

Impact of the automatic protection of Ukrainian refugees on the division of responsibilities in the federal state of Belgium and the response of the regions

Housing focal points meeting Prague

Division of responsibilities in Belgium



Responsibilities of the federal state of Belgium:

Housing of asylum seekers

⇒ Syrian refugee crisis: first reception: mainly up to the federal state



Responsibilities of the regions (Wallonie, Brussels and Flanders):

Housing of people with refugee status

⇒ Syrian refugee crisis: only after the acknowledgment as a refugee, Syrians could settle in the regions

⇒ No responsibilities in first reception and shelter

Automatic protection of Ukrainian refugees



Automatic protection

⇒ Federal state: responsible for the procedure of automatic protection.

⇒ New situation for the regions: almost immediately responsible for housing

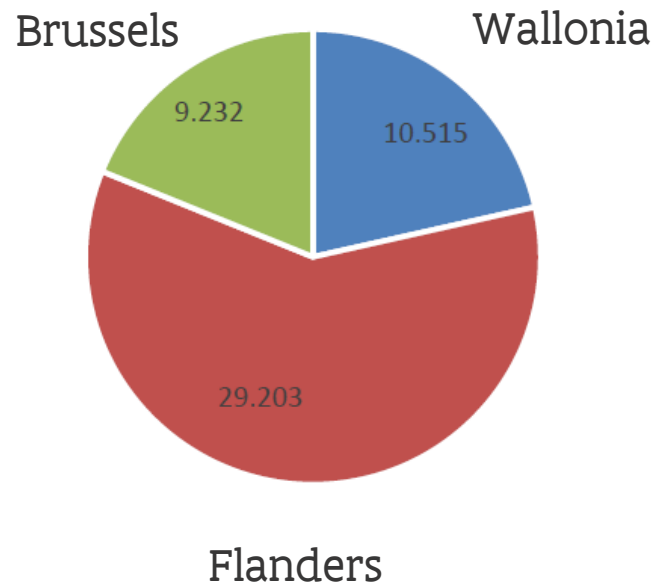
⇒ No framework available

⇒ Each region developed its own framework



Facts and figures

48.950 persons with a temporary protection
status in Belgium



Response of the regions: Wallonia



Criteria

- 1) Public transport < 500 meters
- 2) Primary school < 1 km
- 3) Secondary school < 5 km
- 4) Supermarket < 1 km

4/4 for
25%

victim of the lack of
land



Response of the regions: Wallonia



Exemptions, under certain conditions, from **planning permission** to facilitate the creation and development of accommodation facilities

→ the conditions are mainly related to :

- the applicant,
- the location of the structure
- the water and electricity facilities

Response of the regions: Brussels



► **Brussels reacted rapidly to offer accommodations**

- Web platform “Be my guest” to provide :
 - × Individual housing units
 - × One or more rooms in under-occupied accommodations
- Currently still 6,000 Ukrainians in private accommodations
- Still 500 places available in host families
- Many Ukrainian families have also found housing directly on the private market (+/-2,000)

► **Difficulty of long-term management**

- The war is dragging on and there is no identifiable end to it
- The energy crisis is growing, more rooms in the houses need to be heated and more hot water is needed. So, it's becoming complicated for many hosts.

Response of the regions: Brussels



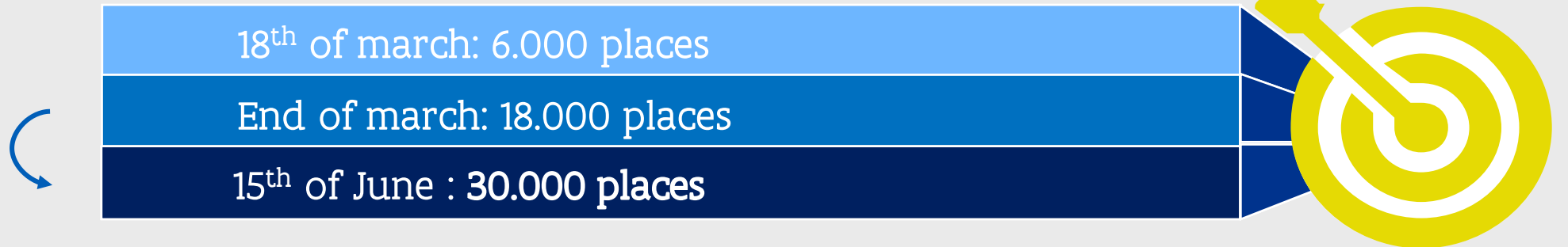
In the public sector:

- Development of modular housing (5 sites of 12 to 30 units)
- Re-opening of 4 hotels
 - 200 to 300 families (225€/adult/month + 75€/children/month)
- Conversion of empty office buildings (11)
 - Capacity of 2,000

Response of the regions: Flanders



Upscaling strategy: goals set at the beginning of the crisis



→ The goal of 30.000 places was transposed to the local level → **target per municipality**

Policy of Flanders

- 1 Financial support for municipalities and social housing to create places
- 2 Central team to support the municipalities
- 3 Facility support for the municipalities
- 4 Deregulation (rental legislation, housing quality norms, spatial planning norms)



Vlaamse
overheid

Response of the regions: Flanders



Deregulation:

1. Rental legislation (f.e. easier to end contracts)
2. Housing quality rules: less stringent rules, but safety has to be assured
3. Spatial planning rules: less stringent for
 - the construction of emergency villages
 - to create housing in privately owned houses

Response of the regions: Flanders



Since the end of June:

Goal: shift from creation of places to durable places:

1. Decreasing dependence of places created by private households (always uncertain => not durable)
2. Focus on increasing collectif public supply
3. Focus on extra efforts of the touristic sector and elderly housing
4. Increasing supply in emergency villages: Antwerp (600 – 1.000), Malines (540), Gent (600)

