

# WORKING SEMINARS AND PEER REVIEWS BOLOGNA REPORT

D.T2.1.1. 09 2020







### 1. Technical report

### Date and location of the seminar:

September 2020 18th, ITC Studio, San Lazzaro di Savena (Bologna), Italy

### Present stakeholders and their affiliations:

- 1. <u>Paola Cavalleri</u>, Children's Services at ASP City of Bologna (social worker)
- Alice Genco, Professional educator Educational activities and social planning, Terra Verde Association (stakeholder from an NGO working with refugees)
- 3. <u>Daniele Greco</u>, Social educator job placement and integration of migrants at ASP City of Bologna (practitioner)
- 4. <u>Silvia Lolli</u>, Welfare area and promotion of Community Wellbeing Territorial Social Service at Municipality of Bologna (public authority representative)
- 5. <u>Bouchra Naji</u>, Reception area operator at Lai Momo Social Cooperative (cultural Mediator with a migrant background)

# Other participants:

- 1. Carla De Lorenzo, Directorate General Special projects and fundraising at ASP City of Bologna
- 2. Giuseppe Nicolini, Head of International Protection Service at ASP City of Bologna
- 3. Mattia Cocchi, EU projects consultant at ASP City of Bologna
- 4. Pamela Pasian, Ca' Foscari University Researcher, Venice
- 5. <u>Micaela Casalboni</u>, Co-director and responsible for intercultural projects at Teatro dell'Argine (facilitator)
- 6. Giulia Musumeci, Project manager at Teatro dell'Argine (facilitator)





### 2. Content report: Analyzing and evaluating the local governance dynamics

SIforREF uses co-creation as a method to share the most pressing challenges in the field of refugee integration, to identify possible ways to design social innovative practices and to improve integration policies. This was highlighted by Pamela Pasian from Ca' Foscari University of Venice, who introduced the project, its objectives and results achieved so far.

A brief presentation of the agenda of the seminar and its aim gave a frame for the working group. Keeping in mind the three core dimensions of social innovation (content, process and empowerment) dialogue was stimulated and peer review was carried out.

### Current situation in the local context and barriers, possibile improvements and recommendations

The expert Giuseppe Nicolini, Head of the International Protection Service of ASP City of Bologna, gave a general overview of refugees integration policies with a focus on COVID emergency.

Continuous regulatory changes and the uncertainty of policies related to residence permits weaken the solidity of integration paths. The need to build a clear long-term approach in the journey towards autonomy and integration, beyond the reception phase, was evident during the pandemic.

Taking into account that Covid-19 is a disease of social contacts, and contacts are the result of integration, it had a strong impact on the beneficiaries of SIPROIMI (Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors) project in Bologna. So, what are possible strategies? Emergency management approach and planning perspective, in collaboration with all the actors involved, keeping an eye to the learnings of this time.

# **Brainstorming**

Starting from the COVID-19 emergency and focusing on the importance of communication, as emerged during the first co-creation workshop in Bologna, two central themes guided the dialogue:

- safety and risk in terms of marginalization for asylum seekers;
- narration and communication about refugees.

The brainstorming phase was conducted around a list of issues and related questions:

"We" and "others"

How polarized is the discussion on the topic of safety? Is Bologna perceived as a safe city for its citizens, old and new? What about the safety of people with migration backgrounds? And the fear of the pandemic? Has the COVID emergency contributed to





making people of all nationalities feel closer in facing the crisis situation?

Is there an active and effective collaboration between the organizations that deal with integration with those that deal with security?

# • New and old media and public opinion

What actions can be implemented to dialogue with traditional or social media? What different communication channel can be used? What is the role of our organizations? How to use communication tools in order to support an objective, without preconceptions, narration about migrants, emphasizing the potential benefits of immigration on culture, economy and society?

Is there an active and effective collaboration of the organizations that deal with integration with those that deal with communication?

The main findings, reflections and suggestions resulting from the discussion can be summirized as follows.

Safety can be granted through the assumption of responsibility of all the actors involved in the process of reception and integration of migrants and the cooperation between public, private and third sector and the local community. The collaboration between workers engaged in the reception and integration processes and those engaged in the safety of people in need (Police, the health care system) was efficient during the lockdown phase. Participants underlined that migrants learned and applied the new health regulations to

prevent contagion and limit the risk of spreading the new coronavirus.

- It is important to show that safety is not necessarily connected to immigration, and it is related to the concrete possibility to realize a life plan starting from a permanent job, and to the support of the local community.
- Overcoming of institutional barriers and access to social and health services for vulnerable people. The health emergency we are facing does not include only the spread of the Covid-19. Mental care is also a crucial issue for all Italians. The stigma of mental illness is present within our society and when it affects refugees or asylum seekers, coming from deep trauma without the opportunity to get a therapist, the situation may become dangerous both for the ill person and for the community.





Attention need to be paid to these special needs, building a strong local network among public institutions (police, health and social institutions).

Fear as a universal feeling. Some of participants defined COVID as a "democratic" disease. The COVID-19 emergency has led many women and men to experience, perhaps for the first time, a state of freezing and waiting. A situation that is very similar to what many asylum seekers and refugees, who arrive in Italy and live in the reception centres and integration projects of the territories, experience every day. The sense of unsafety and the limitations in the freedom of movement activated a sort of reversal of roles: what generally is imposed on migrants, such as restrictions on mobility, need to use special permits, being pointed as transmitters of diseases, was imposed on Italians.

Feeling closer in crisis situation was an opportunity to stimulate solidarity and reduce social distance.

- Racism in communication. If in a first time the attention was paid to solidarity initiatives, after the lockdown phase negative rhetoric portraying refugees and migrants as carriers of COVID-19 continued. Moreover, a single bad news involving a refugee is enough to forget a lot of successful stories of integration.
  - It is necessary to study and implement new ways to communicate.
  - Social media are a powerful channel, and storytelling could be a good strategy. Tell about daily stories of immigration and integration can led to empathy, and personal relationships and mutual knowledge can help to overcome preconceptions.
- Projects involving Italians and refugees together can foster relationship-building, knowledge exchange between migrants and local community.
  - Taking part in common activities in the neighbourhoods where refugees live (sport, theatre, laboratories and cultural events) offers a chance to citizens and refugees to gather and exchange experiences and can support narration without stereotypes better than any campaign on social media against xenophobia. It also fosters collaboration, solidarity and cohesion.
- Need of a long- term and sustainable approach. Bologna is perceived by migrants as place to live for a long time, thanks to the opportunities offered and the existing channels, both





official and non-institutionalized, aimed at supporting migrants in housing search, access to the labour market and social integration.

Nevertheless, difficulties in finding a permanent job represents the main problem, for its impacts on all other areas of the integration process and of one's life. It is a minimum level of economic independence that can guarantee an acceptable standard of living. Coronavirus pandemic also meant job losses and uncertainty.

It is important go beyond an emergency or single project logic and act in a long-term perspective. All possible improvements carried out by single projects need a longer time to be effective, as well as a common strategy at local level.

During the seminar, all the comments, ideas and experiences coming from the stakeholders involved were written in six billboards related to the six indicators to measure refugee integration (1. Labor market integration, 2. Education, 3. Religion, 4. Building relations with local communities, 5. Overcoming institutional barriers, 6. Participation of migrants in civil society).

The findings of the seminar confirm the recommendations of the first co-creation workshop held in Bologna (negative narration about migrants and few relationships in the local community as critical issues, long-term approach as a strategy) and support the choose to implement the Community lab approach for the pilot action.





### 3. Summary of the peer-reviews

### 3.1. Short description of the peer-reviewed practice/institution/policy

The best practice peer-reviewed was **Vesta** (<a href="https://www.progettovesta.com/en/">https://www.progettovesta.com/en/</a>). The project aims at contributing to the protection, welcome and integration of unaccompanied foreign minors and young refugees, beneficiaries of the SIPROIMI project. It was introduced by Paola Cavalleri, Children's Services at ASP City of Bologna.

The project wants to foster social inclusion as the first step for the autonomy, and at the same time support the engagement of the local community in the integration process.

Vesta includes different actions:

- 1) volunteer mentor, who is willing to take on the legal representation of an unaccompanied foreign minor is entrusted to a local community in the territory or to a foster family;
- 2) family support, to offer cultural, play and recreational activities to young people;
- 3) family hospitality, an opportunity for families, couples and individual residents of open the doors of their homes to a foreign child, accompanying him or her for a short period of his journey towards autonomy and integration in Italy.
- 4) foster care, n synergy with the relevant local services,
- 5) volunteer work, giving the chance to offer part of free time for social inclusion projects dedicated to young migrants

In this path, there is a constant assistance from expert operators. The staff helps participants in the training course to imagine themselves as welcoming citizens and families, and illustrates the supervisory and support tools available, along with the counseling services and psychological support for the young people. Vesta staff is composed by social workers, educators, legal consultants, psychologists and anthropologists with experience in welcoming asylum seekers and refugees.

Vesta gives the chance to take part in a community of all families offering hospitality, allowing comparison and generating solidarity, support and socialization between those involved in the same experience.

The communication of the Vesta involves different official channels, interviews on newspaper and tv, storytelling projects (available on BolognaCares website), public local events. The beneficaries and the citizens taking part in the project have also spread the knowledge through word of mouth to their friends or neighbours. For example kids have been great spokespeople, telling about the Vesta experience at school and bringing out how refugee's daily life is very similar to that of other people.





Informal, spontaneous and non planned communication, with a focus on relations and emotional aspects and on daily life, was the most maininful and powerful. This kind of narration is leading to:

- new resources, in terms of hosting families;
- integration opportunities, including work opportunities;
- activism in civil society, for example the creation of associations of welcoming families.

If the reception is full of failures and successes, experiences like Vesta show that we can count on a supportive and active civil society.

According to the most of the participants perspectives, Vesta is strictly related to three area of integration, specifically: the relations with local communities, the opportunity to overcome institutional barriers and the participation of migrants in civil society.

### 3.2. Summary of peer reviews grades and comments by peer reviewers:

3. 2.1: Does the presented practice/initiative/policy respect the **initiative**, **equality and agency** of the refugees?

Average grade: between 2. and 3.

### Comments by the peer reviewers:

The project allows knowledge exchange, and the involvement of the local community gives the chance to better understand the local culture and feel part of its context, engaging direct and more equal relationships, thanks to the mediation of the families.

So far, the project is not available for all the people in the reception system.

The importance of subjective aspects has to be taken into account, because the success of the path is related to the hosting family and the beneficiaries, and to relationship built (i.e. if the family has a lot of relationships within the local community).

3.2.2: Does the presented practice/initiative/policy increase the **capability** of the target group? (For example, in terms of skills, access to resources, knowledge?)

Average grade: between 3. and 4.

# Comments by the peer reviewers:

The involvement of the local community increases the opportunities to find a job and a housing solution.

Nevertheless, a better support is needed, starting from the institutions, both at national and local level.

3. 2. 3: Does the presented practice/initiative/policy encourage active participation of refugees?





# Average grade: between 3. and 4.

### Comments by the peer reviewers:

Stakeholders highlighted the precious opportunity for the refugees to experiment a more direct relationship with the local community, thanks to the mediation and support of people who are already fully integrated.

They again pointed out how important the subjective factor is.

3.2.4: Does the presented practice/initiative/policy increase **trust** between local population and refugees? (Encircle the number)

# Average grade: 4

### Comments by the peer reviewers:

The project helps to see refugees in their individuality and everyday life and to avoid generalizations. The personal knowledge, the direct relationship fosters bridges between old and new members of the community.

3.2.5: Is the presented practice/initiative/policy open to other key actors and stakeholders?

# Average grade: between 3. and 4.

### Comments by the peer reviewers:

The project allows a real cooperation between public, private actors, third sector and beneficiaries, that need to be strengthened. The more the project is known, the more this cooperation, already active, can grow and become important.

The role of the social worker in this process is crucial.

# 3.2.6: Other comments about the presented practice/initiative/policy

# Comments by the peer reviewers:

The best practice should be offered to all refugees, even those who are not in the reception system. The practice is positive because it covers both the concrete and bureaucratic needs and the relational ones. But what about the most vulnerable people?

### 3.3. Short conclusions (500 words)

Brainstorming and peer review sessions were characterized by interesting analysis of the current situation, as well as by concrete proposals and recommendations, both for the SIforREF project and for the general local context. All the involved participants were motivated to give their contributions in all the two phases: their high level of expertise and specificity of competence in their own sector were fundamental in discussing all the proposed topics.

During the phase 1 - brainstorming, having the working seminar proposed the security/safety and the communication/narration as themes to be discussed, one of the facilitator made clusters of keywords on the billboard around the 6 indicators of integration.





The most of the contributions, as shown in the pictures, were linked to the aerea of integration *Potential Institutional Barriers* and *Opportunity to Empowerment. Education* and *Relationships with the Local Community*, assuming also the *Participation* indicator somehow, were also quite discussed, and important suggestions were in the field of *Integration in the Labor Market*.

It is also noteworthy that many challenges exposed by the participants are the same since many years:

- building projects having a long-term perspective;
- more founds implement the needed improvements;
- efficient cooperation and a common strategy among all the stakeholders involved (workers in the reception and integration system, police, the health care system, civil society);
- sharing the good practices, spread the knowledge and include them into the social system, so that everybody may take advantage from them.

About the 4 study visits, the participants made some recommendations, including the importance of gaining experience and learning from social and educational pratictioners who work on the field, taking into account not only access to labour market, but the integration process as a whole, as suggested by the 6 indicators of integration.

A positive and proactive attitude was shared by stakeholders, with a fruitful discussion on difficulties experienced and an interesting confrontation on future opportunities.





### **Additional documents**

# 1. Invitation to working seminar in Bologna and Agenda (in Italian)





Gentilissimi

siamo lieti di invitarvi al secondo seminario sull'innovazione sociale nel campo dell'integrazione dei rifugiati, che si svolgerà il prossimo 18 settembre, dalle ore 9:00 alle ore 13:00, presso ITC STUDIO in Via Vittoria 1, a San Lazzaro di Savena (80).

Il seminario è organizzato nell'ambito del Progetto europeo SiforREF Integrating Refugees in Society and the Labour Market Through Social Innovation, cofinanziato da programma europeo Interreg Central Europe e coordinato dall'Università Ca' Foscari Venezia.

L'obiettivo di SiforREF è ridurre il rischio di marginalizzazione dei rifugiati e di favorime l'integrazione sociale e lavorativa attraverso la promozione di pratiche socialmente innovative che coinvolgono attivamente sia organizzazioni del terzo settore sia attori pubblici. SiforREF utilizza la co-creazione come metodo per progettare o rendere più efficaci le misure per l'integrazione dei rifugiati.

Insieme agli altri partner di Venezia, Parma, Lubiana, Vienna e Berlino realizziamo scambi di buone prassi e, con il coinvolgimento dei diversi attori coinvolti, vogliamo individuare strumenti di valutazione e progettazione di pratiche innovative, come pure rafforzare progetti innovativi già esistenti.

È in questo quadro che stiamo organizzando un seminario di lavoro nel corso del quale, nella prima parte della mattinata, verrà stimolato il brainstorming tra i partecipanti al fine di identificare le sfide più urgenti nell'ambito dell'integrazione dei cittadini stranieri nel contesto locale.

Verrà presentata, nella seconda fase, una buona pratica per l'integrazione dei rifugiati realizzata nel nostro territorio e si avvierà un peer review utilizzando specifici indicatori di innovazione sociale. Il seminario si svolgerà con le stesse modalità in tutti i Paesi partner di progetto.

Il seminario è parte del progetto CE1527 SiforREF, implementato nell'ambito del programma Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE, finanziato dal Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale (FESR).





I partecipanti al seminario saranno coinvolti nella realizzazione di quattro Study Visits a Vienna, Lubiana, Bologna/Parma e Berlino, il cui obiettivo è quello di esplorare le politiche e le buone pratiche nelle città partner di progetto e avviare un confronto con gli altri gruppi di lavoro che si sono costituiti nei diversi seminari che ogni partner ha realizzato.

Le Study Visits avverranno, salvo complicazioni legate all'emergenza sanitaria da Covid-19, nelle seguenti date:

- Vienna 19 e 20 Novembre 2020
- Lubiana 12 e 13 Gennaio 2021
- Bologna/Parma 8 e 9 Febbraio 2021
- Berlino 3 e 4 Marzo 2021

Le visite all'estero saranno interamente finanziate dal progetto.

Siamo certi che la Vostra presenza possa arricchire l'esperienza di lavoro e possa contribuire al raggiungimento degli obiettivi del seminario locale e delle study visits.

Nella speranza di poter godere della Vostra partecipazione si attende un cortese riscontro. In caso di impossibilità, Vi preghiamo di comunicarcelo entro venerdi 11 settembre.

Bologna, 4 settembre 2020

Direzione Generale Progetti Speciali e Raccolta Fondi ASP Città di Bologna

Il seminario è parte del progetto CE1527 SiforREF, implementato nell'ambito del programma Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE, finanziato dal Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale (FESR).









Progetto SIforREF Integrating Refugees in Society and Labour Market through Social Innovation

Programma Seminario di lavoro e Peer Review

18 settembre 2020, Bologna



The seminar is part of the CE1327 SiforREF project, implemented within the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (EROP).





Fase 1	Brainstorming
09:00	Presentazione del progetto da parte dell' Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia
09:15	Presentazione degli obiettivi e del programma del seminario
09:20	Le politiche di integrazione dei rifugiati: COVID e sicurezza
09:30	Brainstorming per identificare le sfide prioritarie nel campo dell'inclusione dei migranti:  • Sicurezza e marginalizzazione  • Narrazione e comunicazione
10:45	Discussione
11:00	Coffe break
Fase 2	Racconto e peer review della best practice
11:20	Presentazione degli indicatori di integrazione e innovazione sociale
11:25	Presentazione della Best Practice: Vesta - progetto di Accoglienza in famiglia e vicinanza solidale per minori stranieri non accompagnati e giovani rifugiati
11:45	Valutazione della best practice sulla base degli indicatori dati e dell'esperienza personale (lavoro individuale)
12:05	Presentazione delle valutazioni individuali da parte dei partecipanti
12:30	Discussione sui risultati del lavoro individuale e raccomandazioni per le study visits
12:45	Conclusioni
13:00	Fine

The seminar is part of the CE1527 SiforREF project, implemented within the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).





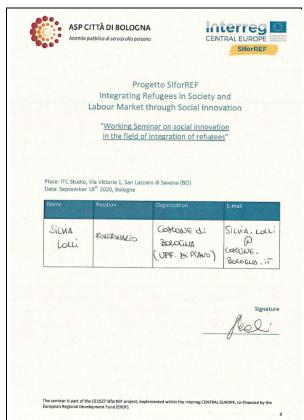
# 2. Lists of participants









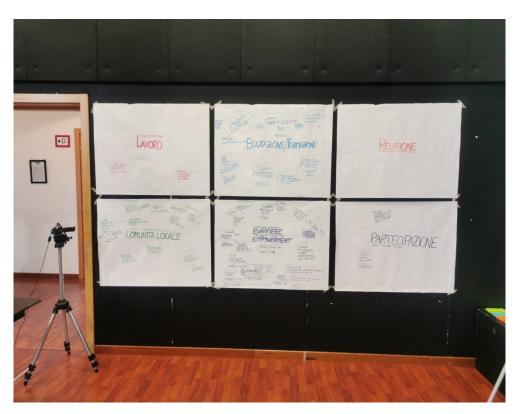






# 3. Photos from the working seminar

















# 4. Peer reviews questionnaire: an example in Italian

