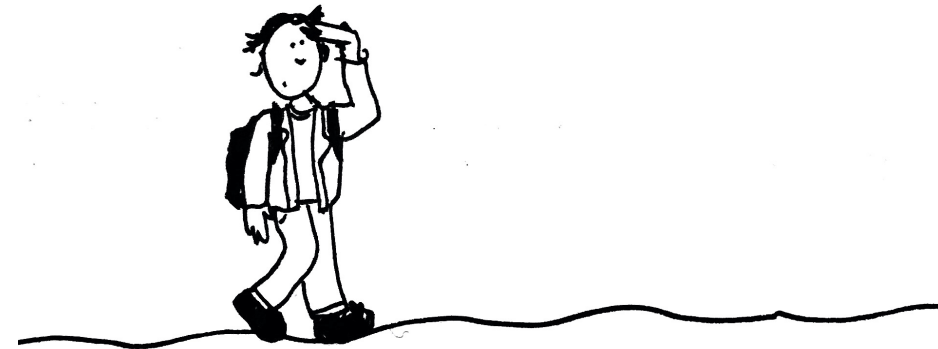


Unsettlement

The manufactured precarity and uncertainty of
refugeehood in Greece and its impact on young lives

Lucy Hunt, University of Luxembourg
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New Frontiers Conference | 31 Oct-1 Nov 2025



Rasoul

I'm leaving. I can't stay here.



Theorising 'unsettlement'

- Unsettlement as precarity and uncertainty

'Everyday precarity' (Johnson & Gilligan, 2021)

(Legal, financial, social, spatial, informational)

Endures long after arrival (Vera Espinoza, 2017)

- Unsettlement as 'in-betweenness'

Limbo; liminality (Van Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1969)

- Unsettlement as existential

Unheimlich: making-unfamiliar (Heidegger)

Relocation and re-familiarisation (Bhabha)

- Unsettlement as manufactured

'Manufactured vulnerability' (Walia, 2021)





Critical Times in Greece

Anthropological Engagements with the Crisis

Edited by
Dimitris Dalakoglou and
Georgios Agelopoulos



**LESBOS
MIGRANT CRISIS**

margins of Europe (Herzfeld 1987a).¹ For many years, the Greek state has been conducting an informal policy that could be defined as “a politics of invisibility” toward asylum seekers and refugees.² This policy is reflected in the lowest

Rozakou (2012)



pair interviews with
creative tasks



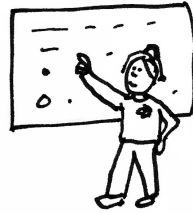
semi-structured
interviews



Methods



participant
observation



Unsettlement



Infrastructural
conditions



Intimate
conditions

Unsettlement



Infrastructural

conditions



Spatial



Legal-temporal



Administrative



Financial



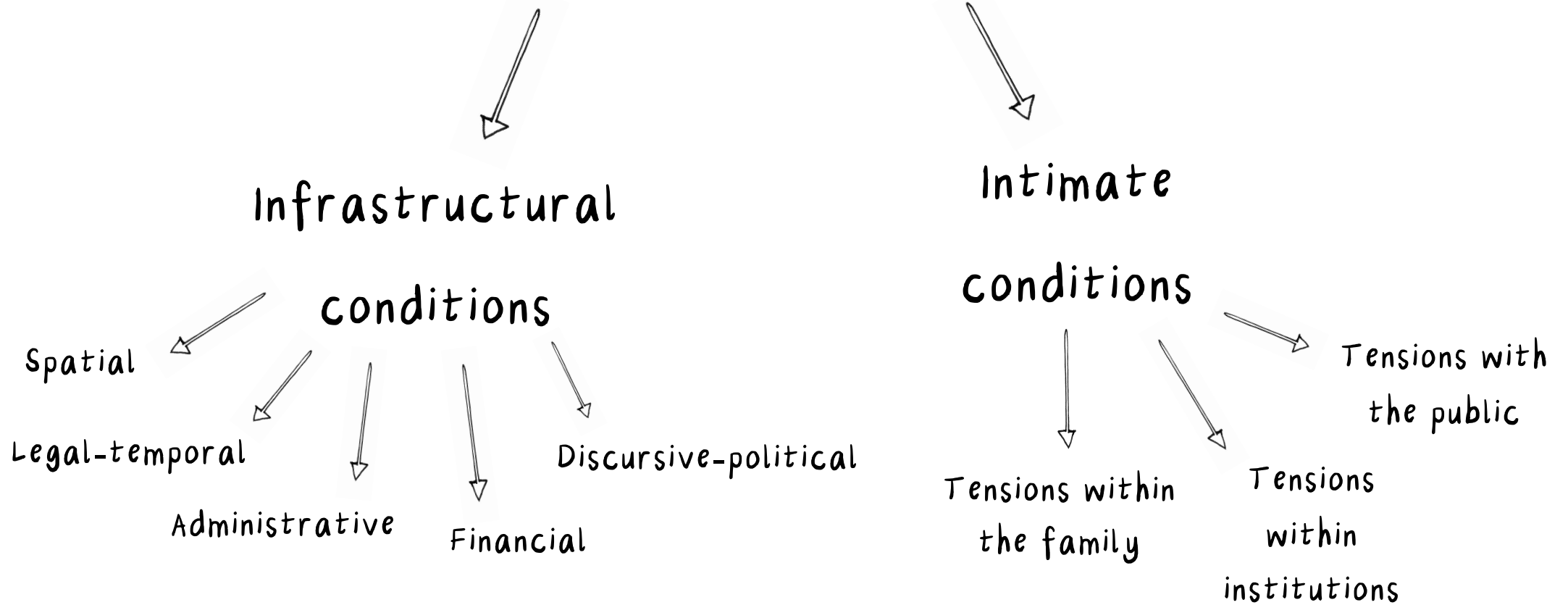
Discursive-political



Intimate

conditions

Unsettlement



Unsettlement



Infrastructural

conditions

Spatial



Legal-temporal



Administrative



Financial



Discursive-political

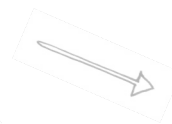


Intimate

conditions



Tensions with
the public



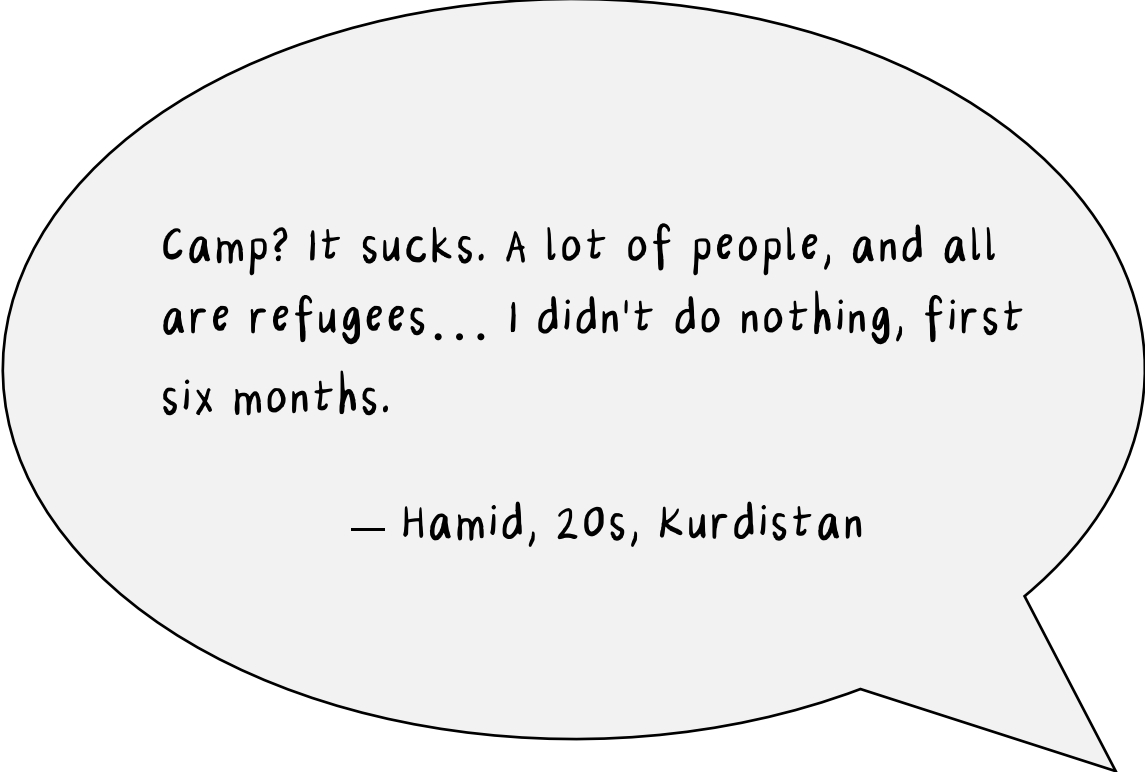
Tensions within
institutions



Tensions
within the
family

Spatial conditions

- Encampment in isolated locations
- Unstable accommodation



Camp? It sucks. A lot of people, and all are refugees... I didn't do nothing, first six months.

— Hamid, 20s, Kurdistan

Legal-temporal conditions

- Delayed asylum procedures and document processing
- Lack of relocation options (out of Greece)
- Lack of certainty r.e. gaining protection

In the beginning, I didn't want to stay in Greece ... *no one* didn't want to stay in Greece.

— Karvan, 19, Iran

Administrative conditions

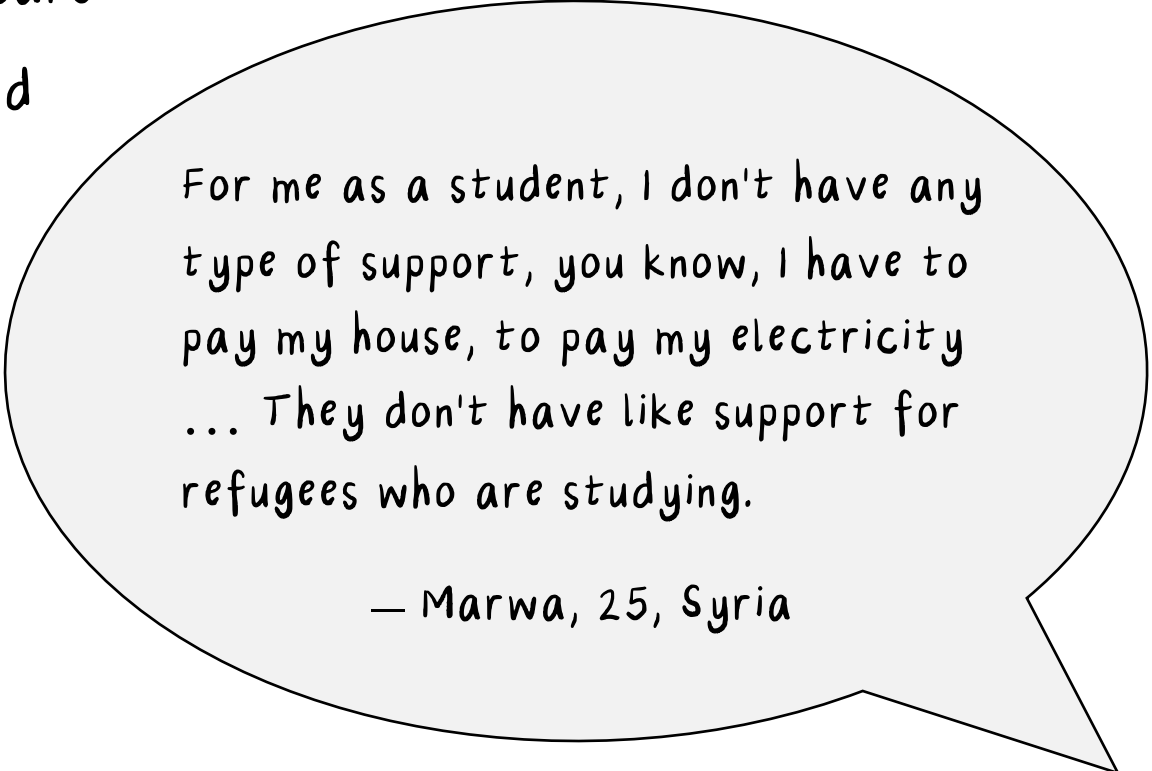
- Lack of/inability to obtain required documents
- Lack of clarity in law/policy (e.g. age)
- Bureaucratic hurdles for NGOs
- Limited public and NGO services

'Refugee' is absolutely different than 'migrant' ... That's unreasonable to ask from a refugee for provide his document.

— Sayed, 20s, Iran

Financial conditions

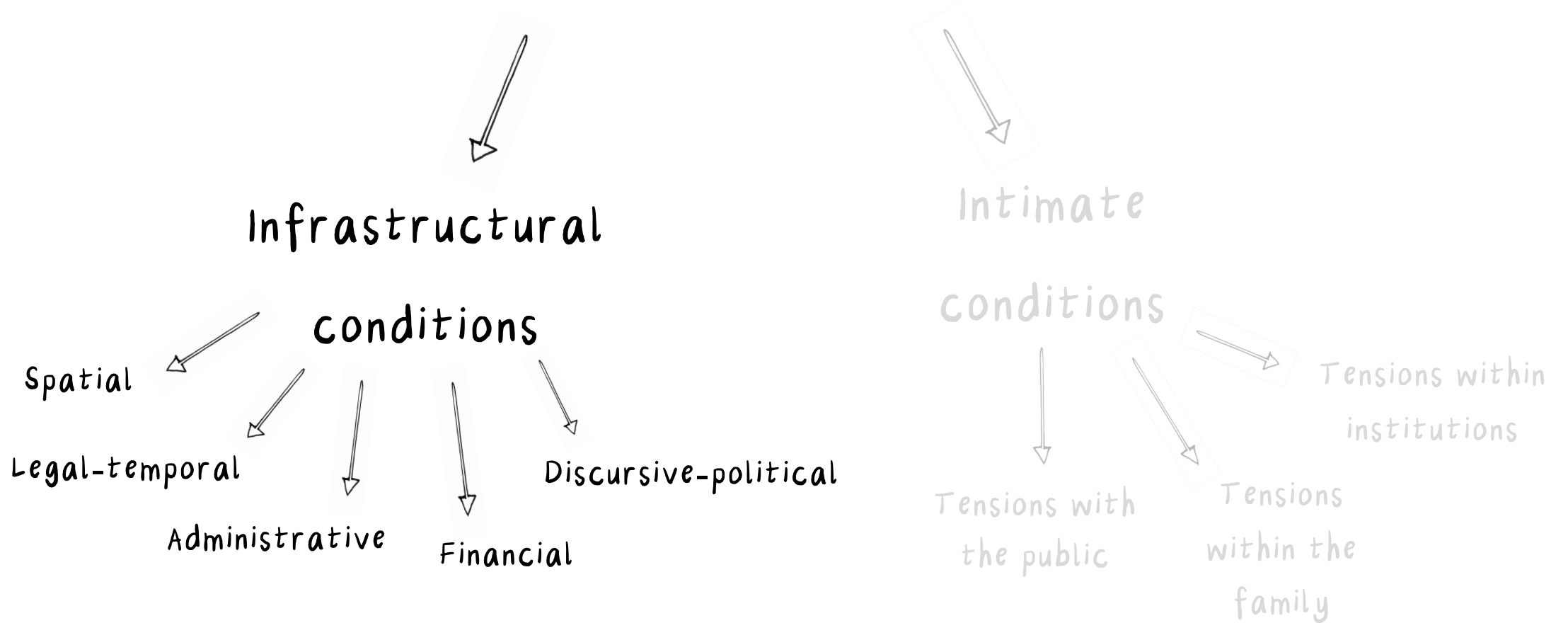
- No right to work (for asylum seekers)
- Potential sudden termination of cash card
- Having to use free services with limited availability/effectiveness



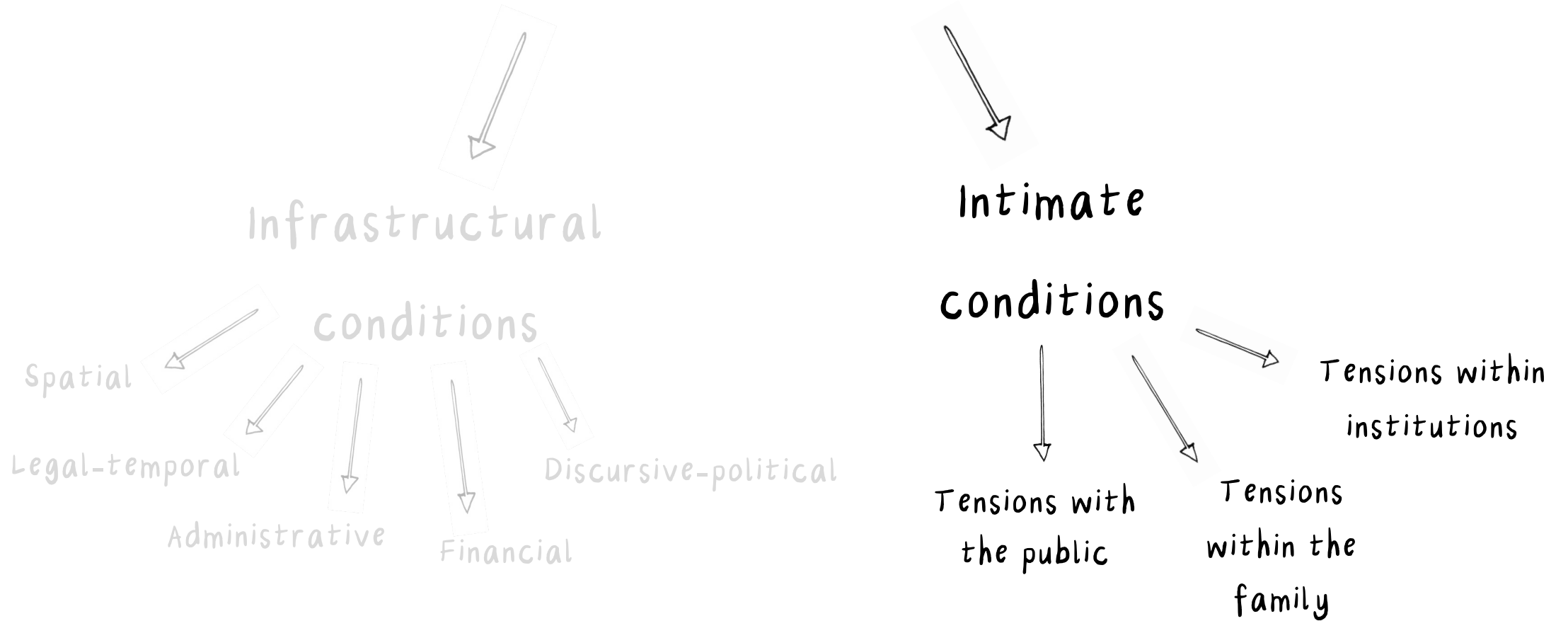
For me as a student, I don't have any type of support, you know, I have to pay my house, to pay my electricity ... They don't have like support for refugees who are studying.

— Marwa, 25, Syria

Unsettlement

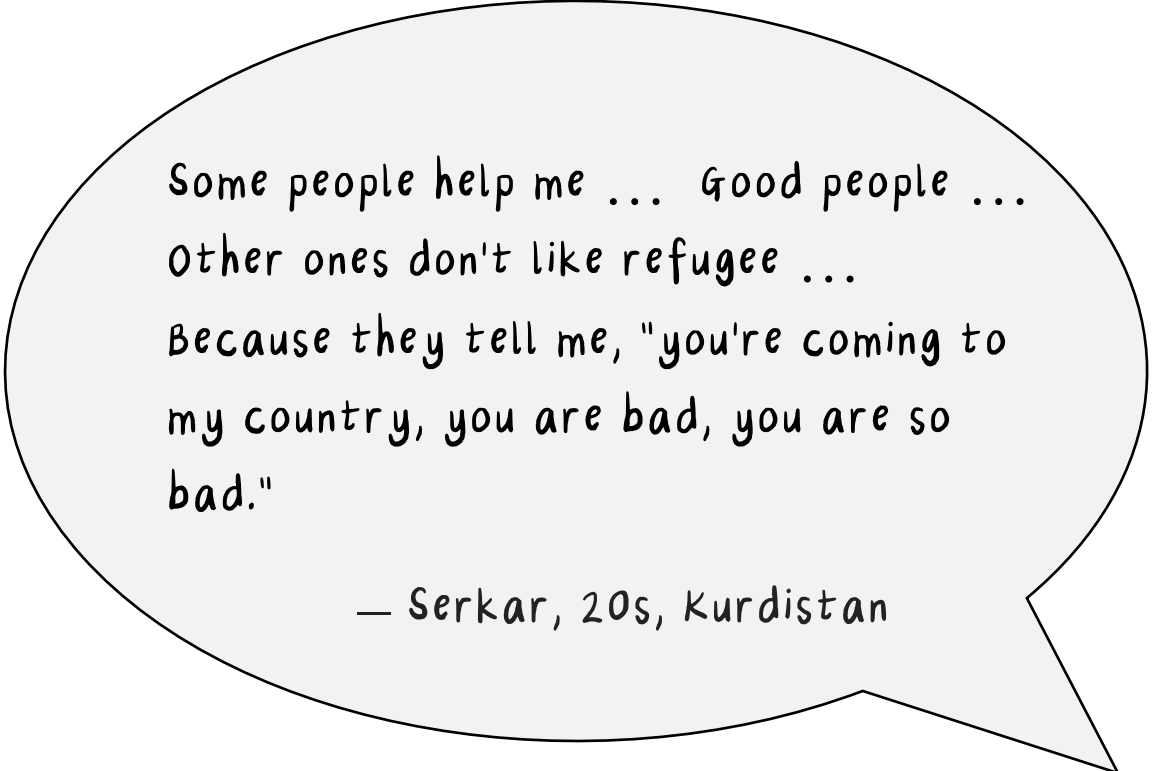


Unsettlement



Tensions with the public

- Racism/discrimination on the street ('local', including migrant, community)
- Friction and misinformation in camps

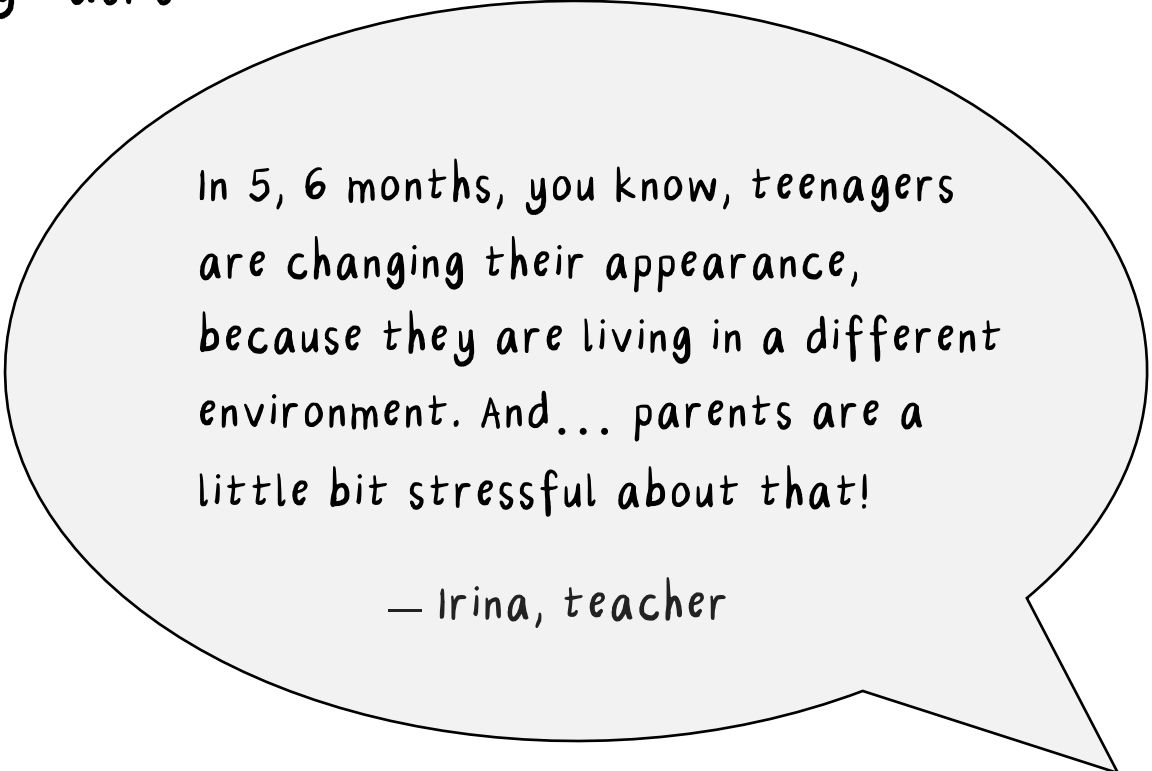


Some people help me ... Good people ...
Other ones don't like refugee ...
Because they tell me, "you're coming to
my country, you are bad, you are so
bad."

— Serkar, 20s, Kurdistan

Tensions within the family

- Parental fears and mistrust
- Required to help with childcare/family tasks
- Domestic abuse
- Transnational family pressures
- Symbolic distance: new tastes, interests, language skills

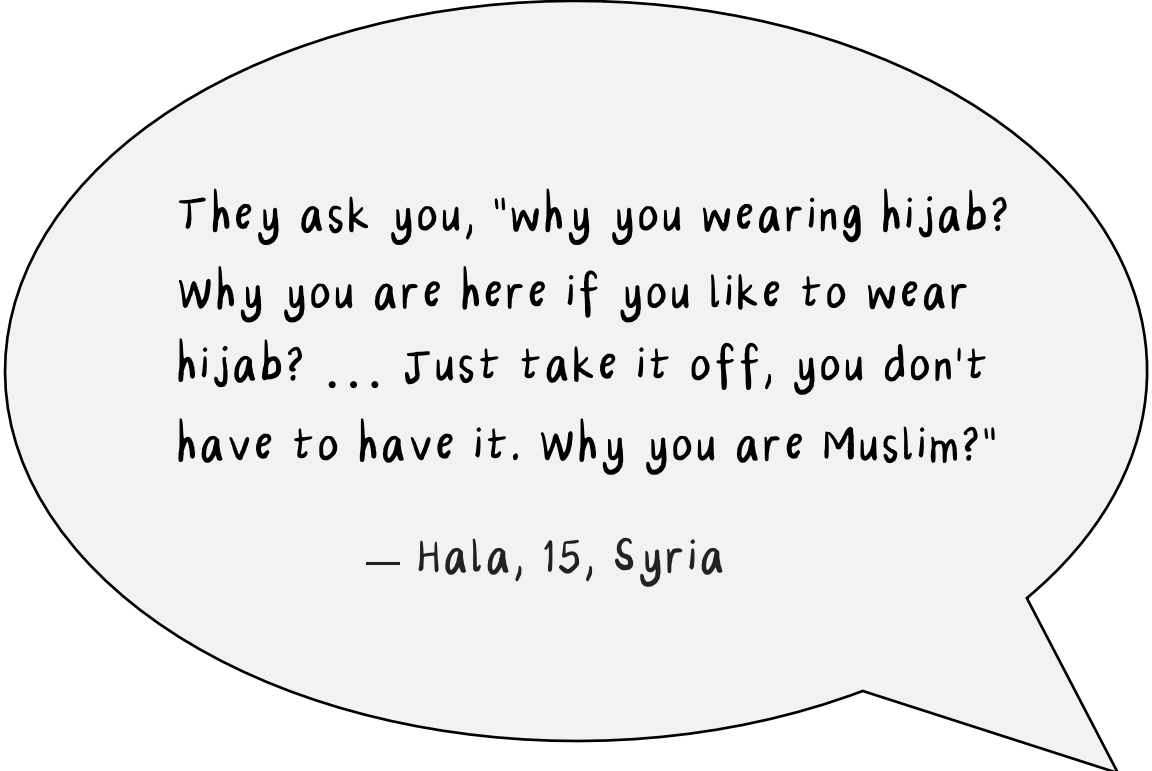


In 5, 6 months, you know, teenagers are changing their appearance, because they are living in a different environment. And... parents are a little bit stressful about that!

— Irina, teacher

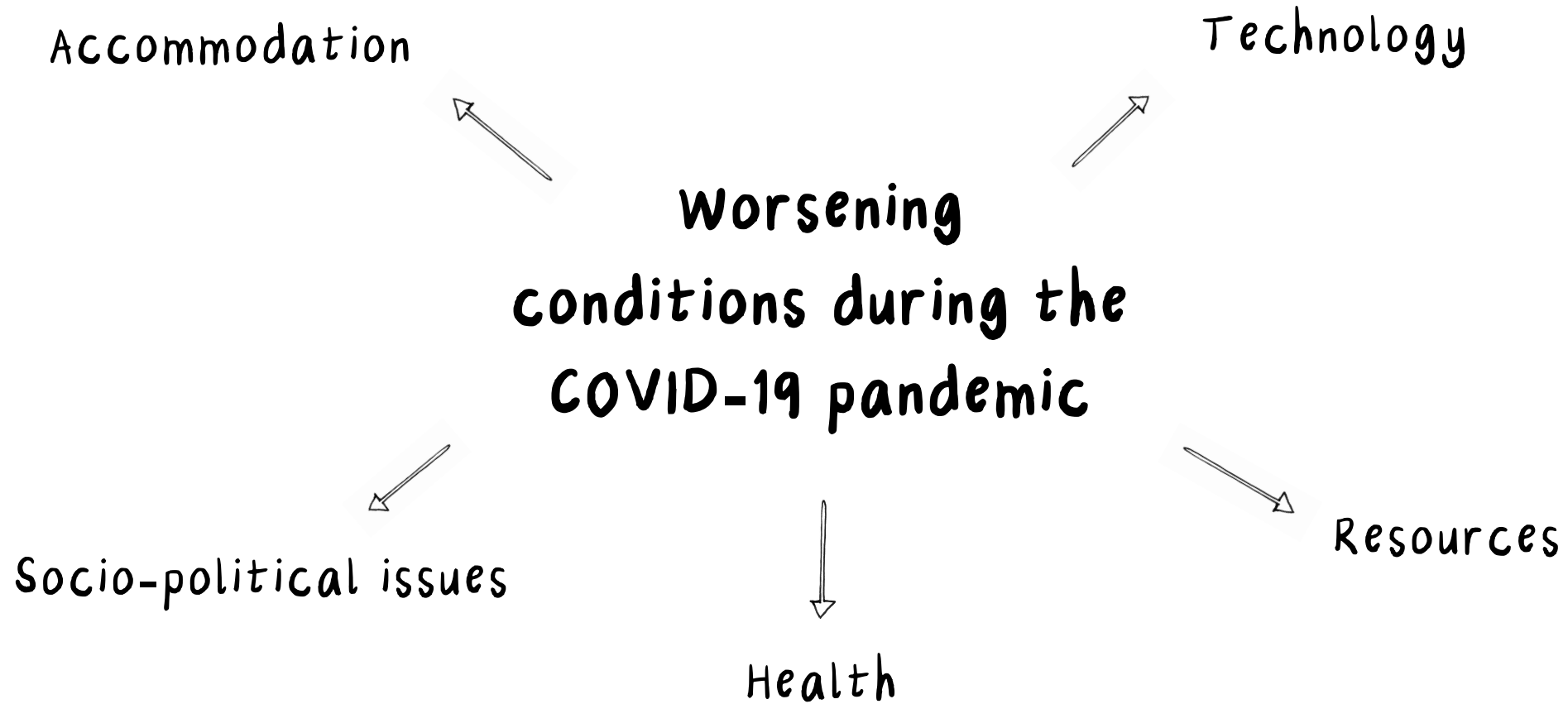
Tensions within institutions

- Racism/discrimination
- Unwelcoming educators or peers
- 'Othering' and power imbalances



They ask you, "why you wearing hijab?
Why you are here if you like to wear
hijab? ... Just take it off, you don't
have to have it. Why you are Muslim?"

— Hala, 15, Syria



Challenging unsettlement

We don't know how it's going in the future. We don't know after two days how it's going...

Maybe school will help me one day. We don't know.



Jilwan*, 25

Frontières fermées, des mers devenues cimetières, des personnes réduites à de simples chiffres Entassées dans des camps d'isolement ou emprisonnées dans des centres de détention, privées du système de santé publique et éducatif,

...
exploitent les autres en l'absence de l'intolérance, tre
cieux contre
grants,
ouvement de
et des

STOP WAR ON MIGRANTS

روز های ملاقات: هر چهارشنبه ساعت 8 شب
محل برگزاری ملاقات ها
Fabrika Yfanet
Squat-

Réunions ouvertes tous les mercredis à 20h00
à Fabrika Yfanet Squat

مرز های بسته، دریا ها و بحر ها به شکل گورستان، مرگ
تقلیل انسان ها به کمیت
تبعید مردم ها در زندان،
های سر بسته و بدون
دسترسی اجتماعات
انسانی و بدون
خدمات صحی

آنهاى که نزدیک به
پناهجویان اند از آنجا راوی
محروم سازی، بی حوصله
گی و خاموشی اند

در مقابل، مردمان محل همراه با
مهاجرین در برابر این عوامل - با هم
پذیری، برقراری ارتباطات و کوشش
- با هم در مقابل جنگ در برابر
مهاجرین و زندگی مشترک جواب
میبهند.

برای توقف جنگ در مقابل ه
**ARRÊTER LA GUERRE
CONTRE LES MIGRANTS**
برای زندگی در
VIVRE ENSEMBLE

Facebook/StopWarOnMigrants
stopwaronmigrants@espivblogs.net



"Education is the key"



Thanks for
listening.