REFUGEES' ROAD FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN CANADA AND SPAIN

EL CAMINO DE LOS REFUGIADOS, DESDE EL COMIENZO HASTA LA INTEGRACIÓN SOCIAL: UN ANÁLISIS COMPARATIVO ENTRE CANADÁ Y ESPAÑA

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El camino de los refugiados, desde el comienzo hasta la integración social: un análisis comparativo entre Canadá y España

Abstract:

Social integration is one of the goals in the intervention with refugees. In order to find ways to make it easier for them is necessary to analyze different existing factors in the societies they arrive. History of the country, the number of refugees, the society, COVID-19 pandemic, the laws, and the understanding of the social integration definition are part of these factors. We used a comparative method to analyze these factors in two different countries: Canada and Spain. The results show how, even with similar laws in both countries, social integration has differential elements in these contexts of analysis, being more difficult even to be accepted as a refugee in one of them.

Resumen:

La integración social es una de las metas de la intervención con refugiados. Para encontrar formas de facilitarla es necesario analizar diferentes factores existentes en las sociedades a las que llegan. La historia del país, el número de refugiados, la sociedad, la pandemia COVID-19, las leyes y el entendimiento de la definición de integración social son parte de esos factores. Hemos utilizado un método comparativo para analizar estos factores en dos países diferentes: Canadá y España. Los resultados muestran cómo, a pesar de haber leyes parecidas en ambos países, la integración social presenta elementos diferenciales en cada uno de estos contextos de análisis, siendo más difícil incluso ser aceptado como refugiado en uno de ellos.

Key words: social integration, refugee, comparative, Canada, Spain

Palabras claves: integración social, refugiado, comparativa, Canadá, España

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1. INTRODUCTION

Leaving your country and all your life behind is a reality for many people. Refugees face challenges that other immigrants do not. In the definitions of refugee and immigrant the main difference is that a refugee is someone that had to leave his/her country by force and is dangerous for him to come back, while an immigrant has decided to leave his/her country by choice and can go back if he wants to (Onghena, 2015).

More specifically, in the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July in 1951, a refugee is defined as a person that is outside of their country and cannot come back there, because of well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political opinions.

Refugees have faced all the situation that led them to leave their house. But once they get to the host country, a lot of times they find a precarious situation, having trouble to cover their basic needs (León & Jiménez, 2013). After arriving in the host country one of the biggest challenges they must face is the social integration in the country where they arrive.

Although the concept of social integration has been broadly discussed and there are a variety of definitions of social integration, in this paper, we would like to tackle the definition given by the sociologist Emile Durkheim. Durkheim defined social integration as the acceptance in society of minorities and disadvantaged groups, with the goal of improving their dignity and standard of living (De la Paz, 2019). This definition is important in this context, and it can be a start, but does not include the full concept of social integration.

The principal approach of integration that is used in the refugee's matter, at least in the academic and critical reflection context, is the "two way process". The idea of this approach is that integration is a bidirectional process of mutual effort and recognition, both in the refugee population and the host society (Iglesias-Martínez & Estrada, 2018). This approach adds to the definition of Durkheim an important aspect: social integration is not only the acceptance of refugees by the society. It gives a proactive role to the society to which refugees are arriving, in the social integration process of the refugees. Considering this we will use this definition of social integration as a "two way process" in this paper.

Social workers are some of the many people that can help to change this process to make it easier for them. Integration is a process that could last the entire life of a person, it is an intercultural approach process (Vega, 1996). It does not mean only to adapt or be part of the society, it means to be autonomous and to participate in different aspects of social and economic life, at the same time as they keep their own cultural identity (Vega, 1996).

In order to achieve social integration, there are many factors that influenced in it even before the refugee steps into the country: history of the country, current and predecessor laws, society, etc. These factors directly affect the social integration of refugees and is necessary to analyze them in order to help and create social integration mechanisms.

Canada and Spain are developed countries, but they present several differences in their societies: their languages, their membership in the European Union (EU) or not, their cultures, etc. They also have different: political history, foreign policies, migratory events, types of migrations, etc. All these factors can be useful to identify differences in the integration process of refuges. There is some literature about the refugees' situation in these countries, but the literature comparing these countries is hard to find.

The main objective of this document is to understand the factors that affect the social integration processes of refugees in Canada and Spain through the existing literature. To achieve this, we will observe and connect statistical data related to factors that can denote a greater or lesser social insertion. We will also try to study some of the factors that surround these different processes. More precisely, we will focus on the history of refugees in these countries, social factors in both countries, the predecessor laws, the influence of COVID-19 in the refugee's context, and social integration processes, from an institutional point of view, in both countries.

We will use a comparative method. Comparison has different meanings, it can have an implicit meaning which is the one everyone uses in daily bases, or an explicit meaning, that is called comparative analysis (Colino, 2009). According to Colino (2009) the comparative analysis consists of the use of observations that are extracted from two or more macro-social entities, in this case two countries. Comparison has many benefits, it helps to increase descriptions, it has a very important role in the creation of concepts, and, at the same time, it can contribute to the discovery of new hypothesis and the creation of theories (Collier, 1993).

In this paper, comparison facilitates learning for the transformation and upgrade of social integration with refugees, as it gives a recognition of the role that certain elements have in integration processes. In addition, comparing these certain elements help to the acknowledge of the importance of certain social resources that can be included in other countries for the improvement of refugees' lives.

The comparative analysis will take place as we analyze each factor. Initially we will focus on getting to know the situation of refugees, analyzing different aspects that currently affect the situation of refugees in these countries (more precisely, history of refugees in both, statistical data, social elements, and COVID-19 pandemic). Once we have analyzed these aspects, we will summarize the existing refugee laws: first general laws and next we will focus on each

country. Later, we will proceed to examine social integration processes through social resources in both countries, focusing on the administrative processes. To sum up, we will draw the final discussion and the conclusions obtained from the comparative analysis.

2. UNDERSTANDING REFUGEES

2.1 THE BEGINNINGS OF REFUGEES

The first refugees that arrived in Spain around 1960 were from Cuba going to the United States, some of them stayed in Spain (López, Gil & Montero, 2016). After in the 70s the military dictatorships of South America led to people from those countries to come to Spain, Spain had at that moment a high number of emigrants and exiles population (López, Gil & Montero, 2016). This means when refugees started to arrive in Spain, the country was getting close to the end of a dictatorship that finished in the 70s.

The number of foreign residents increased a lot in the next years, the average of growth annually in the number of foreign residents was 2.2 percent from 1975 to 1985, but from 1985 to 1991 this percent grew to 7 with the implementations of new laws in Spain, in 1992 this number grew to 10 percent (Ortega, 2003). Since then, the number of foreign residents, which includes refugees, has continued to grow, this means a considerable number of people in Spain are either from a foreign country or their predecessors are.

Spain is part of the EU, which has influenced in the reception of refugees. Since 2015 many refugees have come to Europe because of the war in Syria and other conflicts (Marcu, 2018). In summer of 2015 Greece and Italy could not receive all the number of refugees incoming so the EU agreed to distribute refugees in different countries, Spain agreed to welcome 17,337, but two years later Spain had only relocated 1,983 refugees (Marcu, 2018).

In fact, Spain has not been a country with a high number of refugees welcoming, but this has changed in the last years as it has received an exponential number of applicants for asylum that has never been seen before (Pumares, Ríos-Marín & López-Mora, 2021).

In the case of Canada, the immigration was initially encouraged as a way of building a nation, historically speaking, the immigration was needed to economically develop the country with the new territories (García, 2006).

During the first half of the 20th century Canada gave priority to “white” Europeans, while Asian, African, and Jewish origin immigrants were very restricted, it wasn’t until the 1960s when

family reunification and people with skills necessary for economic started to have priority (García, 2006).

An important aspect in Canada is the terrorist attacks produced in 2001 in New York, which made the regulations harder for the refugees to enter Canada. Before the attacks the borders with the United States were poorly guarded (Verea, 2010).

2.2 REFUGEES IN NUMBERS

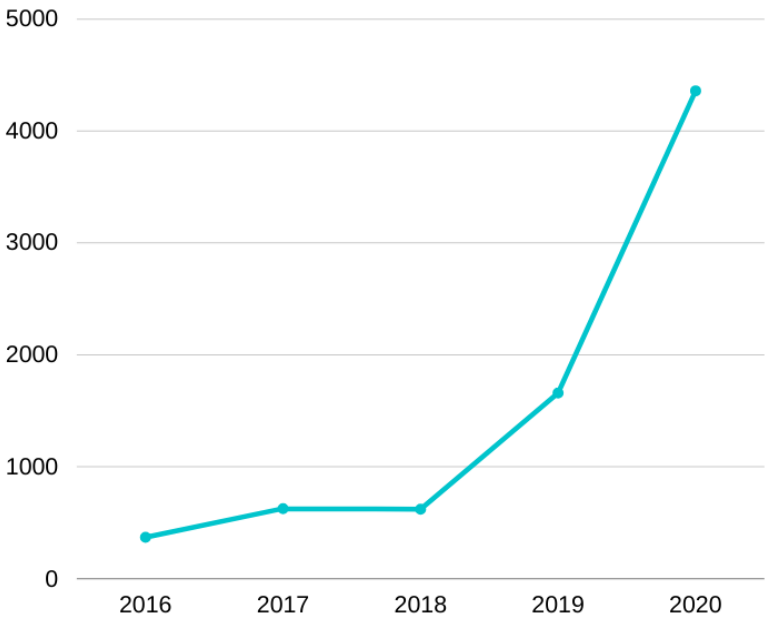
At the end of 2020 there were 82.4 million of displaced people by force in the world, 26.4 million of these people were refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2021). In 2010 the number of displaced people by force was 25.2 million, 10.55 of them were refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011). This means a very worrying increase of displaced people by force, and a 250% increase in the number of refugees.

Even though Spain had historically been a country of emigration the situation changed. Since the 1980 there has been a regular trend of increasing immigration (Gil-Bazo, 2010). This means an increase of the number of refugees too.

There has been an increase in the number of applications for international protection of refugees in Spain, but this number is still low in comparison of our surroundings (Lacomba & Berlanga, 2002).

Figure 1 shows that since 2016 the number of refugees admitted in Spain has constantly increased, especially in 2019 and 2020. In 2016 the number of refugees given the refugee status in Spain was 369, while in 2020 that number rose to 4,359 (Ministerio del Interior. Gobierno de España, n.d).

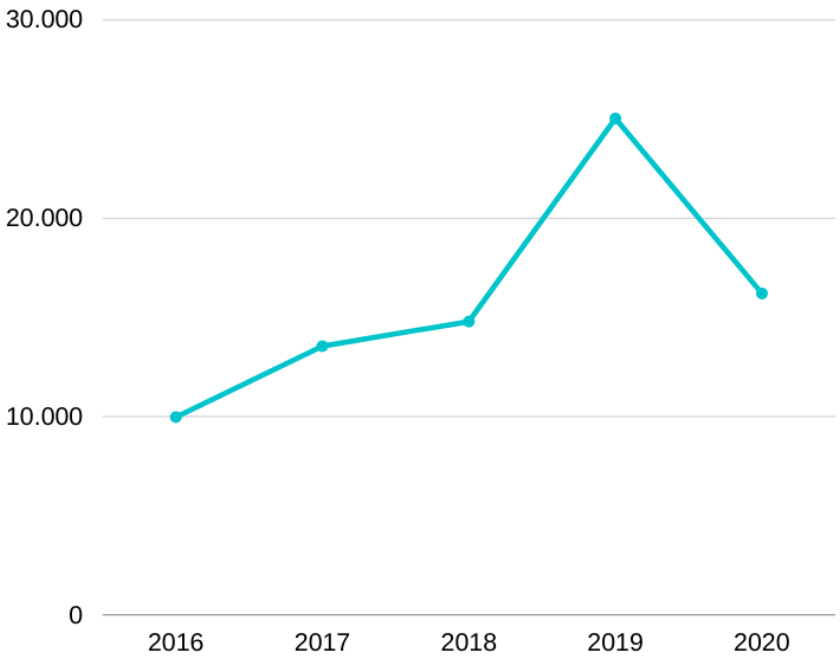
Figure 1 - Recognition of refugee status and granting of the right to asylum in Spain from 2016 to 2020



Source: Own elaboration with data recollected from: Ministerio Del Interior. Gobierno de España (n.d). *Servicios al Ciudadano*.

Canada is very different in this aspect from Spain. Figure 2 shows a very different tendency in Canada. The number of refugees' claims accepted in Canada is not in constant growth as in Spain. In 2016 the number of claims accepted was 9,977, in 2019 this number rose to 25,034, but in 2020 this number went down to 16,209 (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, n.d).

Figure 1 - Canada Claims Accepted of Refugee Protection from 2016-2020



Source: Own elaboration with data recollected from: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (n.d). *Refugee claims statistics*.

This change in the receiving number is strange but it is also important to point out the relevance that Canada has as a receiving country of refugees. Canada has resettled around 800,000 refugees from many countries since the end of World War II (Fantino & Colak, 2001). Also, Canada has a permanent immigration and active resettlement programs, being one of the few countries in the world that has this kind of program (Fantino & Colak, 2001).

The number of acceptances in Spain is way lower than in Canada, Spain has more population than Canada, but Canada is way bigger so this may make sense. On one hand, if there is more space in the country to place people, then it can be easier to build houses and created resources for people arriving in the country. But on the other hand, if a country has more population probably it has more resources created for all this people, which can lead to an easier placement of refugees.

Analyzing the number of claims made in each country Spain rejects a lot more applications than Canada. In 2020 Spain received 88,530 applications of protection stats, 4,360 of them were refugees, but the rejection rate was 59% of those applications (Asylum Information Database & ACCEM, 2020).

Canada received 25.866 claims of asylum from only refugees and rejected the 29.9% of them (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2021). This means Canada accepts more asylum claims than Spain, which can be determined by the process of acceptance or rejections of each country.

In Spain in 2020 the GDP (Gross Dosmetic Product) per capita was 23,690 € (datosmacro.com, n.d). While in Canada the GPD that same year was 41,029 € (Knoema, n.d). This means probably the standard of living is higher in Canada, which can have an impact in the predisposition of both the government and the population to be more open with the arriving of people in their country.

In a context of crisis, when the GDP tends to go down, the situation of refugees tends to be even worse. An example of these is the crisis in Spain in 2008. Before, 2008 Spain had been in a very good position, economically speaking, the GPD grew a 70% from 1994 to 2007. At this moment the immigration population grew a lot, the main reason for this growth was the need of workers. Most of the labor and social insertion of immigrants was made in precarious and subordinated positions, but with access to important social resources (Colectivo Ioé, 2013).

The impact of the crisis in Spain in 2008 was even bigger in the immigrant population, the poverty rate in Spanish population in 2009 and 2010 was very similar, but the poverty rate of immigrants in those years grew from 36,1% to 43,5%. Also, since 2008 the political speech promoted the “return encouragement”, at the same time, police controls in the searching of the irregulars were strengthened, and the xenophobe messages were sent by some political parties in the general elections of 2011 (Colectivo Ioé, 2013).

This proves that in a crisis context immigrant people tend to have it even harder. Xenophobia grows more, and measurements to make life harder for refugees and immigrant are introduced. When immigrants are needed to do the hard jobs, then they are welcome, but when they are not needed, then the “return encouragement” is promoted.

2.3 LIFE AS A REFUGEE

Being a refugee is not a short-term situation in many cases, in 2003 the average duration of the refugee situation was 17 years (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, 2004). This means that for many people is not just a temporary situation, but a long part of their life.

An important aspect to consider is that in Spain in 2019 the percentage of immigrants over the entire population was 12.9% (Datosmacro.com, n.d). But in Canada this percentage in the same year was 21.17% (Datosmacro.com, n.d). This factor means that the immigrant population is almost the double in Canada. This can be interpreted as a signal of a greater integration of refugees in this country. The minds of the people living in Canada could be more open to foreign people.

Spain is part of the EU, so it is important to take into consideration how the EU has approached the refugee's situation. In 2015 the European Commission proposed different measures to be implemented immediately, in order to address the situation of crisis in the Mediterranean (Nascimbene, 2016). Therefore, in the subsequent months, there were introduced several initiatives as: the constitution of an association with Turkey, the creation of a new framework for cooperation and coordination with the Western Balkans countries, and a proposition for new European coast and border guard among others (Nascimbene, 2016).

Some barriers that refugees can find in the integration in Canada are the difficulty of finding a good job, the lack of command of the language, having foreign credentials recognized and others (Yu, Ouellet & Warmington, 2007). According to Yu, Ouellet and Warmington (2007) refugees face different difficulties from other immigrants in Canada:

- The first one is that a lot of times refugees are estimated into Canada on humanitarian grounds and not economic grounds. The government when creating measurements for the acceptance or denial of immigrants, looks for the potential to establish (economic and social support), but for refugees these measurements are established taking into consideration their need of protection. This has an impact on the integration pattern.
- The second one is that the situations that lead to immigrants and refugees to leave their countries are different and are more likely to be traumatic in the refugees' case. This can contribute to a more difficult integration of refugees and for a need of specialized integration services.

Refugees can find similar barriers in Spain. Some of the barriers refugees find in the social inclusion in Spain are: the language barrier, difficulties and cultural differences, economic difficulties, need of housing and difficulties to find a job, among others (León & Jiménez, 2013).

Structural factors such as economic level or education, have an important role in social-cultural factors, which has an impact on social integration for refugees, making it harder or easier. Experts have explained that refugees need to have a social network around them to improve their political, social, and economic capital (Ali et.al, 2021). This indicates that social factors and structural factors are interrelated, and both are needed to promote social integration. This

also explains that social integration is difficult to be achieve but very important for refugees in other for them to have a better life, and face the difficulties mentioned before.

2.4 COVID-19 AFFECTED THE MOST WHO HAD LESS

COVID-19 pandemic is something that also changes the number of refugees, and obviously the life of the refugees. We don't know yet the full impact of the pandemic on the migration and displacement globally, but there is data that shows that the number of new asylum-seekers and new refugees has been reduced (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2021).

Most of the refugees that escape from Third World countries, look for shelter in other to Third World countries, they look especially for shelter in their surrounding countries, and there are the most impoverished countries the ones that host the largest number of refugees (Martínez, 2021). This information is very important because these countries that host the greatest number of refugees, are also the ones that has less resources to face the COVID-19 pandemic (Martínez, 2021).

One of the biggest worries with refugees in the pandemic was that they did not have sanitary attention guaranteed, and they had more difficulties with social distancing and self isolation measurements (Rodríguez-García-de-Cortázar et. al, 2022).

A research made by Edmonds and Flahault in 2021 showed that refugees in Canada faced many challenges with the pandemic as: difficulties in the access to health care, lack of economic and social support and border crossing impediments among other.

According to Pumares, Ríos-Marín and López-Mora (2021) the measurements implemented by the Spanish government during the pandemic in order to help asylum applicants were not enough and they did not solve the problems.

3. LAW

3.1 INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE LAW

Public international law includes both, laws among sovereign states and laws from international organizations, this means that international human right laws and refugees' laws are based on the laws of sovereign states and international organizations (Simeon, 2013).

The international refugee regime has been evolving along the modern state system since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, this evolution has been linked to religious and political persecutions (Canefe, 2010). For some experts the first signs of an actual comprehensive refugee regime appear after the First World War (Canefe, 2010). After this moment the regiment continued experimenting dramatic changes with the Second World War and finally saw the creation of a permanent institutional and legal framework (Canefe, 2010).

The most important treaties that embrace international refugee laws are the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Simeon, 2013). Spain and Canada both take part of these treaties.

These treaties seem to have some flaws in them. The 1951 Convention made by the United Nations claimed the universal jurisprudence, meaning that this will override the private norms and domestic legal practices in refugee protection (Canefe, 2010). But according to Canefe (2010) in the application of the Convention and in later developments made in the area of domestic renditions of refugee law this intent has not been achieved.

Is important to consider that states constantly look for methods to limit the number of people that arrive on their territories claiming refugee status (Simeon, 2913). This has an impact in the measurement and procedures that people must face to become a refugee in these countries and sends a message to the population of these countries, which can lead to rejection attitudes.

As an example, EU has exterritorialized border control, which prevents refugees to enter the EU, therefore even though the refugee protection principal is very known in the world, it is questionable whether the implementation is accurate or not (Weiß, 2018).

When relocating border controls sometimes the control tasks are transferred to national authorities or migration authorities either in the country of destination, or authorities of the same country or a country of transit (Laube & Müller, 2015). The exterritorialized of the border control in Europe puts the responsibility of protecting refugees in other countries, outside of Europe (Weiß, 2018).

3.2 REFUGEES LAW IN SPAIN

In Europe the principal law that interferes with asylum seekers, including refugees, is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union from 2000, which established the need

to respect human dignity, equality, solidarity, and freedom (Martínez, 2021). Spain as part of the EU adheres to this law.

In the Spanish Constitution of 1978, we can find the first social protection and laws for refugees, it established the terms of the right of asylum (López et al., 2016; Prieto, 2020). This same year Spain joins the Geneva Convention (1951) and the New York Protocol (1967), as mentioned before (Ruiz-Estramil, 2018).

Later, in 1989, the first four Reception Center for Refugees (Centros de Acogida a Refugiados) appear. They were public centers. Later in the 90s a collaboration agreement is signed between the Government and three Non-Governmental Organizations (López et al., 2016).

The actual asylum law in Spain is the Law 12/2009 from the 30th of October, which regulates the asylum right and the subsidiary protection (Martínez, 2021). This law included new rules from the EU, like the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, it also supposes a transposition of European legislation where it is included the first phase of the common system of asylum (Sagarra, 2015).

Since 2009 the situation of refugees has changed a lot, that is why organizations that work with refugees have asked for a change in asylum policies (Martínez, 2021).

This law was later modified by the Law 2/2014 from the 25th of March, that established the right of non-nationals to get international protection and reception services in Spain (Prieto, 2020).

3.3 REFUGEES LAW IN CANADA

It was around the 1960s and 1970s, when new laws in Canada started to be more open and emigrants from Asia, Middle East, Latin America and Africa started to have accessed in Canada (García, 2006). This happened because is around the 1960s when a “points system” was introduced in the immigration policies, which led to family reunification and applicants with better skills for the economy to have priority (García, 2006).

Canada’s points system has continued to these days and has different measurements. One of them is, for example, in the employment field, Canada’s points system gives points to the refugees that have already got a job offer, instead of making having a job offer a mandatory aspect (Papademetriou & Sumption, 2011).

In 1969 Canada agreed to the Convention of 1951 and the New York Protocol of 1967, although this fact was very unnoticed, and the media did not report it (Canadian Council for Refugees, n.d).

The framework of refugee policy from around 1980 to 2000 was provided by Canada's Immigration Act of 1976, this law identified four classes of immigrants, one of them was specifically refugees (García, 2006).

Later, this Act was replaced by the Immigration and Refugee Protection in 2002. With this new law, there are three different categories, one of them is still being refugees, everyone in these three categories can ask for entering into the country and may be admitted by the Canadian Government (Verea, 2010).

4. SOCIAL INTEGRATION

4.1 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Social integration is difficult to define and is also difficult to know when it has been completed. However, there are some factors that are linked to factors of integration: language skills, income, house ownerships, social networks, physical and mental health… (Yu et al., 2007).

The approach mentioned in the introduction called "two way process" is very important because it doesn't have only the focus on the refugees, but also in the society. Which means integration is something that everyone needs to be a part of.

Social integration from an institutional point of view, needs to have in mind the approach mentioned before, because social integration is one of the goals of the intervention with refugees in every part of the social intervention.

In the sections above, we will tackle social integration from the perspective of administrative processes in the intervention with refugees in both countries. This way we will proceed to analyze how refugees' integration is understood in both countries, analyzing the administrative measurements that exist.

4.2 SPAIN: INTEGRATION, FROM NOT IMPORTANT TO THE GOAL

As we have shown in the sections before the number of refugees has grown in Spain in the last 5 years. But the increase in the number of refugees in Spain has happened before, although the management of it has not been completely successful.

Lacomba and Berlanga (2002) explained that earlier increments in the number of refugees happened in a context of weak grow in the resources of social care giving by the State, which led to a greater weight in the provision of services by the Third Sector entities.

Currently, one of the principal aspects of the reception system in Spain is that it has a mixed management character: this means that is formed by a network of public reception centers, and some programs and resources managed by nonprofit organizations subsidized by the Government (López, Gil & Montero, 2016).

If the Third Sector entities have more weight in the giving social care, then it becomes an important part of the social integration of the refugees. This means not only social workers in the public sector have an important role in this process, but also the ones in the private sector. At the same time, it is important to consider this aspect when creating new policies for refugees.

Vega (1996), a social worker, explained three different phases in the social intervention of refugees in Spain at that moment. These phases went from the moment the refugee arrived in Spain until the point where his/her adaptation process was completed. The stages were:

- The reception. The arrival: Arriving in a new country is always hard. Many times, the refugees don't know anything about the country they have arrived in. The goal for the professional in this phase is to try to cover the basic needs of the refugees.
- The supervised phase. Settlement. Adaptation: This is a stage of learning for the refugee, where he/she gets a deeper knowledge of the culture, the limitations, and the difficulties of the country of arrival.
- Autonomous phase. Insertion. Integration: Not all the refugees get to this phase. In this stage of the process the refugees should have their needs covered and be stable. In Spain and in many other countries this is something that has big limitations.

An important aspect in these phases that Vega explains is that it is not until the last phase where integration takes place. It means that there is a lot of time since the arrival moment of the refugee in the host country until they can be fully integrated.

In 2018 Iglesias-Martínez and Estrada explained that in Spain it exists the SAI (Sistema de Acogida e Integración), this system is in charge of receiving the refugees at first and promoting

the social integration of refugees using different resources and in three different phases: the first phase is the reception in houses or centers (six-nine months), the second phase (six-nine months) is the integration: here is when the refugees start to be a part of the community, and the third phase the autonomous phase (six months), more focus in the supervision.

In this system the asylum seeker can stay between six and nine months in the shelter or center, also the person can receive financial aid that could be extended to 18 months, and 24 moths in the cases of most vulnerability (Marcu, 2018). After this the CEAR (*Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado*) will make the decision whether the person gets the refugee status or a subsidiary protection status (Marcu, 2018).

These phases explained by Iglesias-Martínez and Estrada in 2018, are similar to the ones described by Vega in 1996, but with a big change, integration is considered to happen in the second phase.

Integration is a difficult process, as we have described in this paper, and there are different ways of understanding this process. This change means is part of the process to adapt into society, it explains that to live a good life and to be part of a society you need to feel welcome and integrated, in other to be autonomous, which is the last phase.

This can be explained because until the end of the 90s integration, in the refugee's field, was not seen as a long-term solution, the goal of the intervention with refugees was the resettlement or return to their origin country (Iglesias-Martínez & Estrada, 2018). During these years integration ended up many times being the actual solution for refugees because it was not possible to proceed with the resettlement or the return to their home country (Iglesias-Martínez & Estrada, 2018).

After the 2000s, several investigations brought back the integration as the long-term solution, in developing countries and in countries with lower economic development (Iglesias-Martínez & Estrada, 2018).

The instrument used in the receiving program in Spain is the itinerary of integration which is a gradual process that has the goal of the person's integration and autonomy in the society, this is translated into an agreement between the professional technician and the requesting person with a compromise to do several activities (López et al., 2016).

Also, in the several processes of the refugee asylum applications in Spain there is a step that checks if the person has asked for asylum in other European countries or has entered Europe through Spain, later the applicant is invited for an interview by the Spanish Commission for Refugee Assistance (CEAR) (Marcu, 2018).

4.3 CANADA: NOT LEAVING ANYONE BEHIND

The system in Canada is similar to Spain in the aspect that is supported both by public and private organizations. Canada has created different programs along history for receiving refugees, with different means of financing.

Canada is part of America which, according to Thomas (1992) has had a “melting pot” model in the integration of immigrants. This model is based on assimilation, which is the absorption by the dominant society or culture of the migrant minority. When the assimilation is completed, the immigrants cannot distinguish in the host culture, which has not changed.

The case of Canada is different to other American countries because it has a different conflict inside the country, for example the English/French conflict, which makes difficult to achieve a complete assimilation (Thomas, 1992). Canada has incorporated a model of integration that allows immigrants to keep a portion of their ethnic identities.

Also, according to Thomas (1992) the government stipulated that, in conjunction with the increased in the level of immigrants at that time, integration is a bidirectional process that involves not only migrant, but also the host society. This new view of integration coincides with the “two-way process” social integration definition mentioned before.

In fact, this understanding of integration in Canada seems to have evolved in the last 30 years. The Canadian Settlement program nowadays is defined as a brief period of mutual adaptation of the people that come into the country and the host society, in which the government gives services and support to the newcomers (Abuhamed, 2020).

Canada since 1949 is a member of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), so it has received regular refugees from different parts of the world. In 1979 the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program was created, due to the increment of refugees in Canada because of the Vietnam war (Ali et al., 2021).

Later in 2013 the Blended Visa – Office Referred (BVOR) program was created for times where the number of refugees was very high: in these cases, the costs are shared between the government and sponsorship groups (Ali et al., 2021).

Nowadays, Canada has two principal refugee programs; the In-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP), this program is designed for people that have entered the country and are looking for asylum, and the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program (RHRP), this program focuses on people that are looking for asylum from outside of Canada (Wilkinson & Garcea, 2017).

Refugees in the RHRP program can be divided later in two refugees' classes: those who are recognized as refugees by the UNHCR (Convention Refugees Abroad Class) and those who do not meet the definition made by UNHCR (Country of Asylum Class). This second category, the Country of Asylum Class, is formed by people who are victims of massive violations of human rights or armed conflicts and are accepted as victims of persecution by the Canadian Government (Wilkinson & Garcea, 2017). This means that Canada has a bigger predisposition to receive refugees and people from other countries and to not let anyone behind.

Inside the RHRP program, there are three different categories of sponsorship: Government Assisted Refugees (GARs), Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) and shared sponsorship programs (Wilkinson & Garcea, 2017). These categories meet the different nature of the programs that have been historically created and were explained before.

The Refugee Protection Division (RPD) is the responsible of the applications for refugee protection and is part of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB or Board) (Hers, 2015). The adjudicator (also call Board Member) determines whether the applicant can be determined as refugee or not following the definition provided by the United Nation Geneva Convention (Hers, 2015).

According to Yu, Ouellet and Warbington (2007) refugees are more likely to intend to apply for, have applied for, or to have received the Canadian citizenship than any other immigrant category.

The way the private sponsorship of refugee's work is the first year the government takes care of the health care and children's education, while the sponsor pays for the resettlement, the second year refugees that have become permanent residents can be selected for means-tested government social welfare benefits (Hyndman, Payne & Jimenez, 2017).

According to Wilkinson and Garcea (2017) the success in the resettlement system of refugees in Canada is in a big part, given by the well coordination between government and non-government organizations, inside and outside Canada.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

History makes a big difference in the welcoming of refugees in the countries studied in this paper. When refugees stared to come to Spain it was a moment where the country was close to being out of a dictatorship as mentioned before. Spanish people could understand the

situation that refugees faced, because they had been through a dictatorship too, and as mentioned in the section 2, many refugees were arriving in Spain because of the dictatorships of South America.

The case of Canada is different, from the research made in this paper, an important aspect has come up: immigration in Canada seems to have been something necessary for the creation and growth of the country. This aspect could be good in the acceptance of refugees, but it has a big twist: refugees are not the kind of immigrant Canada wanted. This country wanted people that could bring an economic value, they receive immigrants more because of interest than solidarity.

The politics of admitting refugees are similar because both countries are based on the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the New York Protocol of 1967, but is strange that the rate of acceptance of refugees is way lower in Spain than in Canada. This means that maybe other laws are making it harder for refugees to get the refugee status in Spain, even though Spain is part of the EU which has several measurements for refugees to come into the EU.

This aspect could be studied in future investigations, to understand why the acceptance rate is so low in Spain. Also, as it was mentioned before, it is necessary to look into why Spain did not welcome the number of refugees that was asked by the EU in 2015.

Canada has a special category for those refugees that do not meet the definition made by UNHCR, but who are in need of asylum. This probably has something to do with the acceptance of more refugees.

If Canada is accepting that there are people that do not add up to the definition, but still are victims of persecution and need help, then maybe is time to reconsider the definition of the refugee term. In the meantime, maybe is necessary to put in place other resources for refugees that do not fit in the definition in Spain too, and in other countries.

Another factor that can affect in social integration is the number of immigrant people in both countries. Canada has a bigger number of immigrants, which can lead to the society been more opened to integrate refugees and people incoming from other countries. Although this aspect does not always apply.

Social workers need to have in mind all these factors in their intervention. The new point of view of social integration in Spain is a great place to start, because social integration needs to be the goal. If a refugee is someone that cannot go back to their country, then social integration in the new society is the goal, the goal cannot be to take them back to their country.

Canada seems to have improved in the integration model for refugees. The main problem of the "melting pot" integration model that existed in this country is that it did not follow our definition of social integration, because it focused on the refugee adapting into the society, leaving the society in a passive role. Nowadays Canada seems to have changed that integration model to a one that shares the "two-way process" definition of social integration.

In both countries the asylum system for refugees is supported by public and private organization, and there is a coordination between the government and the private sector. This means that the coordination and communication between both sectors must be perfect. Social workers need to be aware of the resources that exist for refugees not only in the place they work at, but also in the sector they are not part of. This can be a big challenge, but it seems to be necessary, at least for now, in other to assist the high number of refugees existing in the world.

Following the definition mentioned about integration as a two-way process social workers have a big role in the achievement of it. Sometimes the focus of the refugees' integration is placed only in the refugees, but the society needs to be prepared to welcome them and integrate them. Resources for refugees are needed, but also, we need resources for the population to be ready to welcome them.

To sum up, there is one factor that has come up along this paper and is common in both countries: there is an existing speech about the need to integrate refugees and to help, but the reality is different because as we have shown there are a lot of barriers that refugees face in both countries. Is time not only to talk about the topic, but also to create new measures to help people that needs it, is time to take part and act.

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