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UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

INTEGRATION BETWEEN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF REFUGEES IN ITALY

INTEGRATION BETWEEN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Final Report

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The report has also benefited from a specific contribution by ISTAT, prepared by Cinzia Conti and Fabio Massimo Rottino, which enriched it with the initial statistical section.

Table of Contents

Summary
of Figures and Tables Istat

Appendix
Istat

Summary of Figures

Summary of Figures
Annex

Summary of Tables

Summary of Tables
Annex

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Introduction

"Integration between challenges and opportunities:
a study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy"

"Integration between challenges and opportunities: a study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy" aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic challenges faced by beneficiaries of international and temporary protection in Italy, as well as the systemic and structural factors that influence their integration.* This report is the result of a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights, and serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders seeking to address these issues.

The document is organized to offer both an in-depth analysis of the socio-economic conditions of refugees and practical recommendations for improvement. The opening sections introduce the methodology employed in the study, highlighting the innovative integration of quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups to ensure a nuanced understanding of the challenges refugees face. This methodological rigor provides the foundation for the report's detailed analysis.

The core findings delve into various aspects of refugees' lives, including an assessment of the level of poverty in their population calculated on the basis of three indicators - absolute poverty, relative poverty, and severe material and social deprivation. It also examines coping strategies employed by refugees to navigate these challenges, their access to stable housing, employment opportunities, and language proficiency. Additionally, the report considers how systemic barriers, limited access to social services, and discrimination shape refugees' integration journeys. Each of these dimensions is explored in depth, offering valuable insights into the multifaceted vulnerabilities faced by this group.

The final sections of the document focus on actionable recommendations aimed at improving integration outcomes for refugees. These recommendations are tailored for various stakeholders, including national and local governments, civil society organizations, and private sector actors. They address critical areas such as language learning, labor market access, housing support, social inclusion, and financial empowerment.

By providing a clear structure and a comprehensive analysis, this report serves as both a diagnostic tool and a roadmap for future action. It invites stakeholders to reflect on the systemic challenges faced by refugees in Italy and to collaborate on creating solutions that support their integration and empower them to contribute meaningfully to society.

* For the purpose of this report, to ensure conciseness, the term 'refugees' should be understood as including beneficiaries of international protection, encompassing both refugee status and subsidiary protection, as well as beneficiaries of temporary protection, namely individuals from Ukraine who have been granted this residence permit. In tables, the acronyms BIPs and BTPs will be used respectively instead.

Residence permits for asylum seekers and refugees in Italy

Cinzia Conti and Fabio Massimo Rottino (Istat)

DATA AND LONGITUDINAL APPROACH

The data used in this analysis are mainly based on information from residence permits issued to non-EU citizens, particularly those related to political asylum. It is important to clarify that the data used in this work refer to residence permits and not to asylum applications[1].

For some years, Istat has been employing the residence permit dataset longitudinally. The data referring to the various years are linked through deterministic record linkage, employing unique identification codes. The linkage allows for individuals to be followed over time and to verify the continuity of their regular presence in the area. The unique code is available for about 90% of the cases. This allows for the performance of good quality analyses.

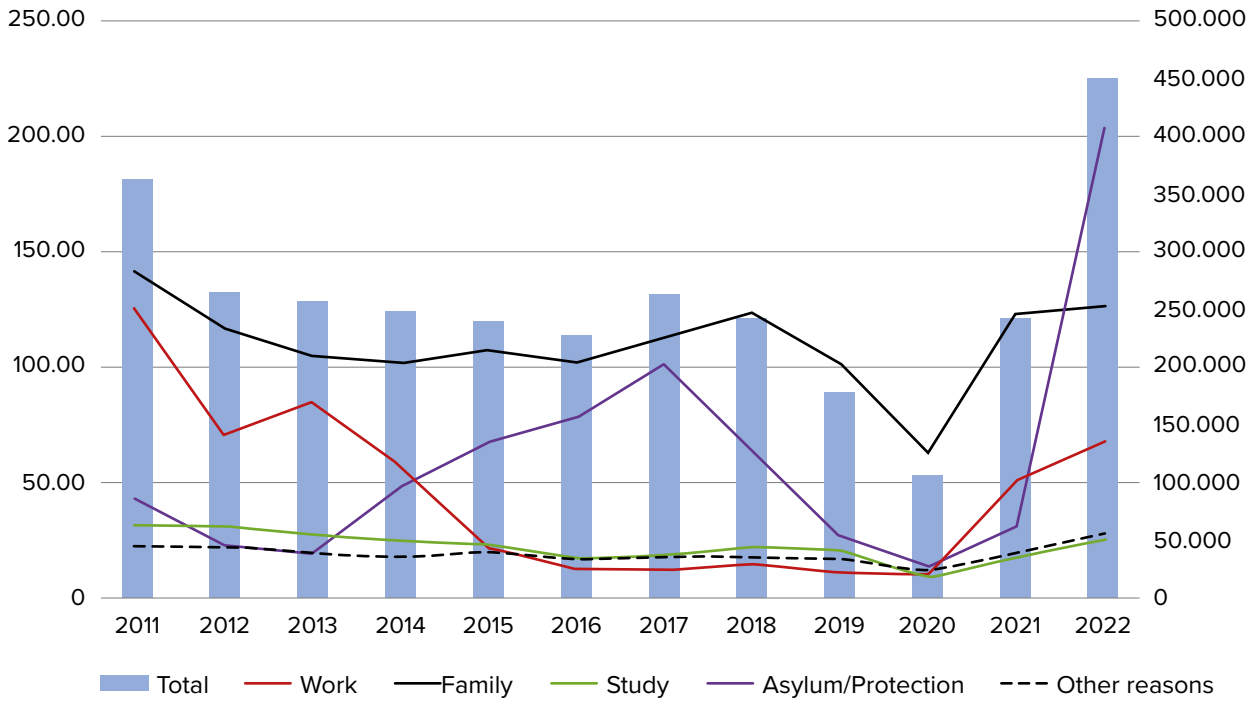
FLOWS AND STOCKS: RECENT TRENDS

The analysis of the release of new residence permits gives us a picture of the characteristics of flows and of the presence of migrants in Italy for the reason of the permit. A total of 3,074,746 permits were issued in Italy between 2011 and 2022, of which 23.4% were for reasons connected to asylum (Figure 1).

In the last decade there has been an unprecedented contraction of flows for work reasons and a substantial stability of those related to family reasons (with the well-known exception of 2020, in the period of COVID19). Analysing the flows, we observe that the number of new holders of residence permits linked to the asylum experienced various fluctuations over the years. After an increase in 2014, there was a significant peak in arrivals in 2017.

The Covid pandemic then led to a drastic decrease in the overall number of arrivals. After the crisis due to the pandemic, we can observe a further increase.

Figure 1. *New permits issued during the reference year by reason, 2011-2022, absolute values*



Source: Istat. 2023 on data provided by the Ministry of Interior

1 As mentioned above, the data of residence permits for "asylum seekers" register the arrival of migrants later than their asylum applications due to the time lag between the application and the issuance of the permit. Some problems were also noted with the registration of asylum seekers' permits in some provinces. In these places there is, therefore, undercounting.

During 2022 the flows of persons in need of protection arriving from Ukraine were the most important. Other relevant nationalities were Bangladeshis (9,616 residence permits related to asylum), Pakistanis (8,396) and Egyptians (almost 5,000). These three citizenships, and Ukrainians covered approximately 53% of permits issued for reasons of asylum in 2022, Nigerian were the fifth citizenship with 3,576 permits.

About the stocks of refuges and asylum seekers, according to the data referred to residence permits, at the beginning of 2023 there were 350,345 people holding a residence permit linked to asylum: 30.2% were recognised refugees, 15.2% asylum seekers and 54.6% migrants under other forms of protection: above all Ukrainians under temporary protection. Among the ten principal countries of citizenship (Table 1) are included: Ukraine (155,000 permits), Nigeria (32,022 permits) and Pakistan (24,132 permits).

The specific reason of protection varies for the different citizenships. Ukrainians are almost all under temporary protection (94.1%). Nigerians are in many cases refugees (52.1%). Pakistanis and Bangladeshis register high percentages of asylum seekers and holders of other forms of protection. Significant percentages of refugees are registered within Afghan and Somali communities.

Table 1. *Number of people under protection by citizenship (principal 10) and type of protection, absolute values and percentages, Italy, 1st January 2023*

			REASON OF THE PERMIT				
COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	ABSOLUTE NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	REFUGEES AND SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION %	ASYLUM SEEKERS %	TEMPORARY PROTECTION %	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION %	TOTAL
Ukraine	154,621	44.1	1.7	0.8	94.1	3.4	100,0
Nigeria	32,022	9.1	52.1	21.6	0.0	26.3	100,0
Pakistan	24,132	6.9	42.5	40.6	0.0	16.9	100,0
Bangladesh	17,117	4.9	11.0	63.3	0.0	25.	100,0
Mali	12,814	3.7	79.2	4.5	0.0	16.3	100,0
Afghanistan	11,633	3.3	93.9	5.6	0.0	0.5	100,0
Gambia	6,961	2.0	34.3	20.1	0.0	45.7	100,0
Somalia	6,871	2.0	95.1	4.2	0.0	0.7	100,0
Senegal	6,510	1.9	33.6	18.9	0.0	47.4	100,0
El Salvador	5,803	1.7	67.7	21.8	0.0	10.4	100,0
Others	71,861	20.5	53.3	26.6	1.2	18.9	100,0
Total	**350,345**	**100.0**	**30.2**	**15.2**	**41.8**	**12.8**	**100,0**

Source: Istat. 2023 on data provided by the Ministry of Interior

In Italy, the presence of beneficiaries of international protection is concentrated in Lazio and Lombardy, which together host over 32% of individuals in these two categories (Tab. 2). Significant percentages are also recorded in Emilia Romagna and Tuscany. Asylum seekers, on the other hand, more often have a residence permit issued or renewed in Lombardy (22.9%) and Emilia Romagna (11.2%). The female percentage is higher among Ukrainians (71.7%), while Women are 39.9% of recognised refugees and 15.6% of asylum seekers.

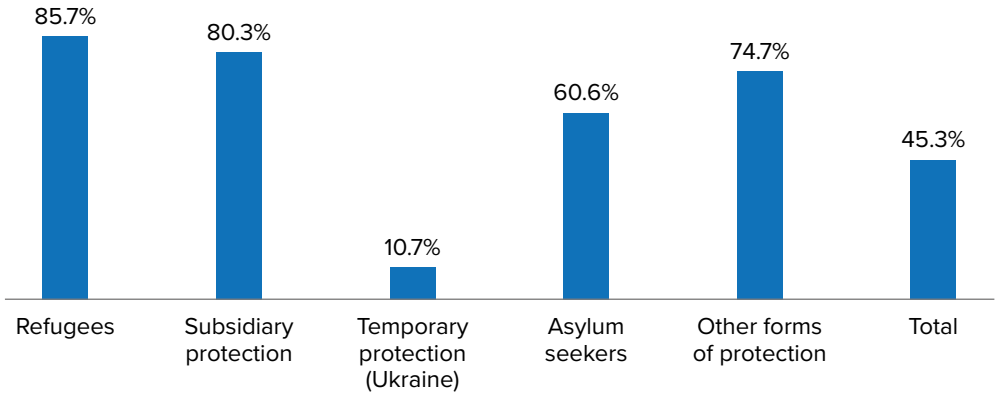
Table 2. *Percentage of women on the total of people under protection by region and type of protection, absolute values, Italy, 1st January 2023*

REGION	REASON OF THE PERMIT					TOTAL
	REFUGEES	SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION	TEMPORARY PROTECTION (UKRAINE)	ASYLUM SEEKERS	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION	
Piemonte	40.5	13.4	71.9	13.4	13.4	**41.5**
Valle d'Aosta	12.8	8.3	67.8	8.3	8.3	**42.6**
Lombardia	40.5	24.3	71.5	24.3	24.3	**46.6**
Trentino-Alto Adige	41.4	21.2	70.2	21.2	21.2	**45.0**
Veneto	39.1	16.9	71.9	16.9	16.9	**49.4**
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	24.1	9.5	70.4	9.5	9.5	**41.4**
Liguria	44.1	13.2	69.6	13.2	13.2	**42.9**
Emilia-Romagna	43.3	19.2	71.9	19.2	19.2	**48.7**
Toscana	35.7	11.5	71.9	11.5	11.5	**38.6**
Umbria	40.4	15.5	70.6	15.5	15.5	**43.1**
Marche	33.9	13.8	72.6	13.8	13.8	**41.2**
Lazio	38.3	15.6	71.6	15.6	15.6	**40.6**
Abruzzo	39.7	11.5	68.7	11.5	11.5	**46.2**
Molise	42.8	15.7	75.1	15.7	15.7	**31.1**
Campania	47.5	23.1	72.6	23.1	23.1	**51.3**
Puglia	43.5	8.0	73.1	8.0	8.0	**34.9**
Basilicata	44.3	8.2	71.5	8.2	8.2	**35.8**
Calabria	40.5	14.2	72.6	14.2	14.2	**45.7**
Sicilia	41.1	9.4	72.4	9.4	9.4	**30.9**
Sardegna	42.7	18.2	75.8	18.2	18.2	**47.2**
Italia	39.9	15.6	71.7	15.6	15.6	**43.7**

Source: Istat. 2023 on data provided by the Ministry of Interior

Not all residence permit holders are enrolled in the Population Register. From some preliminary estimates, obtained by linking residence permits to the population register, it can be inferred that the percentage of those registered in the civil registry is nearly 90% for refugees, but barely exceeds 60% for asylum seekers. The proportion of people under temporary protection with residence registration is very low - less than 11%.

Figure 2. *Percentage of people under protection enrolled in the Population Register by type of protection, Italy, 1st January 2023*



Source: Istat. preliminary estimates

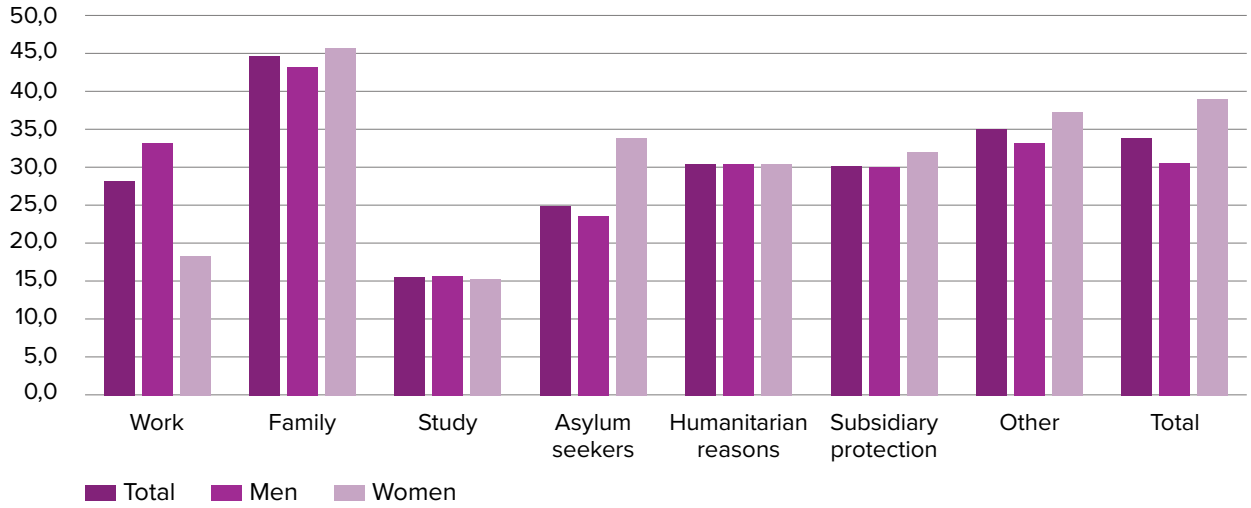
For more detailed information on the territories, see the two tables in the appendix.

LONGITUDINAL AND INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE

The data used in this analysis are mainly based on information from residence permits issued to non-EU citizens. The longitudinal perspective, monitoring over the time a cohort of migrants arrived in the same year, allows for the study of the propensity to stabilization in the territory. The analysis carried out on people that received for the first time a residence permit in Italy for reasons linked to asylum in 2017 show that the propensity to stabilization changes according to the reason of the permit.

In 2017 259,000 new residence permits were issued, among these we find 86,289 asylum seekers and 12,498 persons that obtained some forms of protection. Considering their presence five years after the issuance of residence permits (1st January 2023), the results of the linkage evidence that at the beginning of 2023 the 34.1% of this cohort has still a valid residence permit. The percentage of migrants regularly present after 5 years is - of course - larger among migrants arrived for family reasons (44.9). It is particularly low for students (15.7).
The long-term stayers represent the 28.3% of workers, the 25.2% of the asylum seekers and the 29.7% for people under other forms of protection. Even if women are vulnerable migrants, in general they show a higher propensity to stability, especially among asylum seekers (Figure 3).

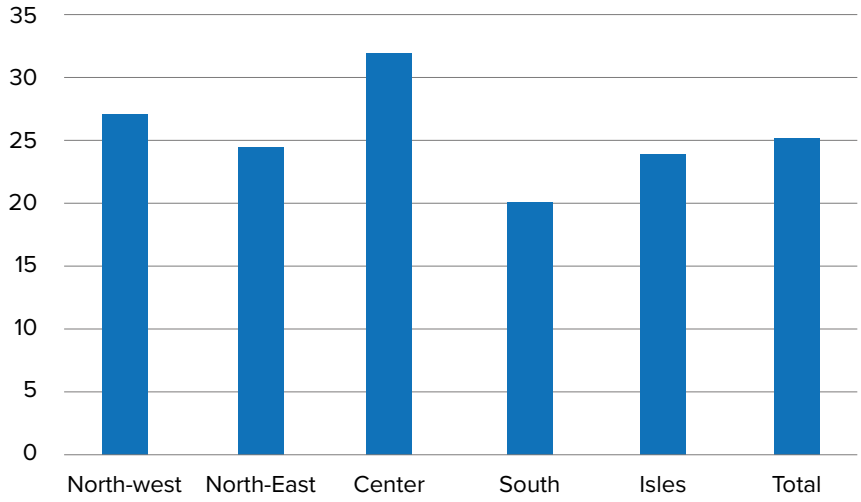
Figure 3. *Immigrants arrived in Italy in 2017 by presence after 5 years (01-01-2023) by reason of the permit and sex (percentages)*



Source: Istat. 2023

The propensity to settle is lower for asylum seekers arriving in the South of the Country and in the Isles (Figure 4).

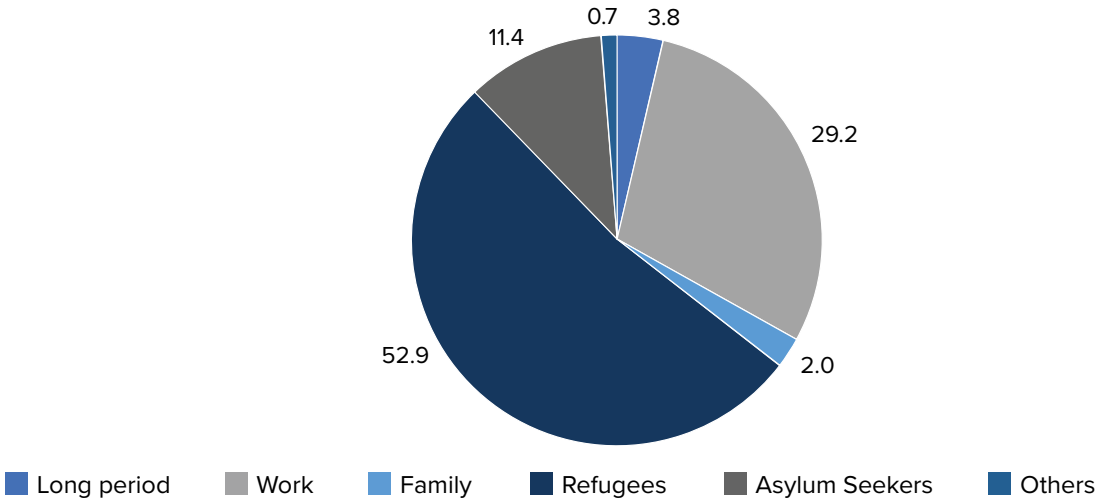
Figure 4. *Asylum seekers arrived in Italy in 2017 present on territory after 5 years (01-01-2023) by territorial area of the first permit issued (percentages)*



Source: Istat. 2023

Focusing on the immigrants entered in 2017 and still present after 5 years, it is also interesting to observe that among the ones arrived as asylum seekers only the 52.9% obtained residence permit as a refugee or for subsidiary protection (Figure 4). The 29.2% at the beginning of 2023 hold a permit for work reasons. The 11.4% still have a permit for asylum seekers.

Figure 5. *First permits for asylum seekers issued in 2017 for reason of the permit registered at 1st January 2023, Italy, percentages*



Source: Istat. 2023

The cohort entered in Italy in 2017 shows a high mobility on the Italian territory, among the ones still present at the beginning of 2023 the 18.8% live in a different province than the one in which the first permit was issued. The percentage is higher than 30% for people arrived as asylum seekers. The mobility of asylum seekers is a common feature studied in many different European countries and we can consider it, in some cases, a second step - after the decision to stay in the host country - towards integration.

The South and the Islands, although being important entry areas into Italy, retain migrants arriving in the territory to a lesser extent. In these geographical areas, not only are the percentages of those settling in Italy lower, but additionally, many of those who remain move to other regions of the country.
In the South only the 74.8% of asylum seekers entered in 2017 and still present in 2023 have remained in the area, in the North-west the percentage of stable asylum seekers who entered in 2017 is more than 91%.
In the Isles the percentage of asylum seekers settled in the region is smaller: less than 54% (Table 2).

Appendix

TABLE A.1 *People under protection by region and type of protection, absolute and relative values, Italy, 1st January 2023*

REGION	REASON OF THE PERMIT					TOTAL
	REFUGEES	SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION	TEMPORARY PROTECTION (UKRAINE)	ASYLUM SEEKERS	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION	
	ABSOLUTE VALUES					
Piemonte	5,898	4,095	9,852	3,311	3,503	26,659
Valle d'Aosta	78	60	426	152	90	806
Lombardia	8,787	6,753	26,356	12,208	6,574	60,678
Trentino-Alto Adige	1,492	1,337	3,369	1,578	753	8,529
Veneto	2,865	2,168	12,638	3,203	2,704	23,578
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1,629	2,243	5,510	1,416	955	11,753
Liguria	1,521	760	5,689	2,993	1,780	12,743
Emilia-Romagna	4,219	3,185	17,079	5,952	4,741	35,176
Toscana	3,623	4,177	8,095	4,225	4,062	24,182
Umbria	831	813	2,114	843	492	5,093
Marche	1,587	1,311	3,955	2,007	1,011	9,871
Lazio	8,782	10,085	13,842	2,923	5,359	40,991
Abruzzo	993	1,700	5,603	1,370	568	10,234
Molise	474	530	551	711	345	2,611
Campania	2,493	3,304	16,091	3,659	3.532	29,079
Puglia	2,830	3,011	4,262	2,024	3,232	15,359
Basilicata	488	380	952	712	453	2,985
Calabria	2,055	1,627	4,593	1,115	1,213	10,603
Sicilia	2,525	3,949	3,746	2,493	2,673	15,386
Sardegna	592	632	1,644	402	759	4,029
Italia	**53,762**	**52,120**	**146,367**	**53,297**	**44,799**	**350,345**
	PERCENTAGES					
Piemonte	11.0	7.9	6.7	6.2	7.8	7.6
Valle d'Aosta	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2
Lombardia	16.3	13.0	18.0	22.9	14.7	17.3
Trentino-Alto Adige	2.8	2.6	2.3	3.0	1.7	2.4
Veneto	5.3	4.2	8.6	6.0	6.0	6.7
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	3.0	4.3	3.8	2.7	2.1	3.4
Liguria	2.8	1.5	3.9	5.6	4.0	3.6
Emilia-Romagna	7.8	6.1	11.7	11.2	10.6	10.0
Toscana	6.7	8.0	5.5	7.9	9.1	6.9
Umbria	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.1	1.5
Marche	3.0	2.5	2.7	3.8	2.3	2.8
Lazio	16.3	19.3	9.5	5.5	12.0	11.7
Abruzzo	1.8	3.3	3.8	2.6	1.3	2.9
Molise	0.9	1.0	0.4	1.3	0.8	0.7
Campania	4.6	6.3	11.0	6.9	7.9	8.3
Puglia	5.3	5.8	2.9	3.8	7.2	4.4
Basilicata	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.9
Calabria	3.8	3.1	3.1	2.1	2.7	3.0
Sicilia	4.7	7.6	2.6	4.7	6.0	4.4
Sardegna	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.8	1.7	1.2
Italia	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

TABLE A.2 *Percentage of people under protection enrolled in the Population Register by type of protection, and province, 1st January 2023*

PROVINCE	% ENROLLED IN POPULATION REGISTER					
	TOTAL	REFUGEES	ASYLUM SEEKERS	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION	SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION	TEMPORARY PROTECTION (UKRAINE)
Italia	**45.3**	**85.7**	**60.6**	**74.7**	**80.3**	**10.7**
Torino	55.8	89.0	86.9	78.6	76.8	11.3
Vercelli	49.1	84.9	60.5	71.1	76.2	13.1
Novara	36.6	88.2	88.2	62.4	84.3	11.8
Cuneo	61.5	92.3	74.4	89.2	85.5	14.0
Asti	67.4	91.9	65.7	85.0	85.5	17.6
Alessandria	66.5	94.9	76.8	84.5	88.9	16.2
Aosta	43.6	91.5	53.3	78.1	92.2	20.6
Imperia	47.6	86.4	55.2	76.4	69.9	8.5
Savona	38.1	85.8	64.2	83.3	76.5	15.5
Genova	44.4	92.3	69.0	79.7	78.5	7.9
La Spezia	46.0	94.0	75.3	81.7	77.2	9.0
Varese	46.5	86.6	71.3	67.1	83.4	12.1
Como	46.8	91.8	59.0	62.8	83.9	11.6
Sondrio	47.8	82.8	71.4	89.0	72.6	16.4
Milano	46.2	88.4	54.2	70.8	86.2	10.7
Bergamo	33.9	80.6	40.4	61.9	74.5	9.4
Brescia	35.0	83.7	57.0	61.4	74.7	9.2
Pavia	41.1	92.9	89.0	86.2	89.3	16.8
Cremona	54.5	90.5	80.9	85.3	88.1	9.8
Mantova	38.6	87.6	65.4	68.5	81.3	10.6
Bolzano	52.0	85.2	51.5	75.1	80.2	15.4
Trento	50.2	92.9	68.5	87.5	86.7	17.9
Verona	36.2	68.4	44.2	73.6	77.2	12.3
Vicenza	37.9	90.1	67.0	79.1	87.3	11.1
Belluno	29.8	91.1	57.9	74.6	70.8	11.2
Treviso	43.3	82.5	78.8	75.3	82.0	10.1
Venezia	25.8	83.5	47.6	59.7	74.0	7.7
Padova	36.9	77.1	40.7	63.4	62.7	9.6
Rovigo	41.1	74.6	47.2	67.6	77.0	14.4
Udine	28.4	85.0	62.1	79.4	71.9	9.3
Gorizia	32.8	75.2	21.9	60.7	62.9	9.3
Trieste	53.2	81.8	61.3	76.5	79.7	17.6
Piacenza	47.9	89.7	62.1	65.7	84.4	10.1
Parma	58.0	91.4	86.4	82.1	92.1	16.9
Reggio Emilia	42.6	92.3	67.5	65.2	84.5	15.6
Modena	42.5	87.7	77.2	77.4	83.9	11.9
Bologna	48.5	91.5	73.8	80.0	88.4	12.8
Ferrara	44.1	89.4	58.5	68.8	82.3	13.9
Ravenna	50.3	90.8	82.6	76.6	77.6	12.9
Forlì-Cesena	36.9	90.4	64.7	76.9	82.5	9.6
Pesaro	42.4	90.7	66.9	84.4	92.2	5.3
Ancona	59.6	84.6	63.6	80.5	75.6	12.4
Macerata	32.5	80.4	40.7	70.1	79.2	10.1

PROVINCE	TOTAL	REFUGEES	ASYLUM SEEKERS	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION	SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION	TEMPORARY PROTECTION (UKRAINE)
Ascoli Piceno	43.1	88.4	58.1	77.9	77.7	7.1
Massa-Carrara	48.2	82.0	78.6	84.4	83.0	11.0
Lucca	46.3	82.6	49.5	69.4	76.9	9.7
Pistoia	51.9	80.4	75.3	81.4	79.2	13.2
Firenze	56.4	85.5	69.7	71.2	77.8	12.7
Livorno	42.1	87.9	68.2	74.3	83.3	14.7
Pisa	55.3	88.8	67.5	79.5	82.2	14.5
Arezzo	55.0	88.8	51.3	71.1	73.9	22.2
Siena	56.6	81.1	59.3	69.9	77.5	20.0
Grosseto	41.9	87.5	63.9	76.3	72.2	9.6
Perugia	49.2	80.2	70.3	77.3	82.2	8.2
Terni	46.3	83.2	44.5	86.0	84.4	15.8
Viterbo	48.8	85.3	41.3	79.7	79.8	10.7
Rieti	56.9	88.3	54.1	82.1	70.9	13.1
Roma	44.7	83.4	51.1	57.2	83.7	5.1
Latina	49.3	87.2	69.4	74.4	84.0	9.2
Frosinone	52.5	87.7	76.5	84.1	79.9	8.8
Caserta	37.5	84.4	58.9	68.8	75.9	9.4
Benevento	46.9	86.1	87.1	70.6	74.5	10.6
Napoli	31.8	85.8	45.2	81.1	84.0	8.6
Avellino	42.1	84.8	62.4	77.5	77.9	11.6
Salerno	30.1	84.3	68.2	78.7	63.6	8.4
L'Aquila	46.6	75.8	55.5	72.3	78.0	10.0
Teramo	17.8	81.9	49.7	63.4	83.8	1.9
Pescara	36.9	75.8	51.9	64.3	77.8	9.8
Chieti	42.9	87.9	77.4	85.4	79.7	8.7
Campobasso	62.9	90.8	63.8	81.9	79.0	20.1
Foggia	50.0	85.1	66.6	84.0	84.7	9.6
Bari	58.1	84.1	60.8	84.9	82.8	11.7
Taranto	57.9	81.1	51.9	86.7	85.0	11.2
Brindisi	65.7	82.8	91.8	86.2	78.8	8.4
Lecce	65.7	85.3	74.4	80.5	80.5	9.7
Potenza	55.7	87.3	74.7	81.4	83.0	14.7
Matera	66.3	94.8	88.1	85.5	95.8	14.6
Cosenza	45.0	83.8	80.8	78.9	85.5	13.5
Catanzaro	56.9	83.5	86.9	79.6	81.6	7.9
Reggio Calabria	42.0	80.1	79.0	71.3	80.5	10.0
Trapani	77.4	88.6	81.8	89.9	89.2	8.4
Palermo	47.5	78.6	26.8	71.4	79.6	7.1
Messina	39.3	86.9	64.7	80.0	87.2	9.3
Agrigento	55.4	71.2	63.2	75.4	74.3	10.5
Caltanissetta	55.7	78.6	24.4	73.4	71.1	7.1
Enna	60.5	63.8	65.6	81.3	71.7	26.5
Catania	54.1	73.6	73.5	78.4	76.5	10.3
Ragusa	65.0	82.8	89.3	86.9	84.4	12.8
Siracusa	67.6	92.3	83.8	88.0	88.9	10.4
Sassari	53.9	93.5	89.5	86.2	91.0	11.4

PROVINCE	TOTAL	REFUGEES	ASYLUM SEEKERS	OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION	SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION	TEMPORARY PROTECTION (UKRAINE)
Nuoro	43.5	97.4	36.7	91.8	81.0	22.9
Cagliari	47.6	88.3	82.1	74.9	82.6	12.4
Pordenone	42.3	82.1	59.6	76.0	65.6	10.7
Isernia	65.3	87.0	76.3	77.1	82.7	9.7
Oristano	60.2	95.7	91.3	85.7	80.0	16.9
Biella	60.4	92.9	79.4	78.2	85.1	23.9
Lecco	43.5	86.0	61.2	83.0	82.7	10.0
Lodi	56.8	91.1	54.6	85.2	84.5	17.0
Rimini	23.3	81.7	75.9	54.4	76.9	5.5
Prato	46.0	70.1	28.8	64.3	61.1	23.8
Crotone	66.1	83.2	86.5	88.1	77.1	35.1
Vibo Valentia	31.6	75.4	50.2	71.0	67.9	12.5
Verbano-Cusio-Ossola	32.8	94.0	87.4	68.3	90.0	10.4

TABLE A.3 *Residence permits issued for refugees, asylum seekers, subsidiary protection by citizenship (principal 3 citizenships in the province), absolute values, 1st January 2023*

PROVINCE	1ST CITIZENSHIP	A.V.	2ND CITIZESHIP	A.V.	3RD CITIZENSHIP	A.V.
Torino	Nigeria	594	Somalia	367	Mali	339
Vercelli	Nigeria	84	Pakistan	51	Afghanistan	26
Novara	El Salvador	115	Nigeria	113	Pakistan	71
Cuneo	Nigeria	166	Mali	153	Afghanistan	45
Asti	Nigeria	165	Afghanistan	85	Pakistan	41
Alessandria	Nigeria	137	Mali	87	Afghanistan	43
Aosta	Somalia	19	Pakistan	17	Mali	17
Imperia	Nigeria	37	Afghanistan	26	Pakistan	16
Savona	Nigeria	51	Afghanistan	45	Mali	33
Genova	Nigeria	171	Afghanistan	106	Venezuela	94
La Spezia	Afghanistan	32	Pakistan	27	Nigeria	22
Varese	El Salvador	313	Nigeria	105	Turchia	72
Como	El Salvador	181	Pakistan	89	Nigeria	82
Sondrio	Nigeria	28	Pakistan	23	Mali	19
Milano	El Salvador	1010	Pakistan	367	Afghanistan	311
Bergamo	Nigeria	149	Pakistan	80	Mali	73
Brescia	Nigeria	195	Pakistan	146	Afghanistan	95
Pavia	Nigeria	63	Mali	52	El Salvador	26
Cremona	Nigeria	156	Afghanistan	51	Mali	37
Mantova	Nigeria	95	Pakistan	67	Mali	35
Bolzano	Iraq	264	Nigeria	165	Afghanistan	160
Trento	Nigeria	204	Pakistan	181	Siria	56
Verona	Nigeria	144	Pakistan	83	Afghanistan	62
Vicenza	Nigeria	129	Mali	51	Afghanistan	35
Belluno	Mali	17	Pakistan	16	Ucraina	14
Treviso	Nigeria	157	Mali	97	Pakistan	59
Venezia	Nigeria	96	Afghanistan	62	Venezuela	39
Padova	Nigeria	163	Afghanistan	118	Pakistan	59

PROVINCE	1ST CITIZENSHIP	A.V.	2ND CITIZESHIP	A.V.	3RD CITIZENSHIP	A.V.
Rovigo	Nigeria	54	Pakistan	28	Kosovo	19
Udine	Afghanistan	165	Pakistan	137	Nigeria	60
Gorizia	Afghanistan	92	Pakistan	80	Bangladesh	20
Trieste	Afghanistan	224	Pakistan	220	Iraq	204
Piacenza	Nigeria	68	Honduras	45	Mali	40
Parma	Nigeria	132	Somalia	79	Afghanistan	73
Reggio Emilia	Nigeria	145	Mali	61	Pakistan	37
Modena	Nigeria	112	Mali	96	Afghanistan	75
Bologna	Nigeria	174	Afghanistan	126	Pakistan	117
Ferrara	Nigeria	159	Pakistan	79	Afghanistan	77
Ravenna	Somalia	128	Nigeria	127	Afghanistan	66
Forlì-Cesena	Afghanistan	42	Nigeria	37	Mali	31
Pesaro	Pakistan	69	Nigeria	47	Ucraina	24
Ancona	Afghanistan	128	Pakistan	113	Somalia	107
Macerata	Pakistan	72	Afghanistan	67	Nigeria	36
Ascoli Piceno	Nigeria	112	Pakistan	111	Afghanistan	70
Massa-Carrara	Nigeria	38	Pakistan	21	Mali	19
Lucca	Nigeria	108	Pakistan	74	Mali	54
Pistoia	Nigeria	104	Pakistan	49	Mali	44
Firenze	Nigeria	218	Somalia	162	Pakistan	129
Livorno	Nigeria	83	Mali	35	Afghanistan	27
Pisa	Nigeria	88	Mali	75	Pakistan	36
Arezzo	Nigeria	102	Pakistan	89	Mali	54
Siena	Pakistan	81	Mali	68	Afghanistan	54
Grosseto	Afghanistan	168	Pakistan	56	Mali	54
Perugia	Nigeria	163	Pakistan	78	Afghanistan	76
Terni	Nigeria	96	Afghanistan	81	Pakistan	66
Viterbo	Nigeria	171	Afghanistan	87	Pakistan	75
Rieti	Afghanistan	267	Pakistan	113	Nigeria	92
Roma	Somalia	987	Nigeria	934	Mali	724
Latina	Nigeria	206	Mali	120	Pakistan	60
Frosinone	Nigeria	201	Mali	129	Somalia	82
Caserta	Nigeria	237	Mali	107	Ucraina	46
Benevento	Nigeria	73	Mali	51	Afghanistan	26
Napoli	Nigeria	261	Mali	180	El Salvador	165
Avellino	Nigeria	88	Mali	67	Afghanistan	61
Salerno	Nigeria	109	Mali	76	Ucraina	59
L'Aquila	Afghanistan	177	Pakistan	159	Venezuela	82
Teramo	Nigeria	107	Mali	50	Venezuela	46
Pescara	Nigeria	143	Eritrea	80	Venezuela	34
Chieti	Nigeria	72	Mali	51	Afghanistan	31
Campobasso	Nigeria	92	Afghanistan	41	Pakistan	40
Foggia	Mali	197	Nigeria	115	Afghanistan	44
Bari	Afghanistan	327	Nigeria	207	Iraq	142
Taranto	Afghanistan	103	Nigeria	89	Mali	57
Brindisi	Iraq	92	Mali	90	Nigeria	73
Lecce	Nigeria	183	Afghanistan	146	Pakistan	76

PROVINCE	1ST CITIZENSHIP	A.V.	2ND CITIZESHIP	A.V.	3RD CITIZENSHIP	A.V.
Potenza	Nigeria	84	Mali	48	Pakistan	27
Matera	Afghanistan	42	Nigeria	41	Mali	39
Cosenza	Iraq	127	Nigeria	117	Afghanistan	89
Catanzaro	Iraq	99	Nigeria	68	Siria	39
Reggio Calabria	Mali	119	Siria	58	Nigeria	58
Trapani	Mali	154	Nigeria	154	Somalia	151
Palermo	Nigeria	178	Mali	110	Costa d'Avorio	46
Messina	Nigeria	73	Mali	38	Venezuela	23
Agrigento	Mali	64	Nigeria	48	Somalia	23
Caltanissetta	Pakistan	204	Afghanistan	162	Somalia	54
Enna	Somalia	56	Nigeria	26	Mali	11
Catania	Nigeria	149	Mali	104	Somalia	41
Ragusa	Nigeria	51	Mali	41	Somalia	37
Siracusa	Nigeria	57	Somalia	45	Mali	37
Sassari	Nigeria	68	Mali	32	Colombia	14
Nuoro	Afghanistan	22	Mali	17	Nigeria	7
Cagliari	Mali	125	Nigeria	105	Ucraina	30
Pordenone	Pakistan	201	Afghanistan	130	Venezuela	60
Isernia	Somalia	122	Afghanistan	43	Nigeria	34
Oristano	Afghanistan	7	Nigeria	7	Mali	6
Biella	Nigeria	105	Pakistan	43	Mali	36
Lecco	Nigeria	54	Afghanistan	29	Pakistan	29
Lodi	Nigeria	52	Afghanistan	31	El Salvador	25
Rimini	Ucraina	64	Afghanistan	46	Nigeria	43
Prato	Pakistan	77	Nigeria	65	Afghanistan	35
Crotone	Pakistan	63	Iraq	57	Afghanistan	55
Vibo Valentia	Mali	25	Nigeria	13	Afghanistan	11
Verbano-Cusio-Ossola	Nigeria	26	Mali	23	Gambia	10

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Abstract

Italy is a major destination of forced migration flows and hosts a sizeable population of beneficiaries of international protection, comprised of refugees and holders of subsidiary protection, and temporary protection status. Existing literature points to a problematic situation marked by high levels of exclusion and generally poor integration.
Despite the relevance of these groups for the Italian social context, the number of studies is limited.
This study aims to fill this major gap, which is also a significant hurdle to the development of more effective inclusion policies.

Through a structured survey of beneficiaries of international and temporary protection living in Italy, complemented by a comprehensive and in-depth qualitative investigation, the report “Integration between challenges and opportunities” uncovers a troubling situation.
The study, based on mixed methods for poverty measurement, presents a reality marked by high levels of absolute and relative poverty, as well as severe social and material deprivation compared with natives and with other immigrants.

The empirical picture offered by the report “Integration between challenges and opportunities” has clear implications for policymaking and provides the necessary evidence base for more effective policy interventions.

Key Takeways from Literature[1]

1. Global Data Gaps

- Existing data, whether from academic research or national and local authorities, often have significant limitations. In particular:
  - Many datasets do not differentiate between refugees and other social groups or among specific refugee subgroups (e.g. gender, origin, age, entry status). Sometimes such data are not collected, or they are collected but not made available to key publics (researchers, practitioners, advocacy organizations).
  - Most studies focus on the structural preconditions of socio-economic incorporation (e.g. reception systems, integration policies) rather than on refugees' perspectives and voices.

2. European and Italian Data Gaps

- There are substantial gaps in data concerning refugees also in European host countries - and in Italy in particular - due to fragmented data collection systems and ineffective policy assessments. In particular:
  - Critical data gaps exist in many domains of refugee socio-economic conditions, including residency, status, family conditions, social networks, education, vocational training, skill recognition, housing, and labour market participation.
  - Data are often limited or absent in these domains and are rarely disaggregated by gender, age, or origin.
  - The lack of standardized reporting mechanisms limits understanding and comparability of refugee socio-economic conditions across Europe.
  - The data gap in Italy has been addressed in policy agendas and is the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the National Institute of Statistics and the Ministry of Interior.

3. Policy Impact

- Policies shape refugee socio-economic outcomes by providing direct support and facilitating refugees' confidence. However, initial reception is crucial for future socio-economic conditions.
  Poorly timed and structured asylum reception policies can be disempowering and result in fragmented outcomes due to organizational and contextual inequalities.

4. Labour Market Conditions

- There is a significant "refugee gap" in labour market conditions, evidenced by higher unemployment, underemployment, deskilling, involvement in the informal economy, and lower wages compared to other social groups, especially at the beginning of refugees' labour careers. Among the main causes documented in the literature:
  - Weaker mobilization and relevance of social ties (both kinship networks and ties with the host society).
  - Lower educational credentials and soft skills, limited formal and informal recognition of previous education and work experience, and lower proficiency in host country languages.
  - Vulnerability in life courses (e.g. encampments, dreadful journeys, health problems).
  - Inadequate active labour market policy targeting.
  - Negative public perceptions affecting even those with stronger human capital and individual characteristics.

1 These key takeaways are the synthesis of a broad literature review that has been made as part of the Desk Review (see Methodology). The whole literature review can be found in the Annex.

5. Labour Market Participation in the Italian Context

- In Italy, the conditions described above apply. Additionally:
- Targeted research and analysis are limited.
- Unemployment may be less relevant than in other EU countries, but due to general characteristics of the labour market downward assimilation into low-skilled and informal jobs is more pronounced.
- While existing literature provides little systematic evidence on labour market integration of refugees, previous qualitative research shows a consistent picture of concentration in low-paid, precarious and informal jobs.
- The transition from the reception system to autonomy is often ineffective.
- Access to educational paths to improve qualifications and labour market participation is limited.

6. Refugee Poverty

- Evidence on refugee poverty is relatively limited and recent, particularly in the Italian context. Studies in the Global North show refugee poverty often manifests through housing insecurity, inability to cover essential needs (clothing, medicines, food), and overreliance on welfare and other support networks.
- Approaches focusing on capabilities and aspirations note that refugee conditions limit opportunities to plan for a better future and thus overcome structural disadvantages.

7. Factors Affecting Refugee Poverty

- Factors such as employment problems, ineffective reception, language proficiency, health conditions, and limited social capital also affect refugee poverty. Some scholars highlight the “trap” of welfare and reception, where inadequate targeting and stigmatization make public support disempowering and ineffective.

8. Role of Civil Society

- Existing literature converges in stating that civil society plays a pivotal role in complementing responses to refugee needs and vulnerabilities. While the role of civil society is not unquestioned (e.g. criminalization of solidarity, lack of adequate skills), civil society organizations have acquired a solid position in supporting refugees directly and/or pressuring public authorities to meet refugee needs and lobby for refugee rights. Civil society organizations thus play a substantial role in refugee coping strategies.

9. Italian Civil Society

- In Italy, where refugee support is mainly focused on the initial phases of asylum adjudication, civil society organizations play a strong and relevant subsidiary role in refugee empowerment. However, their institutional capacity and action may be insufficient to cover all refugee needs. Evidence is based on qualitative data, and systematic surveys do not provide enough information to assess civil society organizations’ roles in refugee coping strategies.

10. Refugee Networks

- Refugee networks are generally more fragile and less extensive compared to those of other migrants. However, there is evidence that refugees actively seek, create, and utilize their networks as coping strategies to overcome their vulnerabilities. In particular, refugee community organizations: a) Act as alternative service providers when public support is inadequate; b) Provide general well-being and a welcoming environment to recreate community identities; c) Give refugees a voice in the public arena.

11. Bridging Social Networks

- International literature shows that bridging social networks spanning different social groups are key to overcoming refugee vulnerabilities. Though hard to achieve, inter-group social networks strongly correlate with refugee socio-economic success.

Key Findings of the Study

The study on the socio-economic situation of refugees in Italy is the first of such width conducted on this target in Italy. It fills a serious knowledge gap through a carefully designed qualitative-quantitative methodology. It is based on a **survey with 1,231 refugees**, complemented by key-informant interviews with relevant stakeholders and focus groups discussions with refugees.

The study has a special focus on poverty, which we based on three complementary indices: absolute poverty, relative poverty and an index of severe material and social deprivation.

The study and the final report "Integration between challenges and opportunities" suggest that t**he socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy are marked by high levels of poverty and deprivation**.
More in detail, the study and the report highlight the following aspects:

HOUSING AND LINGUISTIC SKILLS: TWO CRITICAL DIMENSIONS

- Housing conditions of refugees in Italy are poor and problematic, with almost 10% living in a precarious dwelling or a squatted building and more than one-fourth (26%) declaring to have suffered some housing difficulty in the last year. The probability of having experienced such difficulties is higher for males, persons over 45, and persons of African origin. Surprisingly, such probability is not reduced by time spent in Italy - hinting at difficult access to housing provisions and at persisting discrimination.
- **Linguistic proficiency is perfectible**, with **18% of respondents declaring to have no or little knowledge of Italian**, and only 22% perceiving themselves as mastering the language. The language gap is often traced to insufficient training during the reception phase.

OCCUPATION AND SALARIES: ACTIVE BUT HEAVILY PENALISED

- **Refugees in Italy have a relatively high activity rate**, with 84% of respondents having performed some remunerated activity since arrival and 70% declaring to have performed at least one hour of paid work or business in the last week. These rates are higher than those of Italian nationals and non-EU foreigners.
- The probability of being employed is higher for men (+16%). Secondary education (but strikingly not tertiary education) also counts. **The probability of having a job grows the most with time spent in Italy**. However, refugees over 45, as well as those from Asia and the Middle East, and to a lesser extent from Africa, are less likely to be employed.
- 65% of survey respondents perform some employed work, but only 21% are in a permanent and full-time job, 17% of refugees **in the sample** are employed in a (fully or partially) irregular form.
- **More than 1/3 of refugees in the sample perform an elementary occupation** (e.g. bricklayers, cleaners, unskilled agricultural workers). Deskilling and the lack of upskilling opportunities, associated with a systematic discouragement of personal ambitions by welfare agencies (within and outside the reception system), are perceived as major problems.
- The average monthly compensation for employed refugees in the sample is €1,163. Time spent in Italy has a positive impact on salaries. Still, only after some time: refugees who have spent between 6 and 9 years in Italy earn an average of 16% more (and +24% for those who have been in the country for 10 or more years) than those who have arrived less than five years ago.
- General disparities in remuneration levels determined by gender and area of residence are confirmed for refugees, with men earning 17% more than women and residents in Southern Italy earning 16% less.

- Monthly income at the household level is not much higher than reported individual income (median value €1,254), which reflects a **low employment intensity in refugees households**. Distribution is uneven, with 39% of respondents' households having an overall income of less than €1,000 and 27% of more than €1,500.
- Refugees have an **overall good degree of financial integration**, with 83% of respondents having a bank or post office account. However, 3% of our sample tried to open an account but had their application rejected. The probability of having a bank or postal account is higher for younger refugees, for those with higher level of education, and for those having spent more time in Italy.

ABSOLUTE POVERTY: A WORRYING PICTURE

- According to our income-based definition, 43.5% of our refugees **sample is in absolute poverty**.
- Absolute poverty is less prevalent among men than women, **refugee men are 9 percentage points (p.p.) less likely to be poor than women with similar characteristics** in terms of age, education, origin, time spent, and location in Italy. This gender gap is partly (but not entirely) explained by the presence of minor children in the household.
- **Absolute poverty is more prevalent among individuals with low education**: respondents with secondary or tertiary education are about 10 p.p. less likely to be poor than those with, at most, primary education but otherwise similar characteristics.
- **The likelihood of being in absolute poverty increases with age**: for more senior individuals (aged 45 or more), the likelihood of falling below the threshold is 13 p.p. higher than for their younger fellow refugees.
- **Absolute poverty decreases steeply with the length of time spent in Italy**. Relative to those who have been in Italy for at most one year, respondents who have been in the country for two to five years are about 10 p.p. less likely to be classified as poor, a differential that increases to about 25 p.p. among respondents who have been in Italy for six or more years.
- For Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection, the absolute poverty rate is 20 p.p. higher than for respondents from other origin countries with the same demographic profile and migration seniority. However, the higher prevalence of poverty is not associated with higher social exclusion (probably due to stronger solidarity networks).

RELATIVE POVERTY: AN EVEN MORE DRAMATIC OUTLOOK

- 67% of refugees in our sample were at risk of poverty (relative poverty index), as opposed to 17% of Italian citizens and 39.5% of non-EU citizens living in Italy (data 2023). While this level is worryingly high, it may underestimate the importance of non-monetary sources of wealth represented, for instance, by support provided by fellow nationals or civil society organisations.
- As with absolute poverty, also **the risk of finding oneself in conditions of relative poverty decreases with** education (-11 p.p. and -15 p.p. respectively for secondary and tertiary educated compared with primary or less) **and with time spent in Italy** (14 p.p. lower with six to nine years in Italy, -22 p.p. with ten years or more, compared to those with less than five years since immigration).
- **Ukrainians are significantly more at risk of relative poverty than anyone else**, everything else equal, but as with absolute poverty, this does not translate into a higher risk of social and material deprivation.

SOCIAL AND MATERIAL DEPRIVATION: OVERLAPS AND DIFFERENCES

- **About one-quarter (25.8%) of refugees in the sample are in a state of severe material and social deprivation** (SMSD is a measure based on the lack of capacity to afford basic items such as short annual holidays, a proper meal every second day or having regular leisure activities). By way of comparison, SMSD rate was 8% for Italian citizens and 20% for foreign residents of Italy (Eurostat, 2022).
- As with other measures of poverty, the **probability of being in SMSD increases with age and decreases with length of stay in Italy and with level of education**. Unlike other forms of poverty, however, women are slightly less likely to be in SMSD relative to men (23.4% versus 27.3%) and beneficiaries of international protection from Asia, the Middle East or Africa are significantly more likely (+9 p.p.) to be in such situation than respondents from all other origins.
- Remarkably, Ukrainians do not display higher SMSD than comparable respondents from other countries of origin despite their higher likelihood of being in poverty. This is probably due to the opportunity many of them have to rely on support networks that compensate for income poverty or on support from relatives abroad.

- **The three measures of poverty that were used are obviously interrelated but they do not overlap entirely.** Almost 18% of respondents are simultaneously in absolute poverty, at risk of poverty, and in severe material and social deprivation. But **a significant share (47%) of individuals who are either in absolute or relative poverty are not also in SMSD**. This means that for a significant share of refugees economic poverty does not immediately translate into material deprivation, probably due to private support networks providing basic goods and services.

COPING STRATEGIES: LITTLE HELP FROM OUTSIDE

- In a situation of widespread and serious poverty and deprivation, **coping strategies are crucially important in order to gauge resilience and to design support policies**. When facing periods of economic distress, refugees in our sample declare their most frequent response is "to take loans or borrow money" (38%). The next most frequent answers point to the reduction of consumption of different goods and services: food (26%), housing (i.e. "move to a poorer quality shelter": 25%), health, education, and hygiene-related expenses (15%).
- The capacity to cope with crises critically depends also on personal networks. When asked how many people they felt "so close to" that they could count on them "in case of serious personal problems", a robust majority in our sample answered less than 3 (49% answered one or two, none for 16% of respondents). **Scarcity of "helpful" social capital is certainly an important factor of refugees' disadvantage compared with other migrants and with natives**.
- Even when facing periods of acute economic distress, only a minority of refugees have access to welfare benefits, In fact, **73% of our respondents have never obtained any payment or other forms of material support from public sources**. This is clearly contrasting with a widespread narrative depicting refugees as heavily dependent on welfare.
- **Tertiary-educated respondents are more likely than others to receive some type of public support**. This is probably due to structural barriers in the access to welfare provisions preventing many eligible refugees from claiming the benefits they would be entitled to. More educated refugees are more likely to be able to overcome such barriers.
- When faced with housing difficulties (26% experienced some in the last year), almost half of refugees profited from hospitality at friends' or relatives', and 17% were hosted in a reception centre. **However, a large share had to resort to emergency accommodation (17%), 10% found refuge in a building not intended for residential use, and 11% were forced to live on the street or in some other public space**.
- Marginalisation and distress can be exacerbated by subjective and structural discrimination. In fact, close to half of refugees in our sample (45%) have suffered some form of discrimination in Italy, the most commonly reported reasons for such discrimination being nationality and skin colour. **Effective ways to cope with such a high level of (perceived) discrimination appear to be lacking, 83% of refugees who have suffered discrimination have not reported it**, out of a worrying mix of lack of awareness of their rights, passive acceptance, and lack of trust in public authorities.

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CHAPTER 1

Methodology

The research was developed using a mixed methods approach, jointly mobilising quantitative and qualitative methodologies, in order to pursue more advanced research objectives and to strengthen the results.

Quantitative results, provided by a structured survey in the Italian context, offer statistical data about refugees' socio-economic situation. On the other hand, the **qualitative approach**, comprising an extensive desk analysis and literature review, focus groups and key informant interviews, represents an essential complement not only to validate quantitative information but also to integrate it with more fine-grained insights on some key dimensions and with refugees' own perspectives.

Our analysis aims to disentangle different dimensions of refugee vulnerability in Italy.
Statistical analysis, along with supporting evidence from interviews and focus groups, links specific outcomes regarding poverty and vulnerability to particular socio-demographic factors. By doing so, we can analytically distinguish three main domains of *vulnerabilization*:

a) Refugee-specific factors

These originate from the unique life experiences of refugees.
Fleeing from their home countries means refugees face distinct challenges in the destination societies, compared not only to natives but also to other foreign (migrant) populations. As summarized in our review of existing literature, these challenges include limited social networks, limited language proficiency, difficulty in recognizing skills and credentials, and health fragilities resulting from the hardships they have endured.

b) Context-specific factors

These stem from the functioning of host societies.
In Italy, certain social needs are chronically unmet, creating conditions that increase the vulnerability of both citizens and foreigners. The functioning of labour and housing markets and policies to mitigate social risks in these domains serve as examples. Refugees, as latecomers, face more significant challenges in accessing an already fragile welfare system, thereby increasing their risk of perpetuating and reproducing disadvantage.

c) Interaction-related factors

These factors exacerbate the issues from the previous two categories.
Prejudiced views on foreigners in general and refugees, in particular, can fuel discrimination and further increase refugees' vulnerability.

1.1 Quantitative research methodology

The survey was designed using questions from **previous surveys administered in Italy to migrants and/or natives**, so to have benchmark/comparative data for every single dimension.
This benchmarking based on the results of previous surveys is necessary in order to seize the specificities of refugees as distinct from other foreign immigrants and from Italian natives. The main focus of the survey has been on socio-economic conditions of refugees and included, in particular, a set of specific information that are essential in order to construct our poverty indicators. More in detail, the survey questionnaire covered the following dimensions (full questionnaire in Annex 4.3):

Tab. 1 **List of dimensions for the Survey**

DIMENSIONS	AIM
Personal and household information	Profiling the interviewee and understanding the role played by these elements in the socio-economic vulnerability and poverty level.
Education	
Family	
Work	Detecting the level of integration in terms of employment and self-employment
Poverty Level	Investigating the respondents' level of socio-economic integration
Vulnerability	
Coping strategies	
Integration	

The data collection started with a pilot phase to identify potential practical and ethical issues in the administration phase.
The quantitative data have been collected through the deployment of a **survey with CAPI methodology** (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing), which is a face-to-face (primarily in-person) data collection method in which interviewers use software on a computer or tablet to record interview responses.
In particular, the survey has been **informatized on ID Survey platform**, which allowed automatic upload, tracking of compilation, and updating of sample quotas.

During the fieldwork, enumerators both collected responses to the questionnaire and noted major critical issues encountered while conducting the intervention (e.g. the reachability and availability of eligible respondents). Interviews were conducted throughout the week, including weekends, in order to maximise the probability of intercepting different categories of potential respondents.
For the same reason, the questionnaire has been developed in several languages (**Italian, English, French, Spanish and Ukrainian**).

To enhance the quality of the sample, a variety of sampling channels have been employed for conducting the interviews. Firstly, data collection involved both associations and individual interviewers. Hence, both **practitioners**, who had already developed relationships of mutual trust with the target group, and **experts in face-to-face interviews** were selected as enumerators to oversee survey administering.
The selection process gave priority to the former, who might be members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or independent practitioners.

All enumerators have been trained to guarantee the effectiveness, correctness, robustness, and reliability of the data collection process. Moreover, enumerators were required to scrupulously follow the UNHCR Ethical provisions. Secondly, snowballing sampling (where interviewees suggest one or two additional people for the interview), centre-based sampling (conducting interviews at locations central to the refugees' communities such as churches, language centres, shops, and social services offices), and, to a minimal degree, CSO network sampling were adopted. This strategy enabled the establishment of a system that ensures the completion of a sample size robust enough to provide confidence in the ability to deliver meaningful socio-economic integration results. The incorporation of qualitative components has further enhanced the depth and reliability of the findings, ensuring a comprehensive approach to addressing the information gaps.

The survey targeted **refugees living in Italy and naturalized refugees** coming from several countries as detailed in the tables below.
The distributions by country of origin provide a good approximation of nationalities existing across Italy.

Participants were based in **16 provinces**, selected from those with the largest refugee populations, and balanced between larger and smaller urban centres across four Italian macro-regions (North-West, North-East, Centre, and South).

In agreement with UNHCR, the sample size results in more than 1,200 units, articulated according to the distributions shown in the tables below.

Tab. 2 **Sample distribution by gender**

CATEGORY	QUOTA SAMPLING PLAN[2]	ACTUAL SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION
Male	70%	62%
Female	30%	37%
Other	-	1%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

2 Based on the gender balance of the ISTAT data mentioned in the ToR (which the Consultant considers a proxy for the gender distribution of refugees)

Tab. 3 **Sample distribution by province of residence**

MACRO AREA	PROVINCE OF RESIDENCE	% QUOTA SAMPLING PLAN (N)	% ACTUAL SAMPLE (N)
North-West	Brescia	7% (80)	3% (39)
	Genova	4% (50)	4% (53)
	Milano	14% (170)	14% (169)
	Torino	9% (100)	9% (105)
	Bergamo	_[3]	4% (45)
	N-W Total	34% (400)	34% (411)
North-East	Bologna	5% (60)	5% (63)
	Udine	4% (45)	4% (49)
	Verona	3% (40)	2% (28)
	Venezia	4% (50)	4% (48)
	Padova	-	1% (13)
	N-E Total	16% (195)	16% (201)
Centre	Firenze	4% (50)	4% (48)
	Perugia	3% (40)	3% (39)
	Roma	23% (280)	24% (294)
	C. Total	30% (370)	31% (381)
South	Caserta	5% (60)	5% (63)
	Napoli	11% (130)	10% (129)
	Bari	4% (45)	4% (46)
	S. Total	20% (235)	19% (238)
TOTAL		**100% (1200)**	**100% (1231)**

Tab. 4 **Sample distribution by country of origin**

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN	% QUOTA SAMPLING PLAN[4] (N)	% ACTUAL SAMPLE(N)
Pakistan	13% (150)	14% (169)
Iraq	6% (70)	6% (69)
Afghanistan	10% (120)	10% (119)
Syria	4% (50)	4% (55)
Nigeria	19% (230)	17% (208)[5]
Mali	11% (130)	10% (126)
Eritrea	4% (50)	5% (61)
Somalia	8% (100)	8% (95)
Venezuela	4% (50)	4% (55)
El Salvador	4% (50)	4% (49)
Sudan	-	3% (34)
Sub Total	83% (1000)	85% (1040)
Ukraine (BTP)	17% (200)	15% (191)
TOTAL	**100% (1200)**	**100% (1231)**

3 Although they were not initially part of the sample, Bergamo and Padova were subsequently incorporated and aligned with Brescia and Verona, respectively, owing to their geographic and socio-cultural proximity

4 Based on data provided by ISTAT on residence permits of non-EU citizens for asylum, asylum-seeking, and humanitarian reason across the territory

5 The proportion of Nigerians has been reduced to include Sudanese individuals in the sample

1.1.1 Measuring Poverty

Given the study's special focus on refugees' socio-economic disadvantage, specifically poverty, we developed a specific methodology to operationalise such research priorities.

Poverty is generally defined as a state where an individual or household lacks the financial resources to meet the basic needs for a minimum standard of living. It can be measured in two alternative ways, i.e. in "absolute" or in "relative" terms. Measures of absolute poverty define as "poor" those individuals whose income (or consumption) falls below a certain threshold. Alternatively, relative poverty measures define as "poor" those individuals whose income (or consumption) is below some fixed proportion of median income (or consumption).

A closely related and intertwined concept is material and social deprivation. Material deprivation refers to the inability to afford basic goods and services that are considered essential in a given society. These can include items such as heating, clean water, nutritious food, adequate housing, and the ability to meet unexpected expenses. Social deprivation involves the lack of social connections and resources to fully participate to the activities of the life of the community such as social and political initiatives, having social support networks, and access to cultural and recreational activities.

Given the complexity and multidimensionality of the notion of poverty, in order to enhance the effectiveness and robustness of the study, we opted for a combination of measures, each designed to capture different (but all relevant) dimensions. In particular, we used two alternative measures of poverty, an absolute and a relative one, and an additional measure of material and social deprivation. Each of these measures has strengths and weaknesses, which are discussed below.

For feasibility reasons[6], our measure of **absolute poverty** is akin to the one adopted in other industrialized countries[7,8], where household income is confronted with a threshold calculated as the amount of money spent on a given set of goods and services considered as essential for a minimally acceptable standard of living[9].

Our definition of **relative poverty** is taken from EUROSTAT's definition of "at risk of poverty": a person is defined at risk of poverty if after social transfers (i.e. support given by government and institutions) they live in a household with an equivalised (i.e. adjusted to account for the size and composition of the household) disposable income below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median value.

To compute both measures, we rely on answers to the survey question 33 "Considering all the different sources (income from work, annuities, aids, etc.). what is approximately the average total monthly sum of your household's monetary income?". This provides an estimate of household disposable income, but it may be subject to error since the information is self-reported. In fact, respondents may have had difficulty recalling exact information or may lack full knowledge of the income of other household members, which might be underestimated or exaggerated, which could be underestimated or exaggerated. Additionally, though the question explicitly mentions "aid" as a source of household income, it is possible that some respondents did not include social transfers or transfers received from abroad (as is common, especially among Ukrainian refugees, according to a recent ongoing survey).

6 The primary aim of the study was to provide an overview of the socio-economic situation of the refugees in Italy, which comprises many and different aspects other than poverty, such as coping strategies to face poverty itself, but also work and housing conditions, language knowledge, and financial inclusion. The methodology we used for measuring poverty - although different from the consumption-based one employed by ISTAT - was the one that best aligned with the practical constraints of such a rich and complex study

7 Emily A. Shrider, U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Reports, P60-283. *Poverty in the United States: 2023*, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, DC, September 2024

8 Burton Gustajtis and Andrew Heisz, Market Basket Measure poverty thresholds and provisional poverty trends for 2021 and 2022. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75F0002M ISSN 1707 2840 ISBN 978-0-660-46420-6. January 17, 2023

9 In the Italian context this threshold is calculated by ISTAT, which however uses a different methodology with respect to the one used in this report, thus a comparison is limited

Furthermore, not all respondents reported their household income ("I don't know" and "I prefer not to answer" were also acceptable answers).

Moreover, when computing absolute poverty, we included individuals with households up to five components. When computing the "at risk of poverty" indicator, we used the "equivalized" disposable income, i.e. the total disposable income of a household divided by the number of household members converted into equivalized adults; household members are made equivalent by weighting each according to their age, using the so-called modified OECD equivalence scale, which gives a weight of 1.0 to the first adult, 0.5 to the second and each subsequent person aged 14 and over, 0.3 to each child aged under 14.

An alternative way to capture the vulnerability of the refugee population beyond income poverty is to assess the extent to which they are able to afford expenses for the items that are deemed necessary to lead an adequate life. We measure this aspect by computing the Severe Material and Social Deprivation Rate (SMSD), an indicator developed by the Social Protection Committee, an EU advisory policy committee for the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO).
The SMSD is based on the assessment of individuals' ability to afford certain goods, services, or social activities. Specifically, individuals are defined in SMSD if they cannot afford at least seven out of the following thirteen deprivation items (elicited from questions 36-48 in our questionnaire):

- A one-week annual holiday away from home;
- A meal with meat, chicken, fish, or vegetarian equivalent every second day;
- Keeping home adequately warm;
- Having access to a car/van for personal use;
- Having an internet connection;
- Being confronted with payment arrears;
- Replacing worn-out furniture;
- Replacing worn-out clothes by new ones;
- Having two pairs of properly fitting shoes;
- Getting together with friends/family for a drink/meal at least once a month;
- Having regular leisure activities;
- Spending a small amount of money each week on him/herself;
- Capacity to face unexpected expenses.

1.2 Qualitative research methodology

Qualitative research integrated the quantitative information by exploring in more depth the variations across the target group, focusing mainly on coping strategies adopted by respondents to overcome the obstacles encountered in the process of socio-economic integration.

Data were collected through: in-depth desk analysis, key informant interviews, and focus groups.

1.2.1 Desk analysis and literature review

The in-depth desk analysis consisted in an **accurate investigation of documents** collected from relevant sources. Among these, we included UNHCR, ISTAT, academic papers, and European institutions.

This activity, which included a vast literature review, aimed at analysing and drawing a more **detailed picture of existing knowledge and knowledge gaps** concerning refugees' socio-economic conditions, with particular regard to levels of poverty and vulnerability.

The desk review and especially the literature review played a key role in orienting the drafting of the questionnaire and they were crucial for both supporting the analysis of survey results and orienting the qualitative phase of the research (KIIs and FGs).
For the sake of synthesis, in this report only an overview of the "Key Takeaways of the Literature Review" has been inserted. The full literature review and the relative list of references, however, can be found in the Appendix (Annex 4.1).

1.2.2 Key informants interviews

KIIs unfolded in two different phases of the analysis.
A **first set (comprising nine KIIs) served a preparatory function**. Indeed, before the data analysis phase, aspects detected by the survey and not previously considered elements were further investigated, in order to support evidence.
More specifically, also some refugees/former refugees (all of them with public roles in civil society organisations) were interviewed to incorporate as much as possible their distinct perspective in the research design.
Then, **another seven KIIs were conducted after the first phase of data analysis** to further validate interpretations that emerged during the aforementioned phase.
The dimensions primarily addressed in this phase were job inclusion, housing, coping strategies and the specificities of the conditions of persons with specific needs.

Tab. 5 **List of KIIs**

CATEGORY	NAME AND SURNAME	INSTITUTION
Stakeholders	Congia Stefania	General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies ot Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali
	Delbene Angelo	Welfare department at Municipality of Genoa
	Facchini Andrea	Welfare department / Immigration Area Representative at Regione Emilia Romagna
	Forte Maria	Prefect at Ministry of Interior
	Gallo Fabrizio	Prefect and President of the National Commission for the Right of Asylum
	Henry Giulia	Senior Researcher at IRES (Istituto di Ricerche Economico Sociali del Piemonte)
	Ieritano Francesca and Chiacchella Giulia	Coordinator and Clinical Coordinator of the "Un Camper per i diritti" project, at Medici per i Diritti Umani-MEDU
	Marchetti Chiara	Head of Project Planning, Research, and Communication at CIAC Onlus
	Maselli Stefania	Servizio Centrale SAI
	Nasti Andrea	Consorzio Comunità Brianza (Lead organization for the project Fra Noi)
	Orlandi Camilla	Head of the Department for Integration and Reception, Immigration Management at ANCI
	Schiavone Gianfranco	Consorzio Italiano di Solidarietà
BITPs	Hasnain Syed	Associazione UNIRE
	Keita Adam	Associazione Giovani Profughi
	Kideiba Yagoub	MOSAICO - Azione per i rifugiati
	Anonymous Key Informant	Eritrea Democratica

KIIs targeted stakeholders, decision-makers and practitioners playing particularly relevant roles at national and/or local level in the governance of integration of refugees.

The interviews delved into complex and sensitive topics not fully addressed in the survey, such as coping strategies, and explored key areas not included in the survey, like wellbeing and the role of remittances.

Lastly, five interviews were carried out in a group format with academics working in the field of research and on the topics under study. The interviewees were selected by area of expertise, e.g. housing issues, integration processes, labour insertion, reception and integration system and socio-economic integration of migrants in general.

This moment of exchange of views was moderated by the members of the working team, through the presentation of some preliminary findings and targeted questions.

Tab. 6 **Key Academics Informant**

NAME AND SURNAME	INSTITUTION
Nazareno Panichella	Università degli Studi di Milano
Davide Benassi	Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca
Sabrina Marchetti	Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
Mariapia Mendola	Università degli studi di Milano Bicocca
Enrico Gargiulo	Università di Bologna

In brief, a total of 21 interviews were conducted, comprising 16 individual interviews and 5 group interviews.

1.2.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups aimed, on the one hand, at analysing critical issues and interpretation dilemmas arisen from the survey and, on the other, at the discussion of coping strategies adopted by vulnerable refugees.
In particular, focus groups revolved around the following aspects:

- the main challenges faced by refugees and their coping strategies to address them;
- the strengths, weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages of being a refugee in Italy;
- the description of their personal network and the description of whether it is composed of refugees, Italians or migrants; associations and communities;
- their economic situations/occupation in the country of origin, in the country of residence and transit countries and in Italy and a comparison among them;
- the comparison between who had an experience in the asylum reception system and who had not;
- the education and how influenced their stay in Italy;
- the description of their housing situation;
- the change of their situation before and after international or temporary protection was recognized.

Overall, 10 Focus Groups were organized between November 2023 and February 2024.
They were held in **Milan, Turin, Rome and Bologna** and relied on the participation of almost 70 refugees in total, clustered by their area of origin and respecting an AGD (age, gender and diversity) approach.

Each focus group lasted about **2 hours, involving around 8 people each**. Cultural mediators were included when needed. Participant recruitment was subjected to strict quality control and adherence to sampling to ensure the reliability of the information collected and the security in the processing of sensitive data.
In order to ensure the expected numerosity, over-recruitment was conducted to address any unforeseen circumstances or absent participants.

Focus groups took advantage of group dynamics to go deeper into the topics under investigation, encouraging the sharing of ideas and proposals. Rich and articulate reflections on the topic were stimulated through collective input and the use of “non-directive” techniques.

1.3 Integrating qualitative and quantitative evidence

In all studies of complex and relatively under-researched social issues, integrating qualitative and quantitative evidence is a way to obtain a more complete and nuanced knowledge of the phenomena under investigation. This is the reason why we adopted a mixed method approach articulated in the activities described in previous sections.

It is crucial to emphasise, however, that our understanding of the mixed method approach has not been limited to juxtaposing qualitative and quantitative methods. On the contrary, we paid special and constant attention to the interplay and reflexive cross-fertilisation between the two sets of research activities.

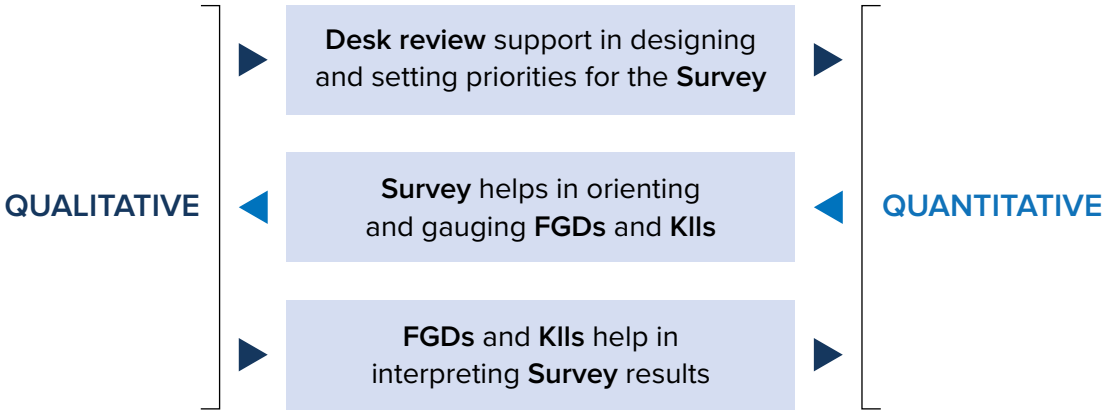
As visualised in Fig. 1. there are three main ways in which this reciprocal and recursive cross-fertilisation took place along our fieldwork and in the writing of this report, composing what we define as a «quali-quanti knowledge development cycle».

First, our extensive and accurate desk review provided critical information that helped us design the survey questionnaire to fill existing knowledge gaps.

Second, the survey results (starting from the descriptive results that were obtained and analysed first) were instrumental in making the subsequent qualitative research activities (focus group discussions and key informant interviews) more fruitful and insightful.

Third, the FGDs and KIIs results provided essential insights, enabling us to interpret survey results in a deeper and more nuanced way.

Fig. 1 **Our quali-quanti knowledge development cycle**



1.4 Ethical compliance

In conducting our study, we adhered to **stringent privacy and ethical standards** to ensure the protection, dignity, and rights of all participants.
Our methodology included both anonymous surveys and focus group discussions, carefully designed to uphold the highest ethical principles throughout the research process.

The quantitative data collection methodology involved the administration of **anonymous survey**, in which the anonymity of the respondent was guaranteed and the identities of the respondents remained **confidential and protected**. To enhance voluntary participation and informed consent, we provided detailed information about the study's objectives, the nature of the data being collected, and the use of this data.
Participants were given the freedom to choose whether to provide their personal contact information by signing a **privacy policy declaration**.
This declaration explicitly stated that their contact details would be used solely for the purposes of recontacting them for focus group discussions or sharing with the UNHCR. Those who opted not to sign the declaration were assured that their responses would remain completely anonymous.

In the qualitative data collection, which took place through focus group discussions, additional measures were taken to maintain confidentiality and comfort.
At the beginning of the focus group, each participant was explained with the objectives of the study and signed an **informed consent**. The consent sheet was explained point by point and, for those who had doubts, the research team answered all questions, sometimes also in different languages.
Participants who agreed to join the focus groups, by signing the consent form, were reminded of the voluntary nature of their participation; they were informed that they could have abandoned the focus group without providing any explanation.
Discussions were conducted in a manner that respected the participants' experiences and perspectives, fostering an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Lattanzio KIBS, as Data Controller, ensured full compliance with the GDPR and other relevant data protection laws. Data security was a paramount concern throughout the UNHCR study.

The company implemented comprehensive measures, including identifying and defining internal roles and responsibilities for data protection, adopting cybersecurity requirements, integrating data protection into all processes by design and default, and regularly updating privacy notices. All collected data was securely stored, with access restricted to authorized personnel only. Lattanzio KIBS adopt procedures to immediately disable access rights when an employee or collaborator's status changes, ensuring no unauthorized access. Additionally, Lattanzio KIBS appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO) to oversee compliance, conducted risk analyses, and developed incident management procedures to ensure ongoing protection of personal data. The DPO played a crucial role in supervising the implementation of these measures and ensuring adherence to all aspects of data protection regulations.

By adhering to these rigorous privacy and ethical standards, we aimed to protect the well-being of the refugees involved in our study. Our approach ensured that the research was conducted with the utmost respect for their rights and dignity, reflecting our commitment to ethical research practices in all aspects of the study.

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CHAPTER 2

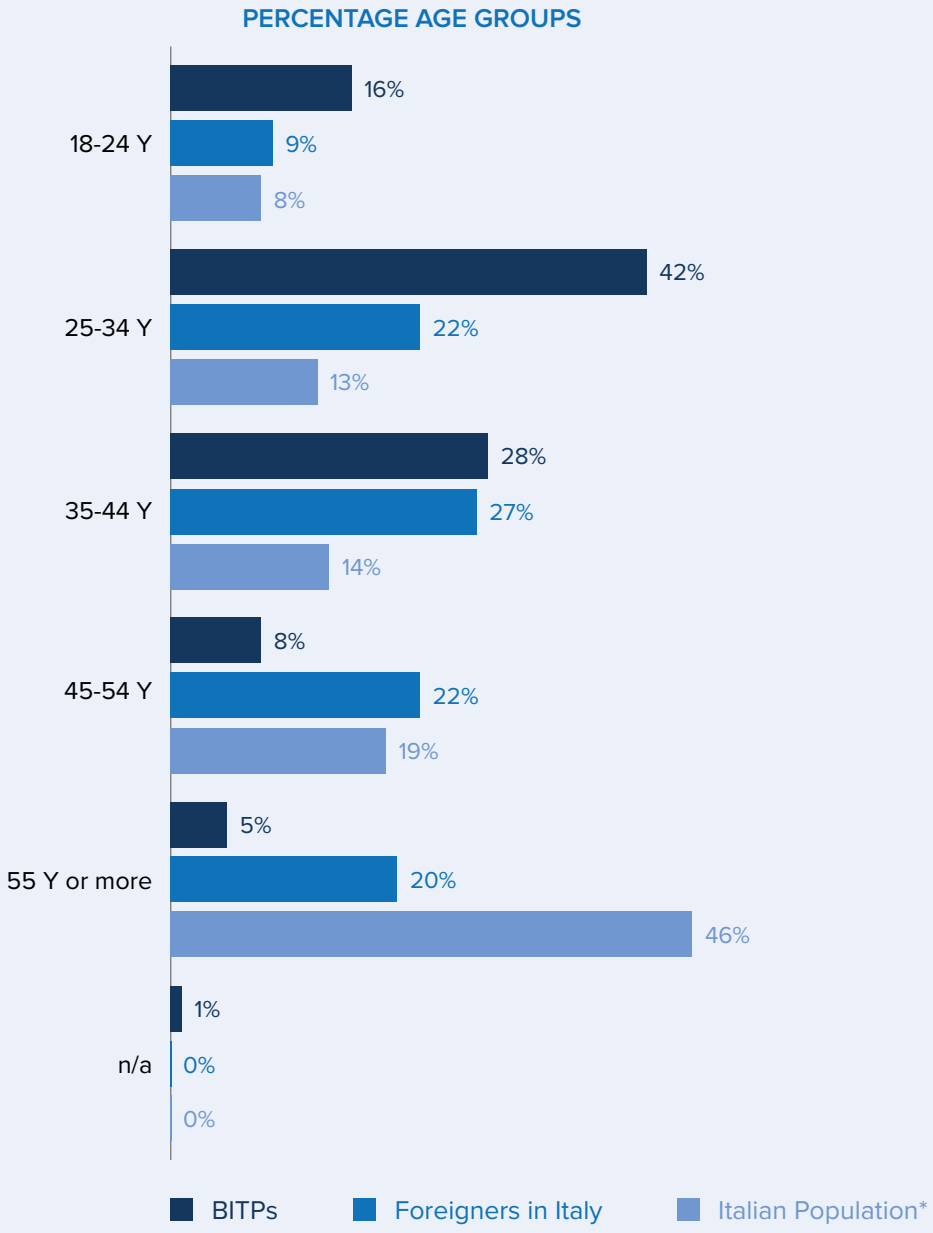
Findings

2.1 Our sample in perspective

We will start presenting our findings by providing a description of our sample according to some key socio-demographic and administrative characteristics. Whenever possible, these characteristics will be compared with the respective characteristics of the general Italian population or of the immigrant population as a whole. This comparative description is not just a way to set our sample in perspective but also to highlight some general compositional specificities of refugee population (sample) in Italy.

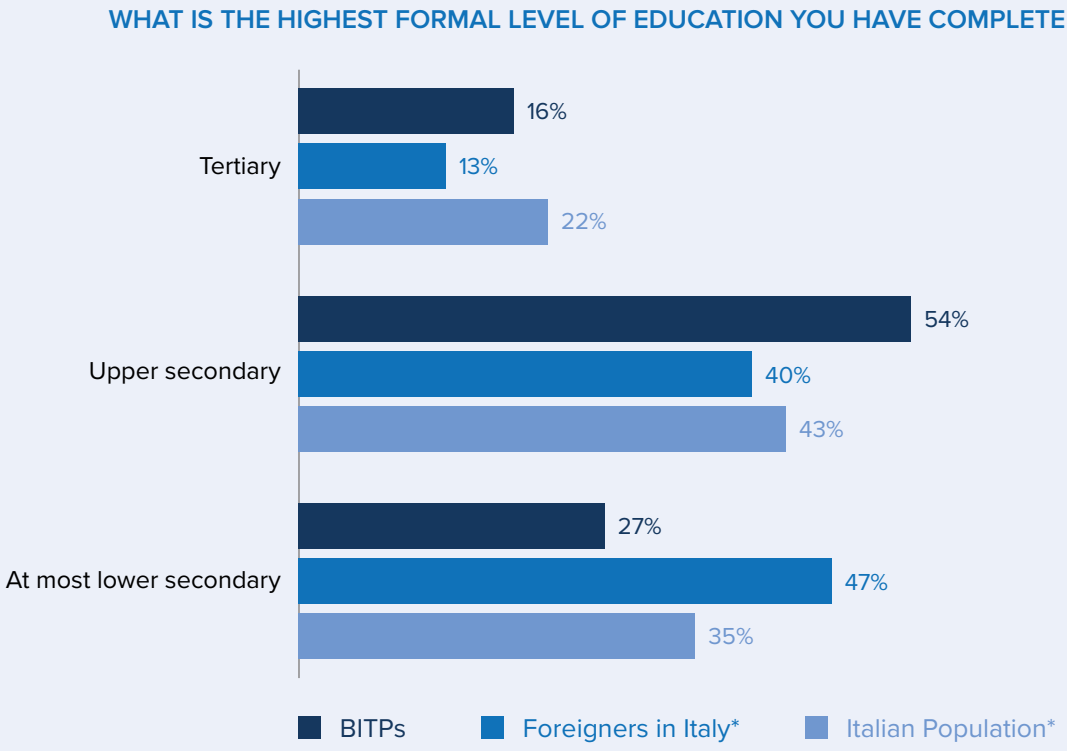
As for the age structure (Fig. 2), as amply predicted, our sample is much younger not only than the overall resident population in Italy but also than the general immigrant population, with a strong concentration in the age range 25-34 and an overwhelming majority (86%) under 45.

Fig. 2 **Distribution among age groups**



N= 1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy
*Source: "Popolazione residente al 1° gennaio 2024 per età - Italia", Demo.istat.it

Fig. 3 **Level of education**



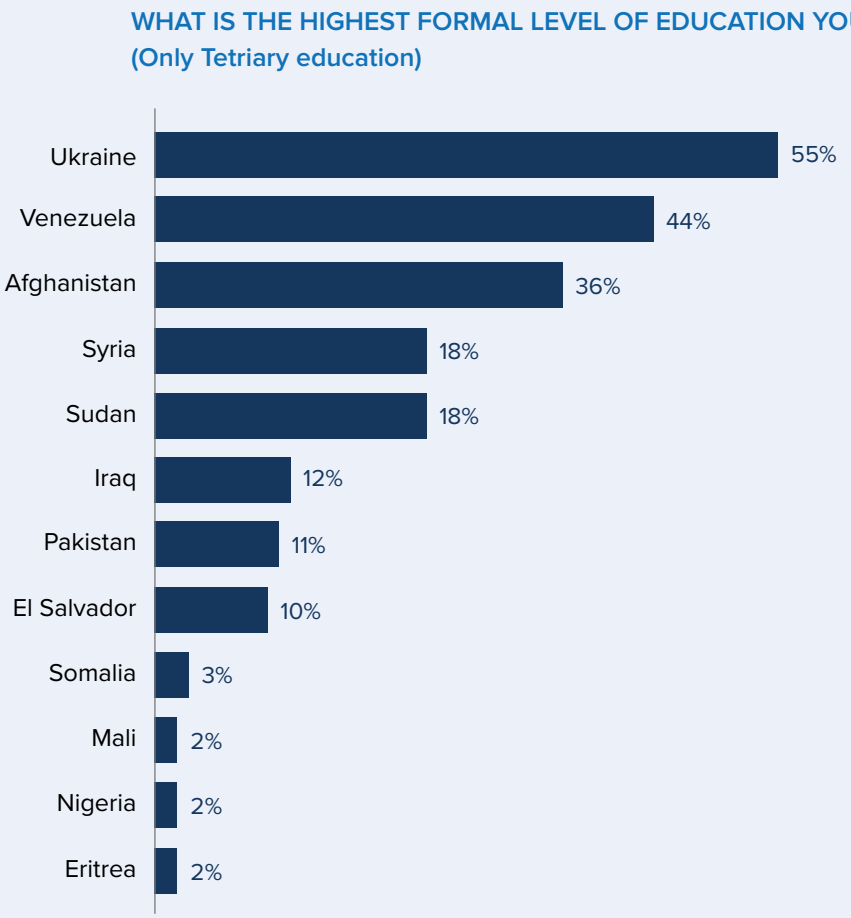
N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy
*Source: European Labour Force Survey (EU LFS) 2022. Population aged 25-64.

The proportion of refugees with at most lower secondary education is 27%, considerably lower than the corresponding share among both the overall foreign population in Italy (47%), and Italian natives (35%), as shown in Fig. 3. In contrast, the share of tertiary educated refugees (19%) is higher than among other immigrants in Italy (13%) and not much lower than among Italian natives (22%).

However, the high share of tertiary-educated respondents is driven by very high rates of tertiary education among Ukrainians (55%) and, to a lesser extent, among Afghans (36%) and Venezuelans (44%).

For beneficiaries of international protection from other countries of origin the share of tertiary educated is instead lower (Fig. 4).

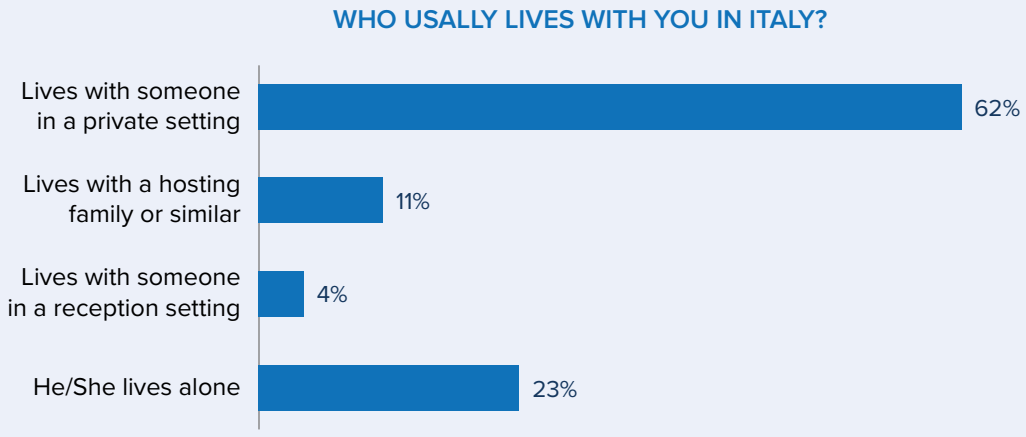
Fig. 4 **Holders of tertiary degree by country of origin**



N=462
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

As shown in Fig. 5 only 23% of the respondents live alone, while the vast majority share a private setting with others or live in a collective facility.

Fig. 5 **Living situation**

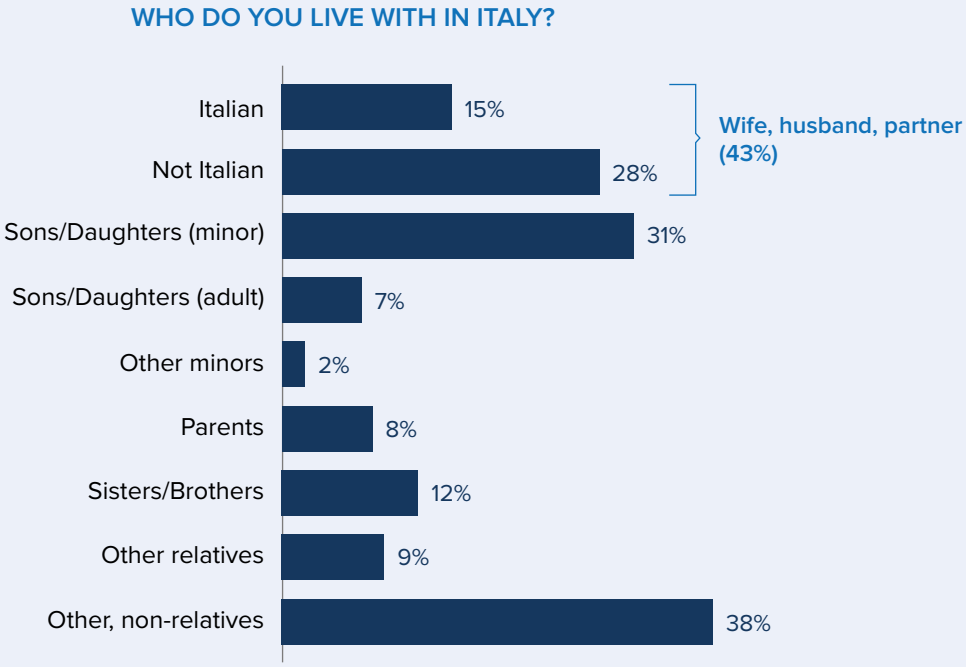


N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Among the 77% of the respondents who live with someone else, most (43%) live with a spouse or partner, 38% with a non-relative, 38% with their own children, and in a minority of cases with other relatives, as Fig. 6 shows.

Living with children is a general predictor of poverty for Italians, so we will return to this particular aspect below when we discuss poverty specifically (Section 2.2).

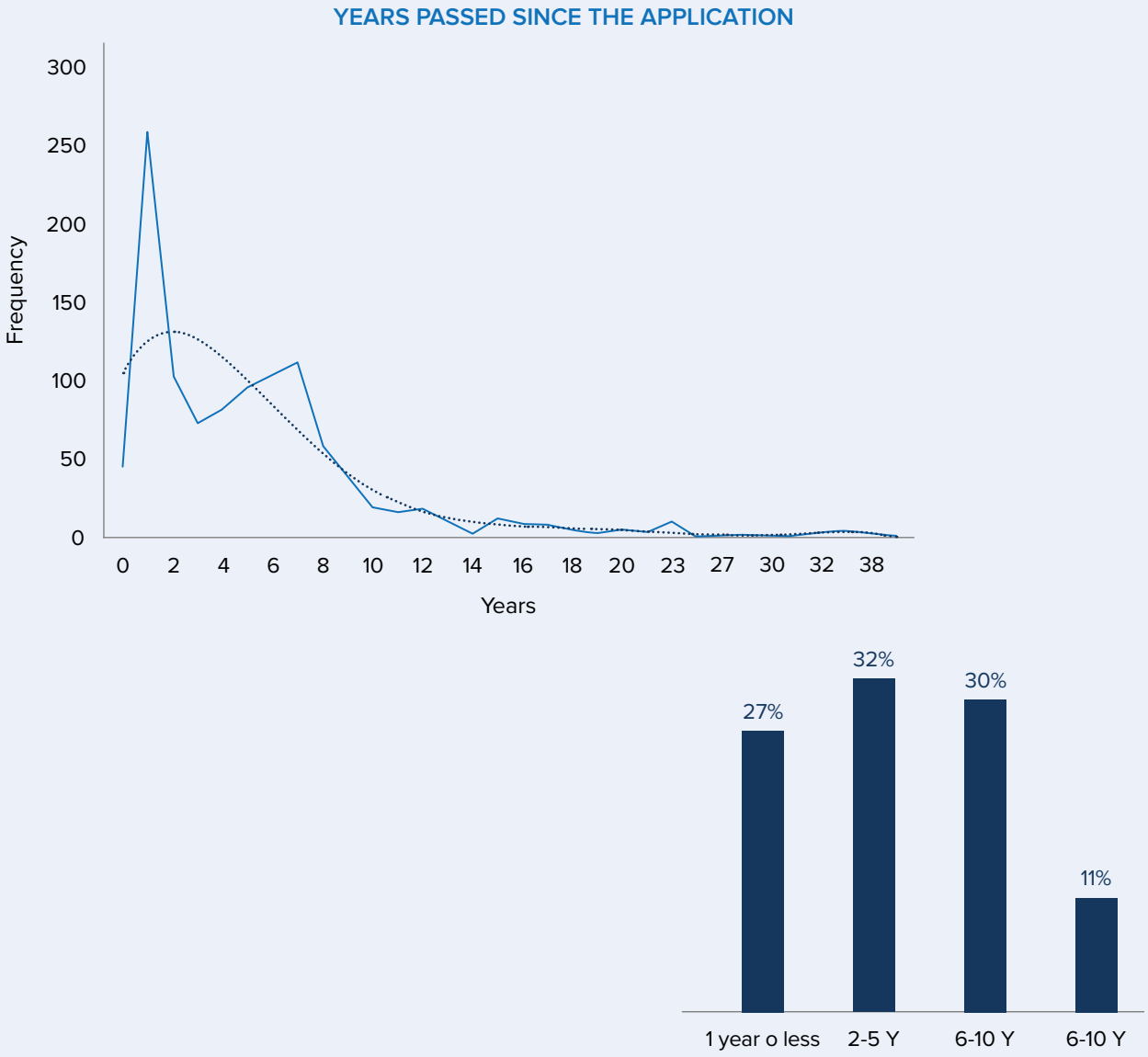
Fig. 6 **Household composition**



N=748
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Another important aspect we wish to highlight in this introductory section is particularly relevant to the general purposes of this study: “refugee seniority”. This term is defined by the number of years since the asylum (or temporary protection) application was submitted, which we can take as a proxy of the time spent in Italy.

Fig. 7 **Application timeframe**



N=1110
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

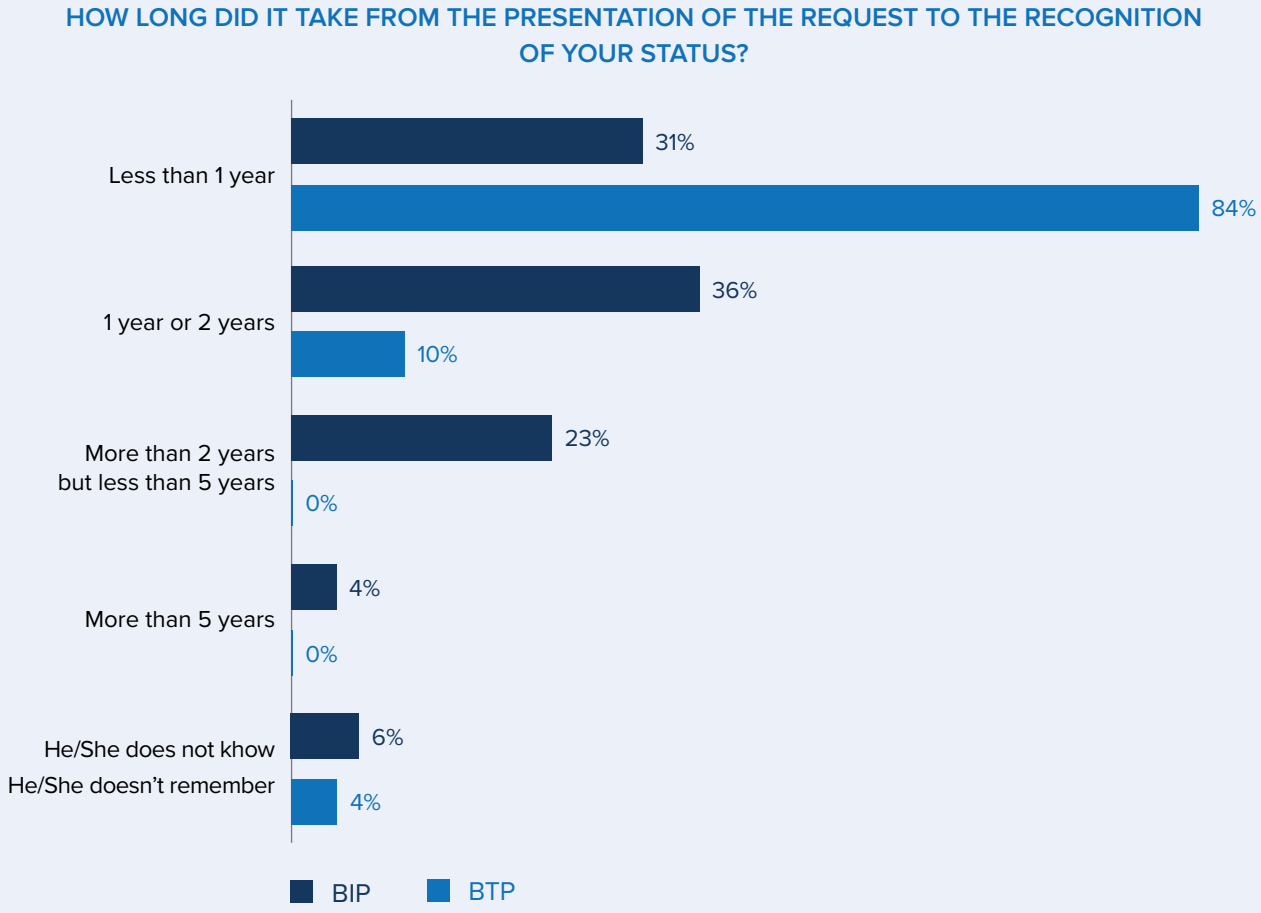
As illustrated in Fig. 7, our sample is relatively 'young' in Italy, with 59% of respondents in the country for no more than five years, and only 11% in Italy for more than 10 years. Thus, refugees have a substantially lower migration seniority than other immigrants in Italy: in 2022, only 8% of all immigrants in Italy had been in the country for no more than five years[10].
This is important to consider for interpreting all other findings, especially given the strong correlations between seniority as refugee and socio-economic conditions that are underlined by most of previous literature (see Annex 4.1).

A different aspect that is also worth underlining pertains to the administrative history of the respondents and concerns the time spent (mostly in the reception system) from the application to the recognition of the legal status.

10 8th Migration Observatory Report "Immigrant Integration in Europe" (https://dagliano.unimi.it/now-available-eighth-migration-observatory-report-immigrant-integration-in-europe)

As shown in Fig. 8, this procedural waiting period is overall quite long, with almost half of the respondents having waited for more than 2 years before obtaining international protection (waiting times for Ukrainians holding a temporary protection permit are homogeneously much lower - 84% under one year - for obvious reasons having to do with the specificities of a procedure that does not entail an individual status determination.

Fig. 8 **Time elapsed between status request and recognition among BIPs and BTPs**

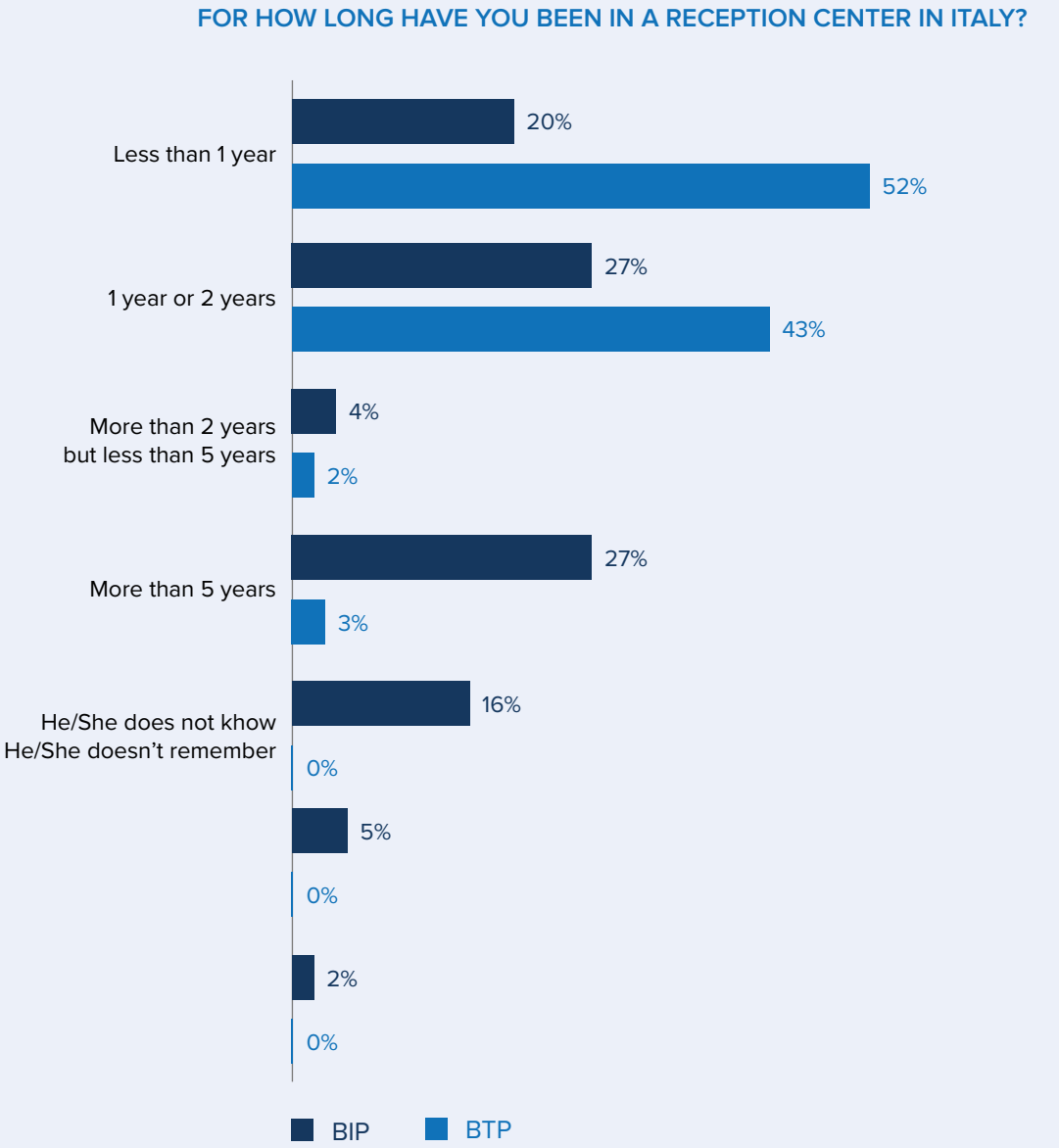


N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The values described in Fig. 8 are particularly important for the interpretation of other findings if we consider that international literature (see Annex 4.1) consistently points to a reverse correlation between time in procedure and level of socio-economic integration (at least in the first years since recognition of the legal status).

More than 67% of respondents have been in a reception centre since they arrived in Italy, a proportion that increases to 74% among beneficiaries of international protection and is lower (30%) among beneficiaries of temporary protection.

Fig. 9 **Time spent in a reception system among BIPs and BTPs**



N=827

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Among the beneficiaries of temporary protection who have been in reception centres, the average permanence is relatively low: 52% have been there for no more than 6 months, and 43% for a period of between six and twelve months. In contrast, more than half (53%) of the beneficiaries of international protection who have been in a centre have remained there for more than one year, and 23% have spent more than two years (Fig. 9).

2.2 Three dimensions of poverty

As we discussed in Section 1.1.1, we adopt three different - but interrelated - indices to analyse the prevalence of poverty and marginalisation among refugees: a measure of absolute poverty (2.2.1), a measure of relative poverty (2.2.2), and an index of severe material and social deprivation (2.2.3).

2.2.1 Absolute poverty

According to our income-based definition, 43.5% of our refugees sample is in absolute poverty. This measure is not directly comparable to the ISTAT measure of absolute poverty, which is consumption-based (see Section 1.1.1 for a discussion of the differences between the two measures). According to that definition, 9.7% of Italian residents were poor in 2023.

There are no data on poverty by immigrant status for 2023, but 2022 data (the latest available)[11] shows that 34% of foreign citizens were in absolute poverty.

Tab. 7 shows the proportion of respondents who are in absolute poverty, according to our definition, by individual characteristics. It shows that poverty is more common among women than among men, and that is highest among refugees who have been in Italy for less than two years, and then declines with years since migration, although it tends to stabilize among respondents who have been in Italy for six or more years. It also shows that there is considerable variation in poverty rates between countries of origin. For instance, less than 20% of Malian respondents are poor, but the share increases to 51% among Eritreans and Iraqis, and it is as high as 75% among Ukrainians. Finally, the table shows that poverty rates vary with education: the poverty rate is 47% among refugees with primary education, 38% among those with secondary education, and 55% among those with tertiary education. This apparently counterintuitive result, that poverty is highest among the most educated respondents, can be explained by remembering that there are few tertiary educated respondents, and they are predominantly from Ukraine, a country of origin that is associated with high poverty rates mostly because Ukrainian population with temporary protection has been in Italy for less than two years.

To analyse the role of individual characteristics and origin separately from that of other correlated variables, we used regression analysis.

Tab. 7 **Share in absolute poverty by characteristics**[12]

EDUCATION LEVEL	
Primary	47
Secondary	38
Tertiary	55
GENDER	
Female	54
Male	37
YEARS SINCE MIGRATION	
0-1	66
2-5	46
6-9	29
10+	31
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	
Ukraine	75
Eritrea	51
Iraq	51
Afghanistan	48
Syria	46
Somalia	41
Nigeria	39
Venezuela	37
El Salvador	36
Pakistan	32
Sudan	31
Mali	20

11 Istat, www.istat.it/it/files//2023/10/REPORT-POVERTA-2022.pdf

12 It is worth noting that while absolute poverty level include the individual and their household members, demographic characteristics refer to the individual only

The regression results reported in Annex Tab. A5 show that absolute poverty is less prevalent among men than women. Refugee men are 9 p.p. less likely to be poor than women with similar characteristics in terms of age, education, time spent and location in Italy, as well as origin. However, this gender differential is driven by the lower likelihood for men to live in households with minor children.
In fact, having at least a child in the household is associated with a 14 p.p. higher probability of poverty. Once we compare men and women with similar household composition, the gender differential in the probability decreases to 7 p.p. and is less precisely measured.

Absolute poverty is also more prevalent among individuals with low education: respondents with secondary or tertiary education are about 10 p.p. less likely to be poor than those with, at most, primary education but with otherwise similar characteristics. Other factors that are strongly associated with poverty are age and time spent in Italy. In particular, poverty is equally frequent among respondents of all ages until 44, but for more senior individuals (aged 45 or more), the likelihood of falling below the poverty threshold is 13 p.p. higher than for their younger refugee fellows. Likewise, absolute poverty decreases steeply with the length of time spent in Italy.
Relative to those who have been in Italy for at most one year, respondents who have been in the country for two to five years are about 10 p.p. less likely to be classified as poor, a differential that increases to about 25 p.p. among respondents who have been in Italy for six or more years.

A group of respondents that is entirely composed of recently arrived individuals is Ukrainians.
For Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection, the absolute poverty rate is 20 percentage points higher than for respondents from other origin countries with the same demographic profile and migration seniority. As we will show later (Section 2.2.3.), however, the higher prevalence of poverty among Ukrainians is not associated with a higher social exclusion (as measured by the index of severe material and social deprivation), probably thanks to the fact that most of them are hosted by co-national or Italian families that can support them and compensate for their lower incomes, and also to the fact that some of them might be receiving money transfers from their relatives in their home country.

2.2.2 Relative poverty

Unlike "absolute" poverty, "relative" poverty depends on the distance of someone's income from the median national income. In particular, we use the EUROSTAT definition of "at risk of poverty" as a definition of relative poverty (see Section 1.1.1 for details).
In 2023, 17% of Italian citizens and 39.5% of non-EU citizens living in Italy were at risk of poverty[13].
In contrast, in our sample, 67% of respondents are at risk of poverty, i.e. a substantially higher proportion than among other non-EU residents in Italy.

While this level is worryingly high, it is important to put it in context with other measures of vulnerability. The gap between poverty and deprivation, for example, may show that income and consumption-based measures may provide a skewed representation of immigrants' and refugees' conditions.

Tab. 8 **Share at risk of poverty by characteristics**

EDUCATION LEVEL	
Primary	76
Secondary	62
Tertiary	69
GENDER	
Female	71
Male	63
YEARS SINCE MIGRATION	
0-1	80
2-5	74
6-9	60
10+	50
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	
Ukraine	84
Eritrea	74
Iraq	72
Afghanistan	70
Syria	66
Somalia	65
Nigeria	63
Venezuela	59
El Salvador	59
Pakistan	56
Sudan	54
Mali	53

13 Istat, http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCCV_RISKPOV

As discussed with the panel of academic experts, non-monetary sources of wealth (e.g. free-of-charge goods and services provided by charities) may contribute to explaining such significant gap between poverty and deprivation. Although the proportion of respondents "at risk of poverty" is higher than that of those in "absolute poverty", the variables associated with both conditions are similar, as shown in Tab. 8.

The regression analysis results, reported in Tab. A6, show the role of each characteristic in influencing the risk of poverty, keeping all other individual characteristics constant.
Higher education is associated with a lower risk of poverty (-11 p.p. and -15 p.p. for secondary and tertiary educated respondents, respectively, relative to those with primary education).

Likewise, time spent in Italy heavily influences the likelihood of being at risk of poverty, although only for those who have been in Italy for six or more years. The risk of poverty is 14 p.p. lower for respondents who have been in Italy for six to nine years and 22 p.p. lower for those with ten or more years since migration, relative to refugees who have been in the country for no more than five years.

Ukrainians are significantly more at risk of poverty than anyone else, everything else equal.
The most relevant difference in the role of individual characteristics in explaining absolute poverty or risk of poverty is with age. While older respondents were significantly more likely to be in absolute poverty than the younger, when it comes to the risk of poverty, age seems to play no role.

2.2.3 Social exclusion and material deprivation

The third way in which we capture the socioeconomic disadvantage and vulnerability of our population of interest is through a measure of their Severe Material and Social Deprivation (SMSD), which assesses individuals' ability to afford certain goods, services, or social activities.

Tab. 9 reports the share of respondents who cannot afford each of the thirteen items considered in the construction of the index. The share of negative responses varies greatly, from 78% of respondents who state they would be unable to face unexpected expenses and about 75% who do not have access to a car for personal use or would be unable to replace worn-out furniture, to substantially lower shares who can't afford other more basic items. In particular, 8.6% do not have access to an internet connection (not even through their phone), and 14% do not have two pairs of fitting shoes.

Tab. 9 **Responses to SMSD items**

SHARE OF RESPONDENTS WHO CANNOT AFFORD/DO NOT HAVE/HAVE FACED:	
A one-week annual holiday away from home	67
A meal with meat, chicken, fish, or vegetarian equivalent every second day	28
Heating home adequately	34
Access to a car/van for personal use	75
An internet connection	9
Payment arrears in the last 12 months	28
Replacing worn-out furniture	75
Replacing worn-out clothes by new ones	34
Two pairs of properly fitting shoes	14
Getting together with friends/family for a drink/meal at least once a month	34
Having regular leisure activities	73
Spending a small amount of money each week on themselves	36
Capacity to face unexpected expenses	78

Putting together the responses to all of the above themes results in about one-quarter (25.8%) of refugees in our sample who cannot afford at least seven of the above thirteen items and are therefore considered in a state of severe material and social deprivation.
By way of comparison, according to Eurostat, in 2022, the SMSD was 8% for Italian citizens and 20% for foreign residents of Italy, a value that increases to more than 21% for non-EU citizens.

The characteristics that are more often associated with SMSD are similar to those associated with poverty, as shown by the proportions reported in Tab. 10. One relevant difference is that women are now slightly less likely to be in SMSD relative to men (23.4% versus 27.3%), a fact that is associated with the proportion of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection in SMSD (27.2%), which is aligned with those of respondents from other countries.
We discuss this further based on the results of the regression analysis reported in Annex Tab. A7.
Level of education is a strong predictor of SMSD, which is about 10 p.p. higher among respondents with primary education than among those with secondary or tertiary qualifications but otherwise similar characteristics.

There is also a clear age gradient, with SMSD increasing gradually and considerably with age. For instance, respondents aged 45 or more are, everything else equal, 17 p.p. more likely to be in material or social deprivation than those who are younger than 25.

Not surprisingly, refugees who have recently arrived in Italy are those more at risk of social exclusion. Relative to respondents who have been in the country for at most one year, the SMSD is 9 p.p. lower for those who have been in Italy for two to five years, and about 18 p.p. lower for those who have been longer in the country. Unlike in the case of poverty, beneficiaries of international protection from Asia, the Middle East or Africa are significantly more likely (+9 p.p.) to be in a situation of severe material and social deprivation than respondents from all other origins.
Remarkably, Ukrainians do not display higher SMSD than comparable respondents from other countries of origin despite their higher likelihood of being in poverty. As discussed in the previous section, this is likely due to the opportunity many of them have to rely on support networks that compensate for income poverty or the support they receive from relatives abroad.

Tab. 10 **Share in SMSD, by characteristics**

EDUCATION LEVEL	
Primary	**36**
Secondary	**20**
Tertiary	**28**
GENDER	
Female	**23**
Male	**27**
YEARS SINCE MIGRATION	
0-1	**32**
2-5	**28**
6-9	**20**
10+	**22**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	
Syria	**40**
Somalia	**33**
Iraq	**29**
Sudan	**29**
Afghanistan	**28**
Nigeria	**27**
Ukraine	**27**
Eritrea	**26**
Pakistan	**23**
El Salvador	**20**
Venezuela	**18**
Mali	**14**

2.2.4 Some final remarks on relations between different forms of poverty

Tab. 11 summarises what has emerged so far in terms of relative poverty and deprivation among refugees as compared with different possible benchmark groups (according to the availability of data)[14].

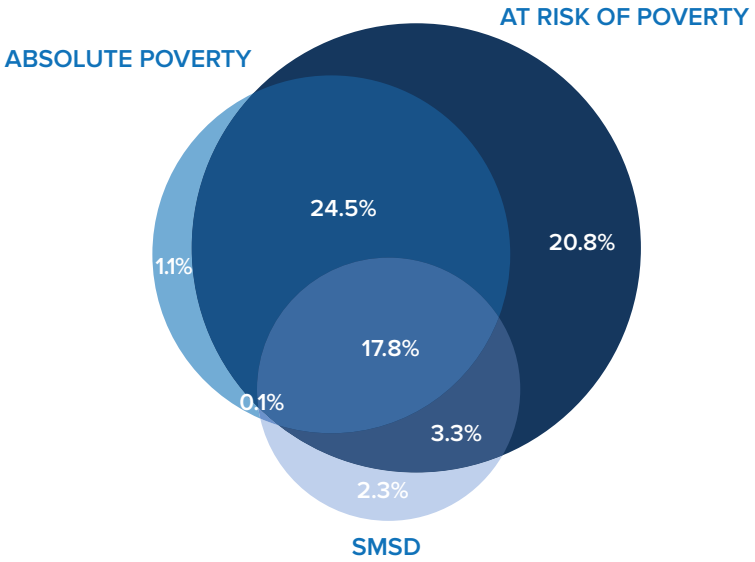
Tab. 11 **Different forms of poverty and deprivation**

	REFUGEES SAMPLE	BENCHMARK 1	BENCHMARK 2
Relative poverty	67%	Non-UE (2023): 39%	Italians (2023): 17%
SMSD	26%	Non-UE (2022): 21%	Italians (2022): 8%

On this basis, we can conclude this section by analysing inter-relations between different forms of poverty among refugees and to what extent they overlap. Fig. 10 shows how the three poverty concepts are interrelated for the respondents in our sample for whom all three measures can be computed. The figure shows that almost 18% of respondents are simultaneously in absolute poverty, at risk of poverty, and in severe material and social deprivation. An additional 24.5% is poor according to both income-based poverty definitions but is not in SMSD. One clear message of the figure is that SMSD is - in general - strongly associated with monetary poverty: only 2.3% of respondents who are in SMSD are not poor according to either of the two income-based definitions.

On the other hand, a significant share (47%) of individuals who are in poverty according to at least one definition are not also in SMSD, as we discussed above.

Fig. 10 **Intersections between the three poverty concepts**



14 Absolute poverty is not included in the table due to the differences in measurement methods, which results in limited comparability of the data.

Inter-relations between different forms of poverty are confirmed and further highlighted by our qualitative findings. As a matter of fact, several of our key informants, consistently with the literature we mentioned in Section 2.2, have focused on the multidimensional nature of vulnerability and deprivation that affects refugees. The issues they mention are an interesting complement to the indicator of social exclusion and material deprivation explored above.
Among relevant dimensions they focus on that see refugees disadvantaged compared to Italian citizens, there are:

- legal status and associated rights and obligations (also due to gaps between formal entitlements and actual access to public services);
- relational poverty, as refugees' social capital can be comparatively poor;
- the experience of violence, and the traumas related to events and conditions in the origin country and during their journey, as well as in the host country (R15).

R15

When we talk about trauma, we think of it as pre-migratory and post-migratory.
So, there is certainly a pre-migratory dimension, which includes the things that happen in the country of origin. These are quite specific to each person's story [...] we certainly collect the traumas that people encounter along the migratory journey. But there is also certainly a post-migratory dimension, meaning that very often what a person then encounters in the destination country also affects how they interpret their own story.
So, there are elements that can be challenging and even traumatizing for the people who arrive.
(Giulia Ciacchella interview, 05.09.24, our translation)

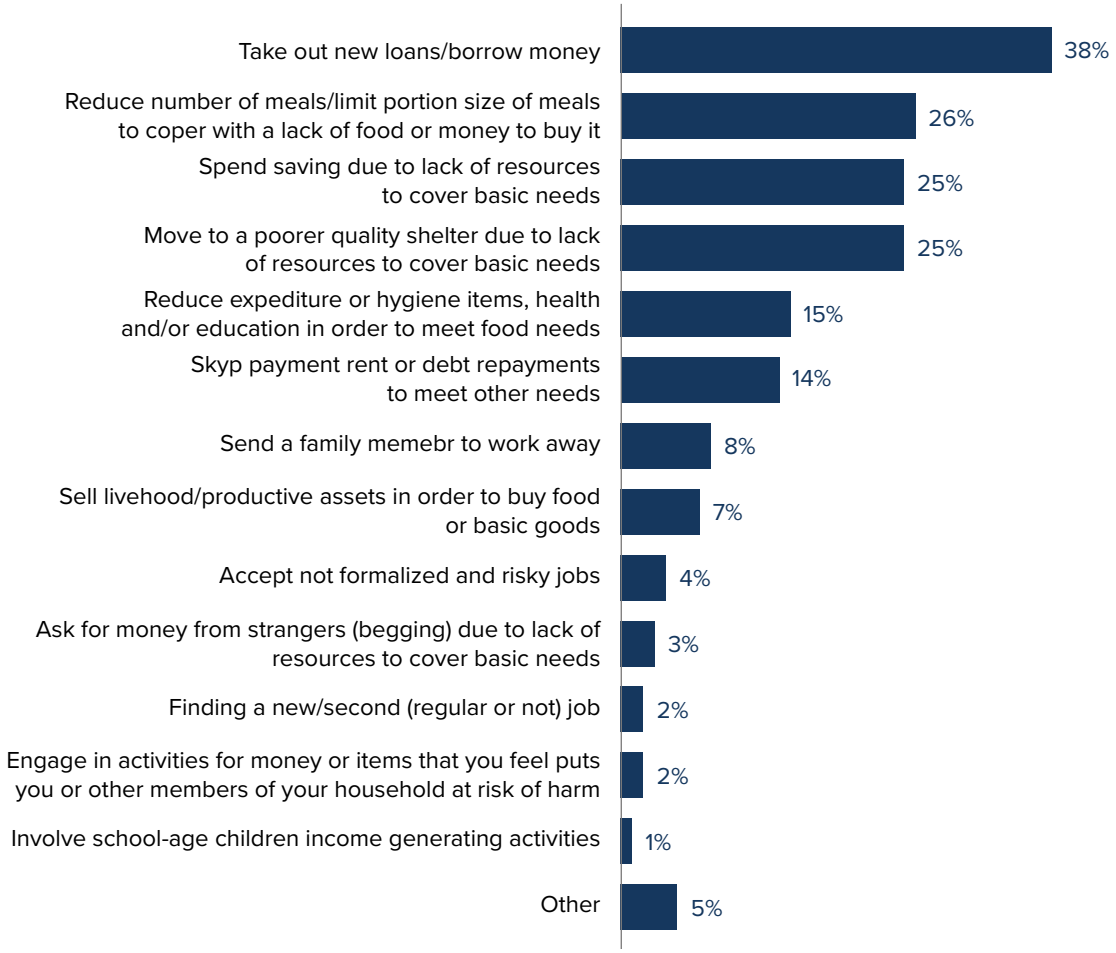
2.3 Coping with poverty and disadvantage: refugees' strategies

The data presented so far compose a picture marked by generally high levels of distress, poverty, and deprivation for refugees in Italy. Against this backdrop, it is essential to understand which strategies refugees themselves and the receiving society (including both its public institutions and non-governmental actors) deploy to counter such marked disadvantage.
In our survey, we tackled this under-researched but crucial issue first by asking a general question on how respondents adapted (or would adapt) in case of economic distress (Fig. 11).

While the single most frequent answer was "take loans or borrow money" (38%), most of the next most frequent answers pointed to the reduction of consumption of different goods and services: food (26%), housing (i.e. "move to a poorer quality shelter": 25%), health, education and hygiene-related expenses (15%).

Fig. 11 **Coping strategies**

WHICH COPING STRATEGY HAVE YOU ADOPTED OR WOULD YOU ADOPT IN CASE OF ECONOMIC DISTRESS?
(More than one answer was possible)

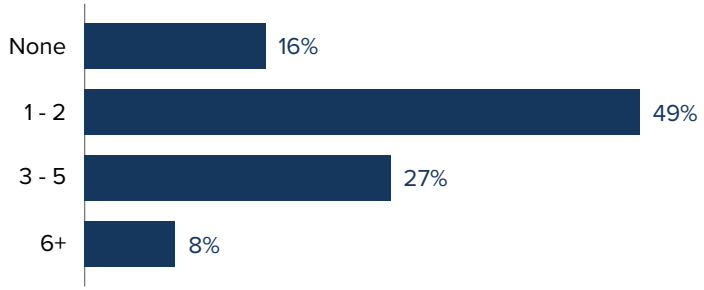


N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The capacity to cope with unforeseen events, setbacks, and crises and to counter distress and deprivation does not obviously depend only on individual resources (resistance, resilience, etc.), but also on external resources, which may be represented by social capital or institutional context (e.g. public welfare). When asked how many people they felt "so close to" that they could count on them "in case of serious personal problems", a robust majority in our sample answered less than 3 (49% answered one or two, none for 16% of respondents) (Fig. 12).
This scarcity of "helpful" social capital is consistent with the findings of international literature (see Annex 4.2) and with the general fact that refugees, as all forced migrants, had generally less opportunities than non-forced ones to orient migration decisions based on the density and strength of networks in the country of destination.

Fig. 12 **People to count on**

HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU FEEL SO CLOSE TO YOU THAT YOU CAN COUNT ON THEM IN CASE OF SERIOUS PERSONAL PROBLEM?

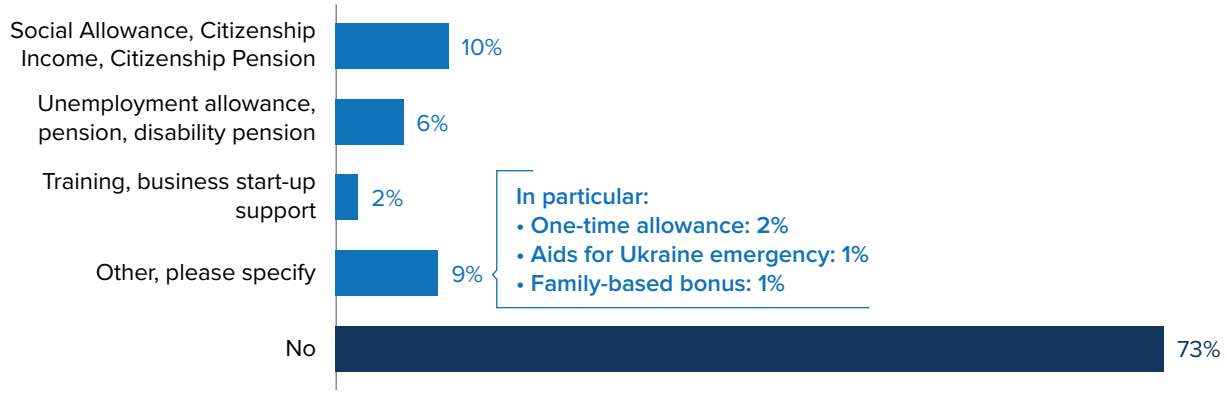


N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The fact that refugees in distress have mainly to count on their own resources (reducing consumption, borrowing money, working more etc; see above Fig. 11) is confirmed by the low level of access to welfare benefits shown in Fig. 13, with **73% of our respondents who never obtained any payment or other forms of material support from public sources**. This is clearly contrasting with a widespread narrative depicting refugees as "heavily dependent on welfare".
Regression analysis reveals that tertiary-educated respondents are more likely than others to receive some type of public support.
This result suggests that there may be barriers in the access to welfare provisions that prevent many eligible refugees from claiming the benefits they would be entitled to.

Fig. 13 **Support from national/local government**

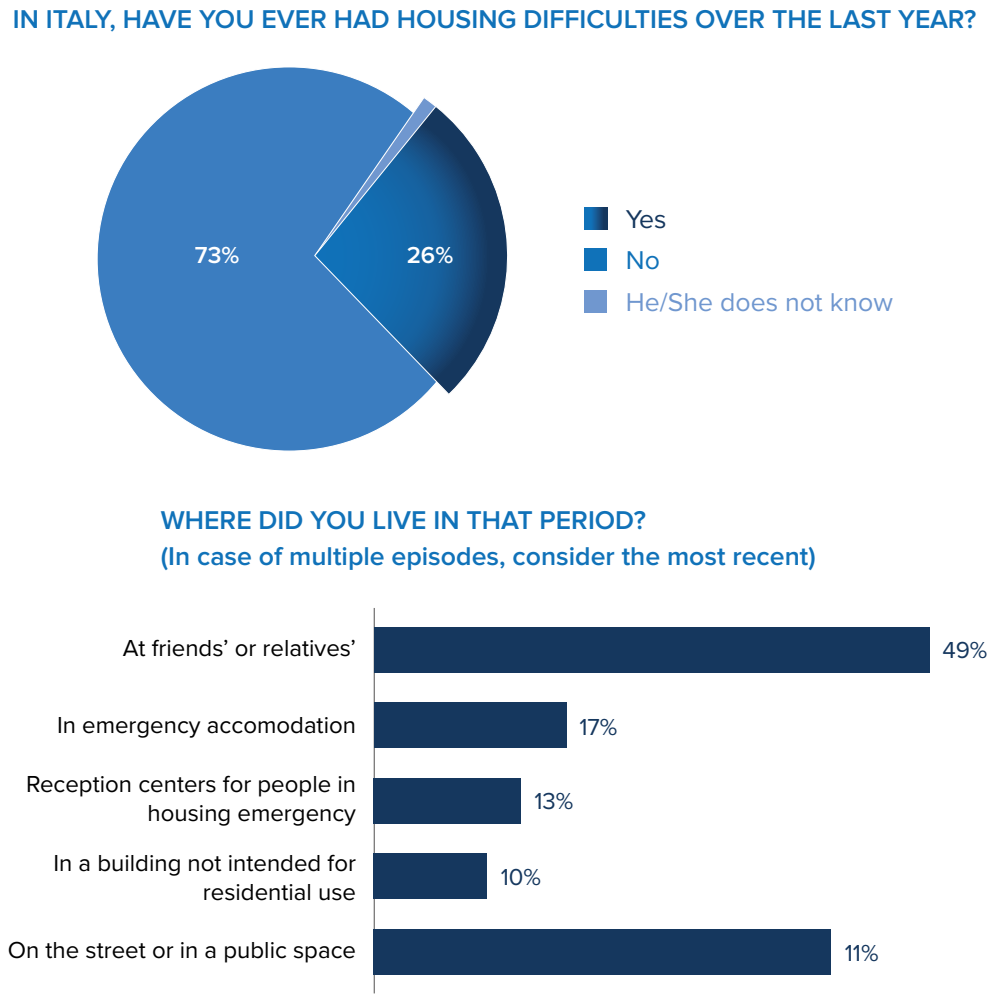
IN THE PAST YEAR, HAVE YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY RECEIVED ANY PAYMENT OR SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ITALY FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES?



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The limited power of (both private and public) solidarity networks is confirmed by the fact that, when faced with housing difficulties (as shown in Fig. 14, 26% of respondents experienced some in the last year), almost half of refugees benefited from hospitality at friends' or relatives' and 17% were hosted in a reception centre, but the rest had to rely on more extreme solutions: 17% in emergency accommodation, 10% in a building not intended for residential use, and 11% on the street or in some other public space.

Fig. 14 **Housing difficulties and remedies**



N=1231 - N=314
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Qualitative insights provide complementary and consistent evidence to these data. In particular, three of the four most discussed coping strategies emerging from focus groups can be related to the issues above:

- Peers (fellow countrypeople, other refugees) are often mentioned as key in different coping strategies. They can share information useful for their specific situation (e.g. labour and housing opportunities, as well as bureaucratic procedures); they can be a valuable source of economic resources (sharing money in different forms, e.g. via rotating savings groups; offering hospitality), but also of relief (providing safe social relations) (R19).
- Native individuals and organizations are a key complement to peer networks, and the debate in focus groups underlined the importance of having plural networks. In particular, Italian acquaintances - from friends to employers - can be formal or informal mediators and guarantors in many social relations (securing a housing contract; supporting job search), and civil society organizations can provide food and shelter in moments of high vulnerability (R20).

- Economising and increasing working hours is a common strategy for getting by. While this is a short-term stop-gap solution, it may also become the entry point for a downward spiral, as this strategy negatively affects the capacity to aspire and plan improvements in refugees' life opportunities.

Finally, a fourth strategy is "exit", i.e. re-migration. In fact, when asked about their plans for the next two years, not all respondents stated that they intend to stay in Italy. About 10% declare that they are planning to move to another country, and 9% that they plan to move back to their home country. Debates in focus groups confirm that leaving is often considered an option. Whether these opinions are well-founded or not, other destinations in the Global North are considered much more welcoming, providing better institutional support, easier housing and labour market integration, less discrimination (R21).

As our study is based on refugees currently present in Italy, we cannot obviously estimate the number of those formerly in the country who have subsequently re-migrated to some other country. A ground-breaking parallel study conducted by ISTAT, however, suggests that this number is probably very high. In particular, preliminary evidence shows that, of all asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection who were granted a first residence permit in 2017 (almost 99,000, in what was a peak year), only 25.2% of the asylum seekers and 29.7% of beneficiaries of protection still had a valid residence permit at the beginning of 2023. This contrasts with 34.1% of non-EU immigrants overall and 44.9% of those with permits for family reasons.

Such a high "disappearance rate" suggests a significant propensity to secondary movements abroad. Alternatively, these data also testify of the Italian system's limited capacity to retain refugees by supporting their aspirations and providing adequate protection against marginalization, poverty, and deprivation.

R19

Social networks among fellow countrypeople are particularly important, especially regarding recreational activities or events such as baptisms and weddings. At the same time, these networks are also used for job or housing searches, as they allow one to find what they are looking for more quickly through word of mouth. But above all, among fellow countrypeople, there is listening, better understanding.
(FG-BO-5-GC-M, Bologna 29.12.23, our translation)

R20

For me, it was essential to have an Italian person help me obtain the guarantee to rent a room. I had to sleep at a church for a while until my former employer helped me by acting as a guarantor and contacting the landlords on my behalf. This mediation is fundamental!
(FG-MI-4-NG-F, Milan 19.11.23, our translation)

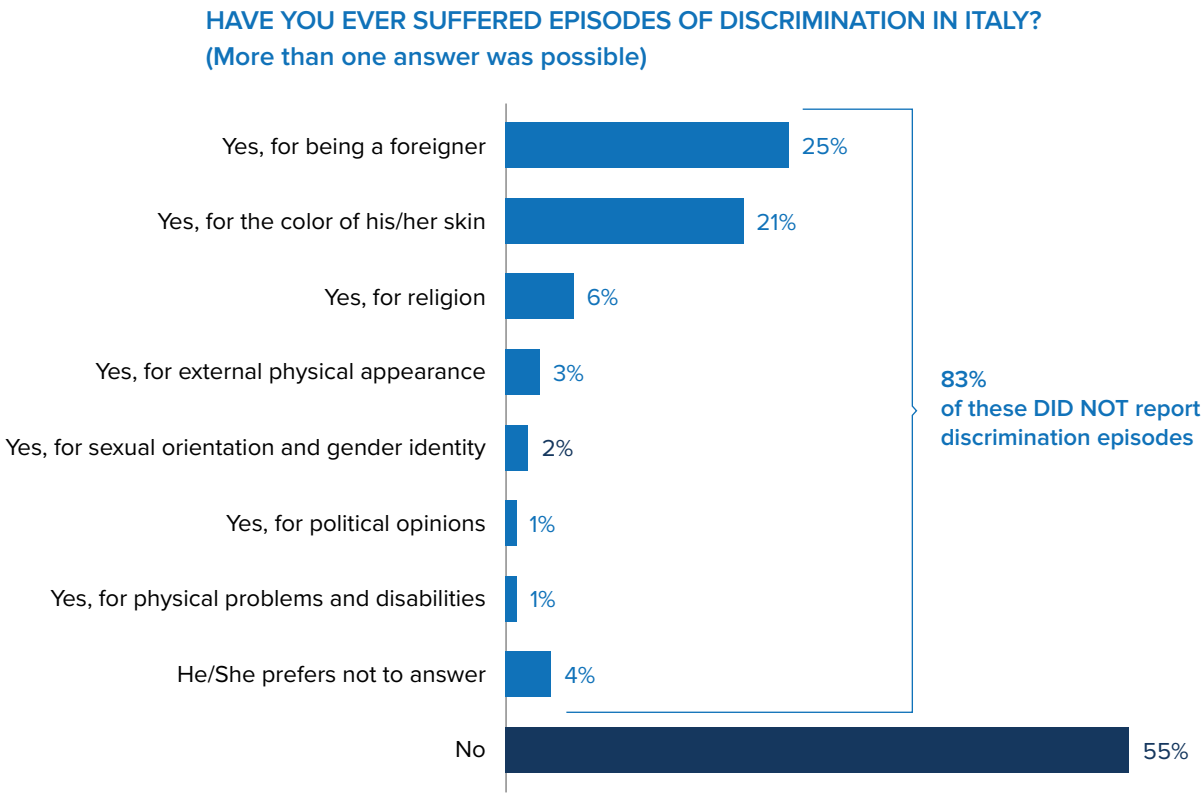
R21

Upon completing the SAI project, many of my friends were uncertain about their next steps. For example, despite having a permanent contract in Italy, my cousin was compelled to leave his job and relocate to France due to the unavailability of housing. Many are departing... after all, why stay where you aren't welcome?
(FG-MI-7-TG-M, Milan 19.11.23, our translation)

To conclude this section, it is worth adding a focus on discrimination and the strategies refugees use to cope with it. Let us begin by illustrating the levels of perceived discrimination in our sample.
Close to half of the respondents (45%) have suffered some form of discrimination in Italy (Fig. 15).
The most commonly reported reasons for discrimination are nationality and skin colour.

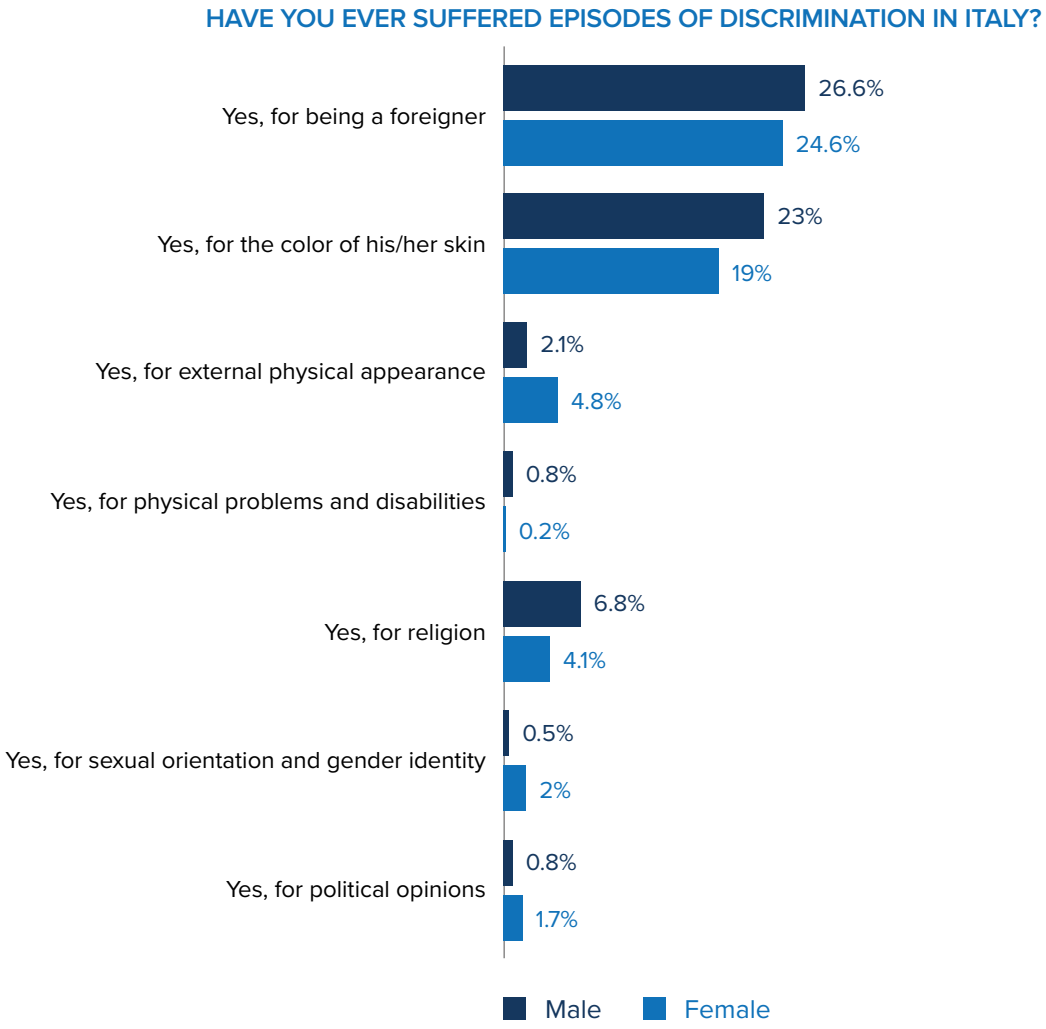
Males are slightly more discriminated against for their religion and for their skin colour compared to females, who conversely suffer more from being discriminated against for the fact of being a foreigner (see Fig. 15).
Finally, leaving aside the specific reasons, refugees coming from the African countries included in the sample report being discriminated against more than the other refugees (see Fig. 17).

Fig. 15 **Discrimination episodes in Italy**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

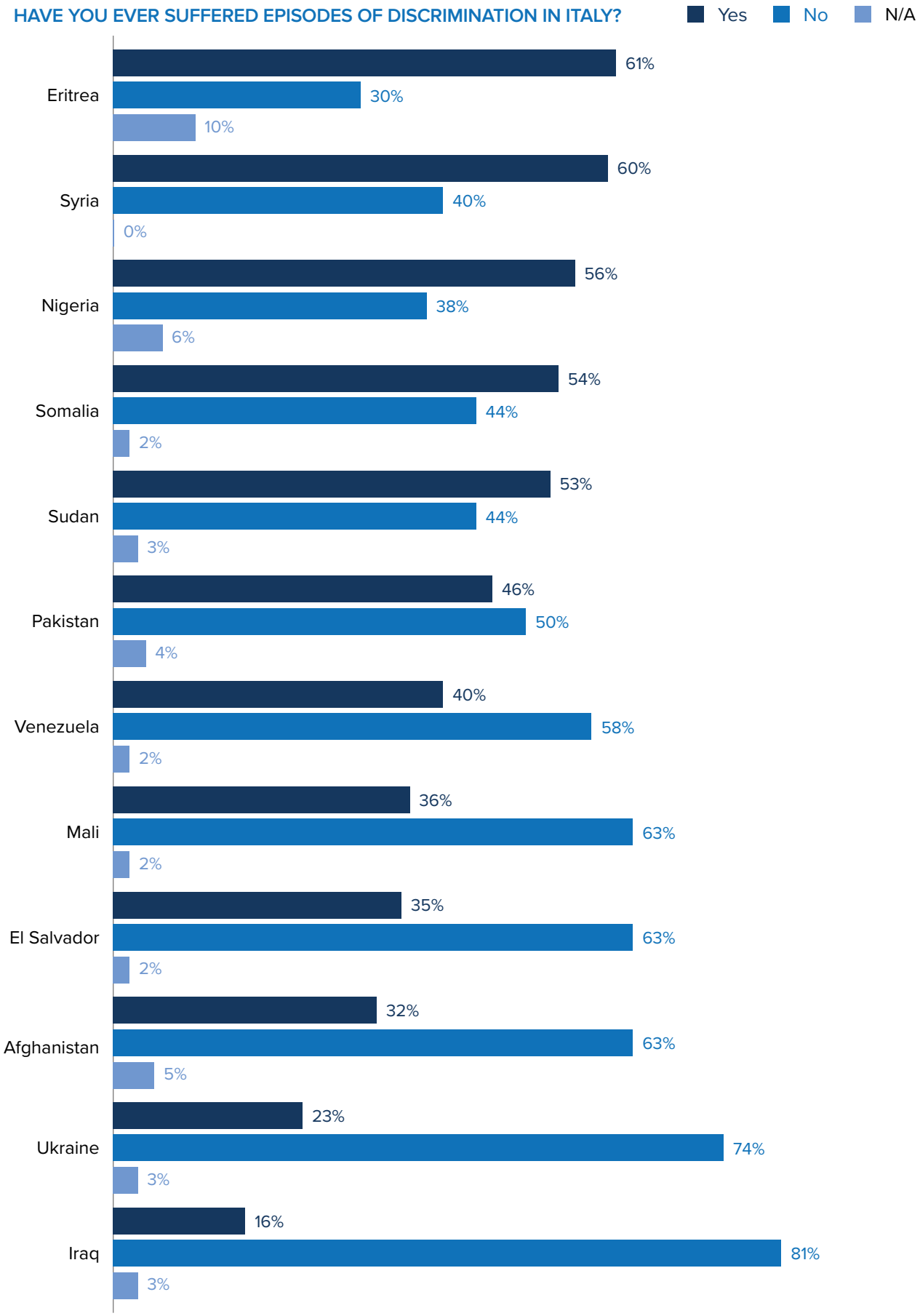
Fig. 16 **Discrimination episodes in Italy by gender**



N=1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Fig. 17 **Discrimination episodes in Italy by country of origin**



N=1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The qualitative evidence that was collected shows how pervasive and detrimental discrimination can be. Besides specific episodes, general attitudes towards refugees are perceived as very negative, perpetuating conditions of social exclusion. Direct discrimination has been mentioned transversally in every dimension of structural integration we mentioned above - education, labour market, and housing.
What is more, it is perceived as more severe and with more detrimental effects for subgroups already more vulnerable, including women, religious minorities and racialized groups (R16).

Discrimination is disempowering and stressful and poses serious societal barriers, jeopardizing individual life chances and social integration (R17; R18).

R16

I have often been a victim of prejudice. One day, I was on the subway going to church, studying to prepare for the exam for the profession of OSS. An old lady did not believe that I was studying.
Then she asked me if all Nigerian women were prostitutes.
(FG-MI-4-NG-F, Milan 19.11.23, our translation)

R17

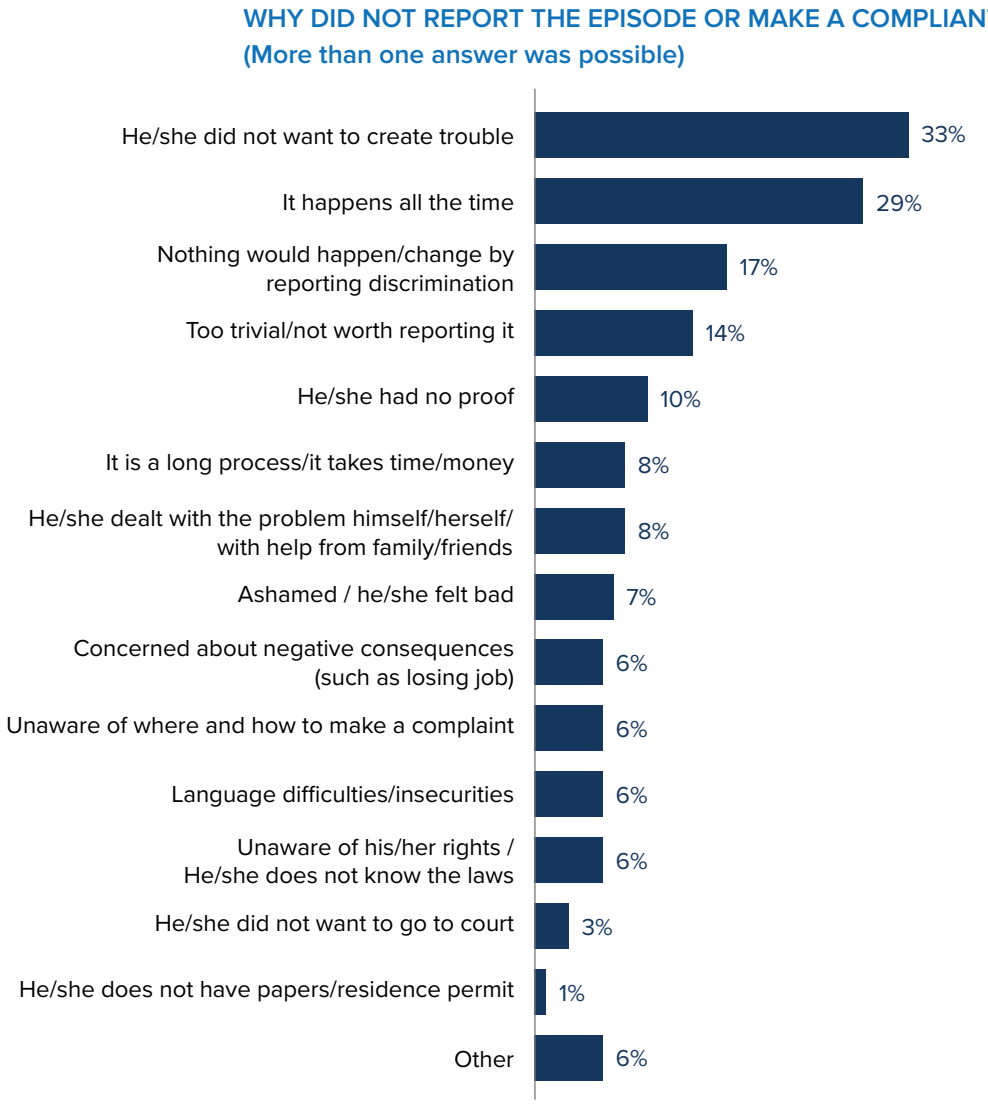
When refugees feel discriminated against in accessing work and/or housing, it essentially leads to exclusion because they perceive that this place, this city, does not offer equal access to rights.
Being discriminated against makes me feel treated differently, like someone who doesn't deserve what others have, which ultimately diminishes my motivation to integrate.
(Syed Hasnain, UNIRE, interview 01.02.24, our translation)

R18

Racism [...] isn't solely limited to asylum seekers. Instead, it refers to a significant portion of these individuals - excluding Ukrainians and some Syrians - who are seen as less capable or less welcomed, deemed less able to integrate, perceived as more backward, and naturally predisposed towards delinquency, among other stereotypes. Consequently, all of this, concerning aspects like housing, social interactions, and employment, significantly complicates the integration process.
(Chiara Marchetti, CIAC ONLUS, interview 29.01.24, our translation)

In spite of such high levels of perceived discrimination, a staggering 83% have not reported it.
When asked why they did not report, refugees' answers compose a worrying picture made of lack of awareness of their rights, resignation and lack of trust in public authorities (Fig. 18).

Fig. 18 **Motivations for not reporting discrimination**



N=511
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

2.4 Refugees' socio-economic conditions

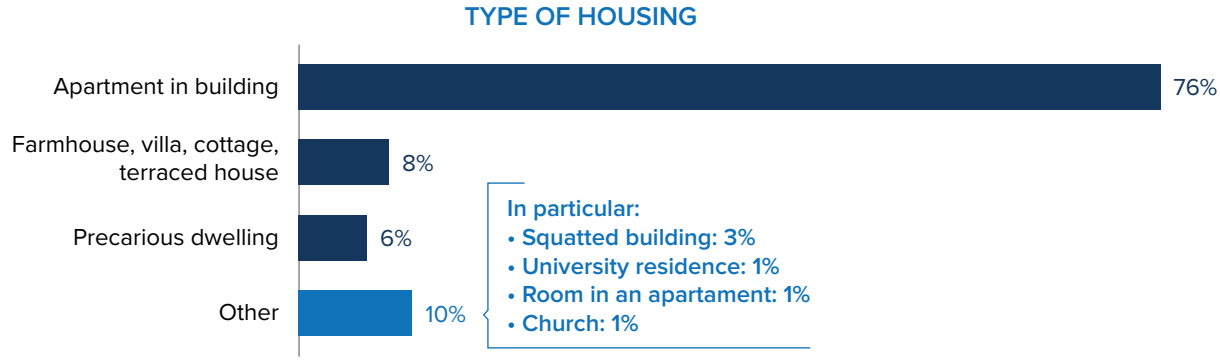
In this section, we focus on some key socio-economic variables that are relevant to understand the challenges faced by refugees in the Italian context and that may contribute to generate situations of disadvantage, poverty and deprivation.
In particular, we will provide data on housing conditions (2.4.1), on the knowledge of Italian as the host country language (2.4.2), and on the working situation, wages and income (2.4.3).

In the following pages, we will also provide the results of some of the regressions that we have conducted to explain some of the described outcomes (for example, housing difficulties, the probability of having ever worked in Italy, or current employment-measured by having worked in the last week, etc.). Each of these explanatory parts will be complemented by considerations stemming from the results of our qualitative analyses.

2.4.1 Housing conditions

Limited financial resources restrict access to affordable and adequate housing. People living in poverty often struggle to afford rent or mortgage payments, leading to overcrowded living conditions, substandard housing, or even homelessness. Fig. 19 shows that an apartment in a multi-household building is the predominant housing situation (76% of respondents), but it should be stressed that almost 10% live in either a precarious dwelling (6%) or in a squatted building (3%).

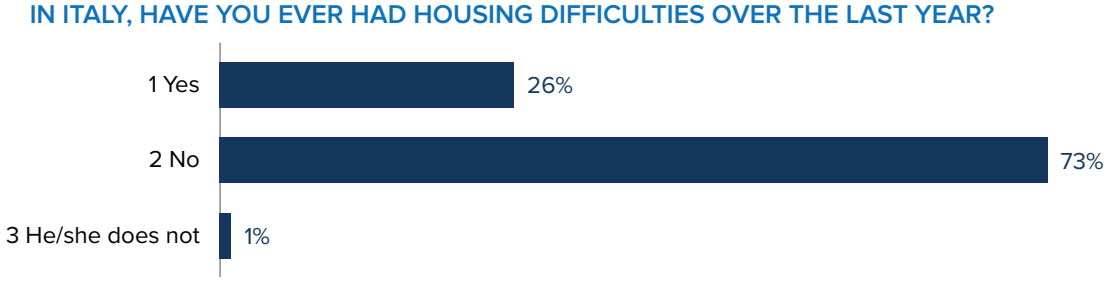
Fig. 19 **Type of housing**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Given these values, it is not surprising that more than one-fourth of the respondents (26%) declare they had some sort of housing difficulty in the last year (see Fig. 20).

Fig. 20 **Housing difficulties**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Our analyses allow identifying possible determinants of such a difficult housing situation in terms of differential probability of having endured housing difficulties in the last year (see regression in the Annex, Tab. A1). The three categories of respondents who display a higher-than-average probability are males (7 p.p. more likely to have suffered housing difficulties), under 45 (respondents older than 45 have 12 p.p. lower probability of recent housing problems), and beneficiaries of international protection of African origin. This latter value is particularly striking, and it possibly suggests the existence of a pattern of anti-black discrimination.

Contrary to our expectations, we found no statistical effect of the time spent in Italy on the probability of having suffered housing difficulties in the last year. This is surprising if one considers that the existing literature consistently shows that migration seniority (i.e. time in the host country since immigration) is a key predictor of socio-economic integration, including in the housing domain. The fact that, in our case, we do not find such an effect of time spent in the country may suggest that, besides structural dysfunctionalities of the housing market that affect also natives, discrimination of foreigners (and especially refugees) in the housing market is particularly rooted and persistent, much more than in the labour market.

These quantitative data on housing difficulties match well the findings of our qualitative research, which consistently point to very high levels of housing marginalization and discrimination.

Actually, most of the participants in interviews and focus groups maintain that housing is the single biggest challenge refugees in Italy have to face.
Refugees experience explicit institutional and social barriers, increasing their vulnerability in the housing market. At least five factors are mentioned in our qualitative data as housing market stressors:

- difficulty in providing guarantees required by landlords. Precarious, grey, cash-in-hand jobs provide little capital and inadequate documents to ensure refugees' solvency;
- weak social networks mean that information on housing market functioning and opportunities are limited; also, networking - especially with native individuals and organizations acting as formal or informal guarantors - is key to overcoming housing discrimination;
- the status - in particular of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection - may not be considered adequate (because it is too short-term and undetermined) to access the housing market by key housing market actors (real estate agents, landlords);
- transversal to the dimensions above, many report explicit discrimination affecting, in particular, racialized minorities. This means that even solving issues related to guarantees and documents may not be enough (see the interview excerpt R1 below);
- finally, some respondents maintain that the refugee reception system often does not provide accommodations, opportunities and capabilities to enter the regular housing market in the long run, thus limiting the possibility of achieving autonomy (R2).

On the other hand, it is quite telling that none of the focus groups' participants mention a role for public housing policy - thus not being considered an option. However, this perception of most refugees has to be situated in the broader context of a generally dysfunctional housing market and an overall very weak public housing policy framework.
In fact, several key informants address refugees' housing problems as just a piece of the larger puzzle of the housing crisis in Italy (R3). Thus, even though key informants generally recognize the specific disadvantage migrants and refugees have in this field, they often maintain that solutions should be found more generally within a public housing policy more than within a targeted action for refugees.

R1

I spent a year looking for accommodation and faced frequent discrimination once potential landlords or agencies realized I was African. This only happened in person because, having a good proficiency in Italian, they didn't realize I was a foreigner over the phone. They realized only at the time of the appointment, and the common reaction was, "Oh, it's you". Just from this response, you feel excluded and realize that you won't be able to secure the accommodation for which you had responded to the announcement.
(FG-BO-5-GC-M, Bologna, 29.12.2023)

R2

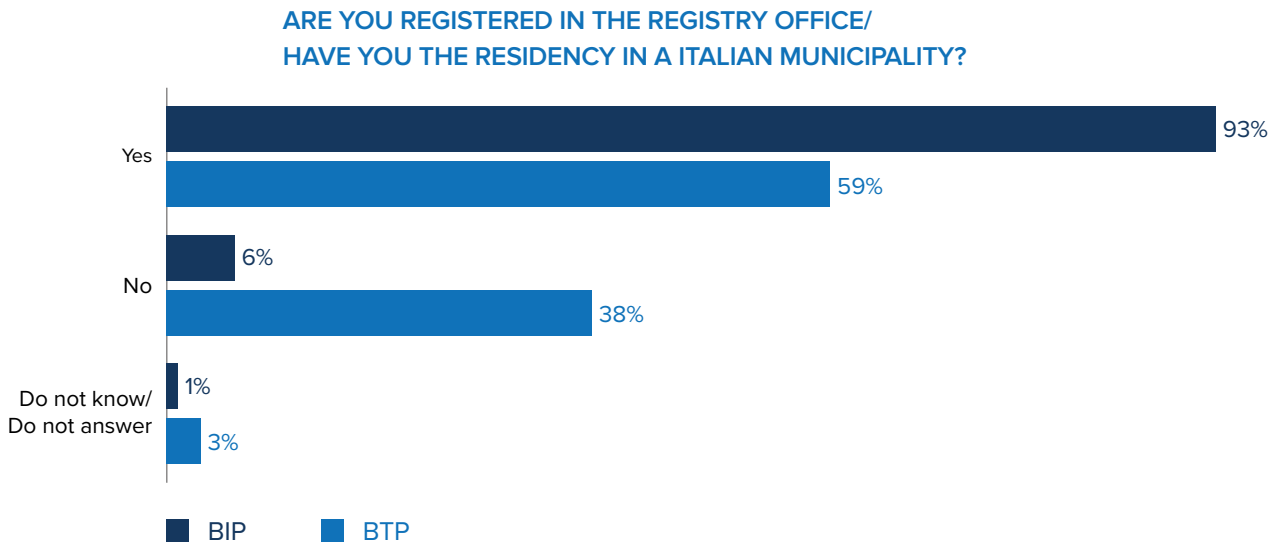
The main problem for refugees is access to housing. Often, refugees complete the asylum reception program without having a roof over their heads because it is very difficult to find rental accommodation; it is much harder to find a home than a job. I have been searching for a home for over six months without success and have received negative responses from potential landlords due to my foreign origin.
(FG-BO-5-AF-M, Bologna 26.01.24, our translation)

R3

From a housing perspective, we face a comprehensive crisis that cannot be solely addressed for refugees and foreigners. There is a demand for housing within the fragile and vulnerable segments of the population in this country, which is almost at its breaking point and reflects significant weaknesses in our welfare system; housing policies have been neglected for many years. Therefore, it is evident that any sector-specific intervention aimed at only certain segments becomes almost unsustainable.
(Camilla Orlandi, CITTALIA. Interview 01.02.2024, our translation)

Housing difficulties have an impact on refugees' residency registration (enrolment in *Anagrafe dei residenti)*, which is a crucial pre-condition to access welfare services. In our sample as a whole, the rate of enrolment is high (87.5% who are enrolled vs. 10.9% who are not). But, as shown in Fig. 21[15], there are substantial differences between beneficiaries of temporary protection and beneficiaries of international protection, which clearly depend on the shorter time spent in Italy by the former, and possibly also on a lower propensity to enrol due to desire and expectation of returning soon in the country of origin.

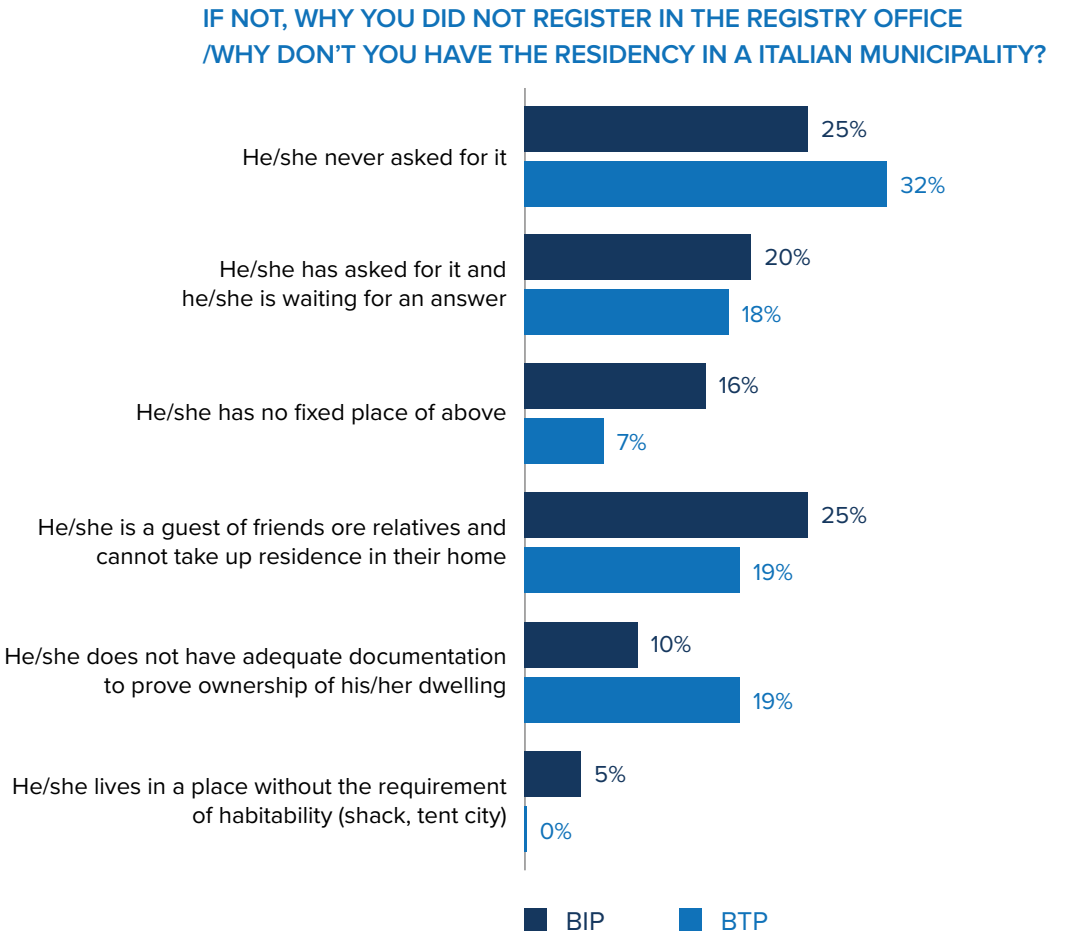
Fig. 21 **Residency registration among BIPs and BTPs**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

15 Values in the graph are consistent with preliminary estimates made by ISTAT in the context of an ongoing study. These estimates, obtained by linking residence permits to the national population register (*Anagrafe nazionale*), shows that the percentage of those registered is nearly 90% for refugees, but barely exceeds 60% for asylum seekers. Interestingly, however, according to ISTAT estimates, the proportion of Ukrainians with temporary protection status who are registered in the Italian civil register is below 11%, i.e. much lower than in our sample (59.2%). This may depend on the chronological gap between the two studies, which may have captured different situations (as the enrolment rate likely grows with the length of stay in Italy).

Fig. 22 **Motivations for not registering their residency among BIPs and BTPs**



N=134

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Although according to Italian law, every person *de facto* residing in Italy has a right (and an obligation) to register their residency, in practice, on the one hand, especially beneficiaries of temporary protection do not seem to be interested in registering (or perhaps they refrain from applying because they anticipate administrative hurdles); on the other hand, municipal authorities often make registration difficult for persons in precarious housing conditions. This is certainly the case with a significant share of refugees in our sample (as shown by the answers our respondents give when asked why they did not enrol: see Fig. 22 above).

Focus group discussions (FGD), in particular, have clearly shown that housing problems frequently have multifaceted negative effects on refugees, as they are not able to exercise their rights, thus hampering their ability to catch other life opportunities.

In the practical experience of several of our research participants (and contrary to formal legal provisions), proper accommodation is often a *de facto* pre-condition for both residence registration (that, in turn, is often a condition to access local welfare) and for the renewal of residence permits.

What is more, unmet housing needs mean that refugees are more vulnerable to exploitative conditions, e.g. relying on predatory networks providing shared rooms and demeaning jobs for profit (R4).

All in all, we can maintain that precarious dwelling conditions limit refugees' capacity to aspire, which is important for social mobility.

In short, this means that refugees spend all their energies on daily operations, cannot plan their future, and miss opportunities for improving their lives (R5).

R4

In many cases, rooms are sublet at exorbitant prices by tenants with rental contracts, leaving refugees with little choice but to accept, sometimes ending up sharing a room with six people. This situation also complicates the renewal of residence permits, as a declaration of hospitality is required, which refugees cannot obtain under these circumstances. Consequently, many individuals resort to purchasing fake declarations of hospitality, often costing up to €600. This desperate measure can drive people towards engaging in illicit activities to obtain the necessary resources. It perpetuates a vicious cycle that frequently traps refugees in severe illegality, marginalization, and hardship.
(FG-BO-3-PAK, Bologna, 26.01.24, our translation)

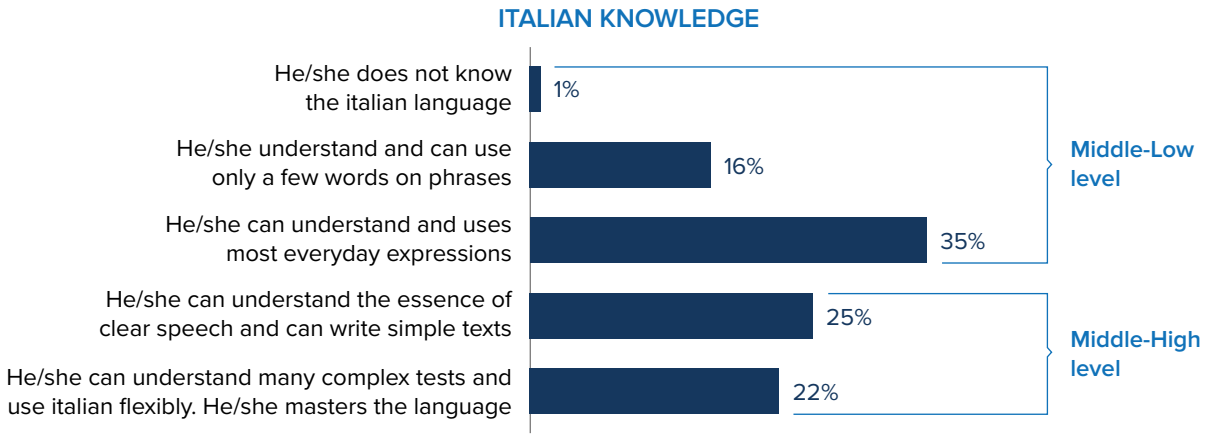
R5

To obtain a job, it is necessary to know the Italian language and to learn the Italian language, one must go to school; to go to school, one must have housing, and a place to study, eat, and rest. Only after obtaining a home is it possible to focus on studying the Italian language and searching for a job, and then integrate.
(FG-RO-1-ER-M, Rome 03.12.23, our translation)

2.4.2 Language proficiency

Poverty and language proficiency are strictly interconnected, as limited language skills can restrict access to education, employment, and social services, which are critical pathways out of poverty. Additionally, poverty can hinder access to language learning resources, making it difficult for individuals to improve their language skills, thereby reinforcing the cycle of poverty and social exclusion.
We measured knowledge of the language of the host country (i.e. Italian) indirectly through the self-perceptions of respondents, based on a scale composed of five qualitative assessments (derived from the Adult Education Survey). Fig. 23 shows a relatively high degree of variation, with 18% with (self-assessed) no or little knowledge of Italian, a significant majority (35%+25%) declaring to have a functional knowledge allowing them to interact and express themselves more or less effectively in everyday situations, and only 22% perceiving themselves as “mastering the language”. As we will see, this variable is positively associated with both the probability of employment and wage levels.

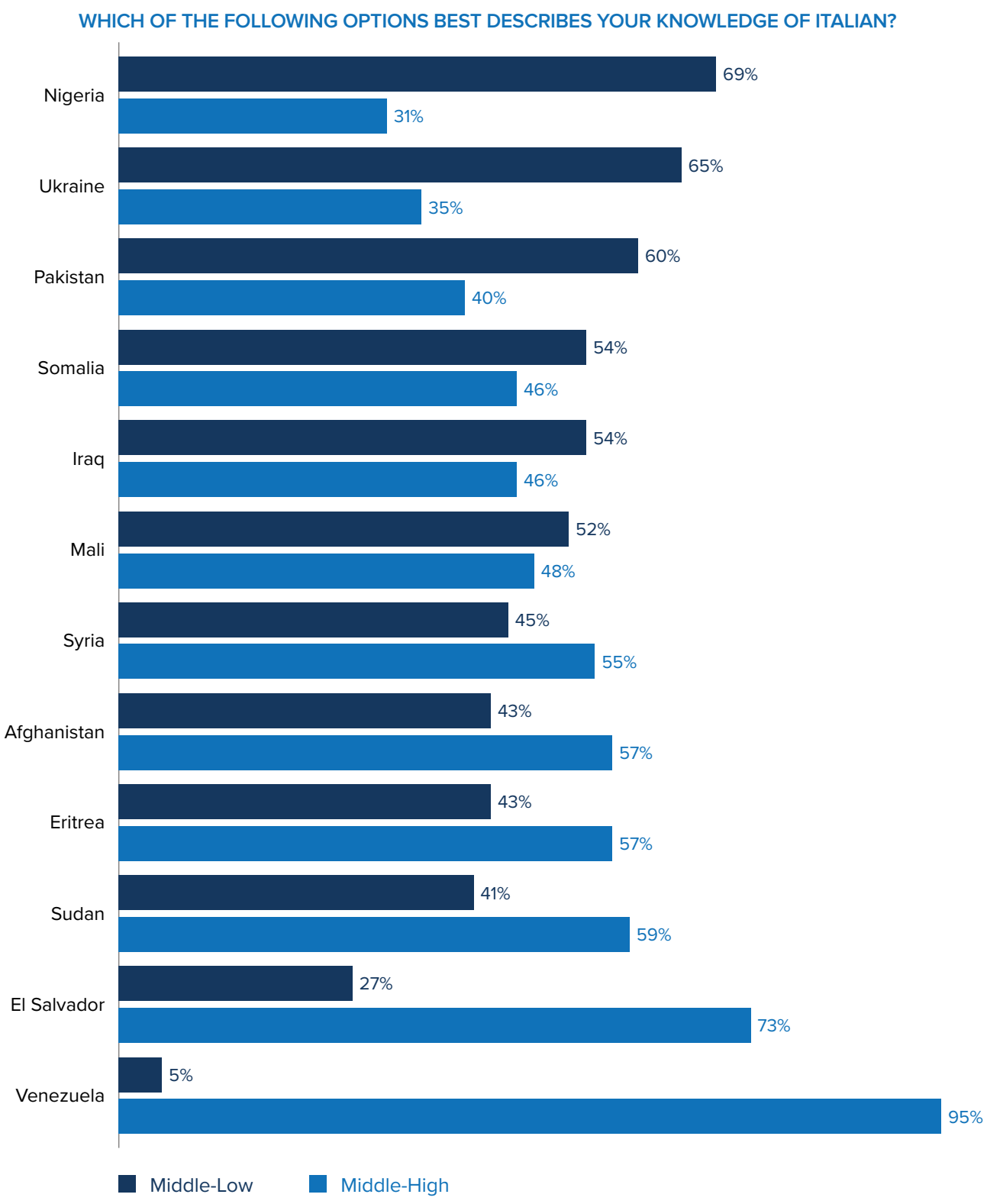
Fig. 23 **Level of Italian knowledge**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Given the key importance of language proficiency in determining socio-economic outcomes, it is worth having a more detailed look at how this variable plays out for different sub-groups of refugees. In the first place, not surprisingly, the country of origin counts. In particular, as Fig. 24 below shows, due to linguistic affinities. South American refugees have an advantage over others, particularly over Ukrainians (who due to recent arrival have generally had less time to study and/or practice the new language).

Fig. 24 **Level of Italian knowledge by country of origin**

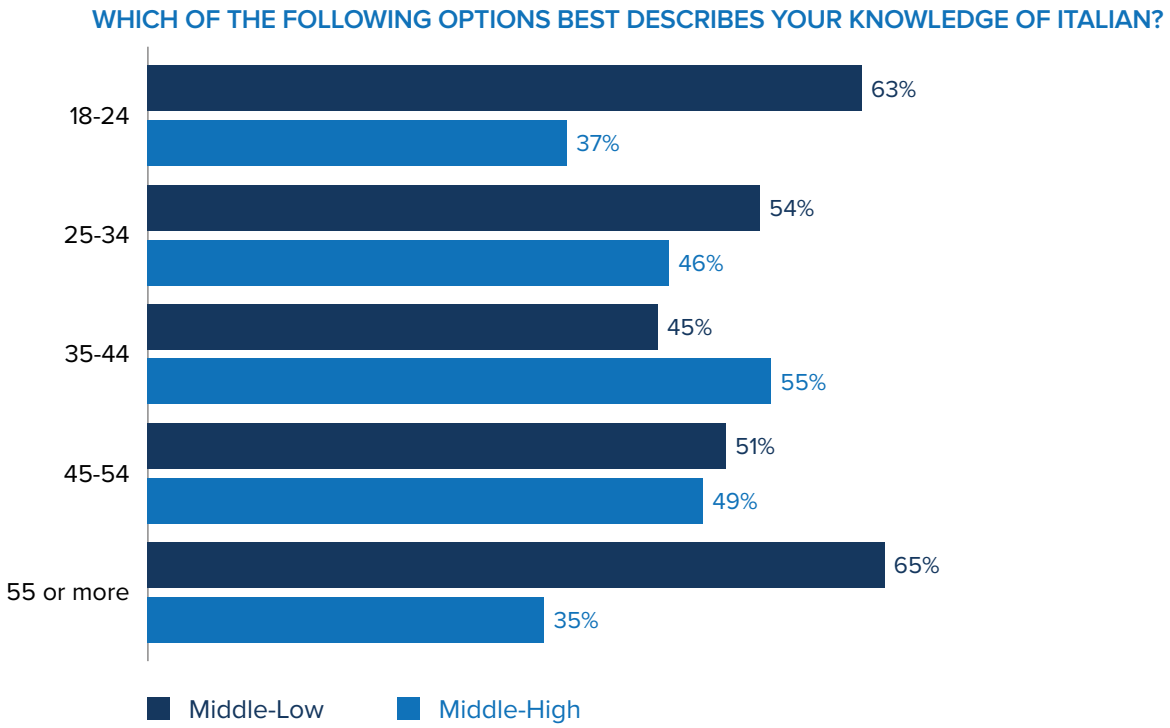


N=1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Language level also seems to depend on refugees age, with younger and older ones struggling more in mastering Italian compared to middle-aged ones (see Fig. 25).

Fig. 25 **Level of Italian Language by age**

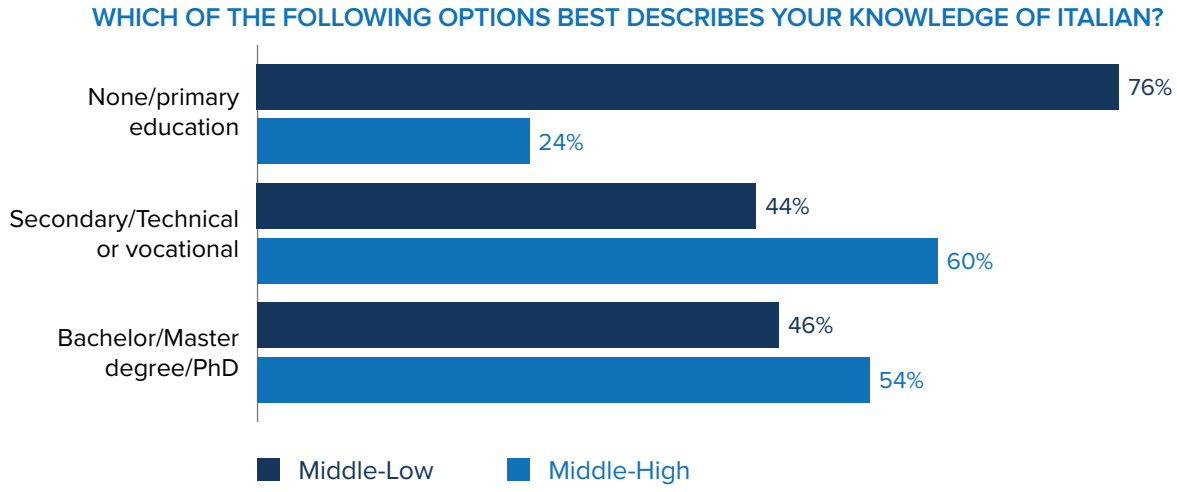


N = 1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Another variable influencing the perception individual refugees have of their host-country language proficiency is the level of education (although, somehow surprisingly, the impact is less marked for those with secondary education than for those with tertiary education), see Fig. 26.

Fig. 26 **Level of Italian knowledge by education**

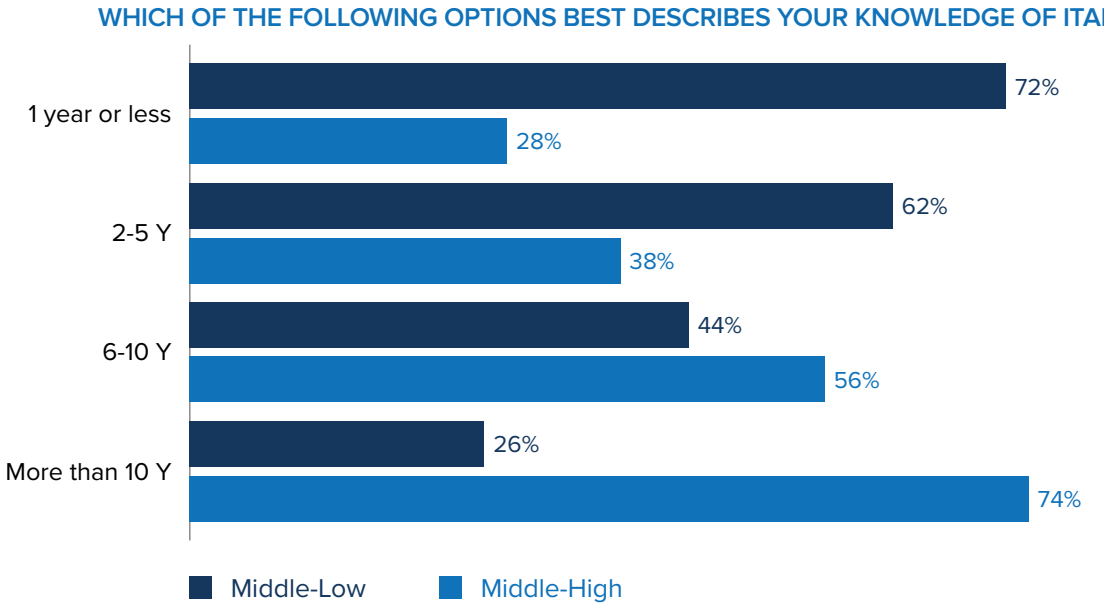


N = 1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Finally, and most importantly, self-assessed proficiency in the Italian language increases with the time spent in Italy (Fig. 27).

Fig. 27 **Level of Italian knowledge by time spent in Italy**



N = 1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

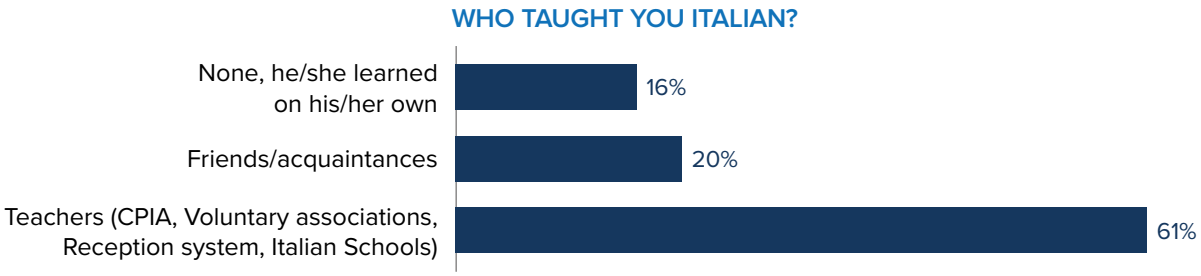
Our qualitative data enrich and deepen this quantitative picture by highlighting what learning Italian means for refugees in their own voice. Most participants in focus groups did actually emphasize the pivotal role of education in their long-term integration.
Proficiency in Italian is deemed particularly important by refugees to access decent jobs and to have the necessary awareness about the complex bureaucracy impacting their lives (from asylum adjudication procedures to labour and housing contracts). At the same time, focus group discussions stressed a number of impediments limiting refugees' opportunity to gain a decent mastery of Italian.

We can group emerging themes into two: individual-level and system-level constraints. As for the first ones, many refugees have limited cultural and social capital. Limited previous formal educational level and limited opportunities for socialization and practising Italian every day affect effective learning chances.
This is deemed particularly relevant for specific sub-groups, in particular women from countries where gender inequalities are strong, those not mastering European languages and/or the Latin alphabet, and those with social networks strongly centred on fellow nationals (Ethiopians and Eritreans living in squats were a case in point in some focus group discussions - R6).

R6

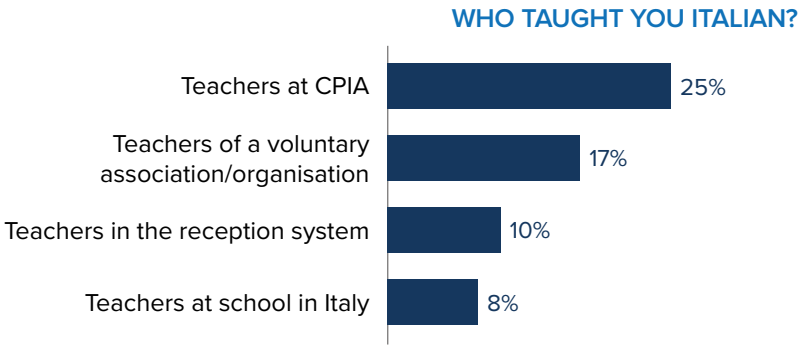
Many Eritreans, even after living here for years, cannot speak Italian, especially those who live in these housing squats. If you go there around nine, it feels like you're in Eritrea because almost everyone living there is Eritrean. Even Italian social workers providing support there have learned to speak Tigrinya.
This makes it even more difficult to integrate into the social fabric, find a decent house, regular and well-paid work because to achieve these goals, you need to know the language.
(Anonymous, key informant interview of 28.02.24, our translation)

Fig. 28 **Modes of learning Italian**



N = 1183
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Fig. 29 **Professional Instruction Contexts for Learning Italian**



N = 746
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

As for system-level hurdles to the improvement of language skills, many participants in our focus groups criticize the working of Italian courses they took part in, whether in the frame of the reception system or not. Call-outs focus in particular on:

- Too few hours dedicated to learning Italian in the reception system; it is worth mentioning that reforms in the regulation of initial reception disinvested from language education, and this may negatively impact refugee integration. As shown by Fig. 28 only 61% of particularly important by refugees were taught Italian by a professional teacher (in the 25% of the cases come from a Provincial Centers for Adult Education - CPIA, *Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti* - see Fig. 29); others learnt it from friends or acquaintances or on their own.
- Organization and methodologies of Italian classes, which are deemed not always fit for the needs of refugees (e.g. targeted courses are not focused enough on different entry levels); additionally, some point out that an unintended effect of the spatially distributed reception system is that opportunities are variable, and those hosted far from nodal places have to travel long hours to access services - language classes included (R7) - and have few opportunities to interact with native speakers.

R7

Knowledge of the Italian language is very important, but refugees are often not allowed to learn it during their stay in the asylum reception system. I spent a year in the CAS, where I was hosted without attending Italian language courses. They enrolled me in a course once a week for two months, but the lack of transportation services made it almost impossible to reach the course location. Refugees are expected to learn Italian but cannot do so effectively. (FG-BO-2-AFGH-F, Bologna 26.01.24, our translation)

R8

I attended CPIA for only three months because the reception operators pushed me to accept the job I currently hold as a pizza maker. I no longer have the time to attend the Italian course. However, I would like to study, improve my life, educate myself, and find a good job in line with my studies. (FG-MI-7-AFGH-M, Milan 19.11.23, our translation)

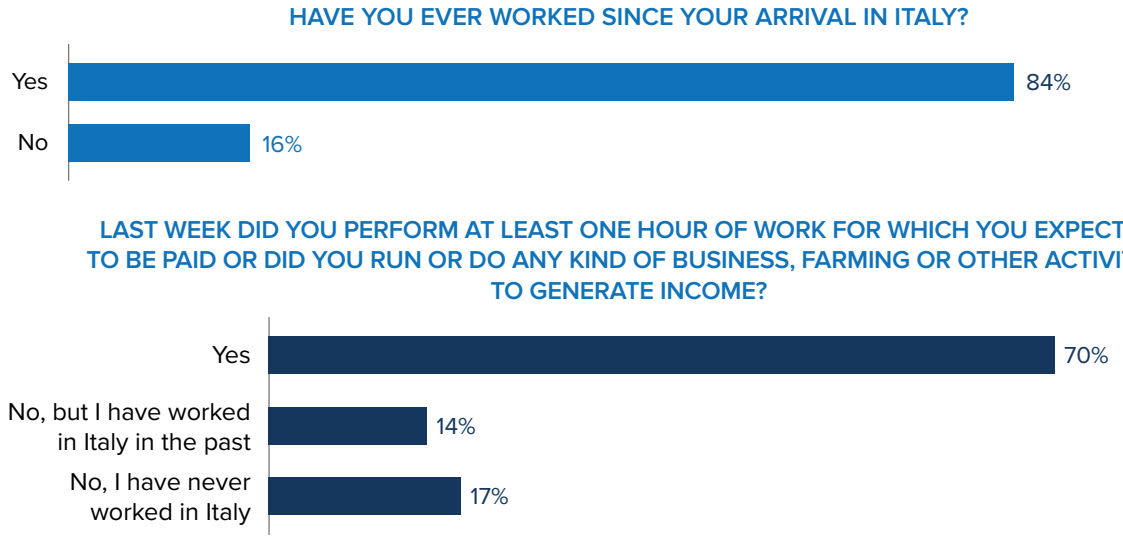
In some cases, motivation to learn Italian may be low, as Italy is not considered a long-term destination. In some other cases, case workers (not only in the reception system but also in the adult education system, in employment offices etc.) are reported to prioritize refugees' labour market participation over language learning as a means to speed up self-reliance and achievement of economic autonomy. This is part of a process of "cooling out" which we will see again later - i.e. a set of practices aimed to lower expectations of people considered unfit for specific attainments. A process that has the consequence of limiting refugees' life opportunities, with a disempowering effect (R8).

2.4.3 Work, wages, income

Economic and work-related indicators are at the core of this study, which also aims to fill a specific and serious knowledge gap that, as our literature review has clearly demonstrated, appears particularly serious in Italy. In fact, individuals who lack access to stable, well-paying jobs often struggle to meet basic needs, perpetuating their poverty. Moreover, poverty can restrict access to resources like education, training, and networks that are essential for finding and maintaining employment, creating a vicious cycle where lack of work inclusion reinforces poverty and vice versa. The economic and occupational conditions of refugees were investigated by combining an individual perspective (i.e. focusing on the situation of the respondent himself/herself) and a household perspective. The latter is essential in constructing composite indexes such as poverty and material deprivation, which are presented in Section 2.2.

Our data (Fig. 30) portray a population with a relatively high activity rate, with 84% of respondents having performed some kind of remunerated activity since arrival and 70% declaring to have performed at least one hour of paid work or business in the last week. The employment rate of refugees in our sample is higher than the employment rate of both Italian citizens and non-EU foreigners, which in 2023 was around 62% (for the age group 20-64). Only 1/6 of our sample, who is the age range 18-78, has been completely inactive during their whole stay in Italy.

Fig. 30 **Work in Italy**



N=1231 | N=1028

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

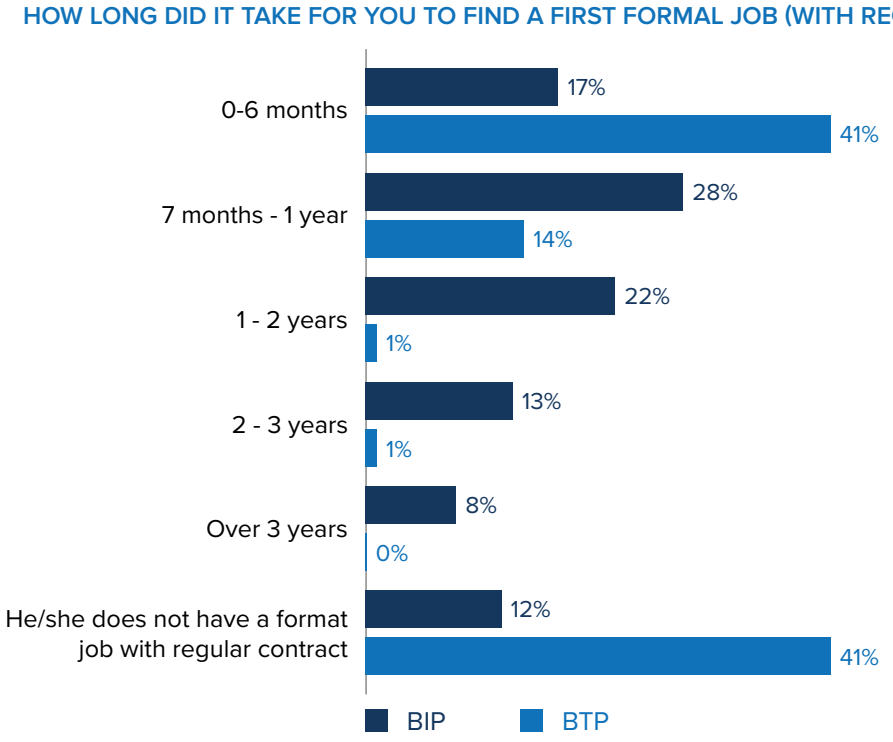
Consistently with our findings on activity rates, we also found that most refugees could obtain a regular occupation in a relatively short time upon arrival: i.e. less than one year for almost half of our sample (Fig. 31).
If one considers that in the first two months, asylum seekers are not allowed to work, this is a remarkably short period for labour market insertion. Of course, as we will see in detail below, this does not mean that the job that is found is satisfactory in terms of the quality of work or remuneration levels.

Fig. 31 **Time to find a first formal job**

N = 1028
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Interestingly, the time needed to find a first occupation is significantly different for beneficiaries of international protection and for beneficiaries of temporary protection (Fig. 32)[16]. While for the former the process of labour market insertion appears more gradual, for Ukrainians there is a substantial gap between a sizeable minority (41.3%) who find a regular job within six months and an identical share who do not have a formal occupation at the time of the survey (and possibly do not aim at having one, in the hope of a quick return to Ukraine).

Fig. 32 **Time to find a first formal job among BIPs and BTPs**

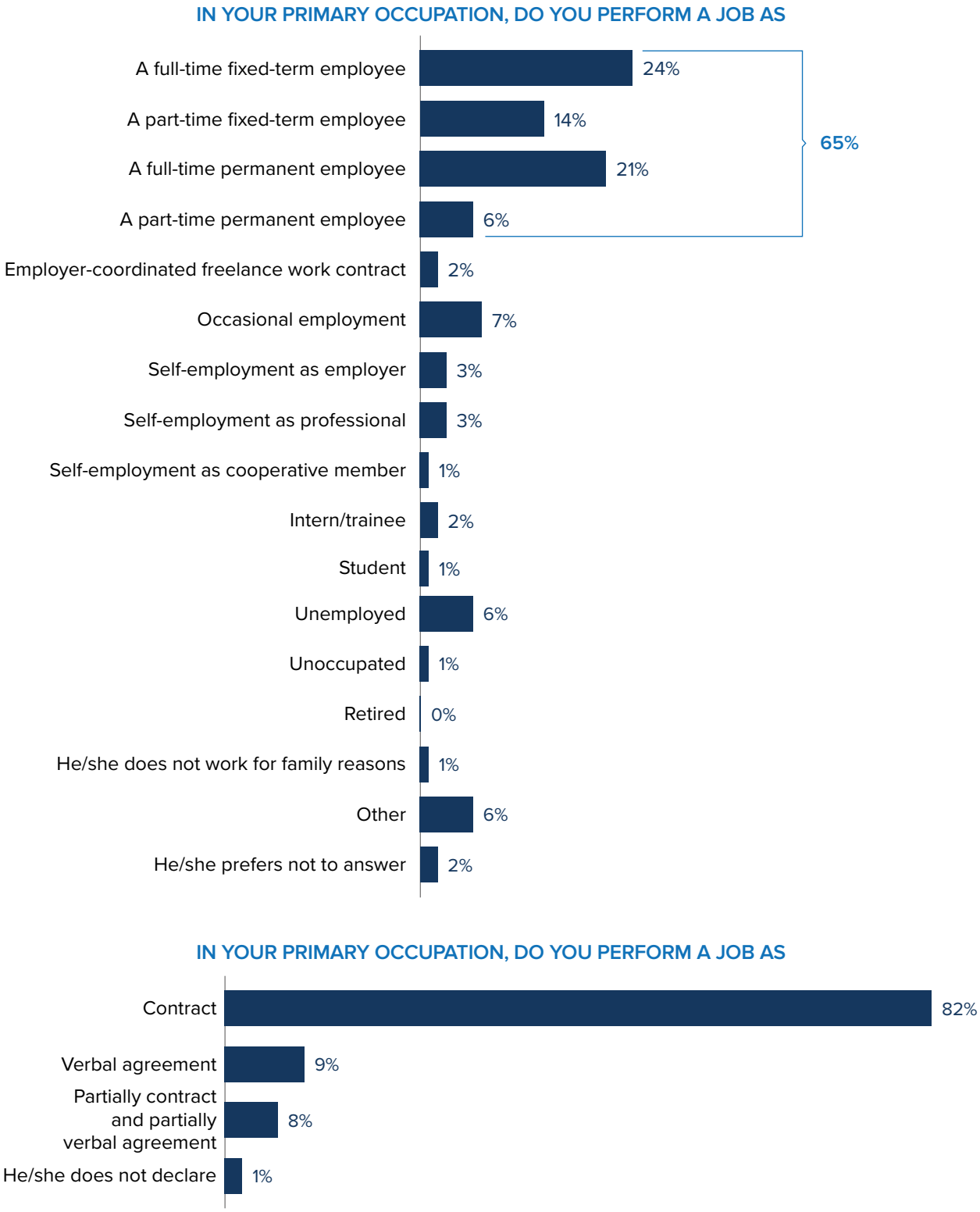


N=1028
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

16 Note that asylum seekers in Italy are allowed to work 60 days after submitting their asylum application, whereas beneficiaries of temporary protection are immediately allowed to work.

With regard to the type of employment relation, 65% of respondents perform some kind of employed work (of which only 21% are permanent and full-time contracts), with an additional 7% having occasional employment and 2% employed as interns. Out of the 65% of respondents who are employees, as Fig. 33 also shows, 17% of interviewed refugees are employed in a (fully or partially) irregular form.

Fig. 33 **Primary occupation**

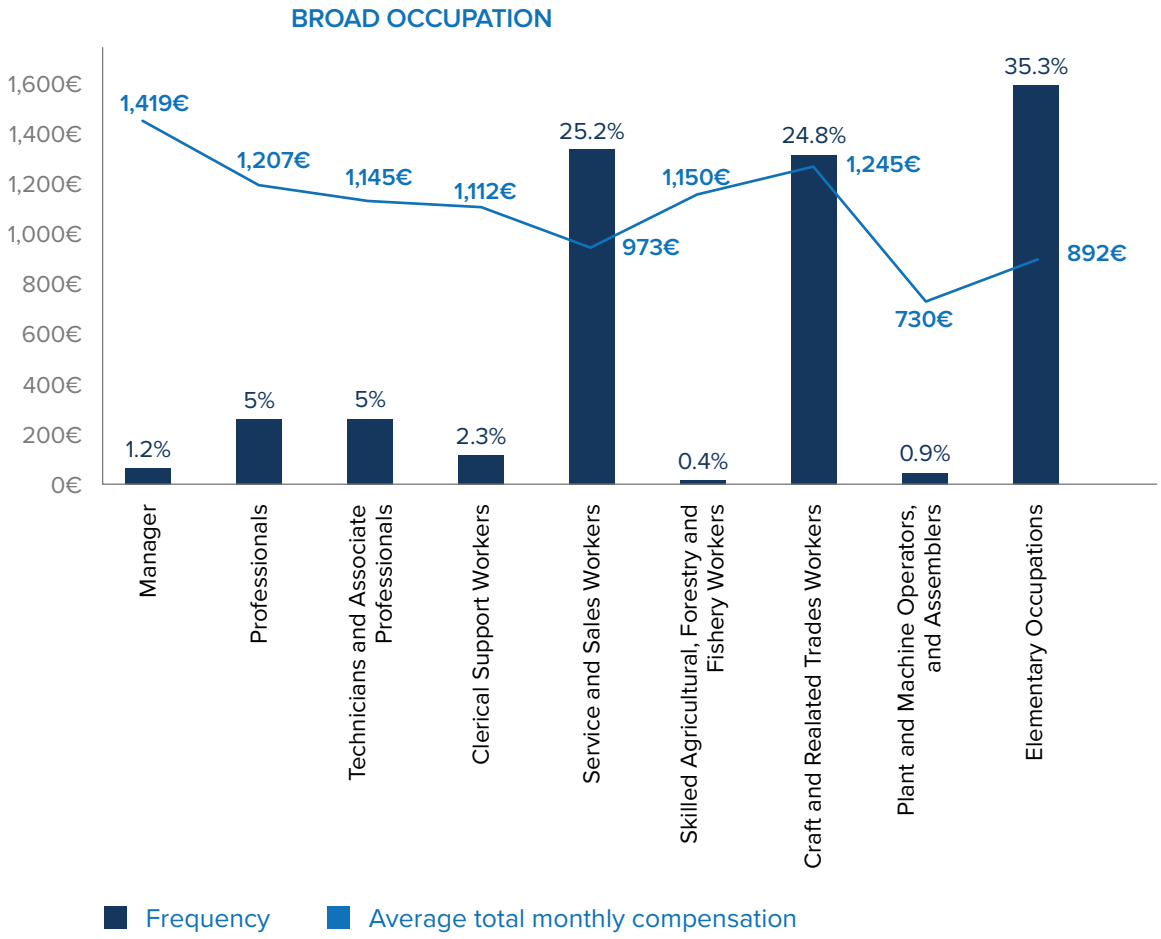


N=1231

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The questionnaire also included an open question on the main occupation in Italy (12% of employed respondents have a second job too). We manually coded this open question using the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO -08). In Fig. 34 we report the distribution of respondents across broad occupational groups (the nine *Major Groups* in the ISCO-08 classification). In contrast, in Tab. 12 we show the proportion employed in each of the ten most frequent detailed occupations (*Unit Groups* in the ISCO-08 classification).
The largest share of respondents (more than 1/3 of the total) perform an elementary occupation (e.g. cleaners, unskilled agricultural workers), but significant shares are also found in the service sector (e.g. waiters) and in crafts (e.g. bricklayers). Those employed in this latter sector have an average monthly compensation significantly (more or less 1/3) higher than in elementary occupations. In contrast, in 2022 according to EULFS data analysed by the LdA-Collegio Carlo Alberto 8th Migration Observatory, 27% of the foreign-born workers aged 25-64 and 8% of Italian native workers in the same age group were employed in an elementary occupation.

Fig. 34 **Broad Occupation**



Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Tab. 12 **Top 10 Occupations**

TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS (DETAILED)	PERCENT
Bricklayers and Related Workers	15%
Cleaners and Helpers in Offices. Hotels and Other Establishments	13%
Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Labourers	7%
Waiters	7%
Hand Packers	7%
Home-based Personal Care Workers	4%
Hand and Pedal Vehicle Drivers	4%
Kitchen Helpers	3%
Cooks	3%
Metal, Machinery and Related Trades Workers	3%

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The analyses that we conducted give us a more fine-grained view of the correlations between individual characteristics and employment status (see regression results in Tab. A2 and A3 in the Annex) or wage levels (Annex Tab. A4).

Men are generally more likely to have worked than women, both considering the whole period since their arrival in Italy (+12 p.p.) and in the last week (+16 p.p.). Secondary education slightly increases such probability, while tertiary education doesn't seem to have any additional effect. Age has a significant effect only on those over 45, who are less likely to have worked both since arrival (-14 p.p.) and in the last month (-11 p.p.). Respondents from Asia and the Middle East, and to a more limited extent from Africa, also show a disadvantage relative to respondents from other origins.
The single factor which has by far more influence on employment probability is migration seniority (i.e. time spent in Italy). It affects not only, as it is obvious, the probability of having ever worked in Italy but also the probability of having worked in the last week. Relative to refugees who have been in Italy for no more than one year, the employment probability is 17 p.p. higher for respondents having spent from two to five years in the country, 26 p.p. higher between 6 and 9 years, 23 p.p. higher for those with a migration seniority of 10 years or more.

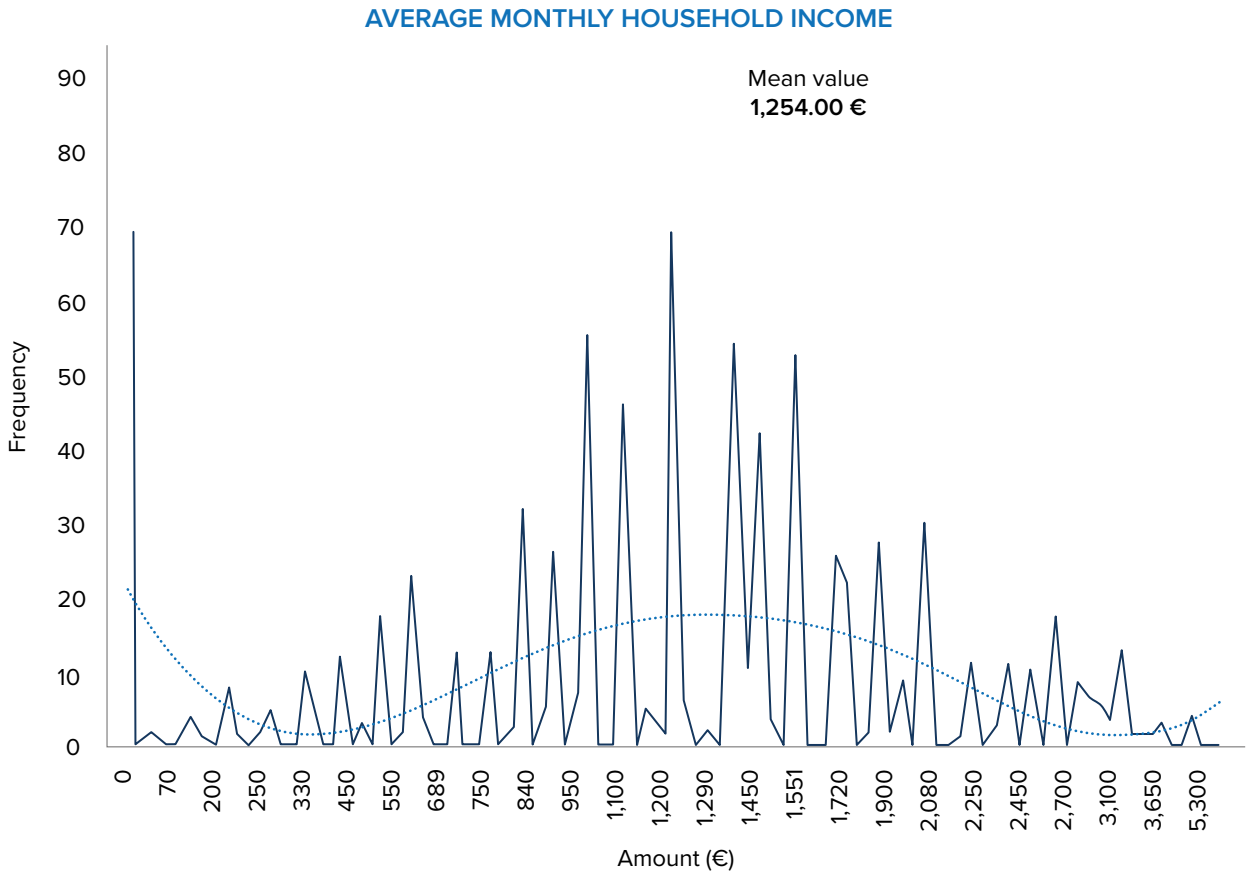
On the contrary, the type of protection has only a limited effect. Former beneficiaries (who obtained Italian nationality through naturalization) predictably have a significantly higher employment probability. This is in line with the international literature, which consistently shows a positive impact of the acquisition of nationality on integration outcomes.

Language fluency is also associated with a substantially higher probability of employment.
Refugees who have a (self-assessed) middle-high or high knowledge of Italian are 6 p.p. more likely to have ever worked in Italy and 10 p.p. more likely to have worked the previous week than those with a lower fluency.

The average monthly compensation for respondents who have worked the previous week is €1,163, including earnings from second jobs for the 12% of respondents who have more than one job.
The net monthly pay of workers is elicited quarterly in the Italian Labour Force Survey. However, since 2021 the compensation data are no longer publicly released. The latest available figures are for 2020, when (in 2023 equivalent euros) the average net monthly pay was €1,675 for Italian natives and €1,329 for non-EU immigrants. Hence, employed refugees in our sample earn about 13% less than non-EU immigrants in general in 2020 (even after accounting for inflation).
Time spent in Italy is the most important determinant of wage levels, but only for refugees who have been in Italy for at least six years.
Relative to those who have arrived within the previous five years, respondents who have spent between 6 and 9 years in Italy have an average premium of +16%, which increases to +24% for those who have been in the country for 10 or more years.

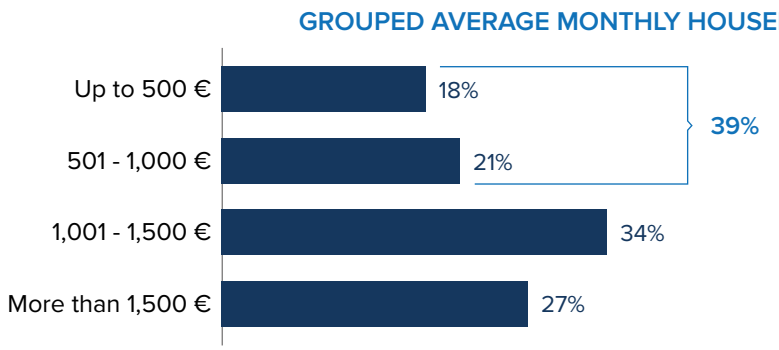
Unsurprisingly, general disparities in remuneration levels determined by gender and region of residence are also confirmed for refugees, with men earning 17 p.p. more than women and residents in the South of Italy earning 16 p.p. less. Before moving to some qualitative insights on the occupation dimension, let us have a glimpse at incomes at the household level.
While the mean value of total household income throughout our sample is €1,254 per month (Fig. 35), the distribution is uneven, with 39% of respondents' households having an overall income of less than €1,000 and 27% of more than €1,500 (Fig. 36).

Fig. 35 **Average monthly household income**



N=894
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Fig. 36 **Grouped average monthly household income**

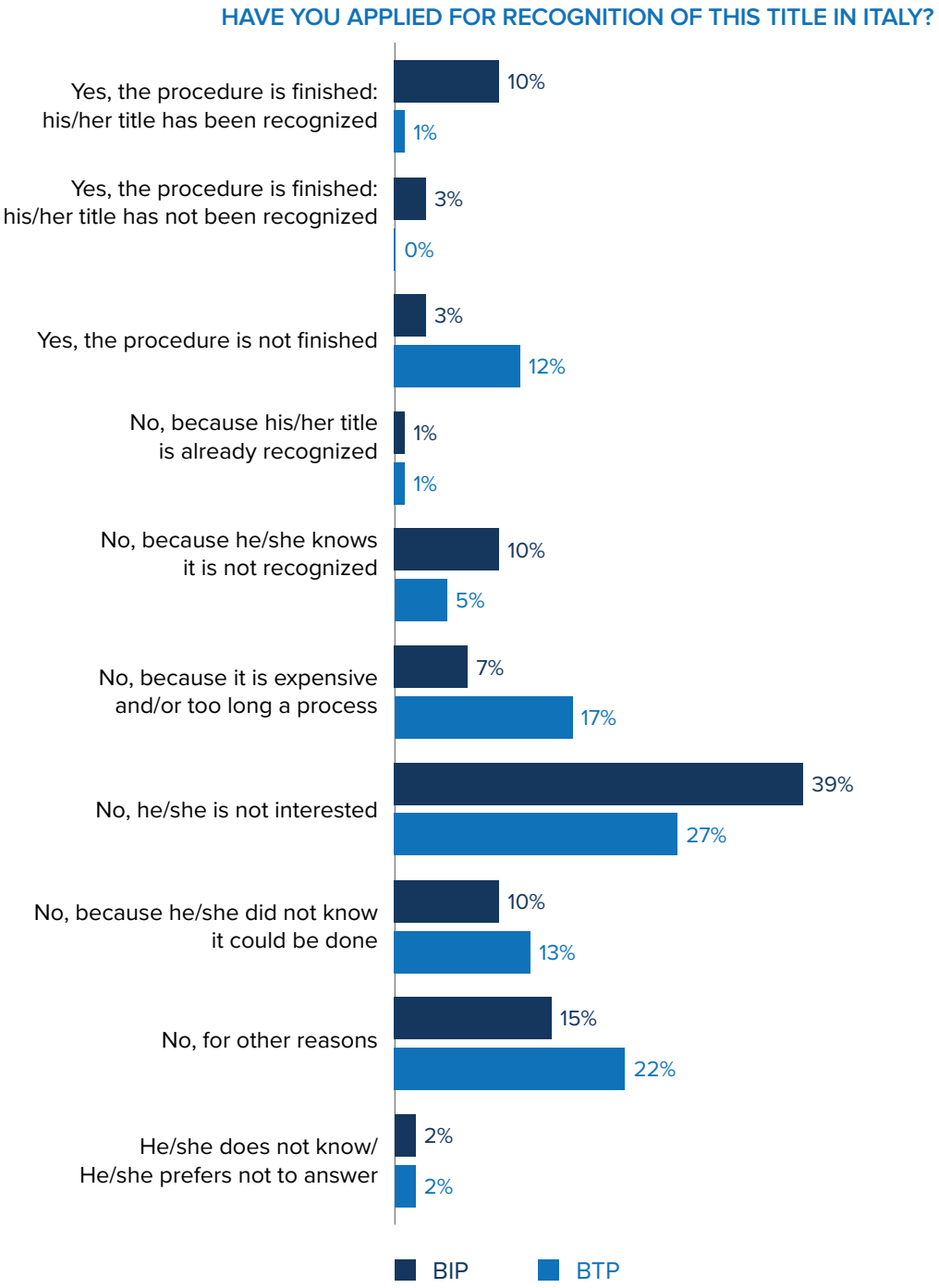


N=894
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Discourses on labour market integration that emerged from the qualitative side of this research are consistent with these findings. On the one hand, many underline that finding a job to make ends meet is not impossible. Still, labour market opportunities are available mostly in typically "3D jobs" (dirty, dangerous, and demeaning), which means serious deskilling and brain waste for a number of refugees (R9). Respondents in our research focus on the following key factors affecting their labour market entry:

- Refugees rank low in labour queues. Employers have prejudiced representations of refugees' skills - not rarely related to reported overt discrimination, especially for racialized minorities. Some skilled refugees in our focus groups mentioned also that employers justify their rejection of refugee candidates mentioning the (short) duration of residence permits and formal barriers to access regulated professions (R10);
- As mentioned above for education, case workers (in the reception system, in the employment offices) supporting refugees' career development more likely guide beneficiaries toward a job of any kind rather than toward jobs that require qualifications and credentials. Strategies of cooling out refugees' expectations of upward mobility via upskilling trade long-term investments in their potential with the short-term benefit of an (insecure) autonomy. This is perceived by many participants in focus groups as a veritable belittlement, jeopardizing their life chances - especially when case workers show contempt for refugees' aspirations (R11).
- More general problems in the Italian labour market, e.g. supply and demand mismatch in numerous sectors, labour insecurity, bad jobs and low wages, limited return on education, and ineffective training hit hard on vulnerable groups like refugees (R12), as grey jobs may limit status improvements (e.g. to apply for naturalisation).
- For qualified staff, deskilling is reinforced by the difficulty of having foreign qualifications recognized, as the administrative process is lengthy and riddled with obstacles - with a negative effect not only on labour market opportunities but also on the public recognition of their social and professional status (R13). As a matter of fact, only 16.4% of beneficiaries of international protection and 12.3% of beneficiaries of temporary protection ever applied for recognition of their qualifications in Italy, and of these only 10.3% and 0.6%, respectively obtained it (see Fig. 37 below).

Fig. 37 **Application for title recognition among BIPs and BTPs**



N=823

Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

As a result of all the labour market insertion dynamics described so far, refugees often fall into a spiral of downward assimilation into the labour market. A relatively fast and wide availability of unskilled job opportunities becomes a trap also for those with skills and aspirations. Refugees' qualifications are made invisible in the Italian labour market, both formally (with problems in the recognition of previous educational credentials) and substantially (with skills and potential underrated by employers and labour market services).

While subordinate incorporation is typical of migrants' labour market integration in Italy, participants to the focus groups perceived that there is a specific refugee penalty that other foreigners do not suffer (R13).

R9

If they want to work, refugees must lower their standards compared to the social position and job qualifications they had before in their home country.
(FG-RO-6-VEN-M, Rome 04.02.24, our translation)

R10

The system pushes you to leave as soon as possible: to work immediately, even if you end up as a janitor[...]. I have often been told that I have blinders because I don't want to take the first job that comes my way but aim for a high-level job commensurate with my education. But the case workers replied that I had nothing, that my degree in Italy was worthless.
(FG-TO-2-AFGH-M, Turin 26.11.23, our translation)

R11

There's a growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility, including valuing social considerations in attracting and recruiting new talent. Consequently, there's a palpable increase in openness, not just within the market but also within companies themselves a heightened awareness. However, they understandably lack the time to actively seek out or engage with refugees, leading to a lamented lack of connection between these disparate worlds, hindering the matching of supply and demand for these profiles.
(Giulia Henry, IRES Piemonte, interview 23.04.24, our translation)

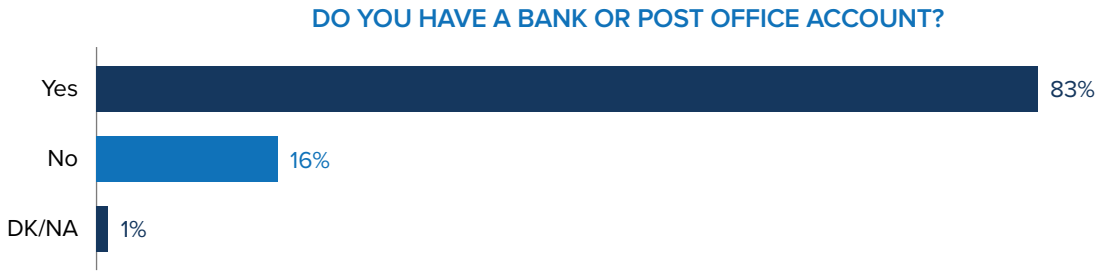
R12

Immigrants arriving with specific occupational goals, whether as labourers or professionals, have their skills and professionalism acknowledged promptly. This recognition is not extended to refugees, who are often perceived as lacking knowledge and treated patronizingly.
(Yagoub Kideiba, Mosaico, interview 24.01.23, our translation)

2.4.4 Financial Inclusion

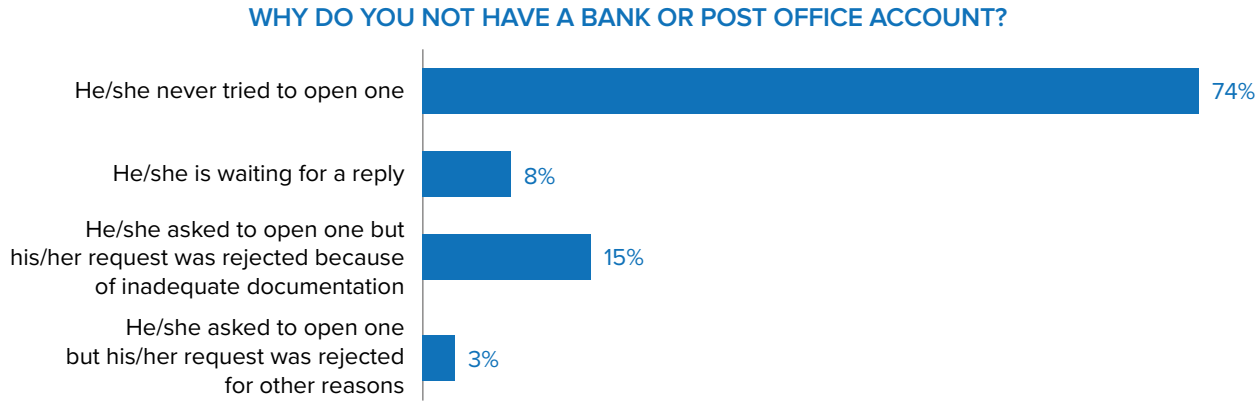
Respondents in our sample have a good degree of financial inclusion: 83% of respondents have a bank or post office account (Fig. 38).
Among those who do not have a bank account, 74% have never tried to open one, 8% are in the process of opening it, and 18% (i.e. about 3% of the whole sample) have had their application rejected (Fig. 39).

Fig. 38 **Bank and post office account**



N=1231
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

Fig. 39 **Motivations for not having bank or post office account**



N=193
Source: Study on socio-economic conditions of refugees in Italy

The regression analysis in Tab. A8 (see Annex) reveals that, unsurprisingly, younger respondents and those with a higher level of education are more likely to have a bank or postal account.
Likewise, time spent in Italy is strongly associated with financial inclusion: recently arrived refugees are 22 p.p. less likely to have a bank account than those who have been in Italy for two to five years and 30 p.p. less likely than those who have been in Italy for more than five years.

Once again, Ukrainians, who have typically been in Italy for less than two years, stand out as an exception: their likelihood of having a bank account is 13 p.p. higher relative to respondents from elsewhere with similar characteristics.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS

This report, filling an important knowledge gap on the Italian asylum system, marks the first quantitative study on the socio-economic condition of the beneficiaries of international and temporary protection. It also includes an important study by ISTAT that gives significant indications on the presence, distribution and mobility of refugees in Italy. As such, it is an indispensable tool for UNHCR and national and local institutions to plan their actions and activities in support of refugees' integration.

The report's findings outline a worrying scenario showing that a large percentage of refugees interviewed live in a condition of poverty, especially women. The data show that 43.5% of refugees in the sample live in absolute poverty, while 67% fall under the relative poverty threshold, and 26% are in a condition of severe material and social deprivation (SMSD). In the latter two cases, the figures are significantly higher than those recorded for Italians and immigrants using the same methodology.

Employment remains a significant barrier to economic stability for refugees. Despite being active in the labor market, many refugees remain in precarious employment situations. Approximately 84% of respondents have performed at least some paid work since arriving in Italy, but only 21% hold full-time, permanent positions. Another critical issue is the low level of knowledge of the Italian language, which precludes effective integration paths. In the research, it emerges that 53% of those interviewed have a medium-low knowledge of the Italian language, a percentage that rises to 62% for those who have lived in Italy for 2 to 5 years. Housing is a further area where refugees face substantial difficulties, regardless of the time spent in Italy; over one-quarter have reported housing difficulties in the last year: some have found temporary solutions by staying with friends or relatives, but others have resorted to emergency accommodation or, in the worst cases, have experienced homelessness.

The ability to cope with crises depends also on external resources like social capital and public welfare. The research shows that refugees have limited social support though: among the respondents, the percentage of those who have never had access to welfare measures is high (73%), while there are few social relations they can rely on, with most respondents having fewer than three people they could count on in times of serious personal problems, reflecting difficulties in building strong support networks.

Refugees face challenges in accessing public support, with specific barriers for those with disabilities and older individuals. The lack of adequate guidance and fragmented information exacerbates their difficulties, particularly in healthcare and social protection. Lastly, a high number of respondents (45%) claimed to have suffered discrimination, although few reported it to the authorities (17%).

The lack of integration of refugees not only negatively impacts their lives, but it can also lead to increased tensions and marginalization, undermining social cohesion and posing risks to the harmony of society as a whole. Moreover, it represents a missed opportunity, as refugees can play a significant role in Italy's economic growth through their skills and competences. If properly supported, they can contribute to addressing the mismatching in the labour market and the unmet needs that the corporate sector is increasingly highlighting. For these reasons it is crucial to strengthen integration programs and take action by improving measures to support refugees. In facing this challenge, national and local authorities can find allies such as private companies, civil society organizations, universities, volunteers, which have shown strong momentum in supporting the asylum system and refugees in recent years.

The role played by refugees and refugee-led organizations is also fundamental, and their participation in public life, particularly in decisions that affect them, should always be facilitated.

Based on the research findings, and in order to improve the economic condition of refugees, UNHCR would like to share some recommendations that can have a positive impact on their integration.

Recommendations

The following recommendations, made by UNHCR, outline key priorities for enhancing the integration of refugees in Italy.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE

For national government institutions

- Strengthen Italian language learning across all levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for asylum-seekers and refugees, by introducing courses in first- and second-line reception centers and by increasing funds for the Provincial Centers for Adult Education (CPIA, *Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti)*, also promoting targeted courses for specific groups such as people with no or low level of literacy.

For public and private actors, such as Municipalities, refugee-led organizations, companies

- Develop complementary initiatives aimed at fostering language learning by asylum-seekers and refugees (e.g. peer support/buddying schemes; in presence or online volunteering-based one-to-one or group conversations sessions; in presence or online professionally focused language courses).

ADEQUATE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

For national and local government institutions and public services

- Promote initiatives to support refugees' access to housing solutions, including the creation of social rental agencies by local public entities, the establishment of financial guarantees schemes funded by companies, in combination with labor inclusion opportunities.
- Actively counteract discrimination, the context of housing, by conducting national campaigns addressed to public opinion, for combating stereotypes on refugee population.
- Ensure full access of asylum-seekers and refugees to residence registration by updating the relevant Ministry of Interior guidelines, removing unnecessary documentation requirements and launching an awareness campaign addressed to refugees about the right-obligation to residence registration .

LABOUR INCLUSION AND PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For national and regional government institutions and the Central Service of SAI

- Set up a skills and profiles database of asylum-seekers and refugees from reception and legal status determination procedures, along with geographically targeted mechanisms for matching refugees with economic and job opportunities.
- Promote the establishment of public mechanisms, and the strengthening of the existing ones (i.e. the EQPR, European Qualifications Passport for Refugees), with streamlined procedures for refugees for the recognition of their titles and qualifications to access tertiary education and regulated professions.

For national government institutions, the Central Service of SAI and the private sector

- Promote initiatives aimed at fostering refugees' employability (reskilling projects, mentoring schemes, on-the-job language training) in both first- and second-line reception centers, as well as professional trainings through partnerships with private companies and training agencies.
- Replicate in other labour sectors the training and job placement model implemented through the agreement between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Ministry of the Interior and business associations and trade unions in the construction sector.
- Set up job inclusion programs designed for refugees with specific needs, particularly taking into considerations the necessities of single-parent households (offering flexible work arrangements and childcare support), survivors of gender-based violence, survivors of torture, survivors of trafficking, people with disabilities.

For national government institutions and academia

- Increase resources available to support recognition of titles and qualifications of refugees, including for dedicated guidance services and assistance in the administrative procedure, and for capacity building activities addressed to workers employed in the reception system and in the Municipalities' integration desks.
- Ensure full access to higher education (including Higher Technical Institutes), by removing administrative and financial barriers, by avoiding excessive documentation requirements to enroll, as well as by strengthening scholarship programs dedicated to refugees.

SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

For national and local government institutions and the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR)

- Foster community and social cohesion by promoting the participation of both asylum-seekers and refugees in the National Civil Service, and refugee-lead organizations in social, sport, and cultural events within the community as well as systematizing peer support/buddying schemes, such as the UNHCR community matching program.
- Enhance protection against discrimination for asylum-seekers and refugees, by promoting a national campaign regarding options to redress events of discrimination, by establishing antidiscrimination help-centers at the municipality level and creating a fund for the victims of discrimination to support their access to judicial protection.

ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION

For local government institutions and public services, civil society organizations including refugee-led organizations

- Support asylum-seekers and refugees' access to social protection by developing online, multilingual informational materials on welfare measures, and by establishing multi-service integration hubs (e.g.. *Spazio Comune*) helping individuals in administrative procedures, as well as by strengthening the capacity of community-based and refugee-led organizations to reach out to refugee communities and provide up-to-date guidance on social services.

For national government and legislative institutions

- Eliminate the criteria for accessing social protection measures that are not related to a person's needs or condition of vulnerability, and which limit the concrete access of refugees to social measures, such as the disproportionate requirement of a long residence seniority.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

For national government institutions, international organizations, refugee-led organizations

- Develop training programs for financial institutions operators to raise their awareness on refugees' right, on the asylum and reception system, and on refugee integration conditions, as well as on the importance of their financial inclusion and their rights to bank account and bank services.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE

For the Ministry of the Interior and the Prefectures

- Strengthen the capacity of the Police Headquarters' Immigration offices to release and renew residence permits in a timely manner in order not to hinder BPTI access to regular labour market, social protection measures and financial services.
- Establish a Working Group tasked to promote and monitor the implementation of the National Integration Plan, also in connection with the activities of the AMIF Coordination Working Group; at the local level, ensure that local integration working groups including RLOs, CBOs and Municipalities, are established within the Territorial Councils for Immigration (*Consigli Territoriali per l'Immigrazione*), for implementation of the plan and for periodical reporting.

For the Ministry of the Interior and institutes of research and statistics

- Ensure access to disaggregated administrative data by legal status, age, gender, and diversity with regards to -among others- work, social protection, socio-economic profiles, and education, and periodically publish a comprehensive statistical report on the distribution, profiles and integration levels of asylum-seekers and refugees, in order to improve inclusion policies and programs.

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CHAPTER 4

ANNEXES

4.1 State of the art

INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

UNHCR (2022) highlights a significant surge in the global refugee population, escalating from 27,1 million in 2021 to an unprecedented 35,3 million by the end of 2022, raised to 37.3 in 2023. The surge is primarily attributed to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. More than half of the refugee population originates from Syria, Ukraine, and Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, fleeing and arriving in a safe country - as complex as it is - is only the first step of a further journey into making a living in the new context.

This review is aimed at exploring the state of the art on a very complex and multifaceted issue, that is, the conditions refugees face in destination countries, with a focus on their socio-economic conditions, their vulnerability, poverty, and social exclusion. In particular, we will focus on key aspects that fead the fieldwork research on refugees' integration in Italy. Hence, our primary focus will be on refugee key socio-economic dimensions, namely economic and labour market participation, living conditions, and poverty, as well as dimensions that help refugee coping with hardship - e.g. ingroup and intergroup networks - encompassing relationships with civil society.

ASCRIBING RESPONSIBILITY FOR REFUGEE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Refugee socio-economic participation impacts both the established receiving community and the newcomers, necessitating mutual adjustment and participation (Korak, 2003, p. 52; see also Vroome *et al.*, 2011; Havrylchyk, Ukrayinchuk, 2017). Not rarely the public discourse is blaming refugees for faring badly; their willingness to participate actively in society is questioned. Nevertheless, various aspects of social life, including employment, housing, health, education, citizenship, language proficiency are related to two-way exchanges between refugees and natives (Alba, Foner, 2015). Opportunities in the receiving society are important, and are available in segmented ways in various sub-sectors and spheres, resulting in diverse outcomes (Castles *et al.*, 2001).

So, when observing refugee socio-economic conditions, it is necessary to take into account that they result from two-sided processes. On the one hand, structural issues (e.g. the functioning of key institutions in host societies - labour market, housing, political participation; specific condition of disadvantage, e.g. abilities, cultural capital); on the other hand, agency (what refugees and people interacting with them actually do); ultimately, socio-economic outcomes result from the interplay of these two dimensions.

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES IN STUDYING REFUGEE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Reviewing studies on refugee socio-economic conditions and vulnerability, we have to face some difficulties.

First, most data do not differentiate between refugees and other immigrants or among refugees based on gender, origin, age, and entry status (Tanay, Peschner, 2017; Fasani *et al.*, 2018; Donato, Ferris, 2020). Even when available, such data often remain inaccessible to researchers (Bevelander, 2020).

Second, refugees experience more adverse physical and mental health outcomes when compared to other social groups. This may hinder a favourable labour market integration (Chin, Cortes, 2015; Ruiz *et al.*, 2018). However, most data sources on refugees often do not measure health conditions (Donato, Ferris, 2020, p. 12).

Third, studies on refugees socio-economic incorporation often focus on the structural and organizational aspects of the integration system (Korac, 2003, p. 3). In general, the assistance programs developed for refugees, often "founded upon unequal power and authority rather than on integration and equal worth," tend to treat them as individuals with "immature social identities" who must be "re-educated" for integration (Knudsen, 1991, p. 31). However, as highlighted by Robinson (1998, p. 122), "since integration is individualized, contested, and contextual", understanding how refugees perceive their experiences becomes just as crucial as considering objective indicators of adaptation, such as employment, income, and socioeconomic mobility (Montgomery, 1996).

THE ROLE OF POLICIES IN REFUGEE INTEGRATION

The extent to which the accumulated set of life conditions positions a refugee in a specific relation to others relies heavily on the policies and country contexts of the receiving societies (Korac, 2003, p. 54; see also Vogiazides, Mondani, 2020; Phillimore, 2021). In a context where refugees experience unequal opportunities and power asymmetries, inclusive public policies and open societal attitudes are key to overcome administrative barriers and discriminatory attitudes (IRC, 2019; Wolffhardt *et al.*, 2019). Hence, how policymakers shape refugee policies affect socio-economic outcomes (Korac, 2003, p. 52).

In recent years, Western countries have been grappling with the challenge of facilitating the settlement of growing numbers of refugees and encouraging their active participation in receiving societies (Valtonen, 1999). This includes facilitating access to retraining and education for improved employment prospects and ensuring access to health, housing, documentation, legal rights, and other essential social services. Moreover, they extend support for community-building initiatives (Korac, 2003, p. 52; also see Valtonen, 2016). Additionally, generalized trust (i.e. refugees' confidence in the interaction with others) is acknowledged as a key facilitator of the integration process, empowering refugees to participate in local decision-making processes (Strang, Quinn, 2019).

The reception and integration policies of European states demonstrate significant diversity (European Commission, 2001; Tanay, Peschner, 2017; Vianelli, 2017; Wolffhardt *et al.*, 2019; Ambrosini, 2023) - an issue of utmost importance, considering that the initial asylum support systems have long-term effects (Bakker *et al.*, 2016; Hynie *et al.*, 2016). While a prolonged stay at asylum centres may alleviate the growing social and political pressures in the receiving society stemming from the fear of being 'swamped' by newcomers, it is evident that they do not facilitate autonomy (Perino, Eve, 2017). In too many cases, the experience of asylum centres does not contribute to the functional integration of refugees. Furthermore, it can have a detrimental impact on how refugees perceive the receiving society and shape their subsequent attitude toward their new homeland (Korac, 2003).

The uncertainty surrounding the future during the limbo period that characterizes the asylum-seeking phase may diminish refugees' inclination to invest in country-specific human capital in the destination country, such as language skills and establishing social connections, or to use this time for seeking recognition of qualifications or skills (Havrylchyk, Ukrayinchuk, 2017, p. 11; see also da Lomba, 2010; Kosyakova, Brenzel, 2020). Many scholars emphasize that the state of limbo incurs unwarranted costs, manifested as suppressed labour market activity, debilitation from mental distress, and excessive reliance on social assistance (Coates, Haward, 2005, Hainmueller *et al.*, 2016). This is, in general, substantiated by refugees' testimonies articulating feelings of marginalization and depression, accompanied by a sense of bleak prospects for the future (Leach, Mansouri, 2004), leading to the squandering of human potential and the erosion of refugees' dignity. The dependency on insufficient governmental aid leaves refugees disheartened, contributing to a diminished sense of self-worth as they grapple with their inability to improve their situation (Abdi, 2005).

REFUGEE ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

While much of the existing literature addresses the economic and labour market participation of migrants in host countries (Scholten *et al.*, 2015; Panichella, 2018; de Haas *et al.*, 2020), nevertheless a noticeable gap exists in the case of refugees (Ortensi, Ambrosetti, 2022; Fasani *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2020).

Some studies conducted in the United States, Australia, Canada, as well as in Northern and Continental Europe (Cortes, 2004; Bevelander, Pendakur, 2014; Bakker *et al.*, 2016; Bratsberg *et al.*, 2017; Sarvimäki, 2017; Fasani *et al.*, 2018; Ruiz, Vargas-Silva, 2018) highlight significant challenges that refugees face in the process of labour market participation compared to other immigrant categories (Mpofu *et al.*, 2012; Waxman, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2020; Ortensi, Ambrosetti, 2022; Bevelander, 2020), although the gap that tends to diminish over time (Tanay, Peschner, 2017; Orav, 2022). This set of challenges - unemployment (Mikhael, Norman, 2018), underemployment (Krahn *et al.*, 2000; Vinokurov *et al.*, 2017), low wages (Yu *et al.*, 2007; Carlsson, Rooth 2016), involvement in the informal economy (Crush *et al.*, 2017) - is commonly referred to as the "refugee gap"

(Connor, 2010) or, more recently, the "refugee entry effect" (Bakker *et al.*, 2017).
It emphasizes the initial disadvantage experienced by refugees at the start of their careers in the host country, a disadvantage that tends to diminish over time but rarely disappears (Ibidem).
Scholars attribute the penalization of refugees to a combination of individual attributes and country-specific characteristics (Bevelander, 2020; Rengs *et al.*, 2017; Lee *et al.*, 2020).

In fact, refugees are compelled to flee their home countries, they often lack pre-existing connections in the receiving society and their admission into a new society is not predicated on a match between their skills and the needs of the job market (Malkki, 1995; Kaabel, 2017). Consequently, the refugee experience differs significantly from that of other migrant groups, with many refugees encountering a range of legal, socioeconomic, psychological, and often also health challenges that have a negative impact on their workforce integration and job performance (Bevelander, Lundh, 2007; Agbényiga *et al.*, 2012).

In general, we can summarize the key critical points regarding the economic and labour market participation of refugees as follows:

a) Social Ties and employment prospects

Scholars argue that refugees face a twofold challenge related to their social ties: the ones they have prior to their mobility are comparatively not so conducive to labour market support and integration; the ones they establish in their destinations are weaker. As social ties are seen as vital in the refugee labour market and social integration, the lack or weakness of such ties is a driver of economic failure (Chiswick, 1999; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017; de Vroome, van Tubergen, 2010, Andersson *et al.*, 2018).

b) Educational and Skill Disparities, and labour market effects

Research consistently shows that refugees, on average, have lower levels of education, language proficiency, and employability skills compared to other immigrant categories (Bevelander, Pendakur, 2014; Connor, 2010; Auer, 2017). Such lower educational and skill levels suggest that refugees are less positively selected for integration into the host country's labour market compared to other immigrant categories (Constant, Zimmermann, 2005; Chiswick *et al.*, 2006; Ruiz, Vargas-Silva, 2018).

c) Mobility without a plan

By definition, refugees' migration is usually forced. This means that refugees lack of initiative in migrating, had insufficient investment in preparatory socialization, and experienced potential interruptions in education - and in standard life courses in general. Those factors are identified as contributing to the disparities faced by refugees in the labour market (Phillimore, 2021).

d) Specific Challenges Recognition of Qualifications

Even in destination countries with refugees in high-education networks, their qualifications are often unrecognized, adding a further layer of complexity to their integration (Ager, Strang, 2008).
Skilled refugees' downward labour market incorporation is related to intertwined factors (Krahn *et al.*, 2000): recognition of previous credentials is problematic for structural reasons in the host countries (protectionism control over access to prestige professions, that can also turn into experience of discrimination and exclusionary practices in the high-end segment of the labour market), refugees' position (e.g. disempowering condition, limited access to proper information, etc.), origin country relations (limited linking social capital to interact with authorities of countries refugees fled from).

REFUGEE ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION IN EUROPE

Several European studies explore the impacts of national and local labour market conditions on refugees' earnings and employment (among others, Bevelander, Lundh, 2007).

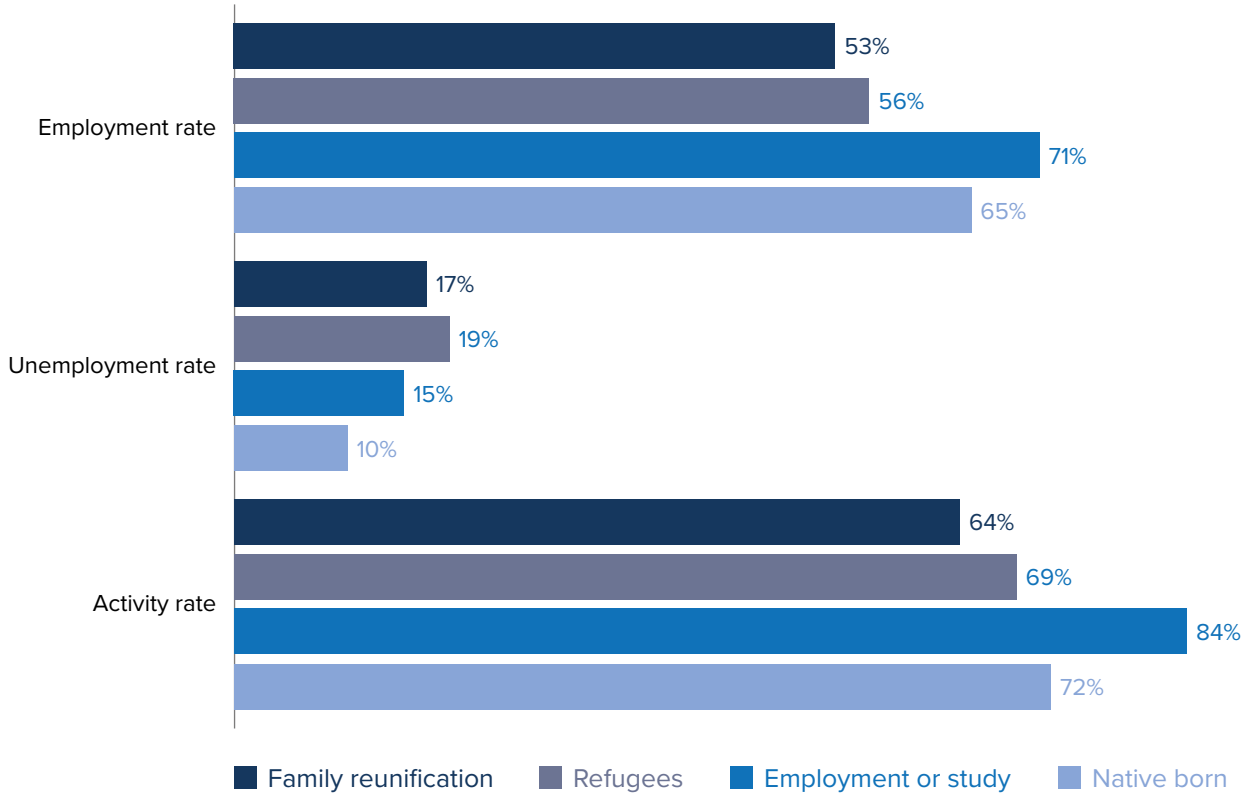
In general, these studies predictably show that refugees' earnings and employment are influenced by economic contingencies, with better outcomes during robust economic periods and declines during challenging times (Åslund, Rooth, 2007). Research also distinguishes among different refugee groups,

considering factors like resettlement from camps, seeking asylum at the border, and family ties (Bevelander, 2011). Phillimore and Goodson (2008) emphasized that difficulties in housing or health conditions impact progress in employment.

Results from the special module EU Labour Force Survey 2014 emphasize that immediately after arrival in the EU, refugees experience lower rates of employment and income compared to other immigrants (Tanay, Peschner, 2017). The study has demonstrated that, within the EU, refugees constitute one of the most vulnerable groups among non-EU migrants in the labour market. They exhibit lower employment rates than the native-born population (56% compared to the EU average of 65%) and significantly lower rates than migrants who come for employment and study (71%). The employment rate for those who migrated for family reunification is even lower, standing at only 53% (see Fig. A1).

Putting together these two strands of disadvantage, refugees and newcoming family members, implies that refugees' family members may face an even harsher disadvantage.
As some scholars noted (Tanay, Peschner, 2017), the intersection of such disadvantage is exacerbated by the lack of policies supporting this specific group throughout Europe.

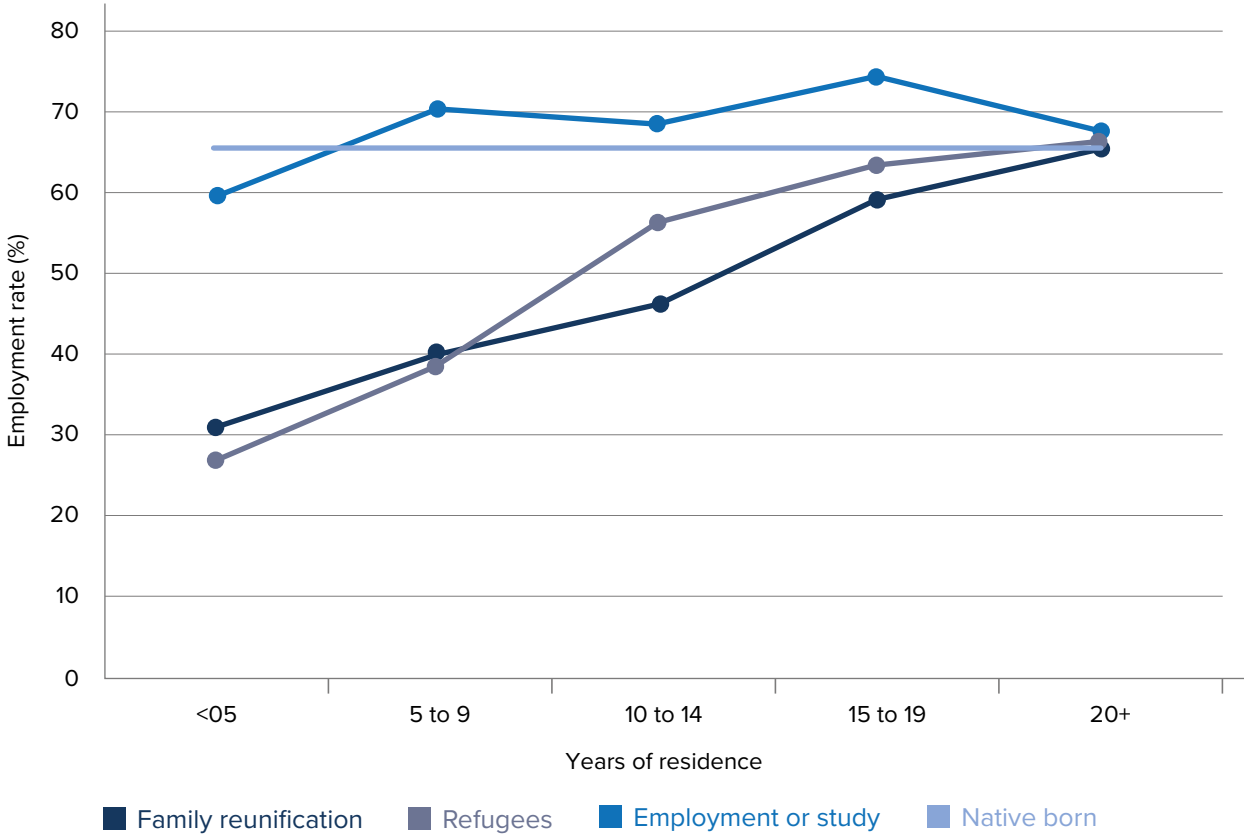
Fig. A1 **Employment, Unemployment, and activity rates for migration of working age people (15-64), EU total, 2014**



Note: Data cover 25 countries of the European Union
Source: European Commission (2016). based on EU LFS 2014 AHM

Furthermore, the authors emphasize that, although the overall employment situation for refugees poses a continuous challenge, trends over time indicate that labour market integration becomes increasingly attainable with prolonged residence in the host country (see Fig. A2). However, refugees require between 15 and 19 years to align with the EU average (Tanay, Peschner, 2017, p. 8).

Fig. A2 **Employment rate by reason for migration and years of residence, EU total, 15-64, 2014**



Note: Data cover 25 countries of the European Union
Source: European Commission (2016) based on EU LFS 2014AHM

Fasani *et al.* (2018) note that while immigrant performance in European labour markets is generally worse than that of natives across various dimensions (such as employment probability, likelihood of working in a skilled occupation, and earned income), the outcomes for refugees consistently fare lower than those for either EU or non-EU migrants. According to this study:

Not only does this labour market gap seems not motivated by the different observable individual characteristics, but 60-80 percent of the 'refugee gap' conditional on age, gender and education remains unexplained even when we control for unobservables using origin area, entry cohort and destination country fixed effects, and the interactions between them. Indeed, refugee employment and unemployment probabilities result being 7.8 percentage points (11.6 percent) below and 3.1 percentage points (22.1 percent) above, respectively, those of similar non-refugee migrants. The refugees that struggle most are those from areas that account for the majority of current refugee waves (i.e. Africa and the Middle East) (Fasani et al. 2018, p. 4-5).

The authors explain this further gap as a likely effect of refugees' poorer health status and lower language proficiency. Moreover, they demonstrate that geographic dispersal policies may have additional adverse effects on refugee integration. This is seemingly linked to inefficient labour market allocation upon arrival, given that it diminishes over time as refugees are eventually allowed to relocate. Finally, their results also indicate that refugees who arrived in countries and years characterized by a relatively high share of applicants awarded full refugee status exhibit stronger labour market integration.

In Europe, factors contributing to the disadvantaged refugees' condition include "non-selection" (as Bevelander, 2020, p. 1 says) for the labour market, devaluation of human capital and credentials due to asylum and skill accreditation processes (skill waste), as well as lower levels of health and education. Moreover, scholars have highlighted that while refugees' economic integration improves with longer residence, after five years most still experience employment outcomes below those of comparable natives. Thus, improvements do not really close the gap for a significant share of refugees (Fasani *et al.*, 2018, Bevelander, 2020; Kosyakova, Kogan, 2022; Orav, 2022). Therefore, broadly speaking, factors such as the right to protection, language proficiency, access to housing and social networks providing labour market information, residing in ethnic enclaves, and prior labour market experience significantly contribute to refugees' economic participation (Tanay and Peschner, 2017; Donato, Ferris, 2020; Phillimore, 2021).

Nevertheless, several studies show that the extent of the disadvantage cannot be explained only by refugees' human capital or other individual characteristics (Valtonen, 1998; Bloch, 2002; Ott, 2013; Bakker *et al.*, 2017). For instance, even educated refugees, who had highly-skilled jobs in their country of origin, relatively high education, and good language skills in the language of the country of immigration are met with serious difficulties in destination labour markets (Valtonen 1998; 1999 Bloch 2002).
In some cases, in fact, controlling for individual characteristics like gender, education, work experience and language competence, the refugee gap accentuates rather than narrowing it (Perino, Eve, 2017).

REFUGEE ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION IN ITALY

Due to its strategic geographical location and connections with nations along the primary migration routes to Europe, Italy has witnessed a significant surge in asylum requests in recent decades (Ortensi, Ambrosetti, 2022, p. 22). This surge was especially pronounced during the Yugoslav conflicts from the 1990s to the early 2000s, as well as the unrest in Northern Africa in 2011 (Bona, Marchetti, 2017). Roughly 400,000 individuals sought asylum in Italy between 1985 and 2013 (Eurostat, 2020).

However, the prevailing perception of Italy as a country of transit rather than a destination has relegated the topic of refugees' participation into the Italian labour market to the background (European Parliament, 2017). Refugee socio-economic condition in Italy, and more broadly in southern European countries are generally characterized by a comparatively low penalization in employment - at least until the outburst of the financial and sovereign debt crises between 2008 and 2012 - (Finotelli, Ponzo, 2018) and by a high level of concentration in low-skilled jobs (King *et al.*, 2000; Fellini, 2018), has been less investigated compared with northern and continental Europe, leaving several research questions unanswered (Ortensi, Ambrosetti, 2022, p. 22).

Despite this relative scarcity of targeted research, a few fundamental features emerge.
For instance, especially in the first years after migrating to Italy, refugees have lower employment rates compared with migrants admitted through other entry channels. Once recognized, refugees often followed the typical Southern European pattern, undergoing an initial phase in a situation of informal employment. One essential aspect of the Italian model is that employment plays a stronger role on the refugee economic participation than their legal status (Ortensi, Ambrosetti 2022).
Scholars have noted that historically obtaining legal status has been easier through economic migration than via the asylum process (Ambrosini, 2014; Korac, 2003). Being categorized as migrants rather than refugees empowered agency and indirectly facilitated integration, albeit amid significant hardship due to exceedingly harsh initial conditions (Ambrosini, 2014).

The substantial capacity to integrate workers into both the formal and informal Italian job markets, alongside the minimal *de facto* distinction between various entry pathways - a trait commonly observed in Southern European job markets (Fellini, 2018) - should, in theory, create a "favorable circumstance" for the initial economic inclusion of refugees in the Italian labour market (Ortensi, Ambrosetti 2022, p. 23).
The economic assimilation of refugees was propelled by the broad adaptability of the Italian labour market to absorb foreign-born workers, primarily placing them in segmented and ethnically stratified low-income and low-profile positions (Zanfrini, 2014). Research indicates that labour market outcomes

deteriorated for immigrants during and after the crisis, bearing a heavier burden than native-born individuals (Fellini, 2018; Pastore, Villosio, 2012).

However, the study by Ortensi and Ambrosetti (2022) on the socio-economic integration of refugees in Lombardy (Italy), underlines that while a significant portion of refugees were unemployed during the survey period (40.1%, in contrast to 10.1% among other migrants), a notable proportion were irregularly employed (16.8% compared to 14.0% among other migrants).
The study also highlighted that the share of inactivity was of 7.0% among refugees as opposed to 14.9% among other migrants (Ortensi, Ambrosetti 2022, p. 32)[1].

These findings shed light on the complex dynamics of refugees' labour participation, showcasing variations in employment statuses compared to other migrant groups in the Lombardy region.
Their study shows that even in one of the wealthiest regions of Italy and Europe, refugees encounter more significant challenges in labour market participation compared to other migrants.
The authors argue that despite refugees being consistently regarded as migrants in Italy and justified by their complementary economic role in a national economy facing a shortage of low-cost labour (Ambrosini, 2014), the broad capacity to include foreign workers, which characterized the Italian labour market in recent years, is insufficient to overcome the challenges in labour market integration that typically affect refugees (Ortensi, Ambrosetti 2022, p. 33).

Altogether, existing research shows that refugees in Italy face significant challenges, primarily in attaining minimal financial security and integrating into the labour market in a meaningful way, thereby securing for themselves a valued social role (Korac, 2003).

POVERTY

Poverty is evidently connected with refugee socio-economic conditions, referencing to the "material core" and the lack of resources (Townsend, 1996), or additionally, to the symbolic dimension of exclusion (Lister, 2004; Lukasiewicz, 2017). The material core is understood in terms of income or living standards. The symbolic aspects of poverty encompass (but are not limited to) disrespect, humiliation, feelings of shame, stigma, assault on dignity and self-esteem, othering, denial of human rights, diminished citizenship, lack of voice, and powerlessness (Lister, 2004, p. 8).

Despite the formulation and implementation of various asylum and social policies in welfare states globally, a non-negligible share of refugees still confronts issues of poverty and social exclusion.

Research on poverty among refugees is still in its early stages, providing scant evidence on the factors that contribute to it. However, some studies in the Global North emphasize how refugee poverty is especially manifested through housing insecurity, the inability to access essential necessities like clothing or medicines, reliance on welfare and other support networks, food insecurity and hunger, and the challenges in planning for the future in their day-to-day lives (Phillimore, Goodson, 2006; Carter *et al.*, 2009; Quintiliani,2009; Valenta, Bunar, 2010; Phillimore, 2011; UNHCR, 2013; Allsopp *et al.*, 2014; Tang, 2015).

Like other individuals grappling with poverty, refugees have reported facing stigma when accessing different forms of welfare (Mulvey, 2010). Pre-migration factors, including traumatic experiences such as torture, also contribute to the experience of (and the capacity to react to) poverty (Allsopp *et al.*, 2014).
Moreover, poverty is influenced by variables such as the duration of residency, language proficiency, and connections with religious and co-national groups (Bollinger, Hagstrom, 2011; Cheung, Phillimore, 2014).

Many scholars argue that refugees are significantly dependent on the structural conditions set by asylum and the related social policies. For instance, the asylum system itself can operate as a 'poverty-producing machine' utilized by governments to diminish or prevent future asylum claims (Bloch, Schuster, 2002; Spencer, 2011; Allsopp *et al.*, 2014).

Within the Italian debate, specific insights on the relationship between refugees and poverty are lacking, both in quantitative and qualitative studies.

1 While the authors do not interpret this evidence, it shall be noted that the two aggregates are characterized by different socio-demographic characteristics: in the refugee sample there are more youngsters, males, without a family. All conditions that explain a larger participation into the labour market.

CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS' SUPPORT FOR REFUGEE INTEGRATION

From 2015, the so-called "refugee crisis" exposed a lack of solidarity among nations, emerging as a moral issue before a demographic one, playing a pivotal role in fostering a sense of collective social responsibility on a broad scale within the EU (Witkowski *et al.*, 2019). In response to the shortcomings of the states, the distance between official policies and social reality (Castles, 2004) and the absence of specific policies (Chtorius, Miller, 2017), thousands of volunteers connected with refugees individually, through informal groups, or existing civil society organizations (CSOs). (Ambrosini, Van der Leun, 2015; Pries, 2019; Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2021). The organizations within such networks vary in their guiding values and norms, which span from charity and relief to solidarity and political activism (Koca, 2016).
These values are influenced and conditioned by the interests and actions of various actors, motivated by profit, humanitarian concerns, personal relationships, or moral obligations. CSOs frequently intervene to tackle the 'organized non-responsibility' of public authorities, filling the voids left vacant (Pries, 2019) and addressing needs overlooked by public welfare provisions (Bonizzoni, Hajer, 2023, p. 46).

Despite facing numerous hostile reactions, occasionally influenced by the discourse of local public authorities, many organizations have made significant contributions to refugee coping strategies, enhancing social cohesion (Bešić *et al.*, 2021; Verwiebe *et al.*, 2019; Siviş, 2021; Vitus, Jarlby, 2022), sometimes in direct contrast to discriminatory actions of the State.

What is more, many CSOs have been also recognized as experts and a significant infrastructure for refugee assistance, particularly at the local level. Many local authorities explicitly integrated and broadly invited civil society groups to assist in addressing the challenges posed by refugee integration (Pries, 2019).
As a result, these initiatives have facilitated positive shifts in attitudes within specific local communities towards refugees, effectively encouraging hesitant local residents to take proactive steps in addressing the challenges associated with forced migration (Hamann, Karakayali, 2016; Karakayali, Kleist, 2016; Simsa, 2017; OECD 2018).

Although studies specifically analyzing the actions of CSOs and assessing their effectiveness and innovative capacity remain limited (Witkowski *et al.*, 2019), it can generally be asserted that CSOs provide diverse forms of assistance to international protection holders. They rely on trust as a primary resource to facilitate connections between refugees and service providers, and the nature of this assistance varies depending on the motivations guiding their involvement and the impact they have on hosting territories (Pries, 2019).

Nevertheless, with the increasing criminalization of support for immigrants in various countries, the relationship between states and CSOs has evolved into an increasingly tense battleground (Ambrosini, 2020), potentially leading advocacy efforts to take the form of civil disobedience or resistance (Carrera *et al.*, 2018; Çelik, 2018).

In the specific case of Italy, the underdeveloped social protection and welfare system in the country has resulted in a correspondingly minimal approach to assistance for refugees (Pinelli, 2018).
In this context, CSOs assumed a significant role in supporting the integration of newly arrived individuals (Caponio *et al.*, 2016; Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2022).

However, the impairment of state-funded services exacerbates social marginalization for refugees, hindering their integration by limiting access to accommodation and employment. Substantial cuts in funding for integration activities have hampered civil society's initiatives to assist refugees.
Additionally, integration efforts by civil society actors face constraints in municipalities that neglect to facilitate the arrival of refugees and often disregard their rights. Pro-migrant civil society organizations encounter suspicion and criticism, with some arguing that they contribute to maintaining border regimes and supporting migration control policies (Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2022).

Some scholars have emphasised that CSOs possess the capacity to confront the exclusion of migrants at the local level and reshape the profiles of individuals entitled to specific rights by resisting political acts or administrative practices (for instance Ambrosini, Van der Leun 2015; Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2021; Bonizzoni, Hajer, 2023). Leveraging their technical and legal expertise, informal networking, and the ability to cultivate social ties with local authorities (e.g. police, social services, prefectures), CSOs can empower refugees to overcome administrative obstacles in accessing services and rights.

For example, the ISMU study by Sarli (2019) examines the practical experiences of NGOs in Italy, offering a vibrant portrayal of the vitality and practices of CSOs. It outlines various initiatives undertaken by civil society to support refugee integration in Italy, spanning two distinct phases: reception and transition to autonomy, including entry into the labour market. These initiatives aim to guide asylum seekers towards socio-economic inclusion and support CSOs activism in employment inclusion, promoting best practices and visibility.

While CSOs provide a range of assistance, their offerings frequently prove insufficient to meet the needs of the rising refugee population (Korac 2003: 59).

In general, the literature review on the role of CSOs in supporting refugee integration reveals that, despite qualitative studies exploring the topic, there is a notable lack of nationally focused quantitative research, with only a limited number of rare local surveys.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Generally, migration gives rise to the formation of social networks, diasporas, and transnational communities (Vertovec, 1999; Smith, 2001). Internationally, research on migration, including forced migration, integrates the concept of "social network" (Boyd, 1989; Düvell, Jordan, 2003; Faist, Özveren, 2004;), often closely associated with "social capital" (Ryan *et al.*, 2015), resources embedded in personal ties that can be mobilized for social advantage (Anthias, 2007).

Although migratory social networks are typically studied in a context other than forced migration, social networks can be vital for individuals seeking asylum (Zetter, 1999; Lamba, Krahn, 2003; Klvaňová, 2010; de Hass *et al.*, 2020).

Typically, there is a belief that refugees, forced to move, often in sudden flight from their country of origin, lack social capital or networks, not only within their own community but, more significantly, in the wider society. Undoubtedly, it can be argued that refugee networks tend to be more fragile and less extensive compared to those of other migrants, thereby hindering their ability to fully leverage their human capital. Nevertheless, in recent years, several authors have shown that even in the case of refugees, these networks, although weaker, not only exist but are actively utilized by them. This illustrates how both the maintenance and reconstruction of an extensive social capital base are essential for successful socio-economic integration (for instance Lamba, Krahn, 2003; Korac, 2003, 2005; Williams, 2006; Sönmez, 2017).

Scholars have underscored the impact of social connections on refugee integration, thereby establishing a connection between refugee rights, citizenship, and outcomes (Hynie *et al.*, 2016).
The research also illuminates the correlation between access to networks and refugee employment (Cheung, Phillimore, 2014), emphasizing that social bridging interactions are associated with improved prospects for integration (Puma *et al.*, 2018).

While refugees in most arrival countries are subject to strict state regulations, and often marginalized or discriminated against, they are not passive recipients of care (Lamba, Krahn, 2003; D'Angelo, 2019). Instead, they actively seek assistance aligned with their priorities and objectives (Williams, 2006), utilizing social networking to achieve the goal of self-determination (Duke, 1996; Crisp, 1999; Loizos, 1999) in an ever-changing environment.

The focus on establishing Refugee Community Organizations (RCOs) and, consequently, fostering connections and social networks among compatriots is associated with two key developments within the European context. First, a lack of sufficient service provision for asylum seekers and refugees in many EU states is increasingly transforming community organizations into alternative service providers (Joly, 1996; Bloch, 2002). Second, in many European states, refugee and migrants' associations are regarded as important for maintaining links with the native culture as well as for "voicing" the needs and interests of specific groups within the multicultural milieu of receiving societies (Eastmond, 1998). The former process and the establishment of networks in receiving societies are considered essential at the early stages of settlement. They provide refugees with emotional support, a sense of roots, and continuity (Gold, 1992; Joly, 1996; Eastmond, 1998; Bloch, 2002).

While it is believed that refugee associations are also important for establishing links with mainstream society and overcoming social isolation, the establishment of formal (refugee associations) and informal ("in-group" networks) connections among compatriots does not necessarily increase cooperation within the receiving society (Korac 2005, p. 88). Volunteering at their local community organization or spending time at their house of worship or any other type of involvement with their in-group community may be beneficial for refugees and their community, but this connection does not always spread social trust (Dekker, Uslaner 2001, p. 7).

Bridging social networks enable refugees to access societal resources that otherwise might not be easily accessible to them. These networks should be seen as intricate structures that direct, sift through, and interpret information, express meanings, distribute resources, and impact behaviour (Fernández-Kelly 2008). It is commonly argued that the formation of 'bridging social networks' beyond the compatriot group tends to occur in the later stages of refugee settlement, be it in the workplace, area of residence, or in associations and clubs frequented by members of the established community. The establishment of these 'mainstream' social networks, it is emphasized, is contingent upon the aims and objectives of migration (Robinson, 1986; Bloch, 2002). When refugees perceive their stay as temporary, they may be less inclined to actively participate in creating bridging social networks with other migrants and natives, thus showing reluctance to undergo the necessary adjustment process required for their complete integration into the receiving society. Consequently, they may be less willing to reshape their identity (Weiner, 1996, pp. 52-53).

Some scholars emphasize that refugees in Italy have formed notably strong social connections beyond their own groups, beginning from the refugees' journey (D'Angelo, 2019). These ties were formed through numerous informal day-to-day interactions in their neighbourhoods, workplaces, and various social encounters with Italians while seeking information or assistance. The lack of a state-organized effort to meet the collective needs of refugees compelled them to depend on their personal skills and resources to integrate into Italian society. This situation led to the organic creation of networks serving as an alternative self-help reception system (Korac, 2003, p. 60).

There are a limited number of qualitative studies investigating the role of social networks in the integration of refugees in Italy (for instance Korac, 2003, 2005; Schuster,2005; Ambrosini, 2014; D'Angelo, 2019, 2021; Crapolicchio *et al.*, 2023), and there is a complete absence of quantitative studies on this subject.

REFUGEE DATA GAP

Numerous studies underscore that refugees worldwide encounter worse outcomes than their non-refugee counterparts. However, substantial gaps persist in data concerning the presence of refugees in host countries. This stems from fragmented data collection systems and ineffective policy evaluations and monitoring mechanisms.

In Europe, substantial gaps exist in comprehensive statistics distinguishing between refugees and other migrant groups (Wolffhardt *et al.*, 2019; Denaro, Giuffré, 2019; Yilmaz, 2022). A thorough analysis by NIEM[2] across 14 EU countries (Yilmaz, 2022) reveals critical data gaps, particularly in residency, family reunification, migratory and social networks, and citizenship.

This study shows that refugee statistics available in Italy are not disaggregated by gender and age. Italy, Spain, and Romania lack data on indicators related to migratory and social networks. Additionally, Lithuania, Spain, and Italy provide no data on indicators related to family reunification, with limited data available in other countries. Lithuania and Hungary lack data on naturalization procedures, and countries like Greece, Romania, Hungary, and the Netherlands have limited residency data.

Moreover, most countries lack data collection on reasons for unsuccessful family reunification and citizenship applications. This overall inconsistency in data availability emphasizes the need for improved and standardized reporting mechanisms to understand challenges in refugee integration across Europe. These data gaps hinder systematic cross-country comparisons, highlighting the need for a comprehensive analysis to identify deficiencies in integration policies and propose solutions (Wolffhardt *et al.*, 2019; Denaro, Giuffré, 2019; Yilmaz, 2022). Educational data gaps are noticeable in Italy and Spain, with a complete absence of data, as well as in Lithuania, Romania, and France.

2 The National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM) is a six-years long transnational project supporting key actors in the integration field to improve the integration outcomes of beneficiaries of international protection. See www.forintegration.eu

Slovenia, Greece, and Poland lack data on refugee employment, while others offer limited and partial data. No country provides data on all employment indicators. Additionally, Slovenia, Greece, and the Netherlands lack vocational training data, while Lithuania, Romania, and the Netherlands face substantial gaps in housing. Lastly, the Netherlands lacks data on basic refugee figures defined in NIEM indicators.

Finally Official statistics do not include the number of naturalized refugees.
Current information on the housing market integration of refugees is unavailable. Data on targeted public accommodation utilization can be obtained from the Ministry of Interior, but specific 2020 numbers are inaccessible. Official statistics lack data on refugee labor market integration, specifically, the number engaged in legal employment and self-employment, educational attainment, and the acceptance rate for skills recognition.

4.2 Full regression tables

The following tables report results from linear regressions where the dependent variable is indicated in the Tab. A1. Each column reports results from different specifications of the regression equation.
The column "Demographics" reports results from regression where the regressors are a dummy for males (reference category: female and other), dummies for secondary and tertiary education (reference category: primary or no education), dummies for three age groups (reference category: age 18-24).
In column "+ YSM" we additionally include three dummy variables for years spent in Italy (reference category: 0-1 years in Italy). In the column "+ Origin", we add dummies for areas of origin (reference category: Latin America). In column "+ Province", we include additional dummies for the area of residence in Italy (reference category: North West).
Column "+ City Size" also includes either dummies for city size (reference category: less than 50 thousand residents) or the logarithm of the population size.
Column (+ Language) adds a dummy for self-assessed Middle-high/High Italian fluency (reference category: absent, low/low-middle fluency).
Column "+ Care work" includes dummies for presence in the household of minor children, persons with disability, or elderly parents. The last column of each Table "Only BIPs" restricts the sample to BIPs, thus excluding Ukrainians with temporary protection, and adds dummies for type of international protection (reference category: beneficiary of subsidiary protection).
We use linear regression models for both dichotomic (linear probability models, LPM) and continuous outcome variables. All LPM results are robust to the use of non-linear models (logit or probit).

Tab. A1 **Regression analysis on probability of experiencing housing difficulties the previous year**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CITY SIZE	+ LANGUAGE	+ CARE WORK	ONLY BIPs
GENDER								
Male	0.073***	0.065**	0.075**	0.074**	0.075**	0.076**	0.055*	0.084**
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)								
Secondary	-0.033	-0.030	-0.020	-0.020	-0.023	-0.019	-0.017	-0.024
Tertiary	0.011	0.012	0.037	0.035	0.022	0.028	0.028	0.023
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)								
25-34	-0.064*	-0.072*	-0.072	-0.073	-0.071	-0.072	-0.059	-0.096**
35-44	-0.052	-0.052	-0.045	-0.045	-0.040	-0.041	-0.016	-0.064
> 45	-0.121***	-0.126**	-0.122**	-0.122**	-0.113**	-0.116**	-0.100*	-0.100*
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)								
2-5		0.010	0.043	0.042	0.036	0.039	0.043	0.045
6-9		0.017	0.031	0.029	0.024	0.030	0.034	0.044
> 10		0.028	0.036	0.036	0.028	0.038	0.060	0.095
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)								
Africa			0.117**	0.115**	0.116**	0.108**	0.096*	0.093
Asia and Middle East			0.018	0.014	0.019	0.010	-0.002	-0.008
Ukraine			0.104	0.102	0.110	0.104	0.098	/

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CITY SIZE	+ LANGUAGE	+ CARE WORK	ONLY BIPs
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)								
North East				0.013	0.028	0.031	0.039	0.042
Centre				0.001	-0.009	-0.008	-0.012	0.004
South				0.003	0.010	0.012	0.019	-0.023
CITY SIZE (Base = < 50 000)								
50.000 - 150.000					0.035	0.030	0.029	-0.013
150.000 - 500.000					0.082	0.079	0.084	0.080
> 500 000					0.093	0.089	0.093	0.085
LANGUAGE (Base = absent, low/low-middle knowledge)								
Middle-high/High						-0.017	-0.017	-0.015
CARE WORK (household composition)								
Minors							-0.114***	-0.117***
Disability							-0.088	-0.050
Elderly							-0.049	0.062
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary protection)								
Ex beneficiary								-0.094
Refugee								0.018
CONSTANT	**0.288*** **	**0.285*** **	**0.178** **	**0.180** **	**0.101**	**0.112**	**0.133**	**0.147**
OBSERVATIONS	**1.206**	**1.089**	**1.089**	**1.089**	**1.089**	**1.089**	**1.089**	**919**

Tab. A2 **Regression analysis on probability of having ever worked in Italy**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ LANGUAGE	+ CARE WORK	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	0.142***	0.095***	0.126***	0.119***	0.115***	0.107***	0.116***
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	0.088***	0.065***	0.054**	0.053**	0.040	0.040	0.032
Tertiary	-0.008	0.046	0.022	0.012	-0.007	-0.008	-0.057
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	0.077**	-0.038	-0.054	-0.054	-0.050	-0.047	-0.066*
35-44	0.089***	-0.033	-0.057	-0.058	-0.055	-0.048	-0.083**
> 45	-0.010	-0.117**	-0.143***	-0.144***	-0.136***	-0.132***	-0.127**
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		0.111***	0.183***	0.194***	0.184***	0.186***	0.187***
6-9		0.232***	0.298***	0.310***	0.291***	0.294***	0.283***
> 10		0.245***	0.323***	0.335***	0.301***	0.310***	0.296***
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa			-0.055	-0.063	-0.035	-0.036	-0.063
Asia and Middle East			-0.094**	-0.108**	-0.080*	-0.081*	-0.108**
Ukraine			0.082	0.067	0.089	0.091	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East				0.048	0.034	0.037	0.061**
Centre				-0.005	-0.008	-0.009	-0.030
South				0.078**	0.071**	0.073**	0.054

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ LANGUAGE	+ CARE WORK	ONLY BIPs
LANGUAGE (Base = absent, low/low-middle knowledge)							
Middle-high/High					0.059**	0.058**	0.065***
CARE WORK (household composition)							
Minors						-0.038	-0.051*
Disability						0.029	0.076
Elderly						0.007	0.162***
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Ex beneficiary							0.038
Refugee							-0.044*
CONSTANT	**0.645*** **	**0.644*** **	**0.643*** **	**0.632*** **	**0.608*** **	**0.613*** **	**0.689*** **
OBSERVATIONS	**1.219**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**929**

Tab. A3 **Regression analysis on current employment (working last week)**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ LANGUAGE	+ CARE WORK	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	0.194***	0.153***	0.168***	0.163***	0.156***	0.151***	0.133***
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	0.104***	0.089***	0.083***	0.083***	0.060*	0.059*	0.061*
Tertiary	-0.079*	-0.036	-0.047	-0.049	-0.081	-0.084*	-0.133**
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	0.075*	-0.031	-0.038	-0.029	-0.022	-0.020	-0.049
35-44	0.090**	-0.015	-0.027	-0.025	-0.020	-0.018	-0.034
> 45	-0.044	-0.101*	-0.112**	-0.113**	-0.098*	-0.098*	-0.140**
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		0.149***	0.152***	0.166***	0.150***	0.150***	0.150***
6-9		0.233***	0.236***	0.260***	0.227***	0.228***	0.207***
> 10		0.202***	0.217***	0.233***	0.175***	0.179***	0.132**
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa			-0.113**	-0.111**	-0.063	-0.060	-0.102*
Asia and Middle East			-0.126**	-0.114**	-0.066	-0.064	-0.105*
Ukraine			-0.090	-0.087	-0.049	-0.045	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East				-0.045	-0.069*	-0.068*	-0.027
Centre				-0.049	-0.054	-0.055	-0.082**
South				0.058	0.047	0.047	0.024
LANGUAGE (Base = absent, low/low-middle knowledge)							
Middle-high/High					0.101***	0.101***	0.093***
CARE WORK (household composition)							
Minors						-0.021	-0.069*
Disability						0.057	0.125*
Elderly						0.072	0.077
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Former beneficiary							0.184***
Refugee							-0.079**
CONSTANT	**0.483*** **	**0.448*** **	**0.555*** **	**0.545*** **	**0.504*** **	**0.505*** **	**0.643*** **
OBSERVATIONS	**1.219**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**929**

Tab. A4 **Regression analysis on monthly labour earnings**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ SECOND JOB	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ LANGUAGE	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	0.246***	0.201***	0.206***	0.180***	0.174***	0.168***	0.178***
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	0.060*	0.052	0.045	0.052	0.038	0.022	0.023
Tertiary	0.014	0.103	0.092	0.118	0.104	0.082	0.057
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	0.124**	-0.003	-0.005	0.016	0.017	0.025	0.011
35-44	0.129**	-0.019	-0.021	0.006	0.005	0.006	-0.000
> 45	0.056	-0.104	-0.093	-0.064	-0.068	-0.059	-0.060
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		0.082	0.082	-0.004	-0.015	-0.028	-0.020
6-9		0.281***	0.278***	0.187***	0.156**	0.131*	0.147**
> 10		0.336***	0.331***	0.231***	0.245***	0.204***	0.201**
SECOND JOB (BASE = NO)							
Yes			0.123**	0.130***	0.128***	0.119**	0.148***
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa				0.054	0.038	0.072	0.068
Asia and Middle East				0.055	0.024	0.062	0.061
Ukraine				-0.137	-0.125	-0.097	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East					0.030	0.007	0.019
Centre					-0.107**	-0.107**	-0.082*
South					-0.162***	-0.175***	-0.156***
LANGUAGE (Base = absent, low/low-middle knowledge)							
Middle-high/High						0.073*	0.065
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Ex beneficiary							0.048
Refugee							0.034
CONSTANT	**6.674*** **	**6.642*** **	**6.630*** **	**6.662*** **	**6.758*** **	**6.727*** **	**6.690*** **
OBSERVATIONS	**731**	**656**	**656**	**656**	**656**	**656**	**594**

Note: sample of individuals in employment

Tab. A5 **Regression analysis on absolute poverty**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CARE WORK	+ CITY SIZE	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	-0.154***	-0.107***	-0.101***	-0.093**	-0.067*	-0.068*	-0.042
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	-0.110***	-0.103***	-0.118***	-0.096**	-0.097**	-0.098**	-0.092**
Tertiary	0.024	-0.096*	-0.131**	-0.110**	-0.105*	-0.112**	-0.091
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	-0.086*	0.064	0.055	0.033	0.018	0.020	0.028
35-44	-0.065	0.087	0.067	0.055	0.024	0.026	0.025
> 45	0.020	0.167**	0.140**	0.130*	0.115*	0.117*	0.161*
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		-0.182***	-0.100	-0.104*	-0.114*	-0.117*	-0.124**
6-9		-0.344***	-0.251***	-0.262***	-0.268***	-0.269***	-0.260***
> 10		-0.349***	-0.250***	-0.246***	-0.267***	-0.267***	-0.199**
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa			-0.004	-0.010	0.001	0.002	0.025
Asia and Middle East			0.059	0.048	0.063	0.068	0.096
Ukraine			0.181**	0.197**	0.199**	0.206**	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East				0.073	0.060	0.075	0.081
Centre				0.137***	0.134***	0.117**	0.138***
South				-0.058	-0.077	-0.078	-0.047
CARE WORK (household composition)							
Minors					0.136***	0.135***	0.194***
Disability					-0.028	-0.022	-0.005
Elderly					0.133	0.135	0.154
CITY SIZE (population. ISTAT 2023)							
Log of pop.						0.014	0.032*
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Ex beneficiary							-0.316***
Refugee							0.003
CONSTANT	**0.641*** **	**0.718*** **	**0.629*** **	**0.583*** **	**0.562*** **	**0.376***	**0.066**
OBSERVATIONS	**893**	**823**	**823**	**823**	**823**	**823**	**704**

Tab. A6 **Regression analysis on risk of poverty**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CARE WORK	+ CITY SIZE	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	-0.086***	-0.052	-0.047	-0.046	-0.039	-0.038	-0.015
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	-0.140***	-0.113***	-0.115***	-0.101***	-0.101***	-0.101***	-0.085**
Tertiary	-0.065	-0.140***	-0.144***	-0.142***	-0.142***	-0.139**	-0.143**
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	-0.118***	-0.015	-0.018	-0.030	-0.035	-0.036	-0.067
35-44	-0.171***	-0.050	-0.057	-0.054	-0.065	-0.066	-0.111*
> 45	-0.167***	-0.038	-0.049	-0.041	-0.049	-0.051	-0.061
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		-0.086**	-0.009	-0.007	-0.010	-0.008	-0.010
6-9		-0.209***	-0.136**	-0.138**	-0.140**	-0.139**	-0.120*
> 10		-0.298***	-0.229***	-0.234***	-0.241***	-0.241***	-0.137*
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa			0.097	0.089	0.092	0.091	0.095
Asia and Middle East			0.089	0.068	0.071	0.069	0.078
Ukraine			0.213**	0.190**	0.190**	0.187**	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East				0.109**	0.105**	0.096**	0.149***
Centre				0.121***	0.122***	0.132***	0.089
South				0.093*	0.087*	0.086*	/
CARE WORK (household composition)							
Minors					0.037	0.038	0.026
Disability					-0.004	-0.008	0.280
Elderly					0.153	0.152	0.001
CITY SIZE (population, ISTAT 2023)							
Log of pop.						-0.008	-0.393***
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Ex beneficiary							0.721***
Refugee							-0.017
CONSTANT	**0.941*** **	**0.966*** **	**0.806*** **	**0.739*** **	**0.731*** **	**0.876*** **	**0.762*** **
OBSERVATIONS	**923**	**850**	**850**	**850**	**850**	**850**	**730**

Tab. A7 **Regression analysis on Severe Material and Social Deprivation (SMSD)**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CARE WORK	+ CITY SIZE	ONLY BIPs
GENDER							
Male	0.034	0.063**	0.040	0.040	0.027	0.026	0.052
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)							
Secondary	-0.153***	-0.130***	-0.123***	-0.120***	-0.121***	-0.123***	-0.130***
Tertiary	-0.078*	-0.111**	-0.097**	-0.096**	-0.099**	-0.107**	-0.116**
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)							
25-34	0.007	0.055	0.067*	0.064	0.070*	0.070*	0.053
35-44	0.018	0.063	0.080*	0.080*	0.091**	0.093**	0.160**
> 45	0.081*	0.147***	0.166***	0.166***	0.172***	0.176***	0.160**
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)							
2-5		-0.051	-0.094*	-0.093*	-0.089*	-0.092*	-0.089*
6-9		-0.142***	-0.181***	-0.179***	-0.173***	-0.176***	-0.149***
> 10		-0.134***	-0.182***	-0.183***	-0.168***	-0.171***	-0.094
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)							
Africa			0.063	0.061	0.063	0.063	0.081*
Asia and Middle East			0.097*	0.093*	0.095*	0.098**	0.126**
Ukraine			-0.019	-0.023	-0.018	-0.014	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)							
North East				0.021	0.025	0.039	0.053
Centre				0.027	0.024	0.010	0.008
South				0.022	0.025	0.031	0.063
CARE WORK (household composition)							
Minors					-0.062*	-0.064*	-0.037
Disability					0.084	0.090	0.213
Elderly					-0.026	-0.022	0.119
CITY SIZE (population, ISTAT 2023)							
Log of pop.						0.013	0.045***
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary prot.)							
Ex beneficiary							-0.224***
Refugee							0.037
CONSTANT	**0.317*** **	**0.327*** **	**0.296*** **	**0.282*** **	**0.288*** **	**0.122**	**-0.362****
OBSERVATIONS	**1.219**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**929**

Tab. A8 **Regression analysis on probability of having a bank account**

BANK ACCOUNT	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	ONLY BIPs
GENDER					
Male	0.068***	0.009	0.013	0.017	0.064**
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)					
Secondary	0.183***	0.159***	0.150***	0.146***	0.136***
Tertiary	0.173***	0.250***	0.228***	0.226***	0.197***
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)					
25-34	0.132***	0.022	0.017	0.006	-0.031
35-44	0.086**	-0.026	-0.036	-0.040	-0.078**
> 45	-0.006	-0.097**	-0.109**	-0.108**	-0.161***
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)					
2-5		0.201***	0.248***	0.222***	0.238***
6-9		0.302***	0.354***	0.308***	0.330***
> 10		0.300***	0.352***	0.326***	0.321***
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)					
Africa			0.029	0.027	0.002
Asia and Middle East			0.061	0.044	0.015
Ukraine			0.134**	0.133**	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)					
North East				0.051**	0.066***
Centre				0.030	0.028
South				-0.130***	-0.113***
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary protection)					
Ex beneficiary					0.146***
Refugee					0.071***
CONSTANT	**0.589*** **	**0.526*** **	**0.448*** **	**0.493*** **	**0.459*** **
OBSERVATIONS	**1.204**	**1.091**	**1.091**	**1.091**	**922**

Tab. A9 **Regression analysis on probability of receiving welfare transfers**

	DEMOGRAPHICS	+ YSM	+ ORIGIN	+ PROVINCE	+ CARE WORK	+ WORK LAST WEEK	+ POVERTY	+ SMSD	ONLY BIPs
GENDER									
Male	-0.132***	-0.113***	-0.095***	-0.091***	-0.056*	-0.028	-0.009	-0.008	0.022
EDUCATION LEVEL (Base = Primary)									
Secondary	0.018	0.011	0.005	0.006	-0.002	0.013	0.005	0.003	-0.007
Tertiary	0.121***	0.115***	0.100**	0.099**	0.096**	0.087*	0.077	0.075	0.086
AGE GROUP (Base = 18-24)									
25-34	0.025	0.048	0.039	0.025	0.003	-0.002	-0.004	-0.002	0.011
35-44	0.027	0.042	0.029	0.025	-0.019	-0.023	-0.016	-0.014	0.010
> 45	0.065	0.032	0.016	0.017	-0.009	-0.029	-0.060	-0.055	-0.044
YEARS SPENT IN ITALY (Base = 0-1)									
2-5		-0.048	0.013	-0.004	-0.009	0.021	0.018	0.017	0.024
6-9		-0.075*	-0.019	-0.049	-0.054	-0.007	-0.028	-0.029	-0.012
> 10		0.018	0.078	0.059	0.023	0.065	0.048	0.046	0.047
ORIGIN (Base = Latin America)									
Africa			0.019	0.013	0.051	0.032	0.005	0.005	0.036
Asia and Middle East			-0.003	-0.023	0.018	-0.002	-0.047	-0.046	-0.016
Ukraine			0.126*	0.118	0.149**	0.134*	0.133	0.130	/
RESIDENCE IN ITALY (Base = North West)									
North East				0.079*	0.062	0.054	0.051	0.051	0.028
Centre				0.076**	0.078**	0.070**	0.042	0.042	0.052
South				-0.053	-0.061*	-0.051	-0.032	-0.031	0.000
CARE WORK (household composition)									
Minors					0.208***	0.204***	0.146***	0.143***	0.192***
Disability					0.355***	0.366***	0.392***	0.391***	0.514***
Elderly					-0.246**	-0.237**	-0.269**	-0.271**	-0.261***
Work last week (Base = No)									
Yes						-0.178***	-0.158***	-0.165***	-0.156***
Poor (Base = No)									
Yes							0.100***	0.105***	0.086**
SMSD (Base = No)									
Yes								-0.024	-0.019
TYPE OF PROTECTION (Base = beneficiary of subsidiary protection)									
Ex beneficiary									0.008
Refugee									0.069**
CONSTANT	**0.283*** **	**0.301*** **	**0.237*** **	**0.241*** **	**0.181*** **	**0.278*** **	**0.273*** **	**0.282*** **	**0.163**
OBSERVATIONS	**1.219**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**1.101**	**876**	**876**	**751**

4.3 Survey questionnaire

Name and surname of the interviewer

Referring institution/association

Date of interview

Municipality of interview

☐ Brescia

☐ Genoa

☐ Milan

☐ Turin

☐ Bologna

☐ Udine

☐ Verona

☐ Venice

☐ Florence

☐ Perugia

☐ Rome

☐ Caserta

☐ Naples

☐ Bari

☐ Other, specify_____

Province of the interview

Respondent's contact channel

☐ Snowballing (contact suggested by others, word of mouth)

☐ Centre-based (informal gathering places. e.g. squares, stations, churches)

☐ Has been part of the association network in the past

☐ Currently belongs to the association network

☐ Other, specify_____

Gender of the interviewee

Country of origin of the interviewee

☐ Pakistan

☐ Iraq

☐ Afghanistan

☐ Syria

☐ Nigeria

☐ Mali

☐ Eritrea

☐ Somalia

☐ Venezuela

☐ El Salvador

☐ Ukraine

☐ Other, specify_____

Code of the interviewee

Progressive number of the interview

Type of protection:

- Refugee
- Beneficiary of subsidiary protection
- Former beneficiary of international protection (only naturalized Italian citizens)
- Beneficiary of Temporary Protection

Personal Information

1. In what year were you born?

!__!__!__!__!

2. What is your nationality?

_____

☐ He/she does not know / He/she does not remember

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

☐ He/she is stateless

3. When did you apply for international/temporary protection in Italy?

!__!__!__!__!

☐ He/she does not know / He/she does not remember

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

4. How long did it take from the presentation of the request to the recognition of your status?

☐ Less than 1 year

☐ 1 year to 2 years

☐ More than 2 years but less than 5 years

☐ More than 5 years

☐ He/she does not know / He/she does not remember

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

5. Have you ever been in a reception centre in Italy (CAS, SPRAR/SAI/SIPROIMI...)?

☐ Yes, but now He/she lives elsewhere [go to 6]

☐ Yes, He/she still lives there [go to 6 and then 7]

☐ No, never [go to 7]

6. For how long have you been there?

!__!__! months

!__!__! years

7. Are you registered in the registry office/Have you the residency in a Italian municipality?

☐ Yes, in the municipality where He/she lives

☐ Yes, in another municipality

☐ Yes, but in a fictious address

☐ No, He/she is not registered / does not have residence in any municipality [go to 8]

☐ He/she does not know / He/she does not remember

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

8. If not, why you did not register in the registry office/Why don't you have the residency in a Italian municipality?

☐ He/she has never asked for it

☐ He/she has asked for it and he/she is waiting for an answer

☐ He/she has no fixed place of abode

☐ He/she is a guest of friends or relatives and cannot take up residence in their home

☐ He/she does not have adequate documentation to prove ownership of his/her dwelling

☐ He/she lives in a place without the requirement of habitability (shack, tent city)

☐ He/she lives in an occupied house

9. Do you have a bank or post office account?

☐ Yes [go to 11]

☐ No [go to 10]

☐ He/she does not know / He/She does not remember [go to 11]

☐ He/she prefers not to answer [go to 11]

10. [IF 9 = No] Why you do not have a bank or post office account?

☐ He/she never tried to open one
☐ He/she is waiting for a reply
☐ He/she asked to open one but his/her request was rejected because of inadequate documentation
☐ He/she asked to open one but his/her request was rejected for other reasons (specify_____)

11. In Italy, are you registered with the National Health Service?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ He/she does not know / He/she does not remember
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

12. Which of the following options best describes your knowledge of Italian?

☐ He/she understands and can use only a few words and phrases
☐ He/she can understand and uses most everyday expressions
☐ He/she can understand the essence of clear speech and can write simple texts
☐ He/she can understand many complex texts and use Italian flexibly. He/she masters the language
☐ He / she does not know the Italian language

13. Who taught you Italian?

☐ None, he/she learned on his/her own
☐ Friends/acquaintances
☐ Teachers at CPIA
☐ Teachers of a voluntary association/organisation
☐ Teachers in the reception system
☐ Teachers at school in Italy
☐ Teachers at school in his/her country of origin
☐ Other_____

Education

14. What is the highest formal level of education you have completed?

☐ No education [go to 18]
☐ Primary Education
☐ First level of Secondary Education
☐ Second level of Secondary Education
☐ Technical or vocational education
☐ Bachelor Degree
☐ Master Degree
☐ PHD

15. In what area did you complete your highest level of education?

_____

16. Where did you earn the highest degree you hold?

☐ In his/her country of origin [go to 17]
☐ In Italy [go to 18]
☐ In another Country (specify which one) _____ [go to 17]

17. Have you applied for recognition of this title in Italy?

☐ Yes, the procedure is finished: his/her title has been recognized
☐ Yes, the procedure is finished: his/her title has not been recognized
☐ Yes, the procedure is not finished yet
☐ No, because his/her title is already recognized
☐ No, because he/she knows it is not recognized
☐ No, because it is expensive and/or too long a process
☐ No, he/she is not interested
☐ No, because he/she did not know it could be done
☐ No, for other reasons
☐ He/she does not know / He/she prefers not to answer

Family

18. Who usually lives with you in Italy?

☐ He/she lives alone	(if selected, go to question 20)
☐ He/she lives with somebody in a private setting	(if selected, proceed to the next questions)
☐ He/she lives with someone in a reception centre (e.g. SAI)	(if selected, go to question 20)
☐ He/she lives with a hosting family or similar	(if selected, go to question 20)

18_a. Who do you live with in Italy?

Italian Wife/husband/partner	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Not Italian Wife/husband/partner	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Own minor children	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Own adult children (>18 years old)	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Other minors, not own (nephews, partners' children…)	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Parents	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Sisters and brothers	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Other relatives (uncles/aunts, cousins, brothers/sisters-in-law, etc)	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99
Others, non-relatives (friends, acquaintances, room/flatmates, students)	N |__|__|	n.d[...]99

For each of the components, declare:(As many boxes appear as husbands/minors etc. have been declared):

18A. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other

18B. Age:

☐ <=14

☐ 15-17

☐ 18-24

☐ 25-34

☐ 35-44

☐ 45-54

☐ 55-64

☐ >=65

☐ He/she does not know

18C. Does he/she share expenses and which ones?

☐ Yes, specify_____

☐ No

18D. Does he/she participate to the family budget?

☐ Yes

☐ No

18E. Does he/she work?

☐ Yes, with a formal employment

☐ Yes, with an informal employment

☐ Yes, partially with a formal employment and partially with an informal employment

☐ No, he/she is retired

☐ No, he/she is engaged in care work

☐ No, he/she is not looking

☐ No, because there is no need

☐ No, because he/she is studying

☐ No, he/she is currently job searching

18F. How much does he/she earn overall (between formal and informal employment)?

☐ specify_____

☐ He/She does not know

☐ Nothing because he/she does not work

19. Are there people living with you with disabilities who need your care?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

Work

20. What is the name of the last occupation you have in your home country?

_____

☐ He/she has never worked before coming to Italy

21. Have you ever worked since your arrival in Italy?

☐ Yes [go to 22]

☐ No [go to 30]

22. Last week did you perform at least one hour of work for which you expected to be paid or did you run or do any kind of business, farming or other activities to generate income?

☐ Yes

☐ No

23. What is the name of your primary occupation in Italy?

_____

24. How long did it take for you to find a first formal job (with regular contract) in Italy?

!__!__! Months

!__!__! Years

☐ He /she does not have a formal job with a regular contract

25. What is the number of months spent in unemployment in the last year?

!__!__! Months

!__!__! Years

☐ I have not taken advantage of unemployment in the past year

26. In your primary occupation, do your perform a job as:

☐ A full-time fixed-term employee (1)

☐ A part-time fixed-term employee (2)

☐ A full-time permanent employee (3)

☐ A part-time permanent employee (4)

☐ Employer-coordinated freelance work contract (with or without a contract)

- ☐ Occasional employment
- ☐ Self-employment as employer
- ☐ Self-employment as professional
- ☐ Self-employment as cooperative member
- ☐ Intern/trainee
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Unemployed (he/she has lost his/her job)
- ☐ Unoccupated (he/she is looking for his/her first job)
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ He/she does not work for family reasons (examples: home maker, childcare, etc.)
- ☐ Other
- ☐ He/she prefers not to answer

27. [SE 26 = 1-4] Is the working relationship in your primary occupation governed by a contract or a verbal agreement with the employer?

- ☐ Contract
- ☐ Verbal agreement
- ☐ Partially contract and partially verbal agreement
- ☐ He/she does not declare

28. Besides your primary occupation, do you have other occupations?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ He/she prefers not to answer

29. Considering all your occupations, what is the average number of hours worked per week?

!__!__!__! hours

30. During the last four weeks, did you do anything to find a paid job or try to start a business?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, because he/she already has a job and is satisfied for the moment
- ☐ No, because he/she is retired
- ☐ No, he/she does not have time as he/she take care of his/her parents/children/relatives with a disability
- ☐ No, for other reasons

Economic Condition

31. What was the net compensation that you received last month for your main job? Exclude other monthly payments (13th, 14th month's pay, etc.) and accessory items not received regularly every month (annual productivity bonuses, back pay, allowances for missions, non-routine overtime pay, etc.)

☐ Euro |_|_|_|||,00
☐ He/she does not know
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

32. What was the net compensation that you received last month for other jobs? Exclude other monthly payments (13th, 14th month's pay, etc.) and accessory items not received regularly every month (annual productivity bonuses, back pay, allowances for missions, non-routine overtime pay, etc.)

☐ Euro |_|_|_|||,00
☐ He/she has e no other jobs
☐ He/she does not know
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

33. Considering all the different sources '(income from work, annuities, aids, etc.), what is, approximately, the average total monthly sum of your household's monetary income?

☐ Euro |_|_|_|||,00
☐ He/she does not know
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

34. How much money on average each month do you send to your home country?

☐ Euro |_|_|_|||,00
☐ He/she does not know
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

35. Compared to this time last year, do you think you can now afford more goods and services, the same, or fewer goods and services?

☐ More
☐ The same
☐ Fewer
☐ He/she does not know
☐ He/she prefers not to answer

Vulnerability

36. Could you/your family, if you wanted to, afford one week's holiday a year away from home?

☐ Yes, he/she could
☐ Yes, he/she can and he/she does
☐ No

37. Could you/your family, if you wanted to, afford to eat meat or fish or a vegetarian equivalent at least once every two days?

☐ Yes, he/she could
☐ Yes, he/she can and he/she does
☐ No

38. Could you/your family, if you wanted to, afford to heat your home adequately?

☐ Yes, he/she could
☐ Yes, he/she can and he/she does
☐ No

39. Does your household have a car or van for private use?

☐ Yes
☐ No but it has other means of transportation (example: bike/scooter)
☐ No

40. Does your household have access to an internet connection (for personal use)?

☐ YES, at home
☐ YES, at home and from the cell phone
☐ YES, from the cell phone
☐ He/she could have it but he/she does not have it
☐ NO

41. In the last 12 months, did it happen that the household was unable to pay at least one of the following in time, due to financial difficulties:

☐ utility bills (heating, electricity, gas, refuse collection);
☐ mortgage or rental payments;
☐ hire purchase instalments or other loan payments
☐ No

42. Would you/your household be able, if necessary, to replace damaged or out-of-use furniture with furniture in good condition?

☐ Yes
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

43. Do you replace worn-out clothes with new ones?

☐ SI
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

44. Do you have two pairs of shoes in good condition for everyday wear?

☐ Yes
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

45. Do you meet with family and/or friends to drink or eat together at least once a month?

☐ Yes
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

46. Do you regularly engage in paid leisure activities outside the home such as going to movies, concerts, playing sports?

☐ Yes
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

47. Do you spend a small amount of money almost every week for your personal needs?

☐ Yes
☐ No, because he/she cannot afford it
☐ NO, for any other reason

48. Would you be able to cover, with your own resources, unexpected expenses of an approximate amount of 850 euro?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Coping strategies and Integration

49. What type of home do you live in?

☐ Farmhouse, villa, cottage, terraced house

☐ Apartment in building

☐ Precarious dwelling (e.g. building not used as a dwelling, such as a store; caravan, tent; garage, basement; shack, hut)

☐ Other (specify)_____

50. How many rooms does your house have? (excluding kitchen, bathrooms, hallway and entrance hall)

!__!__!

51. Do you have a regular rental contract for your house?

☐ Yes, signed by him/her

☐ Yes, signed by other household members

☐ Yes, signed by not household members

☐ No, he/she is hosted by another person

☐ No

☐ He/she is the owner of the house

☐ He/she does not know

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

☐ Other, to be specified_____

52. How much does the rent weigh on your monthly income (if you are alone) or on the household income (if you share resources with other people)?

☐ Euro |_|_|_|||,00 o % |_|_|_|||,00

☐ He/she does not know

☐ He/she prefers not to answer

[The next set of questions is particularly sensitive and requires special mediation and attention].

☐ Confirm

53. In Italy, have you ever had housing difficulties over the last year, i.e. situations in which you did not have your own or rented home to stay in and were forced to find other temporary or emergency accommodation?

Exclude situations generate by unexpected events (earthquakes or other natural disasters, fires or similar accidents) that forced you to leave home for only a few days

☐ Yes [go to 54]

☐ No

☐ He/she does not know

54. [If 53 = yes] Where did you live in that period? In the case of multiple episodes, consider the most recent.

☐ At friends' or relatives'

☐ In emergency accommodation

☐ Reception centres for people in housing emergency

☐ In a building not intended for residential use (mobile home, shack, container, garage, hut, etc.…)

☐ On the street or in a public space

☐ He/she does not know

55. Which coping strategy have you adopted or would you adopt in case of economic distress?

☐ Reduce number of meals or limit portion size of meals to cope with a lack of food or money to buy it

☐ Take out new loans or borrow money

☐ Move to a poorer quality shelter due to lack of resources to cover basic needs

☐ Spend savings due to lack of resources to cover basic needs

☐ Skip payment rent or debt repayments to meet other needs

☐ Sell livelihood/productive assets in order to buy food or basic goods

☐ Ask for money from strangers (begging) due to lack of resources to cover basic needs

☐ Reduce expenditure or hygiene items, health and/or education in order to meet food needs

☐ Involve school-age children in income generating activities

☐ Engage in activities for money or items that you feel puts you or other members of your household at risk of harm

☐ Accept not formalized and risky jobs

☐ Other_____

56. In the past year, have you or members of your family received any payment or support from the national or local government in Italy from the following sources:

☐ Social Allowance, Citizenship Income, Citizenship Pension
☐ Unemployment allowance, pension, disability pension
☐ Training, business start-up support
☐ Other, please specify:_____
☐ No

57. How many people do you feel so close to you that you can count on them in case of serious personal problems?

☐ None
☐ 1 or 2
☐ From 3 to 5
☐ 6 or more

58. Have you ever suffered episodes of discrimination in Italy?

☐ Yes, for being a foreigner [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for the color of his/her skin [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for external physical appearance [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for physical problems and disabilities [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for religion [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for sexual orientation and gender identity [go to 59]
☐ Yes, for political opinions [go to 59]
☐ No [go to 61]
☐ He/she prefers not to answer [go to 61]

59. [If 59 = Yes] Who did you report the most serious episode of discrimination or make the compliant to?

☐ None [go to 60]
☐ Police
☐ Municipality
☐ The institution/place where the incident happened
☐ Non-governmental organisation (NGO)/charity
☐ Community organisation (e.g. church/ faith-based, minority group)
☐ Community leader

☐ UNAR or other antidiscrimination agency.

☐ A lawyer/legal service

☐ Politician, member of parliament, council, etc.

☐ The media

☐ Employer/union

[If 59 = None] Why did you not report the episode or make a complaint?

☐ He/she was afraid of not being treated properly/of retaliation

☐ He/she was concerned about negative consequences (such as losing job, not receiving a 'good service' next time when looking for work)

☐ He/she didn't know how to make a complaint/where to report it

☐ Nothing would happen/change by reporting discrimination

☐ Too trivial/not worth reporting it

☐ It happens all the time

☐ It is a long process/it takes time/money

☐ He/she dealt with the problem himself/with help from family/friends

☐ Because he/she does not have papers/residence permit

☐ Because of language difficulties/insecurities

☐ He/she was not aware of his/her rights/ He/she Does not know the laws

☐ He/she was ashamed / he/she felt bad

☐ He/she did not want to create trouble

☐ He/she had no proof

☐ He/she did not want to go to court

☐ Other reasons (please specify)

60. What are your plans for the next two years?

☐ Staying in Italy

☐ Coming back to his/her home country (if the situation will allow it)

☐ Moving to another country

☐ He/she doesn't know

61. In a word, how would you describe your current situation?

Closing the interview

The project envisages the organization of some moments of confrontation (focus groups) in presence to deepen some aspects concerning the level of integration of beneficiaries of international and temporary protection in Italy and the possible solutions to be implemented.

Would you be interested in participating to one of these meetings? If you would like, we will contact you again in a few weeks to invite you to the meeting.

If interested, we ask you to indicate:

Name and surname: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

INTEGRATION BETWEEN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF REFUGEES IN ITALY

Final Report

Lattanzio KIBS S.p.A. Benefit Corporation is the most prominent Italian consulting boutique for the public sector operating in the global market, in support of the United Nations, the European Commission, the World Bank and some of the most relevant international cooperation funding and development organizations.

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Although we have been conducting research on migratory phenomena for more than 20 years, we do not consider immigration to be a universe in itself. Instead, we are engaged in the study of the social and economic transformations caused by growing levels of international mobility and cultural diversity.
We also propose to analyse how the great systemic transitions we are experiencing – in the technological, environmental and geopolitical fields – interact at different levels with different forms of migration.

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