Survey on Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Between resilience and vulnerability

A STUDY DONE BY THE POLITICAL SCIENCE INTITUTE AT USJ
AND FUNDED BY UNHCR

CAROLE ALSHARABATI (carole.alsharabati@usj.edu.lb)
JIHAD NAMMOUR (jihad.nammour@usj.edu.lb)

The methodology used and the results obtained are the sole responsibilty of the authors and do not engage the organizations that supported this sudy. (V5.0)

Funded by RDPP LEBANON JORDAN IRAQ

@ISPLiban @USJLiban

Final February 27, 2017

Syrian refugees are becoming increasingly vulnerable while worries are rising among Lebanese decision-makers.

Dynamics in relationships between Syrian refugees and host communities are fluctuating as the Syrian crisis continues.

The Lebanese Government has taken several measures on Lebanon's borders to control the movement of Syrian nationals, in efforts to manage the influx of Syrians into the country.

In order to have a legal status, the following is needed: registration fee of $200 (recently removed), sponsor, rent contract, and commitment not to work. Also, UNHCR was asked to stop registration.

Two suveys were done:
- One in 2015
- One in 2016

To assess, compare, analyze and understand.

Objectives

- Continue to measure perception of Syrian refugees on safety and security, access to services, and analyze the causes behind those perceptions.
- Continue to measure perception of the Lebanese community with regards to Syrians, access to services, and perceived threats to local communities.
- Up to date information about tension levels in the country.
- Comparison of indicators between 2015 and 2016 to evaluate change over time.
- Involve students and professors in research related to Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Special Thanks

The Political Science Institute would like to thank:

- OURSE (Observatory of the socio-economic reality in USJ) surveyors, Jacqueline Harfouche, and Chohig Kasparian for their support and expertise.
- USJ Ethics Committee and Research Council for their support.
- Surveyors among USJ students, social workers, and Syrian students:

  Mario Abd El Ahad, Jassem Alnaemat, Mohammad Belal Alkheja, Dania Bek, Youmna Cham, Khatchig Ghosn, Jomana Khamousia, Nadine Kichly, Sanaa Kordi, Katina Mousaoumay, Tonia Moussaoumay, Rasha Salah, Mousa Shammas, Inès Zaki.
- General Elie Darazi for helping our teams access all areas in Lebanon.
- UNHCR for funding this study via RDPP.

Methodology and Timeframe

Syrian Refugees

- 1200 questionnaire filled in 120 villages sampled according to UNHCR data; sampling in every village according to type of Syrian residence, knocking on doors with random selection in every household.

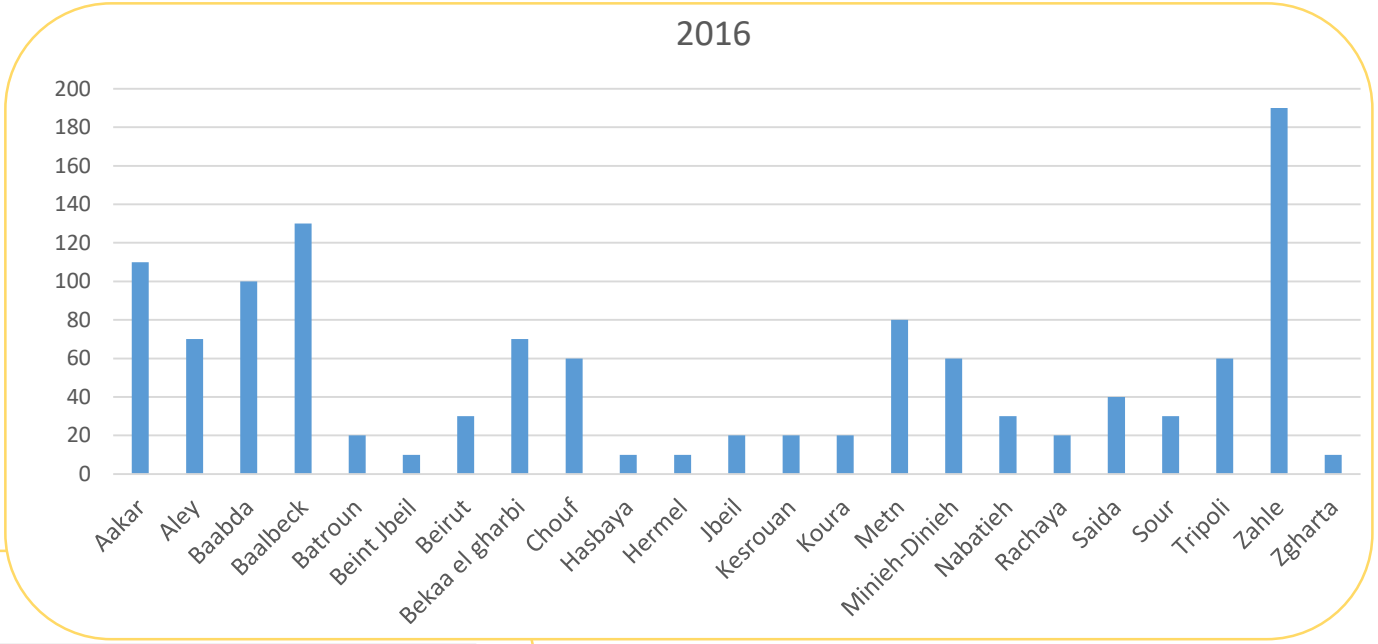
Lebanese Community

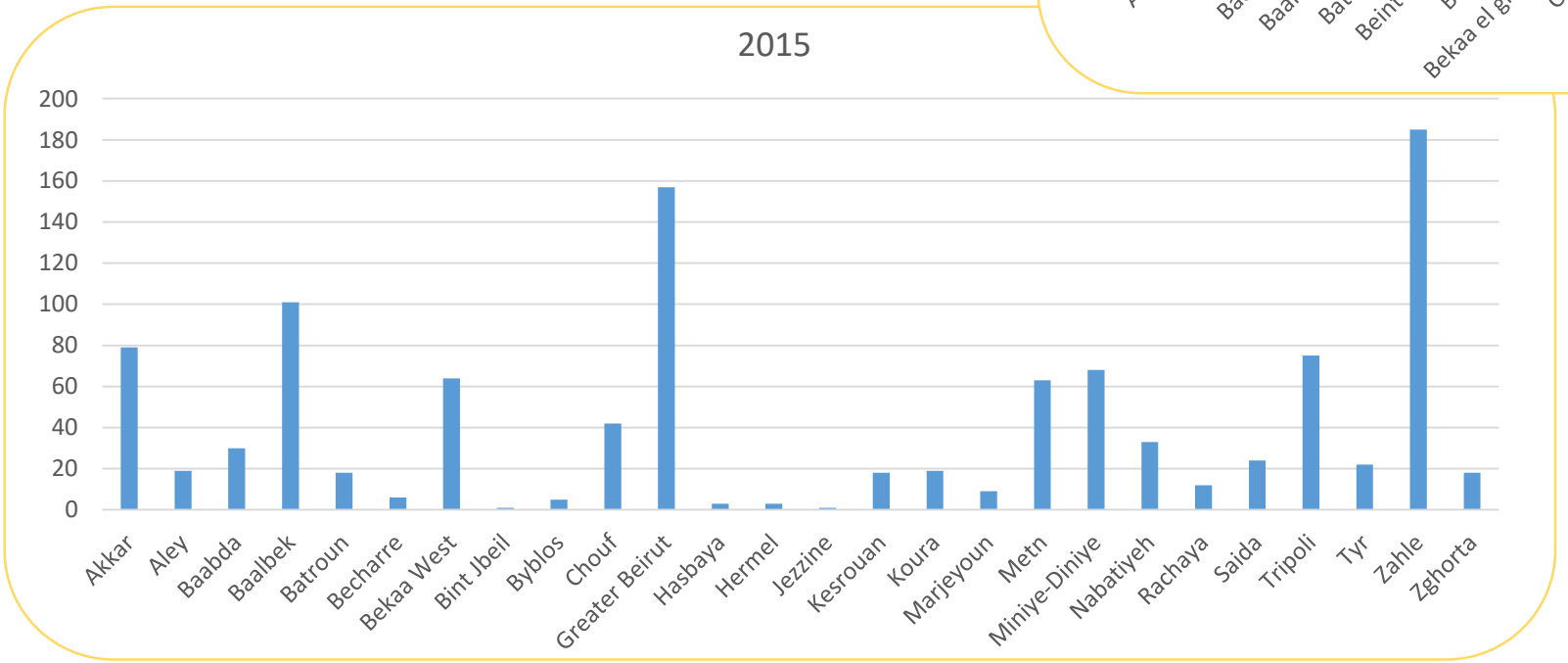
- 600 questionnaire filled in the same villages and same neighborhood; knocking on doors with random selection in every household.

1st Survey: June 18-27 2015
2nd Survey: August 2-17 2016

Sampling

Regional distribution proportional to UNHCR refugee distribution





Syrian Refugee Questionnaire

Gender/Age/Region of origin/Occupation/etc.

Registration with UNHCR/General Security

Safety level

Feelings towards authorities (Police, GS, Army, Municipality)

Exposure to threat/insult/assault /blackmailing + source + response

Checkpoints/ Curfews/Random checks and patrols

Problems accessing services (Health, Education, Electricity, etc.)

Feelings towards UNHCR, NGOS

Feelings towards Lebanese

Subject to Raid/Search/ Arrest/Eviction/ etc.

Movement restriction

Feeling welcomed?

Similarities between the 2 cultures

Friendships in Lebanon

Return to Syria

Lebanese Questionnaire

Gender/Age/Region of origin/Occupation/etc.

Safety level

Willingness to hire a Syrian refugee

Willingness to have Syrian refugees in neighborhood

Exposure to threat/ insult/assault/back mailing + source + response

Checkpoints/ Curfews/Random checks and patrols

Interaction with Syrian refuges

Willingness to send kids to school with Syrian refugees

Willingness to marry Syrian refugee

Syrian impact on public services

Positive/Negative impact from syrian refugees

Feelings towards Syrians: hatred/fear/respect/ compassion

Similarities between the 2 cultures?

Syrian friendships

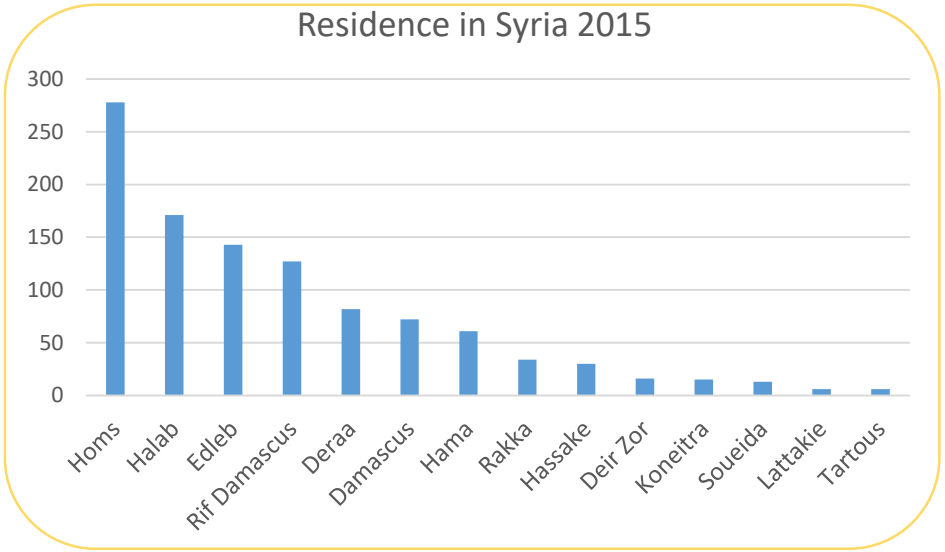
Media impact on public opinion

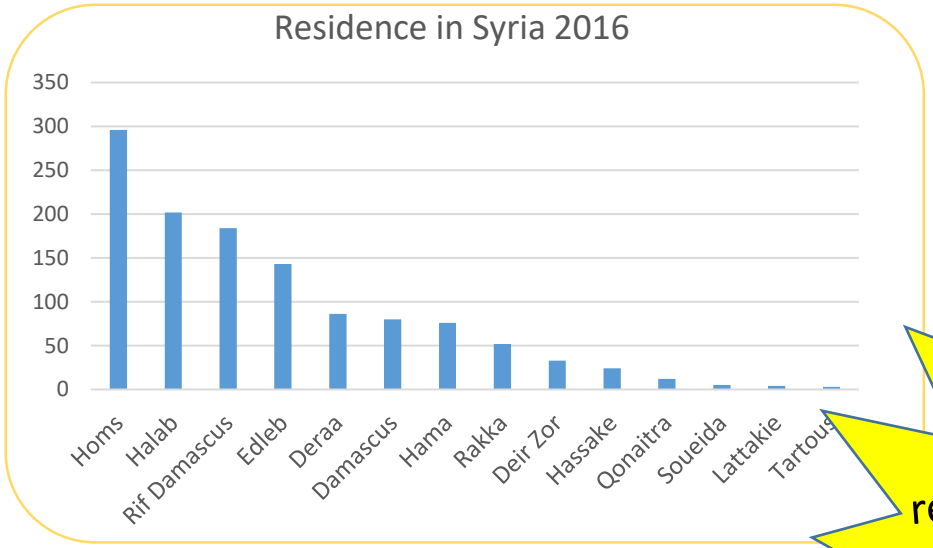
Results

1-Syrian Perception

Economic Resilience?

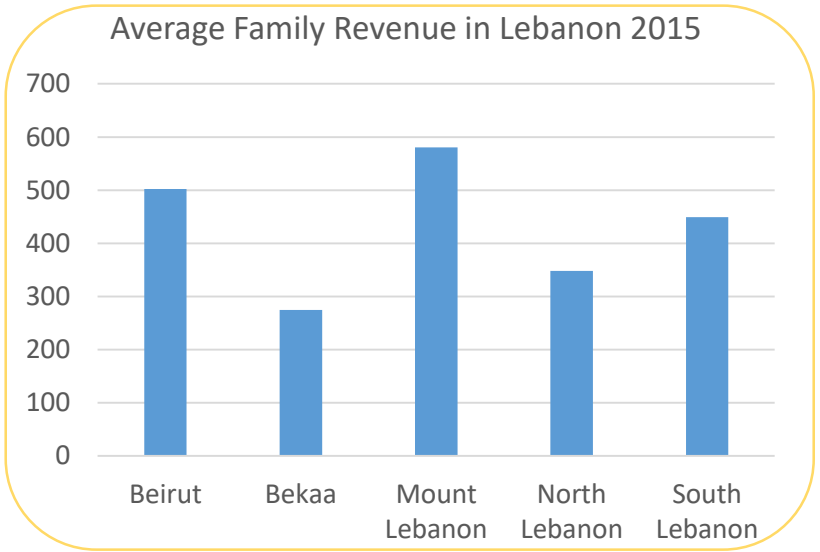
Sample Characteristics

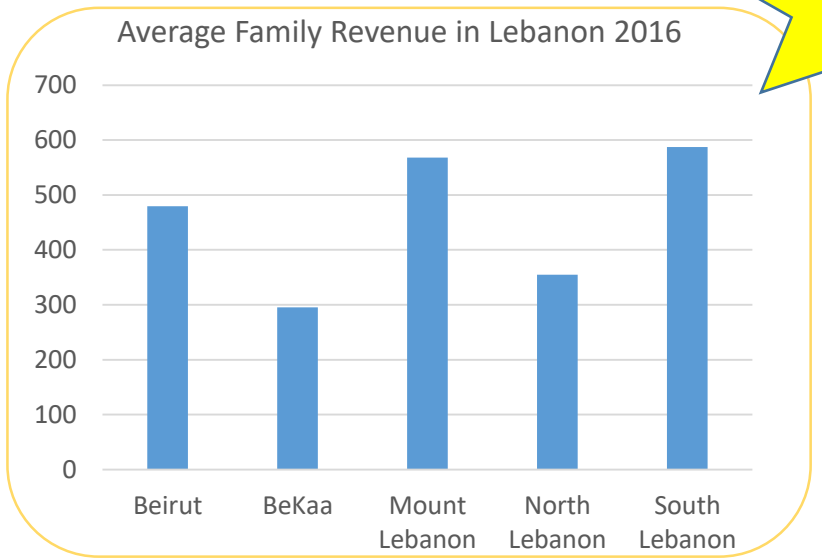




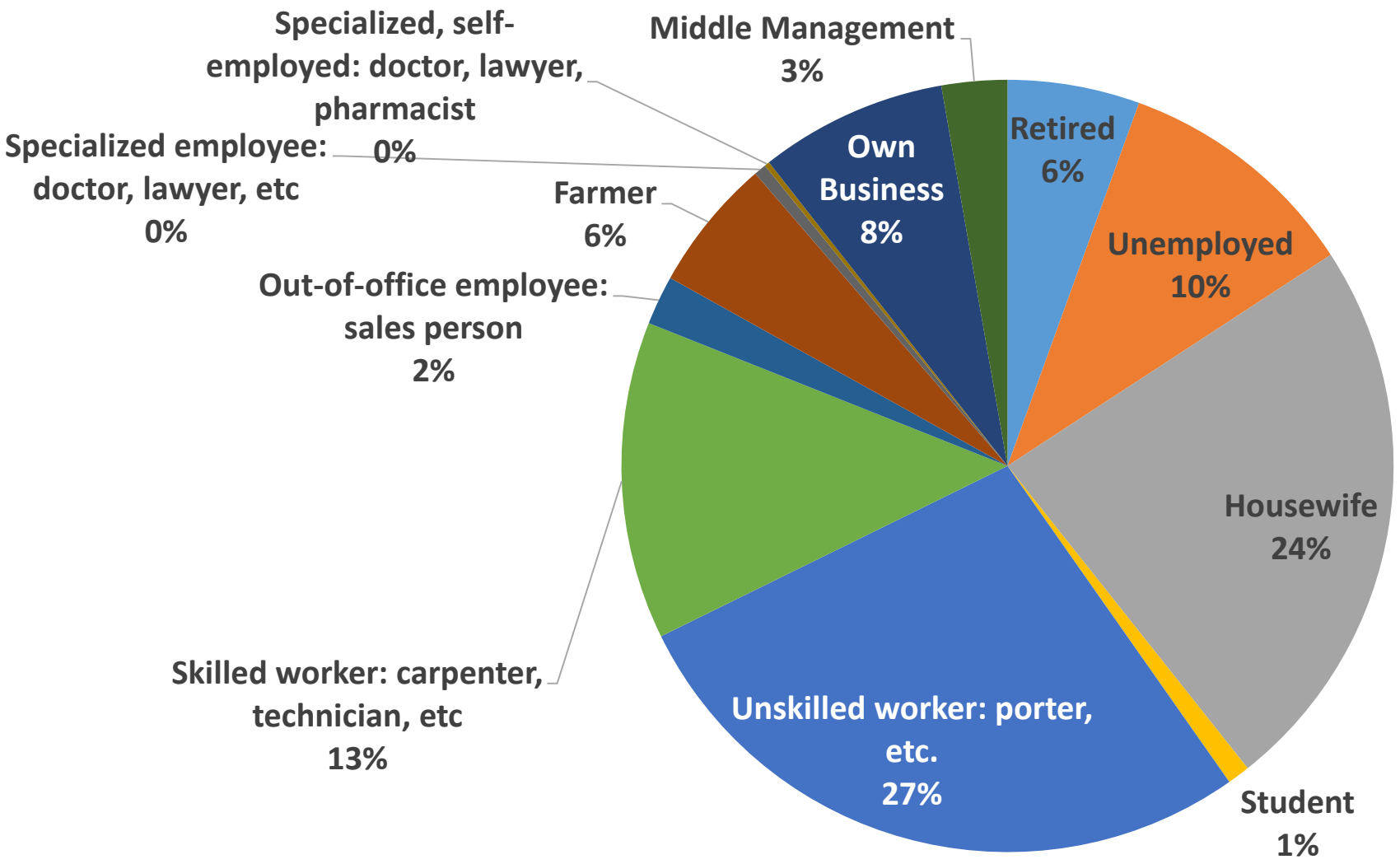
Average family revenue has gone up:

- 422$ in 2016
- 350$ in 2015





Refugee Employment In Lebanon



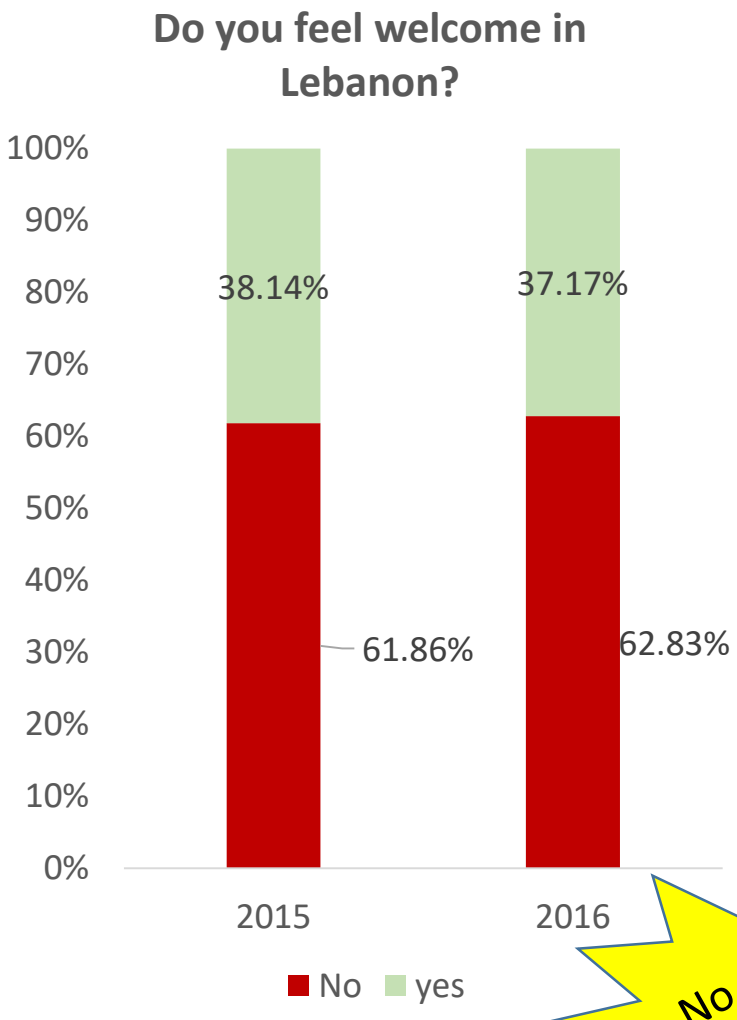
% working has not changed:
61% in 2016
62% in 2015
Most are skilled/unskilled workers, with some in farming.

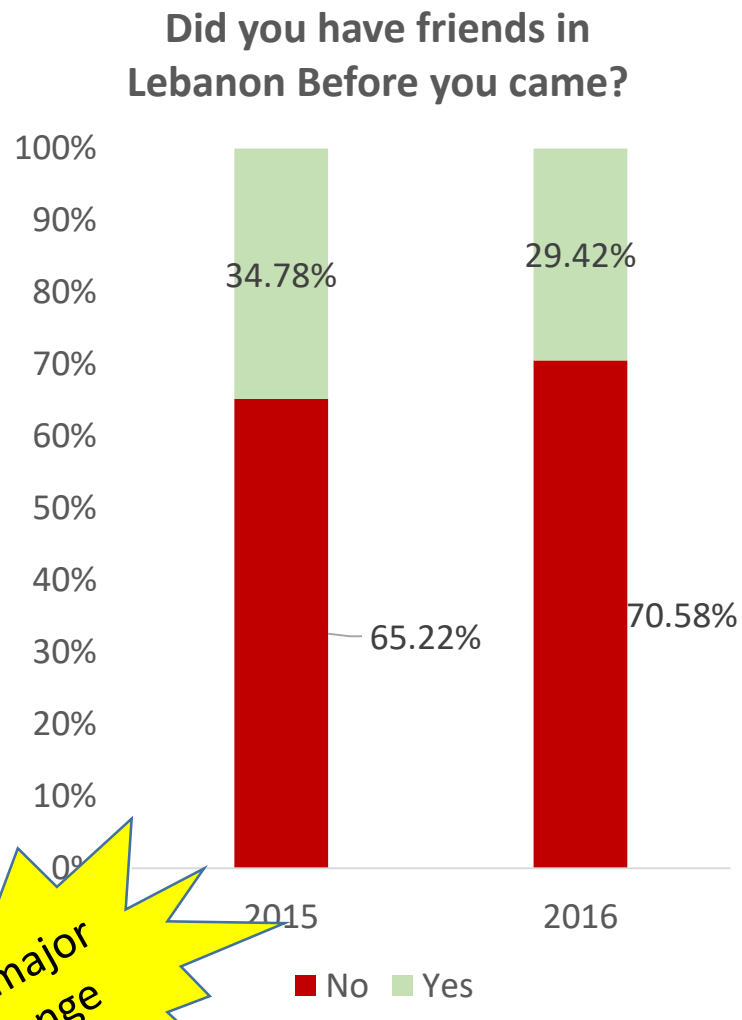
Refugee Employment In Lebanon

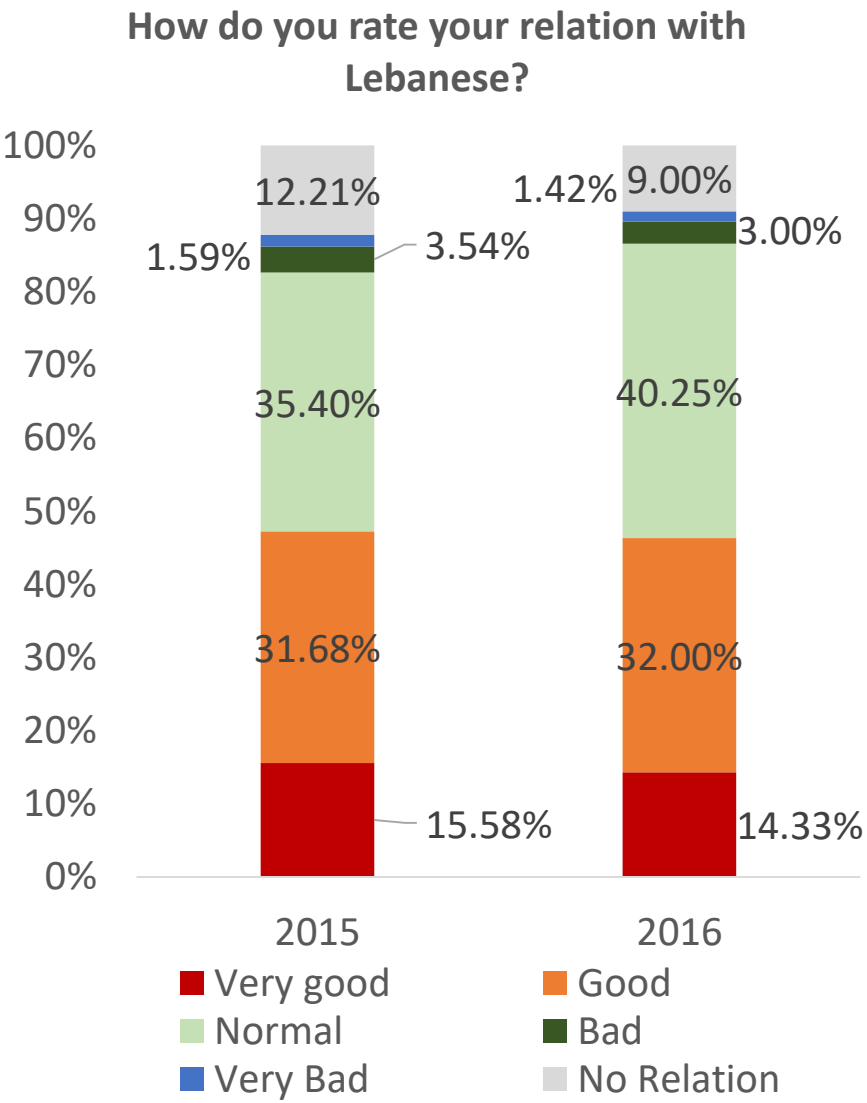
JOB IN SYRIA	JOB IN LEBANON												
Row Labels	Retired	Unemployed	Students	Housewife	Unskilled worker	Skilled Worker	Farming	Out of office employee	Office Employee	Middle Management	Specialized, self employed	Own Business	Work in Syria
Retired	57%	9%	3%	11%	11%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	2%
Unemployed	0%	74%	0%	2%	7%	5%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%	5%	4%
Students	6%	8%	9%	11%	32%	8%	1%	8%	1%	9%	0%	6%	8%
Housewife	1%	2%	0%	87%	4%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	22%
Unskilled worker	8%	5%	0%	3%	76%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	11%
Skilled worker	5%	4%	0%	2%	23%	59%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	10%
Farming	6%	12%	0%	6%	39%	11%	20%	1%	0%	2%	0%	4%	18%
Out of office employee	5%	5%	0%	0%	47%	11%	0%	26%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%
Office Employee	5%	13%	3%	24%	21%	5%	0%	3%	13%	3%	0%	11%	2%
Middle Management	10%	11%	1%	7%	21%	14%	2%	7%	0%	12%	0%	13%	4%
Upper Management	14%	29%	0%	14%	0%	29%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Specialized, self employed	0%	7%	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	21%	14%	7%	36%	0%	1%
Own Business	6%	10%	0%	4%	28%	15%	4%	1%	1%	3%	0%	28%	18%
Work in Lebanon	**6%**	**10%**	**1%**	**24%**	**27%**	**13%**	**6%**	**2%**	**1%**	**3%**	**0%**	**8%**	**100%**

The mapping of work in Syria against work in Lebanon shows that farming skills are unused, as 80% worked in other areas.
Students (of age 18 and above) have not been able to pursue their education (only 9% did).
Other shifts are highlighted in the table…

Relation with Lebanese



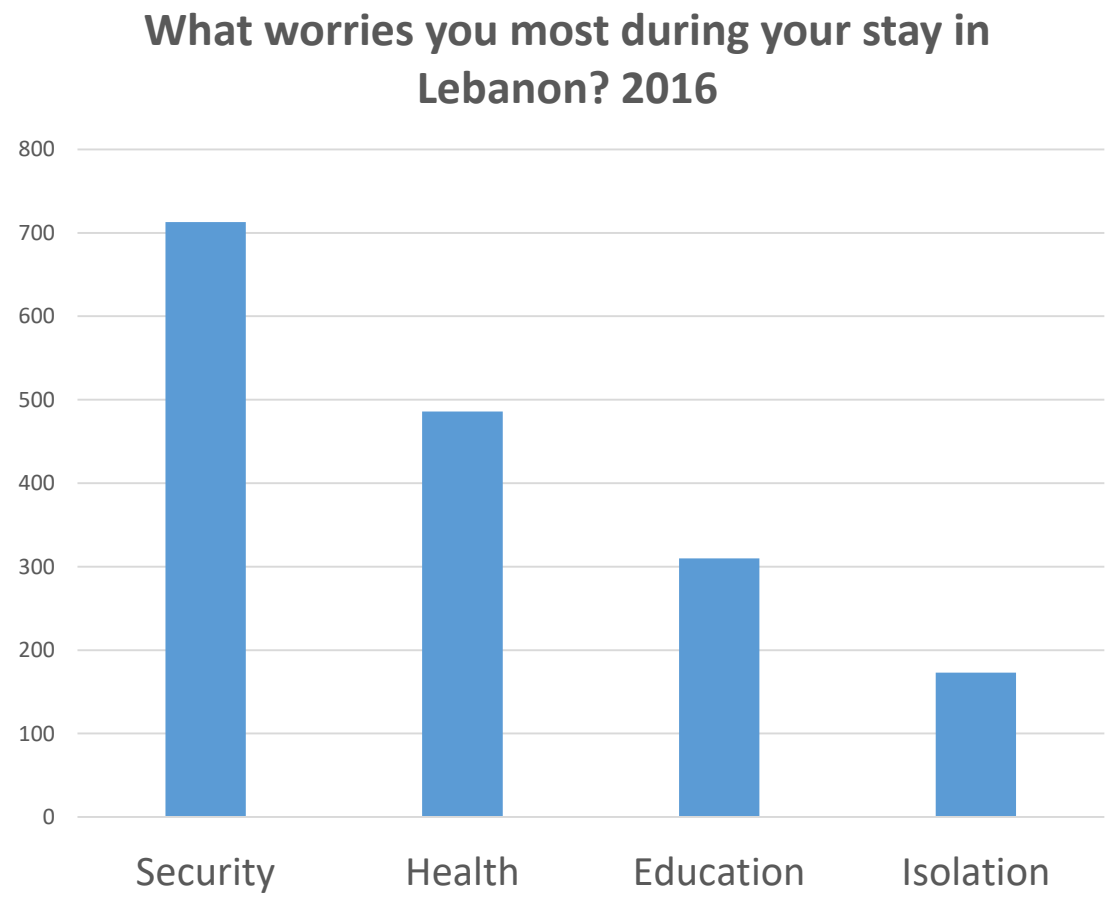




No major change

Security and Vulnerability

Worries



When asked to choose between a series of worries, refugees rated **security highest**. Health came next, followed by Education…

When asked to add other worries, 33% of those who responded mentioned rent, work, and inflation.

Registration and Legal Status

No big change in UNHCR Registration

Registered with UNHCR?

	2015	2016
Yes	**78.88**	**77**
No	21.12	23

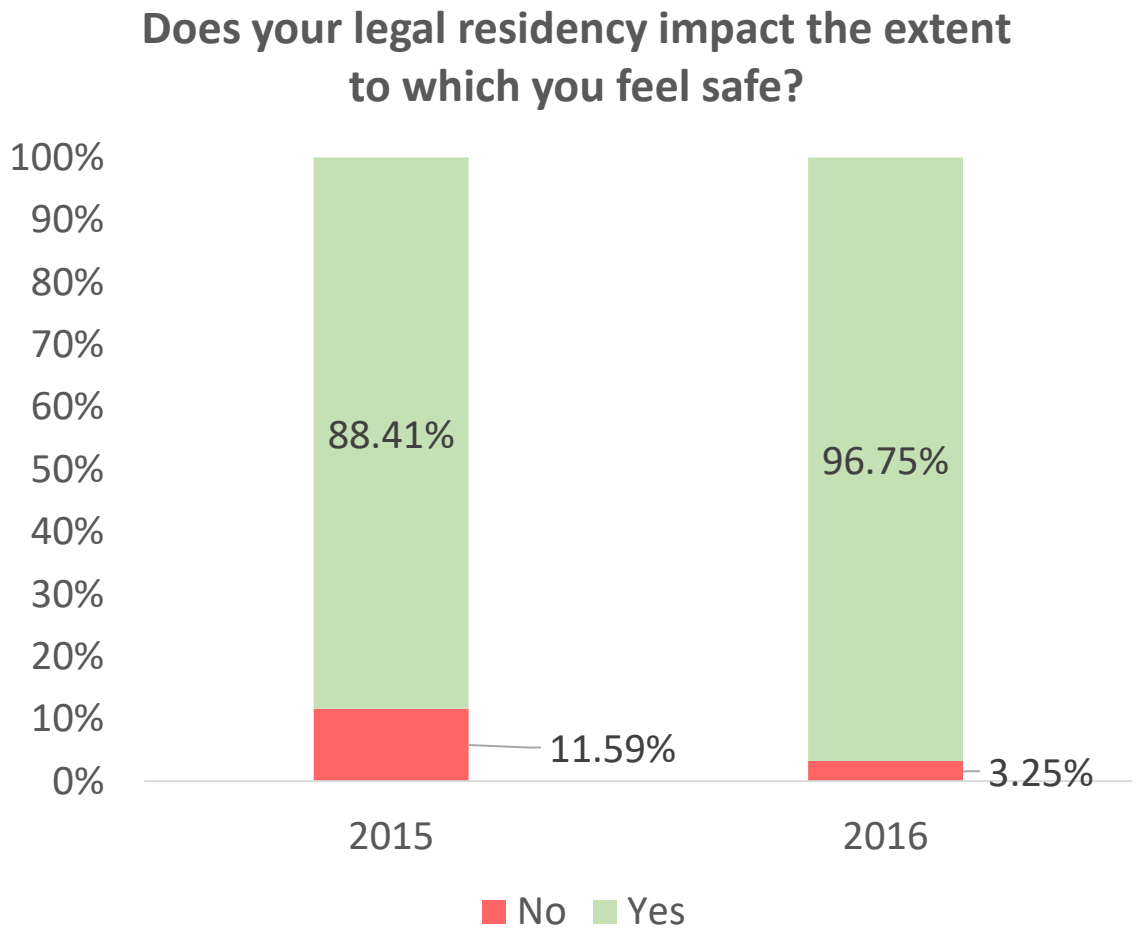
Main Reason for not having legal residency in 2016: financial (mentioned by 80% of respondents) and inability to find a sponsor (mentioned by 68% of respondents)

Less have residency papers

Legal Status in Lebanon?

	2015	2016	
Have Residency	**30.05**	**21.3**	
No Residency	69.95	78.7	(44.6 waiting for renewal)

Safety

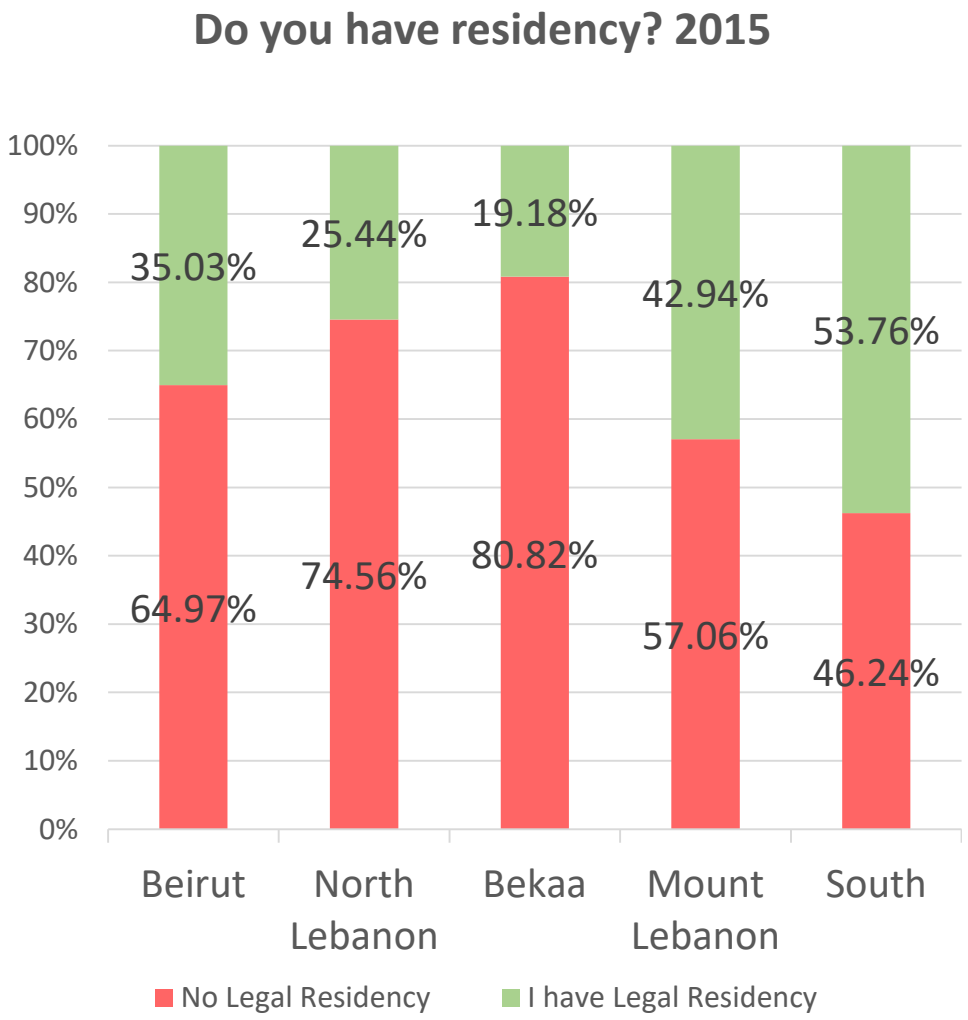


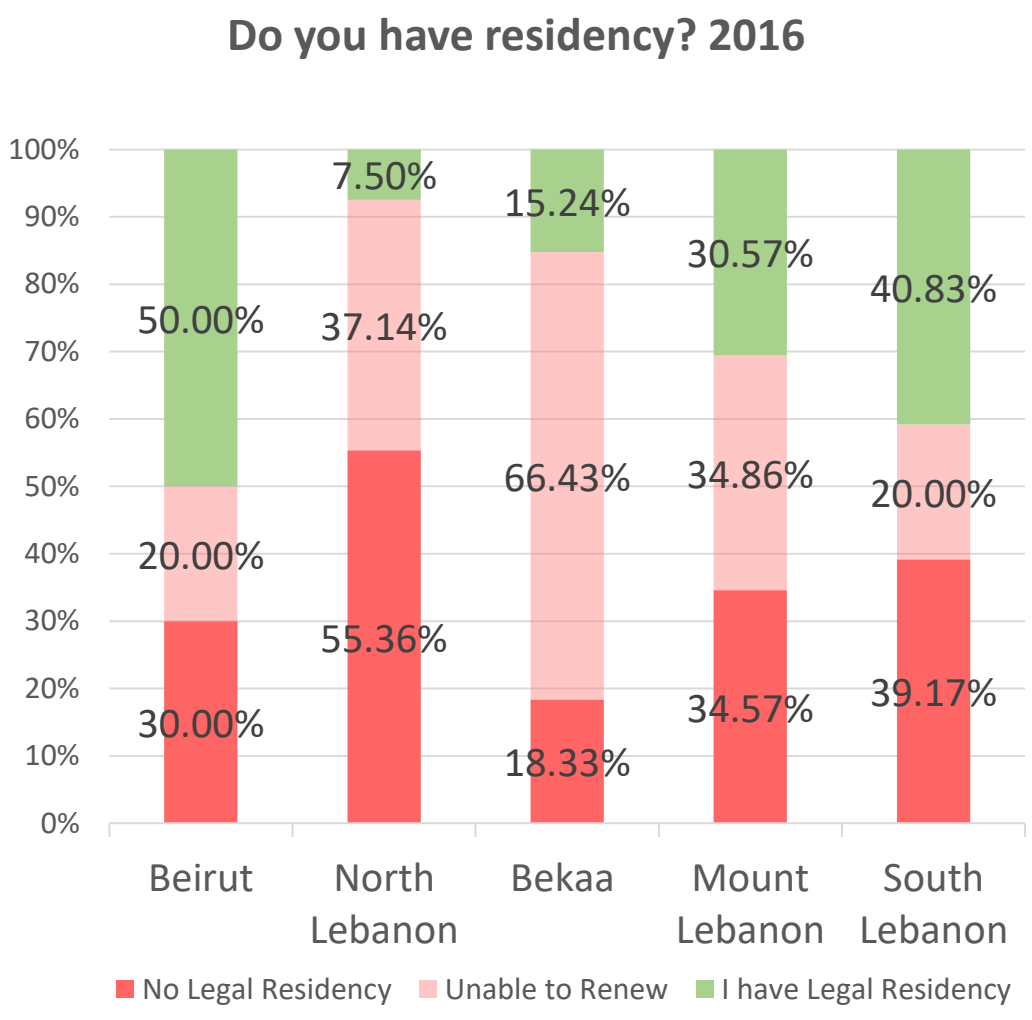
2015:
88.41% feel that residency impacts safety

2016:
96.75% feel that residency impacts safety

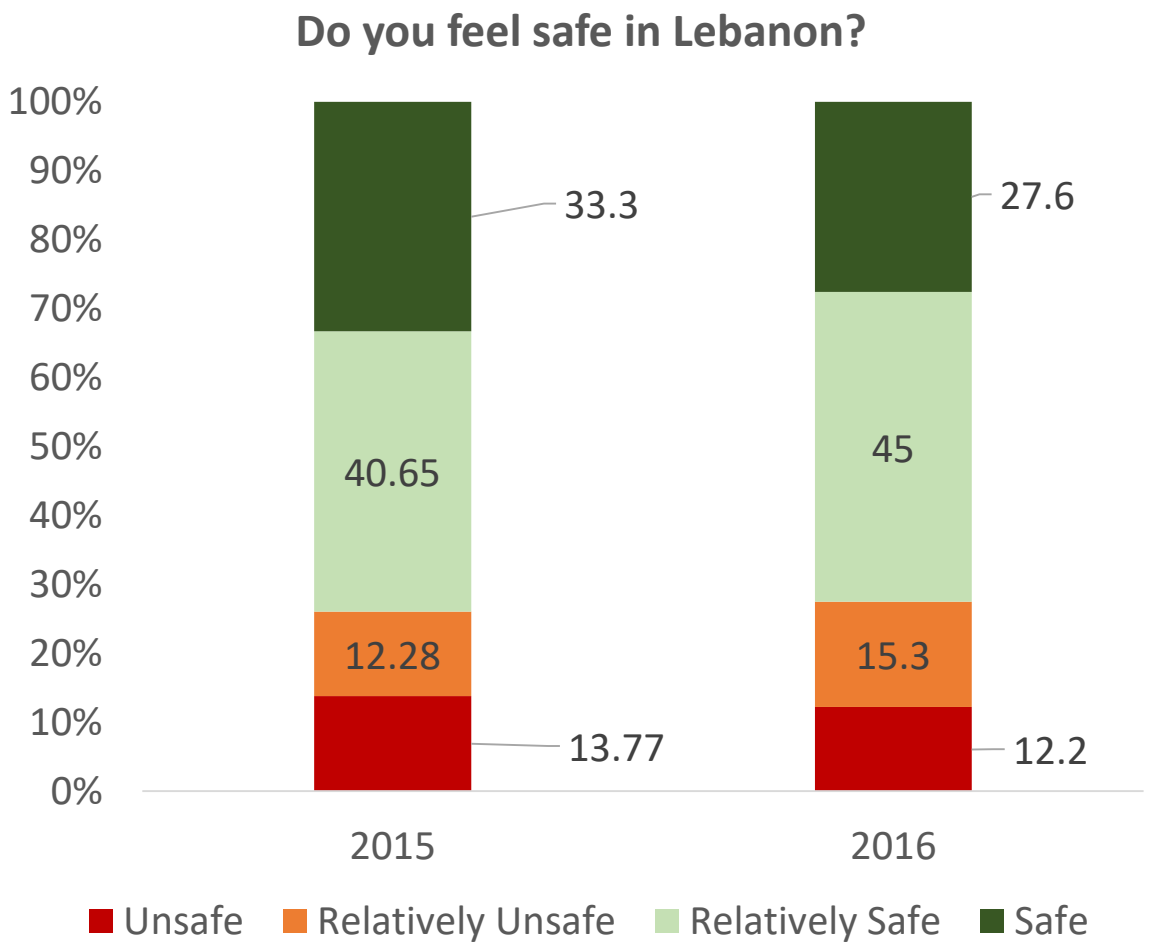
Legal Status

In 2016, 21% have their residency, while in 2015 30% had their residency.
In 2016, 48% of those who have legal residency said it will expire in 1 to 3 months.





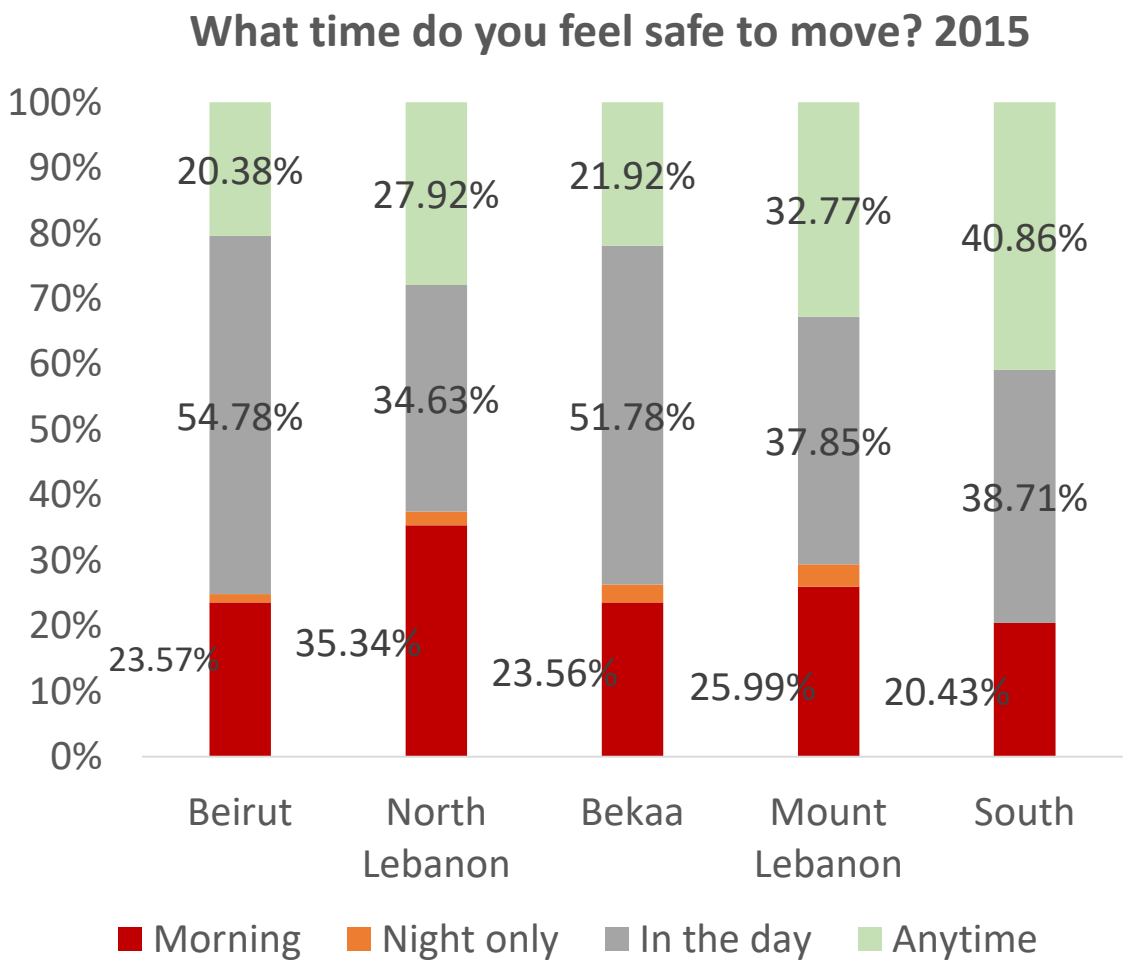
Safety

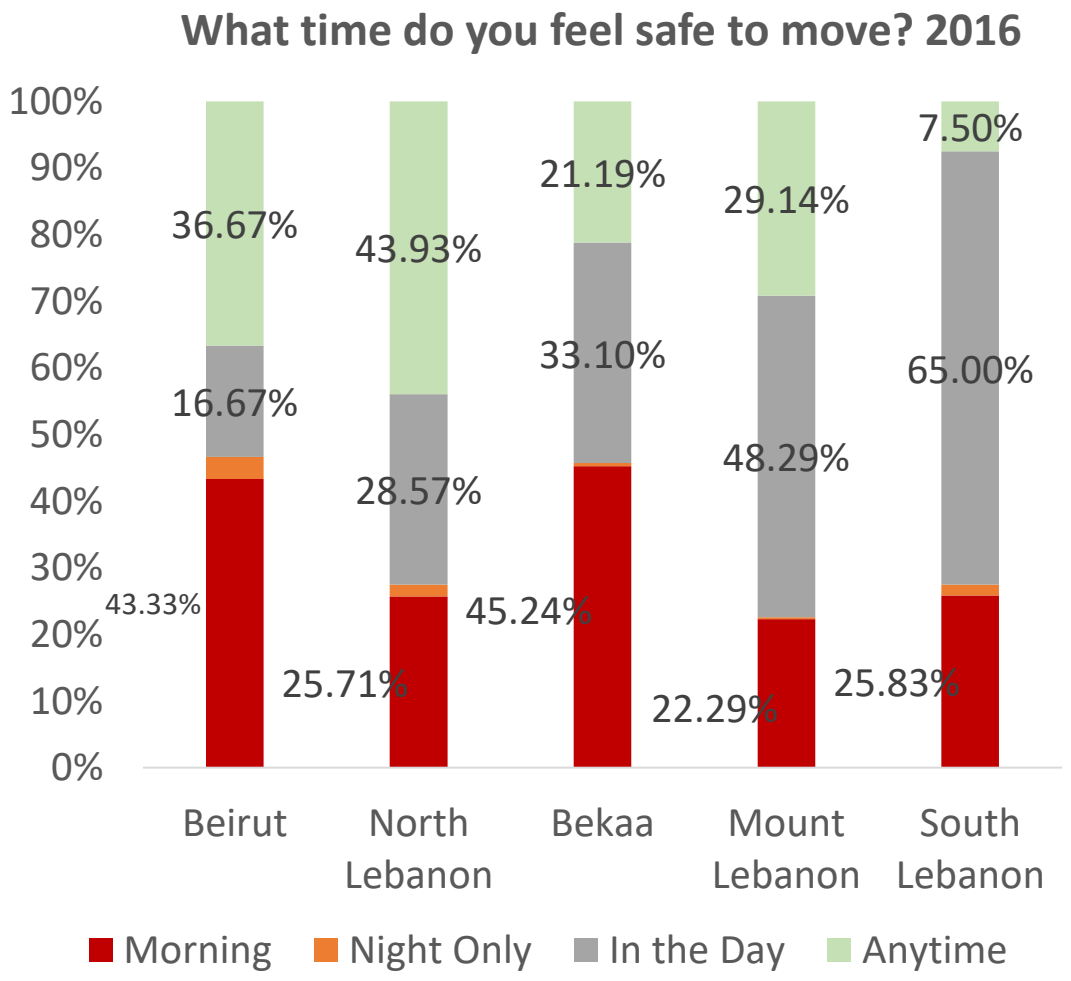


2015:
In Beirut 34% feel Unsafe
North Lebanon: 30% feel Unsafe
Bekaa: 27% feel Unsafe
Mount Lebanon: 18% feel Unsafe
South: 13% feel Unsafe

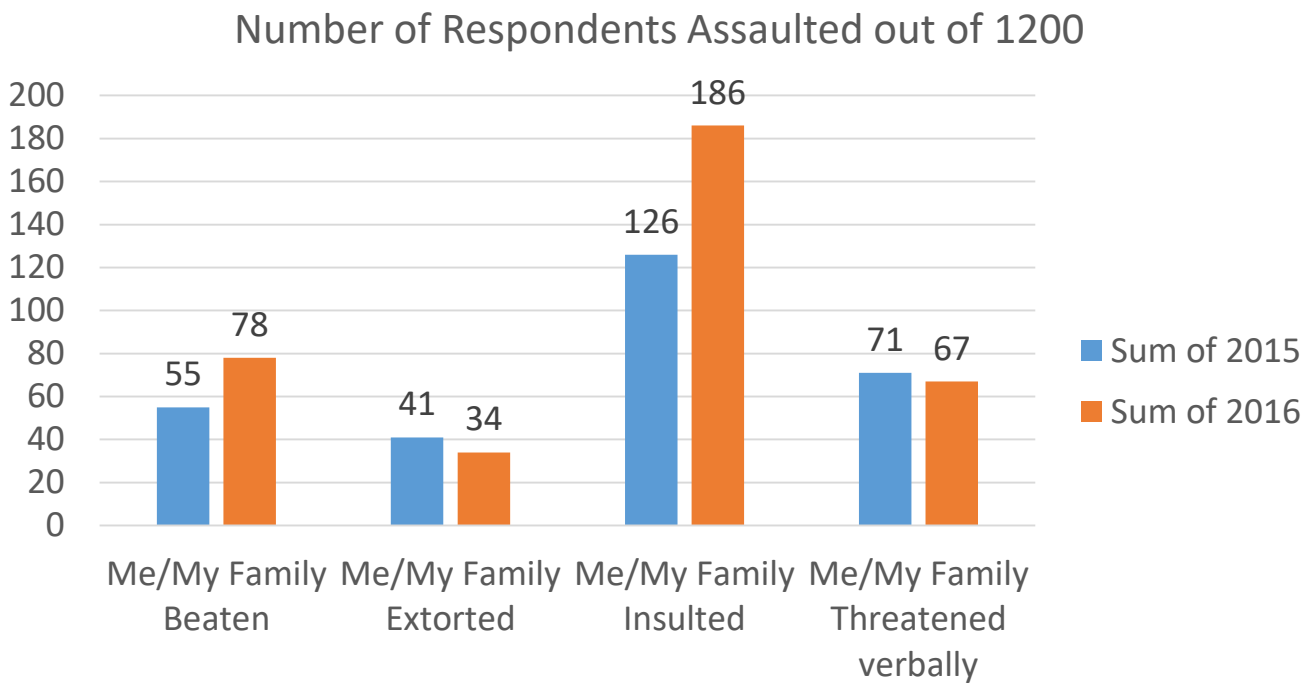
2016:
In Beirut 30% feel Unsafe
North Lebanon: 34% feel Unsafe
Bekaa: 34% feel Unsafe
Mount Lebanon: 17% feel Unsafe
South: 21% feel Unsafe

Safety


What time do you feel safe to move? 2015
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
20.38%
54.78%
23.57%
27.92%
34.63%
35.34%
21.92%
51.78%
23.56%
32.77%
37.85%
25.99%
40.86%
38.71%
20.43%
Beirut
North Lebanon
Bekaa
Mount Lebanon
South
Morning
Night only
In the day
Anytime


What time do you feel safe to move? 2016
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
36.67%
16.67%
43.33%
43.93%
28.57%
25.71%
21.19%
33.10%
45.24%
29.14%
48.29%
22.29%
7.50%
65.00%
25.83%
Beirut
North Lebanon
Bekaa
Mount Lebanon
South Lebanon
Morning
Night Only
In the Day
Anytime

Assault



2015

	Beirut/Mount Lebanon	North Lebanon	Bekaa	South Lebanon	Grand Total
Assault	89	84	101	19	293
Total Respondents	334	283	365	93	1075
	27%	30%	**28%**	20%	27%

2016

	Beirut/Mount Lebanon	North Lebanon	Bekaa	South Lebanon	Grand Total
Assault	97	80	162	26	365
Total Respondants	380	280	420	120	1200
	26%	28%	**39%**	22%	30%

- 293 personal assaults reported in 2015 and 365 reported in 2016.
- 86% of these cases where explicitly blamed on Lebanese offenders in 2015 and 87% in 2016.

Assault increased in Bekaa

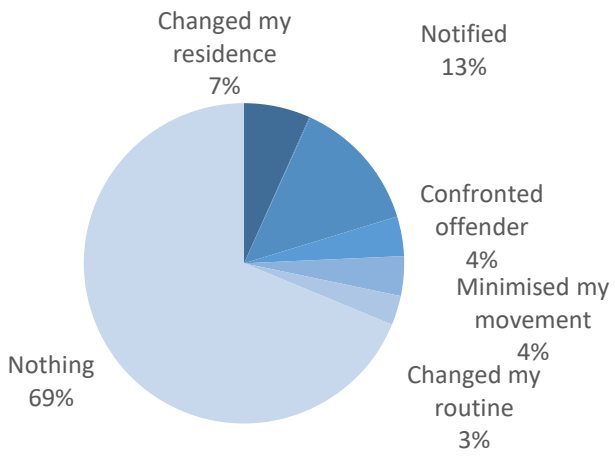
Raids, harassment, insults…

	Total Assaults 2015	Of Which, by civilian (2015)	Total Assaults 2016	Of Which, by civilian (2016)
Insults	303	241	349	285
Harrassed	262	200	325	256
Beaten	95	66	134	98
Arrests	57	7	124	14
Raided/Searched	195	18	265	17
Eviction	5	3	59	44
Expulsion	17	7	31	11
Blackmailed	135	116	115	104
TOTAL	**1069**	**658**	**1402**	**829**

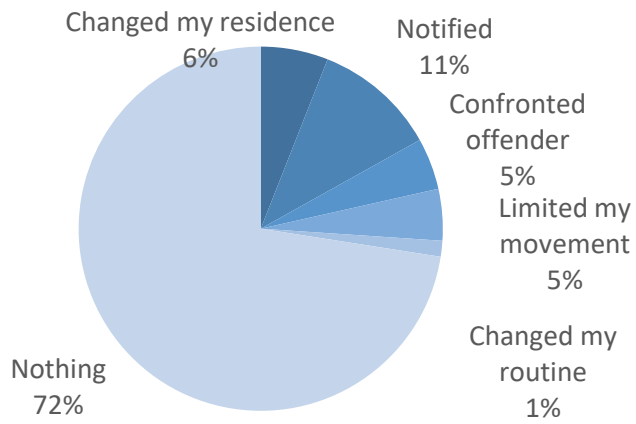
- In 2015, 46% of Syrian Refugees have been victim of abuse while in Lebanon. 69% did nothing about it.
- In 2016, 50% of Syrian Refugees have been victim of abuse while in Lebanon. 72% did nothing about it.
- The percentage of refugees who reported insults, harassment, blackmailing, eviction, etc. by civil society increased from a total of 658 in 2015 to a total 829 in 2016.

Increase in harassments, insults, evictions, raids, etc.

What did you do? 2015

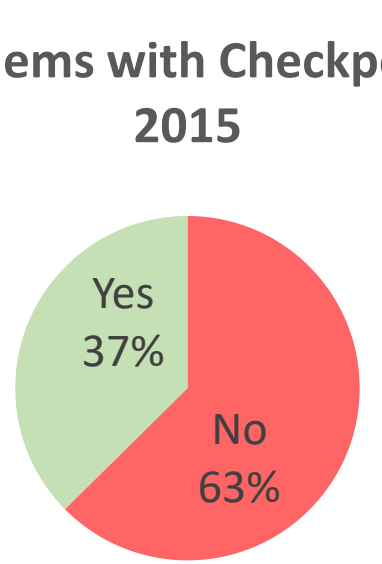


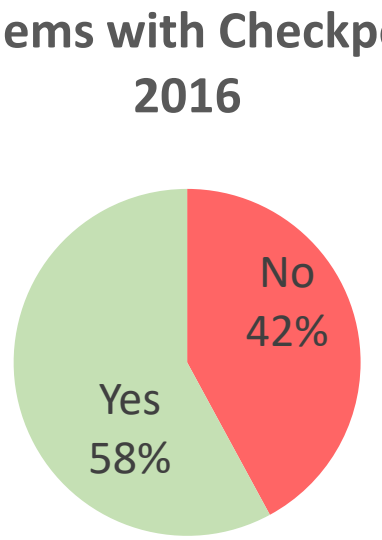
What did you do? 2016



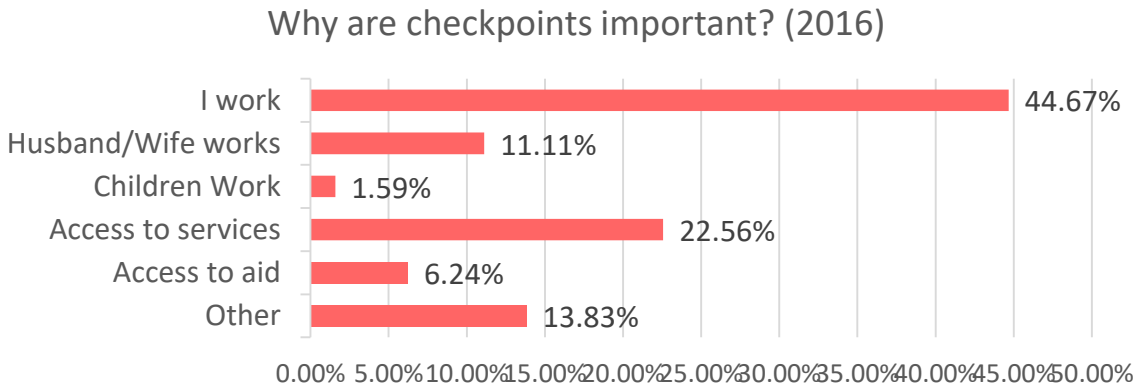
Checkpoints

37% had problems with checkpoints in 2015.
58% have problems with checkpoints in 2016.

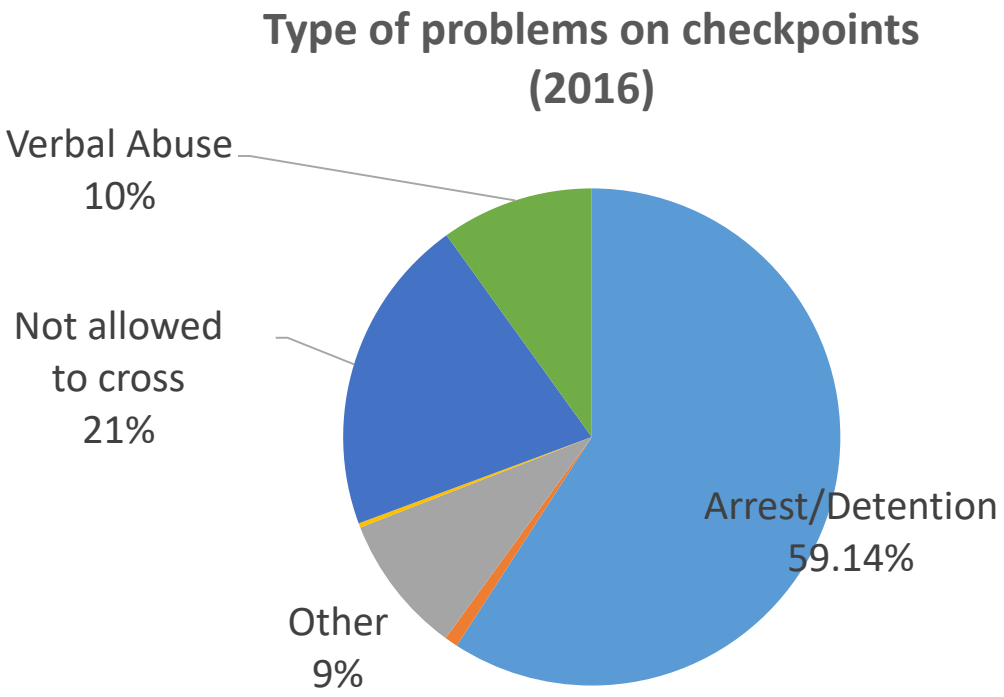


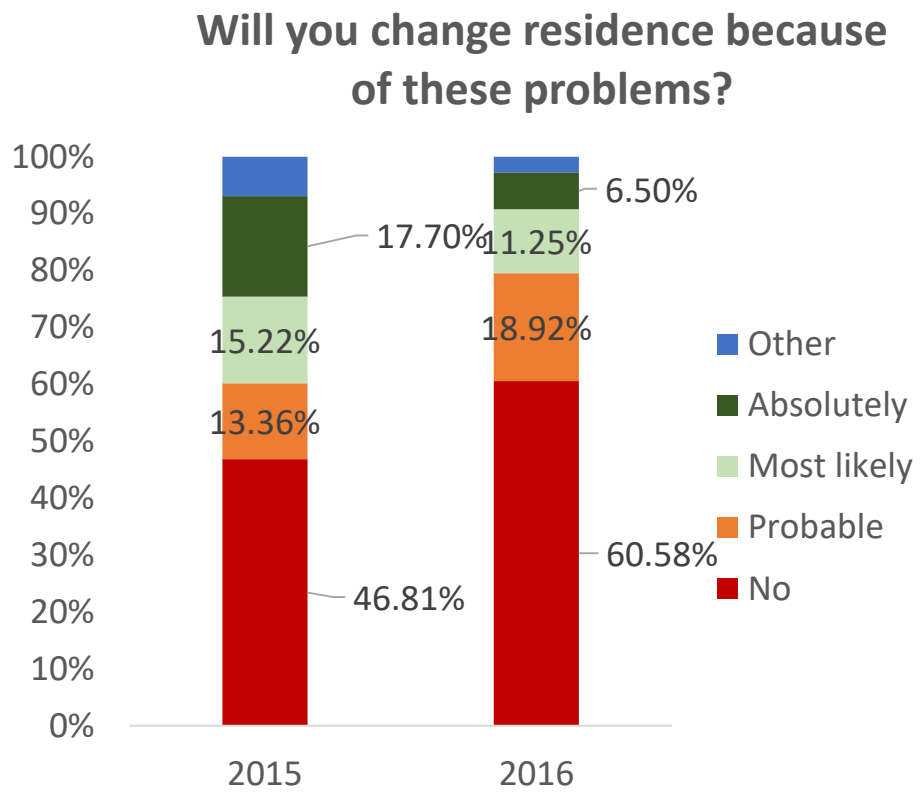


Most respondents said that checkpoints are important to them.
In 2016: 56% of them said the main reason is to go to work, while 23 % mentioned access to services, and 6% mentioned access to aid.



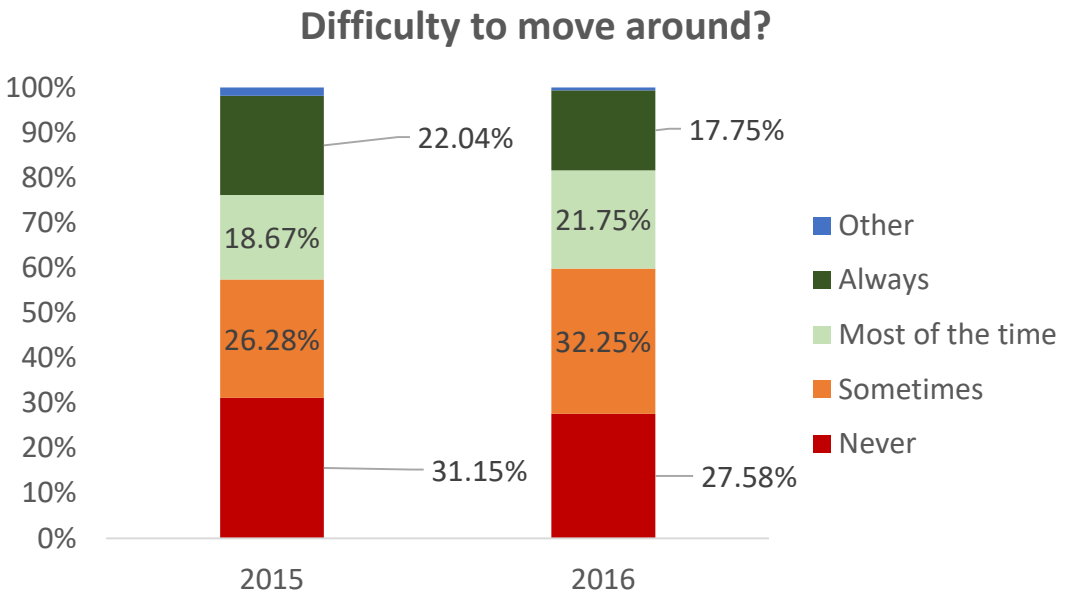
Checkpoints

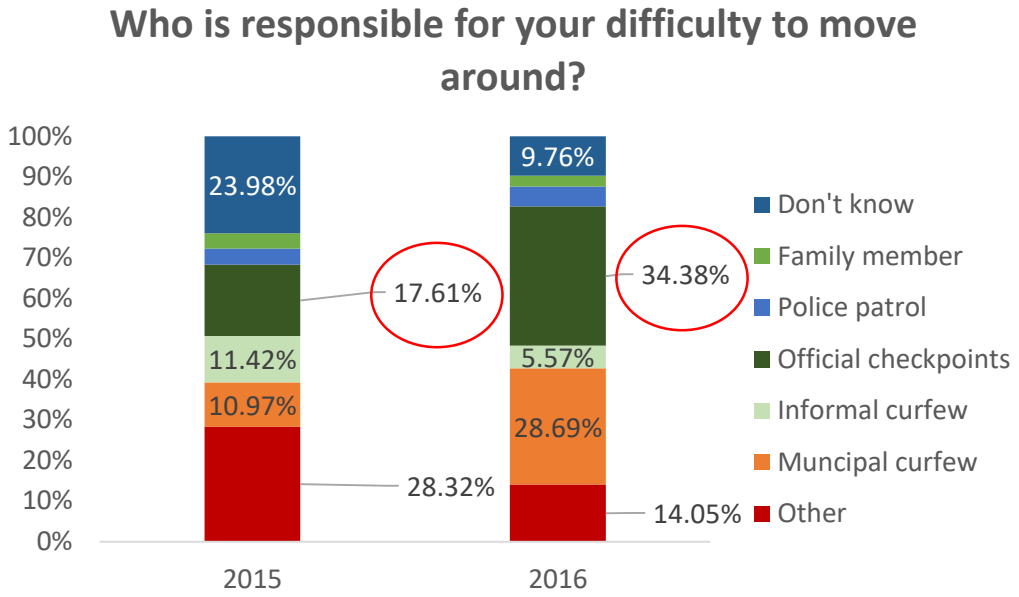


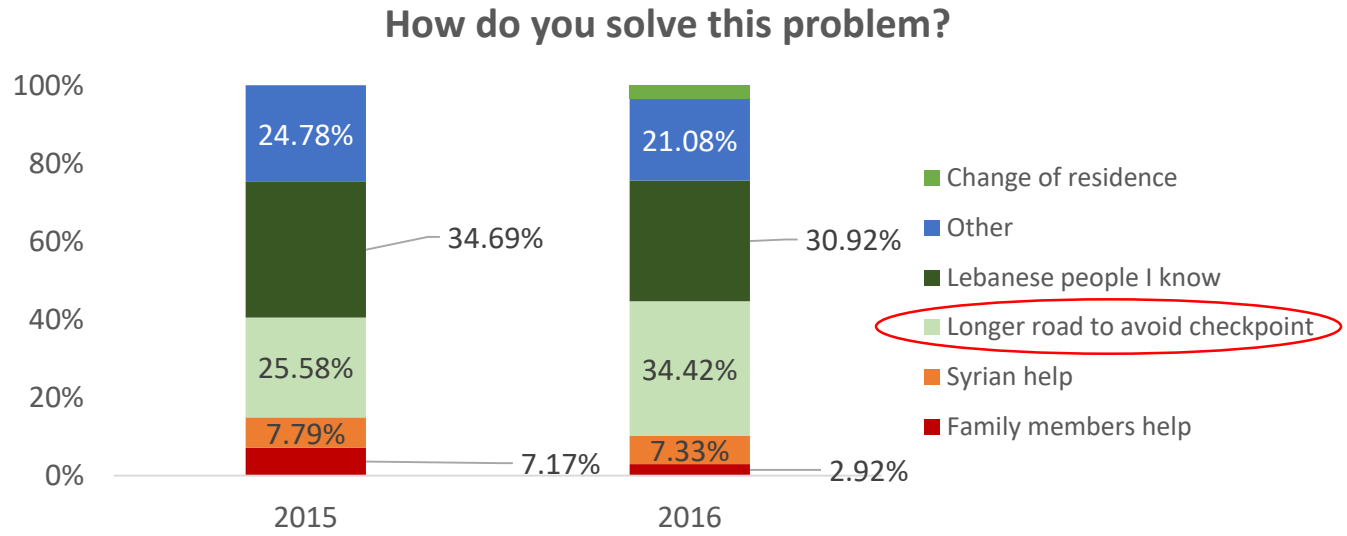


59% worry about Arrest/Detention on checkpoints, while 21% are worried not to be able to cross, and 10% worry about verbal abuse. Respondents are less likely to change residence in order to solve this problem.

Freedom of Movement







No noticeable change in difficulty to move around reported by Refugees. However, more refugees realize that this is due to checkpoints (34% in 2016 compared to 18% in 2015).

Perception of Authorities

Approval score of most institutions slightly raised. Less people “don’t know”.

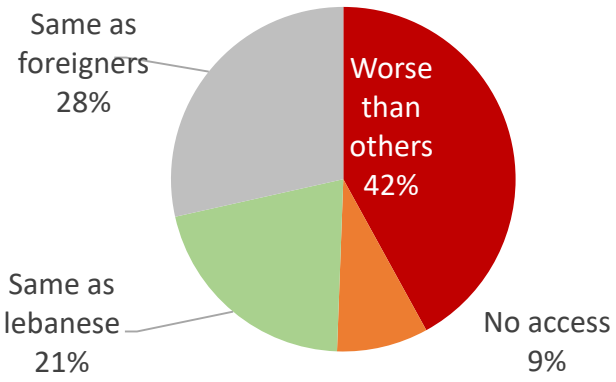
Very good = 5, Good = 4, Don’t know = 3, Bad = 2, Very bad = 0

Relations with	Year	Very Good %	Good %	Bad %	Very Bad %	Don't know %	Approval Score 2015	Approval Score 2016
ISF	2015	6.2	44.1	9.5	5.7	34.5	**3.36**	
	2016	3.3	63.3	9.7	2.8	20.9		**3.55**
Army	2015	11.7	47.9	12.3	6.9	21.2	**3.45**	
	2016	7.9	64.1	11.5	4.2	12.3		**3.6**
General Security	2015	6.05	44.37	21.67	11.26	16.65	**3.12**	
	2016	3.3	63.3	14.7	4.4	14.3		**3.46**
Municipality	2015	8.09	42.79	10.14	4.19	34.79	**3.4**	
	2016	6.6	62.4	6.7	2.2	22.1		**3.65**
UNHCR	2015	11.81	49.49	19.44	6.14	13.12	**3.41**	
	2016	9.1	57.3	14.6	9.4	9.6		**3.42**

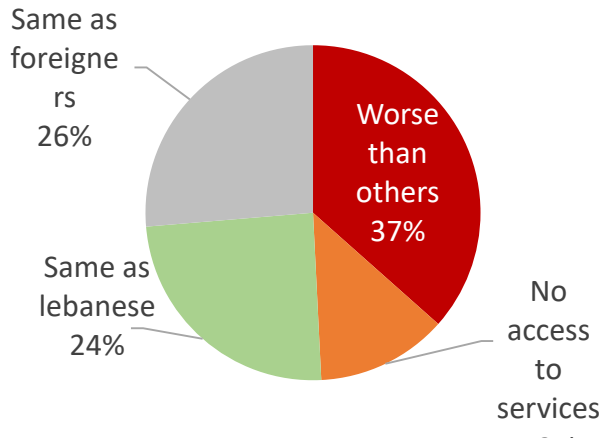
Access to services

- 45% had problems accessing services in 2015 and 29% in 2016.
- 37% said they were treated worse than others when accessing services in 2015 and 42% in 2016.

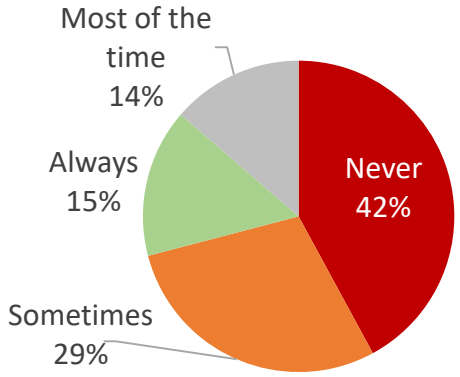
How are you treated when you seek access to services 2016



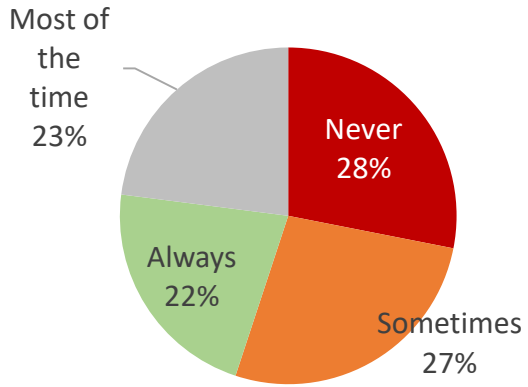
How are you treated when you seek access to services 2015



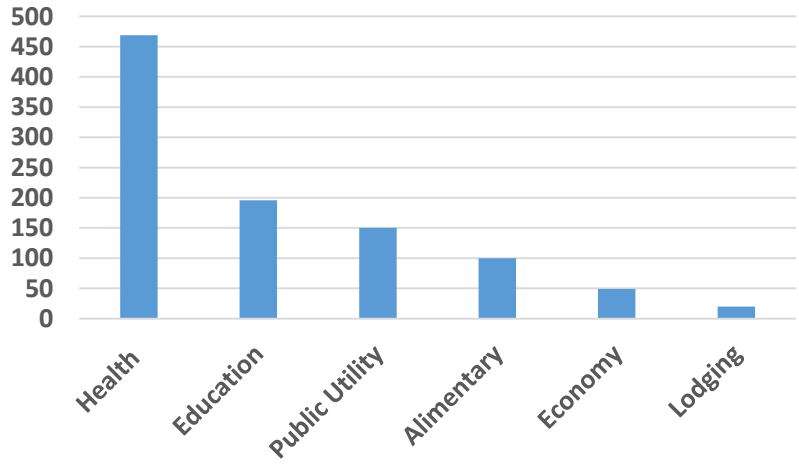
Do you have problems accessing services 2016



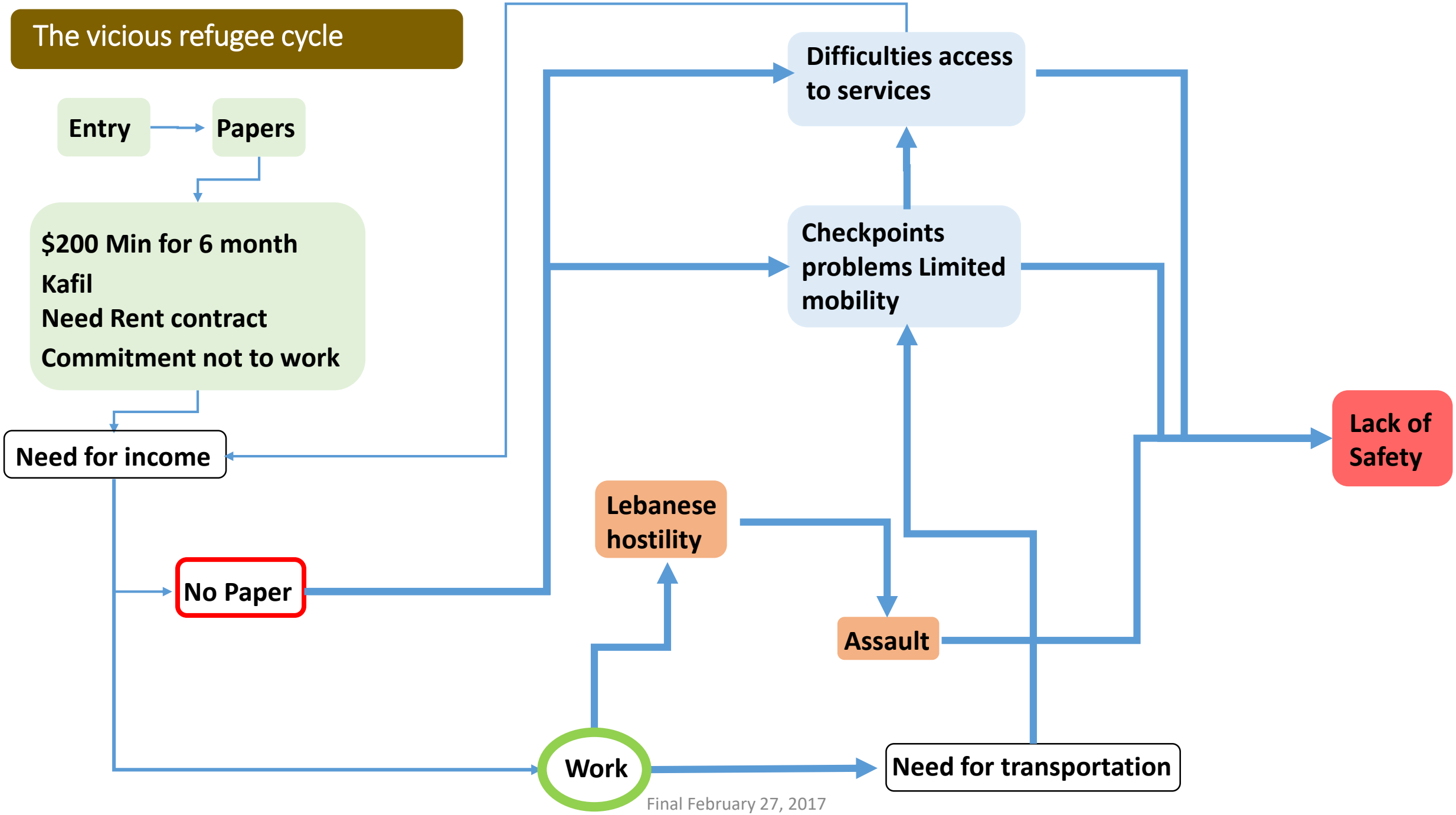
Do you have problems accessing services 2015



Services to which there is no or little access 2015

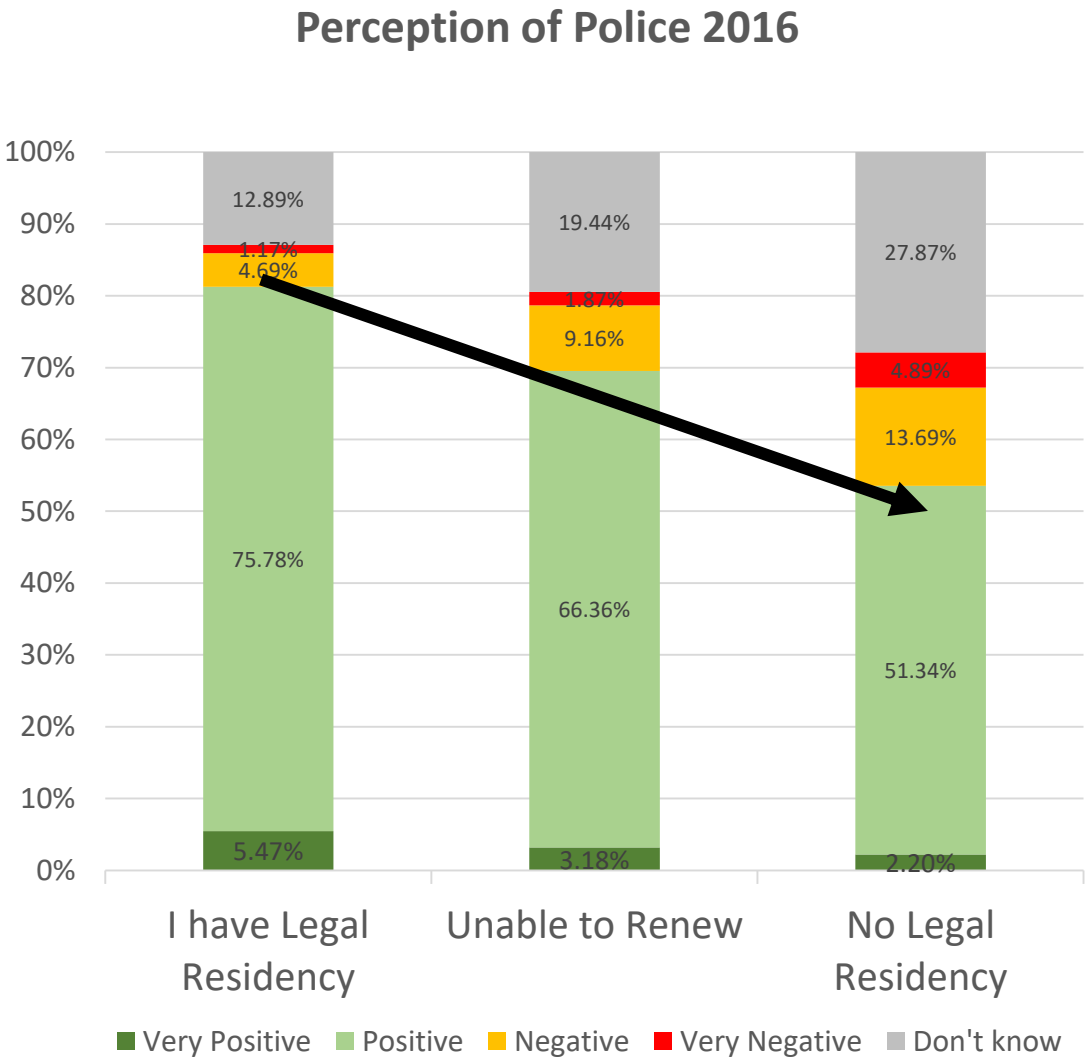


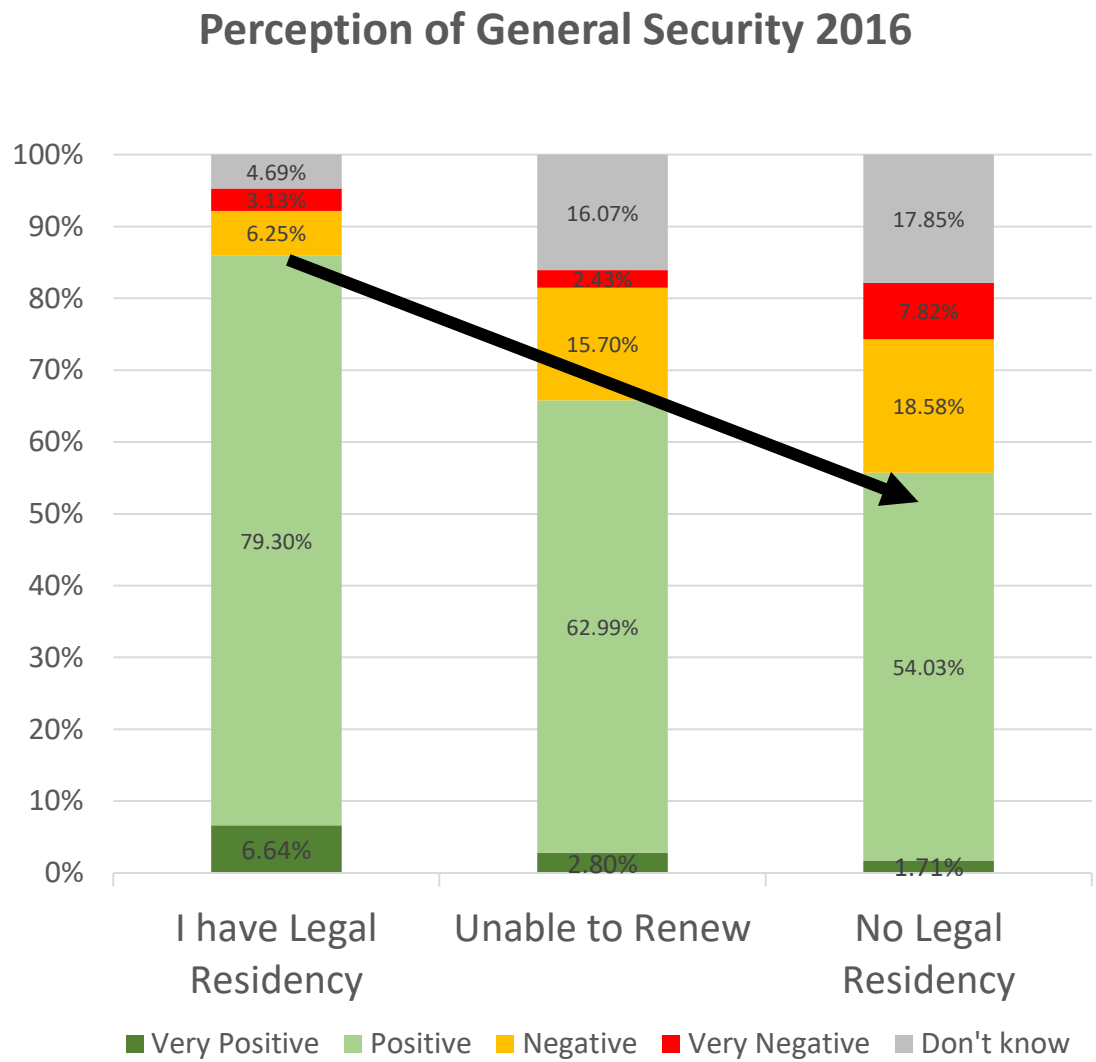
Vicious Refugee Circle Reevaluated


The vicious refugee cycle
Entry
Papers
$200 Min for 6 month
Kafil
Need Rent contract
Commitment not to work
Need for income
No Paper
Difficulties access to services
Checkpoints problems Limited mobility
Lebanese hostility
Assault
Lack of Safety
Work
Need for transportation

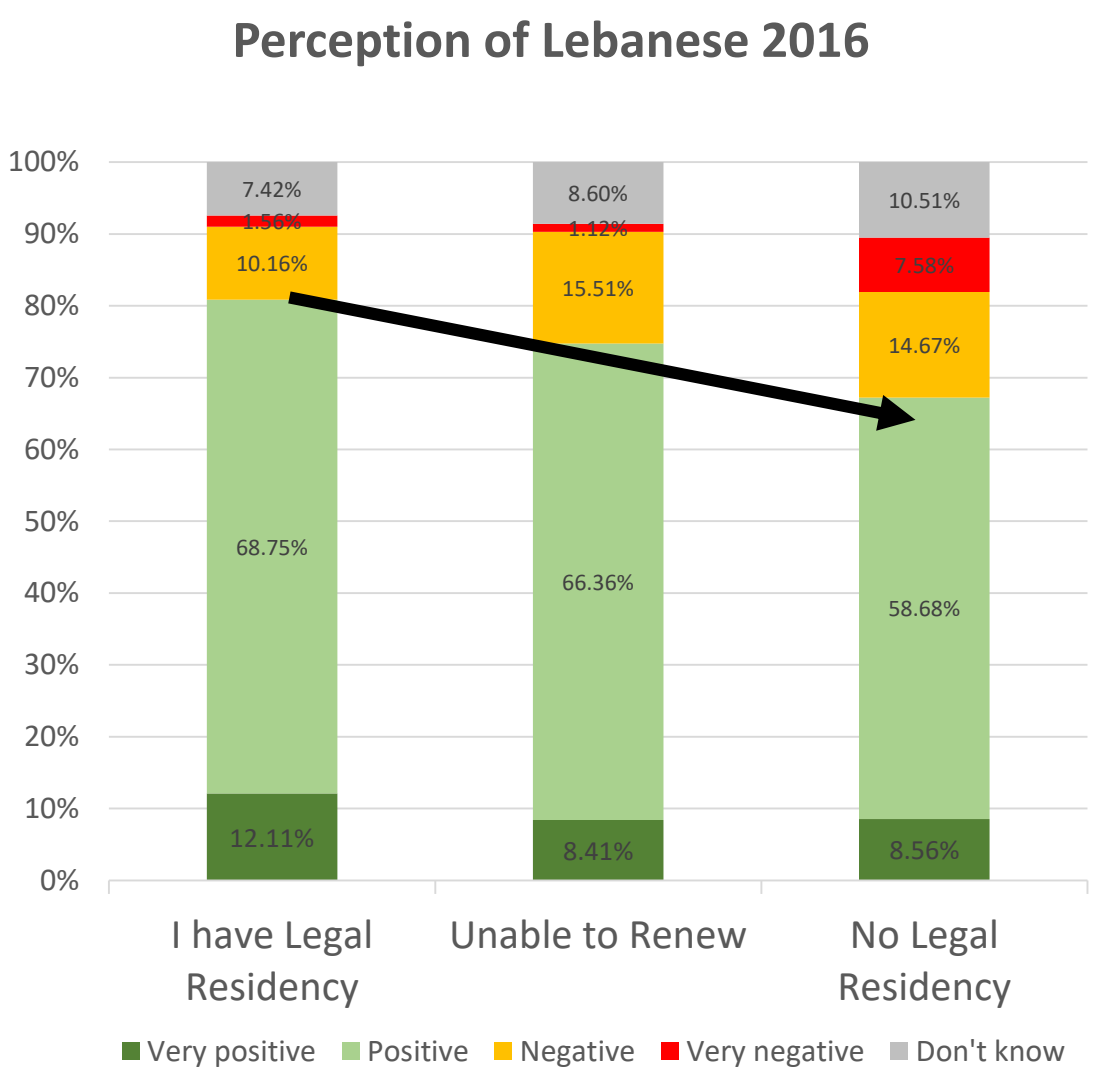
Impact on Perception of Security Agencies

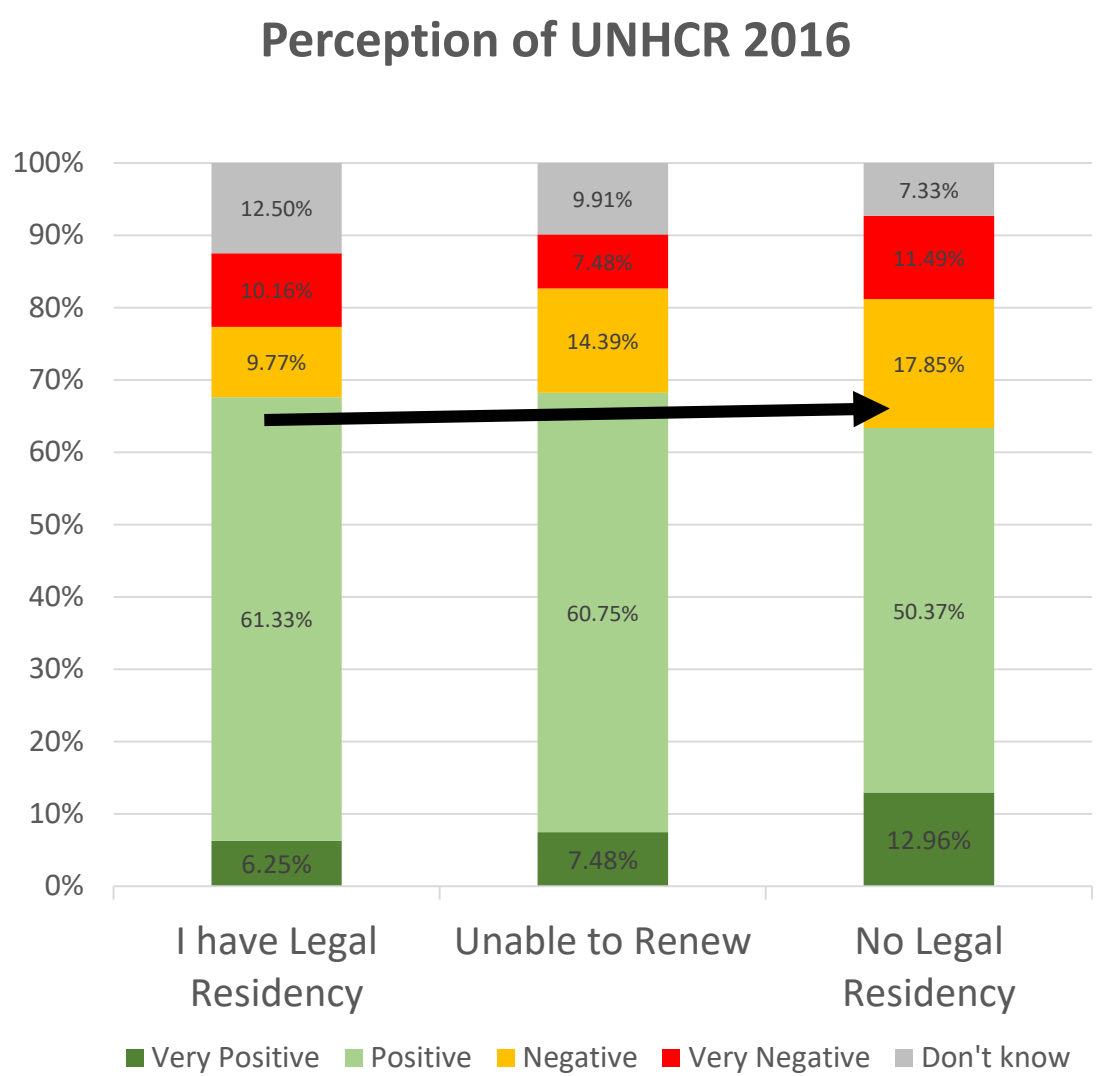
Perception of security agencies is lower among refugees who don't have legal residency.



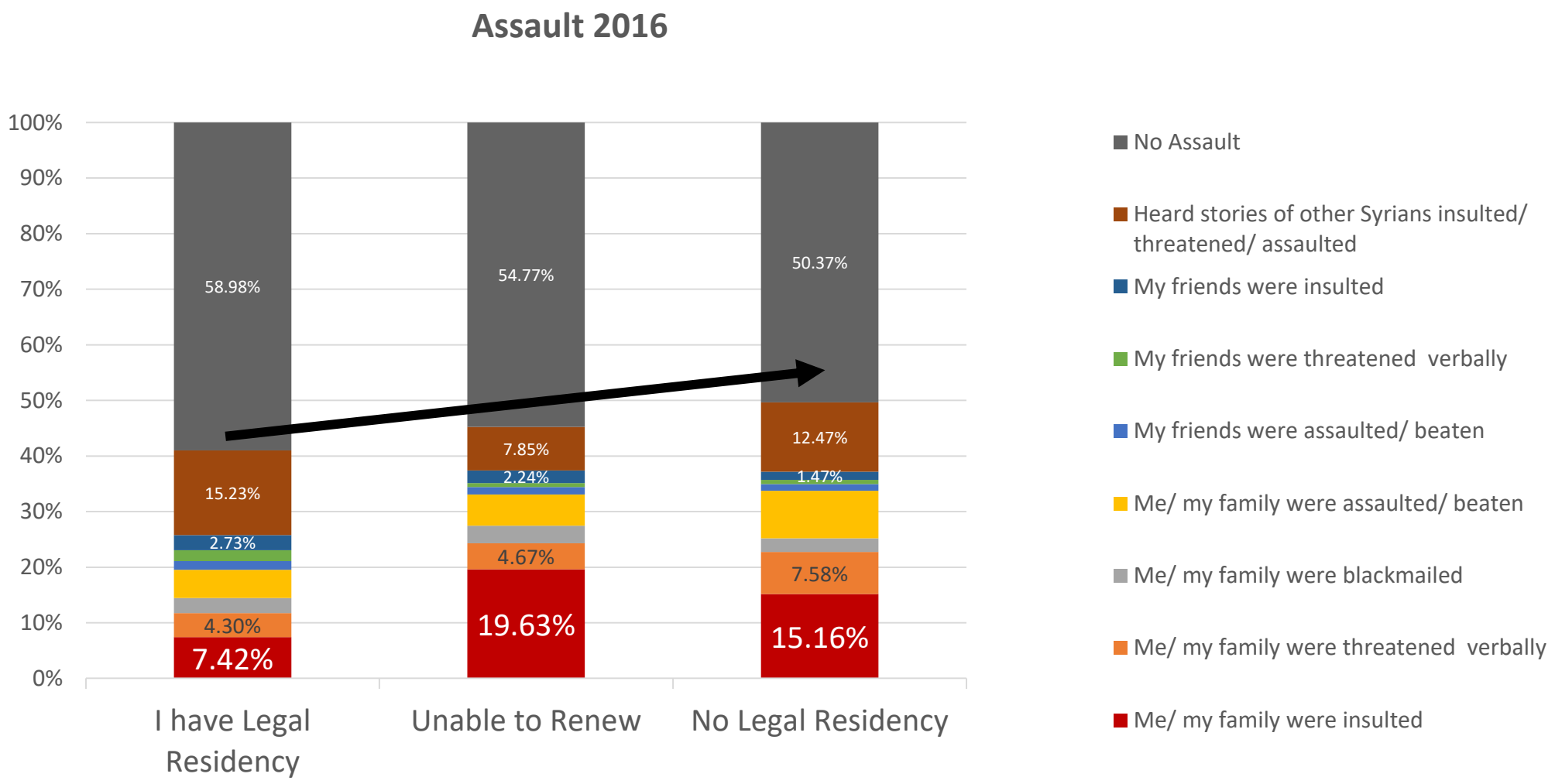


Impact of Illegal Status on Perception of Host and UNHCR



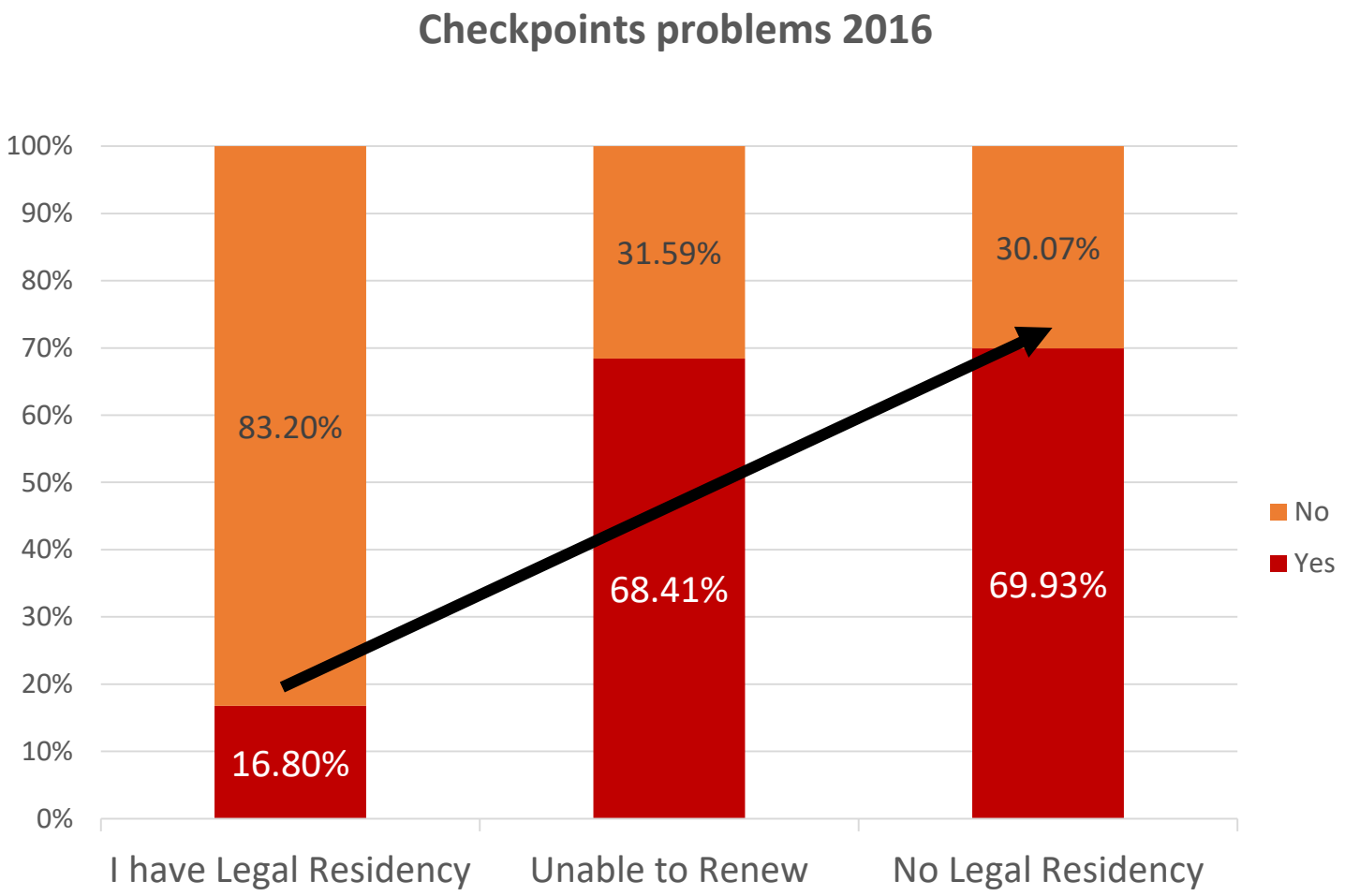


Impact on Assault



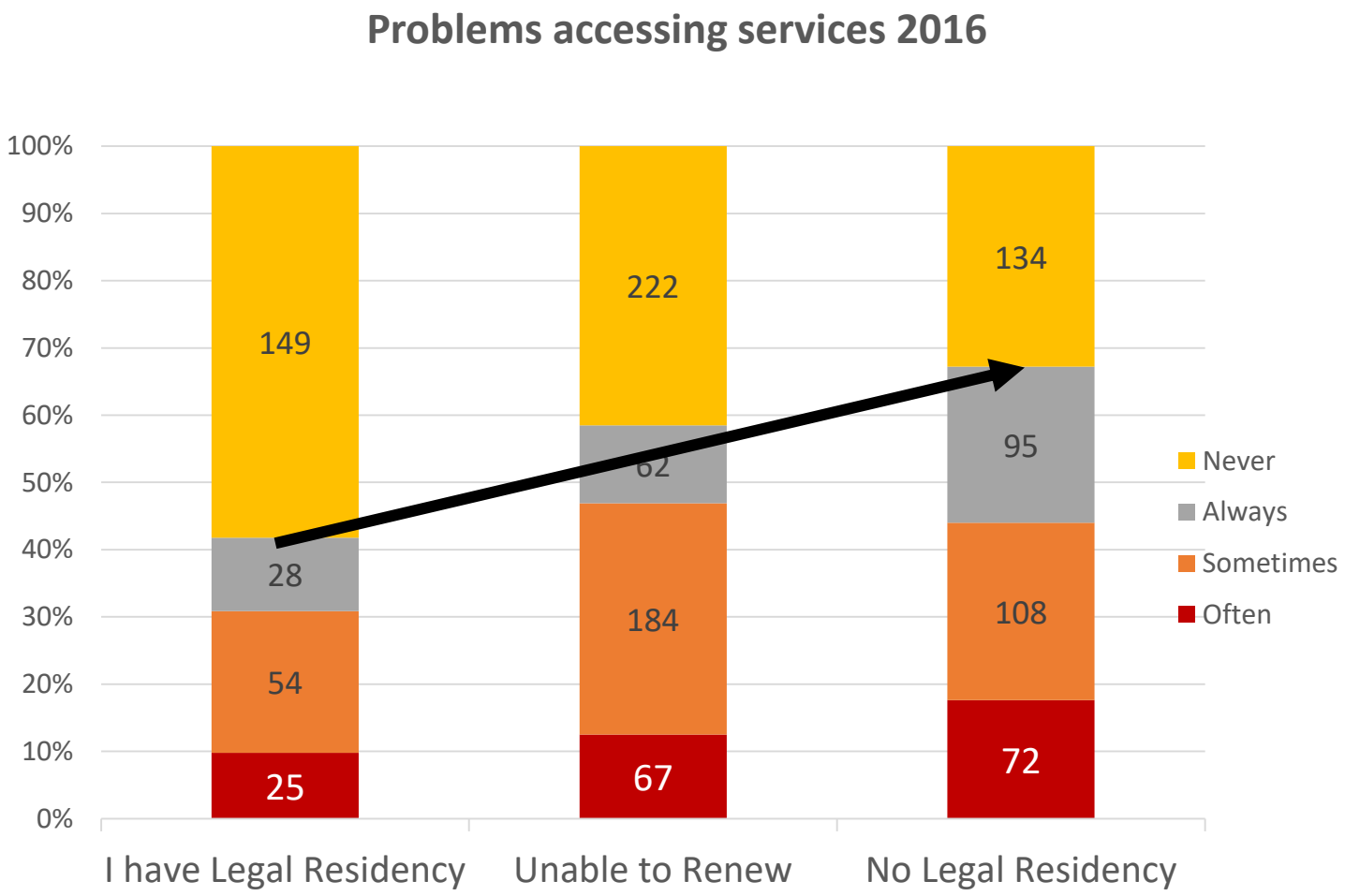
Those who don't have legal residency are more likely to be assaulted.

Impact on Checkpoint Problems



Those who don't have legal residency have more checkpoint problems.

Impact on Access to Services



Those who don't have legal residency have more problems accessing services.

Preliminary test of the vicious refugee cycle

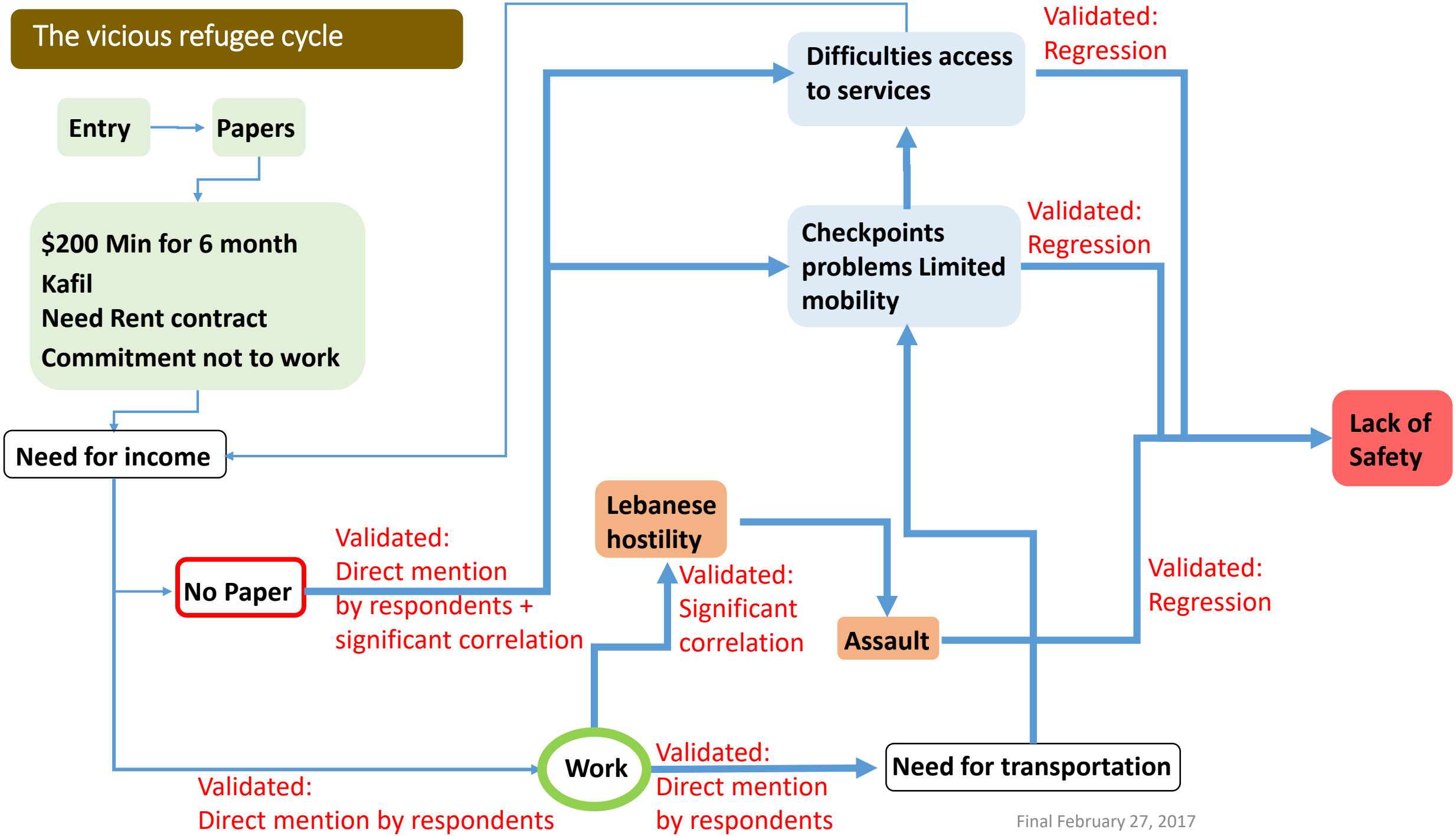
The model was tested in a stepwise regression against the variable safety.

Significant variables are: Checkpoint Problems, Relation with Local Authorities, Access to Services, Mobility Limitation, and Assault. These variables were either coded on a 4 or 5 points scale (depending on the number of answers), or coded as binary dummy variables.

They all turned out significant for 2015 and 2016 with no difference between the two years ("Year" dummy variable not significant).

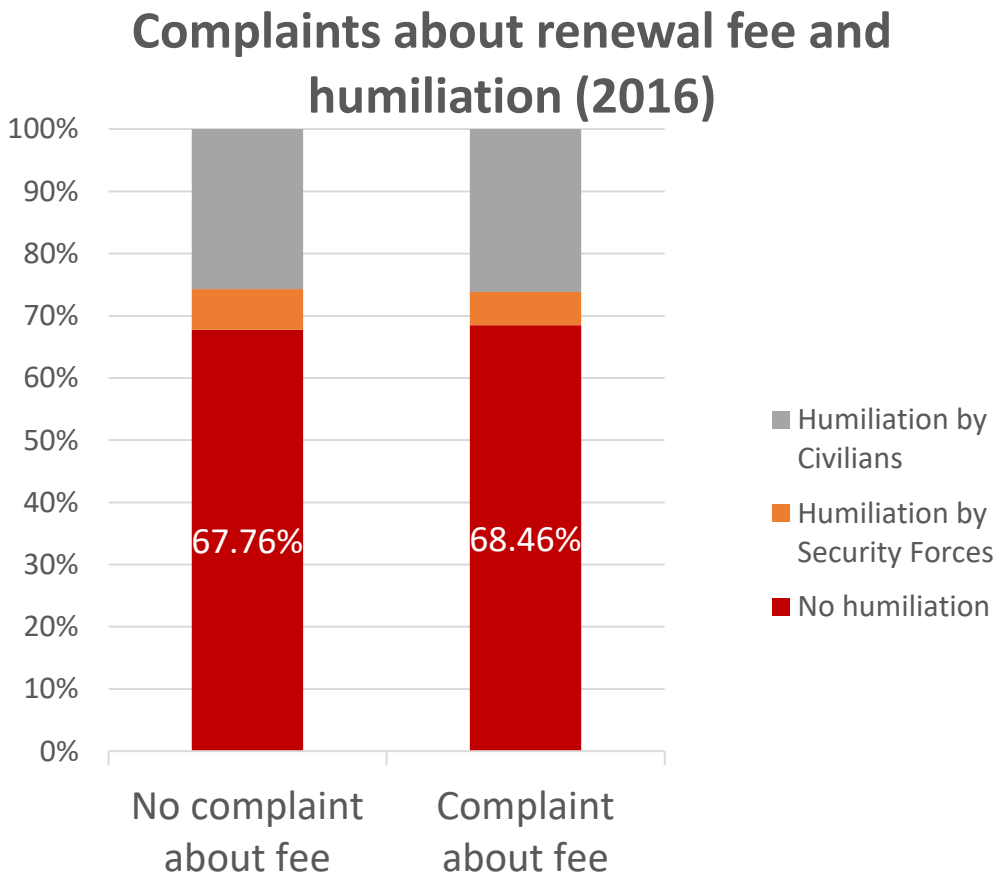
Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.413844
R Square	0.171267
Adjusted R Square	0.169073
Standard Error	0.888921
Observations	2274

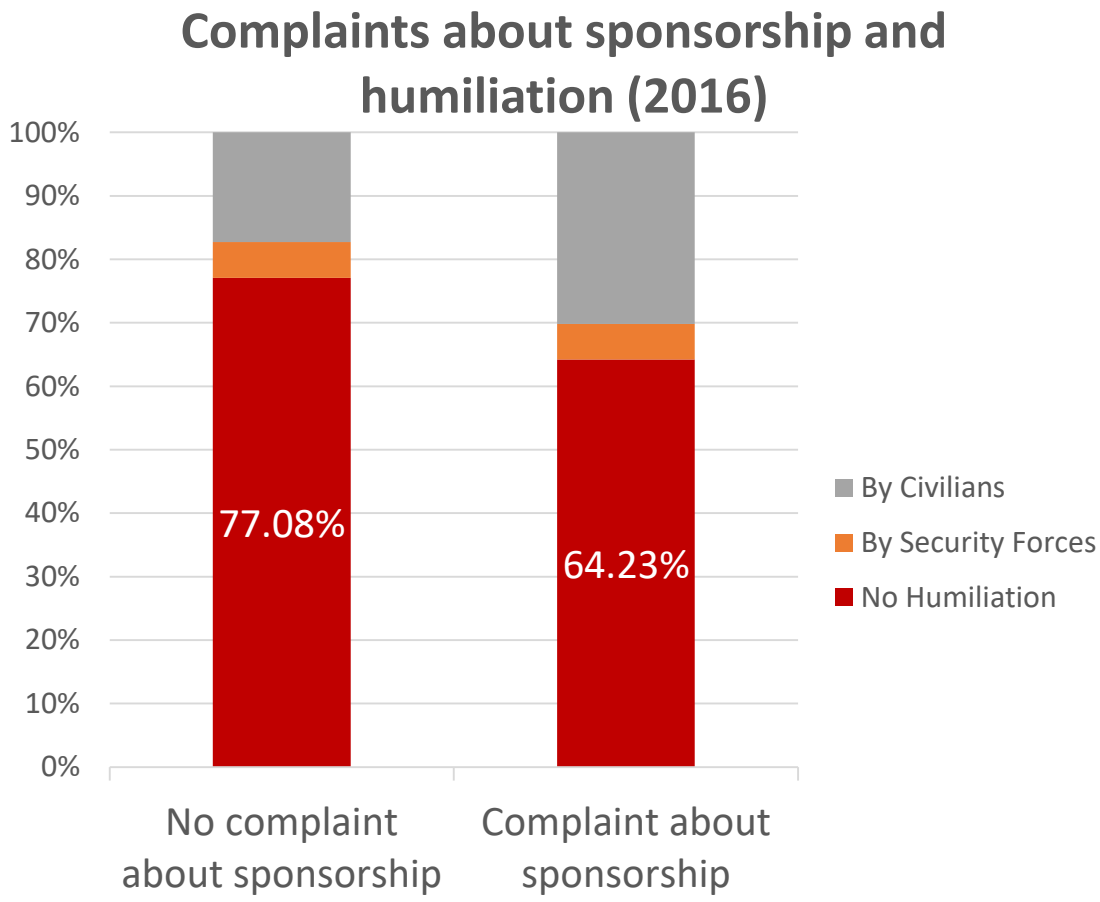
	Coefficients	Standard Error	P-value
Intercept	**1.52**	**0.11**	**0.00**
Checkpoints problems	**-0.18**	**0.05**	**0.00**
Relation with local authorities	**0.21**	**0.03**	**0.00**
Difficulty to Access Services	**-0.08**	**0.02**	**0.00**
Limited Mobility	**-0.23**	**0.02**	**0.00**
Assault	**-0.07**	**0.04**	**0.07**
Year	**-0.07**	**0.06**	**0.20**


The vicious refugee cycle
Entry
Papers
$200 Min for 6 month
Kafil
Need Rent contract
Commitment not to work
Need for income
No Paper
Validated:
Direct mention
by respondents +
significant correlation
Difficulties access
to services
Validated:
Regression
Checkpoints
problems Limited
mobility
Validated:
Regression
Lebanese
hostility
Validated:
Significant
correlation
Assault
Validated:
Regression
Lack of
Safety
Work
Validated:
Direct mention by respondents
Validated:
Direct mention
by respondents
Need for transportation
Final February 27, 2017

Impact of Fee and Sponsorship

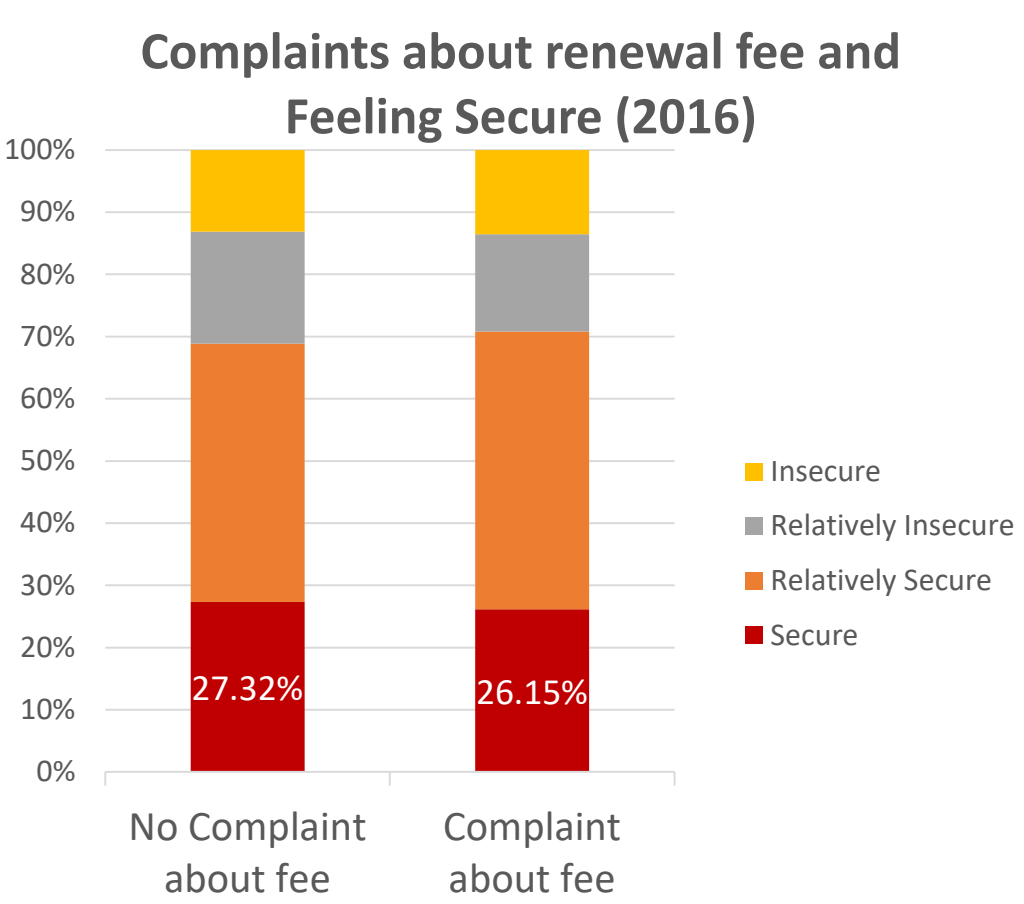
Those referring to sponsorship as a difficulty with regards to legal registration seem to be more subject to humiliation.

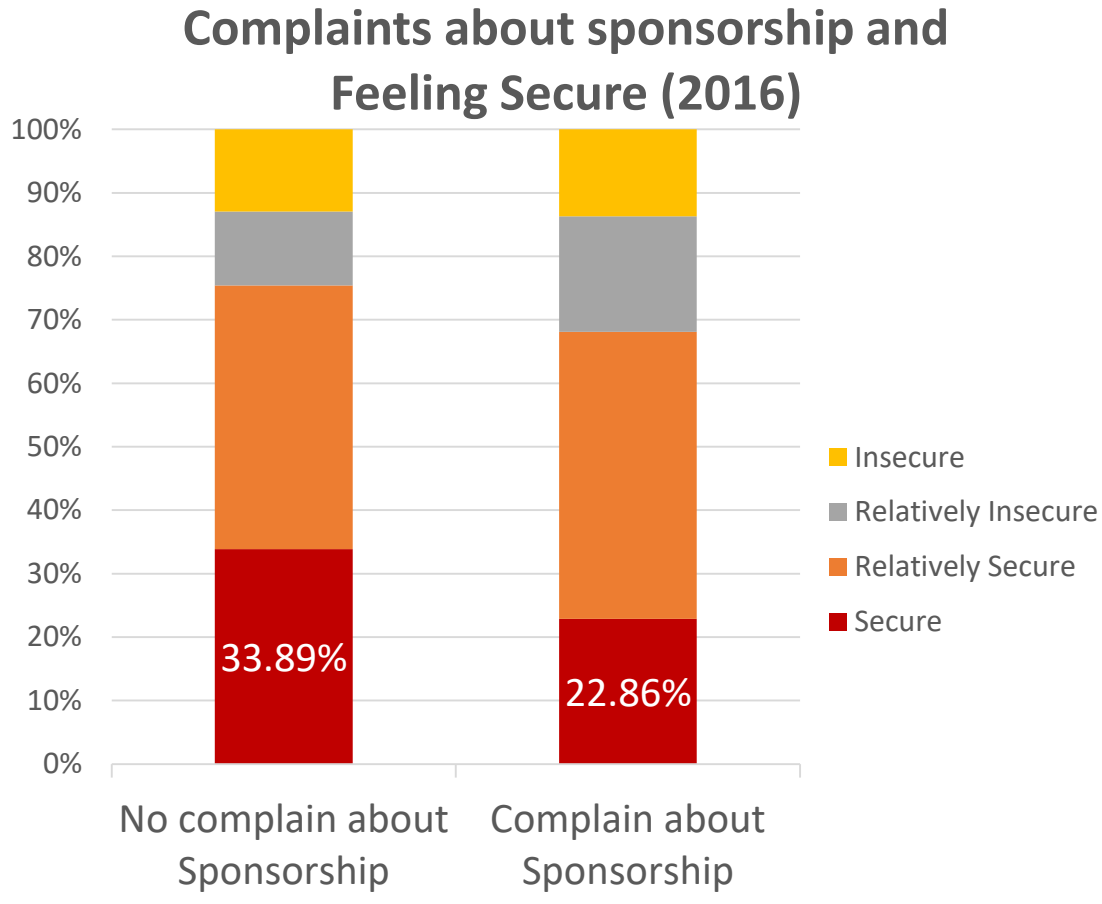




Impact of Fee and Sponsorship

Those referring to sponsorship as a difficulty with regards to legal registration seem to be less secure.

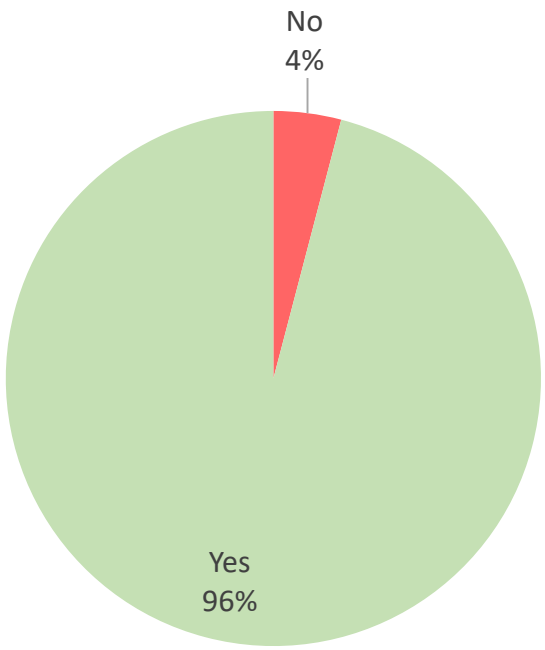




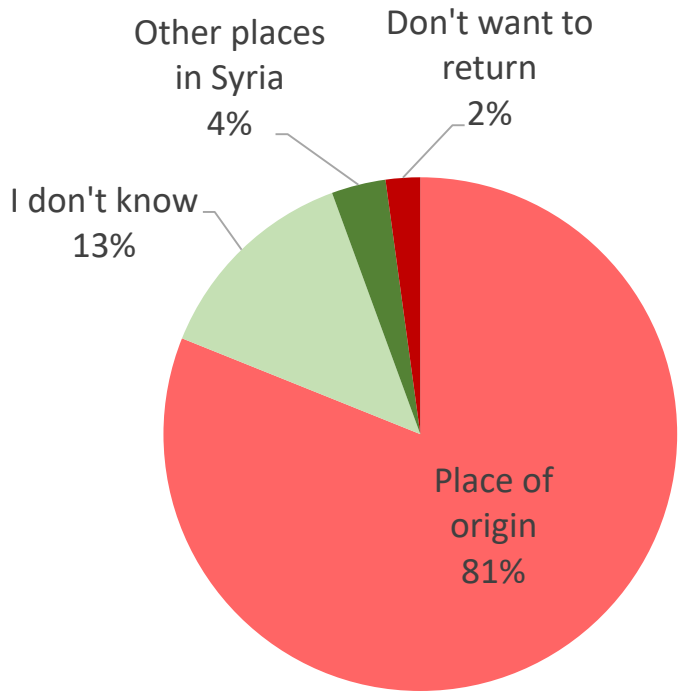
Return and Resettlement

Return: 2016

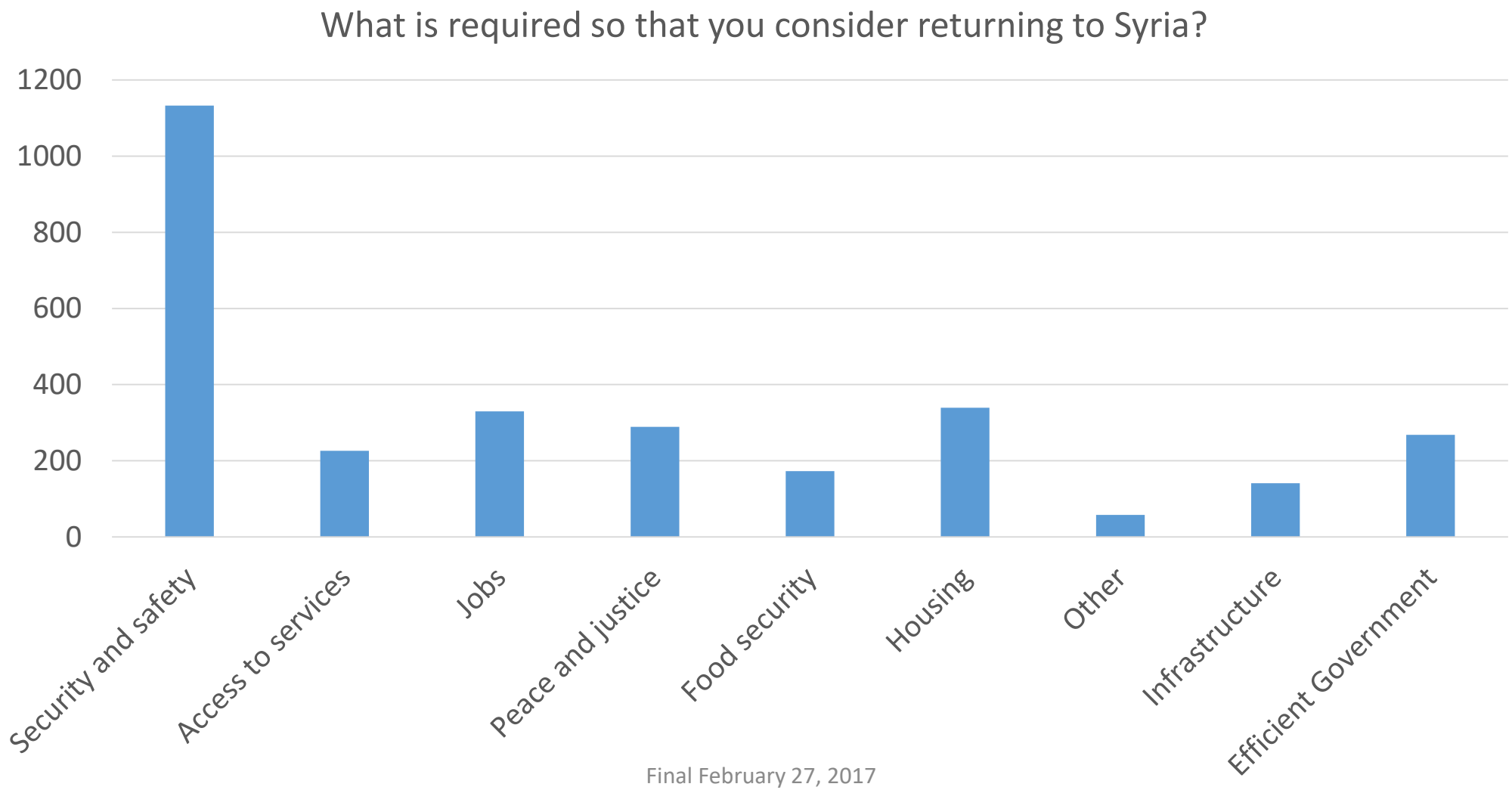
If things go back to normal, would you like to return to Syria?



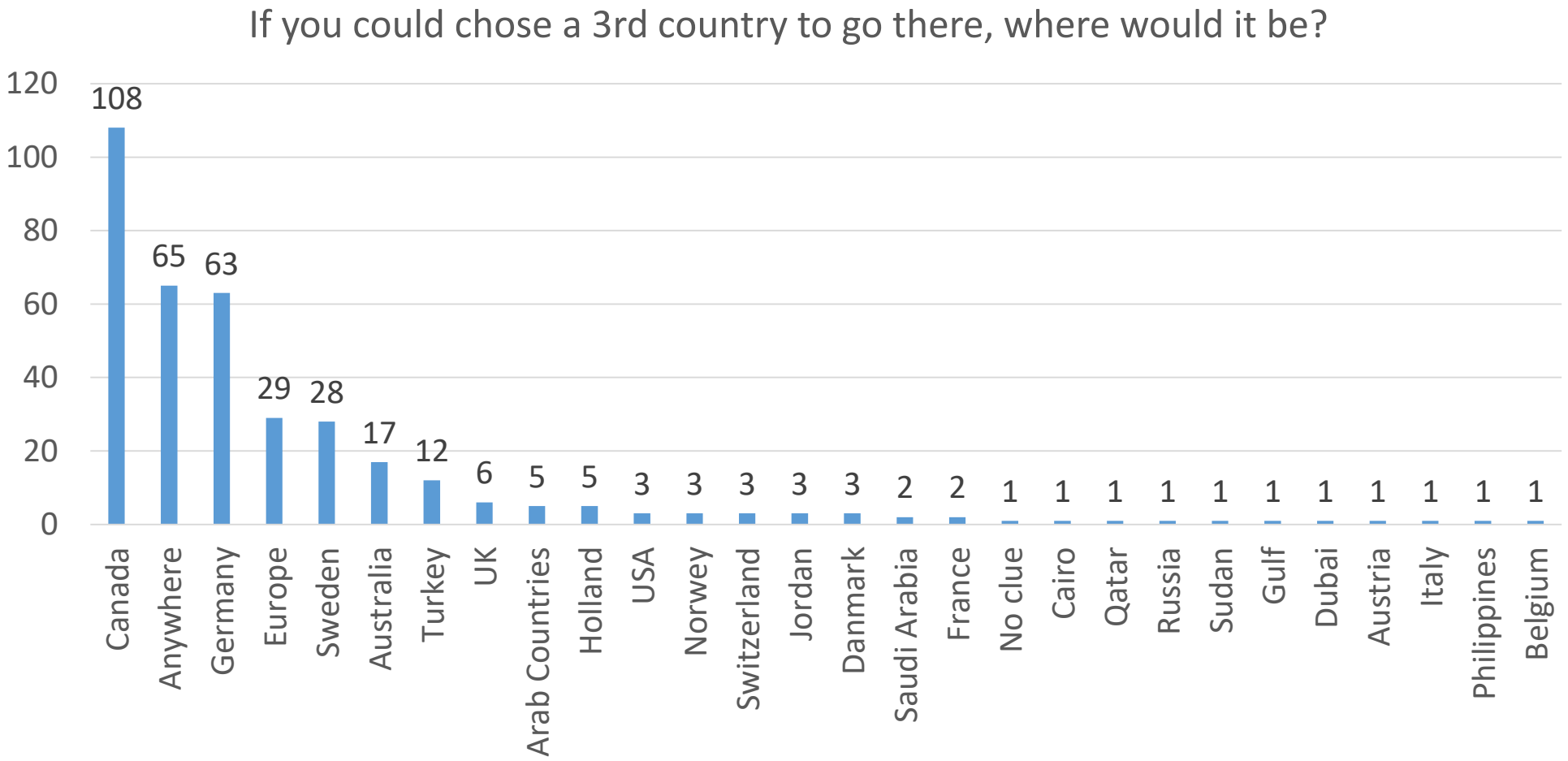
If you go back to Syria, where would you live?



Return: 2016


What is required so that you consider returning to Syria?
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
Security and safety
Access to services
Jobs
Peace and justice
Food security
Housing
Other
Infrastructure
Efficient Government

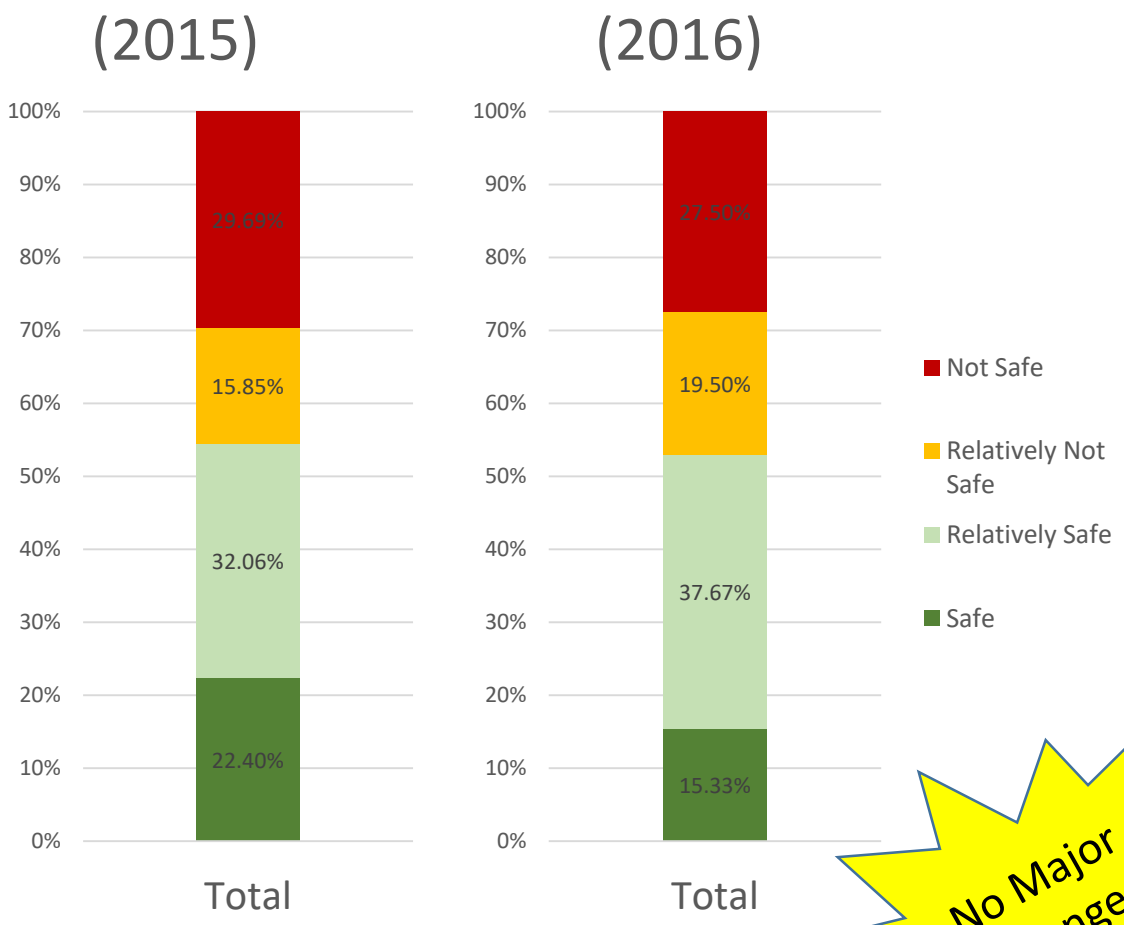
Resettlement: 2016



2-Lebanese Perception

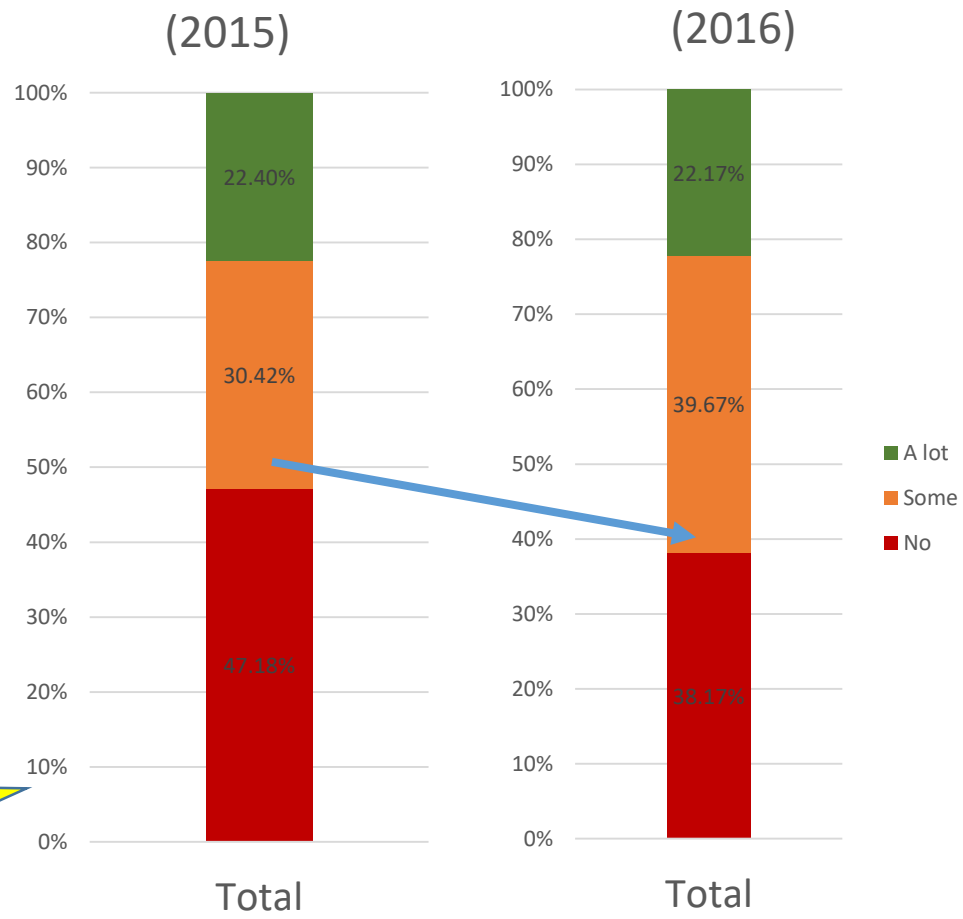
Lebanese Perception

How safe do you feel?



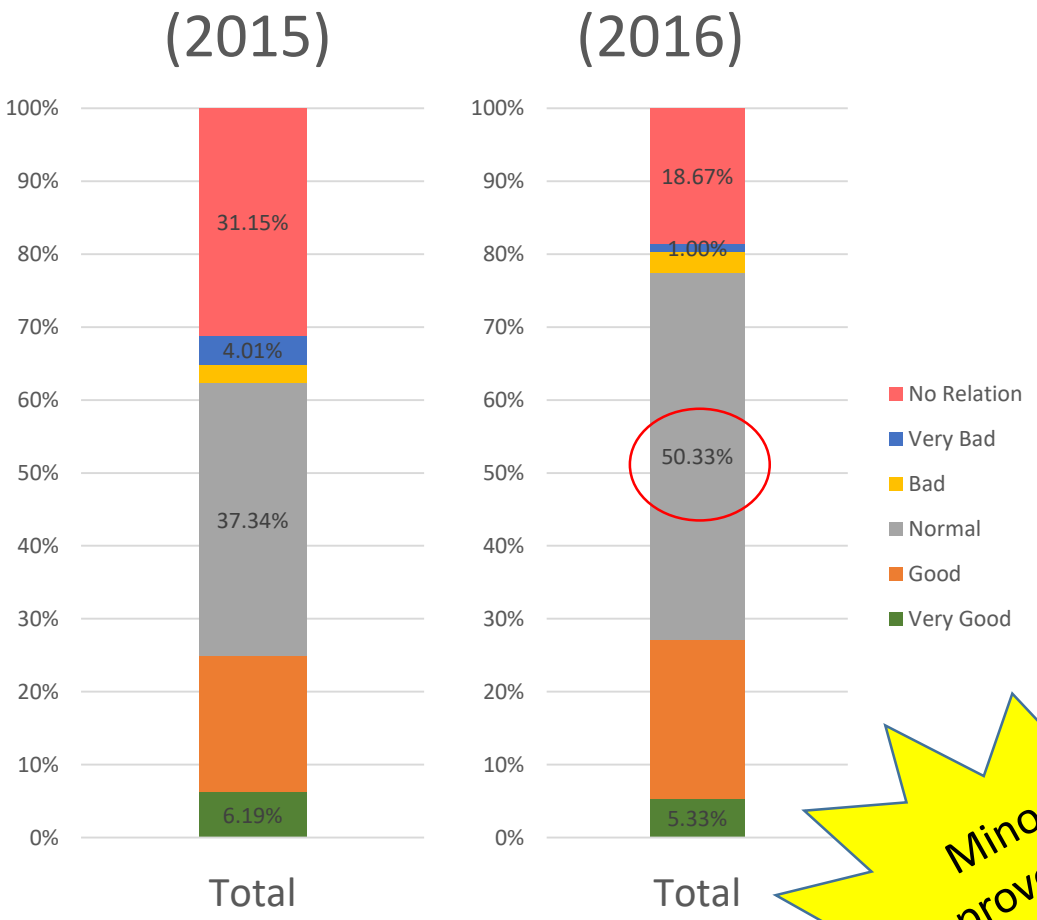
No Major Change

Have you heard stories that make you feel threatened?



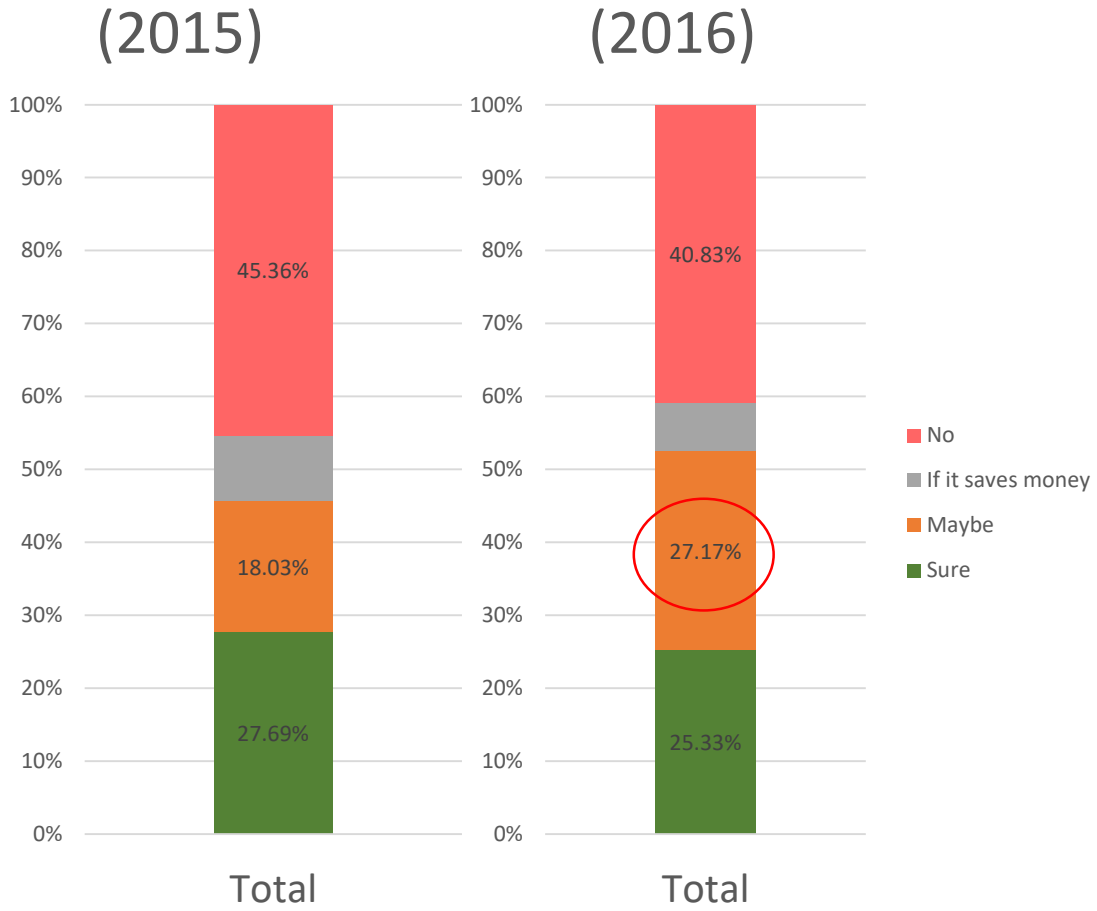
Lebanese Perception

How do you rate your relation with Syrian refugees?



Minor Improvement

Would you hire a Syrian refugee?



Lebanese Perception in 2016

Would you hire a Syrian refugee?

	2016
Yes	59%
No	41%

Would you send your kids to school with Syrian refugees?

	2016
Yes	43%
No	57%

Would you accept that Syrian refugees live in your neighborhood?

	2016
Yes	55%
No	45%

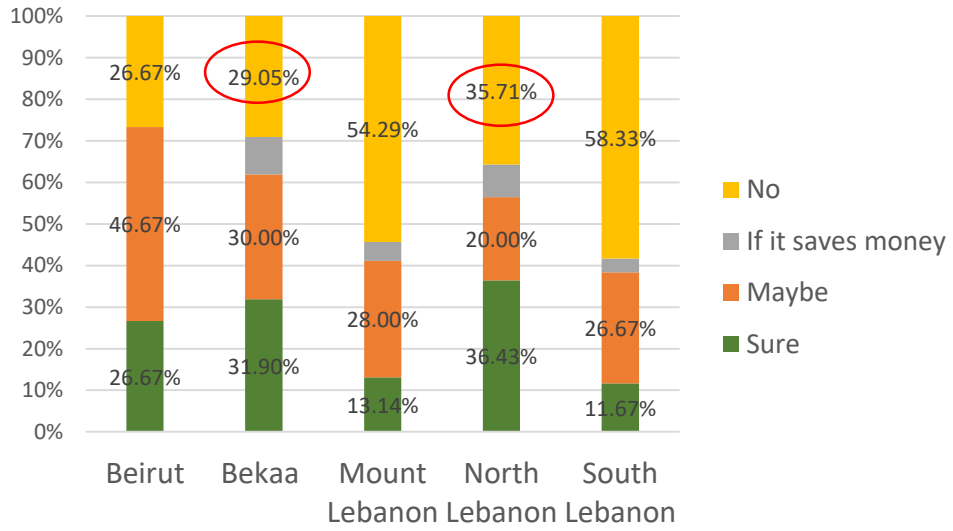
Would you allow your child to marry a Syrian refugee?

	2016
Yes	22%
No	78%

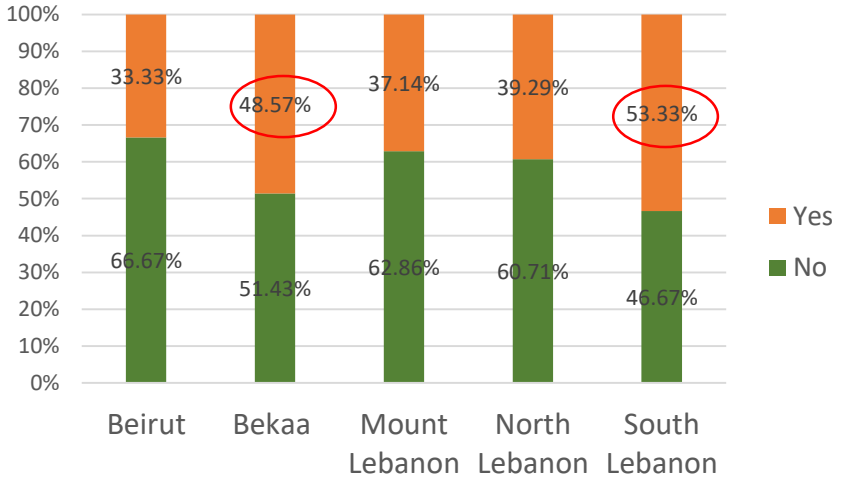
In 2016, 41% of Lebanese respondents would not hire a Syrian refugee, 45% would not accept refugees in their neighborhood, 57% would not send their kids to school with refugees, and 78% refuse that their children marry a Syrian refugee.

Lebanese Perception in 2016

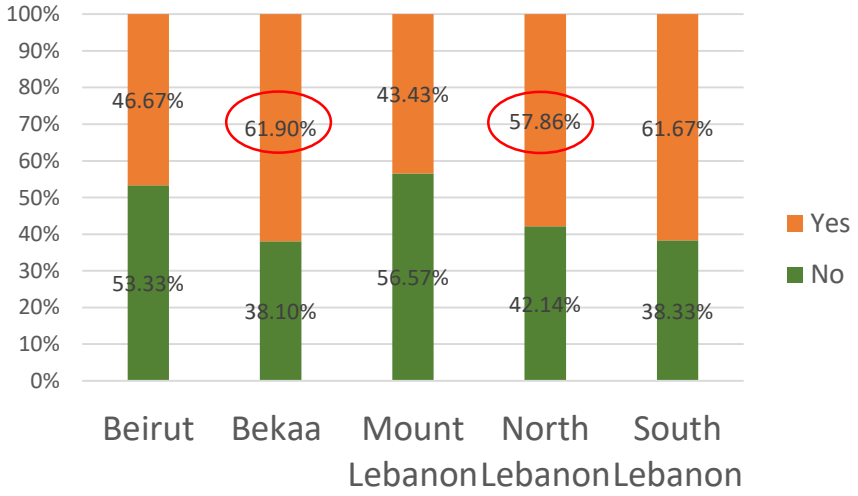
Hiring (2016)



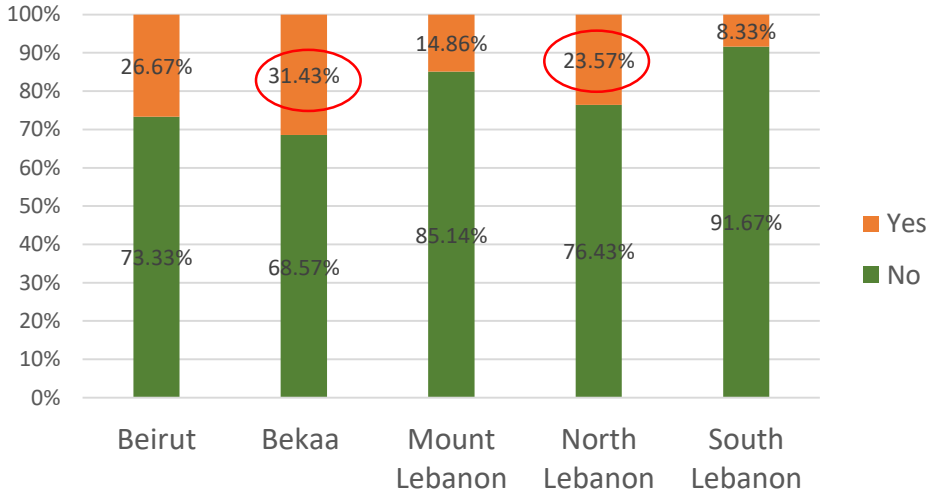
Schools (2016)



Residence (2016)



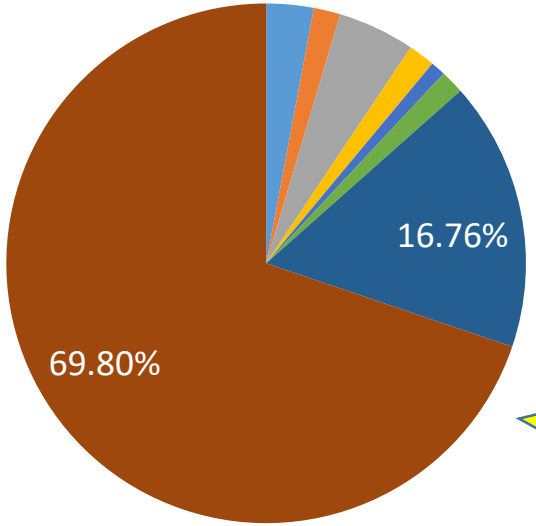
Marriage (2016)



Lebanese Perception

In 2015: assaults reported by 13% of the Lebanese, with a 17% of people saying they "heard stories". While in 2016: assaults reported by 8% of the Lebanese with much less (6%) saying that they heard stories.

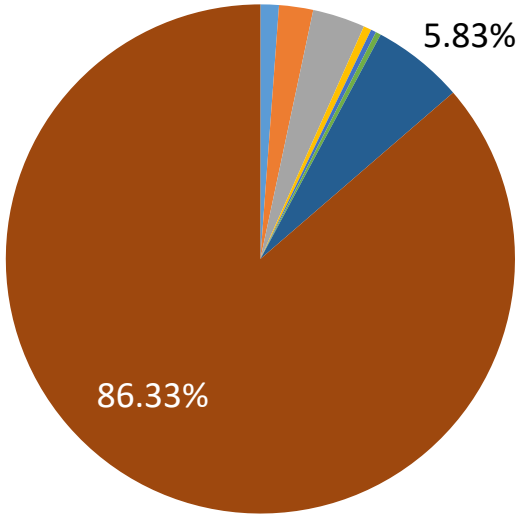
Assault (2015)



Me and my family beaten
Me and my family threatened
Me and my family insulted
Friends beaten
Friends threatened
Friend insult
Heard Stories
No

Less reference to « stories » and less assaults reported

Assault (2016)



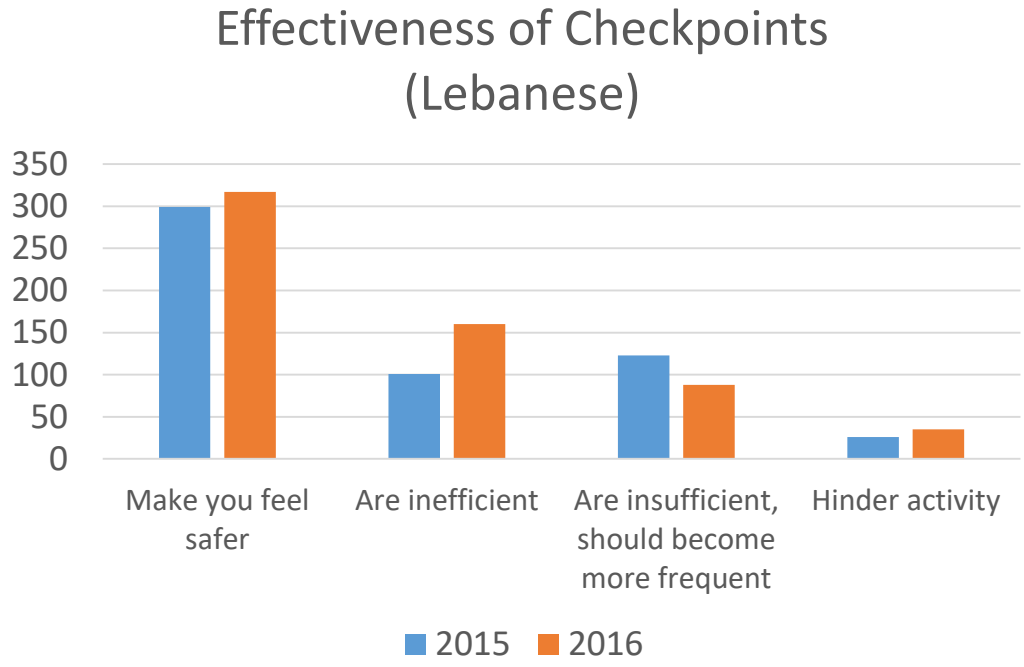
Me and my family beaten
Me and my family threatened
Me and my family insulted
Extorsion gainst me and family
Friends threatened
Friend insult
Heard Stories
No

Lebanese Perception

Number of reported Syrians assaults increased from 293 to 365, while number of reported Lebanese assaults decreased from 51 to 43

Year	Syrians Assaulted (self and family)	Lebanese Assaulted (self and family)
2015	24.4%	8.5%
2016	30.4%	7%

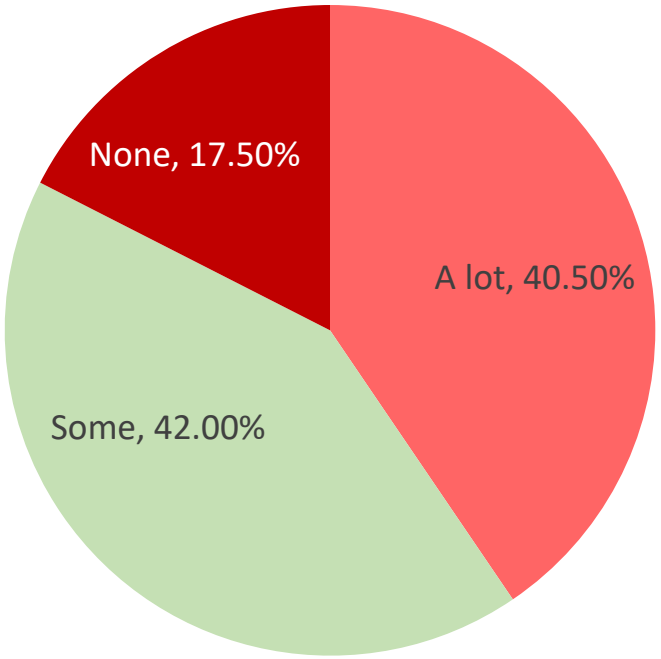
Assaults reported by Syrians increased and those reported by Lebanese decreased.



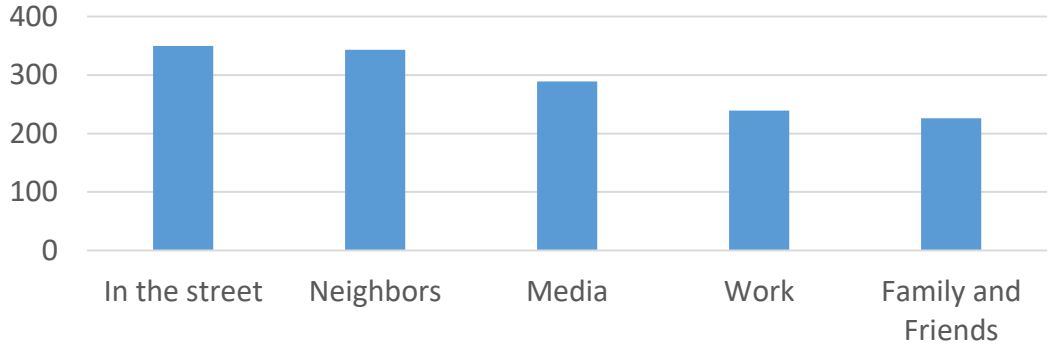
Lebanese Perception

40% said they heard a lot of stories expressing hates against Syrian refuges. Most stories were heard in the street, among neighbors, and in the media (mainly TV).

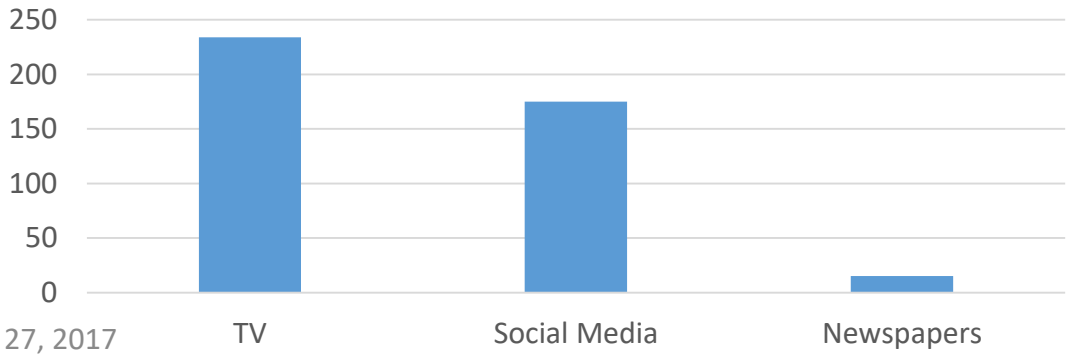
Have you recently heard statements expressing hate against Syrian refugees?



Where?
(number of answers out of 600)

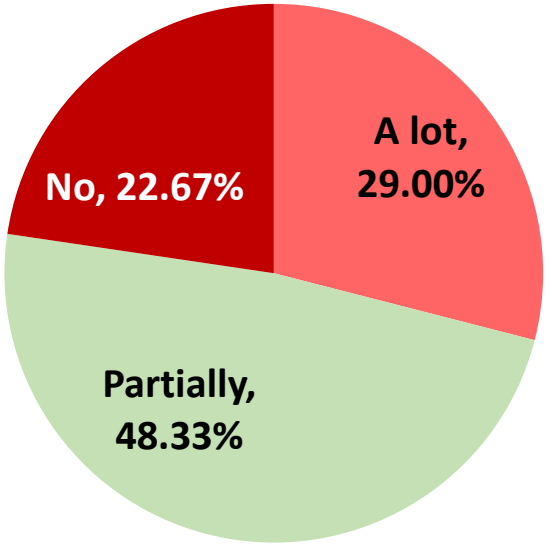


Which Media?
(number of answers out of 600)



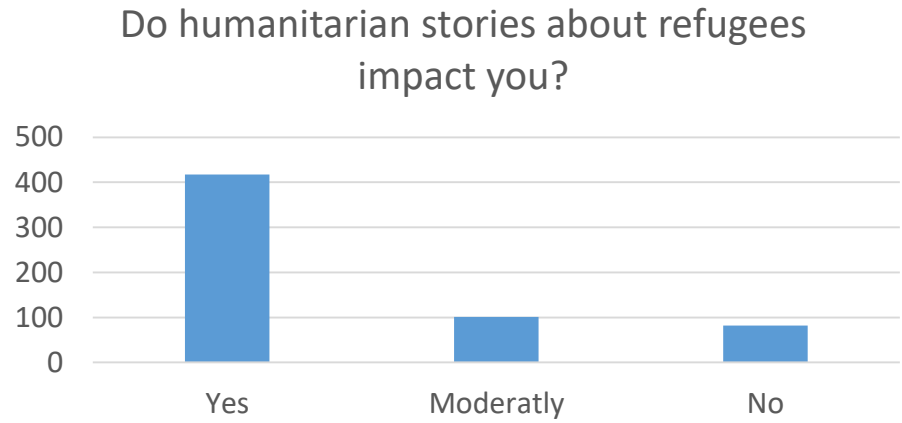
Lebanese Perception

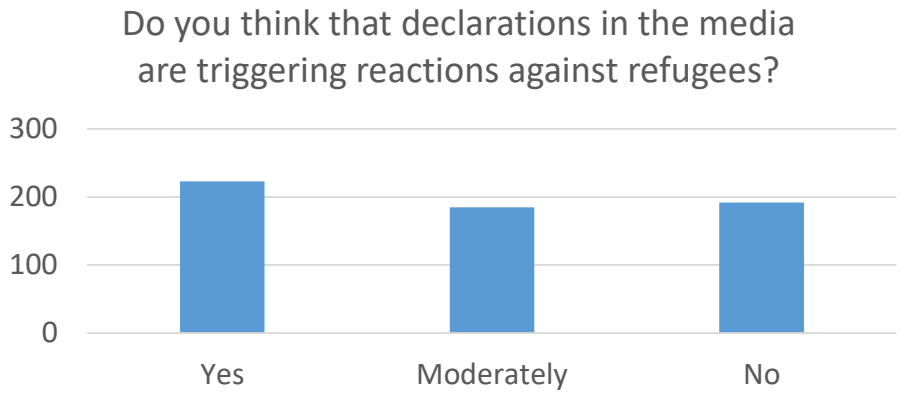
Do you think that media impact your perception of refugees?

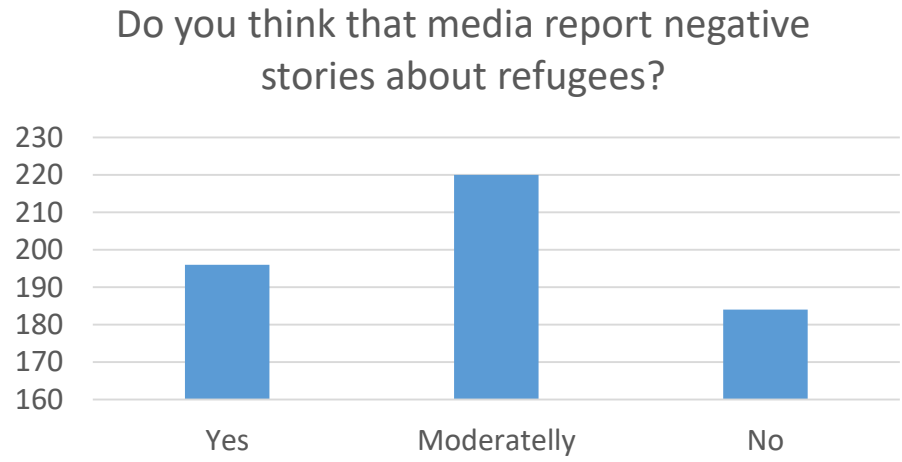


- 29% of Lebanese respondents think that media impact perception of refugees a lot, and 48% think that the impact is partial.
- More than two thirds says that humanitarian stories about refugees impact them.
- More than two thirds also acknowledge that declarations in the media trigger reactions against refugees, and that media report negative stories about refugees.

Final February 27, 2017







Summary

Syrians

Access to jobs	Same
Revenue	Increase
Access to services	Increase
Friendships/Feeling Welcome	Same
Residency Permits	Decrease
UNHCR Registration	Same
Feeling that Residency impacts safety	Increase
Institutional approval score	Slight increase
Assaults against Syrian	Increase
Abuse	Increase
Problems with checkpoints	Increase

Lebanese

Safety	Same
Feeling threatened	Decrease
Relation with Syrian	Same
Willingness to hire Syrian	Slight increase
Assaults against Lebanese	Decrease
Abuse	Decrease
Checkpoint efficiency	Same (High)

On the Syrian side, some resilience is reflected by the increase in access to jobs and services. However, some vulnerability remains with regards to security, mobility, and assaults, due to absence of legal papers. In Parallel, on the Lebanese side, there is an increase in feeling of security, and maybe a slight increase in willingness to hire Syrians.
Nevertheless, Lebanese host communities remain distant socially for Syrian refugees and recognize the impact of media on their perceptions.

Summary

Economic and Social Integration:

- The new survey show the percentage of Syrians working has not changed: 61% in 2016 against 62% in 2015.
- However, average family revenue has gone up: 422$ in 2016 against 350$ in 2015.
- The mapping of work in Syria against work in Lebanon shows that farming skills are unused, as only 20% of those working in farming in Syria are doing the same in Lebanon. Students (of age 18 and above) have not been able to pursue their education (only 9% did). Those who had their own business in Syria, don't have this opportunity in Lebanon.
- There is no noticeable change with regards to friendships or whether refugees feel welcome in Lebanon (63 % don't feel welcome in 2016 compared to 62% in 2015).
- When asked to choose between a series of worries, refugees rated security highest. Health came next, followed by Education. When asked to add other worries, 33% of those who responded mentioned rent, work, and inflation.

Summary

Registration:

- While 30% had residency permits in 2015, 21.3% said they have residency in 2016, a decrease in 9%.
- As for UNHCR registration, there is no noticeable change: 79% were registered in 2015, against 77% in 2016.
- A bigger number fell that legal residency impacts safety: 97% in 2016, compared to 88% in 2015.
- Approval score of most institutions slightly raised. Less people “don’t know”.

Summary

Security:

- 293 personal assaults reported by Syrian respondents in 2015 and 365 reported in 2016.
- 86% of these cases where explicitly blamed on Lebanese offenders in 2015 and 87% in 2016. Assault increased in the Bekaa.
- In 2015, 46% of Syrian Refugees have been victim of abuse while in Lebanon, 69% did nothing about it. While in 2016, 50% of Syrian refugees have been victim of abuse while in Lebanon, 72% did nothing about it.
- The percentage of refugees who reported insults, harassment, blackmailing, eviction, etc. by civil society increased from a total of 658 in 2015 to a total 829 in 2016.

Summary

Checkpoints:

- 37% had problems with checkpoints in 2015. 58% have problems with checkpoints in 2016.
- Most respondents said that checkpoints are important to them. In 2016: 56% of them said the main reason is to go to work, while 23 % mentioned access to services, and 6% mentioned access to aid.
- 59% worry about Arrest/Detention on checkpoints, while 21% are worried not to be able to cross, and 10% worry about verbal abuse.
- No noticeable change in difficulty to move around reported by Refugees. However, more refugees realize that this is due to checkpoints (34% in 2016 compared to 18% in 2015).

Summary

- 45% had problems accessing services in 2015 and 29% in 2016.
- 37% said they were treated worse than others when accessing services in 2015 and 42% in 2016.
- Perception of security agencies is lower among refugees who don't have legal residency.
- Those referring to sponsorship as a difficulty with regards to legal registration seem to be more subject to humiliation and less secure.
- The vicious circle of insecurity was tested again and validated:
  1. Lack of residency has a direct impact on Syrian respondents' mobility, access to services, assault, and vulnerability.
  2. This vulnerability has a direct impact on their safety.

Summary

Return and Resettlement:

- 96% of Syrian refugees said they will go back to Syria if things go back to normal.
- 81% said that, if they go back to Syria, they will go back to their place of origin.
- When asked what alternative country they would choose if they could leave Lebanon, 108 mentioned Canada, 65 said “anywhere”, 63 mentioned German, 29 mentioned Europe, 28 mentioned Sweden, 17 mentioned Australia, 12 mentioned Turkey, 6 mentioned the UK, 5 mentioned Arab countries, 5 mentioned Holland, 3 mentioned the USA, and the rest were scattered in various other destinations.
- Security and safety are a key requirement for return to Syria.

Summary

Lebanese Respondents:

- There is no change with regards to Lebanese respondents' safety (about 55% feel safe).
- The percentage of Lebanese respondents who heard stories that made them feel threatened decreased from 47% in 2015 to 38% in 2016.
- A higher percentage of Lebanese consider their relation with refugees "normal" (50% in 2016, compared to 37 % in 2015), while less consider that they have no relation with refugees (19% in 2016 compared to 31% in 2015).
- 41% of Lebanese respondents would not hire a Syrian refugee, 45% would not accept refugees in their neighborhood, 57% would not send their kids to school with refugees, and 78% refuse that their children marry a Syrian refugee. Tolerance levels are higher in the Bekaa and the North.

Summary

- Less reference to « stories » and less assaults were reported by Lebanese in 2016. In 2015: assaults reported by 13% of the Lebanese, with a 17% of people saying they “heard stories”. While in 2016: assaults reported by 8% of the Lebanese with much less (6%) saying that they heard stories.
- Assaults reported by Syrians increased and those reported by Lebanese slightly decreased.
- 40% of Lebanese respondents said that they heard a lot of stories expressing hates against Syrian refuges. Most stories were heard in the street, among neighbors, and in the media (mainly TV).

Summary

- 29% of Lebanese respondents think that media impact perception of refugees a lot, and 48% think that the impact is partial.
- More than two thirds says that humanitarian stories about refugees impact them.
- More than two thirds also acknowledge that declarations in the media trigger reactions against refugees, and that media report negative stories about refugees.