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RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN FRANCE, A GUARANTEE OF NATURALISTIC SUPPORT: STUDY CONDUCTED IN STRASBOURG FROM 2022 TO 2023

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the social support of immigrants in precarious situations, particularly refugees resettled in France. This topic is relevant in a context marked by an increase in unfavorable decisions in regularization procedures, which nevertheless, in many cases, lead to migrants remaining on French territory. These individuals then seek support from the available services Common law, often under restrictive conditions and with limited resources, compromising their ability to meet their basic needs.

This situation raises questions about the respect for the principle of unconditional reception as provided for by the Social Action and Family Code. It also highlights the structural limitations faced by associations, to whom public authorities entrust the responsibility of sheltering these populations, without always providing them with the necessary legal and financial means to carry out their missions as best as possible.

The aim of this study is to assess the level of satisfaction of people in precarious situations regarding the support offered by the organizations, in a context where institutional reception is difficult to realize, both for the beneficiaries and for the field workers.

Keywords: Migration, Resettled Refugees, Precariousness, Social Support, Vulnerability.

1 INTRODUCTION

Migration can be defined as the movement of a person or a group of people from one place to another, whether voluntary or forced. The motivations behind these movements are multiple and include economic, environmental, social, or political factors, as well as situations of armed conflict. Migration projects are also strongly influenced by the reception conditions and administrative treatment of migrants in the destination countries, which can be either attractive or dissuasive nature [1, 2].

The resettlement program aims to organize in advance and appropriately the migratory transition of the families being welcomed, taking into account their vulnerabilities and individual potentials. Support structures, such as the Regional Specialized Association for Social Aid, Education, and Activities, “ARSEA” for short, commit to implementing measures that promote the autonomy of the people being assisted within twelve months, in accordance with the program's specifications. In cases of specific vulnerabilities, particularly related to health, referrals to suitable local services are planned before the end of the care period [3].

In this study, three major push and pull factors were identified. First, sociopolitical factors are a major driver of migration. Religious, ethnic, racial, and political persecutions Cultural factors, as well as wars and widespread conflicts, force many people to leave their home country in order to protect their life and safety. These individuals often prefer countries that are geographically close or states known for welcoming and recognizing the right to asylum [4, 5].

Secondly, demographic and economic factors play a decisive role, especially in countries in the Global South. These countries are often characterized by high population densities, persistent demographic imbalances, or, conversely, by rapidly aging populations [6]. In these contexts, limited employment prospects and weak economic opportunities drive the working population to consider migration as a strategy for survival or for improving living conditions. These dynamics also affect the norms of Work, the overall health of the economy, and contribute to rising unemployment [7]. Moreover, countries offering a higher standard of living, better job prospects, as well as attractive educational and social opportunities, serve as major points of attraction for migrant populations [8]. Finally, environmental and climate factors are becoming a growing driver of contemporary migrations. Natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, or the effects of climate change force many people to leave their traditional places of residence [9].

All of these factors have contributed to an increase in migration flows to Europe, often under extremely precarious conditions, particularly through dangerous sea crossings. These dynamics have heightened attention on by European public policies on migration issues. As an example, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) recorded about 330,000 irregular crossings in 2022, a significant increase compared to previous years [10].

Strasbourg is a particularly relevant area to study the support of immigrants in vulnerable situations. As the capital of the Grand Est region and home to several European institutions, it occupies a strategic border position, directly touching Germany and at the heart of European flows. Its rail accessibility, the presence of administrative offices, and the concentration of public and community services make it a transit, settlement, and support area for migrant populations [11].

In 2022-2023, the Euro Metropolis of Strasbourg had about 522,600 inhabitants in 2023. It is characterized. It was also characterized by significant social inequalities: its poverty rate reached 23.3%, highlighting the heavy pressure on local housing, healthcare access, food aid, and social support systems. This rate concerns the entire metropolitan population and therefore does not, on its own, measure poverty among immigrants [12]. This period was marked by increased visibility of international migration and asylum. In 2022, Strasbourg, in particular, welcomed several thousand displaced people from Ukraine. At the same time, more than a hundred migrants from different backgrounds, including Georgian, Macedonian, and Eritrean, settled in makeshift shelters in Parc de l'Étoile due to insufficient housing solutions. This situation led the city council, in September 2022, to acknowledge the rise in encampments and the inadequate quantity and quality of reception capacities, especially for families and children [10]. In 2023, the City reported that 5,099 initial asylum applications had been submitted in Strasbourg, a number that confirms its important role in the administrative reception of people affected by forced migration. However, it is important not to equate this number with the number of people permanently settled in the municipality: a locally submitted application does not necessarily imply permanent residence in Strasbourg.

Support relied on a variety of actors: state services, the City and Euro Metropolis, reception centers for asylum seekers, emergency housing structures, health organizations, and the associative network. Their efforts particularly involved providing shelter, registering addresses, access to rights, healthcare, food, schooling, and learning French. Despite this mobilization, the saturation of the housing and presence of families in camps revealed a persistent gap between needs and available resources [13]. Thus, in 2022-2023, Strasbourg appeared at the same time as a welcoming European city and as a territory facing the structural limits of migration and social policies. This tension between humanist tradition, institutional and associative mobilization, and insufficient housing capacity provides an essential framework for analyzing support for immigrants in precarious situations [2].

In response to this increase in migratory flows and with an expressed commitment to international solidarity, France has developed public policies focused on refugee resettlement, seen as an alternative to the traditional asylum request. This approach was reflected in the signing of international agreements and in the implementation specific measures aimed at organizing, upstream, the reception and integration of people eligible for refugee status or subsidiary protection [14]. However, the increase in public action programs in areas such as employment, health, training, housing, or combating discrimination, although driven by goals of social mixing and cohesion, has sometimes led to a dispersion

of resources and varying effectiveness of interventions. The lack of systematic and rigorous evaluations of these programs can limit their impact and weaken the credibility of public action [15].

This article focuses on the social support of immigrants in precarious situations, particularly resettled refugees in France. This topic caught our attention based on field observations showing that many migrants, despite receiving unfavorable decisions in the case within the framework of regularization procedures, they remain on French territory. In this context, they seek support through mainstream systems, often under difficult conditions and with insufficient resources to provide for their basic needs.

This situation raises the question of respecting the principle of unconditional reception, as set out in the Social Action and Families Code. It also highlights the challenges faced by nonprofit operators, to whom the State entrusts the mission of sheltering these populations without always providing the legal, financial, and institutional means necessary to fully carry out their missions. This research assesses how satisfied precarious populations are with the ways they are supported by associations. It aims to identify the structural obstacles that hinder the work of support organizations, in a context where the socio-economic inclusion of Refugees constitute a major challenge for public policies.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Study Framework

2.2 Territorial Context: the city of Strasbourg

This research took place in Strasbourg, the administrative capital of the Grand East region of France and home to European institutions. Its border location with Germany (Kehl) makes it a strategic migratory and economic hub, situated at the heart of the European megalopolis. Crossed by the Ill River, the city has natural spaces conducive to integration efforts.

Despite its dynamism, the area shows significant socio-economic disparities. Priority neighborhoods such as Cronenbourg, Hautepierre, or Neuhof host populations in extreme precariousness, where social structures deploy their accommodation and support services for asylum seekers and refugees [10].

2.2.1 Institutional Field: ARSEA

The ARSEA (The Regional Specialized Association Center for Social Action, Education, and Activities) is the key operator of this research. Recognized as being of public interest, its work revolves around three main areas: Childhood and Youth, Disability, and Inclusion and Multiple Social Challenges. The last area manages emergency housing, the 115 hotline, residential integration, and the National Reception Mechanism (DNA) through its Asylum Seeker Reception Centers (CADA).

The study focuses on the SESAME service (Service for Evaluation, Support, Guidance, and Mediation for Exile), a resettlement program mandated by UNHCR. This program offers comprehensive, multidisciplinary support over 12 months (housing, health, and language, employment) to people who obtained refugee status before arriving in France. During 2022-2023, this service faced historic levels of saturation due to the massive influx of displaced Ukrainians, combined with flows from the Syrian-Afghan axis. Pointing to the association's need to innovate in the face of limited state resources [3].

2.3 Study Type

The research takes a qualitative and phenomenological approach, combining descriptive and retrospective aims [16]. Conducted in the field from May 9 to August 9, 2023, it seeks to understand the subjective experience and the meaning that actors assign to their experiences of precariousness and care [17]. The temporal scope of the evaluation covers the support period from 2022 to 2023.

2.4 Study Population

The reference population included the entire cohort supported by the ARSEA resettlement program in Strasbourg, consisting of eight families and one isolated person, representing a total of forty people with refugee status.

2.5 Selection Criteria

In order to prioritize the depth of experience specific to qualitative approaches, participant selection is based on a non-probabilistic sampling technique by reasoned choice [18]. The defined inclusion criteria were:

- **The institutional criterion:** belonging to the cohort specifically supported by the SESAME service of ARSEA in Strasbourg.
- **The temporal and status criterion:** having refugee status granted before arrival in the national territory and being engaged in the resettlement process during the period 2022-2023.

2.6 Study Sample

Related to the methodological frameworks of Paillé and Mucchielli [17] as well as Pires AP [18], the sample includes a homogeneous group of six families (a total of 30 people, including 10 children), covering 75% of the households in the program. This group illustrates the diversity of resettlement flows in Strasbourg across three nationalities: four Syrian families, one Sudanese family, and one Eritrean family. The survey focused on the voices of the 20 adults in these households, who are at the forefront of the insertion procedures.

2.7 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is based on documentary research and conducting semi-structured interviews [19]. These interviews provided a flexible framework for exchange, structured around specific thematic areas (reception, administrative procedures, housing), while encouraging respondents to freely express their experiences, disappointments, or reasons for satisfaction.

To overcome the language barrier of first-time arrivals, language mediation (interpreters and translation tools) was systematically used. The interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone with the participants' consent and then fully transcribed. This collection was supplemented by concise note-taking (keywords and sentence segments) performed continuously during and after field meetings [20].

2.8 Data Analysis

The processing of textual material from the semi-structured interviews is based on the Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) method [21]. The protocol for analyzing the corpus was organized around two complementary steps:

- **Transcription and immersion:** All recordings were fully transcribed word for word (in verbatim). A phase of "floating reading" then allowed for deep immersion in the narratives to accurately convey the uniqueness of the participants' daily lives in Strasbourg.
- **Coding and analytical illustration:** The textual data were divided into units of meaning, and then grouped within a structured thematic grid. In the main text, analytical findings are systematically supported by direct quotes from the interviews, duly anonymized, placed in quotation marks, and contextualized (e.g., "ALBELKHI Family, interview conducted in May 2023").

2.9 Ethical Aspects

To protect this vulnerable population, the protocol complied with Ethical rules and the GDPR [22, 23] through three major safeguards:

- **Free, informed, and ongoing consent:** The objectives were explained orally in a simplified way with the help of translators. Families were assured of their right to withdraw and of the total independence of the study from institutions (ARSEA, Prefecture, OFII), ensuring no impact on their administrative or residential situation [24].
- **Strict anonymization:** To protect confidentiality, identities, first names, and exact locations were removed as soon as transcripts were made and replaced with generic codes in the article, making identification impossible by outsiders or the association teams.

Data security and destruction: Audio files and field notes are kept exclusively by the researcher on an encrypted digital medium. They will be the subject of permanent destruction upon academic validation of the work.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Profile of the hosted families

The sample includes 6 families (30 people in total), divided into 5 couples and 1 single-parent family. There are 17 adults (9 men, 8 women) and 13 children (10 boys, 3 girls). The common language is Arabic. Half of the families are strictly monolingual, while the other half speaks at least two languages (Arabic and English). This setup directly affects their access to employment and to independent procedures.

No parent has a diploma recognized in France or an educational level considered high. However, there are specialized skills from their country of origin or migration journey (high school diploma, psychology, emergency medical technician, tourism). The adults have a very diverse range of original occupations (cobbler, handyman, driver, hairdresser, military service). While these profiles show a great Versatility aside, they suffer from a lack of formal recognition in the French labor market.

In the end, the profile highlights a highly vulnerable population (low educational capital, language barrier, professional discontinuity) dependent on initial social support, which justifies the need for tailored assistance from ARSEA.

3.2 Civic training in the first asylum country

Provided in the first asylum country by French institutions and the IOM, civic training aims to prepare refugees for their long-term settlement. It conveys the values of French society, its social and legal framework, as well as the initial steps to secure travel and integration [25].

However, fieldwork reveals a significant gap between the expectations built beforehand and the reality experienced upon arrival. The information received is often perceived by refugees as incomplete, inaccurate, or impossible to implement by the hosting structures in France, which cannot verify what has been communicated abroad.

In situations of high vulnerability, the beneficiaries interpret the teachings as implicit promises of rapid advancement. Families express strong frustration and incomprehension regarding initial life projects that are considered unrealistic, a situation illustrated by the testimonies of the ALBELKHI family (Bischheim, May 25, 2023):

“... The information is not the same; many things are not like they told us. We regret it, but we have no choice. The "good life," we don't see it ...”

“... They talked to us about a good life, better housing, and a good job. Today, we realize that this is not the case. Moreover, the language holds us back ...”

Without questioning the relevance of the training, the study highlights the reception biases among vulnerable audiences. This shock of reality increases the burden on the ARSEA, who has to manage the families' disillusionment and readjust social support to rebuild a realistic integration pathway.

3.3 Reception

With regard to public mandates, ARSEA takes care of resettled refugees from their point of entry (airport/train station) with a social worker and an interpreter. The association ensures accommodation and provides transitional financial assistance (rent, living expenses, and transportation) to cover essential needs before benefits become available. During this 12-month period, ARSEA supports access to social rights, healthcare (especially mental health related to exile trauma), professional integration, and learning French [3]. For most, this human-centered reception marks a positive break from the insecurity of the migration journey and generates overall satisfaction, although a minority expresses doubts stemming from the gap with civic training expectations [26].

The reassuring presence of professionals creates an essential space of trust, as families report:

“... We come from Turkey. We arrived in France on August 30, 2022, through Mulhouse airport via Paris. A social worker from ARSEA was waiting for us with a sign with our names. We knew an association officer would come to welcome us. We were happy with this welcome, it relieved us, especially considering the situation we were experiencing in Turkey, where we were afraid every day because our father was a former Syrian military man...” (Excerpt from interview, ALBELKHI family, conducted on May 25, 2023).

“... Sofiane answered all our concerns. We felt like foreigners and a bit frustrated at first, but his presence reassured us. The welcome was good. He drove us by car from Mulhouse to the apartment...” (Excerpt from interview, TEFASLASE family, conducted on May 27, 2023).

More than a simple logistic management, reception is a political and human act of protection and recognition that influences refugees' future commitment to their integration journey.

3.4 Access to fundamental social rights

Within the resettlement program, the mandated organizations provide comprehensive support to refugees in their administrative, social, and health-related processes. Actual access to fundamental social rights is a cornerstone of this framework, as it helps secure their pathways and promotes lasting integration [27].

This support particularly includes access to social protection, healthcare, employment, and learning French [28]. It is based on cooperation among state services, local authorities, and public operators, the nonprofit sector, and civil society, notably the Regional Health Agency, the Departmental Directorate Employment, Work and Solidarity, Employment center, and the consular chambers.

Gradually granting rights upon arrival in the country helps limit interruptions in support and the risks of precariousness. By ensuring minimal resources, access to healthcare, and institutional recognition of refugee status, it also promotes the autonomy of the people being supported [29]. According to Basilien-Gainche ML [1], support structures play an essential role as mediators between beneficiaries and institutions. They make it easier to understand procedures, prepare files, and coordinate actors, while reducing obstacles related to language, lack of knowledge about the systems, and administrative complexity.

The study data indicate that access to social rights is generally effective for all the families monitored. However, processing times, the heaviness of the procedures and the multiplicity of people involved require strong support and specific administrative expertise from social workers. Thus, gaining access to social benefits is not just a simple administrative formality, but a key step in the integration journey. It determines access to housing, healthcare, schooling, and employment, and represents an essential foundation for equal access to rights for resettled refugees.

3.4.1 Access to Housing

Although the ARSEA's three-year program is being structured and expanded, accessing housing remains complicated. The social rental housing stock is limited, leading to long allocation times. To address this, ARSEA requests labeling through the Departmental Collective Agreements (ACD) made with the State. Attempts to enter the private rental market face mostly refusals due to stigma and prejudices against foreigners. This situation is paradoxical since these groups have a regular refugee status and guaranteed social benefits. Sometimes, the management and institutional guarantee of ARSEA manage to reassure certain private landlords [3, 30].

The figure below shows the different types of housing available to resettled refugees accompanied by ARSEA. Three categories of housing can be identified.

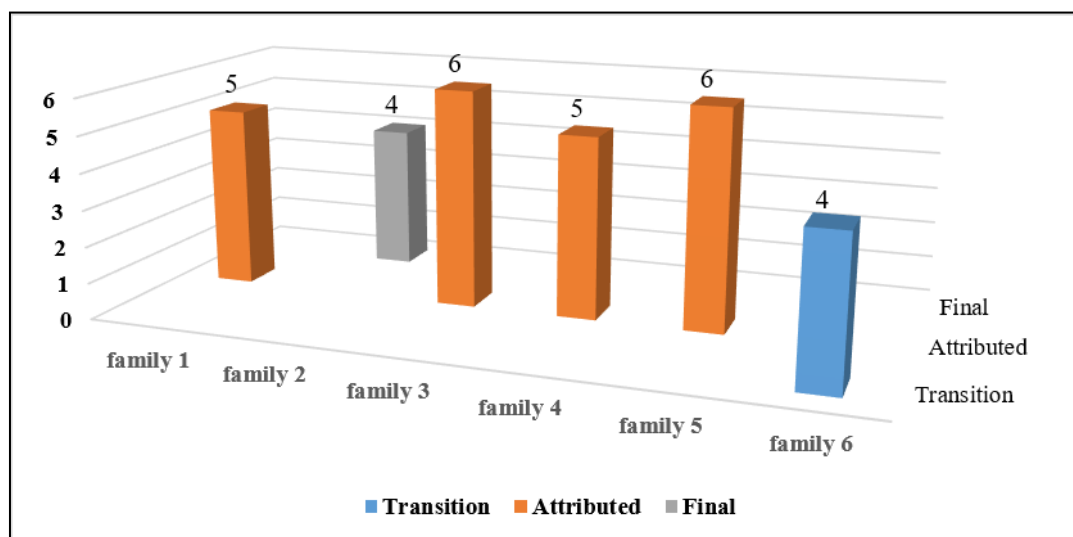


Figure 1: Housing access for refugee families.

The analysis of housing access reveals a structure of the residential stock in three distinct categories, each reflecting a specific stage in the process of empowerment and rights access for families supported by ARSEA:

- Transitional housing (16.67% of the study sample): Located on the site of the “Refugees House” near the coordination office, these three accommodations are intended for the immediate shelter of newcomers. They secure families during the critical phase of administrative regularization and the opening of initial social rights.
- “Allocated” housing (66.67% of the cases): This is the main setup for the cohort. These scattered apartments are made available to refugees for the entire duration of their support. Due to the temporary lack of stable financial resources, bank accounts, or fully activated rights, the leases are signed in the name of ARSEA. At this stage, families do not yet meet the eligibility criteria required to appear before the HLM allocation committees.

- Permanent housing (16.66% of the cases): Obtained at the end of the support period with the technical and partnership assistance of the association, these accommodations mark the culmination of residential integration. The rental contracts are then signed directly in the beneficiaries' names, reflecting their independence and their lasting integration into common law.
- The study confirms a clear gap between the perceptions formed in the first country of asylum and the actual conditions of settlement in France (incomplete housing, lack of immediate healthcare or disability support):
- "... It was like a dream. They said that as soon as you arrive in France, everything would be taken care of, but seventy percent of the truth wasn't there. For example, they said that doctors would be at the airport to take care of our child and start the treatment, and that he would immediately have a suitable chair. We were shocked: I carried my son the entire way with the luggage. Even today, the chair he has isn't suitable, it's too big..." (Interview, DAOUD family conducted on May 30, 2023).
- "... Nevertheless, we already had information from family members living in Europe and Canada, who explained life in France to us. Compared to what we expect... It was said in Cairo, it's totally different. Over there, we were told that we'd have everything: a well-equipped apartment, that we wouldn't lack anything. But when we arrived, the apartment was almost empty; there were only the beds and a table..." (Interview, TESFASLASE family, conducted on May 27, 2023).

Although their situation in Strasbourg is considered better than in transit countries, refugees face limited financial capacity, lack of guarantors, and unfamiliarity with the social housing system. Moreover, the remaining rent costs heavily weigh on their basic resources:

- "... I think fundamental rights are respected and we benefit from them: we have housing, we have health coverage, and the children go to school. That's good, unlike in Lebanon. But the aid we receive is still very basic. The state gives us a little, and with that little we still have to pay for accommodation. It's really complicated..." (Interview, HASAN family) (Carried out on June 6, 2023).

To get around this lack of administrative credibility, ARSEA secures housing by signing leases in its own name. The association ensures that the housing fits the families' needs and immediately starts the necessary procedures to open rights (CAF), since refugees are initially non-taxable and have no administrative history in France (Ministry of the Interior and Overseas/France, 2022).

3.4.2 Social benefits and health insurance

Access to social protection cash transfers (RSA, APL) and health insurance is at the core of the support provided by ARSEA. Focused on preserving family cohesion and respecting confidentiality, this part addresses the severe precariousness of populations identified as highly vulnerable by UNHCR [3]. From this perspective, marginality is not a static state but a dynamic process of social distancing. The monetary benefits then act as a fundamental vector of affiliation, conditioning access to stable housing in the face of market constraints. Nevertheless, an analysis of household budgets reveals the overwhelming weight of 'pre-committed' and non-reducible expenses (rent, utilities, services), which consume the bulk of disposable income tied to guaranteed minimums [25, 31].

For a large majority of the twenty adults interviewed, the effective opening of rights represents a reassuring institutional recognition. The overall intervention of ARSEA is experienced as the primary driver of this stabilization:

- "...We enjoy our social rights, even if we do not yet know everything. We have housing, the children are in school, and we have social security. What we lack is work because of the language. We have started French classes. We haven't done anything ourselves; it's the association that did everything.' ... done for us, and we are very grateful..." (Interview, TESFASLASE family, conducted on May 27, 2023).

However, the stories highlight the insufficiency of social minimums compared to the realities of the cost of living and housing in Strasbourg, sometimes pushing toward early professional integration strategies or residential disappointments:

- "...We want another apartment, preferably on the ground floor, bigger and up to European standards. Here, it's like a dungeon. We pay the rent with our CAF and RSA income, which amounts to about 60%, and we cover the rest ourselves. Madam has also started a small part-time cleaning job..." (Interview, TESFASLASE family, conducted on May 27, 2023).
- "...ARSEA/SESAME does everything for us: we have housing, social security, our child goes to school. But our income is too low, and we pay a lot for the apartment..." (Interview, ALBELKHI family, conducted on May 25, 2023).

The success of this inclusion is based on a stabilized and expanded partnership network (CAF, Prefecture, CPAM, National Education, PMI, DEETS). ARSEA's added value lies in its ability to go beyond the simple requirements of the public procurement specifications. The initiation of preventive and systematic actions (vaccination follow-up with PMI, screening with a tuberculosis control center) illustrates the expertise of social workers [3, 6].

The figure below confirms the actual payment of social benefits as well as health insurance coverage for all surveyed families. The amounts received vary depending on several factors, including family composition, income from any professional activities, and the presence of partial or total loss of autonomy due to a disability situation.

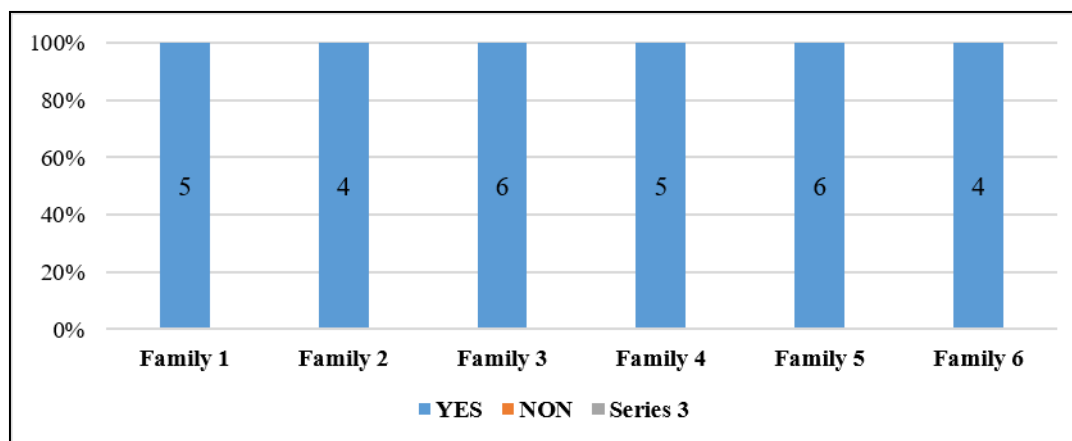


Figure 2: Social benefits and health insurance for families

The designation of a regular doctor for all beneficiaries helps to structure the care pathway right from the initial health check-up. This setup reflects respect for the right to health protection stated in Article L1110-1 of the Public Health Code, ensuring universal access, continuity, and safety of care. In carrying out public mandates, ARSEA strengthens this protection by aligning the medical coverage of resettled refugees with that of national citizens. This comprehensive care eliminates financial barriers and restrictions to emergency care only, allowing for an appropriate response to complex situations, especially chronic diseases and disabilities. These medical criteria echo the vulnerability indicators previously defined by the program's steering committee for selecting beneficiaries [3, 28].

For the twenty adults interviewed, the activation of health insurance rights concretely confirms their integration into the host society. The independent use of digital appointment tools shows a quick adoption of standard public services:

- "... Since we have social security, we make appointments directly on Doctolib with the doctor and we don't pay anything..." (Interview, HIJIEJ family conducted on June 17, 2023).
- Moreover, the actual free access to healthcare and the recognition of fundamental rights in Strasbourg mark a major break from the precariousness and exclusion experienced in first-asylum countries:
- "...Here, our fundamental rights are respected: we have housing, we have social security, and the children go to school. It's very different from Jordan, where we were not allowed to work or buy property, and where our children couldn't study because of their health issues..." (Interview, HIJIEJ family conducted on 1) June 17, 2023).

Finally, the accounts highlight the essential transitional role of the association, which takes on the financial burden of care before full administrative rights are established, thereby securing the critical phase of settlement: "... We go to the hospital without paying anything thanks to social security, but before that, all the bills were covered by ARSEA..." (Interview, ALBELKHII family conducted on May 25, 2023).

3.4.3 Schooling

In France, the fundamental right to education and the obligation to attend school (from ages 3 to 16) apply unconditionally to newly arrive non-French-speaking minors. Within the resettlement program, schooling is a priority area of intervention. ARSEA implements a structured guidance system: direct enrollment in local schools for primary education, and the use of the Schiltigheim Information and Guidance Center (CIO) for secondary education. The systematic implementation of placement tests makes it possible to assess academic levels and request appropriate language support from the Strasbourg academy, which centralizes the follow-up through a single point of contact [2, 8].

Although the studied cohort is mostly adult (with school-aged children representing about 50% of the sample), the work of ARSEA/SESAME receives unanimous support from families. The association acts as a key inter-institutional mediator

between households, educational teams, and local authorities, repairing trajectories that were initially marked by school exclusion experienced in first asylum countries:

“... We feel very comfortable with ARSEA as newcomers. We didn’t know anyone, and the translation helped us a lot. In Lebanon, our son Ali was forbidden to go to school, while Lebanese children ... having the same health problem had access to it. When we arrived, Rita was admitted to school right away. When we accompanied her, Ali started crying. Moved, the school principal contacted the town hall to plead his case. Thanks to her, Ali is now enrolled in school...” (Interview, DAOUD family, conducted on May 30, 2023).

The school inclusion of children is not limited to their own success; it acts as a systemic lever that shapes language learning and the socio-professional integration of the entire family unit. It encourages the development of strategies for delayed integration or early technical insertion (vocational training, CAP), driven by strong motivation from young people to contribute to the household resources:

“... Language remains an obstacle, which is why we are still not doing much. We are making efforts for French lessons, our eldest son and I. The second one is pursuing ambulance training online. The youngest, sixteen years old, did an observation internship in a hair salon and wants to start a vocational diploma (CAP), but there isn’t any spot available yet. He is very motivated to work and help the family financially...” (Interview, ALBELKHI family conducted on May 25, 2023).

Moreover, the data highlight a remarkable intergenerational dimension. By quickly adopting the codes of the host society, the children become “shadow linguistic and cultural mediators’ within the household, temporarily reversing the knowledge transmission between parents and children:

“... I have done six hundred hours of French classes; I’ve already done four hundred. That will help me a lot. The children’s school will bring something important into their lives and into mine, because they will become my teachers at home. My eldest daughter already helps with translations in stores, even though she has just started learning English School. Every day, she brings a new word home...” (Interview, HIJIEJ family conducted on June 17, 2023).

Despite these positive dynamics, the survey reveals severe situations of breakdown and disillusionment as they approach adulthood. Young people who experienced interruptions in their schooling in transit countries face the rigidity of age limits in the French mainstream education system. Excluded from the usual channels of the National Education system after 16, they see their university dreams shattered, causing deep psychological distress and strong disappointment compared to other Western resettlement models:

“... Before coming, I dreamed of continuing my studies and becoming a doctor. In Cairo, as a refugee, I wasn’t allowed to go to university. I thought that in France, everything would be possible. But today, it’s impossible to resume a normal school path because I’m over sixteen. I left the system just before the baccalaureate, and I am excluded from the traditional circuit of the National Education. I can’t go to university because of my age, and that makes me sick. My classmates who left for Canada are now at university. Why is it not possible here? ...” (Interview, TESFASLASE family conducted on May 27, 2023).

These stories highlight the flaws in public integration policies, which struggle to offer flexible and adapted pathways to these “late arrivals”, thus limiting the autonomy of young adults who have a strong capital of aspiration.

The figure below shows the situation of schooling of school-age children from resettled refugee families. To date, the children of five out of six families are in school. The sixth family has a child under the age of three, who is not covered by compulsory education.

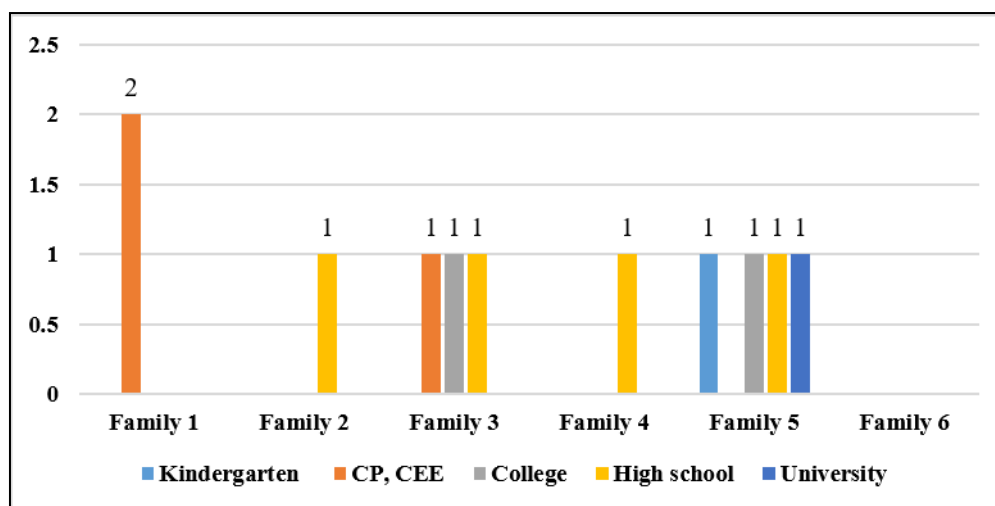


Figure 3: Refugee schooling

Analysis of access to the education system (prima Secondary and higher education) shows an actual enrollment rate of 73.33%, meaning eleven out of a total of fifteen school-age individuals in the studied cohort are enrolled. Conversely, the non-enrollment rate is 26.67% (four people) and is explained by two distinct exclusion factors: Health and disability barriers (20% of cases): Three people (one adult and two children) are kept away from school systems due to serious illnesses or disabilities not yet addressed by the institution. Administrative rigidity related to age (6.67% of cases): An eighteen-year-old young woman experiences structural exclusion from mainstream programs. This gap is directly linked to her late relocation to French territory, which occurred just before the high school exams in her country of first asylum, thus depriving her of suitable pathways to complete her academic journey.

3.4.4 Professional Integration

Integration through work goes beyond merely economic activity; it is a major factor in accessing the social protection system and gaining social recognition, thus realizing the process of affiliation [15]. Aware of this central role, ARSEA provides support that is both prescriptive and practical for newcomers. This guidance aims to explain the codes of the professional world, the legal framework of the French labor market, as well as continuing professional training programs.

On an operational level, the association favors an adapted sectoral and partnership approach. Institutional registration with Employment center is temporarily postponed due to the immediate unemployability caused by language deficits. To address this, ARSEA relies on specialized structures such as Kodiko, dedicated to professional coaching for refugees, or the writers' management, a social enterprise allowing a tailored return to work combined with skills development [3].

Despite these programs, empirical data reveal a bottleneck: almost the entire cohort suffers from a lack of formal educational qualifications or recognized certificates in France, drastically limiting short-term recruitment prospects. At the time of the survey, the actual employment rate was only 5.88%. This low integration is due to the language barrier, but also to a discouragement effect that affects participation in language learning programs.

This finding directly raises questions about integration governance: the formal requirement of courses offered by the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) sometimes seems to take precedence over genuine engagement by the participants. Moreover, the rigidity of the institutional timeframe — constitutionally limited to one year of support — appears structurally insufficient to overcome these accumulated vulnerabilities and achieve true independence. Life stories illustrate this critical correlation between language proficiency, anxiety related to the end of support, and dependence on the association:

"... We enjoy our social rights, even if we don't know much yet. We have housing, the children are in school, and we have social security. What we lack is work because of the language. We've started French classes and we think it'll be fine. We haven't done anything ourselves, the association did everything for us, and we are very grateful ..." (Interview, TESFASLASE family conducted on May 27, 2023).

"... We had signed up for one year of support, but in Cairo we had been told that it could last until we became independent. Our main obstacle is the language and the end of support. We are doing our best to learn. The children are in school, they teach us new words every day, and they manage on their own when we go out. I've finished my hundred

hours of OFII courses and I'm going to continue with the next level, and my wife will soon start hers..." (Interview, TESFASLASE family, May 27, 2023).

Faced with these barriers to immediate employment, families are redefining their priorities by developing a delayed integration strategy. Direct professional insertion for adults is put on the back burner in favor of heavy investment in education for the next generation. School is thus seen as the main vehicle for long-term upward social mobility, capable of transcending the family nucleus's initial economic survival situation:

"... We rely a lot on our children's schooling, that's why we are here. If our four children succeed in their studies, their future will be better and our old age will be guaranteed. The financial support we receive guarantees our survival, but our primary concern remains the future of our children. As for us, we are learning the language and guiding ourselves towards jobs that are in high demand in France..." (Interview, HASSAN family, conducted on 6 June 2023).

This intergenerational outlook allows families to give meaning to their resettlement trajectory, transforming immediate professional vulnerability into a medium-term project for family success.

The figure below represents the situation of professional integration of adult people accompanied in the program of resettlement in the refugees' house of ARSEA. The study population is composed with thirty aged people from one up to forty-nine years old. They are shared between thirteen male people (53. 33) and fourteen female people (46. 67). Among the men, nine are adults (30% of total population) and seven are children (23. 34).

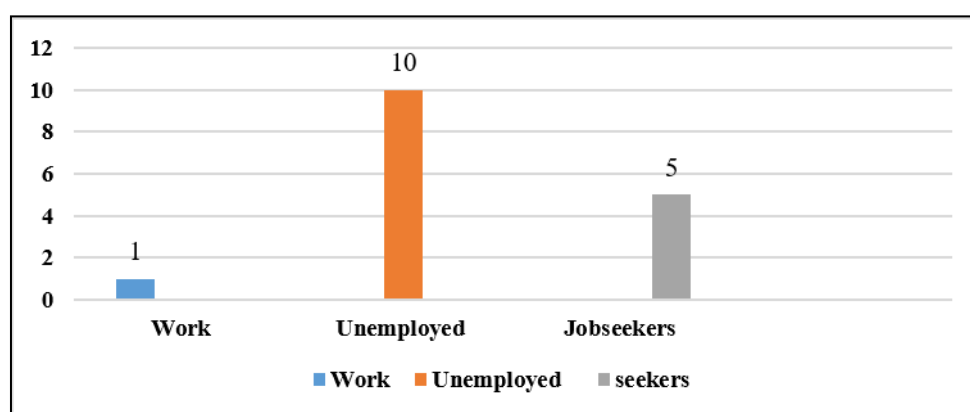


Figure 4: Professional Integration of Refugees

In terms of professional integration, sixteen people are of working age, including nine men (56.25%) and seven women (43.75%). The empirical data indicate that only one person is actually professionally employed, representing 6.25% of the adult population. Additionally, five people (31.25%) are registered with "Employment center" as job seekers. On the other hand, ten people, representing 62.5% of the adults supported, are unemployed.

These results highlight the structural limitations of short-term professional integration for resettled refugees and emphasize the need for enhanced and prolonged support, combining language learning, skills recognition, and gradual access to employment.

4 CONCLUSION

Global crises push exiles to seek refuge in Europe to living with dignity. Faced with this influx, emergency housing facilities must apply the legal principle of unconditional reception, reflecting the universality of fundamental social rights.

Overall, people interviewed express great satisfaction with the reception, access to rights, schooling, and the overall support provided by ARSEA/SESAME. The organization of the system (single points of contact, local partnerships, coordination) effectively secures and streamlines the processes.

Access to employment remains the main weakness in integration due to language barriers, lack of recognition of diplomas, and discouragement. In response, families rely on a "deferred integration" by prioritizing the schooling of their children as a lever for social advancement.

In Strasbourg, the effectiveness of rights depends on cooperation between educational, associative, and institutional actors. The study shows that it is necessary to abandon the short-term emergency management in favor of comprehensive long-term support, which respects the dignity of refugees and considers them as active participants in their own integration.

STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in carrying out this study.

Authors' contribution

Bulaya Mapesa Nono designed topic of the study, collected and analyzed the data. Assani Ramazani Raymond handled the processing and formatting of the text. The other authors carried out the final reading and approval of the text.

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