



EUROPEAN
PEER
TRAINING
ORGANISATION



Associazione
Attiva-Mente
From Modica to Europe...and Back!



RESEARCH ON BARRIERS STANDING IN THE WAY OF YOUNG REFUGEES' SOCIAL INCLUSION IN ITALY, BELGIUM AND ROMANIA



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Table of Contents

1. Introduction	
Context information	5
Aim of the survey	7
Research methods & target groups.....	9
2. Main findings	
Romania	14
Belgium.....	20
Italy.....	23
Europe.....	25
3. Recommendations	
Recommendations.....	27
4. Complete results	
Belgium.....	31
Europe.....	37
Italy.....	41
Romania	67
Copyright	87

Contributions

This research is the result of the collective effort of the following organisations:



Arad County School Inspectorate
Arad, Romania



European Peer Training Organisation
Brussels, Belgium



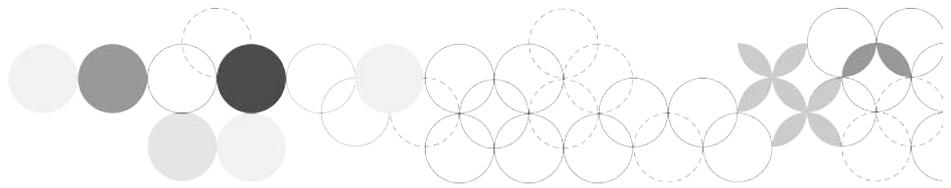
Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The project was co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



1. Introduction



Context information

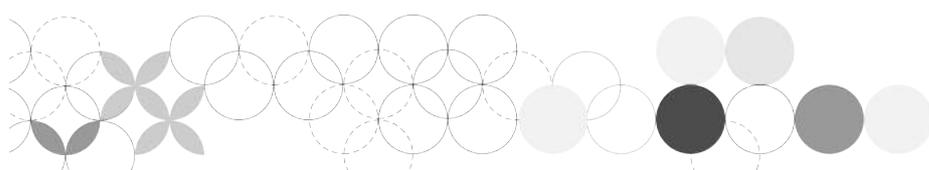
The refugee situation is the most important challenge E.U. faced in decades. Standard E.U. barometers place immigration as the no. 1 concern of Europeans (40 - 60 % consider it as a big threat). 61% of Belgians and 51% of Italians agree that all further migration from mainly Muslim countries should be stopped (Chatam House) and 84% of Romanians would not agree for refugees to settle in their country.

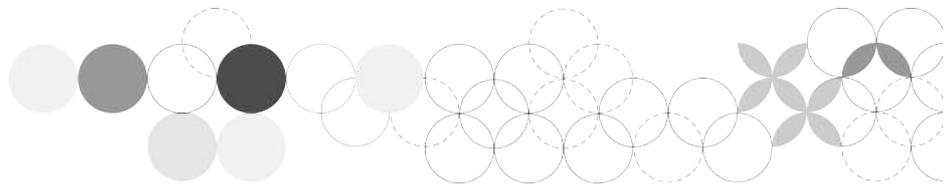
Youngsters manifest similar behaviours. A study of OTI among more than 1000 pupils from Arad (Romania) schools, showed that more than 65% of them (aged 13 to 20) would not like a Muslim or refugee friend, even if they have never met a person belonging to these groups. 32% of young migrants from IT admit to have experienced harassment due to their ethnic or immigrant background (EU-AFR) and real numbers are estimated to be higher.

Different researches (e.g. "The Uncertainty Paradox: Perceived Threat moderates the Impact of Uncertainty on Political Tolerance") indicate that the causes for these are rather emotional than rational and usually involve lack of knowledge and fear. Limited information about their culture and the misrepresentation that part of the media and of the social media have fostered activate automatic defence mechanisms in people that lead to rejection of different groups.

The negative attitudes and the exclusion associated with them are also acknowledged by young refugees and migrants as main challenges for integrating in their host countries. A research conducted by Ofensiva Tinerilor among more than 300 of them who settled in Romania, Belgium, Italy, United Kingdom, Albania, Denmark, France and Spain indicated that the number 1 challenge they faced was the lack of awareness on the different cultural norms that exist in Europe and the lack of ability to deal with "cultural friction" (e.g. in Romania 52% agree with this). Learning the language of the host country and finding a house/job closely followed this.

If until now "cultural friction" was mostly seen as natural, in the current context it only adds to the tension. EU citizens have become more intolerant to cultural differences. In this context, refugees declare this as a big obstacle in their inclusion, they feel the need to better understand and deal with cultural differences, to better advocate for their inclusion and for the respect for diversity, but have almost no resources to do it. This was also acknowledged by the European Commission in its "Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals", which concludes that gaining an understanding of the culture and values of the receiving society is crucial for third country nationals and that peer learning events on intercultural awareness should be supported.

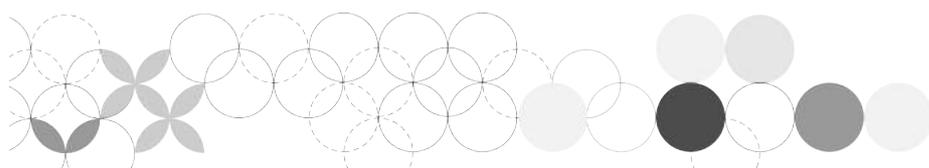


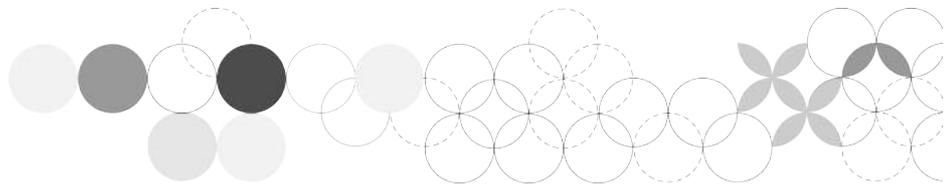


With 65 to 85% of the refugees that settled in European countries being younger than 35, but also observing that the exclusion is manifested as well among young people, this situation of increasing intolerance and exclusion also severely clashes with the common vision of the EPTO members (partners in this project) of "young people learning from each other how to embrace their differences and realize their unique potential".

Given all of the above, partners decided that we should use our expertise and resources, and increase our efforts for facilitating the inclusion of refugees in the European society. In this context we joined efforts in order to develop, test and disseminate a peer-education programme that:

- develops the capacities to integrate in the new cultural environment of young refugees who plan to move to European countries
- schools and youth organisations can use to create an environment in which youngsters understand and embrace cultural diversity





Aim of the survey

The theory of change that the project proposes is that by taking part in this educational programme:

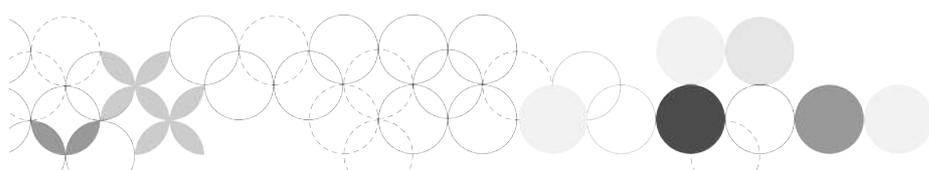
- The refugees/asylum seekers will gain sufficient understanding of European cultural norms and self-advocacy skills that will allow them to: integrate in the European cultural space, be aware of what to expect when settling in a EU country and also of what is expected from them, deal with the cultural shock in a satisfactory way, avoid and deal with “cultural friction”.
- Youngsters from E.U. countries will adopt an open attitude towards diversity and will develop their inter-cultural and civic competencies (especially in terms of understanding the values and cultures of refugees) to such level that they will not show aversion or exclusive behaviour towards refugees.

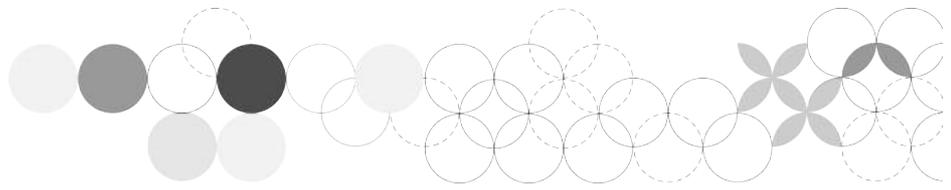
Prior to the programme development, we decided to conduct a thorough needs analysis, which aims at identifying:

- The main stereotypes, fears and cultural “friction zones” that have the potential to become sources of conflict or aversion between young E.U. citizens and refugees
- The needs of young refugees in terms of inclusion and the obstacles they are facing
- The perception of young people from the EU about migration and about asylum seekers
- Other initiatives with similar goals, their impact and good practices that were identified
- Challenges faced in social inclusion of young refugees in schools, in work or in the social life

Data was collected mainly from 3 E.U. (Romania, Italy and Belgium) countries with inputs from another 12 E.U. and neighbouring countries using the EPTO network and other networks.

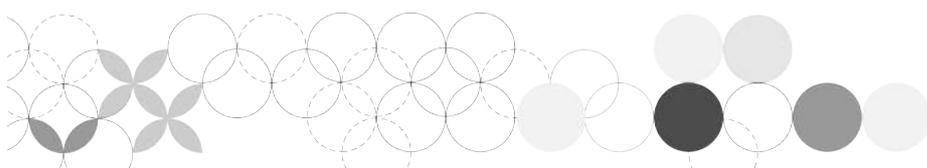
The results of this research are publicly available for sharing and adapting, under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International license (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). Full info is available at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en>.

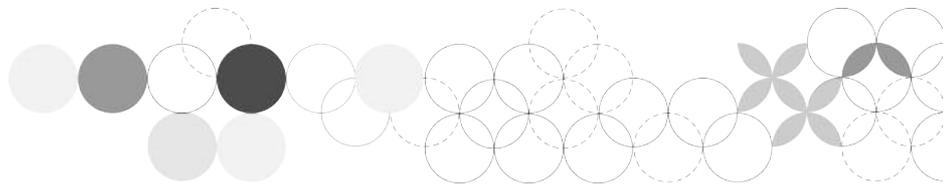




The research is innovative, as it will be the first one that:

- Addresses the particularities in attitudes and needs of young people and young refugees regarding inclusion
- Analyses and collects the good practices that were observed in European and international refugee inclusion projects
- Offers for free insights into the main causes for cultural friction between young refugees and young EU citizens, addressing the issue from the perspective of both groups.





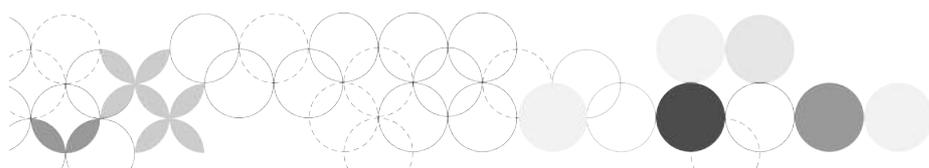
Research methods & target groups

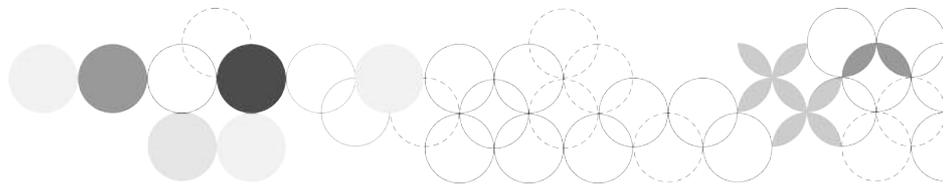
The research is based on a series of surveys, focus groups and synthesis of previous experiences in the field. The two main target groups were, of course, young people and young refugees from the 3 countries. In extent to this, youth workers, teachers, staff of refugee centres were also interviewed and the results of similar projects were analysed.

The survey for young people was based on a set of questions aiming to assess youngsters' perceptions about migrants and refugees, as well as to understand which are the main sources of information that are used to shape their personal beliefs. In order to understand the broader environment in which the project takes place, we have also retrieved a number of surveys among teachers and youth workers. Finally, we gathered data from existing projects dealing with migrants across the E.U., in order to further understand what has been already achieved and what could be further improved.

The survey asked youngsters (aged 14 to 30) about:

- Demographic data: Age, Gender, Study level, Occupation, City of residence, Nationality, Religion
- Previous contact with refugee\asylum seekers
- Three adjectives they would use to describe refugees/asylum seekers
- To what extent they agree with the following statements (from 1 to 5: (1 = "not at all"; 5 = "I totally agree"): Refugees\asylum seekers represent a danger for our society; R. are terrorists, R. are taking our working opportunities; R. are spreading diseases; R. have more benefits than locals; R. will become the majority of our society; R. can bring positive influence to our culture; R. can endanger our cultural identity; R. do not want to learn our language; R. do not want to work and prefer to receive the social benefits; R. do not have a good work capacity (are lazy, come late, are not qualified enough, etc.); R. cannot integrate in our culture; R. do not have respect for equality between men and women; R. are discriminated; R. are poor; R. are ignorant; R. do not want to adapt to local cultural norms.
- How did they form their opinion about refugees/asylum seekers?
- How open they are towards different social relations with refugees/asylum seekers:
- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee\migrant\asylum seeker as a member of their community, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian
- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee\migrant\asylum seeker as a colleague\classmate, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian
- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee\migrant\asylum seeker as a neighbor, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian
- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee\migrant\asylum seeker as a





friend, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian

- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee/migrant/asylum seeker as a boyfriend/girlfriend, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian
- How comfortable would they feel if they had a refugee/migrant/asylum seeker as a member of your family, who is ...? Muslim – African – Christian
- What do they think are the main differences between their culture and the culture of the refugees/asylum seekers coming to their country in terms of: everyday interaction; Friends and family relationships; Faith; Gender roles; Relations and marriage; Parenting; Eating and drinking; Work; Clothing; Other differences;
- Which of these differences they consider to be disturbing

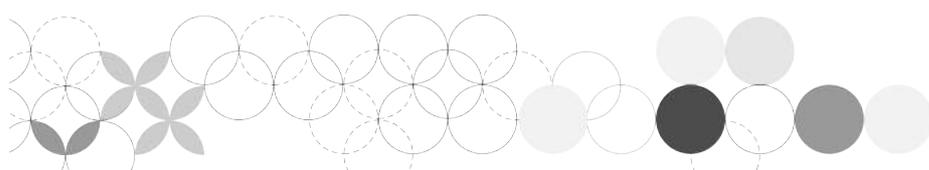
The same questions were asked to teachers in the 3 countries. In extent to these, we also researched about their experience in working with pupils/participants/beneficiaries who were refugees/asylum seekers, in terms of:

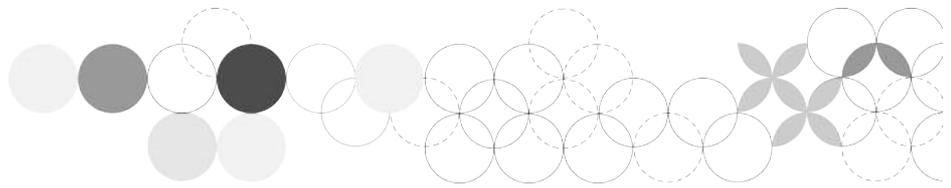
- Their reaction when they found that they should host a refugee pupil in their classroom
- Attitude of their pupils after receiving a colleague with a refugee background
- Any positive or negative effects of having a refugee pupil/beneficiary
- Relationship between the local and refugee pupils/beneficiaries and factors that are influencing it
- Tools/methods/pedagogical approaches they use to increase cohesion in their classroom and help pupils/beneficiaries overcome cultural differences

For understanding the realities faced by refugees and asylum seekers, we surveyed both this target group and the staff working with them.

Apart from demographic data (age, gender, study level, occupation, city of residence, nationality, religion), refugees/asylum seekers were asked about:

- Languages they speak
- To what extent they agree with the following statements (1 = not at all; 5 = I totally agree): "The local population is happy with us being here"; "L.P. is very different than my culture"; "L.P. has prejudice about refugees/asylum seekers"; "It is important that I adapt to the local culture"; "It is important that the local population adapts to my cultural norms";
- Three stereotypes they think exist about refugees/asylum seekers in the country they applied for protection
- Main obstacles they face in integrating in the local environment? (e.g. not knowing the local language, not knowing a language that the locals speak, the prejudice of the locals with respect to refugees/asylum seekers, lack of financial possibilities,





lack of opportunities to interact with the local culture, not being interested in integrating in the local environment)

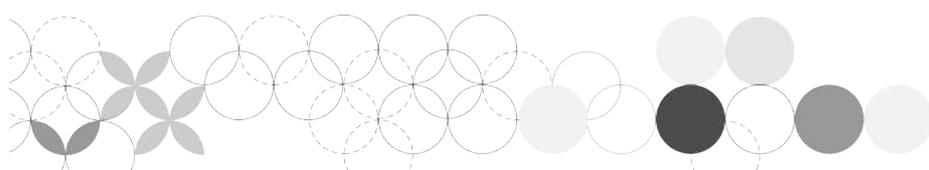
- Main differences between their culture and the culture of the host country in terms of: Everyday interaction; Friends and family relationships; Faith; Gender roles; Relations and marriage; Parenting; Eating and drinking; Work; Clothing; Other aspects.
- Which of these differences are the most uncomfortable/difficult to adapt to
- Their strategy for dealing with these
- Their main source of information about the local culture
- Having friends among the local people
- Their main obstacles to approach local people?
- Their immediate needs upon arrival/after several months of staying?
- Things that could be done for supporting their integration into the hosting community

Staff and volunteers of the refugee welcoming and support centres were also interviewed about:

- The main challenges they see that refugees/asylum seekers are facing in their process of integration
- The most challenging cultural differences for refugees/asylum seekers, in terms of: Everyday interaction, Friends and family relationships, Faith, Gender roles, relations and marriage, Parenting, Eating and drinking, Work, Clothing, Other differences
- Number of asylum seekers asking for support for cultural integration
- Methods with which they support the cultural integration of the asylum seekers and good practices
- Main challenges they see that refugees/asylum seekers are facing in their process of integration in the host country
- Recommendations for better for refugee integration in the hosting societies
- Requests that refugees address them with

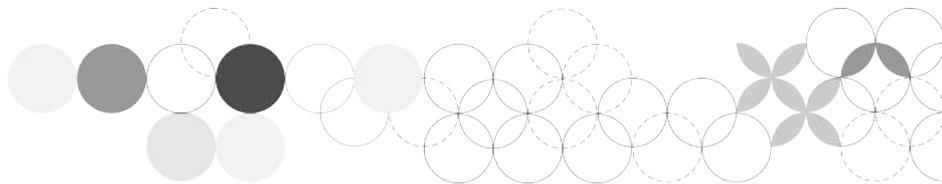
Similar projects were also analysed, in terms of:

- Results and impact
- Most important outcomes
- Changes in the refugees' behaviour they cultivated
- Good practices that resulted
- Challenges and ways of overcoming them
- Strategy for dealing with the language barriers?
- Legal barriers





2. Main findings



Romania

The survey on young people can be considered statistically relevant, at least for the Arad region, as it included 1096 pupils, both from rural and urban environments, aged 14 to 19.

Only 6% of these young people have interacted with refugees. Most of the negative opinions formed are due to traditional media (51%), on-line media (36%), social media (32%). When asked openly about the main sources of information that determined them to have an opinion on refugees, 58% of respondents indicated elements that are associated to one of these 3 sources (news report, videos that were seen on-line, articles they read on the internet, Facebook posts, etc.)

The Romanian pupils are aware of the phenomenon of refugee discrimination. 60% of them agree that refugees are discriminated. They are also aware of their bad situation, with 35% of respondents describing refugees as poor and 28% as vulnerable (e.g. needy, homeless, sad, dirty, hungry).

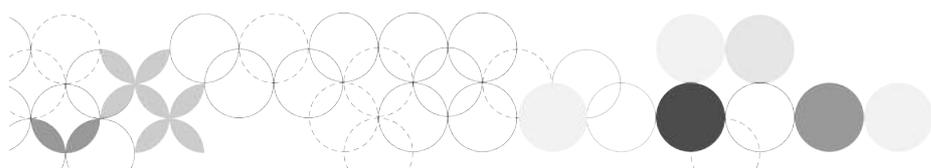
On the other hand, this does not mean that they are more tolerant. 40% to 50% of the pupils would not like a Muslim refugee as a colleague, friend, neighbour, family member, etc.

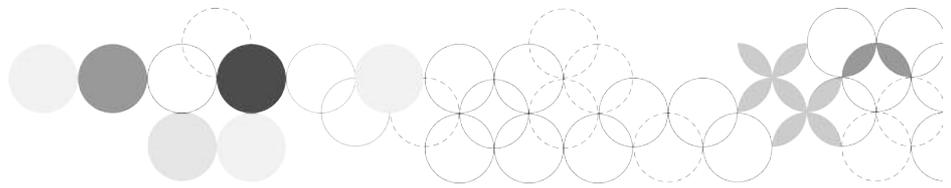
Religion and race still play an important role in the exclusion of refugees. For example, if 50% of pupils would not like a Muslim refugee as a member of the community, and 40% think the same about an African refugee, just 20% would not like a Christian refugee as a community member. The difference is similar for the other types of relationships, with Christian refugees being twice as likely to be accepted compared to Muslim or African.

In this context it is relevant that 42% of the respondents think that refugees are Muslims. Hence, the negative associations are transferred from one group to another.

Also, this is in line with the common stereotypes that surfaced about refugees:

- They are a danger to our society (51% of pupils agree to this)
- They do not want to work (50%)
- They are ignorant (49%)
- They do not wish to adapt to local cultural norms (47%)
- They do not respect gender equality (46%)
- They spread diseases (46%)
- They are a danger to our cultural identity (40%)





The most disturbing differences that were mentioned were related to:

- Religion
- Culture (habits, appearance, food, etc.)
- Gender roles
- Not speaking the same language

More specifically, the disturbing differences are:

- Other differences

Having various diseases / aggressive behaviour / color of their skin / having the right to polygamy / the role of men and that of women / hate towards Europeans / the many benefits they receive / they are offered jobs and home from the start / terrorism

- Religion

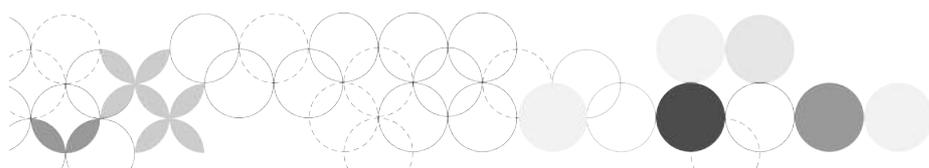
Having fixed hours of prayer / having a different belief / intolerance to other religions / polytheism / not believing in God (believing in another God, like Allah, Budha) / being more religious, praying more and more frequently / different customs and holidays / being imposed to be religious / the way they manifest the faith in public / their religion pushing them to be inhuman / extremists / strict prayer schedule

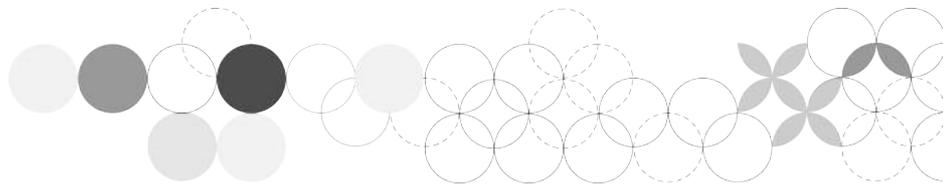
- Raising children

Children are raised only by the rules of their culture and religion, in a traditionalist spirit / raised in the spirit of faith, indoctrinated / have revenge habits / number of spouses (polygamy) / no gender equality – mother is the main responsible for raising the children / brutal fathers / being poorly raised / they traumatize their children / they are negligent in raising children / dirty children / children grow without opportunities / they have too many children / Teach little children to believe in Allah and to master weapons

- Clothing

They have different ways of dressing than Europeans / women bound to wear a veil or have their face covered / not cared / dress strange / specific / neglected / poor / unsuitable for the century / do not have a lot of money so they do not allow quality clothes / dressed in black / strict rules with women's clothing / women always walk with the body covered / women are forced and discriminated in terms of their outfit;





○ Daily interaction

differences in culture, language, customs, traditions, spoken language / strange customs / lazy compared to Romanians who work hard / do not communicate / hostile / use bad words / do not greet / non-adaptation to culture / behavioral difference / communicate less / are more shy / communicate faster / expecting to receive everything without making any effort / aggressive and violent behavior / do not interact with friends / do not go out late / isolate in a room Skin / are careful with whom they come in contact / different language / are more nervous, shout a lot / they want to take over everything

○ Food and drink

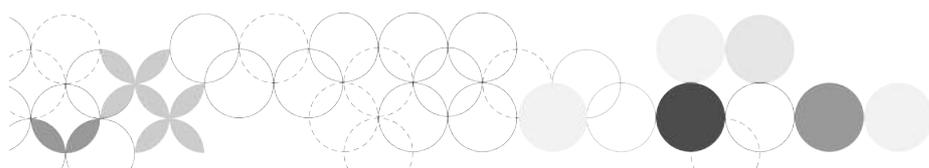
have other eating habits / have restrictions on food / low food, non-diversified / drink a lot of alcohol / banning consumption of pork and alcoholic beverages / their religion does not allow them to eat certain products / have specific foods / some are alcoholic / they can eat better food because they can have a different culture or food like us / we have access to fresh food and drinks, incontinence, unlike refugees / some of them do not eat certain Romanian foods and drinks (especially pork)

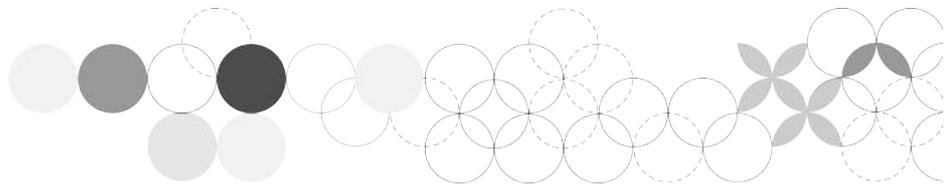
○ The work

lazy / poorly paid / would work anything / only men work / do not want to work / not serious / not reliable / language / have jobs but do not want to work / work much less than us / some companies may not hire them because they are refugees / do not find it easy to work / are qualified / they wait for social assistance/ are taught hard work / are lazy / some are lazy, some are laborers / unqualified / wages and working hours are different / if they are accepted, everything is ok / the same as Romanians work a lot / physical work predominates;

○ Friends and family relationships

Do not easily adapt among Christians / woman is ill-treated / woman has no rights / woman is discriminated / have no friends / do not have family / behave badly in the family and with each other / different style of leisure / do not expose in public / do not behave nicely in the couple / women are subject of domestic violence / women are men's slaves / the husband has an important role in the family / they cherish the family / family relationships are different, there are other values / traditionalism / harem / have fewer friends than us / more tense family relationships / more rigid family relationships / closer families / wife is subordinate to husband / wife are not equal / they have more children / they would find it harder to find a partner in the country they are refugee / have more wives / marrying too young / making many babies / family is





a priority / are very devoted to the family / more rare participations at parties / no technology / men work and mothers take care of children / women are not allowed to work, men bring money into household /

Overall, the most common disturbing differences were related to:

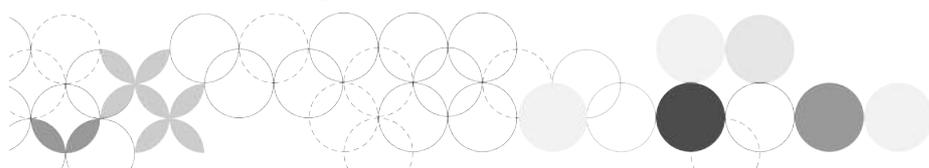
- Polygamy
- Gender inequality
- Not believing in the same God
- Having an aggressive behavior
- Children being raised in an environment dominated by aggressiveness
- Laziness, unwillingness to work
- Low interest of adapting to the local cultural environment
- Women's clothing, especially related to covering the body and the head/face

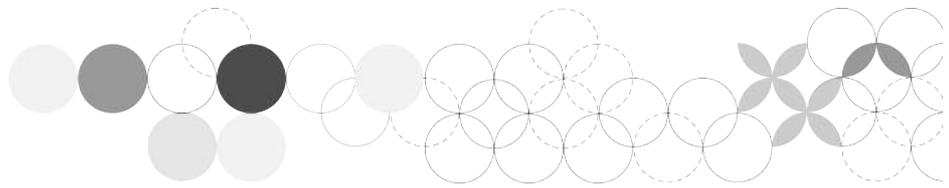
These findings must be put in the general context. National surveys connect the exclusion of such groups and intolerance to the "fear of difference" (e.g. IRES survey ordered by the Romanian Anti-Discrimination Council). When the general population was asked "how much trust do you have in ..." it was revealed that the most distrust of the majority is against homosexuals, at a rate of 74%, the Roma - 72%, immigrants 69%, (although Romania has not really been confronted with this problem). 68% of Romanians do not trust Muslims, although according to statistics, 58% do not trust people of other religions than the Orthodox and 46% do not trust the Jews. Over 60% of Romanians consider Muslims as potentially dangerous, and 52% believe that immigrants should be stopped at the borders of Europe. These percentages show how deep the prejudices and stereotypes in Romania and how they are transferred to the young generation. (The IRES survey, commissioned by the CNCD, was conducted on a representative sample between November 26 and December 10, 2018, using the CATI method, with an error margin of +/- 2.7%).

With respect to the answers of refugees, more than 75 % of the persons believe that there has to be adaptation to the local culture. One conclusion in the focus group interviews wasn't that some participants claimed that they respect and adapt to cultural differences (like clothing, being open to the opposite gender, going out) but also there is an clear expectation that the locals would respect the cultural inheritance of the refugees and find ways to interact, learn and celebrate cultural diversity.

65 % of the respondents agreed that the local population has some prejudice about them. The refugees indicated almost the same stereotypes that were found in the survey with young people:

- Refugees are terrorists,
- Refugees are uneducated,





- They are criminals (thieves, killers),
- They don't really want to work,
- All refugees are muslim, etc.

It appears that these stereotypes are manifested in a visible way in society.

Half of the respondents think that „Lack of opportunities to interact with the local culture“ is an obstacle in their integration.

Gender equality, stronger family bonds, the higher influence of religion and the differences in food and alcohol consumption were also identified by the refugees as the main dissimilarities between their culture and the local culture.

Apart from traditional media and social media, most of the refugees formed their opinion on the local culture from directly interacting with it.

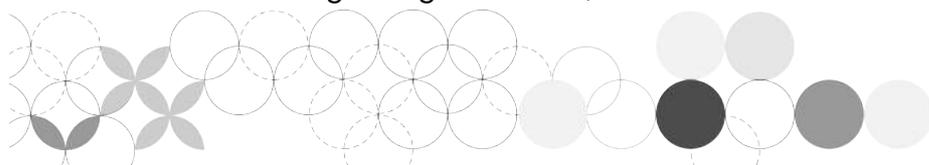
Most of the participants declare that they do have Romanian friends, but still the number is not very high. Most of the participants who have more friends are students (they interact with Romanians in school, parties, sport) or workers that interact with Romanian colleagues. The main cause for this is lack of opportunities to meet with them because of restrictions that refugees/asylum seekers are facing and not knowing the same language.

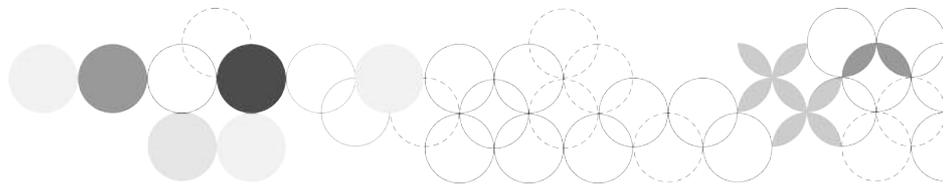
The main conclusion of the research on refugees were that:

- There is a need of more community awareness regarding who refugees are, why they are running away and how communities can support them in finding safety, financial independence, educational and medical assistance and so on.
- Stronger options in terms of intercultural dialogue between the migrants and local community should be provided through: cultural events, art, sport, food festivals.
- Better approaches from the government are required regarding language and cultural classes, fighting prejudice and stereotypes, employability, accommodation.
- It is necessary to educate the local communities about the cultural inheritance that migrants and refugee bring in a intercultural world, were no culture is better or superior then other.

In the perception of staff/volunteers working with refugees the most challenging cultural differences for refugees/asylum seekers (apart from learning the language), relate to:

- Fear of being discriminated and not accepted
- Gender roles / Women refugees being sometimes reluctant to work with men professionals and interact with other gender population, in general.
- Food & drinking
- Stronger religious beliefs,





- Lack of understanding how the governmental system works in Romania (access of daily services: going to the doctor, school, etc.).
- lack of openness of local communities in building relationships with the migrants.

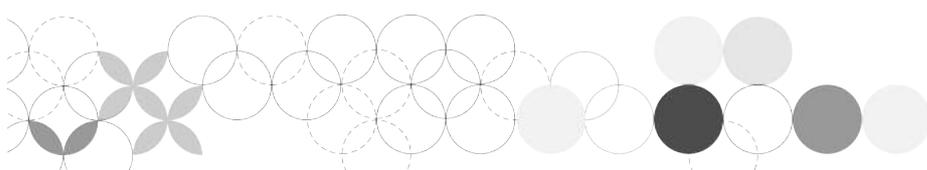
38,9% of the respondents believe that the asylum seekers or refugees show small interest in learning about the Romanian culture as part of their integration. For supporting their cultural integration they recommend to:

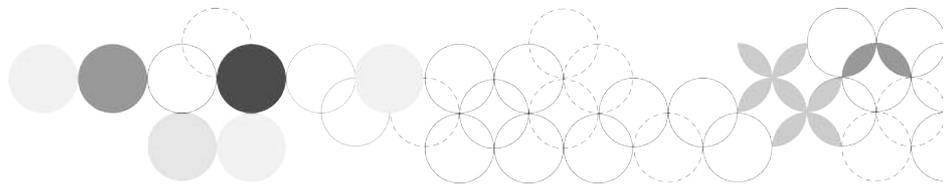
- Teach the Romanian and Cultural Orientation Class
- Offer social and legal advice and informing the migrants
- Make visits in the city, discovering places and people
- Offer intercultural mediation.

Lack of mentorship and learning efficiently about Romanian system is as well a great challenge.

Other methods identified for facilitating integration

- Offering long term integration programs, including Romanian and cultural classes).
- More interactions between the refugees and local communities through cultural and artistic participation.
- Individual and emphatic approach in assisting every asylum seeker or refugee.
- Mentorship and motivating the refugees.
- More empathy for the professional – sometimes the refugees are not perceived as human being but as a job duty!
- Better learning of responsibility process for the migrants.
- Awareness campaigns regarding who refugees are, for Romanians.





Belgium

The Belgium case shows a strong correlation between the age group 14-21 years old youngsters and those people who never had contacts with refugees. Twenty out of thirty-seven people who never interacted with refugees were aged 14 to 21.

The Group 21-29 and the group who had contacts with migrants and refugees have formed their opinion through personal contacts, mostly by volunteering with migrants, in working spaces and throughout their studies. Those aged 14 to 21 mostly relied on media or opinions heard from their family and friends. Nevertheless, some of them watched videos and documentaries about refugees' journeys and lives.

In each group, participants emphasized that migrants and refugees have more benefits than locals (14-21yo =13; 21+yo=13), can endanger our cultural identity (14-21yo =14; 21+yo=14), and do not respect equality between men and women (14-21yo =10; 21+yo=10).

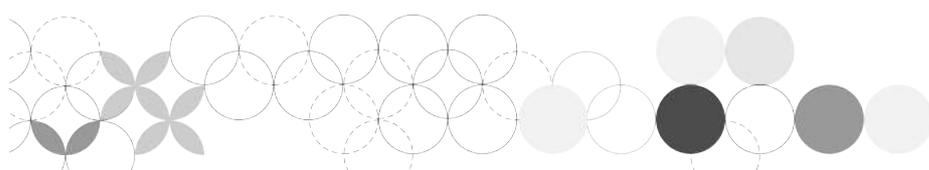
The foremost topic of concern among both youngsters and teachers is gender equality and women's rights. Overall, thirty-five youngsters would feel at strong discomfort if they were in a romantic relationship with a Muslim refugee.

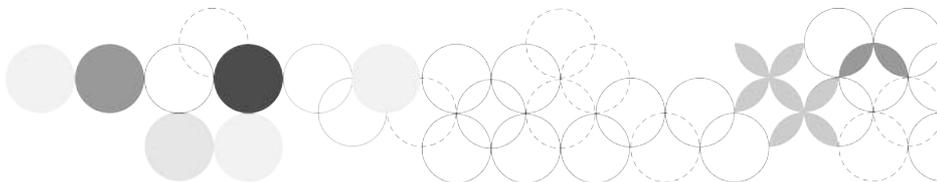
In Belgium, every group interviewed seemed to be especially at discomfort in relation to Muslim migrants, compared to Africans and Christians. Participants identified issues of Muslims' lack of integration in several categories, including gender equality, criminality rate, homosexuality, and special benefits and advantages given to this group (for instance in the work-place or in case of access to social assistance).

The group who never interacted with refugees affirmed they mostly draw conclusions about refugees and migrants from information retrieved from media and their family and friends. They are also more insecure when giving specific examples of differences between the two cultures ("I don't know", "I am not sure"). They are also far less sympathetic, as some claim refugees and migrants are violent, poor, and unskilled.

The 14-21 y.o. age group and those who never had contacts with refugees were more concerned about differences which are connected to daily interactions such as clothing (4), language(3), values (2) etc. than the others. They assimilated different clothing styles and traditions with problems related to hygiene. There was a strong attention on Muslim women's use of the veil.

On the other hand, the group who previously had contacts with refugees is not concerned about differences in terms of clothing, languages etc. They mostly emphasized a lack of integration in reference to religious extremism and gender equality. A significant amount of





people is also concerned about the discrimination faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as members of other minorities and faiths by part of migrants and refugees.

Teachers, just like youngsters who met refugees, are extremely concerned about religious extremism and faith.

The table below gives a clearer vision of which topics were the most sensitive for each group.

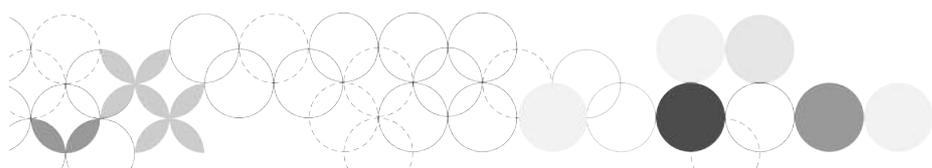
14-21	21-29	Had contacts	Had no contact	Teachers
Nothing specific	Gender equality and oppression of women	None	Nothing specific	Nothing specific if mutual respect
Role of women and gender equality	None	Gender roles & women's rights/inequality	Role of women & gender equality	Religion
Clothing (mostly in case of Muslim)	Religion and its rules	Religious faith	Clothing (mostly in case of Muslim)	Role of women and gender equality

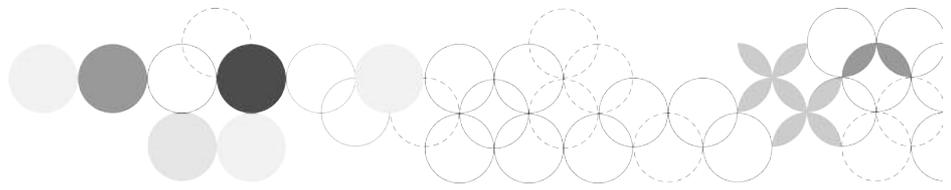
Table: Sensitive topics for each research group

As a country that historically hosted a large number of immigrants, Belgium has a strong network of national, international and private organizations that are active in the protection and integration of migrants and refugees. Thus, we could identify a large body of literature that was developed in order to use formal and non-formal educational tools on integration and anti-discrimination in Belgium. Find [here](#) an example developed by Unia – “*Baromètre de la Diversité- Enseignement*”.

The greatest problems envisaged by organizations were

- The general political environment, which is now jeopardising their work and independence,
- Difficulties in motivating and inspiring young adults by keeping them engaged in integration programmes,





Italy

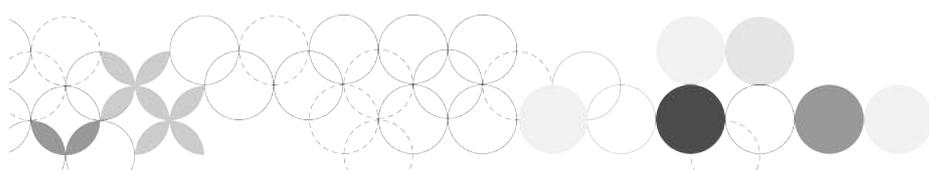
The survey was a fundamental tool to identify the main stereotypes, fears and cultural “friction zones” between young EU citizens and refugees. About this aspect, it can be noticed that local youngsters tend to identify refugees and asylum seekers with African and Muslim people. Only few had in mind the variety of religions; in the table with differences between cultures the majority talked about differences between their culture and Muslim one, not considering Christian refugees, for example. This is caused by the image they receive from media and by a general lack of knowledge and complete information of the topic. This is confirmed also by the fact that there was a big confusion about differences connected to religion: as an example, people referring about the impossibility to eat meat or beef, not only pork.

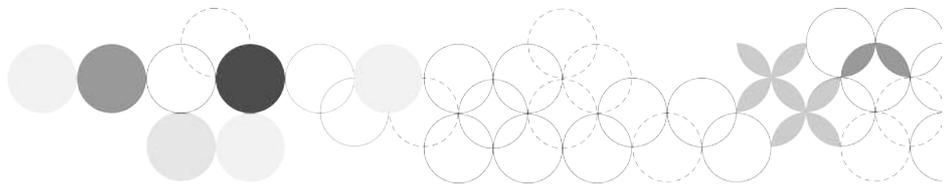
Other religious prescriptions referred by them don't have confirmation in reality or are different than what was declared. Even though the ignorance and the simplification in the answers of respondents aged 14-21, the attitude is positive and welcoming, understanding the stereotypes and prejudices born from ignorance. Things get more complicated when imagining refugees and asylum seekers as neighbours, friends, partners or parts of the family, showing the decrease of comfort with the increasing of closeness of relations.

Compared to younger respondents, respondents over 21 y.o. have more prejudices, and not just mistaking assumptions because of not knowing facts, but – as it seems – because of forming the non-accepting attitude. The big part of the respondents of people who had contacts with refugees do not see any big cultural differences, thinks refugees/asylum seekers are poor, discriminated, need to be integrated, etc., compared to others, this respondent group has a relatively high rate of neglecting opinions, for example adjectives such as dirty, expensive, unappreciative, criminal do appear, or ideas, that refugees/asylum seekers are subject to bringing danger, diseases etc. (compared to 0 or minimal such ideas in other respondents' groups). There is no big distinction between Muslim, African or Christian origins, but it is clear that close relationships with refugees/asylum seekers are not welcome.

It is interesting to notice that also in the care of respondents from abroad younger people seem more tolerant and with less prejudices than the elder ones, who refer about bad experiences and use rather negative adjectives to describe refugees. This is believed to be not due to a lack of information, but because of a non-inclusive and non-tolerant attitude.

The respondents who did not have a direct interaction with refugees/asylum seekers, have a general opinion, but overall positive, accepting and tolerant, considering refugees/asylum seekers to be people in need, poor, scared, discriminated, etc. However,





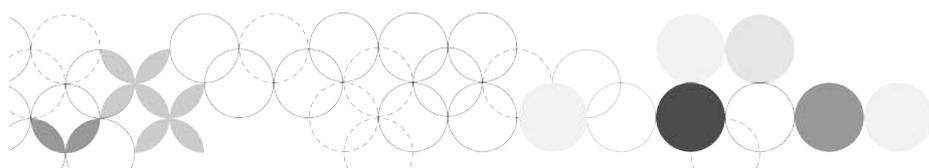
some new ideas appear (e.g. that refugees/asylum seekers don't support homosexual relationship), and also some new terms are used in the explanation (e.g. perceiving differences, the respondents speak about the influence of globalization etc.).

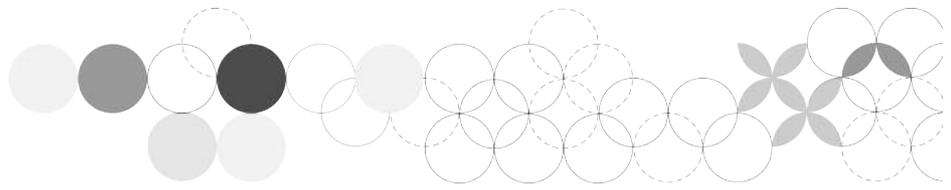
For the whole target group of local young people, traditional and online media, as well as direct interactions and family and friends represent the main sources of opinion making, for this reason it's extremely important to provide the right information to recognize fake news and to understand when media are used as instruments of politicians.

The most bothering aspect for the respondents identified in differences of refugees/asylum seekers, underlined also by teachers and youth workers, is the gender based discrimination, connected also to gender roles, parenting and family relations. This seems the most important friction zone and a topic to tackle carefully, so we hope that activities to address this topic will have great impact on youth. In particular, respondents declared to be bothered by the lack of importance and rights of women and their discrimination in society. Also, burqa was mentioned often as a disturbing element, seen as an imposition against women freedom.

Teachers and refugee centre workers referred about an initial difficulty due to language and a general distrust or inability to trust people and institutions. The teachers refer positive experiences, in which pupils were enriched and the dialogue in the class was built slowly but strongly, thanks to activities based on empathy.

From the answers of refugees clearly emerged a lot of stereotypes and prejudices that they feel are addressed towards them. Some of the most common are "dirty", "criminals", "drug dealers", "prostitutes", "ignorant". If to compare to the actual prejudices (adjectives and opinions) presented by local young respondents, it seems, that refugees/asylum seekers believe that locals think about them worse than they actually do. The refugees/asylum seekers participated in the survey feel discriminated and find local culture very different from theirs, describing a lot of difficulties they experienced with first need things (like documents, language etc.), but especially underlining the challenge of cultural inclusion and the acceptance by the locals.





Europe

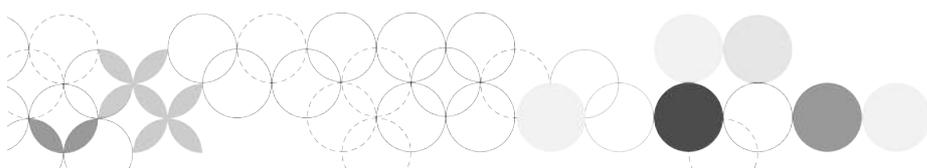
In Europe the large majority of people who never met refugees was older than 21. Overall, those who previously met refugees were more culturally aware and more empathetic towards migrants' struggles to integrate.

Those who never met refugees and migrants mostly relied on mass media to gather information about migrants and refugees.

The greatest obstacles to integration identified by most participants were gender inequality and religion and religious extremism. Women rights were identified not only in the frame of marriage and relationships, but also in terms of working opportunities and social interactions. Furthermore, a small but present part of respondents believed migrants and refugees are more prone to violence and criminality.

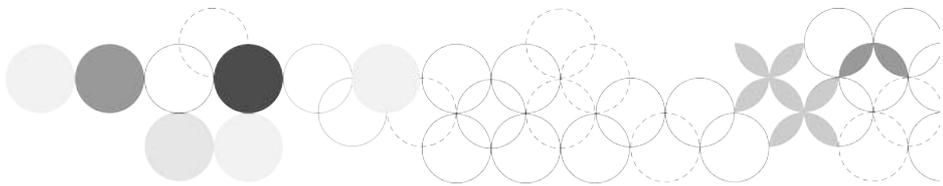
Compared to the Belgian case, the respondents were not very concerned about the lack of respect for the LGBTQ+ rights or the environment.

Most people were more uncomfortable in presence of African migrants than those who arrive from Arab countries, either Muslims or Christians.





3. Recommendations



Recommendations

In light of what emerged from the research and from the main findings, it seems necessary that a toolkit must be developed in order to work on the main stereotypes that emerged and in general on what underlies these stereotypes. The toolkit should aim for the following:

1. Increasing intercultural awareness and acceptance

It is evident that younger kids who never interacted with refugees and migrants are more susceptible to prejudices and misconceptions. A possible solution could be:

- Showing videos and interviews about the life and journeys of refugees and/or showcasing statistics and numbers to launch a discussion;
- Bringing an experience expert -such as a refugee- to bring a personal point of view and share their story;
- Promote simulations games to live “in their shoes”

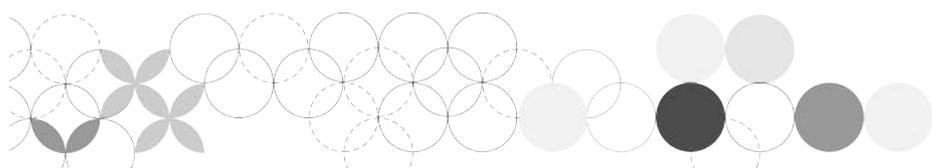
Also, going back to the issues specifically related to the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers, it seems interesting to organize sessions on theoretical aspects, to clarify routes refugees are taking, difference between refugee / asylum seeker / migrants, push and pull factors, statistics and guided visualizations.

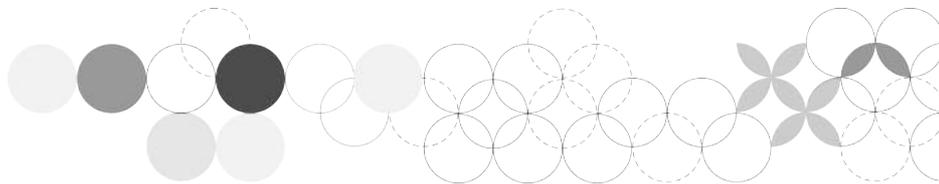
The research has revealed certain confusion in the cultural sphere and prejudices and stereotypes of different kinds. For this reason it is important to think of activities aimed at stimulating curiosity and favouring the openness of young people.

2. Developing media literacy

Another proposal would be to develop activities and a special section on media literacy: understanding how the main traditional media work, social media, fake news and hate speech can have a great impact on the peers involved, allowing them to understand when these are used in an instrumental way by politics and when information and disinformation are mixed together.

This theme is also relevant since media has a very important weight in the formation of public opinion and is a tool through which everyone's imagination is formed. Some stereotypes and prejudices clearly show a close contact with traditional media and social media and even with some fake news (such as the very popular one in Italy of refugees with designer clothes are residing in hotels). Working on the world of information and





communication can help young people recognize the truth more from the false with more agility and to break the vicious circle of prejudice.

3. Combating gender-based discrimination

The most recurrent and named prejudice - as can be seen from the results and the main findings - is related to gender based discrimination, with implications on gender roles. It is also the main disturbing element that respondents complained about. Treating this theme through specific activities in the toolkit seems not only relevant but also fundamental, also for the implications it can have for both locals and refugees. This is a topic to be addressed both to clarify the real situation of things and a first important element to work on empathy and the value of equality and inclusion.

In dealing with discrimination and gender roles, it seems useful for the purposes of the project to also address the broader and more general issue of interpersonal and family relationships, with a mention to homosexual relationships, since some responses indicate that there is discrimination also to the detriment of the latter.

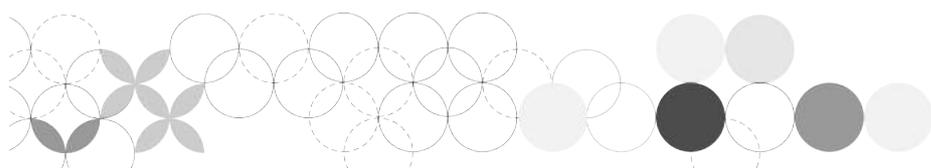
Some specific aspects, such as, were extremely present in the Belgian surveys and not in the European ones.

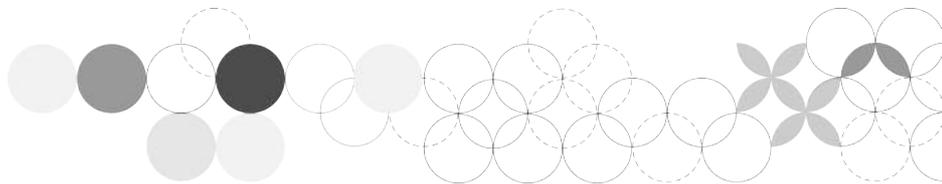
4. Promoting religious diversity

The second aspect emphasized by many respondents and often identified as a disturbing element is religious diversity. A great confusion has been identified between religions different from one's own and some prejudices without any correspondence with reality. For this reason it is essential to do activities to develop a common language, that increases awareness and knowledge of the topic, contributes to multicultural awareness – both on the level of facts and attitude. In Belgium it might be worth it to focus especially on Islamophobia. In other countries in Europe - where immigration is mostly from African countries - African migrants are the most discriminated.

5. Developing empathy and self-esteem

Working on empathy and basing activities on an empathic attitude is another recommendations for the toolkit: using this value as a key and guide in the activities will allow a more stimulating and safe atmosphere for the participants and will also favour their personal growth and their way of relating to others, as well as helping them to better understand each other and learn more about themselves. A transversal approach is suggested to the activities to be implemented by various methods, including for example a role-play.





Another crosscutting theme should be self-esteem, which will help young people enhance their skills and competences and put them to good use in their training as a peer trainer on the specific topic.

Ice-breakers and team-building activities for bringing together people from various backgrounds are highly recommended.

6. Promoting social action

Experience of other projects has shown that the educational component should also be complemented by a social action one, in which the participants personally engage in supporting the target group they are expected to be more inclusive with.

7. Ensuring a tailored approach

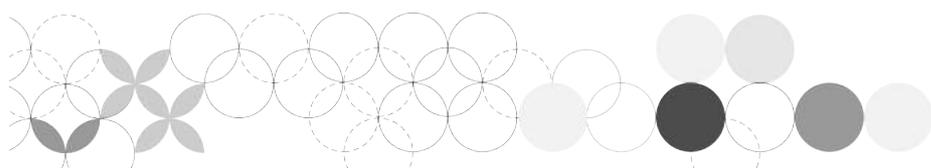
Combining the direct experience of theoretical content will help young people in their training and to become aware of the facts and to fight prejudices and stereotypes. In particular, it will be helpful to shed light on multiple discrimination privileges.

It emerged from discussions with other organizations that motivating young refugees in pursuing the training might be challenging. Some possible solutions are:

- Engaging in topics which are relevant to them and that spark their attention (for ex. sports and arts, jobs and employment, relationships, etc.);
- Invest on a personal bond with the young refugee, invite other refugees and people who lived relatable personal experiences to the workshops;
- Always provide visual support in order to overcome language barriers;
- Provide a safe space where they feel comfortable.

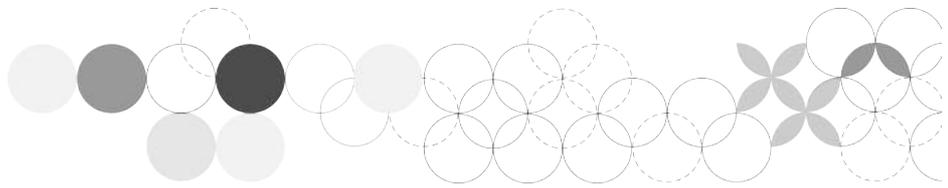
To avoid misunderstandings with the children's families, it was seen as a good practice to include parents and guardians throughout the entire process, by explaining why the training is important and why their children should participate. This is particularly relevant with parents and guardians of young girls.

Some specific aspects, such as homosexuality and Islamophobia, were extremely present in the Belgian surveys and not in the European ones. On the other hand, people from outside Belgium (and especially Albania) were more likely to consider migrants as violent and criminals. As such, it is crucial to focus on the local and national reality when developing training tools, rather than solely relying on a pan-European strategy.





4. Complete results



Belgium

o Youngsters

The first strong pattern that emerged from the data collected was a reasonably strong correlation between a very young age and lack of previous interaction with refugees. People younger than 21 years old in most cases had never interacted on a personal level with refugees and migrants. Out of thirty-two people interviewed who are between 14 and 21 years old, only eleven met a refugee in their lifetime - compared to the thirty-one out of forty-seven who were older than 21. 21+ participants met refugees while volunteering, at work or in school. This data is particularly relevant, since people who had contacts with refugees are overall both more understanding of cultural differences as well as more empathetic.

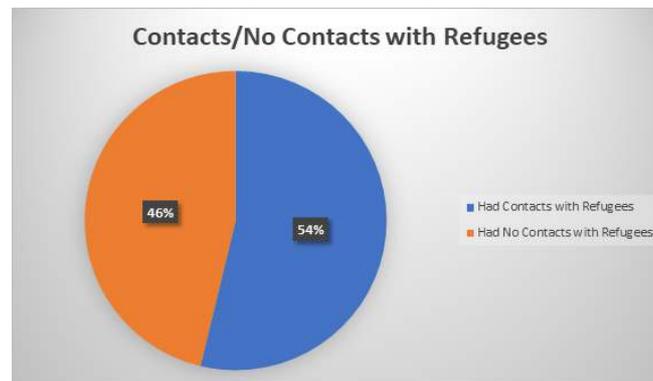
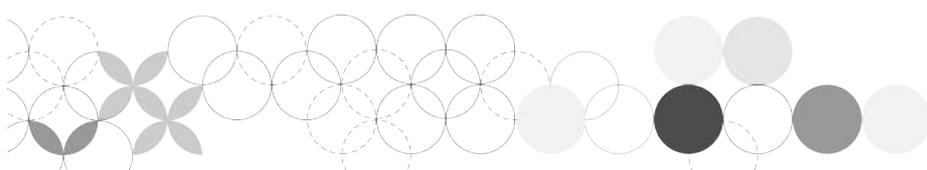
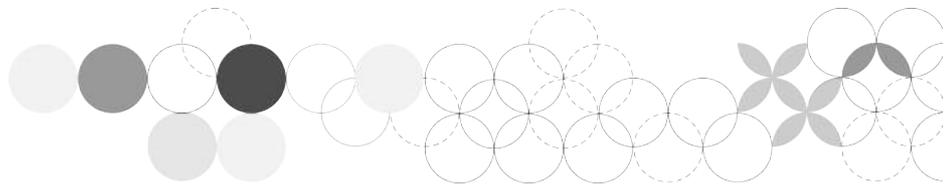


Fig.: Percentage of people who had/ had not contacts with refugees

Some extreme sample answers given by the 14-21 age group to the question "How did you form your opinion about refugees and migrants?" have been: 1) "I believe refugees are privileged in having access to social care and public housing compared to national homeless people", 2) "I have seen what happens in my neighbourhood and my friends have been aggressed by some migrants", or 3) "Knowing that they earn more money than my mother, who kills herself with work, without even working. Watching these people ruining my country. Risking to be aggressed by foreigners who do not want to be integrated".

The survey suggests that a large percentage of youngsters interviewed who belonged to the 14-21 years old group felt insecure about practical differences between the European culture and the culture of migrants and refugees. When asked how our societies, families, relationships etc. might differ, a large part of them answered "I don't know", "not many differences", "it depends". Nonetheless, this same group was statistically far more





concerned about the threats which are caused by the undergoing migration flow compared to older participants. (See Table 2. below)

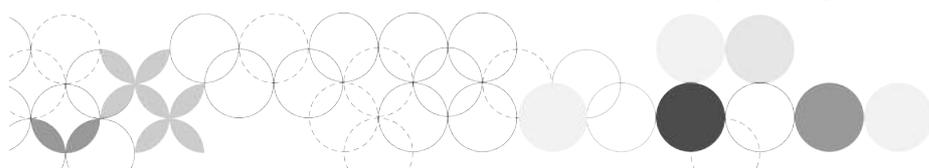
	14-21 Years Old (32 in Total)	21+ years old (47 in Total)
Refugees\asylum seekers represent a danger for our society	28%	6%
Refugees\asylum seekers are taking our working opportunities	31%	13%
Refugees\asylum seekers will become the majority of our society	34%	15%
Refugees\asylum seekers are ignorant	44%	15%
Refugees\asylum seekers can endanger our cultural identity	44%	30%

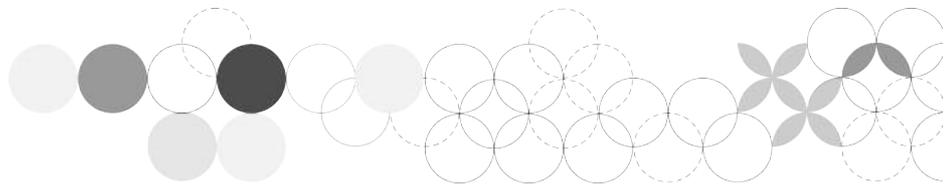
Table: Comparison of the 14-21 Years Old and 21+ years old age groups: How much do you relate with these statements about refugees?

The younger group seemed to be more concerned about differences that are connected to daily interactions such as clothing (4), language (3), values (2) etc. than others who participated in the survey. People connected different clothing styles with problems related to hygiene, and in the case of Muslims many mentioned the Muslim women's veil as a difference they consider significant.

There was an evident emphasis related to the perceived differences between Europeans and migrants on the daily life habits level and especially in working environments, such as in terms of efficiency, motivation, respect for work plans and hierarchy at work. The younger group also believed that migrants are better fit for manual work - Ex. *"They do more manual work or have different qualifications"*; *"They don't work a lot/ are not qualified"*.

Overall, it is interesting to notice a contrasting feeling among the youngest participants. On the one hand, they associate migrants and refugees with positive terms such as *brave* and *hopeful*. Similarly, they constantly repeated the statement *"we are all humans"*, or emphasized the ethical importance of *"humanitarianism"* when dealing with migrants and refugees. Nevertheless, a significant amount of them -almost one in two- believes migrants and refugees do not want to adapt to western culture and reject European and national social rules (13) and thus they are unwilling to integrate.





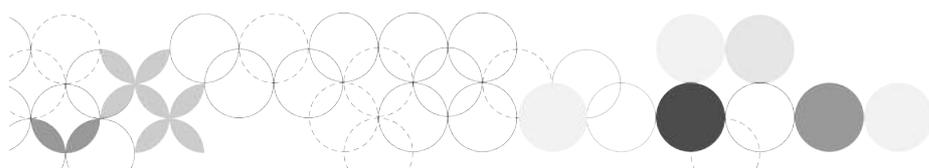
14-21	21-29	Had contacts	Had no contacts	Teachers
POOR	BRAVE	HUMAN	COURAGEOUS	BRAVE
BRAVE	HUMAN	COURAGEOUS	POOR	COURAGEOUS
HOPEFUL	HELPLESS	KIND	DESPERATE	LOST

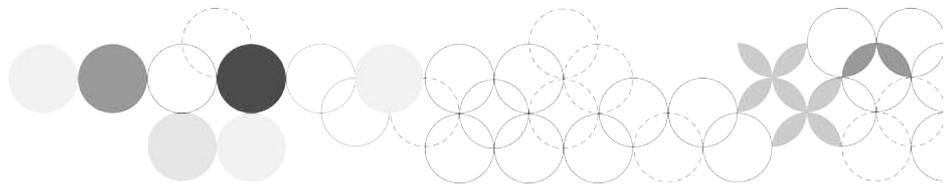
Table: Top 3 adjectives used to define refugees and migrants among all research groups

This issue was also identified by the 21+ group. Some 21+ participants stressed that although many refugees and migrants can successfully integrate into the western culture, some are not interested in understanding and adapting to our society and its rules. In their opinion, this minor group is responsible for strengthening prejudices against migrants and refugees as a whole.

Compared to those who are younger than 21, this age group is not very concerned about differences concerning clothing (2), proximity (1), etc. They rather focus their attention on problem of gender-based discrimination and violence, human rights, gender identity and rivalry amongst different religious groups. Thirteen participants identified gender roles and gender equality as the major problem related to migrants and refugees integration. Twenty participants affirmed they would feel strongly uncomfortable if they were in a romantic relationship with a Muslim migrant, and sixteen of them felt at discomfort if they had a romantic relationship with a migrant of African origins and Christian background. Female participants were particularly consistent in reporting problems related to gender based discrimination within refugee communities.

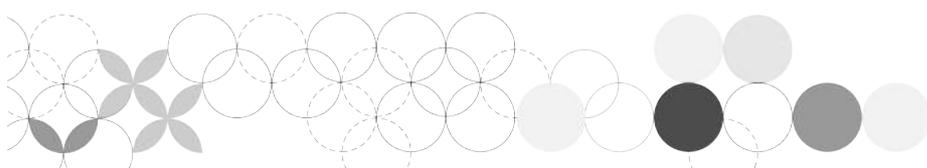
Another delicate issue that emerged throughout the survey was the division between the European secularism and migrants' faiths and religions. People from each research group stressed how religion and faith are far more central to migrants' culture than to western culture, as well as more central in shaping migrants' social norms. Although in most cases this seems not to be an issue, in four surveys religion was described as a possible trigger to social division. One of the answers stated that *"Western society runs around a plurality of ideas, other cultures are not considered different in regarding to religion"*. Similarly, a very small amount of people expressed their concern in reference to religious extremism and religious discrimination against other beliefs.

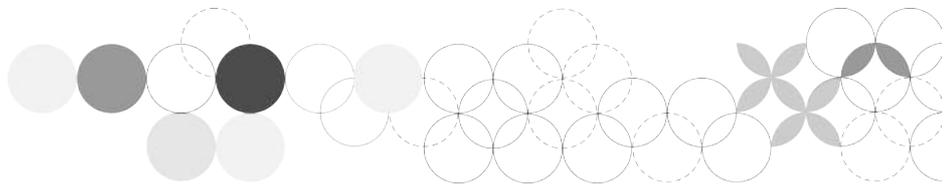




Besides, it emerged that 21+ are concerned about migrants and refugees' rejection of the LGBTQ+ communities' rights and their conservative view of sexuality and sexual orientation. For instance, one of the answers highlighted *"I am very concerned about the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community as I am myself gay and queer. This is more of an issue in the Middle East, Africa and Asia than Europe"*. Similarly, someone else declared *"Our society gives us more freedom, for instance in deciding who we want to be in a relationship with or who we want as a friend. In their societies women are far more marginalised than men and do not have the same role in a relationship. Furthermore, especially if they believe in Islam, homosexuality and losing virginity before marriage can have major consequences."*

Finally, a couple of people accused migrants to be disrespectful of public spaces and the environment.





- Teachers

In teachers' surveys, amongst the eighteen teachers, most of them defined themselves as atheist, agnostic and non-believers: The general overview of this limited data shows that most of them want to be empathic and supportive towards the situation of refugees.

Similarly to the 21+ age group, the sensitive areas identified by teachers were equality between men and women, as well as cultural differences and building relationship with Muslims.

Surprisingly, few teachers used traditional media as the main source of information and none of them claimed to listen to politicians in reference to the migrants' crisis. Most of them interacted with refugees by direct encounter and/or personal contact, as well as with people hosting them.

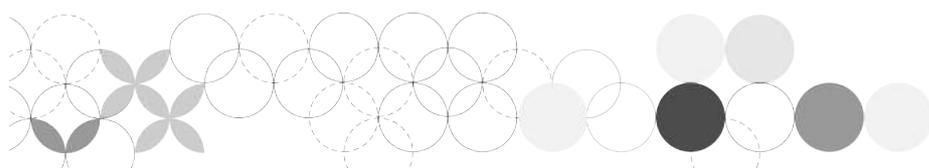
Another difference with other groups is that teachers were less concerned about the use of the veil or in reference to homosexuality.

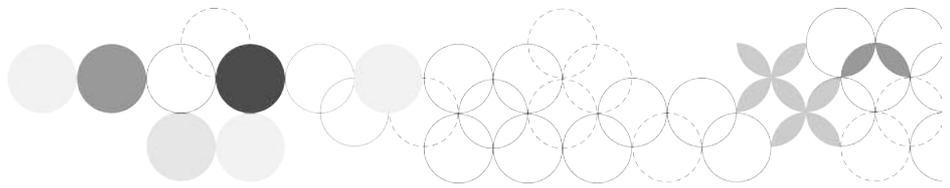
- Projects

It was evident that there is a significant number of organizations which is daily working in contact with migrants and refugees in both the French and Flemish speaking parts of Belgium. Overall, one of the problems envisaged by other organizations was the general political environment and the spread of racism and discrimination all over the country. According to Unia, the general political environment is becoming less and less supportive to initiatives aiming to support integration and anti-discrimination. In 2017, 2018 and 2019 Belgium has seen an increasing number of people closer to ideas linked to the far right. This is especially true in Flanders, where the existence and the independence of the organisation itself was jeopardised.

On the other hand, Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering provided an extensive framework about their work with refugees in the Flanders. In particular the agency organizes summer schools and workshops for asylum seekers and refugees every year. They started with mandatory courses for adults seeking asylum, the government also created a facultative summer school designed for minors and mothers with young children.

Overall, their greatest challenge has been recruiting young refugees to participate in their activities. They also found it difficult motivating them to consistently participating in workshops. In many cases, the greatest goal was convincing these kids that undertaking the course is important and in their own benefit. As a methodology, they usually rely on mentors, which are often refugees themselves and work both as supervisors and translators. The work of mentors is essential, as it is often the personal bond and trust

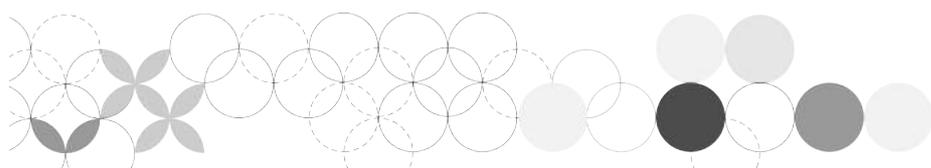


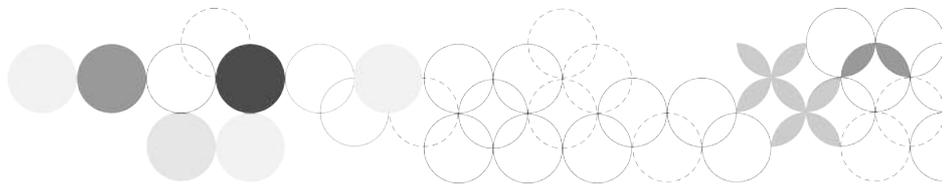


between a child and his/her mentor which incites the child to participate, rather than the content of the course. They found that general mailing does not work, they often have to call each participant several times. In order to build a safe space, they recommend to always bring an “experience expert” with whom the young refugees can relate.

Furthermore, to motivate youngsters to participate in the course, it is often crucial to first get down to the child’s level and provide activities which they find interesting (for instance sports, food, arts) alongside the most urgent ones (such as gender roles and sexuality). They often provide vocational trainings, as many young asylum seekers and refugees are looking for jobs. In the experience of Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering, it is extremely beneficial to always explain “*why*” it is important for the child to integrate and to always provide visual aid to overcome language barriers.

Finally, they recommend involving parents and guardians throughout the entire process. An info package can help in preventing drop-offs and misunderstandings, especially in case one or more participants are young girls coming from religious and/or patriarchal backgrounds.





Europe

It is possible to observe certain similarities between the surveys collected around Europe with those targeting Belgians.

The first evidence is that there is a very different approach towards migration among the group who never encountered a refugee or migrant and those who had the opportunity to interact with them.

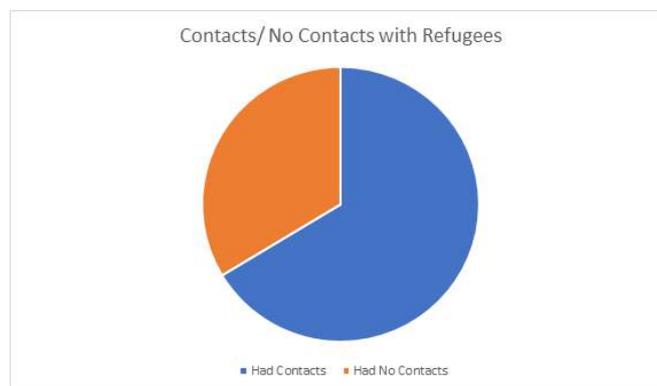
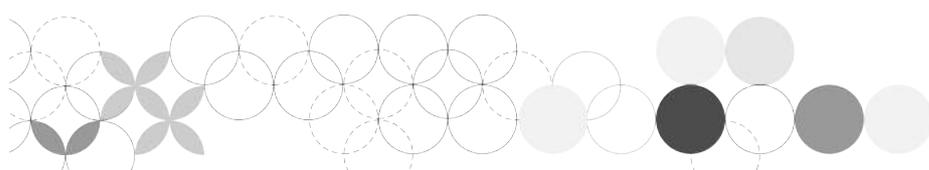
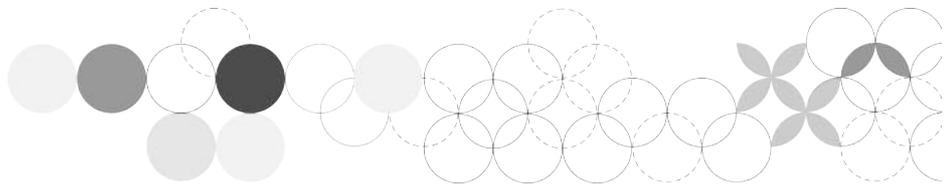


Fig.: Percentage of people depending on whether they had/had no contacts with refugees

In the first case, most participants learned about migration via the media (traditional – 35, online – 28, and social media – 22) as well as from their family and friends (15). This group was strongly concerned about potential threats caused by the migration flow, with fifteen out of forty five people believing migrants and refugees are a danger to our cultural identity and fifteen believing they can spread diseases. When asked to list differences and similarities between European culture and the culture of foreigners, a significant number of people wrote statements such as *“They are uneducated and they are a burden to society”, “They are not trustworthy”, “they are violent”, “they are not respectful”*. Two participants from Albania stated *“I believe my country does not have the economic capacity to support them.”*

The survey shows an inverse trend in the case of people who previously interacted with migrants and refugees in their lives. Just like in Belgium, these individuals mostly had decided to volunteer with organisations dealing with refugees and migrants or met some refugees at work or in their school (52). It is possible to notice that those who interacted with refugees have more intercultural awareness compared to any other research group. For instance, only one in seven people in this group claimed that *“Refugees and asylum seekers are taking our working opportunities”* or *“Refugees and asylum seekers do not want to work and prefer to receive the social benefits”*. This is a very low rate compared to the almost one in four people among those who have never encountered a refugee.





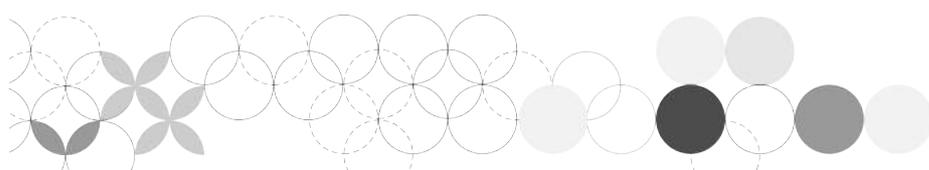
A large majority of respondents demonstrated general positive attitude and through their responses they showed empathy towards the situation of the refugees. As an example, one of the participants stated *"My overall impression is that integration is not an easy process and that these people, as we did a few decades ago, are leaving their countries either to survive or to look for a better life. The problem is not them, but social injustice and inequality. The international economic order has to change"*.

About twenty seven out of seventy one respondents who met a refugee before claimed that no significant difference is disturbing as long as there is mutual understanding and respect. They recognize the difficulties migrants could face in Europe, both in terms of lack of opportunities and discrimination. Similarly, a large majority of the research group attempts to avoid generalisation and stigmatisation of refugees and migrants, and considers mutual respect as a common basis towards cultural assimilation., This aspect is proven by the large number of people who affirmed every culture and every individual is different and we - as a society - should avoid generalisation.

The table below can offer a view of the number of people who said to agree on negative connotations about refugees.

	Never Had Contacts With Refugees (45)	Had Contacts With Refugees (71)
Refugees\asylum seekers represent a danger for our society	18%	14%
Refugees\asylum seekers are taking our working opportunities	20%	10%
Refugees\asylum seekers will become the majority of our society	24%	20%
Refugees\asylum seekers are ignorant	22%	17%
Refugees\asylum seekers can endanger our cultural identity	33%	23%

Table: Comparison of the Had Contacts/ Had Contacts groups: How much do you relate with these statements about refugees?





What is interesting to spot is that - contrarily to the survey held in Belgium- those who never met a refugee or a migrant were often older than 21. Thirty seven out of forty five people who said they never met any migrant or refugee were 21 or older.

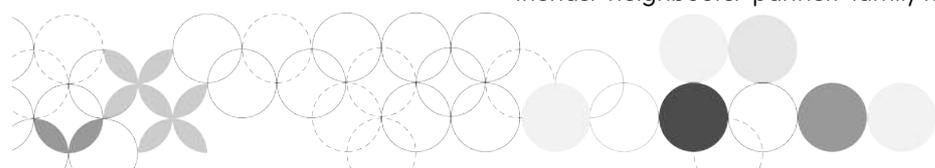
This aspect showcases that age per se is not the most important factor when it comes to recognition and acceptance of different cultures. It seems that having past direct experience in contact with people of diverse backgrounds is what mostly increased participants' empathy towards migrants, which also improved their understanding of cultural differences. With this in mind, age does not successfully explain why some youngsters were more open to integration than others. It is also interesting to notice that whether Belgium has a long history of immigration, a vast majority of the countries involved in this survey used to be involved in emigration until recently.

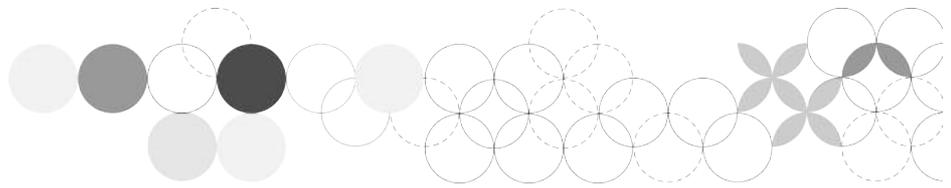
With this in mind, it is also useful to reflect upon the source of information about migration used by each research group. The channels which were used by these youngsters to gather information about the migration crisis (including media, common belief and the current political environment) has been the main vehicle which shaped young people's ideas about migrants and refugees.

Another noticeable difference that emerged in comparison with the Belgian surveys, is that the majority of participants around Europe feels mostly at discomfort when they interact with migrants and refugees of African origins than with those with Islamic or Christian backgrounds. This is not shown in Belgium, were African migrants and those coming from the ex-colonies, are far more integrated than new migrants from the Middle East.

How comfortable would you feel if you had a refugee\migrant\asylum seeker as a ...	Muslim	African	Christian
member of your community	16%	28%	16%
colleague\classmate	15%	27%	16%
neighbour	13%	25%	17%
friend	9%	27%	1%
boyfriend\girlfriend	37%	41%	35%
member of your family	23%	30%	24%

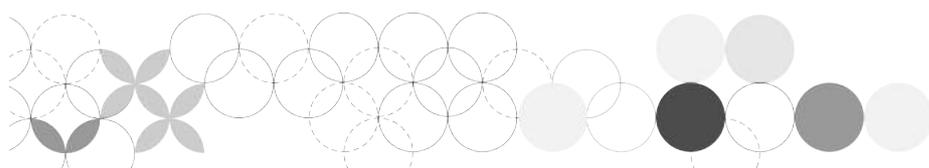
Table 5. People who answered that they felt at discomfort if they had refugees and migrants as classmates/ friends/ neighbours/ partner/ family members

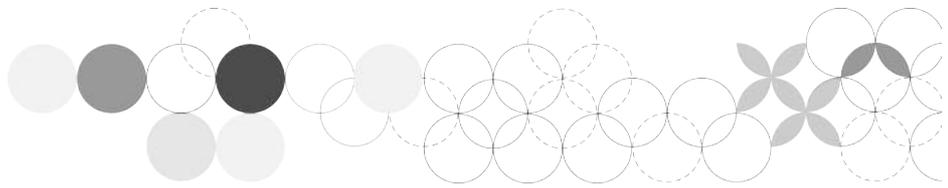




Finally, every group (regardless of their age or their previous experience with refugees) consistently reported their concern about the lack of respect for gender equality among migrants and refugees (57 in total). Inequality was pointed out as the most crucial trigger that jeopardises migrants' integration. Gender inequality was listed in almost every aspect of daily life, including social norms, working conditions as well as family and relationships. The second largest issue that was identified was religion and religious extremism (13). This result is in line with those retrieved in Belgium where women's rights and extremism concerned a large part of the respondents.

Some items, such as homosexuality and islamophobia -which have been identified in the Belgian surveys - were not present in the European ones. On the other hand, non-Belgians were more likely to think of migrants as violent and criminals. This could emphasize that given the multiculturalism, which is the very grounded basis of the European society, not every country has the exact same needs as the others. As such, when developing training tools to facilitate integration, it is very important to keep in mind the local and national reality rather than a pan-European strategy alone.





Italy

- Young Italian respondents

For this target group participated in the survey 290 young people aged 14 to 21 and 28 young people aged 22 to 30. The schools involved were: Liceo Classico "G.Galilei-T.Campailla", Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore "Giovanni Verga" and Istituto d'Istruzione superiore "G. La Pira".

The questionnaires were developed with other organisations involved in the project, written in English and translated in Italian. The questionnaires were structured as follow:

14-21 y.o.

This group of respondents filled out the paper questionnaires in classroom. They are living in Modica and in Pozzallo and attending the high school. Of 288 young people surveyed in this way, only 106 declared to have had contact with refugees or asylum seekers.

The answers to the first question about adjectives to describe gave these results:

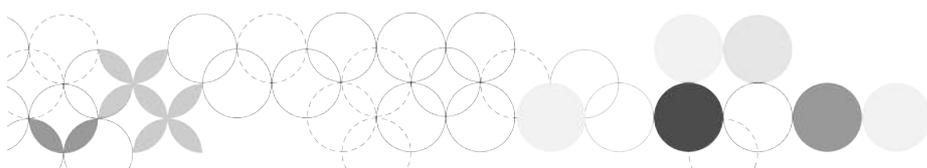
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by youngsters 14-21 y.o. with no contact with them

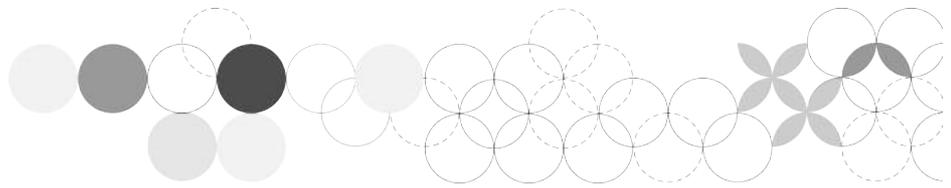


Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by youngsters 14-21 y.o. who had direct contact with them



As can be noticed thanks to the graphs, the portrait of refugees and asylum seekers for this target group is homogeneous, drawing the profile of people in need, poor, hopeful, unlucky, desperate and discriminated.

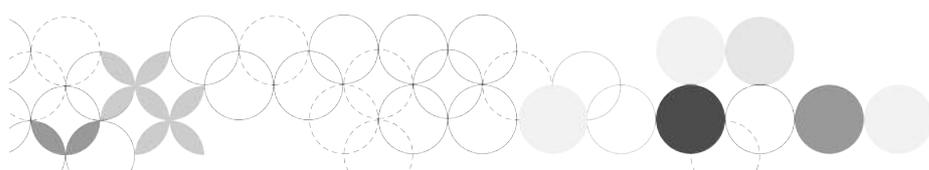
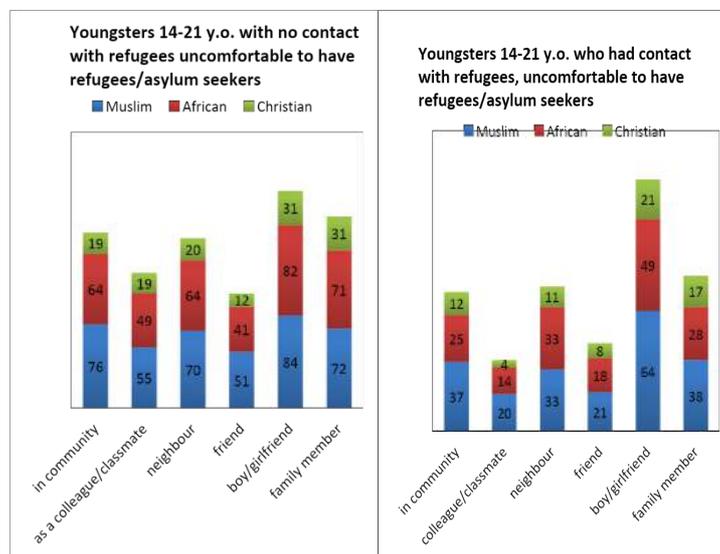


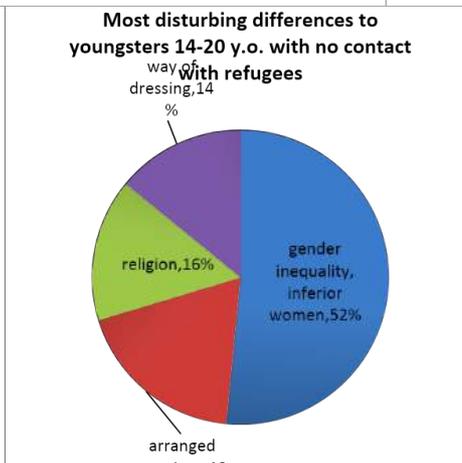
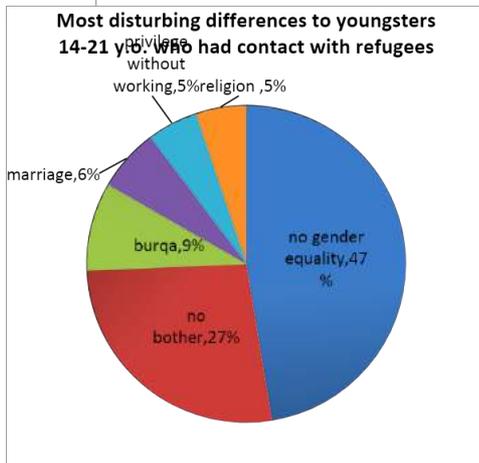
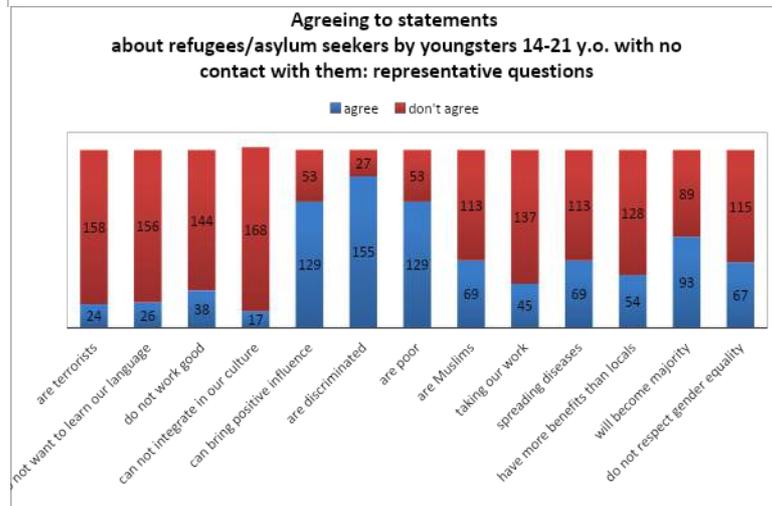
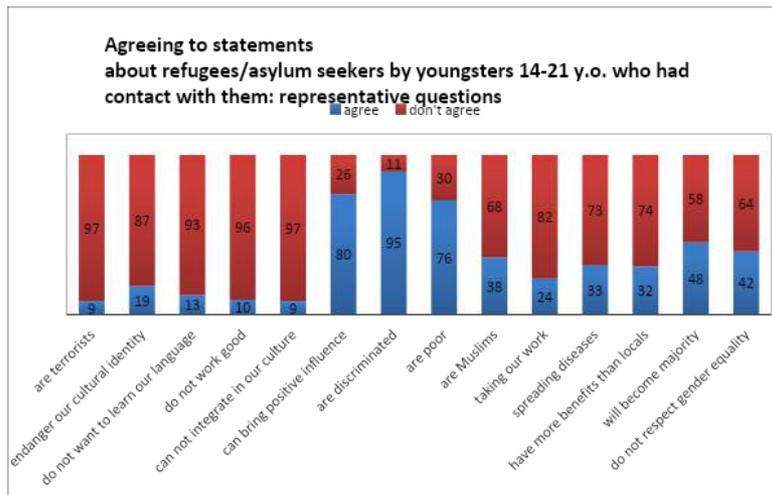
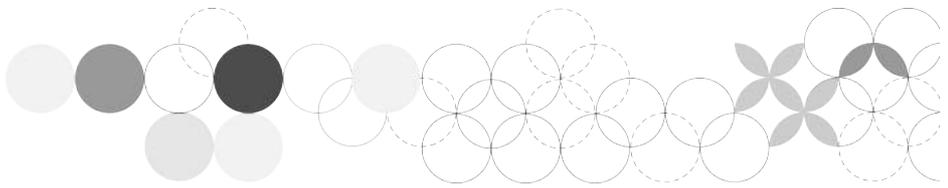


In the group of people that had contacts with refugees\asylum seekers, the opinions were formed mostly thanks to this direct contact (75%), followed by traditional media (64%), family and friends (45%), online media (42%), social media (35%) and politicians (16%). For those who didn't have contact with refugees\asylum seekers the opinions were formed by traditional media (82%), online media (52%), family and friends (41%), social media (37%) and politicians (24%).

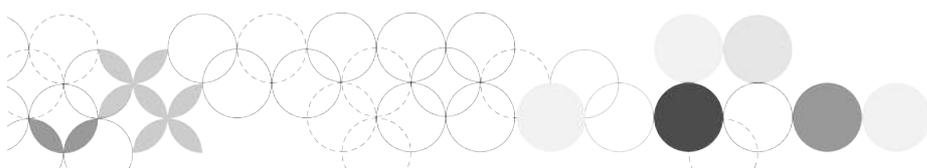
As can be seen from the graphs below, the respondents feel less comfortable in each case with Muslim and African refugees and asylum seekers. In the first graph, the 35% of respondents who had contact with refugees feels uncomfortable to have a Muslim refugee in their community. The number of people uncomfortable in having a Muslim refugee as a colleague or a friend decrease significantly to 19%, but get bigger about close relations, such as boy/girlfriend and family member. In the second graph percentage of people uncomfortable in having African or Muslim refugee in their community and in the other cases is around 40%, decreasing to 30% in having them as colleagues and friends and increasing to 46% in the case of having a refugee partner.

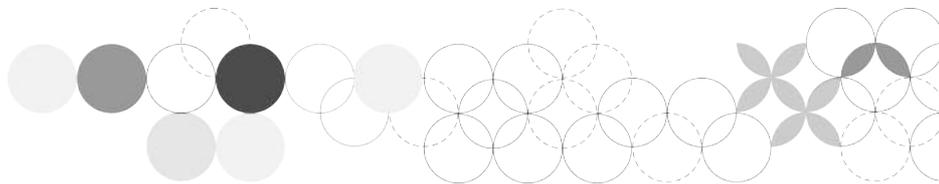
The percentage of people uncomfortable in having African refugees in community and in the other cases is slightly smaller than Muslim refugees. This happens also in the second graph of people with no contact with refugees. The number of people feeling uncomfortable with Christian refugees is much lower than the others.





The majority of respondents would feel less comfortable with Muslim origin refugees/asylum seekers in comparison to others: African and moreover Christian. When it comes to close relationship, such as having refugees/asylum seekers as boyfriends/girlfriends or family members, it is not very preferable by the respondents. Compared to other age groups, it is remarkable that this age respondents show also high





indicators for not feeling comfortable to have refugees/asylum seekers in the neighbourhood.

The fact that the absolute majority of the respondents formed their opinion thanks to traditional media allows to understand that the issue is widely discussed by media in Italy and – good or bad – some sort of propaganda on general ideas exists. However, when it comes to specific details such as understanding cultural differences, the answers show that the information by media is not sufficient enough, as some opinions are contradictory (which meat do “they” eat, other rules...). The general image of refugees/asylum seekers seems to be Muslims, oppressing women in burqas, having strange rules about marriage and praying a lot. Something that was often said is that refugees don’t want to work, that they have a lot of privileges and that they receive money per day and are hosted in hotels.

The fact this young people didn’t have direct contact with refugees, but only indirect and information through television and online media, lead them to a general sense of closeness and rejection, frequent prejudices and inexact information were present in this part of questionnaires. Some of them still don’t see them as a danger, but the majority seems hostile, especially against Muslims.

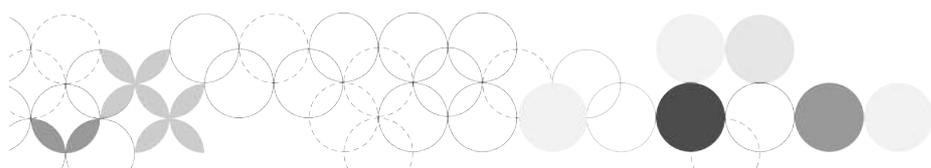
Only few had in mind the variety of religions, countries and cultures of migrants and refugees. Also, there are some clichés recurring in each section and some mistakes about habits (no meat, holy animals...). The most disturbing element for them was how the women are considered and treated and the lack of gender equality.

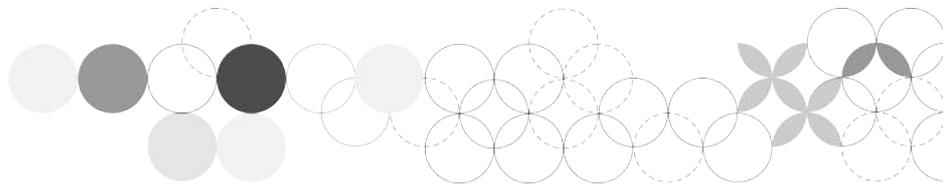
Some reflections derive also from the political discussion in Italy in this period, talking about their laziness and of certain money they receive daily, living also in hotels. These are fake news really rooted in our society and this questionnaires reflect perfectly the issue in our country.

Talking about young people who had contact with refugees, this lead them to a better understanding of their position, avoiding some prejudices. From the exchange of cultures several ones hope to have enrichment and feel comfortable to have refugees in their city and neighbourhood. Situation is more complex talking about family and relationships. Seems evident that there’s a lot of confusion between terms “refugee” and “migrant” and that is very frequent the connection refugee-Muslim. Also in this section, only few had in mind the variety of religions, countries and cultures of migrants and refugee and some recurring clichés.

Analysis of the results through focus group – 14-21 y.o.

The focus group had 7 participants, all Italians and resident in Modica. The age was between 18 and 24, as following 1 pers. 18, 1 pers. 21, 1 pers. 23, 3 pers. 24, three boys and





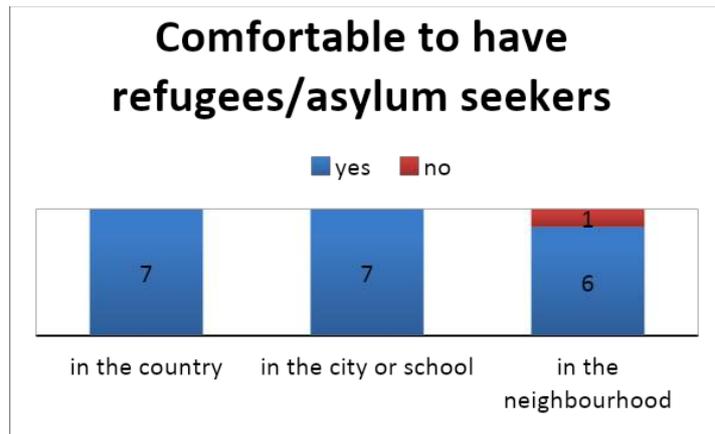
three girls. They were all students – one at High school, others at university, one of them also a trainee.

About religion, only 2 said they are Catholics, others atheists or without mentioning religion.

Between the people who previously interacted with refugees and the ones who didn't there weren't major differences, the overall opinions were very general and „correctly” positive; however, in the answers of a

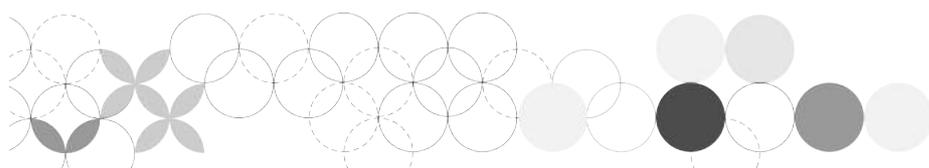
person who did not have an interaction with refugees/asylum seekers it has popped up more clearly (but also slightly in other people's answers), that the refugees/asylum seekers are Muslims and all the differences mentioned were because of the other, Muslim, religion.

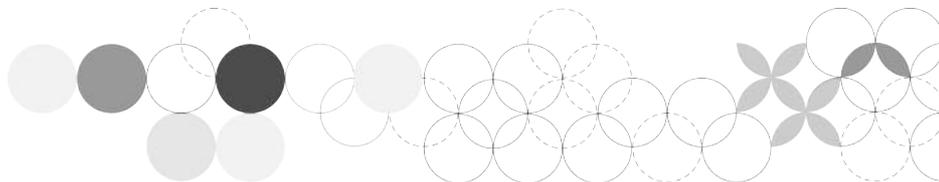
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers



Between the different ages, only the youngest one, 18 years old, was the one to say she would not be comfortable to have refugees/asylum seekers in her neighbourhood.

Absolutely all said it is something good to have refugees/asylum seekers in their country. Besides, all would be comfortable to have them in the city and school etc. Only one person said she would not be comfortable to have them in the neighbourhood; later on in the comment she would say that she has a positive attitude, but is concerned about safety issues. However, as soon as it came to the remarks and comments, absolutely all respondents explained their exclusively positive attitude only with general phrases like "being together is the way to combat the prejudices", "diversity is a positive issue", "refugees are the same normal people as we".



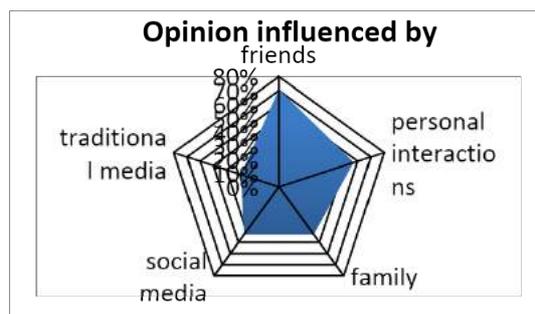


The answers for this question made an impression, that voting independently people may have different opinions, but when knowing that their opinion will be observed by others, they preferred to seem only correctly positive to the issue.

All respondents said they would welcome and approach refugees/asylum seekers. In the comments there are two tendencies to be noticed: 1) I would be good with others, because I would like others to be good with me, if I am in a trouble; 2) this is the way how it „should“ be for the good integration.

The most common answers were that the respondents do not see any differences, or that there are cultural differences, but they don't feel anyhow disturbed by them. The particular mentioned differences were 1) refugees/asylum seekers have different religion; 2) some details about the role of and attitude towards women: they wear a veil, oppressed by men etc. The gender issues and the attitude towards women was called as a disturbing cultural difference. From all the answers it can be concluded, that refugees/asylum seekers are mostly perceived as Muslims.

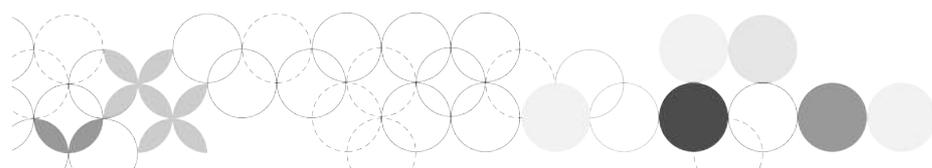
The overall impression is that the group seems to be very homogeneous. Even in respondents' other comments it was mentioned „we all have this positive opinion here in the group, but the reality may be different“. This may be explained by close age and quite similar background of them, but mostly by a small number of respondents and an intimate atmosphere: even though the respondents could vote independently, it can be perceived that they felt under some group pressure of what the correct opinion should be (as the comments are rather short, general, even similar words and phrases repeat among the answers, also a lot of „should“ words mentioned). There were no any particular discussions, debates, the group created just a totally smooth, perfect opinion about the tolerant attitude towards refugees/asylum seekers.



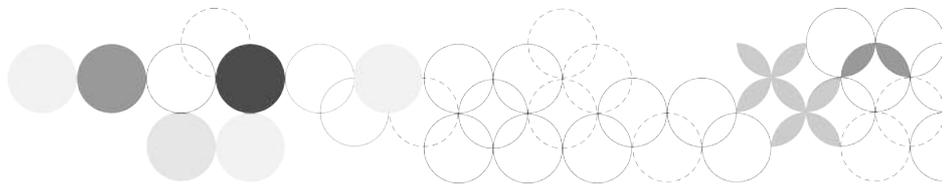
The opinions were formed mostly thanks to friends and family, personal interaction, social media, and followed by traditional media.

Analysis of the results – 22-30 y.o.

This target group was surveyed thanks to the Google Form version of the questionnaire. The questions were the same and in the same order of the ones in paper questionnaire. The number of people surveyed in total between 22 and 30 y.o. is 15, 8 of them had contact with refugees/asylum seekers. The answers from people over 21 years old were filled online. It's something important to notice, because they were without classmates sitting



4. Complete results

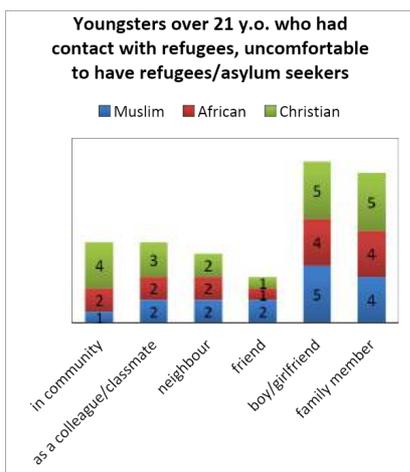


close to them and without teachers observing, also these are the people who are already out of school system and can form their opinion more independently. Compared to younger respondents, these have more prejudices, and not just mistaking assumptions because of not knowing facts, but – as it seems – because of forming the non-accepting attitude.

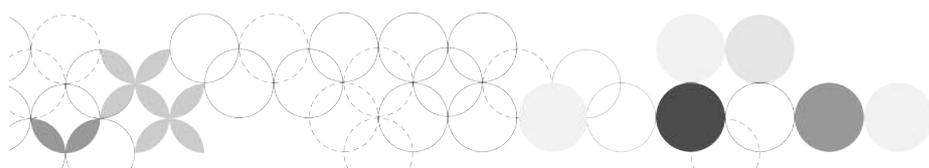
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by youngsters over 21 y.o. who did not have direct contact with them

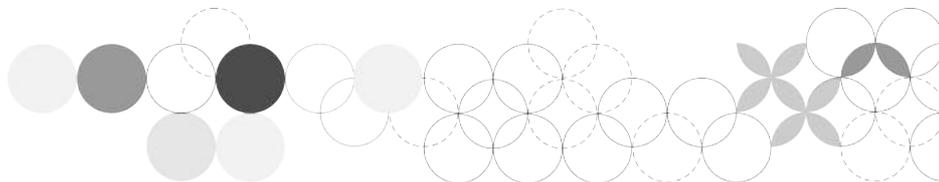


Even if the big part of the respondents of people who had contacts with refugees do not see any big cultural differences, thinks refugees/asylum seekers are poor, discriminated, need to be integrated, etc., compared to others, this respondent group has a relatively high rate of neglecting opinions (rather surprisingly for those who would have a direct contact with refugees/asylum seekers), for example, as adjectives such as dirty, expensive, unappreciative, criminal do appear, or ideas, that refugees/asylum seekers are subject to bringing danger, diseases etc. (compared to 0 or minimal such ideas in other respondents' groups). As feeling comfortable or not with refugees/asylum seekers in various contexts, there is no big distinction between Muslim, African or Christian origins, but it is clear that close relationship with any refugees/asylum seekers are not welcome.



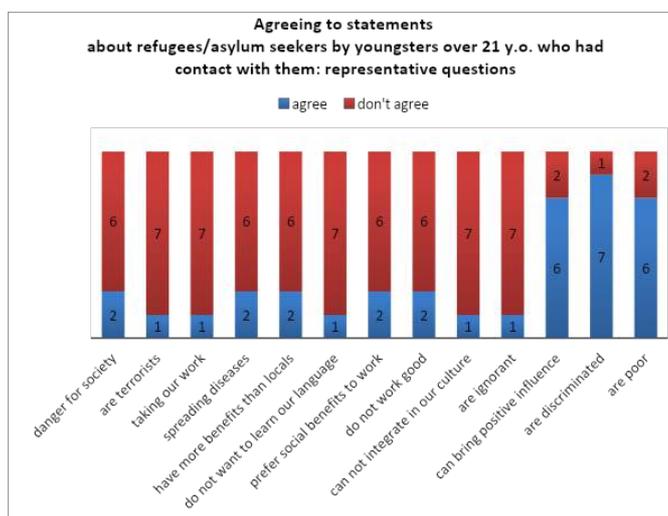
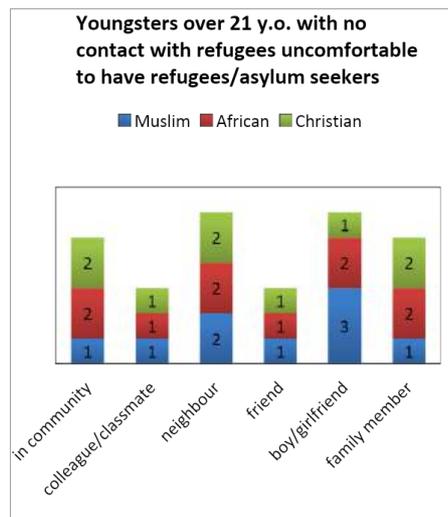
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by youngsters over 21 y.o. who had direct contact with them



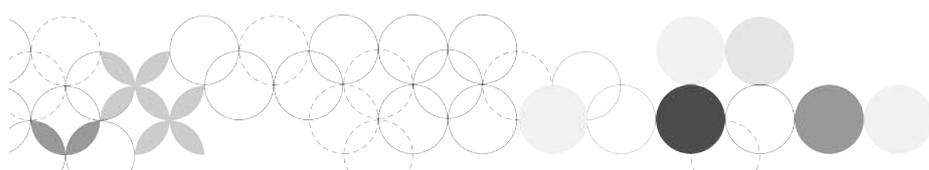


The main common points between 21-30 aged respondents with contacts with refugees are: the interest towards different cultures, the perception of them as needy and equal to us, the presence of too many prejudice; but even the fear of some aggressive behaviour and the non acceptance of the use of the veil.

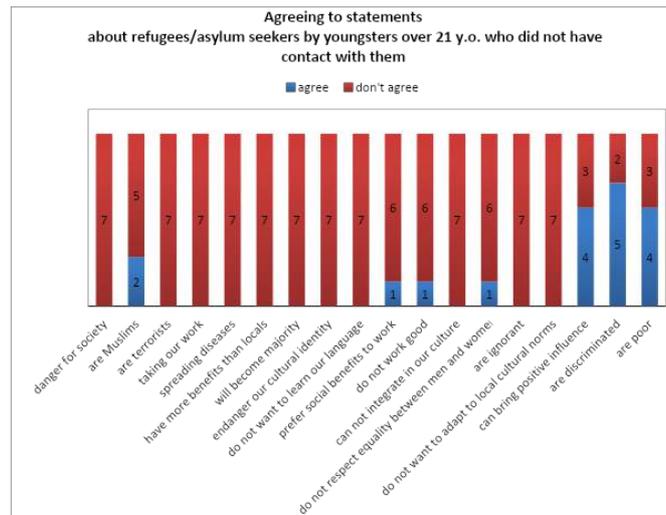
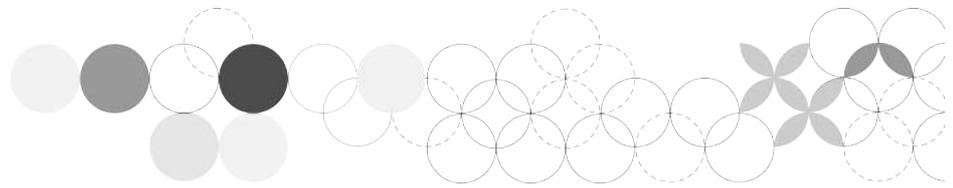
The group of people aged 21 to 30 with no contact with refugees understand that they are people in need, escaping from political instability and complex social context, persecuted for religion, ethnies, sexual orientation. They want to welcome them and give them solidarity and the opportunity to change their future and have a better life. Mass media have a big role in making this reflection for them.



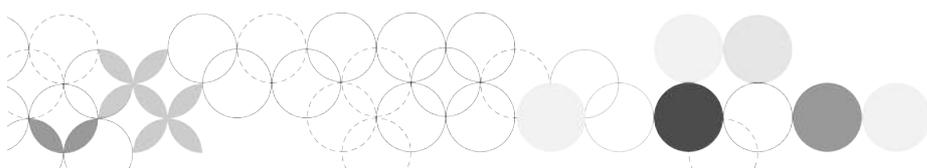
As the respondents did not have a direct interaction with refugees/asylum seekers, their opinion is rather general, but overall positive, accepting and tolerant, considering refugees/asylum seekers to be people in need, poor, scared, discriminated, etc. However, some new ideas appear (e.g. that refugees/asylum seekers don't support homosexual relationship), and also some new terms are used in the explanation (e.g. perceiving differences, the respondents speak about the influence of globalization etc.). They don't make such a big difference between Muslims, Africans and Christians, as younger respondents, speaking about how comfortable they would feel in various contexts with them.



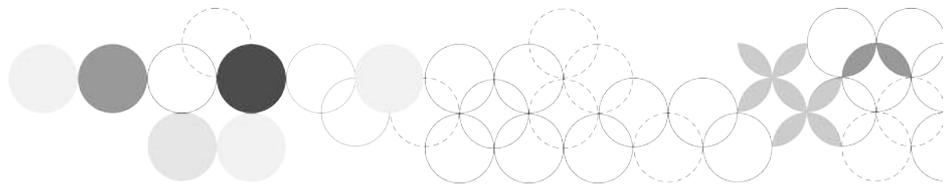
4. Complete results



They demonstrated great empathy and interest for other cultures. Something in common between them was the idea that's very important to help people in need and to consider differences a meeting point for sharing and not an obstacle. This group, who preferred to focus on positive aspects of inclusion, does not follow the most common prejudices.



4. Complete results



o Teachers

The teachers involved in the survey were in total 14, only one did not have contact with refugees or asylum seekers.

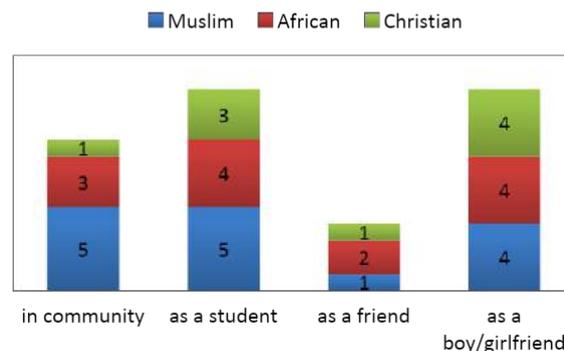
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers



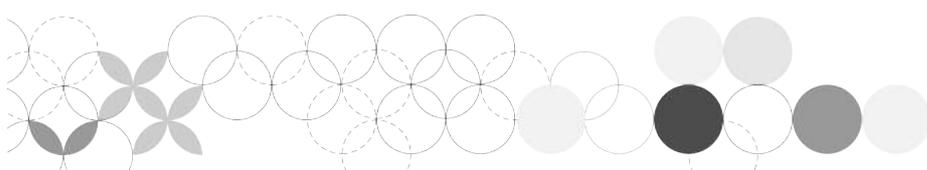
A point in common between these questionnaires was that the refugees/asylum seekers are discriminated, also through fake news powered by the mass-media. Someone underlined how hard is for them to adapt in different cultures, but for some is a tool for enrichment. Differences should be taken in consideration but not considered an obstacle to integration.

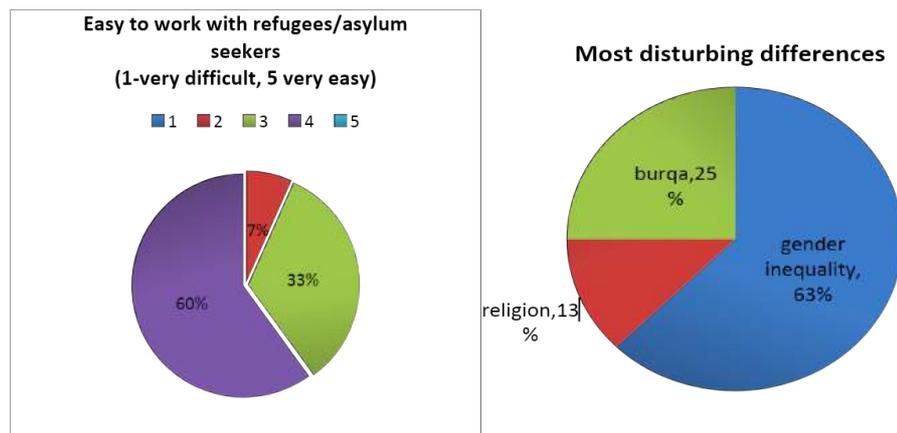
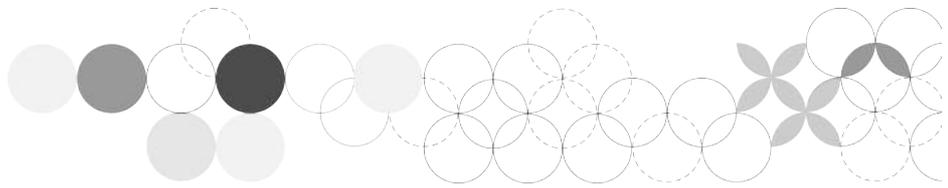
Only one teacher didn't have contact with refugees in her job, but anyway her answer were on the same line of others, toward inclusion and welcoming activities.

Uncomfortable to have refugees/asylum seekers



Several teachers referred of a certain fear of making mistakes for different cultures and habits. Regarding the relationship between students and refugees, they referred to some difficulties at first to find a dialogue, but then a general enrichment with other students, bypassing cultural and linguistic obstacles. For teachers the most challenging issue was the language and way to communicate. The most important tools to get to know each other were respect and sensibility.





"The first feeling was the will to know his thoughts, how to welcome him and make him feel comfortable in the classroom. Then came the struggle about how to communicate, because of different languages." "It was a positive reaction for them."

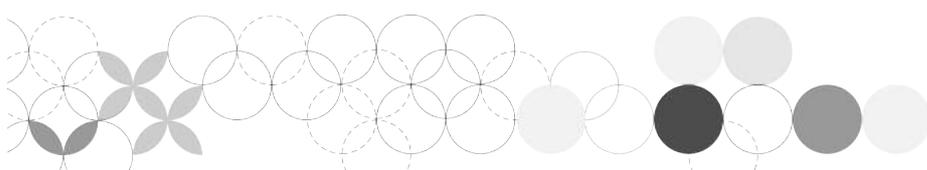
Their beneficiaries had no problem. After a first distrust moment, they noticed empathy and interest toward the new colleague. Some effect of this exchange are: More openness toward the other, less fear of the "stranger", many prejudices overcome by some workmates. In other cases the marginalization of the stranger because of the lack of knowledge. In general students seemed curious and open to new experiences.

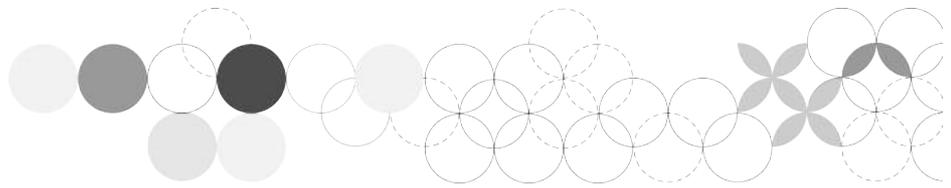
The effects were: The activation of the classmates' sensibility; the consolidation of friendship among peers; language comparison and exchanges, curiosity; increasing ability of putting themselves in others' shoes.

In some cases was hard to establish any kind of relationship, but generally the curiosity prevails along with the tendency to know the refugee's cultural and human reality. Generally positive relationships; they're influenced by the adults' attitude for sure

Tools used by these teachers:

- Attitude to the hospitality,
- Education to the global citizenship,
- non-violence education.
- Historical-philosophical-political-sociological learning itineraries.
- Literature of other cultures.
- To learn to communicate each others
- To communicate fears and emotions instead of letting them grow in silence.
- Dialogue.





- Refugee Centre Workers

Refugee center workers who participated to the survey were 21. The surveys were carried out through focus groups, telematic interviews and self-filled questionnaires. The analysis of the data shows that the largest age group is between 30 -34 (25%) and the 19 % is composed of men while 81% is composed of women.

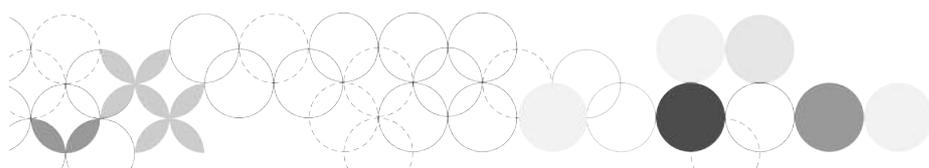
The occupation of respondents were educators, coordinators, legal professionals and mediators.

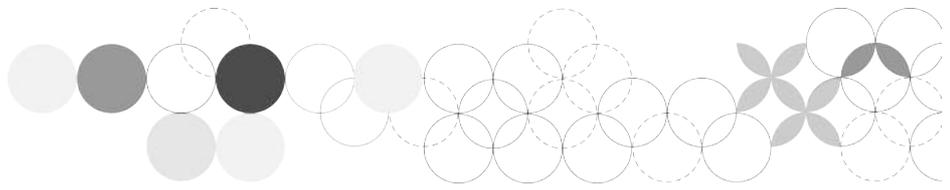
The 33% live in Pachino, 29% in Syracuse the rest between Avola, Ragusa, Portopalo di CP and Rome.

Most challenging differences of refugees, according to the workers	
1. Faith	differences related to religion
2. Gender roles	woman is seen as the one to take care of house and children
3. Eating and drinking	limits related to religion // they love eating the food of their culture
3. Parenting	the father is seen as pater familias, the mother must take care of the children

Some other relevant challenging differences underlined by refugee center workers are:

- Perception and structuring of time
- Sense of ownership and sharing
- Muslims have a more peaceful approach than Nigerian Christians who tend to take a more "theatrical" approach
- Oscillations between collaboration and openness and apathy
- Interact more during meal preparation
- As a form of respect do not maintain eye contact
- Low confidence in the other
- Contextualized emotional and affective investment
- Confusion of roles
- They tend to be overprotective among themselves
- Often they go from fraternal friendship to serious quarrels for futile reasons





- Strong link with original family
- Difficulty creating friendships
- Respect for compatriots
- Family relationships are seen as a help and support
- Confusion between kinship and friendship roles
- Discrimination also for women of different caste, people or level of studies
- Always show a defensive behaviour in relationships
- Respect for elderly women
- Marriage is not tied to bureaucracy
- Diffuse affectivity
- The father is seen as a preponderant figure
- The convivial aspect of the moment of meals prevails
- Wary of what they have never eaten
- Difficulty in respecting times and punctuality
- More likely for manual activities
- They have many expectations
- Religion also has an influence on clothing
- The way they dress up represents a status

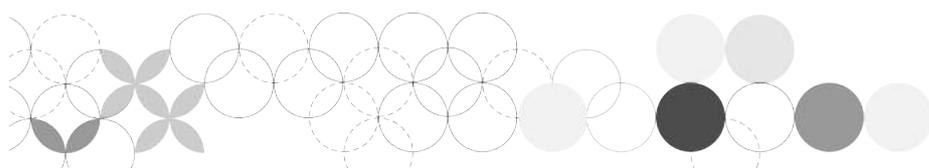
About refugees asking for cultural support, many of them underestimate the importance of integration paths. Instead those who are already schooled look for more integration.

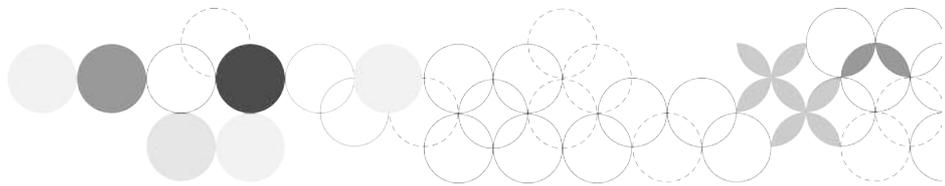
To go deeper in this topic, they ask for school and work placement pathways mostly, but also recreational and sporting activities and artistic ones.

An interesting proposal was about laboratory paths in schools, functional to the possibility of showing the traditions and cultures of origin in a perspective of inclusion that values diversity as an opportunity for growth. Seems also important to make them protagonists, listening to their needs.

About the challenges of refugee centre workers, the linguistic difference is the most common; followed by the difficulty of transmit trust in others and in institutions, prejudices and stereotypes, bureaucratic and economic difficulties, difficulty on agree about flexibility to work on inclusion.

The methods identified for facilitating integration are laboratories like Geomondo, Color plates, inclusion in groups activities like scout and sports groups, Literacy courses, training internships, job placement, Orientation in language learning, Network with other services, Erasmus, Singing school, Let them know the customs and habits of the place, Activities aimed to discover the territory, Professional school, Teamwork, Inclusion in training courses to encourage the development of projects between migrants and Italians, Accompany

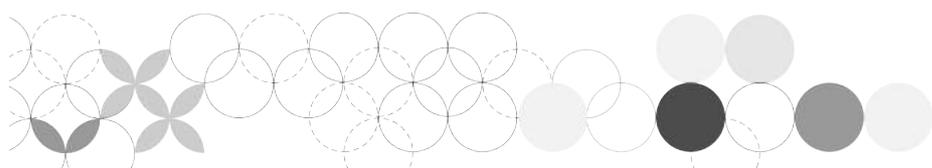


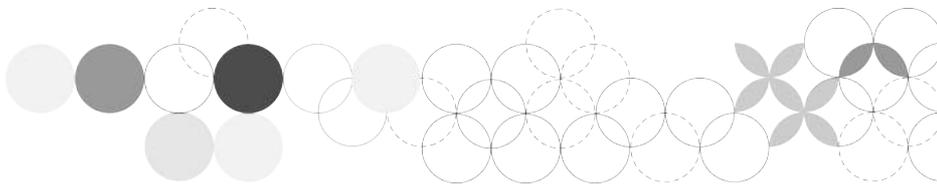


them in the process of preparing documents, Theater performances between foreigners and Italians.

The suggestions by this target group were:

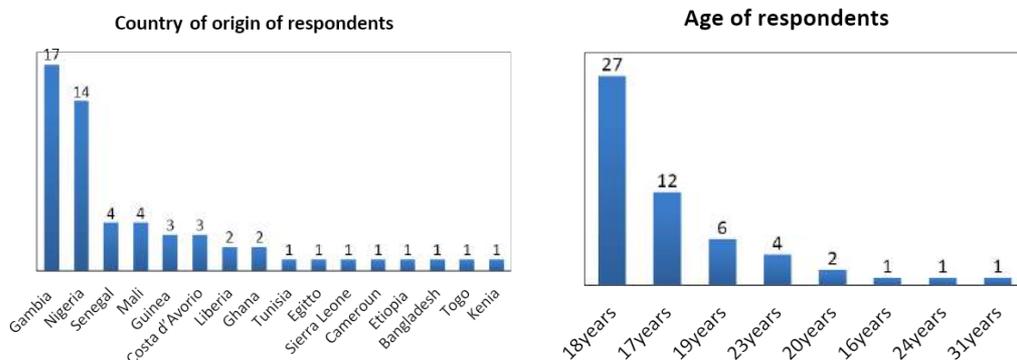
- Interaction and socio-cognitive exchange, confrontation and knowledge as tools aimed at breaking down prejudices and conveying the idea of diversity as a source of wealth
- Raising awareness on the theme of migrants
- Create public events and meetings in schools where migrants can talk about their experience
- We should focus above the knowledge of various cultures to overcome many prejudices
- Create a network of services that will bring them to know what the territory offers for them
- Adequate training in geopolitics, ethno-psychiatry and transcultural psychology



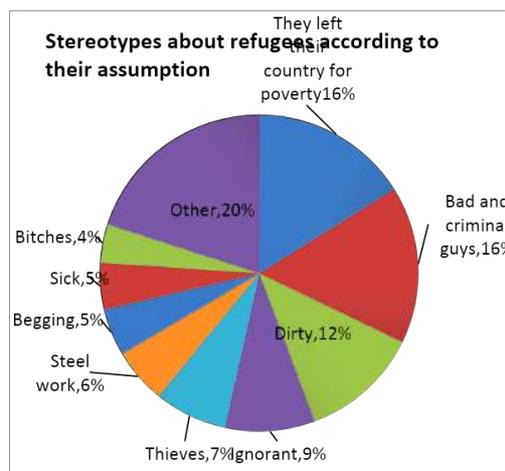


○ Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The respondents of this target group were 57. In the graphs it's possible to know more about demographical aspects.



Main foreign languages spoken by respondents are Italian (46%), English (37%) and French (17%). The 81% is male and the rest 19% female.

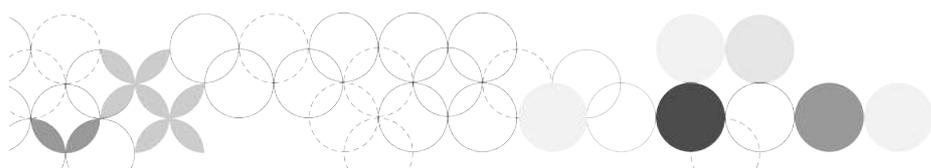


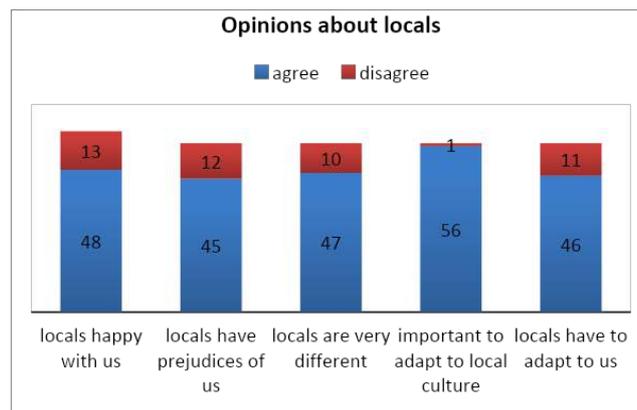
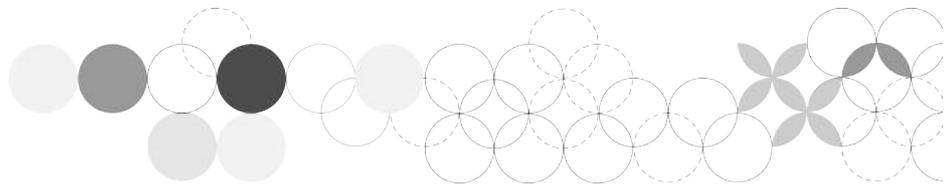
All the respondents focused on the prejudices that the local population has on the Africans, the importance of knowing the language to integrate the best possible in the country that welcomed them and the need to have a job and the documents in order.

Considering the replies we have gathered, on the inclusion of migrants, prejudices, the level of language skills possessed, the inclusion in the way of work, are of considerable weight.

It is therefore important:

- To stimulate initiatives that foster knowledge, exchange and mutual understanding and acceptance between migrants and residents;
- Promote the creation of places and exchange opportunities open to all citizenship;
- Improve the quantity, quality and effectiveness of literacy, providing cultural mediators, tutor/coaching;
- Promote the insertion of work through qualification, training activities in the field (Internship, practicum), as well as flexible training courses with individualized training plans that starting from the areas of strength/weakness of each They consolidate the skills necessary to carry out a profession.

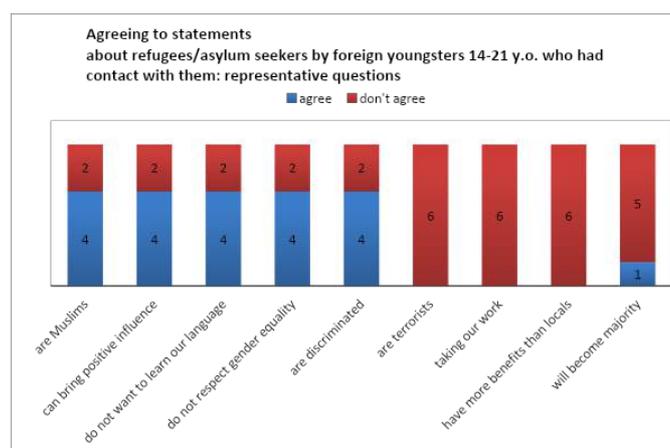




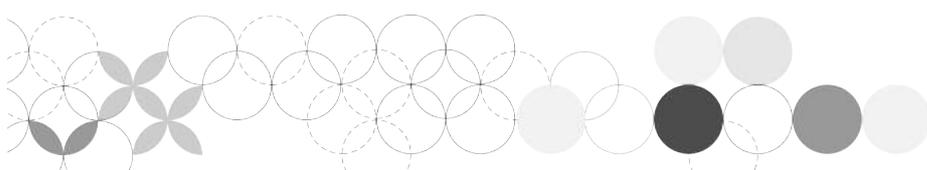
○ International young respondents

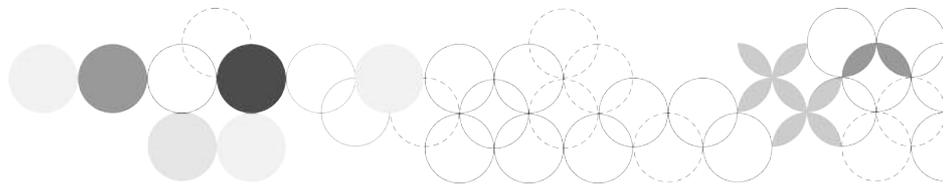
International respondents were in total 42, 1 of them 14-21 y.o. Ukrainian who didn't have contact with refugees, 6 people 14-21 y.o. who had contact, 23 people over 21 y.o. who had contact and 12 people over 21 y.o. who didn't have contact.

Out of 7 answers in the age category 14-21 y.o., 6 people had contacts with refugees/asylum seekers, and their answers (coming from Ukraine, Greece, Estonia, Armenia, Turkey, Belarus) are summarized here. Various occupations and religions were mentioned, it doesn't seem to influence the answers. Young people in Europe, who had direct interaction with refugees/asylum seekers, mostly perceive them as poor, hopeless, scared etc. – the focus is concentrated on their suffering and poverty. Thinking about refugees'/asylum seekers' integration in their communities, young people in Europe mostly see only Muslims around, perceive them badly integrated, discriminated and poor, but also not willing to integrate (taking social benefits instead for working, e.g.).

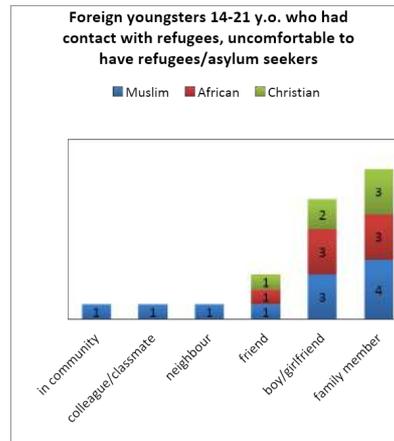


In general, young people feel comfortable about having refugees/asylum seekers around, within different context of relationship, however Muslims are always perceived worse, less welcome than others – Africans and Christians. Remarkable, that as soon as it comes to having refugees/asylum seekers as girlfriends/boyfriends or family members, the

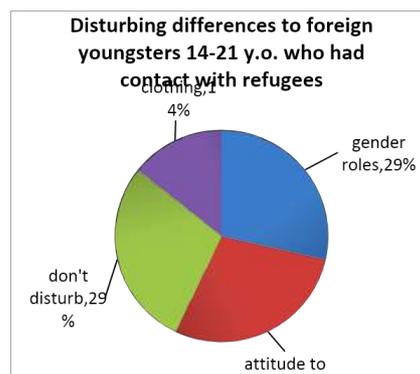




respondents clearly don't feel comfortable with this, compared to other relationship.

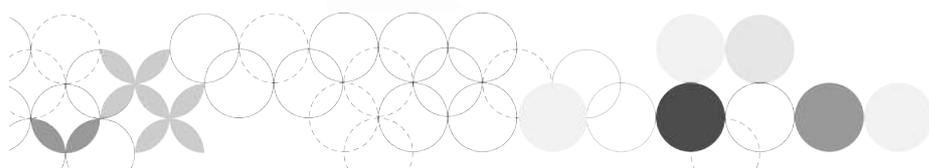


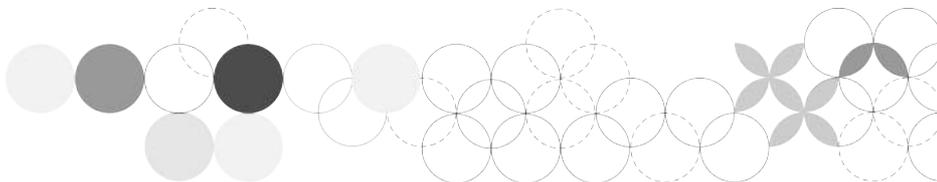
It is highly stressed that refugees/asylum seekers are too conservative and discriminative when it comes to gender roles and parenting, most of the respondents are much against this approach.



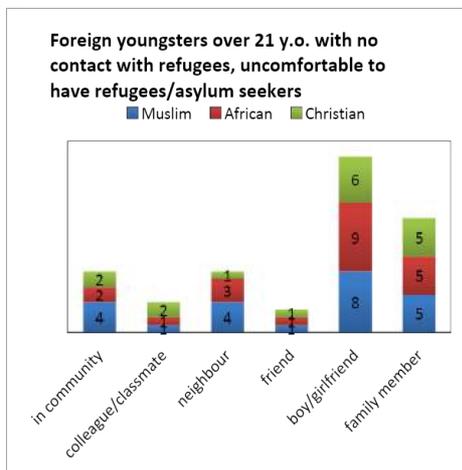
Out of 35 answers from the age category over 21, 12 are summarized here as the answers of the respondents who did not have direct contact with refugees/asylum seekers. They are from the following European countries: Latvia 2, UK 2, Russia 2, Greece, Albania, Croatia, Ukraine, Spain, Moldova. All respondents have higher education, all are working. As for religion, a part positions themselves as atheists, while others mention exactly if they are Catholic, Orthodox, etc. or Muslim.

Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by foreign youngsters over 21 y.o. with no contact with them



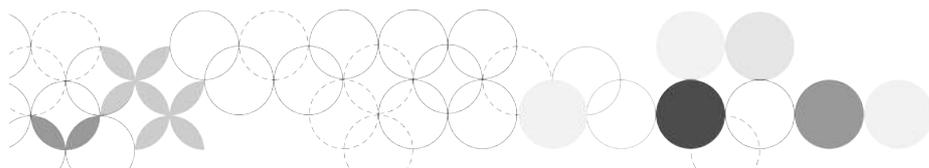
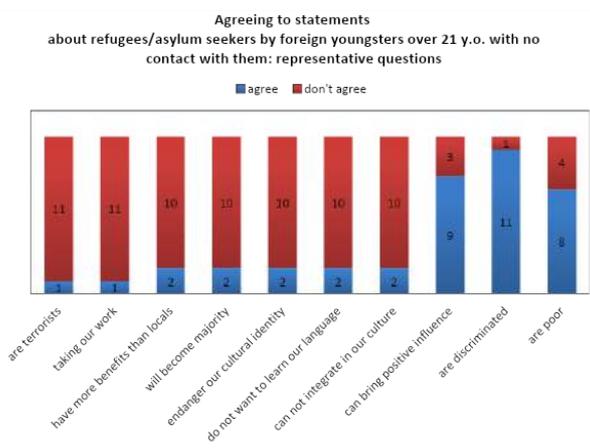
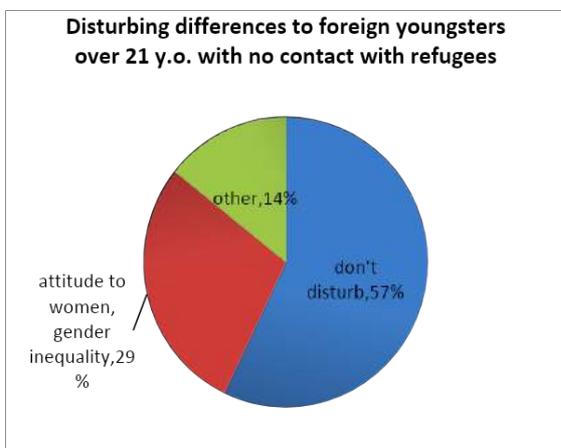


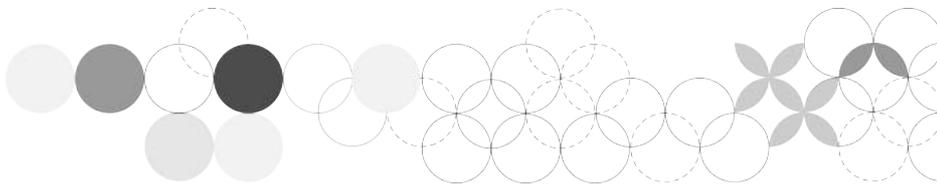
Once again, the respondents would feel less comfortable to have refugees/asylum seekers in close relationship, especially as girlfriends/boyfriends, however, this respondent category does not make such a clear distinction between Muslims, Africans and Christians. Also, it is noticeable that youth workers, project workers etc. even without any direct contact with refugees/asylum seekers, are much more aware and interested in the issue and demonstrate respect to diversity.



Surprisingly, compared to those respondents of this age group who claim they had interaction with refugees/Asylum seekers, these ones are clearly much more tolerant and accepting. On one hand, it can be perceived as a rather general, theoretical opinion, as they assume that they are tolerant because they actually did not have a need to interact with refugees/asylum seekers. On another hand,

these respondents base their opinions on logical considerations, through analysis of documentaries, news, conversations – remarkable – not just with friends, but with colleagues, professionals etc. They don't pretend that they had direct interactions with refugees/asylum seekers just based on the fact of seeing them in the metro (without even speaking with them – as many claimed in the previous respondent group), for example – they just state they did not have any contact with refugees/asylum seekers. There are some minor prejudices in the answers, which can rather be called generalizations, as for example, „refugees have more traditional clothes, hiding themselves more, cover“, but in most cases the respondents are aware that the differences depend on the cultural background of people. Gender inequality and strict family rules are still called as disturbing differences in refugees/asylum seekers.





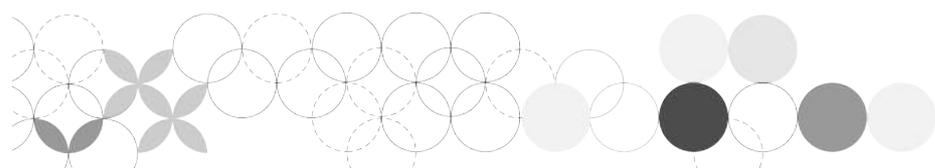
The 23 respondents over 21 y.o. who had contact with refugees are from the following countries: Sweden 5, Latvia 1, Hungary 1, Albania 1, Russian Federation 2, Armenia 3, Greece 4, Ireland 1, Belgium 1, Ukraine 1, Poland 1, Germany 1. Those from Sweden come from various cultural backgrounds, some have other nationalities than Swedish. Same about Germany and Belgium. All respondents are with university education, many with MA or PhD, almost all working, most of them on good positions. Makes thinking that the attitude towards other cultures is not a thing to be studied at university, the attitude does not depend on level of education.

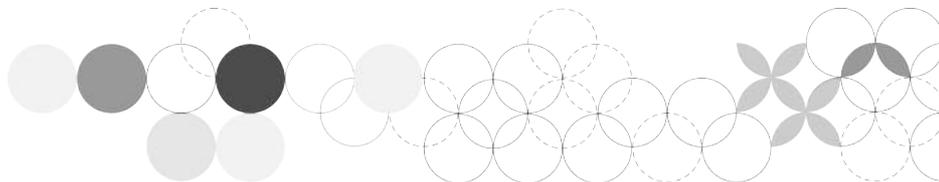
Adjectives to describe refugees/asylum seekers by foreign youngsters over 21 y.o. who had contact with them



Remarkable, that compared to the younger age group (14-21) these respondents have more prejudices and are less tolerant – probably the previous ones discuss such topics at schools and are taught about some general human values etc., while this age respondents are already adults, formed individuals, with their own opinions, not influenced by teachers and educators... As for working positions, there is a clear tendency, that youth workers, educators, project workers – people from education and Ngo sectors – have much wider understanding of the issue and are much more open-minded.

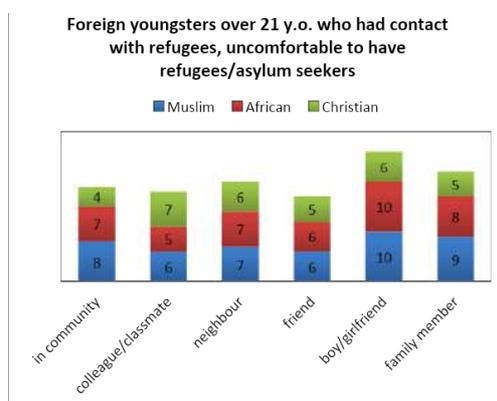
As for religion, remarkable, many are positioning themselves as non-religious, atheists, agnostic, however, in some countries it seems correct to name traditional religions, e.g. all Greeks call themselves „Orthodox Christian“, all Armenians „Christian“. Interesting observations can be done about multicultural and multi-ethnic countries. People who live there coming from other background are very much open-minded and tolerant towards refugees/asylum seekers, while those from national origin very often are against refugees and asylum seekers. The only exception is Sweden, where Swedish have written very „correct“, open-minded opinions and even complaining comments to the questionnaire creators, saying that they find some statements provocative and appealing for discrimination towards refugees/asylum seekers; this based most probably on common Scandinavian positive propaganda about accepting diversity. As the overview of all the questionnaires shows that a lot of people, in various European countries have various prejudices about refugees and asylum seekers, and the problem of intolerance clearly exists, It makes also an impression, that in some contexts like Sweden young people live in



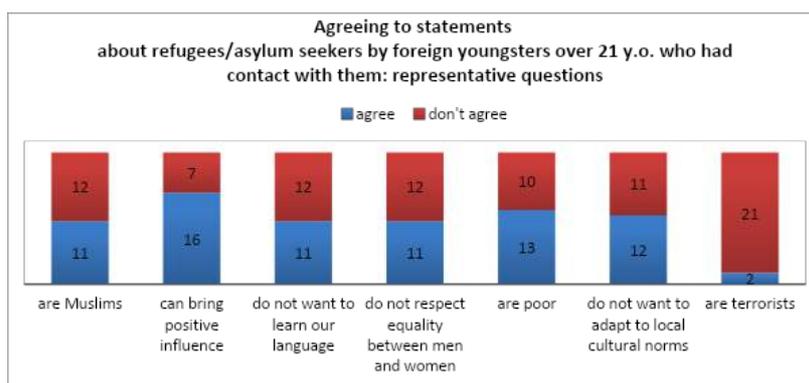


a positive bubble without any awareness of real situation behind the borders of their country. Also, interestingly, that the respondents consider the refugees/asylum seekers only mostly from those backgrounds, from which they see them in their particular countries: if for many they are Muslims from Middle East, for Poland it's exactly Ukrainians and for Armenians it's exactly Syrians.

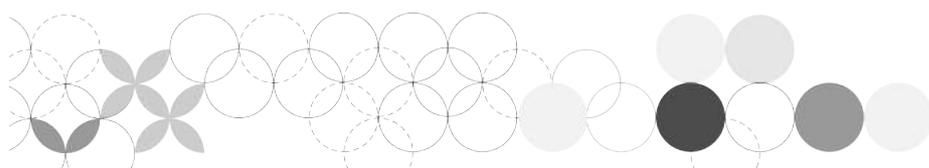
Clearly, the respondents who specify their religion, especially any type of Christianity, are more sensitive to the questions about religion – they feel less comfortable in relationship with refugees/asylum seekers of other religions, especially Muslims. Instead, Muslim respondents are more tolerant to other religions.

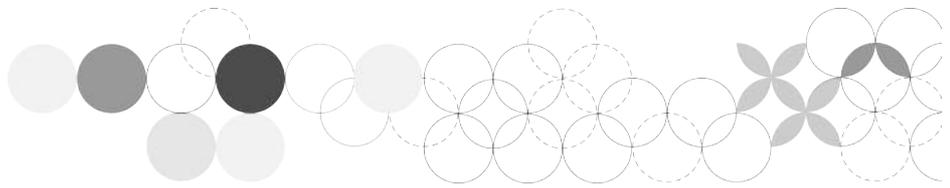


There are high numbers of respondents for all questions saying they would be uncomfortable in various relationship with refugees/asylum seekers, but, clearly, the least welcome relationship is having a family member or even worse a girlfriend/boyfriend from refugee/asylum seeker origin, especially if also Muslim.

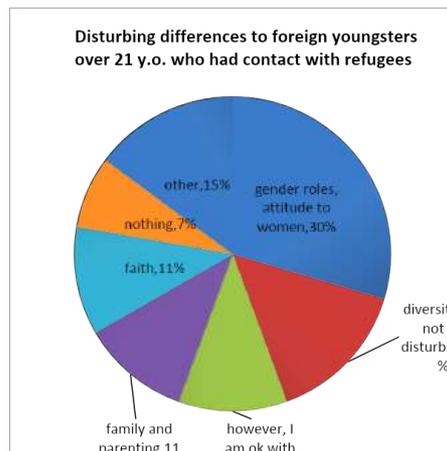


Naming differences – if any – most often gender, parenting, family issues are mentioned, also faith and religion. Based on which specific differences the respondents mention, it is obvious that the refugees/asylum seekers are perceived mostly as Muslims (e.g. mentioning about Ramadan, covered heads of women etc.). Gender issues, attitude towards women, parenting and family issues are named as the most disturbing and are named quite a lot. In general, opinions are quite contradictive. If many perceive

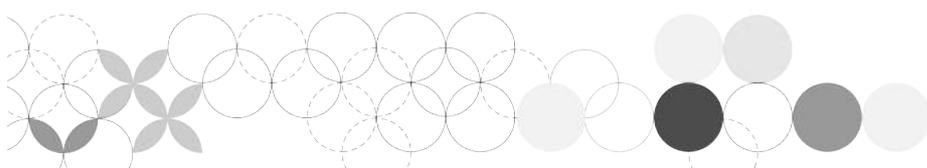


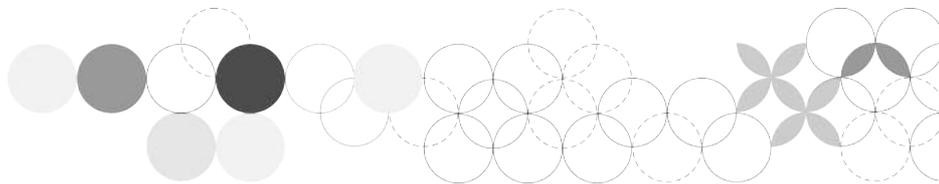


refugees/asylum seekers poor, desperate, discriminated, fighting etc., most respondents say „they are clearly different, but I am the tolerant one, so it is ok“, then shockingly many are clearly negative and even aggressive, against refugees and asylum seekers, and express their opinions in a rude manner. Some are not only „I don't like them“ or „find disturbing“, many say „they should adapt!“, besides there are expressions like „I hate“, „I will go and beat them“ etc.



Once again, it has to be reminded, that these respondents claim they had direct contact with refugees/asylum seekers, so many experienced these contacts clearly negative. However, it is worth to mention, which contacts people named as direct ones – not always it is about having friends and acquaintances from refugee/asylum seeker origin, sometimes it is „I see them in the streets“ or „It is full of them in the metro“.



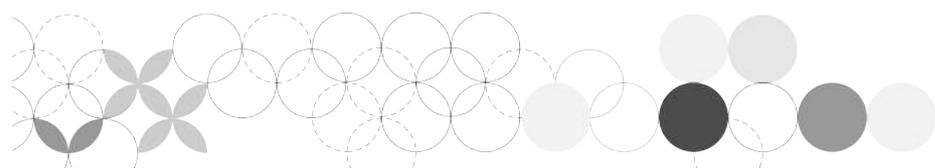


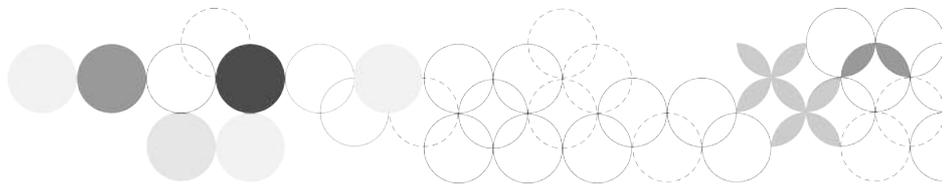
- Research on similar projects

During the survey were collected and identified many similar projects. The topic addressed are various, such as legislation, intercultural museum, cooking classes, storytelling, solidarity, etc.

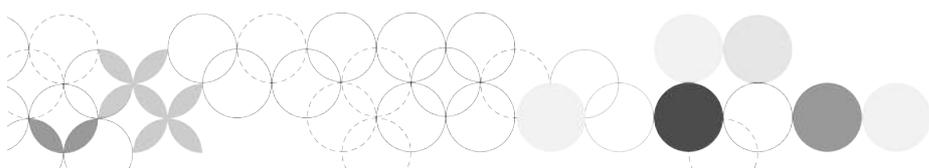
The most representative ones are the following:

Name of the initiative:	GEOMONDO
Leader & partners:	Municipality of Pachino, L'Albero della Vita Onlus ONLUS, Institute of Higher Education
Country:	Pachino, Italy
Short Description	The project consists of an intercultural museum where didactic pathways on migration and inter-culturally are set up. Migrants as museum operators are dedicated to the accompaniment of visitors inside the museum. In particular they guide the students in the use of special supports (multimedia material, paper material); and co-lead the didactic-recreational laboratories such as: Games without frontiers, percussion, construction of mural and interactive maps, role-playing, forum theatre, video-narratives illustrative iconographic panels of the countries of origin etc.
Aims and objectives:	The main purpose of the course is to raise the awareness and integration of migrants in the host territory. Specifically, the objectives of the project are: to encourage the discovery of multiculturalism and attitudes of reception through mutual knowledge, facilitate the integration into the life of the country, encourage the development and enrichment of relations between young migrants and young people of the country, recognize and enhance differences through practical paths in a multicultural environment.
Activities & Working methods	The creation of the intercultural museum involved both at the co- planning and implementation stages the young migrants and young locals. The choice to work to promote integration through "participatory projects" is given by the certainty that entering into multicultural environments facilitate and more precisely accelerates the process of maturation and productive acceptance of diversity as values and opportunities for growth. The activities carried out can be summarized as follows: presentation of the path to the young, creation of the working group, workshops and work experience on the management of the museum tours, focus group to discuss and organize the management of the activities, production of exhibition materials, preparation and activation of the museum.
Results and impacts	The project determines the following impacts: greater knowledge of different cultures, greater knowledge and integration in the territory, facilitating the understanding of migrations, acquiring correct information without common places on migrants. Finally, as an activity that can be seen as Storytelling it could be a valuable tool for the



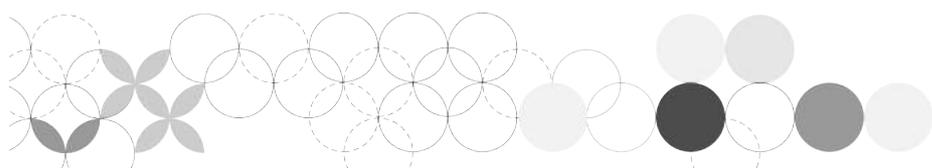


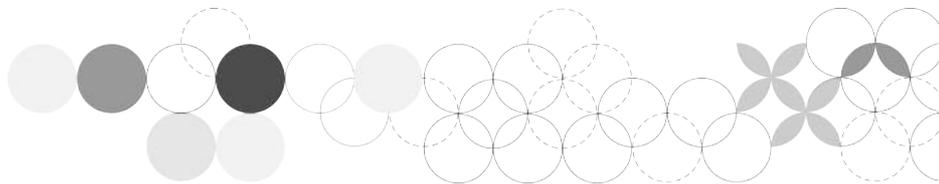
	migrant and community maturation.
What were the most important outcomes of the project?	Surely allows the activation of the relationship with the local community through the use of the museum by schools, as well as being a valuable tool for the maturation of a conscious and welcoming community.
What changes in the refugees' behavior did you notice?	It has strengthened the perception of itself and their origins, allowing one to keep them firm despite the distance from their Country of origin and this has facilitated the preservation of the integrity, identity, self-esteem, inner well-being and integration. It has also improved the level of dialogue/conversation and written and oral understanding of the Italian language.
What good practices would you like to share from the project?	The participatory approach and horizontal and interactive involvement that characterizes all the activities of the museum.
What were the main challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?	The greatest difficulty arose when the participants had a low level of knowledge of the Italian language and this had complicate both the preparation and execution of the presentation of their country of origin and their personal migration path. In this case the obstacle was overcome through the use of an interpreter-mediator.
What were the main challenges when approaching young refugees/asylum seekers?	The different level of schooling and the unequal distribution of social and educational experiences has made it difficult to carry out a unitary and equal work for all.
How did you solve the language barriers?	Through the support of cultural mediators and interpreters for the different mother tongue languages.
Were there any legal barriers that you faced?	No
What are the most important lessons you learned from this project?	Immersing oneself in multicultural environments promote the processes of maturation and the development of a vision of diversity as a value and opportunity to growth.





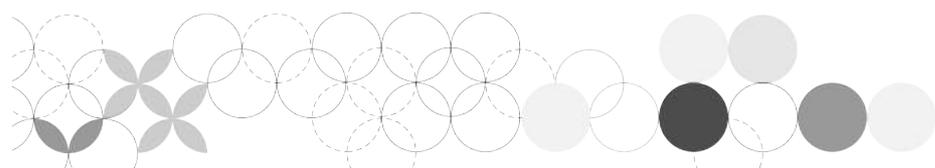
Name of the initiative:	PEER EDUCATION - VOLUNTEERS FOR PUBLIC UTILITY ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS
Leader & partners:	: "M.Bartolo" Institute of Higher Education and "L'albero della vita" Onlus
Country:	Pachino, Italy
Short Description	The project promotes solidarity activities by migrants in favor of newly-arrived foreign students attending a school. For example, by agreement with the teachers, the following activities were carried out: working in class supporting language (linguistic facilitator/communication for newcomers); contributing to the inclusion in the class group; assisting the teacher in the activities; insert the student who has arrived in his social network; friendly support.
Aims and objectives:	The aim of the project is to combat early school leaving through homocultural peer education that facilitate the process of reception and integration of unaccompanied minors.
Activities & Working methods	The methodology identified, consisting of peer education, places the youngest at the centre of the educational system and promotes positive relationships through the experimentation of forms of mutual aid and solidarity. The activities promoted are: translation, Co-Leading literacy courses, Contributing to the inclusion in the class group, Assisting the teacher in the activities, Supporting the teacher in the presentation of the educational deliveries, Supporting intercultural education.
Results and impacts	The final result of the project is to facilitate of the adaptation and the inclusion of the newcomer to the host country.
What were the most important outcomes of the project?	Improvement of school results, of the social support network, strengthening of the Italian language, facilitation of integration, disruption of the common belief that the "migrant" is a passive beneficiary in the host country.
What changes in the refugees' behavior did you notice?	The following changes have emerged: Greater empowerment; Socialization and strengthening of self-esteem; Improvement of sociality; Promotion of the personal objectives and participation.
What good practices would you like to share from the project?	The importance of learning in training activities with people of similar age, cultural background, experiences etc.
What were the main challenges you faced and how did you overcome	Peer training and classroom placement were the most supported aspects considering the young age of the participants. The challenge was overcome through an initial



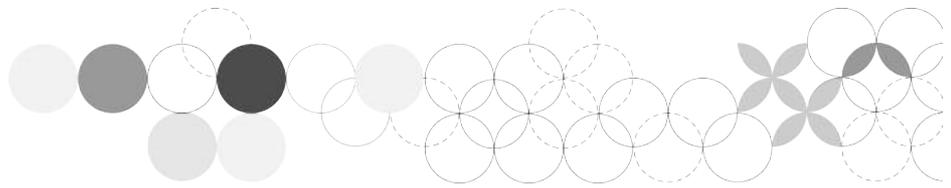


them?	professional orientation and a monitoring / support throughout the process.
What were the main challenges when approaching young refugees/asylum seekers?	The main challenge was the overcoming personal insecurity through coaching activities
Were there any legal barriers that you faced?	The implementation of the project activities required the authorization of the parents and/or guardian
What are the most important lessons you learned from this project?	The introduction of the Peer educators, who have faced and overcome events and difficulties similar to the newly arrived migrant pupils, can more easily bring the newly arrived closer to the new school experience and represent a positive reference, as well as facilitate the learning of the Italian language by providing additional support to traditional teaching.

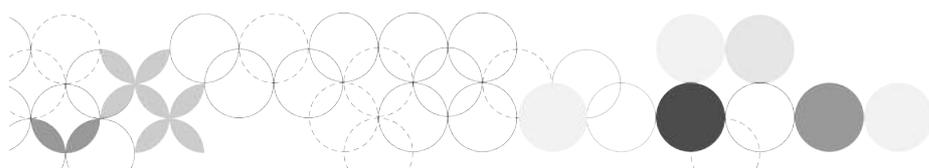
Name of the initiative:	CITTADINANZA ATTIVA
Leader & partners:	"L'albero della vita" Onlus - P. Calleri Institute of Higher Education
Country:	Pachino- Italy
Short Description	The project has been articulated in a participatory laboratory for the territory, where the migrant minors together with the students of the "Paolo Calleri" Institute, have been involved in a photo storytelling activity and recovery of the territory. Specifically, they photographed the areas of the country definable as degraded and then they intervened trying to make improvements
Aims and objectives:	The project aims to positively influence the integration of young migrants through the creation of a group of young people of different nationalities who actively take care of the territory of Pachino.
Activities & Working methods	<p>The methodology used is based on teamwork and planning and implementation of collaborative activities to rehabilitate degraded areas of the country.</p> <p>In summary, the project was divided into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of a video as a proposal-stimulus to start the path; - participation of young people in the working group through the use of So-called dual-training systems - learning and working; training meetings; - survey of the needs of the country and through photo storytelling and the implementation of recovery - interventions.

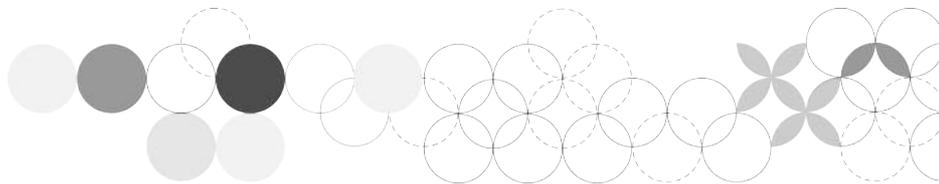


4. Complete results



Results and impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased knowledge of the host territory - Greater integration in the territory, especially with peers
What were the most important outcomes of the project?	Improvement of personal empowerment
What good practices would you like to share from the project?	The participation of young people stimulated by multimedia tools
What were the main challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?	The main challenges we faced were the lack of collaboration
What were the main challenges when approaching young refugees/asylum seekers?	The initial reluctance of the beneficiaries and the organizational difficulties overcome through the realization of meetings aimed at the exchange of information and tasks.
How did you solve the language barriers?	Multilingual simultaneous translation performed directly by participants with appropriate language skills
What are the most important lessons you learned from this project?	The participation in the life of local people is essential to create social networks and break down prejudices and stereotypes





Romania

- Young people

The survey can be considered statistically relevant, at least for the Arad region, as it included 1096 pupils, both from rural and urban environments, aged 14 to 19.

Only 6% of these young people have interacted with refugees.

Most of the negative opinions formed are due to:

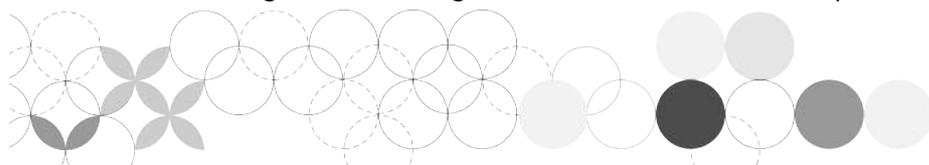
- traditional media (51%),
- on-line media (36%),
- social media (32%).

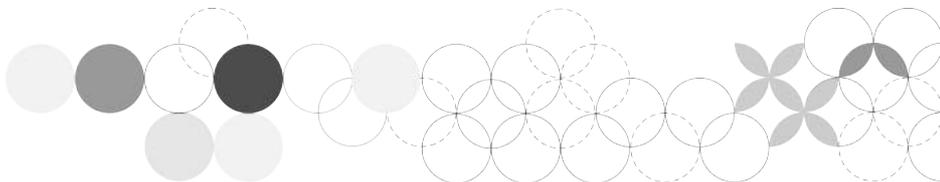
Sources of the opinion on refugees	Total answers (of 1096)	School grade					
		VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Traditional mass media (TV, newspapers, radio, etc.)	554	67	105	100	88	151	43
On-line mass media (on-line publications, on-line TV, etc.)	400	43	55	76	81	111	34
Social media (Facebook, Youtube, etc.)	353	37	70	55	81	71	39
Family and friends	173	45	31	31	21	38	7
Personal experience	61	9	7	7	13	17	8
Politicians, political parties	52	12	9	9	4	14	4
Other	2	1	-	-	-	1	-

Table: main sources of information on refugees of youngsters in 7th to 12th grade

When asked openly about the main sources of information that determined them to have an opinion on refugees, 58% of respondents indicated elements that are associated to one of these 3 sources (news report, videos that were seen on-line, articles they read on the internet, Facebook posts, etc.)

The Romanian pupils are aware of the phenomenon of refugee discrimination. 60% of them agree that refugees are discriminated. They are also aware of their bad situation,





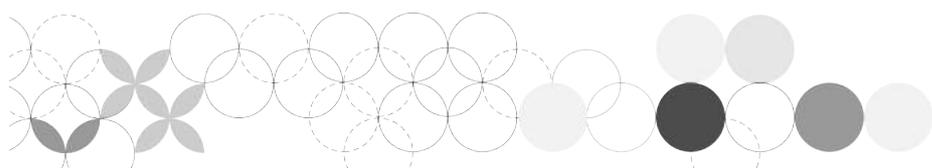
with 35% of respondents describing refugees as poor and 28% as vulnerable (needy, homeless, sad, dirty, hungry).

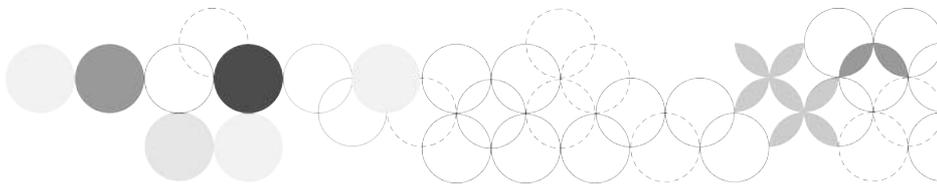
Adjective associated to refugees („refugees are ...“)	% of total answers
Discriminated	60%
Poor	60%
A danger to our society	51%
Lazy and prefer to live of welfare	50%
Ignorant	49%
Not willing to adapt to local cultural norms	47%
Not respecting gender equality	46%
Spreading diseases	46%
Unable to integrate in our culture	45%
Unwilling to learn Romanian	42%
Muslims	42%
A danger to our cultural identity	40%
With more benefits than the local population	39%
Lazy	38%
Terrorists	37%
A positive influence to our culture	36%
To become the majority of our population	32%
Stealing our jobs	26%

Table: adjective associated to refugees by the young people (“Refugees are ...“)

On the other hand, this does not mean that they are more tolerant. 40% to 50% of the pupils would not like a Muslim refugee as a colleague, friend, neighbour, family member, etc.

Religion and race still play an important role in the exclusion of refugees. For example, if 50% of pupils would not like a Muslim refugee as a member of the community, and 40% think the same about an African refugee, just 20% would not like a Christian refugee as a community member. The difference is similar for the other types of relationships, with Christian refugees being twice as likely to be accepted compared to Muslim or African.





Would not like a refugee belonging to the 3 social groups as ...	African	Christian	Muslim
Classmate	30%	17%	42%
Member of the community	40%	20%	50%
Family member	35%	25%	41%
Partner	31%	21%	38%
Friend	26%	19%	34%
Neighbour	34%	19%	44%

Table: % of respondents who would not like to have a social relationship with a refugee belonging to one of the 3 social groups

In this context it is relevant that 42% of the respondents think that refugees are Muslims. Hence, the negative associations are transferred from one group to another.

Also, this is in line with the common stereotypes that surfaced about refugees:

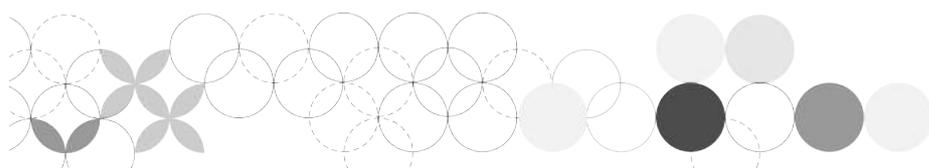
- They are a danger to our society (51% of pupils agree to this)
- They do not want to work (50%)
- They are ignorant (49%)
- They do not wish to adapt to local cultural norms (47%)
- They do not respect gender equality (46%)
- They spread diseases (46%)
- They are a danger to our cultural identity (40%)

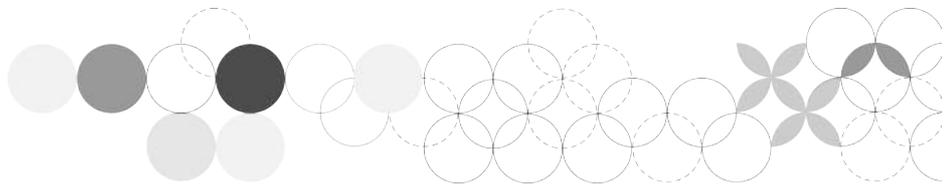
The most disturbing differences that were mentioned were related to:

- Religion
- Culture (habits, appearance, food, etc.)
- Gender roles
- Not speaking the same language

More specifically, the disturbing differences are:

- Other differences





Having various diseases / aggressive behaviour / color of their skin / having the right to polygamy / the role of men and that of women / hate towards Europeans / the many benefits they receive / they are offered jobs and home from the start / terrorism

- Religion

Having fixed hours of prayer / having a different belief / intolerance to other religions / polytheism / not believing in God (believing in another God, like Allah, Budha) / being more religious, praying more and more frequently / different customs and holidays / being imposed to be religious / the way they manifest the faith in public / their religion pushing them to be inhuman / extremists / strict prayer schedule

- Raising children

Children are raised only by the rules of their culture and religion, in a traditionalist spirit / raised in the spirit of faith, indoctrinated / have revenge habits / number of spouses (polygamy) / no gender equality – mother is the main responsible for raising the children / brutal fathers / being poorly raised / they traumatize their children / they are negligent in raising children / dirty children / children grow without opportunities / they have too many children / Teach little children to believe in Allah and to master weapons /

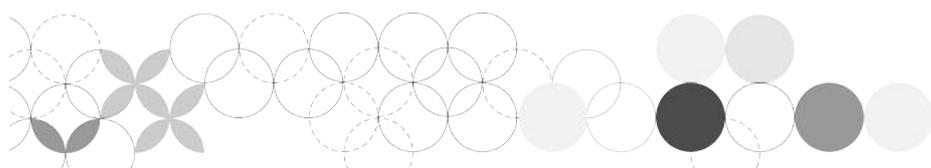
- Clothing

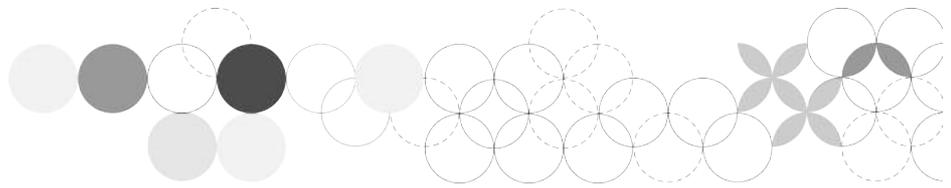
They have different ways of dressing than Europeans / women bound to wear a veil or have their face covered / not cared / dress strange / specific / neglected / poor / unsuitable for the century / do not have a lot of money so they do not allow quality clothes / dressed in black / strict rules with women's clothing / women always walk with the body covered / women are forced and discriminated in terms of their outfit;

- Daily interaction

differences in culture, language, customs, traditions, spoken language / strange customs / lazy compared to Romanians who work hard / do not communicate / hostile / use bad words / do not greet / non-adaptation to culture / behavioral difference / communicate less / are more shy / communicate faster / expecting to receive everything without making any effort / aggressive and violent behavior / do not interact with friends / do not go out late / isolate in a room Skin / are careful with whom they come in contact / different language / are more nervous, shout a lot / they want to take over everything

- Food and drink





have other eating habits / have restrictions on food / low food, non-diversified / drink a lot of alcohol / banning consumption of pork and alcoholic beverages / their religion does not allow them to eat certain products / have specific foods / some are alcoholic / they can eat better food because they can have a different culture or food like us / we have access to fresh food and drinks, incontinence, unlike refugees / some of them do not eat certain Romanian foods and drinks (especially pork)

- The work

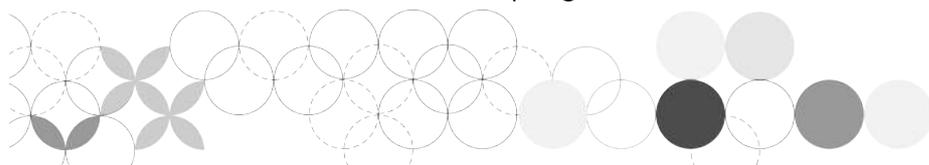
lazy / poorly paid / would work anything / only men work / do not want to work / not serious / not reliable / language / have jobs but do not want to work / work much less than us / some companies may not hire them because they are refugees / do not find it easy to work / are qualified / they wait for social assistance/ are taught hard work / are lazy / some are lazy, some are laborers / unqualified / wages and working hours are different / if they are accepted, everything is ok / the same as Romanians work a lot / physical work predominates;

- Friends and family relationships

Do not easily adapt among Christians / woman is ill-treated / woman has no rights / woman is discriminated / have no friends / do not have family / behave badly in the family and with each other / different style of leisure / do not expose in public / do not behave nicely in the couple / women are subject of domestic violence / women are men's slaves / the husband has an important role in the family / they cherish the family / family relationships are different, there are other values / traditionalism / harem / have fewer friends than us / more tense family relationships / more rigid family relationships / closer families / wife is subordinate to husband / wife are not equal / they have more children / they would find it harder to find a partner in the country they are refugee / have more wives / marrying too young / making many babies / family is a priority / are very devoted to the family / more rare participations at parties / no technology / men work and mothers take care of children / women are not allowed to work, men bring money into household /

Overall, the most common disturbing differences were related to:

- Polygamy
- Gender inequality
- Not believing in the same God
- Having an aggressive behavior
- Children being raised in an environment dominated by aggressiveness
- Laziness, unwillingness to work
- Low interest of adapting to the local cultural environment

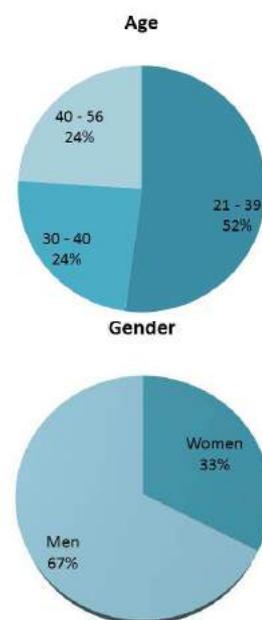




o Young refugees

The focus groups involved 15 young refugees and another 31 responded to on-line questionnaires.

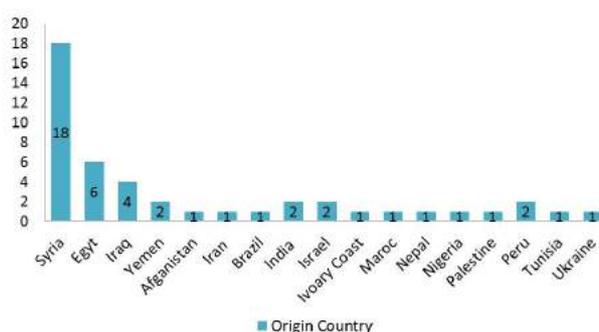
Regarding the age distribution more than 50% of the participants were aged from 21 to 30 years old. 11 persons are part of the age group of 30 to 40 years and other 11 persons are aged over 40, the oldest responded being 55 years old. 33% of the participants were women and 67% were men.



Regarding education most of the persons (30 persons) have a university diploma (either graduated already either in progress in Romania), 6 participants own a high school diploma and other 6 persons have a master degree or Phd diploma. 1 person graduated 4 classes and another person graduated up to 8 classes. 2 other people have a technical degree or no studies at all.

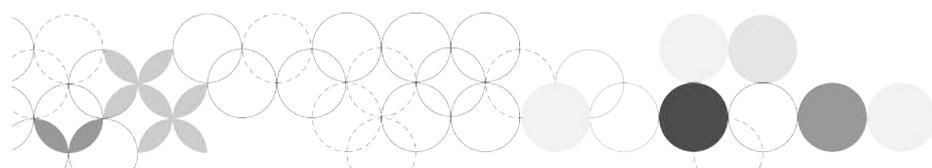
Regarding residence city in Romania, at the moment of research. 89 % of the participants are settled in Timisoara and the rest 11 % on other cities of Romania (Curtici, Dumbravita, Lugoj, Bucharest).

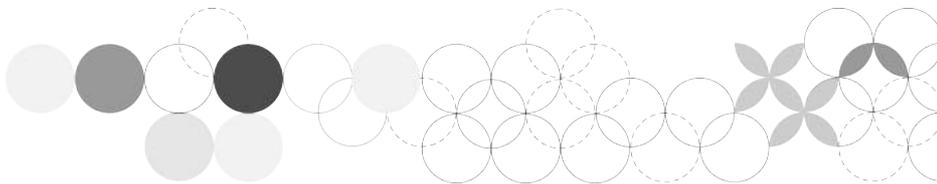
The most origin country of the participants was Syria (39%) followed by Egypt (13 %), Irak (9%) and other countries such as: Afganistan, Brazil, Ivoary Coast, Maroc, Tunisia, Palestine, Ukraine, Yemen, India, Nigeria or Nepal – with 1 ore maximum 2 persons represented.



Regarding religion, 56% of the participants are Muslim, followed by Christianity with 23% and the remaining being Hindu, Yazidi or no religion.

Given the nationalities of the participants the most spoken mother language is Arabic (70%) followed by Farsi and French. Other spoken languages were: Spanish, Ukrainian, Nepalese.





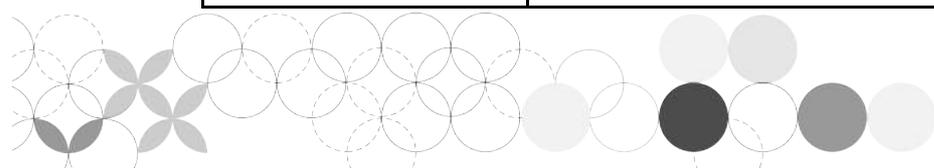
Arabic	At least 28 persons declared they speak Arabic
English	20 persons speak english at some level.
French	2 persons speak French.
Italian	No Italian
German	1 person speaks German
Romanian	19 persons declared they speak Romanian at some extent
Others (name and no. of occurrences):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farsi: 2 persons ○ Kurdish: 2persons ○ Spanish: 1 person ○ Ukranian: 1 person ○ Russian: 1 person ○ Portugheze: 1 peron 	

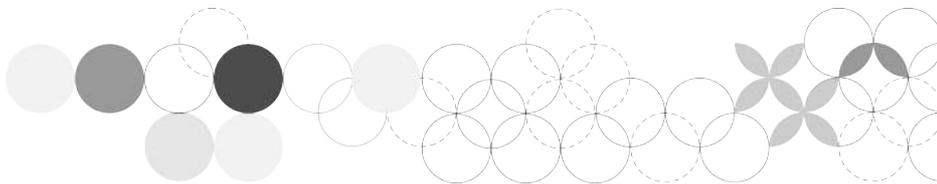
Table: no. of persons who speak one of the languages (out of 46 pers.)

85% of the participants are living Romania for more then 2 years, while another 13% are residents in Romania between 6 months and 2 years, the difference left, accounting for 1 person, has been in Romania less then 6 months.

With regards to their opinions on the local environment and society, we got the following answers

Statement	Answer
The local population is happy with us being here	76 % marked the answer as 3, 4 and 5 from a scale from 1 to 5. Most answers are that they agree with the statement.
The local population has prejudice about refugees/asylum seekers	65 % of the responses were marked the answer as 3, 4 and 5 from a scale from 1 to 5. Still 10 persons out of 46 mentioned in the online questionnaire that they don t know or did not had any personal encounter of prejudice.
The local culture is very	19 persons out of 31 persons answered online believe that the cultural

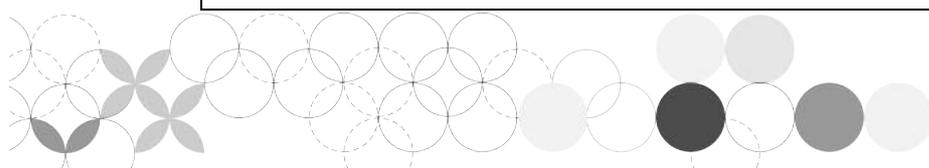




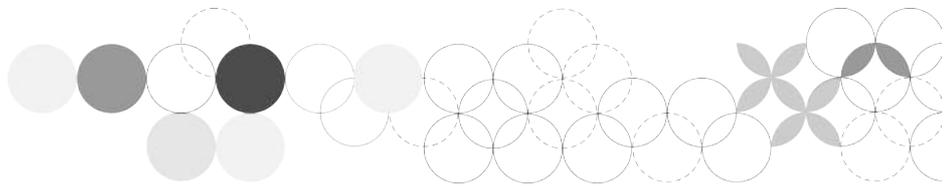
different than my culture	<p>differences are not massive.</p> <p>Other 12 persons that answered online believe that there are cultural differences, at some extent.</p> <p>In our focus group the conclusion was that the Romanian culture is not very different from the Arabic culture, there are many similarities but still there are different aspects, that are completely different</p>
It is important that I adapt to the local culture	<p>More then 75 % of the persons believe that there has to be adaptation to the local culture. One conclusion in the focus group interviews wasn't that some participants claimed that they respect and adapt to cultural differences (like cloth, being open to the opposite gender, going out) but also there is an clear expectation that the locals would respect the cultural inheritance of the refugees and find ways to interact, learn and celebrate cultural diversity</p>
It is important that the local population adapts to my cultural norms	<p>55 % of the responders believe that the local population need to adapt to the cultural norms of migrants. Still there is a limitation in understanding the meaning of adaptation and respect towards different norms.</p>

Regarding the main stereotypes that refugees/asylum seekers thought are common about the in the country they applied for protection, we centralised the following answers:

Stereotype	No. of appearances
Refugees are terrorists	22
Refugees are uneducated	15
They are criminals (thieves, killers)	10
They don't really want to work	14
All refugees are Muslim	5
Refugees are poor	4



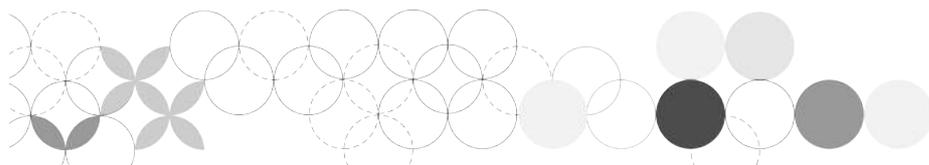
4. Complete results

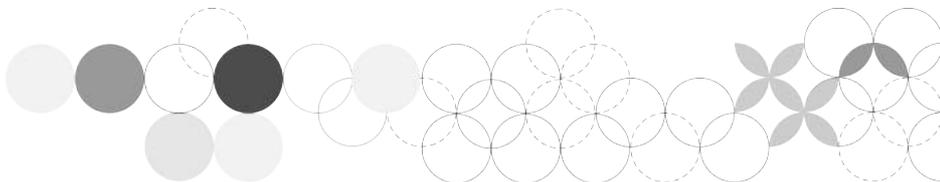


The cultural will be damaged by the newcomers	4
They are not really refugees, they could be economic migrants	2
It's a invasion	1
They came to make problems, they are totally different, they are dangerous.	1
Refugees are radicalised	1
All refugess are running from war only.	1

In terms of main obstacles that they face in integrating in the local environment, they have identified:

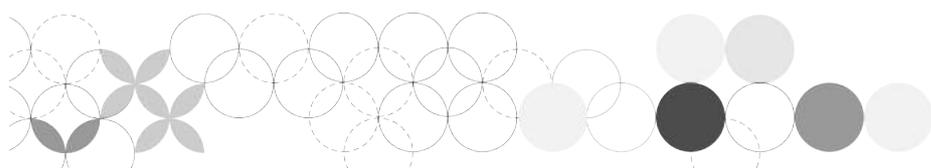
Obstacle	Number of appearances
Not knowing the local language	30
Not knowing a language that the locals speak	4
The prejudice of the locals with respect to refugees/asylum seekers	4
Lack of financial possibilities	6
Lack of opportunities to interact with the local culture	23
Not being interested in integrating in the local environment	1





The main differences between the local culture and the culture of the refugees/asylum seekers that were identified, in terms of:

Everyday interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People from Romania are more friendly and open. ○ There are no barriers in interacting with the opposite sex. ○ Women can walk around in the city ○ Many similarities between the cultures ○ Communication barrier because of language ○ Some people look different to refugees on the streets
Friends and family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The family structure is more strict in origin country. ○ In Romania young adults are not connected so strong with the families, after they leave the house of parents ○ More tribalism in origin country (importance of family). ○ Very common in the origin countries to live with your family. ○ „As doctor I notice many old persons that do not have relatives to take care of them. The old persons are sometimes abandoned here“.
Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Muslim celebrate Ramadan with strict rules. ○ People are more religious in Arab countries. They pray 5 times a day. ○ There are also a lot of similarities in Muslim and Christian religion ○ „Here is much more open-minded. In my culture there is too much religious racism, religious-based hatred, Hateful speech from the dominant religion (Islam) while others called "Religious minorities" have to suffer or sometimes been killed for being non-Muslims.“
Gender roles, relations and marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arab countries (Iraq, Egypt and Syria) are male dominated. ○ Marriage happens with the approval of parents. ○ There are no sexual relationships before marriage. Here in Romania men can shake hands with women. Women here can work. ○ „The place of the women is better here than in Iran, here I feel free to be a woman“ ○ Here all are considered equal. India is a male dominant society. ○ „In Romania people are More open minded to different kind of relationships“ ○ „Society here is more open toward free gender relationships. Even without marriage“



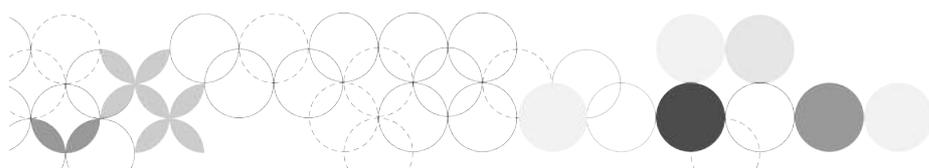
4. Complete results

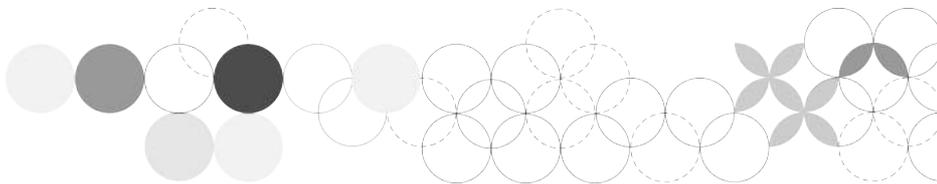


Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parents are respected more in origin country ○ „We consider them in the first place for us“ ○ „Also grandparents have a significant role“
Eating and drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food is very different. ○ The main difference is the use of alcohol in Romania. Here everybody drinks ○ „Healthier in our culture“ ○ “Here I see so many families eats from outside (junk food), this is more rare in my country“
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People in Romania are dedicated to work and professional. Here people try not to late so much. ○ Some of the participants don't work; they are student so there is little experience in this field. ○ „Here more available but similar salaries“ ○ „It is much relaxed here“ ○ - „ Work it's crazy all over“
Clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clothing of women are different here. Girls dress in little clothes. ○ „Young people in Romania are dressed up very well“ ○ „There's more fashion respect here. In India no-one cares much about fashion“ ○ - „The same, apart from the hijab which is compulsory in Iran“
Other differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ „The elders are respected more in our culture“ ○ „Here it's much peaceful and that's effect the behave of the people“ ○ - „In my society they accept the strangers and take care of hospitality more than i feel here“

The differences that are the most uncomfortable/difficult to adapt to, in the order of numbers of mentioning, are

- Language
- Food
- Religion
- Unwelcoming society (prejudice)



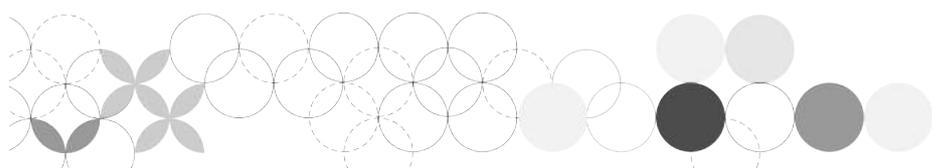


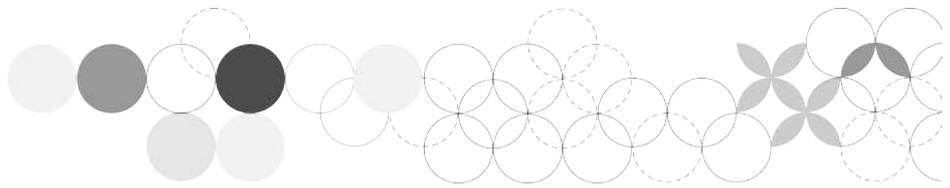
Main sources for forming the opinion on local culture/environment were identified as:

Source	Number of people who selected it
From direct personal experience through interaction with them	19
From traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers, etc.)	11
From on-line media (news sites, blogs, etc.)	12
From social media (Facebook, Instagram , Snapchat , etc.)	15
From politicians / political parties	13
From family / friends	14
Others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traveling ○ Integration Course ○ Participating in cultural event with local community. 	

Most of the participants declare that they do have Romanian friends, but still the number is not very high. Most of the participants who have more friends are students (they interact with Romanians in school, parties, sport) or workers that interact with Romanian colleagues.

This happens due to a series of obstacles to approach local people, like:

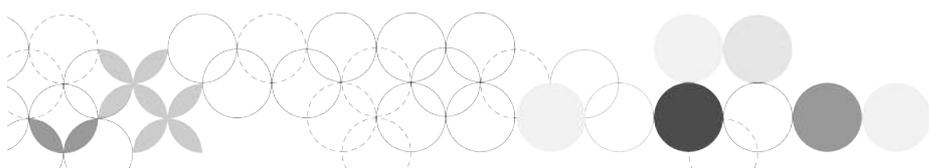


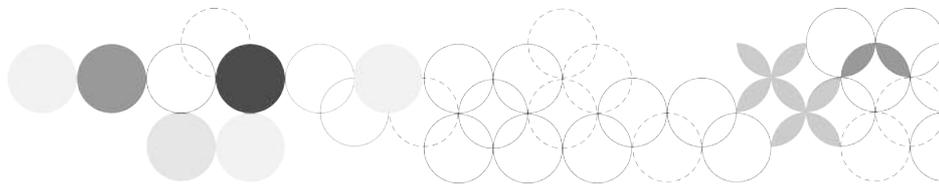


Obstacle	No. of occurrences
Not knowing a common language	35
Attitude of locals (they show they are not interested to engage with refugees/asylum seekers)	3
Lack of financial possibilities	5
Lack of opportunities to meet with them because of restrictions that refugees/asylum seekers are facing	15
It was not a thing that interested them	5

For achieving a better integration, the participants said that the community could do the following:

- More Romanian classes, easy housing, make it more easy to find a work for persons not speaking the language
- Learning the local language and more about the local culture.
- Proper living environment and financial support.
- More support with finding jobs.
- Creation of a training and employment agency for immigrants and
- Promotion of events on
- Romanian Culture Classes for immigrants
- Jobs, Learn the Language and Financial Support





- Staff/volunteers working in refugee support centres

The questioners were filled in by 18 professionals working in Romania in the field of integration refugee and asylum seekers, from the private sector (NGO).

Regarding place of activities, 10 professionals are based in Timisoara, followed by 2 persons from Bucharest, Galati and Oradea, and 1 person coming from Giurgiu and Somcuta Mare.

Regarding nationality 77.8 % of the participants are Romanian, but also 2 persons are originally from Egypt, 1 from Germany and 1 from France.

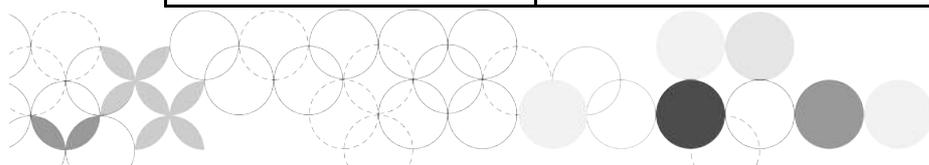
From the job perspective the situation of the target group it is as follows:

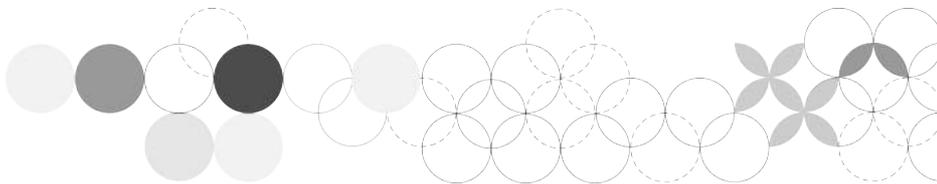
- Social Workers: 7
- Legal Advisers: 2
- Teachers or social pedagogues: 3
- Intercultural Mediators: 1
- Project Coordinators: 2

The questionnaire was distributed online in Romanian and English Version and applied national wide. No local authorities (Immigration Office) agreed to participate in the research.

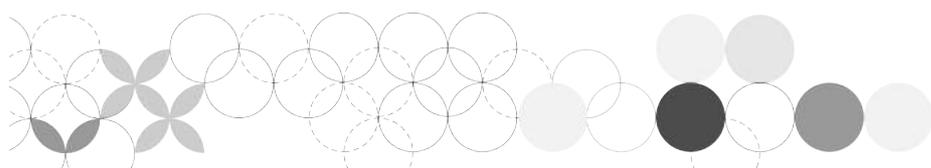
The most challenging cultural differences for refugees/asylum seekers were seen as:

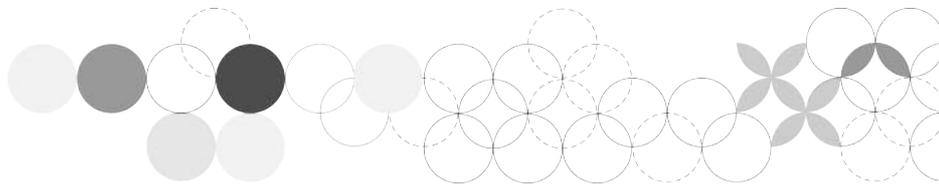
<p>Everyday interaction</p>	<p>56% of the participants agree that the most difficult process of everyday interaction is learning and using the Romanian language.</p> <p>Other possible strong cultural differences mentioned are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fear of being discriminated and not accepted ○ Women refugees are sometimes reluctant to work with men professionals and interact with other gender population, in general. ○ Different visible cultural expressions: different food, different religious beliefs, ○ Lack of understanding how the governmental system works in Romania (access of daily services: going to the doctor, school, etc.). <p>Important to mention that 3 out of 18 participants claimed that there are not strong differences regarding every day interaction</p>
-----------------------------	--



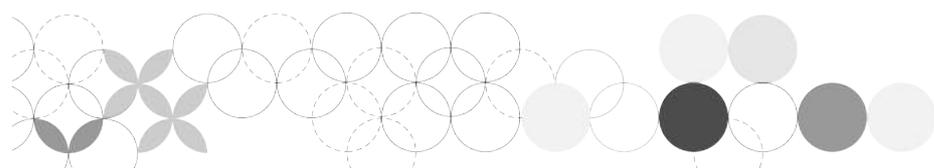


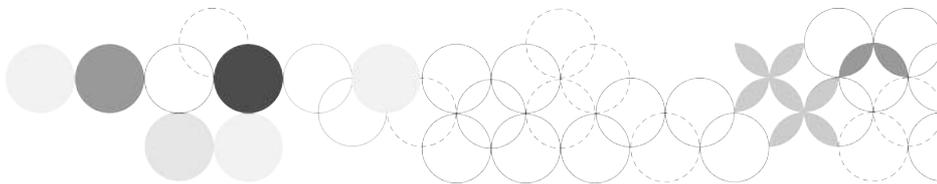
	<p>that could challenge the integration process of migrants in Romania.</p>
<p>Friends and family relationships</p>	<p>Family relationships are stronger in origin country than Romania. Married women show little independence and the men usually take all the decisions.</p> <p>Regarding making friends, one challenge could be the lack of openness of local communities in building relationships with the migrants.</p> <p>Regarding long distance relationships with the families that remained in the origin country, the digital technology plays an important part.</p> <p>3 persons out of 18, consider that there are no major differences regarding Friends and family relationships between the Romanians and refugees.</p>
<p>Faith</p>	<p>Religion could play a conflictual role among communities as long as there is no toleration among the groups. Nevertheless in Romania, the freedom of religion is a constitutional base right therefore there should be no tension of each resident practicing its religion.</p> <p>The religion is a stronger concept for refugees, by praying 5 times a day, the Ramadan, constant participation in religions programs. Still one participant points out that the young generation, similar to Romanian, are less interested in every day practice of religion, but just formal belonging to a religion.</p> <p>Some refugees that are working and religions, receive little understanding from employers regarding prayer breaks.</p> <p>The importance of professions in teaching tolerance on both sides of the communities could help future tension situations.</p>



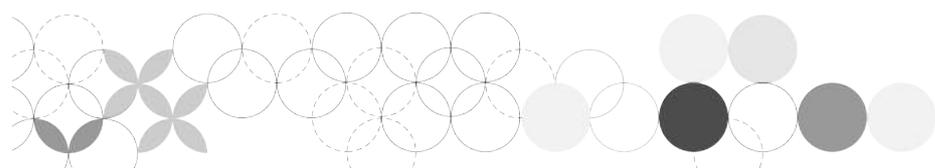


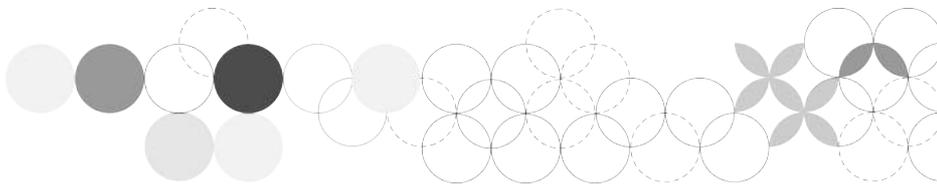
<p>Gender roles, relations and marriage</p>	<p>Relation between couples are seen by the refugees more permissive in Romania than origin country. It's more harder to marry for refugees, and there are still arranged marriages in some countries – a fact that makes it harder for young refugees to date, especially men – because of lack of interaction among boys and girls.</p> <p>Asylum seeker girls seem to enjoy the freedom in Romania more than men, one participant claims.</p> <p>There is more men participation in cultural events, visits organized by NGO.</p> <p>The women are perceived more home based, no pressure to work, even this would negatively impact the financial situation of a family.</p> <p>Lack of fidelity in marriage of Romanian, are seen as a cultural shock. As well as sexual relationships outside of marriage and before marriage.</p> <p>Showing intimate affection in the streets (holding hands, kissing) is as well perceived as a difference for refugees.</p> <p>Some participants point out that men usually get access more to education in origin country, then girls.</p> <p>Children without both parents are also a cultural difference for refugees settled in Romania, as a child born outside of marriage is considered an outcast.</p> <p>Again, men are seen as the strong pillar of the family, and the women is to stay at home, take care of the kids, education and house.</p> <p>For the asylum seekers from Romania, that are based in accommodation camps, the traditions and customs are strongly preserved on every day level.</p>
---	---





<p>Parenting</p>	<p>Parenting style is directly connected with the level of education of refugees. Parents are seen with greater importance in origin countries, then Romania especially after the children become adults they still live with the parents and are in a relationship of commitment and dependency.</p> <p>The refugee parents that put their children into Romanian school are quickly adapting to the Romanian educational system as well as the kids.</p> <p>Some professionals noticed several abusive behaviors towards children in some refugee families.</p> <p>One participants claims that the parenting style of refugees families are more independent and creating abilities for everyday life (the kids go alone to school, learning to clean, cook, etc.).</p> <p>Raising the kids is a task usually only for the mothers, the fathers are less involved in daily activities with the children like taking them to school, playing with them, doing homework.</p>
<p>Eating and drinking</p>	<p>The food in the origin countries of refugees are very different the Romanian cuisine. There is more us of condiments and spices. Cooking traditionally in Romania might be challenging as the condiments or other ingredients are harder to find. Usually the women are cooking in a family.</p> <p>Even the time of eating is different, and how long the dinners are taking place (longer for refugees).</p> <p>There is a interdiction to consume pork and alcohol, for Arabic countries, even for Christian refugees that are following the cultural behaviour of the majority.</p> <p>Some refugees are not consuming meat without being hallal – which is hard to get in small towns.</p> <p>Many refugees continue to cook traditional food – less Romanian traditional food, especially in older population.</p>





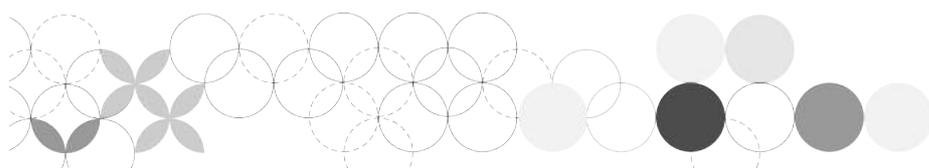
Work	<p>Finding jobs can be difficult because of language barriers and lack of education. Jobs that are connected with making or serving pork and alcohol are declined.</p> <p>There are challenges in respecting the working hours and getting every day to work, for some refugees.</p> <p>Also the legal work contract and documentation is not seen as very important.</p> <p>Most women do not have any work experience in their origin countries as they are seen home based.</p> <p>Business models are different in terms of contracts, deadlines, agreements, being more open and loosed then in Romania.</p>
Clothing	<p>Refugees feel sometimes offended or affected by clotting in Romania, that is revealing. Clothing for men is almost same . For women is more decent in refugees country, one participant claims.</p> <p>The majority of Arabic refugee's women are wearing hijab. In Romania there were no refugees wearing burka.</p>
Other differences	<p>The weather could be a big difference for refugees.</p> <p>Social media use, women post less or no picture with themselves on Facebook.</p>

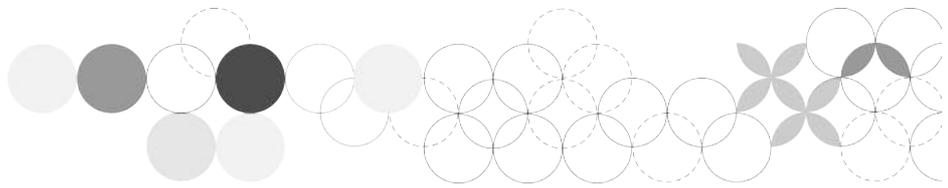
38,9% of the participants believe that the asylum seekers or refugees show small interest in learning about the Romanian culture as part of their integration, under 25%.

50,1% believe that asylum seekers or refugees show interest in learning about the Romanian culture, at some extend: either 50% of the migrants are interested, or 75 % or all of them. 1 participant believes that there is very little interest for asylum seekers or refugees in learning about the Romanian culture as part of their integration (under 10% of the refugees).

They support the cultural integration of the asylum seekers and refugees by:

- Teaching the Romanian and Cultural Orientation Class





- Offering social and legal advice and informing the migrants
- Making visits in the city, discovering places and people
- Offering intercultural mediation.

The majority of the participants (67%) agree that language (learning Romanian) is the hardest challenge in the integration process of refugees and asylum seekers in Romania.

Lack of mentorship and learning efficiently about Romanian system is as well a great challenge.

Other challenges are:

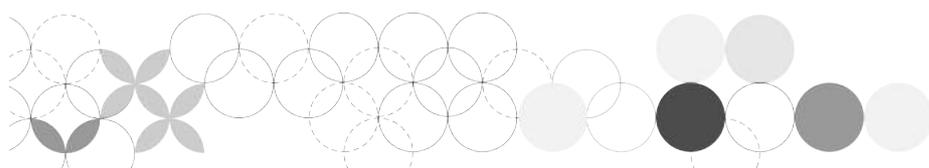
- Finding housing, as owners are sometimes reluctant to accommodate migrants or refugees.
- Finding and keeping a job
- Discrimination and prejudice from the local communities.
- Time waiting for an answer for asylum seekers is decreasing desire to integrate (as they don't know if they will stay in Romania or not).
- Financial Challenges – as Romania offers limited benefits, especially challenging for single individuals.

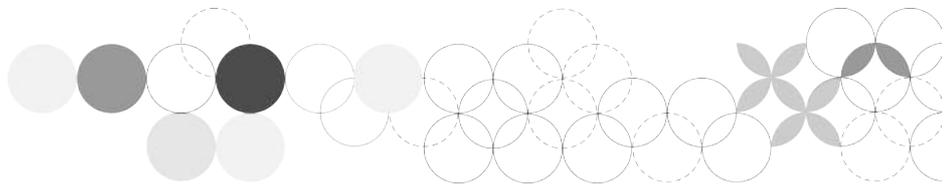
Other methods identified for facilitating integration are:

- Offering long-term integration programs, including Romanian and cultural classes).
- More interactions between the refugees and local communities through cultural and artistic participation.
- Individual and emphatic approach in assisting every asylum seeker or refugee.
- Mentorship and motivating the refugees.
- More funding for more professionals to work directly with the migrants.

Other suggestions for a better for refugee integration the Romanian society are:

- Better cooperation between the NGO and local authorities.
- More empathy for the professional – sometimes the refugees are not perceived as human being but as a job duty!
- Financial support enough not to be forced to work in the first months – so the refugees can attend daily intensive Romanian classes.
- Better learning of responsibility process for the migrants.
- More interactions between the refugees and Romanians.
- Awareness campaigns regarding who refugees are, for Romanians.
- More desire from the government for refugees to integrate (and stay)
- Better language learning programs.





Copyright

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



Full text available at:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en>

You are free to:

Share:

Copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format;

Adapt:

Remix, transform, and build upon the material,

Under the following terms:

Attribution:

You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

Non-Commercial:

You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

Share-Alike:

If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

