand, in the solidarity initiatives it seems to be the opposite case. In more detail, the priorities for NGO interventions appear to be fully linked to the funding outlook. Financial allocations derive primarily from funding from International and European Institutions, as well as from grants from publicly owned establishments and / or private enterprises. This is also a key reason why they are so involved in issues related to the refugee crisis. Characteristic is the extract from the organization mentioned below. *“Of course, funding plays an important role. We look to have a viable plan to intervene. So, financial tools are an important parameter for what kind of actions we will develop. These actions, of course, to be funded should be in line with the values of our organization”* (2_CSO_GR).

On the contrary, solidarity groups oppose the prospect of funding from the official institutions of the EU and the Greek state, as they consider them guilty of how to handle the refugee crisis. Funding channels for these organizations are citizens' sponsorships, as well as special financial contributions from groups abroad. In the solidarity group, it is often a matter of de-prioritizing funding. In other words, they first make decisions to prioritize their social actions and then seek to find an adequate funding. *“Our basic principle in funding is that we refuse to take money from those we are condemning. We cannot say that the EU and the neo-liberal actors are blaming for the crisis and then taking their money. Also, we first decide our plans and then we look at how we will finance them. Our financial resources come from contributions from solidarity citizens or from overseas solidarity organizations that have similar political action with us”* (10_CSO_GR).

The upgraded role of civil society in the management of the refugee crisis has had a significant impact on the assumption of public policy responsibilities. This is most evident in humanitarian interventions. The majority of social support actions for refugees are carried out by civil society. In the case of NGOs, it is implemented on the basis of the standards established by the International Organizations, the European Union, the Greek State, and the organizations themselves. In this context, during the implementation of the interventions financed, they make requests for partial modification on the basis of the specific aims of each organization. In the case of the solidarity groups, the interventions aim at opposing them in the policies of the EU and the Greek state, which they regard as inhumane. *“We strive to influence public debate and public policy decisions from the smaller to bigger. So it's more effective. We strive to have so much technical knowledge about every detail of the issue we want to change, so progressively it goes in our direction”* (3_CSO_GR). *“Our goal for citizens is to understand the*

inhumane EU policies in the refugee crisis. We do this through our support for our own refugees, as well as public protests or awareness-raising actions” (11_CSO_GR).

There is no particular impact from the knowledge-transfer of international and national organizations in the promotion of employment services. This is mainly due to the fact that so far the priority is on humanitarian interventions rather than employment services. Therefore, it can be commented that at the moment labour market issues have not been at the heart of the dialogue on social support for MRAs. As mentioned above, occasional events are organized with the involvement of employers to promote employment actions, but there is not the same pattern of alliances that exists in the humanitarian field.

The involvement of civil society organizations in public dialogues is a basic reason for their existence. Any intervention in the public debate aims to reinforce its ultimate goals. In the NGO dimension, this may stem from the purposes of its establishment (for example, humanitarian interventions or targeted actions for vulnerable groups such as refugees and asylum seekers). These interventions are usually intended to lead to ‘mild’ and reforming improvements to existing policies. Solidarity networks have a strong political orientation in their public interventions (for example, questioning sovereign policies and proposing an alternative example geared to their political ideology). Their attitude to public policies usually has features of conflict and overturning the existing framework.

5.6 What do MRAs Get and Seek (if They Do at All) from CSOs?

This part of the report focuses on refugees and asylum seekers’ views on the role of Civil Society Organizations for their integration in the labor market. Civil Society Organizations act in a context of fragmented or sometimes absent integration policy coming from public actors. To some extent, this is a controversial issue when bearing in mind that Greece is one of the main countries of entry for the new arrivals and has received a massive flow of refugees the last four years. One could think that a country with those characteristics should have developed several integration policy measures, although this is far from being a reality. Civil society organizations and NGOs in particular funded by European and International actors are the main and very often the only provider of integration services such as language courses, employment trainings, skills development trainings and counseling with emphasis in CV preparation and job search. Thus, the weak involvement of public employment services leads to disconnect provision of services from access to the labour market.

Another relevant aspect is that refugees and asylum seekers have greater experience with CSOs and NGOs than migrants entering the country before the refugee crisis. As already mentioned, the role of NGOs as service providers to refugees and asylum seekers is a quite recent phenomenon which couples with the onset of the refugee crisis.

Although refugees and asylum seekers have great aspirations in terms of the provision of services aiming to facilitate their integration in the labour market, they do not necessarily expect that the service provision come from CSOs. In reality, they are in contact with CSOs and with NGOs in particular, since the latter are the only provider of those services. Although NGOs are only one of the many forms that CSOs can take, they are the main entities mentioned in the interviews.

Refugees and asylum seekers have experience with CSOs through the provision of language courses. Thus, the majority of the interviewers have attended Greek language courses at an

NGO because they perceive language proficiency as an important factor when searching for work. However, many of them are underling the necessity of more intensive and better organized courses in a more formal way. *"They did English classes here (in Schisto Refugee Camp), I was lazy, maybe because they were taking us away, maybe because it was for 4-5 months to get the certificate and then ended. As for Greek courses they have...they put us 60 people in a living room I can't (2_MRA_GR). "...the classes that the NGOs provide it's only once or twice per week so is not helpful at all" (Interview 4). There are no places that give intensive courses, there is no process like a formal way to give the language to external and foreigner people...I found one school providing courses one hour per week so one hour per week for refugees what can I learn?" (12_MRA_GR). On the whole, interviewers consider that language lessons were too sparse, provided for a short period of time and often for a limited number of persons.*

The lack of any control on attending the language course and of professionalism in providing language courses are two relevant aspects raised by MRAs. It is worth noting that refugees and asylum seekers know how different the situation is in Greece as compared to other European countries having received refugee flows. *"If I say that it's their fault that I haven't learn will be a lie. Generally I was lazy and that's why I didn't do something...another bad thing was that we weren't obliged to attend at least an hour per day the courses, as the Germans and Austrians are doing. You have to give them some evidence that you attended the courses" (2_MRA_GR). "I believe that the Greek government has to put pressure to refugees and asylum seekers, for example in Germany if you do not go to a language course they do not give you money, services or benefits, but in Greece you know they are not professional they act like amateurs they give house, money...refugees and asylum seekers are just sleeping and eating...it is better for the Greek government to tell to the people if you want house you take diploma about language, if you want cash card you should find a job or rent a house, they have to put some rules" (11_MRA_GR). "Most of my friends are in Germany they take help for two or three years and the first thing to do is to learn the language, if they don't the government takes the money. If they do this here half of the problem will be solved" (14_MRA_GR).*

Refugees and asylum seekers are not satisfied by their experience from employability programs as well, probably because of a misinterpretation or misunderstanding about what role should or do NGOs and CSOs play in the Greek context. In any case they report the lack of skills recognition and qualification and of a follow-up of the various activities as major reasons of their dissatisfaction from employability programs. These programs are focusing on training the MRAs with skills, such as improvement techniques of curriculum vitae, usage of searching engines for job positions and skills recording that are considered as requirements to find a job. However, most interviewers found it useless because in the end it did not meet their expectations; in addition they mention the examples of other countries with more effective employability services. *"There were recordings from the NGOs to understand what a refugee's previous career has been...they made the recordings but nothing else happened" (Interview 3). "The first thing they do here and in other NGOs they help you make a CV and then send your CV to a few places but after that they don't search for something that may suit you better so it was unsuccessful... I just have to wait to call me. I came from Bulgaria there was no employment problem there. The employer used to come there used to employ people I never had a problem" (4_MRA_GR). "I visited so many NGOs but the only thing they can do is making the CVs and give us some websites which, if you are educated you can find them by yourself. But the problem is that for 6 months now and every day I send 20-25 CVs and I get*

no replay. By contrast, in Dubai the CV's are submitted to a recruitment agency and in maximum 2 weeks you get some result" (6_MRA_GR). "...there is no system for recognizing skills...for example the refugee may have some talents, some skills that we can use...you know they don't care they don't value them" (10_MRA_GR).

In the opposite, refugees and asylum seekers consider legal and administrative assistance derived from NGOs, in particular, very helpful – an aspect which greatly differentiates NGOs and generally CSOs from other stakeholders. This positive view refers to assistance for obtaining a Tax Identification Number or a Social Security Number, or for having a local bank account, which are prerequisites to find a job. *"...when you go to a NGOs or an organization they can do the bureaucracy work for you, they can help you with a lot of paperwork's" (5_MRA_GR). "I received an extraordinary amount of support from NGOs with all my papers and all my legal documents. I think I would have to run for 6 months to a year to do what they have done for me in the past 2 weeks, so they were super helpful. No matter how many CVs I send or how many interviews I go to, if I don't get the Tax Identification Number it's just worthless" (7_MRA_GR).*

Despite the significant role of CSOs as regards the skills records, the availability of job search offices and the counselling and language courses provided to refugees and asylum seekers, there was no response or action to find a job in many cases. By contrast, it is worth noting that many refugees and asylum seekers have found jobs through friends, contacts and a wider network of contacts they created. This is also the case for the largest majority of migrants (see SIRIUS Report for WP3 Greek case) for whom contacts with CSOs and NGOs are extremely rare. In particular for refugees and asylum seekers, the support and solidarity offered by CSOs employees in an informal way seems to be particularly important that in some cases even led to finding a job. *"We were trying with a friend to make voluntary shifts in the infirmary and now I see I did something good for my fellow man...the doctor trusted me to translate medical personal data so I got help and I learned the language on a good level" (1_MRA_GR). "I started to think about my future...then my responsible at the shelter where I was accommodated helped me...I spoke to her and I told her that I want to offer interpretation services as a volunteer...she spoke with her supervisor for me and they accepted my offer...I worked there as a volunteer for six months...then I met Giannis there and told me to go to work with him at Technodromos" (9_MRA_GR).*

Although CSOs made an extremely significant contribution to humanitarian aid provided to refugees, they did not appear as successful in meeting MRAs needs in terms of their integration in the labour market if we too refugees and asylum seekers themselves opinions; either because there were no expected results from the services provided either because the actions did not had a follow-up, either because, due to the fragmented funding, services were provided for a limited period of time or because CSOs and NGOs in particular were asking to fulfill the gap resulted from the absence of a clear integration policy coming from public actors and supporting from public administration. It is also probably related to the fact that, in some cases, refugees and asylum seekers, by perceiving CSOs and NGOs as employment services providers, have great expectations that ultimately are not met and lead to frustration. *"When you come and you talk to me about something that you see is a need, like a job, think before you talk to me because I get the hope that I will find a job" (2_MRA_GR).* By contrast, when the scope of the actions is clearly identified, it is very likely that the actions can be proportionate to MRAs expectations and therefore it can be successful. For example, this seems to be case of the Business for Youth program implemented by Solidarity Now which

aimed, in an indirect way, to help MRAs to find a job by providing knowledge about the labour market and opportunities for networking.

On the whole, the Greek reality on the integration of MRAs underlines the deficient role of the state and the constant attempt of the civil society organizations to cover this gap. However, integration services that are provided by CSOs and NGOs in particular are very often not validated – such as the language programs which do not lead to a validation of the level of knowledge – and are closely depended on funds availability. The current situation would require further public action which would act like enablers for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in labour market and in the longer term in the community.

5.7 Greece: Conclusions

The unprecedented migration inflows in Greece over the 1990s have been followed by the development of civil society organizations supporting migrants. Protecting rights, promoting social inclusion and providing support to an increasing, mostly irregular, number of migrants have been the main aims of civil society support. Later on and in particular since 2015 rise in refugee flows, civil society organizations have played a major role with respect to humanitarian aid and to the provision of social services to refugees, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. In addition, mostly CSOs and NGOs in particular, were trying to handle the governmental gap of a designed migration policy that focuses on the social integration of MRAs. In this context NGOs have been overseeing a majority of integration services such as the provision of language courses, skills development training and employability programs related to the integration of MRAs into the labour market. At the same time, the longstanding economic recession in Greece inevitably makes difficult the prospect for framing and developing policies on the integration of MRAs in the labour market. This difficulty is more evident for refugees and asylum seekers than for migrants who have a long time residence in Greece.

Legal and administrative assistance, protection of human rights and dissemination of information as provided by CSOs seem to be important enablers which facilitate MRAs' social and economic integration. However, despite the significant contribution of CSOs to humanitarian aid provided to refugees, it seems that they were not successful in meeting refugees and asylum seekers' needs in terms of their integration in the labour market; either because there were no expected results from the services provided either because the actions did not had a follow-up, either because, due to the fragmented funding, services were provided for a limited period of time or because CSOs and NGOs in particular were asking to fulfil the gap resulted from the absence of a clear integration policy coming from public actors and supporting from public administration. It is also probably related to the fact that, in some cases, MRAs, by perceiving CSOs and NGOs as employment services providers, have great expectations that ultimately are abolished and lead to frustration. In this respect, great expectations of refugees and asylum seekers seems to be mainly related to two particular aspects: a) to their previous positive experience in others host countries and b) to the information that they have through their informal networks for other receiving countries as regards the greater effectiveness of CSOs and public authorities to routing migrants toward employment.

In general, on the one hand CSOs and NGOs in particular frame their activities as temporal agent supporting migrants and on the other hand those activities are not connected with the implementation of policies. Most of the time, the designing of actions is assigned to CSOs, the public authorities are responsible for the monitoring and the allocation of funds, usually coming from European programmes, but the frame and the aim of integration policies are most of the time missing. Thus, informal networks such as friends and contacts risk playing the major role for helping refugees and asylum seekers to reach the labour market.

The refugee crisis has also significantly affected CSOs and NGOs in particular in terms of the knowledge from technical assistance programs coming from International Organizations, of the closer connection between priorities and funding, of the variety of their activities and of the effective management of their increasing staff. The refugee crisis also largely mobilized informal civil society sectors. Or, for labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers in particular, there are fundamental differences in the philosophy of interventions of formal and informal civil society actors. It seems that, formal actors such as NGOs through interconnections and partnership agreements with private sector companies are primarily routing the beneficiaries into employment as unskilled workers. On the contrary, informal actors such as Solidarity Initiatives give emphasis in the development of a solidarity culture. To this end, they channel those who benefit from interventions, who are of a limited number, into employment areas that promote social solidarity, such as the Social Cooperatives.

Two issues have to be highlighted in relation to the frame of the role of the formal civil society sector in refugees and asylum seekers' integration in the labour market. The first concerns the unfavourable landscape created by the high unemployment rate and the gloomy economic environment which makes difficult to implement targeted job creation for refugees and asylum seekers since measures to facilitate employment are mainly related to the fight against overall unemployment. The second relies on our finding that the NGOs beneficiaries are most probably routed to flexible forms of employment and to low-skilled jobs in cleaning, rural and the tourism sector. Of course this finding is based in a small number of interviews and therefore this issue requires further investigation.

On the whole, Greece integration policy has been fragmented. The state has been reacting to the mass migration flows since 2015 in an emergency context leaving integration services aside. Thus, civil society organizations have been overseeing the majority of the tasks related to the integration of the refugees and asylum seekers in the labour market. Since recently the need for a much more organized integration policy deriving from public actors has emerged. Although there are much that need to be done, municipalities with the newly established Community Centers are now coming at the centre of the attention. To what extent this transition from CSOs to public actors in terms of service provision to MRAs integration will be a sustainable process, and how this can affect the role of GSOs and NGOs in particular in labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers remain two open questions.

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6 Italy

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6.1 Introduction

This report critically illustrates the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum applicants into the country's labour market. This will allow us to highlight both the practical implications of the legal and institutional framework illustrated in the previous reports, and enables underpinning integration measures for migrants, refugees and asylum applicants (MRAs).

First, the report describes the general role of CSOs in the integration of MRAs in the labour market, as well as the legal and institutional framework, including the recent modifications introduced at the end of 2018. This is followed by an overview and categorization of the main CSO operating in the field of labour market integration for MRAs in Italy.

The second part of the report is dedicated to the analysis of the role played by CSOs in practice, looking at the dynamics of demand and offer of services both through the perspective of the CSOs and MRAs. This part specifically makes use of semi-structured interviews and more broadly allows to explore the views of CSOs' representatives on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, their employability and integration potential in recent years, particularly after the 2014 migration crisis. On the other hand, looking at the issue through the migrants' lenses also allows to provide a more complete picture, underlining the real needs and dynamics active for their integration in the labour market.

Finally, we conclude by proposing a comprehensive summary of the role of CSOs in relation to the integration of MRAs in the labour market. To do so, we reassess both the perspectives of CSOs representatives and MRAs, as well as the broader context made by policy-makers, experts, politicians, mass media.

6.2 The Role of CSOs Through Academic Lenses

As shown in WP3 report⁴¹, in Italy there is neither an integration law nor a real national integration plan/programme for MRAs. Nevertheless, according to the Integration Agreement (Presidential decree n. 179/2011), there is a central government commitment to organize the integration process of those migrants over 16-years old who require a permit to stay (for one year or more) in the event of the first entry into Italy. In particular, the central government provides free compulsory language and civic integration courses, with the goal to provide the migrant with a better knowledge of the Italian language and culture as well as of the main Italian constitutional principles. Apart from this, the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and

⁴¹ https://www.sirius-project.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/SIRIUS%20WP3%20-%20D3.2_0.pdf

Refugees (SPRAR)⁴² provided a wider range of integration services for unaccompanied minors, refugees and (until the “Salvini decree” of 2018)⁴³ asylum seekers who are hosted in second line reception centres: teaching of the Italian language, cultural mediation, legal counselling, health assistance, psychological support, accompaniment with job searching. Within the SPRAR system, specific projects were financed for people with mental or physical disabilities, and through the Agency Italia Lavoro Spa, the Ministry of Labour supported initiatives for the socio-occupational integration of vulnerable migrant groups, fostering the creation of individualized pathways aimed at encouraging employment. In addition to the system of integrated services offered by the SPRAR system, training internships were another important service that facilitated the entry of foreigners into the labour market.

In such a context, civil society organizations certainly play an important role in terms of the integration of MRAs into the labour market, but especially at local rather than national level, since there is no national policy in this regard. Furthermore, according to the Italian Constitution, labour market policies are a regional responsibility. Therefore, the picture that emerges is quite fragmented and it is not surprising that to our knowledge there is no significant literature on the role exercised by civil society organizations in this field. Conversely, the topic of the labour market integration of migrants in Italy has been explored by scholars from different disciplines by focusing on other aspects, which concern, in particular, education (Azzolini, 2011 and 2015; Borriane, P., Donato, Landini, and Valetti, 2006) and employment related policies (Dell’Aringa, Pagani 2010; Accorinti, 2017), the contrast to irregular/informal employment and labour exploitation (Sagnet, Palmisano 2015; D’Onghia, de Martino 2018; Chiaromonte 2018), reception services (De Petris, 2017; Penasa 2017), and the welfare rights of migrants (Gili, Dragone, Bonetti, 2013; De Maria, Lagravinese, 2015). The existing analyses and assessments of policies concerning the tools, paths and strategies of integration – including in and through the labour market – have been summarized recently by both collective and interdisciplinary research (Cerrina Feroni, Federico, 2018) and handbooks concerning the immigration law (see Di Muro, Di Muro 2018). According to this literature, in general there is a gap between the policy rhetoric and the reality of immigration, and the most recent Italian policies respond more to the former instead of addressing the latter (*ex multis*, Ambrosini, 2017). Additionally, the critical literature highlights the fragmentation of Italian policies and the difficulty of coordination among the several actors involved in the governance of migration and integration process (about this gap of governance, see, for instance, Oxfam 2016). Again, there is no CSOs focused discussion in this literature. However, the role of CSOs is also explored by different strands of literature, focusing both on case studies on local integration processes (Bonizzoni and Marzorati, 2015), or the broader role played at a national level by

⁴² The SPRAR system was created by Law No 189/2002 and was made up of the network of local institutions that implement reception projects for forced migrants by accessing, within the available resources, the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services, managed by the Ministry of the Interior and provided by the budget law. At local level, the local institutions undertook several ‘integrated reception’ interventions in cooperation with voluntary sector organisations. For more details, see WP2 report, available at : <https://www.sirius-project.eu/publications/wp-reports-results>. This system has been radically changed by the decree-law no. 113/2018 on immigration and public security (converted into Law no. 132/2018), which reduced the cases for granting the humanitarian protection (previously granted to those who could neither obtain the refugee status nor subsidiary protection but could not be repatriated) and the SPRAR reception centres are now reserved only for unaccompanied minors and beneficiaries of international protection. For more details, see WP3 report.

⁴³ Decree 113/2018. See previous footnote n. 2.

CSOs linked to the Catholic Church (Ambrosini, 2017, 2019). On a comparative perspective, OECD reports also analysed the role of CSOs in the integration of refugees and asylum seekers, although not necessarily focused just on labour market integration, such as (among others) Galera et al. (2018a and 2018b).

Valuable data and pieces of information regarding civil society organizations (CSOs) are also contained in other kinds of research: mainly, the list of good practices contained in research reports and websites of the associations, the list of associations included in the SPRAR system and pieces of information directly retrieved from the operators of the third sector. In this way, it is possible to map the CSOs that deal with the inclusion of MRAs in the labour market.

6.3 An Overview and Categorization of CSOs

Before the migration crisis, Italian CSOs dealing with migration were mostly active in providing support to illegal migrants, particularly in terms of access to healthcare and legal services against discrimination and exclusion (Ambrosini, 2013); or to promote integration and intercultural exchanges. Few were providing services targeted specifically at integrating migrants into the labour market, with language courses being some of the most diffuse activities (beside multicultural exchanges and promotion). The picture changed after 2014, with the proliferation of CSOs dealing with MRAs, particularly in the field of assistance and reception. This is reflected by the increasing number of Social cooperatives and other CSOs that activated ad-hoc programs for MRAs, often responding to public tenders.

As anticipated, most of the CSOs dealing with the labour market inclusion of MRAs operate at the local or regional level within the SPRAR system (which necessarily includes services aimed at working integration) or even in the first reception system of the CAS (extraordinary emergency centres), in which the supply of services aimed at integration depends on the aims and capabilities of the specific associations that manage these centres. Therefore, this mapping has absolutely no claim to be exhaustive: it provides a list of paradigmatic and illustrative examples of the variety of associations that deal with these issues (especially having asylum seekers and refugees as targets), which is not representative of the totality of CSOs in Italy: many relevant local associations could therefore not be mentioned here and in our list we have included associations that operate mainly in the Centre-North (Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna and Milan), due to greater ease of access to the information on these territorial contexts, traditionally characterized by a large share of social capital with a myriad of voluntary associations.

Looking at our sample, we can see for example, the association “Rena”, the certified incubator and accelerator specialized in high social value companies “Make a Cube” and the Polytechnic University of Milan have jointly participated in a project (“Same Project”) and have produced (with the support of J.P. Morgan) a research report that focuses on innovative practices supporting and fostering the economic and social inclusion of MRAs in different European countries. The research provided insight on the phenomenology of migrants’ entrepreneurship and examples of activities that can support migrants’ economic integration. This allowed the drawing of policy implications and design concrete actions (incubation methodology) in order to accelerate the economic integration of migrants, with particular regard to entrepreneurship. The research has taken a precise point of view: work can be a decisive lever in supporting the

integration process. To understand how different European countries are addressing this issue, the authors (Colucci et al. 2018) have mapped and studied more than 100 initiatives and projects implemented by public bodies, civil society organizations, informal groups and private individuals. Through the experiences of those who designed and implemented them and the analysis of the services they offer, they tried to understand which were the crucial issues. As regards the Italian case, several associations emerge as important actors in the field of labour market integration of MRAs. The CIAC (Asylum and Cooperation Immigration Centre) – was established in the mid-nineties as a network between the actors operating in the field during the war in the Balkans - today manages a network of services throughout the province of Parma: from the orientation desks inside of the municipalities, which act as a link between the various public services, up to Social Housing, a “third reception” project intended for people leaving the SPRAR system but who have not yet consolidated a stable job and economic position. As CIAC, there are many organizations that interpret hospitality as a system, working together with public administrations, other third sector associations and local communities, to build paths that guide migrants (mostly refugees and asylum seekers) towards autonomy and social inclusion. Training and development of skills are the first steps in this process which, however, includes other issues, such as updating previous skills and their formal recognition in relation to the market sector in which they could be spent.

Another way to support training and at the same time create possible opportunities for job placement is that of partnerships, activated by the host structures or organizations that promote specific projects, with companies and non-profit organizations working together. The social enterprise “Less – Impresa sociale”, for example, offers services of this type as well as laboratories in which it seeks to promote the profiles and skills of refugees and asylum seekers in an entrepreneurial or cooperative perspective. One of the business start-up laboratories promoted by Less produced “Tobili” - a multi-ethnic catering service created by some asylum seekers previously hosted in a SPRAR centre. “Tobili”, as similar experiences (e.g. “Cuochi a Colori”), has the twofold goal of including refugees and asylum seekers into a vocational training course and at the same time taking advantage of their culture and informal skills.

Another important actor in the field of labour market integration of MRAs is the “Rete Migrazioni e Lavoro” (Migrations and Work Network). This network is made up of organizations, associations, profit and non-profit companies, groups and individual citizens committed to building a society in which the inviolable rights of man are guaranteed - freedom, justice, equality - without distinction of sex, ethnicity, language, religion, political opinions, nationality, personal conditions. With migrants, the network wants to activate processes of exchange and sharing, so as to build plural communities, in which the cultures and life projects of the various components - Italian and non-Italian - can coexist and reinforce each other. Members of the network are the following non-profit associations and foundations: “Associazione Arcobaleno” (voluntary association), “Associazione Costituzione Beni Comuni” (social promotion association); “Associazione Multiculturale Oasi – A.M.O.” (multicultural association); “Consorzio Comunità Brianza” (network of social enterprises); “Cuccagna Solidale” (voluntary association); “Fondazione ISMU” (scientific independent foundation); “Fondazione Verga” (voluntary association); “Samia – insieme per l’uguaglianza” (non-profit organization); “Soletterre” (ONG); “Rete Scuole Senza Permesso” (a network of schools which are open to people from all over the world, even if they do not have the proper permission to legally stay in Italy). Furthermore, a trade union (CGIL) and a multinational job placement company (Randstad Holding nv) are also members of the network.

In order to facilitate job placement and to respond to the request for regular work by migrants, the Migration and Work Network intends to engage in several projects which seek to:

- Identify existing job opportunities and develop new ones;
- Establish a database of good practices, to draw on to replicate ideas, processes and methodologies; promote supply chains and synergies between the various economic and work organizations, both Italian and foreign;
- Promote the learning of the Italian language (> “A2” level) and the development of professional skills, starting from those of origin, up to the required level;
- Valuing knowledge, skills, experiences;
- Promote training courses, in collaboration with employment agencies and municipal and regional services, also thanks to the use of public funds;
- Offer human and professional support during the job placement phase or in the start-up of new businesses (small, individual)
- Develop forms of economic support for new businesses (small, individual) through micro-credit;
- Develop appropriate communication tools for information to citizens, institutions, profit and non-profit companies; with the aim of raising awareness and involving potential stakeholders;
- Making proposals for policy measures that facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the Network and favour the employment of refugees, such as the establishment of a labour fund, allocating to it a minimum part of the contributions provided to the SPRAR and CAS reception facilities;
- Participate in local, national and European tenders for the development of projects that meet the goals of the network

The network also provides, in collaboration with the association “Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights- Italy”⁴⁴ and ISMU foundation (see Sarli 2019)⁴⁵, a list of good practices in its website (<https://www.retemigrazionilavoro.it/>), which includes a repertoire of initiatives promoted by companies, public institutions, third sector associations and work organizations in the Italian context for job placement and migrant training:

- Orientation to active job search
- Balance and recognition of skills
- Job offer / demand matching
- Job placements and work accompaniment
- Job creation and self-entrepreneurship
- Strengthening of skills, literacy and civic education as tools for job placement
- Training and professional development:

Good examples of the above-mentioned repertoire of initiatives are represented by the following projects and experiences:

- the “Next” project headed by Caritas of Fidenza (PR) together with “NUMBER 1 Logistics Group SpA”, which aims to offer asylum seekers and protection beneficiaries an opportunity for integration in the host society, through the development of both soft skills and professional skills, and a culture of legality,

⁴⁴ <http://www.rfkitalia.org/>.

⁴⁵ <http://www.ismu.org/inclusione-socio-lavorativa-dei-rifugiati/>

by teaching rights and duties, as well as encouraging to understand and follow social and legal norms;

- The “Interculturalhub” project, created by “IMPACT HUB” of Reggio Emilia and the intercultural centre “Fondazione MondInsieme”, which intends to enhance the intercultural dialogue in entrepreneurial terms, through accompanying paths to entrepreneurship;
- the “Singa Professional Mentoring” project carried out by Singa Italy, which aims to promote a job inclusion capable of enhancing the human capital possessed by migrants, by linking them with professionals who have long been employed in the sector in which they aspire to enter;
- the project “Mani e Terra- non-profit social cooperative”, which aims to combat exploitation in the agricultural sector, fostering a different form of production and marketing compared to the one currently dominant;
- the successful story of Konate, a refugee that after the war and the slavery in Libya, got the refugee status, who became a student of the Italian school of the Arcobaleno Association (Schools Network Without Permit) and finally was hired as an apprentice chef in an important restaurant in Milan;
- The project “FAMI - Fra Noi” (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund-Among us), which has as leader the Consortium “Farsi Prossimo” for the autonomy of holders of international protection / subsidiary protection. The project provides financing for the operators who have been involved in the creation of a support network for migrants entitled to search for home and work. Consortium “Comunità Brianza” mainly dedicated itself to the creation of internship opportunities for the holders of international protection / subsidiary protection.

In addition to the associations of the “Rete migrazioni e lavoro”, other relevant organizations operate at the local or regional level, especially within the reception centres of the SPRAR system: these associations, as previously mentioned, provide a multitude of reception and integration services, including inclusion into the labour market, ranging from voluntary associations (e.g. “Associazione Progetto Accoglienza”, “Associazione Nosotras Onlus”), inter-cultural centres (e.g. “Associazione Anelli Mancanti”), social promotion associations (e.g. “Associazione Progetto Arcobaleno”), co-working associations (e.g. “Associazione Co-Cò Spazio CO-STANZA”), social cooperatives (e.g. “Cooperativa Il Cenacolo”, “C.A.T.”, “Cooperativa sociale Kaleidos”, “Cooperativa sociale CIDAS”, “Cooperativa sociale Svoltare”, “Cooperativa sociale Pane e Rose”), to service cooperatives (“Cooperativa Airone”).

Last but not least, nationwide faith-based organisations, social promotion associations, non-profit organizations for international cooperation and NGOs are key actors when we deal with labour market integration of MRAs in Italy, namely Caritas, Valdese Diakonia, Centro Astalli-Jesuit Refugee Service, ARCI (Italian Recreational and Cultural Association), COSPE (Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries), Oxfam, and Singa Italy. In particular, such organizations are part of international umbrella organizations or have developed projects/partnerships abroad and operate at local level through their local branches, delivering a multifaceted basket of services and activities, ranging from mere reception activities to socio-economic inclusion services (language courses, job counselling, training internships, etc.). Beneficiaries are both economic migrants and asylum seekers/refugees, but in recent years these organizations have been particularly involved in

the management of both first level and second level reception centres.⁴⁶ As regards MRAs' inclusion in the labour market, a well-known expertise has been shown by the "Fondazione Adecco", a leading non-profit private foundation specialised in job placement. Fondazione Adecco involves many companies in its projects, creating strategic partnerships in the delivery of training courses, job orientation and activities focused on the theme of diversity management. The Foundation develops projects together with both private and public entities, at local and national level, with the aim of supporting people and companies, and creating the best conditions for their match. Non-profit associations are also partners of Fondazione Adecco, for instance Oxfam.

Other integration programmes also exist, such as the experimental integration of refugees and asylum seekers in remote areas with declining populations. Such program tries to counter the depopulations of such areas and boost local socio-economic development through the integration of migrants, with CSOs often acting as mediators between migrants and local communities. This program, which had only mixed success, was comparatively assessed in detail by Galera et al. (2018) as mentioned in the literature review.

As regards the founding year, most of these CSOs have been working in this field for many years. Nevertheless, some of them have been founded in the last years in the wake of the so-called migration crisis (among others, the aforementioned network "Rete migrazioni e a lavoro"). Furthermore, some pre-existing CSOs (especially social cooperatives) directed their activities towards the migration field, driven by the opportunity to win public contracts, in particular for the management of reception centres. This suggests also, as we will discuss in the following sections, that some CSOs have entered this sector without any specific expertise.

Finally, scientific foundations have played an important role as regards the spread of knowledge on these topics and also in terms of policy advocacy: apart from the aforementioned ISMU foundation, other important actors are the "Leone Moressa" foundation and the study and research centre "Idos". The aforementioned nation-wide organization with international linkages (e.g. Oxfam, Caritas, Valedese Diakonia, Arci, Cospe, etc.) are also relevant actors in terms of policy advocacy. The latter is carried out by local or regional CSOs, too, but to a lesser extent, given their minor organizational capabilities and resources compared to nation-wide or international organizations.

⁴⁶ Until the previously mentioned "Salvini decree" (113/2018), the Italian system of reception of asylum seekers was organized in two different tiers, as established by D. Lgs. 142/2015 (for more details, see Sirius WP2 and WP3 reports). Operations of identification, registration of the asylum application and assessment of the health conditions were (and are still) conducted in governmental first-line reception facilities, the so-called "regional hubs", meant to progressively substitute the already existent centres of reception (the so-called CDA and CARA) (art. 9). Afterwards, asylum seekers who did not have sufficient financial resources (art. 14(3)) were transferred to second line reception centres which are managed by local municipalities within the national system of protection for refugees and asylum seekers (the SPRAR network), with the financial support of the National fund for asylum (art. 14(1)). If in both first line governmental facilities and second line SPRAR facilities there were no places available, the asylum seekers were temporarily accommodated in Centres of extraordinary reception (CAS) activated by the Prefectures. After the "Salvini" decree, as mentioned, asylum seekers are not any longer hosted in SPRAR centres, but only in first-line governmental centres or CAS.

6.4 Methods

The main methods employed for the identification and assessment of the role of CSOs in labour market integration have been qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews with CSO representatives as well as current and past beneficiaries of services supplemented by a focus group with CSOs' stakeholders. Through the combination of the findings deriving from literature and legislative reviews, qualitative interviews, and the focus group we investigate and understand the role of CSOs in the integration of MRAs in the Italian labour market, as well as the main needs and practical experiences of MRAs who have arrived in the country since 2008.

In total we have conducted 20 interviews with CSO members, and 24 interviews with MRAs. The first are mostly operators/workers of associations, while in some cases also founders or presidents/directors of the association itself. The types of association and their geographical distribution have been influenced by the constraints already mentioned in the previous paragraph, with most located in Central and Northern Italy, which is an area with a traditionally high social capital and employment rate. Nevertheless, we still managed to present a broad range of experiences and practices that depicts an informative picture of the role of CSO in Italy.

With regards to MRAs and the interviewees nationalities, most of them (20) are coming from sub-Saharan Africa (5 from Ivory Coast; 4 from Nigeria; 3 from Guinea; 2 from Ghana, Togo; 1 from Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Somalia), two from Northern Africa (Egypt, Morocco) and two from South Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Albania). A detailed breakdown, including other information such as migration year, education, family status, languages spoken, and past and present occupation is presented in Annex 4.

The large number of persons coming from Sub-Saharan Africa is consistent with the nationalities declared by people who arrived in Italy through the so-called 'Mediterranean Route', which also represents the majority of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Italy since the beginning of the migration crisis.⁴⁷ With regards to the sampling, we tried to include whenever possible a broader range of backgrounds and experiences, however it was not possible to create a sample that mirrors the actual composition of nationalities, gender, of MRA arrived in Italy in the past ten years. It should also be taken into account that we encountered some difficulties when trying to get in touch with representatives of some national communities, while other nationalities are found more among MRAs coming from different routes such as the so-called "Balkan Route".

6.5 How Do CSOs React to MRAs' Needs?

Representatives of CSOs we interviewed were all well-placed to provide an informed view, having extensive experience in the field of labour market integration through their organisations and

⁴⁷ According to official statistics by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (2017) over 53% of MRA arrived in Italy are from Sub-Saharan Africa. Source: http://www.libertacivilimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_gio_maliero_31-12-2017.pdf

holding offices of responsibility. The main (if not exclusive) target groups are asylum seekers, refugees and persons in need of international protection. Two CSOs have as target groups women victims of human trafficking and exploitation. Economic migrants are not the main target, albeit some CSOs deliver some labour market integration services to foreigners in general, without having a specific target group. The Italian third sector, in fact, starting from the so-called migration crisis of 2014, has been at the forefront in the management of the reception of asylum seekers arrived by sea. In this regard, CSOs were entrusted by public authorities with the task of carrying out not only assistance activities (for example, providing board and lodging), but also services aimed at favouring the integration of new arrivals, including inclusion in the labour market (for example language courses, job orientation activities, CV writing, training internships, vocational training). The latter services are provided especially by CSOs taking part in the SPRAR network. Moreover, from 2013 the entry quotas for employment opportunities are blocked, except for seasonal workers. It is therefore clear that the majority of newcomers apply for asylum, because there are no other channels of legal access: *"most asylum seekers are actually economic migrants"* (20_CS0_IT). This claim is also partially confirmed by CSOs representatives and State officials during our stakeholders' focus group.

Another effect of the so-called migratory crisis, according to some interviewees, is that some associations or cooperatives have entered this sector without any specific expertise, driven by the opportunity to win public contracts, in particular for the management of first reception centres as mentioned above: *"the cooperative had to do this work overnight, with staff with very little experience in the migration sector [previously, they dealt with identification and expulsion centres] so the complete opposite of integration [...] only business [...] the message that has always come to us is: 'we only do what is required by the prefectures: if we integrate people, better, but it is not mandatory' [...] fortunately we are all young people with clear beliefs and therefore we try to integrate"* (20_CS0_IT). This obviously can have a negative influence on the quality of the services offered, which depends very much on the professionalism of those who manage the centres, as already mentioned.

According to some interviewees, the reception system is not well organized: *"it is left to the case and to the associations of the private social sector [...] from the point of view of the labour market inclusion policies there is no real systematization; for example, there is no systematization of the courses of Italian for starting work, there is no system that favours the match between labour supply and demand ... but this also concerns Italians ... the role of informal networks to find a job is still prominent and this has a greater negative effect on migrants who have less extensive networks when they arrive .. in the past, economic migrants entered through a series of family networks that for better or for worse provided information .. now for asylum seekers this network is missing"* (8_CS0_IT).

In addition to these difficulties, according to our interviewees, CSOs have had to face the challenges posed by some recent legislative changes and by a growing negative perception of immigration. In the first case, according to the opinion of most interviewees, the decree n. 113/2018 (the so-called Salvini decree) goes exactly in the direction opposite to the one necessary for an effective integration. There are many critical issues reported, which concern the fact that *"it makes many migrants illegal immigrants. Because of the abolition of humanitarian protection, many cannot convert their residence permit into a work permit. Moreover, the decree favours large reception centres, where operators only provide accommodation and food, even Italian courses are no longer mandatory"* (6_CS0_IT); *"the new decree favours big first reception centres, which are cheaper, but have a greater impact on local communities [...] such centres often provide only basic activities, such as room and board. Conversely, SPRAR second reception centres are downsized: they are only for unaccompanied minors and refugees"* (3_CS0_IT). The cut in funding

provided by the public tenders have had negative consequences both for people working in the sector and for asylum seekers: *"working in this sector is increasingly difficult: anxiety and stress are rising because we do not know how long we can continue to work. Many people resigned, others were fired, and this reduction in funding led to the fact that we had to cut the co-participation in the health care costs of the beneficiaries and the costs of public transport to go to school or to training courses. Italian courses are no longer obligatory, there is a clear plan to destroy the paths of integration dictated by political motivations. With the new tenders, for large-scale economies, people are concentrated in big reception centres by reducing the services just to save money. We are speaking of an operator for every 50 people: it is impossible to provide real integration paths"* (20_CS0_IT).

Furthermore, most interviewees criticize the current immigration law (the so-called Bossi-Fini law) considered as unrealistic and not in line with the real needs of the labour market: *"the very complex regulation concerning residence permits, citizenship, family reunification, is an element that complicates the life of these people as regards the possibility of finding a regular job"* (CSO, Interviewee 4); *"according to the law, the economic migrant can enter if s/he has a contract of work already signed and the employer must guarantee an adequate accommodation [...] these are inapplicable rules because they are not realistic and very burdensome for the employers [...] it is impossible for a small company to hire unknown people"* (CSO, Interviewee 1); *"there are no real immigration policies: in fact there is no legal access channel [...] the Bossi-Fini law is not adequate"* (3_CS0_IT).

To summarize, most interviewees assure that current legislation does not favour labour market inclusion of migrants and the recent legislative decree has undermined the labour integration of asylum seekers, too. If we consider that, as previously mentioned, claiming asylum is the only way to enter legally the country given that since 2013 there are no entry quota for work reason (except seasonal workers), the picture portrayed by interviewees is not positive.

Furthermore, the growing negative perception of immigration is another challenge that CSOs have to face, strictly linked to the abovementioned legislative changes. Indeed, according to most interviewees, the debate concerning immigration issues in Italy is focused on border control and security issues, with some contradictory aspects: immigrants who work and follow the rules have a positive connotation in the eyes of both public opinion and policy makers, but at the same time policy-makers impede the entry for employment reasons and recently have put up obstacles to the integration of asylum seekers. Therefore, the debate now is not about integration of migrants, but on the control of immigration. And some political actors focused the debate on this aspect for electoral reasons, given that in recent years a growing majority of people wants to limit immigration. Most interviewees say that they have tried to carry out awareness campaigns in order to react to this situation and focus attention on integration issues: for instance, a CSO has carried out various campaigns (including on social media) to raise awareness on the subject of migrants and also fund raising campaigns, for example to finance work grants. Other CSOs opened their activities to the wider neighbourhood, to let people know how they work and to show the usefulness of their projects. In this regard, many interviewees strongly support a widespread reception model based on small reception centres: *"apartments for 6-8 people maximum. This way it is easier to overcome the distrust of neighbours and follow guests with personalized plans of integration"* (6_CS0_IT).

Some interviewees point out that voluntary activities involving MRAs are useful. An association also offered some services to Italians, being located in a very difficult regional context: *"in order to try to involve citizenship, in addition to using the social media to communicate our good practices, we have increasingly opened our facilities to the people of the neighbourhood to show what we do, to foster mutual exchanges and to create professionalizing paths, like cooking classes, for everyone. Through mutual knowledge and shared experiences, it is possible to dispel prejudices."*

This a very difficult socio-economic context and public services do not work. The higher the social marginality, the greater the hostility towards migrants and the risk of a war between the poor" (18_CSO_IT). In general, indeed, interviewees report that mutual exchanges between host community and foreigners are fundamental to overcome the wall of suspicion and fear. In this regard, having a job is fundamental to be integrated: *"Job placement is fundamental in the integration process. Together with other partners, we are thinking about the fact that immigration emergence has drawn attention to the issue of job placement that concerns everyone"* (8_CSO_IT); *"in 2015 we started a training course for self-enterprise and in 2016 a group of young people from different countries established a cooperative that deals with ethnic catering. Currently the cooperative is still active and soon they will open their own restaurant with a cooking workshop. This cooperative is practically a spin-off of our social cooperative and they are now following their path independently, it is the first catering cooperative in this region managed by refugees and asylum seekers"* (18_CSO_IT).

Nevertheless, the positive role played by these stories of successful integration has a limited impact at the local level given that the debate in the media is dominated by security issues. It is worth noting that many CSOs in the Italian context operate especially at the local level, as mentioned in previous sections. Consequently, they do not have the skills and capacity to have a significant impact on the national debate, as reported by many interviewees, with significant exceptions represented by CSOs with an international scope. Even the latter examples, however, report that imposing a counter narrative in the public debate is very difficult given that in recent years hostility has increased not only towards immigrants, but also towards NGOs: *"we moved from being considered as trustworthy actors providing solidarity, to being perceived as actors pursuing selfish interests. This is the result of the heavy political climate we face now in Italy"* (9_CSO_IT).

Despite these difficulties, CSOs collaborate with public institutions. Indeed, most CSOs are financed through public tenders for the management of first reception centres (CAS) and second reception centres (the SPRAR system centres). In this regard, some are also financed through a specific funding scheme, such as AMIF and ESF. Only a minimal part of the resources comes from private donors or CSOs' members in the case of cooperatives. According to our interviewees, this dependence on public funding does not limit their freedom of advocacy, but has a great impact on the type of services they have to offer: *"obviously, we have the obligation to offer the services expressly provided for in the calls for tenders"* (15_CSO_IT).

Finally, the collaboration with other associations, participating also in national and, in a few cases, international networks, is mentioned by interviewees as something that is important not only for advocacy actions, but also to exchange experiences and best practices and deliver positive outcomes in terms of integration outcomes. In this regard, the collaboration between CSOs and companies or services cooperatives through the delivery and payment of training internships for asylum seekers/refugees is perceived to be very fruitful: *"with this tool [training internship], many asylum seekers have found work. An example of a success story is a refugee who has done an internship with a cooperative of services with which we often collaborate: not only was he hired, but he also became a member of the cooperative"* (6_CSO_IT). Many beneficiaries have maintained contacts with CSOs even after leaving the reception centres, and some of them, as just mentioned, were hired by the CSOs themselves. However, the level of MRAs involvement as workers in professionalized CSOs is not high. Indeed, the main role played by CSOs is that of a facilitator: *"I am not a centre for employment. We do not assess competencies, rather, much guidance and accompaniment to the job search [...] The reception centre must be like a gym where one prepares to be autonomous"* (12_CSO_IT). CSOs act as intermediaries between asylum

seekers/refugees on the one hand and temporary agencies, employment centres, social services of municipalities, companies, on the other hand.

6.6 What Do MRAs Get and Seek (if Anything at All) from CSOs?

MRAs who arrive in Italy have as their first goal to find a job, usually any kind of job regardless of their previous qualifications, thus showing a great flexibility and capacity to adapt. Consequently, the main expectation they have from CSOs is to be supported in finding a job. However, not all CSOs have the capacity and possibilities to meet such expectations. Here, two distinctions must be made. First, we have to distinguish between economic migrants on the one hand and asylum seekers/refugees on the other hand.

Economic migrants have rarely had direct experience with CSOs: in fact, most of our interviewees are asylum seekers and refugees. One is a woman victim of human trafficking and exploitation and four are economic migrants. The first stresses the key role played by CSOs to favour her integration into Italian society: *“they gave me so many tools, vocational training, information [...] I did a stage for three months at Ikea and then I got a seasonal contract [...] my first job experiences here were fantastic, I received also letter of references”* (6_MRA_IT). Among the latter, conversely, there is a certain variation in terms of experiences with CSOs. On one extreme, we find a Moroccan woman not only fully integrated into Italian society from a work point of view, but also in terms of social capital. Indeed, she is working in an immigration desk managed by a cooperative and previously she actively participated in a huge variety of civil society organizations, ranging from voluntary associations, cooperatives, religious organizations of Muslims, associations active in international cooperation. Through these associations, she acquired very helpful networks for her previous job as cultural mediator. Furthermore, she founded an association that is very connected to the labour market integration of migrant women. Indeed, this organization developed innovative programmes to encourage entrepreneurship among immigrant women in the wake of a fair-trade project already developed in Morocco with the collaboration of the University of Parma.

On the other extreme, we find an Albanian woman who arrived in Italy through family reunification and works as a social health operator, as well as an Egyptian man who works as a pizza maker. Both found work through friends and relying on themselves, without any support received by CSOs. The Albanian woman points out that for economic migrants or for those who enter through family reunification, there is no support either by public institutions or by CSOs: *“I would have liked to have more support, no one informed me how to find a job, no one offered language courses, etc.”* (24_MRA_IT). Similarly, the Egyptian man did not search for the help of CSOs, although the latter helped his wife and he is a member of a trade union (without having an active role). He has always relied on his strengths, the friendships he has built in Italy and some relatives. In this regard, he stresses that the role played by his national community has been fundamental to enter the labour market and even learn a job: *“I worked in several restaurants, where I learned doing pizza with the help of other Egyptians”* (7_MRA_IT).

In an intermediate position, we found a young man from Nigeria, who recognizes the help received by a job counsellor at the immigration desk, stressing the importance of the collaboration between public institutions and CSOs to deliver integration services. Despite this, he added that in Italy *“according to my experience, it was easier to find work through friends and migrant networks, rather than through associations [...] out of three job*

opportunities I had, two were through friends. Even the third, that is the course offered by the cooperative, I finally found it through an acquaintance” (8_MRA_IT).

Asylum seekers and refugees are in a very different situation: all of them, indeed, were obliged to deal with CSOs, given that they are/have been hosted in reception centres. The latter are managed usually by CSOs, which deliver a huge variety of integration services. In this regard, however, there is a substantial difference between second reception centres of the aforementioned SPRAR system and first reception centres. In the latter, there is no dedicated budget for the implementation of work-related actions for asylum-seekers, contrary to what is granted by SPRAR centres. Conversely, in the first reception centres the type and quality of services offered depends on who manages them. Refugees who passed through the SPRAR system reported that they benefited from services not only in terms of social inclusion, but also economic inclusion, such as accompaniment to job searching, orientation, vocational training, and inclusion into companies through training internships or job grants. In general, they reported a positive opinion about the help received by CSOs, stressing especially the usefulness of language courses and training internships: *“I attended an Italian language course and I attended for three months a vocational training course for cooks”* (Holder of humanitarian protection, Interviewee 4); *“the [name of the religious association] helped me a lot, giving me an accommodation, food, documents, everything [...] [they] paid for me a training internship within the cooperative where I’m currently employed. After the internship, I got a short-term contract and then a permanent contract”* (5_MRA_IT).

However, a critical point was raised by an interviewee from Somalia with the refugee status, directly involved in volunteer associations. According to her, indeed, refugees depend totally on the assistance of the operators when they live in reception centres, whereas they are left to themselves when they leave the centres: *“operators tend to assist you in everything without leaving you autonomy. But when you leave the centre, you are not very able to get away with it alone. In fact, you move from 100 to zero in terms of support”* (1_MRA_IT). In this regard, finding accommodation is very difficult. The latter is mentioned as a critical aspect by all interviewees: sometimes, finding a house is more difficult than finding a job, especially for asylum seekers who do not have yet their documents.

Speaking of asylum seekers, it has been said previously that those who are hosted in extraordinary centres for first reception (CAS) do not always receive the same type of services offered in SPRAR centres, often because they are located in crowded centres. This is even more true after the implementation of the decree n. 113/2018 (the so-called Salvini decree), which removed the asylum seekers from the SPRAR centres to concentrate them in first reception centres where work integration services are not mandatory. In this regard, we interviewed in a CAS several asylum seekers who share the same condition, but with different experiences as far as activities related to labour market inclusion are concerned. Indeed, some of them only attended Italian language courses provided by the social cooperative that manages the centre, without any support in terms of job training, orientation and search. At most, they did volunteer work, like helping children to cross the road working in the library, etc. It should be noticed, however, that our interviewees consider these activities to be useful: *“It is important to help the hosting community, furthermore we got a certificate that we can use in the future”* (18_MRA_IT). Conversely, other interviewees attend or attended training internships: *“I am unemployed, but I’m doing a course for bakers in a pizzeria”* (Asylum seeker, Interviewee 19). These kind of courses, along with Italian language courses, are perceived as

useful to enter the labour market: *“Learning Italian is very important in general and the training internship was very useful”* (23_MRA_IT). Despite this, those who are employed recognize that they found a job through friends, considered that as much more useful than sending a CV: *“If you have friends, they can inform you about job opportunities. Italian and Chinese employers do not call you, unless your friends working for them call you. If you do not have friends that call you, it is impossible to get a job”* (22_MRA_IT).

A further distinction emerges between those who have all their identity documents and those who have not. Indeed, a young man from Mali owning all his identity documents (i.e. ID card and health card) has a permanent contract as a storeman, whereas other asylum seekers without documents cannot work, given that the Salvini decree abolished the possibility of enrolling in the registry office by choosing the reception centre as one's residence: *“Without papers, it is impossible to find a job. The residence permit [for asylum request] is of short duration and employers do not hire you, or you work in [the] black [economy], but this is not good, this is not safe [...] Moreover, it is already difficult to find a home, without papers it is impossible”* (20_MRA_IT). Some of our interviewees, indeed, work or have worked without a job contract in factories owned by Chinese employers: *“If you have no papers, nobody offers you a contract or you work in [the] black [economy],, as I did”* (22_MRA_IT). One of them decided to ask for the help of a trade union: *“I denounced the employer, the trade union provided me a lawyer and now I have a lawsuit pending”* (Asylum seeker, Interviewee 22). However, it is not always easier to take this decision when no other job opportunities exist: *“Many people work in [the] black [economy], here. I want a regular job contract, but I had not the courage to ask for the help of a trade union. I'm afraid of losing my job”* (17_MRA_IT). For these people, getting identity documents and finding a job are interrelated needs.

In general, the help received by CSOs is appreciated by our interviewees, especially by those who arrive without a family network. In this regard, they do perceive CSOs as more sympathetic to them compared to public stakeholders. That said, however, not all CSOs' services are considered as being particularly helpful to find a job: networks of friends, relatives and fellow citizens are often considered as more important. Furthermore, in the eyes of MRAs it is not always clear what CSOs can do for them and what they cannot do (e.g., CSOs are occasionally confused with employment centres), thus sometimes they make requests that cannot be satisfied. Notwithstanding, all interviewees claim that they want to be autonomous and walk on their own two feet in order not to be a burden to anyone and to feel released and useful. Indeed, it is important to underline the widespread the desire for autonomy by the refugees and the absence of any 'bridge' like support between being in the centre (with layers of support) and leaving the centre, which stirs feelings of being almost abandoned once out of the protection programme. This would suggest that policies and practices to improve the autonomy of refugees are paramount for a successful integration.

6.7 Italy: Conclusions

CSOs play an important role in relation to the integration of MRA in the Italian labour market, particularly after the 2014 migration crisis. However, their role cannot be isolated from the specific national context, spanning from the legal framework to the civic culture and specific territorial socio-economic characteristics.

In general, in Italy we have few nationwide association and networks, and limited international cooperation. Most CSOs are working in the reception sector, providing CAS and SPRAR services, thus asylum seekers and refugees are their almost exclusive target groups. Since 2014 we had a proliferation of associations or cooperatives active in this sector, with many responding to public calls and tenders to manage the reception of refugees and asylum seekers. Some of the organizations also provide some services, often in the forms of help desks, to foreigners in general, without specific target groups. We also observe an extreme diversification of services due to the lack of national legislative and clear policy frameworks, aggravated by the extreme policy fragmentation and limited coordination among the several actors involved in the governance of the phenomenon. This is confirmed by stakeholders' opinions and the scientific literature which, unfortunately, is still rather limited on the subject.

With regards to the impact of the legal framework, we have to stress the lack of either a national integration law, or a corresponding plan. Thus, CSOs are active at the local level rather than the national level. Most of the legal provisions are only aimed at providing basic language and civic culture courses. However, until the so-called 'Salvini Decree' of 2018, asylum seekers and refugees hosted in the second-line reception facilities (SPRAR) had access to a wider range of services not only for social inclusion, but also economic inclusion, such as assistance in job searching. This is now limited only to unaccompanied minors and people who have been granted international protection. Such services are completely absent in first line reception centres.

Indeed, it is a widespread conviction that the second-line reception system was a successful model for integration (CSO Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The current legislation hinders the possibilities for successful integration of migrants in the labour market by severely limiting the beneficiaries of the "SPRAR" services, which on the contrary should have been extended to first line reception systems (CSO Interviewee 1). The only major limit of the SPRAR system was the limited time given to the MRAs to stay there and both undergo integration programs and job/house searching, which usually is around 6-8 months (CSO Interviewee 10). On the other hand, the long-time that migrants have to spend in first line reception centres, motivated some of the organizations managing them to provide at least some services for job orientation, which is a primary need advocated by most migrants hosted in those centres (Interviewee 20).

A common problem is to recognize the skills and job attitudes of migrants when they try to enter the labour market. Due to their very different backgrounds, and often lack of education, it is necessary to offer traineeships even to people with a previous professional background. In other words, it is not possible for a former mechanic or electrician from sub-Saharan Africa, for example, to do the same job in Europe, without a specific training, given the very different technical requirements of those jobs. Nevertheless, some success stories of integration are made through those programs, as we have witnessed some cases when after re-training, people managed to continue their professions.

In general, we can identify several fundamental services provided by CSOs to facilitate the integration of MRAs in the labour market:

1. Language courses
2. Cultural mediation
3. Identification of skills and inclinations
4. Voluntary work

5. Training and education (esp. middle-school degrees)
6. Education on the rights and duties of workers and the characteristics of the Italian labour market (also in cooperation with trade unions)
7. Internships

In all cases, it emerges as extremely relevant for a complete and successful integration, to prepare MRAs to be autonomous once out of the program, not only through a care approach but pursuing the empowerment and autonomy of people (CSOs Interviewee 6, 10, 11, 19).

The territorial coverage of our in-depth interviews does not allow a full-scale generalisation, but, when supplemented by literature, expert opinions, and media/news analysis, still provides useful information regarding differences in services between different territories. Indeed, several of the most active and successful stories/practices are from areas with a well-developed manufacturing economy, and a tradition of highly developed public services (i.e. Emilia Romagna) rather than agricultural-focused areas or areas with high rates of unemployment (i.e. most areas in Southern Italy). The better results are achieved when CSOs are facilitating a matching between the skills and competences of MRAs with the needs and economic structure of the territories (CSO Interviewees 11, 13, 18). In general, cooperation between CSOs and public institutions, as well as the local economic community, is crucial for a successful integration process.

It is very important to underline how the role of CSOs in the integration of migrants into the labour market is much more significant in case of refugees and asylum seekers. This is explained by the Italian legislation, which does require reception centres to provide a minimum amount of services, particularly language classes. However, there is ample variation in services provided in different regions, and also between different CSOs. Thus, the absence of a national framework clearly plays a key role in determining the comprehensive successful integration of MRAs into the Italian labour market. Furthermore, the local economy seems to play a crucial role on the opportunities and strategies for labour market integration of MRAs. This emerges both from an analysis of the existing literature, as well as from first-hand data from our sample, and experiences and knowledge shared by participants in the focus group, which makes us believe this variation is generalised both within and across the different regional contexts.

Looking from the perspective of MRAs, finding a job is one of the first goals after arriving in Italy. As mentioned before, we have to distinguish between economic migrants on the one hand and refugees and asylum seekers on the other. Indeed, we can observe different patterns for migrants to find an employment. As for 'economic' migrants, they often do not look for the services of CSOs to find a job, relying mostly on ethnic networks, whereas asylum seekers and refugees are involved with CSOs by the reception system, with the active participation of institutions, NGOs, and civil society associations involved in the migration governance system.

On the other hand, in Italy there is an increasing presence of asylum seekers that are actually economic migrants who would have normally arrived and looked for job through family networks but are now forced to follow this path due to the lack of other legal channels (CSO interviewee 20). This was pretty clear when comparing information provided by the CSOs and also experiences from the focus group.

Migrants hosted also in CAS are expressing the need for a job, and thus relevant support to do it. Many reasons, going from the need to achieve independence, get money, receive a

working residence permit, but also to preserve ones' dignity. This moved several CSOs managing CAS centres to at least provide some basic services in this direction. Again, refugees who passed through the SPRAR system are reporting mostly positive experience in social and economic inclusion. Yet, some lament a problem in the lack of preparation towards an autonomous life once out of the system, after having been dependent on the operators particularly about finding accommodation. Thus, we shall reinstate the importance of preparing MRAs to be autonomous once out of the reception centres, already mentioned by several CSOs. Refugees hosted in CAS centres (first reception) on the other hand often lament the lack of support, as it is not prescribed by the legislation beyond language courses, and completely up to the association or cooperatives managing the centres. In this case, we also witness a relevant role played by informal networks within the reception centres where people who have managed to found a job are sharing their experiences and providing contacts for others. The latter is often the only opportunity for refugees without valid documents, forced to find and accept jobs on the black market due to legislative constraints emplaced by the Salvini Decree.

Among economic migrants, those who turn to CSOs are either longer term migrants in the country from a relevant amount of time, or looking mostly for language training or administrative assistance, while for looking for jobs they might usually turn to public employment centres, specialised helpdesks (where present) or private agencies. On the other hand, they might be persons with peculiar situations such as women victims of human trafficking. Another important thing to mention is how some of the services, workshops or activities organised in particular by Intercultural Associations represent a way to overcome cultural boundaries and also help integrate women (CSO Interviewee 17).

In general, we can summarize the most important services requested by migrants as the followings.

1. Language courses
2. Means to achieve an autonomous life in the Italian context/society
3. Trainings
4. Internships
5. General education
6. Legal assistance

Looking more broadly at the general perspectives on the role of work and labour oriented policies for a successful integration of migrants in the society, work is indeed a fundamental "means" of integration. However, being employed is a necessary but not sufficient condition for successful integration. Training/education is important but often not enough if it is not followed by having a job or a work activity. This is particularly important for women, as a way of emancipation and integration into the host society. Having a job is a crucial element for the dignity and self-accomplishment of a person. It is also crucial from a political standpoint, in that "having a job and paying taxes" seems the only way to stay and be accepted in Italy, also according to the statements of several national-populist politicians. Nevertheless, policies and public debate are only targeted at controlling and limiting immigration, not the successful integration of migrants.

Most of the CSOs are raising the issue of a growing climate of distrust and hate towards MRAs and also towards organizations hosting or providing services for MRAs, however others are

not reporting such widespread hostility in their local context, contrary to the national media debate. Facilitations for the access into the labour market by migrants have also been proposed by several regional governments (i.e. Tuscany, Emilia Romagna). CSOs in general are active as service providers, not much involved in policy making, and voice activity, as we have observed relatively low levels of activism and advocacy. We can assume that this is linked to the nature of the vast majority of organisations, active in the public reception system.

To sum up, our research shows that work and job placement are fundamental in the integration process of MRAs. This is supported by an almost unanimous consensus among the CSOs interviewed, and most migrants who are or have been through training and internship program that often resulted in temporary or stable jobs. This is accompanied by the fundamental contribution of language courses and cultural mediation. The main challenges are stemming from the current legislation, that on the one hand reduces funds for first-line reception centres and public tenders for integration policies, favouring the creation of few very large structures that make effective integration unfavourable, and the other hand revokes the right to the SPRAR services for asylum seekers and refugees still awaiting the recognition of international protection. Finally, the Salvini decree hinders the possibility of the integration of migrants into the labour market by making many of them illegal migrants due to the abolition of humanitarian protections, making it impossible to convert their temporary residence permit into a work permit.

Box 6: Examples of CSOs Good Practices in Italy

In our research we had the chance to examine and compare several CSOs and their work. Among them, we believe that one of the most successful examples can be represented by a social cooperative operating in Parma.

They came from a long experience of working with migrants and inclusion into the labour market, having started their activity over 20 years ago to deal with refugees coming escaping from the Balkan wars, and a long-established cooperation with local authorities. Now they are operating in the SPRAR system and underwent a relevant expansion since the 2014 migration crisis. The association has always been committed to a continuous improvement and expansion by learning from their experience to provide the most suitable services. They developed standard procedures and specific professional figures to provide the best support to the refugees in various areas, moving from an original 'jack of all trades, master of none' approach. They Provide legal, social, and job integration support.

Despite hosting a very large number of refugees and asylum seeker, they offer diffuse hosting, avoiding big concentrations of people in large structures. They also activated programs for the hosting among Italian families of migrants going out of the SPRAR program. Some of their characteristics are a strong cooperation with local authorities, economic associations, and labour agencies, which result in a higher chance of successful integration. In general, the association is very professional and competent, dedicating great care on the formation of their personnel as well as their programmes. One of their core characteristics, is their approach focused at empowering the migrants and making them autonomous.

The area dedicated to training and job orientation is one of the most developed, and most important within the association itself. The first pillar is a language lab providing differential levels of language formation, from socialisation and alphabetization of illiterate persons to

higher levels. The second main pillar is the job orientation. In this workshop they first teach migrants how to approach the job market in Italy, providing a basic knowledge of workers' rights, typologies of contracts, and all the relevant services provided by agencies, trade unions and welfare institutions. The second part is dedicated to teaching people to correctly approach the job market, also teaching how to prepare CVs and preparing them for job interviews, overcoming cultural barriers that might hinder this. This is done also through individual counselling, and the association tend to follow of the persons also in their initial stages. At the end of the training, migrants should be able to develop social relationships and looking autonomously and actively for a job, prosecuting what is most suitable according to their skill and inclinations. This approach, paired by a large use of targeted internships and training in cooperation with local enterprises, results in a large number of migrants to successfully integrate in the local job market, with many now having stable contracts.

Their success is also confirmed by the MRAs who have been hosted by them, who stressed the importance of their job orientation programme, which has been deemed very effective in preparing them to confront the job market. In particular, it seems to provide the necessary tools and knowledge to let them become rather autonomous in terms of job-seeking. Nevertheless, the best results in terms of employment comes when there is a cooperation between the association and private enterprises trough dedicated sessions of recruitment interviews.

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7 Switzerland

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7.1 Introduction

This report is developed in the context of the project *SIRIUS: Skills and Integration of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Applicants in European Labour Markets*, which builds on a multi-dimensional conceptual framework. Within this framework, the host country or political-institutional, societal and individual-related conditions function as either ‘enablers’ or ‘barriers’ to the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the labour market.

The present report is the outcome of a study conducted in the fourth Work Package of the SIRIUS project. Focusing on the case of Switzerland, the aim of our current report is to identify and critically analyse the role of Swiss civil society organizations (CSOs) in the labour market integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (MRAAs) from the viewpoint of representatives of CSOs and the MRAAs. We also want to highlight the (beneficial or negative) impact of those organizations on the effective capacity to integrate MRAAs into the labour market. It should be stressed that in Switzerland and in Europe more broadly, the recent migration crisis has led to increasing fear, prejudice, xenophobia and racism from certain political parties and populist political parties. This has challenged the numerous actions and projects that have recently been implemented by CSOs in order to actively help MRAA. These bottom-up initiatives have played a decisive and visible role in filling the protection and integration gaps left by public national policies and institutions.

A successful labour market integration is typically the result of joint efforts from various actors and stakeholders from the public, private, and civil society sectors. CSOs are crucial actors in this process, though their role may vary depending (among other things) on their relative positioning in decision-making, or on the salience of the issue of migration in individual countries. Generally, CSOs can play a political and societal role, which frames MRAA integration into a general discourse on demographic ageing, skills gap and competitiveness; and a more technical role which builds upon the development of concrete labour market actions through training and education, social welfare, information services, etc. Our examination of Swiss CSO implementing actions aimed at MRAA labour market integration in the Canton of Geneva reveals that the integration of migrants, and more particularly the integration of women migrants, is an increasingly important element of these actions. The number of CSO projects implemented over recent years demonstrates a willingness to find the best ways to support this integration, while taking into account the diversity of these populations. Overall, CSOs have demonstrated a strong commitment, facilitating first reception upon arrival, ensuring access to social services, and promoting fundamental rights and long-term integration. Overall, while CSOs have a pivotal role to play in the domain of MRAA labour market integration, it is vital that they interact and collaborate with other stakeholders to achieve the common goals. Such other stakeholders may be public institutions or authorities – educational or employment institutions which organize reception and integration policies at the local level – but also actors from the private sector and other CSOs dealing with other types of precarious populations, which in most cases have direct contacts with people in need of support and are effective on the *ground* in reaching those who *are* most in *need*.

Against this background, we first provide an examination of the role of CSOs through academic lenses, followed by an overview and categorization of CSOs in the Canton Geneva. This examination is complemented by a presentation of the methodology as well as key findings of the fieldwork which involved conducting interviews with representatives of CSOs and beneficiaries of CSO actions and services. The final part focuses on an assessment of challenges of CSOs' actions and services from the viewpoint of CSO representatives and of beneficiaries themselves, illuminating what they consider as overall barriers and enablers for MRAA labour market integration.

7.2 The Role of CSO Through Academic Lenses

Switzerland has a prominent civil society sector with strong historical ties, affecting the development of CSO types (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2010) and being of great significance to Swiss society. Accentuating this observation, Helmig et al. (2011; p.III) write:

Elements such as independence, individual responsibility and self-help are social cornerstones which are deeply rooted in the mind of the Swiss population and have thus shaped Switzerland's entire social system. Over the centuries, these factors have led to the development of a large and significant civil society sector alongside the state.

Currently, it is estimated that:

...approximately 1.8 million volunteers (out of a population of 8 million) participate in organizations and over 800,000 persons fulfil voluntary services of responsibility in associations, communities, and municipalities. Eighty percent of the voluntary commitment takes place at the local level. Voluntary and civil society work in Switzerland are often considered complementary to government services and as desirable services for the society. Depending on their activity CSOs may receive government subsidies for their work. Most of these organisations are relatively small and financed through membership fees, voluntary donations, and function with the time spent by their members. (Dannecker, 2017; p.58)

As in other European countries (Baglioni and Giugni, 2014), the Swiss CSO sector has been found to encompass a variety of non-profit organizations that exist between state and private firms. They perform different roles ranging from sports to advocacy to humanitarian aid abroad (Lichtsteiner et al., 2008), alongside fulfilling "wider functions such as advocacy, community building, connecting individuals, providing a home for 'social movements' and acting as vehicles for a variety of other sentiments and impulses" (Helmig et al., 2011; p.5). It is estimated that there are about 100,000 associations with legal status in Switzerland (Dannecker, 2017). Most of them:

...are rooted in the local community and municipality. They provide services, activities, local integration, and advances the togetherness of people. They bring people together with common interests and organize their representation. They promote community and leisure activities and they take responsibilities for common duties – sometimes with an official mandate. With their mostly unpaid work they invest their time, money, and energy for other people and organizations, for initiatives, for community work, for the promotion of their hobbies and interests. The range of their interests and the possible forms of voluntary work extend from sports associations to voluntary work in the social, health or cultural arenas, to the acceptance of political duties (mainly at the municipal level), to self-help among neighbours. The variety of

activities and their extent shows that this voluntary commitment is an important contribution to 'social cohesion' which holds together society. (ibid; pp. 57–58)

At the same time, recent research (Fernández and Boursier, 2016; pp. 42; 247) has found that Swiss CSOs, targeting MRAA specifically, meet various beneficiary needs. They promote two specific patterns or types of altruistic and philanthropic solidarity, namely, 'helping/supporting others' and 'distribution of goods and services'. Fewer CSOs are protest-oriented or social movement-oriented, focusing, for instance, on the defence of the rights of migrants and asylum seekers. The range of activities commonly performed by MRAA-focused CSOs concern: integration through guidance and counselling activities for migrants and asylum seekers; the development of North-South development collaborative projects; the promotion of cultural exchanges; the provision of legal, administrative and practical support; liaising and political claimsmaking. In their research, Fernández and Boursier (2016; p.247) find that only a few CSOs seek to enhance the integration of migrants and refugees through employment activities or the provision of development aid to other countries; rather, these organizations seek to promote MRAA integration through the provision of language courses (German or French lessons) coupled with citizenship Swiss culture courses.

Another aspect analyzed by Fernández and Boursier (2016) is the CSO's degree of institutionalization. While a significant number of CSOs have been found to rely on public subsidies, and to display considerable professionalization and formalization due to the presence of several paid staff positions, the protest-oriented CSOs, on the other hand, are found to be less institutionalized and mainly working on a voluntary basis, without receiving any subsidy due to ideological reasons. As Fernández and Boursier (2016; pp.249) observe: "the formal presence of job specializations [...] could be understood as a consequence of their historical course, these organizations have been active for several years, even decades; and even more significant still a large part of their activities rely strongly upon volunteer work (more than 60%)".

Overall, CSO are described in the academic literature as value-driven, encompassing deeply rooted norms of the Swiss social fabric. In this context, Dannecker (2017; p.58) notes: "Internationally Switzerland takes a top-position in the area of voluntary commitment and involvement of its citizens and of voluntary financial donations. In Switzerland contributions of civil society to the functioning of the society as a whole are considerable. A Swiss citizen is often member of a number of different civil society organisations".

As mentioned below, this model of individual associative attitude is underpinned by the subsidiarity principle, which is enshrined in the Swiss Constitution and limits the government action to only those domains that cannot be addressed by institutions or private citizens.

7.3 Overview and Categorization of CSOs in Geneva

Like the country's federal political system, the associative landscape with regard to the integration of migrants into the Swiss labour market is highly decentralised, and also conforms to the principle of subsidiarity. The number and type of associations varies from one canton to another. The types of collaboration the associations will have with the various actors also differ. Few associations operate at the national level. When this is the case, the cantonal associations enjoy a high degree of independence and autonomy; their activities differ and the office at national level usually acts as a coordinator.

The large differences between the cantons in the field of CSOs can be attributed, among other things, to the differences between the cantons in terms of public institutions in the field of professional integration. Thus, when institutions involved in education and training, employment, social assistance or support for people coming from asylum are not organised in the same way, the roles played by associations will not be the same in each canton.

The Swiss legal framework of integration into the labour market gives the power to the public institutions to collaborate with different actors including third sector actors to implement the policies. For example, the law governing social assistance in Geneva stipulates in its article on inter-institutional collaboration (Art. 4 LIASI), that the General Hospice collaborates with other public and private bodies to achieve the aims of the law and that it may establish a service contract with private bodies, 'within the framework of legal and regulatory provisions'. The beneficiaries of social assistance or migrants coming from the asylum context who are under responsibility of this public institution will have, depending on the case, the right to integration measures. The institution may mandate, for some of these measures, third parties, such as other institutions or private bodies such as CSOs.

If we look at associations active at national level such as Caritas, we notice, for example, that its role in integrating migrants into the labour market is fundamentally different in each canton. In the canton of Neuchâtel, for example, Caritas has been mandated by the cantonal authorities to manage the social assistance cases of refugees residing in the canton and to support them in their integration process. In addition to this mandate, it provides various types of support to the local and migrant population. In Geneva, a cantonal public institution is responsible for managing refugee cases. The Caritas association provides several types of support to local and migrant people, but even in this area, the programmes vary from one canton to another.

Thus, some associations carry out activities on behalf of the cantons, many work hand in hand with public institutions and some have developed activities to fill an institutional gap and offer services not provided by public institutions. Among the associations that work hand in hand with the authorities, some operate with service contracts from the authorities for all or part of their activities. The target audience for the activities will then be mainly composed of the beneficiaries of the public institution that has established the service contract with the association. In other cases, associations have started their work in a city or canton, and are setting up in other cities. For example, *Powercoders* that defines itself as a coding academy for refugees including training, coaching and placement in internships or *Singa*, that provides support for entrepreneurship to migrants for example.

In this overview, we will focus on CSOs and more particularly associations or foundations⁴⁸ active in the integration of migrants into the labour market in the canton of Geneva. Although Geneva has more than fifteen associations dedicated to supporting the integration of migrants into the labour market exclusively, most organisations involved in the professional integration of the local population in general play a very important role for migrants in Geneva. In the

⁴⁸ The legal establishment of an association in Switzerland is relatively simple. Most of the actors identified have the status of an association or foundation. We have not taken into account the social partners or social and solidarity enterprises that will be the subject of future analysis in the SIRIUS research project.

canton, 62% of the population over 15 years of age is of immigrant origin, 81% of whom were born abroad. Associations active in the field of professional integration and employability of the local population often have a large proportion of migrants among their beneficiaries and play an important role in their integration. However, some have created specific programmes or activities for migrants. Interestingly, in other cases, associations or activities initially created for migrants have extended their activities to a wider target audience that also includes the local population, as is the case with the *Geneveroule* association and the *Singa* association.

Associations aimed at the professional integration of migrants exclusively represent more or less half of the inventory collected.⁴⁹ The latter, can be categorized into three subgroups:

1. those whose activities are open to all types of migrants including persons in and out of asylum;
2. those open to refugees and mainly provisionally admitted persons; and
3. those whose activities are intended for asylum seekers.

In the first subgroup of associations, those open to migrants in general, we find associations for certain groups of migrants such as migrant women or young migrants. The association *Découvrir* supports the professional integration of qualified migrant women through support for the recognition of diplomas, guidance, coaching, mentoring and training. The associations *Camarada* and *CEFAM* support the integration of migrant women, sometimes with low qualifications, through training and guidance. *Carrefour Orientation Solidarité* provides support to migrant families and has a socio-professional integration sector, including other services such as childcare during appointments for example. For young migrants, the *Espace Jeunes Espoirs* of the *Kultura* association supports young people aged between 16 and 25-years-old from immigrant backgrounds and in situations of social and academic disruption with a view to socio-professional integration. Other associations from the diaspora or those active in integration support in general provide more timely support and basic information such as help with CVs or referrals to other organisations. Some offer courses for basic skills development such as computer science or French courses. Among the associations open exclusively to migrants, we distinguish a single association focusing on supporting entrepreneurship. This is *Singa*, an association active in Zurich and newly arrived in Geneva. Some of these associations have existed for more than 10 years, such as *Camarada*, founded in 1996, or *Découvrir*, founded in 2007. Others such as *Singa* or *Carrefour Orientation Solidarité* have been founded more recently (2017 and 2016 respectively).

The associations whose activities are mainly aimed at refugees and provisionally admitted persons are mostly younger associations, almost all of which were created in 2016 or afterwards. The *Thrive* association connects refugees and provisionally admitted persons with companies, providing them with coaching and also focusing on raising awareness and supporting companies in the engagement of a refugee. The *Powercoders* association, which defines itself as a coding academy for refugees, also works closely with the private sector. Other associations aimed at promoting the integration of refugees or provisionally admitted persons in specific areas have also emerged in recent years, such as the *Refugee Food Festival*, aimed at integrating refugees in the culinary field.

⁴⁹ The inventory does not pretend to be exhaustive. It does not include informal support provided by many diaspora or cultural associations with other objectives but that may occasionally provide *ad hoc* information on where to look for a job, and advice for applications for example.

The associations contributing to the integration of asylum seekers into the labour market are for the most part social integration support associations in general, providing *ad hoc* support in job searches (e.g. CV or letter). Interestingly, these associations are for the most part associations composed of residents of a commune or a neighbourhood and close to homes housing asylum seekers, such as *Carouge Accueille*, *Versoix Accueil* or *Bellevue Accueille*. Most were created after 2015. It is important to note that these associations also support and inform refugees or provisionally admitted persons once they obtain their status.

Finally, in the field of asylum, a group of organisations is active in the field of information, advocacy or defence of the rights of people coming from the asylum framework such as *Elisa Asile*, *Vivre Ensemble* or the *Organisation Suisse d'Aide aux Réfugiés*.

For those organisations that play a role integrating people into the labour market of the general population, whether they be local people or migrants, many provide support to people in need by providing either advice and individual coaching or training, internships or employment programmes. Other organisations support people in the development of their professional career, and accompany them to training or internships when necessary. Very often, the programmes of these associations are intended to work on the employability of people and bring them closer to the labour market through training, occupation programmes or internships.

In the field of training and education, the *Université Ouvrière* and the *Université Populaire* play an important role in providing literacy, local language, computer and basic skills courses including mathematics, for example. These are associations whose aim is to develop basic and continuing training, with priority given to low-skilled people, which promotes their social, cultural, economic and political integration.

Several of the organisations open to the general population and which play an important role in the integration of migrants into the labour market are organisations active at national level such as *CSP*, *Caritas*, *EPER*, the Red Cross (*Croix Rouge*), *Armée du Salut* or the *Oeuvre Suisse d'Entraide Ouvrière*. As mentioned earlier, however, their roles and activities vary from one canton to another.

As we have seen, many organizations whose primary purpose is not to support integration into the labour market play a role in the integration of migrants into the labour market in Geneva through activities that range from occasional support for job search, assistance in writing CVs or letters or language courses. For those aimed at supporting beneficiaries in their socio-professional integration, activities can range from simple consulting appointments to coaching and long-term support. Training, education, skills development, support in the search for training, internships or training are also part of the activities. These activities can be found isolated on their own or added together according to the associations. Some organisations such as *Thrive*, the *Carrefour Orientation Solidarité* or *Armée du Salut* with its *Travail Plus* programme even claim the holistic nature of their approach.

Box 7: Examples of CSOs Good Practices in Switzerland

Powercoders, founded in Bern in 2016, is a coding academy providing refugees and provisionally admitted persons with training opportunities in the IT field. The academy offers full-time intensive coding training for 3 months, facilitates internship placements in IT companies and puts beneficiaries in contact with potential employers. The academy's activities also include the provision of coaching and mentoring courses by individuals from the private sector who work on a voluntary basis. The academy has recently initiated two programs in Lausanne and in Zurich respectively, targeting the general population. The program in Lausanne is also open to migrants, refugees and temporarily admitted person

Website: <https://powercoders.org/>

Découvrir is an association founded in Geneva in 2007 by a migrant woman with expertise in human resources. The association was founded in order to combat underemployment and deskilling among skilled migrant women. It provides information about issues concerning diploma recognition, and it supports qualified migrant women throughout their route into the labour market. Activities range from personal coaching, group and networking training activities, the provision of French and English courses and social media management, among others. In 2018, the association received 690 women.

Website: <http://www.associationdecouvrir.ch/>

7.4 Methodology

As noted earlier, the decentralized and federalist character of the Swiss political system has an important impact on the development and organization of civil society. Thus, many associations only exist or are active only at a cantonal level. Associations active in many cantons or at a national level often operate differently depending on the cantons.

In order to understand the role of CSOs in the integration of MRAA into the labour market, we conducted 20 semi-structured interviews with MRAAs who had relevant experience with CSOs in the canton of Geneva, and 16 interviews with CSOs active in the field of MRAA labour market integration in Geneva.

From the 16 CSOs interviewed, five are active at a national level or in at least two other cantons (two of them). Of these 16 associations, eight have exclusively targeted migrants as beneficiaries and the other half work with a wider population groups; however, many of them have specific side programmes or services for migrants. Half of the organizations that work exclusively with migrants focus on supporting migrants regardless of status or permit. The others work exclusively with refugees and provisionally admitted persons or began by focusing only on this category of migrants. Two organizations also support asylum seekers as a specific target population.

In general, interviewed associations are open to people with all levels of qualification, with the exception of two associations working specifically with a qualified audience. While most associations are open to an audience of all ages, three have specific programmes for young people, including one, a programme specifically for young migrants. A fourth association active at the national level also has specific programmes for young people in other cantons, but not

in Geneva, the equivalent being already offered by another association according to the person interviewed.

Regarding women as a specific target population, three of the associations work exclusively with a female public: one of them with a female audience whether or not they are migrants, and the other two with exclusively female migrants. One focuses on an audience mainly composed of low-skilled or unskilled migrant women, and the other works exclusively with skilled migrant women.

To identify MRAAs interviewees, we relied mainly on the networks of the interviewed beneficiaries (almost every interviewed beneficiary provided a contact) on our own 'personal networks' and on the snowball sampling method (e.g. friends of friends, connections of colleagues, etc.). On the other side, some MRAAs have been contacted directly through some CSOs. All interviewed have arrived since 2008. Twelve of them came after 2014. The primary focus remains on MRAAs with non-EU origins. To capture a certain plurality of actors we conducted interviews with migrants with different geographical, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The interviewed include migrants from Colombia, Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, Brazil. Ten interviews have been conducted with refugees.

The majority of the interviewed MRAAs were mostly high qualified. The majority of the migrants were women. This, due to the important presence of CSOs supporting migrant women integration into the labour market but also to the fact that most of the persons that accepted to answer to the interviews were women.

7.5 How Do CSOs React to MRAs' Needs?

Most of the organizations interviewed face funding challenges. Reductions in public funding sources, accompanied by changes in public policies, are situations to which they have been called to adapt. This has resulted in a need to increase the number of sources of financing, making greater use of private financing and putting in place innovative strategies to make their activities sustainable. Among the strategies mentioned were the establishment of self-financing sources, partnerships with the private sector or with other associations. An example is four associations that are members of the same network (including two associations interviewed) and support the professional integration of women. The four associations have hired a professional job coach together to look for potential employers for their beneficiaries.

Several representatives of organizations also cited labour market evolution as a major challenge facing migrants and a major challenge for the work of organizations. Among the aspects that come into play are the reduction in employment requiring few qualifications, the professionalization of sectors of the labour market that require more and more qualifications even for traditionally low-skilled occupations, increased competition and the changes brought about by new technologies. Several representatives mentioned the need for a redefinition of the workplace in our society.

"We have to rethink everything and integration with it. I think that social issues will take up more space in the future. The type of employment is changing, the labour market is changing, jobs that require few qualifications are becoming increasingly rare. Automation and new technologies are also changing the situation. We will probably have to go back to a society in

which the social will have more space. I think that in the future society will have to adapt and find a viable solution for people who cannot find a job." (3_CS0_SUI)

"I think that with the new realities of the labour market (professionalization, robotization), reintegration associations will have to ask themselves the question of what is the place of work in our society. And how migration flows are managed in parallel, which will not weaken and will become even stronger. What is the place of the human being in our society, which today is almost entirely defined by the professional world. "What are you?" "I'm a bus driver." In the future it may be more difficult to find a job. Maybe we'll need more subsidized jobs?" (10_CS0_SUI).

Below we present in more detail the origin, evolution and type of CSO activities aiming to promote migrants' labour market integration as well as the main challenges with respect to seeking funding and building collaboration.

7.5.1 Origin and Evolution of Activities Related to the Professional Integration of Migrants

Organizations active in the professional integration of the broad, including local population have generally been active for many years. They report that a large proportion of their beneficiaries are migrants, and that they have noticed an increase in this population among their main beneficiary group in recent years. The consequent diversification of origins, linked for example to the field of asylum, is accompanied by other obstacles such as cultural distance.

Organizations open to the broad population have developed activities for migrants in response to growing demand – and in some cases, following a discussion or partnership with a public institution.

Organizations initially active in the field of social integration report that they have developed activities to support the integration of migrants into the labour market in order to respond to a demand, which also comes from their own beneficiaries or following the observation of a need. Other organizations provide one-time support such as resume writing assistance. However, these activities represent only a small part of their activities.

Organizations founded with the main objective of promoting the integration of migrants into the labour market were born as a result of a growing need, and for the youngest ones, as a result of the recent migrant crisis.

However, two of the organizations whose main goal is the integration of migrants into the labour market were born long before the crisis. One is founded by a migrant woman who is experienced in the field of human resources, following the difficulties she encountered upon her arrival. The other initially resulted from an initiative to target asylum seekers as a first priority. It later opened its programmes to a wider local population.

Among the possible reasons mentioned for the growing need to support migrants, in addition to the increase of migration and the decrease of low-skilled jobs, some interviewed mentioned legal reasons. Indeed, dependence on social assistance is a threat to the renewal of residence permits. People will therefore hesitate to use social services to support them in their professional integration. When it comes to renewing permits, more people turn to CSOs for help as public authorities ask them to have a job to see their permits renewed. Three representatives mentioned that they regularly meet people facing administrative difficulties resulting from the law, since pending the renovation of the permit, these people receive a

provisional certificate, and must find a job to see their permits renewed. However, few employers are inclined to hire staff with only a certificate and no permit.

"We have more and more women looking for any work to renew their residence permits. This is a real problem. The cantonal office takes a lot of time in the renewing process and the conditions are that people are independent, speak the language, etc. Often they accept any job because they have to leave social assistance but they are in a vicious circle. They must renew their permit, for that, they must have a job, but as long as they do not have a permit and only a certificate, employers do not take them. It's very difficult." (7_CS0_SUI)

It is important to note that only three of the organizations interviewed were carried by migrants in the beginning. One is the organization founded by the migrant woman from the field of human resources; the other is an umbrella organization of migrant associations that has developed a professional integration program for migrants. The last one, a migrants' association, provides only occasional support in this area.

The association led by migrants that runs a programme for the professional integration of young migrants talks about the difficulty of being an association run by migrants in the middle of associations lead by locals in the specific field of professional integration:

"The difficulty we had from the beginning was how to find our place among associations that are already old and that find that migrants are competing with them? We had to prove ourselves, to position ourselves. The criticism is real. When you see old and already established structures and a new association emerges, she is seen as a beginner. But the problem is not solved, although the pre-existing associations have experience and are professionals. There are always young people who break up. There is always a need." (12_CS0_SUI)

In general, several organizations report that former beneficiaries have been hired or volunteered in some cases. Many remain active in organizations by becoming mentors, presenting their experiences and backgrounds to new beneficiaries.

The degree of formalization of the organizations interviewed offers a broad range. Three of the organizations active at the national level are large, highly formalized NGOs with a committee and a directorate general. On the other end of the scale we see a small association comprised of only a few people active on an *ad hoc* or voluntary basis. All organizations interviewed comply with the minimum organizational structure criteria for an association in Switzerland: they consist of a committee with a president, a treasurer and a secretary. However, most organizations interviewed are highly formalized with professionalized teams.

One organization active for more than 20 years explains how its relations with the public sector have led it to greater formalization:

"For a long time, we were in co-management, maybe 20 years ago. We didn't have a committee. Since the budget was increasing and there was a service contract with the public sector, it was necessary to have a committee, the authorities required it. Moving to a more hierarchical structure was a challenge, which we were able to overcome." (7_CS0_SUI)

Most of the associations interviewed are also highly professionalized. Only two of the organizations interviewed (also the less formal ones) have no employees. Once again, these are two associations whose support for professional integration is limited to information and occasional help in finding a job and whose main activity is to help migrants with various issues

concerning daily life and social integration. The third association, which provides *ad hoc* support and information as well as administrative and legal support regarding social insurances access, operates with three part-time employees with a secretary and a lawyer. Three other organizations operate with a small paid team and a large network of volunteers. The latter are associations whose main target audience is refugees and provisionally admitted persons. All three are aimed at finding the funds to open additional salaried positions.

The other organizations work with a few volunteers on an *ad hoc* basis or without volunteers. Five of them have no volunteers. The majority of employees are people whose activities correspond to the qualifications. The professions present are career counsellors or people with qualifications and experience in the field of human resources, lawyers, secretaries, accountants, communication managers, managers of partnerships with the private sector, etc. Two of the organizations that operate with a large volunteer workforce say that this is a challenge. One of their objectives is to be able to obtain funding to provide salaries for a portion of the volunteers or hire professionals so that they can meet needs in a more professional way.

When we ask them about the organizational structure of organizations, most representatives mention the flexibility in which they develop, and decision-making processes that include employees despite the formalization and different degrees of hierarchy of structures. The flexibility mentioned concerns, for example, the possibility of proposing and implementing new activities or programmes or a certain degree of flexibility in the care of participants. An organization seems to have the most leeway in terms of monitoring beneficiaries and points out that it does not work with programs in order to be able to offer tailor-made support to its beneficiaries. It is also the only organization that does not receive any public funding.

7.5.2 Activities

The range of activities offered by the organizations interviewed includes information and occasional support for job search or counselling, personal coaching, development of soft skills (languages, basic or professional skills), job search techniques, group activities and workshops, training, internships, employment placement. Several of the organisations offer programmes combining the different types of activities, and some associations offer a programme lasting several months combining individual support, group activities and support in to engage in an internship, training or employment. Many of them also follow the participant during and after the internship or training, and interact with the employer in order to work on the necessary points with the participant. Three of the interviewed associations also organise mentoring programmes or activities that include support or advice from migrant or local volunteers. Organizations active in these areas aim to 'improve the employability of the participant and bring him/her closer to the labour market'. The means mentioned to achieve these aims include providing information on the Swiss labour market and its functioning, the development of soft as well as basic or professional skills, support for the development of a professional project that is appropriate and motivates the participant but is at the same time realistic and achievable and finding ways to achieve it and work on the participant's self-esteem. Another common feature of the programs mentioned is the step representing the practice very often provided by an internship. Several organizations mention not only helping the participant to find an internship but also following or advising him/her during the internship. Some also mention being in contact with employers in order to be able to get feedback and work in ongoing coaching on important points with the participant. According to several representatives, the support provided is a time-consuming process. The fact that the follow-up

is not mandatory for the participant (as opposed to some public institution programs) contributes to the participant's motivation and commitment, which maximizes the chances of success.

"We organize group workshops with other migrants. It allows them to understand that this is not a separate problem, that other people experience the same obstacles that others face the same difficulties and they can regain their confidence." (15_CS0_SUI)

"In the processes there is always a coach advisor, who follows the person from beginning to end, then there are training modules, reorientation, job search techniques etc. Modules that can be activated according to needs. Then internships in companies, contact with superiors to have a maximum of exchange in relation to the reality of the market. We make temporary or permanent placements and follow up with social institutions." (8_CS0_SUI)

"The idea is to find something that they like, that suits them and that they can go all the way and give them the means to do it. Work on cognitive fundamentals but also on life skills, make sure they can look people in the eye when they speak etc." (9_CS0_SUI)

7.5.3 Funding

Most of the organizations interviewed have funding sources from both public and private sectors. Some organisations have also set up occasional sources of self-financing by renting their rooms or offering human resources consulting service, for example. Only one organization interviewed is entirely financed by private funds.

The sources of public funding come from subsidies, mainly at the cantonal level, then at the municipal level and to a lesser extent at the federal level. An important source of financing also represents the financing received through service contracts with public institutions. Indeed, several of the organizations interviewed offer a support service for which they provide an individual cost covering a portion of the participant's costs. This individual cost is very often covered by the public institutions on which the participants depend, since the organisations in question collaborate with the institutions (social services or unemployment, for example) in the form of service contracts. For people who are not dependent on a public institution and who are unable to pay their individual participation costs, associations plan or seek solutions to help them (payment arrangement, internal relief fund, support in seeking funding). In other cases, some of the organizations' programs are the result of a mandate from a public institution. In this case, the programme is only open to beneficiaries of the institutions that send them. Very few associations provide a paid service to a population that is mainly not financially dependent on a public institution. This is the case for associations with a more qualified target audience such as the association for qualified migrant women or the association for the support of entrepreneurship, which in both cases request a financial contribution that covers only part of the care, the rest being financed by grants or private donors. In these cases, the counterpart is adapted to the income or arrangements for payment later or in several instalments may be possible. It is also used as a way to enhance the commitment of the participant. Access for migrants, and more particularly for refugees and provisionally admitted persons to CSOs programmes, is therefore strongly dependent on the public institution as paying counter parts of the costs.

"On average, a participant costs 10 000 francs from recruitment to the end of the follow-up, (selection, course, internship or even follow-up after internship if no solution). Half is covered

by the institution to which the participants belong, the rest is financed by the company in which the participant is engaged." (13_CS0_SUI)

"The cost of provision at the individual level is often covered by public institutions, such as social services, disability insurance or regional employment offices. For people for whom we don't know who to turn, we try to find funding with private donors, this source represents about 10% of the funding." (8_CS0_SUI)

The interviews we conducted show that many organisations are financially dependent on public institutions and labour market integration policies. Several associations seem to rely on these service contracts. In the case of a young organisation offering entrepreneurship support for migrants, the idea of a service contract with a public institution would increase access to the programme for a larger number of refugees or people admitted on a temporary basis:

"We are having a discussion with the General Hospice [public institution] to see if they pay for the complete and real cost of the participation of immigrants participants under their framework [refugees, temporarily admitted persons or beneficiaries from the social assistance]. Nothing clear for the moment but there is a possibility there." (14_CS0_SUI)

The representative of an association that supports migrant women noted that the association is part of one of the few organizations that offers this type of support without requiring financial participation from the participant and therefore gives access to programmes to people who are not dependent on any institution.

"There are also men, young adults, often [the] women's children [as part of our beneficiaries]. However, we resist husbands a little bit, but we're doing a lot of work. Husbands often say they do not know where to go. We can't take them for capacity reasons as well, but it is true that we do not know where to refer them when they do not have the funding. We are one of the last institutions who do not look at people and say from which institution they come from? Who will finance them? As some associations only work with beneficiaries of institutions (e.g. unemployment, social services and service in charge of integration of migrants from the asylum framework)." (3_CS0_SUI)

Representatives of older organizations generally mentioned a decrease in public subsidies and a need to compensate by making increasing use of private funds. As a matter of example, five of the organizations interviewed mentioned the 'unemployment fund' as an important source of funding that is now at risk. The 'unemployment fund' is a special fund of the City of Geneva intended to finance projects aimed at the socio-professional integration of people seeking employment. The latter having announced its disappearance, political discussions are currently taking place to decide on a possible follow-up in another form. The organizations interviewed mentioned that they were waiting for decisions, participating in joint actions with other organizations and beginning to look for other solutions to compensate for the loss.

"We are beneficiaries of the unemployment fund. It's going to stop, we're lobbying with the other associations so that it can be continued. We're going to see the magistrates, counsel them and so on. But right now, we're in uncertainty." (10_CS0_SUI)

Most of the private funding comes from foundations and companies. Some organizations also mention relying on donations and legacies. Young organizations also report receiving in-kind donations from companies such as computer equipment, the provision of rooms on an *ad hoc* basis or the provision of volunteer professionals for consulting or workshops.

Almost a majority of representatives identify funding as one of the most important challenges they face. For associations with some experience, the tendency to have to increase the number of funding sources due to the decrease in public funding is a problem and has a direct impact on the type of activities offered by organizations:

"We notice that we are increasingly having to have a single project funded by several organizations. And it takes a lot of time, each organization has its own requirements for how to apply, present the results etc." (7_CSO_SUI)

"Sometimes, you have to cut projects in pieces according to where the funding comes from. There is this need to stick to the fund and what they are asking for. Associations often now have to adapt their offer to the financing, which does not necessarily correspond most closely to the need." (3_CSO_SUI)

Many organizations identify uncertainty related to the Integration Agenda, a federal policy for the integration of migrants coming from the asylum framework, which will be implemented in 2019. The Agenda is mentioned several times as a source of challenges in terms of funding and collaboration with public institutions. It therefore could potentially affect the growth of the CSO sector:

"What is interesting about the Integration Agenda is that the cantons receive more money. We obviously knocked on the door of the institution in charge but they are still in the dark. They are internalizing. Perhaps they will need the associations differently, but for the moment we are in the dark. All last year we had to fight to get information on the reforms but the institutions tell us that they are not yet ready. It was a little stressful for us because we strengthened our team and we learned that the funding was going to be strengthened with the Integration Agenda. We had already incurred expenses, there are people working for us. But the institutions did not get involved. They told us to wait. They are still in the process of reorganization and we are totally dependent on what they actually do. We have very little leeway and unfortunately we learn the information later or by chance." (10_CSO_SUI)

7.5.4 Collaborations

As we have seen, a large part of the relationship between the public institutions and the associations interviewed is contingent on the issue of funding. In many cases, some of the associations' programs are the result of collaboration or a mandate from public institutions.

Additionally, almost all the organizations interviewed mentioned institutions channelling beneficiaries toward them. Thus, they are managed by the institution in charge of social assistance and migrants, by the cantonal employment office, or by other public institutions. This is of course the case when the institutions mandate the organization or when the organization works in the form of a service contract with the institutions. But we also note that when there is no mandate or service contract, institutions also very often refer people to these associations. For example, the cantonal employment office refers people who do not know how to make a CV for their registration file to an association that they do not directly finance. Another example is that the only association that receives no public funding also cites institutions such as the social welfare agency as one of the main channels for the arrival of participants.

Some associations seem to depend heavily on the relationship with institutions for the 'recruitment of participants'.

Apart from the different forms of collaboration with institutions, the organisations interviewed mentioned regular collaboration with other actors such as other associations.

The majority of the stakeholders interviewed mentioned referring beneficiaries to other organizations and receiving referrals from other organizations. Several participate in joint events and some of them collaborate in a more formal way as part of their programs. Among the forms of collaboration mentioned, the exchange of practices, financing ideas, the joint organisation of workshops, the sharing of rooms or premises, lobbying for specific objects such as the unemployment fund.

"We collaborate with many other associations, we organize events together, exchange on practices, funding ideas etc., we send us persons and support us on rooms location. As our activities rely on rooms and rooms are very expensive in both cities, sometimes associations give us rooms for free or for cheaper." (14_CSO_SUI)

More than half of the organizations interviewed claimed to belong to networks, umbrella or collective organizations with other associations such as *Insertion Suisse* or *Insertion Genève*, CAPAS or the *Réseau Femmes*, a network of women's associations. Within the framework of the women's network, four member associations of the network, including two of the associations interviewed, have set up a joint project.

Only one association explicitly mentioned that it was not a member of any collective or network by choice: *"We are members of nothing at all, we are sympathizers of many things, but we are not members. That gives us some latitude. These networks ask for everything about everything, they always want to know a lot of things, whereas what is interesting is to exchange ideas."* (9_CSO_SUI)

Three associations spontaneously mentioned potential competition between associations as an important issue.

"We refer people to other organizations if it is more appropriate. Collaboration is still a little complicated, especially in the associative sector. There's the cake you have to share. Let's be cash, again, it's a market issue. You are in partnership with the others but there is always this posture of mistrust, will he steal my mandate? There can of course be exchanges, knowing who does what. But to my knowledge, there are not many associations that have common projects. These can be projects with complementary skills. There may be an exception, women's associations, with complementary synergies. Insertion, it is true that there are quite many things in Geneva in the field of insertion." (4_CSO_SUI)

"We must be very careful not to compete with other associations working in the field of professional integration. There is a risk for funding and there may be discrepancies." (3_CSO_SUI)

"Until recently, what we had in mind was the picture of the associations working on their own, without any intention to collaborate with others because of a fear of competition; but, I think this is changing. We see more and more organizations seeking to collaborate with each other and find solutions jointly; sometimes it is a matter of doing one step at a time and then coming to realize that collaboration is possible." (1_CSO_SUI)

As most of the associations say they have a lot of demand we may wonder if the competition is not related to relationship with the public institutions, including funding mechanisms.

With respect to collaborations with other partners, the private sector appears to be a partner of growing importance. Several organizations report collaborating regularly with companies both for the placement of their beneficiaries and for funding or partnerships for projects. But the private sector is also mentioned as an actor whose organizations try to have inputs on needs and that they also seek to raise awareness of or inform. Several organizations also mentioned organizing or participating in joint events involving members of the private sector, other organizations and institutions. The development and strengthening of relations with the private sector seem to be one of the key objectives to aim towards for several organizations in the future.

7.6 What Do MRAs Get and Seek (if They Do at All) from CSOs?

The majority of the beneficiaries or past beneficiaries interviewed got to know about the associations through their personal network (friends), active internet research and in few occasions through the main public assistance office of Geneva (The General Hospice) in charge of social assistance and migrants from the asylum framework. An important number of women contacted and benefited from the services of associations focused specifically on the professional integration of migrant women. Depending on their level of education, they contacted association for qualified women or association for women with no qualifications and/or lower educational level.

The interviewed contacted and looked for the support of an association with the following expectations: get a panorama on the working reality in Switzerland; have access to information that could allow them to get more control on their situation; solving problems and finding ways to overcome difficulties related to the research of work; solving difficulties and administrative procedures related to the recognition of previous professional experiences and degrees; get a personal and specific accompaniment from side of the association; overcome a feeling of isolation and loneliness.

The main motive forces that pushed the interviewed to look for the support of an association were related to a wish to overcome problems and a dissatisfaction with the support they received from the public assistance office or/and the main office of unemployment.

7.6.1 Problem Solving

The great majority of MRAs couldn't solve on their own problematics and difficulties related either to their situation as an asylum seeker, refugee and/or migrant or to their professional situation in Switzerland. The main difficulty that migrants encountered as they arrived in Switzerland was in fact to orient themselves and understand how the labour market works. The working reality in Switzerland was defined by the majority as 'different' from the one in their origin country and as disorienting. The majority also encountered problems gaining recognition of their diplomas or previous training and finding a job. In these cases, the associations took on the role of "*problem solver*": the interviewed had the expectation that the associations could help them to solve the different difficulties that they encountered and find ways to overcome the barriers imposed by their situation, their permits, the market and the state. As one beneficiary stated: "*The association [I go to] wants to immediately give an answer, that can be an answer of solidarity, with the activities, that in some way are services that should be provided by public institutions, and that now are not granted*" (17_MRA_SUI).

7.6.2 Dissatisfaction with Public Support and Services

Many decided to look for support in an association/organization because they weren't satisfied with the support or services offered by the cantonal and state offices. In fact, initially, many interviewed looked for support in the cantonal office for professional orientation of Geneva, or other cantonal offices. These weren't considered useful, since they gave only general information and often told them to visit other associations. Many interviewees claimed that they had a need and hope for a more personal and specific approach.

As one of the interviewed claimed:

"At the beginning I was simply looking for the support in the wrong place, namely in state institutions and services like the unemployment service, the orientation office etc. these are too formal, and you have the sensation that they don't really are interested in helping you." (1_MRA_SUI).

Another interviewed claimed as well:

"The public office of integration and the social worker were supportive, but they have an institutional view of the social-professional integration, that could represent a real restriction." (2_MRA_SUI) Because of such dissatisfaction, they looked for support elsewhere.

7.6.3 Services They Benefited From

The great majority of the interviewed benefited from the following services: mentorship program, training programs, support and advice for applications, support to engage in diploma recognition process, access to occupational activities.

The majority of the interviewed benefited from mentorship programs that consisted of the individual support of a personal mentor / coach chosen in relation. Some mentorship programs were accompanied by a program of modules and seminars, often supported by external professionals and experts, where the purpose was to develop and present a personal professional project (developed with the support of the own mentor/coach).

Different associations offered training programs that lasted for several months to the beneficiaries. The programs had different purposes and agendas. Some beneficiaries for example benefited from a training program in order to get a diploma for professional housekeepers. In general, each training program included specific language lessons and computer classes.

Many benefited once or several times from sessions in which they learnt to write a CV and motivation letter as well as to adapt them in relation to a job offer. This service was used more punctually and less frequently. In order to pursue a study or to start an internship or in the best cases to practice a job in sector in which they were trained in their origin country, almost all had to gain recognition for their previous experience or degrees. Many of the interviewees received support to engage in the recognition process. The beneficiaries also received information and orientation. They were provided with an overview of the labour market, general information and 'instruments' useful in the research of a job.

All of the interviewees attended language courses offered by the public office. Only the minority attended these courses offered by NGOs. Some associations offered short internships or opportunities to do volunteering work, which some of them benefited from. Some of them benefited from the services of more associations.

The interviews show a strong relationship between the beneficiary and the association because of the positive experience of the former when it comes to the CSO services received. As shared by one of the interviewed beneficiaries:

"I always loved this place [referring to the headquarters of the association], to me is like being in paradise. I usually came here when I had some time, but I actually decided to get involved once I had the time. Probably the moment when I started to talk with other people like me. It's necessary to speak the same language, share similar experience." (20_MRA_SUI).

Moreover, according to another interviewee, *"The more the bond between beneficiaries is strong, the more are the chances for the person to 'improve' his/her situation"* (17_MRA_SUI). Yet, while these experiences are relevant for the CSOs to understand and analyse the needs of beneficiaries and create relationships between them, there is also a *"negative effect"* (17_MRA_SUI), since there is a chance that this environment remains closed to a broader community.

7.7 Migrants' Assessment of the Support Received

The great majority of the interviewed was satisfied with the services of the associations. The majority expressed feelings of gratefulness and recognition.

Considering the interviews, it appears that the mentorship programs were one of the services that most responded to the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries. Mentorship had several positive outcomes that directly or indirectly supported integration into the labour market. According to many interviewees, through the mentorship programs the associations were also able to better tackle the singularity of the different beneficiaries and find solutions and opportunities based on the profile of a single person.

Psychological benefits were mentioned by almost all interviewees. The personal approach supported a process of 'rebuilding of confidence' and helped to fight against feelings of alienation determined by migration and especially the difficulties of finding a job or occupational activity. As emphasized by an interviewee: *"When I arrived in Geneva I noticed that this city tries to hide the problem of job insecurity, especially concerning economic migrants. So I decided to follow a mentorship programme to find support"* (19_MRA_SUI).

Considering the interviews with migrants as well as the interviews with stakeholders in previous research work packages, the lack of self-confidence and presence of alienation represent great barriers to the process of professional labour market integration. For this reason, psychological benefits should be considered an important outcome that support the process of labour market integration. The three following citations reflect the thoughts of the majority of interviewees who benefited from mentorship programs or personal coaching and who mentioned the psychological dimension of such programs:

"I learned to have confidence in myself. When I arrived in Switzerland I completely lost confidence in myself, I couldn't find a job, I had bad experiences with the interviews, and I wasn't able to speak properly French. I was afraid to speak French. Thanks to the regular meetings with my coach I learnt to express myself and to regain confidence in myself. Speak in French about my project in the public presentation was a huge accomplishment for me. This is what helped me the most." (3_MRA_SUI).

“One of the projects that have participated tries to work with the emotional sphere of people from a psychosocial perspective. Participants don't need to have a diagnosis of mental health illness to participate; they just need to be psychologically affected by the migration trajectory. We have been working self-esteem, mutual support, and social bonds. We have learned to be active in the society.” (18_MRA_SUI).

“The coaches not only help you to improve your CV and your motivation letter. They help you also psychologically. If we have any kind of worries or problems you can count on them, they become your reference. You can talk openly with them and they will try to find a solution as quickly as possible. The association try really to help every single woman. There is a personal approach that improve a feeling of self-confidence, which you lose when you arrive here because you easily forget that you have some competences and that you are qualified.” (4_MRA_SUI).

Many of the women appreciated, in the case of one of the associations, that the association exists for qualified migrant women. Meeting other qualified women with whom she shared the same experience or at least the same worries and difficulties, helped this interviewee to understand that the problem and difficulties finding a job weren't directly related to them as a person.

Getting the opportunity to follow an internship or volunteering activities was also considered as the most useful services offered by a CSO. Thanks to this, those who wanted to work in the social sector had the possibility to learn how the job is practiced in Switzerland, they could gain local experience and especially build an associative network. Some found a job as a result of the internship or volunteering experience. The internship allowed them in many cases to have access to a position or network that allowed them to find a job or to enter for example, in the university of social work that requested practical experience.

The informative sessions were also considered by many as very useful and an empowering process. Informative meetings allowed them to understand which opportunities exist, how to look and how to apply for a job, in certain cases how to use digital platforms (e.g. LinkedIn), how to conduct an interview, etc. These sessions gave a general 'panorama' that allowed the beneficiaries to get a new awareness of the working environment.

Only a minority of the past-beneficiaries considered their experience with the CSOs as disappointing.

One relevant criticism was made by a LGBT migrant, who criticised the lack of associations able to support LGBT refugees in a proper way: *“Being lesbian and being a woman and being a refugee are elements that influence the process of professional integration. Being a LGBT and a refugee require a different support, also for the professional integration” (8_MRA_SUI).* According to the same interviewee, a relevant problematic is that many associations (even these for LGBT migrants) are managed by 'Swiss hetero people' who can't really know what it means to be a LGBT migrant trying to build a new life and integrate professionally in a completely different situation.

Another criticism was the incapacity to tackle problems of certain profiles. One interviewee, a thirty-year-old man from Syria who obtained the permit as a provisory admitted person (and not as refugee), claimed that the associations can't really support the professional integration of migrants with provisory permits and asylum seekers. He qualified many CSOs that he consulted as pessimistic and incapable of managing the reticence the employers to offer a job or even an internship to provisory admitted asylum seekers:

“The association can’t really help people who have my profile. Migrants with a B permit are even helped by the community centres and many other structures. Considering my case, it was the project of the canton that really helped me, because they didn’t consider my provisory permit nor my age. They support people who don’t want to benefit from the unemployment service. This project offered an alternative. They really were able to consider my case, my profile and my project. On the contrary, the associations couldn’t help me and they didn’t really believe in me. Swiss employers and even the association don’t know how to deal with my permit, because it is provisory, even if I can stay here for years.” (9_MRA_SUI)

Some migrants with 'specific' professional baggage claimed as well that some associations weren't able to respond to their needs because of the significant barriers imposed by labour market. One respondent, for example – a 55-year-old political refugee who was an economist for the Minister of Economy and Commerce and had a university degree in Physics – who tried to benefit from a mentorship program for qualified migrants claimed:

“On one side I was too qualified in a specific sector, they couldn’t find any economist nor physicist. On the other side, my age was and is an obstacle, being over fifty doesn’t support a process of professional integration.” (8_MRA_SUI)

Moreover because of his 'political status', no international association to which he applied for work responded to his applications. His degrees were recognised but his profile wasn't attractive enough; being a refugee and being considered as political opposition to the Government of his country of origin wasn't helpful, especially for the international organisations. The political background of certain political refugees who had a high political profile in their origin country and had to leave because they had become considered enemy of the state represented a barrier to practising their profession even in Switzerland. The associations couldn't overcome these barriers and were often challenged to find solutions or alternative approaches.

7.8 Switzerland: Conclusions

CSOs are evolving in impactful and dynamic ways. Our analysis has shown that the landscape of organizations active in this field has grown richer in recent years – and particularly after 2014. Geneva already had organisations supporting the integration of migrants for many years. We can for example highlight the well-established presence in the canton of actors supporting the professional integration of skilled and unskilled migrant women.

In recent years, moreover, the canton has seen the emergence of new initiatives aimed more specifically at migrants from the asylum framework. They offer information, advice and individual support, training and placement among other things. Some of these new initiatives are more innovative by focusing on areas such as computer coding or by adopting approaches that integrate the private sector into their activities. Overall, CSOs possess significant experience and expertise, particularly at grassroots level, that can help public institutions experiment with innovative actions and formulate policy and strategy effectively.

However, the work and the role of CSOs in the integration of MRAs into the Swiss labour market – and the sustainability of their actions - cannot be dissociated from the scope and development of public policy, or from the development of public funding. The interviews with representatives show the existence of a complementary relationship between CSOs and public

funding but also that CSO activities depend on public policies and institutions. This is *dependence* in the sense that part of the work of some organizations depends on a mandate, with public institutions or funding from them in different forms.

The relationship between CSOs, public policies and institutions is complementary in the sense that civil society seems to fill institutional gaps by offering other kinds of services and providing support to people who are not catered for by institutions. The MRAs interviewed in our study found in the support of civil society organizations elements that they felt were lacking in the institutions. Among the elements mentioned were listening, more personalised support based on a relationship of trust, work on self-confidence and the impression of a real interest in supporting and finding solutions for them.

In general, most of the organizations we interviewed are formalized organizations that provide professional services. These organisations mostly provide services to support the integration and increase the employability of people. They do not fall into the category of organisations active in the field of advocacy, which according to the literature may be more informal and generated by social movements. Organisations active in the field of advocacy and migration are mainly active in issues related to migrants' rights, their legal status and asylum law and procedures.

Overall, the formalization and professionalization of the organizations in which we are interested seems to be specific to organizations active in the field of integration into the labour market in general in Switzerland. Dependency on public policies seems to be one of the factors calling for this formalization and professionalization. The formal and professional nature of the integration sector in the labour market of migrants, but also of the population in general, also seems to be one factors that may explain the limited place occupied by migrants themselves as leaders of initiatives and organisations active in the field of professional integration. Migrants' role is often limited to informal support involving *ad hoc* advice in organisations whose main purpose is social integration. Two interviewed organisations made an exception, both led by professional migrants in the field and who, according to the interviews, had to prove themselves and demonstrate that they had a place in this professional and formalised landscape of support for professional integration. However, the interviews showed that support from people with migration experience was seen as beneficial by beneficiaries and professionals. Thus, some messages, such as learning new cultural codes, can be better received if they come from people who have been in the same situation. The example set by the paths of these people is a factor that helps to build self-confidence and for others to be aware that they are not the only people confronting the obstacles they face. This is in circumstances where a lack of self-confidence is seen as one of the major obstacles to integration. Interestingly, the organisations in question and, indeed, other organisations as well, have also set up activities in which other migrants are integrated through events with testimonies or engaged as mentors, for example.

The study suggests that the role of CSOs in the integration of MRAs into the labour market is becoming increasingly encompassing. The emergence of new actors or activities in existing organizations as mentioned above seems to be a first step in this transformation. Moreover, interviews with representatives suggest that some of these new activities supporting refugees and provisionally admitted persons have significant potential to expand their focus to other types of migrants in the future. This is shown by the example of the organization that trains migrants from the asylum framework to enter in the labour market in the computing coding area and that is now opened to other migrants.

Another factor that can profoundly transform the role of CSOs in the integration of MRAs into the labour market is the evolution of policies, and more specifically, the implementation in all the cantons of the Integration Agenda that starts this year (2019) and aims to enhance the integration of migrants from the asylum framework into the labour market. The way the policy will be implemented (which is still unknown), could represent either a challenge or opportunity for the organizations since it may either exclude civil society or more strongly include selected civil society actors.

Looking ahead, CSO leaders may need to understand how shifting external contexts will shape their opportunities to achieve impact, and, in particular, what this evolution means for their relationships with the private sector, and with public institutions and authorities. In an uncertain and changing environment, CSOs can no longer work well in isolation – new, more effective ways of tackling societal challenges, such as migration, will inevitably urge them to look to out-of-the-box sources for inspiration to adapt successfully. Overall, CSOs can play a particularly powerful role as an enabler, a constructive challenger and an advocate of the marginalized or under-represented, creating the socio-political space for collaborations that are based on high levels of societal trust and the collective good.

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8 United Kingdom

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8.1 Introduction

This report provides a detailed overview and analysis of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the UK that can be regarded as potential enablers and/or barriers in integrating migrants, refugees and asylum applicants (MRAs) into the labour market. We begin by providing an analysis of the existing literature which has assessed the role of CSOs thus far. We then examine the numbers and characteristics of organisations which deal directly or indirectly with the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the UK labour market. Following this, we briefly outline the methodology and provide an overview of the interviews conducted. The report then investigates through the analysis of the data stemming from our qualitative interviews, how CSOs react to the needs of MRAs alongside the effectiveness of services to address the needs of labour market integration. We then conclude by highlighting how CSOs facilitate or hinder the integration of MRAs into the UK labour market.

8.2 The Role of CSOs Through Academic Lenses

To understand the position of the civil society sector in the labour market integration of non-EU migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK it is useful to briefly review the evolution that the third sector experienced in the country's policy implementation since 1979, when the election of a Conservative UK Government led by Margaret Thatcher advanced "New Right" policies which made the subsidiary principle a cornerstone of its idea of public policy-making, opening the way for the private sector to become the most relevant provider of what used to be 'public services' (Gamble, 1994). This new policy paradigm was based on the assumption that the market was the most effective and efficient mechanism with which to organise public, and in particular welfare state, services, while the 'state had to be rolled back' (Aiken and Bode, 2009; Taylor, 2003). The establishment of a competitive mechanism for the 'contracting out' of services and the creation of internal 'quasi-markets' through the introduction of a purchaser-provider relationship (particularly in the UK health care system) created a favourable environment for private organisations as well as civil society organisations (including social enterprises) to intervene in service provision (Allen et al., 2011; Grand, 1991).

The policy trajectories instigated during the period of the Thatcher (then Major) Governments were continued by the New Labour Government elected in 1997 and subsequently also by the Conservative-led Coalition Government which came to power in 2010 (Allen et al., 2012; Grand, 1991; Haugh and Kitson, 2007). During the New Labour Government, the state was conceptualised as an 'enabler' in promoting civic activism and engaging with civil society organisations to address societal needs (Carmel and Harlock, 2008; Haugh and Kitson, 2007), while at the same time, civil society organisations were promoted to foster community

development and renewal, enhancing the role of local agencies as a fundamental element of encouraging active citizenship (Johnson, 1999). They became, at least in theory, a partner not only in service delivery but also in policy formulation and service management (Osborne and McLaughlin, 2004). The New Labour Government placed an increasing focus on the local delivery of policy, and civil society organisations were considered by many policy-makers to be better embedded in the community and thus better able to understand specific societal needs than many state actors (Haugh and Kitson, 2007; Nicholls and Teasdale, 2017).

In the 2010 UK General Election, dominated by the debate over how to address the financial crisis, one central plank of the Conservative Party manifesto was that of the “Big Society” (Kisby, 2010). The key values underpinning the type of community solidarity pursued by the Big Society were claimed by the Prime Minister to be liberalism, responsibility and community empowerment. These values were to be manifested through a greater level of voluntarism, including paving the way for charities, private enterprises and social enterprises to be much more involved in the running of public services, all of which were to be encouraged by the Coalition Government. The UK Government had in fact always consistently relied upon the role of community and civil society organisations to provide support when policy provisions are limited, and this was taken to a new level, at least rhetorically, with the Big Society programme (Montgomery and Baglioni, 2018). This brief analysis of the history of the changing role of CSOs in the UK offered here has traced a common commitment across different governments to increase the role of these organisations and to support them in providing public services, treating them as a substitute to, or replacement for, existing (public) providers in a competitive market (Calò et al., 2018; Sepulveda, 2015).

The important role of civil society organisations in the UK can also be identified in the provision of employability services and in the efforts (via services and policy advocacy) to address the issues experienced by asylum seekers, refugees and migrants when integrating into the labour market. For example, recent literature which has analysed the role of civil society organisations in providing employment services has mainly focused upon the impact of marketization on third sector providers (Zimmermann et al., 2014). Commissioning processes have in fact led to a contraction of (smaller) CSOs and to an expansion of larger private sector bodies (Egdell et al., 2016). Third sector organisations have also been required to tailor their services and activities to meet the needs of public funders and this has generated challenges to provide added value such as innovation in services and communities engagement (Lindsay et al., 2014).

Recent literature which connects civil society organisations to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers mainly instead focuses on exploring different subgroups of organisations that might be included under the heading of BAME organisations (diasporic and immigrant organisations, refugee and asylum seeker organisations and faith based organisations) and on discussing the presence of a distinctive BAME sector (McCabe and Phillimore, 2017). The rise of BAME civil society organisations has been identified as a response to the lack of appropriate provision of services by the state and by civil society organisations (Mayblin and James, 2018). However, their development has lagged behind that of the third sector more generally on the one hand because of an increasing diversity of the communities they serve (McCabe and Phillimore, 2017) and on the other hand because of institutional racism (Craig, 2011; Ware, 2017). An increasingly diverse form of migration has also favoured the emergence of new organisations and actions to address complex needs that cut across ethnic groups while more established

BAME organisations have had to adapt their services to a wider range of people (McCabe and Phillimore, 2017). In contrast to other civil society organisations that have benefited from financial support from the Government to provide services, little support has been offered for example to refugee community organisations (Phillimore and Goodson, 2010). Moreover, researchers have highlighted that the BAME sector has been disproportionately affected by Government reforms (Tilki et al., 2015; Ware, 2017).

Although a higher degree of responsibility has been devolved to communities, the austerity measures promoted by Westminster in recent years and the reduction of budgets as well as the implementation of a contract culture raise questions regarding how BAME civil society organisations and in particular those community-based organisations can really sustain this levels of service provision. Even though in 2016 the Controlling Migration Fund has been developed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, aiming to support local areas facing pressures linked to recent immigration (and to improve direct enforcement action on irregular migrants), funding opportunities for non-profit organisations dealing with BAME communities and in particular asylum seekers and refugees have been reduced across time (Mayblin and James, 2018). Few BAME community organisations have been in a position to bid for contracts due to their low annual turnover (Ware, 2017). Accommodation contracts previously awarded to local authorities and civil society organisations were transferred to private security companies (e.g. COMPASS), only one organisation (Migrant Help) has been contracted by the central government at Westminster to provide advice to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. At the same time, funding for regional BAME voluntary sector networks has been removed (Afridi, 2017) and cuts to the budgets of the Refugee Council and Refugee Action led to a decline in essential employment and integration services (Terry, 2017).

CSOs dealing with migration and asylum issues not only offer services such as training for employment and support to resolve health and housing issues, but also have an important role in sponsoring campaigns to address issues of solidarity, provide legal services and promote voluntary work (Sales, 2002). Examples of these variegated roles civil society organisations undertake are initiatives such as the “City of Sanctuary” project originated in Sheffield, which aims to build a grassroots network of support for those seeking asylum or the support services promoted by the Refugee Council at delivery, policy and lobby levels. Two specific civil society led campaigns have also been promoting the need to address issues of inclusion and integration in the UK. The first (the “Let Them Work” campaign) promoted between 2008 and 2010 by the Refugee Council in collaboration with the Trades Union Congress aimed at granting the right to work to asylum seekers while they were awaiting a decision on their claim (Mayblin, 2016). Although the campaign was unsuccessful, it was transformed into the “Still Human Still Here” movement which aims to end the destitution of refused asylum seekers and continues today to fight for the rights of these groups. The second campaign, “Lift the Ban” is another recent initiative (launched at the end of 2018) promoted by civil society organisations with the goal of raising awareness and focusing attention towards the denial of the right to work for asylum seekers. However, austerity measures have also affected the voice of BAME communities. Reductions in resources, the closure of many projects at regional level (i.e. Council for Ethnic Minority Sector Organisations and Race Equality Councils) and a more prominent focus on contracting meant that there was scarce residual capacity for engagement in policy activity (Ware, 2017).

Following a review of the extant literature, we have identified a gap in research that has examined the relationship between civil society organisations and employability services or

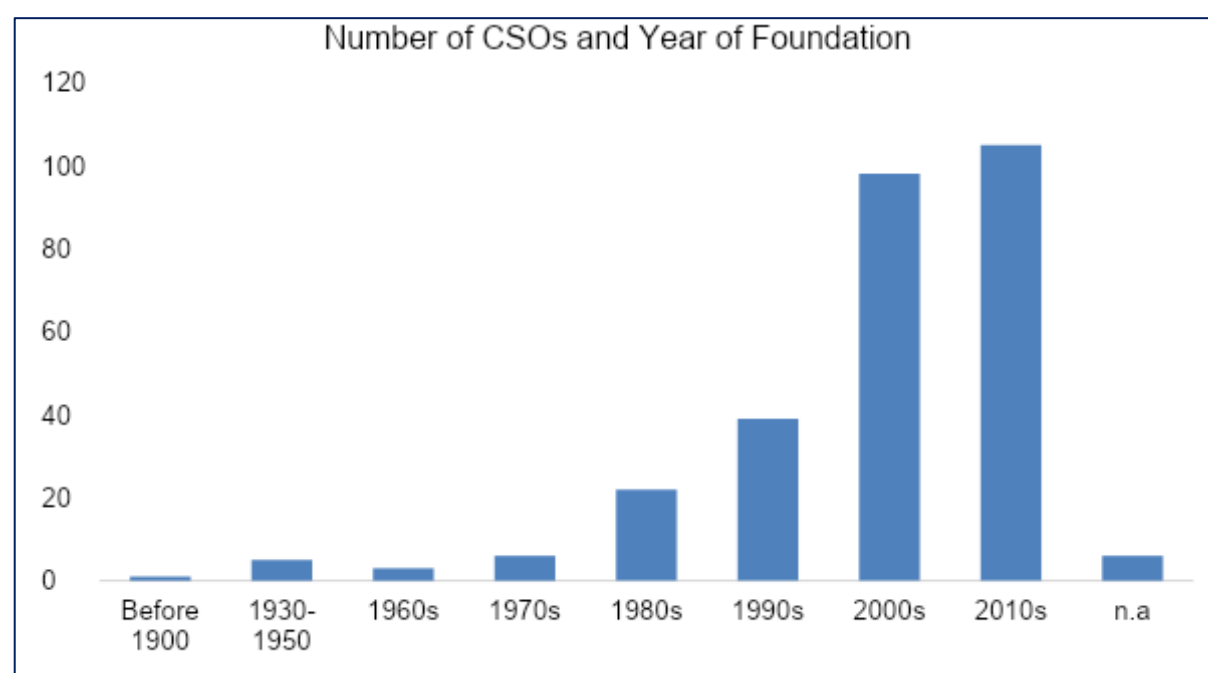
policies for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers: the issue of if and how do civil society organisations enable the employability of these categories of people. While Shutes (2011) highlighted how the welfare-to-work policy may conflict with an ethos to assist those refugees who are among the hardest to reach or to encourage more access to a range of matched skilled jobs, no research has focused on if and how civil society organisations favour (or not) the employability of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, if we are to understand the role of third sector in promoting the employability of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, there is a need for robust analysis to identify and understand empirical results regarding services provided by organisations which involves the collection of data with both CSOs and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; findings from these analyses may well have important implications for policy development and best practice. Going forward, our research thus aims at addressing this gap, providing first an overview and categorization of existing civil society organisations which work in the UK in the field of labour market integration for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Second, our research explores if and how CSOs embrace or reject the employability of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

8.3 An Overview and Categorization of CSOs

Although recently there has been a categorization of civil society organisations (CSOs) dealing with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK (see Mayblin and James, 2019), very few studies draw upon quantitative data in the field (Garkisch et al., 2017). In addition, the categorisation conducted by (Mayblin and James, 2019) focus upon all integration services provided to refugees and asylum seekers in England and Wales, excluding organisations that deal with migrants or BAME communities and not taking in consideration civil society organisations in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Our overview and categorization of CSOs instead includes organisations which provide activities which are related to employability (such as for example language courses, employability services or policy advocacy related to employment policies) of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. We have designed an approach which brings together data from the Charity Commission, Scotland Charity Regulator and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. We used these three databases to identify all registered organisations who support migrants (including BAME communities), refugees and asylum seekers. To meet our inclusion criteria charities must use the word “asylum” or “refugee” or “migrant” or “BME/BAME” in their activities description on the databases. We reviewed each charity website and/or Facebook page and we included those which provide activities related to employability. We excluded those organisations which do not have a website or Facebook activities with the assumption that they are not active at the moment. Our dataset includes data on the year of foundation, activities, location and client groups. Some organisations are not required to register with the Commission such as, for example, small community-based organisations with an annual income of under £5000. For other CSOs it was difficult to explore if they are undertaking activities related to employability services. This will mean that our overview underestimates the level of support provided by CSOs to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Nevertheless, our categorisation and overview provide a first exploration of the organisations which provide employability services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

We have identified a total of 285 organisations that focus on the labour market integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The Charity Commission and Regulator record the date charities registered and Figure 1 presents a breakdown of the number of new organisations across each decade since the beginning of the century. It reveals that 85% of the organisations which today are still active were created from the 1990s onwards, and 71% of the total number of organisations were founded between 2000 and 2019. This could be explained due to the increasing role, analysed earlier, that civil society organisations acquired in terms of service provision during the last three decades. The increasing number of new CSOs focusing upon labour market integration in the UK does appear to indicate that there is growing demand for services which focus on this specific aspect of integration. However, interestingly, 98 organisations were founded between 2000 and 2009 while 105 were established between 2010 and 2019. Therefore, the “so-called” refugee crisis did not seem to affect the establishment of new organisations focusing on labour market integration, while most probably affected the number of organisations focusing upon a wider range of services.

Figure 5: Number of CSOs and Year of Foundation



Source: SIRIUS Project

Table 1 records the 10 local authorities in the country with the highest numbers of CSOs focusing upon the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK labour market. The geography of CSOs not surprisingly reflect the density of population of the major urban areas in the UK. As we had anticipated almost 40% of organisations are based in London, most probably due to the high number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in the capital and the number of employment opportunities which are available. Glasgow instead with its 35 organisations is revealed once again to be one of the cities with a longer and most consolidated tradition of integration and support services for MRA labour market integration.

Table 1: Places with the highest number of CSOs focusing on labour market integration

City	Number of organisations operating
London	110
Glasgow	35
Manchester	8
Edinburgh	8
Birmingham	5
Bristol	5
Cardiff	4
Belfast	4
Leeds	4
Nottingham	4

Those organisations registered with the Charity Commissions and Regulator are large enough to provide their services at least at the city-wide level. As reported in Table 2 - Number of CSOs and types of organisation almost half of the organisations implement their services for an entire urban area, 20% are regional based organisations and 16% are nationwide organisations. Only 16% of CSOs can be defined as community-based organisations. However, we suspect that this small number is caused by the limitations of our approach in capturing organisations that have an annual income lower than £5,000 and thus the role that these small civil society organisations play particularly in creating social links to access employment, which is relevant to understanding the full spectrum of support available. Also, international organisations are only 4% of our dataset, this instead can be explained due to our integration in the labour market focus which often is more related to services provided at the local level.

Table 2: Number of CSOs and types of organisation

Types of Organisations	Number of Organisations	Percentages
Community/neighbourhood-based	45	16%
City-wide organization	127	45%
Regional organization	54	19%
Nationwide organization	47	16%
International organization	12	4%

CSOs were also analysed based upon the typology of beneficiaries they declared on their own websites or in their registration with the Charity Commission and Regulators. On the one hand, one third of organisations declared that they opened their doors to any person from a migrant, refugee and asylum background who could face difficulties, without sometimes recognising the different paths of migration. As reported in Table 3, more than three out of ten organisations declared that they provided services to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers without a specific focus upon one of the categories. On the other hand, refugees and asylum seekers seem to have access to a higher number of organisations per population in comparison with BAME communities. Indeed, 36% of the organisations provide services mainly to BAME or migrant communities while 25% have been established to support the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Only a very small percentage of organisations focus solely on asylum seekers (1%) or refugees (5%).

Table 3: Number of CSOs and beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Number of organisations	Percentages
Migrant/BAME Focused Organisation	104	36%
Refugees focused	14	5%
Refugees and Asylum Seekers focused	71	25%
Asylum seekers focused	2	1%
MRAs focused organisations	94	33%

The Charity Commission and Regulator data alongside our analysis of the CSOs websites reveals that the activities undertaken in relation to the labour market integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK can be structured across five different typologies:

- **Employment activities:** this category not only includes services which provide a match or a bridge between companies and beneficiaries but also migrant-led organisations which employ migrants and refugees in their workforce and CSOs which support migrants and refugees to start-up businesses;
- **Integration support activities:** this category mainly includes organisations which provide a holistic integration service in which employment is aligned with advice-based programmes concerning housing, welfare benefits or health;
- **Education and training activities:** this category includes mainly those organisations which organise English language courses;
- **Skills development activities:** this category includes mainly those organisations which provide courses for developing skills related to specific jobs;
- **Policy advocacy activities:** this category includes mainly organisations which advocate for the equality of migrants in the workplace or promote campaigns related to the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers employed in the UK.

As presented in Table 4, the majority of organisations in our dataset are providing integration support services (38%) and training and education services (30%). Examining our findings more closely we can observe that 14% of CSOs promote policy advocacy related to employability while only 13% provide employability services and 4% invests in skills development activities. From this perspective it is clear that the main activities that CSOs undertake are related to language provision on the one hand and a holistic approach to

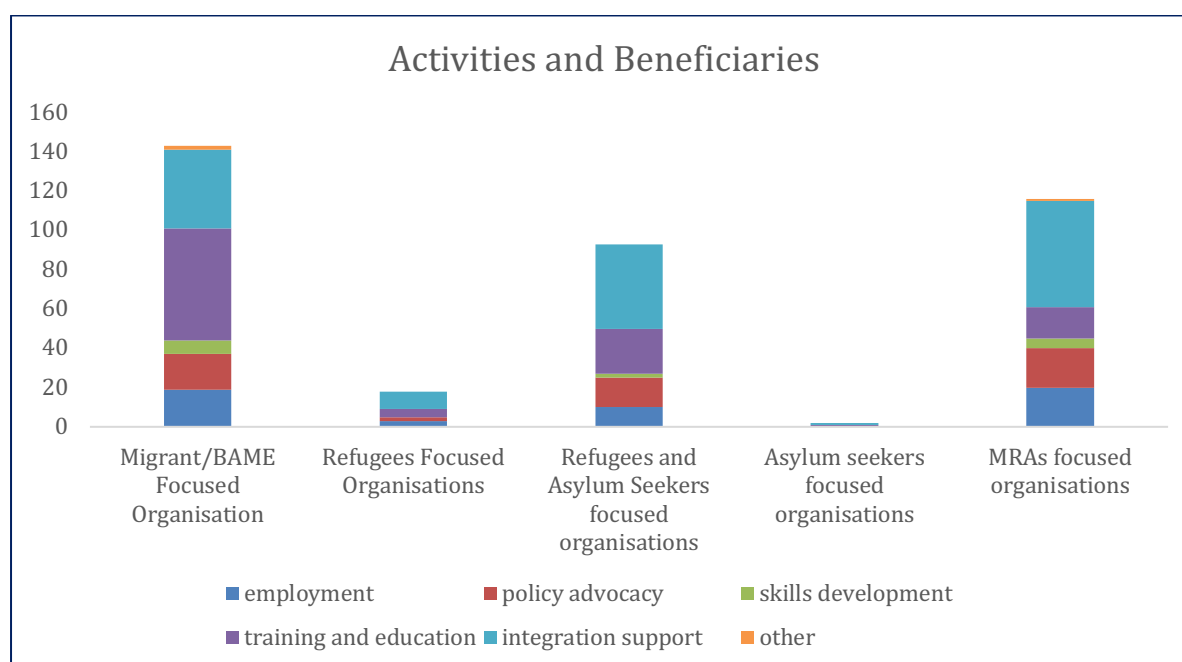
integration on the other hand. Employment services and skills development activities seem to be only residual in terms of the range of activities that CSOs provide and they are often aligned with other types of services.

Table 4: Number of CSOs and activities

Area of Activities	Number of organisations	Percentages
Employment	52	13%
Policy advocacy	55	14%
Skills development	14	4%
Training and education	117	30%
Integration support	147	38%
Other	3	1%

The perspective we have outlined above is partially confirmed when we analyse the number of organisations in terms of their area of activities and final beneficiaries (see Figure 2 - Number of organisations, area of activities and beneficiaries CSOs which provide employment activities and skills development courses are residual in comparison with organisations which implement integration support and language courses across all beneficiaries. However, refugees and MRA focused organisations seem to marginally provide more employability activities (17% of CSOs focusing on specific beneficiaries) in comparison with BAME focus organisations and refugees and asylum seeker focused organisations.

Figure 6: Number of organisations, area of activities and beneficiaries



Source: SIRIUS Project

Following our analysis, we can conclude that a limited number of organisations provide formal employability services or skills development services, focusing upon more education and training activities such as the provision of English language courses. It is difficult to explore the rationale behind this finding through a categorisation. It could be that fewer financial resources are available to promote employability activities and the austerity measures which have particularly affected these CSOs, reducing the availability of services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. On the other hand, it could also be that employability services are not regarded by CSOs as the most important activities to provide for the effective integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in society. They could instead be considered a secondary activity which can be provided by other organisations such as recruitment agencies and/or public sector agencies, once a first level of integration activities has been delivered. In addition, our approach does not allow us to take into consideration CSOs as employers and underestimates the role of community-based organisations which are often important to develop social links that enable integration in the job market. Therefore, in the next phase of the research, reported in the next section of this document, through qualitative interviews we will not only investigate the formal employability activities which act as potential enablers of labour market integration but also the role of civil society organisations and, more in general, the third sector as employers as much as generators of local connections and networks.

Box 8: Kuche (UK)

Kuche is a social enterprise founded in 2016 and based in Glasgow. The organisation aims at creating food focused events, community projects and multicultural catering in collaboration with people navigating the UK immigration system. The organisation thus embraces a cultural approach to integration across different events such as community dinners, community projects or arts events and cooking workshops. It has provided 1400 hours of employment for migrants, organised 40 multicultural caterings, 20 cooking workshops and 30 events. The social enterprise works with a range of partner organisations

in Glasgow and it is supported by the Bank of Scotland, the Big Lottery and the Scottish Government.

Website: <https://www.kueche.co.uk/>

8.4 Methods

The previous two decades have witnessed a notable increase in the use of qualitative research to explore and understand a diverse range of social and public policy issues (Ritchie and Spencer, 2002). Qualitative interviews can thus be used to explore the role of civil society organisations and understand if they constitute barriers or facilitators according to the experiences of different stakeholders. We pursued a sampling strategy that sought to ensure the inclusion of a variety of perspectives. A total of 18 interviews involving managers of civil society organisations providing different activities related to the employability of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were included in our sample. Annex 3 provides an overview of stakeholders involved. The CSOs involved in our study were selected based upon the variety of their activities and their prominence in providing services related to employability. Some organisations organise holistic integration services (such as information and guidance relating to welfare as well as English language classes) aiming at developing a positive environment which can support the employability of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, while other organisations instead provided employability, volunteering or business support schemes, focusing directly on labour market integration. A third category of organisations is formed by working integration social enterprise which include migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in their workforce, while some other non-governmental organisations mainly implement policy advocacy activities. The heterogeneity of the CSOs involved helped, as we shall elaborate below, to give a complete overview on how CSOs can facilitate or hinder the labour market integration of MRAs.

In tandem with our sampling of the managers of CSOs, we also conducted a total of 18 interviews and one focus group involving migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Annex 4 provides an overview of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers involved. Our participants presented very different pathways of migration, including economic migrants who have moved to the UK to study and/or work, refugees who have obtained their status through the asylum process, refugees who have been resettled through one of the resettlement programmes and asylum seekers who are still waiting for their cases to be addressed. Interestingly all of our interviewees have achieved (either in the UK or in their own country) a high (tertiary) level of education. Aiming at addressing this potential limitation, we involved people with very different backgrounds, pathways and histories of migration.

The majority of the interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed ‘intelligent verbatim’ and when it was not possible to record, extensive notes were collected by researchers. The confidentiality and anonymity of each of our interviewees was protected throughout the interview process. In doing so, interviewee numbers and roles (MRAs or CSOs managers) were used in detailing the quotes presented in this report. Ethical approval was requested and obtained from the SIRIUS Ethics board and the ethical committee of the Glasgow School for Business and Society at Glasgow Caledonian University. The interviews

were transcribed, and to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate record of each interview/focus group, the data was then imported into the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software QSR Nvivo for two cycles of coding. Two rounds of thematic coding were used for identifying the different policies analysed and to group concepts together (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2016) with a view to establishing the role of CSOs in facilitating the integration of MRAs into the UK labour market.

8.5 How Do CSOs React to MRAs' Needs

The civil society organisations involved in the research, as explained above, are heterogeneous in terms of their history, their conceptualisation of labour market integration, their activities and service provision, and their relationships with stakeholders (beneficiaries, governments but also private sector organisations), highlighting the presence of a quite diverse environment which aims to address the issue of labour market integration for MRAs. The analysis of the heterogeneous characteristics is used to explore how CSOs respond to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers needs.

8.5.1 History of CSOs, the Conceptualisation of Labour Markets Integration and Services Provided

Two main rationales can be identified to explain the establishment of CSOs which deal directly or indirectly with the integration of MRAs in the UK labour market. Some organisations are funded in response to the impact of the arrival of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in their communities. For example, CSO 16 according to its Director was established more than 15 years ago *"in response to the growing dispersal of asylum seekers and the growing tension in the city [which] culminated with the murder of an asylum seeker"* (16_CSOUK). Other examples are some well-established non-profit organisations which increased their interest in these beneficiaries and consequently diversified their services after encountering *"the negative, hostile language that is being used and the confrontation in the communities with racist talk"* (7_CSOUK).

Other CSOs instead were created in response to the lack of integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. CSO 3, for example, was founded in 2016 *"as a recognition that refugees in destination countries were being pushed to the margins, although there was a high level of professional and business experience within their community"* (3_CSOUK). The personal migration experiences of the founders are often also a trigger to the creation of new organisations. Some of the CSO initiators, after being granted leave to remain, used the knowledge gained during the asylum process to set up community services which address service gaps they identified. Others instead such as the founders/managers of CSO 4 or CSO 1 built upon their previous work experience to set up their organisations and develop networks of stakeholders which could simultaneously support the establishment of new services.

Differences among the organisations involved in the research could also be identified in how labour market issues were conceptualised in terms of social saliency. The majority of CSOs we interviewed perceive employability as a step towards integration in the community and while labour market integration was not identified as the panacea or the route out of poverty, establishing skills that can be transferred alongside *"learning about structure, being reliable and build networks"* (7_CSOUK) were highlighted as an effective integration route. Some organisations such as CSO 8 tried to help navigate on various aspects of life such as housing

and welfare benefits, which could *“bring stability and help set better conditions for a job search”* (8_CSO_UK) while others such as CSO 1 aimed at empowering communities through volunteering programmes and experiences. Employability was perceived by these organisations as second level integration, while solidarity activities and services addressing the most basic and urgent needs were identified as the condition sine qua non to potentially achieve labour market integration in the long term. On the other hand, only a few organisations identified labour market integration as a way to *“unlock the talent, unlock the potential”* (3_CSO_UK) of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, a potential which could help to rebuild their livelihoods in new countries. In this conceptualisation, labour market integration has instead a central and primary role in determining the pathways towards integration due to the potential impact both on the lives of MRAs and the communities where they live.

The heterogeneous conceptualisation of integration was mirrored in the services provided by CSOs and consequently the interaction of beneficiaries with these services. The organisations interviewed which conceptualise employability as a second level of integration were mainly providing holistic services of integration focusing more on addressing the most pressing needs and only once these were being met then turned to issues such as employability. In these organisations, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are mainly involved as beneficiaries who can share with CSOs what they need while civil society organisations can talk them *“through the process and then work out where they can get different opportunities”* (9_CSO_UK) whether this means attending English language classes or seeking specialist advice on their immigration cases. Other organisations, which espouse more the second conceptualisation of labour market integration we have identified, instead aimed at equipping migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with work experience through for example volunteering/work schemes within the CSO, within private businesses or through entrepreneurship programmes.

Box 9: TERN (UK)

TERN (The Entrepreneurial Refugees Network) is a social enterprise founded in 2016 and based in London. The organisation aims at supporting refugee entrepreneurs in the creation and development of their businesses, providing services throughout three stages of the entrepreneurial process. They provide support at the initial stages of an idea, the development stage through a business incubator and an on-demand stage for already established business. They have provided support to 100 refugee entrepreneurs and involving 215 mentors and experts. The social enterprise works with a range of partner organisations at the national and international level.

Website: <http://www.wearetern.org/>

Beneficiaries in these CSOs can be highly engaged and become professionalised workers of the organisation, as in the case of CSO 1, in which the founder is planning to hand over the management of the organisation to her employees with a refugee background because she found *“the more that she gives, hands out responsibility, beneficiaries can make what they want out of a project or an event or a food, the more she gets back”* (1_CSO_UK). Another example of a high degree of involvement of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is in CSO

6, where the manager noticed that volunteers use both the space *“to do stuff that they enjoy, such as baking or cooking”* or as *“as a way to transition into getting a paid job”* (6_CS0_UK). In the organisations which conceptualise integration into the labour market as a primary activity, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can also have a lower level of involvement and be considered as customers of a specific services, as in the case of CSO 4, in which the candidates of a paid placement *“are all refugee professionals and engineers, architects and/or business services professionals like data scientists, for example, and IT engineers, HR administrators”* (4_CS0_UK), or as in the case of CSO 3, where refugees are clients of a targeted business support programme. Finally, some organisations which conceptualise employability in both of the ways we have identified, focus more on providing policy advocacy or empowering the voice of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers through grassroots organisational support or cultural awareness projects which aim at developing a more positive environment. In these cases, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are mainly involved as leaders (or potential leaders) of community-based organisations.

Box 10: Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants (UK)

Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants is a registered charity founded in 1997 and based in the London borough of Islington, the centre has an explicit mission to help create a welcoming environment for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, to support their wellbeing and to empower them to build new skills and gain access to housing and healthcare. The centre thus embraces a holistic approach to integration across a spectrum of needs such as dealing with urgent issues relating to immigration status and asylum applications, offering support through dispensing emergency grants and sourcing access to shelter, providing English language classes and offering skills workshops and training as well as access to health checks and social/recreational activities. Reflecting the diverse composition of London, the Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants offered support to 184 people in 2017/2018 from over 60 countries. The centre works with a range of partner organisations including the British Red Cross, Hackney Migrant Centre and Citizens Advice.

Website: <https://islingtoncentre.co.uk/>

8.5.2 Relationship with the Public Sector: From Service Provider to Partner

Three different degrees of relationship were identified between CSOs and the public sector (central, regional or local level): civil society organisations could act as service providers for the public sector, they could be involved in policy advocacy or they could be identified as partners in promoting new policies, and designing and delivering new services in a spirit of co-production.

Some organisations act as service providers mainly for local authorities, the Scottish Government or specific departments such as the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) and can be involved in a range of activities including organising ESOL classes or conducting specific training and employment schemes. The reduction of public funding which will be discussed in more detail below has affected the number of organisations which provide such public sector type provision. As suggested by Interviewee 13, *“there were other agencies we used to refer to, they have been downsized very much; they don’t have much resources. They do some schemes for refugees for doctors, they run a few activities but it is nothing compared*

to what was run before. Some organisations have closed. There is less infrastructure to help people from our country find jobs" (13_CSO_UK). The CSOs resourced by the Home Office mainly provide information and advice for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, while in recent years few employability schemes and pilot programmes have been resourced by the UK Government. Providing services for the UK Government does not come without tension, particularly if, for example, the lack of participation by MRAs in some of the workshops or services provided by CSOs can result in the sanctioning of beneficiaries and reducing their benefits and rights. Thus, as suggested by CSO Interviewee 7, CSOs should be *"aware of the risks of working with the UK Government and to be very clear about the conditions connected to the programmes"* (7_CSO_UK). Less tension was instead identified in the provision of services for the Scottish Government or the local authority resettlement schemes, which have a remit of integration but have no responsibility for border control. For example, as stated by Interviewee 16, the decision they took to include in their programme - which previously only focused on refugees and asylum seekers, migrants - third country nationals and EU nationals, was a consequence of a request by the Scottish Government to expand the pool of beneficiaries. However, at the moment due to the political instability that is characterising the UK context and the approaching end of the resettlement programme (which has been confirmed up to 2020), it is difficult for CSOs to understand if in the future *"they will focus so much on integration or they will need to do a lot more on the policy and advocacy side"* (2_CSO_UK) because of the potential consequences of policy change at the UK Government level.

Almost all of the organisations we interviewed advocated for an improvement of policy through different instruments. Some of them explained that they often participate in consultations at the UK Government level such as one related to the future of the resettlement programme after 2020 or they work in collaboration with specific All Party Groups or commissions to improve Home Office procedures and future policies. Interviewee 4 pinpointed that the type of advocacy they do can be called *"collaborative influencing"*. They perceived themselves to be collaborative, aiming at improving the system without however taking any political stance, which could negatively impact their existing relationships with other stakeholders. However, some organisations declared that although they are involved in different consultation events with a collaborative lens, they recognise that their contribution is not taken into consideration: *"So within that discussion, you contribute and participate and all that, and you realise that your contribution is not valid. So yes, they give you the power to make the decision and to be engaged...but the recognition is not there, and it goes back to that point of just ticking the box"* (5_CSO_UK). Other organisations instead took a more political stance, aimed at stimulating change in the system through campaigning (e.g. the 'Lift the Ban' campaign to allow asylum seekers access to work or the 'Stand as one' campaign to support integration of refugees) or through the organisation of events (e.g. Day of Action). More established organisations try to use their profile to access politicians and policy makers and give a voice to people that usually struggle to be included in policy dialogues. CSO 7, for example, organised what they called *"candidate cafes"* which involved organising events across different communities, inviting all candidates for the local election alongside community groups to discuss future policies together.

Box 11: Lift the Ban (UK)

Lift the Ban is a coalition made up of over 80 non profit organisations, think tanks, businesses and faith groups (for a total of more than 200 organisations) which has, since 2018, promoted a campaign calling on the UK Government to give people seeking asylum the right to work unconstrained by the Shortage Occupation list and after they have waited six months for a decision on their initial asylum claim. Based upon research and evidence, they have estimated how much the UK economy could gain if the ban was lifted, the importance of work in an integration process and the increasing support of the public to give right to work for people seeking asylum. The campaign is on-going at the moment.

Website: <http://lifttheban.co.uk/>

Very few organisations instead identify the relationship with the government as one of co-production or partnership. The New Scots strategy promoted by the Scottish Government to foster the integration of refugees into Scottish society was the only initiative pinpointed as a partnership process through the lens of co-production. Interviewee CSO 2 stated that, with *“the Scottish Government and the New Scots strategy and the good partnership happening with the voluntary organisations, the third sector, the local government, the Scottish Government, it’s a really nice working environment. It feels really positive, it feels like everyone’s pulling in the same way”* (2_CS0_UK). While the founder of CSO 5 explained that their work is part of a partnership with the Scottish Government; *“which try to address issues and try to support the Scottish Government to do things differently”*.

Thus, although the concept of co-production has been a mantra in the last few years in the understanding of third sector-public sector relations in the UK, this is not mirrored in the field of integration for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in which CSOs mainly occupy a space of collaborative influencing more than service delivery or as partners in designing policy and promoting new services.

8.5.3 Partnership with CSOs, private business and trade unions

Partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders were also discussed by almost all of the CSOs we interviewed. Interestingly, very few organisations and only those which were most established developed collaborations and partnerships with international networks, with most preferring to focus more on the UK context. Organisations collaborate particularly with other non-profit institutions, through various degrees of formalisation and different instruments. In the majority of cases, a referral system is in place, organisations are aware of the services provided by different organisations in various communities and they refer their beneficiaries based upon their needs to other organisations. As suggested by CSO 2, for example at the beginning of 2016, there was an increasing interest in the refugee ‘crisis’ and a lot of *“new organisations which just repeated or copied the work of existing organisations”* were set up. Aiming to not replicate existing services and increase fragmentation, CSO 2 decided *“to link up with most of the local organisations that support asylum seekers, refugees and migrants”* and establish a synergic referral system.

More formal relations were established in fewer cases and occurred for example when CSOs collaborate to apply for new streams of funding such as European funded projects or they work together to promote specific policy advocacy campaigns or events such as the Refugee

festival⁵⁰. Sometimes however collaborations can also have a negative side. As suggested by CSO 1 there is often a feeling of working in “*a professional bubble*” which is difficult to overcome and there is the risk of not being effective in involving people and organisations which work in a different field, which have different standpoints and which could offer new perspectives. In other cases, few organisations implied their willingness to develop better ties with refugee-led organisations but due to funding difficulties, they perceived it as being difficult to consistently pursue this aim. Others instead singled out that not all non-profit organisations are transparent and provide enough information about their services, their beneficiaries and their models of income, affecting the possibilities of establishing collaborations.

CSOs which provide employability or entrepreneurship schemes singled out the importance of creating relationships with corporate businesses. Employers have a key role for CSOs both as customers of the diversity training delivered by CSOs but also as organisations where opportunities for the placement of migrants and refugees can emerge. To deal with employers, CSOs perceived that it is important not to go to “*them with special pleading because this is a) insulting b) if I am running a private company what I can see is that you are going to be hard work*” (Interview CSO 16). Collaboration and involving employers in work placement schemes was also perceived as very difficult for two main reasons: “*One is many employers don’t know that refugees are allowed to work in the UK [...] They feel they’d be fined [...] second, employers don’t have to do this. In the UK, being a refugee is not a protected characteristic [...] so employers don’t have to monitor whether they employ or reject refugees*” (4_CS0_UK).

Almost none of the CSOs involved in the research pinpointed trade unions as existing partners. Only the more established organisations identified the role of trade unions in promoting specific campaigns, but often alignment with trade unions was identified as “*too political*” for CSOs which need to maintain a long-term relationship with any Government with whom they interact.

8.5.4 Funding and Media Narrative

As we had anticipated, funding was described as a common and primary challenge by almost all of the organisations we interviewed. UK government funding had been reduced in previous years due to austerity measures, and as such the “*Home Office funding for refugee integration employment services was withdrawn*” and the “*entire refugee sector was shut down*” (4_CS0_UK). This affected not only community organisations which had to continue, in the best case scenario, to provide more services with the same amount of resources but also more established CSOs which had to completely restructure their integration services, reducing for example employment schemes and services. Accessibility to public funding was also identified as particularly difficult due to the specificity of contracting mechanisms. The founder of CSO 5 described the challenge of his organisation “*to even get a public contract because of the systems in place*” which seemed to favour larger and more established organisations which have more structured procedures and present a lower level of risk for government commissioners. According to our interviewee from CSO 5, if the aim is to empower non-profit organisations to provide public sector services, “*policies and systems that are put in place need to be revised*”.

⁵⁰ <https://www.refugeefestivalscotland.co.uk/about/>

In response to the lack of funding from the UK Government, all of the CSOs we interviewed had been searching for other sources of funding. Some of the CSOs applied and obtained EU funding through for example the AMIF Fund programme⁵¹, while others received grants through local and regional governments (e.g. the resettlement programme and the Scottish Government). Private funding and business income were also used by some of the organisations. Foundations grants (e.g. Big Lottery) or corporate funds were identified as the main resources to pilot new services. Few of the organisations we interviewed were resourced through business income such as income deriving by selling specific services and products to beneficiaries, stakeholders or the community. In these cases, the social enterprise model was pinpointed as a possible solution to bring autonomy, as suggested by Interviewee CSO 6 which declared that *“not having to be on the other end of funding applications all the time, grant dependent and things like that”* was what appealed to her the most of being a social enterprise. However, resources scattered across different funders was perceived as negatively affecting the long term sustainability of the CSOs service provision. As identified by Interviewee CSO 8 *“almost every year charities have to design projects to fit the funding which means that if the following year they have to go for another funding source they have to treat their project in another way so it’s... it’s difficult to bring stability”* (8_CSOUK). The lack of stability could also inevitably affect the services (and social mission) of the organisations, *“increasing the risk of working in silos”* (8_CSOUK) and reducing the coherence of different services. In addition, the uncertainty caused by Brexit is affecting the possibility to apply in the future for European funding, reducing once more the already few avenues available for CSOs to locate resources which can help them to support the integration of MRAs.

Box 12: Radiant and Brighter (UK)

Radiant and Brighter Community is a social enterprise founded in 2012 and based in Glasgow. The organisation provides a holistic person-centred approach engaging and empowering minority ethnic communities to share experiences and build relationships. It aims at raising awareness of cultural diversity within private, public and third sector organisations through educational programmes, creating a platform to explore the impact of culture and diversity within the workplace and society. It aims also at influencing policy to drive systemic change. The organisation has reached 652 people from 42 different countries and they have helped 73 people to find employment. The social enterprise works with a range of partner organisations at national level and it is funded by the Scottish Government and the Hunter Foundation.

Website: <https://radiantandbrighter.com/>

Although the media narratives around MRAs from 2014 onwards has been consistently negative in the UK (see Montgomery et al., 2018) to our surprise it was not considered a challenge by the CSOs involved in our research. There was a sort of *“mainstream acceptance”* of tabloid right-wing narratives while *“the outlets that have always been supportive, remained supportive or became even more”* (10_CSOUK). Some of the CSOs did experience some abusive comments on their social media platforms however they still felt more supported than opposed. Interestingly, one CSO suggested the need of changing completely the narrative

⁵¹ Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund_en

promoted by the entire system (government, academia, media and CSOs) concerning migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The interviewee CSO 5 stated that *“we need to start to talk about the value [...] Because if we start to talk about the value, then people start to think actually is it there and then if we can even demonstrate and show it, that actually this is how much people, migrants, contribute. This is how much you're missing out if you don't employ them. This is how much you're missing out on the innovation. This is how much you're missing out in business terms”*. From this perspective, only through a systemic change of the narrative, would it then be possible to validate services and activities provided by CSOs in this sector and increase the recognition of their importance.

8.6 What Do MRAs Get and Seek from CSOs?

Alongside the involvement of CSOs to understand their characteristics, MRAs were interviewed to explore their relationship with the non-profit organisations. The first results that can be deduced from the analysis of the interviews, and in part contrast the narrative of CSOs which often speak about migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, is the different accessibility or needs of accessibility to civil society organisations that MRAs face. This is expected because while the refugees and in some ways asylum seekers are targeted by specific integration policies, the same cannot be said for other types of migrants such as so-called (non-EU) ‘economic migrants’. For this reason, the analysis of the relation between CSOs and MRAs will be explored separately based upon the path of migration.

8.6.1 Migrants and CSOs

In almost all of the interviews we conducted with “economic migrants” who entered the UK mainly through the tertiary education system (Masters or PhD), there was no knowledge regarding the availability of CSOs in relation to employability and accessibility to the job market. Economic migrants mainly used university career services as a first step which were identified as useful to provide general information about the UK job market, but at the same time, they lacked *“specific and tailored information”* (2_MRA_UK) on how for example to restructure CVs, prepare a cover letter or become aware of the specificity of applying for work in the UK. Therefore, to address their gaps in knowledge of this different system, the people we interviewed asked for help from friends with more experience or went on to *“conduct research on how to apply for jobs and conduct interviews on the internet”* (14_MRA_UK). Recruitment agencies (mainly for-profit ones) were also identified as a *“useful instrument to enter for the first time the job market”* (9_MRA_UK). However, they were also described as not particularly effective in helping to source permanent positions. Specific websites, which aggregate all job vacancies related to specialised sectors, were highlighted as preferred instruments to access the job market. Consistent with the extant literature on the hostile environment for MRAs in the UK, immigration policies were referenced by each of our interviewees as the main barrier to accessing employment in the UK for non-EU migrants. As suggested by Interviewee 14 *“not every employer has the right to sponsor a visa and not all employers are happy to go through the process because it costs money and time. You need to have big companies to do that. For this, your margin shrinks already before you start to apply. You can't apply at any company”* (14_MRA_UK). Even if a migrant is engaged in the job market through for example the Tier 2

Visa, to have access to the same opportunities of EU and British citizens, an indefinite leave to remain permit or citizenship are necessary.

A support network of people and opportunities for work experience in the UK context were instead pinpointed by all migrants interviewed as the main enablers to access the job market and through these two avenues, CSOs have a key role in labour market integration. In fact, although migrants didn't use services provided by CSOs, they indirectly came across organisations through volunteering schemes and their participation in community-based or faith based organisations. Volunteering was often used to improve the social network of people and provide work experience in the UK which is often more recognised than work experience acquired abroad: *"volunteering was useful in different ways. My network improved. Positive well-being to know other people increased, at a time that I was struggling to get a job, it helped. Here they don't care about education as much as they care about experience. Even though I worked as a secretary in Kuwait that somehow didn't translate as experience here, while working in a charity shop translates more because it was in the UK but I had more responsibility as a secretary in Kuwait"* (11_MRA_UK). Participation instead in community groups, such as faith organisations and specific BAME groups, helped to develop a sense of community and integration, promoting trust and confidence alongside widening the network of people, which consequently helped them to locate job opportunities. As suggested by the focus group we conducted, their community-based organisation *"started with the idea of promoting the role of women in society, promoting the appreciation of arts and culture"* and eventually they became a point of reference for all the women of that community, widening job opportunities and developing new relationships.

8.6.2 Refugees and Asylum Seekers and CSOs

Contrary to economic migrants' experiences, all refugees and asylum seekers had some degree of interaction with CSOs. CSOs were identified by our interviewees as providing a first level of support and integration services. They were in fact pinpointed as providing help with asylum cases, the provision of basic needs such as food and clothing, advice about housing and benefits and providing English language classes in the community. As suggested by Interviewee 3, *"when you arrive in the UK as asylum seekers you have priorities. First to get the status. Second is housing"* and *"CSOs help you in an emergency, school, housing, benefits, GPs"*. However, as suggested by interviewee 16, the lack of emotional support alongside difficulties to access training and education are often experienced by refugees and asylum seekers. Only when they discover the support that is offered by CSOs, sometimes through their networks of families and friends, can they get a *"bit more financial and educational support"*. Only afterwards and usually after several years, is a second level of integration provided, which mainly involves language classes, volunteering schemes and eventually employability placements. However, reflecting the views of a number of our interviewees, Interviewee 3 explained that *"it is not part of the duties of non-profit organisations to find a job"* (3_MRA_UK) but it is up to the *"personal life"* (5_MRA_UK) to choose what to study and where to work and to build up the pathway to achieve personal aspirations.

English language classes and volunteering schemes were identified by interviewees as the two key activities provided by CSOs more connected to the UK job market. Interviewees suggested that English classes provided in the community were the first point of contact for starting to learn the language. For example, Interviewees 12 and 13 were both referred (through a social worker or friends) to English language classes in the community while they

were waiting to access a further education college for a more formal learning process. Long waiting lists to access English language classes in colleges affected the life of people and the possibility of acquiring a higher level of language proficiency more quickly; language classes in the community were identified as a temporary solution *“that is better than nothing”* (16_MRA_UK) although limitations were also identified. Often the lack of resources of CSOs were identified as barriers to effective language courses: the availability of only one teacher and one group of beneficiaries with very different levels of English proficiency or the lack of IT equipment were perceived as reducing the effectiveness of the classes and the opportunity to acquire a good standard of English.

Box 13: Bridges Programme (UK)

Bridges Programme was founded 15 years ago and based in Glasgow, the Bridges programme works with employers and partners to ensure that refugees, migrants asylum seekers and anyone for whom English is a second language are supported into work, education and further training. The organisation offers short work experience/work shadowing placements with Scottish companies, employability support courses, vocational English classes and a drop in centre. The organisation works with a range of partner organisations including the British Red Cross, City of Glasgow College, Glasgow Clyde College, Open University and a wide list of employers.

Website: <http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/>

Volunteering instead within CSOs was recognised as particularly important to widen a person's network of acquaintances, increase confidence and trust and finding new job opportunities. CSOs were perceived as a safe space to meet new people, and build up the confidence which is often important for accessing jobs in the future, alongside having the opportunity of undertaking work experience in the UK. Finally, among our interviewees, only one person used an employability service provided by a CSO. Thanks to the service, he undertook two placements and he was offered a job. However, he chose to continue studying at college which would furnish him with a higher qualification and he felt that it was important to understand the different culture of the UK and acquire more confidence before undertaking an employed position.

8.6.3 CSOs and Limitations in Their Provision

Although CSOs provide first level integration services and try to address as best as they can at least the most urgent and pressing needs in particular of refugees and asylum seekers amidst a hostile policy environment, two limitations were singled out by our interviewees.

First, it was perceived that if you are not identified as belonging to a specific path of migration, whether you are an asylum seeker, refugee or migrant, then it is difficult to access any kind of support service. As suggested by interviewee CSO 5 (a migrant and founder of a CSO), the first question while he was asking for support was *“are you in this country illegally, no; are you an asylum seeker, no; are you a refugee, no; are you an international student, no. Sorry we can't help and for us that experience taught us to get to a place where we certainly decided if we ever set up something first and foremost we have that relationship but secondly, we don't want to form an organisation that is going to kick out anyone”* (5_CSOUK). Therefore, most

probably due to the difficulties they are experiencing in terms of resources, organisations may risk unwittingly excluding vulnerable people who for different reasons are falling between the cracks because these individuals are not easily identifiable with one or more category for whom services are provided.

Second, a lack of coordination among CSOs was also identified by our interviewees. As suggested by Interviewee 8, although these organisations really want to help, there is often a lack of coordination and a lack of communication: *“some people don’t know any of these organisations, so if you don’t know any, it is difficult. I also think that asylum seekers: organisations don’t engage with them because they are not allowed to work, so they just leave them in the ESOL classes”* (8_CSO_UK). Thus, if migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are better informed about the existence of these organisations, it most probably means that they have already established a network of people or organisations which can support them or they live in an area where the support is more easily available. The most vulnerable people and among them asylum seekers instead risk being inadvertently excluded from the different types of support CSOs can offer and instead are almost solely involved in ESOL Classes. As suggested by Interviewee 16, isolation is one of the main problems for asylum seekers who often never leave the house unless necessary and suffer from severe mental health issues. It is clear then that if these people don’t have access to such services, it may become more difficult in the future to support their integration into the labour market and thus they risk remaining on the margins of UK society. In addition, Interviewee 8 identified that there is a lack of partnership and communication between big CSOs and small organisations: *“people feel that it is not easy to approach big organisations, they kind of relate more to small organisations, so the small community organisation doesn’t work with the mainstream, so there is a gap”* (8_CSO_UK). The existence of such a gap in partnership between larger and smaller organisations in the ecosystem of support for MRAs indicates that there may be some room for improving inter-organisational solidarity among CSOs.

8.7 UK: Conclusions

Our analysis of CSOs in the UK context presents a very challenging environment for the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the UK labour market. Following our analysis, three main conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, CSOs are the main (and for asylum seekers perhaps the only) providers of integration support services and training education services. They represent the main source of referral to different organisations and they are often a point of reference for refugees and asylum seekers, to address their most pressing and urgent needs. Only a limited number of organisations instead provide formal employability services or skills development services which seem to be only residual in terms of the range of activities that CSOs can organise. Partially this derives from the fact that employability services are not regarded by CSOs as the most important activities to provide for the effective integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into society. They could instead be considered as a secondary activity which can be provided by other organisations such as recruitment agencies and/or public sector agencies, once the most urgent needs have been addressed. Organisations which activate employability or business schemes are perceived as innovative practices that are developing and testing new knowledge and pilot services to explore how to integrate people in the long-term. Mainly refugees and asylum seekers have been involved in using services and activities

provided by CSOs, while migrants tend to use more their informal networks, career services and recruitment agencies to gain access to the UK labour market. Interestingly volunteering schemes have been highlighted by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as one of the most important activities related to CSOs and for labour market integration. CSOs provide a space where people with different pathways of migration can widen their network and obtain some experience of the UK labour market, experience that is perceived as being of high importance to potential employers. Thus, probably the main mechanism that CSOs put in place to enable integration into the UK labour market is providing a safe and trustful context that people can use, according to their experience and pathway of migration, to increase their confidence, to improve their well-being, to get to know more people, to learn the language or to increase their work experience.

Secondly, the austerity measures throughout the last decade have particularly affected CSOs which work with MRAs, reducing the availability of services (and specifically those in the field of employability) for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. This derives from a national environment which, as we analysed in depth in our WP3 report, acts as a barrier for the integration of MRAs into the UK job market. Migration has also become a politically contentious issue, reducing further the willingness of the UK Government to fund organisations working in this field. It is not then by chance that the CSOs involved in the research identified European Union funding, despite Brexit, as the main possible avenue for future funding. Not only have austerity measures affected the relationship between the UK Government and CSOs but also the commissioning procedures raise barriers for the involvement of CSOs, favouring private for-profit companies or larger and well-established organisations. Moreover, providing services for the UK Government does not come without tension and the reputational risk of receiving funds or negotiating objectives with a UK Government which has consistently demonstrated its very different goals on migration and asylum from one of integration. In response to the lack of funding from the UK Government, each of the CSOs we interviewed were seeking alternative sources of income. However, resources scattered across different funders affect not only the long-term sustainability of CSOs but also their services, their social mission and their ethos to assist those people who are among the hardest to reach. Organisations would tend to become competitors struggling over funding, and were therefore embedded in a continuous cycle of short term projects rather than pursuing synergic relationships and long-term goals. Therefore, funding challenges can fundamentally jeopardise the activities of CSOs and represent the main barrier hindering their work to promote the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the UK job market.

Thirdly, although the concept of co-production has been a mantra in the last few years in the UK context of third sector-public sector relations, this is not mirrored in the field of integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into the labour market. CSOs mainly occupy a space of collaborative influencing more than service delivery or partners in designing policy and promoting new services (the exception to this being the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy promoted by the Scottish Government), and thus have limited impact on policy change. Although almost all of the organisations we interviewed advocated for an improvement of policy through different instruments, there is the perception of a lack of visibility and recognition by policy makers, which seem to mobilise the involvement of CSOs as a tick-box exercise rather than a valuable and informative contribution. On the other hand, the organisations that take a more political stance, campaigning for more systemic change seem to have access to media platforms and contribute to widening information sharing about the

topic of integration into the labour market in particular the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers. However, it is not possible to assess at the moment, the impact of these campaigns on changing policies and discourses or whether they increase the visibility and recognition of CSOs to policy makers.

Finally, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers suggested some services that could be provided by CSOs which are perceived as potentially useful and not currently existing at the moment. They suggested that CSOs could have a role in providing information about how the UK job market works, sharing first level information or welcome packs in which all the main organisations dealing with integration into the job market are listed and that highlights the peculiarity and specificity of the UK context. They also suggested that CSOs could further help to increase the work experience opportunities of MRAs through an increasing number of volunteering schemes. In addition, they could also provide a greater emphasis on emotional support for MRAs which could help to develop and widen the social networks of people and reduce isolation.

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9 Appendices

Annex 1: Interview structure for CSOs

1. Could you tell me about yourself and your position in the organisation?
2. When did you begin working for this organisation?
3. Can you describe the structure of your organisation? How many people are employed here? Is the organisation supported through the work of volunteers?
4. How would you briefly describe the atmosphere or culture of your organisation? (formal/non-formal relationships, strict/loose rules)
5. Can you describe what kinds of support for labour integration your organisation provides MRA? (e.g. counselling, training, qualification)
6. If you think about the importance of labour integration issues, would you situate this topic among the priorities of your organisation? *(If you are not interviewing an MRA focused organisation, please raise the following questions: If you think about the importance of MRA issues, would you situate this topic among the priorities of your organisation?)*
7. How often does your organisation deal with the issues related to the position of MRAs in the labour market compared to other issues?
8. Can you describe the scope of your activities related to the position of MRAs in the labour market? Do you work on a local, national, or international level?
9. Can you give a deeper description of each activity or service? Why did you decide to offer those? What services are most in-demand? Do you have the capacity to meet the demand?
10. What strategies and activities do you use to contact MRAs? Do you have difficulties targeting some specific groups?
11. In your experience what specific support is required by migrant women? Do you offer specific services to women?
12. In your experience what specific support is required by migrant youth? Do you offer specific services to young migrants?
13. Could you provide an example of a success story from one of your initiatives?
14. How are MRAs involved in your organisation? Does your organisation employ MRAs? Do MRAs volunteer within your organisation? Is there a specific policy in place to ensure MRAs are involved in decision-making? (e.g. seats on the board/executive?)
15. How do you make decisions in your organisation? What kind of information and knowledge are they based on? How much is it based on accumulated experience and how much on expert knowledge?
16. Is your organisation active in policymaking or advocacy work? What are your policy goals in the field of labour integration?
17. Do you cooperate formally or informally with any political parties or political organisations?

18. Do you cooperate formally/informally with labour unions?
19. Do you attempt to influence the public debate on MRAs in the labour market? What actions and strategies do you use? Which media platforms have been most successful for your organisation (e.g. newspapers, TV, Radio, social media)?
20. What challenges has your organisation had to overcome in the last five years? (Ask complementary questions if not mentioned related to finances, legislation, politics, and public debate about migration in your country)?
21. How did the activities/position of your organisation change in connection with the so-called migrant crisis? How did you cope with the growing negative perceptions towards migration, asylum seekers, and refugees in Europe?
22. Do you cooperate with other civil society organisations on a local, national, or international level? Formally/informally?
23. Can you briefly describe any joint campaigns/events which your organisation has been involved in?
24. Do you have any connections with international organisations (e.g. ILO, OECD)? Do you collaborate with any partners abroad when it comes to labour market issues?
25. How is your organisation financed? How dependent is the organisation upon public funding? Does this affect your advocacy initiatives or services? Is your organisation funded by private donors?
26. Have you received funding from ESF or AMIF? How did this funding influence your agenda and practice?
27. How do you cooperate with public bodies (regional and governmental)? Do you participate in the delivery of public (integration) policies and services? Do you feel you have the power to influence labour policies?
28. What are the plans of your organisation for the next three and five years? What direction would you like to go? Would you like to grow/offer different kinds of services?

Annex 2: Interview structure for MRAs

Before starting the interview, please explain what the ethical commitments of the project are in terms of voluntary participation (withdrawal is always possible, even after the interview has taken place) and anonymity/privacy of disclosed information. Remember to provide a copy of the information sheet, which includes a summary of the ethical measures to protect the informants privacy and anonymity of data. Please **remember to collect and store** the informed consent from participants.

Background/warm up questions:

1. Could you tell us about your situation? Where you come from, when did you arrive, how did you end up here, etc.?

[For the interviewer: Here we are interested in understanding the migration path and reasons for migrating in this specific country and/or eventual experiences of migration in other countries].

Make sure to get the following information during the interview:

- Gender
- Age
- Education level (primary, secondary, tertiary)
- Occupation in his/her country of origin
- Current occupation (if employed)—we also need to infer from this the sector of employment.
- Languages the individual speaks
- Country of origin
- Family status

Cooperation with CSOs:

2. What are you currently doing? Studying; working (in a legal type of work) part time/full time, tenure/short term contract, informally; looking for work.
3. Can you describe the jobs you had in this country and how you found them?
4. Have you ever used the services of any organisation to find work in this country? (counselling, training, workshops, recognition of qualification, any kind of activities)
5. If so, what kind of help did you receive, and what was the nature of your cooperation? (long term or single visit? Was there some offer of services? Individual/group activities)
6. Did the received help match your expectations? Why?
7. How did you find these organisations? Did they approach you? Did someone suggest them to you? Did you find them via social media/internet?
8. Was this helpful in finding a job, in seeing what options were available on the market?
9. Do you think you will use the knowledge, information, etc. in the future?
10. Compared to your social network—friends, colleagues—what is the added value of your collaboration with CSOs? What is the benefit you get from CSOs, and which benefits would you not get elsewhere?
11. Are there any initiatives which you have found helpful in particular?

12. What other services/help/training would help you to find a job?
13. Do you have some career/education plan or ambitions? Would you like to work in another kind of job?
14. Are you planning to use the services of similar organisations in the future?
15. Would you like to add something or speak about something which we have not touched upon yet?

Annex 3: List of Interviews with CSO Representatives

Czech Republic			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_CZ	18.4.2019	Director	National service provider
2_CSO_CZ	11.10.2018	Head of methodology	City wide service provider
3_CSO_CZ	25.7.2019	Social worker	Crisis intervention
4_CSO_CZ	19.10.2018	Coordinator of services for migrants	National service provider
5_CSO_CZ	30.5. 2019	Social worker	Organisation specialised in education
6_CSO_CZ	15.5.2019	Coordinator	Policy making organisation
7_CSO_CZ	2.5.2019	Social worker and director	Regional service provider
8_CSO_CZ	27.7.2019	Social worker	Regional service provider
9_CSO_CZ	24.4.2019	Social worker	City wide service provider
10_CSO_CZ	13.11.2018	Director	City wide service provider
11_CSO_CZ	25.6.2019	Board member	Migrants' association
12_CSO_CZ	2.5.2019	Director	City wide service provider
13_CSO_CZ	25.7.2019	Projects managers (group interview - 3 persons)	Nationwide service provider
14_CSO_CZ	6.5.2019	Social worker	City wide service provider

Denmark			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_DK	28/06/2019	Regional Director	National Organization
2_CSO_DK	19/03/2019	Programming Manager	Social Partner Organization
3_CSO_DK	03/07/2019	Manager	Community-based Organization
4_CSO_DK	22/10/2018	Chief Consultant	Confederation of Employers
5_CSO_DK	23/08/2019	Program Manager	Community-based Organization
6_CSO_DK	31/10/2018	Spokesperson	Confederation of Labour Unions
7_CSO_DK	26/10/2019	Director	Social Partner Organization
8_CSO_DK	13/12/2018	Director of Integration	National Organization
9_CSO_DK	20/06/2019	Member of Board of Directors	Networking Organization
10_CSO_DK	09/01/2019	Director	Cultural Organization
11_CSO_DK	23/05/2018	Senior Advisor	National Organization[1]
12_CSO_DK	13/11/2018	Chief Consultant	Labour Union
13_CSO_DK	11/12/2018	Chief Consultant	Labour Union
14_CSO_DK	05/07/2019	Program Officer	Cultural Organization
15_CSO_DK	08/02/2019	Project Manager	National Organization
16_CSO_DK	14/08/2019	Project Manager	National Organization
17_CSO_DK	20/08/2019	Strategy and Development Manager	National Organization[2]
18_CSO_DK	30/08/2019	Director	Cultural Organization[3]
19_CSO_DK	01/07/2019	Volunteer Organizer	Diaspora Organization
20_CSO_DK	12/06/2019	Consultant	Social Partner Organization
21_CSO_DK	17/06/2019	Volunteer Organizer	Networking Organization

22_CSO_DK	21/05/2019	Program Organizer	Networking Organization
23_CSO_DK	13/12/2018	Chief of Communications	Social Partner Organization
[1] Same organization as CSO, Interview 8; [2] Same organization as CSO, Interview 16; [3] Same organization as CSO, Interview 10			

Finland			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_FI	19.10.2018	Executive manager	MRA association
2_CSO_FI	24.10.2018	Executive manager	Multicultural association
3_CSO_FI	3.4.2019	Coordinator	International NGO
4_CSO_FI	5.4.2019	Career counsellor	NGO umbrella organization
5_CSO_FI	17.4.2019	Expert	International NGO
6_CSO_FI	18.4.2019	Coordinator	MRA associations
7_CSO_FI	8.5.2019	Head of employment	Employment association
8_CSO_FI	8.5.2019	Head of business programme	Employment association
9_CSO_FI	8.5.2019	Development manager	Refugee organization
10_CSO_FI	22.5.2019	Director	Employment association
11_CSO_FI	4.6.2019	Director	Multicultural association
12_CSO_FI	4.6.2019	Coordinator	Multicultural association
13_CSO_FI	12.6.2019	Project manager	NGO umbrella organization
14_CSO_FI	12.6.2019	Teacher	NGO umbrella organization
15_CSO_FI	10.6.2019	Vice-director	MRA association
16_CSO_FI	4.7.2019	CEO	Employment association
17_CSO_FI	21.8.2019	Project employee	Multicultural association
18_CSO_FI	23.8.2019	Communication and organization assistant	Employment wellbeing related association
19_CSO_FI	27.8.2019	Project leader	Multicultural association
20_CSO_FI	2.10.2019	Team leader	International NGO

Greece			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_GR	06/06/2019	Protection officer	NGO
2_CSO_GR	21/06/2019	Social Scientist	NGO
3_CSO_GR	05/06/2019	Project Manager	NGO
4_CSO_GR	03/06/2019	Labor Counsel	NGO
5_CSO_GR	11/06/2019	Project Manager	NGO
6_CSO_GR	08/07/2019	Social Scientist	NGO
7_CSO_GR	14/06/2019	Social Scientist/HR Officer	NGO
8_CSO_GR	28/06/2019	Social Worker	NGO
9_CSO_GR	01/07/2019	Member	Solidarity Collective Initiative
10_CSO_GR	25/06/2019	Member	Solidarity Collective Initiative
11_CSO_GR	10/07/2019	Member	Solidarity Collective Initiative
12_CSO_GR	20/06/2019	Member	Solidarity Collective Initiative
13_CSO_GR	05/06/2019	Member	Social Cooperative
14_CSO_GR	05/07/2019	Member	Social Cooperative
15_CSO_GR	12/06/2019	Member	Social Cooperative

Italy			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSI_IT	07/11/2018	Member of the orientation, training and employment department/service	Religious organization
2_CSI_IT	15/11/2018	Work orientation desk for both asylum seekers/refugees (at CAS centres) and economic migrants	Social cooperative
3_CSO_IT	20/11/2018	Responsible for a SPRAR project	NGO
4_CSI_IT	22/11/2018	Member of the local secretariat with responsibility for immigration issues	Social promotion association
5_CSO_IT	18/01/2019	Project manager, scientific coordinator and management of international projects	Non-profit private foundation specialised in job placement
6_CSI_IT	23/05/2019	Coordinator of the reception service for migrants	Religious organization
7_CSO_IT	28/05/2019	Vice-president	Cleaning services cooperative
8_CSI_IT	03/06/2019	Responsible for projects related to the employment of disadvantaged groups in Italy	Non-profit organization for international cooperation
9_CSO_IT	06/06/2019	Coordinator for work orientation and formation/education	Social cooperative
10_CSI_IT	14/06/2019	Responsible for the integration area within a SPRAR project	Social cooperative
11_CSO_IT	14/06/2019	President/founder	Social cooperative

12_CSI_IT	17/06/2019	Responsible for the integration area (training and employment) within a SPRAR project	Voluntary association
13_CSO_IT	20/06/2019	Operator in charge of migrants' integration	Social cooperative
14_CSI_IT	24/06/2019	Member in charge of the work orientation service and language school	Religious organization
15_CSO_IT	26/06/2019	Operator for the reception facility for women victims of trafficking and exploitation	Voluntary association
16_CSI_IT	08/07/2019	Social worker in charge of welcoming and integration of women victims of trafficking, member of the Board of Directors	Social cooperative
17_CSO_IT	10/07/2019	President/founder	Voluntary association/intercultural centre
18_CSI_IT	12/07/2019	President	Social cooperative
19_CSO_IT	17/07/2019	Operator in charge of education programmes; operator B job placement/psychologist	Social cooperative
20_CSI_IT	25/07/2019	Operator	Social cooperative

Switzerland			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_SUI	2.05.2019	Responsible of communication fundraising and partnerships	NGO providing support to qualified migrant women
2_CSO_SUI	12.06.2019	Co-founder	Association of neighbourhood habitants
3_CSO_SUI	16.05.2019	Person in charge of professional integration	NGO providing support to migrant women
4_CSO_SUI	3.05.2019	Director	NGO supporting for enhancing employability
5_CSO_SUI	6.06.2019	Person in charge of migration topic at the federal level	NGO in humanitarian support and integration
6_CSO_SUI	22.01.2019	Head of the Geneva Office	NGO in humanitarian support and integration
7_CSO_SUI	12.06.2019	Professional orientation counsellor	NGO supporting women.
8_CSO_SUI	5.06.2019	Co-director	NGO supporting broad population
9_CSO_SUI	20.05.2019	Co-founder	NGO supporting young persons.
10_CSO_SUI	7.05.2019	Director	NGO supporting asylum seekers and beneficiaries from social assistance (migrants and non-migrants)
11_CSO_SUI	4.06.2019	Founder and president	Association that provides information on the rights
12_CSO_SUI	9.07.2019	Founder	Programme for young migrants in their professional integration.
13_CSO_SUI	13.06.2019	Responsible for participants recruitment and social issues	NGO providing training and placement support
14_CSO_SUI	25.06.2019	Co-founder	NGO providing support for entrepreneurship to migrants
15_CSO_SUI	9.05.2019	President	NGO supporting professional integration of refugees and temporarily admitted persons.

16_CSO_SUI	14.01.2019	Director	NGO supporting the broad population
17_CSO_SUI	27/06/2019	Member	Social Cooperative

UK			
	Date of interview	Function/Role	Type of Institution
1_CSO_UK	08/05/2019	Founder	Community-Based Organisation
2_CSO_UK	20/05/2019	Coordinator	NGO
3_CSO_UK	24/05/2019	Founder	Social Enterprise
4_CSO_UK	08/04/2019	Founder and Managing Director	Social Enterprise
5_CSO_UK	17/04/2019	Founder and Director	Social Enterprise
6_CSO_UK	09/05/2019	Founder	Community-Based Organisation
7_CSO_UK	17/04/2019	Coordinator of a specific project	NGO
8_CSO_UK	25/04/2019	Volunteer Coordinator and Senior Case Worker	NGO
9_CSO_UK	24/04/2019	Evaluation Officer	NGO
10_CSO_UK	02/07/2019	Coordinator of a specific project	NGO
11_CSO_UK	19/06/2019	Coordinator of a specific project	Community-Based Organisation
12_CSO_UK	29/10/2018	Deputy Director	NGO
13_CSO_UK	27/11/2018	Director	NGO
14_CSO_UK	08/10/2018	Employment Coordinator	NGO
15_CSO_UK	08/10/2018	Chair	NGO
16_CSO_UK	04/12/2018	Director	NGO
17_CSO_UK	17/12/2018	Policy Officer	NGO
18_CSO_UK	13/12/2018	Manager	NGO

Annex 4: List of Interviews with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

Czech Republic										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_CZ	11.7.2019	41	F	single	Syria	2017	Tertiary	Registered at Labour Office	Journalist	Arabic, English
2_MRA_CZ	11.7.2019	35	M	married	Myanmar	2008	Secondary	Owner of ethnic restaurant	Student	Czech, Burmese, English
3_MRA_CZ	12.7.2019	49	F	single mother	Ukraine	2008	none	Cook	Cook	Ukrainian, Czech
4_MRA_CZ	4.7.2019	39	F	married	Syria	2015	Secondary	Parental leave	Stay at home mother	Arabic, English
5_MRA_CZ	30.06. 2019	25	M	married	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Stock keeper	Student	Arabic, English, Czech
6_MRA_CZ	25.6.2019	23	F	single	Afghanistan	2015	Secondary	Works in an ethnic restaurant	Professional sport	Persian, English, Czech
7_MRA_CZ	11.11.2018	51	F	married	Syria	2013	Tertiary	Cook in a café	Professional in telecommunication	Arabic, English, Czech

8_MRA_CZ	2.7.2019	45	M	married	Camerun	2008	n.a.	Works in textile factory	Student	Czech, English, Russian,
9_MRA_CZ	14.7.2019	25	M	single	Cuba	2017	Primary	Bartender at a hotel	Various jobs	Spanish, Czech
10_MRA_CZ	15.11.2018	53	M	married	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Registered at a Labour Office/in a ethnic restaurant	Journalist	Arabic, English
11_MRA_CZ	2.11.2018	39	M	married	Syria	2015	Tertiary	Student	Various jobs	Arabic, Czech
12_MRA_CZ	11.07.2019	30	F	single	Moldova	2017	Tertiary	Ph.D. student	Graphic designer	Slovak, Russian, Romanian, English
13_MRA_CZ	03.08.2019	29	F	married	USA	2014	Tertiary	Ph.D. student/editor	Journalist	English, Czech, Russian
14_MRA_CZ	25.7.2019	33	F	married	Georgia	2017	Tertiary	Freelance	Project manager	Russian, Georgian, Czech, English
15_MRA_CZ	8.7.2019	35	F	married	Serbia	2015	Tertiary	Freelance/student	Language instructor	Serbian, Dutch, English, Czech
16_MRA_CZ	15.2. 2019	33	F	married	Vietnam	2013	Secondary	Cook in an ethnic restaurant	n.a.	Vietnamese
17_MRA_CZ	20.07-- 2019	33	M	single	Belarus	2014	Tertiary	Marketing business	Student	Russian, Polish, English

18_MRA_CZ	25.7.2019	22	F	single	Russia	2013	Secondary	Student/part time job in a hostel	Student	Russian, Czech, English
19_MRA_CZ	27.7.2019	28	M	marrier	Russia	2018	Tertiary	Tester in IT	Doctor	Russian, English
20_MRA_CZ	10.07.2019	24	F	single	Turkey	2018	Tertiary	Project manager in an CSO	Project manager/coordinator	Turkish, French, English
21_MRA_CZ	16.07.2019	32	M	single	Turkey	2017	Tertiary	Job in an ethnic restaurant	Teacher	Turkish, Kurdish, English
22_MRA_CZ	27.7. 2019	25	M	single	Russia	2011	Secondary	Owner a tattoo studio	Student	Russian, Czech, English
23_MRA_CZ	30.06.2019	28	F	single	Kazachstan	2013	Tertiary	Logistics	Students	Russian, Czech, English
24_MRA_CZ	10.7.2019	33	F	single	Belarus	2003	Tertiary	Intermediary	Student	Russian, Czech
25_MRA_CZ	1.12. 2018	28	M	single	Russia	2010	Tertiary	Graphic designer	Student	Russian,
26_MRA_CZ	2.8.2019	38	F	married	Russia	2010	Tertiary	Geophysicist	Stay at home	Russian
27_MRA_CZ	15.6. 2019	33	F	married	Vietnam	2013	Secondary	n.a.	Works in family business	Vietnamese, Czech
28_MRA_CZ	13.5.2019	32	M	married	Vietnam	2016	Secondary	n.a.	n.a.	Vietnamese

Denmark										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_DK	26/06/2019	34	M	Married	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Unemployed	Journalist	Arabic, Kurdish, English, Danish
2_MRA_DK	23/08/2019	23	F	Married	Bangladesh	2016	Tertiary	HR executive	Researcher	Bengali, English
3_MRA_DK	28/11/2018	32	M	Married	Iraq	2009	Tertiary	Student	Journalist/	English, Kurdish, Arabic, Danish
4_MRA_DK	13/06/2019	26	F	Married	Russia	2016	Tertiary	Unemployed	Medical Professional	Russian, English, Basic Danish
5_MRA_DK	25/06/2019	28	M	Single	India	2015	Tertiary	Unemployed	IT Specialist	Hindi, Telegu, English
6_MRA_DK	07/06/2019	41	F	Married	USA	2008	Tertiary	Academic	Academic	English
7_MRA_DK	30/07/2019	37	M	Single	Pakistan	2017	Tertiary	Unemployed	Student	English, Urdu, Hindi
9_MRA_DK	29/06/2019	26	M	Single	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Student	Journalist	Arabic, English
10_MRA_DK	03/07/2019	44	M	Married	Eritrea	2017	Tertiary	Student	Government Employee	Arabic, English

11_MRA_DK	04/07/2019	35	M	Married	Afghanistan	2015	Tertiary	Student	Businessman	Pashto, Dari, English, Urdu
12_MRA_DK	29/10/2018	40	F	Single	India	2011	Tertiary	Academic	Academic	English, Bengali, Hindi
13_MRA_DK	19/06/2019	43	M	Married	India	2017	Tertiary	Consultant	Engineer	English, Hindi
14_MRA_DK	21/06/2019	36	F	Married	USA	2015	Tertiary	Administrative Assistant	Office Manager	English
15_MRA_DK	09/07/2019	33	F	Married	India	2015	Tertiary	Volunteer/Unemployed	Engineer	Hindi, Urdu, English
16_MRA_DK	04/07/2019	29	M	Single	Afghanistan	2014	Tertiary	Student	Project Manager	Dari, Pashto, Farsi, Urdu, Hindi, English
17_MRA_DK	25/11/2019	42	M	Married	India	2009	Tertiary	Driver	Computer Engineer	English, Danish, Tamil, Hindi
18_MRA_DK	13/12/2019	29	F	Married	India	2014	Tertiary	IT Specialist	IT Specialist	English, Hindi, Marathi
19_MRA_DK	29/11/2018	31	F	Single	India	2013	Tertiary	Researcher	Student	English, Hindi, Punjabi
20_MRA_DK	17/10/2018	28	F	Single	USA	2012	Tertiary	Educational Consultant	Student	English, Danish
21_MRA_DK	11/10/2018	29	M	Single	USA	2009	Tertiary	IT specialist	Student	English
22_MRA_DK	06/11/2018	24	F	Single	USA	2012	Tertiary	Marketing Executive	Student	English, Danish
23_MRA_DK	22/10/2018	25	M	Single	USA	2014	Tertiary	MA student	Student	English, Danish

24_MRA_DK	21/12/2018	28	M	Single	Afghanistan	2012	Tertiary	Student	Student	English, Dari, Urdu
25_MRA_DK	06/01/2019	42	M	Married	Afghanistan	2008	Tertiary	Cycle shop owner	Businessman	English, Urdu, Danish, Dari
26_MRA_DK	12/11/2018	24	M	Single	Afghanistan	2008	Tertiary	Artist	Student	English, Urdu, Dari, Farsi, Danish
27_MRA_DK	15/06/2019	33	M	Married	Afghanistan	2010	Tertiary	Unemployed	Businessman	English, Danish, Dari, Farsi, Urdu
28_MRA_DK	21/12/2018	26	M	Single	Iraq	2010	Tertiary	Student	Businessman	English, Kurdish, Arabic
29_MRA_DK	07/11/2018	34	F	Single	Syria	2012	Tertiary	Shop Attendant	Artist	English, Arabic
30_MRA_DK	18/07/2019	25	M	Single	Syria	2015	Tertiary	Student	Student	English, Arabic, Kurdish
31_MRA_DK	18/07/2019	22	M	Single	Syria	2015	Tertiary	Student	Student	English, Arabic, Kurdish
32_MRA_DK	18/07/2019	26	M	Single	Syria	2015	Tertiary	Student	Student	English, Arabic, Kurdish

Finland										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_FI	6.4.2019	44	F	Finnish husband	Russia	2015	Tertiary	Unemployed	Manager	Russia, Finnish, some German
2_MRA_FI	18.4.2019	55	F	Finnish husband	Russia	2014	Tertiary	Student	Teacher	Russian, German, English and Finnish
3_MRA_FI	30.4.2019	37	F	Married and child,	Russia	2016	Tertiary	Student	Law enforcement	Russian, little English and learning Finnish
4_MRA_FI	3.5.2019	54	F	Husband and 4 children that live separately	Russia	2010	Tertiary	Accountant	Economist	Russian, Finnish
5_MRA_FI	6.5.2019	35	F	Finnish husband	Russia	2014	Tertiary	Student	Translator, Interpreter	Russian, English, Finnish
6_MRA_FI	3.4.2019	23	M	Husband and child	Somalia	2015	Secondary/Vocational	Student & food delivery	Non	Somali, Finnish, some English
7_MRA_FI	5.4.2019	20	M	Single	Somalia	2019	Primary	Student	Non	Somali, Finnish, English

8_MRA_FI	9.4.2019	24	M	Married, wife coming to Finland soon	Ethiopia	2016	Tertiary	Unemployed	Animal care	Somali, Amhara, Suomi, Arabia (to some extent)
9_MRA_FI	15.4.2019	23	M	Wife and child	Eritrea	2017	Primary	Student	Non	Tigrigna, Finnish and some English
10_MRA_FI	9.4.2019	26	M	Alone in Finland	Ethiopia	2016	Tertiary	Unemployed	Natural education development worker	Somali, Amharic, English and Finnish
11_MRA_FI	25.4.2019	33	M	Married and 3 children	Kenya	2017	Tertiary	Food delivery	in NGO as humanitarian aid worker	Somali, Swahili, English, Finnish and little Arabic
12_MRA_FI	9.4.2019	32	F	Married	India	2017	Tertiary	Student	Dentist	English, Hindi, Mother tongue, Five local Indian languages, Finnish
13_MRA_FI	21.4.2019	22	F	She and her husband	Bangladesh	2017	Secondary	Student	Student	English, Hindi, Urdu, Mother tongue (Bengali), Finnish
14_MRA_FI	17.5.2019	23	F	Single	Vietnam	2015	Tertiary	Student	Student	Vietnamese, English
15_MRA_FI	13.5.2019	23	F	Single	Vietnam	2014	Tertiary	Student	Student	Vietnamese, English, Finnish

16_MRA_FI	26.5.2019	55	M	Married and child	Russia	2015	Tertiary	Restaurant industry	Different places	Russian, a little Finnish
17_MRA_FI	9.5.2019	45	F	Son in Finland, husband in India	India	2015	Tertiary	Research	Teacher, school coordinator and consultant	English, Hindi, mother tongue along with five local Indian languages
18_MRA_FI	22.5.2019	30	F	Married	Nepal	2016	Tertiary	Unemployed	Medical consultant	Nepali, English, Hindi, Urdu and basic Finnish
19_MRA_FI	13.6.2019	32	M	Finnish wife and child	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Doing integration programme	Sales and management and English teacher	English, Arabic, little Turkish and little Finnish
20_MRA_FI	11.4.2019	24	M	Wife and child	Colombia	2018	Tertiary	Food delivery	Financial coordinator	Spanish, English and a little Finnish
21_MRA_FI	18.5.2019	41	M	Single	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Doing courses and looking for work	IT services in international companies	Arabic, English and some Finnish
22_MRA_FI	30.7.2019	25	M	Relationship with Finnish women	Syria	2016	Tertiary/not completed	Beekeeper	Student and Internet coffee shop owner	English, Arabic, Finnish
23_MRA_FI	1.8.2019	24	M	Moved to Finland with family	Iraq	2015	Basic education	Doing basic education and studying Finnish	Non	English, Arabic, Finnish
24_MRA_FI	23.7.2019	32	M	Single	Iraq	2015	Tertiary	Construction	Accounting	English, Arabic, some Finnish

25_MRA_FI	25.6.2019	28	M	Married to Finnish woman	Iraq	2015	Secondary	Cleaning	Worked in makeup store	English, Arabic, some Finnish
26_MRA_FI	26.4.2019	22	M	Single	Somalia	2014	Secondary/vocational	Student at vocational school	Non	Somali and Finnish
27_MRA_FI	27.6.2019	32	M	Single	Somalia	2015	Secondary/vocational	Student at vocational school	Non	Arabic, Somali, Finnish and some English.
28_MRA_FI	22.6.2019	32	F	Husband and two children	India	2015	Tertiary	Maternity leave	English language teacher	Hindi, English and Finnish
29_MRA_FI	3.8.2019	29	F	Husband and son	Pakistan	2016	Tertiary	House wife	Non	English, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and basic Finnish
30_MRA_FI	18.7.2019	28	F	Husband and 2 children	Syria	2015	Secondary/not completed	House wife	Part-time teacher	Arabic, English, Finnish
31_MRA_FI	13.5.2019	32	F	In relationship	Iran	2013	Tertiary	Nurse	English language teacher	Farsi, English, Finnish
32_MRA_FI	19.6.2019	35	F	Married	India	2011	Tertiary	Social service worker	IT	Hindi, English and Finnish
33_MRA_FI	19.8.2019	32	M	Married	Nepal	2013	Tertiary	Researcher	Student, worked in his family business	Nepali, English, Hindi, and basic Finnish
34_MRA_FI	23.8.2019	32	F	Husband and child	India	2015	Tertiary	Student	Non	Hindi, English and Finnish

35_MRA_FI	19.10.2018	33	F	Husband and pregnant	Syria	2015	Primary	Student	Non	Arabic and some Finnish
36_MRA_FI	19.10.2018	30	F	Husband and pregnant	Iraq	2017	Secondary/vocational	Integration training programme	Office administration	Arabic, Finnish and English
37_MRA_FI	25.10.2018	26	F	Finnish boyfriend, family in China	China	2014	Tertiary	Media company	Non	Chinese, Japanese and some Finnish
38_MRA_FI	8.11.2018	29	F	No family in Finland	China	2014	Tertiary	Phd Student	Education sector	English, Finnish (a2), Chinese native language, little bit of German.
39_MRA_FI	22.11.2018	42	F	Finnish husband and child	Russia	2010	Tertiary	Student	Journalism	Finnish, Russian and English
40_MRA_FI	11.12.2019	28	F	Husband and three kids	Russia	2012	Tertiary	Student	Lawyer	Russian, Finnish, some English and some Italian

Greece										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_GR	03/05/2019	18	Male	Single	Afghanistan	2016	1st class of secondary education	Interpreter in NGO	n.a.	Farsi, Dari, Greek, English
2_MRA_GR	05/05/2019	37	Male	Married with kids	Afghanistan	2016	Secondary	n.a.	Builder and welder	Farsi, Dari, Urdu, Pasto, Basic English and Greek
3_MRA_GR	05/05/2019	32	Male	Single	Afghanistan	2016	Secondary	n.a.	Painter (Buildings)	Farsi
4_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	30	Male	Single	Iran	13-14 months ago	Tertiary	n.a.	Iron Welding and Farming	Farsi
5_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	35	Male	Married in Afghanistan	Afghanistan	2017	Tertiary	Volunteer	Journalist	Farsi/ Little English
6_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	37	Female	Single Mother	Pakistan	2017	Tertiary	n.a.	Banking and insurance (in Dubai)	Urdu, English
7_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	37	Male	Single	Iran	Aug-18	Tertiary	n.a.	(In Albania) Working in forex company, translator, interpreter, graphic designer, video editing, content for social media	Farsi, English
8_MRA_GR	30/05/2019	27	Male	Single	Kurdish-Syria	2016	Secondary	Interpreter	Studying	Kurmangi, Arabic, English

9_MRA_GR	17/05/2019	20	Male	Single	Afghanistan	2016	Secondary	Safeguard for Unaccompanied Minors Shelter	Studying	Farsi Dari Phastu, Urdu
10_MRA_GR	17/05/2019	24	Male	Single	Iraq	2017	Tertiray	Unemployed	Free Lancer	Kurdish, Farsi, Arabic, English
11_MRA_GR	17/05/2019	26	Male	Single	Afghanistan	2017	Secondary	Working	Unemployed	Farsi, Dari, English Turkish
12_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	28	Male	Single	Chad	2018	Tertiary	Unemployed	Volunteer at Private Schools	French, Arabic
13_MRA_GR	23/05/2019	18	Male	Single	Iran	2017	Secondary	Unemployed	Studying	Farsi, English
14_MRA_GR	07/06/2019	32	Male	Married	Syria	2016	Secondary	Part time at a furniture store	Decorator, Restaurant Owner	Arabic, English
15_MRA_GR	22/11/2018	32	Male	Single	Afghanistan	2007	Secondary	Interpreter	Studying	Pastu, Dari,Farsi, Urdu, English, Greek
16_MRA_GR	22/11/2018	33	Male	Single	Syria	2008	Secondary	Interpreter	Studying	Arabic, Kurdish, Greek
17_MRA_GR	26/11/2018	24	Male	Single	Syria	2014	Secondary	Interpreter	Studying	Arabic Kurdish,Greek
18_MRA_GR	05/12/2018	23	Female	Married	Syria	2012	Secondary	Unemployed	Studying	Arabic, English

Italy										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_IT	20/02/2019	34	Female	Divorced, with children	Somalia	2008	Tertiary	Linguistic-cultural mediator, social educator and she is also involved in European	Unemployed	Somali, English, Arabic, Italian
2_MRA_IT	25/02/2019	23	Male	Single	Ivory Coast	2016	Primary	He worked 5 months in black as a car mechanic and storekeeper; currently, he is looking for a regular job	Car mechanic	French, Baoulé, Italian
3_MRA_IT	28/03/2019	41	Female	Married, with children	Morocco	2007	Secondary	She has been working in an immigration desk managed by a cooperative since just one month and previously worked for a long time as a linguistic-cultural mediator	Unemployed	Arabic, French, English, Italian
4_MRA_IT	18/04/2019	42	Female	Traditionally married (not officially) with children	Ivory Coast	2016	Illiterate	Cleaning worker and baby-sitter	Greengrocer	Bambara, French, Italian

5_MRA_IT	29/05/2019	19	Male	Married, with children	Ghana	2015	Primary	Cleaning worker (employed in a cooperative)	Bricklayer, painter	Twi, English, Italian
6_MRA_IT	03/07/2019	33	Female	Married, with a kid	Bulgaria	2008	Secondary	Waitress	Waitress, singer	Bulgarian, Italian
7_MRA_IT	03/07/2019	33	Male	Married, with a kid	Egypt	2010	Tertiary	Pizza maker	Policeman	Arabic, English, Italian
8_MRA_IT	03/07/2019	33	Male	Married	Nigeria	2012	Tertiary	Handyman and custodian of a villa (cleaning, gardening, pool mantainance, small bulding and plumbing work)	He worked in the brother's import company of textile	Ibo, English, Italian
9_MRA_IT	13/07/2019	20	Male	Single	Ivory Coast	2016	Koranic school (evening school)	Intership as worker in a food factory (ham)	Street seller	Dioula, French, Italian, Arabic
10_MRA_IT	13/07/2019	22	Male	Single	Togo	2017	Secondary	Internship as a welder	Welder	Kusuntu, French, Italian, other local dialects
11_MRA_IT	13/07/2019	24	Male	Single	Togo	2016	Secondary	High school student (also doing an internship in a mechanical factory)	Student	French, Italian, local dialect
12_MRA_IT	13/07/2019	23	Male	Single	Nigeria	2016	Secondary	Student - university (computer science)	Barber	English, French, Italian, local dialects
13_MRA_IT	16/07/2019	18	Male	Single	Guinea	2017	Primary	Unemployed	Unemployed	Susu, French, Italian

14_MRA_IT	16/07/2020	21	Male	Single	Sierra Leone	2017	Secondary	Unemployed	P.R. advertisement	English, Italian, Twi, Creole
15_MRA_IT	16/07/2021	22	Male	Single	Senegal	2016	Secondary	Unemployed	Student	French, Italian, local dialect
16_MRA_IT	16/07/2019	22	Male	Married	Ivory Coast	2017	Koranic school (3 years when he was a child)	Storeman	Unemployed	Bambara, French, Italian
17_MRA_IT	16/07/2020	31	Male	Single, with a kid	Ivory Coast	2016	Secondary	Worker in a textile factory (without contract), previously he worked as installer	Worker in a telephone company	Guibini, French, Italian
18_MRA_IT	16/07/2021	38	Male	Married, with children	Nigeria	2017	n.a.	Worker in a textile factory (temporary contract)	Worker in a manufacturing of sofa	Buini, English, basic Italian
19_MRA_IT	17/07/2019	20	Male	Single	Guinea	2017	Primary	Unemployed	Tradesman	Malinké, French, Italian
20_MRA_IT	17/07/2019	25	Male	Married, with a kid	Guinea	2017	Primary	Unemployed	Tradesman	Wolof, Peul, Susu, French, basic Italian
21_MRA_IT	17/07/2019	31	Male	Divorced	Nigeria	2016	Illiterate	Unemployed	Moto mechanic	Bini, English (a little bit of Italian)
22_MRA_IT	17/07/2019	36	Male	Widow, with children	Ghana	2017	Illiterate	Unemployed	Farmer and driver	Twi, English

23_MRA_IT	17/07/2019	30	Male	Single	Mali	2017	Secondary	Storeman	Bricklayer and mechanic	Bambara, Soninké, French, basic Kpelle, basic Malinke, Italian
24_MRA_IT	19/07/2019	33	Female	Married, with children	Albania	2009	Tertiary	Social health operatore	Nurse	Albanian, Italian
25_MRA_IT	27/09/2019	33	Male	Single	Guinea	2016	Secondary	Worker in a food factory	Unemployed	French, Italian

Switzerland										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_SUI	10/06/2018	36 years	Female	Married	USA	End 2007 first round of migration - End 2014 second round of migration	Tertiary	Administrative officer at an NGO, and assistant at a pilot project targeting migrant women	Intern in a Women's NGO and Employee at an Educational Centre	English and Italian, Spanish, French
2_MRA_SUI	04/04/2019	37 years	Female	Married; two children	Colombia	2014	Tertiary	Social worker at a care home for elderly, and founder of a non-profit social organisation	Project Co-Worker and Programme Leader in the area of education and social inclusion of marginalized groups	Spanish and French
3_MRA_SUI	04/08/2019	33 years	Female	Married; one child	Brazil	2016	Tertiary	Unemployed	Has worked for 8 years for an enterprise in the insurance sector	Portuguese and French
4_MRA_SUI	04/10/2019	44 years	Female	Married; two children	India	2012	Tertiary	Project co-worker and administrator at a City department	Secretary and Administration Officer for several enterprises	Hindu, English and French

5_MRA_SUI	04/11/2019	54 years	Female	Married; three children	Brazil	2012	Tertiary	Co-worker at a non- profit association that works for the integration of migrants and refugees	Police Officer and Coordinator of the Department of Criminology	Portuguese, Spanish and French
6_MRA_SUI	4/16/2019	52 years	Male	Married	Colombia	2010	Tertiary	Social-legal prison assistant	Judge in the Criminal Court	Spanish and French
7_MRA_SUI	4/15/2019	35 years	Female	Married; one child	Colombia	2016	Tertiary	Sports instructor, and as socio-cultural animateur - LGBT political activist	Research of a job as socio-cultural animateur / her ambition is to continue with her political activism for the LGBT	Spanish and French
8_MRA_SUI	05/02/2019	55 years	Male	Married; two children	Syria	2012	Tertiary	Public servant	Student	Arab, English and French
9_MRA_SUI	09/05/2019	30 years	Male	Single	Syria	2014	Secondary	Mobile phone repair service technician	Intern at the logistics department of an enterprise	Arab and French
10_MRA_SUI	20/05//2019	41 years	Female	Married; four children	Benin	2014	Secondary	Saleswoman and cook (temporary jobs)	In search of work	French
11_MRA_SUI	23/05/2019	24 years	Female	Married	Morocco	2017	Secondary	Salesperson, geriatric nursing assistant, kitchen staff, cleaning woman	Intern at Hospital - cleaning staff	Arab and French
12_MRA_SUI	06/05/2019	52 years	Female	Married; one child	Colombia	2012	Tertiary	Educator, social worker and director of a women's NGO	In search of work	Spanish and French
13_MRA_SUI	18/05/2019	21 years	Female	Single	Kosovo	2010	Tertiary	No profession	Student	Serbian and French

14_MRA_SUI	18/05/2019	30 years	Male	Single	Colombia	2012	Secondary	student / part-time job as cleaner and works as electronic freelance	Owner of a small shop with electronics and IT equipment	Spanish and French
15_MRA_SUI	19/05/2019	60 years	Female	Single	Syria	2015	Tertiary	Unemployed	Chemical Engineer	Arab, English and French
16_MRA_SUI	27/11/2018	40 years	Male	Single	Eritrea	2012	Tertiary	Works with associations as translator	Journalist	Tigrinya, English and French
17_MRA_SUI	29/07/2019	25 years	Male	Married	Kosovo	2014	Tertiary	Unemployed	Teacher	Serbian and French
18_MRA_SUI	05/08/2019	32 years	Male	Married	Eritrea	2013	n.a.	Unemployed	n.a.	Tigrinya, English and French
19_MRA_SUI	11/08/2019	45 years	Male	Single	Ethiopia	2015	n.a.	Unemployed	Cook	Amharic and English
20_MRA_SUI	15/08/2019	30 years	Male	Single	Syria	2015	Primary	Restaurant assistant	Automotive technician	Arab and English

UK										
	Date of interview/	Age	Gender	Family Status	Country of Origin	Migration Year	Education	Current occupation	Occupation in country of origin	Languages the individual speaks
1_MRA_UK	02/10/2018	Mid 30s	M	Single	India	2011	Tertiary	IT - Insurance Company	Working with IT	English, Hindi
2_MRA_UK	05/10/2018	Mid 30s	M	Single	Pakistan	2010	Tertiary	PhD researcher		English, Pakistani
3_MRA_UK	23/10/2018	Early 40s	M	Married with children	Sudan	2012	Tertiary	Student	Public Sector Official	English, Arabic
4_MRA_UK	27/10/2018	Mid 30s	F	Married with children	Iran	2009	Tertiary	n.a.	n.a	English, Persian
5_MRA_UK	27/10/2018	Early 40s	M	Single	Iran	2011	Tertiary	Student and Waiter	Civil Servant	English, Persian
6_MRA_UK	28/10/2018	40s	M	Single	Iran	2011	Tertiary	Engineer	n.a	English, Persian
7_MRA_UK	01/11/2018	30s	F	Married with children	Pakistan	2002	Tertiary	Not Working	n.a	English, Pakistani
8_MRA_UK	05/02/2019	70s (8 WOMEN)	F	Married with children	India	1980	Primary	Retired	n.a	English, Hindi
9_MRA_UK	29/10/2018	30s	F	n.a.	Eritrea	2008	Tertiary	Policy Officer	n.a.	English, Arabic
10_MRA_UK	20/06/2019	30s	M	n.a.	Nigeria	2008	Tertiary	Civil Servant	n.a.	English
11_MRA_UK	01/07/2019	30s	F	Married	Malaysia	2011	Tertiary	PhD Student	Banker	English, Malay

12_MRA_UK	01/07/2019	30s	F	Single	Turkey	2006	Tertiary	PhD Student	Secretary	English, Turkish
12_MRA_UK	10/07/2019	40s	M	Married with children	Salvador	2019	Tertiary	Not Working	Lawyer	English, Spanish
13_MRA_UK	08/07/2019	30s	F	Married with children	Algeria	2015	Tertiary	Not Working	Customer Support	English, Arabic, French
14_MRA_UK	13/07/2019	30s	M	Single	Nigeria	2013	Tertiary	System engineering	Computer engineering	English
15_MRA_UK	13/07/2019	20s	M	Single	Ivory Coast	n.a.	Tertiary	Bachelor Student, Waiter	n.a.	English and French
16_MRA_UK	18/07/2019	30s	M	Single	Iraq/Iran	n.a.	Tertiary	Not Working	n.a.	English, Farsi and Kurdish
17_MRA_UK	22/07/2019	30s	F	Married	South Africa	2018	Tertiary	Studying	n.a.	English
18_MRA_UK	22/07/2019	30s	M	Married	South Africa	2018	Tertiary	Mechanical Engineer	Mechanical Engineer	English