

Mobile Patrols

Report - December 2025



**UMBRELLA
REFUGEE
COMMITTEE**





UMBRELLA REFUGEE COMMITTEE

WHO ARE WE?

The **Umbrella Refugee Committee (URC)** is a community-based organisation, led by refugees, for refugees.

Since 2019, we have been working to support displaced people in Belgium. Over time, multiple committees have come to be part of our network, such as the *Rainbow* and *Women Refugee Committees*, and other communities along national lines. We also work closely with other organisations, such as Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen, the UNHCR, IOM, the Red Cross, and Fedasil, among others.



The **URC** works to promote the social **inclusion, participation**, and overall **well-being** of **displaced communities living in Belgium**. Volunteers are at the core of our work. This is our greatest strength, as people from all over the world, many of whom have experienced displacement themselves, unite with a common goal of supporting those who have been forced to flee conflict and persecution, along with all the difficulties this entails.

WHAT IS THE URC'S MOBILE PATROLS PROJECT?

Close to **10,000 people** are experiencing **homelessness in Brussels**, a large proportion of whom are asylum seekers ([Brusselhelp](#), 2025). In response to this situation, one of URC's major projects in 2025 was the Mobile Patrols initiative.

We brought together a team of volunteers of diverse nationalities and language backgrounds, many of whom had experienced the asylum procedure themselves, to patrol key hotspots in Brussels, such as *Gare du Midi* and *the Humanitarian Hub*. During these patrols, volunteers engaged directly with people forced to live on the streets.

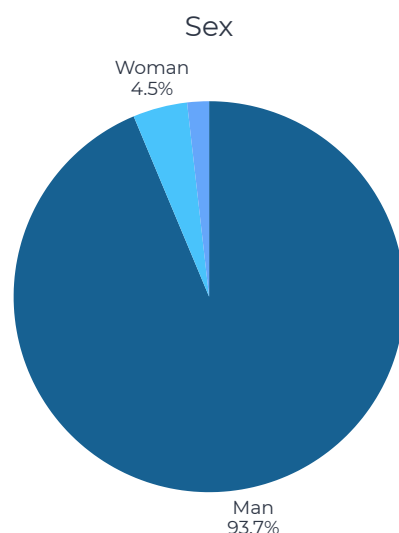
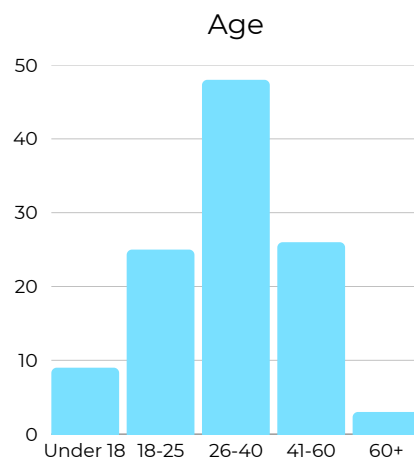
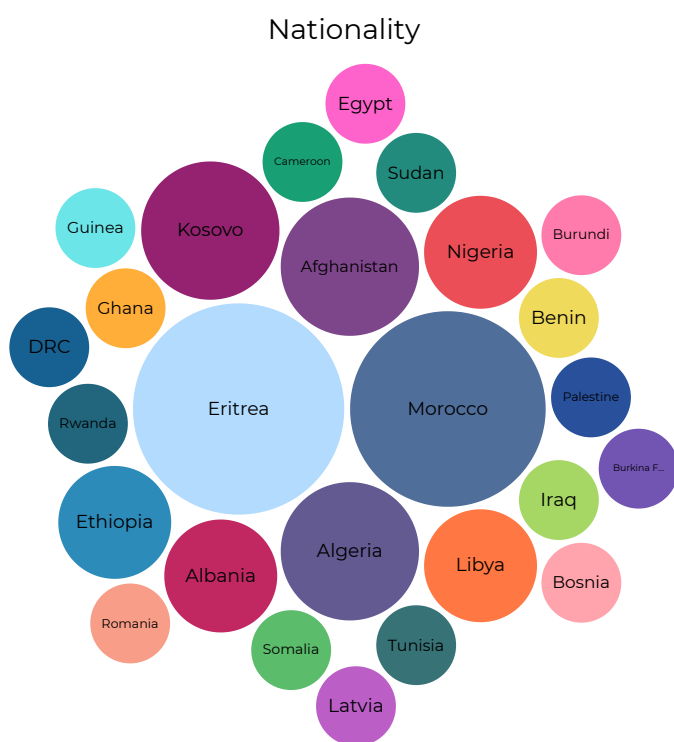


The initiative had a twofold objective: **to collect information** and to **offer support**. On the one hand, we **gathered data** on who is living on the streets, their most **urgent needs** and **challenges**, and which services or organisations people turn to for help. On the other hand, we **provided information** and **guidance** on **how and where to access essential services**, including legal support, shelter, food, hygiene facilities, clothing, and healthcare.

Our diverse group of volunteers enable the URC to harness the strength of **community-to-community support** and **trust**, and enable effective, accessible, and **dignified assistance**.

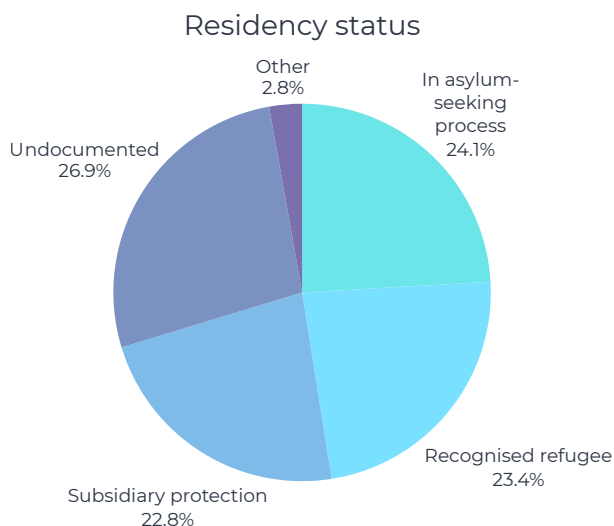
KEY FINDINGS FROM THE DATA

WHO DID WE MEET?



Based on a sample of over 100 individuals, the majority of people experiencing homelessness were adult men, primarily originating from countries in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the Middle East.

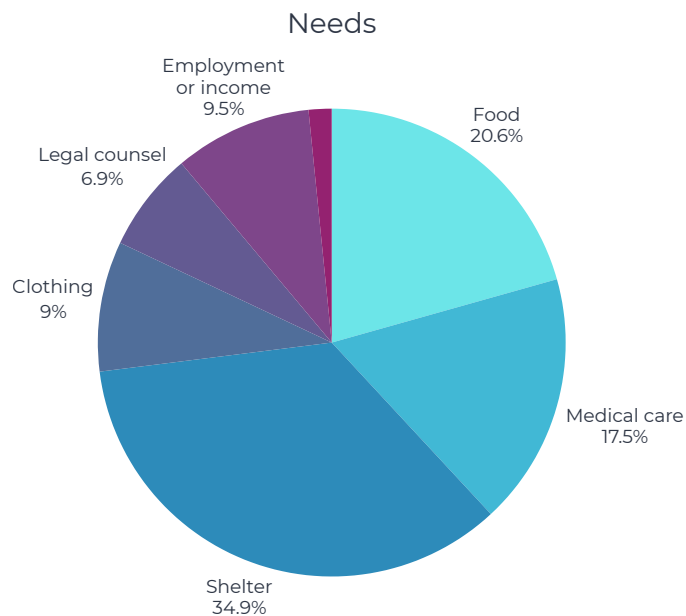
STATUS WITHIN THE ASYLUM SYSTEM



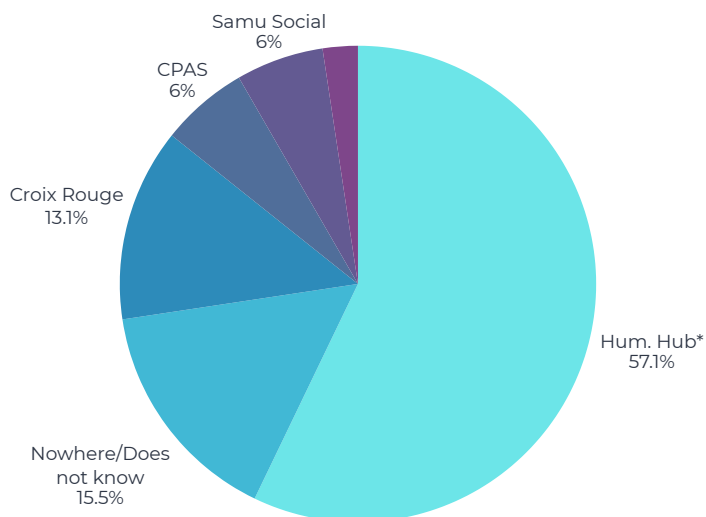
Many individuals were still undergoing asylum procedures, and some had already been granted refugee status. At the same time, a significant number were not registered within the asylum system and were unaware of the steps required to initiate an asylum application.

KEY NEEDS

Regarding their needs, the majority reported having no place to stay for the night or lacking access to basic necessities such as food and clothing. Many also expressed a need for medical or legal assistance. In addition, some highlighted difficulties in accessing employment opportunities or French language courses.



Organisations used for services



*The majority of respondents reported going to “Humanitarian Hub” for help or assistance. This likely reflects the fact that many respondents were encountered at the Hub itself, so it naturally appears as their main point of contact.



WHAT NEXT?

The Mobile Patrols initiative was a pilot project implemented in 2025. In 2026, we are extending the patrols project; adding to it additional service elements, and partnering with other organisations to strengthen and expand our impact.

A key objective is to provide a second line of community support through accompaniment services, such as attending appointments with individuals and guiding them through complex administrative and bureaucratic processes.

*This project was realised with the support of the **IOM Incentive fund 2025**. With the financial support of **Fedasil** through the **Conex project**.*



