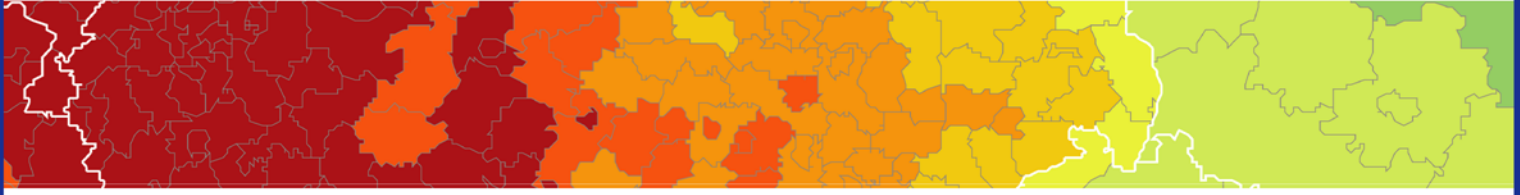


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

Applied Research

Case study – Auzolana Programme in Basque Country (Spain)

Version 18/07/2019

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Authors

Rubén Carrandi Cortina (Spain)

Advisory Group

Project Support Team: Radu Necsuliu (Romania), Lodovico Gherardi (Italy) and Andor Urmos (European Commission)

ESPON EGTC

Martin Gauk (Policy Expert), Laurent Frideres (HoU E&O), Ilona Raugze (Director), Johannes Kiersch (Financial Expert)

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Abbreviations

ACCEM	Spanish Catholic Migration Commission
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
CCOO	Workers' Commissions of Spain
CEAR	Spanish Commission for Refugees
CEOE	Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organisations
CEPS	Centre for European Policy Studies
CEPYME	Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
CIFOB	Barcelona Centre for International Affairs
CSIC	Spanish National Research Council
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EC	European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
EUDEL	Basque Municipalities Association
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LAB	Nationalist Workers' Committees
MPDL	Movement for Peace, Disarmament and Freedom
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PICUM	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
PPP	Purchase power parity
SASEMAR	Spanish Maritime Safety Society
SJM	Jesuit Migrant Service
UGT	General Workers' Union of Spain
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive summary

This case study analyses the main features of the flows and stocks of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees, as well as their impact on the socio-economic development of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country in Spain.

To this end, Section 1 provides a general description of the background and context of immigration and refugee flows and stocks in the Basque Country, including a description of the socio-economic context of the region; the features of the current flows and stocks of asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in the autonomous community; the challenges, opportunities and impacts that they imply for the Basque Country; and the institutional framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees in the autonomous community.

The Basque Country is an autonomous community (NUTS 2) of northern Spain with a total population of 2.2 million (4.6 % of the total population of Spain). It is one of the most aged regions in the country, with an educational level well above the Spanish average, and is a traditionally dynamic region with strong economic growth, with the highest GDP per capita in Spain (31.5 % above the national average). Labour market conditions are improving after the recent economic crisis, and employment and unemployment indicators show better performance than the national average.

The Basque Country is also an immigration-receiving region and an area of transit in the way of the migration routes crossing Spain from Africa and moving to central and northern Europe across the French–Spanish border. Its foreign-origin population amounts to 9.0 % of the total inhabitants (12.9 % in Spain) after the recent increases following years of decline during the economic crisis. The profile of the foreign population corresponds to that of a young person and is concentrated in the central age groups of the population pyramid; they are originally mainly from Latin America, Europe and Africa, mostly from the Maghreb region, and have low and medium levels of qualifications, in line with the jobs corresponding to demand from both companies and families.

Although there are no data available on beneficiaries of international protection (asylum, subsidiary protection or humanitarian reasons) at the level of autonomous communities in Spain, data on asylum applications are accessible: they show an enormous increase in the Basque Country in recent years, multiplying by 25.7 times the number of applications between 2013 (62 applications) and 2018 (1,595), mainly due to the increase in the requests from Venezuela (in particular), Colombia and Honduras, following a more intense trend than the rest of Spain (where the number of applications multiplied by 12.1 times in the same period).

Therefore, the main current challenge within this context in the Basque Country and in Spain is the adaptation of the capacities of the National Refugees Reception and Integration System to the increasing flows of asylum seekers and refugees, as the system is overflowing and

when conflicts or sudden situations occur provoking increasing inflows, it cannot provide an adequate response, as it has been the case for years.

Foreign immigration in the Basque Country has experienced a process of normalisation or relatively stable insertion, and there is evidence available from immigrants that highlights their satisfaction, integration and willingness to stay. A positive impact of a population of foreign origin on public finances in the Basque Country has been proven. They contribute to the public systems more than the expenditure which they incur, as well as from the social and political point of view, mainly because of their positive contribution to the demographics dynamic.

Regarding governance, the subjects of immigration, asylum and nationality in Spain are, according to the Spanish Constitution, the exclusive competence of the central government. The Spanish system assigns places centrally for the refugees and asylum seekers to stay in the different autonomous communities, deciding the reception and integration plan as well as the region for each refugee and asylum seeker, without the autonomous communities taking part in the decision.

Based on this, Section 2 provides an analysis of the Auzolana programme, a pilot project launched in 2017 by the Regional Government of the Basque Country, aimed to reinforce the Refugees Reception and Integration System – implemented in Spain at a national level – in the Basque Autonomous Community. The analysis explains the topic and motivation of the practice; its objectives and the logic of intervention; the actors taking part; the process of implementation; and its outcomes, impacts and results.

The Regional Government of the Basque Country came to an agreement with the Spanish Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, to launch a pilot project in July 2017 called the Auzolana programme, as a reinforcement mechanism for the national Refugees Reception and Integration System within the region.

Therefore, the Auzolana programme is focused on strengthening and improving the ordinary mechanisms for reception of asylum seekers, both from the quantitative point of view (increase in resources), and qualitatively (better resources), by introducing a new model of governance. It develops a bottom-up approach to respond to the challenge imposed by the increase in the flows of asylum seekers, with the involvement of the municipalities and local NGOs and volunteer associations. Together with the autonomous community, the model provides places for housing, but also different kinds of social services to reinforce their reception and integration into the host society.

During its first 18 months of implementation, the Auzolana programme has proved to be effective in terms of its contribution to the reinforcement of the Refugees Reception and Integration System, particularly in terms of the increase in places available for reception, which already represent 13.8 % of the total available in the autonomous community; at the

same time it has supported 120 people, which represents 7.5 % of total applications for international protection in the Basque Country in 2018.

The programme is expected to continue with some improvements which the regional government is already working on, taking into account the outcomes of an analysis of results and systematisation of procedures, currently ongoing.

Furthermore, it will be complemented with a new programme, called Auzolana II. This is currently being implemented by the Basque Government, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and two regional NGOs with the support of the national government. It is based on the Canadian model of community sponsorship and was launched in March 2019 with five families distributed among five Basque municipalities, implying an important change of paradigm in the field of the support to refugees and asylum seekers in Spain.

Finally, Section 3 summarises the main findings, conclusions and lessons learnt from the practice analysed. Thus, it highlights the importance of the new bottom-up approach that the practice has put in place, with the involvement of regional and local levels of public administration together with local NGOs and citizens associations.

It also emphasises the relevance of the coordination among the different stakeholders at a regional and local level as well as the adequate communication channels. These seem to be key factors for the effectiveness of the policy.

To conclude, it also points out the need for better coordination between the Auzolana programme and other social inclusion programmes, in order to maximise the effectiveness of the practice.

1 Profile of the area

This case study focuses on the Auzolana programme, a pilot project implemented in the Basque Country, one of the 17 autonomous communities¹ (NUTS 2) of Spain. This section provides an overview of the socio-economic context, the inflows and the characteristics of the immigrants, the asylum seekers and the refugees across the Basque Country. It also discusses the challenges, opportunities and impacts of those inflows, and describes the policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees in the region.

1.1 Socio-economic context

The Basque Country is an autonomous community in northern Spain, bounded by the Bay of Biscay to the north and other Spanish provinces to the west, south and east, where it borders with France. Across its 20,947 km², it includes coastal, mountainous and rural areas, as well as large urban agglomerations.

With a total population of 2.2 million (48.4 % males and 51.6 % females), it encompasses the provinces of Álava, Biscay and Guipúzcoa (NUTS 3), with Vitoria (in the Province of Álava) being its capital city (with 249,176 inhabitants). The city of Bilbao – the capital city of the Province of Biscay – is the most important city in the region in terms of population (345,821 inhabitants, 15.7 % of the total of Basque Country), occupying 10th position in Spain. Bilbao's Metropolitan Area represents the fifth most populated area in Spain, with almost 43 % of the population of the autonomous community².



Figure 1: Maps indicating the location of the Basque Country in Spain
Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of official maps.

The Basque Country is one of the most aged regions in Spain, with the fifth highest ageing index (147.5 %) of the 17 autonomous communities, well above the national average (120.5 %). Its educational level is higher than the Spanish average, with 49.7 % of the population aged between 25 and 64 years having reached an education level higher than secondary education (ISCED 4 to 9) (36.4 % for Spain). On the contrary, for education levels

¹ Spain is territorially organised in 17 autonomous communities and 2 autonomous cities.

² National Statistics Institute. Municipal Register of Inhabitants at 1 January 2018. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/2qC6zgX>

lower than ISCED 4, the share in the Basque Country is below the average in the country, and the lower the level, the higher the difference compared to the average³.

It is also an immigration-receiving region, with 7,766 more immigrants than emigrants in 2017⁴, and an area of transit for the migration routes crossing Spain from Africa and moving to central and northern Europe across the French–Spanish border.

Its foreign-origin population amounts to 9.0 % of the total inhabitants (12.9 % for Spain) after the increases in 2015 and 2016 following reductions in the context of the recent economic crisis. The profile of the foreign population corresponds to that of a young person and is concentrated in the central age groups of the population pyramid. They are originally mainly from Latin America (46.7 %), Europe (23.4 %) and Africa (21.7 %), mostly from the Maghreb region (14.0 %). By country of origin, the largest foreign-origin population in the Basque Country are originally from Morocco (10.9 %), Colombia (9.3 %), Romania (7.9 %), Bolivia (5.7 %) and Ecuador (4.3 %)⁵. With regard to education, the population of foreign origin in the Basque Country has low and medium levels of qualifications, in line with the jobs for which they have been required⁶ by both companies and families (an important proportion of immigrants were employed in the previous decade in personal and household services in private houses).

The Basque Country has traditionally been a dynamic region with strong economic growth in Spain. Its gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 3.1 % in 2017 (3.0 % in Spain), with an average 1.0 % growth within the 2010-2017 period (0.8 % in Spain). Besides, the Basque Country has the highest GDP per capita in Spain, 31.5 % above the national average⁷. The main sectors of the regional economy are services (69.1 % of regional GDP in 2016), principally commerce, hospitality and transport, as well as public administration, education, health and social services; industry (24.1 %), mainly manufacturing industry; and construction (5.9 %)⁸.

After the recent economic crisis, labour market conditions have been improving since 2014, with continuous increases in employment rates and reductions in unemployment rates. Thus,

³ Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2019). Analysis of labour force survey results (25-34 years old). Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/30BKBJs>

⁴ National Statistics Institute (2018). 'External migration statistics 2017'. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/2Lo8cuf>

⁵ Basque Immigration Observatory, IKUSPEGI (2018). Immigration statistics 2017. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2F7ubRf>

⁶ Regional Ministry of Employment and Social Policies of the Basque Government (2018). '5th action plan in the field of citizenship, interculturality and immigration 2018-2020'. Gobierno Vasco. Departamento de Empleo y Políticas Sociales, Vitoria. <https://bit.ly/2LVQKN2>

⁷ National Statistics Institute (2018). '2017 Spain regional accounts'. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/32uu9wR>

⁸ Basque Institute of Statistics (2018). 2018 Basque statistical yearbook. Instituto Vasco de Estadística, Vitoria. <https://bit.ly/30BGjK>

the employment rate reached in 2017 49.8 % (48.7 % for the Spanish average), with a clear gender gap, as the rate for males amounted to 55.3 %, while that for females was 44.8 %. Regarding unemployment, the rate amounted to 11.3 % in 2017 (17.2 % for Spain), also with gender disparities (10.5 % for men and 12.2 % for women). As can be confirmed through the indicators above, one of the key features of the Basque Country's labour market is its historically better positioning with regard to the Spanish national average.

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

There are no data available on beneficiaries of international protection (asylum, subsidiary protection or because of humanitarian reasons) at the level of the autonomous communities in Spain. However, data on applications are accessible although with some delay in availability.

According to these data, asylum applications have experienced an enormous increase in the Basque Country in the last year with official data showing 500 applications in 2016, more than three times the number in the previous year, when 163 had been made⁹. Although official statistics are still not available, estimates put the number of applications formalised in 2017 at 970, which would imply a new increase of 94 % in one year¹⁰, and 1,595 in 2018¹¹, which means an additional 64.4 % increase. This would imply multiplying by 25.7 the number of applications in five years (from 62 applications in 2013), mainly due to the increase in applications from Venezuela (in particular), Colombia and Honduras, following a more intense trend than the rest of the country.

As observed in available data (2006-2016), asylum applications in the Basque Country have experienced a continuous increase since the middle of the previous decade, only interrupted during the second stage of the economic crisis in 2010, 2012 and 2013. Thus, an important and sustained increase in applications took place between 2006 and 2009, which was interrupted by an important decrease in 2010. After one year of recovery, a sharp reduction in the number of applications was observed in 2012 and 2013, which led to the minimum in the series analysed. From 2014, the applications started a new increase which accelerated notably in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, leading to record numbers of asylum applications in the Basque Country.

⁹ Asylum and Refugee Office of the Ministry of Interior (2008-2016): Asylum in figures. Dirección General de Política Interior. Subdirección General de Protección Internacional. Oficina de Asilo y Refugio, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/2LrUnL1>

¹⁰ Basque Country Office of the Spanish Commission for Refugees (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado, CEAR) (2018): <https://bit.ly/2X8HJDA> .

¹¹ Basque Country Office of the Spanish Commission for Refugees (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado, CEAR) (2019): <https://bit.ly/2BBQkFt> .

It is important to remark on the sustained increase in applications in the Basque Country during the first years of the economic crisis (2007, 2008 and 2009), as a difference to what happened in Spain, as can be seen in **Error! Reference source not found.**. At the same time, the recovery of the number of applications after the crisis occurred in the region later than for the average in the rest of the country (2014 vs 2013). Finally, the important increase produced in recent years has been tempered in Spain in 2016, but not in the Basque Country, where it has continued to increase vigorously.

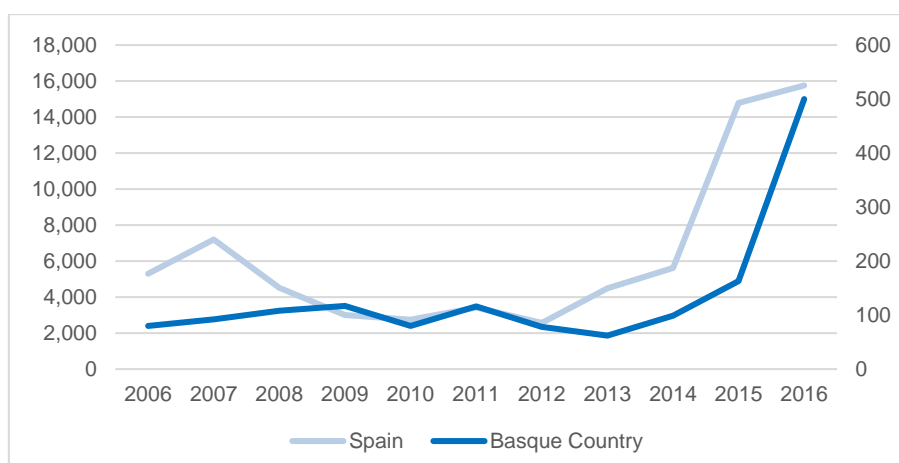


Figure 2: Evolution of asylum applications in the Basque Country and Spain
Source: Asylum and Refugee Office of the Ministry of Interior of Spain/Eurostat.

On the other hand, important changes can be observed in the composition and characteristics of the applicants over time: at the beginning of the period (2006), most of the applications (62.5 %) were made by people from sub-Saharan Africa, followed by those from Maghreb (15.0 %). Ten years later (2016), most of the applications were made by people from Latin America (48.2 %), followed by those from sub-Saharan Africa (21.0 %). As explained above, this is to a large extent due to the important increase in the applications from Latin America that occurred in 2016, mainly because of the increase in applications from Venezuela, Colombia and Honduras, which seems to have continued in 2017 and 2018 (no official data available yet).

With regard to immigration in a broader sense (not only refugees and asylum seekers), according to the most recent definitive data (2017), 196,589 inhabitants from the Basque Country have a foreign origin, which represents 9.0 % of the total regional population (12.9 % is the average in Spain). From those, 52.3 % are women while 47.7 % are men, and most are originally from Latin America (46.7 %), Africa (21.7 %) and the EU (19.5 %). By countries, Morocco is the main country of origin, accounting for 10.9 % of the total population of foreign origin, followed by Colombia (9.3 %), Romania (7.9 %), Bolivia (5.7 %) and Ecuador (4.3 %).

The average levels of their qualifications are low and medium, in line with the jobs for which they have been required¹².

During the five years prior to the economic crisis that began in 2007, the Basque Country experienced an unprecedented wave of international immigration. This was attracted by the vigorous growth of the Basque economy based to a large extent on the availability of flexible and not highly qualified labour, demanded in an important amount by the economic agents. Thus, the stock of population with a foreign origin has been continuously increasing in the region since 2000 apart from 2013 and 2014 when it fell slightly, and multiplied by more than five times between 2000 (35,143) and 2017 (196,589). In the same way, the proportion of the population with a foreign origin compared to the total population of the Basque Country increased continuously in the period (except for 2013-2014) and multiplied by more than five times between 2000 (1.7 %) and 2017 (9.0 %). Differences have also taken place regarding gender disaggregation, with a majority of females (mainly employed in household services) but with the proportion of males increasing until 2009 (from 47.7 to 50.4) and decreasing since then (until the current 47.7 %), in a clear change in the pattern of immigration flows.

Also, there have been important changes in the origins of the foreign population, and an increase in the relative importance of immigration from Africa has occurred. Its share has increased from 14.3 % (2000) to 21.7 % (2017, mainly from Maghreb), that from America rose (from 35.6 % to 47.6 %, mainly from Latin America), and also that from Asia (from 5.0 % to 7.1 %). On the other hand, the proportion of population of foreign origin coming from the EU decreased significantly, from 38.3 % to 19.5 %.

Although the latest analysis available corresponds to 2014, research has confirmed that most of the population of foreign origin over 16 years old arrived in the Basque Country directly from their country of origin (64.8 % in 2014), mainly motivated by the existence of personal contacts (49.3 %) and opportunities to work (37.9 %)¹³. Besides, 88.1 % of those registered in the Basque Autonomous Community have a residence permit and only 11.9 % are in a situation of administrative irregularity¹⁴.

1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts

Challenges

¹² Basque Immigration Observatory, IKUSPEGI (2018). Immigration statistics 2017. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2F7ubRf>. Analysing population of foreign origin as all persons of foreign nationality as well as persons of Spanish nationality and born outside Spain.

¹³ Regional Government of the Basque Country (2015). 'Foreign immigrant population survey. 2014 main results'. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2JMb6pc>

¹⁴ Basque Immigration Observatory, IKUSPEGI (2017). Residence permits: Evolution and situation in 2017. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2F7ubRf>

As highlighted in the previous section, asylum applications have dramatically increased in recent years in the Basque Country, having multiplied by almost 26 times between 2013 (62 applications) and 2018 (1,595). The increase is even more intense, on average, than the one affecting Spain where asylum applications multiplied by 12.1 times in the same period.

Therefore, as highlighted by the interviewees, the main current challenge is the adaptation of the capacities of the national Refugees Reception and Integration System to the increasing flows (especially in case of shocks/waves) of asylum seekers and refugees. This is from the point of view of both the national authorities (management of applications at the Asylum and Refugee Office; assistance and integration services at the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security) and at regional and local levels (assistance services, public services and integration). The system is overflowing and when conflicts or sudden situations occur provoking increasing inflows, it cannot provide an adequate response, which is currently happening and seems to have become a permanent situation.

As an example, the regional government has highlighted that there are only 500 places for asylum seekers in the first phase of their itinerary (reception at the centre) available in the Basque Country (vs 1,595 applications in 2018). Different regional NGOs are requesting the public administrations to provide more places and build new facilities for reception centres, not only to deal with exceptional situations, but also to respond to a system that is considered permanently collapsed. As advanced, the Spanish system centrally assigns places for the refugees and asylum seekers to stay in the different autonomous communities, so the increase in the places would also contribute to the dispersal policy, making it more effective by reinforcing the Refugees Reception and Integration System.

Besides, according to interviewees, there are particular challenges regarding the labour market insertion of refugees and asylum seekers in the Basque Country; this is a determinant for their effective integration into society. Also, according to the same interviewees, there is an important limitation in terms of their capacity to access housing, with very high prices in the region in many cases.

On the other hand, some of the stakeholders interviewed have highlighted problems arising from bureaucracy including, in some cases, the lack of coordination between different areas of public services working on the attention to refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, delays have been detected in obtaining access to health services or initial medical reports, as well as inconsistencies in access to education, among others.

With regard to immigrants in a broader sense, specific challenges arise in terms of integration of immigrant population in the Basque Country, including the labour insertion of the African inhabitants (in particular African women). This is due to the effective integration of the second generation or the sons and daughters of immigrants; the connection and better interaction of specific groups with the receiving society, and the increase in flows of undocumented immigrants due to the improvement of the economic situation of the Basque Country; and the reactivation of international migratory flows.

Beyond these specific challenges, foreign immigration in the Basque Country has experienced a process of normalisation or relatively stable insertion, as the number of people not registered nowadays is very low. The volume and percentage of these people are solidifying with residence permits and the accelerated processes of nationalisation, basically of the Latin American population. There is evidence available from immigrants that records their positive situation of satisfaction, integration and willingness to stay¹⁵. These dynamics of integration indicate that it is now time to follow through with the logic of settlement and permanence of the foreign population in the autonomous community, moving from mere reception to the effective integration through social mobility¹⁶.

Financial Impact

With regard to the impacts from the **financial** point of view, estimates for different countries, including Spain, indicate that increases in asylum seekers significantly improve the balance of public finances. The analysis highlights that the additional public expenditures, which is usually referred to as the *refugee burden*, are more than outweighed by the increase in tax revenues¹⁷.

It has not been possible to obtain data referring to refugees within the region, but only with regard to the overall foreign population. Therefore, recent studies have shown that the population of foreign nationals generates a greater number of public resources than the costs incurred to the system because of their use of the different welfare services.

Thus, a research analysing the Basque Country published in 2016 (with data from 2012) quantified EUR 38 million as the difference between public revenues (EUR 631.6 million) and public spending (EUR 593.4 million) generated by this group. In particular, per capita spending is higher for the foreign population than for the total population in the Basque Country in benefits and social services (EUR 1,559.3 vs EUR 1,040.6 for the total population), education (EUR 1,136.6 vs EUR 1,099.6) and housing (EUR 258.0 vs EUR 142.2). On the contrary, per capita spending in healthcare services is much lower in the case of foreign population than for the total population (EUR 952.7 vs EUR 1,665.5).

Economic impact

Regarding the **economic impacts**, it is important to note that in Spain, asylum seekers have the right to work only six months after their application has been submitted, regardless of whether they have a residence permit. No data are available regarding labour market

¹⁵ Moreno Márquez, G. (ed). (2013) 'Immigration and impact of the crisis'. Yearbook of the Immigration in the Basque Country 2013. Universidad del País Vasco, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2GhQxA3>

¹⁶ Fullaondo, A. et al. (2016). 'Socioeconomic impact of immigration in the autonomous community of the Basque Country (2016)'. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/30C4lgl>

¹⁷ D'Albis, H., Boubtane, E., Coulibaly, D. (2018). 'Macroeconomic evidence suggests that asylum seekers are not a "burden" for western European countries. Science Advances, 4, eaaq0883. <https://bit.ly/2JAFkrq>

insertion of refugees and asylum seekers, although some reports have remarked two main features of their access to the labour market. On one hand, they combine periods of formal employment, unemployment and informal work, as they cannot easily access regular and stable employment in their first years in Spain. On the other hand, they are generally incorporated into the lowest productive segments of the Spanish labour market, performing low-skilled manual jobs under precarious conditions and relationships. Thus, only a minority manages to be employed in skilled manual jobs and occupations. At the same time, it is necessary to highlight the existence of situations of long-term unemployment, in which there is a marked deterioration of the personal, economic and family situation¹⁸.

As previously mentioned, there are no official data available on the incorporation of refugees into the labour market and their contribution to economic growth, neither for Spain nor for the Basque Country. However, studies at the national level have shown that immigration in a broader sense (not only refugees and asylum seekers) has acted as an important stimulating factor of the economy over the last few decades. Thus, between 2001 and the beginning of 2008, growing at an average of 3.5 % per year, the Spanish GDP created more than 4.5 million net jobs, and approximately half of them were occupied by foreigners.

Several studies have tried to quantify the effect of immigration in this phase of economic growth, including the report prepared by the Economic Office of the Presidency of the Government of Spain in 2006. This stated that 30 % of the growth of Spanish GDP between the mid-1990s and the first decade of the new century was the result of the arrival and settlement of immigrants. The positive effect was up to 50 % of GDP growth during the period between 2000 and 2005. This positive influence of the immigrant population would be the sum of the direct effects (increase in private consumption and demand for housing, as well as in the rate of general activity, modification of the demographic structure of Spain), as well as a complex combination of indirect effects on GDP (increase in the activity rate of the native population, labour market flexibility, etc.)¹⁹.

Social impact

Regarding the **social and political impacts**, the positive impact of immigration on the demographic dynamics of the Basque Country is remarkable; it reversed the loss of population that the region had been suffering since the 1980s. Thus, between 2000 and 2017 there had been a constant loss of native-origin population, which resulted in a negative balance of 65,884 people. This was compensated by the contribution of immigration (foreign population origin) in the same period (161,446 people), which led to an increase in the total

¹⁸ Iglesias, J., et al. (2018). 'Receiving without integrating? The reception system and the integration conditions of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection in Spain'. Asociación Claver, Sevilla. <https://bit.ly/2QfPO9r>

¹⁹ Moreno, F. J., Bruquetas, M. (2011). 'Immigration and the welfare state in Spain'. Social Studies Collection no 31, La Caixa Foundation. Fundació La Caixa, Barcelona. <https://bit.ly/2XOiavl>

population of 95,562 people²⁰. Besides, it has favoured a younger demographic structure, as the profile of the foreign population living in the Basque Country corresponds, as mentioned, to that of a young person. It is concentrated in the central age groups of the population pyramid, within the context of a region with a particular high level of ageing.

The majority of Basque society (62.6 % in 2018) considers that the foreign immigrant population of other ethnic groups enriches cultural life²¹. Regional and local governments promote cultural diversity through different plans and measures. Thus, in general terms, the integration of immigration to Basque society has proceeded in a progressive manner without important frictions. In this sense, most recent data show that Basque society has a slightly more optimistic view about the overall contribution of the immigrant population (5.3 out of 10). However, there is also a significant perception that immigrants 'benefit from the protection system' (53.7 %) or 'take advantage of the Minimum Income Scheme excessively' (51.8 %). On the other hand, one of the rumours that most divides Basque society is related to citizen security, as 36.9 % believe that immigrants generate insecurity and crime, compared to 30 % who do not²².

There have been no effects in terms of social or political tensions in the Basque Country due to the recent inflows of asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants. Spanish and Basque society have so far been welcoming towards refugees and asylum seekers, which has favoured the absence of social or economic stresses. However, there has been a struggle between different levels of administration, due to the powers related to asylum seekers and refugees. Although this is a national competence in terms of the reception and application procedures, the autonomous communities provide, together with the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, services for integration. They then request more funding from the central government to provide these services. On the other hand, institutional tensions arose when some municipalities and regions invited refugees to come to Spain in the context of the Syrian crisis some years ago. This was against the action of the central government in this regard, who did not fulfil the international agreements on the issue. Finally, a new political party (Vox) is gaining importance at a national level and also in some regions in recent times, focusing an important part of its discourse on immigration.

²⁰ <https://bit.ly/2XN5h1r>

Basque Immigration Observatory, IKUSPEGI (2018). Immigration statistics 2000-2018. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2F7ubRf>

²¹ Basque Immigration Observatory, IKUSPEGI (2018). Barometer 2018 on perceptions and attitudes towards the population of foreign origin. Observatorio Vasco de Inmigración, Leioa. <https://bit.ly/2XN5h1r>

²² Ibid.

1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees

In Spain, asylum and subsidiary protection has been regulated since 2009 by Law 12/2009. This sets the terms under which nationals of non-EU countries and stateless persons qualify for the international protection constituted by the right of asylum and subsidiary protection; it also covers the content of such protection. A regulation for the implementation of the law has not yet been approved so in practice, the regulation applied to implement it is previous to the law itself. This includes internal procedures manuals for public administrations and NGOs, mainly the Management Manual of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection (*Manual de Gestión del Sistema de Acogida e Integración para Solicitantes y Beneficiarios de Protección Internacional*)²³.

On the other hand, Organic Law 4/2000 (known as *Immigration Law*), has regulated the legal regime of foreigners in Spain and their social integration since 2000. In its approval, it was qualified as one of the most progressive in Europe and includes considerations regarding requests for family reunification or temporary and permanent residence, as well as the possibility to work. Also, it establishes the return to the departure points for those immigrants at the border who are not allowed to enter the country.

Finally, the Royal Decree 1325/2003 has, since 2003, set the protection granted by Spain to those persons who have been evacuated or who have been forced to move and leave their country of origin or habitual residence. This covers those affected by armed conflicts or permanent violence, or who have been or are in serious danger of violation of human rights.

Within this context, the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security has a comprehensive system to assist applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, the status of stateless persons and temporary protection in Spain. This is called the National System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection (hereinafter the national system for reception and integration).

The national system for reception and integration consists of a state reception network, with public centres as well as other, private reception facilities subsidised by the ministry and managed by NGOs. In addition, there are other complementary resources also subsidised by the ministry and managed by NGOs, aimed to favour integration. They all are combined into the individualised integration itineraries, whose purpose is to facilitate the progressive autonomy of the recipients and their social and labour integration in society.

²³ Ministry of Employment and Social Security (2016). Management Manual of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection. Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social. Secretaría General de Inmigración y Emigración. Dirección General de Migraciones, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/2J8VnCH>

These itineraries are organised in three phases: reception at the centre, integration and autonomy, including the following activities.

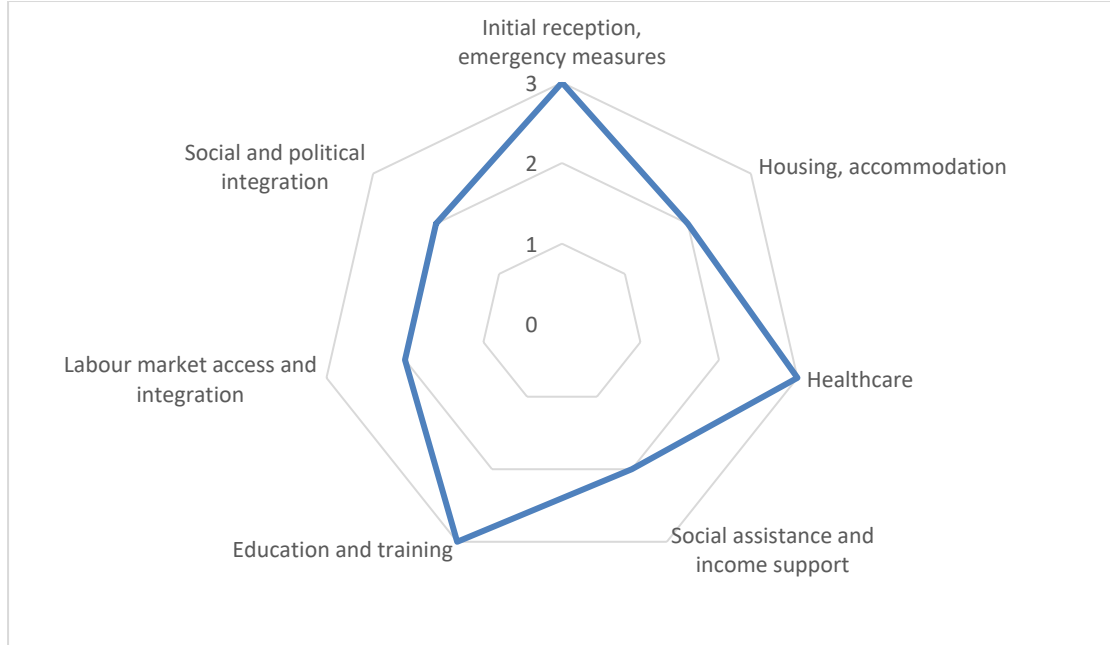
- Initial reception, emergency measures and referrals: These are provided by NGOs (Red Cross Immediate Response Teams) in coordination with the systems of the Spanish Maritime Safety Agency (SASEMAR). Funding is by the ministry in form of a subsidy to the Spanish Red Cross.
- Housing/accommodation: Most of available places for asylum seekers in Spain are in reception centres, during the first phase of the itinerary (reception). This lasts for a maximum of six months and is provided by the above-mentioned network of centres; it is managed by NGOs, subcontracted by the ministry. During the second phase (integration), asylum seekers are placed in private housing, as the final aim is their autonomy within Spanish society. It is funded by the ministry, with part of the funding coming from European sources, including AMIF.
- Destinations: At this stage it is important to highlight that, according to the Law 12/2009 and the Management Manual of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection, the system assigns the destinations centrally. This is done from the central government for the refugees to stay in the different autonomous communities and does not allow asylum seekers to choose their place of permanence. In this regard, the law sets up the framework of the national dispersal policy and the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security chooses the plan and the region for each refugee and asylum seeker. It is decided without the beneficiaries and the autonomous communities taking part in the decision regarding the dispersal.
- Healthcare: Spain provides access to the public healthcare system for all asylum seekers and refugees. This is provided and funded by the healthcare services of the autonomous communities, independently of the participation within the national system for reception and integration.
- Social assistance services and income support: Social assistance services are in charge of the autonomous communities/municipalities, and funded by regional governments. Local governments receive funding from the central and regional government for social services provision.
- Income support: National and regional/local schemes coexist in Spain. Thus, subsistence income to cover the basic needs of people who do not reside in a migration centre is provided at a national level, for a period of six months. It is renewable for another six, and is part of the national system for reception and integration. Besides, pocket money is granted to people who reside in a reception facility during their stay in the centre, as well as one single final payment to facilitate autonomy when leaving the centres (also within the national system for reception and integration).
- Grants and aids: Some autonomous communities and municipalities include refugees and asylum seekers as beneficiaries of grants and aids to support income. These

programmes are funded by the ministry (with funding from the ERDF, the ESF and the AMIF), as well as by the regional governments. In the case of the Basque Country, the minimum income scheme is accessible only after three years of living in the region.

- Education and training: Reception conditions for asylum seekers in Spain include the coverage of personal expenses for educational activities. This covers training in social and cultural skills, learning of hosting country language, vocational training and lifelong training, childcare and other complementary educational types (national system for reception and integration). The service is provided by local NGOs, with funding from the ministry and regional governments, with part of the funding coming from European sources including AMIF.
- School enrolment and attendance: Children in Spain have the right to education, and the schooling of children is compulsory from age 6 to 16. This right is not explicitly mentioned under the Asylum Act, but it is guaranteed by other regulations concerning aliens and children. The scheme followed for integrating asylum-seeking children in the school varies depending on the autonomous community they are placed in, as each regional administration manages and organises its school system. School enrolling is funded by the autonomous communities, apart from children under three years, and independently of the participation within the national system for reception and integration. In the Basque Country, schooling for children between 0 and 3 years old is free for families with an annual income below EUR 18,000, including refugees and asylum seekers fulfilling this condition. As interviewed stakeholders have highlighted, there are no specific plans for the integration of the children of asylum seekers and refugees. In some cases, the main language chosen for their education at school is not Spanish but Basque, which hinders their social integration beyond the region.
- Labour market access/integration: Asylum seekers are legally entitled to start working in Spain six months after their application for asylum is officially accepted. Within this context, labour market support, ALMP and job search assistance are provided by the autonomous communities. NGOs are also an important agent in providing services to refugees in the field of labour market orientation, access and integration. These services are part of the national system for reception and integration and are funded by national and regional funding, with part of it coming from European sources (ESF, AMIF).
- Social and political integration: Support in early orientation programmes (including language or practical orientation) is provided within the different phases of the national system.

The figure below presents an assessment of the policies in place in Spain, based on the description provided above.

Figure 3: Radar chart of policies in place in Spain



Legend:

- 0 There is no policy in this domain.
- 1 There is a policy; however, information on the policy results achieved are not available.
- 2 Information on the policy results is available and they show relevant problems in terms of effectiveness and/or efficiency.
- 3 Information on the policy results is available and shows positive trends; the policy is perceived as able to address the problem in an effective or efficient way.
- 4 The policy in this domain is a good practice/a benchmark.

The main actors of the asylum seeker and refugee integration policies

Regarding the main actors of the system, the subjects of immigration, asylum and nationality in Spain are, according to the Spanish Constitution, the exclusive competence of the central government. Within this framework, main actors involved in the national system for reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees in Spain are as follows.

- The Ministry of Interior exercises responsibility for the control of entry and exit at borders. This covers the fight against irregular immigration networks and, in general, the aspects of immigration and asylum that have to do with security. Specifically, regarding asylum, the Ministry of Interior, through the Asylum and Refugee Office, is in charge of the instruction and resolution of international protection procedures.
- The Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security is responsible for developing the government's policy on foreigners, immigration and emigration through the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, including integration. It also exercises the functional coordination of the Foreigners Offices, dependent on the central government in the autonomous communities, in charge of the procedures related to legal immigration. It coordinates the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network, and it is responsible for the Permanent Observatory of Immigration. This

collects the sets of statistical information available on emigration, immigration, international protection and nationality.

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, is in charge of the foreign policy and international cooperation. This exercises functions related to immigration and asylum, such as some interventions related to migration and development, the management of migratory flows, as well as the visa policy.
- The Ministry of Justice exercises the powers related to nationality and civil registry. It is up to this ministry to elaborate the normative projects regarding the acquisition of Spanish nationality by residence. It is also one of the responsibilities of this ministry to regulate the activity of civil registry offices, of great importance in the accreditation of filiations and civil status, and in certain immigration procedures.
- The Ministry of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare also exercises certain competences related to equality and non-discrimination. It proposes measures and applies transversal policies that affect certain groups of immigrants, such as the fight against trafficking in people for sexual exploitation.

As mentioned, although the subjects of immigration, asylum and nationality are the exclusive competence of the central government, there are certain sectoral competences that may affect the social integration of immigrants and people with international protection status. Their ownership may correspond, exclusively or partially, to the autonomous communities and local entities: education, health, social services, housing, active employment policies and culture, among others.

Under this framework, the coordination of the performance of the different public administrations in migratory matters corresponds to the Sectoral Conference on Immigration and Emigration. This involves the central government, the autonomous communities and the municipalities.

Finally, NGOs have an important role regarding asylum seekers and refugees. On the one hand, they provide the first health assessment at entry by sea. In addition, an important series of facilities and services is provided by various non-governmental organisations and financed by the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, within the national system for reception and integration.

2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges

This section of the case study focuses on the specific programme *Auzolana*, that reinforces the national system for reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country. The section also focuses on the outcomes, results and impacts achieved during the implementation of the programme.

2.1 Topic and motivation

The case study selected for Spain is the *Auzolana programme*, a pilot project launched in July 2017 in the Basque Country. This was devised as a reinforcement mechanism for the National System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection, set in Spain at a national level.

Therefore, the *Auzolana* programme is focused on strengthening and improving the ordinary mechanisms for reception of asylum seekers, both from the quantitative point of view (increase in resources) as well as qualitatively (better resources).

In order to do so, the programme introduces a new model of governance consisting of a bottom-up approach to respond to the challenges imposed by the increase in the flows of asylum seekers. It involves the municipalities and provinces, as well as the autonomous community, in the context of a country with a high degree of centralisation in all matters related to immigration and asylum. The subjects of immigration, asylum and nationality are, according to the Spanish Constitution, the exclusive competence of the central government.

2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention

The main objective of the *Auzolana* programme is to improve the services provided to refugees and asylum seekers. It uses an integral point of view, in such a way that the social integration will be improved by trying to make the participants an active part of the process. It is targeted to applicants or beneficiaries of international protection in Spain whose reception takes place in the Basque Country, and is implemented in seven municipalities in the region.

The practice officially began in January 2018 when a collaboration agreement between the Government of Spain and the Regional Government of the Basque Country came into force, although its implementation began in July 2017. The agreement is valid until 31 December 2019 although, according to representatives of the regional government interviewed, it is expected to be extended.

As seen above, due to the significant increase in asylum applications in Spain, the national system for reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers is overflowing, and it cannot provide adequate responses. Thus, there is a lack of resources. These include those connected with a collapsed administration of the asylum applications by the central government, but also those aimed at the reception, integration and autonomy of asylum seekers and refugees, provided at regional level.

Within this context, the objective of the Auzolana programme is to improve the reception of refugees and asylum seekers in the Basque Country, both quantitatively and qualitatively. This involves increasing the reception capacity of the autonomous community to fulfil the relocation and resettlement commitments that the Spanish Government has committed to with the EU. It should also improve the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Spain.

Likewise, the Auzolana programme seeks to guarantee the coordination and collaboration among the different institutions and entities, participating in the design and implementation of the procedures. These have been established for the reception and integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, which will also make integration processes in the hosting society more effective. Thus, one of the main characteristics of this pilot experience is its focus on reinforcing the ordinary reception system, counting on the autonomous communities, the provincial councils and the municipalities from the start. This implies a new approach within the Spanish system.

In order to achieve this, refugees and asylum seekers arriving in the Basque municipalities taking part in the programme are provided, on the one hand, with places for housing made available by the municipalities. On the other hand, they receive the support of the human resources from the municipalities and the Basque Government for their reception, integration and labour market insertion. This is on top of what is provided within the national system for reception and integration. In all these processes, the refugees receive advice and are accompanied by members of local NGOs and volunteers associations that have an agreement with the municipalities.

This local support takes place within the context of a personalised itinerary of autonomy and integration designed by the local social services. It covers the gaps that are detected in the integration processes of the beneficiaries of the programme, in each municipality.

By doing this, the main expected result of the Auzolana programme is that of bettering the conditions of reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Specifically, the programme includes increasing the number of places available for refugees in the Basque Country, as well as reinforcing services to meet their basic needs and helping them to acquire skills to facilitate an independent life. This is achieved by coordinating the different organisations providing services for the beneficiaries, and by favouring the active participation of the beneficiaries in the process, with the aim of accelerating their social integration.

In order to achieve these results, a fundamental characteristic of the intervention is the new approach that it puts in place, whose main features are as follows.

- The involvement of different levels of the administration (municipal, provinces and autonomous community), in a new bottom-up approach ensures the participation of grassroots institutions from the beginning.

- The connection among the actors, as information and communication which has been reinforced among all the actors involved, improves the effectiveness of the reception and integration process.
- NGOs dealing with the reception of asylum seekers are not only in the spotlight but also receive much greater support and commitment from both the municipality and the local NGOs, and volunteers associations taking part.
- The new approach involves local NGOs, but also local associations of people interested in helping those arriving in their integration. This implies an engagement of civil society in the support to asylum seekers and refugees.
- As a result, the support to refugees and asylum seekers is approached from a more comprehensive point of view, making them an active part of the process.

However, the Auzolana programme also faces difficulties in order to achieve its expected results. Most of them are related to the insufficient availability of places for reception of refugees on the first phase of the individualised integration itinerary (reception). This makes it harder to respond to the huge increase in international protection applications. Also, for the second phase (integration), people leave the public places and have to rent a place to live. This is usually expensive and not affordable for them within the municipalities taking part in the programme.

On the other hand, according to some of the municipalities involved, coordination could be improved as there is a lack of a harmonised approach; each municipality is developing the programme according to its specific approach or idea.

Finally, there have been administrative problems with regard to the economic support provided by the regional government to local NGOs to cover their expenses within the activities they develop under Auzolana, which are currently being resolved.

2.3 The actors

The Auzolana programme is a pilot experience for reinforcing the Spanish System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection in the Basque Country.

In order to do so, it has been implemented according to an agreement between the central government and the Regional Government of the Basque Country. It has been launched in seven municipalities in the region (Amurrio, Galdakao, Getxo, Laudio, Portugalete, Tolosa and Zarautz), in coordination with the regional branches of three national NGOs working in the reception of refugees and asylum seekers (CEAR Euskadi, Red Cross and MPDL). Several local NGOs and volunteer associations are also working in the field of immigration in the municipalities taking part, and cooperating with the experience.

Thus, main actors taking part in the Auzolana programme are:

- The Central Government of Spain: As mentioned previously, in Spain, the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security is responsible for developing the government's policy on foreigners, immigration and emigration, including integration. Within this context, the General Directorate for Migration of the Ministry²⁴ is the signatory of the agreement with the Regional Government of the Basque Country, '*in order to ensure the coordination of actions in the procedures established for the reception and integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection*'²⁵. According to this, the ministry evaluates the needs of asylum seekers and assesses the opportunity for them to join the Auzolana project. It provides the necessary resources for opening new reception facilities in the municipalities taking part in the project.
- The Basque Country Regional Government: Within the regional government, the General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation is the signatory of the above-mentioned agreement with the national government. According to this, the Basque Government informs the NGOs already taking part in the national system for reception and integration about the possibility to receive refugees and asylum seekers within their municipalities. They can then evaluate if new places/facilities for the first phase (reception) of the integration itinerary are required.
- The regional government also provides new places for housing and supports the integration processes by financing activities of local NGOs or volunteer associations. This facilitates the establishment of support networks and mutual knowledge between the beneficiaries of the project and the hosting society, contributing EUR 1,800 per participant per year.
- In addition, the regional government supports the participation of the social services resources from the municipalities taking part in the itinerary of integration of the participants, providing a EUR 6,000 subsidy to each city council per participant.
- According to the agreement, for the third phase of the itinerary (autonomy), the regional government would assume the monitoring and intervention in the individualised integration itinerary of participants. They would also facilitate their access to the regional minimum income scheme in case they have not reached autonomy after completing the itinerary. As it will be explained later, this provision has not been implemented yet, due to administrative reasons.
- Seven municipalities are taking part in the Auzolana programme: Amurrio and Laudio (Álava), Galdakao, Getxo and Portugalete (Biscay), and Tolosa and Zarautz (Guipúzcoa). They provide housing places, generally for the first phase of the integration

²⁴ Named at that time Ministry of Employment and Social Security.

²⁵ Spanish Official Gazette No. 48 of 23 February 2018 (2018). Resolution of 9 February 2018, of the Technical General Secretariat, publishing the Agreement between the Basque Government and the Directorate General of Migration, in order to ensure the coordination of actions in the procedures established for the reception and integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. <https://bit.ly/2SjLNP5>

itinerary (reception), together with social service resources to improve the integration of participants in the hosting society. This is done according to the design of a personalised itinerary of autonomy and integration to cover the gaps detected in the integration processes of the beneficiaries of the programme in each municipality. There is also coordination with the regional branches of national NGOs taking part in the national system for reception and integration.

- Provincial councils (*Diputaciones Forales*) and the Basque Municipalities Association (*EUDEL*): These have a coordination and a communication role within the scheme.
- Regional branches of national NGOs taking part in the Refugees Reception and Integration System: Red Cross (*Cruz Roja*), the Spanish Commission for Refugees (*Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado*, CEAR) and the Movement for Peace, Disarmament and Freedom (*Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad*, MPDL). The current activities of these organisations, already taking part in the national system for reception and integration, are reinforced with resources made available by the Basque Government and the municipalities (housing, social services). They are complemented by those provided by the local NGOs and volunteer associations, in a coordinated manner.
- Local NGOs and volunteer associations (Hotz Zarautz, Perualde, etc.): Local NGOs and volunteers associations working in the integration of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees are involved within the project. They provide services in order to facilitate the establishment of support networks and mutual knowledge between the beneficiaries of the project and the host society. These are mainly leisure and free-time activities, and language learning, in coordination with the municipality and the regional branches of the national NGOs.

2.4 Implementation

A humanitarian crisis occurred in the Mediterranean in 2015 and there was an increase in the inflows of asylum seekers to the Basque Country. This was addressed within the framework of the Inter-institutional and Social Working Table, led by the General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of the Basque Government. It was composed of representatives of different departments of the Basque Government, the three provincial councils, the three Basque capitals, EUDEL and the social entities responsible for the reception and integration of refugees. The regional government made a request in 2016 to the Basque municipalities about their willingness to host refugees and asylum seekers. They were also asked to advise on their available places, to create a census of housing facilities that could be made available in a new programme for the reception of refugees and asylum seekers.

From all the municipalities expressing their willingness to participate, the regional government selected seven taking into account, according to the interviewee from this government, the

territorial equilibrium among provinces (two municipalities from Álava, three from Biscay and two from Guipúzcoa) as well as some political balance among different parties ruling the municipalities (although in fact five of the municipalities taking part in Auzolana are ruled by the Basque National Party PNV, one is ruled by the independent party E H Bildu, and one by the Socialist Party PSE).

In parallel, as highlighted during the interview with the representative of the regional government, it reinforced the communication and coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security of the Government of Spain. To promote this coordination, the Basque Government presented two proposals for joint work: a proposal for a reinforcement of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection, together with a humanitarian visa plan. This was presented on 2 February 2017 by the General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of the Regional Government of the Basque Country, Jonan Fernández²⁶. It was later added to the Institutional Declaration of the President of the Regional Government, Íñigo Urkullu, on 3 April ²⁷.

In this declaration, the regional president proposed the creation of a complementary reinforcement system for the reception of refugees. This was envisaged through an articulated collaboration among the Basque Government, the municipalities, the provincial councils, the social entities and the Government of Spain. In addition, a path of humanitarian visas was suggested in an agreed and coordinated way among different institutions and social entities. He also emphasised the willingness and commitment of the Basque institutions and civil society to actively collaborate in the reception of refugees. They would dedicate to this aim, within the framework of their competences and possibilities, the necessary means and resources. In that declaration, he was accompanied by the members of the Basque Government and by a broad representation of the Basque Country's institutions, including political parties, mayors, representatives of associations and NGOs as well as members of civil society.

After this declaration, the Spanish Government showed its willingness to explore the first of these initiatives, the reinforcement system, which was developed by the regional government through the Auzolana programme proposal.

Thus, the General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of the Basque Government and the General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security of Spain, signed the Agreement to Ensure the Coordination of Proceedings in the Procedures for the Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection (Auzolana Agreement) on January 15, 2018. However, by an informal agreement between the parties, work had begun within that framework in July 2017.

²⁶ <https://bit.ly/2ZpzHHk>.

²⁷ <https://bit.ly/2XwkB0Z>.

The agreement, which initially will be in force until 31 December 2019 (although it is possible – and, according to the interview with the regional government, is expected – to be extended for a period of up to four additional years), set the responsibilities of the different actors taking part in the programme, as described in the previous section. This is in line with the provisions of the Management Manual of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection, through which the protection provided by Spain to applicants and beneficiaries of international protection is developed and specified.

The agreement also set the conditions for funding the organisations involved in the provision of the services. The Basque Government is committed to contributing EUR 1,800 per person participating in the project per year, to be paid to the local NGOs and volunteer associations taking part in the project. In addition, it pays EUR 6,000 to each municipality per participant, for the reinforcement of the integration processes.

The agreement also establishes monitoring mechanisms, with the creation of a Monitoring Commission that foresees semi-annual coordination meetings between representatives of the Basque Regional Government and the National Government of Spain.

At the same time, as mentioned by the interviewees from the regional and local governments, the municipalities started taking part in September 2017, on local agreements with the NGOs that would take part in the programme. This involved regional branches of the main national NGOs taking part in the Spanish reception system, but also the local volunteer associations and NGOs. These would be involved within the project, providing services to facilitate the establishment of support networks and mutual knowledge between the beneficiaries of the project and the hosting society.

At the implementation level, the municipalities interviewed remarked that they already started to work within the programme in July 2017. They had identified the places to be made available under the programme and made, in some cases, adaptations within the facilities to be suitable for the potential users (safety measures for children in cases of families with minors, etc.). The places are intended to be used in the first phase of the reception itinerary (reception) although there are municipalities where there also are places available for the second phase (integration). These are made available to the NGOs taking part in the Spanish reception system which manages them, focusing on the participants of Auzolana.

As emphasised by the representative of the regional government interviewed, it is important to point out that originally, the programme was believed to be for receiving people from the resettlement and relocation programmes established by the European Union. However, there was an absence of these people arriving during a large part of the period when the programme was in operation. This has meant that in order to avoid having new places unused, they have been assigned to asylum seekers and refugees outside these programmes.

At the same time, as remarked on by the local representatives interviewed, the municipalities involved designated those responsible for the reception within their social services teams. They participate in the local implementation of the experience and in the Monitoring Commission with the Basque Government. These people are in charge of the design of the personalised itinerary for the autonomy and integration of the participant. They work on the identification and involvement of a local NGO or volunteer association that favours, with support and reinforcement activities, the integration of the beneficiaries of the programme.

During the implementation, the national government informs the Government of the Basque Country of the arrival of certain refugees and/or asylum seekers (usually families). Their inclusion in the programme is in accordance with the assessment of the corresponding department of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security. Then, the regional government informs the municipalities taking part in Auzolana about the arrival of these refugees or asylum seekers.

Once the beneficiaries are located in the housing facility, the individualised integration itinerary begins to be developed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. This involves the NGO responsible for the reception, the social services of the municipality and the local NGO or volunteer association working on integration. There are municipalities such as Getxo, which have remarked on the development of their own reception and integration procedures, taking into account the three previously mentioned actors. According to the interviewees, this allows a better coordination and systematisation of the whole process, although the mechanism does not exist at the central level of the programme.

In order to cover the expenses for the services provided, municipalities, local NGOs and volunteer associations are entitled to receive funding according to the agreement. However, as stated by the interviewees, only two municipalities have requested financing, connected to specific expenses incurred within the programme for the adaptation of housing facilities. The rest of the services are implemented by their own social services departments, with their own budget. On the other hand, municipalities interviewed have declared that problems have arisen with regard to the funding of the local NGOs and volunteer associations. Their character as voluntary organisations, without staff, has made it difficult to receive the subsidies to recover the costs incurred. According to these interviewees, as well as the regional government, in order to resolve this situation some municipalities have taken charge of these costs. The Basque Government is designing financing instruments for these activities more appropriate to their nature, which are expected to be available in the near future.

With regard to the dispersal policy in place, the Spanish system assigns places to stay in the different autonomous communities and does not allow asylum seekers to choose their place of permanence. The Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security decides the plan and the region for each refugee and asylum seeker, without the autonomous communities taking part in the decision.

Within the Auzolana programme, the central government still decides on the people who are assigned to the autonomous community of the Basque Country, without any participation. However, the interviewees emphasised that the programme implies a substantial improvement with respect to the previous situation in terms of information and ability to anticipate at the regional level. Traditionally, the central government communicates only with the NGOs that participate in the national system for reception and integration, the assignment of applicants for asylum and refugees to the different places. The regional government does not have, in most cases, information about the people who arrive, particularly in the first months of stay. On the contrary, within Auzolana, the regional government is informed about the new arrivals, and it transfers this information in turn to the participating municipalities. Therefore, both administrations can activate specific resources to attend to them, as well as design new policies and programmes for their attention, improving the effectiveness of the dispersal policy in place.

On the other hand, the information about the refugees and asylum seekers that host the autonomous community and the municipalities, is an essential feeding mechanism. It helps the administrations in the design of new policies and programmes for the attention of these collectives, which was not available to them before the programme was launched.

2.5 Outcomes, impacts and results of the specific policy

Within the framework of the Auzolana programme, 69 new places have been added to the national system for reception and integration in the Basque Country in thirteen facilities. This comprises two flats in each participating municipality, except for one in which one large flat has been made available. The Basque Country currently has 500 places in the system, which means that the programme places represent 13.8 % of the total available in the autonomous community.

At the same time, during the first 18 months of implementation of Auzolana, 120 people (which represents 7.5 % of total applications of international protection in the Basque Country in 2018) have benefited from housing places. They have also benefited from services to reinforce their reception and integration into the hosting society provided by the municipalities and the local NGOs and volunteers associations. These include support in language courses, interpreter services, accompaniment in the search for housing for the second phase of the individualised integration itinerary, and intermediation in negotiations.

There has been an increase in the number of places and support resources through the social services of the participating municipalities and local NGOs and volunteers' associations. In addition to strengthening the system from the quantitative point of view, the programme has led to important results from the qualitative point of view, as highlighted by the different stakeholders interviewed.

Thus, there is a consensus that there has been an improvement in communication between all the agents working in the field of asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country. This is favouring a more agile response to the problems and needs faced in the hosting territory. NGOs taking part in the reception and integration system have highlighted that the direct dialogue with the regional government and the municipalities within the framework of the programme makes it possible to speed up the resolution of blockages. These are frequently faced by asylum seekers and refugees and often have to do with bureaucratic obstacles. For example, difficulties in the city registration (municipalities), delays or problems with schooling (municipalities/regional government), difficulties in healthcare access (regional government), or problems for opening a bank account (banks). The increased and improved interaction of the NGOs with the public administrations involved in the programme has allowed the establishment of *informal* systems and procedures that accelerate the resolution of these types of problems.

There is increased communication and flows of information about asylum seekers and refugees who are received in the autonomous community and the municipalities. From the point of view of the institutions this is allowing, as mentioned in the previous section, to provide a better response, making it possible to provide services more suited to their needs. It means that services and policies in the medium- and long-term can be designed to respond structurally to a new situation that is occurring with greater intensity in the Basque Country.

Furthermore, the programme has allowed the involvement of the civil society of the hosting territory, through local volunteer associations but also by individuals who want to get engaged in the support of the new refugees and asylum seekers. This favours a faster and more effective integration of the beneficiaries into the host society. However, NGOs participating in the programme have highlighted that difficulties still exist in involving volunteers on a stable basis in the organisations.

The Auzolana programme has resulted in municipalities that had never received asylum seekers and refugees expressing their willingness and ability to receive them, and being able to host them. This avoids over-concentration in certain cities, and promotes a more homogeneous distribution.

Additionally, the increased institutional recognition of the problems of refugees and asylum seekers, highlighted by the greater involvement of the public administrations closer to the citizens, is increasing social awareness towards reception and integration. This is leading society to become more receptive.

In this context, the Auzolana programme is making a positive contribution to the territorial impacts analysed. The increase in reception places and resources available in the public services provided by Auzolana provides a first response to the main current challenge of the system – the adaptation of its capacities to the increasing flows of asylum seekers and

refugees. In addition, improved communication and coordination procedures result in a 'more intensive and agile reception', and so a greater efficiency of the system.

With regard to the financial impacts, it is expected that the increased capacities of the system that the Auzolana programme has implied will make it possible to increase the number of asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country. This will have positive effects on the regional public budget. As mentioned earlier in this report, estimates for different countries including Spain indicate that increases in asylum seekers significantly improve the balance of public finances. The analysis highlights that the additional public expenditures due to the increase in the number of refugees is more than outweighed by the increase in tax revenues. Thus, the increase in available resources will benefit the public balance. It is expected that this return will be multiplied by the greater efficiency achieved in the use of these resources, stemming from the increased coordination between the different administrations that the programme has implied.

Regarding the economic impacts as advanced, studies have emphasised that asylum seekers and refugees in Spain combine periods of formal employment, unemployment and informal work. They cannot easily access regular and stable employment in their first years in the country and are generally incorporated into the lowest productive segments of the Spanish labour market. They perform low-skilled manual jobs under precarious conditions and relationships, and only a minority manages to be employed in skilled manual jobs and occupations. Regarding this, interviews with stakeholders have emphasised the essential character of the labour market insertion to the effective insertion of the refugees and asylum seekers into the hosting society. Interviewees remarked on the need to reinforce the employment itineraries to make the reception and integration programmes effective.

Thus, the capacity of Auzolana to provide positive economic impacts will be mainly related to its capacity to be successful in the labour market integration of their participants. To the extent that it can reinforce its support services for insertion in the labour market – which now are not very different from those provided to those outside the programme – it could become a successful practice in terms of its economic impact on the territory.

Finally, regarding the social and political impacts, the positive effect of the Auzolana programme is clear, due to its effect on the demographic dynamics of the Basque Country. The programme is mainly receiving families with a lower average age than the native population. Additionally, the greater interaction and communication between the different administrations is favouring greater coordination between them, and the establishment of channels for problem solving reduces the tensions that might arise between the different departments and administrations.

As it has been described, the involvement of those public administrations closer to the citizens is causing greater social awareness towards reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Society is becoming more receptive, which in turn contributes to minimising negative attitudes with regard to foreign population.

An important step forward in this sense is the forthcoming launch of a second stage of the programme, the Auzolana II Programme. This is currently being implemented by the Basque Government, UNHCR and two regional NGOs with the support of the national government.

It is based on the Canadian model of community sponsorship²⁸, and will make it possible to complement national programmes for the reception and integration of families to be received in Spain. It operates within the framework of the resettlement programmes by increasing their number through the involvement and self-organisation of citizens, NGOs and other interested groups such as religious entities or local authorities. Thus, within the Auzolana II Programme, citizens and entities are grouped into 'local groups of community sponsors' and commit themselves to offer economic, emotional and social support for refugees and asylum seekers during a set period of time.

The Auzolana II programme has been launched in March 2019, when the first five families arrived, which have been distributed in five Basque municipalities.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the Basque Government has commissioned the analysis of results and the systematisation of procedures of this experience, which is currently ongoing²⁹. This is to document the process and assess the effectiveness of the reinforcement services proposed in the Auzolana programme, as well as to identify areas for improvement for future experiences. One of its objectives is, according to the Basque Government, to *draw conclusions* from this pilot experience and extrapolate them to the whole system of reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers.

On the other hand, shortcomings have also been detected during the implementation of the practice. The main one is the challenge in terms of accessing housing during the second phase of the individualised integration itinerary (integration), after leaving the housing made available by the programme.

As mentioned in Section 1.3, prices of housing for rent in Spain and the Basque Country have increased significantly in recent years. This makes it difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to access housing once they leave the public resource, as the financial support provided by the system is insufficient. (This is from EUR 376 per month for a single person, to EUR 717 per month for units composed of five or more persons³⁰, while the average price of housing in the region is EUR 1,043 per month³¹). To deal with this situation, the participating

²⁸ <https://bit.ly/2Bdw1jB>.

²⁹ Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Deusto University.

³⁰ Ministry of Employment and Social Security (2016). Management Manual of the System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection. Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social. Secretaría General de Inmigración y Emigración. Dirección General de Migraciones, Madrid. <https://bit.ly/2J8VnCH>

³¹ Specific Statistical Body of the Regional Ministry the Environment, Territorial Planning and Housing of the Basque Country (2019). 'Statistics on real estate supply. 4th quarter 2018. Main results'. Gobierno

municipalities are advancing the search for housing during the first phase of the individualised itinerary (reception) as well as providing special assistance to the beneficiary during the search.

As highlighted by the representative interviewed, one of the municipalities taking part in the programme, Zarautz, is providing its housing places during the second phase of the individualised integration itinerary (integration) to overcome this obstacle. The need to access housing on the free market is therefore postponed for several months, which may help if the beneficiary has obtained financial means during that time. However, the effect of this variant will have to be analysed as results become available on different beneficiaries.

In this sense, it is important to highlight that most of the stakeholders interviewed mention this as one of the main problems for the programme to be effective. There is a need for the regional government to facilitate the access of these people to public housing for rent in the Basque Country.

Another problem detected is the insufficient communication and coordination at the regional level. Most of the agents interviewed highlighted the lack of coordination meetings at the programme level and the lack of common intervention procedures in the practice. There is a need for more meetings to share the problems faced in each municipality as well as the answers given, to learn from best practices and to ensure a common approach.

Finally, during the interviews the insufficient capacity of the programme to address one of the main challenges for asylum seekers and refugees in Spain has also been highlighted. This is related to achieving economic autonomy once they have left the reception and integration programmes, which in turn is closely related to the capacity for insertion into the labour market.

One of the requirements to be able to take part in the Basque Minimum Income Scheme (*Renta de Garantía de Ingresos*) is the need to be registered and have effective residence in the Basque Country during the previous three years without interruption. This is something that new asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country do not fulfil. In this sense, different stakeholders interviewed have expressed the need to reduce the requirement of three years of registration to one. This would enable beneficiaries of the programme to have access to this scheme, which would help them to reach autonomy. The Basque Government, for its part, is currently analysing the possibility of introducing this modification in the scheme under certain conditions.

In order to overcome these shortcomings, it would be desirable for Auzolana to be complemented with a number of specific programmes. For example, a programme supporting access to housing, which is one of the key barriers for the participants to achieve personal

autonomy. Labour market integration is also important, as this is an essential requirement for the effective integration in the hosting society. The adaptation of existing programmes and the creation of specific programmes for income support would also help the participants to adapt to the reduction in public support progressively while reaching autonomy, instead of suddenly exiting the systems.

3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

As detailed in previous sections, the Basque Country is an immigration-receiving region and an area of transit for migration routes crossing Spain from Africa and moving to central and northern Europe across the French–Spanish border. Although its foreign-origin population is 3.9 pp below the national average, in the last five years the region has experienced an enormous increase in asylum applications, even more intense than the average national increase.

As a result, the capacities of the centralised Spanish System for Reception and Integration of Applicants and Beneficiaries of International Protection are exceeded. This includes the capacities in the Basque Country, which cannot provide an adequate response to the refugee and asylum seeker flows, and cannot ensure their appropriate integration and autonomy.

Within this context, the Auzolana programme has proved to be effective in terms of its contribution to the reinforcement of the national system. This is particularly in terms of the increase in places available for reception, which already represent 13.8 % of the total available in the autonomous community. At the same time, during the first 18 months of implementation it has supported 120 people, which represents 7.5 % of total applications of international protection in the Basque Country in 2018.

The increased interaction between the agents involved in services for supporting asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country, fostered by the Auzolana programme, has led to greater agility and effectiveness of the services provided and benefits for participants.

As described in this case study, the increased relationships set between the different actors have contributed positively to the objective of the intervention, by streamlining procedures and unblocking bureaucratic problems. This is due to the establishment of more or less stable channels of communication and (informal) procedures in some cases.

Furthermore, the involvement of municipalities and local NGOs in supporting refugees and asylum seekers is highlighted as positive. In turn, this is leading to greater citizen involvement and more positive social attitudes towards the reception of refugees and asylum seekers.

Key success factors

The main factors for the success of the practice are closely related to the approach put in place by Auzolana, which implies a new paradigm in Spain in the support given to refugees and asylum seekers. It brings in the involvement of different levels of the administration (municipal, province and autonomous community), as well as local NGOs and volunteer associations in a bottom-up approach. The approach, which has also implied the creation of information and communication channels mentioned above, has improved the effectiveness of the reception and integration process, making it more agile and intensive.

The main actor responsible for this success is the Regional Government of the Basque Country, in particular the General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and

Cooperation. Since the humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean in 2015, they had been exploring possibilities for responding to the crisis, and for collaboration in the fulfilment of the resettlement and relocation commitments that the Spanish Government agreed with the EU. This was planned through proposals in which the autonomous communities, provinces and municipalities play a direct role in the processes of reception and integration from the outset.

The municipalities' willingness to host refugees and provide resources has been essential for the success of the practice, in addition to the commitment of the municipal social services, and the local NGOs and volunteer associations. In most cases this has been without economic compensation as evidenced by the fact that they have barely applied for the funding to which they were entitled by the regional government.

Thus, the main condition that made such activities possible has been, first of all, the willingness expressed by the regional and local authorities to the reception of asylum seekers and refugees. In addition, it has been made possible by the existence of available resources provided to the programme, in terms of housing and municipal social services.

It is expected that these conditions will be maintained or increased over time, due to the growing need for reinforcement of the reception and integration system. Also, the capacities of administrations will increase due to experience, in addition to the growing awareness of the regional government and municipalities regarding their involvement in supporting the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. There is evidence of improvement measures for the programme by the regional government in some of the aspects that are not working adequately (financing of local NGOs and volunteer associations, etc.). There is also a deepening of the support to refugees and asylum seekers (Auzolana II programme, with the collaboration of new municipalities).

Hindering factors

Shortcomings have also been detected during the implementation of the practice. The main one is the challenge in terms of accessing housing during the second phase of the individualised integration itinerary (integration), after leaving the housing made available by the programme.

As previously mentioned, prices of housing for rent in Spain and the Basque Country have suffered a significant increase in recent years. This makes it difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to access housing once they leave the public resource, as the financial support provided by the system is insufficient. Thus, most of the stakeholders interviewed have stated this as one of the main problems for the programme to be effective. There is a need for the regional government to facilitate the access of these people to public housing for rent in the Basque Country.

As a response, the participating municipalities are already working in the search for housing during the first phase of the individualised itinerary (reception) as well as providing special assistance to the beneficiary during the search. An alternative option, also described above,

has been the one put in place by the Municipality of Zarautz, which is providing its housing places during the second phase of the individualised integration itinerary (integration). The effect of this variant will have to be analysed as results become available on different beneficiaries.

In addition, and as also detailed in Section 2.5, the lack of appropriate communication and coordination at the regional level has become a hindering factor for the practice. There are no coordination meetings at the programme level, common intervention procedures or exchange of good practices in response to the problems faced in each municipality.

Finally, the insufficient capacity of the programme to help asylum seekers and refugees to achieve economic autonomy once they have left the reception and integration programmes has been highlighted. This is closely related to the capacity for insertion into the labour market.

As previously stated, one of the requirements to take part in the Basque Minimum Income Scheme is the need to be registered and have effective residence in the Basque Country. This has to be during the previous three years without interruption, which is something that new asylum seekers and refugees in the Basque Country cannot fulfil. In response to this problem, which has been highlighted by different stakeholders interviewed, the regional government is analysing the possibility of introducing modifications in the requirements under certain conditions.

Dispersal policy

With regard to the contribution of the programme to the dispersal policy, it has become an important element for supporting it. It has made it more effective, in fulfilment of its primary objective of reinforcing the Refugees Reception and Integration System.

Thus, the Auzolana programme implies an important change in the model adopted to date in Spain. The Spanish system assigns places to stay in the different autonomous communities centrally. It is the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security that decides the plan and the region for each refugee and asylum seeker, without the autonomous communities taking part in the decision.

As explained above, within the Auzolana programme the central government still decides which people are assigned to the autonomous community of the Basque Country, without its participation. However, unlike the previous situation, the regional government is now informed about the new arrivals, and it transfers this information in turn to the participating municipalities. In this way, both administrations can activate specific resources to attend them, as well as design new policies and programmes for their attention.

Transferability capacity

Due to the low complexity of the Auzolana programme, the practice analysed could be easily transferred or replicated in other contexts with a centralised management of the flows of asylum seekers and refugees.

The programme has not required a substantial budget (less than EUR 350,000 in its first 18 months) and has demonstrated a significant impact (13.8 % of increase in housing places available for refugees and asylum seekers, a number of beneficiaries representing 7.5 % of total applicants of international protection within the region in 2018), so financial contributions do not seem to be a barrier for its implementation.

However, two main elements of the practice can be considered for transfer to other territories:

- The clear commitment of the different stakeholders involved is essential, mainly the central government or the authorities in charge of managing the flows of asylum seekers and refugees. They should be open to agreements with other administrations to implement new approaches, and the regional government should be open to providing funding to reinforce the services both at a regional and a local level. Besides, the engagement of the municipalities is key, as an important part of the reinforcement of the system relies on their resources. This is because of the housing places they make available to the programme on the one hand, but also because of the social services provided to the participants on the other. Moreover, they coordinate the practice at a local level, so their engagement and the coordination with the rest of the stakeholders taking part is key.
- Communication is a key success factor, as it can multiply the positive effects of the programme. Close interaction among the different stakeholders and the establishment of channels for communication are essential to overcome the multiple barriers in the area of bureaucracy that affect the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers.

Recommendations

In order to ensure the continuity and the expansion of the practice, it would be of major interest to increase awareness among citizens as well as the public administrations (regional and local). This would help to ensure their willingness to host refugees and provide resources, as they are vital actors within the scheme, in most cases without economic compensation. In this context, the preparation of projects in this regard within the framework of the AMIF, FSE or EaSI programmes could be a positive action.

On the other hand, it would be desirable to foster coordination among the different actors taking place in the practice at a regional level, in order to increase effectiveness of the practice. As highlighted by the interviewed participants, the increased relationships set between the different actors have contributed positively to the objective of the intervention. However, they have remarked that insufficient communication and coordination at the regional level is hindering the effectiveness of Auzolana. Thus, coordination efforts would be

required, including coordination meetings as well as common intervention procedures in the practice in order to maximise synergies and to ensure a common approach.

In addition, it is crucial that Auzolana will be complemented with specific programmes for the effective integration of their participants in the hosting society. This should include labour market integration support, access to housing and programmes for income support.

Finally, it is important to set up close coordination of the programme with the new Auzolana II Programme which, as mentioned above, has started operating in March 2019. The combination of these two programmes will undoubtedly provide a more comprehensive response to the challenges faced for the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the Basque Country, making them more effective.

Lessons learnt

The following key points summarise the main lessons that have been learnt through the implementation of the practice.

- The new bottom-up approach seems to be able to provide solutions to the overflowing of the Spanish Refugees Reception and Integration System. This is due to the involvement of regional and local levels of public administration, together with local NGOs and citizens associations.
- The coordination among the different stakeholders at a regional and local level (regional government, municipalities, NGOs), as well as adequate communication channels seem to be key factors for the effectiveness of the policy. They improve the relationships set among these actors, which creates synergies.
- A better coordination is required within the Auzolana programme and other social inclusion programmes, in order to maximise the effectiveness of the practice.

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List of interviewees

Type of organisation	Organisation
Regional authority	Regional Government of the Basque Country
Local authority	Municipality of Getxo
Local authority	Municipality of Zarautz
NGO	MPDL NGO

Annexes

Annex I Impacts

Table 1: Financial impacts and their indicators - regional/local level

Impacts	Selected indicators	Impacts	Selected indicators	Impacts	Selected indicators	Impacts
Public revenues	Average social security contributions and taxes (payroll/business) per employed refugee ^{32 33}	EUR 1,825.3 (2012). Per-capita public revenues generated by social security contributions of foreign population.	-	-	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	Regional
Public revenues	Consumption tax on spending of refugees per refugee ³⁴	EUR 553.2 (2012). Per-capita public revenues generated by consumption tax pay of foreign population.	-	-	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	Regional
Public spending	Spending on integration and initial reception measures ³⁵ per refugee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public spending	Extra spending on integration into the education system (per refugee pupil)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public spending	Education spending per pupil per year (total population ³⁶)	EUR 1,136.6 (2012). Per-capita public spending in education services used by the foreign population.	-	-	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	Regional
Public spending	Health care spending per person and year in the country (total population ³⁷)	EUR 952.7 (2012). Per-capita public spending in health care	-	-	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the	Regional

³² Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

³³ Calculated by average values for the active population with a discount for immigrants from literature.

³⁴ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

³⁵ Housing, sustenance, language course, employment integration courses other integration courses.

³⁶ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

³⁷ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

		services used by the foreign population.			Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	
Public spending	Housing subsidies per person and year (total population ³⁸)	EUR 258.0. (2012). Per-capita public spending in housing support used by the foreign population.	-	-	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	Regional
Public revenues	Net taxes per capita (PPP, 2010 US\$)	Analysis for the period 1985-2015.	-	-	'Macroeconomic evidence suggests that asylum seekers are not a burden for Western European countries.' D'Albis et. al. (2018).	National
Public spending	Spending per capita (PPP, 2010 US\$)	Analysis for the period 1985-2015.	-	-	'Macroeconomic evidence suggests that asylum seekers are not a burden for Western European countries.' D'Albis et. al. (2018).	National

³⁸ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

Table 2: Economic impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data source	Regional / local***
Employment (rate)	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (at arrival)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (within 5 years)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (in the longer terms)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Entrepreneurship	Number and proportion (%) of self-employed amongst those finding a job) of new enterprises founded by refugees ³⁹	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Underemployed or not employed low skill workers	Number and proportion of long-term unemployed refugees ⁴⁰	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number and proportion of underemployed refugees ⁴¹	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number and proportion of precariously employed refugees ⁴²	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

³⁹ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁴⁰ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁴¹ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁴² Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

Table 3: Social and political impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data sources	Regional / local***
Demography	Impact on dependency ratio	Foreign population: 22.2 %; Native population: 56.5 %; Total: 53.5 % (2013)	N/A	N/A	Socioeconomic impact of Immigration in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (2016). Basque Immigration Observatory.	Regional
Cultural diversity	No quantitative indicator	62.6 % (2018) of population considering that foreign immigrant population of other ethnic groups enrich the cultural life.	-	-	Basque Immigration Observatory (2018). Barometer 2018 on Perceptions and Attitudes towards the Population of Foreign Origin.	Regional
Security	Impact on crime rate (of refugee/total population)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Regional
Perception	Perception rates of immigration as a problem	7.7 % (2018).	-	-	Basque Immigration Observatory (2018). Barometer 2018 on Perceptions and Attitudes towards the Population of Foreign Origin.	Regional
Political tensions caused by migration	Relevance of immigration in political debates and elections	No significant relevance detected. Tolerance Index: 59.7 % (2018) ⁴³ .	-	-	Basque Immigration Observatory (2018). Barometer 2018 on Perceptions and Attitudes towards the Population of Foreign Origin.	Regional

⁴³ The Immigration Tolerance Index measures the empathy of the population of Basque origin regarding foreign immigrant groups, as well as its reactance to negative stereotypes. It is related to the regional social situation in terms of public opinion: less tension, distance from criticisms of immigration in political discourses, absence of interested debates, etc.

Annex II Policy and actors classification

Table 4: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at Country and local level

Category	Types	Country-level policies targeting:		Regional or local-level policies targeting:		Assessment *
		Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	
Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals	Emergency housing Emergency health care Basic subsistence needs Reception and recognition provisions Residence permits Family reunification Settlement restrictions Referrals	System for reception and integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection (national system) – Reception phase.	Same as asylum seekers .	Centralised at National level, by provided regionally.	Same as asylum seekers.	3
Housing / accommodation	Housing/accommodation Housing support	Reception phase of the national system, at Collective Centres. Integration phase of the national system in private housing, with income support from the Programme.	Same as Asylum seekers .	Centralised at National level, by provided regionally.	Same as asylum seekers.	2
Healthcare	Emergency/urgent healthcare Full health care	Public health care system for all asylum seekers.	Same as Asylum seekers .	Regional health care services.	Same as asylum seekers.	3
Social assistance and income support	Social assistance services Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits	Social services of Autonomous Communities and Municipalities. Income support within the national system.	Same as Asylum seekers .	Regional Social Services.	Same as asylum seekers.	2
Education and training	School enrolment and attendance Adult education Vocational education and training	Access to school under the general universal scheme in Spain. Language training, adult education a VET under	Same as Asylum seekers .	Regional Education and Training Services.	Same as asylum seekers.	3

		the national system.				
Labour market access/integration	Skills assessment/validation Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks) Grants and preparatory courses employment subsidies, apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work Unemployment benefits	Support to labour market access within the national system.	Same as asylum seekers	Public Employment Services of the Autonomous Community	Same as asylum seekers.	2
Social and political integration	Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.) Integration programmes such as sport, culture, diversity promotion Political participation (local level) Residence and religion rights	Included in the national system.	Same as asylum seekers	Regional and Municipal Programmes for Immigrants	Regional and Municipal Programmes for Immigrants	2

Table 5: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at Country level

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	Agency for management of cooperation at the EU's external borders (FRONTEX), European Asylum Support Office (EASO) (European Agencies). DG Home of the European Commission.	-	CEPS, Migration Policy Group, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), European University Institute, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique CNRS (Research organizations with important activity in the field of refugees, asylum seekers and/or migrants).	European Council on Refugees and Exiles AISBL, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants ASBL (PICUM) (NGOs working on refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants). UNHCR.	International Red Cross.
National	Ministry of Interior (border controls, fight irregular immigration, security; international protection procedures). Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security (Government's policy on foreigners, immigration and emigration, including integration). Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (foreign policy and of international cooperation). Ministry of Justice (powers related to nationality and civil registry). Ministry of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare (certain competences related to equality and non-discrimination).	-	Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIFOB), Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) (Research organizations focused / with important activities in the field of migration).	UGT, CCOO (trade unions, interested from the labour market point of view). CEOE, CEPYME (employer's organizations, interested from the labour market point of view). ACCEM, CEAR, SJM, Spanish Red Cross (NGOs focused in assistance to refugees and asylum seekers).	-

Regional	<p>Regional Ministry of Employment and Social Policies (employment and social policies, including those affecting foreign population).</p> <p>Regional Ministry of Health (healthcare services to foreign population).</p> <p>Regional Ministry of Education (education to foreign population).</p> <p>Regional Ministry for Culture and Language Policy (policies including integration of foreign population).</p> <p>Regional Ministry for Security (dealing with issues related to irregular migration and legal procedures).</p> <p>Regional Ministry for Employment and Justice (employment policies and services, and legal procedures).</p>	-	<p>Basque Immigration Observatory (IKUSPEGI) (research on migratory movements in the Basque Country.</p> <p>Collaboration Basque Government-University of the Basque Country).</p> <p>University of Basque Country, Deusto University (Universities, interested from the research point of view).</p>	<p>Basque Country branches of the trade unions, employers's organizations and NGOs described above.</p> <p>LAB (regional trade union, interested from the labour market point of view).</p> <p>Coordination Organization of Basque Country NGOs supporting Immigrants (Harresiak Apurtuz) (NGO coordinating regional NGOs working with migrants).</p>	-
Local	Municipalities of Basque Country.	-	-	Local NGOs working with migrants.	-

Annex III Network analysis

Table 6: Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis

Levels	Bureaucrats* ⁴⁴	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	-	-	-	UNHCR.	-
National	General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security.	-	-	-	Spanish Red Cross, CEAR, MPDL.
Regional	General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government. Association of Basque Municipalities (EUDEL). Regional NGOs: CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL.	Jonan Fernández, General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government. Monika Hernando, Director for Victims and Human Rights of the Regional Government.	Deusto University.	Regional Branches of Spanish Red Cross, CEAR, MPDL.	Basque Country branches of the trade unions, employers's organizations. LAB (regional trade union, interested from the labour market point of view).
Local	Municipalities taking part in the practice: Amurrio, Galdakao, Getxo, Laudio, Zarautz, Portugalete and Tolosa. Provincial Councils of Álava, Biscay and Guipúzcoa.	-	-	Local NGOs and volunteer's organizations (Hotz Zarautz, Perualde Getxo, etc).	

⁴⁴ * Bureaucratic actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim that formal rules and procedures confer them a specific responsibility in the process; Political actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact of representing citizens as they enjoy citizens' consensus; experts are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim of having the knowledge needed in order to solve the problem; special interest actors (grey nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact that they are directly affected by the policy decision, meaning that they will try to maximize the benefit/cost ratio from their specific point of view; general interests actors (pink nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the fact that the interests they represent are general (e.g. NGOs, etc) and on the fact that they represent groups that cannot defend their interests by themselves.

Table 7: Mapping the actors and the roles

Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
European Institutions:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
International organisations (UNHCR)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
National public institutions (Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Services)	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Regional institutions (Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Regional Agencies (Public Employment Service of the Basque Country)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other regional public institutions (Provincial Councils, Association of Basque Municipalities, EUEDEL)	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Municipalities (Amurrio, Galdakao, Getxo, Laudio, Zarautz, Portugalete and Tolosa)	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Provinces (Provincial Councils of Álava, Biscay and Guipúzcoa)	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Universities (Deusto University)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Regional politicians (J. Fernández, M. Hernando)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
Mayors	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
International/national/regional/local Trade Unions (regional trade unions)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
International/National/regional/local employers' organizations (regional employers' organization)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
International/National/regional/local NGOs / Associations (CEAR Basque Country, MPDL, Red Cross)	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	2	1
Local committees (citizens' or other types of committees) (Hotz Zarautz, Perualde, etc.)	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	2	1

Table 8: Relationship matrix - Programming Phase

	Central Government of Spain	Basque Country Regional Government	Municipalities taking part in the Auzolana Programme	Provincial Councils	Basque Municipalities Association (EUDEL)	Regional branches of national NGOs	Local NGOs and volunteers associations
Central Government of Spain		X					
Basque Country Regional Government	X		X	X	X		
Municipalities taking part in the Auzolana		X		X	X		












Programme							
Provincial Councils		X	X		X		
Basque Municipalities Association (EUDEL)		X	X	X			
Regional branches of national NGOs							
Local NGOs and volunteers associations							

Table 9: Relationship matrix - Implementation Phase

	Central Government of Spain	Basque Country Regional Government	Municipalities taking part in the Auzolana Programme	Provincial Councils	Basque Municipalities Association (EUDEL)	Regional branches of national NGOs	Local NGOs and volunteers associations
Central Government of Spain		X				X	
Basque Country Regional Government	X		X	X	X	X	X
Municipalities taking part in the Auzolana Programme		X		X	X	X	X
Provincial Councils		X	X		X		
Basque Municipalities Association (EUDEL)		X	X	X			
Regional branches of national NGOs	X	X	X				X
Local NGOs and volunteers associations		X	X			X	

Infographic Summary

Table 10: Graph labels

Type of actor (Colour)	Central or secondary actor based on betweenness (Dimension)	Territorial (Shape)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Bureaucrats  Politicians  Experts  Special Interest  Diffused interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Central actor  Secondary actor <p>In each graph all the actors involved in the programming or implementation phase of the project/policy are represented, even if isolated (usually top left) in one of the phases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  International  National  Regional  Local

The following infographic summarizes the actors and their roles in the project/policy. The biggest characters represent central actors while the smallest ones have a secondary role in that role/function. Then, graphs representing relations among actors in the programming and the implementation phases are shown.

The policy network counts totally 21 actors, 14 involved in the programming phase and 20 in the implementation one.

In the programming phase, the complexity of the network of actors is quite limited, being composed only of public institutions, even if also at national and international level. The General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government and EUDEL represent the core of the programming network, being the connectors between the national/international institutions and the seven municipalities involved in the policy. On the contrary, in the implementation phase the network is much more complex, involving a higher number of different actors and at different territorial level. In fact, during the implementation phase also experts (Deusto University) and special-interest actors are involved. In particular MPDL, Red Cross, CEAR Basque Country, together with the Regional Government, EUDEL and the seven municipalities, play a central role in the implementation phase.

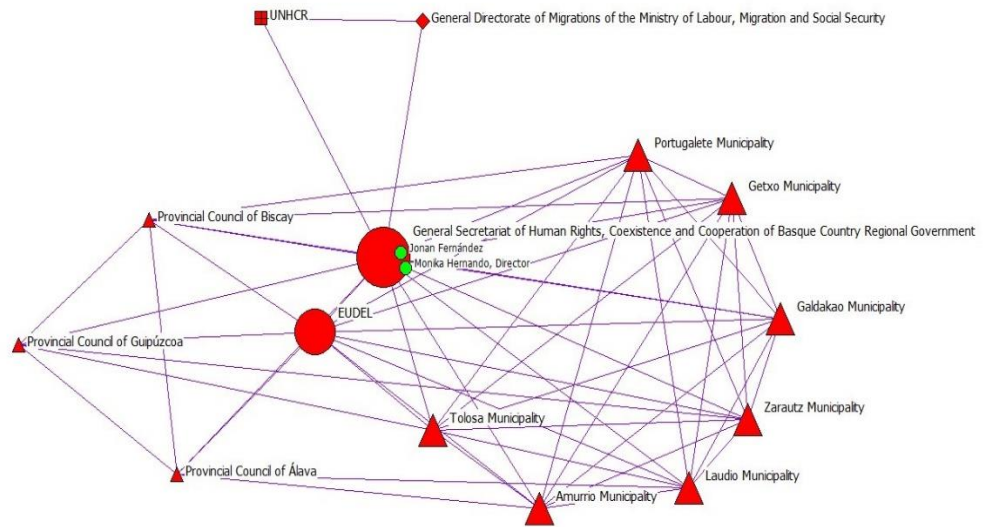
Actors and Roles

Roles	Actors
Setting Legal Framework 	General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights)
Political Responsible 	General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights)
Technical Responsible 	General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL, Local NGOs (Perualde Getxo, Hotz Zarautz and others)
Financing 	General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality
Programming the Intervention 	UNHCR, General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights), CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL
Coordinator in the implement. 	General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Provincial Council of Álava, Provincial Council of Biscay, Provincial Council of Guipúzcoa, EUEDEL, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights), CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL, Local NGOs (Perualde Getxo, Hotz Zarautz and others)
Policy implementer 	General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights), CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL, Local NGOs (Perualde Getxo, Hotz Zarautz and others)

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Monitoring and data</p> 	<p>General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Deusto University, Jonan Fernández (General Secretary of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation), Monika Hernando (Director for Victims and Human Rights), CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL, Local NGOs (Perualde Getxo, Hotz Zarautz and others)</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Resources mobilization</p> 	<p>General Directorate of Migrations of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, General Secretariat of Human Rights, Coexistence and Cooperation of Basque Country Regional Government, Provincial Council of Álava, Provincial Council of Biscay, Provincial Council of Guipúzcoa, EUDEL, Amurrio Municipality, Galdakao Municipality, Getxo Municipality, Laudio Municipality, Zarautz Municipality, Portugalete Municipality, Tolosa Municipality, Deusto University, CEAR Basque Country, Red Cross, MPDL, Local NGOs (Perualde Getxo, Hotz Zarautz and others)</p>

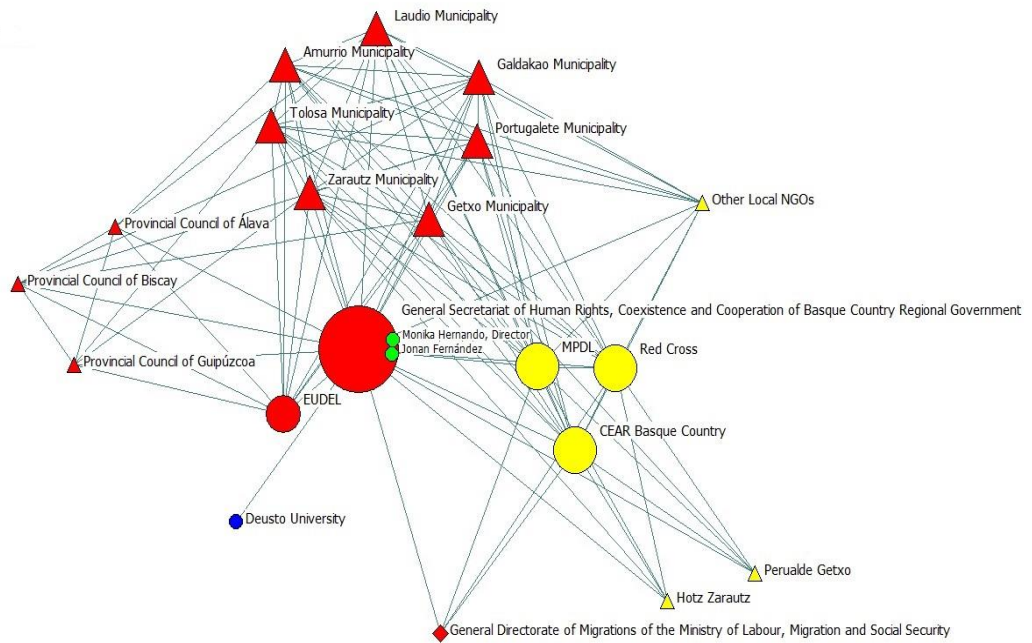
Programming phase

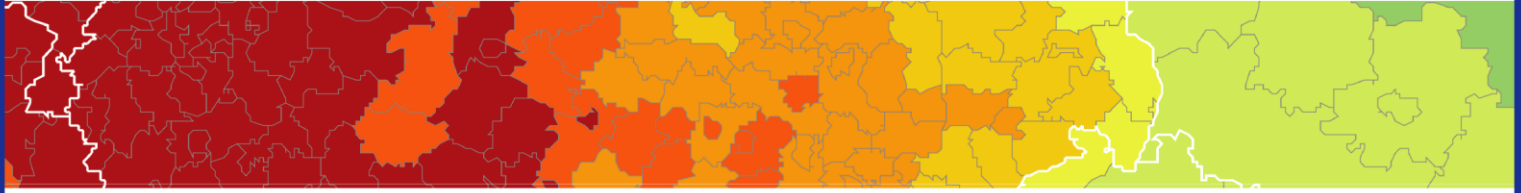
- Deusto University
- CEAR Basque Country
- Red Cross
- MPDL
- ▲ Hotz Zarautz
- ▲ Perualde Getxo
- ▲ Other Local NGOs



Implementation phase

- UNHCR





ESPON 2020 – More information

ESPON EGTC

4 rue Erasme, L-1468 Luxembourg - Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Phone: +352 20 600 280

Email: info@espon.eu

www.espon.eu, [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#)

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