IntegraRef

Local Communities & Refugees, Fostering Social Integration

Final Report
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SPRAR
Sistema di Protezione
per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati

Ministero dell'Interno
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e l'Immigrazione

The Psychosocial
and
Cultural Integration Unit

IOM • OIM

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Glossary of terms

ANCI	**National Association of Italian Cities**
CDAs	Reception Centres
CDIs	Identification Centres
CPTs	Centres for Temporary Presence
CPTAs	Centres for Temporary Permanence and Reception
EC	European Commission
ECRE	European Council on Refuges and Exiles
ERF	European Fund for Refugees
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FNPSA	National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services
IOI	Indicators of Integration
IOM	International Organization for Migration
PNA	National Asylum Programme
SPAR	Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Introduction

The IntegraRef project got underway at the beginning of January 2007. The 15 months long project - co-funded by the European Fund for Refugees (ERF) and managed by the Psychosocial and Cultural Integration Unit of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - focused on integration of refugees both at a local and EU level.

The definition of the term refugee is contentious, for some it refers only to those with a particular legal status (the details of which vary from place to place), for others it applies to all those who have been forced to move from their homes, whatever stage they have reached in their flight. For clarity, in this report we shall use the term 'refugee' to refer to those defined by the 1951 Geneva Convention as follows:

- all those persons who have been granted refugee status;
- all those persons who have been granted special humanitarian protection;
- those who have applied for asylum and whose status has not yet conclusively been determined.

The IntegraRef research was carried out by three European Union (EU) country teams (Germany, Italy and Malta), each representing different experiences of migration and integration (particularly, the study has focused on Mediterranean area - represented by the field research areas of Italy and Malta - which have a young, and peculiar experience of reception and integration of asylum seekers not yet consistently investigated). Despite the challenges in bringing together these diverse realities, the concept of the project could be considered as a 'pilot' for other research.

The research protocol has a core methodology which was shared by the three countries and implemented in their various sites. It has adopted a 'bottom-up' approach, using interviews and focus groups to gather an understanding of how refugees, communities, service providers and policy makers themselves perceive the process of integration, and what they see as evidence of its achievement. The comparison of these different perspectives has allowed to shape the formulation of a basic and common framework of reference on integration.

The IntegraRef project highlights both the economic and social context, and the psycho-social and cultural mechanisms which substantiate the interaction and communication between established local community on one side, and refugees on the other. It argues that it is crucial for policy and practice to focus beyond basic reception of refugees.

The project seeks to develop sensitisation and action on two levels: the first is addressed to the national and local administrators and policy makers aiming to highlight and support refugees and the local communities that receive and integrate them in their territory; the second is addressed to ERF National programmes and aims to encourage a better understanding of integration of refugees. This double

network allows relationships to be built between key stakeholders, promoting the further development and harmonization of European refugee policy, the exchange of best practises and project outcomes, the dissemination of findings amongst policy makers and ERF representatives in the EU member states, and the promotion of minimum quality standards.

The IntegraRef project shows some of the many different understandings of refugee integration across Europe. There is not one European society to integrate into, and there is no single form that integration would take. The project has not attempted to define a model or a general set of indicators, it has explored and extended the range of domains of integration including contextual and psycho-social and cultural responses. The aim is to contribute to the wide and complex debate on integration of refugees in the EU member states and to inform the development of indicators.

This report presents the European refugee policy context and discusses key literature informing the discourse around refugee integration. The objectives of the study are outlined along with the methodology. There follow three country reports summarising the findings of the work conducted in Italy, Germany and Malta. These findings are discussed in a comparative analysis and implications for policy and practice considered.

The European context in the field of asylum and integration

In October 1999 the EU member states decided to find common solutions to the challenge of asylum. At the **Council of Tampere**, the Heads of State or Government agreed on the major aims and principles of shared asylum policy which envisages the establishment of a **European Common Asylum System.** The objective was to create a set of commonly agreed principles in order to attain minimum standards which ensure an equal protection of refugees. In line with the Geneva Refugee Convention's principles, the first needed instruments on asylum were "a clear and workable determination of the State responsible for the examination of an asylum application, common standards for a fair and efficient asylum procedure, common minimum conditions of reception of asylum seekers, and the approximation of rules on the recognition and content of the refugee status" (United Nations, 1951).

The major aim which inspired the above-mentioned action is the creation of "an open and secure European Union, fully committed to the obligations of the Geneva Refugee Convention and other relevant human rights instruments, and able to respond to humanitarian needs on the basis of solidarity. **A common approach must also be developed to ensure the integration into our societies of those third country nationals who are lawfully resident in the Union**". As a way to achieve this, it is highlighted, inter alia, that "we must develop an open dialogue with civil society on

the aims and principles of this area in order to strengthen citizens' acceptance and support"[1].

With a view to initiate the process for the construction of the European Common Asylum System - to be adopted by 2010 - the Heads of State or Government approved the **Hague Programme** in November 2004. The first steps were the establishment of the common asylum procedure and a uniform status for those granted asylum or subsidiary protection. Likewise Tampere, the Hague Programme makes reference to the **integration dimension stating that integration of third-country nationals is priority area for the EU** and a common framework for integration is being developed following a distinctive European approach. Concretely, this implies a more vigorous integration policy that "should aim at granting them (i.e. third-country nationals) rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. It should also enhance non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural life and develop measures against racism and xenophobia'"[2]. Also, it is promoted the approximation of the legal status of third country nationals to that of member states' nationals. To achieve this objective, reference is made on the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach involving stakeholders at the local, regional, national, and EU level. A first concrete step forward refugees' integration is the adoption of the **Reception Conditions Directive** which lays down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers[3].

More recently, the European Commission (EC) presented a **Green paper on the future Common European Asylum System** in which the main issues were outlined. As a further step forward of this process, a public debate was carried out last summer for the elaboration of the **Policy Plan on Asylum policy** to be issued in the first quarter of 2008, where all EU, national, regional and local actors of the private and public sector, as well as candidate countries, third country partners, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the asylum process were invited to contribute to. For the first time, while consulting the public on the future guidelines for the new programme, the EC explicitly raised the topic of integration of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection by questioning on "what further legal measures could be taken to further enhance the integration of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection". In particular the EC highlights that "the EU's policies focus

[1] Tampere European Council 15 and 16 October 1999, Presidency conclusions. Towards a union of freedom, security and justice: the Tampere milestones, point 4) and 7). Retrieved January 15, 2008 from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam_en.htm.

[2] Green Paper on the future Common European Asylum System /* COM/2007/0301 final, presented by the Commission. Brussels, 6.6.2007.   4 Green paper on the future Common European Asylum System, 2.4.2. Integration p.8.). Retrieved January 15, 2008 from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0301:FIN:EN:PDF.

[3] The Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 includes provisions in field of information, documentation, freedom of movement, healthcare, accommodation, schooling of minors, access to the labour market and to vocational training with a particular special needs, minors, unaccompanied children and victims of torture.

increasingly on the integration of third-country nationals, it **is timely to reflect overall on how to enhance the integration of beneficiaries of international protection"[4]**. Additionally it proposes some concrete measures e.g. the extension to this category of long-term residence rights; enhance the standards prescribed by the Qualification Directive regarding the integration of asylum seekers, refugees and subsidiary protection and on developing integration programmes designed to take into account their specific needs and potential; raise awareness of the labour market actors on the value and potential contribution that beneficiaries can bring to their organizations and companies; identify their working experiences, expertise and potential and recognize their qualifications; promote the acquisition of necessary inter-cultural skills and competences, not only regarding the beneficiaries but also regarding the professionals working with them; and support of diversity management.

Finally, it is worth to mention that a draft opinion on the future Common European Asylum System has been recently presented at the Committee of the Regions which represents the local and regional authorities' bodies at the EU level[5]. As an evidence of the important role the local and regional bodies play in the subject, specific recommendations on integration of refugees has been envisaged in order to foster, according to a bottom-up approach, a real path of social and economic cohesion in Europe.

Objectives and structure of project

Defining the level of integration of refugees in Europe is an ambitious and complex challenge, considering that the concept itself of integration, with its political-methodological inflections, touches several different issues and finds diverging interpretations even within a given national context.

The IntegraRef project intends to offer a complete overview of the local forms taken by integration, with the attempt of identifying a shared language among the nations, members of the European community. The outcome of the project is included in the debate on the refugees' integration policies, offering a contribution to the critical analysis of intervention practices performed by territorial administrations and services, in the attempt to sustain local projects and value their positive aspects, while also broadly spreading valid procedures and offering new incentives of interpretation as well as to interventions concerning asylum.

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[4] Green paper on the future Common European Asylum System, 2.4.2. Integration p. 8). Retrieved January 15, 2008 from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0301:FIN:EN:PDF.

[5] Commission for Constitutional Affairs, European Governance and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. The Draft opinion on The future common European asylum system was discussed at the commission meeting on 7 December 2007. CONST-IV-013.

The local territorial factor, within the national dimension, opened itself to a comparison at the European international level, thus suggesting a triple axis of intervention. The European dimension envisioned a double partnership, the first one limited to four European countries (Italy, Germany, Malta and United Kingdom)[6], the other one embracing ERF national programs of twenty-four Member States of the European Union[7]:

- at the national level, the definition of integration indicators is based on research coordinated by the Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh and by the Psychosocial and Cultural Integration Unit of the IOM. This research, mainly qualitative, was carried out simultaneously in Germany, Italy and Malta, based on a common and comparable methodology;

- at the local level, the research consisted of an on-the-field activity in each country, that involved individual territorial projects pertaining to each specific national institutional reality: the municipalities of Berlin, Munich, Schwäbisch Hall and Jena in Germany; the cities of Rome, Venice, Turin, Sessa Aurunca and Syracuse in Italy; Marsa in Malta. The outcome of this type of activity was proposed as a basis for discussion within roundtables organized with local administrators and operators, in order to achieve efficient and meaningful integration indicators at the territorial level, as well as practical reference guidelines;

- at the European level, the action focused on improving the understanding of the dynamics of integration, thus contributing to building a harmonized European policy concerning asylum, capable of adopting common quality standards and to promote networking procedures that would stimulate a constructive exchange of information, experiences and valid practices. Four e-newsletters were sent to the twenty-four participating countries, updating their ERF programs with the actions and results of the research, and convening them to the closing conference.

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[6] The Countries mentioned are represented by the Psychosocial and Cultural Integration Unit of the IOM in Rome as leader of the project, jointly with the Central Service of the Protection System for asylum seekers and refugees run by the National Association of Italian Cities (ANCI), the Cities of Rome, Venice, Turin, Sessa Aurunca and Syracuse for Italy, the University of Malta (Msida), the Berlin Institute of Social Comparative Research (Germany) and Queen Margaret University ,of Edinburgh for the United Kingdom.

[7] Federal Ministry for the Interior of Austria, the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers of Belgium, the Ministry of the Interior of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, the Ministry of Labour of Finland, the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development of France, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees of Germany, the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity of Greece, the Immigration and Nationality Office of Hungary,the Reception and Integration Centre of Ireland, the Ministry of Interior of Latvia, the Ministry of Family and Integration of Luxembourg, the Ministry of Justice of The Netherlands, the Ministry of Interior and Administration of Poland, the European Refugee Fund Management Authority of Portugal, the Ministry of Interior of Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Interior of Slovenia, the General Directorate on Integration of Immigrants of Spain.

The collection of data and the definition of integration indicators proceeded all along the project at a local and national level, addressing the beneficiaries, the social operators and the administrations, that is, the parties being involved at various levels in the matter of asylum. This articulation allowed to:

(a) define sets of integration indicators in a participatory way, promoting their concrete use in the professional practice of every operator and local administration;

(b) outline on a wide scale, integration perspectives and guidelines that take into account the specificities of the territorial contexts, as well as the need to define the lowest common denominator for European policies;

(c) compare experiences, problems and potentials, enriching the debate on integration with diverse viewpoints and practices.

The project lasted in total 15 months (January 2007 through to March 2008), ending with a closing conference in Rome, attended by all partners directly involved in the research activity as well as the European partners of the ERF network.

Approaches to understanding refugee integration in Europe

The meaning and significance of refugee integration continues to be contested (Robinson, 1998 and Castles et al., 2001). It is difficult to define integration because it is a relative term that is culturally determined (Kuhlman, 1991) and always in a process of change (Castles et al., 2003). EU policy does not define integration, but allows each country to interpret integration in a way appropriate to that particular nation. There is a lack of evidence to underpin understandings of the processes of integration in Europe, and in turn, a lack of coherence in the approach to refugee integration across the European Community. This study aims to provide new understandings of the experiences and processes of refugee integration in three contrasting European countries, and relate these to previous work undertaken in Italy (Losi & Papadopoulos, 2004) and the United Kingdom (Ager & Strang, 2004a).

In the IOI study the researchers looked at a range of stakeholders' perceptions including refugees and non refugee communities in order to develop a comprehensive picture of the normative understandings of integration. From these different perspectives they formulated a framework which suggests main domains for which indicators of integration need be developed. The ten discrete, yet interdependent domains from Ager and Strang are shown in the diagram below.

Markers & Means	Employment	Housing	Education	Health
Social Connection		Social Bridges	Social Bonds	Social Links
Facilitators		Language & Cultural Knowledge	Safety and Stability	
Foundation		Rights & Citizenship		

Figure 1: A conceptual framework defining core domains of integration

It is proposed that integration relies on a **foundation** of assumptions about rights and citizenship. In the discussion of integration, citizenship, rights and responsibilities are hotly debated: different countries hold different meanings of citizenship and nationhood. Definitions of integration adopted by a nation inevitably depend on that nation's sense of identity, its 'cultural understandings of nation and nationhood' (Sagger, 1995). This sense of identity as a nation incorporates certain values; and these are values that significantly shape the way that a concept such as integration is approached (Faist, 1995 and Levy, 1999). In addition, notions of nationhood and citizenship shape core understanding of the rights accorded, and responsibilities expected, of refugees (O'Neil, 2001).

Integration is seen as a long-term two-way process of change (ECRE, 1999), and thus there is a need to consider means of **social connection** between refugees and those other members of the communities within which they settle. The concept of social capital has been influential in identifying assets associated with social connection and trust (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 1998). These theorists distinguish between three different forms of social connection: social bonds (with family and co-ethnic, co-national, co-religious or other forms of group), social bridges (with other communities) and social links (with the structures of the state). While it is argued that these concepts are insufficient to account for the whole dynamic of integration (Portes and Landolt, 1998; Bourdieu, 2000) they offer significant explanatory value in the context of perceptions of forms of social connection (Zetter et al., 2006). The UK work suggests that effective integration is characterised by the co-existence of all three forms of relationship (Ager and Strang, 2004b).

The inability to speak the established local community's language can have an impact on accessing services and work, while lack of cultural awareness impacts social relationships. Furthermore the feeling of personal safety and stability in ones own community is a major factor in integration. Therefore reducing language and cultural barriers, and increasing safety and security help **facilitate** refugee integration (Ager and Strang, 2004b).

It is common for European policy documents to define integration in terms of activities in the public arena such as employment, housing, education and health

(Council of Europe, 1997; Home Office, 2001; Korac, 2001; EC, 2007). This approach follows the 1951 Geneva Convention with its focus on social rights of refugees (United Nations, 1951). These 'public outcomes' clearly provide '**markers**' of integration. However it is also acknowledged that access to employment, appropriate housing and so on contribute very significantly to the process of integration itself, they are not just markers but also the '**means**' to integration.

In this project, this framework is used to compare integration in diverse areas within the EU. It provides an opportunity for stakeholders, refugees, and established local communities to test out the relevance of these domains and to provide input on the indicators suitable to their region. The report will contribute to further the debate on what continues to be the complex and controversial concept of integration.

Project research methodology

The focus of the work was not on measuring the level of integration achieved in the areas studied, but on shaping and understanding the views of both refugees and local perceptions of factors influencing integration. Refugees' views were clearly important in this, but so were the views of the wider communities in which they were settling. A focus was also included on the psychosocial aspects of the refugees' integration. This latter builds on the work of Losi and Papadopoulos (2000 and 2004) and colleagues at IOM (2001, 2002a and 2002b) to assess coping strategies of refugees.

Varkevisser, Pathmanathan, and Brownlee (2003) argue that certain variables cannot be defined with indicators before a research study, because the information to do this is lacking. In many qualitative studies the researcher is not primarily interested in measuring variables, but rather in identifying variables or clusters of variables that help explain a problem or reasons for success. Given the focus of the study on the issues and factors which informed local understandings of integration, an exploratory constructionist approach to social and qualitative research was adopted. This methodological approach facilitated local interpretations of integration and coping strategies rather than imposing pre-existing concepts and ideas on those interviewed.

The interviewees were contacted through existing networks and snowballing. The sample groups for the purposes of the data collection consisted of three broad categories:

(a) the first is composed by refugees;

(b) the second sample group included the established local community;

(c) the third sample group were service providers, those people providing services
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used by refugees[8].

In each site it was aimed to carry out one focus group discussion (FGD) with all three categories in the sample group, and 10 semi structured interviews (SSI) with refugees to assess coping strategies.

Despite the complexity of the research, this report demonstrates how rich and varied the data that was collected has turned out to be. The qualitative data has permitted an analysis which explores the multiple layers of meanings and understandings that different stakeholders hold. Through this report it is hoped that further reflection on the data and exchange of ideas can take place after the completion of the project, to enable exploration of certain themes with others working in the field as well as further dissemination.

[8] This may include local authorities, people working in ERF projects, local politicians, local community leaders, the police and migration services, legal representatives and others.

Germany

1. Institutional outline of asylum

The need of integration for immigrants in general – and for refugees in particular – had been neglected for a long time on the national level of politics. It was only with the adoption of the Immigration Act in 2005 that the German government took a more active role in the establishment of a national integration policy. In contrast to the national government, however, local authorities have much earlier implemented more active integration measures towards immigrants. As will be shown, local authorities have developed more advanced integration policies regarding refugees than is envisioned in the national legal framework. In order to understand the German system of immigrants' integration, it is important to note that the existing integration policies differ a lot between the national, regional and local levels. Furthermore, integration policy in Germany can be described by a huge diversity of actors in different fields such as politics, social welfare and volunteer activities. In this project, with the use of case studies in four German municipalities, the roles of local authorities and local non-governmental organisations as well as the attitudes of the local populations and the experiences of the refugees themselves have been investigated.

Given the various legal definitions, there are different status groups of refugees living in Germany at present:

- Recognised political refugees with a limited or unlimited residence permit;
- Refugees recognised on the basis of the Geneva Convention: refugees who enjoy deportation protection because in their country of origin their life or their freedom is threatened;
- Family members of persons belonging to the above-mentioned categories;
- Asylum applicants: persons in an ongoing asylum procedure;
- De-facto refugees: persons who have not applied for asylum or whose application of asylum has been rejected and who, however, cannot be expected to go back to their country of origin for humanitarian or political reasons (status of toleration);
- Quota refugees: Mostly Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union who are admitted in Germany within the framework of humanitarian relief actions. The legal situation of this group is similar to that of recognised refugees with an unlimited residence permit;
- Civil war refugees: immigrants from civil war regions who can obtain temporary protection without applying for asylum[9].

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[9] The latest available reliable figures relating to the different status groups of refugees are from the year 2003. At this time, about 340,000 persons lived in Germany as recognised political refugees or recognised Convention refugees (including family members). In addition, there were 194,500 contingent refugees, 188,000 of them Jewish immigrants. Another 166,000 persons had a limited residence permit as family members of contingent refugees or tolerated refugees. About 250,000 persons had a status of toleration, this group containing also civil war refugees

In Germany, refugees and asylum applicants go through various stages with different residence permits, each encompassing a different legal situation, until they receive a permanent residence permit. Asylum is granted to politically persecuted persons on the basis of article 16a of the German Basic Law, provided they did not enter a safe third country before coming to Germany, such as Poland or France, where they should have applied for asylum due to the Dublin II regulation. The status as a refugee is granted in accordance with either international law (Geneva Convention on Refugees) or national and international regulations within determined quotas for certain groups of refugees (quota refugees). With the implementation of the Immigration Act in 2005, the status of a convention refugee was aligned to the status of a person who is entitled to political asylum (article 60 of the Immigration Act). Since then, refugees are recognised almost only according to the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The responsible authority for the recognition or rejection of asylum applicants in Germany is the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees *(Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge - BAMF)*, in cooperation with its local branch offices. Further institutions involved in the support of refugees are the local aliens' registration offices, the social welfare offices and the youth welfare offices (in the case of unaccompanied minors) as well as the lawyers and the relevant courts in the case of legal proceedings.

Recognised asylum applicants and refugees are only entitled to a legal residence in Germany as long as the reasons for their flight and asylum still exist in the country of origin. At first, they obtain a limited residence permit which can be changed into a permanent residence permit after three years if the reasons for flight and asylum are still present. The limited residence permit, like the permanent residence permit, allows the refugees to obtain the same rights as German nationals, such as the admission to employment or vocational training, to seek private accommodation and to financial benefits according to the Social Security Code (SGB II: basic benefits for job seekers, SGB XII: social welfare). With regard to public health care, recognised refugees receive treatment provided through the statutory health insurance. However, asylum applicants and tolerated refugees need a permit of the local social welfare office to attend a doctor.

Asylum applicants and refugees with a toleration status, receive benefits according to the Asylum Applicants Benefits Act (*Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz*). Therewith a right to basic benefits exists, which are predominantly distributed in kind, such as food, accommodation, heating, clothes, health care and personal hygiene, household

commodities, and only a small amount is issued in cash each month. This group of refugees has to comply with the obligation to live in a defined community and has to live in an asylum seekers' hostel until the asylum application procedure is finally terminated[10]. These refugees are only entitled to a limited and subordinated access to the labour market[11]. Since, according to the Asylum Applicants Benefits Act (*Asylbe werberleistungsgesetz*), the financial benefits to these refugees are 20 percent lower than the regular benefits of social welfare, asylum applicants and tolerated refugees have the lowest social status of all immigrants in Germany. In addition, these benefits can even be further reduced for the tolerated refugees, for instance in the case of a lack of co-operation with the immigrants' registration office, concerning a proof of identity, etc.

For a better understanding of the system of refugee reception in Germany, some explanations on the federal political system have to be added here: Asylum applicants coming to Germany are distributed to one of the 16 federal states according to reception quotas agreed between the states. These quotas are defined according to the tax revenues and the number of population of the federal states. Every state has at least one (central) reception facility where asylum applicants live for about 6 to 12 weeks. After this period, refugees are distributed to other districts within the federal state. The municipalities have to provide the accommodation of asylum applicants and tolerated refugees, mostly in hostels. As a compensation for their costs for accommodation and shelter of the asylum applicants and tolerated refugees, the municipalities receive a lump sum from the federal states. Concerning regulations on accommodation and work permits, a certain margin of discretion exists for the regional and local administrations to house asylum applicants and tolerated refugees in private accommodation and to grant work permits in a more liberal manner.

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[10] In Germany, only the State of Berlin has decided to allow private accommodation for asylum applicants and tolerated refugees in 2003 in order to reduce the costs for public accommodation and to foster the integration of these groups.

[11] The local employment offices are obliged to implement an examination for a subordinated access to the labour market. They have to assess if German nationals or immigrants on a par with German nationals are available for the job. Subsequent to this examination of about four weeks' duration, the local aliens' registration office is responsible for the implementation and grant of the work permit. This procedure is often too longsome for employers. Generally, work permits for asylum seekers and tolerated refugees are in the discretion of the local employment offices also when the general prohibition of work has expired after one year of residence. Asylum seekers and tolerated refugees are generally not allowed to work as self-employed persons.

2. The main features of the local integration of refugees

In the following, the most striking results of the four case studies (Berlin, Munich, Schwäbisch Hall and Jena.) which have been conducted shall be summarised by formulating some general theses about the integration of refugees on the local level in Germany. The empirical inquiry has revealed a number of remarkable differences in the local integration of refugees. We try to sketch out some of these differences which we found in the four localities.

Individual (case) solutions versus system solutions: In 1993, a harsh restriction of the German asylum law, which had been rather liberal before, was enacted by the political parties (the so-called Asylkompromiss). Since then the number of asylum applicants coming to Germany has been decreasing from year to year. In 2006, 21,029 persons claimed asylum in Germany, as against 28,914 persons in 2005. The current situation in Germany can be characterised by a low figure of new applicants on the one hand and a high figure of non-accepted applicants on the other hand who due to severe reasons cannot be deported to their country of origin (so-called obstacles of deportation). Among these are traumatised refugees, persons with severe illness or persons who are not able to provide reliable personal documents. Thus, integration often means to find individual solutions for specific problems instead of general 'system' solutions. Thus the local institutions of refugee integration are mostly confronted with 'complicated' cases which afford a lot of support in the individual case.

Local governance of integration: In general, there is much greater need of integration governance in the smaller municipalities than in the major cities. In the big cities there are much more informal mechanisms of integration available, such as the presence of considerable ethnic communities, the availability of informal employment etc. Nevertheless, the provision of language courses, of programmes for vocational training, of internships, etc. obviously has a very positive effect on the labour market integration of refugees.

Role of the institutions: The role of the local aliens' registration offices regarding the integration of refugees has changed. In general, the aliens' registration offices in Germany have a function of regulatory policy. They have to confirm the identity of asylum applicants, they decide about residence permits, labour permits and permits of private accommodation and about releases from the residency obligation. For a long time, aliens' registration offices had been instructed to regulate the integration of refugees in a restrictive manner or, rather, to prevent the integration of refugees and instead foster the deportation of rejected applicants. In the meantime, this role has changed. Aliens' registration offices have become more aware of the need of integration and accept nowadays much more the role of a player in the process of integration. In the researched municipalities, an increasing interaction between aliens' registration offices and other actors of integration could be ascertained.

No regular integration measures for refugees: Integration of refugees currently is not effected by regular integration measures but almost always by special project funding. This means, institutions which offer integration measures for refugees usually have to apply for special funds. Thus the project administration needs a lot of time, cost and professional capacities of the actors involved. Most of the local integration of refugees is accomplished by special projects which in many cases are funded by the European Refugee Fund (ERF). As a problematic consequence, the continuity of integration measures often is not ensured due to delays in the bureaucratic process of granting the ERF financial framework. Notably weak groups, such as traumatised refugees, who need a long-term support, are severely affected by the discontinuity of measures.

The role of volunteers: The integration of refugees largely rests on the engagement of volunteers. Mentoring programmes have contributed substantially to fostering the acceptance of refugees in the local populations, disseminating knowledge about the restricted situation of refugees and providing a long-term attendance in problematic cases. One result of our investigation is the fact that the social integration of refugees into the local context improves with the extent of activities of volunteers.

Labour market integration: The integration of refugees highly depends on the structural prerequisites which are available in the municipalities, even if the legal conditions are very similar. Municipalities with a low unemployment rate (such as Schwäbisch Hall) succeed much better to integrate refugees into the local labour market – although at low levels of qualification. Refugees in the larger municipalities, such as Berlin and Munich, often find employment in the informal sector. In regions with a weak labour market, such as Eastern Germany, it is nearly impossible for refugees to find regular employment.

Accommodation and local housing situation: In addition, the accommodation of refugees in social housing or private accommodation not only depends on the legal provisions, but also on the local housing situation. In most of the federal states, refugees are entitled to leave the official refugee hostels after about one year of residence. However, given the constrained housing situation in many German municipalities, refugees often have to stay for years in hostels where they live in a crowded and strained situation. In Berlin, refugees are entitled to live in social or private housing after three months of stay in a refugee hostel. With the relaxed situation on the Berlin housing market, this model of private accommodation of refugees has proved to be successful.

Health: The overall health situation of refugees is bad. Refugees are entitled to medical provision in the case of acute illness. However, the medical treatment of typical refugees' disorders such as insomnia, nervousness, depressions, and chronic headache, is usually inadequate. Prevention measures and the instruction of refugees about medical self-help seem very urgent indeed. However, in recent years some regional and local centres for the treatment of traumatised refugees have been established, although these centres are largely dependent on external financing, mostly by the European Refugee Fund and by donations.

Second generation: The current generation of asylum applicants and tolerated refugees often lives in a very desperate condition. In contrast, in all inquired cases the integration of the second generation of refugees was much more advanced. In the meantime, the integration of refugee children and youths into the school system has progressed and attained a rather satisfactory state. However, the transition into vocational training and to universities is still difficult, as refugees still have restricted access to these institutions. The social integration of the second generation, however, in most cases was very advanced and most of the young people expected to spend their future life in Germany.

Refugee families: With regard to the refugees in Germany, family reunification plays a more and more important role. However, the current situation of refugee families is often mentioned as problematic, especially when the family members hold a different residence status. Even if one family member holds a limited or unlimited residence permit and is allowed to private accommodation and employment, it has to secure livelihood for the whole family to be allowed to live together. This is often not possible and the family members with the better residence status have to align to the family members with the worse residence status. This situation is especially reported for the bigger municipalities of Berlin and Munich.

Acceptance of refugees: In the local populations, refugees are usually tolerated but not actually assisted. There is generally not much interaction between locals and refugees in Germany. However, different from the beginnings of the 1990s, there are hardly any reports about violent attacks and public hostility towards refugees. In the larger population, nevertheless, there is little knowledge about the situation of refugees and there is a broad indifference towards them. In the major cities, it is nearly impossible to discern refugees from other immigrant groups. However, the accommodation in hostels and the practice of issuing commodity vouchers instead of cash money implies a visible stigmatisation of asylum applicants and tolerated refugees which was complained of by these groups in the interviews.

Social integration: Refugees are sometimes blamed by providers of integration measures to be too passive and not taking the initiative to become integrated and independent of social welfare. However, the German system of refugee reception dooms refugees to become passive recipients of state alms for many years, by excluding them from the labour market, by refusing access to language courses and vocational training, and by isolating them in hostels. The inquiry in the four municipalities has shown that refugees may become actors of their own integration whenever they have the chance to participate in language courses and vocational training, in labour and in social contact outside the hostel. In addition, it must be accepted that some refugees do not expect to be included in social measures but prefer to manage their integration on their own.

'Feminisation' of integration: In the round tables it was discussed if there was a feminisation of refugees' integration in Germany. It was said that female refugees

in general were more active in fostering integration. Furthermore, the needs of refugee women and children attracted more private sponsoring than did the needs of refugee men. Against this assumption of a 'feminisation' of integration, it was argued that women had special needs and were often oppressed in a gender-specific manner which had to be met by special integration assistance. Moreover, a lot of the professionals in welfare organisations, volunteer organisations and aliens' registration offices in everyday interaction with the refugees are women, while men occupy the senior positions.

Self-perception of refugees: Refugees who had participated in language courses and job training measures, but also persons who participated in organised social contacts, obviously felt more integrated than those persons who had not. Feeling connected to a municipality and also the personal feeling of satisfaction of respondents was higher the more elaborate the choice of integration measures was. With regard to the bigger cities Berlin und Munich, feeling attached to the place was also influenced by the presence of national and ethnic communities. Nearly all refugees who were interviewed had a much stronger feeling of personal security in Germany than they had before their flight. However, most of the respondents with a still unclear residence perspective lived in a depressive situation. Nearly all refugees expected to stay in Germany, and only one of the respondents felt that she was at the wrong place in Germany.

As a result, the integration of refugees on the local level is much more advanced than is envisaged in the national legal framework of refugee reception. In general, the researched municipalities tap the full potential of means which is available for them for the integration of refugees. Even in the small city of Schwäbisch Hall, public and private actors have developed creative forms of dealing with the needs of refugees. The municipalities have a much more adequate perception of the reality of refugees' integration than the national agencies in Germany. On the local level, the legal divide between different migrant groups, such as labour migrants, German repatriates (Spätaussiedler), Jewish contingent refugees, asylum applicants, tolerated refugees, and recognised refugees, becomes more and more irrelevant for integration. Instead of designing different measures for different legal groups, the local practice of integration is focussed on putting immigrants together according to their specific needs, such as measures for women or children.

3. Recommendations, best practices and indicators of integration

An improvement of social integration of refugees on the local level cannot be implemented irrespective of the national conditions of refugee reception. Thus fostering the social integration of refugees in Germany means to a large extent to expedite the legal asylum proceedings, to grant refugees a better access to the labour market, to abolish or at least loosen the restrictive obligation for refugees to strictly stay in the assigned district and to grant them a minimum of integrative

measures, such as the regular participation in language courses. These suggested measures are issues on which the municipalities can exert no or only little influence. However, by inquiring four municipalities good practices could be identified which influenced integration processes in a positive manner.

In our empirical inquiry we found a positive correlation between **the duration of integration measures**, respectively the duration of existing networks, and the **degree of social integration** of refugees. This result implies that the durability and stability of integration measures, in contrast to the frequent practice of limited ad-hoc measures, is a factor that fosters integration.

An **early access for refugees to language courses and to the labour market or job-training measures** still is the exemption in Germany. However, the district of Schwäbisch Hall has been very active to grant refugees an early participation in language courses and employment, substantially advancing the social and economic integration of asylum applicants and tolerated persons.

In addition, **private accommodation** of asylum applicants and their families at an early stage is a rare phenomenon which in Germany is only practised by the city state of Berlin. Even if private accommodation has proved to be problematic in individual cases of refugees, in terms of integration it should be preferred against the often difficult accommodation in hostels. For the city of Berlin, the advantages of individual accommodation far outweigh those of hostel accommodation.

Mentor projects which establish a long-term personal contact and attendance between refugees and autochthonous mentors had a very positive effect on the social integration of refugees in all examined cases. Mentor projects were especially successful when they were organised and monitored by professional social work. Mentor projects do, at best, not only facilitate the personal orientation of refugees in the recipient society, but also have a positive influence on civil society.

In the smaller cities with smaller immigrant groups, the social integration of refugees into the local society plays a more important role than in the larger cities with their manifold migrant communities. Thus, in smaller cities the **organisation of social meeting points between refugees and the local population** outside the hostels is a promising measure to foster social integration and to reduce the fear of contact of the local population. As a good-practice example the so-called women's story-telling café (*Frauenerzählcafé*) in Schwäbisch Hall may be mentioned, a meeting place for autochthonous and immigrant women designed for the exchange of personal experience and information. This women's café has been an institution for ten years and has provided a space for refugee women to establish their own contacts to the local community. Furthermore, this project has responded to the necessity to grant women an access to the recipient society that is independent from their often traditional and patriarchal family structures.

The fact that now in many municipalities there are **institutions for the treatment and mentoring of traumatised refugees** may be regarded as a positive change in Germany's refugee policy in recent years. Without such facilities, the social and economic integration of refugees with a posttraumatic stress disorder would not be possible.

For many years, refugee policy in Germany had formed a restrictive order policy against refugees. In our investigation, however, we found an **increased willingness of the local aliens' registration offices to foster the economic integration of refugees** by granting working permits more generously and by facilitating freedom of movement and loosening the calamitous residence obligation to a single district. Generally, the aliens' registration offices should use their administrative discretion even more to support the integration of refugees.

However, the restricted access of refugees to the labour market, compared to that of nationals, EU foreigners and foreigners with a regular residence permit, and, last but not least, the residence obligation of refugees to a single district are immense obstacles to the integration of refugees. The latter should be completely abolished, and the former should be reduced to a minimum, if not abolished too, for all categories of refugees.

The main fields or indicators for the local Integration of refugees are:

- language proficiency
- labour market integration
- accommodation
- subsistence
- legal and social integration
- health
-children and youths

Italy

1. Institutional outline of asylum

Italy is, historically, a country of emigrants, like Spain and Greece, and is therefore one of the European States where immigration is a recent phenomenon. The fact that there is no consolidated tradition of immigration and asylum may partially explain why legislation and asylum procedures are still incomplete or in the process of being defined. Yet the particular geographical position of Italy makes it one of the main bridges to access the European Union for migrants and asylum seekers.

During the 1990s, when Italy started facing the matter of forced migration, the welcoming of asylum seekers and refugees was based on independent, non-coordinated interventions by individual NGOs or associations that provided food, shelter and clothing to newcomers. With the war in ex-Yugoslavia, the first local structures were created to coordinate the reception of refugees, involving the third sector, individual families or citizens and local authorities. During this period, the nation, having had so far only immigration legislation, introduced also asylum procedures, although these remained fragmented and even banished in some occasional articles different laws on immigration (in law 39/90, partially in law 40/98, then in law 189/2002). To this day, there is no systematic law on the matter.

In 1995 the Government issued the so-called 'Apulia law' that established the implementation of preliminary reception centres for all immigrants who reach the Apulia coastline via sea; while the 'Turco-Napolitano' law of 1998 (no. 40/1998) created the Centres for Temporary Presence (CPTs). With the Kosovo crisis, thousands fled from the region and Italy faced an upsurge of asylum seekers. Consequently, the European Union confronted the emergency by issuing special funds for the reception of Kosovo refugees, supporting the formation of a European cooperative project named Common Action which put the basis of the future National Asylum Program (PNA).

In October of 2000, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the ANCI and the UNHCR stipulated an agreement protocol, leading the way to the PNA in April of the following year. It was an experimental project involving over 200 local bodies and reaching a total of 63 territorial projects, which aimed to create in Italy an integrated network of interventions of reception and integration support, refugees. The know-how developed by the PNA throughout the years eventually converged into the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), founded by law no.189/2002 which capitalized on its innovative experience, further amplifying its area of action and intervention.

The so-called 'Bossi-Fini' law is characterized by a restriction of the presence of migrants in Italy, especially concerning border control and asylum requests. In more detail, it is characterised by three important features: 1. the detention of migrants who have entered the Italian territory illegally; 2. the acceleration of proceedings through the establishment of a simplified procedure and the creation of decentralised

territorial commissions for processing the applications; and 3. the rationalisation of methods to deport migrants who have not been granted the right to remain in Italy. As for asylum seekers, it follows two types of procedures:

- the ordinary procedure (lasting a minimum of three weeks), basically available to aliens who enter legally on national soil;

- the simplified procedure (lasting less than three weeks) which applies to two categories of candidates: (a) those who have been held having eluded the border control or who find themselves in an illegal status, and (b) those who received a deportation or refusal notice.

Seven Territorial Commissions covering the national territory are in charge of examining the asylum applications. Appointed by decree from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, these commissions are chaired by an official with a prefectorial career and are composed by a State Police official; a territorial representative of the public body 'State-Regions Permanent Conference' and local autonomies[12]; and by a representative of UNHCR.

Within fifteen days of receiving the request, the Territorial Commission summons the asylum seeker for a hearing.. In this circumstance the candidate can obtain the service of a translator as well as be assisted by a lawyer. Within three days the Commission issues its decision as either: (a) recognition of refugee status; (b) recognition of humanitarian protection permit (a subsidiary form of protection); (c) refusal of the request. In the latter case, the asylum seeker can request a re-examination (within five days) and, if further rejected, can appeal (within fifteen days). If the response remains negative, the immigrant is required to leave the country within five days.

The Council of Ministers has recently approved two legislative decrees, respectively acknowledging the European directive 2004/83/CE concerning the qualification for international protection status, and the European directive 2005/85/CE on asylum procedures. Both decrees (the first one became effective on January 2008, the second one will be soon to be published), bring important changes to the Italian legislation, deeply modifying the right of asylum mainly by introducing subsidiary protection and by simplifying the asylum procedure.

The Italian reception system is structured as follows:

- CDAs (**Centres of Reception**). These are governmental structures established by the abovementioned "Apulia law". They operate as centres for transit and first acceptance of immigrants before their transfer, in a matter of days, to the CPTAs

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[12] The State-cities and local autonomies Conference, created in 1996, is a collective body endowed with advisory and decision-making powers; it is a permanent institutional instrument for the State to dialogue with local authorities.

or the CDIs, in case they are petitioning for asylum (see below). These centres are usually located in areas with a strong flow of arrivals (the most typical, for instance, is the centre in Lampedusa's island, the most southerly point of Italy).

- CPTAs (**Centres for Temporary Permanence and Acceptance**). Established by law no.40/98, "Turco-Napolitano", the CPTAs are centres designed to detain aliens for administrative reasons, when it becomes necessary to proceed with the required steps (identification and detection of mode of transport to Italy) to implement a deportation or refusal procedure. The "Bossi-Fini" law of 2002 doubles its maximum detention time from thirty to sixty days. The CPTAs should offer the following services: lodging, basic medical assistance, clothing and personal hygiene items, laundry, telephones and groceries. There are 19 such centres in Italy, specifically 14 CPTAs and 5 CDAs.

- CDIs (**Identification Centres**). Established by law no.189/02, the seven Identification Centres are appointed to hold the asylum seekers for the time required to determine the authorization to remain on Italian territory, specifically to verify their identity and nationality and all elements at the base of the asylum request. The activities and services guaranteed by the CDIs are rather heterogeneous, including information, legal guidance, and the continuous assistance to the asylum seeker throughout the procedure. The asylum seeker that leaves the centre is deemed to having forfeited the application.

- SPRAR (the **System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugee**) is composed by a network of local reception and integration projects that offer services aimed at the welcome of asylum seekers and the safeguard of refugees and migrants being granted other forms of humanitarian protection, having access to available resources from the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services established by law no.189/2002. Being a multilevel governance system - local and national - the SPRAR is configured as a network of projects of assistance, protection and socio-economical integration promoted by local authorities through the activation of territorial networks engaging non-governmental organisations, agencies and institutions with experience and competence in social and productive matters.

The national coordination of territorial projects is managed by the Central Service, initiated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs who assigned it to the ANCI based on specific agreements. The services offered by the Central Service include information, promotion, counselling, monitoring and technical support to local projects, as well as training and updating project operators, and management of the system's central database. Moreover, it places emphasis on local good practices allowing them to become common and shared standards, and monitors that services provided match high quality standards, within a habit of constant communication between centre and periphery. Additionally, the Central Service coordinates admission and entry of the beneficiaries in territorial projects, based on availability of positions as determined by decree of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and monitoring in real-time the status of each project, in order to promptly insert the refugees in the structures.

Each project is coordinated within a widespread territorial network (prefectures, job agencies, local health services, language schools, law offices and so on) and develops integrated interventions of:

(a) **reception**, which includes such aspects as individual meetings with arriving beneficiaries, introduction to structure and regulation, signing of hospitality contract, primary socio-sanitary assistance and registration with the National Health Service, initial legal guidance, linguistic and cultural mediation;

(b) **integration**, which, depending on the selected project, can encompass, for instance, economical support to the beneficiary, in-depth Italian language courses, direction to services, social secretariat, legal or psychological and psychiatric assistance, education or professional retraining, job placement, lodging, inclusion in multicultural and artistic activities;

(c) **monitoring** and inner evaluation of projects, coordinated with the Central Service.

Besides its wide reach, SPRAR is also characterized by the voluntary involvement of each city. Each one different in terms of size and socio-economic characteristics of the territory they belong to, as well as in terms of specific recipients of projects (ordinary or vulnerable categories, individuals or families). The distribution all over the national territory and the decentralization of interventions allow the minimization of the congestion of immigrants in the capital and larger metropolitan areas, and to extend to society as a whole the responsibility of the matter of asylum. The Italian network aims at a widened and shared system of reception and integration, not intended in the sense of assimilation or welfare, rather as collaboration to build new local realities, giving true meaning to the concept of political asylum.

2. The main features of the local integration of refugees

Five Municipalities of SPRAR joined IntegraRef: the Municipality of Rome, Sessa Aurunca, Syracuse, Turin and Venice. These sites are chosen considering:

(a) the location: they are spread out across the Italian territory (Turin and Venice in the North, Rome in central Italy, Sessa Aurunca and Syracuse in the South);

(b) the size: they have various populations sizes: large (>250.000 inhabitants, Turin, Venice and Rome), medium (between 100.000 and 250.000, Syracuse) and small (between 5.000 and 30.000, Sessa Aurunca);

(c) the institutional organization: the participation of Italian Municipalities in the Protection System is on a volunteer basis, however, each single project may have a different management: (a) a strong collaboration between the Municipality, with a coordination role, and the Implementing body – e.g. social cooperative or association
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- which run the centre (this is the case of Turin and Venice); (b) the Municipality monitors and supervises the work of the Implementing body (e.g. Rome and Syracuse); (c) the Municipality assigns the whole work to the Implementing body (e.g. Sessa Aurunca).

From the outcomes of FGD and interviews carried out in the five sites, it results clearly that migration defines a complex reality of departures and separations. The history of migration is connected to reasons sometimes personal, sometimes family related, and pertaining to a person's biography as well as expectations. Like migration, the process of integration is defined at a socio-institutional as well as a personal level: besides establishing laws and regulations, public policies and investing material resources and despite confronting cultural issues and interpersonal relationships, integration affects the intimate layers of an individual and his/her autobiographical reconnection. Therefore, the structural variables (such as medical assistance, economic self-sufficiency, independent housing, actual use of services, and so on) intersect individual variables explaining why - given identical conditions - some migration journeys are successful while others fail or determine involutions.

Whereas the former, the **structural variables**, describe a person's life conditions and affect material aspects of migration, the latter, at the **psycho-cultural level**, directly affect the wellbeing of the migrant, unveiling possible risks of developing psychological or psychiatric problems, as well as forms of marginality, deviance and delinquency. Moving across geographical, socio-economical or interpersonal boundaries requires a redefinition of identity and values that easily determine loss of points of reference and social malaise. Even though not all migration journeys report psychiatric casualties, migration in itself undoubtedly exposes people to an increased vulnerability.

As refugees pointed out, transition from one socio-cultural world to another can create a conflict and pain for them that perceive an excessive distance between the two worlds, while becoming particularly vulnerable to those risk factors brought by radical changes, where expectations end up being constantly mortified and forcibly restructured. The progress of migration follows two phases, the first of **over-compensation**, characterized by a feeling of high expectations, euphoria, and sense of accomplishment that comes with the decision of departure and the arrival in the new country; then comes the second, of **de-compensation**, when disappointment, frustration, withdrawal and depression take over, following the clash with the new world.

In between these two phases comes the time of the **coping strategies**, that is the way in which the migrant reacts to changes. The coping strategies exist throughout the entire migration process and represent more in general someone's mechanisms of reaction to a particular critical situation; these mechanisms pertain to anyone's attempt to keep their presence in the world and continue being part of it even when facing dramatic transformations.

Based on this, we can better comprehend the meaning of integration, where the origin of the word "integrate" relates to *making entire,* or *complete*, holding together diverse experiences, good and bad, recognizing changes, failures, without denials and surrender. The understanding of this concept depends also on the specific abilities deriving from one's cultural background, and the constant exchange with the worlds where the migrant journeys.

This dual exchange - individual and collective - is developed both in the country of destination and in the country of origin of the migrant. The private aspect of the psycho-cultural integration is brought back to its public sphere, thus giving the migrant a means to redefine a context, after the unsettlement that followed the departure, and reach original ways of interacting with oneself and with society. These changes, collectively brought forward, can prevent the migrant's psychological uneasiness as well as stimulate services and administrations to offer interventions that rely on the migrant's abilities, not just their limitations, in the attempt to recreate a personal history and to give empowerment.

According to the results of the research in the five municipalities, **the institutional and socio-relational factors have a prevailing position in the process of integration**. This means the active and aware participation of beneficiaries to the country's lifestyle and they span a wide and diverse range of activities such as leisure activities or the right to vote. It is important to highlight that refugees' freedom of choice and ability to act of may have a direct impact on the person's wellbeing, strengthening their sense of identity and belonging in the world, as well as the feeling of being part of a community.

The importance given to the **socio-relational aspect** is also due to the fact that inclusion in Italian society - starting with access to jobs - usually happens thanks to personal contacts and relationships. Within this picture, essential topics such as professional training, job opportunities, housing, all strongly depend on relationship networks. Integration does not therefore mean simply having a job contract; it is rather about having and using the same relationships and socio-institutional tools used by natives when looking for a job or when requesting unemployment benefit. Only when these networks (personal, social, and institutional) will be equally available to all ethnic groups - to immigrants same as to natives - and are equally enjoyed will integration will be fulfilled.

Room and board, medical assistance and access to the job market, are therefore considered essential elements of primary reception not integration in itself. They relate to the safeguarding of fundamental human rights, without coinciding specifically with integration. The main indicators of integration, as it appears, are the quantity and quality of relationships, access and use of services, lifestyles, health choices, use of spare time, group activities and so on. These factors effectively show if refugees are different from Italian society or if they truly are part of it. This does not mean, of course, that the established local community and refugees should be part of the same groups nor have the same lifestyles, but they should all be equally able to. The immigrant should be given the choice to continue living according to his/

her original socio-cultural background while at the same time being given access to, and negotiate with, the new cultural environment. This should be a choice based on freewill and awareness as being the only path to a true form of citizenship, and not forced upon based on meaningless logics of acculturation.

3. Indicators of integration

The tools and the prospects of integration offered to the refugees are evidently strongly influenced by the political-institutional frame of reference. **The national context suggests a particular way to consider and implement the integration of the refugees, while local actualities tend, with more or less flexibility, to adapt them to the specific territorial characteristics and to those of the welcomed beneficiaries** (ordinary and/or vulnerable categories, singles or families). The concept of integration is not unequivocal and it comes with a plurality of different actions. The indicators that describe it refer directly to the beneficiaries of the initiatives as well as indirectly, to the initiatives themselves.

The indicators of integration, therefore, do not simply describe the level of integration of a refugee (on a variable scale that ranges from an unsuccessful to a completed integration, with all the infinite nuances in between), but also provide a means by which **to assess the quality of a project.** The data resulting from the observation based on the indicators (i.e. the type of integration reached by a beneficiary) secondarily show also the standing of the intervention, allowing for interventions both in terms of action adapted to each individual refugee, and in terms of broad political planning. The integration indicators are also crucial tools to evaluate and monitor actions. From this point of view, they are configured more specifically as:

- quality indicators of a project;

- measurement of sustainability of a project;

- signs of progress or performance of an intervention according to established objectives (showing if the project is on the right road, which route has been chosen and which one will complete the final objectives);

- tool to check attainment of goals (if the objectives were reached and how, how to modify the intervention, if the objectives should be restructured);

- a system of monitoring and evaluation, of quality and quantity, at the end of as well as along the process.

Based on this double function, and on the specificities of the Italian context (particularly they are conceptualized on the basis of the specific situation in the Municipalities of Roma, Sessa Aurunca, Siracusa and Torino. The research in these sites produced a

triple set of indicators that include sub-indicators, which can be adapted each time to the specific measurement requirements as well as to the characteristics of the context. Most of them also could be applied in a wider European comparison. For each macro area, five priority headings have been selected following the research:

(a) **structural or basic indicators**: these are the essential indicators of the integration process. According to another perspective, they coincide with the primary reception interventions offered to the refugees, that is, the actions of protection and guarantee of fundamental rights, rather than the integration tout court:

- board and lodging
- job placement
- independent housing
- Italian as second language
- medical assistance

(b) **socio-institutional indicators**: these are considered advanced or second level indicators, because they refer to a higher level of integration that comes chronologically after the previous ones. They pertain to the sphere of social and institutional relationships, in other words they measure the active participation of the refugees in the social and cultural life of the new country, and the exchanges with the other members of the community:

- access and use of institutional services
- social contacts
- use of spare time
- lifestyle
- right to vote

(c) **psycho-cultural or individual indicators**: these are indicators of the refugees' level of dynamism and psycho-socio-cultural wellbeing, as they measure the ability to interact with the environment in the areas explored with the other indicators (i.e. searching for accommodation, actively joining the local community, employment commitment, relationship with offspring). These indicators are often ignored by literature because the individual level is usually not considered a valid, objective parameter suited to be generalized or standardized. However, given that integration largely depends on the individual characteristics of each beneficiary, this study has included also this aspect that is in fact the only one able to explain how despite having identical conditions, some paths of integration are successful while others fail. Psycho-cultural indicators do not chronologically follow the previous ones, rather, they refer to aspects that pertain to the entire migration process:

- chaos versus coherence (experiences of uncertainty, fragmentation,
  disorientation or of satisfactory deciphering and connotation of the experience in
  a coherent setting);

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- situation of control, internal or external (i.e. the level of self-determination of choices);
- perceptions and expectations (withdrawal and lack of trust as opposed to acceptance of change and future)
- flexibility and potential of change (resistance instead of openness to change);
- image of self (negative and at the mercy of the events, or else assertive and capable of facing also the most challenging situations).

The coping strategies actuated by refugees who deal with significant losses (home, family, habits and sense of belonging that gave security and continuity), and socio-economical deprivation (social or economical changes or ruptures that originated the exile), and with problems of assimilation in the immigration context (lodging and work insecurity, linguistic, cultural and generational hardship, prejudice, discrimination, isolation), relate to this class of indicators.

These mechanisms of response to change and crisis induced by forced migration, **determine the type of settlement of the migrant in the new country** (on a scale ranging from becoming fully rooted in the new society to a complete devaluation of the new context and the idealization of the old one left behind), and **the level of interaction and trust that he/she develops in the new context.**

Several typologies of migration and integration experiences, or missed integration opportunities are outlined by these axis. No matter what shape integration takes in the biography of each asylum seeker and refugee, it shows that **the dynamism and psycho-cultural wellbeing of refugees affect their ability to interact with the environment**. At the same time, types of integration such as financial, housing or work, strongly influence each individual, affecting the sense of identity and the perspectives of the refugee. The wellbeing of the refugee fuels different questions and answers in both the new community as well as the one of origin, favouring a continuous exchange between individual and society, country of departure and country of arrival.

Malta

1. Institutional outline of asylum

Malta is a small country in the EU with an area of just 316 sq km and a population of 402,700[13]. It is situated in the centre of the Mediterranean: 93 kilometres from Sicily and 290 kilometres from Libya. In the context of migration, the government describes Malta as "the smallest EU Member State, possessing very limited resources, and, to complicate matters, having one of the highest population densities in the world"[14].

Malta has been a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees since 1971 and enacted its own Refugees Act in 2001[15]. Prior to 2001, asylum applications were heard by the UNHCR in Rome or through UNHCR's operating partner in Malta, the Malta Emigrants Commission. Malta has also ratified the Dublin Convention[16].

In the first seven months of 2007, the Refugee Commission registered 1072 arrivals. The majority of people originated from Somalia (351), Eritrea (162) and Ethiopia (106). The rest of asylum seekers were coming mainly from other sub-Saharan African countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and others[17].

Detention is a matter of national policy, considered as a "requirement in the interest of national security and public order"[18]. Minors, families[19] and vulnerable persons[20] are in principle not placed in detention centres although alternative accommodation is not always available[21].

Given the various legal definitions, there are two main status groups in Malta at present:

(a) Refugees: The Refugees Act defines Refugees in terms of the Geneva Convention

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[13] The population density of Malta is 3000 per square mile, whilst in Canada it is 10 per sq mile, in Australia 10 and in Libya 7.

[14] Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, 12th August 2005, Government Report to CPT, January 2004.

[15] Laws of Malta, Chapter 420.

[16] The Council of the European Union. Dublin II Regulation. 2003.

[17] RefCom Statistics, August 2007.

[18] Irregular Immigrants, Refugees and Integration - Policy Document, by the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs, MJHA and the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity MFSS, 2005.

[19] Policy document defines these as spouses and their minor children.

[20] Defined by the policy document as comprising elderly persons, persons with a disability, lactating mothers and pregnant women.

[21] The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights visited the detention centres describing them as 'totally inadequate' comparing the detention centers to a 'microwave in summer and a fridge in winter" COMM DH(2004)4.

Art.1(A)(2) and provides that once a person is declared a Refugee, than s/he is entitled to: Remain in Malta and be granted personal documents, including a residence permit, and if in custody in virtue only of a deportation or removal order, be immediately released from the detention centre; Unless in custody awaiting judicial proceedings for the commission of a criminal offence, or serving a term of imprisonment, s/he is entitled to a Convention Travel Document, entitling him/her to leave and return to Malta without the need of any visa; Have access to state education and training in Malta, and receive State medical care and services. Dependant members[22] of the family of a refugee, once in Malta, enjoy the same rights and benefits of Refugees.

(b) Humanitarian Protection: The Refugee Commissioner may recommend to the Minister that, in spite of the fact that a person does not satisfy the requirements to be recognized as a refugee, such person should be granted Humanitarian Protection. A total of 4817 asylum applications were processed by the Refugee Commission between its establishment in 2002 and May 31st 2007. 192 persons were granted refugee status during this time signifying acceptance at circa 4% but this rate has fallen to 2.2% in 2006 and 2.8% in 2005[23]. Persons under humanitarian protection do not have the right to family reunification.

Once asylum seekers are released from detention, they are allocated temporary accommodation in one of the Open Centres. There is one main open centre in Marsa. It hosts nearly 800 persons, mainly single men. Another much smaller centre for families is situated in Hal Far close to a detention centre, in a remote part of the Island. There are also two hostels (housing up to 15 persons) which cater for unaccompanied minors, providing good quality care and support. The Malta Emigrants and Refugees Commission, a Church NGO, runs 2 centres in Balzan housing 300 people. One is for single males and another for single women with children, and families. Balzan is a prime residential area, close to all amenities and schools. The Emigrants Commission also provides accommodation in a number of apartments scattered all over the Island.

Public perceptions:

(a) The international appraisal of public perception According to results from a poll taken by the Eurobarometer in 2003, echoed by a survey on discrimination in the EU in 2006, the Maltese are consistently the least supportive of migrants' rights in the EU-27. Key findings listed in the MIPEX[24] - an annual study of 25 EU countries and three non-EU countries, produced by a consortium of 25 universities, research institutes and think-

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[22] Dependant family members are: the refugee's spouse provided the marriage is subsisting on the date of the refugee's application, and the refugee's children who on the date of the refugee's application are under the age of eighteen years and not married.
[23] All the data provided by the Refugee Commissioner and the Ministry of Justice, August 2007.
[24] Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) http://www.integrationindex.eu/integrationindex/2461.html.

tanks - show that in Malta growing asylum seeker and refugee population is modest in raw numbers, but one of Europe's highest as a percentage of the population.

(b) Local appraisals There have been sporadic attempts to address the integration issue. In 2007, the University of Malta's Centre for Labour Studies issued a memorandum urging local political parties to regularise the position of immigrant workers, among other measures aimed at improving competitiveness and addressing social injustice. The memo observed that immigrant workers "are filling a gap in the supply side of labour" by taking on jobs unwanted by the Maltese. Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity spokesperson pointed out that efforts to integrate irregular immigrants after detention are often problematic for two reasons: because those who do not intend residing in Malta permanently are not particularly interested in legal employment, but only in saving up enough money for their next step; and because unscrupulous employers exploit the vulnerability of immigrants and do their utmost to evade the legal regime and employ immigrants illegally.

2. The main features of the local integration of refugees

Given the small size of the Island, it was agreed that Malta should be treated as one local community. A preliminary hurdle concerned the status of the persons to be interviewed. It has already been shown that in legal terms the position of refugees is advantaged vis a vis persons with humanitarian protection and that Malta has very small numbers of refugees. It proved extremely difficult to track down refugees mainly because they are generally not housed in open centres in receipt of ERF funding. Also they are the first to benefit from resettlement and leave the country. For this reason, the research sample is predominantly composed of persons with humanitarian protection. It is also important to point out that refugees are not a homogenous group and it is hard to represent them using one voice.

Interviews with persons having humanitarian protection were held within two FGD; one at Balzan and the other at Marsa Open Centre and in 14 individual interviews. Women refused to be interviewed in the presence of men so did not participate in any focus group discussion and only agreed to be interviewed separately. Two further FGD were held: one with the established local community and another with service providers. Interviews were conducted in a semi structured manner concentrating on a number of key issues. The FGD proved an excellent way for people to engage in debate and highlighted a number of similarities and differences in outlook and opinion.

Safety and Stability: The refugees' need for safety is echoed throughout the interviews: "I always searched for a safe place" (Refugee Somalia). In the FGD refugees at Marsa Open Centre, they mention that the feeling of insecurity that started in their country of origin has been with them throughout their journey and some still feel it in Malta. Asylum seekers are also looking for a stable place to live. They feel they cannot integrate in Malta until they know they can stay here permanently. "If I have refugee

status I can live here in Malta, but now I'm worried to go back to Somalia. That's made me hide in my hat" (Refugee Somalia). It is pertinent to note that skin colour seems to directly affect safety and stability. Initial reception procedures, discriminatory behaviour and media all contribute to refugees feeling unsafe.

Reception: Irregular entry into Malta brought about automatic detention for a maximum of 18 months which has now been reduced to 12 months. This makes it obvious to the refugees that "they are not welcomed from day one" (FGD service providers). Once in detention they are handcuffed even to go to the hospital. "It was very difficult, anyway it was very difficult for me. Because we spent the time under the tents, maybe for six, seven months under the tents, when the rain was falling under the tents" (Refugee Ethiopia). A small of number of asylum seekers, however, expressed their relief at being somewhere safe, no matter what the conditions might be. This might indicate concerns relating to lacking psycho social responses within the reception phase. The general perception is also that most asylum seekers end up in Malta by chance. Their disappointment in not reaching mainland Europe is also telling. However this raises a very central issue to this study: a number of refugees have indicated that when they sought protection, their country of choice is not Malta and never was. While a number have no intention of remaining in Malta and view it simply as a transit country, impacting on their capacity and desire to integrate, others indicate that once here they would be happy to stay.

Status: The temporariness associated with the status they are given, especially the humanitarian protection status that must be reviewed annually, is a factor that hinders integration. "They know they cannot ever get a permit (citizenship), they know it. And that for them it is extremely frustrating. It causes great anxiety for them" (FGD service providers). The anxiety caused by the temporary status undermines the refugees' sense of stability. Service providers argue that it goes against human rights for people to build social connections in a country of asylum only to be sent back home once the conflict is over. They feel permanent solutions such as citizenship must be considered when planning integration policies. In Malta refugees can apply for Maltese citizenship after ten years but the grant is discretionary.

Alienation: Refugees in Malta find it hard to settle, partly because there are no diverse ethnic communities. Therefore refugees might feel alienated when surrounded by people that have a different cultural heritage and language from them. A refugee from Somalia explains his feelings when he arrived in Malta; "First time I was new in the society and it was very difficult and I was alone, the only person who was different".

Discrimination/Racism: Once in the community, some refugees encounter discrimination and racism. One refugee recounts: "We were finding during some days, letters on the streets of threatening, saying that, illegal immigrants if you don't leave our country we will kill you and the people who are taking care of you". Service providers suggest that the Maltese fear integration because of misconceptions about refugees. The local community FGD was unanimous in its concern about the threat to

the jobs of local people and the general impact on their own place in the community. "Today a road sweeper, tomorrow instead of me..."; "Everywhere is full of them. Soon they will take over" (FGD local community).

Media coverage: Such discriminatory behaviour and fear is sometimes fuelled by the media's representation of refugees. The service providers mentioned that the media often focuses on the negative aspects of immigration. In the service providers focus group discussion there was a debate as to whether the media fuels discrimination or if the media is simply reflecting what society wants to hear. Within this context, the refugees tell us that they are also reading these articles. One must wonder what effect this might have on feelings of acceptance and welcome. Most refugees seem to recognize that the Maltese population is diverse and not all are racist, yet this still threatens their feelings of security and stability.

Invisibility of non-African refugees: In contrast to the position of black skinned asylum seekers, Malta receives another group of refugees that service providers labelled as "invisible". They tend to be those refugees with white skin or those that overstay their visa and apply for asylum at that stage. This group tends to integrate better, they have Maltese friends, go out in the evening, go shopping in the same places as local people, go sight-seeing and go to the beach. One service provider comments, "they lead a normal life, they don't have issues, they're not very afraid to go anywhere". Service providers worry about the group that overstay because they do not get in contact with NGOs because of the fear that they will be reported to the police resulting in limited access to social services.

Accommodation: Private purchase or renting of housing is very expensive in Malta. "Housing in Malta is one of the major problems faced by both citizens and government. The number of households exceeds the number of dwellings available, at least at reasonable prices."[25] Refugees have the right to apply for social housing but must compete on a lengthy waiting list. Rent costs are often prohibitive and a number of property owners are reported to be dismissive of any requests for rentals by asylum seekers. The interviews show that in the main, refugees put up with the most dire situations as best they can, hoping to save up enough money to leave Malta and travel to mainland Europe.

Employment: Some of the refugees feel destitute. Some even consider the bus fares in Malta expensive (1 bus ride = 47 euro cents). One of the refugees interviewed said: "We have financial problems. We have escaped from our country to be in a better situation, but here we still are in a poor situation". This financial hardship is due to the lack of access to well paying jobs. Service providers comment that refugees are treated in a different way, working longer hours, and with no regular contract; "They are faced with a problem with having to accept working conditions and jobs that are

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[25] Tabone C., Social Housing now and in the future, 2001, MSP

most of the time not accepted by the local population". In addition, temporary jobs add to the sense of instability in Malta. Services providers also point out that single parents find it very hard to work because they cannot find suitable childcare. There are also issues regarding language and the recognition and certification of documents which some refugees produce to accompany their job application.

Education: Some of the refugees have participated in free courses offered by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology and others have followed courses offered by the Malta Institute of Computer Science. In addition, one of the refugees interviewed started a degree at the University of Malta but found it hard to continue partly because it was hard for him to balance work and studying. On the other hand, some of the refugees said that they do not want to stay in Malta because of the lack of education opportunities.

Access to health care: Besides lack of specialized care, refugees report problems in accessing health services due to culture differences and language barriers. The Balzan open centre run by an NGO has an arrangement with a local doctor who provides care free of charge. The local hospital is used in case of emergency but it seems that the local public health centres are not frequented, although these are theoretically accessible.

Coping strategies: "Life becomes very hard, from the first day that we get here we have to think about how to get a job, how to get money and cope with life." (FGD refugees Marsa). The difficulties refugees encounter seem to further contribute towards their anxieties and therefore, to be able to integrate, refugees need to have their own coping strategies. However service providers point out that there is a lack of specialized care for those already traumatised from the experiences in their country of origin, the voyage to Europe especially those who go through Libya and detention in Malta.

Social connections: A big part of integration comes down to the social connections. Particularly:

(a) Social Bonds: Most of the refugees living in open centres form strong social bonds with one another. One interviewee in the Balzan FGD shares; "We think that we are brothers". Another says: "I have no problem inside, all the people know me, sometimes we consult each other, so they respect me and I respect them". Once they live in the community they invite their friends over and sometimes they go out for lunch or dinner at the Marsa open centre. Service providers suggest that it would be beneficial for refugees to visit those in detention and share information about what they would need once they are released.

(b) Social Bridges: Forming social bridges, i.e. relationships with the established local community seems particularly difficult. None of those interviewed took part in local events or local politics because they do not feel welcome in the community and they prioritise work and education. Most have no contacts with the local population and the majority of those interviewed in the Marsa Open Centre FGD do not leave the centre

unless they have to, for safety reasons. Some mention guilt feelings about have fun without their families. Service providers say that Maltese people come to the centres to donate clothes and things: "charity is good for what it is...but very few Maltese who willingly take an active step to help integration". Refugees that speak neither Maltese nor English encounter language barriers.

(c) Social links: NGOs play a crucial role in helping refugees build social links, i.e. links with institutions and government. Some refugees take the initiative and search on the internet for information. NGOs also help refugees with legal issues and some refugees are comfortable enough to appeal their status decisions and write letters of complaints with the help of local lawyers working pro bono.

Plans of family reunification: Besides the lack of possibility of gaining citizenship, another major drawback for integration in Malta is the position relating to family reunification. While refugees have the right to family reunification, persons with humanitarian status do not. The services providers point out that: "Refugees they have a right to bring the family over, but nobody knows how to do it, no one in the government, nobody knows how to make it happen, because there are no procedures... and they have to pay for it". Some refugees even want to leave Malta in order to have better prospects at being reunited with their families

Plans of repatriation: Refugees have mixed views about wanting to stay in Malta or in Europe versus returning home. Most refugees do not want to go back home: "I don't like going back to Somalia" (Refugee Somalia), the reason being the lack of safety and stability in his home country. A service provider concludes that "the people who want to go back, I would say that their integration process did not succeed". Then there are those who want to go to other European countries because of historical colonial ties and also because as a refugee says, "I think there is no future in Malta". Many refugees who do manage to get to other European countries are often sent back (under Dublin II). A number of others are happy in Malta and have no desire to move elsewhere.

Integration policy: The lack of a clearly formulated integration policy remains an issue for concern. During the FGD with services providers, the meaning of integration was based around equality of access to services. Refugees also think that there should be more emphasis on service provision rather than on military services which provide for detention.

3. Indicators of integration

A number of recommendations were made by service providers and refugees which could lead to better integration. The FDG with the established local community was quite lacking in any such suggestions and simply reiterated the sentiment that the problem was too big for Malta to cope with and the only viable alternative was for refugees to move on to another EU country. These recommendations form the backbone of the

suggested improvements listed below. At this stage, given that the phenomenon of irregular immigration is relatively recent and responses are in their infancy, it would appear too soon to identify indicators and examples of best practice.

The steps which would improve integration:

- The experience of refugees in Malta seems to show that their initial experience on arrival has a major contributing factor to their perception of the country and its people. Reception is a key stage in the integration process. **Detention should be eliminated or kept to the absolute minimum and used as a time for familiarization and communication;**
- The immediate identification of traumatized refugees should be a priority. **Measures are required for the early detection and response to traumatized refugees;**
- Feelings of uncertainty relating to policy, and legislation, pervaded the feedback and resulted in both refugees and service providers handicapped in their ability to provide and access services. **A coherent policy on integration with clearly defines targets should be concluded and publicized;**
- Accommodation on release from detention is currently provided by the state or NGOs. While this may be an effective first step towards fostering integration, refugees require structured programmes to fit in with their own commitments. Refugees who have successfully undergone this process should be motivated to assist or provide such training. **More programmes are essential for information on rights, employment possibilities, cultural awareness and language teaching;**
- Where refugees form part of the workforce, it should be clear that they are making a contribution to society through their social security contributions and taxes and have the right to receive protection and compensation owing to all workers under Maltese law. **Refugee employment requires monitoring and encouragement into full integration in the legal workforce with accompanying rights and duties;**
- As it is difficult for refugees to make first contact with local people, an identifiable organization or state structure should take responsibility to concretely promote social interaction that does not have connotations of charity. **Steps need to be taken to facilitate social connections with the local population by promoting intercultural activities and increasing opportunities for people to get acquainted informally on a personal basis;**
- The media has a vital role to play in bridging the role between refugees and the local community. Considerable interest has already been shown in this aspect but requires more reinforcement and investment. **The media requires greater encouragement to play a more prominent role in integration policy in general and campaigns against racism and xenophobia in particular;**
- Access to housing, education and medical care should be more readily available. While all these issues are addressed to some degree, some with more success than others, there remains room for considerable improvement. Privacy, health and development are high on the list of goals for most refugees and constitute basic rights. **Action must be taken by the state to effectively support refugees seeking accommodation, medical attention and further education;**

- If integration is to be a real option, refugees need to be given the assurance that there will be some element of permanence in their life. Family reunification, a residence permit leading to citizenship and the right to voice an opinion without fear of reprisal or at least reassured by legal support, should be attainable goals for all refugees. **Revision of rights to family reunification and status rights are required**.

At the end, possible **indicators** could be:

- Improvements in reception conditions and responses
- Effective access to information on basic rights
- Quality of cultural awareness and language training
- Monitoring of employment availability and conditions of employment
- Improved social connections with the local population
- Changed attitudes expressed in the media
- Housing allocation and support
- Educational achievement
- Rights to family reunification
- Rights to citizenship

Comparative analysis

Both the strength and the challenge of our work have been to conduct parallel studies in the three different countries, and within those, across varied regional conditions. The three previous sections have presented the findings from each of the country studies. This section will highlight common issues emerging from the data, and discuss contrasting findings considering as theoretical framework the work undertaken in Italy (Losi and Papadopoulos, 2004) and in the United Kingdom (Ager and Stang, 2004a).

1. External condition affecting integration: towards a normative framework

First we will consider what the data from the three contexts can tell us about collective understandings of what is important to the integration of refugees. Data was collected from a cross-section of stake-holders, using small samples to enable the in-depth exploration of issues. Findings are therefore offered as indicative rather than statistically representative. It proved easiest to access information from service providers and policy makers. In addition, all studies also managed to interview and/or conduct FGD with refugees. However across the study, relatively little data was collected from members of the host community, except for the Italian team.

Social connection. It was clear that social connection emerged as a core definitive construct in all three locations - just as it did in the UK study – from the perspectives of both refugees and service providers. Once again the distinctions provided by Putnam (Woolcock, 1998, Putnam, 2000) of 'bonding', 'bridging' and 'linking' relationships seem to be relevant.

(a) Bonding relationships appear to be so important to people that they will be formed despite adverse circumstances. However, the crucial question is: with whom do refugees form these close bonding relationships? The influential Cantle report (2005) following race riots in Britain pointed out that social unrest can actually be fuelled by the co-existence of strongly bonded communities living separate lives. Our data suggests that generally these close relationships are made with other refugees rather than people from the local established community. All the studies report frustration from refugees with the lack of opportunity to meet local people. The German data notes a distinction between the town of Swabisch Hall in East Germany where refugees live outside the town in isolated accommodation and Berlin in West Germany where some refugees even live in private accommodation and have many opportunities to meet locals. As well as Italians, they also observe a difference between large and small towns suggesting that more personal contacts are made between refugees and others in smaller towns where there simply is not an established ethnic community for refugees to relate to.

This seems to indicate a policy priority to foster bonding relationships between local people and refugees by ensuring opportunities for mixing and the development of interpersonal relationships.

(b) Bridging relationships the studies acknowledge that it is crucial that refugees are able to form relationships with members of the local community. For example Italian service providers argue that relationships with locals can be more important than legal status when it comes to securing housing and employment. Various factors are reported as inhibiting the formation of bridging relationships, including location of housing resulting in lack of mixing, language barriers, and cultural differences (such as contrasting attitudes to drinking alcohol observed in Malta).

Of course one of the most influential factors is the public attitudes to refugees amongst the settled population. All studies reported on the existence and impact of wide-scale racism and negative attitudes to refugees. In Malta, service providers made the point that the local population are very fearful about refugees. As a result it is much easier for refugees with 'white skin', i.e. those who do not obviously look like refugees, to mix with and form relationships that bridge the groups. However the Italian data also highlighted the difficulties of the 'invisibility' of refugees, particularly those with irregular employment and housing in isolated or deprived areas - they hide away from local people and local people choose to ignore them. In Germany a range of different attitudes to refugees were observed, ranging from fear and resentment to indifference.

Service providers in all three studies and refugees in Malta called for increased investment in raising public awareness, and providing mediation between refugees and settled communities to address public attitudes and encourage local people to engage with refugees in positive ways.

(c) Linking relationships refers to the ways in which refugees engage with formal services, structures and governance. The three country reports highlighted the difficulty for refugees to access services even when they are available, simply because of their lack of knowledge. Maltese service providers suggested that a form of 'mediation' service was needed to link refugees into existing structures. Interestingly refugees noted the value of the internet as a linking resource helping them to keep in touch with their family and to find out about opportunities in Europe.

However, the concept of 'linking relationships' also incorporates the potential for people to engage with the governance of structures and services, not just their use. There was very little evidence of such opportunities for refugees, with the notable exception of an Italian example where refugees are involved in round table meetings with service providers. Otherwise it seemed - as observed by a refugee in Malta - there is no expectation that refugees will get involved in 'politics'.

This raises the question of whether and how such engagement should be encouraged. At the least, the Italian example offers a way for refugees to take part in governance as service users. Another example - in the UK - would be the active investment made by Glasgow City Council to support the development the growth of Refugee Community Organisations amongst asylum seekers arriving in an area with very little history of forced migration.

Facilitating Factors. The UK study identified two important domains critical in facilitating the integration process: language and cultural knowledge, and safety and security. These emerged again in the current study.

(a) Language and culture. Use of a shared language helps enormously in the formation of personal relationships. Refugees and service providers all emphasise the value for refugees learning to use the dominant local language - it is seen as necessary to secure employment, housing, and form social connections. All the studies reported that language classes are available (and in the case of Italy, sometimes compulsory) to refugees. However, as the Italian study points out, where they are only accessible to refugees, an opportunity is missed to encourage mixing with established Italians. Could such classes be structured in such a way as to bring together both newcomers and established residents? Such an arrangement could also support the communication of knowledge about the culture which underpins active engagement in a society.

(b) Safety and Security. The UK study suggested that integration is most successful where there is a sense of stability and security across the whole community. The Maltese data provides a useful insight into the sense of insecurity experienced by refugees. In particular, one refugee talks of the overwhelming sense of fear and insecurity accompanying him right from the circumstances leading him to leave his home country, through his flight, and continuing during his time in Malta. This is fuelled by the conditions of military controlled detention, hostile responses from local people, and the anxiety caused by prolonged temporary status. Of course fear and insecurity can also characterise the attitudes of local people as they receive refugees into their locality.

Evidence of fear was reported in all three studies, and particularly observed as characterising areas where there is little history of migration and ethnic diversity. In addition, it is interesting to note that fear and instability amongst the local population may not be caused by or focus on the refugees (e.g. as in the case of high crime areas or high mobility areas), and yet it will still undermine refugee integration.

Markers and Means. All three studies pay considerable attention to the impact of employment and housing on integration.

(a) Employment. Access to employment is consistently considered as central to effective integration and independence. Regulations vary according to different types of status, in different countries and - in the case of Germany - in different states. Even where paid employment is not forbidden, it is generally difficult for refugees to access employment for a whole host of reasons: insecurity of status; poor language skills; lack of training or skills; barriers to the recognition of existing training and skills; restrictions on movement; lack of cultural knowledge; limited social connections; poverty; lack of childcare.

In both Germany and Italy it was noted that the availability of work drives refugees

to the more overcrowded urban areas. Refugees in Malta gave the lack of work as a reason for wanting to leave the country.

It is also consistently observed, across the studies, that difficulty of access to work leads refugees into the informal and often illegal economy thus exposing them to exploitation and sometimes danger.

(b) Housing. A clear message emerges from the data that housing is critical in determining the opportunities for social connection and gaining independence through employment. A key principle is that where housing gathers refugees together, isolating them from the rest of the community, it hinders integration. For example the refugees housed in old army barrack huts in the middle of the woods in East Germany find it very difficult to form interpersonal relationships with people living in the local town. It is not surprising that mistrust and fear builds up between the two groups. Isolated locations also prevent refugees from accessing services and employment effectively. For example it is reported that refugees at the open centre in Malta found it very difficult to afford the bus fares into town to seek work. In contrast, there is a consensus that the most successful integration is seen where refugees are able to live in similar housing to other people (such as those living in private rented accommodation in Berlin). In this case they have easier access to employment and services and regular one-to-one contact with local people.

Currently it seems that housing policy tends to allocate refugee housing on the basis of spare capacity. Inevitably this means the less desirable accommodation. Alternatively, housing policy that proactively placed refugees where conditions are conducive to integration could prevent the evolution of inequality and social tension.

(c) Health. The Italian study reports very little reference to physical health issues as an indication of integration, although access to healthcare is seen as a right. In Germany, refugees have automatic access to care for acute illnesses, but not the more chronic, stress-related conditions. Also in Malta there is access to limited healthcare, although the point is made that its effectiveness is undermined by misunderstandings through language barriers, cultural differences and a lack of knowledge of rights.

The most striking finding in these studies is that respondents repeatedly emphasise the need for more mental health and psychosocial support - not just for victims of torture or trauma, but for all refugees. Both the Maltese and the Italian study point out that many refugees suffer psychological stress as a result of their experiences of flight, and also the pressures, conditions, and instability of life in the receiving country.

(d) Education. Access to educational opportunities is seen as a means by which refugees can improve their skills and qualifications. Refugees in Malta quoted the perceived lack of educational opportunity as a reason for seeking to leave Malta for other European countries.

Children's involvement in local schools can provide an introduction to local people for the parents as well as the children - an impact that particularly benefits mothers as seen in the UK study. This research observed that the integration of second generation refugees is much more successful than their parents because of successful integration into schooling, educational levels attained, and subsequent employment gained.

Rights and Responsibilities. Immigration and integration policy and practice reflects fundamental understandings of refugees' rights and responsibilities. These studies indicate large variations in policy from area to area. German policy makers and service providers suggested that in some cases this can be beneficial because it allows a degree of local responsiveness. However it was seen in both Germany and Italy that this can also lead to confusion and inequity. The general picture, certainly emerging in both Malta and Germany, is that the policy emphasis is on resettlement and repatriation - keeping people out of the country. However service providers point out that the reality is that many people who are refused status cannot be returned for both practical and security reasons. As a result there are large numbers of people remaining with either refused or uncertain status, creating a limbo where rights are not clear, and 'integration' is not seen as appropriate. In Germany local policy makers reflected that they then end up having to find individual case by case solutions.

Of primary concern is the granting of some form of **permanent right of residence.** This is acknowledged as crucial for long term integration, although it is also noted in Italy (as in the UK) that often the immediate impact is to create difficulties for refugees through the withdrawal of services such as the provision of housing.

Very closely linked is the right of **family reunification.** The Malta data emphasises that refugees cannot begin to settle whilst they are still separated from their families. This is further confirmed by service providers in Germany who observe that families will stay together even where is means that some members who have already been granted better status are staying in worse conditions.

Where the support of integration is prioritised it is often limited to the meeting of **basic needs** for food and shelter. However, many refugees do not feel **safe or secure**. Refugees complain that their right to **human dignity** is flouted for example by the provision of food and other supplies through voucher systems which undermine their independence and led them to be stigmatised (Germany) or by detention in military run centres where handcuffs are used to constrain asylum seekers visiting the health clinic (Malta). **Independence** is further undermined by restrictions on movement. This emerges from the German data which highlights the impact of restrictions on refugees to stay within municipal boundaries, and also in Malta where refugees have often arrived by chance and yet find themselves required to stay there rather than be able to move on through Europe.

It is clear that policy must be rooted in pragmatic constraints and national (as well as European) priorities. However, it is also clear that currently policy in our sample

countries fails to take account of the perspectives of the refugees themselves. If integration is a two-way process, then policy must also be rooted in the realities of refugees' circumstances aspirations and priorities. As the Italian report argues, refugees' experiences and aspirations are not limited within national boundaries and therefore a coherent integration policy must also transcend national boundaries.

2. Internal conditions affecting integration

Effective integration does not just vary according to circumstances, or external conditions, but also according to individual characteristics. This is clearly understood by many service providers in each location who observe that given the same external conditions, some refugees can reach a satisfactory level of integration, while others do not. This work suggests that it is helpful to explore individual motivation which is revealed in their aspirations and also in their personal coping styles.

Refugees aspirations. These studies provide some insights into the aspirations of refugees themselves revealing some contrasts between the participating countries as well as similarities.

In Germany the perception of policy makers and stakeholders is that most refugees feel safe in Germany and want to stay there. Those with children are particularly future orientated and optimistic about opportunities for their family within Germany. This perception is limited to West German locations however, whilst those placed in East German location are reported to have low expectations of forming relationships with local people, and are hoping to move out to find better opportunities and work once they have the freedom to do so. The Italian report suggests a perception that most refugees hope to return to their country of origin eventually, even if they recognise that on-going conflict will prevent them from doing so for the foreseeable future. If they are to stay in Europe then they prefer not to move again. In contrast there is a strong message emerging from the Maltese work that many, though not all, refugees in Malta see themselves as being in transit and hope to travel further in order to find a place with opportunities for work and education where they can settle with their families.

Clearly these different aspirations will have a huge impact on refugees' approaches and commitment to integrating into the communities in which they find themselves. Policy is more likely to be effective if it takes account of these differences.

Individual Coping Styles. In addressing this, the study has been guided by the work of the Italian partners (Losi, & Papadopoulos, 2004) who argue that individuals' capacity to cope is influenced by their life histories (causes of the departure, pre-departure and period of travel), the link to their families, traditional values and cultural points of reference, self-image and self-esteem. Refugees' histories distinguish them from migrants, e.g., as their autobiographies are the first and, very often, the only factor whereby they might obtain refugee status. The integration of refugees involves

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supporting their capacity to react positively to challenges in a new country. It is crucial to consider their personal, family and home-country history, their psychosocial and cultural identity, their vulnerabilities and their coping skills.

The coping strategies condition the outcomes of the migration: even with the same external conditions, some experiences could end with extremely positive results (good employment of institutions and services of the receiving country, high level of exchange with the hosting society, original society, and between generations), others visibly negative ones (marginalization, criminality). Personal responses can thus be considered a relevant part of the analysis of the overall migration process as factors of influence.

External conditions such as financial, housing or work, strongly influence each individual, affecting the sense of identity and the perspectives of the refugee, and at the same time, the dynamism and psycho-cultural wellbeing of refugees affects their ability to interact with the environment. The memory and cultural patrimony of refugees and their resiliencies could represent a capacity for adaptation which host societies can take advantage of. The readiness of the host society to recognise and value these could also be interpreted as indicators for integration.

Coping strategies can be synthesized by some characterizations, as the drifters, the fighters, the hibernator, and the explores. As Italian teams highlight, these labels are not an exact representation of the reality, but for symbolic images which illustrate the potentialities of reaction of refugees. Moreover, these models of coping are not exhaustive as others could be outlined. They are not equally exclusive, as more than one could be present in the same person, which could make them difficult to recognize. They can also change depending on the moment of the migration cycle ant on others factors as age, family or union reunification, duration of stay, geographic area of settlement, migration motives and so on.

The German study reported that this framework was very helpful to the analysis of individualcopingstyles.Serviceproviderswidelyacknowledgedtheexistenceofsignificant variation in the style and success of individuals' responses to their circumstances. For example in Jena, East Germany, refugees are in isolated accommodation and receive very little support. Yet some use initiative and go out and seek contact and work, whilst others (particularly women without children and those who have suffered trauma) seem to be 'helpless and resigned'. Generally German service providers felt that was necessary and important to encourage refugees to do things for themselves, and that they often needed individual encouragement to participate in support activities.

It seems that circumstances, such as voucher systems, restrictions of movement force individuals to become passive. It is harder to integrate if you are already overstressed with for example a large number of dependents or the effects of trauma. On the other hand access to language, the labour market, training and opportunities for social contact enable refugees able to exercise agency.

3. Implications for services provision

The studies have raised a few key priorities around effective service provision:

- **Collaboration between services.** There is a general call for more collaboration to facilitate more co-ordinated support for refugees and sharing of good practice.
- **Mainstreaming services.** There is support for the view that refugees should be supported by the same services as other migrants and the rest of the population. However this would need to be combined with specialist mediation services ensuring that refugees have knowledge and access, and that service providers have appropriate cultural understanding to respond to the specialist needs of refugees.
- **Sustainability.** Services suffer from insecure funding. They need secure long-term funding in order to develop, build capacity and provide appropriate long-term commitment to beneficiaries.
- **Capacity building.** There is a widespread call for more and specialist training to be made available to workers dealing with refugees, and also for ongoing supervision and support.
- **Role of the voluntary sector**. It is common for many key services to be provided by voluntary organisations, possibly due to widespread policy ambivalence and ambiguity. If supported this has the added potential of promoting the engagement of local people in the integration of refugees and thereby fostering the growth of reciprocal relationships.

Participants in the studies highlighted the following **service development priorities**:

- Training in cultural issues for both refugees and established community members;
- Mediation to help refugees to access services;
- Support in negotiating the legal processes involved in asylum application;
- Services that promote independence rather than dependence (such as vouchers);
- Specialist support for the vulnerable, such as women, the disabled or seriously ill;
- Sustainable services for refugees beyond their stay at a reception centre, and also beyond the allocation of status to remain;
- Specialist and long-term mental health and psychosocial support services for all refugees, not just those who have experienced particular trauma;

Final remarks

Since the beginning of 1990s, the European Union has pursued the objective of creating an area of freedom of movement through the adoption of common measures. These norms aim, on one side, at guaranteeing the free circulation of persons and the control of external borders, and on the other, at protecting the rights of third countries nationals in the fields of immigration. A set of commonly agreed principles at European Community level on asylum is an integral part of this objective.

To reduce the disparities among Member States, the European Union, is committed to drawing up minimum standards for a fair and efficient asylum procedure. They intend to led to the harmonization of the Member States' asylum policies and legislations on asylum through the implementation of European directives in order to define a Common European Asylum System, which is the fundamental goal of "The Hague Programme".

The IntegraRef project has answered to this purpose by enhancing a cooperation between four European country teams. They has developed a dialogue on the concept of integration and shared ideas, expertise and experiences in order to address integration needs, and as a consequence, contribute in solving social, cultural and economic problems they tackle when dealing with asylum seekers and refugees.

The process of integration proposed by each single country is specific to its government policy, which sets the legal and political framework within which other aspects of integration occur. The legislation can strive to remove obstacles and achieve equal outcomes and equal membership by investing in the active participation of all, the exercise of comparable rights and responsibilities and the acquisition of intercultural competences. Government policy is only one of a number of factors which affects integration. As the IntegraRef project has clearly pointed up, the process of integration is also specific to the needs and abilities of each individual and each local community.

By inquiring local projects and several actors involved on asylum at different levels (refugees, social workers, national and local administrators, and policy makers) the research has contributed to the debate on refugees' integration highlighting original practices and positive measures to promote it. Given the great differences among European member states (historical, political, juridical, economical etc), it is not possible designate a single model or a clear set of indicators able to assess integration in all European Union countries. Still, there are concerns and indicators of integration coming out from the project which may become a valuable tool also in other contexts, respecting countries and local peculiarities. The re-modulation of general actions should adapt to the local specificities in order to facilitate the promotion and the harmonization of a shared and common vision of asylum.

There are basic or general strands of integration which this study has pointed out, as for example reception conditions, standards of living, labour market access, language

learning, health care provisions, procedures to obtain the status, anti-discrimination and access to services and institutions, term of residence, language and training courses and so on. Next to these "traditional" domains, the IntegraRef field research in Germany, Italy and Malta pointed out other original aspects and practices coming out from the local sites. Just these ones are exposed below in order to give a small contribution to the worldwide debate on the broad concept of integration and to the definition of indicators of integration.

● The European Union definition says that integration is "**a two-way process** based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant"[26]. Integration is thus understood as a reciprocal practice which affects not only the attitudes of refugees but also those of the recipient society. **The integration of refugees defines a social process in which the majority and minority of a society interact in a positive ways and which might result not in the extinction of minority culture or processes of full assimilation, but rather in a modification of society at a whole and the creation of new forms of intercultural living.**

Generally "integration in both social and civic terms rests on the concept of equal opportunities for all. In socio-economic terms, migrants must have equal opportunities to lead just as dignified, independent and active lives as the rest of the population. In civic terms, all residents can commit themselves to mutual rights and responsibilities on the basis of equality. When migrants feel secure, confident and welcome, they are able to invest in their new country of residence and make valued contributions to society. Over time, migrants can take up more opportunities to participate, more rights, more responsibilities and, if they wish, full national citizenship"[27].

Citizenship concept for refugees includes necessarily the cultural identity, individual and social skills through what dynamically interact with the new living context. However, integration becomes a fundamental and meaningful interaction for the migrant and the local society only when the latter also negotiate its own main culture with the different communities. The receiving culture should function as a tool of preservation and valorisation of minorities' cultures and of interaction and dialogue with them. In this perspective, host countries could be a dynamic socio-economic and cultural context to which migrants will actively contribute. It is crucial to enhance capacities and systems in the host societies in order to fruitfully match the encounter produced by migration.

Although it can envisage a distinguished capacity building process at migrant level and at local society level, it is important that these two processes converge in a same discourse of cultural diversity, able to concretely involve both the migrant

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[26] European Commission, Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment, COM 2003.
[27] AA.VV, Migrant Integration Policy Index, British Council and Migration, Brussels 2007.

communities and the local societies building a common culture and retaining a sense of diversity and cultural heritage. As a result, refugees could eradicate their often subjugated position in the receiving society and be seen instead as a real resource on an economic, social and cultural level.

Integration would become a reciprocal completion of knowledge, experiences and competences, by passing from a policy on 'refugee integration' to a creation of an 'integrating society'. In this sense, it could be referred to as '**circular migration**', not with its traditional meaning (the cycle of departure and return of a migrant), but, instead referring to a mutual exchange which overcomes the division between 'dominant culture' (corresponding to the host society) and 'subjugated culture' (of the refugee) and which includes the country of departure and those of arrival.

● If not only considered as an individual/individualistic process, but in a broader community and social dimension, integration is able to concretely involve the migrant communities and the established local societies, then it involves also destination countries. The links between source and **destination countries** are fundamental for refugees' well-being and, as a result, for their positive integration into the new society. All actions should consider the link between the refugees and its native country and its **ethnic community** settled in the new place. Similarly, the **family reunification** can give a migrant a sense of social and cultural stability in community life that helps build stable diverse societies.

● An effective intercultural exchange is built on the social responsibility and participation of all residents. This may be encouraged through a decentralization of the interventions and the valorisation of the local projects. To decentralize the action at local level leads to: (a) interest on asylum discourse a larger number of people; (b) consider and valorise the peculiar characteristics of each territory; (c) to avoids the emergencies due to the huge percentage of refugees, mostly concentrated in the urban areas or in the European capitals.

● As the field research has showed, **the involvement of the civil society** could be encouraged in many different ways: by building reception centres in more central areas; making aware and informing constantly the neighbourhoods where centres are settled; organizing social meeting points or social contacts opportunities between refugees and the local population; by providing services together with the rest of the population; developing programmes for information on rights, employment possibilities, cultural awareness opened to all citizens; multiplying social and cultural events, lessons or courses at the schools and university, conferences, seminars; by recurring to volunteers; promoting mentoring programmes and so on.

● All local actions should be regularly linked at the national framework which plays a role of coordination, as well as facilitating the exchanges among different poles, valorising and disseminating good practices, monitoring and evaluating single projects always considering the local specificities. This practice of **networking and**

sharing practice and experiences should equally work among European member states, not only within a single country.

● A positive integration process doesn't refer only to a social domain, but it take into consideration also the original identities of refugees (individual and cultural), their personal stories and the history of their families and home-countries. **The cultural patrimony of refugees, their memories and their resiliencies represent a capacity for adaptation which host societies can take advantage of**. Refugees' histories distinguish them from economic migrants, for example, as their autobiographies are the first and, very often, the only factor whereby they might obtain the refugee status. We cannot speak about the integration of refugees or support their capacity to react positively to challenges in a new country, without first considering their personal, family and home-country history, their psycho-social and cultural identity, their vulnerabilities and their coping skills.

● An economic integration, which refers particularly to immigration context (condition to access to employment, housing, education and health) is distinguished from a **psycho-social integration** (which considers the personal, cultural and social heritage in coping with the difficulties of the new context of immigration): **there is a set of coping strategies, depending on the refugees' identity, which influences the result of a migration cycle**. Even with the same background and initial conditions, migration outcomes might be dramatically different; some of them could end with extremely positive results (good employment of institutions and services of the receiving country, high level of exchange with the hosting society, original society, and between generations), others visibly negative ones (marginalization, criminality). With that in mind, personal responses can be considered in the analysis of the overall migration process as factors of influence.

● **Specialized and general trainings** (on geopolitical situation of emigration countries, language and culture of sending countries, juridical norms of receiving countries etc.) should be constantly provided to all health and social workers which are employed in this domain. For those who interact or take care of people with trauma, psychological and psychiatric diseases, and handicaps, specialized courses with substantial transcultural components/knowledge should be envisaged.

● **Staff, at all levels, has to be supported and psychologically accompanied** during their work to avoid stress and burnout symptoms (state of emotional, physical, mental exhaustion).

● The recourse at **linguistic and cultural mediators** and interprets should always be envisaged as if refugees and social worker have not a common language. Particularly relevant is the role of mediators in the health field.

● Given the international scene and the latest events, from the Van Gogh affair in the Netherlands in 2004 to the so-called 'crise des banlieues' in France in 2007, it is

evident that **second and third generations of migrants play a significant role in the integration process.** Working at the individual, group, and institutional levels, second generations can encourage, facilitate or, on the contrary, stress and counter the dialogue between immigrant community and receiving country, because their place is exactly in between cultures and generations. Cultural integration, as well as migration, is an intergenerational phenomenon which requires to work on problems and potentialities of second and third generations and generational relationships. If this aspect is not considered, out of a purely efficiency logic, the integration process will not be sustainable in a long-term perspective with a consequent waste of resources from the social, cultural and economic capitals.

● Also considering the second and third generation phenomena, briefly summarized above, we can finally consider **integration as a multidimensional, interactive and long-term process.** Successful integration should therefore be aimed at achieving a pluralistic society where refugees are not expected to give up their cultural identity but, instead they are given the possibility to associate with their local societies' culture. **This means that both the local and the migrant society have to learn from each other and find connections and similarities between their cultural identities thus creating an environment of mutual tolerance.** Some symbols of migrants' cultural identity will therefore survive, like the celebration of certain ceremonies and festivals and probably will also be incorporated into the local society's culture. Some others will be created by the interaction between different people and generations. They will be an expression of intercultural change and dialogue which recognizes differences and allows for cultural diversity.

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