

FEEDBACK FINDINGS

OCTOBER 2018 PILOT
PROJECT PT.1: SERVICE USER
FEEDBACK FINDINGS



02

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ABOUT

re:view

Re:view is a dedicated space for people on the receiving end of humanitarian assistance to review services and service providers, supporting: a) submission and publication of direct and facilitated feedback; b) on and offline responses from organisations; c) the sharing of information on the same, via the platform, social media and related reports.

Whilst the overall goal of the re:view feedback mechanism is for feedback to be used to inform and improve services, re:view is also concerned with how transparency can help overcome power dynamics that weaken accountability to service users in the sector. In this regard, feedback is also intended to eventually inform giving choices.

Koosh



Koosh is a refugee led multi-media platform based in Athens, Greece. They provide news and information via various mediums with the aim of bridging the information gap between NGOs and the services they provide, refugees and the Greek community. The Koosh team have been working on improving knowledge about feedback processes with the grassroots in Athens.

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About the Pilot

In October 2018, re:viewd and Koosh partnered to carry out a week long feedback pilot project. Seven facilitators, predominantly from refugee communities themselves, were recruited and trained to facilitate feedback from service users in and around Athens.

The overall aim of the project, further to the collection and sharing of feedback for information purposes, was to explore the viability of the concept of a transparent feedback mechanism and to identify the likelihood of service user and organisation engagement with the same.

This report (Part 1) is concerned with sharing the feedback findings from the pilot and will be followed by a second part analysing the process and engagement.

Background

Shortly before the project commenced, an effort to reduce crowding in Moria camp had led to an influx of newcomers into Athens. Whilst in principle this transition was anticipated and reception plans put in place, during the week facilitators were surprised at the number of new arrivals they encountered, frequently homeless, seeking accommodation and basic services.

05

Unlike the islands, the situation in Athens is typically not considered an emergency, however, the combination of lengthy asylum procedures, housing demand, and insufficient financial assistance portray a bleak picture for refugees in Athens and Greece in general.

With Greece evidently struggling to meet the needs of its citizens, refugee services continue to fall on NGOs, including the countries significant grassroots, to pick up.

Methodology

Enquiry: Feedback was solicited about both services in general (non-organisation specific) and about the services specific organisation provide. The favoured method of enquiry in both instances was to request open, unstructured feedback in the absence of a pre-defined research agenda. This meant the primary questions were openly posed:

“

What do you think of aid / humanitarian services in Athens?
What improvements do you think could be made?

”

By asking the questions in this way the aim was to preference feedback that respondents wanted to share, rather than what we or partnering organisations wanted to find out. Occasionally additional closed questions were asked on behalf of a small number of partner organisations. Insufficient responses were received however and have therefore been left out of this report.

06

Feedback facilitation: Feedback facilitation occurred over the span of one week. The team of 7 facilitators were able to converse with respondents in the majority of the main languages spoken. There were 5 male and 2 female facilitators. All facilitators completed a 2 day training carried out by Koosh who similarly oversaw facilitation and data entry throughout the week.

Scheduled locations where conversations took place consisted of the premises of partnering organisations (where feedback was collected both about the respective organisation, and about others – general and specific- as per the desire of the respondent), camps, general known meeting locations and around and inside informal squats.

Specific locations included:

- Ritsona Camp: I am You and general
- Oinofyta Camp: ECHO mobile library and general
- Athens: FORGE for Humanity
- Athens: Mosaico House
- Athens: Melissa Network
- Athens: Victoria Square
- Athens: Omonia Square
- Athens: Exarcheia general and squats
- Athens: Kotzia Square

Facilitators uploaded their data daily and at the end of the week provided their own feedback and findings in person and via a form about their experiences of the project.

07

Working with organisations: Prior to project commencement, specifically grassroots organisations in Athens and the neighbouring camps were contacted and invited to participate. This was done by contacting organisations directly, via networks and the grassroots coordination meeting. Take-up was mixed, with 6 organisations agreeing to take part and a few additional expressions of interest for a later stage of their operations. On the other hand, there were a significant number who did not respond.

Participating organisations were offered to select additional questions (of which four chose to do so), tailored conversations and guidance around feedback mechanisms, and an analysis of findings specifically related to their feedback which all have now received.

After some deliberation, it was decided that facilitators would also collect the feedback from respondents about non-participating organisations, and similarly, this feedback would also be published. Facilitators did not name non-participating organisations for review, rather prompted feedback about the organisations that the respondent sought services from, enabling respondent led identification of the organisations.

Within two weeks of project commencement all non-participating organisations were also provided with a summary of their feedback findings and were informed that the same could be publicly viewed on the re:view website.



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Analysis: Around fifteen interactions recorded by the facilitators have been excluded from publication and analysis. This is because they did not comply with the guidelines as laid out in the re:viewed website. Reasons for exclusion include unsubstantiated criticisms that provide no context or explanation, and language that could be considered inflammatory and offensive.

The following report analyses only the included open feedback collected regarding both organisations specifically and services in general.

Demographic information collected has been used to analyse inclusion in the pilot, themes and patterns. However, to ensure anonymity of the respondent has not being shared alongside their corresponding review online nor directly with the respective organisations.

For the purpose of relevance within this report, whilst organisational specific comments have been included in the identification of general findings, feedback that relates very specifically only within the context of that organisation has not been included.

Feedback has been analysed by location: Oinofyta; Ritsona and Athens; with the primary thematic areas, key concerns and overlapping issues identified and analysed.

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Key Findings

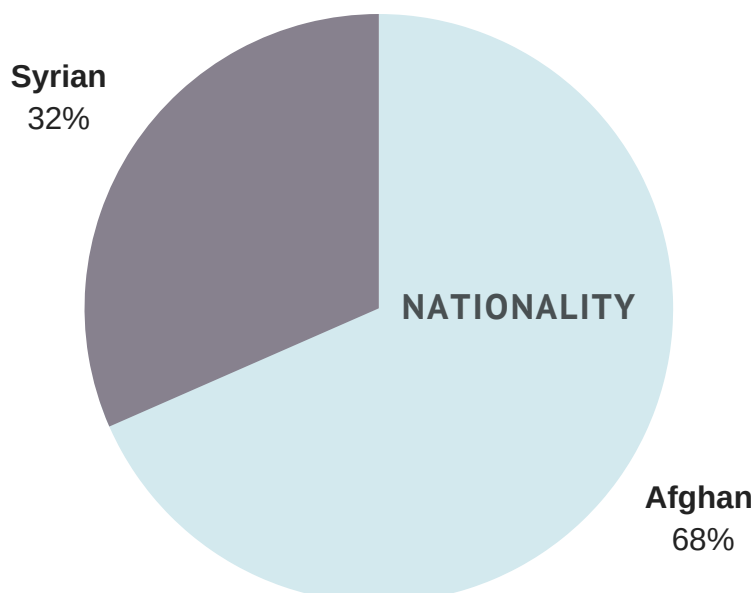
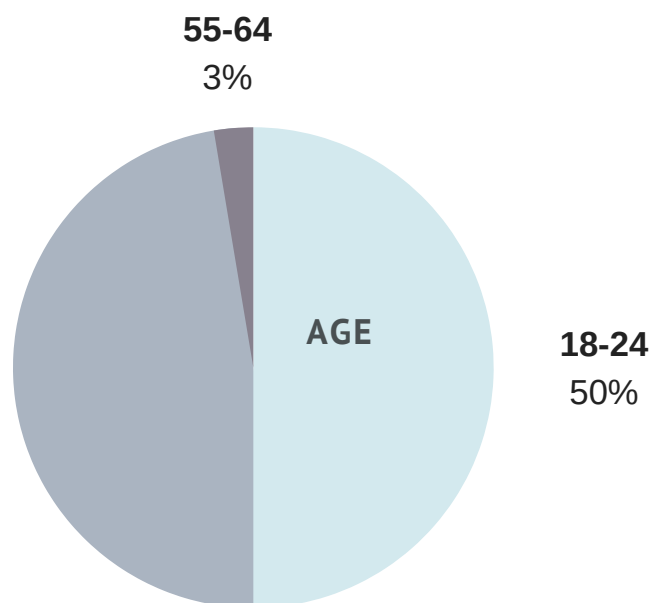
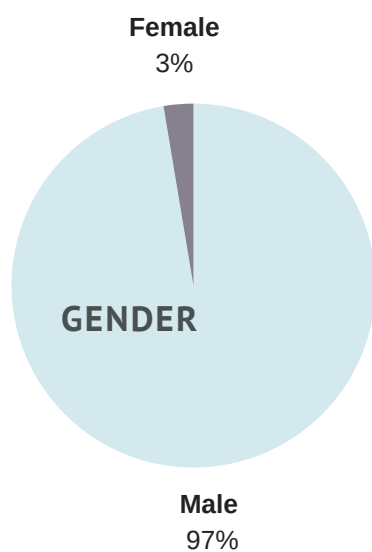
- The three most pressing concerns of respondents were asylum, housing and language barriers.
- Medical services were reported as low or absent in both of the camps visited, Oinofyta and Ritsona. There is furthermore a lack of affordable transport options to enable residents to meet their medical and other needs elsewhere in Athens.
- There is a group of multiply disadvantaged individuals in Athens, where certain factors have been mentioned frequently alongside and consequentially linked to others. These include the experience of multiple or all of the following: lack of asylum, lack of housing, lack of mobility and access to services, differential treatment. The needs of these individuals, possibly harder to reach due to their tenuous residencies, do not appear to be being met.
- Key criticisms regarding organisations and access to services are communications based, with respondents requiring increased translation and interpretation support, shorter response times and better follow up after service provision.

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DATA FINDINGS: OINOFYTA

A total of 38 respondents provided feedback for Oinofyta camp. The majority (28) consisted of general feedback about services and camp conditions, nine were specific to IOM and one to ECHO mobile library.

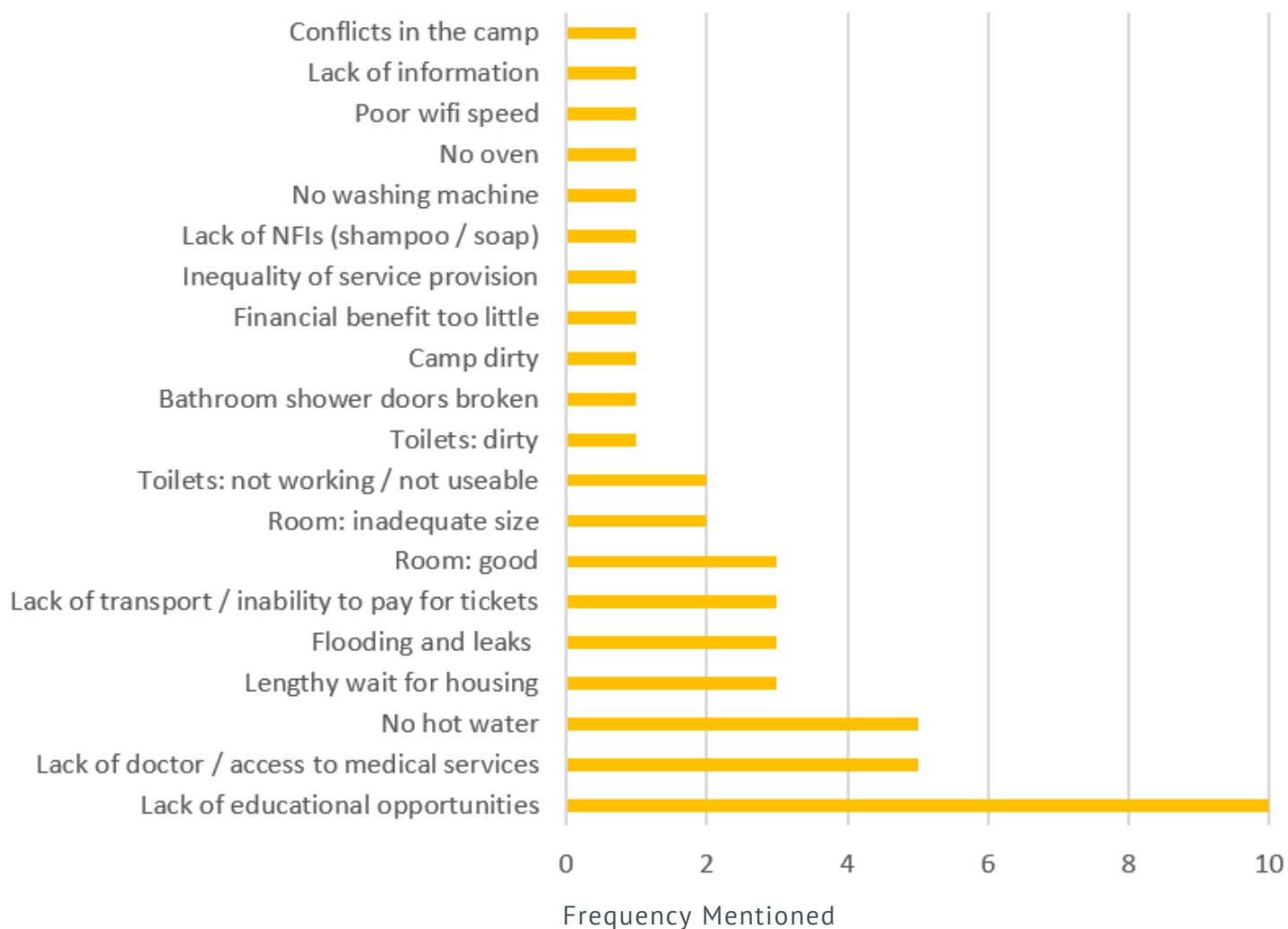
Demographics



11

Oinofyta Feedback Themes

The lack of educational opportunities in the camp was mentioned the most frequently, followed by lack of medical services and hot water.



12

“

We need more classes and language lessons here. We all want to learn

”

Education: The theme that emerged the most frequently in Oinofyta, as discussed by 10 residents, was the lack of educational opportunities on offer in the camp, with language classes being specifically sought after.

"We really have a problem to get to Athens because of the ticket. There we at least could go to a language lesson or something."

Transport: Residents explained that in order to study they needed to travel to Athens. However, a further emerging theme: ‘the lack of transport and inability to pay for tickets’ constituted a barrier in being able to do so.

"All of our kids are sick and we can't take them to the doctor."

Health: The lack of affordable transportation to Athens is also worryingly related to access to medical / health facilities, reportedly unavailable in the camp and the second most prevalent concern of residents.

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Water: The third largest concern raised by five residents was the lack of hot water in the camp. This feedback directly contradicts the Site Management Support (SMS) Site Profile published on the 11th of September in which provision of hot water was reported by site agencies to be adequate.

Additional key concerns raised included the long wait for housing (echoing the same concerns elsewhere) and the flooding and damage caused by rainfall to resident's occupancies. Facilitators were shown rooms by some residents filled with a number of buckets collecting rainwater.



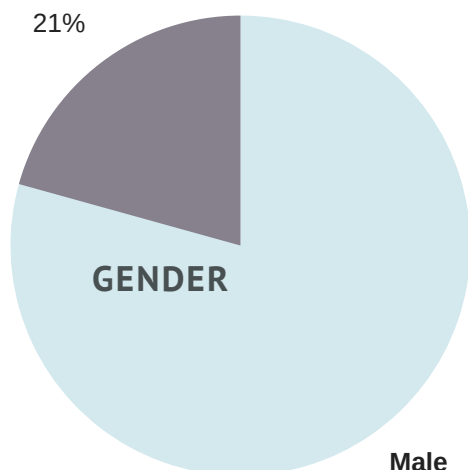
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DATA FINDINGS: RITSONA

A total of 29 interactions were recorded in Ritsona camp, of which five were specific to three organisations: IOM, I Am You, and re:viewed and 24 contained general feedback.

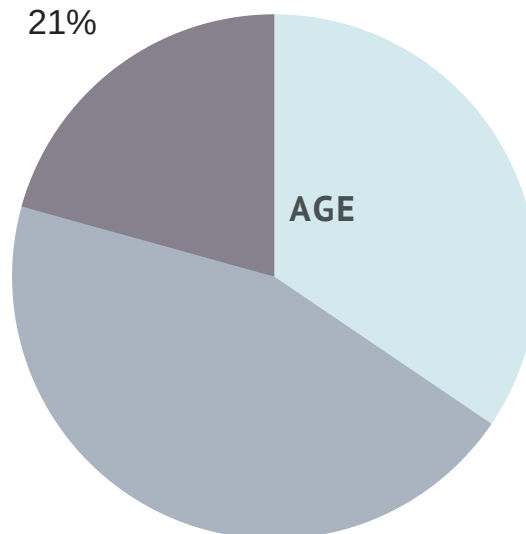
Demographics

Female
21%



Male
79%

35-44
21%



18-24
34%

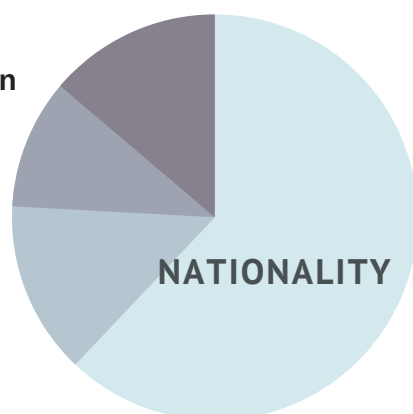
AGE

25-34
45%

Nigerian
14%

Cameroonian
10%

Iraqi
14%



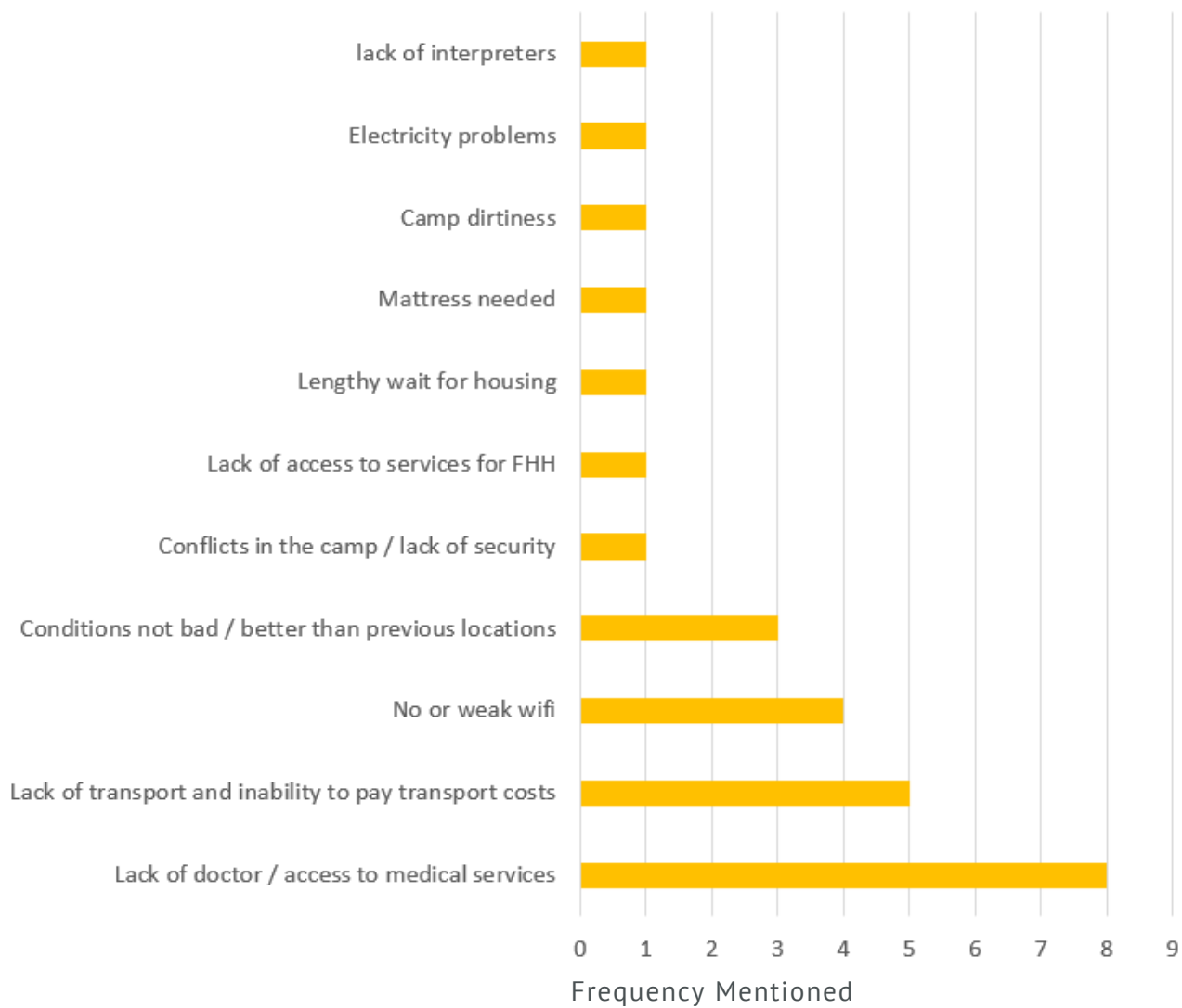
Syrian
62%

NATIONALITY

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Ritsona Feedback Themes

Key issues raised by residents were the lack of access to medical services; lack of affordable transport and weak wifi.



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“

There is one doctor in the whole camp and it is very difficult to access medical services. The medical problem became bigger especially when the Red Cross left the camp. They were a big help.

”

Health: The concern cited the most frequently by residents was the inadequate access to medical services. There appeared however to be some confusion over the medical services available with two respondents stating that there was one doctor present in the camp and another two saying there were none. One respondent shared their concern that medical needs that arose during the night could not be met.

Transport: The second most cited concern was the lack of transport and inability to pay for transport costs. In three of these occasions’ residents described the cost of transport as a specific barrier to accessing medical services in Athens.

“Transportation is a main issue. We pay 15 euros to go to Athens and 15 euros to get back. In total this is 30 euros! If you keep in mind that I take 150 euros a month this is very expensive. Buses are provided only on Wednesdays to Athens and can take only 100 people each time. We are 1100 people in the camp.”

Internet: The third cited mentioned was the lacking or weak wifi available in the camp.

“Internet would be my only problem in the camp. You can't watch movies or something like that which we would like since our days at the camp are long and boring many times.”

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“

The conditions in the camp are not bad. They are better than where I was before in Moria.

”

Satisfaction: Three respondents noted their satisfaction with the camp services and conditions including two comparisons to worse conditions in the Island camps from where they had transferred.

Security: In two occasions safety and security was mentioned, with one respondent stating that *“In general, everything feels safe here”* whilst another lamented the frequent fighting in the camp and suggested that *“There should be police or a team of security to stop people”*

Overall, facilitators reported a generally frustrated and dissatisfied tone from the residents in both Oinofyta and Ritsona camps.

Despite there being some variances in services available (Ritsona for example has some education opportunities provided by organisations such as I am You, whereas Oinofyta does not) the prevailing theme in both was the sense of isolation in the camps, where residents felt that due to the lack of affordable transport options they were unable to benefit from services in Athens.

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DATA FINDINGS: ATHENS

A total of 172 interactions were recorded with respondents in Athens, with a near even split of general reviews (85) and reviews about specific organisations (87).

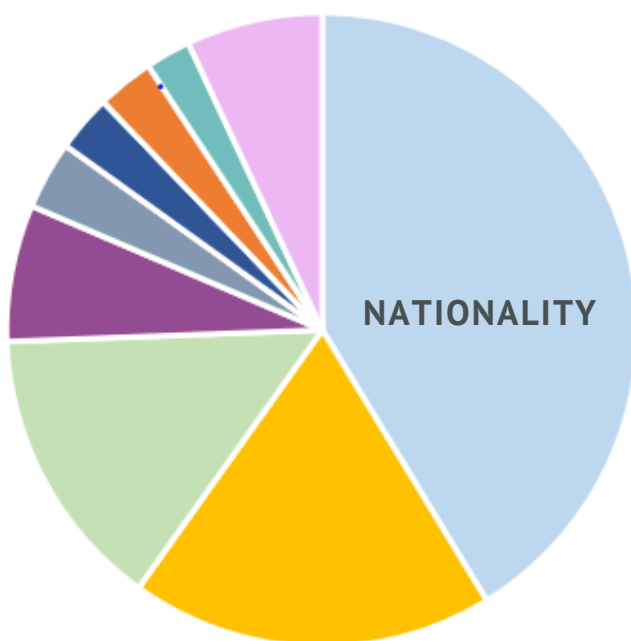
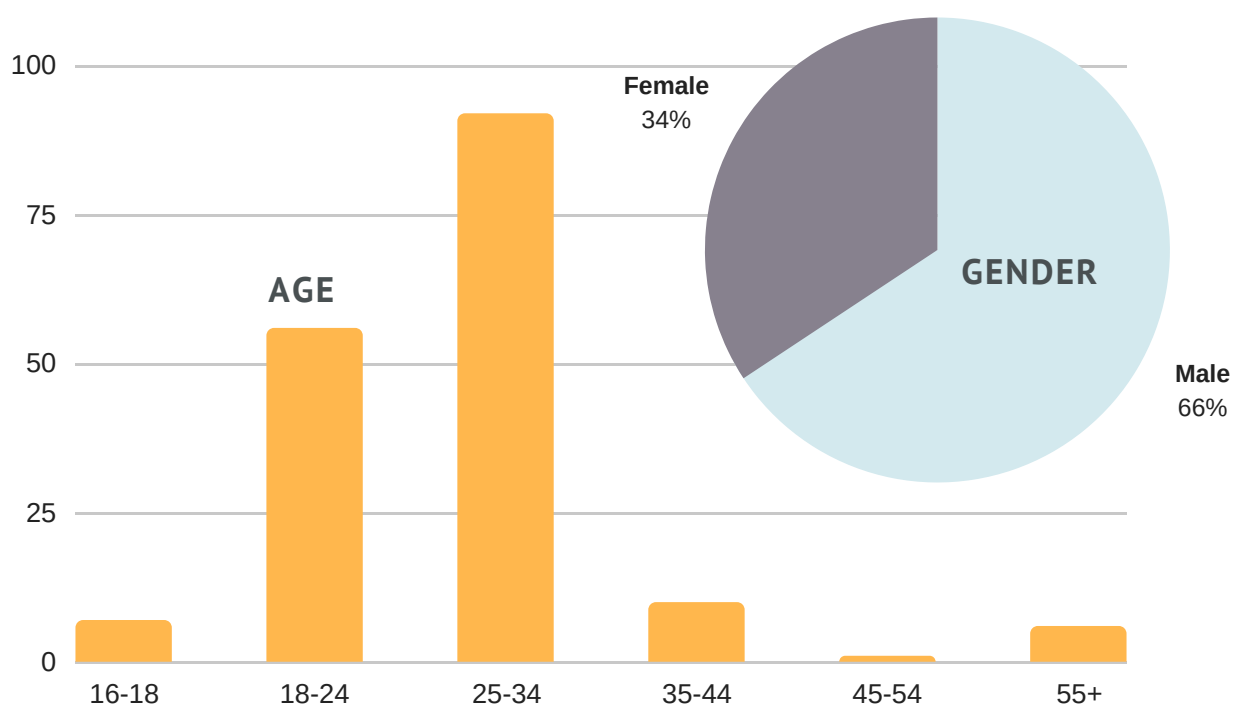
The percent of responses from women was higher in Athens than in the camps at 34%. This can be attributed to the direct access granted to women's only facilities such as Melissa Network and Mosaico House.

Facilitators managed to reach a wider range of age and nationality groups in Athens also, however above 35's still only represented 10% of the total.

The total number of respondent nationalities was 19, with the 'other' category representing Kuwaiti, Algerian, Burkinabe, Ghanaian, Congolese, Egyptian, Gambian, Libyan, Senegalese, Tunisian and Turkish respondents.

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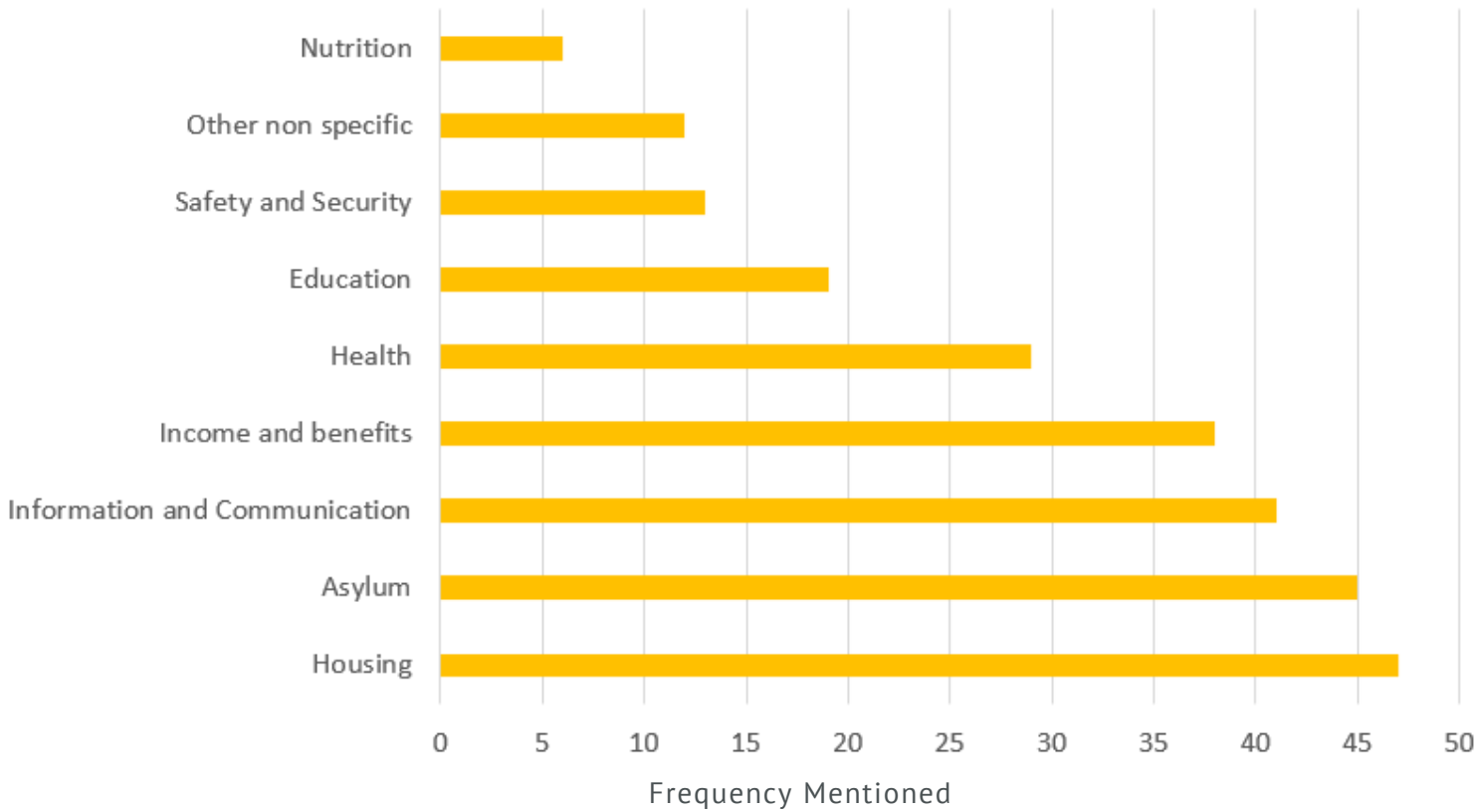
Demographics: Athens respondents



- Afghan
- Iranian
- Syrian
- Palestinian
- Guinean
- Moroccan
- Cote D'Ivoirian
- Iraqi
- Other

Athens Feedback Themes

Athens based responses and analysis have been grouped into thematic areas. The following sections will elaborate on the findings under each category, including their overlaps.



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HOUSING

I arrived in Greece a month and a half ago, still wandering in the streets, without a home, without paper.

Forty-seven respondents discussed their housing with facilitators, describing a variety of situations including: homelessness (relevant to at least 14 respondents); squatting (relevant to at least five); renting privately; shelters and agency provided accommodation with the most frequently cited service provider (and the most frequently reviewed organisation overall) being Praksis.

Access to Housing

Twenty-six respondents indicated the need for housing, they either self-identified as homeless, living in squats or have described their experience of attempting to apply or register for housing.

Of those in need of housing, more than half indicated multiple vulnerabilities and complicating factors (expected to be higher had the respondent been explicitly asked).



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Of those in need of housing, at least:

- 35% were without papers or official asylum status
- 15% were unable to access other services
- 11% had no income
- 11% experienced differential treatment (felt they could not access housing because they were single males)
- 11% struggled to meet their food needs.
- 8% couldn't access medical services
- 4% felt insecure (sleeping on the streets)
- And 26% expressed 2 or more of the above.

Of those whose need for housing correlated with a lack of asylum status and international protection, cases included those that had been rejected, retracted or had not been processed yet via the Greek Asylum Service Skype process.

"I don't have a money card, I don't have a home, I lost my paper. I'm not register in the camp because I don't have paper. I go to camp just for sleep without telling the camp."

Three respondents stated that their access to housing was further reduced because they are single men. More still mentioned the long waiting periods between applying for and receiving housing.

"I got connected with different organisations for housing, they all told me that I need to wait or because I'm a single man the chances are low, there is no help for single men."

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I'm satisfied from my home and my Supervisor and also I'm sick. Praksis help us but they did not provide for us our needs. For example we need dish but they did not help us. Furthermore, they said if you use too much electricity you should pay not Praksis. What we have to do with this little money. Now winter is coming we need to use electricity.

Experiences of housing

Mixed feedback was received from those who had received or were paying for their own accommodation. For women in the Mosaico House emergency shelter, whilst the security was appreciated the living conditions were described as crowded and they commonly stated communication problems with their room-mates of other nationalities.

"Praksis have given us a house and its pretty good. though I should say it's good because the good worker that they have put on our case and we are in contact with. She is an amazing person."

Some in receipt of housing expressed their satisfaction with the accommodation received and the relationship they had with the service provider. Others however felt that once they had received or had been promised housing they were left without the further support that they needed.

"Solidarity now told us to go and get a house on our own and they will pay for it. But how can I do that when I can't speak the language and don't know anyone."

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ASYLUM

“There was a big misunderstanding between what I said and what was recorded. I have lost one year and a half and a lot of money.”

Feedback relating to the asylum process was received on 45 occasions.

Half of these related to the issues and obstacles facing asylum seekers during the asylum process:

1. Accessing the means to connect and then connecting to the Greek Asylum Service via skype. Being the only channel available to establish initial contact after which the first interview can be placed, many noted the lengthy time it took for their calls to be answered:

“I am trying to get though skype and haven't been able to in the last two months. I want to apply and become legal and am not able to.”

Efforts of two organisations to support access to the skype calls, FORGE for Humanity and Caritas, were mentioned by respondents positively.



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2. The lengthy wait for an interview

"My most important problem is that my interview is due in 14 month and that is not near and is slowing my life down"

3. The lack of, or poor, interpretation provided during the asylum process:

"I was injured by the lawyer after the asylum application was rejected me. This was a mistake from the interpreter in the asylum department, also the investigator who didn't ask any more to be sure about what I had said. There was a big misunderstanding between what I said and what was recorded. I have lost one year and a half and a lot of money."

4. The lengthy wait for acceptance after the interview:

"I have been here for 2 years and 7 months and still haven't gotten my residence. Everything is soo slow here. My friend went to Germany 1 year ago and he got his papers and everything and is already working. Integration in Greece is difficult."

Further comments were received regarding the access to legal services including experiences with organisations

1. Four individuals shared their negative experiences with legal service. Including withholding papers for lengthy periods, poor communication in English, and cancellations and mistakes

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I had spoke to GRC lawyers and was preparing with them but right on the day of my interview the lawyer cancelled. So I did the interview alone and got rejected. when I went back to them they told me that they don't work with cases that been rejected ones and have second interview.

2. Three shared that accessing legal services via organisations was difficult:

"We asked to have a lawyer for our asylum process and the social worker said go to find by yourself."

3. One positive experience with legal support via organisations was received:

"I got a lawyer from Solidarity in Larissa Station. It is the only good thing that I get from any organisation."

On 11 occasions the consequences and impact of living without an official asylum status was expressed.

1. Seven individuals explained that they were unable to access the health and medical care that they needed:

"I have health problems and I can't go to the hospital because I don't have papers."

2. Six described not being able to leave the vicinity of their residence (frequently squats) to try and access services often because they feared being picked up by police and imprisoned:

"Me and many of my friends don't have the white card and can't get through skype to get it. This makes us stay in Exearchia and not be able to go around the city and use any of the organisations or just feel comfortable to be in the city."

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A further two had been imprisoned after being picked up without papers

"I have been sleeping in the park for four months, I and six other friends. I have spent two months in the prison because I do not have papers that prove my identity."

3. Two respondents spoke about homelessness

"I arrived in Greece a month and a half ago, still wandering in the streets, without a home, without paper"

On eight occasions respondents spoke about their asylum procedures with other countries.

1. Six of which spoke about the various stages of their reunification processes, two had reunification applications rejected from Germany. Three applications were in process to Austria, Germany and the UK. And one was unclear about how to join their son in an undisclosed third country. The mother awaiting UK reunification explained it as the reason for her child not being enrolled in school:

"I am here with my nine year old daughter for almost 5 months. I have applied for family reunification 3 months ago now. I am going to my husband in England. They told me it takes 1 year for the process to be completed. I hope I don't wait long because the women here told me it takes more. This is the reason I don't send my daughter to school here, there is no reason. She won't need Greek."

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

“NGOs are very good in the country. But we have a communication problem with these NGOs.”

Forty-one comments were received relating to information and communication, with the overwhelming issue, reported by nearly half of this group being translation and interpretation needs. Whilst a couple concerned written materials and IT resources, the majority spoke about the lack of translators at organisations, during asylum procedures and at hospitals. Frequently, respondents described how they experienced challenges accessing services as a result of it:

“NGOs are very good in the country. But we have a communication problem with these NGOs. I am French speaking. When I go to an NGO, they don't let me express myself. As soon as I start to speak Greek or English with difficulty, they give me an appointment directly so that I can speak with interpreter another day. Each time, they give me an appointment with an interpreter while I could try to explain my problem in Greek or English even with difficulty.”

And whilst experience with hospitals in Athens were generally well reported, consistently translation and interpretation was lacking:

"We went to the Greek hospital and couldn't speak to them at all. There was no interpreters. Its' not possible for us to find someone that can speak the language to come with us to hospital."

"The medical organizations have to send some interpreters to hospitals."

"I am here with my husband and kids about 7 months. Our two baby kids were recently diagnosed with cancer. They are being treated at Paidon hospital. They have been fantastic with us. The only issues we face is interpretation."

"The social worker does not work for us even when we call she does not answer she says we should go to hospital by ourselves without an interpreter."

"I like the MSF doctors. They are so kind. Also, the hospital where I gave birth, Tzaneio, is amazing. Clean, staff is kind. The only problem with hospitals here is interpretation. And the problem is there is no organisation that offers interpreters escorting refugees to hospitals."

30

For others, language barriers meant not being able to access jobs that they would otherwise be qualified for and for some reflecting on their living situation, not being able to communicate with those they lived with.

A couple of respondents provided further specific information on translation considerations – explaining that for them the nationality (not only the language) mattered when entrusting the translator to correctly translate their concerns to the respective service provider and that dialect and precision of translation was important:

“

“Interpreters at the asylum services should for sure be from where I am from and speak my Farsi. Its fine to have Dari speakers for me that speaks Farsi for casual needs but not for interviews.”

“The translator nationalities is different that’s why he had bad behaviour with us he also does not explain our needs to the social worker”

”

Another concern that came up approximately eight times, was the perception that organisations had not communicated well, honestly or reliably. For some, this meant they felt their needs were not heard and met, and for others they felt misled by organisations that for example hadn’t called back.

31

Communicating with Organisations:

- *“They are lying a lot because social worker gave me an appointment and when I went to Solidarity Now office the social worker was on holiday”*
- *“They just take our phone number and do not call us.”*
- *“They lawyer took my documents to work on my reunification with my wife in Germany but they don’t call me back since 4 month ago.”*
- *“Most of organizations are forgetting to have contact with refugees they just take our phone numbers.”*

Some respondents felt misinformed about services (cash cards for example) and a couple have described situations where they have asked for translation services and the respective organisation has refused to help.

Two respondents reflected on the apparent lack of information and communication between organisations, perceiving organisations as not knowing the correct information about each other or working well together.

Information needs expressed included understanding of the cash card process, updated legal information and what to do if asylum applications are rejected. Language lessons were also requested.

32

INCOME, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS

I didn't have any income for a while and was going around all day to find free food. So I ended up starting to sell drugs to be able to buy food for myself

Thirty-eight reviews related to personal income and the financial and other benefits needed and / or received. In most of these instances respondents spoke about having insufficient financial means. Those who were not in receipt of cash cards (perhaps because of failed asylum applications, or lack of access to the cash card service providers) were frequently homeless or residing in squats. Four respondents said they had resorted to selling drugs as a way to earn an income.

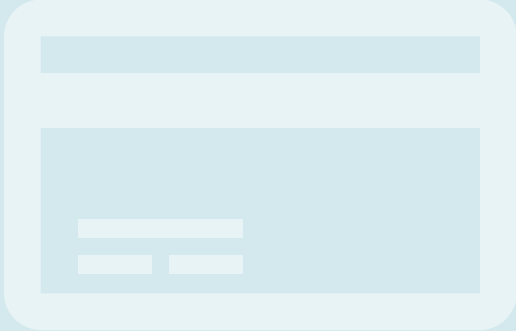
Those who were in receipt of financial assistance explained that the money received was not enough to provide for basics such as clothes; baby milk and nappies; household items such as cooking utensils; electricity; or eye glasses. One respondent said that the financial assistance provided per child was inadequate.

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Others explained that they were not entitled to receive the medical treatments they required for free (for physical or psychological complaints) and could neither afford them privately.

Fifteen respondents spoke about cash cards (also referred to as money cards) raising multiple issues. A couple of respondents spoke positively about receiving metro cards or annual transport cards from service providers, a key need expressed by numerous Oinofyta and Ritsona camp residents.

Issues with cash cards:

- 
- Not being able to acquire a cash card, not knowing how to, or having to wait a long time to receive them;
 - Having cash cards refused or cut because of asylum rejections;
 - Card loss, replacement and subsequent payment delays;
 - Being confused about the location of the service provider and not being able to communicate due to not having a phone
 - Cash cards not being loaded as expected or receiving cash cards only not to receive the confirmation message and money.

“

I had rented a house and was living there but because they haven't loaded my card I had to come out of that house and now I have moved into a squat.

”

34

Unemployment

"I really need a job then I don't need to sell drugs in Exarcheia and I'm pretty sure that 80% people here would not, but it's impossible to find job in Greece even if you have all the paper works"

Unemployment was mentioned 11 times. The key issues being:

- Language as a barrier to employment,
- Jobs being difficult to find, even with asylum.
- Difficulty meeting employment requirements such as provision of a Tax ID number (AFM) when landlord does not provide an official contract and address
- Racism from prospective employers on arrival
- Unemployment as a driver of conflict

"My problem is that when I found a job with a Greek person, he asked me for the afemi (AFM – tax ID) but I have not managed to do it since my landlord doesn't contract me and I can't have an address."

35

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

I like the MSF doctors. They are so kind. Also, the hospital where I gave birth, Tzaneio, is amazing. Clean, staff is kind.

Feedback relating to the respondents health and their experience with medical services was received on 29 occasions. A quarter described good experiences with public hospitals (Paidon Hospital and Tzaneio for example) and the health services as provided by NGOs.

As described under the information and communication section a recurring theme was the lack of translation / interpretation available when accessing health services.



“The only problem with hospitals here is interpretation. And the problem is there is no organisation that offers interpreters escorting refugees to hospitals.”

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Again noting the overlap with other sections, those who were unable to access health services said that this was the case due to their lack of asylum status (including the associated fear of travelling to the hospital) and / or financial reasons where the only way to access a service is privately.

“

Because I've been tortured in Iran I have some psychological problems and I have to take some medications. That's why I visited many organizations but none of them was able to provide it for me and I don't have enough money to buy them because they are very expensive.

”

On three occasions, respondents mentioned that they had experienced lengthy delays obtaining medical appointments.

“I live in a house and get a get monthly salary,my problems starts with my inability to walk even using a crutch, the doctor gave me the appointment for surgery two years later.”

EDUCATION

“

About English, it wasn't like Greek class but it was good. Because English lesson don't have a specific teacher, it changes every time.

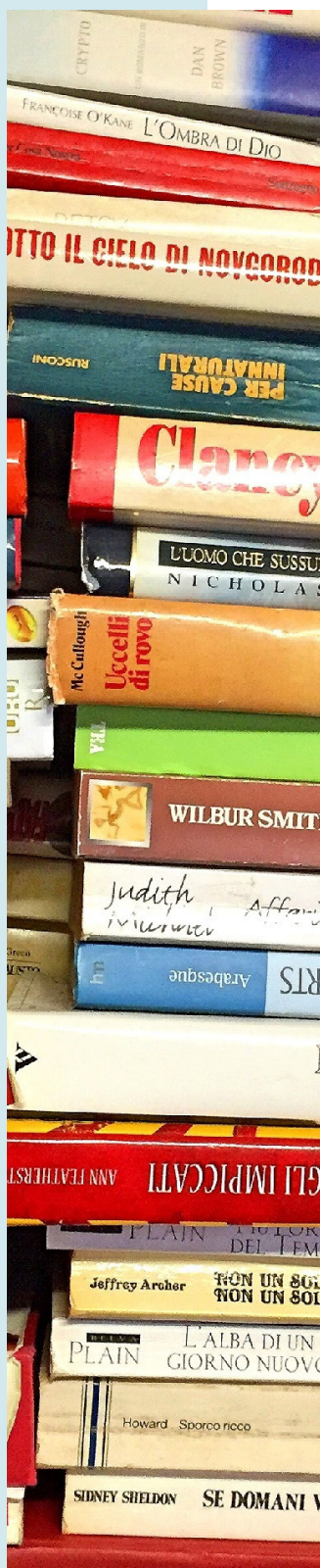
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Nineteen comments were received concerning education needs and services. Positive feedback was received for the classes provided by both Metadrasi and Melissa Network.

Some additional points and suggestions were received concerning the experience of these services but relevant to other education service providers:

- Teacher turnover and inconsistency affects perceptions on class quality

“I was satisfied from Greek class. About English, it wasn't like Greek class but it was good. Because English lesson don't have specific teacher it changes every time.”



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- Keyboard language may be a barrier to accessing IT related classes:

“The computer course is fine and also the language lesson is good these are very useful. But the language of computers are Greek. I told them to change the language to English they said no it is impossible.”

- Class environment and formality of lessons affects learning experience:

“The thing I would like to say is that the place is a bit small, and when mothers bring their babies to the classes it's too noisy. Also, there is a big age difference between me and students taking lessons. I am 21 and a one of my classmates is 60. Also, the education here is not formal. So it is not recognized by any institution.”

Other respondents shared that they were in need of consistent language classes, with one specifically requesting that language classes taught by someone speaking the students language would be beneficial.

Some suggestions were provided for classes that respondents would like to attend, including employment workshops, self defence and makeup and cooking skills.

One respondent noted that the process for entering higher education was confusing, and lastly, a potential barrier to attending classes was noted – with one individual describing their unease attending classes which required night time travel to attend.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

“Living in the squat is constant fear, fear from fascists attacking or other refugees or just the people who live there will fight. Our family is not safe at all.”

Thirteen respondents spoke about their safety and security. Reasons provided for the occurrence of fights between refugees included unemployment communication issues. Respondents spoke positively about feeling secure at both Melissa network and Mosaico house, and further comments (by women) requested the provision of self defence classes.

When respondents felt unsafe / insecure:

- At night, when sleeping on the streets
- At night, when accessing services
- In squats, concerning attacks from outside as well as internal fighting
- In relation to asylum applications, the fear of being picked up by police.
- Concerning racism experienced from Greek nationals, being stared at, and experiences of racism at school
- Giving feedback about organisations for fear of reprisal.

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OTHER – NON-SPECIFIC

Approximately 12 comments were received regarding perceptions of organisations and processes that could not specifically be linked thematically or by sector. In summary these included reflections on:

- How well the respondent was treated when they approached an organisation and the extent to which they felt helped. Including perceptions of differential treatment.
- Slow bureaucratic processes in Greece.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

A small number of comments directly related to food quality, access and availability. The majority related to food insecurity when homeless, one commented on the poor quality of food available in the squat in which the respondent lived, and one mentioned the lack of availability of baby powder.

“In the squat we haven't got fresh food and a while ago we even find food maggots in rice other supplies.”

“I have been sleeping in the park for four months ... We are in really poor state, sometimes we don't eat for two days. I try to cross the borders many times, I was stopped and returned from Albania to Greece.”



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CONCLUSION

The following summary of key findings and crosscutting issues appeared without notable distinctions of age or nationality.

Camp needs

Of the two camps that were visited, it appears that Oinofyta has a greater level of need, indicated by the absence of certain basic services reported by residents, i.e. education and hot water. The primary concern in Oinofyta was the lack of available education opportunities - something that was not echoed in Ritsona. Prevalent in both however was the limited or completely lacking medical services and this was strongly connected to the absence of affordable transport solutions that would enable residents to seek these services elsewhere in Athens.

Multiple vulnerabilities

The most apparent finding has been the tendency that where certain factors are prevalent they are usually accompanied by others. For example: lack of asylum; lack of housing; lack of mobility (and risk of prosecution otherwise) and the consequent lack of access to services including medical services; tend to be mentioned collectively and are consequentially and cyclically linked.

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The key variable affecting the individuals experience of all others appears to be asylum status – an extremely lengthy and complicated process where even the first skype phone call can take months to connect. Engagement in the skype process itself is often highly complicated.

Individuals who do not have their own means of accessing skype need to approach service providers to do so, however these are the same individuals that are afraid to leave their neighbourhoods for fear of being picked up by the police and imprisoned for not having papers.

Incidentally, the same goes for those wishing to apply for voluntarily return: their ‘illegal’ status and subsequent risk of imprisonment impedes their ability to apply, as does the lengthy process during which key needs, such as housing, are not being met.

There is therefore a group of multiply disadvantaged individuals, suggestively high (given that housing and asylum were the two most frequently mentioned themes), whose needs are not being met in Athens.

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Relationship with organisations and service providers

A fair number of respondents did express satisfaction with services – with 20% of Athens based respondents sharing positive feedback about specific organisations, and 4% of respondents speaking highly of services in general. Overall, where educative opportunities were discussed respondents were generally appreciative and positive. Similarly for medical services, however in this case access to medical services was complicated by language barriers, asylum status and cost of private treatments.

The majority of feedback received however concerned unmet needs, reflected primarily through critical reviews about service provision and detailed here throughout this report. In summary:

- Many reported that the provision of translation and interpretation was lacking when dealing with service providers. For some this constituted a barrier to accessing services, delayed access, a sense of being misunderstood and misrepresented, and general frustration.
- Some felt that rather than being based on level of need, some groups had preferential treatment when accessing services. Single men reported being particularly disadvantaged in terms of access, with some claiming that they had been openly told the same.

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- Some respondents felt that once they had received a service, housing for example, they were then left without the ongoing support they needed. This might have included the ability to heat their houses, specific considerations for disabilities and the purchase of required household items.
- Further to language barriers, some reported unsatisfactory communication with organisations who might for example take phone numbers and not call back or pass the service user onto another organisation without sufficient information to do so. Concerning legal services, some respondents spoke about papers being held for indefinite periods of time without follow up in between.
- A fair number of individuals spoke generally about the lack of trust they had in organisations and shared their perceptions that organisations were not willing or able to help them.



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“

I feel safe here at Melissa. I became stronger. They have empowered me. I never thought I can leave my country and be alone without my husband. But I managed just fine and all this thanks to Melissa who supports me.

”

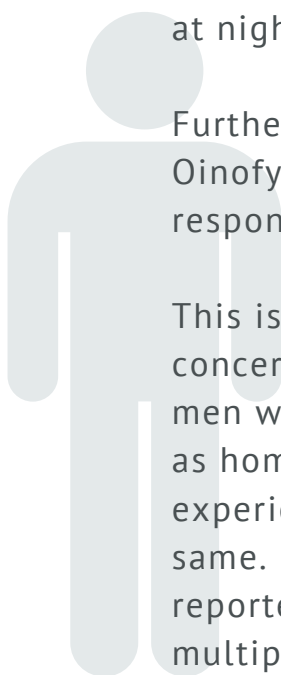
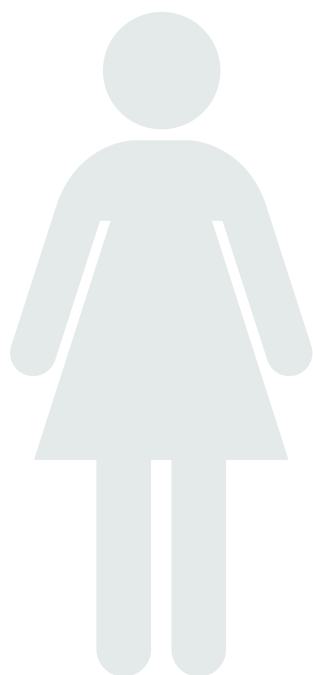
Gender Trends

Due to the ratio of male to female respondents it was not possible to identify concrete demographic trends (the same applies for age and nationality related) however in some cases certain generalisations could still be deduced.

Concerns about personal security were raised proportionately more by women, with 61% of the Athens based safety and security comments being shared by women (in comparison to their 34% share of total responses). Comments ranged from remarks about good security in their residences, feeling secure on the premises of certain organisations, concerns about access to services at night and suggestions for self defence classes.

Further, the only individual who raised conflict in Oinofyta camp as an issue was a female respondent.

This is not to say that safety and security is a concern unique to women. On the contrary it was men who were more likely to identify themselves as homeless, sleeping on the streets, having experienced crime or having participated in the same. It was also men who more frequently reported differential treatment and having multiple disadvantages or unmet needs.



RECOMMENDATIONS

If you ask me what services can be improved ... I would tell you that the best service is to remove the whole camp.
(Ritsona)

The following recommendations for service providers have been derived in part from the suggestions respondents made themselves and the data findings. They are aimed towards service providers, donors and decision makers.

- **Provide transport cards to those living in the camps outside of Athens, or the information on how to access the same.**

One respondent in Athens mentioned receiving an annual transport card from Caritas. In addition, information shared by refugee.info in March 2018 explains that The Greek Employment Authority (OAED) issue registered refugees with unemployment cards which grants access to free public transportation and social benefits. If this provision is available outside of inner city Athens and accessible to those residing in neighbouring camps then the residents require information about the same and application support.

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- **Prioritise the availability of translators and interpreters, particularly considerations for hospital visit accompaniment.**

Given the multiple language needs in Greece, it is appreciated that this is a challenging and expensive request to meet, as has also been the experience of this short term project. However, given the frequency that it came up its clearly a very significant issue for many people. Therefore alongside the delivery of language classes it is suggested that a key priority remain interpretation and translation particularly in how an individuals first contact with a service provider is handled, appreciating the anguish that delayed appointments in order to book and provide a translator cause. Further, where service providers are able to provide hospital accompaniment to meet translation needs it is strongly suggested to do so.

- **Extend outreach services for those living in squats, immobile for fear of imprisonment due to lack of asylum status.**

There is no doubt a significant number of people with multiple needs who have tenuous residencies and who are not typically being reached by service providers. The less organised squats in Exarcheia for example, as well as temporary arrangements with acquaintances renders these individuals harder to locate. However it is often these individuals that fear travelling out of their residencies due to the risk of police interference. If service providers have the means to locate and reach out to these individuals (perhaps through community informants) it is recommended doing so.

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- **Expand the definition of vulnerable individuals to focus on also meeting the acute needs of those experiencing multiple disadvantages.**

It is of no question that those typically defined as vulnerable: unaccompanied children; single parents of minors; pregnant women and new mothers; victims of torture and SGBV; elderly, disabled or ill all require targeted services to meet their indisputably specific needs. At the same time, those not defined as such have greater difficulties accessing services and as a result their needs and vulnerability increases.

From pending or rejected asylum applications, these individuals lack the eligibility to access housing, public services including medical or social benefits, income benefits in the form of cash cards and are similarly unlikely to access services provided by NGOs. They are homeless or live in tenuous residencies and may be prone to criminal engagement (selling drugs for example) in order to meet their basic needs. They are most likely single men.

A more organised and concerted effort needs to be made on behalf of this group who are falling through the net. With service provision not solely left up to individual service providers who do not have the capacity to meet such enormous needs.

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- **Improve response rates, call back times and follow up with prospective and actual service users.**

A relatively inexpensive improvement that could be made to improve the relationship between service providers and prospective or actual service users would be to ensure reliable and timely response and follow up. Record interactions and monitor call back times in an effort to reduce them. Prevent delayed withholding of documents and communicate clearly where delays and lengthy waiting periods are inevitable and why. When services have been provided maintain communication with the recipient to support where possible their ongoing needs.

- **Frequently request feedback about services, share findings primarily with service users, respond and make necessary and possible changes. Use feedback processes as an opportunity to share information on services and capacities, address expectations and build trust.**

Respondents welcomed the opportunity to speak and share their opinions and suggestions. Evidently however feedback is not always requested and facilitated. Independent and collective mechanisms, such as this one, have their advantages: many do not feel comfortable speaking directly with service providers and findings can be shared across organisations benefiting many. However, individually, all organisations can do more to create an environment where feedback and suggestions are facilitated, welcomed and acted upon.

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Part 2.

In the coming second part of this report the pilot itself will be analysed. The focus will be less about data findings concerning services, as has been the focus here, and more about the viability of an independent and transparent feedback mechanism. It will concentrate on service user and organisation engagement and response, their feedback and the feedback of facilitators.

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