

## **On Inclusion, Exclusion, Diversity and Cosmopolitanism**

### **Introduction:**

To the naked eye, Greece appears to be a cosmopolitan society, which is primarily due to migration. Over a million refugees arrived in Greece in the last few years, many of whom are young men from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2018, a total of 27, 492 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece despite attempts by the European Union to keep them out of Europe. Most came from Syria (27%), Afghanistan (25%), Iraq (19%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (5%) (Asylum Information Database, 2018). More refugees and asylum seekers also arrived from Central Africa and South Asia, fleeing war and persecution and gender and sexual-based violence.

Despite the number of arrivals to Greece – the lowest since 2015 – most refugees and migrants face exclusion and discrimination in the country. Cosmopolitanism, though, is supposed to signify openness, inclusion and belonging. In his celebrated book, the Ethics of Identity, Kwame Anthony Appiah writes:

The cosmopolitanism I want to defend is not the name for a dialogue among static closed cultures, each of which is internally homogenous and different from all the others; not a celebration of the beauty of a collection of closed boxes. What I want to make plausible is, instead, a form of universalism that is sensitive to the way in which historical context may shape the significance of a practice...Cosmopolitanism imagines a world in which people and novels and music and film and philosophies travel between places where they are understood differently because people are different and welcome to their difference.

Reflecting on Appiah's statement, it's clear that Greece and other Western democracies are far from achieving this ideal version of cosmopolitanism, where everyone is welcomed with his or her difference. Migrant and refugee communities are instead marginalized and excluded from the social, political and economic spheres.

This chapter introduces students to the notion of exclusion and its impact on individuals and communities. It also provides students with a list of best practices of dos and don'ts, which strive to eliminate prejudice and alienation and facilitate inclusion. It ends with a list of activities on exclusion/inclusion and suggested readings for those who are interested in deepening their knowledge and understanding.

### **Exclusion, alienation and its impact:**

After fleeing oppression, violence and war, refugees and migrants face additional challenges upon arriving in Greece such as racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, and legal limbo. The Hellenic Police Statistics found that the number of hate crimes against refugees and migrants – motivated by the categories above – nearly tripled in 2017 compared to the year before. The report stated that many of the attacks were carried out by neo-Nazi groups like Golden Dawn, which targets refugees and Muslims. Al Jazeera English also reported a spree of far-right attacks against Pakistanis and Afghans in Athens and the port city of Piraeus.

Among the 58,661 applications for protection status received in 2017, 9,323 were granted refugee status, 36,340 applications were pending, while 12,149 were rejected. Nearly all Pakistanis (97.8%) and Bangladeshis (96.7%) were denied, followed by Iranians (40.3%), Afghans (23.4%), and Iraqis (23.8%) (Asylum Information Database, 2018). Many of those rejected continue to live in Greece with no legal status or protection, leaving them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The challenges are compounded for disabled refugees and migrants. A report published in 2017 by Human Rights Watch found that refugees and other migrants with disabilities are “not properly identified and do not enjoy equal access to services in reception centers

in Greece.” The report urged the Greek authorities, the EU, the UN, and other aid organizations not to treat people with a disability as “an afterthought.”

These harsh conditions are preventing refugees and migrants from fully participating in social life; thus hurting the social fabric of societies in the long run. Social exclusion, after all, negatively impacts mental and physical health, poverty, crime, social cohesion and the economic prosperity of communities (Saloojee, 2011; Schiffer & Schatz, 2008). Hehir (2007) found a strong correlation between ableism, poverty, suicide and depression. He defines ableism as a practice that “makes the world unwelcoming and inaccessible for people with disability” (p.10).

Likewise, scholars say that classism, racism and precarious legal status, negatively impacts public health, crime, and social cohesion. Classism, for one, refers to the systematic marginalization of those perceived to belong to a lower social class (Liu, 2013) and is “significantly associated with poor health and a feeling of inferiority” (Simons et al., 2017, p. 433).

The above findings were echoed in other studies on gender and sexual orientation-based discrimination. In a study examining the experiences of self-identified gay and bisexual Latino men in the United States, Diaz et al. (2001) found a correlation between the type of mental illness men developed and the social context in which they were subjected to homophobia and racism. The study reveals how different forms of oppression and exclusion intersect to create a particular experience of exclusion and inequality.

Davis (2008) employs the term intersectionality to refer to “the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power” (p. 6). Instead of examining each category separately, intersectionality traces and exposes

exclusion. It reveals that oppression intersects between the macro levels, such as race, class, and gender, which create specific social positioning and structure; and micro processes of oppression in which individuals and groups occupy certain social positions (As cited by Hulko, 2009, p. 47).

Once recognizing and understanding the salience of social exclusion, the excluded can be placed at the centre to claim to belong. Inclusive practices are the glue that binds the different struggles against oppression and injustices. It stems from the simple fact that people are valued and accepted with their differences. It is about embracing the right of belonging without discrimination as the core ideal.

### **Dos and Don'ts:**

Though restricted, interpreters may contribute to creating an inclusive environment by following the basic rules of Dos and Don'ts. By abiding by these simple rules, migrants and refugees may feel less alienated, and more valued and respected:

- Treat all people equally and with respect, regardless of their legal status, race, gender, ability, background, religion, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, gender identity, age, socioeconomic status, or any other association. Don't impose your beliefs and values. Keep these to yourself.
- Confidentiality. Confidentiality. Confidentiality. Everything discussed with the beneficiaries is confidential. Ensure that you are providing them with the space that is safe and entirely confidential. Exposing their personal information, even when it is done in good faith, might endanger them and their families.

- Don't ask personal questions unless the person initiated. Avoid any behaviour that might be perceived as interrogative, unless being asked by the service provider. Avoid talking about controversial topics, such as religion, politics, refugee status.
- Don't invade the personal space of the other. Maintain a comfortable physical distance, and respect boundaries.
- Do treat people with sensitivity and be patient. Some might be experiencing depression, trauma, or any other mental health issue which may affect their communication style. Listen attentively and show interest in what the other is telling you.
- Don't assume that beneficiaries are on good terms with their community. Also, just because a community exists, it doesn't mean they are willing or able to support.
- Don't generalize or stereotype. People have different cultural and political affiliations even when they come from the same region. An Arabic speaking individual from Morocco comes with different experiences than someone from Palestine.
- Don't assume that all adult women are married or have children.
- Be sensitive when asking questions about the family as some might have lost family members or have been separated.
- Don't assume that all women and men shake. Some might not due to cultural or religious reasons. Play it safe. Wait for them to extend their hand first.
- Avoid private conversations with the service provider in front of the beneficiary. Avoid any conversation about the beneficiary in a language that they don't understand when it is not part of the service.
- Do dress modestly as it makes people feel more at ease, and comfortable. People come from different cultures and perspectives that may contradict yours. Respecting their

dress code does not mean giving up your freedom. It cultivates a space in which they feel respected and acknowledged.

- Keep a good hygiene and decent dress code. Set a good example.
- Don't use language that appears coercive or intolerant of other perspectives. Make sure that your verbal and non-verbal communication does not convey judgement, but rather acceptance and tolerance.
- Be aware of non-verbal communication as it might not be understood by the beneficiaries due to cultural reasons.
- Try to work through the mentality of the beneficiaries and not against it.

***When working with people with disability:***

- Don't stare. Acknowledge people's presence without staring. Focus on the person and not the disability.
- Person-first language "the person is with a disability" NOT "disabled person."
- Do give up your seat when occupying a seat that is designated for people with disability.
- Do ask if someone needs help and abide by his or her wishes. Don't help without asking. Offer your arm if the person asked for it, but do not grab their arm.
- Make sure to warn the person if there is any physical obstacle in their way.
- Don't assume that you know how to help when in doubt ask.
- Do speak directly to the person and don't be patronizing. Refrain from condescending jokes.
- Don't ask intrusive personal questions such as "how did that happen to you?"
- When someone is using a wheelchair, get to a similar level, especially if you are having a lengthy interview with them. That way, they won't hurt their back or strain their neck.

- Ensure that facilities are accessible and don't be afraid to seek help if accessibility is an issue.

***When working with the LGBTQ community:***

- LGBT status is only one part of the person's identity or of who they are.
- Don't make assumptions about a person's gender identity/expression based on their sexual orientation (such as assuming that a gay man is interested in fashion because he is gay). LGBT individuals like everybody else have a wide range of the spectrum of interests, values and political affiliations.
- Do ask people what terms they feel comfortable with. Do follow the LGBT's person's lead in terms of word choices. For a list of appropriate and inappropriate terms, please see below: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression: Essential Terminology for the Humanitarian Sector.
- Don't refer to the person's significant other as "your special friend."
- Don't say "those people" or "you people."
- Don't ask intrusive questions about the person's sex life, such as "how do you have sex").
- Try to use gender-neutral terms.
- Do try to refrain from bringing up LGBT topics, such as "I have a gay friend," especially when it is the first time you meet the person.

**Proposed Activities for facilitators/trainers:**

**Disclaimer:** The activities listed below are not those of Humanity Crew but have been adopted and (sometimes revised) from different sources. These are commonly used activities on exclusion.

- **Labeling** (15-20 minutes) (Goal: To experience the effects of inclusion and exclusion).

Ask the participants if they have ever labeled someone because they belonged to a different group. Explain what labeling mean and its impact on other people.

On blank stickers, write a list of instructions. Majority of the labels will have positive messages, such as “smile at me,” “wink at me,” “say hi to me.” Some of the labels will have the message “turn away from me,” and “ignore me.” Hand in randomly the labels to participants and ask them to stick it on their foreheads. No one is allowed to see or reveal what’s written on these labels. Participants are not allowed verbally communication.

Ask participant to walk around the room and to follow the instructions written on people they come across. After a few minutes, participants return to their seats. Ask: how did you feel? Did you know what was written on your forehead? If so, how did you know? Ask participants who felt ignored or avoided to stand together on the other side of the room. After few minutes, ask how they felt about their labels. Explain more about feeling of exclusion. Ask participants to come up with ways to make people feel included, respected, and welcomed.

- **Things in Common** (10-15 minutes) (The Goal: is to focus on things that people have in common) Hand out blank paper and pens. Tell the audience members that when you say ‘go,’ they need to meet with three other people (preferably people that they don't know) and write down at least three things that you have in common with them. After the activity is completed, ask questions such as: What unusual things did you discover?

How did you uncover what you had in common? What implications does it have that you have more in common with others than you thought?

- **Fear in a Hat** (10-15 minutes) (Goal: To builds empathy and trust).

Ask participants to anonymously write down their fears on a piece of paper and to place them in a hat. Once all placed their note in the hat. Circulate the hat and ask each participant to randomly pick a piece of paper and read it out loud. Ask the participant to explain how the person wrote the note may feel. Discuss: Are there common fears? What does that say about us humans?

- **Outside the circle:** (Goal: feeling excluded) The group forms a tight circle standing up with their arms around each other. Asked one volunteer to force themselves into the circle, while others try to stop him. Ask how did everyone feel?
- **Walking in other people's shoes** (10-20 minutes) (Goal: building empathy): Ask participants to take off their left shoe and throw them in the middle of the room. Ask each participant to go to the pile of shoes and pick on that roughly same size and to put it on. Ask them to walk around few minutes, then take it off and get back to their seats. Ask "how did it feel to put the shoes on? how did you cope? Did you adjust your walk? Etc." The idea is to learn that we sometimes need to change the way we see things.
- **See Tolerance Pledge Ceremony** (<http://www.expressivetherapist.com/group-activities.html>)

Naming all derogatory names that humiliate people and pledging aloud to the group.

See the link for more details.

### **Further readings:**

Avicoli, T. (2014). *He Defies You Still: The Memoirs of a Sissy. Radical Teacher, 100(100)*, 88–91. Available at: <http://radicalteacher.library.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/radicalteacher/article/viewFile/162/96>

A collection of short narrative written by Tommi Avicolti in which he shares personal stories from his childhood once realizing he was gay.

**Balibar, Etienne. (2015). Borderland Europe and the Challenge of Migration.** Available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/etienne-balibar/borderland-europe-and-challenge-of-migration>

In this article, Balibar problematizes the idea of borders and the moral consequences of violent borders.

**Brown University. (n.d.). Facilitating Effective Group Discussions: Tips.** Available at:

<https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/classroom-practices/learning-contexts/discussions/tips>

This resource provides facilitators with tips on effective facilitation in creating an inclusive environment.

**Buzzfeed. (2015). What is a privilege?** Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD5f8GuNuGQ&feature=youtu.be>

This online video explores the idea of privilege.

**Campbell, F.K. (2010). Crippin' the Flâneur: Cosmopolitanism, and Landscapes of Tolerance. Journal of Social Inclusion 1(1): 75- 89.** Available at: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.879.2373&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

The paper examines perspectives on disability from a cosmopolitan and social inclusion perspectives.

**Calder, M. D., MacDonald, R., Mikhael, D., Murphy E. C., & Phoenix Jo. Working Paper No. 35 - May 2017 Marginalization, SEM Young People, and Policy.** Available at [http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y\\_35.pdf](http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y_35.pdf)

The paper examines the experiences of young people of marginalization in South and East Mediterranean Countries.

**El Sawy, N, (2001). Yes, I follow Islam, but I'm not a terrorist. Newsweek, 138(16), 12.** Available at: <https://www.newsweek.com/yes-i-follow-islam-im-not-terrorist-154333>

The article sheds light on misconceptions about Islam in the US that denies Muslims their humanity.

**Human Rights Watch (2016). EU Policies put refugees at risk, an agenda to restore protection.** Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/23/eu-policies-put-refugees-risk>

The report describes how the EU policies put the lives of refugees at risk.

**Linton, S. (1998). Reassigning meaning.** Available at:

<https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/edu/essay.html?id=21>

The essay explores meanings that usually attributed to disability and people with disability.

**Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration (ORAM). (2016). Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression: Essential Terminology for the Humanitarian Sector.** Retrieved from <http://oramrefugee.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Glossary-PDF.pdf>

A handy resource to learn how to communicate effectively and respectfully with people of diverse sexual and gender identities. The document is translated into different languages including, English, French, Farsi, Turkish and Arabic.

**Trudeau D., & McMorran, C. (2011). The geographies of marginalization. Vincent Del Casion, et al. eds., in A Companion to Social and Cultural Geography. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 437-453.** Available at: [http://profile.nus.edu.sg/fass/jpscmm/2011%20trudeau\\_mcmorran.pdf](http://profile.nus.edu.sg/fass/jpscmm/2011%20trudeau_mcmorran.pdf)

The book chapter seeks to answer the following questions: “How is space fashioned to privilege some groups and marginalize others? How does space contribute to the social exclusion of particular groups?”

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol.** (2006). Retrieved from: [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/Ch\\_IV\\_15.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/Ch_IV_15.pdf)

The full text of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and Optional Protocol in different languages.

**University of Missouri, I., Diversity & Equity. (n.d.-a). The Language of Identity: Using inclusive terminology at Mizzou.** Available at: <https://www.umsystem.edu/media/hr/inclusive-language-handouts.pdf>

It is a good resource to learn about inclusive language and terminology: “Inclusive language positively furthers social and cultural diversity and reduces negative stereotypes. People feel included when we adopt the correct words in conversation.”

**University of Missouri, I., Diversity & Equity. (n.d.-b). Tips for Talking about Race.** Available at: <https://diversity.missouri.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/talk-about-race.pdf>

Students/facilitators/trainers learn about how to engage in productive conversation about race.

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Saloojee, A. (2011). From social exclusion to social inclusion: Theory and practice over two continents. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 4(2): 1-17.

Simons, A.M.W., Koster, A., Groffen D. A. I, & Bosma, H. (2017). Perceived classism and its relation with socioeconomic status, health, health behaviours and perceived inferiority: the

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Schiffer, K., & Schatz, E. (2008). *Marginalization, social inclusion, and health. Correlation*

*Network*. Retrieved from

[https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/11927/1/Correlation\\_marginalisation\\_web.pdf](https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/11927/1/Correlation_marginalisation_web.pdf)

Strickland, P. (15 March 2018). Greek police: Racist hate crimes nearly tripled in 2017. *Al Jazeera*.

Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/greek-police-racist-hate-crimes->

[tripled-2017-180315105439865.html](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/greek-police-racist-hate-crimes-tripled-2017-180315105439865.html)