

Migration, Minorities, and Refugeehood in Cyprus: A View of the Citizenship Regime through the Lens of Displacement

Introduction

Generally known for its long-standing conflict, Cyprus is a place where the migration and refugee regimes, operating on either side of a dividing line, are imbricated in the legacies and discourses of the inter-ethnic dispute (Demetriou, 2018). This is largely because citizenship on both sides is framed by a binary logic and informed by the history of displacement on the island in the last century. This article analyses the dynamics involved in these relationships in order to explain how the governance of migration, minorities, and refugeehood stem from the politics of citizenship.

The article is divided into two sections. The first section will offer an overview of the formation of migrant, minority, and refugee communities on the island. It will thus first provide a history of migration movements on the island as a way of introducing the political and demographic complexities that make up Cypriot society today. Secondly, it will discuss further the governance of otherness on the island, particularly relating to different minority groups. Thirdly, it will provide an overview of the displacements induced by the Cyprus conflict. Fourthly, it will discuss the policies relating to refugee protection over the last two decades.

The second section will focus on the analysis of the governance of migrant, minority, and refugee groups within the citizenship regime. It will thus first provide an overview of the premises of citizenship on which belonging to the island is understood in law and practice. Secondly, it will explain how the governance of others relates to this framing of citizenship. Thirdly, it will present demographic data to exemplify the implications of these dynamics. Finally, it will summarise these relations and conclude with thoughts about policy and practice.

The article is partly based on data presented in a 2019 report on migration and its relation to the Cyprus conflict (Demetriou, 2019). It draws largely on ethnographic observations carried out over two decades of engagement on the island, numerous interviews with practitioners in related fields, and substantial desk research on law, policy, public discourse, and civic activity.

The main claim in this article is that the conflict in Cyprus cannot be delinked from understandings of citizenship and that in turn, these understandings cannot be separated from the governance of minorities, migrants, and refugees. In short, the entire socio-political sphere in Cyprus is imbued with the construction of a post-conflict subject as a refugee subject, which is always an ongoing process. This means that whatever legal categories are used to govern those subjects, displacement within the conflict is always at heart of conceptualisations of otherness and belonging on the island.

Section I

1. Historical and Political Background to Migration Movements

Cyprus has a long history of migration and forced displacement. The island is often presented in local discourse, including history books, as having diachronically sat ‘at the crossroads of civilizations’, and cultural influences are celebrated for their blending of eastern and western elements (Panayiotopoulos and Nicolaidou, 2007). Significantly, all of Cyprus’s local population groups identify their origins elsewhere. Greek-Cypriots often trace their cultural lineage all the way back to the Achaean Greeks who colonized the island from the 12th century BC. Maronites find their roots in communities that emigrated from present-day Syria and Lebanon from the 9th century AD and through the Middle Ages. Latins claim heritage from Levantine groups that settled on the island during the Crusades and particularly the Lusignan and Venetian rulers (1192-1489 and 1489-1521). In the absence of a formalised history of the Roma population, it is speculated that the Roma settlement on the island took place in the 14th century and was related to population movements during the time of the Crusades. Turkish-Cypriots trace their roots to the Ottomans who conquered the island in 1521, and Armenians often have family histories of descendants settling in Cyprus after the genocide of 1915. Thus, the population of the island is a population identified by migration as well as by conflict.¹

In the more recent past, population movements related largely to internal displacements resulting from the inter-ethnic violence of the conflict, outlined below. The year of the Republic’s establishment, 1960, saw independence from colonial rule by Britain through the establishment of a constitution determining the status of various groups of citizens overviewed in the next section. As violence flared in 1963 with the breakup of the bicomunal state, the greater part of the internally displaced populations until 1974 were Turkish-Cypriots, whereas after the war of 1974 and the division of the island, Greek-Cypriots from the north became displaced to the south the Turkish-Cypriot from the south became displaced to the north. After 1974, most migration movements concerned the emigration of Cypriots for work, and the settling of populations from Turkey in the north of the island.²

After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, migration patterns changed for both parts of the island. Ethnic Greeks and Turks from former Soviet Union republics could migrate to Greece and Turkey under repatriation schemes (Voutira, 1991; 2004; 2006; 2011), and from there to Cyprus. In the 1990s, as the economy--particularly in the south--was booming, labour migration policies were also instituted, allowing migration from the global south, mainly for domestic and agricultural work (Sainsbury, 2009). Irregularity and its policing gradually became more visible in public discourse, as visa permissions and restrictions became more stringently regulated. Similar work schemes in the north saw an increase in migration for domestic work, but targeted Turkic groups from Central Asia. Human rights issues also began to gradually surface, and trafficking for sexual exploitation gained attention as an issue on both sides as of the early 2000s (Agathangelou and Ling, 2003; Agathangelou, 2004; Vassiliadou, 2004).

A system of refugee protection under the terms of the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (henceforth “the Convention”) was put in place in the 2000s in the Republic of Cyprus, whose largely Greek-Cypriot authorities in practice exercise control over the southern part of the island since the division of 1974 (the north being controlled by Turkish-Cypriot authorities and largely dependent on Turkey). The Republic effectively took over from UNHCR, at this point, as the latter had been stationed on the island since the 1960s and had been active in

¹ Studies on the groups mentioned can be found in Varnava, Coureas and Elia (2009), Coureas (2000), Pattie (1997; 2013), Constantinou (2007), Nevzat (2005), Erdal Ilcan (2011).

² Early studies of displacement in Cyprus include Evdokas et al (1976), Volkan (1980), Loizos (1981), Zetter (1991).

protecting internally displaced Cypriots in the 1960s and 1970s and then shifted its focus from Cypriot displaced populations to foreign refugees. The entry of Cyprus into the EU in 2004 meant that the asylum system was streamlined with EU directives since the early 2000s. By extension, much of migration policy that hinges on irregular migration and refugee protection also came within the purview of EU legislation. Free movement within the EU also meant that migration from new entrant countries in particular also increased (Mainwaring, 2012; 2014; Trimikliniotis, 2001).

At present, Cypriot migration policy is intimately tied to EU policies with respect to the south and to Turkish policy with respect to the north. This creates a situation whereby migration dynamics and demographics vary substantially between the two sides. The on-going stalemate of the conflict also means that there is no communication between the two sides so that policy may be coordinated. And yet, the policing of migration takes account of the conflict in various ways, starting with the status of the Green Line, and with the territorial dispute.

A case in point is the governance of refugee protection during the COVID-19 pandemic which imposed severe restrictions of movement in Cyprus over the last year. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, strict lockdowns were implemented on both sides of the island lasting until the early summer months. Cases of infection were overall well managed, during this first phase at least, on both sides, but this was largely due to the island's halting of all passenger air traffic. In addition, and prior to the closing of airports on both sides, movement across the Green Line, which had been possible since 2003, was also halted. This had an impact on refugees who had up to then been crossing the Green Line and seeking asylum in the south, having arrived in the north, mainly from Turkey. It is indicative that right after the lockdown was announced by authorities of the Republic on March 15, a boat of Syrian refugees was pushed back by Greek-Cypriot marine patrols and forced to disembark in the north of the island, where no asylum procedures exist.³ As of the time of writing further pushback have been reported, while reports also surfaced of refugees stranded on the Green Line, unable to cross into the south or return to the north.⁴

2. The Governance of Minority Groups

The way in which minority groups are governed in Cyprus intersects with the experience of displacement on the island in mostly indirect ways. Minority groups have generally not been targeted for displacement because of their minority status but rather because this status was treated as membership of larger community groups, i.e. either the Greek-Cypriot or the Turkish-Cypriot community.

The Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, as will be explained further below, recognises three groups as religious groups rather than ethnic minority groups. These are the Armenian, Maronite, and Latin communities. In terms of citizenship, all three groups are counted as members of the Greek-Cypriot community. Each of these groups trace their origins within migration movements tied to the history of the island. They are also connected to specific locations: for example, large Maronites communities lived in a village cluster in the northwest of the island prior to their internal displacement in 1974. Armenians lived in Turkish quarters, mainly in Nicosia prior to their displacement in 1964. Because of the locations they inhabited, these two groups experienced displacement very differently. Maronites were able to maintain residence rights in their origin villages through the years of division. Armenians, who lived in

³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/3/30/cyprus-pushes-syrian-refugees-back-at-sea-due-to-coronavirus>

⁴ <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2020/9/26/iranian-asylum-seeker-stuck-in-limbo-on-divided-cyprus>

Turkish-Cypriot urban neighbourhoods in large numbers prior to the eruption of violence were not recognised initially as having been displaced and did not receive effective assistance. This was because they were displaced as members of the Greek-Cypriot community (to which they belonged) and therefore the assistance that was being offered at that time by UNHCR was focused on Turkish-Cypriots, who were bearing the brunt of the violence (Demetriou 2014; 2018). The Latin community is the smallest in size and has been integrated to a larger extent within the Greek-Cypriot community. Their displacement experience does not differ significantly from the Greek-Cypriot population at large.

Thus in effect, the organisation of these three groups into religious groups that are part of the Greek-Cypriot community, has defined their displacement experience. However, in doing so, it has differentiated it, because of the fact that the locations from which they were displaced and the times of their displacement, in terms of conflict phases, differed. While in the case of the Maronites this experience allowed greater possibilities for return than the rest of the Greek-Cypriot population, in the case of the Armenians it allowed lesser access to assistance. These differentiations were not directly tied to ethnicity, but rather indirectly linked to it via time and place.

This differentiation is also tied to wider political alliances. Politically, as religious groups, the three minorities are led by religious leaders. However, they maintain ties with states and diasporas to differing degrees. The Vatican has been important in mediating rights in the cases of Maronites and Latins (Constantinou, 2007). The Armenian community has strong links with Armenian diasporas and the Armenian state. Internally, however, the three groups lack formal representation in government. Three elected representatives, one for each, sit in parliament and advocate for the interests of the groups but have no voting rights. Community members vote in national elections as Greek-Cypriots. In the north, Maronite and Greek-Cypriot groups who remained behind following the division were treated as minorities with voting rights limited to local rather than general elections. This in effect means that the governance of otherness within the citizenship regime allows little room for collective representation. It is rather guided by cultural assumptions. Minorities are thus often unseen and unheard in discussions about politics on the island and particularly the Cyprus conflict. This means that their rights as displaced populations are also circumscribed within that governance (Demetriou, 2016; 2018)

There is another minority group however, that is not included in the recognised religious groups. These are the Roma, who are not recognised formally in law. They instead form part of the Turkish-Cypriot community, living across the north and the south and often maintaining family ties across the divide. In the south, they are afforded rights as Turkish-Cypriot community members. Some language provision is also provided within the education system in specific schools in the town of Limassol. Other groups within the Turkish-Cypriot community also include people of African descent studied by artist Serap Kanay.⁵ These unrecognised groups are not subject to specific policies and are largely understudied and not well organised. For these reasons it is difficult to assess how the governance of citizenship, or aspects of the Cyprus conflict, including displacement, may have affected them.

Newer minority groups were formed by migration movements in the last five decades. The governance of these groups has also largely fallen within the parameters of the dichotomic distinction between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities (whose constitutional aspects are explored in section 2). This means that if in the south, they naturalise into citizenship as members of the Greek-Cypriot community by default, while if in the north, they gain status as

⁵<https://scripties.uba.uva.nl/download?fid=544480>

citizens of the self-declared state there, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (henceforth TRNC). In effect then, both polities assume an ethnic aspect to their citizenship regimes that does not correspond to the identities of many of their subjects. This creates a situation whereby many groups in Cyprus are “minoritised” (Demetriou, 2013), i.e. placed in a position of disadvantage vis-à-vis the assumptions of homogeneity that understandings of Cypriot identity imply on both sides of the island. This disadvantage is largely also class-related and separates the experience of migrant communities from communities of individuals who naturalise through investment schemes – a policy that has been introduced in the Republic in the last decade (Rakopoulos, forthcoming). Thus it could be said that wealth is now becoming a factor replacing ethnicity in the determination of how otherness is governed in Cyprus.

3. Displacement relating to the Cyprus Conflict

The conflict between the two main ethnic communities has been the key driver of displacement in Cyprus’ modern history. This displacement has taken many forms, however. It has included movements that we today recognise as “internal displacement”, for example Turkish-Cypriots (chiefly) in the 1960s and movements north and south of the Green Line after 1974. It has also included movements across country borders of people fleeing violence or targeting, for example during the EOKA campaign in the 1950s and the violence of the 1960s: these may be today recognised as “refugee” movements, however, in many cases they did not involve recognition by state authorities as such. They were seen at the time as migration movements. Yet other movements, post-1974, were induced by poverty and dispossession that followed the war but were again seen as migratory rather than forced. In examining the spectrum of displacement in the recent history of the island therefore, it is important to account for all these different types of movement. It is also important to remember that these movements took place within a larger temporal context where Cyprus also hosted incoming refugees from elsewhere, like the Armenian community after the genocide of 1914 and more recent refugee arrivals, for example since the 1980s with the war in Lebanon.

During the anticolonial struggle (1955-1959), in which the Greek-Cypriot nationalist organisation EOKA sought unification with Greece towards the end of British colonial rule (1878-1960), colonists as well as Turkish-Cypriots who were seen as an impediment to the goal of the struggle, and Greek-Cypriots who were seen as liabilities were targeted. The formation of the Turkish nationalist organisation TMT escalated the violence further, inter-ethnically and within communities. Even though migration movements pre-existed this period (Smith and Varnava, 2017), Cypriots migrated at this point particularly to the UK to escape the violence, either because they felt directly targeted (French, 2017) or due to the general insecurity. Displacements within the island also occurred, particularly around specific neighbourhoods, but were rather small scale and not subject to any reparation policies.

Following independence in 1960, inter-ethnic violence persisted and resulted in the separation of the territory, with Turkish-Cypriots leaving the power-sharing government and taking refuge in enclave pockets scattered around the island. At that point, large numbers of the Turkish-Cypriot population became displaced and significant numbers left the island altogether, emigrating to other countries in the Commonwealth, Australia being a favoured destination in addition to the UK (Cahill, 2015). Within the island, members of other communities were also displaced, for example, Armenians (who, under the terms of the 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, were counted as members of the Greek-Cypriot community) and Greek-Cypriots who lived in areas that became enclaves. In this period, the UNHCR set up an office on the island, which focused its work on the Turkish-Cypriot population, since this was the population that lacked the protection of the state. The Greek-Cypriots and Armenians who were

displaced did not receive effective support as they fell under the ill-defined category of people “struck by the Turks” (Tourkoplikti) – a term with no legal validity, which was used by the Greek-Cypriot press of the time to lay the blame for the violence on the Turkish-Cypriot community (Demetriou 2014, 2018). The term was to be revisited in the early 2000s and become a legal definition, used as a subcategory of those internally displaced and their children, who were now afforded limited rights to housing loans.

The next phase of the conflict was the war of 1974, prompted by a military coup against the Greek-Cypriot government organised by the junta regime in Greece (1967-1974) with a view to effecting the island’s union with Greece, and the subsequent invasion by Turkey in order to protect the Turkish-Cypriot community from violence. This was the most traumatic in terms of displacement, because it left large numbers of the population displaced, the majority of them Greek-Cypriots. This Greek-Cypriot population, estimated officially at 200,000, has been the main referent of the appellation ‘Cypriot refugee’ for the last five decades – the implied exclusion of other population groups from this concept owes much to the political ways in which displacement has been read. Greek-Cypriot discourse prioritises 1974 over earlier periods, while Turkish-Cypriot discourse downplays the relevance of displacement as a traumatic experience by comparison to the deliverance found in the post-1974 situation (Demetriou, 2018a). This history of displacement in modern history is important to the reception of refugees today, because it has put in place structures and discourses that have an impact on such reception on both sides, to this day.

Since 1974, migration into Cyprus has taken different forms, some forced and tied to displacements from elsewhere, others less so. In the north, populations from Turkey were settled in various phases in order to boost population and development. They were incentivised by property and land offers-- in houses and areas that had been vacated by Greek-Cypriot populations fleeing the war (Erdal Ilcan, 2011). In some cases they were also settled in Cyprus after being displaced from areas in Turkey that were subject to large scale development projects or that were affected by the war against Kurdish insurgents. This policy of settlement has been heavily criticised by the RoC government, as well as international actors, as a measure designed to cement the effects of the war on the ground, in the absence of a political agreement ending the war. The populations thus defined as ‘settlers’ are hence largely seen on the Greek-Cypriot side as having illegitimate claims to being in Cyprus and their presence on the island over the last four decades is seen as an on-going war crime. Within that time however, further migrations took place into northern Cyprus, of Turkish nationals who arrived independently of formal settlement policy, as well as of ethnic Turks from other areas, who arrived as part of such policies. These movements also involved displacement as for example in the case of the population of Bulgarian Turks, who fled to Turkey to escape the Zhivkov regime (1954-1989), some of whom then settled in northern Cyprus (Demetriou, 2018b).

In the south the 1974 war induced not only internal displacement but also emigration to other countries. Many of the Greek-Cypriot refugees who had lost their properties in the war migrated to countries of the region (Middle East and North Africa) where development projects were underway, and found jobs in the construction industry (Demetriou, 2012). Saudi Arabia and Libya are often cited as examples of such labour migration destinations. Others migrated more permanently to the UK and Australia. Some Turkish-Cypriots, although not in comparable numbers, also emigrated along these routes at the same time. Refugee movements into the Republic were minimal until the 1990s and not the subject of a coherent policy. The most important of these movements was of Lebanese refugees in the 1980s.

4. Refugee Protection since the 2000s

Even though displacement has been an important effect of the conflict, not all displacement movements have been met with effective remedies by government authorities. The most significant policies concerned the displacements of 1974, whereby the Republic provided housing and other support to Greek-Cypriot IDPs, while the Turkish-Cypriot authorities implemented a mixture of policies that centred on the nationalisation and redistribution of properties vacated by Greek-Cypriots to Turkish-Cypriot displaced and to other settling groups (Erdal Ilcan, 2011). Before that point, displaced populations were not prioritised by authorities (of the Republic) as subjects of protection. In fact, “refugee protection” in the way that it is understood in international law, i.e. in terms of the 1951 Convention, was not a real concern until the 2000s.

As stated in part 1, refugee protection used to be offered by UNHCR, which has been stationed on the island since the years of inter-ethnic violence. Although the 1951 Refugee Convention was signed and ratified by the Republic in 1963 and the 1967 Protocol in 1968, a Refugee Law relating to third country nationals was only passed in 2000. In 2002, Cypriot authorities took over processes of asylum examination and protection from UNHCR. The asylum system was further developed in line with EU directives since accession in 2004. The refugee protection framework is still in development in the north. Refugees in the north are under the protection of UNHCR who examines applications and then seeks relocation possibilities to third countries.

This effectively means that refugees on the island can apply for recognition of their status through asylum processes in the south only. The fact that entry to the island is possible only by air or sea makes the crossing from Turkey by boat, which is the shortest route of all possible origin points around the island, the easiest way to enter for those travelling irregularly. Hence, for the last two decades, the most frequently used route to access refugee protection has been to cross from Turkey into northern Cyprus, then cross the Green Line, and seek asylum in the south. This has rendered the Green Line an important factor in formal and informal policies of refugee protection and border policing. The Republic has for years raised concerns with the EU about the fact that the entry of people via the Green Line is a security issue for which Turkey is responsible (Demetriou, 2018). Authorities there have also tended to differentiate in statistics between asylum-seekers crossing from the north and those entering the areas they control directly. As a result of the conflict, the division of the island determines in fundamental ways the protection refugees receive.

Once in the area controlled by the Republic, protection is granted under three statuses: (i) refugee protection under the parameters of the Refugee Convention of 1951; (ii) subsidiary protection under the EU Qualification Directive of 2004; (iii) humanitarian protection under national parameters as decided by the Ministry of Interior. In practice, the numbers of refugees recognised under the Convention are much lower than those receiving subsidiary protection, even though total numbers have been rising and more so since 2016. The main difference between subsidiary and refugee protection inheres in the fact that refugees fleeing war rather than targeted political persecution are recognised under the subsidiary protection directive and receive restricted rights by comparison to Convention refugees. The most important aspect of such restrictions is the limitations to family reunification, which is not covered under subsidiary protection (Demetriou, 2019). Humanitarian protection, being a status granted at the discretion of the Minister of Interior, can have variable parameters but also carries diminished protections as compared with refugee status.

The process of status determination comprises two main stages, the initial decision and appeal. Since 2017, the European Asylum Support Office, EASO, has been involved in the procedure in the Republic, through personnel on the ground. Initial determination by the Asylum Service is largely based on interviews. Appeals can be made on both facts and law, formerly through the Refugee Reviewing Authority and since 2019 the International Protection Administrative Court.⁶ The shift has meant that the appeals process is now a judicial one, whereas under the Refugee Reviewing Authority it was an administrative process. The process varies under different conditions (e.g. applications at borders) and is accelerated in cases where applicants are deemed to come from safe countries.

The rise in asylum applications and higher numbers of recognition in the last three years, in combination with European-wide reforms to the asylum system (Demetriou, 2019) have given cause to authorities to reform the system. Key objectives in these reforms seem to be the widening of the fast track process and strengthening of the grounds and scope of deportations. The imposition of emergency measures during the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 have had an impact on these policies too. The closing of the borders to all air and sea traffic as well as the Green Line has been applied to refugees too, as mentioned in part one. At the same time, emergency orders regarding the containment of the disease have been applied to impose specific restrictions on reception centres where diseases other than COVID-19 were discovered. A case that was extensively discussed in the public sphere in May was the lockdown imposed on the reception centre at Kokkinotrimithia due to the presence of scabies.⁷ Such discussions have also provided opportunities for the authorities to raise alarm over the presence of foreigners in Cyprus, fuelling xenophobic and anti-refugee sentiment. In such discussions, the facts over refugee protection (levels of recognition, provision of welfare, access to work and provisions) are often distorted and highly securitised, even resulting in opposition to government initiatives. An indicative example was the public opposition to the opening of a shelter for vulnerable refugees in the Nicosia suburb of Aglantzia, whereby a group of local residents, backed by the far right party, opposed government plans on the grounds that the refugees posed a security threat to the community, as well as to the country as a whole, since the suburb borders the Green Line and houses military barracks.⁸ These developments, and their apparent contradictions, can be explained within a wider context where Cyprus is lobbying the EU for assistance in refugee processing by foregrounding the rising asylum application numbers and the even higher rates these translate to in proportion to the population vis-à-vis other European countries (Demetriou, 2019). This allows the government to claim assistance while at the same time imposing a restrictive regime due to its status as an increasingly important EU entrypoint.

The Cypriot approach to refugee recognition therefore, which has diachronically been restrictive, is now becoming more so. An important aspect of this restrictive approach is the framing of refugeehood within the citizenship regime, examined in the second section.

⁶ <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/regular-procedure>

⁷ <https://www.dw.com/el/χρόνος-αντιμεταναστευτικός-οίστρος-με-αφορμή-την-πανδημία/a-53632908>

⁸ <https://politis.com.cy/apopseis/antidrontas-stin-kathodigoymeni-diamartyria-poy-egine-echtes-stin-aglantzia/>;
<https://24h.com.cy/2020/07/o-mikros-emfylios-tis-aglantzias/>

Section II

1. The Citizenship Regime

In Cyprus, refugeehood determines citizenship just as much as citizenship determines refugeehood. Displacement has been crucial, section I has shown, not only in shaping the demographics of the island in the last two centuries, but also in providing a political discourse through which the shorter history of the conflict, and particularly after the division of 1974, has been understood. This is emphatically the case for Greek-Cypriot official narratives, but it has also been important in Turkish-Cypriot ones. In turn, these narratives are inextricably intertwined with understandings about otherness and concomitantly, the governance of others in the two polities. This section focuses specifically on citizenship in order to delineate how the concepts on which the citizenship regime is based determine the inclusion and exclusion of groups and their movements.

Citizenship in Cyprus is primarily guided by *jus sanguinis* principles, acquired through parentage and marriage. This places great significance on family in the determination of citizenship, and is directly linked to the determination of communal membership. Under the 1960 Constitution, citizens of the Republic are separated into two distinct and mutually exclusive groups: Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots (text box 5.1).⁹ These groups are defined by ethnic origin, language, cultural identity, and religion, but all these characteristics are thought to coincide (Art.2, § 1-2). While it is recognised that some individuals may not share these characteristics with either of the two groups, the constitution provides that such persons, communally or individually (§ 3-4), should choose one of the two communities to belong to. Thus, the Armenian, Maronite and Latin communities, which as seen in section I, have different origin myths and religions, became part of the Greek-Cypriot community under this provision in 1960. The Roma community was not asked and became automatically part of the Turkish-Cypriot community, presumably due to religion. And although the constitution affords the possibility of switching communities, the process by which this is done is laborious, and since 1963, largely defunct. Original assignment into communities, beyond the three religious groups mentioned above, was not a matter of choice and remains a question that is never asked.

Where the constitution provides for an automatic switch between communities, it does so in reference to women and children, who are by default assigned to the community of the husband or father. This represents a patriarchal mentality which essentially renders women and children the property of the male family head (Art.2, § 7a; 7b). In doing so, the Constitution recognises ethnic belonging as the only mode of existence in social and political life. By making families mono-communal, (all members belong to a single community, defined by default as that of the father), lines of ethnic purity are at once created and maintained, even as exceptions are recognised. Paradoxically, the Constitution does not merely describe who the Cypriot population is – it creates that population (Demetriou 2018; also 2013).

Article 2 of the RoC Constitution relating to citizenship:

For the purposes of this Constitution:

- 1. the Greek Community comprises all citizens of the Republic who are of Greek origin and whose mother tongue is Greek or who share the Greek cultural traditions or who are members of the Greek-Orthodox Church;*
- 2. the Turkish Community comprises all citizens of the Republic who are of Turkish origin and whose mother tongue is Turkish or who share the Turkish cultural traditions or who are Moslems;*

⁹[http://www.presidency.gov.cy/presidency/presidency.nsf/all/1003AEDD83EED9C7C225756F0023C6AD/\\$file/CY_Constitution.pdf](http://www.presidency.gov.cy/presidency/presidency.nsf/all/1003AEDD83EED9C7C225756F0023C6AD/$file/CY_Constitution.pdf)

3. citizens of the Republic who do not come within the provisions of paragraph (1) or (2) of this Article shall, within three months of the date of the coming into operation of this Constitution, opt to belong to either the Greek or the Turkish Community as individuals, but, if they belong to a religious group, shall so opt as a religious group and upon such option they shall be deemed to be members of such Community...

4. a person who becomes a citizen of the Republic at any time after three months of the date of the coming into operation of this Constitution shall exercise the option provided in paragraph (3) of this Article within three months of the date of his so becoming a citizen;

5. a Greek or a Turkish citizen of the Republic who comes within the provisions of paragraph (1) or (2) of this Article may cease to belong to the Community of which he is a member and belong to the other Community upon - (a) a written and signed declaration by such citizen to the effect that he desires such change, submitted to the appropriate officer of the Republic and to the Presidents of the Greek and the Turkish Communal Chambers; (b) the approval of the Communal Chamber of such other Community...

7. (a) a married woman shall belong to the Community to which her husband belongs. (b) a male or female child under the age of twenty-one who is not married shall belong to the Community to which his or her father belongs, or, if the father is unknown and he or she has not been adopted, to the Community to which his or her mother belongs.

Text Box 1

In the Republic, some of these provisions have been superseded by later amendments, mainly in the sphere of family law. The introduction of civil marriages (1990) and civil partnerships (2015) had an impact on the ethnic determinism that pervaded the concept of family. Because up to the 1990s marriages and family law in general were under the jurisdiction of Communal Chambers (institutions that guided the cultural life of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities respectively) they fell under the purview of the Church for Greek-Cypriots and were essentially defunct for Turkish-Cypriots since 1974 (and partly so in the preceding period). From 1990 onwards, the Republic implemented changes to the legal parameters on parenthood, maintenance, adoption, and divorce, but these initially applied only to the Greek-Cypriot community, with a separate law extending provisions to the religious groups within the community, Armenians, Maronites, and Latins (Nicolaou, 1996). The application of the civil marriage law was extended to include Turkish-Cypriots in 2002, after a European Court of Human Rights suit (*Selim v. Cyprus*). These later changes to the marriage law have had a profound impact on the citizenship regime because they hold the potential of undermining the ethnic purity premises on which understandings of citizenship are founded. However, their implementation in practice remains limited due to the low numbers of marriages across communities.

In the meantime, in the north, citizenship is also determined by *jus sanguinis* and acquired generally through family connections. Naturalisation policies have been implemented at different times, often in a rather arbitrary manner that has been the matter of controversy. They mostly involve Turkish nationals and have thus been seen as an extension to the policy of population settlement.

More recent changes to citizenship laws in the Republic allow greater scope for foreign nationals to naturalise. Naturalisation policies based on long-term residence were initiated in large part through EU harmonisation processes. The right to apply for naturalisation is gained after seven years of lawful residence in the Republic.¹⁰ This makes it difficult for foreigners who have resided in the country in an irregular status to become eligible for naturalisation. Asylum-

¹⁰<http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/CRMD/crmd.nsf/All/F03BEB8DF3591BC1C2257D2C00453383?OpenDocument>

seekers may often fall into this category since the long processes of examination of claims create opportunities for regular status to lapse. The other major naturalisation scheme is by investment, which came into effect following the financial crisis of 2013, and has been heavily criticised by local and international bodies, including the EU, as a route to “selling” European passports, including to individuals involved in money laundering.¹¹ These two extremes of denying citizenship through long, complex, and arbitrary processes on the one hand and offering citizenship through speedy and highly professionalised processes (Rakopoulos, forthcoming) represent the difference that displacement makes to structures of belonging. It also shows how displacement acquires class and economic aspects. On the one extreme, individuals living in precarity are rendered further insecure through a prolongation of their displacement, whereas on the other, individuals who are financially secure can utilise this security to purchase their emplacement in the polity. These changes suggest that even though the citizenship regime is becoming more flexible and its intimate connections to the Cyprus conflict are beginning to loosen slightly, the shift is geared largely by neoliberal concerns over economic gain. It thus appears that the Cyprus politics are still a long way away from redefining citizenship in a way that prioritises connection to place, freedom of movement and settlement, and co-existence. The next section unpacks in more detail the connections between these enduring conceptions of citizenship as primarily ethnic and the governance of otherness on the island.

2. Citizenship provisions in the governance of migration and of others

The implications of the constitutional citizenship provisions outlined above for migration and the governance of others in general (migrants, minorities, refugees) are multi-fold and they still endure despite the changes described above. In this part, the impact of the citizenship regime’s specific parameters on migrants, minorities and refugees is delineated and exemplified. Taken together, these examples show how citizenship parameters today, tied as they are to the legacy of the conflict, intersect with the categorisation of population groups that have little to do with this legacy. In this sense, displacement can be said to cast a long shadow over past and present dimensions of citizenship.

Naturalisation: Migrants and refugees who become naturalized are assigned communities, rather than choosing them. Community lists are held by the Communal Chambers, which have been defunct since the beginning of the conflict in the 1960s, with the Greek-Cypriot Chambers having been absorbed into RoC government structures. This means that naturalizations today take place into the Greek-Cypriot community by default. However, there have been instances where such decisions have been taken arbitrarily, with people being assigned to the Turkish-Cypriot community due to their religion but without this being consistently applied (Demetriou, 2019b).

Because of the Cyprus conflict, naturalization (as the link between migration and citizenship) is a highly politicized question in the north and the south. Naturalization begins with the 1960 constitution and continues on the same governmental logic, which guides citizenship today. Thus, economic criteria are now being added to the factors considered in naturalization, as seen in the example of citizenship by investment, which targets Russian investors as a key group. The political influence of these investors on governmental decision-making has in recent years been raised as a concern in public discussions. And in the north, naturalization has been and continues to be a highly politicized field, with Turkey widely believed to have a say in relevant policy, while at the same time the naturalizations of Turkish citizens in the north often come under the scrutiny of Turkish-Cypriot left parties. In one example, the (left-wing party)

¹¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/23/exclusive-cyprus-sold-passports-to-criminals-and-fugitives/>

Minister of Interior in the north, following elections in January 2018, withdrew 175 citizenships granted under the previous regime, causing controversy, through the reactions of nationalist circles.¹²

Political and cultural rights: Because political and social rights emanate from community membership, they are still determined today by such assignment, including in the case of voting rights. Since 2004, Turkish-Cypriots can vote and run for office in the Republic, following a decision by the European Court of Human Rights (*Aziz v. Cyprus*). In the European parliamentary elections of May 2019, the main left-wing party in the Republic elected the first Turkish-Cypriot into office, an achievement which was officially hailed as a success for the democratic process, but which had been preceded by oppositional slander from many sides. This result showed that political representation need not equate to ethnic identity; it is equally indicative however, of the difficulties of overcoming this connection, bearing in mind that the MEP in question was already a high-profile well-integrated academic living in the south.

Rights falling under the Communal Chambers also include education, which under the Constitution is divided communally. This means that migrant children are educated in Greek-Cypriot schools, which, as institutions that originally fell under the Communal Chamber, are structured to promote an emphatically Greek-Cypriot identity. For the same reason, education is a sphere where the church exercises considerable control, including in traditionally having a say over the appointment of Ministers.

Demographic concerns: Because the assignment into communities was for the purposes of maintaining a power-sharing governmental system, the definitions of community membership imply homogeneous groups who are, as stated above, mutually exclusive in their identities, and who are pitted against each other in an adversarial relationship. The size of each community is thus a driving factor in political decision-making. The results of the only census undertaken prior to the eruption of the conflict counted 18% of the population as Turkish-Cypriot, 80% as Greek-Cypriot, and the remaining 2% as belonging to the three religious groups. Since 1960 and throughout the peace negotiations, this proportion is taken as the golden standard that should be maintained in deciding how to assign a common federal Cyprus citizenship to the population, particularly of those naturalised after the division. This has never explicitly been presented as an issue in the official design of migration and citizenship policies, but it has been mentioned in less formal settings (Demetriou, 2018a) and is often an unstated factor underlying restrictive logics in granting citizenship status and in implementing naturalisation policies.

Identification with the enemy group in public discourse: The implied presentation of communal affiliation in adversarial terms, as described in the previous point, also informs wider public discourse, most pronounced among the far right who see refugees, migrants, and naturalised citizens as potential enemies if they have identity traits that resemble “Turks” as laid out in the constitutional descriptions (religion, language, etc.). It is indicative that at the height of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, the Minister of Interior suggested that Cyprus could accommodate 300 Syrian families, specifying that they should “preferably” espouse of the Orthodox Christian faith.¹³ This adversarial approach also has spatial aspects, mentioned in section I, whereby the Green Line becomes important in the classification of foreigners. The movement of refugees and migrants across it is understood and policed by RoC authorities as related to adversarial policies instigated by Turkey. In this way, migration policy is even further securitised. As Turkey is in fact pursuing this tactic of managing refugee movements into Greece

¹² https://tr.sputniknews.com/dogu_akdeniz/201805121033413969-kibris-vatandaslik-iptali/

¹³ <https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-cyprus/cyprus-says-it-could-take-up-to-300-preferably-christian-refugees-idUSKCN0R711220150907>

as political manoeuvres in its relations with the EU more forcefully in the last few years, these securitisation dynamics are becoming more and more acute across the Green Line also.

Treaty of Establishment provisions: Finally, two further points relate to the citizenship regime set up in the 1960 Treaty of Establishment of the RoC rather than the Constitution per se.¹⁴ On the one hand, the treaty confirms the point about maintenance of population proportions, as it explicitly states the 4:1 ratio as one that needs to be maintained in naturalizations into the two communities (Annex D, Section 4, § 7d). And on the other hand, it assigns two areas within Cyprus, Akrotiri and Dhekelia to UK sovereignty, declaring them Sovereign Base Areas of the UK (Main text, Art. 1). However, no special citizenship arrangements are made for people living in these areas (Main text, Art. 6), rendering them Cypriot citizens. The existence of these base areas creates zones of territorial exception, where the law is unclear as to whether refugees and migrants arriving in these spaces are under the jurisdiction of RoC or UK authorities. This has created situations whereby refugees arriving on the bases have been stranded in them, refusing to transfer to the Republic, and unable to be resettled in the UK (Demetriou, 2019b). In the specific situation, it took two decades for the UK Home Office to reach an agreement with the refugees for relocation (Demetriou, 2020).

Taken together, these points underscore the fact that the Cypriot citizenship regime, complicated as it is because of the dichotomic split into communities, the assignment of non-conforming identities into this schema, and the existence of pockets of exceptional jurisdiction, creates a host of uncertainties for people seeking regularization in Cyprus, within or outside citizenship models (asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants, or persons pursuing naturalization).

3. Discourse and Data in Context

Policy-making on migration and refugees is largely circumscribed by the parameters used to conceptualise citizenship as described thus far. However, in recent years, it is not these parameters that are foregrounded. Especially in the last five years, and in line with developments in European asylum policy post-2015, the major instrument used in the formulation of policy have been migration statistics (Demetriou, 2019). In this respect, the Republic has been lobbying the EU for greater support in terms of structures and funding in order to cope with what it claims is a concerning rise in irregular migration. These arguments have been successful, owing to the fact that Cyprus' low population size make the proportion of asylum claims to the population one of the highest in Europe. While it is the case that in recent years both applications and recognitions have been rising, it is less certain whether these numbers should in absolute terms be cause for alarm and whether they are enough to implement policies that essentially deny protection to people who need it. The purpose of this section is to review these statistics and contextualise them. Based on this contextualisation, it would appear that numbers per se are less a problem in the wider social context. What seems to be happening instead is that statistics is being used to legitimise restrictive policies that are informed primarily by those problematic citizenship parameters discussed thus far.

It is important from this perspective, to keep in mind the absolute separation that official discourse draws between migrants and refugees. Even though much of the literature has shown that great overlaps exist between the two categories (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018; Long, 2013; Voutira, 1991; Dreher and Voyer, 2015; Sajjad, 2018; Schuster, 2005; 2011; Nyers, 2006; 2013) the separation between the two in absolute terms confers a distinction that is primarily legal. Hence, the term 'migrants' carries connotations of illegitimacy to a larger extent than 'refugees'

¹⁴ https://www.mfa.gr/images/docs/kypriako/treaty_of_establishment.pdf

does. At the same time, the category ‘migrants’ is further differentiated in terms of regularity between those migrants who are properly registered and whose presence is not, in general, construed as problematic, and those migrants who do not have valid papers and on whom xenophobic discourse primarily focuses. The category ‘refugees’, on the other hand, is often differentiated between ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum-seekers’, with the latter term often carrying similar connotations of illegitimacy, premised on the belief that many asylum applicants are irregular migrants seeking regularisation. In this sense, it is important to look at asylum statistics in relation to general migration statistics; and it is more relevant to do so in these terms rather than in relation to population size.

In terms of migration, between 1998 and 2018 the Republic of Cyprus reported an average of 15,000 migrants per year, about half of which were Europeans (Figure 1).¹⁵ Between 2007 and 2018 the total number of people who acquired Cypriot citizenship was 25,867 with a rising trend since 2013. Between 2014 and 2019 long-term residents (on permits of over 5 years) increased from 4,116 to 27,168 (Figure 2). In the last ten years there were 167,622 new residence permits issued, about half of them for workers (Figure 3). In terms of asylum, during the same decade, 8,405 asylum applications received positive decisions at first instance, and 12,350 were rejected. Of these, only 1,225 were for refugee status under the Convention, while 7,155 were for subsidiary protection and just 65 for humanitarian (Figure 4). There was an additional 11,585 decisions made on appeals with only 1,025 being successful, and only 175 for Convention status, 670 being for subsidiary protection and 180 humanitarian. Finally, in terms of policing, almost 8000 people were refused entry to the Republic in the same period, while 62,760 were found to be illegally present. Of those, 25,385 were ordered to leave and 24,755 were returned.

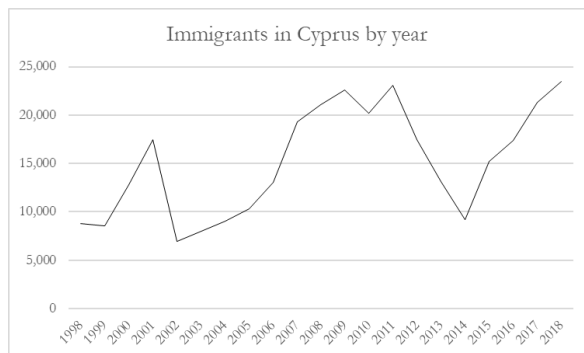


Fig 1



Fig 2

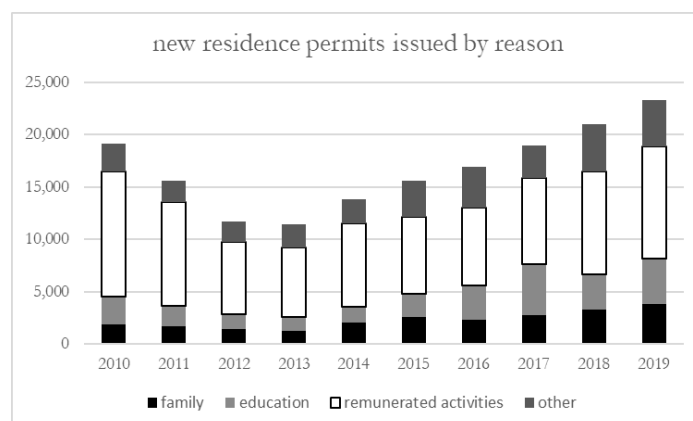


Fig 3

¹⁵ Data extracted from Eurostat database.

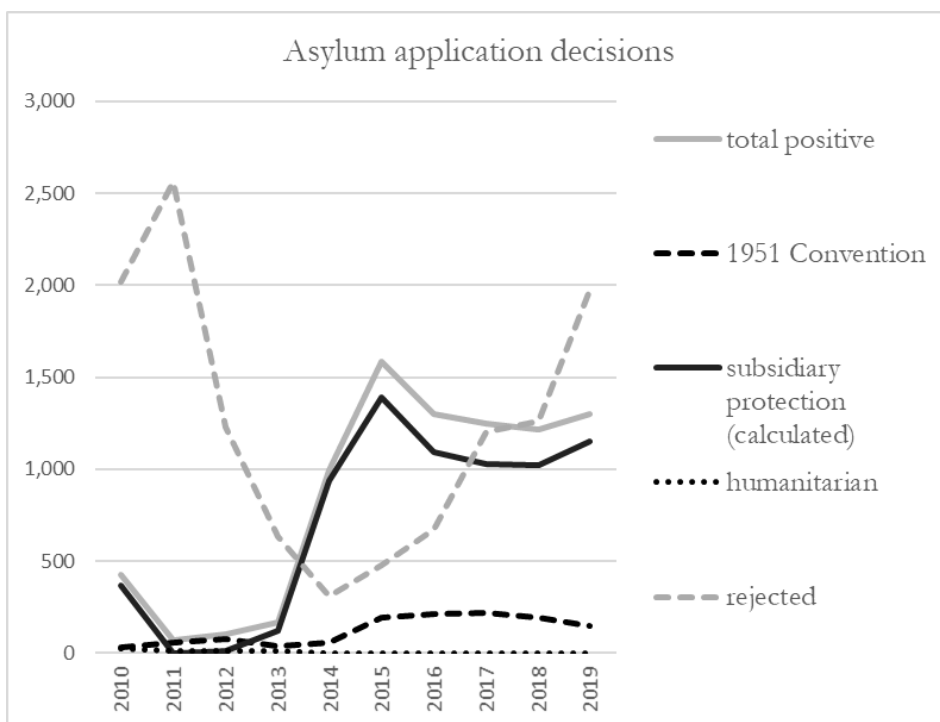


Fig 4

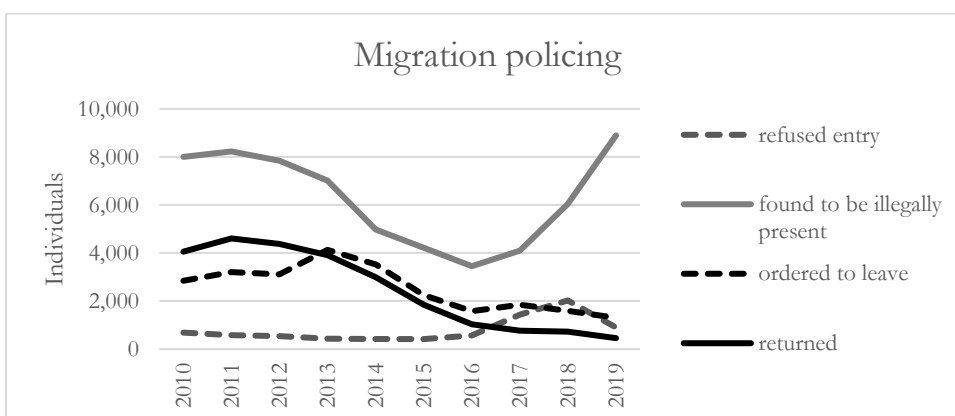


Fig 5

In all these statistics, which paint the general picture of regular migration, the period around 2013 appears as a turning point, with low migration numbers across most categories. This would most reasonably be related to the financial crisis experienced in that year, when the country saw the near-collapse of its banking sector (Zenios, 2013; Pashardes and Pashourtidou, 2013; Clerides, 2014). The impending crisis had slowed the economy slightly prior to the collapse and impacted it severely for a long time after. This would have made Cyprus a not very attractive destination for labour migration. In contrast, the years at the end of the first decade of the millennium had seen a property boom (Michaelides, 2014; Clerides and Pashourtidou, 2007). Following Cyprus's entry to the EU in 2004, this would have been a pull factor. Similar attraction can be gleaned in the last five years, when the economy appears to be recovering.

The same uneven pattern is observed in irregular migration. Persons classified as found to be illegally present in the country numbered 8,230 in 2011. This was the highest number for the years between 2008 and 2017, while a sharp drop to 4,980 was recorded in 2014, the lowest number being 3,450 in 2016, with a rise the following years. Further data shows that across those

years, adult males comprised the majority of this population and girls the smallest minority. Asylum applications (not in graph), for which data is recorded in a longer timeframe, evidence an increase following Cyprus's entry to the EU (from 950 in 2002 to 9,675 in 2004), a steady drop from 2007 (6,780 applications) to 2013 (1,255 applications) and a slow rise until 2016 (2,940 applications). A comparison indicates that 'illegal presence' does not necessarily correlate with asylum applications. For example, the high number of "illegals" for 2011 (8,230) does not map onto, in any obvious way, the asylum application numbers lodged for that year, which were less than 2,000. What is better correlated are the peaks in both rejection decisions and arrests in that year (figures 4 and 5). This in turn might suggest that a hostile environment could have worked to deter applications. The rates of rejection have been diachronically high, falling only around 2013, when, as we have seen, application numbers were also lower, and then beginning to rise again (Figure 4). Also, in respect to positive decisions, until 2009 the protection offered was mostly under subsidiary status, i.e., not affording the full rights of refugee protection under the terms of the 1951 Convention. This would have had repercussions on the rights of people to create a settled life in Cyprus. In reading these numbers, one should keep in mind the argument that policing and categorization create the situations of 'illegality' that demography then documents (Luibheid, 2013; Andresson, 2014; Tazzioli, 2014; Rygiel, 2011). At the same time, it should also be remembered that regularity and irregularity are hardly mutually exclusive. Shifts may occur between them, as when persons overstay their visas, or gain rights through work arrangements or marriage.

Overall, what the reported numbers show is that regular migration (not considered a problem) far outweighs irregular migration by 4:1, in terms of absolute total numbers over the last decade (figure 6). In fact, this ratio has been decreasing rather than increasing in the last five years, in which discourses have become more alarmist. This begs a question as to whether the situation is as dire as public discourse and authorities present it to be. Even starker is the difference between categories of protected people and regular migrants, where the former account for just 5% of the whole migrant population, and just 3% of the total foreign population (figure 7). For the case of refugees protected under the 1951 Convention, this percentage drops to less than 1%. The argument therefore that refugee movements into the country pose a threat to services, the social fabric, and the system as a whole, appears weak. What seems to be the case is rather that discourses of alarm legitimise and support a hostile environment that pushes people into irregularity.

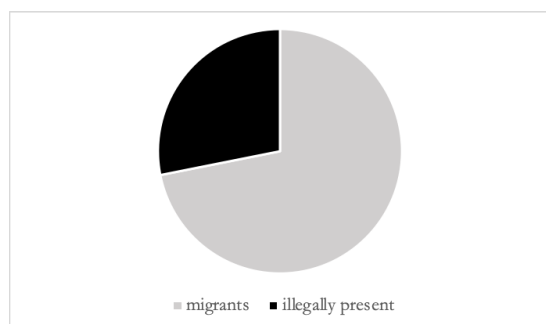


Fig 6

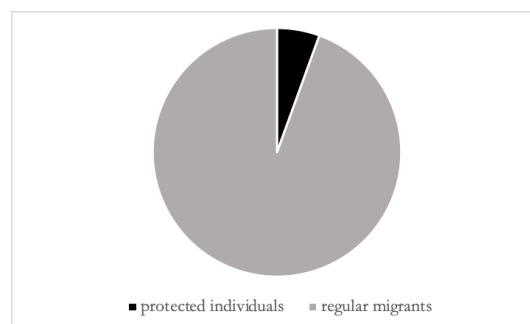


Fig 7

Although these statistics refer to exclusively to the Republic, much of what they represent is connected to the situation in the north, which is neither well documented, nor transparently managed. Turkey control over politics in the north, primarily through ensuring financial aid in exchange for influence over policies (Bozkurt, 2013), has a particular impact on population demographics. As institutions are not stringently monitored, statistics produced by

Turkish-Cypriot authorities are scant and relatively arbitrary.¹⁶ The education sector is increasingly being seen as one of the routes through which shifts between regular and irregular migration occur.¹⁷ The higher education sector has developed into one of the most important areas attracting foreigners to northern Cyprus (Katircioglu, 2010). There are currently 16 universities, reportedly with a total student population of 101,000. Of those, 88,000 are foreign and hail from 135 countries, 56,000 of them from Turkey.¹⁸ In this field too, data is not readily available.

The lack of an asylum system in place in the north effectively means that statistics in this field are altogether absent. Applications are dealt with through UNHCR, with decisions aimed primarily at relocation of those afforded protection. A law to institute a domestic framework for refugee protection has been discussed since 2015. The draft law prohibits refoulement and provides protections for minors, including unaccompanied minors, and provides rights to residence and work under a clause for humanitarian grounds. A 2012 report by the Refugee Rights Association registered 221 asylum applications in the years between 1999 and 2011, with yearly numbers ranging from 1 to 43 applications (Polili, 2012: 90). It also reported that the vast majority of applicants (85%) hailed from Iraq, Palestine, and Syria. A significant number of asylum applicants in the north are rejected and deported (ibid), while many are also reportedly pushed back at the border.

The fact that significant numbers of people seeking international protection who arrive in northern Cyprus actually cross the Green Line and file asylum applications with the authorities of the RoC is an important point which clearly shows how the Cyprus conflict is affecting migration and protection. Although this fact has been raised as a concern with EU authorities since the early 2000s, it is interesting to note that statistics regarding people who are “refused entry at the land border” are not provided to Eurostat, presumably because the Green Line is not recognised as a state border. This is indicative of how parameters related to the conflict relate to migration and refugee protection today, but are not consistently treated as issues to address politically (e.g. in negotiation or, even less so, collaboration, with Turkish-Cypriots) rather than managerially (asking the EU to assist in management). The last part of this article addresses the implications of this situation, where the nexus between migration and the Cyprus conflict is largely determined by the exclusions of the citizenship regime.

4. Conclusion: Implications for policy and practice

The escalation of the crisis in Syria has rendered Cyprus’s position as a relatively peaceful European Union outpost in the region immensely significant. In the last quarter of 2015, there were three shipwrecks close to the southern shoreline, a phenomenon that had not been seen for years. Many of the applications for refugee protection in the RoC had, until then, been filed by individuals crossing from the north or by individuals who had entered as migrants and had lost their regular status. This change is indicative of wider, and more profound changes to the patterns and routes of migration, which seem set to continue in the coming years and as long as conflicts in the region remain unresolved. Continuing instability in Syria, the capacity of

¹⁶ The 2011 population census registered 286,257 people in northern Cyprus, of whom 190,494 held TRNC citizenship (66.5%). Another 80,550 were Turkish citizens (dual citizenships counted within the TRNC number), corresponding to 28% of the population. All other groups, 0.3% and 1.3% of the total, numbered just over 1,000 at most, and hailed from the UK, Turkic republics, Nigeria, Iran, Pakistan, and Bulgaria (<http://www.devplan.org/Frame-tr.html>).

¹⁷ For example, in the early months of 2018 concerns were raised about exploitation rings targeting Zimbabwean students (<https://www.herald.co.zw/zim-students-in-cyprus-journey-of-broken-promises/>).

¹⁸ http://www.studyinnorthcyprus.org/?page_id=5422

neighbouring countries like Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, to accommodate refugees, their policies vis-à-vis the EU, the terms of operation of FRONTEX, the EU's border agency, in the region, border policies in the region and the EU, as well as migration and refugee protection policies in the EU and beyond, are all factors impacting on refugee and migrant arrivals in Cyprus. Collecting data both on movement and on policies is thus crucial to identifying the changing position and role of Cyprus in this crisis-- in the region, and in the EU. Considered analysis can identify ways in which Cyprus can play a positive role in this crisis, from mapping the local situation in terms of humanitarian responses thus far, policy frameworks currently under formation, and public discourses on migration which make reference to security threats and concerns and to humanitarian needs. Also relevant to consider is the relation between local dynamics around the negotiations: how far peace-building arrangements, for example, account for regional instability and threats, as well as the need to integrate growing migrant and refugee populations in the federal state are important questions that have not been discussed in the negotiations. Equally, the ways in which failure to reach an agreement will impact on refugee protection capacities in the two polities and on future migration routes also needs to be considered.

Since 2015, reception infrastructures in Cyprus have been given more attention, and funding has been channelled to improve them. However, dire problems still exist. The EU-Turkey statement issued in March 2016, under which migrants can be returned to Turkey in exchange for the relocation of Syrian refugees, bears no relevance for policy-makers in Cyprus, who do not maintain relations with Turkey because of the conflict. Whether this will have any substantial effect on patterns of migration vis-à-vis Cyprus is still to be seen. But having in mind that the statement has been criticized heavily by human rights organizations, the RoC's choice not to apply it would appear to afford some space, albeit little, for better protection than that afforded in places where the statement is applied. Cyprus participates in the operations of FRONTEX and has hosted meetings on the island. Although information on this relationship is scant, possibilities for tighter cooperation are likely if migration dynamics intensify.¹⁹

Given current trends, it appears that the field of migration into Cyprus will still change in the coming years. It also appears that as long as the Cyprus problem remains unresolved, the impact on migration, along the lines mentioned here, and perhaps in new ways yet to be seen, will continue. As the report has tried to show, it is an area that deserves more attention from policy-makers and researchers, if better conditions and procedures are to be put in place in an effective manner. Areas that should be given particular attention include:

- (i) The relevance of the Green Line as a space from which migrants and refugees cross. One aspect that has not yet been considered in research and policy is the movement in the opposite direction, i.e., of migrants in the south who choose, for various reasons, to cross to the north and seek employment there or in Turkey. The factors involved in this movement remain to be explored, alongside their impact on the migration field more generally.
- (ii) The relevance of the Cyprus conflict in structuring the rhetoric on migration. In this respect, the discourse espoused by the far right has been given particular attention and shown to contribute substantially in the securitization of migration in conjunction with the call to close the checkpoints. At the same time, the adversarial logic on which perceptions of demographics are based and which emanate from as far back as the constitution of 1960 and its citizenship regime,

¹⁹ <http://www.police.gov.cy/police/police.nsf/All/C513B54A8B39D23EC2257A2F002CC76C>

has also been shown to still guide the ways in which migrants and refugees are treated. A key area of concern here is integration, which has been shown to be particularly difficult in Cyprus, and as one of the case-studies shows, remains so in cases of naturalization, even if this occurred generations prior. The picture painted in this respect is bleak, and is perhaps the main area on which efforts should be expended, i.e., creating more welcoming conditions of living.

- (iii) Another difficulty with perceptions of migration pertains to the north, where the demographic orientation of Turkish policy in settling people at different points through the years has cemented views of intolerance amongst Turkish-Cypriots, including even the progressive pro-peace side. This hampers communication on the issue between the sides, and effectively precludes possibilities of coordination, even on the civil society side, except for NGOs focussing explicitly on refugee rights. Better communication on this issue will undoubtedly be beneficial to the coordination of policy, reception, and integration, and could prove an entry point for a breakthrough in the peace negotiations as well.
- (iv) The impact of new dynamics post-2015 is yet to be determined, but the noted indications must be given further consideration and examined explicitly for their intersection with local conflict dynamics.

In sum, the current migration regime indicates serious problems, a substantial proportion of which emanate from factors relating to the Cyprus conflict. New dynamics developing in the region around Cyprus need to be seen as opportunities for addressing these problems, rather than allowing them to become further complicated.

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