

Needs and challenges of refugees and migrants in northwest Italy

This snapshot offers an analysis of the needs and challenges of refugees and migrants in northern Italy (Piedmont and Liguria regions). It is based on 51 interviews conducted in five different locations between January and February 2021. The first section of the report covers both refugees and migrants in transit and those aiming at settling in Italy, while the second part focuses on the specific needs of the latter. This snapshot aims to contribute towards a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses on the ground, as well as advocacy efforts related to the situation of refugees and migrants in Italy.

Key findings and recommendations

- Most respondents received basic assistance but reported unmet needs particularly in relation to legal assistance and job-seeking support.
- Provision of reliable and useful information about services, rights and obligations in Italy, which is essential for refugees and migrants to be able to take an active role in their migration path, has been reported as a gap.
- For respondents who intend to settle in Italy, the main challenges for socio-economic integration are access to decent work and language barriers.
- Assistance for settlement and integration reported by respondents is quite commonly received, however it does not always match most reported challenges/needs.
- In the light of above key findings, local authorities, NGOs and other civil society organizations should invest in further strengthening provision of information and legal assistance, particularly on rights and obligations for legal stay in Italy and access to decent work.

Profiles

This analysis draws from interviews with 45 men and 6 women conducted face-to-face in the regions of Piedmont and Liguria in the north-west of Italy between 18 January 2021 and 25 February 2021. The respondents were of various nationalities, 12 from Pakistan, 8 from Somalia, 6 from Afghanistan, 5 from Nigeria, 3 each from Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, and Bangladesh, 2 each from Iraq and Algeria and 4 from other African countries. All

respondents had arrived in the town of interview within the past 2 years: 27 arrived 1-2 years ago and 24 less than 12 months before the date of the interview.

Figure 1 shows the locations where these interviews were conducted while Figure 2 demonstrates the migration status of respondents at the time of interview. The respondents were recruited through NGOs from whom they were receiving support, which is likely to have influenced findings on number of respondents having received assistance.

Figure 1. Place of interview

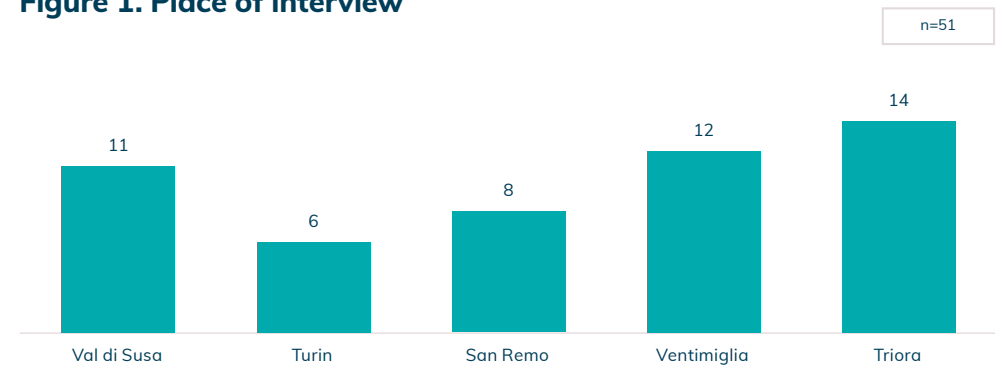
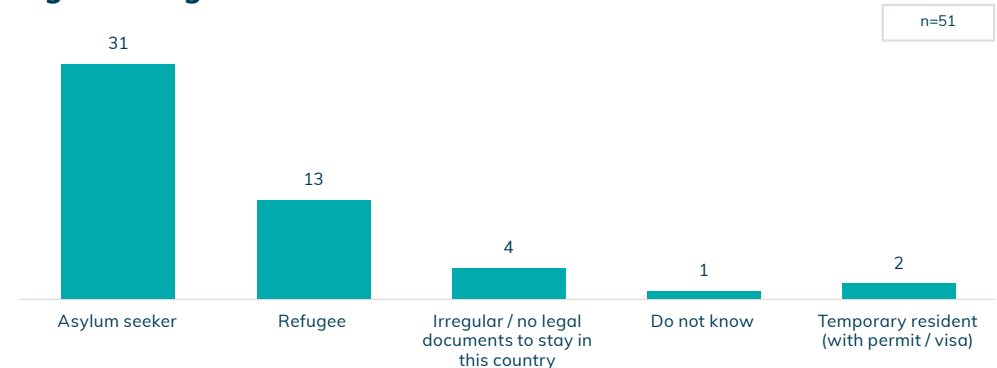


Figure 2. Migration status

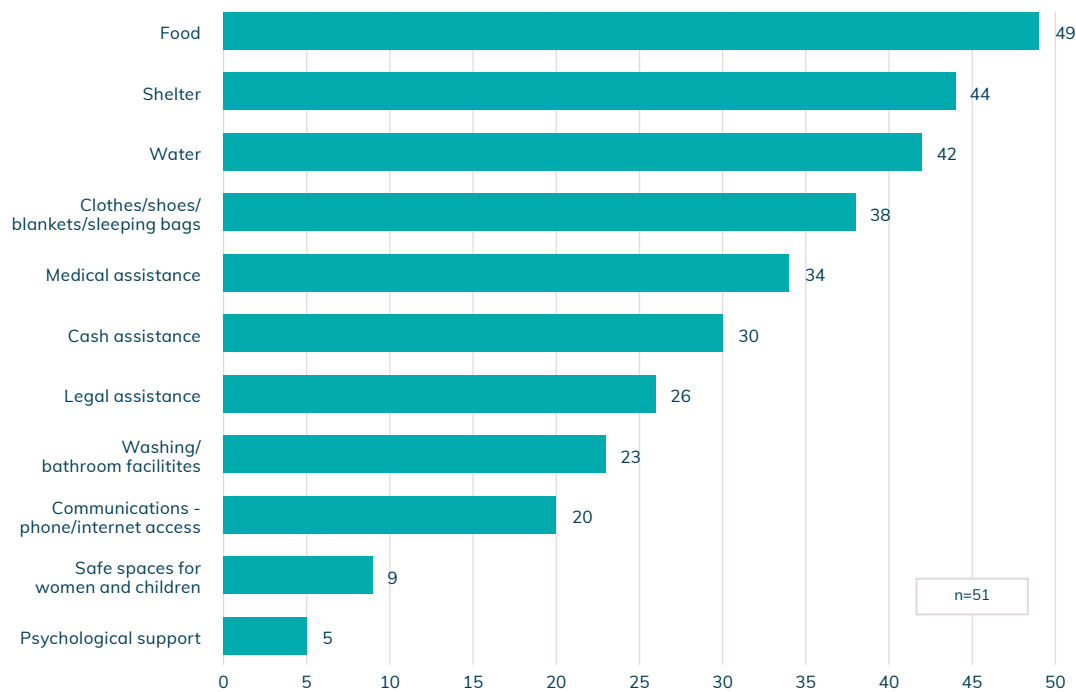


Finally, 39 responded that Italy is the end of their journey, 9 said that they have not reached their destination and 3 did not know. The second part of this snapshot focuses on the needs of the group who expect to stay in the country.

Most respondents received basic assistance, but legal assistance and job-seeking support remain a gap

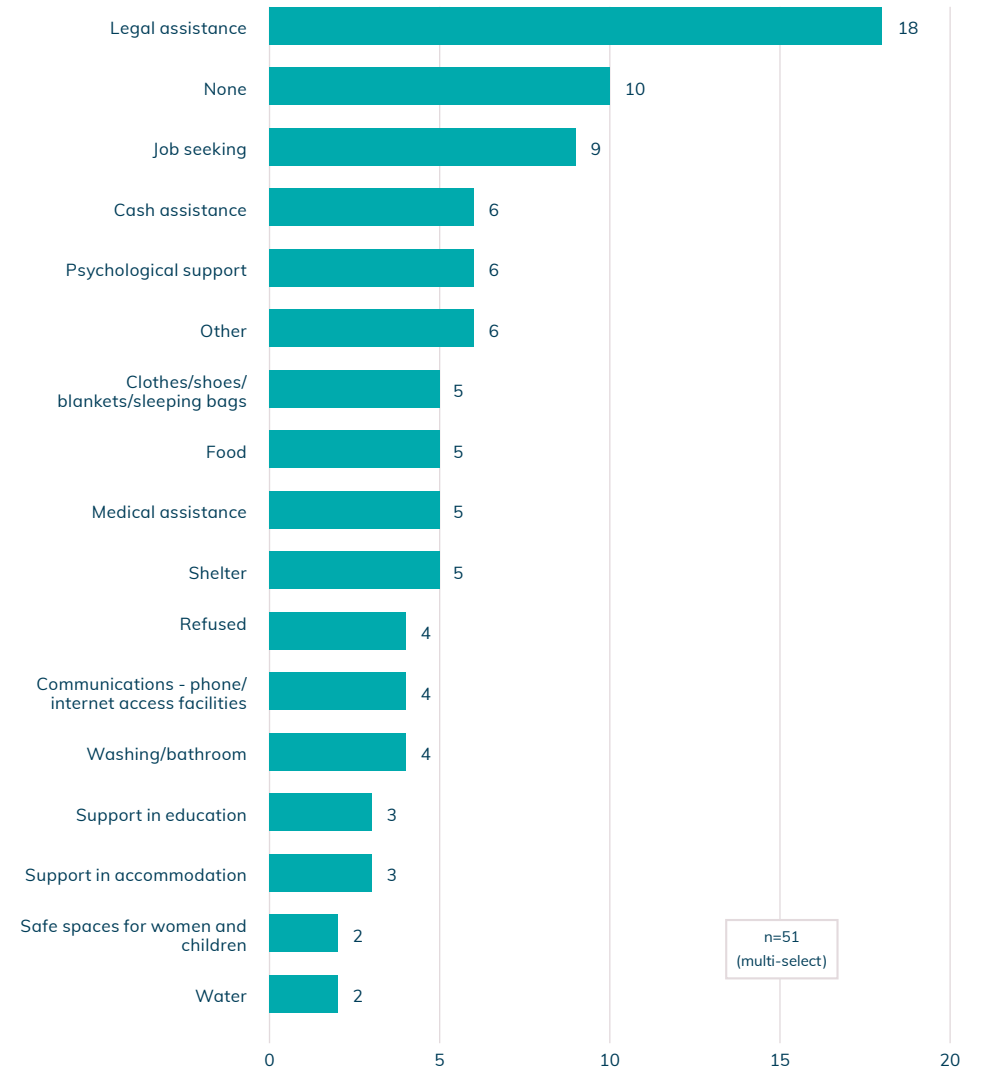
Most respondents received basic assistance (respondents were recruited via NGOs). As shown in Figure 3, the most common assistance received consist of basic services, such as food, shelter, water and clothing.

Figure 3. What type of assistance did you receive?



When asked about unmet needs, one third of respondents mentioned legal assistance, followed by job-seeking support. 10 people said they did not require any additional support.

Figure 4. Are there forms of assistance you still need in Italy?¹



The reported unmet needs in the area of legal assistance could also be linked to a lack of information about processes for access to protection and/or other permits to stay in Italy at arrival. As shown in Figure 5, 49% (n=25) of respondents reported that they did

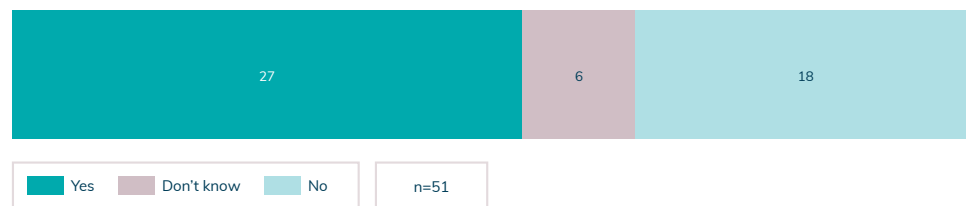
¹ 33 respondents mentioned other: these responses were recategorized as job seeking (9), legal assistance (3), education (3) and nothing (10).

not receive information about legal processes such as obtaining visa or asylum in Italy at arrival and 53% (n=27) stated that they would be interested in more information about such processes (see Figure 6)

Figure 5. When you arrived, did you receive information about the legal process for obtaining a visa or asylum in Italy?



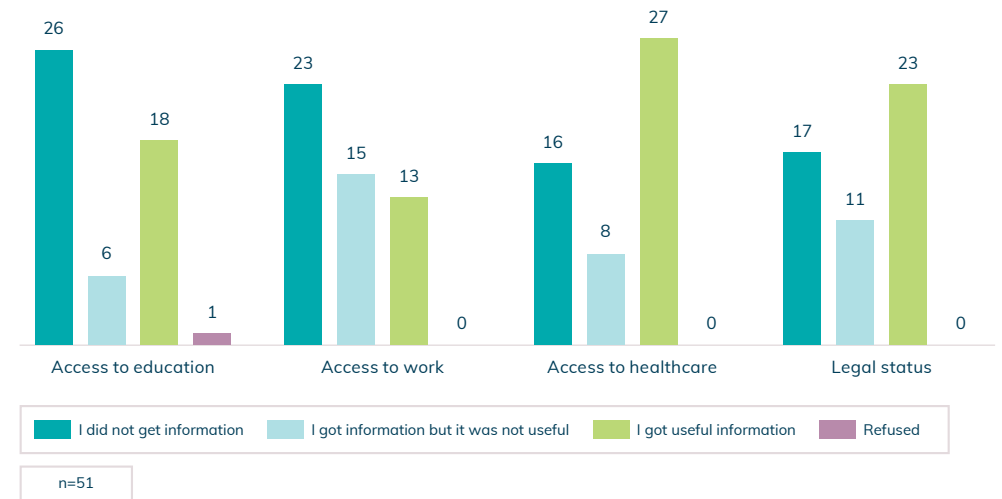
Figure 6. Would you be interested in more information about legal status, your rights, and the process for applying for a status in Italy?



Reliable and useful information about services, rights and obligations

Access to reliable and useful information is a necessary complement to direct assistance as it allows refugees and migrants to better understand their environment, including their rights and obligations, and become actors in their migration path in Italy. As shown in Figure 7, respondents reported gaps in information received. 34 people responded that they did not receive any information on access to education or that the information was not useful, 75% (n=38) responded the same about access to work, 47% (n=24) about healthcare and 55% (n=28) about legal status. Among respondents who received information, several reported concerns about the usefulness of the information received, particularly about access to work and legal status, mirroring the result of the previous section about assistance needs.

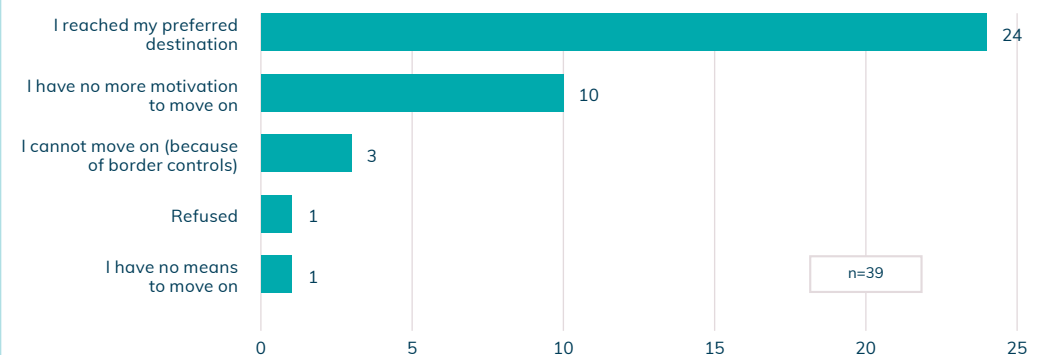
Figure 7. What types of information did you receive in Italy?



Focus on respondents planning to settle in Italy

The rest of this snapshot will focus on the specific situation, needs and challenges of respondents who had Italy as their destination (n=24) or decided to remain there for other reasons, like lacking motivation to try and reach their initial intended destination (n=10), being blocked in Italy because of difficulties in crossing the border (n=3) or lacking the financial means needed to continue the journey.

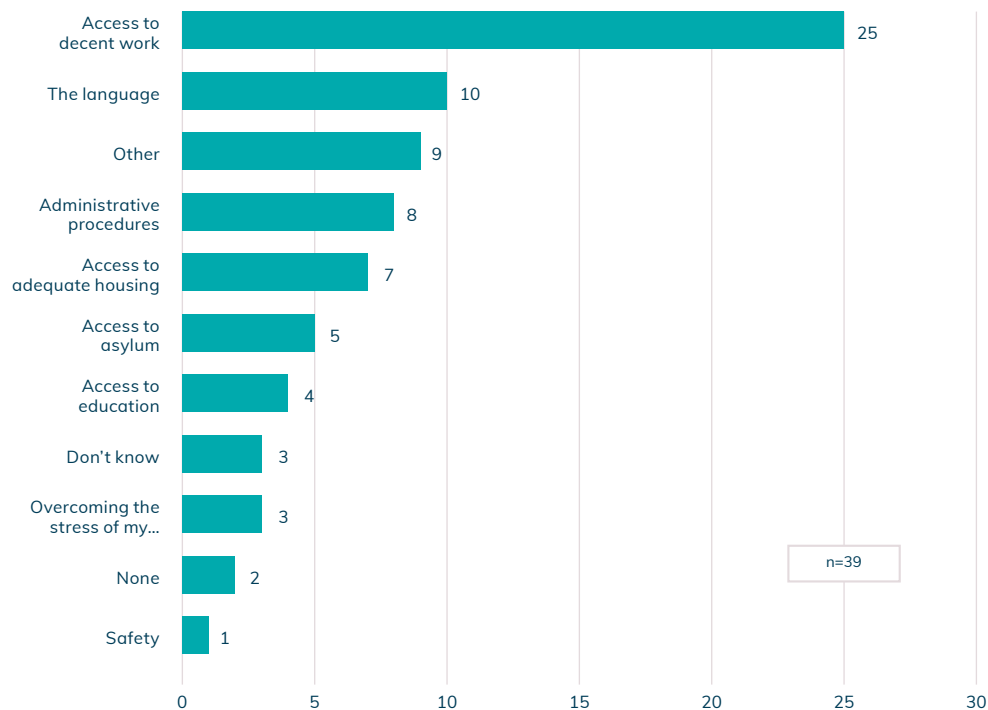
Figure 8. Why is this the end of your journey?



Access to decent work and languages barriers are the main challenges to socio-economic integration

When asked about the main challenges they are facing in their socio-economic integration in the country, most respondents mentioned access to decent work and language barriers.

Figure 9. What are the major challenges in Italy?



Assistance for integration received by respondents only partially responds to challenges

Assistance for settlement and integration received by respondents is significant, however it only partially matches most reported challenges. A majority of respondents had received support in accessing Italian health services, livelihood support and assistance with administrative processes. About half of the respondents receive language support and assistance with access to education, as shown in Figure 10. Nonetheless, needs for support with administrative processes remains relatively high (reported by 16 respondents, 40%). In addition, respondents also mentioned support for employment or access to education (31%, n=12) as areas where further support is required, while 25% (n=10) also mentioned a need for support with longer-term housing or language (Figure 11).

Figure 10. What assistance have you received for free to support your settlement and integration?

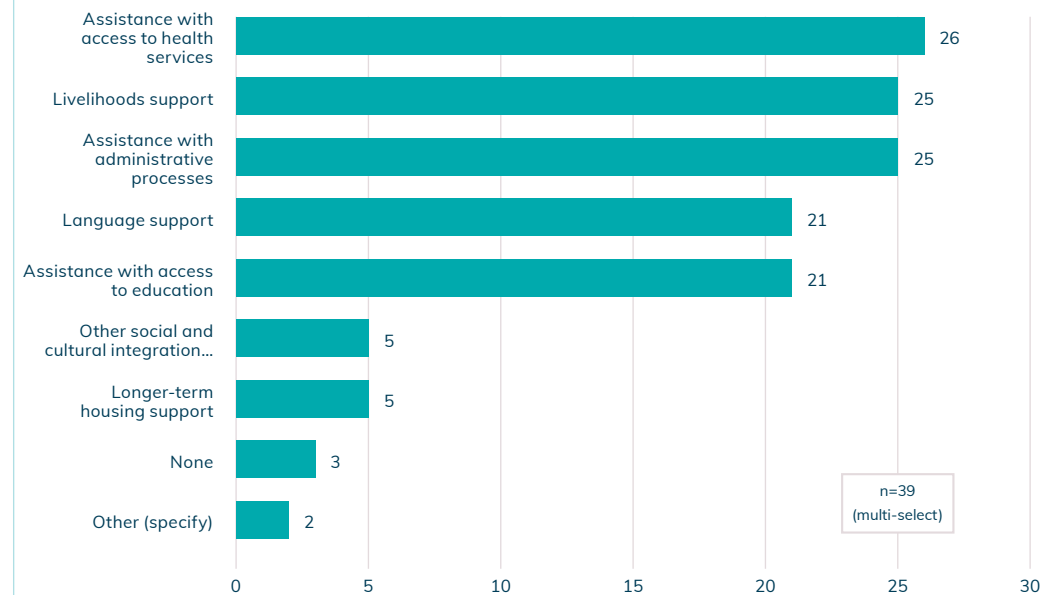
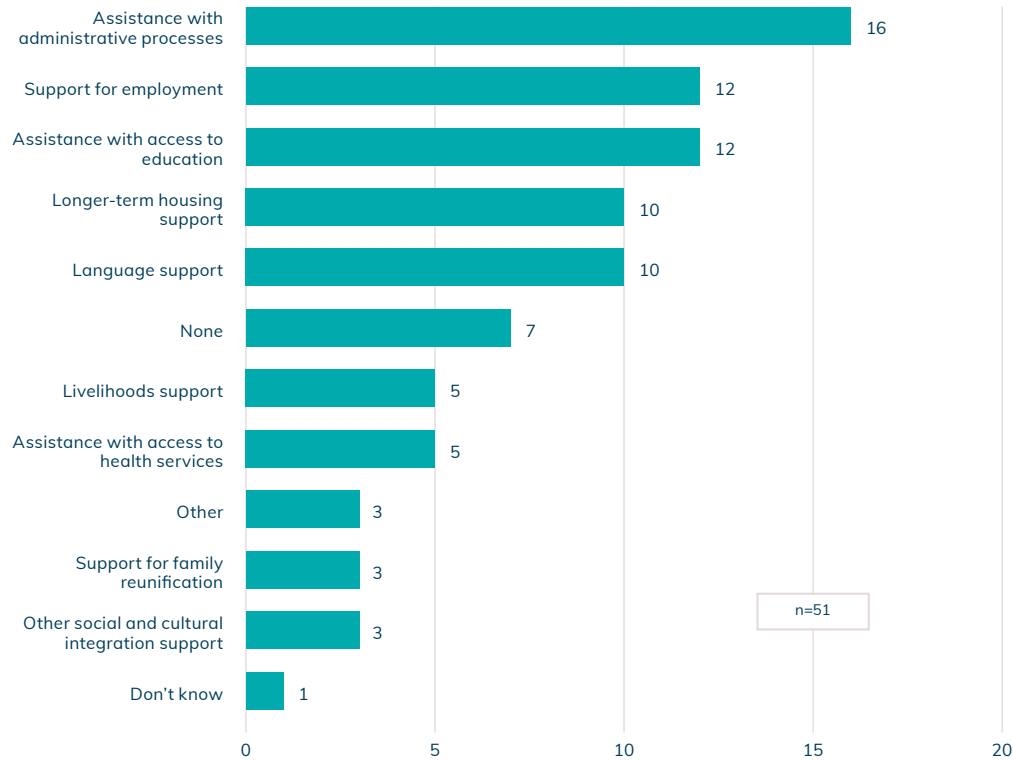


Figure 11. What further assistance are you in need of to support your settlement and integration?



4Mi

The [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative \(4Mi\)](#) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements.

This snapshot is based on a customized survey targeting refugees and migrants in primarily destination countries, and focusing on experiences in the country of interview, which was conducted in Italy in early 2021. Findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make inferences about the total population of refugees and migrants, as the sample is not representative. For more information on 4Mi tools, data and analysis, go to: www.mixedmigration.org/4mi