



# A TASTE OF HOME

IMMIGRANT  
GASTRONOMY IN  
THESSALONIKI

By: Nathan Brumble, Andrew Carlton,  
Katee Harrington, Jacob Nguyen

# A Taste of Home: Immigrant Gastronomy in Thessaloniki

An Interactive Qualifying Project submitted to the faculty of  
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Bachelor of Science By:

Nathan Brumble  
Andrew Carlton  
Katee Harrington  
Jacob Nguyen

Date:  
May 4th, 2023

Report submitted to:  
Panos Remoundos and Paraskevi Tarani with the Creativity Platform  
Professor Robert Hersh and Professor Darko Volkov  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

This report represents work of WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on its website without editorial or peer review. For more information about the projects program at WPI, see <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Projects>

# Abstract

Our project investigated immigrant-owned food enterprises in Thessaloniki, Greece to illuminate how they impact the city's gastronomic identity. Through interviews with business owners and employees, we identified the importance of these enterprises in the immigrant community, how native cuisines can provide comfort to immigrants, and how food facilitates the formation of relationships. We uncovered and mapped a network of connections between businesses that can be extended to investigate the ever-growing immigrant community in Thessaloniki.



# Acknowledgements



**We would like to give a special thanks to the following people who have helped our project successful during our IQP experience:**

#### Creativity Platform

Panos Remoundos  
Paraskevi Tarani

#### WPI Advisors

Professor Robert Hersh  
Professor Darko Volkov

#### Our Co-Researchers

Smaro Katsangelou  
Alkisti Chatzigiannidou

All business and organizations taking time to speak with us!

**WPI**



# Executive Summary

Over 100,000 immigrants have settled in Greece since 2019 due to its proximity to the bridge connecting the Middle East to Europe (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2020). Thessaloniki has been home to multiple migration events with the arrival of Sephardic Jews in the 15th century, the arrival of Christians from Asia Minor in 1922, the arrival of Kurdish political refugees in the 2010s, and up to the most recent arrival of Syrian refugees in 2015.

Food entrepreneurship, such as starting a restaurant or mini-market, can be a vehicle for integration for immigrants in their host countries (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021; Birdthistle et al., 2019). Through food entrepreneurship, immigrants have been able to achieve economic success (Altinay & Altinay, 2006), nurture social relationships, and improve their psychological and hedonic well-being (Al-Sayed, 2021). In addition, immigrant owned restaurants serve as important cultural spaces for others in the community (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021).

The goal of this project was to investigate how immigrants have been able to start and sustain food-related businesses in Thessaloniki and how immigrant communities have benefited from these enterprises, largely restaurants and mini-markets. Specifically, we focused on immigrant-run food enterprises within the Σ4 district of Thessaloniki in the northwestern sector of the city.

Important context for our research involved an integrative framework developed by Lubana Al-Sayed, who did a case study with 34 Syrian refugees to determine how cuisine is meant to satisfy psychological, social, and hedonic goals. Functional benefits relate to achieving physical and psychological health, symbolic benefits help nurture social relationships and express any relation and identity to specific groups, and hedonic benefits include the sensory experiences and emotions that are related to food (Al-Sayed, 2021). These goals are combined to create the idea of social well-being, which include social acceptance, integration, actualization, contribution, and coherence. The study revealed how the satisfaction in food-related life was tied to these previously mentioned benefits. Our project aimed to see whether the immigrant food business owners and their customers in Thessaloniki fit this framework.



## Approach

The goal of this project was to investigate how immigrants have been able to start and sustain food-related businesses in Thessaloniki and how immigrant communities have benefited from these enterprises, largely restaurants and mini-markets. Specifically, we focused on immigrant-run food enterprises within the Σ4 district of Thessaloniki in the northwestern sector of the city. To achieve this goal, we identified the following five objectives:

- Investigate how refugees and immigrants start and sustain food related businesses through interviews with business owners and NGOs;
- Interview owners of immigrant-run enterprises to learn their stories and experiences with running a business
- Map the locations of Middle Eastern food enterprises to understand where they are in reference to each other;
- Delineate the refugees' social networks that help build a strong community as well as mediate their integration in Thessaloniki;
- Identify the impact these enterprises have on the surrounding community through observations and interviews with business owners and employees.

## Results

Our findings are organized by the restaurants and mini-markets that we visited during our fieldwork.

For each venue, we discuss how the enterprise started, the immigrants' journey to Thessaloniki, and the community they cater to. The overarching themes that emerged from our fieldwork include:

- The role food plays in facilitating the formation of new relationships;
- The sense of community and belonging established by these enterprises;
- The feeling of home provided by authentic Middle Eastern cuisines;
- Apparent cultural friction impacting the ease of integration;
- The desire of immigrants to maintain their identity;
- Gathering places within the city and place-making for immigrants.

At the beginning of our project, we walked the streets of the Σ4 district to identify all of the Middle Eastern food enterprises present. Once we mapped the locations of these enterprises, we noticed a high concentration of these enterprises in and around Kleisouras Street. Upon this observation, we conducted a case study of the impact of the enterprises in the area of Kleisouras Street. We interviewed two restaurants and one mini-market in this area: Damascus Flower, Kurdish Food, and Baghdad Market.

### Damascus Flower

Damascus Flower Restaurant is a Syrian restaurant around the corner from Kleisouras Street. We conducted multiple in-depth interviews with an owner, and two cooks. These interviews gave us insight on the importance of the restaurant to the Middle Eastern community. We found that Damascus Flower has a strong and lively immigrant community around it that utilizes the restaurant as a gathering space to achieve collective social well-being. This community was especially active and festive during the Holy month of Ramadan, where Damascus Flower prepared traditional Ramadan meals for people to break their fasts. These dishes also provided comfort and a sense of home to the immigrant community.

The owners of Damascus Flower are preparing to open a Greek restaurant in downtown Thessaloniki. This new enterprise will be nearly entirely Greek-run, besides the owners being Syrian. The owners have decided to pursue this opportunity to attract more customers, as Syrian food does not attract much of the Greek population.

### Kurdish Food

Kurdish Food is the only restaurant with Middle Eastern cuisine located on Kleisouras Street, and is co-owned by a Greek chef named Mr. Dimitris, and a Kurdish immigrant named Aris. The two owners

decided to serve a fusion of Greek and Kurdish dishes. Similar to Damascus Flower, Kurdish Food offers a warm and welcoming environment for the immigrant community. By sharing his home cuisine with the immigrant population, Aris is able to make social contributions to work towards social well-being.

Through our interview with Dimitris, he revealed that he plans for Kleisouras Street to be developed into a hub for the immigrant community to gather and share their culture. He plans to do so, by “buying or renting other properties in the area to make businesses catered to the Arabic community”. To cook both the Kurdish and Greek dishes, Kurdish Food employs a Kurdish chef and a Greek chef. Both chefs solely speak their native language, which makes communication in the kitchen challenging.

We also had the chance to interview a frequent customer named Aristotelis. He enjoys the environment that Kurdish Food offers and often brings friends to socialize. Aristotelis visits Kurdish Food often, as they offer similar dishes to what he ate growing up. This reminder of home helps him achieve social well-being through fulfilling the hedonic goal of experiencing nostalgia.

## Middle East Restaurant

Middle East Restaurant is located in the center of the city, and is owned by a Kurdish man named Aziz. His restaurant caters to the Middle Eastern community selling halal dishes, such as falafel and chicken shawarma. Aziz opened up his business with previous knowledge and experience from his father’s restaurant in Baghdad. He also used financial capital from his friends and family back home to open his restaurants. During the holy month of Ramadan, he brought free food to his local mosque for people to break their fast. His food allowed individuals associated with the mosque to bond over shared experiences while promoting a healthy social well-being.

## Baghdad Market

Baghdad Market is located on the corner of Kleisouras Street next to one of the aforementioned restaurants of focus, Damascus Flower. In our interviews with an employee and owner, Petras and Ahkmad, we learned about the difficulties of starting a business in Greece, the demographic of clientele, and popular items sold. We observed that the market acts as a gathering space for the immigrant community to congregate and socialize. During Ramadan, the Muslim community gathered in and around the store, which ultimately promoted their social well-being by satisfying a symbolic goal of associating with a religious group.



## Conclusions

Through our fieldwork, we have seen the benefits of preparing and consuming food and the effect it has on the community. These restaurants and mini-markets offer support to each other by developing business partnerships while offering employment opportunities for people in their community. In addition to this, these businesses serve as community gathering spaces where people of similar ethnicity and background can socialize and form new connections. Cuisine plays a role in promoting an individual's social well-being, as it allows one to build social relationships, and experience pleasure from a reminder of home. These developed relationships provide a sense of belonging for immigrants who are in a foreign land and contribute to one's social well-being. The networks that we uncovered displayed how interconnected the immigrant population is, and this social cohesion is driven by the power of cuisine.

When we walked around our district of focus, we noticed that Thessaloniki is still under development with construction sites scattered all over the city. Future projects could include how to develop the surrounding community with the input from the Middle Eastern community that we highlighted during our research. Having input from these business owners and employees would help build up the proposed hub for the Middle Eastern community proposed by Mr. Dimitris. A case study done with how the people we interviewed can contribute to the proposed plans for the area would be crucial, given that this is their community and population that is being impacted.



# Meet Our Team



Pictured left to right:

**Jacob Nguyen, Katee Harrington,  
Nathan Brumble, Andrew Carlton**

WPI Project Team

## About Us

**Jacob Nguyen** is a 3rd year student from Westwood, MA, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering. He is also pursuing minors in Business and Data Science. He enjoyed exploring the city and diverse gastronomy of Thessaloniki.

**Katee Harrington** is a 3rd year student studying Industrial Engineering from Golden, Colorado. She is also pursuing her Master's degree in Business Analytics. She has loved the opportunity to explore Thessaloniki and trying all the wonderful foods the city has to offer.

**Nathan Brumble** is a 3rd year student from Mansfield, MA, pursuing his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering. He has really enjoyed the opportunity to travel abroad, and experience a new culture.

**Andrew Carlton** is a 3rd year student from Methuen, MA. He is pursuing his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering. He has valued the opportunity to experience and learn about other cultures.

# Authorship

**This report is a result of an equal contribution from all authors.**

**Jacob Nguyen** is responsible for the sections relevant to immigrant entrepreneurship, starting a business, and mini-markets.

**Katee Harrington** is responsible for the sections relevant to social capital, social networks, and No Name Restaurant.

**Nathan Brumble** is responsible for the sections relevant to history, mapping, and Middle East Restaurant.

**Andrew Carlton** is responsible for the sections relevant to benefits of entrepreneurship, impact of businesses, and Damascus Flower.



# Table of Contents

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>Meet Our Team</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>Authorship</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>XII</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction to Immigrant Gastronomy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Understanding Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Greece</b>	<b>2</b>
Brief History of Immigration to Thessaloniki	2
Immigrant vs. Refugee	2
Mother of Migration	2
Challenges Immigrant Food Businesses Face in Greece	4
Challenges of Running a Business as an Immigrant	4
Business Necessities and Barriers	4
Impact of Immigrant-Owned Food Enterprises	5
Motives for Entrepreneurship	5
How Immigrant-Owned Restaurants and Mini-Markets Benefit the Community	5
Integration and Solidarity	5
The Hidden Terrain of Immigrant Gastronomy	6

# Table of Contents

x

Chapter	Page Number
<b>Chapter 3: Our Approach</b>	<b>7</b>
Goal and Objectives	7
Starting and Sustaining Food Related Businesses	7
Interviewing Immigrant-Owned Food Enterprises	8
Social Network Analysis	8
Spatial Mapping	9
Enterprises' Impact on the Surrounding Community	9
<b>Chapter 4: Stories of Immigrant Gastronomy</b>	<b>11</b>
Σ4 District	11
Restaurants	13
Damascus Flower	13
Abd Kader	16
Mamdouh	17
Fatmah	18
No Name Restaurant	19
Aris Pepekidis	20
Dimitris	21
Greek and Kurdish Chef	22
Aristotelis	24
Middle East Restaurant	25

# Table of Contents

Chapter	Page Number
Mini-Markets	27
Baghdad Market	27
Limitations	29
<b>Chapter 5: Concluding Thoughts and Areas for Future Research</b>	<b>30</b>
Areas of Future Research	30
Closing Thoughts and Reflection	31
<b>Sources</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>35</b>
Appendix A: Interviews with Restaurants	35
Appendix B: Interviews with Mini-Markets	37
Appendix C: Interviews with Organizations	39

# List of Figures

<b>Figure Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
1	Map of Thessaloniki with the Σ4 district highlighted	1
2	Data on Syrian Asylum Seekers	2
3	Map of Greek Islands and Turkey	3
4	Map of Kurdistan and Surrounding Nations	3
5	Migrant Population Density of Thessaloniki	3
6	Integrative Framework	6
7	Mamdouh, a Chef at Damascus Flower, Carrying a Traditional Syrian Dish	7
8	Team at Restaurant Conducting Interviews	8
9	Blank Map of the Σ4 District	9
10	Team and Co-Researchers	10
11	Map of the Neighborhood from Walking the District	11
12	City Wall Area	12
13	Middle East Restaurant Storefront	12
14	Kassandrou Street	12
15	Map of Kleisouras Street	12
16	Location of Damascus Flower	13
17	Young Man Praying in Damascus Flower	13
18	Several People Working in Damascus Flower Kitchen	14
19	Traditional Ramadan Dishes	14
20	Damascus Flower TikTok Account	15
21	Damascus Flower Menu	15

# List of Figures

<b>Figure Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
22	Abd Kader Portrait	16
23	Mamdouh Portrait	17
24	Fatmah Portrait	18
25	Location of Kurdish Food	19
26	Kurdish Food Storefront	19
27	Aris Portrait	20
28	Kurdish Food Window with Prepared Food	20
29	Traditional Sour Milk	21
30	View of Kleisouras Street	22
31	2 Chefs from Kurdish Food	22
32	Greek Chef at Kurdish Food	23
33	Kurdish Chef at Kurdish Food	23
34	Aristotelis Portrait	24
35	Middle East Restaurant Storefront	25
36	Location of Middle East Restaurant	25
37	Tables and Tea at Middle East Restaurant	26
38	Picture of Shawarma and Falafel	26
39	Location of Markets Near Kleisouras Street	27
40	Petras Portrait	28
41	Shelf at Baghdad Market	29
42	Team at UNHCR Office	30
43	Team in Creativity Platform Office	31

# Chapter 1: Introduction to Immigrant Gastronomy

Over 100,000 immigrants have settled in Greece since 2019 due to its proximity to the bridge connecting the Middle East to Europe (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2020). Thessaloniki has been home to multiple migration events with the arrival of Sephardic Jews in the 15th century, the arrival of Christians from Asia Minor in 1922, the arrival of Kurdish political refugees in the 2010s, and up to the most recent arrival of Syrian refugees in 2015.

Food entrepreneurship, such as starting a restaurant or mini-market, can be a vehicle for integration for immigrants in their host countries (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021; Birdthistle et al., 2019). Through food entrepreneurship, immigrants have been able to achieve economic success (Altinay & Altinay, 2006), nurture social relationships, and improve their psychological and hedonic well-being (Al-Sayed, 2021). In addition, immigrant owned restaurants serve as important cultural spaces for others in the community (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021).

Our project, sponsored by Creativity Platform, a non-profit organization based in Thessaloniki, Greece, sought to investigate the hidden terrain of immigrant gastronomy in the city and map food related social networks within the immigrant community.

The goal of this project was to investigate how immigrants have been able to start and sustain food-related businesses in Thessaloniki and how immigrant communities have benefited from these enterprises, largely restaurants and mini-markets. Specifically, we focused on immigrant-run food enterprises within the Σ4 district of Thessaloniki in the northwestern sector of the city.

We conducted numerous interviews with the owners, employees, and customers of immigrant run restaurants and mini-markets to understand their personal stories and experiences. These stories help illuminate the importance of food in providing comfort and forming relationships for immigrants in a new country.

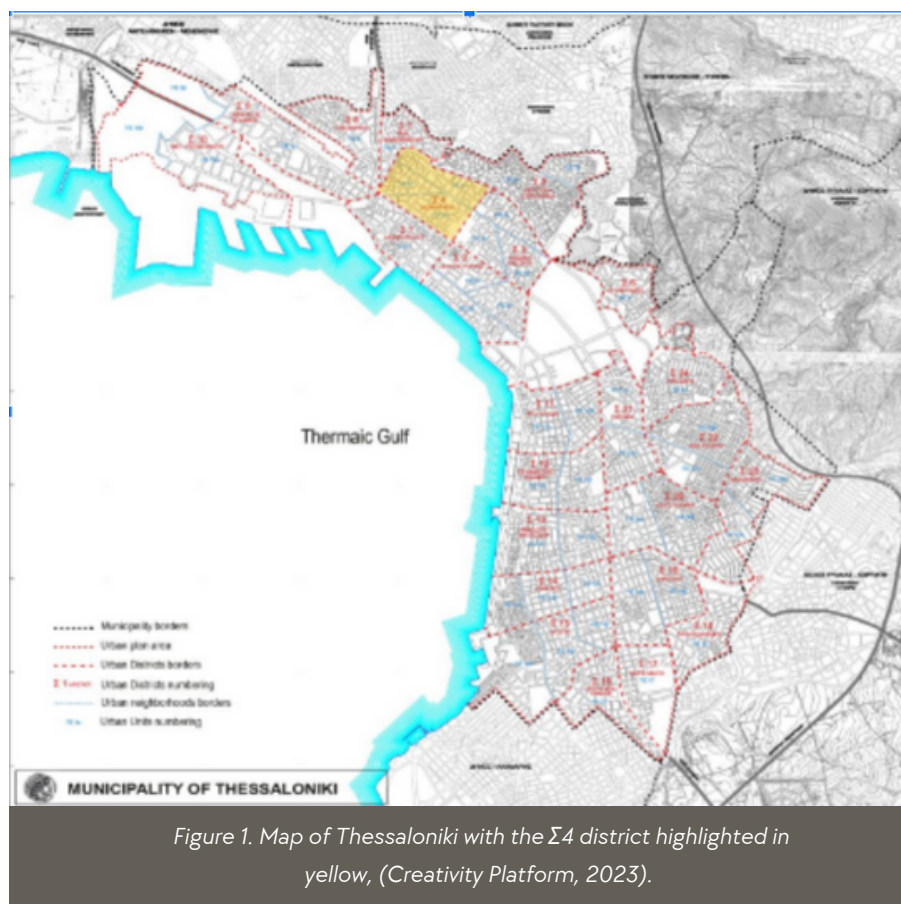


Figure 1. Map of Thessaloniki with the Σ4 district highlighted in yellow, (Creativity Platform, 2023).



# Chapter 2: Understanding Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Greece

## Brief History of Immigration to Thessaloniki

### Immigrant vs. Refugee

An important distinction to make in the context of our study is the difference between a refugee, an immigrant, and an asylum seeker. It is common in literature for these terms to be used interchangeably, but there are legal differences that determine what they can and cannot do in their host society. According to the UNHCR, "Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country" (UNHCR, 2022). Applying to become a Greek citizen normally requires one to produce various documents such as tax records and birth certificates (Residence-Greece, 2023). However, due to the sudden circumstances when leaving their home country, refugees often cannot produce the necessary documents for the immigration process to go smoothly.

Before receiving the legal status of a refugee, people are classified as an asylum seeker. In Greece, asylum seekers have the right to free mainland refugee housing, and basic free

healthcare. However, before they are registered, asylum seekers are not legally allowed to work. Failure to follow Greek laws and regulations can result in losing their rights as an asylum seeker and could lead to removal from the country. Legal refugees have more rights than asylum seekers, but this does not mean that these rights are sufficient for a livable situation. For example, refugees can apply for residential permits that are valid for one to three years, but it takes a minimum of seven years to be able to apply for citizenship. It can be difficult for refugees to utilize bank loans during this time period, and this framework can discourage them from attempting to find permanent housing or business locations (UNHCR, 2021). A final note to make is the definition of an immigrant in contrast to that of a refugee. An 'immigrant' simply refers to someone who moved from their country of origin to a new one for any reason (economic, personal, etc.) where they intend to permanently stay. Immigrants make a purposeful choice to move to a new country after doing personal research on economic and residential options. Immigrants are able to return to their home country and have much more stability in their new country compared to refugees and asylum seekers (International Rescue Committee 2018).



Figure 2: Data on Syrian Asylum Seekers, (Statista, 2021)

## Mother of Migration

Greece is the first European country that neighbors Turkey and the Middle East. Migrants who traveled by land or sea from the Middle East would likely first arrive in Greece. With centuries of immigration history, Thessaloniki has received immigrants from all over the Middle East and North African regions. Specifically, Thessaloniki hosts migrants from countries that overlap with

the region of Kurdistan. As of 2021 Greece had 119,650 refugees in the country with about 16,000 of them being in Thessaloniki (MacroTrends 2021). With a lack of economic opportunity, Greece often serves as a pass-through country for migrants hoping to begin their new life in a country such as Germany. However, for some migrants, Greece is their final destination where they wish to start their new life.

When looking at the Σ4 neighborhood, it is evident that there is a very high volume of migrants living in the area. This map is dated to 2011, but since then there have been a large number of migrants arriving in Greece. This map shows where migrants have previously gone, so people under similar circumstances would follow suit. According to the World Atlas, Greece has a population that is 98% Greek Orthodox with the remaining 2% being a mix of other ethnicities such as Albanians, Turks, and Macedonians (Kiprop 2019). In the Σ4 neighborhood, the migrant population accounts for upwards of 33% of the population, despite the minority status that migrants face in the remainder of Greece.



Figure 3: Map of Greek Islands and Turkey, (Economist, 2021).



Figure 4: Map of Kurdistan and Surrounding Nations (Central Intelligence Agency, 1992).

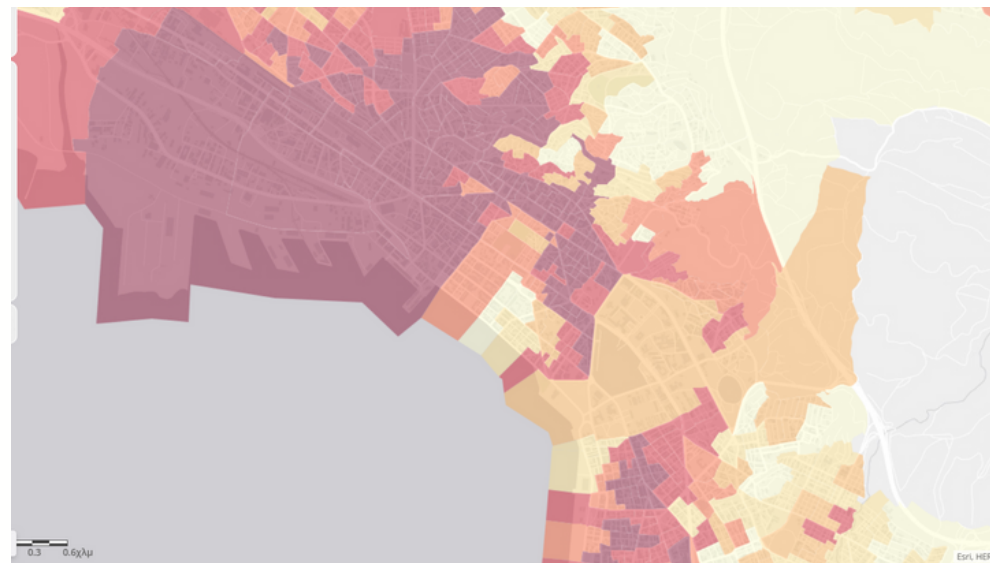


Figure 5: Migrant Population Density of Thessaloniki (Statista, 2011).

## Challenges Immigrant Food Businesses Face in Greece

### Challenges of Running a Business as an Immigrant

A key resource of running a successful business for immigrants is social capital, which refers to the assets possessed from relationships developed and maintained in business (Kenton, 2022). Many immigrants rely on their family and friends for support. Immigrants in Greece maintain ties with relatives and individuals in their home country as well as in Greece to create, what scholars have defined as, “horizontal” family social capital (Evansluong & Pasillas, 2019). Within Greece, “vertical” family social capital refers to supportive migration networks within the country. These networks help provide financial resources, moral support, advice, networking, and more that businesses need to be successful, (Bayram, 2020). Despite these social networks, immigrant food businesses in Greece still face multiple challenges.

Food entrepreneurship is enticing for immigrants given its unique characteristics: easy access to the market, low capital requirement, substitutable products, ethnic cuisine, and the curiosity of food-enthusiasts (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021).

Because the social situation for immigrants is difficult in a new and uncertain environment, establishing a close bond with similar ethnic groups strengthens their social capital (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021). This network helps immigrants integrate into the labor market, as they can be employed by fellow immigrants who are entrepreneurs (Daginelie et al., 2019). Since these networks are made up of people who come from the same country or similar cultures, they are more inclined to work for them given they will not have to deal with discriminatory conditions (Portes & Wilson, 1980). This is called the Enclave Economy Theory and is based on a study done by Kenneth Wilson and Alejandro Portes who tested their hypothesis on Cuban emigres integrating into the United States labor market. The idea of co-ethnic labor has shown to have a significant competitive advantage, as it allows businesses to lower employment costs and maintain a lower salary (Altinay & Altinay, 2006).

A major challenge for immigrant entrepreneurs is borrowing enough loans to fund their venture. Banks and other lending institutions see loaning to immigrant businesses as risky. Many immigrants have little collateral or access to common bank credit, which refers to money or credit that individuals can use such as loans, debit cards, and credit cards (Birdthistle et al., 2019). Immigrants often arrive in a new country with no savings or

assets, and securing even the smallest amount of funding poses a difficulty. Starting a new business as someone who is in an unfamiliar country can be difficult, but it is necessary to use the surrounding support systems to successfully integrate into the economy and society.

### Business Necessities and Barriers

Starting a business in Greece, typically requires resources such as an accountant, a lawyer, and a guarantor for loans. Given the complicated process of starting a business in the face of Greek bureaucracy, these resources are necessary to ensure a business is legally established. The accountant’s purpose is to help navigate the difficult tax and monetary regulations surrounding business capital, funding, and profit. Having a lawyer is necessary to understand the complicated laws and regulations that need to be followed when starting a business in Thessaloniki. The need for a guarantor is based on the fact that many immigrants who hope to start a business do not have the necessary documentation, permits, and identification. A guarantor is a person who can vouch for this person and can provide a guarantee that any loan will be paid back. If a loan is not paid back, the guarantor becomes personally responsible for the business debt.

In addition to this, there are barriers that these owners face in the start-up process. Having the

correct documents and permits poses an issue for those who wish to start a business. To start a business in Greece, it is necessary to have a Greek Tax Identification Number (TIN). For immigrants to work or start a business they need to obtain an AMKA, or a social security number and TIN, and additionally provide their status which can take months. An AMKA is the insurance ID of all employees, pensioners, and dependent members of the immigrant's family in Greece, with the TIN being necessary to declare taxes. To obtain an AMKA, an individual must visit a governmental office which can be confusing and put the immigrants in a bureaucratic spiral with the offices being understaffed and changing regulations often (Kasra et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship in Greece is difficult with the current regulations set in place, as businesses are taxed 21% on all profits (PWC, 2022). These challenges compile to make the entrepreneurial landscape of Greece difficult to navigate.

## Impact of Immigrant-Owned Food Enterprises

### Motives for Entrepreneurship

Access to resources and training from governmental and non-governmental organizations are motivations for entrepreneurship, as well as

self-realization, self-satisfaction, and family encouragement and support (Alsos et al., 2014; Evansluong and Ramirez Pasillas, 2019). Other entrepreneur integration motives include having a greater control of their life, improving their social status, having an opportunity in a new environment, and advice from others (Cifci & Atsiz, 2021). Refugees establish their ventures because of blocked opportunities in the labor market, and by starting their own business, they can employ themselves and overcome some of the challenges and barriers faced when moving to an unfamiliar country (Birdthistle et al., 2019).

### How Immigrant-Owned Restaurants and Mini-Markets Benefit the Community

Food enterprises are often one of the initial forces that help change the shape of the city. Nevin Cohen, an associate professor at the City University of New York and the Director of the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, wrote about the importance of the food sector, "The food sector also shapes the urban environment. Food businesses, from manufacturers to restaurants, are large employers and important sources of tax revenue in many cities. Food can shape a city's cultural identity and be a source of tourism. Food influences development and residential patterns and thus affects zoning and land use" (Cohen, 2022, p. 422). This quote speaks to the power that

food enterprises hold in an urban environment. Therefore, if food enterprises of a new culture begin to appear in a city, the cultural landscape of the city will also begin to change.

Food businesses give immigrants the opportunity to make traditional cuisine and share it with other immigrants in host society. Through the sharing of culture and cuisine, food can bring immigrants together while giving a commonality to help encourage integration in their new country, (Harrington 2005). By creating a business centered around cuisine, immigrant cooks and restaurant owners can provide comfort to other immigrants through food.

### Integration and Solidarity

When immigrants first arrive in a city, they often settle into communities that have similar culture to theirs. "Immigrants first settle into segregated ethnic enclaves with poor housing conditions" (Lord & Marois, 2018, p. 235). These enclaves often provide a community for immigrants as they can relate better to those who share the same culture. Given some time, these communities will begin to open restaurants, markets, and other shops that are centered around their own culture, instead of the majority culture. "Such clustering promoted mutual aid, niche economies, and eventual economic independence and social mobility" (Gilliland & Poutanen, 2017).

Initially, these clusters of immigrants can create underserved communities, however after the community develops and strengthens, these enclaves can act as their own self-functioning district. This phenomenon raises the question of whether or not this can be called integration, as these communities can be strong and stable, yet remain isolated and much different than the city outside the community. Another commonality found in immigrant communities is that integration can take multiple generations to truly take effect. In 1993, two American sociologists conducted research on this delayed assimilation process, and they concluded that, "A strategy of paced, selective assimilation may prove the best course for immigrant minorities" (Portes & Zhou, 1993). By paced, selective assimilation, Portes and Zhou were explaining how slow assimilation can be. For immigrants' assimilation refers to the complete cultural understanding and embodiment of their new country's culture. Assimilation is more common for second-generation immigrants because they grow up within the culture they are integrating to, instead of first-generation immigrants trying to bridge a gap between two cultures.

## The Hidden Terrain of Immigrant Gastronomy

Little is known about the ways immigrants have contributed to Thessaloniki's food culture, and how food enterprises create a wider circle of benefits for immigrant communities in the city. A study was done with 34 Syrian immigrants to understand the relationship between food and well-being. Lubana Al-Sayed proposes a framework that is used to understand the importance of food consumption for an individual. They proposed a framework that consumption and preparation of food is meant to satisfy psychological, social, and hedonic goals. Functional benefits relate to achieving physical and psychological health. Symbolic goals help nurture social relationships and express any relation and identity to specific groups. Finally, hedonic benefits include the sensory

experiences and emotions that are related to food (Al-Sayed, 2021). These three ideas combined to create a sense of social well-being, which include social acceptance, integration, actualization, contribution, and coherence. The study revealed how the satisfaction in food-related life was tied to the previously mentioned functional, symbolic, and hedonic goals. Overall, when migrants are able to make food from their own culture, it gives them a sense of purpose and well-being that allows them to feel socially accepted and feel like they are contributing to their host society. Our project used this framework as a lens to understand immigrant food businesses and their impact on the broader immigrant community.

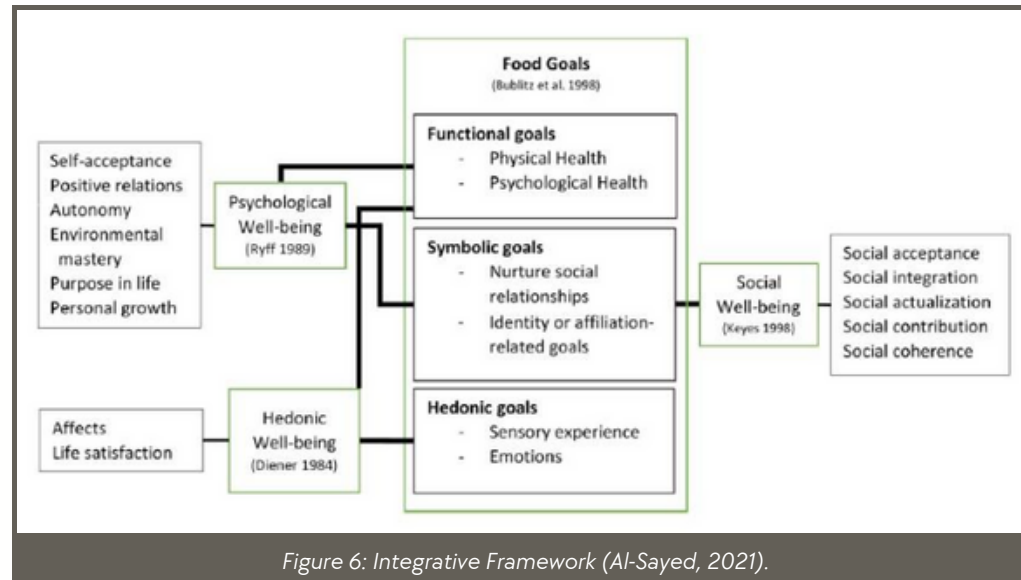


Figure 6: Integrative Framework (Al-Sayed, 2021).

# Chapter 3: Our Approach

## Goal and Objectives

The goal of this project was to investigate how immigrants have been able to start and sustain food-related businesses in Thessaloniki and how immigrant communities have benefited from these enterprises, largely restaurants and mini-markets. Specifically, we focused on immigrant-run food enterprises within the Σ4 district of Thessaloniki in the northwestern sector of the city. To achieve this goal, we identified the following five objectives:

- Investigate how refugees and immigrants start and sustain food related businesses through interviews with business owners and NGOs;
- Interview owners of immigrant-run enterprises to learn their stories and experiences with running a business;
- Map the locations of Middle Eastern food enterprises to understand where they are in reference to each other;
- Delineate the refugees' social networks that help build a strong community as well as mediate their integration in Thessaloniki;
- Identify the impact these enterprises have on the surrounding community through observations and interviews with business owners and employees.

## Starting and Sustaining Food Related Businesses

To gather information about how gastronomic enterprises are started and sustained in Thessaloniki, we researched regulations and conducted interviews about immigrant run food businesses. In order to gain a better understanding of the entrepreneurial landscape in Thessaloniki, we interviewed various organizations. Interviewing organizations such as UNHCR and Solidarity Now about laws and programs gave us insight on the strategies employed to contribute to the integration of immigrants in Greek society without alienating them from their culture.

In our interviews with municipal organizations, we gained a better understanding about the legality of businesses for immigrants. Learning about how businesses are started was necessary to understand the challenges and barriers immigrant business owners face when in a foreign country.



Figure 7: Mamdouh, a chef at Damascus Flower, carrying a traditional Syrian dish (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

From these interviews, we found information such as:

- How immigrants start a business;
- What type of documentation is needed to start a business;
- The restrictions/challenges immigrant business owners face that Greek owners do not;
- The requirements that must be met for these businesses to stay open;
- The existence of programs or classes that help navigate the entrepreneurial landscape of Thessaloniki.

With permission, we recorded and transcribed the interviews and used this information to help us better understand the business climate in Thessaloniki. From these interviews, we reached out to other organizations to discover the resources and programs available to these business owners. This information was crucial in understanding how businesses are operated given the regulations present in Thessaloniki.

## Interviewing Immigrant-Owned Food Enterprises

To successfully understand the lives of local business owners, we tried to become continuous customers of each location. From there, we asked the owners to have a formal interview and take pictures of their business. The purpose of the interviews was to answer the following questions.

- What was your motivation for starting this enterprise;
- How has this business affected your experience in Greece;
- What challenges did you face when creating this business;
- What does the network look like that supports your business?

The information gathered in the interviews helped us understand their journey to Thessaloniki and how they started their enterprise. We were then able to develop more specific follow-up questions for each enterprise to develop a deeper understanding of the business.

## Social Network Analysis

Once we have identified the enterprises in the third objective, we conducted social networking analysis to evaluate the patterns and crossover between different food enterprises, (Scott, 2012). Through this analysis we were able to further understand the businesses suppliers, customers, and identify any similarities among the businesses. In order to accomplish this we completed interviews with business owners and employees to understand the individuals and enterprises' journey to Thessaloniki. We analyzed the following topics:

- Relationships between restaurants and mini-markets;
- Demographic of clientele;
- Where these businesses are sourcing their products from;
- Assistance from family and friends;
  - Use of financial and social capital.



Figure 8: Team at restaurant conducting interviews (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

With our findings, we made sociometric structures to visualize the network for each enterprise we investigated. Once we established a structure for each enterprise, we analyzed patterns and connections between the enterprise sociograms to find any ties between them. We aimed to map the enterprises as nodes, the organizations, and supporters as influencers, and drew lines between any connections, with thicker lines representing a stronger connection. Using this method allowed us to gain an understanding of any patterns or relationships between different enterprises. This further pointed out the patterns we identified and the impactful influences on these businesses.

## Spatial Mapping

The  $\Sigma 4$  district is one of the most culturally diverse regions in Thessaloniki. We found immigrant-owned businesses in the district by using a paper map along with a GPS tracking software to record our walking path throughout fieldwork. From here, we marked the exact street and locations we visited and had an analog map before creating our digital one.

An example of an empty map gave us the ability to create a physical representation of the places we visit. This also allowed us to set up distinct personal landmarks that helped us develop a working understanding of the area we were working in before making a formal, published map. Being able to reference businesses in the context of their street and nearby personal landmarks allowed us to create a mental map used to construct an effective, complete map of these businesses (Lynch 1960).

## Enterprises' Impact on the Surrounding Community

Another important aspect of our project was understanding the impact these immigrant-run enterprises had on the immigrant community in the surrounding area. To accomplish this goal, we made detailed field

observations about the demographic makeup of the customers who frequent these immigrant businesses, and the way these customers interacted with their environment. We expected to observe a much higher presence of immigrant patrons, when compared to the presence of Greek patrons. We observed how the customers interacted with each other, as well as how the employees interacted with the customers. This helped us gauge if certain enterprises act as a gathering spot for immigrants and helped us understand the importance of these businesses to the community. In addition to these observations, we also interviewed customers and employees of these businesses. In these interviews we probed further into how these enterprises act as a gathering spot, and how the community thrived through restaurants and markets that shared their culture.



Figure 9: Blank Map of the  $\Sigma 4$  district, (Andrew Carlton, 2023)



We further analyzed the impact of these businesses on the community through observations of community outreach activities. These outreach activities consisted of donating food for people who are observing Ramadan to break their fast. This analysis helped us better understand how the businesses are supporting the Muslim community in their area.

Once we conducted all of our interviews and had sufficient information about each restaurant, we made a slide presentation to present to the community at Creativity Platform. Our sponsors as well as their network of interested individuals gathered to view our presentation explaining our findings during our fieldwork. The presentation included information about the research done on immigrant entrepreneurship, followed by information about the business owners in the area and provide insight into the ideas surrounding our project goal. The presentation drew on themes gathered from interviews with the business owners to comment on the goal of our project.



Figure 10: Team and co-researchers, (Photo Credit: Robert Hersh).

# Chapter 4: Stories of Immigrant Gastronomy

Our findings are organized by the restaurants and mini-markets that we visited during our fieldwork. For each venue, we discuss how the enterprise started, the immigrants' journey to Thessaloniki, and the community they cater to. The overarching themes that emerged from our fieldwork include:

- The power of food to provide comfort and bring people together;
- The sense of community established by these enterprises;
- The feeling of home provided by authentic Middle Eastern cuisine;
- Apparent cultural friction impacting the ease of integration;
- The desire of immigrants to maintain their cultural identity;
- The importance of gathering places within the city for immigrants.

## Σ4 District

After identifying numerous immigrant-owned food enterprises in the Σ4 district, we decided to do a more in-depth case study of three restaurants and a mini-market located in close proximity to one another. These enterprises include Damascus Flower, Kurdish Food, Middle East Restaurant, and Baghdad Market. We visited these venues multiple times and established good relationships with the owners and workers.

First, it is important to have a general understanding of the neighborhood before we focus our discussion on the case study of the enterprises noted above. Each location on the walking map represents a Middle Eastern business we identified in our initial mapping of the region.

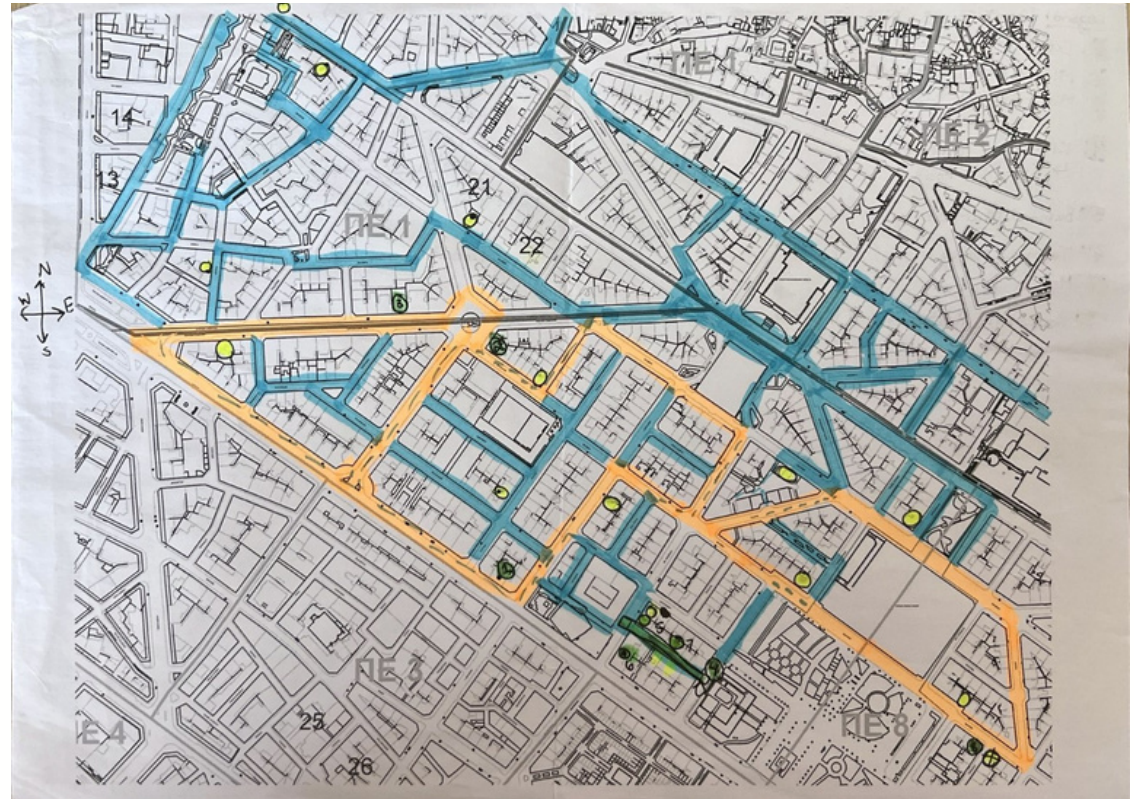


Figure 11: Map of the Neighborhood from walking the district.

The northwest section of the district is largely residential but has many automotive shops that sell car parts for various manufacturers. The neighborhood was much quieter than other areas in the district and had significantly fewer food businesses. There were substantially more abandoned shopfronts and the area felt much less cared for compared to the sections closer to Egnatia, the main street of Thessaloniki.



Figure 12: City Wall Area (Photo Credit: Nathan Brumble, 2023).

Middle East Restaurant is located on Kristali Street directly off of a rotary in the center of the district. From our observation, this area gets both heavy street and foot traffic. People passing by it could easily be attracted by the colorful signage and pictures of food.



Figure 13: Middle East Restaurant storefront, (Photo Credit: Nathan Brumble, 2023).

Another residential area can be found on Kassandrou Street, which is the northern border of the Σ4 district. This was a densely packed residential area with tall apartments lining the streets.



Figure 14: Kassandrou Street, (Photo Credit: Nathan Brumble, 2023).

Kleisouras Street and the surrounding few blocks held many Middle Eastern restaurants and mini-markets that provided us with extremely useful information for our project. Each location of interest can be found marked on the paper walking map.

Each location on the street will be explained in greater detail, but it is important to know where they are in relation to each other. Kleisouras Street is an area in development and has significantly changed in the past years. From interviews with business owners on this street, we learned that Kleisouras Street will remain on this trajectory of change for the coming years.

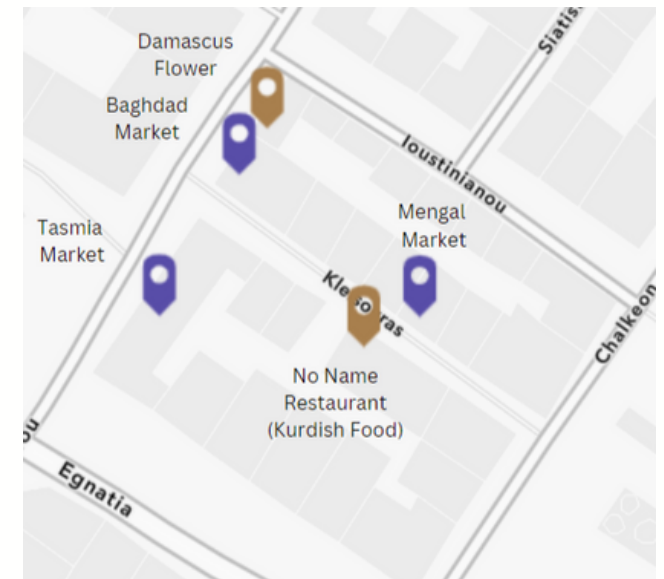


Figure 15: Map of Kleisouras Street, (Nathan Brumble, 2023)

## Restaurants

### Damascus Flower

Damascus Flower Restaurant is a Syrian restaurant that opened in 2018. The restaurant is currently located on El. Venizelou street, which is around the corner from Kleisouras street where numerous other Middle Eastern restaurants and markets are located. We conducted in-depth interviews with the owner, and four other employees. To conduct the interviews with Abd Kader and Mamdouh, the owner and one of the cooks, we were accompanied by our co-researchers, Alkisti Chatzigiannidou and Smaro Katsangelou, and a customer who could translate from Greek to Arabic. They translated our questions into Greek, then relayed the questions to the translating customer. This customer asked the question in Arabic to Abd and Mamdouh and gave the answer back to Smaro and Alkisti in Greek.

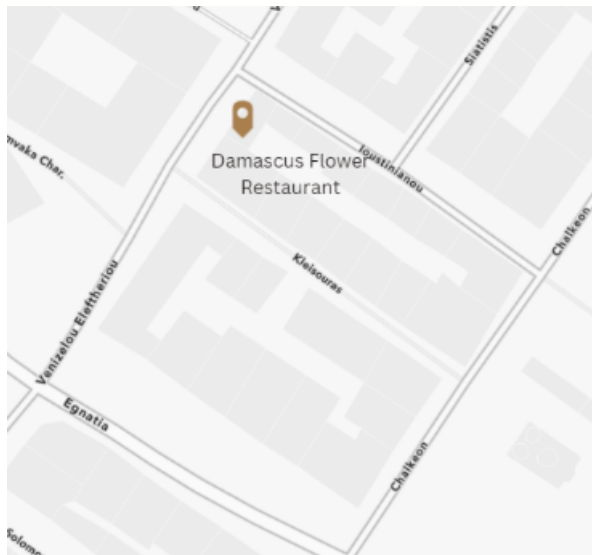


Figure 16: Location of Damascus Flower (Nathan Brumble, 2023)

Out of the restaurants we observed, the community we noticed in and around Damascus Flower was the most active and lively. The restaurant has two rooms for customers; one where you order and pay, the other is the seating area. The wall facing the street in both of these rooms can be completely opened to give customers and passersby the opportunity to stop in quickly and greet friends, creating a lively community. In the seating area there is a small television mounted high on the wall that plays Arabic songs, including religious prayers during Ramadan. During Ramadan, Damascus Flower had its own prayer mat for people to use. We observed a young man come into the restaurant and take a moment to pray before ordering food.



Figure 17: Young Man Praying in Damascus Flower in front of a TV playing Ramadan prayers, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

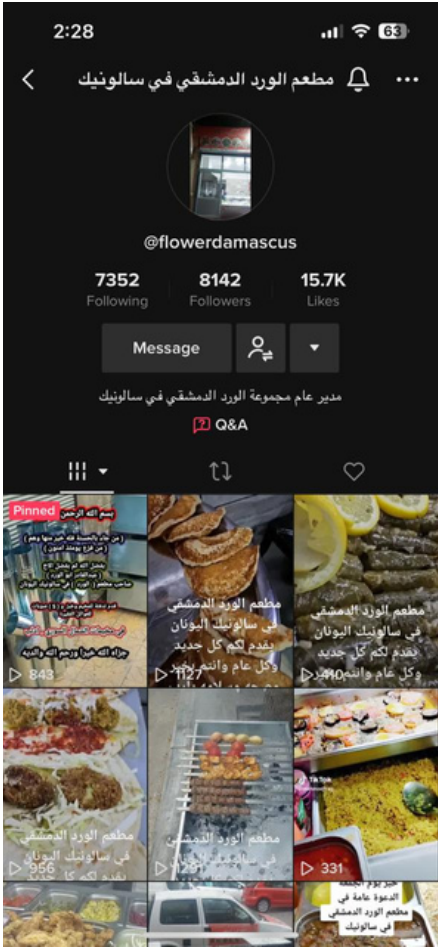
During Ramadan, Damascus Flower acted as a community hub for the Muslim residents in the neighborhood. On the last full day of Ramadan, the restaurant environment was festive after sundown when the Muslim community broke its fast. The sidewalk outside Damascus Flower was cleaned and decorated, and people gathered around the restaurant to celebrate. Throughout the day the cooks at Damascus Flower were busy making traditional Ramadan dishes for the evening, all the while fasting. These dishes consisted of quzi, stuffed zucchini and eggplant, quzi wrapped in filo dough, and yellow lentil soup. Quzi is rice with peas, cashews, lamb, and raisins. For dessert there was rice pudding with raisins, and qatayef, which is a light, airy dough filled with a sweetened cream called ashta.



Figure 18: Several people working in the kitchen, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).



Figure 19: Qatayef (top-left), Yellow Lentil Soup (top right), and Quzi (bottom), (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).



The community that gathers at the Damascus Flower is largely Arabic speaking, which is evident on the restaurant’s social media platforms used for marketing. The restaurant’s TikTok page is entirely in Arabic, including the text, captions, music, and the comments from its followers. The restaurant’s social media platforms do not use Greek in its posts. Clearly, the restaurant is not trying to draw attention towards the local Greek population. Similarly, the menu on the door only shows pictures of the food with prices for each. The lack of names and descriptions of the food demonstrates that Damascus Flower is catering to a customer base that is familiar with its cuisine.

The immigrant community enjoys the comfort and sense of home provided by Damascus Flower. This has helped immigrants from Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey achieve social well-being through nurturing social relationships, and being affiliated with similar individuals. While the immigrant community has grown stronger, the restaurant has not brought together Greek and immigrant customers, or acted as an integrating force in the way that we expected at the beginning of this project.

Figure 20: Damascus Flower TikTok Account, (Photo Credit: Andrew Carlton, 2023).

Figure 21: Damascus Flower Menu, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Abd Kader

We interviewed one of the co-owners of the Damascus Flower named Abd Kader. Damascus Flower opened in western Thessaloniki in 2018, where it served food for three years. Abd Kader and the other owners moved the restaurant to its current location in 2021. He and his partners could do so because they owned the property where the first Damascus Flower was located, realized gains from its sale, and were able to move to the current location.

Abd Kader and his partners are planning to open up a Greek restaurant in downtown Thessaloniki. They will run the business side of the restaurant and hire Greek chefs and wait staff to operate the food side of the business, which will focus on traditional Greek food. This discovery surprised us, as we initially believed that they would want to highlight Syrian cuisine in any new venture to build their brand. Abd Kader told us this decision is to attract more customers, as Syrian cuisine does not attract very many Greek residents in the city.



Figure 22: Abd Kader, an owner of Damascus Flower, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).



Figure 23: Mamdouh, a chef at Damascus Flower, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Mamdouh

Mamdouh is one of the cooks for Damascus Flower and is often seen in the front kitchen serving food to the customers. Mamdouh and his family are originally from Palestine and moved to Jordan to escape the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Mamdouh came to Greece in 2020 with valuable restaurant experience as he was an experienced chef in Jordan. This experience with Middle Eastern cuisine made him well prepared to work in Damascus Flower.

Due to our unfamiliarity with Middle Eastern cuisine, we were interested in examining the authenticity of the Middle Eastern food in Thessaloniki. When asked about how similar the food at Damascus Flower was to the traditional recipes of falafel, Mamdouh said, “[The food] is 90% authentic to what they have in Palestine” (Mamdouh, April 21, 2023). Initially we believed the access to Middle Eastern ingredients would be limited, however Mamdouh said they are able to source nearly all of the ingredients from local Middle Eastern mini-markets. However, the ten percent he was referring to were small differences in the spices available in Greece and the Middle East. Despite the challenges associated with

sourcing spices and ingredients in Greece, restaurants such as Damascus Flower can still cook authentic food by sourcing ingredients at immigrant-owned markets in the area.

One of the most significant findings from Damascus Flower Restaurant is how food can help people develop social relationships and achieve social well-being. Mamdouh plays a large role in creating the warm and inviting atmosphere of Damascus Flower. Despite the language difference between us, we have still been able to bond with Mamdouh through our shared interest in his culture. From our first interaction Mamdouh offered us free falafel, and he has continued to do so anytime we stop by Damascus Flower. At the end of Ramadan when we ate the traditional meals, Mamdouh could not have been more excited to share his culture with us. Once we were done eating the main dishes, we were getting ready to leave and Mamdouh ran over to let us know there was more food he wanted to give us. This enthusiasm and shared interest has enabled us to better relate and understand each other, which shows how food helps nurture social relationships.





## Fatmah

Fatmah is a Syrian woman working at Damascus Flower in the back kitchen. She came to Greece in 2018 with the intention to stay and find work. She told us, "No, I don't think to leave... I like to live here. And I [found] a chance to work [here]" (Fatmah, April 26, 2023). She provides for her family through her work in the restaurant and sends money back to her family, who are taking care of her sick husband in Syria. Fatmah stated how "I want to be something in life, for example a lawyer, but my husband said no," and "I was ready to go to university, but my husband prevented me and told me to stay in the home and bear the children," (Fatmah, April 26, 2023). She married her husband at 16 and learned to cook traditional Middle Eastern food from her mother and mother-in-law. The dishes she prepared during the last day of Ramadan were authentic compared to what she cooked at home. When asked if the food was cooked the same, she explained, "Yes, exactly, but the restaurant I cook more," (Fatmah, April 26, 2023).

Fatmah's experience of immigrating to Greece is different from that of the restaurant owners pursuing economic opportunities. Fatmah came to Greece and is providing for her family out of necessity and survival, as she explained how "the war and life is not great in Syria... because our money is very low," (Fatmah, April 26, 2023). As stated earlier, Damascus Flower serves as a gathering space for people of Middle Eastern descent to congregate and socialize. She describes how people "from Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco," also gather in the restaurant to talk and eat (Fatmah, April 26, 2023). Fatmah was very happy to share her story and experiences with us, and showed us pictures of her family, friends, and home back in Syria.

Figure 24: Fatmah, a cook at Damascus Flower, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## No Name Restaurant

Kurdish Food restaurant was founded in 2019 by Aris, a Kurdish immigrant, and Dimitris, a Greek chef. The restaurant is located on Kleisouras Street and serves a fusion of Greek and Kurdish food. Although the restaurant is well established, it does not have a sign indicating it is a Kurdish restaurant. Since it offers a fusion of flavors, not having a sign labeled ‘Kurdish Food,’ but rather offering pictures of the food on the outside of the restaurant attracts more customers to try the restaurant based on the pictures. The menu offers an array of delicious Kurdish dishes, while incorporating Greek cuisine elements. We conducted interviews with both owners, a Greek chef, a Kurdish chef, and a frequent customer of the restaurant.



Figure 26: Exterior storefront of Kurdish Food, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

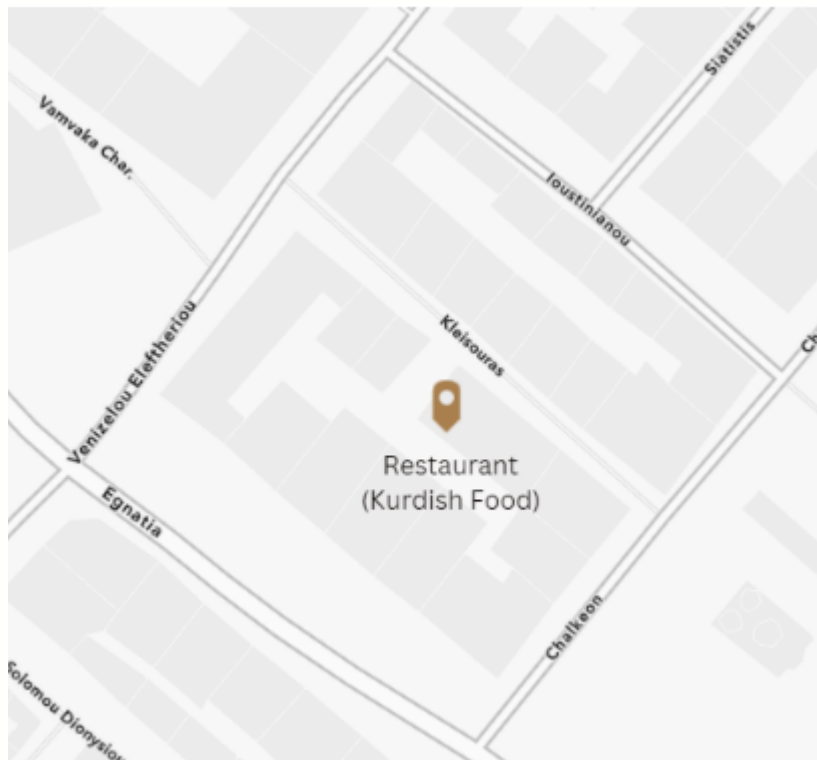


Figure 25: Location of Kurdish Food on map, (Nathan Brumble, 2023).

The restaurant serves diverse customers and welcomes everyone wanting to visit. Kurdish Food offers a welcoming place for immigrants where they can gather comfortably throughout the day. The restaurant has no posted operating hours but allows customers nearly all hours of the day to drink tea and socialize. Customers visit the restaurant throughout the day, although their rush hours are mainly during lunch and dinner.



Figure 27: Aris, co-owner of Kurdish Food, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Aris Pepekidis

Despite speaking limited Greek, Aris was very open to tell his story of immigrating to Greece and deciding to start a restaurant. He was originally from Iraq and came to Greece in 2000 and worked for a moving company for nearly twenty years before opening the restaurant with Dimitris in 2019. In Iraq, Aris worked in restaurants which motivated his idea to start a restaurant in Greece. Aris viewed opening a restaurant as an opportunity to share parts of his culture through the cuisine he experienced growing up. It gave Aris a chance to share some of his favorite Kurdish dishes while making strides towards creating an environment for Greeks and immigrants to integrate.

When asked if the Kurdish food he serves is authentic Aris stated that it is “pretty much the same,” (Aris, April 20, 2023). The restaurant serves a variety of Kurdish dishes in combination with Greek dishes. The restaurant has a mix of Kurdish and Greek chefs encouraging innovation in cooking to integrate the flavors and dishes of their cuisines. Aris explained the clientele as “mostly immigrants that live in the area with a few Greeks,” (Aris, April 20, 2023). The most popular dishes he sells include tepsi, a roasted vegetable dish, tanomenon sourba, and red lentil soup. Tepsi is very similar to a dish in Greece, tourlou, but the preparation is different, and the spices vary slightly. Aris explained that many dishes are similar since Kurdish and Greek food are Mediterranean cuisine, but they combine the preparation techniques and spices to blend the cuisines together.



Figure 28: Kurdish Food window with prepared food. The most popular dishes include tepsi (top right) and tanomenon sourba (bottom right), (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Dimitris

Dimitris is the co-owner of the restaurant and a trained chef from Greece. When Aris and Dimitris developed their partnership, they agreed to create a fusion restaurant that served both Kurdish and Greek dishes. Dimitris helped create a blended cuisine for the restaurant since he has “been to Iraq, Iran, and Turkey multiple times [and] had a sense of the different cooking styles and the corresponding spices,” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023). Working with Aris they developed a restaurant concept that brought their food traditions together with the hope of appealing to a larger customer base.

Dimitris explained his desire to create a place for immigrants where they could feel comfortable and enjoy traditional dishes while encouraging Greek customers to try new flavors or opt for more traditional Greek dishes. When planning to open the restaurant, Dimitris claimed he was told by some of his Greek clients in the area “to not get mixed up with these ethnicities.” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023). Dimitris' interest in supporting immigrants and creating an immigrant hub in the Kleisouras neighborhood stemmed in part from his experience as an immigrant in Germany, where he was employed as a cook, and found it difficult at times to integrate into a new culture in

a new country. From this experience he believed that no matter your original country of origin “we are all one in the same,” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023).

Dimitris and Aris agreed to open their restaurant on Kleisouras street since the street was run down and abandoned at the time causing the rent to be low. The demographics of the neighborhood were also favorable as Dimitris said, “the area had a large refugee and immigrant population, so we thought [the restaurant] suited the area,” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023). Since the restaurant opened, the clientele has expanded and customers come at all hours of the day to gather, even if they do not eat. Lots of customers “have a habit of talking and drinking tea,” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023).

The restaurant serves halal food, which is food prepared and handled in accordance with Islamic law. To ensure its food is halal, the restaurant sources products from local halal markets or directly from farms in Xanthi, Greece. The restaurant sources meat and dairy products from a food distributor in Xanthi, which is a Muslim owned company and guarantees its products are prepared in the proper manner. Similar products were sourced from Xanthi in the other restaurants

we observed as well, including the sour milk named ariani. Sourcing from these distributors enables immigrant restaurants to offer its customer base halal food while supporting other immigrant run businesses in the region.



Figure 29: Traditional sour milk sourced from MAX, a dairy production company that ensures their products are halal, (Photo Credit: Alkisti Chatziannidou, 2023).

When discussing the future of the restaurant, Dimitris was excited to share his aspirations of turning Kleisouras street into a hub for immigrants to support their social well-being. Since the restaurant opened, more immigrant-owned enterprises have appeared in the area including two other restaurants, four mini-markets, and a barber shop. With all of these enterprises in close proximity to one another, many immigrants feel welcome and hang around this street often. Dimitris has a “vision to buy or rent more stores on the street to make businesses catered to the Arabic community,” (Dimitris, March 21, 2023). The hub for the immigrant population has developed since Kurdish Food was opened, and this progress provides hope for the hub to continue growing.



Figure 30: View of Kleisouras Street (Photo Credit: Alkisti Chatziannidou, 2023).

## Greek and Kurdish Chef

Aris welcomed us to watch the two chefs prepare food for the day, and we were able to briefly talk with them about their preparations. The Greek chef, Vasilis, prepares the Greek dishes while the Kurdish chef, Shirvan, prepares the Kurdish dishes. Shirvan is a trained chef from Iraq who immigrated to Greece in 2017 and only speaks Arabic. Vasilis is a trained chef from Greece and only speaks Greek making communication in the kitchen challenging. Both chefs cooked their dishes on their own and had little interaction. (Vasilis, April 24, 2023).



Figure 31: Kurdish chef (left) and Greek chef (right) preparing food in the kitchen, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Vasilis

Vasilis explained the main differences he sees between the Greek and Kurdish dishes. He noted that the “Kurdish dishes are simpler” and Greeks “keep flavors clean and are more into classic flavors,” (Vasilis, April 24, 2023). Vasilis claimed that his Kurdish counterpart uses turmeric in several dishes and that Kurdish dishes “have a lot of juices, sauce, and are not dry,” Vasilis described his dishes as using more rice and potatoes as well as lots of fresh vegetables. Although the chefs cook separately, Vasilis emphasized that “the restaurant's cuisine marries Kurdish and Greek culture together,” (Vasilis, April 24, 2023).



Figure 32: Greek chef, Vasilis, at Kurdish Food, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

Vasilis informed us that there was another Kurdish chef who worked in the restaurant, but “he left to go live abroad,” (Vasilis, April 24, 2023). He expressed that in the restaurant “most of the refugees are people working who want to go to Germany or Europe,” (Vasilis, April 24, 2023). The other chef knew how to make traditional Kurdish pita and the restaurant has a

special burner for doing so, but since he left, they have been trying to find another chef that is able to make this. The restaurant is eager to find another Kurdish chef in order to serve a wider variety of Kurdish options to its customers.

## Shirvan Shafiq

Since Shirvan speaks Arabic, Aris helped translate so we could ask Shirvan some questions about his life and cooking. Shirvan “came to Greece in 2017, he is Kurdish from Iraq,” (Aris and Shirvan, April 24, 2023). He was a trained chef and worked as one in Iraq for several years. His favorite dishes to cook in the restaurant are “tepsi and the soups,” (Aris and Shirvan, April 24, 2023). These are dishes that he cooked back in Iraq, but here “they put chicken in their tepsi,” (Aris and Shirvan, April 24, 2023). Shirvan also liked making dolmadakia but “doesn’t make it here because it is very time consuming,” (Aris and Shirvan, April 24, 2023).



Figure 33: Kurdish Chef, Shirvan, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Aristotelis

At the restaurant, we spoke with a frequent customer, Aristotelis, who is of Pontic Greek descent and lived in Turkey before coming to Thessaloniki. He often visits Kurdish Food as it offers several dishes that are “similar to cuisines he ate while growing up,” (Aristotelis, April 20, 2023) and reminds him of home. Aristotelis enjoys their tanomenon sourba nearly every other day. Aristotelis noted that the soups are most similar to Pontic Greek dishes as the chefs cook the lentils in the same way, but there are slight differences when it comes to the spices.

Since Aristotelis visits the restaurant often, he is very close to the employees. He explained that he “often brings friends along as the restaurant offers a social environment and reasonable prices,” (Aristotelis, April 20, 2023). He explained the clientele of the restaurant as being an assortment of customers coming “from Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and a small portion of Greeks,” (Aristotelis, April 20, 2023). Lots of the customers are regulars and contribute to the restaurant’s “welcoming environment”.



Figure 34: Aristotelis, a frequent customer of Kurdish Food, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Middle East Restaurant

Located at the center of the district, Middle East Restaurant offers a wide range of halal foods. The owner is a Kurdish man named Aziz whose father owned a similar restaurant in Baghdad, Iraq. Aziz worked in his father’s restaurant for 30 years, learning how to cook and manage a business. In 1996, Aziz left Baghdad and moved to Turkey for four years, before arriving in Greece in 2000.

2000. Starting a business in Greece was easy for him; he had experience in the restaurant sector, enjoyed the work, and had significant financial aid from his family and friends back home. In fact, when asked what challenges he faced when starting a business, his response was simply, “We faced no problems” (Aziz, March 17, 2023). As mentioned before, this form of horizontal social

capital made starting the restaurant much easier. With adequate savings, Aziz was able to successfully navigate the legal hurdles of opening a business. Aziz opted to design his restaurant to cater to customers from the Middle Eastern, as he could now attract more people in the neighborhood and expand his network of customers.



Figure 35: Middle East Restaurant Store Sign, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

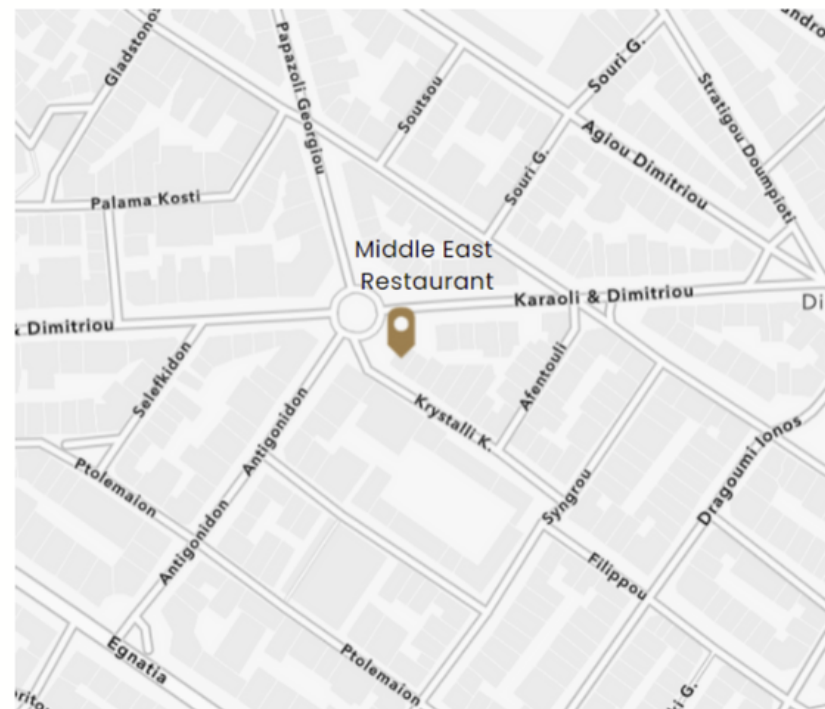


Figure 36: Location of Middle East Restaurant, (Google, 2023).



Aziz developed friendships with neighborhood residents before opening his restaurant. Aziz chose the location for his business, because “There are friends and family in the neighborhood that make me feel at home” and “[I] live close to the business for ease of access” (Aziz, March 17, 2023). Having a business that serves halal food is extremely important to his customers. As we were conducting fieldwork during Ramadan, we got to experience firsthand the effect that Aziz was able to personally have on the community. Even though he is not a practicing Muslim, he showed acts of solidarity to his Muslim neighbors by bringing free food to his local mosque for people to break their fast with. His food allowed people to gather and bond over shared experiences while promoting a healthy social well-being.

Aziz has seven employees, all of whom are from the Kurdish region in Iraq and are familiar with the cuisine that he wishes to serve. Typical Middle

Eastern furniture can be found at the restaurant, with the tables and chairs being decorated with warm colors and detailed geometric designs. The table fit the traditional Middle Eastern design, and the beverages sold were also traditional to the Middle East. There was also Arabic music being played inside the restaurant and kitchen, adding to the Middle Eastern environment being created. Aziz explained how he sources all his ingredients from Halal stores in Thessaloniki and typically returns to the same few stores for his supplies.

Aziz’s employees make these dishes exactly how they are prepared in Iraq. Therefore, the authenticity of the food is limited only by the comparison of ingredients found in Greece versus those found in Baghdad.



Figure 37: Tables and Tea at Middle East Restaurant, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).



Figure 38: Picture of Shawarma and Falafel at Middle East Restaurant, (Photo Credit: Andrew Carlton, 2023).

## Mini-Markets

Immigrant owned mini-markets help source ingredients for some of the restaurants we have profiled. Focusing on these mini-markets allowed us to uncover how food enterprises on Kleisouras street are interconnected. By analyzing the relationships between businesses we were able to discern how a community has formed around Kleisouras street. Similar to the restaurants, mini-markets act as gathering spaces for the immigrant population to socialize. Customers often congregate inside or in front of the store during business hours. Regular customers would converse with each other, workers in the store, and individuals who passed by on the street. Through our observations at these mini-markets, it was clear the role these stores had in creating new social relationships for the immigrant population.

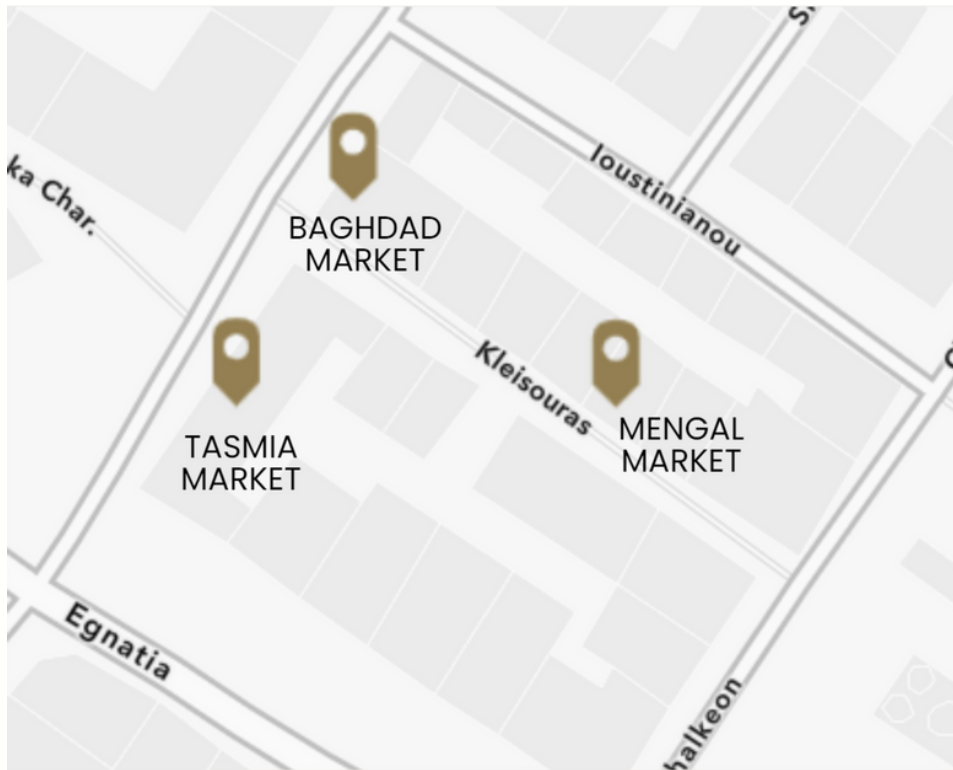


Figure 39: Location of Markets near Kleisouras Street, (Nathan Brumble, 2023).

Although these markets are still food related, they sell a wide range of products targeted towards the Middle Eastern residents in the neighborhood. The food products consist of grab-and-go items, such as chips, candy bars, and drinks, or ingredients needed to cook a meal at home. With the exception of Tasmia Mini Market, the majority of the products sold in these mini-markets have Arabic script as part of the packaging. These enterprises allow individuals to satisfy the hedonic goals of experiencing pleasure when eating food from their own culture which helps them achieve social well-being.

## Baghdad Market

Baghdad Market is a mini-market located on the corner of Kleisouras Street that has been open for around 2 years. The store caters mostly to a Syrian demographic, but occasionally sees some Greek customers who purchase products, such as hookah. We walked around the mini-market and noticed the products sold were from Syria and the spices and ingredients were written in Arabic. The employee we spoke with, Petras, noted how he is Kurdish, but many of the products and ingredients sold in the store are Syrian. He stated how most of the products sold in the store are convenience foods, and customers usually take them home to cook a Syrian or Kurdish style meal. In the store, popular items are hummus, Syrian cheese, black tea, and rice. After the interview concluded, he sent us to a nearby restaurant, Kurdistan Food, where he mentioned they have a partnership that shares ingredients, food, and recipes.

On the last day of Ramadan, we stopped by the store and interviewed one of the store owners, Ahkmad. He explained how starting a business in Greece is difficult for everyone, "Unfortunately in Greece, not only for foreigners but also for Greeks, it is hard to open up a business, the state hinders a person from opening up a business and puts obstacles in one's way, so you don't succeed" (Ahkmad, April 20th, 2023). The building that Baghdad Market is in is

recognized as historically important by the Ministry of Culture, so in order to set up his business he had problems getting additional licenses and permits due to this recognition. He also noted how it is more economical for restaurants to buy ingredients from the markets instead of supermarkets, as for example their rice is much cheaper compared to regular markets. Ahkmad described how important it was for people of different ethnicities to have food from their home countries: “The existence of products that are of different origins is an important part of life, it helps against alienation and

feeling foreign to [your environment]” (Ahkmad, April 20th, 2023). This touches on how cuisine from home can fulfill the hedonic goal of experiencing nostalgia and pleasure, which helps an individual achieve social well-being. The clientele at the market is a mix of both cultures since he and his brother both speak Greek, so they are able to explain how ingredients are used and can be incorporated into recipes. This mini-market is located next to Damascus Flower, so much of the customer base between the two stores is shared. On the last day of Ramadan, the street had a lively

atmosphere: with many people gathering outside these two businesses. A few children were inside the store, and a few adults were outside. During Ramadan, the mini-market acted as a gathering space for individuals from the same religious community to socialize and celebrate. Specifically, it allowed these immigrants to promote their social well-being by collectively celebrating Ramadan to foster social integration.



Figure 40: Petras, an employee at Baghdad Market, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).



Figure 41: Shelf at Baghdad Market, (Photo Credit: Smaro Katsangelou, 2023).

## Limitations

Within a seven-week period, it is difficult to make deep personal connections with immigrants in a foreign country. Having four Americans and two Greek co-researchers with notebooks in hand walk into an establishment is not the most welcoming sight for an owner or employee. It took us time to build connections with business owners. Another limitation was the difficulty of scheduling interviews and meetings with these business owners and employees. Many times, we would set up a meeting time, and then be met with a cancellation the next day because of how busy the lives of business owners can get. This made our fieldwork schedule inconsistent and difficult to plan around. We realized that field work was a messy process, and embracing this fact helped us understand the complexity of our project.

On top of this, the language barrier posed a large problem for us. Our interviews were mostly conducted in Greek, and needed to be translated and transcribed by our co-researchers Alkisti and Smaro. The meaning of these stories may have been lost through translation as our interviewees' vocabulary may not have been strong enough to accurately convey their message.

# Chapter 5: Concluding Thoughts and Areas for Future Research

Through our fieldwork, we have seen the benefits of preparing and consuming food and the effect it has on the community. These restaurants and mini-markets offer support to each other by developing business partnerships while offering employment opportunities for people in their community. In addition to this, these businesses serve as community gathering spaces where people of similar ethnicity and background can socialize and form new connections. Cuisine plays a role in promoting an individual's social well-being, as it allows one to build social relationships, and experience pleasure from a reminder of home. These developed relationships provide a sense of belonging for immigrants who are in a foreign land and contribute to one's social well-being. The networks that we uncovered displayed how interconnected the immigrant population is, and this social cohesion is driven by the power of cuisine.

We were also able to highlight challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs in the food industry as they face bureaucratic hurdles. The entrepreneurial landscape in Greece provides challenges for Greeks in addition to the immigrant business owners we highlighted. The emergence of these enterprises provides a glimpse into the resilience and creativity of immigrants.



Figure 42: Team after conducting interviews at the UNHCR office in Thessaloniki, (Photo Credit: Jacob Nguyen, 2023).

## Areas for Future Research

Our project heavily focused on successful and established businesses and immigrants who had legal status, therefore we were unable to unveil the stories of failed enterprises or migrants who were denied asylum. Having these stories to share with the greater public would have been a powerful tool to demonstrate the difficulty of leaving your home and having to navigate a new and foreign land.

Through our interactions with immigrant business owners in Thessaloniki, we have learned that they have hopes to establish new enterprises in the future.

Maintaining the connections, we made with these enterprises and investigating their future business plans would be an intriguing way to extend the research into the current social network and community we focused on. Examples of questions that could be asked are if there have been any new developments such as a change in customer demographic, new stores opening, or if new connections have been formed between restaurants and mini-markets. One specific area of focus could be investigating the ongoing development of the community hub for Middle Eastern immigrants that Dimitris had planned. It would be interesting to track the progress of the Greek restaurant that the owners of the Damascus Flower are opening in downtown Thessaloniki. Exploring these new businesses would highlight the possibilities and opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs.

When we walked around our district of focus, we noticed that Thessaloniki is still under development with construction sites scattered all over the city. Future projects could include how to develop the surrounding community with the input from the Middle Eastern community that we highlighted during our research. Having input from these business owners and employees would help improve the hub for the Middle Eastern community

proposed by Mr. Dimitris. A case study done with the people we interviewed could also make important contributions to the proposed plans for the area, given that this community and population will be impacted more.

### Closing Thoughts and Reflection

This project was extremely rewarding for us. The stories we heard were extremely moving and the community that welcomed us provided great insight for our project and personal experiences. We were able to get insightful stories unique to the region, broadening our experience of the world. Learning about the struggles of having to leave everything at home, and coming to a foreign land in pursuit of economic opportunity was powerful. These stories gave us a perspective that we would not have gained if we did not go outside of our comfort zone and contribute to this social science project. The connections that we developed during our 7 weeks in Thessaloniki showed us the importance of having a supportive community, and how nurturing relationships promotes the concept of social well-being.



Figure 43: Team in the Creativity Platform office, (Photo Credit: Panos Remoundos, 2023).

- Al-Sayed, L., & Bieling, C. (2020). Food-related well-being in times of crisis: Conceptual considerations and empirical findings for Syrian refugees in Germany. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 1-2, 100005. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2020.100005>
- Alsos, G. A., Carter, S., & Ljunggren, E. (2014). Kinship and business: How entrepreneurial households facilitate business growth. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 26(1-2), 97–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2013.870235>
- Altinay, L., & Altinay, E. (2006). Determinants of ethnic minority entrepreneurial growth in the catering sector. *The Service Industries Journal*, 26(2), 203–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02642060500369354>
- Barth, H., & Zalkat, G. (2021). Refugee entrepreneurship in the Agri-food industry: The Swedish experience. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 86, 189–197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2021.06.011>
- Bird, M., & Wennberg, K. (2016). Why family matters: The impact of family resources on immigrant entrepreneurs' exit from entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 31, 687–704. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2016.06.001>
- Birdthistle, N., Flynn, A., & Rushworth, S. (2019). From Syria to the Land Down Under – the Land of Opportunity? *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 26(1), 116–137. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27001395>
- Bizri, R. M. (2017). Refugee–entrepreneurship: A social capital perspective. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 29(9–10), 847–868. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2017.1364787>
- Bublitz, M. G., Peracchio, L. A., Andreasen, A. R., Kees, J., Kidwell, B., Miller, E. G., Motley, C. M., Peter, P. C., Rajagopal, P., Scott, M. L., & Vallen, B. (2013). Promoting positive change: Advancing the food well-being paradigm. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8), 1211–1218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2012.08.014>
- Cabannes, Y., & Marocchino, C. (Eds.). (2018). *Integrating Food into Urban Planning*. UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv513dv1>
- Cifci, I., & Atsiz, O. (2021). Understanding the role of refugees' entrepreneurship motives and challenges in integration: Evidence from the food industry. *Journal of Economy Culture and Society*, 64, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.26650/JECS2021-863909>
- Clayton, M. (2019, May 7). Project politics: How to win the game of projects. Online PM Courses. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://onlinepmcourses.com/project-politics/>
- Cline, Lawrence E. "The Prospects of the Shia Insurgency Movement in Iraq." *Journal of Conflict Studies*, August 8, 2000. <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/4311>.
- Cohen, Nevin. "Roles of Cities in Creating Healthful Food Systems." *Annual Review of Public Health*, vol. 43, Apr. 2022, pp. 419–437., <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-052220-021059>.
- Dagnelie, O., Mayda, A., & Maystadt, J. F. (2019). The labor market integration of refugees in the United States: Do entrepreneurs in the network help? *European Economic Review*, 111, 257–272. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroeconrev.2019.04.001>

- Dieterich-Hartwell, R., & Koch, S. C. (2017). Creative Arts Therapies as Temporary Home for Refugees: Insights from Literature and Practice. *Behavioral sciences (Basel, Switzerland)*, 7(4), 69. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs7040069>
- Edwards, A. (2016). UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right? UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency. <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>.
- Evansluong, Q., & Pasillas, M. R. (2019). The role of family social capital in Immigrants' Entrepreneurial Opportunity Creation Processes. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 36(1/2), 164. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijesb.2019.096973>
- European Commission, Official Website. European Commission. (n.d.). [https://commission.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/index_en)
- "Financial Inclusion." *UNHCR*, <https://www.unhcr.org/financial-inclusion.html>.
- Fong, R., Busch, N., Armour, M., Heffron, L., & Chanm, A. (2007). Pathways to self-sufficiency: Successful entrepreneurship for refugees. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 16(1–2), 127–159. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J051v16n01\\_05](https://doi.org/10.1300/J051v16n01_05)
- Gehl J. (2010). *Cities For People*. Island Press. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10437880>.
- Great Public Spaces: What Makes a Place Great? RSS. (2008). from <https://www.pps.org/article/public-space-benefits>
- Hellenic Statistical Authority. (2020, December 30). Estimated Population and Migration Flows. Greek Statistical Authority. <https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/8db90789-197d-04e0-9313-8343518637a0>
- Herzberg, B., & Yong-D'Herve, D. (2022, June 17). Refugees mean business: The role of the private sector in creating economic opportunities for the forcibly displaced. *World Bank Blogs*. Retrieved March 2, 2023, from <https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/refugees-mean-business-role-private-sector-creating-economic-opportunities-forcibly>
- Hilado, A., Rezniceck, E., & Allweiss, S. (2021). Primer on Understanding the Refugee Experience. In J. D. Aten & J. Hwang (Eds.), *Refugee Mental Health* (pp. 22, 36). American Psychological Association. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1f70m24.5>
- Jiang, Yi Dragon, et al. *Unfolding Refugee Entrepreneurs' Opportunity-Production Process – Patterns and Embeddedness*. May 2020, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2021.106138>.
- Jimenez, L. (2019, June 24). Fostering Entrepreneurship is critical to refugees' economic and Social Integration. Center for International Private Enterprise. Retrieved March 2, 2023, from <https://www.cipe.org/blog/2019/06/20/fostering-entrepreneurship-is-critical-to-refugees-economic-and-social-integration/>
- Keridis, D., & Kiesling, J. (Eds.). (2020). *Thessaloniki: A City in Transition, 1912–2012* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429201561>
- Kirkwood, J. (2009). Motivational factors in a push-pull theory of entrepreneurship. *Gender in Management, An International Journal*, 24(5), 346–364. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910968805>



- Larson, Eric V., and Bogdan Savych. "Operation Desert Storm (Iraq, 1991)." In *Misfortunes of War*, 21–62. Press and Public Reactions to Civilian Deaths in Wartime. RAND Corporation, 2007. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg441af.10>.
- Lester, E. (2005). A Place at the Table: The Role of NGOs in Refugee Protection: International Advocacy and Policy-Making. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 24(2), 125–142. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45053976>
- Lyon, F., Sepulveda, L., & Syrett, S. (2007). Enterprising refugees: Contributions and challenges in deprived urban areas. *Local Economy*, 22(4), 362–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02690940701736769>
- Meister, Alexander, and Rene Maurer. "Understanding Refugee Entrepreneurship Incubation." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*, vol. 25, Feb. 2018, pp. 1065–92, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-02-2018-0108>.
- Rao, Sarita. Refugees Open First Afghan Restaurant in the City. 3 Jan. 2023, <https://www.luxtimes.lu/en/community-and-lword/refugees-open-first-afghan-social-restaurant-in-the-city-63d230a5de135b9236393186>.
- Scott, J. (2012). What is social network analysis? Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. . Sim, Ryan. "Into the Mind of the Refugee: Unpacking Modern Refugee Mental Health." *Harvard International Review*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2016, pp. 46–48, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26445618>.
- Simsek, D. (2018). Integration processes of Syrian refugees in Turkey: 'Class-based integration'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 33(3), 537–554. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fey057>
- Taylor-Powell, E. and Renner, M. (2003). *Analyzing Qualitative Data*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Extension. <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/G3658-12.pdf>
- UNESCO: Creative Cities Network (n.d.) Creative Cities | Creative Cities Network. <https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/>
- Wauters, B., & Lambrecht, J. (2008). Barriers to refugee entrepreneurship in Belgium: Towards an explanatory model. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(6), 895–915. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830802211190>
- Westlund, H., Larsson, J. P., & Olsson, A. R. (2014). Start-ups and local entrepreneurial social capital in the municipalities of Sweden. *Regional Studies*, 48(6), 974–994. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2013.865836>
- Wilson, K. L., & Portes, A. (1980). Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami. *American Journal of Sociology*, 86(2), 295–319. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2778666>
- Zehra, Khizran, and Sadia Usmani. "Not without Family: Refugee Family Entrepreneurship and Economic Integration Process." *Journal of Enterprising Communities*, vol. 17, Mar. 2022, pp. 158–81, <https://wpi-illiad-oclc-org.ezpv7-web-p-u01.wpi.edu/illiad/illiad.dll?Action=10&Form=75&Value=130485>.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Interviews with Restaurants

This appendix is specific to immigrant-run restaurants, street vendors, food trucks, and caterers. The questions attached are specifically for owners, employees, and customers at these food enterprises. The questions focus on the reason for starting, working, or visiting this enterprise, the specific ingredients used and their suppliers, as well as the benefits and challenges this enterprise has resulted in. This will give us insight to be able to determine follow up questions and encourage further storytelling to provide us insight for our StoryMap.

### Considerations

We will give all participants the opportunity to remain confidential in our interviews to protect the immigrants from any negative repercussions from their answers to our questions. The following questions are meant to gather general ideas of the immigrant's experience. We want them to tell their story in their own way, so asking excessive directed questions will take away from that. We are also aware there may be a language barrier that we need to consider and will alter our interactions to better engage with them. This may include a picture guided interview or asking a fellow immigrant to help translate.

### Verbal Consent

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States. We are interviewing immigrant entrepreneurs to learn more about the experience of starting and maintaining a business. We hope this research will help others understand minority communities' experiences with food related entrepreneurship and give an opportunity to tell their story.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your answers will remain confidential unless you consent to participate with identifying information. We will only include identifying information that you consent to including name, image, etc...

This is a collaborative project between WPI and the Creativity Platform, an NGO that addresses creative capital and economy in Thessaloniki. Our final project will be available to the public, and if interested, we can send a copy of our results at the conclusion of our study. We greatly appreciate your participation.

### Media Consent Form

\*Note: Form for those that choose not to remain confidential.

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States. We are interviewing immigrant entrepreneurs to learn more about the experience of starting and maintaining a business. We hope this research will help others understand refugees' experiences with food related entrepreneurship and give an opportunity to tell their story.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please read and note your preferences on this form.

Do we have your permission to audio record an interview?

Yes  No

Do we have your permission to photograph you?

Yes  No

Do we have your permission to use your words and image for use on a public website platform?

Yes  No

I understand that these interviews will be published for educational purposes and made available to the public.

# Appendix A

## Sample Interview Questions

O - Owner E - Employee C - Customer

Interview Questions	O	E	C
Do we have permission to record this interview?			
Can we quote you in our report?			
How was your company supported at the beginning (startup capital)?			
Did any friends or families help fund the company (social capital)?			
What were some challenges that were faced when first starting?			
Where do you get ingredients that are not as common in Greece?			
What were the motives of starting and working for this enterprise?			
How much, if any, experience did you have before starting this business?			
How has this enterprise aided you in your new country?			
Why do you choose to come to this business?			
How often do you visit this business?			
How does it make you feel when you visit this business?			
How did you find out about this food business?			

## Conclusion

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us today. Is there anything you would like to comment on further? Would you want a copy of the transcript from the interview? Thanks again and if there is anything else you would like to discuss you can reach us at [gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu) or you can contact the Creativity Platform.

# Appendix B: Interviews with Mini-Markets

This appendix is used for interviews with mini markets, including the owners, employees, and customers of these enterprises. These questions focus on the enterprise's customer demographic, specifically if any restaurants or home cooks are frequent customers. This will help us understand if similar ethnic groups are purchasing from these establishments, or if there are any patterns with the clientele. Many of these questions focus on the concept of the customers of these businesses, so we can further analyze why they continue to come back, and why they are specifically buying from these stores. It is also important to understand the motivations behind starting this business, and whether the owner and employees want to serve a specific purpose for the immigrant community.

## Considerations

We will give all participants the opportunity to remain confidential in our interviews to protect the immigrants from any negative repercussions from their answers to our questions. The following questions are meant to gather general ideas of the minority communities' experiences. We want them to tell their story in their own way, so asking excessive directed questions will take away from that.

We are also aware there may be a language barrier that we need to consider and will alter our interactions to better engage with them. This may include a picture guided interview or asking a fellow immigrant to help translate.

## Verbal Consent

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States. We are interviewing immigrant entrepreneurs to learn more about the experience of starting and maintaining a business. We hope this research will help others understand immigrants' experiences with food related entrepreneurship and give an opportunity to tell their story.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your answers will remain confidential unless you consent to participate with identifying information. We will only include identifying information that you consent to including name, image, etc...

This is a collaborative project between WPI and the Creativity Platform, an NGO that addresses creative capital and economy in Thessaloniki. Our final project will be available to the public, and if interested, we can send a copy of our results at the conclusion of our study. We greatly appreciate your participation.

## Media Consent Form

\*Note: Form for those that choose not to remain confidential.

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States. We are interviewing immigrant entrepreneurs to learn more about the experience of starting and maintaining a business. We hope this research will help others understand immigrants' experiences with food related entrepreneurship and give an opportunity to tell their story.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please read and note your preferences on this form.

Do we have your permission to audio record an interview?

Yes  No

Do we have your permission to photograph you?

Yes  No

Do we have your permission to use your words and image for use on a public website platform?

Yes  No

I understand that these interviews will be published for educational purposes and made available to the public.

# Appendix B

## Sample Interview Questions

O - Owner E - Employee C - Customer

Interview Questions	O	E	C
Do we have permission to record this interview?			
Can we quote you in our report?			
How was your company supported at the beginning (startup capital)?			
Did any friends or families help fund the company (social capital)?			
What were some challenges that were faced when first starting?			
What were the motives of starting and working for this enterprise?			
Where do you source products that are not as common in Greece?			
What is the demographic of your customers?			
How has this enterprise aided you in your new country?			
Why do you choose to come to this business?			
How often do you visit this business?			
How does it make you feel when you visit this business?			
How did you find out about this food business?			

## Conclusion

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us today. Is there anything you would like to comment on further? Would you want a copy of the transcript from the interview? Thanks again and if there is anything else you would like to discuss you can reach us at [gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu) or you can contact the Creativity Platform.

# Appendix C: Interviews with Organizations

This appendix is specific to Municipal officers, any government officials, and non-government organizations. The questions focus on the assistance, programs, or any other resources that may be available to immigrants when trying to start a food enterprise. This will help us better understand the challenges that immigrant entrepreneurs face. Many of these questions focus on the resources available to immigrants, any lasting support given to immigrants, and common qualities in successful immigrant entrepreneurs.

This is a collaborative project between WPI and the Creativity Platform, an NGO that addresses creative capital and economy in Thessaloniki. Our final project will be available to the public, and if interested, we can send a copy of our results at the conclusion of our study. We greatly appreciate your participation.

## Conclusion

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us today. Is there anything you would like to comment on further? Would you want a copy of the transcript from the interview? Thanks again and if there is anything else you would like to discuss you can reach us at [gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-gastronomy23@wpi.edu) or you can contact the Creativity Platform.

## Sample Interview Questions

Interview Questions
How can you help immigrants start and maintain their business?
What resources can you offer immigrants? (Social/Monetary Capital)
What is the most common source of startup capital?
Is there someone that can consistently be reached for assistance?
Can you support refugee businesses in the future?
How common is it for immigrants to seek entrepreneurial ventures?
How do these enterprises serve as an integrating source for immigrants?
Do you provide information about these enterprises to other immigrants to visit?
What are the attributes of the most successful immigrant run businesses? Least successful?
What is the most important aspect for immigrants to do for their business success overall?

## Verbal Consent

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States. We are interviewing immigrant entrepreneurs to learn more about the experience of starting and maintaining a business. We hope this research will help others understand minority communities' experiences with food related entrepreneurship and give an opportunity to tell their story.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your answers will remain confidential unless you consent to participate with identifying information. We will only include identifying information that you consent to including name, image, etc...