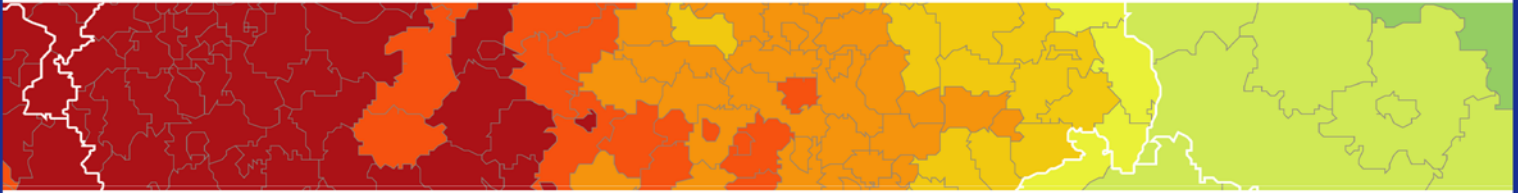


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

Applied Research

**Case study – Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
- FRANCE**

Version 18/07/2019

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Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
ACOSS	Social Security data
ADA	Allocation Demandeurs d'Asile
CADA	Centre d'Accueil pour Demandeurs d'Asile
CAF	Social assistance at local level (<i>Caisse d'Allocations familiales</i>)
CAO	Centre d'Accueil et d'Orientation
CESEDA	Code de l'Entrée et du Séjour des Étrangers et du Droit d'Asile
CFDA	Coordination française pour le droit d'asile
CHRS	Centre d'Hébergement et de Réinsertion Sociale
CHU	Centre d'Hébergement d'Urgence
CIMADE	Comité Inter-Mouvements Auprès Des Évacués
CIR	Republican Integration Contract (<i>Contrat d'Intégration Républicaine</i>)
CMA	Material conditions of reception (<i>Conditions Matérielles d'Accueil</i>)
CNDA	Cour Nationale du Droit d'Asile
CPH	Centre provisoire d'hébergement
CRA	Centre de Rétention Administrative
DADS	Yearly declaration of social data – <i>La déclaration annuelle de données sociales</i>
DETLTD	Very long-term employment applicants
DGEF	The Direction Générale des Étrangers en France
DIHAL	Interdepartmental delegation to housing and access to housing (<i>Délégation interministérielle à l'hébergement et à l'accès au logement</i>)
DIRECCTE	Regional Direction for companies, competition, consumption, work and employment at the Ministry of Labour
DNA	National system of Reception (<i>Dispositif national d'accueil en faveur des Demandeurs d'asile et réfugiés</i>)
DPAE	Declarations Prior to Hiring
EIF	European Integration Fund
ESPACE	Espace de Soutien aux Professionnel.le.s de l'Accueil et du Conseil aux Étranger.ère.s
FAMI	Asylum Migration and Integration Fund
FM	Metropolitan France
GUDA	Guichet Unique Demandeurs d'Asile
GDP	Gross domestic product
HUDA	Hébergement d'Urgence pour Demandeurs d'Asile
ICP	Skills investment plan
INSEE	French national statistical institute

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OFII	Office Français d'Immigration et d'Intégration
OFPRA	Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides
PAADE	Points of Support and Access to Law in the Bouches-du-Rhône
PACA	Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur
PADA	Plateforme d'Accueil des Demandeurs d'Asile
PPS	Purchasing power standard
PRAHDA	Programme d'Accueil et d'Hébergement des Demandeurs d'Asile
RSA	Minimum income support
SMNA	Service Mineurs Non Accompagnés
SRADA	Regional Plan of Reception of Asylum Seekers

Executive summary

France is a country of immigration (and emigration of French youth seeking employment opportunities abroad). It is also a transit country, with respect to the makeshift camps in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region hosting migrants and refugees who strive to reach the United Kingdom. In recent years, France has faced unprecedented numbers of asylum claims particularly since 2015 (85,726) and reaching just over 100,000 in 2017¹. While significant, this rise remains less sharp than was registered in other European countries like Germany and Sweden.

Since the early 1970s, French migration and asylum policy has been focused on deterrence and stopping migration. In 2018, a new immigration asylum law was adopted. *Law 10 September 2018 for a controlled immigration, an effective right of asylum and a successful integration* was adopted. This law has made reception policies in France more severe and procedures have been accelerated, with asylum applications filed and processed more quickly.

Asylum seekers benefit from freedom of movement (if not detained), but as reception conditions are offered in a specific region, the asylum seeker is required to reside there. After the reform implemented in 2018, a more stringent relocation policy has been implemented as asylum seekers are allocated to a specific region even if they are not offered an accommodation place². Non-compliance with this requirement leads to termination of reception conditions.

France is a highly centralised country with asylum and migration policies being defined at the national level. However, the consequences of changes in the political approach are relevant at regional level, in particular as far as the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region, a border region, is concerned. The PACA region is one of the main migrant receiving regions in France. Investigating the implementation of national policies in this region can represent a typical case of the French system of first reception and the following integration of migrants.

This case study focuses on reception policies in the PACA region, analysing them from different perspectives through interviews with local and national stakeholders, and through the analysis of relevant policy and analysis documents.

The analysis moves from the description and assessment of how current reception policies are implemented in the PACA region and the problems arising from their implementation. It also considers how other local actors intervene to support and complement formal policies implemented by national and local institutions and to mitigate current shortcomings in terms of reception, housing and access to work. In particular, literature and stakeholders interviewed

¹ <https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/nos-publications/rapports-d-activite>.

² Article 13 Law n. 2018-778 of 10 September 2018.

underline pushbacks, detention, difficulty in registering asylum applications, difficulty in reception conditions and difficult access to the labour market:

- Asylum seekers and refugees are confronted with difficulties regarding access to the labour market. Interviews indicate that very few asylum seekers apply for a work permit: this is due first of all to the challenging requirements (asylum seekers can apply for a work permit only after nine months from the application and are generally not allowed to work during the examination period), insufficient language competence, holding no professional experience in France, not being able to have their qualifications recognised and a lack of social networks.
- Also, access to welfare provision is a serious concern for asylum applicants. The problems of access to food, physical security (shelter, income) and health interact with each other and exacerbate the vulnerability of these persons, leaving them in a situation of neglect and danger.
- One of the key reception and integration challenges is regarding access to (adequate) housing. Less than 50 % of asylum seekers receive dedicated accommodation, and refugees often stay for extended periods in emergency accommodation, reception centres for asylum seekers or even in makeshift camps. Indeed, refugees often experience extremely precarious living situations once they receive their protection status and are supposed to leave the reception centres, which are for asylum seekers. This problem persists for those granted refugee status.
- A final consideration concerns the impact of the growth in the illegal presence of asylum seekers in the area, due increasing difficulties in obtaining a legal status. This situation impacts several issues, and in particular it increases the presence of women at risk of exploitation in the trafficking of human beings. Each of them bears specific and significant needs that are still insufficiently analysed and taken into account.

These shortcomings, according to experts and actors interviewed, have led to a fluent transfer of the responsibility of reception and integration from the state towards associations and NGOs.

It is in this context that a few initiatives promoted by local actors to answer the needs of asylum seekers and refugees have been analysed. These interventions do not refer to a specific policy, but to the role played by local networks of NGOs in supporting asylum seekers and refugees in their access to France and in their integration path within the French bureaucratic system.

1 Profile of the area

This case study focuses on initiatives implemented in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA)³ region in France, a country that is highly centralised and where asylum and migration policies are defined at the national level. It is of particular interest to analyse how national policies and changes in the political approach impact regional levels, more specifically a border region such as PACA, one of the main migrant receiving regions in France. To investigate the implementation of national policies in this region represents a typical case of the French system of first reception and the following integration of migrants.

This section provides an overview of the socio-economic context – the inflows and distribution of asylum seekers and refugees across the PACA region. It also discusses the challenges, opportunities and impacts of those inflows, as well as the policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees.

1.1 Socio-economic context

The Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region includes six departments – Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Alpes-Maritimes, Bouches-du-Rhône, Hautes-Alpes, Var and Vaucluse. On 1 January 2018 the population was 5,065,700 in 963 municipalities: 90 % of the population reside in three major cities – Marseille, Nice and Toulon – or in cities of medium dimension with more than 20,000 inhabitants⁴. From west to east, nearly 900 km of coastline border the Mediterranean. To the north and east, the mountainous and coastal areas face Italian borders.

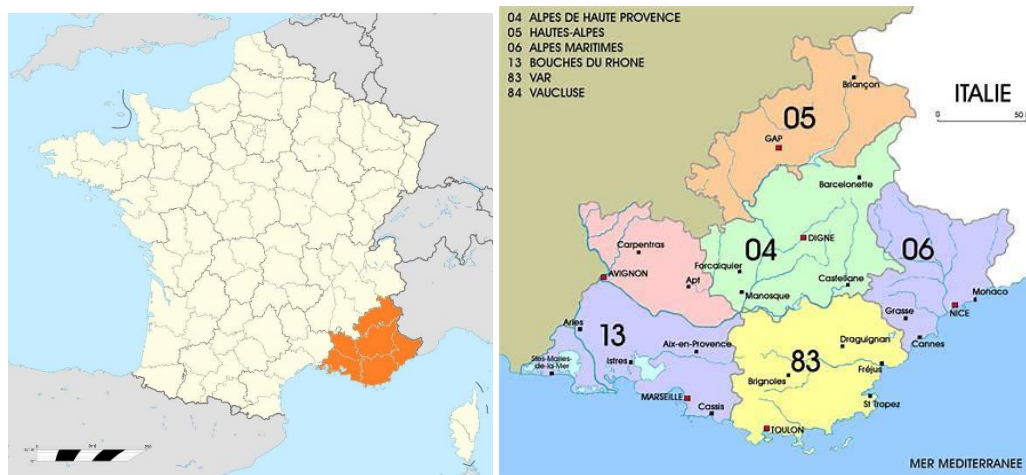


Figure 1: Maps indicating the location of PACA Region

Source: <https://www.actualitix.com/carte-paca-provence-alpes-cotes-d-azur.html>

³ As of December 2017 the official name of the region is South Region (Région Sud).

⁴ Pole Emploi, 2018.

In the past, PACA used to be a dynamic area in demographic terms, while in recent years it shows a slower pace of growth. According to INSEE⁵ the population increased from +0.8 % on average per year between 1999 and 2008 (compared to +0.6 % for metropolitan France – FM) to +0.4 % on average per year between 2010 and 2015 (+0.5 % FM). This small increase is mainly due to the natural balance (difference between births and deaths). The region is also characterised by an ageing population. As of 1 January 2018, youth under-25s are less numerous in PACA than in metropolitan France: they represent 28 % of the population (30 % FM). In contrast, those aged 50 and over account for a larger share in the region (42 %), of which 22 % (19 % FM) are over-65s. The regional population is ageing especially in the Alpine departments and in the Var and Maralpin coasts: this is partly explained, according to the INSEE⁶ (Regional Atlas No 4 – June 2016), by the inflows of seniors into the region.

The main socio-economic indicators concerning the 2014-2017 period show that the PACA region is in a weaker condition compared to metropolitan France, in particular in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), and employment and unemployment rates, as well as with a much higher presence of elderly people and migrants.

Table 1: Main demographic data – 2014-2017 average

	Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	France	EU28
Total fertility rate	2.0	2.0	1.6
Old dependency ratio	35.4	29.6	28.5
Crude rate of nat. pop. change	2.0	3.3	0.1
Crude rate of net migration change	2.0	0.8	2.7

Source: Insee

Table 2: Main socio-economic data 2014-2017 average

	Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	France	EU28
Self-employment rate (%)	14.0	10.9	14.1
GDP growth rate (%)	1.0	1.6	2.9
GDP (PPS/hab)	27,967	30,200	28,600
Population 30–34 with tertiary education (%)	43.5	44.2	38.9
Total unemployment rate	10.5	10.1	9.0
Total employment rate	62.7	64.0	66.2
Female employment rate	58.8	60.7	60.9
NEET rate (15–24, unemployment)	12.3	11.7	11.8

Source: Insee

⁵ The French National Statistical Institute.

⁶ The French National Statistical Institute.

The region is the second most popular national tourist destination after Île-de-France. Six per cent of regional jobs are directly related to tourism. According to INSEE, two out of three tourism jobs come from catering.

The regional economy is also characterised by the importance of very small companies with fewer than ten employees (95 % against 94 % FM). The business creation rate was 13 % in 2015 (12 % FM). At the end of June 2018, the number of microenterprises created over 12 months increased by +31 % in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (+25 % FM) and the overall number of business creations reached its highest level since the beginning of 2011, with an increase of +18 % over one year. At the same time, in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur the number of failures over twelve months decreased by -9 % (-7 % FM) to 5,500⁷. This peak of business creation stems in particular from a more favourable political context with projects such as the PACTE law, the Action Plan for Business Growth and Transformation⁸.

The active population in the region is mostly composed of employees in service occupations. The region has more employees and artisans, traders and business leaders, and fewer workmen and managers than at the national level. At the end of June 2018, 1,844,500 people were employed in PACA. According to INSEE, 435,000 employees (including 7,300 subsidised contracts) worked in the public administration in PACA at the end of 2011, i.e. 22 % of total regional employment (20 % FM). Between 2010 and 2014 the number of employees remained stable, then in 2017 increased by +1.0 % (+0.8 % FM). Thirty-three per cent of women work part-time, compared with 12 % of men⁹. DADS data¹⁰ highlight the role of the general public administration as the top employer sector in the region. Next comes the health sector and social services, and the accommodation and catering sector. The analysis of social security data (ACOSS DATA) on employment flows, based on the declarations prior to hiring (DPAE), confirms a favourable context. In fact, at the end of June 2018, the number of hiring declarations in the first half year increased by +6 % over one year to 1,809,100 units¹¹.

However, the PACA region also hold second place for the highest unemployment rates in metropolitan France. Despite a drop of 0.2 points over one year, the regional unemployment rate stood at 10.6 % in the second quarter of 2018, a rate higher than the national rate (8.7 %). The gap with the national level has been widening since early 2011 (1.6 percentage points on average), while remaining below the maximum recorded in the years 1998 to 1999 (3.6 points).

⁷ Pole Emploi (2018), *Portrait Socio-Économique De La Région Provence-Alpes-Côte D'azur*, November 2018
https://services.pole-emploi.fr/PACA/web/media/paca-fr/see/portraits_socio-Eco_DT/E&S_Portrait_socio_economique_de_la_region_Provence_Alpes_Cote_d_Azur.pdf

⁸ <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/loi-pacte-encourager-innovation-france>

⁹ Pole Emploi (2018)

¹⁰ DADs data present the yearly declaration of social data - La déclaration annuelle de données sociales.
<https://www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/definition/c1914>

¹¹ Pole Emploi (2018)

As at the national level, the unemployment rate returned to a value equivalent to that of the end of 2011¹².

The number of jobseekers registered at Pôle Emploi¹³ for two years or more, the so-called very long-term employment applicants (DETLDs), has doubled in six years. In total, 118,800 people were very long-term unemployed in the second quarter of 2018, i.e. 24 % of the unemployed¹⁴.

1.2 Current stock and flows of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in the area of analysis

As emerges from the French asylum office, OFPRA (*Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides*), activities reports¹⁵ show that France is a country of immigration, and emigration of French youth seeking employment opportunities abroad. France is also a transit country, with respect to the makeshift camps in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region hosting migrants and refugees who strive to reach the United Kingdom.

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are concentrated in large cities and their suburbs such as Paris and in PACA regions Lyon and Marseille.

Since the early 1970s, French migration and asylum policy has been focused on deterrence and stopping migration. Despite these efforts France has nonetheless received on average 100,000 new entries per year through student visas, family reunification and asylum channels.

In recent years, France has faced unprecedented numbers of asylum claims. It peaked in 1990 (61,422), dropping down to around 21,000 in the mid-1990s, rising again in 2004 (65,614), then had steadily climbed towards higher numbers, particularly since 2015 (85,726) and finally reaching just over 100,000 in 2017¹⁶.

In 2017, the number of asylum applicants in PACA was 5,553 – equal to 5.5 % of the applicants across the country, as it is possible to see in the following table.

¹² Pole Emploi (2018)

¹³ The French Public Employment Service.

¹⁴ Pole Emploi (2018)

¹⁵ OFPRA (2017) , Rapport d'activité 2017 https://ofpra.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/rapport_dactivite_ofpra_2017.pdf

¹⁶ OFPRA (2017)

Table 3. Data on asylum seekers / asylum applications (at NUTS2 and/or national level) 2017

		Total¹⁷	%
Total National		100,613	100
NUTS 2	NUTS 3		
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	Alpes-de-Haute-Provence	265	0.3
	Hautes-Alpes	181	0.2
	Alpes-Maritimes	1,152	1.1
	Bouches-du-Rhône	3,215	3.2
	Var	393	0.4
	Vaucluse	347	0.3
	Total Region	5,553	5.5

Source: IRS elaborations on

https://ofpra.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ra_ofpra2017_web_0604.pdf

Table 4. Data on refugees – individuals with a recognised refugees status (at NUTS2 and/or national level as available) 2017

		Total¹⁸	%
Total National		31,734	100
NUTS 2	NUTS 3		
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	Alpes-de-Haute-Provence	118	13,3
	Hautes-Alpes	56	0.4
	Alpes-Maritimes	280	0.2
	Bouches-du-Rhône	886	0.9
	Var	179	2.8
	Vaucluse	155	0.6
	Total Region	1,674	5.3

Source: IRS elaborations on

https://ofpra.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ra_ofpra2017_web_0604.pdf

The French asylum office, OFPRA, indicates that in 2017 France registered a sustained increase in asylum applications (+17 %) from 2016, with some 100,412 requests presented. While significant, this rise remains less sharp than what was registered in other European countries like Germany and Sweden. Almost 43,000 asylum seekers were granted protection. Asylum seekers and refugees are predominantly located in large metropolitan centres and particularly the Ile de France region (21,747 applicants)¹⁹.

Concerning asylum seekers and refugees' characteristics, there are no data detailed by region. At national level, the proportion of women remains steady at around 35 % of asylum applicants. The average age of asylum seekers is 31 years. More than half of applicants declare

¹⁷ Total requests (first requests + reconsiderations + re-openings of closed files + requests of accompanying minors)

¹⁸ Total admissions (OFPRA + CNDA) without accompanying minors by department of residence (Department of residence = last known address of asylum seeker).

¹⁹ OFPRA (2017)

themselves to be single, while around 43 % declare themselves to be married²⁰. Thus, the presence of elderly people between asylum seekers/refugees seems to be low. People in need of protection in transit, as well as failed asylum seekers who remain on French territory are invisible to statistics. Several thousands of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are estimated to be staying in the makeshift camps in Paris and elsewhere²¹.

In the past, refugee flows were characterised by two dominant profiles: French speaking, with low levels of schooling, and educated and skilled non-French speaking populations. Over the last five years France has been receiving a growing number of non-French speaking asylum flows with little schooling. A significant part of this population is illiterate. This creates new needs and challenges for the French integration policy²².

In the last few years, a relevant change in terms of nationalities of asylum seekers and refugees has occurred. At the national level (no statistics are available at regional level) in 2010, the main nationalities of asylum seekers concerned were Kosovo, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Russia and Sri Lanka. Almost 35 % of applicants were women. The number of Bangladeshi applications dramatically increased, almost doubling between 2009 and 2010. By 2015, the main nationalities of asylum seekers in France in ascending order were Sudan, Syria, Kosovo, Bangladesh and Haiti; France had an overall acceptance rate of 23 %. Protection rates were highest among people from Iraq, Syria, Central African Republic, Yemen and Afghanistan. In 2016 the main countries of origin of asylum seekers in ascending order included Albania, Afghanistan, Haiti, Sudan, Guinea and Syria. Nationalities with the highest protection rates included Syrian, Afghan and Sudanese²³.

According to the interviewees, a significant proportion of refugees and asylum seekers arrive in France by air (notably at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris). A growing number arrive in PACA from the territorial borders with Italy, notably Menton in the south, and Briançon in the Haute-Alpes. It is expected that the flow of those from the Franco-Spanish borders will increase, although this area is heavily policed.

As for the regions of permanence, Paris and its suburbs are the main ones where refugees and asylum seekers wish to stay, mainly because these are the territories with more job opportunities and social networks²⁴.

²⁰ OFPRA (2017)

²¹ UNHCR (2015) UNHCR calls for comprehensive response to the Calais situation <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/8/55c4d98c9/unhcr-calls-comprehensive-response-calais-situation.html>

²² OFPRA (2017)

²³ AIDA (2016)

²⁴ AIDA (2017)

Little information is available on the regions of permanence of refugees, as OFPRA does not keep track of refugee trajectories upon receiving their protection status. Many become naturalised and are not registered by the national authorities in any way as refugees.

1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts

Being a highly centralised country, France decides policies at national level, but the consequences of changes in the political approach are relevant at regional level, in particular as far as the PACA border region is concerned.

To contextualise the analysis it is important to consider the evolution of the political discourse concerning the integration of migrants over the years²⁵.

- In the early 1990s, the conservative government's interior minister, Charles Pasqua, put forth the goal of 'zero immigration'. The so-called Pasqua Laws prohibited foreign graduates from accepting employment, increased the waiting period for family reunification from one to two years, and denied residence permits to foreign spouses who had been in France illegally prior to marrying. The legislation also enhanced the powers of police to deport foreigners and eliminated opportunities to appeal asylum rejections (much like the Macron's 2018 bill on asylum). Throughout the 1990s, the far-right party, Front National, grew in popularity. Much like today, mainstream parties responded to this trend by embracing some propositions and language used by the far-right on migration.
- By 1997, France began to move away from this zero immigration policy towards one that sought to maintain a tough stance on unwanted forms of migration, but at the same time to attract highly skilled migration.
- During the 2000s, the Sarkozy, Hollande and Macron administrations, although positioned differently across the political spectrum, have adopted a securitised approach to migration that aims to reduce legal pathways, reinforce border controls, increase expulsions and reduce access to asylum services, while at the same time trying to attract highly skilled migration.

The integration landscape is now certainly changing in France. President Macron declared refugee integration as a priority for his migration agenda. In late 2017, MP Aurélien Taché was commissioned to carry out an in-depth consultation with relevant stakeholders involved in refugee integration. In February 2018, his findings were published as a set of recommendations aimed at improving integration policies. The Ministry of Interior also organised a series of multistakeholder working groups on integration. Finally, an inter-ministerial delegate for refugee integration was created in early 2018 that will strive to improve harmonisation between different sectors. Thus, in the coming years less reliance on a mainstream approach and more targeted policies to promote the integration of refugees into French society can be expected²⁶.

²⁵Guiraudon Virginie (2019) Immigration Policy in France, Brookings, July 1, 2001 <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/immigration-policy-in-france/>

²⁶ <http://www.france-terre-asile.org/accueil/actualites/agenda/a-lire-rapport-d-information-sur-l-integration-du-depute-aurelien-tache>

It is in this context that challenges, opportunities and impact of asylum seekers and refugees have to be looked at.

First of all, it has to be mentioned that the restrictions introduced by the 2018 asylum law (see Section 1.4) have exacerbated the already massive pushbacks of migrants and refugees at the Italian border into the PACA region. This began in 2016 and continued in 2017 in the area of Menton. French authorities have been illegally taking migrants and potential refugees back to the Italian territory without letting them apply for protection. This practice also involves minors, often from Sudan and Eritrea and has led to a shift in migratory routes from the southern Mediterranean towards riskier journeys through the Alps²⁷.

Another challenge is linked to the length and complexity of application procedures which hamper the potential for integration in the country. Asylum seekers can apply for a work permit only after nine months from the application for asylum and are generally not allowed to work during the examination of their application in France. Access to the labour market is allowed only if OFPRA has not ruled on the asylum application within nine months after the registration of the application and only if this delay cannot be attributed to the applicant. There is no official data on the work permits requested by and granted to asylum seekers. In addition:

- All interviewees have commented on the bureaucratisation of the asylum system in France. Over the course of the last decade, it has become increasingly difficult for asylum seekers to even lodge their claim. They must first register their claim with a platform, outsourced to agencies such as *France Terre d'Asile*²⁸, which then enables them to register with the prefecture. These reception structures are critically understaffed and asylum seekers often camp nearby to assure that they will be well placed in the queue. This can create a lot of tension. They often have to wait weeks or months (when legally it is supposed to be a maximum of three days) before being able to register their claim with the prefecture to become an asylum seeker in legal terms.
- Interviews indicate that in practice, very few asylum seekers apply for a work permit. This is due first of all to the challenging requirements, including an offer of employment (*promesse d'embauche*). It is hard for an asylum seeker to find an employer willing to recruit them, when their residence permit is valid only for three months and mentions that the holder is not authorised to work.
- Formally, refugees have immediate access to the labour market upon receiving their protection status; however, the prefecture often takes weeks or months to produce their residency permit. During this time the refugee is given a receipt (*récépissé*) valid for a three or six month period, a document that is supposed to attest the same rights to enter the labour market. However, this document is often not accepted by employers.

Turning to the impact of asylum seekers and refugee flows, it is possible to disentangle a few relevant issues at national level.

Concerning the financial impact it is only possible to refer to a study on the financial impact of migration carried out at national level in 2018 by CEPII, Research and Expertise on the World

²⁷ <https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/nos-publications/rapports-d-activite>

²⁸ <http://www.france-terre-asile.org>

Economy²⁹. The study has shown that the net contribution by immigrants was generally negative and small throughout the whole period studied, and particularly after the 2008 crisis.

The contribution of immigration to French public finances between 1979 and 2011 is overall negative, but of low magnitude and contained within 0.5 % of the GDP. The results show a strong dependence of net contribution on age and qualification structure of populations. The individualised net contribution by immigrants was for a long time more favourable to public finances than by natives, due to their age structure concentrated on active classes. With the crisis of 2008, the strong deterioration of individual tax profiles made the demographic component for the first time insufficient to generate a positive contribution by immigrants.

According to this study however, results and conclusions depend on

whether children of the second generation are assigned to the immigrant or native population, and on the imputation of either all or only part of the expenditures related to provision of public goods to the native population. Depending on the hypothesis, immigrants turn out to make a strongly negative contribution to public finances, or instead a very positive contribution at the origin of all primary budgetary surpluses in France over the studied period. The reference scenario that we have selected rests between the two extremes above. It is based on a treatment unaltered by the age of individuals (since children born in France are natives, whether they result from immigration or not) and on the allocation of part of public goods expenditure to the immigrant population, since it also derives benefits from them³⁰.

Asylum seekers and refugees are confronted with difficulties regarding their access to the labour market due to insufficient language competence, holding no professional experience in France, not being able to have their qualifications recognised and a lack of social networks, interviewees report. These issues apply particularly in the PACA region, being a border region with a high influx of migrants.

- Asylum seekers do not have access to state-sponsored language courses at the national level. The state remains reluctant to offer asylum seekers access to language training on the basis that their stay in France is only treated as temporary. Language classes run by OFII (*Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration*) aimed at long-term migrants and refugees receive heavy criticism from different organs of the state as well as external experts. They largely fail to improve the language level of beneficiaries. This is often considered a consequence of the limited number of hours and an inadequate pedagogy³¹.
- France's main targeted integration policy is that of the Republican Integration Contract (*Contrat d'Intégration Républicaine*, CIR). The CIR is obligatory for all third-country

²⁹ CEPII Working Paper The fiscal impact of 30 years of immigration in France: (I) an accounting approach, 2018 http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2018/wp2018-04ang.pdf

³⁰ CEPII Working Paper The fiscal impact of 30 years of immigration in France: (I) an accounting approach, 2018 http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2018/wp2018-04ang.pdf

³¹ Sénat (2017), <https://www.senat.fr/rap/r16-660/r16-6601.pdf>.

nationals, including beneficiaries of international protection, who wish to settle in France. Last revised in 2016, the CIR is intended to provide signatories with a personalised integration process. The main tools for integration in the framework of the CIR are a two-day civic course and up to 200 hours of language training courses to reach an A1 level³². These integration measures have been widely criticised by institutional and civil society actors alike. Evaluations of the civic course tend to point towards its dense content, being far from the challenges of everyday living in France, and the lack of interpreting facilities during the course. Criticisms of the language training courses include concerns about the course duration; the A1 level is seen as too low to allow for professional integration; heterogeneous class populations do not take into account different levels; there is a lack of targeted support for illiterate populations³³.

To counterbalance the more strict law on irregular migration, the French government has proposed the doubling of hours in language courses and easier access to the labour market for those legally residing.

A large economic literature has considered the links between immigration and the labour market. When considering the impact of refugees and asylum seekers on the labour market, a few issues emerging from the debate should be considered.

- Immigration does not only have direct effects on public finances but also potential impacts on the labour supply and demand for private sector goods. This can modify the remuneration of production factors or increase taxes, thereby leading to indirect effects on public finances.
- A considerable increase in the availability of experienced and inexperienced workers to work illegally at a lower wage, due to the difficulties for them to enter the legal labour market, represents a considerable shortcoming of the current situation. The higher the supply compared to demand, the higher the unemployment. Thus irregular migration risks increasing labour supply and short-term unemployment.
- The increased labour supply risks an impact on wages. An increase in supply may imply a decrease in wages because companies would have no difficulty in recruiting even if the salary were to be less attractive. At the same time, lower wages would allow businesses to hire more, which would help reduce unemployment.
- Concerning competences, on the one hand immigrants are mainly present in low-skilled or unskilled jobs, due to their lack of education and work experience; on the other hand, qualified refugees and asylum seekers may introduce skills and competences in the French labour market that are lacking. Immigrants and refugees are also involved in sectors where, despite unemployment, many jobs remain vacant. For example, in the PACA region this is the case in agriculture and the personal care sector (due to the high presence of elderly), since these jobs are not generally accepted by native people. Immigrant populations partly make up for this lack of personnel³⁴.

³² The Common European of Reference Framework for Languages.

³³ Sénat (2017), <https://www.senat.fr/rap/r16-660/r16-6601.pdf>.

³⁴ Pole Emploi (2018)

Also, access to welfare provision is a serious concern for asylum applicants. The overview, drawn up by the Observatoire Asile Marseille³⁵ between September 2017 and May 2018, illustrates the deterioration of the human and material conditions of asylum applicants recently arrived in France. This is putting at risk the principles of hospitality and respect of fundamental rights.

- The problems of access to food, physical security (shelter, income) and health interact with each other and exacerbate the vulnerability of these people, leaving them in a situation of abandonment, neglect and danger.
- Young refugees under 25 years old are not eligible for minimum income support (RSA), and can find themselves with no source of assistance from the state.
- Interviewees noted that while refugees have access to income support upon receiving protection status, there are many administrative blockages which make accessing this support difficult. The same problem can be observed for other kinds of social assistance (e.g. CAF – *Caisse d'Allocations familiales* at local level) and health care. Although refugees have full access in theory, in practice not speaking the language and other administrative hurdles make accessing their rights a challenge.
- Interviewees commented that mental health problems are highly diffused among asylum seekers and refugees. The state provides little help to accommodate and treat these vulnerable people, instead relying on associations such as *Forum réfugiés*³⁶, which do not have the means to assist this population systematically.
- The programme *Garantie jeune*³⁷ (Youth Guarantee) which provides some form of assistance to this age group has recently been extended to include refugees, although only a few schemes for this population have been set up so far³⁸.

One of the key reception and integration challenges is regarding access to (adequate) housing.

- Less than 50 % of asylum seekers receive dedicated accommodation, and refugees often stay for extended periods in emergency accommodation, reception centres for asylum seekers or even in makeshift camps. Indeed, refugees often experience extremely precarious living situations once they receive their protection status and are supposed to leave the reception centres for asylum seekers.
- This problem persists for those granted refugee status. Refugees who are living in accommodation for asylum seekers normally have to leave such places three months after receiving their protection status. Considering that it is virtually impossible to get a work permit as an asylum seeker, most refugees need time before being able to find work, which they need to secure accommodation. Thus, the problem of housing for asylum seekers and refugees in France is critical. Furthermore, refugees are not treated as a priority group for social housing, and are put on long waiting lists.
- There is often a waiting period of between one and two years before refugees are able to access social housing if they wish to stay close to France's major cities. While the French

³⁵ Observatoire Asile Marseille, *L'asile en exil - État des lieux de l'accueil des personnes en demande d'asile à Marseille 2017-2018*

³⁶ <http://www.forumrefugies.org/>

³⁷ <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/emploi/mesures-jeunes/garantiejeunes/>

³⁸ <https://missionlocaledeparis.fr/garantie-jeunes-adapter-loffre-de-service-au-public-jeunes-refugies/>

State has devoted more resources towards facilitating refugees access to housing, this remain a chronic problem.

All the interviewees have remarked that lack of sufficient housing for asylum seekers and refugees is one of the main limitations of the last decade, despite the law guaranteeing accommodation to all asylum seekers. While the state has increased the capacity of accommodation for this population, it is still far from meeting the real needs (about 30 %). This places asylum seekers in highly vulnerable situations.

Asylum seekers and refugees have access to (limited) assistance, for example language training and career guidance. However, those who have not been assigned housing are often left without any kind of assistance to access their rights, including social and legal assistance.

Another key issue relates to the impact of dispersal policy. As described in the AIDA report 2019, formally asylum seekers benefit from freedom of movement (if not detained), but as reception is offered by OFII in a specific region and the asylum seeker is required to reside there. After the reform implemented in 2018, a more stringent relocation policy has been implemented as asylum seekers are allocated to a specific region even if they are not offered an accommodation place³⁹. If they move from there, they lose their right to stay. Freedom of movement is therefore restricted to the region assigned by OFII. One of the problems described is that since the assignment to a reception centre is an informal decision, they cannot appeal to the decision. In addition, they can be asked to move several times from emergency facilities, to transit centres, to finally settle in a regular reception centre⁴⁰.

Concerning the social impact of migration, as emerges from the CEPII study⁴¹, according to a survey conducted by the Ipsos Institute in 25 countries in 2017, 86 % of French citizens attributed a negative impact to immigration (compared to 79 % average stemming from results in all countries).

The series of surveys over time indicates a trend towards increasingly negative views on immigration. Faced with the evolution of public opinion in relation to immigration and the perception of its impact on public finances, the political response has been typically fast and often involves pledges to restrict access of immigrants to social welfare.

Paradoxically, although such measures have burgeoned following an increase in the proportion of people who think that immigrants represent a cost to the state budget and the

³⁹ Article 13 Law n. 2018-778 of 10 September 2018

⁴⁰ AIDA (2019)

⁴¹ CEPII Working Paper *The fiscal impact of 30 years of immigration in France: (I) an accounting approach*, 2018 http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2018/wp2018-04ang.pdf

finances of social protection, studies measuring such alleged costs only appeared relatively recently (in the last 20 years) and remain scarce to this day⁴².

A study by Vertier and Viskanac (2017)⁴³ finds evidence suggesting that municipalities hosting refugees showed a decrease in support for far-right parties. They investigated the impact of refugees relocated to temporary accommodation centres (CAO) after the closure of the 'Jungle' camp near Calais and found that the presence of these centres reduced the vote share for National Front, between 2012 and 2017, by about 15.7 percentage points.

A final consideration concerns the impact of the growth in the illegal presence of asylum seekers in the area, due increasing difficulties in obtaining a legal status. This situation impacts several issues, and in particular it increases the presence of women at risk of exploitation in the trafficking of human beings. Each of them bears specific and significant needs that are still insufficiently analysed and taken into account. The presence of irregular migrants not accessing the regular labour market also reduces the impact of their potential to support the economy by enhancing expenditure on goods and consumption.

1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees

In French law, the code for the entry and residence of foreigners and the right to asylum (CESEDA – Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile), sometimes referred to as the Aliens Code, groups the legal and regulatory provisions relating to foreigners. The CESEDA has been revised many times over the last decade. The latest version was updated in March 2019⁴⁴.

The main laws on the integration of migrants are the following:

- The Law of 29 July 2015 on asylum notably codified the procedure for family reunification of beneficiaries of protection.
- The law of 7 March 2016 on the rights of foreigners in France introduced multiannual residency cards for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. A new residency permit, the 'passeport talent' was also created to attract highly skilled migration.

The 2016 law also modified the integration apparatus through the introduction of the Republican Integration Contract⁴⁵.

⁴² CEPII Working Paper *The fiscal impact of 30 years of immigration in France: (I) an accounting approach*, 2018 http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2018/wp2018-04ang.pdf

⁴³ Paul Vertier (Sciences Po – LIEPP), Max Viskanac (Department of Economics, Sciences Po-CNRS) *Dismantling the 'Jungle': migrant relocation and extreme voting in France*, 2017. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3170838.

⁴⁴ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070158>.

⁴⁵ <http://www.ofii.fr/IMG/pdf/CIR/CIR%20anglais.pdf>.

In 2018 a new immigration asylum law was adopted – Law 10 September 2018 – for a controlled immigration, an effective right of asylum and a successful integration⁴⁶. It was promulgated after a long disagreement in the mixed joint commission, an indicator of a policy controversy. It represents the transposition of the Directive (EU) 2016/801⁴⁷ voted in by the European Parliament and the Council on 11 May 2016. It relates to the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service and exchange programmes of pupils or educational projects, and au pair work. It enforces the directive that requires countries to allow and facilitate asylum seekers to enter the labour market before a given deadline. Each country was allowed to choose the length of the waiting period and France picked the longest option: nine months of waiting, before gaining access to French labour market.

This law has made reception policies in France more severe and procedures have been accelerated. As a consequence, asylum applications are filed and processed more quickly. In line with these objectives, several measures have been taken and others will be taken in the next months through implementation decrees. A number of consequences have already been detected, and have been explored in Section 2.

The box below presents the main modifications introduced by the new law in the procedures for application.

Box 1: Modifications in the procedures for application

According to most recent procedures, migrants applying for asylum first go to PADA (asylum seekers' reception centre) and there they are given an appointment for GUDA (one-stop-shop for the request of asylum).

At GUDA, the authorities check and register fingerprints before comparing them with the European databases EURODAC at their disposal. Only people who are actually applying for the first time (not already registered in the database centre), have the right to continue the procedure. Otherwise, according to the Dublin accords, the migrant has to be returned to the first safe country of registration.

For first-time applicants, two procedures are now to be followed on their first day at GUDA.

- After reaching the counter of the prefecture, the applicant is given documents to clarify their story for the OFPRA (Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides) application, to complete within 15 days from the starting day. At this point applicants are given a document confirming their regularity during the entire process of their asylum application, to make them stay legally on French territory.

- Meanwhile, they have to visit the OFII (French Office for Immigration and Integration) for social interviews, to evaluate and verify their vulnerability concerning their family, health, accommodation, etc. These interviews could be repeated several times and are supported by mediators/interpreters.

If the case is considered urgent enough, an emergency procedure is triggered, but this only applies to women who are over seven months pregnant or single women with young children up to one year old. The ADA (asylum seeker allowance) is given to asylum applicants through a prepaid card (EUR 6.80 per day per person). Once the files have been sent to OFPRA the asylum seeker is placed under receipt and they are, therefore, protected during the entire procedure and cannot be sent out of France.

⁴⁶ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000037381808&categorieLien=id>.

⁴⁷ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AJOL_2016_132_R_0002

If OFPRA's response is positive the refugee status gives the right to a 10-year residence permit and access to work (the rest of the family of the refugee also benefit from these same rights). However, if the answer is negative, the obligation to leave the territory must be pronounced in the following month (since January 1, 2019, before then there was no deadline) and the migrant must then leave within 30 days from the notification, except if coming from a country at war, or victim of epidemic, etc. (reactive list). In that case, it is possible to call CNDA (Cour Nationale du Droit d'Asile) and restart the entire process with new deadlines and more specific procedures.

The new law on the one hand brings a number of benefits:

- It has the objective of enforcing the European Directive 2016/801 requiring countries to allow and facilitate asylum seekers to enter the labour market.
- It aims to secure the right to stay of beneficiaries of international protection and their family members, by extending the duration of the residence permit for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection to four years (instead of one year). It standardises the conditions of issue of residence permits for family members of beneficiaries of international protection and extends the benefit of family reunification to the siblings of the refugee who are minors.
- It enhances protection for girls at risk of female circumcision and protective provisions for victims of domestic violence.
- It extends the talent passport to employees of innovative companies. The job search is facilitated for those who have completed their studies in France.

On the other hand, according to the current debate and the interviews with NGOs and civil society organisations, the law presents several shortcomings.

- Concerning reception, as a consequence of the new law migrants arriving in France now have only 90 days from their arrival to apply for asylum (while before the period was 120 days). Moreover, an appeal against an asylum decision will no longer allow the suspension of an expulsion measure for people from so-called safe countries. Moreover, a rejected applicant will no longer be able to apply for another kind of stay except in the event of new circumstances. During the appeal period granted to unsuccessful persons who have been asked to leave the territory, recourse to house arrest will be possible.
- The maximum duration of detention has been doubled from 45 to 90 days. The administrative deduction (the right the authorities have to withhold a civilian without any kind of proof for security reasons) for verification of the right of residence, has been increased from 16 to 24 hours. According to most associations, this is a threat to the fundamental rights of migrants who, because of their condition, may find themselves spending a whole day in custody and without specific charges against them. Moreover, in most cases, by not speaking French they do not have the opportunity to understand what is happening and why they are held by the authorities.
- The offence of unauthorised crossing of external borders is now punishable with one year in prison and a fine of EUR 3,750.
- As waiting time to access the labour market has been widened, finding a regular job, which is complicated even for statutory refugees, has become more difficult. It is therefore increasing the opportunities and risks of being involved illegally. The effects of this choice are even more relevant in the context of the PACA region where there is a high demand for workers in agriculture (flowers, vegetables, etc.) where migrants are frequently employed illegally.

As part of the state emergency order issued following the attacks in November 2015 and July 2016, measures concerning the reintroduction of internal border controls were strengthened in France during 2016. This included steps in relation to the organisation of major sports events

like the Tour de France and the UEFA European Championship 2016. Law no. 2016-1767⁴⁸ of 19 December 2016 extended the state of emergency until 15 July 2017, with consequent border controls.

As already mentioned after the reform implemented in 2018, a more stringent relocation policy has been implemented and asylum seekers are assigned to a specific region by OFII. If they move, they lose their right to stay: therefore, their freedom of movement is restricted to the region they are assigned to⁴⁹.

The integration of migrants and refugees is predominantly managed through a national, mainstream approach: once an individual obtains international protection, they enter the regime of common law (*droit commun*), are treated equally to any other French citizen and can access all mechanisms of social protection. Thus, according to the common-law approach, there is little need for specific measures for refugee populations.

As described in the following Section 2.3, the main institutional actors involved in the reception and integration measures are at national level: The Direction Générale des Étrangers en France (DGEF), the agency within the Ministry of Interior in charge of developing migration and asylum policy; the Office Français de l'immigration et de l'intégration (OFII), responsible for the reception and integration of migrants and asylum seekers, return and reintegration assistance in countries of origin; the Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA) is in charge of examining asylum applications. Local and non-state actors, including NGOs, provide humanitarian assistance and shelter for asylum seekers and refugees; they also help and support migrants in promoting their integration supporting their access to welfare and housing services and the labour market.

⁴⁸ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000033651975&categorieLien=id>

⁴⁹ Article 13 Law n. 2018-778 of 10 September 2018

2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges

This section of the case study focuses on the implementation of reception policies in the PACA region, involvement of local actors and the challenges encountered.

2.1 Topic and motivation

The overall reception procedures in France are highly centralised at the national level: asylum policies – including reception procedures – are largely under prefectural competence.

The PACA region is one of the main migrant receiving regions in France. Therefore, investigating the implementation of national policies in this region can provide a specimen case of the French system of first reception, and the subsequent integration of migrants.

This case study focuses on reception policies of migrants in the region, analysing them from different perspectives through interviews with local and national stakeholders, and through the analysis of relevant policy and analysis documents.

The analysis starts with the description and assessment of how current reception policies are implemented in the PACA region and the problems arising from their implementation. It then considers how other local actors intervene in supporting and complementing formal policies implemented by national and local institutions and mitigating current shortcomings in terms of reception, housing and access to work.

These shortcomings, according to experts and actors interviewed, have led to a slow transfer of the responsibility of reception and integration from the state towards the associations and NGOs. The civil society, the NGOs and local associations in France hence represent key actors in supporting the state in reception and integration policies. It is in this context that a few initiatives, promoted by local actors at local level to answer the needs of asylum seekers and refugees, have been analysed.

2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention

In France, admitting an asylum seeker means giving them the means to live, and accommodation. The prefecture (representing the French State) is supposed to play the most significant role in reception, accommodation and integration measures, but the current situation, according to recent studies and interviews, is highly problematic.

The interventions analysed in the case study refer to the role played by local PACA networks of NGOs in supporting asylum seekers and refugees. This relates to their access to PACA and France in general, and in their integration path within the French bureaucratic system. The objective of the 'interventions' analysed is to describe how other actors intervene at local level offering help and 360° support to all those in need. This is in a problematic context, where the French government is progressively reducing support and protection offered to asylum seekers and refugees.

The problems derive from the previous and current French legislation, and from its application. According to the most recent *AIDA Country Report France 201750* (published in 2018) the French reception system presents several critical issues, many of them of particular concern for the PACA region.

- Concerning asylum procedures, the main problem is represented by pushbacks: 'Massive and unlawful pushbacks of migrants have taken place at the Italian border throughout 2017 and led to condemnation by courts. To circumvent the controls set up in Menton, migratory routes have shifted towards riskier journeys through the Alps, near Briançon.' (AIDA 2018) As a consequences of mass arrest procedures, migratory routes have been modified, leading migrants to cross borders through the mountains. 'Media reports have documented incidents of unaccompanied children refused entry by police authorities and directed towards the Italian border.' (AIDA, 2018). Local people have supported asylum seekers by rescuing them on the mountains, others have helped some migrants to reach Nice in order to apply for asylum there. Several of these people helping migrants have been prosecuted and ultimately convicted by French courts (AIDA, 2018).
- Registration of asylum applications are managed at the GUDA, the national 'one-stop-shop'. The AIDA report showcases that there has been no improvement from 2016: in most areas, the prefectures have been unable to register claims within the three working days deadline set by the law⁵¹. Moreover, even though several humanitarian organisations as well as court rulings have condemned prefectures for failing to register the asylum applications of people entering from Italy, illegal police operations at the border have been extended from the Menton and Nice areas in 2016 and 2017, to the Hautes-Alpes in 2017.
- As for reception conditions, the AIDA report evidences that 'reception capacity is still insufficient, despite the creation of 25,000 additional accommodation places in 2017, bringing the total number to more than 80,000'. Of these, 5,294 are in the PACA region (6.6 % of the total national number). As a consequence of the lack of available shelters, many asylum seekers still live on the streets.
- Also, the integration in the labour market is particularly hard for asylum seekers and refugees. According to the law they are allowed to access the labour market from the moment they are granted asylum, whether they are refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, and they have the same access as French citizens. However, the reality is different: asylum seekers have very limited access to the labour market, due to a number of constraints of which some were mentioned in the sections above.

The new immigration and asylum law does not seem to have modified this situation significantly, but it is too early to provide an assessment of the impact of the new law on reception procedures. In any case, it is considered by most of the associations as 'a dangerous law', exposing migrants increasingly to the risk of remaining illegally on the French territory, involved in irregular jobs, detained and/or fined.

⁵⁰ http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/report-download/aida_fr_2017update.pdf

⁵¹ To restore the three-day time limit, the Minister of Interior published a circular on 12 January 2018 which plans to increase the staff in prefectures and OFII and to reorganise services. This plan envisages fully open desks every day of the week, as well as overbooking to compensate for 'no show' appointments.

Nevertheless, some of the outcomes are already imaginable: with the shortening of deadlines, refugees, who do not speak the language and do not know the associations that will help them, cannot exercise their rights. Thereby, most of these people are often refused a protective status and returned to their country of origin. The situation is particularly critical for asylum seekers without any networks to count on (which is the case for around 55 % of official asylum seekers in the region).

It is in this context that the role of associations becomes essential. The lack of adequate support by the state has led to the development of different forms of support and rescue organised by associations in various areas. A wide network of associations helps migrants in accompanying them through all the procedures, to learn French, to create intercultural and religious links and to access housing and the labour market.

In the following part we analyse the system of actors active in the PACA region. In the next part, we analyse the role played by each actor in reception, housing and access to the labour market, with focus on how NGOs complement institutional actions.

2.3 The actors

As mentioned above, France has a highly centralised reception policy with prefectures (representing the French State and its Ministry of Interior) playing the most significant role in reception, accommodation and integration policies. The other two national key actors are OFII and OFPRA.

- Direction générale des étrangers en France (DGEF): This is an agency within the Ministry of Interior (Moi) in charge of developing migration and asylum policy.
- Office Français de l'immigration et de l'intégration (OFII), under the supervision of the Moi is responsible for the reception and integration of migrants during the first five years of their stay in France. It is also responsible for the reception of asylum seekers, return and reintegration assistance in countries of origin.
- Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA) is in charge of examining asylum applications.

Table 5. List of the authorities intervening in each stage of the procedure

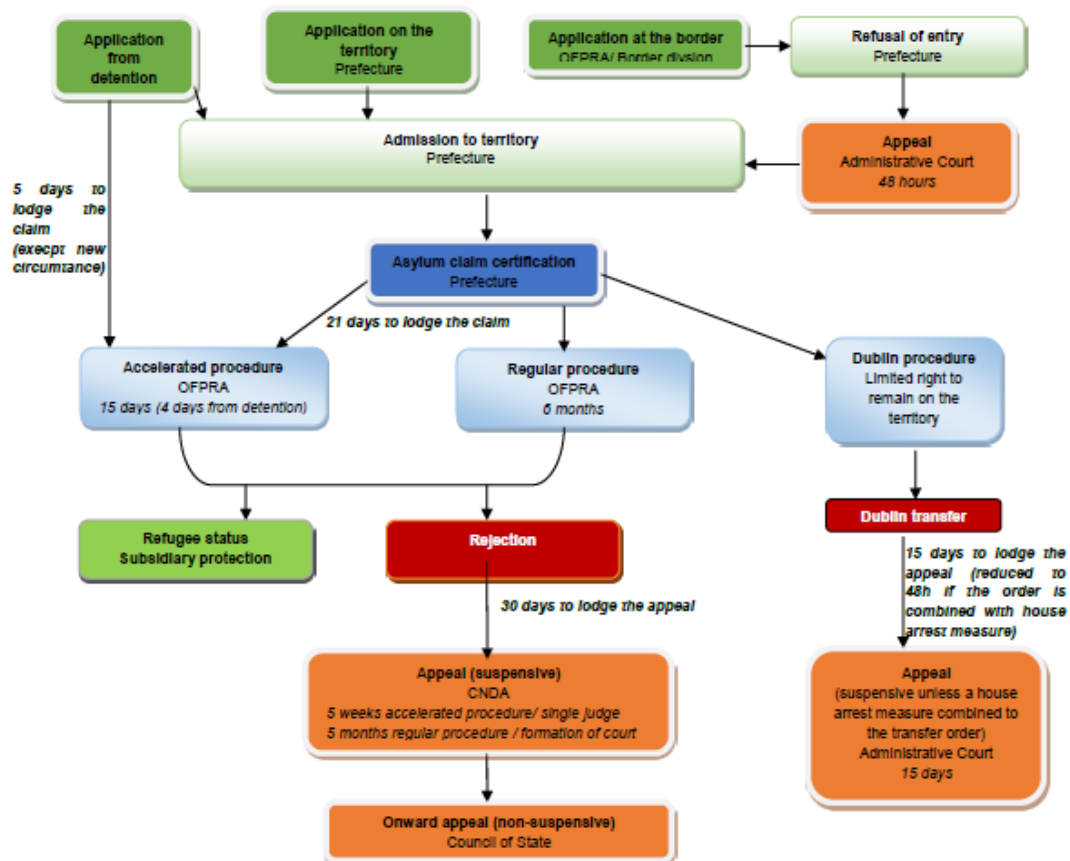
	Competent authority (EN)	Original name in French
Application at the border	Border Division, Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA)	Division de l'asile à la frontière, Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA)
Application on the territory	Prefecture/French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII)	Préfecture /Office Français de l'immigration et l'intégration (OFII)
Dublin procedure	Prefecture	Préfecture

Accelerated procedure	Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA)	Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA)
Refugee status determination	Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA)	Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA)
Appeal	National Court of Asylum (CNDA)	Cour nationale du droit d'asile (CNDA)
Onward appeal	Council of State	Conseil d'Etat
Subsequent application (admissibility)	Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA)	Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA)

Source: AIDA, 2018

The following flowchart describes the roles played by the different actors and the procedures to be undertaken to obtain an asylum status.

Figure 2: Flow chart of the asylum procedure in France



Source: AIDA, 2018

A plethora of working groups and agreements between ministries and departments have been set up to improve the reception of asylum seekers and the integration of refugees.

- An inter-ministerial delegate for refugee integration was created in early 2018, which strives to improve harmonisation between different sectors and levels of governance involved in integration.
- Concerning employment, for example in 2016 an agreement was signed between OFII and Pôle Emploi to assist with helping asylum seekers secure employment or professional training. In 2017, multistakeholder working groups to promote refugee integration were created.
- Concerning housing policies, the interdepartmental delegation to housing and access to housing (*Délégation interministérielle à l'hébergement et à l'accès au logement – DIHAL*) was created in 2010 to improve the coordination and coherent policy between different organs of the state dealing with housing. Since 2015, its migration centre assists refugees in finding housing solutions.

While reception policies are the responsibility of the national level, local and non-state actors, including NGOs, have proved crucial in providing humanitarian assistance and shelter for asylum seekers and refugees. It is equally true that they also provide support in the preliminary reception phases in accompanying them through all the procedures.

There is a growing recognition that the successful integration of migrants and refugees requires targeted approaches that go beyond a common-law approach. This is specifically the approach that associations and NGOs implement when dealing with integration policies at local level. To this effect, various pilot programmes promoted by local actors, civil society organisations and NGOs have been created to improve integration prospects. These often adopt a comprehensive approach: they provide refugees with a personalised support package including, for instance, accommodation, language and vocational training, and support to access welfare support. These initiatives tend to involve collaborations between state and non-state actors at the national, regional or local level.

For instance in the PACA region, most of the associations helping migrants in accessing welfare and housing services, the labour market and French courses, are international or national organisations which have implemented their activities in the region. For example, *Secours Catholique* which covers the whole country, thanks to its 3,700 local teams distributed in 75 local offices called 'delegations', or *Amnesty International*. *Forum réfugiés-Cosi* is another important national NGO present at local level. It is also one of the six national NGOs present quasi-permanently in reception centres to inform and support migrants. The access to detention facilities is possible only for accredited organisations in one or more of the nine areas in which the French territory has been articulated. Each area is called a lot. *Forum réfugiés-Cosi* has formal access to CRA (centres of detention) in Lot 3 (Lyon, Marseille and Nice) and in Lot 4 (Nîmes, Perpignan and Sète).

There are also many regional organisations such as *Cimade Sud Est*, which is a key actor, having headquarters in Nice, Marseille, Aix-en-Provence and Hautes-Alpes. They mainly offer legal support, consulting and French classes. *ESPACE (the Support Space for Professionals of Reception and Council for Foreigners)*, is another key actor in the PACA region, organising a *resource centre for stakeholders* involved in the integration process. Another important actor

is OSIRIS, specialising in the psychological support to victims of traumas among asylum seekers, refugees, 'dubliners' migrants, undocumented migrants and those having endured torture and political repression.

Associations have recently created a network of organisations working near the Italian/French border under the name of CAFFIM. It involves Amnesty International France, La Cimade du Sud Est, Médecins du Monde, Médecins sans Frontières, Secours Catholique, Caritas France, all solidarity and human rights associations, with the aim to help, support and denounce human rights violations on the PACA territory.

2.4 Implementation

As mentioned previously, reception and integration policies are carried out at different levels by state and non-state actors, with the latter playing a prominent role in particular as far as integration is concerned. Most of the organisations cited above offer their support with one or more key policies in the overall reception and integration process of asylum seekers and refugees.

To describe the articulated role played by NGOs, some examples of how they implement their interventions are described below. The descriptions provided are based on interviews to stakeholders and on the websites of each organisation.

The first organisation considered is ESPACE⁵², as it plays an interesting role in local networking. Since its creation in 2001, ESPACE (*the Support Space for Professionals of Reception and Council for Foreigners*), is a resource centre for stakeholders in the integration process in the PACA region. It implements a set of coherent interventions and services to support the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, and their access to the institutional policies of reception and integration.

ESPACE participates in the various departmental steering committees of the region and works in partnership with various county councils, promoting networking of the different actors working in the area of access to social rights by migrants.

It is a crucial centre for networking actors throughout the region. Since 2003, ESPACE has been entrusted, by the state, with the animation of the network of *Points of Support and Access to Law* in the Bouches-du-Rhône (PAADE⁵³), contributing to the establishment of a similar network in the Vaucluse department. Since 2005, ESPACE also contributes to the establishment and organisation of associated networks in the other departments. It works to improve access to social rights in the region by setting up common tools to be used by other

⁵² <http://espace.asso.fr/>

⁵³ <http://espace.asso.fr/25-ans-des-paade/>

organisations such as training courses, common evaluation and dissemination tools, and implementing a legal service available to all these actors.

In 2017, ESPACE also participated in the implementation of the new *Regional Plan of Reception of Asylum Seekers (SRADAR⁵⁴)* and provided its tools and services to relevant stakeholders. The aim is to facilitate cooperation between the different actors involved in the integration process of newcomers and first-time asylum seekers.

Part of its funding comes from EU funds. For example, in 2013 ESPACE obtained the support of the *European Integration Fund (EIF)* to co-finance its development and in 2015 it obtained multiyear funding from the *Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)*.

Other organisations play different roles within the wide framework of policies in place to facilitate access and integration of migrants.

A key actor involved in reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees is the cited *Forum réfugiés-Cosi⁵⁵*, a non-profit association working for the reception of refugees and the defence of the right of asylum. Its establishment follows the merger in May 2012 of the associations *Forum réfugiés* and *Cosi-promouvoir et défendre les droits*. The new association *Forum réfugiés-Cosi*, resulting from a close collaboration between the two associations, promotes the reception of refugees and the support of development towards democracy in countries of origin, tackling the problem from both sides.

It works on several different aspects of reception and integration, as described in their recent report on activities implemented⁵⁶.

- Reception procedures:
 - The forum manages six *reception platforms*: – in Lyon since 1994, in Nice since 2011, in Clermont-Ferrand since 2014, in Marseille since 2016, in Toulouse and Montauban since 2017. The reception platform for asylum seekers is a unique resource centre that centralises the information and legal, administrative and social support needed by people in need of protection, so they can be guided and counselled in their access to asylum and social rights. Its mission is to refer the newly arrived asylum seekers to the various competent organisations or to directly provide useful services thanks to specialised professionals. The platform thus provides a pre-reception service to asylum seekers prior to their visit to the one-stop-shop for registration, evaluation and orientation.
 - Since 31 July 2015, it is a third party authorised by OFPRA to accompany asylum seekers during their interview at the office, in accordance with the provisions of the code of the entry and residence of foreigners and the right of asylum.
 - The platform also accompanies asylum seekers after their visit to the one-stop-shop, offering various services. All these activities are offered free of charge.

⁵⁴Schéma régional d'accueil des demandeurs d'asile Paca <https://www.lacimade.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/sch%C3%A9ma-r%C3%A9gion-PACA.pdf>

⁵⁵ <http://www.forumrefugies.org/>

⁵⁶Forum réfugiés-Cosi, ACCUEILLIR, PROTÉGER, ACCOMPAGNER, DÉFENDRE, http://www.forumrefugies.org/content/download/4635/46318/version/1/file/Plaque+Forum+r%C3%A9fugi%C3%A9s-Cosi_2018.pdf

- Hospitality and accommodation: Forum réfugiés-Cosi manages the following.
 - Six hosting platforms in Clermont-Ferrand, Lyon, Marseille, Montauban, Nice and Toulouse; asylum seekers benefit from their support in the opening and application of the asylum procedure.
 - A transit centre in the Rhône temporarily hosts asylum seekers, provides administrative, legal and social support, and organises referrals for accommodation.
 - Reception and needs assessment centres in the Rhône, Clermont-Ferrand and Marseille (CAES) shelter people identified as seeking asylum.
 - Reception centres for asylum seekers (CADA) are found in the Rhône and its metropolis, Allier, Puy-de-Dôme, Corrèze and Var. The CADA provides accommodation, social and medical support, and legal and administrative monitoring of asylum seekers.
 - There are emergency shelter arrangements in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, where asylum seekers receive support as close as possible to the one offered in CADA.
 - Provisional accommodation centres (CPH) host recognised refugees.
 - There are facilities for the accommodation, evaluation and monitoring of unaccompanied minors.
- Healthcare: Throughout the asylum procedure, their health centre provides medical consultations, psychological therapies, physiotherapy sessions, art therapy workshops and prevention advice.
- Support to integration: Forum réfugiés-Cosi implements settlement programmes for people who have already been granted refugee status in a first host country, including Syrians and people from sub-Saharan Africa.
- Support to detained refugees: This is in the *administrative detention centres* where the forum is mandated (Lyon, Marseille, Nice and Nîmes). Teams of experts put their legal expertise at the service of the effective exercise of the rights of foreigners held while awaiting their expulsion towards their country of origin, or towards a third country. It also provides legal support by telephone to foreigners detained in border areas.
- Support to unaccompanied minors and young adults: Forum réfugiés-Cosi provides an information, counselling and support activity for unaccompanied foreign minors, in the framework of an agreement with the Métropole de Lyon. The mission of the forum is to inform them on their rights and to accompany them in their asylum application. As part of this project, in 2012 the forum opened ten accommodation places for young adults (18–21 years old) applying for asylum and under a ‘young adult’ contract with the city of Lyon. Beyond the sheltering of young people and their comprehensive follow-up, the forum organises empowerment and integration activities in school and vocational training for these young people.
- Support to victims of human trafficking: Forum réfugiés-Cosi coordinated a transnational project on identifying the specific needs of victims of trafficking in human beings in relation to the asylum procedure and reception condition. This project was implemented by six partners in Belgium, Cyprus, Spain, Italy, Ireland, the United Kingdom and an associated partner in Switzerland.
- Political and awareness-raising action: Forum réfugiés-Cosi contributes to the evolution of public policies concerning asylum procedure as well as their implementation.
 - through monitoring and advocacy on the evolution of legislative, regulatory and jurisprudential frameworks in France and Europe;
 - through the involvement in European projects;
 - through the development of training for professionals and volunteers working in the field of asylum and migration, as well as future professionals of social action;

- through the *Floribert Chebeya Documentation Centre*⁵⁷, with more than 2,800 references on geopolitics, international relations, migration and human rights, with a non-exclusive focus on central Africa.

Forum réfugiés-Cosi supports more than 30,000 people each year offering more than 2,300 hosting places. They involve 350 employees and 450 volunteers. Their actions are funded mainly by the state, the European Union, the United Nations, and local territorial and private foundations.

Another, much more specific action promoted by NGOs concerns the psychological support to victims of traumas, being asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants. This is the case, for instance, of the *OSIRIS centre*⁵⁸, founded in Marseille in 1999. OSIRIS works with people that have lived through war, torture, ethnical conflicts, genocide, massacres, and forced relocation and exile. They offer psychoanalytic support, with the therapeutic objective to relieve the post-traumatic suffering, offering appropriate care. The healthcare team is specialised and multidisciplinary, and includes interpreters, a physical therapist, psychiatrists, a clinical psychologist and a social psychologist. They also support unaccompanied minors who are frequently in need of urgent measures. OSIRIS collaborates with national institutions dealing with asylum, but while previously their patients came only from OFPRA, the CNDA and CADA, now it is mostly people without a status, under serious pressure due to the long waiting for recognition. As a result of this changing of those assisted, the OSIRIS centre is now also involved in helping them in a wider perspective. They are spending time and resources in supporting them to apply for welfare services and benefits instead of helping them psychologically.

2.5 Outcomes, impacts and results of the specific policy

The case study is focused on the support offered by NGOs to asylum seekers and refugees in a context characterised by the difficulty of institutions in dealing with migration policies. NGOs also play a prominent role in keeping the attention and in permanently assessing the condition of the reception system in France. There are a few considerations emerging from the debate and the interviews conducted, concerning outcomes and results of policies addressing asylum seekers and refugees in the PACA region.

The first perspective concerns registration procedures: according to the law, between the registration at PADA and the convocation at GUDA (one-stop-shop) there should be three days, maximum ten in specific cases, of waiting. As stated by interviewees, only in the last part of 2017 at national level did people wait on average 40 days before being called by the GUDA.

⁵⁷ <http://www.forumrefugies.org/s-informer/centre-de-documentation-floribert-chebeya>.

⁵⁸ <http://www.centreosiris.org/accueil>

The one-stop-shop (or 'single desk') system was aimed at reducing delays relating to registration and avoiding long lines of people presenting themselves in front of prefectures, but the result is that the additional step added to the procedure has led to more complexity and delays in accessing the overall procedure. As the AIDA report evidences 'it takes several months to obtain an appointment at the PADA, followed by several weeks of delay for an appointment at the single desk'. The support offered by several NGOs in this preliminary reception phase is proving to be relevant, as emerges from interviews. In accompanying asylum seekers through all the procedures of specific competence of the French State, they help to simplify the access, in particular for those who are not able to speak French and who lack contacts and supporting networks. Particularly relevant is their role in supporting unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups.

NGOs support asylum seekers in registering to obtain the economic support. As interviewees evidence, two main problems arise: 1) the complexity of procedures; 2) the long waiting time to receive the support provided by the law. In fact, asylum seekers cannot access any form of income support for a considerable period of time, and they become completely dependent on NGOs and associations. The French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), in charge of asylum, has to advise every asylum seeker, after registration, about material conditions of reception (CMA). Thereby, if at GUDA (one-stop-shop), people sign the offer of care, they can benefit from the material conditions of reception (CMA). They are registered on the DNA (National System of Reception - *Dispositif national d'accueil*), which allows them to collect the allowance once they are allocated. However, as described during interviews, only a minority of people actually have access to accommodation, they can not access economic support.

Waiting is a constant for people seeking asylum. As soon as they arrive, they must wait to register their asylum application, then once being transferred to the GUDA (one-stop-shop) and subject to acceptance of material reception conditions, they wait at least 45 days for the payment of the ADA (the benefit for asylum seekers) to be effective. There are also problems linked to procedures which hamper the access of beneficiaries to the sums they are entitled to. Interviewees state that suspensions of ADA payments are very frequent and, according to them, there are many problems related to differentiated treatment among family members (OFII grants a single bank card per family unit, and it is *de facto* allocated to the man in the couple, and the woman becomes completely dependent on her partner), random examinations, file misplacement and administrative blockages. Individuals and families may remain without economic support for several months and fail to recover the unpaid amounts. In addition, part of the amount does not take children into account. According to the organisations working with migrants, many people seeking asylum have been deprived of the ADA due to malfunctions of *Dispositif national d'accueil* (DNA). As a result, people are left without financial resources for long periods, without explanation and without any institutional contact to move through the procedures. The absence of accompaniment and money forces people into precariousness and absolute deprivation. In this limbo, asylum seekers cannot even access the labour market, and this makes them extremely vulnerable to recruitment by criminal organisations. It is up to

local associations to provide migrants with food, drinks and then accommodation, accompanying them through all the procedural steps to be taken. After obtaining refugee status, the situation gets better through training, the insertion into the labour market and a house provided by the state⁵⁹.

Access to the labour market is another area of concern for the stakeholders interviewed. It is allowed only if OFPRA has not taken a decision on the asylum application within nine months after the registration of the application and only if this delay cannot be attributed to the applicant. In any case, asylum seekers have very limited access to the labour market, due to a number of constraints. They have to be able to work and they need a temporary work permit. To obtain it, the asylum seeker has to provide proof of a job offer or an employment contract. The duration of the work permit cannot exceed the duration of the residence permit linked to the asylum application. This falls under the competence of the DIRECCTE, the Regional Direction for companies, competition, consumption, work and employment at the Ministry of Labour.

As described by the AIDA report, to grant or deny a work permit the prefecture may take into account some elements of assessment such as 'the current and future employment situation in the profession required by the foreign worker and the geographical area where he or she intends to exercise this profession'. In France, in the context of the reform of the public employment service⁶⁰ a decree described the fields of work that are experiencing recruitment difficulties which justify the involvement of third-country nationals to work without imposing restrictions. The latest version is updated to 2016⁶¹.

According to the CESEDA law⁶², once they are granted asylum, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are allowed to access the labour market under the same conditions as French citizens. However, the reality is that they face considerable difficulties. It is difficult for them to find a job as they face several obstacles:

- Language: French classes provided by the French State are insufficient to get a job. Therefore, they often turn to their native community to be supported in their professional path, which might complicate their integration.
- Accommodation: In the countryside, locations are frequently in remote areas and without a car it is almost impossible to find a job.
- Lack of recognition of their national diplomas: As a consequence, highly skilled beneficiaries face various obstacles to entering the labour market, and when they find a job they have to accept those needing no qualifications.

⁵⁹ CFDA, 2018, *D'une réforme à l'autre, L'asile en danger*.

⁶⁰ <https://www.vie-publique.fr/actualite/panorama/texte-vote/loi-du-13-fevrier-2008-relative-reforme-organisation-du-service-public-emploi.html>

⁶¹ Observatoire Régional des Métiers Les métiers en tension structurelle en PACA <https://www.orm-paca.org/Les-metiers-en-tension-structurelle-en-PACA-729>

⁶² Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile.

- Accessing vocational training: This is difficult because it is subject to the issue of a work permit.

As mentioned in the AIDA report, NGOs and other organisations support beneficiaries in determining their professional path and facilitating their integration into the labour market. Partnerships are implemented with stakeholders in charge of access to the labour market and the struggle against unemployment. They work in close collaboration with the French national employment agency (Pôle Emploi) or with other local charities and NGOs to facilitate the professional integration of beneficiaries.

An interesting public action is under development at national level, to support professional integration of beneficiaries of international protection facing difficulties in access to the labour market and in the assessment and recognition of their skills. As part of the Skills Investment Plan (ICP), the Office of the *High Commissioner for Skills and Inclusion through Employment* launched a call for projects for the professional integration of refugees⁶³. Thanks to its success, a second wave was launched at the beginning of April 2019. The Government's Skills Investment Plan has the dual objective of training one million young people and one million low-skilled jobseekers, and accelerating the transformation of vocational training. The call for projects, with a budget of EUR 15 million, aims to contribute to their professional integration through the deployment of support programmes in employment or business creation. The call for projects is aimed at all types of actors (public or private, including associations and public operators with legal status). Its purpose is to encourage coordination and cooperation between players in the same territory, as well as the mobilisation of companies and the development of actions in connection with companies. The desired actions may, in addition to existing policies, be oriented towards: a) career paths towards employment or the creation of activity, in a logic of global support (employment, housing, mobility, health, removal of cultural barriers, etc.); b) preliminary diagnosis actions (knowledge of the beneficiaries, local actors including economic actors, the opportunities of a territory), coordination and structuring of actors at the level of a territory, pooling of resources and professionalisation of actors; c) any action to better assess and recognise the competences of beneficiaries of international protection; d) any action aimed at multiplying bridges between beneficiaries of international protection and companies and facilitating their access and retention of employment (recruitment procedures, support for the entrepreneur).

The call for projects is intended to encourage the reinforcement of existing cooperation and the creation of new forms of cooperation between public and private actors on a territory. The target is composed of beneficiaries of international protection looking for employment or vocational training: refugees (residence permit of 10 years), beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, stateless persons. Particular attention will be paid to the following targets: women,

⁶³ Appel à projets pour l'intégration professionnelle des réfugiés <http://paca.direccte.gouv.fr/Appel-a-projets-pour-l-integration-professionnelle-des-refugies>

young people under 26, seniors (40 years and over), or illiterate people. Eligible expenditure must be at least EUR 400,000 (for projects covering a maximum period of three years). The financing of the project by the state (all ministries combined) cannot exceed 80 % of the base. Project promoters must be able to mobilise other types of financing (private financing, local government funding, European funds, etc.). The call for projects will close on 1 October 2019; it will then require time to assess the impact of this relevant initiative. However, it is possible to state at the moment is that stakeholders consider this call particularly innovative. They believe it has the potential to encourage the reinforcement of existing cooperation between public and private actors on a territory and with a strong transversal approach across policies and ministries. This call has the characteristics to let promoters be particularly free in the elaboration of proposals, leaving space for creativity and professionalism.

Concerning the accommodation of asylum seekers, the main role is played by OFII: the asylum seeker has to present themselves at the accommodation proposed by OFII within five days. If not, the offer is considered to be refused and the asylum seeker will not be entitled to any other material reception conditions. Accommodation facilities are mainly in accommodation centres for asylum seekers (CADA – collective reception centres and scattered housing in apartments) and other types of accommodation funded by the Ministry of Interior, including emergency accommodation. In December 2017, the national and regional reception scheme (*Dispositif national d'accueil, DNA*) included 80,221 places, 5,294 in the PACA region.

Table 6 : Asylum seekers accommodated in French accommodation facilities in 2018

Region	CADA⁶⁴ Reception centre	AT-SA⁶⁵ centrally managed emergency centres	HUDA⁶⁶ decentralised emergency shelters	PRAHDA⁶⁷ reception and accommodation programme for asylum seekers	CAO⁶⁸ reception and orientation centres
Provence Alpes-Côte- d'Azur	2,551	524	1,142	297	780
Total	40,450	5,776	18,514	5,351	10,130

Source: AIDA 2018

Asylum seekers accommodated in these facilities receive an address (attestation de domiciliation) and are allowed to open a bank account and to receive mail. The management of these asylum reception centres is subcontracted to the semi-public company Adoma or to NGOs. These have been selected through a public call for tenders, and include Forum

⁶⁴ Centre d'accueil pour demandeurs d'asile

⁶⁵ Temporary accommodation – asylum office | Accueil temporaire – service de l'asile

⁶⁶ Emergency accommodation for asylum seekers | Hébergement d'urgence dédié aux demandeurs d'asile

⁶⁷ Programme for Reception and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers | d'accueil et d'hébergement des demandeurs d'asile

⁶⁸ Reception and Orientation Centre | Centre d'accueil et d'orientation

réfugiés-Cosi, France terre d'asile, l'Ordre de Malte, Coallia and the French Red Cross. The centres fall under the French social initiatives (action sociale) and are funded by the state.

As emerges from interviews and policy documents in the area of accommodation, the situation is very critical. This is despite efforts in the PACA region over the supply of accommodation, implemented by the most recent laws, which has sharply increased the number of places since 2015. However, this still remains insufficient considering the figures for asylum seekers. It remains very difficult to find accommodation. According to the AIDA report in 2016, the average delay to securing accommodation depends on the area where asylum seekers submit their claim. In Lyon, the average delay between the registration of the claim and access to housing is 62 days, while in Marseille, this delay goes up to 101 days, whereas it is around 70 days in Nice. The most severe emergency in fact is in Marseille, being one of the most exposed area in terms of migrant-managing, together with Paris and Calais. Asylum seekers are supposed to be accommodated, but this is not always the case and undocumented migrants are very frequently in a condition of homelessness. In 2017, the Marseille Asylum Platform registered 5,585 people. A total of 3,694 people returned to the PADA after the registration of their asylum application at GUDA (one-stop-shop), because they had not been placed in an accommodation due to lack of places provided by the state. As a consequence, several people have become homeless. Most of the interviewees differentiate between Nice and Marseille, with Nice considered in a much better situation, even though it is far from being optimal. Since 2015, the situation has worsened. Accommodation is both insufficient to host all the asylum seekers having the right to be accommodated, and is turning out to be of poorer quality, with the state having serious difficulties in meeting local needs.

The worst situation in Marseille relates to unaccompanied minors. Coming to France without any documents, most of them are subject to evaluation by the Social Assistance for Childhood (ASE) that operates on a national level. Indeed, the vulnerability assessment by OFII administrative agents is based on an extremely simple grid which does not allow for a thorough assessment of each situation. It is only a quick and administrative assessment and not an overall social assessment of people's fragility and vulnerability. This evaluation is strongly questioned by professionals in the sector. Since it is often arbitrary, many of those who are assessed as adults are actually minors, and even when they get the status of minors, in Marseille they are often homeless despite a national provision for the housing of minors. Every day, only in Marseille, it is possible to count between 75 and 80 minors recognised by the state who are not cared for by the national reception system.

A study was conducted between September 2017 and May 2018 in Marseille by *Comité pour la santé des exilés (Comede)*⁶⁹. It shows that the deterioration of the human and material conditions of the reception of people in asylum procedure who recently arrived in France is

⁶⁹ Comité pour la santé des exilés (Comede), (2018), *L'asile en exil* <http://www.comede.org/lasile-en-exil-un-rapport-de-observatoire-asile-a-marseille/>

evident. The problems of access to subsistence (food), physical security (shelter, income) and health are multiplying. This exacerbates forms of abandonment, neglect and endangering of the exiled population. Due to this worrying context, members of the *Hospitality Network*⁷⁰ launched the creation of an Asylum Observatory in Marseille in summer 2017. The aim was to bring together associations, organisations, researchers and activists, to propose a critical space to exchange views on the problems related to the system of reception of the people in their request for asylum.

In this difficult context, PACA, historically speaking, is a region of migration and transit, and large numbers of migrants (of second and third generation), have settled in cities like Nice and Marseille. It is of particular interest to understand whether – especially in cities like Marseilles and Nice – previous migration has influenced the policies of integration of new refugee and asylum seeker flows in terms of policies of local institutions. The COMEDE⁷¹ study evidences that the role played by organisations promoted by second and third generations is particularly relevant. Migrant networks have been described as informal, based on the principle of mutual help between compatriots, and scarce information has been found regarding this concern. Militants from second or third generation of migrants, refugees or asylum seekers are not described as particularly socially active in the region. The political situation and the general climate of terroristic alarm (also as a consequence of the recent attack in Nice) hampers the role and the work of local associations promoted by migrants in the PACA region. Therefore, those who have already obtained their refugee status or that have African origins, tend not to militate close to the border and in the PACA region. They usually go to major cities (like Paris or Lyon), and those who stay tend not to get involved. An important exception to this general tendency is the collective *Al Manba*⁷² in Marseille, also called the collective in support of migrants. Al Manba is a collective born during the summer of 2015 in response to the blocking of the Franco-Italian border, in collaboration with migrants and Italian supporters in Ventimiglia. It began by arranging meeting in an abandoned garage with the aim of making it a space of struggles and sharing, a meeting point in the neighbourhood. Here migrants, asylum seekers and refugees have their space to get involved and fight against their often-inhuman conditions. Initially created to facilitate transits and pool sources of information, nowadays it allows migrants to anticipate the trip to France, to counter obstacles, including smugglers and repression, preparing the following steps in advance. They aim at maintaining a good connection with Ventimiglia and the mobilisation on the Italian side. They offer personalised administrative and legal support, support for the mobilisation of migrants who transit and settle in Marseille, and economic support through the organisation of solidarity events.

⁷⁰ <https://reseauhospitalite.org/>

⁷¹ <http://www.comede.org>

⁷² <https://elmanba.noblogs.org/home/>

3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

Conclusions

France is a country of immigration (and emigration of French youth seeking employment opportunities abroad). It is also a transit country, with respect to the makeshift camps in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region hosting migrants and refugees who strive to reach the United Kingdom. In recent years, France has faced unprecedented numbers of asylum claims. The French asylum office OFPRA indicates that in 2017, France registered a sustained increase in asylum applications (+17 %) from 2016, with some 100,412 requests presented. Asylum seekers and refugees are predominantly located in large metropolitan centres and particularly the Ile de France region. The PACA region analysed as the case study, being a border region with Italy, is one of the main migrant receiving regions in France.

Since the early 1970s, French migration and asylum policy has been focused on deterrence and stopping migration. The integration landscape is now certainly changing in France. President Macron declared refugee integration as a priority for his migration agenda. In 2018, a new immigration asylum law, *Law 10 September 2018 for a controlled immigration, an effective right of asylum and a successful integration*, was adopted. This law has made reception policies in France more severe and procedures have been accelerated, with asylum applications filed and processed more quickly.

Asylum seekers benefit from freedom of movement (if not detained), but as reception conditions are offered in a specific region, the asylum seeker is required to reside there. Since the reform implemented in 2018, a more stringent relocation policy has been implemented as asylum seekers are allocated to a specific region even if they are not offered an accommodation place⁷³. Non-compliance with this requirement entails a termination of reception conditions.

France is a highly centralised country with asylum and migration policies being defined at the national level. However, the consequences of changes in the political approach are relevant at regional level, in particular as far as the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region is concerned.

The analysis has moved from the description and assessment of how current reception policies are implemented in the PACA region and the problems arising from their implementation. The case study has put specific attention on the role played by other local actors to support and complement formal policies implemented by national and local institutions, to mitigate current shortcomings in terms of reception, housing and access to work. In particular, literature and stakeholders interviewed underline the following:

- Asylum seekers and refugees are confronted with difficulties regarding access to the labour market. Interviews indicate that very few asylum seekers apply for a work permit. This is due first of all to the challenging requirements, insufficient language competence,

⁷³ Article 13 Law no 2018-778 of 10 September 2018

holding no professional experience in France, not being able to have their qualifications recognised and a lack of social networks.

- Also, access to welfare provision is a serious concern for asylum applicants and exacerbates the vulnerability of these people, leaving them in a situation of neglect and danger.
- One of the key reception and integration challenges is regarding access to (adequate) housing. Less than 50 % of asylum seekers receive dedicated accommodation, and refugees often stay for extended periods in emergency accommodation, reception centres for asylum seekers or even in makeshift camps. Indeed, refugees often experience extremely precarious living situations and the problem persists for those granted refugee status.
- A final consideration concerns the impact of the growth in an illegal presence of asylum seekers in the area, due increasing difficulties in obtaining a legal status.

These shortcomings, according to experts and actors interviewed, have led to a transfer of the responsibility of reception and integration from the state towards associations and NGOs.

Lessons learnt

The integration landscape is now certainly moving in France as the current President Emmanuel Macron declared refugee integration as a priority for his migration agenda.

In 2018, a new immigration asylum law was adopted: *Law 10 September 2018 for a controlled immigration, an effective right of asylum and a successful integration*. It was promulgated after a long disagreement in the mixed joint commission, an indicator of a policy controversy. Its official objectives can be summarised as follows: a) reducing the time taken to examine the asylum application; b) strengthening the fight against irregular immigration; c) improving the reception of foreigners admitted, staying for their skills and talents. In line with these objectives, several measures have been taken and others will be taken in the next few months through implementation decrees. It is too early to provide an assessment of the impact of the new law on reception and integration procedures. Stakeholders interviewed are doubtful of the potential of this new law to correct critical issues posed by previous French legislation.

- These shortcomings, according to experts and actors interviewed, have led to a slippage of the responsibility of reception and integration from the state towards the associations and NGOs. Civil society, the NGOs and local associations in France now represent key actors in supporting the state in reception and integration policies.
- France, and in particular the case studied in the PACA region, represents a good practice when considering the relevance of the role played by associations and actors at local level to answer to needs of asylum seekers and refugees. A wide network of associations helps migrants in accompanying them through all the procedures, to learn French, to create intercultural and religious links, and in access to housing and the labour market.
- In France, to admit an asylum seeker is to give them the means to live and accommodation. The prefecture (representing the French State) is supposed to play the most significant role in reception, accommodation and integration, but the current situation has been described by recent studies and interviews as highly problematic. This is despite efforts in the PACA region over the supply of accommodation, implemented by the most

recent laws, which has sharply increased the number of places since 2015. The management of asylum reception centres is subcontracted to the semi-public company Adoma or to NGOs. These have been selected through a public call for tenders and include Forum réfugiés-Cosi, France terre d'asile, l'Ordre de Malte, Coallia and the French Red Cross. These centres fall under the French social initiatives (action sociale) and are funded by the state. However, this still remains insufficient considering the figures for asylum seekers. It remains very difficult to find accommodation and as a consequence, a number of people have become homeless.

- A specific policy action that deserves attention is related to the access of asylum seekers and refugees to the labour market. Asylum seekers have very limited access to the labour market, due to a number of constraints as they have to be able to work and they need a temporary work permit. Interviewees indicate that very few asylum seekers apply for a work permit. This is due first of all to the challenging requirements, including an offer of employment (promesse d'embauche). It is hard for an asylum seeker to find an employer willing to recruit them, when their residence permit is valid only for three months and mentions that the holder is not authorised to work. Once they are granted asylum, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are allowed to access the labour market under the same conditions as French citizens, but the reality is that they too face considerable difficulties. It is difficult for them to find a job as they face several obstacles: a) the language. French classes provided by the French State are insufficient to get a job; b) in the countryside, locations are frequently in remote areas and without a car it is almost impossible to find a job; c) lack of recognition of their national diplomas means that highly skilled beneficiaries face various obstacles to entering the labour market, and when they find a job they have to accept one needing no qualifications. NGOs and other organisations support beneficiaries in determining their professional path and facilitating their integration in the labour market, implementing partnerships with stakeholders in charge of access to the labour market and the struggle against unemployment. They work in close collaboration with the French national employment agency (Pôle Emploi) or with other local charities and NGOs to facilitate the professional integration of beneficiaries.
- To improve the above-mentioned critical picture, an interesting public action is under development at national level. This is aimed to support professional integration of beneficiaries of international protection facing difficulties in the access to the labour market, and in the evaluation and recognition of their skills. A call for projects for the professional integration of refugees has recently been launched. It is part of the Skills Investment Plan (ICP), from the Office of the *High Commissioner for Skills and Inclusion through Employment*. This plan has the dual objective of training one million young people and one million low-skilled jobseekers and accelerating the transformation of vocational training. The call for projects, with a budget of EUR 15 million, aims to contribute to their professional integration through the deployment of support programmes in employment or business creation. It will require time to assess the impact of this relevant initiative. However, it is possible to state at the moment is stakeholders consider this call particularly innovative. They believe it has the potential to encourage the reinforcement of existing cooperation between public and private actors on a territory and with a strong transversal approach across policies and ministries. It may deliver important results able to be disseminated in other countries having similar problems; this action could also be supported by EU funds.

Such a policy can have the potential to tackle some of the negative effects of refugees and asylum seekers on the labour market, as described in Section 1. If widespread at national level, such a policy has potential to bring a number of benefits.

- It can counterbalance the negative impacts on the labour supply in terms of involvement of illegal workers at a lower wage, impacting on unemployment levels and on wages. A decrease of irregular and poorly paid supply may imply a stabilisation of the decrease in wages and an increase of regular hiring.
- A regular and better paid workforce can impact on the demand for private sector goods, which can modify the remuneration of production factors or increase taxes, thereby bringing indirect effects to public finances.
- The increase in competences of immigrant workers and the recognition of skills acquired abroad favours the involvement in the French labour market of more qualified workers importing skills and competences which are lacking. The regular involvement of asylum seekers and refugees in sectors where many jobs remain vacant, for example in the PACA region, in agriculture and in the personal care sector, represent a key factor for the involvement and better qualification of activities which could highly benefit qualified and reliable personnel.

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List of interviewees

Type of organisation	Organisation
Regional authority	Prefecture of the Alpes- Maritimes
International organisation	Amnesty International
University	CNRS Centre national de la recherche scientifique and University Science-Po
Non-profit organisation	Secours Catholique / Caritas France
Non-profit organisation	Cimade Sud Est
Association	Centre OSIRIS
Private individual	Sudanese refugee since 2016

List of Annexes

Annex I Impacts

As there are no available data on PACA region and on Asylum seekers and refugees we consider the assumptions formulated for the country fiche

Table 7: Financial impacts and their indicators - regional/local level

Impacts	Selected indicators	Latest available data*	Forecast of growth or decline in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decline in twenty years*	Source	Regional / Local***
Public revenues	Average social security contributions and taxes (payroll/business) per employed refugee ⁷⁴⁷⁵		+		Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or portion of national studies	UNHCR, reports by the Sénat and other ministries (notably, culture)., as well as media and press releases by associations
Public revenues	Consumption tax on spending of refugees per refugee ⁷⁶				Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or portion of national studies	National
Public spending	Spending on integration and initial reception measures ⁷⁷ per refugee		-		Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or portion of national studies	National
Public spending	Extra spending on integration into education system (per refugee pupil)				Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	National
Public spending	Education spending per pupil				Local Authorities,	National

⁷⁴ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁷⁵ Calculated by average values for the active population with a discount for immigrants from literature.

⁷⁶ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁷⁷ Housing, sustenance, language course, employment integration courses other integration courses

	per year in country (total population ⁷⁸)				Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	
Public spending	Health care spending per person and year in the country (total population ⁷⁹)				Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	National
Public spending	Housing subsidies per person and year in the country (total population ⁸⁰)				Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	Regional

Table 8: Economic impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Latest available data*	Forecast of growth or decline in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decline in twenty years*	Data source	Regional / Local***
Employment (rate)	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (at arrival)		+		Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (within 5 years)		+		Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (in the longer terms)		+		Case studies Past studies	Regional
Entrepreneurship	Number and proportion (% of self-employed among those finding a job) of		+		Case studies Past studies	National

⁷⁸ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁷⁹ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁸⁰ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

	new enterprises founded by refugees ⁸¹					
Underemployed or not employed low skill workers	Number and proportion of long-term unemployed refugees ⁸²		-		Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion of underemployed refugees ⁸³		-		Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion of precariously employed refugees ⁸⁴		-		Case studies Past studies	Regional

Table 9: Social and political impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Latest available data*	Forecast of growth or decline in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decline in twenty years*	Data sources	Regional / local***
Demography	Impact on dependency ratio		+		Case studies and extrapolations from existing population projections	National
Cultural diversity	No quantitative indicator		+		Local Authorities, Universities NGOs, or local sections of national studies	
Security	Impact on crime rate (of refugee/total population)				Studies on impact on crime rates	Regional
Perception	Perception rates for immigration as a problem		+		Recent polls and past polls in past immigration waves	National
Political tensions	Relevance of immigration in political		+		Recent polls and past polls in past	National

⁸¹ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁸² Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁸³ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁸⁴ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

caused by migration	debates and elections				immigration waves	
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Annex II Policies and Actors classification

Table 10: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at Country and local level

Category	Types	Country-level policies targeting:		Regional or local-level policies targeting: NGOS		Assessment*
		Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	
Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals	Emergency housing Emergency health care Basic subsistence needs Reception and recognition provisions Residence permits Family reunification Settlement restrictions Referrals <i>Distinguishing between exceptional and ordinary reception procedures</i>	x	x	x	x	
Housing / accommodation	Housing/accommodation Housing support ...	x	x	x	x	
Healthcare	Emergency/urgent healthcare Full health care ...	x	x	x	x	
Social assistance and income support	Social assistance services Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits ...	x	x	x	x	
Education and training	School enrolment and attendance Adult education Vocational education and training ...	x	x	x	x	
Labour market access/ integration	Skills assessment/validation Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks) Grants and preparatory courses Employment subsidies, apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work Unemployment benefits ...	x	x	x	x	

Social and political integration	Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.) Integration programmes such as sport, culture, diversity promotion Political participation (local level) Residence and religion rights ...	x	x	x	x	
Other						

Table 11 Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at local level

Levels	Bureaucrats	Politicians	Experts	Special interests	Diffused Interests
International					Amnesty International France
National	DGEF OFII OFRA CNDA Council of State DIHAL Pole Emploi		CNRS		Secours Catholique Caritas France Médecins du Monde Médecins sans frontières,
Regional	Prefecture of the Alpes Maritimes				Centre Osiris Forum réfugiés-Cosi ESPACE CAFFIM
Local					Cimade Sud Est

Annex III Network analysis

Table 12. Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis

Levels	Bureaucrats	Politicians	Experts	Special interests	Diffused Interests
International					Amnesty International France
National	DGEF OFII OFRA CNDA Council of State DIHAL Pole Emploi		CNRS		Secours Catholique Caritas France Médecins du Monde Médecins sans frontières,
Regional	Prefecture of the Alpes Maritimes				Centre Osiris Forum réfugiés-Cosi ESPACE CAFFIM
Local					Cimade Sud Est

Table 13: Mapping the actors and their roles

Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
<i>European Institutions (specify)</i>									
<i>International organisations (specify)</i>									
<i>National public institutions (specify)</i>	DGEF Council of State	DGEF	OFII OFRA CNDA DIHAL Pole Emploi		DGEF OFII OFRA CNDA Council of State DIHAL Pole Emploi				
<i>Regional institutions (specify)</i>		Prefecture of the Alpes Maritimes							
<i>Regional Agencies (specify)</i>									
<i>Other regional public institutions</i>									
<i>Municipalities (specify)</i>									
Provinces (specify)									
Local agencies (specify)									
Other peripheral public institutions (specify)									

Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
Universities (specify)									
Research centres (specify)									
Technical agencies (specify)									
Consultants/professionals (specify)									
European MPs(specify)									
National MPS (specify)									
Regional politicians (specify)									
Mayors									
Police or other law enforcement									
Other local politicians/political parties (specify)									
International/national/regional/local Trade Unions (specify)									
International/National/regional/local employers' organisations (specify)									
International/National/regional/local NGOs / Associations(in various fields) (specify)							Amnesty International France Secours Catholique Caritas France Médecins du Monde Médecins sans frontières,		

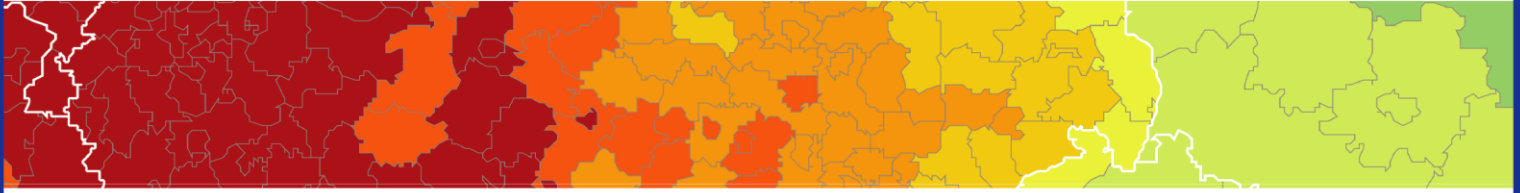
	Role in the network								
Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
							Centre Osiris Forum réfugiés-Cosi ESPACE CAFFIM Cimade Sud Est		
<i>Local committees</i> (citizens' or other types of committees) (specify)									
<i>International/national/Local migrants' associations</i> (specify)									
<i>Other actors</i>									

Table 14: Relationship matrix - PROGRAMMING PHASE

	Actor 1	Actor 2	Actor 3	Actor 4	Actor 5	Actor 6	Actor 7	Actor 8	...	Actor N
Actor 1										
Actor 2										
Actor 3										
Actor 4										
Actor 5										
Actor 6										
Actor 7										
Actor 8										
...)										
Actor N										

Table 15: Relationship matrix - IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

	Actor 1	Actor 2	Actor 3	Actor 4	Actor 5	Actor 6	Actor 7	Actor 8	...	Actor N
Actor 1										
Actor 2										
Actor 3										
Actor 4										
Actor 5										
Actor 6										
Actor 7										
Actor 8										
...)										
Actor N										



ESPON 2020 – More information

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