



Private Sponsorship for Integration:  
building a European model



## SPONSORING INTEGRATION

### Impact assessment of Humanitarian Corridors Program primary achievements in Italy and France



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# The Italian Humanitarian Corridors Program Achievements through the Eyes of Participants<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

As reported in the most recent UNHCR's report *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2019*<sup>2</sup>: “We are witnessing a changed reality in that forced displacement nowadays is not only vastly more widespread but is simply no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon.” The situation is even more worrisome if we consider that, while the number of forced migrants in need of protection rose to 79.5 million at the end of 2019,<sup>3</sup> policymakers and host societies have become less willing to provide reception to those seeking protection.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, the Humanitarian Corridors program represents a significantly beneficial practice, being the fastest and most accessible path for the Italian reception of asylum seekers concentrated in Lebanon. The Humanitarian Corridors program represents an effective response to the “scandal of deaths at sea,” which, according to data released by the IOM, referred to more than 15,000 people who died following shipwrecks in the central Mediterranean between 2014 and 2019.<sup>5</sup>

The project dates back to December 2015, when representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FCEI), the Union of Waldensian and Methodist Churches (CSD) and the Community of Sant'Egidio signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)<sup>6</sup> for access to Italy for a thousand refugees from Lebanon, Morocco and Ethiopia. In February 2016 the first participants arrived and were immediately welcomed by Protestant and Catholic groups and families, who also attended to the integration process. The result is a full involvement on the part of the host society, without burdening the public budget,<sup>7</sup> as the Humanitarian Corridors program is funded primarily through Italy's “8 x 1,000” (*otto per mille*) system in which taxpayers contribute a compulsory 0.08% of their annual income to their choice of charities or faith-based organizations.

This impact assessment will focus on the human dimension behind the outcomes that were produced, on the key challenges faced and how they were addressed, and on the identification of critical areas that need to be improved. A particular emphasis will be also placed on the impact of the Humanitarian Corridors program experience both for the host communities and on the integration of the newcomers. All this will be achieved through the eyes of the participants, of the persons directly concerned, who were widely available to be consulted and interviewed during the implementation of this impact assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> The elaboration of texts was carried out as follows: Antonio Ricci, Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS (chapters 1 and 2), Paolo Naso, Centro Studi CONFRONTI (chapters 3 and 5) and Paolo Pezzati, OXFAM Italia (chapter 4).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Migration Policy Institute, *Refugee Sponsorship Programmes*, Policy Brief no. 15, Washington, December 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Bartolini Laura, *Il Mediterraneo centrale: una rotta sempre più pericolosa*, in IDOS-Confronti, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2019*, IDOS, Roma, 2019, pp. 138-141.

<sup>6</sup> In brief, the legal basis for the issuing of a visa was Article 25 of the Regulation (EC) No. 810/2009 (the so-called Visa Code), which derives from the “principle of fulfillment” of the Schengen Borders Code, thus allowing each Member State to issue a visa where national authorities deem it necessary “for humanitarian reasons or national interest reasons or by virtue of international obligations.” See: Ricci Carola, “The Necessity for Alternative Legal Pathways: The Best Practice of Humanitarian Corridors Opened by Private Sponsors in Italy”, *German Law Journal*, no. 21, 2020, pp. 265–283.

<sup>7</sup> Naso Paolo, *I corridoi umanitari. Da best practice a policy*, in IDOS-Confronti, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione*, IDOS, Roma, 2019, pp. 142-143.

## Objectives and research design phases

The objective of this impact assessment is to define the level of interaction of the participants with the local society, and to report their assessment of the path undertaken from first program contact through the current phase of assessment.

To achieve this objective, the analysts proceeded through an **initial phase** of desk research and methodological clarification. This report reviews those findings, adding findings from secondary sources, identifying points of strength and weaknesses, and stating the central research hypothesis.

The **subsequent phase** was a field survey to be implemented according to a mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology based on three different analysis techniques:

- Questionnaires administered to two different target groups: adults and teen-agers;
- Interviews with program participants and main stakeholders;
- A photolanguage session in which the participants evaluated photographs, each of which explicitly referred to an emotional response that can be summarized with six keywords: trust, fear, nostalgia, multi/intercultural integration and dialogue, traditionalism and radicalism.

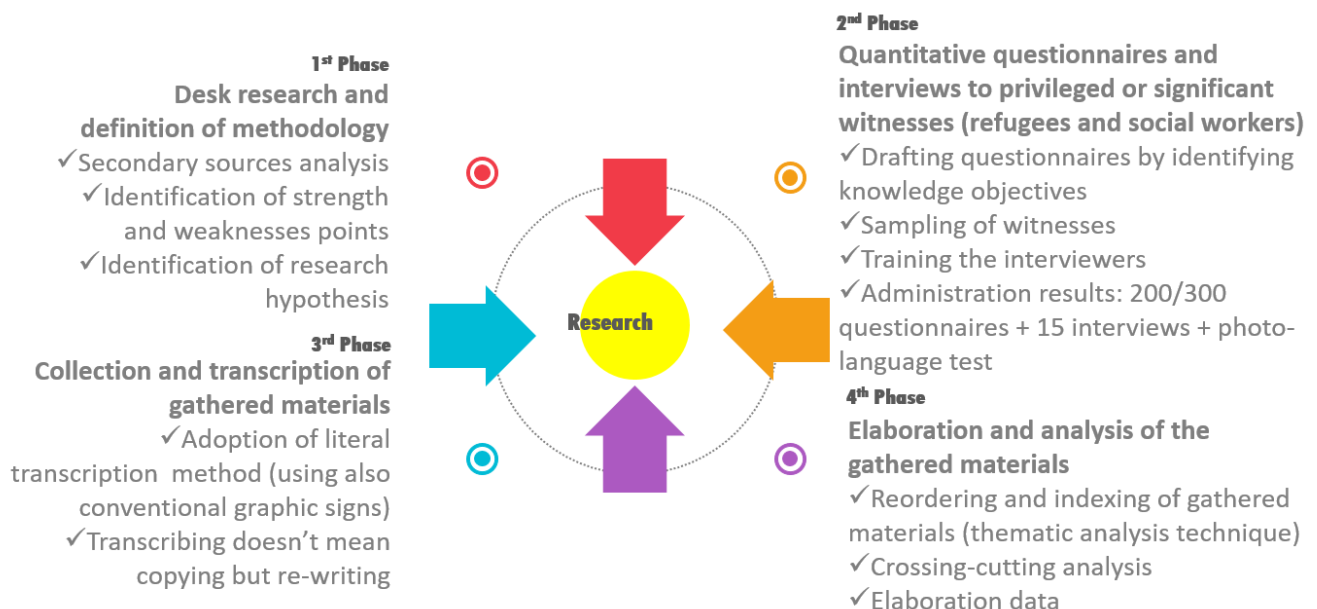
This mixed methodology in the collection and analysis of empirical data ensures that:

- Each technique will validate or correct the results of the other;
- Each technique will compensate for the gaps or the limits of the other.

In the **third phase**, the gathered materials were organized, data was entered in a SurveyMonkey database and analyzed through Office applications, and interviews were transcribed according to a literal transcription methodology.

**Finally**, it was possible to proceed with the elaboration and analysis of the gathered materials, by reordering and indexing the gathered materials (according to a thematic analysis technique) and by proceeding with a cross-cutting analysis capable of identifying good practices, and points of strength and weakness of Humanitarian Corridors program.

Ultimately, the program will be appraised from different points of view, engaging various assessment scales to arrive at deductive, logical, detailed measurements of the program participants' attitudes and behaviors, and of the program's successes or failures.



## Survey methodology

In implementing the project assessment, the analysts took into consideration the main empirical surveys conducted on asylum seekers at the national and transnational level over the last decade, in

particular focusing on the sampling strategies and techniques that were employed. As noticed by a recent EASO report,<sup>8</sup> non-probability sampling methods are mostly used when surveying asylum seekers and refugees (in particular, snowball and purposive samplings).

In the present case the impact assessment concerned a sample of 894 participants of the Humanitarian Corridors program who legally and safely arrived in Italy between 2017 and 2020, mostly Syrians from Lebanon. In the same period other 1,001 participants were supported by the Sant’Egidio community.

	MoU 2016 – 2017	MoU 2018 – 2019 (Slippage Into 2020)	Total 2016-2020
CSD	353	368	721
FCEI	86	87	173
<b>Protestant Churches</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>894</b>

In order to maximize the overall response rate of a target group which is difficult to interview and moreover scattered throughout the Italian territory, the analysts made a decision to carry out a field survey drawing on official lists and adapting to the context the aggregation center sampling method<sup>9</sup> (a variant of the so-called “center-location sampling”).

This strategy involved the administration of the survey during occasions of special aggregation initiatives, such as the Workshop on Active Citizenship and the anti-radicalization courses provided for in this project,<sup>10</sup> which were divided into four working days, according to the following calendar:

1. Waldensian Church in Turin (July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019);
2. Methodist Evangelical Church in Rome (October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019);
3. Methodist Evangelical Church in Milan (November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019);
4. House of Cultures in Scicli, Sicily (December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

In occasion of these meetings, thanks to the collaboration of the local coordinators of the CSD and FCEI projects, all the participants relevant to MoU 2018-2019, plus any interested participants belonging to the previous round of arrivals (2016-2017), were invited to participate. Thanks to the support of a small reimbursement of travel expenses, the maximum geographical coverage was reached, and participation was substantial. Most helpfully, the absolute majority of participants proved to be available to fill the written questionnaire by themselves.

### The survey’s questionnaires

Two written anonymous questionnaires were drafted: one targeted to adult participants (59 questions) and a second one targeted to their teen-age sons and daughters (45 questions), in order to take into account different needs, problems encountered, and integration pathways followed since their arrival in Italy.

Both questionnaires were mainly built with multiple choice single-answer questions in order to allow respondents to select one option from a list of predefined and intuitive answers, in order to obtain

<sup>8</sup> EASO, *A Review of Empirical Surveys of Asylum-Related Migrants*, Valletta, June 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Blangiardo Gian Carlo, *The centre sampling technique in surveys on foreign migrants. The balance of a multi-year experience*, Eurostat Working Paper 12, 29 February 2008; Baio Gianluca, Blangiardo Gian Carlo, Blangiardo, Marta, “Centre sampling technique in foreign migration surveys: a methodological note.” *Journal of Official Statistics*, 27, 2011, pp. 451-465.

<sup>10</sup> The activities of these meetings were aimed at i) reinforcing trust in European institutions and principles; ii) providing training and information tools on pluralism and multiculturalism; iii) promoting active citizenship, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, democracy, non-violent resolution of conflicts; and iv) teaching tools to recognize the nature of hate speech and violent propaganda through the web.

structured answers, which i) produce clear and easy to analyze data, ii) provide mutually exclusive options, and iii) simplify participation in the survey thanks to the presence of predefined response options. To facilitate participation, multiple choice multi-answer questions were reduced to the minimum (only one for adults and two for teen-agers).

Again with a view to simplification, it was preferred not to use questions on the evaluations scale (the so-called “ordinal questions”) which ask the respondent to select the numerical value that best represents his answer (for example from 1 to 10), rather preferring the so-called “Likert-scale questions” that offer respondents a range of answer options ranging from one extreme to another (for example from “not at all probable” to “extremely probable”), considering them more effective for measuring opinions and feelings of respondents.

In order to further simplify the content of the question, sometimes matrix questions were employed, providing a set of questions each with the same answer options according to the “Likert scale.”

The “Other(s)” answer option has always been provided so as not to oblige respondents to make a choice from a predetermined list of answer options, with the possibility of distorting the results (for example with random answers). Respondents who do not find a relevant answer option were therefore allowed to opt for the “Other(s)” answer and enter a personalized answer in the comment field left specifically open.

In addition, the respondent was given the freedom to refrain from answering, always offering the “No response” answer options, so as not to force or distort the respondents’ expressions.

Open survey questions were provided only at the end of the questionnaire (4 for adults and 1 for teen-agers), in order to allow respondents to provide feedback with their own words and try to detect information that otherwise would never have been gathered.

The availability of respondents on the four occasions of administering the questionnaire has always been broad, although there were difficulties—especially of a linguistic nature—which were mitigated thanks to the presence *in situ* of three IDOS and Confronti researchers and thanks to the collaboration of cultural-linguistic mediators specially trained in the previous weeks.

### **The semi-structured interviews**

The interviews were aimed at: i) understanding the achievements of the Humanitarian Corridors program according to the point of view of the interviewed witnesses; ii) collecting empirical data and information by questioning the people and “entering their individuality;” and iii) drawing out problematic areas and unclear concepts thanks to the direct personal contact between subject and researcher. In other words, the aim is to observe the world through the eyes of the respondents,<sup>11</sup> in order to observe the achievements of the Humanitarian Corridors program according to the perspectives of participants and main stakeholders.

There were 15 qualitative interviews collected between April and May 2020 in six regions of Italy (Lazio, Lombardy, Piedmont, Sicily, Tuscany and Veneto). Due to the social distancing limits imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, it was not possible to carry out the interviews in person, but it was necessary to resort to virtual platforms such as Zoom, Skype, Meet, etc.

The strategy was to prepare four semi-structured interview tracks, to be addressed to representatives of four key areas:

- participants (dealing with integration, Humanitarian Corridors program personal evaluation, perspectives),
- social workers,
- local government officials, and
- journalists.

Qualitative research, conducted after administration of the surveys, played an essential integrative role to decode and deepen quantitative results, confirming that mixed methods can constitute a link between research and intervention phases.

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<sup>11</sup> Ferrarotti Franco, *Trattato di sociologia*, Utet, Torino, 1991, pp. 323-353.

Regarding the obstacles encountered, it was very difficult to obtain interviews from local government officials, however, the immediate availability of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs should be underlined.

### **The Photolanguage Methodology**

Finally, in order to overcome the communication difficulties encountered with the target group (either because of language barriers, or because of complex and delicate migratory backgrounds), the technique of photolanguage was engaged experimentally in order to inspire the participants to express their opinions and points of view. With this method, participants use the photo as a medium to talk about oneself indirectly, without having to focus the gaze on the people present.

As shown by various studies, photolanguage reveals to the researchers important and not-always-evident glimpses of a person's life, because the evocative power of the images can bring out preconscious contents and allow subjects to compare their own expressions with those of the group, enhancing the experience of self-and-other relationality.



## 2. The quantitative analysis: the survey of adults

### The personal and socio-demographic framework of the respondents

Over the occasions of the four territorial meetings held between July and December 2019, it was possible to collect a total number of 117 questionnaires, administered to participants of projects specializing in the legal and safe resettlement of people in vulnerable conditions, under the auspices of the so-called “Humanitarian Corridors program” managed by FCEI and CSD. In addition to these, another 27 questionnaires were collected during the same occasions from teenaged participants, of which analysis will be delegated to a subsequent chapter.

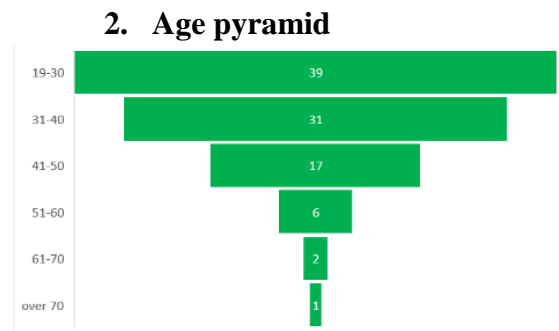
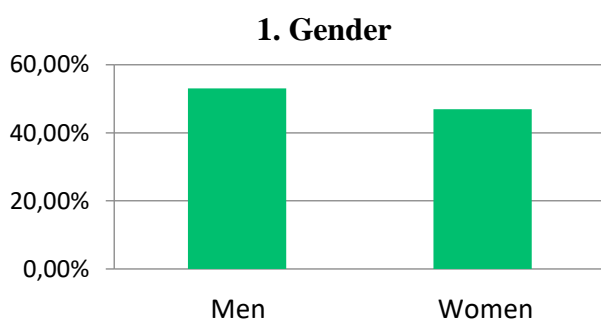
Unfortunately, the disaggregated data relating specifically to participants belonging to FCEI and CSD (the subjects of this report) are not available at the moment; however, it was possible to gain access to the provisional data (31/1/2020) derived from the total participants of the Humanitarian Corridor’s program, therefore including also those pertaining to the Community of Sant’Egidio. The full sample of participants will be occasionally referenced during the data analysis, using the term “reference universe” (represented by 1,161 adult participants).

### Gender and age

Males represented the majority of respondents to the survey questions (53.0%), almost in line with the reference universe in which adult men reached 51.3%.

In terms of age groups, the group of respondents adheres to a pyramid model, being made up mostly of young adults under 30 (40.6%). The levels of successive ages, segmented in groups of 10 years, scales down: in second place are people between 31-40 years (32.3%), in third place people between 41-50 years (17.7%), in fourth place those between 51-60 years (6.3%), in the fifth place between 61-70 years (2.1%), and in the last place the over-70s (1.0%).

The average age of the respondents is 35.2 years, corresponding fully with the average age of the adults belonging to the reference universe (which is 35.4 years). It is interesting to note that the latter falls to 25 years if we also take minors into account.



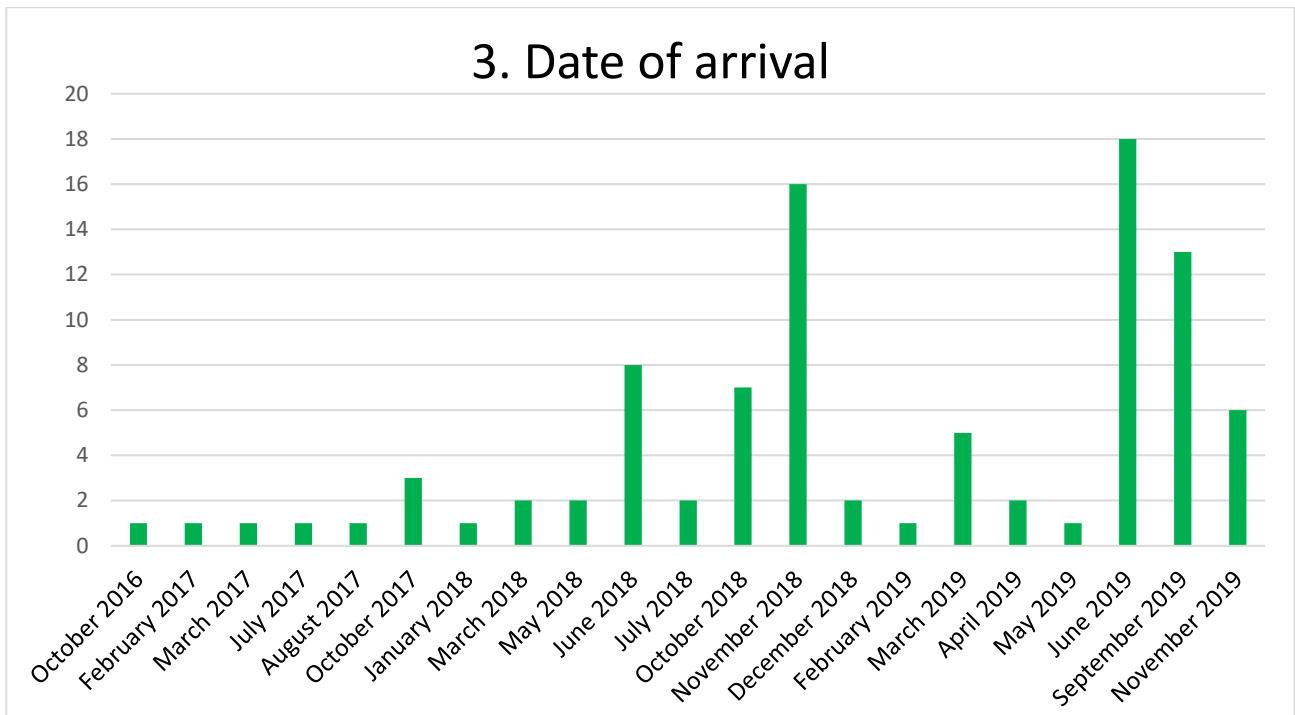
### Arrival in Italy and countries of origin and transit

The vast majority comes from Syria (108 out of 114). Regarding the year of transfer to Italy, 86 out of 94 respondents arrived through the 2018-2019 MoU, while the remaining eight through the 2016-2017 MoU (among the minors, out of 26 respondents 20 belong to the most recent two-year period and the remaining 6 to the previous two years). At the reference universe level, on the other hand, 55.6% moved to Italy in the first two years.

The most numerically significant arrival sessions were recorded in June 2019 (19.2% of the total), November 2018 (17.0%) and September 2019 (13.8%).

The respondents reside in 23 different municipalities, belonging to nine Italian regions. Sicily ranks first with 25%, followed by Piedmont with 20%, Lombardy with 16%, Tuscany with 11% and Liguria with 8%. Among the most represented municipalities, one should note the relevance of some regional capitals such as Turin (10%), Florence and Rome (7% each), Genoa (6%) and Milan (5%). It is not

surprising the leading role played by smaller destinations such as Scicli (13%), Pinerolo (6%) and Vittoria (5%), demonstrating that the commitment to the reception and integration of asylum seekers is strongly rooted in local communities.



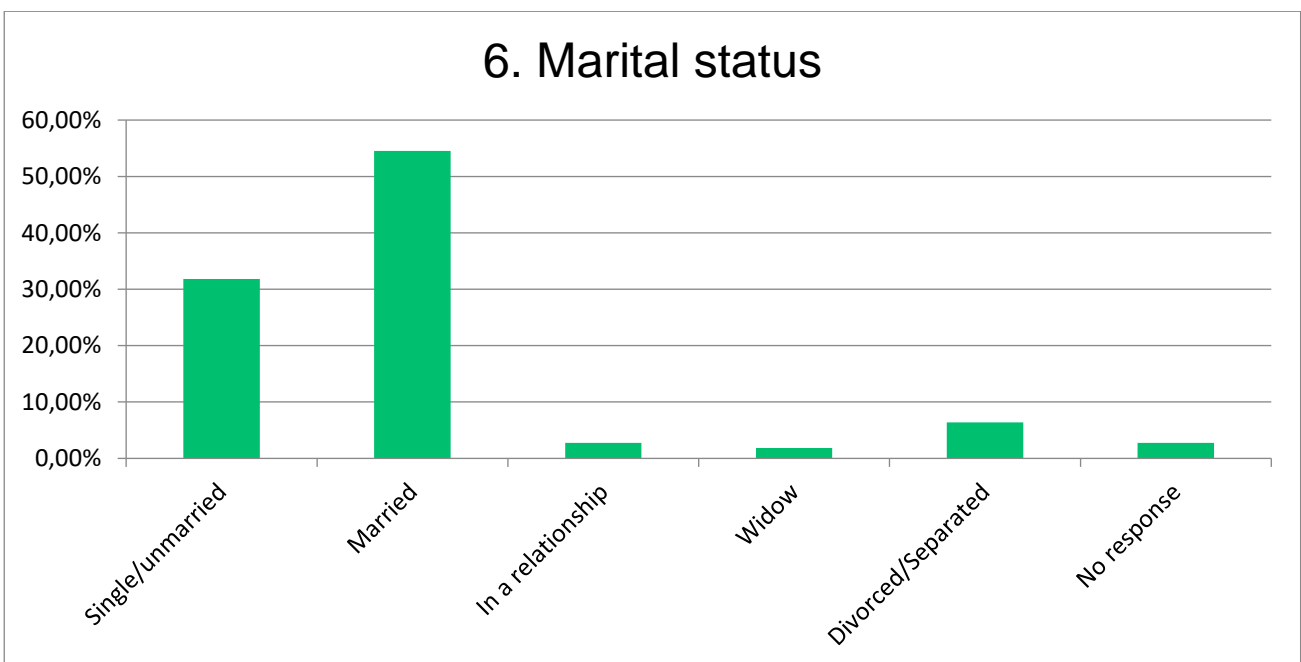


#### *Marital status and children*

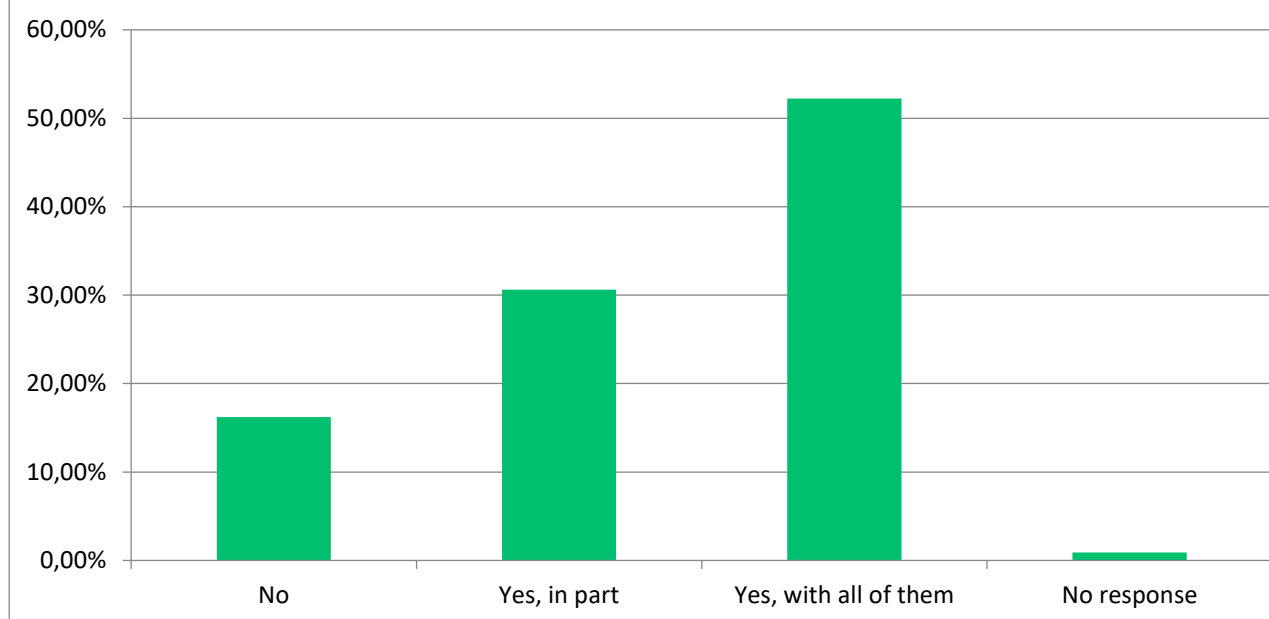
In the sample interviewed, over half are married (54.6%) and almost a third single (31.8%). 82.9% also claim to have arrived in Italy with the family; of these, however, 30.6% arrive with only a part of their family: only the spouse in 12.9% of cases and only the children in 14.1%.

Even within the reference universe, 84.9% of adults are accompanied by the family. Unfortunately, however, further details are not available.

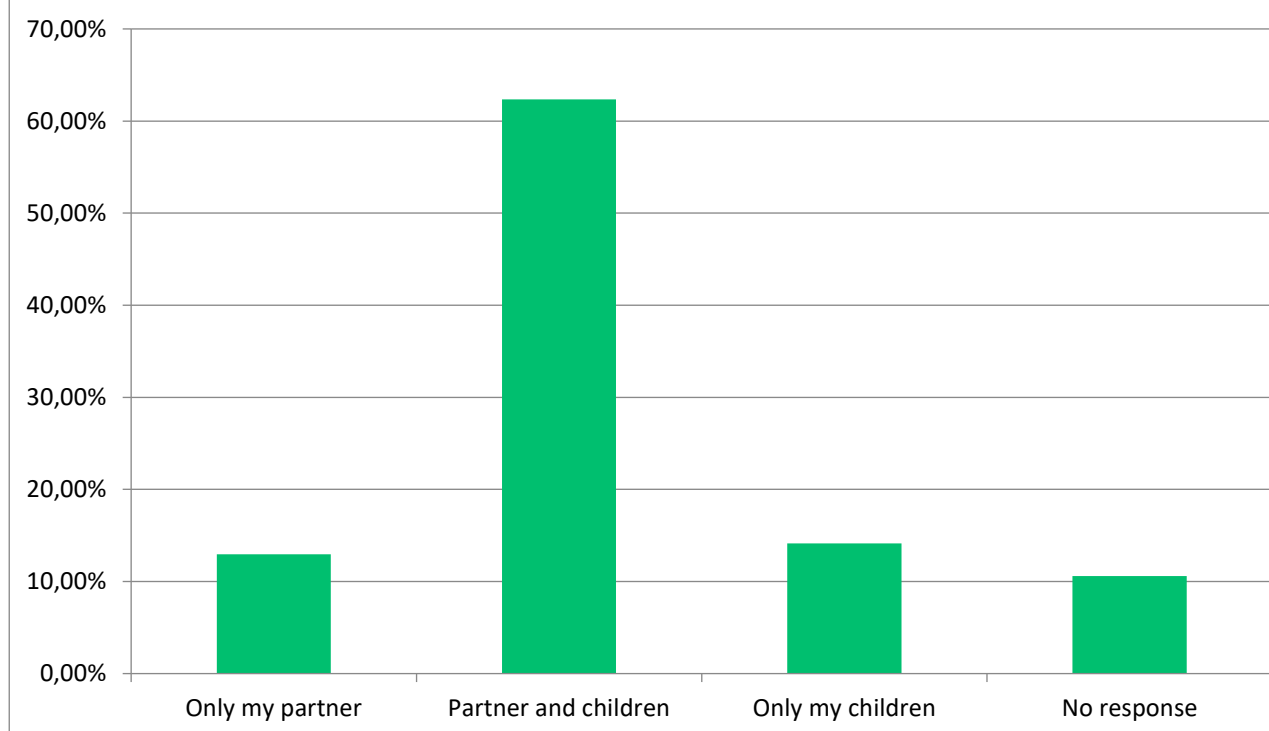
The percentage of singles is justified by the young age; indeed, 40.6% of adult respondents are aged between 18 and 30.



## 7. Are you here with your family?



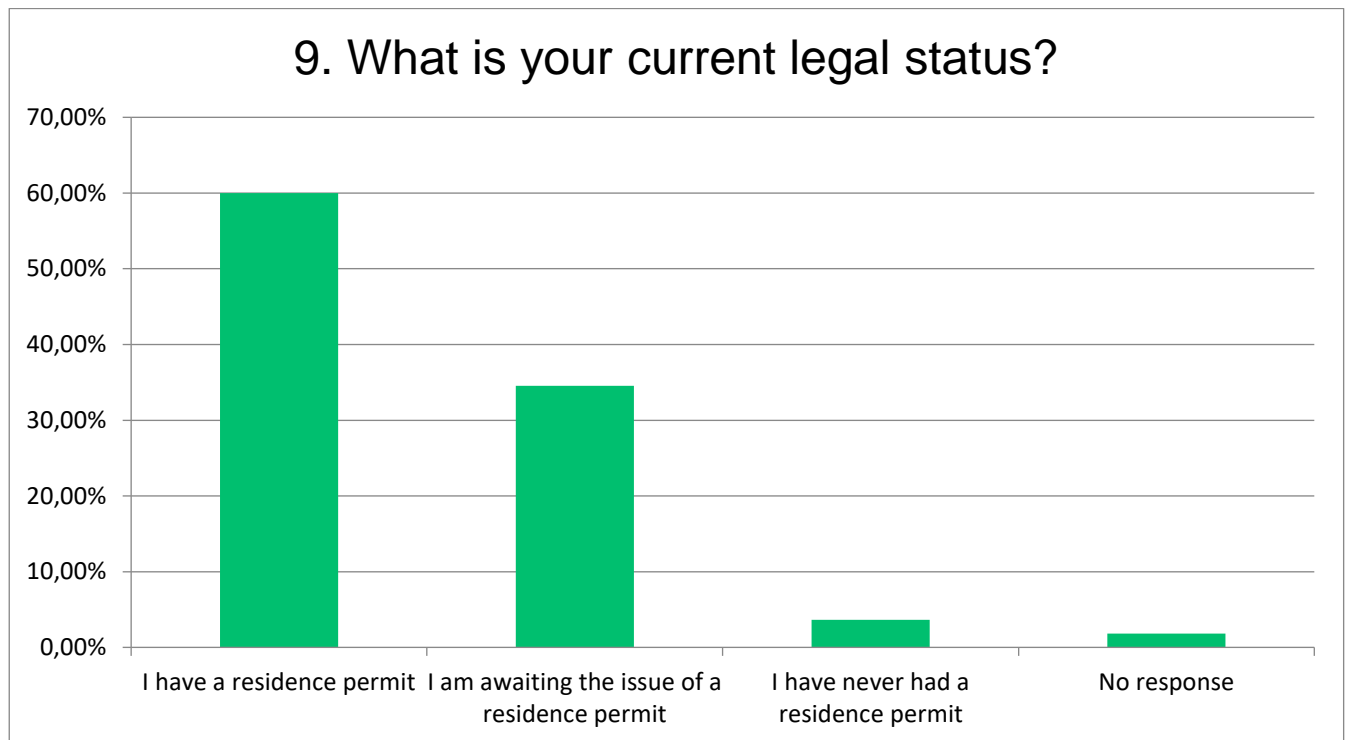
## 8. If yes, with whom?



### *Legal status*

Legal status is the primary motivation for this population's arrival in Italy: they are generally in search of a form of protection that takes the shape of a residence permit. 60% of them possess a residence permit covering various intents and purposes, while 38.2% are awaiting one or have never had a residence permit, generally due to their particularly recent arrival.

Even if various civil society organizations have often denounced serious delays in issuing the stay permits for asylum seekers and refugees at the police headquarters, it must be said that, for participants of Humanitarian Corridors programs, the procedure of recognition of protection status by the territorial commissions is generally facilitated by the dossier of information collected previously in Lebanon by the Italian consulate, and also through on-site intelligence channels. In essence, these preliminary checks to ensure that the person was not implicated in criminal acts nor had contacts with Islamic extremism make it easier to carry out the asylum procedure once in Italy.



#### *Study and professions before leaving*

Regarding the education level of the interviewees, on the one hand, it is admirable that 27.5% are university graduates or holders of university degrees and 15.6% have successfully completed high school. On the other hand, however, it should also be stressed that one third of the participants stopped their studies after obtaining their elementary school qualification (26.6%) or never even obtained any formal education (6.4%).

The average of years of study is generally high—10.6 years—and, for the most qualified individuals, the school and university career can last as long as 20 years.

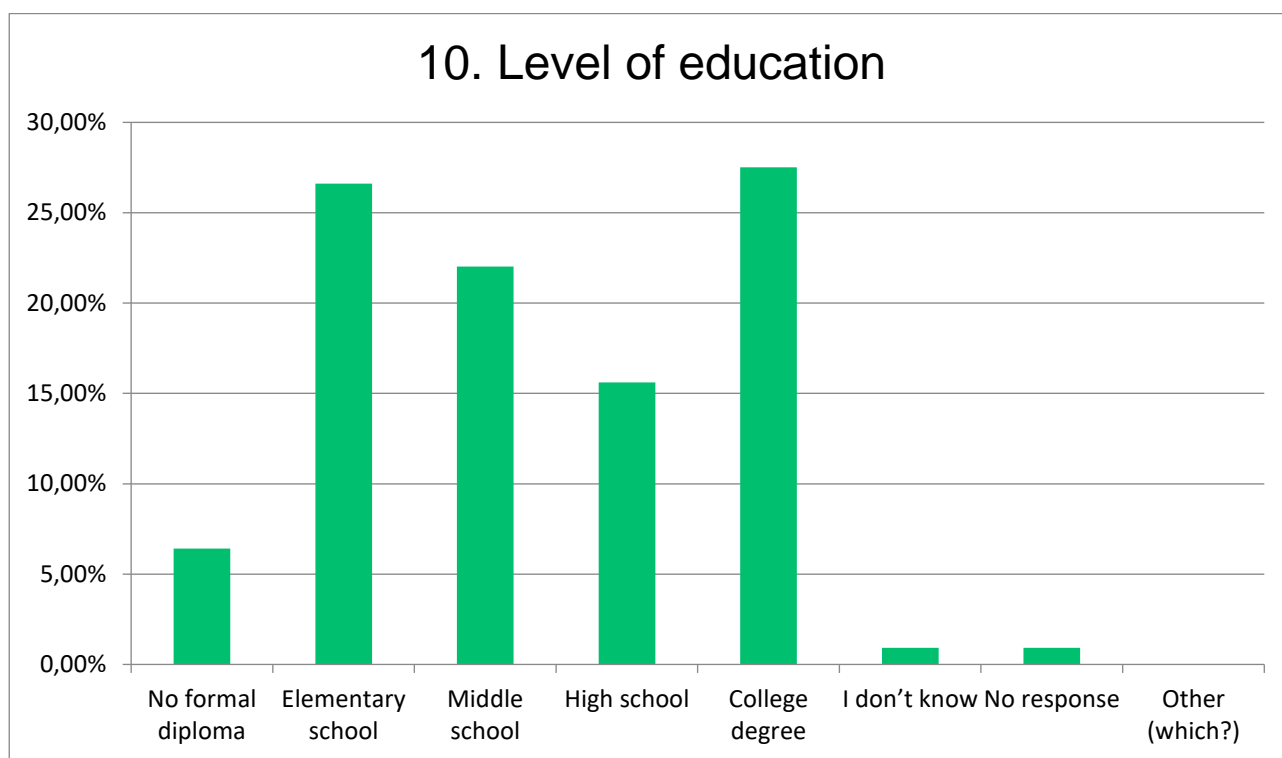
Faced with such significant educational assets, further efforts to facilitate the recognition of qualifications are essential. Within the Lisbon Convention of April 11, 1997 (the Convention on the recognition of qualifications related to higher education in the European Region) there is a specific section of rules regarding civil values that regulate the recognition of qualifications declared by refugees or other persons with equivalent or comparable legal status. It is provided that “each country adopts all possible and reasonable measures to develop procedures to evaluate fairly and effectively whether refugees meet the requirements for access to higher education, more advanced studies or the pursuit of professional activities, also in cases where the educational qualifications declared cannot be proven by the relative documents.” In other words, the Lisbon Convention establishes that all the signatory countries of the Geneva Convention are obliged to facilitate the procedures for all those who cannot provide certain documents because they are refugees. In daily practice, the procedures remain long and complicated, because Italy still requires the Embassy in Italy of the country of origin to issue a Declaration of Value of an educational qualification—which in turn requires the

presentation of the original qualification—at the relevant office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome.<sup>12</sup>

In partial compensation, it is possible to highlight the good practices activated by various Italian universities to allow refugees to start or resume university studies, including through the provision of special scholarships.

An excellent “best practice” is seen in the “UNICORE” project (University Corridors for Refugees)<sup>13</sup> which for the second consecutive year sees a commitment from 11 Italian universities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, UNHCR, Italian Caritas, Union of Waldensian and Methodist Churches (CSD) and Gandhi Charity to implement a memorandum of understanding that will give to 20 refugee students currently in Ethiopia the opportunity to continue their academic career in Italy through scholarships.

Among these initiatives, the National Coordination of the Evaluation of Refugee Qualifications<sup>14</sup> could be also mentioned as an example of best practice. This informal network between higher education institutions is promoted and coordinated by CIMEA (Mobility Center for Academic Equivalences) with the aim of sharing experiences, practices and methodologies for assessing the qualifications held by refugee students who intend to attend higher education courses in Italy and who do not have the documents attesting to previous qualifications acquired in their country of origin.

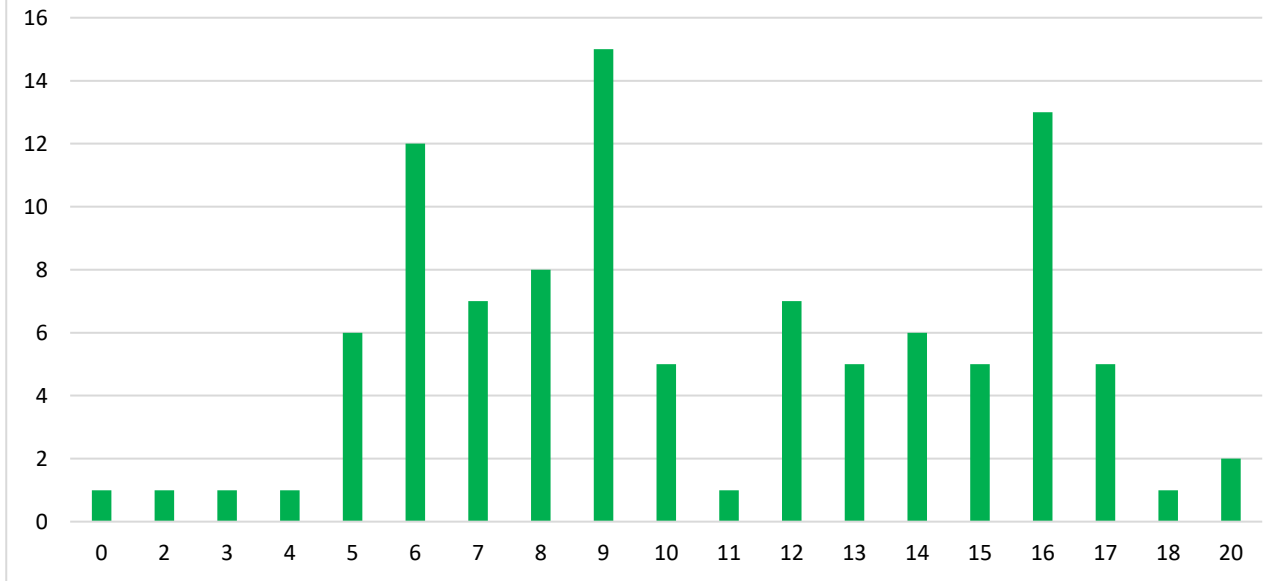


<sup>12</sup> <https://viedifuga.org/riconoscimento-dei-titoli-di-studio-il-caso-dei-rifugiati/>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/sala\\_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/corridoi-universitari-per-studenti-rifugiati\\_0.html](https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/corridoi-universitari-per-studenti-rifugiati_0.html)

<sup>14</sup> <http://cimea.it/valutazione-qualifiche-rifugiati/>

## 11. Number of years of education



As for the professions practiced before respondents departed their countries of origin, these were reclassified according to the national nomenclature of professional units categorized by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT).<sup>15</sup> Given that 12.5% respondents were unemployed or engaged in studies before leaving their countries, we see the emergence of a very qualified labor insertion in the country of origin. Almost half of the respondents practiced a highly qualified profession (4.7% entrepreneur or managers, 28.1% intellectual, scientific, high specialized professions, 12.5% technical professions); 39.1% a skilled profession (4.7% clerical support workers, 17.2% service and sales workers, 17.2% skilled agricultural and craft and related trades workers); and only 3.1% practiced unskilled labor.

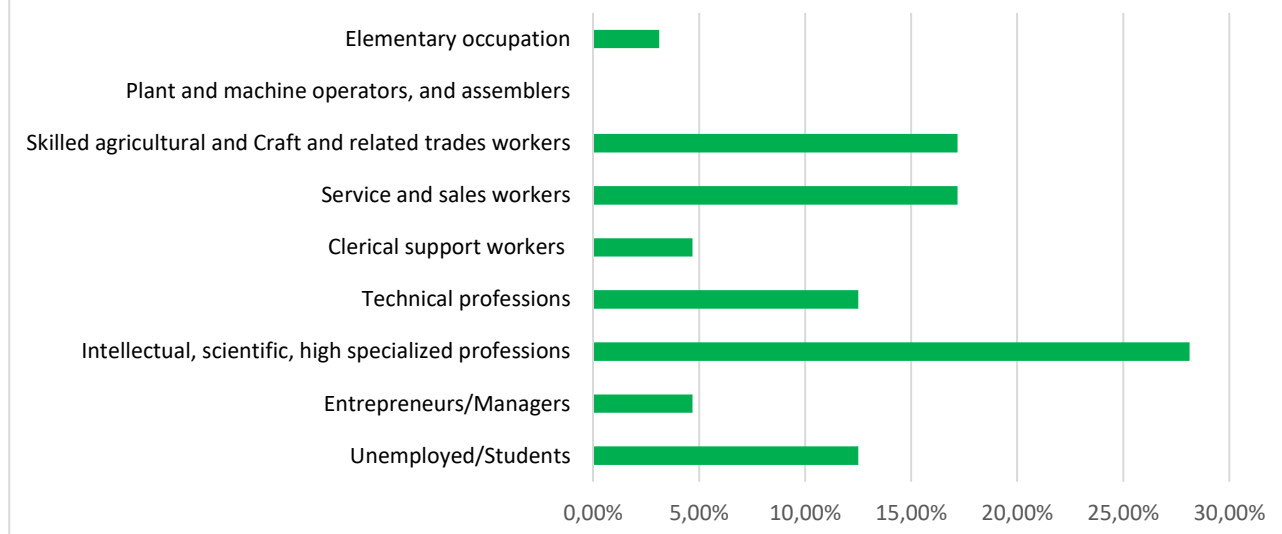
The future outlook for labor integration of these people in Italy should arouse a reasoned concern, if we take into account that Italy generally offers immigrants only secondary labor market access. In 2018, according to ISTAT data from the national Labor Force Survey,<sup>16</sup> the unemployment rate among foreign workers reached 14%; among the employed, almost two thirds of the foreign workers were employed in unskilled professions, and only 7 out of 100 held a qualified professional position. This is a picture diametrically opposite to the occupations practiced at home by the participants before the war and their inevitable departure from Syria. These data raise serious “brain drain” risks for most of the participants, in a country like Italy where 34.4% foreign workers are employed below their educational level (that rate is 23.5% among Italian workers, whose situation is only marginally better than that of foreigners).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://professioni.istat.it/sistemainformativoprofessionioni/cp2011/index.php>

<sup>16</sup> Pintaldi Federica, Pontecorvo Maria Elena, Tibaldi Mauro, *Occupati e disoccupati stranieri nella Rilevazione sulle forze di lavoro Istat*, in IDOS-Confronti, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione*, IDOS, Roma, 2019, pp. 259-267.

<sup>17</sup> Attanasio Paolo, Ricci Antonio, *Come Saturno, l'Italia divora i propri figli? Le dimensioni reali, le motivazioni a partire e le narrazioni delle nuove migrazioni italiane in Europa/Is Italy, just like Saturn, devouring its children? The actual size, the motivations to leave and the narratives of Italian new migrations in Europe*, in B. Coccia, A. Ricci, *L'Europa dei talenti. Le migrazioni qualificate dentro e fuori l'Unione Europea"/ Europe of talents. Qualified migration inside and outside the European Union*, IDOS-Istituto di Studi Politici San Pio V, Roma, 2019, pp. 46-69/45-67.

## 12. Professions practiced before leaving



### *Religious adherence*

83.9% of the respondents say they are Muslims, with Catholic (7.1%), Orthodox or Coptic (1.8%) and Protestant (0.9%) minorities. Many classic studies<sup>18</sup> have emphasized that religions play a key role in immigrants' integration into a host society.

When migrating, people often gain a new perspective of their own religious affiliation, sometimes even against other faiths.<sup>19</sup> Religious identity and practice can become a fundamental fixture in the new life abroad, taking on even more importance than it had before in the original homeland.<sup>20</sup>

Immigrants rely on religion to help them to preserve spiritual identity and cohesion in a group, leaning on religious communities to reinforce fundamental social ties, to help alleviate difficulties faced by the immigrants in new, unpredictable environments, and to provide the so-called "three Rs": Refuge, Respectability and Resources.<sup>21</sup>

It is too early to claim anything about the connection between religious adherence and the future integration of Humanitarian Corridors participants; nevertheless, it is important that religious associations promote dialogue between religious communities of the host society, thus strengthening religion's potential as a bridging tool for integration, avoiding marginalization and frustrations that may lead to conflict.

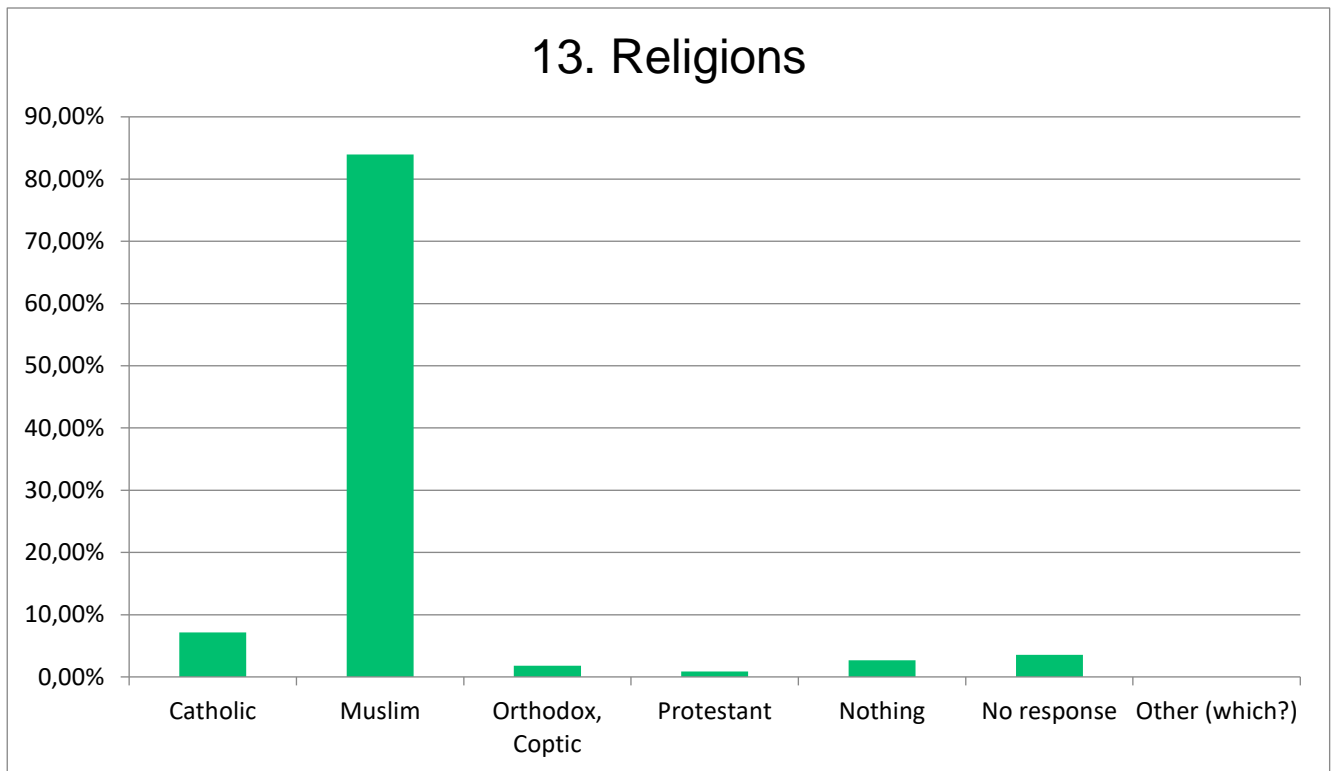
<sup>18</sup> Since the times of *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, the milestone of sociology edited by Florian Znaniecki and William I Thomas in five volumes in the years 1918 to 1920, it was noticed how parishes and religious organizations have represented for migrants a sort of "clearing house" which allowed immigrants to adapt to the new context of life without losing the relationship with their identity roots and with the social networks of their compatriots. *c.f.* Cadge, Wendy, and Ecklund Elaine Howard, "Immigration and Religion." *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2007, pp. 359–379.

<sup>19</sup> Naso Paolo, «*Le religioni sono vie di pace*». (*Falso!*), Laterza, Bari-Roma, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Ambrosini Maurizio, Naso Paolo, Claudio Paravati (edited by), *Il Dio dei migranti. Pluralismo, conflitto, integrazione*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Hirschman Charles, "The Role of Religion in the Origin and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States," *International Migration Review*, 38, 3, September 2004, pp. 1126-1159.





### Interaction and expectations with respect to the Humanitarian Corridors program

After a first set of questions which were necessary to identify and characterize the target group to which the survey is addressed, there followed a set of questions concerning participants' interaction with the Humanitarian Corridors program and its operators in the various stages of the procedures. These stages span identification and pre-departure orientation, motivational talks and collaboration in the departure phase, arrival procedures, the approach to various public offices and local police headquarters for the issue of the residence permit. Survey questions also addressed difficulties encountered and the alignment between present conditions and pre-departure expectations.

The *modus operandi* of the Humanitarian Corridors program can be summarized in three phases.<sup>22</sup>

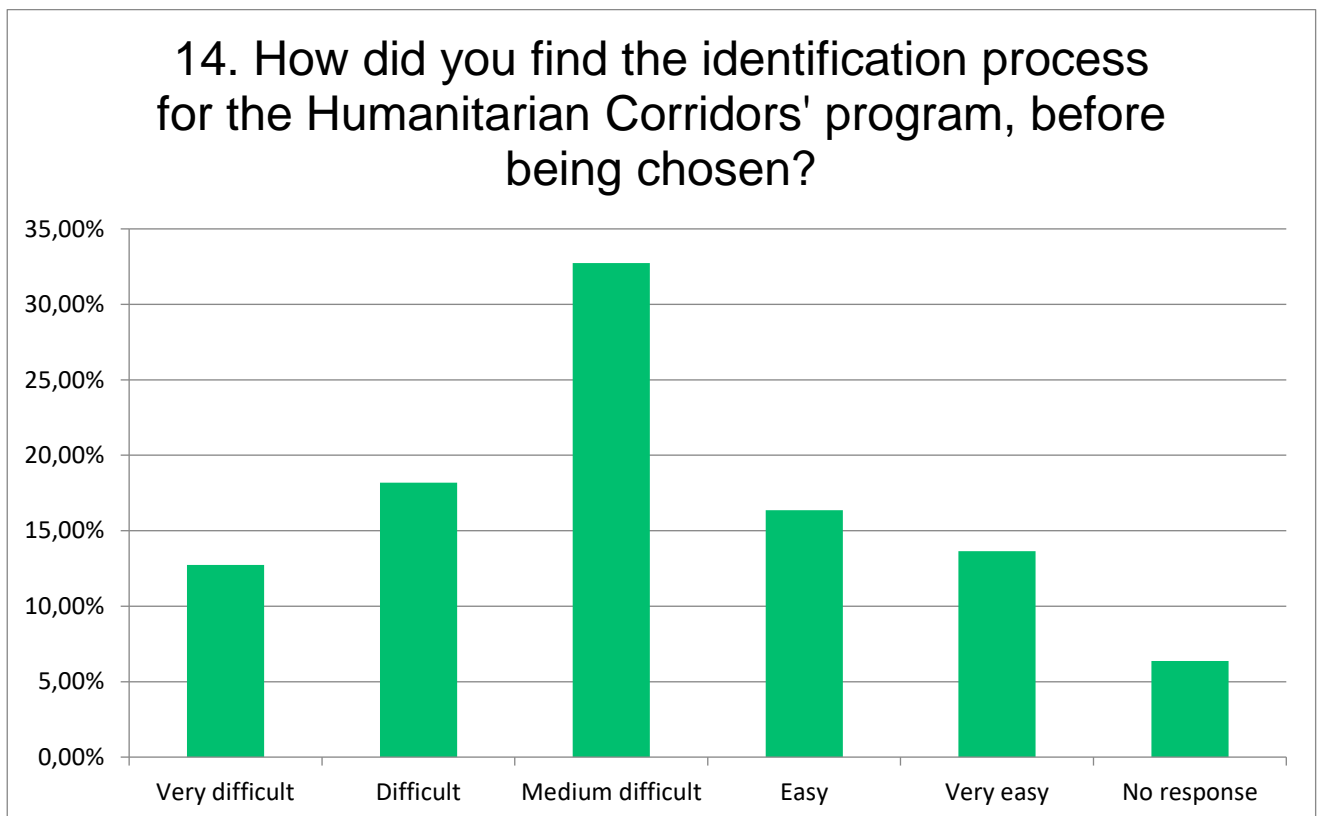
- 1) The first is aimed at building a project-supporting network which must necessarily include different actors: host communities, politicians, and opinion-makers. The project, in fact, derives strength and substance from the contribution of prominent figures who make it credible and guarantee its sustainability.
- 2) The second phase is targeted at the territories where the participants are identified. This is not an easy choice; indeed, it is a very complex one from a psychological and deontological point of view. It is facilitated however by the precision with which the criteria for admission to the program are defined: female victims of trafficking, single women with minor children, people in need of urgent and unavailable care in refugee camps, and families forced to live in unsustainable conditions. By evaluating these cases of exceptional vulnerability referred by UNHCR, a "regulation" has been defined in order to make it possible to act conscientiously and effectively.
- 3) The third phase is that of integration. It is a complex process, which requires the commitment of qualified operators; the willingness of the participants to undertake learning Italian, attending a professional course or starting a work never done in the past; and the support of an accompanying group—a religious community, an association, one or more families—

<sup>22</sup> Naso Paolo, *I corridoi umanitari. Da best practice a policy*, in IDOS-Confronti, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione*, IDOS, Roma, 2019, pp. 142-143.

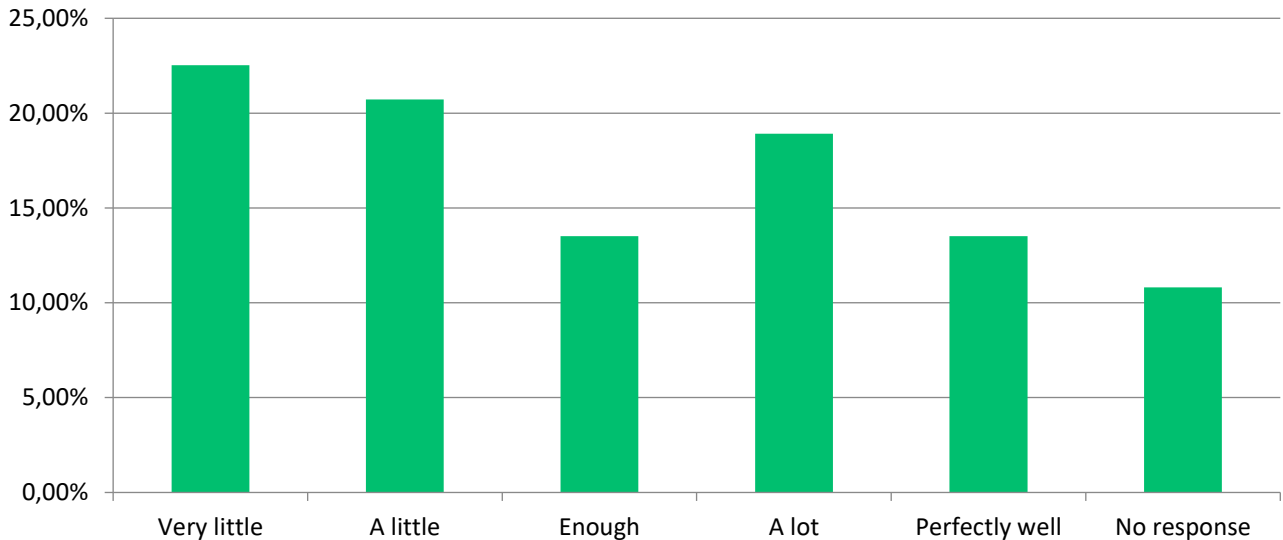
which guarantees the necessary intercultural mediation between immigrants and the context into which they are now inserted.

Regarding the second phase, that is, the fieldwork for pre-departure identification, the experience of the current participants is categorized into 3 opinion categories, almost equivalent in numerical terms: 32.7% found this process neither easy nor difficult; 30.9% found it difficult or even particularly difficult, and 30.0% found it easy, if not very easy. It should be noted that a significant share preferred not to respond (6.4%); and that, for many respondents, the reasons for difficulties are intrinsic to the conditions of exceptional vulnerability in which, unfortunately, their existence is currently taking place.

However, a critical attitude emerges in response to the next question, in which respondents were requested to declare if the information and orientation provided before leaving allowed them to acquire useful skills and develop a positive attitude. 43.2% declared that they were poorly or very poorly informed during the orientation phase, compared to 32.4% who declared to have been very well informed, if not perfectly. The percentage of those who are halfway between these two positions drops to 13.5% and the party of those who prefer not to express themselves regarding the matter rises to 10.8%.

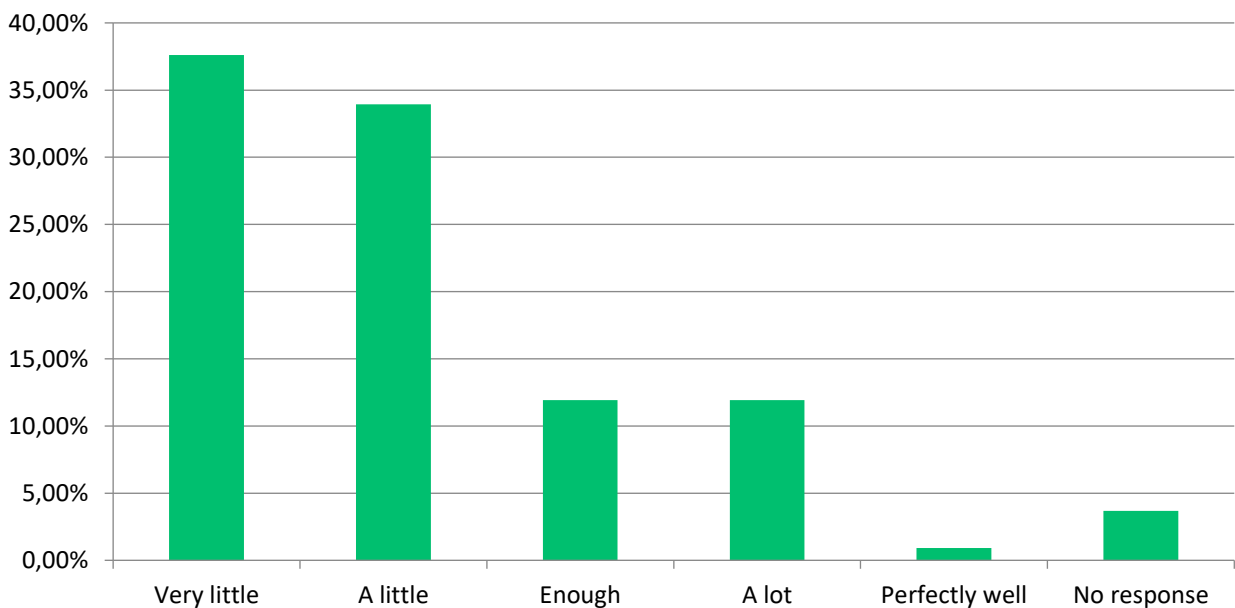


### 15. Did the information and orientation that you were given before leaving allow you to acquire useful skills and develop a positive attitude?



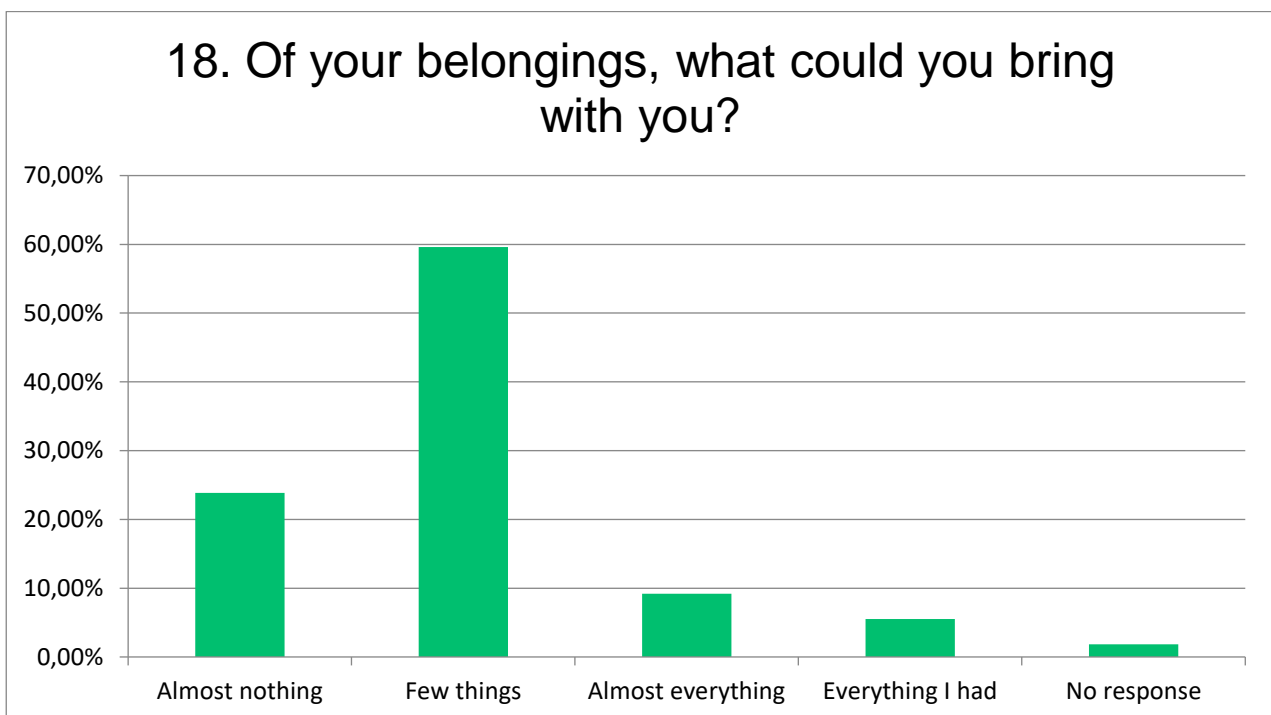
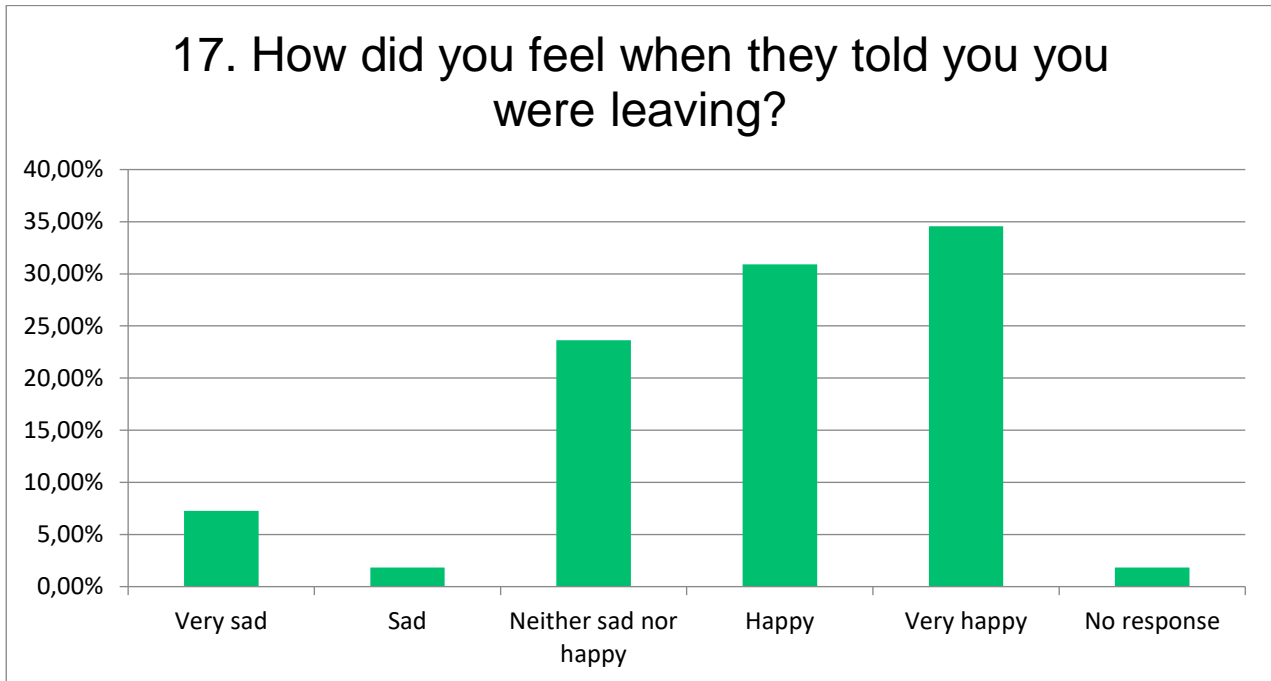
Given the exceptional nature of forced emigration and the subsequent drastic changes in daily existence, Italy appears to be totally new to the majority of respondents, where there is no possibility of relying on forms of anticipatory socialization: 7 out of 10 respondents declared that they knew little about Italy before leaving, if not very little; only 2 out of 10 claim to know it sufficiently or enough. Only 1 in 100 say they know Italy perfectly.

### 16. How much did you know about Italy before leaving?



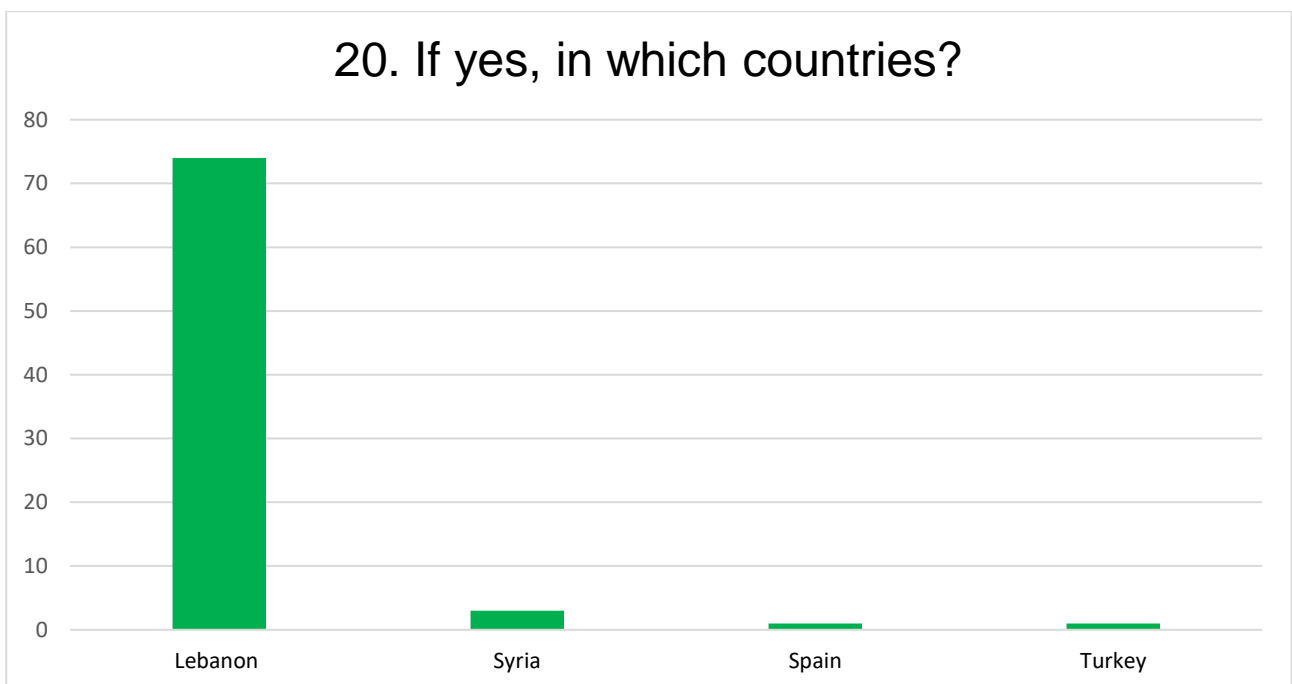
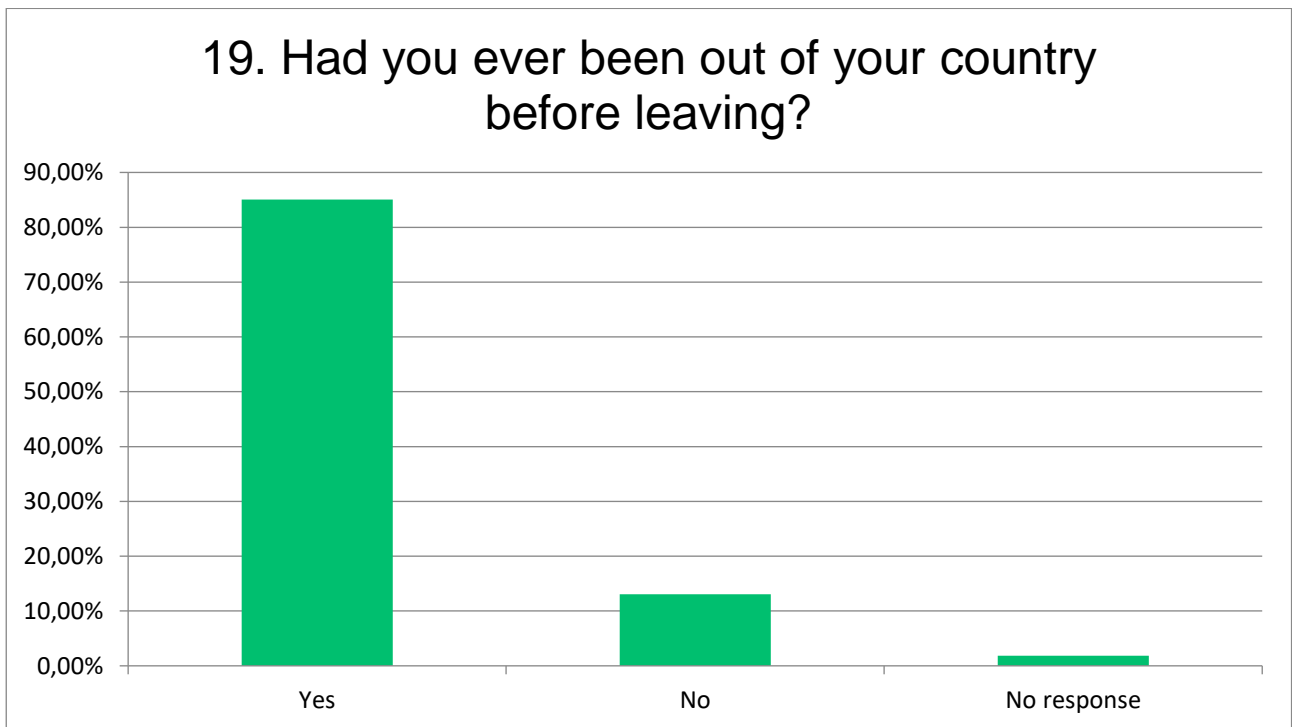
Despite the difficulties met by the respondents in the identification and especially orientation phase, two thirds felt very happy when the confirmation of departure arrived, a sign of a strongly expected change from their refugee conditions in Lebanon. While 1 out of 4 said they felt neither sad nor happy, only 1 out of 10 said they were sad or very sad, most likely because of the awareness that conditions are not favorable for their safe return to Syria.

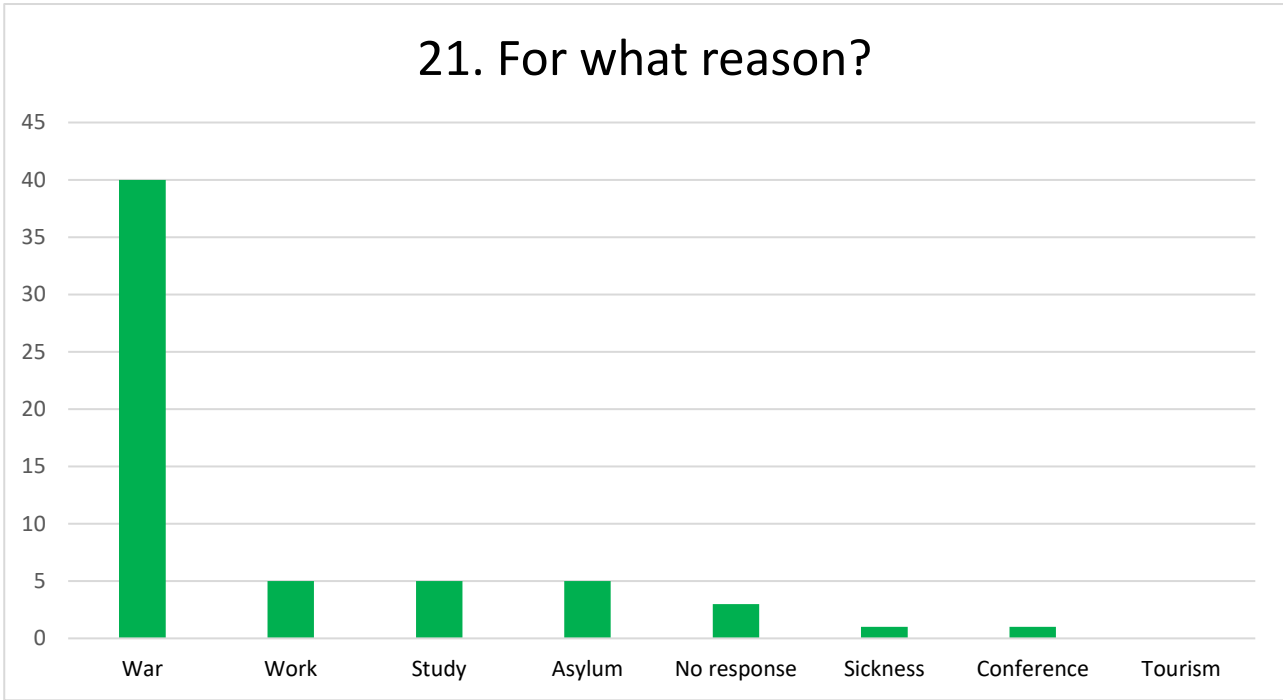
Leaving Lebanon, the conditions of departure allowed respondents to bring with them few things (59.6% of cases) or almost nothing (23.9%).



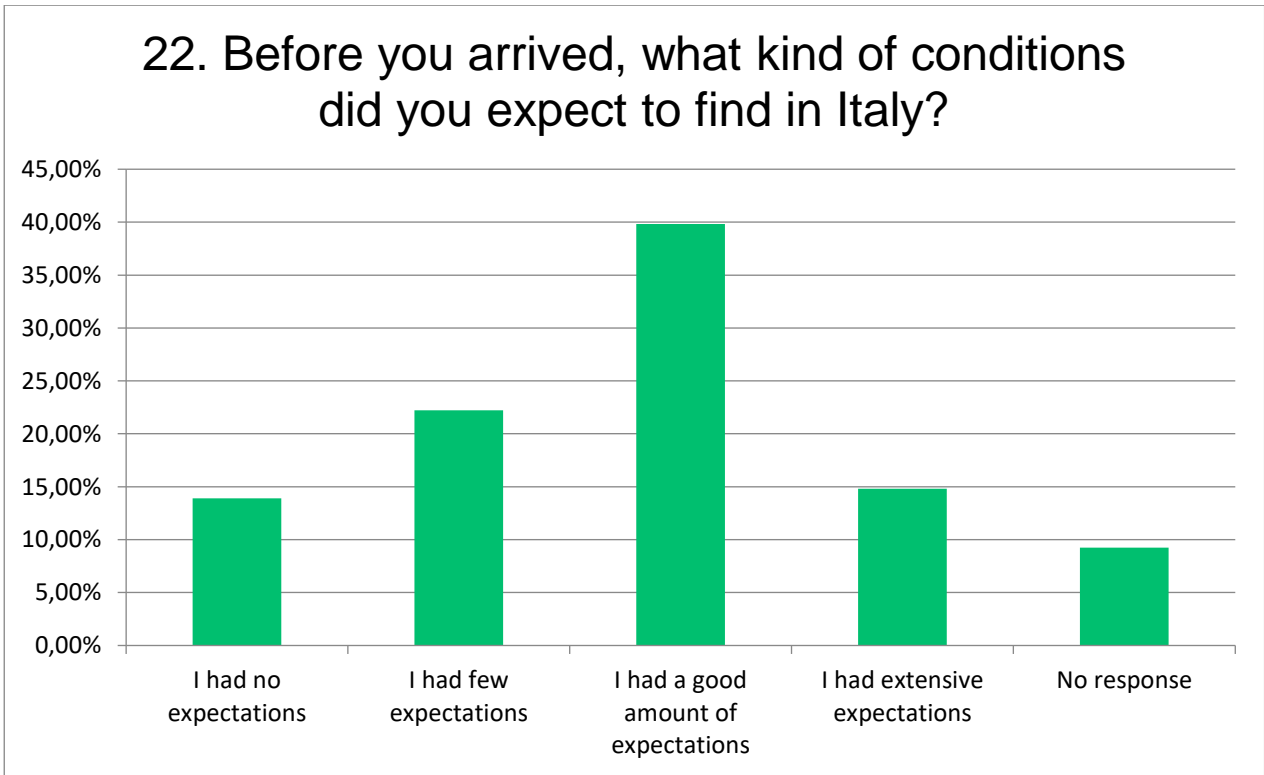
The majority said they had already had experiences of travel and longer-term stays abroad (85.1%). Of these, however, the absolute majority then indicated Lebanon as their destination, mostly for reasons related to the war and the search for protection, even if there was a small but significant

amount of cases that had already gone to Lebanon for work or study (8.3% each, compared to the total of respondents).



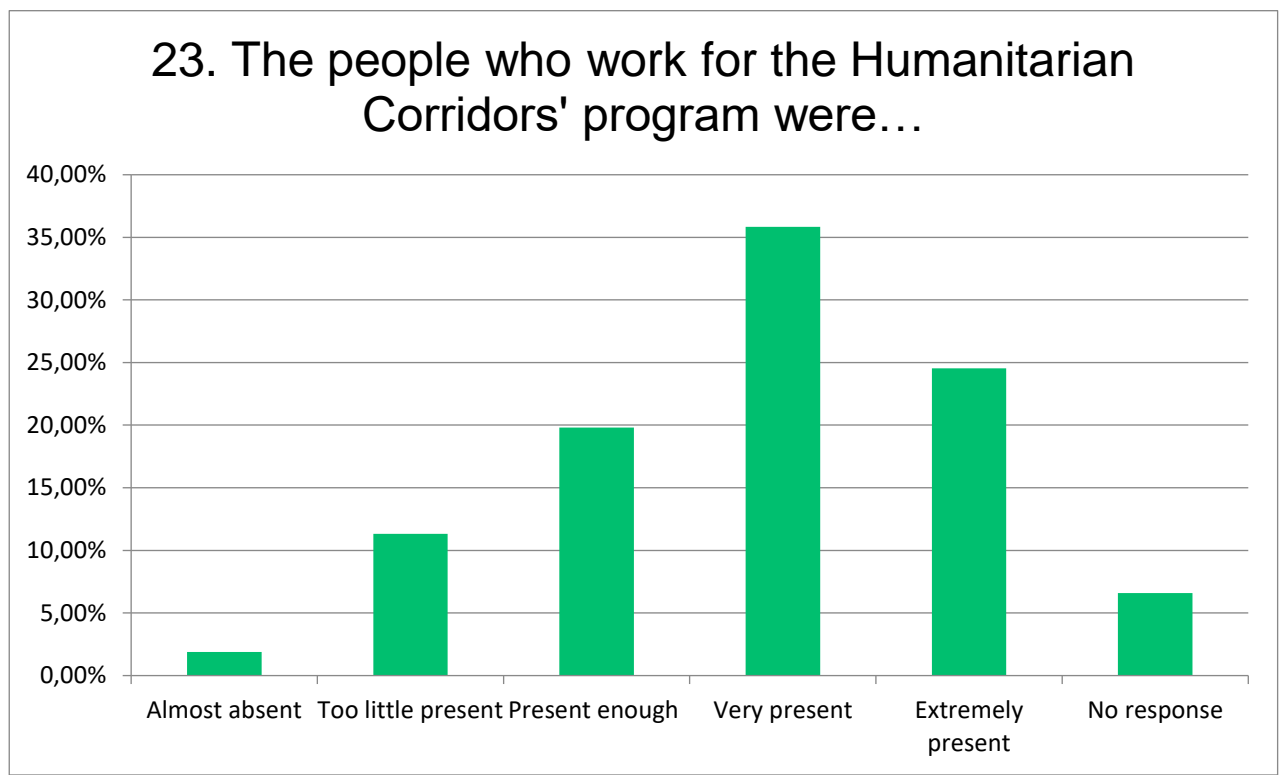


As for pre-departure expectations regarding the conditions they would meet in Italy, more than half of respondents said they had great or very great expectations (overall 54.6%), but a strong component expressed itself on the opposite front, stating that they expected little or nothing (36.1%); compared to 9.3% of respondents who preferred not to express their opinion.

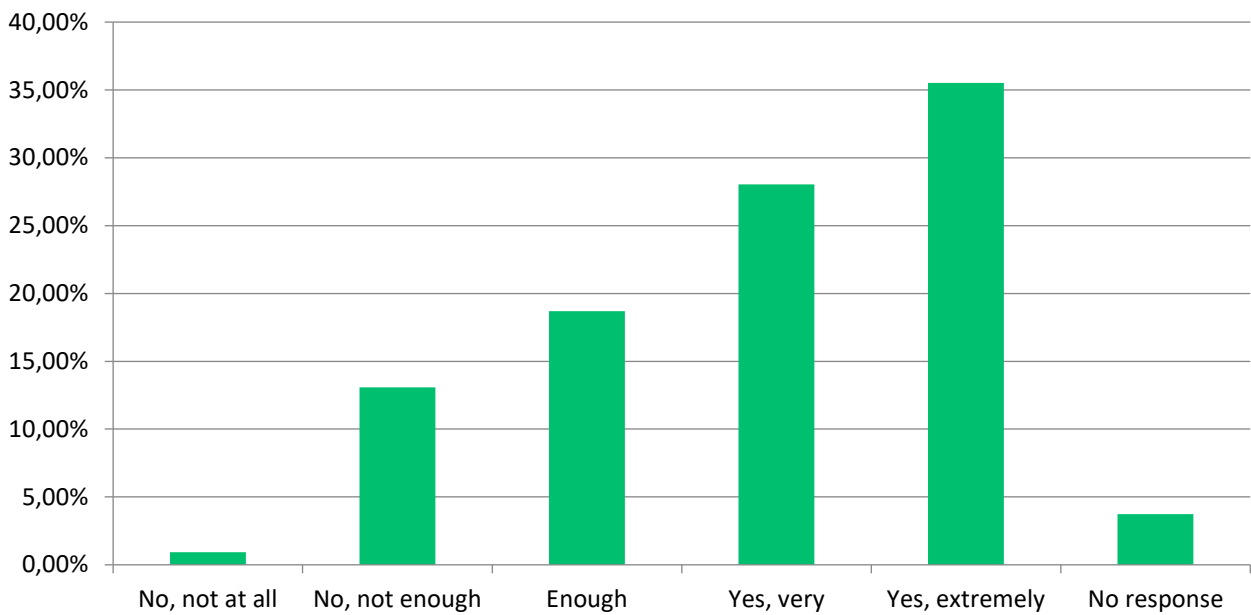


Humanitarian Corridors operators affiliate with various organizations based in transit countries. They provide assistance to people living in refugee camps who may be included in the Humanitarian Corridors program; they collect all the information needed to be considered for inclusion in the project

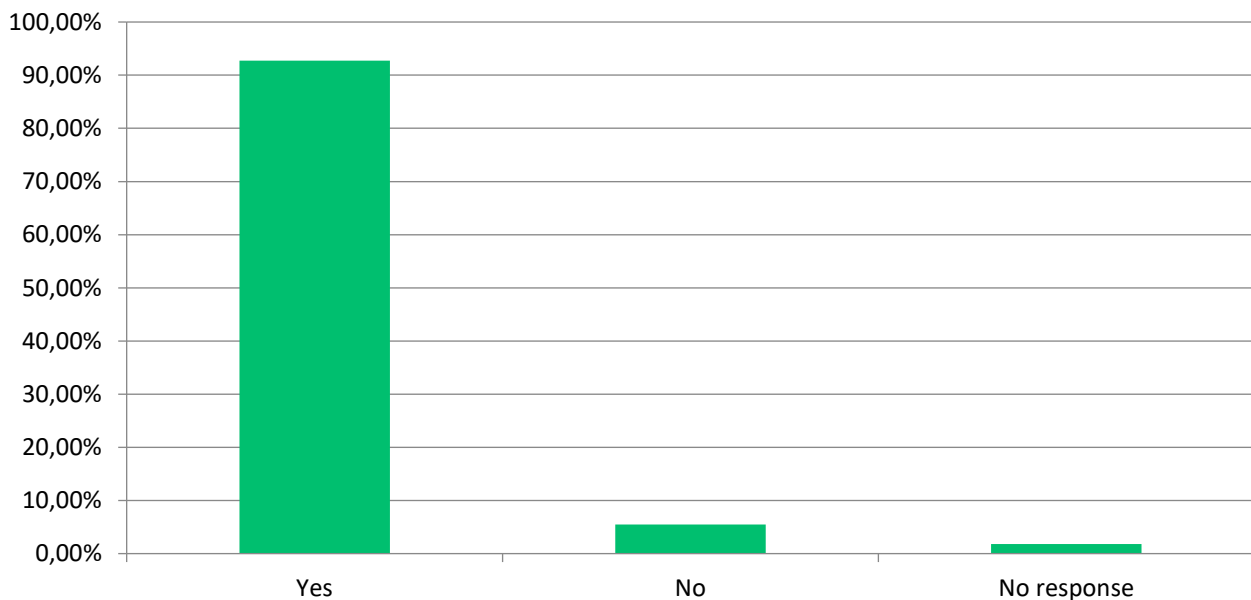
(personal and family situation, problems and expectations, etc.); and they carry out preliminary checks on the existence and availability of all documentation relating to eventual participants which, on the basis of the specific legislative contexts, is necessary to leave the country and enter Europe. The opinion of participants on the Humanitarian Corridors personnel involved in pre-departure management was largely positive (almost 80%), against 13.2% of respondents who instead complained about lack of availability and a residual 6.6% who preferred not to express their opinion. Consistently, 82.2% of respondents said they felt attended to and helped in all the phases of pre-departure, with 14% feeling disgruntled and a share of non-respondents who dropped to 3.7%. It should be noticed that, in coincidence with this specific question, as many as 35.5% described their feelings as super-enthusiastic, the highest rating among similar questions. Over 90% confirmed having held motivational talks before leaving.



## 24. Did you feel supported and assisted in all the phases of departure?



## 25. Did you have personal motivational interviews before leaving?



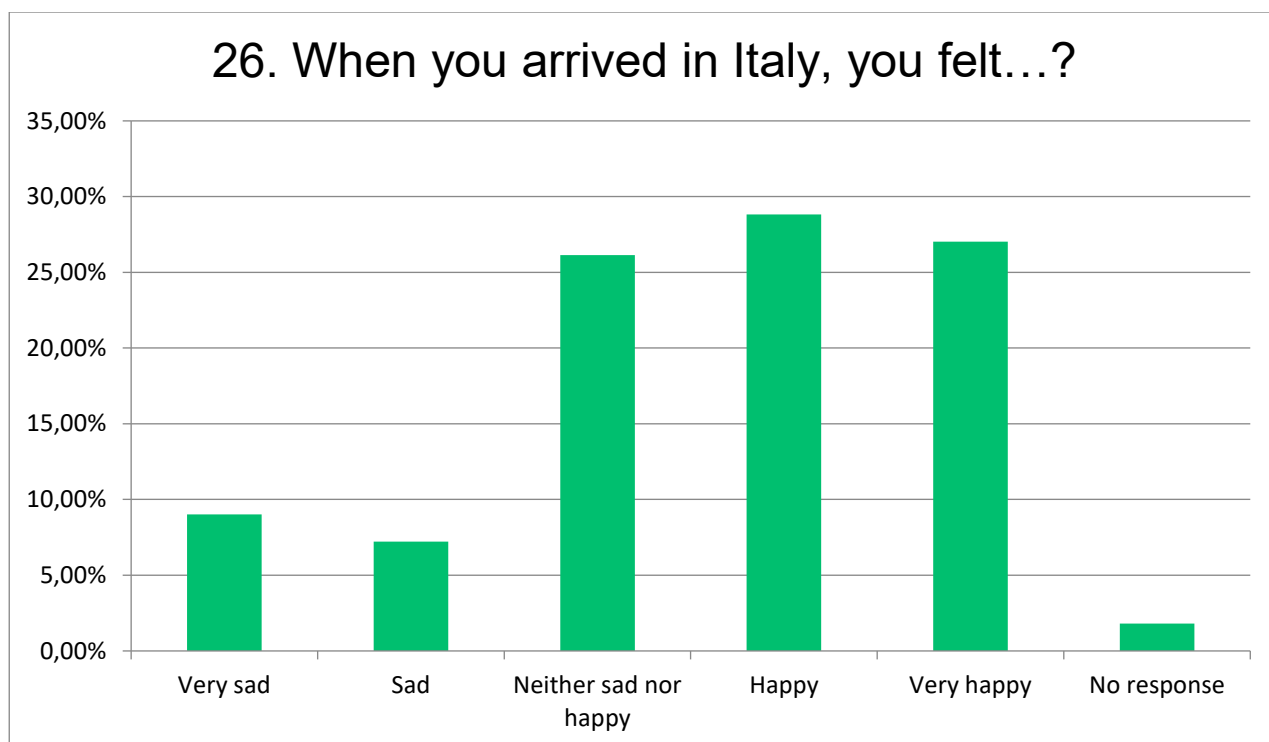
Arrival in Italy increased the feeling of sadness already present at the moment that departure was confirmed (see question 17), passing from 9.1% to 16.2%; similar growth is seen in the number of those who are indifferent (26.1%, +2.5 points).

However, almost two thirds confirmed that they had a feeling of happiness throughout their arrival in Italy (55.9%, of which 27.0% felt great happiness).



**Feelings about moving to Italy (comparison of questions 17 and 26)**

	At the confirmation of next departure	Once arrived
<b>Very sad</b>	7.27%	9,01%
<b>Sad</b>	1.82%	7,21%
<b>Nor sad nor happy</b>	23.64%	26,13%
<b>Happy</b>	30.91%	28,83%
<b>Very happy</b>	34.55%	27,03%
<b>I don't answer</b>	1.82%	1,80%

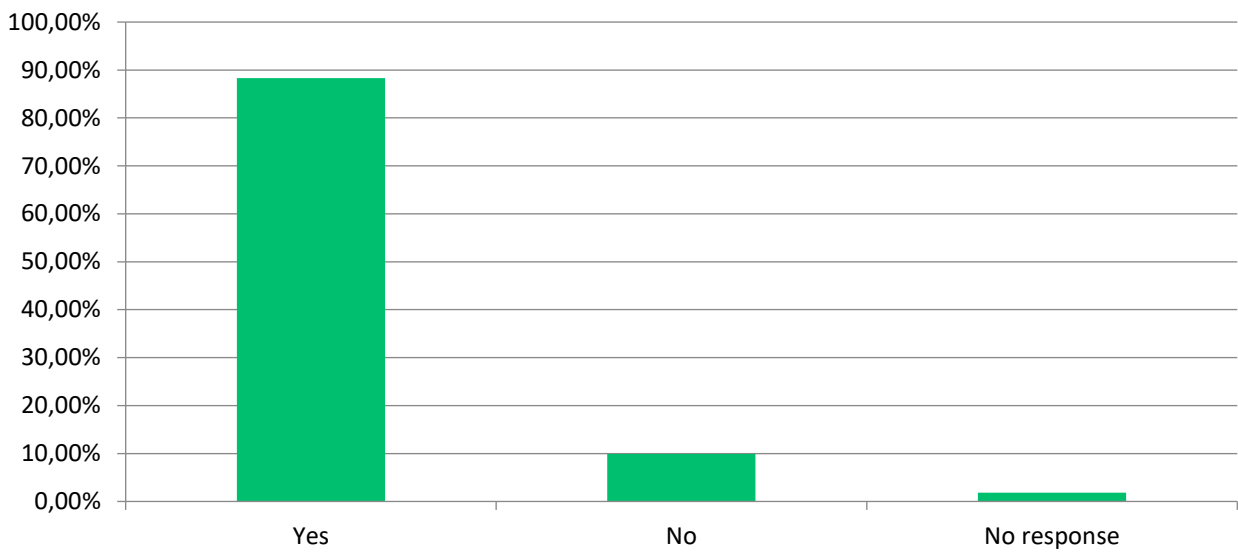


Usually, an application for international protection is submitted by each participant to the Border Office at the airport of arrival, with the support of Humanitarian Corridors operators.

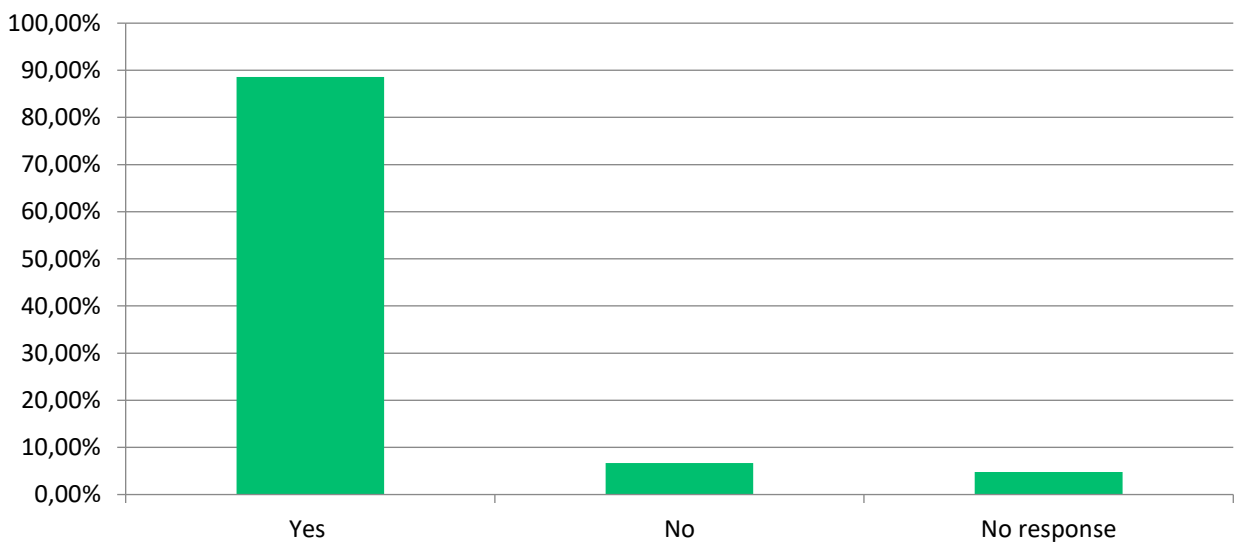
In this case 88.3% of respondents have already applied for recognition of international protection, while 9.9% declare to have not yet done so. The remaining 1.8% prefer not to let people know their legal status.

All those who applied confirm that they were sufficiently supported for this procedure, through the completion of this period.

## 27. Have you applied for international protection?



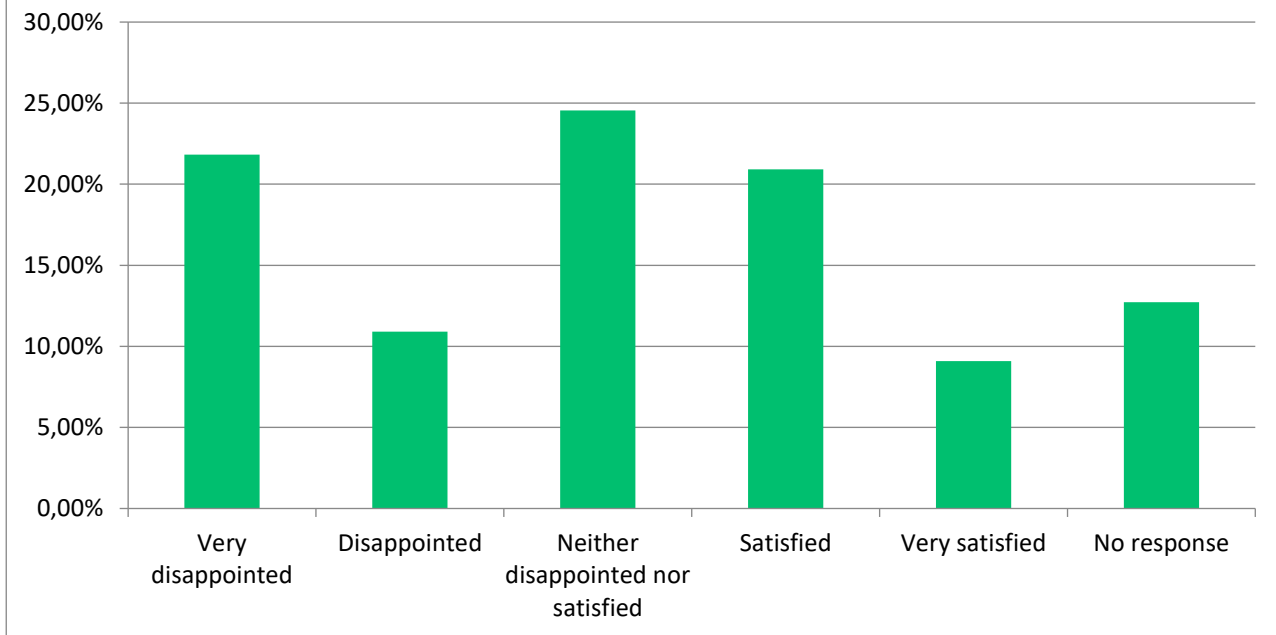
## 28. Were you adequately supported for this process?



As seen in the analysis of question 22, before leaving more than half of respondents said they had great or very great expectations (overall 54.6%), but a strong component stated that they expected little or nothing (36.1%).

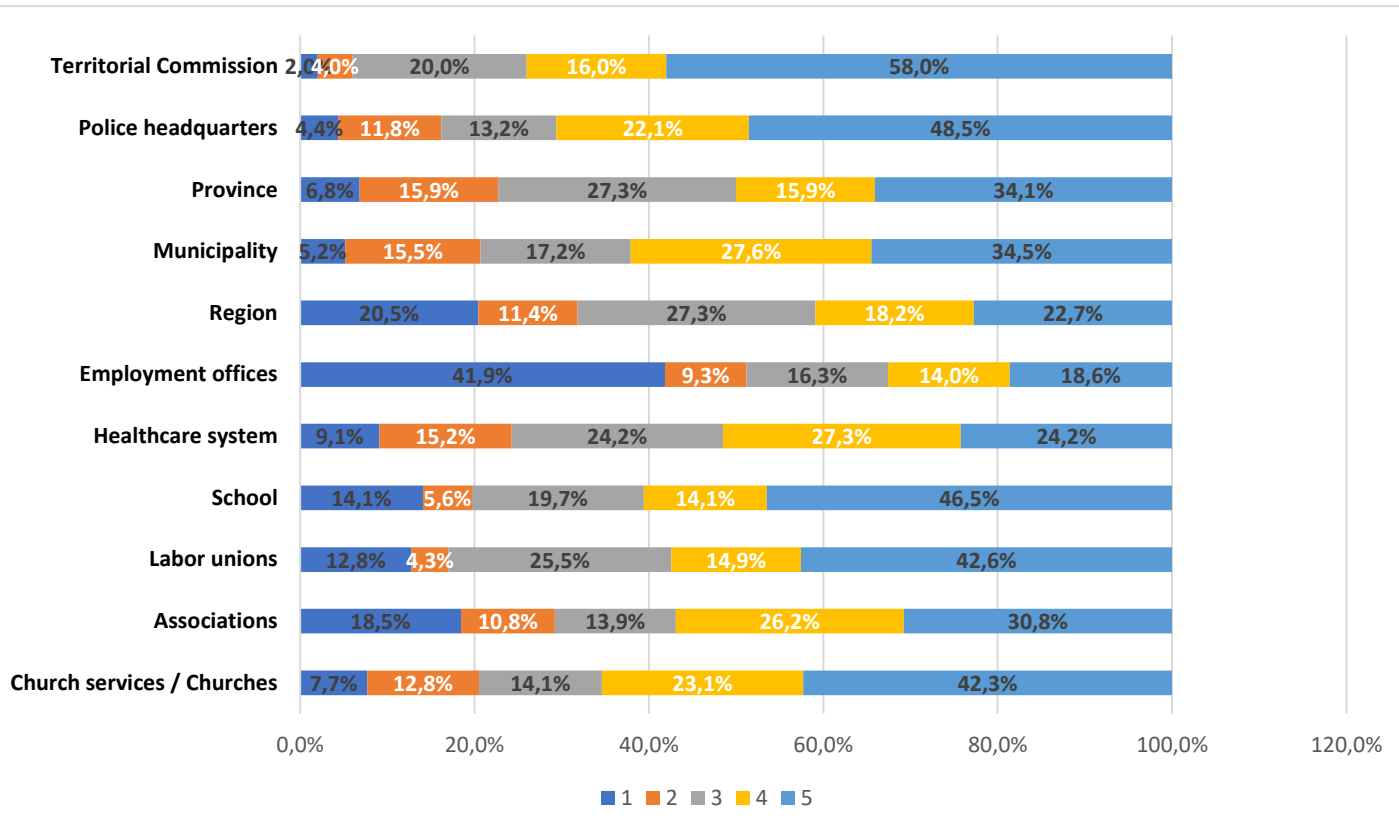
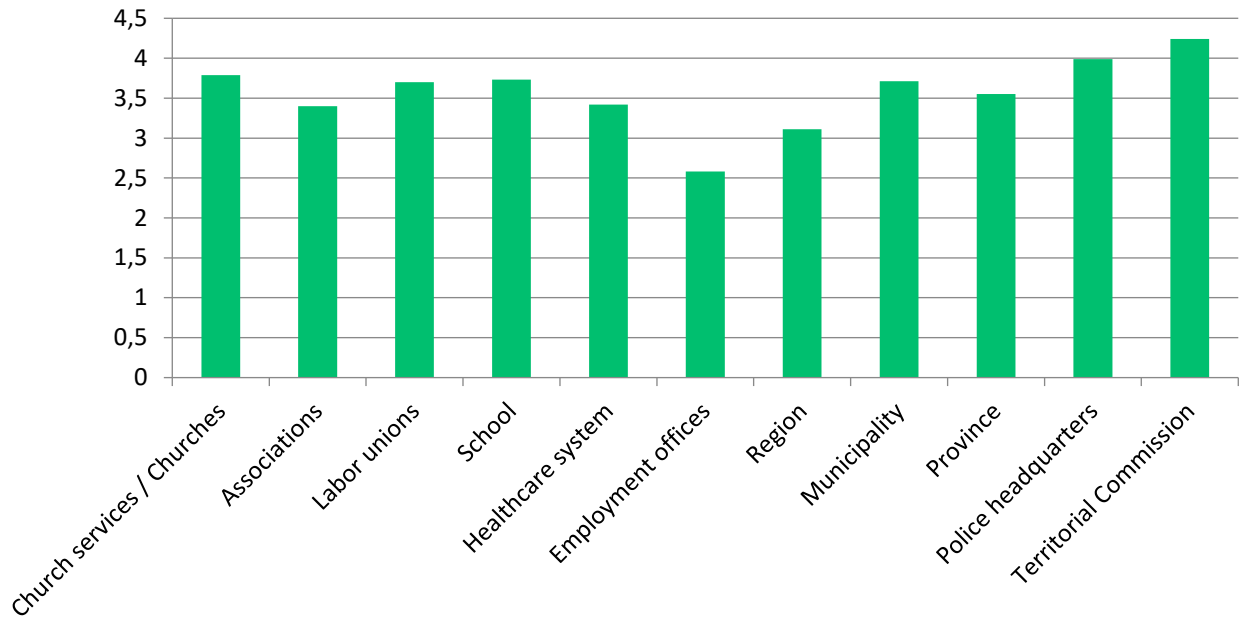
Today, however, compared to the expectations developed before leaving, a divergent attitude emerges in three categories: those who declare themselves disappointed (the majority feeling of 32.7% respondents, of which 21.8% are very disappointed), those who declare themselves satisfied (30.0%, of which only 9.1% is very satisfied) and those who declare themselves neither disappointed nor satisfied (24.6%). A significant share of participants, equal to 12.7%, suspended judgement and declined to respond.

## 29. With respect to the expectations you had before leaving, today you feel...?



Regarding the participants' evaluation of the sensitivity shown by the public and private structures with which they have interfaced during their time in Italy, it is not surprising to notice that greatest appreciation is for the Territorial Commissions for the recognition of the refugee status and by the Police Local Headquarters, to which, on a growth scale from 1 to 5, a weighted average equal to 4.2 and 4 points are respectively paid. In third place are the church services and parish churches (3.8 points), followed by 3.7 points for schools, trade unions and local authorities (mainly municipalities). The structure least appreciated for its sensitivity were the employment offices, to which almost half of the respondents assigned a minimum score of 1 point (41.9%). This evaluation could be easily interpreted because of the difficulties encountered by the participants in job placement, as well as the limited functionality exercised by these offices in job placement.

30. Rate from 1 (the lowest value) to 5 (the highest value) the sensitivity shown by following institutions, weighted average



### **Pathways of Integration<sup>23</sup>**

To analyze the living and integration conditions of the participants, the following sets of data were taken into consideration: perceptions of personal safety; perceptions of sociocultural differences with respect to the host society, friends and family relationships; neighborhood relationships; knowledge of the Italian language; job placement; housing; access to social and health services; participation in social and religious life; access to consumer goods, etc.

The first question asked about who in the family is experiencing greatest difficulty in their new life in Italy; 1 out of 5 preferred to maintain privacy and did not respond (20.2%), 1 out of 4 indicated greatest difficulties were met by the partner (26.6%), 1 out of 4 indicated a close relative such as children or siblings (26.6%), and another 1 out of 4 attested that no family members are in difficulties (24.5%). The remaining 2.3% expressed their concerns about the situations of difficulty encountered by grandchildren.

Moving from the family level directly to the personal one, the following question concerned the experience of integration in contact with Italian society (note that in this case the percentage of those who refuse to answer has halved, resulting in 10.5%).

The self-perception of integration is quite positive if we consider that the majority of the participants who responded to the survey arrived in the two-year period of 2018-2019, many of which in the last half year.

Apart from 1.9% who consider themselves rejected by the host society and 9.5% who admitted to a sense of isolation, 30.5% declare themselves to be accepted and 9.5% even well-integrated.

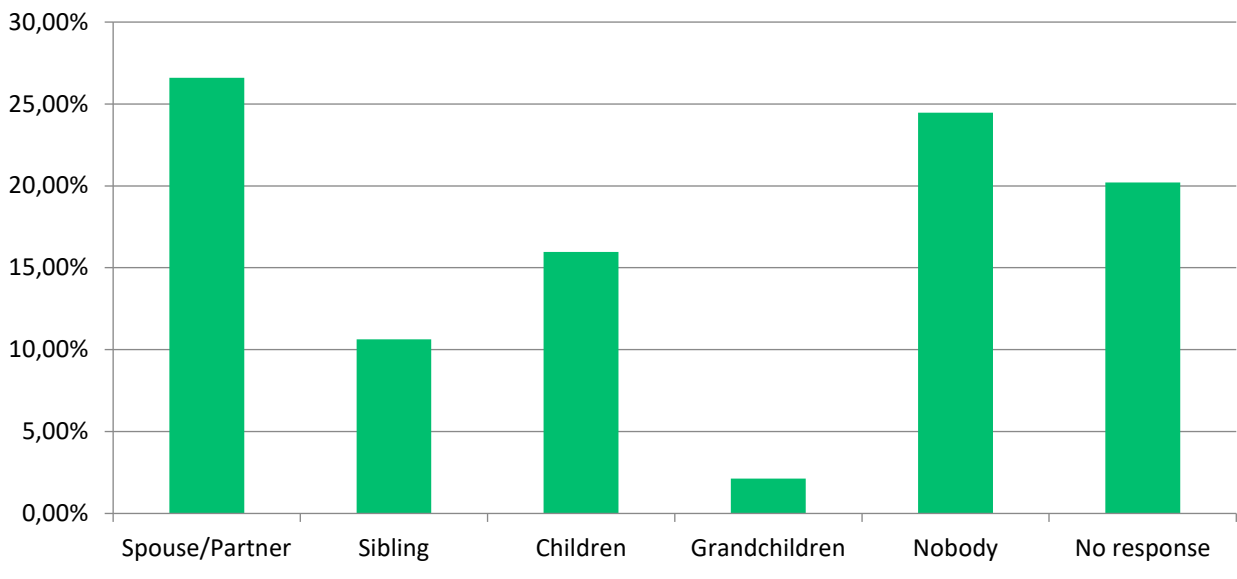
The condition of the majority group, the remaining 38.1%, remains to be defined as they neither declare themselves isolated nor accepted, evidently because their path of integration in Italy is at the initial phase because of their recent arrival.

Therefore, when asked how safe they feel in Italy, 82.9% provide a positive answer: from sufficiently (25.7%), to very (29.5%), to extremely (27.6%). Unfortunately, still 9.5% say they feel unsafe and 5.7% feel very unsafe. For the latter two groups of respondents, the hope is that over time this self-perception may shift toward more peaceful horizons.

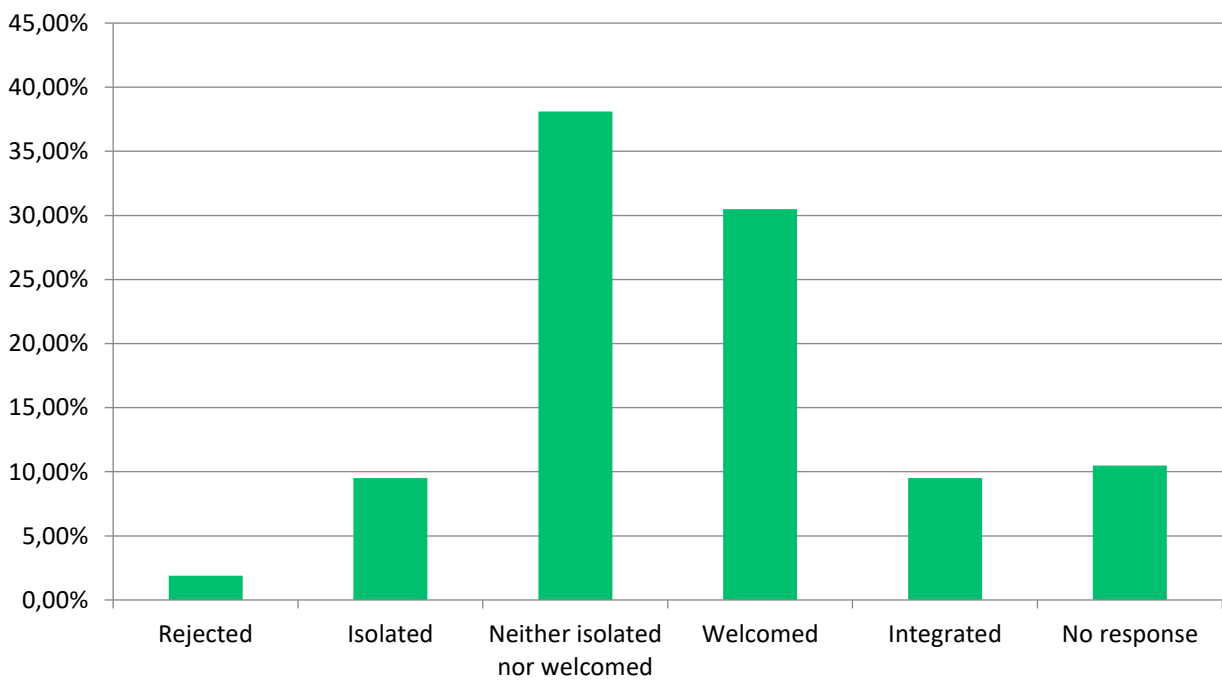
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<sup>23</sup> The definition of Integration followed is proposed in *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social committee and the Committee of the Regions - A Common Agenda for Integration - Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union*: "Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States."

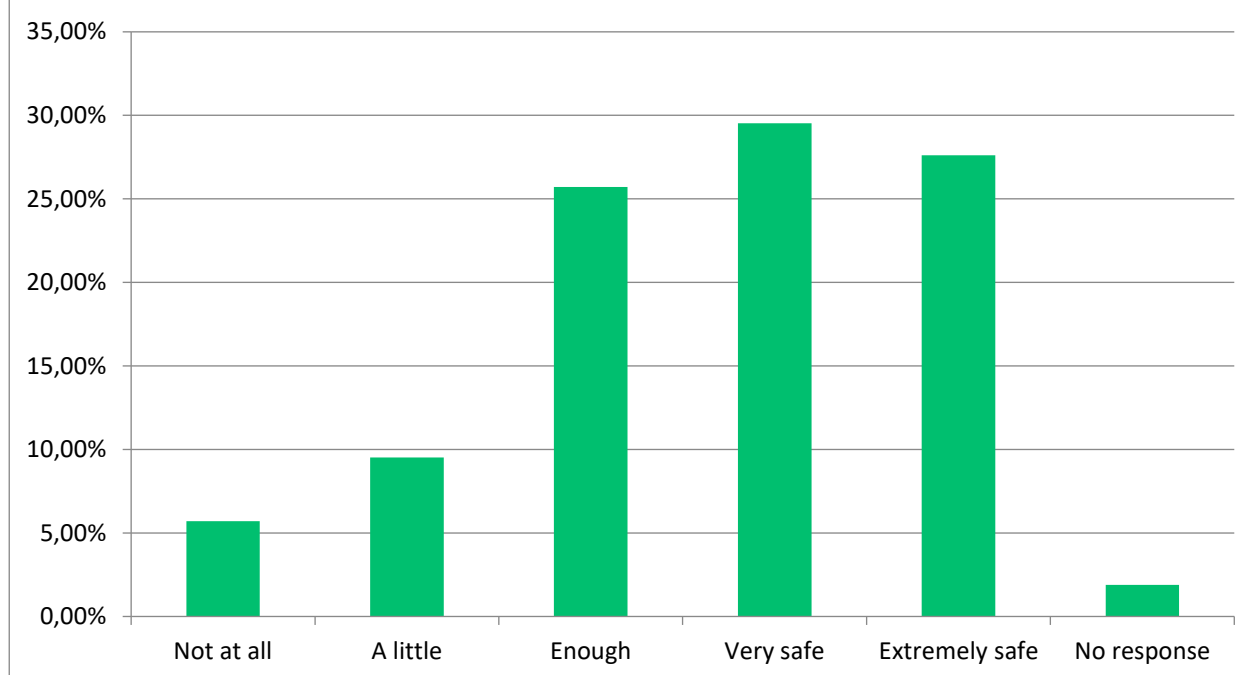
### 31. According to you, in your family, who is having the hardest time?



### 32. After the first contact with Italian society, you feel...?



### 33. How safe do you feel in Italy?

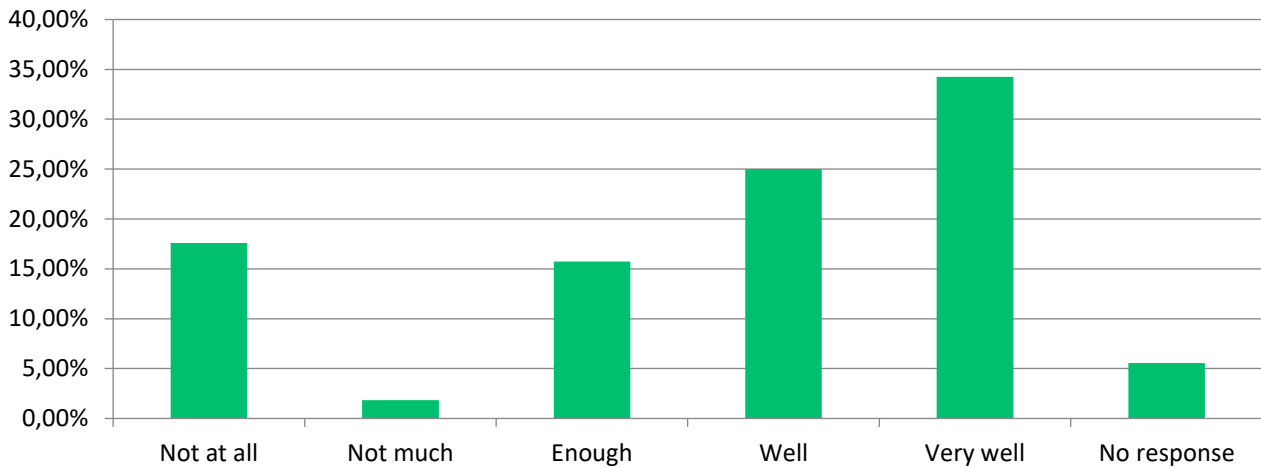


Each staff member of the Humanitarian Corridors program is responsible for looking after one or more individuals or families and for providing them with material and moral support. They help participants to complete their integration project in the local communities in which they live. Program operators are therefore required to provide a wide range of goods/services/activities to be offered to participants, such as: food and shelter; awareness raising; identification of training opportunities (language courses; vocational training; etc.) and other activities aimed at their social inclusion and integration, including work, in the local host communities.

Questioned on whether the staff of the Humanitarian Corridors program provided adequate support to address all the needs of new life in Italy (hospitals, medicines, school for children, job placement, etc.), 19.4% of respondents provided a negative answer. In particular, 17.6% expressed themselves a particularly negative opinion (very bad). Despite a minority of dissatisfied participants, 76.8% expressed appreciation and in any case the majority of respondents were the ones that expressed themselves with the greatest enthusiasm (34.3% - very well). No response for the remaining percentage.

It should be noticed here that, through participatory observation and the collaboration established during the questionnaire administration phase, the analysts were able to detect not only the obvious availability of the operators toward the participants, but also the efficacy, emotional depth and communicative intelligence of the linguistic-cultural mediators involved in project management. These observations validate the effort to have fully trained the operators that were preparing to receive the participants, welcoming their efforts to come into contact with and gain knowledge (on at least the most essential level) of the participants' culture of origin, in turn supporting the participants in their own confidence-building process.

### 34. How did the staff of the Humanitarian Corridors' program help you cope with all the needs of your new life in Italy (hospitals, medicine, schooling for children, work, etc.)?



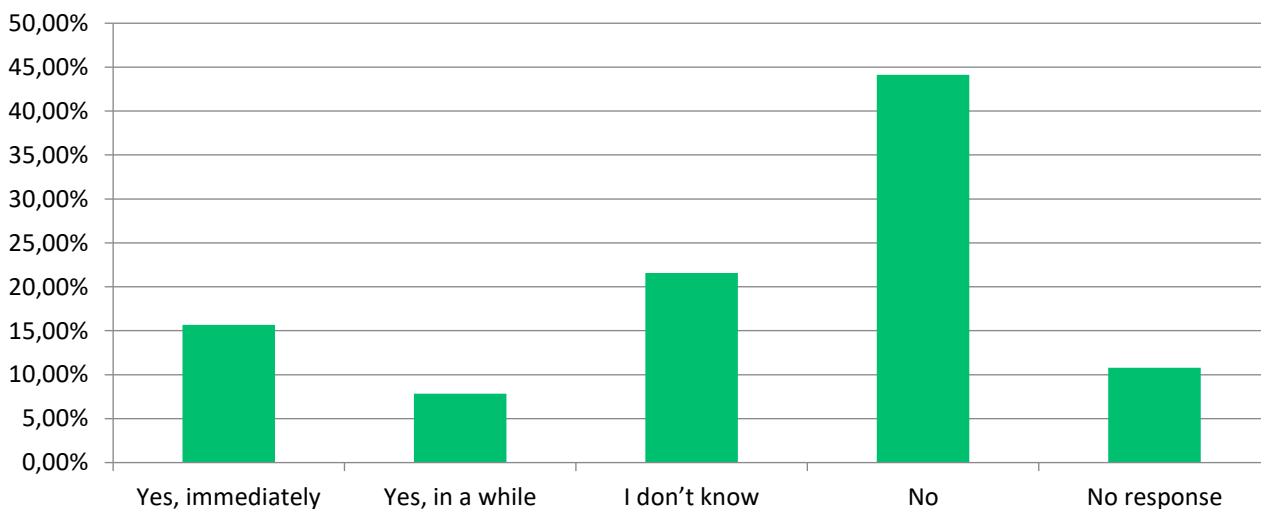
Despite the substantial progress recorded in terms of integration in local Italian contexts, only a small portion of the respondents would agree to return home, assuming that a return in conditions of full safety were possible.

The majority of respondents expressed an unconditional refusal (44.1%), probably not being able to count on the physical and psychological forces for the reconstruction of a country like Syria, upset by a decade of armed conflict.

21.6% do not know how to respond, probably needing more time in Italy to consider an answer, and 10.8% refuse to answer.

Among those in favor, 15.7% would leave immediately and 7.8% would leave after a short delay.

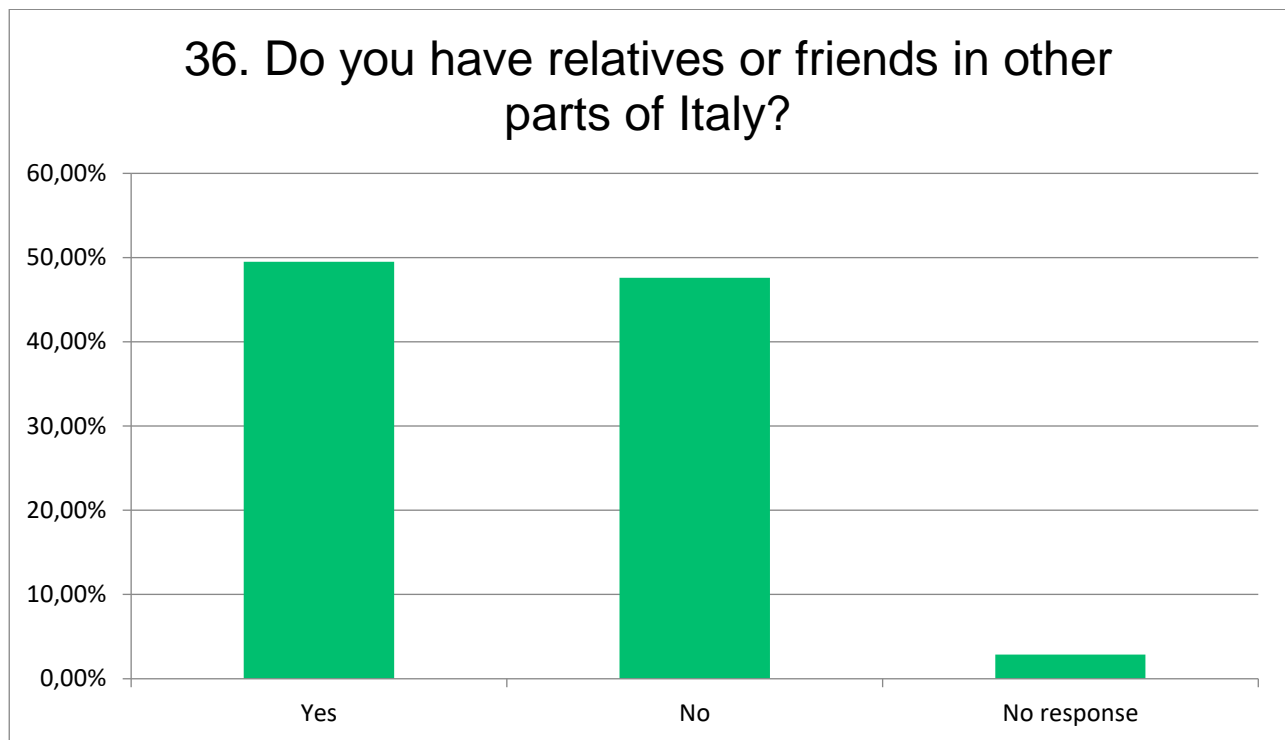
### 35. If you could, and if it was possible, would you go home?





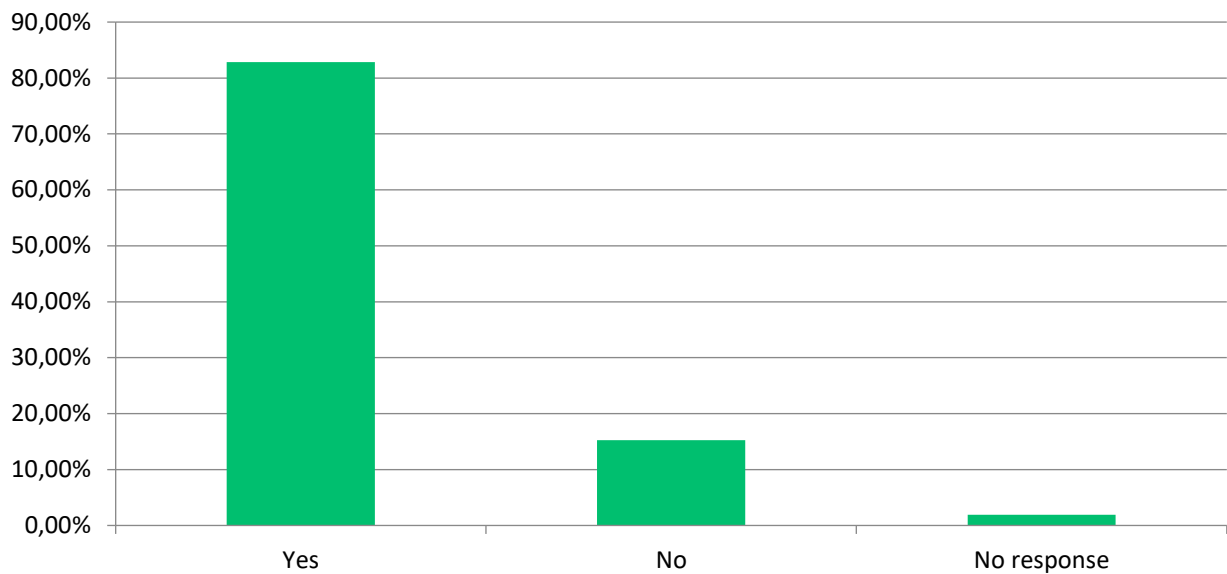
When asked if the participants have relatives and/or friends in other parts of Italy, the respondents are divided into two groups: 49.5% answer affirmatively and 47.6% negatively. Instead, asked the same question on a European level, affirmative answers increase to 82.7%. Questioned if they intend to reach them one day, 45.8% give a positive answer.

The Syrian diaspora, represented in 2019 by 6.6 million refugees scattered around the world,<sup>24</sup> constitutes a complex network of solidarity, however it is clear at the current moment that the asylum seekers and refugees hosted in Italy through the Humanitarian Corridors program appear relatively less interested in migrant networking opportunities because of exhaustion and accumulated fragility.

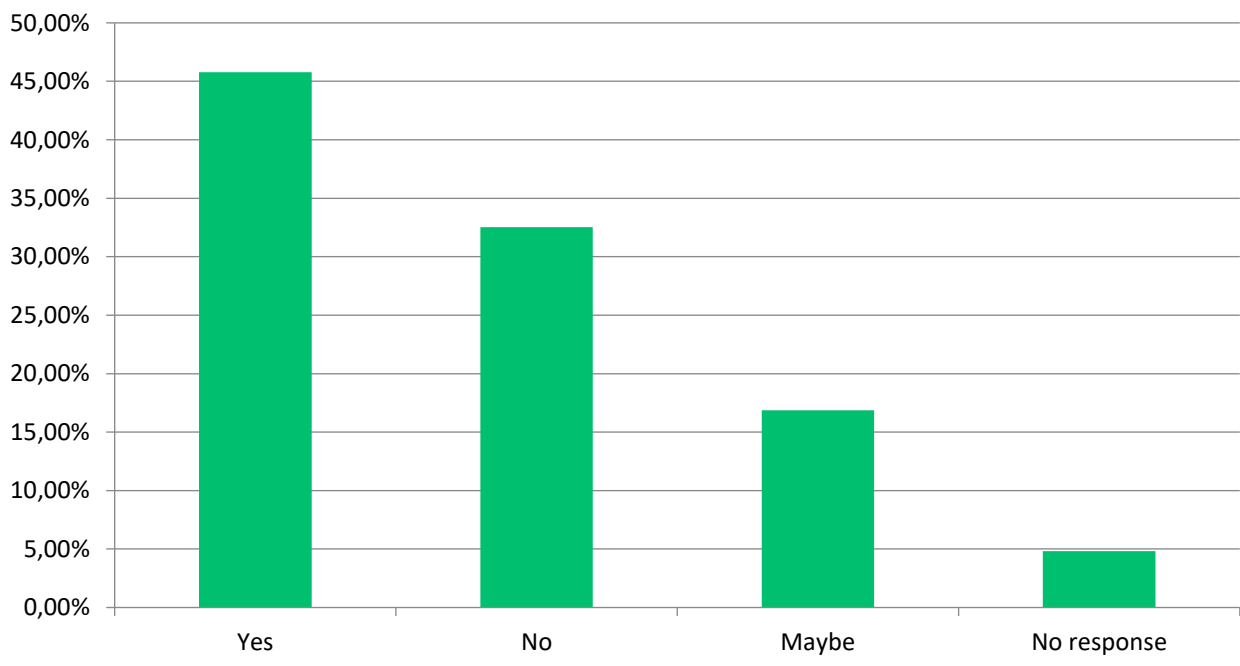


<sup>24</sup> UNHCR, *Global trends. Forced displacement in 2019*, Geneva, 2020.

### 37. Do you have relatives or friends in other parts of Europe?



### 38. If yes, do you want to join them some day?

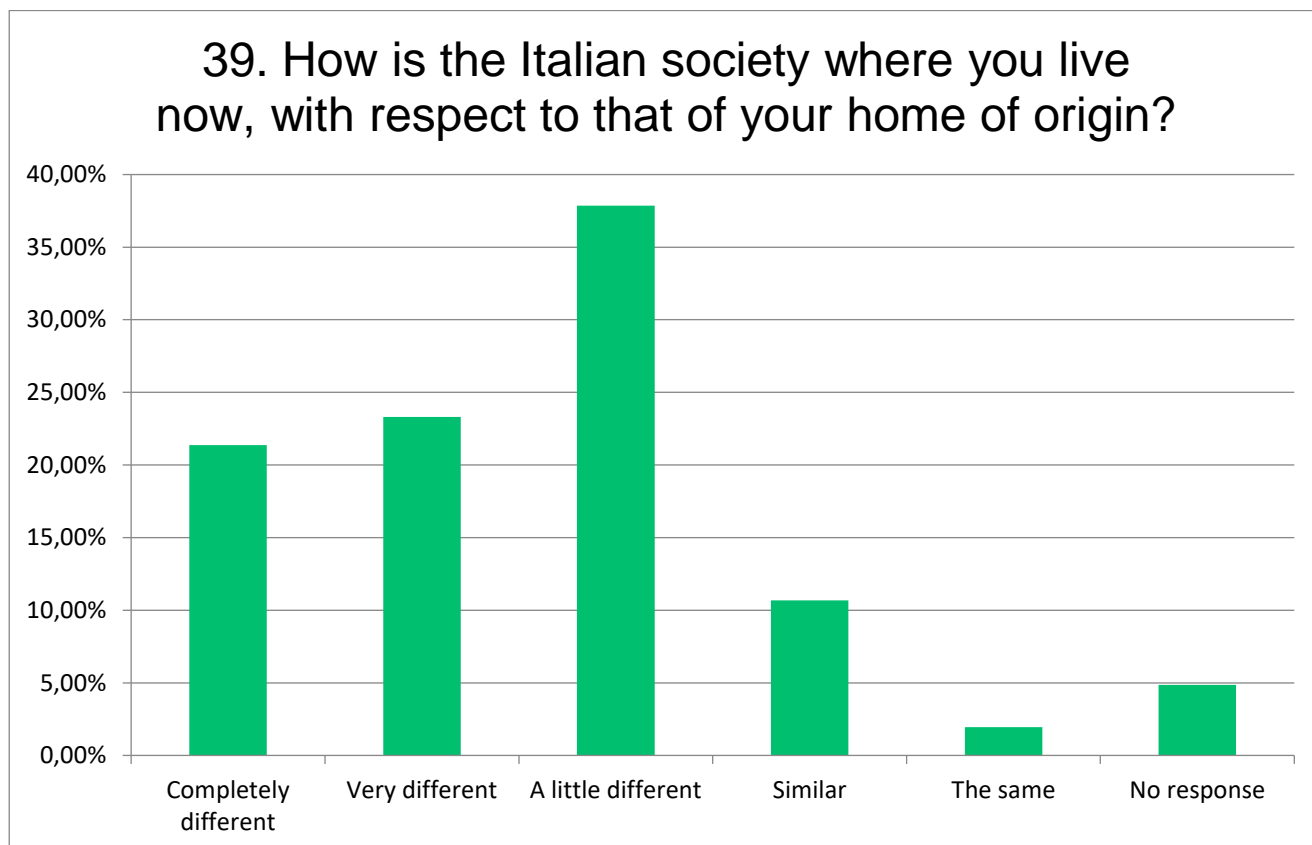


Another important test of the integration process in Italy is the perception of sociocultural differences with respect to the host society. Once again, the answers must be interpreted in light of the fact that the majority of respondents had been in Italy for a relatively short time, i.e. mainly during the two-year period 2018-2019 and especially in the last half of the second year.

Among the respondents, 82.6% recognize the diversity between their society of origin and Italian society, albeit to different degrees. The majority group tends not to emphasize sociocultural differences (a little different: 37.9%), however 23.3% say they find Italian society very different and 21.4% completely different.

12.6% of the respondents have a diametrically opposed opinion, asserting that they find in Italian society some similarities with Syrian society, and the very few of them that went so far as to affirm full equality between the two societies.

In any case, continuous intercultural mediation support is generally provided and mediators - who perform much more than the mere function of translation or interpretation - play a role of support and guidance both before departure and during the participants' stay in the local communities receiving them.

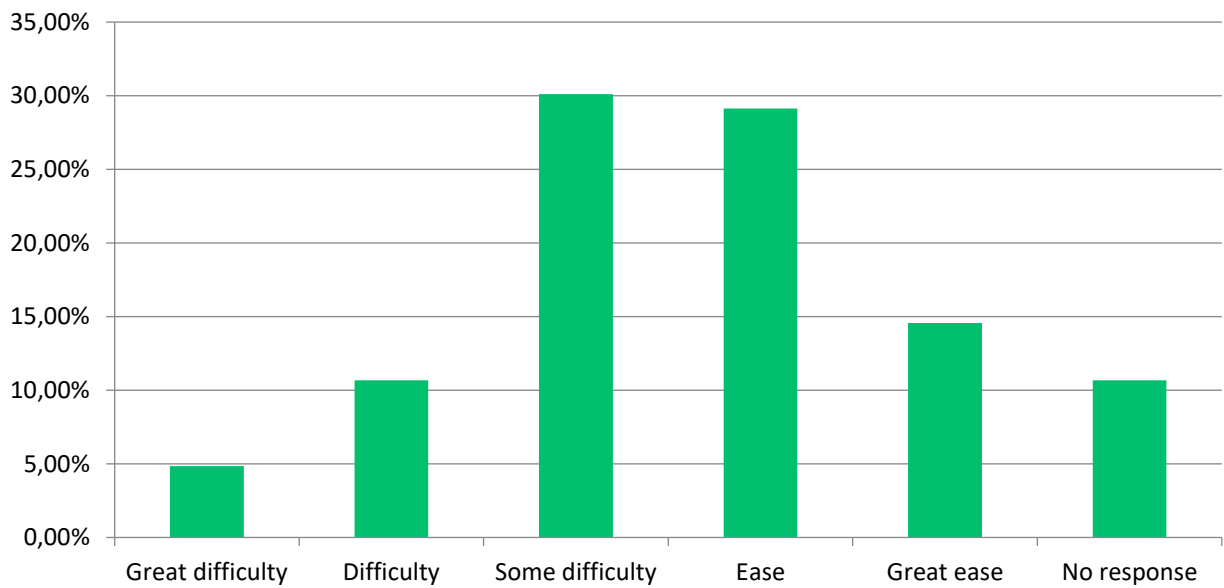


Levels of social interaction, relationships and communications with neighbors are easy for 43.7% of respondents, difficult for 40.8% and almost impossible for 4.9%.

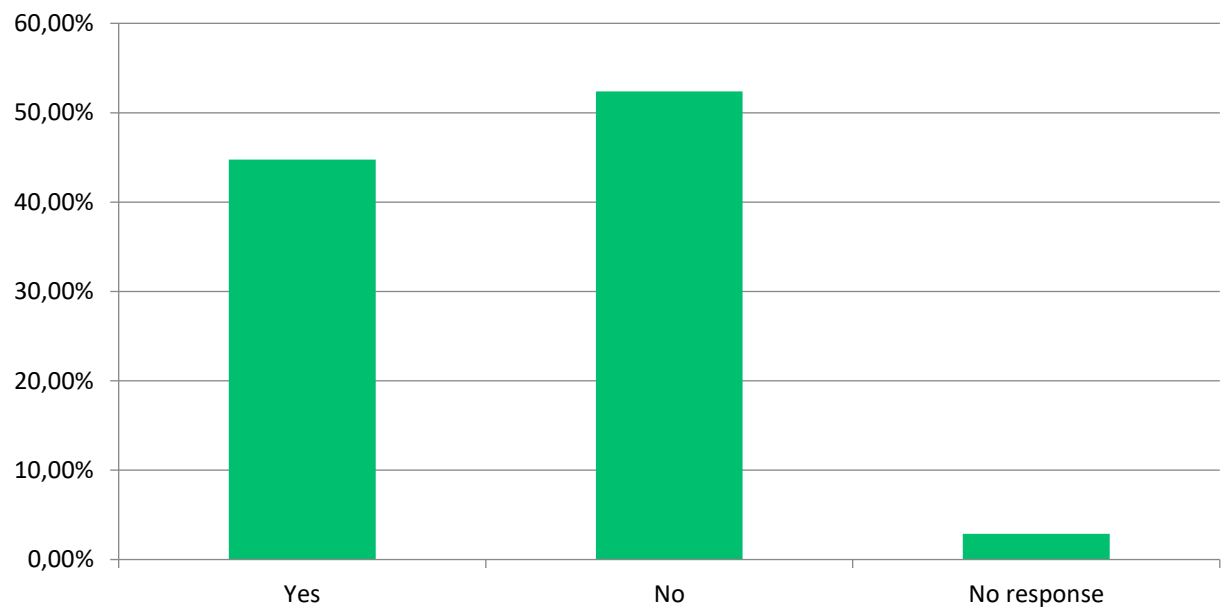
Equally difficult is the availability of Italian friends (excluding social workers) or of Italian people they could confidently call upon in case of need: 52.4% of participants do not hesitate to respond negatively, however, 44.8% have developed deep friendships even outside their immediate social group, also thanks to the support of local networks made up of individuals, groups of families, parishes or voluntary associations.

Inevitably, the situation is destined to evolve over time, thanks to growing confidence on both sides, but also to the increasing communication skills and Italian language knowledge by the participants.

### 40. In communicating with neighbors, you encounter...?



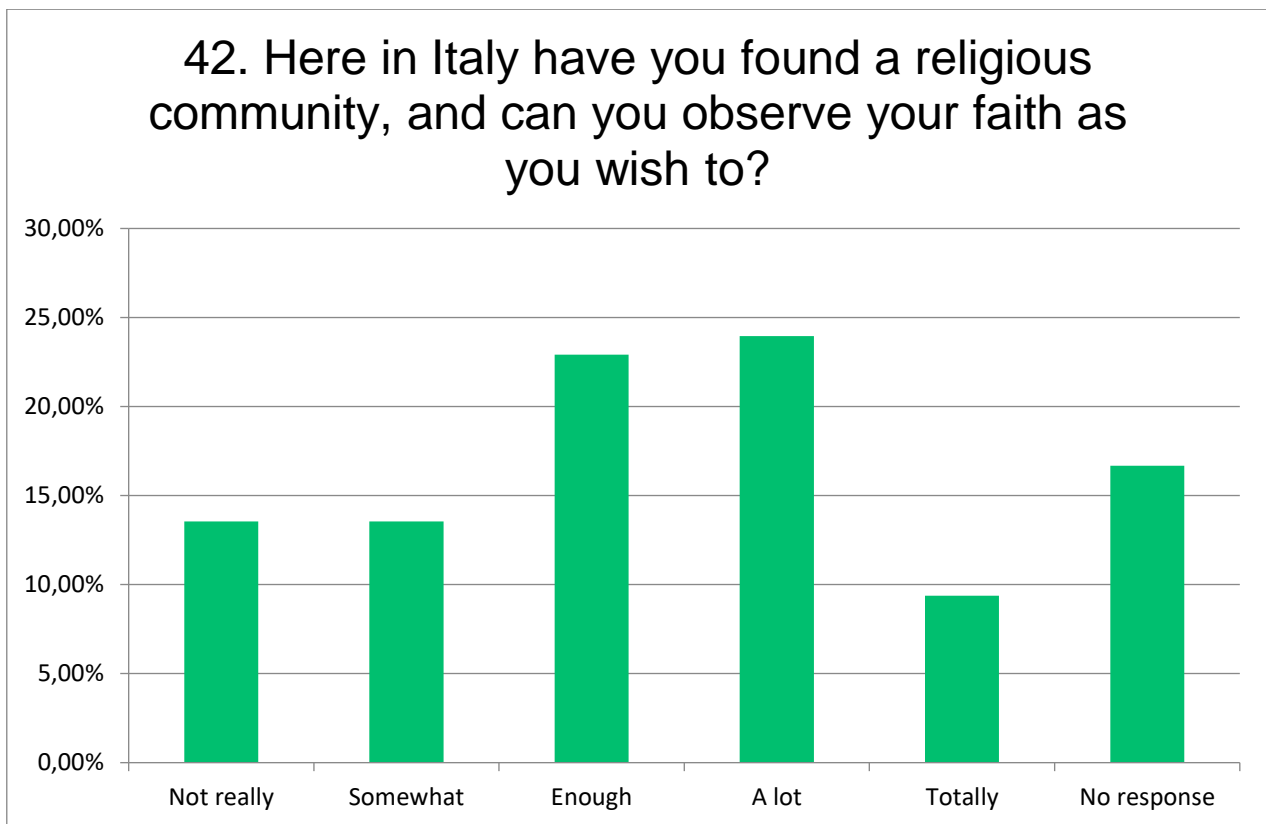
### 41. Do you have Italian friends (other than your regular social workers) that you feel you can call in times of need?



As for the possibility of attending a religious community and practicing their faith, the current situation is not simple; however, 56.3% manage to practice their religion as they would like to, while 27.0% complain of doing it hardly or almost never.

Respondents may be hampered by obstacles of various kinds, such as the distance from home to places of worship (if not even the absence of a community or place of worship in the relevant territory), or commitments concurrent with the times of gathering and worship.

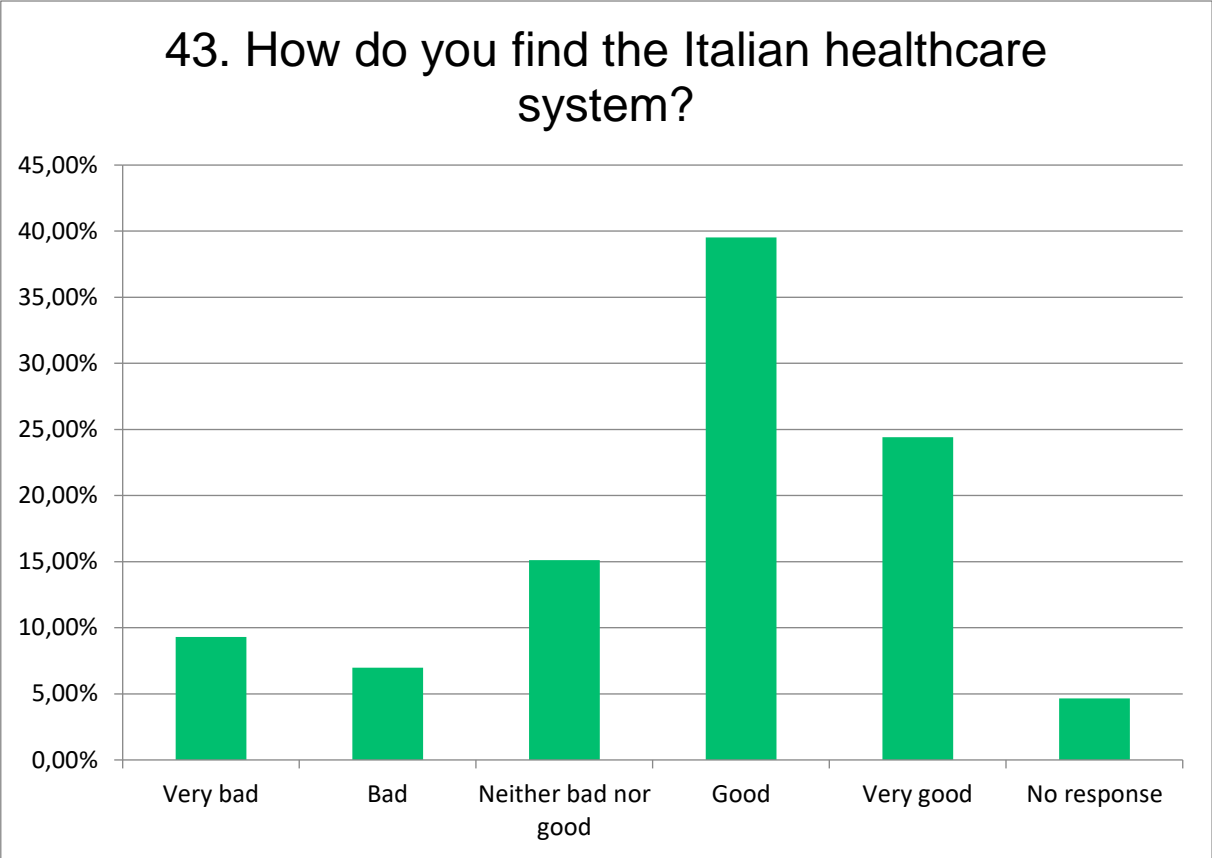
Finally, it should be underlined that, in asking about religions, the number of respondents who prefer not to answer the question has risen again (16.7%).



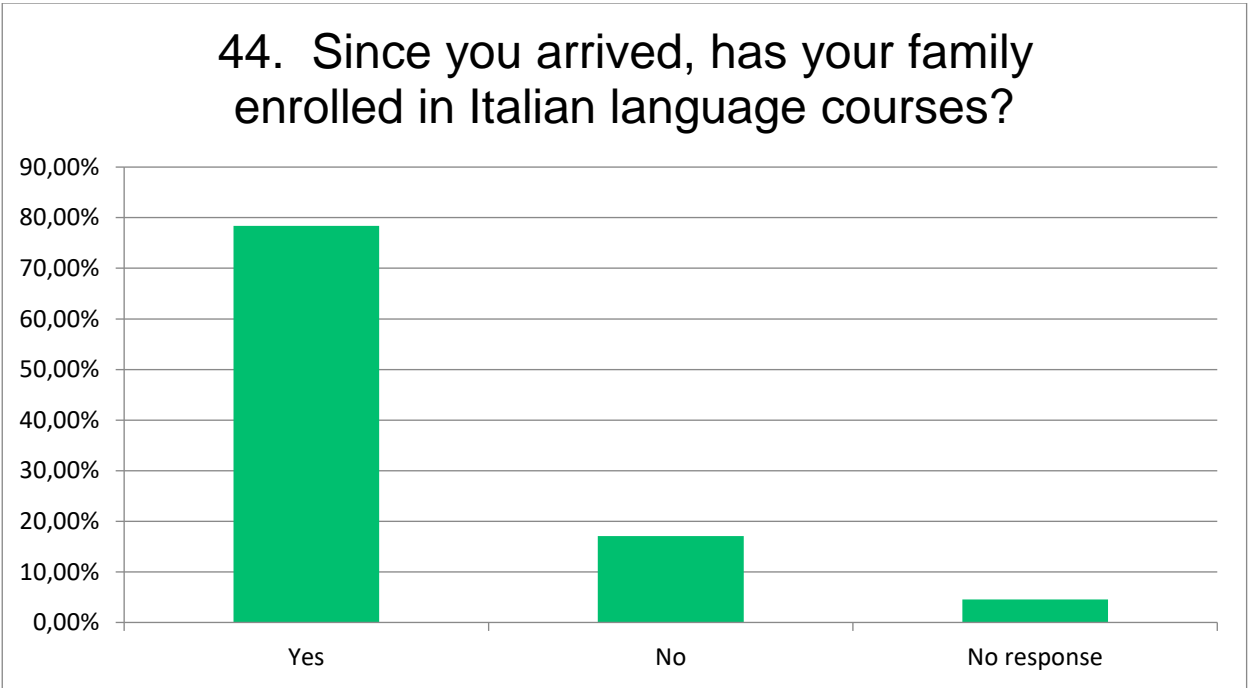
After their arrival, all participants are enrolled in the national healthcare system and are supported by the operators in setting up initial contacts with healthcare structures, specialists and hospitals at every stage of medical treatment.

64.0% of respondents say they are comfortable with the Italian healthcare system, 16.3% provide a bad or very bad evaluation, and 15.1% say it is neither good nor bad.

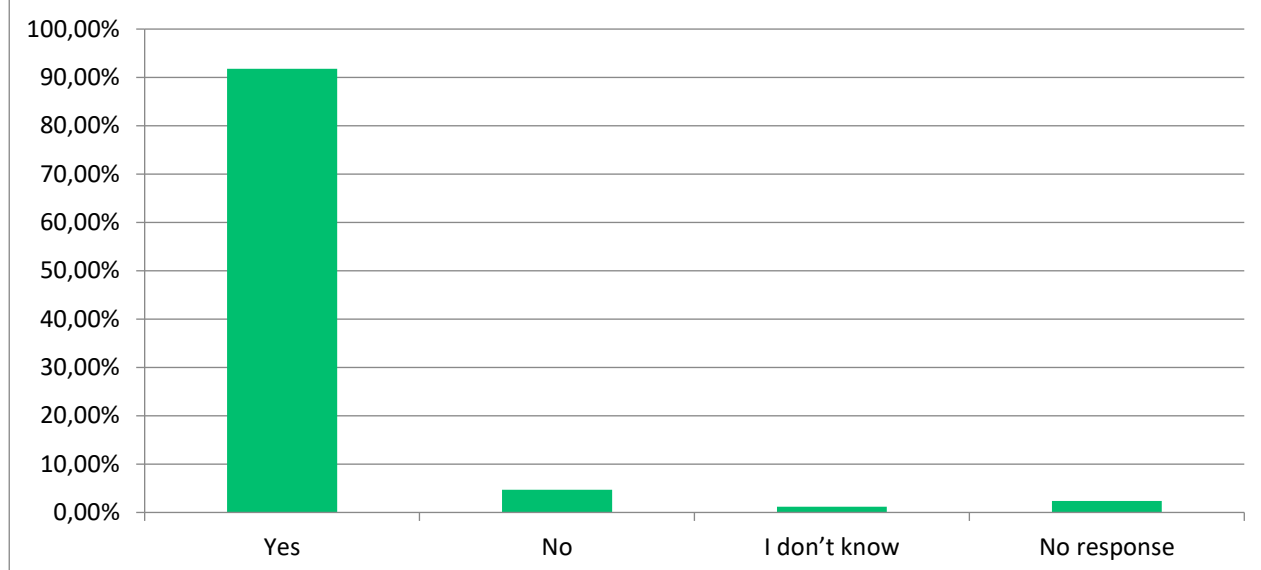
The respondents had previously been alerted to this topic, when question 30 asked them to evaluate from 1 to 5 (increasing) the sensitivity they encountered at local public health structures. In that occasion, the weighted average resulted an average score (equal to 3.4 points out of a maximum of 5). This result could seem a bit problematic if we consider that several of the participants suffer “serious medical cases” requiring medical treatment or specialist surgery.



91.8% of respondents find learning Italian language useful, if not fundamental, and 78.4% confirm that special Italian courses have been offered for themselves and their families. Language courses, vocational training, support for job integration, and inclusion and integration of refugee children into the education system represent effective milestones of the integration pathways geared toward refugees' autonomy.



## 45. Do you find it useful to learn the Italian language?



### Labour placement

Since autonomy can only be considered as “achieved” when people have a stable job, one of the main activities implemented by Humanitarian Corridors operators is to develop ad hoc agreements with local training centers aimed at including participants in training courses which enable them to acquire or improve professional skills, and encouraging self-employment in particular for those who were self-employed in their country of origin.

84.5% of respondents confirm that finding a job is a priority for participants, but only 25.6% say they have had access to job orientation courses and/or training courses once they arrived, despite the continuous support from operators in the search for training or employment opportunities.

The result is that currently only 20.7% of respondents have work (17 out of 82), very often in catering services or as a facilitator (respectively 3 and 2 out of 10 who provided an answer).

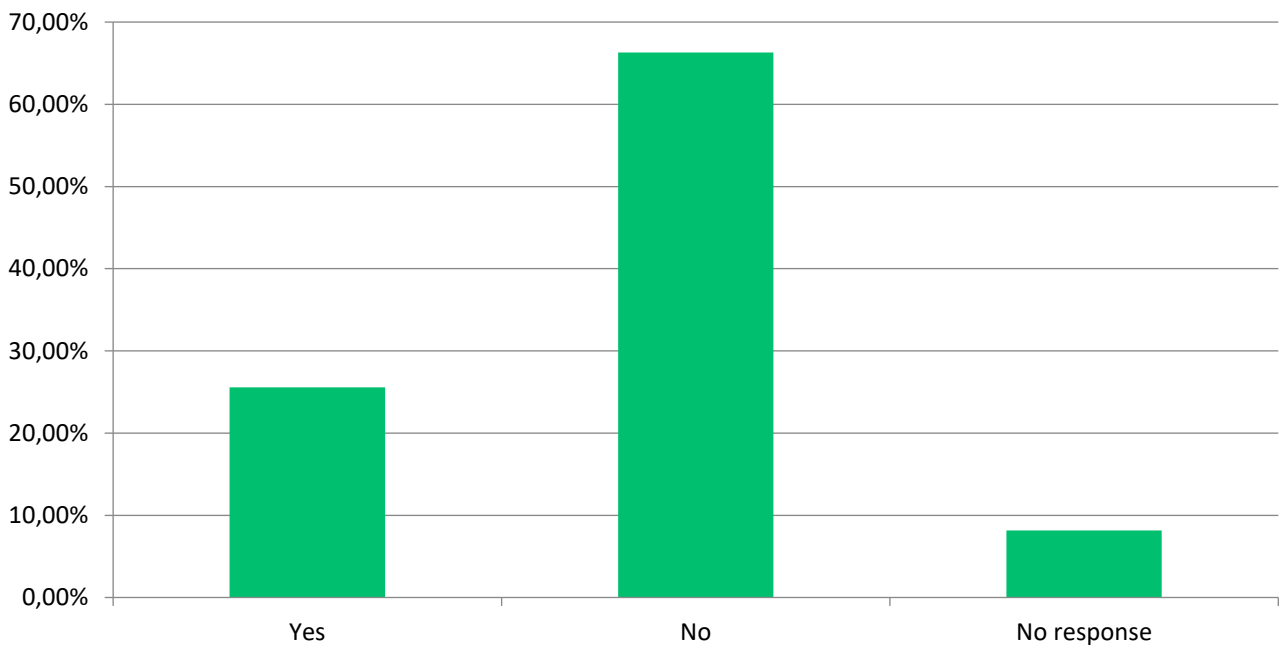
When asked to assess the level of satisfaction for work activity from 1 to 5, in most cases the satisfactory experience of increased social prestige due to being employed (2.8 points on a weighted average) was much more satisfactory than satisfaction with levels of remuneration (2.4) or the correspondence of the job with the level of previous education or professional experience (2.5).

Finally, when asked how the job was found, 69.2% said they found work with the help of the Humanitarian Corridors project, 23.1% on their own initiative and 7.7% thanks to the help of Italian or foreign friends (but not Syrians).

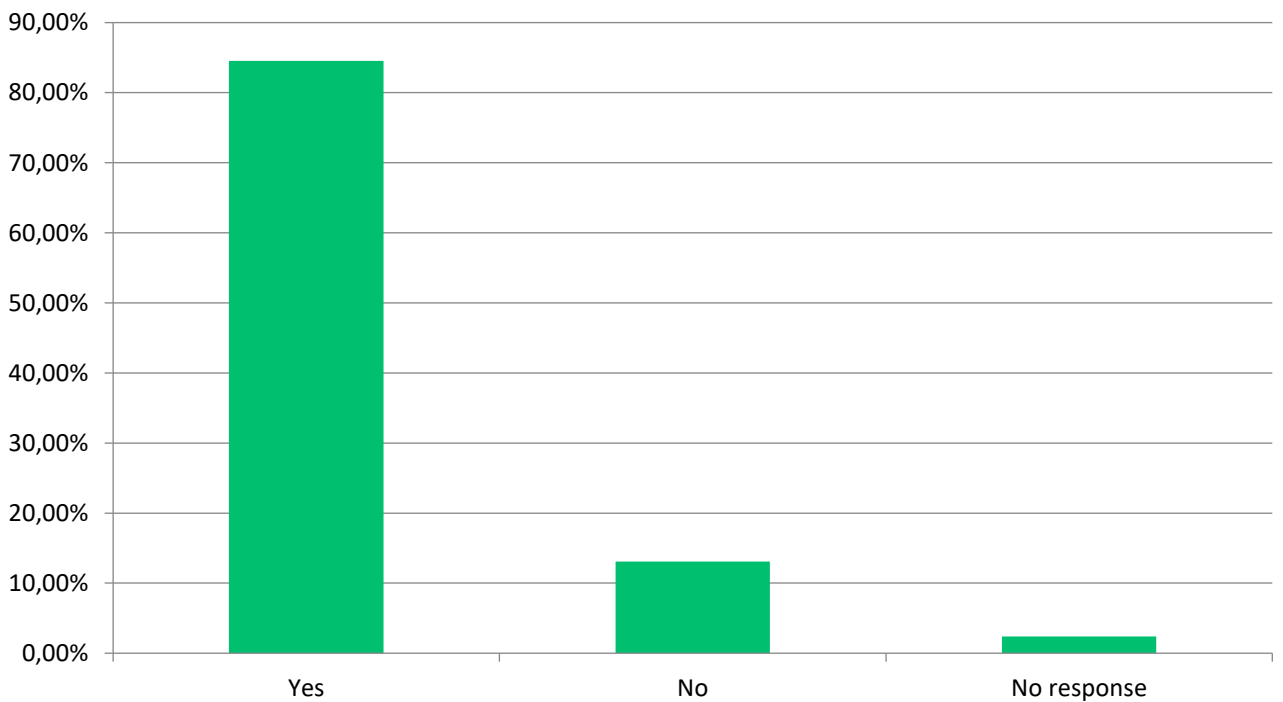
Help from public services (such as public employment offices), private work administration agencies, or even work-producing cooperatives currently has an impact equal to zero jobs found.

The operators’ strategy of activating formal and informal networks of companies, training centers, groups of friends, etc. has shown to be much more effective. In fact, these networks can also facilitate the search and selection of job and training opportunities for participants who are able to work.

### 46. Since you arrived, have you enrolled in courses for job orientation and training?

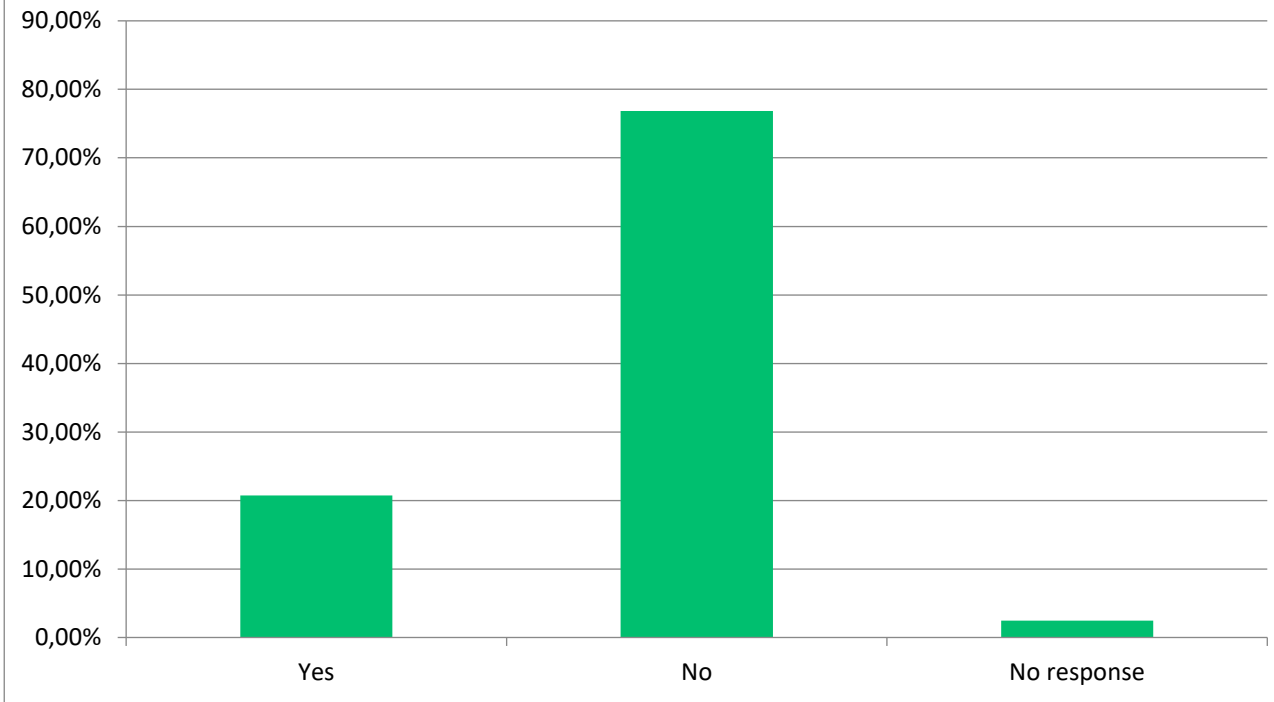


### 47. Is finding work a priority for you?

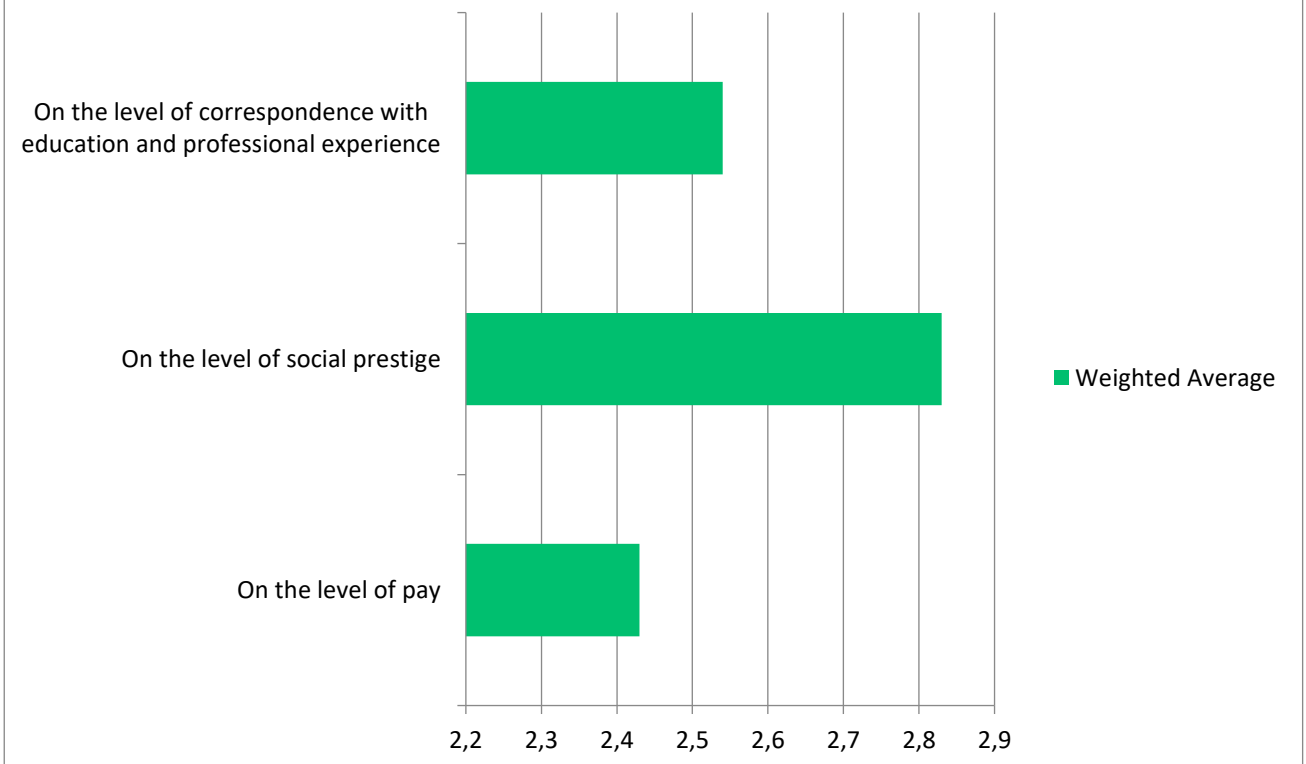




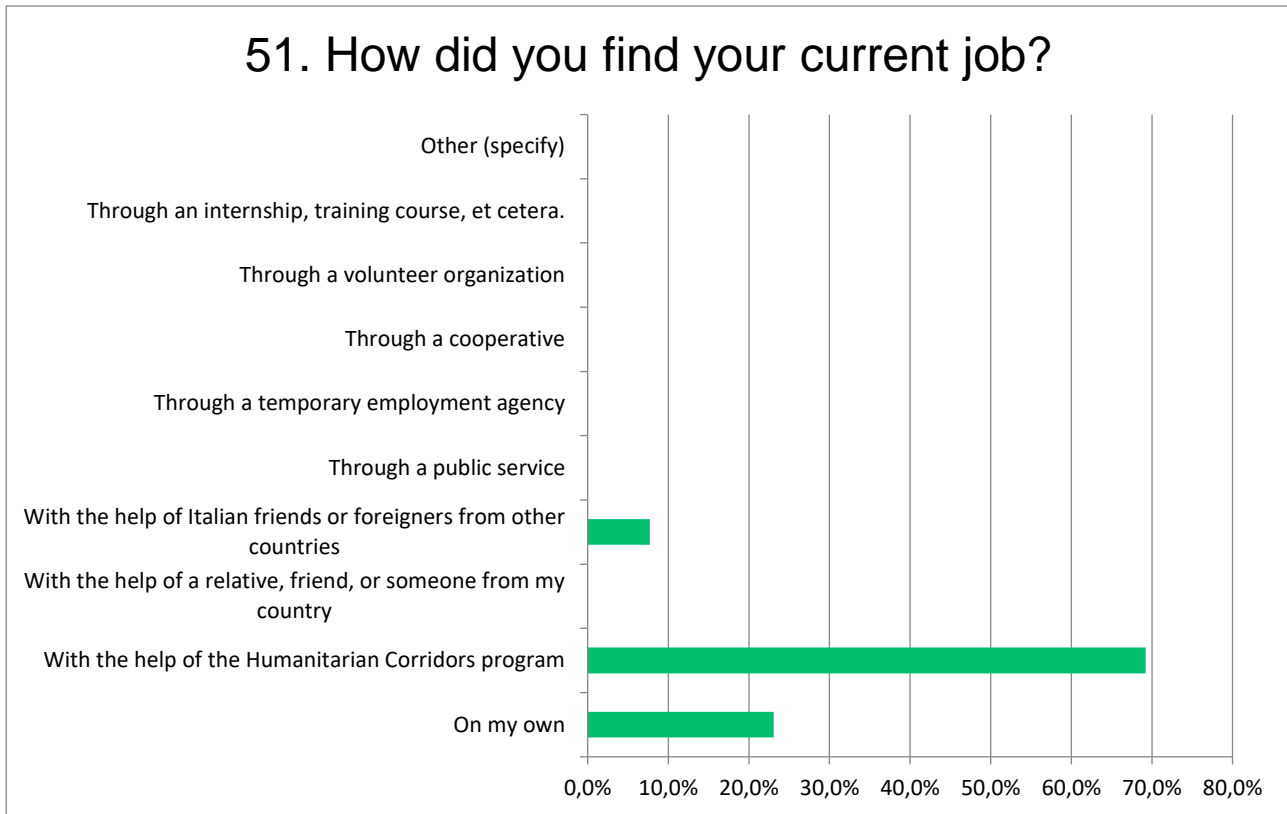
### 48. Are you currently working?



### 50. If you are working, how satisfied are you?



## 51. How did you find your current job?



### Goods and accommodation

Participants in the local host communities receive basic material support for many months after their arrival, such as food, shelter, goods and services.

According to the survey:

- Regarding personal transportation, 1 in 5 was able to afford the purchase of a bicycle, 1 in 30 of a moped and 1 in 100 of a car;
- As for technological resources, over 80% of respondents say they have a mobile phone or even a Smartphone or an iPhone, and 1 in 3 has a computer;
- As for leisure, 1 in 2 has a television, but only 1 in 10 has a satellite dish.

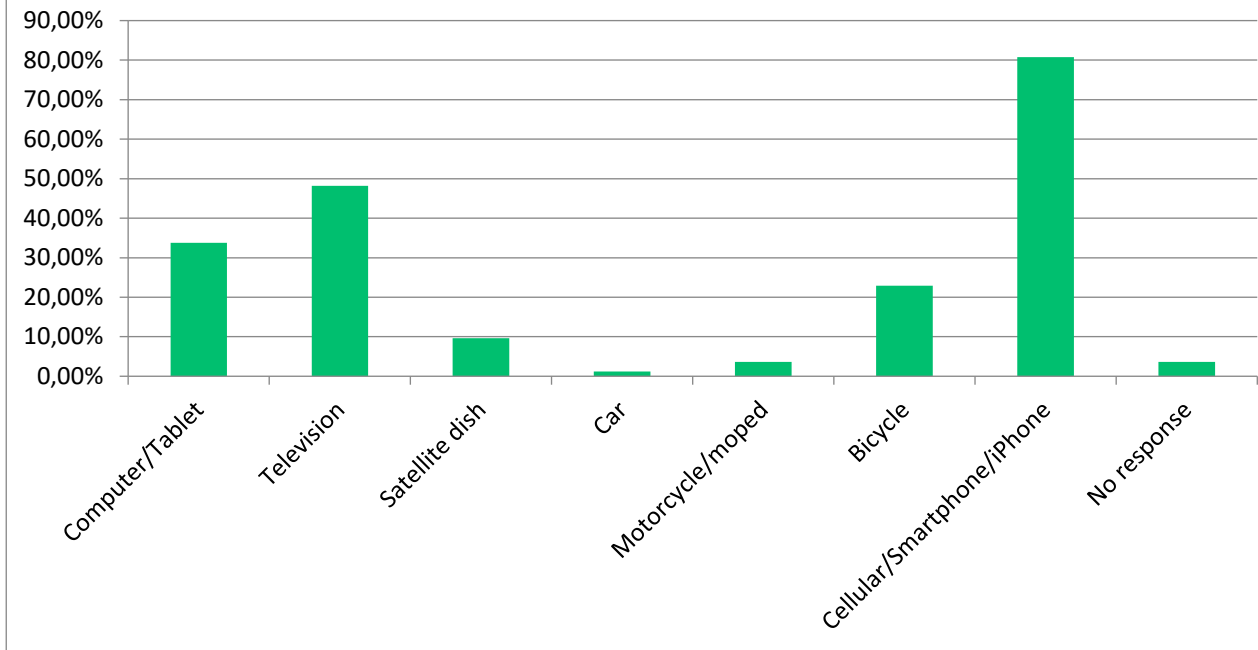
Participants are housed in different types of facilities, such as: family apartments, shared apartments, rooms in reception centers, rooms in private homes, etc. The shelter is offered thanks to the activation of a “widespread reception systems” composed of civil society stakeholders (associations, groups of individuals, parishes, organisations, families, relatives already in the country, etc.). This system represents a symbolic alternative to the current Italian public reception system.

Regarding the homes in which participants live, 1 case out of 7 is a cohabitation with people not belonging to the same family. In general, 39.3% declare themselves satisfied or very satisfied, but at the same time 29.1% declare themselves dissatisfied and 22.8% just sufficiently satisfied.

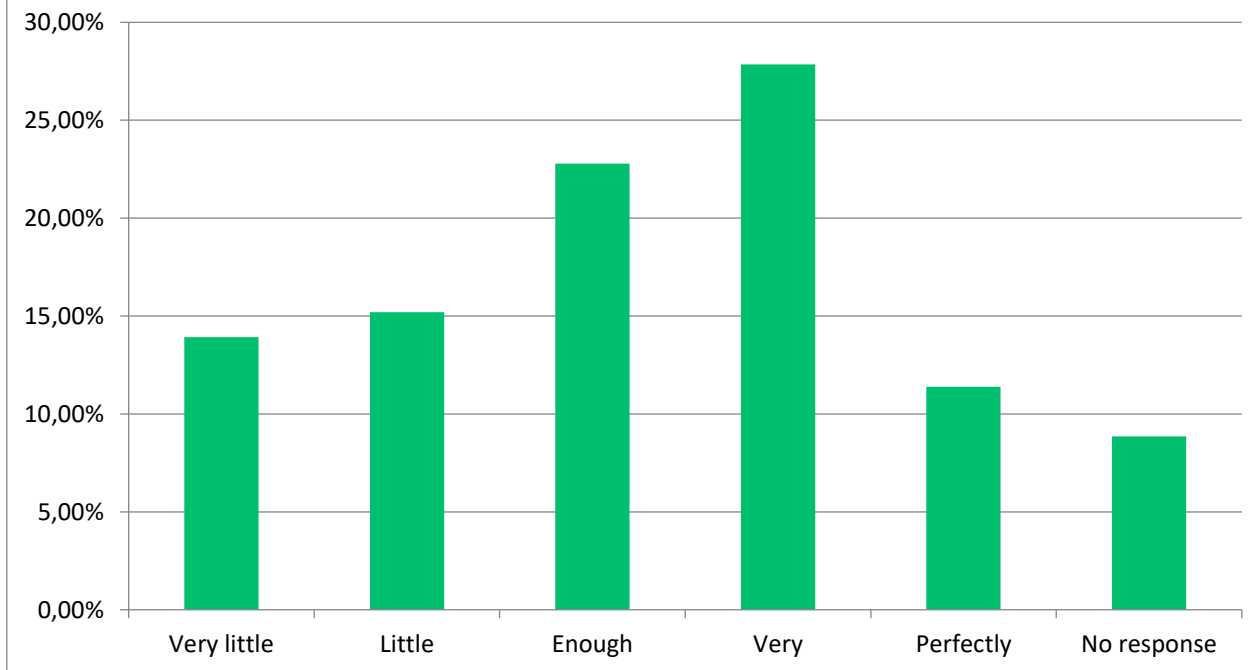
By paying particular attention to families, numerous cohabitations are also possible, however the prevailing model is that of sharing the apartment between 2 people (25.4% of cases) or 3 (20.3%). Individual families represent 11.9% of the total, while among the non-family cohabitations, those numbering 5 people are 15.2%, those numbering 6 are 13.6%, those numbering 4 are 10.2% and those numbering 9 are 3.4%.

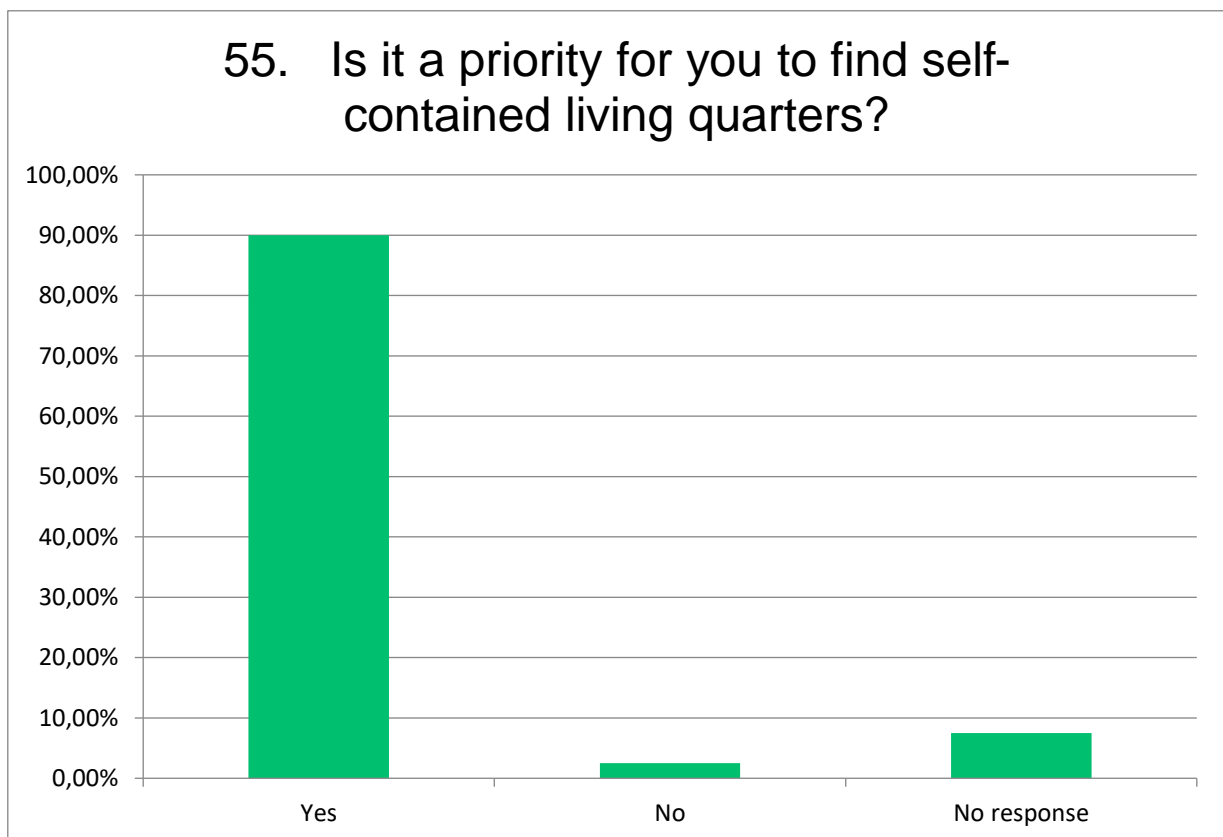
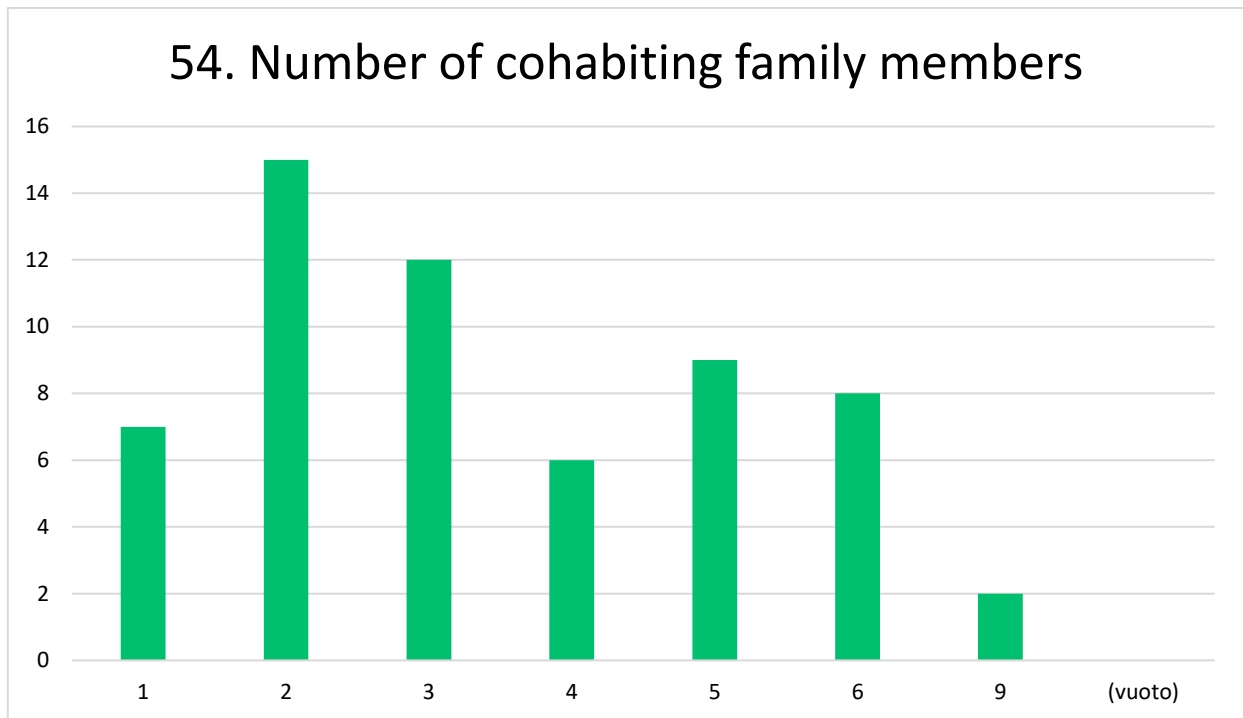
In 90% of cases, finding an independent accommodation for themselves and their families is declared as a major priority.

## 52. Which of these assets do you own?



## 53. Are you satisfied with your living conditions?





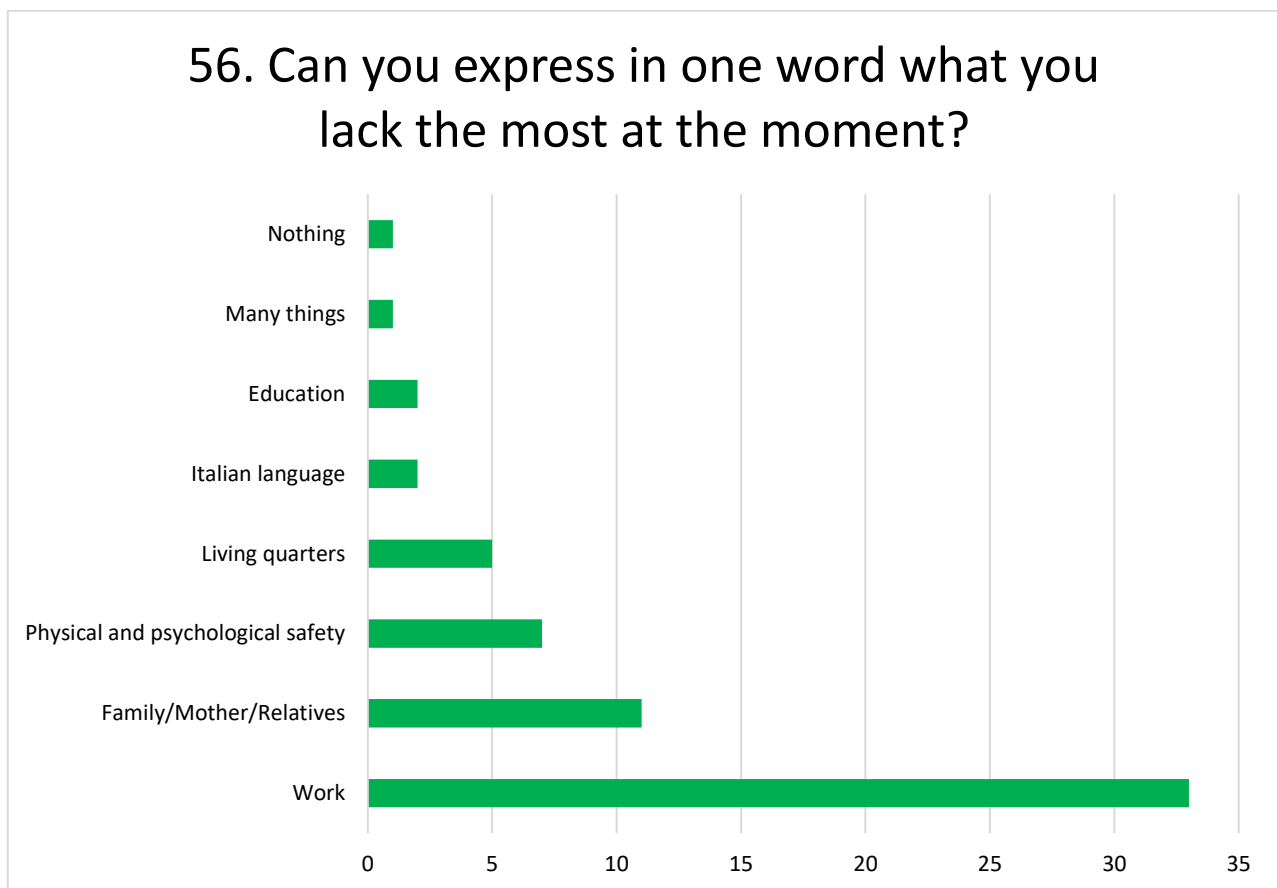
#### Final open questions

The final questions requested that participants express what they lack most at the moment: 55.0% declared a stable job; 18.3% missed their family in general or specifically a member of the family who remained at home; 11.7% lacked a sense of physical and psychological security; 8.3% lacked independent accommodation, 3.3% lacked fluent Italian and 3.3% wish to resume their studies.

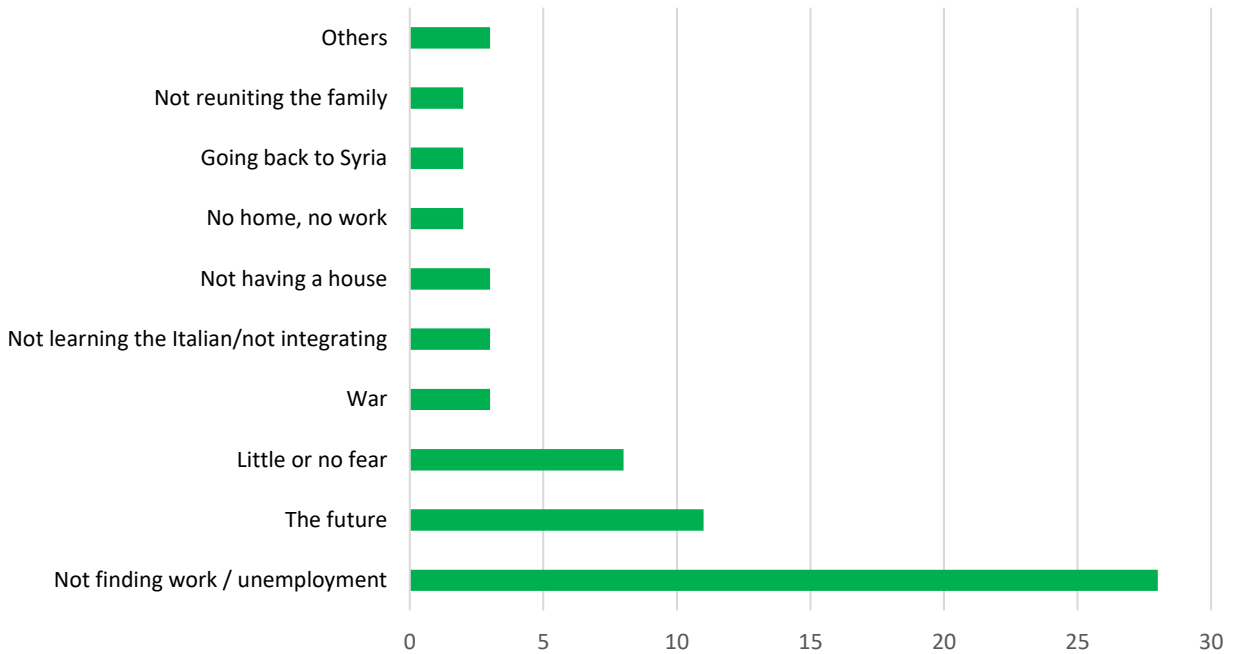
Among the fears declared, unemployment (43.1%) is the most recurrent, followed by uncertainties about the future (16.8%) and war (4.6%). In a countertrend, 12.3% of respondents said they were not afraid of anything.

When asked to express their greatest hope for the future, once again, work came first (41.5%), followed by peace and happiness (38.5%), independent accommodation (7.7%), good health (4.6%) and, last but not least, obtaining Italian citizenship (4.6%).

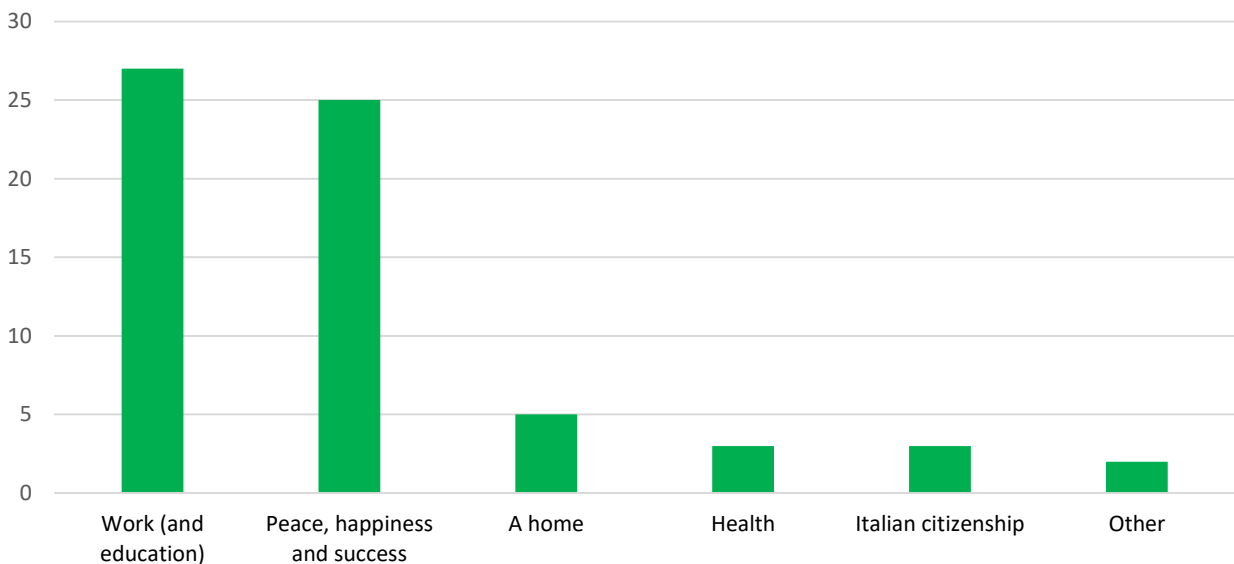
Finally, participants were asked to freely express their own short thoughts. 58.1% of respondents thanked IDOS and Confronti analysts for the day spent together in the Workshop on Active Citizenship and the anti-radicalization course. 12.9% took the opportunity to remember the urgency of reuniting the family and 6.5% turned their thoughts to defending gay rights.



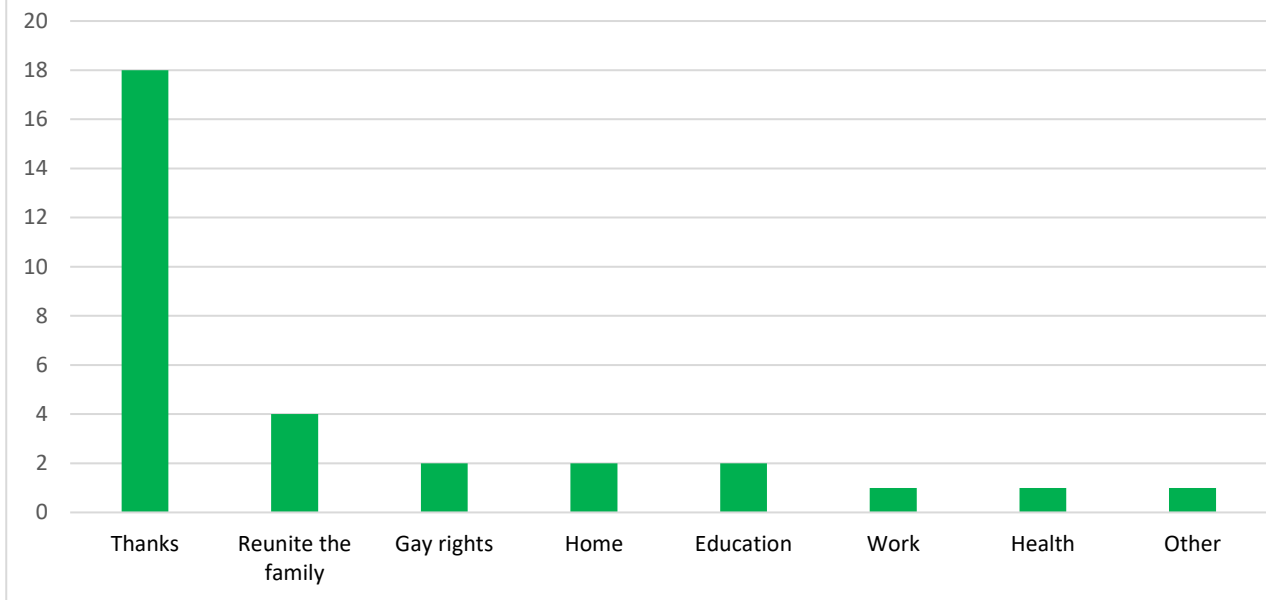
### 57. Can you express in one word what you are most afraid of?



### 58. Can you express in one word what you hope for the future?



## 59. Is there anything you would like to add? Is there anything you would like to add or anything else you want for your life right now?



### Conclusion

The survey and the data collected show a representative group of asylum seekers and refugees benefiting from the Humanitarian Corridors program in Italy at a very young average age, made up mostly of families and with significant human capital. The acquisition by participants of the set of knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for the achievement of individual or collective social and economic objectives is confirmed by answers to the questionnaire.

As an example, the incidence of graduates (27.5%) within our sample is much higher than that recorded among Italians during the 2011 Census (11.2%). Almost half report having held highly qualified professions before losing everything because of the conflict in Syria.

Despite the significant level of human capital, educational qualifications and professional qualifications do not seem to influence the success of program participants in Italy for now, because education or professional titles are difficult to use due to the complex bureaucratic procedures that need to be carry out for their recognition. This goal, in the case of asylum seekers and refugees, can become incredibly elusive, if one considers the difficulty of obtaining documentation from the country of origin, from those same institutions by which they felt threatened enough to ask for protection from Italy.

It is even more problematic for newcomers to have to find an adequate job placement in a country where immigrants have access only to a secondary labor market, a segment of the market rejected by natives, which is characterized by the offer of jobs called in Italian of the “five Ps”: *pesanti, precari, pericolosi, poco pagati, penalizzati socialmente* (heavy, precarious, dangerous, underpaid, socially penalized).<sup>25</sup>

For the participants of the Humanitarian Corridors program, the risks of “brain waste” are particularly serious, in a country like Italy where 34.4% foreign workers are employed below their educational level.

<sup>25</sup> Ambrosini Maurizio, *Migrazioni*, Egea, Milano, 2017.

Half of the respondents declare that they have friends and/or relatives in other parts of Italy; that percentage exceeds 80% regarding friends and relatives dispersed across the European continent. Nevertheless, for the moment, very few are willing to move again due to exhaustion and accumulated fragility. Because of this, some more opportunities for participants could come from long-lasting relational resources, immediately in terms of solidarity, deriving from belonging to the same group (“solidarity social capital”), but also in terms of reciprocity, deriving from social relations (“reciprocal social capital”).<sup>26</sup>

#### *The specific relationship with the Humanitarian Corridors program*

The data collected shows that asylum seekers and refugees benefiting from the Humanitarian Corridors program represent a particularly complex target for many reasons, ranging first from specific conditions of vulnerability, and then to practical aspects such as the total lack of prior knowledge of the Italian society and language.

Furthermore, it should not be overlooked that the participants do not represent a monolithic group. On several issues the target group is shown to be divided into equivalent pillars in numerical terms but, amongst themselves, bear outlooks and opinions that are also very different from each other. The presence of a minority of dissenters has been constantly observed, a more or less significant group of people whose opinion often contrasts the general mainstreaming.

These aspects will inevitably have to take into account the future experiences of the Humanitarian Corridors program, developing even more flexible tools to assist individual cases so that nobody is left behind. This, in part, already happens and is favored by the dispersion of the participants throughout the territory. At the same time, greater attention must be paid in future programs to ensure minimum standards and quality control, while preserving the dimensions of flexibility, innovation and creativity that have characterized the Humanitarian Corridors program implemented so far.

The participants show a high degree of appreciation towards the operators of the Humanitarian Corridors program, specifically those involved in the management of the pre-departure practices, even if at this level there are many complaints regarding the difficulty of the identification procedures (30.9%) and the inadequacy of the pre-departure orientation (43.2%).

The majority said that before leaving, they were happy to have been chosen (55.9%) and to have had high expectations (54.6%), although the significant share of them were also prudent and skeptical (36.1%). Today, after a period of stay in Italy, the status of expectations appears somewhat different because one third of participants declare themselves dissatisfied, a third satisfied and the remaining third do not express an opinion or are uncertain in the evaluation. Despite this, two thirds confirm that they are happy to have arrived in Italy and the wide majority declare themselves to feel safe in Italy (more than 80%).

#### *Integration pathways*

The first important finding is that, apart from 1.9% who consider themselves rejected by the host society and 9.5% who do not hide their isolation conditions, 30.5% declare themselves accepted and 9.5% well-integrated. For the majority group (remaining 38.1%) it seems to be too early to evaluate their path of integration in Italy.

Almost half of participants find sociality with neighbors very difficult, as well as the task of cultivating friendships with Italian people, notwithstanding the support of local networks (individuals, groups of families, parishes or voluntary associations).

Regarding the participants' evaluation of the sensitivity shown by the public and private structures with which they have interfaced during their time in Italy, they generally appreciate Territorial Commissions, the police headquarters, the church services and the parishes, the local health system,

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<sup>26</sup> Pizzorno Alessandro, *Perché si paga il benzinaio*, in Bagnasco Arnaldo et al. (eds), *Il capitale sociale. Istruzioni per l'uso*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2001, pp. 27-29.



etc. The structure least appreciated for its sensitivity is the provincial employment offices, probably due to limited functionality exercised by these offices in job placement.

For the development of better confidence in their relationship with the local society, it seems fundamental to increase Italian language skills, so much so that the majority of participants declare that they have committed themselves to attending special courses.

The support of the staff of the Humanitarian Corridors program is also important, as it can provide immediate information regarding needs related to participants' new lives in Italy (hospitals, medicines, school for children, job placement, etc.), even if one participant out of five expresses dissatisfaction. Despite this, the professionalism of the linguistic-cultural mediators proved to be very effective for training the operators, supporting the local community, putting participants at ease and supporting them in their confidence-building process.

#### *Work as a driver towards autonomy*

However, assistance cannot last a lifetime. Language courses, vocational training, support for job integration, and inclusion and integration of participants' children into the education system represent effective milestones of the integration pathways geared toward participants' autonomy.

The most delicate part, however, is precisely job placement, which emerges in all respects as the fundamental motivator for social integration, and for leaving the reception system and starting life paths with full autonomy.

From the responses of the participants, it is evident that job placement difficulties risk becoming a source of frustration: in fact, for almost 85%, work is an existential priority. According to the sample of participants, the thing that is missing the most is mainly work (considered even more important than family reunification) and what they fear most is the lack of work.

In reality, a quarter of respondents say they have had access to a job orientation course and a fifth are carrying out a job, even if mostly precarious and not requiring great skill. The operators of the Humanitarian Corridors program were most helpful in helping them in finding work, while provincial employment centers, temporary work administration agencies and work production cooperatives have been found to be completely ineffective.

Considering the young average age of participants, study and professional trainings also represent two dimensions closely linked to job placement, which cannot be treated as simple corollaries of the new life to be built in Italy. In both cases, it would be very important to be able to complement the future Humanitarian Corridors programs with further best practices aimed at facilitating the job placement of people who potentially have high human capital. An example of this is the aforementioned project "University Corridors for Refugees."

Once the issue of work has been resolved, the doors to independent living should open and the home becomes the new priority. The current accommodation system, while guaranteeing a "widespread reception" composed of civil society stakeholders (associations, groups of individuals, parishes, organizations, families, relatives already in the country, etc.) and meriting a general level of satisfaction, also entails limitations, for example, as participants report numerous cohabitations or sharing spaces between different families.

#### *The challenge of cultural differences and the support of religious communities*

Another important test of the integration process in Italy is the perception of sociocultural differences with respect to the host society.

The participants of the Humanitarian Corridors program endeavor to establish themselves in Italy with an attitude oriented towards trust in the future, positively inclined to dialogue and multi/intercultural exchange, while at the same time trying to keep traditional cultural and religious ties alive.

In this context, religious identity and practice can become a fundamental fixture in the new life abroad, offering them the so-called "three Rs": Refuge, Respectability and Resources.

The majority says they are able to attend places of worship, even if one out of four declares doing so infrequently and with difficulty.

It is too early to claim a strong connection between religious adherence and the future integration of Humanitarian Corridors program participants; nevertheless, it is important to underline that they were able to reach a safe place in Italy thanks to an ecumenical initiative launched by different Christian faiths.

This seems to be a good starting point for dialogue initiatives between religious associations, which can strengthen religion's potential as a bridging tool for integration, avoiding marginalization and frustrations that may lead to conflict.

#### *Uncertain future prospects*

On one hand, speaking of future prospects, we refer first of all to the success of participants developing lives in Italy. When asked about the possibility of a possible return to home in conditions of full security, the majority said they wanted to stay in Italy, hoping to find as soon as possible a job and to live in a state of peace and happiness.

On the other hand, the hope is that most of the Italian society will take on the dialoguing role necessary with immigrants, refugees and all new arrivals, thanks to the courageous initiatives undertaken by civil society organizations (also of a religious nature, such as in our case), by non-governmental organizations and numerous municipalities, such as the pilot experience in the municipality of Riace whereby citizens welcomed refugees for a certain period.

Finally, the Humanitarian Corridors program can enable not only the social and professional integration of refugees, but, by deconstructing "fear of strangers," the program can also raise awareness about asylum seekers within the host society and contribute to a shift in perspective.

<b>1. Gender</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	53.0%	61
Female	47.0%	54
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>2</b>

<b>2. Age</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
19-30 years	40.6%	39
31-40 years	32.3%	31
41-50 years	17.7%	17
51-60 years	6.3%	6
61-70 years	2.1%	2
over 70 years	1.0%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>21</b>

<b>3. When did you move to Italy?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
October 2016	1.1%	1
February 2017	1.1%	1
March 2017	1.1%	1
July 2017	1.1%	1
August 2017	1.1%	1
October 2017	3.2%	3
January 2018	1.1%	1
March 2018	2.1%	2
May 2018	2.1%	2
June 2018	8.5%	8
July 2018	2.1%	2
October 2018	7.4%	7

November 2018	17.0%	16
December 2018	2.1%	2
February 2019	1.1%	1
March 2019	5.3%	5
April 2019	2.1%	2
May 2019	1.1%	1
June 2019	19.1%	18
September 2019	13.8%	13
November 2019	6.4%	6
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>23</b>

<b>4. In which region do you live now?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Sicily	25.0%	25
Piedmont	20.0%	20
Lombardy	16.0%	16
Tuscany	11.0%	11
Liguria	8.0%	8
Lazio	7.0%	7
Emilia Romagna	6.0%	6
Veneto	4.0%	4
Campania	3.0%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>17</b>

<b>4b. In which municipal zone do you live now?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Scicli	13.0%	13
Turin	10.0%	10
Florence	7.0%	7

Messina	7.0%	7
Rome	7.0%	7
Genoa	6.0%	6
Pinerolo	6.0%	6
Milan	5.0%	5
Vittoria	5.0%	5
Bergamo	4.0%	4
Melegnano	4.0%	4
Padua	4.0%	4
Cesano Boscone	3.0%	3
Vergato - Bologna	3.0%	3
Figline Valdarno	2.0%	2
Liguria	2.0%	2
Luserna	2.0%	2
Mezzani	2.0%	2
Naples	2.0%	2
Occhieppo Superiore	2.0%	2
Pontassieve	2.0%	2
Sorbolo Mezzani	1.0%	1
Aversa	1.0%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>17</b>

<b>5. Country of citizenship</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Syria	94.7%	108
Iraq	0.9%	1
Lebanon	0.9%	1
Palestine	3.5%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>3</b>

<b>6. Marital status</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Single/unmarried	31.8%	35
Married	54.5%	60
In a relationship	2.7%	3
Widow	1.8%	2
Divorced/separated	6.4%	7
No response	2.7%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>

<b>7. Are you here with your family?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
No	16.2%	18
Yes. in part	30.6%	34
Yes. with all of them	52.3%	58
No response	0.9%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>6</b>

<b>8. If yes, with whom?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Only my partner	12.9%	11
Partner and children	62.4%	53
Only my children	14.1%	12
No response	10.6%	9
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>32</b>

<b>9. What is your current legal status?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	

I have a residence permit	60.0%	66
I am awaiting the issue of a residence permit	34.6%	38
I have never had a residence permit	3.6%	4
No response	1.8%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>

<b>10. Level of education</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
No formal diploma	6.4%	7
Elementary school	26.6%	29
Middle school	22.0%	24
High school	15.6%	17
College degree	27.5%	30
I don't know	0.9%	1
No response	0.9%	1
Other (which?)	0.0%	0
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>8</b>

<b>11. Number of years of education</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
0	1.0%	1
2	1.0%	1
3	1.0%	1
4	1.0%	1
5	5.9%	6
6	11.8%	12
7	6.9%	7
8	7.8%	8

9	14.7%	15
10	4.9%	5
11	1.0%	1
12	6.9%	7
13	4.9%	5
14	5.9%	6
15	4.9%	5
16	12.7%	13
17	4.9%	5
18	1.0%	1
20	2.0%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>15</b>

<b>12. What was your profession before leaving?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
8. Business owner/Manager	4.7%	3
7. Intellectual, scientific and highly specialized professions	28.1%	18
6. Technical work	12.5%	8
5. Executive office work	4.7%	3
4. Skilled worker in commercial activities and services	17.2%	11
3. Craftsmen, workers and specialized farmers	17.2%	11
2. Plant operators, fixed and mobile machinery workers, vehicle drivers	0.0%	0
1. Unskilled worker	3.1%	2
Unemployed / student	12.5%	8
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>

<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>53</b>
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*n.b.* Professions reclassified according to the nomenclature and classification of the professional units designated by the Italian National Institute of Statistics

<b>13. Religion</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Catholic	7.1%	8
Muslim	83.9%	94
Orthodox. Coptic	1.8%	2
Protestant	0.9%	1
Nothing	2.7%	3
No response	3.6%	4
Other (which?)	0.0%	0
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>5</b>

<b>14. How did you find the identification process for the Humanitarian Corridors program, before being chosen?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very difficult	12.7%	14
Difficult	18.2%	20
Medium difficult	32.7%	36
Easy	16.4%	18
Very easy	13.6%	15
No response	6.4%	7
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>

<b>15. Did the information and orientation that you were given before leaving</b>		
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<b>allow you to acquire useful skills and develop a positive attitude?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very little	22.5%	25
A little	20.7%	23
Enough	13.5%	15
A lot	18.9%	21
Perfectly well	13.5%	15
No response	10.8%	12
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>6</b>

<b>16. How much did you know about Italy before leaving?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very little	37.6%	41
A little	33.9%	37
Enough	11.9%	13
A lot	11.9%	13
Perfectly well	0.9%	1
No response	3.7%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>8</b>

<b>17. How did you feel when they told you you were leaving?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very sad	7.3%	8
Sad	1.8%	2
Neither sad nor happy	23.6%	26
Happy	30.9%	34
Very happy	34.6%	38
No response	1.8%	2

<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>

<b>18. Of your belongings, what could you bring with you?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Almost nothing	23.9%	26
Few things	59.6%	65
Almost everything	9.2%	10
Everything I had	5.5%	6
No response	1.8%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>8</b>

<b>19. Had you ever been out of your country before leaving?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	85.0%	91
No	13.1%	14
No response	1.9%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>10</b>

<b>20. If yes, in which country were you?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Lebanon	93.7%	74
Syria	3.8%	3
Spain	1.3%	1
Turkey	1.3%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>40</b>

<b>21. For what reason?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	

Work	8.3%	5
Study	8.3%	5
Tourism	0.0%	0
No response	5.0%	3
Other (which?)	78.4%	47
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>57</b>

<b>21b. For what reason? Specify another...</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
<i>War</i>	66.7%	40
<i>Asylum request</i>	8.3%	5
<i>Poor health</i>	1.7%	1
<i>Conference</i>	1.7%	1
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>78.4%</b>	<b>47</b>
Work	8.3%	5
Study	8.3%	5
Tourism	0.0%	0
No response	5.0%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>57</b>

<b>22. Before you arrived, what kind of conditions did you expect to find in Italy?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
I had no expectations	13.9%	15
I had few expectations	22.2%	24
I had a good amount of expectations	39.8%	43
I had extensive expectations	14.8%	16
No response	9.3%	10
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>108</b>

<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>9</b>
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<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>
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<b>23. The people who work for the Humanitarian Corridors program were...</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Almost absent	1.9%	2
Too little present	11.3%	12
Present enough	19.8%	21
Very present	35.9%	38
Extremely present	24.5%	26
No response	6.6%	7
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>11</b>

<b>26. When you arrived in Italy, you felt...?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very sad	9.0%	10
Sad	7.2%	8
Neither sad nor happy	26.1%	29
Happy	28.8%	32
Very happy	27.0%	30
No response	1.8%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>6</b>

<b>24. Did you feel supported and assisted in all the phases of departure?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
No. not at all	0.9%	1
No. not enough	13.1%	14
Enough	18.7%	20
Yes. very	28.0%	30
Yes. extremely	35.5%	38
No response	3.7%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>10</b>

<b>27. Have you applied for international protection?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	88.3%	98
No	9.9%	11
No response	1.8%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>6</b>

<b>25. Did you have personal motivational interviews before leaving?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	92.7%	102
No	5.5%	6
No response	1.8%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>

<b>28. Were you adequately supported for this process?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	88.6%	93
No	6.7%	7
No response	4.7%	5
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>12</b>

<b>29. With respect to the expectations you had before leaving, today you feel...?</b>		
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Answer Choices	Responses	
Very disappointed	21.8%	24
Disappointed	10.9%	12
Neither disappointed nor satisfied	24.6%	27
Satisfied	20.9%	23
Very satisfied	9.1%	10
No response	12.7%	14
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>7</b>

<b>30. Rate from 1 (the lowest value) to 5 (the highest value) the sensitivity shown by following institutions:</b>								
	1	2	3	4	5	Total		W.A.
Church services / Churches	7.7%	12.8%	14.1%	23.1%	42.3%	100.0%	78	3.8
Associations	18.5%	10.8%	13.9%	26.2%	30.8%	100.0%	65	3.4
Labor unions	12.8%	4.3%	25.5%	14.9%	42.6%	100.0%	47	3.7
School	14.1%	5.6%	19.7%	14.1%	46.5%	100.0%	71	3.7
Healthcare system	9.1%	15.2%	24.2%	27.3%	24.2%	100.0%	66	3.4
Prov. employment								
Offices	41.9%	9.3%	16.3%	14.0%	18.6%	100.0%	43	2.6
Region	20.5%	11.4%	27.3%	18.2%	22.7%	100.0%	44	3.1
Municipality	5.2%	15.5%	17.2%	27.6%	34.5%	100.0%	58	3.7
Province	6.8%	15.9%	27.3%	15.9%	34.1%	100.0%	44	3.6
Police headquarters	4.4%	11.8%	13.2%	22.1%	48.5%	100.0%	68	4.0
Territorial Commission	2.0%	4.0%	20.0%	16.0%	58.0%	100.0%	50	4.2
<b>Answered</b>								<b>84</b>
<b>Skipped</b>								<b>33</b>

<b>31. According to you, in your family, who is having the hardest time?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Spouse/Partner	26.6%	25

Sibling	10.6%	10
Children	16.0%	15
Grandchildren	2.1%	2
Nobody	24.5%	23
No response	20.2%	19
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>23</b>

<b>32. After the first contact with Italian society, you feel...?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Rejected	1.9%	2
Isolated	9.5%	10
Neither isolated nor welcomed	38.1%	40
Welcomed	30.5%	32
Integrated	9.5%	10
No response	10.5%	11
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>12</b>

<b>33. How safe do you feel in Italy?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Not at all	5.7%	6
A little	9.5%	10
Enough	25.7%	27
Very safe	29.5%	31
Extremely safe	27.6%	29
No response	1.9%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>12</b>

<b>34. How did the staff of the Humanitarian Corridors help you cope with all the</b>		
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<b>needs of your new life in Italy (hospitals, medicine, schooling for children, work, et cetera)?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Not at all	17.6%	19
Not much	1.8%	2
Enough	15.7%	17
Well	25.0%	27
Very well	34.3%	37
No response	5.6%	6
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>9</b>

<b>35. If you could, and if it was possible, would you go home?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes. immediately	15.7%	16
Yes. in a while	7.8%	8
I don't know	21.6%	22
No	44.1%	45
No response	10.8%	11
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>15</b>

<b>36. Do you have relatives or friends in other parts of Italy?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	49.5%	52
No	47.6%	50
No response	2.9%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>12</b>

<b>37. Do you have relatives or friends in other parts of Europe?</b>		
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Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	82.9%	87
No	15.2%	16
No response	1.9%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>12</b>

<b>38. If yes, do you want to join them some day?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	45.8%	38
No	32.5%	27
Maybe	16.9%	14
No response	4.8%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>34</b>

<b>39. How is the Italian society where you live now, with respect to that of your home of origin?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Completely different	21.6%	22
Very different	23.3%	24
A little different	37.9%	39
Similar	10.7%	11
The same	1.9%	2
No response	4.8%	5
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>14</b>

<b>40. In communicating with neighbors, you encounter...?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Great difficulty	4.8%	5

Difficulty	10.7%	11
Some difficulty	30.1%	31
Ease	29.1%	30
Great ease	14.6%	15
No response	10.7%	11
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14</b>

Very bad	9.3%	8
Bad	7.0%	6
Neither bad nor good	15.1%	13
Good	39.5%	34
Very good	24.4%	21
No response	4.7%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31</b>

<b>41. Do you have Italian friends (other than your regular social workers) that you feel you can call in times of need?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	44.8%	47
No	52.4%	55
No response	2.8%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>

<b>44. Since you arrived, has your family enrolled in Italian language courses?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	78.4%	69
No	17.1%	15
No response	4.5%	4
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29</b>

<b>42. Here in Italy have you found a religious community, and can you observe your faith as you wish to?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Not really	13.5%	13
Somewhat	13.5%	13
Enough	22.9%	22
A lot	24.0%	23
Totally	9.4%	9
No response	16.7%	16
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>21</b>

<b>45. Do you find it useful to learn the Italian language?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	91.8%	78
No	4.7%	4
I don't know	1.2%	1
No response	2.3%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32</b>

<b>43. How do you find the Italian healthcare system?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	

<b>46. Since you arrived, have you enrolled in courses for job orientation and training?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	25.6%	22
No	66.3%	57

No response	8.1%	7
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>31</b>

<b>47. Is finding work a priority for you?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	84.5%	71
No	13.1%	11
No response	2.4%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>33</b>

<b>48. Are you currently working?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	20.7%	17
No	76.8%	63
No response	2.5%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>35</b>

<b>49. If you are working, what job do you do?</b>		
Respondents	Responses	
Freelance artist	10.0%	1
Agricultural work	10.0%	1
University student	10.0%	1
Assistant chef	10.0%	1
Apprenticeship	10.0%	1
Pizza restaurant apprenticeship	10.0%	1
Facilitator	20.0%	2
Housewife	10.0%	1
Cook	10.0%	1

<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>107</b>

<b>50. If you are working, how satisfied are you?</b>							
	Not at all	Little	Enough	Very	Total	W.a.	
On the level of pay	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%	14	2.4
On the level of social prestige	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%	12	2.8
On the level of correspondence with education and professional experience	23.1%	23.1%	30.8%	23.1%	100.0%	13	2.5
<b>Answered</b>						<b>14</b>	
<b>Skipped</b>						-	<b>103</b>

<b>51. How did you find your current job?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
On my own	23.1%	3
With the help of the Humanitarian Corridors program	69.2%	9
With the help of a relative, friend, or someone from my country	0.0%	0
With the help of Italian friends or foreigners from other countries	7.7%	1
Through a public service	0.0%	0
Through a temporary employment agency	0.0%	0
Through a cooperative	0.0%	0
Through a volunteer organization	0.0%	0
Through an internship, training course, et cetera.	0.0%	0
Other (specify)	0.0%	0
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13</b>

<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>104</b>
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<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>51</b>

<b>52. Which of these assets do you own?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Computer/Tablet	33.7%	28
Television	48.2%	40
Satellite dish	9.6%	8
Car	1.2%	1
Motorcycle/moped	3.6%	3
Bicycle	22.9%	19
Cellular/Smartphone/iPhone	80.7%	67
No response	3.6%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>34</b>

<b>54b. With how many family members (excluding yourself) do you share your room?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
1	12.1%	7
2	25.9%	15
3	20.7%	12
4	10.3%	6
5	15.5%	9
6	12.1%	7
9	3.4%	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>58</b>

<b>53. Are you satisfied with your living conditions?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very little	13.9%	11
Little	15.2%	12
Enough	22.8%	18
Very	27.8%	22
Perfectly	11.4%	9
No response	8.9%	7
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	-	<b>38</b>

<b>54c. With how many non-family individuals do you share your room?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
1	62.5%	5
3	12.5%	1
5	12.5%	1
6	12.5%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8</b>

<b>54. With whom do you share the room where you live?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
With family members	86.6%	58
With non-family	11.9%	8
Family members and non-family	1.5%	1

<b>54d. With how many people in total (excluding yourself) do you share your room?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	
3+3	100.0%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>55. Is it a priority for you to find self-contained living quarters?</b>		
Answer Choices	Responses	

Yes	90.0%	72
No	2.5%	2
No response	7.5%	6
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37</b>

Going back to Syria	3.1%	2
Not reuniting the family	3.1%	2
Other (dog. faith. unsuccessful children)	4.6%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52</b>

<b>56. Can you express in one word (Italian or English) what you lack the most at the moment?</b>		
Answers	Responses	
Work	55.0%	33
Family/Mother/Relatives	18.3%	11
Physical and psychological safety	11.7%	7
Living quarters	8.3%	5
Italian language	3.3%	2
Education	3.3%	2
Many things	1.7%	1
Nothing	1.7%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>

<b>58. Can you express in one word (Italian or English) what you hope for the future?</b>		
Answers	Responses	
Work (and education)	41.5%	27
Peace. happiness and success	38.5%	25
A home	7.7%	5
Health	4.6%	3
Italian citizenship	4.6%	3
Other	3.1%	2
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52</b>

<b>57. Can you express in one word (Italian or English) what you are most afraid of?</b>		
Answers	Responses	
Not finding work / unemployment	43.1%	28
The future	16.9%	11
Little or no fear	12.3%	8
War	4.6%	3
Not learning the Italian language / not integrating	4.6%	3
Not having a house	4.6%	3
No home. no work	3.1%	2

<b>59. Is there anything you would like to add or anything else you want for your life right now?</b>		
Answers	Responses	
Thanks	58.1%	18
Reunite the family	12.9%	4
Gay rights	6.5%	2
Home	6.5%	2
Education	6.5%	2
Work	3.2%	1
Health	3.2%	1
Other	3.2%	1
<b>Answered</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>86</b>

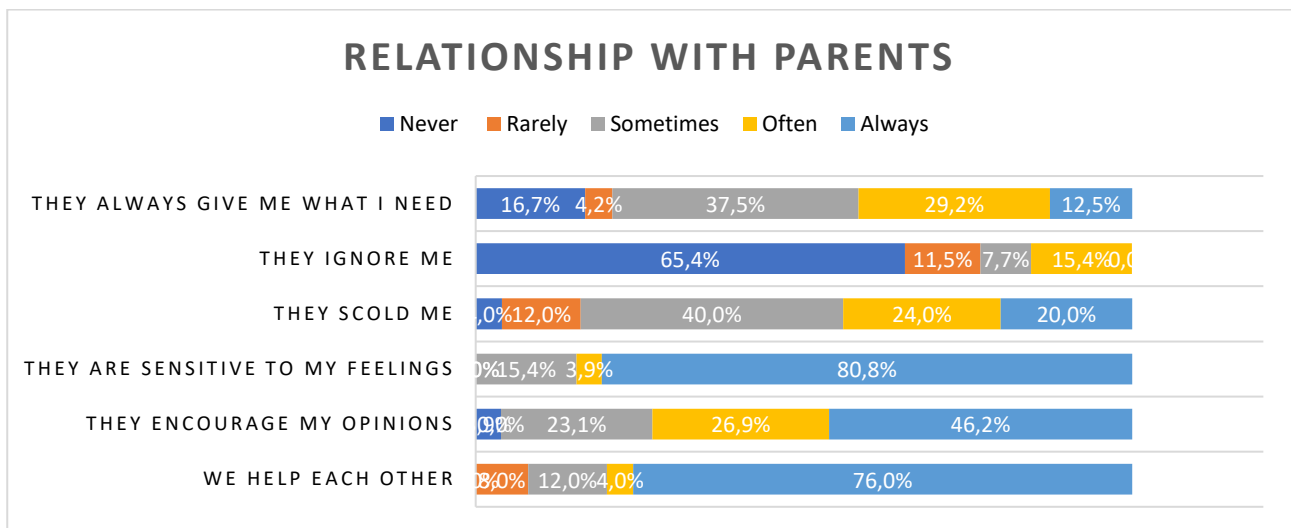
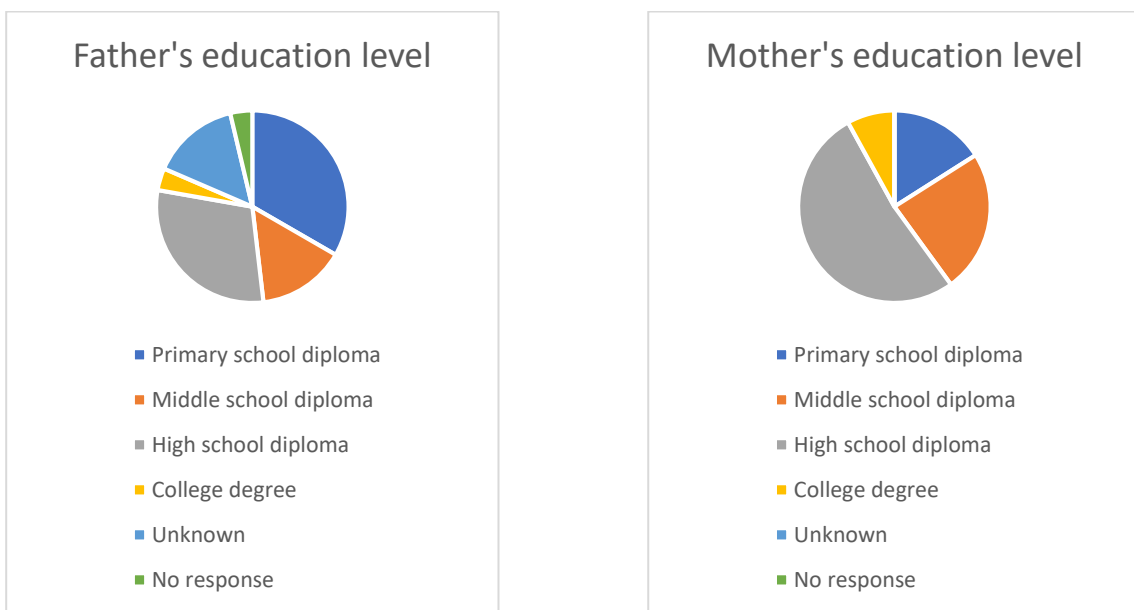


### 3. A focus on the developmental integration pathways of teenagers

The sample consists of 27 subjects, 16 boys and 11 girls, between 10 and 18 years of age. The group's average age is around 14 years. Also in this case the majority of the sample (over 96%) is made up of young people of Syrian origin, who arrived in Italy thanks to the Humanitarian Corridors program between 2017 and 2019. Currently the interviewees reside in Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, Lazio, Emilia Romagna and Liguria. From a religious point of view, 24 declare themselves to be Muslims, 2 Catholics and one non-specific. 100% of the sample attend school.

#### The Parents

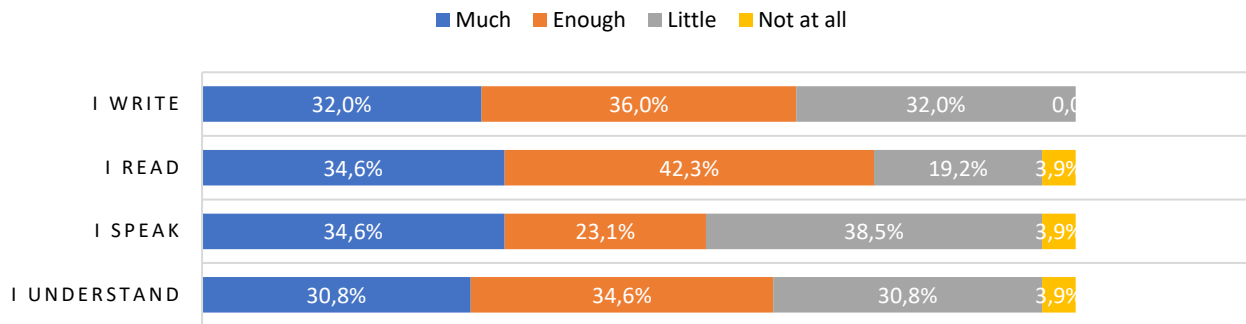
The graphs show a fair level of education which – interestingly - is slightly higher in the case of mothers.



The clear prevalence of the “always” repetition of responses such as “are sensitive to my feelings” or “we help each other” highlights a solid hold on family ties. This hypothesis is confirmed by the equally clear prevalence of "never" to an attitude of ignorance and indifference.

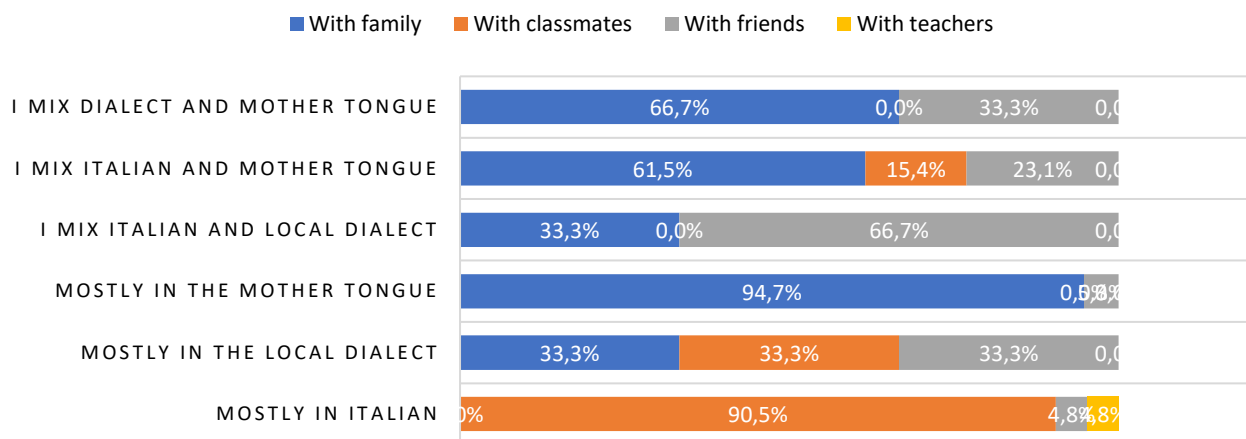


## ITALIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS

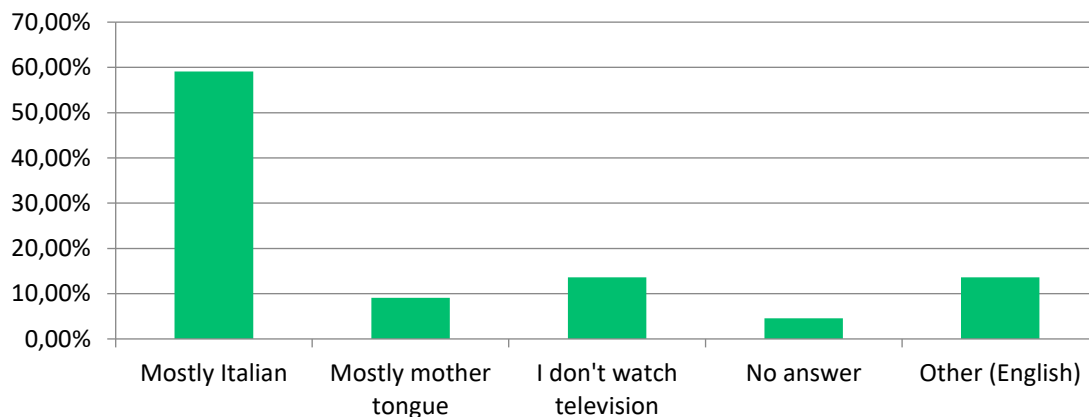


Overall, the self-assessment of language ability reflects a satisfactory level, even if it appears more passive than active. This indicates the tendency to speak “little,” more than other frequency ratings. The culturally interesting and linguistically predictable data of a *mélange* between Italian, mother tongue and dialects remains. Television remains a primary vehicle for learning the Italian language.

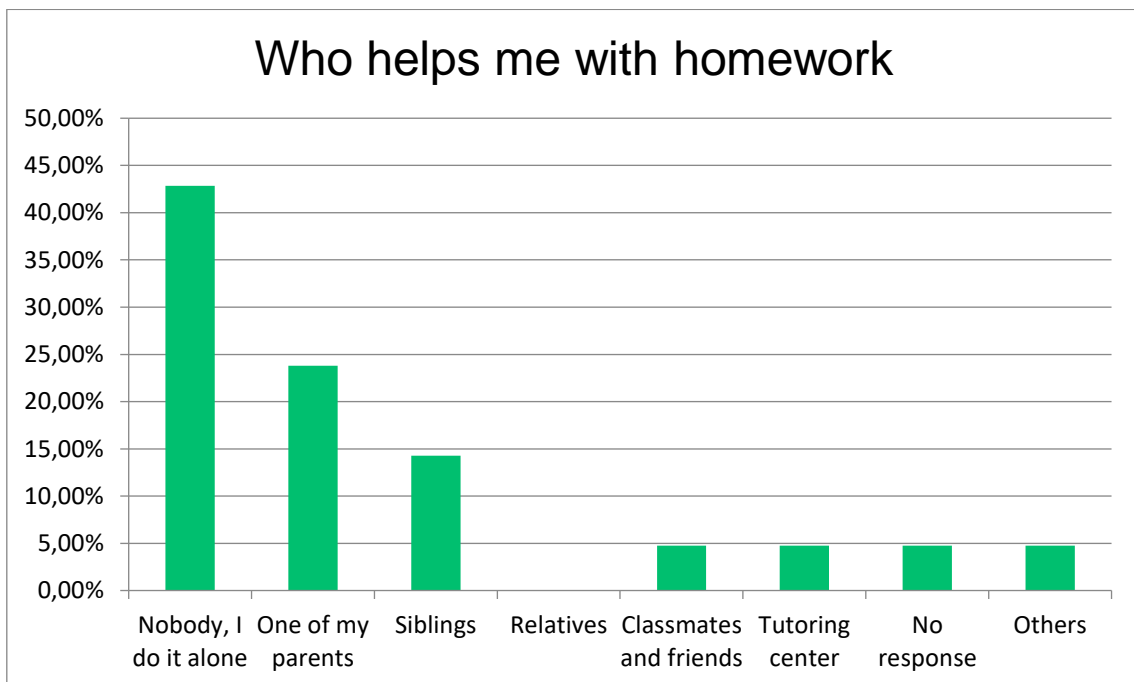
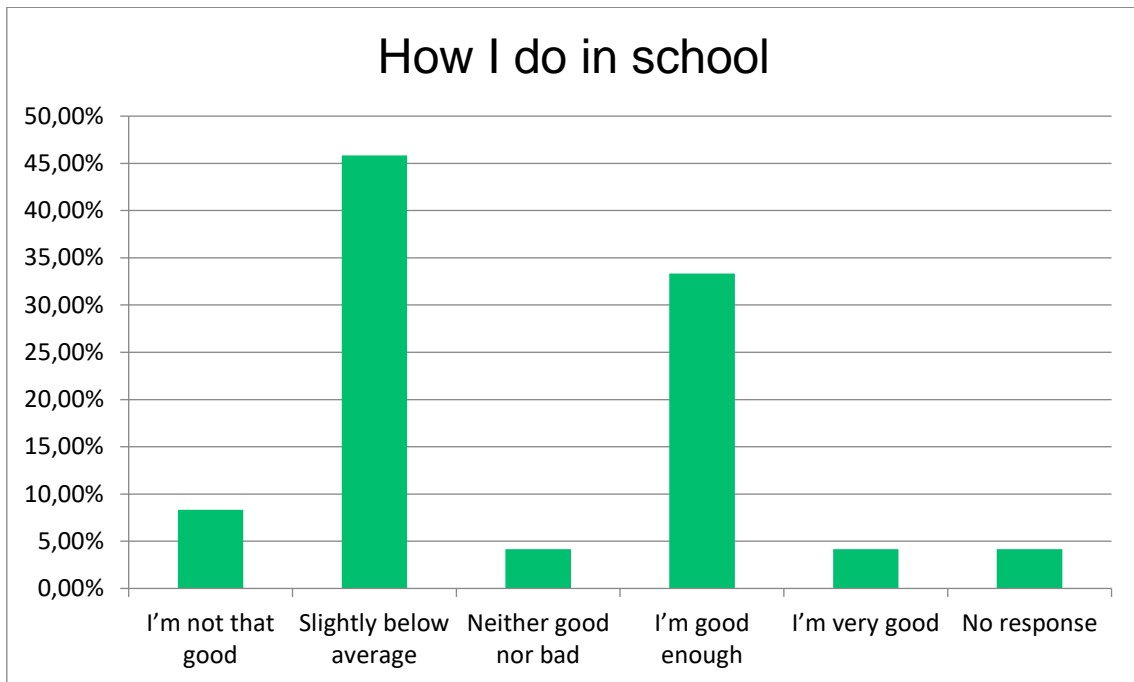
## HOW I NORMALLY SPEAK

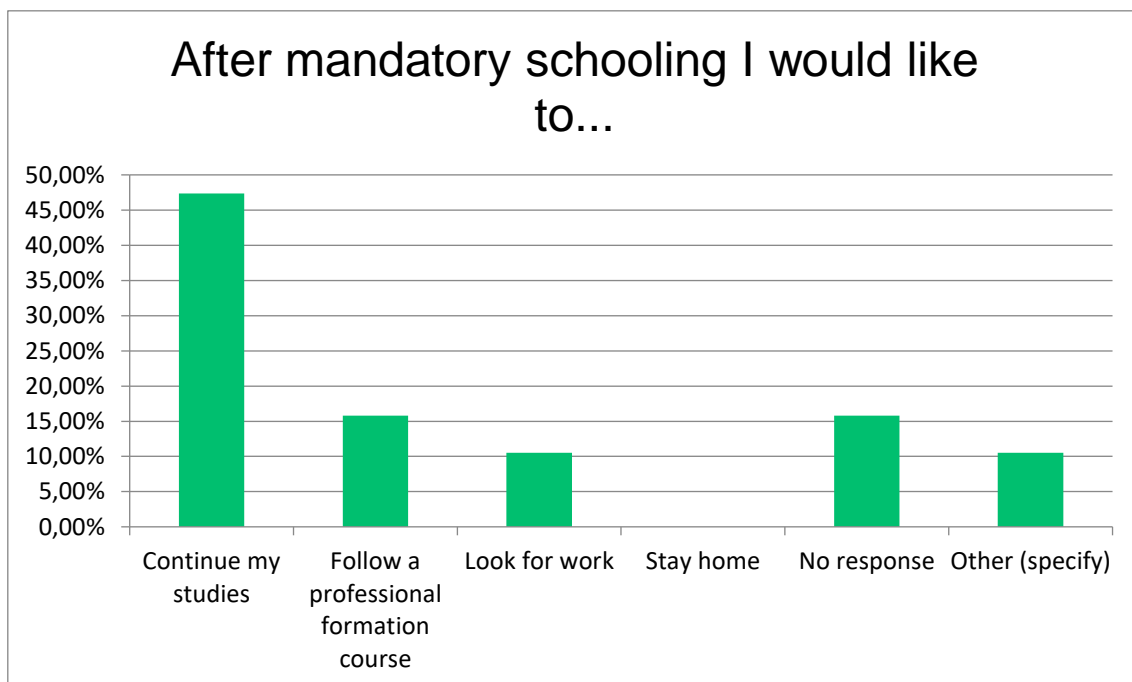
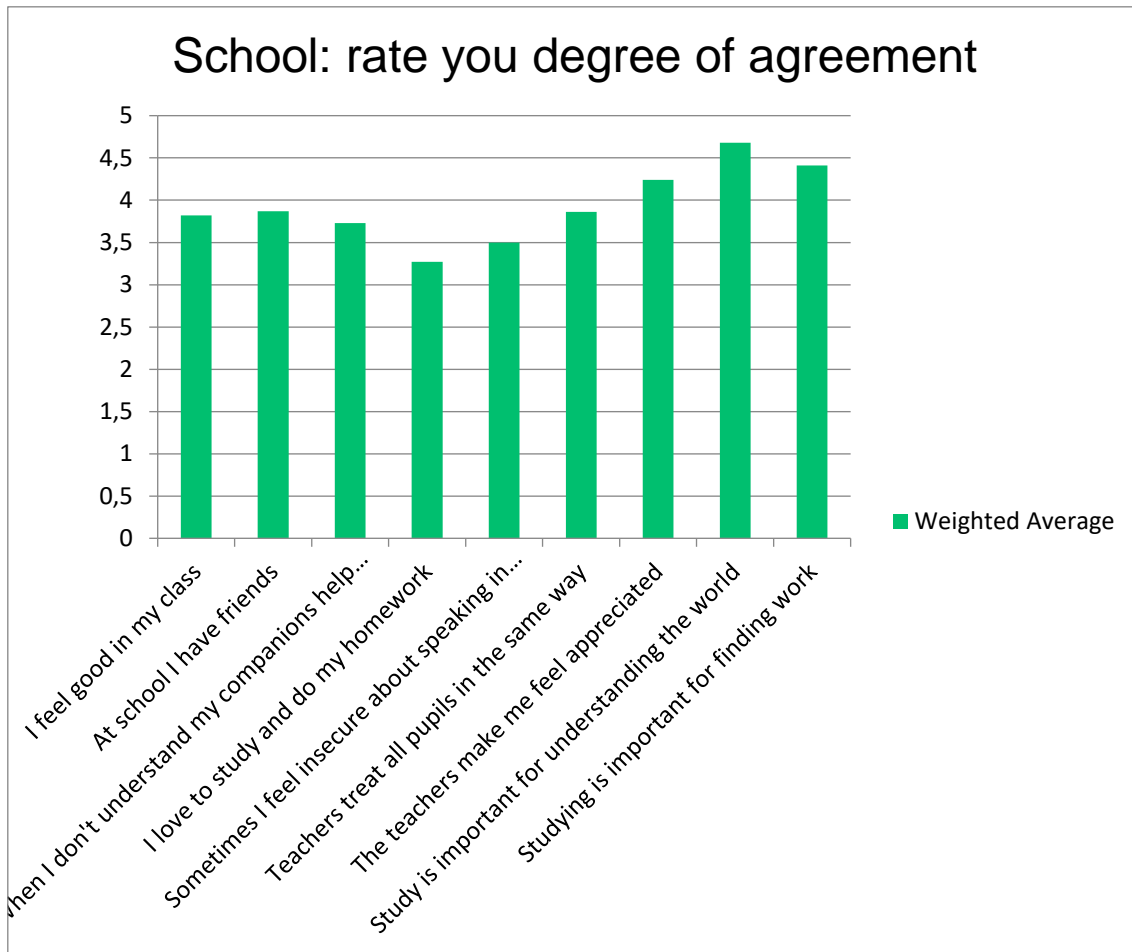


## In which language do I watch the television



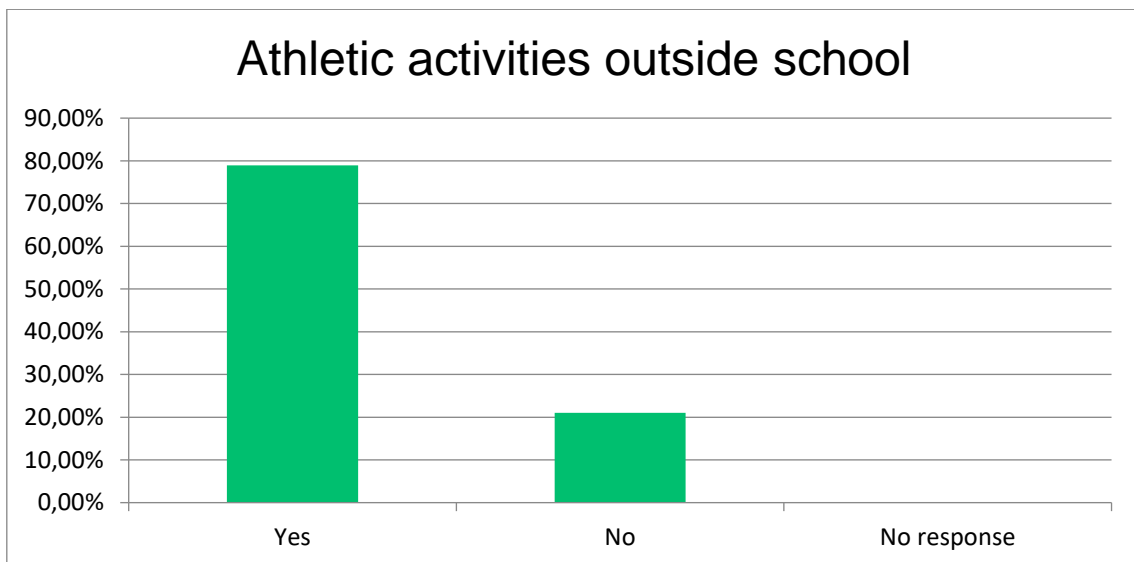
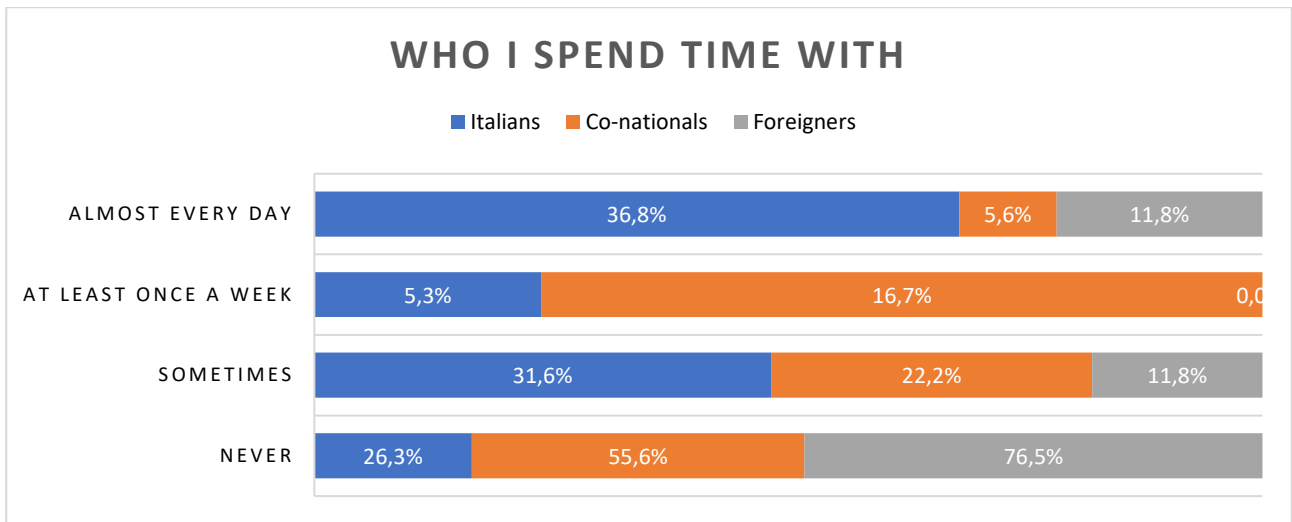
The average academic achievement is encouraging. Italian school is therefore confirmed as one of the main areas for training, integration and social inclusion of foreign children. It certainly affects the balance between family contribution and individual commitment in carrying out these tasks. Also very important is the perception of welcome in the class group in which friendships and helping bonds are created. The clear-cut nature of the school experience is also expressed in the intention to continue studying even after the achievement of compulsory education.

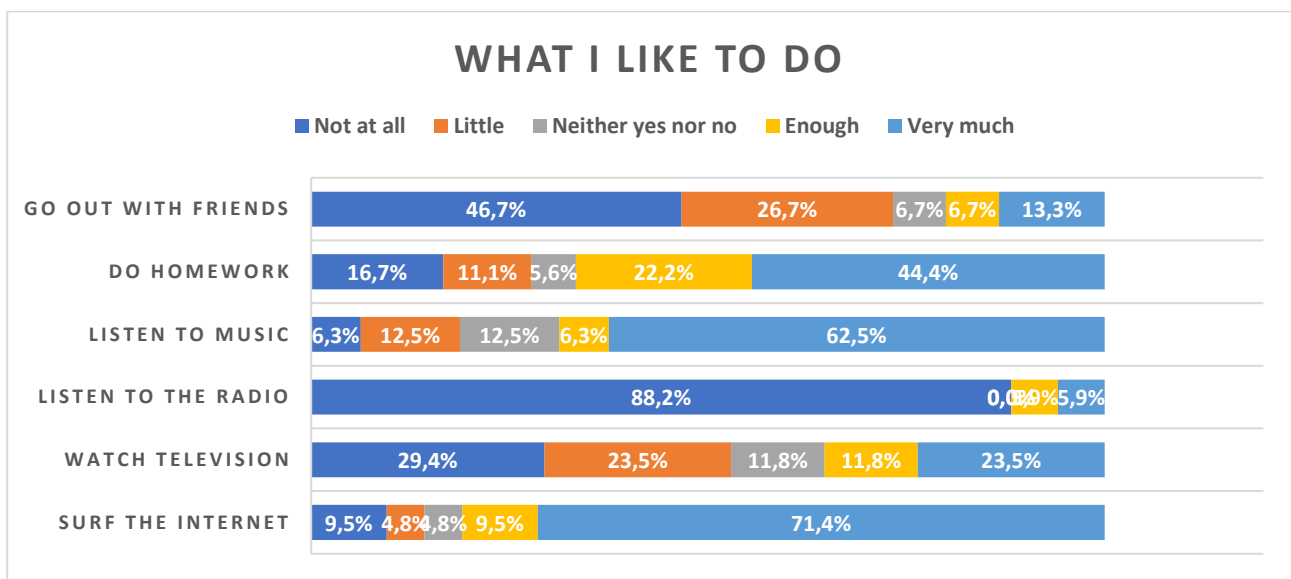
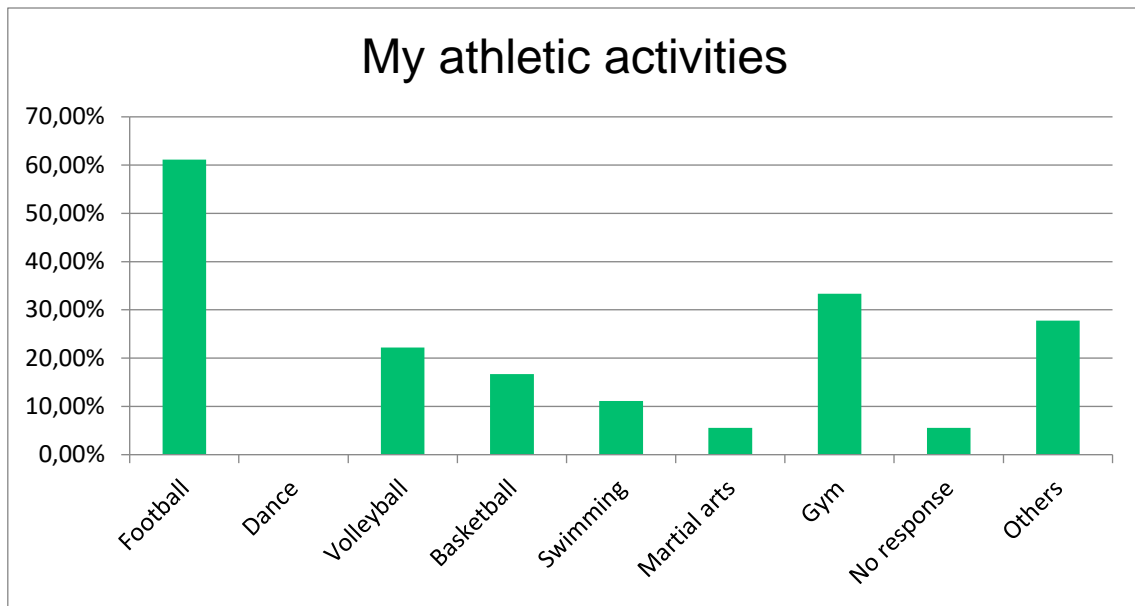




The positive school experience has a positive impact on the entire integration process and—we believe—on that of the respective families. Students who are participants of the Humanitarian

Corridors program and well-integrated in school have the advantage of stable social groups and friendships equally composed of Italians and other foreign children. The high index of sports practice is an additional important index of integration, especially when referring to girls.





## Conclusions

Ultimately, we analyzed the results deriving from these two different analysis methodologies, arriving at fairly clear conclusions that we itemize here.

1. The participants of the Humanitarian Corridors program endeavor to establish themselves in Italy with an attitude oriented towards trust in the future, positively inclined to dialogue and multi/intercultural exchange, while at the same time trying to keep traditional cultural and religious ties alive. Radicalism is experienced with suspicion if not with an opposing attitude by the absolute majority of the sample.

2. Teenagers were able to speed up their integration process mainly thanks to school and its ability to motivate them to study, even in a context very distant from the original one.
3. Subsequently, we observe a process of assimilation whereby the young people who have benefited from the Humanitarian Corridors program tend to look more and more like their Italian peers, to adopt their lifestyle and their modes of interacting.
4. Thanks to effectively multi-ethnic and multi/intercultural schools, Italy has so far avoided the “ghettoization” effect, promoting meeting and equal relational exchange between Italian children and immigrants.
5. Therefore, the Humanitarian Corridors programs are confirmed as a best practice, not only from the point of view of the safety of the participants and of the Italians in the departure and arrival phases, but also from the point of view of integration processes, demonstrated over time to create a significantly productive, diverse social fabric on a national level.

#### 4. Through the eyes of witnesses: the semistructured interviews

*“The Humanitarian Corridors program allows people who come from a situation of serious vulnerability to start a new life, build their future, and integrate. It is an Italian project, and as such it highlights Italy as a country that helps and protects human life anywhere, especially in vulnerable situations. A country which is anchored to the great values of our Constitution.”*

Emanuela C. Del Re, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

The following chapter analyses the results of a series of qualitative interviews aimed at highlighting key aspects and experiences of the project, and possible proposals for a new approach. Program participants, policymakers and journalists were involved in this activity from Piedmont to Sicily, across Veneto, Liguria, Lazio and Tuscany. All these people know the project well and were linked to it in various ways.

The participants' answers show some recurring elements that prove to be central in their experience, even if with different nuances.

The first of them is the problem of the Italian language.

Learning a new language is the main barrier during the first months in a new country. All guests realize that they need to complete the Italian learning process as soon as possible, and then move on to further challenges posed by their new life.

“At the beginning it was difficult because the language is very different. We were in a new country and we didn't know what we would do and what our life would be. But then everything was fine.”  
(Razan A., program participant)

Whether they participated in the program alone or as part of a family, the interviewees made a clear decision to invest in learning Italian, both to proceed in their integration process and, more generally, to fulfill their wish to be independent. The level of linguistic competence crucially influences the possibility of finding a job and the ability to integrate into the host community, meet new people, participate in public events, and interact with others.

Various elements affect the possibility of learning a language: on the one hand, the service offered (which in some cases did not immediately prove adequate because participants were assigned to non-homogeneous groups of Italian L2); on the other hand, the participants' ages and education levels. The younger the age and the higher the level of education, the quicker the learning process.

Within families, for example, the level is not always homogeneous and children generally show faster progress in comparison to their parents. Graduates or university students make use of personal tools and skills that support the study of the Italian language and accelerate the process.

The second recurring theme is the desire to enter the job market, both as an integration tool and a component of the autonomy process. This also applies to university students, since in Syria it was very common to work while studying at the university.

Although they appreciate the program approach, once in Italy all of them must face the harsh reality of entering the job market.

Reactions are different, but they all seem to indicate the same frustration: in some cases, participants had nursed the secret hope that their “status” as Syrian asylum seekers would make things much easier, in some other cases they feel responsibility toward their families and perceive every difficulty as a burden that postpones the realization of their dream.

“My language skills are a bit lower than my children’s. My children have improved a lot thanks to the lessons, and they are still improving, now that they have a job. I have a lot on my mind, I worry about many things, and I struggle with the language.” (Mohammed J., program participant)

In general, the participants are strongly motivated and ready to take on any job, postponing to a later stage the specific search for the one closest to their skills or the one they used to have in their own country or in Lebanon.

With regard to the level of hospitality perceived in the host community, they unanimously report feeling well-accepted in Italy and do not perceive any form of racism. This aspect is particularly important since they directly or indirectly experienced racism in Lebanon, a transit country where anti-Syrian feeling has grown over the years.

“There was strong religious racism in Lebanon: between Christians and Muslims, between Orthodox and Catholic Christians, between Maronite and Catholic Christians... a lot of racism. Moreover, there was a lot of racism against Syrians in general because of historical and political events that have taken place between the two nations....” (Habib AT, program participant)

Only in one case did a person clearly express the intention to go home once the conflict was over and put into practice what he has studied here at the university. Almost all participants see their future in Italy, albeit keeping an eye on when happens in their country.

“I love it here, but that’s my country. Here we have the opportunities, here we have freedom of speech and the chance to study, now I’m here... but... ‘You can’t take the nose off your face,’ as we say. If one day everything is quieter....” (Belal A., program participant)

Among the issues that emerged in the interviews with operators, the most significant is the problem of bureaucracy. They feel overwhelmed by having to mediate between the participants’ expectations and concerns and the Italian system which in no way facilitates the procedures that asylum seekers have to carry out.

“[...] Once they begin to understand how the ‘Italian system’ works, their questions express their concerns. They say: ok, now everything is fine, but what will become of us in two or three years, when the reception period ends? Many are elderly people, and not all of them have a background that allows them to be trained and have the perspective of a stable working future... I would say that they are concerned about the general precarious situation that all Italians and foreigners presently have to face. They’d like an accommodation, a promise for a safe future, but no one can give them that.” (Farida N., cultural mediator)

Following the conversion into law of the first Decreto Sicurezza (Security Decree), the situation has worsened significantly.

“After the security decree has entered into force, things have become more difficult for asylum seekers, especially with regard to civil registration. From asylum application to obtaining the status and then the electronic residence permit, several months pass. During these months, depending on how the security decree is implemented by the municipalities, people do not have the right to residence and are deprived of a series of rights. For example, at school level there were some cases of school enrollment without the possibility of being exempted from the meal fees because the children’s families did not have the residence. So we had families with three or four children for which the school requested a full payment of the meal fees as if they had a very high income, actually denying the service provision. At healthcare level, we have the example of a disabled child in a wheelchair: he recently obtained the residence, in the month of February, but we still can’t change



his wheelchair. He is in a totally inadequate wheelchair but, since he did not have the residence, he was not entitled to have a better one without paying for it. The price is totally out of reach, since this wheelchair costs an estimate 4,500 euros.” (Chiara C., operator)

However, there are some sectors, such as schools, where the goodwill of all actors involved brings about excellent results which benefit the whole family:

“School is undoubtedly the place that has given me the most satisfaction from this point of view. Children and youth have always been well received; I have had the opportunity to meet headmasters, teachers and school staff who are always very welcoming and helpful. School is undoubtedly the greatest vehicle of integration for these people.” (Maria Grazia K., operator)

On a more general level, operators, local administrators and observers agree that a crucial role is played in the integration project (both of individuals and families) by the social context, the capacity to respond in terms of services, the network that the host community is able to guarantee by involving the various diasporas.

“In our municipality, the social and associative fabric is very active thanks to a public-private pact that involves also the Prefecture of Ragusa and has developed protocols of understanding. The House of Cultures, for example, has promoted reception projects for the participants of the Humanitarian Corridors and actively collaborates with our social services, encouraging integration in schools, interacting and stimulating voluntary work. [...] We have joined the SIPROIMI network and we are waiting for the September time window. Coordination and efficient direction will be essential because reception is important, but integration is important as well.” (Caterina Riccotti, councillor of the Municipality of Scicli)

“I believe that it is important to establish an even more effective mechanism for linking up with second reception projects and trying to guarantee the possibility to remain on the same territory. In addition, we could work for a stronger link between the new families and those who arrived earlier, or in any case those belonging to the Syrian diaspora” (Cecilia D., operator).

“If the Corridor program could be integrated as much as possible with the SIPROIMI system, i.e. with the national system (I know that a lot of efforts are going in that direction), we could promote the passage toward something more structural and aspire to higher numbers.” (Annalisa Camilli, journalist)

Camilli—a journalist specializing in issues related to migration policies—reiterates the issue of including higher numbers of participants, highlighting this as a “challenge” that the program will have to face in order to establish which direction to go in, in order to strengthen its position as an integral structural instrument.

“The question is how to achieve higher numbers and make it a project that has a continuity. Continuity means developing a method, giving a perspective both to the people in Lebanon (or in the countries of origin) and in the host communities.”

However, achieving higher numbers is also closely linked to the capacity of civil society to bear the total costs of the services offered, in some cases for very long periods of time. Only very few organizations can make such a structured program stable over the years.

“We need to spread the experience of humanitarian corridors (which has already been replicated, although with small numbers, in some European countries) in Europe and make it a European practice

driven by Italy. [...] If it were to become a European model, we could think of a budget line with specific funds that could make the process more agile and perhaps even increase the numbers....”  
(Emanuela C. Del Re, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)

Reflecting on a possible better integration with second reception facilities, possibly with a review of the duration of temporary holding in the Humanitarian Corridor program, and understanding how to access financial instruments to cover part of the necessary budget, could represent a possible strategy for enhancing the program and recruiting more civil society actors interested in proposing it.

## 5. The Method of Photolanguage

The main methodological challenge was the difficulty of communicating directly, easily, and quickly with the target group, as well as tackling complex and delicate issues such as ethical attitudes and the individuals' propensity for integration or, conversely, having been exposed to radical Islamist propaganda.

It therefore seemed to us that the most suitable tool to build our research was that of photolanguage, a technique now scientifically accredited also for research programs of psychological and behavioral analysis.<sup>27</sup>

Photolanguage was developed in 1968 in Lyon, France by educator Pierre Babin, psychosociologist Alain Baptiste, and psychologist Claire Belisle. They decided to use a series of images during a session with teenagers to help them express themselves. Using this method led them to use the photo as a means of self-disclosure, as they spoke about themselves indirectly and were not distracted by facial expressions of their listeners. Due to the positive results, it was decided to engage this method also for adult education, and thematic photo dossiers were officially published. In France a 1971 law that extended lifelong learning to the whole active adult population pushed the photolanguage initiative forward.<sup>28</sup>

Various studies clarify how and why the photolanguage methodology reveals to the researcher important and not always evident glimpses of a person's life:

Since the 1960s, the Photolanguage tool has been used in various fields, from educational to clinical contexts. Evocative photographed images allow preconscious contents to emerge and for interlocutors to compare them with those of the group as a practice of self-and-other perception, orienting participants toward objectives such as the improvement of abstract and symbolic thinking...and the development of communicative-relational skills such as active listening, verbal expression, ...empathy, understanding of how others are represented...and the integration of different opinions in a group process.<sup>29</sup>

Using a qualified pool of experts including a political scientist, a photographer and a psychologist, we selected 5 sets of photographs strongly evocative of feelings and attitudes which in turn refer to particular "Emotional Spheres," which we have schematized according to the categories below:

- a) Nostalgia for "life before" emigration, with its rites related to food, leisure, and relationships
- b) A tendency towards radicalism, which is expressed in the appreciation of images of military personnel, weapons and parades by ISIS or associates
- c) Traditionalism, understood as a reference to behavioral models, values and lifestyles marked by the Islamic tradition, however, without inclinations of an extremist or fundamentalist type
- d) Dialogue, interpreted as an attitude toward meeting others
- e) Multiculturalism, as an attitude not only toward dialogue but also to the acceptance of different models and lifestyles, from clothing to family dynamics

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<sup>27</sup> Vacheret Claudine, Zurlo Maria Clelia, *Foto, gruppo e cura psichica: Il Fotolinguaggio come metodo psicodinamico di mediazione nei gruppi* (Limina), Liguori, Napoli, 2016; Zurlo Maria Clelia (ed.), *Gruppi a mediazione. Dispositivi ed esperienze*, Liguori, Napoli, 2017; Corbetta P., *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2014.

<sup>28</sup> Baptiste A., Belisle C., Pechenart J.M., Vacheret C., *Photolanguage. Une Méthode pour communiquer en groupe par la photo*, Les Editions d'Organisation, Parigi, 1997.

<sup>29</sup> Ballerini Nakaj, *Nuovi metodi e strumenti per l'orientamento professionale*, Università Cattolica di Milano, Online, scaricato il 18 aprile 2020.

- f) Fear, interpreted as a defensive attitude of closure and unease in reaction to scenes that refer to an undesirable and traumatic past
- g) Trust, understood as a positive outlook on the present reality

### **Administration of Image Sets**

During the initial phase of the course, a **photographic image test** was administered to introduce the participants to the Workshop for Active Citizens and anti-radicalization course.

The administrations took place completely anonymously.

**The goal is to analyze attitudes of refusal or acceptance** with respect to a series of images to which certain attitudes correspond.

The images are divided into five sets.

1. Set 1: 10 images;
1. Set 2: 11 images;
2. Set 3: 11 images;
3. Set 4: 9 images;
4. Set 5: 10 images.

For a total of **51 images (See detail in the attachment)**.

### **Emotional Spheres Referenced by Photographs**

Each photo refers to an Emotional Sphere which in turn suggests the following attitudes:

- *Tendency towards radicalism*
- *Traditionalism*
- *intercultural dialogue / multiculturalism*
- *Fear*
- *Trust*
- *Nostalgia*

#### **SET 1**

1. Bombed mosque. An evocative image of war and therefore connected to the Emotional Sphere of FEAR.
2. Bearded and smiling young man with traditional Islamic clothing. Attributable to the Emotional Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
3. Dramatic scene of a father rescuing a child from a clash with military. It references the Emotional Sphere of FEAR.
4. A young couple with a child. She wears a hijab. Emotional Sphere of TRUST.

5. Internet café outdoors with customers relaxing. It refers to the Emotional Sphere of NOSTALGIA.
6. Muslims in mass prayer. It refers to the Emotional Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
7. A veiled Arab woman sitting on the ground serenely feeding her baby. Emotional Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
8. A western dance hall with older couples dancing. Emotional Sphere of respect for MULTICULTURALISM.
9. A young smiling couple, she is veiled. Emotional Sphere of TRUST.
10. A Western-style fashion show. Emotional Sphere of respect for MULTICULTURALISM.

## SET 2

1. Cops in uniform. Given the difficult (if not violent) relationships with policing systems of their countries, we believe that this photo refers to the Emotional Sphere of FEAR.
2. Men in mosques chatting peacefully. Emotional Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
3. Smiling woman swimming in burkini. Paradoxical image that refers to the Emotional Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
4. Pope Francis giving a blessing. Photo that refers to the Emotional Sphere of MULTICULTURALISM.
5. Vote. A gesture that refers to the Emotional Sphere of TRUST.
6. Tattooed young man. Emotional Sphere of MULTICULTURALISM.
7. Barge of refugees awaiting rescue. Sphere of FEAR.
8. Young woman lying on the beach in a bikini, a sphere of MULTICULTURALISM.
9. Italian football match. Sphere of MULTICULTURALISM.
10. Two males hugging each other affectionately. Accepting this image means placing oneself in a value and behavioral sphere explicitly reflecting MULTICULTURALISM.
11. Women in niqabs on an Arab street. Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.

## SET 3

1. Bearded young man smiling. Sphere of TRADITIONALISM.
2. Ultra-Orthodox Jewish family. Accepting this image, given the Syrian political scenarios, is an expression of an attitude in the sphere of MULTICULTURALISM.
3. ISIS units. Sympathizing with this image highlights an inclination towards RADICALIST attitudes.
4. Qur'ans ostentatiously flaunted, more "brandished" than displayed. Tendency toward RADICALISM.

5. Veiled girls going to school wearing Western-style backpacks. Ordinary scene expressing TRUST.
6. Interreligious prayer, attitude of MULTICULTURALISM.
7. Political demonstration showing men with long beards and violent attitudes. Sharing the photo means accepting RADICALIST behavior.
8. People coming out of the mosque in Rome. TRADITIONALIST attitude.
9. Intercultural group of women. Explicitly MULTICULTURAL attitude.
10. Anti-Islamic manifesto. Those who accept it express a fear of Islam (perhaps Christians who have suffered persecution); those who reject it feel a sense of threat against their identity and therefore FEAR.
11. Woman behind the wheel of a showy Western-style car, MULTICULTURAL inclination.

#### SET 4

1. Two girls of evidently similar cultures embrace each other amicably. Image of TRUST.
2. Teens of different ethnic backgrounds embrace each other. MULTICULTURAL orientation.
3. Two children, one white and the other black, suggest an image strongly oriented towards MULTICULTURALISM.
4. Sellers of Arabic sweets and spices, image of NOSTALGIA.
5. Small-scale model of a ladder held in the hands, evoking TRUST.
6. Little girls swimming in the pool, displaying TRUST.
7. Veiled women out and about on a street, representing NOSTALGIA.
8. ISIS warrior with weapon in hand. A positive opinion on this photo, unless there is an error of interpretation, highlights a RADICALIST tendency.
9. Air bombardment, suggesting FEAR emotions.

#### SET 5

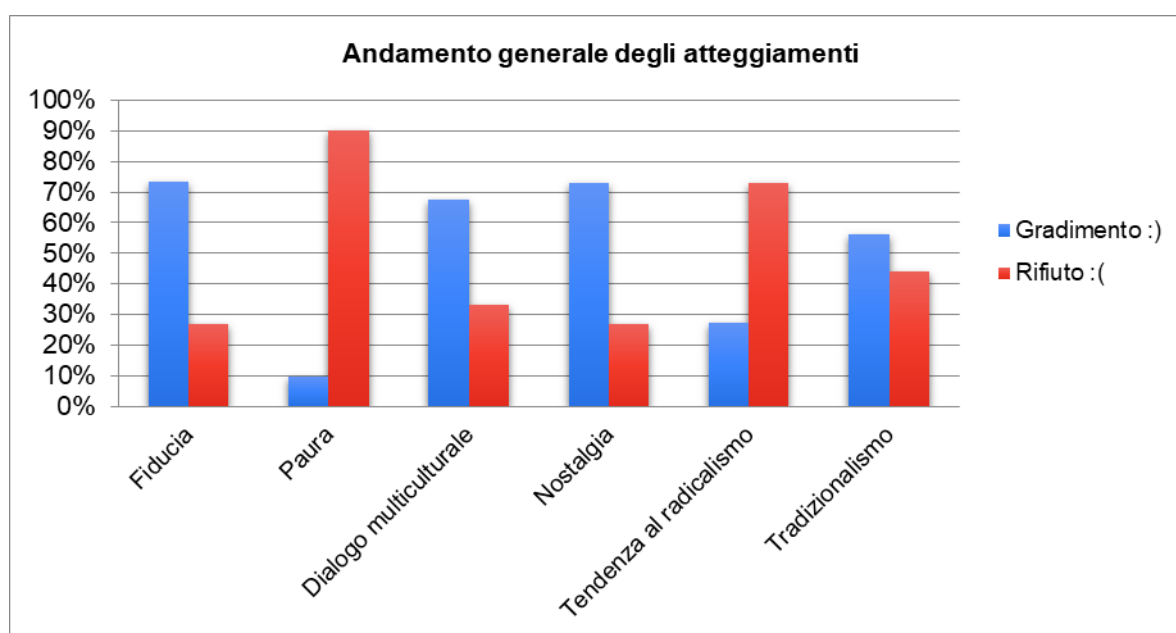
1. Veiled Muslim girls. The photo refers to TRADITIONALIST emotions.
2. A Muslim woman with the official Italian “tricolore” mayoral sash opens a municipal parade. Indicates a clear MULTICULTURAL ambiance.
3. Elderly people in a typical Middle Eastern shop refer to a NOSTALGIC attitude.
4. Women's soccer team, evoking MULTICULTURALITY.
5. Mosque with man praying, image referring to TRADITIONALIST orientations.
6. Group of young people taking a selfie, MULTICULTURAL image.
7. Female manager, evoking a progressive concept of women and the value of MULTICULTURALISM.
8. Western-style soldiers in wartime uniforms. The image evokes FEAR.
9. Meeting of young bearded Muslims dressed in traditional clothes. The image references a RADICALIST vision.
10. A little girl holding her teddy bear, referencing feelings of TRUST.

**130 people** took part in the administration of the five sets of images.

During the first day in **Turin**, **50 people** responded to the test, including 28 adults and 22 teenagers. On the second day of the workshop at the Methodist Evangelical Church in **Rome**, **22 adults** participated in the administration of the images. On the third day in **Milan**, **29 people** took part in the test. Finally, on the fourth and final day of the Workshop in **Scicli, Sicily**, **29 respondents** participated in the administration of the images.

From an initial graph of the answers, plentiful evidence emerges of a collective predisposition to **trust, dialogue, and nostalgia**; and **traditionalism** is understood as the conservation and preservation of traditional customs and habits. This understanding of traditionalism is derived from images of everyday life typical of the countries of origin, characterizing a traditional Islamic context that includes veiled women, large family celebrations, and attitudes aimed at preserving and defending traditional lifestyles.

Attitudes of rejection are instead found with respect to **fear** and **radicalism**.



#### GENERAL TREND IN ATTITUDES

Emotional Spheres: Trust, Fear, Multicultural Dialogue, Nostalgia, Tendency to Radicalism, and Traditionalism.

Blue: Agreement

Red: Rejection

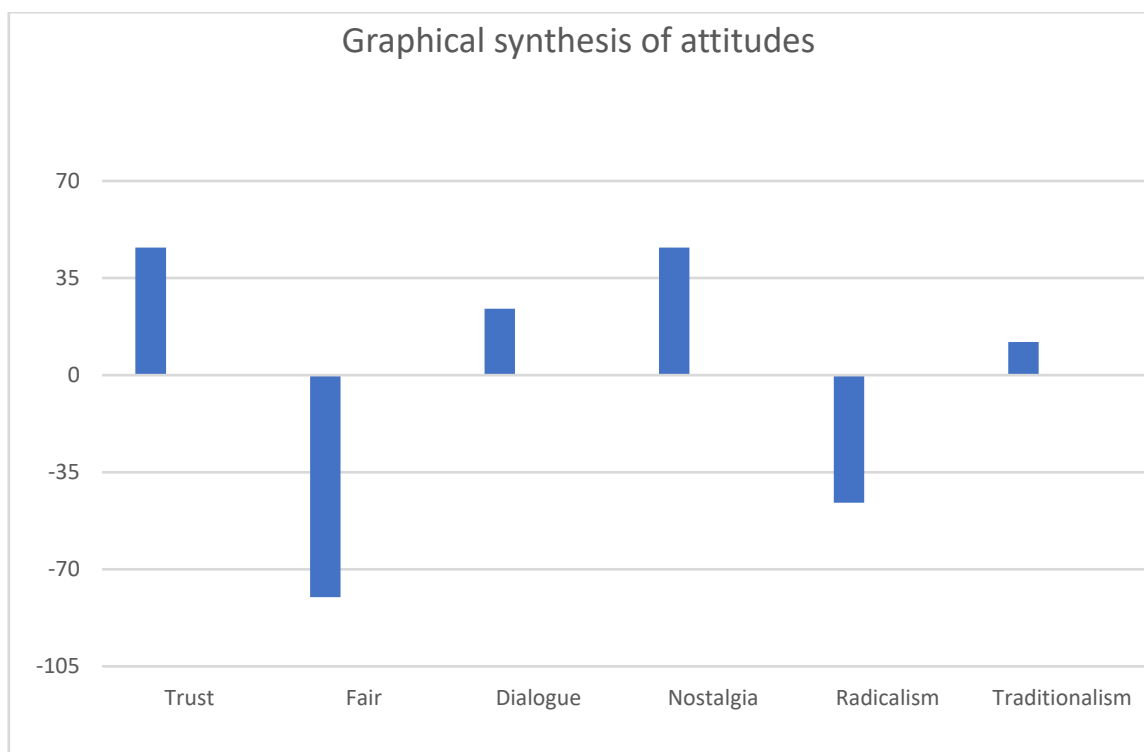
The data in this table is strengthened when one considers the measure of the gap between the acceptance of an attitude and its rejection. From the value obtained after subtracting the measure of rejection from the measure of satisfaction, we thus obtain a compact index of the response difference, helping us understand the study's scope and impact.

#### SPECIFICATION OF ATTITUDES

FIDUCIA (TRUST)	46
PAURA (FEAR)	-80

DIALOGO (DIALOGUE)	24
NOSTALGIA	46
RADICALISMO (RADICALISM)	-46
TRADIZIONALISMO (TRADITIONALISM)	12

The attitudes that conjure a clearer rejection from respondents are those of **fear** and **religious radicalism**; on the contrary, those who find the greatest favor are those of **trust** and **nostalgia** which register the same index, of **dialogue**, and of **traditionalism** (with the lowest value).





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<https://ppiproject.org/>

# The French Humanitarian Corridors Program Experience: An Assessment of a Private Sponsored Program, 3 Years Later

## 1. Introduction

*The “2015 “migrant crisis” represented, for many, a “hosting crisis,” or better yet, an EU crisis toward international mobility. [...] Since the creation of Schengen Space, the opening of internal borders has gone hand-in-hand with the closure of external borders. [The 2015 crisis] also revealed the importance of both individual and collective [...] commitments to the voluntary hosting of refugees, in response to States’ reluctance to give migrants a safe reception that is worthy [of European values]. [...] Thousands of French citizens, generally gathered in local committees, have expressed the wish to help migrants, providing accommodation, food, clothes, as well as leisure, language learning, legal aid... All those citizens acted on behalf of hospitality.” (Agier et al., 2019: 7-8)*

This excerpt from the introduction of a recent book, entitled *Hospitality in France: Political and Personal Mobilizations*, perfectly summarizes both the international context of creation of the Humanitarian Corridors Program (HCP) and a particular, national French response to the 2015 migrant emergency: the spreading of dozens of Citizen Committees (CC) supporting various privately-sponsored aid programs. As J.Valluy showed in 2012, whenever “waves of immigration—in the double sense of mobility and border crossing” (Noiriel, 2010)—were identified as a major public issue in the two decades after the signature of Schengen protocol (1990), EU States have always chose to “radicalize their borders” under the cover of humanitarian intentions (Valluy, 2012 : 86). Anti-immigration policies, refusal of arrivals, deployment of riot police, and the building of holding centers have officially been explained to the public as responses in the interest of migrants themselves: “It’s officially for their own good that migrants are informed about dangers [of their travel]; it’s to preserve the Asylum-seeking right that State select ‘true’ and ‘false’ refugees, and that most of them are rejected; it’s officially to support them in their Asylum-seeking that they are placed in special holding centers” (*ibid.*). However, since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011 and most particularly the “deadly Mediterranean summer” of 2015 – “700 migrants died in the Mediterranean Sea that summer, in several shipwrecks off Lampedusa’s coast”<sup>30</sup>—this strategy has evolved in two simultaneous ways.

On one hand, border closure policies became increasingly radicalized, displaying a progressive abandonment of official humanitarian intentions, especially within the EU countries most exposed by their South or East boundaries that have seen a breakthrough of far-Right parties and governments. Recent troubles at the Greek and Turkish borders in February and March 2020 give living testimony to this first evolution.

On the other hand, citizens, associations, political parties and religious structures have worked in all EU countries to claim dignity, humanity, and safety for migrants, devising solutions to host refugees more or less independently from public authorities (Bouagga and Segond, 2019: 83). Italian and French Humanitarian Corridors programs represent two of these solutions.

As Roberto Zuccolini (CSE) affirms to the French newspaper *Ouest France*, an ecumenical project involving three Catholic and Protestant organizations (CSE, FCEI, Tavola Valdese) was launched in Italy during the summer of 2015 “to avoid [Mediterranean] ‘death trips.’ We have found an article in the EU laws allowing member States to deliver humanitarian visas to reach Europe legally and

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<sup>30</sup> Interview of Roberto Zuccolini, CSE for French newspaper *Ouest France*, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

safely.”<sup>31</sup> A protocol was soon signed with the authorities, and the Italian Humanitarian Corridors program was officially born. Through this program, between February 2016 and March 2017, Italy hosted more than 700 asylum seekers and refugees.<sup>32</sup> Inspired by Italian efforts, an agreement was signed in France during the month of March 2017 between 5 faith-based associations and networks—three Catholic (*Secours Catholique*, *CSE*, *Conférence des Évêques de France*), two Protestant (FEP, FPF)—and the State departments of Homeland Security (*Ministère de l’Intérieur*) and International Affairs (*Ministère des Affaires Étrangères*). This protocol stipulated that France would deliver 500 temporary political asylum visas—part of the larger category of *D Visas*, allowing the right to seek an asylum request after arrival in the country—within a short time-frame (90 days) for asylum seekers, escaping Syria and Iraqi territories. Participants were identified according to certain conditions: vulnerability (e.g. families with young children, persons with medical problems), endangerment (e.g. homosexuals), and/or having a particular attachment to France (e.g., family members already in the country).<sup>33</sup> In return, the five associations and networks would commit to voluntary host efforts—meaning: “to accommodate, to feed but also to help juridically and culturally”<sup>34</sup>—those 500 participants, with the support of citizen committees (see insert below).

### **FEP and Local CC**

Local CC—an acronym translated from the French into “welcoming groups” or “host groups” (see Appendix 1 for list of acronyms)—already existed in 2017. They were created in about 2014 by parishioners and *Fédération d’Entraide Protestante* (FEP) members alerting public authorities about the situation of Syrian refugees. An informal agreement was reached with the French department of Homeland Security: a D Visa would be delivered to asylum-seekers with the counterpart of voluntary hosting. However, as explained before, these local actions took on a more national dimension when French *Comunità Sant’Egidio* (CSE) promoted an ecumenical dialogue with other associations, including FEP, on the model of Humanitarian Corridors programs in Italy. Eventually, local CC spread all over France.

The identification stage takes place in Lebanon, the main Middle-Eastern state hosting Iraqi and Syrian war refugees (Geisser, 2013). French and Italian Humanitarian Corridors programs are very similar at this stage: two workers from FEP and FCEI work together to supervise teams in Beirut. They also share a common personal referencing system with other structures and associations—especially HCR, IRAP and MSF—to identify eligible candidates for the program. Participants are directed toward France or Italy according to specific criteria. First, workers from FEP or FCEI conduct between 2 and 4 interviews with each individual person to collect their life stories, in order to ensure that French or Italian Consulate will accept their visa request. If program operators perceive a reason that an application can be rejected, they can preventively stop the procedure and explain reasons to the potential participants of Humanitarian Corridors programs. Conversely, if interviews are successful, FEP/FCEI workers will follow the entire visa procedure at the Consulate, except the official interview with the authorities. Humanitarian Corridors program participants and their families are then invited to participate in a psychosocial program provided by a Lebanese association called *Metanoia* to prepare their new life in Europe. Indeed, once they leave the country, Lebanese authorities request that they sign a document stipulating that return to Lebanon is impossible. In other words, participation in Humanitarian Corridors programs is synonymous with starting a new life, far from one’s own country as well as from the Lebanese camps. French program participants are also invited to connect to an online language learning platform and to watch some videos in Arabic which

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *L’Orient-Le Jour*, November 3rd, 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Although the initiative comes from Christian structures, it is important to note that belonging to a particular religion is not a condition to be eligible.

<sup>34</sup> Interview of François Clavairoly, FEP President, for French newspaper *20 minutes*, June 6th, 2017.

aim to adjust expectations related to accommodation and livelihood, and to explain future possible issues and frustrations related to administrative procedures (see [Appendix 2](#)). During this time, French citizen committees begin to look for accommodation for participants.

Italian and French Humanitarian Corridors programs significantly differ after the arrival of participants on European territory. Although both are privately-sponsored programs, in the first experience faith-based associations will provide to participants accommodation, food, legal assistance, etc. for a limited time (around eighteen months), but the State can take over if needed. Luca Maria Negro, FCEI president, explains to *Confronti*: “There are no fees for the State during the initial phase [of the program]. We are committed to bringing refugees to Italy and to welcoming these people for a period of several months. This period is necessary to provide them with tools and possibilities for integration. It may happen that in this period someone is unable to achieve the desired objectives; in these cases, the State takes over. The entire Humanitarian Corridors program is financed by the ‘*Otto per mille* to the Waldensian Church’ (OPM) fiscal agreement. Accommodation is also sponsored by private donations by CSE and other European Protestant churches.”<sup>35</sup>

In contrast, French Humanitarian Corridors programming is totally provided by volunteers, part of local CC, generally composed of 15 or more members (see [Appendix 1](#)). The State provides the regular allowance and services provided to all asylum seekers except housing, but it doesn’t take over operations at any point. Tasks of local CC include, for a variable period, accommodation, integration, language learning, administrative assistance (school registration for example). At the very beginning of the project, a single volunteer-run platform in Paris centralized all FEP hosting initiatives. However, after the first arrivals of participants, it appeared that local committees couldn’t accomplish the whole process without supplementary support from social workers. Specialized in social assistance, playing a mediation role if misunderstandings or tensions emerged between participants and volunteers, social workers are linked to associations that formerly worked with refugees (not only as a part of Humanitarian Corridors but also other programs, including State-based programs). Hence, five regional platforms<sup>36</sup> (or divisions, known hereafter as RD) were gradually developed by FEP to support local CC. Each one is led by an association, member of the larger FEP network, employing a social worker in charge of the HCP. A sixth case, called “Hors-Pôle” (HP), which encompasses the rest of regions and counties, is directly supported by the central FEP platform in Paris (see [map](#) below).

### **HCP/FEP Regional Divisions, Associations (Location), Social Workers**

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<sup>35</sup> Interview of Luca Maria Negro, FCEI President, for Italian magazine *Confronti*, March 2017.

<sup>36</sup> These platforms do not correspond to the administrative French regional division; we chose to use FEP appellation.

Grand-Est (GE)

Ile-de-France (IF)

Rhône-Alpes (RA)

Arc Méditerranéen (AM)

Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)

Hors-pôle (HP)

1. *L'Étage* (Strasbourg), social worker:  
Cécile Clément

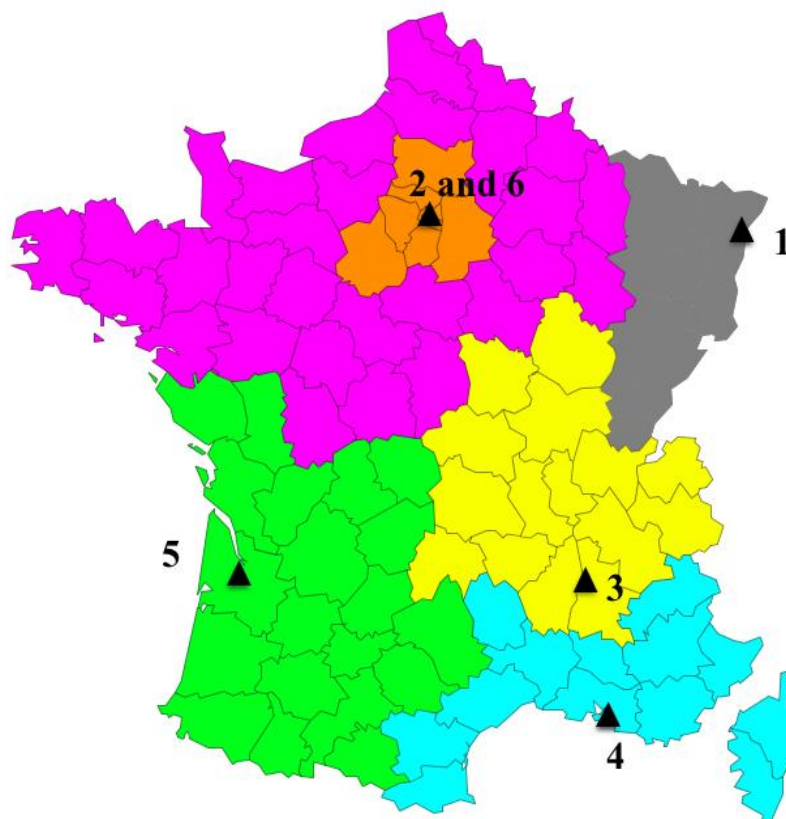
2. *CASP* (Paris), Ludovic Tourbet

3. *Diaconat Protestant Drôme  
Ardèche* (Valence), Aurélie Fillod

4. *Jane Pannier* (Marseille), Olivier  
Landes

5. *Diaconat Protestant de Bordeaux*  
(Bordeaux), Tariq Bellefquih

6. FEP central platform (Paris)



This division into five different regional platforms corresponds, in large part, to the wider French Protestant areas. Each regional division is independent from another, and social workers' practices can vary as well, according to Guilhem Mante (FEP general coordinator of hosting programs): for example, in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine division, Tariq Bellefquih follows the entire migrants' asylum-seeking process at the OFPRA, while elsewhere this task may be accomplished by CC themselves or by other associations. After the creation of regional divisions, beside its own mission of following Hors-Pôle participants, the FEP central platform in Paris continues to occupy a main coordination role, both nationally (clustering accommodation offers, for example) and internationally (linking Lebanese FEP workers and French CC or regional divisions, for example). However, this structure has become more and more professional: one of its first helpers, Sophie de Croutte, has been hired as an employee, supported by two other volunteers and by Guilhem Mante. Together they publish a newsletter, called "*La lettre aux hébergeurs*," sent to more than 200 contacts, most of them part of local CC.

Since the beginning of the Humanitarian Corridors programs, around 400 refugees were hosted in France, 236 of whom were hosted by CC groups, in turn supported by FEP central and/or regional platforms, for a total of 62 family units (FUs, including individuals and families). In a report published at the end of 2018, faith-based association *Secours Catholique* estimated that HCP allowed the hosting of 160 welcomed persons, that is, "38 families and 3 individuals arrived in France," 70 of whom were hosted by CC groups that are linked with FEP (see [Appendix 1](#)). In other words, counting only this Protestant network, 166 additional refugees were welcomed to France over a 16-month period, an increase of more than 200% compared to 2018. Additionally, the Humanitarian Corridors program has been extended since 2018 to other EU countries, including Belgium and Andorra.

### Emerging research questions

From its beginning, and still today after three years of operation, the goals of the French Humanitarian Corridors programs were mainly symbolic. As Guilhem Mante explains in an interview, the program is indeed based on two main principles:

“First, to suggest that we can open borders to refugees, decreasing risks so they can access legally and safely an EU country; secondly, to show that a citizen host is possible. 500 refugees present a small portion considering the fact that, only in Lebanon, there are currently more than a million of refugees, and that more than three quarters of refugees in the world are hosted in the developing countries, not in the wealthiest ones.”<sup>37</sup>

In other terms, this privately-sponsored program intends—more than being a solution to State deficiencies in hosting refugees—to model alternative options, meeting at the same time the needs of a particular population. Guilhem Mante and FEP resist governmental remuneration, and express vigilance against “resettlement” programs and logics (see insert below).

#### Resettlement and HCP

The DNA program started in 1973, and a new protocol was signed in November 2019 to host 10,000 more refugees from Lebanon, Turkey and Sub-Saharan Africa areas. OFPRA officials directly travel in these areas to make interviews and deliver official refugee status. The State financed not only the travel but also the accommodation of resettled refugees. A concern developed by FEP in 2017 was that the HCP could be used as an alibi by the French government to delegate to associations and citizens the accommodation of refugees and, at the same time, to reduce the number of participants of resettlement programs. The signature of a new resettlement protocol in 2019 seems to have reassured FEP, but the network, according to Guilhem Mante, is “still vigilant.”<sup>38</sup>

Despite this, HCP has been criticized in France by radical left, considering this program as an alternative way to resettle populations (“HCP even contributes to extending EU borders, identifying people in Lebanon”<sup>39</sup>). Moreover, this program has been built by faith-based associations claiming a “humanitarian exception” [*ibid.*: 84]—the 2015 migrant crisis—within a national context of “silence” on the part of media and politicians about asylum-seeking, better termed as an “aphasia” [Stoler, 2011]. Indeed, as it has been recently noticed by two researchers, Ugo Palheta and Damien Carême, even left-wing liberal French political parties currently avoid any discussion about refugees, except when the subject becomes topical (the riots in “Calais Jungle” migrants camp of 2016, for example). This may be because, under the influence of the Far Right, categories of economic migrants, asylum-seekers—and, more recently, terrorists—become more and more interchangeable. According to the researchers, this process started at the very beginning of the 1990s, when Prime Minister Michel Rocard claimed that “France cannot welcome all the world’s misery.” The refugee question is, since then, more or less made invisible in the country: “The idea is that ‘the less they talk about that, the less Far Right scores will increase.’”<sup>40</sup> According to Pierre Jova, some French Protestant ministers and congregations would also prefer to avoid this “contentious subject,” criticizing “pro-refugee mobilization of institutional Protestantism” when FEP and FPF decided to start the HCP.<sup>41</sup> An additional demonstration of this cultural “aphasia” is represented by the silence of French press about HCP: research on a majority of francophone newspapers and periodicals published between March

<sup>37</sup> Interview of Guilhem Mante (FEP), Paris, 22/1/20.

<sup>38</sup> Interview of Guilhem Mante (FEP), Paris, 22/1/20.

<sup>39</sup> Bouagga and Segond, 2019: 96.

<sup>40</sup> Palheta and Carême, 2018: 68.

<sup>41</sup> Jova 2017: 76.

1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 show only few results.<sup>42</sup> Around 20 articles were published either in religious or generalist national and regional press in a three-year period, most of them soon after the signature of the protocol or the arrival of first families in France.

This consideration invites us to investigate both the symbolic and the practical impact of this pro-refugee mobilization promoted by faith-based structures and by non-religious CC. Indeed, HCP appears as a concrete demonstration – albeit slightly underground, as regards the French cultural “aphasia” mentioned before, and maybe subject to critique, considering radical arguments –that “another hosting is possible,” and that, “given the background of the DNA crisis, these [volunteer] forms of hosting appear like an innovative formula: people desiring to welcome foreigners reinvent – and rediscover – the “hosting laws,” each and every day.”<sup>43</sup> How can we assess the impact of French HCP, taking the example of the 236 program participants welcomed by CC supported by the FEP network, after 3 years since the program started?

Assessing program impact requires some distinct lines of questioning, focused both on hosted participants and on volunteer hosts and social workers. The CC and FEP regional divisions/associations are important to consider. From the participants’ standpoint, on the one hand, this dual system may allow them to more quickly integrate French cultural codes, language and, more generally, social habits by the daily contact they establish with the members of CC (the sociocultural side); on the other hand, at the same time, they may access their rights more easily through the support they receive by the social worker of the FEP network association helping them (the legal side). From the standpoints of CC members and social workers, this double system could facilitate some tasks, like cultural mediation, and increase the chances of refugees’ legal, social and cultural integration. Do citizen committees and associations really help participants to more easily integrate French culture, language, system of law, and society? How have the expectations of participants developed since the identification process in Lebanon, after their arrival in France? How is their integration pathway proceeding? What are their difficulties, and, at the same time, what are the difficulties of the volunteer hosts and social workers?

## Methodology

This research is based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. It has been completed within a timespan of two months with the support of a core team of interviewers<sup>44</sup> and of an advisor committee composed by a theologian (Elisabetta Ribet, Faculté de Théologie Protestante, Strasbourg), a sociologist (Antonio Ricci, deputy president of IDOS study and research center) and a philosopher (Alberto Romele, Université Catholique de Lille). Claudio Paravati, director of *Confronti*, and Guilhem Mante from FEP have also provided a significant contribution to this project, in various forms ranging from advice to material support.

The quantitative side of the research has consisted of a double, complementary work: first, the statistical analysis of a spreadsheet, called the “*tableau de suivi*,” (“tracking table” in English) in which FEP central platforms gather information about each individual welcomed person (n=236) and Family Unit (n=62) which is hosted by a CC they support, either directly or by one of their five regional divisions (see insert below).

### FEP “*tableau de suivi*”

Information input to this spreadsheet includes, at least: name, first name, date of birth, age,

<sup>42</sup> Combining *Europresse* and *Google News* database, using keywords “Humanitarian Corridors,” “Syria,” and “Airplane” (in order to distinguish HCP from the juridical/UN meaning of the term “Humanitarian Corridors,” normally reserved to the war zones).

<sup>43</sup> Agier et al., 2019 : 35.

<sup>44</sup> Thanks to Emmanuelle Simon, Lilian Garrissière and Sophie de Croutte for their help in submitting questionnaires and doing interviews.



nationality, gender, family situation, date of arrival, hosting town and county (“*département*”), and the date of asylum-seeking request at the central administrative office called GUDA. According to the situation of each individual person and FU, the table can also include information about the time-frame of the asylum-seeking procedure, the date of the decision by OFPRA or CNDA, the kind of protection they have obtained (a 4-year or a 10-year refugee card), the date of signature of an integration contract called CIR (“*Contrat d’Intégration Républicaine*”), the date of exit from HCP (including hosting delays), their initial level of French, their final language level, and the kind of financial resources, work and accommodation they have found once the hosting period has ended.

The main advantage of working on this spreadsheet is the fact that it is progressively updated by FEP central platform volunteers and workers, giving an accurate picture of the 236 program participants welcomed by FEP-supported CC. However, some information may be missing, and in some cases, it has been impossible to gather it during our limited survey time. All the family and the first names were anonymized to standardize statistical data set, and each FU has been identified by a code (their position on the table and the acronym of the regional division (for example, NA1 corresponds to the first Family Unit hosted by a CC in the Nouvelle Aquitaine division). Secondly, the research team submitted 35 questionnaires to adult participants living in four different regional divisions (see insert below): Nouvelle Aquitaine (n=17), Grand Est (n=8), Ile-de-France (n=4), Rhône-Alpes (n=6).

#### **French “*Recherche sur l’expérience des couloirs humanitaires*” adult questionnaire**

Translated from Italian, the questionnaire was originally composed of 59 questions. However, some questions were modified or deleted, either because FEP considered them inadequate or mistranslated. Eventually, 52 questions were submitted to the program participants, who chose to answer the question or not. In a first part, called “*Renseignements personnels*,” included 13 questions. HCP participants were questioned about their sex, age, status, level of instruction, etc. A second part, called “*Conditions avant le départ*” including 9 questions, focuses more on participants’ knowledge of HCP in Lebanon, their hopes before arriving in France, their travel, etc. A final and a third part, called “*Conditions post-arrivée*,” included 30 questions and invited respondents to describe some aspects of their current life in France, including perceptions of HCP support and hospitality, but also material questions about their work, accommodation, etc. 6 of these questions were open, and the last three questions allowed the possibility of describing, in a few words (and, if possible, in French), their hopes, fears for the future, or simply to add something. The idea of submitting a questionnaire to teenagers (as the Italian team did) was abandoned, because their number is too reduced in France (n=22).

35 questionnaires seems to be – and it probably is – a very reduced number compared to the 236 welcomed persons hosted by CC supported by FEP network in France. However, if we consider that 108 of them are minors and that two participants died after their arrival in the country,<sup>45</sup> more than a quarter of the total welcomed people there (35 out of 126) were interrogated. Moreover, we attempted to respect as much as possible the Family Units’ dispersal around the national territory, despite limited time and some practical reasons (for example, the difficulties reaching the participants living in most rural areas led us to concentrate the effort of submission and collection of answers in some selected places).

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<sup>45</sup> See below, Part 1.

To summarize, quantitative work consisted of the analysis of data condensed in the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” spreadsheet and from the adult questionnaires (considered as a sample of the whole hosted population). 35 is obviously an exploratory number regarding quantitative standards, confounded by bias. For these reasons, efforts will be made to complete as much as possible data, using both the spreadsheet and the questionnaires.

The qualitative side of the survey consisted of conducting eight semi-direct interviews with the different actors involved in the French HCP, to gather their standpoint about the program: two with social workers (regional division of Grand Est and Rhône-Alpes), three with CC members (one in Rhône-Alpes, two in Nouvelle Aquitaine divisions), 2 with local officials (in Nouvelle Aquitaine division), and one with a participant of HCP (in Ile-de-France division). Four interview guides were developed according to the different situations (see insert below).

<b>Key inquiry categories for interviews</b>
<p>Participants of HCP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presentation (including departure conditions from Syria-Iraq)</li> <li>● Once in Lebanon (including FEP support to access HCP)</li> <li>● Once in France (perceptions of hosting, difficulties, relationships with CC or FEP workers, etc.)</li> <li>● Perspectives for the future (including suggestions of improvement of HCP)</li> </ul>
<p>Social Workers (regional division)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presentation (including career and commitment into the program)</li> <li>● Perception of the program (with national platform, with CC, refugees etc.)</li> <li>● Difficulties and perspectives for the future (including suggestions for improvement of HCP)</li> </ul>
<p>CC members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presentation (including commitment into the program)</li> <li>● Description of CC (task division, etc.)</li> <li>● Perception of the program (with national platform, social workers, refugees etc.)</li> <li>● Difficulties and perspectives for the future (including suggestions for improvement of HCP)</li> </ul>
<p>Local officials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presentation (including career and political/administrative commitment)</li> <li>● Knowledge of HCP (including perceptions of the population)</li> <li>● Relationships with different structures (FEP, CC, etc.)</li> </ul>

Additionally, two exploratory interviews were conducted with Guilhem Mante and Sophie de Crouette, from FEP, for a total of 10 interviews. Interviews with two local officials can also be categorized with other CC members. The first of them was the Mayor of Orthez, a town near the Pyrenees, when he agreed to host into his municipality the first families of refugees that arrived in France in 2015, two years before the official start of HCP. At the same time, he is the brother of the founder of the local CC, and he is himself committed to supporting the program. The second official is both a delegate of the Prefecture in Bordeaux and a (former) voluntary host of one participant of the program. Hence, the main advantage of the qualitative side of the survey is represented by the fact that we gathered no fewer than five standpoints of CC members. Once again, our central problem has been the lack of available time to complete the survey: 10 interviews represent a very limited number, and we would have liked to interrogate more people, especially participants of the program.

In the first part of this report, we will focus on some general data, mainly extracted from the FEP spreadsheet, allowing a first assessment of the French HCP experience. Then, in a second and a third part, we will test our previous hypotheses about feelings and difficulties regarding HCP, from standpoints of both participants and social workers/CC members, combining questionnaires, interviews, and, if necessary, the FEP spreadsheet. Finally, we will conclude by highlighting key findings, critiques and suggestions, both for our future surveys and for the HCP itself.

## 2. General data

Who are the program participants hosted by CC and supported by the FEP network? Where do they live? Have they easily accepted their status, from their application for asylum to the obtention of their card? What are their current housing conditions and resources? Answers to these simple questions allow us to profile the 236 welcomed persons and, at the same time, to assess some administrative and practical elements of the French HCP since 2017.

Analyzing the “*tableau de suivi*” of the FEP central platform, we can observe that the first participants of the program arrived in France July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, and the most recent ones on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Around 49% are male, 51% female. Although all of them (n=236) come from Lebanese camps, their origin country is mostly Syria (n=187) or Iraq (n=24), except for 25 young children born in Lebanon (n=23) or in France (n=2). The ages of living welcomed persons (two of them died after their arrival in France) range from two weeks to 77 years old. This is very important information for several reasons. Indeed, 108 participants of HCP are minors, but only 22 of them are teenagers.

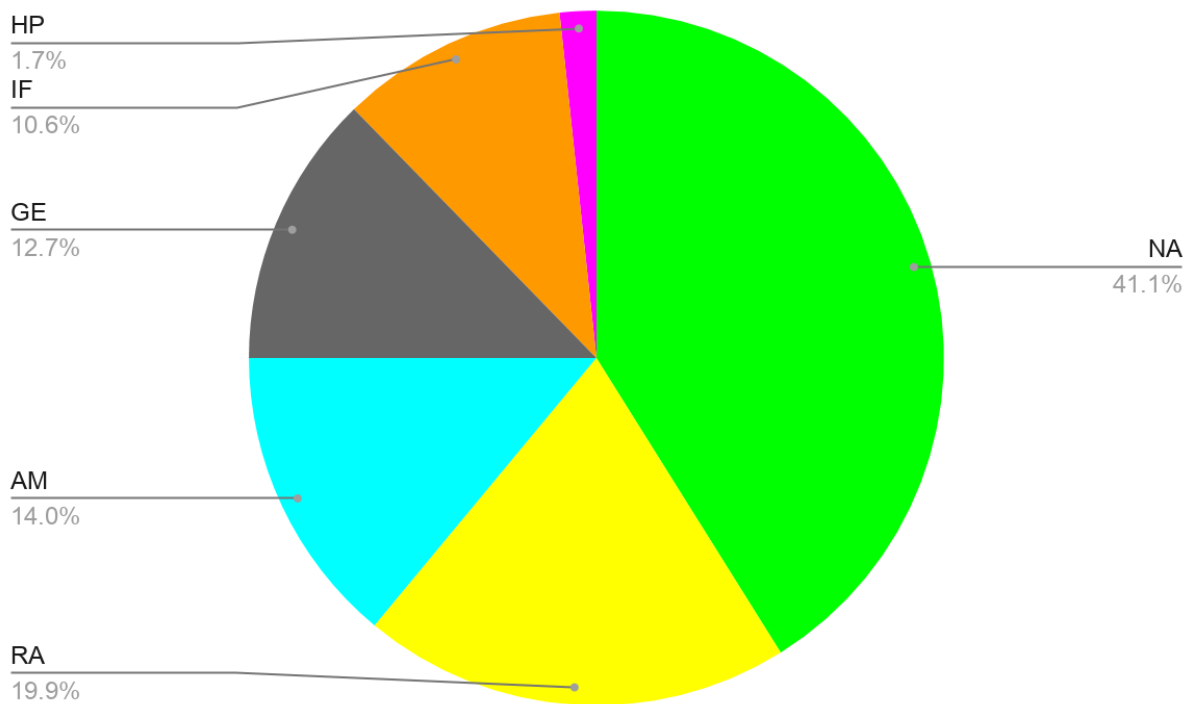
Furthermore, a majority of minors (n=64) were born after the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011, so they never knew anything other than war, refugee camps and/or, for the youngest ones, France. More information can be gathered considering the geographical distribution of the welcomed population (see [table](#) below).

Regional Division (RD)	Number of participants	Number of Fus	Men/Women	Minors (Teenagers / Born after 2011)
Grand-Est (GE)	30 (1 deceased)	6	13 / 17	13 (1 / 9)
Ile-de-France (IF)	25	7	14 / 11	11 (3 / 7)
Rhône-Alpes (RA)	47	11	27 / 20	24 (8 / 9)
Arc Méditerranéen (AM)	33	8	17 / 16	16 (4 / 11)
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)	97 (1 deceased)	29	43 / 54	42 (6 / 26)
Hors-Pôle (HP)	4	1	2 / 2	2 (0 / 2)
<b>Total</b>	236	62	116 / 120	108 (22 / 64)

Some differences are immediately observed between the five RD besides Hors-Pôle: for example, CC in NA division currently hosts a total of 96 participants (29 FUs) when Ile-de-France welcomes only 25 persons (7 FUs). A rank between the five (or six) different divisions can be established (see [table](#) and [chart](#) below).

RD	Number of	% participants	Number of FUs	Rank
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	participants			
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)	97 (1 deceased)	41,1%	29	1
Rhône-Alpes (RA)	47	19,9%	11	2
Arc Méditerranéen (AM)	33	14%	8	3
Grand-Est (GE)	30 (1 deceased)	12,7%	6	4
Ile-de-France (IF)	25	10,6%	7	5
Hors-Pôle (HP)	4	1,7%	1	6



The most represented RD is NA (41.1%), followed by RA (19.9%), AM (14%), GE (12.7%), and finally IF (10.6%). HP participants are only 1.7% of the total of welcomed persons. These differences invite us to focus more accurately on participants' hosting areas.

### Geographical breakdown of HCP

Former findings show that there exists a sort of hosting line between the north of the country and the south: indeed, if we add NA, RA and AM divisions, we notice that CC in these three RD host three quarters of the total French HCP welcomed persons. However, some differences can be observed within the regional divisions themselves, especially considering the fact that some counties (“*départements*”) and towns – where local CC were created – host more program participants' than others (see [table](#) below).

<b>RD</b>	<b>Département (number and appellation)</b>	<b>Number of participants / Fus</b>	<b>Most represented town (by participants / FUs)</b>
1.Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)  Tot benef.: 97 Tot FUs: 29	33 - Gironde	33 / 12	Bordeaux (17/8)
	64 - Pyrénées-Atlantiques	21 / 6	Orthez (13/4)
	47 - Lot-et-Garonne	11 / 2	Agen (11/2)
	17 - Charente Maritime	9 / 3	Ile d'Oléron (5/2)
	24 - Dordogne	7 / 1	Grand Brassac (7/1)
	81 - Tarn	5 / 1	Vabres (5/1)
	31 - Haute Garonne	4 / 1	Toulouse (4/1)
	16 - Charente	4 / 1	Villefagnan (4/1)
	79 - Deux-Sèvres	3 / 1	Parthenay (3/1)
2.Rhône-Alpes (RA)  Tot benef.: 47 Tot FUs: 11	26 - Drôme	15 / 4	Buis-les-Baronnies (6/1)
	01 - Ain	12 / 3	Lhuis (12/3)
	63 - Puy-de-Dôme	6 / 1	Tours sur Meymont (6/1)
	07 - Ardèche	5 / 1	Vernoux (5/1)
	69 - Rhône	5 / 1	St Romain en Gal (5/1)
	84 - Vaucluse	4 / 1	Vaison la Romaine (4/1)
3.Arc-Médit. (AM)  Tot benef.: 33 Tot FUs: 8	30 - Gard	18 / 5	Mandagout (6/1)
	48 - Lozère	11 / 2	Pont-de-Montvert (7/1)
	13 - Bouches du Rhône	4 / 1	Gardanne (4/1)
4.Grand Est (GE) Tot benef.: 30 Tot FUs: 6	67 - Bas-Rhin	30 / 6	Wangen (11/2)
	78 - Yvelines	8 / 3	Montesson (4/1)

5. Ile-de-France (IF) Tot benef.: 25 Tot FUs: 7	28 - Eure-et-Loir	5 / 1	Luisant (5/1)
	94 - Val de Marne	5 / 1	Champigny-sur-Marne (5/1)
	95 Val d'Oise	4 / 1	Deuil la Barre (4/1)
	77 - Seine-et-Marne	3 / 1	Farmoutiers (3/1)
6. Hors-pôle (HP) Tot benef.: 4 Tot FUs: 1	56 - Morbihan	4 / 1	Questembert (4/1)



The most represented “*départements*” are Gironde (NA division, 33 participants/12 FUs), Bas-Rhin (GE division, 30 participants, 6FUs), Pyrénées-Atlantiques (NA division, 21 participants, 6FUs), and Gard (AM division, 18 participants, 5 FUs). Regarding the hosting towns, besides Bordeaux, we can see that a majority of CC are located in middle-sized (like Agen, in NA division) or small-sized, rural towns<sup>46</sup> (for example, Wangen in GE division, or Pont-de-Montvert in AM division). Moreover, although around one sixth of the total French population is concentrated in Paris and the surrounding region, we can observe: first, that the IF division hosts the least out of the other RDs of the program; secondly, that the capital is not represented; thirdly, that the hosting towns in this RD are relatively distant from Paris (the nearby town is Champigny-sur-Marne, around 30 min by train). In other words,

<sup>46</sup> Combining a “small density of population, a distance from most services and an economy turned to agriculture” [Balouzat, Bertrand, 2019: 2].

the hosting line seems to be more a division between the most rural and the most urban French areas, rather than a division between the north and the south of the country. A map developed by the FEP central platform helps to localize the geographical distribution of the 62 FUs welcomed by local CC (see [map](#) below).

Interviews with FEP central platform members and social workers seem to confirm this urban/rural distribution: according to Sophie de Croutte, for example, “refugees’ common representation of France is Paris, and, [when they are in Lebanon], they are expecting to be hosted in Paris. Once arrived in France, they are often disappointed by the rural location of their accommodation.”<sup>47</sup>

Two hypotheses can explain this geographical breakdown. The first is linked to a long-term process of “invisibilization” of migrants by locating them in rural areas. Indeed, as Simona Tersigni and Chantal Crenn showed in a 2014 article, the French administration has always considered that “it is preferable to allow ten hectares of our land to a foreigner than a single pavement stone of our cities,” as a high-ranking official, M. Paon, wrote in 1926.<sup>48</sup> This process continues today under the influence of the EU common market, fostering occupations that face manpower shortages such as farm workers.<sup>49</sup> Since HCP is a privately-sponsored program escaping State resettlement logic, however, a second hypothesis seems to be more pertinent to explain the rural location of a great number of welcomed persons: as noticed before, CC have spread in historically French Protestant areas, and a majority of these areas are rural, like Cévennes.<sup>50</sup> Again, differences can be observed between RD (for example, a large majority of HCP participants live in rural areas in the AM division, whereas all of them live in cities, even small or distant from Paris, in the IF division). Lastly, we can observe that rural places only host families or individuals with children. This aspect invites us to interrogate the composition of participants’ Family Units.

### **Family Unit composition**

According to the “*tableau de suivi*,” five different FUs were identified: couples with children, couples without children, individuals without children (“*célibataires isolés*”), and single mothers with children. There are no fathers with children: either they died, or they remained in Syria, Iraq or Lebanon. Finally, a case, called “others,” for more specific situations (for example, a refugee family, hosted in GE division, composed of a couple with three adult children, an aunt/mother/sister, and a grandmother). This case is however uncommon: out of a total of 62 FUs, only three of them (around 5%) are composed by “others” FUs. Couples with children – which are, as seen before and for a large part, young children – represent the majority of FUs (n=42, around 68%), attesting the importance of the progeny factor into the HCP identification process in Lebanon. Indeed, as Yasmine Bouagga and Rapahëlle Segond observed in their article of 2019, HCP is based on a “discrete negotiation [...] allowing NGO to identify participants because of their vulnerability. [...] Distinguishing individuals with particular needs and vulnerabilities includes biopolitical issues linked to age, gender, and health [...]. This notion doesn’t fit with a fixed juridical category, but it is negotiated case-by-case by NGO, depending on the moral appreciation of personal exposure to given risks.”<sup>51</sup> The second most important FUs are constituted by single mothers with children (n=8, around 13%). Individuals without children (n=6, around 10%) and couples without children (n=3, around 5%) are also represented: they include both heterosexuals and homosexuals (homosexuality is indeed one of the factors that can be associated to the “vulnerability” of the HCP participants). As noticed before, however, differences can be observed between RD (see [chart](#) below).

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<sup>47</sup> Interview of Sophie de Croutte (FEP), Paris, 19/2/20.

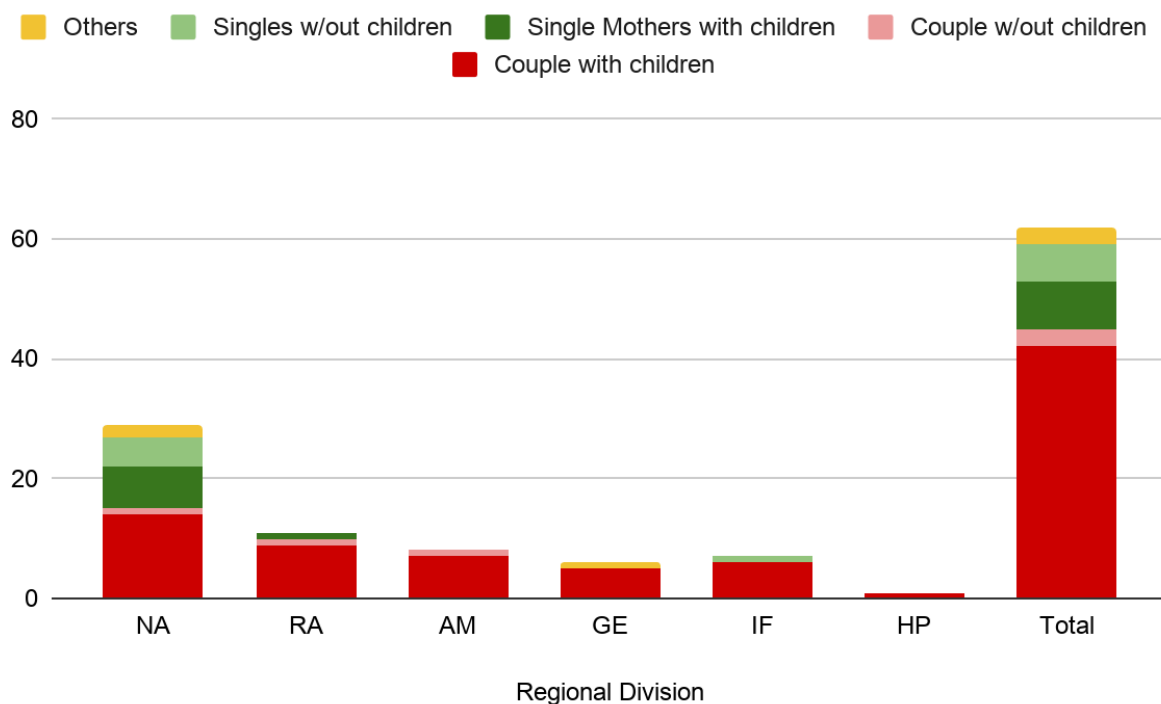
<sup>48</sup> Crenn and Tersigni, 2014: 59.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*: 74-76.

<sup>50</sup> A mountain range shared between AM and RA divisions.

<sup>51</sup> Bouagga and Segond, 2019: 92.





NA is the most representative division of the FUs' diversity. This RD also attests the breakdown between rural and urban places: indeed, 21 FUs are living over there in urban areas, eight in rural places; yet, all of these FUs are composed either by couples (n=6) or single mothers with children (n=2). According to Sophie de Croutte, singles (n=5) or couples without children (n=1) "all live in Bordeaux or its nearby area," and this factor "is particularly important regarding homosexuals."<sup>52</sup> The presence of these different FUs, identified in Lebanon according to specific "vulnerability" criteria, also interrogate the asylum-seeking procedure: indeed, after having obtained a D Visa to reach France and having been hosted by a CC, what about their asylum request once in the country?

### Status of Refugees

French asylum procedure is a two- (or three-) step administrative process. First, a request must be introduced within 90 days after arrival in the country to an office called GUDA. Then, the request is transferred to the OFPRA, the governmental French agency for the protection of refugees and stateless persons, based in Fontenay, near Paris. Officials examine the request, convene the asylum-seeker, and make a decision. If the request is rejected, the seeker has the right to appeal to a national administrative court called CNDA, also located near Paris. Once convened and heard, this court makes a definitive decision, prevailing on the former status allowed (or not) by OFPRA officials. The most recent government data (January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020) indicate that in 2019 OFPRA examined 132,614 asylum requests (+7.3% compared to 2018) and that 36,512 refugee cards were delivered (+9.5% compared to 2018).<sup>53</sup>

The FEP "*tableau de suivi*" contains several indications for each step of the procedure (the date of the introduction of the request to the GUDA, the day of convening at OFPRA, delays between GUDA and OFPRA, the date of the OFPRA decision, the type of status allowed by OFPRA, the date of convening to CNDA, delays between OFPRA and CNDA, and the final decision of CNDA) even if some cells are sometimes empty, either because the procedure is still in progress or, less frequently, because data are missing.

<sup>52</sup> Interview of Sophie de Croutte (FEP), Paris, 19/2/20.

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Info-ressources/Actualites/Communiques/L-asile-en-2019>.

First, we can observe how many procedures were achieved and how many are still in progress (see [table below](#)).

<b>RD</b>	<b>Procedures In progress/FUs (nbr benef.)</b>	<b>Procedures achieved /FUs (nbr benef.)</b>	<b>Total/FUs (nbr benef.)</b>
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)	7 (26)	22 (71)	29 (97)
Rhône-Alpes (RA)	3 (12)	8 (35)	11 (47)
Arc-Médit. (AM)	2 (6)	6 (27)	8 (33)
Grand Est (GE)	3 (12)	3 (18)	6 (30)
Ile-de-France (IF)	4 (16)	3 (9)	7 (25)
Hors-pôle (HP)	1 (4)	0 (0)	1 (4)
<b>Total</b>	20 (76)	42 (160)	62 (236)

The 20 procedures in progress concern mainly the participants of HCP and their FUs that arrived more recently in France, especially those who reached the country during the summer or the fall of 2019 and during January 2020. However, information from the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” seems to show that some procedures were initiated a longer period of time ago and that they are still not concluded. How can these delays be explained, when we know, according to Guilhem Mante from FEP, that “OFPPRA officials, when the HCP protocol was signed, committed to reduce the timeline for the participants of the program”<sup>54</sup> and that, according to anthropologist Carolina Kobelinsky, “consecutive French governments always tried to decrease the asylum-seeking time horizon, considering more the costs of the procedure<sup>55</sup> than humanitarian interests.”<sup>56</sup>

To answer this question, we can gather information from the FEP “*tableau de suivi*,” but only for the procedures that have already been concluded, concerning 42 FUs and 160 welcomed persons.<sup>57</sup> We can especially observe, nationwide and for each RD, what is the minimum and the maximum time frame between the first request at GUDA and the final decision by OFPPRA or CNDA. We can also calculate some daily averages. In particular, we can estimate the difference between the procedures sent to OFPPRA by the means of the HCP and the national average delay for the whole 132,614 asylum requests treated by the governmental agency in 2019, corresponding to “a national processing time of 161 days on average.” We can finally determine the number of appeals to CNDA and calculate a global timeline average<sup>58</sup> (see [table below](#)).

<sup>54</sup> Interview of Guilhem Mante (FEP), Paris, 22/1/20.

<sup>55</sup> Asylum-seekers can claim for a social benefit called ADA (see next part).

<sup>56</sup> Kobelinsky, 2014: 22.

<sup>57</sup> The most pertinent criterion, here, seems to be the FU: indeed, OFPPRA or CNDA always convene families – even when they are composed, for example, by a homosexual couple without children – the same day, and officials or judges take the same decision for each FU.

<sup>58</sup> If some data from the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” are missing, we developed the following method. First, we estimated the daily difference between the introduction of the request to the GUDA office and the OFPPRA or the CNDA decisions. If “GUDA” cell is empty (five procedures), we calculated that the request has been introduced within a time-frame of 45 days, corresponding to the average between the arrival of participants on the French territory and the maximum legal deadline to seek an asylum request (90 days). We are however conscious that this method has some limits, so the results will be presented with a certain caution.

RD/nbr of achieved procedures	Min. time period (days)	Max. time period (days)	OFPRA decision Average (days)	Difference HCP / Nat. OFPRA average (161 d., 2019)	Appeals to CNDA (nbr)	Global average to obtain status (days, incl. CNDA)
NA 21 proc.	76	674	178.5	+ 17.5	6	222.1
RA 8 proc.	100	247	183	+21	2	203.6
AM 6 proc.	54	425	144.2	-16,8	1	200.4
GE 3 proc.	135	205	170	+9	0	170
IF 3 proc.	64	139	97	-64	0	97
HP 0 proc.	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total France</b> 42 proc.	54	674	152.2	-8.8	9	200.3

Nationwide, the minimum time period between the introduction of the asylum request and the obtention of a status was 54 days, and the maximum delay was 674 days (including the appeal to the CNDA). Besides the limits of the calculation outlined above,<sup>59</sup> the national daily timeline average for HCP participants to get a card is around 152 days. This difference seems to be insignificant compared to the national processing time of 161 days on average claimed by OFPRA for all the asylum requests that officials examined in 2019. In other words, to answer the interrogation from FEP expressed by Guilhem Mante, OFPRA seems to have only slightly reduced the timeline for the participants of the HCP. Moreover, some differences can be noticed between RD. For example, in IF, the average to obtain a status for the welcomed persons by HCP is 64 days faster than the national average, whereas in NA or RA divisions it seems to be longer (of around 18-21 days). If we include appeals to CNDA in our computation, however, we can estimate that HCP participants seem to obtain a decision in a relatively reasonable time of around 200 days (around six month and a half) on average.

If accepted, the asylum procedure at OFPRA (and CNDA) may result in two different statuses: welcomed persons can obtain a 10-year renewable card (“*réfugié statutaire*”) if French officials or judges consider that they “fear being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the[ir] country [...] and [are] unable or, owing to such fear, [are] unwilling to avail [them]self of the protection of that country.”<sup>60</sup> Otherwise, they can obtain a 4-year renewable card (“*protection subsidiaire*”) if judges or officials consider that they don’t qualify for the “*réfugié statutaire*” status, but they incur serious risks of death, torture, or threats if they are sent back to their origin country. Once again, the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” allows to define with precision<sup>61</sup> how many participants of HCP have obtained a 10-year card and how many have obtained a 4-year card, as we can observe in the following [table](#) and [chart](#).

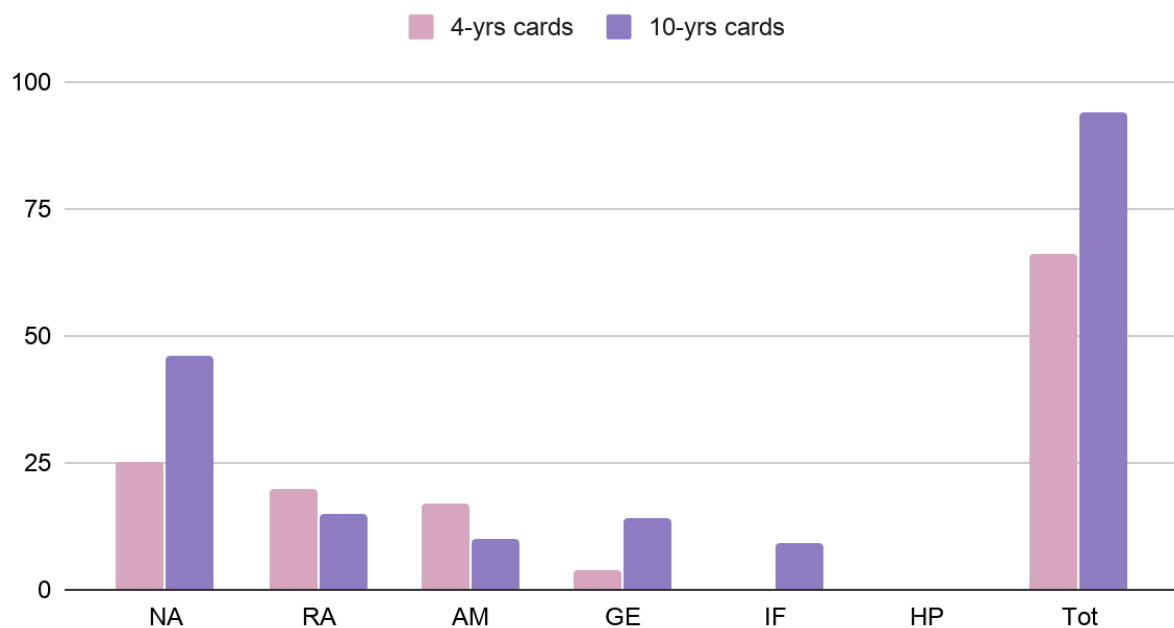
<sup>59</sup> See former footnote.

<sup>60</sup> Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951, art.1.

<sup>61</sup> No data are missing for these cells of the spreadsheet.

RD	Nbr 4-yr cards ( <i>protection subsidiaire</i> ), benef./FUs	Nbr 10-yr cards ( <i>réfugié statuaire</i> ), benef./FUs	Total (benef./FUs)
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA)	25 / 9	46 / 13	71 / 22
Rhône-Alpes (RA)	20 / 5	15 / 3	35 / 8
Arc-Médit. (AM)	17 / 3	10 / 3	27 / 6
Grand Est (GE)	4 / 1	14 / 2	18 / 3
Ile-de-France (IF)	0 / 0	9 / 3	9 / 3
Hors-pôle (HP)	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>66 / 18</b>	<b>94 / 24</b>	<b>160 / 42</b>

## 4-yr cards and 10-yr cards



Out of a total of 42 decisions, 24 have resulted in the delivery of a 10-year card and 18 of a 4-year card. In other terms, 94 participants of HCP are nowadays “*réfugiés statutaires*” and 66 of them have obtained a “*protection subsidiaire*” status. Some differences can be observed between RD, but, as the decision of judges or officials is based on particular life stories, it seems that it doesn’t matter for the analysis.<sup>62</sup> However, data would have been different if we considered only the initial decision by OFPRA officials. Indeed, the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” allows us the possibility to examine the results of the 9 appeal procedures to CNDA. Data were completely anonymized for this task (see [table](#) below).

<sup>62</sup> We only left this aspect for information.

FU number	Initial decision by OFPRA	Final decision by CNDA	>/=
1 (5 ben)	4-yr card	10-yr card	>
2 (5 ben)	4-yr card	10-yr card	>
3 (2 ben)	Request rejected	10-yr card	>>
4 (3 ben)	4-yr card	4-yr card	=
5 (4 ben)	4-yr card	4-yr card	=
6 (1 ben)	4-yr card	4-yr card	=
7 (4 ben)	4-yr card	4-yr card	=
8 (4 ben)	4-yr card	4-yr card	=
9 (3 ben)	4-yr card	10-yr card	>

CNDA confirmed the initial decision of OFPRA five times, but the court allowed a more favorable status to the rest of the asylum seekers, including a family (FU number 3, composed by 2 participants) whose initial request was rejected by OFPRA officials (they finally obtained a 10-year card).

Gaining refugee status—in a more general sense of the term, including the two different types of cards—is also a way for the participants of HCP to claim social benefits or to seek a job. This way, they can progressively become independent, from a financial standpoint, and envision leaving the HCP (or, at least, their accommodation by CC). These data, assessing the impact of the program three years after it has begun in France, can be gathered, again, by analyzing FEP spreadsheet.

### **Housing and financial resources of refugees**

HCP, as noted before, is a completely privately-sponsored program regarding the hosting of its participants. Participants are invited to become independent as soon as possible from their host, and the first approach is to claim from the State a social benefit called ADA (“*Allocation pour Demandeur d’Asile*”) from applying for asylum at GUDA. A guide (“*livret d’accueil*”) developed by FEP explains the various social benefits they can access at each step of the program, as well as the possibility of finding employment (see insert below).

#### **Financial resources of refugees (extracts from FEP “*livret d’accueil*”)**

“During the first two months of the program (approximately), the welcomed person is not yet considered a participant of the ADA. During this period the local CC finances food, transports, sim cards, etc.. As soon as they obtain the ADA, they become independently able, from a financial standpoint, to get food. [...] Once participants secure the status of refugee or the “*protection subsidiaire*,” they can claim [...] [two] social benefits, [called] RSA (Inclusion Income support) and APL (Personalised Housing Allowance). They are then considered financially independent. [...] They can also start to seek work. [...] Three months after the obtention of the status, France allows refugees to work. CC can take part in this process by accompanying welcomed persons to seek employment. Vocational training is organized by [French regional employment agencies called] ‘*Pôle Emploi*.’ We should remember that the knowledge of French is an essential condition to get a position.”

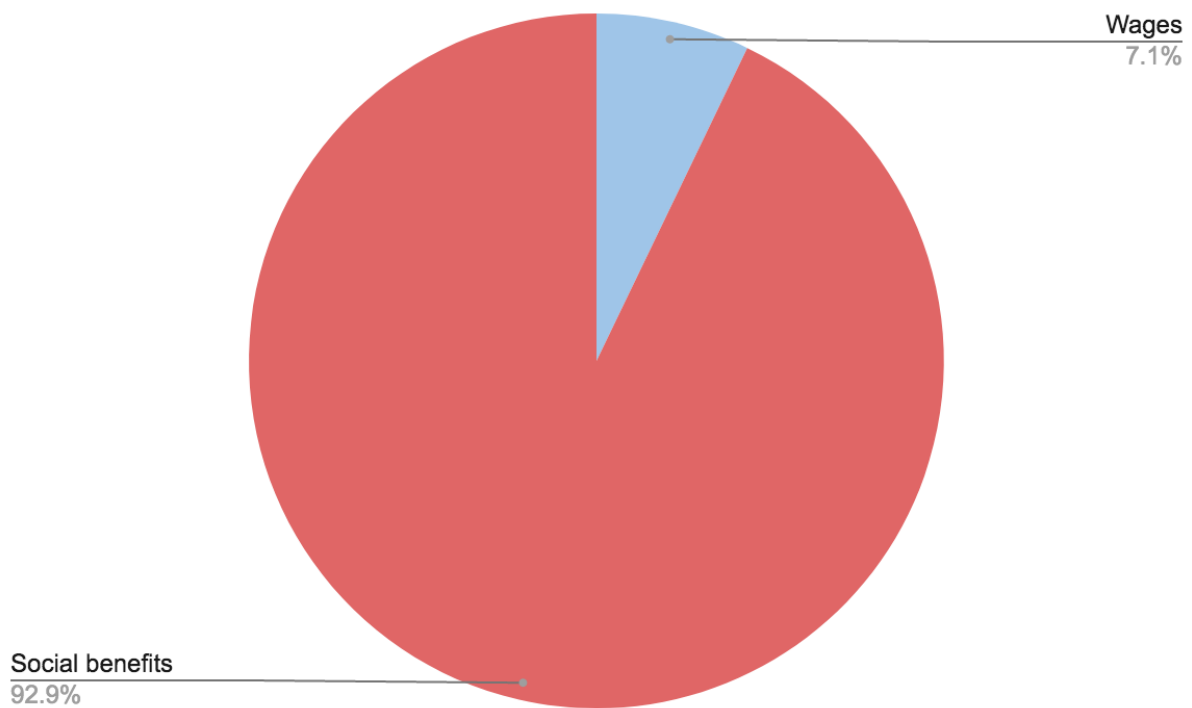
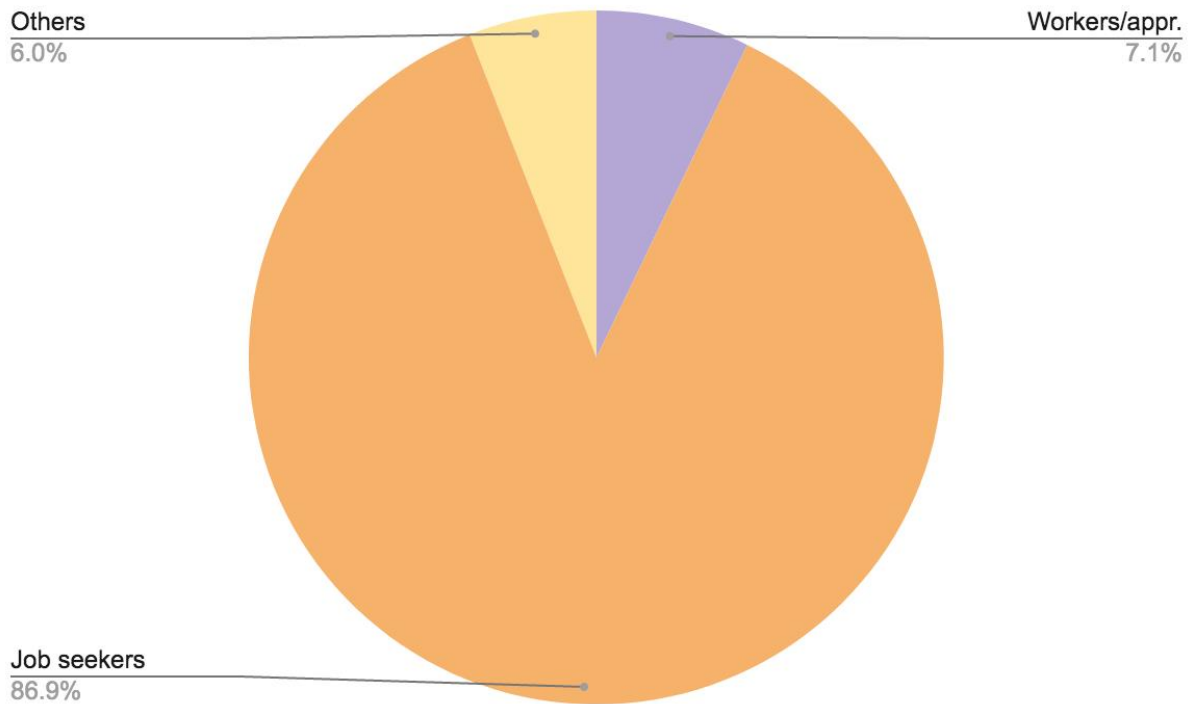
Data gathered from the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” excludes information about minors 16 years old and younger—the French compulsory school age—and most of the persons under 25 years of age (because

they are excluded from RSA social benefit). However, information includes some specific situations that are not mentioned in the “*livret d’accueil*,” like a social benefit allotted to adult persons which have disabilities, called “*Allocation Adulte Handicapé*” (AAH). Additionally, in analyzing data, the choice was made to consider only adults that have secured their status for more than three months.<sup>63</sup> 84 cases of HCP participants were examined (out of a total of 160 welcomed persons that have obtained their status). Three different situations were distinguished: they may either be workers/apprentices, job seekers, or fit into another category (university students, adults unable to work because of their disability, etc.). Two different financial resources have also been characterized: wages (for workers or apprentices) and social benefits (for the rest of cases), as we can observe in the table and the two charts below.

<b>RD</b>	<b>Workers/ apprentices</b>	<b>Job seekers</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Wages</b>	<b>Social benefits</b>
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA) 46 benef.	3	40	3	3	43
Rhône-Alpes (RA) 10 benef.	0	10	0	0	10
Arc-Médit. (AM) 13 benef.	1	10	2	1	12
Grand Est (GE) 10 benef.	0	10	0	0	10
Ile-de-France (IF) 5 benef.	2	3	0	2	3
Hors-pôle (HP) 0 benef.	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total 84 Benef.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>78</b>

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<sup>63</sup> See insert above.



The immense majority of participants – around 87% – are currently job seekers and their financial resources seem to be mostly dependent on various French social benefits (in around 93% of cases). Only approximately 7% of them are currently earning wages from their work or their vocational training. Therefore, we can estimate that the financial independence of refugees is almost always linked to the French welfare system, and only in a few cases to wages from their professional position or trainee.

Another important aspect for assessing the impact of HCP, always connected to the resources of participants, is their accommodation. Indeed, as Sophie de Croutte explains, “Once they can finance food and once their host and the [local] CC estimate that they can recover the costs of a rent and its charges [by] RSA or wages, they can start to leave the program, [at least] in terms of accommodation. If they do this, they will benefit from APL [as allowed by] CAF.<sup>64</sup> ...CC are however still active, helping them with the administration, schooling of children, French lessons, etc..”<sup>65</sup> In other words, families can start to exit the program, becoming independent in their accommodation. Data contained in the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” allows us to estimate how many Family Units are still hosted by CC members and how many secured independent accommodation. If they left the program, additionally, the spreadsheet informs us about their housing period and about their current kind of accommodation. Four kinds of housing are distinguished, besides the hosting by a CC member: traditional leasing, adapted leasing, social leasing and free leasing (see [table](#) below).

<b>RD</b>	<b>Still hosted by CC</b>	<b>Exit</b>	<b>For exited FUs: housing time period (average, months)</b>	<b>For exited FUs: current kind of accommodation</b>
Nouvelle Aquitaine (NA) 29 FUs	16	13	11,6	4 traditional housing (rent) 3 adapted housing 3 social housing 3 free housing
Rhône-Alpes (RA) 11 FUs	9	2	8,5	1 adapted housing 1 social housing
Arc-Médit. (AM) 8 FUs	5	3	16	1 traditional housing (rent) 2 adapted housing
Grand Est (GE) 6 FUs	5	1	13	1 traditional housing (rent)
Ile-de-France (IF) 7 FUs	7	0	0	0
Hors-pôle (HP) 1 FU	1	0	0	0
<b>Total 62 FUs</b>	43	19	11,8	/

A majority of FUs are still hosted by CC (42 out of a total of 62), even if around a third of them (n=19) can be considered independent from the housing standpoint. Monthly average hosting, for families that already exited the program, is close to 12, so we can assess that these FUs are independent after around one year of hosting by a CC member. Variations can be established however as well between RD and between the kind of accommodation they found once they leave their initial home.

The focus on resources of welcomed persons and their current housing tells us about the impact of the HCP, and exposes participants’ standpoint on the program. The 35 questionnaires we administered, as a sample of the whole number of refugees welcomed to the CC and FEP network, can help us in this task, even if and obviously the “*tableau de suivi*” can also be useful for gathering some missing data.

<sup>64</sup> “Caisse d’Allocations Familiales,” a French agency allowing social benefits.

<sup>65</sup> Interview of Sophie de Croutte (FEP), Paris, 19/2/20.



### 3. HCP from the standpoint of its participants

The 35 respondents to the questionnaire share most of the standard features of adult participants of HCP that were underlined earlier. All come either from Syria (n=27) or Iraq (n=8). The first of them arrived in France during the month of January 2018, and the most recent in November 2019. Males are slightly overrepresented compared to the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” (n=18, corresponding to 51.4%), but this data doesn’t seem to be very significant because the proportion of around 50%-50% is broadly respected. Their ages also respected the diversity of the whole welcomed population, ranging from 20 to 69 years old, as well as their current familial situation (a large majority of respondents are couples with children) and their geographical breakdown (even if questionnaires were submitted in only four of the five RD besides Hors-Pôle, a majority lives in NA, followed by RA, GE and IF). Two minor differences with FEP central platform spreadsheet can be noticed regarding the legal status of respondents (13 of them are asylum-seekers, eight obtained a 4-year card, 14 a 10-year card) and their current working situation (four respondents declared to have a work – one of them is farm worker, the other construction worker – or follow nowadays a vocational training – both are apprentice cooks). However, the proportions are essentially respected compared to the “*tableau de suivi*”: for legal status, around  $\frac{2}{3}$  of them have already obtained a card, the other third is still awaiting a decision by OFPRA or CNDA. The same goes for employment, as 31 respondents (around nine of ten) declared themselves job seekers.

All of those facts seem to validate the idea that the answers to the 35 questionnaires administered provide a good source of information about French HCP participants. We wanted in particular to ask about the program participants’ pathways; from their contact with FEP workers in Lebanon to their hosting by a CC in France, the help they received at each stage from social workers or volunteer hosts. We also asked about their expectations, hopes, fears and disappointments, both regarding the program itself and their own future. Answers to the questionnaires can also help us to understand if the primary distinguishing element of the French HRP – the double system of CC and RD led by a social worker – really helps participants to access their rights more quickly and also to integrate into French society. This information serves for validating or invalidating the two hypotheses (legal and sociocultural) that were proposed in the introduction to the French portion of this report.

#### **The identification process in Lebanon**

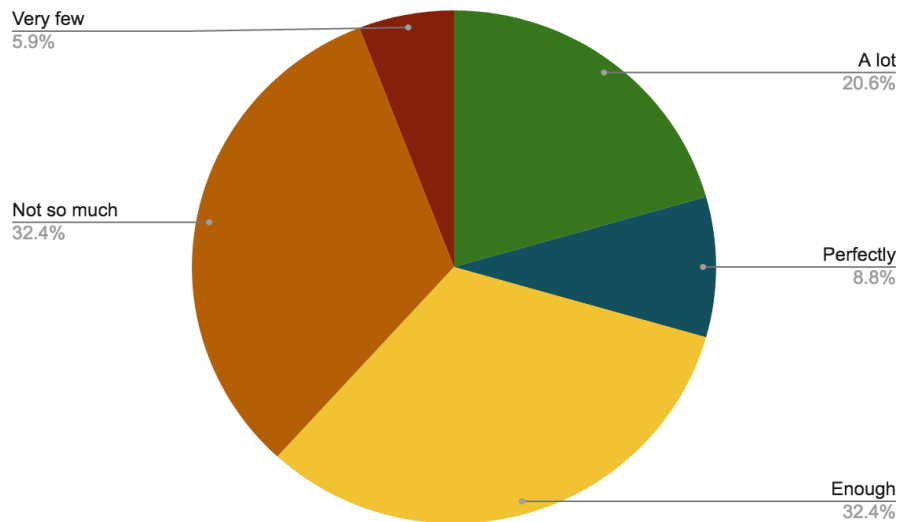
Respondents seem to be very divided about the perception of the first step of their involvement with HCP: their identification process in Lebanon. The 32 answers to the question “How was the screening process to access HCP, before you were definitively identified?” show that 50% of participants of the program found this process either “difficult” (n=13, 40.6%) or “very difficult” (n=3, 9.4%) when just less than a third of them consider that it was “easy” (n=7, 21.9%) or “very easy” (n=2, 6.3%). The rest of the respondents declare this stage as “intermediate” (n=7, 21.9%).

Analyzing the responses further, we notice that these variations seem not to be particularly linked to gender, age, or social features. Indeed, compared to the FEP “*tableau de suivi*,” respondents to the questionnaires were invited to give some information about their instruction level, their former work in their home country, and their former travels into a foreign country before the beginnings of the Syrian conflict in 2011. Taking a classical sociological hypothesis, these elements may allow us to give a first estimation of their “cultural capital,” a mechanism highlighted since the 1960s by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. According to him, a high level of cultural capital – including educational qualifications and other cultural skills (knowledge of foreign languages, travels in another country, etc.) largely inherited within families – help to access to the best working positions and also improve the understanding of the major issues in a series of fields.<sup>66</sup> According to this hypothesis, we might think that HCP participants who have considered that the process was “easy” or “very easy” would

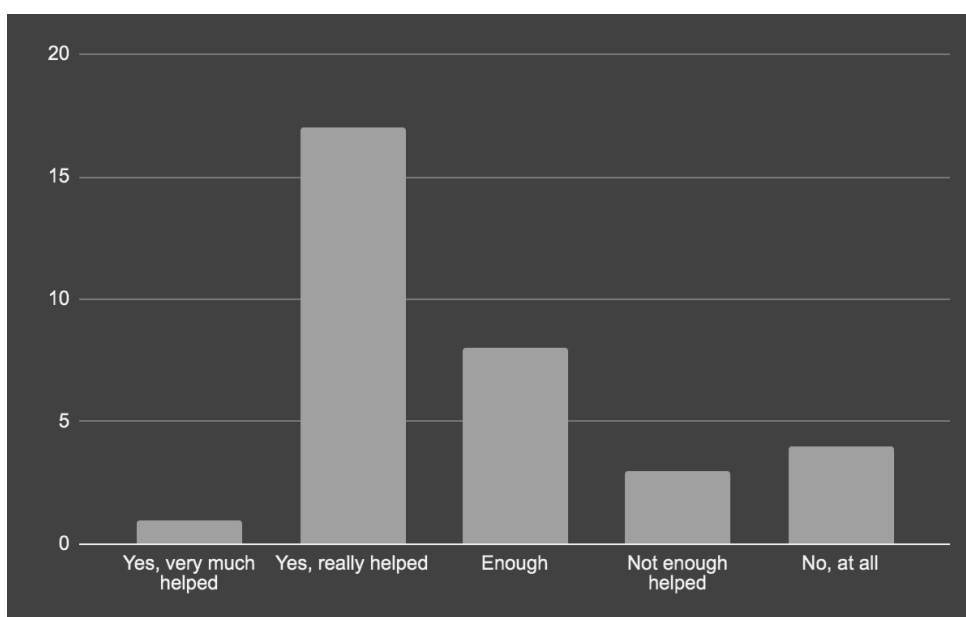
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<sup>66</sup> Bourdieu, 1966.

generally be those that had the highest educational titles as well as working positions in their original country and that had already travelled before the war. However, this hypothesis appears not to be operational here: one of the two respondents who considered that the process was “very easy” was a journalist (university grade, 3 years of studies) that had already travelled in France, Sweden, US and Denmark for professional reasons, but a former Syrian professor of biology (university grade, 4 years of studies) who already visited Turkey estimated for example that this step was “difficult” and the same went for another Syrian computer engineer (university grade, 5 years of studies). In other words, at this stage, all the refugees’ perceptions vary without the possibility of identifying links with their social features, as we can also attest by observing responses to the question “Do you think that information and advice given by a social worker in Lebanon allowed you to acquire the main skills needed to prepare your departure project?” (see [chart](#) below).



Around a third of the 34 respondents to this question considered that they were “enough” informed about their departure project (n=11), while just less than a third estimated that they have received “perfect” (n=3) or “a lot” (n=7) of helpful advice. The other third, in contrast, deplored a lack of information (n=13, 11 “not so much” and 2 “very few”). However, beyond these – hard or moderate – difficulties, a large number of respondents to another question, regarding the commitment of HCP team looking after them in Lebanon, estimated that workers were either “active” (n=18, 54.5%) or “very active” (n=8, 24.2%), whereas around only 20% considered the contrary. A similar trend can be observed for the following question, “Did you feel helped by social workers at each step before leaving Lebanon?” (see [chart](#) below).



A majority of respondents estimated that the HCP team “really” helped them, while another significant part considered they were supported “enough.” By contrast, a minority of respondents expressed their discontent. These elements seem to indicate that the identification process in Lebanon might be slightly improved, in particular in its informational aspects, but also that a large majority of HCP participants seems to appreciate the work of the program local team.

Identified participants have also been interrogated about their knowledge of the hosting country, and their expectations. Most of them (n=25, 71.4%) declared to know “very few” or “few” things about France before leaving Lebanon, when others affirmed to know France “enough” (n=5, 14.3%) or “a lot” (n=5, 14.3%). A large majority of 34 respondents to the following question, moreover, indicated that they expected very good conditions of hosting in France (n=22, 64.7%). Have their expectations been satisfied?

### Once in France

Welcomed persons’ pathways after their arrival in France obviously vary following a series of criteria. Some of them are linked to their former life, with their many traumas and hopes accorded to the HCP; some others depend on the material and affective conditions of hosting by a local CC. In an article of 2013, Nader Vahabi mobilized the classical notion of the “career” as intended by the American interactionist sociology – a “sequential model of transitions from one position to another, considering individual stories as a series of commitments to norms and institutions that entail changes in behaviors and opinions”<sup>67</sup> – to identify a “migrational career.” Integration to the host country is one of the 5 different “steps” in this “career,” coming after preparation time, exodus, permanence in a “no man’s land” and just before the potential come-back to the countries of origin or to a third country. Four different invariable factors take part in the construction of a “migrational career”: “life path, legal status, work (a great socializer), and [various] resources.”<sup>68</sup> Each individual step in this career also includes a series of “adaptations.” This factor has been revealed by the authors of the book *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations*, when they wrote, regarding the integration step: “private hosting [...] can generate a series of interrogations and fears by migrants, implying complex adaptations. However, it [can also represent] a means of providing [them] with some unexpected

<sup>67</sup> Vahabi, 2013:14.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*: 16.

resources,”<sup>69</sup> whose most important are the moral and legal support that they receive from their welcoming hosts. Private hosting is also a “springboard to socioprofessional integration. The creation of “strong links” with hosting families allows hosted people to access “weak links”: [in other terms] it opens [to refugees] familial, friendly or professional networks”<sup>70</sup> that are supposed to help them to integrate the welcoming country economy and society.

Considering these different hypotheses and combining them with our previous suppositions, three different aspects are explored among the responses given to the questionnaires by the 35 HCP participants: their legal integration, including larger representations of French institutions; their sociocultural integration, both through their social environment (neighbors, social workers, friends, CC, etc.) and language learning; and their economic integration, including their current accommodation, and work.

### ***Legal integration***

If we choose to focus on “legal” aspects in the narrow sense, only one question would help us to assess refugees’ integration, besides the number of procedures achieved or the kind of status they received. Indeed, as noticed before, all of the respondents have sought an asylum request soon after their arrival in France and a majority of them already received a 10-year or a 4-year card. However, how many of them felt supported in this process by CC members and/or FEP social workers? The questionnaire reveals that the immense majority of the 34 respondents to this question found that they were “sufficiently looked after at this step of the procedure” (n=31, 91.2%) when only 3 of them express a contrary opinion (8.8%), without any possibility of knowing the reasons for their satisfaction or of their discontent.

For this reason, participants’ “legal” integration could also be assessed by the opinions that they express about several welcoming country administrations and private organizations. All these structures are supposed to actively play a role in their integration pathway, allowing them to access to a series of different rights (asylum, security of persons, freedom of religion, health, work, education). How did refugees feel about them? Have they been sufficiently supported? In one question, in particular, the questionnaire invited the participants of HCP to assign a grade from between 1 and 5 to the quality of support they received from 10 different structures since their arrival in France, ranging from parishes and associations to schools and OFPRA. Responses to this question were combined with a series of other interrogations about their current feelings regarding safety, religious freedom, and relationships to French healthcare (see insert below).

#### **HCP participants’ rights vs feelings**

The right to asylum: a majority of 29 respondents rated the support they received by OFPRA by a grade of 5 (n=14) or 4 (n=4), but a strong minority assigned to this administration a grade of 3 (n=7). 4 respondents expressed more negative judgments (n=1, 2; n=3, 1).

The right to security: a vast majority of the 35 respondents to the question “Do you feel safe in France?” answered “a lot” (n=24, 68.6%) or “heavily” (n=5, 14.3%), when only 6 of them (17.1%) estimated to be “sufficiently” safe there.

The right to freely practice a religion: a majority of the 29 respondents to the question “Here, in France, do you feel that you can take part in a religious community and practice your faith as you want?” answered either “completely” (n=4, 13.8%) or “a lot” (n=10, 34.5%). 13 of them, however, answered only “enough” (n=13, 44.8%), when 2 gave negative judgments (n=1, 3.4% “few”; n=1, 3.4% “very few”).

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<sup>69</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 93.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*: 110.

The right to health: 26 of the 32 respondents to the question “How did you feel with French healthcare?” considered either that they felt “very good” (n=16, 50%) or “good” (n=10, 31.3%), when only four of them estimated that they had either “difficulties” (n=3, 9.4%) or “hard difficulties” (n=1, 3.1%) with this system. The two other respondents described an intermediary situation (n=2, 6.3%). The same goes for the question who asked them to rate the help they received from medical centers: out of a total of 26 respondents, 18 of them assigned the grade of 5, 7 of them of 4 and only one of them of 3 to healthcare.

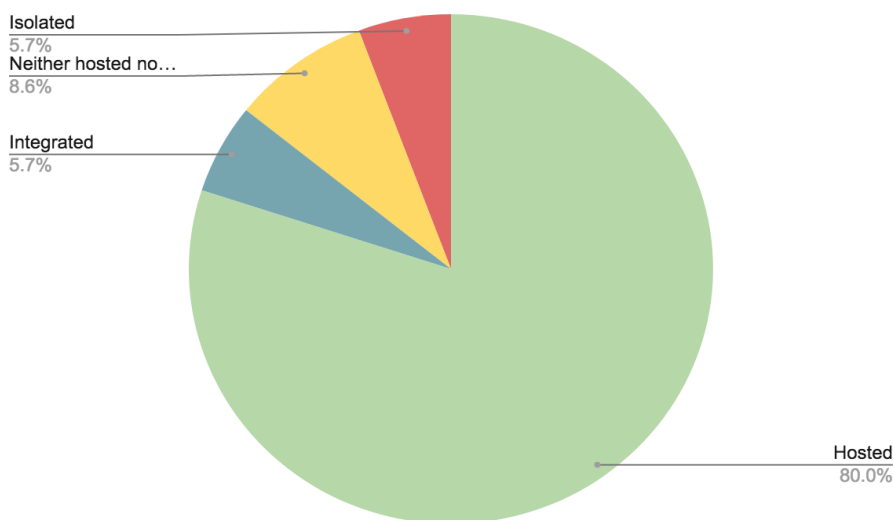
The right to work: only 3 respondents rated the help received by trade unions, showing a general lack of knowledge about these structures (and, maybe, a misunderstanding of this question), so results seem not to be so significant. More judgments were expressed about their backing from the French employment agency, *Pôle Emploi*. Even if only 11 respondents answered this question, the grades they assigned show a very divided situation: 5 of them rated it by 3, 2 of them rated it either by 1 or 4 and 2 of them rated it either by 2 or 5. In other words, work seems to represent one of mains pitfalls encountered by welcomed persons, as the analysis of the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” has already suggested and as the assessment about economic integration will go on to confirm.

The right to education: a strong majority of 27 respondents rated help from schools by a grade of 5 (n=21), 4 of them by a 4 and 3 of them by a 2.

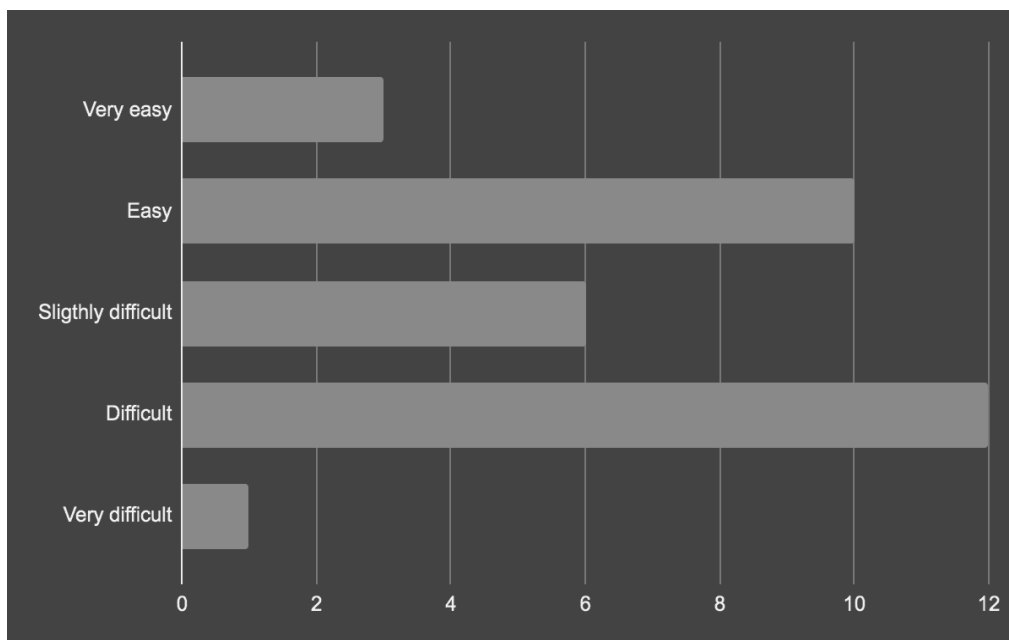
The general positive judgment on schools – the second most appreciated structure by the respondents behind associations (intended both as faith-based structures and CC: 22 respondents out of a total of 31 rated their help by a 5, eight of them by a 4) – and the majority good opinions expressed, in particular, about healthcare, religious freedom, and security, invite us to target some more sociocultural aspects of the HCP.

### ***Sociocultural integration***

First, refugees were questioned about their feelings after the first contact with French society: did they feel hosted, integrated, isolated or rejected? (see [chart](#) below).



80% of the 35 respondents (n=28) described themselves as “hosted,” 5.7% as “integrated” (n=2), 8.6% as “neither hosted or isolated” (n=3) and 5.7% as “isolated.” It is important to notice that nobody answered “rejected.” However, focusing on the social environment, the situation described by a majority of respondents doesn’t look so rosy, in particular regarding neighborly relationships (see [chart](#) below).



A majority of the 32 respondents to this question described their neighborly relations as “slightly difficult” (n=6), “difficult” (n=12) or “very difficult” (n=1), when 10 of them characterized relationships as “easy” (n=10) or “very easy” (n=3). A similar split can be observed when we asked them if they have French friends that they can call if necessary, beyond social workers: out of a total of 35 respondents, 20 of them answered “yes” and 15 of them “no.”<sup>71</sup> By comparison, 30 of them affirm to have other family members or friends coming from their country of origin living nowadays in another region of France, and 32 in another EU state.

Analyzing the results further, we tried to relate the former answers – in particular those about the first contact with the French society, the neighborly relations, and French friends – with the following factors: the kind of housing (rural/urban), the date of arrival in France (from more to less recent), the composition of FU. Our original idea was to try to identify a possible link between time and social proximity.<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately, due to small sample size, data do not allow us to conclude in this direction without any doubt; they only open an avenue for future research. So far, we can only assess that a majority of HCP participants are currently in a transitory situation, asking to reinforce their social integration beyond FEP and CC networks.

Another way to achieve refugees’ sociocultural integration is language learning.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, since their arrival in France, the “*livret d’accueil*” edited by FEP warns them on this point (see [insert](#) below).

<sup>71</sup> The phrasing of this question is subject to critique, as we will notice on the conclusion of this report.

<sup>72</sup> Intended, here, both as kinds of less impersonal relations that is possible to build in small-sized, rural towns where a CC is active and an integration through schooling of the children.

<sup>73</sup> According to sociologists Simona Tersigni and Lorenzo Navone, the question of language training can also be envisioned as a constraint imposed by EU policies to assimilate migrants, a sort of “soft management of bodies” within other techniques according to philosopher Foucault’s analysis [Tersigni and Navone, 2018: 124-125]. However, the

**Language (extracts from FEP “livret d’accueil”)**

“How is your life in France organized during the first year?”

French Lessons: the learning of French must be a priority, because it is the key to a better integration in French society. It is important to start lessons as soon as possible, for all family members, without any distinction of gender or age. [...] [An agency called] OFII will offer you 400 hours of language training. However, [...] CC volunteers can also organize lessons in order to allow you to integrate in French society as fast as possible. Your personal commitment is essential, because French is a very complex language. We invite you to work hard on it. French learning is also the primary way to find a job position once you have obtained a status.

[...]

Interculturality, laicity, and everyday life.

Language: The official language is French. Please note that several people master English there, and that there exist a lot of Arabic-speaking communities, especially in the big cities. However, it is asked that you try to not hide behind your native language, because you have to speak French every day in your new life. We should remember that knowledge of French is an essential condition to get a position.”

Questionnaires aren’t really useful for this task, because the 35 respondents were only questioned about their “consider[ation of] French training [as] a priority [for them],” and all of them had obviously answered “yes” to this question. However, we can estimate French language progress of – at least – the 84 adult participants that have already secured a status by OFPRA or CNDA<sup>74</sup> by analyzing the FEP “*tableau de suivi*.” Indeed, the central platform team dedicated two columns of their spreadsheet to the “initial level” and to the “final level” of language of the HCP participants. Hence, it is possible to estimate the impact of French language training by OFII agency and volunteers from local CC on the whole hosted adult “*refugié*” or “*protection subsidiaire*” persons. General results show a more or less significant improvement for at least a quarter of them, as we can see in the [chart](#) below.

At the very beginning of the process, according to information gathered by FEP central platform team, only three participants had an intermediary knowledge of French, when one of them was already “advanced.” After several months – or years – of language training, a majority of participants continue to be “beginners” (59 out of a total of 84), but 15 of them improved to “intermediate” level, seven of them to an “advanced” level and three of them can be considered “bilingual” nowadays. By this way we can affirm the achievement, even if in variable proportions, of language training effort toward a better cultural integration to France.<sup>75</sup>

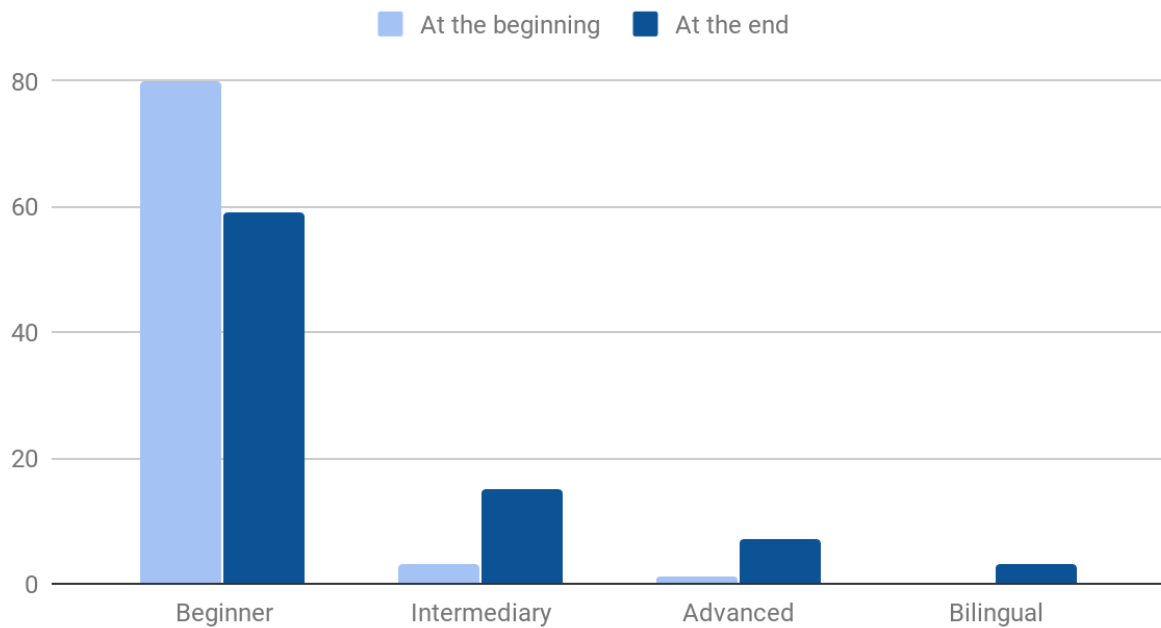
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choice was made here to follow the recommendations of HCP promoters, analyzing language training as a means to integrate French society.

<sup>74</sup> See above, Part I.

<sup>75</sup> Whereas, for further surveys, it would be interesting to combine data gathered by FEP with questions submitted to the whole hosted population, in order to assess relationships between their integration feelings and their French level.

## French level / Cultural integration



As set out in the “*livret d’accueil*,” language learning could also represent a springboard to find a job (one of the main avenues, with social benefits, to reach an economic independence), despite the difficulties in this field noted earlier by the analysis of data gathered from the FEP “*tableau de suivi*.”

### ***Economic integration***

Focusing on the 35 questionnaires, two main priorities were brought to the fore by a large majority of respondents: finding a job and an independent accommodation. Indeed, only five of the 32 respondents to the question “Do you consider finding work to be a priority for you?” gave a negative answer (18.8%), and this proportion even decreased – falling to one individual respondent (representing 3% out of a total of 33 answering refugees) – for a similar question regarding private housing. However, as mentioned before, questionnaires’ results also reflect an awkward situation on both fronts: only four of the 35 respondents are currently working or following vocational training;<sup>76</sup> moreover, a majority of welcomed persons which were questioned are still hosted, under various forms, by CC volunteers.

Looking for independent accommodation is maybe the most problematic point emerging by the analysis of the answers to the questionnaire: indeed, respondents are very divided on their current housing situation. From a general standpoint, more than 40% of the 35 welcomed persons declared

<sup>76</sup> They were questioned about the ways they found their job: even if the sample (n=4) is tiny as-possible, two of them indicated they secured it by their – former or current – host network, another one by HCP team (FEP network association or RD) and the last one by a charitable association (independent from FEP network). That seems to confirm Agier’s previous hypothesis about “weak links” as a way to get a position (see above, part II - B) but the negligible size of the sample doesn’t allow for any definitive conclusion.



themselves quite unhappy (n=6, 17.1%) or very dissatisfied (n=9, 25.7%) about their ongoing accommodation, while five of them affirmed to be “sufficiently satisfied” (14.3%), 12 of them to be “very satisfied” (34.3%) and three of them to be “totally satisfied” (8.6%). Analyzing the results further, we can see that almost all of those who are either unhappy or totally dissatisfied are still hosted by CC members,<sup>77</sup> even when they live in an individual room. In other words, satisfaction about housing seems to be more related to a feeling of dependence on hosts, the CC members, than to sharing spaces with other family members. Indeed, participants have also been interrogated about their room-sharing: a majority of those declaring that they share their room with 2 or more family members (10 out of a total of 13 respondents) are either “very” or “sufficiently” satisfied of their current accommodation. Free responses at the end of the questionnaire can however qualify this conclusion: for example, a young woman, answering the last question, “Do you want to say something else?” begged us: “Please, can you find a little house for us, because I’m pregnant and I’m living now in a tiny room with my husband and my daughter?”

Job-seeking and looking for independent accommodation are also two of the recurrent “hopes,” amongst others, that were expressed answering the open question “Can you say, in a few words and possibly in French, what is your main hope for the future?” Eight different categories of hope were distinguished regarding the responses, and then classified from the most to the least recurrent, as we can see in the [table](#) below.

Hopes for future	Mentions (total)	Example (fragments of sentences)
To find a job	12	“To find work”
Children’s social mobility/health/school results	9	“That children will become doctors or engineers”
To find an independent accommodation	7	“Finding a house”
To join/see again/bring to France/ their family	6	“That my nephews, who are still in Syria, will join us in France.”
To acquire French nationality/refugee status	4	“To have status at OFPRA”
To learn/improve French	4	“Learning French”
End of war in Syria	4	“That war in Syria will end soon”
To have a car	3	“To get a driver’s licence and to have a car”
Others	3	“Finish writing my book of poems”

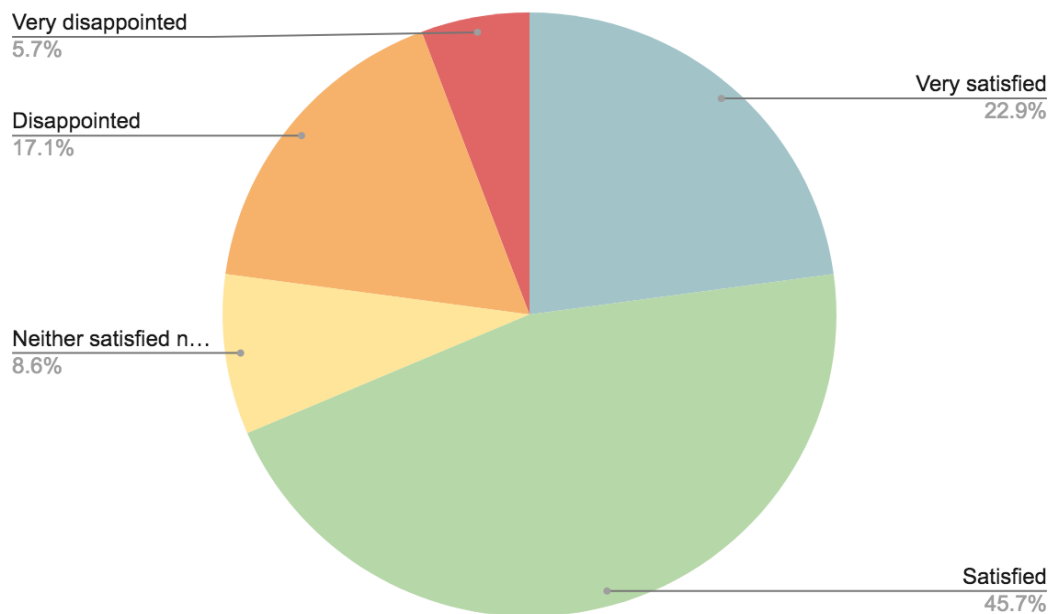
The most mentioned hopes<sup>78</sup> for the future by the 33 respondents to this question were job-finding (12 mentions, rank 1), children’s social mobility, health, or school success (9 mentions, rank 2) and getting an independent home (7 mentions, rank 3), even if Syrian political or personal situations were often quoted as well. These considerations draw our attention to the ongoing positive points and difficulties about the HCP.

### Positive points and difficulties

<sup>77</sup> Only one of them, a single without children, has already exited the program, but he is currently living with a family who lodges him for free.

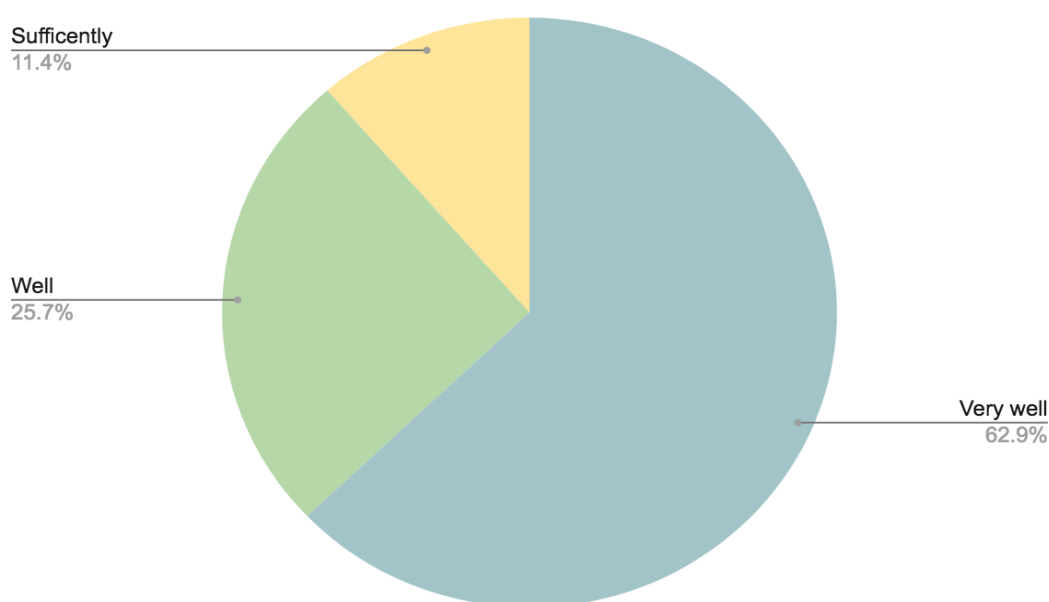
<sup>78</sup> Please note that if respondents mentioned more than a single hope in their answer, every single wish has been classified into a distinct category, so the total is not exactly corresponding to 33 answers.

In their 2018 report, *Secours Catholique* highlighted “overall satisfaction and appreciation of the project by welcomed persons; [...] the majority of respondents felt timely and well informed about their roles and responsibilities. Welcomed persons further noted that the most positive experience was a warm welcome at the airport and the extensive support provided by host groups” (see [Appendix 1](#)). The faith-based association pointed out, however, some difficulties, recommending more particularly giving participants “access to job market and French courses from the moment of the registration of asylum claim,” in order to “foster [their] integration,” and to “ensure access to ADA allowance for housing,” because “host groups commit themselves in the project with large financial amounts in order to support Welcomed persons. In some cases, the amount for the first three months of hosting exceeds 3000 EUR” (*idem*). In other words, French learning, job-seeking and accommodation were already three of the main problems that emerged from that survey in 2018. In 2020, around two years later, the responses to our questionnaires show that a large majority of welcomed persons continue to appreciate the project, confirming their overall satisfaction of participants already observed in 2018 by *Secours Catholique*. Indeed, more than the two thirds of the 35 respondents to the question “Compared to expectations you had before leav[ing Lebanon], you are nowadays [very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor disappointed, disappointed, very disappointed] by HCP?” estimated the program either positively (n=16, 45.7%) or very positively (n=8, 22.9%), when only a minority expressed negative judgments (6 “disappointed,” 17.1% and 2 “very disappointed,” 5.7%), as we can see in the [chart](#) below.



Despite this, when they were interrogated, in another question, about the effectiveness of the French “HCP system (voluntary committees and regional divisions) to provide [them] with all that [they] need[ed] to face [their] new life in France (healthcare, schooling of children, etc.),” all of the 35 respondents expressed positive judgments,<sup>79</sup> ranging from “sufficiently” (n=4, 11.4%) to “well” (n=9, 25.7%) and “very well” (n=22, 62.9%), as we can observe in the [chart](#) below.

<sup>79</sup> Although the questionnaire gave them five different possibilities for this response, including “few” and “very few.”



A final means of assessing the overall satisfaction about the program by its participants is represented by the free responses that a majority of them gave to the last query of the questionnaire, “Do you want to say something else?” A large majority of welcomed persons would like to thank “France, the association and everyone for the hosting” (a 30-year-old Iraqi woman), “Sant’Egidio and FEP” (a 30-year-old man from Syria) or the local “volunteers of Orthez” (a 67-year old Syrian woman). More surprisingly, one respondent recommended “new welcomed families to take care of the accommodations loaned” by CC members (a 38-year-old man from Iraq), when another declared himself a “volunteer to help new families” (a 30-year-old Iraqi man). All of these elements allow us to conclude in the same direction as the previous survey of 2018.

Some of the final responses are however more critical: for example, a 22-year-old man from Syria asks if it is possible “to accelerate the procedure at OFPRA?” while another 38-year-old Syrian man would like to “have more language training.” Those responses bring out the difficulties that seem still to remain after three years of HCP implementation.

As referred to earlier, the 2018 report by *Secours Catholique* identified some particular pitfalls concerning the asylum-seeking procedure, language learning, access to the job market, and housing.<sup>80</sup> We already pointed out most of these difficulties in the previous paragraphs of our own survey, despite a slight improvement about the French training, and brought to light a couple of additional issues, regarding in particular, friendly and neighborly relations. Some of these difficulties have also been expressed by HCP participants answering the open question “Can you say, in a few words and possibly in French, what is your main fear for the future?” As we did for the “hopes” table, we distinguished and ranked seven different categories of fear according to responses (see [table](#) below).

Fears for future	Mentions (total)	Example (fragments of sentences)
Reject of the asylum seeking/ status-related	6	“To return in Syria at the end of the 4 years of “ <i>protection subsidiaire</i> ” status.

<sup>80</sup> Including a feeling of dependence on CC members by most refugees in the detailed version of the report, which has been published in French.

Not to find a job/home	5	“Not to find a job and a home”
No fear/no more fears	4	“I have no more fear over here because France is a rule of law country.”
Political/cultural situation in France	3	“Racism and problem of Islamic handcraft”
Fear for family members which remained in Syria or Iraq	2	“I fear that my nephews that are still in Syria would die over there”
Political situation in Syria	2	“That Bachar El-Assad continues to be president.”

The most mentioned fears for the future by the 26 respondents to this questions are the rejection of their asylum request or the end of their “*protection subsidiaire*” card (6 mentions, rank 1), unemployment and/or dependence on CC members (5 mentions, rank 2), and problems related to the cultural and political situation in the host country like racism or the rise of the Far Right (3 mentions, rank 4), while 4 of them seem to be particularly confident and affirm having currently “no fear” or “no more fears” (rank 2). In other words, welcoming, integration in the host country, housing and work constitute particular matters of concern for welcomed persons, confirming some of the analysis of the report been published in 2018 by *Secours Catholique*. If the dual system imagined three years ago by the FEP is generally satisfactory, we can expect to see some improvements, in particular in the areas of language training, cultural integration, access to the employment market and to independent housing. This appears, from participants’ standpoints, to be indispensable. Do social workers and CC members share this point of view about the program implementation?

## 4. HCP from standpoints of FEP regional divisions and citizen committees

Interviews with CC members and RD social workers may help answer this question and, at the same time, to test some other hypotheses. By investigating more particularly three of the five Regional Divisions, indeed, we would like to verify our main supposition that the French HCP dual system really facilitates tasks like cultural mediation, and increases chances of participants' legal, social and cultural integration.<sup>81</sup> However, we will also assess if it is possible to incorporate HCP into a larger, innovative category of hosting identified by the authors of the recent book *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations* as “à la carte” and “without constraint.”<sup>82</sup> By these terms, they describe a kind of “easy, feasible and soft hosting” which aims to be “an opportunity for meeting the Other,” and to avoid affecting “the ordinary life of hosting families.”<sup>83</sup> They based their categorization on the observation of seven privately-sponsored programs apparently similar to HCP, sharing some common characteristics. The kind of hosting they promote is “easy,” which means “without any risks for the hosts, because the program secures a trusting relationship.” It is also “feasible,” intended as “affordable from a financial standpoint.” Finally, this kind of welcoming is “soft”: “hosts don't have to look after hosted families, because associations or institutional partners ensure social and administrative monitoring.”<sup>84</sup> Do these features correspond to the action of French CC and RD? What are the specificities of HCP, and what are the characteristics it shares with other privately-sponsored programs?

For our survey, as noticed earlier, we had an opportunity to question two RD social workers and no fewer than five CC members, because the two officials we interviewed are considered part of them.<sup>85</sup> We will provide a short description of their life paths later. We chose to anonymize their interviews as well as the welcomed persons they mentioned during interviews. In contrast, RD social workers haven't been anonymized, because their contacts are easily traceable.<sup>86</sup>

In this part, we will first report on the logistics of hosting, from the creation of a CC to the material preparation of arrivals by the RD. We will then describe their support for welcomed persons once in France, and their efforts to give them the necessary independence to exit the program. Finally, we will expose some positive points about the program implementation but also some difficulties that CC members and social workers are currently expecting.

### Hosting groundwork

According to the French version of the 2018 report by *Secours Catholique*, we can observe that a majority of local CC they questioned (16 out of a total of 27) were specifically created for the needs of HCP, although some of them already existed: authors mentioned, for example, the case of a CC founded near Paris soon after Pope Francis' appeal for refugees in 2015. They also note that three of those CC weren't originally created to accommodate people (they had other aims, like sociocultural accompaniment), but that they reconverted in this task: HCP is their first experience as hosting groups. Finally, 85% of the CC they interrogated declared that they had been informed of the existence of the HCP by a partner organization or a parish network, while 15% of them affirmed that they discovered the existence of the program from the press. During our own survey, we interrogated members about the creation of the CC they belong to. The genealogy of local committees seems to vary as well as the profiles of hosts (see insert below).

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<sup>81</sup> See above, introduction: emerging research questions.

<sup>82</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 40.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*: 41-43.

<sup>85</sup> *Idem*: methodology.

<sup>86</sup> For example, on the FEP website, at the end of the monthly newsletter “*lettre aux hébergeurs*” (see Appendix 2) or in the first chart of this report (see above, introduction).

### Profile of CC members/hosts

The authors of *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations* distinguished some common features regarding hosts: in general, they hold an advanced diploma (4 years of university studies or more); they have high employment positions (lawyers, doctors, university professors, etc.) or they are artists; around 50% of them are householders; they generally committed to the program after a “moral shock” like the 2015 “mediatization of deaths in Mediterranean Sea” or the “presence of migrant camps behind their windows.”<sup>87</sup> However, the rest of their life paths – as well as their familial, political and religious socializations – seem to differ quite significantly, except maybe for the fact that, for many of them, “hosting a refugee is the first experience of commitment they had in their life.”<sup>88</sup> With such a reduced number of interviews like ours, our purpose is not to confirm or deny these conclusions, but simply to observe that the 5 members we interrogated seem to share some of the common features highlighted by the authors of the 2019 book. Indeed, they generally have high positions (prefecture official, retired professor, entrepreneur, arts and crafts potter, professional of the “third sector”) and educational qualifications (most of them followed 5 or more years of studies). They also generally own their house. However, a majority of members we have questioned were previously committed toward refugees in various ways. For example, the Grand Brassac CC founder remembered that her “parents helped refugees from Serbian civil war when she was a child,” while the Bordeaux prefecture delegate quoted her “experience at the cabinet for humanitarian action of minister Bernard Kouchner” during the 1990s. Orthez former mayor had a “strong engagement” with CIMADE (a Protestant association following asylum-seekers) and the Orthez CC founder had a “50 years long commitment to FEP” (she is currently a member of the executive board of FEP for the Southwest of France). Except this, their life paths differ significantly, ranging from a long career in public administration to the creation of a business, from a long religious commitment to fight inequalities to a sudden “shock” upon becoming aware of migrant problems, etc., representing a variety of profiles reflected in the composition and the *modus operandi* of each local CC.

The founder of Orthez CC explained to us, for example, that they created the group in 2015, two years before the official start of the HCP, but its origins

“Go back to November 2014, when the FEP president François Clavairolly called for support of Christians in the Middle-East. [...] We thought: we can’t ignore that. What can we do? [...] So we decided to create a questionnaire and to pass it out to each [Protestant] parish member, directly in church, in order to assess how they could contribute. For example, financial support, language learning, transport [...]. One member answered she had chickens, so she could provide eggs. Another said that he had a bed he didn’t use anymore. [...] And the mayor of Orthez, [who is] the brother of [the other founder of the local CC] told me: I have two empty apartments belonging to the municipality, near the school. We were ready to host refugees!” (CC member, Orthez, NA division<sup>89</sup>) Another CC member in RA division said: “I am a potter. I owned a place for professional training. When I stopped this training activity, the place remained empty. I heard on the radio about all of those people in the streets, all those camps [of migrants] in the towns... So, after a two-years period of reflection, [which] is a lot of time, I decided to visit a close friend. [...] We wrote a letter to all of our friends and, in the next few days, I exposed my project to the mayor. [...] We sent around 30 emails. 15 days later, almost all of the people we contacted came for a first meeting. Then, we contacted FEP and other associations. We organized another meeting, this time in a room loaned by the municipality. We were 80-90! [...] At the very beginning, our collective was very informal, but we improved little

<sup>87</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 70-71.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*: 72-73.

<sup>89</sup> Names of interviewed people, henceforth, will be resigned directly after their quote.

by little. [...] We had urgencies, like restoring the place, finding a stove, tiling, etc. We have done that in only one month” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

As we can observe from these first extracts, “citizen hosting” doesn’t necessarily mean accommodating participants “at home,” giving them one (or more) room(s) of a private apartment or house “with the permission of the whole family members, especially of children,”<sup>90</sup> as described by the authors of the book *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations*. This is only one of the possibilities offered by HCP, as the case of the Bordeaux prefecture delegate shows:

“My son moved to Canada last year, so he left his room and his [private] bathroom. [...] I found at the Prefecture a paper by “*Diaconat de Bordeaux*” explaining that they were looking for voluntary hosts owning, at least, a room and a bathroom. [...] I called my son in Canada, he agreed, so I called the phone number I found on the paper. [...] Tarik [NA social worker] came home to see how [the young refugee] would be hosted. [...] And at the end of February, [he] arrived!” (Bordeaux prefecture delegate and host, NA division)

Not only the variety of their origins and profiles of CC members, but also the diversity of accommodation offered<sup>91</sup> attests to their independent manner of functioning. Some are more formal than others; some concern an elevated number of active members, others are based on the actions of only a few people; some are finance their activities almost exclusively by membership fees, others by a series of activities, etc. For example, in Grand Brassac:

“Our blog is followed by more than 200 subscribers, but we are around 60 ‘real’ CC members I think, I mean people paying fees. But we organized a lunch recently and we were around 150, we also organized a concert and there were even more people. [...] Finally, we are 5 young members very committed to looking after families from an administrative standpoint. We give other activities to retired people. I know other CC, and I’m conscious that they are supported by the actions of retired people. Here, it’s the contrary...” (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

Lhuis CC is slightly different:

“We send regular information to around 150 people. Not all are members of the association. But we have the chance to gather people with competencies in different fields (papers, finances, communication...), so we divide tasks. For example, 3 members are committed to healthcare, 2 help with the school. [...] We are an association, but we are not pyramidal: we regularly organize assemblies, then we split the work between different groups. We have no president of the association. All the groups are open to everyone. [...] We have a group called “animation,” and they organize events. Recently, they organized a concert. 140 people came, raising 2000€. [...] Syrian women prepared dishes that were sold there for 5€ each. They also organized three film screenings” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

In Orthez, one of the first CC created in France:

“There is a minimum fee of 10€ per year. We also have regular donations: someone gives 100€ per month, others 50€. [...] [We have to consider that] rent of an apartment, with extra costs [water, electricity, etc.], is around 600€ per month, so when first families arrived, we called for donations to the church, and we gathered 3000€ in a single week! [...] But soon after, we realized that we needed to divide tasks. So, we appointed a person who would be responsible for healthcare [...], a treasurer, a vice-president. [...] We also have volunteers for language training. Tarik [NA social worker] followed the whole process at the OFPRA.” (CC member, Orthez, NA division)

Besides these differences, all CC members highlighted a privileged relationship they built with their responsible RD representative – the social worker – and the FEP national platform team since the establishment of a hosting project. Céline Clement (GE division) and Aurélie Fillod (RA division), the two social intervention professionals we interviewed, explain that their roles, at this stage, are:

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<sup>90</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 50.

<sup>91</sup> Some members are explicitly opposed to any hosting granted by French families: the Orthez CC founder affirms that “she always opposed welcoming by families” because, in her opinion, “granting a quality hosting implies a certain distance between hosting and hosted people.”

- Firstly, to recruit potential hosts, making contact with existing CC or helping to form new ones. They can in particular provide training, called “hosting and understanding each other” (Aurélie Fillod, RA division).
  - Secondly, to “present HCP and divide tasks between CC members. Because [RD social workers] face an increasing number of requests about the Middle East and about concrete aspects of hosting, [they] can show documentaries or organize talks with volunteers coming from the same RD” (Céline Clément, GE division).
  - Thirdly, to visit the place where refugees will potentially be hosted, in order to verify that the house or the apartment complies with the project standards (“provide decent accommodation,” Aurélie Fillod, RA division).
  - Fourthly, to prepare hosts and CC networks for arrival, by “introduc[ing] the welcomed persons and their life path (names, children, where they come from...)” (Céline Clément, GE division). They also sign a tripartite convention between FEP, CC and local sociocultural center for language training, and “provide to CC members a series of other documents (FEP chart, “*livret d’accueil*”...)” (Aurélie Fillod, RA division).
- Once these tasks are accomplished, the social workers’ “mission [becomes one of] supporting hosts: on the one hand, by connecting them with hosted people and supporting first meetings; on the other hand, by being the mediators of the hosting relationship.”<sup>92</sup>

### Early post-arrival support

The first task accomplished by either the RD/central platform team or CC members is welcoming participants at the airport, near Paris. In general, as Sophie de Croutte explains, “We then stop in Paris at Eiffel Tower, because they all want to take a picture in front of the Eiffel Tower [...], and afterward we go with them to a train station, where they take a train to their final destination” (Sophie de Croutte, FEP). RD social workers “are not always there when families arrive at the airport. But, in that case, [they] meet them in the next few days” (Aurélie Fillod, RA division). Each individual CC member told us their own stories about this particular moment: a strenuous luggage transfer from the hall of airport to the parking lot, a difficult meeting in an overcrowded train station, etc. Perhaps one of the most significant of these stories is the arrival of the first refugee family in Orthez, two years before the official commencement of HCP:

“The first family we hosted in 2015 was the focus of much media attention. That year, [...] [a lot of] politicians advocated hosting, [...] we were exactly in the right context: a committee, not yet an association, formed by citizens and supported by municipality. A lot of media came [...]. At the arrival of the first family, there were cameras interviewing the mayor, and also the police. [Indeed,] we received a lot of criticism on social networks, I also received anonymous messages and threats on my personal phone. So, the police were informed. I personally introduced the family to the local police, and I asked them to have a look at their apartment, just in case...” (CC member, Orthez, NA division)

The former mayor of Orthez qualify, however:

“We met a few [real] antagonists. Since the beginning, as a municipality, we have claimed our strong intention to host refugees. [...] If we had shown signs of hesitation, opposition would have been stronger. [...] But the welcoming was so joyful that we never had any backfire from opponents” (former mayor, Orthez, NA division)

Even if these stories date back before the beginning of HCP, things haven’t really changed since the program implementation, especially in middle-size or rural towns: local CC are, in a number of cases, confronted with local misgivings that need to be dispelled. In Grand Brassac, for example:

“We faced a lot of reluctance, especially from members of the municipal council: [they asked] “Who will pay?” “And if the association can’t pay anymore?” [...] We tried to say, “We are responsible for them, we are an association with 3 co-presidents,” “It’s our responsibility, but if you can support us, it would be better!” And then we hosted our first family. We introduced them to the whole municipal

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<sup>92</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 51.



board. Members were just... Ecstatic! Because when you put a human behind a project, and when a project takes a human face, with people who breathe, like us, who don't come from Mars, and in addition with children... It's very reassuring!" (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

The first months of hosting also include material and administrative support. Both of these aspects create some complex dynamics between CC members and FEP RD or central platforms teams. They can also vary from one situation to another, according to the task division of each local CC and RD. For the needs of this survey, we separated these aspects.

### ***Legal Support***

In the 2018 report by *Secours Catholique*, a CC from RA division expressed regret: "Administrative procedures are very time consuming. We would welcome an agreement between the French authorities and partners of the project that could guarantee the assistance of a social worker during different administrative procedures from the moment welcomed people arrive in France" (see [Appendix 1](#)). Around two years later, CC members and RD social workers continue to expect difficulties in this field, more particularly regarding the asylum process (GUDA, OFPRA/CNDA). For example, the Orthez CC founder deploras an increasing procedural delay – "For first families, it went very fast: they came with a D Visa, OFPRA convened them, they told their life story and they had a 10-year card within 6 months" (CC member, Orthez, NA division) – while GE social worker laments, "the lack of a specific legal service, so [she] manage[s] with national platform, CIMADE or other associations" (Céline Clément, GE division). According to a Lhuis CC member, "It would be a great idea if RD could follow the whole administrative process: [...] for each new family we host, we need to find someone to train them to tell their life stories at OFPRA, and this task would be better accomplished by a professional" (CC member, Lhuis, RA division). Beyond these difficulties and variations from a RD to another, the – dual – presence of – either – one or more voluntary host(s) and/or social workers undertaking the asylum request seems to constitute a precious resource for the participants of the program.

Indeed, French sociologist Smaïn Laacher, during his survey at CNDA published in 2018 under the title *Believing the unbelievable: a sociologist at CNDA*, highlighted a particular difficulty: a "reciprocal lack of transparency" manifested in both applicants and judges of the Court. "On the one hand, asylum-seekers have no idea of how their dossier is managed (by the prefecture, by OFPRA officials or by CNDA judges). On the other hand, judges and lawyers don't know the past and the origins of seekers."<sup>93</sup> The presence of HCP volunteers and/or social workers following asylum-seekers at each step of the procedure certainly helps participants to know how their dossier is managed since the GUDA request, giving them valuable legal advice and preparing them for the appointments with officials or judges. Moreover, at least one person from RD or FEP central platform comes with them when they are convened at OFPRA or at CNDA. The moral support they receive there seems to be fundamental, because this moment is very difficult for them – from a psychological standpoint – as the Bordeaux prefecture delegate explains:

"I was a little 'motherly' with [the young refugee I hosted], for example I came with him to OFPRA, In Fontenay [near Paris]. I met Sophie de Croutte there. OFPRA has been a very violent moment for him. [...] The procedure took a lot of time, I discussed with Sophie during that time, and... Then he went out. The return trip [to the hosting place] was a terrible moment: he spent all the travelling time in the train crying on my shoulder... [Because at OFPRA] he remembered all his past. [...] Fortunately, he got a 10-year card." (Bordeaux prefecture delegate and host, NA division)

Other administrative procedures during those first months include registration – for the ADA allowance, healthcare, language training and, for families with children, at school – with their many appointments. Each RD and CC is again independent in organizing this work, midway between legal and material support.

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<sup>93</sup> Alunni, 2019: 650.

### **Material Support**

HCP “*Livret d’accueil*,” as observed in the first part of this report, explains indeed that the first months of the program are those requiring the greatest material investment by CC members. In particular, during (approximately) the first two months, participants are entirely dependent on them, including for food, because they can’t yet access ADA allowances. Once they obtain this social benefit, they are supposed to become independently able to get food, but local committees still finance other outgoings. According to the Orthez CC founder, amounts can be up to “5000 euros per year and per person, including rent” (CC member, Orthez, NA division). Fortunately, other associations can help to cover some of these outgoings under various forms. For example, *Secours Catholique* provides clothes and other articles (notebooks, pencils, furniture, etc..) for free. Likewise, “*Restos du Coeur*,” a non-religious association providing food. Institutions can also take part, in some cases, in this financial effort: for example, Lhuis municipal board has decided to cover school canteen costs for participants’ children (approximately 600 euros per child and per year).

However, a series of other material needs can’t be directly financed by money or in-kind donations. They call for the solidarity of volunteers belonging to committees. For example, transport to the different appointments mentioned previously, according to the analysis of a RA CC member:

“It is the most difficult task we have to accomplish... [We provide] a lot of trips: to the doctor, to the pediatrician, to administrations, to the bank... All these trips represent a huge cost [for us], especially in terms of time. A round trip to Bourg-en-Bresse is an hour of car. By happy chance, many of us take part in this task” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

Rural areas seem to be the most confronted by mobility difficulties. New rules published by the French State department of Homeland Security in 2019, stating that Syrian and Iraqi driver licenses can no longer be exchanged for a French driving permit (see [Appendix 2](#)), certainly represent an additional hurdle. But, besides this specific problem, this example highlights the importance of building a large CC, with a diversity of involvements: the more members there are, the more they can divide tasks, so the effort is apportioned between each individual member and so “constraints,” if not disappearing, are eventually strongly reduced.<sup>94</sup> Despite this, some interviews can also reveal an opposite situation that is likely to occur: a sort of helping contest between the different CC members. This can create tensions, as the Bordeaux prefecture delegate explains:

“I think the most problematic aspect, for me and for [the participant I was hosting], came from volunteers themselves! They were in a sort of competition about who was doing more for him; hence they weren’t listening to him... They are beautiful people besides this, but they weren’t really helping each other, they constantly called me to find out if one of them had already accomplished this or that other task... [...] And [the participant] didn’t appreciate that they took care of him like a baby, so a lot of tensions spread.” (Bordeaux prefecture delegate and host, NA division)

In other cases, however, conflicts are more connected to relationships between welcoming and welcomed families, or to participants’ attitudes themselves. In any case, according to the authors of *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations* “teams in charge of the program can intervene on the request of either welcoming or welcomed persons as mediators, to ease tensions or solve everyday life problems.”<sup>95</sup> Indeed, according to the RA social worker, “mediation is one of our missions.” (Aurélié Fillod, RA division). Céline Clément, from the GE division, details:

“When malfunctions appear, for example families who are disrespectful of hosting terms, participants who are abandoning French lessons, quarrels, etc., I can intervene as a mediator. It also happens that I play this role to solve problems between CC members themselves.” (Céline Clément, GE division)

In order to reduce these kind of conflicts, and because one of the main goals of HCP is to give its participants as much independence as possible in a short period of time, CC members and social

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<sup>94</sup> For a reading of HCP in terms of a kind of hosting “without constraints,” see above and the conclusion of this part below.

<sup>95</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 55.

workers generally try to speed up legal, sociocultural, and economic integration of refugees, with varying degrees of success.

### **C. Toward integration**

Interviews reveal a wide array of efforts deployed by CC members and social workers to accelerate the legal and administrative integration of welcomed persons, and upstream and downstream asylum requests. Indeed, if GUDA, OFPRA and/or CNDA have their own timelines,<sup>96</sup> with limited possibilities of action by volunteers and teams in charge of the program, institutions at the local stage<sup>97</sup> are more open to arrangements made by local networks. The Orthez CC founder disclosed, for example, that she has her

“Own networks, and the fact of being in a small town certainly helps... E.g., a local official from the Education State department asked me to reveal [a participant family’s] incomes. My word was enough, no need to prove it by any paper...” (CC member, Orthez, NA division).

Efforts to speed up sociocultural integration, by contrast, seem to meet a series of barriers already highlighted by analyzing refugees’ responses to the questionnaires. On the one hand, an immense majority of respondents described themselves as “hosted” or “integrated” by the French society; on the other hand, problems persisted for part of them to build neighborly or friendly relationships with French persons.<sup>98</sup> From a statistical standpoint, we perceived the impossibility of precisely identifying the reasons for these difficulties, suggesting however several ideas: they could be linked to the time period spent in the hosting country, to the location of the accommodation (supposing that there is less social proximity in big towns than in small-sized/rural towns), to the FU composition – suggesting that schooling of children foster a more quick integration – and, more generally, to French language training. Interviews reinforce some of these ideas, even if their reduced number doesn’t allow us to make these conclusions without any doubt. An RA CC member explains for example that:

“All refugees go through a difficult time after the first three or four months of hosting. They feel very isolated, because they have another way of life than ours: they don’t understand our vision of ‘everyone in their own homes.’ Their families and friends really miss them. And they speak very few words of French [...] so the language is a difficult point. [...] Little by little, they better understand our culture. Many members invite them for meals, so they build friendly relationships. [One of the children] is also very integrated into his high school.” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

Being hosted in a small-sized town, schooling children and improving French level seems to constitute three very helpful factors for sociocultural integration. The most important of them, according to the analysis of all of the CC members we interviewed, is school: indeed, children or teenagers learn French in school generally faster than parents. Some of them, after four or five months of lessons, also start to speak the host country language with their brothers and/or sisters at home. Moreover, their schooling creates friendship networks with others, like local children or teenagers. By extension, these networks can include parents. A final role played by school is the opportunity given to adult refugees to tell their story in front of a public audience for an hour during an afternoon. This moment, aiming to promote awareness of values of peace, tolerance and anti-racism, can be lived either as a dramatic experience – in one interview a CC member told us that a participant exited classroom after a few minutes, crying – or as a supplementary means for integration. For example, the Orthez CC founder explains that:

“Last year, many of our high school students decided to do personal work about refugees. They called and visited me. I provided them several documents. [One of the young participants we are hosting] came three times to local high school to talk about his experience. It was wonderful, because he came with a F.C. Barcelona t-shirt, and some students had a PSG football club t-shirt, so they asked him

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<sup>96</sup> See above.

<sup>97</sup> Including town, county, regional agencies and local branches of national institutions.

<sup>98</sup> See above, part II.

“what’s your favorite football club?” He proudly showed his t-shirt and said “Barça”... He showed a very strong willingness to integrate into [French society].” (CC member, Orthez, NA division)

The final social sphere which CC members and social workers focus their efforts on in order to speed up participants’ integration is economy, on the levels of work (or social benefits) and autonomous housing. As a reminder, HCP “*livret d’accueil*” stated that once participants have secured their status (4-year or 10-year card), they can start to seek work and an apartment. They can also claim two allowances, RSA (income support) and APL (help for leasing), so that they can be considered financially independent and begin to exit the program, at least regarding their accommodation. However, a series of material difficulties in these areas were underscored both by analyzing the FEP “*tableau de suivi*” and the responses from the 35 questionnaires. From the standpoints of CC members and social workers, it is important to strictly cooperate in this field, but also to respect the time and wishes of hosted families, according to the analysis of a NA CC member:

“Once they obtain status, they have choice. They can stay here, or they go away. Obviously if they want to live in the same flat, we will help them, asking the Town Council if they can establish a renting contract. [...] For my part, I foster the maximum of independence. But we will accompany them for the necessary time, both administratively and humanely.” (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

In all cases, especially if participants quit the program, CC members and social workers seem generally to preserve solid and friendly relationships with their former hosts, explained for example by the Bordeaux prefecture delegate:

“At the very beginning of the program, we signed an agreement for unlimited time hosting. [...] But, after some months, I said [to the participant she hosted]: “You were there for almost 9 months, now you are born!” He told me “OK,” found a place and left. But I meet him regularly when I go out, and I plan to invite him home soon, for dinner.” (Bordeaux prefecture delegate and host, NA division)

Interviews nevertheless point out a number of difficulties (unemployment, problems with attribution of social housing, etc.) coming mainly from administrations – e.g. “there are always problems with “*Pôle Emploi*”<sup>99</sup> or with “*CAF*,”<sup>100</sup> a missing document, an interruption of allowances without any reason... Always!” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division) – but also, less frequently, from hosted persons themselves. For example, the Orthez CC founder says that one of the first families they hosted:

“Occupied the same flat for almost 5 years. That’s not normal! They blocked a place for other families... So now we ask them to sign a contract, between 9 months and 1 year. Obviously, we can renew this leasing agreement.” (CC member, Orthez, NA division)

This sort of problem, but also the achievements exposed in the previous paragraphs (e.g. the successful exit of HCP by the refugee hosted by the Bordeaux Prefecture delegate), invites us to consider CC members’ and social workers’ general feelings about the inner workings of the program.

#### **D. Positive points and difficulties**

By analyzing the 7 interviews we made, we identified three positive points generally disclosed by RD teams and local welcoming volunteers. The first, already mentioned, concerns the efficiency of the French HCP dual system – CC and FEP – since they constitute the groundwork of hosting projects. CC members affirmed that they established good relationships at all stages of the program, both with the central platform and with RD workers. They also noticed that they made good connections with other local committees. For example, an RA CC member told us:

“We have built very good relationships with other CCs in the region, as well as with the national [FEP] platform. Their work, especially at OFPRA, is amazing. And Sophie [de Croutte] is an incredible person. [...] We are also very happy to have Aurélie [Fillod] supporting us. She’s very reactive... We are all impressed by her reactivity. This is very important for us.” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

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<sup>99</sup> See above.

<sup>100</sup> Idem.

Social workers share the same feelings. According to Aurélie Fillod:

“Relationships with CC, except for a few cases, are generally very positive. We support their members with administration, we visit them... And we can communicate too with hosted families, by text messages [...]. We also dialogue a lot with the national platform, almost each and every day. We try to think together how to help CC and families more.” (Aurélie Fillod, RA division)

The second positive point revealed in interviews is the creation, through the HCP, of new local dynamics. In Grand Brassac, for example:

“The fact that we hosted 5 more children in the municipality is a very positive point, especially for old people that in the early days thought that ‘they made noise.’ Now they perceive the importance of having activities, swings belonging to the municipality are used...It changes everything!” (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

According to a RA CC member:

“One of the main achievements of HCP here [in Lhuis] is represented by the fact that, at the beginning [of the program], local people weren’t enthusiastic at all, there was also opposition... Now, reluctance has disappeared. It’s magic! [Hosted people] always said “hello!” even when they were ignored in return. And local people perceived this kindness...They appreciate them a lot now.” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

The dissipation of the initial misgivings by locals go hand-in-hand with the reinforcement of CC neighborly networks. This aspect is very important because, as we have pointed out before, it helps to establish a large committee with a diversity of roles and involvements. A NA CC member explains, indeed, that:

“We can count now on three different ‘supporting circles’ within the committee. First group: the eight founders of CC. They are the most committed to the program. Second group: very enthusiastic people that really want to help. If no one coming from these two first groups is available to do a task, a third group takes over... [...] For example, for transport, we have a lot of retired people who offered their ‘free taxi’ services for [refugees’] parents and children... In the worst case, we can always ask the Major, ‘Can you lend us the van owned by the municipality?’” (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

In other words, CC, especially in rural areas, seem to promote a new social cohesion, both by trying to integrate participants in the local population<sup>101</sup> and by connecting locals themselves through material tasks and solidarity with welcomed persons<sup>102</sup>. In Lhuis, for example, a CC member “would like to thank FEP, because they make it possible for us to live this beautiful human adventure, and also to build strong links within CC. It allowed us to create a very solid network” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division). A Grand Brassac CC member analyzed:

“Our school is not jeopardized by closure, but still, it’s clear that five more children... It shows that we need schools in rural zones, we cannot all send our children to school by bus in towns where there are already 400 schoolchildren... But it is also important to focus on the creation [by the program] of social links between neighbors. People started to ask us if they could help in any way: ‘I have a garden and vegetables, do you think that if I give some to refugees, it could help them?’ ‘Indeed!’ Because we need social connections over there, rural zones are missing them nowadays because most of us work far away, 20 kilometers or more, and when we return here in the evening, it’s difficult to meet our neighbors.” (CC member, Grand Brassac, NA division)

A third and final positive point, emphasized especially by the CC members we interviewed, is their feeling that most of HCP participants, even if they are confronted with multiple hurdles, express a genuine desire to integrate into French society and economy, in order to become independent and exit the program swiftly. In other terms, even if the achievement of the integration pathway is still more a goal than a reality for a majority of welcomed persons, CC members share a common persuasion:

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<sup>101</sup> Beyond the problems mentioned previously, and beyond our uncertain conclusions due to the reduced number of interviews we made.

<sup>102</sup> Indeed, according to an official, those “dynamics can take part to maintain social links. But it’s more the case of some small rural municipalities, and less over there” (former mayor, Orthez, NA division).

outcomes will be more and more reliable over the next few years, as long as a (variable) adaptation time is respected. Indeed, this transition can “take time, but, afterwards, integration becomes a reality!” according to the former mayor of Orthez (NA division). The only interview we made with a participant of the program also seems to confirm willingness to reach an effective integration:

“I feel that things were set up, little by little. The fears [I developed at] the beginning have gone, we had our own routines, our own traditions, now we are learning to deal with practices of our new country. [...] [In the next few years], I see myself getting a working position with young children, doing vocational training at kindergarten. I feel that there is a future in France for me and for all of my family.” (Syrian woman, IF division)

This set of elements allows us to revisit the two main hypotheses mentioned at the beginning of this section. Do citizen committees and associations really help refugees to integrate more easily into French culture, language, system of law, and society? Despite the reduced number of interviews conducted, results seem to move in this direction, even if some problems still persist. Can we describe HCP as a program “à la carte” and “without constraint,” according to the analysis of the authors of *Hospitality in France: political and personal mobilizations*? Only in part. Everything depends on the degree of engagement of each individual CC fellow within the group (e.g. the different “supporting circles” described by the Grand Brassac CC member), the kind of hosting they offer to the participants (a more or less independent accommodation), and the autonomous organization of each RD (the social worker providing more or less assistance with administrative tasks, especially with OFPRA/CNDA). The same goes for a complementary supposition made by the anthropologists who edited the 2019 book: hosting “à la carte” and “without constraint” involves a commitment described as “*post-it*” and “rewarding” from a moral standpoint.<sup>103</sup> Through the first expression, borrowed from French sociologist Jacques Ion, they identify an engagement “limited in time, replicable in different places and situations – distinguishing refugees’ hosting ‘*post-it*’ commitment from trade unions ‘*stamp*’ involvement, meaning that ‘sociability networks often overcome collective action’ – and including a reduced degree of conviviality.”<sup>104</sup> Most of these features seem not to match the action of local citizen committees.<sup>105</sup> By the term “rewarding,” they identify a series of “moral rewards” received as a result of their commitment, as well as new knowledge and skills. These characteristics seem more to apply to HCP. Again, it is important to underline that a more significant number of interviews would be welcomed for the next surveys, allowing us to assess these aspects more precisely.

CC members and social workers also informed us about a series of difficulties they still are expecting three years after the program implementation. Besides problems to get a status, a working position and an independent accommodation for refugees (even by activating their own networks), they generally underscore a “culture gap” between participants’ former traditions and new hosting country practices. For example, a CC member told us that:

“It would be great to inform welcomed persons that, in France, gynecologists and doctors are often men. [One of the women we are hosting] agrees now to be examined by male doctors, but it was not self-evident at the beginning. [Another one] refused to go to the swimming pool, because they don’t accept short pants covering the knees.” (CC member, Lhuis, RA division)

This “culture gap,” partially linked with difficulties in language training and more generally to integration hurdles, leads CC members and social workers we interviewed to express two main improvement requests for the HCP. The first is to hire more social workers and interpreters, in order to overcome the barrier of the language, and to support more efficiently the participants of the program from the time of their arrival on French ground. According to Céline Clément,

“The lack of interpreters and the lack of financial means to pay them is harmful both for my work and for that of local volunteers. I also have to highlight that neither one of the refugees we are

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<sup>103</sup> Agier et al., 2019: 76-78.

<sup>104</sup> *ibid.*: 76.

<sup>105</sup> Or maybe just for the persons belonging to the “extended network” created by CC (the “third circle” described by Grand Brassac member), even if conviviality seems to characterize the action of committees especially in rural areas (see above).

currently hosting [in our division] is an English-speaker anymore, so things are getting more and more complicated. Moreover, I think that my role in the program might be significantly improved by the hiring of a second social worker. [...] I have a feeling that I am managing everything alone: if some day for some reasons I'm not available to do one task, who will replace me?" (Céline Clément, GE division)

A second suggestion is to create training courses for CC members, provided either by RD social workers or by other professionals (psychologists, scholars, etc.). The Orthez CC founder explains, for example, that they:

"need a training course about the culture and the practices of refugees we are hosting. For example, when [one of them] passed away, we had no idea how to organize funerals... And I think we are very, very ignorant about their culture! So, we need this kind of training course." (CC member, Orthez, NA division)

Another CC member submitted to us the request to access "a training course about autonomy: not all of us have the same conception about participants' independence" (CC member, Lhuis, RA division). All of these elements suggest a tension between a necessary adaptation time and desires of speeding up the integration process, between religious cultures and state practices. Finally, they open avenues of reflection for further surveys. We want to investigate a thesis that the French HCP double-staged organization – non-religious CCs supported by faith-based structure – is the reflection of a national model of integration which is "based on the assimilation to the majoritarian culture [...] and on the acceptance of values of French Republic, including laicity."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Badea, 2012: 576-577.

## 5. Conclusion

This report assessed the impact of the French HCP, considering the example of the 236 participants welcomed by CC and supported by the FEP network (RD and associations), with 3 years of hindsight since the program started. It has been conducted within a short timespan of two months. A main question has been tested, from the standpoints of both participants and CC members/social workers: does the French dual system – CC and RD/central platform – offer to the participants of the program a quicker integration in the French society? A series of secondary interrogations (about participants' expectations, difficulties, etc.) have also been answered. The report drew upon both quantitative data (gathered from “*tableau de suivi*” by FEP and 35 questionnaires submitted to adult participants of the program) and qualitative data (8 semi-directive and 2 exploratory interviews).

### Key findings

Given the analysis of the available data (“*tableau de suivi*,” questionnaires, and interviews), one can reasonably conclude that:

1. The French HCP gives both symbolic and concrete proof that “another form of hosting is possible.” Undoubtedly, participants have encountered difficulties with language, housing, work, and in navigating the asylum-seeking process (GUDA, OFPRA/CNDA). Yet, more than the two thirds of the 35 respondents to our question “Compared to expectations you had before leav[ing Lebanon], you are nowadays [very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor disappointed, disappointed, very disappointed] by HCP?” judged the program either positively (n=16, 45.7%) or very positively (n=8, 22.9%), when only a minority expressed negative judgments (6 “disappointed,” 17.1% and 2 “very disappointed,” 5.7%). Similarly, from the point of view of the CC members and social workers, three positive aspects were specified. Firstly, the efficiency of the French HCP dual system: CC members recognized that they established good relationships at all stages of the program, both with the central platform and with RD workers. They also noticed that they made good connections with other local committees. Secondly, we note the emergence of new local dynamics of cohesion, especially in rural areas. Thirdly, CC members felt that a majority of HCP participants expressed a genuine desire to integrate into French society and economy.
2. The FEP “*tableau de suivi*” is a powerful instrument for better understanding the long term outcomes of this process and its organization, especially if integrated with more qualitative data such as those collected for this report. The FEP central platform gathers information about each individual welcomed person (n=236) and FU (n=62) which is hosted by a CC they support, either directly or by one of their five RD. Indeed, the “*tableau de suivi*” allows us to understand the general framework of the HCP: the arrival of the participants since July 2017, their gender distribution, origins, age-range, distribution throughout the French territory, family units' composition, and so on. Moreover, the “*tableau de suivi*” contains detailed information about each step of the asylum procedure. It also includes other useful data (participants' resources, accommodation, language level, etc.). If opportunely analyzed – and, of course, anonymized – these data can represent the first tool for any future report and research about the FEP's initiative.
3. The identification stage in Lebanon seems to represent the hardest phase of the program, at least from the standpoint of participants. First, workers from FEP or FCEI conduct 2, 3 or 4 interviews with each individual person to collect their life stories, a means to be sure that the French or Italian Consulate will accept their visa request (the choice between France and Italy is met on the basis of specific criteria). If they understand that a file can be rejected, they can preventively stop the procedure and explain the reasons to the potential participants of HCP; rather, if interviews are successful, FEP/FCEI workers will follow the entire visa procedure at the Consulate, except the



official interview with the authorities. In the meantime, HCP participants and their families are invited to participate in a particular psychosocial program provided by a Lebanese association called *Metanoia* to prepare for their new life in Europe. Refugees are also invited – at least on the French side – to connect to an online language learning platform. During this time, French citizen committees begin to look for accommodation. Interviewees are divided about the perception of this identification process. Half of those who replied to the question “How was the screening process to access HCP, before you were definitively identified?” (n=32) considered it “difficult” (n=13, 40.6%) or “very difficult” (n=3, 9.4%) while just less than a third of them consider that it was “easy” (n=7, 21.9%) or “very easy” (n=2, 6.3%). Moreover, to the question “Do you think that the information and advice given by social workers in Lebanon allowed you to acquire the main skills useful to prepare your departure project?” around a third of the 34 respondents considered that they were “enough” informed about their departure project (n=11), when just less than another third estimated that they have received “perfect” (n=3) or “a lot” (n=7) of helpful advice. The other third, in contrast, deplored a lack of information (n=13, 11 “not so much” and 2 “very few”).

4. The arrival in France and the first months of hosting represent a transitional moment needing mutual adaptation. Participants were questioned about their feelings after initial contact with French society: did they feel hosted, integrated, isolated, or rejected there? 80% of the 35 respondents (n=28) described themselves as “hosted,” 5.7% as “integrated” (n=2), 8.6% as “neither hosted or isolated” (n=3) and 5.7% as “isolated.” It is important to notice that nobody answered “rejected.” However, focusing on the social environment, the situation described by a majority of respondents doesn’t look so rosy, in particular regarding neighborly relationships. A majority of the 32 respondents to this question described their neighborly relations as “slightly difficult” (n=6), “difficult” (n=12) or “very difficult” (n=1), while 10 of them characterized relationships as “easy” (n=10) or “very easy” (n=3). Some problems seem to come from volunteers, who sometimes are involved in competitions amongst themselves for being the most helpful. In other cases, conflicts are more connected to relationships between welcoming and welcomed families, or to participants’ attitudes themselves. In order to reduce these kind of conflicts, CC members and social workers generally try to speed up legal, sociocultural, and economic integration of participants, with varying degrees of success.

5. The legal and moral support offered at OFPRA or at CNDA has a fundamental impact on the integration process. A “reciprocal lack of transparency” often impacts both requesters and officials/judges of the agency/Court. On the one hand, asylum-seekers have no idea how their dossier is managed. On the other, judges and lawyers don’t know the past and origins of asylum seekers. The presence of HCP volunteers and/or social workers following asylum-seekers at each step of the procedure helps participants to know how their dossier is managed after the GUDA request, giving them valuable legal advice and preparing them for appointments with officials or judges. Moreover, at least one person from RD or the FEP central platform comes with them when they are convened at OFPRA or at CNDA. Still, CC members and RD social workers experience several difficulties, especially regarding the asylum process (increasing delay of procedures, lack of a specific legal service, etc.). All the HCP participants made an asylum request soon after their arrival in France and a majority of them already received a 10-year or a 4-year card – see in particular pp. 19-23 for the details. The great majority of the 34 respondents to the question if they felt supported in the legal process by CC members and/or FEP social workers found that they were “sufficiently followed at this step of the procedure” (n=31, 91.2%) while only three of them express a contrary opinion (8.8%) – see the box on pp. 32-33 for a better understanding of the relation between HCP participants’ legal rights and feelings.

6. Once participants have secured their status, their integration pathway is still strewn with obstacles. After having been hosted for several months by CC members (their main material task amongst others, such as transport) and becoming independent in certain tasks such as obtaining food,

they are supposed to seek a job and independent accommodation. Both the analysis of “*tableau de suivi*” and responses to the questionnaires show difficulties in these areas: the immense majority of participants whose legal procedure is already achieved – around 87% – are for example currently job seekers and their financial resources seem to be mostly dependent on various French social benefits (in around 93% of cases). Moreover, a majority of FUs are still hosted by CC (42 out of a total of 62), even if around a third of them (n=19) can be considered independent from the housing standpoint. Some of these problems seem to come from degrees of difficulty in learning the French language – see in particular pp. 35-36 for the details. Job-seeking and looking for independent accommodations are also two of the recurrent “hopes,” amongst others, that were expressed answering the open question “Can you say, in a few words and possibly in French, what is your main hope for the future?” CC members and social workers also informed us about a series of difficulties they expect in order to secure for participants working positions and independent accommodation (even by activating their own networks). They also underscored a “culture gap” between participants’ former traditions and new hosting country practices, and suggested some solutions to fill it, such as creating training courses for CC members, recruiting interpreters, etc..

7. Another kind of gap emerged during our survey: a gap between integration in rural and urban areas. A majority of CC are located in middle-sized (like Agen, in NA division) or small-sized, rural towns – while, for instance, the IF division hosts fewer RDs than any other area besides Hors-Pôle. Rural places only host families or individuals with children. Although more qualitative data should be collected on this point, the analysis conducted for this report suggests that participants have experienced easier integration in rural areas rather than in big, urban French areas. CC in the countryside seem to promote a new social cohesion, both by trying to integrate participants to the local population, and by connecting locals themselves through material tasks and solidarity with welcomed persons. The problem is that, as suggested by interviews with the FEP central platform members and social workers, participants’ common impression of France is Paris. Once they arrive in France, they are often disappointed by the rural location of their accommodation. Moreover, other factors could contribute to this gap, such as the distribution of religious beliefs around the country, the type of work available for each region, and even the sizes and kinds of buildings in which participants are hosted. As the research stands now, a clear and definitive answer on the gap between rural and urban areas is not available.

### **Criticisms and suggestions for improvement**

In order to improve further investigations, a first obvious suggestion is to allow researchers to invest more time in doing interviews and submitting questionnaires. This would increase their number, so that more complex quantitative and qualitative analysis could be made, in particular in conjunction with the useful information offered by the FEP “*tableau de suivi*.” 10 interviews and 35 surveys are certainly not enough to reach any certain conclusion: thus, this report must be rather seen in terms of an exploratory kind of work. In addition, more attention should be given to the translation of the questions, and to their adaptation to the specific environment. For example, a question translated from Italian asked French HCP participants “Do you have friends beyond social workers?” misses out the phrase “and CC members?” Out of 35 respondents, 20 of them answered “yes” and 15 of them “no,” but we don’t know exactly how many of the 20 participants that claimed that they currently have French friends would have answered differently if “CC members” had been added to the phrasing of the question. Increasing data collection and eliminating mistranslations are just two examples of a series of methodological improvements which are needed for further investigations of the program. Three more points could be developed:

1. In further research, it would be necessary to better explore the relation between the “capital” (cultural, social, economic, and ultimately symbolic) of both the participants and the social workers/volunteers, and the outcomes of the entire process. While some preliminary findings suggest

that a higher capital from both sides can make integration smoother, a much deeper analysis on this point is certainly needed.

2. One more note could deal with the personal biographical data of the participants, and particularly with gender-related issues. It could be helpful to deepen the study of the challenges, difficulties and advantages in hosting and empowering men and women, and to ask how and if gender as a social factor is linked to the whole of the welcoming experience. For example: is the experience of welcoming a young single mother “easier” in a rural or in an urban context? Does the welcoming context change priorities, from a gender perspective?

3. This report should represent the basis for a comparison of similar practices in different countries (in particular, between France and Italy). Another important aspect that could be investigated is the specific relation between the program and the religious dimension – of the participants, the volunteers and social workers, but also of the institutions involved in the process, as well as the deeply different approaches to the idea of the secularism of public institutions. Finally, it could be interesting to propose a comparative reflection (France-Italy) on how the different subjects consider the welcoming process “achieved,” according to what priorities, timings and results.

The advisory board and the author of this report also suggest three kinds of improvements regarding the HCP itself:

1. During the identification stage in Lebanon, information – especially regarding the difficulties that participants of HCP will face once in France – could be (even more) increased, for example, by multiplying the number of videos made by FEP (see [Appendix 2](#)). This suggestion aims not to daunt, but to (even) better prepare those chosen for their new life in Europe. The more they develop realistic expectations about their hosting, the less they are disappointed if they encounter hurdles in France.

2. After arrival in the hosting country, all of the barriers mentioned both by participants and by CC members/social workers (asylum-seeking, language, work, accommodation, culture) should be considered in order to:

a. Standardize some practices, without questioning the independence of each RD and local CC. According to Guilhem Mante from FEP, a first project steering committee was planned in February 2020 to develop some common recommendations for the five different RD. We encourage the development of this kind of initiative in the future.

b. Support requests from Social Workers to hire interpreters, helping participants during their first months, and from CC members to organize training courses at least about the cultures of the participants’ countries of origin, so that the “culture gap” would be more easily filled. Moreover, one of the respondents to the questionnaire offered to help newcomers: why not try to generalize this suggestion? Welcomed persons, on condition of having already made good progress in their own integration pathway, could become “voluntary welcomers” in this way and help either RD social workers or CC members to better integrate new arriving families.

3. More generally, we suggest an improvement of the HCP network, simultaneously at the European level (Italy, France, Belgium etc.), at each individual country stage, and finally locally (RD and CC). Given the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the next months and years will see the emergence of new challenges: a social and economic crisis will probably spread, and the risk is that it will further weaken the most vulnerable populations – including HCP participants – drawing attention away from the dramatic nature of their situations (e.g. slums at the doors of the EU or camps in Lebanon) and increasing their difficulties (e.g. unemployment). Confronting practices and

improving cooperation between and within States could be a solution to face these new challenges imposed by the changing global context, preserving in the meantime the independent organization of each individual HCP.

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## List of acronyms

CC: *Collectifs Citoyens*, voluntary French citizen committees organized to host participants.

CNDA: *Cour Nationale du Droit d'Asile*, French appeal court for asylum-seekers.

CSE: *Comunità di Sant'Egidio*, an Italian and French Catholic network.

DNA: *Dispositif National d'Accueil*, an official French program to host 10000 refugees from Lebanon, Turkey and Sub-Saharan areas.

EU: European Union.

FCEI: *Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italia*, a faith-based network of almost all of the Italian Protestant communities.

FEP: *Fédération d'Entraide Protestante*, an associative network of around 360 French Protestant associations.

FPF: *Fédération Protestante de France*, a faith-based network of around 500 French Protestant communities.

FU/FUs: Family Units.

GUDA: *Guichet Unique des Demandeurs d'Asile*, French central administrative office for introducing asylum requests.

HCP: Humanitarian Corridors Program.

HCR: UN High Commissioner for Refugees .

IRAP: *International Refugee Assistance program*, an American NGO in the legal field.

MSF: *Médécins Sans Frontières*, a French NGO in the medical and healthcare field.

OFPRA: *Office Français pour la Protection des Réfugiés et des Apatrides*, governmental French agency for the protection of refugees and stateless persons.

RD: Regional Divisions.

## **Lessons Learned from the Two Case-Studies and Final Recommendations**

The Humanitarian Corridors program constitutes a very particular good practice that binds together a variety of stakeholders in a common strategy that can be set apart from “illegal migration”, granting safe and legal passage for asylum-seekers to EU member states.

**MULTI-ACTOR.** The case studies described in this publication show us a creative and affective synergy between four different actors: 1) churches and faith-based associations who initiated the process; 2) national institutions – namely, Ministries of Interiors and of Foreign Affairs – who decided to implement such a seminal project; 3) civil society and the network of associations in the sending countries – Lebanon mainly but Ethiopia as well – who cooperated in the identification process of the participants; 4) the international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM who facilitated the process; 5) the civil societies of the countries who exercised a major role in securing and strengthening the process of integration of the newcomers. This multi-actor paradigm is a good practice in itself, because it facilitates a mutually-empowering aim of achieving more ambitious goals than those which can be pursued by individual plans of action.

**HUMANITARIAN.** The core mission of the Humanitarian Corridors program is to grant legal status to asylum seekers who are fully entitled to get any form of protection from the international community. In this sense its capacity is limited to those who are effectively eligible for such protection, offering a concrete and approachable alternative to the traffickers.

**SUSTAINABLE.** The strategy of the Humanitarian Corridors program offers stakeholders the possibility of selecting and programming the level of their involvement and the number of the participants. Of course, shared European responsibility will greatly strengthen the effectiveness of the project, but the experiences documented here confirm that small organizations, as well, can assist and integrate high numbers of people. However, the Humanitarian Corridors program has not constituted a “pull factor” – as it has sometimes been criticized as doing – because only a limited number of people are mentally prepared and equipped to leave their country and family relations, and a still smaller number is willing to enter a path of preparation, language learning, job training and integration in a different society.

**BIPARTISAN.** Sometimes the political debate on migration policies is conditioned and characterized by a harsh polarization between pro-immigration and anti-immigration agendas. The experience of the Humanitarian Corridors program has been implemented, at least in Italy, in different political contexts and recognized as a powerful tool for compromise between different agendas, granting basic human rights according to a non-partisan premise.

**INCLUSIVE.** The key criteria for access to the Humanitarian Corridors program is the “vulnerability” of the participants who can appeal to the above-mentioned art. 25 of the Schengen Visa Code. Formal protocols were approved to open the Humanitarian Corridors program in Italy and France after an articulate specification of this criteria – vulnerability – clarified that it can be applied to victims of sex abuse, human trafficking, political or religious violence, persecution and wars. In fact, the adopted criteria also helped offer protection to people with severe disabilities or in need of specific treatment unobtainable in Lebanon or Ethiopia, and to single mothers exposed to the violence of local traditions and customs. The inclusive approach of the Humanitarian Corridors program represents a positive contribution to criteria that can be adopted by the international community and agencies in order to grant refuge in the specific geopolitical context of the 21st century.



**MULTI-PHASE.** We stress that the Humanitarian Corridors program requires a long preparation time in order to conduct and evaluate interviews; once in the EU, the participants are supported by networks of associations and volunteers for a consistent period of time and are involved in a variety of actions such as language learning, job trainings and internships. This is a crucial phase aiming to empower participants and to create the conditions for their eventual economic independence. The success of aspects of the Humanitarian Corridors program confirms the importance of a strategy of gradual integration into the core values of the EU states. Civic loyalty, in fact, appears to be an essential element for any serious policy of integration and social cohesion. The direct participation of the civil society is requested, in order to enhance this strategy and create a “circle of support” around the participants, especially in the primary phase of contact with new lifestyles and attitudes.

**INTERRELIGIOUS.** In the specific study cases reported, the role of integration with civic values has been largely granted by religious congregations, usually Christian. We want to underline this, at the same time affirming the importance of interreligious meetings and festivals as excellent opportunities for creating mutual knowledge and respect. For example, for the Syrian refugees the report focuses on, the “religious factor” can be a point of division with the European host society that must be addressed and managed in order to avoid stereotypes, prejudices and religious radicalism. Both in Italy and France, Islam is deeply rooted and largely present, so a dialogue with local leaders active in interreligious relations building can be very fruitful, also for the Humanitarian Corridors program.

**FLEXIBLE.** In the considered cases of Italy and France, church-related organizations took responsibility for implementation and resource-gathering for the Humanitarian Corridors program. This is one option, among others. It means that the concept of the Humanitarian Corridors program can be shaped and articulated in a variety of ways, coherent with national legislations and the national political debate. The development of the NEST program in the German region of Westphalia proves the adaptability of the practice and its fundamental flexibility.

## **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The analysis of the achieved results recommends the Humanitarian Corridors program as a general model for EU policy, encouraging willing states to adopt this model of crisis management in order to grant fast and effective protection to people in danger and at risk of death. The role of the EU institutions could be oriented to the following goals:

1. Establish a common platform for information-sharing and integration-modeling based on the already-implemented Humanitarian Corridors program experiences
2. Encourage, also with the aid of special grants, willing states who decide to adopt this measure to tackle illegal migration with the preferable option of open safe and legal passage for agreed annual quotas of asylum seekers
3. Establish – in accordance with UNHCR and related international agencies - a priority list of countries where, in cooperation with the national institutions, the Humanitarian Corridors program can be initiated in conversation with NGOs and other civil society bodies that can offer their involvement and expertise
4. Recognize and support NGOs and other civil society bodies who are ready to launch the Humanitarian Corridors program in crisis regions

5. Experiment, in agreement with willing states, with granting Humanitarian Corridors program support to single mothers and unaccompanied minors, given the necessary financial resources.

## **Appendices**

1. Digest - When Citizens Host Refugees (Secours Catholique, October 2018)
2. Lettre aux hébergeurs (FEP, December 2019)



# WHEN CITIZENS HOST REFUGEES

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
FROM THE SURVEY OF THE HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS  
PROJECT

## The first year of the project implementation: July 2017 - August 2018

The project Humanitarian Corridors aims to provide reception of particularly vulnerable persons among refugees temporarily hosted in Lebanon. These Welcomed persons are provided with humanitarian visa that allows them safe and legal access to France under the private sponsorship scheme (Welcomed persons are privately sponsored and supported by voluntary Host groups/individuals). This project is being implemented within the framework of the Agreement signed in March 2017 between the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France and five faith-based organizations (namely: Community of Sant'Egidio, the Protestant Federation of France, the Federation of Protestant Mutual Aid, the Bishops' Conference of France and Secours Catholique - Caritas France). As a result, the first families were welcomed in France in July 2017 and by the end of September 2018, 160 Welcomed persons that is 38 families and 3 individuals arrived to France.

In order to better assess and evaluate the project and its impact on Welcomed persons and Host groups as well as to address the gaps and propose improvements, the project partners agreed to conduct a survey. This survey was shared with respondents at least 3 months after the arrival of the respective Welcomed person. The retention rate of the survey was relatively high and managed to reach respondents who were in a relevant position to answer the survey questions. Out of 25 addressed families and 3 individuals (105 persons in total), 21 questionnaires representing 79 Welcomed persons were answered. Out of 28 Host groups addressed, 27 baseline questionnaires were answered.

# KEY FINDINGS



## PROFILE OF WELCOMED PERSONS

**Majority of respondents and their families** (14 families) remained in protracted displacement situation outside their country for three years or more before arriving to France. Before applying for the participation in the project Humanitarian Corridors a half of all respondents (11 families) tried to reach secure place outside Lebanon through other channels mainly through safe migration programmes for refugees and people in need.



## PROFILE OF HOST GROUPS

**The majority of Welcoming groups** (16 groups) has more than 15 members from which 9 groups indicated that their group has more than 26 members. In addition, the majority of the Host groups (16 groups) indicated that their group was specifically and exclusively created for the Humanitarian Corridors project.



## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND ACCESS TO RIGHTS IN FRANCE AND SUPPORT PROVIDED BY HOST GROUPS

**In order to initiate administrative procedures in France**, most respondents and their families (15 respondents) succeeded to register their asylum application within 15 days upon arrival as specified in the Agreement. On the contrary and not in accordance with the Agreement, nearly a half of respondents and their families did not have an interview with the Office for the Protection of Refugees (OFPRA) during first three months upon the arrival to France. Welcomed persons receive support with settlement from Host groups. In particular, Host groups provide accommodation, material support, language training, socio-cultural activities, social support and assistance during the asylum claim and administrative procedures. At least 18 Host groups responded that they cooperate with civil society organizations and 13 Host groups indicated that they collaborate with social support structures dedicated to state-funded asylum-seekers.



## HOUSING

**Half of all respondents** (11 Welcomed families) expressed their satisfaction with the accommodation in France organized by Host groups. Some of the responding Welcomed families consider their current accommodation or the place of residence as too small while few respondents pointed out a lack of good connection with public transportation to schools and medical facilities. In terms of the type of accommodation arranged for Welcomed persons, 15 Host groups indicated that they found accommodation free of charge while 11 Host groups indicated that the Welcomed persons are hosted in rented housing



## EMPLOYMENT OF WELCOMED PERSONS

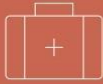
**The data from** the survey shows that none of the respondents or their family members were engaged in a remunerable activity. This is mainly due to work restriction for the asylum seekers, but also due to limited French language skills and limited availability of jobs in the area of residence. On the other hand, one half of respondents (10) indicated that they or their family members work as volunteers in charitable or sports associations.



## LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

**The average level of French language** of the majority of Welcomed persons upon arrival to France was basic or non-existing. By contrast, after few months of stay in France the French language skills of Welcomed persons and their families increased to basic or intermediate level. While 36 per cent of responding Welcomed persons indicated that their children in schooling age could not or had a limited access to education in Lebanon, the survey revealed that 67 per cent of the children in schooling age were enrolled in the French educational system immediately upon arrival and the remaining children within few months





## HEALTHCARE

**The majority of respondents and their families (13)** did not have an access to free healthcare in Lebanon, Iraq or Syria. In contrast, almost all respondents indicated that currently they have free access to healthcare for all family members. In addition 17 respondents and their family members already used the medical services in France.



## SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

**Friends and family can provide additional support** with settlement in France. The survey showed that only 5 respondents and their families live close to another family member and only one respondent with the family declared to live near to someone they knew from home. Only four respondents indicated that they presently live near to their country nationals they met in France and nearly a half of the respondents (10) indicated that they live near to friends they made once in France. When asked how the involvement of the Host group in the project changed their perception of persons with migration experience, 11 Host groups responded that the change was positive. In addition, 15 Host groups responded that the involvement of their group in the current project also changed positively the community perception of foreigners in general. Nearly all Host groups participating in the survey responded that they would encourage other Host groups to get involved in the project Humanitarian Corridors.

**“**What are the positive aspects of the project: “..to bring together people from various political and religious backgrounds who work together for the common goal. This diversity is enriching and it does miracles. The regular events such as picnics for refugees/ asylum seekers and neighbouring hosting groups are very rewarding”

Host group from the Occitanie region

**To conclude with**, the survey results highlighted overall satisfaction and appreciation of the project by Welcomed persons and Host groups. In fact, both surveyed groups indicated satisfaction with guidance and tools provided by the project partners. The majority of respondents felt timely and well informed about their roles and responsibilities. Welcomed persons further noted that the most positive experience was a warm welcome at the airport and the extensive support provided by Host groups, while Host groups were motivated and inspired with the trust Welcomed persons have towards them as well as the patience Welcome persons have with lengthy procedures and learning French language.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations provide a list of concrete measures aiming to improve the project design and fine-tune its implementation.

### PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION AND POST-ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE

Welcomed persons and Host groups would further welcome additional pre-departure information. The Welcomed persons, would value more detailed information on: labour market and education in France, information about housing, general information about French culture, information about the place of their residence, detailed description of administrative procedures in France and more information about the travel to France. The Host groups would appreciate more information about their role and responsibilities towards Welcomed persons.

**“**Administrative procedures in France are lengthy; sometimes there is a lack of clarification. I think that others joining the project should be informed and advised to be more patient with administrative procedures and do not hesitate to ask questions and seek clarification.”

Young Iraqi woman

### INCORPORATE IN THE PROJECT SPACE FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOG AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE

Given the differences in culture, language and faith, the intercultural encounters bringing together Welcomed person and Host groups as well as exchanges of experience should be considered by the project partners in the second year of the project»»

## HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS

### ENSURE ACCESS TO QUALIFIED SERVICES PROVIDED BY ADMINISTRATORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

» Although majority of Welcomed persons arriving to France through the project Humanitarian Corridors succeeded to access the entitlement for asylum seekers and follow up on their asylum claim, these administrative procedures represent a time consuming, complex and stressful task, especially for the Host groups. It is therefore necessary to ensure availability of dedicated services/social actors who could counsel and support the Welcomed persons and Host groups through procedures.

“ Administrative procedures are very time consuming. We would welcome an agreement between the French authorities and partners of the project Humanitarian Corridors that could guarantee assistance of a social worker during different administrative procedures from the moment Welcomed persons arrive to France. ”

Host group from the Bourgogne Franche Comté region

### RESPECT THE LENGTH OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE AS STATED IN THE AGREEMENT

Timely procedures are critical element in the Humanitarian Corridors project as any significant delay hinders Welcomed person access to entitlements, including housing, unemployment or family benefits (as guaranteed by the Republican Integration Contract). The duration of procedures as stated in the Agreement should be therefore respected to facilitate planning for the Host groups and project partners. In cases where the deadlines can not be respected, the State authorities should provide alternative solution and ensure commitment towards hosting the Welcomed persons.

### ENSURE ACCESS TO ADA ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING

Host groups commit themselves in the project with large financial amounts in order to support Welcomed persons. In some cases the amount for first three months of hosting exceeds 3000 EUR. The recent decree decreasing the additional amount of ADA (Financial allowance for asylum seekers) for persons residing outside the state housing facility has a strong implication for the independence and autonomy of the Welcomed persons as well as for the Host groups. This decree restricts autonomy of these individuals

and impedes solidarity actions of civil society and it is therefore important to cancel this decree.

### ENSURE TIMELY ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AND SPECIAL CARE SERVICES

Given the fact that majority of Welcomed persons under this project are persons with significant vulnerabilities, it is a priority to guarantee quick access to free psychosocial support. Moreover, in some cases, arriving persons have strong disabilities that require specific type of accommodation (for example persons in a wheelchair). For these particular cases, the State should guarantee a priority access to adapted public facilities while Host group can provide the socio-cultural and emotional support.

### IMPROVED ACCESS TO FRENCH COURSES, VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES, TRAINING AND JOB MARKET

Similar to situation of other asylum seekers, access to job market and French courses from the moment of the registration of asylum claim would foster integration of Welcomed persons. It is therefore recommended to guarantee for all asylum seekers access to job market and French courses from the moment of the asylum claim registration and not only once the protection is granted. All project partners fully support this recommendation.

### PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROCEDURE

Several Welcomed persons express deep worries about their closest relatives and family members who stayed behind in Syria, Lebanon or Iraq. It is of main importance both for the relatives still in conflict zones, as well as for the integration of Welcomed persons to facilitate family reunification by providing detailed information about the procedure, timeframe and assistance during the application procedure.

“ We are exhausted and suffer so much as we left our family (parents and my brother) behind in Lebanon. They should come to France, I hope you will be able to find a solution. I am sick and frequently hospitalized and the presence of my parents here in France would help me, my wife and our little daughter a lot. ”

Iraqi man



CONFÉRENCE  
des évêques  
de FRANCE







FÉDÉRATION DE L'ENTRAIDE PROTESTANTE

# LETTRE AUX HÉBERGEURS

#12

Décembre 2019

## Chers amis engagés dans l'accueil et l'accompagnement des réfugiés,

**En cette fin d'année 2019, nous souhaitons revenir avec vous sur les évolutions du contexte pour les personnes réfugiées, que ce soit au Liban ou en France.**

Avec une population de quatre millions d'habitants, le pays du cèdre accueille entre 1,5 million et deux millions de réfugiés, syriens et irakiens.

Comme nous l'explique dans cette lettre Soledad André, notre envoyée de la FEP au Liban, la situation de ces familles réfugiées se détériore. D'autre part, les événements survenus au Liban ces dernières semaines ont accru la pression subie par les réfugiés alors que la situation en Syrie ne permet pas d'envisager un retour en toute sécurité pour ces familles. Enfin, au niveau mondial, selon l'Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés, 70 millions de personnes sont victimes de déplacements forcés.

Evidemment l'engagement citoyen seul ne peut suffire à offrir des solutions durables à l'ensemble des personnes en besoin de protection internationale. Il est cependant porteur d'un sens profond, il témoigne de la volonté d'une partie de la population française de promouvoir et d'exiger un accueil digne de ceux qui fuient les conflits et les persécutions.

Il encourage les États à prendre leurs responsabilités et à s'engager dans l'accueil des réfugiés, il encourage les réseaux territoriaux, les

collectivités locales à travailler de concert dans le développement de réseaux d'accueil et à considérer l'accueil des réfugiés comme un ciment de cohésion sociale. Enfin, il donne à la FEP des arguments, des exemples et des preuves pour appuyer ses revendications, et porter la parole des sans-voix.

Les collectifs citoyens, appuyés par la FEP ont accueilli à ce jour 58 familles dans le cadre des couloirs humanitaires. Cela peut paraître peu au vu des besoins mondiaux, mais c'est un exemple fort d'engagement fraternel qui rayonne et envoie un message fort, démontrant que l'hospitalité peut présenter une alternative aux durcissements des politiques migratoires. Ce message, nous le portons devant les différents acteurs et décideurs français, comme européens.

**Dans une période marquée par un durcissement des conditions d'accueil des demandeurs d'asile en France, nous avons plus que jamais besoin de faire entendre ces voix d'espérance. Merci à tous ceux qui les portent ainsi, avec nous, au quotidien.**

**Guilhem Mante**  
Coordinateur de programme  
«Accueil de l'Étranger»

*Nous vous souhaitons de belles  
fêtes de fin d'année  
et une excellente année 2020,  
placée sous le signe  
de la solidarité.*



## Un mot de Soledad...

...qui accompagne et prépare depuis le Liban les familles avant leur départ.

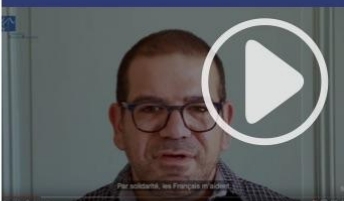
### EN VIDÉO

Des pastilles vidéos de sensibilisation ont été réalisées par la FEP et projetées à ces occasions ; si vous souhaitez les visionner, cliquez sur les vignettes ci-dessous.



> **L'aide financière pour les demandeurs d'asile**

<http://bit.ly/FEPaide>



> **La demande de logement pour les demandeurs d'asile**

<http://bit.ly/FEPlogement>

Depuis le début du projet, les conditions de vie des réfugiés au Liban ont considérablement empiré. Soumis à de nombreux décrets émis par les autorités libanaises rendant très difficile le renouvellement de leurs papiers, leurs déplacements, leurs possibilités d'emplois ou de trouver un logement, les réfugiés, majoritairement syriens, sont poussés à quitter le pays. Malheureusement, la situation actuelle en Syrie ne permet pas d'envisager un retour en toute sécurité pour ces familles. D'autre part, les événements survenus au Liban ces dernières semaines ont accru la pression subie par les réfugiés.

L'équipe de la FEP au Liban continue donc son travail d'identification des bénéficiaires des Couloirs Humanitaires et d'accompagnement dans leurs démarches, depuis la constitution de la demande de visa humanitaire auprès du Consulat de France à Beyrouth jusqu'au départ en France. Outre l'assistance légale fournie aux bénéficiaires, cet accompagnement passe également par une préparation au départ qui inclue des groupes de discussions avec des psychologues, un atelier d'explication du projet et très récemment une introduction à l'apprentissage du français. Durant cette préparation sont abordés les thèmes de l'interculturalité, la gestion du stress, la procédure de demande d'asile en France... Ce temps de préparation est l'opportunité pour les bénéficiaires d'exprimer leurs questions, leurs doutes et leurs peurs. C'est donc l'occasion pour l'équipe de la FEP de les rassurer, mais également de déconstruire toutes idées reçues sur la perspective d'une vie idéale en Europe.



SI VOUS SOUHAITEZ ACCÉDER AU PROGRAMME D'APPRENTISSAGE DU FRANÇAIS EN LIGNE, RENDEZ-VOUS ICI :

<https://bit.ly/34zMnwN>

## Évolution du contexte pour les demandeurs d'asile en France

**En France, les politiques d'accueil pour les demandeurs d'asile ont évolué ces derniers mois.** La question migratoire fut au centre de l'actualité avec le débat organisé à l'Assemblée Nationale sur l'immigration. Il a mis en lumière les clivages au sein de la société française concernant les questions migratoires et a débouché sur quelques annonces dont certaines vont durcir les conditions d'accueil des demandeurs d'asile en France. Les députés ont ainsi entériné l'instauration d'un délai de carence de trois mois avant que les demandeurs d'asile n'aient accès à la protection universelle maladie (PUMA).

### Les mesures antérieures entrées en application :

- **Depuis le 5 novembre, la carte ADA ne permet plus de retrait d'argent liquide** (sauf dans les magasins équipés du dispositif de cash back). De nombreux collectifs font déjà remonté les difficultés rencontrées par les demandeurs d'asile en zone rurale et semi-rurale pour effectuer leurs achats, alors que ces zones sont faiblement équipées en terminaux de paiement par carte bancaire.
- **Le permis de conduire syrien n'est plus échangé, tout comme le permis irakien.** Les personnes doivent donc repasser leur permis, ce qui engendre des délais importants dans l'obtention du permis. Encore une fois, les personnes accueillies en dehors des grands centres urbains, où le permis de conduire est essentiel pour pouvoir se déplacer, sont pénalisés.



### PLUS D'INFOS SUR...

#### LA CARTE DE PAIEMENT

- > [www.ofii.fr/carte-de-paiement-ada](http://www.ofii.fr/carte-de-paiement-ada)
- > [www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/18756/carte-ada-qu-est-ce-que-le-cashback](http://www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/18756/carte-ada-qu-est-ce-que-le-cashback)
- > [www.lacimade.org/carte-ada-pourquoi-faire-simple-quand-on-peut-faire-complique/](http://www.lacimade.org/carte-ada-pourquoi-faire-simple-quand-on-peut-faire-complique/)

#### L'ÉCHANGE DE PERMIS DE CONDUIRE

- > [www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1460](http://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1460)

La FEP a fait remonter ces difficultés au ministère de l'intérieur lors d'une réunion de suivi du dispositif des couloirs humanitaires, en pointant ces contradictions : alors que ces politiques ont pour objectif de favoriser l'intégration des réfugiés, notamment en privilégiant leur installation dans les zones rurales et semi-rurales. Ces alertes figureront également dans le rapport de bilan intermédiaire des couloirs humanitaires, envoyé par la FEP au ministère de l'intérieur et au ministère des affaires étrangères.

**Nous voulions tout de même finir sur une bonne nouvelle.** Dans le cadre du projet des Couloirs Humanitaires, la FEP a signé un accord pour permettre aux demandeurs d'asile de bénéficier de cours de français langue étrangère sans attendre l'obtention de la protection internationale et la signature du contrat d'intégration républicaine. C'était un plaidoyer fort pour permettre dès leur arrivée sur le territoire l'apprentissage du français qui est le prérequis essentiel pour une intégration réussie.

**Plus de 200 structures réparties sur tout le territoire peuvent dispenser ces cours, vous pouvez vous rapprocher du responsable de pôle régional pour avoir davantage d'information sur ce dispositif.**





## Retour sur la rencontre de Sommière entre collectifs d'accueil

**Le 8 octobre, les collectifs et les personnes accueillies dans le quart sud-est de la France ainsi que l'équipe de la FEP se sont réunis à Sommières dans le Gard.**

Ce fut l'occasion d'entendre de belles histoires de rencontres, ainsi au sein d'un même collectif dans une même ville, se découvrent des amitiés et les a priori se transforment en surprise de l'accueil... Des rires face aux enfants, de l'admiration face aux progrès des jeunes en classe, des découvertes culinaires savoureuses, des champions d'échec en herbe... autant de petites joies qui consolident l'engagement de chacun.

C'est aussi pour les personnes accueillies comme pour les collectifs d'accueil de partager certaines difficultés, notamment concernant les démarches administratives, parcours chaotique qui a souvent tout du parcours du combattant. Cette rencontre est donc aussi l'occasion d'échanger des conseils et des bonnes pratiques.

Nous tenons à remercier toutes les personnes qui ont participé à cette rencontre et plus particulièrement Saïf Al-Tekreeti, journaliste, qui a pris des photos et réalisé un film de la rencontre et Micheline Helaleh-Ackl, avocate, a traduit l'ensemble des débats et des discussions durant cette journée.



© Photos : Saïf Al-Tekreeti



**PLUS D'INFOS  
SUR VISA AD**

[www.visa-ad.org](http://www.visa-ad.org)

**PLUS D'INFOS SUR LE  
PROGRAMME VOLONTR**

<https://accueil-integration-refugies.fr/volontr-programme-de-service-civique-accueil-integration-refugies>

### VISA AD

Volontariat International au Service des Autres, l'Année Diaconale (VISA-AD), est une association membre de la FEP, reconnue « d'Éducation et de Jeunesse Populaire », engagée depuis 1959 dans le volontariat sous toutes ses formes.

Elle propose un dispositif permettant d'engager les jeunes réfugiés de 18 à 25 ans comme volontaires de Service Civique, rémunérés, sur la base d'un contrat de 10 mois. C'est une opportunité intéressante pour les jeunes de moins de 25 ans ayant obtenu la protection internationale, connaissant des difficultés pour trouver un premier emploi et ne pouvant pas encore bénéficier du RSA. Pour les personnes reconnues en situation de handicap, il est même possible d'effectuer un service civique jusqu'à l'âge de 30 ans révolus.



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Fédération  
Entraide Protestante

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