

ENSURING DIGITAL INCLUSION & AIMING FOR DIGITAL EQUALITY

FEDASIL CASE STUDIES & LESSONS LEARNED

Katrijn Maryns & July De Wilde / 16.5.2025

WHO ARE WE?



Katrijn Maryns



July De Wilde

INTERPRETER TRAINERS

- Master in Interpreting
- Faculty of Arts & Philosophy
- both academic and very practical scope
- e.g. through interprofessional training



RESEARCHERS ON MULTILINGUALISM

- **language in relation to (in)equality / language and (un)even access to services / care / therapy / treatment**
 - different types of language facilitation
 - (NPT vs professional) interpreters, online vs onsite
 - language technology (translation tools, machine translations)
 - multilingual strategies
 - medical contexts such as (mental) health care contexts, abortion centres
 - asylum and reception contexts (mainly Fedasil or Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers)

HOW ABOUT YOU?



- Name?
- Organisation, function?
- What brings you to this COA event?
- Specific interests in digitalisation, reception, other?
- Things that you would like to discuss?

STRUCTURE OF THIS SESSION

- why care about digitalisation and access?
- key information on Fedasil
- showcase research collaborations with Fedasil
 1. multilingual website fedasilinfo.be
 2. multilingual intake tool
 3. video-interpreting & EU-WEBPSI
- concluding reflections

WHY CARE ABOUT DIGITALISATION AND ACCESS?




2019



ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM OF THE BELGIAN IMMIGRATION OFFICE

NLFR



FOD Binnenlandse Zaken
Vreemdelingenzaken

Onthaal | Toelichting | Formulier

Formulier voor het verkrijgen van een afspraak in het aanmeldcentrum

A. Identiteitsgegevens en burgerlijke staat van de verzoeker op het Belgisch grondgebied

Na(a)m(en) *

Naam bij geboorte

Voornaam *

Geboortedatum *

Geboortestad *

Geboorteplaats *

- Selecteren -

Nationaliteit *

- Selecteren -

Geslacht *

☐ Man ☐ Vrouw ☐ Onbepaald

E-mail *

Privacy-instellingen

LIMITED ACCESS

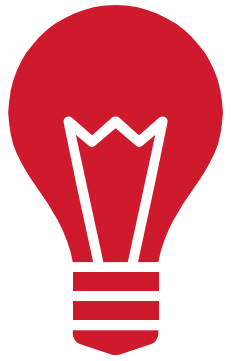
The online registration form:

- ✓ was only available online and should be filled in electronically and not manually
- ✓ needed to be completed in either Dutch or French
- ✓ had to be uploaded together with a scan (colour, good quality) of the applicant's ID, passport or any other travel document
- ✓ required applicants to fill in an email address that would be used for all correspondence concerning the application

WHO WAS LEFT BEHIND?

- no material access
- applicants with no / very low digital skills
- applicants without e-mail
- applicants with the “underprivileged” or “partial” language competences

KEY INFORMATION ON FEDASIL



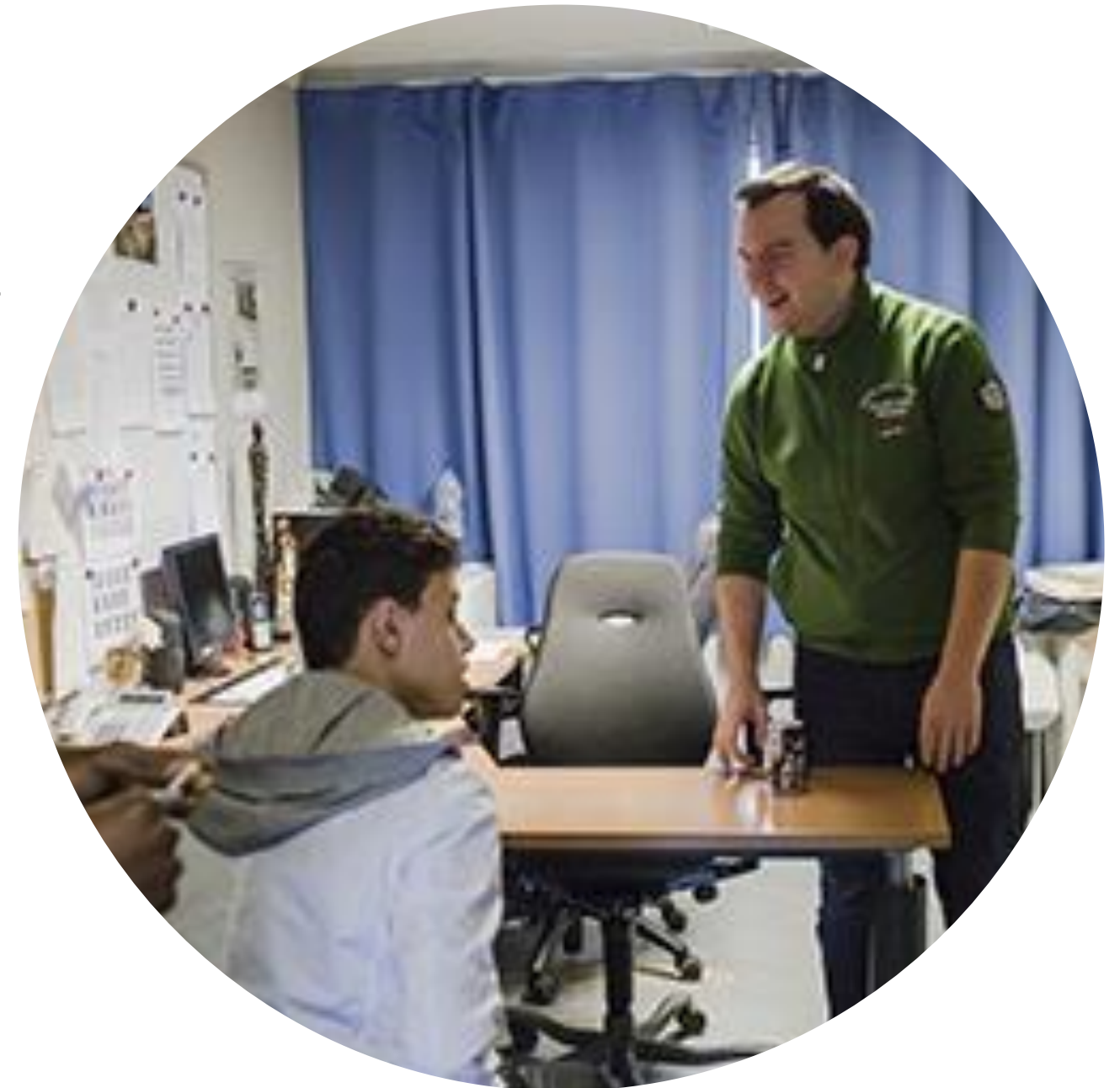
Fedasil

- Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Fedasil) = a government agency under the tutelage of the **Minister for Asylum and Migration**, Anneleen Van Bossuyt
- operational since 2002
- 3040 staff members
- 36.500 reception places (also with partners)
- Budget Fedasil consists mainly of a federal endowment (€840 Mi in 2023)



Mission

- Fedasil is responsible for the **reception** of applicants for international protection and other target groups in Belgium
- Fedasil ensures the **quality** of reception throughout the reception network
- Fedasil coordinates the **voluntary return** from Belgium to their country of origin





Fedasil activities

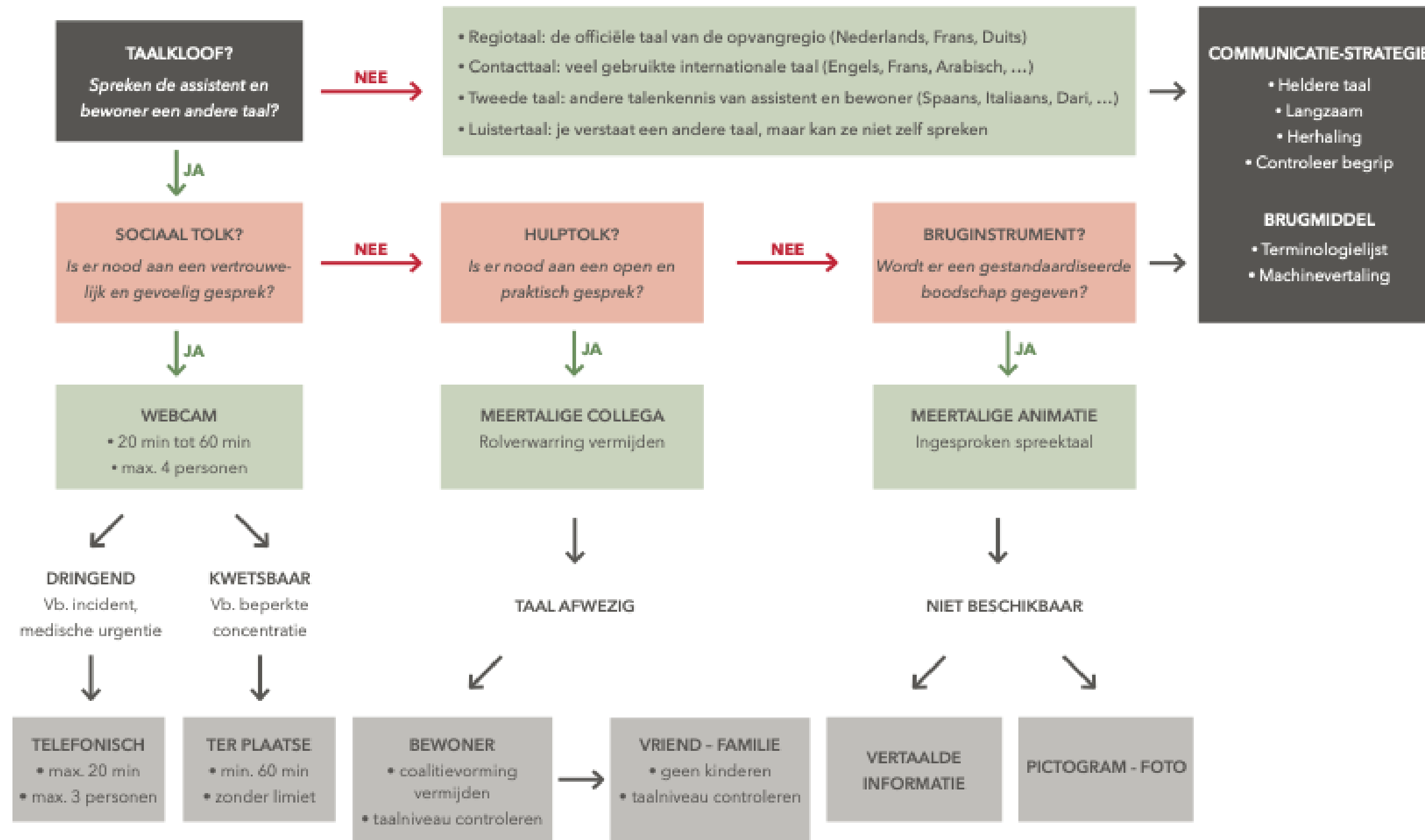
- grant **material assistance** (*bed, bath, bread and guidance*) to applicants for international protection and other foreign nationals entitled to reception
- with partners: organise **flexible and high-quality reception** with special attention to vulnerable target groups and persons with specific needs
- responsible for the observation and orientation of **unaccompanied minor foreign nationals** (NBMV in Dutch)
- inform centre residents about their rights and duties and prepare them for an independent life after reception, in Belgium or in their country of origin

SHOWCASE RESEARCH INITIATIVES

RESEARCH INITIATIVES

1. Multilingual website *fedasilinfo.be*
2. Multilingual intake tool in arrival centre
3. Video interpreting & EU-WEBPSI

MEERTALIGE COMMUNICATIE IN DE OPVANG
Beslismodel

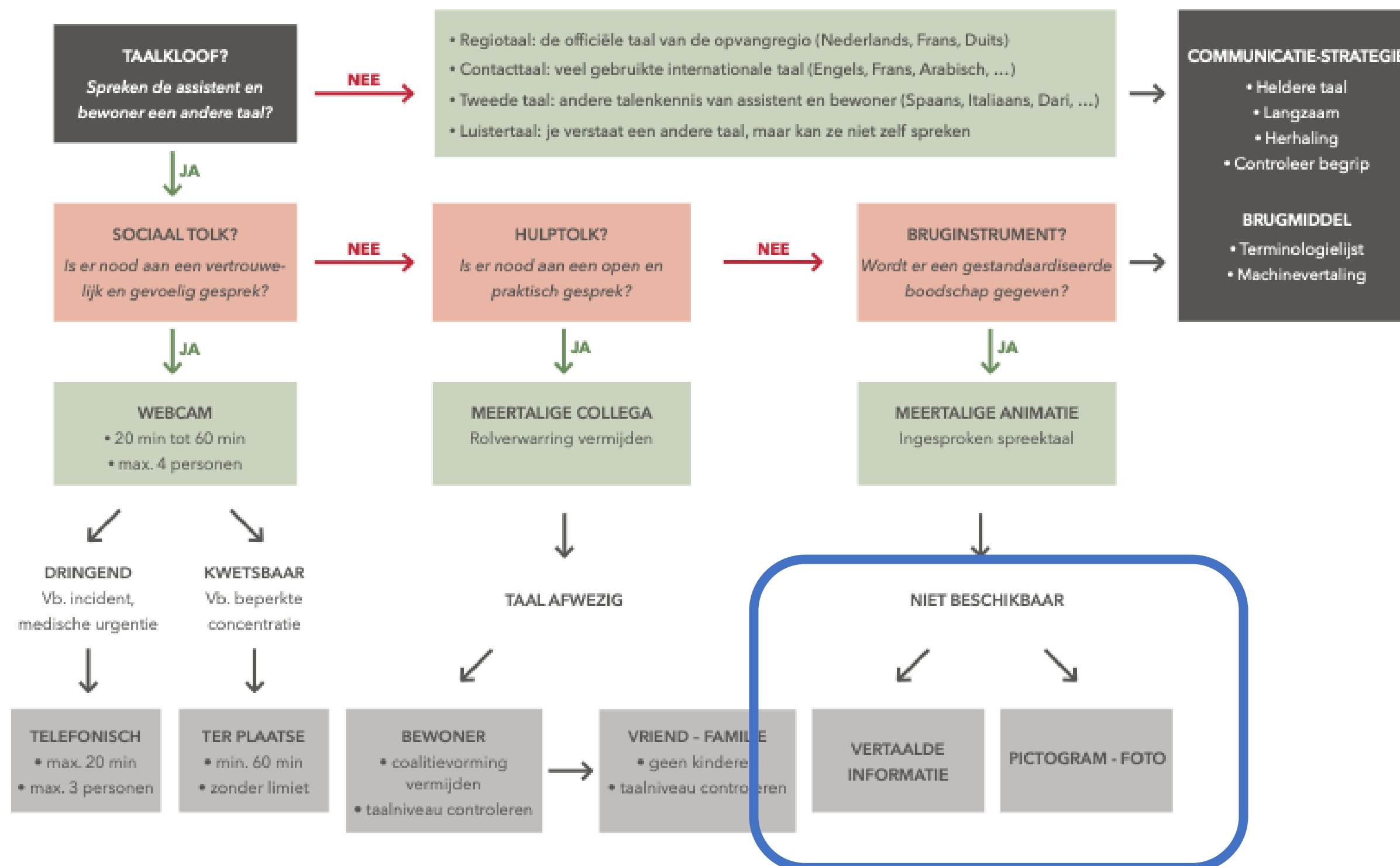


decision model
for multilingual
communication
(working
document
Fedasil)

**VISUAL
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY'S TALK**

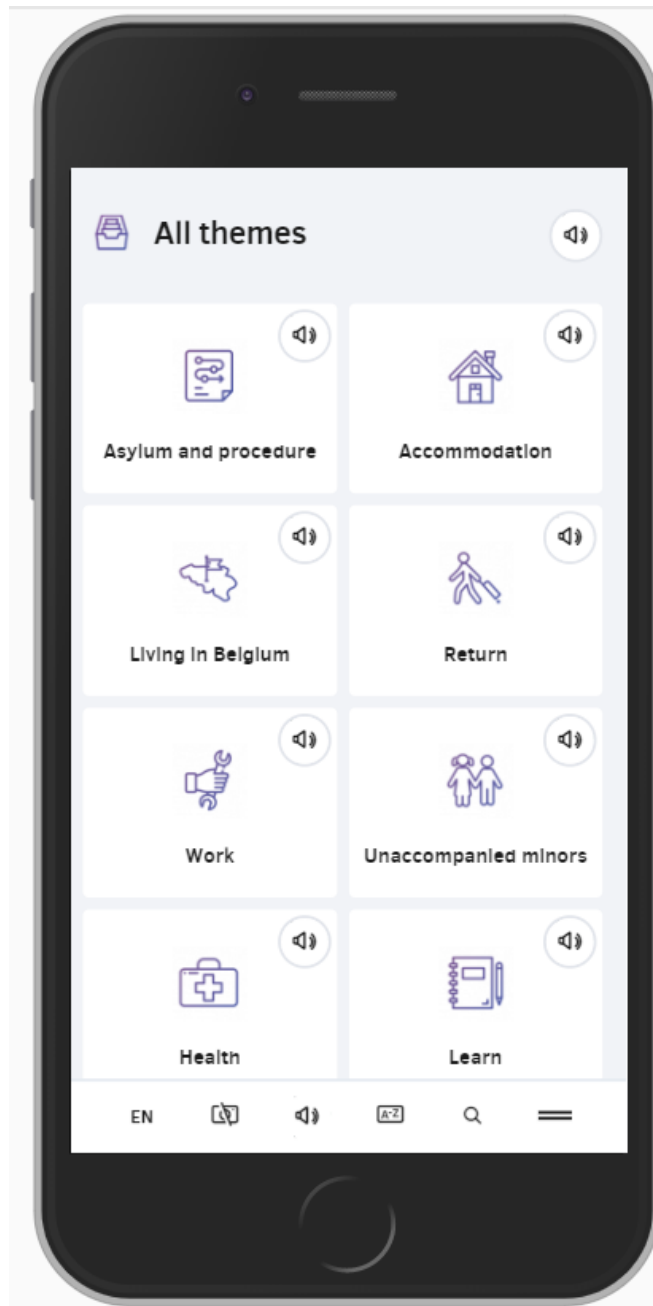
1. MULTILINGUAL WEBSITE FEDASILINFO.BE

MEERTALIGE COMMUNICATIE IN DE OPVANG *Beslismodel*



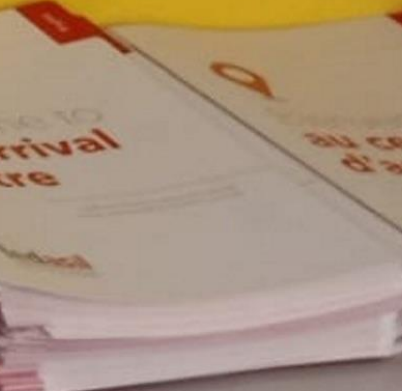
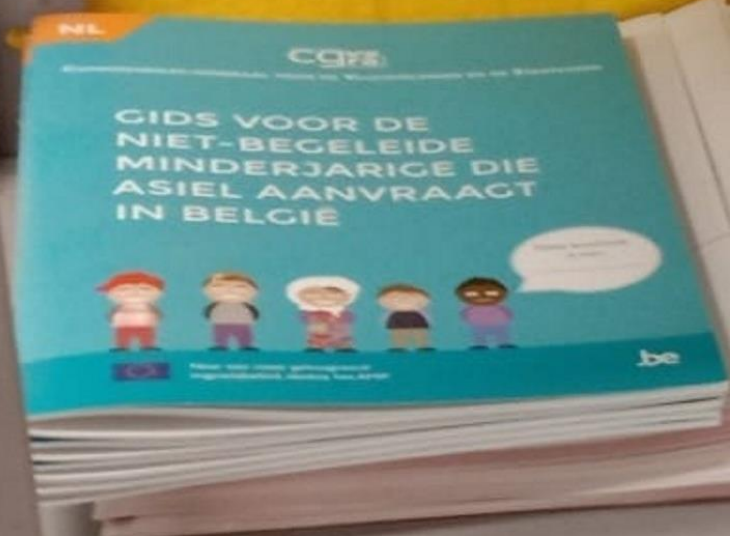
- Evaluation of the multilingual website **fedasilinfo.be**
- Ghent University involved in the **evaluation** of its content, use & user-friendliness, perceived reliability
- 2021 – 2022

1. MULTILINGUAL WEBSITE FEDASILINFO.BE



Context

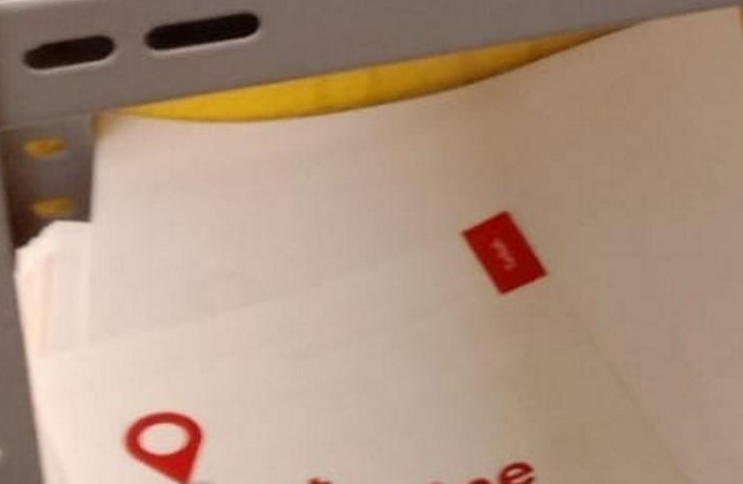
- responsive website developed by Fedasil (AMIF)
- online since 2019
- meeting legal obligation on informing
- accurate information for **applicants** (cf. countering misinformation, enhancing agency and allowing informed decisions within the complex asylum procedure)
- accurate information for **staff** (cf. staff turnovers, legal or procedural changes)
- adapting to societal changes and media habits



ARABE

DARI

ANGLAIS

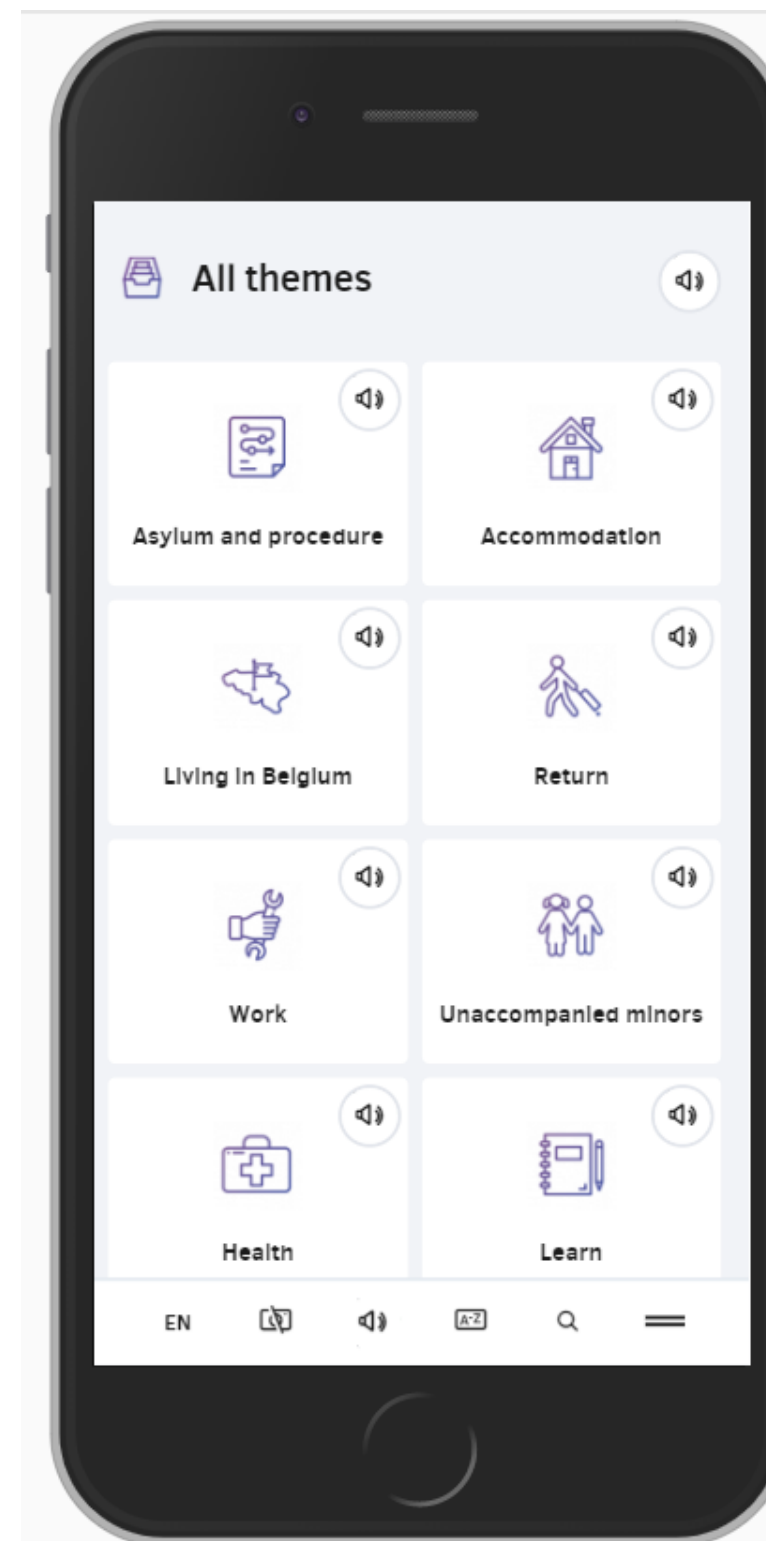


SOMALI

TURC

8 central topics

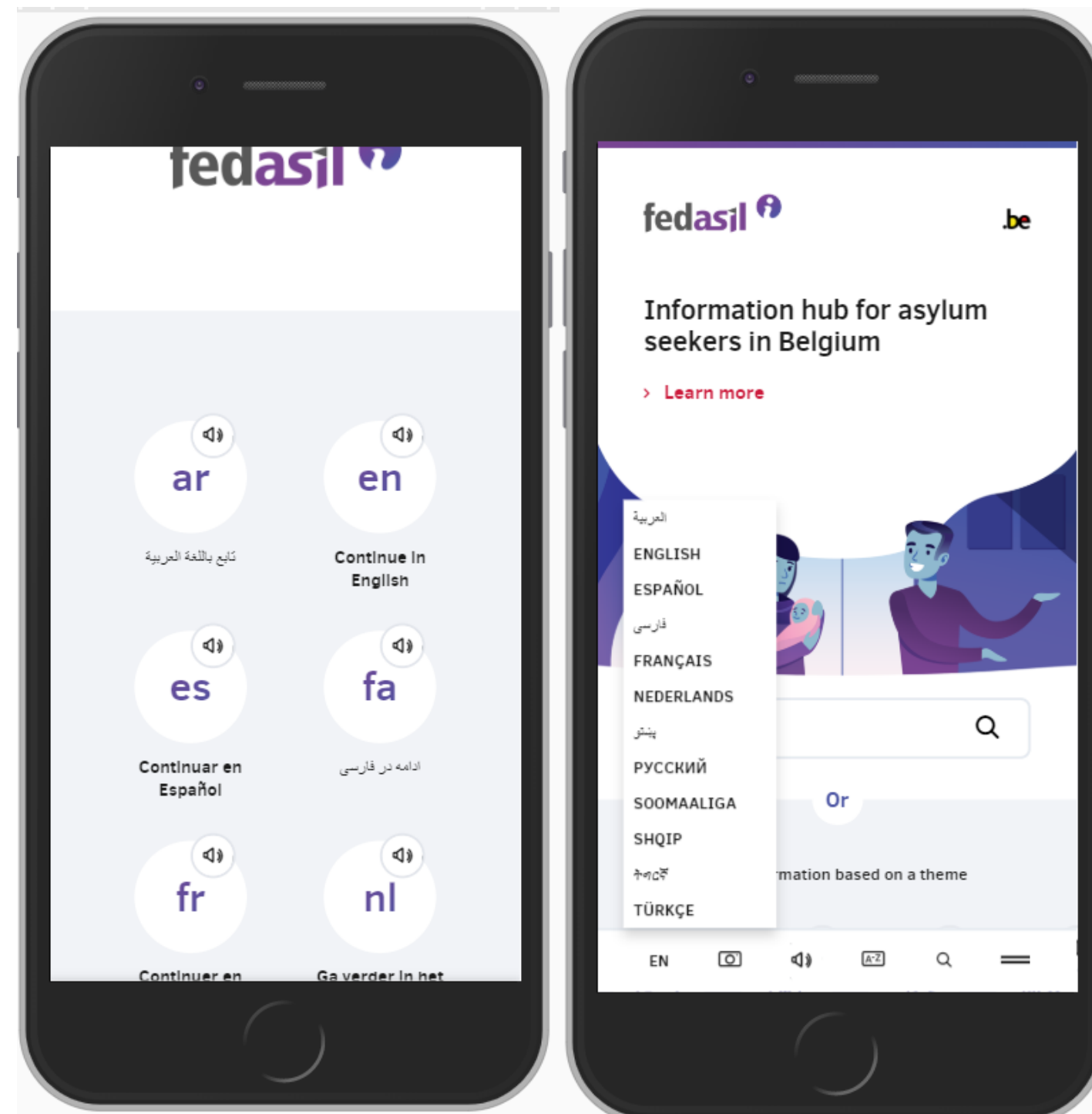
- Asiel en procedure
- Wonen
- Leven in België
- Terugkeer
- Werk
- Niet-begeleide minderjarigen
- Gezondheid
- Leren





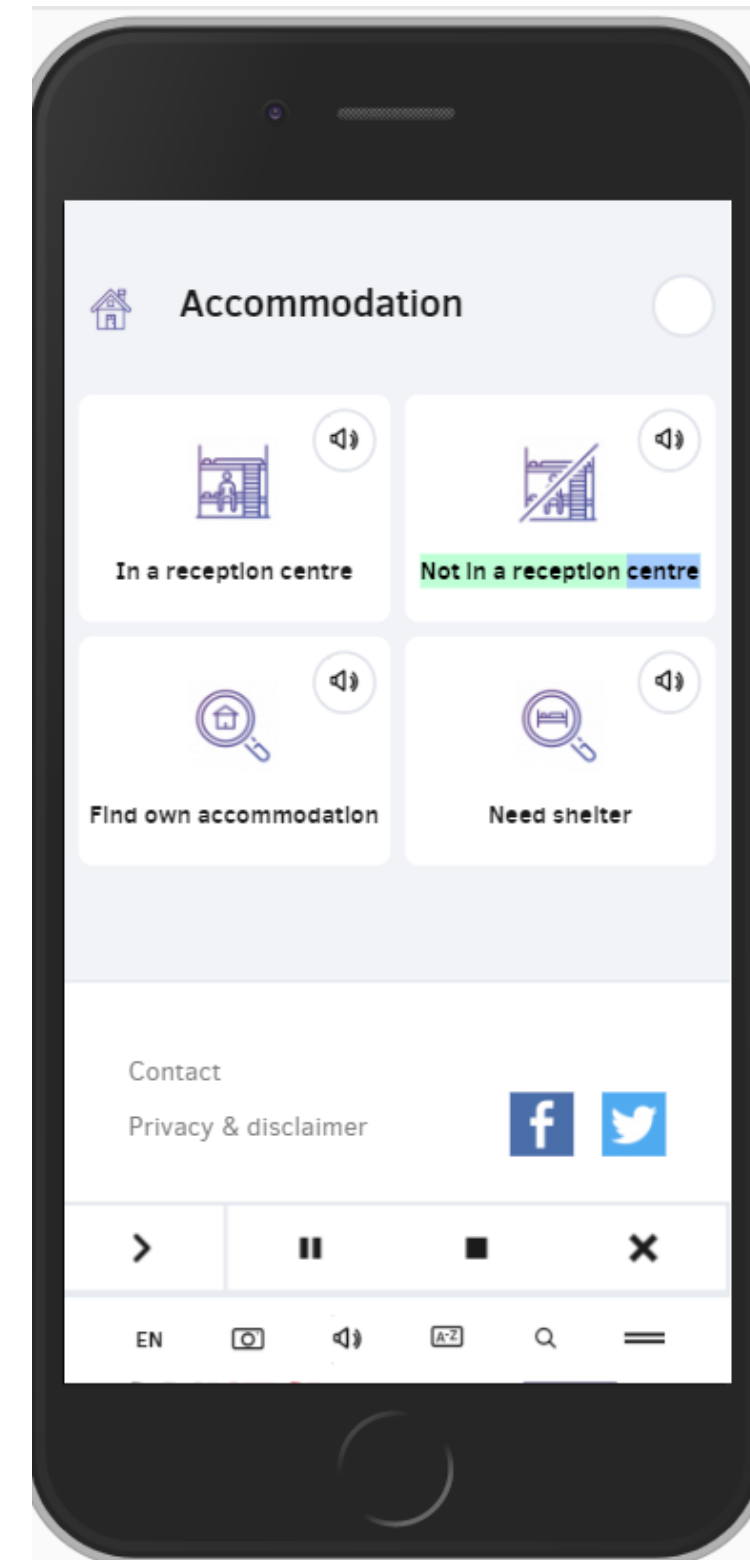
14 languages

Nederlands, Frans, Engels, Duits
Arabisch, Farsi, Pashto, Russisch,
Spaans, Albanees, Turks,
Somalisch, Tigrinya, Portugees,

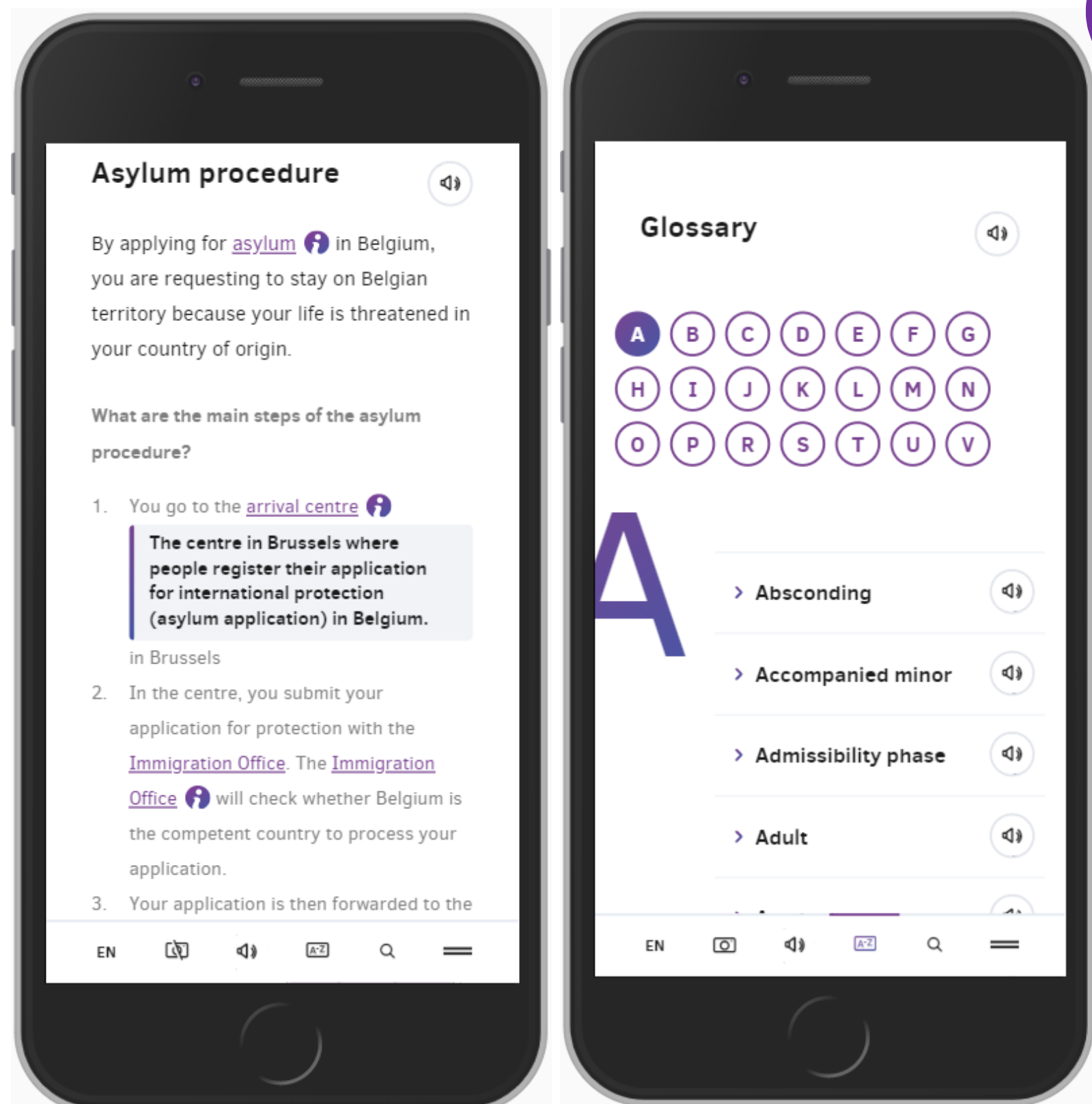


10 languages audio

- Nederlands, Frans, Engels, Duits, Arabisch, Farsi, Russisch, Spaans, Turks, Portugees,
- Lezen van aparte fragmenten, thema's of volledige pagina's
- Mogelijkheid tot pauzeren



Glossary





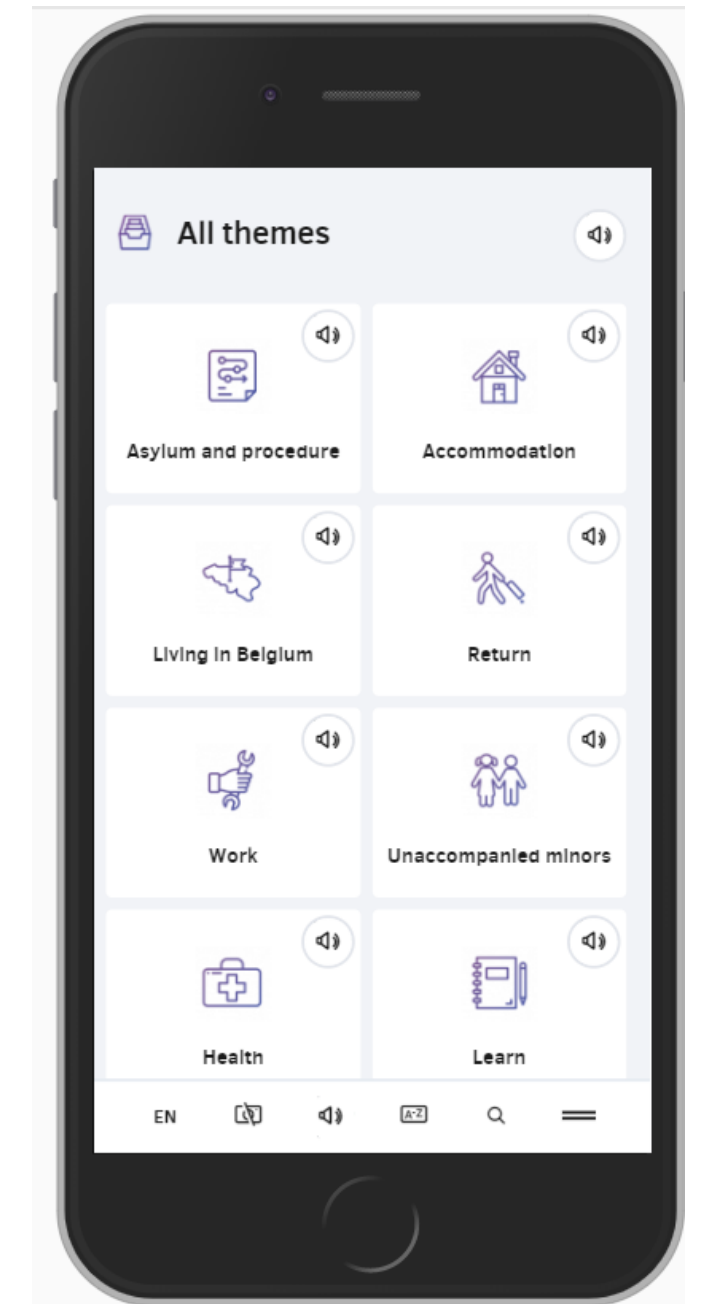
Elaborated with the **target group**

- Information structure was tested by applicants and front-line staff in the reception network and adjusted according to the results
- Pictograms were tested with front-line staff
- Texts written or rewritten to suit applicants' needs
- Colleagues/native speakers rewrote translations



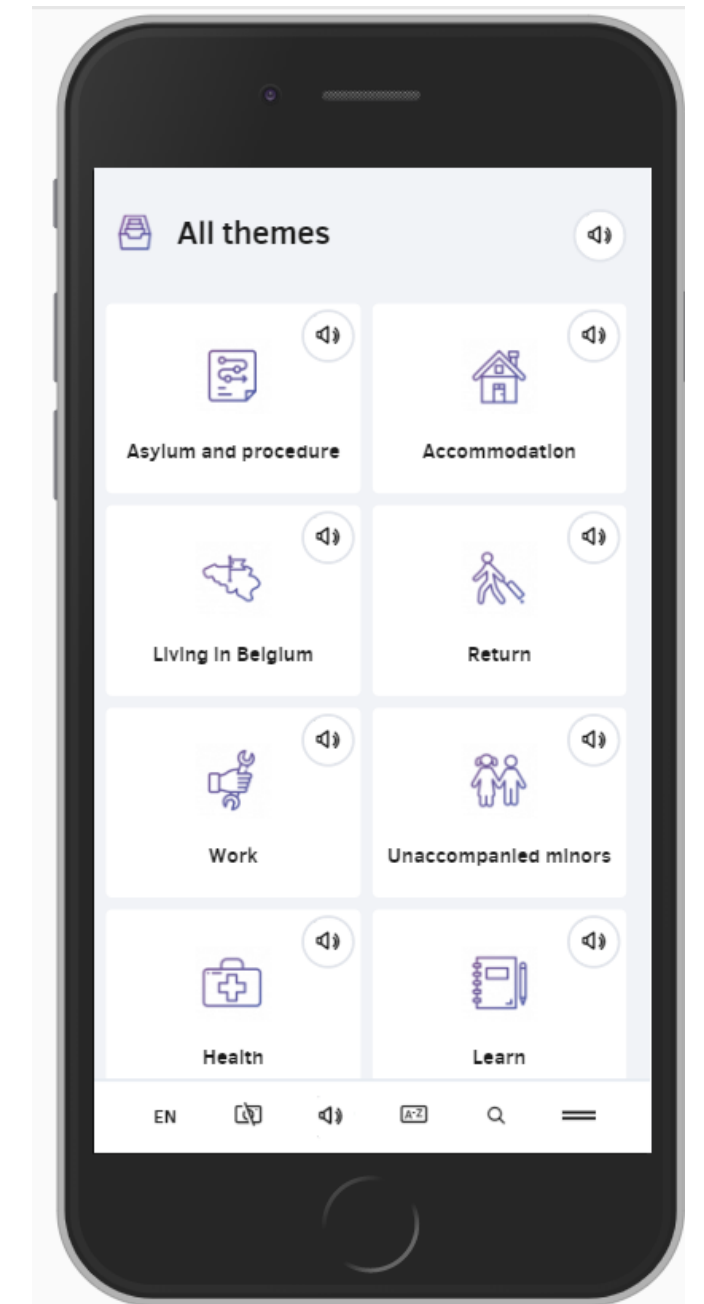
1. MULTILINGUAL WEBSITE

- **Evaluation** Ghent University: user needs, usage, satisfaction, perceived reliability, desired changes
- **different methods**
 - survey among employees
 - interviews + focus group discussions with applicants
 - screen recordings of navigation experiences



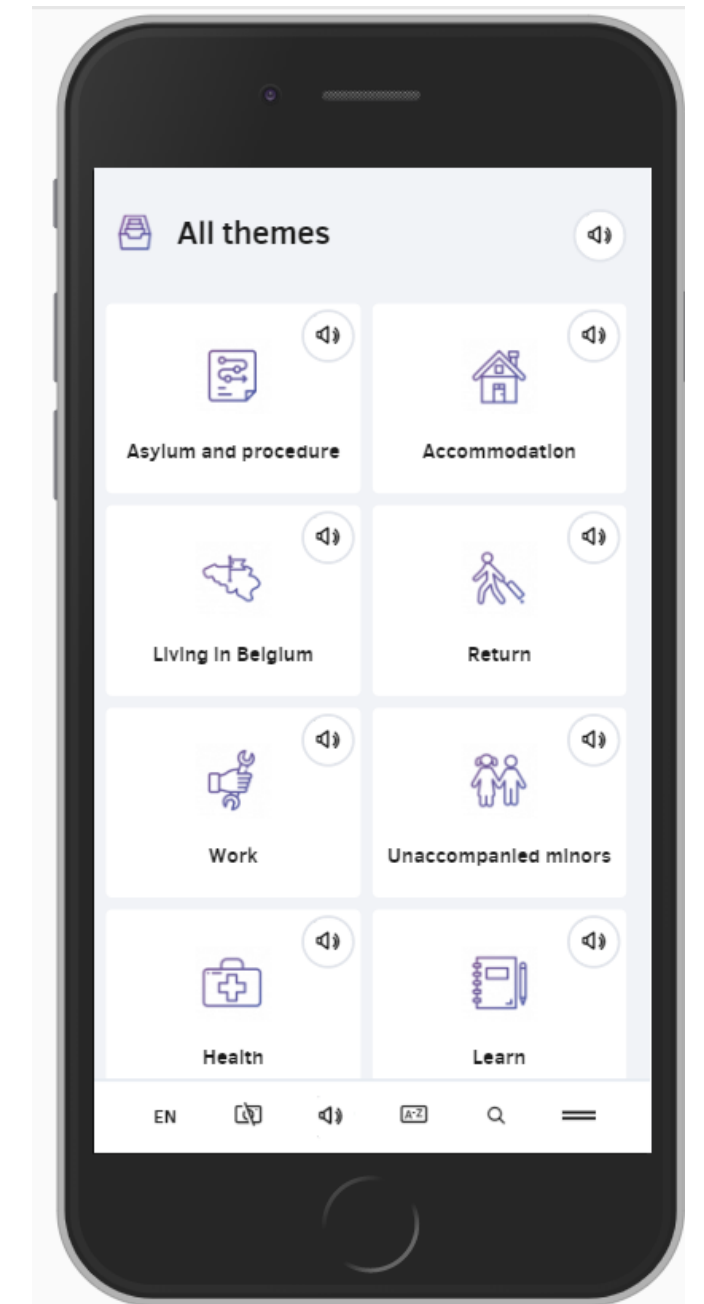
MANY POSITIVE POINTS

- overall high user satisfaction
- positive feedback on content, visual design, and reliability
- rated well for usability
- some issues with page structure and internal linking



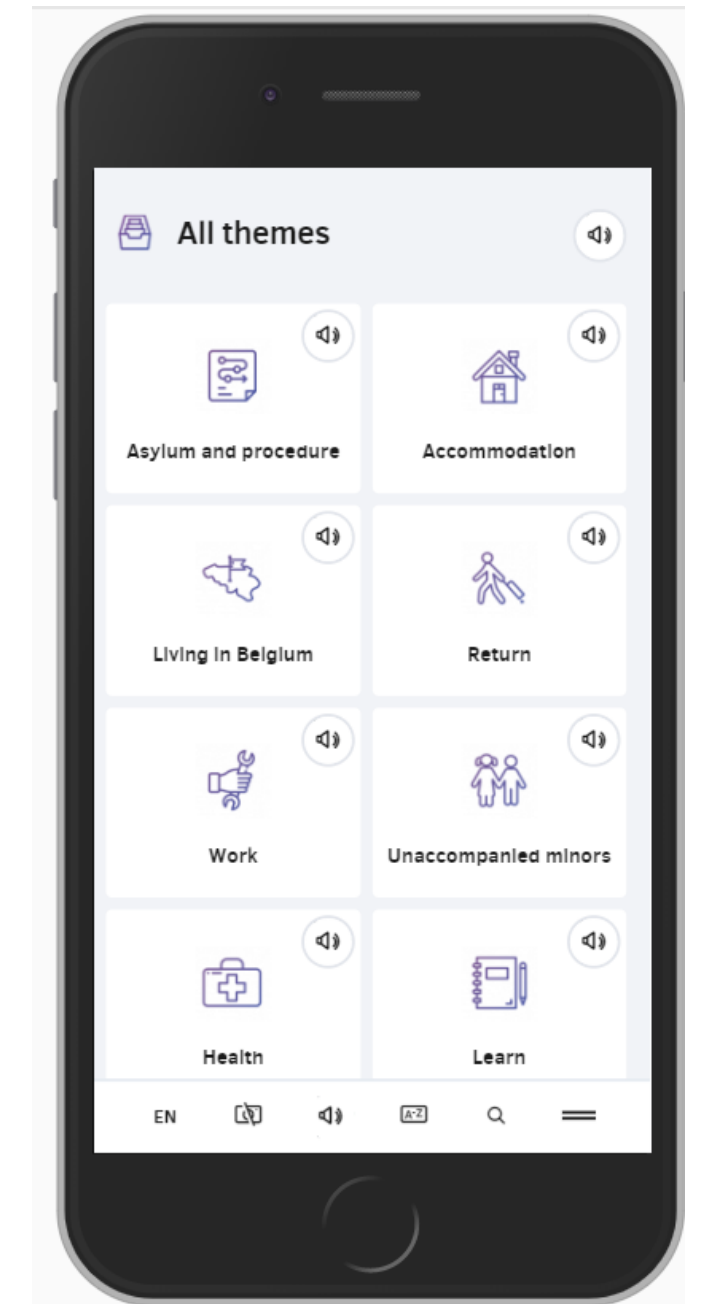
PARADOX OF DIGITALISATION

- digitalisation framed as a solution: promise of access, empowerment, self-reliance
- But also: digital tools can reinforce/deepen existing inequalities or create new forms of exclusion



LAYERS OF DIGITAL INEQUALITY

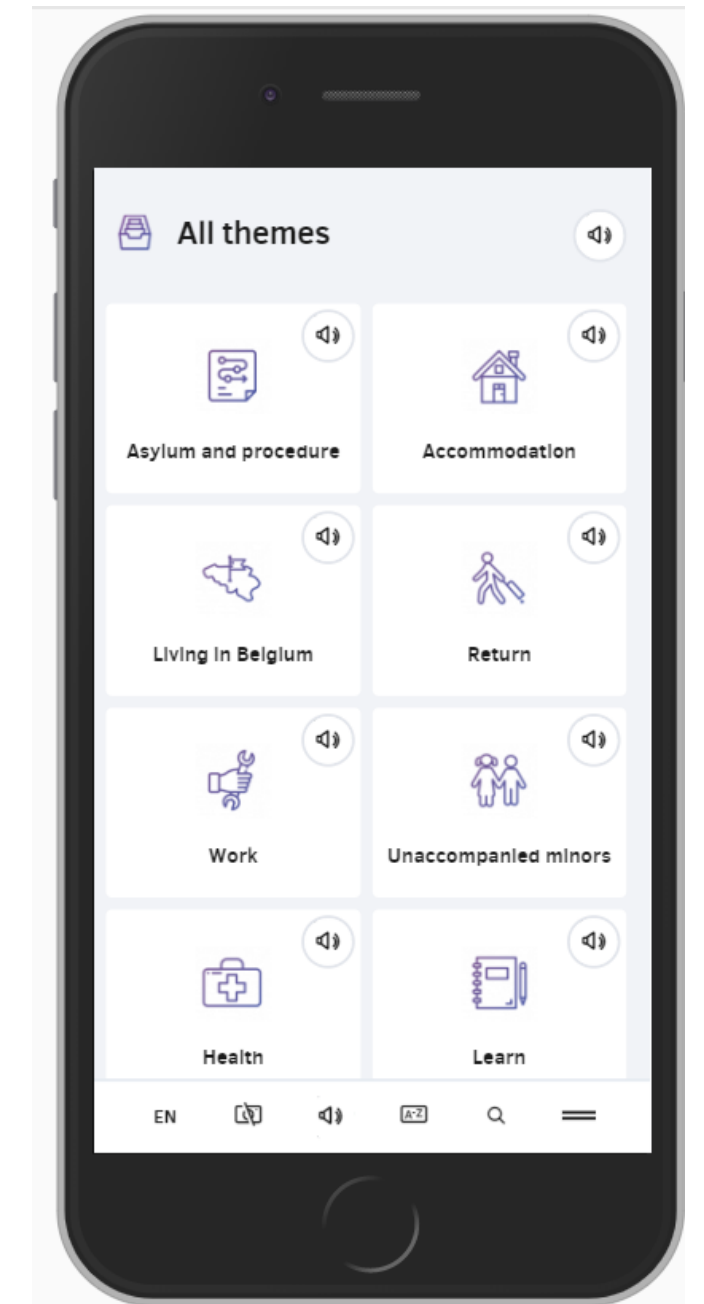
1. Lack of access to internet/devices - affected groups:
 - Older applicants
 - Women and children (restricted by family members)
 - Applicants from regions with poor infrastructure
2. Unequal infrastructure across reception centres
 - Rural military barracks vs. urban buildings
 - Wi-Fi: not always available or reliable



LAYERS OF DIGITAL INEQUALITY

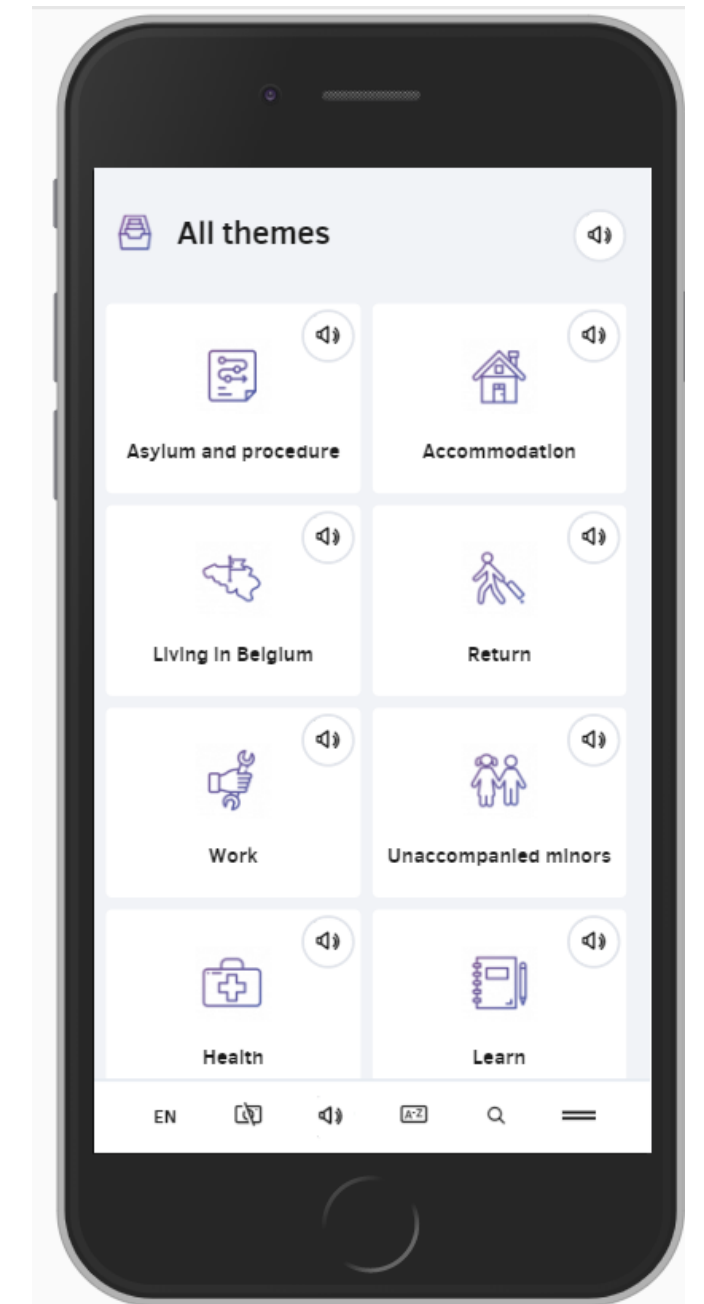
Level of digital skills, confidence, motivation

1. Users with low digital literacy struggle with *fedasilinfo.be*
2. Users with other information gathering strategies (e.g. unaccompanied minors preferred social media, peers, informal channels)



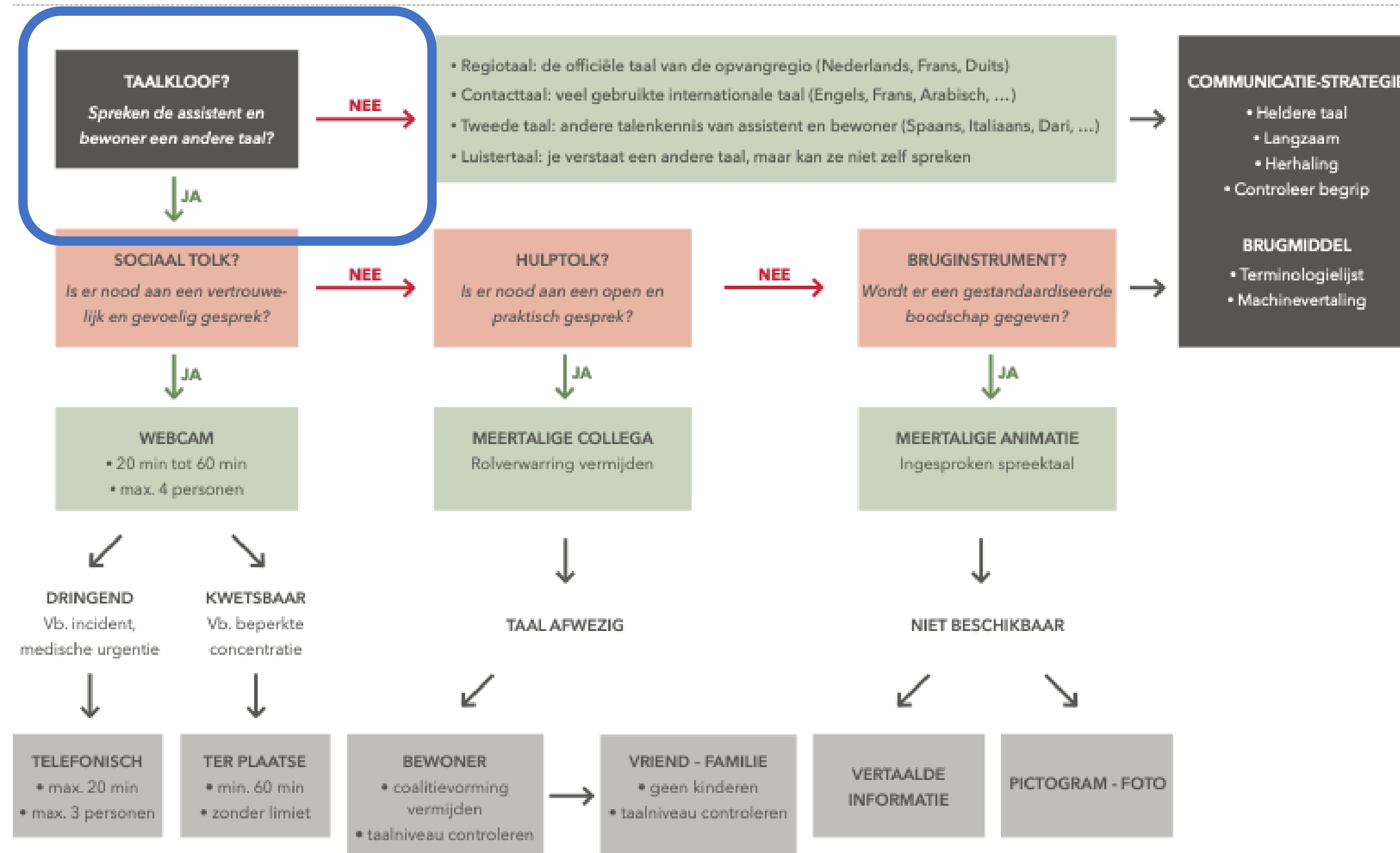
EVALUATION TAKEAWAYS

- not a one-size-fits-all solution
- essential to continuously evaluate usage patterns, barriers
- adapt to changing technologies and user behaviour, individual profiles
- fedasilinfo.be = supporting tool, not a full substitute → danger of neglecting alternatives



2. MULTILINGUAL INTAKE TOOL

MEERTALIGE COMMUNICATIE IN DE OPVANG *Beslismodel*



LANGUAGE
IDENTIFICATION?

WITHOUT A
COMMON
LANGUAGE?

AMICA
2019 – 2022
INTERUNIVERSITY
PROJECT

2. MULTILINGUAL INTAKE TOOL

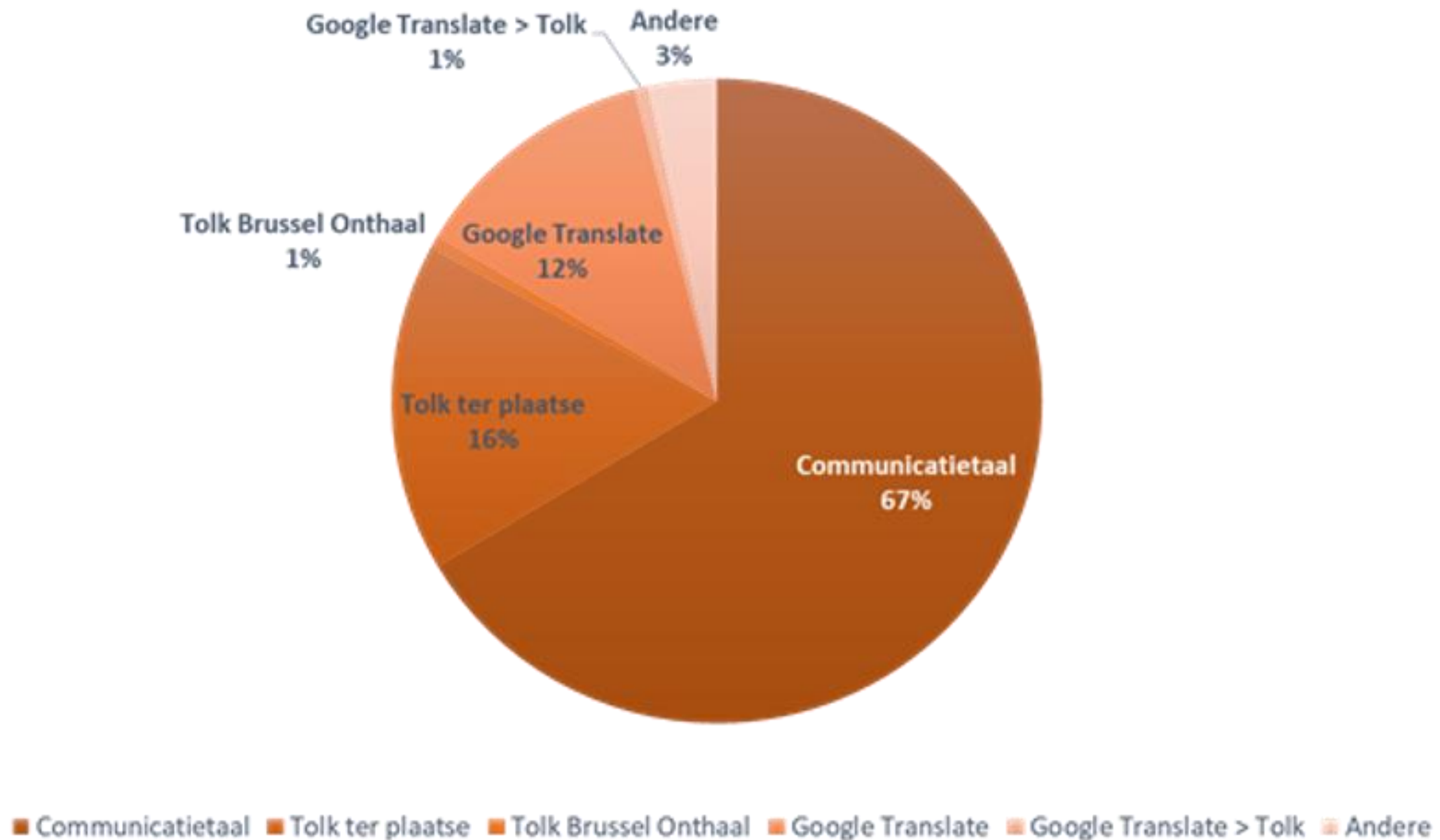
Context

- *Klein Kasteeltje*, Brussels
 - single point of entrance: arrival centre
 - multiple tasks
 - medical intake
 - **social intake** (assessment of reception needs)
- in what language?



Pilot study

- Inventory of language identification practices
- Fieldwork: 146 observations + staff interviews



Findings

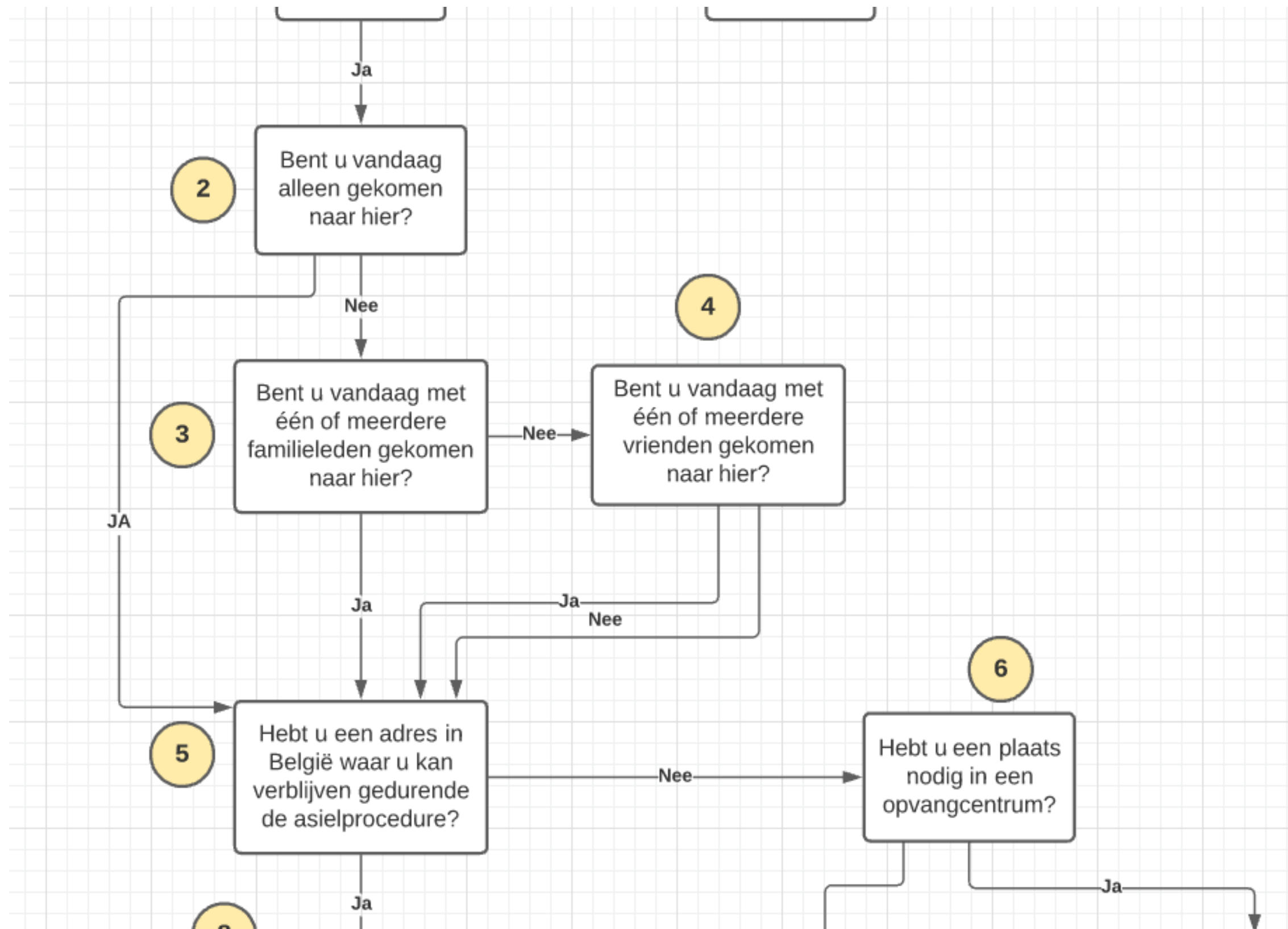
- time pressure
- nationality or origin as indicators of language
- “language guessing”, “trial & error”
- esp. for “lesser resourced languages”
(e.g. Tigrinya, Pashto, etc.)

This leads to:

- Differential access to critical information
- discomfort residents
- professional frustration







STANDAARD

Centraal-Azië	Eurazië	Midden-Oosten	Oost-Afrika	Zuid-Azië
Dari	Engels	Arabisch	Somali	Tamil
Farsi	Frans	Koerdisch (Kurmanji)	Tigrinya	Tibetaans
Pasjtoe	Nederlands			
	Oekraïens			
	Russisch			
	Spaans			

Hello. Welcome at Fedasil. Do you speak my language and do you understand what I say? Please point at the green checkmark.

VOLGENDE



Yes



No



I don't know



<https://amica.xuntar.com/languageselection>

Solution

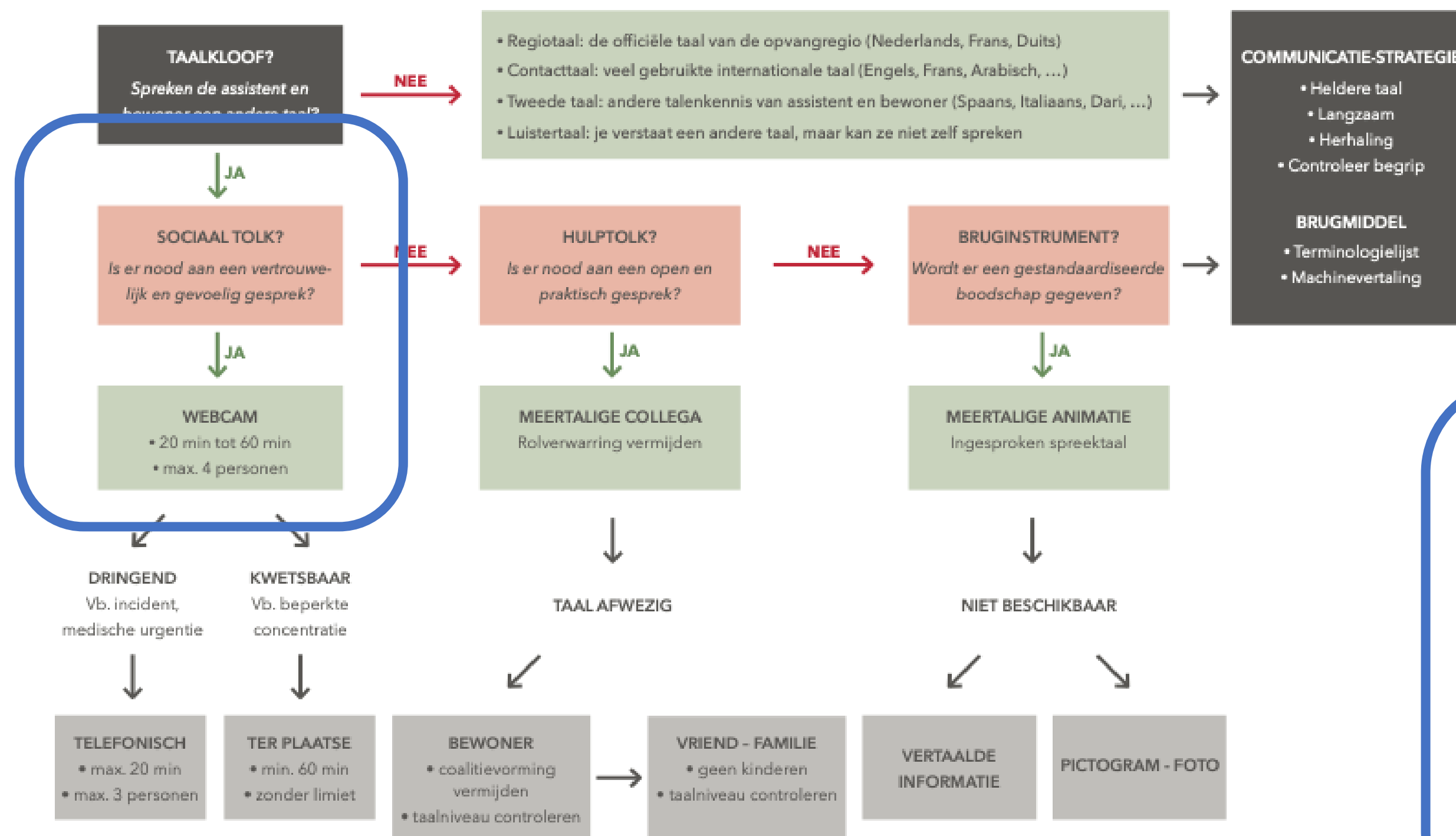
- semi-automated basic question & answer (limited options)
- easy to use, multilingual, text + audio
- digital support for applicants indirect through case-workers
- flags complex (accommodation) needs early on:
- supports first contact information gathering for more languages:
fairer intake

Takeaways

- digital tools can help reduce unequal access to information
- but important considerations
 - at key moments
 - for specific types of information
 - in support of broader human interaction
 - co-developed with users
 - based on real needs
 - introduced with training and time

3. VIDEO INTERPRETING

MEERTALIGE COMMUNICATIE IN DE OPVANG *Beslismodel*



Werken met
videotolken

(1/1/2021-
31/12/2022)
(UGent)

- **AIM:** facilitate and optimize video-interpreting, specifically for LLDs
- **Method:** context analysis, observations of interactions,
- **Output:** leaflet, trainingsmodule
- **Impact:** structural embedding videointerpreting since 2022 (with EUAA support)

Why motivate staff to work with video-interpreters?

- shortage of in-person / on-site interpreters (rare languages, remote reception centres)
- preference over alternative (telephone interpreting)
 - more flexibility, especially for rare languages
 - access to visual cues
 - allows for longer conversations
 - cost-effective

Source: Fedasil



Kaart van de centra



Video interpreting

Challenges

- staff reluctance: adopt new routines
- organisational: advance booking ≠ ad hoc needs
- **technical: poor internet, lack of quiet spaces, wrong equipment**

Impact

- reached “new” staff, next to early adopters
- simplified interpreting workflow
- more support in rare languages thanks to more efficiency in their time schedules

EU-WEBPSI

PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING IN THE EU

No harmonized
framework of minimal
standards for PSI Services



Unequal access to basic
services across the EU

Mismatch interpreter
supply/demand



Limited interpreting
capacity (esp. for LLDs)

<https://www.webpsi.eu/>

EU-WEBPSI: SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

EU

- Geographical scope: EU and EFTA

WEB

- Online portal

PSI

- Public Service Interpreting, especially in languages of lesser diffusion

Case study approach: asylum and reception contexts

1

Standardise

2

**Building PSI
capacity**

3

Share



eu - webpsi

EU-WIDE WEB PORTAL FOR
PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING

1

Designing a common framework
of minimum quality standards of
(WEB)PSI competence, training
and accreditation

2

Strengthening video-mediated
interpreting capacity for LLDs

- 60 refugee interpreters
- 8 language combinations

3

Developing video-mediated
interpreting solutions across
national boundaries



Co-funded by
the European Union

WEBPSI.EU

EU Web Portal for Video-mediated Public Service Interpreting

To improve access to basic services for migrants and refugees

[Learn more about it >](#)



<https://portal.webpsi.eu/>

REPOSITORY FOR PSI TRAINING MATERIALS

Context: asylum and reception

Train-the trainer approach

8 modules = 8 topics

TRAINING MODULES

MODULE 1: ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT

University of Vienna, Centre for Translation Studies

Laura Andrea González Figueroa & Sonja Pöllabauer

MODULE 2: BASIC INTERPRETING TECHNIQUES

Ghent University, Department of Translation, Interpreting and Communication

Eleonora Mazzanti, Joly De Wilde & Katrijn Maryns

MODULE 3: ETHICS

Ghent University, Department of Translation, Interpreting and Communication

Eleonora Mazzanti, Joly De Wilde & Katrijn Maryns

MODULE 4: THE PUBLIC SERVICE DOMAIN

KU Leuven, Department of Linguistics

Aline Guaus & Lieven Buysse

MODULE 5: SPECIFICITIES OF VIDEO-MEDIATED INTERPRETING

University of Surrey, Centre for Translation Studies

Diana Singureanu, Sabine Braun & Elena Davitti

MODULE 6: SPECIFICITIES OF TRAINING INTERPRETERS IN LLD

University of Vienna, Centre for Translation Studies

Laura Andrea González Figueroa & Sonja Pöllabauer

MODULE 7: THE ORGANISATION OF CERTIFICATION TESTS

AGII Flemish Integration Agency

Laura Theys & Pascal Rillof

MODULE 8: INTERPROFESSIONAL TRAINING ON WORKING WITH WEBCAM INTERPRETERS USING THE EU WEB PORTAL

University of Surrey, Centre for Translation Studies

Diana Singureanu, Sabine Braun & Elena Davitti




Co-funded by
the European Union



Adaptation of trainer materials + creation of a SharePoint site for learners

(ISM CORUM, France)



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PROJET EU-WEBPSI

Formation à l'interprétariat social et médical
par visioconférence

Dates limite de réponse aux tests (obligatoires et optionnels)

+ Ajouter un événement

JANV.
13

Test OBLIGATOIRE "Ethique et
déontologie 4"

lun. 13 janv., 19:00

JANV.
17

Test OBLIGATOIRE "Services
publics 1"

ven. 17 janv., 19:00

[Afficher tout](#)

Mes résultats

Accéder aux contenus

Modules et ressources de formation

Evaluations et questionnaires


Evaluations et questionnaires déjà clos et corrigés

FAQ

Contactez l'équipe de formation

Quoi de neuf ?


+ Ajouter



Services publics

Module Services Publics, les contenus sont en ligne...


Yves HENRY il y a 18 heures
0 vues



Bonne Année !

Bonne Année 2025 ! L'équipe de...


Yves HENRY avant-hier
9 vues



Contrôle continu - Résultats du
module Techniques de base de...

Consultez vos résultats ! Afin de vou...

Yves HENRY 6 décembre 2024
40 vues



Fin du module "Techniques de
base de l'interprétariat"

Fin du module "Techniques de base ...

Yves HENRY 19 novembre 2024
43 vues

[Afficher tout](#)

Les prochaines sessions de formation

+ Ajouter un événement

JANV.
15

Services publics 3

mer. 15 janv., 09:00

JANV.
16

Services publics 3

jeu. 16 janv., 09:00

JANV.
22

Services publics 4 (Présentiel)

mer. 22 janv., 09:00

JANV.
23

Services publics 4

jeu. 23 janv., 09:00

JANV.
29

Interprétariat par visio-
conférence 2

mer. 29 janv., 09:00

JANV.
30

Interprétariat par visio-
conférence 2

jeu. 30 janv., 09:00

FÉVIL.
5

Interprétariat par visio-
conférence 3

mar. 5 fév., 09:00

FÉVIL.
6

Interprétariat par visio-
conférence 3

jeu. 6 fév., 09:00

[Afficher tout](#)




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the European Union

FORMATION WEBPSI


Ressources de formation

 Session d'accueil


 Techniques de l'interprétariat

 Ethique

 Services publics

 Interprétariat Par Visioconférence

 Perfectionnement du français

 Retour à la page d'accueil

FORMATION WEBPSI

Evaluations et questionnaires

 Session d'accueil

 Techniques de l'interprétariat


 Ethique

 Services publics

 Interprétariat Par Visioconférence

 Perfectionnement du français

 Retour à la page d'accueil

 1 personne a ajouté une mention J'aime à cet élément

 4 commentaires

 868 vues



Enregistrer pour plus tard

4 commentaires

 Ajoutez un commentaire. Tapez @ pour mentionner une personne

Publier

 29 octobre 2024

Bonjour est merci.



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the European Union



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FORMATION WEBPSI

Ethique

Modules de formation

de la session "Ethique et déontologie 4" (11 et 12/12/2024)

Ethique et déontologie 4

WEBPSI - Ethique 4

ISM CORUM
construire l'égalité

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the European Union

INTERPRÉTARIAT
Ethique et Déontologie 4

eu - webpsi

41:58

Ressources complémentaires

de la session "Ethique et déontologie 4" (11 et 12/12/2024)

2_Ethique

Afficher tout

Vidéo #2

1:36

interprète_en_turc

5:11

Neutralité

0:34

EVALUATIONS ET QUESTIONNAIRES

Ethique

Tests obligatoires

de la session "Ethique 4" (11 et 12/12/2024)

Date limite de réponse le 26/12/2024 à 19h00 !

Questionnaire - Ethique et déontologie 4

Avant d'effectuer ce test, nous vous recommandons de consulter les ressources disponibles sur la page [Ethique et déontologie 4](#)
Cliquez sur l'image ci-dessous pour accéder au test

← Précédent

Ordinateur Appareil mobile

29:26

Questionnaire - Ethique 4

1. Lors d'une consultation médicale, un patient utilise un mot familier pour décrire ses symptômes, mais le médecin emploie un terme technique dans sa réponse. Comment gérez-vous cela ?

Sélectionner 2 options:

- ☐ Vous utilisez un terme plus simple pour harmoniser les deux niveaux de langage.
- ☐ Vous expliquez brièvement chaque mot selon le niveau de langage des intervenants.
- ☐ Vous expliquez au patient la signification du terme technique.
- ☐ Vous demandez au médecin d'expliquer le terme technique s'il y a incompréhension.

2. Un participant interrompt constamment l'interprétation pour ajouter des détails ou des corrections. Que faites-vous ?

- ☐ Vous adaptez votre rythme pour inclure ses commentaires au fur et à mesure.
- ☐ Vous demandez à la personne de s'exprimer à la fin pour éviter les interruptions.
- ☐ Vous traduisez uniquement les parties importantes et ignorez les interruptions.
- ☐ Vous reformulez pour que le message soit plus fluide.

Tests obligatoires

de la session "Ethique 3" (04 et 05/12/2024)

Date limite de réponse le 20/12/2024 à 19h00 !

Questionnaire - Ethique et déontologie 3

Avant d'effectuer ce test, nous vous recommandons de consulter les ressources disponibles sur la page [Ethique](#)

PSI TRAINING

Training 60 LLD interpreters with a refugee or migrant background

Belgium

France

Greece

In collaboration with our local partners: PSI providers and Reception agencies



Standard test in the three countries

Organisation of on-site classes

Hybrid training programme

(Flemish Agency for
Integration, Belgium)



Co-funded by
the European Union



eu - webpsi

Organisation of online classes

(ISM CORUM, France)

Profil professionnel des réfugiés et bénéficiaires de la Protection subsidaire en France

Les niveaux de qualifications variés :

- Une proportion significative a un **niveau d'études élevé**
- Une partie possède des qualifications professionnelles ou techniques, notamment dans des métiers manuels
- Cependant, un certain nombre de personnes réfugiées n'ont **pas de qualifications ou de diplômes formels reconnus**

Dès leur arrivée en France, **57 % des réfugiés étaient actifs sur le marché du travail**, un taux proche de celui des autres primo-arrivants (59 %).

La répartition par type d'emploi dans le pays d'origine est similaire à celle des autres immigrés en France, mais les informations précises sur les qualifications et professions exercées restent limitées.

Funded by
the European Union



Co-funded by
the European Union

Trainees practicing online

(METAdrasi, Greece)



Co-funded by
the European Union



FINAL REFLECTIONS

- digital tools are never neutral, but reflect choices and priorities
- technology changes fast – but people need time → the *softer skills* like digital confidence and aptitude towards the technology are just as important (for all involved)
- intertwined nature of digital and social exclusion
- digital technologies have a mixed blessing: they can both reinforce and overcome existing social inequalities

OUR HOPES

- map diversity of needs and capacities before implementing digital tools
- design for varying layers of use: high autonomy, medium support, low access
- see tools as complements to people, not substitutes
- invest sufficiently in training, infrastructure, user feedback loops
- involve all stakeholders from the beginning
- keep asking: What happens to those not reached by tools

JOIN US FOR THE FREE EU-WEBPSI FINAL SYMPOSIUM

ONSITE, 5th June 2025, 1-5 PM

ONLINE, 19th June 2025, 2-4 PM

SCAN THE QR-CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION



Co-funded by
the European Union



eu - webpsi

Prof dr Katrijn Maryns & prof dr July De Wilde

Vakgroep Vertalen, Tolken en Communicatie

E July.DeWilde@ugent.be

E Katrijn.Maryns@ugent.be

www.ugent.be



Universiteit Gent

@ugent

@ugent

Ghent University