THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD TO EMPLOYMENT

An Analysis of the Labour Market Careers of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Belgium

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The Long and Winding Road to Employment

An Analysis of the Labour Market Careers of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Belgium

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This publication is the result of the research entitled “Careers of new migrants in Belgium” (CAREERS) funded by the Belgian Science Policy under the program “Science and Society” and by the Federal Migration Centre.

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© Academia Press
Eekhout 2, 9000 Gent
Tel. 09/233 80 88 Fax 09/233 14 09
Info@academiapress.be www.academiapress.be

The Long and Winding Road to Employment
Gent, Academia Press, 2014, ix + 171 pp.

Lay-out: punctilio.be

ISBN 978 90 382 2396 4
D/2014/4804/202
U 2262
NUR1 740

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List of acronyms

(in the order in which they appear in the text)

Nederlands		Français	
KSZ	Kruispuntbank van de Sociale Zekerheid	BCSS	Banque Carrefour de la sécurité sociale
	Multisectoriële Individuele Rekening	CIMIRe	Compte individuel multisectoriel
FAO	Fonds voor arbeitsongevallen	FAT	Fonds des accidents du travail
FBZ	Fonds voor beroepsziekten	FMP	Fonds des maladies professionnelles
NIC	Nationaal intermutualistisch college	CIN	Collège intermutualiste national
POD MI	Programmatorische federale Overheidsdienst Maatschappelijke Integratie	SPP IS	Service public de programmation pour l'intégration sociale
PDOS	Pensioendienst voor de Overheidssector	SdPSP	Service des pensions du secteur public
RIZIV	Rijksinstituut voor ziekte- en invaliditeitsverzekering	INAMI	Institut national d'assurance maladie-invalidité
RKW	Rijksdienst voor kinderbijslag van werknemers	ONAFTS	Office national d'allocations familiales pour travailleurs salariés
RSVZ	Rijksinstituut voor de sociale verzekeringen der zelfstandigen	INASTI	Institut national d'assurances sociales pour travailleurs indépendants
RSZ	Rijksdienst voor sociale zekerheid	ONSS	Office national de sécurité sociale
RSZPPO	Rijksdienst voor sociale zekerheid van de provinciale en plaatselijke overheidsdiensten	ONSSAPL	Office national de sécurité sociale des administrations provinciales et locales
RVA	Rijksdienst voor arbeitsvoorziening	ONEM	Office national de l'emploi
RVP	Rijksdienst voor pensioenen	ONP	Office national des pensions
VDAB	Vlaamse dienst voor arbeitsbemiddeling en beroepsopleiding	Forem	Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi
Actiris	Brusselse gewestelijke dienst voor arbeidsbemiddeling	Actiris	Office régional bruxellois de l'emploi
CGVS	Commissariaat-generaal voor de vluchtelingen en de staatlozen	CGRA	Commissariat général aux réfugiés et aux apatrides
RVV	Raad voor vreemdelingenbetwistingen	CCE	Conseil du contentieux des étrangers
DVZ	Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken	OE	Office des étrangers
OCMW	Openbare centrum voor maatschappelijk welzijn	CPAS	Centre public d'aide sociale

Nederlands		Français	
VVSG	Vereniging van vlaamse steden en gemeenten		
		CRI	Centres régionaux d'intégration
VGC	Vlaamse GemeenschapsCommissie	COCOF	Commission communautaire française
BON	Brussels Onthaalbureau Nieuwkomers		
		CRACs	Centres régionaux d'appui en cohésion sociale
		FLE	Français Langue Étrangère
VBO	Verbond van Belgische Onderneming	FEB	Fédération des entreprises belges
WSE	Het steunpunt Werk en Sociale Economie		
VSAWSE	Vlaams Subsidieagentschap voor Werk en Sociale Economie		

Acronyms in English:

CGRS:	Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons
IO:	Immigration Office
PCSW:	Public Centre for Social Welfare
RIC Foyer:	Regional Integration Centre Foyer Brussels
NEO:	National Employment Office
EEA:	European Economic Area
FEB:	Federation of Enterprises in Belgium

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Introduction

Andrea Rea and Johan Wets

An increase in the numbers of spontaneous asylum seekers in Belgium since the late 1990s has led to a series of restrictive legislative changes of the procedure in the last 14 years (2001, 2007). In 2003, a new law was introduced with the intention of improving the labour market rights of asylum seekers in order to increase their labour market participation. However, between 2007 and 2010, this integration was hindered because of the contradiction between the 2003 Act and the 2007 Act. Even though the rate of recognition of asylum seekers is low (between 10 and 20%), the increase of foreigners from third country nationals holding a permanent residence permit in Belgium results mainly from this specific category of migrants. Therefore analyzing the socio-economic integration of this population has become crucial in the current situation.

In the field of migration studies little research has been dedicated to asylum seekers and refugees in particular, and especially not to their socio-economic integration. This is the case in Belgium and in Europe in general. Some recent Belgian research (Martiniello et al. 2010; Mussche et al. 2010; Timmerman et al. 2012) investigates the integration of all newcomers in the labour market without paying specific attention to (former) asylum seekers. Other Belgian research focused on labour market integration of irregular migrants or regularized migrants (Wets 2009; Marx et al. 2008).

Studies on the employment integration of asylum seekers and recognized refugees shows that the employment rates of refugees are relatively low. These rates are lower than those of the indigenous population, second generation immigrants and other immigrants who migrated under a different status. (Piché et al. 2002; Bevelander 2011). Thus in Sweden the employment rate of people who entered the country on grounds of family reunification is higher than that of refugees (Bevelander 2011). The factors which account for employment integration are generally of three kinds: individual factors (age, gender, family situation, nationality, etc.), factors relating to access to the labour market (length of stay, language skills, level of education, social capital, etc.), and structural and institutional characteristics (opportunities

available in the labour market, barriers to employment, local unemployment levels, legislation relating to asylum seekers, etc.).

Wooden (1991) shows for Australia that the employment rate of refugees is low at the moment of their arrival but increases with the length of their stay. Length of stay is likewise considered to be one of the determining factors for Piguet et Wimmer (2000) who argue that time allows both a better command of the language and a better knowledge of local institutions, allowing an increased mobilization of social networks. The employment rate of asylum seekers is sometimes higher than that of refugees and this is explained by the fact that asylum seekers more often accept unskilled work in the traditional employment sectors for newly arrived migrants (i.e. hotels and restaurants) (Piguet and Wimmer 2000). In agriculture, asylum seekers have sometimes replaced seasonal workers. When asylum seekers obtain recognized refugee status, they change sectors and look for work in a sector related to their qualifications. The same pattern has been observed in Belgium for people whose status has been regularized (Marx et al. 2008). The employment of refugees is very sensitive to local conditions. In areas where the general unemployment rate is high, few refugees succeed in finding work. They find more employment opportunities in big cities with a large service sector (Belevander 2011). In addition, recognized refugees receive benefit payments which empower them to refuse jobs with low pay and low status, but this varies according to national welfare systems, as shown by the comparison made by Korac (2003) between the Netherlands and Italy.

Research (Piguet and Wimmer 2000; Piché et al. 2002; Bevelander 2011; Bloc 2007) shows that women have lower chances of employment than men. Having children increases the likelihood of getting a job for men but not for women. Single women have a higher probability of being employed. Employment integration is affected by age (younger people have higher chances of getting a job), and by level of education (the better educated have higher chances of getting a job). Language knowledge also plays a very important role for employment integration. Bloch (1999) stresses the over-qualification of refugees and the difficulties of getting recognition for qualifications from their countries of origin in the United Kingdom.

Some studies stress the importance of country of origin but here also there have been contrasting findings. In the United States, the Viet-

namese have been found to have a high employment rate in some studies and a very low rate in others. (Montgomery 1991; Tran 1991). Piché et al. (2002) show that in Quebec, country of origin plays an important role when socioeconomic variables and level of education are controlled. People who come from developing countries have more difficulty in finding their first job than those coming from Europe. In the United Kingdom, people coming from English-speaking countries have a higher probability of being employed. (Bloch, 2007)

Hjarno (1991) finds that it is the weakness of social networks and the prevalence of stereotypes that explain the difficulties encountered by refugees in integrating into the labour market. Hauff et Vaglum (1993) give particular stress to one specific factor, the impact of trauma experienced by refugees and the violence they have suffered, to explain their difficulty in integrating into the labour market.

The research we carried out for this book aims on the one hand to map the labour market integration of asylum seekers, refugees and people who were granted the status of subsidiary protection between January 2001 and December 2010, and on the other hand to create socio-economic profiles (based on legal status, family situation, labour market position, gender, age, etc.). The research also tries to clarify how structural conditions (employment opportunities, region of residence, etc.), institutional conditions (length of the procedure) and individual characteristics (age, sex, family situation) determine their socio-economic integration careers.

Following the ROUTE project[1], which focused on foreigners who were regularized, the CAREERS project is based on the analysis of the same kind of database (National Register and Crossroads Bank for Social Security). An additional objective of the research project is to widen the scope and improve on the methodology of the ROUTE project. This research drew on an analysis of data on all (former) asylum seekers who submitted an asylum application between January 2001 and December 2010 and who are still residing in Belgium, regardless their actual legal status.

[1] http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fedra/proj.asp?l=en&COD=AG/JJ/141

1. Research questions

The main focus of this research is to investigate the socio-economic integration into Belgian society of asylum seekers who are still waiting for a decision on their asylum application, recognized refugees and people who have received subsidiary protection. This focus leads us to pinpoint four complementary research questions:

1. What are the socio-economic integration pathways of these people?
2. What are the socio-economic profiles of the families of these different categories of (former) asylum seekers?
3. To what extent do the integration careers differ for these different categories of (former) asylum seekers?
4. Which are the factors that foster or hinder socio-economic integration in the labour market?

The CAREERS project attempts to go beyond mere description of the integration paths of this population. We propose to use the concept of "migratory careers" (Martiniello and Rea 2014) as a theoretical framework to analyze the data collected. We take the three elements that contribute to the construction of "migratory careers" into account: (1) first, the political opportunity structures, (2) second, individuals' characteristics, like age, gender, citizenship, marital status and level of education; (3) the mobilization of resources, notably social capital.

Since this project is not based on a survey, we needed to adapt the proposed theoretical framework to the available variables for the quantitative part of this study. In particular, data regarding the social network are not included in any of the datasets used. This research needs to be completed by a qualitative analysis through which data could be gathered on variables that are usually absent in existing databases such as levels of education, vocational training, and mobilization of social networks.

2. The use of official data

Several databases record information that can be used to describe the socio-economic characteristics of immigrants. The main data source for demographic data on migration, foreigners and populations with a foreign background is the National Register of natural persons. It is a

centralized population register under the responsibility of the Federal Public Service of the Interior. The information is primarily collected for administrative purposes. However, the data can also be used by other public services to produce statistics (Perrin and Schoonvaere 2009). The National Register contains several sub-registers. Belgian citizens are registered in the population register as are foreigners having a settlement permit. Foreigners who are admitted or authorized to stay – whether on a temporary or permanent basis – are registered in the aliens register. Asylum seekers are included in the so-called "waiting register" and are not considered as a part of the "official" population. An asylum seeker, who is granted the status of refugee, is then registered in the population register. Legal variables such as name, age, gender, nationality and place of residence are recorded in this register. Since the Program Law of December 2006, a variable on the legal status of immigrants was added. The National Register thus contains information on asylum seekers. For this project, data on all former asylum seekers who submitted an asylum application between January 2001 and December 2010, regardless of their actual legal status, were requested. This dataset contains information on personal characteristics like age, gender, nationality, nationality history, place of residence, history of place of residence, etc. A database containing information on 108,856 individuals was put together.

A unique personal identification number – National Register number – is created for each person registered. This key allows the possibility of linking the data from the National Register to other official data sources. Technically, it is possible to link all kinds of information, but in practice this is regulated by privacy legislation. Access to individual data is subject to approval by the privacy commission.

In accordance with the privacy rules, the data of the National Register were linked to socio-economic information from the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (KSZ/BCSS). The KSZ/BCSS itself does not contain substantive data, but consists of references to the decentralized databanks of the various social institutions using the national register number as a key. For the sake of easy access, the 'Data Warehouse Labour Market and Social Protection' was created, containing data originating from the different participating social security institutions. Linking the records of these various institutions allows the creation of tailor-made statistical series on individuals and their socioeconomic

histories. The Data Warehouse is a collaboration between the Multisectoral Individual Account (CIMIRe), the Fund for Employment Accidents (FAO/FAT), the Fund for Occupational Diseases (FBZ/FMP), the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (KSZ/BCSS), the National Intermutual College (NIC/CIN), the Federal Public Service: Social Integration (PPS/POD) Social Integration, the Pension Service Government Sector (PDOS/SdPSP), the National Institute for Sickness and Disability Insurance (RIZIV/INAMI), the National Office for Family Allowances for Employees (RKW/ONAFTS), the National Institute for Social Security of the Self-Employed (RSVZ/INASTI), the National Office for Social Security (RSZ/ONSS), the National Security Office for Local and Provincial Administrations (RSZPPO/ONSSAPL), the National Employment Office (RVA/ONEM), the National Office for Pensions (RVP/ONP) and the regional Employment and Vocational Training Agencies (VDAB/FOREM/Actiris).

The Data Warehouse contains labour market information (wages, employer, social security contributions, working hours (full time / part time), unemployment, etc.), information about old age pensions (benefits/fees, kind of pension, starting date, etc.), information about sickness/invalidity/incapacity for work (benefits/fees, cause [illness, industrial accident, occupational disease], starting date and [potential] final date, etc.), information about child allowances, personal data (birth date, gender, nationality, etc.). For all 108,856 former asylum seekers, supplementary socio economic information was requested. It should be noted however, that for many (former) asylum seekers, there is little or no information in the Data Warehouse Labour Market. This explains why residual categories like 'other' and 'others' are often the largest category in the further socio-economic analysis.

3. A four stage approach

The time series that can be constructed based on the official databases depict changes in positions in the social security system and on the labour market. The social reality however also changes. The labour market opportunities for asylum seekers before and after the change of the asylum procedure in 2007 are completely different. To interpret the time series and trends adequately, the social, economic, legal and institutional context should be taken into account and the changes in this context over the years studied should be documented in order to draw

a complete picture and fully understand the mechanism behind the integration trajectories.

Chapter 1 is dedicated to the description of the changing context. The following aspects will be dealt with in turn:

1. Changes in legislation (asylum application procedure);
2. Changes in the institutional setting (i.e. civic integration policy in Flanders, NGO initiatives aimed at new migrants, growing involvement of welfare centres…);
3. Changes in labour market conditions (supply and demand, unemployment…) and
4. Changes in labour market rules (labour market shortages, rules of entry to the labour market …).

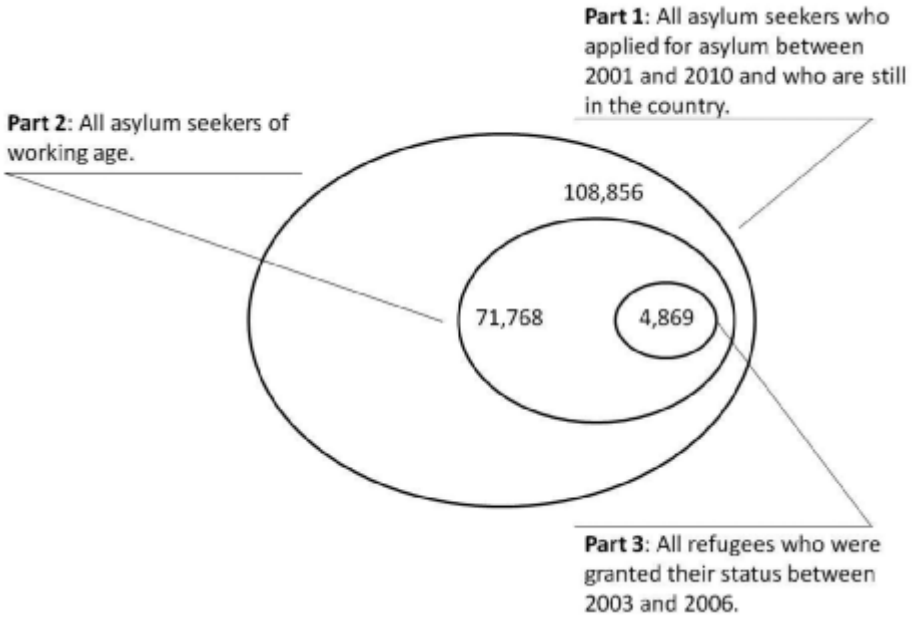
The quantitative analysis is based on data from the National Register that were linked to other administrative datasets. The analysis consists of three sections: (1) a descriptive section, (2) an analytical multivariate section and (3) a longitudinal section. Each section is described in a separate chapter.

Chapter 2 describes the population of all asylum seekers (including those who have been granted the status of refugees) who applied for asylum between 2001 and 2010 and who are still residing in the country. The database used was based on the aforementioned extract from the official registers in Belgium (National Register and Crossroads Bank for Social Security). A univariate and a bivariate analysis shows the changes in socio-economic status, e.g. on the labour market, dependent on welfare, etc. In this section, the whole population is taken into account, regardless of variables like age.

In Chapter 3, some research questions are answered such as what factors contribute to the inflow to the labour market (be it employed, self-employed or unemployed). This chapter looks only at a subsection of the population: only people of working age were considered in these analyses. After some more data cleaning, this resulted in a subset of 71,768 single persons between the ages of 18 and 65. In order to answer the research questions, multivariate techniques were used such as analysis of variance, correspondence analysis and logistic regression. Comparisons were made between the socio-economic integration of asylum seekers, refugees and people granted subsidiary protection.

In Chapter 4, the careers of refugees only were studied using other multivariate techniques such as optimal matching and – to explain some differences – again logistic regression. In order to compare similar periods of activity, the population was limited to only those people who obtained the status of refugee between 2003 and 2006. These data provide a quarterly employment history calendar with a four-year observation period for all individuals studied in this section.

Figure 1. *Graphical presentation of the research population*



This book is based on research funded by the Belgian Science Policy Office and the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (since 15 March 2014, the Federal Migration Centre). We would like to thank these two institutions for giving us the opportunity to carry out our research on the employment integration of asylum seekers and refugees. We would like to thank everyone on the Steering Committee for their advice and comments during the research and on the final Report and in particular Chris Brijs from the Crossroads Bank for Social Security. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Aziz Naji from the Belgian Science Policy Office and to Koen Dewulf, Nathalie Vanparys, Julie Lejeune, Sophie Vause, and Louise Callier from the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism for their

valuable comments on our final report. We also thank Tadgh O'Sullivan and Anne Whyte for their priceless efforts in proofreading several chapters and Isabelle Renneson for her copy-editing and devoted work to finalize the manuscript.

Chapter I.
Legislative, institutional and economic contexts

Andrea Rea, Johan Wets, Louise Callier, Wouter Schepers, and Lieselot Vanduynslager

1. The legislative context

1.1. The asylum procedure

The asylum procedure was originally defined by the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol of New York. These laws were included in the Aliens Act (Perrin 2008). The legislation has undergone numerous reforms over the years, the most important of which are the two laws introduced in 15 September 2006 (BS/MB: 6.10.2006), which are the subject of this study.

The first law enacted the European Directive 2004/83/EC of 22 September 2003 and introduced the new subsidiary protection status into Belgian law. The provisions for subsidiary protection came into force on 10 October 2006[2,] while other provisions came into force on 1 June 2007[3]. The law also clarified the interpretation of the definition of a refugee in the 1951 Geneva Convention. Both types of protection (refugee and subsidiary protection) are examined in a single procedure, the asylum procedure[4]. If a person does not have access to refugee status as defined by the Geneva Convention, the procedure determines whether he or she can benefit from subsidiary protection. The first status entitles a refugee to permanent residence in Belgium while the second results in a one-year residence permit, renewable if the conditions for subsidiary protection continue to apply. Subsidiary protection was created for individuals who do not fit the requirements of refugee status but who face a real risk of suffering serious harm if they return to their country of origin.

2 Royal Decree, 3 October 2006, BS/MB, 6 October 2006.
3 Royal Decree, 27 April 2007, Art. 103, BS/MB, 21 May 2007.
4 CGRA (2009). 'La procédure d'asile en Belgique: Information pour les spécialistes'.

The law also introduced a substantive reform of the administrative procedure for determining refugee status. Previously an application for asylum had three stages. The Immigration Office (or IO) began by determining the state responsible for the application (according to the Dublin procedure), then it considered the admissibility of the application and whether multiple requests had to be taken into consideration, and finally, if the application was considered admissible, the "in-merit" phase was started by the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGVS/CGRA) to determine eligibility for refugee status. In the case of inadmissibility, an appeal for annulment with the Council of State was possible. With the 2006 reform, the distinction between the two phases of admissibility and merit disappeared. The procedure now takes place in two stages: determination of the state responsible (Dublin procedure)[5], consideration by the IO in the case of multiple requests, and scrutiny of the application by the CGRS.

The second law, reforming the action of the Council of State and creating the Council for Alien Law Litigation (RVV/CCE) (BS/MB: 6.10.2006)[6], reformed the appeal procedure, including relieving pressure on the Council of State which no longer deals with asylum appeals. The new institution of the RVV/CCE was created, which is responsible for handling all requests for "asylum" decisions by the Immigration Office (DVZ/OE) and CGRS but also requests for "migration" decisions by the IO (family reunification, regulation, etc.). CGRS decisions may be reviewed by the RVV/CCE, which may confirm or alter the CGRS decision but judges have no authority to make further inquiries. The appeals are pending, which is to say that they suspend the order to leave the country associated with a refusal of refugee status or subsidiary protection. In addition, the RVV/CCE can also annul the IO's asylum decisions (Dublin procedure, taking into account multiple requests). Finally, the Council of State was also reformed so that it no longer handles appeals against RVV/CCE decisions. It is now concerned with administrative cassation appeals to which eligibility filters apply, using a written procedure performed by lawyers.

5 The Dublin II Regulation adopted in 2003 establishes the principle that the Member State where the claimant entered European territory is responsible for assessing an asylum application.

6 The RVV/CCE was only effectively created in June 2007.

The evaluation of the alterations in the length of the asylum procedure caused by legislative changes is not straightforward. Indeed, the duration of the procedure depends heavily on the administrative trajectory in which individuals find themselves (declared admissible or inadmissible, appeal procedure or not, etc.). However the 2011 activity report of the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism, using figures from the Immigration Office, indicates that the treatment of asylum applications has become faster since 2006. Only 2% of individuals who arrived in 2000 had been granted refugee status three years after making their request, whereas after the same amount of time, 20% of individuals who arrived in 2007 had received a positive decision (CECLR 2011:52). Moreover, the introduction of the new subsidiary protection status did not result in a reduction in the numbers granted recognition of refugee status. The Centre noted that the rate of recognition of subsidiary protection increased over time and the duration of the procedure tended to accelerate.

1.2. Family reunification

The provisions on family reunification are included in the Aliens Act (15 December 1980). Bringing a spouse, minor children and in some cases parents is possible under certain conditions, which differ depending on the identity of the person requesting reunification and the family members involved. We will highlight the most important legislative developments before the July 8 2011 reform (BS/MB: 12.09.2011), which had no impact on our research.

The 15 September 2006 law implementing European Directive 2003/86/EC adds two conditions to the family reunification procedure: adequate housing and health insurance (CECLR 2007:129). Flexibility is provided for recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, who are exempt from these conditions in the year of recognition. After one year, the same rules apply to them as to other categories of foreigners. For foreigners with a limited or unlimited residence permit, this reform also brings an increase in the minimum age of the spouse from 18 to 21 years.

The 2006 reform has undoubtedly had an impact on the number of applications for family reunification or the actual number of family groups, since the conditions are quite restrictive (CECLR 2007:130). In

addition, we see that in practice it is very difficult for recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection to initiate the process of family reunification in the year of recognition, because of the long and complicated procedures involved (locating dispersed family members, retrieving vital documents, etc.). Moreover, the family reunification procedure often involves significant costs (airfares, production and delivery of documents, DNA testing, etc.), which recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection often cannot afford. As a result, they often find themselves out of time and are subject to the same conditions as other categories of foreigners.

1.3. Access to Work

Since 1999, the law provides that recognized refugees are exempt from work permits[7], while the law also does not provide specific work permits for asylum seekers. The employer for whom a migrant wishes to work must obtain a temporary employment authorization and a B permit to be able to employ him or her. Although the employer normally applies for and obtains this before the foreigner's arrival in Belgium and is subjected to a labour market assessment, asylum seekers benefited from a circular published in 1994 by the SPF Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue. This circular facilitated the granting of this authorization and the B permit for asylum seekers already in Belgium, including an exemption from the labour market assessment, but the Regions retained flexibility in its application.

The work permit's conditions changed significantly in 2003, particularly for the purpose of our study: foreigners who were granted an unlimited residence permit, including recognized refugees who were granted a work permit. For foreigners with a limited residence permit, work permit C was created by Royal Decree on 6 February 2003. It is limited to 12 months, renewable, and valid for all salaried professions. Asylum seekers declared admissible are therefore eligible for this work permit[8]. The permit is not tied to a particular job so people can change jobs without needing a new permit and employers are exempt from any

[7] Law dated 30 April 1999 regarding the employment of foreign workers and the Royal Decree of 9 June 1999 implementing the law of 30 April 1999.

[8] Other categories of eligible persons are those with a regularized residence permit of limited duration, persons awaiting family reunification, victims of human trafficking, students, members of the diplomatic corps, their children and spouses.

authorization. The creation of the C permit for asylum seekers who are declared admissible can therefore have an impact on their career trajectories.

However, the 2007 legislative changes removed the admissibility phase in the asylum procedure and therefore asylum seekers could no longer be declared admissible and benefit from this labour legislation. An asylum seeker starting his or her asylum procedure from June 2007 onwards could not apply for a work permit C and work legally. This legislative discrepancy was only corrected by Royal Decree on 22 December 2009 (BS/MB: 12.01.2010).

The 2009 Decree adapted labour regulations to the new asylum procedure:

- Asylum seekers who submitted their application before 1 June 2007 can work if their application was declared admissible or if a merits decision had been taken about the admissibility of their application (old procedure).
- Asylum seekers who submitted their application after 31 May 2007 can work if they have not yet received a negative decision from the CGRS six months after the beginning of their asylum procedure and until the CGRS notifies them of a negative decision, or in the case of an appeal to the RVV/CCE (new procedure).

Between 2007 and 2010 many asylum seekers did not have the right to work. In summary, we would expect our data to show an increase in the number of asylum seekers and recognized refugees who work following the 2003 Act, and then a reduction between 2007 and 2010 linked to the political and legal context (Pécoud, 2004).

1.4. Regularization

The development of the legislation about regularization was punctuated by two temporary regularization campaigns and in practice, individual regularization occurs annually at the discretion of the Minister of the Interior. The basic legislation comprises the 15 December 1980 Aliens Act in Article 9, paragraphs 2 and 3. Article 9 states that applications for regularization should be sent from abroad (paragraph 2). However, it allows exceptions in paragraph 3: in case of "exceptional circumstances", individuals may submit their application for regularization in

the municipality of residence in Belgium. Jurisprudence is used to make the notion of "exceptional circumstances" a little less blurred[9].

The 22 December 1999 law established a three-week regularization campaign in January 2000. The regularizations were subject to four criteria: long asylum procedure, medical reasons, inability to return for humanitarian reasons, and/or permanent ties in Belgium. According to IO figures[10], 40 to 45,000 people were regularized through this law between 2000 and 2005. The intention was to arrive at a process of mass regularization with the conditions being assessed flexibly by the Regularization Commission. Moreover, the purpose of this particular campaign was to reduce the large number of asylum seekers who experienced long procedures (Adam et al. 2002).

It is important to emphasize here that the asylum reforms directly impacted on regularization and regularization policies. For example, between 2005 and 2007 the LIFO 2001 decision[11] influenced decisions to regulate asylum seekers experiencing long procedures by giving them a permanent residence permit (Carte B)[12]. This reduced the backlog created by the LIFO decision, which shifted the processing of old applications to the CGRS and RVV/CCE. Anyone who received a permanent residence permit on any basis other than asylum saw his or her procedure declared not applicable, unless they notified the institutions within 60 days that he or she would like to continue[13]. Furthermore, to address the concerns of the asylum seekers who undertook collective action because of the legal uncertainty (e.g. the mobilizations of Afghans, Iranians, and Kurds in 2003 and 2009), the relevant Minister and the IO regularized some people based on an assessment of their individual request. These regularizations thus took place on the basis of the lengthy procedure criterion, applied only internally, that is to say without turning this into a regularization campaign. Therefore, in our research some asylum seekers may have received a permanent residence permit without obtaining refugee status and were still regularized (on this topic, see the ROUTE project).

9 See Fiche pratique de l'ADDE "Régularisation pour circonstances exceptionnelles", available at: http://www.adde.be/J_15/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=72&Itemid=207

10 Office des Etrangers (2010), Rapport d'activité 2010, p. 56.

11 'Last In First Out', more recent asylum applications are given priority.

12 Regularization normally entailed a temporary CIRE (carte A) but this special wave gave rise to a permanent CIRE.

13 Article 55, law of 15 December 1980.

The 15 September 2006 law (BS/MB: 6.10.2006) attempted to address the legal uncertainties by reforming Article 9 paragraph 3 of the 15 December 1980 law and establishing items 9a and 9b. Article 9a concerns the regularization of residence on the basis of exceptional circumstances and Article 9b is based on medical reasons. However, the law does not establish specific criteria in Article 9a, only specifying the elements that cannot be used for regularization. Administrative decisions and positive practice, however, have led to several non-formal criteria, such as the unreasonable length of the asylum procedure, medical compassion, humanitarian reasons, and having a Belgian child. These criteria were announced in circulars or ministerial statements but have never been enshrined in law, which perpetuates legal uncertainty. In March 2009 a statement was published, creating an additional category of foreigners to consider for regularization: families who were formerly asylum seekers, including children, whose assessment of their asylum application had lasted at least one year and who had lived in Belgium for five years (CECLR 2010:79).

Finally, on 19 July 2009, a new instruction was issued on the application of paragraph 3 of former Article 9 and Article 9a of the 15 December 1980 law. The government adopted new regulation criteria through this instruction, some of which would be permanent and others temporary (between 15 September 2009 and 15 December 2009), establishing a new regularization campaign. The instruction specified two permanent criteria (an unreasonably long asylum procedure and an urgent humanitarian situation) and two temporary criteria (sustainable local ties and regularization for work) (Sterckx 2009; Hiernaux 2011).

We could not observe the effect of regularization on the labour market in our study. We must rather pay attention to possible movements out of the asylum procedure, because asylum seekers who had experienced long procedures at the time of regularization campaigns could have been granted an unlimited residence permit. Permanently regularized asylum seekers (permanent CIRE: Carte B) have 60 days to initiate a process that they want to pursue their asylum procedure. If they do not achieve their asylum procedure is declared “not applicable”.

It should be noted that before 2009, only those regularized as a result of a long asylum procedure receive a Carte B, ensuring permanent residence. Persons regularized on the basis of other criteria received a Carte A, which is time-limited and renewable. However, from the July

2009 instruction onwards (which actually applied from October 2009 onwards), all regularized persons received unlimited residence permits irrespective of the regularization criterion applied, except regularization for work.

1.5. Acquisition of nationality

The legal basis regarding the acquisition of nationality was established in the 28 June 1984 law. It was modified several times, including in the 1 March 2000 law, which greatly facilitates the process of nationality acquisition and naturalization for foreigners over 18 years, including the elimination of the concept of willingness to integrate from the nationality code (Rea and Bietlot 2007).

The three main conditions for acquiring nationality by declaration for people settled permanently in Belgium are the following: 1) born in Belgium and have Belgium as his or her principal country of residence since birth; 2) born abroad to parents who were Belgian at the time of the declaration; 3) having had their principal residence in Belgium for at least seven years and authorized to stay indefinitely or established in Belgium. The naturalization process is also facilitated in the law, including for recognized refugees and stateless persons to whom a reduced residency requirement applies (two years instead of three years) (Louis 2000). Unsurprisingly, these relaxations caused an overall increase in applications for citizenship: more than double the number of foreigners obtained Belgian nationality in 2000 and 2001 compared to 1999, although a downward trend began in 2003 (CECLR 2007:51). This increase can be observed in the careers that we researched.

After two minor modifications in December 2004 and July 2006 and more circulars, the 27 December 2006 law clarified the concepts of residence and legal residence. Indeed, it was unclear that the notion of principal residence by itself implied legal residence. This law, explained by a 25 May 2007 circular, thus clarified the obligation to have both legal residence and residence in Belgium. The law also specified what the legislature meant by "legal residence". Moreover, this law and its circulars confirmed the possibility of obtaining citizenship from abroad. Even though it is the most important amendment to the legislation on nationality and naturalization, overall few changes can actually be observed as the trend remains the same. The main changes occurred with the major reform of the Law on 4 December 2012 (BS/

MB: 14.12.2012) but these did not affect the time period in which this research took place.

2. The institutional context

Residence in the country and the reception of asylum seekers belongs to federal competences. FEDASIL is the federal agency responsible for managing the reception of asylum seekers during their procedure. However, the head of the federal authorities considers reception and integration as two separate processes, since the integration of migrants into Belgian society depends heavily on the quality of reception. There is therefore a desire to take advantage of the periods spent in shelters to begin the integration trajectory as soon as possible, acquiring language and professional skills. Although some integration schemes are funded by the Federal Policy for Large Cities or by the Federal Ministry for Social Integration, integration policy is a regional responsibility.

The adaptation of integration policies to state reforms (those of 1988 and 1993) led to the constitution of different regional public policies. Since then, the three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels) as well as the three language communities (French, German, and Flemish) have responsibilities with respect to integration policies. Until then labour market policies aimed to promote equality in employment without targeting any groups in particular. In 1998, Flanders introduced policies of recognition of and support for ethnic associations that emerged in the context of immigration and that were defined on an ethnic-identity basis (*Minderhedenbeleid*). Since 2001, Flanders has developed an additional public policy, a program of civil integration (*Inburgeringsbeleid*) aimed at new migrants, that offers a Flemish language course and classes that teach the fundamentals of democracy and state law. In the French-speaking part of the country, integration policy is characterized by indirect targeting policies (priority action areas, positive discrimination areas, etc.) based on social (unemployment rate, number of tenants, etc.) and demographic criteria (percentage of foreigners). Since 1996 Wallonia has applied public funding mainly to fight against social disadvantages. The same happened in Brussels with the introduction of social cohesion public policies in 2004, and the introduction by the French community of an integration program in 2012.

Although integration policies are mainly financed by the regions, many activities also receive support from the European Social Fund, the European Refugee Fund and the European Integration Fund.

This chapter consists of five sections. The first maps the actors in the process of reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees. The next presents the particular role of the Public Centres for Social Welfare (OCMW/CPAS). The lasts three sections are dedicated to the regional policies of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels.

2.1. Reception

The principles of reception have generally evolved from financial assistance to other forms of material support. It is clear that the legislation and jurisprudence concerning reception involve numerous changes in laws, royal decrees and instructions but we will focus on recent legislative changes[14] that may affect the integration trajectory of the former asylum seekers studied in this research. From 1994 onwards a redistribution plan was implemented to avoid the concentration of asylum seekers in certain cities. Asylum seekers receive a mandatory place of registration in the form of a "Code 207". The system is still divided into a phase of material assistance in a shelter while the admissibility of the application is reviewed, and subsequently financial aid. Asylum seekers must leave the centres and take up residence in the town defined in the allocation plan in order to receive the social integration benefit provided by the town's PCSW. In 2000, the Local Reception Initiatives managed by the PCSW were established to cope with the massive influx of asylum seekers. However, in many cases reception in a centre did not take place and asylum seekers received direct financial assistance. In January 2001, the Federal Government decided to eliminate financial assistance to new asylum seekers, replacing this by material assistance provided by new reception structures. Financial aid is now reserved for those who are subject to merit review. In order to improve the reception of asylum seekers, the federal government created the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (FEDASIL) in May 2002.

[14] A list can be found on the Medimmigrant website: http://www.medimmigrant.be/index.asp?idbericht=91&idmenu=7&state=89&lang=fr

The 12 January 2007[15] "Reception Law" implemented a new system for the distribution of material assistance in two stages. The first four months of the procedure take place in collective shelters (FEDASIL centres, Red Cross, Christian Mutual Societies, etc.) followed by individual reception structures (provided by PCSW, the *Ciré*, *Vluchtelingenwerk*). This law resulted from the European Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 on minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers in Member States.

The 2007 Reception Law was amended by law on 30 December 2009, comprising various provisions. The law limits the right to reception to three applications unless the IO has approved the presence of new elements in the application. Changes also include extensions after the end of material assistance and time limits to support. Along with several logistical and disciplinary changes[16] (control rooms, sanctions, etc.) the Council of Ministers' decision on the possible use of an allocation plan was again included. Finally, the last major amendment to the Reception Law happened on 19 January 2012, adding a "return trajectory", implementing various provisions relative to the second asylum request and limiting social assistance for people coming from an EU member state[17].

2.2. *Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW)*

The socio-professional integration of (former) asylum seekers is an issue that impacts on all policy levels: federal, regional and local. The latter is important with regard to all kinds of support to the studied group. Local authorities are closer to the citizens and can be approached without difficulty. In case of distress, the research population finds its way easily to the Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW).

[15] The law entered into force in May 2007.

[16] See FEDASIL note on "Modification apportées à la loi du 12 janvier 2007 relatives à l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile par la loi du 30 décembre 2009 portant dispositions diverses", 19 January 2010.

[17] See FEDASIL note for the attention of directors and those in charge of reception centres and partners, "Modification de la loi du 12 janvier 2007 relatives à l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile et de certaines autres catégories d'étrangers et de la loi organique du 8 juillet 1976 des centres publics d'action sociale", 26 March 2012.

The legislation regarding support to the investigated population has changed radically during the research period. Therefore, the situation prior to the 2007 change and afterwards will be described separately. Next, the support provided by public social welfare centres to refugees, people under subsidiary protection, regularized persons and people who entered the country through the process of family reunification will be described briefly.

2.2.1. Support provided by PCSW to Asylum seekers

The role of PCSWs in supporting asylum seekers changed radically with the removal of the admissibility phase in the asylum procedure in the 2007 legislative change (the Reception Act) which had important consequences for the way PCSWs could support asylum seekers. Asylum seekers start by staying in a collective reception structure (an Asylum Centre). The asylum applicants receive material assistance. Material aid is provided when the asylum application is submitted and is effective throughout the entire asylum procedure. Apart from some exceptions, there is no direct assignment to a given PCSW anymore. Despite the legislative change, PCSW continue to be an important feature of support to asylum seekers.

The recognition procedure of the old Asylum Act contained an admissibility phase. Asylum seekers that were considered eligible were assigned to a PCSW, based on a federal 'distribution plan'. The PCSW offered all kinds of support, including financial aid. Once an asylum seeker was assigned to a PCSW (Code 207 PCSW), he or she was entitled to support by the welfare centre. The centre decided on what kind of aid should be granted. The aid could comprise financial support, social employment, housing allowance etcetera. Offering financial support and living allowances is one of the core tasks of PCSW. However, living allowances are only one of the forms of PCSW assistance. The PCSW duty is not to provide an income, but to offer an opportunity to regain financial independence. If possible, realization of social integration is sought through employment. One of the measures used by the PCSW is employment under application of article 60, 7 of the organic Act of 8 July 1976 on the PSWCs. Employment in accordance with article 60 § 7 is a form of social service whereby the PCSW arranges a job for someone who dropped out of the employment market. The aim of employment under article 60 § 7 is to bring the

person in question back into the employment system by offering the minimum number of working days to qualify for e.g. an unemployment allowance. In most cases, the PCSW acts as employer. People can be employed by the PCSW itself, or be put at the disposal of a third party employer.

The admissibility phase disappeared after the implementation of the new Reception Act. Asylum seekers are entitled 'material assistance' and start by staying in a collective reception structure, a centre managed by Fedasil (the federal reception service), the Red Cross of Belgium or a different partner. Then, after a four-month stay, they are able to request a transfer to individual housing, subject to availability. This individual housing is organized by a NGO or the social service of the municipality ('local reception initiatives'). Individual housing guarantees 40% of the reception capacity for asylum seekers. Local Reception Initiatives (LRI) are small scale projects – often in private houses – coordinated and managed by the PCSW. The PCSW responsible provides material assistance, comprising accommodation, meals, clothing, medical, social and psychological assistance, the provision of a daily allowance, as well as access to legal aid, and services such as interpretation and training. Four regional offices (of Fedasil) support the regional authorities that are accountable for the Local Reception Initiatives.

Offering material assistance to asylum seekers is the general rule, but there are some exceptions, such as people who were admissible before the legislative change or people who apply for asylum while legally residing in the country. Asylum seekers who were considered admissible before the legislative change of 2007 kept their rights after the implementation of the new act and were assigned to a PCSW and could receive the related services. Asylum seekers that apply for asylum while legally residing in Belgium are not assigned to a PCSW. They receive the regular support offered by the PCSW. In most cases, the PCSW of their municipality of residence is responsible.

2.2.2. Support provided by PCSW to other legal categories

Since February 1987, PCSW are responsible for the reception and integration of recognized refugees. Also other categories are entitled to support by Public Centres for Social Welfare, such as people in the process of subsidiary protection and (former) asylum seekers in a case

of medical force majeure. Other categories of foreigners may also be entitled to support once they receive a temporary or permanent permit: people entering the country through the family reunification scheme, regularized foreigners and individuals who received the status of subsidiary protection. The type of support that can be granted is summarized in table I-1.

2.3. *Flemish Integration and Reception Policy*

The responsibility for policy in respect of the reception and integration of newcomers was made the responsibility of the Flemish Community under the Law of 8 August 1980. Since 1987 the federated entities can determine their own integration and reception policies. The Regions are responsible for employment policy while the Language Communities decide education and culture policy (Wets 2007).

The integration policy of the Flemish government was a response to the increasing diversity in society as a result of migration. The growth in cultural and ethnic diversity is fascinating, but also creates many challenges and tensions. From this perspective the Flemish government has developed a policy which attempts to deal with these challenges as effectively and efficiently as possible. The government is working towards a society in which people live together as individuals of equal worth, in a communal framework of norms and values and with respect for one another's individuality. Consequently, integration policy is explicitly concerned with all citizens, on the basis that everyone in society must share the responsibility for promoting cohesion amongst all citizens[18].

While integration policy is directed towards all residents of Flanders, reception policy has been specifically developed with the view that new citizens (and later also long established immigrants) should be able to participate fully in society. Integration policy and reception policy are inseparably linked, as is clear from the fact that in 1998 reception policy (then *onthaalbeleid*, now *inburgeringsbeleid*) was taken up as one of the three central policy tracks of the Flemish Minorities Decree (predecessor of the Integration Decree).

[18] Agentschap voor Binnenlands Bestuur (15.11.2012), *Integratiebeleid van de Vlaamse overheid: Waarom?*,Brussel:Vlaamse Overheid http://www.integratiebeleid.be/integratiebeleid/integratiebeleid-van-de-vlaamse-overheid-waarom

Table I-1. *What kind of support can be granted by the PCSW?*

Type of support	Recognized refugees	Foreigners registered in the population register	Asylum seekers	Foreigners registered in the register of foreigners	Subsidiary protection (ongoing)
Living allowances **(law of 26/05/2002):**	x	x			
Financial support **(law of 02/04/1965)**			x	x	
Contribution to medical expenses			for asylum seekers filing an application and who cannot enroll for statutory health insurance		
Contribution to urgent medical expenses			asylum seekers who have exhausted their rights of appeal and who are still in Belgium can, after possible contribution of the health care service, apply for coverage of their urgent medical expenses		x
Child allowance and birth premium: for asylum seekers and foreigners who have resided in Belgium for an effective and uninterrupted period of five years			x	x	
Housing premium			x		
Material Aid			x		x

Source: based on http://www.mi-is.be/en/public-social-welfare-centres/foreigners

In the following discussion, we first briefly consider integration policy. Because reception policy is more specifically oriented towards the relevant population for this research, we then discuss this policy in more detail.

2.3.1. Flemish Integration Policy

Between 2000 and 2010, Flemish integration policy has fundamentally changed. We therefore begin with an outline of policy developments, with attention to the most important changes. Then the integration sector will be described.

a) Developments in Integration Policy in Flanders

Minorities' policy was an inclusive policy which aimed to phase out separate provision in favour of maximal openness of existing facilities and institutions to ethnic and cultural minorities. In concrete terms this meant that for example the Flemish Service for Labour Mediation and Training (VDAB) and other bodies which organized training initiatives were encouraged to be open to ethnic and cultural minorities rather than organizing separate training programs for foreigners[19].

On 22 April 2009, the 1998 Minorities Decree was replaced by the new Integration Decree[20]. In the decree the aims, target groups and the allocation of responsibilities were laid out.

From that point onwards, integration policy was understood as a three-track policy with proportionate participation in society, accessible high-quality service provision and the creation of a support base for a diverse society as key policy objectives.

The Integration Decree gave special attention to "persons without legal residence status who request assistance in case of need". According to the Decree they have the right to humane assistance, particularly in respect to health care and education. In addition the Decree provides for the recognition and subsidy of integration centres, integration services, publicly subsidized translation and interpreting services and a Flemish Centre of Expertise for Migration and Integration.

[19] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (19.12.2012), *Minderhedenbeleid in evolutie*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=935

[20] Article of decree in revision of the decree 28 April 1998 regarding Flemish policy in respect of ethno-cultural minorities (22.04.2009): http://www.fov.be/IMG/pdf/inderhedendecreet.pdf

On 12 November 2010 the Flemish Government approved an important memorandum with respect to the Integration Decree. This memorandum is the first phase of the implementation of the Integration Decree. It lays out regulations for the Commission for Integration Policy, the Flemish Expertise Centre for Migration and Integration, the participation organization (*participatieorganisatie*)[21], the integration centre in the Capital, and the regulations in respect of project subsidies. In addition a number of general issues were discussed. For the remaining issues the earlier law remains in force. The regulations of this memorandum were to be implemented from 1 January 2011.

b) The Integration Sector

Government-funded integration centres and integration services have been established to support the implementation of integration policy on the ground.

There are a total of seven integration centres in Flanders: five provincial integration centres and two local integration centres (in Antwerp and in Ghent). These centres are primarily concerned with supporting diversity in the community. The second key task of the centres is to promote the accessibility of services and facilities and to assist the process of intercultural contact.

Moreover, the decree requires the integration centres to work in a more coordinated and results-oriented manner by drawing up official plans: the centres' funding is contingent on their reaching a number of specific objectives. The tasks of the integration centres are explicitly linked to the Integration Decree in that the centres are expected to support the transfer of new residents from welcome offices to mainstream services[22]. Kruispunt Migratie en Integratie (the Flemish Centre of Expertise for Migration and Integration) also supports reception policy by furthering the link between reception and general integration policy, among other things.

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[21] The 'participatieorganisatie' is a formally recognized organization which acts as a forum for minority organizations. This role is taken up by the Minorities Forum (Forum van Etnisch-Culturele Minderheden vzw), recognized as such since 1999 (act of April 28 1998, act of January 14 2011)

[22] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (14.12.2012), *Het integratiedecreet*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=4704

The coordination of local integration policy in Flanders is in the hands of local government. The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) is expected to work through local government to build up the support base for integration policy. In this respect the integration services recognized by the Flemish Community are important. These services are part of municipal administration and advise the local council on implementation of integration policy. They support municipal services and work with local associations and facilities.

2.3.2. Flemish Reception Policy

Flemish reception policy, like integration policy, has changed drastically during the time period relevant for this research. We therefore describe the most important changes in more detail before taking a closer look at the civic integration program. Finally, we will consider the cooperation between welcome offices on the one hand and social welfare centres (PCSW) on the other.

a) Developments in Reception Policy in Flanders before 2001

Specific attention from the Flemish Government for newcomers is a relatively recent phenomenon. This is because it was only in March 1989 that work on migration policy in Belgium began with the founding of the Royal Commission for Migration Policy (Wets 2007). From 1992 onwards various local initiatives started up in Flanders with a view to creating a reception policy for newcomers. These local experiments aroused the interest of the Flemish Government, which recognized in its Strategic Plan for Flemish Minorities Policy (1996) that an overall strategy for newcomers was needed.

The heart of reception policy was the reception program, which consisted chiefly of personal guidance, a basic course in the Dutch language, an introductory course on Flemish and Belgian society and career coaching. For the purposes of this study the career coaching is of particular interest. This intensive assistance was an attempt to give newcomers the best possible support in making (or learning to make) choices in order to plan their future careers.

In concrete terms, there were three types of career guidance:

- Newcomers with 'professional goals' are guided towards finding work and independent entrepreneurship

- Newcomers with 'educational goals' are guided towards further study
- All newcomers are guided towards participation in social and cultural activities, voluntary work and other leisure activities.

At first this reception policy only regarded three categories of migrant as eligible: migrants for family reunification and family formation; asylum seekers whose applications had been admitted; and recognized refugees[23].

In 1999 the new Flemish government shifted the focus by renaming reception policy *(onthaalbeleid)* as civic integration policy *(inburgeringsbeleid)*. Not only was the content of the policy different but also the target group was expanded to include regularized foreigners[24].

b) Developments in Reception Policy in Flanders between 2001 and 2010

The transformation of reception policy into a civic integration policy, whereby the newcomer had significant obligations, progressed further in the early years of the time period relevant to this study. Thus in February 2003 the Flemish Parliament approved the Civic Integration Decree[25]. The Decree, which came into force on 1 April 2004, defined civic integration as

> *'an interactive process in which the government offers a specific program to foreigners which on the one hand offers them the possibility of adapting to their new social environment and on the other hand contributes to their recognition as citizens by our society, with the goal of their full participation in society'.*

The Decree described the content of the civic integration program and set out which bodies were responsible for policy implementation. Important changes from the previous policy included especially that it was now obligatory for certain sections of the population of newcomers

[23] Agentschap voor Binnenlands Bestuur (28.11.2012), *Loopbaanoriëntatie*, Brussel: Vlaamse Overheid http://www.inburgering.be/inburgering/LO

[24] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (21.12.2012), *Historiek Vlaams inburgeringsbeleid,* Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw – http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=345

[25] Decreet van 28 februari 2003 betreffende het Vlaamse inburgeringsbeleid (28.02.2003): http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/docl_1294_743451124.pdf

in Flanders to participate in a civic integration program (see below). Also the target group was extended to include all newcomers, with the exception of asylum seekers in the admissions phase and people who were only staying temporarily in Belgium (Boone 2012).

The Civic Integration Decree of 2003 was revised twice: on 1 January 2007 and on 2 March 2008.

- The first revision (2007) further extended the target group of civic integration policy by including immigrants who had already lived in Belgium for some time. Secondly, the obligation to follow a civic integration program was extended to include almost all newcomers who intended to stay permanently in Flanders.
- The second revision (2008) harmonized the definition of the target group for reception policy with new federal immigration regulations – including the new asylum procedure (Fermont 2008).

As a result of these revisions of the Civic Integration Decree, the group of people in Flanders who were obliged to follow the primary civic integration program was significantly extended. There was an obligation for the following categories:

- Foreign newcomers who have a residence permit valid for more than three months for the first time, such as recognized refugees, people with Subsidiary Protection Status, regularized foreigners and migrants from outside the European Union who are migrating for the purpose of family reunification.
- Asylum seekers for whom the asylum procedure takes more than four months are obliged to follow the introductory course on Flemish and Belgian society.
- Belgian newcomers who acquired Belgian citizenship while abroad and who are coming to Belgian for the first time, if they are at least 18 years old.
- Newcomers who are minors and not native speakers of Dutch, when they reach the age of 18.
- Ministers of recognized religions[26].

[26] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (12.01.2013), *Doelgroep Vlaams inburgeringsbeleid*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw: http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=344

This obligation is enforced by the possibility of sanctions. Since the first revision of the Civic Integration Decree, a financial deposit is required for the civic integration program and access to social housing can be denied to people who do not fulfil their civic integration obligations (Van Puymbroeck 2011). Moreover, since 1 March 2009 people in the civic integration program in Flanders can be fined (this replaces a system of penalties). Even those who have voluntarily signed a civic integration contract can be fined if they subsequently drop out of the program without official permission[27].

c) Developments in Reception Policy in Flanders since 2010

One of the most important changes since 2010 is that asylum seekers in Flanders who have been in the asylum process for 4 months are no longer obliged to follow the introductory course on Flemish and Belgian society. This means that they still have the right to civic integration but they are no longer part of the priority target group. These changes came into force on 16 March 2012. Asylum seekers who reported to a welcome office before that date are still obliged to follow the course (VVSG 2013).

The Flemish government has further suggested the idea of reforming the integration and civic integration sector to improve the suitability of the support offered and the efficiency and effectiveness of Flemish policy. The central principle is that integration services are offered locally and that the Flemish government should play a supportive role[28]. On 15 July 2011 the Flemish government approved a concept paper which gave these ambitions concrete form. Actual reform along these lines has not yet been implemented (Van Puymbroeck 2011).

2.3.3. The Civic Integration Programme

There are a total of eight welcome offices in Flanders and Brussels, just as there are eight integration centres, seven in Flanders and one in Brussels. The welcome offices are responsible for the coordination of reception policy.

[27] Agentschap voor Binnenlands Bestuur (2009), *Asiel en inburgering*, Brussel: Vlaamse Overheid.
[28] Vlaamse Regering (2011), *Conceptnota Integratie en Inburgering*, Brussel: Vlaamse Regering.

The basic recipe of the primary civic integration program remained unchanged in comparison with previous reception policy. The welcome offices in Flanders organise programs consisting of a basic Dutch course, a course on Flemish and Belgian society and career orientation. For career guidance for people with professional goals the welcome offices in Flanders make use of the Flemish Service for Labour Mediation and Training (VDAB) (VVSG 2013). Furthermore, people following the civic integration program are supported by a program counsellor[29]. This individual guidance helps to ensure that both the content and the length of the program can be adapted to the needs of each individual (Boone 2012).

Besides the primary civic integration program, people can also take part in a secondary program. During this second program the choice made during the primary civic integration program is given more shape. Possibilities include following a vocational training or training in how to start a business. In addition they can take a further course in Dutch as a second language and they can continue their studies[30]. Unlike the primary program, the secondary civic integration program is not organized by a welcome office but by mainstream facilities. In the context of the secondary civic integration programs the VDAB has develop specific training programs for migrants seeking work (Boone 2012).

2.3.4. Cooperation Protocol with Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW)

The welcome offices aim for an optimal integration and participation in society on the part of their clients. Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW) likewise aim to help their clients to participate fully in society. Therefore sometimes in practice the same client is enrolled both at a welcome office and at a PCSW. It is consequently important that both bodies should coordinate their activities with each other as well as possible so that those involved receive the best possible help. With this aim in mind, the Association of Flemish Cities and Communes (VVSG), the Flemish Service for Labour Mediation and Training (VDAB) and the

[29] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (24.11.2012), *Inburgering*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw: http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=199

[30] Agentschap voor Binnenlands Bestuur (26.01.2013), Inburgeringstraject, Brussel: Vlaamse Overheid: http://www.inburgering.be/inburgering/node/2

Agency for Domestic Governance produced a standard Protocol in 2009. The Protocol sets out the cooperation between the PCSW and the welcome office for clients who have been granted a living allowance. The protocol is in accord with the desire of the Flemish government to involve PCSW as partners in Flemish reception policy.

The protocol lays out in which cases PCSW clients may or must follow a civic integration program and what implications this has for all relevant parties. Whenever following a civic integration program is considered to lead to the fulfilment of employability conditions, the client is expected to enroll for a civic integration program at the welcome office. In that case the program counselling is carried out by the welcome office, unless PCSW assistance is compatible with following the civic integration program. The welcome office keeps the PCSW informed about the progress of the civic integration program. At the end of the program the client is transferred back to the PCSW[31].

2.4. Integration policy in Wallonia

In the Walloon Region, integration activities for foreigners or people of foreign origin are governed by a 4 July 1996 decree (BS/MB: 03.09.1996). This decree structures the field of integration and draws the outlines of integration policy in Wallonia. The decree set up seven regional integration centres (CRI), put forward the concept of positive discrimination, and aimed to support local initiatives for social development (Torrekens et al. 2014).

The decree covers foreign individuals and those of foreign origin but it does not explicitly identify the target population (refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection), which is implied by foreigners. Asylum seekers are not the target of this foundational decree but in practice the CRIs and other actors in the integration process include them in their activities and concerns. This decree was amended in 2001, 2003, 2008 and 2009.[32]

The 1996 decree reflects the first wave of migration to Wallonia (labour migrants of Italian, Greek, Spanish, Moroccan, and Turkish origin) and

[31] Agentschap voor Binnenlands Bestuur (2009), De samenwerking tussen OCMW en onthaalbureau, Brussel: Vlaamse Overheid, 20 p.

[32] AGW of 13 December 2001; decree-programme, 18 December 2003; decree, 6 November 2008; decree, 30 April 2009.

made little reference to more recent waves of migration: asylum seekers, students, family reunification, and illegal immigration. Modification of the decree in 2009 resulted in an expansion of the groups targeted by the decree. Since 2009, Walloon political authorities have demonstrated a greater willingness to take into account the specific needs of these newcomers. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are nevertheless not specifically targeted but are indirectly affected by these measures. As previously stated, Walloon policy rests on two pillars: regional integration and local initiatives for social development centres.

2.4.1. Regional Integration Centres (CRI)

There are seven Regional Integration Centres in Wallonia (CRIC in Charleroi, CERAIC in La Louvière, CRIPEL in Liège, CIMB in Mons, CAI in Namur, the CRVI in Verviers and CRIBW in Tubize). These are mixed associations, partly public, partly private, in which municipalities are involved through the administrative council on which aldermen sit alongside representatives of institutions and associations.

Under the terms of the decree, the CRIs must (1) provide support for local social development initiatives and coordination of integration activities within the Local Integration Plans; (2) promote social, economic, cultural and political participation; (3) coordinate the reception, guidance, support and integration of foreigners recently settled in the Walloon Region; (4) train stakeholders active in the integration sector; and (5) collect statistical data at the local level. The CRIs are the location of coordination of and assistance to various public services, institutions and associations in the implementation of integration policies. They are not directly in contact with the public. The partners of the CRIs are mainly associations organizing local social development initiatives but also public authorities and municipalities. Note that the CRIs do not cover the whole of the Walloon Region. Only the areas considered most important for the integration of foreigners and people of foreign origin benefit from the presence of a CRI. For example, during the period under consideration, the Province of Luxembourg did not have a CRI despite having several shelters for asylum seekers, but discussions are underway to open one (Torrekens et al. 2014).

The CRIs have had a role in coordinating and supporting Regional Integration Centres since June 2009. Since the modification of the decree in

April 2009, the CRIs are also responsible for developing a Local Integration Plan in their respective regions. These plans are designed to promote the integration of foreigners or people of foreign origin, highlighting their specific needs, identifying existing activities and defining strategies to better meet their needs. It is a collaborative and collective approach involving all actors in the region in order to network and coordinate available resources.

2.4.2. Local Social Development Initiatives

Local social development initiatives carry out frontline operations. The Walloon Regional Administration provides funding to associations organizing activities promoting the integration of migrants. Eligibility criteria for subsidies are: social and intercultural mediation; support for foreigners in explaining their rights and duties; literacy; education; and social and professional integration projects that bring together the indigenous and non-indigenous population. These local initiatives affect adult foreigners or people of foreign origin and may therefore also affect asylum seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. These are also formally identified as a target group for literacy activities, training and socio-professional integration as well as for information campaigns for migrants about their rights (Targosz and Lauvaux 2008: 88).

These activities are not organized in an integrated form as seen in Flanders and several European countries (Jacobs and Rea 2007; Pascouau 2012; Adam and Martiniello 2013). The integration services exist on a voluntary and non-organized basis, including activities to learn about culture and institutions, social, legal, administrative and individual aid, supplemented by learning and language activities supported by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Certain activities are conducted by local social development initiatives and the CRIs to target asylum seekers and refugees specifically, such as accompanying asylum applications, participation in consultation meetings, briefings, French courses, etc. (Targosz and Lauvaux 2008: 97).

2.4.3. Actors in Employability

The public training institution in Wallonia, Le Forem, organizes various activities for refugees. Although this institution is not listed in the 1996 decree on the integration of foreigners, it also does work that is aimed

at newcomers. In partnership with *Lire et Ecrire* and the CRIs of Liège and Verviers, it participated between 2001 and 2007 in the "Integration of Newcomers" project coordinated by the *Centre pour l'Égalité des Chances et la Lutte Contre le Racisme* (Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism) and funded by the European Social Fund. Together with its partners, Le Forem has developed initiatives for literacy and teaching French as a foreign language to newly arrived foreigners (family reunification, recognized refugee applicants and/or regularization applicants) to increase their level of employability. The main objective is to allow for integration in working life as quickly as possible. The training focuses primarily on oral and written skills required in job searches and presentation to the employer (ads, telephone contact, personal statements), but it does not neglect social and cultural life in Wallonia. The project provide the opportunity for each partner to develop expertise in supporting newly arrived people in employment and other legal and administrative matters related to their status. The partners also currently pursue similar activities in the framework of the 2007-2013 regional program of the European Social Fund.

2.5. Integration policy in Brussels

The bilingual region of Brussels has a complex institutional architecture. There are two different institutions each pursuing their own policy of integration: the French-speakers policy, led by the French Community Commission (COCOF), and the Dutch policy led by the Flemish Community Commission (VGC). The latter is essentially identical to that described for Flanders but it is not mandatory.

2.5.1. Integration policy in Brussels (Dutch speaking)

The Flemish Community Commission (VGC) is responsible for Dutch language integration and reception policy in Brussels Capital Region. The VGC prefers to implement Flemish policy in the capital by applying Flemish law and policy choices with respect to minorities and civic integration as far as possible. Nevertheless the specific Brussels situation has led the VGC to pursue additional measures which are better attuned to the specific needs of the target population.

On 15 June 2006 the VGC Minorities Plan was approved, which gave prominence to two major policy aims. On the one hand there was

emphasis on working towards proportionate participation and empowerment of ethnic and cultural minorities. On the other hand it was decided to increase investment in social cohesion[33].

As is the case in the Flemish Region, in the Brussels Capital Region there is a distinction between integration policy and reception (civic integration) policy.

a) Integration Policy

In Brussels Capital Region, the Flemish Community Commission (VGC) is responsible for the direction of local integration policy. With this aim in mind they attempt to support initiatives which promote integration in the Flemish Community and help achieve the aims of the Minorities Decree. In doing this the VGC gives great attention to cooperation with and coordination between its partners on the ground: Regional Integration Centre Foyer Brussels (RIC Foyer), the Minorities Forum, The Dutch Language House and Brussels Reception Agency for Integration (BON). Just as in Flanders, integration policy in the Brussels Capital Region is oriented towards the whole community, regardless of origin or background.

In line with the integration centres in the Flemish Region, there is one integration centre in Brussels with responsibility for the support of Flemish integration policy in the capital[34]. This function is exercised by the RIC Foyer. RIC Foyer works towards a community which engages positively with diversity and in which ethnic and cultural minorities participate fully in the life of society. The Centre therefore works on the basis that all citizens have strengths and qualities, so that those involved are encouraged to take responsibility and make independent decisions in the interests of their family and of the wider community[35].

RIC Foyer offers various services in order that this supportive work runs as smoothly as possible. Besides a specific service for Roma and Travelers, the following services contribute to the smooth integration of the target group:

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33 Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie (21.11.2012), Minderheden, Brussel: Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie http://www.vgc.be/Welzijn+en+Gezondheid/LeefbareStad/Minderheden/

34 Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (14.12.2012), *Het integratiedecreet*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=4704

35 Foyer (24.01.2013), *Missie*, Brussel: vzw Foyer: http://www.foyer.be/?page=article&id_article=1288&id_rubrique=13&lang=nl

- Legal Protection Service: offering legal advice and assistance, and also training courses on the legal position of foreigners.
- Social Cohesion Service: organizing projects and training courses to promote social cohesion and to highlight the value of ethnic and cultural diversity.
- Language Diversity and Education Unit: developing materials, activities and training courses to encourage and facilitate constructive engagement with (language) diversity in education[36].

b) Reception Policy

The reception policy of the Flemish Community Commission (VGC), like its integration policy, is largely based on that of the Flemish Region, to which it is consequently very similar. However, there are some significant differences.

The most important difference from reception policy in Flanders is that in Brussels nobody is obliged to follow a civic integration program. What does happen is that the civic integration programs in Brussels give priority to the categories of people who in the Flemish Region would be obliged to follow a civic integration program[37].

In accordance with the distribution of the integration centres, the Brussels Capital Region has just one welcome office. The Brussels Reception Agency for Integration (BON) was set up by the Flemish Community on 1 April 2004 and implements the Flemish Civic Integration Decree in the capital. BON regards civic integration as an interactive process with the goal of full and active participation in society[38].

Just as in Flanders, BON organizes primary civic integration programs consisting of a basic Dutch language course, an introductory course on Flemish and Belgian society and careers orientation. As in Flemish welcome offices, program counselling is provided on a one-to-one basis. The fact that BON, certainly in the case of careers orientation, is more active than Flemish welcome offices is largely to do with the particular circumstances of the Brussels welcome office. In the complex

[36] Foyer (10.02.2013), *Organisatiestructuur*, Brussel: vzw Foyer http://www.foyer.be/?page=article&id_article=1282&id_rubrique=12&lang=nl

[37] Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (12.01.2013), *Doelgroep Vlaams inburgeringsbeleid*, Brussel: Kruispunt M-I vzw: http://www.kruispuntmi.be/thema.aspx?id=344

[38] BON (28.01.2013), *Mission & Vision*, Brussel: Brussels Onthaalbureau: http://bon.be/en/about-bon/mission-vision

Brussels situation it was necessary to establish a well-defined role. BON has achieved this by agreeing a protocol with the Flemish Service for Labour Mediation and Training (VDAB), Actiris (the Brussels regional service for labour mediation) and other partners to give shape to the labour market-oriented aspect of civic integration in Brussels. This means that the careers guidance for people on the civic integration program with professional goals is not simply delegated to the VDAB, as happens in Flemish welcome offices[39].

An evaluation of Flemish civic integration policy reached the conclusion that the welcome offices in Flanders could learn lessons from the approach of BON. BON is the only welcome office with a systematic follow-up procedure. Whereas Flemish welcome offices mostly work as problem solvers for newcomers who take the initiative to approach them, BON has a preventative approach. Moreover Flemish welcome offices have no systematic follow-up of newcomers and the program counselling is carried out on a rather ad hoc basis. In contrast, by defining a minimum framework the BON has established a consistent procedure (Lamberts et al. 2007).

2.5.2. Integration policy in Brussels (French speaking)

Unlike Wallonia which has a decree targeting the integration of foreigners and those of foreign origin, the COCOF integration policy was written in the context of a wider social cohesion policy, which was established by the social cohesion decree of 13 May 2004 (BS/MB: 23.03.2005). The purpose of the cohesion policy is to support "living together" initiatives in partnership with municipalities and local associations active in troubled neighbourhoods in Brussels. This policy is strongly established at municipal level.

This decree does not specifically apply to foreigners and people of foreign origin but it defines the principles of social integration for the overall population. However, the decree clearly covers all people "regardless of their national or ethnic origin, cultural and religious affiliation", including foreigners and people of foreign origin in general. Nevertheless, there is no specific provision for asylum seekers, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and recognized refugees.

[39] Interview with Eric De Jonge, director of BON (20.11.2012).

The central actors are the local coordinators that manage social cohesion contracts at municipal level. Thirteen municipalities with deprived districts (defined on the basis of socio-economic indicators) were selected for a social cohesion contract. These contracts, resulting in a five-year subsidy, were made between the municipality, grassroots organizations and the subsidizing authority for the implementation of activities within the social cohesion framework. To ensure the proper development of communal programs, each eligible municipality was invited to set up a local coordinator. Local coordinators were responsible for ensuring the preparation and monitoring of the implementation of communal social cohesion contracts, the effective coordination of projects, administrative and educational support, assessment, and the consultation of stakeholders among local people working on different projects in the same community. Besides the thirteen municipal social cohesion contracts, the decree also provided funding for 55 regional projects.

The decree gives priority to activities such as school support; literacy; overcoming the digital divide; access to new communication technologies; welcoming newcomers; and particularly activities aimed at learning the French language. Two further activities are also strongly supported: activities for a mixed public, and intercultural encounters. However, as various assessments of the policy show, the primary recipients are second and third generation immigrants and nearly half of the funding is oriented towards tutoring children (Kaddouri and Rea 2006; Rea 2007; CRACs 2009, 2010). Newcomers have become a public priority since 2010. For this purpose, the *Lire et Ecrire* institution has developed literacy activities and has become the regional centre for the development of literacy and French for adults. It is thus the largest operator in French as a foreign language (FLE) for newcomers.

On 5 July 2013, COCOF adopted a Decree on the integration trajectory for newcomers in the Brussels-Capital Region. By establishing reception offices for newcomers, including asylum seekers and refugees, this policy aims to provide social and professional monitoring. Although language courses, vocational guidance and citizenship training is offered this is not mandatory for newcomers. The effects of this new policy could not be observed in our research results.

2.6. Integration policy of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

The integration of foreigners and those of foreign origin is the responsibility of the Regions. However, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation responsible for education and continuing education also plays an important role in this integration policy. It finances French Foreign Language (FLE) and literacy classes, which are in high demand among asylum seekers and recognized refugees.

An important player in the field of continuing education is the literacy and training agency for adults *Lire et Ecrire*. This initiative provides literacy, basic education and courses in the French language (FLE) and *Lire et Ecrire* is officially responsible for coordinating literacy initiatives in Francophone Belgium. In recent years, civil society actors appear to emphasize decreased support for literacy in favour of the FLE course, which is more suitable for quick and effective employment. However the supply of literacy courses and FLE remains well below demand.

The purpose of the FLE and literacy courses is not just language acquisition but often includes a focus on social inclusion for cultural and professional learners. Trainers provide a considerable amount of practical information (about the education system, social security, the medical system, etc.) or administrative support (formalities for address changes or the birth of a child, etc.). They also provide information on "Belgian culture" and "Belgian customs" and organize cultural outings. The Wallonia-Brussels Federation funds schools for social improvement, which are very popular among our target group because there are opportunities available for training and they sometimes recognize skills already acquired in the country of origin.

3. Economic context

3.1. Labour market trends (2001-2010)

In the second half of 2008, the paralysis of the worldwide financial system brought about the biggest economic crisis for decades. This had an enormous impact on the economy, the labour market, Government finance and on families, in Belgium as elsewhere. An analysis of the Belgian economic situation over the period 2001-2010 clearly shows

that the economic crisis caused a discontinuity between the period before the crisis and the later period in which the effects of the crisis were evident. While the beginning of the time period relevant for this study was characterized by the end of a period of constant economic growth and falling unemployment rates, in 2010 the economy and labour market were still in recovery from the serious economic crisis that began in late 2008.

As a result of this crisis, the greatest reduction in economic activity during the period 2001-2010 was in the first half of 2009. During this time the GDP volume fell 3.9% in comparison with exactly one year before. The downturn in economic activity was accompanied by a less than proportional fall in the number of hours worked. As a result, labour productivity fell. Already in 2008, when the average GDP growth was still positive, the productivity per hour of work was shrinking. In other words, the growth in number of hours worked slowed less than the growth in GDP. In early 2009, at the height of the crisis, productivity continued to fall, which moderated the impact of the crisis on the volume of work. (De Mulder and Druant 2011).

The following analysis of unemployment and employment shows that the impact of the crisis was relatively limited. So, in the immediate wake of the crisis the Belgian unemployment rate remained below the European average. Moreover the relative increase in the unemployment rate was less marked in Belgium. This limited increase in unemployment during the crisis can be explained by the fact that many employers only resort to redundancies after it becomes certain that the economic slowdown is structural in character. Many therefore preferred less drastic alternatives such as limiting overtime to reduce the volume of work. As the reduction in economic activity continued, popular strategies included the increased use of part-time work and time credits. Besides these existing initiatives, at the start of 2009 a number of supplementary measures were introduced in response to the crisis, such as temporary collective reduction in working hours and crisis time credit.

3.1.1. Unemployment

The group of unemployed people who are seeking work, fully unemployed and with the right to unemployment benefits has undergone various changes between 2001 and 2010. Due to the economic cycle,

demographic changes and changes in the regulatory framework, this group is constantly in a state of flux, both numerically and in profile.

It goes without saying that trends in the unemployment rate are closely linked with economic growth. During the period from 2001 to 2010 the economic situation changed fundamentally. It follows that these different circumstances have a definite influence on the composition of the unemployed population.

Another important factor with a clear impact on the unemployment profile is changes in regulations. In response to the challenge of a rapidly changing labour market, unemployment regulations have repeatedly been revised. Between 2001 and 2010 several radical reforms were implemented: the introduction of the system of housework voucher system; the procedure to activate job-seeking behaviour; the gradual raising of the age at which unemployed people are exempt from signing on as job-seekers; the raising of benefit percentages and wage limits, and so on.

Since both the number and the composition of the unemployed population can be fundamentally changed by these factors, it is necessary to keep them in mind. An important change in this respect is the rise in the age at which unemployed people can become exempt from signing on as job-seekers. From 2002 this age was gradually increased from 50 to 58 years. In consequence, since 2002 the number of fully unemployed benefit claimants aged over 50 has risen gradually. In 2010 the effects of this regulatory change first became fully visible because most unemployed people aged between 50 and 57 were no longer exempt from signing on.

3.1.2. Regional variations in unemployment

The unemployment rate for Belgium as a whole rose between 2001 and 2010 from 6.6% to 8.4%. In absolute terms, the increase was largest in Wallonia, whereas Brussels suffered by far the greatest relative increase (+33.8%). The increase in the numbers of unemployed was highest in Brussels throughout the period. Only in the years 2007 and 2008 was there a slight decrease. A similar scenario played out in Flanders and Wallonia, with a rise in the unemployment rate during the first half of the decade. This rise was relatively less marked than in Brussels. The decline, a consequence of the favourable economic cycle in 2006, 2007 and part of 2008, was also stronger in both regions (NEO, 2011).

Table I-2. *Unemployment rate (15-64 year) by region, 2001-2010*

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Flanders	4.0%	4.9%	5.7%	5.4%	5.5%	5.0%	4.4%	3.9%	5.0%	5.2%
Wallonia	9.9%	10.6%	10.9%	12.1%	11.9%	11.8%	10.5%	10.1%	11.2%	11.5%
Brussels	13.0%	14.7%	15.7%	15.9%	16.5%	17.7%	17.2%	16.0%	15.9%	17.4%
Belgium	6.6%	7.6%	8.2%	8.5%	8.5%	8.3%	7.5%	7.0%	8.0%	8.4%

Source: Statistics Belgium, Eurostat LFS

The sharp increase in the Brussels Region can be explained by both demographic and socio-economic factors. On the demographic level, the working-age population of Brussels has risen much faster than that of the other regions. This is partly due to increased immigration. On the socio-economic level, the imbalance between the requirements of employers (higher education, language skills, …) and the typical profile of the job-seekers (with over-representation of disadvantaged groups such as young people, people with low levels of education, and immigrants) is a major obstacle in Brussels. In addition, commuters add significantly to the competition in the Brussels labour market (NEO 2011).

As already stated, the economic crisis brought an increase in the unemployment figures from 2009 onwards. However, the official statistics from the National Employment Office (RVA/ONEM) show that the increase in the unemployment rate was already slowing down from the beginning of 2010 and even went into reverse in October of that year. The fall in unemployment was most pronounced in Flanders. This was also the region most affected by the crisis with 25% increase in unemployment between 2008 and 2009. In Brussels and Wallonia the increase was much more limited, respectively 8% and 3.5% (De Mulder and Druant 2011).

An analysis of unemployment at city level shows that the unemployment figures of almost all big cities were above the regional average for the whole period. In Flanders, Antwerp and Hasselt were outliers with unemployment rates of 9.8% and 8.1% respectively in 2010. In Wallonia, Mons and Charleroi topped the chart with rates of 23.3% and 22% (NEO 2010). The high unemployment figures in Brussels Region were reflected in high figures for the 19 communes of Brussels. However, there are significant differences between the communes. The unemployment rate for Sint-Pieters-Woluwe was 'only' 10.2%, whereas more than 30% of the inhabitants of Sint-Joost-ten-Node were unemployed (Brussels Observatorium voor de Werkgelegenheid 2012).

3.1.3. Profile of the unemployed population

If the unemployed population is broken down by age group, the most noticeable feature is the sharp increase in the numbers aged over 50. In the 55-60 age group, the absolute numbers increased by a factor of five during the period studied. Nevertheless, the 25-30 age group was the most strongly represented, both in 2000 (17.5%) and in 2010 (14.9%).

If we consider the gender distribution we see that the increase in the total number of unemployed between 2001 and 2010 is chiefly an increase in the number of unemployed men (+36.7%). In contrast, the increase in the female unemployed population was relatively limited (+14.7%). This striking difference is partly explained by the economic reality that men more often than women work in sectors more sensitive to the economic cycle, and therefore economic difficulties have a greater impact on men than on women. In addition, an important influence has been the success of the housework voucher system which was introduced in 2002. Because housework voucher agencies mostly employ women, this has created an outflow from the population of unemployed women. In spite of the stronger increase in male unemployment, in 2010 the percentage of unemployed men was still lower (at 8.2%) than that of the female population (8.6%).

When considering the nationality of the unemployed, we can distinguish Belgians, EU citizens without Belgian citizenship and non-EU citizens. Table I-3 shows clearly that during the 2001-2010 period people with Belgian citizenship had a significantly lower risk of unemployment in comparison with the other two groups. Whereas the unemployment rate for people from other member states of the European Union hovered around 11% throughout this period, the figure for non-EU citizens took much more dramatic proportions at around 30%.

Table I-3. *Employment rate (age 15-64) by nationality, 2001-2010*

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Belgian	6.0%	6.7%	7.5%	7.7%	7.8%	7.5%	6.8%	6.3%	7.1%	7.5%
Other EU	10.4%	11.7%	11.8%	11.6%	10.5%	11.4%	9.8%	9.1%	11.0%	11.0%
Non-EU	25.7%	33.7%	31.6%	31.5%	33.5%	32.9%	29.5%	27.4%	29.5%	30.6%

Source: Statistics Belgium, Eurostat LFS

Notwithstanding the fact that the unemployment rate of Belgian citizens was by far the lowest of the three throughout the period, it was for

this group that the rate increased the most steeply over the period 2001-2010. While in 2001 6.0% of Belgians were unemployed, by 2010 this percentage had reached 7.5%, an increase of 25%. The unemployment rate of EU citizens rose in the same period from 10.4% to 11%, which is an increase of 5.8%. The most problematic was the unemployment rate of non-EU citizens, which was already at 25.7% in 2001. In 2010 this figure rose even higher, to 30.6%. This represents an increase of 19%.

3.1.4. Employment

In 2000, the heads of state and government leaders of the European Union agreed to launch the Lisbon Strategy, with the aim that by 2010 the EU should become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. This goal included a European Employment Strategy whereby every member state committed to raising the employment rate of 15- to 64-year-olds (the proportion of the working age population who are in work) to 70% between 2000 and 2010. Given that this period of time is almost exactly the same as that relevant for this study; it is of interest to consider to what extent Belgium has fulfilled the Lisbon objectives with respect to employment.

The most important conclusion in this respect is that neither Belgium as a whole nor any Belgian region considered separately has succeeded in reaching the ambitious goal of 70%. Table I-3 shows that in 2010 only 62% of Belgians aged between 15 and 64 were in work. The Flemish Region performed best with an employment rate of 66.3%. In the other regions labour market participation remained somewhat lower than in Flanders with an employment rate of 56.7% in Wallonia and 54.8% in Brussels. In spite of the fact that many (mainly Scandinavian) countries did achieve 70%, the average for the EU-27, at 64.2%, lagged more than 5 percentage points below the goal.

Table I-4. *Employment rate (age 15-64) by region, 2001-2010*

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Flanders	63.4%	63.5%	62.9%	64.3%	64.9%	65.0%	66.1%	66.5%	65.8%	66.3%
Wallonia	55.4%	54.9%	55.4%	55.1%	56.1%	56.1%	57.0%	57.2%	56.2%	56.7%
Brussels	53.9%	54.5%	53.2%	54.1%	54.8%	53.4%	54.8%	55.6%	55.1%	54.8%
EU-27	62.5%	62.4%	62.7%	62.8%	63.5%	64.5%	65.4%	65.9%	64.6%	64.2%
Belgium	**59.9%**	**59.9%**	**59.6%**	**60.3%**	**61.1%**	**61.0%**	**62.0%**	**62.4%**	**61.6%**	**62.0%**

Source: Statistics Belgium, Eurostat LFS

If we consider the progress in employment rates achieved between 2001 and 2010, it is clear that only the Flemish region (+2.9%) exceeded the European Union average (+1.7%). In spite of the limited progress in Wallonia (+1.3%) and Brussels (+0.9), the percentage increase for Belgium as a whole (+2.1%) is above the average percentage increase for the EU-27 (Boey 2011).

As a result of the crisis, the Belgian employment rate followed the falling trend which prevailed in almost all EU member states. Although the Belgian employment rate fell less rapidly than the EU average, it continued to lie below that average. The fall in employment in this period was almost completely due to a reduction in male employment from 68.5% to 67.2%. In contrast, the female employment rate remained almost stable in the same period.

In just the same way as the trend in unemployment rates, the negative trend in employment rates as a result of the crisis was quickly reversed. In the period June 2009 – June 2010, 206 400 new jobs were created in Belgium by growing and new employers, while 173 100 jobs were lost due to downsizing and closures. Thus there was a positive balance of 33 200 new jobs. The previous year there was a net loss of 26 800 jobs. The upturn in the employment figures can primarily be attributed to the reduction in job losses. 20% fewer jobs were lost during the 2009-2010 period (Geurts 2010). However the employment rate did not rise in proportion. The Belgian labour market suffers from a major mismatch between the demand and supply of labour.

3.1.5. Demand and Supply: Mismatches

The Belgian labour market is characterized by a paradox: in spite of a large number of job seekers the number of unfilled vacancies remains high. The gap between the competencies sought by employers on the one hand and the capacities of the job seekers on the other is cited as the main reason for this.

A survey of businesses in the year 2010 found that 55% of Belgian businesses had difficulty in finding qualified staff, compared to a European average of only 36%. For low qualified/unqualified staff in particular, 22% of Belgian firms experienced problems in filling vacancies. This was the highest figure in the EU-15.

Due to this meager efficiency of the labour market, there was an urgent need for technical skills especially, as much at secondary education level as at the level of technical college graduates and university graduates. In addition to the quantitative mismatch due to a lack of school leavers and new graduates, there was also a clear case of a qualitative mismatch. In 2010, 1 in 2 hard-to-fill vacancies required no qualifications or experience, a very high proportion which showed the limited appeal of such functions (VBO 2010).

A third mismatch relates to jobseekers' limited geographical mobility. The indicator generally used to measure geographical mismatches is the variation in regional unemployment rates. The labour market situation varies considerably from one region to another, and that applies equally at provincial level. In 2010 the variation of regional unemployment rates[40] was higher in Belgium than anywhere else in the EU. This high variation could mean that jobs are not offered in the locations where jobseekers are living. Greater regional labour mobility could be a partial solution to this problem (Zimmer 2012).

3.2. Access to the Labour Market

3.2.1. Legal access to the labour market according to the regulations

Non-European employees (from outside the EEA) need a work permit to take up paid work in Belgium. There are three types of work permit:

- *Work permit A* is valid for all occupations and employers and is of unlimited duration. It is only granted to foreign employees who have already been employed for several years under work permit B.
- *Work permit B* is tied to a specific occupation with a particular employer who has been granted approval in advance. It is valid for 12 months, with the possibility of renewal. Approval is only granted after a labour market study and only to employers from countries who have signed an international agreement with Belgium.
- *Work permit C* was introduced in 2003 and is valid for all occupations and employers, but is of limited duration (maximum one

[40] At the 'NUTS2' level which in the case of Belgium means the provinces.

> year, renewable). It is granted to foreigners who have a legal right to temporary residence in Belgium where the right to reside is not based on employment, such as asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, students and migrants for reasons of family reunification. (WSE 2013).[41]

If the worker is not salaried but self-employed, the non-European worker must have a self-employment permit (Rosenfeld et al. 2010).

The legal framework for the employment of foreign workers depends on their migration status. Until 2003, asylum seekers needed work permit B to be allowed to take work, for which they were exempted from the labour market study by a 1994 circular. Since 2003, with the revision of work permit B (only granted to workers with a permanent residence permit) and the introduction of work permit C, it is the latter which asylum seekers need to be allowed to work. Their access to the labour market was facilitated in the sense that the employer no longer needed to get approval for this type of work permit. Until 2007, asylum seekers could apply for this work permit after their asylum application was admitted. In 2007 the admissions phase of the asylum procedure was abolished without adjustment of the legal framework regarding employment. As a result, applicants for asylum with an asylum application dated after 31 May 2007 no longer had access to a work permit. It was not until 12 January 2010 that this situation was resolved by restoring access to the labour market for asylum seekers if they had been in the asylum process for 6 months without their application being refused by the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) (or in case of appeal RVV/CCE).[42]

When the asylum application is rejected, by the CGRS or in case of appeal the RVV/CCE, the right to work also expires. If the asylum seeker is recognized as a refugee, he or she then has free access to the labour market. As determined in 1999, recognized refugees are exempted from the need for a work permit, or a self-employment card in the case of self-employed workers. People who acquire subsidiary protection status, a new category of international protection recognized

[41] In 2011 the target group for work permit C was adjusted, but without implications for asylum seekers or people with subsidiary protection status. See: http://www.werk.be/online-diensten/werknemers-buitenlandse-nationaliteit/de-arbeidskaart-c/wie-komt-aanmerking

[42] For the wider legal framework and changes in law: see part 1 of the context analysis.

in 2007, are not granted the same access to the labour market as recognized refugees. Because their right to reside is temporary for the first five years and can be renewed annually depending on the situation in the country of origin, people granted subsidiary protection need work permit C to be able to work. Afterwards they receive permanent right to reside and are then, like recognized refugees, exempt from the need for a work permit. To work in a self-employed capacity, people with subsidiary protection need a self-employment card during the first five years of their residence, just like asylum seekers. In the case of asylum seekers, they are not allowed to undertake business that requires major investment, because of the uncertainty of their continuing right to reside. Regularized foreigners with a temporary residence permit need work permit C in order to be able to work, in contrast to those with a permanent residence permit who have unlimited access to the labour market without a work permit (Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie 2012).

3.2.2. Position in the Labour Market

The position of foreign workers (and workers of foreign origin) in the labour market is followed by various bodies (such as VSAWSE and VDAB for Flanders), but there is little information about their employment according to migration status. In order to build an adequate picture of the situation, (changes in) migration policy (among other things) must be taken into account.

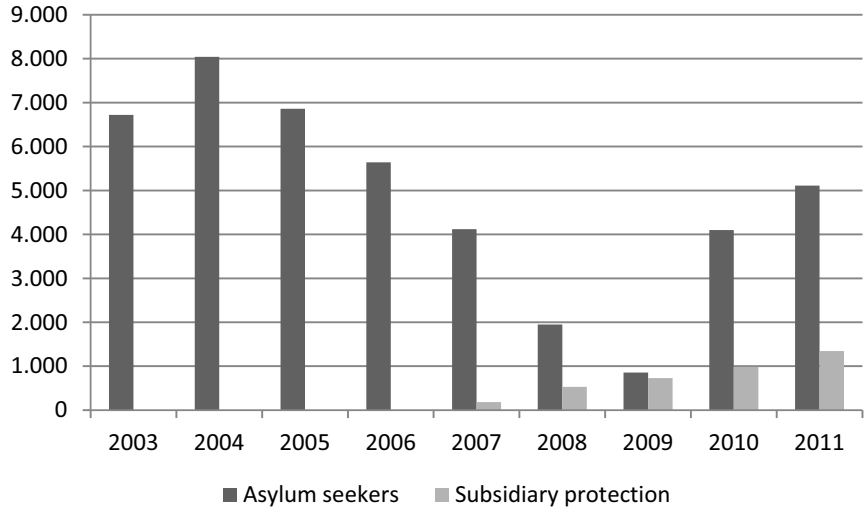
a) Impact of migration policy: trends in the employment of asylum seekers in Flanders

Asylum seekers have had the right to work under work permit C since 2003. Their position in the labour market has been strongly shaped by the legal changes described above, namely the abolition of the admissions phase in 2007 and the restoration of access to the labour market in 2010. These changes in legislation are reflected in various ways in Flemish employment statistics, such as (i) number of work permits granted and (ii) the unemployment figures.

- The fact that asylum seekers who made their application after 1 June 2007 could no longer apply for a work permit caused a steady decline in the number of work permits granted up to and including 2009 (table I-1). Asylum seekers regained access to the labour market only after 12 January 2010, and from that point they

have the right to apply for work permit C if they have been in the asylum process for 6 months without being refused. There was therefore a sharp increase in the number of work permits for asylum seekers in 2010, with almost five times as many permits granted as during the previous year (an increase from 855 to 4.100 work permits) (VSAWSE 2012). Because the number of asylum applications shows no parallel change during the same period, the large difference in the number of work permits granted can be attributed to the change in the laws governing access to the labour market. Table I-1 also shows that from 2007 increasing numbers of work permits were granted to people with the new legal status of subsidiary protection.

Figure I-1. Trends in the number of type C work permits granted to asylum seekers and people with subsidiary protection status, Flemish Region, 2003-2011



Source: VSAWSE

The changes in the number of work permits granted act here as an indicator of the changing access to the labour market as governed by legislation. However this does not give a full picture of the actual employment of asylum seekers. On the one hand, people may apply for work permits which they then do not use, and on the other hand people may be employed illegally without having a work permit.

- The legislative changes in January 2010 also impact on the unemployment figures for the foreign population. Asylum seekers once again have access to the labour market after 6 months in the asylum process without a refusal from the CGVS, or in case of appeal, RVV/CCE. Because they have the right to work they can also enroll as job seekers and follow training courses. According to the VDAB, the rising unemployment rate of people of foreign origin in Flanders between May 2011 and May 2012 (+9.4%) is partly explained by this change in legislation (together with other factors such as the regularization campaign in 2009), which allowed asylum seekers to enroll as job seekers after being granted the right to work (VDAB 2012). However it is not clear what proportion of asylum seekers are granted the right to work. From interviews with key actors, it emerged that asylum seekers are often refused asylum within 6 months of their application.

b) Impact of employment policy

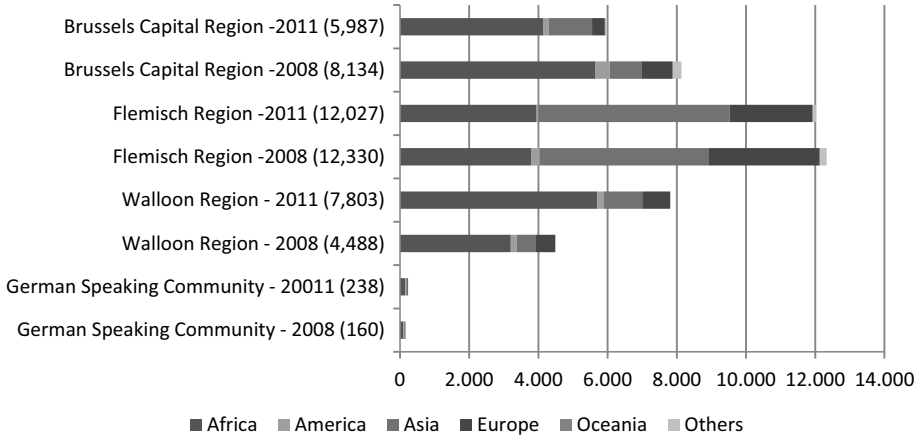
Although a significant proportion of employment policy is developed at regional level, various competencies, such as employment regulations, social security and taxation, are almost exclusively the responsibility of federal government. In this respect research has shown that migrants integrate into the labour market more effectively in countries with lower unemployment benefits, labour tax wedge and minimum wage (Causa and Jean 2007). From a European standpoint the employment of non-EU migrants in Belgium is characterized by a low labour market participation rate and a high proportion in receipt of unemployment benefits (OESO 2008).

c) Impact of regional variation within Belgium

The granting of work permits is a regional competency. Previous research on work permits in the different regions has shown that there is little difference between the number of applications and the number of work permits granted (Martiniello et al. 2010: 90). Table I-3 shows that the Flemish Region granted almost half of the total number of type C work permits, more precisely 49% in 2008 and 46% in 2011. In 2008 Brussels Capital Region granted just under a third of the total number of type C work permits (32%), but in 2011 the share of the Walloon Region had risen to second place (from 18% in 2008 to 30% in 2011).

Bear in mind that Flanders houses about 60%, Wallonia 30% and Brussels 10% of the total population; but respectively about 38%, 30% and 32% of the foreign population. This indicates the high proportion of work permits granted in Flanders. Table I-3 also shows that the region of origin varies widely with Belgian region, so that the Flemish Region mainly grants type C work permits to foreigners from Asia (and also Europe), whereas Brussels in 2008 and Wallonia in 2011 mostly granted work permits to the African community.

Figure I-2. Number of type C work permits granted according to Belgian region and region of origin, 2008, 2011



Source: Belgian Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue

The regional differences in the number of work permits granted, with almost half being granted in Flanders, is possibly related to the particularities of the labour market situation in the different regions. Flanders, for example, has a higher economic growth rate and a better employment rate than the other regions (Corluy, Marx and Verbist, 2011a). This research has also revealed particular regional tendencies such as the approach to newcomers. Almost all new non-EU migrants achieve better labour market integration in Flanders than in the other regions. The authors indicate a possible link with Flemish civic integration policy (Corluy, Marx and Verbist, 2011a: 221). Moreover, this research explains regional variation not only in terms of the economic situation of the relevant region and its labour market and civic integration policies, but also in terms of factors such as the composition of the migrant population, language and urban context.

Another regional variation that influences the labour market integration of migrants is the recognition of professional qualifications. The French and Flemish Language Communities each have their own procedure, and the requirements of conformity and financial barriers are higher for the French Language Community. The Flemish Language Community is comparatively flexible in its criteria, taking account of relevant professional experience and essential components of training, and also recognizes level equivalence (Martiniello et al. 2010: 83).

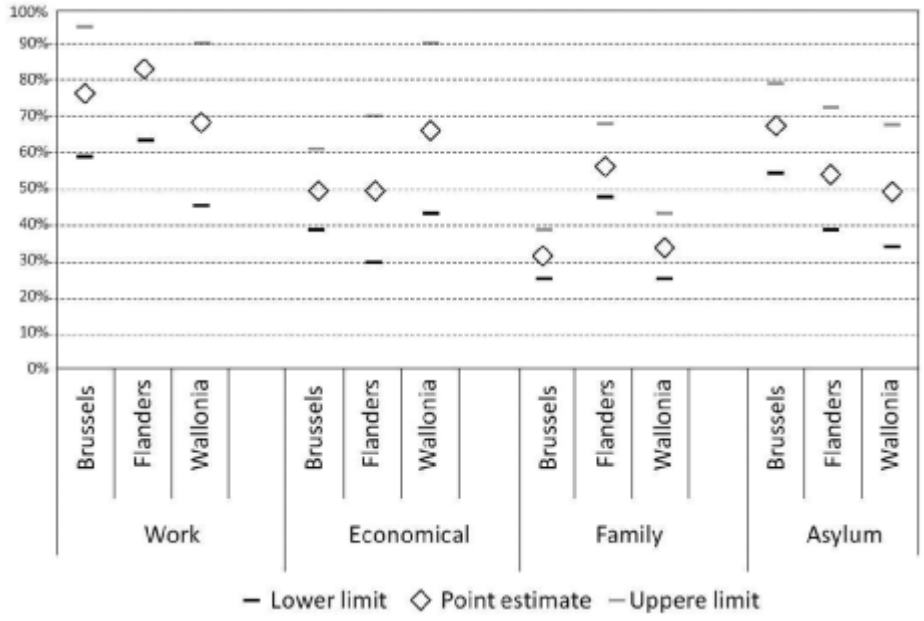
d) Impact of migration status and individual characteristics: Belgium in international perspective

The employment rate of migrants is also correlated with their individual characteristics, such as nationality, gender and reason for migration. With regard to gender, Corluy, Marx and Verbist show that in all regions of Belgium foreign women have a low level of employment. Women with a background outside the EU-27 are less likely to participate in the labour market, both in comparison with women of Belgian origin and in comparison with male migrants. Among men, the limited rate of employment is rather caused by unemployment problems (Corluy, Marx and Verbist 2011a).

It is difficult to determine the impact of naturalization on employment. Acquisition of Belgian citizenship is linked to better labour market outcomes for non-EU migrants, but this may be due to a selection effect, rather than purely an effect of citizenship on employment (Corluy, Marx and Verbist 2011b).

When we consider migration status, table I-4 shows that migrants who come to Belgium for reasons of work (in the strict sense) have a higher employment rate than (in decreasing order) 'economic' migrants, migrants who enter Belgium as asylum seekers and migrants who come to be reunited with their families. Although this last group has only a limited chance of integrating into the labour market, their employment rate is considerably higher in Flanders. Economic migrants have a higher employment rate in Wallonia and asylum seekers in Brussels (Corluy, Marx and Verbist, 2011a: 225).

Figure I-3. Employment rate of non-EU migrants according to reasons for migration (age 15-64), 2008



Source: Statistics Belgium (analysis Corluy, Marx and Verbist, 2011a)

There has been little research on employment in relation to migration status, but international research confirms the link between the reasons for migration and the employment rate. For example, Bevelander found that in Sweden family reuniters find work more quickly than asylum seekers. He found that asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to be unemployed, to take temporary jobs and to have a low income. The author attributes this partly to a selection effect (self-selection and selection by policy mechanisms) and partly to the role of social networks (Bevelander 2011: 22). The lower employment rate of migrants and the even lower labour market integration of refugees is a general trend in many European countries. Explanatory factors include differences in human capital (such as limited language knowledge), limited access to networks, and discrimination by the majority population. Various other policy measures to promote integration can have an impact on labour market integration (Bevelander 2011: 42).

The same author also found that level of education has an impact. The higher the level of education a migrant has, the greater the chance that he or she will find employment. Nevertheless, research shows that

although level of education has a positive effect on employment rates, newcomers are often not able to take work that matches their qualifications (Martiniello et al. 2010: 82). Recognition of qualifications and work experience is obviously important in this respect. For example, refugees in Australia experienced underemployment, unemployment and downwards career progression because of non-recognition of qualifications and because of language barriers (Colic-Peisker 2003). During the interviews (see institutional context) various key actors drew attention to the higher educational level of some refugees and the specific needs and frustrations associated with this. For example Flemish Refugee Action focuses on adequate employment of highly qualified refugees.

Age also plays an important role; the older the refugee, the greater the challenge in finding employment (Colic-Peisker 2003; Bevelander 2011). Various studies show further the impact of psychological well-being (trauma) on the employment of refugees. During the interviews with key actors, the traumatic experiences of refugees were discussed, but also their difficult situation once arrived in their country of destination, specifically the asylum procedure, the employment possibilities and working conditions and equally difficulties on the level of self-awareness and identity.

Chapter II.
Descriptive Analysis

Wouter Schepers and Johan Wets

This chapter describes the total population of people who applied for asylum in Belgium between 2001 and 2010 and who were still residing in the country during the last quarter of 2010[43]. This descriptive chapter gives an idea of the composition of the total population and contains information on 108,856 individuals who appeared in the database of the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS) in the period from 2001 till 2010 and who are still residing in the country. The presented analysis consists of univariate – and sometimes bivariate – presentations of data of different welfare institutions.

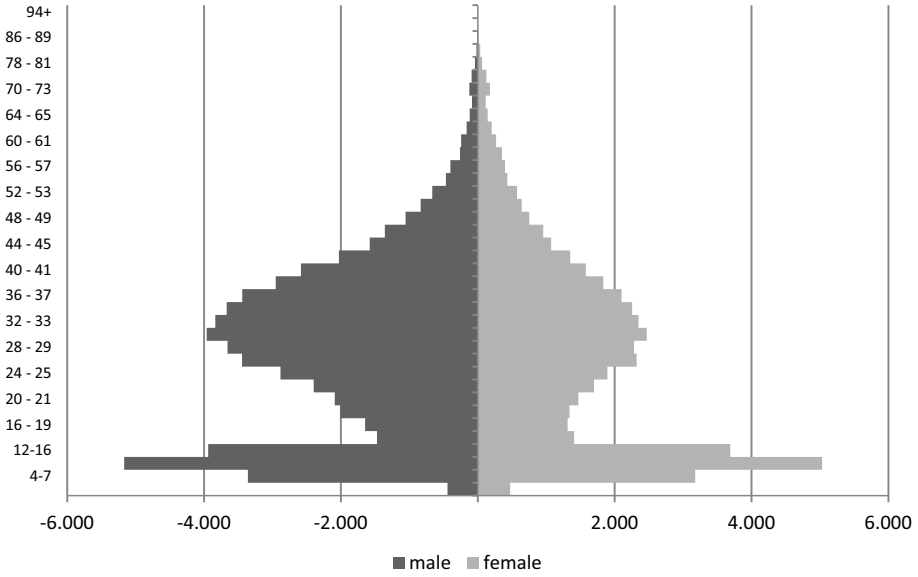
1. Profile of the studied population: age, gender and family composition

The data registered by the National Register and the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS) can be used to construct a profile of the former asylum seekers and their families.

Figure II-1 presents the population pyramid of the studied population at the end of 2010. The figure includes all 108,856 individuals who appeared in the database in the period 2001-2010 and who were still present in the last quarter of 2010. It can be seen that the former asylum seekers and their families are relatively young. The vast majority of the cohort that resided in Belgium in the last quarter of 2010 was born after the seventies. A closer look at the population pyramid shows that young children (0-14) are overrepresented compared with adolescents (15-24). This implies that the population largely consists of relatively young households. In addition, the population pyramid gives an overview of the distribution of the former asylum seekers and their families

[43] All people in the database have applied for asylum. Their status might have changed in the course of the years studied. They may still be asylum seekers, or may be refugees or may have been granted the status of subsidiary protection but they all have in common, regardless of their actual status, that they once were registered as asylum seeker and that they are still living in the country. To avoid lengthy descriptions in the text, the group is further referred to as 'former asylum seekers'.

Figure II-1. *Population pyramid (2010)*



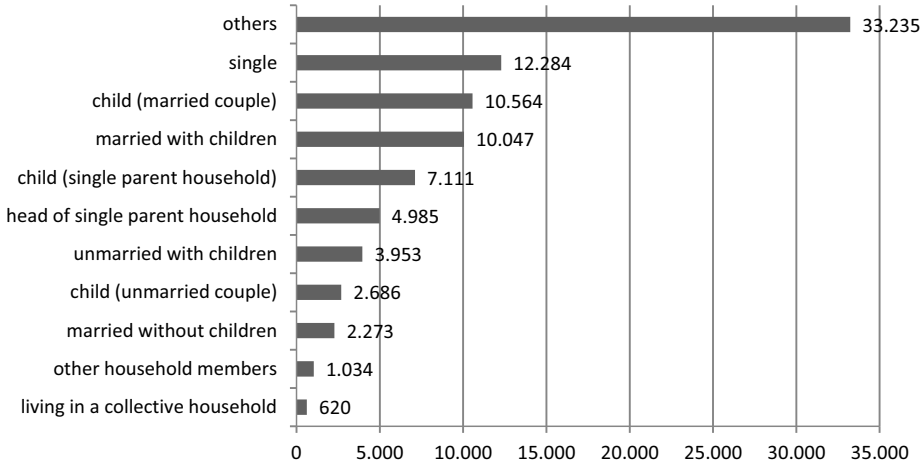
The age groups in the population pyramid are unequally distributed. Due to the privacy legislation it was only possible to obtain age groups rather than exact ages. Working age population is clustered in 2-year groups, youngsters and people above working age (65+) are clustered in 4-year groups.
Source: data CBSS

according to gender. The graph clearly shows that men (57%) are over-represented compared to women (43%). This is mainly due to the large number of single males in the studied population.

The exact household composition can be derived from the LIPRO codes. The LIPRO codes are internationally agreed codes to indicate the position in a household. It originates from a pioneering study by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) to develop a dynamic household projection model which explicitly focuses on the flows underlying household changes. The LIPRO codes project the number of individuals which have different positions within the household.[44]

[44] NIDI, *Software: LIPRO multistate projection model*, The Hague: Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute: http://www.nidi.nl/Pages/NID/24/841.bGFuZz1VSw.html

Figure II-2. *Distribution of positions within the family (2009)*



Source: data CBSS

Figure II-2 displays the composition of the studied population according to the LIPRO-codes at the end of 2009[45]. The distribution of the position of the 88,792 studied individuals within their respective families shows that the group of individuals for which we do not have information (others) is large (37%)[46]. A look at the other individuals who can be distributed according to the LIPRO codes indicates that the singles form the largest subgroup (13.8%). Another important subgroup is traditional families composed of married couples (11.32%) with children (11.90%).

A distribution of the family position according to country of birth shows significant differences among the population. The most striking observation is the large overrepresentation of individuals who are born in Africa in the singles category: Whereas the singles represent 15% of the total population, the proportion of singles among the individuals born in Sudan, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Niger and Mauritania lies between 27% and 44%.

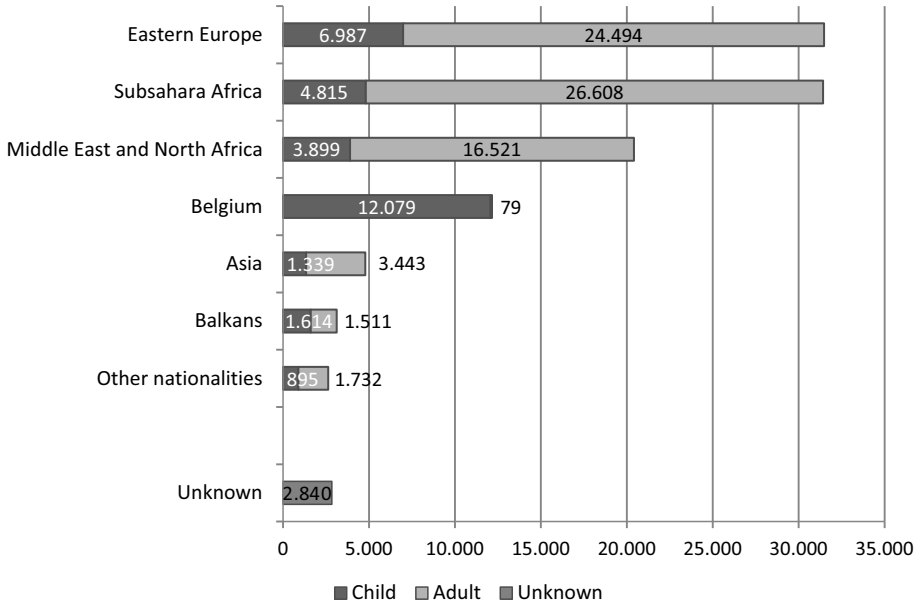
[45] The LIPRO codes are only available until 2009 so it was not possible to look at the position within the family for the population during the last quarter of 2010.

[46] The information available about the population who once applied for asylum increases steadily the longer they are in the country. Composite variables like the LIPRO code are generated by analysis of other data and are thus not readily available for everybody.

As such, the LIPRO codes do not provide a projection of entire households. However, taking into account that the different positions are mutually exclusive and the data should be internally consistent, it is possible to calculate the number of households.

A closer look at the region of birth shows that the largest share of the studied population originates from Eastern Europe (29%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (29%). Almost 1 out of five of the research population was born in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa).

Figure II-3. *Country of birth of the research population*



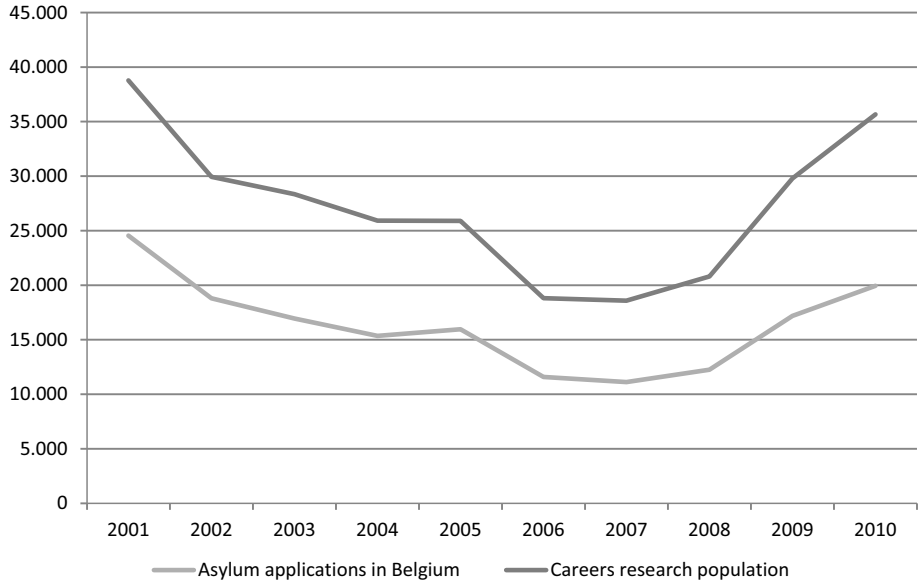
Source: data CBSS

More than one in three (35%) of the children (aged less than 18 years in 2010) were born in Belgium. An analysis of the region of birth of the parents of the children born in Belgium shows that the country of origin of the parents can be linked to the child in only one in three cases. In the cases where it is possible to trace the region of origin back, the parents originate from Sub-Saharan Africa (42%), Eastern Europe (37%) and the MENA countries (13%).

The people in the database entered Belgium during the period 2001 to 2010. The year of the first application is registered and can be used in

further analysis. The graph showing the research population per year of entry has a curvilinear shape (figure II.4). This figure is in line with the fluctuation of the number of asylum applications in Belgium over the studied period.

Figure II-4. *Research population per year of first application and number of asylum applications in Belgium (annually 2001-2010)*



Source: data CBSS, Home Affairs FPS – Immigration Office

Further in this chapter, we will refer to the individuals who registered in the same year as belonging to the same *cohort*. For instance, the people who registered in Belgium for the first time in 2001 make up the 2001 cohort.

In the majority of the cases, the year of the first registration in a Belgian municipality corresponds with the year of the individual's arrival into Belgium. Hence, this makes it possible to see whether the individuals' socio-economic paths change according to the year of their arrival in Belgium. Taking into account that the population is exclusively composed of people who were still residing in Belgium in 2010, it can be assumed that those people who registered in the first years of the period 2001-2010 had been residing longer in Belgium than the ones who registered in the last years of the research period. In concrete terms, this means that the 2001 cohort was living in Belgium during the

entire period 2001-2010, whereas the 2010 cohort only resided in the country in 2010. Consequently, it is interesting to verify to what extent the integration paths of subgroups who have been residing in Belgium for a relatively long time differ from those of the individuals who have only recently entered Belgium.

Belgium is divided into three regions: the Flemish region in the north, the Walloon region in the south and the Brussels region in the centre of the country. The municipality of residence is registered. Based on this information, the distribution over the different (linguistic) regions can be calculated. The largest share of the research population is living in Flanders (38.4%), followed by Wallonia (28.6%) and Brussels (20.2%). The remaining 12.8% is unknown or registered abroad and/or not attributed to a municipality. The concentration of the research population is quite unevenly distributed over the different regions even excluding the unknown or not attributed category. Compared to the total population in 2010, the largest concentration of the research population can be found in Brussels (where the research population is an equivalent of 2% of the 2010 Brussels population), followed by Wallonia (0.9%) and Flanders (0.7%).

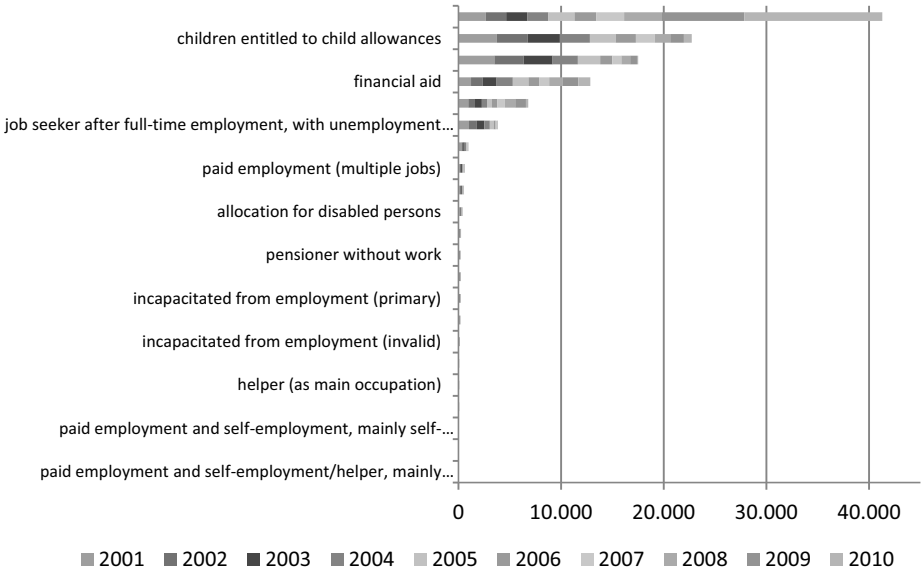
2. The socio-economic position: integration paths

The socio-economic position of the former asylum seekers and their families can be used to describe their integration paths in considerable detail. The databases of several social security institutes provide useful information regarding their activities on the labour market, unemployment and dependence on social welfare.

The nomenclature code is created by the Crossroads Bank Social Security to indicate the socio-economic position of an individual. The code indicates the labour market position. It is a hierarchically structured numerical code and can be broken down into 5 digits. There are four main categories: employed, unemployed, economically inactive and unknown. Each of these main categories can be further refined. The nomenclature code in this particular case is based on variables of different institutes and was requested for the period 2001 to 2010. The code is determined for the last day of each quarter.

The Crossroads Bank for Social Security appoints a singular code which corresponds with the socioeconomic situation of an individual on the last day of each quarter.[47] This nomenclature code makes it possible to give a global overview of the socio-economic positions of the former asylum seekers and their families. Figure II-5 depicts the nomenclature codes of the studied population for the last quarter of 2010. All categories are included in the figure, including those with frequencies below 100 (and thus barely visible on the graph), to show the strong concentration of the research population in the categories 'other', 'child allowance' and further 'paid employment', 'financial aid' and 'living allowance'.

Figure II-5. *Nomenclature codes (2010-4)*



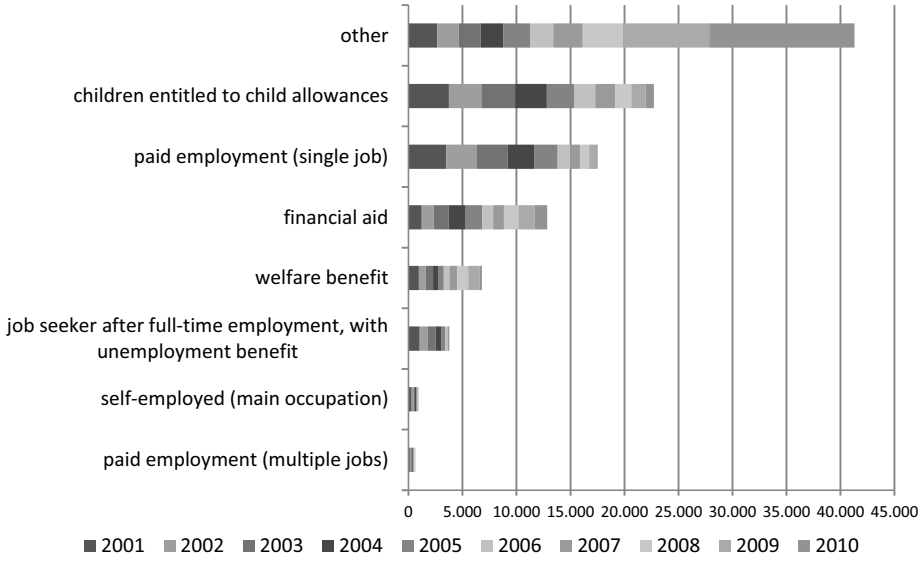
Source: data CBSS

If the abundant category 'other' (37.92%) is excluded, children entitled to child allowances, people in paid employment and people relying on financial aid are the most important categories. Although the nomenclature codes allow having an idea about the distribution of the population within different categories, it is – given the variety of categories – difficult to draw conclusions. In the next sections, the different socio-

[47] PPS Social Integration, *Data warehouse labour market and social protection*, Brussels: POD Maatschappelijke Integratie: http://www.mi-is.be/en/e-government-and-website-applications/data-warehouse-labour-market-and-social-protection

economic positions will be discussed in more detail by making use of the separate databases of the aforementioned public agencies.

Figure II-6. *Nomenclature codes (selection) (2010-4)*



Source: data CBSS

Figure II-6 summarizes the main labour market- and income-oriented socio-economic positions of figure II-5. The categories are divided according to the year in which the individual was registered in a Belgian municipality for the first time. This makes it possible to see whether the distribution of socio-economic positions changes according to the year of the first registration. For example, more than half of the people in the residual category 'other' entered the country in 2010 (32.6%) or 2009 (19.4%).

The above depicted composite variable 'nomenclature code' (figure II.5, figure II.6) gives an indication of which of the social security institutes has further information on the research population, and of the numbers of individuals whose socio-economic position is not clear from the available data (in which case they appear in the category 'others'). In the following section the position in the labour market is described on the basis of the different databases available. The position in the labour market is then described, be it as employee (data NSSO/RSZ/ONSS), as employed by local authorities (data NSSOPLA /RSZPPO/ONSSAPL), as unemployed (data NEO/RVA/ONEM), or self-employed (data RSVZ/

INASTI). The position in the labour market is completed by data on other sources of income such as welfare benefits (data Programmatic Public Service Social Integration[48]).

3. Employment

3.1. Paid employment

The graph of the different nomenclature codes (figure II-5, II-6.) shows that one of the possible positions the former asylum seekers and family members can have in the labour market is that of paid employment. The database of the National Social Security Office (RSZ/ONSS) records all individuals who hold explicit (written or oral) or implicit employment contracts which give them a basic remuneration which is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the unit for which they work. This unit can be a corporation, a non-profit institution, a government unit or a household. Given that the NSSO database contains statistics for each quarter over the period 2001-2010, it is possible to study the trends in paid employment among the population.

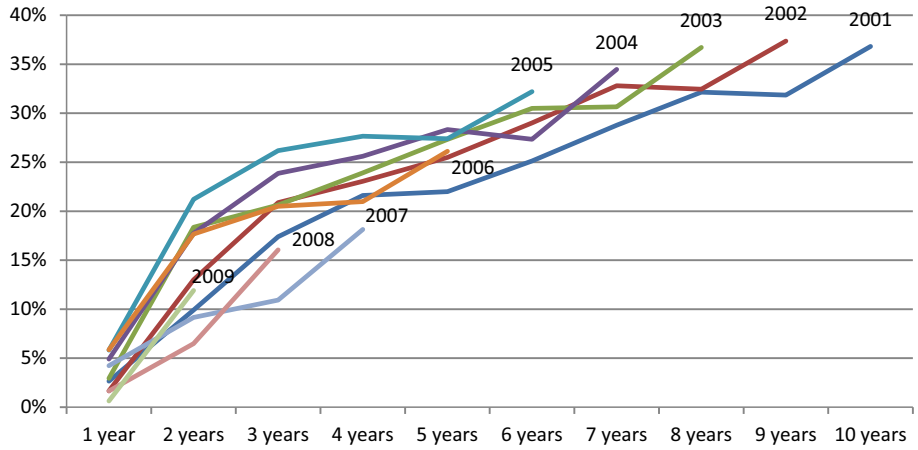
Figure II-7 shows the trends in the paid employment rate per cohort over the period 2001-2010. The presented proportion of paid employment is expressed as the ratio between the total number of paid employed and the number of people of working age (the subgroup of the population between 18 and 65 years). These proportions are calculated for the last quarter of every year from 2001 (01_4) to 2010 (10_4)[49]. For ease of comparison, the horizontal axis shows the number of years present in the country. In general, the presented trends can be seen as a sequence of quarterly snapshots. In the case of paid employment, this means that the proportion of individuals in paid employment per

[48] People entitled to the support by a Public Centre for Social Welfare (PCSW) can receive a *guaranteed minimum income benefit*. Throughout the book, *welfare benefit* is used to refer to this guaranteed minimum income benefit.

[49] The years on the X axis in this and the following graphs refers to the last quarter of the measured year and gives an indication on the maximum time already on the Belgian soil: 1 year refers to the year of arrival and means living between 0 and 1 year in Belgium; 2 years means living between 1 and 2 years in Belgium, etcetera. Some of the 227 people in figure II 7 who were registered on the last quarter of 2001 Might have arrived 12 months before the moment of measurement and some others only a few months. A small number of people (ranging between 28 for the 2001 and 2004 cohort and 10 for the 2009 cohort) were already registered in the NSOO database – and thus already in the country – before applying for asylum.

cohort is observed for each quarter. It is perfectly possible for an individual to be included in a certain quarter while not being present in another quarter. For instance: if an individual only worked in the periods just after arriving (e.g. between 2 and 3 years in the country) and again after 6 years, he/she will not appear in the snapshots during the intervening period.

Figure II-7. *Paid employment per cohort (2001-2010)*



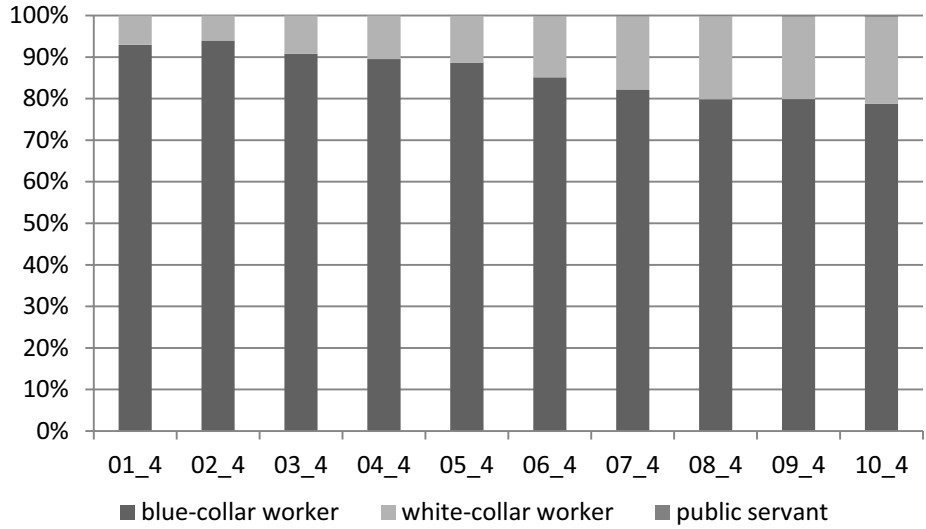
Source: data NSSO/RSZ/ONSS

The graph shows a similar trend for the different cohorts over time. Although some cohorts catch up with earlier ones regarding the proportion of paid employment, the picture is more or less the same for the all cohorts: The longer a group has resided in Belgium, the higher is the likelihood of being employed. So the cohorts who were residing in Belgium at the beginning of the period 2001-2010 have the highest employment rates in 2010, although the cohorts 2003 and 2002 attain more or less the same level after respectively 8 and 9 years in Belgium. For each cohort, the proportion of paid employment is rather low in their first year in Belgium. However, substantial differences can be observed between the different cohorts: Whereas the initial rates for the 2004-2007 cohorts are close to 5%, the other cohorts' employment rates are significantly lower (between 0.63% and 2.94%). Afterwards, the proportion steadily increases to a maximum of 37.36% for the 2002 cohort in 2010, which corresponds to 2,929 individuals in paid employment. The legal possibilities to enter the labour market were not the same for all legal categories over the whole period. Asylum seekers

who applied after June 2007 were not allowed to work until the beginning of 2010. That can explain the lower rates at the beginning of their careers. The total number of individuals in paid employment (all cohorts) amounted to 18,584 in 2010.

The NSSO database allows us to have a closer look at the types of jobs which the research population takes up. The careers of the individuals can be grouped according to labour market statute (white-collar worker, blue-collar worker or public servant). Since only 27 out of 18,584 individuals in the NSSO database were employed as a public servant in the last quarter of 2010, the main focus of this section will be on the blue-collar workers and white-collar workers. In what follows, we will study the trends in the statute ratios for the cohort that was resident in Belgium during the entire period 2001-2010 (2001 cohort), the cohort that was resident in Belgium from 2005 (2005 cohort) and the cohort that had only recently entered Belgium (2010 cohort). Figure II-8 represents all individuals who were registered in a Belgian municipality in 2001 for the first time and worked as a blue-collar worker, white-collar worker or public servant in the period 2001-2010 (01_4 to 10_4 on the x-axis). Given this cohort's presence in Belgium since 2001, it is possible to show the relative distribution of the categories over the whole of the period 2001-2010.

Figure II-8. *Percentage distribution of labour market statute for the 2001 cohort (2001-2010)*



Source: data NSSO/RSZ/ONSS

Figure II-8 clearly shows that blue-collar workers are overrepresented compared to white-collar workers throughout the whole period. The proportion of blue-collar workers among the paid employed ranges from 78.72% (the lowest share or 2,952 individuals in 2010) to 94% (the highest share or 799 individuals in 2002). However, over time, the proportion of white-collar worker rises from 7% in 2001 (the lowest share: 16 individuals) to 21% in 2010 (the highest share: 787 individuals). This means that most individuals who start working shortly after their arrival are employed as blue-collar workers. The likelihood of being employed as a white-collar worker increases the longer the individuals are resident in Belgium.

Figure II-9 portrays all individuals who were registered in a Belgian municipality in 2005 for the first time and worked as a blue-collar worker, white-collar worker or public servant in the period 2005-2010. These individuals appear in 2005 for the first time in the NSSO-database, so the depicted development is limited to six years (2005-2010).

Figure II-9. *Percentage distribution of labour market statute for the 2005 cohort (2005-2010)*



Source: data NSSO/RSZ/ONSS

Nevertheless, the results for the 2005 cohort are very similar to the evolution of the 2001 cohort. The 2005 cohort does not include any public servants over the period 2005-2010. The blue-collar workers form the largest category with a proportion between 82% (1,836 indi-

viduals in 2010) and 92.5% (346 individuals in 2005). Again, the proportion of blue-collar workers diminishes over time. This implies that the longer the individuals of the 2005 cohort are resident in Belgium, the more likely they are to be employed as a white-collar worker.

Regarding the 2010 cohort, it is only possible to analyze the ratio between blue-collar workers, white-collar workers and public servants in 2010. Again, the majority of the 2010 cohort in the NSSO-database is employed as a blue-collar worker (86.1% which corresponds to 186 employees). It can be expected that this proportion will decline in the following years as was the case for the previous cohorts. Similarly to the 2005 cohort, nobody in the 2010 cohort worked as a public servant.

3.2. Employment provided by local authorities

The National Social Security Office for Provincial and Local Administration (RSZPPO/ ONSSAPL) is the social security organization that is responsible for provincial and local administrations, including the provinces, municipalities and Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW). An examination of the database of this service makes it possible to study the changing numbers of individuals employed by local authorities.

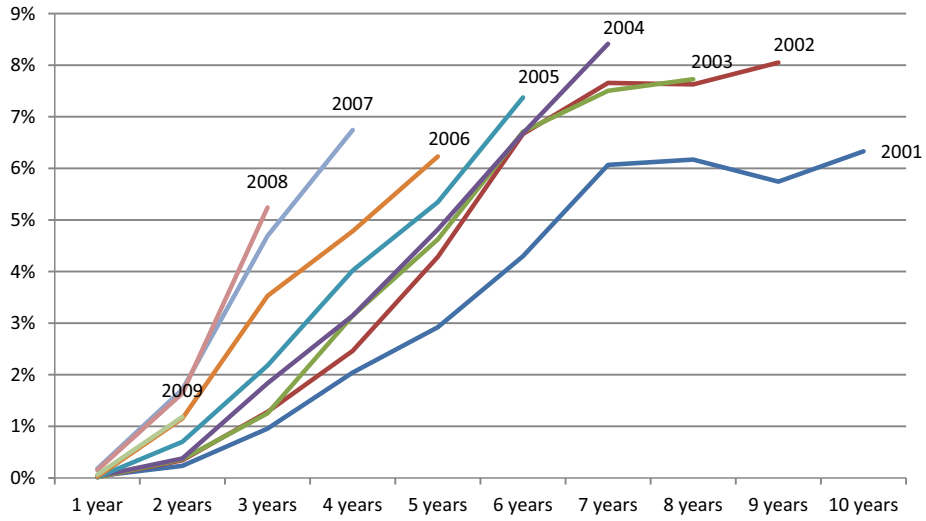
The vast majority of the population that is employed by local authorities is recruited on the basis of art.60, § 7 of the law on PCSWs (70.85% in 2010).[50] According to this article, the welfare centre can itself act as the employer or mediate with a third party to hire the beneficiary. In both cases, the job is subsidized by the federal government. These regulations aim at reintegrating excluded persons into the labour market and restoring their social security rights. Because many members of the studied population encountered difficulties in finding work, they made extensive use of this possibility. In addition to the widespread use of art.60, employment by local authorities is provided through other forms of subsidized employment contracts on the one hand and traditional employment contracts on the other hand.

Figure II-10 depicts the trends in the employment provided by local authorities per cohort over the period 2001-2010. Similarly to the paid

[50] Organic law regarding the Public Centres for Social Welfare (08.07.1976): http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=nl&la=N&table_name=wet&cn=1976070801

employment rate, the proportion is expressed as the ratio between the total number of individuals employed by local authorities and the number of people of working age.

Figure II-10. *Employment provided by local authorities per cohort (2001-2010)*



Source: data NSSOPLA /RSZPPO/ONSSAPL

Regarding the cohorts with the longest stay in Belgium (2001-2003), the proportion of employment provided by local authorities seems to rise sharply in their first six years. Afterwards, the employment rate stabilizes and even decreases in certain periods. One of the potential reasons for this trend is the negative feature of the use of art.60: The subsidy expires as soon as the individual's eligibility for unemployment benefits is created or restored, which results in a majority of the beneficiaries falling into unemployment at that moment (Nicaise and Schepers 2012). This might explain the growth retardation and eventual decrease during the last registered years. For the cohorts that arrived in Belgium more recently (2004-2010), the importance of the employment provided by local authorities continues to rise throughout the period. To conclude, it has to be acknowledged that the importance of employment provided by local authorities should not be overestimated given that the maximum proportion is only 8.41% (compared to 37.36% for paid employment) or 617 individuals (2004 cohort). The total number of individuals employed by local authorities (all cohorts) only amounted to 4,038 in 2010.

3.3. *Self-employed*

The National Institute for the Social Security of the Self-employed (RSVZ/INASTI) is responsible for the social statute of the self-employed in Belgium. As a result, its database contains data about the self-employed, including the self-employed of the studied population.

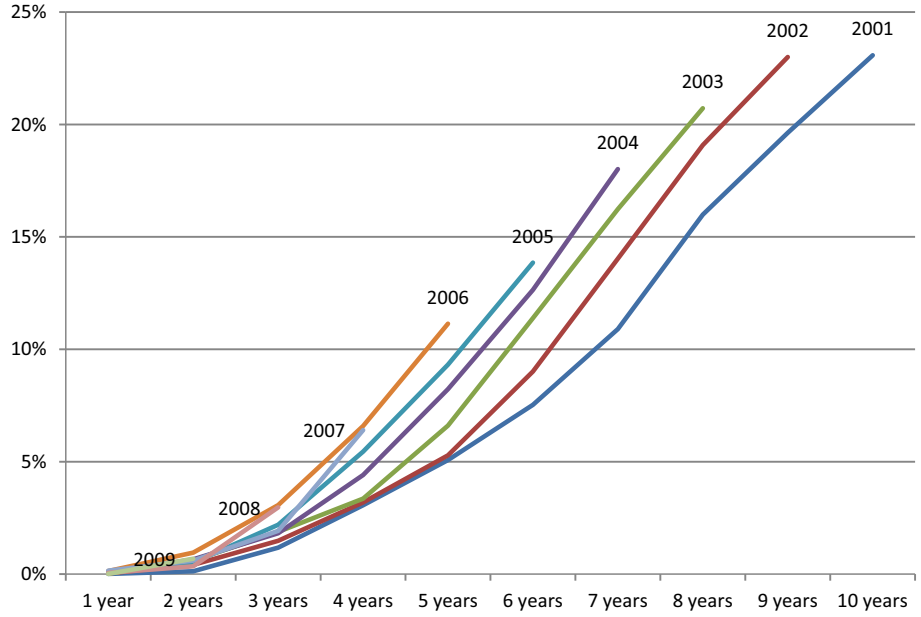
The number of self-employed among the population grows strongly throughout the period 2001-2010. In the beginning of 2001, the combined database contained only one self-employed person. This number gradually increases to reach 1,250 individuals (for all cohorts) during the last quarter of 2010. Despite the sharp rise in the numbers of self-employed within the population, it has to be taken into account that the total number of self-employed among the studied population of (former) asylum seekers remained relatively limited compared to the numbers in the aforementioned categories of paid employment and employment by local authorities.

3.4. *Unemployed*

The previous sections demonstrated that a significant subgroup of the studied population gradually found their way to the labour market. This development also increased the risk of becoming unemployed for this particular group. The National Employment Office (RVA/ONEM) is responsible for managing unemployment insurance within the Belgian social security system. Figure II-11 shows the changing numbers of unemployed per cohort over the period 2001-2010. Again, the presented proportion is expressed as the ratio between the total number of unemployed and the total number of the population aged between 18 and 65 years. These proportions are calculated for the last quarter of every year from 2001 (01_4) to 2010 (10_4) and again the horizontal axis represents the number of years present in the country.

As is the case with paid employment, the different cohorts follow a similar trend over time: The longer an individual is residing in Belgium, the higher is the likelihood of being registered as unemployed. Consequently, the 2001 cohort, which has been resident in Belgium during the entire period 2001-2010, has the highest unemployment level (23.08%) in 2010 (2,351 individuals). The total number of unemployed (all cohorts) amounted to 9,164 individuals in 2010. The similar rise in employment and unemployment over time is a logical

Figure II-11. *Unemployment per cohort (2001-2010)*



Source: data NEO/RVA/ONEM

consequence of the requirement that an individual who receives unemployment benefits needs to have worked before: the higher the probability of being employed (see Figure II-7), the higher the chance of being registered as unemployed afterwards.

As a result of the employment requirement, the rise in the unemployment rate lags behind the employment rate for each cohort: whereas the employment rate ranges from 0.63% to 5.86% for the different cohorts in their first year, the unemployment rates in the first year only range from 0.01% to 0.16%.

3.5. Social welfare

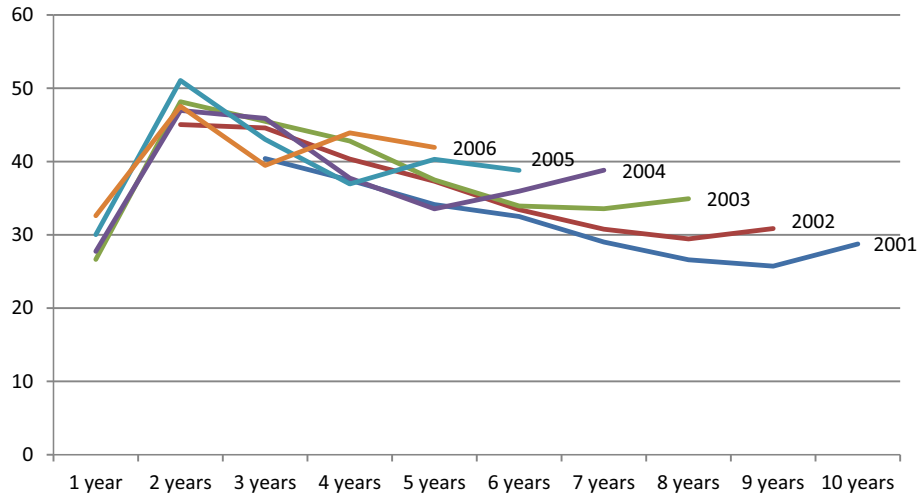
In order to analyze the situation of the regularized with respect to the use of social welfare measures, it is necessary to have a closer look at the different types of social welfare based on the PRIMA-database. This database of the Programmatic Public Service (PPS) Social Integration contains statistics concerning reimbursements from the State to the PCSWs for individuals who received a *living allowance* or other forms of financial support. In addition, the database includes information about

the employment measures of the PCSWs and other initiatives aimed at fostering socio-economic integration.

Because the changes in the proportion of social welfare use per cohort shows a more complex picture, the 2001-2006 cohorts and the 2007-2010 cohorts will be displayed separately.

Figure II-12 presents the changes in the proportion that relied on social welfare measures for the cohorts 2001-2006. Because the PRIMA-database only contains statistics starting from 2003, the figure is limited to the period 2003 (03_4) – 2010 (10_4). Again, social welfare use is expressed as the ratio between the absolute numbers receiving social welfare and the number of people of working age, taking into consideration that the most important types of social welfare focus on that age group (see below). Moreover, it allows the combination of unemployment, employment and social welfare use into one single graph[51].

Figure II-12. *Social welfare use for the 2001-2006 cohorts (2003-2010)*



Source: data Programmatic Public Service Social Integration

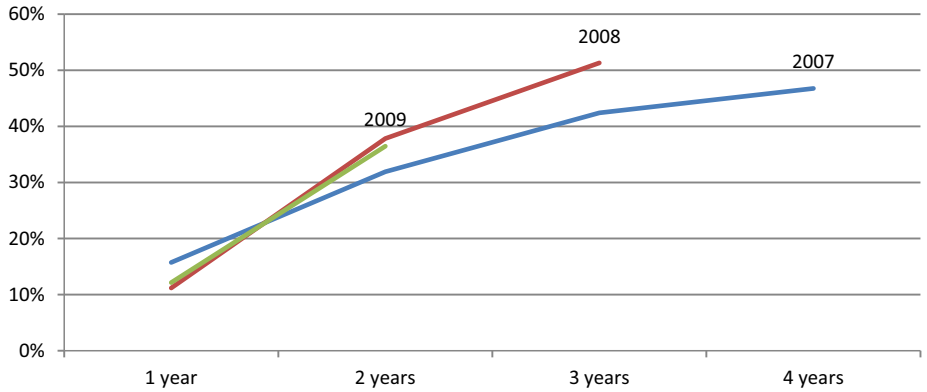
Unlike the employment and unemployment rates, the proportion of social welfare use for the 2001-2006 cohorts is relatively high in their first year of residence in Belgium. In their first year, the proportion of the research population that relies on social welfare ranges from 26.65%

[51] It has to be taken into account that the exclusive focus on the labour force might result in missing certain individuals who are not part of the labour force and rely on social welfare measures

(1,904 individuals for the 2003 cohort) to 32.60% (1,401 individuals for the 2006 cohort). Subsequently, the proportion of social welfare use keeps on increasing to reach even more than 50% in case of the 2005 cohort. This means that more than half of the 2005 cohort's working age population relied on social welfare at the end of 2006. After the sharp increase of social welfare use, the proportion reaches a maximum and tends to stabilize between 28.74% (2001 cohort) and 41.93% (2006 cohort).

Figure II-13 shows the changing rate of social welfare dependence for the last four cohorts (2007-2010). In comparison with the previous cohorts, the proportion dependent on social welfare is lower in the first year of residence (between 11.17% and 15.74%). Similar to the trends of the earlier cohorts, the proportion of social welfare use among the 2007-2010 cohorts rises in their first years of residence (to a maximum of 51.30% or 2,937 individuals for the 2008 cohort). Unlike the 2001-2006 cohorts, the proportion of social welfare use among the cohorts that have been residing in Belgium most recently does not seem to plateau but continues to increase instead. A potential explanation for this phenomenon might be found in the precarious economic context after the outbreak of the 2008 Financial Crisis. Moreover, asylum seekers who entered the country after 1 June 2007 were not entitled to work. This situation changed only in January 2010. The total number of individuals who relied on social welfare (all cohorts) amounted to 25,260 in 2010.

Figure II-13. *Social welfare use for the 2007-2010 cohorts (2007-2010)*



Source: data Programmatic Public Service Social Integration

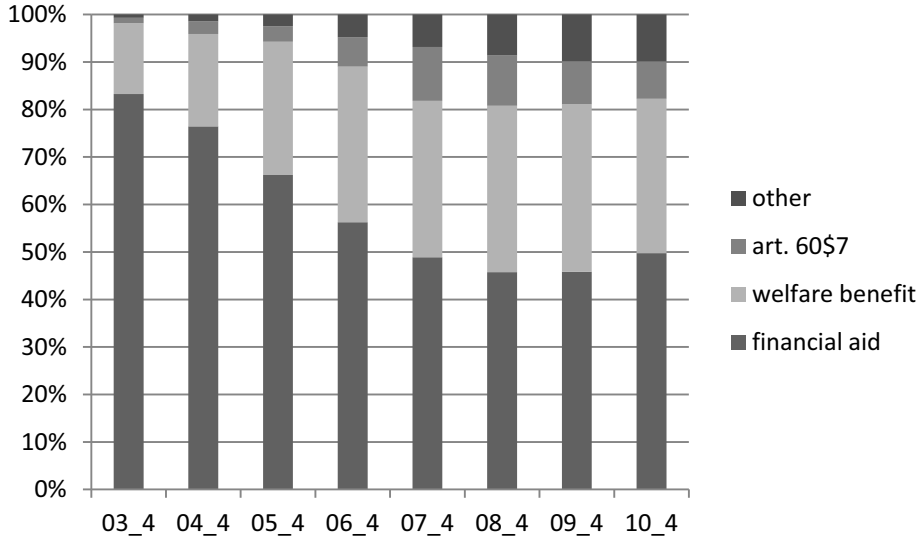
The context analysis above includes an overview of the most important social welfare categories: (1) the living allowance, (2) financial aid and (3) employment programs in order to ease the transition to employment according to art.60, § 7 of the law on PCSWs. Taking into consideration that the majority of the studied population in the database of the PPS Social Integration relied on one of these categories, they will be discussed in more detail in this section. In addition, the database also contains less frequently used categories such as activation measures, the use of article 61 of the law on PCSWs and social economy measures. In the following graphs, these types of social welfare will be grouped into the category 'other'.

Figure II-14 gives an overview of the types of social welfare upon which the 2001 cohort has been relying over the period 2003-2010. It proves that *financial aid* is the most important type of social aid throughout the whole period: The proportion of financial aid among the provided social welfare measures ranges between 46% (in 2008) and 83% (in 2003). Although its importance diminishes over time, it remains the most important kind of aid provided by the public authorities between 2003 and 2010. Furthermore, it is shown that for the period 2003 to 2007, the longer the 2001 cohort is resident in Belgium, the higher the likelihood that they make use of the living allowance and article 60 categories. In the last three years, the importance of financial aid seems to grow slightly again compared with the living allowance (around 34%), article 60 (around 9%) and the other categories (around 8%).

Figure II-15 shows the distribution of the provided social welfare measures over the period 2005-2010 for the cohort that has been resident in Belgium since 2005. Again, we can observe an extremely strong dependence on financial aid during the first years (ranging from 65% in 2010 to 97% in 2005). Although the welfare benefits, article 60 and the other types of social support become increasingly important the longer they are resident in Belgium, financial aid remains the most important category of social welfare throughout the whole period.

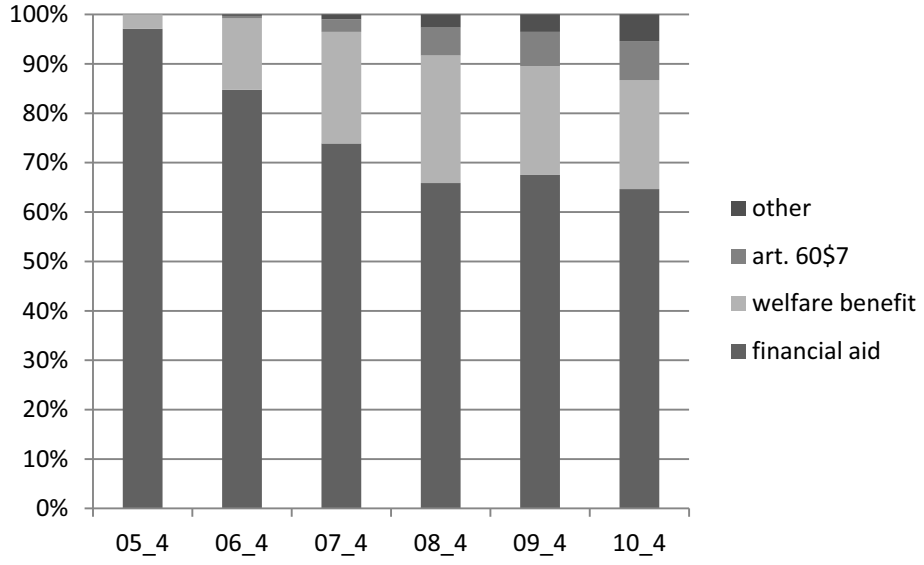
The distribution of social welfare measures for the 2010 cohort in 2010 is very similar to ratio for the aforementioned cohorts in their early years. Financial aid (83%) is the most common type of social welfare, followed by the entitlement to a living allowance (17%). None of the individuals of the 2010 cohort relied in that year on article 60 or on the types of welfare in the category 'other'.

Figure II-14. *Distribution of social welfare measures for the 2001 cohort (2003-2010)*



Source: data Programmatic Public Service Social Integration

Figure II-15. *Distribution of social welfare measures for the 2005 cohort (2005-2010)*



Source: data Programmatic Public Service Social Integration

The fact that almost all individuals who depend on social welfare receive financial aid in their first year(s) of registration can be explained by their legal status. In the context analysis, it was already mentioned

that asylum seekers who requested asylum before 7 May 2007 are entitled to support from the PCSWs. The most common type of support for asylum seekers is financial aid. Considering that most individuals in each cohort are still registered as asylum seeker immediately after their registration in Belgium, it is logical that the proportion of financial aid is extremely high compared to other social welfare measures. The focus of assistance for asylum seekers who requested asylum after 7 May 2007 was the provision of material aid during the entire asylum procedure. This explains why the proportion of financial aid was lower for the 2010 cohort compared to the cohorts who requested asylum before the new legislation entered into force.

For each cohort, the proportion dependent on financial aid decreases as time passes. This is due to the fact that the longer the studied population is present in Belgium, the higher is the likelihood that they are no longer registered as an asylum seeker and that they obtained another statute in the meantime. This has consequences for the type of social welfare they receive. If the asylum seeker is recognized as refugee, he/she will be entitled to social integration measures, including the living allowance and employment measures. This partly explains the rise of the categories 'living allowance', 'article 60' and 'other' the longer the individuals are resident in Belgium.

4. Concluding figures

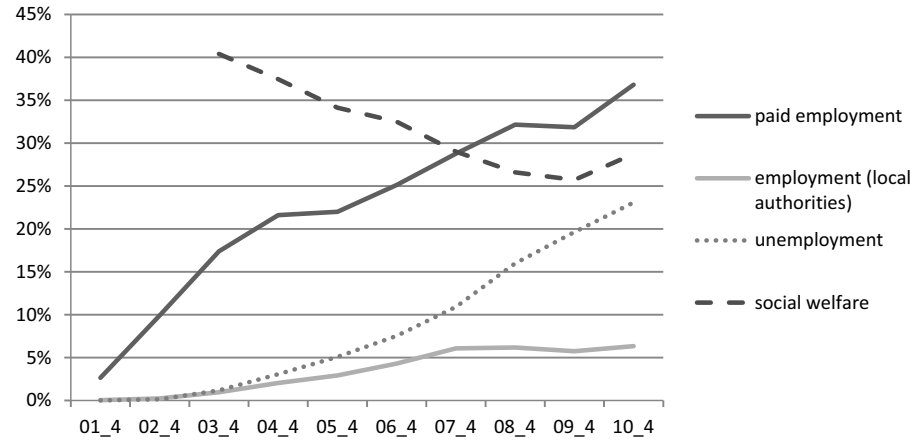
Hitherto, the socio-economic integration of the different cohorts has only been portrayed by describing the trends in paid employment, employment provided by local authorities, unemployment and social welfare dependence separately. In order to have a comprehensive overview of the socio economic integration of the studied population, it is also possible to combine the different figures into one single graph. Considering that the proportions of the aforementioned categories are expressed as the ratio between absolute numbers per cohort and the working age population, they can be compared directly.

Since it is not feasible to display the combined graphs for all ten cohorts (2001-2010), the focus in this section will be on the cohort that has been resident in Belgium during the entire period 2001-2010 (2001 cohort), the cohort that has been resident in Belgium since 2005 (2005 cohort)

and the cohort that entered Belgium in the last year of the relevant period (2010 cohort).

Figure II-16 shows the combined figure for the 2001 cohort that has been resident in Belgium during the entire period 2001-2010. Because the statistics regarding social welfare use are only available from 2003 onwards, it is not possible to show the 2001 cohort's dependence on social welfare in the first two years (from 01_4 to 02_4).

Figure II-16. *Socio-economic integration of the 2001 cohort (2001-2010)*

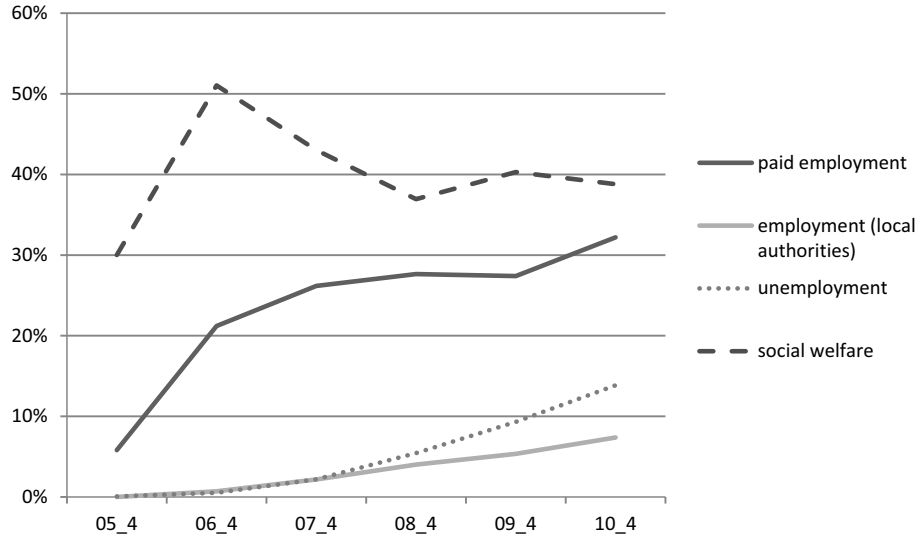


Source: data CBSS

Despite the lack of rates for the first two years, it is clear that social welfare is very important in the first years. Although the use of social welfare measures gradually decreases before stabilizing, it remains important throughout the whole period (with proportions between 25.7% and 40.4% of the research population aged between 18 and 65). A positive feature with respect to the socio-economic integration of the 2001 cohort is the sustained growth of the paid employment rate (from 2.7% in 2001 to 36.8% in 2010). From 2008 onwards, the proportion of people in paid employment is higher than the proportion of people relying on social welfare. The proportion of employment provided by local authorities' remains relatively low compared with the paid employment rates and seems to stabilize at approximately 6% after a slight increase during the first seven years. The unemployment rate steadily increases from 0.01% to 23.8% but remains well below the (paid) employment rate.

Figure II-17 depicts the socio-economic integration of the 2005 cohort for the period 2005-2010. In general, the employment rates, unemployment rate and social welfare rate follow the same trend as the 2001 cohort, albeit on a higher level. Similarly to the 2001 cohort, the cohort's dependence on social welfare is very high, with a maximum of 51.1% at the end of 2006. Afterwards, the use of social welfare among the 2005 cohort seems to stabilize at 40%. Unlike the 2001 cohort, in this case the steady increase of the paid employment rate (from 5.8% to 32.3%) was not sufficient to catch up with the social welfare rate in the studied period. Given that the 2001 cohort's employment rate surpassed the social welfare rate only after seven years, it is too soon to conclude that the 2005 cohort has performed less well. The proportions of those employed by local authorities and unemployed increase slightly to reach maxima of respectively 7.4% and 13.9%.

Figure II-17. *Socio-economic integration of the 2005 cohort (2005-2010)*



Source: data CBSS

The global picture for the 2010 cohort is identical to the first year of residence of the 2001 and 2005 cohorts with a relatively high proportion of people relying on social welfare (14.97%) and a small number of people in paid employment (2.19%). The categories employment provided by local authorities (0%) and unemployment (0.06%) are virtually absent.

5. Conclusions

Despite some slight differences, all the cohorts seem to follow the same socio-economic trends: Whereas the (paid) employment rate, the local authority employment rate and the unemployment rate increase throughout the period, social welfare dependence reaches a maximum level and seems to stabilize afterwards (apart from the most recent cohorts). The social welfare dependence level is already high in the first years of residence and remains relatively high throughout the whole period. As seen in the analysis of the individual databases (sections 2.1.-2.3.), this was not only the case for the 2001, 2005 and 2010 cohorts but for all ten cohorts (2001-2010). Whereas the (paid) employment rate surpasses the rate of social welfare use for the cohorts that have been resident in Belgium the longest, this is not the case for the cohorts that entered Belgium more recently.

Time apparently plays an important role. The longer (former) asylum seekers are in Belgium, the more likely they are to appear in the labour market (as being employed or as unemployed) and the bigger the chance that they are no longer dependent on social welfare. The next section will elaborate on this and look at what factors contribute to their position in the social security system.

Chapter III.
Multivariate Analysis

Johan Wets

The aim of the analysis in this section is to study the factors influencing the labour market integration of (former) asylum seekers in Belgium. The population studied in this section was (former) asylum seekers aged between 18 and 65 in 2010, who applied for asylum between 2001 and 2010 and who are still in the country. The data studied were population data, not based on a sample. All relations found in this study are real associations. Subsequently, variance analysis, cross-tabulation, correspondence analysis and logistic regressions have been used to draw a picture of the position of the research population in the social security system. This section uses logistic regression to estimate the effect of individual characteristics, legal status, place of residence and period of arrival on the former asylum seekers' odds of being employed, unemployed or dependent on social welfare.

In most EU countries, migrants have lower labour market participation and employment rates than the native-born. They are less likely to participate in the labour market and are also much more affected by unemployment. This is the case in Belgium, but also in other EU countries like Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands (OECD 2009).

The aim of this section is to analyze the factors contributing to the probability of obtaining a position on the Belgian labour market. The questions at hand are:

- Is there a variation in the employment (unemployment, social welfare) chances according to the legal status of former asylum seekers,
- Is there a regional variation in the employment chances of former asylum seekers,
- What factors explain this variation (individual characteristics, place of residence, period of arrival, etc.)?

1. Description of data used

The basic information on the research population is based on administrative data derived from the National Register. The central population register in Belgium is the National Register of natural persons. At the local level, the municipalities register all inhabitants in their own municipal registers, which are used to update the central National Register.

The National Register contains several sub-registers. Belgian citizens are registered in the population register, as are foreigners having a permanent residence permit. Foreigners who are admitted or authorized to stay for a period exceeding three months are registered in the aliens register. Asylum seekers are included in the so-called waiting register and are not included in the "official" population. A recognized asylum seeker becomes a refugee and is registered in the population register. Each person registered is given a unique personal identification number, the National Register Number. Legal variables such as name, age, gender, nationality and place of residence are recorded. Since the Program law of December 2006, a variable on the legal status of immigrants has been added.

1.1. Description of the research population

The population in the analysis is made up of adults who arrived in the country between 2001 and 2010 and youngsters who reached the age of 18 during the research period. As the data available for the research only lists age group, rather than exact age, some youngsters born prior to 1990 are excluded from the analysis, because although they are in fact 18 years old they are grouped in an age group which is mostly made up of former asylum applicants below the age of 18. Also people who reached the age of 65 in 2010 were excluded from the analysis.

In some cases, people who were still registered as a child (LIPRO code) but who were in their thirties or forties were omitted from the research, as they would contaminate the category 'Youngsters' used later in the analysis. After data cleaning and omitting observations because they didn't belong to the category of 'working age people', the database consisted of 71,768 people.

1.2. Description of the variables used

1.2.1. Personal variables

– Age: for privacy reasons, date of birth or year of birth could not be communicated. Instead the population was divided into 2-year age groups.

– Gender.

– Family situation: two indicators give an idea of the family composition. First, the LIPRO code is used. This code is derived from the LIPRO typology of households (LIfestyle PROjections), developed by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) in order to model changes in household structures. This makes it possible to distinguish between singles, single parents, people living together (married or unmarried) and people living in a family (parents and children). The rather broad LIPRO code has been redefined for the following analyses into five categories: (1) singles, (2) couples, (3) couples with children, called 'parents', (4) single parents and (5) a residual category 'others'. This category does not only include other types of cohabitation, but also the profiles of people who are not yet assigned another code. This group is quite heterogeneous. People under 25 have been grouped together in a sixth category 'youngsters'.

– Nationality: The region of origin was analyzed in two ways. First by using the 2005 Human Development Index (HDI). The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and income indices used to rank countries. The HDI assesses intercountry development levels on the basis of three deprivation indicators: life expectancy, adult literacy and (the logarithm of) purchasing power adjusted per capita GDP. Secondly, the nationalities were grouped according to the region of origin. A distinction was made between Sub-Sahara Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Others.

– Status: all the people in the database are in a certain phase of the asylum procedure; depending on the stage of the procedure, people have a different status. The statuses used in this study are derived from the national register and are (1) refugee, (2) ongoing, (3) undetermined, (4) unknown, (5) subsidiary protection, (6) refused and (7) others.

– Place of residence: for each former asylum seeker the internal migration history, as well as the actual place of residence, is known. In this part of the research the region is treated as a variable. Three different regions are used: Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels.

1.2.2. Time related variables

– Year of entry in the country / moment of first application: one time related variable is the time since arrival in the country. In most cases the year of arrival in the country is for the same as the time of first application, the variable in the database of the national register. In some exceptional cases, people were already in the country when they applied for asylum. As a result, some labour market information can be found for years prior to the first registration as an asylum seeker. This variable was translated into a categorical variable containing the categories 2001-2003, 2004-2006 and 2007-2010.

1.2.3. Socio-economic variables

All data of national social security institutions are collected by the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS). The CBSS allows the digital compilation and exchange of administrative social data between the various social institutions and between these institutions and the National Register. A specific data warehouse was created, which should make it possible to calculate statistics, link data from different sources, take samples, encrypt data, etc. more effectively and cost-efficiently. The 'Data Warehouse Labour Market and Social Protection' was created as a tool to facilitate data exchange and link records of the various social security institutions, enabling the supply of tailor-made statistical series on individuals and their socio-economic histories. The Data Warehouse contains labour market information (wages, employer, social security contributions, working hours (full time/ part time), unemployment, etc.), information about old age pensions (benefits/ fees, kind of pension, starting date, etc.), information about sickness/ invalidity/incapacity for work (benefits/fees, cause [illness, industrial accident, occupational disease], starting date and [potential] final date, etc.), information about child allowances, personal data (birth date, gender, nationality, etc.). The socio-economic variables used in this analysis are variables created by the CBSS based on the input of other social security institutes. Based on an internally developed algorithm,

the CBSS creates mutual exclusive categories. For the sake of this research, some categories are merged. A person registered as 'self-employed and working (mostly self-employed)' is added to the category 'self-employed'. A person registered as 'self-employed and working (mostly employed)' is added to the category 'employed'.

– Employment: this variable is based on the data provided by the National Social Security Office. NSSO collects and manages data on employers and employees. People working for local authorities are registered in another official database, the National Security Office for Provincial and Local administrations. They are in this part of the research also considered as employed.

– Welfare: people supported by Public Social Welfare Centres (PSWCs) are registered on a federal level by the PPS Social Integration.

– Unemployment: people registered as unemployed by the National Employment Office (NEO).

– Self-employment: people registered in the NISSE-database. This is the database of Social Security of the Self-employed that contains data on the self-employed, including the self-employed among the studied population.

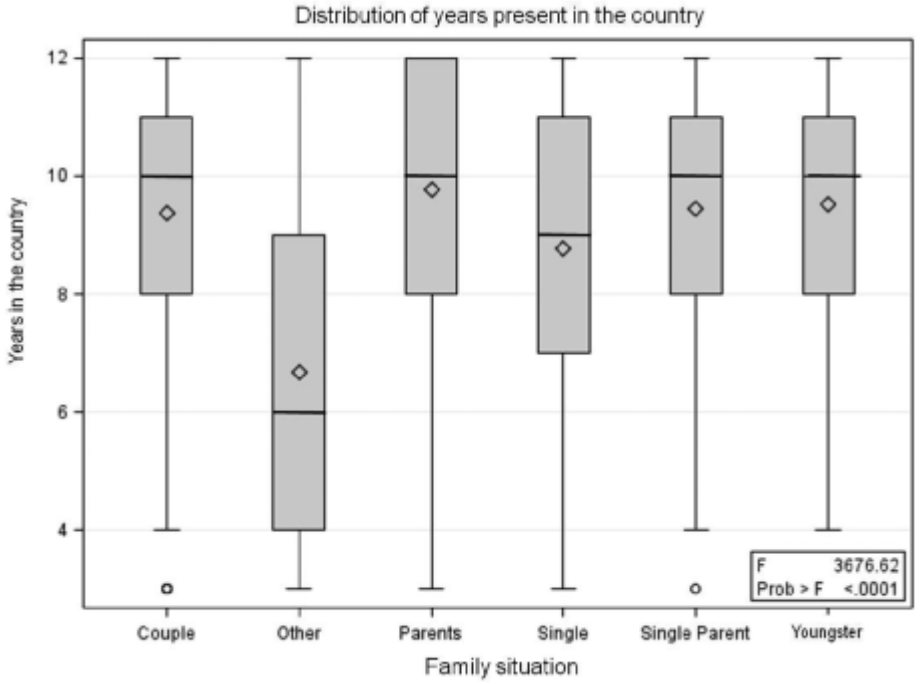
2. Analysis of variance

Analysis of variance is used to analyze the differences between group distributions. The population studied is heterogeneous with regard to the time since the first registration as asylum seeker, family composition, legal status, and position in the social security system, etcetera. The question is whether or not there are differences between the different groups (e.g. the different LIPRO codes), whether or not there are in-group differences and to what extent these differences are significant or just the result of a coincidence. The analyses presented below are one-way variance analyses: one factor studied (years present) and respectively 6 (family situation), 7 (legal status) and 5 (social security position) groups. The box plots presented below give the quartiles, the maximum values, the minimum values, the medians and the means. The bottom and top of the box represent the first and third quartiles, so the box contains half of the population. The band inside the box is the median. The diamond is the mean.

2.1. *Family situation*

We can study the family situation based on the LIPRO codes. We compare the different categories – (1) couple, (2) others, (3) parents, (4) singles, (5) single parents and (6) youngsters – in relation to the time since their first registration as an asylum seeker.

Figure III-1. *Box plots of the length of time living in Belgium for different LIPRO codes*



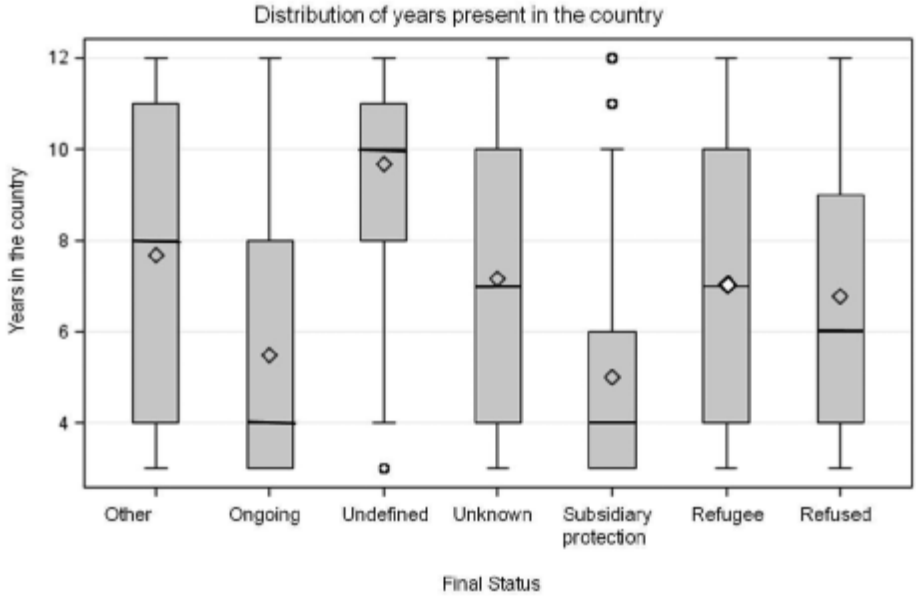
Is the time since registration on average the same or different between the different categories, and is this purely coincidental? Looking at the box plot, it is clear that there are differences. The average stay in Belgium is not that different, except for the residual category 'others'. Even the quartiles and the median for the couples, single parents and youngsters are not significantly different. The lengths of stay of these groups differ from the other groups such as the 'parents', the singles and especially the group 'others'. Also the in-group differences are more important in the latter group. The reason seems simple. The group 'others' contains those people who have not been assigned a LIPRO code. This is most probably more often the case for more recent

arrivals. It is however worth mentioning that the median of this 'more recently arrived group' is 6 years of residence.

2.2. *Legal status*

In a second variance analysis, legal status is studied. We compare the different categories – (1) others, (2) ongoing, (3) undetermined, (4) unknown, (5) subsidiary protection, (6) refugee, and (7) refused – in relation to the time since their first registration as an asylum seeker.

Figure III-2. *Box plots of length of time living in Belgium for different legal statuses*



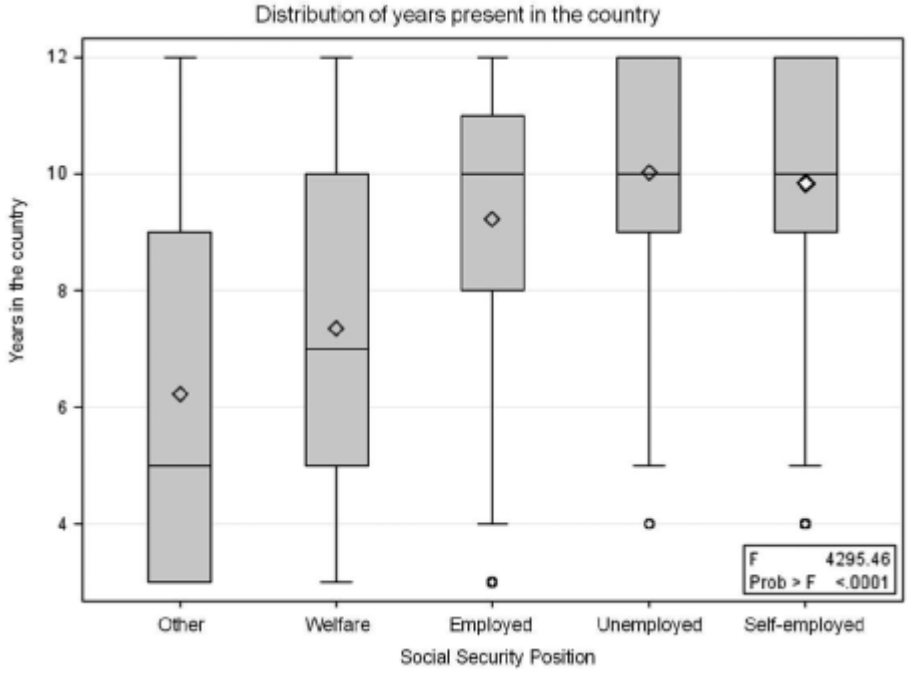
Again the question is whether or not the time since registration is, on average, the same or different for the different categories, and whether or not this is coincidental. Looking at the box plot, it is clear that there are important differences between the groups as well as within the groups. The medians of the 'subsidiary protection' and 'ongoing' groups lie far below the medians of the other groups, and the median of the 'undetermined' group is particularly high (10 years). This group contains more people who have been resident in Belgium for longer. The first quartile of this group lies at 4 years of residence. The dot below indicates outliers. The low median length of stay of the people granted subsidiary protection can be explained because this is a more

recently introduced status. There are however also outliers for this category. Some people in the database were registered for the first time more than ten years ago and have been granted the status of subsidiary protection.

2.3. *Labour market*

In a third variance analysis, the positions in the social security system are studied. We compare the different categories – (1) others, (2) welfare, (3) employed, (4) unemployed and (5) self-employed – in relation to the time since their first registration as an asylum seeker.

Figure III-3. *Box plots of length of time living in Belgium for the positions in the social security system*



Again the question is whether or not the time since registration is, on average, the same or different for the different categories, and whether or not this is coincidental. Looking at the box plot, it is clear that there are again important differences between the groups as well as within the groups. The medians of the groups 'employed', 'unemployed' and 'self-employed' are the same and differ from those of the other groups.

The groups 'unemployed' and 'self-employed' have almost identical distributions. The first quartile starts in year five, half of the population is grouped after the 9th year and the median is 10 years. Only the mean number of years present is slightly lower for the self-employed. Based on the analysis of this box plot, the hypothesis can be formulated that the length of time present in the country has a strong effect on access to the labour market. People in the category 'others', a category with a large range, have a mean length of residence in Belgium of just over 6 years. For people dependent on social welfare the mean is just over 7 years, for people in employment it is around nine years and for the unemployed and self-employed around ten years.

3. Correspondence analysis

3.1. Introduction: social security position

A quarter of the population studied in this section is employed at the end of the examined period (24.95%). Another quarter (24.62%) receives welfare benefits. Only a small share can be found in the unemployment statistics (5.75%) and an even smaller proportion of the population is self-employed (1.48%). The largest subgroup is however the group 'others', the group for which there is no specific information in the database.

***Table III-1**. Social security position of the research population*

Social Security position (large)	Number	%
Employed	17,223	24.95
Unemployed	3,971	5.75
Self-employed	1,023	1.48
Welfare benefits	16,995	24.62
Others	29,830	43.21

* Frequency missing: 2,726
Source: data CBSS

3.2. Relationship of personal characteristics and social security position

The position people take in the social security system can vary according to certain background variables. This can be analyzed using cross-tabulation. A cross-tabulation is a two (or more) dimensional

table that records the number (frequency) of respondents that have the specific characteristics described in the cells of the table. Cross-tabulation tables provide information about the relationship between the variables. Table III-2, presents the relation between the social security position and some background variables (Gender, status, nationality group (by HDI), years in Belgium and region of residence).

Table III-2. *Relationship of personal characteristics and social security position*

Variables	Strength association (Cramer's V)
Gender	0.1079***
Status	0.1265***
Nationality group (by HDI category)	0.1160***
Years in Belgium (categories)	0.3087***
Region	0.0712***

* Frequency Missing = 2,726 (Except Region: 9,008)
** Significance level is reported. The data however concern the whole population
Source: data CBSS

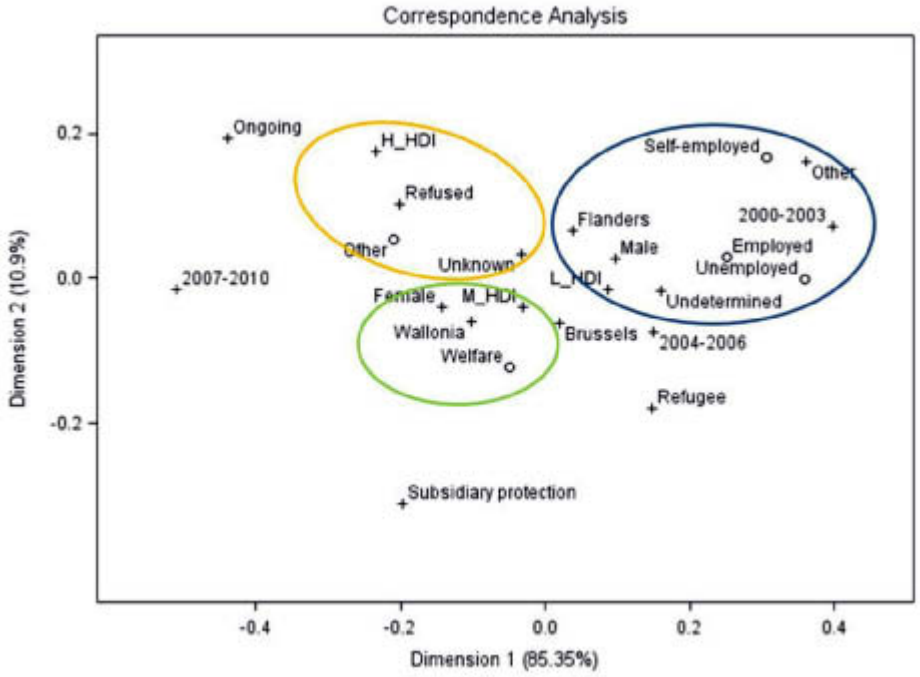
The association measure Cramer's V is a frequently used measure of nominal association and varies from 0 (corresponding to no association between the variables) to 1 (complete association). Table III-2 represents the association between the position in the social security system and respectively gender, legal status, nationality group, years since the first registration as asylum seeker (in classes) and region of origin. The values in the table are rather low, except for the years spent in Belgium. There is a (weak) association with social security position for gender, status, 'nationality group' and region.

3.3. Correspondence analysis

The association between the different profile variables and the position in the social security system can be depicted using a correspondence analysis. Multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) is a (multivariate) descriptive data analytic technique that can be applied to nominal categorical data. It is a means of displaying and/or summarizing a set of data in a two-dimensional figure. It shows underlying structures in a data set by representing data as points.

The graph on p. 91 is a bi-plot showing a 2D approximation of the "distances" between row cells and column cells of the variables included in the model. A correspondence map summarizes on two axes the corre-

Figure III-4. *Multiple correspondence analysis*



Source: data CBSS

lations among all the categories in the data. In correspondence analysis, the closer to the attribute, the more correlated. The axes in correspondence analysis do not represent variables and therefore need not be named. The horizontal axis explains 85.4% and the vertical axis explains 10.9% of the variance (distances or correlations) between the categories.

The correspondence map (Fig.III-4) summarizes the findings from the analyses above (paragraph 3.2). Looking at the chart, some 'clusters' can be found: a 'welfare' cluster, a 'labour market' cluster and an 'undetermined' cluster. People living in Wallonia, coming from a country with middle HDI and women are more likely to receive welfare benefits: to be found in the 'welfare' cluster. The distance of women to this cluster is only slightly bigger than the distance of men to this cluster. Men are however much closer to the labour market cluster described below than are women.

People living in Flanders, resident in Belgium for 7 years or more, coming from countries with a low HDI, and men are more likely to be

found on the labour market, whether employed, unemployed or self-employed. The legal categories 'Others' and 'Undetermined' are all close to this 'labour market' cluster.

The third cluster, the 'Undetermined' cluster, groups people of whom we don't know the social security position (the large group 'Others'), nor any other information. The legal categories 'refused' and 'ongoing' tend to be found mostly in this cluster.

The fairly large distance from other 'attributes' of outliers like 'subsidiary protection' is partly the result of the rather small number of people in this category.

4. Logistic regression analysis

4.1. Introduction

In this section, we deepen our analysis by using multivariate logistic regressions. Our specific question is whether legal status and number of years in the asylum seeking process affects the probability of being traced back to a position in the social security system while controlling for a number of individual and context related factors. Later the probability of being employed, the probability of being unemployed and the probability of being found in the welfare system are calculated.

The rather broad LIPRO code indicating the family position has been – as mentioned earlier – redefined into five categories (1) singles, (2) couples, (3) couples with children, called 'parents', (4) single parents and (5) a residual category 'others'. This category does not only include other types of cohabitation, but also the profiles of people who are not yet assigned another code. This group is quite heterogeneous.

The region of origin is defined in geographical terms: Sub-Saharan-Africa, Middle East and Northern Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Europe and a supplementary category others containing a hybrid group of asylum seekers from the Asia Pacific region, Latin America and other regions.

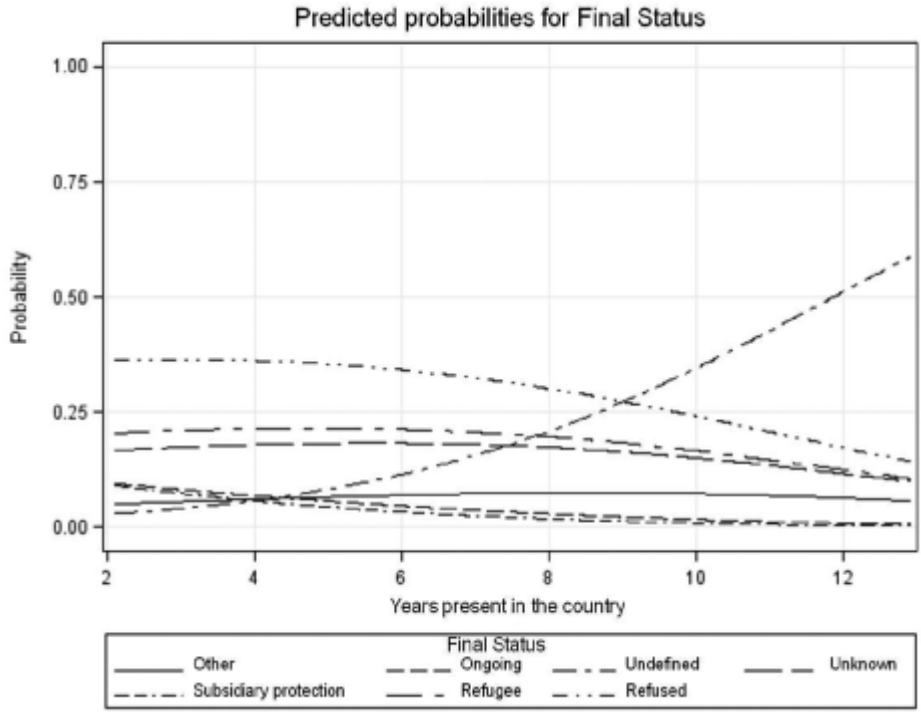
The legal statuses derived from the database from the national register are (1) refugee, (2) ongoing, (3) undetermined, (4) unknown, (5) subsidiary protection, (6) refused and (7) others.

4.2. *Predicted probabilities*

Before analyzing the social security position of the research group, it is worthwhile to look closer at the status of the research population at the end of the research period. For this purpose, legal status has been studied in relation to the two main continuous variables: the years present in Belgium after the first application and age.

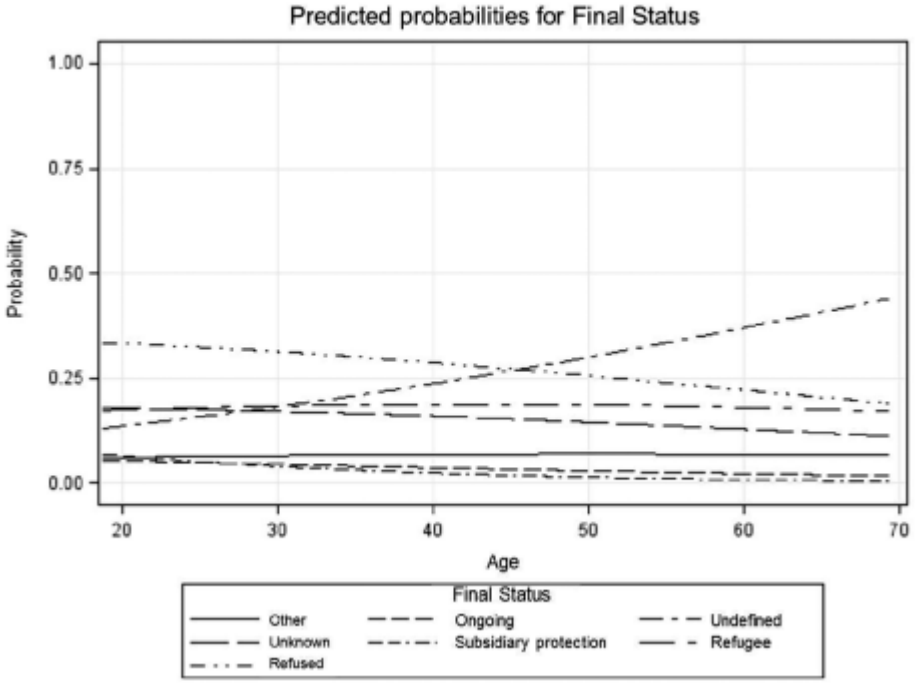
Three statuses are worth mentioning in relation to the time spent in the country: subsidiary protection, refusal and refugee status. The probability of being granted subsidiary protection status is close to 10% for those people who have just arrived in the country. This figure drops to a rate not significantly different from zero for people who have been in Belgium a little longer, as it is an only recently established measure. Until approximately the ninth year of residence in Belgium, the probability of finding a person who has been refused is higher than that of finding a person in another status. From the ninth year on, the probability of finding a person who has been granted a refugee status is higher.

Figure III-5. *Predicted probability: Legal status in relation to years present in Belgium*



Source: data CBSS

Figure III-6. *Predicted probability: Legal status in relation to age*



Source: data CBSS

4.3. Regression analysis: employment in the last quarter of 2009

Table III-3 below shows results from a first regression. The dependent variable is whether or not the respondent is employed. As independent variables we included demographic variables (age, family composition), region of origin, legal status, region of residence and years since applying for refugee status.

Table III-3*. Logistic regression analysis: being employed in the last quarter of 2009*

Effect	**Odds ratio**
Age: (ref = 26-40)	
41-65	0.875^{ns}
<25	0.744***
Gender: Female **(ref = Male)**	0.560***
Family composition: (ref = Single)	
Couple	1.377***
Other	0.388***

***Table III-3**. Logistic regression analysis: being employed in the last quarter of 2009 (continued)*

Effect	Odds ratio
Parents	1.243***
Single Parent	0.804 ns
Youngster	0.689 ns
Nationality group: (ref = Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Other	1.084***
Asia	1.239***
Central Europe	0.506***
Middle East and North Africa	0.486***
Eastern Europe	0.426***
Year of arrival in Belgium: (ref = 2001-2003)	
2004-2006	0.774***
2007-2010	0.357***
Region: (ref = Wallonia)	
Flanders	1.919***
Brussels	1.070***
Status: (ref = Refugee)	
Others	1.091**
Ongoing	0.931ns
Undetermined	0.961ns
Unknown	0.979ns
Subsidiary protection	1.074 ns
Refused	0.878***

* The levels of significance are reported. The analysis is however on population data
Source: CBSS

Looking at personal characteristics we see that age is negatively associated with having a job, though this effect is curvilinear. This becomes clear if the interval-variable age is replaced by categories. The odds of finding people above 40 or below 25 are respective 14% and 26% lower than finding a person of the age category 26 to 40.

An important gender difference can be witnessed. The chance of finding a man employed is twice as high as the chance of finding a woman employed. Also family composition plays a role. Compared to singles, couples have the best chances of being employed, followed by parents (couple with children). Single parents (20% less) and young adults living with their parents (32% less) are – compared to singles – less likely to be found employed. The heterogeneous category 'others' is even much less likely to be employed.

Looking at the coefficients for region, compared to the Walloon area, individuals living in Brussels and certainly in Flanders have significantly higher probabilities of being employed. The chance of having paid employment is almost twice as high in Flanders than in Wallonia.

The number of years the (former) asylum seekers have spent in Belgium has a positive correlation with being employed. The importance of the number of years present in the country becomes more obvious if this variable is introduced into the model as a categorical variable. Compared to the people who entered the country in the years 2001 to 2003, those who entered Belgium between 2004 and 2006 and those who entered between 2007 and 2010 have respectively 23% and 64% less chance of being employed.

The region of origin shows a remarkable pattern. Compared to former asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan Africa (the reference group) residents from the Middle East and Northern Africa and from Central Europe are less likely to be found employed. The odds of finding (the relative smaller groups of) Asians and the residual category 'other' is only slightly higher than that of finding Sub-Saharan Africans. This pattern remains if the above used HDI is introduced into the model instead of the region of origin. The odds of finding people originating from low HDI countries on the labour market is much higher than finding people from high HDI counties or middle HDI countries.

Legal status plays a role also but only in a minor way. In comparison to 'refugees', people in the categories 'others' and 'subsidiary protection' have a slightly higher probability of being found on the labour market. The groups 'ongoing', 'undetermined' and 'unknown' do not differ significantly from the group of refugees, but have a slightly worse chance of being found on the labour market (2 to 7%). The chances of finding people in the category 'refused' to be registered as employed, is approximately 12% lower than the probability of finding a person with refugee status in this position.

4.4. Regression analysis: social welfare last quarter of 2009

Table III-4 below shows the results from a second regression. The dependent variable is whether or not the respondent can be found in the social welfare system, whether or not he or she is receiving welfare

benefits. The independent variables used are the same as the variables used in the previous regression: age, family composition, region of origin, legal status, region of residence and years since applying for refugee status.

***Table III-4**. Logistic regression analysis: social welfare last quarter of 2009*

Effect	Odds ratio
Age (ref = 26-40)	
41-65	1.498***
<25	1.510***
Gender: Female **(ref = Male)**	1.132***
Family composition: (ref = Single)	
Couple	0.437***
Other	0.780^{ns}
Parents	0.335***
Single Parent	1.901***
Youngster	1.199**
Nationality group: (ref = Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Other	0.527***
Asia	0.591***
Central Europe	1.039***
Middle East and North Africa	1.077***
Eastern Europe	1.241***
Year of arrival in Belgium: (ref = 2001-2003)	
2004-2006	1.671*
2007-2010	2.495***
Region: (ref = Wallonia)	
Flanders	0.641***
Brussels	0.965***
Status: (ref = Refugee)	
Others	0.535**
Ongoing	0.612***
Undetermined	0.963***
Unknown	0.759***
Subsidiary protection	1.534***
Refused	0.660***

* The levels of significance are reported. The analysis is however on population data
Source: Data CBSS

Looking at personal characteristics we see that age is correlated with dependence on social welfare. This becomes manifest if age categories are used. The odds of finding people below 26 or above 40 are around

50% higher than the probability of finding someone aged between 26 and 40.

Also gender is a contributing variable. The probability of depending on social welfare is 13% higher for women than for men. Also family composition plays a role. Compared to singles, all other categories – with the exception of single parents and youngsters – are less likely to be found in social welfare. Parents have the best chances of not being dependent on social welfare. The probability of finding single parents depending on welfare is 5.5 times higher than that of finding parents.

Looking at the coefficients for region, compared to the Walloon area, individuals in Flanders have significantly lower probabilities of being dependent on social welfare. For every 10 persons depending on social welfare in Wallonia, 6 can be found in Flanders. The odds of finding a person of the research group depending on social welfare is 3% less in Brussels than in Wallonia.

The number of years the (former) asylum seekers have spent in Belgium has a negative association with dependence on social welfare; the longer in Belgium, the less dependent on welfare. Here too, the pattern is more obvious when a category variable is used. The chances of finding a person dependent on social welfare are – compared to the people who submitted their asylum application between 2001 and 2003 – respective 60% and almost 150% higher for the groups who did the same between 2004 and 2006 and between 2007 and 2010.

The region of origin also shows a remarkable pattern here, which seems to be the mirror image of the probability of being employed. The probability of finding Eastern Europeans depending on social welfare is 24% higher than the likelihood of finding a Sub-Sahara African in the same situation. For every 10 Sub-Saharan Africans depending on social welfare, 6 Asians can be found and 5 former asylum seekers of the residual category 'other'. If the HDI categories are used, the same image is drawn: the lower the HDI, the lower is the probability of being dependent on welfare. Though the differences are not spectacular, still the odds of finding people originating from low HDI countries dependent on welfare benefits is lower than that of finding people from high HDI counties or middle HDI countries.

Legal status also plays a role. As compared to refugees, people with Subsidiary protection status have a higher probability of being

dependent on welfare benefits. The group labelled 'undetermined' does not differ greatly from the group of refugees, but has a slightly lower chance (4%) of being found in the welfare system. The other legal categories are clearly less often to be found dependent on social welfare. This is among other things due to the legislation on welfare centres. Refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection are officially entitled to welfare benefits. The situation is less clear for the other categories.

4.5. Regression analysis: unemployment in the last quarter of 2009

Table III-5 below shows the results from a third regression analysis. The dependent variable is whether or not the respondent is registered as unemployed. To receive an unemployment allowance, it is necessary to be entitled to this benefit. It is a right derived from a minimum number of days of employment in a period of reference. The number of days and period of reference depends on the age of the applicant (e.g. 312 days in a reference period of 21 months prior to the demand for people aged less than 36 years). So people who receive unemployment benefits have previously had work, by definition. The same independent variables were included: demographic (age, family composition), region of origin, legal status, region of residence and years since applying for refugee status.

***Table III-5**. Logistic regression analysis: unemployment last quarter of 2009*

Effect	Odds ratio
Age: (ref = 26-40)	
41-65	0.836 ^{ns}
≤25	0.718 ^{ns}
Gender: Female **(ref = Male)**	0.521***
Family composition: (ref = Single)	
Couple	0.697 ^{ns}
Other	0.188***
Parents	0.722 ^{ns}
Single Parent	1.171***
Youngster	0.766 ^{ns}
Nationality group: (ref = Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Other	0.865*
Asia	0.389***
Central Europe	0.526*
Middle East and North Africa	0.875***
Eastern Europe	0.830**
Year of arrival in Belgium: (ref = 2001-2003)	
2004-2006	0.599***
2007-2010	0.126***
Region: (ref = Wallonia)	
Flanders	1.076 ^{ns}
Brussels	1.108 ^{ns}
Status: (ref = Refugee)	
Others	0.782*
Ongoing	0.528 ^{ns}
Undetermined	0.506 ***
Unknown	0.704 ^{ns}
Subsidiary protection	0.742 ^{ns}
Refused	0.580 *

* The levels of significance are reported. The analysis is however on population data
Source: data CBSS

Looking at personal characteristics in this third analysis, we see that age is slightly negatively correlated with entering the unemployment system. The older one gets, the lower the odds of being registered as unemployed. This was also true with regard to being employed. The probability of entering the labour market, as employed or as unemployed person, diminishes slightly with age. Yet, the connection proves to be – if the variable is entered as a categorical variable – curvilinear again. People aged under 26 and over 40 are less likely to receive unemployment allowances than people aged between 26 and 40.

Men have a 48% higher chance than women of becoming unemployed. This should not be considered automatically as negative for men, as the starting position is generally not employment but social welfare. The fact of being unemployed means that one has a position on the labour market and enjoys social rights.

The family composition plays again a role in the analysis of unemployment. The chances of being unemployed are for 'single parents' 17% higher than those for 'singles' (the reference category). The probability of being unemployed is for all other family positions lower than the probability for 'singles'. The probability of being registered as unemployed is almost 5 times smaller for the category 'others', compared to the 'singles'. This can in all probability be explained by the fact that little is known of these people and that they are most likely not entitled to enter the unemployment system.

Looking at the coefficients for region it is noticeable that there is no big difference between Brussels and Flanders and the reference category Wallonia. The odds of being unemployed are slightly higher in Brussels (11%) and Flanders (8%) compared to Wallonia.

An analysis of the region of origin shows that, compared to citizens from Sub-Sahara Africa, all other categories are less likely to be unemployed. The incidence ranges from 60% less for the Asians to 12% less for residents from the Middle East and North Africa. It is noteworthy to repeat that the fact of not being unemployed doesn't means that the person concerned is working. As some nationality groups are not employed and rather strongly dependent on social welfare, it is most probable that they are not present on the labour market and thus neither working nor receiving unemployment benefits.

Also legal status plays a role. In comparison with refugees, no other category has a lower probability of becoming unemployed. This seems logical, given the institutional framework. Refugees have full access to the labour market and – once they have worked a sufficient number of days to be entitled – full access to unemployment allowances. The situation is less clear for the other categories. It is however strange to see that – not massively, but still substantially – in some cases the people in the group 'refused' are still registered as 'unemployed' (3.7%). This group, however, represents 18.9% of all unemployed.

5. Synthesis and conclusions

5.1. Synthesis of this section

The aim of the analysis in this section was to study the factors influencing the labour market integration of (former) asylum seekers in Belgium. The population studied in this section were (former) asylum seekers aged between 18 and 65 in 2010, who applied for asylum between 2001 and 2010 and who are still in the country. The data studied were population data, not based on a sample. All relations found in this study are real associations. Variance analysis, cross-tabulation, correspondence analysis and logistic regressions have been used to draw a picture of the position of the research population in the social security system.

This position in the social security system (employed, unemployed, self-employed, welfare or a residual category 'others') was the dependent variable. Other variables used in the analysis were gender, age, family situation, place of residence, region of origin, moment of application (or year of arrival in Belgium) and legal status.

The research population is studied on the basis of their situation in 2010. The population is heterogeneous: different regions of origin, different family positions, different ages, different legal statuses, different regions of residence and different positions in the social security system. A quarter of the studied population is employed at the end of the examined period (24.95%). Another quarter (24.62%) receives welfare benefits. Only a small share can be found in the unemployment statistics (5.75%) and an even smaller proportion of the population is self-employed (1.48%). The largest subgroup is however the group 'others', the group for which there is no specific information in the database.

The cross tabulation already suggests that the time spent in the country correlates with the position in the social security system. The time also defines to which category the research population belongs. The variance analysis makes clear that the residual category 'others', used in variables such as legal status and family position, appears mainly in the first years of residence in the country.

The correspondence analysis clusters the data, suggesting some 'profiles'. A labour market cluster, a welfare cluster and an undefined

cluster can be distinguished. More men, more people living in Flanders, more residents originating from poor countries (Low Human Development Index) and more people living for more than 7 years in the country can be found in this labour market cluster. The welfare cluster is made up of people who relatively more often live in Wallonia, are women, and originate from a Middle Human Development Index country. The people in this cluster tend to have lived a shorter time in Belgium than the people in the Labour market cluster. The undefined cluster contains the residual social security category 'others', the legal categories 'unknown' and 'refused' and the people originating from High Human Development Index countries.

Finally, to answer the question of which variables contribute to the chances of being employed, unemployed or dependent on social welfare, logistic regressions have been used. Employment, dependence on social welfare and unemployment have been treated as dependent variables. The explanatory variables or predictors used were age, gender, family composition, legal status, country of origin, place of residence and period of arrival. All explanatory variables seem to have an impact on the likelihood of being employed, unemployed or dependent on social welfare. People aged between 26 and 40 are – compared to younger and older people – more likely to be found on the labour market, as worker or as unemployed. Dependence on social welfare gives the opposite image: the groups of (former) asylum seekers aged 41 or more and under 26 are more likely to depend on welfare. Gender is also significant. Men and women don't have the same probability of entering the labour market: for every woman, almost two men can be found working or unemployed. Dependence on social welfare is less biased, but women still have a 13% higher chance of depending on welfare. The family situation of the (former) asylum seekers plays a crucial role. People living in a family (as a couple or as parents with children) are more often working than singles (the reference category) and less often unemployed. Single parents, however, have a 17% higher chance of being unemployed than singles and a 20% lower chance of being employed. The odds of being dependent of social welfare are for single parents almost twice as high as for singles. People living in a family situation (couples and especially parents with children) rely 57% to 67% less on welfare than singles. For every (former) asylum seeker living in a family (partner and children) who depends on social welfare, there are almost 6 single parents who depend on it. The most

striking finding in relation to the region of origin is that citizens from rather poor (mainly African) countries tend to be found more often on the labour market (working or unemployed) than Eastern Europeans. The probability of finding an African employed is almost 2.5 times higher than finding an Eastern European (former) asylum seeker employed. A determining factor – as already illustrated in the descriptive section – is the time people are in the country. The longer they are in Belgium, the greater the chances of being in the labour market (employed and unemployed) and the less likely they are to be dependent on social welfare. The region of residence plays a less significant role in relation to unemployment: the odds of being unemployed are – compared to Wallonia – 11% higher in Brussels and 8% higher in Flanders. The big regional differences relate to employment and social dependency. The likelihood of finding a person employed in Flanders is almost twice as high as finding a person employed in Wallonia. Compared the latter, the probability of finding a person employed is 7% higher in Brussels. The dependency on welfare is almost a mirror image of the employment situation. For every person in Flanders who is dependent on welfare benefits, 1.6 persons who depend on social welfare can be found in Wallonia. The probability of finding a (former) asylum seeker who depends on welfare benefits in Brussels is 3.5% lower than finding one in Wallonia. A final striking, but nonetheless obvious, finding relates to the legal status the (former) asylum applicants have. After applying for asylum, the status of refugee is the 'final' status. Refugees have all civil and labour market rights. The hypothesis could be formulated that the chances of finding them on the labour market are much higher than the chances of finding people in another, less favourable, status. This is to some extent true. The probability of being employed is 7% higher for people granted subsidiary protection than for refugees and the chances of finding a person labelled 'refused' on the labour market is 18% lower. But a person in the residual category 'others' has a 9% higher chance to be found in employment than a refugee and the other categories 'ongoing', 'undetermined' and 'unknown' only have respectively a 7%, 4% and 2% smaller chance of being employed. Refugees tend to be found more often in unemployment statistics than all other legal categories used in the analysis. The same is true (with the exception of people granted the status of subsidiary protection) for welfare statistics. People under subsidiary protection are 53% more likely to receive welfare benefits than refugees. All

other categories are less inclined to depend on social welfare ranging from 4% less for the 'undetermined' to 46% less for the residual category 'others'.

5.2. *Concluding analysis*

The analyses above make it possible to draw some intermediate conclusions based on the research questions formulated earlier:

- *Is there a variation in employment chances according to the legal status of former asylum seekers?*

The answer to this question is affirmative. There are differences in the chances of being employed, unemployed or dependent on social welfare, albeit that the differences are not striking. Refugees, having achieved the final status they aimed for when applying for asylum, have slightly better chances on the labour market than some other categories, but people granted social protection and the category 'others' tend to be found more often in employment. The chances of being unemployed – and thus on the labour market – is higher for refugees than for all other categories, including people granted subsidiary protection. Time is most probably an important factor in this. To be entitled to unemployment allowances, it is necessary to have been active on the labour market before. People granted subsidiary protection tend to have arrived rather late in the studied period (80% arrived after 2007) and had a shorter stay in the country. People with refugee status have been in the country for 7 years on average (also the median); the much smaller group of people granted the status of subsidiary protection have only been in the country for an average of 5 years (and a median of 4 years). People who have refugee status and certainly people who have been granted the status of subsidiary protection depend much more on social welfare than the other (temporary) categories. A logical explanation is that they are entitled to social welfare and that this right is less clear for the other categories.

- *Is there a regional variation in the employment chances of former asylum seekers?*

There are regional differences in the probability of employment, unemployment and dependence on social welfare.

The probability of being employed is almost twice as high in Flanders as in Wallonia. This is in line with the activity rates of the migrant population in general. The activity rate of non-EU migrants is 11 percentage points higher in Flanders than in Wallonia.[52] In Brussels it is 7.5 percent points higher. For every non-EU migrant employed in Wallonia, there are 1.3 persons employed in Flanders; for every person of the research population employed in Wallonia, there are 1.9 persons employed in Flanders.

The research population tends to rely much more on welfare benefits in Wallonia than in Flanders. Brussels is situated in between, but is more similar to Wallonia than to Flanders. This is fairly well in line with the general figures of e.g. the (equivalent) living allowances. Wallonia hosts 32% of the Belgian population and 44.7% of the people entitled to a living allowance (figures for January 2010). The proportion of non-EU migrants dependent on living allowances is however bigger in Flanders and especially in Brussels. The Brussels capital region is home to almost 10% of the Belgian population, but has approximately the same proportion of all Belgian living allowance beneficiaries as Flanders. Brussels is also host to more than 40% of all non-EU living allowance beneficiaries in Belgium.

The chances of being unemployed in Flanders and Brussels, though more similar to Wallonia than the employment and welfare figures, are still respectively 7% and 10% higher. These figures deviate strongly from the unemployment figures of the 'general' non-EU migrant population. The unemployment rate of this group is respectively 11.8 and 1.7 percent points lower than in Wallonia[53]

- *What factors explain this variation?*

The explanatory factors are among other things age, gender, family composition, region of origin, place of residence and the numbers of years in Belgium. The situation of the research population can be compared with the general labour market situation in the case of age: younger and older people have more difficulty in finding a job than the age group in between. Men get access to the labour market more easily

[52] Data Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue: http://www.employment.belgium.be/moduleDefault.aspx?id=23910

[53] Data Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue: http://www.employment.belgium.be/moduleDefault.aspx?id=23910

than women and family composition plays an important role. Single parents tend to have more problems in finding employment, are more often unemployed and are pre-eminently dependent on social welfare. Almost 9 out of 10 of the single parents are women (89%) and almost one out of five of all women in this part of the research are single parents (18.7%). They are especially Sub-Sahara African (60%) and secondly East European woman (28%). Looking at the graphs in the previous chapter, it was already clear that time plays an important role. The longer one is in the country, the more likely one is to be on the labour market (be it employed or unemployed) and the greater the chance of disappearing from the welfare statistics.

The analysis in this chapter was based on a snapshot of the end of the period studied. One conclusion that can be drawn is that time plays a non-negligible role. This will be addressed in the next section where the "careers" of a subsection, the "refugees" will be elaborated.

Chapter IV.
Longitudinal analysis

Barbara Herman and Andrea Rea

1. Introduction

Up to now, analyses of the socio-economic integration of refugees have been made from a static point of view and have offered only a snapshot of the process. The CAREERS project goes beyond such a procedure and uses the concept of "migratory careers" (Martiniello and Rea 2014) as a theoretical framework. In this approach, integration is analyzed through time series which allow a dynamic point of view, showing occupational transitions or mobility patterns. In other words, the research is based on careers and describes the evolution of refugees' positions in the labour market. The objective of this section is to classify experiences through an understanding of a full sequence of events and not merely of partial elements, as is typical in most analyses. We will consider integration in the labour market as a sequence of experiences: some people will have stable employment experiences while others will have interrupted or precarious ones. Consequently, the research questions are:

- *Are there any typical socioeconomic careers among recognized refugees in Belgium?*
- *What is the impact of individual characteristics on the types of careers of recognized refugees?*
- *What is the impact of institutional and economic contexts on the types of careers of recognized refugees?*

To classify refugees' experiences of their labour market integration we need to know, firstly, if there are typical careers among them and, if so, how many there are. This stage produces a typology of socio-economic integration paths. As part of the second stage, we need to understand if these typical careers are characterized by a socio-economic and contextual profile. For example, do they vary according to the region in Belgium where refugees first applied, or according to the country where they came from? To answer these questions, we conducted a

sequence analysis with optimal matching and cluster analysis as methodological tools. These statistical methods were used to decide which careers are close and which are distant from another.

The official data we used for these analyses were a combination of data from the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (KSZ/BCSS) and data from the National Register (NR/RN). Unlike in the other chapters, we only took recognized refugees into account. This is because of the requirement of comparability as people with refugee status have access to a larger range of rights (to the labour market, minimum social income, social housing, training, naturalization, etc.) than people who are still in the asylum procedure. To analyze professional careers we need a similar starting point that allows us to compare independent variables, which is the case for refugees when they obtain refugee status.

This section consists of four parts. The first presents the methodology used to analyze the socio-economic integration careers, namely sequence analysis, as well as defining the population and the period covered by this chapter. In the second part, we briefly discuss the socio-demographic characteristics of the selected population. The third section describes all known socio-economic careers in the selected population. The final part demonstrates the results of the sequence analysis allowing us to build a typology of careers. This section allows us to answer the research questions and evaluate the impact of various individual and contextual factors on integration into the labour market through multivariate logistic regressions.

2. Population and methodology

The sequence analysis (SE) helps us to decide which careers are close and which are distant from one another (Abbott and Tsay 2000; Halpin and Chan 1998; Pollock 2007; Robette 2011). The analysis took place in two stages: the first used a dynamic algorithm known as optimal matching analysis (OMA) which compares each sequence with each other and produces a matrix of difference scores. Secondly, this distance matrix was subjected to a cluster analysis that reduced the matrix to a set of categories or career ideal-types. These two stages involved choices about the ways in which each process was carried out. Moreover, the decisions at each stage were not guided by any formal

statistical rules. This is therefore an exploratory technique: the data were explored for meaning and we must rely on our knowledge of the data and of the concepts to guide the choices.

Before explaining the methodology used to identify the careers in depth, let us recall how the CAREERS project defines integration in the Belgian labour market, what the different statuses of a socio-economic career are and consequently how a socio-economic career is measured.

2.1. Definition of a socio-economic integration career

A career is defined as a succession of different positions in the labour market. As presented previously, in the CAREERS project the nomenclature code is derived from the Data Warehouse of the Crossroads Bank Social Security (KSZ/BCSS), which easily determines the socioeconomic position of an individual on the last day of each quarter. To analyze the careers five main categories were identified: (1) employed[54], (2) self-employed, (3) unemployed with benefits, (4) social welfare (5) and "other" (including unknown). We limited the divisions of the socio-economic position to these five categories for methodological reasons: in the sequence analysis, the more categories, the higher the number of careers that can be distinguished from one another and the lower the probability of obtaining a significant typology of careers (Robette 2011).

Table IV-1 depicts the specific nomenclature by category[55]. As we can see in this table, the status "other" includes people qualified as "inactive" (i.e. retired or receiving disability allowance) and the "unknown" category. The "unknown" category represents the majority of people in the "other" category and includes all people who do not belong to one of the other categories described in Table IV-1. Although the "unknown" category includes a wide variety of positions in our population, we consider that the majority of people in this category are housewives and househusbands[56]. The frequency of these different classification codes is presented in Appendix 4.1.

[54] People who receive an article 60 of the law on Public Centres for Social Welfare (PCSW) are considered here as employed.

[55] This list includes all nomenclature codes in the study population at the time of study but it is not an exhaustive account of all nomenclature codes in Belgium.

[56] For more details of this category, see page 51 of the Socioeconomic Monitoring of the Ministry of Employment: http://www.diversite.be/monitoring-socio-economique

Table IV-1. *Nomenclature codes by socio-economic categories*

Employed
paid employment (single job)
paid employment (multiple jobs)
paid employment and self-employment, mainly paid employment
Self-employed
self-employed (main occupation)
self-employed (secondary activity)
helper (as main occupation)
paid employment and self-employment, mainly self-employment
Unemployed
job seeker after graduation (waiting allowance)
job seeker after full-time employment, with unemployment benefit
job seeker after voluntary part-time employment, with unemployment benefit
Social dependence
living allowance
financial aid
Other
full-time career break
exempt from subscription as job seeker
children entitled to child allowances
incapacitated from employment (primary)
incapacitated from employment (invalid)
incapacitated from employment (working accident)
allocation for disabled persons
unknown

In the remainder of this section, we regard a person as 'active' in the labour market if they meet the definition given by the International Labour Office: an individual who is either employed (included self-employed) or who receives unemployment benefits. However, we must also remember that these data are only official data, thus those active in the labour market without a contract, i.e. those working on the "black market", are not included in the following results.

2.2. Identification of the time of analysis, career duration and the selected population

The identification of the time of analysis, career duration and the population selected for the sequence analysis is defined according to different methodological limitations.

First, the data used for the CAREERS project includes all asylum seekers who submitted an initial application between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2010 and who were still residing in Belgium on 31 December 2010 (see the introduction to the results section of the report).

But as mentioned above, for reasons of comparability we only took into account individuals who had obtained refugee status. Indeed, asylum seekers do not have the same access to the labour market as refugees and are therefore excluded from the dataset. As consequence, we have identified the beginning of their socio-economic career as the first quarter following the one when an individual obtains refugee status in order to assess the socio-economic career after the change of status.

Secondly, as explained previously, because socio-economic positions are provided quarterly by Data Warehouse, this information is available for each individual four times a year. As one limitation of sequence analysis is that all careers have to be of equal length in order to have a better chance of obtaining a significant typology of careers, we decided to take into account only people for whom we had data for the same length of time in Belgium.

Thirdly, the statistics regarding the social welfare category were available only from the beginning of 2003. Since this information is central to the analysis of professional careers, it was not possible to include the 2001 and the 2002 cohorts' reliance on social welfare in the first two years.

Fourthly, the observation window was limited to sixteen quarters (four years) following the moment of the recognition of refugee status. We limited the study of careers to this period because several studies (Piché et al. 2002; Piguet and Wimmer 2000; Korac 2003; Bloch 2007) on refugees' labour market participation emphasize the importance of the first eighteen months. Since we have data until the last quarter of 2010 and four years of careers information for all individuals are needed, we did not include those individuals who obtained refugee status after the fourth quarter of 2006 in our analysis.

Fifthly, the population for this analysis is composed of individuals who obtained refugee status between 2003 and 2006[57]. In order to maintain

[57] Specifically, people who obtained recognition of their refugee status in the first two quarters of 2003 are also excluded from the study population. The reason is explained in subsection 6.

the largest population possible, the period of analysis was calculated without taking variation from one year to another into account. For each individual, we analyzed his or her career at T0, T+1, T+2, ..., T+8, ..., T+14, T+15, where T0 is the socio-economic position in the quarter following the recognition of refugee status and T+15 is the socio-economic position of that individual four years (or sixteen quarters) later. However, this methodology includes inaccuracies because it does not take into account the impact of changing economic and institutional conditions on the careers.

Sixthly, this chapter study focused on the refugee population who obtained their permanent residence permit between the ages of 18 and 61 years. The age boundaries were set to exclude the influence of differential school participation and retirement[58].

According to these considerations, the selected population consists of 4869 refugees who obtained their status between 2003 and 2006, were aged between 18 and 65, arrived in Belgium after 2001, and were still in Belgium at the end of 2010. The data provide a quarterly employment history calendar with a four-year observation period.

Since we are only interested in refugees who obtained their status before 2007, the 2007 legislative changes do not affect our analysis, and similarly, changes after 2007 in the C permit also do not affect our analysis. During the period of research, asylum seekers had access to the C work permit and recognized refugees were exempt from the work permit requirements when accessing the labour market (see legislative context for more information).

2.3. *Method: Sequence Analysis Techniques*

As explained above, we applied a sequence analysis to describe and classify the socio-economic careers of refugees (Halpin and Chan 1998;

[58] We should briefly note two methodological limitations of age. Firstly, for reasons of privacy protection, age data were provided by the National Registry by year of birth and not by date of birth. Secondly, the year of birth is grouped by the National Registry by categories of two or three years. Consequently, there is inaccuracy because we cannot exactly identify all individuals from the age of 18. Thus, the selected individuals were at least 18 years of age and a maximum of 61 when they obtained refugee status.

Kogan 2004; Pollock 2007; Robette 2011), which allowed whole careers or parts thereof to be treated as a serial succession of various states over time. This analysis helped to classify all careers in order to describe which are close and which are distant from one other and was performed in two stages.

For the first stage, the technique used most often for the study of career sequences is Optimal Matching Analysis (OMA) (Kogan 2004): "The idea is to create an interval-level measure of dissimilarities between sequences by counting the costs needed to turn one sequence into another, or in other words by counting the minimum number of transformations needed to make both sequences equal. Thus the more steps that are necessary to make two sequences equal, the higher are the costs and hence the greater the dissimilarity. On the other hand, if the two sequences are identical, the distance or dissimilarity between them is obviously zero." (Kogan 2004:424)

In order to transform one sequence into another, two types of transformations are possible, followed by two categories of cost: an element can be inserted/deleted (*indel*) into and from a particular position in one of the sequences; or an element in one sequence can be substituted for the corresponding element in the other sequence. Thus OMA takes into account not only the length and frequency of the events, but also their location and order. Each transformation is assigned with costs that represent the OMA distance.

There are different ways to assign a cost to each operation and the challenge is to adapt this method to the data and the research hypotheses: either favouring *indel* operations, i.e. the order of events by joining parts of identical sequences that take place at different times; or favouring substitution operations that preserve the temporal structure of the sequences, since comparable situations are at the same point in the sequence but alter the sequence of events (Lesnard and Saint Pol, 2006). In this study, we decided for the substitution cost, to use the transition rates between states. Hence, the substitution costs depended on the probability of a transition between the two states: the higher the probability of a transition between the two states, the higher the cost of the substitution. We decided to set the *indel* cost at 1, focusing on the order of the careers rather than temporality within the careers. However, we must point out that many cost comparisons, which favoured the temporality of the sequences among others, were

conducted on our data and the results were relatively consistent between these comparisons.

The second step calculated pairwise dissimilarities between each sequence/career in order to find a typology or classification in the sequences. However, the OMA did not provide classifications of sequences so cluster analysis with a hierarchical clustering method was applied to investigate the dissimilarity matrix resulting empirically from the sequence procedure. Given the large number of clustering methods, Ward's linkage was used to find the most homogeneous clusters. The purpose of the cluster analysis was to obtain a minimal number of homogeneous clusters that reflected distinct patterns of career paths among refugees. But the decision regarding the number of clusters was not guided by any formal statistical rules and a good knowledge of the data was needed to guide our choices. Cluster analysis was conducted using the 'R program' and a solution with four clusters was selected.

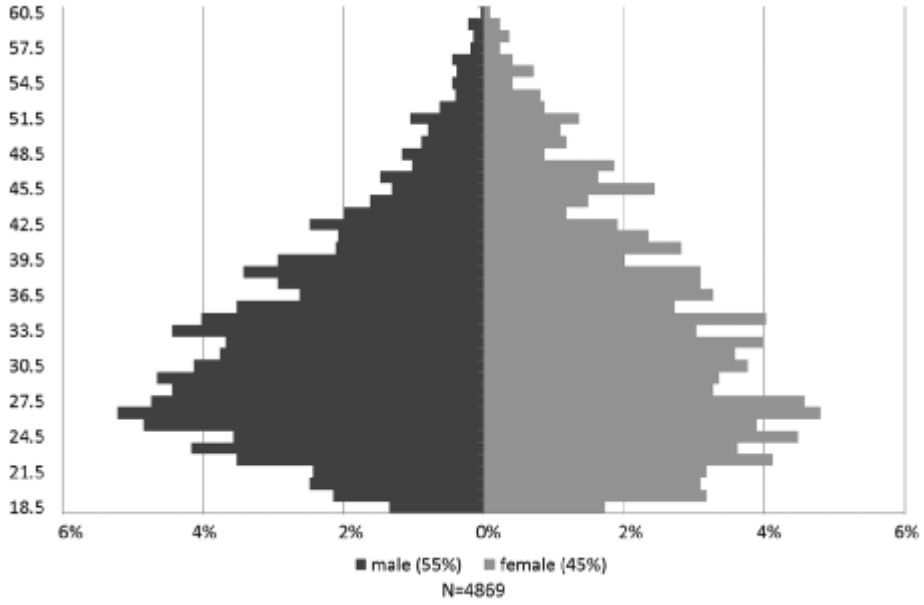
Before presenting this typology resulting in optimal matching and cluster analysis (subsection 4) we briefly discuss the socio-demographic characteristics of the selected population.

3. Socio-demographic characteristics

3.1. Characteristics of the selected population (n=4869)

Figure IV-1 presents the age pyramid of the selected population at the moment of recognition of refugee status. Since the year of birth was made available by the National Register in categories of two or three years, age is represented by an average. The majority of the population was between 18 and 30 years old when they obtained refugee status. In addition, the age pyramid provides an overview of the distribution of the refugees according to gender, showing that men (55%) are overrepresented compared to women (45%). It should be noted that a gender perspective will be applied throughout the chapter as the gender issue is indeed crucial in migration studies because it determines specific dimensions of integration in the host country.

Figure IV-1. *Age pyramid at the moment of recognition of refugee status*



The range of nationalities of origin was very large with more than 70 nationalities, the majority being from Caucasian countries and particularly from Russia, but also drawn from Sub-Saharan Africa (Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Guinea and Burundi) (Table IV-2).

The gender distinction demonstrates that some of these groups consisted primarily of women rather than men, which is particularly true for women from some African countries, including Rwanda, Congo, Guinea and Burundi.

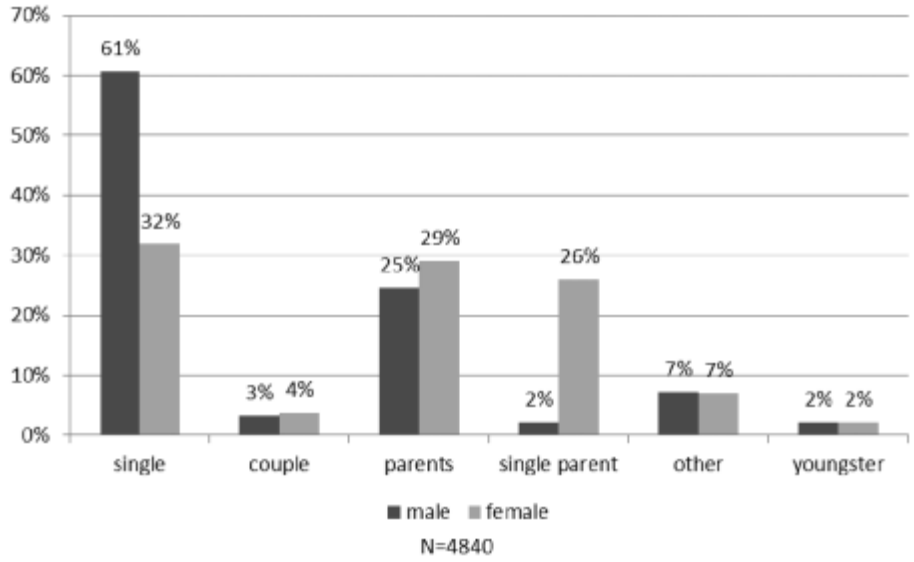
Table IV-2. *Nationality of origin by gender*

	Male	Female	Both male & female
Russia	35.0%	39.2%	36.9%
Rwanda	10.3%	15.2%	12.5%
Democratic Republic of Congo	8.9%	11.3%	10.0%
Ex-Yugoslavia	3.9%	4.2%	4.0%
Ivory Coast	4.7%	1.3%	3.2%
China	4.1%	1.7%	3.0%
Guinea	2.3%	3.6%	2.9%
Burundi	2.2%	3.1%	2.6%
Iraq	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%
Belorussia	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
Iran	2.1%	1.4%	1.7%
Afghanistan	1.9%	1.2%	1.6%
Mauritania	2.2%	0.5%	1.4%
Togo	2.0%	0.6%	1.4%
Syria	1.5%	0.6%	1.1%
Turkey	1.3%	0.8%	1.1%
Other countries	11.1%	9.8%	10.5%
Missing values	2.7%	1.8%	2.3%
Total (N)	**2,660**	**2,209**	**4,869**

The family situation was derived from LIPRO codes, which are internationally agreed codes to indicate an individual's position in a household. Figure IV-3 displays the composition of the studied population according to the LIPRO codes at the moment of the recognition of the refugee status by gender. We should note that the category "youngster" refers to people aged 18 or over who live with at least one of their parents and are present in the social security system.

Data on the family situation shows that single men category is overrepresented in the population, which confirms the presence of a large number of single males in the research population. Women, on the contrary, are overrepresented in the single parent category. The distribution of the LIPRO codes further indicates that traditional families composed of married couples with children, the "parents" category, form another important subgroup.

Figure IV-2. *LIPRO codes at the beginning of the observed period by gender*



3.2. *Comparison of the characteristics of the selected population (n=4869) and all refugees who obtained their status between 2001 and 2010 (n=16524)*

Given that the population selected in this chapter are refugees who obtained their status only between 2003 and 2006, we compared the gender, age and nationality of the selected population (selected population) with the entire group of refugees who obtained their recognition between 2001 and 2010 (total population)[59]. This allowed us to check if there were differences between the refugees selected for this chapter and the whole refugee population in the database.

Firstly, there was very little difference in the distribution of men and women between the selected population and the total population. Indeed, the total refugee population was composed of 57% men and 43% women, while there were 55% men and 45% women in the selected population. Secondly, a comparison of age at the moment of obtaining refugee status between these two populations doesn't show any differences (controlling for the effect of age linked to education and retire-

[59] As a reminder, this includes all refugees who first applied for asylum between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2010 and who still resided in Belgium on 31 December 2010.

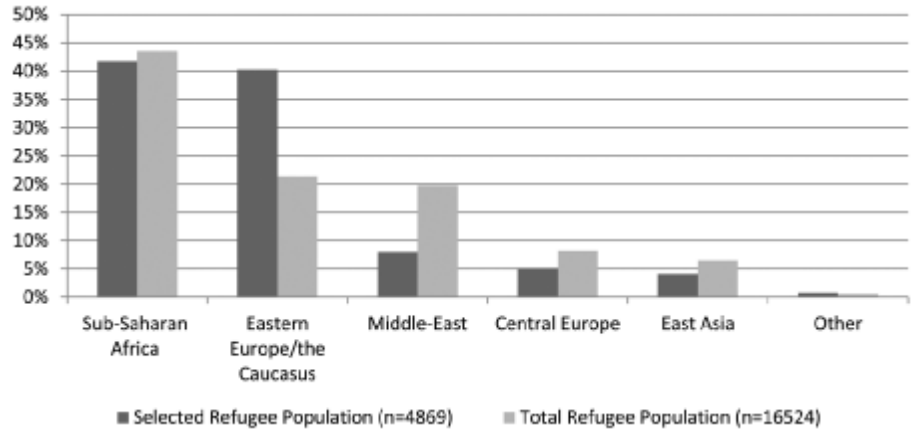
ment): an average of 32 for men and 33 for women in the selected population, and 32 for men and women in the total population.

Thirdly, Figure IV-3 compares the selected refugees and the total population of refugees according to nationality of origin.

To simplify the comparison, we present the nationalities of origin according to five main regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, the Middle East, and East Asia (and another group which includes countries that are not part of the other five regions of origin).[60]

As can be seen in this figure there was an overrepresentation of nationalities from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, and an underrepresentation of refugees from the Middle East among those selected in our analysis compared to all refugees who were recognized between 2001 and 2010. Because this difference is related to fluctuations in the movement of asylum seekers during the 2000s (CECLR 2013) we must therefore take account these differences in the generalization of the results presented in this chapter.

Figure IV-3. *Comparison of nationality of origin between the selected and total population*



[60] Sub-Saharan Africa: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic), Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Togo. Central Europe: Albania, Romania, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: Belorussia, Ukraine, Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia. Middle-East: Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey. East Asia: Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, China, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh. Other: Algeria, Ocean Pacific countries, Latin American and Caribbean countries.

3.2.1. General overview of the careers

This section summarizes the socio-economic careers found in the selected population. The analysis of these careers will be presented as a typology in the following section.

As explained above, the careers are distinguished by five socio-economic statuses over a period of four years (sixteen quarters). Figure IV-4 plots their distribution in each quarter, which shows that at the moment of recognition, 57% of refugees were in the social welfare category and this proportion decreased until the end of the follow-up period in favour of people who were active on the labour market. Whilst at the moment of recognition of their status 19% were active, this was the case for 55% four years later. Moreover, these results demonstrate that many people could be found in the heterogeneous "other" status, showing that refugees also tended to spend time in situations other than employment, unemployment, or social welfare. This figure also demonstrates that the proportion of the heterogeneous "other" category is quite stable over time. As a reminder, the vast majority of people with this status had no legal income and we believe this category is mostly made up of housewives or househusbands.

Figure IV-4. *Distribution of socio-professional statuses per quarter*

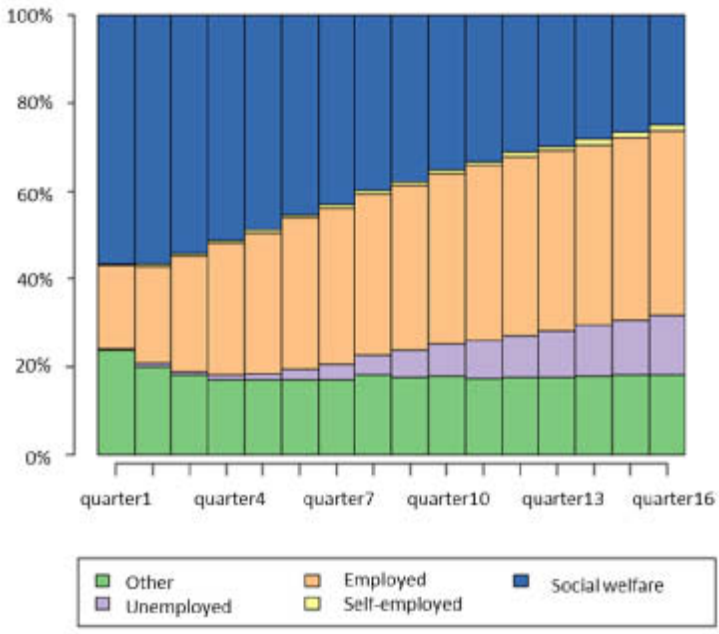
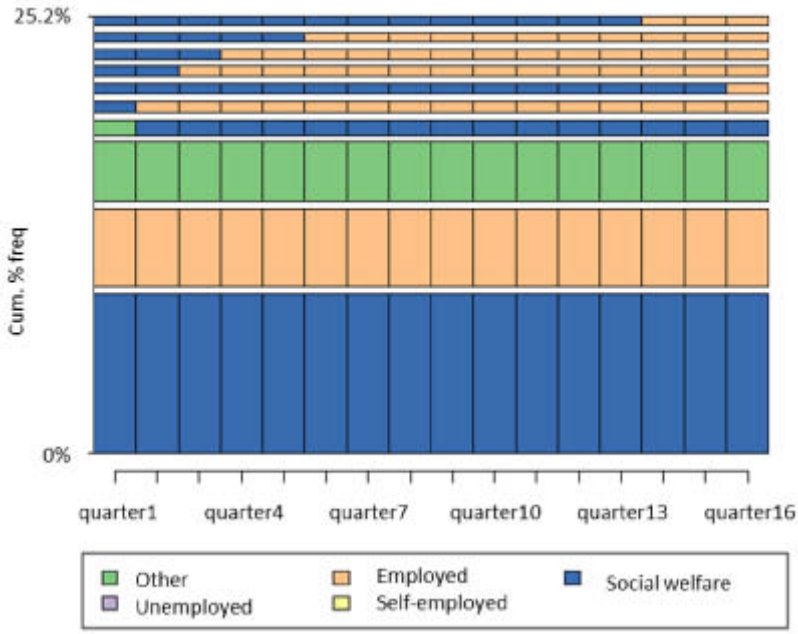


Figure IV-5 plots the ten most frequent careers and each sequence is plotted as a horizontal bar split. The sequences are ordered by decreasing frequency from the bottom up and the bar widths are set proportionally to the sequence frequency. This figure shows that the three most frequent careers are homogenous: many refugees occupy the same position during their entire career. Indeed, about 12% of refugees continually depended on social security during their four-year career path; 5% of them were continually employed and 4% continued to stay in the "other" category. The ten most frequent careers presented in this figure concern 25.2% of the selected population.

Figure IV-5. *Sequence frequency plot: the 10 most frequent careers*



4. Career typology

This section presents the classification of socio-economic careers as well as the impact of various individual and contextual factors on this classification. In fact, to reiterate, the purpose of this section was firstly to identify and quantify typical careers among recognized refugees. This step distributed the population into a limited number of relatively homogeneous groups that are distinct from each other, thereby identi-

fying sets of career types. Then, in the second step, we analyzed whether these careers were characterized by particular individual and contextual factors.

As regards the first step, we conducted a sequence analysis with optimal matching and cluster analysis to produce a typology of socio-economic careers. These statistical methods were used to decide which careers are close and which are distant from one another. The following section reports the results of the optimal matching analysis of career among refugees. As described in the methodological section above, the matrix resulting from the pairwise calculation of distances was subjected to hierarchical cluster analysis with a Ward linkage, resulting in the selection of four clusters[61].

The following clusters were differentiated: Active career (cluster 1); gradually-becoming-active career: social welfare at the beginning with employment at the end (cluster 2); Social welfare career (cluster 3); and an "other" career (cluster 4). Table IV-3 reports the distribution of refugees according to cluster membership, the proportion of females in each cluster and the average number of years in the asylum procedure in each cluster.

The findings for the gender comparison are striking: whereas in the active and gradually-becoming-active career (cluster 1 and 2), only 35% were female, they were largely overrepresented in the «other» status (cluster 4), and also slightly overrepresented in the social welfare career. Regarding the duration of the procedure, people with an active career had on average a longer asylum procedure than those with other types of careers. Since the moment of the recognition of refugee status defines the beginning of the observed career, the duration of the asylum procedure is defined as the number of years spent in Belgium since the (first) asylum application. It seems that refugees with an active career in the labour market have, on average, been in Belgium for longer than refugees with other types of careers. Time is therefore a factor in socio-economic integration.

[61] Identification of a number of clusters in a typology is related to statistical criteria but should also be consistent with the study (Robette 2011). Consequently, before selecting this typology of four clusters, we observed other clusters at different levels of partition in order to examine the nature and homogeneity of each clusters through the subclasses it comprises.

Table IV-3. *Socio-economic career sequences according to cluster membership*

Cluster		Frequencies	Female proportion	Average number of years of the asylum procedure
1	Active career	34%	34.5%	2.3 years
2	Gradually-becoming-active career: social welfare at the beginning with employment at the end	29%	35%	1.8 years
3	Social dependence career	25%	55%	1.8 years
4	The "other" career	12%	73.5%	1.9 years
	Total	**4,869**	**45%**	**2 years**

The next step is to check whether this typology of socio-economic careers can be attributed to differing individual and contextual characteristics. To do this, the statistical method used was multiple logistic regression (DeMaris 1999). Through a multiple regression analysis we can examine the effect of a series of independent variables presented simultaneously (e.g. the duration of the asylum procedure) on a dependent variable (e.g. having an "active career"), controlling for other independent variables. The relevance of logistic regressions results from the binary character of the dependent variables. A variable is considered binary when it has only two response categories, e.g. either having or not having an "active career".

We will not go into the detail of the mathematical formulas of this technique because they are found in most statistical textbooks (e.g. Cohen et al. 2003). Instead, we present the tools that allow us to read and understand the results presented here. Reading the results of a multiple logistic regression happens in two ways. The first refers to the statistical significance of each independent variable, i.e. whether the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is not related to chance. The statistical significance of an independent variable is shown by an asterisk '*'. Here we take 95% as the threshold for significance: there is at least a 95% chance that the effect of the independent variable is not due to chance.[62]

[62] A significance level of 95% is equivalent to an alpha of 0.05 (*), a significance level of 99% is equivalent to an alpha of 0.01 (**), a significance threshold of 99, 9% is equivalent to an alpha of 0.001 (***).

The second way is based on the effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable in the form of regression coefficients. There are different ways to present these coefficients in a logistic regression but we use the odds ratio because it is easier to interpret (DeMaris 1999). For example, if an individual has odds of 2, this means that they are twice as likely to be positive than to be negative with respect to the reference group.

The independent variables included in our model of analysis are summarized in Table IV-4. These variables show attributes such as gender, age at the moment of the recognition of the refugee status, having Belgian nationality during the observed period[63], family composition derived from the LIPRO code and nationality of origin by region of origin. We should note that the category "youngster" refers to people aged 18 or over who live with at least one of their parents and are present in the social security system.

The independent variables of the refugees' experience during the asylum procedure are also taken into account. First, the duration of the asylum procedure was taken into account. Since the moment of the recognition of refugee status defines the beginning of the career, the duration of the procedure is equal to the number of years spent in Belgium since the first application for an asylum.[64] Next, a variable indicating whether the refugee was active in the labour market during the asylum procedure was also measured. We define an active person on the labour market according to the International Labour Office definition as a person who is either employed (included self-employed) or who receives unemployment benefits. Since the administrative data provided by Data Warehouse about socio-economic positions were not complete before 2003 and because we wanted to exclude as few people as possible in the selected population, we only looked at whether a

[63] During the observed period, 56% of the population obtained Belgian nationality (see annex IV.2)

[64] The year of arrival in Belgium is not included as an independent variable for two reasons. Firstly, from a methodological point of view, this variable is strongly correlated with the duration of the asylum procedure and consequently the number of years spent in Belgium. The second reason relates to the period covered by the research. The selected population includes refugees who applied for asylum after 2001 and who obtained recognition of their refugee status between early 2003 and late 2006. This population applied for asylum before major legislative reforms of the asylum procedure, of access to work regulations and the so-called "reception" law. Consequently, a variable listing the year of arrival in Belgium is not necessary to answer our research questions.

person was active on the labour market in the quarter preceding the recognition of refugee status. Whether a refugee was active during his or her asylum procedure is essential for an understanding of their career transition after obtaining refugee status because, as explained in the chapter on the legislative context (Chapter 1), asylum seekers have access to the labour market in Belgium.[65] In this way it is also possible to observe if there is continuity in labour market participation before and after the acquisition of refugee status.

Finally, the contextual variable is measured by the region of the first registration in a municipal administration in Belgium. Although we were not able to include other contextual variables (because of the available variables in the database), a consideration of this contextual variable allows the identification of problems specific to public policies in particular regions of the country. The variable of the region of the first registration in a municipality raises several of the distinct dimensions presented in the first chapter on the institutional and economic context. However, we cannot assess the impact of the institutional context on refugee careers separately from the impact of the economic context. In addition, although we report the moment of first registration and regional settlement of the refugees, they may have moved to a different region during the period of research. However, the low level of intra-regional mobility in Belgium leads us to conclude that settlement in the arrival region is a much more widespread phenomenon than mobility. The region of the first registration variable thus involves two components treated generally here and which can be summarized as follows: on the one hand, the economic situation in Flanders is better, leading to more frequent careers opportunities or employment vacancies; and secondly, Flanders has a policy monitoring new migrants, including refugees, who are also obliged to take a Dutch language course within the integration program (*inburgeringbeleid*). In Wallonia, on the other hand, there are adverse economic conditions and fewer jobs. Moreover, there is no mandatory monitoring of the integration of refugees, although they may find associations that support integration efforts. The same situation occurs in Brussels where the employment situation is midway between Flanders and Wallonia.

[65] Since this chapter focuses on refugees who obtained their status before 2007, the 2007 legislative changes do not affect our analysis.

Table IV-4. *Description of the independent variables used in the analyses*

Independent variables	Description
Gender	0. Female – reference category
	1. Male
Age	Age at the recognition of refugee status (the beginning of the observed period):
	Between 18 and 25 years old
	Between 26 and 40 years old – reference category
	Between 41 and 61 years old
Family situation	A group of dummy variables:
	Single – reference category
	Couple
	Parents
	Single parent
	Youngster
	other family situation
Nationality of origin	A group of dummy variables:
	Sub-Saharan Africa – reference category
	Central Europe
	Eastern Europe and the Caucasus
	Middle-East
	East Asia
	Other countries
Belgian nationality	Having Belgian nationality at any time during the period observed (dummy variable)
Length of the asylum procedure = length of stay in Belgium	A group of dummy variables:
	1 year or less – reference category
	more than 1, less than 3 years
	3 years or more
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	Employed, self-employed or unemployed in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained (dummy variable)
Region	First residential region in Belgium:
	Wallonia (ref. category)
	Brussels
	Flanders

4.1. Cluster 1: Active career

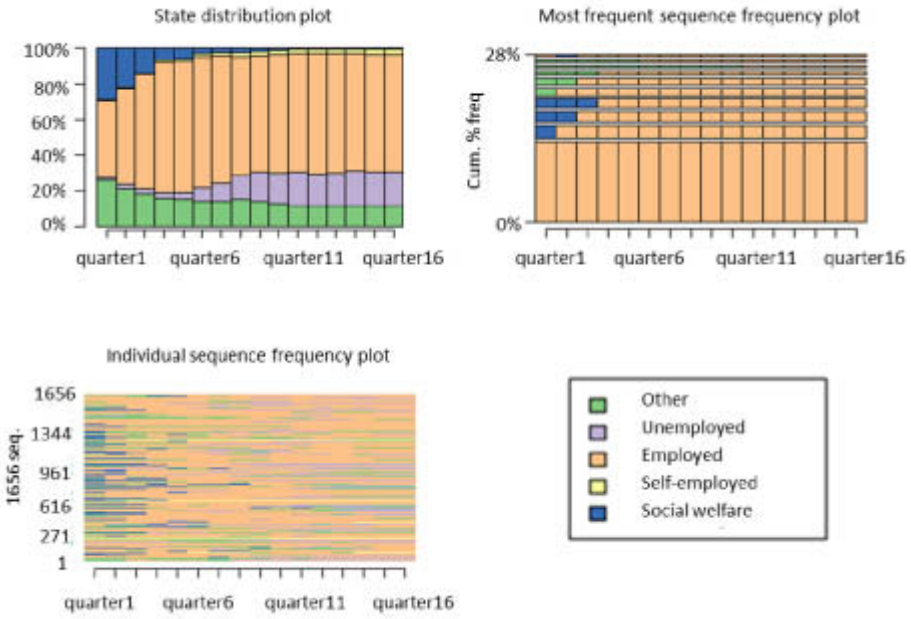
4.1.1. Description of the careers

Figure IV-6 describes the first cluster produced by the OMA and three graphs are presented for each cluster. The first shows the distribution of

each socio-economic status by quarter; the second describes the ten most common careers in this cluster; and the third shows the individual careers within the cluster. The first cluster is characterized almost completely by 'active' careers, i.e. employees, self-employed or unemployed. This cluster contains 34% of the refugee population and is the largest of the four. Although for some refugees their early career involves a transition to the 'other' status, on average they remain active for 79% of their career. Reliance on welfare is almost entirely absent from their career.

On the other hand, this profile is also characterized by an increase over time in the proportion of unemployed. While we consider the status of receipt of unemployment benefits as an active status on the labour market (as one must have worked to receive unemployment benefit), we observed that a minority of people who have paid employment did not keep it. In fact, on average over the last four quarters, 12% of people who had this type of career were unemployed.

Figure IV-6. *Plots of the first cluster (active career)*



4.1.2. Description of the profile

To reflect the impact of individual characteristics and institutional and economic contexts, multiple logistic regression is applied (Table IV-5). The dependent variable is whether or not the respondent has or has not this type of career. As independent variables we included all variables listed in Table IV-6.

Looking at individual characteristics, we see that gender has an impact on whether or not a refugee has an active career. The chance of finding this type of career is greater for men than for women. Age also plays a role. People aged between 26 and 40 are more likely to have an active career than those aged between 18 and 25 and those between 41 and 61. This means that the relationship between age and an active career is curvilinear (an inverted U-curve): the probability increases up to a certain age and then decreases until the age of retirement.

Family composition also plays a role, particularly when we consider the interaction between marital status and gender (for reasons of readability the results by gender can be found in Appendix 4.3). The family composition of women strongly influences whether they have an active career on the labour market or not, whereas this is not the case for men. In fact, women are more likely to be active throughout the observed career if they are part of a couple with or without children, rather than if they are single, and particularly if they are single mothers. This homologous situation does not occur for men since there are almost no single fathers in our population.

The analysis equally shows that national origin has an impact with having an active career. Compared to refugees from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, as well as from the Middle East, refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa are more likely to have an active career. An interpretation of this result is that the main countries of the region (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Burundi and Guinea) have French as one of the official languages. Knowledge of one of the Belgian national languages would benefit asylum seekers and recognized refugees entering the labour market. Another interpretation that could therefore explain the differences between nationalities would be related to the level of education but we do not have access to this information in this study. On the other hand, the actual nationality, i.e. having Belgian nationality, has no impact on having this type of career. Other

characteristics such as the family situation or the national origin have more impact on the chance of having this type of career. This result will be discussed in the discussion section of this chapter. Considering the situation before obtaining refugee status, the duration of the asylum procedure, which in this section is equivalent to the number of years spent in Belgium, has a positive impact on an active career: the more years spent in Belgium, the higher the probability of having an active career.

Furthermore, people who had already worked legally before obtaining refugee status were more likely to have an active career than those who did not work during their asylum procedure. Thus, as was observed in previous research (Marx et al. 2008) on the socio-economic integration of people who were regularized in 2000, obtaining refugee status strengthens the position of those who were already inserted in the labour market. It is not the recognition of the status itself that facilitates insertion in the labour market. Rather, recognition of legal status reinforces the position of this group in the labour market by removing the negative effects of the insecurity of their status in Belgium. It is particularly important to note the positive effect of access to work during the asylum procedure, which is a factor promoting the socio-economic integration of refugees. Greater integration in the labour market when they were asylum seekers therefore increased the chances of maintaining good levels of employment and obtaining refugee status helped stabilize and perpetuate their employment.

Further analysis shows that there is a significant interaction between working during the asylum procedure and the duration of the procedure. Because the duration of the asylum procedure equates to the number of years spent in Belgium for the selected population, we interpret this result as follows: the longer someone resides in Belgium the higher his chance of finding a job during the asylum procedure, and the more likely it is that he has an active career in the Belgian labour market after the recognition of his refugee status.[66]

[66] Individuals who worked during the asylum procedure and who experienced an asylum procedure lasting more than three years were almost four times as likely to have this type of career than individuals who did not work and had an asylum procedure lasting less than one year.

Table IV-5. *Logistic regression (odds ratio) of the first cluster (active career)*

	Cluster1
Gender(ref. female)	1.51***
Age (ref. 26-40)	
18-25	0.68***
41-61	0.64***
Family situation (ref. single)	
Couple	1.38
Parents	1.43***
Single parent	0.53***
Youngster	0.53*
Other family situation	1.14
Nationality of origin (ref Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Central Europe	1.06
Eastern Europe and the Caucasus	0.58***
Middle-East	0.60***
East Asia	1.34
Other nationalities	2.41*
Belgian nationality	1.10
Length of the asylum procedure= length of the stay in Belgium (ref. 1 year or less)	
more than 1, less than 3 years	1.26*
3 years or more	1.80***
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	4.92***
Region	
Brussels	1.23*
Flanders	1.42***
ll	-2,700.62
chi2	800.71
N	4,837

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p<0.05
Note: N does not add up to 4869 for male because of the missing responses for the variables "family situation", "nationality" and "region" (see annex 4.2 for more details)

Regarding the impact of the institutional and economic context, there is again an interaction with gender because the context is only significant for females. Female refugees who lived in Flanders and Brussels at the beginning of their asylum procedure had significantly higher probabilities of having an active career than those living in Wallonia. The institutional and economic context, as presented in the first chapter, therefore has a specific impact on female refugees' active inclusion in the labour market. The analysis in this context demonstrated firstly that

Flanders has an institutional environment that supports the early stages of integration, while the public integration policy is more passive in Brussels and Wallonia. The economic context is also much more favourable in Flanders and Brussels, leading to a greater supply of job opportunities compared to Wallonia and promoting access to employment. This context does not have a significant impact for men, and this result supports the view that women's careers are more strongly influenced by institutional and economic context.

4.2. Cluster 2: Gradually-becoming-active career

4.2.1. Description of the career

This career is characterized by an active process of integration in the labour market after obtaining refugee status. Members of this cluster began their careers primarily with social welfare but as time went on, the proportion of those who work increased. While at the beginning of their careers, as presented in the first graph in Figures IV-9, 76% received social welfare and 10% were active workers, four years later the proportion of social assistance recipients was only 5%, and 90% were active workers. This profile is also characterized by an increase in the proportion of unemployed. This case clearly illustrates a career of progressive insertion on the labour market where obtaining refugee status seems to be a catalyst for employment. This cluster contains 29% of the population.

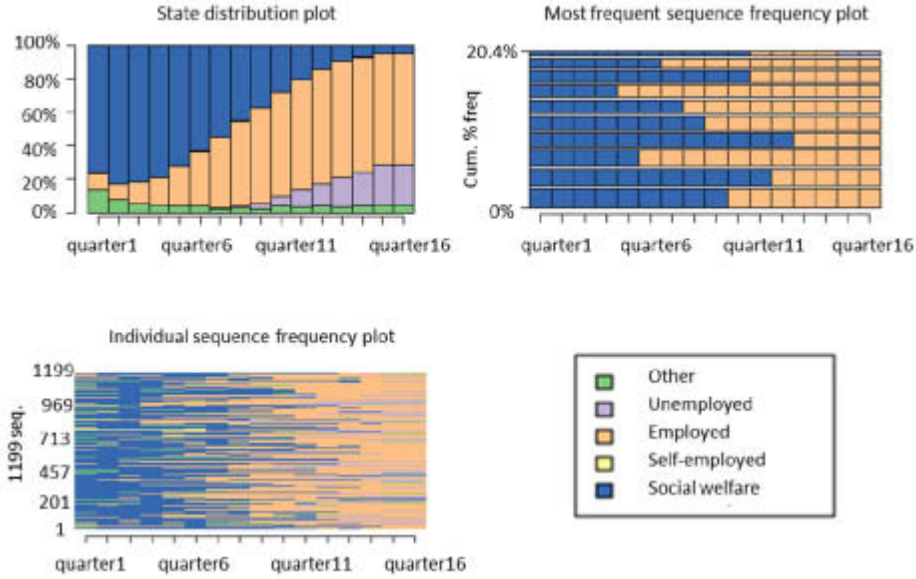
4.2.2. Description of the profile

Table IV-8 shows results from the second regression where the dependent variable is whether or not an individual has a career of progressive insertion into the labour market. We included all those variables listed in Table IV-6 as independent variables.

Looking at personal characteristics, logistic regression analysis shows that men are more likely to have this type of career than women. On the other hand, age is not a contributing variable because there is no significant difference between the different age groups.

Once again, marital status plays an important role, particularly when the interaction between marital status and gender is considered (see Appendix 4.3): single women have higher probabilities of a gradual

Figure IV-7. *Plots of the second cluster (Gradually-becoming-active career)*



insertion into the labour market than women who are in a couple with or without children. Amongst the single women, those without children are more likely to be found in this cluster. In contrast, family status has no effect on men. By comparing this result with that of the first cluster, where women in couples (with or without children) were more likely to have an active career than single women (with or without children), we believe that this reflects the difficulty single women have in finding a job during the asylum procedure. In this case isolation could be an obstacle to employability. Once refugee status was recognized, these women were more likely to enter the labour market. Since these results are influenced by, among other things, the duration of the asylum procedure or the number of years spent in Belgium, a stabilized legal status would favour a transition to an active career. For these women, obtaining refugee status is a catalyst for their employability and career. Obtaining refugee status allows this group of women to acquire what may be called "legal capital", which opens up more opportunities for them than the previous situation. Obtaining legal status as legal capital provides access to two types of entitlements. The first includes benefits derived from the new legal status of recognized refugees, including access to family reunification, social housing, a permanent residence permit, free access to the labour market, etc. The

second dimension is linked to the opportunity to appeal to more institutionalized and wider social networks. By acquiring refugee status, these people and particularly women can move away from social connections centered on strong ties with the family or groups of the same ethnic origin (Granovetter 1973) to more formal and weaker ties giving access to new and more diverse social networks. In summary, obtaining refugee status is a prerequisite for them to expand and diversify their social networks and to increase labour market opportunities. Our research does not prove this but previous research on settled refugees (Adam et al. 2002; Marx et al. 2008) demonstrates that a permanent residence permit reduces uncertainty and increases investment in the country of residence.

National origin also has a significant impact on this type of career. Compared to people from Central Europe, those from Sub-Saharan Africa are more likely to have a gradually-becoming-active career.

The actual nationality has also a significant impact on this type of career when we consider the interaction between Belgian nationality and gender (see annex 4.3). Males who have been naturalized have higher probabilities of a gradual insertion into the labour market than those who don't have Belgian nationality. For females, the acquisition of the Belgian nationality has no impact on this type of career, other personal characteristics are more important to explain this type of career.

The duration of the asylum procedure is equally significant. Unlike the previous cluster, compared to an asylum procedure of less than a year, those who experienced an asylum procedure of three years or more were less likely to have this type of career. In other words, those who had arrived more recently in Belgium were more likely to have an active career than people who had arrived more than three years ago.

As regards the situation in the labour market, those who had already used the opportunity to work legally before obtaining refugee status had a lower probability of having this type of career than those who did not work during the asylum procedure.

Finally, the institutional and economic context had no significant impact on having a gradually-becoming-active career.

Table IV-6. *Logistic regression (odds ratio) of the second cluster (Gradual integration career)*

	Cluster2
Gender(ref. female)	1.98***
Age (ref. 26-40)	
18-25	1.06
41-61	0.86
Family situation (ref. single)	
Couple	0.62*
Parents	0.54***
Single parent	1.32*
Youngster	0.74
Other family situation	0.74*
Nationality of origin (ref Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Central Europe	0.59**
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	0.86
Middle-East	0.97
East Asia	1.20
Other nationalities	0.70
Belgian nationality	1.14
Length of the asylum procedure= length of the stay in Belgium (ref. 1 year or less)	
More than 1, less than 3 years	0.90
3 years or more	0.73***
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	0.52***
Region	
Brussels	1.07
Flanders	1.13
ll	-2,584.71
chi2	239.37
N	4,837

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p<0.05; Note: N does not add up to 4869 for male because of the missing responses for the variables "family situation", "nationality" and "region" (see annex 4.2 for more details)

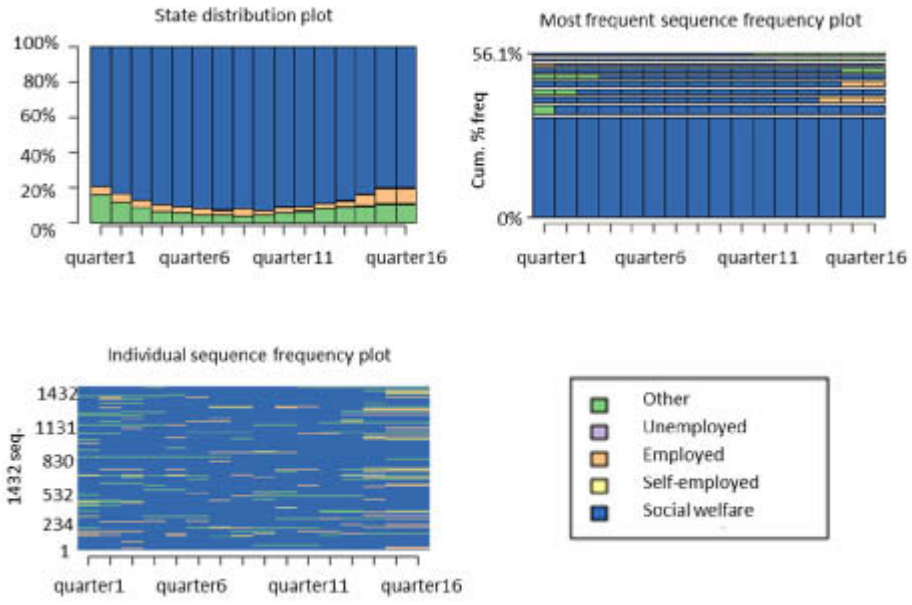
4.3. Cluster 3: Social welfare career

4.3.1. Description of the career

This cluster brings together people who were not active in the labour market, either before or after obtaining refugee status, and are characterized by an almost complete dependency on social welfare (Figures IV-8). On average, the refugees in this cluster were welfare dependent

during 89% of their observed careers. This type of career is experienced by 25% of the study population.

Figure IV-8. *Plots of the third cluster (social welfare career)*



4.3.2. Description of the profile

Figure IV-9 shows the results of the third multiple logistic regression analysis where the dependent variable is whether or not an individual had a career of social welfare.

The results demonstrate that women were more likely to be dependent on welfare throughout this type of observed career than men. We also observed that individuals aged between 18 and 25 and between 41 and 61 had a higher probability of having a social welfare career than those aged between 26 and 40. This means that the probability of a social welfare career is curvilinear: the probability decreases up to a certain age and then increases until retirement. The results show again that family situation had an impact on women only (see Appendix 4.3). Single women with children were more likely to receive welfare throughout their careers than women in couples with or without children or single women without children. In contrast, the impact of marital status was not significant for men.

Regarding national origin, refugees from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus were more likely to have a social welfare career than refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa. The actual nationality also has a significant impact on this type of cluster, again only for males (see annex 4.3). Males with Belgian nationality were less likely to have a social welfare career than people without Belgian nationality.

The duration of the asylum procedure is also significant: the longer the duration, the lower the probability of having a social welfare career. Also, those who had already used the opportunity to work legally before obtaining refugee status had a lower probability of having this type of career than those who did not work.

Table IV-7. *Logistic regression (odds ratio) of the third cluster (social welfare career)*

	Cluster3
Gender(ref. female)	0.77***
Age (ref. 26-40)	
18-25	1.47***
41-61	1.72***
Family situation (ref. single)	
Couple	0.63*
Parents	0.50***
Single parent	2.04***
Youngster	1.52
Other family situation	0.91
Nationality of origin (ref Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Central Europe	1.17
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	1.60***
Middle-East	1.15
East Asia	0.66*
Other nationalities	0.63
Belgian nationality	0.92
Length of the asylum procedure= length of the stay in Belgium (ref. 1 year or less)	
More than 1, less than 3 years	0.84*
3 years or more	0.75***
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	0.27***
Region	
Brussels	0.85
Flanders	0.67***

Table IV-7. *Logistic regression (odds ratio) of the third cluster (social welfare career) (continued)*

	Cluster3
ll	-2,662.50
chi2	533.25
N	4,837

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p<0.05; Note: N does not add up to 4,869 for male because of the missing responses for the variables "family situation", "nationality" and "region" (see annex 4.2 for more details)

Finally, the results on the institutional and economic context demonstrate that refugees who lived in Wallonia at the beginning of their asylum procedure had significantly higher probabilities of having a social welfare career than those living in Flanders. The fact that institutional and economic contexts, understood as opportunity structures, were particularly unfavourable in Wallonia explains this outcome.

4.4. Cluster 4: The "other" career

4.4.1. Description of the career

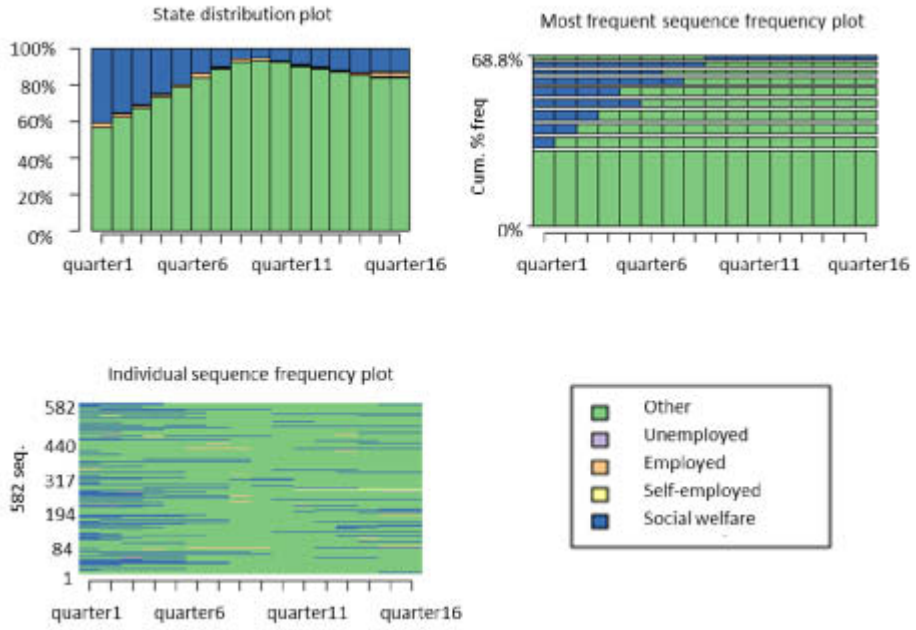
Finally, the fourth type of career is characterized by a quasi-unique "other" status (see Figures IV-9). On average, the refugees in this cluster had this status for 82% of their careers. It means that the vast majority of people with this status had no legal income and they were probably mainly housewives or househusbands. These figures also show that some people may have received welfare benefits during part of their careers.

4.4.2. Description of the profile

Table IV-10 provides an overview of the results of the multiple logistic regressions where the dependent variable is having or not having an "other" career.

Gender has a significant impact on this type of career. Women were four times more likely to have an "other" career than men. Family composition also played a role, and unlike the three other career types, the family situation of both men and women was significant (see Appendix 4.3). In other words, both men and women in a couple with or without children were more likely to have a career with no income

Figure IV-9. *Plots of the fourth cluster (the "other" career)*



than a single person with or without children. We hypothesize that the lack of a regular income is linked to the presence of a male breadwinner.

The results also demonstrate that refugees from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus as well as those from the Middle East are more likely have this type of career than people from East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Regarding actual nationality, having Belgian nationality also has a significant impact on this type of cluster for females (see annex 4.3). Females with Belgian nationality were less likely to have an "other" career than people without Belgian nationality.

Also, those who had already used the possibility to work legally before obtaining their refugee status had a lower probability of this type of career than those who did not work during their asylum procedure. By contrast, the duration of the asylum procedure had no impact on having a career without an income.

Table IV-8. *Logistic regression (odds ratio) of the fourth cluster (the "other" career)*

	Cluster4
Gender(ref. female)	0.23***
Age (ref. 26-40)	
18-25	0.88
41-61	1.12
Family situation (ref. single)	
Couple	3.09***
Parents	4.13***
Single parent	0.31***
Youngster	2.47**
Other family situation	2.00***
Nationality of origin (ref Sub-Saharan Africa)	
Central Europe	1.49
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	1.50***
Middle-East	2.27***
East Asia	0.15**
Other nationalities	0.55
Belgian nationality	0.73***
Length of the asylum procedure= length of the stay in Belgium (ref. 1 year or less)	
More than 1, less than 3 years	1.20
3 years or more	1.07
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	0.20***
Region	
Brussels	0.78*
Flanders	0.85
ll	-1,407.35
chi2	717.19
N	4,837

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p<0.05$
Note: N does not add up to 4869 for male because of the missing responses for the variables "family situation", "nationality" and "region" (see annex 4.2 for more details)

Finally, the results on the institutional and economic context demonstrate that there is no significant difference between Flanders and Wallonia. However, there is a difference between Brussels and Wallonia for females as the probability of having an "other" career is higher in Wallonia than in Brussels (see annex 4.3). The fact that institutional and economic contexts, understood as opportunity structures, were particularly unfavourable in Wallonia explains this outcome.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The integration of recognized refugees into the labour market in Belgium takes various forms. If we consider the period before and after obtaining refugee status, it appears that some people were never dependent on social welfare and had almost always been active in the labour market (cluster 1) while others were dependent on welfare for a long period (cluster 3). Between these two types of careers, a profile emerges of refugees who often began their careers in receipt of social welfare but after some time, gradually integrated into the labour market (cluster 2). The temporal dynamics used in this analysis demonstrate that refugees may leave a situation of welfare dependence at any moment even though they were already dependent on welfare before obtaining refugee status. There is also a fourth type of career that includes those refugees absent from the other profiles, i.e. people who were neither active in the labour market nor dependent on social welfare (cluster 4).

The differentiation between these careers is strongly influenced by individual characteristics and the Belgian institutional context. First of all, women are more likely than men to find themselves in an inactive labour market career (clusters 3 and 4). This outcome also corresponds to the difference in activity rates between men and women in the labour market for Belgians and other foreigners. Men on the other hand are more likely than women to have an active career (cluster 1) and experience gradual integration into the labour market (cluster 2). Age also had an impact on active careers (cluster 1) and social welfare (cluster 3): the probability of having an active career increased until a certain age and then decreased until retirement (a curvilinear relationship); similarly the probability of a social welfare career decreased with age and increased until retirement.

Next, the family status of women strongly influenced their type of career, which is mainly due to the fact that there were very few single men with children among the studied refugees. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that single women were much less likely to have a fully active career in the labour market than a woman in a couple. Once refugee status had been recognized, single women were more likely to find a job or to experience progressive integration into the labour market: the stabilization of their legal status facilitated their

active integration. Obtaining refugee status would provide these women with a "legal capital" which opened up more opportunities for them than when they were asylum seekers.

Concerning national origin, refugees from Sub-Saharan countries had a greater likelihood of having an active career compared to refugees from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and from the Middle East, as well as a higher probability of having a career of gradual insertion into the labour market compared to refugees from Central Europe. This higher probability for Sub-Saharan Africans could be due to the fact that, in the population studied, the main countries of this region (Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Burundi and Guinea) had French as one of the official languages. Knowledge of one of the languages spoken in Belgium could therefore benefit asylum seekers and recognized refugees when entering the labour market.

The results for the naturalization during the observed career are more divided. On the one hand, having Belgian nationality is not significantly related to an active career. For those refugees active in the labour market, naturalization will not offer additional opportunity as other factors such as having worked during the asylum procedure explain the fact of having this type of career. On the other hand, the acquisition of Belgian citizenship is an important factor related to the other types of career and interacts with gender: having Belgian nationality is positively related to a career of gradual insertion into the labour market for males but is negatively related to a social income career for males and an "other" career for females. A possible explanation of these results is that obtaining Belgian nationality could promote gradual integration into the labour market and decrease the chances of having an inactive career as naturalization would be both a source of stability to employers and would remove some of the barriers to the labour market.

The duration of the asylum procedure, which as outlined in this chapter is equivalent to the time spent in Belgium in our analysis, affects the type of career that refugees experienced. A long time spent in Belgium increased the likelihood of having an active career (cluster 1) compared to a relatively short stay. Conversely, a brief stay in Belgium increased the chances of having a gradually-becoming-active career (cluster 2) and a social welfare career (cluster 3) compared to a longer stay.

The results highlighted the critical importance of having worked during the asylum procedure to explain the careers of refugees. In particular, the results demonstrated that having worked during the asylum procedure had a positive impact on an active career (cluster 1) whereas this relationship was reversed for the other three clusters. Further analysis showed that there is a relationship between working during the asylum procedure and the duration of the procedure. Whereas the duration of the asylum procedure was equivalent to the number of years spent in Belgium for the selected population, we interpret this result as follows: the longer a person had lived in Belgium, the higher were his/her chances of finding a job during the asylum procedure and the more likely he/she was to have an active career in the labour market after obtaining refugee status.

The context also influenced the categorization of recognized refugees' careers. Indeed, this analysis confirms earlier research on regularized people (Marx et al. 2008). The economic environment in Flanders, with a lower unemployment rate than the other two regions, offered employment opportunities, improving recognized refugees' chances in the labour market. Without having tangible evidence from this research, we can sustain that policies such as *inburgering* (integration of immigrants) in Flanders contribute on the one hand to an improvement in language skills, through language courses; and on the other hand, through monitoring, promotes contacts with Belgian and Flemish institutions and the development of useful relationships (Granovetter 1973) in the job search. But the impact of context is especially important for females. This confirms the very sensitive situation of female refugees and asylum seekers who face difficulties in finding a place in the labour market.

Annex IV.1. *Frequency of the nomenclature codes by socio-economic categories at the moment of recognition of refugee status (the beginning of the observed career) and four years later (the end of the observed career)*

Note: the explanation of the beginning and the observed career is described in Section 2.2 (Chapter IV)

	Beginning of the career	End of the career
Employed		
paid employment (single job)	878	1,949
paid employment (multiple jobs)	37	78
paid employment and self-employment, mainly paid employment	2	19
Self-employed		
self-employed (main occupation)	13	64
self-employed (secondary activity)		2
helper (as main occupation)	1	4
paid employment and self-employment, mainly self-employment		1
Unemployed		
job seeker after graduation (waiting allowance)		13
job seeker after full-time employment, with unemployment benefit	19	608
job seeker after voluntary part-time employment, with unemployment benefit	1	33
Social welfare		
welfare benefits	2,609	1,210
financial aid	153	2
Other		
full-time career break		6
exempt from subscription as job seeker	2	117
children entitled to child allowances	19	6
incapacitated from employment (primary)	2	22
incapacitated from employment (invalid)		4
incapacitated from employment (working accident)		2
allocation for disabled persons	5	103
Other (Unknown)	1,128	626
Total	4,869	4,869

Annex IV.2. *Frequency of independent variables by cluster and by sex*

	cluster 1		cluster 2		cluster 3		cluster 4		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Age										
18-25	230	109	201	142	193	251	29	100	653	602
26-40	684	354	457	197	292	343	74	239	1,507	1,133
41-61	171	108	119	83	159	194	51	89	500	474
Family situation										
Single	676	184	504	189	369	272	54	55	1,603	700
Couple	35	29	20	10	18	23	12	22	85	84
Parents	249	240	166	38	175	90	60	272	650	640
Single parent	20	84	20	147	13	317	2	24	55	572
Youngster	13	5	17	8	21	25	7	8	58	46
Other family situation	89	27	47	30	45	59	10	40	191	156
Missing values	3	2	3	0	3	2	9	7	18	11
Nationality of origin										
Sub-Saharan Africa	520	254	298	246	211	325	49	85	1,078	910
Central Europe	56	33	21	15	35	29	8	41	120	118
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	316	215	296	120	305	356	72	240	989	931
Middle-East	84	29	87	16	55	44	18	50	244	139
East Asia	72	23	47	19	17	15	1	1	137	58
Other nationalities	10	9	5	1	4	4	1	0	20	14
Missing values	27	8	23	5	17	15	5	11	72	39
Belgian nationality										
Having Belgian nationality	622	388	409	255	293	457	73	230	1,397	1,330
Not having Belgian nationality	463	183	368	167	351	331	81	198	1,269	879
Length of the asylum procedure = length of the stay in Belgium										
1 year or less	206	107	261	114	232	246	32	140	731	607
More than 1, less than 3 years	332	158	247	151	189	250	52	135	820	694
3 years or more	547	306	269	157	223	292	70	153	1,109	908
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained										
Not participated	690	444	678	395	597	765	143	421	2,108	2,025
Participated	395	127	99	27	47	23	11	7	552	184
Region										
Wallonia	220	117	150	94	152	186	36	105	558	502
Brussels	626	299	454	234	358	464	84	210	1,522	1,207
Flanders	235	148	170	93	130	131	31	110	566	482
Missing values	4	7	3	1	4	7	3	3	14	18
Total	1,085	571	777	422	644	788	154	428	2,660	2,209

Annex IV.3. *Logistic regressions by cluster by sex (odds ratio)*

	Cluster1		Cluster2		Cluster3		Cluster4	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Age (ref. 26-40)								
18-25	0.74**	0.57***	0.95	1.26	1.57***	1.44**	0.92	0.83
41-61	0.64***	0.71*	0.72**	1.04	1.93***	1.37*	1.75**	0.94
Family situation (ref. single)								
Couple	1.13	1.89*	0.69	0.48*	0.73	0.48**	3.75***	3.04***
parents	1.05	2.24***	0.80	0.24***	0.97	0.20***	2.06**	6.03***
single parent	1.02	0.55***	1.32	1.15	0.77	1.71***	0.66	0.38***
youngster	0.60	0.47	0.76	0.64	1.33	1.45	3.83**	2.03
other family situation	1.50*	0.76	0.70*	0.77	0.87	0.82	1.14	2.80***
Nationality of origin (ref Sub-Saharan Africa)								
Central Europe	1.33	0.77	0.53*	0.73	1.35	1.05	0.98	1.79*
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	0.56***	0.57***	1.14	0.58***	1.63***	1.74***	1.15	1.72***
Middle-East	0.64**	0.49**	1.34	0.46**	1.10	1.37	1.35	3.14***
East Asia	1.40	1.16	1.17	1.55	0.55*	0.91	0.18	0.12*
Other nationalities	2.01	2.76	0.69	0.85	0.68	0.63	0.85	0.38
Belgian nationality	1.06	1.18	1.22*	1.04	0.81*	1.01	0.71	0.75*
Length of the asylum procedure = length of the stay in Belgium (ref. 1 year or less)								
More than 1, less than 3 years	1.35*	1.12	0.82	1.11	0.81	0.87	1.77*	0.99
3 years or more	1.83***	1.71***	0.64***	0.93	0.70**	0.78	1.82*	0.80
Participation in the labour force in the quarter before the quarter in which refugee status was obtained	4.42***	6.71***	0.49***	0.70	0.28***	0.26***	0.25***	0.14***
Region								
Flanders	1.26	1.68**	1.10	1.26	0.74*	0.60***	0.81	0.82
Brussels	1.16	1.34*	1.10	1.06	0.79*	0.93	0.88	0.70*
ll	ll	-1593.69	-1078.18	-1549.74	-986.67	-1359.68	-1246.57	-534.19
chi2	chi2	391.72	342.85	98.96	170.88	208.34	361.08	89.61
N	2,646	2,191	2,646	2,191	2,646	2,191	2,646	2,191

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p<0.05$

Note: N does not add up to 2,209 for female and 2,660 for male because of the missing responses for the variables "family situation", "nationality" and "region" (see annex 4.2 for more details)

Synthesis and Conclusion

Johan Wets, Andrea Rea and Barbara Herman

1. Conclusions: main findings

- The goal of the research project at hand was to study the evolution of the socio-economic position of people who applied for asylum in Belgium in the period between 2001 and 2010 and who are still residing in the country. The research compares the integration in the labour market of asylum seekers in procedure to those who have been granted the status of refugees.
- The research aims also to identify the factors that foster and hinder the socio-economic integration of these populations.
- The study is based on a database containing information on 108,856 individuals who appeared in the database in the period 2001-2010 and were still present in the last quarter of 2010. The database couples data from the National Register and the Crossroad Bank for Social Security.
- Different types of statistical analyses (descriptive, multivariate and longitudinal analysis) have been performed on distinct (sub) populations of the database. All our findings using these various analyses are in line with each other, and give complementary information on the socio-economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees.

1.1. A Changing context

- The integration in Belgian society and the careers in the social security system depend on the opportunity structure, shaped by the institutional context, the legislation and socio-economic possibilities and the characteristics of the asylum seekers.
- Asylum seekers are people who apply for the status of refugee as defined by the 1951 Geneva Convention, the European directives (Asylum Procedure Directive, Qualification Directive, and Reception Conditions Directive) and national laws. The procedure for

granting a refugee status is however based on national and supra-national legislation. Some important legal changes have altered the procedure over time and also during the research period.

- During the course of the study, several changes were introduced in the law and in the procedure for acquiring refugee status. These changes affected the research population in several ways:
  - The status of subsidiary protection was introduced into Belgian law in 2006, in the middle of the research period (2000-2010).
  - The changing asylum procedure and the introduction of the status of subsidiary protection have had a direct impact on the research population.
  - The 2007 reform had a direct impact on the procedure and on the possibilities for asylum seekers to enter the labour market. Between the introduction of the new act and the 2009 Decree, the labour market was closed to asylum seekers.
  - Regularization policy in the research period had a direct impact on the asylum seekers studied. As result of the LIFO policy (Last In, First Out), many asylum seekers experiencing a long procedure were regularized.
- Reception of newcomers and integration are considered as two separate processes. Residence in the country and the reception of asylum seekers are federal competences. Fedasil is the federal agency responsible for managing the reception of asylum seekers during their procedure. Integration policies are since the state reforms of 1988 and 1993 organized on regional level (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels). The three linguistic communities (French, German, and Flemish speaking) have responsibilities with respect to integration policies.
- Local authorities, through the Public Social Welfare Centres, are important actors in the reception of asylum seekers. The legislation with regard to the role of PSWC's has evolved during the research period. The 2007 act changed the support from a larger range of measures including financial support to material support.
- The different regional socio-economic situations (e.g. more job opportunities in Flanders than in Wallonia and in Brussels) had an impact on the integration on the labour market of asylum seekers and refugees.

1.2. Descriptive analysis: the studied population

- This description considered all 108,856 individuals who appeared in the database in the period 2001-2010 and were still present in the last quarter of 2010
- The population is quite young: in their twenties and thirties. There is also a large share of young or new born children.
- More than one in three (35%) of the children (aged less than 18 years in 2010) were born in Belgium. The largest share of the studied population originates from Eastern Europe (29%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (29%). Almost 1 out of five of the research population was born in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa).
- In the research population, men (57%) are overrepresented compared to women (43%). This is mainly due to the large number of single males in the studied population.
- Family composition is unknown for a large part of the population (37%). Singles are apart from the residual category 'others', the largest subgroup (13.8%), followed by traditional families composed of married couples (11.32%) with children (11.90%).
- When the population is studied based on the year of application, it becomes clear that despite some slight differences all applicants of a given year (called a cohort) seem to follow the same socio-economic trends.
- The labour market position of the research population of working age changes gradually. The picture is more or less the same for all cohorts, though some catch up faster than others. The share of the research population employed – measured by year of arrival – ranges from 0.63% (after one year) to 37.36% for the 2002 cohort in 2010.
- The low participation in the labour market of the people who arrived after 2007 is most probably due to the legal change, introducing restrictions on the labour market access of asylum seekers
- The largest share of the research population enters the labour market as a blue collar worker (up to 94%). Over time however, the

share of white collar workers rises to 21% of the paid employment positions in 2010.

- The number of former asylum seekers that were employed by a local authority at the end of the research period was extremely limited: only 27 people were employed by a local authority.
- Time apparently plays an important role. The longer (former) asylum seekers are in Belgium, the more likely they are to appear on the labour market (as being employed or as unemployed) and the bigger the chance that they are no longer dependent on social welfare.

1.3. Multivariate analysis: Factors influencing the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees in Belgium

- The analysis considered 71,768 unique persons between the age of 18 and 65.
- For the multivariate analysis, the position in the social security system (employed, unemployed, self-employed, welfare or a residual category others) was the dependent variable. Other variables used in the analysis were gender, age, family situation, place of residence, region of origin, moment of application (or year of arrival in Belgium) and legal status.
- The research population still present in the country in 2010 is heterogeneous: different regions of origin, different family positions, different ages, different legal statuses, different regions of residence and different positions in the social security system.
- A quarter of the studied population is employed at the end of the examined period (24.95%). Another quarter (24.62%) receives welfare benefits. Only a small share can be found in the unemployment statistics (5.75%) and an even smaller proportion of the population is self-employed (1.48%).
- The largest subgroup of the studied population (43.21%) is a group for which there is no specific information in the database. They are labelled 'others' in the database.
- The time spent in the country is an important variable. It correlates with the position in the social security system and defines to which

category the research population belongs. But sometimes in the database information is missing and the real legal status of a few people is unknown at the beginning of their stay.

- Based on a correspondence analysis three 'profiles' or clusters can be found: a labour market cluster, a welfare cluster and an undefined cluster. These clusters are based on gross effects of the variables used (gender, region of residence, region of origin, years in the country and status) on the reference variable social-economic status.
- More men, more people living in Flanders, more residents originating from poor countries (Low Human Development Index) and more people living already for more than 7 years in the country can be found in the labour market cluster.
- The welfare cluster is constituted by people living relatively more in Wallonia, being women, and originating from a Middle Human Development Country. The people in this cluster tend to have lived a shorter time in Belgium than the people in the labour market cluster.
- The undefined cluster contains the residual social security category 'others', the legal categories 'unknown' and 'refused' and the people originating from High Human Development countries.
- To finally find out what variables contribute to the odds of being employed, unemployed or depending on social welfare, logistic regressions have been used. Subsequently, employment, dependence on social welfare and unemployment have been used as dependent variables. We used age, gender, family composition, legal status, region of origin, place of residence and period of arrival as explanatory variables or predictors. The effects of the logistic regression analysis are net effects.
- The *age* group of persons aged between 26 and 40 is – compared to younger and older people – more likely to be found on the labour market, as workers or as unemployed. Dependence on social welfare gives the opposite image: the groups of (former) asylum seekers aged 41 or more and under 26, are more likely to depend on welfare.

- *Gender* has a similar effect. Men and women don't have the same probability of entering the labour market: for every woman, almost two men can be found working or unemployed. Dependence on social welfare is less biased, but women still have a 13% higher chance of depending on welfare.
- *The family situation* of the (former) applicants plays a crucial role. People living in a family situation (as a couple or as parents with children) are more often working than singles and are less often unemployed. Single parents however, have a 17% higher chance of being unemployed than singles, and a 20% smaller chance of being employed. The odds of being dependent on social welfare are for single parents almost twice as high as for singles. People living in a family situation (couples and especially parents with children) rely 57% to 67% less on welfare than singles. For every (former) asylum seeker living in a family situation (partner and children) that relies on social welfare, there are almost 6 single parents who depend on it.
- The most striking finding in relation to the *region of origin* is that citizens from rather poor (mainly African) countries tend to be found more often on the labour market (working or unemployed) than Eastern Europeans. The probability of finding an African employed is almost 2.5 times higher than finding an Eastern European (former) asylum seeker employed.
- A determining factor – as already illustrated in the descriptive part – is the *time people are in the country.* The longer they are in Belgium, the bigger the odds of being on the labour market (employed and certainly unemployed) and the less likely it is to find these people depending on social welfare.
- The *region of residence* plays a less significant role in relation to unemployment: the odds of being unemployed are – compared to Wallonia – 11% higher in Brussels and 8% higher in Flanders. The big regional differences relate to employment and social dependency. The likelihood of finding a person employed in Flanders is almost twice as high as finding a person employed in Wallonia. Compared to the latter, the probability to find a person employed is 7% higher in Brussels. The dependency on welfare is almost a mirror of the employment situation. For every person who

depends on welfare benefits in Flanders, there are 1.6 persons who depend on it in Wallonia. The probability of finding a (former) asylum seeker who depends on welfare benefits in Brussels is 3.5% lower than finding one in Wallonia.

- A final striking but nonetheless obvious finding relates to the *legal status* the (former) asylum applicants have. After applying for asylum, the status of refugee is the 'final' status. Refugees have all civil and working rights. The hypothesis could be formulated that the odds of finding them on the labour market are much higher than the probability of finding a person in another less favourable status. This is to some extent true. The probability of being employed is for people granted subsidiary protection 7% higher than for refugees and the odds of finding a person labelled 'refused' on the labour market is 18% lower. But the residual category 'others' has a 9% higher chance of being found in employment than the refugee category. The other categories "ongoing", "undetermined" and "unknown" only have respectively 7%, 4% and 2% smaller chances of being employed. Refugees tend to be found more often in unemployment statistics than all other legal categories used in the analysis. And the same is true (with the exception of people granted the status of subsidiary protection) for welfare statistics. People under subsidiary protection are 53% more likely to receive welfare benefits than refugees. All other categories are less inclined to depend on social welfare ranging from 4% less for the "undetermined" to 46% less for the residual category "others".

1.4. Longitudinal analysis: Typology of refugees' socio-economic careers

- For the longitudinal analysis we focused only on the integration of recognized refugees into the labour market in Belgium. The analysis considered 4,869 unique persons who obtained refugee status between 2003 and 2006. The data provide a quarterly employment history calendar with a four-year observation period. The characteristics of the selected population (n=4869) differ slightly from those of all refugees who obtained their status between 2001 and 2010 (n=16524) for most of the variables (sex, gender, age, family situation, region). The main difference relates to the nationality of

origin. The selected population contains – compared to all recognized refugees in the research – an over-representation of nationalities from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and an under-representation of refugees from the Middle East.

- The careers are distinguished by five socio-economic statuses (employed, unemployed, self-employed, social welfare and other) over a period of four years (sixteen quarters). At the moment of recognition, 57% of all refugees were in the social welfare category. This proportion decreased until the end of the follow-up period in favour of people who were active on the labour market. While at the moment of recognition of their status 19% were active (employed and unemployed), this was the case for 55% four years later. *the labour market integration improves over time*. Many refugees could be found in the heterogeneous "other" status, showing that refugees also tended to spend time in situations other than employment, unemployment, or social welfare. This "other" category (probably mainly composed of housewives or househusbands) is quite stable over time.

- The production of a *typology of refugees' socio-economic careers* is based on a sequence analysis with optimal matching and cluster analysis as methodological tools. Taking the period before and after obtaining refugee status into account, we had a typology of four different socio-economic integration careers: active career (cluster 1); gradually becoming active career (cluster 2); social welfare career (cluster 3); and an "other" career (cluster 4).

- The first type is characterized almost solely by *active careers*, i.e. employees, self-employed or unemployed. This cluster contains 34% of the studied refugee population and is the largest of the four. This profile is also characterized by an increase over time in the proportion of unemployed. On average over the last four quarters, 12% of people who had this type of career were unemployed. Reliance on welfare is almost entirely absent from their career.

- The second type is characterized by an *active process of integration into the labour market* after obtaining refugee status, which seems to be a catalyst for employment. People of this type began their careers primarily with social welfare but as time went on, the

proportion of those who worked increased. While at the beginning of their careers 76% received social welfare and 10% were active workers, four years later the proportion of social welfare recipients was only 5%, and 90% were active workers. This profile is also characterized by an increase in the proportion of unemployed. This cluster contains 29% of the population.

- The third type, *social welfare career*, covers people who were not active in the labour market, either before or after obtaining refugee status, and are characterized by an almost complete dependency on social welfare. On average, the refugees in this cluster were welfare dependent during 89% of their observed careers. This type of career is experienced by 25% of the selected population.
- The fourth type of career is a kind of residual category, *other career*, and includes those refugees who were neither active in the labour market nor dependent on social welfare. This type is characterized by a quasi-unique "other" status. On average, the refugees in this cluster had this status for 82% of their careers. Some people may have received welfare benefits during parts of their careers.
- The differentiation between these careers is strongly influenced by *individual characteristics* and the Belgian institutional context. First of all, women are more likely than men to find themselves in an inactive labour market career (clusters 3 and 4). This outcome also corresponds to the difference in activity rates between men and women on the labour market for Belgians and other foreigners. Men on the other hand are more likely than women to have an active career (cluster 1) and experience gradual integration into the labour market (cluster 2). Age also has an impact on active careers (cluster 1) and social welfare (cluster 3): the probability of having an active career increased until a certain age and then decreased until retirement (a curvilinear relationship); similarly the probability of a social welfare career decreased with age and increased until retirement.
- The *family status* of women strongly influenced their type of career, which is mainly due to the fact that there were very few single men with children among the studied refugees. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that a single woman was much less likely to have a fully active career on the labour market than a woman in a

couple. Once refugee status had been recognized, single women were more likely to find a job or to experience progressive integration into the labour market: the stabilization of their legal status facilitated their active integration. Single women with children occupy the worst position. They are more likely to receive welfare throughout their careers than women in couples with or without children and single women without children.

- Concerning *national origin*, refugees from Sub-Saharan countries had a greater likelihood of having an active career compared to refugees from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and from the Middle East, as well as having a career of progressive insertion into the labour market compared to refugees from Central Europe.
- The results for the *naturalization* during the observed career are more divided. On the one hand, having the Belgian nationality is not significantly related to an active career. For these refugees active on the labour market, naturalization will not offer additional opportunities as other factors such as having worked during the asylum procedure explain the fact of having this type of career. On the other hand, the acquisition of the Belgian citizenship is an important factor related to the other types of career and interacts with gender: having Belgian nationality is positively related to a career of progressive insertion into the labour market for men but is negatively related to a social income career for men and an "other" career for women. To explain these results, obtaining the Belgian nationality could promote progressive integration into the labour market and decrease the chances of having an inactive career as naturalization would be both a source of stability to employers and would remove some of the barriers to the labour market.
- The *duration of the asylum procedure*, which as outlined in this chapter is equivalent to the time spent in Belgium in our analysis, affects the type of career that refugees experienced. Indeed, a long time spent in Belgium increased the likelihood of having an active career (cluster 1) compared to relatively short stay. Conversely, a brief stay in Belgium increased the chances of having a gradually becoming active career (cluster 2) and a social welfare career (cluster 3) compared to a longer stay. The results highlighted the critical importance of having worked during the asylum proce-

dure to explain the careers of refugees. In particular, the results demonstrated that having worked during the asylum procedure had a positive impact on an active career (cluster 1) whereas this relationship was reversed for the other three clusters. Further analysis showed that there is a relationship between working during the asylum procedure and the duration of the procedure. Whereas the duration of the asylum procedure was equivalent to the number of years spent in Belgium for the selected population, we interpret this result as follows: the longer a person has lived in Belgium, the higher are his/her chances of finding a job during the asylum procedure and the more likely he/she was to have an active career in the labour market after being granted refugee status.

- *The context* also influences the categorization of recognized refugees' careers. The economic environment in Flanders, with a lower unemployment rate than the other two regions, offers employment opportunities, improving recognized refugees' chances on the labour market. Without having tangible evidence in this research, we can also assume that policies such as *inburgering* (civic integration of immigrants) in Flanders contribute on the one hand to an improvement in language skills through language courses; and on the other hand, through monitoring, to the promotion of contacts with Belgian and Flemish institutions and the development of useful skills in the job search. But the impact of the context is especially important for women. This confirms the very sensitive situation of female refugees and asylum seekers who face difficulties finding a place on the labour market.
- Even though refugees still face major difficulties after obtaining their status (finding decent housing, finding a job, following vocational training, learning languages), *they slowly enter the labour market*. After four years, the employment rate of refugees rises sharply. Specific groups however, like single mothers, remain dependent on social welfare. Over time, the research population acquires better qualifications such as better language proficiency, a better knowledge of the institutional setting and they are more able to mobilize their (new) social networks.

2. Main conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Migration is a global phenomenon and many countries are struggling to deal with it. One of the gateways to the EU is the asylum procedure, based on the 1951 convention. Although asylum and immigration have been moved under the Amsterdam Treaty from the "third pillar" – where unanimous decisions by all member states through an intergovernmental decision – making process are required – to the "first pillar" where the EU institutions play a larger role, the rules, regulations and practices differ all over Europe. The labour market situation is not alike in the different EU countries and although some counties have similar social security regimes, the daily practice differs among the distinct EU countries. Some member states attract relatively more economic migrants; some attract fewer economic migrants and relative more asylum seekers, such as Belgium.

The goal of this research project was to study the evolution of the socio-economic position of people who applied for asylum in Belgium in the period between 2001 and 2010 and who were still residing in the country at the end of the research period. The study compares the integration in the labour market of asylum seekers in procedure to those who have been granted the status of refugees and aims at identifying factors that foster and hinder the socio-economic integration of these populations.

In summary, the analysis of the 'careers' of asylum seekers and refugees towards work in Belgium shows the same wide variation in the labour market position of the different groups of immigrants that can be witnessed throughout Europe and by extension across the OECD (OECD 2009). All over Europe, immigrants' labour market outcomes tend to lag behind those of the native-born and in Belgium even farther than in other OECD countries. No single aspect seems to be responsible: many factors intervene in the labour market integration process and there is no single policy measure that can be, by itself, a key for success. This study however reveals some key factors in the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees.

Time plays a crucial role and greatly contributes to the changing socio-economic position of the new immigrants. The different types of statistical analysis (descriptive, multivariate and longitudinal analysis) that

have been used to analyze the distinct (sub) populations of the database are all in line with each other and with other research such as the study carried out by Caritas International (2014) on a sample of refugees in Belgium. The longer a person is present in the country, the more likely that person is to find a job and cease dependence on social welfare. More 'time' implies that the asylum seekers (and refugees) could adapt themselves better to the new environment, to the circumstances. Time is needed to learn more about the country and the labour market. Time implies the possibility that refugee status or a status of subsidiary protection has been granted, which gives a sense of security and more social rights. Time means the possibility to learn the local language and to create and develop a social network.

The fact of *having a job soon*, of being present on the labour market in an early stage apparently stimulates further labour market participation.

After a decade of being present in the country, a steadily growing share of the research population finds a job and an increasing number of people are no longer dependent on social welfare, but all new migrants *remain extremely vulnerable*. Research suggests that they still face difficulties finding decent housing, finding a job, finding a job matching their qualifications, following vocational training, learning languages, recognition of their diploma… (OECD 2009).

Not all groups however face the same problems. *Gender and the family situation* are factor to be taken into account. People living in a family situation are apparently slightly better off than e.g. singles, but single parent families (mainly headed by women) are definitely much worse off. They are more dependent on welfare benefits than other groups and have more difficulties in finding their way to the labour market.

A surprising finding was the fact that asylum seekers and refugees from poor, *African countries* have a better chance of finding a job. It is hard to assess why they have higher probability than e.g. former residents from the Balkans or Central Asia. Some hypotheses can be formulated. Language e.g. can play a role. Many Africans speak French (or English) and are in an advantageous situation having probably better communication skills. The fact that there is already a long standing community of Africans in Belgium may also contribute to an explanation. The social network may be beneficial when looking for a job. One should however not overrate its significance. The unemployment rate

of the African community in Belgium is in general quite high. The odds calculated above give no information on the quality of the job, nor on the level of employment. It might be possible that many Africans, as is the case in France (Simon and Steichen 2014) are overqualified.

Another striking observation is the fact that the *legal status* of the former asylum seekers is not more differentiating. Contrary to what can be expected, people who were recognized as refugees didn't have much better labour market chances than the other statuses in the research population. Some researches argue that asylum seekers are more willing to work for 3D Jobs (Dirty, Dangerous, and Demeaning). When asylum seekers are granted refugee status, they start looking for a job in line with their qualifications. A similar process could be observed in the study *Before and Afte*r (Marx et al. 2008) after undocumented migrants obtained a regularization of their residence permit.

The existing *regional differences* between Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia are mirrored in the research population, but the differences within the research population are bigger than the differences in the general population.

The researched population is on a long and winding road to the labour market. The (former) asylum seekers studied steadily integrate into the labour market. The picture that can be drawn is a picture of a slow but steady integration dynamic. The population is quite heterogeneous; as much in characteristics as in careers. Nevertheless, it is possible – based on the observations made above and the literature used in this project – to make some recommendations that can contribute to further policy development:

1. The impact of *age and gender* on labour market chances in the research population seems to be similar to the impact of age and gender in the whole population.

   > *As a consequence, it seems reasonable that this issue is addressed through an inclusive policy strengthened by accompanying measures. The extremely vulnerable position of (female) single parents justifies however also a targeted approach. Single parents can be a priority target group for the federal, regional and local reception and integration policies. Inactive immigrant mothers can be activated in conjunction with childcare.*

2. *Time* plays an important role. The longer a (former) asylum seeker is in the country, the better are the chances of finding a place on the labour market and the bigger the odds of not relying on social welfare anymore. People adapt to the country, they get to know the possibilities, they learn rights and regulations etc.

   Time cannot be influenced, but the adaptation process can. A rapid integration into the labour market seems extremely important. The question remains however how much should be invested in integration policies during an asylum procedure for people who most probably will be refused a longer stay in the country.

3. A rapid integration into the labour market seems advantageous. To increase employment integration of refugees, people must have access to work during the asylum procedure. Facilitating this requires the development of a series of adapted policies on different levels, in different fields. Language proficiency can be attributed a key role. Some suggestions made in the OECD study *The Labour Market Integration of Immigrants and their* children (2009) can be defended on the basis of the explicit and implicit findings of this study.

   Link language training with early work experience. Social partners and employers can be involved in this process.

   Target wage subsidy schemes to immigrants and promote immigrant employment in the public service. Make sure that there is a follow up to avoid an inflow in unemployment schemes after the end of subsidized employment.

   Promote temporary employment and temporary agency work as a stepping-stone to more stable employment for immigrants

4. Another observation is that there are noticeable *regional differences*. The reception policies as well as the labour market policy and labour market conditions vary.

   Even though we are not able to assess the impact of regional integration policies, there is a necessity to develop accompanying policies during the procedure and moreover after the refugee status has been granted, to assist people in their integration career.

   A suggestion might be that – despite the existing initiatives – more be invested in the social integration of people who received their

refugee status (follow up, career counselling) as requested by some NGO's. Refugees must be a specific and priority target group in integration policies, vocational training and employment supporting activities.

5. An important blind spot in the research is the fact that *no data on the level of education or professional experience* was at hand. The level of education is an important variable in relation to the chances of entering the labour market. The research had no data on this issue, but it is clear that even for those people holding a degree, entrance to the labour market is all too often hampered by the lack of recognition.

   The development and/or use of a standardized instrument to assess the qualifications and skills of new migrants would beneficial for the development of a rapid labour market integration policy.

   Enhance transparency regarding the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications and skills. A systematic recognition of the diploma obtained in the country of origin is a particularly important for refugees as pointed out by many NGO's (Caritas International 2014). This allows making better use of the skills of migrants and leads thereby to a win-win situation.

   Enhance accreditation of prior learning

6. It is impossible to know – using administrative databases – to what extent new migrants are overqualified, carrying out 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous, and demeaning).

   Further qualitative research is needed to have a better idea of why certain groups are more inclined to enter the labour market.

7. Regarding the data collection on asylum seekers: the National Register could improve the recording of data.

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