

REPORT OF LOCAL POLICY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM PILOTS IMPLEMENTATION IN BOLOGNA

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1) Executive Summary

On a national level, the main points/recommendations arising from Pilot implementation in Bologna can be divided following summarized:

- To develop a long-term strategy to increase the networking and hybridization of each network. In fact, To solve complex issues we need to cooperate, to have the possibility to discuss with different professionals with different point of views, sharing our knowledge. Open networking can allow this process.
- Job is the priority issue, for asylum seekers and refugees, and for locals too. One of the format tested during the Community Lab (Job Stories) has been a way to orient on the different jobs, as well as on the theme of expectations. Just having an expectation it is possible to define the right process to get a particular job, or the right training to improve own skills. Looking at the “Job problem” as an intercultural and intergenerational challenge, we can develop a more inclusive society able to respond to the real needs of its citizens.
 - Community Labs allowed to understand that it is possible to deal with the necessity of cooperate around some complex issue, such as the job search, throughout the methodology of learning by doing in open and public spaces where usually people stay, so it could be possible also to include other targets and to create a real community around some activities.

On an international level, themes at the center of a possible local agreement in Bologna could be reused to innovate some practices:

- How to create an open network, starting from a map of what already exists in a specific area;
- How to take care of the network;
- How to work with a not-formal approach to create and stimulate a real and effective network inside the local community, to include asylum seekers and refugees and to give them more chances in the Job field;
- The engagement of politicians and public administrations in the process and the strictly cooperation with the NGOs, to support the local associations to develop the activities in a sustainable way.

What is more, a critical aspect that emerged during the implementation of the Pilot is the low participation and collaboration of local institutions. The active participation of local institutions in this kind of process is fundamental to activate formal and informal networks in the territories, to favor direct knowledge among welcoming projects, third sector and citizens. This is an aspect we need to work on, at an institutional and international level, in order to truly build innovative and effective integration policies.

Finally, we believe it is crucial to create a solid formal and informal network that can give more job opportunities to migrants. At the same time, being able to create activities in neighborhoods where there is little multicultural outlook can be a first step in the path of creating an inclusive and more welcoming culture. In other terms, to create a local, national and international integration policies, it is fundamental that every part of the society take actively part in the process.

2) Methodological Reflection

The methodology adopted within the Municipality of Bologna started from the assumption that in order to develop social innovation and inclusion, it is important to build processes able to activate and strengthen individual passions, best practices, sense of community and collaboration.



The methodology of **Community Labs had been then** used to develop the pilot in a process of engagement and analysis of needs and resources of each territory, in order to find common solutions to common problems, and to create a real link between citizens, immigrants, NGOs and local Institutions. This is a method ordinarily implemented in the Emilia-Romagna Region.

The Community Lab is a training method to experiment with forms of active participation of citizens: it consists in the participatory analysis of local contexts and concrete cases, where the response to community needs has been provided in a participatory way by operators, citizens, volunteers. The method, applied in more than 20 territories of the Emilia-Romagna Region since 2012, is based on experimentalism, i.e. on the awareness that in the historical phase in which we live it is necessary to innovate institutions starting from conscious, monitored, accompanied experimentation. Put experimentation at the center and make it a system of collective learning. Community participation represents an unavoidable process within the current socio-cultural context, as well as an element of challenge in the field of personal services: new poverties affecting the middle classes and consequent shame in asking for help; a life above one's possibilities within societies that require ever greater performance; a new area of discomfort on which services have few diagnoses and norms at their disposal; the decrease in social cohesion that translates into the disappearance of places to collectively re-elaborate discomforts (CIT. <https://partecipazione.regione.emilia-romagna.it/iopartecipo/policy-e-processi/community-lab>).

It is fundamental to take care of the participants in the process. The identity of the project expresses the importance of the meeting, of recognizing each other in order to activate trust relationships between people.

3) Introduction

The goal of this report is to collect the work developed in the city of Bologna through the activities of project SiforREF, and to analyze how challenges of the local context have been tackled through the implementation of best practices and the pilot.

At the beginning of the project Bologna's stakeholders and policy makers were interviewed by the researchers of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice, in order to understand local policies and practices related to the integration and inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers. Moreover stakeholders, experts, refugees and policy makers took part to a co-creation workshop with the aim of discussing methodologies to design an innovative approach for dealing with refugees' integration. In the meanwhile a set of best practices implemented in the city were collected by the Ca' Foscari University researchers. During the development of the Work Package 2 of the project SiforREF a Working seminar was realized in the city of Bologna to discuss the activities implemented, which were discussed later on at transnational level through the study visits. From the work of the entire Consortium in WP2, a toolbox on how to design social innovative approaches for integrating refugees were created and tested during the implementation of the pilots. In the city of Bologna, the pilot wants to strengthen the already existing networks in the areas described before, in order to ensure a continuity on some already existing projects and to facilitate a process of community organizing and engagement targeted on real, as well as to share new participatory methods and techniques. In particular, the methodology used to develop the pilot has contributed to create a collaborative project where every step, tool, and problem has been shared.

Starting from what has been done, the report intends to produce some recommendations and guidelines which will be discussed with local politicians, social and economic actors, in order to develop a Local Agreement that includes specific actions to be pursued. The Local agreement will constitute the base for the draft of a Memorandum of Understanding that will be officially signed by political institutions.



4) Local Context and Current Challenges

Local migration data

Following data collected in the report of Idos, at the 1st December 2017 there were 13.990 asylum seekers and refugees hosted in Emilia Romagna region: 12.193 in CAS, 1.367 in SPRAR and 430 in first reception centres.

At the end of December 2017, Emilia Romagna could count 1.539 places in SPRAR projects, widespread in all provinces, even though there were big differences about numbers: Bologna had 600 places, Parma had 206 places, Ferrara had 177 places, Modena 175, Ravenna and Rimini, both had 102 places, Forlì-Cesena had 81 places, Reggio Emilia 75 and Piacenza 21 places.

The ten nationalities more represented were: Nigeria (382 people), Gambia (326 people), Pakistan, Somalia, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Afghanistan, Ivory Coast and Ghana. Refugees were mostly men (89%), while unaccompanied minors were 11,2%, in constant growth from 2014.

Policies and Legislations

The Municipality of Bologna, and its metropolitan hinterland, has a long tradition related to hospitality. In fact, since the 1990s, several services have been created for immigration, based on the criterion of the double access channel, therefore diversified between Italian and foreign citizens, in order to respond to the specific needs of the latter (which are certainly different from both a cultural and legal point of view as compared to the resident population). Over the years, on the other hand, the Municipality has opted for the creation of a unified access channel: the competences of the previous services connected to immigration have been therefore acquired by the standard municipal services, with the support of linguistic and cultural mediators.

More recently, targeted territorial actions were organized to address the issue of managing asylum seekers contextually with the Balkan migration crisis, and to cope with the 2012 North Africa emergency. In particular, negotiation tables were set up to involve technicians and politicians at the metropolitan level. In these occasions, a "widespread reception model" had started to be privileged, based on the idea that a form of reception in small facilities scattered throughout the province had to be adopted, rather than opting for the concentration of people in large reception centers.

Over the last few decades, therefore, the role of local authorities on the subject of initial reception and integration has been progressively strengthened. The Municipalities of the metropolitan area have in fact began to deal in an increasingly structural way to address the problems relating to the reception and inclusion of foreign adults and unaccompanied minors, including applicants and holders of international protection. In particular, since 2004, the Municipality of Bologna has joined the SPRAR network. Since then its projects have seen, over the years, the adhesion of the other Municipalities of the metropolitan area. This way, the activation of SPRAR reception facilities on the territories of these Municipalities has been possible, with the latter that started to collaborate in defining and implementing inclusion paths for accepted refugees and applicants for international protection.

All of these actions, implemented from the Nineties to the middle of this decade, have led the way to the creation and consolidation of a new and peculiar reception system that sets the Bolognese case apart not from the rest of the Italian context, but also from the more general European panorama. Its originality is linked to the implementation of a SPRAR model managed at the metropolitan city's level instead of by single municipalities, along with the CAS transformation into SPRAR. This metropolitan SPRAR project was proposed by the Municipality of Bologna and then joined by 43 Municipalities of the metropolitan area, 23 of which through the Unions of Municipalities to which they belonged. These various local bodies «agreed to address the reception of applicants for international protection in their own territory in programmatic



terms and to overcome the phase of emergency reception, supporting the development of a widespread system of integration actions, closely linked to territorial communities». Contextually to the signing of the agreement, in the first half of 2017, there has also been an increase of places up to 1350 for "ordinary reception" (i.e. the reception of applicants / holders of international protection or humanitarian permit) and 350 for the reception of foreign adults and unaccompanied minors.

Actors

There is no doubt that the real pivot of the system is represented by the third sector and the Bolognese voluntary sector, which has also made it possible to cushion the consequences of the restrictive turn of the Salvini Decree. These actors operate on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity. Added to this, there also is the vast world of the private social, voluntary and civil society. On the whole, these actors have been very active in recent years and, in addition to participating in wider contexts of reflection and in various technical rounds, have also given rise to mobilisation efforts. Emblematic in this regard was the closure and evacuation, in July 2019, of the so-called Hub Mattei, by the Prefecture, which triggered a very strong mobilization from civil society.

During the field analysis, it has been highlighted the important role played by the Catholic Church (and the network of associations that rotate around it) within the governance system in Bologna. In particular, the Caritas Diocesana began to deal with refugees from the beginning of 2000, starting a fruitful collaboration with the FIC for the opening of a specialized department for refugees of the Municipality of Bologna, which had not existed until then. This was followed by a collaboration with the initial reception facility in the San Donato district, which later became the first SPRAR in Bologna. Due to two major internal re-organisations that took place in the late 2000s, Caritas stopped carrying out the reception activities it had implemented up to that point for a period of time, and then started to work in a more structured and specialized manner starting from the end of 2015. The opportunity to do so came after the launch, by Pope Francis, of the "A Casa Mia Project" that encouraged a move by religious institutes towards hospitality. After three years of implementation of the project, around 132 people were received in Bologna: an ad hoc integration path for each of them was created, identifying a reference family as a privileged place for refugees to start cultivating human, social and professional relations, that might endure even after the project is completed. Each family welcomes a refugee to their home or tutors him. The average stay time of a refugee within the "A Casa Mia Project" is 6 months.

More in general, the refugees' integration has been supported by a plurality of political and social actors. First at all, cultural and sports associations have been a positive driver for integration campaigns. In addition to these associations, a fundamental role has also been played by those linked to the social private sector and the world of Bolognese voluntary work. However, the Church, and the more general world of Catholic associations behind it, has undoubtedly been the main actor who supported the integration of refugees in the city. The various actors linked to the Bolognese Catholic, social, cultural and sporting world mentioned above, however, did not act singularly or in compartments. In fact, their actions often overlapped, and in any case were complementary to each other. Emblematic are above all the structured protests against the closure of the Mattei Hub, with the creation of garrisons by all the forces previously listed. The group "Bologna Accoglie", composed of a plurality of actors linked to the world of Catholic associations, CGIL, UIL, welcoming families of Bologna, Libera and Emergency was also created. This coalition has made specific requests to the local administration, aimed in particular at ensuring the consolidation of a more stable and cohesive partnership for strategic political choices at the metropolitan level, as well as the creation of thematic technical tables for the development of alternative strategies shared by all the actors in the game (such as the registration to the registry office previously mentioned).

On the contrary, the main forms of opposition came from some of the right-wing parties, primarily the League. However, only institutional actions have been put forward by these political forces, through debates and questions in the municipal council, without ever proceeding with occupations, demonstrations and/or



public protests. Similarly, the episodes of stigmatization that took place have been isolated and on individual local cases, often on social media, but without the presence of a structured protest group.

Multi-level-governance

The transition from a local SPRAR managed solely by the Municipality of Bologna to a metropolitan SPRAR model happened in 2017. There is a complex governance which is stated in the Agreement for the functioning of SPRAR Metropolitano: the Azienda per i Servizi alla Persona (ASP) has the main responsibility in the relation with the Enti Gestori (third sector organizations which implement the activities of the SPRAR), but also the Unions of Municipalities, the District and the single Municipalities have specific commitments stated in the Agreement.

There is, of course, a set of super-orderly entities with which the metropolitan SPRAR system interacts, and to which it refers. The main one is the Central Service of the Ministry of the Interior which provides general guidelines and manages the requests for transferring subjects. The Central Office then has a regional structure - which is the proximity reference for ASP - with a referent with functions of both control and support. In particular, this regional structure makes it possible to carry out inspections on the structures and on the actual implementation of the projects developed (in qualitative terms as well). It also performs support functions in the event of doubts about the interpretation of a new ministerial rule/circular, rather than of the reporting manuals.

In regard to the internal governance of the project, it is possible to identify a series of institutional actors ranging from the Municipality of Bologna to the peripheral administrations, which are responsible for it. Each of them has well-defined tasks, as established in the Agreement (called, in Italian “Accordo Operativo per la gestione del Progetto SPRAR Metropolitano di Bologna”).

As the body responsible for the project, the Welfare and Promotion of Community Welfare Area of the Bologna Municipality presents the applications for funding under the National Fund for asylum policies and services. Being responsible to the central service of the Ministry of the Interior, it also maintains functions of programming, monitoring and control. Furthermore, it carries out an institutional liaison function with the Prefecture of Bologna and with the other participating local bodies, to allow a shared monitoring of the progress of the entire project.

ASP Bologna is the subject delegated by the Municipality of Bologna for the implementation of some aspects of the SPRAR projects. Among these, the major ones concern: the information and the service of social responsibility of people and groups in particular social fragility; the preparation of deeds and procedures for the identification of one or more implementing bodies; and, the overall coordination of the management of the actions of the implementing bodies.

The municipalities and the Municipal Unions of the metropolitan area collaborate in the realization of the project, by assuming an active role in identifying and activating the reception facilities and in making available to the territorial services useful to accompany the inclusion paths addressed to the beneficiary citizens of the SPRAR that take advantage of the reception in the respective territories.

A fundamental role is played by the “Ufficio di Piano” (Plan Office), the juncture of the municipalities, the Municipal Union(s) and ASP City of Bologna. A Plan Office is therefore the junction for the programming and the analysis of the needs, as well as the answers and the actions that are taken. It can be defined as the technical structure of the local political administrators. In detail, the Plan Office performs tasks defined by the regional law on social and social-health planning. The programming is enucleated in the area plan for social well-being (lasting three years and annually reviewed).

Furthermore, the Plan Office supports the activities of the District Committee, which is responsible for the governance of the District Program. In detail, the district’s scope is defined by the Region and is recognized



as the optimal area for the joint exercise of several municipal functions. The District Committee is the place where the verification of the implementation of the Project in the territory is carried out.

A further body linking the various actors involved is the Territorial, Social and Health Conference (CTSS), which connects USL companies and political representatives of the various local authorities for the definition of social and health services (at least one mayor or a councillor for each territorial area). This is the body close to operations, being involved in monitoring and accompanying the projects. The USL company manages the FAMI projects as well, which are aimed at asylum seekers in vulnerable conditions.

The last level of government involved, and in which the various inter-institutional relations are concretized, is represented by the so-called “Working Group” consisting of the Plan Office and the ASP Città di Bologna and coordinated by the Municipality of Bologna. It is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the technical-operational connection useful for the management of the Project, as well as for the planning, monitoring and verification of the activities.

Areas of integration and access/barriers for refugees

In this report, we distinguish between three main area of integration, that are: 1) labour market integration; 2) social integration; 3) housing integration.

The effects of refugee policy-making on labour market integration

To better understand the effects of refugee policy-making on labor market, the results of the recent annual report “Attività Servizio Trasversale Formazione e Lavoro Adulti SPRAR - 2018” will be present. The report takes into account the actions carried out in the year 2018 as part of the orientation and support to the work of the guests of the Ordinary SPRAR adult structures. The Transversal Training and Adult Work Service of the Ordinary SPRAR project is managed, under the coordination of the ASP Città di Bologna, by two temporary associations of companies. The Service provides beneficiaries with various active labor policy tools (e.g., training courses, internships, active job search, etc.) and constant monitoring by specialized personnel in job orientation. The ultimate objective of the Service is to accompany individual beneficiaries in a process of acquiring skills that can make people able to orient themselves independently in the labor market.

In general, the accompaniment to work of asylum seekers shows elements of strong criticalities. Among the beneficiaries in charge of the Service there is a very high percentage of people with frailties, often multiple, such as the condition of asylum seeker, young age, family burden, mental and physical problems, and socio-relational fragility, low level of education and learning difficulties. A further element of difficulty in accompanying work was represented by the long periods in which asylum seekers were in possession of an expired residence permit without the possibility of requesting a renewal in a short time. The residence permit that is issued to them has a duration of 6 months, each time renewable, for an unlimited number of times, up to the conclusion of the application procedure. These residence permits must be renewed at the “Questura Immigration Office” whose waiting lists for appointments did not coincide with the need for renewal.

The report shows that over the course of 2018, 576 people were followed in work- accompanying paths, about half of the beneficiaries accepted in the SPRAR Ordinary project. Out of 576 beneficiaries of the SPRAR Ordinary project, 411 have benefited from at least one of the routes available (that are the 71% of the total). As can be seen from the numbers of beneficiaries who have carried out the individual training courses (266), training (246), active research (134) and support for self-enterprise (1), many beneficiaries have benefited from multiple types of path during the year. Of particular interest is also the analysis of data on labor contracts. Out of a total of 138 beneficiaries who have entered into a work contract at least once a year, the total number of contracts stipulated is 555, of which only 13 are permanent contracts and



542 are temporary contracts. From these data it is clear the dynamics of precariousness of the labor market on which the beneficiaries overlook and in which it becomes very complex to achieve sufficient stability to become autonomous.

In addition to the difficulties in learning the Italian language which constitute a significant obstacle in the pathways to work, there is, for the majority of beneficiaries in charge, the presence of intersectional fragility that outline more or less transient vulnerability profiles. The frailties that are registered most are socio-relational fragility (15%), often linked to other types of fragility (see trafficking and exploitation risk, learning fragility, psychosocial fragility, young age); the family burden (14%), which is characterized as an important obstacle in accompanying work integration; the young age (13%), which almost always denotes a departure from the country of origin during childhood or early adolescence, in most cases it concerns unaccompanied minors to whom the parental figures and reference; learning fragility (11%), often linked to the above with respect to the low starting level of education, or to traumas suffered during migration.

The effects of refugee policy-making on social integration

The field analysis suggests the presence of positive effects as concerned the social integration. Many initiatives have in fact been carried out over the years, both by public institutions and the third sector. This allowed the start of refugee integration processes into Bologna and its metropolitan area's social fabric. Although, net of good social integration, some interviewees highlighted the fact that they still suffer from various forms of prejudice.

As concerned the actions implemented by public entities, we noted, in particular, the events organized by ASP within the SPRAR structures «to bring the community into dialogue with the hosting realities». In the same direction there are also the numerous and varied initiatives carried out by the wide world of the third sector discussed above, such as, for example, the organisation of the Ramadan party, involving the local community, as well as a wide range of recreational activities that include, among others, the party of the good neighbour, the party of the condominium, the sharing of the kitchen, and the cultural exchanges.

Nevertheless, net of good social integration, the need to overcome some barriers was emphasized, specially of those linked to social prejudice, which continue to make a total and complete integration of refugees in the local context difficult.

In order to reach social integration, the age-old issue relating to those who should guarantee this, and therefore to the actors and the social workers who should support the strengthening of such integration, has been emphasized. As suggested by an interviewee, this should concern a shared strategic vision, which can implement more and more system actions, with the strengthening of the quantitative and qualitative role of the operators. Such actions should not be totally delegated to volunteering.

The effects of refugee policy-making on housing integration

While it has been possible to find positive effects both in the integration of the labour market and in the social one, housing integration remains the most critical issue in Bologna. This problem clashes with a structural problem of the entire Bolognese hinterland, linked to the fact that more and more apartments are used for tourism purposes, rather than for medium / long term rentals. More in general, the lack of a series and structured municipal housing policies was underlined, to which the continuing social prejudice mentioned in the previous paragraph is added

In this regard, the world of the third sector and the Bolognese cooperatives in recent years has initiated numerous actions to raise awareness in the territory and among the local communities, in particular addressed to those who own buildings and those who are particularly close to the Christian and Catholic world. The Bishop of the Bologna diocese was involved as well to offer these people the increasingly high economic guarantees requested by landlords. Similarly to this support and awareness action, several



proposals, more or less formalized and more or less structured, have been advanced by the third sector. Among these, the one that seemed the most convincing is that of co-housing (e.g. between refugees and university students of the Alma Mater University of Bologna). This is a particularly sensitive issue among the Bolognese population, which has not been followed by a political line from the municipal administration defined yet, due to the different economic interests at stake.

Identification of barriers produced by structures and legislation

Net of the benefits that will be outline in next paragraph, the governance system discussed so far certainly presents risks linked to the real ability and willingness of the actors to be fully involved, both in the decision-making and implementation phases, within the entire architecture of the metropolitan SPRAR. What would often be missing is the complete flow of information on the various steps that make up the integration process, starting from the taking over of migrants. Moreover, in virtue of the equal relationship between all the levels involved that a similar system of governance would foresee, it is always required a constant technical training to all the operators who work in the peripheral administrations (whether they be social assistants or technical-administrative), in order to better dialogue with the super-ordered administrations, primarily with ASP.

It is a cascade of problems that often affect the citizens/final users. In this regard, some stakeholders interviewed during the field analysis had provocatively talked about “user infantilization” as a consequence of the disadvantage caused by the governance system.

Identification of “what works best” in the current context of structures and legislation

The analysis of the origin, development and consolidation of refugee policy-making in Bologna has provided useful information to better understand the role of the different levels of government involved in the management of refugee policy at the local level. In fact, both the long tradition of strong and stable inter-institutional collaboration and the great sensitivity and attention shown to the issue by civil society have made the most general dysfunctionality deriving from governmental interventions both at the net of the same national asylum policy framework in recent years described in the previous paragraph.

In fact, starting from the beginning of this decade, a metropolitan-based SPRAR system began to be designed, creating a widespread reception model that pivoted on a regional hub based in Bologna as a place for the first landing. At the same time, the idea of a reception spread in the whole territory (metropolitan area) in flats and small spaces where migrants could better integrate with local communities was implemented.

Furthermore, compared to the national context, another peculiarity of the Bolognese model has been the attempt to standardize the CAS reception model to make it as similar as possible to the SPRAR. This process has come to a standstill with the Salvini Decree, since asylum seekers cannot be welcomed in SPRAR anymore. Currently, 1,000 places are present in SPRAR, and around 800 in CAS (before the Decree 300/400 more CAS places were present, which were planned to become SPRAR). As emerged during the field research, the current project is to transform the CAS into SPRAR with the aim of “dismantling” the CAS system (which is based on “emergency”).

5) Interim Findings

As the field analysis has highlighted, in Italy there’s a trend towards more restrictive integration measures for refugees’, but the city of Bologna, and its metropolitan area, is trying to continue the implementation of welcome policies. Although recent policies seem weaker, than the past ones, the will of the city government to follow refugees’ integration and inclusion processes is clear.



The system in this city is characterized by a strong collaboration between public and private actors, that had facilitated the implementation of social innovative practices, and from which the next activities of the SiforREF project have to start. In general, the long tradition of strong and stable inter-institutional collaboration, on one hand, and the great sensitivity and attention shown to the issue by civil society, on the other hand, have made the most general dysfunctionality deriving from the most recent governmental interventions. They were also able to mitigate the possible dysfunctions of the Bologna governance system, that represent an “unicum” in the national and European panorama. As discussed in this report, in fact, the originality of this system concerns the establishment, starting from the beginning of this decade, of a metropolitan-based SPRAR system began, based on the idea of a reception spread in the whole territory (metropolitan area) in flats and small spaces where migrants could better integrate with local communities. At the net of good practices until now implemented in this City, and taking into account the good social and political fabric present, there are a set of critical aspects that have to be taken into account in the following years. In fact, net of the benefits and disadvantages of the multi-level governance system described previously, it is necessary to point out that the capillary articulation of the reception system in the metropolitan territory of Bologna implies the need for constant mediation between all the Municipalities, to reach a common ground. In this context, moreover, it is necessary to underline that, even in presence of a formalized agreement, the municipalities could also decide to not put into practice what was previously decided, since their commitment is merely political, and not legally binding. The need for a greater coordination role from the regional actors had been underlined in several occasions, in particular to guarantee a better regulation on the issue of co-responsibility of the partner municipalities to the consortium, as well as on the relationships between local entities and managing bodies of the final projects. SiforREF has helped policy-makers and practitioners to do it, since today there is not a clear political vision about how to solve these criticalities, but only some ideas/proposals coming from civil society on how to tackle these problems. The main problems are related to the health planning, and the issue of extreme vulnerability. The analysis of the effect of the refugee policy in labor, social and housing integration, instead, has shown that some issues still remain unsolved. The most important concerns the housing integration issue, due to the impossibility to guarantee a full integration of the refugees in society and labor market without a strong and structured municipal housing policy (that continues to be still absent). As concerned the labor market integration, instead, the report has shown that among the beneficiaries there is a very high percentage of people with frailties, often multiple. Moreover, a further element of difficulty continues to be represented by the long periods in which asylum seekers are in possession of an expired residence permit without the possibility of requesting a renewal in a short time.

6) Evaluation of Pilot

The pilot helped the NGOs working with asylum seekers and refugees to discover new associations, institutions and services existing in the territories and to develop new and own methods to work in social inclusion. Also, at the end of the project the team designed a conclusive and narrative infographic with the aim to give the opportunity to with European partners, local institutions and local NGOs to have a complete idea of all process of the pilot.

Moreover, for locals, asylum seekers and refugees engaged there, it was an experience to feel part of a more complex community and to keep taking part in future activities proposed.

The pilot was built through a bottom-up approach and a community labs methodology. It is possible to transfer those methods in working with migrant and local people. Activating communities from gathering their needs is the key to work that can lead people to integrate and build relationships within the social context. The activation of these processes required time and a long planning. Identifying, involving and connecting the stakeholders of each territory was a complex job.



How is this pilot tackling issues and challenges arising from the local context?

The pilot is started from the observation of the specific challenges of the areas where it will be implemented:

- San Donato -San Vitale → The neighborhood in Bologna shows difficult relationship between old people and new generations and between local seniors people and refugees. Although there are a lot of social associations that developed social and cultural projects, a lot of work needs to be done to reach the real social inclusion of immigrants.
- San Lazzaro → The town in the suburbs of Bologna, offers a lot of opportunities to stay, but migrants are always seen as guests and it is very difficult for them to take part in the social, cultural and political life.
- Gaggio Montano and Porretta Terme → They are two small towns in a bigger and mountainous area called Alto Reno Terme, where there are thermal baths and some trekking itineraries. These areas risk a big depopulation process although the quality and the cost of life is more accessible than Bologna.
- Castello d'Argile and San Giorgio di Piano → They are two small towns in an area called Unione Reno Galliera, a valley where usually migrants arrive by chance because of the hosting public policy. It is very difficult in these areas to have a social relationship with locals, because there are not so many associations and most of them are engaged in services thought only for locals.

The pilot wants to strengthen the already existing networks in the areas described before, in order to:

- ensure a continuity on some already existing projects and to facilitate a process of community organizing and engagement targeted on real, recognized and evident needs each area will express;
- share new participatory methods and techniques, as well as qualitative and quantitative data resulting from the mapping of each area, fostering the development of new skills in local associations and a higher engagement in the social, cultural and relational growth of each area;
- support a positive image and narrative about integration, starting from the neighborhoods where refugees live with projects involving Italians and refugees.

The methodology used to develop the pilot has contributed to create a collaborative project where every step, tool, and problem will be shared. Testing together every step of the process could be possible to introduce some remedial and, in the meanwhile, to strengthen the previous experiences of local partners.

The pilot is sustainable because it will engage from the beginning local associations in order to build a tailored methodology and to define in a participatory way which kind of Community Lab could be implemented.

In every area, the team shared the mapping phase results with local stakeholder and politicians, and will leave them an important tool to develop future activities in the social inclusion field.

The pilot has helped the NGOs working with asylum seekers and refugees to discover new associations, institutions and services existing in the territories and to develop new and own methods to work in social inclusion.

On the other side, for locals, asylum seekers and refugees engaged there will be an experience to feel part of a more complex community and to keep taking part in future activities proposed.

Finally, all the tools built during the process by the team will be shared with European partners, local institutions, and local NGOs, in order to guarantee an upscaling of this co-created process. What is more,



at the end of the project the team will write a conclusive and narrative report inclusive of some pictures, participants' point of views, infographics and all the strategies used during the process.

In particular the team will define:

- Canva to describe the process. The canva model could be used to plan activities in other territories.
- Tools used in the mapping could be re-used in other territories;
- Focus groups as a way more useful to include people that usually don't participate in the social life of their territories;
- Strategies to create more inclusive process;
- Strategies useful to face some challenges that could happen during the process: how to engage people that you don't know; how to understand if people recognize themselves in the communities.

To what extent does the pilot follow the objectives and indicators of SI developed by the SiforREF project?

In order to develop social innovation and inclusion, it is important to build processes able to activate and strengthen individual passions, best practices, sense of community and collaboration.

The methodology of Community Labs will be used to develop the pilot in a process of engagement and analysis of needs and resources of each territory, in order to find common solutions to common problems, and to create a real link between citizens, immigrants, NGOs and local Institutions. This is a method ordinarily implemented in the Emilia-Romagna Region.

The pilot is called Connettiamoci-Coltivare Comunità ("Let's connect-Growing Community"). "Let's connect" represents the culture of relationship and active participation between citizens, refugees and asylum seekers that are living in the same area.

"Growing Community" tells us how fundamental it is to take care, as well as take care of the earth, it is desirable, if not necessary, to take care of the participants in the process. The identity of the project expresses the importance of the meeting, of recognizing each other in order to activate trust relationships between people.

Through interviews and questionnaires, the team will explore how refugees live the relationships, discover new opportunities and plans his/her lives for the future. Through the analysis of their skills, expectations, knowledge of territories, resources and needs, it could be possible to engage them and try to create a trust relationship with people. To involve refugees, the team will develop some questionnaires and focus group activities, structured with images in order to be accessible also for illiterate persons or vulnerabilities. If necessary, the Welfare Community Manager will involve intercultural mediators to facilitate the process.

Refugees could have the possibility to define which kind of Community Lab implement in order to respond to their needs and to give value to their personal resources and, if it will be possible, Baumhaus will engage refugees to manage some phases of the pilot, such as video making, communication plan, tutoring during the Labs.

Therefore, the pilot was a way to:

- taking care of a process of inclusion at different levels in order to achieve successful results;
- mapping relationships, public and private services already existing in each area;
- listen to different points of views in each area and learn from them, giving voices to
- people that usually have less opportunities to explain their point of view;



- enhance value to previous projects and successful activities in inclusion of immigrants;
- co-create a new way to project together, also facing something new that could happen
- (e.g. Covid-19);
- create a common sense about inclusive and sharing approaches;
- define a methodology of engagement of locals and asylum seekers and refugees (or people that live for a short period in the territory) in the social, economic, cultural life of the territory;
- spread the knowledge of different best practices through networking, fostering mutual
- learning at local level;
- disseminate the value of the service design method.

As concern the success indicators: attended quantitative and qualitative results for each step

Step 1: Mapping:

- number of stakeholder engaged, minimum 30;
- number of migrant associations engaged, minimum 5;
- number of asylum seeker and refugees engaged, minimum 30 ;
- number of permanent resident engaged, minimum 30;

Step 2: Community Labs:

- number of Community Labs for each area: minimum 2;
- number of participants for each Labs: minimum 20;
- final questionnaire for each Labs in order to collect feedback by the participants.

Step 3: Conclusive events:

- Deedback from the events of each area: number of participants- minimum 100;
- The key figures enrolled are:
- Welfare Community Manager and Project Manager
- Facilitators for mapping
- Teachers for Community Labs

To develop the pilot, Baumhaus worked with a team of experts already engaged in the areas and with a huge expertise in welfare community management. The pilot is implemented in 4 stages with methods involving Welfare Community Management, focus groups and community labs. In particular, after focusing on the community to engage and on the touch points to reach them, the team projected specific tools (questionnaires, structured interviews, focus groups) to map the area: how people live there, which



similarities and differences there are between locals and asylum seekers, between seniors and younger, and in what ways people network with each other. What is more, the communication plan is a fundamental part of the process: giving a sense of belonging to a community means to recognize oneself part of this community.

To face the Covid period and the red zone imposed by the government, the communication strategy has been mostly online, using the facebook profile of baumhaus and ASP Città di Bologna and sponsored posts for target and territories in order to reach locals and immigrants residents in the areas.

The posts will be the first contact with people that don't know the project and that could be interesting in that. Thanks to an outlined questionnaire people will be included in a database, clusterized for targets and territories, in order to create an online community that could participate during the Community Labs and that will be updated in the future months. At the end of the projects, the final database will be shared with local and institutional stakeholders that could be considered for future plannings.

Some printed posters will be affixed in strategic points (municipalities, pharmacies, squares, doctors offices, etc...) for each territory to also reach people without social accounts.

As concern the actors targeted, the pilot wants to reach:

- Refugees
- Neighborhood citizens (seniors, families, under18)
- NGos workers
- Local authorities

The most important need is to facilitate relationships between people living in the same area and to create some services based on real needs and resources of each area.

The focus has been to engage all the targets from the beginning as an active part of the process of the pilot. Baumhaus is working to develop tools and to structure the methodology for the engagement process. This process involves different people at different levels.

In order to map the real needs and resources of each area, and to understand the different levels of possible engagement, the team designed some useful tools to reach the target:

- Online map (January 2021)
- Structured interviews (February - April 2021)
- Questionnaires (March - May 2021): questionnaires for locals and questionnaires for immigrants.
- Focus groups (March - May 2021)

A dedicated Whatsapp number, a dedicated email address, a monthly newsletter to share the process with all the people previously involved. The monthly newsletter has also been a way to promote the network created during the process, and to give more exposure to local associations and innovative projects in the territories in order to share a common framework and a collaborative way to work together.

All Community Labs have reached 122 people (locals, refugees) and 33 stakeholders (NGOs, policy makers) on the territoris selected.

In particular, stakeholders and native people have been reached by focus groups, interviews and qualitative questionnaires conducted during the relational mapping phase and by the promotional campaign on social networks. Also, all participants who signed up were reached by a dedicated whatsapp number and email to remind them the events.



Refugees were involved from social networks, migrant associations and social workers who are working in refugee projects. They were engaged through refugee projects (SAI -Reception and Integration System, CAS - Extraordinary Reception Centres) and integration's projects (Nausicaa, Minors Shelter, Social Services). In particular, the involvement of refugees mainly passed through ASP International Protections Services and the mailing list of the various stakeholders engaged in the first phase of the project. Where it was possible, the team created a direct channel with people.

The team sent a monthly newsletter to share the process with all the people previously involved. The monthly newsletter was also a way to promote the network created during the process, and to give more exposure to local associations and innovative projects in the territories, in order to share a common framework and a collaborative way to work together.

33 stakeholders were engaged among:

- policy makers: council members, public institutions;
- associations: cultural associations, cooperatives, migrant associations.

The team decided to involve directly Migrant Associations, such as UNIRE (National Refugees and Asylum Seekers Associations), Il Grande Colibrì (committed to providing correct information on the socio-cultural and political situation of LGBTQ + people in non-Western countries) and “Buona Volontà” (born from the will of J. and C. a family who stayed in a refugee project in the 2019-2020 and which, following its integration path, has decided to stay and live in San Lazzaro) to discuss **refugee protagonism**, advocacy and respect of diversity.

The pilot was built through a bottom-up approach, or rather, the needs of the people were firstly collected, and then the activities were built in the areas where people lived. The activation of these processes required time and a long planning.

Identifying, involving and connecting the stakeholders of each territory was a complex job.

The main difficulty was related to the participation in the Community Labs. It was difficult to get citizens, refugees and asylum seekers to participate in the workshops.

The team had tried to reach and involve them in different ways, but sometimes the information has arrived in a fragment way or even has not reached them directly.

We are aware that activation processes take time, so we believe we have diffused opportunities that in some cases will be maintained and carried forward over time, and in others they can also be transformed into something else.

As concern the collaboration of institutional stakeholders, the institutions identified in the first phase of mapping were then contacted for the implementation of Community Labs. It was complicated to involve them in practical actions, such as involving citizens, finding spaces and understanding the long-term goals of the processes that were activated through the workshops.

Finally, to sum up (see next Tables), the first three basic indicators for social needs of the target group had been achieved in the Bologna pilot, while the last three only partially. All the indicators that contribute to changing the mind-sets of the local population toward refugees are present in the case of Bologna More complex, instead, the situation related to the indicators for social innovative policies and practices that enhance labor market opportunities of refugees, in particular as concern the indicators that would empower women refugees not being them present.



Basic indicators for social needs of the target group

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Agency - the initiative respects the equality and agency of the refugees	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation - the refugee must have a voice and be heard	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve the status quo - increase the capabilities of the target group	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide access to resources - empowering the members of the target group/ refugees	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability - Institutionalization and long-term funding concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing a holistic approach	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mainstreaming -Adaption beyond refugee status, for other immigrants and locals who need guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicators that contribute to changing the mind-sets of the local population toward refugees

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Activities that create trust between local population and refugees share common interests	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Root the activity, practice at the local level within local communities	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer opportunities for local population and refugees to meet in smaller group activities	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion of exchanges among a diversity of ethnicities, ages, regions, gender, etc.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide intercultural mediators / “animateurs” in local settings	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use when possible the concept of the Co-creation workshops.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicators for social innovative policies and practices that - Enhance Labor Market Opportunities of Refugees

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Increases opportunity of “refugees” to have a job that matches their skills	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offers a reasonable / practicable assessment of their occupational skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offers the refugee access to potential auxiliary training and an opportunity for an equivalent job	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links additional specialized language training to specialized technical courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provides a practicable training to achieve full recognition that can be mastered in reasonable time schedule and will be concretely required for the exercise of this occupation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes equal pay /fair wages and social-security;	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Indicators that would empower women refugees			
Access to education and training at all levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X



Accessible professional childcare facilities are available for the training-period;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
Childcare facilities are available, subsidized by the local government for all families/ with working mothers, or single women who work who are seeking work or training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

7) Evaluation of Selected Best Practices

Best Practice: Vesta

Vesta Project has been selected since it has been considered a good practice to be replied in other contexts. The project is adaptable to other contexts. It is important to take into account the difficulty of involving families; it is not easy to find people willing to welcome migrants within their own family context. For these reasons, it is important to take care of the network of associations and realities with which relationships have been established because through these it is possible to spread the project to a wider audience.

How is this selected Best Practice tackling issues and challenges arising from the local context?

Vesta has the objective to welcome, to care for and to support the integration of unaccompanied foreign minors and young refugees who are beneficiaries of the SPRAR project. Families, couples and individual residents choose to volunteer to host the young persons in their own home and actively accompany them in their integration process. The project includes different forms of care: family hospitality, family support, volunteer mentor, foster care and volunteer work.

In this path, the VESTA staff prepares participants in training seminars to imagine themselves in the role of individuals and families welcoming these young minors. They make offer materials to assist then in their new role along about counselling services and psychological support that is available to the young people. The main goal of the project is to promote the social inclusion and autonomy of the young refugees as SPRAR beneficiaries, and at the same time the engagement of the local community in their integration process. The integration of the young new arrivals in families eases the economic aspect via the housing solution and at the same time living in local families contributes better to understanding the local context and culture.

The Vesta project partnership involves the Municipality of Bologna as lead institution, Asp City of Bologna with a coordinating role and CIDAS Social Cooperative like managing body.

Vesta wants to contribute to the protection, welcome and integration of unaccompanied foreign minors and young refugees who are beneficiaries of the SPRAR project.

It involves families, couples and individual residents who voluntary choose to host them in their own home and actively accompany them in their integration process. The project includes different opportunities: family hospitality, family support, volunteer mentor, foster care and volunteer work.

In this path, the staff helps participants in the training course imagine themselves as welcoming citizens and families, and illustrates the supervisory and support tools available to the candidates, along with the counseling services and psychological support for the young people in the programme.

The main goals of the project are the promotion of the social inclusion and the autonomy of the SPRAR beneficiaries, and at the same time the engagement of the local community in the integration process.

The Vesta project is offering a new opportunity to build increasingly integrated, innovative and safe communities and represents an important contribution to integration, in which families and individual citizens can be personally involved.



The most important success factor regards the involvement of families and citizens in the integration path of SPRAR beneficiaries.

Sprar beneficiaries involved in Vesta project more easily can found their source of income, housing solution and can better understand the local culture and feel part of the local context.

An important challenge that the project has to address is continuously adapting the skills of the project operators to the new dimensions of this phenomenon.

The good practice was already tested in Bologna and Ferrara territories but it is easily adaptable to other contexts. What is more, The project is easily adaptable to other contexts with the involvement of refugee or asylum seekers, other projects and citizens.

To what extent does the Best Practice follow the objectives and indicators of SI developed by the SiforREF project?

In general, the evaluation of the project includes the evaluation at the beginning of the training path that involves families and SPRAR beneficiaries, intermediate and final evaluations. It is realized through meetings with families, operators and beneficiaries.

Vesta is a social innovative Best Practice that integrates young minors unaccompanied adolescent refugees into the context of local families. With the care of the CIDAS staff and the support mechanisms they can make available for the families and the individual support of the young refugees, this can be a solid path toward integration of young refugees via further education and training into Italian society. The evaluation process contains three basic interventions, that accompany the families in this process. This is a holistic approach, that includes integration into the language and culture of families in Bologna. The beneficiaries receive a back-up of support mechanisms including counseling. This places young people at a very important stage of their formation into a support system with a back-up that includes accompanying them in their educational and occupational paths.

SI is the access to language and culture via daily life with local families in Bologna. This is a special program that needs a longitudinal follow-up longitudinal study to learn for future such programs, and to see its long-term impact.

Basic indicators for social needs of the target group

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Agency - the initiative respects the equality and agency of the refugees	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation - the refugee must have a voice and be heard	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve the status quo - increase the capabilities of the target group	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide access to resources - empowering the members of the target group/ refugees	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability - Institutionalization and long-term funding concept	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing a holistic approach	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mainstreaming -Adaption beyond refugee status, for other immigrants and locals who need guidance	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



To sum up, and as better explain in next Tables, Vesta perfectly meets all the basic indicators for social need of the target group with the exception of the “agency” indicator that is only partially present. In the same way, all the indicators that contribute to changing the mind-sets of the local population toward refugees are present, even if the best practice selected only partially provides intercultural mediators/ “animateurs” in local settings. Finally, all the indicators for social innovative policies and practices that enhance labor market opportunities of refugees are present in the Vesta project.

Indicators that contribute to changing the mind-sets of the local population toward refugees

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Activities that create trust between local population and refugees share common interests	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Root the activity, practice at the local level within local communities	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer opportunities for local population and refugees to meet in smaller group activities	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion of exchanges among a diversity of ethnicities, ages, regions, gender, etc.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide intercultural mediators / “animateurs” in local settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use when possible the concept of the Co-creation workshops.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicators for social innovative policies and practices that - Enhance Labor Market Opportunities of Refugees

INDICATOR	Yes	Partly	No
Increases opportunity of “refugees” to have a job that matches their skills	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offers a reasonable / practicable assessment of their occupational skills	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offers the refugee access to potential auxiliary training and an opportunity for an equivalent job	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links additional specialized language training to specialized technical courses	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provides a practicable training to achieve full recognition that can be mastered in a reasonable time schedule and will be concretely required for the exercise of this occupation.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes equal pay / fair wages and social-security;	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicators that would empower women refugees			
Access to education and training at all levels	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessible professional childcare facilities are available for the training-period;	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childcare facilities are available, subsidized by the local government for all families/ with working mothers, or single women who work who are seeking work or training	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



8) Visibility, Potential and Future Challenges

This chapter reviews the main insights, generated within the five Local Policy Guideline Reports of the SiforREF partner cities. Particularities of the specific local context, future challenges as well as strengths and weaknesses of the implemented projects for refugee integration through social innovation were co-creatively developed during a review process¹. The review interviews revealed a number of commonalities and patterns between the five European cities. Therefore, this chapter is a first step towards the comparative analysis within the Transnational Guideline Report (DT.4.1.2), the final report of the SiforREF project.

This first summary of results shows that the transnational perspective adopted by SiforREF is necessary to identify and address the interconnected challenges of refugee integration through policy responses. This approach is particularly promising in order to avoid a fragmented way to address refugee integration at the local level.

Lack of sustainable integration of refugees

Regardless of particular starting positions (e.g., GDP, political orientation or geographical position of the five cities), the lack of sustainable integration of refugees into the host society can be traced back to the same fundamental issues. First, although the four federal governments (Italy, Germany, Austria, Slovenia) apply a comprehensive and adequate integration policy, which is based on the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, our analysis shows that actual practice does not meet the legally mandated requirements. This discrepancy is attributed to the spread between centralized legislation at the national level and highly fragmented implementation at the local level. Additionally, differences in the quality of integration occur due to diverse reception processes at the local level, e.g. in Italy. Furthermore, the implementation of respective measures is mostly outsourced to the third sector, which is embedded into precarious structures with regard to funding and temporal sustainability. Confronted with underfunding and unstable perspectives, actors of the third sector are not capable to shoulder the entire burden of integration work.

Best practices and pilot projects

All of the SiforREF best practices investigated and pilot projects implemented rely on underpaid and/or voluntary staff and are located in time-limited spaces, which leads to a limited scope of the projects in scale and in time. Therefore, long-term successes are limited and the high personal efforts do not reflect the output of the projects or the impact for the participating refugees. Regardless of demands for structural improvements, our analysis points out the necessity of an increased and regular knowledge exchange between stakeholders of all different levels (local, regional, national and transnational) in order to streamline efforts and benefit from what works best. In addition to internal communication between involved stakeholders, external communication towards a broader public audience must also be more closely coordinated between the involved actors. Our analysis reveals the necessity to speak with a common voice and to coordinate media outreach in order to create a counterpoint to prevailing anti-refugee sentiments in politics, the media and society.

Housing crises

Another pattern that emerges from our analysis identifies a severe housing crisis which all cities are facing. This crisis is also greatly affecting refugees in Parma, Bologna, Berlin, Ljubljana and Vienna. Real estate

¹ Review interviews with all PPs took part on Dec 7 and 9, 2021 led by the UNIVIE team.



prices and rental costs have been rising steadily due to the lack of newly created housing, municipal and social housing or rent regulation. Refugees are unable to withstand fierce competition due to their low financial strength and a lack of housing options. Especially on the private housing rental market, discrimination and reservations to rent out to foreigners can be reported for the cases in Austria and Italy. The accommodation of refugees in state-funded special accommodations also harbors the risk of stirring up resentment within underprivileged strata of the host society. Since the tight housing market is a serious problem in all European countries, it should be dealt with more intensively at the level of EU policy.

Access to (precarious) labour market

The poor financial situation of refugees results equally in all cities from the highly restrictive access to the regular labor market, which actively excludes the majority of incoming refugees and makes them either dependent on low government support payments or pushes them into self-exploitation, temporary employment or the irregular labour sector. In these areas of the labour market, capitalist market logic comes into play to an unregulated extent and the precarious situation of the refugees is likely to be exploited. Due to a lack of residence permits, work suspensions during asylum procedures, the need for language certificates or long procedures for the recognition of existing qualifications, refugees are artificially kept for a long time in a state in which they are incapable of self-determined acting and cannot earn a living. As a result, social integration is also made more difficult, as they are not only deprived of points of contact with members of the host society, but they are also deprived of the opportunity to earn respect and recognition by demonstrating their skills and abilities.

Limited potential for future wellbeing

This state of uncertainty also has a deep mental dimension, since the high level of dependency, the constant state of uncertainty and the limited perspectives undermine the willingness of refugees to further contribute their share to the integration process (e.g., participation in integration courses, language courses or training programs). In addition, our analysis recognizes the high load of everyday-life issues that are mostly neglected when talking about the integration of refugees. Because family, financial, or mental problems naturally demand a great deal of energy and attention, these circumstances must be considered within the design and implementation of integration programs or individual projects.

Future challenges ahead

Overall, it is apparent that integration efforts in all cities are encountering the same problems, albeit to varying degrees. This may also be due to the fact that the reception of refugees is considered and treated as a temporary crisis that is to be overcome promptly. Accordingly, policies and measures do not take a comprehensive and sustainable approach, but foster an uncoordinated and everchanging environment in which it is difficult for actors to operate and for refugees to find their way into their new society. In doing so, we overlook the enormous potential that the refugees bring with them.

9) Synthesis & Conclusion

The project has activated several actions on national and international territories. The actions have been developed respecting the terms of social innovation through the use of innovative methodologies and connecting different actors (political institutions, associations, locals, migrants etc.).



In conclusion of this report, the main points can be underlined to better perform in the future in the field of refugees' integration:

- An Increase of interinstitutional relations between municipal actors involved in the system;
- A Greater involvement of the regional body, with more ad hoc regulatory functions;
- Enhancement of the relationships between local and private social entities, with a greater co-planning;
- The activation of a guarantee fund on the housing side, plus a constant communication and awareness actions by the municipal actor, in concert with the regional one;
- A greater temporality of the projects.

To better deliver these actions the activation of political institutions is fundamental in projects such as this one. As the report has shown, in fact, the constant difficulty of working with political institutions remains. If the institution does not respond and does not encourage direct contact between the host country, third sector entities and citizens, the process is not very effective, if not impossible to be achieved.