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The role of the social economy in
migrants' reception and integration.

The Municipalities of Romagna Faentina in Central Italy

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The role of the social economy in migrants' reception and integration.

The Municipalities of Romagna Faentina in Central Italy

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Abstract

In this paper we consider the phenomenon of the reception of migrants, political refugees and asylum seekers in Southern European countries as instance of patterns of social exclusion versus inclusion and regeneration. The emergency nature of the increased inflows of asylum and protection seekers coming from war and other disrupted geographical areas calls for urgent legislative, policy and administrative measures directed to build integration and to avoid exclusion and conflict. To tackle these socio-cultural and political issues, we follow a twofold strategy: (i) we introduce the general trends of immigration and the legislative and policy measures adopted in Italy, which represents the main migration frontier in Europe, over the last few years starting from the Arab Spring in 2011; (ii) we contextualize the patterns of migrants' inclusion at local level, where dedicated national resources and actual administrative and reception measures are deployed. In this context, we consider the case of the Union of Municipalities of Romagna Faentina in Central Italy, which recently started several dedicated programs. In this local context, reception and integration are managed through a web of public, civil society and third sector organizations. The center of the web is found in one specific public agency (the ASP, Agency for Personal Services), which is in charge of managing reception facilities and of issuing public calls directed to deliver the most needed and inclusive services. Specific organizations created and run by both Italian and immigrant citizens, delivering language teaching for migrants, administrative services, and cultural integration are considered. The pattern of social regeneration connected to the growing phenomenon of migrants' inflows in a country such as Italy, which is affected by the aging of the native population, and by depopulation and deindustrialization of many peripheral areas, emerges as the result of networking between public agencies and civil society organizations, and of the accomplishment of dedicated governance.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of migrants poor and war and political refugees, has been growing steadily in recent years especially in Southern Europe, and it is likely to further increase or to remain stably high over the years to come (Saraceno, Sartor and Sciortino, 2013). The reception of migrants and refugees in European countries is becoming a paramount social and political phenomenon (Impagliazzo, 2012, 2015). Substantial parts of electoral campaigns are played around the migration and surrounding themes. Given the importance and extension of the topic, in our chapter we do not aim at providing exhaustive discussion and at drawing far reaching socio-political implication. We want, instead, to focus one specific theme: the patterns and governance of social inclusion vis a vis exclusion, led by public authorities and by third sector organizations at the local level, introducing the case of the territory surrounding the municipality of Faenza (Province of Ravenna), in North Eastern to Central Italy. Localities became crucial actors in the process of migrants' reception, since local authorities and actors are, in Italy, in charge of using the funds transferred by the central government to implement reception, to find suitable structures, and to involve operators and organizations.³ Finally, they are also

³ The Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior manages the foreign integration policy through the network of Territorial Councils for Immigration: structures operating at provincial level, under the direction of prefects (Art. 57 of the DPR 31.8.1999 n. 394). The Territorial Councils are made up of representatives of all relevant immigration and asylum subjects at the local level and deal with, inter alia, analysis of needs and programming and implementation of social integration policies of immigrants. The coordination promoted by the Ministry is aimed at providing the necessary link between center and periphery and the implementation of homogeneous addresses in immigration interventions on the territory. The Ministry of Labor, in addition to regulating inputs for work, promotes inclusion policies and social cohesion of foreign citizens, such as cultural mediation activities, linguistic literacy, civic formation, etc. The existing legislation on social integration of immigrants attributes to the 20 regions of the Italian state a crucial role in defining the fundamental features of local autonomy in the social policy in this area. Both as connectors of different institutional layers (the state, the national health care system, the provinces, the municipalities and so on and concerning housing, health, work, education, social and health care etc. The fundamental position of the regions dates back

in charge of evaluating the achieved results in terms of survival and inclusion of migrants, and of external effects (both positive and negative) of incoming flows.

We strive to identify in migration flows those elements that can lead to social regeneration, as against marginalization and exclusion. Social regeneration is seen as a process of inclusion and cooperation aiming at improving peoples' life through democratic empowerment, the involvement of beneficiaries and other stakeholders (Sen, 2002). Within Europe's Net4Society, socio-economic research develops "new forms of organisations and interactions to respond to societal challenges" in order to determine and satisfy community needs (NET4SOCIETY, 2014: 21). Our contribution is set in the same direction. The aim of our work is to analyse the governance of relations at local level, to understand what governance solutions are able to lead to virtuous results. Social regeneration, in our work, is the upshot of suitable sets of rules, resources and actors. Local resources, especially social capital, are employed by actors, in public institutions and in the social economy, to achieve integration of immigrants. Resources and actors interact fruitfully in the presence of correct governance. Beyond formalized relations, that are set by law, each locality needs to develop its own governance structure, on the basis of available resources and organizations. The accomplishment of suitable governance does not have predefined solution, but depends on the features of the actors (e.g., whether there is one single pivotal actor that has the leadership in the process, or a plurality of equally positioned actors etc...). The process in time is also crucial: governance can evolve passing from centralized to decentralized; or from exclusive to inclusive etc... Ideally, inclusive and decentralized structures always represent best solutions. However, centralization and strong leadership may be a necessary condition to kick-start the process, which need to be observed in real, historical time. Path dependency is crucial in most cases, since initial conditions very often influence the whole process. However, patterns can be modified through appropriate intervention, and this is especially true in emergency situations.

Governance solutions providing decision-making patterns for the achievement of wellbeing through social regeneration have been theorised in the work of institutionalist scholars, such as Elinor Ostrom, who considered the evolution and self-governed management of common-pool natural resources by local actors, through the self-production of governance rules (Ostrom, 2010; Sacchetti and Sugden, 2009). Participatory and co-operative forms of interaction and decision-making activate transformative answers to valued problems. These solutions, as social economy scholars have

to the '90s, when law 39/1990 delegated matters of reception and of labor and social integration of immigrants and refugees at the regional level. Regional laws concerning the social policy for immigrants soon followed.

remarked, go beyond the use of material resources and the production of monetary outcomes, and involve the use and production of relational goods (Gui, 2000), behavioural norms of reciprocity and cooperation (as in Borzaga and Tortia, 2017). Social economy organisations, and other interacting contextual factors (such as relations and civic engagement, the use of physical space, leadership, technology, and finance) can achieve social regeneration and promote the development and welfare not only for the existing population, but also for incoming migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. In the latter case, clearly, difficulties are severely heightened by the emergency nature of relevant parts of migration flows, and by the need to create integration in the presence of strongly heterogenous socio-cultural and institutional factor. In this sense, the study of migration flows represents one of the most sensitive and difficult social issues in contemporary political science. This notwithstanding, they also represent a necessary social pattern in advanced societies, and a unique occasion for social regeneration, given the high social potential attached to cultural diversity and interaction. Given the sensitivity of these patterns, marginalization, or even exclusion and rejection, represent dangers that can never be excluded and must guide proactive policy and intervention aimed at integration of migrants. Whilst conflict is often the result of exclusion and heterogeneity, patterns of inclusion are extremely difficult to imagine, devise and accomplish. On the other hand, inclusion carries with it high potential also in economic terms, since it is often strongest in those countries, such as Italy, characterized by the aging of the population and by the need to restructure their labour market. The stringent and conspicuous inter-temporal effects, spanning many years to come, require study and management of both direct and indirect or external effects.

We analyse co-operative and collaborative solutions at several levels (individuals, organisations, networks, local authorities) that are applied to different dimensions of the migration problem. Social regeneration in terms socio-economic integration of migration flows requires the creation of a context where opportunities and capabilities for migrants and for local communities at large can be developed. Beyond governance, in terms of organisational solutions, the chapter focuses on the role of local public agencies, and on third sector organizations (non-profit organizations, and social enterprises). These solutions are increasingly defined as social enterprises, since they are characterised by a social objective, cooperation and inclusive democratic governance. Specific policy solutions require elements of public leadership that recognise the desirability of processes based on deliberative democracy and civic engagement in the management of migration flows, which entail the necessity of cooperation and inclusion, in a multi-stakeholder context defined by potential conflict and emergency (Sacchetti and Campbell, 2014).

The introduction is followed by a snapshot of the management of migration flows and patterns of migrants' reception and inclusion in Italy, one of the countries that is most involved in the increased phenomenon of asylum seekers and war refugees. Then we proceed to analyse the case of migration reception and integration in the territory of Romagna Faentina, in central Italy, adding also an initial evaluation of the impacts of the management of migration flows in the territory. The pivotal role of the ASP, the public Agency for Personal Services in Faenza is evidenced. Finally, we analyse the involvement of other local actors, especially third sector organizations and social enterprises that are carrying out strategic and operational activities. Final discussion concludes.

2. Refugees and asylum seekers in Italy

The problem of migrants' reception is complex, multifaceted, and multi-layered. At least four dominant dimensions can be singled out: (i) initial reception and survival, which includes the most pressing initial aid and dislocation at local level; (ii) integration in economic and social activities to convert the presence of migrants from passive receptors of aid to active participants in local systems; (iii) the interaction between the presence of migrants and the local context in terms of direct impacts (creation/destruction of wealth and welfare) and indirect impacts (positive/negative external effects on social regeneration or degradation); (iv) intra-relations within migrants communities, which can be both homogeneous, or heterogeneous in ethnic and cultural terms. The risk of internal dispute needs to be carefully considered and guarded against. In the second and third context, the intervention of local actors is most crucial, since the management of migration flows and their integration in local systems requires dedicated actors (local authorities, volunteers, third sector organizations, enterprises etc...) steering the process in appropriate directions, to eschew the risk of degeneration. Exclusionary and maladapted patterns can be due several causes, besides the intrinsic difficulties that always characterize migrants' integration: insufficiency of dedicated resources; bureaucratisation of the integration process; less than optimal and opportunistic behaviour by the involved organizations, which may pursue private appropriation instead of social benefit etc... As said, the presence of local resources, such as civic culture, social capital and leadership, and the construction of suitable governance, with the attached rules, balances, checks and sanctions, become necessary conditions to build virtuous processes, and to eschew vicious ones.

2.1. *The reception system in Italy*

Immigration policy in Italy is perceived as an emotionally charged and contradictory issue, at least in the first instance the migration crisis has been regulated and managed as a security or emergency concern. On the other hand, immigration is also perceived as a way to meet the economic and demographic needs of the country.⁴ The Italian reception system is based on the powers to manage reception conferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Temporary reception (first aid) is organized on the basis of hotspots (CARA, reception centers for asylum seekers) and directly delivered by the central government. Medium to long term reception medium-long term reception (on average 12 months) can be (i) emergency-led and directed by local prefectures. In this case it is directly contracted out by local prefectures to private providers (CAS, extraordinary reception centers); (ii) coordinated by municipalities or consortia of municipalities and delivered in most cases in cooperation with local third sector organizations (SPRAR,⁵ protection system for asylum seekers and refugees).⁶

The impact of welcome services is substantially different when different instruments are considered. The SPRAR system represents the most virtuous example in terms of range and quality of services to immigrants. However, it is highly bureaucratized, this feature being justified by the need to monitor the process. The best examples of CAS show strong inclination towards innovation and entrepreneurship to face first aid. However, since they undergo lesser regulation, more often SPRAR services, they are haunted by significant numbers of bad practices.⁷ As we shall see, what is likely to

⁴ The new law on immigration, no. 46/2017 concerns “Urgent provisions for the acceleration of international protection proceedings and measures to counter illegal immigration”. The most relevant innovations included in the law are two: the speeding up of the procedures for accepting or rejecting the instances of asylum seekers; the strengthening and speeding up of the procedures for the expulsion of irregular migrants.

⁵ SPRAR was institutionalized in 2002 by law n. 189 following an agreement between the Italian Ministry of Interior, Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, the ANCI and UNHCR to accomplish a “National Program of Asylum”. The SPRAR system, funded by the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services, is constituted by the network of local authorities that, also thanks to the support of third sector organizations, guarantee “integrated reception” interventions for the construction of individual paths of socio-occupational integration.

⁶ The two autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano (Trentino and South Tyrol region) coordinate the services directly. The province of Trento on the basis of CAS and SPRAR services, the province of Bolzano as contractor to third sector organizations on the basis of an agreement with the Ministry of Interior.

⁷ The systems in Trentino and South Tyrol undergo some serious limitations due to high centralization. The risk in Trentino is to suffocate innovation and deresponsibilizing municipalities and civil society. In South-Tyrol the exclusive pre-selection of two large NGOs is controversial.

make the difference in terms of quality of services is the “maturity” and local anchorage of the managing entity. Maturity is mainly impacted by the extent to which the community is engaged in the welcome initiative, and the managing entity able to steer the asylum challenge so as to generate social and territorial innovation.

2.2. *The number of recent migration flows*

In recent years, Italy has increasingly become the land of new migratory flows, mainly composed by war-torn people, or connected to natural disasters and intolerable socio-political and economic conditions. According to UNHCR,⁸ more than 150,000 migrants landed on Italian shores in 2015 and almost 90,000 asylum applications were received. Among these new arrivals, there is an escalation in the requests for refugee status:⁹ on 1 January 2015, according to ISTAT, immigrants present in Italy with a regular residence permit issued for humanitarian reasons, asylum or protection, were 100,138 males and 17,682 females (long-term residents, residence cards and unaccompanied minors are excluded from the account). In October 2016 the total estimate of the attendance at this site reached over 150,000 (Galera, 2016; Membretti and Galera, 2017).

2.3. *The case of migration flows on the Alps*

While often considered purely passive presences and receptors of aid (References... ???), recent contributions based on case studies show instead the potential of migrants’ flows for social regeneration, in specific and marginal localities (Galera, 2016; Membretti and Galera, 2017). For example, Galera (2016) deals with the role of migrants in social regeneration in some remote and marginal areas in Italy (especially in the mountain areas in the Alps and the Apennines), which have been characterized over the last decades by depopulation, and social and economic marginalization. The depopulation trend has been reversed over the last years, in which the economic and financial crisis has hit Italy. The average yearly rate of population change between 2003 and 2013 has been

⁸ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

⁹ The refugee status is granted by the Territorial Commission for the Recognition of International Protection, which consists of 4 members, two of which belong to the Ministry of the Interior, one representative of the local authorities, and one representative of UNHCR.

+0,49% (Convenzione delle Alpi 2015). The increase in population has not been homogeneous on the territory as 42% of alpine localities registered shrinking population. Increased population on the Alps concerns migration inflows and not growth of existing population (Dematteis 2013). In 2014, in the Alps area, the extra-EU residents from Eastern Europe, South America, and North Africa especially amount to a number between 350 and 400 thousand (out of a national total of about 5 millions), with an incidence that is higher when compared to the national average (78.6 versus 73.5 per thousand residents). The most represented ethnicities are the Romanian, the Albanian and the Moroccan, and they are concentrated in largest urbanized areas, and in industrial and touristic districts (Corrado *et al.* 2014). The choice to reside in these mountain areas, beyond being linked in an obvious way to employment possibilities, is also influenced by the lower cost of living and housing, and by the higher quality of life. Non EU residents aged under 18 represent 24 per cent of the total. Non-EU residents have also a higher net birth rate than the Italian population, whose net birth rate is negative, nationally, since 2007. The presence of young immigrants appears vital to guarantee the Italian demographic equilibrium against the backdrop of aging population (CENSIS 2016). These trends can signal new revitalization, but also increased disparity in income distribution, and segregation, also in connection with non-Italian migration flows, whose ethnic and cultural origin and features need to be identified (Membretti 2015b; Dematteis M. 2010). ISTAT¹⁰ data on foreigner residents, based on the type of residence permit they hold (in our case, for humanitarian, asylum or protection reasons) are recorded on the basis of municipality of registration of the permit itself. However, migrants can move or be relocated to a different place and, for the next 1-2 years, his or her residency is not re-registered.

Unlike other European countries, the Italian reception system of asylum seekers sees a strong involvement of private organizations, which perform themselves as bodies responsible for the management of refugees' flows by virtue of conventions stipulated directly with the prefectures according to an emergency logic or within the SPRAR circuit, which presupposes a partnership relationship with the local authority. This system of welcoming migrants presupposes the promotion of a micro hospitality model spread across the territory by highly-rooted management bodies at community level and marked by wide participation of different stakeholders as members (Galera, 2016; Membretti and Galera, 2017). This is the reason why our contribution focuses on the role of local actors and on the interaction between local public authorities and third sector organizations in the deployment of hospitality measures. It features a two way pattern in which central policies, funding and

¹⁰ Italian National Agency for Statistics.

directives are accomplished and complemented, following the principle of subsidiarity, by civil society initiatives that exploit local social capital (as substantiated, for example, by volunteer organizations, and financial and in kind donations), production capabilities and information to accomplish patterns of inclusion, regeneration and development. We now turn to consider the case of the system of immigrants' reception and integration in Romagna Faentina in Central Italy.

3. Immigrants' reception and integration in Faenza: the role of the ASP public agency

The municipality of Faenza, in the Province of Ravenna, was populated, in 2016, by slightly less than 60 thousands residents.¹¹ This small town is located in Romagna, between North-Eastern and Central Italy at the heart of the so called "Third Italy", which is characterized by the highest levels of socio-economic development and social capital in the country.

The existing pattern of immigrants' reception and integration emerged in recent years as the result of: (i) the policies and regulation of the central government; (ii) of civil society spontaneous initiatives, which in some cases date some decades back, since when, at the end of last century, immigration became a relevant phenomenon in Italy; (iii) of the emergency caused in recent years by the exponential growth of flows caused by upraising, revolution and war in North Africa and Middle East. To counteract the mounting challenge, the Union of Municipalities of Romagna Faentina (*Unione Romagna Faentina*) developed its own welcoming system following central regulation and specific local experience. This system conjugates funding from the central government, with controls and contracting out (through tenders and public procurement) by local authorities, and with the active intervention of civil society and third sector organizations. These ingredients are producing, *in fieri*, a new system of immigrants' reception and integration in the local community, which has been evaluated by privileged referees in Faenza as a well working one. We now turn to depict its pattern of emergence and main features.

¹¹ Faenza is the common capital of the Union of Romagna Faentina, which includes the municipalities of Brisighella, Casola Valsenio, Castelbolognese, Riolo Terme, Solarono, located in the Apennine Piedmont with a total of about 85,000 inhabitants.

3.1. Bird-eye view of the Faenza system and the role of the ASP

The reception system of the Union of Romagna Faentina was built around the Public Agency for Personal Services (ASP, *Azienda per i Servizi alla Persona*) of the Union. ASP addresses the problems of the most fragile persons in the territory of the Union by offering aid, support and cure. Its local and social embeddedness make ASP the ideal agency able to detect emerging social fragilities through the development of a network of integrated and innovative services, and to the flexibility and rapidity of delivery (Sacchetti and Tortia, 2016). ASP has been developing experience and networking based on horizontal subsidiarity and participation, transparency and shared values, of which direct interactions with the community and its social actors are integral parts.

Given the continuous increase of migration flows, and especially of political refugees and asylum seekers, at national level, the territory of Faenza developed its own receptive capacity, within the provincial governance and hospitality planning of the prefecture of Faenza. ASP was singled out by the municipalities of the Union as the right operational instrument able to build an experimental model of hospitality made of small nuclei structured in the form of apartment group (first introduced in the municipalities of Solarolo and Casola Valsenio).

The agreement between the ASP and the Union was perfected in late 2015. At the same moment, the prefecture manifested the necessity to increase the receptive capacity by 80 more residential places for foreigners asking for international protection. The Union, as mainly represented by its majors, faced this emergency in a coordinated and unitary way to achieve effectiveness, and to also project the services for secondary hospitality, which starts when migrants exit reception facilities, after receiving the status of person deserving international protection, which implies the assignment of long-term residence permit.¹² Following the agreements with the Union and with the prefecture, ASP is now in charge of directly managing hospitality facilities, and to coordinate the reception process in the territory of the Union.¹³

¹² The new programming and coordination model has been defined in 2015 by the decision of the Union, by the resolution of the Assembly of the Members of the ASP Romagna Faentina, by the resolution of Board of the ASP itself, and by the agreement between the prefecture and the ASP, as representative of the Union.

¹³ At the beginning of 2016, ASP's directly managed residential places rose to 30, distributed between 5 reception facilities, in 3 different municipalities.

For the year 2017, the territorial coordination system will guarantee the availability of 353 reception places: of these, 252 derive from the requests for increased availability originally guaranteed by the 2015 convention between the Ravenna Prefecture and ASP. The remaining 101 places have been integrated into the territorial co-ordination system, but the facilities and posts remain in the management of the original operators.

The management of the available places was delineated in 2016 by ASP, which started the search for subjects able to guarantee the reception service in facilities made available by them, to cover up all the places that the territory had committed to. However, the public disclosure procedure was given limited responses by the seven private social operators who adhered to the public notice. Apart from the coordination role assigned by the Union, Asp is also in a position to assume direct management of several facilities and reception places.

3.2. The management of hospitality by ASP

The approach to a strategically unplanned service, but needed in a few weeks and in a growing way, has necessarily been progressive. From the outset, the organizational model of widespread hospitality and the apartment group was carried out in 4 to 10-12-person housing units managed by ASP with its own staff, which was supported by educational and linguistic-cultural mediation activities provided by qualified external operators.

Subsequently, a medium size structure of up to 40 places was implemented. This was characterized as a territorial mini hub, with an important function of first acquaintance and subsequent transit in other structures. The management of the structure is headed and supported by ASP personnel. Educational, linguistic-cultural mediation and garrison of the H24 structure is provided by qualified service providers. A completely restructured structure is in the process of starting up, with a capacity of 20 places inside a farm owned by ASP with the aim of organizing training courses in the agricultural sector, in synergy with other social farming projects addressed, during the design phase, to the elderly and the under-aged.

In June 2016, on the eve of the annual period at greater risk of new massive arrivals, ASP was deploying what had actually been characterized as a new, more structured and unified business service, with concrete prospects for further quantitative increase. That is the direct management of reception.

An intervention on the organizational structure of the APS would allow the use of competences also present in the new field of activity, and a simultaneous reconnaissance of specialized skills, that were not present within the corporate body or acquired outside.

Direct management of the reception (in addition to the services required by the relevant legislation, such as administrative management services, hotel services, integration services, etc.) implied taking care of groups of people, from time to time assigned to the territory, of different nationalities, often of different ethnicities and, even if of the same nationality, with different languages, with different cultures. It was therefore necessary, in order to build an APS reception service, to find out who was able to take charge of these people, to speak with them knowing their language or dialect, to start teaching the Italian language, to orient them to the rules of reception and coexistence in Italy, and to start to work on their life plan. There was also the need to relate to the applicants hosted in the other institutions, associations and interacting with the various components of civil society in relation to projects of socially useful activities that are a key component of reception and integration.

For these reasons, ASP has been moving in the direction of acquiring specific coordination skills capable of intercepting and understanding the needs of applicants. It sought among those linguistic-cultural mediation figures with whom collaboration had already started, especially for the construction and preparation work of the individual memories to be presented to the territorial commissions.

The choice, reinforced by several months of mutual knowledge, was directed towards a Senegalese graduate with 15 years of experience in the field and maturing skills as a teacher in training courses in the field of regional vocational training funded by the European Social Fund. This figure has been joined by another Italian practitioner who has, for ten years now, been active in the social affairs addressed to immigrant people of the Union of Romagna Faentina. ASP acquired the missing skills to build the project's operational co-ordination in close relationship with its management and staff.

3.3. The implementation of the territorial coordination model

The territorial co-ordination model pivoted by ASP has as its methodological reference the content and guidelines resulting from the National Framework Agreement "Charter of Good Reception of Migrant People" (initiated by the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, the ANCI, National Association of Italian Municipalities, and the Alliance of Italian

Social Co-operatives) and is directed towards actions which, during the reception phase, pre-constitute tools aimed at facilitating the exit from "assisted" reception and the conscious and active entrance in civil society.

The coordinating functions of the ASP of Romagna Faentina have thus evolved from the management of the initial emergency phase to a more complex activity which, already at the initial reception stage, provides for the creation of conditions and opportunities to facilitate the integration paths. In particular, the foundations for coordinating and integrating the macro functions throughout the territory of Romagna Faentina are as it follows:

1. In-depth knowledge of the personal, social, educational and professional stories of international protection applicants in order to acquire all the information useful to a subsequent individual and/or group planning of life paths that will then have to be retrieved, mapped and recorded on specific databases.

2. In-depth mapping of all the actors and organizations present on the territory of Romagna Faentina, able to provide resources and opportunities for the development of individual and/or group integration pathways as related to: (i) professional training and retraining; (ii) orientation and accompanying to work placement, housing and social inclusion.

3. Networking, with strategic orientation, of all public and private social interventions in the territory related to the SPRAR, in order to: (i) plan and coordinate action; (ii) avoid as much as possible waste of energy and resources; (iii) identifying funding channels for the development of the post-reception phase.

4. Consolidating a centralized information system for optimizing and simplifying the international protection applicants' database for permits, demographics, health records, CVs etc...

The initiation of coordinated and integrated intervention, developed in a cross-cutting manner on the addressed macro functions, and involving all of the actors engaged with ASP and coordinated by it, has been possible thanks to the organizational and operational structure that ASP has been able to create. This has been an effective response both to the need to directly manage the hosting service and to the territorial coordination function.

The organizational and operational structure, in addition to the administrative resources of ASP (coordination of managers, organization and updating of registers and databases, coordination of

documentary and health records), in the accounting area (project and control accounting, billing, regulation of economic relations with other involved institutions and hospitality structures) and in the technical area (property search, logistics and preparation of reception facilities, purchase of goods and services, transport services), uses qualified and specialized external resources, which work to support ASP internal processes, but also to the cross-sectional benefit of the other ASP-coordinated entities.

In particular, a collaborative relationship with the social co-operative *Ricercazione* was established to include in the workforce an external expert for the co-ordination of the reception, who is able to support ASP and its coordinated managers in the accomplishment and improvement of: (i) relationships with the Prefecture regarding the educational design related to the different aspects of reception; (ii) relations with the Union's Social Services and the Foreign Service Centre; (iii) external institutional relations with local authorities, trade associations, vocational training establishments; (iv) implementation of the networking of all public and private social interventions related to SPRAR actions; (v) strengthening the relationships with volunteer organizations and associations for the development of projects for inclusion of hosts in socially useful activities on hosting territories; (vi) participation, in representation of the territorial area of Romagna Faentina, to the working group set up at the Prefecture of Ravenna for exiting the assistance period and integration in the social context; (vii) search for opportunities for inclusion of people in the field of vocational training or in employment paths, in conjunction with the life plans designed with the educators.

Furthermore, as mentioned, a collaborative relationship with a Senegalese professional was established. This relation aims at assisting the direct management of reception by ASP; educational-methodological co-ordination; training and updating activities; supervision of individual biographies and customized life projects; educational-methodological supervision of private social sector institutions contracted by ASP through public calls.

The two experts - one professional from Senegal and one from the social co-operative *Ricercazione* - support the ASP in the direct management of its structures and territorial coordination activities and have been involved in many agreements, training and information on a number of thematic issues open to the operators involved in the coordination activity of ASP.

4. The local embeddeness of the hospitality system in Faenza: the role of civil society organizations

The decision of the municipality of Faenza to put the ASP in charge of the hospitality measures has been followed by the spontaneous emergence of a partnership between public authorities and some third sector organizations, which are taking a leadership role in the process. We consider in some depth the experience of three main instances: Without Border Project by Teatro Due Mondi; the Penny Wirton School of Italian language and the Teranga social co-operative.

4.1. The Penny Wirton School of Italian language

The teaching of Italian language to migrants is compulsory and included in the agreement between the ASP and the prefecture of the Province of Ravenna. Under the requirement by the prefecture, the Italian School for Immigrants Penny Wirton¹⁴ was singled out by the ASP as the institution that will carry out this duty. The School has been created for teaching Italian language to foreigners that aim to reside in the country. Faenza hosts one of the main branches of the school, while its centre is in Rome. Students from high schools, the linguistic lyceum, volunteer to accumulate competencies in teaching Italian language, and to help the process of welcoming and linguistic inclusion of migrants. The school has been successful in teaching Italian language, given its informal style and the involvement of migrants both in teaching and extra-teaching activities.

Penny Wirton is an association founded in Rome in 2008 by Eraldo Affinati and Anna Luce Lenzi. It reached national dissemination today, counting 20 schools from Calabria to Lombardy, which are administratively autonomous and independent.¹⁵ All affiliated schools recognize the basic and indispensable principles of the Charter of Intellectual Property, whose Article 1 states that the school is "free, apolitical and aconfessional" and always welcomes everyone by teaching "one by one, or by small groups" (Article 3). The working of the school is based on beneficent donations, and on the volunteering work of teachers and tutors, who are often high school students. The didactic approach is based on human relationship. Meetings are not conceived as teachers lecturing to a group of students,

¹⁴ The name of the school was conceived after the title of the novel by Silvio D'Arzo "*Penny Wirton and his Mother*".

¹⁵ One collective interview was carried out in April 2017 with two volunteer teachers of the school and two students from the linguistic lyceum volunteering to teach in the school.

but as interaction between people, who have the knowledge, values and skills to share the aims of the school. This elements convinced volunteers in Faenza to create the 21st associated Penny Wirton school in Italy. The ASP gave space and instruments to the school to carry out its activities: one copier and the foyer of a theater to teach Italian lessons twice a week. The overall time migrants spend with the volunteers is four hours each week. The school also intends to ensure openness throughout the solar year and not just for the school year, in order to avoid summer breaks that interrupt friendship relations and the learning process.

The experience began with the involvement of 4 teachers in humanities and English language and 28 students from the third class of the local Linguistic Lyceum who, initially involved in a completely voluntary form, then obtained that their activity was recognized as part of the work-school alternation framework for highschool students.¹⁶ The school started its operations on January 12^{ve} 2017 with the participation of 14 asylum seekers, selected by the ASP, of whom 7 from Côte d'Ivoire and 6 from Afghanistan. In March 2017, the school has over 20 participants coming from Pakistan, the Gambia, New Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Morocco. Not everyone is asylum seeker, but ordinary migrants are few exceptions. The prevailing gender is male, but one Nigerian girl and an asylum seeker from Morocco are well placed in the group.

The lessons begin with the preparation of the space. Boys are grouped by volunteers according to their linguistic levels: basic (illiterate or just literate), medium and advanced. It is not always possible to guarantee the continuity of theaching. Most of the students (only two volunteers are male) are carrying out the service once a week, so migrants are looked after by different people, not just students but also volunteer adults who gradually joined the four "founding" teachers. These are people from civil society, not all of them are teachers. They work alongside female students whose English and French language skills allow for effective language mediation. Lessons are aimed at acquiring survival language skills and practical use of language in the most widespread everyday communication situations. Migrants have strong motivation, and regardless of the different learning speeds, they are particularly stimulated by being followed individually or by small groups, a situation that allows a personalization of learning that has value from both the educational and the human point of view. Migrants feel that each volunteer tries to teach them what they most need and, in turn, volunteers have the concrete perception of meeting the needs of their "students" and, at the same time, their linguistic

¹⁶ The "work-school alternation" framework is promoted by the Union of the Municipalities of Romagna Faentina in collaboration with ASP and the schools in Faenza.

skills gain practical relevance. From a human point of view, the most striking and exciting aspect is the spontaneity with which, especially young students, find themselves in the new situation of being literate teachers, leaving tangible signs, thanks to the gratuity they make available to their "students". The atmosphere is, as testified by several attending persons, one in which it is unclear "who teaches and who learns", in a logic of spontaneous and reciprocal exchange of skills and cultural abilities.

4.2. Teranga social co-operative

The Teranga Social Co-operative,¹⁷ was born in November 2015 by the encounter of people with skills and knowledge of different origin both geographically and in terms of educational and work background. In particular, it represents a development of the experience of an association created in 2004 by a group of Senegalese migrants who are resident in the Ravenna. The group was formed several years ago in Italy by Senegalese with university education. The group founded the Global Solidarity Association to provide support to and accompany newcomers, who just arrived or were in difficulty, from Africa. Given the extreme complexity of Italian bureaucracy, which finds no nearly so complex counterparts in most African countries, the association helped in delivering good administrative practice in the renewal of residence permits, access to territorial services, etc ... The volunteers of the association thus allowed their fellow countrymen and the general population to access their fundamental rights. Another goal of the association was to promote the Senegalese culture in Italy through the culinary experience. The Association has participated in several events and festivals sharing its own dishes and flavours with the Italian Population. Among the members of the association there are cultural mediators: key professional figures who work as a bridge between two cultures, in addition to pursuing linguistic mediation, which is a small part of the integration path and of inclusion of foreign citizens in Italy.

In 2014, the association's mediators began collaborating with the Ravenna Prefecture in linguistic and cultural mediation, given the important numbers of international protection seekers who came from the Libyan coasts and were then deployed throughout the Italian territory. In November 2014, the association, under the pressure and after the recognition of the emergency, started, under the mandate

¹⁷ The social co-operative is, in Italy, a special kind of co-operative enterprise, in which mutual benefit is conjugated with an explicit social aim, the non-profit distribution constraint, socialization of the firm assets, and multi-stakeholder governance, as defined by law no. 381 in 1991.

of the Prefecture, an Extraordinary Reception Center (CAS) in the outskirts of Ravenna. The CAS offered capabilities and expertise in terms of mediation and foreign population management.

Some members of the association and some Italian citizens coming from experiences in managing the foreign population in France and Argentina met in 2015. They decided to combine their skills and knowledge to create a new organization responding to the needs of international protection seekers' at this precise historical moment. This is the genesis of Cooperativa Teranga, a multicultural co-operative with intercultural skills whose purpose is to support and accompany the foreign population in Italy. Its main aim is to contribute to the integration of the foreign community and the local population, understanding integration not as a unilateral process concealing the culture of the immigrant community, but as a movement that unites two cultural phenomena, this way creating a new intercultural reality.

Teranga is a term drawn from the native Wolof idiom, the most widespread language in Senegal and Gambia. It can be translated as “hospitality”, but it actually expresses a lot more: welcome, attention, respect, kindness, cheerfulness and the pleasure of receiving a guest in your home. An action Teranga is experiencing and promoting now is the Amalg-aimiamoci (Let's interact with love) project, which has as its objective the intercultural exchange among and the reciprocal knowledge of the protection seekers, with the resident citizens. This is effected through convivial moments where the asylum seeker is welcomed in the family for a snack, lunch or dinner in private or public places, such as gardens, bars and clubs.

The aim is to try to break down the wall of distrust through mutual knowledge between the local community and the host structure. The guests are given the opportunity to know and understand Italian culture throughout the day, for example having a coffee at the bar, eating Italian food, spending some fun with members of the community. For the local community it can be an opportunity to widen its cultural reach and understanding by interacting with distant social, political and cultural contexts. Informal encounters that are not included in events or activities that were organized in advance make it possible to establish connections that can develop into sincere and positive relations.

4.3. Without Border Project (Participative theatre “Due Mondi”): the practice inclusion through theatrical activities.

The Two Worlds Theater is an association that was born in 1979 as a "group theater" and is still engaged in continuous artistic research, which is the basis for its daily practice of self-pedagogy.¹⁸ It performed its shows all over the world, from North Europe to South America, from Taiwan to Eastern Europe.

The theatrical practice follows two main directions: street theater and social engagement, mostly linked to pedagogical projects. Choosing to operate "in the street" has led associates to the theatre to meet cultural and social realities far from the official circuits and outside the commercial theatrical performance. On the artistic side, it has led to develop a theatrical technique focused on the use of the body and non-verbal communication that allows to get in touch with the heterogeneous and casual audience with whom associates want to interact. The latest developments in the project work of the Theatre have seen the intensification of social engagement especially with migrants. A "Refugee" project has been developed with the refugees in the territory of Faenza.

The Theatre has been developing workshops aimed at social inclusion of refugees for about six years now. The workshops allowed the refinement of the competence to mediate between the different included cultures. This makes the various groups of participants slowly get interrelated with each other, overcoming initial mutual distrust, and thus recreating a solidarity community. The theater work of Teatro Due Mondi, therefore, becomes a social inclusion vehicle. Projects with "non-actors" also aim at "giving voice" to the weaker or marginalized social groups, for which the theater becomes a social communication vehicle and at the same time an affective and effective empowerment tool.

Without Borders. Without Borders is the participated theater workshop which is proposed to the community of reference, the citizens of the area and the hosted migrants, since 2012. In Without Borders the aim is to build street actions on issues that affect people's lives as citizens of the world. Theatrical activity, in this case, can be a tangible and incisive way to communicate with the city on topical issues and is an effective means of communication between and with individuals: it offers the opportunity to meet the other, to stimulate to open towards the other, to break down barriers and prejudices, and commit oneself. It has been defined as “participated” theatre since the aim is to share

¹⁸ One in depth interview was conducted in April 2017 with Alberto Grilli, founder and representative of the “Due Mondi” Theatre.

content, reflections and goals with everyone who wants to do so, without forgetting fun, irony and curiosity.

Street actions are interpreted as social and cultural exchanges between the participants (whether they are actors or non-actors) and create the possibility - boundless and therefore without limit - to express their identity, their own visions, their dreams. The workshop sets one rendez-vous per week, and is open to all. No entry fee is envisaged and there are no age limits. From the outset, the idea was to activate laboratories that would work together with Italian citizens and asylum seekers, thus inserting this activity into an inclusive and participatory perspective that promotes mutual encounter and knowledge among different people, ethnic and national groups, accepting each with its own peculiarities. Difference becomes so widespread and dominant, that implies a high potential to build on it and create something new and fruitful. Working together eliminates the risk to create ad hoc structures in favour of specific subjects, leading to ghettoization of the marginalized. The linguistic "problem" is overcome by explaining each exercise in the required languages with respect to the composition of the group.

Over the years, the laboratory has produced a number of street actions. Being able to take advantage of the various opportunities offered and to go down to the street as often as possible proved very important to continue to raise the awareness of the citizens against the construction of the walls and the barriers that in recent months some European countries are implementing to block the flows of migrants. Street action can therefore be defined as a theatrical happening halfway between the show and the event. The event shares the strong political will to support a cause. Not by chance many of the people involved are non-actors driven by the will to do something together and express their opinion on a given theme, and take it out in open places, which are testimonies of large crowds of people in the street, on the street or in the heart of the city. The show shares a structured form with well-defined schedule and a strong stage presence of the participants, with the will to meet and relate with anyone who stops and pays attention. The street action has the ability to deal with current and strong themes, presenting personal visions, which immediately acquire wide breath and become dialogue with the rest of the world. This is also because the actions, mostly simple and everyday, repeated by a large group of different people, gain meanings that eliminate any joke or rhetoric and transcend the daily to become universal poetic language.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The social issue of reception and integration of migrants, war refugees and asylum seekers became all the more pressing in recent years, especially in countries, such as Italy, neighbouring war and unrest areas, with borders facing strong migration flows. Italy, as several other European countries, faces migration flows as a double-edged phenomenon: both a danger and an opportunity for development.

In countries characterized by the aging of population and by the need to regenerate wide urban and rural areas, migrants represent resources that need to be empowered and included actively in the fabric of society. Social regeneration is a key issue that sharply separates integration and inclusion from marginalization and exclusion patterns. The explosion of the problem of asylum seeking starting from the “Arab Spring” in 2011, forced governments, local authorities, and civil society to take or reinforce action. Italy is no exception: migrants’ reception and inclusion became a dominant political, social and cultural issue over the last years. The central government intervened by guaranteeing financial coverage for life rescue and for fulfilling the most pressing needs of migrants.¹⁹ The organization of hospitality has been decentralized to local authorities and prefectures, which are in charge of finding suitable shelters and implementing integration policies. Most municipalities in Italy accepted to be involved in reception and hospitality activities. Different patterns clearly emerged: at the extremes of the hospitality spectrum, some municipalities used public resources to guarantee minimal services, without any effort to achieve integration, this way generating ghettoization and refusal by local communities; other municipalities took instead integration and social regeneration as polar stars towards which hospitality processes are geared. Positive and far reaching external effects can be envisaged, starting from purely economic ones in terms of support to local and marginalized areas, and creation of new jobs. Beyond economic effects, social regeneration can play its positive role in terms of the creation of a multicultural, open and variegated society, which can complement and renew the traditional Italian culture. Also, the study of the Italian landscape clearly shows that hospitality is work in progress: local authorities, municipalities and civil society are building the road as they travel along it. New initiatives are added to face the emergency. Push and pull social processes are clearly at work, whereby the needs of migrants stimulate the accomplishment of new and creative solutions, while organizations and public agencies are also able to figure out new services through their own experience and imagination.

¹⁹ Each migrant is financed by the Italian government through 2.5 daily Euro of pocket money and about 30 Euro given to assisting organizations.

The Union of Municipalities of Romagna Faentina in Central Italy represents a virtuous case in which local authorities and civil society organizations collaborate in implementing new social patterns that are geared to overcome exclusion and to generate positive social effects. The governance of the hospitality system in Faenza can be interpreted as a hub in which public authorities, as represented by the ASP, play a pivotal role. The ASP of Romagna Faentina has been taking care of implementing the bulk of necessary hospitality measures: it directly provides most sleeping berths, though not all of them, and it also implements other necessary services such as cleaning and supply of groceries and other necessities. Interestingly, public structures favour migrants' inclusion also through self-catering and self-managed cooking services. On the other hand, public tenders, calls and procurement have been used to include several civil society organizations, whose working is most of the times guaranteed by volunteers. The interaction between civil society and local authorities is two way, and does not appear to be hierarchical. Civil society organizations take action in implementing activities and services much needed to migrants and to the community of reference. On the other hand, local authorities have shown themselves to be ready to recognize and also to stimulate the virtues of civil society intervention and creative initiative. Future in the future cannot be excluded, given the very recent development of the highlighted governance solutions. For example, it is possible to imagine that governance will be further decentralized through more substantive processes of delegation of activities and strategic decisions to local actors in the third sector. However, the study clearly highlights a strong pattern in which the pivotal role of public agencies is necessary to create and running the whole system. Identification of suitable public agencies and local actors appears to be an unavoidable feature of public policy if integration of migrants and social regeneration is to be achieved.

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