

LIVED CITIZENSHIP EXPERIENCES OF HIGHLY SKILLED
MIGRANTS IN BUDAPEST AND ATHENS: THE EMERGENCE
OF PATRIOTIC COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENS

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
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November 2024

To my Kyriakos,



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COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENS

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
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ABSTRACT

LIVED CITIZENSHIP EXPERIENCES OF HIGHLY-SKILLED MIGRANTS IN BUDAPEST AND ATHENS: THE EMERGENCE OF PATRIOTIC COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENS

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This study explores the lived citizenship experiences of highly-skilled migrants through the analysis of 62 semi-structured interviews and an online questionnaire (N=177) conducted in Budapest and Athens between October 2022 and February 2024. The study aims to understand and explain how citizenship is understood and appropriated by highly skilled migrants who develop multi-layered attachments as highly mobile individuals, reflecting on their everyday transnational lives in the urban setting of Budapest and Athens. The study suggests that migrants' understanding of citizenship is shaped based on an amalgamation of legal-political status laden with rights and duties, and an identity and multi-layered sense of belonging derived from their lived socio-economic, socio-cultural, and emotional experiences. This study defines lived citizenship as a sum of the relational process involving experiences of belonging and coexistence that individuals undergo in everyday life within and beyond states, in both public and private realms. The research argues that highly skilled migrants' experiences and narratives demonstrate a distinct understanding of citizenship, which is conceptualized in this study as patriotic cosmopolitan citizenship, turning them into hybrid citizens. The study advances the analytical framework and thinking on the foundation, manifestations, and operationalization of citizenship from below, underlining the significance of affective and subject-defining aspects. This empirical research goes beyond the existing studies which focus on policy-oriented, macro-level analyses of highly-skilled migration, presenting a unique

contribution to the production of knowledge on highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens.

Keywords: Lived Citizenship; Patriotic Cosmopolitanism; Highly Skilled Migrants; Budapest; Athens



ÖZET

BUDAPEŞTE VE ATİNA'DA YÜKSEK NİTELİKLİ GÖÇMENLERİN YAŞADIĞI VATANDAŞLIK DENEYİMLERİ: YURTSEVER KOZMOPOLİT VATAVDAŞLARIN ORTAYA ÇIKIŞI

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Bu çalışma, Ekim 2022 ile Şubat 2024 arasında Budapeşte ve Atina'da gerçekleştirilen 62 yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme ve 177 katılımcıdan oluşan çevrimiçi anketin analizi yoluyla yüksek nitelikli göçmenlerin yaşanmış vatandaşlık deneyimlerini araştırıyor. Çalışma, oldukça hareketli bireyler olarak çok katmanlı bağlanmalar geliştiren yüksek nitelikli göçmenler tarafından vatandaşlığın nasıl anlaşıldığını ve tüketildiğini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Ulusötesi bir ortamda yaşanan vatandaşlığın karmaşıklıklarını yakalamak için bu araştırma, aşağıdan yukarıya bir bakış açısı benimseyerek vatandaşlık, kozmopolitizm, vatanseverlik, aidiyet ve günlük yaşam çalışmaları üzerine çeşitli literatürden yararlanmaktadır. Çalışma, göçmenlerin vatandaşlık anlayışlarının, hak ve görevlerle dolu hukuki-siyasi statü ile yaşadıkları sosyo-ekonomik, sosyo-kültürel ve duygusal deneyimlerden kaynaklanan bir kimlik ve çok katmanlı aidiyet duygusunun birleşimine dayalı olarak şekillendiğini öne sürüyor. Bu çalışma, yaşanmış vatandaşlığı, bireylerin devlet içinde ve ötesinde, hem kamusal hem de özel alanlarda günlük yaşamda yaşadıkları aidiyet ve bir arada yaşama deneyimlerini içeren ilişkisel sürecin bir toplamı olarak tanımlamaktadır. Araştırma, yüksek nitelikli göçmenlerin deneyimlerinin ve anlatılarının, bu çalışmada vatansever kozmopolit vatandaşlık olarak kavramsallaştırılan ve onları melez vatandaşlara dönüştüren farklı bir vatandaşlık anlayışını ortaya koyduğunu ileri sürüyor. Çalışma, duygusal ve konuyu tanımlayan yönlerin öneminin altını çizerek

ařağıdan vatandaşlığıın temeli, tezahürleri ve işlevselleřtirilmesine ilişkin analitik çerçeveyi ve düşünceyi geliřtirmektedir. Bu ampirik araştırma, yüksek nitelikli göçün politika odaklı, makro düzeydeki analizlerine odaklanan mevcut çalışmaların ötesine geçerek Budapeřte ve Atina'daki yüksek nitelikli göçmenlere ilişkin bilgi üretimine benzersiz bir katkı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yaşanmış Vatandaşlık; Yurtsever Kozmopolitizm; Yüksek Nitelikli Göçmenler; Budapeřte; Atina



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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDA	Asylum Information Database
ATH	Athens
BUD	Budapest
CCS	Critical Citizenship Studies
CEE	Central Eastern Europeans
ELSTAT	Hellenic Statistical Authority
EMN	European Migration Network
EU	European Union
EU27	European Union (EU) which consists of 27 member countries
Eurostat	European Statistics
Fidesz	Hungarian Civic Party
GCM	UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GT	Grounded Theory
HIPA	Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency
HSM	Highly Skilled Migrant
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupation
ISSP	International Social Survey Program
IOM	International Organization of Migration
KSH	The Hungarian Central Statistical Office
MM	Mixed Methods
MM-GT	Mixed Methods Grounded Theory
ND	New Democracy
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
US	The United States of America

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What are the lived citizenship experiences of migrants in the everyday diversity of transnational settings? What does citizenship mean to citizens? How do people understand and negotiate rights and responsibilities, belonging, and participation? How do migrants narrate their experiences in urban spaces influenced by transnational interactions? To what extent do their subjective citizenship experiences and understanding influence their self-conception and practices as political actors? Why do these experiences matter for the development of the concept of citizenship? Within the framework of the citizenship-migration nexus, these multifaceted research questions aim to unfold the link between citizenship, characterized as a legal, formal category indicating a total relationship between an individual and the state, and everyday life that is lived and experienced in both public and private spaces within and beyond nation-states. Although scholarly attention focusing on the micro-level analysis of citizenship from the perspectives of migrants within the literature of critical citizenship studies (CCS) is increasing (Cherubini, 2011; Lanari, 2022; Martin and Paasi, 2016; Müller, 2022; Cochrane and Wolff, 2022; Kallio and Mitchell, 2016; Pascucci, 2016; Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2006; Bloch, 2014; Ataç, Rygiel, and Stierl, 2016; Caraus, 2018; Bhimji, 2016), most revolve around the issues of migrants' rights, participation, and naturalization. Such discussions neglect or underemphasize the subject-defining and affective dimension of citizenship and the constitutive processes for the emergence of a distinct type of citizen identity, which this study addresses.

This research explores the lived transnational citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants (HSMs) in socio-politically complex, cosmopolitan urban settings, where they hold multiple legal ties, develop multi-layered attachments, and claim recognition, rights, and respect locally, nationally, and globally. The study aims to define citizenship experiences and explain to what extent, how, and why these experiences matter for the formation of subjective citizenship understanding and a distinct type of citizen identity. This research draws upon diverse literature on citizenship, cosmopolitanism, patriotism, belonging, and everyday life studies, adopting a bottom-up perspective to capture the complexities of lived citizenship in a transnational setting. Lived citizenship experiences and practices are examined based on the analysis of 62 semi-structured interviews and an online survey (N=177) conducted with EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens between October 2022 and February 2024.

The increasing need for specific skills and expertise, driven by demographic shifts and global competitiveness (Melegh, 2016), has led the European Union (EU) to strive for a solid position in the competition for global talent (Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020: 5). The EU Blue Card scheme, introduced as a prominent policy initiative aimed at attracting skilled workers from third countries to fulfill the demand for highly skilled labor in addition to national policies, has led to the growth of a foreign labor force in Europe (Boucher, 2020). However, despite efforts to open up 'Fortress Europe' to highly skilled third-country nationals, embracing a market-driven approach to migration policies (Cerna, 2013: 184; Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2010), EU member states maintain authority over entry conditions and constrain mobility at their own discretion (Cerna, 2013; Boucher, 2020). Hungary and Greece, two semi-periphery EU member countries identified by their anti-immigrant stance as the defender (Merabishvili, 2023; Kallius, 2016) and the frontline of the EU (Panebianco, 2022; Stivas, 2023), illustrate the tension between economic openness and border restrictions for third-country nationals within EU member states. Budapest and Athens, as the capitals and political and financial centers of their respective countries, with their complex urban settings and large migrant populations, are ideal locations for observing the lived citizenship experiences and practices of HSMs.

Citizenship is conventionally defined as a mechanism and a unitary institution that confers a formal legal status, distributing rights and responsibilities. It recognizes a specific group of individuals as members of a particular political community, distinguishing them from others. That implies the constitution of a legal relationship between individuals and the state to homogenize people in a polity, building the boundaries based on full membership. It ascribes an instituted subject position that facilitates modes of practices and acts, enabling individuals to participate in social, political, economic, and cultural life in the political community. This traditional approach predominantly refers to an understanding of citizenship from above. It, therefore, focuses on citizenship laws, regimes, and policies, including their impacts on individuals in formal spaces, and examines citizenship as an institutionalized inclusionary and exclusionary mechanism used by the nation-state and its institutions. It helps to qualify individuals as citizens or non-citizens based on this dichotomy of inclusion and exclusion (Joppke, 2019: 874), reflecting upon the legal framework. However, in everyday life, the boundaries of national communities defined by nation-states through citizenship and the whole population living within these boundaries do not overlap (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 207). Almost every political community includes the members of other political communities. Thus, a top-down approach to citizenship does not adequately explain how the legal framework and status granted by the state are perceived and utilized by individuals, how it affects their daily lives, or how it shapes their identities, regardless of their formal status.

Migration de-homogenizes political communities by bringing major changes that require the redefinition of demos and reconstitution of subjectivities. It indicates a transformative point of life in that individuals build newer legal and affective ties based on multiple experiences, power relations, and policies emanating from the politics of inclusion and exclusion (Ayata, 2019: 337; Sönmez Gioftsios & Ozcurumez, 2024). These experiences encompass citizenship experiences, shaping individuals into a unique type of citizen with varied, multilayered attachments and commitments. It involves a process of living one's citizenship as an actor entitled to the rights within and beyond state boundaries, establishing oneself as an active political subject engaged in every aspect of daily life. This process, therefore, makes citizenship as both a legal status and identity visible to individuals, encouraging

them to question and reassess their formal (objective) and informal (subjective) roles, relationships, values, norms, attachments, and loyalties.

Mainstream studies in citizenship-migration literature dwell on legal and institutional design, focusing on the access-defining feature of the concept, as it is labeled by Shachar (2007), which mainly refers to the legal positionality of individuals and the conditions that allow them to act in formal spaces. However, they have largely overlooked the multiple scales and, as this study calls it, the subject-defining feature of citizenship. That feature requires an analysis of the concept from below, zooming in on different dimensions of individuals' lived citizenship experiences in both formal and informal spaces that are under-researched. In this study, the subject-defining feature of citizenship is examined in interrelation with the "access-defining" feature (Shachar, 2007) in a particular, given context through questions of what citizenship means to migrants and to what extent and how citizenship influences migrants' experiences and the reconstitution of subjectivity in the residence country. Such an agency-based, bottom-up analysis deconstructs the abstract nature of citizenship, focusing on the lived experiences of individuals in actual spaces and the impact of formal citizenship on individuals' subjective positioning. In other words, it is an attempt to reify the concept in lived feelings, practices, and acts derived from the citizenship experiences of people in both formal and informal spaces.

Citizenship as a lived experience is context-sensitive. Therefore, unlike regular citizens of a state, migrants as non-citizens and naturalized new citizens undergo unique citizenship experiences accumulated over time within and across the borders. These experiences also vary among migrant groups based on the degree of temporariness, permanence, and circularity. Temporary migrants who return to their countries of origin or move to another country after some time based on their conditions and circular migrants who go back and forth between two or more countries, following employment and career opportunities constitute large shares of the highly skilled migrant populations (Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2010: 4). As the increase in complexity of formal and informal relationships and attachments define the daily life of this group of migrants that may change at any moment, the lived experiences of this group of migrants present an intriguing case. Exploring the

citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants provides an opportunity to understand how they navigate and narrate their self-identification and positioning and construct a subjective citizenship understanding. Therefore, this study explores the lived citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants residing in Budapest and Athens as transnational sites of citizenship, where migrants maintain multiple legal ties, form complex attachments and commitments, claim rights, and seek recognition and respect locally, nationally, and globally. By focusing on intersections and interrelations between institutionalized public and private sites of citizenship, the study thinks of citizenship through lived experiences of belonging and coexistence to investigate and explain how and why these experiences matter for the formation of a subjective understanding of citizenship and a distinct type of citizen identity. To capture the complexities of lived citizenship in a transnational setting, this research draws upon the scholarly literature on citizenship, cosmopolitanism, patriotism, belonging, and everyday life studies by engaging with the narratives of highly skilled migrants regarding their everyday experiences.

This study suggests that HSMs undergo unique and complex citizenship experiences as members of a highly mobile global community by engaging in multiple constellations of transnational belonging within a long-distance relationship with their country of origin and a well-regulated social contract with the country of residence. These are nested processes of individual self-determination (Genova, 2016) and the emergence of hybrid citizens who experience public and private life in different political communities. The study, thus, suggests that migrants' understanding of citizenship is shaped based on an amalgamation of legal-political status laden with rights and duties and an identity and multi-layered sense of belonging derived from their lived socio-economic, socio-cultural, and emotional experiences gained within and beyond nation-states. Within this framework, this study defines lived citizenship as lived experiences of being and becoming a citizen in a relational, life-long learning process involving experiences of belonging and experiences of coexistence that individuals encounter in everyday life within and beyond states in both public and private realms. The narratives of HSMs about citizenship experiences reveal their positioning as patriotic cosmopolitans who reconcile cultural and moral cosmopolitanism with constructive patriotism. The

study posits that the construction of patriotic cosmopolitan citizen identity through multi-layered belonging and multiple legal ties enables highly skilled migrants to position themselves in a secure space and act more flexibly in the complexity of everyday life in transnational settings. This hybrid citizen identity becomes the narrative and the anchor for the self to ensure recognition and enjoy respect in global, national, and local contexts, allowing them to act as political and social actors at all levels.

The study advances the descriptive and analytical framework and thinking on the foundation, manifestations, and operationalization of citizenship from below, particularly underlining the significance of affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship. Second, as highly skilled migrants' lived citizenship experiences reflect a mixture of patriotic and cosmopolitan ideas, ideals, and attachments, this study also displays the significance of cosmopolitanism and patriotism to the study of citizenship, exploring how migrants navigate through and narrate a blend of patriotic and cosmopolitan ideas and emotions while constructing their citizenship understanding. Third, this research examines the unique circumstances of highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens, assessing the significance of particularities of urban settings and the country of residence context in shaping citizenship experiences and practices. The study contributes to the production of knowledge on highly skilled migration in Hungary and Greece from a micro-level perspective, opening a path to further studies.

1.1 Research Questions and Objectives

This research examines the legal/political, socio-economic, cultural, and emotional experiences of citizenship that shape individuals' subjective understanding of citizenship, transforming migrants into political subjects and explaining the rationale behind their citizenship practices. This study began with a core research question, accompanied by a sub-question that were carefully formulated and refined multiple times to guide the investigation. Through the application of the MM-GT (Mixed Methods-Grounded Theory) approach, additional questions emerged throughout the research process, allowing for a more dynamic and responsive exploration of the topic. This iterative process not only expanded the scope of inquiry but also enriched

the depth and relevance of the study's focus. Ultimately, the primary aim of this dissertation evolved from the central research question and was informed by the complementary sub-questions listed below. These questions collectively shape the framework of this research, setting the foundation for a comprehensive examination of the study's key themes.:

1. What are the lived citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants in the everyday diversity of transnational settings, and how and why do these experiences matter for the constitution of subjective citizenship understanding, practices, and the formation of a particular citizen identity?
2. What role does the EU citizenship play in highly skilled migrants' lived citizenship experiences? What are the similarities and differences between EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants living in Budapest and Athens?
3. To what extent, how, and why do patriotism and cosmopolitanism influence highly skilled migrants' citizenship experiences and understanding, self-identification, belonging, subjective representation, and participation?
4. What are the experiences of highly skilled migrants within a socio-political context marked by skepticism and hostility toward foreigners, and how do these experiences influence their citizenship understanding and practices?

Through these research questions, this study aims to provide an analytical framework for examining the lived citizenship experiences in relation to subjective citizenship understanding, practices, and the formation of citizen identity. By highlighting the importance of affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship, it seeks to advance thinking on the foundation, manifestations, and operationalization of citizenship from below and contribute to the literature of critical citizenship studies. The primary empirical objective of the research is to understand how HSMs make sense of citizenship and what their lived citizenship experiences are in the everyday diversity of transnational settings. The study aims to analyze the relationship between HSMs' lived experiences and citizenship understanding and practices. This research also seeks to understand the role of EU citizenship and the potential differences between EU and non-EU HSMs. The study intends to conduct a comparative analysis between Budapest and Athens, scrutinizing the distinct circumstances of highly skilled migration in each city and

assessing the impact of the country of residence context on shaping citizenship experiences. This research endeavors to provide a unique contribution to the production of knowledge on highly skilled migration in Hungary and Greece, going beyond the existing studies that focus on policy-oriented macro-level analyses of highly skilled migration.

1.2 Methodology

In this section, first, an overview of the mixed methods-grounded theory (MM-GT) method will be provided to explain the rationale for choosing an MM-GT approach and combining qualitative and quantitative approaches is necessary for addressing the research questions. Second, the study will highlight the importance of focusing on highly skilled migrants and provide the reason for choosing Budapest, Hungary, and Athens, Greece, as the two specific sites for analysis. Third, data collection methods and steps followed in this process, including the development of interview and survey questions, will be described. Finally, the data analysis procedures, guided by the coding principles of grounded theory, and field notes will be discussed.

1.2.1 Research Method: Mixed Method-Grounded Theory

Despite the recent increase in bottom-up studies on citizenship, our understanding of the everyday experiences of migrants, especially HSMs, and the impact these experiences have on shaping specific citizenship practices, perceptions, and citizen identities remains limited. Additionally, the lived experiences of HSMs from their perspectives and how they, as social and political actors, navigate, negotiate, and reconstruct their narratives about self-conception, belonging, and political communities they are connected to in the everyday diversity of transnational settings are understudied. Therefore, it is difficult to hypothesize arguments about the lived citizenship experiences and practices of highly skilled migrants and their roles in forming particular citizenship understanding and citizen identity. There is a need to acquire and compile new knowledge to develop an explicit understanding of what lived citizenship experiences are and propose an analytical framework of the concept of lived citizenship that is rooted in empirical data (Birks & Mills, 2011: 17-

18; Johnson & Walsh, 2019: 518). This research, thus, uses the MM-GT method, which embeds the logic of mixed methods, requiring constant comparisons of data and grounded theory procedures to have an in-depth understanding of the complexity of HSMs' experiences.

This study combines qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze and interpret data from 62 semi-structured interviews and an online survey (N=177). The MM-GT approach, as a dynamic research design, provides an in-depth understanding of addressing the research questions, as each method contributes unique insights and perspectives, complementing each other. Mixed methods (MM) research is effective for this, allowing for detailed engagement and reconciliation of conflicting data (Manek et al., 2023). Grounded theory (GT) is also ideal for developing theoretical and conceptual models for studying citizenship from below through migrants' narratives on experiences. This approach is suitable for this study because the concept of lived citizenship is highly abstract and requires the development of a clearer analytical framework (Kallio et al., 2020) to identify its key components. Mixing the logic of these two methods, MM-GT provides the ability to combine diverse data, conduct flexible exploration, and explain HSMs' lived experiences and citizenship understanding within specific contexts. Furthermore, it enhances the validity and credibility of the research by enabling a deeper exploration of complex phenomena, which would not be achievable through a single method alone (Bryman, 2004; Cox and Hassard, 2010; Hastings, 2010).

This study adopts the MM-GT convergent design in which qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently and constantly compared and analyzed together through the research process [(QUANT+QUAL) GT] (Johnson & Walsh, 2019: 525; Shim et al., 2021: 64; Creswell, 2009; Walsh, 2015). The study of lived citizenship experiences of migrants in a state of transnationality demands a framework that recognizes and incorporates the complexity of everyday diversity. This research design offers a significant understanding of the complexity of everyday life, allowing us to capture differences, diverse perspectives, and experiences. One of the empirical objectives of this study is to offer a unique contribution to the production of knowledge on highly skilled migration in Hungary and Greece, as previous studies have overlooked these contexts. Employing the

MM-GT method also helps to facilitate theory and knowledge production, promoting the use of multiple logics (Johnson & Walsh, 2019).

1.2.2 Sample Selection

The heightened competition to attract global talent has contributed to the growth of the highly skilled middle class in Europe, and the lower barriers to mobility for those educated professionals increase the flows of this category of migrants (Weinar & Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020). Highly skilled migrants are defined as “the human face of global mobility” (Smith & Favell, 2006) and are usually portrayed as a privileged, desired group of cosmopolitans who are high-earners, rarely politicized, and able to integrate easily and quickly (Weinar et al.; Bielewska 2021). They consist of educated professionals who are willing to move whenever there is an opportunity for a better life and are equipped and ready to make and remake their homes. The higher level of mobility and the perception of temporariness among the highly-skilled migrants, as bringing out more complex relationships, experiences, and practices in multiple political communities at the formal and informal levels, make their understanding of citizenship and themselves as citizens more interesting. Additionally, although HSMs are identified as members of the global upper-middle class, there are a few studies indicate their real-life experiences and their relationships with the country of origin and the country of residence(s), thinking citizenship through the experiences and understanding of migrants (Bielewska, 2021). Additionally, the majority of studies on highly skilled migrants focus on migration patterns, governance, and policies in the United States (US), Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK) (Balcerzak 2016; Schittenhelm and Schmidtke, 2010-11; Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2010; Bailey and Mulder, 2017). Very few studies explore the lived experiences of highly skilled migrants residing in semi-periphery countries where skepticism toward foreigners, anti-immigrant attitudes, and discourses prevail, such as Hungary and Greece, which have not been considered a popular destination for skilled migrants (Bielewska, 2021; Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020; Koikkalainen, 2013).

The focus of this study is on defining the lived citizenship experiences of EU and non-EU HSMs and how these experiences influence HSMs’ understanding and

practice of citizenship in the complex urban settings of Budapest and Athens. Despite several structural differences, Budapest and Athens are similar in the sense that they are globalized, cosmopolitan capitals and growing business hubs for outsourcing activities and shared service centers of international companies and organizations in two semi-peripheral EU member countries. They occur to be less popular but appealing, alternative global destinations for highly skilled migrants with career and/or lifestyle ambitions. Hungary and Greece share common characteristics as semi-peripheral economies within the EU, reflecting their intermediate position in terms of economic development and integration into the global economy. Both countries are often portrayed as emigration countries whose large proportions of citizens live in other EU countries (European Commission, 2018). Similar to most European countries, they face demographic challenges, including an aging population and declining birth rates (Kenna, 2012; Melegh, 2016), which causes a skilled labor shortage and a need for recruiting foreign workers to maintain economic productivity and competitiveness. Over the past two decades, these challenges have driven both countries to actively seek a stronger position to attract highly skilled foreign-born citizens. While these efforts have transformed Budapest and Athens into prominent business centers and destinations for the newly arriving migrants, hosting a substantial majority of the migrant population in Hungary and Greece, migration has increasingly become a major issue in media campaigns and political debates, leading to growing negative public sentiment towards refugees and, in general, migrants.

Studies indicate that the proportion of people with negative attitudes towards migration, particularly from non-EU countries, is higher in Hungary at 81% and Greece at 70% than the EU28 average at 56% (Joshani, 2024: 497; Kirtsoglou & Tsimouris, 2018; Samek Lodovici et al., 2017). Budapest and Athens, the capitals of their respective countries, host significant migrant populations and serve as similar sites where HSMs, as educated and skilled professionals, navigate complex socio-political landscapes characterized by skepticism and hostility toward foreigners. These two research sites serve as ideal settings to explore HSMs' experiences in socio-politically and economically challenging contexts within the EU. Additionally, practical considerations, such as accessibility to participants and the feasibility of

conducting fieldwork in Budapest and Athens, also influenced the selection of these two sites. The presence of well-established research networks and prior collaborations in Hungary and Greece facilitates access to both participants and data.

These similarities enhance the comparability of these sites in addressing the research questions this study asks in terms of HSMs and their lived citizenship experiences in these overlooked contexts. However, there are also two significant differences between these sites, which enable the study to reveal the impact of the contexts of both country of residence and country of origin. First, Hungary and Greece have different migration patterns, immigration and naturalization policies, bureaucratic structures, cultural and socio-economic characteristics, and labor market dynamics, all of which influence the lived experiences of HSMs in Budapest and Athens. Second, the heterogeneity of highly skilled migrants' backgrounds, even among the same group (EU or non-EU), due to several reasons, including the impact of the home country, influences their citizenship experiences and understanding. Although the main goal is not to analyze the impact of the home country context on each interviewed HSM, the study reflects the salient narratives underlined by the participants about their home country context, which appear to shape their understanding and practices.

This study centers on the patterns, variations, and commonalities in the citizenship experiences, practices, and perceptions of HSMs, making the migrants the primary unit of analysis. Broadly defined, “a migrant,” in this study, implies a person who is a citizen of at least one state but moved to another country with the purpose of employment, family, or/and education. Narrowly defined, “a migrant” refers to an EU or a non-EU HSM who has resided in Budapest and Athens for more than a year, has completed tertiary education, and is in the labor force or search of labor by being qualified to work in high-skill job categories, which the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO) defines (ILO, 2024). These migrants reside in the country either as non-citizens holding specific migrant statuses based on their formal citizenship and/or visa type or they have recently been naturalized. The sample includes two groups of HSMs who came to Budapest and Athens from other EU member countries as EU citizens and those who came to Budapest and Athens as third-country nationals from non-EU countries. The interviewees and survey

participants are classified based on the citizenship they hold at the time of the interviews and survey. Specifically, HSMs holding dual citizenship -one from an EU member state, such as Hungary or Greece, and the other from a non-EU country- are categorized as EU HSMs. The primary reason for distinguishing HSMs as EU and non-EU HSMs is to explore the role of EU citizenship in shaping their lived citizenship experiences. This study examines both EU and non-EU HSMs, addressing a gap in comparative research that rarely investigates the experiences of EU and non-EU migrants together. EU HSMs are often excluded from research on international migration due to their classification as “mobile EU citizens” rather than migrants (Shutes & Walker, 2017). However, despite their distinct legal status that affects how they are perceived, both groups share similar expat lifestyles in the European countries they live. Additionally, most studies focusing on intra-EU mobility examine new trends, socio-economic and political factors, and experiences of EU citizens from Europe’s East to West, and not vice versa, which this study does.

1.2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

This study is based on qualitative and quantitative data collected through sixty-two semi-structured interviews and a survey (N=177) conducted in Budapest and Athens between October 2022 and February 2024. Employing the MM-GT convergent design, the study combines qualitative and quantitative data and techniques to increase the validity and credibility of the research, maintaining an exploratory approach with both types of data and analyzing them together as a single set. The first phase involves a limited and purposive preliminary review of critical citizenship literature and an initial literature review of highly skilled migration within the EU context. The review of the theoretical framework is conducted without strictly engaging with the literature but by adopting a skeptical stance to the approaches employed in scholarly works that examine citizenship from the perspectives of migrants. This review helps to identify who highly skilled migrants are in the context of semi-periphery EU countries, specifically Hungary and Greece, as well as exploring how, why, and where this group of migrants has been studied. The main goal of this initial review is to understand the existing approaches to highly skilled migration and become familiar with existing studies on critical

citizenship literature to gain confidence for formulating interview and survey questions before data collection begins. In the second phase of the research, the interviews and survey were conducted by constantly revisiting the literature to improve the quality of the contents of data and to have a clear coding in an open-ended, iterative process (Guetterman et al., 2019: 191; Birks and Mills, 2011: 21). Data collection, data analysis, and conceptual development in this study, which adopts MM-GT research design, is based on constant back and forth between different stages of the research and comparison of the collected data with the literature (Bryant and Charmaz, 2019: 217).

1.2.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

In this study, semi-structured interviews were employed to explore the lived citizenship experiences of HSMs, allowing for flexibility in conversations and the pursuit of in-depth responses. In 2022 and 2023, two rounds of semi-structured interviews with sixty-two EU and non-EU HSMs in Budapest and Athens. Conducting qualitative interviews at these two different sites, which share a similar socio-political context marked by anti-immigrant sentiments, allows for in-depth, individualized conversations focused on issues relevant to each participant. This approach encourages the exploration of variations and commonalities in subjective citizenship experiences, practices, and perceptions, which in turn shape individuals' sense of identity and self-perception as citizens. In the case of uncertainties of conceptual approaches focusing on complex experiences of individuals, interviews, reflecting subjective narratives, appear to be the more effective method for generating theoretical models grounded on empirical data (Rogers, 2013: 229). This method allows sufficient time for each participant to thoroughly express their opinions on various issues and provides a private setting that encourages open sharing of their perspectives. The participants were mainly selected based on the following eligibility criteria:

1. Have been living in Budapest/Athens for at least 1 year
2. Having a tertiary education (Completing a four-year bachelor degree)
3. Actively working or in a search for a job

4. Working in ISCO 3rd or 4th skill level job categories listed below (ILO)¹
- a. Legislators and senior officials of government and special-interest organizations like political party organizations, employers', workers' and other economic-interest organizations, and humanitarian and other special-interest organizations
 - b. Corporate managers (Directors and chief executives, production and operations managers, Finance and administration managers, HR managers, sales and marketing managers, advertising and public relations manager, supply and distribution managers, computing services managers, research and development managers and other specialist managers)
 - c. Managers of small enterprises
 - d. Professionals
 - i. Physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals (physicists, chemists, mathematicians, statisticians, geologists, computing professionals like designers, analysts, architects, engineers)
 - ii. Life science and health professionals (biologists, botanists, zoologists, pharmacologists, medical doctors, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists, nurses and midwives)
 - iii. Teaching Professionals in every level of education
 - iv. Business professionals (accountants, HR professionals); legal professionals (lawyer, judges, other legal professionals); archivists, librarians and related professionals; social science and related professionals (economists, sociologists, psychologists, social work professionals); writers and creative or performative artists (authors, journalists, film stage actors and directors, composers, painters); religious professionals; public service and administrative professionals

¹ These are 3rd and 4th level job categories defined by ISCO in detail. For more information:
<https://ilostat ilo.org/methods/concepts-and-definitions/classification-occupation/>

Purposive sampling was mixed with snowball sampling, in which the participants were also recruited through interviewees' personal networks. Before conducting the interviews, interview questions were formulated based on the initial literature review. The questions were tested with both an EU HSM and a non-EU HSM. The interviews in Budapest were conducted face-to-face between October and November 2022, while in Athens, interviews took place between November and December 2023, utilizing both face-to-face (seventeen interviews) and online formats (fifteen interviews). All face-to-face interviews were conducted in various coffee shops, primarily located in the central areas of Budapest and Athens, selected for their accessibility and conducive conditions for interviewing. I conducted the online interviews through Zoom and Google meetings and recorded them based on the consent of the participants. Online consent forms were shared via e-mail before the interviews and collected and stored digitally. Both online and face-to-face interviews lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. To enhance representativeness, the selection of interviewees considered diversity in terms of gender, country of origin, occupation, and workplace.

The sample included sixty-two professionals consisting of thirty-five women and 27 men. Thirty-five interviewees were citizens of other EU countries, while twenty-seven were nationals of third countries. They were born in Belarus, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Syria, Tajikistan, The Netherlands, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. They were employed by different international companies, institutions, and organizations in Budapest and Athens, such as BaseBlue, BlackRock, Bosch, Kaizen, Morgan Stanley, ELIAMEP, Friesland Campina, HP Inc., TATA, Teleperformance Hellas, Webhelp, UNHCR, Citi Group, and Nokia. They worked as managers, engineers, finance & accounting associates, academics, researchers, artists, musicians, and teachers. Half of the interviewees could speak at least three different languages. In Budapest, four interviewees hold dual citizenship, with only one being naturalized in Hungary. In Athens, eleven interviewees hold dual citizenship, eight of whom were naturalized in Greece. The majority of interviewees in both cities are single individuals aged from twenty-five to sixty-five. For

anonymity, the interviewees are identified with pseudonyms assigned during the transcription of interviews, the name of their country of origin, and whether they are EU or non-EU citizens.

Since all the interviewees had an excellent command of the English language, I conducted, recorded, and transcribed all the interviews in English. Following the transcription process, the interviews were imported into MAXQDA, a software program for data analysis, to facilitate the systematic evaluation and interpretation of the data. The analysis process built on open, axial, and selective coding stages (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Manek et al., 2023: 6). Through line-by-line analysis of the transcription of the interviews, initial open codes and categories were created to identify, name, and categorize diverse citizenship experiences and practices based on spatial, affective, performed dimensions as well as subjective understanding of citizenship and the characteristics of highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens. In this stage, open coding was accompanied by memo writing, which helped in understanding and conceptualizing the data. I used memos to facilitate the coding process by documenting codes, their relationships, and categories, as well as defining, describing, and tracking the development of codes and the conceptual model (Smith et al., 2020). The memos also included my reflections, questions, and insights during the first phase of coding and analysis (Cho & Lee, 2014). After excluding unrelated and less frequent data, the second phase of the analysis, axial coding, was conducted to examine and understand the hypothetical relationships between codes and categories. At this stage, coded segments on citizenship experiences and practices were compared to identify and test recurring points about the relationships between codes and categories. The final phase (selective coding) involved defining the core categories as “experiences of belonging,” “experiences of coexistence,” and “citizenship practices” and integrating them with their related sub-categories. Through the integrated and comparative analysis of core and sub-categories, a narrative that explains the data was developed, proposing the theoretical model of lived citizenship grounded in empirical findings. Interviews were utilized to improve the internal and external validity of data collected through other methods.

1.2.3.2 Survey

To support the findings of qualitative interviews, an online survey (N=177), which improves the study's validity, reliability, and generalizability, was designed after reviewing literature and international surveys on citizenship. The questions were developed to align with the interview questions, drawing insights from the 2014 Citizenship Questionnaire of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) (ISSP Research Group, 2016; Scholz et al., 2017). The online survey was tested to confirm that participants clearly and consistently understood the questions as intended. The online survey was shared by six different individuals from both EU and non-EU countries who used to live in Budapest and Athens. The survey was completed between 10-15 minutes by the respondents in the test group. Based on their feedback, the survey was reviewed and finalized.

The survey comprised fifty questions and was organized into five main sections: Eligibility criteria, screening part, self-identification and sense of belonging, citizenship understanding, and citizenship practices. The first section was designed as an eligibility part to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the data collected. Survey respondents were selected among those who have been residing in either Budapest or Athens and were willing to provide informed consent. Unlike the interviews, the length of stay in Budapest and Athens was not considered an eligibility criterion for survey respondents to reach a larger population of HSMs and observe recent trends as well as rare cases if there were. Therefore, random sampling from the population of interest was adopted in the survey research. The screening section consisted of an initial set of demographic questions, including socio-demographic background, current conditions, length of residence, and legal status, indicating the characteristics and profile of the sample. The questions in the third section explored the self-identification practices and sense of belonging among HSMs. It sought to understand the depth of their emotional and spatial attachment to their country of origin and its connection to their citizenship experiences and practices. The fourth section probed how respondents perceive citizenship and what it means to them in their everyday lives. This part also aimed to measure the affective dimension of citizenship and survey respondents' tendency to apply for Hungarian or Greek citizenship. The fifth and last section focused on citizenship

experiences and practices. The questions in this section scrutinized what respondents emotionally, politically, economically, and socio-culturally experience as citizens in their country of origin and beyond and the level of their trust in politics and politicians. The questions related to citizenship practices were formulated to assess the extent of political, economic, and socio-cultural participation in their country of origin, Hungary/Greece, and elsewhere. This final section was designed, benefitting from the ISSP 2014 Citizenship Questionnaire, a well-structured and widely implemented survey in various countries, specifically to formulate questions related to citizenship practices. It served to capture respondents' experiences of coexistence and citizenship practices. Overall, the survey included questions that measure the level of patriotism and cosmopolitanism among HSMs, focusing on patriotic and cosmopolitan belonging and practices to observe the role of these two types of spatial attachments on HSMs' citizenship understanding and practices.

Questions included different designs, such as rating scale, likert scale, matrix, dropdown, and open-ended questions. Non-response was only allowed for open-ended questions. The survey was converted to digital format on Google Forms and shared with respondents in Budapest and Athens through e-mail, social media messaging tools, and the use of social media community groups such as "Hungary Expats," "Central European University Alumni & Friends," "Expatriate Women in Budapest," "Expats in Athens (Greece)," "Digital Nomads & Expats in Athens," and "Foreign Women of Athens." Respondents were also asked to distribute the survey link within their networks to ensure the sample was not limited to just one network. This approach helped me reach more HSMs from diverse backgrounds, thereby enhancing the sample. Anonymity and confidentiality were emphasized with a statement about data protection in the introductory informative page before the survey started. Respondents were informed at the beginning of the study that their participation was voluntary, and they were allowed to end the survey any time they would not like to continue. The online questionnaire has been completed by 177 respondents (see Table 1).

Table 1. Structure of the Sample

	<i>EU country citizen</i>					<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>			<i>TOTAL</i>
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Prefer not to say</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>N</i>	
<i>Athens</i>	23	7	0	1	31	26	14	40	71
<i>Budapest</i>	16	20	1	0	37	47	22	69	106
<i>N</i>	37	27	1	1	68	75	36	109	177

This study used the grounded theory approach to categorize qualitative data on how the lived citizenship experiences of HSMs shape citizenship practices and subjective citizenship understanding. The findings were then applied to analyze survey data collected from a larger population of HSMs. The online survey intended to explore the relationship between lived citizenship experiences, defined as experiences of belonging and coexistence in this study, and citizenship practices, particularly participation. Data from the online survey was analyzed in MAXQDA using descriptive and statistical methods with an exploratory approach. In the MM-GT convergent [(QUALT+QUANT) GT] design, qualitative and quantitative data were used as a single data set and analyzed accordingly. Based on this methodological approach, the survey data was constantly compared with the interview data to build a conceptual model of lived citizenship. I integrated the survey findings, interpreted using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, and correlation, with the interview findings by comparing and analyzing them together based on the categories defined by the GT method during interview analysis. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data enabled me to construct an analytical framework for lived citizenship by identifying experiences and patterns in citizenship practices and a subjective understanding of citizenship while also illustrating the relationships between them.

1.2.3 Limitations

To explore the lived citizenship experiences of HSMs and to explain the extent, manner, and reasons these experiences influence their subjective understanding and

practices of citizenship within the everyday realities of transnational settings, I first interviewed HSMs residing in Budapest and Athens. Interviews allowed me to observe not just the complexity of interviewees' views in their own words (Hennink, 2014: 6) but also provided time enough for each interviewee to express their opinions deeply, even about personal matters and sensitive issues in more private settings. Interviews were more suitable than focus groups to capture interviewees' detailed narratives about HSMs' views, feelings, and experiences, thereby serving the conceptual goals of the study more effectively. Additionally, conducting personal interviews during the COVID-19 pandemic was a more practical option since people preferred one-on-one settings, which were easier to manage safely with health measures compared to group gatherings.

Potential interviewees in Budapest were initially contacted in June 2022. Due to the unavailability of interviewees during the summer period and the impact of COVID-19, which led to the need to postpone interviews several times, the interviews in Budapest were completed in November 2022. Despite the challenges, all interviews took place in a face-to-face format. I contacted interviewees in Athens through email, social media tools, and middle persons who might know potential interviewees between August and September 2023. I aimed to schedule interviews in advance of my trip to Athens to ensure that all interviews could be conducted face-to-face. However, upon my arrival in Athens, several individuals who had initially agreed to schedule an interview were unable to participate due to various reasons, such as health issues or last-minute changes in their schedules. To overcome this difficulty, I tried to become more flexible by rescheduling the interview date and time. I also prolonged the duration of my stay in Athens to have enough time to contact more people through the use of snowball sampling. As a result, I could recruit 32 interviewees. Despite my attempts to conduct all interviews in person, ten participants opted to take part online, and five additional interviews could be held online after I left the city. Despite the various disadvantages of online interviews, such as connectivity issues that can disrupt the process, privacy concerns, external distractions, and accessibility challenges, they offer the advantage of easier scheduling and allow participants to feel more comfortable in their own environment, often resulting in more open and honest responses. To minimize

potential drawbacks of online interviews, they were conducted on secure and reputable platforms that provide encryption and data protection. I provided clear instructions before the interviews, offered technical support, and developed backup plans such as phone calls in case of persistent technical difficulties. During the entire research period from 2022 to 2024, I lived in Budapest and frequently traveled to Greece, staying in Athens for extended periods totaling over two months. Spending prolonged time in Budapest and Athens as the sites of the research to develop an in-depth understanding of HSMs' citizenship experiences in their actual life settings and conveying details about the sites was crucial in terms of the credibility of the study (Creswell, 2009: 192).

The scope of this study is limited by its contextual focus. Hence, findings are based on a sample of HSMs residing in Budapest and Athens, and it is unknown how applicable the findings of this study are to HSMs or other migrant communities in Hungary, Greece, or elsewhere. Nonetheless, the data provides significant insights and a foundation for a detailed, context-specific analysis of the lived citizenship experiences, practices, and understanding of highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens, calling for further studies on the question. It highlights subject-defining and emotional aspects of citizenship, encouraging more extensive studies. The findings are also sufficient to explain how EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants navigate a complex process of blending their attachments and identities to form hybrid citizen selves adaptable to various localities within a state of transnationality, maximizing the chances of recognition in socio-politically challenging contexts. This limitation should, however, still be underscored regarding the findings of this study.

Another limitation of this study is that it relies on self-reported data gathered from the narratives and responses of highly skilled migrants, which reflects their personal perspectives and feelings at the time of data collection. It is important to acknowledge that these perceptions and self-reported experiences may vary under different circumstances or over time, as migrants' feelings, attitudes, and interpretations could shift in response to changing social, political, or personal contexts.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the research, I triangulated my qualitative findings by conducting an online survey concurrently with the interviews. The survey has several limitations. Firstly, the population of EU and non-EU HSMs residing in Hungary and Greece is undocumented. Without statistical data on the composition of the entire population of EU and non-EU HSMs in Budapest and Athens, it is impossible to obtain a representative sample. Demographic statistics related to migration provided by Hungary and Greece indicate the number of total populations of EU and non-EU foreign residents who are respectively considered mobile EU citizens and regular migrants. While online statistical data on Budapest's migrant population was available, I was unable to reach the data on the number of EU and non-EU migrants living in Athens since the Greek Statistical Authority and the Ministry of Migration & Asylum publish data at the administrative region level. However, it was challenging in both sites to capture statistical information about the actual population of highly skilled EU and non-EU foreign citizens and the increasing trend of foreign citizens residing in these countries and cities for employment purposes. Despite these limitations, the online survey was a valuable tool for supporting and confirming my observations and identifying patterns in citizenship experiences, practices, and perceptions both within and beyond nation-states. The triangulation of my qualitative findings with survey data on citizenship experiences and practices helped me to improve and strengthen the interview findings and increase the validity of the research.

The distribution of the survey link through respondents' networks, although intended to broaden the sample, may have led to a non-random sample, which limits the generalizability of the findings. To overcome this deficit, I added the eligibility part to the survey and before analyzing the survey results, I reviewed each respondent's responses in the screening part to differentiate and exclude the ones that are irrelevant. Additionally, as people might have different priorities or constraints, such as work, family responsibilities, or lack of time, which may have reduced their willingness to participate in the online survey. These constraints were particularly evident among HSMs in Athens, making it challenging to reach a larger number of respondents from this location. The feedback from a few HSMs in Athens indicates that many people either did not have the time to complete the survey or were

hesitant due to concerns about the trustworthiness of online surveys, worried about scams or misuse of their personal information, which lowered their willingness to participate. To overcome this challenge, I introduced myself in detail, sharing all my professional social media profiles and contact information when distributing the online survey. I also dedicated considerable time and effort to reach more HSMs by leveraging diverse networks and reaching out to higher education institutions, companies, and organizations. Despite the introductory page of the online survey providing clear information about the study's aim and scope, ethical approval, anonymity, and the researcher's contact information and affiliation, as well as efforts to reach a broader population, the number of responses from Athens remained limited. While this limitation itself appeared to be a finding, it also made me realize that conducting an online survey technically limits the ability of the researcher to convince people to participate remotely, without face-to-face contact, and in such cases, providing incentives such as gift cards might have been motivating people to spend their time on the online survey. In future studies, overcoming these limitations will contribute to improving the overall research quality, and employing a combination of online and offline surveys will increase inclusiveness and better representation of the target population.

1.3 Structure of the Study

The structure of this study is organized as follows: The subsequent chapter is composed of four sections that explain the theoretical framework. The first section provides an overview of the concept of citizenship from Thomas Marshall to the recent critical approaches and its boundaries in a transnational context. In the second section of *Chapter 2*, the lived citizenship approach, which this study conceptually focuses on, is introduced to reframe the concept, proposing an analytical framework and a model of lived citizenship as lived experiences of belonging and coexistence in the third section. In the final section, the significance of patriotism and cosmopolitanism as spatial and emotional attachments to the study of lived citizenship is discussed, and the concept of patriotic cosmopolitanism is introduced.

Chapters 3 and 4 analyze the empirical data from Budapest and Athens, respectively, using qualitative and quantitative methods. These chapters, which

share an identical structure, are divided into five parts. Each chapter begins with an overview of the Hungarian and Greek contexts to provide background information about the highly skilled migration regime, policies, their implementation, and anti-immigrant social and political context in Hungary and Greece. In the following sections, the discussion initially focuses on HSMs' lived experiences of belonging as expressed through their self-identification and place attachment narratives. Then, it examines their lived experiences of coexistence by analyzing their legal-political, social, and economic experiences in relation to citizenship practices. Legal-political experiences are elaborated, highlighting institutional and subjective dimensions. The fourth section analyzes citizenship understanding based on lived experiences and practices.

Chapter 5, as the conclusion, discusses the theoretical and empirical contribution of this study. In terms of empirical contribution, the citizenship experiences, understandings, and practices of HSMs in Budapest and Athens are presented from a comparative perspective based on the findings analyzed in *Chapters 3 and 4*. The themes and patterns that emerged in the study are thoroughly examined. The chapter builds a discussion about the comparison of HSMs in Budapest and Athens, as well as between EU and non-EU HSMs, suggesting the emergence of patriotic cosmopolitan citizen identity.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter sets out the main conceptual and theoretical perspectives underpinning this research. First, section 2.1 reviews the citizenship literature, focusing on the evolution of the concept from conventional to critical approaches and elucidates the boundaries of citizenship, presenting scholarly debates and gaps within the framework of migration. In the next section, the concept of lived citizenship is defined, highlighting current discussions and emphasizing the everyday experiences and practices of citizens. The section aims to build a ground to rethink lived citizenship as experiences of belonging and coexistence in a life-long learning process proposed and clarified in the following section. In the final section of this chapter, we explore patriotism and cosmopolitanism as they pertain to citizenship experiences of belonging and coexistence, delving into spatial and affective attachments and allegiances. This examination aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities of lived citizenship experiences, illustrating how individuals construct and navigate their sense of belonging and act accordingly amidst local, national, and global attachments.

2.1. Citizenship and Its Boundaries in Transnational Context

Citizenship emerged as a virtue appropriate to ruling and being ruled rightly in the city-state. According to the Aristotelian perspective, this virtue was attributed exclusively to specific individuals, excluding women, slaves, foreigners, and certain other groups (Johnson, 1984). Citizenship conventionally has been a matter of inclusion and exclusion, and this is the reason why, from Aristotle to the recent scholars in the literature, the main questions have remained the same: Who is to be

called a citizen, and what virtues do make an individual a member of a political community?

In the past half-century, under the impact of liberalization policies, the rising number of displaced people and increasing rates of labor migration in the post-war period gave rise to a revival of interest in the theory and practice of citizenship. By the 1980s, it transformed from a status of legal and political membership to an identity laden with the semantics of nation and nationalism, namely national membership and a bundle of rights and responsibilities (Bloemraad, 2015: 591-592; Joppke, 2007). In the 1990s, during the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union and all communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, which caused tragic ethnonational and ethnoreligious disputes, the question of citizenship gained even more popularity. This transformation primarily resulted from debates surrounding the concept focusing on the deregulation of the increased prominence of the human rights regime (Sassen, 2002: 4), multiculturalism, and the boundaries of citizenship within the context of migration. As a result, the traditional understanding of citizenship has expanded with the development of three different aspects of citizenship: Status, a bundle of rights and duties, and identity (Joppke, 2007).

T. H. Marshall is the pioneer who brought a new theoretical approach to understanding post-war societies by examining the concept of citizenship as a possible solution for minimizing antagonism between social classes and, as a result, for building egalitarian societies based on the ideal of social equality (Marshall, 1950; Turner, 1997; Brubaker, 2015: 19). This approach divides the development process of citizenship into three periods to analyze the concept in an evolutionary line from legal (civil) rights in the 17th and the 18th centuries to political rights in the 18th and the 19th centuries, and finally, to social rights in the 19th and the 20th centuries (Marshall 1950; Turner, 1997: 12). For Marshall, full human equality is possible with full membership in a political community (Marshall, 1973: 76-78). He advances a model of citizenship based on civil, social, and political rights by taking citizenship as a given concept that indicates a homogenous community and focuses on social class division and inequalities derived from class differences. This approach fails to account for other forms of inequality stemming from differences based on race, gender, ethnicity, and religion by falling short of explaining

citizenship in diverse, multicultural societies that characterize today's reality (Turner, 1997: 13-14). Additionally, the classical Marshallian approach solely examines citizenship status as the rights accorded to citizens, overlooking the rights of non-citizens residing within a specific political community. Considering the increasing movement of people across borders, as Joppke (1999: 629) also suggests, "Marshallian citizenship's universalism is no longer plausible today." Despite all these criticisms, Marshall's legacy of social citizenship remains significant as it highlights the evolution of citizenship policies towards more inclusive frameworks within the context of liberalization processes in modern nation-states.

Since the 1990s, globalization and increased migration have resulted in the emergence of cultural complexity, contributing to the development of the citizenship literature. In particular, three noteworthy works that determine the direction of conventional debates have become prominent. Rogers Brubaker, whom Joppke (1999: 630) calls "the true galvanizer of the contemporary debate on citizenship and immigration," develops one of the most influential approaches by defining citizenship as a social closure (Brubaker, 1992: 21). Brubaker offers a re-conceptualization of commonly used terms like state, nation, nation-state, and citizenship by interconnecting them. According to his approach, citizenship serves as both "an instrument and object of social closure" by being "internally inclusive but externally exclusive" (Brubaker, 1992: 21-23; Brubaker, 2015: 19). The model Brubaker proposes heavily relies on a division between insiders and outsiders, citizens and non-citizens, or members and non-members. In this divided world, insiders are portrayed positively, while outsiders are characterized negatively and residually; their exclusion stems not from being outsiders *per se*, but from not being insiders (Brubaker, 1992: 29). As the modern state is both territorial and national, citizenship as national membership does not only set political boundaries between citizens and non-citizens but also ethnocultural boundaries (Brubaker, 1992: 27). Hence, social closure consists of both territorial and national (ethnocultural) closures, which lead to a national approach to citizenship by bringing the identity aspect of the concept back and recoupling the concept with national identity.

While some scholars reject Brubaker's conception of nationhood by finding his cultural approach as deterministic or his national citizenship model as ultra-stable

(Joppke, 1999: 630), some others, such as Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal, recognize the exclusionary character of citizenship but propose a new and striking model by emphasizing the post-national aspect (Soysal, 1994; Joppke, 1999: 630). She argues that rights are no longer legitimized based on nationhood but on peoplehood (Soysal, 1994: 3). By looking at the phases of migration and guestworker experiences comparatively in European countries in the 20th century, Soysal (1994) claims the de-territorialization of citizenship. She argues that the national citizenship of Brubaker has lost its ground to a universal type of membership with the standardization of rights of non-citizens in migrant-receiving countries (Soysal, 1994: 119-120). While this constitutes a notable and groundbreaking contribution, it remains evident that the codification and standardization of universal human rights, encompassing minority and refugee rights alongside other related regulations, have not eradicated the exclusionary authority of nation-states or the persistence of national boundaries. This rights-focused approach, representing an adaptation of Marshall's concept of social citizenship at the post-national level, also overlooks socio-cultural aspects of everyday life that cause inequalities and exclusion and the difficulty to fully guarantee the rights of non-citizens in every country where distinct migration regimes are enforced (Joppke, 2007: 42). What is outstanding in the approaches of Brubaker and Soysal is that both acknowledge the presence of “non-citizens” within national contexts and seek to extend the rights of citizens to non-citizens.

By the 1990s, most scholars have endeavored to re-question the concept and to analyze citizenship regimes and policies about migration, multiculturalism, ethnocultural pluralism, and social cohesion. Within this view, Kymlicka and Taylor bring the terms of “multicultural citizenship” (Kymlicka, 1995) and “deep diversity” (Taylor, 2002) to the literature by carrying the concept to the multicultural level. By extending Soysal’s approach, Sassen (2003: 42, 47) questions the function of citizenship for exploring the problems of belonging and identity in the modern world and brings the discussion to the de-territorialization of citizenship practices by proposing a denationalized form of citizenship. Similarly, Bloemraad (2015: 591) links citizenship with multiculturalism to consider whether it really matters in the modern world. John Clarke (2014) also contributes to the debate, suggesting the idea

of de-centralization of citizenship, which indicates how it becomes less of a legal status and more of a discourse about the relative strengths of different political and social actors. The central inquiries posed by these prominent scholars revolve around whether the national dimension of citizenship has diminished in significance and, if so, whether alternative approaches to conceptualizing and implementing citizenship exist. In all these efforts, there is an emphasis on the presence of “non-citizens” who may claim to acquire citizenship rights or citizenship *per se*. Therefore, it is not wrong to state that all scholars in the field focus on extending citizen rights to non-citizens through the reconceptualization of citizenship, particularly concerning migration.

Citizenship plays a crucial role for sovereign nation-states in establishing a legal frame of membership by determining who will be considered members and assigning specific rights and responsibilities to that status. It serves as the means by which a nation-state defines its population, upon which it establishes its legitimate sovereignty and exercises control. In other words, citizenship regulates the relationship between individuals and the state through a mutually recognized social contract. It confers specific status, rights, membership, solidarity, and security as a pledge from the state while also necessitating well-defined duties and responsibilities to be fulfilled by individuals, namely citizens. As a civic virtue, citizenship should ideally be egalitarian, sacred, national, democratic, unique, and socially consequential (Brubaker, 1990: 380). However, in most cases, membership to the nation-state is understood and defined in a primordial sense of national belonging based upon the fictional idea of the membership to territorially and culturally bounded, congruent, and homogenous nation-states, and it makes citizenship exclusivist, undemocratic, and selective (Puggioni, 2016: 123).

Migration fosters the formation of diverse, multicultural communities, challenging this traditional understanding of citizenship and demanding a shift in its content toward being more inclusive, egalitarian, and democratic. As a response, many states adopted inclusionary national membership models by either promoting civil, political, and social rights that would make migrants quasi-citizens or naturalizing them as part of integration and democratic inclusion processes (Vink and Bauböck, 2013; Joppke, 1999: 641). However, citizenship law is quite an internal issue for

states. As Vink and Bauböck also underline, citizenship regimes can be inclusive, selectively inclusive, or exclusive depending on states' national interests, which can be related to historically contingent factors, demographic trends, and political contestation (Vink and Bauböck, 2013: 20). Additionally, the ways of implementing citizenship policies also remain another question that is very much dependent on the sovereign will of states. Furthermore, different implementations of distinct regimes and policies shape individuals' everyday life experiences and how they constitute their subjectivity, which, in turn, may affect subject-state relations. However, these are not the focal points of traditional structural approaches to citizenship.

Citizenship is often assumed as a homogenous category for all the members of a polity, mostly a single nation but rather a dynamic concept that is conceived differently and imagined, experienced, and practiced in various ways by different groups of people, including both citizens and non-citizens. Citizenship is constantly negotiated and reproduced by individuals in everyday life, which is often defined as a space of banal and mundane practices (Edensor, 2002; Billig, 1995). In this sense, citizenship is more a way of claiming subjectivity than just owning a passport that brings rights and obligations. Particularly in the case of non-citizen residents of nation-states, citizenship turns into the "right to claim rights" and a struggle for recognition (Isin, 2009: 371; Isin and Turner, 2003: 1) by making individuals active social and political subjects. As a relational process, claim-making is highly based on recognition. Therefore, individuals need to have an awareness of themselves, a voice to claim their existence, and to be heard by making their body visible to others. In this context, the formation of subjectivity first requires self-awareness of one's identity, which is deeply rooted in the knowledge and experiences of belonging to and being recognized within a community.

These recent developments in the citizenship literature direct scholars to examine the concept from below, offering alternative approaches that encompass differences (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 207; Maier, 2021). Within this framework, critical citizenship scholarship argues that citizenship is not only owned by states but also owned by individuals, and the complexities of the concept are best understood and revealed as lived experiences of individuals in everyday life (Maatta et al., 2021: 774; Carranza, 2017: 107; Lister, 2007; Kallio et al., 2015). Traditional approaches prioritize legal

status rather than daily citizenship experiences and mainly focus on the relations between citizens and the state by overlooking non-citizens' relations and interactions with the state, as well as the new ways of being and becoming a citizen in the absence of legal status (Isin and Nielsen, 2008: 1-2). However, critical approaches to citizenship consist of the efforts to explore and explain relational, multifaceted citizenship experiences of individuals, adopting a bottom-up perspective. Given that citizenship is a political agency and manifests in multidimensional contexts, critical scholars explore and explain citizenship from below, locating it at multiple sites of daily life. Although their focal points differ, the critical approaches outlined in the following section are interconnected and complement one another.

2.2. Reviewing Critical Citizenship Literature

Departing from a state-centered approach to a subject-centered approach, critical scholars investigate citizenship through three different but highly related conceptual approaches. The first group of critical scholars defines the concept as politically effective acts or deeds of people that produce new subjects who are claimants of rights actively engaging in communal and public affairs (Isin and Nielsen, 2008; Çağlar, 2016). The concept of “acts of citizenship” was introduced by Isin and Nielsen to shift the focus from subjects to the acts of subjects to challenge the roles allocated to individuals by authorities (Isin and Nielsen, 2008: 2; Lewicki and O’Toole, 2017: 156). They go beyond the understanding of citizenship as legal status by making individuals active, political, and effective subjects who act and speak on their behalf (Isin and Nielsen, 2008: 7). This approach investigates citizenship by moving against the mainstream to respond to the processes of postmodernism and globalization by underlining the plurality of individuals’ political expressions and practices without negating the accomplishments of contemporary citizenship studies (Caraus, 2018: 795; Isin and Nielsen, 2008: 3). It highlights the agents’ capacities to act politically regardless of public authorities’ “formal” authorization by enacting their political subjectivity (Isin, 2009; Lewicki and O’Toole, 2017). The concept is recently being used and enriched by many scholars who examine acts of citizenship as a way of becoming political and acquiring a political subjectivity by focusing on the political participation of different groups of individuals in different contexts (Çağlar, 2016; Caraus, 2018;

Lewicki and O'Toole, 2017; Lewicki, 2017; Darling, 2017; Biglin, 2022). For instance, acts of citizenship are described as moments in which individuals, regardless of their formal status as citizens and non-citizens, constitute themselves as activist citizens through political activities, open forms of protests, and volunteering (Artero et al., 2022: 203-204).

This approach prioritizes acts of citizenship within the public domain even though a few scholars working on this concept explore the acts of citizenship in private spaces through parenting (Bloch, 2022) or learning and knowledge sharing (Darling, 2017: 733). The goal of the studies on acts of citizenship is to understand how citizenship is formed through acts, decentering the subjects offers a new perspective to observe the genealogy (Isin & Nielsen, 2008). However, it fails to consider how individuals perceive, experience, and feel citizenship in the private sphere, as well as how they form relationships and engage in specific practices and actions based on these perceptions and experiences. Additionally, as acknowledged by Staeheli (2020: 399), they also overlook the fact that the practices of citizenship, which include the daily routines integral to the relationships that both construct and disrupt citizenship, are crucial to people's lives and their potential actions as citizens.

The second group of scholars in critical citizenship studies explores the affective dimension of citizenship, focusing on the role of affect and emotions in state-subject relations within mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion (Ayata, 2019: 330; Fortier, 2010; Di Gregorio and Merolli, 2016; De Wilde and Duyvendak, 2016: 975). This approach examines how the state uses specific policies and discourses to design people's feelings and behaviors within the framework of a constructed understanding of the desired citizen (Ayata, 2019: 334; Fortier, 2010: 20). The affective dimension of citizenship is used by the state to set boundaries between 'us' and 'them' by encouraging citizens to feel in a certain way about themselves and others (Johnson, 2010: 496). States define who true citizens are and what desired affective attachments and social relations individuals must have to be identified as desired citizens (Ayata, 2019: 330; De Wilde and Duyvendak, 2016: 980; Fortier, 2013). The analysis of this approach to citizenship from below scrutinizes individual experiences as the source in identifying the contextual factors and the issues in individual and collective policy-making about citizenship and naturalization (Hung,

2010: 496-497). That's why it does not only take place at the level of the state but also at the individual level. While examining the affective governance strategy of the state, affective citizenship as a holistic approach also tries to respond to questions "such as how citizens themselves respond to, engage in, or practice affective citizenship and what forms of resistance, contestation, compliance, or adaptation are expressed in acts of affective citizenship" (Ayata, 2019: 334). Within this scope, the majority of current studies that adopted this approach examine the concept in terms of politics of identity, political polarization, and resistance through the perspective of citizens as legal members of political communities (Di Gregorio and Merolli, 2016; Fortier, 2010; De Wilde and Duyvendak, 2016; Johnson, 2010). A small number of studies, on the other hand, explore affective practices of naturalization within the scope of desirability, belonging, and integration through the analysis of migrant experiences (Fortier, 2013; Kalm, 2014; Merolli, 2016). This approach does not aim to formulate policies but rather to analyze issues by reminding the significance of citizenship as an invisible affective contract between individuals and the state that informs and frames multiple experiences of being and becoming citizens, and power relations exist at all the levels of daily life.

The third group of critical scholars in citizenship literature adopts a micro-sociological perspective defining citizenship as a lived experience that focuses on both citizens' and non-citizens' understandings of the meanings of citizenship and subjective representation of their position within the social and political community in which they live in (Lister, 2007; Staeheli, 2011; Cherubini, 2011; Kallio et al., 2015; Kallio and Mitchell, 2016; Kallio et al., 2020; Cochrane and Wolff, 2022). Lived citizenship, which has gained popularity among scholars over the last decade, builds a relationship between citizenship and everyday life, defining it as "a condition related to people's everyday experiences in multiple domains" (Cherubini, 2011: 128). Lived citizenship offers a promising theoretical framework for understanding and explaining citizenship, with significant potential for further development. Its analytical power can be enhanced through future studies that focus on achieving greater conceptual clarity and refinement. Building on this conceptual approach, the next section in this chapter introduces a relational model of lived

citizenship, further developing the descriptive and analytical framework of the concept.

2.3. Reframing Lived Citizenship as A Life-long Learning Process

Traditional approaches prioritize citizenship as a legal status and mainly focus on the relations between citizens and the state, recognizing it as a homogenous category for all the members of a polity. However, it is a dynamic concept learned, interpreted, imagined, and practiced in various ways by individuals in everyday life. Citizenship is inherently connected to and emerges in specific spatial and social contexts (Lister, 2007), which not only shape the nature of citizenship and the dynamics of citizens' environments but also influence citizens' perception of their roles within communities and their self-understanding (Terbish et al., 2022). The everyday life approach to citizenship, thus, shifts the focus from formal settings to the intersection and interrelation of both formal and informal sites, aiming to map out the lived experiences and realities of being and becoming a citizen within and across national borders. This approach suggests that all dimensions and both formal and informal spaces of citizenship are interconnected and collectively shape individuals' experiences as social and political actors in political communities (Lister, 2007; Cherubini, 2011: 128; Kallio et al., 2020: 716). In this sense, it stands apart from two other critical approaches concentrating solely on acts or emotions. Instead of limiting researchers to a single aspect of citizenship, it provides a comprehensive understanding that encompasses all dimensions centering on lived experiences. As a newly emerging concept, lived citizenship presents a generative approach that explores relational and lived experiences of citizenship in the everyday diversity of transnational settings by producing a minimal consensus to coexist with different groups (Samanani, 2022). It offers a perspective that makes citizenship understandable and meaningful via experiences and daily interactions of individuals.

Lived citizenship approach in critical citizenship studies draws attention to "the actual spaces in which citizenship is expressed" (Lister, 2007: 55) and how their social, cultural, and material contexts affect their lives as citizens (Hall et al., 1998: 313). Ruth Lister (2007), who first introduced the concept emphasizes the

importance of the everyday world of citizenship, which encompasses the inclusive and exclusive dynamics of the concept, as well as the cultural, social, and political practices in various contexts. It offers broader and more detailed conceptualizations beyond the ethnic-civic dichotomy which most micro-level analyses of citizenship are based on (Maier, 2021). Various empirical studies explore the lived citizenship experiences of youth and children (Kallio et al., 2015; Wood, 2016), women and LGBTQ individuals (Cochrane and Wolff, 2022; McKearney, 2021), and asylum-seekers and refugees (Cochrane and Wolff, 2022; Kallio and Mitchell, 2016; Cherubini, 2011), mostly focusing on their social and political participation. These studies define lived citizenship as an interactive and relational experience of interpreting and negotiating rights, responsibilities, attachments, and loyalties in everyday life. However, only a few studies define what lived citizenship experiences are and the interrelations between experiences, participatory practices, and subjective citizenship understanding, which, as a result, produce particular citizen subjectivities. Lived citizenship recognizes the spatial and social complexities of citizenship in today's increasingly transnational everyday contexts, offering an analytical framework to explore how individuals critically evaluate and shape their membership within political communities. Therefore, reframing lived citizenship by explicitly outlining the experiences and the relational processes between experiences, practices, and subjective understandings of citizenship enhances the analytical depth of the concept.

Migrants navigate multiple forms of transnational belonging, balancing a long-distance relationship with their country of origin and a regulated social contract with their country of residence. Exploring citizenship experiences in these nested processes, which influence migrants' self-conception as social and political actors, challenges the traditional "citizenship-in-the-state" concept (Staeheli, 2010: 396) and the rigid distinction between citizens and non-citizens (Carens, 2013; Kallio & Mitchell, 2016). This study argues that migrants' understanding of citizenship is formed through a combination of legal-political status and a multi-layered sense of belonging and identity derived from their socio-economic, socio-cultural, and emotional experiences within and beyond nation-states. Within this framework, the study conceptualizes lived citizenship as lived experiences of being and becoming a

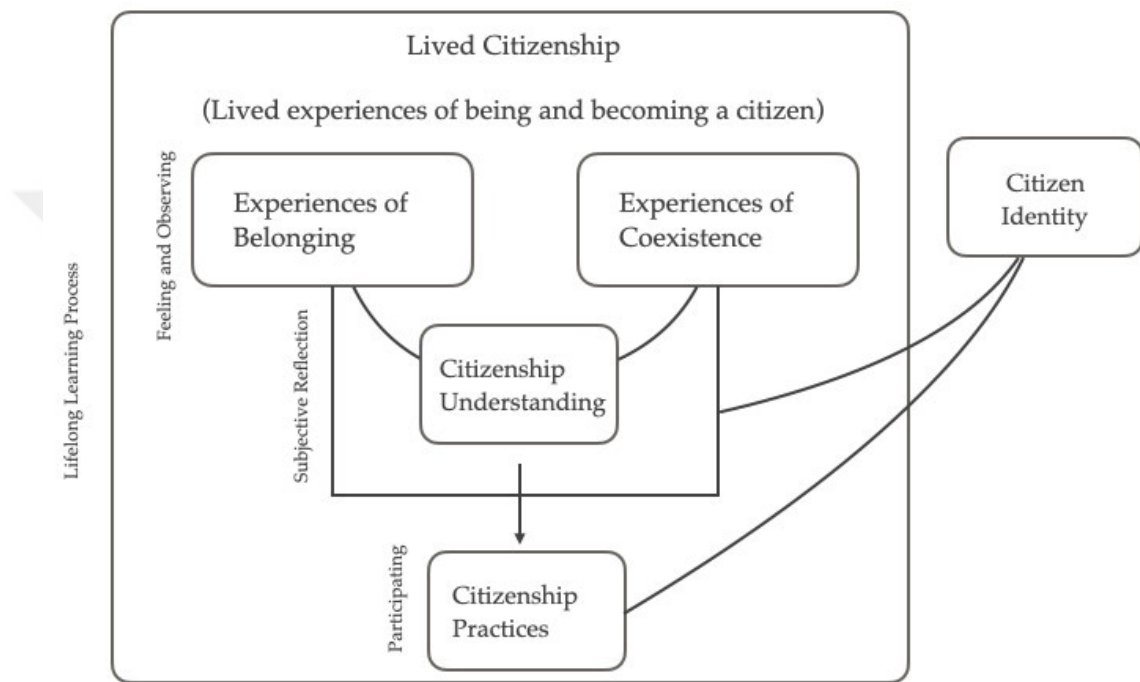
citizen in a relational, life-long learning process involving experiences of belonging and experiences of coexistence that individuals encounter in everyday life (Sönmez Gioftsios & Ozcurumez, 2024).

Experiences of belonging indicate the emotional and cultural aspects of the concept, explaining how citizenship intersects with one's self-identification, external identification, spatial, socio-cultural, and emotional belonging, and sense of distance. It refers to the subjective emotional connections that individuals acquire, cultivate, and engage in both public and private settings as social and political actors who are members of political communities. Lived experiences of coexistence, on the other hand, pertain more to the public sphere, primarily focusing on the institutional dimension of citizenship. However, these experiences also encompass a subjective aspect where individuals cultivate specific sentiments towards society, state, and state institutions, influencing their actions and behaviors. Legal-political social and economic experiences that individuals undergo throughout their lives in political communities consist of experiences of coexistence. The experiences of coexistence encompass a range of interactions, attitudes, and engagements with others within a shared community and provide a sense of community, contributing to their understanding of living together, and influencing their role in fostering a harmonious political community. The sense of community, in turn, shape the individual's sense of belonging.

This comprehensive and relational approach does not solely concentrate on practices, actions, or experiences. Instead, it encompasses the entire process of being and becoming a citizen in everyday life. This relational approach to live citizenship proposed in this study defines lived experiences and illustrates the relationship between experiences, practices, and citizen identity formation. Individuals are not passive consumers of citizenship, but they are also active producers. Therefore, reframing the concept of lived citizenship which examines citizenship from the perspective of citizens explains how and why these lived experiences contribute to the formation of specific citizenship understanding, which, in turn, shapes a distinct type of citizen. In this approach, citizenship foregrounds lived experiences to explore fluid areas between citizens and non-citizens by defining citizenship as a life-long learning process of negotiating identity and belonging with a given status.

It does not ignore or diminish the significance of the legal status. Rather, it highlights affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship, locating citizenship as an identity and belonging alongside the legal status as an equally important dimension in a central position.

Figure 1. Relational Approach to Lived Citizenship



Lived citizenship experiences of belonging and coexistence indicate a state of living together with differences in a transnational form of conviviality (Samanani, 2022, 2023; Hemer et al., 2020) that is related to the concept of cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 1997) through its moral and cultural accounts as well as patriotism. Exploring how migrants navigate cosmopolitanism and patriotism as spatial and emotional attachments and allegiances helps to grasp the affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship, which are fundamental factors shaping subjective citizenship understanding and citizen identity. Studying how migrants experience citizenship in their everyday lives of transnationality offers an insight into the interplay of cosmopolitan and patriotic attachments and commitments framed by constant spatial, temporal, and situational reconfigurations filtered through multiple socio-cultural, political, and emotional references. Therefore, cosmopolitanism and patriotism, which are spatial and emotional attachments, and their interplay are

discussed in the following section as two significant factors that shape migrants' citizenship experiences and participatory practices.

2.4 Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism in the Study of Lived Citizenship

Patriotism and cosmopolitanism are spatial concepts which involve a sense of attachment to one's country and the world, respectively, and have been utilized in various ways across disciplines, with no universally agreed definition, theoretical conceptualization, and empirical attributes (Held, 2010; Pin-Fat, 2015: 83; Skovgaard-Smith and Poulsen, 2018: 131). As spatial attachments and allegiances, they help us to grasp the affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship, which are fundamental for the constitution of subjective citizenship understanding. Therefore, prior to the analysis of the empirical data, the question of what patriotism and cosmopolitanism, the interplay between the concepts and the significance of belonging to the study of patriotism and cosmopolitanism must be examined to build a ground for the empirical discussion.

Patriotism, at its core, involves a sense of attachment and a political act of showing loyalty and devotion to one's country with a desire to contribute to its well-being and success (Ikuenobe, 2010: 301). It basically embraces an idea of a positive and active disposition to love and care for one's country (Nussbaum, 2008, 2002; Nincic & Ramos, 2012: 375; Sardoč, 2020: 3; Viroli, 1995) and one's self-identification with the patria that refers to a fatherland (Appiah, 1997; Bar-Tal, 1993). It provides a sense of identity and a purpose to work towards the common good of the beloved country. Daniel Bar-Tal (1993: 48) expands this definition, proposing that patriotism is an "attachment of group members towards their group and the country in which they reside." His perspective suggests that in order to experience patriotic feelings towards a specific geographic location, it is essential to establish a connection between that area and a particular nation or community that resides there (Bar-Tal, 1993: 49). This approach, referring to an attachment not only to the political entity but also to the nation, links patriotism with nationalism, two concepts that are often used interchangeably as group identities despite having separate meanings.

Patriotism reflects gratitude, a positive affection toward a country, whereas nationalism is a way of thinking that values membership in a nation and entails a commitment to sovereignty for a particular group, centering on the people rather than the country (Kapust, 2020: 53). It is a positive attitude regarding the civic accomplishments of a country and its people whereas nationalism involves a negative perception that reflects chauvinism which is the glorification of one's own nation along with the conviction of its superiority over other nations (Heinrich, 2020: 77). That is to say, the object of patriotism is not a nation but rather a country, rules, and institutions. It is crucial to explicitly disentangle patriotism from nationalism to understand better the language, ideas, and ideals of patriotism and observe individuals' patriotic attachments and commitments that are not always nationalistic and are compatible with more inclusive stances such as cosmopolitanism.

Over the last decades, many scholars have endeavored to distinguish patriotism from other group identifications by proposing different theoretical frameworks for understanding patriotism and patriotic attitudes (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999; Heinrich, 2020; Tinsley, 2022; Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989; Viroli, 1995). It has been examined through a set of themes that define the concept as an allegiance to the state (Viroli, 1995), a moral requirement and a civic virtue (Primoratz, 2007), a membership that entails civic commitments based on republican, constitutional, and democratic principles reminding its historical connection to liberalism (Soutphommasane, 2009, 2020; Ikuenobe, 2010; Habermas, 1994: 134), and a sense of belonging (Viroli, 1995; Schatz, 2020; Bar-Tal, 1993). Among varied approaches, the most functional conceptual distinction to explore patriotic attitudes and belonging is offered by Staub (1997) as blind patriotism versus constructive patriotism, by focusing on the mode of reasoning associated with patriotism (Nincic & Ramos, 2012: 376) and its socio-psychologically and politically effective conclusions.

Blind patriotism is defined as a “rigid and inflexible attachment to country” with unwavering support, unquestioning allegiance, and intolerance of in-group criticism that is seen as inherently disloyal (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999; Schatz, 2020; Nincic & Ramos, 2012: 376). The self is constructed through idealized group

attributes (Schatz, 2020: 617). Constructive patriotism, on the other hand, involves recognizing and addressing the flaws and shortcomings of one's country while working towards creating a positive change and better future for the well-being of all (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999; Spry and Hornsey, 2007: 152). Constructive patriots feel a sense of belonging to the country; however, their group and personal identities are not intertwined as they rationally appraise group attributes and prevailing norms and values (Schatz, 2020: 617). Constructive patriotism, as a balanced and nuanced approach, is positively associated with political activism, objective political information gathering, critical loyalty, and relative impartiality, and it is orthogonal to nationalism (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999: 169). Constructive patriots may be, thus, seen as more open to welcoming the ideas and ideals of cosmopolitanism to carry out their patriotic objectives in a broader context beyond the borders of states.

Cosmopolitanism is a more complex, multifaceted, philosophical concept than patriotism, having been influential in fields such as political philosophy (Nussbaum, 2002; Hedrick, 2013; Beitz, 1999; Hedrick, 2013), political theory (Held, 2010; Linklater, 1998; Pogge, 1992), ethics (Turner, 2002; Pogge, 1992), and cultural studies (Noble, 2009; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulsen, 2018; Skey, 2013), and has been used to address a wide range of issues, from human rights and social justice to environmental sustainability and global governance. Even though there is no universal agreement on the meaning of the concept, there are four broad approaches based on certain thematic accounts that contribute to the contemporary meaning of cosmopolitanism: Moral, legal, political, and cultural or “actually existing cosmopolitanism” which is also called as “new” cosmopolitanism (Pin-Fat, 2015: 83; Held, 2010: 39-44; Beck, 2006: 41-43).

Moral cosmopolitanism is based on the idea that all human beings as ‘the ultimate unit of moral concern’ (Pogge, 1992: 48) share a common humanity on the basis of peoplehood and are entitled to equal consideration and treatment (Tan, 2004: 10; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulsen, 2018: 131; Pin-Fat, 2015: 84). Advocating for the equal value and inherent worth of every individual, this perspective emphasizes moral obligations and responsibilities that individuals have towards all human beings, regardless of their morally arbitrary and irrelevant nationality, ethnicity, or

cultural background (Pin-Fat, 2015: 84). Concerning the application of cosmopolitan principles to the domain of legal and political systems, legal- political cosmopolitanism builds on a moral approach and addresses the necessity of universal law to ensure and uphold the principles of justice, fairness, and respect for human rights on a global scale, overriding nation-states (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018: 131; Pogge, 1992: 49). It promotes global political thinking and the establishment of global civil society and institutions that recognize individuals as equal members of a unified human community, rather than mere subjects of specific states (Held, 2010: 56; Hedrick, 2013: 624).

Unlike these approaches, cultural cosmopolitanism provides an empirical framework and emphasizes the importance of cosmopolitan conditions and moments in real places. Cultural cosmopolitanism which focuses on the influence of cosmopolitanism on individuals' identity and lives (Taraborrelli, 2015: 87) is defined as 'new' or 'actually existing cosmopolitanism (Pin-Fat, 2015). It is also conceptualised as 'banal cosmopolitanism' (Beck, 2006). It embraces and values cultural diversity, promoting the idea of cultural exchange, openness, and the exploration of diverse cultural experiences as a means to broaden one's knowledge and outlook on the world. Cultural cosmopolitanism emphasizes the possibility of dialogue, exchange, and mutual understanding among people from different cultural backgrounds (Held, 2010: 110). Cosmopolitanism requires individualization, and having a cosmopolitan identity is a manifestation of personal identity goes beyond a single cultural identity and belonging (Beck, 2006). Hence, the question "who is a cosmopolitan" gains significance in cultural cosmopolitanism that concerns culture and self (Taraborrelli, 2015).

Cultural cosmopolitanism emphasizes the fluidity and hybridity of personal identities that flourish with diverse cultural sources (Taraborrelli, 2015: 90). It suggests an "imagined community of humankind" (Linklater, 1998: 24) that is not based on the worth of similarities but based on the worth of differences, presenting the world as an experiential space where the boundaries of cultures blur and local, national, global sensibilities and influences intertwined (Beck, 2006: 43). Cultural hybridity that emerges in such spaces, shapes individuals' personal and social identity, reflecting in everyday experiences, dispositions, practices and discourses

(Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018: 132-133). This approach, thus, makes the idea of cosmopolitanism a “category of practice” that is used by individuals to make sense of themselves and their practices (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 4) in global everyday existence (Beck, 2006: 42; Pin-Fat, 2015: 85; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018: 131). On that sense, cultural cosmopolitanism paves a way for explaining the construction of patriotic cosmopolitan identities among migrants.

Table 2. Patriotic, Cosmopolitan, and Patriotic Cosmopolitan Traits

Patriotic Traits	Cosmopolitan Traits	Patriotic Cosmopolitan Traits
Identification Self-identification with patria Personal and group identity are intertwined Self is constructed through idealised group attributes Citizen of a country	Identification Self-identification with the imagined community of humankind Personal independence Self is constructed through socio-cultural hybridity Citizen of the world	Identification Self-identification with universalist attributes Personal independence (Personal and group identity are not intertwined) Self is constructed through hybridity and mixture of idealised different group attributes Both a citizen of a country and a citizen of the world
Attachments and Emotions Primary allegiance to home country/blind or critical loyalty Home is Patria Rigid, inflexible, irrational attachment Shame/anger/hate when one's country of origin acts poor (care); proud when one's county of origin acts well (care)	Attachments and Emotions Primary allegiance to the community of humankind Home is the world Fluid, flexible, rational, multi-layered attachments Love, support, care the world and all humanity	Attachments and Emotions Allegiance to the community of humankind and critical loyalty to home country Home is everywhere one feels connected to in the world Fluid, flexible, relatively rational, multi-layered attachments Loving one's homeland(s) (not only country of origin but also country of residence) while being loyal to humankind

The lived citizenship experiences of migrants indicate a state of living together with differences in a transnational form of conviviality (Samanani, 2022) related to cosmopolitanism through its moral and cultural accounts, as well as patriotism (Sönmez Gioftsios & Ozcurumez, 2024). Transnational experiences cultivate specific forms of cosmopolitanism and patriotism through intense interactions with others, offering opportunities for self-rediscovery both within one's homeland (*patria*) and in the broader global community (*cosmos*) (Pin-Fat, 2015: 85). As there is no single moment purely cosmopolitan or patriotic for individuals in the everyday life of transnational space, these two forms of attachments, sentiments, and

commitments cohabit. Migrants' narratives of belonging and identity, thus, reveal a complexity that spatially encompasses multiple layers, including local, national, and global.

This study approaches cosmopolitanism and patriotism from below through the concept of patriotic cosmopolitanism and observes the impact of cosmopolitan and patriotic attachments and commitments on the lived citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants. Patriotic cosmopolitanism appreciates human diversity, reconciling the universalism of humanist worldviews and the particularism of local and cultural attachments (Appiah, 1997; Erez & Laborde, 2020; Varouxakis, 2002; Tan, 2004; Taraborrelli, 2015). The patriotic cosmopolitan condition, which is also called rooted cosmopolitanism offers alternative ways of a more inclusive and less conflictual life, balancing particularity with universality (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018: 132). These multi-layered attachments and sentiments are constructed through imagined solidarities (Calhoun, 2003), which redefine the demos and rescale citizenship and citizenship practices. However, only a few studies directly deal with the aspects of daily lives in transnational conviviality and the relationship between patriotism and cosmopolitanism as distinct but complementary layers of individuals' belonging that shape their understanding of membership and construct hybrid selves (Horvat, 2020; Appiah, 1997; Tan, 2004; Taraborrelli, 2015; Dumanig et al., 2023).

CHAPTER III

UNPACKING LIVED CITIZENSHIP EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES OF HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS: INSIGHTS FROM BUDAPEST

3.1. The Hungarian Context

Hungary was portrayed as "the defender of Europe" (Merabishvili, 2023; Kallius, 2016) against migrants from third countries through a xenophobic and culturalist narrative primarily targeting asylum seekers and refugees (Rajaram, 2016; Barna & Koltai, 2019). This narrative intensified by 2010 with Viktor Orbán's march to power after eight years in opposition. First, his populist tone gained a more nationalistic character, emphasizing the nation and presenting the government party, Fidesz, as the actual representative of the Hungarian people. In constructing this populist rhetoric, Orbán leveraged the concept of an enemy, using the image of "the corrupted elite," who are those pro-immigration liberals, to strengthen his agenda (Csehi, 2019: 1016; Bíró-Nagy, 2022). The so-called migration crisis and the pre-existing xenophobia in Hungarian society (Bíró-Nagy, 2022), which is not limited to non-EU migrants, including negative opinions about the free movement of EU citizens to Hungary (Nyíri, 2003), allowed Orbán to fuel his anti-immigrant campaign. He extended his anti-immigrant and "corrupted elite" narratives beyond Hungary, positioning himself as the defender of Europe against immigrants and pro-immigration corrupted elites and Brussels (Bíró-Nagy, 2022; Csehi, 2019). Anti-immigrant policies were presented as essential for protecting both national and regional unity (Merabishvili, 2023; Kallius, 2016; Csehi, 2019).

Economic migrants have a relatively favorable position in Hungary in comparison to refugees, who are considered to belong to the political realm within this hierarchical migration system based on the economic vs. political distinction that shapes economic migrant/refugee differentiation. Highly skilled non-EU individuals, categorized as economic migrants, are integrated into the labor market through market-driven policies that grant them relatively easier access. In contrast, EU citizens from other member states residing in Hungary enjoy equal legal treatment with Hungarian citizens. However, following the 2015 Charlie Hebdo attack, the Hungarian government adopted a more skeptical stance toward economic migrants, asserting that economic migration cannot be entirely separated from political implications, linking security concerns with the presence of all foreigners (Melegh, 2016; Merabishvili, 2023; Rajaram, 2016; Reményi et al., 2022: 336). As a result, all foreigners, particularly those who are non-EU migrants regardless of their migrant status, have begun to face increased scrutiny and a more restrictive political climate. In Hungary, xenophobic sentiments and intolerance towards immigrants notably increased among the less educated, elderly, and rural populations. However, in Budapest, where most foreign citizens reside, the rise in xenophobia was considerably lower (Bajomi-Lázár, 2019).

Owing to a range of challenges, such as demographic shifts and global competitiveness, similar to most European countries, Hungary has implemented new strategies to expand its labor supply (Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020: 4-5; Melegh, 2016; Cerna & Czaika, 2016), including the reduction of corporate income tax rates and cash incentives to boost corporate activities and foreign investment (Deak, Burjan and Lócsei, 2023). As a result, Budapest has become a prominent center for outsourcing and shared service centers, leading to significant improvements in job creation, a notable decrease in unemployment rates (HIPA 2019). With the rise on the number of foreign-born citizens from EU and non-EU countries, the city became remarkably cosmopolitan. However, Hungary has also established annual quotas to limit immigration and implemented the national priority condition, which means highly-skilled individuals from third countries can only be employed if there are no suitable Hungarian or EU citizens available for the position (Kahanec & Zimmermann, 2010; EMN, 2018). The national priority condition has

particularly been underlined in the new immigration law (Act XC of 2023) introduced by the Hungarian government in 2023 as to be effective on March 1, 2024. The opening statements of the Act XC which brings major changes, focusing on the general rules for the entry and residence of third-country nationals indicate the country's clear tendency to nationalize its labor force with an exclusionary approach (Law XC of 2023; European Commission, 2024):

“Due to the increasing migration again, stricter immigration enforcement is necessary! Hungary belongs to the Hungarians and Hungarian jobs belong first and foremost to Hungarians. We must clearly regulate who can stay in Hungary and for how long. Neither employment nor other purposes of stays can be unlimited and cannot be extended automatically. The Government is therefore proposing the creation of a new comprehensive law, which will tighten and clarify the legal rights and conditions for the residence and employment of foreign citizens in Hungary.”

The Hungarian legal system classifies individuals entering Hungary into four groups based on hierarchical traditions: Hungarian minorities from neighboring countries, EEA citizens (including EU member states), citizens of third countries, and refugees (Melegh, 2016). The introduction of the Single Permit concludes with the enactment of the new immigration law, which delineates 24 types of residence permits, including eight specifically for employment purposes, each aiming to accommodate various conditions for different migrant categories (Law XC of 2023; European Commission, 2024). Among these changes, the introduction of the "guest worker" permit for low-skilled workers and the "Hungarian Card" as a domestic policy equivalent to EU Blue Card, providing new pathways for highly skilled migrants stand out as significant (Law XC of 2023). The revision to the EU Blue Card, specifically aimed at attracting professionals in fields such as information technology and engineering, where labor shortages are apparent, is also a notable change (Law XC of 2023). Guest worker permits can only be issued for specific, defined roles and cannot be switched to other types of permits or renewed. Additionally, guest worker permit holders are not eligible for family reunification (Law XC of 2023). Highly skilled migrants whose legal presence is defined within the framework of Hungarian Card and EU Blue Card, however, are not subject to the limitations implemented for low-skilled migrants. The new Hungarian immigration

law, thus, provide a favorable position, better conditions, and easier access to Hungarian labor market for highly skilled migrants while making the conditions of the entry and residence for low-skilled migrants harder and stricter. Although the implementation of the Hungarian Card concurrently with the Blue Card opens new pathways for highly skilled migrants, due to the lack of a clear definition of who qualifies as highly skilled migrants, how the law will be carried out remains uncertain. Therefore, overall, the new law indicates nothing but Hungary's tendency to nationalize its labor force, adopting an exclusionary approach.

Hungary also defines the naturalization process with a detailed and comprehensive approach by offering eight ways of acquiring Hungarian citizenship. According to the regular mechanism, a non-Hungarian may be naturalized if the applicant has resided in Hungary continuously over eight years before the application submission (Act XLVI/2005). As the second mechanism informs, for the applicants who have resided in Hungary continuously for at least three years before the submission of the application and who also satisfy the conditions specified as a) he/she has lived in the household of a Hungarian citizen in lawful marriage b) his/her minor child is a Hungarian citizen, c) he/she has been adopted by a Hungarian citizen, d) he/she has been recognized as a refugee by the competent Hungarian authority, or e) he/she is stateless (Act XLVI/2005). Eligible applicants for naturalization must demonstrate adequate knowledge of Hungarian history and culture by passing an exam on "constitutional studies" in Hungarian, which consists of both written and oral parts. While Hungarian naturalization processes are well-defined and citizenship seems to be accessible to those who meet specific criteria, such as residency conditions, language proficiency, and passing a citizenship test on Hungarian history and culture, the country's overall anti-immigrant stance necessitates further studies. For instance, the practical implementation of these processes indicates that Hungary is selective about naturalization. With the introduction of a simplified naturalization procedure in 2011 for ethnic Hungarians living abroad, the number of preferentially naturalized people in Hungary increased to 20,554 in 2011 from 6,086 in 2010 (KSH, 2024) and a significant part of newly naturalized people were the ethnic Hungarians living in neighboring countries, who became dual citizenship holders, not immigrants as registered residents of Hungary (Tóth, 2018). In the aftermath of

2015, when the so-called migration crisis began to dominate the political agenda, reflected in policies and discourses in Hungary, the number of naturalized people decreased to 4,315 in 2016 and 2,450 in 2023 (KSH, 2024). Among 2,450 naturalized people, 1,400 people were from Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Ukraine, demonstrating the continuous practice of prioritizing the naturalization of ethnic Hungarians living abroad over migrants residing in Hungary (KSH, 2024). That is the reason why the naturalization of Hungarian kin minorities and the concept of external citizenship have been highly studied for the case of Hungary in the literature by scholars (Pogonyi, 2017; Tóth, 2018; Dumbrava, 2019; Waterbury, 2017). Considering all these, further studies are needed to examine the practical application of these processes and elaborate on whether, in reality, they reflect a more restrictive or more inclusive approach to granting citizenship.

According to Eurostat, which provides the only available data source indicating the population of highly skilled migrants, seventy-nine third-country nationals have been granted the EU Blue Card by Hungary since 2013 (Eurostat, 2024). The Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) reports the total population of foreign citizens living in Hungary, as of January 2024, is 437,550 and the majority of them (131,291) are the citizens of neighbor European countries such as Romania, Ukraine, Germany, and Slovakia (KSH, 2020). In Budapest alone, the total number of foreign citizens amounts to 113,950, with 46,350 arriving for employment, 12,950 for family unification, and 17,450 for educational purposes (KSH, 2024). Since 2016, the number of foreign residents in Hungary has increased from 355,193 to 437,550 in 2024 (KSH, 2024). The number of EU migrants residing in the country is not indicated in the statistics as a separate table for EU27 since the data focuses on the number of foreign citizens from Europe as a region, including non-EU countries such as Ukraine, Serbia, and Türkiye. The data provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office demonstrates the increasing trend for the population of foreign citizens residing in the country for employment purposes (including both EU and non-EU), from 41,618 in 2016 to 100,800 in January 2024 (KSH, 2024). However, it does not include any specific information, presenting the total number of highly skilled foreign citizens living in the country, specifically in Budapest. Additionally, many studies on skilled labor migration in Hungary focus

primarily on the self-perception and positioning of ethnic Hungarians from neighboring countries such as Romania and Slovakia. These individuals, proficient in Hungarian and familiar with Hungary's socio-cultural and political landscape, form a significant portion of the skilled migrant population (Fox, 2003; Kovacs & Melegh, 2001). While this perspective enriches the literature, it predominantly reflects the experiences of a relatively privileged group. Therefore, to capture the diverse experiences of highly skilled migrants from various backgrounds, this study aims to explore a broader range of narratives beyond this specific demographic. The absence of concrete national data on highly skilled migrants poses a challenge to understanding the dynamics of this migrant category, thereby limiting insights into their characteristics and movements.

3.2 Experiences of Belonging: Feeling Citizenship

In today's world, individuals uphold their attachments and responsibilities in cultivating the culture and politics of their homes while spending their lives as non-citizen residents in diverse places that shape their self-conception. Understanding how people understand and communicate who they are to themselves and others in transnationalizing, complex urban contexts of everyday life as citizens and non-citizens requires zooming in on their lived citizenship experiences of belonging, which is the sum of one's self-identification and representation, external identification, sense of distance/not-belonging, and emotional and spatial attachments. In this section of the chapter, the study examines HSMs' narratives of self-identification and emotional and spatial attachments, respectively, as the constitutive components of experiences of belonging. As this section focuses on migrants' narratives of self-identification and belonging to examine subject-defining and affective aspects of citizenship through personal conversations, the analysis of experiences of belonging is mainly based on the findings of semi-structured interviews. These findings, however, are supplemented by the findings from the survey data. This section presents and discusses the complexity of HSMs' identities and attachments and how they elaborately and actively construct hybrid identities shaped by cosmopolitan and patriotic traits.

3.2.1 The Narratives of Self-identification

Examining the self-identification of HSMs as one of the fundamental aspects of the lived citizenship experiences, who are often depicted as a privileged and desirable group of cosmopolitans who view citizenship as a commodity bringing access to better employment, social security benefits, and other advantages, presents an interesting case. Self-identification narratives can lead to a better understanding of how HSMs construct their identities and belonging within socio-political contexts marked by skepticism and hostility toward foreigners, integrate into different societies, and describe their roles within them. While such an analysis uncovers how and to what extent narrative identity interacts with citizenship, it also gives us the chance to observe how citizenship functions in everyday life for HSMs.

The interviewees are initially asked to share how they self-identify in general. Their responses show a common tendency among both EU and non-EU HSMs in Budapest to primarily self-identify by their profession, education, personal characteristics, skills, and values accompanied by universalistic attributes such as being human or open-minded, being a citizen of the world, international or/and cosmopolitan. All interviewees employ multiple categories and attributes for self-identification. All EU and non-EU HSM describe themselves as human beings:

Interviewer: How do you self-identify, in general?

“I don't really classify myself. I'm just a human being, a Turkish citizen who ended up in Budapest.” (Ali, Türkiye, non-EU)

“A person with his own insecurities, fears. A human.” (Luka, Croatia, EU)

Ali's quote above exemplifies a form of hybrid identification, constructing a cosmopolitan self-view while also acknowledging patriotic and spatial attachments. Self-identifying as human beings, HSMs acknowledge their place in an “imagined community of humankind” (Linklater, 1998: 24). They highlight a sense of interconnectedness and community that goes beyond the sense of belonging based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and other social categories. This form of self-

identification suggests a moral and cultural cosmopolitan perspective that emphasizes peoplehood with the idea of human beings as the primary unit of moral concern (Pogge, 1992: 48), which may influence how they view their rights and responsibilities within and beyond their country of citizenship. Such a cosmopolitan identification underscores a moral commitment to the global community, promoting the idea that citizenship encompasses not just legal status or patriotic allegiance but also a broader ethical and cultural belonging to the humanity as a whole. One of the interviewees, Shameem from Tajikistan in her statement below, self-identifies as a human and highlights the moral duties individuals have towards all people, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity, or cultural background. She articulates a sense of global solidarity where everyone is seen as part of a collective human community with responsibilities both nationally and globally:

“A person and a human being who can bring change and do something good. We need to act responsibly, no matter what and where. It's very important for every single human being to be a part of this bigger community.” (Shameem, Tajikistan, non-EU)

Self-identifying as an open-minded person, which suggests a personal value system based on empathy and respect, appears to be another common way for self-conception among the interviewed HSMs in Budapest. Shameem from Tajikistan and Sia from Greece describe their self-conception as open-minded persons, underscoring their commitment to “continual learning” and the “value of diversity of people and views.” The narratives of both EU and non-EU HSMs reveal their inclusive approach to life with curiosity and a readiness to question assumptions, fostering dialogue, inclusivity, and harmonious coexistence (Held, 2010; Skey, 2013). They embody cultural cosmopolitanism, actively seeking opportunities to engage with diverse people, cultures, and experiences, which they see as enriching their self-improvement and the development for humanity (Beck, 2006; Taraborrelli, 2015; Pin-Fat, 2015).

Cultural hybridity that emerges in transnational spaces, shapes individuals' personal and social identity, reflecting in everyday experiences, dispositions, practices, and discourses (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018: 132-133). It embraces and values cultural diversity, promoting the idea of cultural exchange, openness, and the

exploration of diverse cultural experiences as a means to broaden one's knowledge and outlook on the world. In line with this understanding, it is observed that the majority of interviewees adopt a cosmopolitan outlook, which they do not always explicitly express but show with their attitudes. For instance, Tadeu unambivalently identifies himself more as a citizen of the world than a Portuguese citizen, asserting how his experience abroad and social interaction with people from different cultural, social, and political backgrounds improve his worldview, making him more independent. He also adds that all these experiences he gained made him a more open-minded person, a world citizen who enjoys life abroad and what international, professional, and personal experiences offer to him:

“I see that living abroad was a plus for me. It provided me with a lot of advantages and knowledge in terms of discussing certain topics that I feel I wouldn't have any idea about if I would stay at home. It is a big plus to have such broad international knowledge about a lot of different things. I feel a bit more independent and I am thinking more wisely than before.” (Tadeu, Portugal)

Referring to abroad experience suggests an extended period spent outside one's home country, implying exposure to different cultures, perspectives, and experiences. It indicates a context of migration, which often prompts individuals to reassess and renegotiate their identities and attachments. Some interviewees, such as Tadeu, highlight their international professional and personal experiences as a part of who they are while expressing their maintained patriotic attachment. They refer to their internationalism and open-mindedness to present themselves as true cosmopolitans who embrace a world of social and cultural hybridity in which particularistic and universalistic attachments cohabit. The presence of a cosmopolitan identity seems to pose a significant challenge to national and other specific identities. As cosmopolitanism is a spatial concept, the cosmopolitan element of HSMs' self-identification is deeply related to their sense of spatial belonging. Nevertheless, even if one's self-identification centers around cosmopolitanism, it does not automatically imply a loss of one's roots and patriotic sentiments. Engaged in global cross-cultural border movements, migrants may reconcile aspects of different cultures with each

other, developing multilayered particularistic and universalistic attachments to different localities (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Supporting this argument, Sia from Greece and Jakub from Slovakia recognize and embrace hybrid identities, clearly presenting themselves as rooted cosmopolitans (Appiah, 1997).

“Deep inside I'm a world citizen. I belong everywhere but by keeping the feeling of belonging to a certain country” (Jakub, Slovakia, EU)

“Although I still have my roots, I just feel more like a world citizen”. (Sia, Greece & Australia, EU)

The universalistic attributes the interviewees employ to self-identify, such as being humans or open-minded and international persons imply an implicit form of cosmopolitan self-presentation. Most interviewees who embrace a cosmopolitan perspective do not often overtly identify themselves as cosmopolitans. They illustrate their cosmopolitan nature through the description of their daily activities and personal values which qualify them as cosmopolitan individuals. Similar to Sia and Jakub, only a few interviewees explicitly express their cosmopolitan identity:

“I think I'm a cosmopolitan because I cannot attribute myself to any countries, cultures, or ethnicities.” (Gulnar, Tajikistan, non-EU)

“I do not want to be identified as Arabic. I do not want to be identified as Iraqi. I do not want to be identified as a brown person. I just believe I am a global citizen and a dreamer.” (Omar, Iraq, non-EU)

Although a few interviewees emphasize liberal values, openness, and respect for diverse social and cultural groups, implicitly reflecting a cosmopolitan outlook, they avoid labeling themselves as cosmopolitans and criticize those who identify as world citizens and cosmopolitan. While Maja from Serbia views identifying as a world citizen as “too hippy,” Miltos from Greece expresses skepticism and uncertainty about its true meaning, considering cosmopolitanism a conditional identity that necessitates living in multiple countries and continents.

The majority of both EU and non-EU HSMs critically evaluate group characteristics (Schatz, 2020), maintaining their personal autonomy to navigate, negotiate, and challenge identities. As Omar emphasizes in the quote above, some interviewees prioritize particular social categories of identification over others. The interview findings suggest that non-EU HSMs more explicitly stress their cosmopolitan tendencies. They are more reluctant to identify with specific countries, cultures, nations, and ethnicities than EU HSMs. They deliberately distance themselves from narrow identifiers and cultural attributes. Even if citizenship or nationality is not used as a primary identification, most interviewees also refer to their country of origin as an instant and practical method of self-identification, adding another layer to how they understand and describe themselves. However, they often present their country of origin as a secondary and complementary aspect of their identities rather than a primary identifier:

Interviewer: How do you self-identify, in general?

“I wouldn't say I should identify myself in connection to my country. I deeply feel it, but it is only a part of my identity. We are all here creating something like an international society. First of all, I am a good professional and a kind-hearted person. I first self-identify with my personal characteristics.” (Anna, Ukraine, non-EU)

“I most identify myself with my creative interests. I have been into making music and writing literature. I am from Ireland, but it's not something that I'm really emotionally attached to. I would see my interests as central to how I identify myself.” (Daniel, Ireland, EU)

National identity, used as a primary self-identification category by only two interviewees from Mexico and the Netherlands, does not appear to be central to the self-conceptualization of the majority. Likewise, none of the participants associate themselves with social categories such as gender, ethnicity, or religion, indicating that these categories are insignificant for the interviewees' primary self-identification. However, while self-identifying, some of them highlight their lack of

religious belief as part of who they are, contesting external categorization imposed on them due to their citizenship:

“I am not a religious person. It was just attributed to me by birth that I was born into a Muslim family even though nobody was practicing. I cannot say I am a Muslim. I feel quite uncomfortable when I meet with somebody from my region or the countries where Islam is predominant, and they ask me if I am a Muslim or why I don’t fast.” (Gulnar, Tajikistan, non-EU)

“I am an atheist. I make jokes about religion, so people understand I do not care about it. This is a big effort for me.” (Omar, Iraq, non-EU)

They distance themselves from religion to navigate social biases associated with Islam or to escape the pressures and inquiries from others regarding their religious practices. Both of their country of origin is known as Muslim-majority countries, and this cultural attribute is immediately associated with these countries’ citizens, socially challenging them. The defined identity of the country is inherited by its citizens as a part of their identity, affecting their everyday social interactions, self-perception, and others' attitudes toward them. Religion as a dominant cultural attribute of countries is often recognized by others as an attribute of these countries' citizens, regardless of their personal beliefs and preferences. The quotes above reveal the tension between individual identity and the collective identity imposed by citizenship, illustrating the interviewees' effort to maintain personal independence and contestation against external identification. Citizenship, as an identity 'box' filled with cultural, social, and political characteristics, can become a primary identifier for individuals, even if they do not accept the pre-conceived attributes of that category. Hence, external identification through the country of origin does not only mean the identification with the name of a country but also with all defined characteristics attributed to that country. The quotes below show how external identification with the country of citizenship may directly or indirectly impact the way individuals position themselves and the formation of subjective citizen attitudes:

“When you are defined by your citizenship, you are put in a box. You are defined by it because it is defined. It is enough to say where I am from and people will already have certain ideas about me.” (Maja, Serbia, non-EU)

“In a new environment, everybody defines you by your country, putting you in a box based on that. Then, you are trying to show that you are better than that box. You want to encourage the good stereotypes, not the bad ones.’
(Marta, Croatia, EU)

The way political authorities in a country define citizenship and the citizen may evoke emotional and reactive responses, influencing individuals' perceptions of self and their attachment to the country. While elaborating on what a good citizen means and how he reports his relationship with his country of origin, Magnim, one of the interviewees, states that he views himself as an outsider within and outside his country of origin, lacking a sense of belonging. When asked to explain why he feels like a foreigner in his own country, he underscores that this sentiment arises from how political authorities in his country view returning citizens from Europe as a marginalized group, often viewed as “failed citizens” (Anderson, 2013: 4) and an internal threat to the nation:

“For a foreigner like me trying to come back home and work, you are either considered as one of the prospective politicians of the country, or they will put the clamp on you right away to see if you are against the state. As you live abroad, you bring in a European mentality from Europe where more freedom is given to the people. As it is seen as a threat; you are seen as a threat.’ (Magnim, Togo, non-EU)

Political administrations of countries may emphasize different attributes, behaviors, and values that constitute good citizens based on their political and ideological stance, directly impacting how individuals self-identify and approach to their citizenship. While some citizens embrace that understanding, others may negotiate and contest it. Ewa, from Poland, self-identifies as Polish and a European. However, she expresses that, as a citizen of her country, she feels compelled to make a choice

between embracing European identity and fulfilling the expectations of being a good citizen in Poland. She explains that identifying as a Western or European instantly disqualifies someone from being considered a good Polish citizen. Ewa's account indicates an exclusionary mechanism in her country of origin that influences her self-conception even when she resides abroad. While her self-identification as a European citizen suggests a tension between personal identity and the collective identity imposed through citizenship, Ewa asserts that she is both a good Polish citizen and a European, emphasizing that these identities are complementary rather than conflicting for her. Iza from Poland similarly identifies herself as European and signifies that it is a form of resistance against exclusionary and nationalist ideologies prevalent in her home country:

“This is also the way how I describe myself. A European! When we had the population census in Poland, I typed European in the self-identification question. This was my symbolic act of being against this nationalist movement in the country. So, I guess people identify themselves as Europeans because they want to show that they are against all this nationalist craziness.” (Iza, Poland, EU)

The interviewees' self-identification as both European and Polish citizens does not only offer insight into their home country context and its impact on them. It also indicates that citizenship, as lived experiences, is not a singular identity bound solely to one nation-state. Instead, it is a complex and dynamic concept that may include various levels of belonging and nested identities and may also be experienced by people beyond their country of citizenship. In both cases, supranational European identity based on EU citizenship complements national citizenship, showcasing a dual allegiance. In this regard, the perspectives of the interviewees from Togo and Poland above reflect the common attitude, as the interviewed HSMs often tend to challenge and negotiate the external identifications imposed based on political authorities' conceptions of citizenship and the definition of a good citizen. Additionally, these narratives also explicitly show how external categorizations, identifications, and representations based on political authorities' definition of

citizen affect individuals' self-understanding and their attachment (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 18).

When asked how they self-identify in Budapest as non-citizens, most HSMs in the interviews describe themselves as foreigners, foreign workers, or expats. They distinguish their migration experience and personal preferences and either reject any labeling or describe themselves through the use of non-migrant categories that do not directly indicate racial, ethnic, and cultural connotations. They avoid racial, ethnic, cultural, or national identifiers that may lead to social bias to increase their chances of being socially recognized and integrating more easily into political communities. This is also why identifying with their country of citizenship is less emphasized among the interviewees. Self-identifying as a foreigner, which suggests a cosmopolitan condition and indicates a universal foreignness and cultural hybridity (Agier, 2021), is the most common identification strategy among the interviewees. Utilizing broader categories of foreignness and resisting specific labels allows both EU and non-EU HSMs to distance themselves from the migrant label:

Interviewer: How do you self-identify in Budapest, Hungary?

“I do not like labelling myself or others but let's say a foreigner. That would fit me better. I don't like terms like migrants or expats. It feels that you are excluded from the country, it doesn't feel like, you can easily integrate yourself. It puts a kind of border between you and the city or the country.”
(Ali, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I don't use migrant to identify myself, but I do use the word foreigner. Foreigner is my condition here. I know that a migrant is a person who leaves his country of origin and starts living in a different place. In that sense, of course, I am a migrant but... I don't know...I don't use migrant to self-identify. I would identify myself more as a foreigner.” (Tadeu, Portugal, EU)

The quotes above uncover the interplay between individual identity, societal perceptions, and the power of language. Both Tadeu and Ali exercise agency in

choosing how to self-identify, resisting externally imposed labels that do not align with their self-perception or desired social position. By identifying as a “foreigner” rather than a “migrant,” Tadeu subtly distances himself from the negative connotations linked to the term 'migrant.' His choice reflects strategic identity management to avoid negative connotations and to manage their identity in a way that aligns with their experiences and the social context in which they live. His explicit acknowledgment of knowing the definition of a migrant but still preferring not to use it indicates an awareness of the broader social and political implications of these terms. Ali's discomfort with certain labels reflects broader power dynamics in the discourse of migration. He critically engages with identity labels, highlighting their impact on integration and social inclusion. The category of foreigner as a social identity appears to be a more desired and less loaded category of identification, implying a fluid, adaptable, cosmopolitan status rather than a fixed, marginalized one. Even if it implies a distinction from the local population, according to the majority, it does not carry the same connotations of exclusion or non-integration as the term “migrant” may. Therefore, the use of such more general categories appears to enable individuals to detach themselves from the migrant category, differentiating their position and granting them a sense of freedom, adaptability, and enhanced feelings of security and recognition. It also helps them to cope with situations that may generate discomfort or dissatisfaction. As Ewa in her quote below highlights, self-identifying as a foreigner provides a psychological buffer and a flexible position that enables her to maintain a sense of comfort and control over her experiences in Budapest, her country of origin, and elsewhere:

“I like being foreigner because it helps me to distance myself from the things I don't like. I think it provides me a lot of comfort and helps a lot mentally.”
(Ewa, Poland, EU)

The hesitation to self-identify as migrants seems to stem from the portrayal of migration as a crisis in Europe and the negative associations of the term “migrant” with illegitimacy and threat in the Hungarian context (Rajaram, 2016; Melegh, 2016: 103). Through the interviews, it becomes clear that the redefinition of migration categories within the context of a crisis and the pejorative meanings attached to

terms such as “migrant,” “immigrant,” and “refugee” play a major role in forming HSMS' perceptions. The discursive tendency to use these terms as interchangeable categories makes them more contested, confusing, negotiated, and resisted in praxis:

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself as a migrant in Hungary?

“I would not call myself a migrant. I think all these politics, all these populist politics have really attributed this derogatory connotation to this word. But I am not a migrant because I think there is a very thin line between migrants and refugees, and nobody was driving me out of my home country. I am an expatriate and if I want to, I can go back home anytime.” (Gulnar, Tajikistan, non-EU)

“A migrant is someone who either fled war or moved to make money as their own country is economically bad. That's how migrants are being associated here in Hungary. So, I am not a migrant, it's not the case for me.” (Zoe, Netherlands, EU)

“Migrant seems like a word that's too heavy. So, I wouldn't call myself a migrant. I know that I'm not Hungarian but that's it.” (Adem, Türkiye & Portugal, EU)

A few interviewees state that they contextually self-identify as migrants as a form of resistance and a strategy to oppose the xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments that are prominent in the Hungarian government and society. By aligning themselves with the term “migrant” in the face of criticism, they foster a sense of solidarity with other migrants and challenges the boundaries between “us” (Hungarian citizens) and “them” (migrants):

“In Hungary, I jokingly call myself a migrant. *Migráns!*² It's used as a slur here. I also sometimes call myself a migrant using the slur because it is not

² *Migráns* means migrants in Hungarian. This term was only technically used by scholars and policy makers in the Hungarian context until the European migration crisis when the Hungarian Government

actually a slur. It is just a word. But I know I am always going to be a foreigner here despite my Hungarian background.” (Jack, Canada & UK, non-EU)

“I use it either as a joke or in a serious conversation here in Hungary. When I hear something against migrants, I say I am a migrant. I'm also kind of an economic migrant and if you say something bad about migrants then you are also against me.” (Iza, Poland, EU)

As the quote below explains, the findings uncover that HSMs also negotiate and contest non-migrant categories and do not adopt them blindly to avoid the category of migrant. Daniel chooses to self-identify as a “foreigner” rather than an “expat,” revealing a critical awareness of the social hierarchies embedded in these labels. By highlighting the Western European or American connotations associated with “expat,” the interviewee underscores how this term implies privilege and a superior status compared to “immigrant,” which is often reserved for those from Eastern regions and carries stigmatizing implications. This differentiation exposes the underlying biases and elitism in societal perceptions of migrants. Daniel’s choice to identify as a “foreigner” is a deliberate rejection of these biased labels, opting instead for a term that reflects a more inclusive and egalitarian stance:

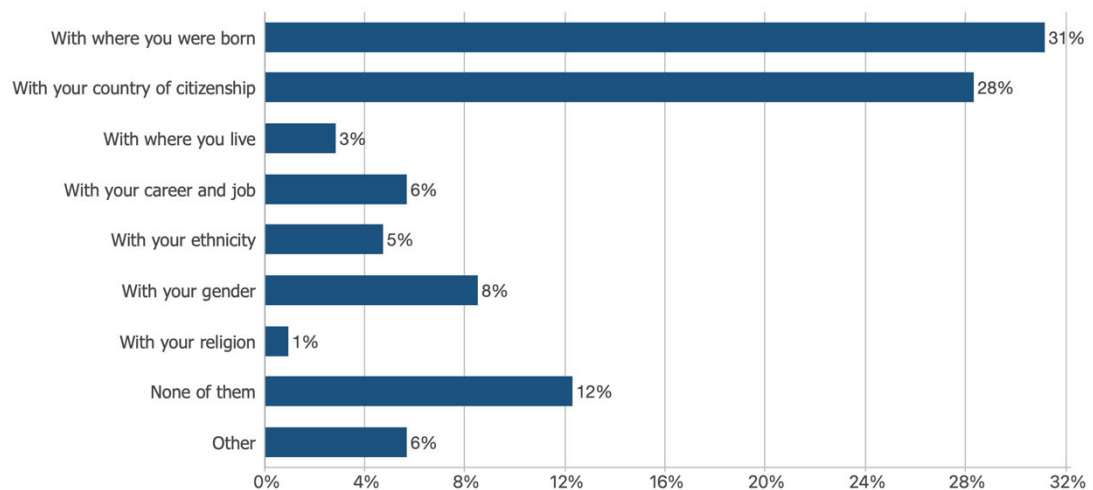
“I would just say I am a foreigner. Because the word expat has become something associated with a sort of Western European or American kind of attitude. People coming from the East are immigrants, but we're expats! There is a kind of mindset that expat as a word sounds better for people. So, speaking personally, I just put it as the matter of fact that I am just a foreigner in Hungary.” (Daniel, Ireland, EU)

initiated a massive campaign against refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants whom are identified as migrants. As a result, in 2015, the term migrant has undergone a significant transformation in Hungary. It has shifted from being a technical term to becoming a derogatory label, a stigma, and an insult, now often used in both public and private conversations. For more: Eline Jeanne. 2018. “Migrant as Slur, Stigma, and Insult in Hungarian Media.” Media Diversity Institute. July 18, 2024. <https://www.media-diversity.org/migrant-as-slur-stigma-and-insult-in-hungarian-media/>.

In response to how they self-identify in Budapest, Hungary, most EU HSMs who call themselves foreigners or expats also emphasize their European identity. This serves to distance themselves from the migrant category and to locate them in a more favorable and secure position in Hungary's socio-political landscape. EU citizenship shifts EU citizens' legal status from migrants to EU citizens living in another EU country, providing them a legal position equal to the citizen of the countries they reside in. This legal status elevates their position above that of migrants from non-EU countries while fostering their cosmopolitan outlook. As a source of broader, supranational identity, it allows them to distinguish themselves from non-EU migrants, resisting stigmatizing labels and negative conditions that may be associated with the term migrant and asserts a more respected and legitimate identity:

“I never feel like an expat or an immigrant because we are European citizens. I feel we are all in the same community that is European Union.” (Pedro, Spain, EU)

Figure 2. Primary Self-identification (Budapest)



In the interviews, when asked an open-ended question about their primary self-identification without any intervention, the vast majority chose not to limit themselves to a specific cultural or national category and mostly self-identify with their profession, career, achievements, personal interests, and values. Interviews suggest that survey respondents are likely to self-identify in terms of their career and job,

opting for the choices "other" or "none of them" when given the opportunity. The survey data, however, contradict the findings of interviews in terms of primary self-identification of HSMs (Figure 2). When the same question is asked in a survey with multiple-choice options that include predefined categories such as nationality and citizenship, the majority identify themselves primarily by nationality (31%) or citizenship (28%). Self-identification with career and job appears to be an insignificant category in the survey research. This contradiction highlights how the format and framing of questions may significantly influence how individuals choose to self-identify. The interviewees were not constrained by predefined, prompting options in the interviews where they had the freedom to express their identities in more personalized ways. As indicated while analyzing the narratives of self-identification, the interviewees refer to citizenship and nationality as secondary identification by underscoring that it sometimes appears to be a practical category of identification for HSMs in a transnational context. Therefore, the presence of predefined categories in the survey might prime respondents to think about their identity in terms of those given categories, leading them to choose more conventional, functional, straightforward options such as nationality and citizenship. In this sense, while the outcome of these two different data sets leads to different primary identifications, overall findings about primary self-identification emphasize the practical utility of nationality and citizenship as key identifiers.

The survey results on how HSMs self-identify in Budapest, Hungary, are consistent with the interview findings. A larger proportion of survey respondents identify themselves as foreigners (32%), expatriates (15%), and foreign employees (8%) (Figure 3). Indicating that only 6% of respondents self-identify as world citizens or cosmopolitans, it also corroborates the interview findings that highlight an implicit use and display of cosmopolitan traits for self-identification rather than an explicit identification with cosmopolitanism. Only 19% of the respondents who are EU citizens identify themselves as European, while 32% prefer to position themselves as foreigners (Table 3). This result indicates that, even among EU HSMs, identifying as a foreigner is more favored and popular than identifying as European in the context of Hungary.

Figure 3. Self-identification in Budapest, Hungary

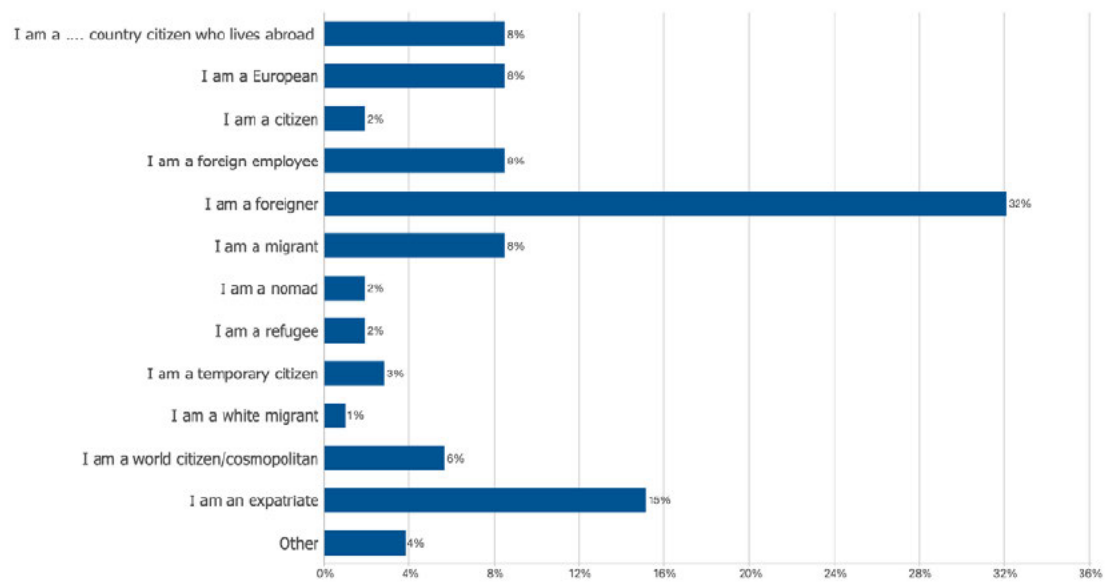


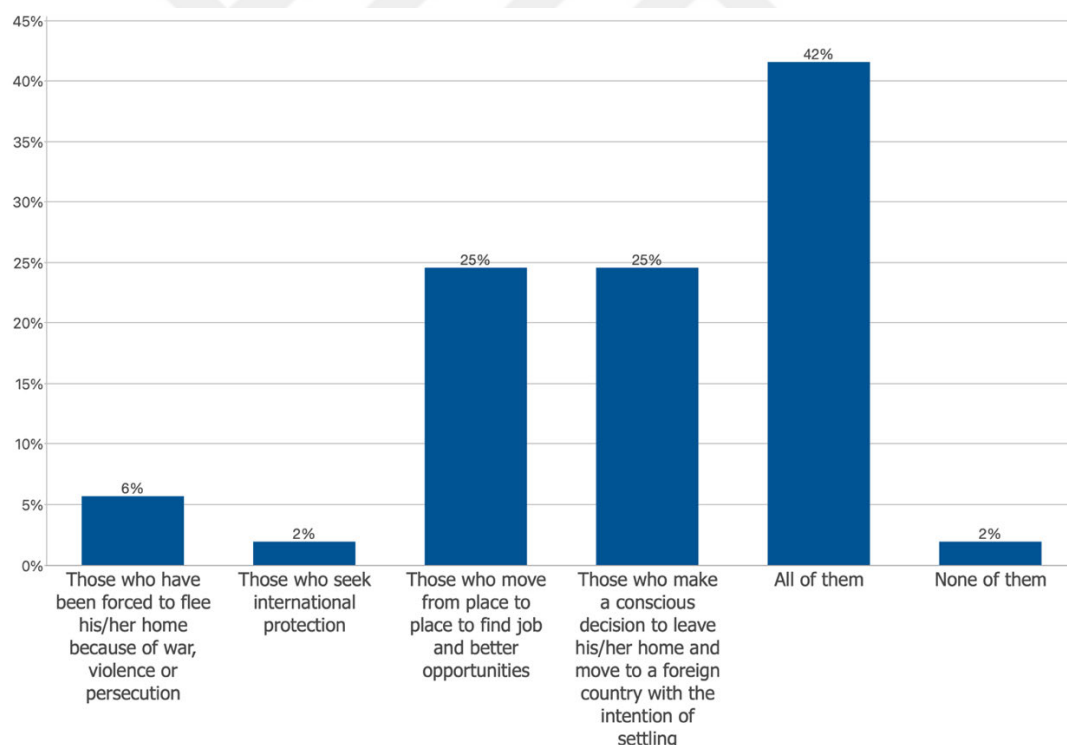
Table 3. Self-identification in Budapest, Hungary by Citizenship

<i>Self-identification in Budapest, Hungary</i>	<i>EU HSMs</i>	<i>Non-EU HSMs</i>
<i>I am an expatriate</i>	14%	16%
<i>I am a foreigner</i>	32%	32%
<i>I am a foreign employer</i>	8%	9%
<i>I am a migrant</i>	5%	10%
<i>I am a white migrant</i>	-	1,5%
<i>I am a refugee</i>	3%	1,5%
<i>I am a citizen</i>	5%	-
<i>I am a country citizen who lives abroad</i>	5%	10%
<i>I am a European</i>	19%	3%
<i>I am a world citizen/cosmopolitan</i>	3%	7%
<i>I am a nomad</i>	-	3%
<i>I am a temporary citizen</i>	3%	3%
<i>Other</i>	3%	4%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%

Similar to the interviewees, the survey respondents are not inclined to identify themselves as migrants. Although this study acknowledges that there is no universally accepted definition of migrant, and it is mostly used as an umbrella term for different well-defined legal categories of people such as migrant workers and international students (IOM, 2019: 132), the respondents are asked to define who a

migrant is. They are respectively provided with the definitions of the terms “refugee,” “asylum seeker,” “economic migrant,” and “immigrant” as choices to explore what they understand from the term migrant. 42% of the respondents indicate that all given statements are the definitions of the term migrant (Figure 4). In line with the interviewees’ understanding and perception of the term migrant, almost half of the survey respondents also use the words migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker interchangeably, treating them as the same thing. It reveals a lack of clear distinction among the terms and different forms of human mobility in the minds of many respondents. However, as illustrated in Figure 4, the survey data also demonstrates that the other half of the respondents who selected the definitions of “economic migrant” and “immigrant” recognize and understand the specific factors of and the legal distinctions between different types of categories.

Figure 4. Understanding of What Defines a Migrant (Budapest)



3.2.2 Emotional and Spatial Attachment

Highly skilled EU and non-EU migrants' self-identification and belonging narratives demonstrate a complexity that includes multiple layers of spatial attachments -local, national, and global- based on feelings of belonging and socio-cultural attachment.

They provide insight into the evolving nature of citizenship in a transnational context, illustrating how personal citizenship experiences in broader socio-political spaces with which they associate themselves, such as the EU, influence citizen identity formation and belonging:

Interviewer: As an EU citizen, what do you think about EU citizenship? How does being an EU citizen make you feel?

“I have been in Hungary for eight years, and living here made me feel more European than Italian. The European Union is trying to invest a lot in European cohesion and citizenship to unite people and break borders, stereotypes, or mental barriers between people. I would say I am somehow proud. When I think of the life conditions of people living on other continents, I feel lucky to live in Europe. We always have pros and cons. I would say that it could be better, but it could be also worse. So, I am happy.”
(Massimo, Italy, EU)

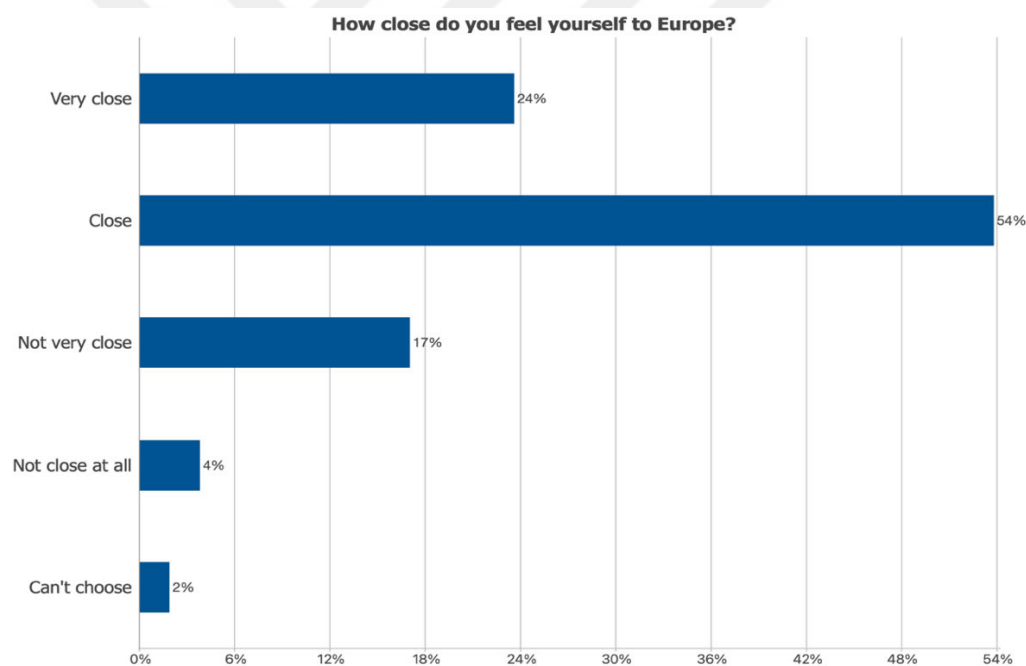
Massimo’s view underscores the transformative impact of prolonged residency and the lived experiences of an EU citizen in a different EU country on his sense of belonging, reflecting the complex interplay between personal experiences and broader socio-political efforts by the EU. He constructs EU citizenship as an inclusive and cohesive identity, emphasizing unity, solidarity, and the breakdown of stereotypes. It also reflects an understanding of EU citizenship as a supranational identity that complements, rather than replaces, national identities. A sense of belonging to Europe is common among EU HSMs, even though not all of them primarily identify as European. EU citizenship enables them to feel belonging anywhere they go within the EU since they are legally allowed to stay and act freely and flexibly as they are in their country of origin. It does not only play a role in the lived legal-political and socio-economic experiences of EU migrants but also as an identity that promotes a sense of belonging to a safer space with advantages and to broader united solidarity. As illustrated in the quotes of Zoe and Sia below, EU citizenship strengthens the perception of Europeanness serving as a potent inclusive

means for developing attachment to Europe and as an added value to national citizenship:

“The fact that Netherlands is an EU country -actually one of the founder countries of the EU- gives the Dutch passport a status by definition, and this is also why people don't want to really give it up.” (Zoe, Netherlands, EU)

“The only moment I have thought about it was the moment when I realized that being a Greek citizen means I'm part of the European Union and I can travel and work freely in EU countries.” (Sia, Greece & Australia, EU)

Figure 5. Spatial Belonging to Europe (Budapest)



The survey findings, aligning with the interview data, demonstrate that 78% of the respondents feel very close and close to Europe (Figure 5). Feeling close to a place refers to experiencing a sense of familiarity, comfort, or emotional connection to that particular place. It implies a subjective feeling of affinity or proximity towards a specific location, often associated with feelings of belonging or attachment. Among EU HSMs, 89.2% express a sense of spatial belonging to Europe whereas the

proportion of non-EU HSMs who feel a sense of belonging to Europe is comparatively and insignificantly lower at 71% (Table 4).

Table 4. Spatial Belonging to Europe by Citizenship (Budapest)

<i>EU/Non-EU</i>	<i>Very close</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Not very close</i>	<i>Not close at all</i>	<i>Can't choose</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>EU country citizen</i>	29,7%	59,5%	8,1%	2,7%	-	100%
<i>Non-EU country citizen</i>	20,3%	50,7%	21,7%	4,3%	2,9%	100%
<i>TOTAL</i>	23,6%	53,8%	17%	3,8%	1,9%	100%

Identifying as a European is not exclusive to EU HSMs. In cultural terms, some non-EU HSMs such as Ali from Türkiye, Anna from Ukraine, and Milan from Serbia also feel connected to Europe despite not holding EU citizenship. In the context of belonging to Europe, individuals may identify with shared European values, cultural heritage, or political ideals, reflecting a cosmopolitan orientation towards a supranational entity. In addition to identifying with Europe as a regional attachment, both EU and non-EU HSMs also use regional identities such as “Balkan,” “Mediterranean,” and “African” which indicate a form of cosmopolitan belonging, encompassing a broader sense of global citizenship.

When the interviewees are asked about their feelings regarding citizenship in their country of origin, their emotions seem influenced by their perception of the country's economic success and political stability. Demonstrating a sense of love and care (Nussbaum, 2008) for their homeland, most describe their emotions with the words pride, happiness, or luck even though they also mention at least one negative emotion such as frustration, presenting a form of critical patriotic loyalty (Schatz, 2020):

Interviewer: How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel?

“I don't have a negative feeling but it's also not like super positive. So, it's like positive to neutral, let's say. It doesn't mean that I'm not proud of my

country because I'm happy where I come from and I am proud of it but the citizenship itself doesn't really... I don't know... In a way, I feel it is a burden.” (Milan, Serbia, non-EU)

"It makes me feel proud. I am proud of history and who we are but I also feel like judged, especially in Europe due to the misconceptions about Greece and Greeks." (Sia, Greece & Australia, EU)

Negative emotions are more frequently noted in the narratives of non-EU HSMs than EU HSMs. The interview findings suggest that EU citizenship, in addition to national citizenship, enhances positive sentiments among EU HSMs towards their country of origin. Both EU and non-EU HSMs demonstrate love and care for their homeland. Most interviewees appreciate the informal, commonly shared cultural and social values and principles that influence their daily lives, acknowledging these as integral to their identity. They express positive sentiments about the culture, history, literature, language, and cuisine of their country of origin, which reinforce their patriotic attachment. They often highlight specific cultural traits as a source of pride:

“I'm proud of where I come from. I think any Indian citizen would say you they are proud to have an Indian passport even though our passport is weak. We are still happy to identify as Indian citizens due to strong patriotism that has been drilled into us since when we were children. The whole history... The relationship with the British, how much we had to struggle, the freedom fighters and everything. We are quite patriotic and very much connected.” (Sovhona, India, non-EU)

“Spanish is a language that have the second more or the third more speakers in the world. If you're in a class, everyone, if they do not speak Spanish, they at least travelled to Spain or know something about Spain. It feels like Spain has a good brand outside (..) I would say I feel proud to be a Spanish citizen” (Pedro, Spain, EU)

While both negative and positive emotions demonstrate their patriotic affection for their countries, their patriotic feelings are influenced by their perceptions of their country's bureaucratic systems, political actions or economic performance, affecting their expressions of self-identification as citizens and how they feel about their citizenship:

“I have mostly positive feelings. However, if the state causes some issues, then, it makes me feel not good because I'm also kind of the face of this country as a citizen and I feel like ashamed” (Gulzhan, Kazakhstan, non-EU)

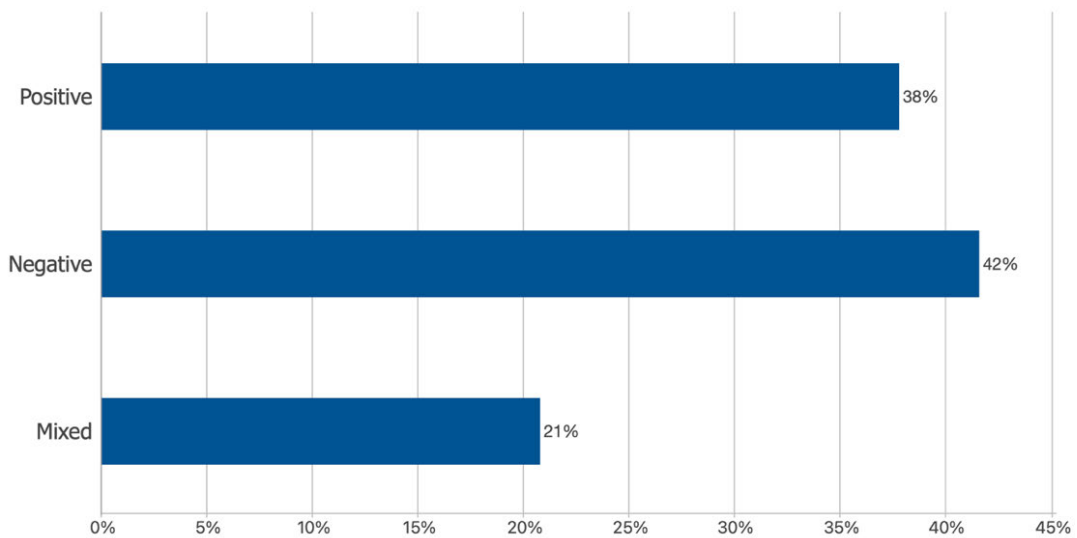
“I am a citizen of a country that help me with freedom of movement etc. It is a good part. But, for example, during the second World War, Slovakia killed almost 100,000 Jewish citizens, which brings me bad feelings as a citizen of Slovakia.” (Jakub, Slovakia, EU)

Table 5. Citizenship Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Budapest)

How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel?	
Word	Frequency
Proud	100
Frustrated	94
Privileged	88
Free	81
Happy	76
Limited	74
Confused	72
Insecure	70
Secure	60
Lucky	58

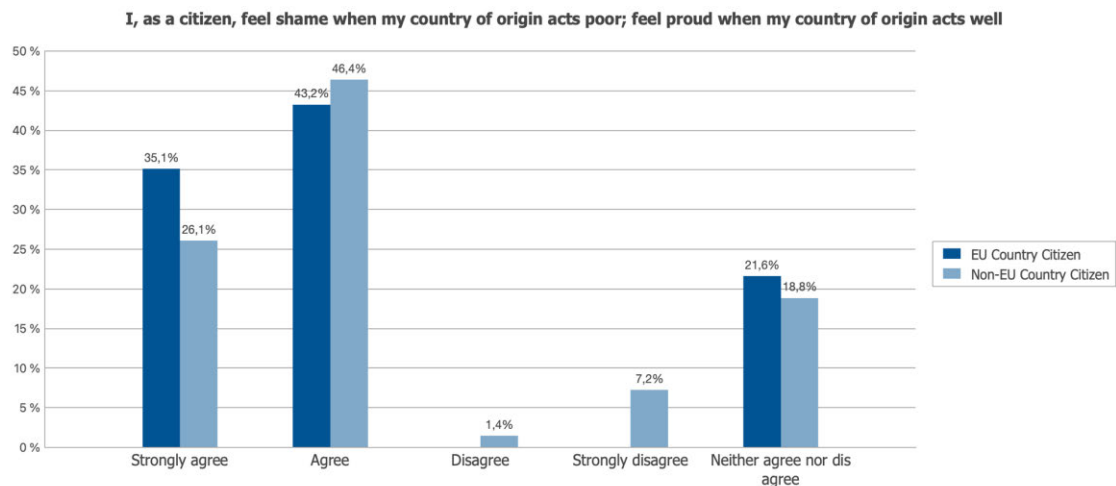
In line with the interviews, the survey respondents are asked to choose three words among multiple choices to express how being a citizen of their country makes them feel. The responses indicate that the most frequently chosen three words that express their feelings as citizens are respectively “proud,” “frustrated,” and “privileged” (Table 5). The survey data shows that 38% of respondents mention only positive emotions, while 72.7% who express mixed feelings and 81.8% who have negative feelings are non-EU HSMs (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Categorization of Citizenship Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Budapest)



Appiah (1997) views patriotism as a genuine sentiment, a deep attachment to the homeland rather than just an ideology. He describes patriotism as evoking pride and excitement in the achievements of the country while also allowing for critical detachment to evaluate the country's progress. Patriots, as noted by Viroli (1995), feel their country's shame and suffer when it fails or political authorities act poorly. Both negative and positive feelings serve as acts of care. The interviewees' narratives of experiences and the survey findings (Figure 7) support this argument, revealing the contextual concurrent presence of negative and positive emotions.

Figure 7. Citizenship Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Budapest)



According to the widely held assumption, spending more time living abroad weakens individuals' spatial attachment to their home country (Dzięglewski, 2020; Trąbka et al., 2022). However, the interview data show that the duration of time spent abroad does not necessarily weaken HSMs' attachment to their home country. Both EU and non-EU HSMs report strong attachments to their country of origin, regardless of the time spent in Hungary. The survey findings support the interviewees' narratives, revealing that the respondents who have resided in Budapest, Hungary for eight years or more exhibit the strongest attachment to their country of origin (Table 6).

Table 6. Spatial Attachment to the Country of Origin by the Length of Stay in Hungary

<i>Length of Stay</i>	<i>Very close</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Not very close</i>	<i>Not close at all</i>	<i>Can't choose</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>0 to 3 years</i>	33,3%	25%	33,3%	8,3%	-	100%
<i>3 to 5 years</i>	35%	40%	15%	10%	-	100%
<i>5 to 7 years</i>	24,1%	41,4%	31%	-	3,4%	100%
<i>8 years and more</i>	39,4%	45,5%	9,1%	6,1%	-	100%
<i>TOTAL</i>	33%	38,7%	21,7%	5,7%	0,9%	100%

Emotional attachment to the country of origin plays a significant role in individuals' decision to acquire another citizenship. Individuals with strong patriotic sentiments may hesitate to proceed with naturalization particularly in cases where they are obliged to renunciate their birth citizenship. Gulzhan from Kazakhstan clearly describe her feelings and the reason why she has not started her process yet despite being eligible as:

“If I apply for another citizenship, I have to renounce my Kazakh citizenship. For me, it is a struggle to give it up. I could do it many years ago. I could change my passport to be a citizen of another country. But I could not. It is not easy to change. You know, patriotic feelings...” (Gulzhan, Kazakhstan, non-EU)

For many interviewees, patriotic attachment extends beyond their country of origin or city of birth. While their country of origin provides a foundational sense of patriotic attachment, their experiences and interactions in their new places of residence can cultivate a profound sense of belonging. Although some interviewees, such as Miltos from Greece, express gratitude and respect for the opportunities and quality of life Hungary provides, reflecting patriotic sentiments, the majority tend to have a stronger attachment to Budapest than to Hungary. Both EU and non-EU HSMs emphasize their unique emotional connection to Budapest, expressing that they do not feel the same level of strong attachment to Hungary:

Interviewer: How close do you feel yourself to Hungary? Do you self-identify as Budapestian?

“I feel like the city is my home. I also like Hungary. But yeah, Budapest, this is the place I feel home.” (Sovhona, India, non-EU)

“A lot of people said that they feel connected to Budapest, but not to Hungary. For me, it's the same. I feel very much connected to Budapest, but not Hungary. I think if I was offered to become a citizen of Budapest, I would definitely want it.” (Ewa, Poland, EU)

The strong attachment to Budapest reflects a form of urban patriotism rooted in the city's distinctive cultural diversity and cosmopolitan nature. Budapest stands out from many cities in Central and Eastern Europe and shares similarities with cosmopolitan centers such as London, Berlin, and Paris (Ryan, 2018; Barwick & Beaman, 2019). Many HSMs note that Budapest offers opportunities for young professionals and serves as a hub of social and economic possibilities similar to other European cities, creating an “international pink bubble” (Ewa, Poland, EU) where migrants can live cosmopolitan lives while preserving their cultural distinctiveness.

Figure 8. Spatial Belonging to Budapest

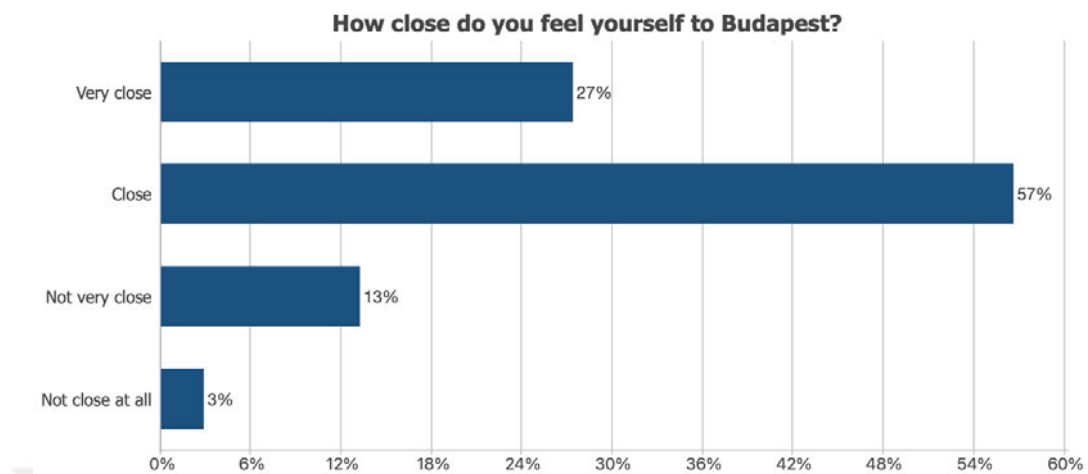
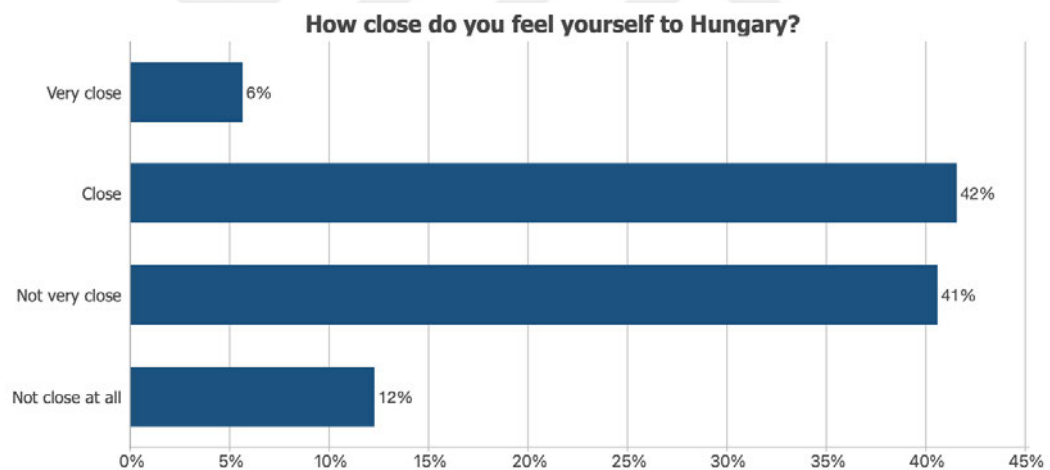


Figure 9. Spatial Belonging to Hungary



Despite their favorable experiences and strong emotional ties to Budapest, HSMs face challenges such as the difficulty of learning Hungarian, cultural differences, democratic decline, economic instability, and increasing xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment. These issues impact their overall feelings toward Hungary, leading them to view their stay in Budapest as temporary. As illustrated in Figure 8 and Figure 9, the respondents of the survey also feel a stronger sense of belonging to Budapest than Hungary. This weaker attachment to Hungary is also a key factor in why many interviewees, including non-EU HSMs who might be expected to pursue EU citizenship through Hungary, are reluctant to apply for Hungarian citizenship:

“I don't feel the same connection as I did with Italy, my former country of residence. I would apply for Italian citizenship, for example. I felt more connected. I speak Italian. But, here, I have never been willing to learn the language. I feel like people are not friendly. So, I don't want to be part of the society. I know I will get more advantages if I become but no, I don't really feel it.” (Magnim, Togo, non-EU)

Table 7. Highly Skilled Migrants’ Approaches to Hungarian Citizenship by Citizenship

<i>Reasons of applying for Hungarian Citizenship</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>I feel I emotionally and culturally attach to Hungary</i>	-	6%	4%
<i>I have Hungarian origin</i>	10%	1%	5%
<i>I would like to live in Hungary for the rest of my life</i>	-	3%	2%
<i>To be an EU citizen</i>	18%	22%	21%
<i>To get citizenship of another country to increase my chances for a better and more secure life</i>	8%	30%	22%
<i>Reasons of not applying for Hungarian Citizenship</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>I am already an EU citizen and I don't need it</i>	38%	-	15%
<i>I don't see my future in Hungary</i>	10%	22%	18%
<i>I have long-term/permanent residence and I have access all rights and services that I need</i>	8%	15%	9%
<i>If I acquire Hungarian citizenship, I have to renounce citizenship of my home country and I don't want it</i>	8%	1%	4%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%	100%

88% of all survey respondents, confirming the interviewees, also report that they do not consider acquiring Hungarian citizenship. When asked about the reasons for their reasons for applying or not applying for Hungarian citizenship, the majority approach to the naturalization in Hungary pragmatically to get better opportunities

or become an EU citizen. Only 4% of all respondents express an emotional attachment to the country (Table 7). This may assert that the weaker the sense of belonging to a country people feel, the less they are willing to be naturalized in that country.

When the interviewees were provided with a world map and asked to mark the place(s) they call home, both EU and non-EU interviewees marked their country of origin or city of birth as their primary home on the map, immediately referring to other places. None of the interviewees chose a single location; rather, each identified several places as home. A few described that for them, home is anywhere they feel connected and comfortable, indicating that the entire world could be their home. For HSMs who have lived in various locations, home represents a place that provides familiarity, comfort, security, and refuge. Their home understanding, thus, varies according to their lived experiences, circumstances, cultural backgrounds and practices, and personal emotional and social connections, linked to family, friends. The majority underlines that feeling a sense of belonging to a place is important to call that place home. This argument is also supported by the survey findings, indicating the significance of the sense of belonging in HSMs' home perception (Table 8). The interviewees' conceptualization of home reflects a maintained feeling of rootedness and a developed cosmopolitan outlook:

Interviewer: Could you please pin on this map the place(s) you call home, and what make this place home for you?

“It is where I was born because my family and people close to me live there. San Francisco is also a home to me because of its diversity. You feel safe and welcomed there. For some reason, I do not feel Budapest or Hungary as my home. I consider here as a temporary spot for us. We are just like birds. We are here to build up the muscles to make our wings stronger and fly to better warmer places.” (Shameem, Tajikistan, non-EU)

“It is the Netherlands. That's where the family is, where my parents are, where my brother is with his family. And then, Hungary is home to me, as

well. I spent my whole adult life here, and it is where all my friends are. So, family and friends make these places home. And... I secretly have this connection with Türkiye that... It's not home but I just wish it could be a home. My daughter's dad is Turkish.” (Zoe, Netherlands, EU)

Table 8. Home understanding of Survey Respondents (Budapest)

<i>Home understanding</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>My home is where I feel belonged to</i>	48,1%	45,3%	4,7%	1,9%	-
<i>My home is where my family and friends are</i>	30,2%	40,6%	19,8%	9,4%	-
<i>I have multiple places where I feel like a home</i>	24,5%	56,6%	14,2%	3,8%	0,9%
<i>My home is where I have good job and life opportunities</i>	16%	47,2%	21,7%	13,2%	1,9%
<i>I don't feel anywhere like my home</i>	4,7%	13,2%	30,2%	30,2%	21,7%
<i>My home is where I have a property</i>	3,8%	19,8%	26,4%	35,8%	14,2%
<i>My only home is where I was born</i>	1,9%	5,7%	20,8%	47,2%	24,5%

3.3 Experiences of Coexistence and Performing Citizenship

Coexistence refers to the state of living together peacefully and harmoniously, despite socio-economic, socio-cultural, and political differences. It is the ability of individuals, communities, or nations to share a space with mutual respect and tolerance, recognizing and valuing each other's unique qualities and perspectives. Convivial coexistence does not indicate the absence of conflict but rather an active effort to manage disputes, building bridges of communication and empathy (Samanani, 2022). It requires open-mindedness, empathy, and a willingness to engage in dialogue to find common ground and resolve conflicts peacefully. Emphasizing shared values of different groups of individuals, mutual respect,

understanding, and acceptance are the foundations of coexisting in political communities.

For living together, individuals are expected to strive to bridge cultural, religious, ethnic, and social divides, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility for the well-being of their communities. It entails actively participating in civic life, upholding democratic values, respecting the rule of law, promoting equal rights and opportunities, and advocating for social justice and equality. Therefore, coexistence involves creating inclusive spaces that accommodate different perspectives, needs, and aspirations of diverse communities and ensure equal opportunities for all members of political communities, including both citizens and non-citizens. It requires the acknowledgment of the importance of respecting freedom of speech, assembly, and association, allowing individuals and groups to express their political opinions and engage in political activities within the framework of the law. Furthermore, living in coexistence entails fostering active citizenship and community engagement. It can involve volunteering, participating in community projects, and working together to tackle local challenges and enhance social cohesion.

People's experiences of living together with fellow members of a political community in a complex urban and socio-political environment are influenced by their encounters in legal, political, social, and economic contexts, as well as their everyday interactions with people and institutions, and further shape their perception of citizenship and practices. Experiences of coexistence are thus the sum of all legal-political, social, and economic experiences that individuals accumulate throughout their lives as citizens and non-citizens in different political communities. In this section, HSMs' experiences of coexistence are identified and examined with citizenship practices, focusing on political, social, economic, and cultural participation.

3.3.1 Legal-Political Experiences and Practices

The examination of legal-political experiences involves a focus on both institutional and subjective dimensions. The institutional dimension primarily pertains to an

individual's legal status, rights and responsibilities, formal and informal citizenship education, and encounters with bureaucracy within and outside their country of origin. In contrast, the subjective dimension involves an individual's sense of security, evaluation of institutions, satisfaction with and trust in the political system and politics, as well as political identification and level of interest in politics. The institutional and subjective dimensions of citizenship are interconnected and influence each other reciprocally. The institutional dimension indicates a formal understanding of citizenship as a legal status with rights and duties assigned to that status and institutionalized experiences of citizenship within states in everyday life. The legal status of individuals, along with their experiences within this formal classification, significantly impacts their political, social, and economic dimensions of life. Regardless of their citizenship status, these factors enable individuals to form distinct relationships with various institutions, shaping their subjective position, perceptions, and comprehension of their legal status and the political system that impacts them. That is to say, the institutional dimension of legal-political citizenship experiences affects peoples' evaluation of institutions and legal-political systems, including political interest, self-identification, their trust in justice and the political system, and political participation.

Exploring the experiences of belonging among HSMs within their transnational context demonstrates that EU citizenship emerges as a higher-order identity by comparison with national citizenship (Sönmez Gioftsios & Ozcurumez, 2024). The social, economic, and political privileges linked to EU citizenship reinforce the attachment to European identity among EU HSMs. It also enables them to distinguish themselves from non-EU HSMs, who are viewed as the "other" within the EU. All interviewed EU citizens emphasize that being an EU citizen provides them with greater opportunities and simplifies their lives within the EU. When asked about their citizenship, some of them prioritize European citizenship over national citizenship, as they view the latter as less significant in the absence of the EU aspect:

“If one day Poland decided to exit the EU, it would have a huge impact on the trajectory of my life because my status would change. Everything would become much more difficult. I believe my life is easier simply because I am

an EU citizen. You may think that citizenship has no impact on your life, but there is actually a huge impact. I would not be able to be here on the same terms and in the same way if I were a citizen of another country outside the EU.” (Ewa, Poland, EU)

“If you go to Switzerland, you are almost seen as a Latin person. There is discrimination against Spanish people in the West of Europe, the high side of Europe, in countries such as Germany and England. So, if the European Union did not exist as a roof institution, being a Spanish in Europe probably would not be as valuable.” (Juan, Spain, EU)

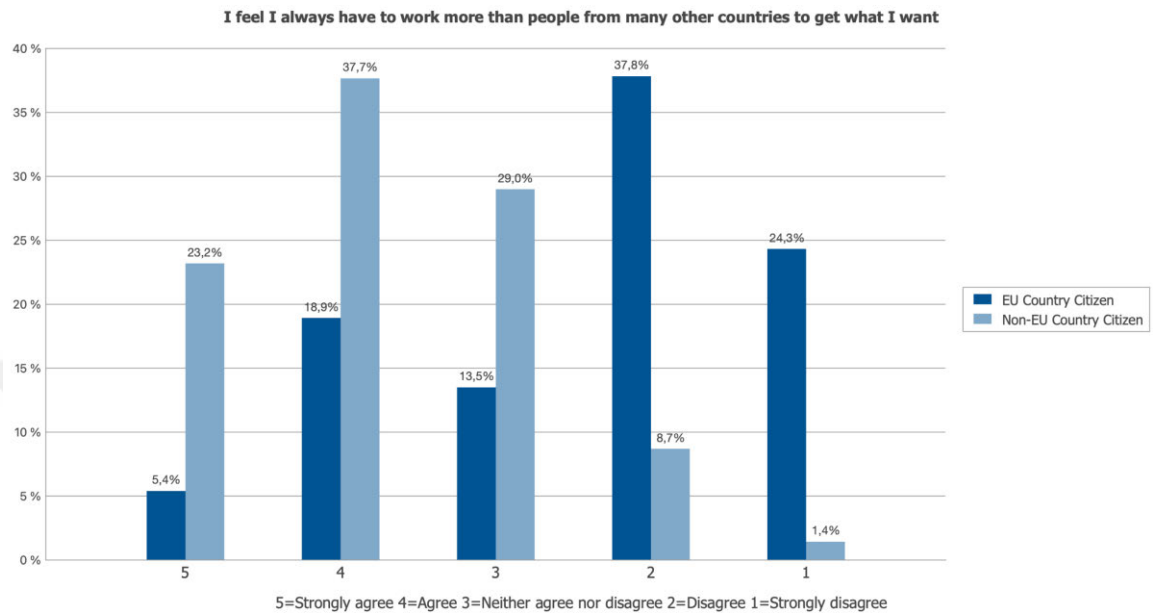
Acknowledging the benefits of EU citizenship, some interviewees, such as Sia from Greece, view this advantageous condition as unjust. They recognize that many highly skilled people among non-EU citizens may miss out on opportunities solely due to the limitations imposed by their passports. Daniel points out the same issue while explaining why he thinks he is privileged:

“In the companies I've worked in, I have met with people who were not from the EU, and they really had to go through hoops with various visa applications. There are some people whose presence in the country is wholly dependent on a job. So, if they lose their job, they need to leave Hungary. The absence of that kind of pressure certainly influences my position in a positive, privileged way.” (Daniel, Ireland, EU)

As stated by EU HSMs, non-EU HSMs also highlight the disparities between EU and non-EU citizens and the sense of exclusion they experience. All non-EU interviewees reflect on the challenges, such as systemic barriers that hinder their employment opportunities and freedom of movement, contrasting sharply with the freedoms EU citizens enjoyed. The survey results, confirming the interviews, suggests that 75.7% of EU HSMs think that they have social and economic advantages both in their country of origin and abroad whereas only 24.6% of non-EU HSMs agree with this statement. Unlike EU HSMs, the majority of non-EU

HSMs responded the survey feel that they always have to work more than people from many other countries to get what they want (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Perception of Disadvantaged and Inequality by Citizenship (Budapest)



Although non-EU migrants residing in an EU country can travel to other Schengen countries for short stays without needing a visa and can access certain social services and benefits in their host country, their legal status often includes various limitations and conditions. They express significant frustration over the restrictions on their freedom of movement within the EU, a fundamental aspect of EU citizenship automatically granted to EU member state citizens but not to those from non-EU countries:

“I feel that I am a non-EU, mostly because of the immigration system that makes our lives harder, particularly for getting a proper job. It restricts your movements when you are in the immigration process, making you stuck in a country where you do not want to stay. We want to have the freedom of movement that the European Union is proud of, but we cannot enjoy this privilege because we are non-EU. However, there is no way that it makes me feel myself little. It is a matter of chance that I am not an EU citizen. I was

born in another country. When you go to *Blaha Lujza*³, you see people lying in the streets, being drunk or half-naked. Those people are EU citizens, and I am a non-EU highly skilled person with two master's degrees who has traveled the world. I do not have EU citizenship, but that is life! Plus, nobody will just come and say 'hey here is your EU citizenship, take it.' I have to work for it. So, it is also irrational to sit and complain." (Gulnar, Tajikistan, non-EU)

Gulnar's statement above reveals a complex interplay of frustration, resilience, and pragmatic acceptance regarding her status as a non-EU citizen in an EU country. Although she acknowledges systemic inequities, like many other non-EU HSMs interviewed, she recommends accepting the legal realities and advocating for a proactive and resilient approach to overcoming barriers. She views EU citizenship as a goal to work towards. However, highlighting her qualifications and experiences, she resists feeling devalued, attributing their non-EU status to chance rather than personal inadequacy. In her quote above, Gulnar also questions the inherent value of EU citizenship when juxtaposed with the visible struggles of some EU citizens. This contrast challenges the assumption that EU citizenship inherently correlates with higher worth or better living conditions. This critical perspective suggests that citizenship status by itself does not determine a person's value or quality of life and highlights the importance of lived experiences. It prompts a reconsideration of the benefits and limitations of EU citizenship through the lived experiences of individuals in actual spaces.

Freedom of movement within the EU is a major limitation highlighted by several non-EU HSMs in the interviews. In line with this observation, the survey dataset offers valuable insights into the significant difference in travel experiences between EU and non-EU HSMs. 62.3% of non-EU respondents agree with the statement that they cannot easily travel to different countries freely because of their passports, whereas 83.8% of EU respondents disagree (Figure 11).

³ Blaha Lujza which was named for Lujza Blaha, a Hungarian actress and a singer is one of the main squares and busiest public areas in central Budapest. It is also known as one of the meeting points where many homeless people in Budapest are gathered.

Figure 11. Ability to Travel by Citizenship (Budapest)

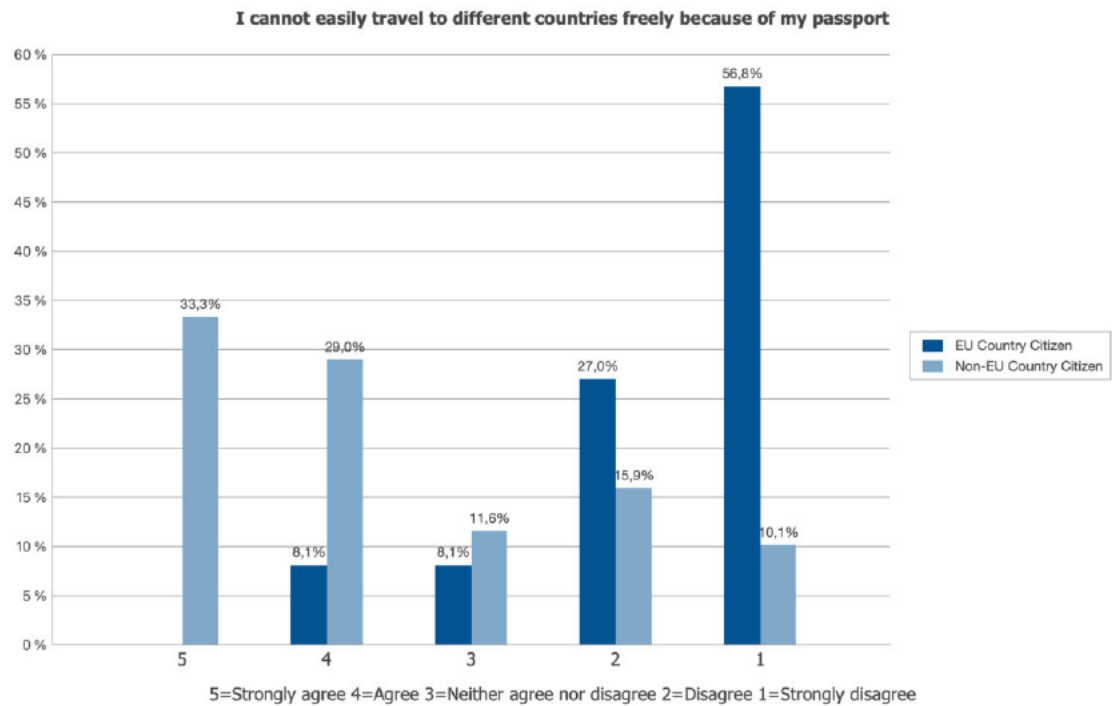


Table 9. Ability to Travel by Citizenship (Budapest) One-way Analysis of Variance

<i>EU/Non-EU</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Mean lower b. (95%)</i>	<i>Mean upper b. (95%)</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>EU country citizen</i>	37	1,68	0,944	0,155	1,36	1,99	1,0	4,0
<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	69	3,59	1,365	0,164	3,27	3,92	1,0	5,0
<i>Total</i>	106	2,92	1,535	0,149	2,63	3,22	1,0	5,0
<i>Post hoc tests</i>	Diff. Cohen's d Hedge's g* F p (Scheffe)							
<i>EU country citizen</i>	Non-EU Country Citizen -1,919 -1,553 -1,542 58,078 0,0000							

Travel restrictions on non-EU citizens within the EU appear significantly impactful on the experiences of non-EU HSMs (Table 9), despite their residency status providing some flexibility in movement within the EU. The combined analysis of the survey and interview results reveals a disparity in mobility among HSMs, with a

particular emphasis on the role of passport power in accessing their socio-economic opportunities.

Dual citizenship significantly influences individuals' daily lives, particularly in their perception of security, flexibility, and decision-making capabilities. This aspect is particularly highlighted by dual citizenship holders interviewed and by HSMs actively seeking the chance to acquire another citizenship when they become eligible. Holding citizenship in multiple countries enhances HSMs' personal and professional lives, granting them additional rights, freedoms, and greater flexibility. This favorable position also serves as a means to more effectively navigate and adapt to different socio-political environments. The interviewees with dual citizenship approach their first and second citizenship differently and view the second as a more valuable asset than an emotional connection. They describe the second one as a strategic tool with diverse potential uses, such as an exit strategy, welfare benefits, and family protection (Harpaz & Mateos, 2018), offering various pathways, opportunities, increased mobility, and a stronger sense of security:

“My British passport was useful when coming to Europe. It was useful traveling elsewhere. It may not be the best practice to follow, but, for example, depending on the visa fee, if I am a Canadian today, I may be a British tomorrow. Türkiye is an example of where I have pulled that. If I am going to Türkiye, I am British in Türkiye because the visa fee is cheaper. But if I go somewhere in the Middle East, I am Canadian, for sure.” (Jack, Canada & UK, non-EU)

"I was very happy when Portugal gave me such opportunity because I have more freedom with the Portuguese passport than the Turkish passport. I can live freely within Europe and move to somewhere else just tomorrow if I want to. I have a different setup now and more options. (...) I feel lucky but I know that I'm not Portuguese. I don't even know the national anthem. I just have the passport." (Adem, Türkiye & Portugal, EU)

Adem clearly illustrates above that his Portuguese passport is valued not for its cultural or emotional significance but for its utility in enhancing personal freedom and opportunities. This perspective reflects a broader trend of the commodification of citizenship, where the acquisition of a passport becomes a transactional process. In the later parts of the interview, however, Adem's pragmatic approach to his second citizenship contrasts with a more emotional and patriotic attachment to his first citizenship. All interviewees with dual citizenship hold a similar understanding and perception as Adem. This finding underscores the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of citizenship, where legal status, identity, and belonging intersect in diverse ways in everyday life.

With dual citizenship or long-term/permanent residency which provides a type of semi-citizenship status, HSMs can experience diverse social, political, and economic systems firsthand, fostering an appreciation for different perspectives and ways of life. They are more likely to engage in transnational networks, bridging gaps between countries and acting as a member of a more interconnected and harmonious global community. Being a citizen or a permanent resident of such countries where the political system and bureaucratic institutions and services work well empowers individuals with the ability and flexibility to make decisions and take action in a secure environment. A well-functioning political leadership and efficient bureaucratic system in a country enhance individuals' sense of security and protection, strengthening their respect and appreciation toward the countries they have legal relationships with:

“I have never been to Australia where I am a citizen. Besides my family, I do not have any connection with the country beyond that. I view it as something like security, a privilege that I have. Dual citizenship is the ability to go to another country without having paperwork or problems. It is a lot easier for me to make some moves or move to another country. With Australian citizenship, you have a very strong paper in your hand because it can open the door to many other countries or many opportunities. Australia has a more structured system for education, pensions, and health compared to Greece or Hungary. I feel a sense of security. If anything happens and I need to move

to another country, I still have a safe place there. It is like a pillow.” (Sia, Greece & Australia, EU)

As indicated by Sia above, interviews uncover that excessive red tape and poor bureaucratic organization in their country of origin or/and residence may motivate HSMs to move to other countries with better bureaucratic systems. They tend to compare institutional structures of different countries through their experiences. The efficiency, accountability, transparency, accessibility, effectiveness, and fair treatment by political authorities, bureaucratic services, and public and private institutions influence their satisfaction, trust, and attachment. High level of red tape, the lack of a merit system in recruitment processes due to social and political corruption and clientelism, bribery, lack of communication between units, and bureaucratic ineptitude are some issues both EU and non-EU HSMs mentioned to describe the challenges they face in their country of origin. Lorenzo explains his frustration and the push factor that made him leave his country of origin, Italy:

“I feel a bit frustrated as an Italian citizen because we are not evaluated in the proper way in our country. There is such a high volume of high skilled people, so the competition is high. That is the reason why you need to leave your country to go somewhere else. You do not leave your country because of a war but you leave because rules are not good. There is competition but we call it recommendation, the Italian referral! Clientelism. You need to know people to get a position.” (Lorenzo, Italy, EU)

The bureaucratic challenges and conveniences that HSMs face outside their country of origin are closely linked to their citizenship status and the associated rights and responsibilities. The interviewees’ views about public services and bureaucratic processes in Hungary vary. Some interviewees find them “quite smooth and straightforward as long as people are absolutely on top of it to the finest detail” (David, Ireland, EU). Some others, on the other hand, identify both bad and good experiences, mostly reporting issues such as red tape, communication issues between different units, the quality of facilities in public institutions, and officials’ lack of knowledge. The majority of complaints were raised by non-EU HSMs. EU

HSMs report less involvement in bureaucratic processes compared to non-EU HSMs, as they do not interact with certain public institutions such as the immigration office. HSMs from certain countries appear to receive more favorable treatment in Hungary than those from the Middle East, Africa, or other regions:

“I don't think I've ever faced a bad experience. 12 years that I've been here and I think public institutions have improved on things such as customer service, queuing systems, etc. drastically. Speaking Hungarian also helps a lot. I think being a Canadian citizen makes my life easier. Whether it's the positive reactions in public offices or just generally passing through borders, I never really had a bad time. Maybe I have a nice and a charming personality but I think, there's also that element of my citizenship.” (Jack, Canada & UK, non-EU)

“I came here to study. Back then, I did not have that much interaction with state institutions and everything was much easier but when we opened a business, everything got harder and harder. When we were trying to open a bank account, we had to go five different banks and the fifth one agreed on opening the bank account. The earlier four of them rejected us and the only reason that they said to us was that we are Turkish and we are risky.” (Özlem, Türkiye, non-EU)

The quotes above reveal how citizenship significantly impacts the way HSMs are treated by local institutions. Jack highlights the protective and facilitating power of his Canadian passport, which smooths interactions with public institutions. He points out the role of citizenship as an identity marker in determining access to positive experiences and opportunities and its broader influence of passport power in formal and informal interactions within transnational spaces. Özlem's experience, on the other hand, underscores the power dynamics at play, where citizenship becomes a tool for exclusion, perpetuating stereotypes, and reinforcing social hierarchies. The label of “risk” attached to Turkish citizenship exemplifies the broader challenges that non-EU citizens may face in accessing basic services. The rights and recognition of non-EU HSMs seem to be contingent upon the perceived value of

their citizenship which may act as a tool of exclusion, rendering them perpetually foreign and unprotected. It also highlights how institutional practices can perpetuate social hierarchies based on nationality, affecting not only access to services but also broader issues of identity, belonging, and social cohesion. Several interviewees from different countries, such as Özlem, share narratives suggesting that negative experiences based on their citizenship outside their country of origin may lead HSMs to view their passports as weak and view their citizenship as a problematic identity marker.

According to many interviewees, the attitudes of officials working in public and private institutions also matter in shaping their experiences regardless of citizenship. They all identify the language barrier as the most significant challenge in their experiences, emphasizing that a lack of language knowledge can sometimes result in negative attitudes. Interviews also demonstrate that the majority of HSMs retain considerable skepticism toward public and political authorities derived from the country's xenophobic stance, which diminishes their sense of belonging to Hungary, discouraging them from integrating into Hungarian society and participating in social and political life:

“I don't think I was mistreated in any institution because of the fact that I'm a Serbian citizen. But in a way, my non-EU status determines my relationship with them. I also did feel unwelcomed on some occasions. For example, when I was kicked from the doctor's office with a fever of 39-40°C just because of my lack of knowledge of Hungarian. That really happened.”
(Milan, Serbia, non-EU)

“I don't speak the language and this is very difficult for me to go to the public offices to do my taxes or to get any legal paper that I might need. It creates problems also with the employees working there. For example, people in *Kormanyablak*⁴ are rude. I don't really feel like I'm a part of the community or that I'm integrated. I don't really agree with the government,

⁴ The literal translation of *Kormanyablak* is government window. These are the local government offices operate in every district in Budapest.

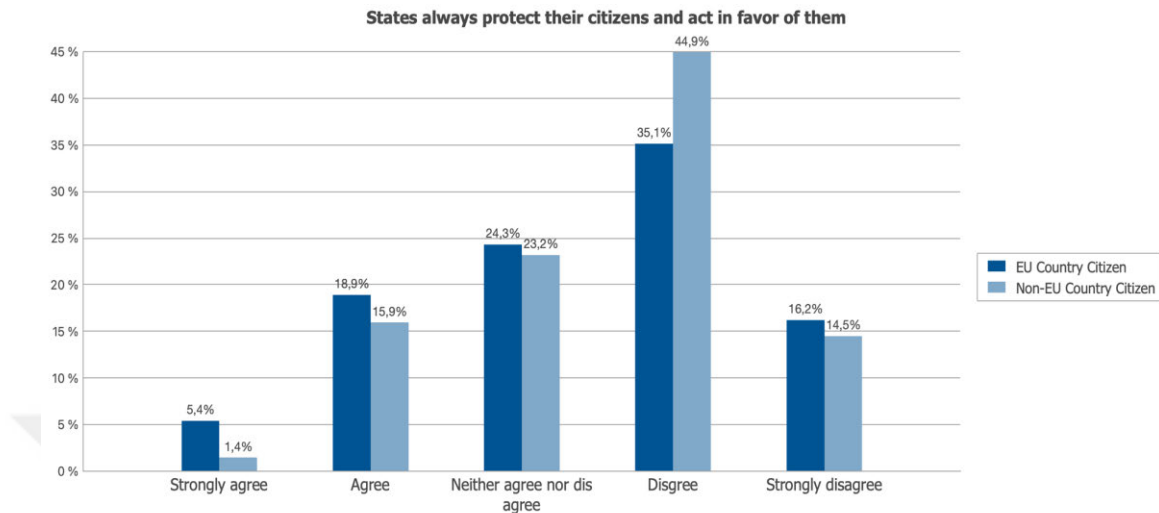
the politics or how people think and live here.” (Sia, Greece & Australia, EU)

The role of the state in providing essential support and protection to its citizens, both domestically and internationally, is highlighted in the interviews as a key aspect of the relationship between the individual and the state. Citizenship fundamentally provides protection and safety to its citizens through legal, social, and political frameworks. However, the extent and effectiveness of the protection provided by states can vary based on distinct factors influencing citizens' experiences. Negative experiences such as discrimination, lack of access to services, inefficiency of institutions within and outside the country, insufficiency of policies implemented for the wellbeing of citizens, a general lack of state responsiveness to their needs, or deprivation of rights may lead to alienation, distrust, and a sense of abandonment. Negative perceptions and feelings may result in distancing citizens from their countries. Conversely, positive experiences such as efficient and adequate legal and social protection and bureaucratic services, equal and fair treatment, and active citizen-state engagement enhance citizens' trust, patriotic attachment, and self-confidence, making them feel cared for and protected:

“I feel that I've been taken care of. If I am in Ukraine and something happens, I can approach relevant authorities using my identification documents. They can help me. If I am anywhere in the world and something happens, I can go to the Ukrainian Embassy, and they will support me. I also feel protected by Ukraine in terms of pension, social security.” (Anna, Ukraine, non-EU)

According to the survey, only 20% of all HSMs think that states always protect their citizens and act in favor of them and 57% of them present negative perception, having no significant difference between EU and non-EU HSMs (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Perceived Safety and Protection for Citizens by Citizenship (Budapest)



The sense of security and protection is not only related to the HSMs' lived experiences in their country of origin but also in their country of residence. States are bound by international treaties to ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of all individuals living within their borders, irrespective of citizenship status. The persistent fear among some non-EU HSMs of residency issues and deportation, as narrated in the interviews, reflects a tangible sense of vulnerability among non-EU HSMs, leading to a feeling of insecurity and a constant worry about their future in Hungary. While describing her experiences in institutions with locals as a non-EU citizen, Malak from Morocco expresses her feelings about her status:

“Fear is always there. Whenever my work permit ends and my company starts the process for extending it, each time, I am panicking. Even if I know that everything is fine, I get panic. Throughout those months that my application in process, I am full of fear by thinking what if they would not extend it. I don't want to go back home or if I go, I want it to be my choice.”
(Malak, Morocco, non-EU)

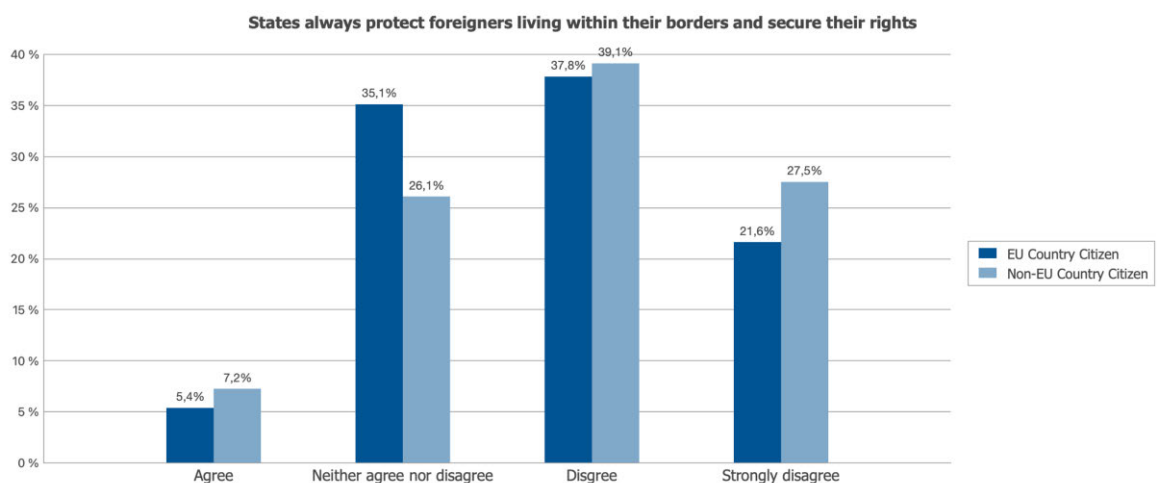
Similarly, Sovhona, below, stresses the psychological impact of bureaucratic processes and the precariousness of her situation, where the right to stay is contingent upon external forces beyond her control. It reflects the power dynamics

that shape non-EU HSMs' experiences, where states' decisions and attitudes may drastically affect their sense of security and belonging:

“I don't feel secure as an Indian citizen living here. I know that whatever happens, I don't matter to the government or the people in general. I'm not a part of their society. I consider this place my home, but it could be taken from me anytime. I always feel the fear of being deported. I have already been rejected twice in Hungary. When I first applied for a work permit, they sent me a long letter warning me to leave the EU in 30 days and noting that I would be forced to leave unless I did. I felt scared when they sent it.”
(Sovhona, India, non-EU)

Unlike EU citizens, non-EU HSMs face continual uncertainty about their right to stay in the country, which profoundly impacts their sense of security, decreasing their autonomy to make a decision. Malak's experience serves as an example that shows the privileges of holding EU citizenship and the real-life implications of legal and bureaucratic structures. The overall analysis of interviews with non-EU HSMs also uncovers the precarious nature of non-EU HSMs' status and a sense of distrust towards Hungarian authorities, likely originating from the anti-immigrant stance of the Hungarian government and lived experiences with the authorities.

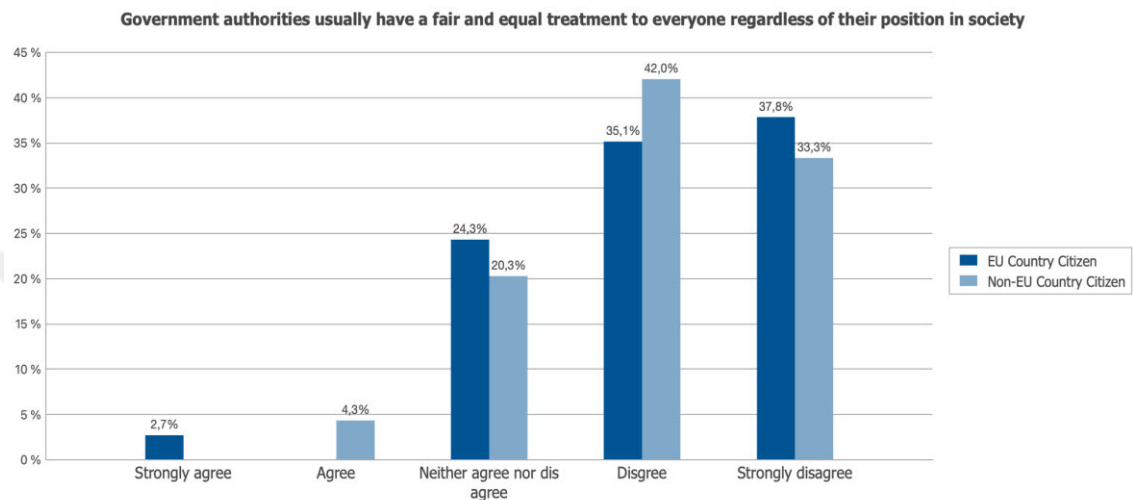
Figure 13. Perceived Safety and Protection for Foreigners by citizenship (Budapest)



The survey's findings indicate a general, widespread skepticism among all respondents about state protection for non-citizens. The high disagreement rate with

the statement that states always protect foreigners and secure their rights suggests that many HSMs believe states may fall short in providing safety and protecting the rights of non-citizen residents who are integral members of the political community (Figure 13).

Figure 14. Fair and Equal Treatment by Citizenship (Budapest)



Although several non-EU HSMs interviewed in Budapest experience fear and insecurity, particularly concerning their residency, and feel they are not treated equally (Figure 14), the survey results should be interpreted with caution. The abovementioned survey questions on state protection do not aim to assess respondents' specific sense of safety and perception of fairness and equality in Hungary or their country of origin. Instead, they intend to provide insight into HSMs' general perceptions of how states treat foreigners within their borders. This distinction is significant because the responses in the survey reflect more of a global perspective of the respondents about state behavior, indicating a general disbelief about state protection and fairness. Therefore, while the specific fears and concerns of non-EU HSMs residing in Hungary are evident in the interviews and are crucial to address, the survey findings should be interpreted in a broader context.

The responsiveness and efficiency of legal and institutional structures are essential components that influence public trust and satisfaction with governance. When these structures function effectively, they not only meet the needs of people but also reinforce the perception of fairness and reliability in the legal and political system.

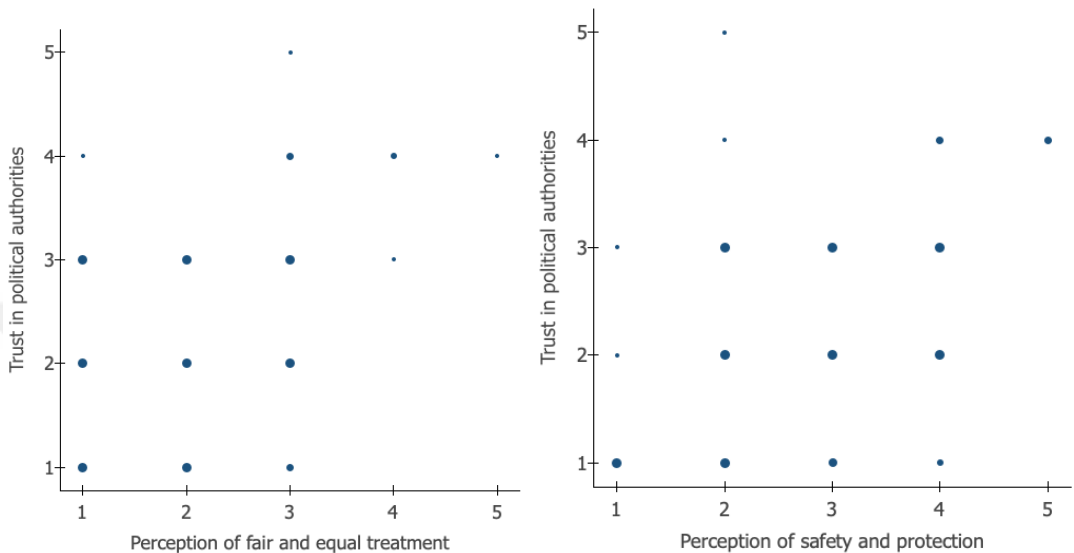
Many studies assert that trust in the government and politicians is more likely to increase when individuals have opportunities to engage in policy-making as they feel they are heard and their opinions are genuinely taken into account (Ma & Christensen, 2019; Berger, 2009). Some other studies, on the other hand, claim that distrust towards political authorities and dissatisfaction motivate people more to engage in political activities for a change in administration (Dalton et al., 2011; Goldfinch et al., 2009). Supporting the initial argument, most interviewees express their lack of trust in government officials and politicians due to their indifference toward the needs and demands of the public. They view political authorities as driven mainly by personal interests and the interests of specific groups. Several interviewees emphasize that they have lost their faith in the ability of citizens to influence their societies. They also point out that their distrust of political authorities extends beyond their experiences in their home countries and Hungary, reflecting a common distrust towards politicians worldwide. Many interviewees question the efficacy of traditional methods of political participation, such as protests or advocacy in the face of widespread corruption:

“There is an incredible amount of corruption all around the world right now. It is getting worse and worse. It is not only in Türkiye, Portugal, or Hungary. It is everywhere and spreading. I think the power of people is decreasing more and more. People who want to make a change cannot really make it because no one is actually hearing them. When was the last time you saw a protest successfully achieve its goals?” (Adem, Türkiye & Portugal, EU)

Similarly, a significant portion of survey respondents have low trust in political authorities (Figure 15). While there is a general trend indicating that those who feel protected and treated fairly are more likely to trust political authorities, Figure 15 also reveals a considerable level of distrust, even among those who report fairness and protection moderately. Therefore, despite the positive correlation between perceived fairness, safety, and trust in political authorities, the outliers in Figure 15 suggest that these two factors alone may not be enough to explain the causes of trust or distrust in political authorities. Other factors are likely to influence trust in

political authorities, highlighting the need for further, more focused research into migrants' trust in political institutions and politicians.

Figure 15. Trust in Political Authorities vs. Perceived Fairness, Equality, and Safety (Budapest)



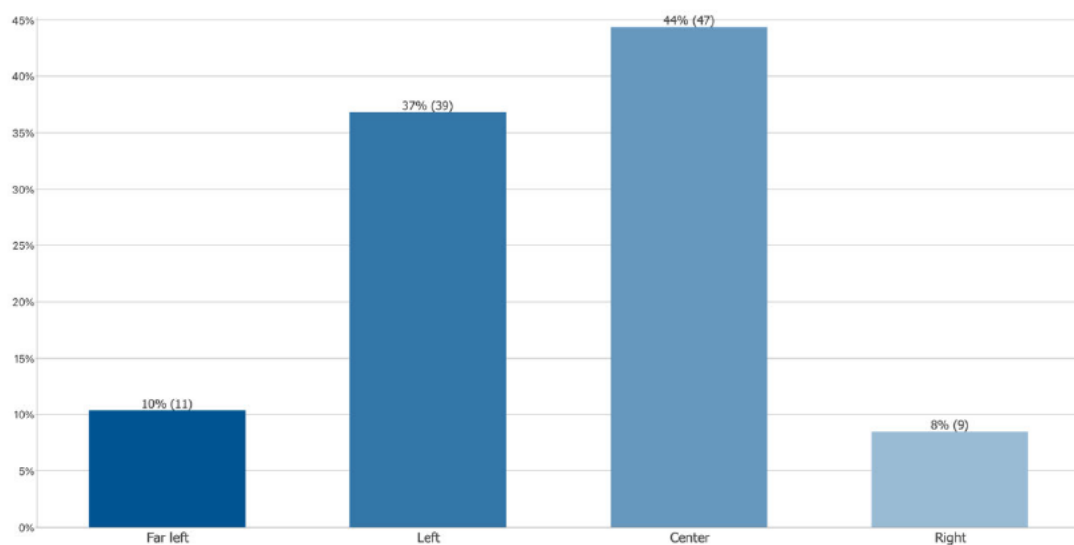
Perceived indifference of authorities toward public opinion leads to a significant erosion of trust in political authorities and public institutions. As HSMs' belief that political authorities in the countries disregard public opinions increases, their trust in those authorities diminishes. As the interviewees highlight, the majority of survey respondents also agree that most politicians are in politics only for their personal benefit and they are untrustworthy (Table 10). Many HSMs interviewed and responded to the survey believe that their opinions do not matter to political authorities and that their efforts to engage in decision-making processes as political actors may not lead to meaningful changes as they would not be heard by the authorities (Table 10). While the perception of inability to influence decisions and the feeling of despair are highly likely to reduce political participation among the interviewees, the survey findings do not suggest a clear positive or negative correlation between political participation and dissatisfaction and distrust towards political authorities. This study reveals a range of practices rather than a single dominant pattern, indicating that distrust and dissatisfaction may, depending on the context, either discourage or motivate people to engage in political activities for a change in administration.

Table 10. Perception of Political Authorities (Budapest)

<i>Perception of Political Authorities</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>I don't think authorities care much what people like me think</i>	32%	40,6%	18,9%	8,5%	-
<i>Most of the time we can trust people in government(s)</i>	0,9%	6,6%	27,4%	34,9%	30,2%
<i>Most politicians are in politics only for their personal benefits</i>	24,5%	40,6%	26,4%	4,7%	3,8%
<i>Political parties encourage people to become active in politics</i>	1%	21,7%	39,6%	30,2%	7,5%
<i>I believe that I can make a difference</i>	9%	35%	35%	16%	5%

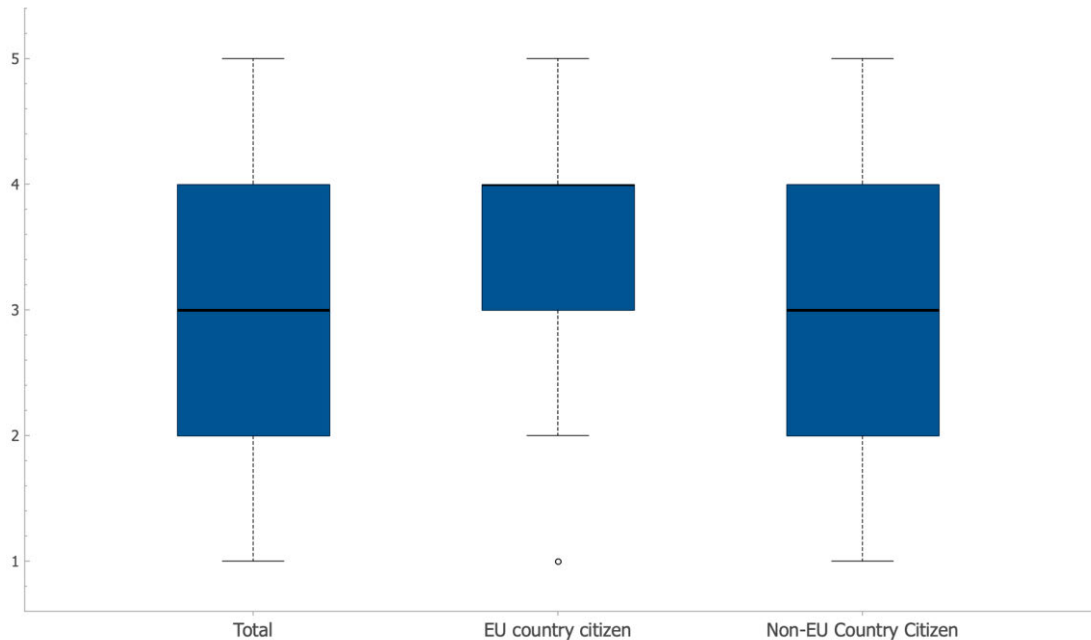
HSMs are often portrayed as a group that is primarily driven by self-interest and personal growth. As a result, they are assumed to be less likely to engage in political discussions, keep up with news, or actively participate in political activities (Weinar & Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020; Bielewska, 2021). However, findings from both interviews and surveys challenge this generalized view by revealing that HSMs in Budapest have different political orientation and show a wide range of interest in politics.

Figure 16. Political Identification (Budapest)



Political identification shapes an individual's worldview, values, and beliefs, influencing their understanding and engagement with the concept of citizenship. HSMs who responded to the survey mostly identify with the center and left of the political spectrum (Figure 16). None of the respondents align with the far right, and only a few identify with the far left. This indicates that the respondents tend to embrace liberal, progressive, or moderate ideas. Their political stances, which avoid extremist views, facilitate their adaptation to new contexts by being open to diverse social, cultural, and political perspectives, allowing them to reconcile their personal values with broader societal ones. While there is no significant difference between EU and non-EU HSMs in terms of political orientation, non-EU migrants relatively seem to incline more to identify with the left. A similar tendency is also found in the interviews. Although the interviewees are not explicitly asked to state their political identification, most of them position themselves on the left or the center of the political spectrum when discussing their views about politics.

Figure 17. Political Interest by Citizenship (Budapest)



While some interviewees show a strong interest in politics, actively following political developments, expressing their opinions, and participating as active political actors, others exhibit a lower level of political interest, with minimal

involvement or concern for political matters. The survey findings support this diversification among HSMs and challenge the stereotype of them being apolitical and self-interested by showing that HSMs are not a homogeneous group as portrayed. EU migrants exhibit a higher political interest than non-EU migrants. The variance for non-EU migrants is notably larger, indicating a broader spread and greater diversity in political interest within this group (Figure 17). The presence of outliers among non-EU migrants further underscores the variability. These findings suggest that while EU migrants tend to have a higher and more consistent level of political interest, non-EU migrants display a wider range of interest in politics, suggesting the heterogeneous nature of their political involvement.

The interviews assert that migrants' experiences in their country of origin significantly influence the level of their interest in politics. HSMs who have faced political instability and corruption in their home countries seem to be discouraged to engage in politics. Some HSMs deliberately choose to avoid politics because they have lost their trust in politicians and the political system or feel a sense of hopelessness.

“I think politics is not a thing for me because I act more with my emotions. You need to be a strong person. 3-4 years ago, I stopped following the news in Morocco or participating in an activity. It was my conscious decision because it was just hurting me so much. I cannot do anything about the country. My dad still sends me things that I just never read. I am in denial, and I know it's going to hit me at some point.” (Malak, Morocco, non-EU)

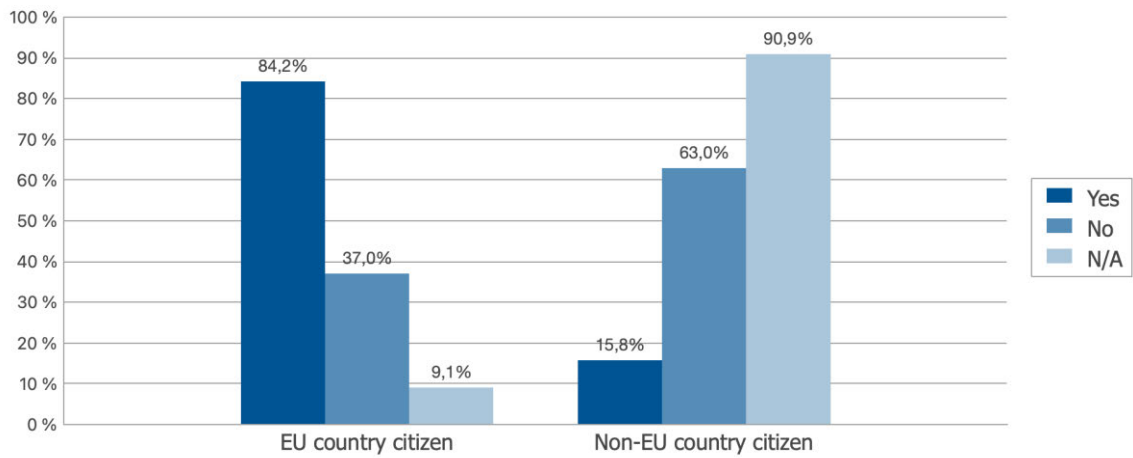
“When I was younger, I was very interested in politics. I was even involved in fights with many friends and family members. That's very common in Spain. You do it because you strongly believe in politics. When you are younger, you're also innocent and naive. You think it's the right way. But when I grew up and realized that politics is just a business, I was disappointed. Nothing is real. So, I don't care anymore. Maybe I still follow out of curiosity and to be updated, but I don't feel the need to delve deeply into politics.” (Juan, Spain, EU)

Overall, both interviews and the survey responses display low trust and confidence in politics and politicians. The interviews, which provide a deeper insight into HSMs' perception of political systems and authorities, show that this pervasive distrust towards political systems and authorities is deeply rooted in their lived experiences within and beyond the borders of their country of origin. The narratives from the interviews suggest that as citizens of their countries, the failure of political authorities mostly means for HSMs a form of unfulfilled promises, corruption, or ineffective governance, leading to dissatisfaction, abandonment, insecurity, and betrayal. In a few cases, it also manifests discrimination and alienation. As non-citizens in their country of residence, on the other hand, the feeling of distrust and dissatisfaction often derive from their experiences of exclusion, marginalization, inadequate legal protections, and their observations about national and local politics and its reflection in regional and global socio-political landscape.

Sharing opinions on political matters and voting are the two most common forms of political participation among HSMs interviewed in Budapest. Engaging in political discussions and expressing opinions on politics is seen by HSMs as the simplest form of political activity they may engage in their daily lives. They assert the significance of these discussions as an opportunity to share diverse perspectives, exchange ideas, and contribute to the democratic discourse. As Milan clearly explains below, by voicing their views, they believe they may influence others' perceptions and potentially mobilize support for specific political causes:

“I believe that my point of view or my vote itself cannot change much. I do believe in change but only for changing our environment and ourselves because I don't believe a single person can make a significant change. I think the change can happen in the microenvironment. I could rather influence my microenvironment by speaking to family and friends about my views and listening to their perspectives.” (Milan, Serbia, non-EU)

Figure 18. Participation in Hungarian Local Elections by Citizenship



The ability of EU and eligible non-EU migrants to vote in both their country of residence and their country of origin empowers them to contribute to and influence the political landscapes of both countries. While reflecting their ongoing ties to their home country, it also encourages migrants to engage with local and national political systems, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility in their country of residence. This transnational engagement allows them to contribute to and shape the societies of both countries. In the European Union, EU citizens have the right to actively participate in the political life of their host countries, with the notable exception of voting in national parliamentary elections. This legal framework reflects a recognition of their contributions and presence. Non-EU migrants have experienced a gradual expansion of their electoral rights, providing them with increased opportunities to participate in decision-making processes (Fabbrini, 2014). However, these opportunities can still be constrained by the specific regulations of individual member countries. Hungary allows non-EU migrants who have long-term or permanent residency to vote in the country's local elections (Bozoki, 2013: 11). Interviews show that although they are willing to participate in elections in Hungary, many non-EU HSMs are not aware of the fact that they can vote in the local elections. The survey findings reveal that 90.9% of respondents who believe that voting in Hungarian local elections is not applicable to their status are non-EU highly skilled migrants. This confirms the widespread lack of awareness among non-EU HSMs about their voting rights, aligning with the interview data (Figure 18).

EU HSMs, while being aware of their rights within the EU, are not all eager to cast their votes. Some hesitate because they feel they lack sufficient knowledge about local politics and candidates:

Interviewer: Have you ever voted in the Hungarian local elections?

“No. I have the opportunity to vote but I didn't because I do not speak Hungarian. I did not want to be in the queue for voting without not understanding what is happening. I didn't know about Hungarian politics and the points they are trying to resolve. I do not want to be involved in decision-making process even though it may benefit to me if things progress.” (Pedro, Spain, EU)

While half of the interviewees exercise their right to vote in the elections of their countries of origin through various methods such as postal voting, voting in embassies or consulates, or electronic voting systems, the other half do not participate due to various reasons. While some of them question whether voting can truly bring about meaningful change, reflecting a lack of faith in the ability of elections to influence real outcomes, some others approach skeptical to external voting:

“I don't vote anymore. I tried before it is a very fixed system. It is either this or that. There has not been any change for years. So, I cannot literally influence it.” (Zoe, Netherlands, EU)

“I must have more rights here than in my country of origin, Croatia as I have been residing for more than ten years. I do not agree that much with the idea of this diaspora voting system. Voting in Croatia where I don't live and I no longer know the conditions whether people are struggling or happy, does not seem fair to me. You are not part of the everyday conversation there anymore. But wherever you live, whether it's Hungary or elsewhere, I believe people should have a say. You pay taxes and contribute to the

community, so decisions should take you into account as well.” (Marta, Croatia, EU)

A few EU HSMs also acknowledge the lack of a strong voting tradition in their country of origin, explaining that this cultural context influences their attitudes toward voting not only in their countries but also when living abroad:

“I don't think that people in Greece see voting as something a citizen should necessarily do. As a Greek citizen, you have to know some basic stuff such as speaking the language or having knowledge about the history of the country. I think that we view citizenship as something like an ethnic identity. We are proud to be Greeks because of the history and of the country that we have. I do not think that we exercise our right to vote or our duty to pay taxes regularly.” (Sia, Greece, EU)

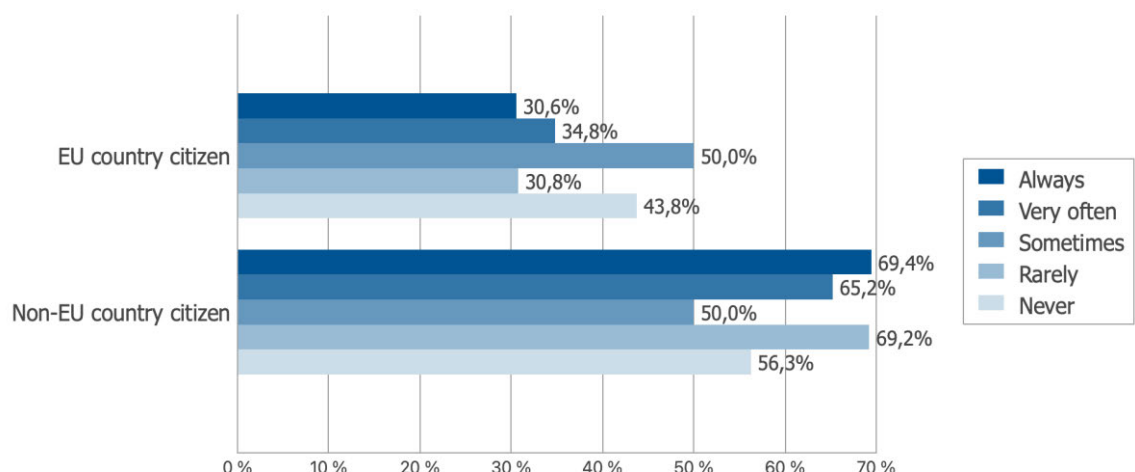
HSMs who have a higher interest in participating in elections in their country of origin are driven by a sense of responsibility to influence the political landscape of the place they still consider a core part of their identity. This patriotism is often fueled by a feeling of solidarity with their fellow citizens and a desire to contribute to the betterment of their country. They highlight that voting, even from abroad, is a way for them to maintain their connection with their country of origin. Ewa articulates the significance of voting to her by presenting a blend of patriotic and cosmopolitan outlook:

“I feel Poland is my home. Maybe not my current home, but I want to be able to influence what's going on there. I want to be able to feel at home when I visit my family and my friends. I want to have that feeling that I am still part of it. So, I do it by voting. This is the ability that I miss here, in Hungary. I voted in the local elections as I'm allowed to, but not for the government. I don't want to become a Hungarian citizen, but I would like to be able to vote. Once, the general elections in Poland and the local elections in Hungary coincided. I voted for two countries on the same day. That's my reality. I have two homes and should be able to vote in both. But if you

cannot vote, there are still things that you can do, such as interacting with people and taking initiative on a smaller level that can help to make the world a better place” (Ewa, Poland, EU)

Ewa advocates for a more flexible and cosmopolitan approach to political participation as a form of global citizenship practice, where individuals can engage fully in the political life of multiple countries without needing legal status. Her willingness to engage in political life in both her country of origin and Hungary and contribute to decision-making process exhibits her dual patriotic attachment which encourage a more inclusive approach to citizenship and political engagement. The transnational political engagement supports the cosmopolitan ideal of being a citizen of the world. Her reflection on alternative forms of participation also indicates a broader cosmopolitan ethic and commitment to making a positive impact wherever one resides. With a similar perspective, many interviewees argue that they should have the right to voice their opinions and participate in decision-making processes, regardless of their citizenship status. They believe that as active members who pay taxes, contribute to the countries they live in, and are willing to integrating into the places they consider home, they should be included in these processes.

Figure 19. Frequency of Exercising Electoral Rights by Citizenship (Budapest)



The overall findings of the survey and interviews, confirming each other, reveal that the level of engagement in elections appears to be relatively higher among non-EU

HSMs than EU HSMs (Figure 19). Non-EU citizens show a higher commitment to consistently participating in elections, with 69.4% always voting compared to only 30.6% of EU citizens who EU display more varied voting habits. This may be attributed to a variety of factors, including a stronger motivation to engage in the political process as a way of asserting their presence and claiming their political subjectivity or a sign of a more deeply ingrained voting culture. Both groups, however, have a significant proportion of individuals who do not participate in elections. Although interview findings provide some insights into the reasons for this disengagement above, underlining the significance of contextuality, the causes of HSMs' lower engagement in electoral participation warrant further exploration.

As indicated in Table 11, signing petitions and participating in demonstrations are the other common forms of political participation among HSMs, according to the survey data. Activities like contacting media or politicians and attending political meetings show lower engagement levels. The potential for increased participation is evident in the substantial percentage of people who might engage in various forms of political activity, indicating areas for potential growth in political participation.

Table 11. Participation in Political Activities (Budapest)

	<i>Have done it many times</i>	<i>Have done it couple of times</i>	<i>Have done it once</i>	<i>Have not done it but might do it</i>	<i>Have not done it yet and would never do it</i>
<i>Signed a petition</i>	30,2%	38,7%	12,3%	12,3%	6,6%
<i>Took part in a demonstration</i>	20,8%	38,7%	12,3%	17%	11,3%
<i>Expressed political views on the internet</i>	19,8%	25,5%	15,1%	17,9%	21,7%
<i>Attended a political meeting or rally</i>	9,4%	25,5%	17,9%	26,4%	20,8%
<i>Contacted or appeared in the media to express your views</i>	3,8%	7,5%	15,1%	41,5%	32,1%
<i>Contacted, or attempted to contact, a politician or a civil servant to express your views</i>	3,8%	11,3%	16%	49,1%	19,8%

Similarly, HSMs in the interviews express hesitation to participate in demonstrations, rallies, and protests in their country of residence, as they prefer to avoid potential conflicts or legal issues. They exhibit a much higher level of engagement in these types of political activities within their country of origin, where they feel more connected and secure in expressing their views even if they know that they may have troubles. However, a small number of interviewees, particularly those from authoritarian countries, highlight that they do not engage in such activities anywhere in the world. Their experiences with repressive regimes seem to instill a deep sense of caution, where they view political activism as inherently dangerous, regardless of location.

Civic education equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively in democratic processes, understand their rights and responsibilities, and contribute to the community. The foundational knowledge and skills acquired through civic education are essential for fostering active participation in democratic processes and promoting a sense of community and social responsibility among citizens. Both EU and non-EU interviewees mentioned the likelihood of encountering civic education in their school curriculum or at some point in their educational journey even though they could not recall it exactly. The fact that they are not sure if they had civic education suggests that its impact on their citizenship understanding and awareness might be limited. The survey findings reveal strikingly low participation in civic education, with only 29,2% of all HSMs reporting that civic education was included in their school curricula as part of the formal education system (Table 12). This low percentage suggests that a significant majority of HSMs did not receive structured education on civic responsibilities, rights, and the functioning of political and social systems during their schooling.

Table 12. Participation in Civic Education by Citizenship (Budapest)

<i>EU/Non-EU</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>I don't remember</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>EU country citizen</i>	24,3%	70,3%	5,4%	100%
<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	31,9%	60,9%	7,2%	100%
<i>TOTAL</i>	29,2%	64,2%	6,6%	100%

The absence of formal civic education may contribute to a lack of awareness and understanding of civic duties, legal rights, and the mechanisms of governance, which are crucial for active and informed participation in society. However, the interviewees' experiences indicate that all HSMs acquire significant knowledge from their families and by observing fellow citizens throughout their lives, which shapes their understanding of what it means to be a good citizen:

“At school, there were courses on Ancient Greece, democracy, values, et cetera. I think our initial citizenship education aimed to present a general perspective about the values of the state, how to integrate into the country, and being helpful and valuable. I perceive it as an education starting in the family and then in the school. It tries to make you a member of the country who really contributes and is beneficial.” (Miltos, Greece, EU)

3.3.2 Social and Economic Experiences and Practices

Social and economic experiences of citizenship refer to how individuals engage in social interactions and access to economic opportunities, as well as the influence of their citizenship status in determining their ability to participate fully in social and economic life beyond the border of their country of origin. These experiences focus on individuals' access to social mobility, security, and essential services such as education, healthcare, opportunities for employment, economic stability, and well-being. These factors collectively shape how individuals understand the value and effectiveness of their citizenship, impacting their sense of belonging, security, and identity within the political communities in which they reside.

The interviews reveal that individual's perception of citizenship is highly influenced by their social and economic experiences in their country of origin. People with a stronger connection to their home countries, supported by social networks and access to resources, often feel content with their citizenships. These networks provide emotional support, access to opportunities, and a safety net in times of need. When individuals have strong social ties and can leverage these connections for career advancement, education, or business opportunities, they are more likely to view their citizenship positively. With this perspective, Ali from Türkiye thinks that

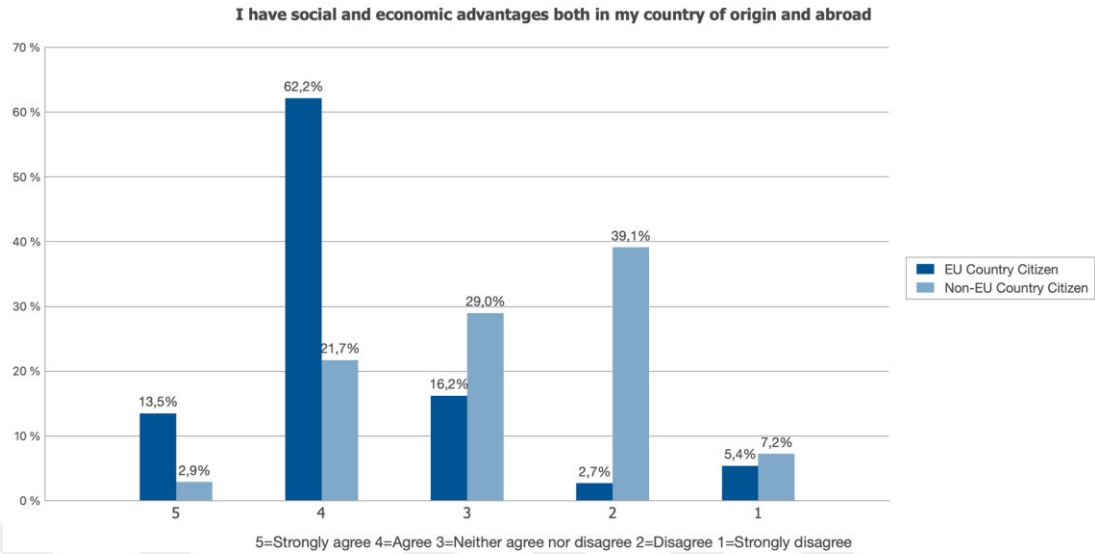
individuals from countries where citizenship provides limited access to opportunities or where they have weaker social networks may look for alternative citizenships that promise better prospects. Describing his own experiences, Ali highlights that Turkish citizenship meets his needs and supports his aspirations, and he, therefore, sees little value in seeking another citizenship.

Individuals' perceptions of the strength of their passports are closely related to their social and economic experiences outside their country of origin, as well as their legal status. If their passport consistently limits their opportunities or subjects them to difficult experiences, they are likely to view it as weak. Conversely, if their passport allows them to navigate the world with relative ease, they will consider it strong. EU citizenship plays a significant role on HSMs' social and economic citizenship experiences in the EU context. EU HSMs interviewed view their passports as strong due to the considerable advantages and flexibility that come with holding an EU member country passport.

“I think being a Dutch is a status. That is why I would never give up my Dutch passport. Dutch people know they can reach almost any country with their passport without too many bureaucratic requirements. That is a huge advantage. It is one of the founder countries of the EU. It, by definition, gives the Dutch passport a status.” (Zoe, Netherlands, EU)

In contrast to EU high-skilled migrants, most interviewees from non-EU countries regard their passports as weaker, believing that their passports restrict their career opportunities and compel them to put in more effort to achieve their goals. Gulnar from Tajikistan indicates that possessing a less powerful passport requires significantly more effort compared to those with stronger passports, such as the Hungarian one. She views these people as inherently privileged and advantaged, while she must work twice as hard to achieve similar outcomes as she has a weaker passport and faces systemic obstacles.

Figure 20. Perceived Social and Economic Advantages by Citizenship (Budapest)



In line with the interviews, the survey data highlights the disparity between EU and non-EU HSMs in terms of perceived social and economic advantages across borders. Figure 20 shows a strong perception of social and economic advantages among EU HSMs. Non-EU HSMs show more varied opinions, with fewer expressing confidence in their advantages. The high number of neutral and dissenting responses indicates that non-EU HSMs likely encounter greater challenges and uncertainties in accessing similar benefits. This could be attributed to the benefits of EU membership, such as freedom of movement, access to a broader labor market, and social protections that may significantly impact their well-being and quality of life across member states. For instance, as reported in the interviews, employers may favor hiring EU citizens because it involves fewer bureaucratic difficulties and simplifies the hiring process compared to non-EU citizens. This increases their employment opportunities and flexibility, allowing them to navigate international borders with ease to pursue career opportunities in different EU countries:

“If you are an EU citizen, you will probably find a job faster. It doesn't mean that I, as a non-EU citizen, will not find a job. So, it's not impossible, but I think it requires more time because not all companies would be open to sponsor the work permit.” (Milan, Serbia, non-EU)

“Definitely, in the labor market, being European rather than Italian is an advantage.” (Lorenzo, Italy, EU)

The freedom of movement is a core principle of the EU, allowing EU citizens to live, work, and receive equal treatment across all member states, particularly concerning employment, working conditions, and access to social and tax benefits (Vasilopoulou & Talving, 2018). Based on this right, rooted in the Treaty of Rome, EU HSMs are entitled to access social services and benefits offered by the Hungarian state. This includes healthcare, education, social welfare, and other support systems that can significantly impact an individual's well-being and quality of life. EU citizenship, in principle, guarantees non-discrimination for EU citizens within the EU. EU citizens typically hold a more favorable position in social hierarchies compared to non-EU migrants (Leschke and Weiss, 2023). Nonetheless, recent research on intra-EU mobility highlights that EU citizens from Eastern and Central Europe face unequal treatment and racialized discrimination within Western Europe's social and economic structures (Lewicki, 2017). The analysis of the interviews indicates that EU HSMs generally receive fair and equal treatment in accessing the labor market, education, and social services in Hungary. Although they are legally considered equal to Hungarian citizens, some EU HSMs highlight that discrimination still occurs, primarily due to cultural factors and widespread xenophobia in society. Non-EU HSMs, conversely, are more prone to experiencing discrimination related to both citizenship and cultural factors in public and private settings, which results in feelings of alienation and social exclusion.

Pedro, from Spain, emphasizes that there are limited opportunities for professional growth and promotion in Hungarian workplaces, as companies tend to favor Hungarian citizens for higher-level positions. He further notes that foreign workers are often perceived as competitors by their Hungarian colleagues, creating an atmosphere of unease and making them feel unwelcome. Pedro's experience sheds light on a broader issue within the European Union regarding the principle of free movement and the ideal of equal treatment for all EU citizens. Despite both Spain and Hungary being member states of the EU, which should principally guarantee equal opportunities for employment and advancement, his statement suggests that

being an EU citizen does not automatically translate into being treated as an equal in the Hungarian labor market, revealing underlying national preferences and cultural biases that limit the professional advancement of foreign employees. This structural preference, reported by other HSMs from both EU and non-EU countries in the interviews, reflects broader systemic issues, including nationalism, protectionism in the labor market, or institutional practices designed to prioritize Hungarian employees over foreigners and promote domestic employment. As a result, despite meeting all professional and legal criteria, foreign workers often find themselves at a disadvantage when competing for jobs against Hungarian citizens.

Although being promoted seems challenging for some HSMs who are in senior positions or work in specific sectors, Hungary is perceived as a promising country to build a career in big, multi-cultural companies for early career professionals. The majority of HSMs interviewed underscore that they started their professional career in Hungary and gained experience to advance their career. Most of them first moved to the country for internships via certain organizations such as AIESEC to ease their access to opportunities or bypass passport limitations. Although their move to Budapest may seem more coincidental than a deliberate choice, both EU and non-EU HSMs emphasize that their decision to stay is primarily motivated by career growth opportunities and the dynamics of the international community in Budapest. They note limited opportunities for early career professionals in their home countries and the desire to get international experience as the primary reasons for seeking employment outside their country of origin. For instance, Maritza from Mexico shares her story about her arrival in Budapest:

“I just wanted to have the opportunity to gain international experience in a multicultural company and practice English. I knew that with abroad experience, life would be better for me in my country. I contacted AIESEC to find an opportunity because obviously with my passport it is quite hard to do it. I started to apply everywhere. I got the offer from a company in Hungary and I moved to Budapest. I have been here for seven years. I feel lucky I have been given the same opportunities as a Hungarian citizen to build my career and be promoted. While it's not stated in any formal process,

the fact that we are not locals but expats, may affect the chances for promotion opportunities and advancement. We hear such experiences. I feel lucky.” (Maritza, Mexico, non-EU)

The interviewees point out that coming from a well-regarded country improves social connections, opportunities, and acceptance in Hungary. However, individuals from countries with poor international reputations stemming from global power dynamics, cultural stereotypes, historical narratives, political regimes, or socio-economic conditions may experience feelings of exclusion. As indicated in the contrasting experiences of Milan from Serbia and Massimo from Italy below, citizenship is not just a legal status but a marker of social capital, privilege, or stigma that impacts HSMs’ social mobility and acceptance:

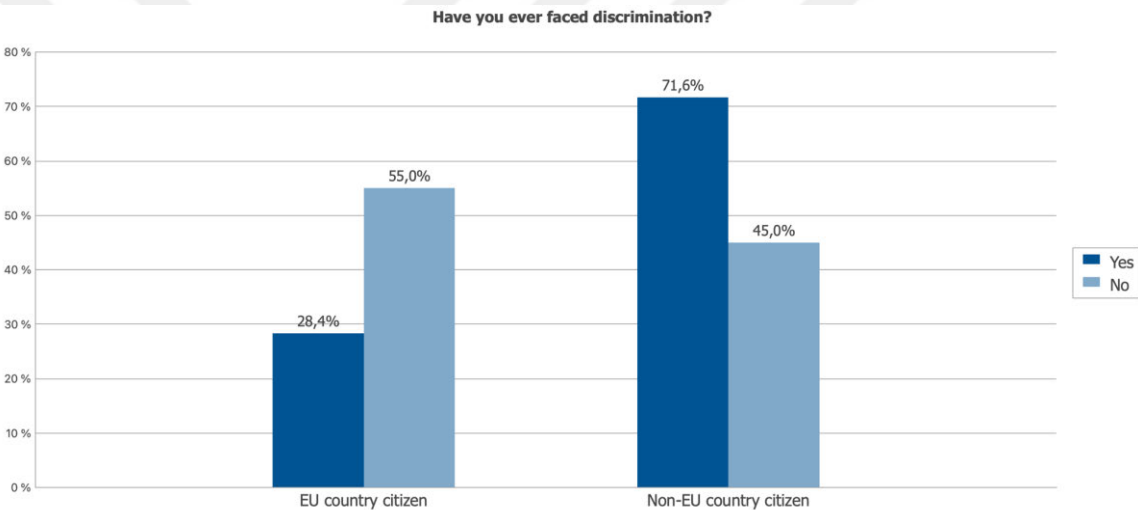
“If you come from a rich country or a country where people have fewer prejudices, you will not be questioned constantly or looked down upon. As a person coming from Serbia, where emigration is high to Western Europe and where people in Europe do not necessarily have a good opinion for some reason, I sometimes feel that people are distant. I think it's just the image of the last 30 years after the war. Serbia was put on a wall of shame as the guilty party. I learn to live with that” (Milan, Serbia, non-EU)

“In my interactions with people in daily life, I think I'm lucky that I'm from Italy because, in general, it positively influences me. When I mention that I'm from Italy, I rarely encounter any barriers or limitations in my daily interactions, whether at work, forming friendships, or being accepted by others. People usually associate Italy with art, beautiful cities, and funny people. So, when I say I'm from Italy, they start smiling.” (Massimo, Italy, EU)

The survey data suggests that non-EU HSMs are significantly more likely to report experiencing discrimination compared to EU citizens. The difference is stark, with 71.6% of non-EU HSMs reporting discrimination versus only 28.4% of EU HSMs (Figure 21). The analysis of the survey responses on the experiences of

discrimination indicates a statistically significant relationship between citizenship status (EU vs. non-EU) and discrimination with a Chi-Square value of 4.949 and a p-value of 0.0261. Non-EU HSMs are much more vulnerable to discriminatory experiences than their EU counterparts. The effect size (Phi and Cramer's $V=0.237$), while significant, is modest, implying that while there is a notable association, other context-specific factors may also contribute to the experience of discrimination. It also provides insight into the perceived sources of discrimination, in general, by comparing EU and non-EU HSMs across various categories such as citizenship, ethnicity, gender, race, political stance, religion, and other factors (Figure 22).

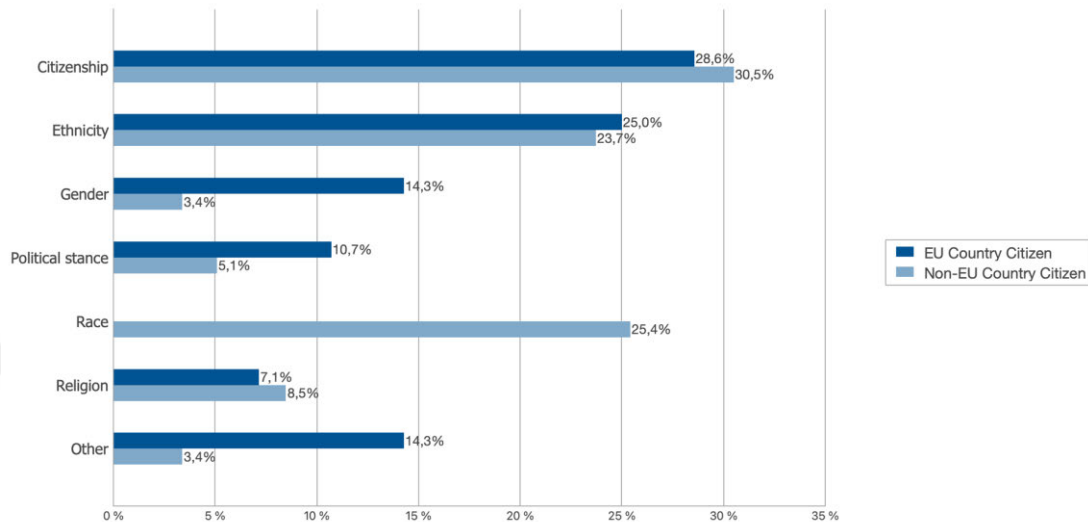
Figure 21. Experience of Discrimination by Citizenship (Budapest)



Citizenship is a significant factor for discrimination for both non-EU HSMs (30.5%) and EU HSMs (28.6%) (Figure 22). While citizenship and religion appear to be the categories contributing to feelings of exclusion and alienation among particularly non-EU HSMs in the interviews, discrimination based on race and gender is not reported by any interviewees. Citizenship remains a key factor for both groups, but non-EU citizens face more pronounced challenges related to race and religion. This indicates that non-EU residents are navigating a more multifaceted landscape of bias, shaped by legal status, ethnic and racial identity, and cultural differences. On the other hand, EU citizens also report gender and political stance as notable sources of discrimination (Figure 22). Additionally, gender-based discrimination is reported

by 83.3% of female respondents and 16.7% of those who identify as "other," while no male respondents report experiencing it.

Figure 22. Perceived Reasons of Discrimination by Citizenship (Budapest)



The interviews reveal that beyond the challenges tied to citizenship, there exists a broader sense of xenophobia in Hungary that affects how foreigners are perceived and treated. HSMs report difficulties in engaging with locals and integrating into Hungarian society due to language barriers, cultural differences, marginalization, and exclusion. Language, particularly, acts as a gatekeeper to full social and economic participation. Many HSMs emphasize that while legal rights might be guaranteed on paper, language proficiency becomes an informal yet powerful barrier to social and economic inclusion. These challenges create a sense of social isolation for many HSMs, pushing them to seek connections within the more familiar and diverse expatriate community. It reflects a common experience among HSMs interviewed in Budapest, where their everyday social interactions tend to be centered around co-nationals and other foreigners rather than forming bonds with Hungarians. It also creates a social divide between locals and foreigners in society, indicating societal barriers that limit social cohesion:

“It doesn't matter where you are from, they don't like you just because you are foreigner. I think it's a very general thing here. If you're an expat, locals might not like you just because you are expats, you are not locals.”

(Massimo, Italy, EU)

“If you cannot speak the language fluently, you can have difficulty accessing your rights related to social security or services, and you do not feel like an insider. This feeling is usually not because I'm a foreigner but because of the language barrier. Of course, there are some cultural reasons, too. Knowing the language may make things easier, but I still have doubts about whether the locals would fully accept you. We usually have friends who are also foreigners from other European countries or other regions. We actually live in a bubble here. This doesn't allow you to feel like an insider.” (Ali, Türkiye, non-EU)

The interviewees mention various activities they have participated in while living in Budapest with many highlighting the role their companies play in promoting and supporting their civic engagement. As expressed by Martha below, many interviewees underline their efforts to positively impact their immediate environment and community where they are more informed and access easier with a sense of civic responsibility. They particularly mention social challenges concerning homeless individuals, refugees, senior citizens, and children in Budapest, expressing a strong commitment to addressing and engaging with these issues:

“In my job, we have many volunteering activities and I am also currently organizing one event in a homeless kindergarten in ton 8th for the homeless children. We will try to help out there. I am also trying to foster the dogs and help senior neighbors around by going to groceries for them twice or three times a month. During the refugee crisis, I also tried to help by providing food. These all are local level actions.” (Martha, Croatia, EU)

All HSMs in the interviews, see taxation not merely as an obligation, but as a means of contributing to the social and economic fabric of countries, aligning with the traditional view of citizenship where individuals support the state through financial contributions. For HSMs in Hungary, paying taxes is a fundamental aspect of economic participation, reflecting their integration into the country's economic and

legal framework. They contribute directly to the economic welfare and infrastructure of the country via taxes and supporting public services like education, healthcare, transportation, and social security systems. It signifies their role not only as consumers but also as contributors to the society they live in. A few interviewees who own property or businesses in Hungary also view their investments as important economic activities that deepen their connection to the country. Iza from Poland highlights the opportunity for individuals to allocate 1% of their taxes to support a non-governmental organization (NGO), describing it as an empowering aspect of the Hungarian taxation system that provides a sense of autonomy. She finds this choice meaningful, emphasizing the importance of contributing to causes that resonate with their beliefs. It shifts the perception of taxes from a compulsory burden to a tool for personal and social impact, indicating a type of involvement extends beyond the passive act of tax payment and demonstrates a more active role in shaping the community's development.

While fulfilling their tax obligations in Hungary and actively contributing to the local economy and prosperity as residents, HSMs also maintain strong economic ties to their countries of origin. Some interviewees highlight that they send remittances to support their families and friends. This not only helps improve the financial stability of their loved ones but also stimulates local economies in their home countries. Additionally, many engage in charitable activities, making donations and participating in community-driven initiatives that address critical issues, including environmental sustainability, human rights advocacy, animal welfare, and responses to natural disasters. These contributions go beyond financial support, as HSMs also play a role in creating opportunities for women, youth, and children, whether through educational programs, mentorship, or other forms of assistance that aim to foster long-term development in their home countries:

“I feel like this is an obligation for me. I need to contribute to the economy of my country. For example, I order lots of things from Ukrainian shops. (...) I am not a taxpayer there because I don't reside there. But still, I need to help and contribute. And it was even before the war. Every time I go there, I try to

spend money there. I go to the restaurants, buy things to contribute to the economy.” (Anna, Ukraine, non-EU)

“I run my small podcast here. I talk with mostly women who study abroad. I hope by that I can give a chance to more women, not only from Kazakhstan, but from Central Asia or whoever listens in Russian to have an idea, vision about studying abroad, especially adult students.” (Gulzhan, Kazakhstan, non-EU)

Both EU and non-EU HSMs present a tendency to often act as cultural ambassadors for their home countries. Some interviewees feel a personal responsibility to behave in a courteous and respectful manner, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a positive image as they see themselves as representatives of their countries. This sense of duty to represent one's country is a blend of both personal pride and social expectation, positioning the individual as a bridge between national identity and global participation. In this context, citizenship becomes an active, outward-facing role, where the individual feels responsible not only to their country but also to how their country is perceived by others. Ewa's experience in Hungary, where she feels responsible for representing her country, explicitly shows her sense of belonging and the dynamic nature of citizenship, where personal responsibility to one's country coexists with a broader, more inclusive sense of duty to the global community:

“I felt an immense sense of pride when I saw the strong sense of community during a protest in Poland at the start of the war in Ukraine, something I'd never experienced before in my country. When I came here, people acknowledged my efforts by saying, 'Of course, you're doing this because you're Polish.' That made me feel like an ambassador of my country. I sometimes do feel I have to represent my country.” (Ewa, Poland, EU)

The survey data suggests that while many HSMs retain a strong sense of patriotic duty to their country of origin, there is also a significant shift toward a more fluid and inclusive understanding of citizenship, reflecting both transnational and cosmopolitan values. They seem not only navigating their identities between

multiple cultures but also rethinking their responsibilities in a globalized world. The sense of responsibility toward one's country of origin, as seen in the questions about cultural preservation and economic development, reflects a traditional view of citizenship, where individuals maintain strong ties to their countries and feel accountable for their well-being. There is a significant sense of responsibility to preserve cultural values and act as cultural ambassadors and economic contributors among nearly half of the respondents despite expressed neutrality by a large number of HSMs (Table 13). A comprehensive analysis of the findings suggests that the neutral responses could signify an ongoing effort to balance patriotic and cosmopolitan values, as well as a careful negotiation of economic interests between their home and host countries. HSMs may not prioritize one set of responsibilities over the other, reflecting an absence of a clear hierarchy in their sense of economic duty. This balancing act demonstrates how their sense of belonging and duty is both fluid and multi-layered, blending loyalty to their country of origin with a broader, more global sense of responsibility in their host countries. This diversity in attitudes reveals how HSMs navigate dual attachments, fostering cultural continuity while integrating into the larger cosmopolitan landscape they are part of. No notable difference is observed between EU and non-EU HSMs regarding patriotic responsibilities, though non-EU HSMs show a slightly stronger inclination toward acting as cultural ambassadors and contributors.

Table 13. Patriotic Responsibility (Budapest)

<i>Patriotic Acts of Responsibility</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>I feel responsible for teaching my culture and traditions to other people and representing my country</i>	17%	31%	32%	13%	7%
<i>I feel responsible for contributing to my country of origin and supporting its people</i>	14%	29%	39%	14%	4%
<i>Economic development of my country is more important for me than the economic development of Hungary or elsewhere</i>	8%	15%	41%	24%	12%
<i>I have always been taught to respect and maintain cultural values and traditions</i>	36%	41%	17%	5%	1%

The interview and survey research shows that HSMs are more engaged in social and economic activities compared to political ones. Many interviewees illustrate their sensibility of attentiveness and care in both their country of residence and country of origin. For HSMs, social and economic participation indicates more of a transnational form of participation, which plays a crucial role in their integration into the societies of their country of residence and in maintaining and nurturing ties with their country of origin. Transnational form of social participation involves activities ranging from personal interactions to involvement in community organizations, volunteer work, or civic engagement in multiple national contexts. The economic participation of HSMs, on the other hand, encompasses a broad range of activities that directly or indirectly contribute to the economic welfare and growth of both their host and home countries, as well as places they may have an impact. This participation involves providing services, paying taxes, investing, consuming products, sending remittances, donating, and philanthropy. By participating in social, economic, and cultural activities, HSMs can bridge the gap between different communities, fostering a multilayered sense of belonging and contributing to more cohesive and interconnected communities. Their dual engagement in social and economic life, sense of patriotic responsibility, and attachment to their country of origin and Hungary make them more attuned to global issues and open to diverse perspectives:

“I feel a responsibility to give back to Hungary for the opportunities it has provided me. This includes returning the privilege of living here and the sense of belonging by learning about and respecting Hungarian culture, social customs, and ways of life. I believe it's important to honor the local traditions, values, and perspectives of the people as a way of expressing gratitude for being able to work and live here. (...) At the same time, I also feel a strong sense of responsibility toward my home country. I feel a duty to contribute to its development and society, and to represent my culture, values, and way of life wherever I go.” (Tadeu, Portugal, EU)

HSMs' ability to navigate and contribute to multiple social, economic, and cultural spheres allows them to develop a cosmopolitan outlook through diverse affiliations. Many interviewees express a strong motivation to participate in various activities, driven not by ties to any specific group or community, but by a broader sense of respect, compassion, and empathy for others as human beings. Their involvement and high interest in globally debated issues about environmental challenges, anti-immigration, socio-economic inequalities, and human rights violations reflect a deep commitment to the well-being of people, emphasizing their identification with universal human values rather than national, cultural, or local affiliations. This cosmopolitan perspective highlights their desire to contribute meaningfully to the world around them, guided by a sense of shared responsibility and solidarity with humanity:

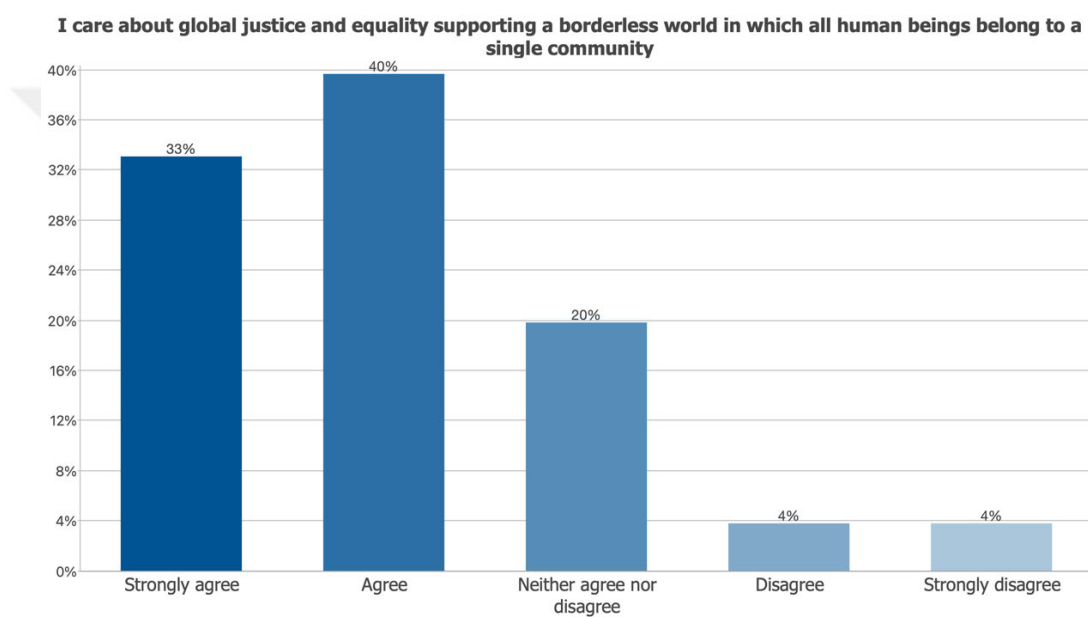
“Helping others always brings a sense of fulfillment, regardless of whether you're a citizen of that country or not. You're contributing to people and the planet, and that transcends national boundaries. Citizenship doesn't matter in this context—we're international people, and I consider myself international.” (Ali, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I was volunteering to teach the children about other cultures here. I also asked them to teach me about their culture and national symbols. I was trying to help the kids dream about their lives and the opportunities that they may have in the future to broaden their horizons. It is a lot easier to impact the youth. If a young person feels included and loved, that person will eventually be a better person and advance society.” (Sia, Greece, EU)

In line with the interviews, the survey data also reflects a strong alignment with cosmopolitan values, where HSMs see themselves as part of a global community rather than being strictly tied to their particularistic attachments (Figure 23). Both EU and non-EU HSMs show considerable support for global justice and equality, but EU HSMs express relatively stronger consensus. The findings also provide insight into HSMs' awareness of economic and social matters, sense of financial responsibility, work ethic, social responsibility, and interest in economic policies.

HSMs generally exhibit high levels of economic awareness and a sense of responsibility toward both individual and collective well-being. Financial prudence and productivity are valued, while most respondents reject the notion of economic indifference in favor of recognizing the broader implications of policies. Their strong emphasis on global justice and equality indicates that many participants have a cosmopolitan worldview, balancing local economic concerns with global issues.

Figure 23. Perceived Global Justice and Cosmopolitanism (Budapest)



3.4 Citizenship Understanding: Interpreting the Bond

Citizenship is seen as a fundamental aspect of citizens' identity and a source of belonging, deeply embedded into the social fabric. For most interviewees, it is a natural, nearly invisible part of everyday life that is rarely questioned or consciously acknowledged. Citizenship is viewed as an “inherited property” (Shachar, 2007) that automatically grants membership to a political community through birthright. The majority of EU and non-EU HSMs assert that while living in their country of origin, they rarely, if ever, had to think about what citizenship truly means or what it entails to be a citizen:

“We really don't think of ourselves as a citizen. It is there. So, we don't really need to think about citizenship and ourselves as citizens.” (Miltos, Greece, EU)

For many, traveling abroad and encountering legal and administrative duties and procedures mark pivotal moments of awareness regarding their citizenship. Interactions with border controls abroad, legal and administrative duties and procedures they are required to follow, and the rights they hold, coupled with the favorable or unfavorable treatment they receive from others or state authorities, make their citizenship more prominent in their minds. When discussing the moments that prompted them to reflect on their citizenship, most non-EU HSMs pointed to their experiences at border controls or immigration offices. During these interactions, they are often required to present documents and navigate complex procedures. These experiences made them acutely aware of how their citizenship defined their interactions with authorities and shaped their experiences abroad. The process of being identified and categorized according to their citizenship, coupled with the legal and administrative procedures non-EU HSMs face led to a deeper elaboration of what it means to be a citizen of a particular country:

Interviewer: Have you ever thought about citizenship and what it means to be a citizen?

“It was when my application for a work permit was rejected in Hungary. I felt like my world was over. I had to go back to home. Then, one of my friends reminded me that at least I have a country where I am a citizen and can go back. I have a passport from a country where I have rights. Many people do not have a country to go back to. I knew this before, but I did not realize what I had was such a powerful thing.” (Sovhona, India, non-EU)

In contrast, EU HSMs typically reflect on their experiences with bureaucratic processes in both their home country and Hungary, sharing various situations prompting them to think more about their citizenship. Some of them also highlight

how the privileges of EU citizenship become particularly visible and relevant in Hungary for them as EU citizens, enhancing their understanding of citizenship:

“Maybe it was the moment when I went to the Italian Embassy to declare that I was no longer living in Italy. We have to declare that we do not live in Italy anymore. We need to provide the necessary documents to change our registered address. But we know that once we complete this process, we lose all the benefits you used to have in Italy. If I go to Italy now, even if I am a citizen, I won't have the same rights and benefits as an Italian citizen because I do not live in Italy.” (Lorenzo, Italy, EU)

Citizenship becomes a concrete experience that impacts HSMs' feelings, self-positionings, life paths, and perceived roles as both citizens and non-citizens, within and outside of political communities. Subjective citizenship understanding is constituted through lived experiences often in moments of crisis, exclusion, or bureaucratic processes that force individuals to reflect on their status and rights. It involves a constant negotiation between legal rights, emotional attachment, and lived realities, shaped by individual circumstances and external forces like borders, residency rules, and international mobility. Lorenzo, in the subsequent part of the interview, stresses that citizenship is “nothing unless it is not surrounded or linked to a culture and common or shared aspects.” Such narratives observed frequently in the interviews underscore how citizenship is not just a legal status conferred by the state but a dynamic part of personal identity, deeply shaped by interactions with legal, administrative, and political systems. In everyday life, citizenship encompasses rights and obligations along with an emotional dimension that involves social and cultural elements as a relational and participatory concept:

“It is a sense of belonging to a group of people, legally living on a certain land with some advantages cause of the status, but also with some duties they need to fulfill towards the state.” (Jakub, Slovakia, EU)

Table 14. Defining Citizenship with a word (Budapest)

Word	Frequency
Rights	46
Passport	30
Belonging	17
Voting	14
Country	12
Home	9
Identity	8

When the interviewees are asked to provide three words associated with citizenship, the most frequently mentioned are “rights,” “passport,” and “belonging” (Table 14). Citizenship is understood through a combination of legal, practical, and emotional dimensions. The emphasis on "rights" highlights the legal and political aspects, where citizenship empowers individuals to claim and exercise entitlements within a legal framework. The association with “passport” highlights the practical significance of citizenship, tying it to freedom of movement and the security of being recognized by other countries. In contrast, “belonging” reflects the emotional and psychological aspects, linking citizenship to a sense of identity, community, and shared cultural values. Together, these aspects show how citizenship functions both as a legal status and as a deeper source of identity and belonging within a political community.

Table 15. Definition of Citizenship by Citizenship (Budapest)

<i>Definition of Citizenship (Budapest)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Citizenship is a legal status that entails certain rights and duties and an identity</i>	36%
<i>Citizenship is a relationship between an individual and a state</i>	14%
<i>Citizenship means unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty to a state and a nation</i>	2%
<i>Citizenship is to have right to vote</i>	12%
<i>Citizenship is to have a passport</i>	19%
<i>Citizenship means where you are from</i>	5%
<i>Citizenship is a belonging to a nation</i>	12%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%

This complex view of citizenship is supported by survey data, which underscores citizenship as a legal status that formally connects an individual to a state (Table 15). This legal bond provides specific rights and duties, fostering a sense of identity. Additionally, the possession of a passport emerges as a key symbol of citizenship, representing both the practical and symbolic aspects of this relationship.

Demonstrating a resistance to state-imposed understanding of citizenship, some HSMs in the interviews underscore the importance of individual autonomy in defining what it means to be a citizen in a politically dynamic environment. For instance, Ali critically approaches the curriculum of civic education and political rhetoric, contesting the imposition of conservative ideologies and redefining citizenship according to their political agendas. His perspective reveals a tension between enforced collective identity and personal identity, stressing the desire for a more inclusive view of citizenship and the significance of individual agency in shaping the discourse around citizenship. The lived citizenship experiences of HSMs indicate a common tendency to negotiate and challenge the idea that state institutions alone should dictate what constitutes a good citizen and what citizenship means to citizens. Although the socio-cultural norms and values that shape national citizenship can vary significantly from one country to another, the interviewees consistently highlight a set of common attributes they associate with being a good citizen (Table 16).

As illustrated in Table 16, the survey data reveals that a strong majority of respondents view civic duties such as voting, obeying laws, and avoiding tax evasion as essential components of being a good citizen, with over 70% agreeing and strongly agreeing on these points. Additionally, there is significant support for staying informed about government actions and inclusivity and civic participation, with many respondents agreeing that advocating for equity, understanding diverse viewpoints, and participating in social and economic life are key aspects of good citizenship. However, there is more ambivalence regarding participation in social and political associations, understanding differing opinions, and knowing the country's history and culture, suggesting these aspects are seen as less critical. Notably, the idea of unquestioning loyalty to the country, even to the point of being

willing to fight and die, is largely rejected, indicating a more critical understanding of patriotism among the respondents.

Table 16. Understanding of Good Citizen (Budapest)

<i>Understanding of good citizen</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>Always to vote in elections</i>	31%	35,8%	21,7%	7,5%	4%
<i>Always be aware of rights and duties and to obey laws and regulations</i>	36,8%	45,3%	12,3%	5,6%	-
<i>Never try to evade taxes</i>	31,1%	41,5%	19,8%	5,7%	1,9%
<i>Keep watch on the actions of government(s) and stay up to date</i>	22,6%	55,7%	18,9%	2,8%	-
<i>Participate in social and political association</i>	10,4%	34%	40,5%	10,4%	4,7%
<i>Try to understand the reasoning of people with other opinions</i>	17%	50,9%	26,4%	3,8%	1,9%
<i>Advocate for equity and justice by respecting cultural diversity</i>	36,8%	38,7%	17,9%	4,7%	1,9%
<i>Actively participate in social and economic life to contribute</i>	24,5%	45,3%	21,7%	6,6%	1,9%
<i>Know the country's history, language, culture and traditions well</i>	21,7%	49,1%	23,6%	4,7%	0,9%
<i>Always be ready to fight and die for the country with an unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty</i>	3,7%	8,5%	25,5%	28,3%	34%
<i>Love and support the country</i>	16%	35,8%	31,2%	14,2%	2,8%

HSMs often carry with them the lessons and values of citizenship learned in their country of origin, but they may also adapt to the new socio-cultural norms of the countries they reside. This suggests a transnational understanding of citizenship, which helps them navigate the complexities of living between multiple places, providing a framework for ethical behavior that is recognized and respected across national boundaries. The overwhelming majority of respondents define citizenship

as both a contractual and emotional relationship that is lived and practiced locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. They emphasize that responsible citizenship extends beyond the boundaries of one's immediate political community, with good citizens taking accountability for their actions wherever those actions may have an impact. Many interviewees express a commitment to what can be described as cosmopolitan convivial solidarity (Duru and Trenz, 2017), wherein they see their role as citizens not just tied to a specific nation-state but to the well-being of humanity at large. Shameem from Tajikistan clearly presents this approach by emphasizing the importance of acting responsibly and contributing positively to their communities, regardless of their official citizenship status. She highlights that all people, as part of a global community, have the power to bring about change and should actively engage in efforts to improve society. The narratives of HSMs in Budapest about their citizenship experiences highlight their unique positioning as both patriotic and cosmopolitan citizens. They manage to harmonize a sense of moral and cultural cosmopolitanism (Pogge, 1992; Taraborrelli, 2015; Beck, 2006), with constructive patriotism.

The overall findings indicate that the formation of a patriotic cosmopolitan identity, built on multilayered belonging and multiple legal affiliations, allows HSMs to position themselves in a secure space and navigate the complexities of transnational life with greater flexibility. HSMs value and protect specific social and cultural traditions and commitments, but their patriotism coexists with an appreciation for diverse cultures and a critical focus on equality. This form of patriotism fosters a reflective and inclusive mindset, promoting respect for different ways of life without resorting to exclusionary or biased attitudes. For patriotic cosmopolitans, citizenship becomes an active, lived experience that influences their sense of identity, their roles within and beyond political communities, and their emotional and social trajectories. They blend their national and global attachments, forming hybrid identities that adapt to various local contexts, thereby enhancing their recognition and reducing cultural, social, and political challenges. Non-EU HSMs demonstrate this approach more distinctly than their EU counterparts, whose cosmopolitanism is already fostered by their EU citizenship.

CHAPTER IV

LIVED CITIZENSHIP EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES OF HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS: INSIGHTS FROM ATHENS

4.1 The Greek Context

Most studies on migration in Greece focus on forced migration, brain drain, the economic impact of immigration, and securitization of migration policies (Grigoriadis & Dilek, 2019; Stivas, 2023; Labrianidis & Pratsinakis, 2016; Labrianidis et al., 2023; Cholezas & Tsakloglou, 2008). While Greece is frequently approached as a gateway for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, the inflow of highly skilled professionals and the patterns, dynamics, and impacts of highly skilled migration remain underexplored. This gap in the literature is notable given the country's complex socio-political context, where economic recovery and labor market needs are increasingly intersecting with anti-immigrant sentiments.

The period between 2009 and 2015 in Greece is characterized by two simultaneous crises and a surge in xenophobia driven by economic threat perception and deep-rooted socio-cultural fears (Kirtsoglou & Tsimouris, 2018; Kalogeraki, 2015). The economic crisis that began in 2010, coupled with low fertility rates, and aging population (Pavlopoulos & Rachiotis, 2024), drastically diminished Greece's capacity to support its citizens, resulting in rising poverty, widespread social unrest, and political instability (Kalogeraki, 2015; Pratsinakis, 2022). Migrants who had arrived in Greece during the 2000s also faced increasing insecurity and instability (Dalakoglou, 2012). Economic challenges, including high unemployment rates and

limited opportunities for career advancement, prompted a considerable number of highly skilled young Greeks and foreign nationals residing in Greece to seek employment opportunities abroad (Pratsinakis, 2022; Labrianidis & Vogiatzis, 2013). Additionally, the refugee crisis during this period further strained the country, as Greece became a primary entry point for thousands of displaced individuals seeking refuge in Europe.

This financial downturn alongside low fertility and aging population (Judah, 2022; Pavlopoulos & Rachiotis, 2024) and the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers contributed to the intensification of discriminatory narratives against all migrant populations within the country (Melidis & Tzagkarakis, 2022: 235). As economic hardship intensified, societal tensions worsened, resulting in migrants, particularly those from non-EU countries, being increasingly scapegoated. The majority of Greeks, apart from activists and Greek citizens involved in left-libertarian, pro-migrant movements, particularly in major cities, particularly in Athens (Kalogeraki, 2015; Raimondi, 2019; Pettas, 2019; Tsoukala, 2020), tended to view migrants through negative stereotypes. They often perceived migrants as dangerous, unhealthy, and unable to integrate into Greek society. Various media outlets, largely controlled by the New Democracy (ND) government, have reinforced populist narratives by framing immigration in ways that promote discrimination and exclusion of migrants (Mylonas, 2020; Way & Serafis, 2023). While Greece has not experienced the same extreme politicization of migration as Hungary (Hutter & Kriesi, 2021), the issue has nonetheless become increasingly prominent, especially under the ND government led by Kyriakos Mitsotakis since 2019. Upon his arrival, migration became a focal point in Mitsotakis's political strategy. Like other right-wing populist leaders, Mitsotakis leveraged migration as a polarizing issue to foster a politics of fear and securitization (Turam, 2021). When COVID-19 emerged, refugees and migrants were not only associated with criminality and illegality but were also blamed for increasing COVID-19 cases, being portrayed as potential carriers of the virus and a threat to public health. This further heightened public anxiety and fear (Kalfeli et al., 2022; Kokkinaki, 2021). Kostopoulos and Mylonas (2022) argue that the ND government particularly capitalized on the refugee crisis

by adopting a hardline approach to rally its supporters, with mainstream media often supporting this stance and limiting criticism, protest, and solidarity efforts.

While EU citizens are entitled to reside and work in Greece freely without facing any restrictions, the entry of highly skilled migrants from outside the EU into Greece's labor market is also largely dependent on the level of demand for their expertise (Kahanec & Zimmermann, 2010). Every two years, a joint ministerial decision is issued to establish the maximum number of highly skilled positions available to third-country nationals, categorized by region and specific occupational fields (Law 4251/2014). By allocating limited quotas, Greece aims to regulate the flow of highly skilled workers, ensuring that the labor market aligns with national employment needs (Dimitriadi, 2024). This balanced approach, which is also stressed in the new Immigration Law in article 32 (Law 5038/2023), reflects the attempts to control and direct migration based on national and economic priorities, ensuring that highly skilled migrants from third countries are only recruited where there is a clear need for their expertise. Additionally, the migration system, which traditionally focuses on low-skilled labor (Dimitriadi, 2024; Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2005; Kapsalis, 2020), has not been equipped to address vertical and horizontal skills mismatches and meet the growing need of the labor market for highly skilled professionals (Katsikas, 2021; OECD, 2018). The cumbersome administrative processes in Greece, including complex visa procedures and slow residency approval for non-EU nationals, have created additional challenges. These bureaucratic obstacles not only delay the ability of skilled professionals to secure work matching their qualifications but also complicate their integration into Greek society. Additionally, the scarcity of job opportunities in sectors requiring specialized skills discourages many highly skilled migrants from selecting Greece as a destination. However, although the overlapping economic and migration crises combined with COVID-19 strained the country's capacity to attract and retain highly skilled migrants, the crises made the presence of HSMs in Greece more crucial to economic recovery and modernization.

Similar to Hungary, while HSMs may have been viewed more favorably due to their perceived economic value, they were not entirely immune to the broader climate of hostility that affected migrants and refugees, who are all referred to as “xenoï”

(strangers/foreigners) by Greek (Kirtsoglou & Tsimouris, 2018; Karakatsanis & Swarts, 2007). Within the context of highly skilled migration, this dual crisis generates a complex landscape. The emigration of talented Greeks and foreign nationals, including both EU and non-EU migrants, left gaps in professional, scientific, and technical occupations (OECD, 2018; Angeli, 2013). While attracting HSMs became more important for the country to fill these gaps and help stabilize key industries, the economic crisis challenges the country to provide attractive incentives, such as competitive wages or favorable working conditions. Despite the nationalist, anti-immigrant discourses of the government and structural difficulties, in recent years, Greece has been in efforts to attract both highly skilled EU and non-EU professionals and encourage skilled Greek emigrants to return (Vella, 2024; Ministry of Migration & Asylum, 2022; Labrianidis & Vogiatzis, 2013). The Greek government aims to balance enforcing strict border controls while facilitating regular migration in alignment with Greece's specific needs and priorities (Angeli, 2013). Initiatives such as the Golden Visa and increasing start-up opportunities, enhancing institutional structure, easing procedures for digital nomads to reside in the country, and offering residency permits to investors and their families have further incentivized skilled migration to Greece (Vella, 2024; Ministry of Migration & Asylum, 2022). Natural landscapes and climate are also significant factors that attract skilled migrants from EU and non-EU countries, offering an appealing lifestyle for professionals seeking a high quality of life alongside career opportunities.

With the recent developments and the efforts to recover its economy and increase competitiveness, unemployment in Greece dropped from 23.9% in 2016 to 12.5% in 2022. Correspondingly, the employment rate among non-EU nationals residing in Greece rose from 56.2% in 2016 to 62.9% by 2022, when this study was conducted (Eurostat, 2024). Athens, Greece's capital and economic center, has become a key destination for migrant populations, including highly skilled professionals from various sectors (King, 2021). Despite the prevailing anti-immigrant sentiment endorsed by the right-wing government, Athens remains relatively welcoming to migrants. This openness has helped transform the city into a cosmopolitan hub that values diversity and multiculturalism, earning its status as a sanctuary city that

promotes the political and social inclusion of migrants and refugees (Turam, 2021). In 2023, Greece declared further incentives to attract skilled non-EU workers, including a “Talent Visa” and a “Tech Visa,” to address the country's growing demand for qualified professionals (Georgakopoulos, 2024; Carassava, 2024). These visas will allow individuals to work in Greece without the need for Greek language skills, offering flexibility in employment and self-employment (Georgakopoulos, 2024). The initiative, which aims to attract recent graduates and skilled workers, part of a broader bill, reflects Greece's strategy to compete for global talent.

The 2021 Population-Housing Census indicates that 765.598 foreign-born citizens reside in Greece. Data published on January 2024 by the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, the number of foreign-born citizens living in Greece has been recorded as 228.690 EU and 472.062 non-EU country citizens (Ministry of Migration & Asylum, 2024). Most residence permits were issued in Greece for family reasons (EMN, 2019). The number of foreign citizens residing in Greece for employment purposes is only 96.118 (Ministry of Migration & Asylum, 2024). Although no EU Blue Cards were issued in Greece before 2019, only 77 individuals have been granted one between 2019 and 2023 (Eurostat, 2024). In the Attica region, where the entire Athens metropolitan area is, the number of EU citizens is 50.711, whereas 290.194 registered foreign citizens are non-EU country citizens, including refugees and asylum seekers (ELSTAT, 2023). While most migrants in Greece come from neighboring Balkan countries, there are also significant numbers of economic migrants and asylum-seekers from Eastern Europe, the former USSR, the Middle East, and various Asian and African countries (Labriaidis et al., 2004; Gropas & Trindafyllidou, 2005). HSMs in Athens display more heterogeneous settlement patterns and diverse age composition. There was a significant decline in the number of European immigrants in Greece following the 2007 recession (Salvati & Benassi, 2021).

Greece also defines three mechanisms for the naturalization of foreign nationals. The first one is the typical conditions of naturalization, including lawfully residing in Greece for seven continuous years before the submission of the application (Law 4735/2020). The second mechanism is honorary naturalization for foreign nationals who have offered special services to Greece. Finally, the third mechanism defines

the conditions for acquiring Greek citizenship based on certain circumstances. In 2020, Greece also announced the proposal for implementing a unified, written citizenship test that is considered a solution for minimizing the workload of committees and finalizing the examinations of all pending applications (Kouras, 2020). However, because of the increased difficulty of the exams, only 2,465 applicants took part in the 2021 examinations despite there being 30,000 pending applications (Gogonas & Tramountanis, 2023). The new naturalization system introduces stricter criteria for proving economic integration, requiring applicants to show a steady annual income over several years, with a threshold set at EUR 7,500 (Gogonas & Tramountanis, 2023; Law 4735/2020). While this policy may be more easily attainable for HSMs who often earn higher wages, it places a strong emphasis on economic status rather than broader measures of social integration. As a result, the system risks excluding many well-integrated residents, including some highly skilled migrants who may still fall short of the financial criteria due to fluctuations in employment or other factors. With the latest amendments of 2020, Greece's citizenship regime has gained a more exclusionary character. It is also important to underline that Greece has already been quite selective that naturalization in Greece often concerns specific groups of the foreign national population, particularly those defined as *homogeneis* (Christopoulos, 2013). According to the report of Globalcit in 2013, 51.789 people were naturalized in Greece between 2004 and 2012, and while 44.653 of them were foreign nationals of Greek origin, only 7.136 were foreign nationals (Christopoulos, 2013).

4.2 Experiences of Belonging: Feeling Citizenship

This section explores the multifaceted experiences of belonging among highly skilled migrants in Athens, focusing on their self-conception and emotional and spatial attachments. The subject-defining and affective aspects of citizenship that indicate individuals' experiences of belonging are examined through the narratives of self-identification and emotional and spatial attachments. The narratives of self-identification scrutinize how HSMs in Athens navigate their primary self-identification alongside their identification as migrants, which influences personal and societal interactions. The impact of external identification by the political authorities and society in their country of origin and residence is also addressed to

understand how this affects their feelings of belonging and citizenship. The final part of this section examines the emotional and spatial attachments of HSMs, focusing on their feelings of citizenship and their evolving sense of home. It explores how they navigate the balance between their aspirations for social acceptance and the realities of adapting to life in a new country while maintaining long-distance ties to their country of origin. Grounded on these key factors, the section aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and complexities HSMs face in their lived citizenship experiences related to their sense of belonging.

4.2.1 The Narratives of Self-identification

Highly skilled migrants in Athens construct their identities through a complex interplay of various factors influenced by the dynamic nature of their lived experiences in different contexts. Similar to HSMs in Budapest, they self-identify through their transnational experiences, personal and professional roles, personality traits, and values while integrating a broader, universal perspective that highlights qualities like being human, open-minded, or a citizen of the world. Through this interplay, HSMs construct identities that are multi-dimensional, inclusive, and adaptable to different contexts:

Interviewer: How do you self-identify, in general?

“I consider myself a world citizen. I say this because when extreme situations occur, whether in my home country, here, or elsewhere, I feel equally happy or saddened by what happens around me. As a result, I find it difficult to define myself in specific terms. I simply see myself as a citizen adapting to circumstances, striving to be a human being above all.” (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I am a person who makes the world go round, who lives, dies, part of life.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

The simplicity of Harry’s identification speaks to a cosmopolitan worldview which indicates an openness to seeing oneself beyond national, cultural, or ethnic

boundaries. He expresses a more existential identity rooted in being part of the human experience, one that transcends particularities. Harun, on the other hand, sees himself as a world citizen, positioning himself as someone who is emotionally and morally connected to events globally, regardless of geographical boundaries. By exemplifying the cosmopolitan outlook shared by many interviewees in Athens, his identity is fundamentally shaped by an overarching commitment to being “a human being above all,” which emphasizes the emotional and moral connections he feels toward humanity. This perspective encourages a sense of empathy and solidarity that transcends national boundaries, enabling him to engage with diverse cultures and communities meaningfully. Yet, he also subtly conveys a connection to his home country, highlighting that it remains a significant part of his emotional landscape. This duality in self-identification illustrates how individuals negotiate their identities in a globalized world. The interplay between a universalistic approach and particularistic ties reflects a balancing act that is both dynamic and fluid, as seen in the narratives of all HSMs. For instance, Oscar, in this quote below, characterizes himself as “a mix of everything,” reflecting his embrace of multiple identities. He identifies as “British by core,” while also fostering a broader, cosmopolitan connection to humankind. His approach underscores a commitment to a cosmopolitan ethic centered on dialogue and understanding, which he views as essential for fostering a more unified and cooperative future for humanity, all while remaining grounded in his roots:

“I’m someone who always tries to do the right thing and be a good and an open-minded person. I’ve been in the UK, Italy, the Netherlands and in Greece and although I am British by core, all those experiences shaped how I see the world. I am a mix of everything. I am a person who believes we should be open to learning and embracing new opinions from each other even if we disagree. Listening to opposing views in their entirety helps bring us closer as human beings because in the end, we’re all the same as humans.”
(Oscar, UK, non-EU)

Interviews illustrate that many EU and non-EU HSMs create identities that are flexible and responsive to their experiences and the communities they inhabit. As

quoted below, Claire primarily frames her identity through her profession, which shows the significance of personal achievement in her self-conception. Her focus on citizenship reflects how people often categorize themselves based on formal citizenship status, especially in transnational contexts where mobility is common. By identifying with the expat community, she embraces a globalized identity rooted in shared experiences. Her emphasis on Anglo-Saxon connections may confine this cosmopolitanism to a specific socio-cultural reference point, suggesting a tension between an inclusive cosmopolitan identity and a more exclusive cultural affiliation. However, Claire's overall narrative also illustrates a balancing act, showing how identity is shaped by both broad inclusivity and selective differentiation within transnational contexts rather than presenting a subtle contradiction. Victor's quote similarly encompasses aspects of both global citizenship and individualized agency. He portrays himself as self-reliant yet altruistic, emphasizing his determination to achieve personal goals while also caring for the well-being of others. He embodies active civic responsibility and a transnational sense of belonging, where his identity and sense of duty extend beyond a single country and encompass multiple contexts. In most cases, HSMs stress and value their personal characteristics, achievements, and aspirations as internal parts of who they are but they frequently complement these attributes with a broader sense of attachments and global responsibilities:

“Although I self-identify with what I do professionally, the question always comes up about my citizenship. I explain that I hold dual citizenship. They often ask whether I feel more Greek or American. I primarily identify with the expat community, more so with Anglo-Saxon globalized persons. I am a sort of citizen of the world.” (Claire, US & Greece, EU)

“I'm a simple person. I love adventure and I'm a kind who never gives up. Once I set a goal, I am determined to achieve it, no matter how long it takes. I have a passion for helping others and always seek to support people wherever I am. I connect with every community, in any country I find myself in, and I believe it's essential to contribute and play my part in society. I can't stand to see people in pain.” (Victor Nigeria & Greece, EU)

By employing multiple attributes, the majority exhibit a pluralistic sense of self and cultural hybridity that accommodates the diversity of their experiences and recognizes the complexity of living across borders (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018). Living in diverse locations often exposes HSMs to a range of cultural contexts, practices, and social norms. Interviews show that these varied experiences not only broaden their perspectives but also enrich their identity by incorporating elements from different cultures. In this context, mobility emerges as a central force shaping the self-conception of HSMs in Athens. Living in multiple countries and navigating new cultural norms, social practices, and professional environments require a level of adaptability and flexibility that aligns with a cosmopolitan worldview. The quote below explicitly presents the common approach reflected in the interviews:

“When people ask if I’m Kazakh, or if I identify with my ethnic origin or where I grew up, I don’t identify with any of my parts of ethnic origin or locality of upbringing. Instead, I self-identify with my experiences. It’s the experience of living in different countries and being part of various cultures that has shaped who I am far more than any one cultural background.”

(Aksana, UK, non-EU)

Aksana was born in Belarus, raised in Kazakhstan and Belarus, and then moved to the UK to study and became a British citizen, renouncing her Belarusian citizenship. The way how she self-identifies reflects this background, suggesting a cosmopolitan worldview, where identity and belonging are constructed through lived experiences across borders, rather than by affiliation with a single country and particularistic identities. The tension between rootedness in particularistic identities and the fluidity of a migrant experience illustrates the complexities and multiple layers of modern identity formation, particularly in a transnational context. Sandra from the US also presents a similar approach as Aksana and self-identifies as a human being and a world citizen through her lived transnational experiences:

“In the U.S., I was never quite American enough, and in Germany, I wasn’t German enough. My mother was German, my father American, so we had

both cultures at home. It's like mixing barbecue with sauerkraut. I found myself stuck between trying to prove I was Texan enough or proving I was German enough. But eventually, I realized there was another option: to find others like me and stop trying to prove anything. I'm a human who grew up between Germany and the U.S. back and forth, and experiences to live in seven different countries." (Sandra, US, non-EU)

Sandra constructs her identity through experiences of living in multiple countries, emphasizing a cosmopolitan understanding of belonging. While explaining, she refers to how others view her. These external labels create boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, where citizenship is not just a legal status but a culturally defined category that others impose. Citizens are often categorized based on superficial or symbolic markers which may force individuals into a position where they feel compelled to align with an identity that may not fully represent their lived experiences. Sandra rejects the imposed German and American identities, choosing a third, more cosmopolitan way that helps her to fit in every context. Therefore, external identification plays a critical role in shaping individuals' relationships to citizenship by influencing how they are perceived and treated by others, how they experience inclusion or exclusion, and how they form their own identities. However, as a lived experience, it limits individuals' connection to their citizenship as a sense of belonging. Edward explains it as:

"When I first arrived in Greece, I hid my Palestinian origins due to negative experiences with people. Whenever I mentioned I was from Palestine, the initial reaction was often with assumptions that I was Muslim and a bad guy. They viewed people from Palestine, the West Bank, or the Middle East, in general, as savage and poorly behaved. To avoid this prejudice, I often claimed to be from Jordan, which made it easier for people to accept me." (Edward, Palestine, non-EU)

Citizenship may significantly impact social acceptance and individuals' everyday interactions in transnational spaces, acting as a primary anchor of their identity. Edward's statement above highlights the complexities of external identification

based on citizenship, illustrating his coping mechanism in response to prejudices and the negative connotations associated with being a Palestinian citizen. It reflects deep-rooted challenges faced by Edward whose citizenship is intertwined with broader political, social, and cultural stereotypes. Citizenship here functions not merely as a form of membership in a country but also as a label loaded with assumptions about behavior, culture, and belonging. The interviewee's choice to present himself as Jordanian is a strategic attempt to navigate these prejudiced perceptions. He holds a temporary Jordanian passport as a Palestinian to travel. Through this document, he claims Jordanian identity, which may carry fewer negative connotations in European contexts, allows him to access spaces and opportunities that would otherwise be denied. This reflects how individuals from marginalized identities that indicate a membership often adopt "acceptable" ones to gain social acceptance, highlighting the performative aspect of citizenship. The statement also brings into focus the intersection of religion and citizenship which is also referred to by the HSMs in Budapest. Being Palestinian is immediately equated with being Muslim, which introduces an additional identifier that acts as a layer of prejudice. Edward is a Christian Palestinian. However, the assumption that being from Palestine automatically implies Muslim identity leads him to deal with the negative stereotypes associated with Palestinian citizenship and Muslim identity in Greece, where Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment are prevalent (Tsitselikis, 2013; Sakellariou, 2019).

External identification based on citizenship can profoundly affect how individuals self-identify and navigate their identities in transnational settings. Some interviewees express feelings of shame or discomfort when identifying with their home countries due to the negative judgments or stereotypes associated with their fellow citizens. These stereotypes often reduce identity to a simplistic label, categorizing individuals by their citizenship, which becomes entangled with assumptions about behavior, attitude, and moral character. The actions of a few citizens are generalized to represent the whole. It may result in a form of self-alienation and constrain individuals' ability to self-identify with their country freely:

“To tell you the truth, at the beginning when I moved to Spain ten years ago, I was ashamed to say I'm French. Even in Romania and Greece at the beginning, I was ashamed because I saw the French behavior, how they behave others in Romania, France, or even in Greece. But after some time, I understood there are good and bad people. So now I just say I'm French and I'm proud of it. I don't represent all people from France.” (Louis, France, EU)

Challenging international conjuncture and the role of migrants' country of origin in this setting also creates an environment where external identification becomes charged with the weight of ongoing conflicts and disagreements between countries. For instance, Lia (Israel & Poland, EU) expresses the harsh reality of navigating identity amid conflict, highlighting how her Israeli citizenship fundamentally alters others' perceptions of her. She explains that when people learn of her citizenship, they immediately expect her to defend Israel, regardless of her personal beliefs or political views. Her citizenship leads to a distinct shift in how individuals are treated, often resulting in biased assumptions that they align with their country's actions. She recalls an incident that happened at the onset of the war, where a colleague, unfamiliar with her background, confronted her with anger and accusations simply because she was an Israeli. This interaction underscores the broader societal tendency to reduce complex identities to stereotypes, revealing how citizenship can become a burden in a climate of hostility.

A significant number of HSMs in Athens express that their self-identification is context-dependent, navigating between multiple identities according to the social, political, or cultural environment they find themselves in at any given moment. As Olena's identification explicitly shows below, the narratives of many HSMs suggest a shift from rigid labels to a more fluid and relational understanding of identity. This adaptability reflects their capacity to balance personal complexity with the universal experience of being human. Such resilience highlights their ability to navigate complex socio-political landscapes, revealing a complex self that is both grounded in their origins and influenced by global experiences:

“If I had to identify myself, it would depend on which part of my life we're discussing, as I might identify differently in various situations. So, I can't

give a straightforward answer on how I identify myself. Ultimately, without a specific context, I would simply say I'm a human being." (Olena, Ukraine, non-EU)

"I don't think that it can be one word. First of all, in general, I'm a human being. I'm female. My origins come from Russia, but my character has nothing to do with Russian. I do not know... I think the way how you self-identify depends of who is asking and what is the context of the question. It also can also change based on your preferences, or over time. I just got recently the Greek citizenship. I may get married and have a kid, and then eventually after 10 years I may identify myself as a Greek." (Elina, Russia & Greece, EU)

The data shows that in contrast to those in Budapest, HSMs in Athens tend to employ a broader range of attributes in their self-identification, placing greater emphasis on citizenship and nationality as core aspects of their self-conception. A higher number of interviewees in Athens refer to their nationality and citizenship as a layer of their primary identification, suggesting that they hold greater importance in shaping their sense of self. Additionally, unlike HSMs in Budapest, 15% of the interviewees in Athens also indicate the significance of national identity for them to self-identify. The narratives of these HSMs reveal that even in a globalized context, national and patriotic belongings remain a deeply personal and culturally rooted anchor for many individuals. These individuals live outside their home countries but maintain a strong attachment to their particular cultural identities and home countries while simultaneously engaging with diverse cultures and societies. In doing so, they construct complex, multilayered identities and a sense of belonging. They express a level of cosmopolitanism through their international experiences by highlighting the balance between patriotic attachment to the country of origin and global mobility. The quotes below explicitly show this complex interplay between patriotic attachment and cosmopolitanism in the lives of HSMs:

Interviewer: How do you self-identify, in general?

“Even though I have lived away from Denmark since I was 19 and I grew up in a cosmopolitan environment, I still think of myself as Danish. I still maintain my Danish passport. We are not allowed dual citizenship, so I've never obtained either American or Canadian or Greek because if I do, I lose my Danish passport.” (Ella, Denmark, EU)

“I'm a French and a European. It's all about my culture and feelings. I'm a French who choose to live elsewhere.” (Antione, France, EU)

While gender, religion, and race are generally considered insignificant social categories for the self-conception of HSMs in Budapest, a few HSMs in Athens recognize these categories as integral aspects of their identities. In particular, the concept of “whiteness” is frequently invoked by certain interviewees from Western Europe and the United States to articulate how their racial identity contributes to their sense of security and acceptance within Greek society. This phenomenon occurs against a backdrop of racialization and Islamophobia, where perceptions of race are intertwined with negative stereotypes associated with Islam (Gousis & Gill, 2023; Kirtsoglou & Tsimouris, 2018). Both Harry and Olena acknowledge that implicit racism plays a significant role in shaping social interactions and the lived experiences of migrants in Greece.

“I am a white male with Italian and English citizenship, right? Now, if I were a black male or if I were from Albania, the reactions I'd get would be completely different from what I experience now. The way people treat me is different simply because of where I'm from, and this still happens in Greece. When I speak Greek, I obviously have a bit of an accent, so people sometimes don't know where I'm from. But as soon as I say England, they respond with 'Oh, very nice'.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

“I think it would be a big issue if I had a different skin color. That's a real problem. As long as you're white, maybe you're not in the same class with

Greeks, but you're close enough to them. I believe Greeks can be quite racist—not in an overtly aggressive way, but it's definitely there.” (Olena, Ukraine, non-EU)

When asked how they self-identify in Athens, many HSMs mostly describe themselves as expats and world citizens, emphasizing their social status and cultural hybridity. By identifying as expats, they leverage their cultural and social capital and underline their ability to integrate into professional circles, access better jobs, and navigate social systems. Such identification is a claim to higher social and economic status, distancing themselves from the negative connotations associated with being other migrants who may not have the same resources or are marginalized in the context of Greece. Sareena and Aksana explicitly explain it as:

“I identify myself as an expat. Because I'm working here, I'm paying my taxes. I have rights. I did not come here like an immigrant. Because I did not come like those people who leave their country without permit or due to the war. I'm calling myself as an expat, but not as an immigrant.” (Sareena, Lebanon, Non-EU)

“I think it depends on where you live because in London, everyone is the same. Most of the Londoners come from somewhere else. So, in London, I didn't have this kind of self-identification. In Athens, I definitely feel like an expat. Because first, Greek society is very homogeneous and second, they actually don't seem to have many higher skill migrants in Greece. You generally see migrants delivering packages. Therefore, people can never understand what the hell I am doing in Athens.” (Aksana, UK, non-EU)

The interviewees' claim to the identity of expats signals an attempt to disassociate from these negative connotations of migration, positioning themselves as part of a more desirable, higher-status group. Sareena's distinction between expat and migrant is grounded in economic privilege and legal status. She emphasizes her contribution to the Greek economy through paid work and taxes, as well as the rights she possesses as a legal resident. By doing so, she claims a higher status,

respectability, and legitimacy that affords her recognition and rights within Greek society. She stresses that she did not come to Greece “like an immigrant,” implying that her legal entry and professional work differentiate her from migrants who may lack such privileges. This mirrors broader discourses that often associate expats with voluntary migration and skilled labor, while migrants are associated with involuntary migration, economic hardship, or displacement. Aksana’s approach to expat identity is closely tied to her professional mobility and shaped by the local social context. It signals a differentiation from those migrants perceived as occupying lower rungs of the social ladder in Greece. Her narrative also reveals the tension between how she sees herself and how others see her. Additionally, the locals’ confusion about her presence in Greece underscores the prevalent social assumptions that migrants are primarily low-skilled workers. Both individuals emphasize their capacity to navigate global labor markets and integrate into local societies through their professional roles, a privilege not available to all migrants. Their expat identity also reflects an understanding that personal and professional identities may transcend borders, aligning with cosmopolitan ideals that value inclusivity and internationalism.

Similarly, some other HSMs define themselves as world citizens, asserting a clearer cosmopolitan outlook. Their narratives signify personal autonomy over their identity and a rejection of external categorization. They embrace a more expansive and inclusive form of identity, one that reflects their experiences across different countries and cultures. They construct and present themselves in a way to integrate into different contexts with ease. Harun who is a Turkish citizen, for instance, avoids identifying with migration-related categories. His perspective reframes the migration experience as a proactive, empowered choice, suggesting that he views himself more as an active agent of his own preferences, decisions, and goals than as a person defined by his legal status. Hanna’s statement, in a similar way, demonstrates the broader implications of globalization, where individuals increasingly identify with multiple cultures and experiences. The ability to navigate various cultural contexts without feeling like an outsider reflects a new paradigm of identity in a globalized world, where traditional boundaries of belonging are continually being redefined.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself as a migrant in Greece?

“I have thought about this before, and I can honestly say I do not define myself that way. If you ask me whether leaving was a choice or an obligation, and for me, it was not an obligation at all. I was not forced to leave my country. It was my decision. I do not see myself as a refugee or migrant, or someone forced to leave. I am just a person who set out to achieve bigger things in life. I am more like a world citizen.” (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I have never thought about it. I don't know why I have never thought of myself as a refugee or a migrant. I know that I am not a Greek person, language-wise, but I don't feel like I am an outsider either. I am connected to the Greek culture and the country well. But, when I think about how I self-identify in Greece, I would say I am a world citizen. I have lived in different countries where I never felt like an outsider, either. I would consider myself a world citizen.” (Hanna, Sweden, EU)

Like those in Budapest, most interviewees in Athens also highlight liberal values such as openness, respect for diverse social and cultural groups, and a sense of cultural hybridity, along with a strong emphasis on the moral worth of humanity, without explicitly labeling themselves as cosmopolitan. While a minority of interviewees express that they like the concept of world citizenship, which they may associate themselves with, reflecting a clear cosmopolitan outlook, they also assert that it is a desired but unrealistic ideal:

“Even if we convince ourselves that we are world citizens living in a unified world, that is not the reality. It is more like a utopia, especially in a world where every country has its rules, thoughts, religion, and traditions. I wish we could reach the point of world citizenship because it is the top point we can achieve as humanity. But it is a lie for the moment.” (Sareene, Lebanon, non-EU)

As noted in the quotes above, the interviewees express reluctance to embrace labels that imply foreignness, indicating a shift away from narratives focused on displacement and otherness. This perspective is also found in the narratives of HSMs who consider themselves as integrated into Greek society, influenced by their cultural hybridity, evolving self-identity, and changing legal status over time. Sara considers the acquisition of Greek citizenship a milestone of her life that allowed her to move beyond her identity as a migrant and a foreigner, bringing a sense of closure to her foreignness. While Sara's perspective displays how legal citizenship can significantly shape an individual's self-conception, Melisa's self-identification represents a more expansive understanding of citizenship beyond legal status, focusing on emotional attachment and lived experiences of citizenship. Their rejection of migrant categories and articulation of dual patriotic belonging with or without legal status indicates a hybrid citizen identity that integrates aspects of their Turkish and Serbian identities with their lived experiences in Greece:

“Absolutely not. Even though I used to be a migrant, that changed this year when I finally received Greek citizenship after four years of waiting. Despite having been a foreigner in this country for so long, and always feeling Serbian at my core even though I grew up here and went to school in Greece. I don't believe it's important for me to define myself by where I came from.”
(Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

“I did not feel the need to identify myself as a migrant or even an expat because I feel myself half Greek. I self-identify as a Turkish living in Greece. That's it.” (Melisa, Türkiye, non-EU)

While the majority distance themselves from the migrant category, a few interviewees, such as Ella, a Danish citizen living in Greece for twenty-seven years, and Oscar, a British citizen, challenge the socio-political connotations of these labels, suggesting that the distinction between them is not based solely on objective criteria like skills or professional status, but is deeply intertwined with a racialized understanding (Kunz, 2019):

“I always identify as an immigrant. Many of my high-skilled friends tend to disagree with me on this. They insist I am an expat because I’m white and I can read and write. This often leads me to a discussion with them at this point but from my perspective, I’m an immigrant.” (Ella, Denmark, EU)

Ella resists the social pressures to adopt the more privileged label of the expat, demonstrating a political awareness of the ways migration labels reinforce social stratification. Similarly, Oscar and Domino, as noted below, also challenge contemporary narratives that have degraded the term migrant by pointing out that migration has always been a fundamentally human process. Both acknowledge that “migrant” is the correct term for someone who moves between countries, but argues that society has given it a negative connotation. This twisting of the term points to broader socio-political discourses that tend to stigmatize migrants, often associating them with lower social status or undesired economic impacts, particularly in countries where anti-immigration sentiments are prevalent:

“I personally don’t have an issue with the term 'migrant.' The problem is that society has distorted its meaning. The word comes from Latin, and migration is something that has always existed throughout history, as seen in archaeology. Migration is a natural process that happens constantly. Problems arise when you restrict migration. People need the freedom to move, or at least the possibility of doing so. So yes, you could call me a migrant since I’ve moved across countries. So migrant is the quite correct term to use. It’s just been twisted in a negative way over time.” (Oscar, UK, non-EU)

“I never refer to myself as a migrant, mainly because of the broader issue of migration in Europe. While I recognize that I am a migrant, I avoid publicly using the term. In society, the word migrant often carries a negative connotation, tied to larger issues. The term ‘migrant’ is often associated with people who were forced to leave their countries, which wasn't my case. But if we look at it from a psychological perspective, many of us, in a way, were still forced to leave.” (Domino, Italy, EU)

Oscar further notes in the later sections of the interview that the term “migrant” is often used in contemporary European political discourse in a derogatory way. He criticizes the portrayal of migrants as outsiders who threaten the cultural identity of European countries by introducing diverse religions and changing societal frameworks. He finds this viewpoint particularly ironic, reminding that many European countries, such as Britain and France, have rich histories built on migration. Having such a perspective, both Ella and Oscar self-identify as migrants, contesting the marginalized conceptualizations of migration and what it means to be a migrant. Similar to Domino, some other HSMs, on the other hand, reject the socio-political stigma attached to the migrant category by underlining that they “don't see the difference” (Dina, Lebanon, non-EU) between being an immigrant or an expat.

In recent years, the term *xenos*⁵ (foreigner) has increasingly been used as a shorthand for migrant, a trend observed not only among the locals in everyday life but also strategically employed by ultra-right-wing political groups (Kirtsoglou, 2018; Kirtsoglou & Tsimouris, 2018). It often carries racialized undertones, reflecting a broader societal tendency to associate foreignness with specific ethnic or racial identities (Kirtsoglou, 2018). In the Greek context, it serves as a linguistic tool that simplifies complex discussions about immigration and belonging. By reducing individuals to a single label, it creates an “us versus them” mentality, fostering division and promoting xenophobic sentiments. As a result, the term has evolved to embody varying degrees of resentment and hostility towards foreigners, regardless of their legal or political status. In contrast to HSMs in Budapest, those in Athens tend to avoid identifying themselves as foreigners:

“When I first arrived, I was just a *xeni*—an outsider. Then, over time, I became the ‘good *xeni*.’ I had a motorcycle, and some kid kept stealing gas from it. One day, I started telling my neighbors about what was happening. I knew it was a kid, but as soon as I told the story, they immediately said it must have been an immigrant, a *xenos/xeni* stealing the gasoline. I pointed

5 The terms *xenos* (foreign, stranger, outsider) and its antonym *dhikos* (one of us, insider, intimate) highlight the relative and provisional nature of categories of intimacy and belonging. *Xenos* is often used in Greece to identify non-Greeks, particularly those who are non-EU migrants.

out, 'But I'm also *xeni*.' Their response was, 'No, you're different. You're a *kalo paidi*, a good *xeni*.' I told them, 'You don't like the field workers, the immigrants who aren't even competing for jobs with your kids, but I am. I'm the one who could actually take those jobs.' Yet, they insisted, 'But you live in the house. You're a *kalo paid*⁶*i*, good *xeni*.'" (Sandra, US, non-EU)

Identification as a foreigner is not limited to HSMs who lack Greek citizenship. Even migrants who have formally obtained Greek citizenship and EU migrants who move within the EU having similar rights as Greek citizens may still be considered foreigners. They may continue to be regarded as outsiders, often due to differences in culture or ethnicity. The persistence of this category uncovers the difficulty of being recognized as a citizen in Greece and deeper societal attitudes toward migrants. In an interview with Vicky, a naturalized Greek citizen, she expresses discomfort with being identified as *xeni* in Greece. She explains that while the term may be factually correct, she feels it as carrying negative connotations in the Greek language. She underlines that despite being a Greek citizen who has been in an effort to integrate socially and culturally, she still encounters this label, especially when her limited language proficiency reveals her non-native status.

As seen among EU HSMs in Budapest, European identity is also a common form of self-identification for many EU HSMs in Athens. They emphasize their supranational affiliation, which sets them apart from the label of migrant as well as social labels and stigmas often linked to non-EU migrants within the EU context:

"Migrants and refugees are two different things. I feel like a new citizen and I can go anywhere in Europe. I consider myself first European and after French. If we put the question in perspective, thank God for who invented the European Union." (Louis, France, EU)

"I do not consider myself an immigrant because of the European Union. I am an EU citizen and I can go anywhere in Europe. Maybe if I went to the

⁶ "Kalo paidi" in Greek means "good kid/good child."

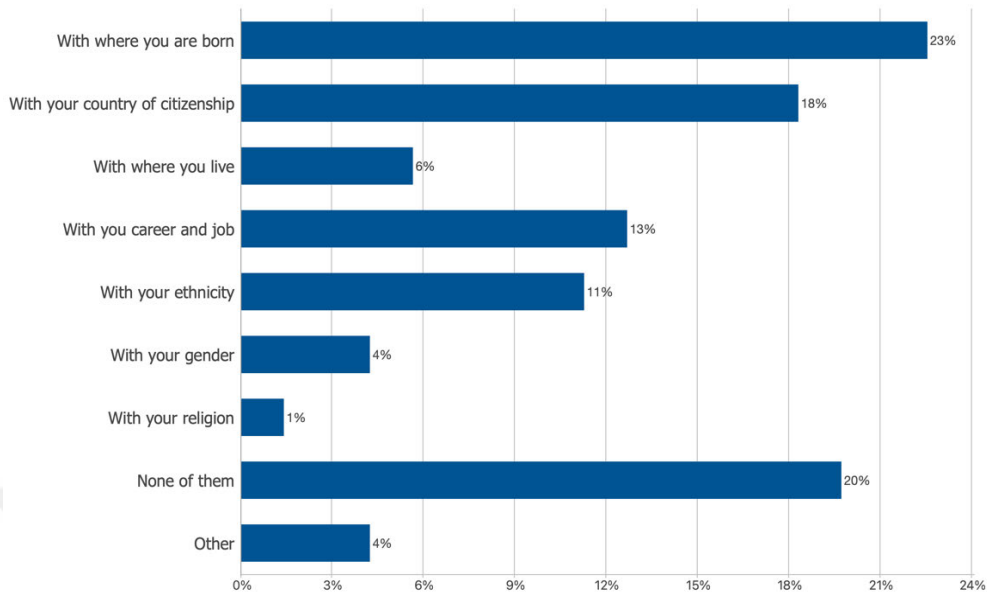
States, maybe I would feel an immigrant but, in the EU, I'm an EU citizen.”
(Denisa, Romania, EU)

“I don't think of myself as a migrant because I am a European. I guess migrant is less used for EU citizens who move between European countries. Because, there's Schengen zone, so you're free to go to whichever country you like.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

Louis and Denisa emphasize a clear distinction between being an immigrant and being an EU citizen. By identifying primarily as EU citizens, they avoid the marginalizing connotations typically associated with the term migrant. Louis, particularly, claims to feel more European than French, expressing gratitude for the existence of the European Union, which allows him to transcend national borders easily. This suggests that the EU's legal framework enables him to move freely, fostering a sense of belonging that goes beyond national boundaries. His gratitude toward the creation of the EU further reinforces the idea that this supranational entity provides him with a cosmopolitan sense of belonging, making him feel like “a new citizen” everywhere he is in the EU. Identification with EU citizenship reflects the transformative effect of the EU in reshaping traditional ideas of citizenship, belonging, and migration.

When interviewees are asked an open-ended question about their primary self-identification without prompts, most combine broader categories, such as being human or a global citizen, with more specific social and cultural attributes. The findings reveal a diverse array of responses, indicating a mix of cosmopolitan and patriotic identities, with nationality and citizenship highlighted as a significant layer of their identities. Consistent with the interviews, nationality, and citizenship emerge as prominent responses for primary self-identification in the survey study conducted with HSMs in Athens (Figure 24). While nationality and citizenship are the most prominent identifiers, 20% of the respondents do not identify with any of the provided categories. This suggests a preference for more layered and complex forms of identity and a reluctance to self-associate with categories that are conventional identification methods.

Figure 24. Primary Self-identification (Athens)



For both EU and non-EU HSMs, self-identification as a foreigner and a world citizen is relatively common. However, only EU HSMs use Europe as a significant identity marker, reflecting their access to a shared European identity (Table 17). This attachment to regional identity serves as a unifying label that positions EU migrants as insiders within a broader, regionally defined community. Although most EU HSMs are inclined to identify with privileged categories like citizen (16,1%) or European (12,9%) due to their enhanced mobility rights, legal protections, or acquisition of Greek citizenship, a noteworthy number still prefer to identify with categories of foreignness. This preference may stem from the social, cultural, or emotional barriers they encounter despite their legal and social advantages.

Non-EU HSMs tend to see themselves more as foreigners and expats or identify through their experiences in diverse locations. They are more likely to maintain a stronger connection to their country of origin, with 15% identifying as citizens living abroad. These findings suggest that non-EU HSMs who face more barriers in their daily lives are more in need of negotiating between their countries of origin and residence, navigating a more complex identity due to their salient outsider status. They appear to exert greater effort in self-positioning within broader, inclusive categories, likely as a way to mitigate exclusion and foster inclusion in their host societies. Overall, by balancing between their roots and the globalized environment

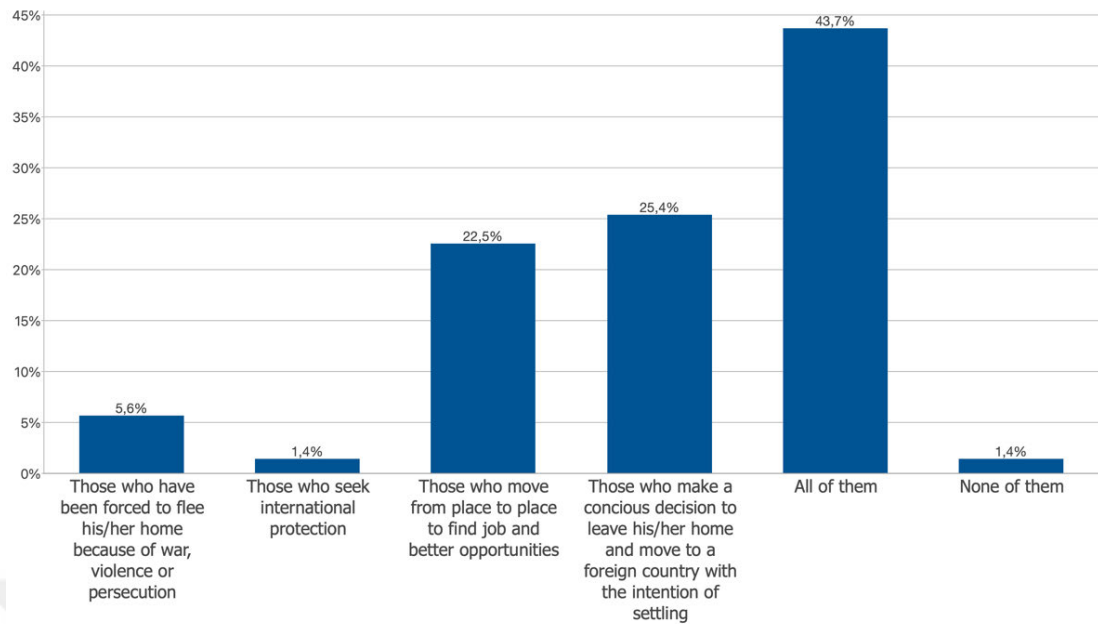
they operate within, both EU and non-EU HSMs build a more transnational perspective constructed by either supranational legal and social framework or experiences of foreignness.

Table 17. Self-identification in Athens, Greece by Citizenship

<i>Self-identification in Athens, Greece</i>	<i>EU HSMs</i>	<i>Non-EU HSMs</i>
<i>I am an expatriate</i>	6,5%	10%
<i>I am a foreigner</i>	25,8%	25%
<i>I am a foreign employee</i>	3,2%	2,5%
<i>I am a migrant</i>	6,5%	7,5%
<i>I am a citizen</i>	16,1%	10%
<i>I am a country citizen who live abroad</i>	3,2%	15%
<i>I am a world citizen/cosmopolitan</i>	19,4%	15%
<i>I am a European</i>	12,9%	-
<i>I am a nomad</i>	3,2%	-
<i>I am a temporary citizen</i>	-	2,5%
<i>I am an economical migrant</i>	-	2,5%
<i>Other</i>	3,2%	10%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%

Supporting the interview findings and the study conducted in Budapest, the category of migrant does not appear to be a popular, desired category of identification for both EU and non-EU HSMs (Table 17). When asked to define what a migrant is from the provided definition of “refugee,” “asylum seeker,” “economic migrant,” and “immigrant,” 43,7% of the respondents indicate that all these terms are synonymous with migrant (Figure 27). The findings from the Athens survey closely mirror those of the study conducted in Budapest, indicating that respondents struggle to differentiate between various terms and types of human mobility. This ambiguity significantly influences their understanding of migration and appears as the reason for their efforts to disassociate themselves from this category.

Figure 25. Understanding of What Defines a Migrant (Athens)



4.2.2 Emotional and Spatial Attachment

The experience of migration involves spending an extended period outside one's home country, exposing individuals to diverse cultures, perspectives, and experiences. This context frequently leads them to reevaluate and redefine their identities, attachments, and commitments. In the case of EU citizenship, this process can foster a deeper sense of belonging to Europe among HSMs, particularly those who are EU citizens, enhancing cosmopolitan attachment (Seitova & Kovacs, 2024). As they navigate life in different EU countries, EU HSMs' attachment to Europe may strengthen, embodying a broader, cosmopolitan outlook. For instance, Louis, a French citizen who has lived in different EU countries, expresses his appreciation for the opportunities that come with being an EU citizen. He prioritizes his European citizenship over national citizenship, identifying more strongly with the supranational community of the EU. That is to say, he does not reject his national attachment; rather, he places it within the broader context of European citizenship. His self-identification suggests a dual sense of belonging and a reconciliation between patriotic attachment to France and cosmopolitan attachment to Europe through supranational legal status. Similar to Louis, Denisa also highlights that EU membership has changed the way Romanian citizens view their citizenship and belonging. It reflects a broader trend of increasing importance placed on European

identity. Such approaches reinforce the idea that their identity is not tied solely to their country of origin but also to a shared European experience:

“I’m an EU citizen. I consider myself first European and after French. If we put the question in perspective, thank God for who invented the European Union.” (Louis, France, EU)

“Since we became a member of the European Union, I think the Romanians cherish more with the EU citizenship and being a European citizen than their Romanian citizenship.” (Denisa, Romania, EU)

The British citizen interviewees, as former EU citizens, underscore the significant loss of benefits they once enjoyed, articulating feelings of disappointment and disillusionment. They note that the ease and privileges that were once integral to British citizenship have been significantly diminished by the new limitations and restrictions imposed after Brexit. This shift not only highlights a decline in their mobility and access to various opportunities across Europe but also underscores a broader sense of disconnection from Europe. This shift has contributed to a perception of diminished value in British citizenship, particularly in the absence of its EU component. Despite these challenges, they seem to maintain a pro-EU stance and a strong sense of belonging to the EU, which fosters openness to the idea of acquiring citizenship from an EU country, including Greece. This desire reflects their longing to regain the connections and opportunities they once had within the broader European community. It illustrates how EU citizenship functioned as an emotional and spatial anchor, adding significant value to national citizenship:

“Being a British citizen has definitely impacted me, especially after Brexit. Before, it was easy to come here, rent a flat, start working, or even drive a car. Now, I face far more restrictions. We once had something great, but now we don’t. Now, we have to navigate and adapt to the new requirements for being in the EU. The British public is slowly realizing the mistake we made and coming to terms with what we’ve lost. It makes me ashamed to be British.” (Oscar, UK, non-EU)

While all EU HSMs emphasize the benefits and privileges of EU citizenship within the EU context, some are critical to the European Union and skeptical about its unifying power. Some EU HSMs express their sadness and disappointment with the current state of the EU and its global standing. Antione takes it a step further by referring to the influence of others, implying a fear and unease regarding the impact of non-European cultures on European identity. Overall, for a minority of EU HSMs, either the promise of a “united Europe” remains unfulfilled, or Europe’s role on the world stage appears to be diminishing:

“It's not united at all. It's sad. I am pro-Europe, but the united Europe has been built yet.” (Domino, Italy, EU)

“I feel sad about being an EU citizen. Because we used to be great and now we are like a little puppet controlled by the United States. We are under influence of the East, Arabs, Chinese, and Africans. Now it feels like we're in decline. Our civilization is fading.” (Antione, France, EU)

The practical realities of mobility within the EU such as political, social, cultural, or emotional barriers, may complicate this attachment. Despite the advantages of EU citizenship, HSMs, particularly those whose nationality or first citizenship originates from outside the EU, may continue to navigate feelings of foreignness, which shape their evolving sense of identity. Mary’s experience as a European citizen who was born as a Palestinian in Syria explicitly illustrates the challenges of reconciling formal legal status with societal perceptions and the realities of lived experiences, where cosmopolitan attachments may be undermined by socio-cultural biases. Mary's attachment to Europe is shaped by more than just the tension between her cosmopolitan identification with the EU and her patriotic connection to Greece. It is also deeply influenced by the limitations imposed by her Palestinian nationality. Despite having legal rights as an EU citizen, Mary feels that her Palestinian background complicates her full acceptance within the European framework. She notes the practical and social limitations of EU citizenship, particularly in how others view her based on her place of birth. Therefore, although she recognizes

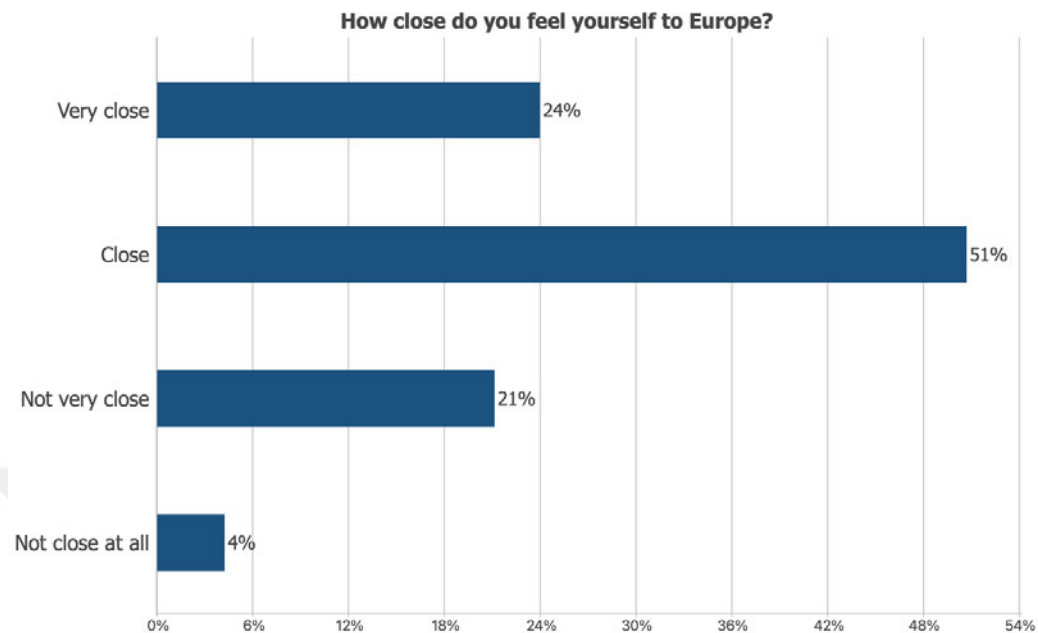
herself as a European citizen, she feels a stronger connection to her Greek identity than to a broader European one, which she does not believe its unifying power. While she lived negative experiences as a Palestinian EU citizen in the EU weaken her belief in and sense of belonging to Europe, her Greek citizenship seems to foster her attachment to Greece, suggesting a patriotic position:

“I am European but I feel more Greek than European. Even if I am an EU citizen, okay, first one, they know that I'm Palestinian. I don't really believe in the EU. You have rights, of course. But when they will look at my ID and see another country as the country of birth, they will not treat me as I am an EU citizen.” (Mary, Palestine & Greece, EU)

Notably, ten EU HSM who gained EU citizenship through naturalization in Greece feel somewhat distanced from the EU despite valuing the privileges and opportunities of their new status. As clearly noted by Mary above, their sense of belonging to Europe is shaped by past experiences and the discriminatory attitudes they encounter based on their original citizenship or nationality. The majority of them, thus, express a stronger attachment to Greece and their country of origin than Europe. The interviews also reveal how EU citizenship may be seen as utilitarian rather than deeply felt, contrasting with the national affiliations that are more emotionally and culturally significant to some HSMs. While having practical value within Europe, EU citizenship may hold little significance in shaping EU HSMs' self-identity outside the EU. Being an EU citizen is described by Harry as an empty feeling, suggesting that he sees it as a label devoid of personal meaning or significance. His sense of belonging is more deeply rooted in his cultural background and country of origin rather than in a supranational framework:

“I have never really identified with Europe. If someone calls me an EU citizen, it feels somewhat empty. If I really think about it, I guess there's some meaning, like the ability to travel and move freely within Europe. But still, if I go to the U.S. and someone asks me where I'm from, I am not going to say I am from Europe. I will identify more with my country and cultural background.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

Figure 26. Spatial Belonging to Europe (Athens)



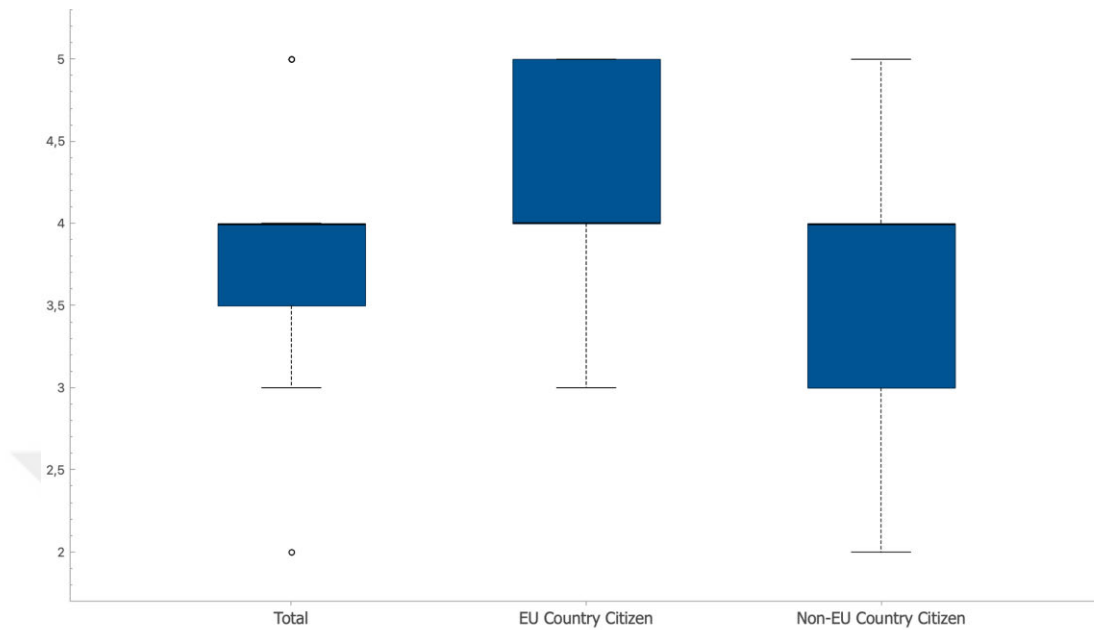
Some interviewees express a strong connection to their European identity, valuing the opportunities and freedoms that come with EU membership. Others, however, such as Harry exhibit a sense of detachment, emphasizing more specific or broader identities. Harry's statement also reflects on the limitations of transnational identities and attachments. While the EU allows for a broad sense of belonging to multiple countries, the interviewee's experience shows that this kind of transnational identity may lack the depth of cultural connection they associate with their country. It indicates a tension between particularistic and more universalist attachments, suggesting that the interviewee prioritizes a localized, cultural sense of citizenship over a broader, pan-European identity. The narratives of spatial and emotional attachment suggest that factors such as personal citizenship experiences, political dynamics, and cultural or national identity significantly influence how individuals understand their relationship with Europe. Although interviewees express these diverse feelings about their EU citizenship, the survey results reveal a strong emotional bond with Europe among respondents. A significant majority (75%) report feeling either "very close" or "close" to Europe (Figure 26). This indicates a widespread recognition and appreciation of European identity and values.

Table 18. Spatial Belonging to Europe by Citizenship & One-way Analysis of Variance (Athens)

<i>EU/Non-EU</i>	<i>Very close</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Not very close</i>	<i>Not close at all</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	
<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	76,5% (41,9%)	41,7% (48,4%)	20,0% (9,7%)	-	43,7% (100%)	
<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	23,5% (10%)	58,3% (52,5%)	80,0% (30%)	100% (7,5%)	56,3% (100%)	
<i>TOTAL</i>	24% (23,9%)	51% (50,7%)	21% (21,1%)	4% (4,2%)	100% (100%)	
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p	Eta squared
<i>Between groups</i>	7,900	1	7,900	15,196	0,0002	0,180
<i>Within groups</i>	35,874	69	0,520			
<i>Total</i>	43,775	70				
<i>Post hoc tests</i>		Diff.	Cohen's d	Hedge's g*	F	p (Scheffe)
<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	Non-EU Country Citizen	0,673	0,933	0,923	15,196	0,0002

Table 18 indicates a significant difference in spatial attachment to Europe between EU and non-EU citizens (Table 18). EU HSMs tend to feel a stronger and more uniform attachment to Europe, while non-EU HSMs display a more varied and often weaker connection, highlighting how legal, cultural, and political statuses influence one's spatial attachment to Europe. Non-EU citizens, while a majority still feel some degree of closeness, report less attachment overall, with a notable proportion feeling either "not very close" or "not close at all." The large effect size (Cohen's d-value of 0.933) and significant p-value (0.0002) suggest that citizenship status plays a critical role in determining spatial attachment to Europe (Table 18). The integrated analysis of survey results and interview findings suggest that EU HSMs benefit from political, legal, and cultural integration, fostering a stronger sense of belonging, while non-EU HSMs, despite living in Europe, experience more barriers to feeling truly connected. The survey findings also reveal the variance within the groups by suggesting that there is a greater variability among non-EU HSMs with some reporting very low levels of attachment or satisfaction (Figure 27). It supports interview findings which also present different forms of spatial attachment to Europe, showing contrasting perspectives of both EU and non-EU HSMs on their relationship with both Europe and the EU.

Figure 27. Spatial Belonging to Europe by Citizenship (Athens)



While only one non-EU HSM expresses a weak spatial attachment to Europe, driven by feelings of cultural and social disconnection, others demonstrate an appreciation and contentment with the European lifestyle. These individuals emphasize an evolving, hybridized identity, combining elements of their particular cultural background with European values and experiences. This evolving sense of self is an implicit yet significant indicator of their deepening connection to European identity and a more cosmopolitan attachment:

“I don't identify as European; I feel more Middle Eastern. Europeans have so much freedom. They do whatever they want. Personally, I don't feel like I can or want to live like that. Even though, technically, I have the same freedoms, I choose not to exercise them. It's my decision. In terms of society, this isn't just about Greece—Greece is a bit more conservative compared to other European countries, which I think is a good thing. However, I don't feel encouraged by European society to raise a child here or bring up a family in this environment.” (Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

European identity is not the only regional attachment referred to by the interviewees in Athens. Identification with the Balkans, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern

regions emerges as a significant dimension of HSMs' sense of belonging. For many EU and non-EU HSMs in Athens, spatial belonging is shaped by a complex mix of influences from different places and cultural contexts. The statements of Elina and Malik below best illustrate this complex, layered sense of spatial attachment and the feeling of in-betweenness, signifying both a patriotic and a cosmopolitan perspective. This patriotic cosmopolitan outlook allows her to navigate different identities without tension and build a hybrid self by appreciating the richness that comes from her diverse background:

“I have asked myself it many times. I do not fully identify as Russian, Greek, or European. I feel like I am a mix of all of them. However, I think the way I understand myself has been shaped most by the European Union and Greece. If someone were to ask me to self-identify, I would say I am Russian since that was my only citizenship until recently. I think I will continue to define myself as Russian when asked, but when I reflect on it more deeply, I am really a mix of all.” (Elina, Russia & Greece, EU)

“I'm going toward the idea of being a world citizen. I feel belonging to where I live but that doesn't mean that I don't care about Afghanistan. I do have emotional and cultural attachment to that place, to that country. I do care whatever is going to happen to that place, whatever is happening at the moment.” (Malik, Afghanistan, non-EU)

In some cases, cosmopolitan identification comes with its own challenges. While cosmopolitanism celebrates diversity and global interconnectedness, it can also lead to feelings of rootlessness, as expressed by Domino below. Although she acknowledges her Italian identity and some characteristics of Greek culture as part of her self-conception, there is a clear distinction that she does not feel Italian or Greek. This ambivalence underscores the complexities of cultural and national identities in a globalized world where migrants often find themselves straddling multiple cultural spheres without fully belonging to any of them:

“I do not identify myself with anything. This is the reason why I sometimes feel a bit lost. I am a cosmopolitan. The only thing that I associate with

personally is that I am from the north of Italy. But I do not feel Italian. I self-identify with some characteristics of Greece but I do not feel Greek, either. So, actually, I feel a sense of belonging to nowhere, which is not sometimes a nice feeling.” (Domino, Italy, EU)

Domino’s feelings of being “lost” and disconnected reflect the emotional costs of not having a clear sense of patriotic attachment. Her mixed feelings also uncover the potential limitations of a cosmopolitan identity, especially when it comes to fulfilling deeper emotional or psychological needs for belonging to particular groups and political communities. Additionally, her narrative provides deep insight into her citizenship feelings, revealing how a lack of strong identification with any political community shapes her experience of belonging, or more precisely, her sense of non-belonging. These mixed emotions are important because they show that citizenship is not simply about legal membership in a country; it’s also about the internal, emotional experience of identifying with that country. Understanding this complexity is crucial for developing a more comprehensive view of what citizenship means to different individuals.

When asked about their feelings toward the citizenship(s) they hold, the interviewees’ responses are strongly shaped by their perceptions of the country’s history, culture, and socio-economic and political landscape. Although HSMs in Athens use the same words -“proud,” “happy,” and “lucky”- to describe their sense of citizenship as those in Budapest, their overall sentiment is notably more positive than that of their Budapest counterparts. The sense of pride articulated by the interviewees reflects their appreciation for the cultural richness and diversity and historical and political influence of their respective countries. For many, it symbolizes a connection to a larger narrative that encompasses their cultural heritage and values, fostering a sense of belonging that enhances their identity as citizens. The happiness and luckiness expressed reflect gratitude for the opportunities afforded by citizenship, such as the ability to travel freely, participate in civic life, and access resources that enhance their quality of life:

Interviewer: How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel?

“It's a sense of pride because it's a country with a rich history. In Italy, almost every city feels like the most beautiful place you've ever seen. Each city offers something unique if you're interested in ancient history, you can visit Rome; if you're fascinated by the Renaissance, Florence or Venice are perfect. The variety is incredible. No matter where you go, you'll find amazing food and exceptional wine. Even when it comes to football, Italy excels. In many ways, Italy is a country that stands out, offering high quality in nearly everything.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

“I am proud because of history and influence of France globally. For instance, I know that Kemal Ataturk drew inspiration from French laicity. I'm proud of it.” (Louis, France, EU)

Most HSMs express mixed feelings, reflecting an emotional tension where pride and frustration, or love and resentment, coexist. These mixed emotions often arise when individuals' pride in their cultural identity and patriotic attachment to their countries is overshadowed or complicated by societal, political, economic, or global factors. Mixed feelings about citizenship, as expressed by Denisa and Lia, underscore how citizenship can be a source of both personal pride and emotional conflict, shaped by a variety of factors. For Denisa, this means loving her country's culture and landscapes while grappling with the deep flaws in its governance and social systems. For Lia, it means embracing her Israeli identity while feeling burdened by external judgments and political associations. This emotional complexity reflects the broader reality that citizenship continuously shapes how individuals relate to their country and their role within it.

“I am proud of my country, and I genuinely like Romania. We have beautiful landscapes and good people. But at the same time, there's a lot of corruption. Sometimes, I just hate being Romanian because of how things work here. It feels like everything is influenced by who you know or how much money you give to get ahead, even in places like hospitals, where care is supposed to be free. They treat you like dirt. Sometimes it really pisses me off. It's complicated.” (Denisa, Romania, EU)

“The events happening in the world can make me feel bad because people perceive me as Israeli. But mostly I'm pretty proud of it.” (Lia, Israel & Poland, EU)

Lived experiences, historical context, and socio-political realities may also negatively shape HSMs' relationship with their country. The historical and socio-political narratives surrounding countries may create a complex emotional backdrop that informs the identities of HSMs. As found in the narratives of HSMs interviewed in Budapest, negative emotions are more commonly referred to by non-EU HSMs compared to EU-HSMs. For instance, as noted below, Malik's relationship with Afghanistan is shaped by a history of conflict, leading to feelings of brokenness but also a commitment to positive change through hard work and standing against the war. Conversely, Margaret's disappointment stems from a critical examination of the actions of the United States and a moral conflict, leading to a rejection of pride and a sense of alienation. Therefore, an integrated analysis of all interviews indicates the significance of EU citizenship, which boosts positive feelings among EU citizens toward their national citizenship:

“I don't want to... When we were in Afghanistan, they would keep telling us to say that we are Afghans and we are proud of our country. I said it, but I'm not going to say it. I don't feel it. I would rather prefer to say beaten or broken. Because we, as a country, went through a lot. Even when my mom was young, there was war. Being from Afghanistan reminds me to work harder and work against war.” (Malik, Afghanistan, non-EU)

“I don't feel particularly any pride of being American, that's for sure. Maybe I used to, perhaps back in the day, I might have that feeling but now, I don't. It's just pain and suffering. I think my country's done so many bad things that I don't have any pride in the situation.” (Margaret, US & Greece, EU)

Twelve interviewees in Athens have dual or multiple citizenship, with ten of them becoming dual citizens by acquiring Greek citizenship. While they acknowledge particular socio-political challenges or bureaucratic hurdles that occasionally lead to

negative feelings, they generally express positive attachment toward their citizenships, reflecting a favorable experience as citizens of two or more countries:

"I'm proud to be a citizen of Russia for nonpolitical reasons. I completely disagree with the politics that's going on, but I'm proud to belong to the rich culture. British citizenship makes me feel that I belong to a very stable place. Being a Greek citizen makes me feel connected with my roots. It matters to me a lot in that sense. Greek citizenship is probably the most meaningful to me because that's the one I am less connected with and I want to develop it. I really want to become more Greek and live up to it." (Vicky, Russia & UK & Greece, EU)

HSMs who acquired Greek citizenship express sentiments that reveal a shared sense of emotional belonging and gratitude for enhanced opportunities, privileges, and security that Greek citizenship and its EU context offer. These feelings are intertwined with aspirations for personal and familial growth and achievement:

"I feel like I'm on the top now. After I got the Greek citizenship, I feel like I got everything I need." (Victor, Nigeria & Greece, EU)

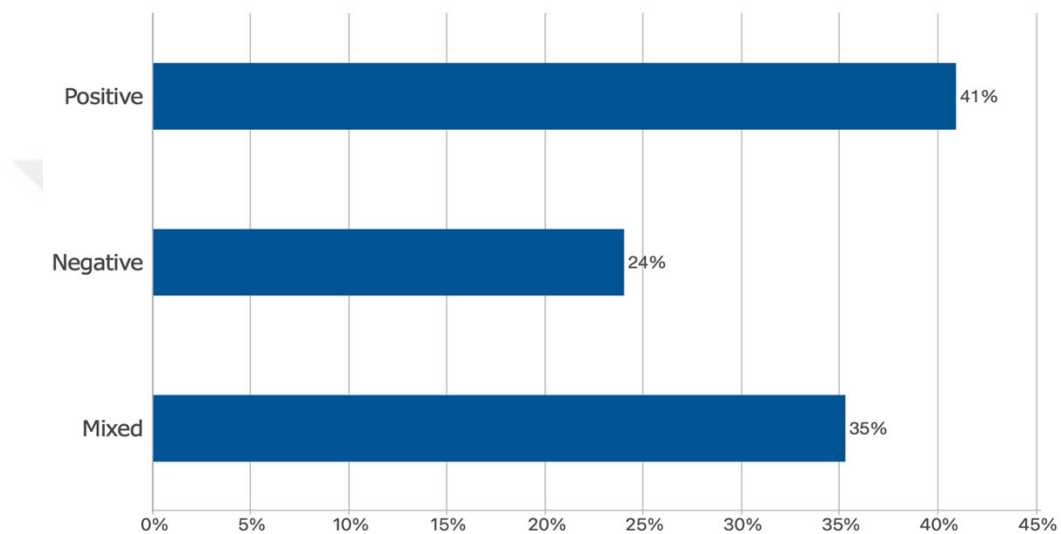
"I feel lucky that I can go to the airport gate quickly. Jokes aside, the only thing that matters to me is that my daughter can have Greek citizenship, so that she will not have to go through the migration process like I did. That's very important to me." (Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

Table 19. Citizenship Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Athens)

How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel?	
Word	Frequency
Privileged	23
Proud	19
Respected	16
Free	15
Frustrated	15
Confused	13
Happy	12
Insecure	12
Lucky	12
Limited	11

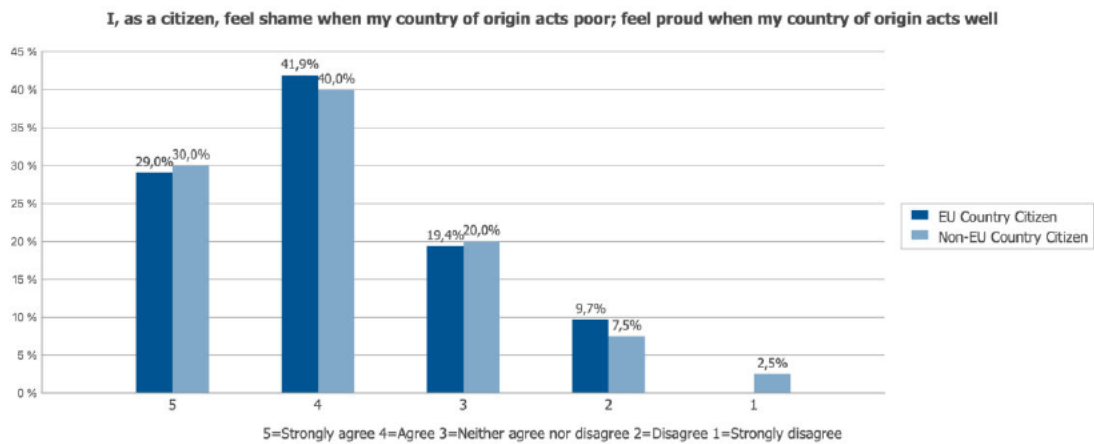
Consistent with the interviewees' responses, survey participants often express positive sentiments about their citizenship. When asked to describe their emotions, the most commonly mentioned feelings are being “privileged,” “proud,” and “respected” (Table 19). The data indicates that HSMs in Athens are more likely to express their feelings using positive words rather than negative ones.

Figure 28. Categorization of Citizenship Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Athens)



A relatively higher percentage of respondents (41%) express positive feelings about their citizenship in Athens compared to those in Budapest (38%) (Figure 6 & Figure 28). Similarly, while the data from Budapest shows a significantly lower percentage of mixed feelings (21%), indicating more polarized responses that lean toward either positive or negative extremes, a notable 35% of respondents in Athens report mixed feelings (Figure 6 & Figure 28). As seen among non-EU HSMs in Budapest, non-EU HSMs in Athens also tend to express more negative emotions (76.5%) and mixed emotions (60%) compared to their EU counterparts. This suggests that individuals in Athens tend to evaluate their country's progress, shortcomings, or failures from a relatively more critical perspective (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999). Both EU and non-EU HSMs either strongly agree or agree that they feel shame when their country acts poorly and pride when it performs well, with 70.9% of EU HSMs and 70% of non-EU HSMs expressing such sentiments (Figure 29). The near-equal responses across these groups indicate that regardless of their EU citizenship status, individuals maintain a deep emotional connection to their country of origin, balanced by criticism.

Figure 29. Patriotic Feelings of the Survey Respondents (Athens)



The data reveals a clear relationship between the length of stay in the country of residence and HSMs' sense of belonging to their country of origin. The longer residents in the five to seven years group exhibit the highest proportion of “close” responses (72.7%), suggesting this period may be when emotional ties to the country of origin stabilize after an initial period of adjustment (Table 20). However, after eight years and more, there is a noticeable shift. The percentage of those feeling “very close” drops to 16.7%, while the number feeling “not very close” or “not close at all” increases to 26.7% combined. While a majority of respondents across all groups still feel some level of connection, the data suggests that as time progresses, individuals are more likely to experience a gradual erosion of their sense of belonging to their country of origin, particularly after eight years. Unlike the findings of the survey study in Budapest, this partly confirms the argument that spending more time living abroad weakens individuals' spatial attachment to their home country (Dzięglewski, 2020).

Table 20. Spatial Attachment to the Country of Origin by the Length of Stay in Greece

<i>Length of Stay</i>	<i>Very close</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Not very close</i>	<i>Not close at all</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>0 to 3 years</i>	36%	24%	40%	-	100%
<i>3 to 5 years</i>	20%	60%	20%	-	100%
<i>5 to 7 years</i>	27,3%	72,7%	-	-	100%
<i>8 years and more</i>	16,7%	56,7%	20%	6,7%	100%
<i>TOTAL</i>	25,4%	47,9%	23,9%	2,8%	100%

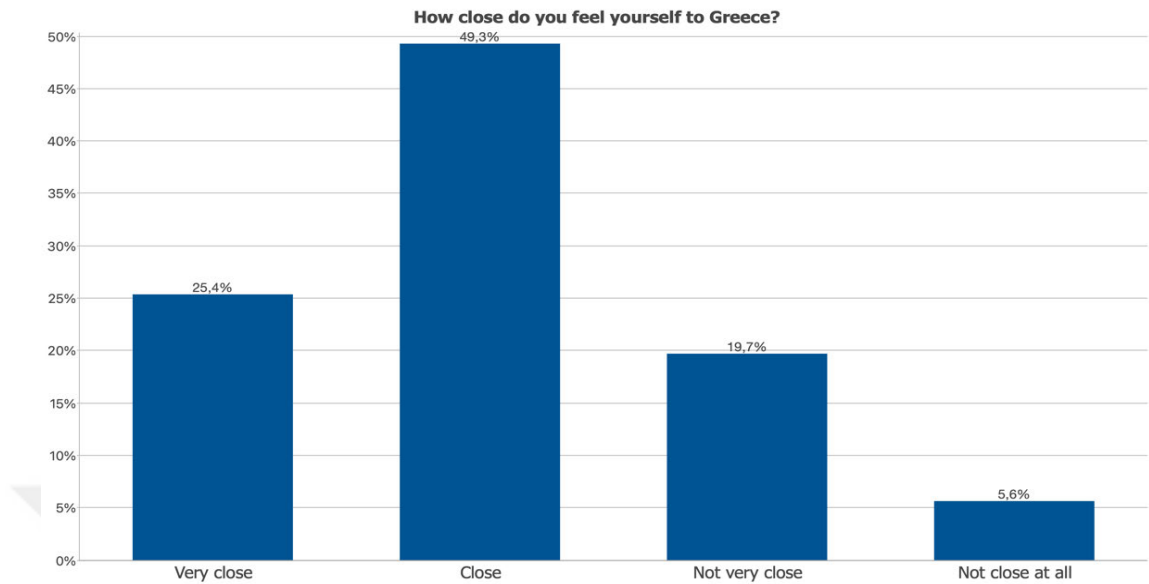
Both the interviews and the survey results uncover that highly skilled migrants also develop feelings of love, care, and pride for their city and country of residence. Except for one interviewee who is a citizen of India, all interviewees in Athens reflect different levels of attachment to Athens and Greece, revealing a relatively stronger attachment to Athens. They particularly underscore how close they feel themselves to Greece and Athens when presented with a world map and asked to indicate the place(s) they consider home. While responding, the majority first refer to their country of origin or city of birth and then they mention other places they feel as their home(s). Cultural proximity, family ties, social connections, memories, jobs, and property ownership are indicated as essential elements, accompanied by feelings of belonging, safety, and comfort, that foster a sense of home for the highly skilled migrants interviewed in Athens:

Interviewer: Could you please pin on this map the place(s) you call home, and what make this place home for you?"

"I feel home in Greece and in Lebanon because people and memories I have make these countries home to me. I feel I belong to Greece. Even if they call me an immigrant, I'm okay with it. I sometimes feel more Greek than Greeks. This might be because our cultures, traditions, and food are quite similar. I don't see a significant difference between Lebanese and Greek people." (Dina, Lebanon, non-EU)

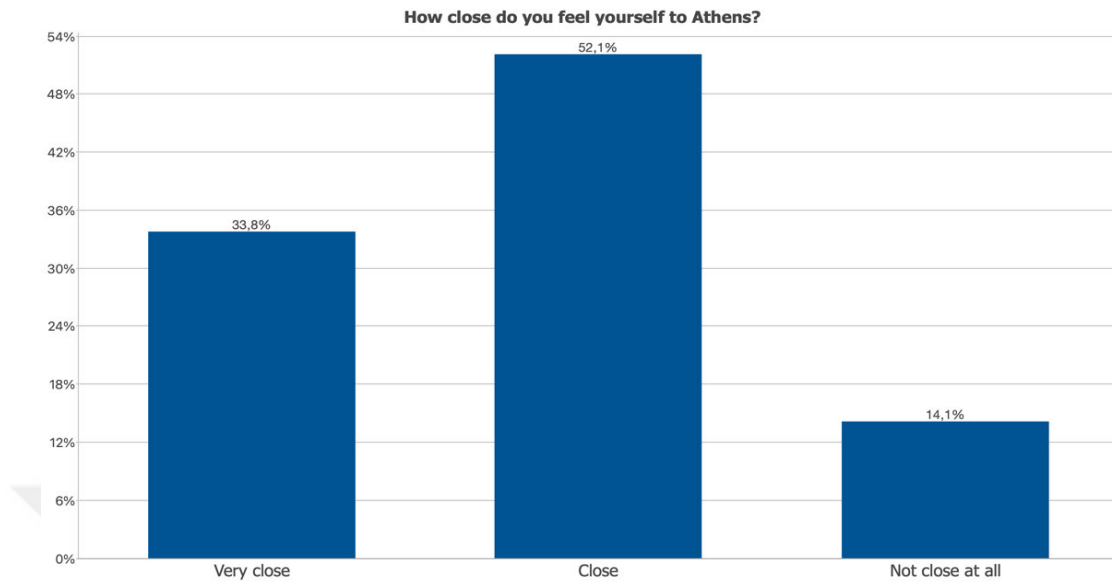
"My country, Palestine, is my home. For the past ten years, I have lived in Greece, which has also become a significant part of my life. I've traveled throughout Greece, but ultimately, I find my way back to Athens, which feels like home. To me, what makes a place home is family, friends, and work. Greece feels like home to me because of my job and friends, while my family is what makes Palestine my home." (Edward, Palestine, non-EU)

Figure 30. Spatial Belonging to Greece



While there is a notable gap between HSMs' attachment to Budapest and their connection to Hungary, the data does not indicate a similarly pronounced difference when it comes to Athens and Greece. While the interviewees acknowledge the existence of discrimination against particular groups of people in Greece, they do not highlight the country's anti-immigrant sentiment as a prominent issue affecting their experiences. This lack of emphasis suggests that many HSMs consider Greece as having a more welcoming socio-political climate. Such a perception fosters a sense of belonging which contrasts with the experiences of HSMs in Hungary, where anti-immigrant sentiments are more pronounced. This is also found in the analysis of the survey study which the gap between the sense of spatial belonging to Athens and Greece is noticeable, but it is not vast (Figure 30 & Figure 31). While 49.3% of respondents feel "close" to Greece, fewer respondents (25.4%) feel "very close" when compared to their feelings about Athens (Figure 31). Additionally, 19.7% report not feeling very close to Greece, and 5.6% feel "not close at all." This could indicate that while people appreciate the broader national context of Greece, their connection to Athens as a city is stronger.

Figure 31. Spatial Belonging to Athens



The interviewees with a strong attachment to Athens highlight the city's multicultural and cosmopolitan character as key factors contributing to their sense of belonging. Their further narratives about their experiences in the city indicate that this multicultural landscape not only enriches their daily experiences but also fosters a sense of community where different perspectives and cultural backgrounds are celebrated. Additionally, the vibrant and dynamic nature of the city, along with the diverse social, cultural, and professional opportunities that Athens provides, significantly contributes to their sense of attachment:

Interviewer: How close do you feel yourself to Athens? Do you self-identify as an Athenian?

“Actually, I feel belonging to Athens more than Greece because it is cosmopolitan. As my husband describes, it is the center of the world. There are so many bars, schools, so many activities to do, and so many things to discover. It is a place you can connect to the people from different countries. It is multicultural. I see here like a Berlin of Germany.” (Melisa, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I don't know if I could live in any other part of Greece. Let's put it that way. Athens is chaotic, diverse. It's got a bit of everything. It has all socio-

economic classes. We have the universities, businesses, museums, and all those cultural places. So, I'd say I identify more probably as an Athenian than anything else.” (Claire, US & Greece, EU)

As Melisa and Claire note above, the city serves as a bridge connecting them to diverse experiences and people, making it a part of their identities. For instance, Melisa’s comparison of Athens to Berlin underscores her appreciation for the city’s multicultural essence, suggesting that she finds a similar spirit of inclusivity and dynamic energy in Athens as the popular cosmopolitan hub of Europe (Ryan, 2018). In these narratives, the city of Athens emerges as a crucial, localized layer within their broader, multilayered sense of belonging. A significant majority of survey respondents (85.9%) feel either “very close” or “close” to Athens, indicating a strong sense of belonging to the city (Figure 32). This suggests that Athens is seen as a meaningful place of residence for most, providing a sense of comfort, connection, or fulfillment.

A minority of interviewees highlight that everywhere in the world is their home. This perspective aligns with cosmopolitanism, which advocates for global citizenship and the idea that one can belong to multiple places. Home is not limited to a particular geography; rather, it is a state of being defined by feelings of tranquility and acceptance. Furthermore, it challenges the traditional notion of home as a fixed location associated with personal or familial ties. Instead, it presents a dynamic understanding that values diversity and encourages active engagement with different cultures and communities:

Interviewer: Could you please pin on this map the place(s) you call home, and what make this place home for you?

“The entire world. Feeling peaceful makes a place home for me, that's all.”
(Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I genuinely feel a sense of belonging to everywhere. I believe that as a human being living on this planet, I should have the right to explore every country.” (Poco, Palestine & Greece, EU)

Table 21. Home understanding of Survey Respondents (Athens)

<i>Home understanding</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>My home is where I feel belonged to</i>	43,7%	39,4%	15,5%	1,4%	-
<i>My home is where my family and friends are</i>	36,6%	42,3%	14,1%	4,2%	2,8%
<i>I have multiple places where I feel like a home</i>	33,8%	43,7%	16,9%	5,6%	-
<i>My home is where I have good job and life opportunities</i>	22,5%	38%	29,6%	8,5%	1,4%
<i>I don't feel anywhere like my home</i>	1,4%	12,7%	35,2%	26,8%	23,9%
<i>My home is where I have a property</i>	1,4%	11,3%	43,7%	21,1%	22,5%
<i>My only home is where I was born</i>	1,4%	7%	31%	21,1%	39,4%

The survey data also reveals that a sense of belonging, family connections, and opportunities for personal and professional growth are vital components of home understanding among respondents in Athens. A notable 83.1% of participants either strongly agree or agree that their home is defined by a sense of belonging, emphasizing the significance of emotional ties (Table 22). Over 77.5% of respondents agree with the notion that they have multiple places they consider home, reflecting the fluidity and complexity of home in a globalized world. When individuals feel at home in various locations, they are more likely to participate actively in those communities, fostering cultural exchange and enriching the social fabric of each place. Ultimately, the understanding that home can exist in multiple forms and places emphasizes the interconnectedness of human experiences, reflecting a cosmopolitan outlook.

4.3 Experiences of Coexistence and Performing Citizenship

Migrants' legal-political and social and economic experiences in both their country of origin and country of residence significantly shape their sense of belonging, political and civic participation, integration which includes their decisions about citizenship status, and their citizenship understanding. In this section, the study first examines the lived citizenship experiences of HSMs in Athens, exploring their access to rights and services in both their home country and Greece, their views on dual citizenship and EU citizenship, subjective evaluations of institutions, perceptions of passports, and their sense of trust and security. It explores how these experiences shape their citizenship practices, including political participation and decisions about citizenship status. Secondly, this section examines the social and economic experiences of highly skilled migrants in their country of origin and Greece and their impacts on HSMs' perception of citizenship, sense of belonging, and inclusion. These experiences encompass their social relationships, access to social networks, economic opportunities, and social and economic rights and services.

4.3.1 Legal-Political Experiences and Practices

For mobile individuals, citizenship extends beyond being a mere legal status granted by a state; it encompasses a complex web of institutionalized experiences that they navigate within and beyond various state structures and negotiate their access to rights, services, and opportunities. This multidimensional nature of citizenship emphasizes that individuals do not engage with states in isolation. Instead, they interact with a complex system that fosters unique relationships with political institutions across different countries, particularly their country of origin and residence. Their simultaneous engagement in different institutional structures, holding a specific legal status, and their capacity to access rights and services significantly influence how they describe their roles and positions within the socio-political contexts they are related to. The analysis of interviews and survey research conducted in Athens highlights significant contrasts in the legal-political experiences of EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants, especially regarding restricted mobility and the bureaucratic challenges they face:

“There are certain opportunities that I cannot access, such as travelling. My friends are going to Lisbon for the weekend, visit Sweden, or travel to France. While this doesn’t bother me because it doesn’t negatively impact my life, it makes me feel I have less freedom. That’s the main downside, but aside from that, I don’t feel any significant effects of being a non-EU.”

(Hamza, Tunisia, non-EU)

The restriction on his ability to travel freely leads to feelings of exclusion for Hamza, as he observes his friends enjoying travel privileges that he himself lacks. Although he downplays its immediate impact, this legal limitation subtly reinforces a sense of being “other” within his social circles, affecting his social experiences and sense of belonging. While non-EU migrants living in an EU country can obtain residence permits that allow travel to other EU countries, as noted by Elina below, the situation for those in Greece is more complex. Many non-EU interviewees have pointed out that Greece issues a blue certificate as a temporary resident permit. This certificate allows them to travel between Greece and their home country until their official residence permit is granted. Even though they are legal residents in a member state of the EU, the lack of a formal residence permit restricts their ability to travel within the EU. It does not only impact their mobility but also hinders their professional and personal opportunities:

“All migrants without EU citizenship face a constant burden regarding their documentation, as it requires regular renewal. This situation was particularly challenging before COVID-19, as you often had to wait longer periods without the necessary papers to travel. Everyone relied on blue papers which are inadequate for movement. During the pandemic, these papers even expired, further complicating matters and limiting your ability to travel.”

(Elina, Russia & Greece, EU)

“(…) I am married here and I have a Greek son. My residence permit will expire soon and I need to wait one and a half years to get my official residence permit. In the meantime, I'll be given a blue paper that only allows me to travel to Turkey. This is horrible. it's yet another reason why I'm

considering becoming a Greek citizen, to avoid having to constantly deal with all this paperwork.” (Melisa, Türkiye, non-EU)

These difficulties were reported by all non-EU HSMs including recently naturalized Greek citizens who used to be non-EU HSMs, such as Elina. Their experiences show that the constant need to renew documentation which allows the mobility of non-EU migrants reflects systemic barriers that they face, often creating a sense of frustration in navigating the bureaucratic system and instability or uncertainty in their lives. While systemic issues may also affect EU HSMs, particularly non-EU HSMs seem to be caught in a cycle of dependency on inadequate temporary measures. As Melisa points out, administrative inefficiencies may motivate non-citizens, especially non-EU migrants, to seek Greek citizenship as a way to bypass the obstacles. Citizenship provides a pathway to greater security, peace of mind, and a more stable life, offering a sense of permanence and protection by eliminating the need for repeated applications for residency permits or temporary documents.

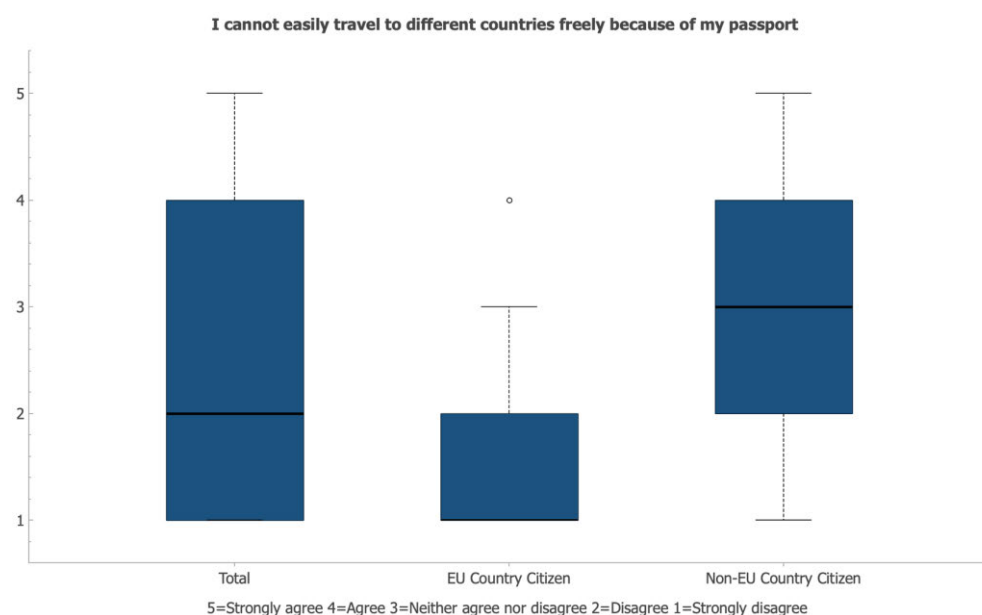
An analysis of the experiences of HSMs who acquired Greek citizenship, and thus became EU citizens, also reveals that the primary factors shaping their post-naturalization experiences are the benefits of reduced bureaucratic challenges and the enhanced freedom of movement within the EU. These advantages foster a sense of positive change and greater ease in navigating their lives as EU citizens. Sara and Victor recall their experiences as non-EU HSMs to show the challenges of being a non-EU migrant in Greece:

“Anyone who has experienced the immigration process in Greece can attest to its traumatic nature. The situation is so striking that I often think it deserves to be the subject of a movie, showcasing the hundreds of people queuing in front of a tiny door, some even arriving the night before their appointment and paying others to let them cut in line. I even came up with a title: The List. It's degrading for anyone to endure such a process; it shouldn't be this difficult. Now, I feel relieved knowing that my daughter and I won't have to face that traumatic experience again.” (Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

“As a Nigerian, which is not part of the EU, I cannot move to Germany for two or three months without applying for a permit or residency. But as an EU citizen, I can do that. I can move freely because I'm now part of the European Union family. I have the right to wake up and decide to Germany, Italy, or Spain, and stay for six months.” (Victor, Nigeria & Greece, EU)

Consistent with the interview findings, the survey data reveal a clear disparity in the ability to move freely between countries for EU and non-EU HSMs, highlighting the considerable advantages that EU citizenship provides in terms of mobility. As Figure 34 illustrates, EU HSMs largely disagree with the statement that their passport restricts their travel, whereas non-EU HSMs' higher agreement with the statement suggests that they experience substantial bureaucratic barriers and limitations that impact their ability to travel freely (Figure 32). Only a very small percentage (3.2%) of EU citizens agreed that their passports limit their travel, and none strongly agreed, further emphasizing their freedom of movement. The difference in responses between the two groups reinforces the privilege and convenience associated with holding an EU passport while also highlighting the bureaucratic and legal obstacles faced by non-EU HSMs, who frequently need visas or permits to travel to EU countries.

Figure 32. Ability to Travel by Citizenship (Athens)

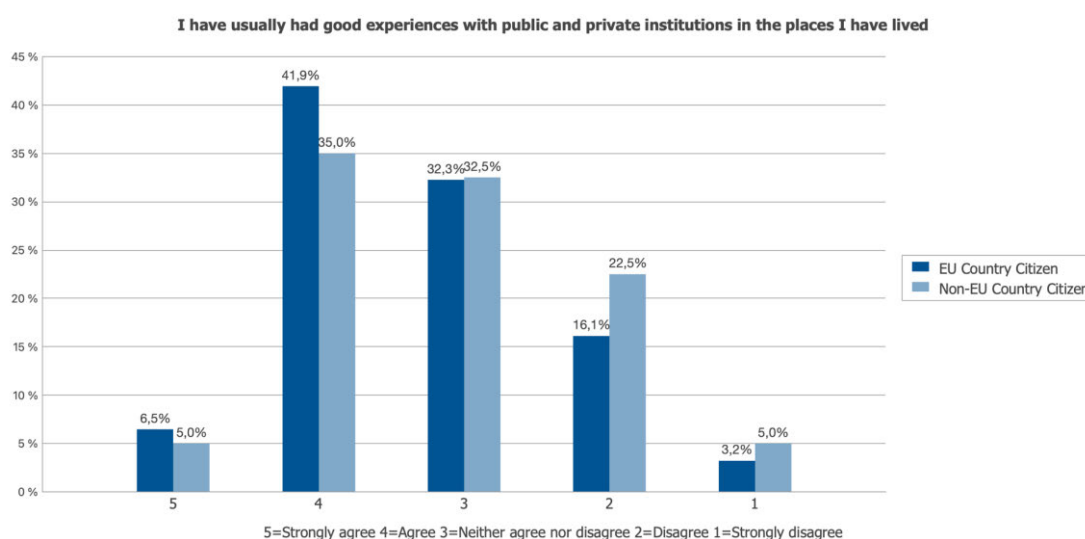


Non-EU HSMs often face significant bureaucratic challenges, navigating complex procedures and dealing with substantial amounts of paperwork to maintain their legal status. In contrast, many EU HSMs, such as Antoine, tend to approach their legal documentation responsibilities with greater ease and flexibility. For Antoine, renewing a passport is viewed as burdensome, but it doesn't feel urgent because, as an EU citizen, he can travel freely within the Schengen Area without it. This contrasts with the experiences of non-EU migrants, for whom valid documentation is crucial for legal residency, employment, and cross-border mobility. His indifference to renewing his passport reflects the ease of navigating EU structures as a European citizen, a privilege that significantly reduces the bureaucratic burden in his daily life:

“I do not have a passport. My passport was stolen 10 years ago. I'm just too lazy to go to the French Embassy and to renew it, because it is hard and I do not actually need it actually.” (Antoine, France, non-EU)

The survey data indicates that, although there is no substantial difference between EU and non-EU HSMs in their experiences with public and private institutions, EU HSMs express a slightly more positive sentiment compared to their non-EU counterparts (Figure 33).

Figure 33. Experiences with Public and Private Institutions by Citizenship (Athens)



Though non-EU HSMs face greater bureaucratic challenges, all EU and non-EU HSMs in Athens highlight the excessive red tape and inefficiencies within the Greek bureaucratic system that lead to profound frustration. When asked to describe her experiences with public and private institutions in Greece, Ella from Denmark, for instance, refers to it as a “broad topic, with very few positive remarks she may offer.” While recognizing some recent improvements with the introduction of the gov.gr platform and the digitalization of public services, Sara and Margaret also express similar frustrations with Greece's bureaucratic system:

“The bureaucratic system does not function efficiently. For a European country, Greece is quite behind in this regard. Only in the past few years, with the introduction of gov.gr digitalization of public services, things have started to improve slightly. However, the overall structure remains flawed. Greek bureaucracy is a dead end with no clear solution and very frustrating. Imagine needing three documents, but to get one of them, you must first have the very document you are trying to obtain.” (Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

“It is getting a little bit better. Now, we have gov.gr website and it's better but it is still all messed up. I feel like bureaucratic processes are impossible. You try to ask somebody to learn what you need, how to do things. Nobody explains it. You're on your own. A lot of foreigners just have to hire a lawyer or somebody to do things for them.” (Margaret, US & Greece, EU)

The need for legal assistance or intermediaries such as lawyers and accountants to handle basic bureaucratic tasks is observed as a common practice mentioned by many interviewees in Athens. The reliance on intermediaries to manage these challenges is closely linked to socio-economic status, making the bureaucratic process even more difficult for those without the financial means to access professional assistance. This practice, along with the focus on the inability and confusion exhibited by some legal professionals who are expected to offer clarity and guidance, highlights the system's disparities, complexities, and inefficiencies, leading to a widespread lack of trust in the system. Furthermore, the necessity for self-education on rights, obligations, and public service procedures highlights the

broader inefficiencies within Greece's bureaucratic and civic systems, where crucial information is frequently inaccessible or inadequately communicated:

"I cannot still believe that I had four immigration lawyers, all claiming they could help. It was complete nonsense; they had no idea what they were doing." (Sandra, US, non-EU)

"After the naturalization process, I received no information or instructions about my obligations as a Greek citizen. So, it's been a process of self-integration and self-citizen education. My first lesson was a letter coming to my house telling me that I had to go and observe elections that were being held. I was notified that if I didn't show up the next day to observe the electoral process, I would be arrested. I spoke to all of my Greek friends and none of them had ever called to observe elections. (...) This is the experience of being a Greek citizen. You have to figure things out on your own. If I was not positioned well socio-economically, even staying in the country would be very difficult. At least, I have access to lawyers and accountants who I can pay well to get information about my rights and obligations." (Claire, US & Greece, EU)

While language appears to be a huge challenge in HSMs' interactions in public and private institutions in Budapest, the main obstacles HSMs face in Athens seem to be a high level of red tape, poor and complex bureaucratic organization, and communication issues with public officials and professionals. As many HSMs interviewed in Athens have a certain level of Greek language knowledge, they can navigate administrative processes with greater ease, reducing frustrations typically associated with language barriers. They, thus, feel more confident and entitled to demand services and resolve issues without having a high level of anxiety or hesitation that often accompanies language barriers:

"I've learned the language, and it's easier for me to communicate. I'm not perfect at it, but I can express myself and get by." (Edward, Palestine, non-EU)

A minority of interviewees with limited Greek language skills express that their lack of proficiency often makes navigating public office procedures more difficult. However, they do not place blame on Greek authorities for the obstacles caused by the language barrier, demonstrating an awareness of the societal expectation for long-term residents to learn the local language. For these HSMs, the main challenge is not the system itself, but their own lack of fluency, which they feel ashamed of. This self-awareness reflects their understanding of the shared responsibility in the integration process where migrants are expected to learn the language and adapt, while institutions should strive to be accessible and supportive:

“My biggest criticism, and one that any Greek person could rightfully have, is that I don’t speak Greek fluently. It’s ridiculous, considering how many years I’ve been here. Yes, I know a bit of Greek, simple things such as ‘Where are you from?’ or ‘Do you want to grab a coffee?’ but having a real conversation or dealing with a government office, no. That’s where it becomes an issue, and it causes me a lot of anxiety in those situations.”
(Sandra, US, non-EU)

The bureaucratic challenges that HSMs encounter related to their country of origin while living in Greece also play a significant role in shaping their overall experiences and self-perception. For instance, Domino, an Italian citizen, expressed frustration over the lack of support from Italian authorities while residing abroad. After losing her driving license, she sought help from the Italian Embassy in Greece, only to be told that, as a resident of Greece, her issues were no longer Italy’s concern. She feels that the Italian government’s attitude towards citizens who transfer their residency abroad reflects a “mafia-like” mentality since Italian citizens no longer pay taxes in Italy, they are not considered part of the community and thus receive little to no assistance from the government and have restricted access to certain rights and services:

“As an Italian citizen living abroad, my citizenship should offer me the possibility to renew my driving license or to do things easy, going to a doctor without paying, privately, and I don’t have it because I am an Italian citizen. Italy does not care about me. So, my belonging to Italy is null. We are

citizens but we always say with my friend who also live in Greece that we are citizens of nowhere. Because we are not Greeks and Italy doesn't care about us.” (Domino, Italy, EU)

Bureaucratic hurdles may result in feelings of disconnection and a growing sense of alienation, as they struggle to navigate complex administrative processes from afar. Limited access to citizenship rights for citizens of a country residing in another country leads to a sense of being “stateless,” weakening their emotional and civic ties to their country of origin.

“According to Danish law, you cannot vote in national elections unless you are residing in Denmark. Having a Danish passport is not enough to full citizenship rights. As for Greece, although I live here legally, I am not a Greek citizen, so I’m not allowed to vote in national elections. I believe I could participate in municipal elections, but I haven’t explored that option because, frankly, I haven’t felt motivated to do so. As a result, I’ve never voted, and it’s something that frustrates me. It feels strange, almost as if I’m stateless. I have a passport, but it doesn’t grant me full citizenship rights. I reside here but I don’t enjoy the full citizenship here.” (Ella, Denmark, EU)

Contrary to the results of the negative experiences, positive experiences in effective and well-functioning bureaucracies may enhance citizens' sense of empowerment and control over their civic rights. By increasing their trust in public institutions and services, it reinforces their connection to the state. Melisa contrasts Turkey's bureaucratic system with those of the EU countries where she previously lived, as well as Greece, emphasizing how efficiency, transparency, and accessibility greatly contribute to her confidence as a citizen and sense of pride in Turkey:

“I’m proud of being a part of the Turkish system. Turkey is a bureaucratically very well-developed and highly improved country compared to some European countries. After I experienced Italian bureaucracy, dealing with things in Germany and Greece, I can say that the bureaucratic system and e-

devlet (online public services system) in Turkey are well-organized. I know my rights as a Turkish citizen.” (Melisa, Türkiye, non-EU)

Unlike those in Budapest, both EU and non-EU HSMs interviewed in Athens often highlight the instrumental value of citizenship in offering legal and economic benefits rather than emotional attachment. EU citizenship is viewed by interviewees as a strategic means to enhance their opportunities, reflecting a pragmatic approach. The data about EU and non-EU HSMs’ approaches to Greek citizenship reflects the sentiments of migrants regarding their connection to Greece, their rights, and future aspirations, offering insights into the complexities of citizenship in the context of the EU:

Interviewer: Do you consider to apply Greek citizenship once you are eligible?

“Yes, I want to apply to have more opportunities. It's only about opportunities. Being an EU citizen is the major thing. If your employment contract is cancelled, you have to leave the country. But when you have citizenship, you are not obliged to leave.” (Sareene, Lebanon, non-EU)

“I wouldn’t mind because it would mean getting to be in the EU and gaining so much more. If I'm able to be a Greek citizen or EU citizen, I believe it will open many doors for me. Because the British passport is great for non-EU countries but within the EU it’s quite limiting.” (Oscar, UK, non-EU)

As indicated in Table 22, 29% of non-EU HSMs find long-term or permanent residence status enough to access all the rights they need (Table 22). This result aligns with the narratives of the interviewees who feel that their long-term residency grants them adequate rights, except for voting in national elections, illustrating confidence in their status. This points to a perception that citizenship may not provide additional benefits for long-term residents of Greece. Tanja, who became a Greek citizen and has the ability to compare pre-and post-naturalization conditions explicitly indicates the minor difference between the two statuses:

“To be honest, having only a permanent card doesn’t feel vastly different from being a citizen. However, it does become apparent when I need to enroll in schools or travel. The costs can vary significantly depending on whether you’re from the European Union or not. That’s where I notice the difference; otherwise, there is not something more special.” (Tanja, Serbia & Greece, EU)

Table 22. Highly Skilled Migrants’ Approaches to Greek Citizenship by Citizenship

<i>Reasons of applying for Greek Citizenship</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>I feel I emotionally and culturally attach to Greece</i>	4%	7%	5%
<i>I have Greek origin</i>	17%	5%	10%
<i>I plan to apply once I am eligible</i>	-	21%	13%
<i>I would like to live in Greece for the rest of my life</i>	4%	7%	5%
<i>To be an EU citizen</i>	10%	17%	14%
<i>To get citizenship of another country to increase my chances fo</i>	4%	7%	6%
<i>Reasons of not applying for Greek Citizenship</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>I am already an EU citizen and I don't need it</i>	41%	-	17%
<i>I don't see my future in Greece</i>	-	5%	3%
<i>I have long-term/permanent residence and I have access all rights</i>	17%	29%	24%
<i>If I acquire Greek citizenship, I have to renounce citizenship</i>	4%	2%	3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%	100%

Similar to Tanja, Harun, as a non-EU HSM, also emphasizes the benefits of long-term/permanent residency status by noting that the naturalization process is deliberately challenging and discouraging in Greece. His perspective on obtaining citizenship for the sake of family and children implies that citizenship is understood as a legacy to be passed down. As also previously stressed by Sara, who thinks that “the only thing that matters is to transfer Greek citizenship” to her daughter, getting

the ability to pass citizenship to future generations appears as a key motivation for citizenship application among HSMs in Athens:

“When the time comes and I’m eligible, I will definitely apply. I want to secure a second option for my children. As a Lebanese citizen, I cannot give them my citizenship. I want this for their future, so they can have better opportunities than I did.” (Dina, Lebanon, non-EU)

Interviewer: Have you ever thought to apply for Greek citizenship?

“I thought once but I didn't go into the details. You need to complete a certain year and pay tax in the country for seven years. And you need to know the history of the country. During the interview, they're asking questions even Greek citizens don't know. So, they're making it tough and actually. I have a full-time market access status now and this card gives you almost every right, besides voting. I don't need to have citizenship since I'm not at the moment thinking of building a family and I do not need it for my kids. Plus, you need to have the army service after getting it. I have done it in Turkey and doing the same thing around my 40s here in Greece, it's nonsense to me.” (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

Harun also adds that his reluctance to acquire Greek citizenship is tied to the mandatory military service required for Greek males between the ages of 19 and 45. This seems a significant deterrent as he sees no benefit in repeating this experience. Although Harun is the only male interviewee who refers to mandatory military service as a concern, a more in-depth analysis of the data reveals that all the survey respondents and interviewees who have successfully obtained Greek citizenship, with the exception of one, are female. This requirement may discourage male HSMs from seeking citizenship despite being eligible, as the added responsibility disrupts their professional and personal lives, especially for those settled in their careers or nearing middle age. Conversely, female migrants are not subject to this military obligation, which may explain their higher naturalization rate. This gender imbalance in citizenship acquisition underscores how legal obligations tied to gender can influence migrants' choices. Aligning with the findings of interviews, the survey

data also suggests a notable gender imbalance in applications for Greek citizenship, with females representing a substantial majority of applicants (Table 23). While mandatory military service may contribute to this trend, a further investigation into the reasons behind this gender disparity is necessary.

Table 23. Greek Citizenship Application by Gender

<i>Greek Citizenship Application Status</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>Acquired</i>	47,6%	-	47,6%
<i>In progress</i>	33,3%	14,3%	47,6%
<i>Rejected</i>	4,8%	-	4,8%
<i>TOTAL</i>	85,7%	14,3%	100%

As seen in the narratives of several interviewees in Budapest, dual citizenship holders among HSMs in Athens also often approach their first and second citizenship in distinct ways. Many HSMs who are dual citizens express a clear distinction between their attachments to their different citizenships, highlighting how one citizenship may carry deeper emotional or cultural meaning, while the other is viewed more for its practical advantages. They tend to associate their first citizenship with identity and emotional belonging, while viewing the second more pragmatically, as a strategic tool. Lia's experience with her two citizenships illustrates these complex dynamics many dual citizens navigate. Her deeper emotional and cultural connection to her Israeli citizenship contrasts with the practical value she places on her Polish passport. For her, citizenship means both an emotional anchor and a practical resource, depending on context and personal perception. In contrast, Margaret's quote shows how dual citizenship plays a significant role in shaping individuals' sense of identity, security, and belonging, particularly when perceptions of their home country change over time. Her preference for European identity over her American one reflects a shift in emotional alignment, largely driven by her dissatisfaction with the current state of the U.S. However, she also views her EU citizenship as a safety net, allowing her to navigate life without being bound by the challenges she associates with her American citizenship. It highlights the fluid nature of citizenship and how individuals can

reassess the value of their different nationalities based on the socio-political context of the countries they are tied to:

“I just have the Polish passport and its benefits. My Polish citizenship is just a passport but the Israeli one is not. My Israeli citizenship means more than that.” (Lia, Israel & Poland, EU)

“To be European is really important to me. I actually would prefer to be European than to be American right now because of the way my country has gone. It's just gone downhill so fast. There's too much wrong with that country. It is not the country I grew up in. I grew up in a great place. I feel quite lucky, privileged, and secure to have dual citizenship.” (Margaret, US & Greece, EU)

Dual citizens often find themselves strategically choosing which passport to present based on their travel experiences and the perceived benefits associated with each citizenship. This appears to be a common behavior among dual citizenship holders as it is also observed in practices of HSMs in Budapest. The choice of which passport to use becomes strategic, informed by the knowledge of how different identities will be recognized and treated in various contexts. The ability to “switch” between citizenships depending on the situation illustrates the fluidity and flexibility that dual citizenship can provide. On a broader level, Vicky’s narrative below reveals how dual citizenship can foster a sense of security and empowerment, allowing individuals to mitigate discrimination, bypass biases, and move through global systems with greater ease:

“I once traveled to the U.S. with my Greek passport. The officer in the customs looked at me and asked, "How can you afford to travel to America if you're from Greece? Isn't Greece in crisis?" It felt so shocking, and this interaction was being recorded. It traumatized me. (...) After that experience, I decided to travel with only my British passport. The last time I used it while going to the US, it was a smooth sailing. They treat me so nicely.” (Vicky, Russia & UK & Greece, EU)

Citizenship, while often viewed as a source of security, mobility, and privilege, can be a double-edged sword depending on the geopolitical context and global perceptions of one's country. The majority of interviewees in both Budapest and Athens consider applying for Hungarian or Greek citizenship to feel more secure. Similarly, all dual citizens in both cities express their increased sense of safety as they have flexibility in their decision-making processes, having broader opportunities and protection of the two countries. However, the power dynamics of international relations can affect the safety a citizenship might offer, illustrating how the political actions of a state can directly influence the experience of its citizens abroad. This underscores the significance of citizenship as a marker of identity in transnational settings. In certain contexts, having a particular citizenship may open doors, while in others, it may lead to biased treatment, discrimination, exclusion, and heightened scrutiny. As Sandra notes, one's citizenship may even function as a symbol that may either shield or endanger individuals, shaped by the complexities of international relations and the ever-changing dynamics of politics:

“With a US passport, I could go anywhere easily. It's a passport that creates access. However, when I travel to places where our foreign policy is problematic, I travel with a cover on my passport. There is a lack of safety sometimes, right? When you're abroad, you are a citizen of a country, and foreign policy matters. It also depends on who the president is in the US.”
(Sandra, US, non-EU)

“It's weird, but if I show my Israeli passport, they do not act nice. If I show my Polish passport, some of them are okay, some of them aren't. It depends.”
(Lia, Israel & Poland, EU)

The role of the state in providing essential support and protection to its citizens, both domestically and internationally, is emphasized as a critical element of the relationship between individuals and the state. However, the extent and effectiveness of this protection can vary significantly, especially for migrants whose experiences are often shaped by both their country of origin and their country of residence. The interviews in Athens illustrate diverse experiences and varying perceptions of safety and protection among HSMs. The quotes from Edward and Domino below

underscore a profound sense of alienation and disempowerment experienced by EU and non-EU HSMs who feel their citizenship fails to provide them with the protection and support they inherently seek. Edward's assertion that "citizenship means somebody to have your back" emphasizes the essential role of state protection in defining citizenship. His experience as a Palestinian illustrates a profound disconnection from his home country, where he sees himself as merely a "number," lacking individual worth and support. This feeling is echoed by Domino, who articulates a similar disillusionment with her Italian citizenship, claiming it means "zero" (no meaning) in practical terms. Domino expresses a sense of abandonment and alienation, asserting that her citizenship no longer confers any tangible benefits and sense of belonging. Both statements reflect a broader critique of citizenship as a social construct, one that can be rendered meaningless in the absence of protective and supportive state mechanisms. Such negative experiences diminish individuals' sense of belonging to their countries of origin and, as underlined by Edward, lead those who feel unprotected to seek citizenship in a new country as a means of reclaiming agency and ensuring their safety.

"Citizenship means somebody to have your back. I don't have a country to have my back (protection) in case something happened. In Palestine, they won't even care about you. I'm just number for them. They don't care who I am or what I'm doing. Most people that I know here got Greek citizenship to be protected. I need to have a country that protects me." (Edward, Palestine, non-EU)

"In practical, my citizenship is zero. That's the reason why also I don't feel Italian, because my country doesn't protect me or doesn't help me in anything. Since I changed my residence, basically I am not Italian anymore. I don't receive any assistance. So, my belonging to Italy is null." (Domino, Italy, EU)

When states nurture a sense of comfort among their citizens and prioritize the well-being of their citizens, citizenship evolves into a crucial source of security and pride. This relationship not only deepens the emotional connection between individuals and their country but also fosters trust in state institutions. For instance, Lia's

experience demonstrates how the support her country provided during the pandemic positively impacted her sense of safety and protection:

“Everyone's proud of their citizenship. I'm proud to be an Indian. There's a very good sense of comfort when you're in your own country. I know that if anything happens, I'm safe here. That is the comfort. I can mess up and I can still be safe in my country.” (David, India, non-EU)

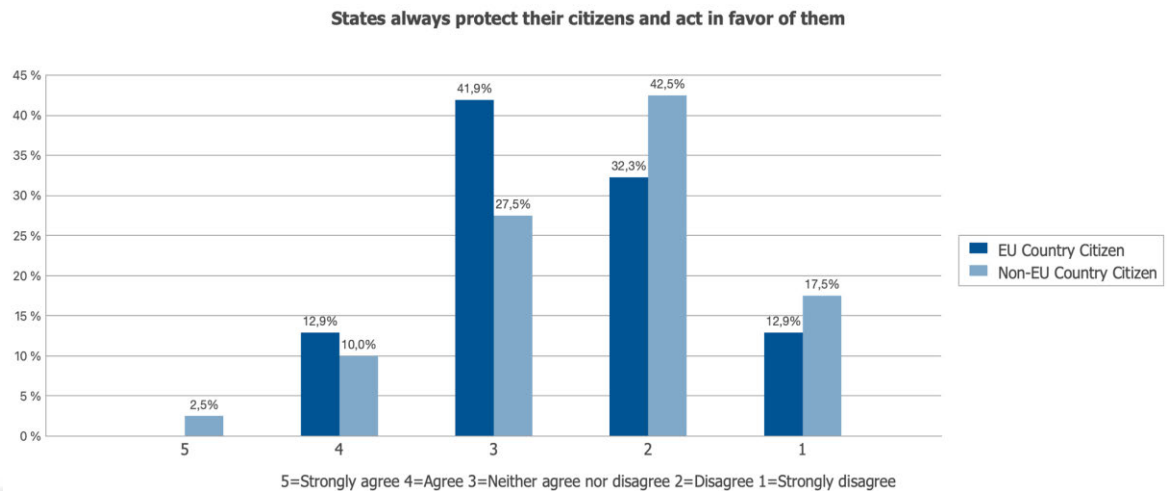
“During the pandemic, the Israeli government made the decision to offer free flights for all Israeli citizens wishing to return to Israel. If you hold an Israeli passport, you can fly back to Israel at no cost. No matter what, you always know that Israel will take and help you. It makes you feel more secure as a citizen. I know that they will help me.” (Lia, Israel & Poland, EU)

The sense of safety and protection that individuals feel concerning their country of origin significantly influences their level of political participation. When citizens feel secure, they are more likely to engage in political processes and take on civic responsibilities. Fear of persecution or punishment for dissent can deter citizens from engaging in political life, contributing to feelings of vulnerability:

“I don't feel secure expressing my feelings because of the situation in my country after the attempted coup and the political situation. I don't express my opinions online.” (Melisa, Türkiye, non-EU)

“I come from Palestine, and I distance myself from political matters to maintain a peaceful life here in Greece, as I'm focused on supporting my family. I can't risk returning to Palestine, where I could be accused of something and lose the ability to provide for them.” (Edward, Palestine, non-EU)

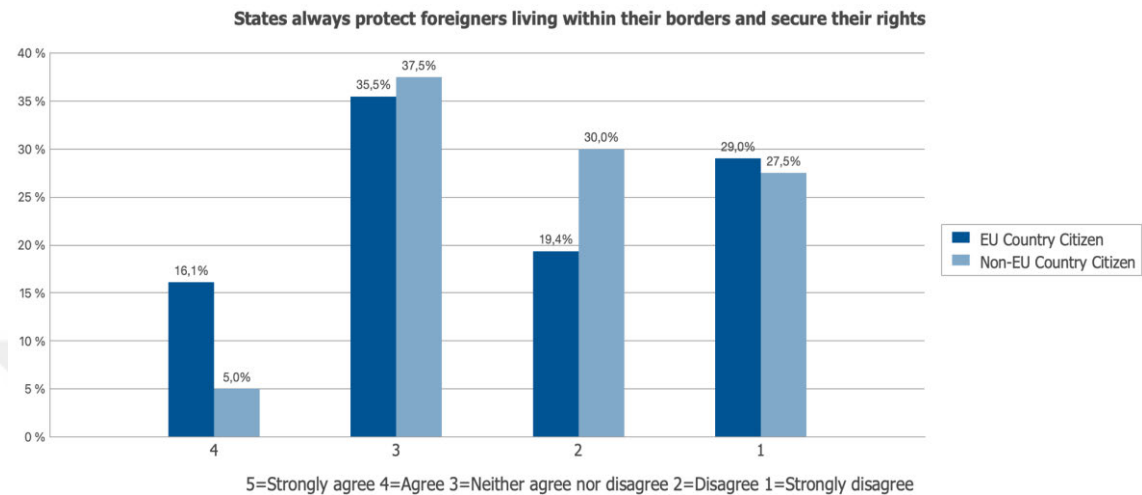
Figure 34. Perceived Safety and Protection for Citizens by Citizenship (Athens)



The survey data suggests that non-EU HSMs feel more negatively about the state's role in protecting and acting in favor of its citizens compared to EU HSMs. While both groups display considerable ambivalence and doubt, non-EU HSMs tend to disagree more strongly, which may reflect their challenges in accessing state support or protections or dissatisfaction with how the state treats them. In contrast, EU HSMs (41.9%) are more likely to hold neutral or mildly positive views than non-EU HSMs (27.5%), though even among them, strong agreement is rare (Figure 33). This could point to broader issues of trust in government institutions. Similarly, the survey responses of HSMs reveal a significant sense of skepticism toward the states' role in protecting foreigners, especially among non-EU citizens. While no respondents strongly agree with the statement, indicating a lack of strong belief in the state's ability to fully protect and secure the rights of foreigners among both groups, a relatively higher number of non-EU respondents strongly disagree (27.5%) and disagree (30%) with it (Figure 34). This may stem from personal experiences where non-EU citizens, being outside the privileged EU legal framework, often face greater bureaucratic hurdles, discrimination, and legal uncertainties that make them feel vulnerable. A higher level of neutral responses from both groups and diverse experiences suggests a shared sense of uncertainty and dissatisfaction regarding the states' role in securing foreigners' rights among HSMs. Overall, the analysis of the data suggests that a diminished or absent sense of safety and protection among HSMs contributes to a sense of distance from their country of origin and widespread

skepticism about state protection, which in turn affects their political participation and decisions regarding citizenship.

Figure 35. Perceived Safety and Protection for Foreigners by Citizenship (Athens)



The majority of interviewees express a deep-seated distrust of politics and political figures, suggesting that most consider politics as inherently corrupt. The lack of trust is rooted in the belief that politicians often prioritize their personal interests over their official responsibilities, sometimes engaging in illegal or unethical activities:

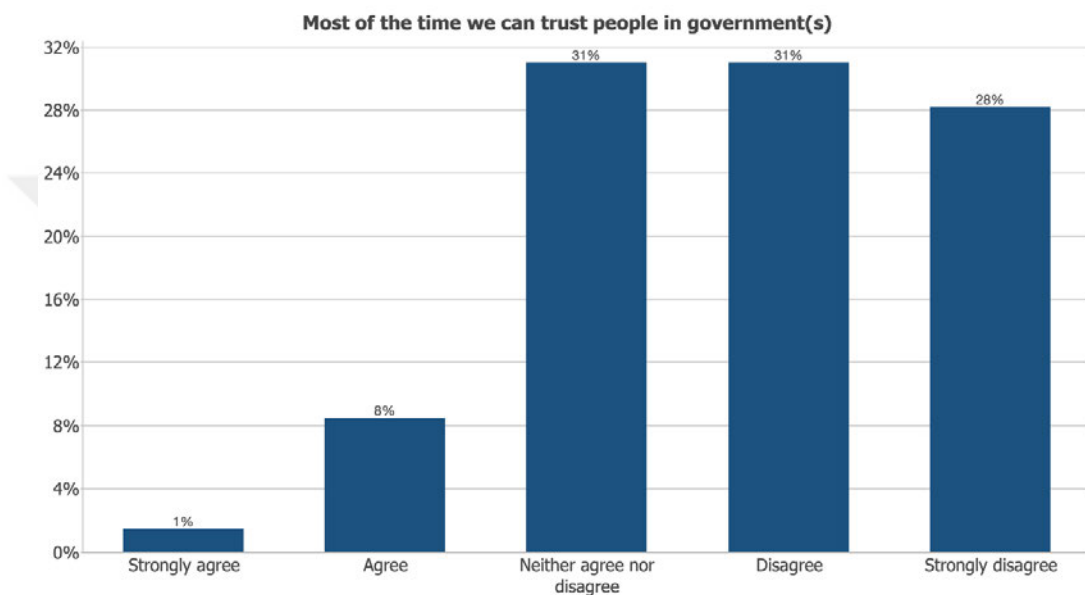
Interviewer: Do you trust in political authorities?

“Absolutely not. Politics is dirty. It is a dirty game. To succeed in politics, you must be a wolf among wolves. Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to manage a country; it’s an incredibly tough job. I question why anyone would take it on. It’s not out of love for their country; rather, they do it for money and personal interests. Regardless of their political stances, most politicians do not genuinely want to bring about change; they prioritize their own agendas first. That’s why I do not trust them, whether here, in Turkey, Tunisia, or the U.S., I just do not trust politicians in general.” (Hamza, Tunisia, non-EU)

Hamza’s display of distrust is an example of a common approach among the interviewees in Athens. Hamza's distrust is not confined to a single country; he states that he feels the same way about politicians in Turkey, Tunisia, and the U.S.

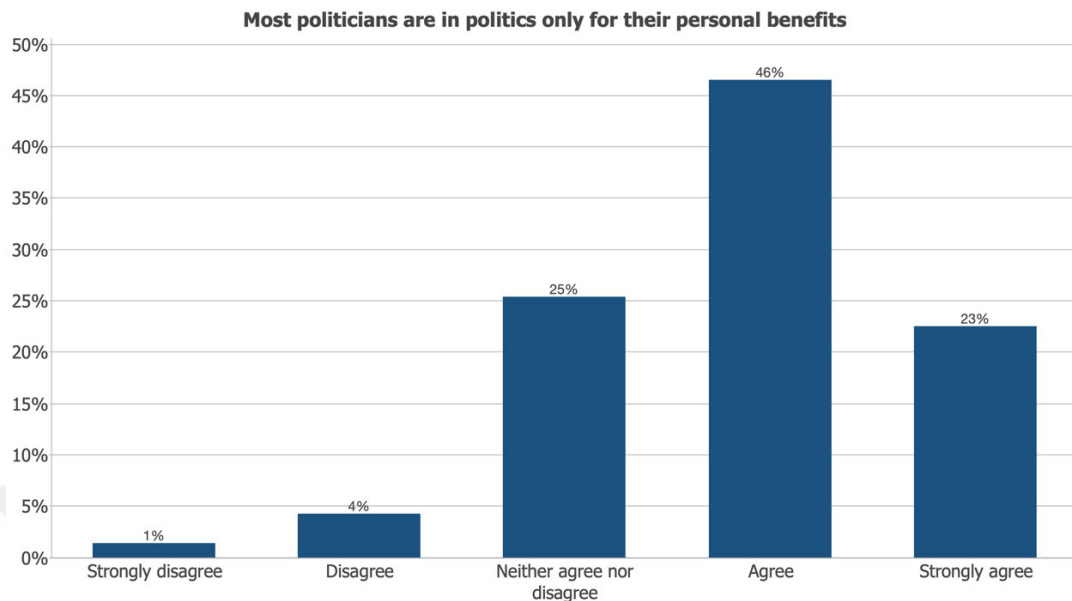
This broader suspicion across different political systems suggests that his concerns are not just about individual politicians but about the nature of politics itself. This sentiment mirrors the survey results, where 59% of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that people in government can be trusted (Figure 36).

Figure 36. Trust in Political Authorities (Athens)



The survey question assessing the level of trust is phrased in a way that doesn't focus on any specific country or political system. Therefore, this negative sentiment observed in both the survey and interviewees' reflections suggests that dissatisfaction and disbelief in political leadership and systems is not an isolated issue but rather a global phenomenon. Similarly, the survey respondents' opinion skews heavily toward distrust in politicians' intentions. Only a small minority of respondents (5%) disagree or strongly disagree with the idea, indicating that very few HSMs believe politicians are in politics for reasons beyond personal gain (Figure 37).

Figure 37. Perception of Politicians' Motivation (Athens)

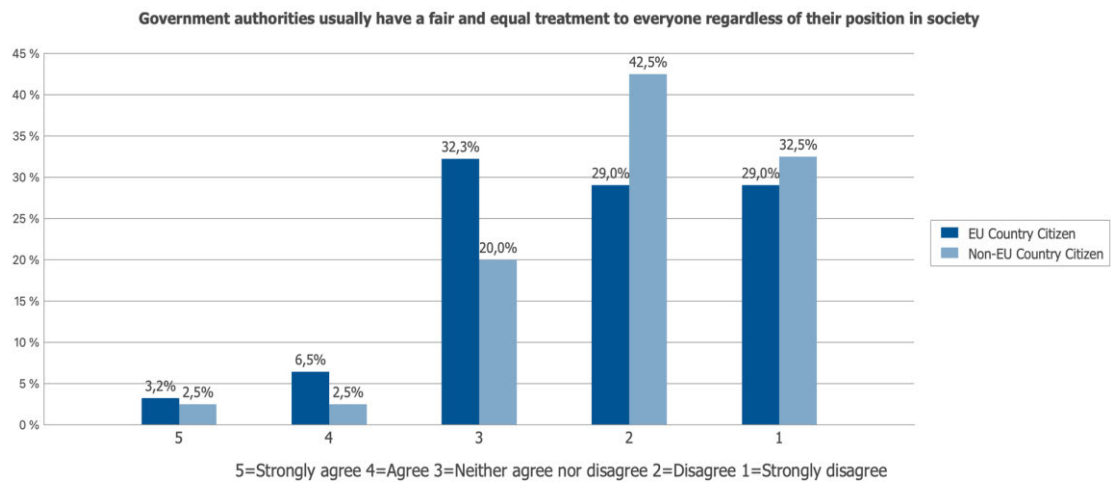


As observed in the interviews, the survey also reveals that there is no difference among EU and non-EU HSMs in their perception of political authorities.

Additionally, Hamza's assertion above that politics is a “dirty game” indicates a broader frustration with the perceived lack of transparency and accountability. This often makes citizens feel disconnected from political processes, believing that politicians are more concerned with maintaining power and serving their own agendas than with addressing the needs of the people:

“Speaking up won’t change anything. I don't really believe in democracy anymore, because, in the end, the government will act in its own interest, with only minimal regard for the citizens. I’m not opposed to people fighting for their rights, but I’ve become more realistic, and that shift has changed how I see things.” (Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

Figure 38. Fair and Equal Treatment by Citizenship (Athens)



The responses also reveal that both EU and non-EU HSMs express significant doubt about the fairness and equality of government authorities. Non-EU HSMs (75% combined) appear to be relatively more critical, displaying stronger levels of disagreement (Figure 38). This may reflect differential experiences between the two groups regarding treatment by government authorities, potentially due to factors such as EU citizenship status, immigration policies, and social inclusion/exclusion. For instance, a few interviewees, such as Aksana, mention the institutional discrimination they observe in the immigration office in Athens based on racial and social dynamics, which influence migrants' experiences and interactions:

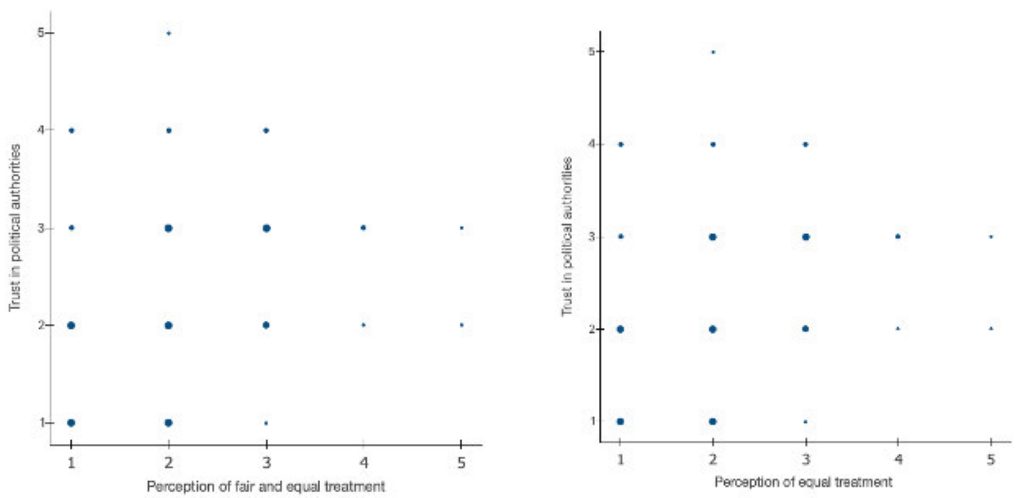
“I’ve noticed that I have an easier time each time I visit the immigration office. At the entrance, there are often several non-white individuals, and the guard tends to yell at them. But when I arrive with my pretty papers and talk at him in exaggeratedly British accent, he just lets me in. But if I wasn’t blonde and speaking very good English, if I was like dark skinned and I was trying to communicate in Greek, this would be a completely different story.”
(Aksana, UK, non-EU)

Aksana contrasts her own experience with that of “non-white individuals” at public institutions and highlights that those who fit a Western or white ideal are more likely to be treated with dignity and respect, while others, especially those who are non-white face marginalization and disrespect. Her experience as an observer, rather than

a direct target, highlights the implicit bias and unequal treatment by public officials in Greece, driven by factors such as skin color, ethnicity, language proficiency, and perceived socio-economic status.

The survey data from Budapest indicates that respondents who sense a lack of fairness and protection tend to have lower trust in political authorities, while those who feel treated fairly and protected are more likely to have higher trust. In contrast to these findings, the survey results from Athens do not show trust in political authorities as a strong or consistent predictor of individuals' perceptions of safety, protection, or fairness. People can feel safe or believe they are treated equally without trusting in political authorities. While higher trust in political leaders may be somewhat linked to more positive perceptions in these areas, the wide variation in responses suggests that these perceptions are shaped by multiple factors beyond just political trust (Figure 39).

Figure 39. Trust in Political Authorities vs. Perceived Fairness, Equality, and Safety (Athens)



Distrust in political authorities and dissatisfaction often lead to a decline in political engagement. The interviews reveal that when HSMs feel increasingly ignored and disconnected from decision-making processes, it undermines the legitimacy of political representation and weakens the significance of citizenship in a democratic society. Oscar’s experience following Brexit exemplifies how some British citizens,

like him, feel a profound breakdown in trust and representation between the public and political leaders in the UK. This increasing sense of disconnection generates a feeling of disenfranchisement, where citizenship itself seems devalued, particularly when it no longer guarantees that individuals' voices are heard by political authorities:

“It's gradually becoming clear to the British public that we've made mistakes. However, political parties don't listen to us, and the relationship between us and our leaders is becoming increasingly strained. What's the point of having citizenship if the leaders we vote for, or try to vote for, don't represent our views? It's becoming more and more frustrating.” (Oscar, UK, non-EU)

Some other HSMs underline that they are engaging defensively rather than out of genuine belief in the value of democratic participation. For instance, Denisa expresses a low sense of political efficacy, believing that voting rarely brings significant change, yet she feels compelled to vote to avoid “uneducated” individuals making poor decisions or their vote being manipulated due to systemic corruption. Her approach to voting suggests a deeper distrust in both the electorate and political institutions. Similarly, Victor takes a pragmatic approach by seeking “less corrupt” politicians and remaining involved despite his critical view of politics and politicians. In these cases, distrust in the political system and fear of negative outcomes drive individuals to participate in political processes with a preventative mindset, reflecting patriotic sensibilities and duties. In Budapest, HSMs' trust in political authorities increases when they have opportunities to participate in policy-making and feel their contributions are acknowledged. This trust and participation reinforce each other, creating a mutually supportive dynamic. In contrast, in Athens, distrust toward political authorities and dissatisfaction motivate HSMs to engage in political activities with a preventative approach and a stronger sense of patriotic duty.

“Most of the time, voting doesn't change anything. But if I don't vote, uneducated people might vote for something terrible, and things could get even worse. So, I vote to at least stop that from happening. Also, with all the corruption in our country, I worry that if I don't vote, they could manipulate

my absence and use my vote illegally. By voting, I can prevent that.”
(Denisa, Romania, EU)

“I’m politically active because I don’t agree with how politics is currently handled. I want to support someone who is less corrupt. I say less corrupt not completely free of corruption, because I believe all politicians are corrupt to some extent.” (Victor, Nigeria & Greece, EU)

Table 24. Perception of Political Authorities (Athens)

<i>Perception of Political Authorities</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>I don't think authorities care much what people like me think</i>	16,9%	42,3%	31%	7%	2,8%
<i>Political parties encourage people to become active in politics</i>	2,8%	23,9%	47,9%	16,9%	8,5%
<i>I believe that I can make a difference</i>	12,7%	23,9%	47,9%	12,7%	2,8%

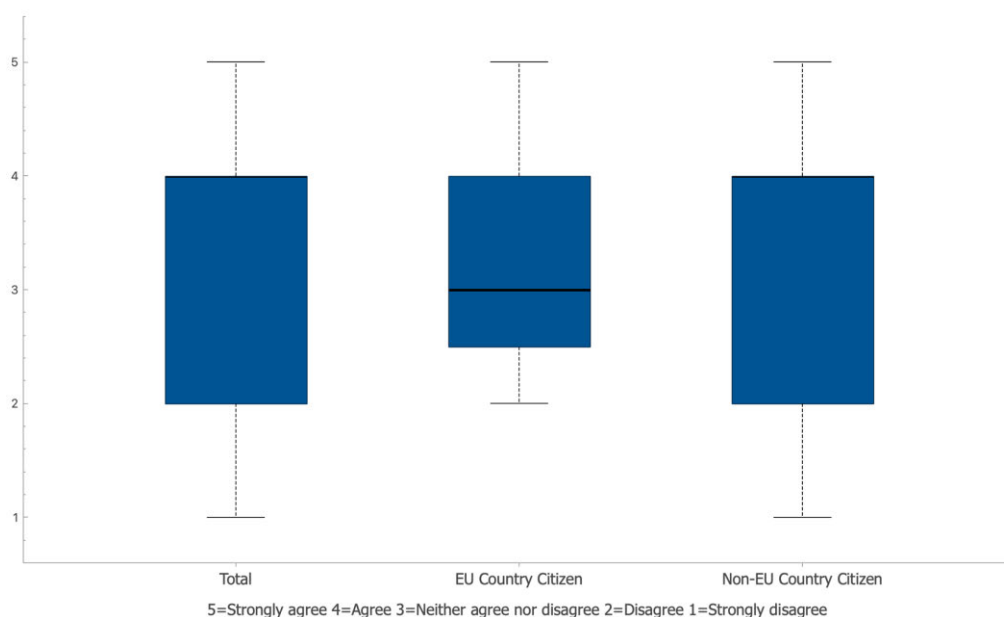
In line with the survey findings from Budapest, a clear majority of survey respondents in Athens also sense a lack of care from political authorities, reflecting a general dissatisfaction and potential disconnection from political leaders. 59.2% of the survey respondents feel that authorities are indifferent to their concerns (Table 24). This indicates a reported lack of responsiveness from political leaders. There is considerable ambivalence regarding whether political parties encourage participation. Only 26.7% “agree” or “strongly agree” that parties actively encourage people to become involved, while a large portion remains neutral (47.9%). This neutrality suggests that many respondents may be uncertain or skeptical about the role of political parties in fostering engagement. Similarly, while a third of respondents (36.6%) feel empowered to make a change, 47.9% of the respondents are unsure of their capacity for political efficacy in decision-making processes as active political agents (Table 24). For instance, the perceived ineffectiveness of voting points to increasing skepticism about the impact of one's participation. As Harun notes, when citizens feel that their votes do not lead to tangible benefits or improvements in their quality of life, they begin to question the

importance of political engagement. This gap between politics and personal experience can diminish the perceived value of democratic participation, as their involvement does not seem to bring about meaningful change:

“I'm 37, and I've been through many elections, experiencing the outcomes of each. In most cases, they haven't significantly improved the overall welfare of the citizens. So, while I'm aware of what is happening, I choose not to think about politics much because it feels like something beyond my control. It's not something that you can change. I'm voting continuously but I still don't see much change. So, I feel like it's not worth paying attention to politics that much.” (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

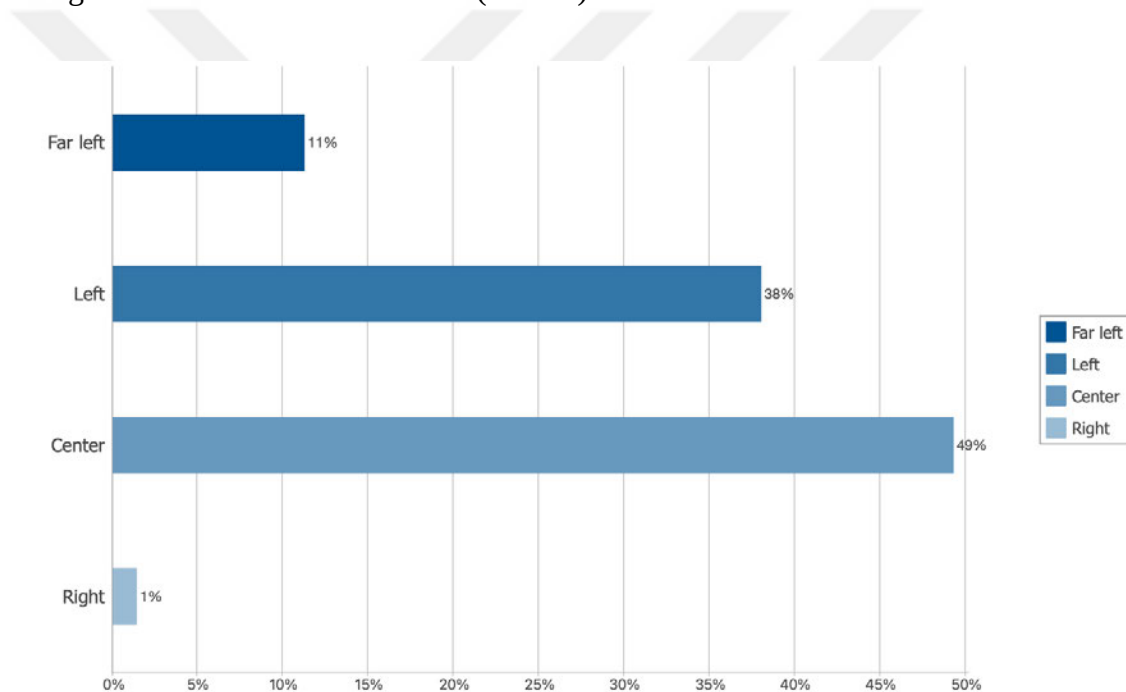
Harun's statement above also displays a type of passive political interest and participation in which individuals remain informed and aware but do not actively participate beyond voting. The quote above indicates a form of passive political interest and participation, where individuals stay informed and aware but limit their involvement to voting. It indicates political disengagement, where HSMs' attention to and interest in political events, policy discussions, or party platforms have gradually declined.

Figure 40. Political Interest by Citizenship (Athens)



The survey uncovers that EU HSMs have a slightly higher and more uniform level of political interest compared to non-EU HSMs, who show more variability (Figure 40). The total population follows a similar pattern to non-EU HSMs, indicating that the overall group is more diverse in terms of political interest. EU HSMs appear to have more consistent responses regarding political interest, with a narrower range of opinions clustered around neutrality and slight agreement. This suggests that political interest among EU HSMs is more homogeneous. Non-EU HSMs exhibit more variation, with a wider spread in opinions, indicating that there is more diversity in how engaged or interested this group feels about politics.

Figure 41. Political Identification (Athens)



The interviewees are not asked to express their political affiliation. However, their responses on political matters reveal that the majority align themselves with progressive, left-leaning, or liberal, centralist political views. Aligning with this, the responses of HSMs who participated in the survey present a political spectrum heavily tilted towards centrist and left-leaning ideologies, with very little representation from the right (Figure 41). The large centrist group (49%) indicates that moderate political views hold sway, while a significant proportion of the population aligns with more progressive, left-leaning ideologies. Considering that HSMs in Budapest also mostly self-position on the center and left of the political

spectrum, the minimal presence of right-wing opinions among HSMs reveals a broader trend in which conservative, extreme nationalist viewpoints are less prevalent. EU HSMs exhibit a stronger preference for moderate, centrist positions while non-EU HSMs show a greater inclination towards more progressive and radical left ideologies. Among EU HSMs, 41.9% identify as left-leaning, with no respondents identifying as far left. In contrast, 55% of non-EU HSMs identify as either left or far left, with none aligning themselves with the right of the political spectrum (Table 25).

Table 25. Political Identification by Citizenship (Athens)

<i>Political Spectrum</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>Far left</i>	-	20%	11,3%
<i>Left</i>	41,9%	35%	38%
<i>Centre</i>	54,8%	45%	49,3%
<i>Right</i>	3,2%	-	1,4%
<i>Far right</i>	-	-	-
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%	100%

Many HSMs interviewed in Athens underline that they closely follow what is happening in Greece to be informed and some of them, particularly those who have been in Greece for many years, seem to be very willing to engage in Greek politics, actively. Olena, in this sense, explicitly expresses a growing awareness of her role in the well-being of Greece, indicating a developing sense of civic duty. By acknowledging her desire to contribute to positive change, she demonstrates an internalization of responsibilities typical of active citizens, regardless of legal citizenship status. Her journey from passive observation to active interest in leadership decisions reflects a deepening sense of belonging and integration into Greek society, as well as a patriotic attachment to Greece as her country of residence:

“I have lived here for a long time, and I genuinely feel a sense of responsibility for the state of this country. When I notice things deteriorating in Greece, I often wonder if I play a role in that and if there's a way I can contribute to positive change as a member of society. I recognize that the one

thing I can't do is vote, which is part of why I believe it's time to apply for citizenship. I've started to pay closer attention to who the mayor of my city is and what initiatives he is implementing, as well as who the Prime Minister is and their impact on the country. Ultimately, I do feel like I am a part of this community.” (Olena, Ukraine, non-EU)

Although HSMs’ narratives on political matters seem to be influenced by the political polarization in the country, they avoid openly standing with or against one political group. While some implicitly show their dissatisfaction with the current government, reflecting a general sentiment of distrust and skepticism, others favor the government, particularly mentioning the changes after the pandemic. Those who are against the Greek government voice their concerns, pointing to the government’s policies and approaches toward migration and foreign relations, as well as specific incidents and political scandals such as the Tempi train crash in 2023. However, as mentioned by many, the digitalization of bureaucratic services during the COVID-19 pandemic has found as a factor in increased the popularity of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis among some HSMs:

“We also didn’t feel like going to vote because it was so soon after the train crash. Honestly, I found that situation so disturbing based on what we’ve been hearing. I believe this significantly influenced our decision. Then, after the votes were counted, it was disheartening to see that the party in power during the accident ended up winning again. That was quite disappointing.” (Elina, Russia & Greece, EU)

“With the new government that came into power before the COVID-19 Pandemic, things changed. I see the developments in bureaucratic services. For example, if you ask me who I like the most, the previous candidate or current candidate. I would say the current. I think he is socially more involved and very modern. You can see more action from him and not just talk, in comparison to the previous one. Even though my Greek language is limited, I still can see the way he interacts with people. I can see that he is genuine. I was happy that he was elected again for second time.” (Hanna, Sweden, EU)

Unlike those in Budapest, HSMs in Athens are more politically engaged in their country of residence, Greece. Despite the high level of engagement in Greek politics, their participation in political movements, protests, and elections is limited. While some self-constraints, others support the conditional inclusion of migrants in political participation. They negotiate their political and civic roles and advocate recognizing their rights in issues directly affecting them but reserving full political rights for citizens. Particularly, Sandra's approach reflects the tensions that can arise between universal human rights and the local dimensions of political governance. Her acknowledgment of her right to vote, paired with a sense of strangeness, underscores the difficulty of fully bridging the gap between universal belonging and local political participation, a core tension within cosmopolitan ideals:

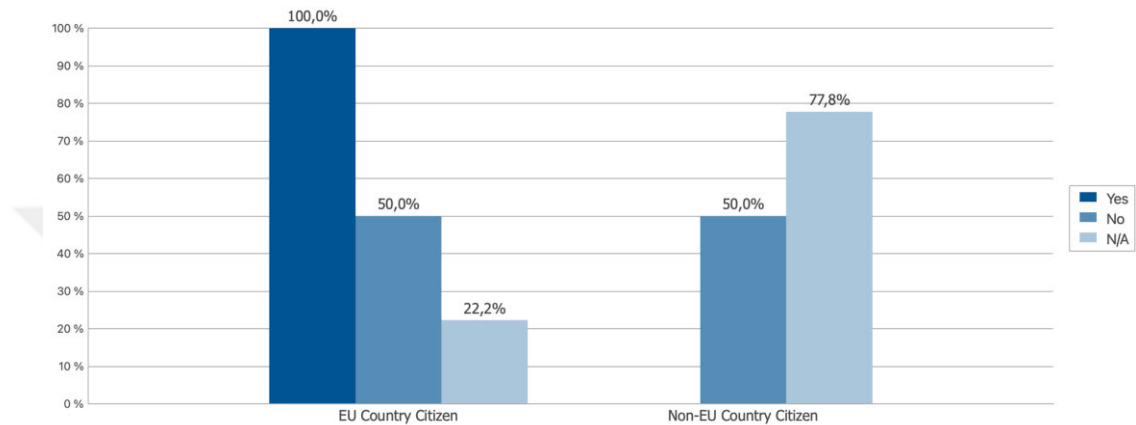
"I believe there should be some limits about our participation. Speaking from a Romanian perspective, if I were in my own country, I wouldn't want just anyone to come in and have a say about everything. On specific issues that concern migrants, involving their right to stay, work, or other relevant matters, we should definitely have a voice. Migrants should have the right to express their views, but perhaps not in the same capacity as a Greek citizen."
(Denisa, Romania, EU)

"With my work permit, I have the right to vote in local elections. I'm not even sure how I feel about that. On one hand, I'm glad, but it's a bit strange, isn't it? I care about human rights, and that's important to me. But when it comes to issues like taxes and running the government, it feels different."
(Sandra, US, non-EU)

Contrary to this perspective, some others highlight the impact of government decisions on non-citizens who contribute economically, calling for a more inclusive approach to voting rights grounded in direct involvement and financial contributions to society. Through the principle of taxation as a basis for representation, they challenge the conventional link between citizenship and political rights:

“I do think that if you pay taxes in a country, you should have the right to vote, even at the national level. Quite frankly. I'm directly affected by decisions made by the Greek government and I should have a voice, but I don't.” (Ella, Denmark, EU)

Figure 42. Participation in Greek Local Elections by Citizenship



In 2010, Greece introduced voting and candidacy rights for third-country nationals. This change allowed foreign residents who do not possess the *homogeneis* I.D., which Greek legislation qualifies as *allogeneis* (of non-Greek origin) (Christopoulos, 2013a) to participate in local elections. This category includes holders of an indefinite residence permit, such as family members of EU citizens, parents of Greek citizens, political refugees, and officially recognized stateless individuals who have resided in the country for at least five years (Christopoulos, 2013a). Figure 42 indicates that EU citizens show a higher level of electoral engagement, likely due to rights extended within the EU, making it easier for them to vote in local elections across member states. Conversely, the low participation rate among non-EU citizens indicates potential legal or institutional barriers that limit their access to local political processes. Furthermore, the interviews reveal that many non-EU HSMs, such as Harun and Alisa, have not voted in municipal elections despite being eligible, as they mistakenly believe that, as non-EU citizens, they are not allowed to do so. This indicates a lack of awareness about their political rights.

Regarding their engagement in the politics of their home countries, most interviewees demonstrate a strong interest in staying informed about current events and exhibit socio-political awareness. They often analyze political issues by considering various socio-political, economic, and cultural factors, as well as their connections to regional and global politics. While half of the interviewees consistently participate in elections in their home countries, the other half either lack interest in voting for different reasons or have never voted, at all. Notably, most of those who have never voted in any election hold dual citizenship:

“Never voted in Russia. Never voted in the UK, and I’ve never voted in Greece either. This is probably like the stupidest thing about me is that I can actually vote in three different countries, but I never do. There is no way of influencing or controlling anything that was happening in the politics. That’s why I don’t vote because it’s so embedded in me the idea that my vote doesn’t mean anything, it doesn’t matter. It’s not going to change anything.” (Vicky, Russia, UK, Greece, EU)

Similar to the findings in Budapest, some HSMs in Athens also express their ethical concerns about external voting. Harry and Sara’s approaches serve as examples that reflect a broader discomfort with having a say in the political affairs of countries where they have not lived for years. Despite being citizens entitled to political rights, they question the fairness of influencing decisions that do not directly affect them.

“I don’t think I should be allowed in England or Italy because I don’t live in those countries and I haven’t lived in many years.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

“I don’t think it’s fair for me to vote in Serbia. I don’t live there but I can still vote and have a say in deciding the living conditions of the country and its people, despite not being directly affected by those decisions. On the other hand, acquiring Greek citizenship allows me to vote. It is really important to me. I lived here for so long without being able to vote and participate in the political decisions of the country.” (Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

A few interviews also present a thoughtful and responsible approach to voting, emphasizing the importance of having a clear and informed understanding of a

candidate before making a decision. They express that voting is not a casual or impulsive act but a critical civic duty that requires careful consideration and informed judgment. This approach presents a deliberative citizen identity, one characterized by a sense of responsibility, critical thinking, and an emphasis on informed participation:

“If I can form a clear opinion about a candidate who is supposed to be in that position, then yes, I will vote. But if I don’t have a complete understanding of them, then no, I won’t. I see voting as a serious responsibility given to citizens, allowing them to choose the right person to represent their country, the EU, or any institution. If you vote for the wrong person without having a full picture, their mistakes will eventually impact you, as their decisions will come back to affect your life.” (Poco, Palestine & Greece, EU)

Table 26. Participation in Parliamentary Election in the Country of Origin by Citizenship & One-way Analysis of Variance (Athens)

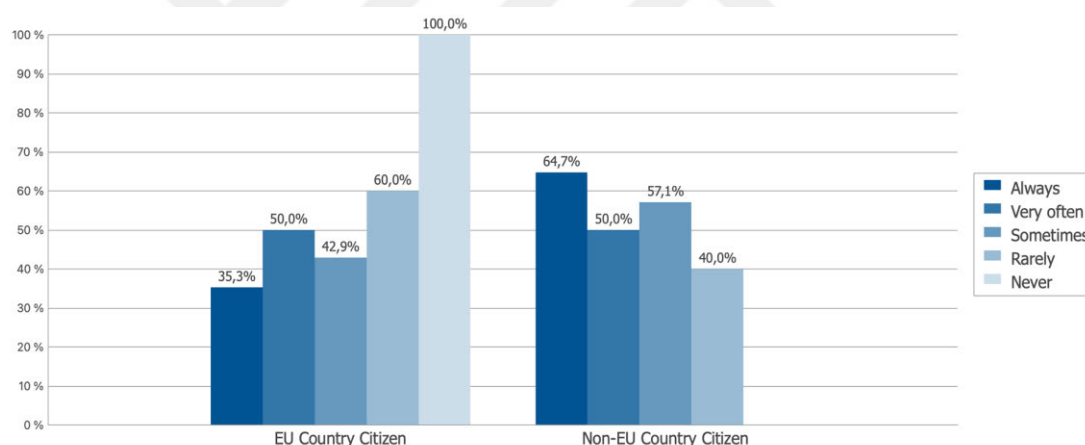
<i>EU/Non-EU</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>		
<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	40,7%	64%	21,1%	43,7%		
<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	59,3%	36%	78,9%	56,3%		
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%		
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p	Eta squared
<i>Between groups</i>	5,038	1	5,038	9,040	0,0037	0,116
<i>Within groups</i>	38,455	69	0,557			
<i>Total</i>	43,493	70				
<i>Post hoc tests</i>		Diff.	Cohen's d	Hedge's g*	F	p (Scheffe)
<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	Non-EU Country Citizen	-0,537	-0,719	-0,712	9,040	0,0037

Among EU HSMs, only 40.7% indicate that they voted in the parliamentary elections in their country of origin, while a substantial 64% report not voting. Additionally, 21.1% select “N/A,” suggesting that voting is not an option for them (Table 26). According to several interviewees, certain countries impose restrictions on voting rights for citizens residing abroad, which is likely the reason behind the “N/A”

responses in the survey. In contrast, non-EU HSMs show a higher level of participation, with 59.3% having voted in the parliamentary elections in their country of origin. The large effect size (Cohen's d value of -0,719) and p -value (0,0037) indicate a statistically significant difference between EU and non-EU HSMs regarding their participation in parliamentary elections in their home countries (Table 26).

The difference in frequency of exercising the electoral rights of EU and non-EU HSMs reflects varying levels of political engagement. Non-EU HSMs demonstrate more consistent and regular participation, while EU citizens show a more polarized pattern, with a substantial minority consistently voting and a significant number rarely or never participating (Figure 43). The survey findings reveal that 69% of all HSMs always or very often exercise their electoral rights.

Figure 43. Frequency of Exercising Electoral Rights by Citizenship (Athens)



Some interviewees' view on political participation suggests a shift from public, collective actions such as protests towards more individualized or indirect forms of participation, reflecting a broader skepticism about the effectiveness of traditional political activism. Ella, from Denmark, highlights using personal connections with politically involved individuals to voice her opinions, asserting that informal networks may provide more direct influence on political decisions than public demonstrations. Similarly, Aksana from the UK expresses doubts about the impact of protests, particularly in Greece, where she finds them inconsistent and ineffective:

“The main way I have any influence on political decision making is by talking to friends who are politically connected, or who are politicians, and telling them what I think.” (Ella, Denmark, EU)

“I don’t believe protests are very effective most of the time because people often demand one thing today and then shift to something else tomorrow. Especially in Greece, I don’t have much faith in protests. In other countries, people are more consistent in their demands, but here, protests feel more like a social event, almost like a Sunday gathering. (...) It makes more sense for me to find ways to inform people by offering resources such as websites or articles to raise awareness.” (Aksana, UK, non-EU)

Aksana’s experience in Greece, where protests often appear disorganized or more symbolic than effective, particularly, causes her to question the value of mass mobilization as a means for political change. This indicates that her approach to political participation is influenced by her observations of the lived realities of her immediate environment, alongside her personal experiences as a British citizen and former Belarusian citizen. Her residence in Greece, therefore, significantly informs her critical view of public protests, influencing her broader skepticism toward collective political actions. Such perspectives indicate a lack of trust in other people and society and a preference for more controlled, knowledge-based approaches to influence politics, rather than mass movements or public demonstrations, which are seen as unreliable. Sareena, an interviewee from Lebanon, similarly emphasizes her dedication to promoting participation through dialogue, seeing discussions as a way to exchange ideas and raise awareness. Having a strong political interest, she exemplifies a cosmopolitan viewpoint that recognizes interconnectedness and the impact of international dynamics on regional and national matters. Her dual focus suggests a citizenship understanding, where individuals are informed and responsive to both their patriotic and global sensibilities and responsibilities.

“I frequently share my thoughts, particularly on global politics, during discussions with my friends. Recently, we’ve engaged in conversations about the situation in Palestine, as well as the challenges in Lebanon. To truly understand or predict what may occur in our own country, it’s essential to

consider the broader global context. Therefore, these discussions are important to me as they allow us to exchange ideas and raise awareness.”
(Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

Table 27. Participation in Political Activities (Athens)

	<i>Have done it many times</i>	<i>Have done it couple of times</i>	<i>Have done it once</i>	<i>Have not done it but might do it</i>	<i>Have not done it yet and would never do it</i>
<i>Signed a petition</i>	49,3%	33,8%	7,0%	4,2%	5,6%
<i>Took part in a demonstration</i>	28,2%	29,6%	16,9%	19,7%	5,6%
<i>Expressed political views on the internet</i>	22,5%	26,8%	16,9%	14,1%	19,7%
<i>Attended a political meeting or rally</i>	19,7%	25,4%	16,9%	22,5%	15,5%
<i>Contacted or appeared in the media to express your views</i>	4,2%	15,5%	11,3%	40,8%	28,2%
<i>Contacted, or attempted to contact, a politician or a civil servant to express your views</i>	11,3%	25,4%	12,7%	31,0%	19,7%

Signing petitions and participating in demonstrations are the most common forms of political participation, indicating a preference for collective actions that can influence policy indirectly. Expressing political views online and attending political meetings are also relatively common but show a more reserved engagement, as a notable portion of respondents express reluctance to participate in these activities. Contacting politicians and appearing in media are the least frequent activities, possibly due to higher barriers or discomfort in direct or public engagement. They are more inclined towards collective and less direct forms of engagement (such as petitions and demonstrations) and are less likely to take part in more individual or confrontational actions (like media appearances or direct contact with officials). The overall findings of the survey and interviews suggest that HSMs in Athens are willing to contribute the political life with a preference for more accessible and less confrontational modes of political participation to self-position in a safer place.

Engagement in formal civic education is crucial for developing individuals' understanding of their roles and responsibilities as active members within political communities. It significantly contributes to shaping how people understand their citizenship and their place within the political landscape. However, findings from this study reveal that HSMs in both Budapest and Athens commonly experience a lack of structured formal civic education in their home countries. Most interviewees in both cities highlighted that their primary understanding of citizenship and what it entails stems mainly from the values and lessons imparted by their parents at home. This informal learning appears to have a significant impact, filling the gap left by formal education. Oscar, an interviewee from the UK living in Athens, exemplifies this situation by emphasizing the reality of limited civic education and the pivotal role that cultural background and personal experiences play in shaping one's understanding of citizenship. He suggests that interpretations of citizenship can vary significantly based on cultural heritage and upbringing despite sharing a common legal definition:

“Citizenship isn’t really taught in schools; it’s touched on, but the real understanding typically comes from what you learn at home, especially in terms of cultural influence. For instance, someone of Indian descent with British citizenship or someone with Welsh heritage might have a different interpretation of what citizenship means compared to mine, but at its core, it’s the same concept. The main difference lies in the cultural aspect.”

(Oscar, UK, non-EU)

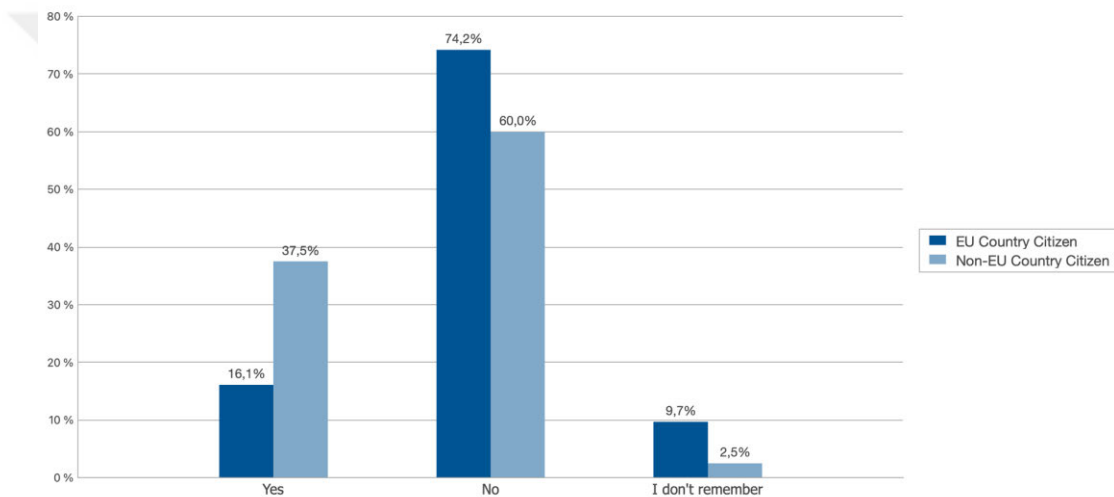
Sandra underscores the critical role of civic education in fostering an informed and engaged citizenry. She asserts that the absence of comprehensive civics instruction in schools has left many young Americans with limited understanding of governmental processes and political structures, making them more susceptible to manipulation and less equipped to participate effectively in democratic life:

“We stopped teaching citizenship, or what's called civics, in schools. And now you see the confusion of American kids, they don't even understand. How a bill becomes a law. They don't understand how the government

works. So, it's much easier to manipulate them. We used to have to take civics.” (Sandra, US, non-EU)

The responses of HSMs who participated in the survey also align with the experiences of the interviewees, revealing that the majority have never participated in civic education in their lives. A higher proportion of non-EU HSMs (37.5%) reported receiving civic education compared to EU citizens (16.1%). This gap in formal civic education between EU and non-EU HSMs in Athens (Figure 44).

Figure 44. Participation in Civic Education by Citizenship (Athens)



4.3.2 Social and Economic Experiences and Practices

Citizenship, socially, influences how individuals form relationships and engage with their communities, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion vital for personal and professional growth. This includes civic engagement, participation in community activities, and cultural integration, all of which enhance emotional stability and acceptance within the host society. On the other hand, it, economically, affects access to job markets, professional advancement, and entrepreneurship, with citizens often enjoying preferential access to employment opportunities and job security. Additionally, citizenship typically grants broader entitlements to essential services such as healthcare and education, impacting individuals' quality of life and economic stability. The interplay between social and economic experiences is crucial; positive social interactions can enhance access to economic opportunities, while economic

stability can improve individuals' social experiences. Together, these factors shape how individuals view their identity as citizens and their capacity to participate fully in society.

EU citizens benefit from comprehensive rights that allow them to work freely across member states, enjoying full integration into the European labor market. This includes access to essential social benefits like pensions, healthcare, and other financial protections that can be seamlessly transferred or utilized across the EU. These benefits not only enhance job mobility but also offer economic stability and long-term security for EU citizens. In contrast, despite contributing to the labor markets of EU countries, non-EU migrants often encounter limitations on transferring social benefits, such as pensions, to their home countries. These structural differences create unequal access to opportunities and benefits, leaving non-EU HSMs at a disadvantage in terms of long-term financial security and career growth. All non-EU HSMs in the interviews underscore the impact of citizenship status on access to social and economic opportunities that influence life trajectories. The quotes from Harun and Mila explicitly illustrate these disparities in labor market access and social benefits between EU and non-EU HSMs:

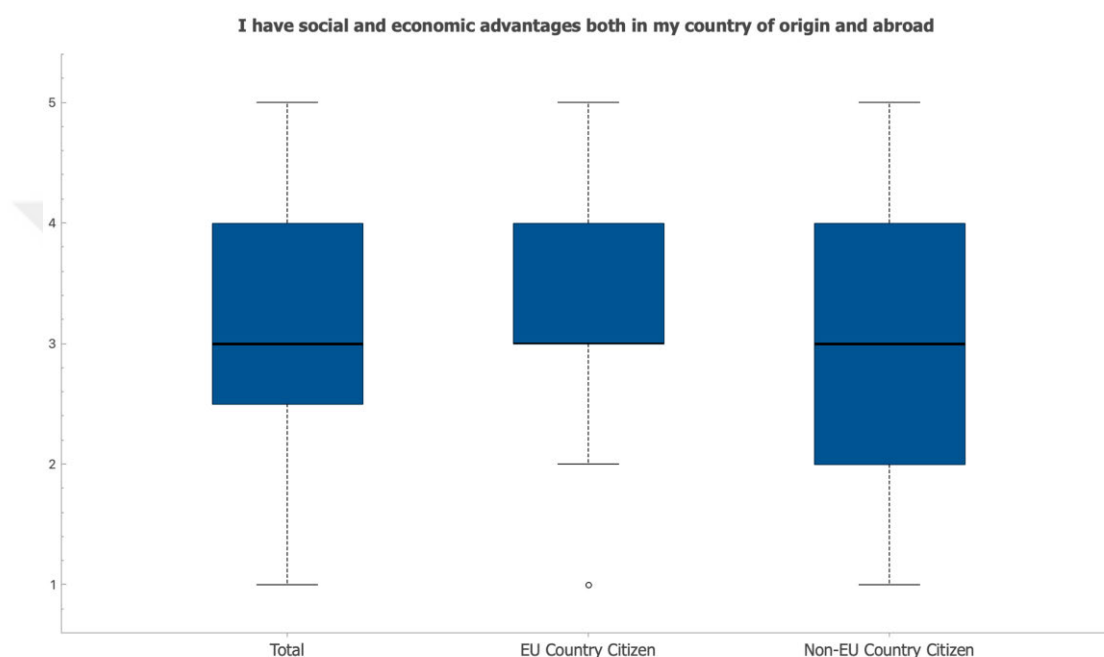
“If you are not an EU citizen, you don’t have full access to the labor market and face various barriers. For example, even though I work in Greece, I can't transfer my pension back to my country, no matter how long I work here, even up to retirement.” (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

“Becoming a Greek and a European citizen has opened up many doors and possibilities for me. (...) The ability to work anywhere in the EU (...) is a major benefit.” (Mila, Serbia & Greece, EU)

Figure 46 reveals a clear difference in the consistency of perceived social and economic advantages between EU and non-EU citizens. While EU citizens generally report more stable access to advantages, non-EU citizens show a wider distribution, indicating less uniformity and more challenges. Non-EU HSMs experience more extremes in their perceptions of social and economic opportunities. Some feel greatly

disadvantaged, while others may see substantial opportunities. EU citizens' more consistent perceptions likely stem from the benefits tied to EU citizenship. The absence of high outliers and a shorter lower whisker in the box plot below suggests that EU citizens feel relatively stable in their perceived advantages, with fewer reporting extreme disadvantages (Figure 46).

Figure 45. Perceived Social and Economic Advantages by Citizenship (Athens)



Many non-EU HSMs and naturalized EU HSMs emphasize significant differences in their experiences related to accessing employment and career development opportunities compared to EU citizens. These differences stem from various structural, legal, and social barriers that disproportionately affect non-EU HSMs, even when they hold similar qualifications or skill levels. Dina's statement below, reflecting this common experience, highlights that the current legal and administrative framework fosters inequality, placing non-EU HSMs at a systemic disadvantage despite their qualifications or capabilities:

“For me, it's all about being able to work, that's the main thing. The other aspects don't really matter. What's important is the opportunity to move around the Schengen area, or Europe, in general, without needing a visa or any additional permits. The main challenge, compared to EU citizens, is the

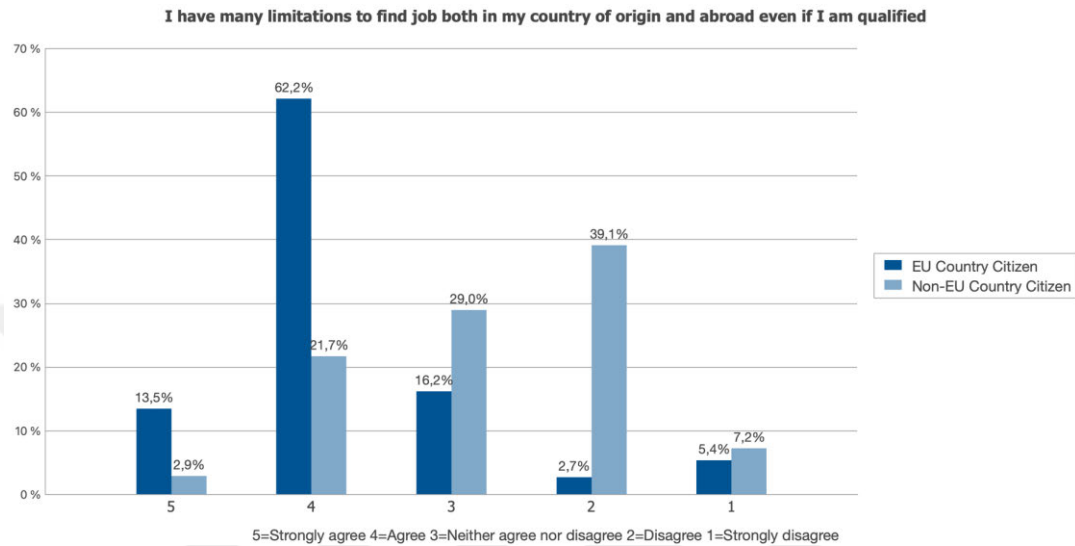
frequency of renewing our documents, which is frustrating. Plus, my job opportunities are limited because of my status, restricting me to certain types of jobs and companies that allow me to work with this kind of documentation. The majority of jobs you may get in Greece is through knowing someone. You need networking and even if there are international companies in Greece and you work there, the management are always Greeks. So, you need to speak very well Greek to be promoted.” (Dina, Lebanon, non-EU)

While the desire for work and mobility is paramount, the reality is marked by continuous administrative challenges, limited job prospects due to status, and the dominance of local networks and language requirements. These factors together create a landscape where not only non-EU HSMs, but also EU HSMs, may encounter structural, socio-cultural, and legal obstacles to achieving full participation and career growth in the Greek labor market. Claire who is from the US and a naturalized Greek citizen who works on migration in academia, affirms these challenges and offers insights as an expert in the field while sharing her own experiences with the Greek labor market. She underlines the complexity of the labor market dynamics in Greece under the influence of the government's fragmented strategy that's used to attract migrants. She informs that the Greek government frames migrants as low skilled laborers, and they are predominantly facilitating pathways for migrants in the construction or the agricultural industries. She states that:

“When considering opportunities for highly skilled migrants, it seems that these are shaped more by market dynamics than by policy. Working conditions are often poor, and even in international companies, the workplace culture remains distinctly Greek. There are ongoing challenges with inclusivity, which makes it difficult for foreigners, even those who know the language, to choose Greece as a destination for job opportunities. Speaking from my experience, there are a lot of highly skilled migrants. Most of the highly skilled migrants that I socialized with are not able to find valuable employment in this country. They're overqualified, and the opportunities would leave them severely underpaid, and most of them therefore engage in

some form of consulting, which they probably do through companies outside of Greece.” (Claire, US & Greece, EU)

Figure 46. Perceived Limitations in Accessing Job Opportunities by Citizenship (Athens)



The survey data reveals that a substantial majority of EU highly skilled migrants (75.7%) report considerable difficulties in finding employment both in their home countries and abroad, despite their qualifications and advantages within the EU labor market (Figure 45). This observation is consistent with the experiences shared by interviewees, showing that labor challenges in Greece affect both EU and non-EU HSMs. Non-EU respondents exhibit more varied perceptions, with some feeling that being qualified still provides opportunities in their home countries or abroad. The strong negative perception among EU HSMs may be attributed to factors such as regional economic disparities, high competition, or sector-specific constraints where qualifications and EU citizenship alone do not ensure job security or access to positions. Additionally, since the research participants are classified as EU or non-EU based on their citizenship status at the time of the interviews and survey, this finding may capture the experiences of naturalized EU citizens who could still be influenced by the lingering impacts of restrictions they faced when they were non-EU citizens. Therefore, it is essential to further explore the social and economic challenges faced by EU HSMs to better understand the underlying causes of their negative perceptions in the context of Greece.

The deprivation of social and economic benefits in one's country of origin leads to a profound sense of detachment and insecurity, reshaping their relationship with their country. Marco's shift in residency led to a tangible decline in his economic security and state support, altering his view of what it means to be a citizen of Italy. When state protections and benefits are lost or diminished, the perception of citizenship may shift. As lived experiences, citizenship is understood as a sum of legal-political, social, and economic experiences influencing citizens' affective ties with their countries:

"I became a bit anxious about my future because, for instance, the healthcare system in Italy is very good, better than in Greece, in my opinion. However, since I chose to pay taxes in Greece, I lost my tax benefits in Italy. Now, when I return to Italy, I have to cover costs out of pocket. For example, I recently needed some blood tests. I went back to Italy for three days, did the tests, and ended up having to pay a significant amount. I am an Italian citizen but now a resident in Greece, having changed my residency. And the Italian state doesn't really care once you are no longer a resident there. The state fails to offer protection or support; it feels like they just don't care about you anymore." (Marco, Italy, EU)

Experiences of discrimination or social exclusion can make HSMs more aware of their outsider status, prompting considerations of how citizenship might alter their acceptance in society. The interviews indicate that the experiences of HSMs are contrasting in terms of the presence of differential treatment and discrimination in Greece. While some mention discrimination and negative attitudes towards specific groups of people based on racial and ethnic backgrounds and the implications of social status in bureaucratic settings, some others reflect experiences indicating a welcoming social environment:

"I've never faced any kind of racism and bad attitude in my 13-year life in Greece." (Harun, Türkiye, non-EU)

“Honestly, I have never found myself in a situation that I felt like I'm a foreigner. I haven't felt neglected or subjected to racism. Never...” (Hamza, Tunisia, non-EU)

Non-EU HSMs are significantly more likely to encounter discrimination compared to their EU HSMs, reflecting a potentially unfair and unequal treatment in how different groups are treated due to various factors, including citizenship, gender, race, religion, or, socio-political status. Assumptions tied to citizenship can lead to discrimination and social exclusion for individuals. The biased perception that non-EU individuals are only in EU countries to obtain citizenship through marriage is a form of stereotyping that is referred to by a few female non-EU HSMs, such as Dina and Alisa. This stereotype portrays non-EU female HSMs as opportunistic or having ulterior motives, which undermines their individuality and intentions. This biased approach based on both citizenship and gender reinforces boundaries between “locals” and “outsiders,” creating an environment where non-EU residents are not fully embraced or trusted, impacting HSMs' social choices, interactions with the locals, and sense of belonging:

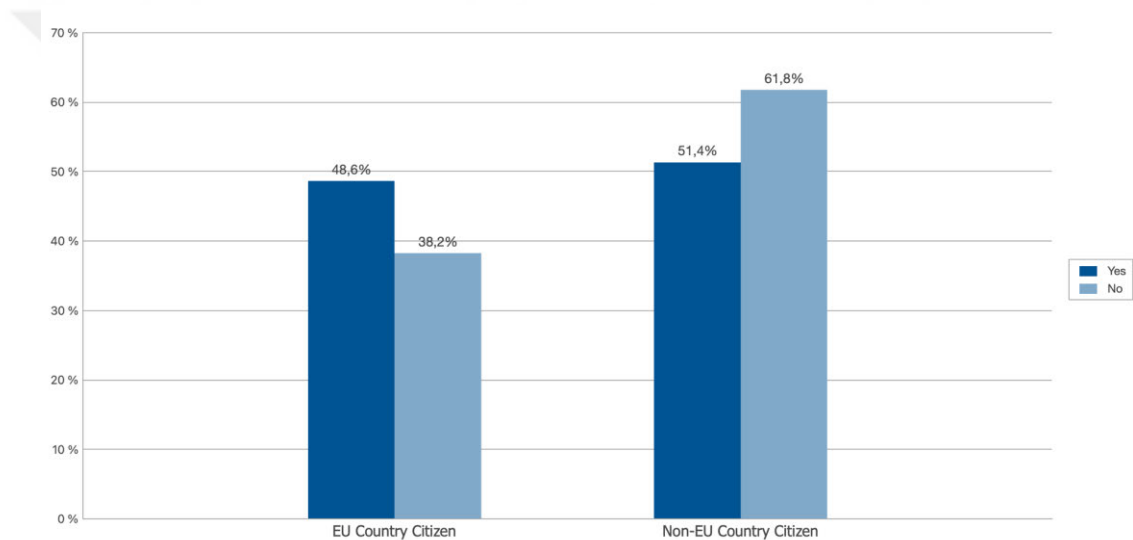
“Whenever I say that I'm from Russia, many people are offended. They have the idea that Russian women are here for prostitution or to get some documents to stay here and they are bad.” (Alisa, Russia, non-EU)

“The assumption that every non-EU person travels to an EU country just to marry someone for citizenship is a cliché that really frustrates me. It's especially annoying when Greeks say this to me because, honestly, if I could go back in time, I might have chosen to go to Canada, for instance. I could face a few tough years, and within a few months or years, secured residency or citizenship. Or I could have chosen France, where I could study, speak the language, and gain citizenship more easily. It's one of the reasons I avoided dating Greek men in the beginning, I didn't want to give anyone the chance to even think that about me.” (Dina, Lebanon, non-EU)

The survey suggests that non-EU HSMs (51.4%) are more likely to experience discrimination than EU HSMs (48.6%) (Figure 46). Non-EU HSMs are more likely

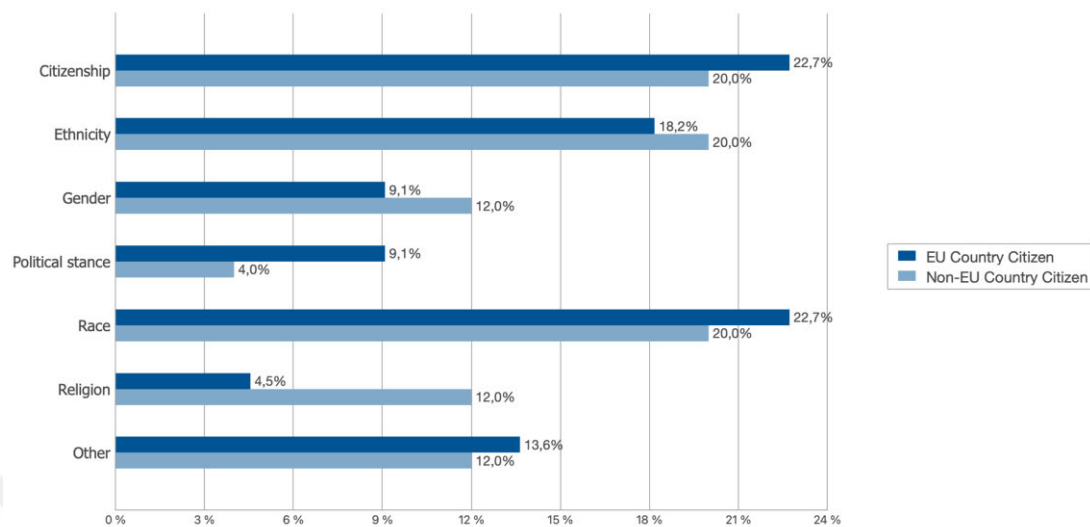
to face systemic or structural barriers in access to jobs, social services, or community acceptance, leading to their higher perception of discrimination. The closer balance between their responses among EU citizens indicates a more divided perception. Some EU citizens may feel discriminated against due to factors like ethnicity, gender, or political stance, while others may not experience the same challenges. This variability suggests that while EU citizenship confers certain privileges, internal differences (such as regional or cultural biases) still affect the experiences of discrimination within the EU.

Figure 47. Experience of Discrimination by Citizenship (Athens)



Citizenship and race are the most frequently reported reasons for discrimination among both EU (22.7%) and non-EU citizens (20%) (Figure 47). This highlights how citizenship and racial identity often intertwined with ethnicity, create significant barriers for both groups of HSMs in Athens. When the reported reasons for discrimination among HSMs in Budapest and Athens are examined together, citizenship is found prominent factor of discrimination for both EU and non-EU HSMs in both cities (Figure 22 and Figure 47). In Athens, racial identity significantly influences perceived discrimination, impacting both EU and non-EU HSMs, while in Budapest, race does not emerge as a reason for discrimination for EU HSMs. Overall, a slightly higher number of EU HSMs report experiencing discrimination in Athens compared to those in Budapest, suggesting that all highly skilled migrants are more vulnerable to exclusion in Athens.

Figure 48. Perceived Reasons of Discrimination by Citizenship (Athens)



Some interviewees also recognize that certain groups may continue to face exclusionary or negative attitudes in Greece. This conditional acceptance highlights underlying social barriers and biases that affect the experience of migrants based on their perceived differences. However, on one hand, HSMs highlight a clear distinction in how some groups of foreign nationals are welcomed compared to others, particularly if they are from non-white backgrounds. On the other hand, locals are described as friendly and open, particularly when efforts are made to engage with the language and culture. Despite the challenges and discrimination that HSMs encounter related to their citizenship status and other socio-cultural factors, most interviewees in Athens share positive experiences in their interactions with the local population. They highlight the friendliness, warmth, and willingness to help shown by many Greeks, which help them feel more at ease and supported in their new environment. Many HSMs emphasize that they have formed friendships, professional relationships, and partnerships with the locals, indicating a level of social integration within the society:

“The people here are very nice. Compared to other European nationalities, Greeks are not as harsh; they are friendly and always willing to help.”

(Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

“In my experience, Greek people have been genuinely nice and friendly. When you try to speak Greek, it really makes them smile, and they tend to be quite open and welcoming. However, it seems that they are more accepting of temporary visitors and tourists than long-term residents. This attitude seems to depend on where you're from, particularly if you're from non-white countries. Greece is racist but it's racist to your face, not behind your back.”

The majority of HSMs in Athens develop an attachment to Greece with a sense of patriotic responsibility that involves acknowledging and respecting the rules, culture, and opportunities provided by Greece. Their integration into Greek society is driven by practical adaptation including learning the language, understanding the systems, and engaging with local customs combined with a reciprocal respect for the opportunities and social support they receive. This approach to patriotic attachment shows that highly skilled migrants construct a layered identity.

“If you move to another country, you do need to learn about it. You need to invest time in learning about the country, including navigating its bureaucracy. I get that when you first move to Greece, learning Greek might not be a priority. But after five years, you should learn the language if you plan on living here.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

“I live here and I have to respect their rules and mentality. Greece opened its arms and welcomed us, offering opportunities for work and providing for us. In return for the taxes we pay, we receive social rights and services. Therefore, I cannot come here and say why they are doing this or that. I feel a sense of responsibility to give back to Greece and be respectful.” (Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

Hanna from Sweden underlines the significance of emotional and social fulfillment in shaping a sense of belonging. She reflects on her personal experiences and feelings about living in Greece compared to Sweden, expressing a strong preference for the social dynamics and lifestyle in Greece. This attachment is not just about adapting to a new environment but also about finding a place where one's personal

values and social and emotional needs are met, leading to a deeper connection with the host country:

I don't want to have the life that they have in Sweden. They are very robotic there. Here, people work, live, try to survive and get money, but they also think about socialization, hanging out with people, dancing, and all of these things make you happy even if you don't earn enough of money. I have my Greek boyfriend here and his family. We live in a same apartment, having family gatherings. In Sweden, people live on their own as to without support of anyone you feel more depressed in that way.” (Hanna, Sweden, EU)

Similar to the findings from Budapest, a significant majority of HSMs in Athens, regardless of their citizenship status, regard taxation as a reciprocal and essential pillar of societal functioning. By paying taxes, these migrants feel they are investing in the societies that they are part of, which fosters a stronger sense of belonging and responsibility. This reciprocal understanding fosters a deeper connection to their host country and a recognition of their role in sustaining its social systems. Highly skilled migrants consider economic contributions as a mutual exchange, where they contribute financially to the countries, they are members of, in return for public services and support. However, they view civic engagement differently and broadly, considering it a voluntary and essential aspect of being a member of humankind. While some highlight time constraints as a barrier to their involvement, others point out the limited opportunities in Greece to contribute to the well-being of people and communities. A majority acknowledge the positive influence of their companies, which encourage and facilitate volunteer participation. HSMs in Athens commonly engage in activities such as supporting refugees and asylum seekers, addressing environmental concerns, and participating in blood donation campaigns. Their experiences of contributing to their home countries show that they engage in charitable organizations and initiatives from afar, especially during crises such as wars or natural disasters. Several HSMs mention in interviews that their support extends beyond their home countries to any region in need where they believe their individual efforts can make a difference. Many cite the earthquake in Turkey and the wars in Palestine and Ukraine as examples. In these instances, their focus is on mobilizing resources and providing financial aid to assist affected communities.

The survey data reveals varying levels of patriotic responsibility among migrants across different dimensions. A strong sense of cultural pride is evident, as a majority of respondents (76.1%) express feeling responsible for teaching their culture and traditions to others and representing their country (Figure 28). This indicates that many HSMs in Athens like their counterparts in Budapest view themselves as cultural ambassadors and prioritize sharing their heritage. However, when it comes to contributing to their country of origin and supporting its people, the responses are more dispersed. While 39.5% agree with this responsibility, a large portion remains neutral (36.6%), suggesting mixed feelings or ambivalence towards direct contributions. Table 28 also reflects differing levels of prioritization regarding home-country economic development versus that of Greece or other countries. It appears to be a nuanced area; only 39.4% of respondents prioritize the economic development of their country of origin over that of Greece or elsewhere, while a significant 42.3% remain neutral (Table 28). This indicates a lack of a strong preference or potentially reflecting pragmatic considerations tied to their current residence and attachment to their country of origin. The overall attitudes of both EU and non-EU HSMs reveal no significant difference in how they prioritize their home country's economic growth compared to Greece or other countries. This lack of a substantial variation indicates that, regardless of their origin, HSMs generally hold a balanced view on the economic development of both their country of origin, Greece, and elsewhere. This perspective suggests a cosmopolitan outlook and a sense of transnational belonging. Respect for and maintenance of cultural values and traditions, on the other hand, shows notable division, with only 21.2% strongly agreeing or agreeing, and nearly half (49.3%) disagreeing, indicating a diverse range of perspectives on the importance of preserving cultural traditions (Table 28). While there is clear pride in cultural representation, a more varied sense of responsibility towards their country of origin and traditions suggests a complex negotiation of identity, values, and priorities among HSMs.

Table 28. Patriotic Responsibility (Athens)

<i>Patriotic Acts of Responsibility</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>I feel responsible for teaching my culture and traditions to other people and representing my country</i>	31%	45,1%	12,7%	7,0%	4,2%
<i>I feel responsible for contributing to my country of origin and supporting its people</i>	8,5%	31%	36,6%	15,5%	8,5%
<i>Economic development of my country is more important for me than the economic development of Greece or elsewhere</i>	5,6%	33,8%	42,3%	15,5%	2,8%
<i>I have always been taught to respect and maintain cultural values and traditions</i>	9,9%	11,3%	29,6%	26,8%	22,5%

The data suggests that HSMs in Athens are navigating a dual sense of belonging that blends patriotic attachments to their home countries with cosmopolitan outlooks. They express cultural pride and a desire to represent their heritage, but their direct contributions and economic prioritizations reflect a more balanced and pragmatic view, indicating a complex negotiation of identity, values, and responsibilities. This points to the emergence of a multilayered identity among migrants, where a commitment to cultural heritage coexists with an openness to global integration and a recognition of multiple responsibilities. Thus, HSMs demonstrate both a connection to their roots and an evolving sense of cosmopolitan belonging.

A cosmopolitan outlook is characterized by an openness to the world and recognition of all people as part of a shared humanity, transcending local, national, or cultural boundaries. When people engage in their communities with a broader sense of global belonging, their actions are driven by the desire to help others beyond considerations of particular attachments and allegiances. Civic engagement rooted in a cosmopolitan outlook often builds bridges between diverse groups and promotes inclusivity.

“When we were asked to be volunteer for blood donation. My friend and I went without thinking about whether we were doing it for a Greek person or someone from Lebanon. It was simply an act of humanity. I hope to reach a

point where we all see each other as just human.” (Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

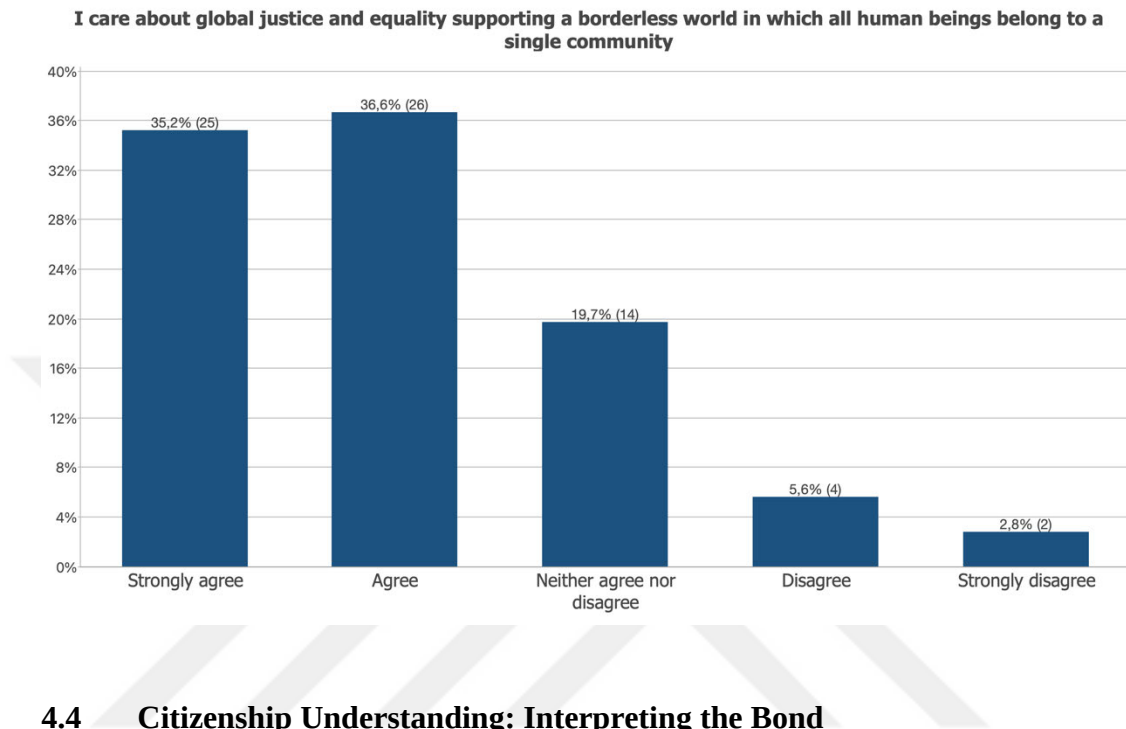
The analysis of the narratives of HSMs reflects a form of civic engagement that transcends traditional national boundaries and particular identities, embracing a cosmopolitan perspective rooted in empathy and universal values and ideals. Their ability to contribute to multiple social, economic, and cultural spheres enables them to develop a cosmopolitan outlook characterized by diverse affiliations. Many interviewees express a strong motivation to participate in various activities, driven not by attachment and allegiance to any specific group or community, but rather driven by a broader sense of respect, empathy, and shared human responsibility. This cosmopolitan approach to civic engagement is evident in Vicky's volunteer experience with a charity in Athens:

“I joined in a fundraising team of a charity as a volunteer in Athens. What stands out to me about this experience is that it doesn't feel tied to a specific country or dependent on my citizenship. The charity, which focuses on feeding refugees in Greece, was actually founded by a Scottish and a Swiss persons who actually came to Greece for vacation. When they witnessed the severity of the refugee crisis, they decided to establish their own charity and build a team together. For me, this work isn't about acting as a citizen of a particular country; it's more about contributing as a compassionate human being.” (Vicky, Russia & UK & Greece, EU)

The involvement of HSMs in addressing global issues such as environmental challenges, anti-immigration sentiment, socio-economic inequalities, and human rights violations further illustrates their commitment to universal values and their identification with humanity at large. The high proportion of survey respondents who agree or strongly agree (71.8%) indicates a significant openness to cosmopolitan ideals within this group (Figure 48). This aligns with the perspective of the interviewees that favors global solidarity, inclusivity, and universal justice. However, the presence of neutral and dissenting responses suggests that while cosmopolitanism

is an attractive ideal for many, others may have reservations or prioritize national frameworks over a purely global orientation.

Table 49. Perceived Global Justice and Cosmopolitanism (Athens)



4.4 Citizenship Understanding: Interpreting the Bond

In a familiar environment, citizenship is seen as an inherent status, not something to actively reflect on. Citizenship which provides legal status, security, political rights, and a sense of belonging often remains an abstract concept until individuals experience its absence. A substantial number of interviewees tend to take citizenship for granted while living in their home country, where it feels like an automatic and unquestioned aspect of their identity. Moving to another country than their country of origin highlights the practical and emotional impact of not having citizenship, as individuals may face challenges of limited rights, social exclusion, and a sense of insecurity. Citizenship, therefore, often becomes evident when people move to a place where they do not hold citizen status. Olena expresses this shared experience by explaining how migration can lead to a greater awareness of citizenship, enhancing appreciation for the security, rights, and sense of belonging it offers as a valued aspect of one's identity. Harun, in a similar way, highlights the transformative impact of global awareness on an individual's perspective about their own living conditions and environment:

Interviewer: Have you ever thought about citizenship and what it means to be a citizen?

“I strongly believe that the feeling of citizenship only becomes apparent when you move to a place where you are not a citizen. If you've always lived in your own country and never moved from there, the concept of citizenship is not clear. You don't grasp what it means not to have citizenship. It feels like something taken for granted. You have a passport and that's it. But once you move to another country, that's when you truly begin to understand what it means to you.” (Olena, Ukraine, non-EU)

“Yes, the first time I've thought about it was when I moved out of Turkey. My initial destination was here, Greece but I also traveled to other countries, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Romania, and Poland. As you explore different places and see what's happening in various countries, you start to reflect on your own life and living conditions. That was the turning point for me.” (Harun, Türkiye, no-EU)

Travel and exposure to diverse contexts can broaden individuals' worldviews and foster a more critical awareness of their own circumstances. It emphasizes the role of direct experience in prompting them to question and reassess their assumptions, leading to shifts in self-understanding and outlook. Harun's experience shows the power of global exposure to act as a transformative force in shaping his citizenship understanding, identity, and aspirations. Aligning with the findings from Budapest, the majority of the interviewees in Athens mark their experiences at the passport controls, visa applications, and administrative offices in other countries as the moments that deepen their awareness of citizenship. These experiences often served as eye-openers, bringing into focus the privileges and limitations tied to their citizenship:

"When I was about to finish university, I had an opportunity to skip master's and go straight into a Ph.D. However, at that time, I only held Serbian citizenship and needed to renew my residence permit in Greece. The renewal

required me to be employed. I missed that opportunity because I had to work. It was a key moment for me. If I had held Greek citizenship, this wouldn't have been a problem." (Sara, Serbia & Greece, EU)

The need to renew her residence permit, coupled with the requirement to be employed, creates a barrier that forces Sara to prioritize work over advancing her studies. In her case, citizenship acts as a gatekeeper to opportunities that may otherwise be accessible. This situation highlights the differences between citizens and non-citizens, as well as between EU and non-EU citizens, in terms of accessing opportunities and managing residency requirements. Sara's experience serves as a powerful reminder of how legal and bureaucratic barriers may shape an individual's path, affecting not only their immediate choices but potentially altering the course of their future. Similarly, Ella, who is a Danish citizen and has been living in Athens for more than twenty years explicitly explains traveling and border controls make her realize what citizenship and being a citizen of a country means:

"The border check was quite harsh in my childhood. I cannot tell an exact moment but I remember when we were teenagers, we'd often take the train to go to Germany in spring breaks. They used to stop the train and come through with big, scary dogs and machine guns to check everybody's papers. I distinctly remember that we used to feel the advantage of having a Danish passport, as we were seen as unimportant and benign. We knew that nobody particularly wanted to kill us. Even as small children, we were quite aware of what being a Danish citizen means." (Ella, Denmark, EU)

Ella demonstrates how experiences at borders can shape an understanding of the privilege and safety associated with citizenship. For her, holding a Danish passport is not merely a legal, bureaucratic detail; it serves as a protective shield against scrutiny and symbolizes being viewed as "benign" or non-threatening. She mentions that her experience as a kid not only influenced her perception of her own citizenship but also heightened her awareness of the broader implications of citizenship as a marker of belonging and identity in a world structured by borders and security protocols. Her moment of awareness also shows the social and

psychological dimensions of citizenship that define how individuals are viewed and treated in various contexts.

Table 29. Defining Citizenship with a word (Athens)

Definition of Citizenship with a word	
Word	Frequency
Rights	26
Belonging	16
Voting	14
Passport	13

The interviewees are not directly asked to provide a personal definition of citizenship in their own words. Rather, they are invited to choose three words that they most strongly associate with the concept of citizenship. This approach allows for a more nuanced and unfiltered understanding of how individuals understand citizenship without imposing a rigid framework or preconceived definitions. The three most commonly mentioned words, “rights,” “belonging,” and “voting,” provide a well-rounded view of how HSMs define citizenship as a combination of legal status, emotional attachment, and political engagement (Table 29). The emphasis on “rights” and “voting” aligns with a legalistic and participatory view of citizenship, where the ability to exercise certain rights and engage in democratic processes is paramount. Meanwhile, “belonging” introduces a more personal and emotional dimension, emphasizing the importance of feeling connected to the community and culture of the country. For HSMs, citizenship emerges as a dynamic and influential factor that permeates various aspects of their lives. As a result, they continuously navigate and negotiate their citizenship as a legal status, an emotional connection, and a means of participation in transnational everyday life, moving between the complex landscapes of both their country of origin and Greece. Most HSMs demonstrate a combined understanding of citizenship that encompasses both rights-based and participatory elements, viewing it as a relationship grounded in legal, and emotional connections:

“For me, citizenship means belonging to the country where I have rights. I view citizenship mainly as a political concept. It is tied to the country where I have my rights. The first time I genuinely felt like a British citizen was when I voted for the first time. Taking part in my first local election made me feel like I was actively contributing and exercising my political right to choose a representative.” (Oscar, UK, non-EU)

“I have never really thought what citizenship means. I believe it is belonging to a country.” (Domino, Italy, EU)

For some interviewees, citizenship serves as a profound and symbolic marker of identity and emotional connection to one’s country of origin. Malik highlights the complexities of migrant identities, where citizenship is a deeply personal and intergenerational bond to heritage and ancestry. His dedication to maintaining Afghan citizenship, despite the difficulties it has brought, mirrors a common trend among many highly skilled migrants. For them, maintaining a connection to their roots through citizenship is vital, as it significantly contributes to shaping their identity, ensuring a sense of continuity, and preserving cultural legacies:

“I want to keep my Afghan citizenship because it’s a part of my identity. If I have children in the future, I want them to understand that a part of them is connected to Afghanistan. It’s something deeply emotional for me. My parents are from Afghanistan, and holding onto this citizenship feels like an important link to my roots. It’s not just a responsibility; it’s a sense of emotional belonging to that place.” (Malik, Afghanistan, non-EU)

Oscar highlights that citizenship is not merely a passive legal status but rather an active engagement with the political structure of the state, where the possession of rights and involvement in democratic processes foster a sense of belonging. For Domino, belonging is more of an emotional attachment to the country, not necessarily connected to specific rights or active participation. This reflects a more passive and identity-based understanding of citizenship, where the sense of belonging comes from being part of a political community. These differing understandings indicate the complexity of the concept of citizenship and how the

sense of belonging encompasses legal-political dimensions and emotional-cultural connections.

The interview findings also suggest that citizenship plays a crucial role in providing individuals with a sense of security, stability, and belonging. For many, obtaining citizenship represents more than just legal recognition; it symbolizes permanence and rootedness in a particular society or country. It alleviates feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability, as citizens no longer have to fear being displaced due to changes in laws, political conflicts, or diplomatic issues. Citizenship ensures that individuals have protected rights, offering peace of mind and the ability to plan for the future with confidence:

“I think that citizenship makes me feel more rooted in this world. I feel more permanent. There are places I can go and stay permanently. There’s no longer the fear of being pushed out, or of laws changing, or conflicts arising whether diplomatic issues or otherwise. I know that, regardless of what happens, I have the full right to remain here.” (Vicky, Russia & UK & Greece, EU)

The survey data reveals that the majority of respondents from both groups define citizenship in legal and rights-based terms (Table 30). EU HSMs seem to place a slightly stronger emphasis on citizenship as a legal status and as the right to vote, reflecting an institutional, democratic, and civic understanding of citizenship. While the majority of non-EU HSMs also approach citizenship as EU HSMs, a few exhibit a comparatively stronger tendency to define citizenship in terms of national belonging. Defining citizenship with a reference to national identity is not an unexpected finding, as it has been similarly reflected in the interviews with a minority of HSMs. Unlike HSMs in Budapest, who do not place an emphasis on national identity, a few HSMs in Athens, particularly those from non-EU countries, refer to national identity to explain what citizenship means to them. Although, at first sight, this suggests a prevalent understanding of citizenship as a national belonging, their overall statements and practices uncover that they do not favor one group or nation over another, presenting nationalistic feelings, ideas, and ideals.

Table 30. Definition of Citizenship by Citizenship (Athens)

<i>Citizenship definition</i>	<i>EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>Non-EU Country Citizen</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>Citizenship is a legal status that entails certain rights and duties and an identity</i>	42,9%	40%	41,2%
<i>Citizenship is a relationship between an individual and a state</i>	23,2%	20%	21,3%
<i>Citizenship means unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty to a state and a nation</i>	-	1,3%	0,7%
<i>Citizenship is to have right to vote</i>	14,3%	11,3%	12,5%
<i>Citizenship means where you are from</i>	1,8%	1,3%	1,5%
<i>Citizenship is a belonging to a nation</i>	5,4%	11,3%	8,8%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%	100%	100%

The majority of those who mention national belonging are actually expressing a connection to the country as a whole, rather than to a specific ethnic or national group. For instance, Harry's explanation of citizenship clearly illustrates the impact of conceptual confusion and a complex understanding of citizenship:

“Citizenship is often linked to a specific country. Nationalism can create a sense of exclusivity because being a citizen usually involves a feeling of pride in the country to which you belong. This pride stems from a sense of belonging to a particular place and an identification with it. For example, as an Italian, supporting the national Italian team instills a sense of pride in being part of that nation. Additionally, citizenship is tied to the concept of the “right to entry,” as people are often restricted from entering certain places based on their citizenship status.” (Harry, UK & Italy, EU)

Harry links citizenship to a sense of pride in being a citizen of a country, which he describes as nationalism. However, this notion of pride in one's country is more aligned with patriotism than nationalism. Nationalism typically involves a stronger, often exclusive or superior, attachment to one's nation, while patriotism is about pride and love for one's country. The confusion seems to arise from his interchangeable use of “nation,” “nationalism,” and “citizenship,” leading to a blurred distinction between the legal, cultural, and emotional aspects of these

concepts. Despite the conflation, the quote expresses a patriotic sentiment, as it focuses on pride and a sense of belonging to one's country without the exclusionary or superiority-driven elements of nationalism. In the subsequent part of the interview, Harry also defines a "citizen as someone who has lived in a particular country and embraced its culture for many years." His idea of associating citizenship with a country's culture, offering a cultural open-mindedness (Viroli, 1995: 55), and contributing to it suggests a hallmark of patriotism, which emphasizes love for and commitment to the community, culture, and well-being of the country, rather than an exclusive preference for one's nation. Furthermore, such a patriotic stance aligns with cultural cosmopolitanism, which values cultural inclusivity and openness and the integration of diverse individuals into a shared community.

The conventional understanding of citizenship is challenged by some interviewees who emphasize the importance of global interconnectedness. Claire, for instance, envisions a more inclusive, flexible, and globally connected concept of citizenship, advocating for a reimagined citizenship that prioritizes shared human experiences and global responsibilities:

"You're limited to within the global framework. I think the concept of citizenship is extremely limiting. I would vote for the concept of citizens of the world as many of our transnational challenges transcend the narrow, arbitrary borders that split people, often in ways that feel philosophically outdated. From this perspective, I view citizenship as a limitation, especially considering how the economic power of one's country affects its recognition and perception by others. This, in turn, shapes how individuals from that country are perceived." (Claire, US & Greece, EU)

Highly skilled migrants' understandings of citizenship vary significantly based on individual experiences, cultural influences, and national contexts. HSMs interviewed in Budapest highly mention the state-imposed definition of citizenship and good citizen by signifying their personal autonomy over the imposed citizenship understanding and rejecting or negotiating with it. Aligning with this finding, many HSMs in Athens also point out the complexities of citizenship and the diverse interpretations in different socio-political contexts. For instance, Sareena stresses the

importance of maintaining infrastructure, respecting laws, and contributing to the common good, framing citizenship as an ethical and proactive commitment to collective responsibilities. Her viewpoint implies that true citizenship transcends formal or externally imposed definitions, instead of resting on personal and collective dedication to strengthening the community. As exemplified in her statement below, the majority of HSMs' sense of belonging is more closely linked to the country as a civic and geographical entity, rather than to an ethnic or nationalist identity. Such an understanding of citizenship centers on fostering unity, well-being, and a sense of duty, reflecting a fundamentally patriotic orientation:

“There are diverse political perspectives, and no unified concept of citizenship exists. Each group believes their interpretation of citizenship is the correct one. To me, citizenship comes with a responsibility to care for our roads, uphold our rules, and contribute to the well-being of our people. True citizenship, in my view, involves a commitment to these responsibilities.”
(Sareena, Lebanon, non-EU)

This sense of duty and ethical commitment to societal welfare also mirrors cosmopolitan ideals that prioritize the well-being of all communities and promote a sense of global responsibility. While Sareena speaks from a patriotic standpoint focused on her country, the principles she advocates are universal responsibilities that resonate beyond any one country. Her emphasis on shared duties and ethical obligations reflects a mindset that values the common good, not just within her own country but potentially on a global scale.

As indicated in Table 31, the responses of survey participants suggest that among HSMs in Athens, being a good citizen is primarily understood as adhering to laws, being aware of rights and duties, promoting equity and justice through cultural respect, and actively participating in civic life. Open-mindedness and empathy are also valued, while traditional notions of patriotic loyalty are less emphasized. This reflects a broader, inclusive, and civic-oriented understanding of citizenship, aligning with more modern, cosmopolitan values rather than patriotic sentiments. While there are still elements of traditional patriotic values, such as respect for the country's

culture and participation in voting, there is a noticeable shift towards cosmopolitan ideals.

Table 31. Understanding of Good Citizen (Athens)

<i>Understanding of good citizen</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>Always to vote in elections</i>	21,1%	39,4%	32,4%	2,8%	4,2%
<i>Always be aware of rights and duties and to obey laws and regulations</i>	26,8%	54,9%	18,3%	-	-
<i>Never try to evade taxes</i>	22,5%	43,7%	26,8%	7%	-
<i>Keep watch on the actions of government(s) and stay up to date</i>	28,2%	47,9%	19,7%	1,4%	2,8%
<i>Participate in social and political association</i>	19,7%	29,6%	40,8%	8,5%	1,4%
<i>Try to understand the reasoning of people with other opinions</i>	26,8%	50,7%	19,7%	1,4%	1,4%
<i>Advocate for equity and justice by respecting cultural diversity</i>	43,7%	42,3%	9,9%	4,2%	-
<i>Actively participate in social and economic life to contribute</i>	21,1%	59,2%	18,3%	1,4%	-
<i>Know the country's history, language, culture and traditions well</i>	35,2%	43,7%	18,3%	2,8%	-
<i>Always be ready to fight and die for the country with an unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty</i>	5,6%	9,9%	19,7%	32,4%	32,4%
<i>Love and support the country</i>	23,9%	28,2%	38,0%	8,5%	1,4%

Respondents place a strong emphasis on inclusive values like equity, justice, cultural diversity, empathy, and civic engagement, indicating a modern, global orientation in their understanding of citizenship. This balance suggests that respondents view citizenship not solely through a patriotic lens but also in a broader, more interconnected way that values universal rights, duties, and a commitment to shared human responsibilities. Their focus on inclusivity and understanding indicates a developing model of patriotic cosmopolitan citizenship that embraces cultural and moral cosmopolitanism while preserving aspects of patriotism centered on critical democratic engagement and cultural consciousness:

“I think the understanding of good citizen should be the same everywhere. We should comply with the laws, be tolerant to each other and we should not feel yourself superior to others, because we're all equal.” (Denisa, Romania, EU)



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This dissertation studied the lived transnational citizenship experiences and practices of highly skilled migrants to gain insight into how these experiences shape a unique understanding of citizenship, adopting a bottom-up approach. The main objective was to explore how and why these individual and shared experiences contribute to shaping a specific understanding of citizenship, which subsequently leads to the emergence of a unique kind of citizen. While focusing on defining the lived citizenship experiences and understanding their impact on citizens' practices and identity, I employed mixed method-grounded theory by conducting fieldwork in Budapest, Hungary, and Athens, Greece.

To explore the complexities of lived citizenship in a transnational context, this research initially drew on a diverse body of literature, including studies on citizenship, cosmopolitanism, patriotism, and everyday life. Second, Budapest and Athens were conceptualized as transnational spaces where citizenship is actively practiced and negotiated. Then, empirical findings from the fieldwork were summarized to illustrate the lived citizenship experiences of highly skilled migrants, shedding light on how they understand and navigate citizenship in the everyday context of these transnational settings. The analysis mainly focused on the role of EU citizenship in shaping these experiences.

5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the literature on citizenship and migration in three ways: First, the study proposes that only a holistic approach that involves all the dimensions of citizenship may accurately capture what lived citizenship experiences are what lived citizenship experiences are and why they matter for the subjective

citizenship understanding of individuals who perform citizenship beyond nation-states. The study advances the descriptive and analytical framework and thinking on the foundation, manifestations, and operationalization of citizenship from below, particularly underlining the significance of affective and subject-defining aspects of citizenship. Second, as highly skilled migrants' lived citizenship experiences reflect a mixture of patriotic and cosmopolitan ideas, ideals, and attachments, this study also displays the significance of cosmopolitanism and patriotism to the study of citizenship lies in their role in shaping the understanding, experience, and expression of citizenship. Third, this research went beyond the existing studies that focus on policy-oriented macro-level analyses of highly skilled migration.

This study reveals that, in our increasingly interconnected world, the concept of citizenship for highly mobile individuals, such as highly skilled migrants, is influenced not only by their experiences within their country of citizenship but also by their interactions with multiple countries. As a result, citizenship emerges as a lifelong learning process that transcends its traditional definition, which typically associates citizenship solely with legal status in a single state. Instead, for mobile individuals such as highly skilled migrants, citizenship becomes a multifaceted concept encompassing their broader experiences and connections across different political, economic, socio-cultural, and legal contexts. Their ability to navigate these diverse institutional frameworks influences their perceptions of their roles and positions as citizens and non-citizens, as well as their approach to citizenship. This perspective recognizes that their identities, sense of belonging, and practices are informed by their global mobility and overall lived experiences as members of different political communities. Their understanding of citizenship may incorporate values and practices from different cultures and systems, leading to a more holistic view of citizenship as a dynamic and evolving relationship rather than a fixed legal designation. This broader perspective challenges the conventional notion of citizenship as merely a legal affiliation with one state. Instead, it emphasizes the dynamic nature of citizenship as influenced by ongoing experiences and relationships in various contexts.

This dissertation offers a significant theoretical contribution to the concept of lived citizenship by reframing it as a comprehensive and relational process that

encompasses both the affective and identity-defining dimensions alongside legal status. By introducing the intertwined experiences of belonging and coexistence, the research highlights how citizenship is both shaped by and shapes highly skilled migrants' experiences and interactions within various socio-cultural and institutional contexts within and beyond nation-states. This approach moves beyond traditional legalistic and state-centric perspectives, emphasizing that individuals are not merely passive recipients of citizenship but active producers who negotiate their identity and sense of belonging in a lifelong learning process. It positions citizenship not only as a legal status but also as an identity and form of belonging, placing this equally significant aspect at the center of the analysis. The integration of affective and subject-defining dimensions into the analysis, this framework broadens the scope of citizenship studies to account for the diverse and fluid experiences of migrants, particularly within transnational contexts. It positions citizenship not only as a legal status but also as an identity and form of belonging, placing this equally significant aspect at the center of the analysis. Thus, the study not only reframes citizenship as a multi-layered and evolving concept but also paves the way for future research to explore the complex realities of being and becoming a citizen in a globalized world.

By exploring the interplay between cosmopolitanism and patriotism as spatial and emotional attachments, the study deepens the analytical depth of lived citizenship. It demonstrates how these affective dimensions are fundamental in shaping subjective understandings of citizenship and, consequently, distinct types of citizen identities in transnational contexts. This reframing enhances our understanding of the fluid boundaries between citizens and non-citizens and provides a nuanced lens through which to examine the complexities of citizenship in an increasingly interconnected world. Contributing to the concept of patriotic cosmopolitanism, the study bridges the gap between universal humanistic values and particular local attachments, demonstrating how migrants construct hybrid identities and redefine their membership within political communities. The findings demonstrate that lived citizenship is not merely about legal status or formal participation but is profoundly shaped by emotional connections and self-perceptions that span local, national, and global contexts. The study advances the conceptual discussion on patriotic

cosmopolitanism by showing how this blended identity enables migrants to form adaptable hybrid selves that reconcile their particularistic ties to their countries of origin with a universal appreciation for diverse cultures. These identities maximize the chances of recognition and participation in various localities while minimizing social, cultural, and political challenges. The narratives of highly skilled migrants reveal that they successfully reconcile their deep care for their own social and cultural values with an appreciation for diverse cultures and a commitment to equality. This amalgamation of multiple legal ties and layered senses of belonging enables them to navigate the complexities of transnational life with ease.

In a nutshell, this dissertation positions patriotism and cosmopolitanism not as opposing forces but as complementary frameworks that collectively shape the formation of subjective citizen identities. While it is not always a perfect coexistence as patriotic and cosmopolitan ideals may appear as conflicting in certain areas, such as migrants' political participation, HSMS' regard for their national and cultural identities coexists with a universal identification with humanity, challenging traditional notions that view patriotism and cosmopolitanism as mutually exclusive. This dual allegiance transforms citizenship into an everyday reality that profoundly affects their perceptions, actions, feelings, and self-positioning within and beyond political communities. This perspective provides a fresh analytical lens to explore how diverse attachments and sentiments coexist, enabling a more inclusive and less conflictual understanding of citizenship in transnational settings. It enhances the analytical depth of lived citizenship by acknowledging the complexity of migrants' affective ties and their active role in shaping citizenship practices, thus paving the way for a more nuanced understanding of citizenship in an increasingly interconnected world. This conceptualization also provides a foundation for future studies exploring the evolving dynamics of contrasting concepts in transnational contexts.

This research moves beyond traditional policy-oriented, macro-level analyses of highly skilled migration by focusing on the experiences of highly skilled migrants from their perspective. The study reveals that highly skilled migrants do not constitute a homogeneous group of highly mobile, desired, and privileged individuals. Instead, the study demonstrates that many highly skilled migrants,

particularly non-EU HSMs, face various vulnerabilities stemming from their citizenship and legal residence status, socio-cultural perceptions, institutional structures, and challenges related to their countries of origin, such as foreign relations and international reputation. Additionally, EU HSMs are often overlooked in international migration research due to their classification as "mobile EU citizens" rather than migrants. However, despite their distinct legal statuses influencing perceptions, both EU and non-EU HSMs share similar expatriate lifestyles in the European countries where they reside. The study also uncovers that, despite the EU's principle of non-discrimination, many EU migrants report experiencing discrimination based on language, socio-cultural biases, and socio-economic conditions. While existing research has focused on intra-EU migration from Eastern to Western Europe and the unequal treatment and racialized discrimination faced by Eastern Europeans, there is limited knowledge about the conditions and experiences of intra-EU migrants in semi-periphery countries like Hungary and Greece. This study reveals that EU HSMs generally receive fair and equal treatment in accessing the labor market, education, and social services in these countries. However, they may encounter cultural discrimination in Hungary and bureaucratic challenges in Greece. Finally, challenging the widespread portrayal of highly skilled migrants as apolitical, self-interested individuals, this research suggests that they exhibit significant levels of social and political engagement, presenting themselves as locally, nationally, and globally responsible individuals.

5.2 Empirical Contribution: The Emergence of Patriotic Cosmopolitan Citizens in Budapest and Athens

This study conducts a comparative analysis of the lived citizenship experiences and practices of highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens, drawing on 62 semi-structured interviews and an online survey (N=177). This comparison reveals how the cosmopolitan urban environments of socio-politically complex and economically challenging national settings shape the lived experiences of migrants as political agents. By providing insights from a micro-level perspective, the research makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of highly skilled migration in Hungary and Greece, paving the way for further studies in this field. This contrast between HSMs in Budapest and Athens highlights how perceptions of citizenship vary based

on local contexts and the diverse backgrounds of migrant communities. The comparative analysis of highly skilled migrants' lived experiences of belonging and coexistence in Budapest and Athens highlights notable differences influenced by the unique socio-political and economic landscapes of Hungary and Greece, as well as the diverse backgrounds of the migrants. These elements lead to variations in how they practice and understand citizenship within each context.

First, in contrast to HSMs in Budapest, those in Athens tend to employ a more diverse mix of attributes in their self-identification, placing greater emphasis on citizenship, national identity, and individualistic attributes as central aspects of their self-identity. While for the majority of HSMs in Budapest, national identity plays a more peripheral role in how they understand and define themselves, in Athens, national identity emerges as a far more central and prominent element of self-conceptualization for many interviewees. External identification matters in both cases for both EU and non-EU HSMs' self-conception. The analysis of data in both cases indicates that there is a negative attitude towards people coming from certain countries, such as those from the Middle East, as they are immediately associated with certain attributes of the country, such as religion. Islamophobia in this context plays a crucial role as an exclusionary tool in both Hungary and Greece, being relatively higher in Greece. Furthermore, although gender, religion, and race are generally viewed as less significant social categories for the self-identity of HSMs in Budapest, some HSMs in Athens regard these aspects as fundamental to their sense of self. Notably, unlike those in Budapest, several HSMs from Western Europe and the United States frequently reference the concept of "whiteness" to explain how their racial identity influences their feelings of security and social acceptance within Greek society.

Second, in Budapest, the majority of HSMs from the EU strongly identify with their European identity, frequently placing a greater emphasis on their EU citizenship over their national citizenship. They see themselves as part of a broader, supranational network, benefiting from the shared resources and rights that EU membership offers, including freedom of movement, access to social services, and the right to live and work. This identification reflects a clear prioritization of their EU citizenship, suggesting a sense of belonging that is closely tied to the broader

European community. In contrast, highly skilled EU migrants in Athens demonstrate a different pattern. While they all culturally identify as European, they express a relatively weaker attachment to the concept of EU citizenship. Additionally, both EU and non-EU HSMs interviewed in Athens often highlight the instrumental value of citizenship in offering legal and economic benefits rather than emotional attachment which is often expressed by HSMs in Budapest. For these migrants, their European identity does not carry the same weight in defining their sense of belonging, and instead, their national citizenship holds a more prominent place in their self-identification. In this context, EU citizenship assumes a more peripheral, secondary role for EU HSMs in Athens, supplementing but not overshadowing their national affiliations. Since this research participants are categorized as EU or non-EU based on their citizenship status at the time of the interviews and survey, the findings may reflect the experiences of naturalized EU citizens who might still be affected by the lingering impacts of restrictions they encountered as non-EU citizens. This may be a reason for weaker attachment to the EU among EU HSMs in Athens. Therefore, it is crucial to further investigate the social and economic challenges faced by EU HSMs to gain a deeper understanding of the root causes behind their negative perceptions in the Greek context.

Despite these, the legal and social privileges afforded by EU citizenship, such as freedom of movement and access to rights across member states, reinforce a sense of supranational belonging to the EU. Many EU HSMs view themselves as part of a larger European community, which shapes their sense of self not just in relation to their country of origin but also to the EU as a whole. This attachment to Europe reflects a cosmopolitan outlook, where the idea of being a European citizen signals inclusivity and access to a shared regional identity, transcending national borders.

Third, the data from Athens indicates a more balanced distribution of positive, mixed, and negative sentiments, with a dominant positive outlook and a significant number of respondents expressing mixed emotions. This suggests that Athens may offer a more welcoming atmosphere, allowing migrants to comfortably express their unique identities and cultural backgrounds, which fosters a stronger sense of belonging and connection to the community. In contrast, Budapest exhibits greater polarization, with a notably high proportion of negative feelings and fewer

respondents reporting mixed emotions. The heightened negativity observed in Budapest could indicate more complex challenges related to social acceptance and integration, possibly due to a political and social landscape that hinders the expression of individual particularities, leading to feelings of frustration and alienation toward their country of origin among migrants.

These differences may also be partially attributed to the diverse origins of the migrants in each city. In Budapest, participants hail from a wide range of countries across different continents, contributing to a broader diversity of experiences and perspectives that may complicate integration efforts as individuals navigate varied cultural contexts. Conversely, the migrants in Athens predominantly come from specific regions such as North America, Europe, and the Middle East, resulting in shared cultural elements and experiences that contribute to more positive sentiments. Overall, these findings highlight the significant role of local environments, personal identities, and migration experiences in shaping how highly skilled migrants understand and relate to their citizenship in each context. They underscore the importance of considering both the socio-political landscape and the demographic composition of migrant populations when addressing issues of integration and belonging in transnational settings. By examining these affective aspects, future studies can explore how emotions such as frustration, alienation, acceptance, and connectedness play a role in shaping migrants' understanding of citizenship beyond legal frameworks and formal rights. Moreover, the study's focus on the diverse origins of migrants in each city points to the importance of cultural diversity and shared experiences in influencing feelings of belonging. That is to say, this perspective could open new avenues for exploring the intersection of emotions, social acceptance, and citizenship, particularly in diverse and complex urban settings.

Fourth, the findings indicate that, much like their counterparts in Budapest, most interviewees in Athens emphasize liberal values such as openness, respect for diverse social and cultural groups, and a sense of cultural hybridity. They place a strong emphasis on the moral worth of humanity without explicitly labeling themselves as cosmopolitan. However, a notable difference emerges in how highly skilled migrants in Athens self-identify with the category of "foreigner." In the

Greek context, the term foreigner (*xenos*) has increasingly been used as a shorthand for “migrant,” often carrying racialized undertones to foster an “us versus them” mentality. Among HSMs in Budapest, this category of identification seems popular, as it conveys a sense of universal foreignness without referencing specific social or cultural identity markers.

Despite these differences, EU and non-EU HSMs in both cities often reject labels such as “migrant” or “immigrant” and instead reclassify themselves using more specific or broader terms like “foreigner,” “foreign worker,” “world citizen,” “human being,” “cosmopolitan,” or “expatriate” that lack racial, ethnic, or cultural connotations. The label of “migrant” is not a preferred or desired category for self-identification. The study asserts that the redefinition of categories in migration studies within a crisis context, coupled with the negative and pejorative associations attached to commonly used terms like “migrant,” “asylum seekers,” and “refugee,” significantly influences contemporary perceptions of HSMs.

The combined analysis of data from Budapest and Athens reveals that while Hungary exhibits a broad and generalized xenophobia and anti-immigrant stance, Greece demonstrates a more targeted and selective form of anti-immigrant sentiment. In Hungary, negative attitudes towards immigrants are widespread and often directed towards migrants as a whole, regardless of their background, reflecting a broader narrative of exclusion. This generalized hostility is rooted in political rhetoric and policies that portray immigration as a national threat, contributing to a pervasive atmosphere of mistrust and rejection toward newcomers. In contrast, Greece's anti-immigrant sentiments are not as uniformly applied but are instead selectively directed towards specific groups based on certain social, cultural, or national characteristics. For instance, discrimination and negative perceptions may be more pronounced towards asylum seekers or refugees from particular regions, while migrants from Western countries or those perceived to have higher social or economic status might experience a more welcoming reception. This nuanced approach in Greece suggests that public attitudes towards migrants are influenced by factors such as cultural proximity, economic contributions, and socio-political contexts, resulting in a more differentiated landscape of acceptance and exclusion.

Fifth, HSMs in Athens tend to be more culturally and politically integrated, driven by their frequent interactions with Greek citizens, socializing, and forming familial ties through marriages with Greeks. This deeper level of engagement fosters a stronger sense of connection and patriotic responsibility towards Greece, which in turn leads to a heightened interest in Greek politics. In contrast, such integration is less evident among HSMs in Budapest, where many describe living in a social “bubble” that keeps them largely disconnected from local Hungarian communities. They often report having few friendships or contacts with Hungarians, and none of the interviewees in Budapest were married to Hungarian citizens, whereas ten HSMs in Athens were married to Greek citizens.

These dynamics contribute to higher rates of naturalization, greater social engagement, and deeper integration among HSMs in Greece compared to those in Budapest. HSMs in Athens also tend to approach citizenship pragmatically, prioritizing stability, security, and better opportunities and reducing bureaucratic challenges. Conversely, their counterparts in Budapest place more emphasis on emotional attachment to the country in their decision-making process regarding citizenship. The mandatory military service requirement for Greek males, however, appears to be a significant deterrent for male HSMs seeking citizenship, leading to a noticeable gender disparity in naturalization rates, as female migrants, who are not subject to this obligation, are more likely to pursue Greek citizenship. This gender-based legal obligation highlights how differing responsibilities can shape migrants' decisions, warranting further investigation into the underlying causes of this imbalance.

Citizenship and race are recognized as primary factors in the discrimination experienced by HSMs in both Athens and Budapest. The findings indicate that in Athens, racial identity is closely linked to experiences of discrimination for both EU and non-EU HSMs, while in Budapest, race does not appear to be a significant factor for EU HSMs. Notably, EU HSMs report slightly higher levels of discrimination in Athens compared to Budapest, suggesting that all HSMs may face greater risks of exclusion in the Greek context.

Sixth, compared to Budapest where both EU and non-EU HSMs do not face serious obstacles in bureaucratic and documentation processes, HSMs in Athens face more structural challenges to access rights and services and encounter more bureaucratic difficulties regardless of their citizenship. Despite the obstacles, HSMs in Athens feel a stronger sense of belonging to Greece, while their counterparts in Budapest show a weaker sense of attachment to Hungary. This is largely due to the stronger anti-immigrant stance in Hungary compared to Greece. While language barriers significantly hinder HSMs' interactions with public and private institutions in Budapest, the primary challenges faced in Athens revolve around complex bureaucracy and ineffective communication with officials; however, HSMs in Athens, with some knowledge of Greek, are better equipped to navigate administrative processes, fostering a greater sense of confidence and entitlement in accessing services.

Seventh, in Budapest, HSMs' trust in political authorities is strengthened through opportunities for active participation in policy-making, creating a positive feedback loop where acknowledgment of their contributions reinforces both trust and civic engagement. Conversely, in Athens, a sense of distrust and dissatisfaction with political authorities drives HSMs to engage politically with a more proactive and preventative approach, motivated by a heightened sense of patriotic duty. These contrasting dynamics highlight how trust and political participation can emerge from different motivations and experiences, shaping distinct pathways of civic engagement in each context. In contrast to those in Budapest, HSMs in Athens are more politically involved in their host country, Greece. However, despite this higher level of engagement with Greek politics, their participation in political movements, protests, and elections remains limited, similar to their counterparts in Budapest.

Some highly skilled migrants in both Budapest and Athens express ethical concerns about external voting, feeling uneasy about influencing the political affairs of their country of origin where they no longer live. Likewise, some are hesitant to participate in elections in their host country, despite being granted political rights, as they believe that only citizens should have the privilege of such rights. Recognizing migrants' right to vote in local elections and other political rights granted to them as non-citizens, alongside their feeling of being outsiders, highlights the challenge of

fully closing the gap between universal belonging and local political involvement, an inherent tension within cosmopolitan ideals. In both instances, political participation emerges as the sole area where HSMs' patriotic cosmopolitan identities reveal a clear conflict between patriotic and cosmopolitan principles.

Eighth, the survey data reveals that HSMs in Athens, similar to those in Budapest, often view themselves as cultural ambassadors, expressing strong pride in representing their heritage. However, their sense of responsibility towards their country of origin varies, with mixed feelings about direct contributions and economic prioritization. While many are committed to sharing their culture, fewer prioritize their home country's development over that of Greece or elsewhere, indicating a balanced, pragmatic approach shaped by their current circumstances. This suggests that HSMs navigate a complex dual sense of belonging, blending patriotic ties to their roots with a cosmopolitan outlook. Their attitudes reflect a multilayered identity that values both cultural heritage and openness to global integration, demonstrating an evolving balance between local and transnational responsibilities.

While citizenship is often pursued as a means of gaining security, mobility, and privilege, it is important to recognize that it can also present unforeseen risks depending on geopolitical contexts and global perceptions. Although many interviewees in both Budapest and Athens consider obtaining Hungarian or Greek citizenship to enhance their sense of safety and dual citizens express increased flexibility due to broader opportunities and protections, the reality is more complex. The power dynamics of international relations can adversely affect the safety and treatment of citizens abroad, as the political actions of one's country may lead to biased treatment, discrimination, exclusion, or heightened scrutiny. Thus, while citizenship can serve as a valuable asset, it can simultaneously become a liability, illustrating that it is not an unequivocal safeguard. This duality underscores the need to consider how citizenship, as a marker of identity in transnational settings, may sometimes expose individuals to vulnerabilities shaped by the ever-changing dynamics of global politics.

Considering all these points, the findings from Athens and Budapest highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of citizenship as experienced by HSMs. Citizenship, often taken for granted within one's home country, becomes a crucial consideration when moving to a new place, as its absence reveals the emotional and practical implications of lacking legal status, rights, and belonging. The HSMs' narratives about their experiences emphasize the evolution of citizenship from a passive, inherent aspect of identity to an actively navigated and negotiated status that intertwines legal, emotional, and participatory dimensions. HSMs express a combined understanding of citizenship, associating it with rights, belonging, and participation, while navigating dual identities between their country of origin and their host country. The perception of citizenship as both a source of security and a marker of cultural pride underscores its role in fostering a sense of stability and attachment in a transnational context. Although some HSMs express connections to their home countries in patriotic terms, their perspectives reflect a broader, inclusive view that aligns with a cosmopolitan appreciation for cultural diversity and collective responsibilities. This nuanced understanding of citizenship challenges traditional notions tied strictly to legal status or national identity, instead embracing a dynamic relationship grounded in cultural openness, ethical commitment, and emotional attachment to the broader community.

The empirical findings suggest that both EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants in Budapest and Athens navigate a complex process of blending their attachments and identities to form hybrid selves adaptable to various localities, maximizing the chances of recognition in every context and minimizing social, cultural, and political challenges. Based on this outcome, it is asserted that the narratives of the highly skilled migrants about citizenship experiences and practices reflect their positioning as patriotic cosmopolitans who reconcile cultural and moral cosmopolitanism with constructive patriotism. Their conception of citizenship extends beyond national boundaries, incorporating cosmopolitan values and ideals, and reshaping their identity as citizens not only within their homeland (*patria*) but also within the larger global community (*cosmos*). However, although the patriotic cosmopolitan positioning of EU and non-EU highly skilled migrants and the question of whether all interviewees fit that description, significant differences observed between HSMs

in Budapest and Athens non-EU HSMs in Budapest exhibit this tendency more prominently compared to EU HSMs, as EU HSMs' cosmopolitanism is already nurtured by their EU citizenship within the EU context.

The analysis of the lived citizenship experiences of HSMs reveals that these individuals, as rooted or patriotic cosmopolitans, exhibit critical and reflective attitudes not only toward their country of origin but also toward their country of residence and the distinct political and socio-cultural dynamics of various places, regardless their formal and informal attachments. They highly acknowledge global responsibilities, such as addressing climate change, human rights, and economic inequalities by indicating humankind as the ultimate moral concern. However, a comparison of the patriotic cosmopolitanism exhibited by HSMs in Budapest and Athens reveals noticeable variations in the balance between their patriotic and cosmopolitan attachments. In Budapest, the narratives of these migrants reflect a harmonious integration of both attachments, where individuals seamlessly blend their sense of national loyalty with a broader, cosmopolitan outlook. HSMs, here, display little to no observable tension between their national connections and global values, suggesting that their dual allegiances coexist without conflict. In contrast, the experiences of HSMs in Athens suggest a more complex relationship between these attachments.

This study redefines citizenship by focusing on lived experiences of belonging and coexistence, impacting theory, policy, integration practices, public perception, and future research, and encouraging a more inclusive understanding of citizenship. It invites further empirical studies on the lived citizenship experiences of various groups of individuals, including other migrant populations, youth, children, women, and minorities. Such further studies may investigate how lived citizenship experiences differ across different groups, socio-economic backgrounds, legal statuses, and socio-cultural contexts, offering a fuller understanding of citizenship. By emphasizing the distinct challenges and opportunities encountered by highly skilled migrants, the study opens pathways for further research on this type of migration. This study shifts away from conventional policy-driven, macro-level analyses by centering on the firsthand experiences of highly skilled migrants, allowing their unique perspectives to inform the research. By emphasizing these

lived experiences, the study provides a foundation for more citizen-informed policies that are attuned to the specific needs, identities, and contributions of migrants, ultimately fostering more inclusive and responsive approaches to migration governance. It also encourages future studies to investigate the influence of non-state actors, such as NGOs, community groups, and transnational networks, in shaping individuals' experiences of citizenship. Understanding their impact may shed light on alternative avenues through which citizenship is experienced and enacted outside formal state mechanisms. The study paves the way for longitudinal research tracking how migrants' experiences of citizenship evolve as they navigate different cultural, social, and political environments.

The study encourages policymakers to address the lived realities and needs of migrants by acknowledging the diverse ways in which migrants experience citizenship. By fostering a more inclusive and adaptable framework, political authorities may better support migrants' integration, ensuring that policies are responsive to the complexities of transnational lives. This approach not only benefits migrants but also strengthens social cohesion and leverages the full potential of diverse talents within the EU. The study, at its core, promotes a more expansive and nuanced understanding of citizenship that goes beyond legal definitions to include personal perceptions, emotional bonds, and active engagement across various contexts. It establishes a foundation for future research and policy-making aiming to build more inclusive societies that acknowledge and value the diverse contributions of all members within a political community.

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APPENDICES

A. ETHICAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL



Bilkent Üniversitesi

Akademik İşler Rektör Yardımcılığı

Tarih : 31 Mart 2023
Gönderilen : Pınar Dilan Sönmez Gioftsios
Danışman : Ioannis N. Grigoriadis
Gönderen : H. Altay Güvenir
İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başkanı
Konu : "Everyday ..." çalışması etik kurul onayı



Üniversitemiz İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu, 31 Mart 2023 tarihli görüşme sonucu, "Everyday Citizenship and Reconstituting Subjectivity: Experiences of the EU and Non-EU Citizen Highly-skilled Migrants in Greece and Hungary" isimli çalışmanız kapsamında yapmayı önerdiğiniz etkinlik için etik onay vermiş bulunmaktadır. Onay, ekte verilmiş olan çalışma önerisi, çalışma yürütücüler ve bilgilendirme formu için geçerlidir.

Bu onay, yapmayı önerdiğiniz çalışmanın genel bilim etiği açısından bir değerlendirmedir. Çalışmanızda, kurumumuzun değerlendirmesi dışında kalabilen özel etik ve yasal sınırlamalara uymakla ayrıca yükümlüsünüz.

Kovid-19 salgını nedeniyle konulmuş olan kısıtlamaların yürürlükte olduğu süre içinde, tüm komite toplantıları elektronik ortamda yapılmaktadır; aşağıda isimleri bulunan Bilkent Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu Üyeleri adına bu yazıyı imzalama yetkisi kurul başkanındadır.

Etik Kurul Üyeleri:

Ünvan / İsim	Bölüm / Uzmanlık	
Prof.Dr. H. Altay Güvenir	Bilgisayar Mühendisliği	Başkan
Prof.Dr. Erdal Onar	Hukuk	Üye
Prof.Dr. Haldun Özaktaş	Elektrik ve Elektronik Müh.	Üye
Doç.Dr. Işık Yuluğ	Moleküler Biyoloji ve Genetik	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Burcu Ayşen Ürgen	Psikoloji	Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Didem Özkul McGeoch	İletişim ve Tasarımı	Yedek Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi A.Barış Özbilen	Hukuk	Yedek Üye

Kurul karar/toplantı No: 2023_03_31_01

Bilkent Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Hakkında:

- Kurul aşağıda ünvan, isim, uzmanlık alanı/bölümü belirtilen 5 asli ve 2 yedek üyeden oluşur:
Prof.Dr. H. Altay Güvenir (Başkan), Bilgisayar Mühendisliği
Prof.Dr. Erdal Onar, Hukuk
Prof.Dr. Haldun Özaktaş, Elektrik ve Elektronik Mühendisliği
Doç.Dr. Işık Yuluğ, Moleküler Biyoloji ve Genetik
Dr.Öğr. Üyesi Burcu Ayşen Ürgen, Psikoloji
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Didem Özkul Mcgeoch (Yedek Üye), İletişim ve Tasarımı
Dr.Öğr. Üyesi Arif Barış Özbilen (Yedek Üye), Hukuk
- Kurul toplantılarına katılamayan asli üyelerin yerine yedek üyeler görevlendirilir.
- Kurul en az 3 üye ile toplanabilir.
- Bir başvurunun onay alması konusunda olumsuz oy kullanan üyeler bunu onay belgesindeki isimlerinin yanına muhalefet notu düşerek belirtirler.
- Bir başvurunun onay alabilmesi için en az 3 üyenin olumlu oy kullanması gerekir. Onay belgesinde isimlerinin yanında muhalefet notu bulunmaması, o üyelerin olumlu oy kullandıkları anlamına gelir.

B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Experiences of being highly-skilled migrants

1. How did you decide to move to Budapest/Athens?
2. How would you self-identify, in general? If I would ask you who you are, how would you respond?
3. As a person who live and work in Budapest/Athens, how do you self-identify? Why?
4. How do you feel about your socio-economic conditions in Hungary/Greece comparison to other foreign groups and locals?
5. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of being a highly-skilled individual in Budapest/Athens? What do you think about the labor market in Hungary/Greece?

B. Understanding of being citizen and non-citizen in informal and formal sites

6. How is citizenship defined and perceived in your country?
7. Do you remember when was the first time you thought about citizenship and being a citizen of the X country? Why was that? Could you please specify some moments that remind you are a citizen of your country and make you think about that?
8. Could you please tell me three words that you relate to citizenship when you think about that? Why these words?
9. How do you think being X country citizen and having this formal state-citizen relationship with your country affect you and your life trajectory?
10. How do you think and feel about being an EU or non-EU citizen in Hungary/Greece? Why?
11. Have you ever thought to apply for Hungarian/Greek citizenship? If yes, why and if you have already applied what are your experiences? If you get it, do you consider to leave your current citizenship? Why? How does acquiring Hungarian/Greek citizenship affect your life?

12. How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel? Why? How do these feelings affect you and your life? How does obtaining two citizenships/obtaining a Hungarian/Greek citizenship make you feel?
13. Do you think you are well-informed about your rights and responsibilities as a citizen of your country of origin and a non-citizen living and working in Hungary/Greece?
14. What rights and responsibilities do you have in Hungary/Greece and in your own country?
15. Considering your interactions and relations with Hungarian/Greek public and private, how would you describe your experiences with these institutions?
16. Do you think you should have a right to say on important decisions taken by the Hungarian/Greek Government and participate in decision-making processes about the migration governance and all issues like taxation, education, health system etc. that may affect your life as a resident of the country? Why? How do you express yourself? Do you think you are heard when you express yourself?
 - a. What are the social, political, or/and economic issues which you notice, care about, and work to change in Hungary/Greece? Why do you want to take a part and how do you think taking a part make you feel like?
 - b. What are the issues which you notice, care about, and work to change about your country of origin despite residing abroad? Why?
 - c. Have you ever participated in any type of social and/or political movements, protests, campaigns, volunteering or/charity activities in Hungary/Greece and in your origin country? What is/are it/they about?
 - d. To what extent are you following Hungarian/Greek politics, political and social events happening in the country? Which media do you often and in which language?
 - e. Have you ever voted in a) Hungarian/Greek elections b) European Parliament Elections c) Elections of your country of origin?
17. What is home for you? What make a place home for you? Could you please pin in the map the place(s) you call home?

C. INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT LIST

No	Pseudonym	City	Method	Age	Gender	EU/Non-EU	Country of Birth	Citizenship	Occupation	Education	Length of stay
1	Marta	BUD ⁷	Face to face	36	Female	EU	Croatia	Croatia & Hungary	BID Manager	MA	17 years
2	Milan	BUD	Face to face	32	Male	Non-EU	Serbia	Serbia	Future Talent & Employer Branding Lead	BA	8 years
3	Jack	BUD	Face to face	37	Male	Non-EU	Canada	Canada & UK	Clinical Data Manager	BSc	13 years
4	Ali	BUD	Face to face	32	Male	Non-EU	Türkiye	Türkiye	Sourcing Manager	MA	9 years
5	Maritza	BUD	Face to face	36	Female	Non-EU	Mexico	Mexico	Talent Management Operations Regional Lead	BA	8 years
6	Malak	BUD	Face to face	32	Female	Non-EU	Morocco	Morocco	Financial Associate	MA	7 years
7	Shameem	BUD	Face to face	37	Female	Non-EU	Tajikistan	Tajikistan	Freelance Consultant & Former Language Teacher	MA&MBA	5 years
8	Sovhona	BUD	Face to face	26	Female	Non-EU	India	India	Teacher	MA	6 years
9	Daniel	BUD	Face to face	37	Male	EU	Ireland	Ireland	Customer Service Specialist	BA	14 years
10	Lorenzo	BUD	Face to face	35	Male	EU	Italy	Italy	Contract Services Associate	MA	4 years
11	Omar	BUD	Face to face	36	Male	Non-EU	Iraq	Iraq	R&D Engineer	MBA	8 years
12	Sia	BUD	Face to face	26	Female	EU	Greece	Greece & Australia	Senior Accountant	BA	5 years
13	Massimo	BUD	Face to face	36	Male	EU	Italy	Italy	Team Manager	BA	9 years
14	Gulzhan	BUD	Face to face	35	Female	Non-EU	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan	Client Liaison	MA	5 years
15	Adem	BUD	Face to face	28	Male	EU	Türkiye	Türkiye & Portugal	Test Project Manager	BSc	4 years
16	Luka	BUD	Face to face	31	Male	EU	Croatia	Croatia	Compliance Associate	BA	16 years
17	Tadeu	BUD	Face to face	34	Male	EU	Portugal	Portugal	Accounting Specialist	MA	10 years

⁷ Abbreviation of Budapest

18	Antonio	BUD	Face to face	30	Male	EU	Italy	Italy	Risk Associate	MSc	5 years
19	Gizem	BUD	Face to face	27	Female	Non-EU	Türkiye	Türkiye	PhD Student & Business Owner	PhD	4 years
20	Jakub	BUD	Face to face	40	Male	EU	Slovakia	Slovakia	Project Manager	PhD	5 years
21	Magnim	BUD	Face to face	36	Male	Non-EU	Togo	Togo	Valuation Controller	MSc	7 years
22	Gulnar	BUD	Face to face	42	Female	Non-EU	Tajikistan	Tajikistan	Tendering Manager EU Framework Contract	MA	6 years
23	Pedro	BUD	Face to face	36	Male	EU	Spain	Spain	Coordinator Accounts Payable	MSc	6 years
24	Zoe	BUD	Face to face	47	Female	EU	Netherlands	Netherlands	Head of Learning and Development	BA	27 years
25	Miltos	BUD	Face to face	31	Male	EU	Greece	Greece	Credit Portfolio Risk Int. Analyst	BA	6 years
26	Ewa	BUD	Face to face	37	Female	EU	Poland	Poland	Operational Manager	MA	11 years
27	Juan	BUD	Face to face	29	Male	EU	Spain	Spain	Senior IT Analyst	BA	5 years
28	Maja	BUD	Face to face	30	Female	Non-EU	Serbia	Serbia	Biodiversity Policy Officer	MSc	7 years
29	Iza	BUD	Face to face	30	Female	EU	Poland	Poland	Global Associate Representative	BA	7 years
30	Anna	BUD	Face to face	29	Female	Non-EU	Ukraine	Ukraine	Associate Manager	MBA	7 years
31	Harun	ATH ⁸	Face-to-face	37	Male	Non-EU	Türkiye	Türkiye	Recruitment and Selection Coordinator	BA	13 years
32	Melisa	ATH	Face-to-face	35	Female	Non-EU	Türkiye	Türkiye	Trader	BA	10 years
33	Aksana	ATH	Face-to-face	35	Female	Non-EU	Belarus	UK	Postdoctoral Researcher	PhD	3 years
34	Ella	ATH	Face-to-face	60	Female	EU	Denmark	Denmark	Communication Expert	BA	26 years
35	Sandra	ATH	Face-to-face	54	Female	EU	Germany	US	Start-up Venture Capital	BS	19 years
36	Olena	ATH	Face-to-face	36	Female	Non-EU	Ukraine	Ukraine	Operational Excellence Partner	MA	10 years
37	Hanna	ATH	Face-to-face	35	Female	EU	Belarus	Sweden	Customer Service Team Leader	BA	7 years
38	Margaret	ATH	Face-to-face	65	Female	EU	US	US & Greece	Artist	MA	30 years
39	Louis	ATH	Face-to-face	34	Male	EU	France	France	Engineer Support	Vocational Degree	2 years

⁸ Abbreviation of Athens

40	Denisa	ATH	Face-to-face	39	Female	EU	Romania	Romania (In process for French citizenship)	Translator & Assistant Manager	PhD	2 years
41	Hamza	ATH	Face-to-face	38	Male	Non-EU	Tunisia	Tunisia	Customer Representative	BA	5 years
42	Alisa	ATH	Face-to-face	39	Female	Non-EU	Russia	Russia	Customer Service Representative	BA (5 year program 4+1 year master)	8 years
43	Harry	ATH	Online	35	Male	EU	UK	UK & Italy	Senior Account Manager	BA	14 years
44	Oscar	ATH	Face-to-face	30	Male	Non-EU	UK	UK	PhD Student & Tour Leader	Master	2 years
45	Lia	ATH	Face-to-face	38	Female	EU	Israel	Israel & Poland	Partner Business Manager	1 year Art Studies	4 years
46	Sara	ATH	Face-to-face	34	Female	Non-EU	Serbia	Serbia & Greece	Quality Manager	BSc	24 years
47	Dina	ATH	Face-to-face	33	Female	Non-EU	Lebanon	Lebanon	Training Manager	BBA	8 years
48	Victor	ATH	Face-to-face	50	Male	Non-EU	Nigeria	Nigeria & Greece	HP Transactional Sales Manager	LLB	20 years
49	Sareena	ATH	Face-to-face	35	Female	Non-EU	Lebanon	Lebanon	Account Manager	MA	3 years
50	Malik	ATH	Online	26	Male	Non-EU	Iran	Afghanistan	Protection Assistant	BA	7 years
51	Antione	ATH	Face-to-face	32	Male	EU	France	France	Customer Service Representative	MA	8 months
52	Marco	ATH	Online	31	Male	EU	Italy	Italy	Musician/Teacher	BA	6 years
53	Tanja	ATH	Online	41	Female	EU	Serbia	Serbia & Greece	Digital Marketing Specialist	MBA	14 years
54	Mila	ATH	Online	36	Female	EU	Serbia	Serbia & Greece	Sales Manager	BA	24 years
55	Edward	ATH	Online	34	Male	Non-EU	Palestine	Palestine & Temporary Jordanian Passport	IT Support Engineer	BA	8 years
56	Mary	ATH	Online	26	Female	EU	Syria	Palestine & Greece & Residency Card for Palestinians from Syria	Dentist	BA	2,5 years
57	Poco	ATH	Online	26	Female	EU	Syria	Palestine & Greece & Residency Card for	Doctor	BA	2,5 years

								Palestinians from Syria			
58	Elina	ATH	Online	36	Female	Non-EU	Russia	Russia	ACM & EMEA Inside Sales and Marketing Manager	MA	18 years
59	Domino	ATH	Online	30	Female	EU	Italy	Italy	Trainer/Music ian	BA	6 years
60	Vicky	ATH	Online	35	Female	EU	Russia	Russia, UK, Greece	Event Planner	MA	1,5 years
61	David	ATH	Online	25	Male	Non-EU	UAE	India	Trader - Marine Fuels	BA	2 years
62	Claire	ATH	Online	42	Female	Non-EU	US	US & Greece	Associate Researcher	Master	18 years



D. CODEBOOK

Section 1: Eligibility

Q1 Current Residency

	Do you currently live in Budapest, Hungary/Athens, Greece?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Budapest / Athens

Section 2: Screening

Q2 Age

	NUMERICAL RESPONSE

Q3 Gender

	SINGLE RESPONSE 1=Female 0=Male 2=Other 3=Prefer not to say

Q4 Level of education

	What is the highest level of education you have completed?
	SINGLE RESPONSE

Q5 Country of birth

	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE

Q6 Please specify whether you are an EU country citizen or a third country citizen

	SINGLE RESPONSE 1= EU Country Citizen 0= Non-EU Country Citizen

Q7 Dual Citizenship

Q8 Marital Status

	SINGLE RESPONSE
	Married/Single/Registered partnership/Other/Prefer not to say
	SINGLE RESPONSE Yes/No

Q10 Religion

	SINGLE RESPONSE
	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE: Christian/Muslim/Jewish/Hindu/Buddhist/Deist/Atheist/I am not religious/Other/Prefer not to say

Q11 Political Identification

	SINGLE RESPONSE					
		Far left	Left	Centre	Right	Far right
	How do you politically position yourself in the political spectrum?	1	2	3	4	5

Q12 Employment Status

	SINGLE RESPONSE
	Part-time work/Full-time work/Self-employed/Out of work and looking for a work/ Out of work but not currently looking for work/Student

Q13 Sector of Employment

	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE
	Private sector/Public sector/Non-profit sector/Other

Q14 Occupational Category

	In which occupational category you define your occupation?
	Legislator and Senior Officials of Government/Special-interest Organizations / Manager / Physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals / Life science and health professionals / Teaching professionals in every level of education Other professionals

Q15 Position

	Please specify the title of your current position (If you are a PhD student, please answer it as 'PhD student' and if you are currently out of work, you can write "N/A")
	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE

Q16 Monthly Personal Net Income

	Which of these describes your monthly personal net income?
	SINGLE RESPONSE € 0 / €1 to €699 / €700 to €999 / €1000 to €1499 / €1500 to €1999 / €2000 to €2499 / €2500 and greater

Q17 Economic Satisfaction

	MULTIPLE RESPONSES					
		Definitely yes	Yes	Maybe	No	Definitely no
	Are you satisfied with your job and financial situation in Budapest, Hungary/Athens, Greece?	5	4	3	2	1

Q18 Searching Job Opportunities Elsewhere

	Do you check job opportunities in other countries than Hungary and your country of origin?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Yes/No

Q19 Languages

	Please select the language(s) you can speak.
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES

Q20 Length of Stay in Hungary/Greece

	How long have you been in Hungary?
	SINGLE RESPONSE 0 to 3 years / 3 to 5 years / 5 to 7 years / 8 years and more

Q21 Residence Type

	Please select the language(s) you can speak.
	SINGLE RESPONSE Registration Card for EU citizens / Residence Card for Non-EU citizen spouse of EU citizens / Long-term residence permit for third country nationals / Short-term residence permit for third country nationals / EU Blue Card / Permanent Residence Card for EU citizens / Other

Section 3: Self-identification and Sense of Belonging**Q22 Self-identification in Hungary/Greece**

	Which of the following one best describes the way you think of yourself in Budapest, Hungary?
	SINGLE RESPONSE I am a foreigner / I am a migrant / I am a citizen / I am an expatriate / I am a world citizen/cosmopolitan / I am a foreign employee / I am a European / I am an economical migrant / I am an asylum seeker / I am a white migrant / I am a refugee / I am a temporary citizen / I am a nomad / I am a country citizen who lives abroad / Other

Q23 Self-identification

	Please specify how you identify yourself if you chose the option 'other' in the previous question
	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE

Q24 Definition of Migrant

	With which of the following definitions you define who migrant is?
	SINGLE RESPONSE A migrant is someone who is moving from place to place to find job and better opportunities / A migrant is someone who has been forced to flee his or her home because of war, violence or persecution / A migrant is someone who is seeking international protection from dangers in his or her home country / A migrant is someone who makes a conscious decision to leave his or her home and move to a foreign country with the intention of settling there / All of them / None of them

Q25**Spatial Attachment**

	As far as you are concerned personally, how close do you feel yourself to the places indicated below?					
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES					
		Very close	Close	Not very close	Not close at all	Can' t choose
Q25_city_of_origin	Your town/city in your country of origin	5	4	3	2	1
Q25_country_of_origin	Your country of origin	5	4	3	2	1
Q25_country_of_residence	Hungary	5	4	3	2	1
Q25_city_of_residence	Budapest	5	4	3	2	1
Q25_Europe	Europe	5	4	3	2	1

Q25_region	The region/continent of your country of birth (e.g. America, Asia, Middle East, North Africa etc.)	5	4	3	2	1

Q26 Primary Self-identification

	With which of the following one you identify yourself at first?
	SINGLE RESPONSE With the country you are a citizen of / With where you are born / With your ethnicity / With your career and job / With your religion / With your gender / With where you live None of them / Other

Q27 Home Understanding

	How much you agree or disagree with the statements below:					
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q27_social_networks	My home is where my family and friends are	5	4	3	2	1
Q27_career	My home is where I have good job and life opportunities	5	4	3	2	1
Q27_belonging	My home is where I feel belonged to	5	4	3	2	1
Q27_nowhere	I don't feel anywhere like m home	5	4	3	2	1
Q27_birth_place	My only home is where I was born	5	4	3	2	1
Q27_property	My home is where I have a property	5	4	3	2	1

Q27 _multiplicity	I have multiple places where I feel like a home	5	4	3	2	1

Section 4. Citizenship Understanding

Q28 Citizenship Understanding

	Which of the following two statements better define the concept of citizenship for you?
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES Citizenship is a legal status that entails certain rights and duties and an identity / Citizenship is a relationship between an individual and a state / Citizenship is a belonging to a nation / Citizenship is to have right to vote / Citizenship is to have a passport / Citizenship means unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty to a state and a nation / Citizenship means where you are from

Q29 Citizenship Understanding

	Have you ever thought about the meaning of citizenship before?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Yes / No

Q30 Citizenship Understanding

	Please write three things (words) that come to your mind when you think about citizenship
	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE

Q31 Civic Education

	Have you ever got a citizenship education at any point of your life?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Yes / No / I don't remember

Q32

Good Citizen

	There are different opinions as to who a good citizen is. As far as you are concerned personally, how much do you agree or disagree with the statements below? A good citizen...
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q32_good_citizen_voting	Always to vote in elections	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_rights_duties	Always be aware of rights and duties and to obey laws and regulations	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_tax	Never try to evade taxes	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_informed	Keep watch on the actions of government(s) and stay up to date	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_sp_participation	Participate in social and political association	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_empathy_tolerance	Try to understand the reasoning of people with other opinions	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_equity_justice	Advocate for equity and justice by respecting cultural diversity	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_se_participation	Actively participate in social and economic life to contribute	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_history_culture	Know the country's history, language, culture and traditions well	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_loyalty	Always be ready to fight and die for the country with an unquestioning faithfulness and loyalty	5	4	3	2	1
Q32_good_citizen_love_support	Love and support the country	5	4	3	2	1

Q33 Relationship with the Country of Origin

SINGLE RESPONSE						
		Very bad	Bad	Neither bad nor good	Good	Very good
	How do you describe your relations with the state(s) you are a citizen of? (Scale from 1 to 5 which 1 stands for Very bad and 5 for Very good)	1	2	3	4	5

Q34 Citizenship Feelings

	How does being a citizen of your country of origin make you feel like? (Please choose only three options)
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES Burden / Cared for / Confused / Desperate / Disrespected / Equal / Fair / Fear / Free / Frustrated / Happy / Insecure / Limited / Lucky / Privileged / Proud / Respected / Secure / Shameful / Unequal / Unlimited / Worthless / Valued

Q35 Citizenship Feelings (EU/Non-EU)

	If you are an EU citizen, how does being an EU citizen or if you are a non-EU citizen, how does being a non-EU citizen make you feel like? (Please write your feelings with few words)
	OPEN ENDED QUESTION – SINGLE RESPONSE

Q36 Naturalization

	Have you ever applied for Hungarian/Greek citizenship?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Yes / No

Q37 Naturalization Status

	If you've already applied, did you acquire Hungarian/Greek citizenship?
	SINGLE RESPONSE Acquired / Rejected / In progress

Q38 Reason for applying or not applying Hungarian/Greek citizenship

	Which of the following statements may best explain your reason for applying or not applying Hungarian/Greek citizenship?
	SINGLE RESPONSE To be an EU citizen / To get citizenship of another country to increase my chances for better and more secure life / I feel I emotionally and culturally attach to Hungary/Greece / I would like to live in Hungary/Greece for the rest of my life / I would like to get citizenship of another country to renounce the citizenship of my country of origin / I am already an EU citizen and I don't need it / I have long-term/permanent residence and I have access all rights and services that I need / I don't see my future in Hungary/Greece / If I acquire Hungarian/Greek citizenship, I have to renounce citizenship of my home country and I don't want it / I have Hungarian/Greek origin

Q39 Relationship with Hungary/Greece

	SINGLE RESPONSE					
		Very bad	Bad	Neither bad nor good	Good	Very good
	How do you describe your relations with Hungary/Greece?	1	2	3	4	5

Section 5. Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence

Q40 Political Participation (Political interest)

SINGLE RESPONSE						
		Not interested at all	Slightly interested	Moderately interested	Interested	Very Interested
	How interested would you say you personally are in politics?	1	2	3	4	5

Q41

Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence

Based on your experiences, how much do you agree or disagree with the statements below?		MULTIPLE RESPONSES				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q41_not_feeling_equal_citizen	I have never felt myself as an equal citizen in my country of origin	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_good_experiences_institutions	I have usually had good experiences with public and private institutions in the places I have lived	5	4	3	2	1

Q41_cannot_travel	I cannot easily travel to different countries freely because of my passport	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_social_economic_advantages	I have social and economic advantages	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_hardwork	I feel I always have to work more than people from many other countries to get what I want	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_n_impact_of_country	People's first reactions are usually negative when I say where I am from	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_p_impact_of_country	People usually behave me very good when they hear where I am from	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_respect_cultural_values	I have always been taught to respect and maintain cultural values and traditions	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_sociocultural_patriotic_responsibility	I feel responsible for teaching my culture and traditions to other people and representing my country	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_economic_patriotic_responsibility	I feel responsible for contributing to my country of origin and supporting its people	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_care_global_justice_equality	I care about global justice and equality supporting a borderless world in which all human beings belong to a single community	5	4	3	2	1
Q41_patriotic_feelings	I, as a citizen, feel shame when my country of origin acts poor; feel proud when my country of origin acts well	5	4	3	2	1

Q42

Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Trust to political system and politicians

How much you agree or disagree with the statements below:		MULTIPLE RESPONSES				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q42_not_heard	I don't think authorities care much what people like me think	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_trust_in_government	Most of the time we can trust people in government(s)	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_distrust_towards_politicians	Most politicians are in politics only for their personal benefits	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_political_parties	Political parties encourage people to become active in politics	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_protection_citizens	States always protect their citizens and act in favor of them	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_protection_non-citizens	States always protect foreigners living within their borders and secure their rights	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_fair_equal_treatment	Government authorities usually have a fair and equal treatment to everyone regardless of their position in society	5	4	3	2	1

Q42_believe_in_making_difference	I believe that I can make a difference	5	4	3	2	1
Q42_believe_in_justice	I believe in justice	5	4	3	2	1

Q43

Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Political Participation

	Please indicate to what extent you have done different forms of political actions indicated below:					
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES					
		Have done it many times	Have done it couple of times	Have done it once	Have not done but might do it	Have not done yet and would never do it
Q43_petition	Signed a petition	5	4	3	2	1
Q43_demonstration	Took part in a demonstration	5	4	3	2	1
Q43_political_protest	Attended a political meeting or rally	5	4	3	2	1
Q43_contact_authorities	Contacted, or attempted to contact, a politician or a civil servant to express your views	5	4	3	2	1
Q43_contact_media	Contacted or appeared in the media to express your views	5	4	3	2	1
Q43_online_activism	Expressed political views on the internet	5	4	3	2	1

Q44 **Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Political Participation (Voting Behavior)**

	SINGLE RESPONSE					
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
Q44_voting_behavior	How often do you vote in the elections of the country/countries you are a citizen of?	1	2	3	4	5

Q45 **Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Political Participation (Voting)**

	While living in Budapest/Athens, have you ever voted in..			
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES			
		Yes	No	N/A
Q45_parliamentary_co	Parliamentary elections of your home country(ies) via posting system or in the Consulate	1	0	2
Q45_European	European parliamentary elections	1	0	2
Q45_parliamentary_HU/GR	Hungarian parliamentary election	1	0	2
Q45_local_HU/GR	Hungarian local elections	1	0	2
Q45_presidential	Presidential elections of your home country(ies)	1	0	2
Q45_referendum	Any referendum	1	0	2

Q46

Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Economic Participation

		How much you agree or disagree with the statements below:				
		MULTIPLE RESPONSES				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q46_financial_info_formation	I regularly follow the news from the media and to be aware of social and financial matters	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_saving	I have been always taught to be careful while spending and advised to make savings	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_responsibility_econ_contribution	I should work hard and be productive to benefit other people and contribute to economy	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_self-interest	I don't care about economic policies as long as my financial condition is stable and good enough	5	4	3	2	1

Q46_sense_of_irresponsibility	I don't feel responsible for helping other people	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_economic_insecurity	I have never economically felt secure in my life	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_economic_power_for_recognition_respect	I should financially empower myself to be recognized and respected by other people	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_challenged	I have many limitations to find job both in my country of origin and abroad even if I am qualified	5	4	3	2	1
Q46_economic_patriotism_co	Economic development of my country is more important for me than the economic development of Hungary/Greece or elsewhere	5	4	3	2	1

Q47

Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Social and Cultural Participation

	Please indicate to what extent you have done different forms of social and cultural actions indicated below:
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES

		Have done it many times	Have done it couple of times	Have done it once	Have not done it but might do it	Have not done yet and would never do it
Q47_boycot	Boycotted, or deliberately bought, certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_donation	Donated money or raised funds for a social, political, or economic activity	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_voluntarism	Participate as a volunteer in community organization or event	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_support_social_networks	Help neighbors or relatives when they are in need	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_cultural_activities	Participate in cultural activities (going to theatre, cinema, opera, concert etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_cultural_days	Celebrate important cultural days while living abroad	5	4	3	2	1

Q47_consume_cultural_products	Consume cultural products while living abroad	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_civic_engagement	Participate as a volunteer in local or/and national social projects in the place(s) you live abroad	5	4	3	2	1
Q47_cultural_engagement	Take part in local and national cultural days, event and festivals in the place(s) you live abroad	5	4	3	2	1

Q48		Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Membership		
	Are you a member of...			
	MULTIPLE RESPONSES			
		Yes	No	I am not a member but I support the activities and participate in events
Q48_member_union	A trade union, business, or professional association	1	0	2
Q48_member_party	A political party	1	0	2
Q48_member_religious_group	A church or other religious organization	1	0	2
Q48_member_cultural_group	A sports, leisure or cultural group	1	0	2
Q48_member_voluntary_association	A local, national or international voluntary association/organization	1	0	2
Q48_member_hometown_association	A hometown association (E.g. Association of Greek People in the US or Foundation of People from Bari)	1	0	2

Q49 Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Discrimination

	Have you ever faced with discrimination because of your social or/and cultural identity?
	SINGLE RESPONSE 1=Yes 0=No

Q50 Citizenship Experiences of Coexistence - Reason of Discrimination

	Which of the following one do you think might be the reason you faced discrimination?
	SINGLE RESPONSE (Race / Ethnicity / Citizenship / Gender / Religion / Political Stance / Other)