

Barriers to housing for people in emergency accommodation

The role of administrative status

Vanessa Benoit
Jacques Pisarik
Zoé Canal Brunet

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Samusocial de Paris in brief

- Samusocial de Paris is an emergency service founded in 1993 whose original purpose lies in providing care and medical and nursing ambulatory aid to people in social distress.

- Our missions are the following:
 - **Outreach** - Mobile teams lead actions towards individuals in social distress
 - **Healthcare**- Health professionals provide care to people in need
 - **Regulation and coordination** - Including 115, the emergency phone number
 - **Shelter and emergency services** - in 9 housing centers and 2 day centers
 - **Social hotel management** - Dedicated teams book hotel beds and oversee the working relations with hotel owners
 - **Social observation and data analysis**

- Today, Samusocial de Paris counts over 1,000 employees and mostly relies on public funding.

Context

- 2012 homeless survey estimated that there were at least 141,500 homeless people living in Metropolitan France.
 - The greater Paris region alone accounts for more than 40% of them.
 - More than half (55%) were born outside France.
- Next survey is taking place in 2025, but Fondation Abbé Pierre estimates that the number reached over 330,000 last year. This number includes people living in emergency housing (hotels included, around 203,000 beds), in accommodation services dedicated to asylum seekers (around 113,000 spots), as well as people living on the streets or in public spaces.
- In 2022, Samusocial de Paris regulated over 20,000 spots in emergency shelters and 16,000 beds in hotels.
- The average length of stay in hotels reached 3 years in 2022, resulting in a logjam than lessens capacity of further entry. Every day, approximately 2000 individuals in Ile de France are denied the shelter they requested.
- Despite increasing public and political scrutiny, legal residency is not a requirement in France to access emergency shelter, unlike most permanent housing solutions.

Criteria for regularisation in France

Under French law and administrative rules, criteria for legalising undocumented persons fall under three headings :

- Persons with a a right to residency, such as parents of children born French ;
- Persons who can demonstrate strong ties to France, as evidenced by their length of stay (10 years) or their children's enrolment in school ;
- Persons employed in France, as evidenced by the length of time employed, with additional criteria regarding the sector of employment and the level of pay earned. In some cases, workers seeking legalisation also have to find a potential employer willing to pay an employer tax.

These last two headings remain at the discretion of the local Préfet, who can choose to apply them or not, and largely determines the evidence required.

Recent legislative changes in 2023 aimed at creating easier conditions for workers in short-staffed sectors but had little impact in practice.

Objectives of this survey

- To improve the organisation's knowledge of households in emergency hotels, enriching perspectives for our social workers, legal experts and hotel field workers
- To analyse the impact of administrative status on length of stays:
 - How many households are undocumented?
 - How far are they from legalisation criteria ? What barriers do they face in obtaining residence permits and rights?
 - To what extent is residency status the main challenge in accessing permanent housing?
- To help improve the services provided by Samusocial
- To draft public policy recommendations

Methodology

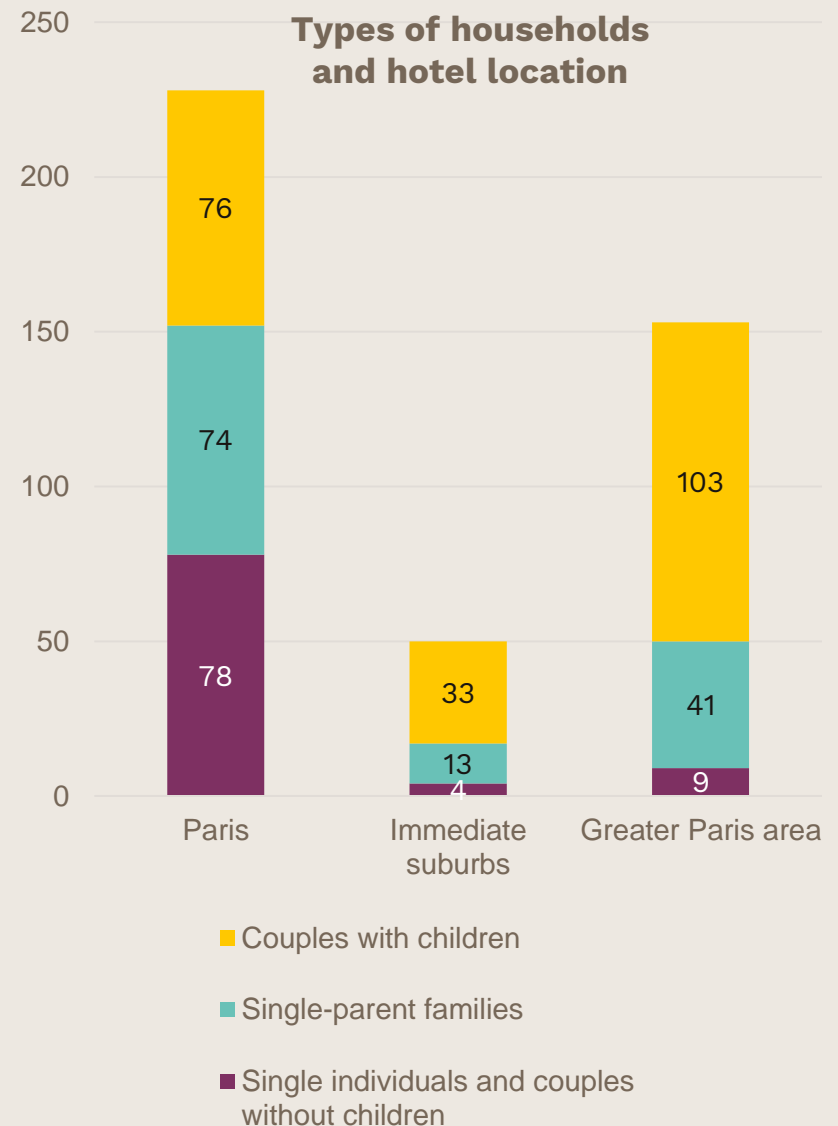
- Data collection took place from June to November 2022
- Sampled households taking into consideration a set of key characteristics
- Face-to-face interviews conducted with the help of hotel field workers
- Two questionnaires:
 - A short questionnaire for households with residency rights, exploring household composition, working situations and access to case management ;
 - A longer questionnaire for households with a temporary residence permit (1 year or shorter) or undocumented, adding questions about migration background, health and working history in France and abroad.
- Data protection and ethics
 - Data was collected on a securised platform, no name-specific information was recorded ;
 - Participation in the survey was not compulsory : households were informed of their right to refuse, without any impact on their future access to housing or case management by Samusocial de Paris.

2. Main results

2.1. General characteristics of survey respondents

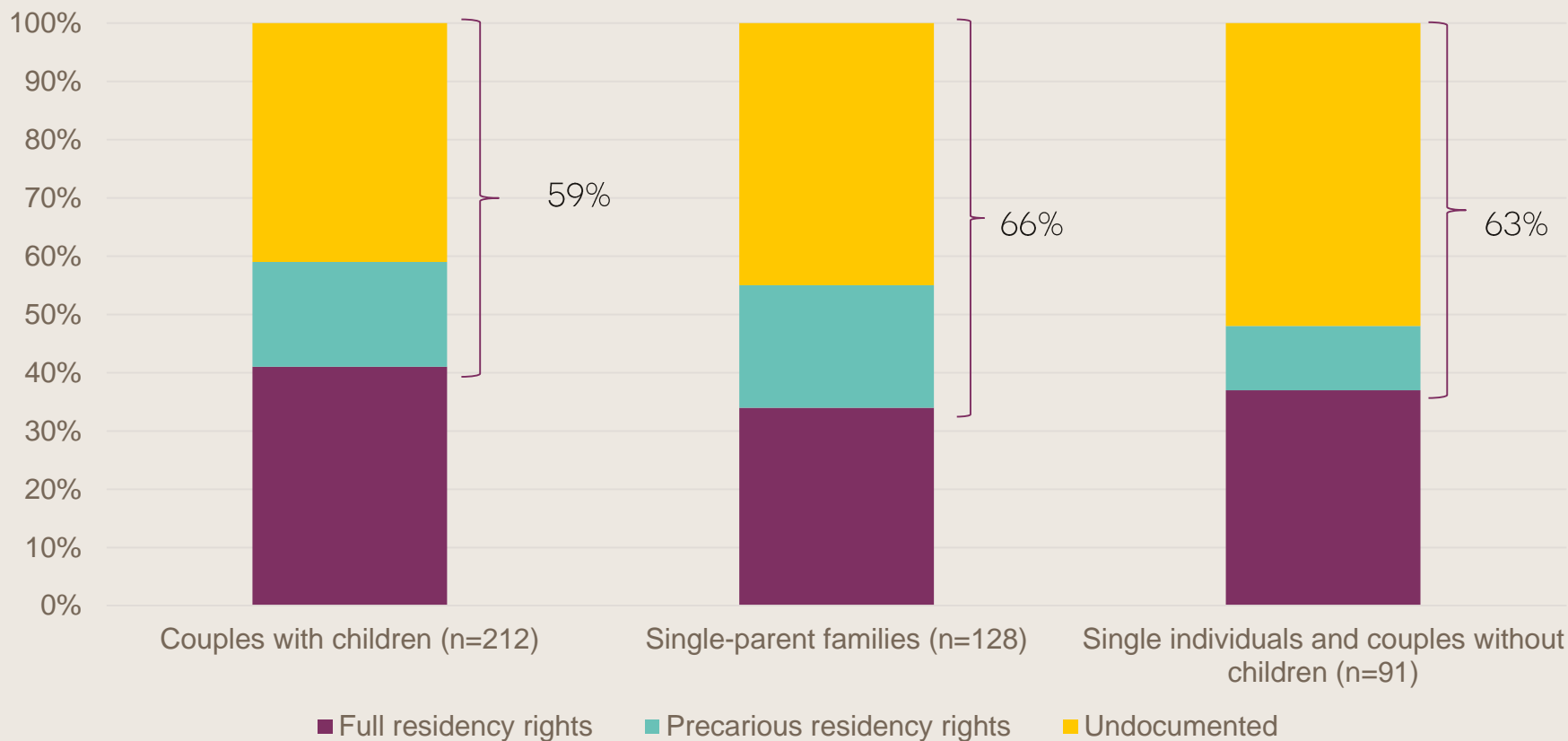
Main characteristics of surveyed households

- Household : the occupants of one or several hotel rooms regarded as a unit
- 431 households were surveyed, composed of 1 to 9 individuals – with a clear majority of families (340)
- 77 single individuals (including 54 women) and 14 couples without children
- In total, the survey gathered data on over 1,400 individuals
- 50% of households were housed in emergency hotels since before October 2018 (i.e. over 3.5 years)
- A quarter of all households declared being unable to access any kind of case management support



Residency rights of households surveyed

Administrative situations in surveyed adults
(for couples, the least precarious situation prevails here)



➤ Overall : **62% of households hold precarious residency rights or are undocumented**

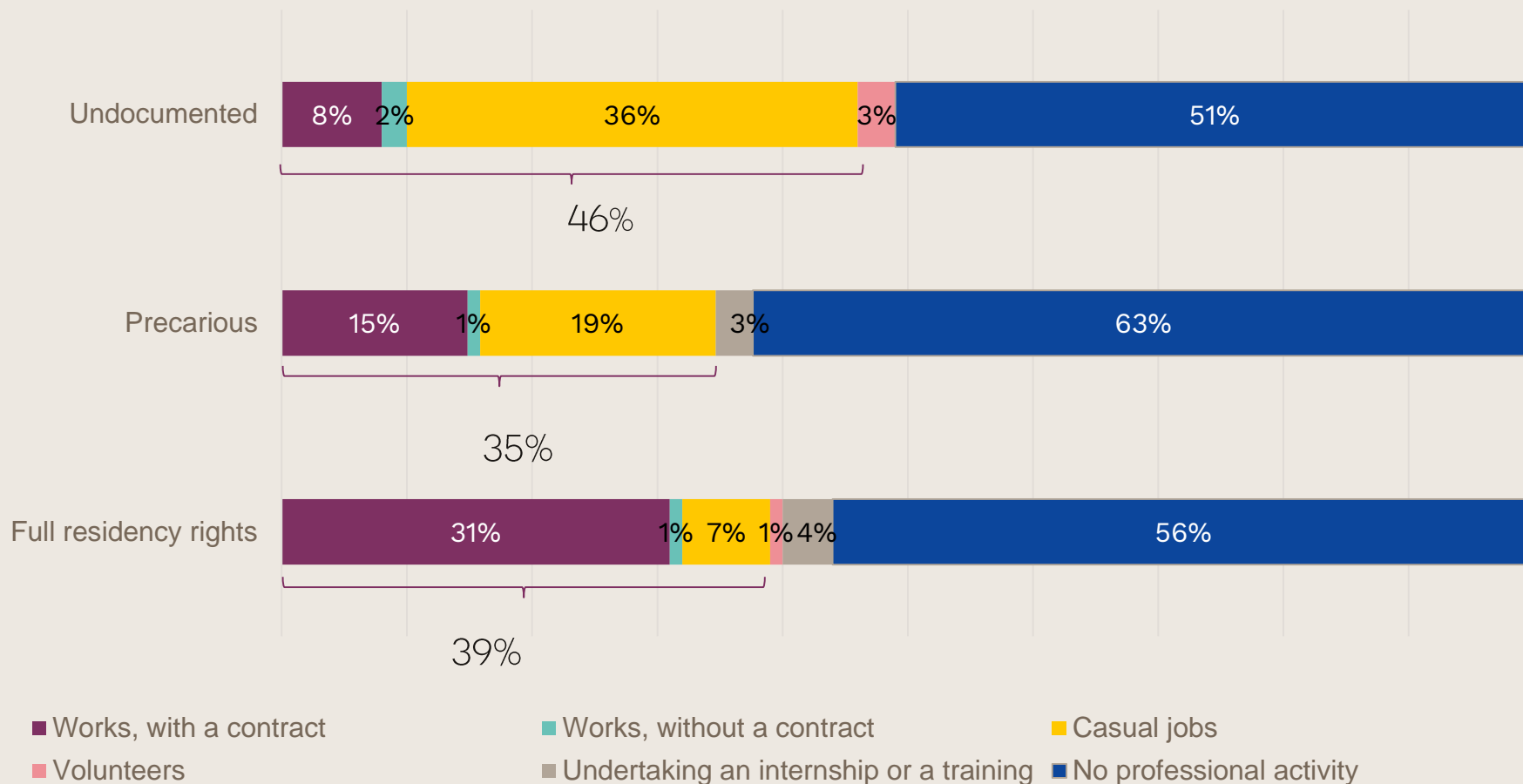
Links and roots in France and criteria for regularisation

- Some households already meet certain criteria for regularisation :
 - Overall, 9% have been in France for more than 10 years; 58% for more than 5 years.
 - A quarter of undocumented families could claim a residence permit based on family links and integration (5 years in France, 3 years of schooling) and 30% could apply within 3 years.
 - These applications depend upon the approval of the Préfets, but most households said they were in possession of the necessary evidence (several administrative documents per year).
- For a majority of families, at least one child was born in France; thus a potential future citizen with full residency rights.
- An analysis of these households' general characteristics reveals a high potential for legalisation among emergency hotel residents, including families.

2.2 Perspectives for regularisation based on working situations

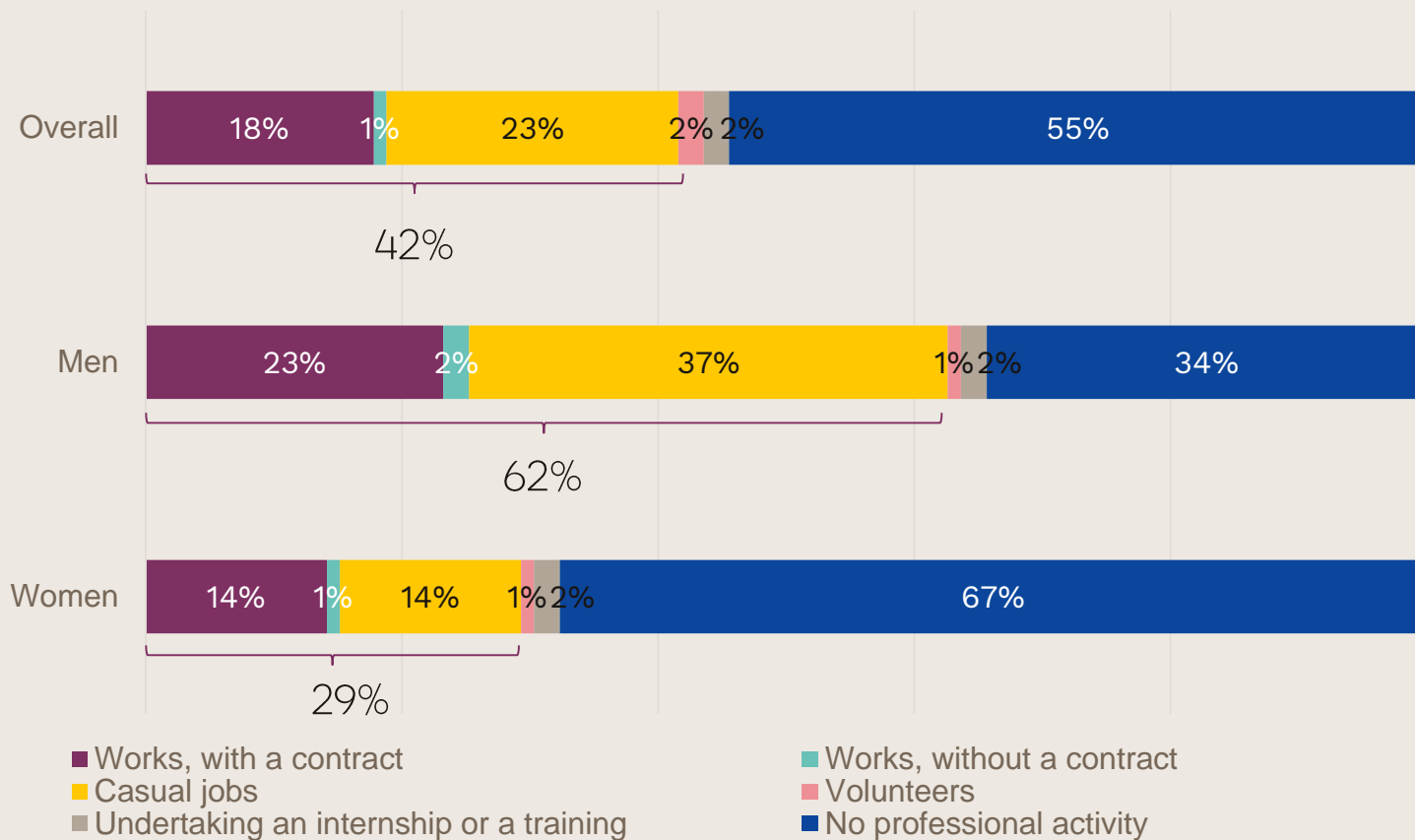
Working situations surveyed

Working situations and administrative status



Working situations from a gender perspective

Working situations and gender



Job sectors of undocumented people surveyed

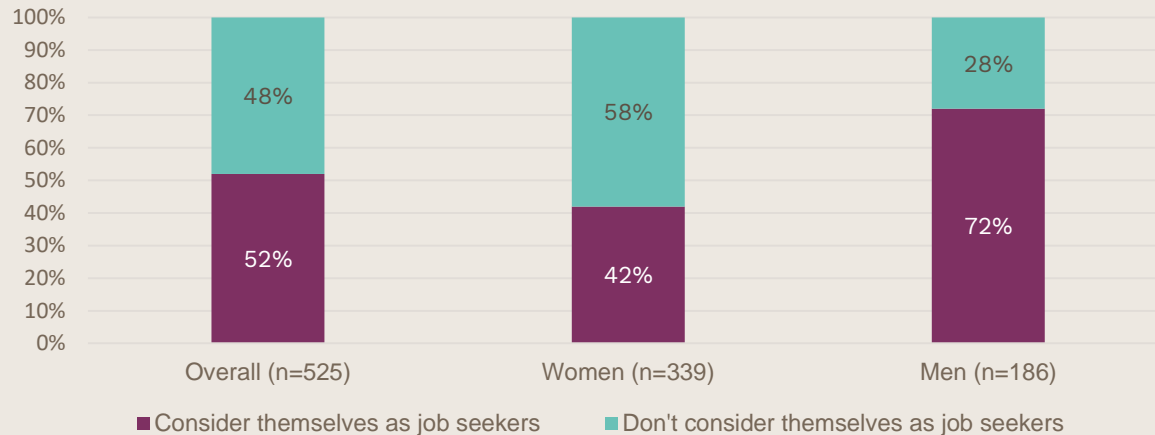
Job sectors	Percentage among undocumented workers (n=148)
All short-staffed job sectors, including :	73%
Personal services, administrative and support service activities	29%
Construction	14%
Hospitality	12%
Other short-staffed sectors	18%
Other job sectors	27%
Overall	100%

Difficulties in accessing residency rights based on work situations

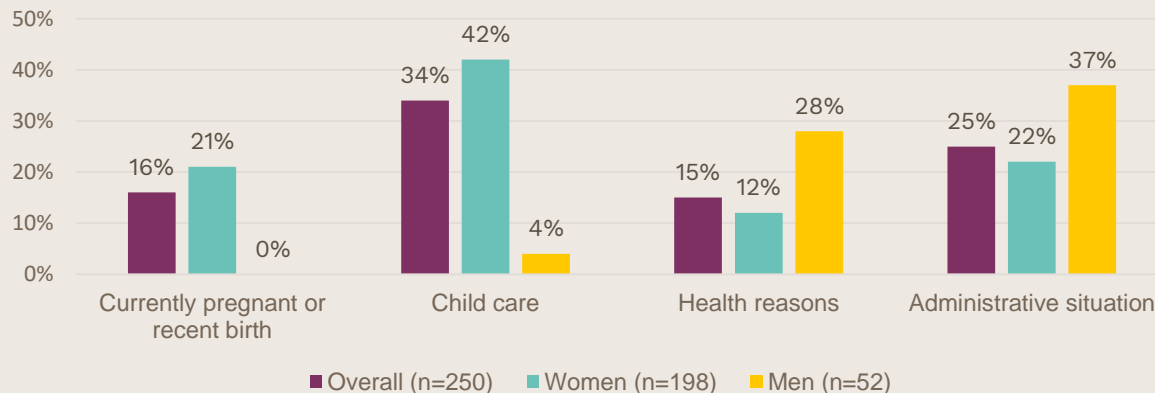
- Undocumented people often work in short-staffed sectors (the rationale behind the recent legislative changes)...
- But they rarely meet other criteria, such as work experience:
 - Only a minority is able to describe their work experience in France: **33% have documents that can testify of at least some of their jobs in France** (over 219 people who have worked in France).
- Job duration and income levels (earning around, at least, the minimum wage level) are also difficult to reach :
 - Over **one third of the people have been working without regularity** (no duration, in months or years, can be computed)
 - Their **median wage is around 400 euros**, corresponding either to (very) short-time employment or to wages below the minimum wage level
 - Thus, most of undocumented or precarious households live **in great poverty : 94% of them** are far below the poverty threshold (40% of the median income per consumption unit).
- Moreover, people surveyed described **multiple barriers to employment**.

Job market entry barriers reported by job-seekers surveyed

Job seeking individuals among people who don't work, or work without contract



Reasons hampering job search



To sum up

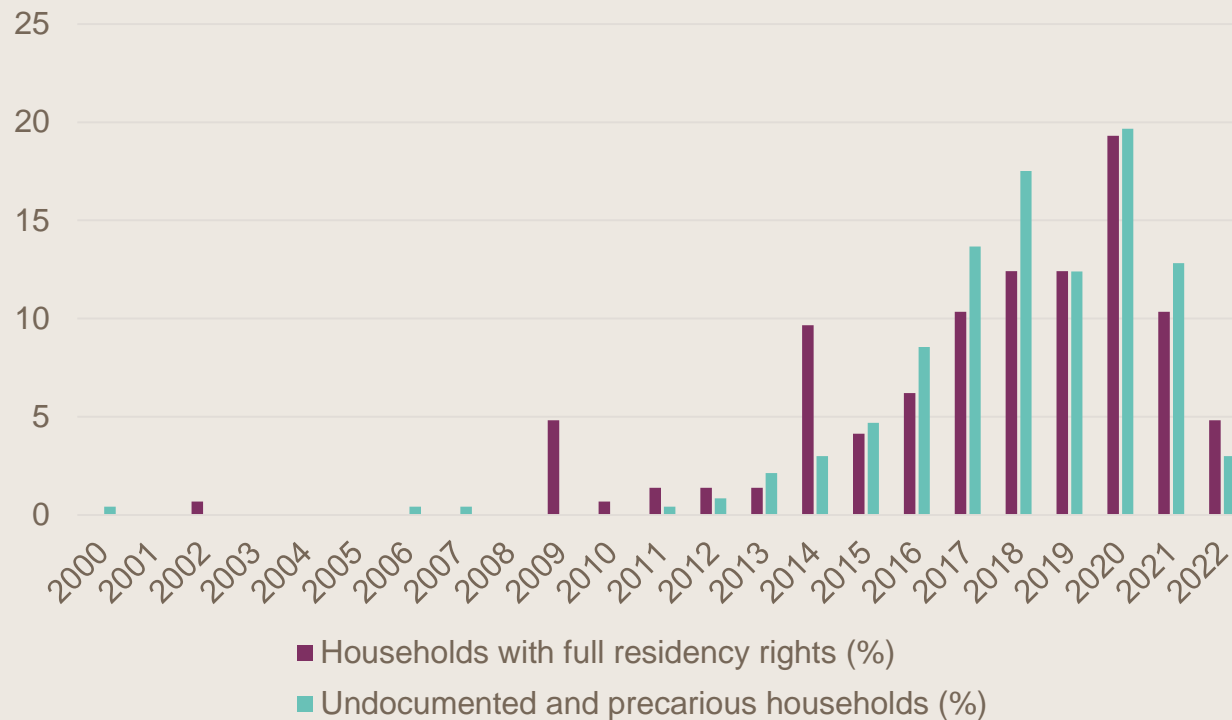
Key results:

- Adults with precarious or no residency rights are more likely to work (and it makes sense!) and a lot of them are working in short-staffed sectors.
- However, most of them work casual jobs, making it nearly impossible to claim residency rights for professional reasons and condemning them to harsh living conditions and high poverty levels.
- An important share of people (37%) identify their administrative situation as the main barrier to entering the job market.
- Women face even more difficulties entering the job market, as 42% identify childcare and 21% pregnancy as reasons hampering their job search.

2.3 Other barriers to housing

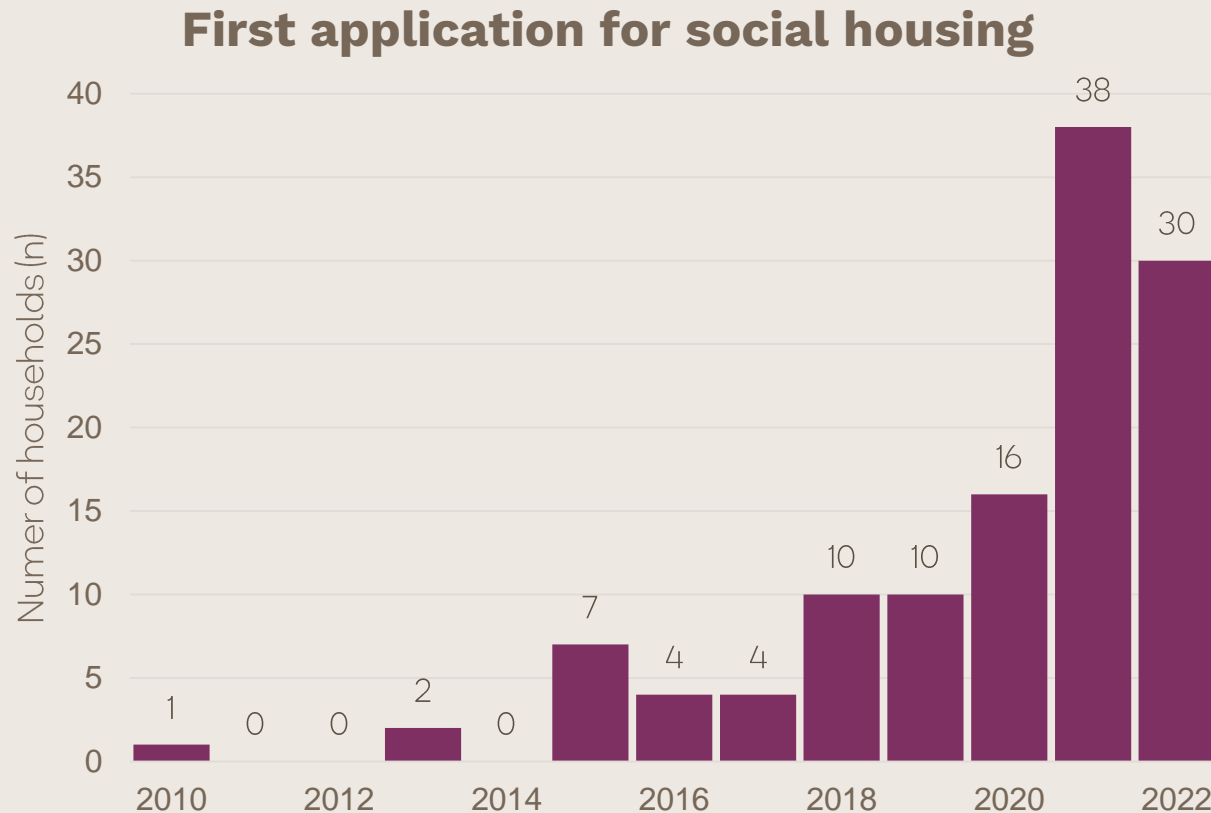
Length of stay in hotel accommodation and residency rights

Sheltered in a hotel since...



- In both situations, the median length of stay is around 4 years (sheltered in a hotel since 2018)

Access to social housing for households with full residency rights



Overall, 66% have applied for social housing (130 households). Among households without case management (44 households), 59% have applied.

Employment and income

- Households with full residency rights have greater incomes :
 - 11% of them earn more than 1350 euros (level of minimum wage for 1 person working full-time);
 - vs. only 5% of undocumented or precarious households.

- However, a majority of them still falls below the first quartile of income of applicants for social housing

- Multivariate analysis of the determinants of access to work with a contract confirms that:
 - Administrative situations and gender are significant determinants of access to work, in favor of men and of persons with full residency rights.

 - So is the stability in hotel accommodation: those who live in their hotel for more than one year have almost double chances to work than others.

 - Mastering French and hotel location (proximity of Paris) are also helping factors.

4. Conclusion

Key takeaways and recommendations

- **Unconditionality of emergency accommodation** must be preserved, ensuring that all households in need can access shelter.
- It is necessary to extend access to and reinforce **case management**, which has to be multidimensional (social, legal, etc.) to overcome the logjam in hotel accommodation
- It is necessary to implement efficient **regularisation procedures**, and to **alleviate the barriers that applicants face**. Two thirds of the people surveyed meet some of the criteria for regularisation and the faster they can access their rights, the shorter their stay in emergency accommodation will be.
- **Regularisation through work** must be adapted to the realities faced by undocumented workers or potential workers. The rationale should be granting residency rights to be able to find work rather than the other way around.
- The market for **social housing** needs to be reformed in order to make more room for the poorest applicants.

Benefits of this survey

- Better understanding of the situations of people accommodated in hotels and their living conditions (wider scope than administrative data, complements the field workers' feedback)
- We were able to anticipate, almost model, the effects of policy changes, such as the recent immigration law
- The data collection process offered opportunities of exchange among Samusocial employees
- We hope that the results offer a support to discuss legalisation with (some) public authorities
- This survey paved the way for a derived survey, in 2024, among emergency centres, whose results may reinforce our conclusions, and highlight the differences between hotel accommodations and centre accommodations.

l'Observatoire

SIAO

service intégré de l'accueil

et de l'orientation



Enquête « Diagnostic d'Appui à la Régularisation » (2022)

**Les enjeux de la régularisation
dans l'hébergement d'urgence :**
un état des lieux de l'accès
aux droits dans les hôtels sociaux
et LHSS du Samusocial de Paris.

Zoé Canal-Brunet, SIAO 75, Samusocial de Paris,
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(Juristes pour l'accès aux droits des étrangers), Samusocial de Paris.

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Full report (in French)
& questionnaires available [here](https://www.samusocial.paris/nos-enquetes?)

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Thank you!