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Crossing borders, connecting cultures

“I have a dream”: refugee children’s aspirations from a child-centered perspective

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Introduction

- Refugee flows in Greece
- Skaramagas refugee camp

Methodology

- Project objectives
- Interview protocol
- Research context
- Sample

Identifying children's aspirations

Conclusions

Refugee flows in Greece

- In Greece, 1.1 million refugees have entered the country since 2014 (UNCHR, Operational Portal, 2020)
- The estimated number of refugee and migrant children across Greece is 45.300 and among them 4.594 are unaccompanied (UNICEF, 2020)
- In 2021, total arrivals are 3.594 (1.286 sea arrivals and 2.308 land arrivals) (UNCHR, Operational Portal, 2021)

Skaramagas refugee camp

- Skaramagas refugee camp is one of the largest refugee camps in mainland Greece, in Athens' port area
- Skaramagas camp is home to more than 3.000 refugees and the majority of this population (40%) is children and adolescents
- The community is very diverse (different regions, cultures, languages, religions)



Project objectives

Research aim of the project (MiCreate*) is:

- position the refugee children in the center of their stories
- acquire knowledge of the essence of their life with sensitivity
 - > explore their aspirations
 - > map their future ambitions
 - > understand their educational needs

* Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

Interview protocol

Interview questions align with research questions

3 axes

Personal

Social

Educational

- Prior schooling experiences
- Post-resettlement educational experiences
- Aspirations and dreams

***RQ:** What are your dreams? What kind of job would you like to do in the future?*

Research context

The study was conducted at Skaramagas refugee camp between July and September 2020. The camp was chosen as it would allow us to identify a comprehensive list of children's aspirations.

Sample

Distribution of sample by gender/country of origin/age breakdown

N=21



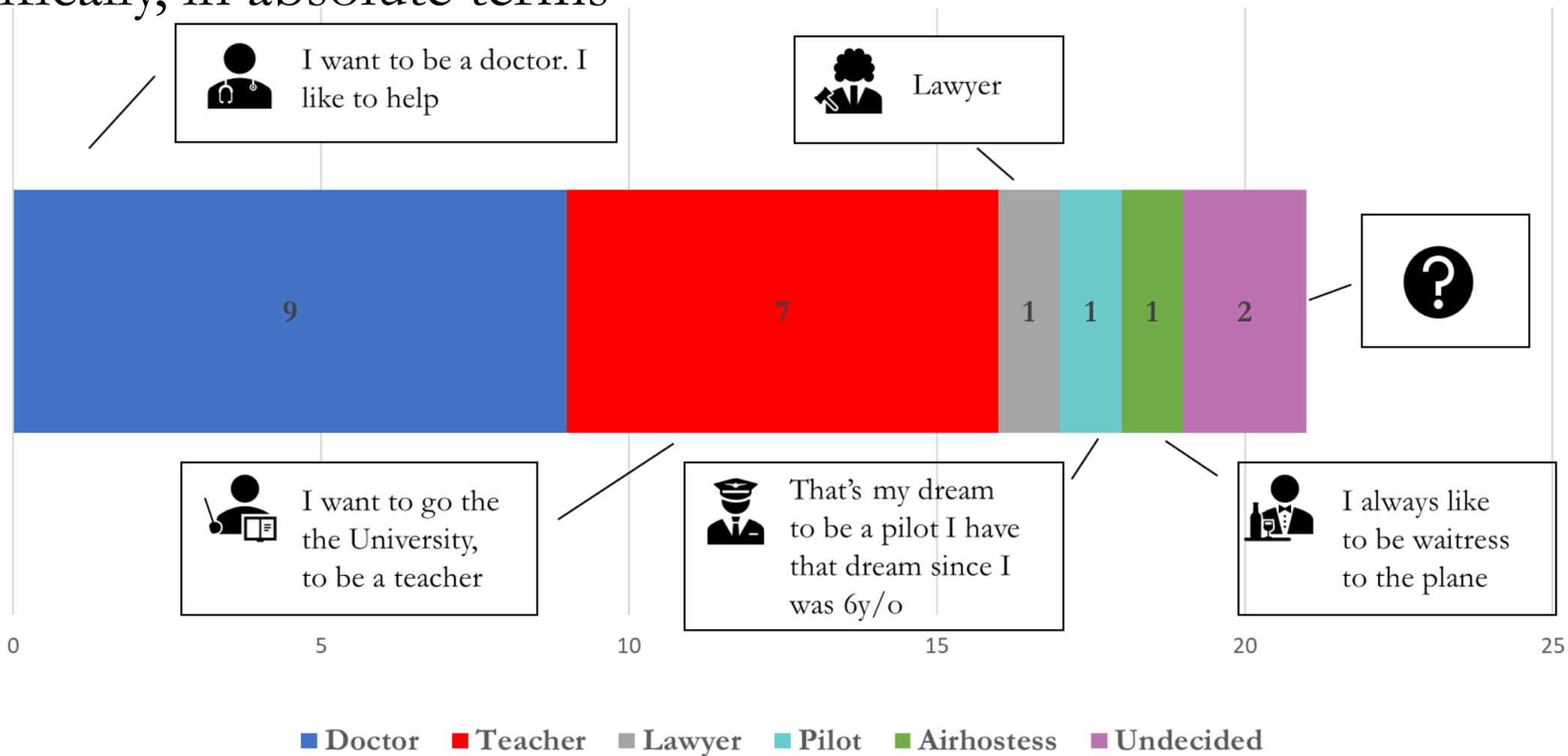
Children's aspirations

Core Research Questions:

What are your dreams? What kind of job would you like to do in the future?

- Children's aspirations predominantly focused on their education
- The respondents cited their dream of having access to higher education
- The majority of the participants want to obtain a university degree
- Refugee children have interest in the future
- They set long-term goals

Specifically, in absolute terms



Children's aspirations

Participants	Quotations
They have dreams	<i>"Whenever I see an airplane I just make a wish and I also put all over my room pictures of airplanes that's a dream"</i>
They feel capable	<i>"I want to study English studies.. English and German. Plus like for my studies I will study medicine"</i>
They want to improve the quality of their life	<i>"I'd would like a good scholarship" "I want opportunities"</i>
They want to obtain independence	<i>"To express myself, to find my own self, to get my destiny"</i>
They want to offer to the community	<i>"Doctor. Help people" "My dream is to become a person in the future that can help others"</i>

Children's aspirations

- Our findings seem to correlate with the results of a study reporting that migrant and refugee children in Greece want to study and become doctors (UNICEF, 2017)
- Doctor, lawyer, teacher are the most respected professions according to a survey conducted in 35 countries

These are the world's most respected professions

Based on rankings from the Global Teacher Status Index, 2018

Occupation	Average rank (1-14)
1 Doctor	11.6
2 Lawyer	9.5
3 Engineer	9.1
4 Head Teacher	8.1
5 Police Officer	7.8
6 Nurse	7.4
7 Accountant	7.3
8 Local Government Manager	7.3
9 Management Consultant	7.1
10 Secondary School Teacher	7.0

Source: Varkey Foundation

Conclusion

- Provide an appropriate environment for learning at the camp
- Help children set short and long-term goals for their education
- Inform children about educational possibilities and opportunities
- Encourage children to do their best
- Involve refugee parents in their children's education
- Close the cultural gap between refugee and majority students in school

So...



refugee children expedite their
academic success and their's dream will not remain
out of reach

References

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