

Project

# LIB(e)RO



Intellectual Output 1 / Activity 3

## European Analysis Report

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## I. Introduction

This report was a meta-analysis of all national level analysis reports. It was prepared by DUK. The European analysis report serves as a central document for all further work steps in the project.

The analyses serve the purpose of the information acquisition and evaluation of the existing situation and the need in the area of intercultural language training from the perspective of refugees as learners and from the perspective of librarians and social workers as trainers or guides.

From a methodological point of view, these analyses include a good combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis procedures yet they are not scientific research reports, and more practice oriented.

The results of these analyses provided a clear picture of existing measures and structures in issues related with refugees and libraries, also in the language learning area for refugees. Thus, they yielded the basic understanding for us to be able to structure the pedagogic concept and the platform.

## II. Situation of Minor Refugees

### A. General Situation

Especially in 2015 the world faced a major movement of forcibly displaced people due to conflicts, wars, persecutions and human rights violations. The number of people forcibly displaced reached the record number in the world history. At the end of the year 2015, 65.3 million people reported to be forcibly displaced. 21.3 million of these people were refugees; 40.8 million of them were reported to be internally displaced people, while 3.2 million people were asylum seekers. Europe was one of the hot spots as a final destination for these people (UNCHR, 2016). Only in 2015, 1.3 million people applied for asylum in Europe (Eurostat, 2017).

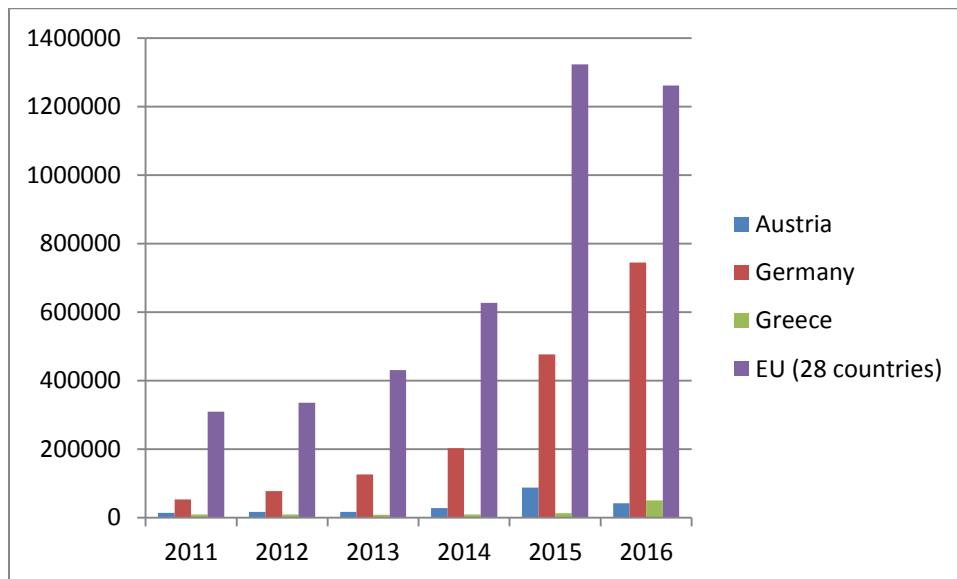
Figure 2 shows the trend of asylum application in the last five years in the EU countries and in the project countries Austria, Germany and Greece. The number of applications has been increasing steadily, peaking in the last two years, 2015-2016. As it can be seen, Germany, being a hotspot, has the highest number of applications in all years that is not comparable to the number of applications in Austria and Greece.

Figure 1 Hot Spots for Asylum Claims (2015)



Source: Eurostat

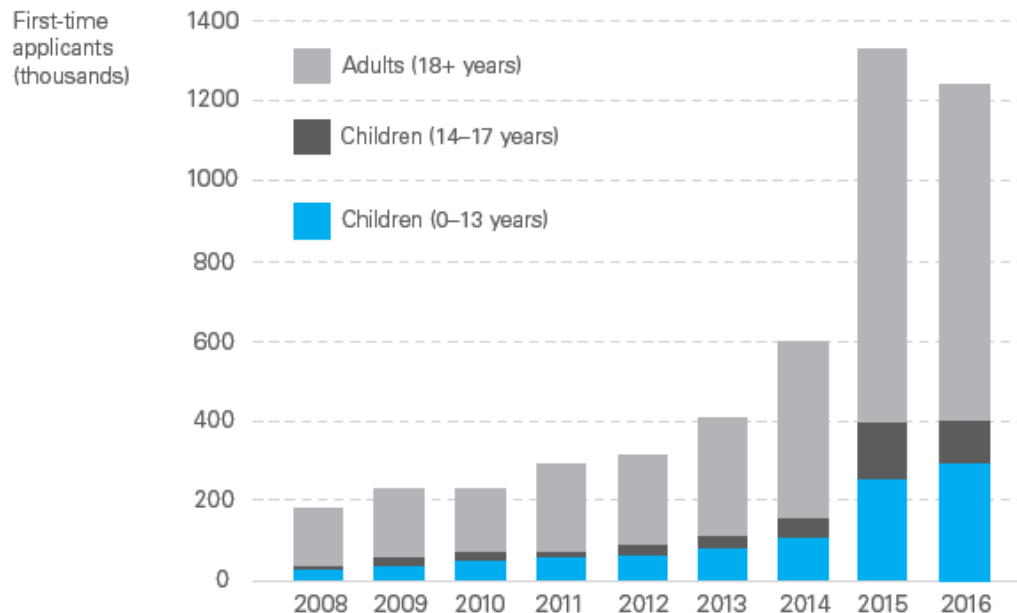
Figure 2 Number of Asylum Applications (2011-2016)



Source: Produced with the data from Eurostat, 2017.

Children comprise a significant amount of refugees. Age distribution of the asylum seekers indicates that in Europe, almost 30% of them were under 18 years old in 2015. Their share among the asylum seekers increased from one in five to one in three from 2008 to 2016 (UNESCO, 2017) (See Figure 3). This number includes children who were with their parents as well as those without any guardian.

**Figure 3 Share of Children in the Asylum Applicants**



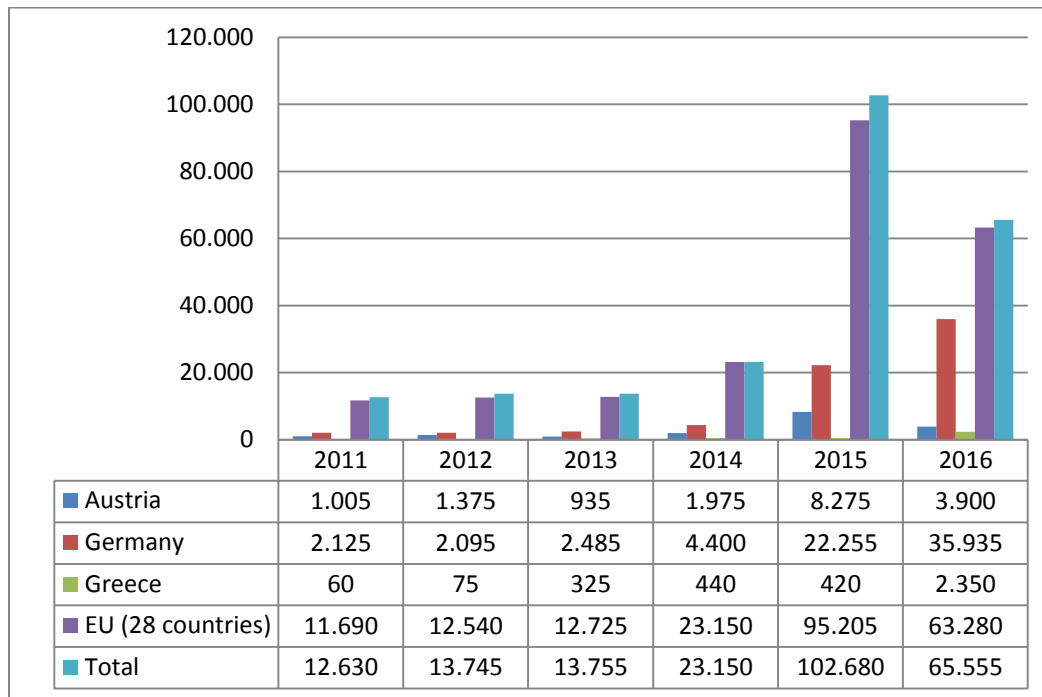
Source: UNICEF, 2017, p. 10.

Children who are without any guardian are defined as “unaccompanied minors” (UAMs). The EU defines an unaccompanied minor as *a third-country national or stateless person below the age of eighteen, who arrives on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or custom, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person, or a minor who is left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States* (Article 2(f) of Council Directive 2001/55/EC,6).

In 2015 there were 95.205 applications for asylum in the EU-28 from unaccompanied minors (See Table 1):

- 91% of them were males
- 57% were between 16-17 years old
- 29% were between 14-15 years old
- 13% were younger than 14 years old
- 51% of the unaccompanied children asylum applicants were Afghans.
- 40% of those registered in the EU MS, filed applications in Sweden, 16% in Germany, 10% in Hungary, 9% in Austria (Eurostat, 2016).

**Table 1: Number of UAMs applied for Asylum (2011-2016)**



Source: Produced with the data from Eurostat, 2017

Situational analysis reports from project countries depicted the most current situation in detail. Main conclusions drawn from the reports can be listed as:

*a) Unequal distribution of UAMs among the countries (Difference between transit and destination countries):*

In the project countries, the difference between the transit (Greece) and destination country (Germany in our case) is huge. Germany has been a hot spot for UAMs as well as it has been for adult asylum seekers. Passau as one of the entry points to Germany, faced a huge number of applications in 2015. Yet, as it was mentioned in the report, it was handled with care.

Greece on the other hand has been considered mainly as a transit point, a passage to other European countries (In 2015 alone, among all the people arrived in the EU, around 885,000 of them came through Greece). Thus, the number of refugees who wanted to stay and settle down in Greece was quite low. Numbers of applications for asylum also indicate that clearly (See Figure 1 and Table 1). However, due to recent developments at the political level, such as EU-Turkey Statement in March 2016 which aimed at ending the flow of irregular migration from Turkey to the EU and replace it with organised, safe and legal channels to Europe, asylum seekers are detained in Reception and Identification Centers (RICs) until their final status is defined, currently 60.000 people have been trapped in Greece and the Islands as it is indicated in Figure 4. Due to these developments, numbers of asylum applications have also increased, as they started to apply for asylum in Greece due to long waiting time for decisions about their situation (See Table 1). This brings new challenges for Greece as they need to focus more on integrative policies and measurements to ensure successful integration of the increasing number of applicants.

Figure 4 Number of Stranded Refugees in Western Europe (2017)



Source: International Organization for Migration, 2017

Austria, on the other hand, is in between Germany and Greece, being both a transition country and final destination. Yet, there is a sharp decrease in the number of applications from UAMs in the year 2016 compared to Germany and Greece. Yet, it is still a hot spot for the refugees and especially UAMs compared to other European countries.

#### *b) Challenges in terms of legal, physical, and social conditions of UAMs*

Country reports indicated that there have been and are problems in the handling procedures and living conditions of the UAMs. *Legal framework, living conditions and access to basic services* are the main themes that emerged from the reports.

Legal framework for the custody and asylum application of UAMs is clearly defined in Germany and Austria and has a more established system. However, Greece started to develop a systematic approach for the reception of UAMs after 2015 flow. How to treat UAMs, how to handle their application, how to take them under the protection and the guardianship are clearly and legally defined in Austria and Germany. Greece, on the other hand, issued a Ministerial Decision in February 2016 related to conditions of UAMs and guardianships, as well as supporting their education (Greece Fact Sheet, 2016). Yet, main challenges in relation to reception procedure lay on the identification of the age, guardianship and long waiting times in all project countries.

In terms of the physical conditions, the most important issue to highlight is the accommodation, especially in Greece. In Austria and Germany, special arrangements are done for the accommodation



of UAMs where they are supported and protected quite well. There are different alternatives for the accommodation of UAMs; they may stay in common houses, dormitories or with the guardian families. However, accommodation is a major problem in Greece. As Figure 4 indicated, there is a large number of refugees stranded in Greece, mainland, and on the islands and unfortunately under unfavourable conditions. Greek situation analysis (2017) reported that refugees who are residing in Greece face several problems such as overcrowdings, lack of basic amenities such as beds, hygiene conditions, infant alimentation, and food quality as well as regular access to essential services, namely psychosocial counselling and healthcare (p. 5). According to numbers of UNCHR, 57% of the accompanied children live in urban areas, in apartments and hotels within the UNHCR accommodation scheme, while 34 % are in accommodation sites, some of them being relatively close to urban areas (2 to 20 km). 6% are in UAC shelters and 3% in RICs. Regarding the unaccompanied children, 1.350 children are on the waiting list for a place in a shelter and are currently either detained in police stations and RICs at the islands of entry or stay in “safe zones” within temporary accommodation sites at the mainland (UAC, 2017). Thus it is crucial to improve the living conditions of these minors first hand.

In social conditions, UAMs in Germany and Austria are provided with opportunities and programme for their integration in the system, even if they are waiting for their decision. Language support is offered through different mechanisms and opportunities. School is compulsory for UAMs under 16 and those who are over 16 are able to choose between entering a secondary school based on their previous learnings, or they can keep on with the vocational track after they fulfil the necessary conditions. In Bavaria, for example, those who completed the compulsory school or over 16 can attend the “BAF- Classes”, technical colleges for asylum seekers and refugees and they are prepared for dual training based on apprenticeship model (Germany Needs Analysis Report, 2017). In Greece, on the other hand, access to formal and non-formal education is very limited for children as well as their access to playgrounds and libraries. A large number of them are not attending any form of education. Thus, this project becomes more significant in Greece as we hope to give those young people a better environment where they feel included and their needs are met.

## B. Governmental and Non-governmental Bodies

National Analysis reports conclude that each partner country has a good network of governmental and non-governmental organizations that are involved in the issues of minor refugees. We found out that Austria and Germany have similar governmental structures and bodies to serve the refugees in general and minor refugees in specific at different governmental levels (local, regional, national). Issues related to refugees are identified by national regulations but the implementation and further decisions and regulations are more delegated to local governments. Differences between the regions and local practices were stated to have a negative impact on the well-being of especially minor refugees. It is problematic also the perspective of equality. On the other hand, Greece has a more central structure. Yet, the situation is also not any better there for the minors.

In addition to governmental bodies, a really large body of NGOs was reported as a result of our national analyses. Especially in Austria and Germany, there exist some national NGOs that operate with several local offices and service points such as *Diakonie Austria*, *Caritas* and *Roland-Berger-Foundation*. Moreover, we found out that there is an immense amount of local NGOs working with/for refugees. They offer a wide range of services such as health issues, legal counselling, psychological counselling, offering language courses, and providing shelter and other basic needs. In Greece, in addition to high number of international organizations such as *UNHCR*, *SOS Kids Villages*

and *Doctors without Borders*, local NGOs such as *Network for Children's Rights* and *Greek Forum of Migrants* can be given as examples for major NGOs.

Our results indicated that in all project countries, NGOs are actively involved in the protection and well-being of minor refugees. Volunteers that are working under the roof of these NGOs have had and still have a crucial role in providing help, support and guidance for a new start in foreign countries for the refugees. Thus, it is strongly suggested for reaching the objectives of LIB(e)RO to have a strong cooperation with those NGOs especially focusing on young refugees and to include more volunteers into its structure for the sustainability of the platform.

### C. Measures Taken on Local, Regional and National Level

It was found out that several actors have taken numerous initiatives on educational or other type of activities to promote social inclusion for refugees in all project countries. It was mentioned that there is a strong network of organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, and parallel to this strong structure supporting refugees, several measures are taken at different levels. At the national level, especially in Austria and Greece, more central regulations and integration policies have been issued, not only in relation to refugees, but also in dealing with migration and integration in general. In Germany measures are concentrated more at the regional level.

All these measures can be classified into three groups: 1) education and training, 2) economic, vocational and occupational and 3) more general and comprehensive social initiatives.

- 1) Education and training measures: These focus mainly on the language courses. Our reports indicated that there is wide array of offers for teaching the local languages especially in Austria and Greece. In addition to language courses, orientation and integration courses that deal with issues such as living together, educational and social system, and interculturalism. These courses are compulsory in many cases for the asylum seekers. Another group of courses is related to completion of compulsory education or basic education for having the opportunity to study in the project countries. These measures are especially important for minor refugees and their access to formal and non-formal education system and pursue on their educational life. Initiatives such as MORE in Austria help young asylum seekers to start studying at the universities and provide them support in language and social issues in relation to education.

Our analyses found that each country offers up to some degree all these groups of initiatives. For the objectives of project LIB(E)RO, we are more interested in the measures that focus on the language learning. These courses are offered by governmental bodies, NGOs and online as well.

- 2) Economic, vocational and occupational measures: These initiatives and measures aim at inclusion of the refugees in the labour market in the project countries. They support refugees in taking their first steps into work life. These types of initiatives are taken mainly by the public employment services and economical organizations. However, measures taken for the accreditation, validation and recognition of the prior learnings of the refugees are an important area of work for inclusion into work life.
- 3) More general and comprehensive measures: These initiatives assemble programmes from legal advice for refugees, to supporting their finding an apartment and to opportunities of (intercultural) exchange as well as health and social welfare issues.

What is important to note is that, many of these measures target those who already hold their asylum. For those who have been waiting for the decision in relation to asylum application, alternatives and support is much less. Waiting times can be quite long and during this time, asylum seekers are not allowed to work and are not entitled to receive the support the asylum holders.

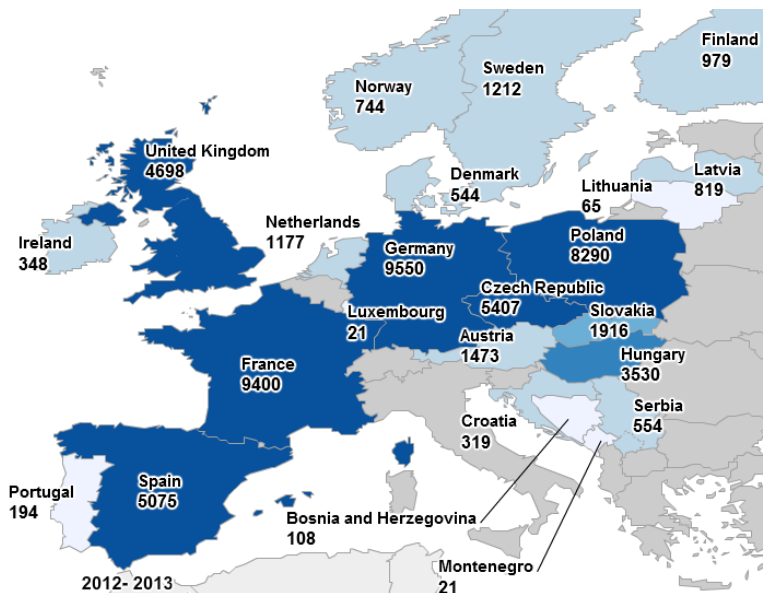
Moreover, for those who are in the reception camps in Greece, almost no offer is provided in any of the areas mentioned above. Thus, LIB(e)RO online platform gains more importance in reaching these people and including them with the support of libraries and online platform and give them the necessary leverage to take part in every aspect of the life in their new countries.

### III. Situation of Libraries

#### A. General Situation

Europe has a strong foundation and tradition in terms of libraries. Figure 5 indicates the numbers of libraries (public and others from 2013) in European countries. Lison and Reip (2016) cite that there exist 65.000 libraries with about 100 million visitors. Libraries are an important part of the cultural and social life in Europe and they bear a great potential in terms of serving more into their communities. LIB(e)RO aims at revealing this potential for the use of especially disadvantaged groups.

Figure 5 Numbers of Libraries in Europe



Source: [www.eblida.org](http://www.eblida.org)

Our situational analysis revealed following results in comparison to situation of libraries in the project countries:

1. Quantitative differences: There is quite an imbalance among the project countries in terms of the numbers of libraries, and number of users and resources. Table 2 (2014 and 2015 statistics) shows the numbers of community (public libraries) and other libraries (academic and governed by NGOs and religious organizations). Germany has the highest number in all areas among the project countries as well as being leader in Europe. As it is identified in Table 2, there are also significant differences in terms of the active users, personnel and media. What is important to note here is that in all countries there are three groups of personnel, full-time, part-time and volunteer employees. In Austria, the majority of the employees work as a volunteer, 8091 out 9491. In Germany volunteer and part-time workers are quite low compared to full-time workers. In Greece, the amount of volunteers and part-time workers is almost 50 percent. Thus, professional

further training provided to librarians is especially crucial considering the number of volunteer and part-time workers. Moreover, considering the network of public and community libraries, LIB(e)RO gains more importance in guiding and helping librarians and libraries.

**Table 2 Library Statistics in Partner Countries**

	Austria	Germany	Greece
<b>Community Libraries</b>	618	7623	209
<b>Other Libraries</b>	801	254	265
<b>Active Users</b>	824.237*	7.370.000	4.848.431
<b>Personnel</b>	9.491**	13.496**	1.787**
<b>Media</b>	11.045.702	119.000.000	13.513.132

\*Registered library users

\*\*Total number of volunteers, part-time and full-time employees working in the libraries.

Source: Compiled by the researcher using library statistics from National Reports.

2. **Administrative Differences:** In addition to significant differences among the countries, governance of libraries also differs. In Austria and Germany, there are neither central governance mechanisms, nor a central regulation for the libraries. As a result of the lack of supra-regional coordination, the scope for public libraries is dependent on the extent to which municipalities and other organizations are involved and the financial and professional support they receive in Austria and Germany. In Greece, a more central structure and financial scheme is observed. Our analysis yielded that there has been a cut in the funds for libraries and this brought into light the support from NGOs and private sector for the survival of the libraries. As resources and personnel is directly related to financial support the libraries receive, it is one of the important issues in the implementation of the online platform in LIB(e)RO as well.

## B. Governmental and Nongovernmental Bodies

It was mentioned above that in Austria and Germany, a national level structure and regulation is missing. However, libraries and librarians are well organized in these countries, both at the regional and national level. There are several associations and networks that libraries are organized under. In addition to regional associations such as our partner *komm.bib* and *Bibliotheksverbund Bayern*, there are several umbrella organizations that local and regional associations gather such as *Büchereiverband Österreich (BVÖ)* and *Vereinigung Österreichischer Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekare (VÖB)*; *Deutscher Bibliotheksverband (dbv)* (*German Library Association*), *Berufsverband Information und Bibliothek (BIB)* (*Professional Association Information and Library*). In Greece, associations are organized only at the national level. Some of the national associations are *General Council of Libraries*, *Greek Libraries Network* and *Association of Greek Librarians and Information Scientists*. Cooperation with these networks and associations are quite important for the sustainability and the dissemination of the project and the platform. At the regional level, especially in Austria *komm.bib* has been working on the networking and National Library of Greece has been working on the project at the national level as one of the main stakeholders in the area of libraries

In addition, at the global level, The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession. We have already contacted IFLA's Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section. The Section brings together libraries and institutions interested in the development and availability of library services designed to

meet the needs of cultural and linguistic minorities. LIB(e)RO will be presented at the division meeting of IFLA and we will try to receive feedback on our platform and the project in general.

At the European level, The European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Association (EBLIDA) presented itself as the voice of libraries in Europe for the last 25 years. EBLIDA is an independent umbrella association of library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe.

### C. Measures Taken on Local, Regional and National Level

At the global level IFLA together with UNESCO has developed guidelines for creating and structuring multicultural libraries based on their joint manifesto on multicultural libraries. This manifesto and the guidelines will be one of the basic documents that we will use for the online tutorial for the librarians and social workers.

At the European level, EBLIDA also lobbies and advocates for creating a welcoming culture for the refugees in European libraries. It devotes a special part on the website to disseminate and support actions taken by different European libraries in order to serve refugees (<http://www.eblida.org/special-event.html>). This website presents several actions from all around the world that focus on creating a welcome culture in the libraries.

Within the project countries, the results of the situation analysis showed that libraries are well aware about their role in supporting refugees especially in the process of meeting their needs in terms of communication, connection and learning in addition to their special place in integration and have taken several measures and initiatives. During the flow of refugees in 2015, they took an active role and supported the help process in different ways such as opening their doors to refugees so that they can stay, connect, use the internet and computers and other media. A very large number of libraries have had / has offers for refugees especially in Austria and Germany. Some of them started to offer German courses or opened their classroom for courses. Some example initiatives are as follow:

The Austrian Library Association (BVÖ) created the project “Welcome Culture in the Library”. BVÖ highlights that libraries have the task of providing access to information, education, and culture for all. And they cannot have a better chance to legitimize their socio-political function within the community as they have now with the integration and inclusion of refugees.  
[https://www.bvoe.at/themen/grenzenlos\\_lesen/bibliotheksangebote\\_fuer\\_fluechtlinge](https://www.bvoe.at/themen/grenzenlos_lesen/bibliotheksangebote_fuer_fluechtlinge).

In Germany, the concept "Asylothek" is used to refer offering media specifically adapted to the needs of asylum seekers. There is also a project "Asylothek", originated in Nürnberg, which is relevant to mention in the context of LIB(e)RO. It is entirely based on the work of volunteers and seeks to establish new small collection of books in refugee centres.

In Greece, the *Public Central Library of Samos* in collaboration with UNCHR and NGOs have organized library tours for acquaintance with the library, narration of fairy tales with the presence of an interpreter and creativity activities. *The Central Municipal Library of Thessaloniki* has a mobile library that visits at a regular basis the “Diavata” accommodation site to serve minor refugees. *The Public Central Library of Veria* in collaboration with secondary schools has organized creative writing workshops for teams of Greek and Syrian teenagers, with the presence of an interpreter.

Besides all these efforts at the national level, IFLA Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning and the New Professionals SIG partnered with the American Library Association to present one-hour webinar titles “Library Services to Immigrants and Refugees” in order to inform

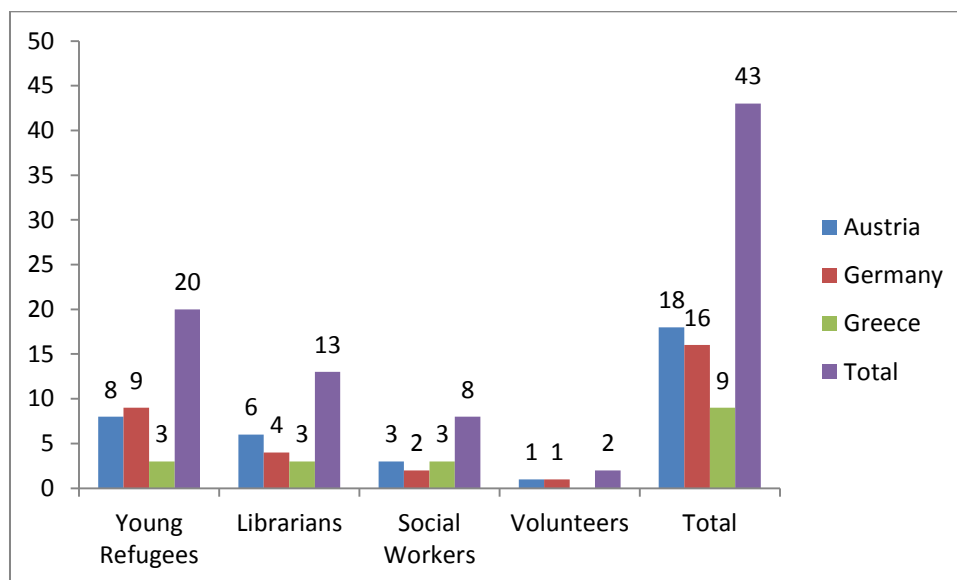
librarians aware about their abilities to support refugees (<https://www.ifla.org/node/10483>). We will also utilize the content of this webinar in our tutorial as well.

## IV. Needs Assessment

Within the framework of the needs analysis our practice partners conducted needs assessment through semi-standardized interview forms (See Appendix A for the interview forms) and reached a wide range of participants beyond our pre-set criteria. Interview questions were shaped with the contributions of all partners. Figure 6 indicates the distribution of the participants according to groups and countries. All in all we reached 43 participants and 20 of them were young refugees.

Next part presents the results of the needs assessment for each group of participants. Volunteers are included in the group of social workers.

**Figure 6 Number of Needs Analysis Participants according to Group and Country**



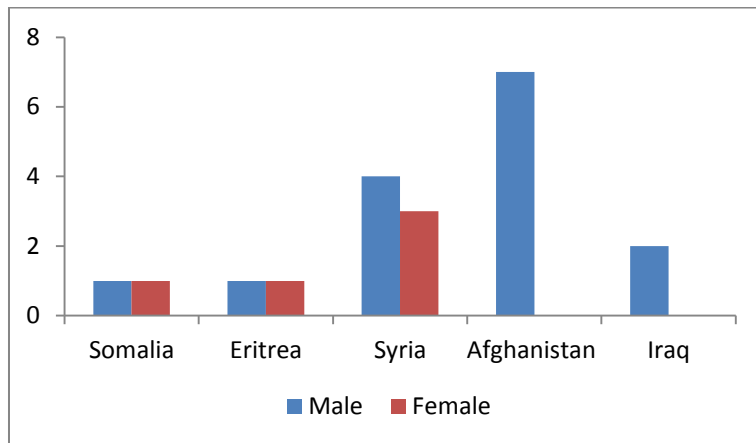
Source: Compiled from the needs analysis report of each country

### A. Needs of Refugees

Our practice partners Komm.bib from Austria, WIFO Passau from Germany and Action Synergy from Greece conducted the needs assessment with the minor and young refugees and reported the results. In addition to minor refugees who are under 18, we also included young adults in order to widen our target group. We have participants from five different countries of origin, which is similar to normal distribution in project countries, e.g. refugees from Afghanistan is the highest, followed by Syrian refugees (See Figure 7 for the distribution according to country and gender). We could reach five female participants which is better than the percentage of females in minor refugees in Europe (90% male). Findings of the country needs analyses are synthesized below:



Figure 7 Distribution of the Participants according to Country and Gender



### 1. Familiarity with Libraries

It was important for us to know the perception and experiences of young refugees related to libraries. Our results indicated that more than half of the refugees we interviewed had been to a library at least once and they know what it is like. Some of them visited libraries in their hometowns, while some others were introduced to libraries in their new countries. Those who visited the libraries mentioned their visits as a very pleasant experience and they liked the environment and the services provided there such as reading newspapers, using language learning materials, using wireless internet, or just a quiet place to study. Six of them have never visited any library before. But all of them are welcoming the idea of using libraries as a learning place.

### 2. Familiarity with Technology

As our platform is based on internet technology, we enquired the technological abilities and interests of our participants. Results showed that all of the refugees had mobile phones that they can access to internet but only a few of them had worked with a computer before, therefore the majority of them did not know how to use a computer. This may seem as a disadvantage but all of the participants were eager to learn how to use a computer especially in learning.

We also asked them about their perception and experience in relation to e-learning. Most of the participants did not have any experience with e-learning and online learning platform. However, they see such an opportunity very positive and they all think it would be helpful for them. Especially those who are living in small villages in rural areas do not have alternatives for language learning. Two of the moms especially emphasized that they need local offers with a low threshold so that it would make it easier for them to access information in the areas such as language learning especially.

### 3. Experience with the Local Language

In the interview, we also wanted to learn about the refugees' experiences with the local languages. Language is considered as the key to successful integration and this was one of driving points for the projects. Our needs analyses yielded important results for our project. Our participants from Austria and Germany speak German and some of them English. They had been involved in activities to learn German as they plan to stay in these countries permanently. Thus, they were motivated to learn the local language and try ways to improve their skills. However, in Greece, those who saw Greece as a transition point had no interest to learn the language. Due to

political developments explained above, the number of refugees who apply for asylum in Greece has been increasing and it looks like there will be more applications from the refugees who get stuck in Greece. This is an important issue for Greece to consider and prepare the right measure for integration and inclusion of the asylum seekers, especially of UAMs.

Another issue in relation to language was the need for *authentic communication opportunities* with the locals. This was emphasized by almost all our participants. They said that as they were living in more or less isolated life, they had no contact with the local people so that they cannot use the local language. They stated that e-learning is good, but it can be combined with face-to-face tasks and programmes. This is an important feedback for us especially for preparing the tutorial for the librarians. We are well aware about the importance of real-life usage of the language in order to practice it as well as to increase mutual understanding and getting to know each other. Thus, we will pay special attention in the tutorial to provide guidance in organizing right types of face-to-face meetings with the local in the libraries to create opportunities for refugees to practice their newly acquired language skills as well as to exchange their experiences with them.

#### 4. Expectations from the Platform

Participants were asked to share their expectations from an online platform such as LIB(e)RO. The most voted issue was language teaching. Almost all of the participants mentioned that this platform should focus on teaching language (English, German and Greek) and grammar was specifically mentioned. Our participants are also aware about the importance of learning the language and they look for ways to learn the local language and improve their skills. Thus they are open to any effort that will help with learning the local language. They also suggested, as mentioned before, a more interactive method which would also create face-to-face opportunities meeting with the locals and would provide support for social networking with the locals were very much appreciated.

Another issue they mentioned was the politics, economics and issues related to country they were staying in. In addition to these, our participants were also interested in the local social and cultural life. This includes cultures and customs of the country as well as other social issues such as sports and food.

Last but not least our participants indicated the need for opportunities for working, studying or training. Due to certain barriers such as language, unfamiliarity with the rules and regulations, or just mechanical problem due to living in rural areas, refugees may miss a lot of important information in these areas, or may just get lost in a new and complicated system, and cannot access the right piece of information they need. Thus LIB(e)RO will also cover these areas.

To sum up, our analyses in Austria, Germany and Greece conducted with minor refugees and young adult refugees provided important issues to highlight and to use as a guide while designing the structure of the platform. We will take into consideration of all of these statements and expectations in every step to shape the platform. It is also important to mention that most of the participants were glad to be part of this assessment and to be asked about their ideas, feelings, thoughts and experiences as they need to be listened to and need to be heard as well. They have been included in the process from the very beginning and we keep their needs and expectations always in focus. It is important for us that we follow a socially inclusive design process during the implementation of the project and not only in one or two outcomes. During the test phase, we will have more and concrete feedback on the platform from young refugees and we are already looking forward it.



## B. Needs of Librarians and Libraries

“In recent years, public libraries have risen to the challenges born from ongoing social, digital and economic changes” (Lison and Reip, 2016, p. 3). Thus it is important to examine their role and function in the society, especially for local communities it is crucial and project LIB(e)RO also aims at identifying a new role for libraries in today’s multicultural and multilingual world.

In line with this aim, our practice partners interviewed 13 librarians from three countries. Analysis yielded four concepts that were important for the librarians, especially in relation to implementation of the project:

### 1) Contact with Refugees

Our participants were well aware about the situation in the project countries and majority of them had encounters with refugees. Most of them had and still have special offers and programmes for refugees, such as the project “Welcome Culture in the Library” in Austria, the project “Asylothek” in Germany and mobile library in Greece.

### 2) Lack of Resources, Time and Space

One of the issues that were mentioned by almost every participant was the lack of resources, time and space. What was specifically emphasized was the lack of technical equipment such as computer, wireless internet and so on, especially in Germany and Greece. As we plan an online platform, libraries will need at least an internet connection and a working computer. As our country needs assessment indicated, especially small community libraries in rural areas, fail to provide these services. Thus it becomes a major problem for them, even if they want to take part in the project. In addition to technical resources, lack of media in the mother tongue of refugees is also a challenge. Especially in Greece, where there have been several cuts to budget of public libraries, buying new resources and media is more difficult. Even though they were well aware that for serving the refugees better, a wider range of books, CDs, DVDs and other materials are required to offer multilingual service to library users, yet budget is not in their hand. So, some of the libraries go for the sponsorships.

Another challenge stated by librarians was the lack of space. Most of the community libraries function within quite limited space. Thus providing a learning space may not be physically possible.

### 3) Lack of Personnel

It was mentioned in the situation analysis part that the number of volunteer librarians are quite high, especially in Austria. In the case of small libraries, most of the time there is only one person who is responsible for all of the activities in the library including administrative and organizational work. Thus to provide other types of services to refugees, they may need someone external, such as a volunteer. On the other hand, for the implementation and sustainability of the project, some librarians stated that trainings should be given to staff, not to volunteers as there is high turn-over rate among the volunteers. So, librarians found limited number of personnel challenging for the implementation of the project.

Another issue that was brought about by the librarians was the professional and continuing education or training provided for the librarians. Our situational analysis also showed that further training opportunities are quite limited in project countries and some of our participants expressed their interest in a training about social inclusion and multiculturalism and working with refugees.

#### 4) Lack of Coordination

Another issue came out was the lack of coordination between the libraries and other institutions working with the refugees. These include NGOs, German language teachers and social workers, as well as integration offices. This was specifically mentioned among Austrian participants. LIB(e)RO can provide a very good link among these institutions, libraries and refugees. So that they all can work knowing what others are doing, what their needs are, and they can cooperate to provide the best service to refugees. Thus, inclusion of the social workers is important in the design and implementation of the platform. Moreover, we believe that libraries and institutions that participate in the project will create a network that will keep cooperating for the inclusion of the refugees even after the project timeline.

In conclusion, it is possible say that librarians are eager and motivated to take part in the project, however they are constrained by several challenges. Technical equipment is important not only for our project but also for a better functioning and better service to the public. LIB(e)RO will consider all of these issues while designing the platform and the handbook.

### C. Needs of Social Workers and Volunteers

Within the framework of the needs analyses, 8 social workers and 2 volunteers were interviewed. Having the possibility to work with minor refugees on one-to-one basis, social workers provided more data on the psychological and social conditions of the refugees in each country. Interestingly, they were the group that focused more on the challenges. Challenges stated by the social workers and volunteers are as follows:

#### 1) Heterogeneity of the groups they are working with

They work with different groups of refugees with different linguistic, cultural, social, educational and historical background. They all have different personal histories and even legal situations. Most of the UAMs are psychologically deprived or traumatized. Thus trying to adapt to a new life in a new country, culture and language does not make their job easier. Especially for those who were stranded in Greece, the situation is really vague as they do not know what will happen to them. These UAMs need more support and guidance in comparison to others. Based on this, social workers think that every tool and opportunity that will help them bring out some commonalities and increase the connection, bonding and cooperation among the refugees as well as with the local people is important. Moreover, they also stated that learning the local language is crucial for their successful inclusion in the society.

#### 2) Lack of Resources and Personnel and Support

Similar to librarians, social workers are also concerned about the lack of the resources, personnel and support. Their job requires one-to-one interaction and detailed work with the young refugees as their situation is very delicate. However, the number of social workers is very limited. Hence, they have a very busy schedule, and do not have time for activities that would require their active participation. Another reason for this was shown as lack of support from the government and other institutions. Especially in Greece, due to financial crises, they need to rely on their own skills and knowledge while dealing with the refugees due to lack of institutional support.

### 3) Opportunities for Networking and Cooperation

Social workers considered networking and cooperation with the local community very important. As it was also mentioned by the librarians above, there is definitely a missing link between institutions working with the refugees. Involving as many stakeholders as possible was suggested by the social workers. We aim at inclusion of the stakeholders from the very beginning in the implementation process of the project and use every opportunity to create the social and institutional network among the related organizations.

In summary, it is important to listen to the social workers as they are the ones who work with the refugees directly and closely. Their knowledge and their experience is vast and it was important for LIB(e)RO to receive their ideas on the project and the platform. For the content of the platform, some of them suggested themes such as language, learning about the local community: people and institutions and cultural, social life (traditions, values and norms).

## V. Summary and Recommendations

Situational analyses and assessing the needs of each groups provided a very detailed picture of the two stakeholders of the project, minor refugees and libraries. Situation for refugees, especially for UAMs is really hard as they are more vulnerable and need special treatment and protection. Project countries have been doing their best at different levels through different institutions. However, their educational needs are not really met due to challenges mentioned above. Each country has its specific conditions and challenges, but the concern is common: to support minor and young refugees for their inclusion in the society in every aspect of the life.

Libraries, where now are “seen as modern learning hubs close to citizens and (potential) learners,” (Lison & Reip, 2016, p. 9) have been changing and adding new roles and identities to their existing traditional ones. They have been moving beyond the traditional conceptualization of book and culture. Moreover expanding their role in local communities in helping people acquire new skills or improve their skills through different lifelong strategies / opportunities is crucial for social inclusion as well. Lison and Reip (2016) underline that libraries now should offer “a neutral and trusted space for people to create, learn and connect” (p. 9). IFLA also considers public libraries as crucial actors in effective and efficient integration of migrants and refugees. This is exactly the vision we had before we developed the idea of the project. Being a low-threshold public service that everyone can reach, their involvement in projects like LIB(e)RO becomes more important for creating the inclusive societies in which migrants and refugees can take part in every aspect of life.

Based on our analysis at different levels, it is possible to conclude that there challenges, problems and inadequacies in relation to both groups we examined. Nonetheless, we identified that both groups are eager and motivated to learn through an online platform and participate in this transformative process where libraries turn into hot spots for learning and where refugees feel more and more included and reach a level of belonging. Of course this transformation is neither easy nor short with immediate impact. It will take time to perform the leap, yet we believe our platform will serve the need in this area, not only with the language learning part for refugees but especially with the part for librarians and social workers. To be able to reach this goal we considered all of the concerns, needs, expectations, critiques and comments from our participants and present the following recommendations:

- 1) It is important to increase the visibility of the libraries in the community to increase involvement from community. Several strategies (some of which were presented in the analysis reports) can be used for this purpose and project LIB(e)RO is one of these strategies.
- 2) The missing link between the social workers, librarians and refugees should be completed as well as with the other institutions working with refugees. We believe social workers also need to change how they see the libraries and have a closer contact with them. New tasks for them include being aware and informed about the activities in the libraries and guiding their clients to the right activity. We see it in our contact Impulse Verein Krems and Caritas that this is really a new connection and impact for them. They are working quite regional but not with libraries. It is a new thought for social workers. Within our project they are not in the main focus as the librarians but they are key stakeholders to guide young refugees to become familiar with and explore the new platform.
- 3) Online platform is appreciated by all parts contacted up to now, however, it is emphasized that it should be flexible, country specific and not only another language teaching tool. It should provide a wide range of information that will address the basic areas of information

for refugees to give them leverage in their new life. Based on all the information we have, we defined the areas of competences to teach in the online platform as:

- citizenship education at the European level
- challenges that one can face in the host countries
- rights and opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers
- access to certain services such as health, housing, legal advice
- local libraries and their role in the host countries

Themes above will provide the content for the language learning platform for the young refugees. The level of the activities and texts are determined to be A2 according to CEFRL considering the fact that users of the platform will not have a high level competence in the local languages (German and Greek). Each theme will be presented with based on four language skills; *reading, writing, listening* and *speaking*.

In addition to this language part, there will be repository of useful links in different areas such as citizenship education, Math, computer skills and links for vocational guidance in their local settings. We aim at increasing the awareness of these young people in terms of possibilities in learning, especially in their close surrounding and online platforms and courses, trainings, etc.

On the other side of the platform, for the trainers, main themes were decided as:

- Socially inclusive learning
  - Intercultural competence
  - Citizenship education
  - Language learning and teaching
  - Refugees as library users
  - Methods shelf for resources
- 4) Professional training and further education opportunities or librarians are very limited. We believe LIB(e)RO will serve as an example curriculum for professional development considering the dynamic structure of the society and social challenges emerged from this structure. Even though in-service training or professional development did not come up as an issue in our analyses, it is very important for the transmission of libraries to safe and inclusive learning places where everybody, but especially those who are with disadvantaged background can attend, connect, and learn.

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