Resettling Hope:

Expectations *versus* Reality Approach
to the Resettlement in Belgium of Syrian Refugees from Lebanon

Author: Danaé Coquelet
Supervisor: Karim El Mufti

Abstract

According to UNHCR, resettlement is one of the only three durable solutions for refugees. Despite the importance of this practice, little literature offers an in-depth analysis of its inherent challenges. Evidence shows that one of them is the existence of a gap between expectations in the pre-resettlement phase and reality in the post-resettlement phase. This Master's thesis therefore aims at shedding light on the resettlement practices of the State of Belgium in Lebanon from this particular perspective. Since 2013, Belgium has regularly carried out selection missions with the view to resettling Syrian refugees from Lebanon (SRL). The goal of the research is to highlight the root causes of the gap between their pre-resettlement expectations and their post-resettlement reality. It examines to what extent three factors – the individual factor, the legal factor and the socio-political factor – contribute to widening it. To this end, both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used: 291 SRL were surveyed in Lebanon and a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted in Belgium with five resettlement actors (UNHCR, Fedasil, CGRS, Convivial, and Caritas) and ten resettled SRL. The thesis concludes that the root cause of the discrepancy is both individual and legal in nature: SRL develop unrealistic expectations, mostly due to a lack of knowledge about UNHCR's scheme, and show low levels of satisfaction with the host country because the latter fails to acknowledge their vulnerability and adopt a human rights approach to resettlement.

"We are all refugees of a future that never happened."
– Lee Weiner

To my friend Susie;
a transgender Syrian refugee engulfed in a Lebanese nightmare.
May this thesis bring you the UNHCR call you have long been waiting for.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

But now that I have tasted hope,
I have fallen into the embrace of my own rugged innocence.
How long were my ancient days?
I no longer care to count.

– Khaled Mattawa

With thousands of applications submitted every year, UNHCR's resettlement programme is the largest worldwide. For the most vulnerable, resettlement is often a synonym for hope. After being selected for resettlement, refugees find themselves trapped between a painful past they wish to flee and a future they tend to idealise. A recurrent issue singled out by resettlement professionals is the gap between expectations in the pre-resettlement phase and reality in the post-resettlement phase. In the event that their expectations are not fulfilled, refugees show low levels of satisfaction with the host country, which has a direct influence on their integration process.

In 2013, Belgium launched its very first structural resettlement scheme and resettled 100 African refugees from the Great Lakes region. Since then, the country's annual quota has been constantly revised upwards and reached a total of 1,100 refugees in 2017. Also, the main focus of the programme was put on a new refugee population: Syrians. Lebanon, which is currently host to around 1.5 million Syrians, has become an attractive first country of asylum for Belgian authorities to carry out their selection missions. This Master's thesis aims at shedding light on the systematic discrepancy between the expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their reality once resettled in Belgium. It thus explores the influence of three factors that potentially contribute to widening this gap: the individual factor, the legal factor and the socio-political factor.

The originality of the research method, which combined a quantitative and a qualitative approach to the research question, ensured the maximisation of the accuracy and the reliability of the results. Firstly, expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon (SRL) were

identified in an attempt to understand whether they qualified as unrealistic. To this end, 291 Syrian refugees from Lebanon were surveyed both in camps and urban settings in April 2017. Secondly, it was examined whether the Belgian resettlement scheme in Lebanon was implemented in full respect of the human rights obligations of the State of Belgium. Thirdly, the research highlighted to what extent the recent socio-political context surrounding the arrival of Syrian refugees in Belgium impacted their level of satisfaction in the post-resettlement phase. For the second and third phases of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted in March 2017 with both Belgian and international resettlement actors – UNHCR, CGRS, Fedasil, Convivial and Caritas – and ten Syrian refugees resettled in Belgium from Lebanon.

The main challenge of this Master's thesis lay in its organisational complexity. On the one hand, contacts had to be established in both the departure and arrival countries. On the other hand, the experiences of four types of actors – international institutions, federal authorities, civil society organisations (CSOs) and refugees – had to be taken into account. It should be mentioned that two resettlement actors did not respond to solicitations: the Resettlement Unit of UNHCR Lebanon and the Cabinet of the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration. All other participants showed great willingness in collaborating and underlined the relevance of this research in a context of expansion of resettlement activities by the State of Belgium.

The primary goal of this Master's thesis is to provide a constructive analysis of the Belgian resettlement practices. In order for Belgium to maximise its utilisation of resettlement, the shortcomings of its system should first be fully understood. The research was carried out for a purely functional purpose: the root causes of the gap between expectations and reality were brought to light in the hope that they can be eradicated. The conclusions of the research should be read with a view to higher the quality of the resettlement programme supervised by the Belgian asylum authorities.

2. What is resettlement?

2.1 Definition

For the purpose of this research, the term "resettlement" will be used in accordance with the definition of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

> "*Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a state in which they have sought protection to a third state which has agreed to admit them – as refugees – with permanent refugee status[1].*"

The right to seek asylum was first enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 14 (1) of the Declaration states that "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution"[2]. This provision laid the foundation for an international refugee law, which was later materialised in two core instruments, namely the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its additional 1967 Protocol. Even though resettlement existed before 1951, it acquired its legal recognition under international law in the two aforementioned instruments as they make several mentions of the practice.

General principle (D) of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees states that:

> "*The Conference,*
>
> *Considering that many persons still leave their country of origin for reasons of persecution and are entitled to special protection on account of their position, Recommends that Governments continue to receive refugees in their territories and that they act in concert in a true spirit of international cooperation in order that these refugees may find asylum and the possibility of* **resettlement**[3].*"

In the same Convention, article 30, which relates to the transfer of assets, goes further and provides that:

> "*1. A Contracting State shall, in conformity with its laws and regulations, permit refugees to transfer assets which they have brought into its territory, to another country where they have been admitted for the purpose of* **resettlement**.

---

[1] UNHCR, "The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 9.
[2] Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) art 14.
[3] Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) 147-148.

*2. A Contracting State shall give sympathetic consideration to the application of refugees for permission to transfer assets wherever they may be and which are necessary for their **resettlement** in another country to which they have been admitted[4]."*

In 2003, resettlement further came under the spotlight when it was identified as a key instrument of refugee protection in the UN Agenda for Protection – a joint programme of action intended to serve as a guide for UNHCR, NGOs and other actors involved in this field[5]. Goal 5 of the said Agenda – "Redoubling the search for durable solutions" – reaffirmed the importance of the three durable solutions – voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement – in putting an end to protracted refugee situations. It called upon states to make "a strategic use of resettlement, including within regions affected by refugee movements"[6]. The Agenda for Protection exhorted UNHCR to "work to enhance protection through an expansion of the number of countries engaged in resettlement", while encouraging governments to "consider increasing their resettlement quotas, diversifying their intake of refugee groups and introducing more flexible resettlement criteria"[7]. In its Recommendation 17, the Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement went one step further. It recommended that resettlement countries considered the possibility of resettling persons of concern to UNHCR even if they did not fall within the terms of the 1951 Convention[8].

The Agenda for Protection came to the conclusion that resettlement offers a triple advantage. It is a mechanism for refugee protection, a durable solution as well as a responsibility-sharing tool[9]. Resettlement is a protection tool in the sense that it enables refugees to be granted international protection by being admitted in a country of asylum that will safeguard their rights as defined under international refugee law and international human rights law. Resettled refugees will enjoy civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to nationals[10]. Aside from securing protection, resettlement also provides refugees with a durable solution. According to UNHCR, a solution qualifies as durable when it breaks the cycle of displacement by ending a refugee's suffering and enabling them to start a normal life[11]. Giving refugees the possibility to be resettled abroad is surely an efficient way of coming to

---

[4] Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) 174.
[5] UNHCR, "Agenda for Protection" (2003) 9.
[6] Ibid. 75.
[7] Ibid. 78-79.
[8] UNHCR, "Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement" (2004) 3.
[9] UNHCR, "The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 11-36.
[10] UNHCR, "The strategic use of resettlement" (2003) 2.
[11] UNHCR, "The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 28.

terms with their plight. With respect to durable solutions, it should be outlined that UNHCR believes that all three options mentioned above – voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement – are equally valuable and complementary in nature[12]. The UN refugee agency is the institution in charge of assessing what solution is the most appropriate for each individual in view of their specific situation. Last but not least, resettlement is an expression of international solidarity. It translates the will of the international community to help countries that are strongly affected by refugee flows. UNHCR's resettlement scheme is nothing but a legally recognised burden-sharing mechanism.

2.2 Preconditions and submission categories

In order for their application to be considered for resettlement, refugees must fulfil a series of requirements set out by UNHCR. Two preconditions must be met: on the one hand, the applicant should have been determined to be a refugee in accordance with UNHCR's definition, and, on the other hand, resettlement should have been identified as the most appropriate solution after the prospects of all durable solutions were assessed[13].

It must be underlined that resettlement is not a right[14], which implies that not every refugee is entitled to it. Only a refugee who satisfies UNHCR's vulnerability criteria can benefit from the programme. For that purpose, the institution established a list of seven vulnerability-based submission categories.

Table 1	
UNHCR Submission Resettlement Categories	
Submission Category[15]	Description[16]
Legal and/or physical protection needs	Risk of *refoulement* to the country of origin or expulsion to another country; threat of arbitrary arrest, detention, threat to physical safety or human rights.
Survivors of torture and/or violence	Lingering physical or psychological effects; risk of further trauma due to asylum conditions; necessity of medical or

---

[12] UNHCR, "The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 28-30.
[13] Ibid. 36.
[14] Ibid. 173
[15] Ibid. 37.
[16] UNHCR, "UNHCR Resettlement Submission Categories" (n.d.).

	psychological care unavailable in the country of asylum.
Medical needs	Particularly when life-saving treatment is unavailable in the asylum country.
Women and girls at risk	Lack of effective protection as a result of gender (human trafficking, prostitution, domestic violence etc.); priority given to single heads of families and unaccompanied girls.
Family reunification	When resettlement is the only channel to reunite family members.
Children and adolescents at risk	Especially for unaccompanied or separated children.
Lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions	Other durable solutions are not available or feasible in the foreseeable future; efficient in addressing protracted refugee situations.
Source: The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook	

Considering that resettlement is not a right, states have no legal obligations to launch resettlement schemes and accept refugees into their territory. At present, all resettlement activities are conducted on a voluntary basis. As a consequence, states also have the last word regarding whom they are willing to host. Each host country imposes its own quota and sets its own profile requirements. Resettlement activities must however be carried out without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin, as provided for in article 3 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees[17]. As of today, resettlement initiatives remain greatly influenced by immigration policies.

3. The individual factor: expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon

3.1 Legal status of SRL

On several occasions, Lebanon has reached out to the international community to call for a better implementation of the idea of burden-sharing through resettlement. Since the beginning

---

[17] Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) 156.

of the Syrian crisis, the country has been claiming that the continuous flow of Syrian into its territory threatened its socio-economic stability as well as its security. Prior to identifying the expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, it is essential to gain an insight into the legal context surrounding their presence in the country. Indeed, expectations are intrinsically linked to potential protection gaps. In an attempt to better understand how the Lebanese government has chosen to tackle this influx of Syrians, the legal regime that applies to Syrian refugees in Lebanon (SRL) will be examined.

On an international level, Lebanon is not party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Yet, it is bound by major principles of refugee protection under customary international law and international conventions to which the country is party – including the Geneva Conventions and the Convention against Torture. The main principle of refugee protection with which the country must comply is certainly that of *non-refoulement*. *Non-refoulement* is increasingly regarded as *jus cogens*, which entails that no derogation is permitted[18]. On that ground, Lebanese authorities have the obligation to refrain from sending Syrians back to their country of origin if they fear persecution. What is more, Lebanon is a signatory to a number of international human rights instruments, which holds the country to minimum standards insofar as the treatment of aliens is concerned. The Preamble of the Lebanese constitution recalls that:

> *B) [...] Lebanon is also a founding and active member of the United Nations Organisation and abides by its covenants and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Government shall embody these principles in all fields and areas without exception[19].*

This provision is the living proof that Lebanon is *de facto* bound by all the international legal instruments it ratified. Interestingly, by citing the Universal declaration of Human Rights – which recognises the right to asylum in its article 14 – and asserting to embody the UN principles "in all fields and areas without exception", Lebanon recognised the legal value of the right of individuals to seek asylum[20].

---

[18] Alice Farmer, « *Non-refoulement* and *Jus Cogens*: Limiting Anti-terror Measures that Threaten Refugee Protection » (2008) 37.

[19] Preamble of the Lebanese Constitution (1995) (B).

[20] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 62-63.

Nevertheless, in practice, the right to asylum is not granted to any individual by the State of Lebanon. In 2003, UNHCR and the Lebanese government notably signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to address the refugee issue. UNHCR was mandated with registering asylum seekers and conducting refugee status determination. Pursuant to the agreement, Lebanon does not consider itself an asylum country and the term "asylum seeker" refers to "a person seeking asylum in a country other than Lebanon"[21]. Residency permits are to be issued to asylum seekers within a period of three months, which is the estimated time necessary for their asylum claim to be reviewed. Upon recognition, permits may be extended from 6 to 9 months, which allows UNHCR to "find a durable solution for the refugee". With most Syrians unable or unwilling to return home, Syrian refugees recognised by UNHCR in Lebanon are expected to be resettled to a third country within a period of six months[22].

On a national level, Lebanon does not have a national legislation dealing with refugee-related issues. Despite the fact that a great majority of Syrians qualify as refugees under UNHCR's definition, the Lebanese government has insistently refused to call them as such. Former Prime Minister Nagib Miqati insisted on exclusively using the term "displaced persons" ("*nazihoun*"), not "refugees" ("*lajioun*") when referring to Syrians[23]. This terminological choice was enforced on two grounds. One is the negation of the obligations of the Lebanese state to grant Syrian refugees the specific rights conferred upon them by their mere legal status; the other is the subtle difference in meaning between the terms, the status of "displaced person" being perceived as more temporary than that of "refugee"[24].

Following the outburst of the Syrian crisis, NGOs and international institutions praised Lebanon's open-border policy towards Syrians and its decision to maintain a non-encampment policy[25]. Nonetheless, in October 2014, the Lebanese Council of Ministers adopted the Policy Paper on Syrian Refugee Displacement, its first refugee-related legal framework designed to tackle the crisis. The main objective of the newly-elaborated legislation was to decrease the number of Syrians in Lebanon by two means: imposing further restrictions on access to territory and encouraging returns to Syria[26]. In other words, Lebanon

---

[21] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 63.
[22] UNHCR, "Country Operations Plan" (2004) 1.
[23] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 60-61.
[24] Ibid. 61.
[25] Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-) Encampment of Syrians Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan (2015) 390.
[26] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 59.

purposely opted for a strategy of non-integration of Syrians. Their stay was defined as temporary and, consequently, no long-term strategy was put in place. Additionally, a number of controversial measures aimed at Syrians were implemented by the Lebanese authorities. Difficulties in obtaining or renewing one's residency permit and accessing the labour market are among the most criticised by human rights actors. They are said to be highly detrimental to Syrians' well-being while making them easy targets for abusers.

Residency permits

Starting from 2015, new requirements were issued concerning entry and residency of Syrian nationals. Syrians are allowed to legally enter the country only if they are able to produce valid identity documents and prove that the reason behind their stay fits in one of the ten categories approved by the General Security Office[27]. Valid reasons for entering include: tourism, shopping, business, being a landlord or tenant, studying, transiting to a third country, having a medical or an embassy appointment, being sponsored by a Lebanese national (pledge of responsibility)[28] etc. Specific documents supporting the claim must be provided for each category in order for the visa to be issued and further conditions are attached to categories that might seem easily accessible. For instance, visas for medical or embassy appointments often allow Syrian nationals to stay for a pre-defined period of time that can be as short as 24 hours. As for the category concerning humanitarian admission, it applies only to those who fulfil the humanitarian exception criteria – an unaccompanied child with a parent already residing in Lebanon, for example. The term "humanitarian" was purposely stripped of its initial meaning under international law to exclude most Syrians fleeing war, which suggests that Lebanon does not honour its *non-refoulement* obligations under customary international law. Until 2016, residency permits were supposed to be regularly renewed at a cost of 200 dollars per person for each individual over 15 years of age[29]. This obligation was removed by authorities but the decision has yet to be fully implemented across all General Security sections in the country.

Specific attention should be paid to the abovementioned pledge of responsibility, also known as sponsorship. Under the sponsorship system, a Syrian national will be able to legally enter Lebanon providing that a Lebanese national previously accepted to be their legal tutor. In this system, which was previously applied exclusively to domestic workers, the sponsor is

---

[27] "Q&A on 'New Entry and Renewal Procedures for Syrians in Lebanon'" (2016).
[28] Idem.
[29] Human Rights Watch, "How Lebanon's Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees" (2016) 9.

requested to take full responsibility for the whereabouts and the accommodation of the newcomer[30]. Unsurprisingly, it leaves the door open for countless abuses (sexual exploitation, financial exploitation, forced labour…) due to the hierarchy it establishes between the sponsor and the sponsored[31].

According to Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, the percentage of Syrian households without valid residency permits rose from 9% in January 2015 to 61% at the end of July 2015[32]. The burden of legal requirements to obtain a valid residency permit encourages Syrians fleeing the war to cross borders illegally. Additionally, it should be mentioned that, for the time being, Syrians are no longer able to register with UNHCR. Registrations were suspended as of May 2015 following instructions by the Lebanese government[33]. Scores of SRL are thus left without any legal status or protection, which reinforces their level of vulnerability.

Work permits

Another major issue for SRL is the lack of access to the labour market. Syrian nationals can enter Lebanon if they are granted a work permit (often under the patronage of a Lebanese sponsor), but, currently, they are only permitted to work in three sectors: construction, agriculture and cleaning[34]. Yet, chances of obtaining a work permit reached record lows. In 2013, for example, only 1,233 of them were issued or renewed for Syrian nationals[35]. Besides, all Syrians who register with UNHCR are requested to make a pledge not to work – a statement in which they swear in the presence of a notary that they will not work in Lebanon[36]. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 92 % percent of Syrians who qualify as refugees in Lebanon – whether they are registered or not – work

---

[30] Maja Janmyr, "The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 14.

[31] Human Rights Watch, "How Lebanon's Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees" (2016) 19-20.

[32] Maja Janmyr, "The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 15.

[33] "Q&A on 'New Entry and Renewal Procedures for Syrians in Lebanon'" (2016).

[34] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 69.

[35] Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-) Encampment of Syrians Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan (2015) 397.

[36] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 69.

without official permits[37]. The illegal nature their of work makes them primary targets for arrest and detention[38].

There is little doubt that non-encampment policies and labour market participation are closely related in today's Lebanese context. Policies relating to the access to the labour market can be understood through the lens of history. Chalcraft recalls that in the early 2000s, "Syrians constituted between 20 and 40 % of Lebanon's labour force"[39]. Many of these workers went back to Syria following Rafiq Hariri's assassination in 2005 and the Israeli assault on the country in 2006, leaving an enormous workforce gap to be filled[40]. According to Turner, "Lebanon's refusal to build formal camps is designed to serve Lebanese owners of businesses and capital by expanding the labour supply, lowering wages and increasing workers' precarity"[41].

High vulnerability: between fear and abuse

Owing to their lack of legal status and the numerous restrictions imposed on them, SRL find themselves in extremely vulnerable situations. According to a recent study carried out by the Norwegian Refugee Council, 73 % of SRL claimed that their restricted freedom of movement constituted their main challenge. Fear of arrest and detention on the ground that they are illegally residing in Lebanon led them to move as little as possible. As a consequence, SRL have a significantly lower access to healthcare and education[42]. In a report published in 2016, Human Rights Watch found that half of the 500,000 Syrian school-age children registered with UNHCR did not have access to a formal education[43]. This phenomenon is amplified by the imposition of curfews by local authorities: in 2015, more than 45 municipalities set up curfews targeting SRL[44]. According to Human Rights Watch, the illegality of their stay also "hinders their ability to register marriages and births, leaving tens of thousands of Syrian children born in Lebanon at risk of statelessness"[45]. Finally, restrictions on residency and

---

[37] Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-) Encampment of Syrians Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan (2015) 397

[38] Amnesty International, "Pushed to the Edge: Syrian Refugees face Increased Restrictions in Lebanon" (2015) 18.

[39] Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-) Encampment of Syrians Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan (2015) 397.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Norwegian Refugee Council, "The Consequences of Limited Legal Status for Syrians in Lebanon" (2014) 18-19.

[43] Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon: New Refugee Policy, A Step Forward" (2017).

[44] Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon: At Least 45 Local Curfews Imposed on Syrian Refugees" (2014).

[45] Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon: New Refugee Policy, A Step Forward" (2017).

work play a significant role in the worsening of the fragile economic situation of most SRL. As of today, 71% of them live on less than 3.84 dollars a day[46] and most of them are regarded as "vulnerable to a range of abuses, including labour exploitation and sexual abuse"[47]. Needless to say, all legal restrictions that apply only to Syrian nationals are contrary to the core principle of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality.

SRL: a protracted refugee situation?

A prolonged lack of legal status can lead to the creation of protracted refugee situations, defined as a forced displacement context in which "largely sedentary populations [are] waiting for durable (permanent and sustainable) solutions and a regulated and documented existence"[48]. The case of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, often given as an eloquent example of protracted refugee situation, demonstrates that the country has a long history of negating fundamental rights to the refugees it welcomes. Protracted situations are said to occur when a first asylum state prevents refugees from "getting on with a normal life, from reaching their full potential and fully contributing to any community"; such situations also favours a "possible growth of bitterness and resentment within the refugee population itself"[49]. The approach favoured by the Lebanese government tends to suggest that, if no significant change is undertaken, SRL might fall prey to the same dead-end as their Palestinian peers. Evidence supports the idea that the former are on the verge of crossing the red line.

Though *de facto* integration of SRL is taking place, no *de jure* integration is occurring at the moment. Because Syrians are unwilling or unable to return to their country of origin and Lebanese policies offer no serious chances of local integration, it can be claimed that SRL constitute a target group for resettlement. Indeed, they qualify as resettlement beneficiaries under UNHCR's submission category number 7, namely "Lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions". UNHCR's resettlement scheme in Lebanon can offer a regularised and safe pathway to third countries for SRL living in what seems to be(come?) a protracted refugee situation.

---

[46] UNHCR, "Livelihoods 2017 Quarter 1 Dashboard" (2017) 2.
[47] Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon: New Refugee Policy, A Step Forward" (2017).
[48] Roger Zetter and Katy Long, "Unlocking Protracted Displacement" (2012) 34.
[49] UNHCR, "The Strategic Use of Resettlement" (2003) 3.

3.2 Case study

Today, Lebanon is host to almost 1.1 million Syrian refugees[50]. Though all Syrian refugees in Lebanon (SRL) are not eligible for it, resettlement with UNHCR is one of the few legal channels still available for them to travel abroad. The idea of being a potential resettlement beneficiary leads SRL to develop certain expectations regarding UNHCR's scheme. This section will raise two questions: can expectations of SRL be considered unrealistic? If so, do these hopes contribute to the formation of a gap between expectations and reality? Focus will be laid on three main elements: resettlement awareness, personal expectations and expectations vis-à-vis third countries.

3.2.1 Methodology

Quantitative data collection was carried out by handing in a standard questionnaire to a total of 291 SRL in April 2017. In order to obtain the most accurate and reliable data possible, both camp refugees and urban refugees were targeted. Refugees could be accessed mainly through NGOs as NGO workers acted as facilitators in refugee-populated areas. Refugees living in unformal camps were surveyed in the Bekaa Valley: the NGO Sawa for Aid and Development gave access to the Al-Dalhamia Camp; the NGO Salam LADC (Lebanese Association for Development and Communication) gave access to both camps and private houses located in Bar Elias, Taanayel and Haouch el Harimi. Forms were filled in with refugees in their homes. As for urban refugees, the NGO Amel Association International opened the doors of two of its community centres in South Beirut: the Baajour Centre and the Haret Hreik Centre. Forms were filled in with Syrians in the waiting room (health unit) or during class (education unit). Other urban refugees were surveyed in their homes in the Ras el Nabaa area located in Beirut. In all cases, communication between the researcher and Syrians was made possible thanks to NGO workers and/or informal interpreters. In addition to this, the same form was also filled in directly by a series of refugees from various parts of the country after it was shared on a social media group for Syrians in Lebanon.

The questionnaire submitted to SRL contained 14 questions. Three types of questions were used: open-ended questions, closed-ended questions and multiple-choice questions. Four introductory items (Questions 1, 3, 4 and 5) underpinned refugees' background characteristics – place of residency, gender, age and education levels. Results were interpreted in light of

---

[50] UNHCR, "Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-Agency Information Sharing Portal" (2017).

these four variables. Among the refugees surveyed, 26 % were women and 73.8 % were men, which can constitute a shortage of the survey; 3.1 % had no education, 32 % completed primary education, 41.2 % reached secondary education and 23 % went to university. All other items served to identify refugees' expectations towards resettlement. Three main axes were explored: resettlement awareness (Questions 2, 6, 7), personal expectations (Questions 9, 10, 12) and expectations vis-à-vis host countries (Questions 8, 11, 13, 14). Detailed results can be found in the third annex

3.2.2 Resettlement awareness

First and foremost, the role of UNHCR as an outreach institution will be analysed by measuring the impact of its communication strategies on resettlement awareness. Generally speaking, resettlement awareness is considered high given that more than 80 % of surveyed refugees said they had heard about UNHCR's programme. When carefully examined, results show that registration with UNHCR is a factor that influences refugees' awareness about resettlement: 84.6 % of registered refugees were aware of the existence of a resettlement programme compared to only 68.5 % of their non-registered peers. The place of residency is also an influential factor as figures demonstrate that camp refugees were on average more informed than urban refugees.

Even though registration with UNHCR seems to have a positive impact on resettlement awareness, only 10.2 % of surveyed refugees declared that they had been told about the programme by a UNHCR resettlement outreach officer or by regular UNHCR staff. Friends (45.2 %) and the Internet, especially social media (35.7 %), appeared to be the main sources of information. A number of camp refugees also mentioned that they had been told about the programme by an NGO. For instance, in the Bekaa Valley, refugees living in camps managed by SAWA for Aid and Development systematically answered positively when asked whether they had already heard of the possibility of being resettled. Most of them insisted that SAWA's staff had conducted information sessions about resettlement. This explains why figures show a higher level of resettlement awareness among camp refugees than among urban refugees. By being hosted in a camp managed by an NGO, refugees are exposed to more information as they are surrounded and taken care of by well-informed actors. On the contrary, their urban peers tend to be more isolated and, as a consequence, reachable with difficulty. Families met in the Bekaa Valley underlined the essential role played by SAWA for Aid and Development in their camp: not only did SAWA inform about resettlement

opportunities, but they also played a primary role in identifying and referring vulnerable cases to UNHCR. This suggests that non-governmental actors are crucial intermediaries between refugees and UNHCR.

In its Resettlement Handbook, UNHCR also stresses that "an effective communication outreach programme is a key part of managing expectations"[51]. Evidence suggests that expectations tend to be amplified by rumours in communities, misunderstandings and a lack of information[52]. Under the current scheme, only refugees who satisfy UNHCR's criteria can be resettled and, though they might be encouraged to express their preferences, they are not able to choose their host country. As far as family reunification is concerned, UNHCR points out that "family members and dependants seeking reunification with a resettled refugee may be considered for derivative status in accordance with their right to family unity"[53]. Relatives are expected to submit a claim for derivative refugee status and their application must be assessed and approved by both UNHCR and the resettlement country. Family reunification is not automatically granted.

In view of the results, it is self-evident that SRL lack basic knowledge about UNHCR's resettlement programme. According to the survey, 20.7 % of SRL believed that any refugee could be resettled and 52.4 % of them did not know; 45 % of them were convinced that they could choose their host country while 33.3 % said they did not know. As to the statement "Other members of my family can join me after my arrival", results are even more worrying: 54 % of SRL ticked "Yes" and 36.4 % opted for "I don't know", which suggests that less than 10 % of refugees are aware of the additional conditions attached to the right to family reunification.

One can come to the conclusion that more emphasis should be put on awareness-raising among SRL. Despite the fact that most Syrians in Lebanon have heard about the possibility of being resettled, the functioning of UNHCR's resettlement programme remains vague for the great majority of them. UNHCR's communication strategies bear fruit to some extent but provide SRL with only a cursory knowledge of resettlement. As shown by the examples above, refugees tend to develop assumptions about submission categories, the possibility of choosing a resettlement country or the right to family reunification. Resettlement awareness is

---

[51] UNHCR, "UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 142.
[52] The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program, "Managing Expectations: A Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors" (2013) 1.
[53] UNHCR, "UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (2011) 79.

positively correlated with the development of realistic expectations among Syrian communities in Lebanon. A lack of knowledge about basic resettlement principles, in contrast, leads SRL to raise unrealistic expectations.

3.2.3 Personal expectations

Regardless of their resettlement awareness, SRL also develop expectations directly linked to their personal situation. Traditionally, the search for a better future translates into a series of hopes. These expectations can be "powerful in that they can motivate the refugees to do well if they are set high, and also cause disappointment and grief if they are not met"[54]. For the purpose of this analysis, the term "expectations" will be understood as "how the present and the future are framed based on past experiences, perceptions, emotions, imagination and desires – sometimes without a rational basis and with little available information"[55].

Syrians who found refuge in Lebanon face numerous hurdles on a daily basis. By asking them what the most important thing they could find in another country was, the questionnaire helped understand what needs could, in the view of SRL, be satisfied through resettlement. The table below ranks their most recurrent answers. The needs expressed were translated into human rights.

Table 2	
Needs of Syrian refugees in Lebanon (SRL)	
Expressed need	**% of refugees mentioning this need**
Right to security of person	33.2 %
Right to education	19.2 %
Right to work	13 %
Other issues mentioned:	
- right to housing - right to health - right to asylum - right to equality and non-discrimination - right to reside - access to justice	

---

[54] The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program, "Managing Expectations: A Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors" (2013) 2.
[55] Idem.

-   freedom of thought, conscience and religion

-   freedom of movement

-   human dignity

Right to security of person and unfulfilled protection needs

Interestingly, the right to security of person is the number one priority for SRL, which supports the idea that they are highly vulnerable due to their lack of legal status in the country. Even though they fled war-torn Syria, their basic protection needs are not fulfilled. A Syrian refugee disclosed:

"*I want safety, no fear of hunger and a future for my children. I want to get away from problems and wars. I dream of settling down and having a peaceful life*"

Predictably, a significant number of refugees expressed other needs in relation with their legal status. For instance, issues such as the impossibility to be granted refugee status, the difficulty to obtain a residency permit or register children at birth, the obligation to have a sponsor and the lack of freedom of movement were mentioned.

Also, SRL strongly emphasised difficulties regarding integration into the Lebanese society due to racism and discrimination. The following testimonies give an insight into this issue:

"*I want to have human rights because we do not have any when we live in Lebanon. Lebanese people are racist against Syrians, maybe because of the presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon in the past.*"

"*I want security, a decent life and a better situation for my children and my family. I would also like us to stop living as victims of racism in Lebanon; I would like to find security, work, dignity and equality in another country and get rid of this system of privilege. At the moment, we do not have any of these things, and besides, we are victims of discrimination and racism.*"

The illusory nature of the traditional dichotomisation of rights

It should be pointed out that SRL made mention of rights traditionally thought to belong to different categories. On the one hand, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) encompasses the right to security of person (article 9), the right to reside and to

freedom of movement (article 12) as well as equality and non-discrimination (article 2), access to justice (article 14) and freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 18). On the other hand, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) guarantees the right to education (article 13 & 14), the right to work (article 6), the right to health (article 12) and the right to housing (article 11). The fact that both categories were equally referred to brings to light the debate over the relation between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights in the context of forced displacement. Human rights scholars continue to disagree on their nature, classification and priority.

Firstly, by citing the right to education and the right to work as their second and third priorities, SRL demonstrated that economic, social and cultural rights are tangible. Due to the lack of international protection caused by the refusal of the State of Lebanon to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention, many SRL are out of school or out of work. With 59 % of school-aged SRL out of formal education[56], human rights actors are warning that Syrian refugee children might be on the verge of becoming the next lost generation; with no legal access to the labour market, 71 % of Syrian households are living under the poverty line, meaning on less than 4 dollars a day[57]. Testimonies collected among SRL suggest that this lack of access to education and to the labour market makes SRL unable to fully develop their potential and rebuild a decent life. They are firmly convinced that economic, social and cultural rights are "true rights, not mere aspirational targets"[58]. The traditional belief that economic, social and cultural rights should be progressively realised is questioned by their experience: they see these rights, particularly the rights to education and to work, as a starting point rather than a distant goal. This echoes the view that economic, social and cultural rights are not social ideals but rather the basis for the "equitable participation in the production and distribution of the values and resources" of the Lebanese society and the State of Lebanon must "utilise its available resources maximally in order to redress social and economic imbalances and inequalities"[59]. Lebanon must create protection and implementation mechanisms to guarantee access to work and education for SRL[60].

---

[56] UNHCR, "2017 March statistical Dashboard" (2017) 1.
[57] UNHCR, "Livelihoods 2017 Quarter 1 Dashboard" (2017) 2.
[58] Jackbeth Mapulanga-Hulston, "Examining the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (2002) 29.
[59] Ibid. 31-34.
[60] Ibid. 29-30.

Secondly, answers provided by SRL cast doubt on the legitimacy of the traditional "dichotomisation"[61] into civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. They question a hypothetical hierarchy between these two categories, which is in line with the stance adopted by the United Nations – all human rights are universal, indivisible and interrelated and interdependent.

The dichotomisation into two categories is known to be the result of political divisions between the USSR and Western nations during the Cold War. In spite of the position put forward by the United Nations, the two opposed political blocks pushed for the creation of two separate legal instruments, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[62]. The heterogeneity of the rights underpinned by SRL during the survey tends to confirm the unfounded nature of the dichotomisation. Just as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, SRL made no obvious distinction between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. Nor did they give one set of rights primacy over the other. While Western nations continue to affirm the superiority of civil and political rights, most developing countries call upon the international community to recognise the importance of economic, social and cultural rights and ensure they are protected by legal systems[63]. Testimonies of SRL support Roosevelt's idea that "necessitous men are not free men"[64] in the sense that all rights are interrelated and interdependent. Mower asserts that "rights to certain opportunities and conditions are essential to enable an individual to enjoy a decent standard of living"[65]. Answers of SRL proved that they believe all rights are interactive, not sequential:

"*I need freedom of thought first and the opportunity to work to secure a decent life.*"

"*I need security, safety and an appropriate work with a suitable salary.*"

There is little doubt that, in the Lebanese context, socio-economic stability cannot be attained without individual freedoms and *vice versa*. The rights of SRL – be they civil and political or economic, social and cultural – are deeply connected and mutually reinforcing. The three priorities expressed by SRL (right to security of person, right to education and right to work)

---

[61] Jackbeth Mapulanga-Hulston, "Examining the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (2002) 31.
[62] David Petrasek "Interdependence and Indivisibility of Economic and Political Rights" (2011).
[63] Mapulanga-Hulston, Jackbeth. "Examining the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (2002). 29-30
[64] "FDR's Second Bill of Rights: 'Necessitous Men are not Free Men'" (2011).
[65] Mapulanga-Hulston, Jackbeth. "Examining the Justiciability of economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (2002) 42-43.

support's Shue's belief that there is a basic right to personal integrity, encompassing security and subsistence,[66] and that this right is both political and economic in nature.

Dignity in forced displacement: a fundamental dimension

A high percentage of SRL made explicit references to another type of entitlements. For example, 33.2 % of respondents referred to notions such as "humanity", "human being", "human rights", "respect", "dignity" "freedom" and "decency".

"*I want respect for each person as they are human beings and have the right to live in dignity and freedom.*"

Syrian refugees feel that their precarious situation in Lebanon deprives them from their right to live in dignity. This finding goes hand in hand with the conclusions of the ICTJ report "Not without Dignity: Views of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon on Displacement, Conditions of Return and Coexistence", indicating that most Syrian respondents referred to the concept of "dignity" (*karama* in Arabic) during interviews. According to Karim El Mufti and Rim El Gantri, "dignity was identified as a common loss, beginning with the very fact of their displacement by a war that has changed their lives forever"[67]. The two researchers insist that "the humiliation and discrimination faced by refugees impacted on people who had been used to a certain social and economic level in Syria, despite a quasi-absence of civil and political rights"[68].

Against the backdrop of the Syrian refugee crisis, the concept of dignity is of special interest. Indeed, dignity has long acquired recognition in predominantly Middle Eastern societies because it is deeply rooted in both Arabic and Islamic values. In Arab societies, the concept of dignity is taught to children in schools and largely depicted in Arab literature. For instance, the influential poet Antarah Ibn Shaddad wrote extensively about honour and self-esteem[69]. One of his famous verses read:

"*Don't offer me life elixir with humiliation. Offer me rather a drink of colocynth with dignity.*"

---

[66] Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (1980) 158.
[67] Karim El Mufti and Rim El Gantri, "Not without Dignity: Views of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon on Displacement, Conditions of Return and Coexistence" (2017) 35.
[68] Idem.
[69] Karim El Mufti and Rim El Gantri, "Not without Dignity: Views of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon on Displacement, Conditions of Return and Coexistence" (2017) 35.

From an Islamic point of view, dignity is a core principle as it appears in the Quran under various forms. A statement such as "the upper hand is better than the lower one" shows how Islamic values exhort believers to "provide for their needs and preserve their dignity"[70]. According to Surat al-Isra, verse 70, human dignity is bestowed on all humans by virtue of their creation by God:

"We have honoured [conferred dignity] on the descendants [progeny] of Adam, and we have carried [borne] them over land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life, and favoured them far above most of Our creation."[71]

Dignity is a "God-given right that applies to all humans, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religious belief, or other distinction"[72]. SRL are convinced their displacement deprived them from this God-given right.

In the field of human rights, the notion of human dignity has been studied from both a legal and philosophical angle. Legally speaking, it is enshrined in several international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which both mention the notion of "inherent dignity". The latter stresses that "rights *derive* from the inherent dignity of the human person"[73]. Human dignity is said to "precede and justify human rights"[74]. This vision is coherent with the observation that the primary concern of SRL is to be recognised as human beings. They describe the need to enjoy traditional human rights as subordinate to the need to live in dignity. Philosophically speaking, Paul Ricoeur argues that dignity "is due to the human being because of the sole fact that he or she is human"[75]. Catherine Dupré adds an element to the previous definition by asserting that "dignity is generally understood as the freedom to shape one's life"[76]. Her view is close to the Kantian understanding of human dignity. In the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant states[77]:

---

[70] Karim El Mufti and Rim El Gantri, "Not without Dignity: Views of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon on Displacement, Conditions of Return and Coexistence" (2017) 35-36.
[71] Cherif Bassiouni, *The Shari'a and Islamic Criminal Justice in Time of War and Peace* (2014) 91.
[72] Idem.
[73] ICCPR (1976), Preamble.
[74] Doris Schroeder, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Appeal to Separate the Conjoined Twins" (2012) 325.
[75] Paul Ricoeur, cited in Jean-François de Raymond, *Les Enjeux des droits de l'homme* (1988) 236-237.
[76] Catherine Dupré, cited in Steve Peers and others, *The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. A Commentary* (2014) 10.
[77] Doris Schroeder, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Appeal to Separate the Conjoined Twins (2012) 329

"A human being regarded as a person, that is, as the subject of a morally practical reason, is exalted above any price; for as a person… he is not to be valued merely as a means to the ends of others or even to his own ends, but as an end in himself, that is, he possesses a dignity (an absolute inner worth) by which he exacts respect for himself from all other beings in the world."

Kant believes that reasoning faculties are the ground for autonomy and, therefore, dignity. Allen Wood summarises this idea by asserting that dignity is "the capacity to think for oneself and direct one's own life with responsibility both for one's own well-being and for the way one's actions affect the rights and welfare of others"[78]. The reflections of SRL substantiate this theory. They perceive their lack of autonomy in the Lebanese society as a deprivation of human dignity:

"I want security, education and the feeling of being a human being who is capable of developing his or her community."

Furthermore, testimonies of SRL support Howard-Hassmann's theory that there are two kinds of human dignity rights[79]:

- a right to minimum absolute wealth – defined as the possibility to obtain a fair share of the economic resources of the community. Example: *"I want safety; I am harassed by the residents of the area. I cannot secure my daily necessities, I cannot secure permanent work and I spend more than what I earn."*
- a right to community (right of belonging) – defined as "the need to feel secure in one's kinship or social system and in one's exercise of custom, ritual culture; the need to feel that those who have power have some legitimacy and are not arbitrary"[80]. Example: *"I would like to go to any country that gives us the same rights as its citizens, a country where there is no racial or sectarian discrimination."*

Personal expectations and international refugee law

As indicated by the need-focused table on page 20, SRL have personal expectations regarding resettlement. They believe that resettlement will ensure their enjoyment of the following

---

[78] Allen Wood, "Human Dignity, Right and the Realm of Ends" (2007) 10.
[79] Barrington Moore, cited in Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, "The Full-Belly Thesis: Should Economics Rights Take Priority Over Civil and Political Rights? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa" (1983) 488.
[80] Idem.

rights: right to security of person, right to education, right to work, right to housing, right to health, right to asylum, right to equality and non-discrimination, right to reside, access to justice, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and freedom of movement. These rights are most assuredly core components of international refugee law. Thereupon, any resettlement country that ratified the main legal instruments of refugee protection will be under the obligation to safeguard their enjoyment for resettled refugees. As for human dignity, it was identified is a prerequisite for the compliance with refugees' rights in a context of forced displacement. Human dignity is far from being a mere theoretical notion, it is a fundamental dimension of refugees' well-being. Accordingly, all personal expectations of SRL can be described as fully realistic.

3.2.4 Expectations vis-à-vis host countries

Apart from highlighting personal expectations of SRL, the questionnaire wished to identify the expectations of SRL vis-à-vis a third party: the host country. All statements included in Question 14 were conceived to understand what role they assign to resettling countries.

Aggregated data: expected services provided upon arrival

SRL were asked whether some services were provided by the host country in the immediate post-resettlement phase. Results, which are summarised and ranked in the table below, clearly show that they have high expectations vis-à-vis hosting governments.

Table 3		
Expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon (SRL) vis-à-vis resettlement countries		
Statement	**Corresponding human right**	**% of refugees expecting this service to be provided upon arrival**
"I will have access to free language classes and training courses."	Right to education (with the prospect of a future integration)	90 % (no: 0.7 %)
"My children will be able to go to school."	Right to education	88.6 % (no: 1.1 %)

"I will have access to free healthcare."	Right to health	70 % (no: 2.4 %)
"I will be able to practise my religion freely."	Freedom of religion	63.6 % (no: 5.1 %)
"The government will provide me with a house."	Right to shelter	58.3 % (no: 6.5 %)
"The government will provide me with a job."	Right to work	49.1 % (no: 7.9 %)
"I will receive a monthly allowance."	Right to social security	47.8 % (no: 6.2 %)
Source: sample of 291 SRL surveyed in April 2017.		

Results will be analysed in light of the personal expectations (needs) of SRL disclosed at an earlier stage of the research. As a reminder, the right to security of person (33.2 %), the right to education (19.2 %) and the right to work (13 %) were identified by SRL as the main needs that could be satisfied through resettlement to a third country.

To start with, free access to language classes and training courses as well as the right to education for children are believed to be best addressed by host countries. It comes as a satisfaction as the right to education ranked second in the list of needs expressed by SRL. As for the right to health, even though it was not among the most mentioned needs, more than two thirds of the refugees surveyed were convinced that access to healthcare was well-taken care of by host countries. Freedom of religion, the only right associated with civil and political rights, was also presumed to be of concern for host countries. Even though SRL were hesitant, almost two thirds of them thought that they would be allowed to freely practise their religion abroad. It should be noted that some refugees made explicit references to the ongoing debate surrounding the right to wear the hijab in some European countries.

On the contrary, the right to housing, the right to work and the right to social security are thought to be addressed in an unsatisfactory way by host countries. Less than 60 % of SRL believed that services related to these rights were provided upon arrival. Particular attention must be drawn to the right to work as it was identified as the third priority of SRL. With barely half of surveyed refugees (49.1 %) convinced that access to the labour market would be guaranteed, figures convey the idea that more efforts need to be made. Even if they know that it is rarely the case, SRL expect host countries to offer guidance services in the post-arrival phase to help them integrate the labour market as rapidly as possible.

Disaggregated data: the importance of a refugee's background

Specific expectations were also identified depending on background characteristics. Data can be broken down into age, gender and level of education. Disaggregated data demonstrate how these factors affect the goals that refugees wish to pursue through resettlement.

For instance, the younger the refugees are, the more concerned they are about their own future. Concerns about family are, for their part, amplified as the refugees' age increases. Refugees under 26 expressed their will to build a new life (57.2 %) by emphasising that they wished to either get or finish their education in the hope of finding a job in the host country. Among refugees over 26, on the contrary, the number of SRL who prioritised the building of a new life dropped to 35.4 %; a higher share of individuals said that they wished to find safety for their family and secure their children's future. Females saw security as their priority; males had a strong tendency to prioritise the building of a new life. Significant variations were also observed with regard to children: while 31.1 % of women declared that their children's future was their main concern, only 18.8 % of men did. These observations reveal the existence of preeminent gender-based patterns among the Syrian refugee population living in Lebanon. The two above examples back the findings of behavioural psychology experts: in decision-making, women are statistically more child-oriented[81] and risk-averse[82] than their male counterparts. As for the level of education, the more educated refugees are, the more knowledgeable they are about resettlement and the brighter they believe their integration prospects are in the host country.

Post-arrival phase: the responsibility-resilience dilemma

---

[81] Kim Parker, "Women More than Men Adapt their Careers for Family Life" (2015).
[82] James P. Byrnes and others, "Gender Differences in Risk Taking: A Meta-Analysis" (1999) 367.

In order for integration in the post-resettlement phase to be successful, a reasonable balance must be kept between the responsibility of the host country to provide assistance and the necessity of welcomed refugees to show a high level of resilience. The following testimony shows how complementary these two components are:

"*Yes, I know someone who was resettled in Canada. He was assisted by the government at the beginning. Then, he started working in the same field as in Syria and became an active member of the community. Today he is convinced he will achieve what he aspires to and make his dreams come true.*"

On average, SRL are well-aware of this dilemma: 85.7 % of the refugees surveyed agreed with the statements "life will be difficult when I arrive, I will have to solve problems by myself" and "the government will do its best to help me in my everyday life". Only, 14.4 % of the panel believed that the government *must* help in their everyday life and only 1 in 5 refugees declared he would feel anger towards the host country if their expectations were not met in the post-resettlement phase.

An important pattern emerged from answers: the less educated refugees are, the more they expect from the host country. That is, the level of education of a refugee is negatively correlated with their belief that the government is the main duty-bearer in resettlement. Figures show that while 55.6 % of uneducated refugees opted for the answer "the government must help me in my everyday life," it was the case for only 23.6 % of refugees who finished primary school, 8.5 % of those who finished secondary school and only 7.3 % of university graduates. When asked, uneducated refugees argued that if the government had deliberately chosen them to come, it was incumbent on them to guide newcomers until they were able to rebuild a new life abroad.

In this regard, the Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Program stresses the difference between expectations and unrealistic expectations, the latter being identified as the main cause for the emergence of a "sense of entitlement"[83]. Uneducated or poorly educated refugees hold the strong belief that they *deserve* something because they have already *earned it*; this sense of entitlement becomes counterproductive when it starts causing "feelings of resentment,

---

[83] The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program, "Managing Expectations: A Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors" (2013) 3.

frustration and anger on the part of refugees"[84]. The primary goal of expectation management is to address conflicts arising from these mismatched expectations.

Logically, the level of education is positively correlated with the level of initiative of refugees. Figures suggest that while only 22.2 % of uneducated SRL believed that life would be difficult upon arrival and they would have to solve problems autonomously; their number rose to 29.2 % for those who attended primary school, 50 % for those who attended secondary school and 58 % for university graduates.

Greater attractiveness: the Canadian example

The statements "In Europe, host communities are welcoming to refugees" and "I will integrate quickly and easily" helped gain an insight into the way host communities are perceived by SRL. The image reflected by a resettlement country is of utmost importance: evidence shows that the more positive the image of a country is, the more attractive this country becomes for refugees wishing to be resettled. In this section, the reasons behind a country's attractiveness will be analysed.

With 112 mentions, Canada is by far the most popular destination among SRL today. It is followed by Germany and the United Kingdom, which were both mentioned 29 times, and Sweden, which was mentioned 20 times. Reasons invoked by the refugees are numerous. The presence of friends and relatives in the country is the leading factor in the choice of a resettlement country. In that regard, a Syrian refugee from the Bekaa made it clear:

"*I would definitely not go to a country where I do not know anyone.*"

Other factors such as compliance with human rights standards, religious freedom, multiculturalism, language compatibility, education, safety, healthcare and willingness to help Syrians are also highly valued by SRL.

A closer look must be taken at the case of Canada. The country ranked first as it seems to offer a perfect combination of the aforementioned factors. Answers provided by SRL described Canada as being "a country governed by the rule of law and that respects religious and cultural diversity". It was also said to be "democratic", "free", "peaceful" and "not racist"; it was called a "nation that respects human rights" and offers Syrians a chance to "live

---

[84] The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program, "Managing Expectations: A Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors" (2013) 3.

in dignity". Refugees believed that Canada provided "high living standards", "quality education" and "good medical and psychological treatment". One testimony read:

"*Canada: I am looking for safety and it is a wonderful country in terms of treatment and humanity. Here, in Lebanon, I do not feel that I am ever considered a man [...]. We are treated like the animals of the Lebanese forest, everyone is becoming hateful and people do not want us in their country. We became a bother, we became undesirable. I want to live proudly and I am tired of everything here.*"

Interestingly enough, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's open-door policy towards Syrian refugees was also mentioned as an encouraging factor. So far, Canada has resettled more than 40 000 Syrian refugees via UNHCR's scheme and its private sponsorship programme[85]. Trudeau has been increasingly vocal about his support for Syrians and his will to promote diversity within his country, thus offering a counter-example to the recent US Travel Ban implemented by President Donald Trump. Trudeau's actions went beyond the political sphere and transformed into a large-scale pro-refugee campaign. He personally welcomed Syrian families at the airport, publicly teared up over their stories or tweeted about Canada's openness:

"*To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada*" – 10.20 PM – 28 Jan 2017.

This pro-refugee communication strategy reminds of Merkel's 2015 open-door policy. During the 2015 asylum crisis, the German Chancellor fiercely opposed fellow leaders of EU countries by declaring that "all Syrian asylum seekers were welcome to remain in Germany"[86]. She rejected the Dublin III Regulation that required asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in the country through which they had first entered the EU[87]. In both cases, a countless number of Syrians expressed gratitude, sending thankful letters to Merkel or naming their new-born after Trudeau. By creating a deep emotional link with the Syrian population, both host countries witnessed a large influx of Syrian refugees. In times when they feel abandoned by the international community, Syrians are sensitive to the willingness of a

---

[85] "#WelcomeRefugees: Canada Resettled Syrian Refugees" (2017).
[86] Allan Hall and John Lichfield, "Germany opens its gates: Berlin says all Syrian asylum-seekers are welcome to remain, as Britain is urged to make a 'similar statement" (2015).
[87] European Parliament and Council of the EU, Regulation 604/2013 [2013] OJ L 180/31.

country to welcome them. The attractiveness of Canada for SRL illustrates the theory under which there is an obvious link between a country's image and its attractiveness as a resettlement destination.

The individual factor: a final reflection

Resettlement was thoroughly examined from three different perspectives – resettlement awareness, personal expectations and expectations vis-à-vis host countries. Several conclusions can be drawn. On the one hand, even though most SRL are aware of the existence of a resettlement programme, they lack basic knowledge about its functioning. As a result, they are highly likely to develop unrealistic expectations vis-à-vis UNHCR's resettlement scheme. On the other hand, SRL set high expectations both for themselves and host countries. Personal expectations are in line with international refugee law and can therefore be described as fully realistic. In contrast, expectations vis-à-vis host countries vary according to the level of education of a refugee. The more uneducated a refugee, the more unrealistic their expectations become. In conclusion, the individual factor can have a negative influence on the level of satisfaction of a refugee. In the event that the refugee developed unrealistic expectations, he or she is extremely likely to be disappointed in the post-resettlement phase after discovering what he or she is legally entitled to.

4. The legal factor: human rights approach to the Belgian resettlement scheme

4.1 Methodology

So as to understand the exact role of the legal and socio-political factors in the creation of a discrepancy between expectations and reality, a qualitative method of research was used. Interviews of a duration of one to two hours were conducted in March 2017 with the principal actors involved in the Belgian resettlement process: UNHCR (Peter O'Sullivan, Resettlement Officer to UNHCR's Bureau for Europe), CGRS (Geert Beirnaert, Policy Officer), Fedasil (Mélanie Hostaux, Resettlement Programme Associate), Convivial (Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator) and Caritas (Elisabeth Verniers, Resettlement Project Coordinator). All actors showed great interest in the research. Furthermore, 10 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Syrians who were resettled in Belgium from Lebanon. Contacts of resettled Syrians were provided by Caritas and Convivial. No selective criteria were imposed. The two NGOs were requested to constitute a representative sample of resettled Syrian refugee population. Profiles included isolated persons and families; males and females; married and single persons; children and adults; heterosexual, homosexuals and transgender persons; Muslims, Christians and atheists. All resettled Syrian refugees belonged to different resettlement categories and arrived in Belgium after 2014. They used to live in various parts of Lebanon and originated from different regions of Syria. All of them were interviewed on a voluntary basis. Participants seemed eager to collaborate and showed an impressive level of proactivity during the sessions.

The limitations of this study lie in the fact that no formal contact could be established neither with UNHCR Lebanon nor with the Cabinet of Theo Francken, the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration. UNHCR Lebanon ignored all solicitations by phone or by e-mail[88]. Several NGOs in Lebanon hinted that the lack of answer could be attributed to the recent imposition of a new policy. It is believed that a non-explicit guideline might prevent resettlement officers from communicating with external individuals; it was rumoured to be put in place following a corruption scandal involving resettlement officers. It should be added that a number of NGOs and refugees, both in Lebanon and Belgium, did mention the

---

[88] Requests for interviews were sent by e-mail to Resettlement Officers Oana Curtiss and Reem Andary on 6 March 2017. A complementary request was later sent to another Resettlement Officer, Hagop Mihraniy, on 14 March 2017. The Protection Unit of UNHCR Lebanon kindly tried to put the researcher in touch with the Resettlement Unit, in vain.

existence of bribery practices in the first country of asylum. No evidence of the existence of neither a UNHCR policy nor corruption practices in the context of resettlement could be gathered. As for the Cabinet of the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, it kindly rejected a request for interview formulated by e-mail. The negative response read that it was unfortunately impossible to grant permission for an interview due to "the busy schedule of the State Secretary and his advisors"[89]. Nonetheless, the Cabinet said to be "interested in the final result of the project" and insisted that the research could be sent to them[90]. In this respect, it is worth emphasising that, in the words of the European Migration Network, "Belgian political authorities have decided not to communicate proactively on the topic of resettlement"[91].

4.2 The Belgian resettlement model under scrutiny

4.2.1 Resettlement tradition

Belgium has a long tradition of being a resettlement country. Resettlement activities can be divided in four major phases that reflect the will of the Belgian government to accept the most vulnerable in times of conflicts or repression.

The first resettlement programme can be traced back to the late 50s when Belgium accepted more than 6,000 Hungarians fleeing fierce persecution from the Soviets in the aftermaths of the Hungarian Uprising in 1956[92]. After this inaugural phase, in the 70s, Belgium welcomed 400 asylum seekers of Asian descent whose expulsion had been ordered by Ugandan President Idi Amin[93], 1,100 Chileans threatened by Pinochet's regime and 2,500 boat people from Vietnam and Cambodia[94]. The third phase of resettlement activities was stirred by the need to protect those affected by conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the 90s: Belgian authorities granted asylum to 200 Bosnians and 1,200 Kosovars, respectively in 1992 and 1999[95]. It is worth mentioning that the 1999 resettlement scheme was put in place as part of a larger European framework. In April of that same year, the Council of the European Union adopted Joint Action 1999/290/JHA to coordinate efforts and open its doors to asylum seekers fleeing war-torn Kosovo. Article 6 of the Joint Action provided that the EU would provide emergency assistance to "Member States which receive, in particular following an initiative of

---

[89] The request for interview was sent on 29 May 2017 and a negative answer was received later that day. The response from the Cabinet also contained links to several resettlement actors, including CGRS and Fedasil.
[90] Response sent the Cabinet of the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration on 29 May 2017.
[91] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian admission in Belgium" (2016) 21.
[92] Fedasil, "History: Previous Belgian Resettlement Initiatives" (n.d.).
[93] Nina Lakhani, "After the exodus: 40 years on from Amin's terror offensive against Asians in Uganda" (2012).
[94] Fedasil, "History: Previous Belgian Resettlement Initiatives" (n.d.).
[95] Idem.

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a significant number of refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers who have fled from Kosovo and from neighbouring regions as a result of recent events […] for a duration of six months"[96]. This initiative evidently paved the way for the creation of a more sophisticated resettlement scheme within the EU. It took more than ten years before the fourth revival of the Belgian resettlement programme occurred. The intensification of the crisis in the Arab world gave birth to a new wave of resettlement activities in Western Europe and Belgium was no exception to the rule. In 2009, its government responded to the conclusions of the Council of the EU that exhorted EU Member States to resettle 10,000 refugees from Iraq[97] by establishing a second ad-hoc resettlement scheme. The Belgian Council of Ministers agreed to take in a group of 471 Iraqi refugees made of solely single women and Iraqi Palestinians[98]. In a similar way, in 2011, after a joint call from UNHCR and EU institutions to resettle refugees of Sub-Saharan origin, a small number of Eritrean and Congolese refugees who had been granted asylum in Tunisia were resettled in Belgium[99].

4.2.2 Recent developments

In 2014, against the backdrop of the Middle Eastern crisis and with the Syrian conflict showing no signs of abating, UNHCR urged states to commit to opening 130,000 resettlement and humanitarian admission places for Syrians, notably in Jordan and Lebanon by the end of 2016[100]. In the meantime, the European Commission relentlessly pushed for the creation of an EU-wide resettlement scheme in line with the idea of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The Commission suggested that it could offer "rapid access to protection" while providing for "managed and orderly arrivals"[101]. In 2012, the EU Parliament had already made a first step towards that goal by approving the Joint EU Resettlement Programme[102]. Participation from each Member State was voluntary and the programme was expected to focus on specific geographical regions, nationalities or categories of refugees at risk[103]. Four specific categories of refugees were framed: persons from a country or region designated for

---

[96] Council of the EU, Joint Action 1999/290/JHA [1999] OJ L 114/2.

[97] Fenya Fischler and Salomé Phillmann, "Know Reset – Country Profile: Belgium" (2012) 2.

[98] Fedasil, "History: Previous Belgian Resettlement Initiatives" (n.d.).

[99] Fedasil, "Congolese Refugees: Selection of Refugees" (n.d).

[100] ICMC, "10% of Refugees from Syria: Europe's Resettlement and Other Admission Responses in a Global Perspective » (2015) 27.

[101] Arton Krasniqi and Brigitte Suter. "Refugee Resettlement to Europe 1950-2014: An Overview of Humanitarian Politics and Practices" (2015) 13.

[102] Delphine Perrin and Frank McNamara, "Refugee Resettlement in the EU: Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames" (2013) 13.

[103] European Parliament and Council of the EU, Regulation 282/2014 [2014] OJ L86/1.

the implementation of a Regional Protection Programme; unaccompanied minors; children and women at risk (particularly psychological, physical or sexual violence or exploitation) and persons with serious medical needs that could only be addressed through resettlement[104]. In 2015, the European Resettlement Scheme initially proposed by the European Commission was adopted by the Council. It aimed at creating 20,000 resettlement places in EU Member States. As of February 2017, more than 13,000 individuals had already found a new home within the EU[105].

The adoption of the 2012 Joint EU Resettlement Programme constituted a turning point for the Belgian asylum policy. In 2013, given the incentives of UNHCR and the EU, the Belgian government formally took the decision to launch its first structural resettlement scheme. Since then, resettlement activities have been carried out uninterruptedly on the basis of an annual quota determined by the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration[106]. The following table summarises Belgium's most recent resettling activities[107].

Table 4		
Evolution of the Belgian annual resettlement quota		
Year	**Annual quota**	**Nationality and Departure Country**
2013	100	100 refugees from all over the world, with a specific focus on the African Great Lakes region.
2014	100	75 Syrians (mission in August in Turkey). 25 Congolese (mission in the African Great Lakes region).
2015	300	188 Syrians, including: - 141 Syrians (mission in March and in September in Lebanon); - 4 Syrians (mission in Jordan); - 43 Syrians (mission in Turkey); - 14 Syrians (mission in Iraq). 88 Congolese (mission in January in Burundi).
2016	550 (still ongoing)	298 Syrians (mission in June in Lebanon).

---

[104] European Commission, Communication COM (2009) 456 FINAL on the establishment of a joint EU resettlement programme [2009] 4.
[105] European Commission, "Relocation and Resettlement – State of Play" (2017) 2.
[106] Fedasil, "La réinstallation : un complément à l'asile " (n.d).
[107] Idem.

2017	1100 (expected)	Syrians (mission in June and future mission in September in Lebanon).
	Source: Fedasil	

Belgium has progressively increased its annual resettlement quota and given a new direction to its activities by focusing its efforts on Syrian refugees. At present, NGOs based in Belgium continue to raise their voice in favour of an acceleration of resettlement activities. In December 2016, Oxfam prompted high-income countries to resettle at least 10 % of Syrians identified as vulnerable by UNHCR. According to Oxfam's calculations, Belgium has only become home to 13 % of the Syrian refugees it could afford to welcome. The NGO estimated that, based on its GDP, the country should have taken in 4,771 Syrians so far to make a fair contribution to the Syrian crisis and respect the principle of responsibility-sharing[108].

4.2.3 Reactivity and main focuses

Based upon historical developments, it is clear that the Belgian resettlement model can be described as reactive. All resettlement schemes, be they *ad hoc* or structural, were set up in response to a particular crisis. For instance, specific schemes were established to address the Chilean crisis, the boat people crisis, the Yugoslav crisis or the Iraqi crisis. Over the past twenty years, Belgium has given much weight to priorities set by international institutions, notably UNHCR and the EU. For example, the creation of today's structural scheme followed both a call of UNHCR to share the burden of the Syrian crisis with Middle Eastern countries and a call of the EU to increase the number of available places for Syrians.

What is more, resettlement activities in Belgium are geography-focused and category-focused. As far as categories are concerned, when Belgian authorities agreed to resettle refugees from Iraq in 2009, priority was given to two categories of refugees: single women and Palestinians from Iraq[109]. Geographically speaking, since 2013, the programme was given a new focus after it was decided that the country would gradually concentrate its efforts on Syrian refugees. According to Jasper Kuipers, Assistant Director of Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland and Co-President of the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, the danger of prioritising certain categories of refugees or geographical areas lies in showing a

---

[108] RTBF, "Oxfam appelle les pays riches, dont la Belgique, à réinstaller plus de réfugiés" (2016).
[109] UNHCR, "Le HCR se félicite de la reprise par la Belgique d'un programme de réinstallation" (2009).

lack of impartiality. He recalls that resettlement should be carried out "fairly" and "regardless of the person's nationality or the attention the media pay to a conflict"[110].

4.2.4 Refugee intake and purpose

Under Kunz's theory, two resettlement models can be distinguished on the basis of refugee intake and purpose. Resettlement can be a tool used by underpopulated countries to "actively support population growth through immigration"[111]. Such practices have been commonly featured in Canada and the United States. The two countries use large-scale resettlement programmes to bring in specific categories of refugees and selection is often based on previous job experience. Such a model can be both beneficial and detrimental to newcomers. Resettled refugees are surely highly valued as they are expected to rapidly incorporate the national workforce and contribute to the country's economic growth; yet, they are solely regarded a "manpower source ready to be exploited"[112]. Kunz also stresses that this model can lead to discriminatory practices such as the systematic exclusion of the old and the ill[113] – an aberration considering that the primary goal a resettlement mechanism is to protect refugees identified as vulnerable by UNHCR. Most European countries have traditionally preferred to use resettlement as a mere protection tool. They tend to accept a limited number of refugees and favour quality over quantity. Based upon the details provided in the previous sections, one easily comes to the conclusion that Belgium belongs to this second category of host countries.

In Belgium, resettlement is a complementary tool to the domestic asylum policy. As far as purpose in concerned, Belgian authorities are said to be tolerant and eager to offer a "sanctuary" without preconditions to incoming refugees[114]. The country describes its resettlement mechanism as "a tool designed to grant protection to the most vulnerable refugees around the world through a specific procedure"[115]. It thus has a purely humanitarian purpose. As for refugee intake, Belgium accepts a relatively small number of refugees on an annual basis and favours their social integration over a quick integration into the labour market.

---

[110] Caritas, "Il faut d'urgence réinstaller plus de réfugiés" (2016).
[111] Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory" (1981) 48.
[112] Idem.
[113] Idem.
[114] Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory" (1981) 48.
[115] Convivial, "La réinstallation de A à Z" (n.d).

4.2.5 Social receptiveness

All augmentative societies do not share the same level of social receptiveness. Kunz draws the line between monistic societies, which demand a high degree of conformity, and pluralistic societies, which do not see uniformity as a goal in itself[116]. Belgium has traditionally been a country of immigration; consequently, it is host to a population composed of multiple ethnic and religious groups and it qualifies as a pluralistic society. The Belgian resettlement scheme is open to anyone in need of international protection, regardless of faith, traditions, language or ethnics. Such a model is believed to be optimal as it puts little pressure on newcomers. Kunz underlines that, in a pluralistic society, refugees tend to favour permanent settlement and assimilate seamlessly[117].

4.2.6 Procedural steps and relevant actors

Prior to examining the compliance of the Belgian resettlement scheme with human rights standards, an overview of the resettlement process will be given. The main stages of the procedure and the relevant actors are disclosed in the table hereunder.

Table 5	
The Belgian Resettlement Scheme	
Stages	**Actors involved**
Preselection	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Selection	Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS)
Cultural orientation	Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Fedasil)
Travel arrangements	International Organisation for Migration (IOM) + Belgian Embassies
Registration	Belgian Immigration Office + Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS)
First reception phase	Federal Agency for the Reception of

---

[116] Convivial, "La réinstallation de A à Z" (n.d).
[117] Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory" (1981) 49.

	Asylum Seekers (Fedasil)
Second reception phase	Local Reception Initiatives (LRI) + Public Social Welfare Centre (PSWC)
Integration	Convivial + Caritas
Sources: CGRS, Fedasil & Know Reset	

An in-depth description of each stage of the process and of the exact role of the corresponding actor(s) will be provided. In Belgium, each resettled refugee follows this pathway:

- Preselection: UNHCR is in charge of identifying vulnerable refugees and determining whether they qualify for resettlement. Once approved for resettlement, all information related to an applicant is stored in a Resettlement Registration Form, which will be submitted to a potential resettlement country[118].

- Selection: The role of CGRS is to review all files sent by UNHCR. At this stage of the process, two methods can be used. Protection officers from CGRS can screen files from Belgium or directly conduct interviews in the first asylum country during a selection mission[119]. They are responsible for analysing each refugee's claim and assessing their present fears[120]. The only criterion set by Belgium is that each refugee should satisfy the definition of "refugee" under the 1951 Refugee Convention. A limited number of applicants will be selected in accordance with the established quota and officially accepted by the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration. On average, Belgian authorities approve 95 % of cases submitted by UNHCR[121].

- Cultural Orientation: Fedasil organises a cultural orientation in the first country of asylum to inform selected refugees about the country and the post-resettlement phase. The orientation is "based on a curriculum developed by Fedasil […] that covers different themes […] such as housing, employment, education, vocational training,

---

[118] CGRS, "Comment se déroule la sélection des réfugiés dans le cadre de la réinstallation?" (n.d) 1-2.
[119] Idem.
[120] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 7.
[121] Ibid. 7; 35.

healthcare, family reunification [and] cost of life"[122]. Additionally, IOM also briefs refugees on travel-related aspects and cultural adaptation[123].

- <u>Travel arrangements</u>: IOM performs medical checks on selected refugees so as to ensure that they are physically capable of travelling and do no present any risk to public health. Maximum 48 hours prior to departure, complementary "fit-to-travel" examinations are performed on selected refugees[124]. Documentation – a *laissez-passer* as well as a visa – is issued by the Belgian Consulate after the green light was given by the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration. All other travel arrangements – from booking plane tickets to assisting refugees when going through customs[125] – are taken care of by IOM. IOM can also possibly provide special assistance to the most vulnerable refugees (a medical escort, for example)[126].

- <u>Registration</u>: Once refugees have arrived in Belgium, they are required to shorty proceed to the Immigration Office in order to be registered. Following this step, they formally lodge an asylum request that will be processed by CGRS. In the meantime, they are handed out a birth and an identity certificate as well as an "Annex 26" – a legal document proving that they have introduced an asylum request. Previous passports must be handed in to CGRS[127].

- <u>First reception phase</u>: Fedasil guarantees temporary housing to newcomers for a duration of six weeks (reception period can vary from 3 to 7 weeks)[128]. Resettled refugees are staying in one of the four centres managed by Fedasil for the purpose of resettlement (Saint-Trond, Pondrôme, Florenne and Kapellen); hosting newcomers in a Fedasil facility is a way to ensure that they have direct access to social and medical services as well as to a tailor-made integration programme[129]. Interpreters, be they professionals or volunteers, are also available at all stages of this first reception phase[130].

---

[122] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 7.
[123] Idem.
[124] Idem.
[125] Fedasil, "La réinstallation en étapes" (2013).
[126] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 7-8.
[127] Ibid. 8; 43.
[128] Convivial, "La réinstallation de A à Z" (n.d).
[129] Fedasil, "La réinstallation en étapes" (2013).
[130] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 43.

- Second reception phase: Resettled refugees are transferred from the centre to a local reception initiative (LRI), which is under the supervision of a Public Social Welfare Centre (PSWC). They are allowed to stay in this LRI for a period of 6 months[131]. Once settled down, they gain access to the integration programme for newly arrived immigrants (*parcours d'intégration des primo-arrivants*), which includes a civic training course on their rights and duties, 120 hours of language classes and orientation sessions regarding professional activities[132].

- Integration: Caritas and Convivial provide "additional and tailor-made support to resettled refugees [...] for a minimum of 12 months and up to 24 months depending on [their] specific needs"[133]. The two NGOs are in charge of counselling resettled refugees and ensuring that they become autonomous and integrate smoothly into the Belgian society[134].

4.5 Compliance with human rights standards

Compliance with human rights principles can have a true incidence on refugees' satisfaction in the post-resettlement phase: reality can either exceed expectations or fall short of them. This section aims at understanding whether the Belgian resettlement scheme implemented in Lebanon is in line with core human rights principles. The goal of this assessment is to uncover whether refugees' satisfaction is low, which would certainly contribute to exacerbating the asymmetry between expectations and reality. As a starting point, it should be reminded that Belgium has a specific legislation regarding the treatment of aliens; that the country must enforce EU Law and that it is party to most UN human-rights instruments. A critical analysis will be carried out so as to underline the main strengths (high level of compliance) and weaknesses (low level of compliance) of the programme. Extracts of interviews conducted in Belgium in March 2017 with five resettlement actors – UNHCR, Fedasil, CGRS, Convivial and Caritas – and ten resettled SRL will be used to support all claims.

---

[131] Fedasil, "La réinstallation en étapes" (2013).
[132] CPAS, "Parcours d'intégration des primo-arrivants" (n.d.).
[133] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 29.
[134] Fedasil, "La réinstallation en étapes" (2013)

4.5.1 High level of compliance

To start with, it must be stressed that a great majority of resettled Syrian refugees from Lebanon expressed gratitude towards Belgium and showed a high level of satisfaction with the country's resettlement scheme. Their selection by the State of Belgium immediately resulted in the creation of a positive image of the country; most Syrians declared that they felt welcome, which had a strong incidence on their willingness to go abroad. Four main features were identified as the main strengths of the Belgian resettlement scheme: legal status and corresponding rights, assistance of NGOs, staff & logistics and cultural orientation.

Legal status and corresponding rights

Upon arrival, Syrian refugees are required to introduce an asylum request at CGRS. Refugee status criteria for resettled refugees and for regular asylum seekers are identical[135]. Nonetheless, in the case of resettled refugees, their status will be automatically granted as applications were examined and accepted prior to arrival. Resettled refugees go to the same procedure as all asylum seekers, the only difference being theirs is accelerated. In Belgium, refugee status is granted on the basis of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and asylum regulations are governed by the Law of 15 December 1980 regarding entry, residence, settlement and removal of foreign nationals[136]. All resettled individuals are fully recognised as refugees, which is not always the case in other European countries (temporary protection can be granted instead[137]). In this respect, the Belgian policy is in line with UNHCR's recommendation that resettled refugees should systematically benefit from the highest level of international protection. In Belgium, all refugees obtain a five-year residency permit[138]. When it expires, they are given an unlimited residency permit. Their right to reside can only be revoked if the refugee status is withdrawn or ceases to apply[139].

Geert Beirnaert, Policy Officer at Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS), explained that, once SRL are accepted, they enjoy the same rights as refugees who lodged an asylum request from Belgium. No difference is made. The right to education was particularly valued by resettled refugee during interviews. A resettled Syrian expressed his satisfaction:

---

[135] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 6.
[136] Idem.
[137] European Resettlement Network, "EU Resettlement Factsheet" (2014).
[138] CGRS, "You Are Recognised as A Refugee in Belgium: Your Rights and Obligations" (2016) 7.
[139] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 33.

"I like Belgium. Everything is very nice here. It is better for me because I can do anything I want: I can go to school, learn French, learn Flemish… […]. The positive point of the system is that it gave me a new life."

Many firmly believed that easy access to Belgian schools for their children would secure their future. In "*Les experiences des refugiés réinstallés en Belgique*" – a study on the resettlement in Belgium of Iraqis, Eritreans and Congolese refugees – Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn argued that resettlement could be seen as a long-term integration tool. Resettlement facilitates the integration of the second generation; it becomes "the creation and the construction of a better future for children rather than for parents"[140].

In Belgium, refugees also have access to citizenship in the long run, which is in accordance with article 34 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees:

> "*The Contracting States shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalisation of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to expedite naturalisation proceedings and to reduce as far as possible the charges and costs of such proceedings*"[141].

Citizenship can be obtained by "any person above 18 years of age who has resided legally in Belgium for five years, knows one of the national languages and can prove his or her social integration and economic participation"[142]. According to Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, accessing citizenship was of utmost importance for Iraqi, Congolese and Eritrean resettled refugees as it gave them a feeling of "belonging", a feeling that they are well-integrated into the Belgian society[143]. The same conclusions apply to the new wave of resettled Syrians.

Assistance of NGOs

During interviews, Syrians suggested that the major strength of the Belgian programme was the daily guidance by the NGOs Convival and Caritas. Most Syrians became very emotional when asked about their NGO tutor and they commented on the strong human link that united them. Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Convivial, explained that NGOs strive to establish direct and unique contact with resettled refugees. As far as Convivial is concerned, a system of coaches is used: every coach is a bicultural person who speaks

---

[140] Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 77.
[141] Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) 176.
[142] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 8.
[143] Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 7.

French, English and Arabic. It allows them to avoid communicating with the refugee through an interpreter, which smoothen the creation of a special bond between the two individuals. Convivial's resettlement workers are people who lie at the intersection of social assistants and intercultural mediators.

Two specific aspects of the daily work of Caritas and Convivial were praised by Syrian interviewees. NGOs act as are linguistic intermediaries and key actors when it comes to identifying special needs. Two Syrians still struggling with the language explained:

"*She [Convivial's staff person] is extremely caring, she helps us a lot [...]. If I have an appointment at the city hall, at the doctor, wherever, she translates for me or calls for me.*"

"*Of course! Convivial and Caritas are essential. For example, today, you sent me the message "Je suis arrivée" and I understood… But I hadn't understood your previous messages. So, what did I do? I sent them all to her [Convivial's staff person]: she translated what you had written and she wrote me a proper answer in French.*"

A transwoman highlighted how important Convivial was in her particular case:

"*Convivial was very kind to me, they helped me a lot. When I was in Lebanon, the Belgians told me that we were going to stay six weeks in a centre in Wallonia or in Brussels. But when I arrived here, I asked Convivial if I could have private accommodation. You know, given my situation, I can't… It's dangerous for me to live with the others. They found this private house for me [...] and I can stay here for one year [...]. The woman from Convivial calls me every day; if I do not give her news for two days, she asks me if I am ok, if everything is fine.*"

Logistics and staff

Syrian refugees were unanimous in asserting that the Belgian resettlement process as implemented in Lebanon was flawless in terms of logistics. From the selection mission to the arrival at the airport, everything was well organised. They also underlined the professionalism of the Belgian staff. Testimonies suggested that the coordination between resettlement actors, especially CGRS, Fedasil, IOM and the Belgian embassies was optimal.

"*There is no problem. All of them are very nice; they were always by my side. They even showed me where the restrooms were so that I would not feel lost. They are very kind people.*"

"*Everything regarding the programme is very positive [...]. As for the journey, it was very well organised. It was not good, it was perfect.*"

During the journey, special attention is also paid to the most vulnerable. Mélanie Hostaux, Resettlement Programme Associate at Fedasil, specified that some refugees were accompanied by a medical or an operational escort.

"*There is a possibility of having a medical escort that takes them to the airport, to the centre or to the hospital. It happened that the ambulance was waiting for someone next to the plane after landing and took the person directly to the hospital, notably to translate and tell Belgian doctors what the problem was exactly [...]. We have also organised operational escorts for, for example, a single mom with several children because we knew she was vulnerable and the situation was going to be hard to handle… Sometimes it's the first time they have taken the plane and it is very complex.*"

Cultural orientation

Peter O'Sullivan, Resettlement Officer to UNHCR's Bureau for Europe, affirmed that the UN refugee agency strongly believes in high-quality cultural orientations. He stated that proper planning is of paramount importance given the impact of cultural orientation sessions on the integration process.

"*As soon as a family has been accepted into a state, they need to be getting as much information as possible to ready them to where they are moving to.*"

The same way, refugees stressed the importance of the cultural orientation numerous times. They were convinced that the sessions with Fedasil helped them develop realistic expectations.

"*We might have had high expectations at first, but during the two days of cultural orientation in Lebanon, they gave us all the little details, even the prices in the stores or the amount of money we would receive every month. I am very satisfied with the cultural orientation.*"

"*They told us the truth, they said it very clearly. They explained that there was a big Arab community in Belgium [...], that it might be difficult to find a house in Brussels. Everything I heard in Lebanon, I witnessed it here. Actually, Belgium is even better than what they had told us.*"

At an early stage of Belgian resettlement activities, refugees tended to arrive with unrealistic expectations. The most common issue was that of family reunification: newcomers showed a very poor understanding of the conditions attached to the right to family unity and many

believed that the process was quick and open to non-core family members. It is unclear whether the information was wrongly communicated to refugees during the cultural orientation; whether they misunderstood this information or whether the information was distorted during the translation process. Geert Beirnaert, Policy Officer at CGRS, remarked that rumours also play a significant role in the development of false assumptions: refugees have a tendency to overlook what is told and believe messages spread among refugee communities. Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Caritas, explained:

"I also think we set very high standards. The group is big, people are overexcited, information is first given in French or Dutch before being translated… Paying attention is difficult. We see it here as well when we organise bilingual informative sessions: people find it hard to focus as they always have to listen to a language they do not understand for several minutes. Also, they have only three days and a lot of topics to address."

Peter O'Sullivan, Resettlement Officer to UNHCR's Bureau for Europe, added:

"Refugees are given so much information in a very confined time that the expectation that they can digest all that information is paternalistic […]. It is a lot to take in. It must be about creating quality information and giving the opportunity to ask questions."

Caritas and Convivial assured that great progress had been made since the creation of the structural scheme. Mélanie Hostaux, Resettlement Programme Associate at Fedasil explained that the cultural orientation was systematically modified after feedback from partners was received. This approach seems to bear fruit today for the new waves of resettled Syrians. She added that, besides adapting the content of the cultural orientation, Fedasil also followed two major rules: handling information very carefully and keeping people down to earth. These two principles are strictly applied to prevent selected candidates from raising unrealistic expectations prior to departure. Four years of experience taught Fedasil's resettlement staff that it was more efficient to point out potential negative points than to make individuals overly hopeful. Mélanie Hostaux gave several examples:

"We say that the rent for a one-person studio is around 500 euros per month… But if you live in the countryside or in a city, it varies; if the house is new of old, it varies; depending on the neighbourhood, it varies too. You see, we take sufficient precautions."

"We feel that our message is very tough. But it is better for expectation management. At first, we wanted to be human, caring, reassuring. But after the first missions, even when we were

increasingly clearer and more transparent, when we insisted on negative points, we still had negative feedback. So now we are careful with every little detail. If I show a picture of an apartment with a television, I precise that not all houses have a television [...]. Yes, we have a good healthcare system, but it takes time to have an appointment with a specialist; we also have to say that dental care is not always reimbursed [...]. We are very careful, we sometimes feel that we give a depressing message but upon arrival, if it is better, they are pleasantly surprised."

Moreover, time is short and information is dense. All actors agreed that a balance must be found between quality and quantity. It is necessary to repeat the information on several occasions: during the selection mission, during the cultural orientation and in the immediate post-resettlement phase. Roxanne Tremblay hinted that another efficient way of avoiding confusion could be to invite NGO representatives to the Fedasil mission in charge of the cultural orientation. NGO representatives, because they are in charge of the post-resettlement guidance and they were present during the orientation, could counter refugees' fallacious argument that "they were not told". Actor coherency seems to be an interesting solution to explore in the future. This approach is already in practice for the airport pick-up session: Belgian staff involved in the cultural orientation and/or the selection mission is systematically present when refugees arrive in Brussels. Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn demonstrated that this coherency is immensely appreciated by resettled refugees: they feel reassured and relieved to see people they know[144].

4.5.2 Low level of compliance

Interviews with resettled Syrians and resettlement actors also revealed the shortcomings of the Belgian resettlement programme. Two elements – the legal framework surrounding resettlement and the access to healthcare & housing – emerged as unsatisfactory. They will be examined in light of the human rights obligations of the Sate of Belgium.

Legal framework surrounding resettlement

As of today, Belgium lacks a legal framework for resettlement. Resettled refugees fall under the legal regime provided by the Law of 15 December 1980 regarding entry, residence, settlement and removal of foreign nationals. Yet, neither the original legislation, nor its

---

[144] Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 10.

amended versions contain any specific provision regarding resettlement[145]. Every decision affecting resettlement activities is the result of a strictly political decision. The Cabinet of Theo Francken, the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, is the only institution that lays down guiding principles for the Belgian resettlement policy.

Due to this legal loophole, Belgium is not equipped with any mechanism of extraterritorial refugee status recognition. In accordance with the Law of 15 December 1980, refugee status determination can only be done in Belgium[146]. Both UNHCR's Bureau for Europe and CGRS see this issue as a legal constraint. As mentioned previously, applying for asylum upon arrival is nothing but a formality as refugees' claims were previously examined and accepted by CGRS following the selection mission in Lebanon. No interview on the substance of the asylum request will be conducted[147]. Yet, this formality will soon constitute a major hurdle as the country's quota is regularly revised upwards. Geert Beirnaert, Policy Officer at CGRS, commented on this future difficulty:

"*After their arrival, refugees still have to lodge an asylum request. It is certainly a disadvantage for us because we are working with groups that are increasingly bigger. We used to work with around 100 refugees per year and we are soon going to reach more than 1,000, around 600 Syrians from Turkey, 300 from Lebanon and 150 from Jordan. […] Even if it is only a formality, it takes several days because the administrative path must be followed. […]. Officially, we cannot take a decision before they set foot in Belgium, but* de facto *we have already given the green line.*"

Access to housing and healthcare

Belgium being a signatory to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, it is under the obligation to "take steps […] to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realisation of the rights recognised in the […] Covenant by all appropriate means"[148]. Article 11 of the Covenant lays out the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, which includes housing; article 12 guarantees the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for everyone[149].

---

[145] Know Reset – Country Profile: Belgium (2012) 3.
[146] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 6.
[147] Ibid.19.
[148] CESCR (1976) 5.
[149] Ibid. 8-9.

Belgium also has obligations stemming from its belonging to the EU and the Council of Europe. At a European level, the rights to housing and health are recognised in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights – article 34(3) (social security and social assistance), article 35 (healthcare) – and in the European Social Charter – article 31 (right to housing), article 13 (right to social and medical assistance)[150]. Furthermore, even though the right to housing and the right to health are not directly enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights, the recent jurisprudence of the Court suggests that their applicability is increasingly relevant, especially in the field of asylum. For example, in *M.S.S. v. Belgium*, the Court held that, after being sent back to Greece from Belgium, the applicant's living conditions reached the threshold to amount to a breach of article 3 of the ECHR on the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment[151].

Attention must also be paid to Directive 2013/33/EU, which lays down the standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. General principles (11) and (18) of the Directive provide that EU Member States should maintain standards that "suffice to ensure [applicants] a dignified standard of living" and reception should be specifically designed to meet their needs[152]. This particular Directive was transposed into the Belgian legislation in the Law of 12 January 2007 on the reception of asylum seekers and other categories of foreigners[153]. Due to the unusual way in which they were accepted into the country, resettled refugees fall in a legal loophole: they are placed in centres under the authority of Fedasil, just like regular asylum seekers, but are already recognised as refugees. Because they are not asylum seekers, Syrians arriving through the Belgian resettlement scheme do not directly fall under the scope of neither the Reception Directive nor the Law of 12 January 2007. Indeed, the Reception Directive covers only "applicants of international protection in Member States"[154]; the Law of 12 January 2007, for its part, applies exclusively to asylum seekers and their relatives, unaccompanied minors and families with minors illegally residing in Belgium[155]. Their applicability will nevertheless be discussed hereunder as reception conditions are very similar for both resettled refugees and regular asylum seekers.

Housing

---

[150] EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, "Handbook on European Law Relating to Asylum, Borders and Immigration" (2015) 180.
[151] M.S.S. v Belgium (Application no. 30696/09) ECHR 21 July 2011.
[152] European Parliament and Council of the EU, Directive 2013/33/EU [2013] OJ L 180/97.
[153] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (2016) 64.
[154] European Parliament and Council of the EU, Directive 2013/33/EU [2013] OJ L 180/99.
[155] CIRÉ, "Fiche pratique : l'accueil des bénéficiaires de la loi du 12 janvier 2007. Pratiques et évolutions" (n.d).

Since the creation of the structural resettlement scheme in 2013, several changes occurred in the field of reception. Elisabeth Verniers and Roxanne Tremblay explained that in 2013 and 2014, resettled refugees were first hosted for a period of 6 weeks in a Fedasil centre before being sent to a social house. The main partner was a Public Social Welfare Centre (PSWC)[156]. In 2015, in the aftermath of the asylum crisis, the number of places available in Fedasil centres and social houses dropped sharply. It was agreed that resettled refugees would be first hosted in a Fedasil centre for a period of 6 weeks before being transferred to an LRI – a reception facility supervised by a PSWC in close collaboration with Fedasil[157]. Each LRI is usually composed of at least one social assistant and one educator; the LRI staff is in charge of providing daily administrative legal, social, psychological, medical support to newcomers[158]. The overlapping of the two systems created tensions among the resettled population. Roxanne Tremblay pointed out:

"*In 2015, some Syrians were hosted in a LRI while others were still granted a social house by a partner PSWC. Of course, they were comparing their respective situations and they did not understand why one was offered accommodation for one year, why another one could choose freely where to reside [...]. It caused tensions and even aggressiveness among resettled refugees.*"

Consequently, Fedasil decided to harmonise the system. At present, resettled refugees are first hosted six weeks in a Fedasil centre and then transferred for a period of six months in a LRI. They are then expected to find permanent housing, which is, generally speaking, not easy for any refugee in Belgium. All refugees being low-income individuals, they usually struggle to find decent housing. In view of reception system detailed above, it can be deduced that Belgium complies with its core obligations with regard to the right to housing. Nonetheless, both resettled refugees and NGOs question the logic behind the housing system as implemented today. They claim that a more human approach to housing should be envisioned.

For resettled refugees, the search for a new home is perceived as harsher due to the confusion surrounding the system. As of today, the main duty-bearer in the search for post-reception accommodation is not clearly defined. As a result, after the first 6 months, responsibility often becomes a bone of contention. Tensions arise, resettled refugees feel abandoned and NGOs and social services feel pressured. Under the new LRI system, refugees must be proactive.

---

[156] Fedasil, "Resettlement Process" (2013).
[157] CPAS, "Service ILA – Initiative Locale d'Accueil pour demandeurs d'asile" (n.d).
[158] CPAS, "Initiative Locale d'Accueil (I.L.A.)" (2017).

Theoretically, they are expected to find private accommodation with the help of the LRI staff. In practice, many resettled refugees turn to Caritas and Convivial to look for additional support as the two NGOs have experience and are better equipped – linguistically, amongst others – to respond to their needs. As demonstrated in March 2017 in a study carried out by the University of Gent, the psychosocial well-being of resettled refugees is deeply challenged by the uncertainty surrounding access to accommodation in the post-reception phase[159].

Both NGOs and resettled refugees also underlined that the system is not optimal because it does not favour long-term solutions. Elisabeth Verniers, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Caritas, believes that the initial system in which a partner PSWC was involved for a duration of one year had virtues despite the fact that it gave refugees little scope for action. According to her, it favoured security and reduced stress:

"*Under the system where we had a partner PSWC, they could not choose at all: if there was a house for 6 people in Mortsel, they were sent to Mortsel. They had no choice, but it also had one advantage. When refugees arrived in Belgium, they had no global understanding of the country, they didn't know the cities, and they didn't know where to settle down. In a way, they were happy to be provided with housing upon arrival and, after one year, we were helping them to find a permanent house.*"

Many resettled refugees interviewed believed that because they had been selected by Belgian authorities, Belgium should provide long-term private accommodation upon arrival. This practice is common and highly successful in other resettlement countries – in Scandinavia, for instance. When refugees arrive, they are immediately transferred to private accommodation and the country's social services show greater flexibility regarding a future deadline for departure, Elisabeth Verniers pointed out. In her view, such a system favours successful integration as refugees are given the chance to build a solid social network in the post-resettlement phase. She is convinced that the fragmentation of the Belgian housing system has a negative impact on resettled refugees' integration potential.

"*Instead of facilitating integration, the system postpones it. Six weeks in a centre, six months in a LRI, then moving to another city… Kids are in school close to the centre, then close to the LRI, then parents are moving and the kids have to restart from scratch. If parents were on a*

---

[159] Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 9.

waiting list for language classes and they move, they have to start all over again. It is a real waste of time."

Finally, NGOs and resettled refugees assert that the Belgian accommodation policy is paradoxical: the country decides to take in vulnerable Syrians but is not equipped with a suitable housing system to welcome them. In Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn's view, "considering that Belgian authorities choose […] to resettle vulnerable groups and that the need for protection is a major reason behind the selection of an individual, this vulnerability should be taken into account"[160]. In addition to assisting them in their search, authorities should be equipped with a system that ensures that they have access to healthcare and basic services such as language classes, social assistance, civic integration courses etc.[161]. At present, it is rarely the case. Needless to say, hosting facilities have a strong influence on rights accessibility[162]

Healthcare

Access to healthcare for resettled refugees was also deemed unsatisfactory. Even though Belgium guarantees *de jure* healthcare for resettled refugees, most of them enjoy a very limited access to it *de facto*. Admittedly, all refugees in Belgium face such a hurdle, but the case of resettled refugees raises particular concerns as many of them have been selected on the basis of their particular medical vulnerabilities. According to both Caritas and Convivial, the problem is triple.

Firstly, in the post-resettlement phase, the proximity of medical institutions is not a primary concern during the search for permanent accommodation. Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Convivial, explained that, in many cases, finding suitable accommodation is already an achievement. Making sure that medical facilities are easily accessible comes second. Syrians resettled in Belgium in rural areas said they experienced very low access to health facilities.

Secondly, poor language proficiency often prevents resettled refugees from having effective access to healthcare. Elisabeth Verniers claimed:

---

[160] Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 80.
[161] Ibid. 11.
[162] Spyros Franguiadakis and others, *En quête d'asile : aide associative et accès au(x) droit(s)* (2004) 240.

"*Another issue is guaranteeing access to healthcare […] Given that people speak only Arabic and do not speak Dutch or French, they are stuck. Many hospitals and doctors do not work with interpreters or are not really willing to make efforts in order to communicate with people who do not speak French or Dutch.*"

She added that Caritas tried to solve this issue by setting up a network of informal interpreters:

"*We try to find official interpreters but it is very difficult. In Caritas, we partner up with "life experts", people who are refugees and who speak Arabic and French or Dutch but who do not have an educational background in interpretation. When they have to interpret for specialists, it becomes tricky… But if we have no other solution, that's what we do. The best option is finding someone who studied interpretation and knows the specialised terminology.*"

According to her, finding Arabic-speaking doctors can be a solution, but, once again, only refugees resettled in or around big cities have that opportunity. Arabic-speaking doctors are not likely to be found in small, isolated villages. During interviews, some Syrians mentioned that they often brought a bilingual friend along or called bilingual NGO workers when they attended medical appointments.

Thirdly, Belgium faces a shortage of institutions specialised in trauma linked to forced displacement. As a consequence, resettled refugees often end up being attended by non-specialised doctors in non-specific health institutions. Elisabeth Verniers, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Caritas, summarised:

"*Finding psychological care is a challenge. There are departments specialised in migration and migration-related trauma, but mostly in Brussels and other big cities. And they have very few places […]. It's extremely complicated to find a facility that is easily accessible, affordable and adapted. A psychologist used to treating patients who are getting divorced is not suitable for a Syrian who was a victim of torture […].*"

In other words, resettled refugees have *de jure* access to healthcare, which suggests that the country complies with its core obligations, but the current infrastructure clearly fails to ensure them effective access to it. Elisabeth Verniers insists that bilateral efforts must be made: it is essential to explain to resettled refugees how the Belgian system works and to raise awareness about their situation among healthcare professionals.

4.6 Future prospects: towards more violations of the rights of resettled refugees?

4.6.1 Civil society participation

In their book *En quête d'asile*, Franguiadakis, Jaillardon and Belkis assert that the level of participation of civil society is positively correlated with refugees' enjoyment of their rights. They highlight the difficulty of establishing a trustful relationship between grassroots associations and governmental agencies in a field that falls under the exclusive competence of the state[163]. They also warn that, in such a context, the scope of action of NGOs can be rapidly questioned and partnerships terminated[164]. This analysis strongly resonates with the most recent developments surrounding the Belgian resettlement programme.

In January 2017, the scheme underwent a major change. It was agreed that the two NGOs in charge of resettled refugees' daily guidance, namely Caritas and Convivial, should be progressively discharged from their responsibilities in the post-resettlement phase. As a reminder, their mandate consisted in providing personalised social guidance to resettled refugees for a period of up to two years to facilitate their integration into the Belgian society. Caritas and Convivial will continue to follow refugees who arrived prior to January 2017, but will not be entrusted with any similar mission in the future. Fedasil and the LRI facilities now bear the entire responsibility for the welcoming of incoming resettled refugees. Following their 6-week stay in a Fedasil centre, resettled refugees are directly transferred to an LRI which will be in charge of their guidance during the first six months of the post-resettlement phase.

The reason behind this reform is predominantly linked to vulnerability assessment. Fedasil put forward that, in the present context, the difference in terms of vulnerability between resettled refugees and other refugees tends to be less pronounced. As a result, it becomes difficult to justify that the resettled be entitled to special treatment. Mélanie Hostaux, Resettlement Programme Associate at Fedasil, affirmed:

"*The choice is based on the belief that all recognised refugees should benefit from the same assistance, there should not be a two-speed system. We were often told that resettled refugees were VIPs because they were entitled to more rights than others. We were asked why they had special assistance while other refugees were sometimes more vulnerable than them.*"

---

[163] Spyros Franguiadakis and others, *En quête d'asile : aide associative et accès au(x) droit(s)* (2004) 238.
[164] Idem.

Starting from this year, Fedasil has decided to focus on the most vulnerable, regardless of the way they entered the country. Special places were created in partnership with NGOs to provide special assistance to those in need. For instance, Caritas offers several places for refugees with serious medical conditions. Mélanie Hostaux also made it clear that the new policy was not caused by the increase of the annual resettlement quota. She clarified that NGOs' funds were allocated on the basis of the number of refugees they were taking care of. The more refugees assisted, the more funds allocated.

Specialised actors

The termination of both Caritas and Convivial's mandates raises questions. According to Franguiadakis, Jaillardon and Belkis, the role of NGOs in the reception phase is crucial. In the aftermath of the European asylum crisis, "reception facilities are saturated and political decisions favour an increasingly restrictive definition of the right to asylum"[165].

NGO workers and resettled refugees interviewed expressed strong concerns when asked about the quality of the post-resettlement guidance. Caritas and Convivial have long-term experience in the field of forced displacement, which makes them highly-qualified actors. LRI structures, on the contrary, are better described as mainstream social structures dealing with refugee-related matters. Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Convivial, explained:

"*We are a true specialised actor. We have lawyers in case we face legal problems, we have family reunification experts. PSWC have no idea about this, for example. We can grant small loans and find alternative solutions. We know everything about refugee law; we know that in the municipality, they might have problems registering a new-born, acknowledging the validity of a marriage… These are issues linked to the mere fact of being a refugee and, for that reason, we believe that specialised services are essential, at least for the most vulnerable.*"

Intermediaries

Franguiadakis, Jaillardon and Belkis assess that "associations play a fundamental role in accompanying asylum seekers, but also in acting as intermediaries between these individuals and government-led services"[166]. According Roxanne Tremblay, NGOs are indeed "refugees'

---

[165] Spyros Franguiadakis and others, *En quête d'asile : aide associative et accès au(x) droit(s)* (2004) 234.
[166] Idem.

voice" for they act as a go-between. They make sure that refugees' needs are correctly expressed to LRIs and addressed by the latter. They enable LRIs to pass information over and remind them of their obligations.

"*We follow up with the families, so we know them. During collective activities, people meet but also complain. We take these complaints to the PSWC and try to solve the issues.*"

Geer Beirnaert, Policy Officer at CGRS, agreed:

"*When they have practical problems that the social assistant cannot solve, they rely on the help of that NGO. NGOs work with intercultural mediators and interpreters; they often send someone from their community.*"

A young Syrian told about his immediate needs in the post-resettlement phase:

"*There is just a little problem for someone like me, someone who arrives here with a lot of problems… I don't want money or anything like that, I just want someone by my side; someone who can be there to listen to me, talk to me, give me some positive energy […] Now, it's ok but at first, you have a lot of problems […] I was dead inside, I really needed someone.*"

Linguistic mediators

As hinted in the previous section, Caritas and Convivial fulfil another fundamental role, that of linguistic mediator. Roxanne Tremblay, Resettlement Project Coordinator at Caritas, said:

"*Services offered will be different. Needs will not be addressed in the same way by LRIs for a simple reason: how will people communicate? LRIs don't have either cultural mediators or interpreters.*"

In its article 15, the Law of 12 January 2007 states:

> "*The Agency [Fedasil] or the partner ensures that the reception beneficiary has access to social interpretation and translation services as part of the rights and obligations they are entitled to under the present law. The Agency or the partner can establish partnerships with services or organisations specialised in social interpretation or translation.*"[167]

---

[167] Law of 12 January 2007, art. 15.

When in a Fedasil centre, resettled refugees benefit from the same advantages as regular asylum seekers, which includes linguistic assistance. Later, once individuals – be they resettled refugees or regular asylum seekers – are transferred to an LRI, such services become less common. Though, according to the law, LRIs are supposed to partner up with specialised institutions, it is rarely the case. So far, resettled refugees were privileged as they could rely on Caritas and Convival. Roxanne Tremblay asserts that frustration often emerges on both sides: LRIs complain that refugees constantly fail to reach imposed targets while refugees report that the LRI's social assistant speaks to them in a language they do not understand.

Facilitators for access to housing and healthcare

In the previous section, it was demonstrated that Caritas and Convival facilitated a greater enjoyment of the rights to housing and health by increasing their accessibility for resettled refugees. With removal of the NGOS from the post-resettlement process, there is no doubt that these two rights will be further jeopardised.

During the legal reception period – 6 weeks in a Fedasil centre and 6 months in a LRI – resettled refugees enjoy from the same rights as regular asylum seekers. Their right to housing and to heath are guaranteed respectively by article 16 ("*the reception beneficiary is hosted in a collective or individual reception facility*") and article 23 ("*the reception beneficiary has a right to medical assistance required to live in human dignity*") of the Law of 12 January 2007[168]. The law does not contain any provision concerning the period following the six-month stay in the LRI. Legally speaking, Belgium does not directly violate any right of resettled refugees by putting an end to the mandate of NGOs. However, from an ethical point of view, this choice is questionable on the following basis. Article 36 of the Law of 12 January 2009 provides that "in order to fulfil the specific needs of vulnerable persons […] the Agency or the partner establishes partnerships with services or organisations specialised in social interpretation or translation"[169]. By stating in its legislation that some refugees are more vulnerable than other and by setting up a resettlement scheme specifically designed to alleviate their plight, Belgium implicitly recognises their inherent need for closer supervision. The previous system was in line with this reasoning as it foresaw long-term social assistance – during the first six months and beyond this legal reception period.

---

[168] Law of 12 January 2007, art. 16 and 23.
[169] Ibid. art. 36.

Under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Belgium has the obligation to respect two key principles: progressive realisation and non-regression. Regressive steps must be understood as "all of those acts, of omission or of commission on the part of the state, which deprives people of rights that they used to enjoy"[170]. In the meantime, CESCR General Comment No. 3 states that "any deliberately retrogressive measure […] would require the most careful consideration and would need to be fully justified". It underpins that "even in times of severe resources constraints whether caused by a process of adjustment, of economic recession or by other factors, the vulnerable members of society can and indeed must be protected"[171]. Applied to the Belgian case, these provisions suggest that neither the 2015 asylum crisis (budgetary constraints, lack of reception places…), nor the need for a restructuration of the resettlement programme constituted a valid reason to set up an NGO-free scheme. Article 12 (d) of the Covenant highlights the importance of creating favourable conditions to guarantee access for all to basic rights[172]. General Comment No. 3 insists that it is incumbent upon state parties to strive to ensure the widest possible enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights[173]. Because it cancels the possibility of relying on specialised assistance, the decision of Belgian asylum authorities assuredly causes resettled refugees to have lower access to the essential rights they used to enjoy, including basic healthcare or shelter.

Increasing the annual resettlement quota but all the while dismantling the support system involves risks. Peter O'Sullivan, UNHCR Resettlement Officer at the Bureau for Europe, confirmed that countries should undertake proper planning before implementing any new resettlement programme.

"*That applies to every aspect of resettlement […]. If those elements are not in place, then the programme will not be sustainable: refugees feel that they are not given the support that they need and they might feel the need to move on. It has happened that a country had resettled refugees and the refugees did not feel that they were receiving the support that they needed and they started to move to another member state because they believed that might get better support there*."

---

[170] International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights, "Progressive Realisation and Non-Regression" (n.d).
[171] CESCR, "General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2, Para. 1, of the Covenant)" (1990) 3-4.
[172] CESCR (1976) 8.
[173] CESCR, "General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2, Para. 1, of the Covenant)" (1990) 4.

He also stressed that the involvement of civil society was key to the success and sustainability of a resettlement system. In UNHCR's view, NGOs play a pivotal role, especially in the post-resettlement phase:

"*I think that is why it is so helpful to have NGOs involved in this because the government and government-supported services cannot always be there whereas NGOs, through volunteers for examples, can have that more day-to-day and hands-on support for refugees. Where this is lacking, refugees might feel lonely or abandoned to some extent. It is really, really important that they are given special support upon arrival, because they arrive with very particular needs, psychological trauma or medical issues, for example.*"

Nordic countries, traditionally recognised by UNHCR as efficient resettlement countries, tend to favour the creation of support mechanisms tailored to the specific needs of resettled refugees with the view to maximise their chances of integration. Peter O'Sullivan gave the following example:

"*The Nordic countries develop individual integration plans for refugees when they arrive. They sit down with them and they capture all of their skills, whether soft skills or hard skills (maybe they worked as a nanny or a welder or a technician) and ask what they wish to do*" *in our country and they try to charter the plan that will assist them in attaining their goal.*"

While most European countries are following suit, Belgium seems to opt for the opposite approach. Caritas and Convivial used to provide resettled refugees with daily support adapted to their specific needs; as of January 2017, no tailor-made supervision has been available.

Lobbying force

Civil society organisations should remain a strong lobbying force that has the capacity to face up to the authority of the state; their role in the field of asylum should not "come down to being the state's auxiliaries in charge of implementing public policies"[174]. So far, the Belgian civil society served as a whistle-blower: it singled out the shortages of the resettlement policies while trying to maintain a good relationship with governmental asylum authorities. NGOs find themselves torn between their reception mission and their political activism[175]. Due to the 2017 reform, not only will Convivial and Caritas be limited in terms actions, but they will progressively disappear from the scheme. With their removal, the state of Belgium

---

[174] Franguiadakis and others, *En quête d'asile : aide associative et accès au(x) droit(s)* (2004) 238.
[175] Ibid. 242.

deliberately decided to get rid of the only partners that ensured monitoring beyond hands-on guidance.

4.6.2 Non-discrimination

Article 3 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees states:

> *"The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this Convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin."*

As table 4 "Evolution of the Belgian annual resettlement quota" shows, Belgium is one of the few countries that has consistently considered very diverse refugee populations for resettlement. The country imposes very flexible selection criteria and does not prioritise individuals on the basis of age, religion or health condition or others. Besides, unlike many of its peers, Belgium has never used any integration potential criterion – proficiency in one of the country's official languages or education level, for example – to select its resettled population[176].

Nevertheless, since 2014, the proportion of Syrians resettled in Belgium has kept on increasing at the expense of other refugee populations. For 2017, an annual quota of 1100 refugees was adopted. Beside around 100 Congolese, according to Geert Beirnaert, "the country should welcome more than 600 Syrians from Turkey, 300 from Lebanon and 150 from Jordan". Fedasil argues the decision is in line with UNHCR's policy. The UN agency indeed called upon states make sure that 10% of the Syrian refugee population could have access to resettlement by 2018[177].

This new orientation based on country of origin raises questions as to whether the Belgian resettlement actors act in full respect of the non-discrimination provisions contained in the Convention relation to the Status of Refugees. A very similar question was addressed in 2015 at the European Parliament after a debate targeted the legal validity of accepting only Christian refugees under the voluntary resettlement and relocation schemes. On 18 February 2016, Dimitris Avramopoulos, EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, gave the following answer:

---

[176] European Migration Network, "Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium) (2016) 37.
[177] UNHCR, "UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017" (2016) 50.

"*[…] Under the Conclusions on resettlement of 20 July 2015 the Member States agreed to take account of specific priority regions for resettlement. Both Council Decisions on relocation state that Member States of relocation may indicate their preferences in relation to applicants with due respect to the principle of non-discrimination. Under these Decisions, preferences include qualifications, language skills or family, cultural or social ties which may facilitate integration of applicants into Member States of relocation. However, the decisions make it clear that the expressed preferences are not a condition for relocation. The only ground on which Member States may refuse to relocate is where there are reasonable grounds for considering an applicant a danger to national security or public order […].*"

No case law has yet shed light on discrimination on the grounds of religion or country of origin in the context of resettlement. Only close monitoring of EU Member States' country-oriented resettlement schemes and European jurisprudence will reveal whether such practices can amount to a possible breach of the non-discrimination principle. Should Belgium decide to start resettling exclusively Syrians in the future, the question would become even more pressing.

When asked about the new Belgian policy, Peter O'Sullivan, UNHCR Resettlement Officer at the Bureau for Europe, formulated UNHCR's view on the matter:

" *[…] Our point of view is that yes, absolutely there are significant needs for Syrian refugee population, now there are a 4.9 million registered in the region, and they are in desperate need of pathways of admission to Europe, including resettlement, but at the same time, there are a number of other protracted refugee populations around the world, for example Congolese, Afghans, Iranians, Iraqis, Eritreans, Somalis, and that's the challenge for us in the European context: while we very much welcome the efforts towards providing resettlement opportunities and other pathways of admission for Syrians, it shouldn't be at the expense of other refugee populations globally.*"

The legal factor: a final refection

The Belgian resettlement scheme was examined from a purely legal perspective. It was observed that the majority of SRL resettled in Belgium show high levels of satisfaction with the programme. Nonetheless, they expressed discontent regarding the right to housing and to health in the immediate post-resettlement phase. Creating a long-term housing system and enhancing tailored-made assistance are two key measures that could efficiently improve their

well-being in this respect. Though Belgium fulfils its core obligations under international law, its current resettlement system does not sufficiently take into consideration the vulnerability of Syrian refugees. The 2017 reform, which stripped the NGOs Caritas and Convivial from their mandate, confirms this hypothesis. With the removal of NGOs from the post-resettlement process, it is highly likely that Syrians will be left with *de jure* rather than effective access to housing and healthcare. By implementing the 2017 reform, Belgium went one step further in not acknowledging the vulnerability of its resettled population. It should also be mentioned that the termination of the partnership with NGOs supposes a total lack of monitoring of the Belgian asylum authorities by civil society organisations, thus leaving the door open for future potential breaches of the rights of resettled refugees in the country. In other words, it is clear that the legal factor contributes to widening the gap between expectations and reality: Belgium's human rights approach to resettlement is insufficient, which causes a drop in the satisfaction of its Syrian resettled population.

5. The socio-political factor: anti-refugee discourse and popular mobilisation

5.1 The 2015 asylum crisis and the creation of a new dynamic

The socio-political context surrounding the arrival of resettled refugees in Belgium surely affected their satisfaction in the post-resettlement phase. An unfavourable context can lead to lower levels of satisfaction and, as a result, contribute to widening the gap between expectations and reality. The goal of this section is to determine whether the Belgian socio-political context of the recent years has had a positive or a negative influence on the overall experience of Syrian newcomers. To this end, its evolution will be examined starting from the 2015 asylum crisis, now largely considered a turning point for asylum-related matters in the country.

Asylum policy

In 2015, Belgium witnessed a sharp increase in the number of applications for international protection. Between January and July, applications increased by 130 % due to massive arrivals: CGRS registered 2.975 asylum requests in July, 4.621 in August and 5.512 in September[178]. Most asylum seekers came from Syria, Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan, countries typically associated with high recognition rates for refugee status[179]. Registrations were delayed and Fedasil rapidly faced a shortage of reception facilities. By the end of August, the Council of Ministers approved the creation of 28.200 new reception places[180], bringing their total number to more than 36.000[181]. In 2015, CGRS registered 35.476 asylum requests, or twice as much as in 2014. The year 2015 was the second asylum peak in Belgian history after the one resulting from the Balkan wars in 1999 (35.778 asylum requests) and 2000 (42.691 asylum requests)[182].

Theo Francken, who was named State Secretary for Asylum and Migration in October 2014, was the leading authority during the crisis. Since then, he has left his footprints on Belgian asylum policies. It is commonly accepted that he adopted a stance that discouraged illegal immigration while encouraging legal entries.

---

[178] CGRS, "Tous les chiffres" (2015).
[179] Gaëlle Smet, "Analyse: politique d'asile, état des lieux" (2016) 2.
[180] Caritas, "Rapport annuel 2015" (2016) 13.
[181] Gaëlle Smet, "Analyse: politique d'asile, état des lieux" (2016) 8.
[182] Caritas, "Rapport annuel 2015" (2016) 13.

As far as illegal arrivals are concerned, he implemented numerous measures aiming at reducing the number of asylum seekers entering the country without being granted permission. In July 2015, CGRS suspended the examination of all applications for international protection introduced by Iraqis from Bagdad to assess whether or not the zone could be declared safe. Theo Francken responded to this decision by launching a large-scale dissuasion campaign towards Iraqis. Every Iraqi asylum seeker first received a personal letter stating that "the security situation in Bagdad [had] changed since 2014 and [was] no longer such that every applicant from Bagdad [ran] a real risk in case of return". The letter also warned that "all Iraqi asylum seekers that [had] been registered by the EURODAC-system in another EU Member State [would] be transferred to this Member State"[183]. In May 2015, a second letter was sent to Iraqis with the aim to offer them grants (500 euro per adult and 250 euros per minor) if they accepted to go home by the end of the month; the letter also hinted that their application was likely to be unsuccessful and that family reunification was difficult[184]. According to Coordination and Initiatives for Refugees and Foreigners (CIRÉ), the two letters clearly advocated for voluntary return and were nothing but an attempt to jeopardise Iraqis' right to asylum. The information disclosed was tendentious as it omitted that all decisions related to applications were taken on a case-by-case basis[185].

In 2016, the dissuasion campaign was enlarged to Afghan asylum seekers. In a similar letter, asylum seekers from Afghanistan could read that in the first month of 2016, more than half of the asylum decisions from Afghans were rejected and that, in case of appeal, the procedure would last at least one year and a half[186]. The State Secretary for Asylum and Migration assured all candidates that, in case of voluntary return, they would be paid their flight back home and given 500 euros. The letter ended with the statement "if you want to start your personal [...] business in Herat, Kabul and Jalalabad, the Belgi[an] government will [help you financially] and advi[s]e you"[187]. At the time, Ligue des droits de l'homme said to be deeply shocked by Francken's actions and recalled that the right to seek international protection in Belgium stemmed from the obligations of the country under international law[188].

---

[183] Le Soir, "La lettre de Theo Francken aux Irakiens" (2015) 1.
[184] Chambre des représentants, "Compte rendu analytique (CRABV 54 COM 435)" (2016) 19-20.
[185] CIRÉ, "Le droit d'asile des Irakiens en danger" (2015) 4-6.
[186] Solidaire, "Francken étend sa campagne de dissuasion aux réfugiés afghans" (2016).
[187] Idem.
[188] Ligue des droits de l'homme, "Lettre de Theo Francken aux demandeurs d'asile afghans : une dérive autoritaire et discriminatoire" (2015).

From a purely legal point of view, the State Secretary for Asylum and migration has repeatedly landed in hot water since 2015. For instance, his implementation of article 74/9 of the Law of 15 December 1980 called attention. The said provision, which allows for the short-term detention of accompanied minors in closed centres as long as the centres are adapted to their needs[189], has recurrently been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights (see *Mubilanzila Mayeka and Kaniki Mitunga v. Belgium*; *Muskhadzhiyeva and others v. Belgium*; *Kanagaratnam and others v. Belgium*). In spite of the jurisprudence, numerous minors were transferred to closed centres in 2015 and 2016. Worse yet, Theo Francken announced that new family units were about to be built in the closed centre 127bis. Asylum authorities assured that they would be conceived in full respect of minors' needs and used exclusively as a last resort, but the Belgian Migration Federal Centre (Myria) expressed its deep concerns about the project[190]. The Belgian practice of detaining minors was also firmly condemned by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, who declared that "the deprivation of liberty of children based on their or their parents' migration status is never in the best interests of the child, exceeds the requirement of necessity, becomes grossly disproportionate and may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of migrant children"[191].

In 2016, another heated debate over the admission of a Syrian family erupted in the country. On 12 October, a Syrian family applied for humanitarian visas at the Belgian Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, on the basis of the EU Visa Code. The family planned to leave the besieged city of Aleppo in the hope of lodging an asylum request in Belgium upon arrival[192]. The Belgian Immigration Office rejected their request on the grounds that by attempting to be granted a visa with limited territorial validity with a view to apply for asylum in Belgium, they acted in contradiction with the EU Visa Code[193]. Indeed, the Code provides for a 90-day stay and the family openly expressed their will to stay longer[194]. The Syrian family challenged the decision and appealed to the Belgian Council for Immigration and Asylum Proceedings (*Conseil du contentieux des étrangers*). In its decision, the Council proved the Immigration Office wrong and ordered the latter to urgently suspend its decision and issue 3-month visas

---

[189] Myria, "La migration en chiffres et en droits 2016" (2016) 232-233.
[190] Idem.
[191] Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan E. Méndez" (2015) 17.
[192] CJEU, "Press Release No 24/17" (2017) 1.
[193] Idem.
[194] Idem.

or a *laisser-passer* to all family members within 48 hours[195]. The dispute was later referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union. Applicants invoked Article 18 of the EU Charter, which in their view imposed a positive obligation on Belgium to guarantee the right to asylum; in their situation, being denied the possibility to request international protection could lead to a breach of Article 3 of the ECHR and Article 4 of the EU Charter[196]. The Court ruled that "an application for a visa with limited territorial validity made on humanitarian grounds by a third-country national, on the basis of Article 25 of the code, to the representation of the Member State of destination that is within the territory of a third country, with a view to lodging, immediately upon his or her arrival in that Member State, an application for international protection and, thereafter, to staying in that Member State for more than 90 days in a 180-day period, [did] not fall within the scope of that code but, as European Union law currently stands, solely within that of national law"[197]. In other words, Belgians authorities could decide whether or not they wished to grant humanitarian visas in this particular case. According to the Court, forcing Member states to systematically grant visas with the aim of allowing third-country nationals to lodge a request for international protection would undermine the general structure of the asylum system established by the EU[198].

This case deeply divided the Belgian society after Theo Francken declared that he would not respect the initial decision taken by the Council, arguing that it was likely to create a dangerous precedent. In an attempt to escape his obligations, Theo Francken informally established diplomatic contacts with Lebanon and offered the family to apply for humanitarian visas in the neighbouring country[199]. Some stood by his side with the hashtag #IkSteunTheo (#ISupportTheo) while others denounced a threat to the rule of law and retorted #IkSteunDeRechtstaat (#ISupportTheRuleOfLaw) or denounced a #Theocratie (#Theocracy). N-VA – Theo Francken's political party, traditionally described as anti-immigration – took advantage of the situation and launched a campaign under the slogan "*GEEN Belgische papieren voor elke asielzoeker in de wereld*" ("No Belgian paper for every asylum seeker in the world)". The campaign put forward the idea that the country could not welcome all asylum seekers[200], which, needless to say, gave rise to a major controversy.

---

[195] Conseil du contentieux des étrangers (arrêt 176 577) 20 October 2016.
[196] CJEU, Case C-638/16 *X and X v. État belge* 24 March 2017.
[197] Idem.
[198] CJEU, "Press Release No 24/17" (2017) 2.
[199] RTBF, "Le gouvernement fédéral propose à la famille syrienne une solution d'accueil humanitaire au Liban" (2016).
[200] RBTF, "Pas de papiers pour les réfugiés : une campagne choc de la N-VA suscite l'indignation" (2016).

Conversely, Theo Francken has showed continuous support for the acceptance of refugees through resettlement. Since his appointment in 2014 – one year after the establishment of the structural resettlement scheme – the resettlement quota has risen from 100 to 1,100 refugees[201]. Interestingly enough, he has also showed great willingness in accepting a specific refugee population: Syrians. While the first resettled refugees used to come from an African background, today, the vast majority of them are of Syrian origin. Belgium regularly organises selection missions in Jordan, Turkey or Lebanon[202]. In short, Theo Francken's influence on resettlement, especially when aimed at Syrians, is better described as entirely positive. Geert Beirnaert, Policy Officer at CGRS, explained:

« *We see that numbers are rising, which means that he believes in the idea of […] the externalisation of the asylum policy […]. In this context, resettlement is very logical. If we select the most vulnerable, those who need it the most, then, yes, he is in favour of it. He promotes legal and humanitarian resettlement in line with the Convention.*"

Grassroots initiatives

Following the 2015 asylum crisis, a plethora of grassroots initiatives blossomed in Belgium. Belgian citizens responded to the growing number of restrictions imposed by the government on asylum seekers by uniting to support the latter. Many talked about the emergence of a new grassroots dynamic that compensated for the inertia of the political elite.

The most shining example of this mobilisation was the Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support. During the summer 2015, citizens set up an informal refugee camp in front of the Belgian Immigration Office in Brussels to help asylum seekers who were left to sleep in the streets, awaiting to be registered. In order to coordinate activities in the camp, citizens launched the aforementioned platform on social media. The camp, which was entirely run by volunteers and active for a period of two months in Park Maximilien, provided food, shelter, education, medical and psychological support to up to 1,000 newcomers at a time[203]. It was dismantled after the government decided to open a pre-reception facility (WTC III) and promised to make 27,000 additional reception places available[204]. On 27 September 2015, under the hashtag #RefugeesWelcome, more than 23,000 Belgians marched in the streets of Brussels to show solidarity with refugees and criticise the way asylum authorities were

---

[201] Fedasil, "La réinstallation : un complément à l'asile " (n.d).
[202] Idem.
[203] Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support, "About Us" (n.d.).
[204] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 3.

handling the crisis[205]. Today, the Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support remains active in Hall Maximilien, a small-scale centre that ensures basic services for refugees thanks to the help of numerous volunteers.

Another collective of citizens instigated "*Un visa, une vie*" ("One visa, one life"), a project which consisted in assisting Syrian families in their fight to be granted a humanitarian visa in Belgium[206]. The initiative inspired many and ended up being addressed by Anne-Laure Losseau, its founder, in a TED conference on the theme "Become a Better Version of Yourself"[207]. On their Facebook page, the collective states:

"*We are Belgian citizens. Fathers, mothers or single. From thirty to sixty. Social workers, teachers, employees or freelance. From all political backgrounds. We do not know each other, or very little [...]. We did not stand being powerless in these circumstances, so we decided to take concrete actions together.*"

Both these examples – The Citizens' Platform and "*Un visa, une vie*" – proved the power of social media in connecting strangers who decided to think and act for the common good.

Concrete actions were undertaken at a local level. In Tournai, for example, after old military barracks were transformed into a refugee centre, locals set up the refugee sponsorship system "*Tournai refuge*" to take care of "the ethical dimension of reception: helping, giving, greeting and welcoming"[208]. Inhabitants promoted mutual assistance and local democracy. In the same vein, major universities of the South of the country agreed to adopt "exceptional transitory measures […] to favour the integration of refugee students into the French-speaking university system"[209]. All refugees were offered free access to the French entrance examination and allowed to attend three courses with no additional costs[210]. Some universities decided to expand their action. For instance, the University of Mons (UMons) – which put in place its first refugee unit in October 2015 – now offers 240 hours of French classes, administrative assistance, Arabic-French roundtables, reduced entrance fees and fully-funded PhD opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees[211].

---

[205] PTB, "23 000 à marcher en solidarité avec les réfugiés" (2015).
[206] RTBF, "Des initiatives citoyennes se poursuivent pour aider les réfugiés" (2016).
[207] TEDx, "Theme: Become a Better Version of Yourself" (2016).
[208] Sébastien Verleene, "L'assassin, l'urbaniste et le réfugié" in *Manuel pratique de ville ensemble* (2016) 76-79.
[209] UNamur, "Inscription à l'UNamur: étudiants refugiés" (n.d.).
[210] Idem.
[211] UMons, "Accueil et accompagnement des demandeurs d'asile" (2017).

These grassroots initiatives brought to light a new powerful actor in the field of refugees' rights in Belgium: the citizen. Belgians – and non-Belgians who joined the movement – bettered the quality of the reception of refugees and facilitated their integration. According to Coordination and Initiatives for Refugees and Foreigners (CIRÉ), Belgian citizens emerged as new field workers and political actors; they became actors with whom "it is important to collaborate to perpetuate actions of the traditional professional sector"[212]. Because they showed a clear willingness to support incoming refugees, Belgians became essential social cohesion actors.

5.2 Repercussions on the perception of resettled refugees

The arrival of Syrians in Belgian localities is a testimony of what Robertson calls the glocalisation phenomenon, or the progressive disappearance between the local and the global levels[213]. In the previous section, it was argued that the 2015 asylum crisis created a new dynamic at the country level; this dynamic was symbolised by the ethical awakening of Belgians citizens. It is thus of interest to analyse to what extent this generalised changed of mind impacted Syrians who were resettled in Belgium over the past three years.

NGOs argued that the level of integration of resettled Syrians varied greatly depending on the individual and the locality where he or she found a home. Integration can be assessed only on a case-by-case basis. On the matter, Elisabeth Verniers summarised:

"*We see very diverse experiences depending on the locality. And we also see cases where two families live in the same city and for one of them everything goes well – they are very well integrated, they have a lot of friends, including among other parents from their children's school, they organise gatherings and everything is fine – but for the other, no. The family doesn't feel home […]*"

Though Syrians confirmed that integration was not always easy, the vast majority of them showed high levels of satisfaction with the willingness of Belgians to assist them in the process. In 2006, Sonia Gsir and her peers demonstrated that the stranger phobia felt by some Belgian citizens led them to suspect or reject asylum seekers. She found that foreigners were often perceived as the source of insecurity for they symbolised a threat to the established public and social order[214]. Ten years later, in 2016, a CIRÉ report came to the opposite

---

[212] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 3.
[213] Sonia Gsir and others, "Les Belges francophones face aux demandeurs d'asile" (2005) 89.
[214] Ibid. 89-90.

conclusions. It found that important numbers of Belgians wished to be involved in the daily life of migrant and refugee populations living in the country[215]. The experiences of resettled Syrians definitely tend to confirm this second hypothesis. Regardless of how integrated they felt so far, all Syrians recognised that the host community was compassionate, helpful and proactive. A young Syrian refugee explained:

"*From what I saw, Belgians are very nice [...]. When I say I am Syrian, people are very kind to me. They tell me 'I am sorry for what is happening in Syria' and if I need something, they do their best to help me [...]. Everywhere I go, though I look European, I say I am Syrian and people accept it very well.*"

Many told stories about how locals voluntarily took them under their wing. For example, the same Syrian added that a Belgian woman invited him to stay with her. She now plays a significant role in his integration and acts as a cultural mediator.

"*Now I feel much better thanks to this lady. She is like my mother, I call her* mamma mia*. She comes with me to the bank, she helped me register in school, she is super kind to me [...]. Here I feel good because she is very popular. She took me along to go help for the carnival and told me 'you live with me, you are like my son.*"

NGO workers stressed that, in some cases, the support of the Belgian community was even crucial for resettled refugees. The most striking example of collective action in favour of a resettled family took place in Bruges. Following the death of one of the family's children in a car accident, the whole community tried its best to relieve the family's pain. Elisabeth Verniers, Resettlement Project Coordinator in Caritas, remembered:

"*They received a lot of support from the mosque, the school... Many volunteers got involved and [the workers of the] PSWC came to see them every day, found them a psychologist, etc. They did a remarkable job and the family felt cared for even if what happened to them was terrible [...]. If it had happened in a locality where no social network had been built, it would have been a nightmare.*"

One element emerged on several occasions during interviews: the presence, in Belgium, of an important Arab community. Despite the generalised satisfaction of resettled Syrians, some of them saw this presence as negative. Kunz emphasises the importance of host-related factors and defines cultural compatibility as the compatibility between the refugee's background and

---

[215] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 4.

the new society he is emerged into[216]. According to him, "inability to overcome the gap created by unaccustomed values and practices could simply lead to inhibition and withdrawal from human contacts", which entails that the refugee might suffer from loneliness, depression or even paranoid hallucinations[217]. A facilitating element in the adaptation process is the presence in the host country of individuals who speak the refugee's mother tongue and share their values, traditions, lifestyle, religion or even food habits[218]. Kunz argues that in such a context, both the refugee's integration and the level of identification with the host country are accelerated[219]. Logically, the presence of a dense Arab community in Belgium should facilitate Syrians' integration. Yet, the experiences of Syrians interviewed suggest that a balance must be struck. Syrians who happened to find a house in predominantly Arab neighbourhoods or cities expressed disappointment and affirmed it did not favour their immersion into the Belgian culture.

"*Here in the building, all are Arab but one family that comes from Turkey and another one that comes from Iran. All my friends are Arabs. When we organise parties, we speak only in Arabic. I feel like I live in an Arab country, not in Belgium.*"

In the very specific case of a transsexual refugee, it even proved to be a real hassle. The Syrian transwoman expressed her difficulty in coexisting with conservative Islamic communities in low-income areas of Brussels. In her case, this rejection had significant financial repercussions.

"*My house is very expensive. I cannot live in Molenbeek or in Schaerbeek. There are many Arabs there and if I walk on the pavement, someone might stab me. So I have to live in a neighbourhood that is posh, class, welcoming towards open-minded people. Now I live in Ixelles and it is very expensive. I just have 130 euros for myself per month. I have to ask money to my friend because it is not enough [...]. My rent is 700 euros per month.*"

Beyond the bilateral relationship between citizens and refugees, it is also beneficial to create multilateral bonds between refugees, citizens and professionals. Asylum workers can serve as bridges between locals and refugees: if trust is built between a refugee and a citizen through an official network, they can later develop a relationship outside of the framework established

---

[216] Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory" (1981) 46.
[217] Idem.
[218] Idem.
[219] Idem.

by professionals[220]. A pilot project of refugee sponsorship called "*Voisins solidaires*" ("Supportive neighbours") will be set up in the near future by Convivial. It will aim at pairing up resettled refugees with Belgians who live close to them[221]. All refugees interviewed strongly supported the idea and insisted that it would help them broaden their network and integrate faster. Their view echoes that of their Iraqi and Eritrean peers in "*Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique*". The research, led by Frank Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, pointed out the huge asymmetry between the need for a strong social network made of locals and refugees' limited social circles. It found that resettled refugees' social interactions mainly consisted in keeping in touch with their family abroad[222]. An interviewee confessed:

"*There is just a little problem. Someone like me, who arrives here, has a lot of problems. I don't want money or anything like that, I just want someone who is there for me, who is there to listen to me, talk to me, give me positive energy [...]. Now, it's better, but at first, you have a lot of problems [...]. I was like dead, I really needed someone who could talk to me, give me strength; that's what I really needed when I was alone.*"

In the words of CIRÉ, "facilitating the establishment of a social bond between citizens and migrants allows the latter to broaden their network and increase their resources in a way that would enable them to take part more actively in the life of the Belgian civil society"[223]. Setting up a refugee sponsorship system could be highly beneficial for all parties involved. Indeed, the work of citizens and asylum professionals is complementary: by collaborating, citizens and professionals maximise their potential. The involvement of citizens is a source of innovation that can be used by professionals while the experience of professionals can benefit citizens when it comes to implementing their refuge-related projects. Collaboration through the creation a sponsorship programme would constitute a social innovation[224]. It would be an efficient way of putting citizens' urge to help to good use and increasing chances of successful integration for all resettled Syrians. Sponsoring is nothing but the "co-creation of a living and doing together"[225].

The socio-political factor: a final reflection

---

[220] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 4.
[221] Convivial, "Devenez voisins solidaires" (2017).
[222] Frank Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (2017) 8-9.
[223] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 4.
[224] CIRÉ, "Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (2016) 7.
[225] Ibid. 5.

To conclude, it can be deduced that the socio-political context surrounding the recent arrival of Syrians through resettlement is entirely positive. On a political level, though Theo Francken imposed restrictive measures to tackle illegal entries, he consistently supported resettlement initiatives, specifically when aimed at Syrians. It was also found that the 2015 asylum crisis constituted a wake-up call for citizens. On a societal level, the Belgian host community was described as empathetic and immensely proactive. Actions undertaken by the civil society at large can be seen as a leading factor in the successful integration of resettled Syrians. It is clear that he socio-political factor is not a root cause of the discrepancy between expectations of SRL and their reality once resettled in Belgium given that it increases their level of satisfaction in the post-resettlement phase.

6. Conclusion

This Master's thesis studied the complexity of the gap between the expectations raised by Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their reality once resettled in Belgium. Three factors identified as the potential root causes of this asymmetry were successively explored: the individual factor, the legal factor and the socio-political factor.

In a first phase, expectations of Syrian refugees in Lebanon were examined through three channels: resettlement awareness, personal expectations and expectations vis-à-vis resettlement countries. With more than 80 % of SRL aware of the existence of UNHCR's programme, resettlement awareness was deemed high. Yet, SRL showed a very cursory knowledge of conditions attached to the programme. Their personal expectations and expectations vis-à-vis resettlement countries were, on average, realistic. SRL expressed their will to satisfy three particular needs through resettlement: the right to security of person, the right to education and the right to work. It should be emphasised that they also attributed great value to the concept of dignity: they believed that their precarious situation in Lebanon deprived them from their right to live a dignified life. Upon arrival, SRL expected to find quality education and healthcare. Disaggregated data highlighted the influence of a refugee's level of education: the less educated a refugee is, the higher his or her expectations become towards the host country.

In a second phase, the Belgian resettlement scheme in Lebanon was analysed from a human rights angle. Generally speaking, Syrians resettled in Belgium expressed high levels of satisfaction with the country's programme. Even though Belgium does respect its core obligations under human rights law, improvement is needed. CGRS deplored the lack of a legal framework for resettlement while NGOs and refugees insisted that the current housing system was not optimal. Considering that Belgium decides to welcome vulnerable refugees, a long-term housing system should be put in place to favour security and reduce stress among the Syrian resettled population. The 2017 reform must also be closely monitored, especially due to the withdrawal of Caritas and Convivial from the integration process. It was demonstrated that the two NGOs are specialised organisations acting as essential linguistic mediators and intermediaries between asylum authorities and resettled refugees; their workers also play a significant role in facilitating access to housing and healthcare for resettled Syrians. The termination of their mandate is thus likely to have a negative influence on refugees' effective access to the two aforementioned rights.

In a third phase, the research took a close look at the socio-political context surrounding the arrival of resettled Syrians. The 2015 asylum crisis is considered a turning point in Belgian asylum policy. The imposition of restrictive measures to lower the number of asylum seekers entering the country illegally precipitated the emergence of a new dynamic. Belgian citizens launched a plethora of innovative grassroots initiatives with the aim to welcome, help and integrate Syrians. In the meantime, Theo Francken, the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, relentlessly supported the legal arrival of Syrians by increasing the annual resettlement quota. As a result, resettled Syrians felt warmly welcome, which positively influenced their satisfaction.

To conclude, the socio-political factor was found to reduce the gap between expectations and reality. On the contrary, the individual and the legal factors directly contributed to widening it. In Lebanon, the significant lack of knowledge of Syrian refugees led them to develop misconceptions about, for instance, conditions attached to family reunification. It appeared that increasing resettlement awareness and expectation management is key to building realistic expectations in the pre-resettlement phase. As for the post-resettlement phase, the need to adopt a deeply human approach to resettled populations is pressing. By failing to recognise the inherent vulnerability of resettled refugees, Belgium is jeopardising the rights they are entitled to under international human rights law. Instead of reducing assistance, the country must guarantee that each and every resettled refugee is provided with long-term, tailor-made guidance, notably through the direct involvement of NGOs. The experience of resettled Syrians revealed that such guidance is, *de facto*, a leading factor in their satisfaction with the host country and, consequently, their level of integration.

There is no denying that, for thousands of refugees, resettlement is a synonym for hope. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are no exception to this rule: they find themselves trapped between a painful Lebanese past they wish to flee and a Belgian future they tend to idealise. The challenge of resettling them therefore lies in ensuring they "no longer care how long their ancient days were". And, for that, resettling hope successfully is the one and only option.

7. Bibliography

Books

Anne-Marie Tournepiche, *La protection internationale et européenne des réfugiés* (Éditions A. Pedone 2014).

Cherif Bassiouni, *The Shari'a and Islamic Criminal Justice in Time of War and Peace* (Cambridge University Press 2014).

Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton University Press 1980).

Jean-François de Raymond, *Les Enjeux des droits de l'homme* (Larousse 1988).

Serge Bodart, *La protection internationale des réfugiés en Belgique* (Bruylant 2008).

Spyros Franguiadakis and others, *En quête d'asile : aide associative et accès au(x) droits(s)* (Librairie Générale de Droit et de Jurisprudence 2004).

Steve Peers and others, *The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. A Commentary* (Hart Publishing 2014).

Journal articles

Alice Farmer, "*Non-refoulement* and *Jus Cogens*: Limiting Anti-terror Measures that Threaten Refugee Protection" (2008) 23(1) Georgetown immigration Law Journal 1.

Doris Schroeder, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Appeal to Separate the Conjoined Twins" (2012) 15(3) Ethical Theory and Moral Practice 323.

Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory" (1981) 15(1/2) International Migration Review 42.

Egon F. Kunz, "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement" (1973) 7(2) International Migration Review 125.

Jackbeth Mapulanga-Hulston, "Examining the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (2002) 6(4) The International Journal of Human Rights 29.

James P. Byrnes and others, "Gender Differences in Risk Taking: A Meta-Analysis" (1999) 125(3) Psychological Bulletin 367.

Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan (2015) 20(3) Mediterranean Politics 386.

Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon" (2016) 35(4) Refugee Survey Quarterly 58.

Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, "The Full-Belly Thesis: Should Economics Rights Take Priority Over Civil and Political Rights? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa" (1983) 5(4) Human Rights Quarterly 467.

Roger Zetter and Katy Long, "Unlocking Protracted Displacement" (2012) Forced Migration Review 34.

Sonia Gsir and others, "Les Belges francophones face aux demandeurs d'asile" (2005) 34 Santé conjuguée 92.

<u>Legal instruments</u>

United Nations

Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (adopted 28 July 1951, entered into force 22 April 1954) 189 UNTS 137(Refugee Convention).

CESCR, "General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2, Para. 1, of the Covenant)" E/1991/23 (14 December 1990).

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3 (CESCR)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 999 UNTS 171 (ICCPR).

Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (adopted 31 January 1967, entered into force 4 October 1967) 606 UNTS 267 (Protocol).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted 10 December 1948) UNGA Res 217 A (III) (UDHR).

EU Law & ECHR

Council of the EU, Joint Action 1999/290/JHA of 26 April 1999 establishing projects and measures to provide practical support in relation to the reception and voluntary repatriation of refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers, including emergency assistance to persons who have fled as a result of recent events in Kosovo [1999] OJ L 114/2.

Case C-638/16 X and X v. État belge CJEU 24 March 2017.

Chapman v. the United Kingdom *(*Application no. 27238/95) ECHR 18 January 2001.

European Commission, Communication COM (2009) 456 FINAL on the establishment of a joint EU resettlement programme [2009] 4.

European Parliament and Council of the EU, Directive 2013/33/EU of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection [2013] OJ L 180/96.

European Parliament and Council of the EU, Regulation 282/2014 of 11 March 2014 on the establishment of a third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1350/2007/EC [2014] OJ L 86/1.

European Parliament and Council of the EU, Regulation 604/2013 of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person [2013] OJ L 180/31.

M.S.S. v Belgium (Application no. 30696/09) ECHR 21 July 2011.

Belgian Law

Loi du 12 janvier 2007 sur l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile et d'autres catégories d'étrangers.

Loi du 15 décembre 1980 sur l'accès au territoire, le séjour, l'établissement et l'éloignement des étrangers.

Conseil du contentieux des étrangers (arrêt 176 577) 20 October 2016.

<u>**Online sources**</u>

UNHCR Documents

"2017 March statistical Dashboard" (*UNHCR*, March 2017) <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/working_group.php?Page=Country&LocationId=122&Id=21> accessed 22 May 2017.

"Agenda for Protection" (*UNHCR*, October 2003) <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3e637b194.pdf> accessed 29 May 2017.

"Livelihoods 2017 Quarter 1 Dashboard" (*UNHCR*, 31 March 2017) <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/working_group.php?Page=Country&LocationId=122&Id=51> accessed 22 May 2017.

"Le HCR se félicite de la reprise par la Belgique d'un programme de réinstallation" (*UNHCR*, 4 September 2009) <http://www.unhcr.org/fr/4b9e3ec39.html> accessed 15 March 2017.

"Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-Agency Information Sharing Portal" (*UNHCR*, 2017) <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122> accessed 5 May 2017.

"Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement" (*UNHCR*, 16 September 2004) <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/convention/414aa7e54/multilateral-framework-understandings-resettlement-emforum20046em.html> accessed 29 May 2017.

"Q&A on 'New Entry and Renewal Procedures for Syrians in Lebanon'" (*UNHCR*, 8 January 2016) <https://www.refugees-lebanon.org/en/news/35/qa-on-new-entry--renewal-procedures-for-syrians-in-lebanon> accessed 28 May 2017.

"The Strategic Use of Resettlement" (*UNHCR*, 3 June 2003) <http://www.unhcr.org/excom/standcom/3edf57cd4/strategic-use-resettlement.html> accessed 29 May 2017.

"The UNHCR Resettlement Handbook" (*UNHCR*, 2011) <http://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf> accessed 21 May 2017.

"UNHCR Country Operations Plan" (*UNHCR*, 2004) <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/cops/3fd9c6a14/unhcr-country-operations-plan-2004-lebanon.html> accessed 28 May 2017.

"UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017" (*UNHCR*, 2016) <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/575836267/unhcr-projected-global-resettlement-needs-2017.html> accessed 14 June 2017.

"UNHCR Resettlement Submission Categories (*UNHCR*, n.d.) <http://www.unhcr.org/558bff849.pdf> accessed 29 May 2017.

Media

Allan Hall and John Lichfield, "Germany opens its gates: Berlin says all Syrian asylum-seekers are welcome to remain, as Britain is urged to make a 'similar statement" (*The Independent*, 24 August 2015) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-opens-its-gates-berlin-says-all-syrian-asylum-seekers-are-welcome-to-remain-as-britain-is-10470062.html> accessed 22 May 2017.

Ju. Vl., "Pas de papiers pour les réfugiés : une campagne choc de la N-VA suscite l'indignation" (*RTBF*, 2016) <https://www.rtbf.be/info/dossier/drames-de-la-migration-les-candidats-refugies-meurent-aux-portes-de-l-europe/detail_pas-de-papiers-pour-les-refugies-une-campagne-choc-de-la-n-va-suscite-l-indignation?id=9476112> accessed 2 July 2017

"La lettre de Theo Francken aux Irakiens" (*Le Soir*, 9 October 2015) <https://fr.slideshare.net/redacsel/la-lettre-de-theo-francken-aux-irakiens> accessed 2 July 2017.

"Le gouvernement fédéral propose à la famille syrienne une solution d'accueil humanitaire au Liban" (*RTBF*, 2016) <https://www.rtbf.be/info/monde/detail_la-famille-syrienne-va-pouvoir-etre-accueillie-au-liban-via-des-visas-humanitaire-annonce-charles-michel?id=9479298> accessed 2 July 2017.

Nina Lakhani, "After the exodus: 40 years on from Amin's terror offensive against Asians in Uganda" (*The Independent*, 23 June 2012) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/after-the-exodus-40-years-on-from-amins-terror-offensive-against-asians-in-uganda-7869878.html> accessed 15 March 2017.

"Oxfam appelle les pays riches, dont la Belgique, à réinstaller plus de réfugiés" (*RTBF*, 16 December 2016) <https://www.rtbf.be/info/dossier/drames-de-la-migration-les-candidats-refugies-meurent-aux-portes-de-l-europe/detail_crise-des-migrants-oxfam-appelle-les-pays-riches-dont-la-belgique-a-reinstaller-plus-de-refugies?id=9482390> accessed 16 March 2017.

S. Ha and S. Calderon, "Des initiatives citoyennes se poursuivent pour aider les réfugiés" (*RTBF*, 22 August 2016) <https://www.rtbf.be/info/monde/detail_des-initiatives-citoyennes-se-poursuivent-pour-aider-les-refugies?id=9385732https://www.cire.be/services/structure-d-accueil-des-demandeurs-d-asile/le-cire-et-l-accueil-des-demandeurs-d-asile-en-belgique/coup-de-projecteur-sur-les-initiatives-citoyennes#!13497555_1035945329830203_3770842167273898524_o> accessed 30 June 2017.

Other sources

 "10% of Refugees from Syria: Europe's Resettlement and Other Admission Responses in a Global Perspective » (*ICMC*, June 2015) <https://www.icmc.net/sites/default/files/documents/10-percent-syrian-refugees-resettlement-2015.pdf> accessed 17 March 2017.

"23 000 à marcher en solidarité avec les réfugiés" (*Parti du travail de Belgique*, 27 September 2015) <http://ptb.be/articles/23-000-marcher-en-solidarite-avec-les-refugies> accessed 30 June 2017.

"#WelcomeRefugees: Canada Resettled Syrian Refugees" (*Government of Canada*, 4 June 2017) <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/index.asp> accessed 20 May 2017.

"About Us" (*Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support*, n.d.) <http://www.bxlrefugees.be/en/qui-sommes-nous> accessed 30 June 2017.

"Accueil et accompagnement des demandeurs d'asile" (*UMons*, 2017) <http://portail.umons.ac.be/fr/universite/admin/rectorat/refugies/pages/default.aspx> accessed 30 June 2017.

Allen Wood, "Human Dignity, Right and the Realm of Ends" (Address to the Conference on Dignity and Law, *Cape Town University Law School*, July 2007) <http://www.stanford.edu/~allenw/webpapers/keynote2007> accessed 20 May 2017.

Arton Krasniqi and Brigitte Suter. "Refugee Resettlement to Europe 1950-2014: An Overview of Humanitarian Politics and Practices" (*Malmo Institute for Studies of Migration*, 2015) <https://muep.mah.se/bitstream/handle/2043/19587/WPS%2015.1%20Krasniqi%20and%20Suter.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y> accessed 6 July 2017.

"Congolese Refugees: selection of Refugees" (*Fedasil*, n.d.) <http://www.resettlement.be/content/congolese-refugees> accessed 15 March 2017.

"Comment se déroule la sélection des réfugiés dans le cadre de la réinstallation?" (*CGRS*, n.d) <http://icmc.tttp.eu/sites/icmc.tttp.eu/files/Note%20de%20dossier2_D%C3%A9roulement%20de%20la%20s%C3%A9lection%20des%20r%C3%A9fugi%C3%A9s%20dans%20le%20cadre%20de%20la%20r%C3%A9installation_tcm126-39749.pdf> accessed 13 June 2017.

"Compte rendu analytique (CRABV 54 COM 435)" (*Chambre des représentants*, 1 June 2016) <https://www.dekamer.be/doc/CCRA/pdf/54/ac435.pdf> accessed 2 July 2017.

David Petrasek "Interdependence and Indivisibility of Economic and Political Rights" (*Human Rights Advocacy and the History of International Human Rights Standards*, 2011) <http://humanrightshistory.umich.edu/problems/indivisibility> accessed 21 May 2017.

Delphine Perrin and Frank McNamara, "Refugee Resettlement in the EU: Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames" (*Know Reset*, 2013) <http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/Know-Reset-RR-2013-03.pdf> accessed 19 March 2017.

"Devenez voisins solidaires" (*Convivial*, 2017) <https://www.convivial.be/devenez-voisins-solidaires> accessed 30 June 2017.

"EU Resettlement Factsheet" (*European Resettlement Network*, 2014) <http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.tttp.eu/files/UNHCR%20EU%20Resettlement%20Fact%20Sheet%2024.07.14.pdf> accessed 28 June 2017.

"FDR's Second Bill of Rights: 'Necessitous Men are not Free Men'" (*Roosevelt Institute*, 1 November 2011) <http://rooseveltinstitute.org/fdrs-second-bill-rights-necessitous-men-are-not-free-men> accessed 22 May 2016.

Fenya Fischler and Salomé Phillmann, "Know Reset – Country Profile: Belgium" (*Know Reset*, December 2012) <http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00145_20130704132512_knowresetcountryprofilebelgium.pdf> accessed 21 March 2017.

"Francken étend sa campagne de dissuasion aux réfugiés afghans" (*Solidaire*, 19 June 2016) <http://solidaire.org/articles/francken-etend-sa-campagne-de-dissuasion-aux-refugies-afghans> accessed 2 July 2017.

Franck Caestecker and Ilse Derluyn, "Les expériences des réfugiés réinstallés en Belgique" (*University of Gent*, March 2017) <http://www.myria.be/fr/publications/experiences-des-refugies-reinstalles-en-belgique> accessed 25 June 2017.

"Fiche pratique : l'accueil des bénéficiaires de la loi du 12 janvier 2007. Pratiques et évolutions" (*CIRÉ*, n.d) <http://www.lstb.be/pdf/2010-01-08-Fiche%20pratique-accueil-1.pdf> accessed 27 June 2017.

Gaëlle Smet, "Analyse: politique d'asile, état des lieux" (*Centre Jean Gol*, Janvier 2016) <http://www.cjg.be/wp-cont/uploads/2014/01/201601_Asile-Etat-des-lieux-et-mesures-annoncees-du-gouvernement.pdf>

"Handbook on European Law Relating to Asylum, Borders and Immigration" (*European Agency for Fundamental Rights*, 2015) <http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Handbook_asylum_ENG.pdf> accessed 24 June 2017.

"History: Previous Belgian Resettlement Initiatives" (*Fedasil*, n.d.) <http://www.resettlement.be/content/history> accessed 15 March 2017.

"How Lebanon's Residency Rules Facilitate Abuse of Syrian Refugees" (*Human Rights Watch*, January 2016) <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/lebanon0116web.pdf> accessed 6 July 2017.

"Il faut d'urgence réinstaller plus de réfugiés" (*Caritas*, 15 June 2016) <http://www.caritasinternational.be/fr/asile-migration/il-faut-durgence-reinstaller-plus-de-refugies> accessed 17 March 2017.

"Initiative Locale d'Accueil (I.L.A.)" (*CPAS*, 2017) <http://www.cpas-profondeville.be/services/initiative-locale-daccueil> accessed 13 June 2017.

"Inscription à l'UNamur: étudiants refugiés" (*UNamur*, n.d.). <https://www.unamur.be/etudes/inscription/refugie> accessed 30 June 2017.

Julius Muriungi Marete, "Resettlement or Resentment? Expectations and Experiences of Resettlement of Somali and Sudanese Refugees Living in New Zealand Who Have Come

from Refugee Camps in Kenya" (*University of Canterbury*, 2001) <https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/7264> accessed 25 April 2017.

Kim Parker, "Women More than Men Adapt their Careers for Family Life" (*Pew Research Center*, 1 October 2015) <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/01/women-more-than-men-adjust-their-careers-for-family-life> accessed 21 May 2017.

"La migration en chiffres et en droits 2016" (*Myria*, May 2016) <http://www.myria.be/files/MIGRA16_FR_AS.pdf> accessed 2 July 2017.

"La réinstallation de A à Z" (*Convivial*, 2017) <http://convivial.be/la-reinstallation-de-z> accessed 16 March 2017.

"La réinstallation en étapes" (*Fedasil*, 2013) <http://www.reinstallation.be/content/la-reinstallation-en-etapes> accessed 31 May 2017.

"La réinstallation : un complément à l'asile" (*Fedasil*, n.d.) <http://fedasil.be/fr/content/la-reinstallation> accessed 16 March 2017.

"Lebanese Constitution" (*Government of Lebanon*, 1995) http://www.presidency.gov.lb/English/LebaneseSystem/Documents/Lebanese%20Constitution.pdf accessed 29 May 2017.

"Lebanon: New Refugee Policy, a Step Forward" (*Human Rights Watch*, 14 February 2017) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/14/lebanon-new-refugee-policy-step-forward> accessed 30 May 2017.

"Lebanon: At Least 45 Local Curfews Imposed on Syrian Refugees" (*Human Rights Watch*, 3 October 2014) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/10/03/lebanon-least-45-local-curfews-imposed-syrian-refugees> accessed 30 May 2017.

"Le droit d'asile des Irakiens en danger" (*CIRÉ*, October 2015) <https://www.cire.be/publications/analyses/le-droit-d-asile-des-irakiens-en-danger> accessed 2 July 2017.

"Les citoyens, nouveaux acteurs de l'accueil et de l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants" (*CIRÉ*, November 2016) <https://www.cire.be/publications/analyses/les-initiatives-citoyennes-en-faveur-des-refugies-et-migrants> accessed 30 June 2017.

"Lettre de Theo Francken aux demandeurs d'asile afghans : une dérive autoritaire et discriminatoire" (*Ligue des droits de l'homme*, 27 November 2015) <http://www.liguedh.be/2015/2455-lettre-de-theo-francken-aux-demandeurs-dasile-afghans-une-derive-autoritaire-et-discriminatoire> accessed 2 July 2017.

Maja Janmyr, "The Legal Status of Syrian Refugee sin Lebanon" (American University of Beirut, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, 2016) <https://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/publications/Documents/working_papers/20160331_Maja_Janmyr.pdf> accessed 29 May 2017.

"Managing Expectations: A Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors" (*The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program*, 2013) <http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/expecttool2013.pdf> accessed 21 May 2017.

"Parcours d'intégration des primo-arrivants" (*CPAS*, n.d.) <http://socialsante.wallonie.be/?q=action-sociale/integration-personne-origine-etrangere/dispositifs/parcours-integration-primo-arrivant> accessed 26 June 2017.

"Press Release No 24/17" (*Court of Justice of the European Union*, 7 March 2017) <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2017-03/cp170024en.pdf> accessed 2 July 2017.

"Progressive Realization and Non-Regression" (*International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights*, n.d) <https://www.escr-net.org/resources/progressive-realisation-and-non-regression> accessed 24 June 2017.

"Pushed to the Edge: Syrian Refugees face Increased Restrictions in Lebanon" (*Amnesty International,* 2015) <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/1785/2015/en/> accessed 27 May 2017.

"Rapport annuel 2015" (*Caritas*, 24 August 2016) <http://www.caritasinternational.be/fr/urgence-et-developpement/moyen-orient/rapport-annuel-2015> accessed 2 July 2017.

"Relocation and Resettlement – State of Play" (*European Commission*, 7 February 2017) <https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20170208_factsheet_on_relocation_and_resettlement_en.pdf> accessed 16 March 2017.

"Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan E. Méndez" (*Human Rights Council*, 2015) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session28/Documents/A_HRC_28_68_E.doc> accessed 2 July 2017.

"Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission in Belgium" (*European Migration Network*, December 2016) <https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/02a_belgium_national_report_resettlement.pdf> accessed 25 June 2017.

"Resettlement Process" (*Fedasil*, 2013) <http://www.resettlement.be/content/resettlement-process> accessed 15 March 2017.

Sébastien Verleene, "L'assassin, l'urbaniste et le réfugié" in *Manuel pratique de ville ensemble* (*Les cahiers raisonnance*, September 2016) 76-79 <http://aimf.asso.fr/ville_ensemble/files/assets/common/downloads/publication.pdf> accessed 30 June 2017.

"Service ILA – Initiative Locale d'Accueil pour demandeurs d'asile" (*CPAS*, n.d). <http://www.cpascharleroi.be/aide-sociale/service-ila.html> accessed 13 June 2017.

"The Consequences of Limited Legal Status for Syrians in Lebanon" (*Norwegian Refugee Council*, March 2014) <https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/the-consequences-of-limited-legal-status-for-syrian-refugees-in-lebanon> accessed 30 May 2017.

"Theme: Become a Better Version of Yourself" (*TEDx*, 25 February 2016) <https://www.ted.com/tedx/events/16232> accessed 30 June 2017.

"Tous les chiffres" (*CGRS*, 2015) <http://www.cgra.be/fr/chiffres?field_cijfers_month_year_value[value]=&page=4> accessed 2 July 2017.

"You Are Recognised as A Refugee in Belgium: Your Rights and Obligations" (*CGRS*, 25 November 2016) <http://www.cgvs.be/sites/default/files/brochures/2016-11-25_brochure_recognised-refugee_eng.pdf> accessed 22 June 2017.

8. Annexes

8.1 Form for Syrian refugees in Lebanon (English version)

1) <u>Where do you live (city)?</u>
2) <u>Are you registered with UNHCR? Yes/No</u>
3) <u>What is your gender? Male/Female</u>
4) <u>How old are you?</u>

5) <u>What is your education level?</u>
    o No education
    o Primary school
    o Secondary school
    o University

6) <u>Have you already heard of the possibility of being "resettled" in another country?</u> <u>Yes/No</u>

7) <u>If so, how did you learn about the programme?</u>
    o UNHCR staff
    o friends
    o Internet (social media etc.)
    o other (explain):

8) <u>If you could be resettled, what country would you choose? Why?</u>

9) <u>What is the most important to you?</u>
    o finding safety for my family
    o building a new life (integrating + finding a job/getting an education)
    o my children's future

10) <u>Select your preferred answer. "I believe that…</u>
    o life will be difficult when I arrive, I will have to solve problems by myself."
    o the government will do its best to help me in my everyday life."
    o the government must help me in my everyday life."

11) <u>Do you know someone who has been resettled?</u> <u>If so, in what country? What did this person tell you about his/her experience?</u>

12) <u>What is the most important thing you could find in another country that you do not have here in Lebanon?</u>

13) <u>How would you feel if your expectations were not met in the resettlement country?</u>
    o   sad and frustrated
    o   angry at myself
    o   angry at the host country
    o   I would ask to return to Lebanon

14) <u>In your opinion:</u>
 	
   * Every refugee can be resettled: yes/no/I don't know
   * I can choose the country I want to be sent to: yes/no/idk
   * Other members of my family can join me after my arrival: yes/no/idk
   * The government will provide me with a job: yes/no/idk
   * The government will provide me with a house: yes/no/idk
   * I will receive a monthly allowance: yes/no/idk
   * I will have access to free health care: yes/no/idk
   * I will have access to free language classes and training courses: yes/no/idk
   * My children will be able to go to school: yes/no/idk
   * In Europe, host communities are welcoming to refugees: yes/no/idk
   * I will integrate easily and quickly: yes/no/idk
   * I will be able to practise my religion freely (wear hijab, for example): yes/no/idk
   * I will be able to send money to my family: yes/no/idk

Thank you for your help!

8.2 Form for Syrian refugees in Lebanon (Arabic version)

<u>حدد مكان سكنك (المدينة) ؟</u>
<u>هل انت مسجل في اللجنة العليا لشؤون اللاجئين التابعة للأمم المتحدة ؟ نعم/لا</u>
<u>الجنس: أنثى/ذكر</u>
<u>كم تبلغ من العمر؟</u>
<u>ما هو مستوى تحصيلك العلمي؟</u>

غير متعلم
الابتدائي
الثانوي
الجامعي

هل سمعت عن إمكانية اعادة التوطين في دولة أخرى؟ نعم/لا

في حالة نعم كيف سمعت عن هذا البرنامج؟ هل من خلال:
أعضاء المنظمة
اصدقاء
عبر الإنترنت
أخر(وضح):

في حال امكانية اللجوء إلى دولة اجنبية إلى أي دولة تفضل؟ لماذا؟

بالنسبة لك ما هي أهم نقطة
- وجود الأمان لعائلتك
- بناء حياة جديدة - الاندماج و الحصول على العمل - التعليم
- مستقبل اولادك

اختر الجواب المناسب "انا اعتقد بأن " :
- الحياة ستكون صعبة لدى وصولي و يجب علي حل المشاكل بنفسي
- الحكومة ستبذل كل جهدها لمساعدتي بالحياة اليومية
- على الحكومة مساعدتي في حياتي اليومية

هل تعرفون احد نقل إلى دولة أخرى ؟ اي دولة؟ ماذا أخبرك عن تجربته

ما هو أهم شيء يمكنك الحصول عليه بدولة أخرى و لم تحصل عليه في لبنان

ماذا لو ذهبت إلى بلد اللجوء و لم تجد ما كنت توقعته ، ستكون
-محبط و حزين
- غير راض عن نفسك
- غير راض عن دولة اللجوى
- سأطلب العودة إلى لبنان

في رأيك:
- كل اللاجئين يمكنهم اللجوء.   نعم/ لا / لا أعرف
- يمكنك اختيار الدولة التي ترغب الذهاب إليها   نعم/ لا / لا أعرف
- بعض أفراد عائلتك يمكنهم اللحاق بك   نعم/ لا / لا أعرف
- الحكومة سوف توفر لك العمل   نعم/ لا / لا أعرف
- الحكومة ستمنحك منزلا   نعم/ لا / لا أعرف

نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- ستحصل على معاش شهري
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- سيكون لك الحق بالضمان الصحي
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- سيكون لك الحق بمتابعة دورات لغوية
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- اولادك يحق لهم الذهاب إلى المدرسة
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- في أوروبا الجمعيات الإنسانية ترحب باللاجئين
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- سوف تندمج بسرعة و بسهولة
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- ستتمكن من ممارسة شعائر الدينية وضع الحجاب مثلا
نعم/ لا / لا أعرف	- سيمكنني إرسال المال لعائلتي
شكرا لتعاونك	

8.3 Results

1. Where do you live (city)?

291 responses

- Beirut
- Bekaa
- Other

58.8%
18.2%
23%
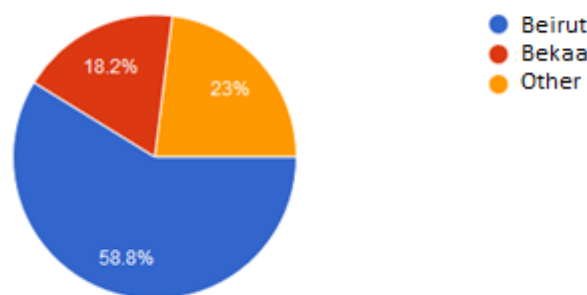
2. Are you registered with UNHCR?

291 responses

- yes
- no

74.9%
25.1%
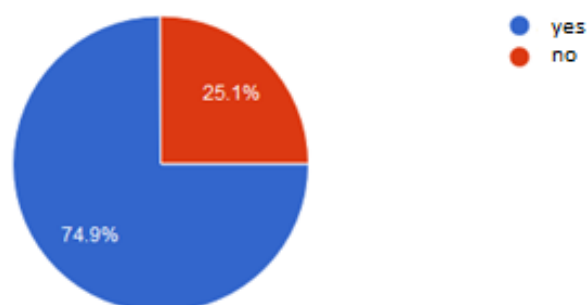
3. What is your gender?

290 responses

- Male
- Female

26.2%

73.8%
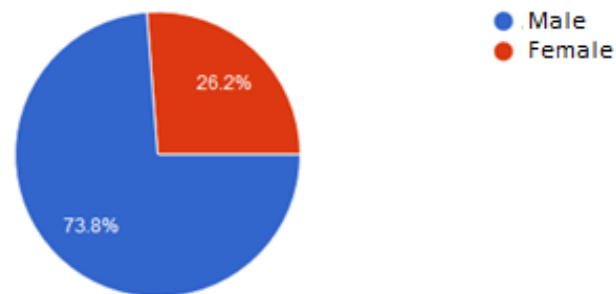
5. What is your education level?

291 responses

- No education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- University

41.2%

23.7%

32%
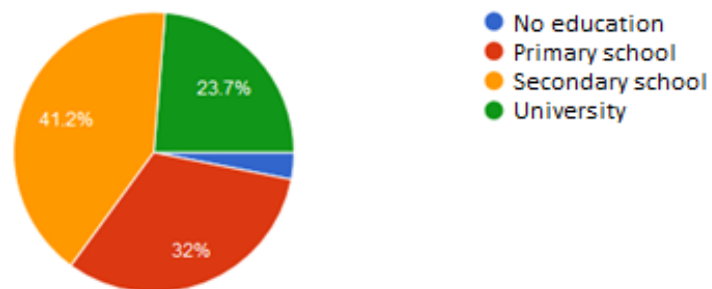
6. Have you already heard of the possibility of being "resettled" to another country?

289 responses

- Yes
- No

19.4%

80.6%
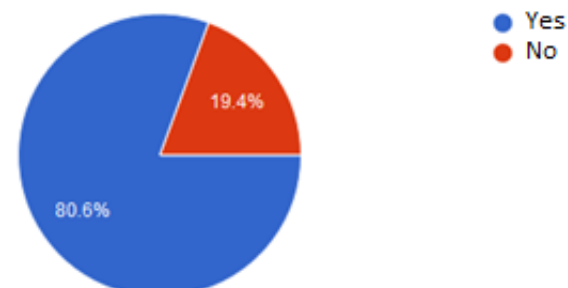
7. If so, how did you learn about the programme?

283 responses

- UNHCR's staff
- Friends
- Internet (social media etc.)
- Other

35.7%
8.8%
10.2%
45.2%
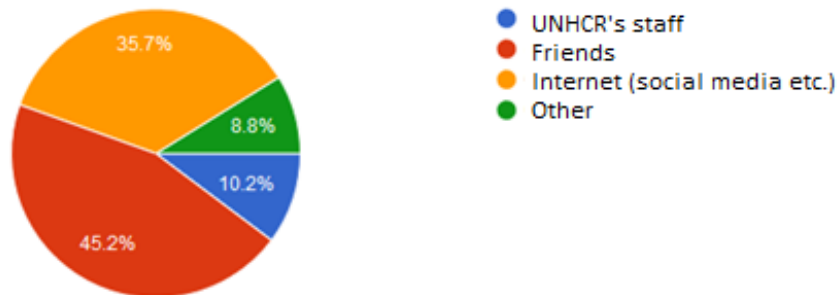
9. What is the most important to you?

289 responses

- finding safety for my family
- building a new life (integrating + finding a job/getting an education)
- my children's future

22.5%
43.6%
33.9%
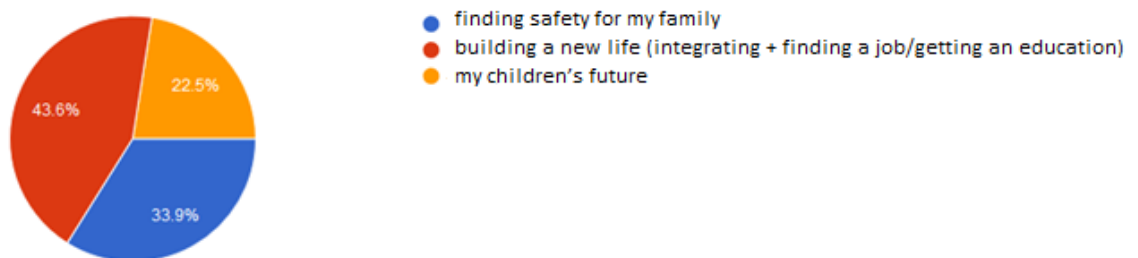
10. Select your preferred answer: I believe that...

285 responses

- life will be difficult when I arrive, I will have to solve problems by myself
- the government will do its best to help me in my everyday life
- the government must help me in my everyday life

41.1%
14.4%
44.6%
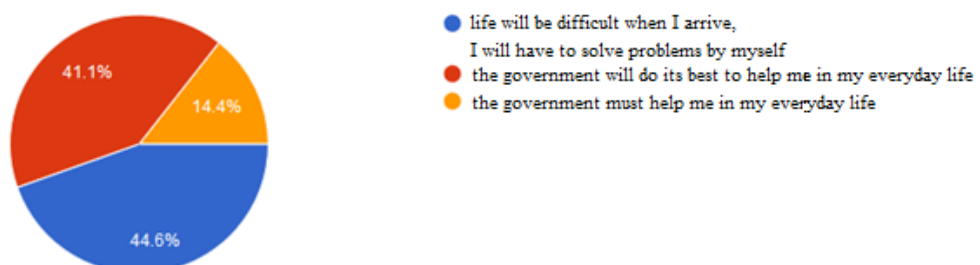
## 13. How would you feel if your expectations were not met in the resettlement country?

290 responses

- sad and frustrated
- angry at myself
- angry at the host country
- I would ask to return to Lebanon

18.6%
21.4%
20.3%
39.7%

Every refugee can be resettled

290 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

52.4%
26.9%
20.7%
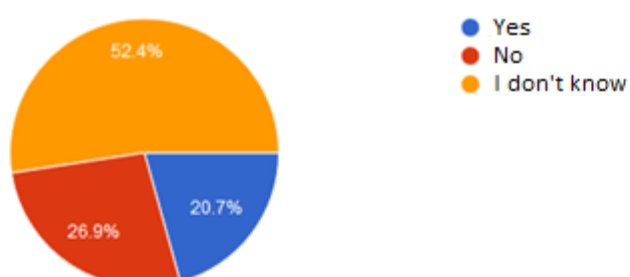
I can choose the country I want to be sent to

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

33.3%
21.6%
45%
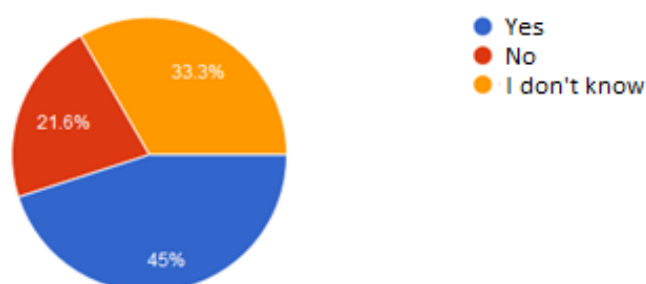
Other members of my family can join me after my arrival

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

36.4%
9.6%
54%
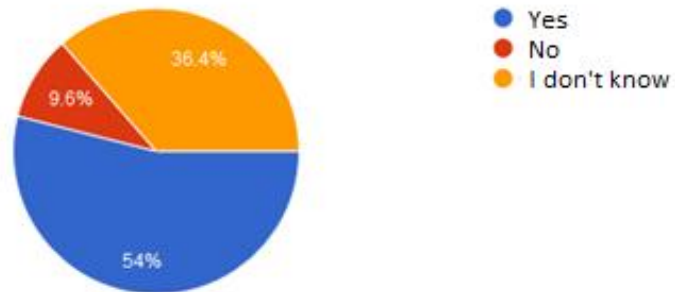
The government will provide me with a job

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

43%
7.9%
49.1%
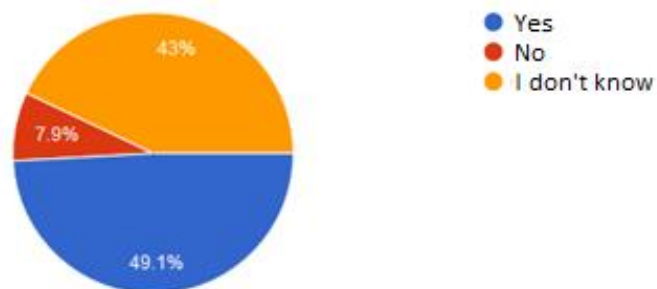
The government will provide me with a house

290 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

35.2%
58.3%
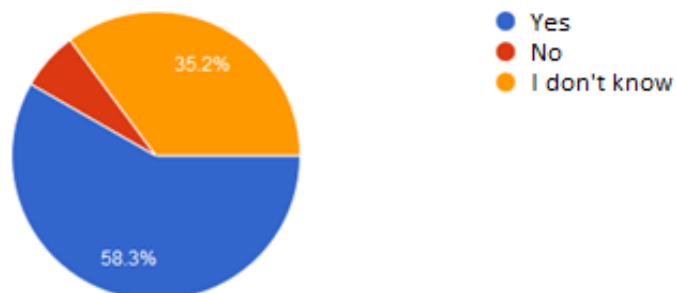
I will receive a montly allowance

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

46%
6.2%
47.8%
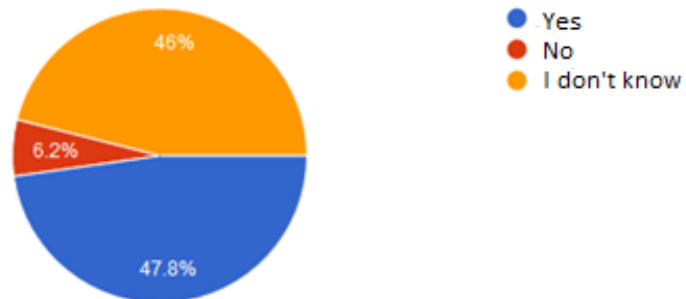
I will have access to free healthcare

290 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

27.6%
70%
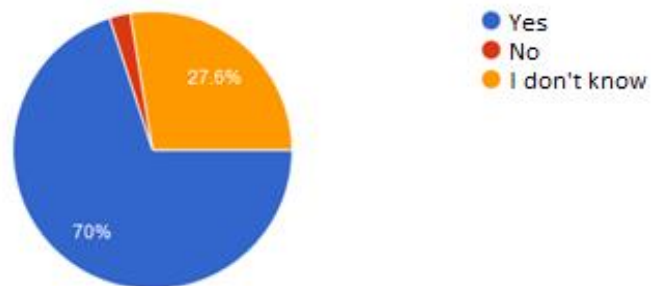
I will have access to free language classes and training courses

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

9.3%
90%
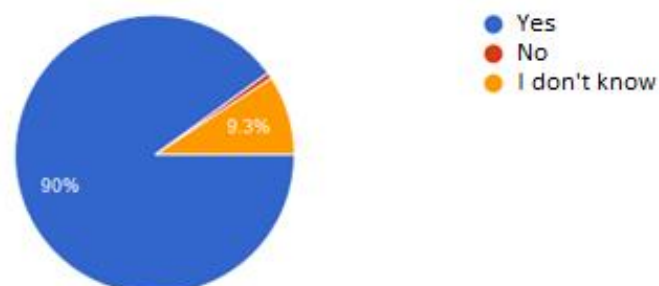
My children will be able to go to school

290 responses

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- I don't know

88.6%
10.3%
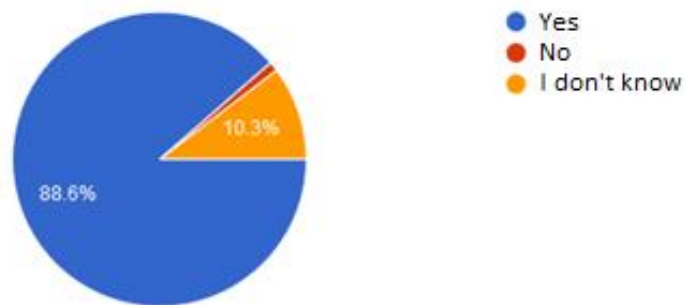
In Europe, host communities are welcoming to refugees

291 responses

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- I don't know

76.3%
23%
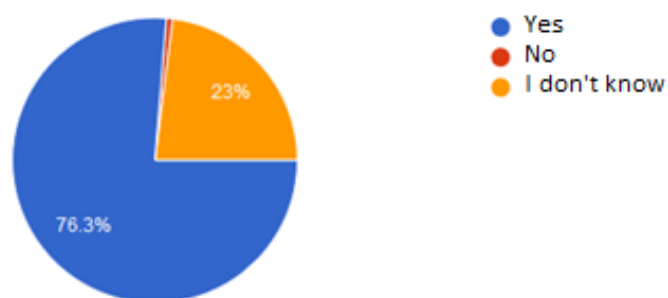
I will integrate easily and quickly

291 responses

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Maybe

54%
25.1%
10.7%
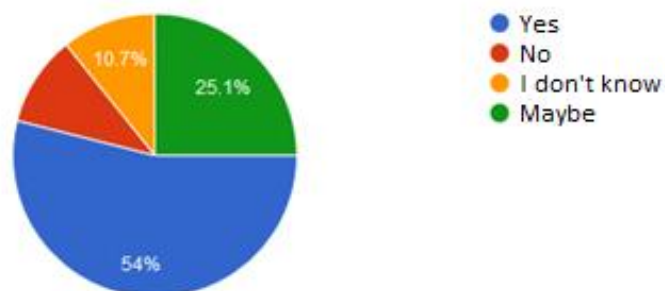
I will be able to practice my religion freely

291 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

63.6%
31.3%
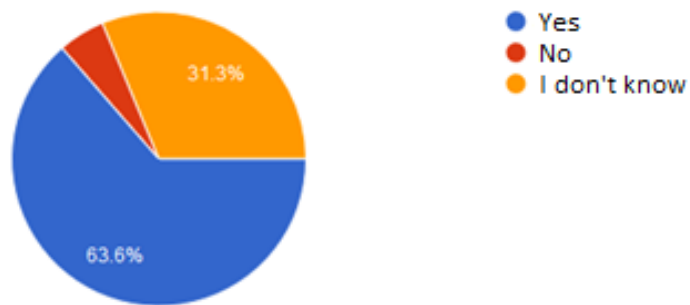
I will be able to send money to my family

289 responses

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

50.9%
11.4%
37.7%