



STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION OF LOCAL, REFUGEE AND MIGRANT YOUNG PEOPLE

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Abstract

Migration has been a part of human experience from the earliest days of civilization. Today cross-border movements are characterized by their diversity, as there are no typical characteristics, their legal statuses, and their circumstances and prospects. The millions of refugees worldwide live in a high - income countries, but the majority still are hosted by the low – and middle-income countries. Thought more than 90% of migrations in the world have taken place for employment purpose, youth including students chooses migration also for educational, administrative, social and cultural aspects. The European Union (EU) faces challenges that effects its persistence, including the revival of national populism in many EU members and studies have shown that individuals with immigration histories identify less strongly with Europe, such aspect must be taken into account, because the citizens and their identities are vital for European cohesion. Successful integration benefits both migrants and destination societies, but there are various triggers, which can effect affect the relations toward emigrants, like the pandemic or convivial attitude toward emigrants. Psychological and socio-cultural adaption of refugees are strongly influenced economic concerns, pre-migration expectations, religion and other factors. Settlement in a new country can be challenging process for refugees in general, and for unaccompanied minors in particular. Based on the current situation, a project on “Strengthening social cohesion and capacity of local, refugee and migrant young people by creating STEM/STEAM areas” funded by the Erasmus+ programme was developed with 6 partner institutions from Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Lithuania. The activities and workshops carried out during the project with the participants inspired the development of a research study. This article aims to research the aspects and possibilities to strengthen the social cohesion and capacity of local refugee and migrant young people. Quantitative research included respondents by country of origin from Asia: Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Afghanistan. Analysing the results the hypotheses were tested assuming the differences between opinion of men and women and between respondents grouped by age. The findings of this research can be used to minimize factors that undermine favourable levels of psychological and socio-cultural adaptation and promote factors that facilitate strengthening social cohesion and capacity of local, refugee and migrant young people.

KEYWORDS: Social Cohesion, Integration, Adaptation, Migrant, Refugee, Young People.

Introduction

From the earliest days of civilization, 200.000 years ago, migration has been part of the human experience. Today cross-border movements are characterized by their diversity, as there are no typical characteristics, their legal statuses, and their circumstances and prospects. There are over 25 million refugees worldwide, around half are children, and the majority (84%) are hosted in low- and middle-income countries (Brown, Aoun, 2020).

The World Bank report in 2023, defined that about 40% (64 million economic migrants and 10 million refugees) live in a high- income countries that belong to the Organization for Economic cooperation and Development (OECD). But most of the refugees – 76% are hosted by low – and middle-income countries (Fig. 1.).

Global conflicts during the past decade have led to repeated major humanitarian protection crises in Europe: Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, Europe hosted around 2.3 million people, and today the ongoing war in Ukraine has resulted in more than 8 million Ukrainians seeking refuge (Bansak et al., 2023).

The European Union (EU) faces challenges that affects its persistence, including the revival of national populism in many EU members and studies have shown that individuals with immigration histories identify less

strongly with Europe than individuals without immigration histories (Matafora, 2023).

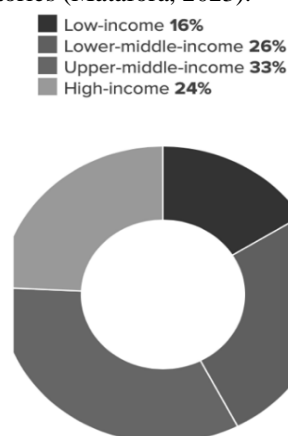


Fig. 1. Refugee hosting displacement by the country's incomes [UNHCR Global Trends, 2022]

Citizens and their identities are vital for European cohesion, so those who identify more strongly with Europe can be expected to feel greater solidarity with member states (Verhaegen, 2018). Most contributors to

the debate of immigration agree that it is important to educate immigrating youth in order to lay the foundations for their successful future (Alexander and Nurnberg, 2018).

Literature Review

The definition of a “refugee” has changed across the years, until the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol that are the key legal documents defining the basis of UNHCR’s work. It is important to understand the difference between the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants since these differences do affect the main reason for people to migrate in the first place. For refugees the main reason of leaving the origin country is fleeing armed conflicts or persecution [European Youth Portal, 2023]. In violent conflicts, it is mostly the adolescents and youths – female and male who are conscripted into armed groups or targeted for sexual violence (Maguire, 2012; United Nations, 2019).

Asylum seekers are people who claim to be refugees but haven’t been recognized as such yet, and this means that not every asylum seeker will be recognized as a refugee. In 2018, EU countries granted protection to almost 333,400 asylum seekers [Eurostat, Asylum decisions in the EU, 2019]. For example, in England, the Red Cross supports people who were lawyers and teachers in their home countries: all keen to lend their skills [BritishRedCross, 2023].

Migrants on the other hand, generally choose to move because of a direct threat or persecution but mainly to improve their life: finding work, seeking better education, reuniting with family. And while the refugees are protected by international law, specifically the 1951 Refugee Convention, whereas national governments handle migrants under their own immigration laws and processes. But under international law, migrants have human rights by virtue of their humanity as international customary law and international human rights [Migration Data Portal, 2023].

United Nations have determined the distress migration of rural youth and defined analysis of the main factors determining the propensity of rural youth to migrate out of distress, at country, household, and individual level (Fig. 2.).

More than 90% of migrations in the world have taken place for employment purpose; migrants move either alone or with their families (Sultana and Fatima, 2017). The investigations also show that as a result family with migrants are in a better situation to acquire land and obtain education for their children (Noyori-Corbett and Moxley, 2016). Also, as a prime causes of movements, can be defined geographical conditions, civil war, hunger, epidemic diseases, population growth, insufficient resources (Gocke Uygur, 2020).

Sciences categorized the factors affecting migration of students as follows: economic, educational, administrative, professional, social, and cultural factors beside the phenomenon of globalization (NooriHekmat et al. 2009; Asadi et al. 2018).

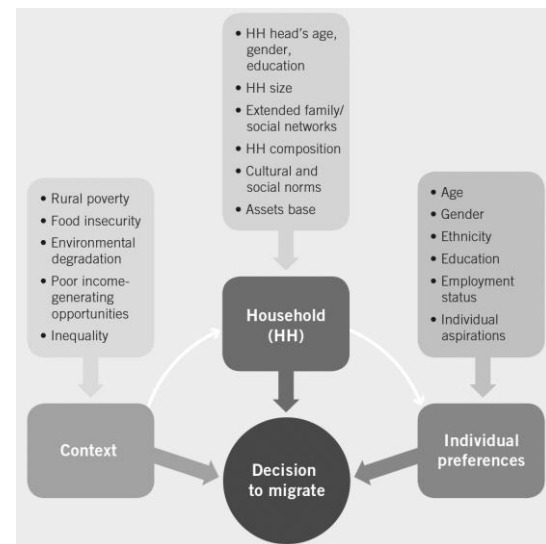


Fig. 2. Determinants of distress migration of rural youth (Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations, 2016)

Settlement in a new country can be a challenging process for refugees in general, and for unaccompanied minors in particular. Minors face new laws, customs, education systems, cultural codes, etc., all without the support of parents or extended family. Having fled their home countries and endured challenging and traumatic experiences, on reaching safe havens, their relief may be short lived as they begin to grapple with the realities of settling in unfamiliar environments (Brook, Ottemöller, 2020). After arrival in the host country, refugees usually continue to face many challenges and they suggest that the impact of war and forced migration on mental health is compounded or alleviated by the post-migration resettlement context (Hornfeck et al. 2023; Hohne et al. 2020). According to the World Health Organization, mental health problems, such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and depression, are higher among refugee populations than the general population (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). Separation from the family in different locations pointed to the heavy emotional burden of learning for the families back in the country of the origin (Integration of young refugees in the EU, 2019). There are several studies about refugee children and adolescents which highlight the protective effect social support after resettlement for mental health and its importance for recovery after trauma (Hornfeck et al., 2023; Verelst et al. 2022).

Providing care and support to refugee youth and their families is a worldwide concern. Refugee youth may experience severe stressors during the pre-migratory, migratory, and post-migratory periods. In their home countries, war-exposed young people may witness or experience war atrocities, be deprived of food and water, and be separated from family members. They can experience other hardships including significant disruption of their daily lives, separation from loved ones, and disruption of schooling (Measham, Guzder et al., 2014).

Social cohesion and capacity of local emigrants is investigated in various scientific articles, analysing

practices, diverse processes and there many studies on social cohesion, but in non-European, refugee and local contexts remain limited (Ozcurumez and Hoxha, 2020).

Successful integration benefits both migrants and destination societies: migrants gain significantly through better outcomes in the labor market, as well as stronger society and destination countries benefit through migrant's stronger economic contributions and by avoiding the emergence of a marginalized population (Migrants, refugees, and societies, 2023). But there are various triggers, that can affect the relations towards emigrants, like it was investigated that after the pandemic, convivial attitudes toward Latin American migrants decreased (Castillo et al., 2023).

Findings of research revealed that psychological and socio-cultural adaptation of refugees are strongly influenced by economic concerns, pre-migration expectations, religion and perceptions of natives' expectations/ attitudes towards refugees. Economic concerns and uncertainty regarding duration of stay have a negative impact on refugees' acculturation, leading to delayed psychological and socio-cultural adaptation. Positive perceptions of natives' expectations/ attitudes towards refugees are perceived to increase motivation to seek social support, which promotes well-being and life satisfaction in the country. Yet, negative perceptions such as prejudice and discrimination, may pose a risk for psychological health and low socio-cultural adaptation. Religion can be considered a binding/ equalizing function subsuming refugee and native groups under a superordinate identity. Nonetheless, it also appears to generate social distance when perceived as a threat to the secular national identity (Şafak-Ayvazoglu, Kunuroglu et al., 2021).

Given the increasing use of low-intensity psychological interventions in humanitarian mental health and psychosocial support work, more attention is needed to strengthen the intersection between evidence-based interventions and cultural contextualisation. Undertaking the process of cultural adaptation ensures the appropriateness and acceptability of psychological interventions in these contexts (Akhtar, Engels et al., 2021). Children frequently experience significant stressors and barriers to healthy development during the refugee experience, including poverty, education interruptions, exposure to traumatic events, increased family and community violence, and child protection risks. These experiences contribute to a greatly increased risk for poor mental health. Host communities in low – and middle-income countries also face similar stressors, associated with living in adversity, and these stressors impact significantly on child and adolescent mental health (Brown, Aoun, 2020).

Good mental health may be a manifestation of resilience, post-traumatic growth, or both. Resilience is defined as the ability to maintain a stable, healthy psychological and physical functioning despite exposure to trauma (Measham, Guzder et al., 2014).

Methodology

The data were collected via a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was developed in the January of 2023, after a comprehensive literature review and consultations with project partners *Gocmen Hakları Sosyal Uyum Dernegi* (Turkey), *SOPRO - Solidariedade e Promoção ONGD* (Portugal), *Association of Human Rights Educators – AHEAD* (Spain), *Kyttaro Enallaktikon Anazitiseon Neaon - KEAN* (Greece), *Positiva Milano* (Italy) and *Mano Europa* (Lithuania). The final version of the questionnaire was finished in March of 2023. The quantitative research was conducted in March-July 2023. 110 respondents participated in the survey. These respondents were participants of the project “Strengthening social cohesion and capacity of local, refugee and migrant young people by creating STEM/STEAM areas”.

The results obtained during the research were processed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Description statistics as analytical process helps researchers to illustrate and sum up an observation. Moreover, this statistical technique is chosen by researchers because it helps researchers in establishing rationale that is associated with quantification. This statistical measurement is a preliminary phase of the quantitative research (Ali, 2020). Independent Samples Test, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, t-test for Equality of Means were using for testing the first hypothesis and ANOVA for testing the second hypothesis.

Results of Empirical Research

Respondents distribution by age was sufficiently even: 46,36 percent of male and 53,64 percent of female. The age distribution is shown in Table 1.

Distribution by age is presented in Table 1. The biggest part of respondents was 15-23 years old.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by age

Age of respondents	Percent
under 15 years	6.4
15-18 years	38.2
19-23 years	21.8
24-27 years	5.5
28-31 years	15.5
over 31 years	12.7
Total	100.0

Source: Compiled by authors based on research findings

The largest groups of respondents by country of origin were from Asia: Iraq (17,3 percent), Syria (11 percent), Turkey (9,1 percent) and Afghanistan (8,2 percent). The results presented in Figure 3.

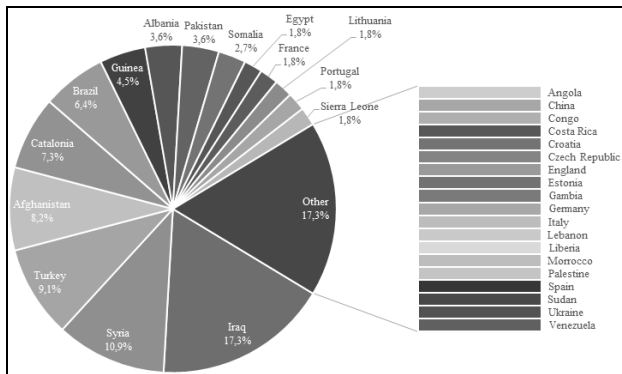


Fig. 3. Distribution of respondents by country of origin
Source: Compiled by authors based on research findings

The largest groups of respondents by country of relatives (parents, grandparents) were from Asia too: Turkey (19,1 percent), Syria (9,1 percent), Iraq (8,2 percent) and Afghanistan (7,3 percent). The results presented in Figure 4.

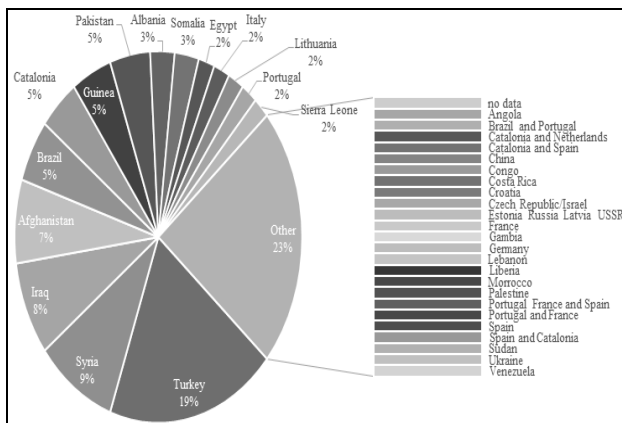


Fig. 4. Distribution of respondents by country of relatives (parents, grandparents)
Source: Compiled by authors based on research findings

The largest groups of respondents by country of residence were from Turkey (34,5 percent), Greece (29,1 percent) and Portugal (16,4 percent). The results presented in Figure 5.

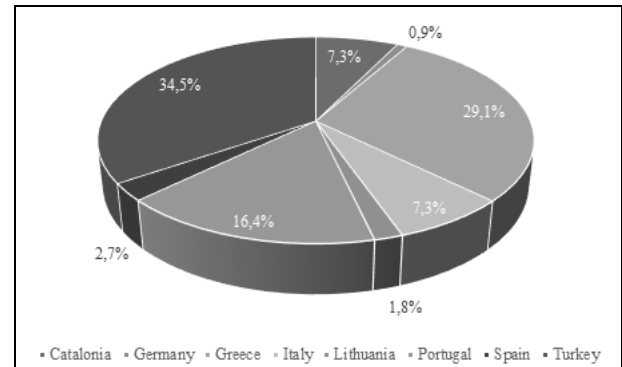


Fig. 5. Distribution of respondents by country of residence
Source: Compiled by authors based on research findings

Descriptive statistics of survey statements are presented in Appendix 1.

The evaluation of the statements presented in the survey is presented in Table 2. Each statement is assigned a number, which is used to test the proposed hypotheses in further analysis.

In particular, respondents strongly disagree (52,7 percent) or disagree (29,1 percent) with statement, that „I avoid to become friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)“. Also 47,3 percent of respondents strongly disagree and 30,9 percent disagree, that „I avoid activities with individuals from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)“. Most of the respondents respectively strongly disagree or disagree with statements, that „I generally do not feel comfortable being around members of other ethnic/diverse cultural groups“ (76,3 percent), „I often feel bad that I belong to the ethnic/diverse cultural group“ (74,5 percent), I feel uncomfortable to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s) (72,7 percent) or „it turns me off to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)“ (70 percent). 71,8 percent of respondents state, that „I usually do not feel comfortable around members of my own ethnic/diverse cultural group“ and „I feel unable to involve myself in activities with members of the other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)“. Respectively 68,2 percent and 65,4 percent of respondents strongly disagree or disagree that „I often feel confused about which ethnic/diverse cultural group I should identify myself with“ and „I do not spend much time with members of other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)“. But only a little more than half of the respondents, respectively 57,2 percent and 56,3 percent, state that „I feel very “confused” about my sense of ethnic membership“ and „I often feel “left out” when others around me talk about ethnic/diverse cultural identity issues“ (Table 2).

Table 2. Evaluation of the statements

Statement for evaluation in the survey	Evaluation of statements (percent)				
	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
1. The cultural traditions of my ethnic/diverse cultural group absolutely express me	5,4	10	25,5	37,3	21,8
2. It turns me off to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	42,7	27,3	10,9	9,1	10
3. I often feel bad that I belong to the ethnic/diverse cultural group	42,7	31,8	10	8,2	7,3
4. I usually go by the values of the overall culture where I live	5,5	14,5	20	46,4	13,6
5. The values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups are important for my judgment about what I have to do	5,4	15,5	23,6	40	15,5
6. I avoid to become friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	52,7	29,1	8,2	5,5	4,5
7. I often feel lost about who I am as an ethnic/diverse cultural being	33,6	33,6	18,2	9,1	5,5
8. It is important for me to internalize the overall cultural values of country that I live	5,5	13,6	26,4	31,8	22,7
9. I feel uncomfortable to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	43,6	29,1	14,5	4,6	8,2
10. I feel very “confused” about my sense of ethnic membership	24,5	32,7	20,9	15,5	6,4
11. I generally identify strongly with the overall culture of country that I live	8,2	14,6	33,6	30,9	12,7
12. I avoid activities with individuals from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	47,3	30,9	4,5	8,2	9,1
13. I often feel confused about which ethnic/diverse cultural group I should identify myself with	36,4	31,8	17,3	8,2	6,3
14. In general, belonging to my ethnic/diverse cultural group is an important part of my self-image	4,6	12,7	18,2	41,8	22,7
15. I generally do not feel comfortable being around members of other ethnic/diverse cultural groups	43,6	32,7	8,2	8,2	7,3
16. I often feel “left out” when others around me talk about ethnic/diverse cultural identity issues	24,5	31,8	18,2	16,4	9,1
17. It is important to me to identify closely with the overall culture of country that I live	6,3	8,2	30	35,5	20
18. The culture of country that I live absolutely expresses me	8,2	10,9	31,8	35,5	13,6
19. The values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups determine my life	10,9	30	24,5	24,6	10
20. I do not spend much time with members of other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	31,8	33,6	17,3	14,6	2,7
21. I usually do not feel comfortable around members of my own ethnic/diverse cultural group	32,7	39,1	11,8	10	6,4
22. I like keeping the traditions of the heritage of my ethnic/diverse cultural group	4,5	4,5	29,1	35,5	26,4
23. It is important for me to be accepted by the overall culture where I live	7,3	5,4	19,1	42,7	25,5
24. I feel unable to involve myself in activities with members of the other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	39,1	32,7	17,3	5,4	5,5

Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS results

As Table 2 shows, the biggest part of respondents strongly agree or agree, that „it is important for me to be accepted by the overall culture where I live“ (68,2 percent), but „I like keeping the traditions of the heritage of my ethnic/diverse cultural group“ (61,9 percent). 67,2 percent of respondents strongly disagree or disagree, that „I often feel lost about who I am as an ethnic/diverse cultural being“. 64,5 percent of respondents confirm by strongly agreeing (22,7 percent) and agreeing (41,8 percent), that „in general, belonging to my ethnic/diverse cultural group is an important part of my self-image“. 60 percent of respondents strongly agree or agree, that „I usually go by the values of the overall culture where I live“. 59,1 percent of respondents strongly agree or agree, that „The cultural traditions of my ethnic/diverse cultural group absolutely express me“. More than half, that is 55,5 percent strongly agree or agree, that „the values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups are important for my judgment about what I have to do“ and „it is important to me to identify closely with the overall culture of country that I live“ and 54,5 percent of respondents state, that „it is important for me to internalize the overall cultural values of country that I live“. Almost half of respondents (49,1 percent) strongly agree and agree that „the culture of country that I live absolutely expresses me“. But an even smaller proportion of respondents (43,6 percent) strongly agree or agree that „I generally identify strongly with the overall culture of

country that I live“ and even a third of respondents’ state, that they neither agree nor disagree. The most ambiguous was the statement that „the values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups determine my life“: 40,9 percent of respondents strongly disagree or disagree, but 34,6 percent of respondents strongly agree or agree.

Analysing the results, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: There are differences of opinion between men and women.

H2: There are differences of opinion between respondents grouped by age.

Testing the hypothesis H1, that there are differences of opinion between men and women, results are presenting in Table 3.

Table 3. Results for testing hypothesis H1

The number of the evaluated statement		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
1	Equal variances assumed	.323	.571	.971	108	.334	.205	.211	-.213	.623
	Equal variances not assumed			.982	107.990	.328	.205	.208	-.208	.618
2	Equal variances assumed	1.943	.166	-.664	108	.508	-.170	.256	-.678	.338
	Equal variances not assumed			-.674	107.495	.502	-.170	.252	-.671	.330
3	Equal variances assumed	.184	.669	-1.437	108	.154	-.337	.235	-.802	.128
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.450	107.955	.150	-.337	.232	-.798	.124
4	Equal variances assumed	12.820	.001	-.431	108	.667	-.089	.206	-.497	.319
	Equal variances not assumed			-.443	101.777	.658	-.089	.200	-.486	.308
5	Equal variances assumed	12.609	.001	-1.811	108	.073	-.376	.208	-.787	.036
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.862	102.084	.066	-.376	.202	-.776	.025
6	Equal variances assumed	16.645	.000	-3.510	108	.001	-.702	.200	-1.098	-.306
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.383	77.192	.001	-.702	.207	-1.115	-.289
7	Equal variances assumed	.871	.353	-1.876	108	.063	-.412	.220	-.847	.023
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.871	104.554	.064	-.412	.220	-.848	.025
8	Equal variances assumed	5.708	.019	-.350	108	.727	-.077	.220	-.514	.359
	Equal variances not assumed			-.357	106.669	.722	-.077	.216	-.506	.351
9	Equal variances assumed	1.016	.316	-.726	108	.469	-.171	.236	-.638	.296
	Equal variances not assumed			-.733	107.937	.465	-.171	.233	-.634	.292
10	Equal variances assumed	6.384	.013	1.058	108	.292	.243	.230	-.212	.698
	Equal variances not assumed			1.077	106.856	.284	.243	.225	-.204	.690
11	Equal variances assumed	10.408	.002	-1.384	108	.169	-.293	.212	-.713	.127
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.431	97.850	.156	-.293	.205	-.700	.113
12	Equal variances assumed	3.117	.080	-2.659	108	.009	-.641	.241	-1.119	-.163
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.627	98.622	.010	-.641	.244	-1.125	-.157
13	Equal variances assumed	3.861	.052	-1.558	108	.122	-.353	.227	-.802	.096
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.596	104.084	.113	-.353	.221	-.791	.085
14	Equal variances assumed	1.584	.211	.584	108	.561	.124	.212	-.296	.543
	Equal variances not assumed			.594	107.183	.554	.124	.208	-.289	.536
15	Equal variances assumed	3.293	.072	-1.028	108	.306	-.242	.235	-.708	.224
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.046	107.080	.298	-.242	.231	-.700	.216
16	Equal variances assumed	15.867	.000	.651	108	.516	.159	.245	-.326	.644
	Equal variances not assumed			.669	102.750	.505	.159	.238	-.313	.631
17	Equal variances assumed	3.188	.077	-1.974	108	.051	-.409	.207	-.819	.002
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.006	107.425	.047	-.409	.204	-.813	-.005
18	Equal variances assumed	12.113	.001	-1.199	108	.233	-.253	.211	-.671	.165
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.239	98.500	.218	-.253	.204	-.658	.152
19	Equal variances assumed	6.814	.010	-1.923	108	.057	-.428	.223	-.869	.013
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.965	105.505	.052	-.428	.218	-.860	.004
20	Equal variances assumed	1.369	.245	-1.085	108	.280	-.234	.216	-.662	.194
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.092	107.658	.277	-.234	.215	-.660	.191
21	Equal variances assumed	2.251	.136	-.926	108	.357	-.209	.226	-.658	.239
	Equal variances not assumed			-.944	106.459	.347	-.209	.222	-.649	.230
22	Equal variances assumed	7.198	.008	-.544	108	.587	-.109	.200	-.506	.288
	Equal variances not assumed			-.559	102.805	.577	-.109	.195	-.496	.278
23	Equal variances assumed	10.046	.002	-1.446	108	.151	-.309	.214	-.732	.115
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.482	104.052	.141	-.309	.208	-.722	.104
24	Equal variances assumed	.041	.840	-1.222	108	.224	-.264	.216	-.692	.164
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.224	106.423	.224	-.264	.216	-.691	.163

Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS results

Although there are differences of opinion between men and women, following the application of the t-test for Equality of Means, we found statistically significant differences in only 3 statements (Table 4):

- ✓ I avoid becoming friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)^a;
- ✓ I avoid activities with individuals from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s);
- ✓ It is important to me to identify closely with the overall culture of the country that I live in.

As can be seen in the table above, only for the 3 statements, the sig value is less than 0.05.

Testing the hypothesis H2, that there are differences of opinion between respondents grouped by age, results are presenting in Appendix 2.

There are statistically significant differences between the opinions of respondents grouped by age on the following statements (Table 5):

- I avoid becoming friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s);
- I avoid activities with individuals from other

ethnic/diverse cultural group(s);

➤ I often feel confused about which ethnic/diverse cultural group I should identify myself with;

➤ In general, belonging to my ethnic/diverse cultural group is an important part of my self-image;

➤ I do not spend much time with members of other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s);

➤ It is important for me to be accepted by the overall culture where I live;

➤ I feel unable to involve myself in activities with members of the other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s).

Conclusions

Migration has been a part of human experience from the earliest days of civilization. There are over 25 million refugees worldwide, around half are children, and the majority (84%) are hosted in low- and middle-income countries. More than 90% of migrations in the world have taken place for employment purpose; migrants move either alone or with their families, also, as a prime causes of movements, can be defined geographical conditions, civil war, hunger, epidemic diseases, population growth, insufficient resources.

The European Union (EU) faces challenges that effects its persistence, including the revival of national populism in many EU members and studies have shown that individuals with immigration histories identify less strongly with Europe, such aspect must be taken into account, because the citizens and their identities are vital for European cohesion. Successful integration benefits both migrants and destination societies, but there are various triggers, which can effect affect the relations toward emigrants, like the pandemic or convivial attitude toward emigrants.

The survey shows that the biggest part of respondents (81,8 percent) does not avoid becoming friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s) or 78,2 percent of respondents do not avoid activities with individuals from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s). Both hypotheses that age and gender influence the difference in respondents' opinions were confirmed.

During the project “Strengthening social cohesion and capacity of local, refugee and migrant young people by creating STEM/STEAM areas” was an aspiration to increase the social cohesion and strengthen the resilience of young participants, consisting of immigrants, refugees and local groups, by revealing their skills in STEM/STEAM (Science, Robotic Technology, Art, Drama-theatre, Transform-Design-Play and Sports) and including them in social areas. The project put forward successful social cohesion practices like seminars and workshops to resource comprehensive social policies and to contribute to international literature. Workshops implemented during the project have contributed to raise awareness about multiple aspects of identity and the intersectionality of criteria that may lead to situations of privilege or discrimination in diverse hosting communities.

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Appendix 1. Descriptive statistics of statements in the survey

Statement in the survey	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The cultural traditions of my ethnic/diverse cultural group absolutely express me	110	1	5	3.60	1.102
It turns me off to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	2.16	1.338
I often feel bad that I belong to the ethnic/diverse cultural group	110	1	5	2.05	1.233
I usually go by the values of the overall culture where I live	110	1	5	3.48	1.073
The values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups are important for my judgment about what I have to do	110	1	5	3.45	1.097
I avoid becoming friends with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	1.80	1.099
I often feel lost about who I am as an ethnic/diverse cultural being	110	1	5	2.19	1.161
It is important for me to internalize the overall cultural values of country that I live	110	1	5	3.53	1.147
I feel uncomfortable to associate with people from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	2.05	1.230
I feel very "confused" about my sense of ethnic membership	110	1	5	2.46	1.202
I generally identify strongly with the overall culture of country that I live	110	1	5	3.25	1.112
I avoid activities with individuals from other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	2.01	1.296
I often feel confused about which ethnic/diverse cultural group I should identify myself with	110	1	5	2.16	1.193
In general, belonging to my ethnic/diverse cultural group is an important part of my self-image	110	1	5	3.65	1.104
I generally do not feel comfortable being around members of other ethnic/diverse cultural groups	110	1	5	2.03	1.230
I often feel "left out" when others around me talk about ethnic/diverse cultural identity issues	110	1	5	2.54	1.276
It is important to me to identify closely with the overall culture of country that I live	110	1	5	3.55	1.097
The culture of country that I live absolutely expresses me	110	1	5	3.35	1.105
The values of my ethnic/diverse cultural groups determine my life	110	1	5	2.93	1.179
I do not spend much time with members of other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	2.23	1.131
I usually do not feel comfortable around members of my own ethnic/diverse cultural group	110	1	5	2.18	1.182
I like keeping the traditions of the heritage of my ethnic/diverse cultural group	110	1	5	3.75	1.044
It is important for me to be accepted by the overall culture where I live	110	1	5	3.74	1.123
I feel unable to involve myself in activities with members of the other ethnic/diverse cultural group(s)	110	1	5	2.05	1.132
Valid N (listwise)	110				

Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS results

Appendix 2. Results for testing hypothesis H2

ANOVA						
The number of the evaluated statement		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Between Groups	7.675	5	1.535	1.280	.278
	Within Groups	124.725	104	1.199		
	Total	132.400	109			
2	Between Groups	15.406	5	3.081	1.784	.123
	Within Groups	179.648	104	1.727		
	Total	195.055	109			
3	Between Groups	11.101	5	2.220	1.494	.198
	Within Groups	154.572	104	1.486		
	Total	165.673	109			
4	Between Groups	1.047	5	.209	.175	.971
	Within Groups	124.416	104	1.196		
	Total	125.464	109			
5	Between Groups	3.858	5	.772	.630	.677
	Within Groups	127.315	104	1.224		
	Total	131.173	109			
6	Between Groups	24.149	5	4.830	4.675	.001
	Within Groups	107.451	104	1.033		
	Total	131.600	109			
7	Between Groups	12.925	5	2.585	2.005	.084
	Within Groups	134.066	104	1.289		
	Total	146.991	109			
8	Between Groups	8.330	5	1.666	1.283	.277
	Within Groups	135.089	104	1.299		
	Total	143.418	109			
9	Between Groups	8.526	5	1.705	1.135	.347
	Within Groups	156.247	104	1.502		
	Total	164.773	109			
10	Between Groups	5.790	5	1.158	.795	.556
	Within Groups	151.565	104	1.457		
	Total	157.355	109			
11	Between Groups	1.301	5	.260	.203	.961
	Within Groups	133.572	104	1.284		
	Total	134.873	109			
12	Between Groups	24.722	5	4.944	3.249	.009
	Within Groups	158.269	104	1.522		
	Total	182.991	109			
13	Between Groups	19.245	5	3.849	2.947	.016
	Within Groups	135.810	104	1.306		
	Total	155.055	109			
14	Between Groups	15.961	5	3.192	2.840	.019
	Within Groups	116.912	104	1.124		
	Total	132.873	109			
15	Between Groups	14.251	5	2.850	1.967	.090
	Within Groups	150.667	104	1.449		
	Total	164.918	109			
16	Between Groups	18.945	5	3.789	2.488	.036
	Within Groups	158.409	104	1.523		
	Total	177.355	109			
17	Between Groups	12.466	5	2.493	2.182	.062
	Within Groups	118.807	104	1.142		
	Total	131.273	109			
18	Between Groups	11.184	5	2.237	1.907	.099
	Within Groups	121.989	104	1.173		
	Total	133.173	109			
19	Between Groups	5.530	5	1.106	.788	.560
	Within Groups	145.888	104	1.403		
	Total	151.418	109			
20	Between Groups	25.111	5	5.022	4.573	.001
	Within Groups	114.208	104	1.098		
	Total	139.318	109			
21	Between Groups	7.926	5	1.585	1.141	.343
	Within Groups	144.437	104	1.389		
	Total	152.364	109			
22	Between Groups	7.893	5	1.579	1.479	.203
	Within Groups	110.979	104	1.067		
	Total	118.873	109			
23	Between Groups	14.611	5	2.922	2.476	.037
	Within Groups	122.744	104	1.180		
	Total	137.355	109			
24	Between Groups	26.769	5	5.354	4.932	.000
	Within Groups	112.903	104	1.086		
	Total	139.673	109			

Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS results

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