



PROTECTION

Indicators assessing the protection space of Syrian refugees in Lebanon through the VASyR are in relation to legal residency, civil documentation and safety. These indicators include residency status, birth registration, and marriage documentation, with a focus on births and marriages that occurred in Lebanon as well as community relations and tensions. Indicators specific to child protection assessed through the VASyR include child labor and child marriage.

KEY FINDINGS

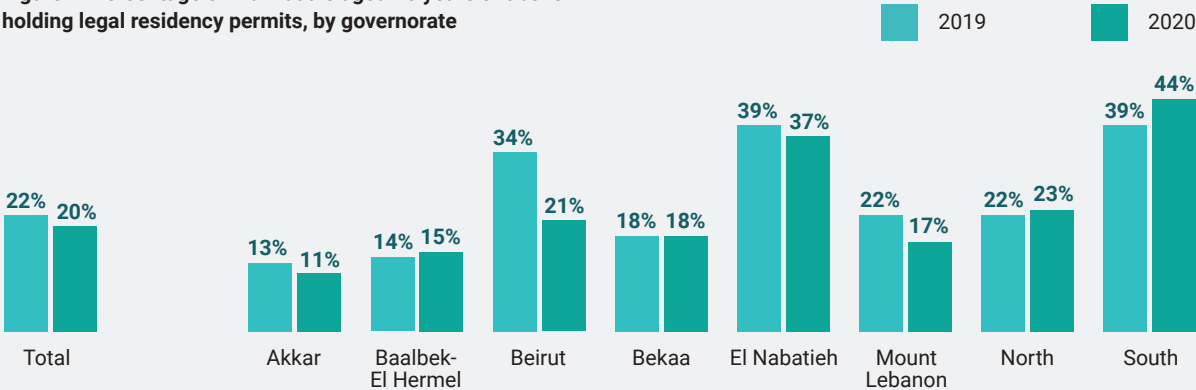
- The rate of legal residency among the Syrian refugee population continued to decline, with only 20% of individuals aged 15 years and above having had legal residency (compared to 22% in 2019). Disaggregation by age showed that younger individuals (aged 25 years and younger) had lower rates of legal residency as compared to their older counterparts. Across all age groups, a higher proportion of men had legal residency, as compared to women.
- Birth registration did not continue to improve, as was noted in 2019. In 2020, only 28% of Syrian refugee children born in Lebanon had their births registered with the Foreigners' Registry, compared to 30% in 2019 and 21% in 2018. However, almost all (98%) had either a doctor's or midwife's certificate.
- Twenty-one per cent of families reported curfews being imposed in the area where they live, compared to 14% in 2019. The highest rate and largest increase since 2019 was found in El Nabatieh (68% in 2020, 46% in 2019).
- Similar to previous years, competition for jobs was cited most commonly (40%) as one of the main drivers for tensions between the refugee and host communities; this was, however, a stark decrease from 2019 (51%). Also, competition for resources was cited as a driver of tension by only 8% of families, a decrease since 2019. A 12% increase in the share of households citing cultural differences as a main driver for community tensions was noted.

LEGAL RESIDENCY

Rates of legal residency continued to decline, with only 20% of individuals above the age of 15 holding legal residency permits (compared to 22% in 2019 and 27% in 2018). The most notable decrease was in Beirut where rates of legal residency were at 34% in 2019 but dropped to 21% in 2020. Akkar continued to have the lowest rate with only 11% of individuals aged 15 years and above with legal residency.

The majority of individuals (84%) who did not have legal residency at the time of the interview also reported not having had legal residency at any point in the year. Among those without valid residency, 58% reported that they have never approached the General Security Office (GSO) to renew, 27% reported that they had approached the GSO prior to 2018, 6% in 2018, 7% in 2019 and only 2% in 2020.

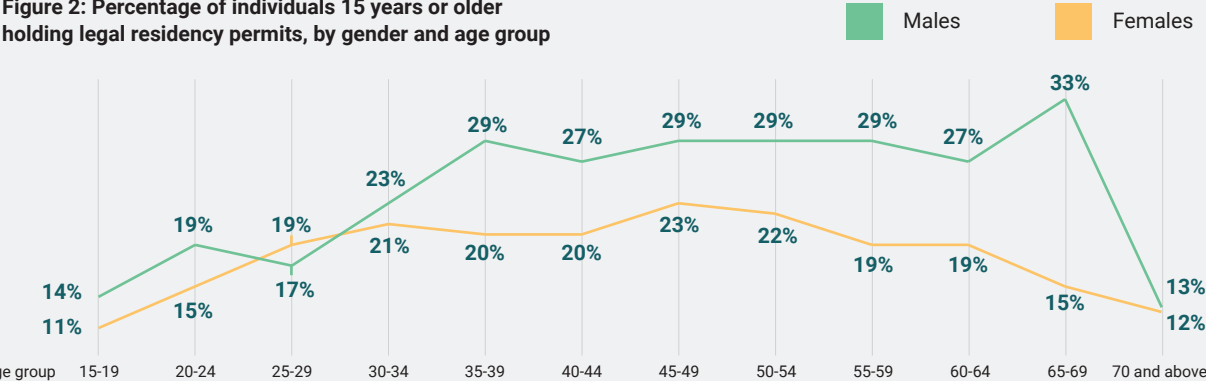
Figure 1: Percentage of individuals aged 15 years or above holding legal residency permits, by governorate



Trends of legal residency by gender and age group were similar to previous years where youth and younger adults (under the age of 25) had lower rates of legal residency than their older counterparts. Females across almost all age groups had lower rates of legal residency than males. Women and youth remain facing difficulties when

mobilizing due to lack of legal residency and will require enhanced targeted awareness raising. Lower shares of households living in non-permanent shelters had legal residency (14% compared to 22% in both residential and non-residential shelters). Among individuals with a disability, 18% did not have legal residency permits.

Figure 2: Percentage of individuals 15 years or older holding legal residency permits, by gender and age group



At the household level, only 11% of households reported that all members were holding legal residency (10% in 2019) and 30% had at least one member with legal residency (from 33% in 2019). This leaves less than three quarters (70%) of households with no member at all having legal residency.

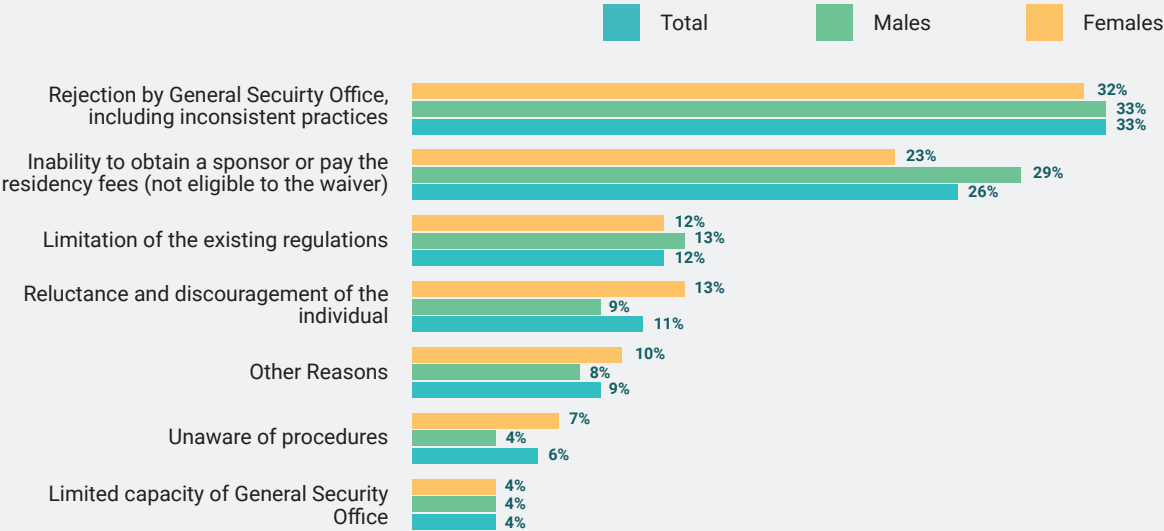
Based on the current regulations, Syrian refugees can renew their residency permits either on the basis of registration with UNHCR, through a pledge of responsibility by a local sponsor, courtesy permit (if the mother or wife are Lebanese), or through other categories such as a property ownership, tenancy, student visa, etc. Additionally,

those who had entered Lebanon legally as of 2015 had to do so based on one of the entry categories and could only renew their legal stay within the limitations set for this specific entry category (such as tourism, medical visit, transit etc.). Each category has its own requirements, fees and residency duration. In 2017, the residency fees were waived for Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR prior to 1 January 2015 and who did not previously renew their legal residency based on categories such as tourism, sponsorship, property ownership, or tenancy. However, it was not possible to switch from a residency permit based on one of these categories to the UNHCR certificate residency permit.

Rejection by GSO, including inconsistent practices, were the most commonly cited reasons (33%) for not having legal residency, followed by the inability to obtain a sponsor or pay residency fees (26%); the latter being slightly more commonly cited by men as compared to women. Limitations of the existing regulations, which included individuals that had an unrenovable and expired residency or individuals who lacked ID documents, was cited by 12% of those not having legal residency. Eleven percent of individuals stated personal reluctance and discouragement as the reason they did not have legal residency.

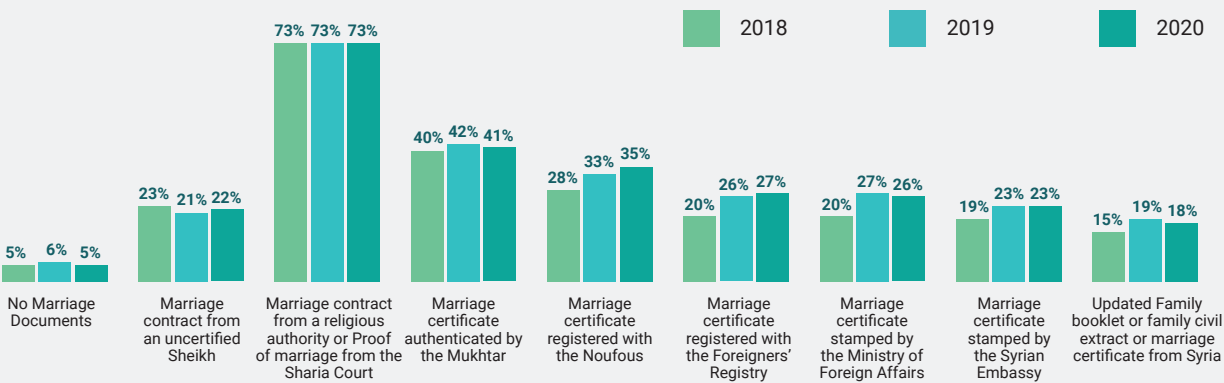
Similar to 2019, over half (55%) had legal residency through their UNHCR registration certificate. This was much more common among females than males (68% versus 44%), while males were much more likely to have legal residency through sponsorship (46% versus 19%). Ten percent of households had legal residency through courtesy (i.e. having a Lebanese parent or a Lebanese wife).

Figure 3: Reasons for not holding legal residency permits, by gender



MARRIAGE AND BIRTH REGISTRATION

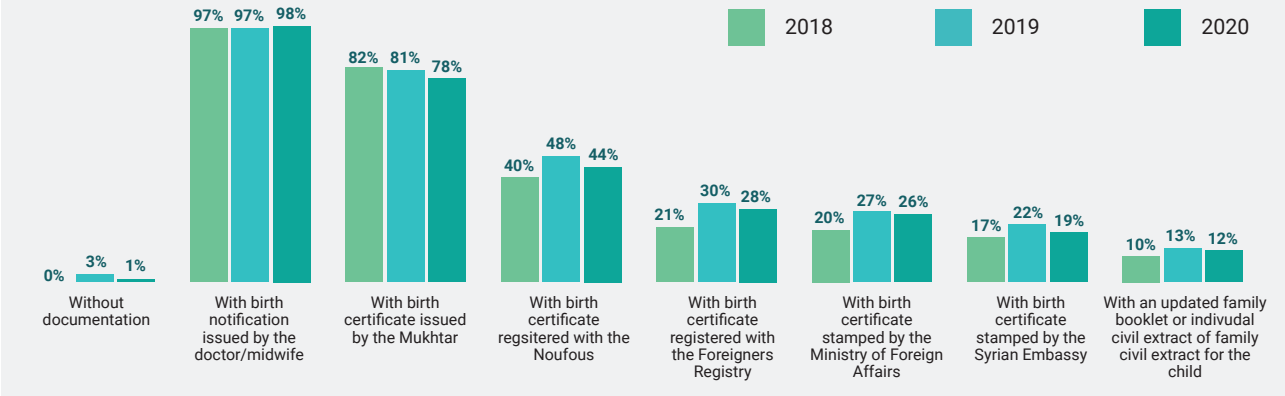
Figure 4: Percentage of individuals having completed the required steps of marriage registration, for marriages in Lebanon



One quarter (26%) of the married individuals surveyed were married in Lebanon. In 2019, there was a slight improvement in the level of marriage registration for those married in Lebanon compared to 2018. However, this improvement seemed to have halted in 2020. This reversal in trend could be explained by the COVID-19 related lockdowns and their impact on awareness raising and legal counselling activities, as well as on the closure of institutions, and by the enhanced inability of the population to cover the costs associated with the procedures. The

proportion of marriages with no legal documentation (which included those without any documentation (6%) and those with documentation only from an uncertified Sheikh (21%)) remained stable at 27%. Almost three quarters (73%) met the minimum needed documentation of either a marriage contract from a religious authority or proof of marriage from the Sharia Court. Similar to 2019, 27% reported to have had their marriage registered at the level of the Foreigners' Registry (26% in 2019).

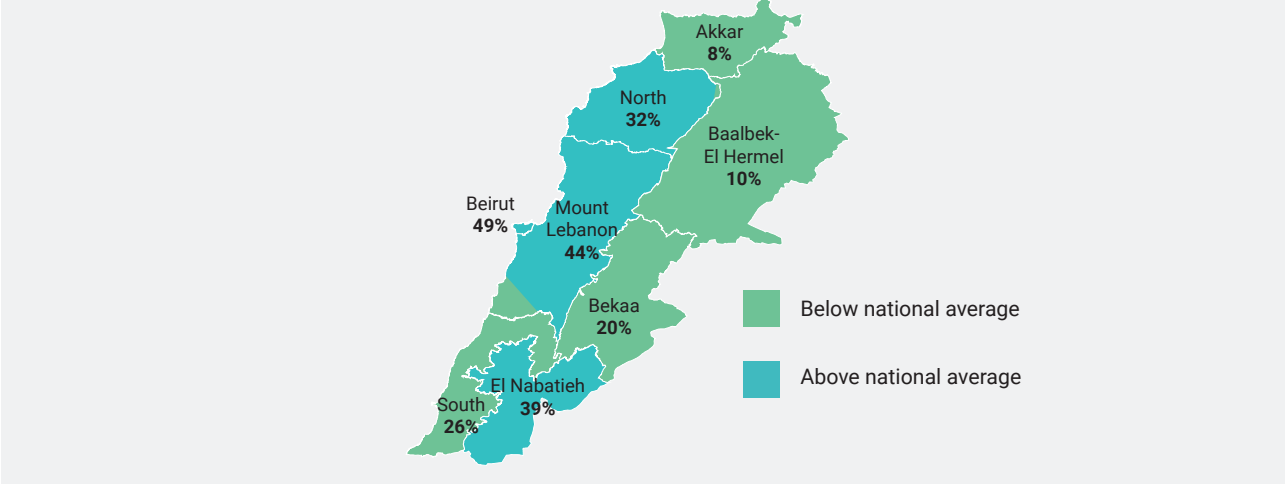
Figure 5: Cumulative percentage of highest-level birth registration document for Syrian children born in Lebanon. Children registered at the level of the Foreigners’ Registry are considered as ‘registered’ under Lebanese law



Like marriage documentation, improvements noted in the level of birth registration in 2019 did not continue through 2020, most likely for the same reasons as those mentioned above. In 2020, 28% of births were registered at the Foreigners’ Registry, compared to 30% in 2019. However, the proportion of births that went without any documentation improved and decreased to 1%. Thus, almost all births have at least completed the first step of the birth registration process (having a notification from a doctor or midwife). The highest rates of birth registration with the Foreigners’ Registry were among families living in

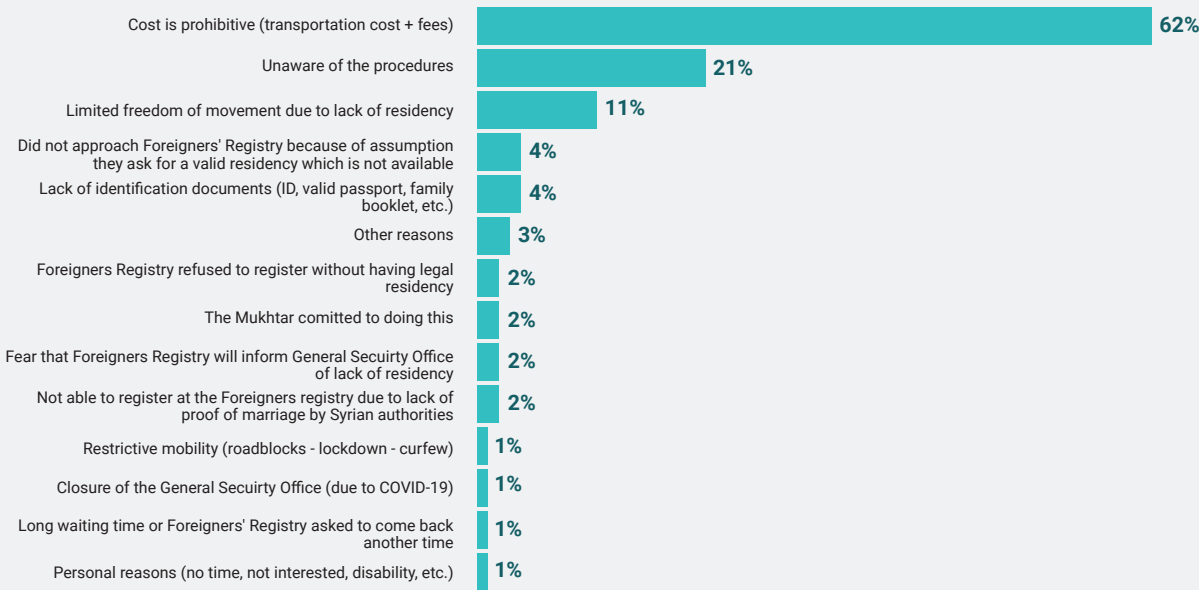
Beirut (49%), while the lowest were among families living in Akkar (8%). No differences were noted in birth registration rates when comparing boys and girls. When examining birth registration rates by shelter type, a striking difference was noted between those living in non-permanent shelters compared to those living in residential and non-residential buildings. The proportion of births registered at the Foreigners’ Registry among those living in residential and non-residential shelters was above the national average, at 35% and 31% respectively. For those in non-permanent shelters however, the rates were much lower at only 9%.

Figure 6: Percentage of children born in Lebanon with births registered at the Foreigners’ Registry, by governorate



Cost was the most commonly cited barrier for those who were able to register the births at the Nofous but not at the Foreigners’ Registry (62%); this included transportation costs as well as registration fees required by the Foreigners’ Registry. It is worth noting that being unaware of procedures was cited by 21% of individuals, at the same rate in 2019.

Figure 7: Barriers to birth registration at the Foreigners' registry, among those who registered the birth with the Noufous



SAFETY AND SECURITY

At the time of data collection, there was no COVID-19 specific national lockdown in place that restricted movement. While 21% of households reported that there was a curfew being imposed in the area where they live (an increase from 14% in 2019), 11% of all families also reported that curfews were a source of safety or security issues (12% in 2019). Specifically, there was a substantial increase in the share of households that reported curfews in Bekaa, El Nabatieh, and the North , while this decreased in the South. Curfews were mainly being imposed by the municipality (95%), with a few households (5%) reporting curfews by the local community. Most commonly, the sanction imposed for breaching the curfew was cited to be a verbal warning (84%); less than one quarter (23%) reported fines.

Ten per cent of families reported concerns for safety that limit their freedom of movement. The percentage of

families that reported community violence or disputes doubled to 6%, from 3% in 2019.

On average, two to four per cent of families reported that they worried about a household member being exploited while accessing services such as housing, food, health services, legal services, jobs, and others. However, less than 1% reported having heard of such incidents in the three months preceding the interview.

It is important to acknowledge that interviews for this assessment most likely took place with the head of households or other adult members, and the respondent was male in about two thirds of the interviews. Individual and confidential interviews with household members were not conducted as part of this data collection exercise and, therefore, incidents related to physical or sexual harassment were most likely to be underreported.

Figure 8: Percentage of households who experienced any of the following safety/security incidents during the previous three months

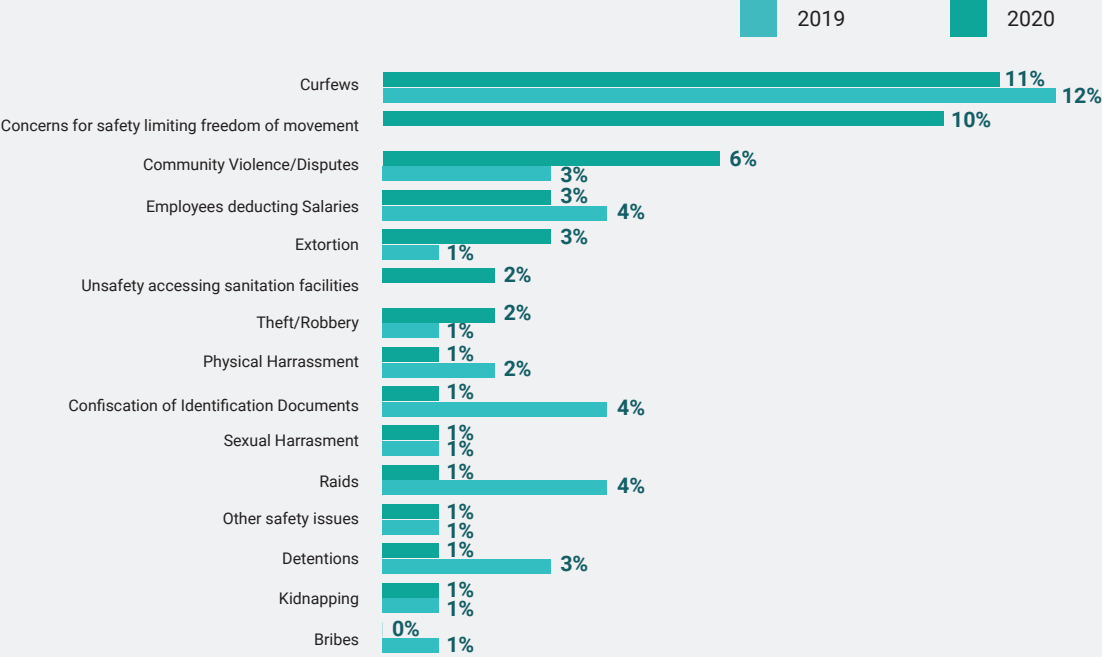
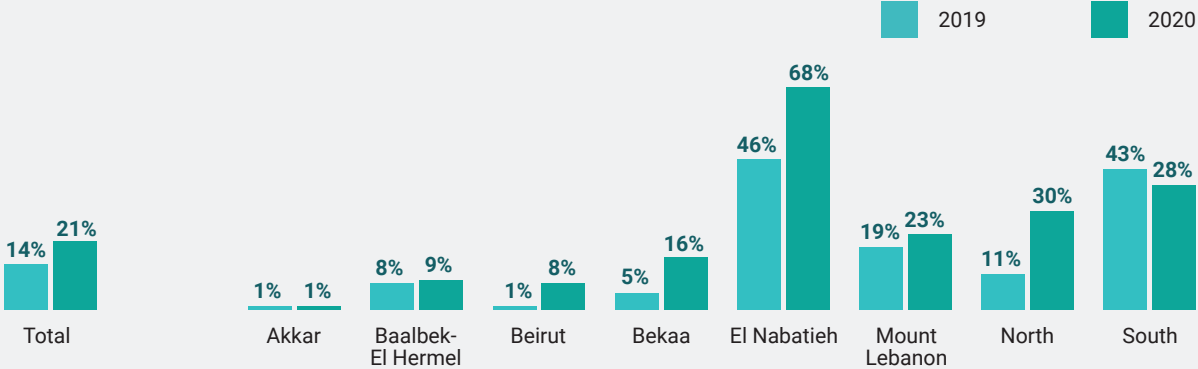


Figure 9: Percentage of households reporting a curfew being imposed on them in the area where they live, by governorate



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Most refugee families rated their relationship with the host community as positive or very positive (54%), at a similar rate to 2019 (56%), with few rating it as negative or very negative (4%). As in previous years, competition for jobs was cited most commonly as one of the main drivers for community tensions (40%), although this decreased from 51% in 2019. The proportion of families citing cultural differences as a key driver of community tensions increased to 20% from only 8% in 2019, while competition for resources decreased drastically to 8% (compared to 20% in 2019). Forty-five per cent of families did not report tensions with the host community, similar to 43% in 2019.

Figure 10: Quality of interactions with the refugee and host community

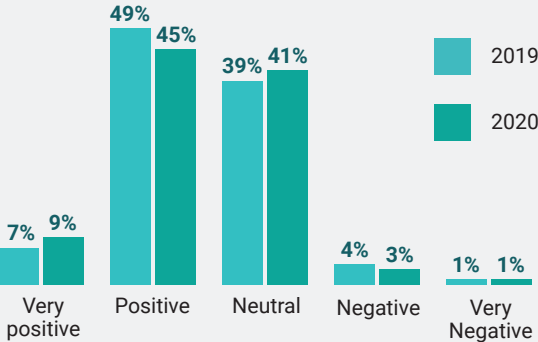
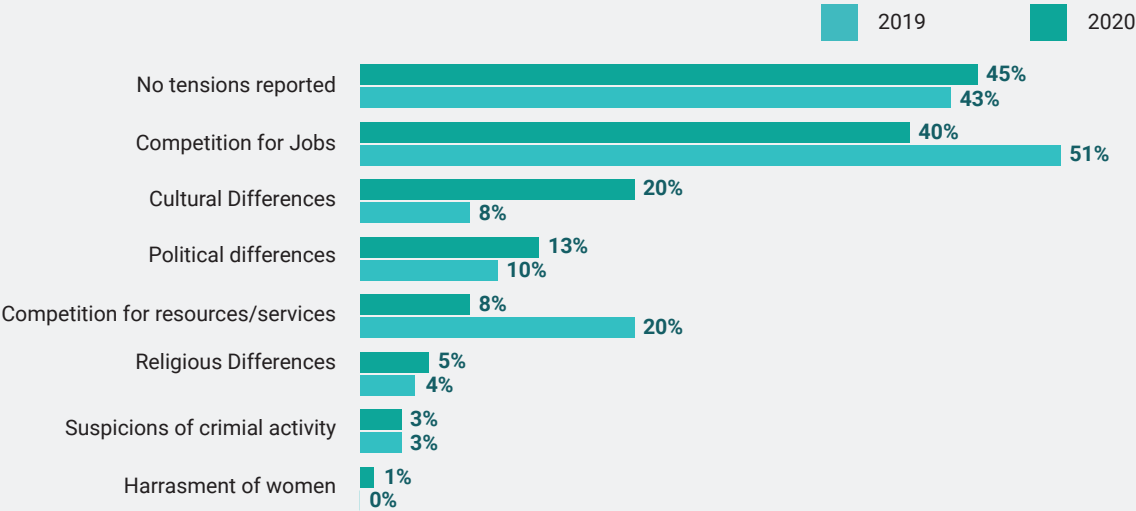


Figure 11: Key issues cited by refugees as drivers of tensions between refugee and host communities



CHILD PROTECTION

This section explored child protection issues faced by Syrian refugee children; specifically, child labour, child marriage, and violent discipline. Findings detailed below show that Syrian refugee children were at risk of being exposed to exploitation and abuse.

KEY FINDINGS

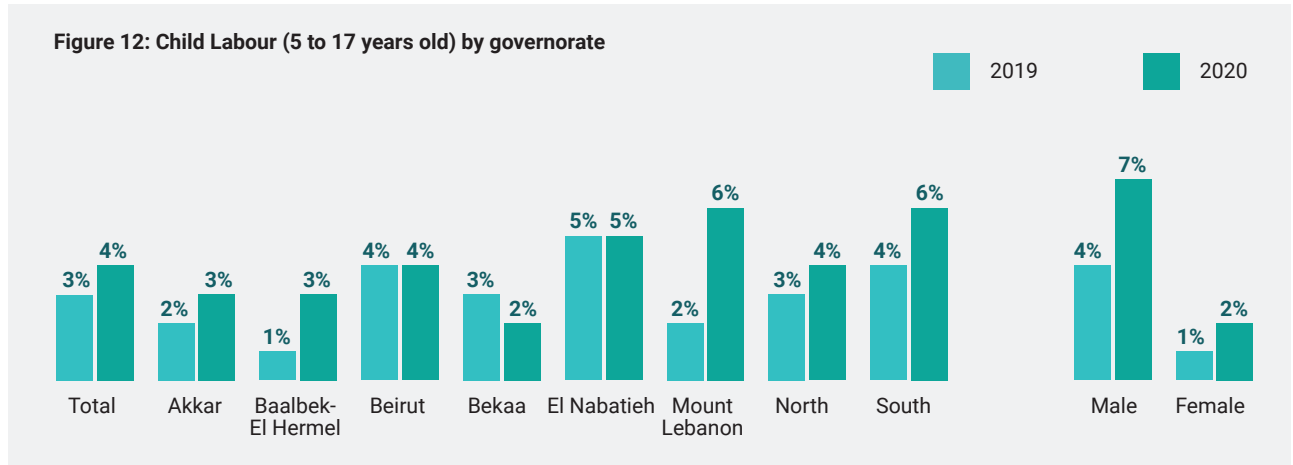
- The percentage of children between 5 and 17 years old who were engaged in child labour almost doubled compared to 2019 at 2.6% to 4.4% in 2020;
- Boys were still at higher risk of child labour than girls, 7% and 2%, respectively;
- 1 out of 2 children between the ages of 1 and 14 years have experienced at least one form of violent discipline. Despite the rate being high, it showed a decrease of 8 percentage points from last year;
- The percentage of Girls between the age of 15 years old and 19 years who were married at the time of the survey was at 24%. In 2019, the highest percentage of girls (15-19) who were married was in the North governorate. This year, Beirut governorate reported the highest percentage of girls (15-20) who are married at 37%.

CHILD LABOUR

Child labour is defined as a child having performed either economic activities or household chores during the last week for more than the age specific number of hours.

- Economic activities: aged 5-11: 1 hour or more; aged 12-14: 14 hours or more; aged 15-17: 43 hours or more.
- Household chores: aged 5-14: 28 hours or more; aged 15-17: 43 hours or more.

The share of children aged 5-17 involved in child labour almost doubled from 2018 and 2019, where the share was at around 2%, reaching 4.4% in 2020. Mount Lebanon and the South recorded the highest rate of children engaged in labour at 6% (see Figure 12). Additionally, as across the years, child labour was more common among boys (7%) than girls (2%).



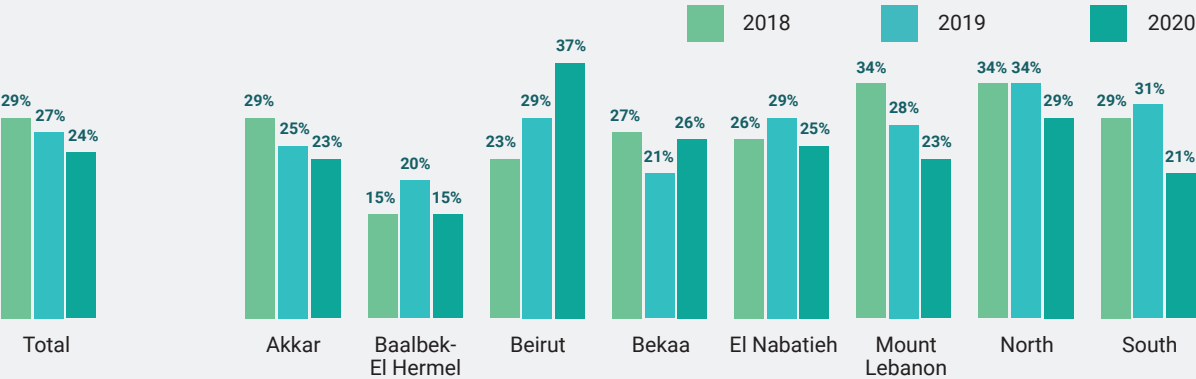
Of these children involved in child labour, a significantly higher proportion was involved in economic activities rather than household chores.

CHILD MARRIAGE

Child marriage was measured as children between the ages of 15-19 who are currently married.

Twenty-four percent of girls aged 15-19 were married at the time of the survey, down from 27% in 2019. There was variability in rates of child marriage across governorates as can be seen in figure 13.

Figure 13: Children between the ages of 15-19 who are currently married



VIOLENT DISCIPLINE

Violent discipline is any form of psychological, physical, or severe aggression.

Psychological aggression: if the child is shouted, yelled or screamed at; called an insulting name (dumb, lazy, etc.)

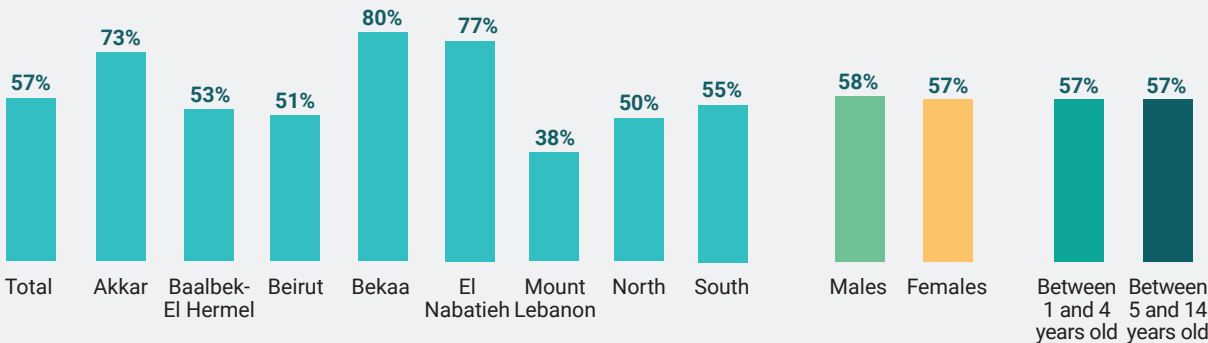
Any physical aggression: shook him/her; spanked, hit, or slapped; hit him/her on the bottom; hit or slapped on any part of the body.

Severe physical aggression: hit or slapped on the face.

Non-violent discipline: took away privileged; explained behavior; gave something else to do.

Children between the ages of 1 and 14 years of age who have experience any form of violent discipline decreased from last year at 66% to 57% in 2020. The highest rate of violent discipline was reported in the Bekaa governorate (80%) and the lowest in Mount Lebanon (38%). There were no significant differences between girls (57%) and boys (58%). Caregivers who have used violent discipline methods mainly resort to psychological violence (48%) or physical violence (43%), while severe violence was reported at 6% (half the rate reported in 2019 at 12%). Furthermore, 63% of caregivers reported using only non-violent discipline methods.

Figure 14: Children between 1 and 14 years old that have experienced at least one form of violent discipline



Annex 2: Legal residency and birth registration

	Legal residency			Birth Registration	Marriage Documentation	Reported key issues that drive community tensions						
	Percentage of individuals (above 15 years old) with legal residency	Households with all members having legal residency	Households with at least one member having legal residency			Competition for jobs	Competition for resources/ services	Political Differences	Religious Differences	Cultural differences	Suspicion of criminal activity	Sexual Harrasment of women
Total	20.2%	10.9%	29.6%	28.1%	27.4%	40.3%	7.8%	12.8%	4.8%	19.9%	2.8%	.8%
Governorate												
Akkar	11%	3%	18%	8%	6%	37%	14%	1%	1%	20%	7%	0%
Baalbek-El Hermel	15%	9%	23%	10%	10%	27%	4%	7%	3%	10%	1%	1%
Beirut	21%	11%	35%	49%	54%	47%	10%	18%	4%	21%	2%	0%
Bekaa	18%	9%	28%	20%	17%	14%	3%	1%	2%	11%	0%	0%
El Nabatieh	37%	23%	51%	39%	28%	67%	17%	27%	14%	21%	1%	0%
Mount Lebanon	17%	9%	25%	44%	51%	48%	6%	23%	6%	25%	4%	1%
North	23%	13%	31%	32%	26%	63%	17%	19%	8%	25%	4%	0%
South	44%	29%	60%	26%	11%	44%	5%	8%	4%	28%	3%	6%
Gender		Gender of the head of household				Gender of the head of household						
Female	18%	13%	26%	28%	26%	31%	6%	12%	7%	19%	3%	1%
Male	23%	10%	31%	28%	29%	42%	8%	13%	4%	20%	3%	1%
Shelter type												
Residential	22%	11%	32%	35%	35%	44%	7%	15%	5%	21%	3%	1%
Non-residential	21%	14%	31%	31%	19%	43%	9%	19%	7%	26%	2%	1%
Non-permanent	14%	8%	22%	9%	8%	26%	8%	3%	2%	12%	2%	1%