



City of Reggio Emilia

Intercultural Profile 2016

1. Introduction¹

Reggio Emilia was one of the founder members of the Intercultural Cities Network in 2008. It was also the founder, and remains the coordinator, of the Italian Network of Intercultural Cities: *Le città del dialogo*. This document supersedes the original intercultural review which was conducted when Reggio Emilia first joined the ICC.

The visit of the Expert Team came in the week of a period of change and transition in Reggio. A new Mayor and a new Deputy Mayor (Assessore) for International and Intercultural Affairs (Foracchia Serena), has been followed by a restructuring of the Comune services and the introduction of new policies, and this within the context of major policy and structural changes within Italian state and local government. There has also been a change in the relationship between the premier NGO Mondinsieme and the Comune, with Mondinsieme taking on a more municipal complexion, as well as a change in personnel in its governance structure and its senior management. The Expert Team was keen to learn about the rationale for the changes and to assess their impact.

2. Background

Reggio nell'Emilia (to give it its full title) is a city in northern Italy, in the Emilia-Romagna region, although residents tend to refer to it simply as Reggio. It has about 173,000 inhabitants (2012) and is the main Comune (municipality) of the Province of Reggio Emilia (which comprises 44 comuni and a population of 534,598).

Reggio became a free Comune at the end of the 11th century and grew prosperous as a centre for agriculture and communications. Following the expulsion of the Jews from Spain it became a tolerant haven for Jews and other excluded minorities.

Following the French Revolution the arrival of the republican French troops was greeted with popular enthusiasm in 1796. The ducal garrison was driven off, and the Senate claimed the rule of Reggio and its duchy, which is now considered as the first act of the Italian Risorgimento. Napoleon occupied Emilia and formed a new province, the Cispadane Republic, which was proclaimed in Reggio in 1797, and the Italian national flag, *Il Tricolore*, was created by Reggio women. Around the same time, Jozef Wybicki, a Polish supporter of Napoleon, composed in Reggio the *Mazurek Dąbrowskiego*, which in 1927 became the Polish national anthem, all of which confirms Reggio's self-image as wellspring of liberal and cosmopolitan values. However, Reggio's liberal spirit was subdued with the return to aristocratic rule after the fall of Napoleon in 1815.

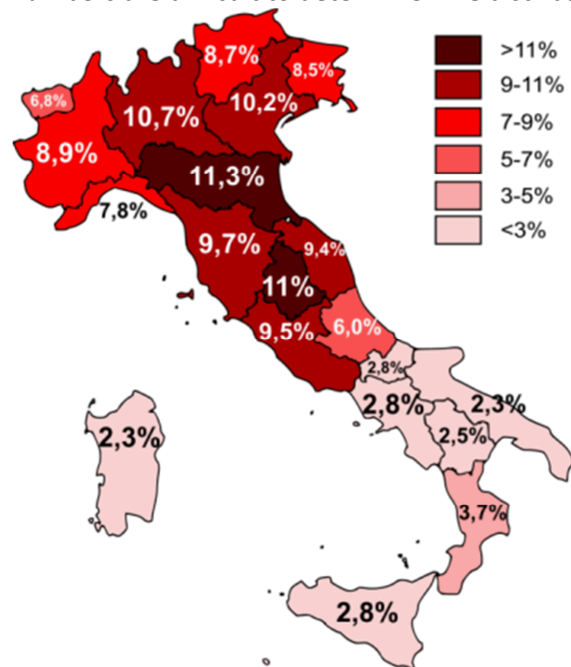
¹ This report is based upon the visit of the CoE inspection team on 27 & 28 January 2016, comprising Francesca Lionetti and Phil Wood.

With a plebiscite in 10 March 1860, Reggio definitively entered the new unified Kingdom of Italy. It then went through a period of economic and population growth and in 1911 it had 70,000 inhabitants. A strong socialist tradition grew alongside a very prosperous small/family business infrastructure of light industry and food production. That one of the Italy's most prosperous regions should also be one of its most liberal and radical might appear a paradox in many other countries, but it seems a perfectly normal state of affairs in Reggio. This in turn became the main source of attraction for the growing population of migrants who have come to Reggio both for the jobs and the welcoming atmosphere. Almost 18% of the population are non-nationals and of these 55.6% are foreign-born, while 44.4% were born in Italy. Remarkably, only a few years earlier in 2011 only 23% of the non-nationals were born in Italy. None of the minority groups represent more than 5% of the population. The biggest foreign-population is Chinese (2.13%), followed by Albanian (2.11%) and Moroccan (1.79%). This marks a significant change from the composition registered in 2011, when Chinese residents only accounted for 1.58%.

However, the most recent evidence suggests that the economic crisis is biting deep in Reggio, and some migrants are leaving in search of work elsewhere. The foreign presence has fallen from 18.4% to 17.5% in 2 years.

3. Migration and Diversity in Italy

As of 1 January 2015, there were 5,014,437 foreign nationals resident in Italy. This amounted to 8.2% of the country's population and represented an increase of 92,352 over the previous year. These figures include children born in Italy to foreign nationals (who were 75,067 in 2014; 14.9% of total births in Italy), but exclude foreign nationals who have subsequently acquired Italian nationality; this applied to 129,887 people in 2014.² They also exclude illegal immigrants whose numbers are difficult to determine. The distribution of foreign born population is largely uneven in



Italy: 86% of immigrants live in the northern and central parts of the country (the most economically developed areas), while only 14% live in the southern half of the peninsula. As the map demonstrates, the region with the largest proportion of its population represented by foreign residents is Emilia Romagna.

Many illegal immigrants from Africa make the dangerous boat journey across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy. This has led to numerous disasters such as the 2007 Malta migrant shipwreck, the 2009 Libya migrant shipwreck, the 2011 migrant shipwreck, the 2013 Lampedusa migrant shipwreck, and the 2015 Mediterranean Sea migrant shipwrecks. Once in Italy, immigrants seeking asylum often are unable to leave due to the Dublin Regulation requirement that they stay in the first country where they are processed.

Figure 1 Foreign residents as a percentage of the regional population, 2011

² "Cittadini Stranieri. Popolazione residente e bilancio demografico al 31 dicembre 2014". ISTAT. 15 June 2015.

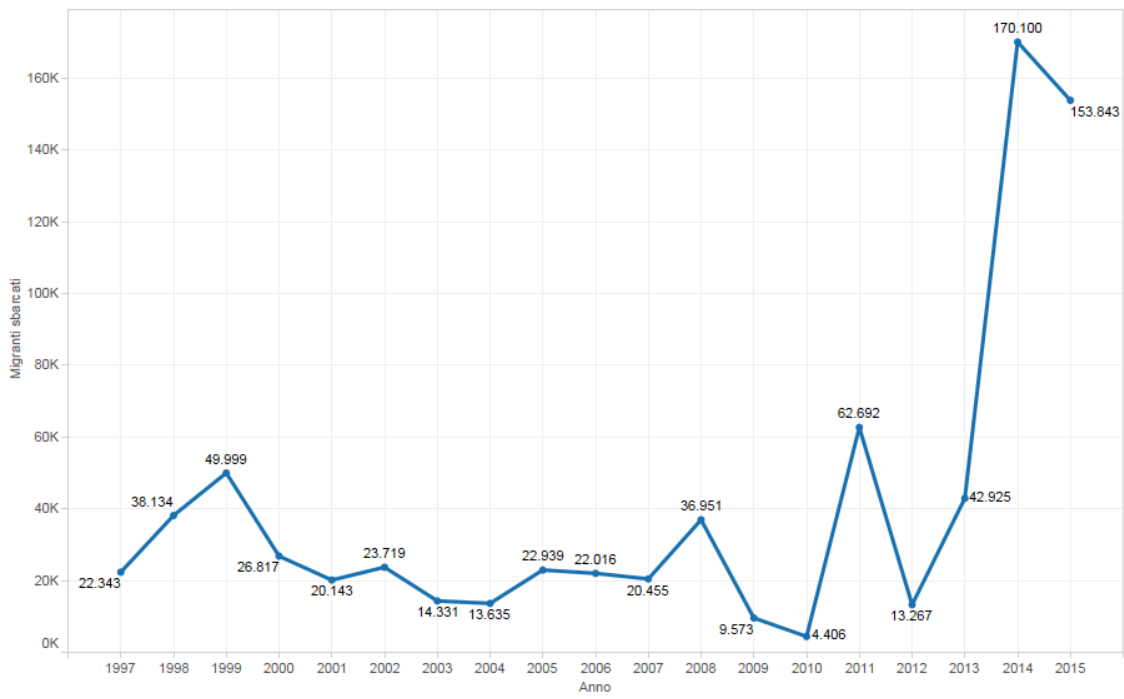


Figure 2 Refugees and migrants arriving in Italy by sea, 1997–2015

Since the expansion of the European Union, the most recent wave of migration has been from surrounding European states, particularly Eastern Europe, and increasingly Asia, replacing North Africa as the major immigration area. About a million Romanians (around 10% of them being Roma) are officially registered as living in Italy. As of 2013, the foreign born population origin was subdivided as follows: Europe (50.8%), Africa (22.1%), Asia (18.8%), America (8.3%), and Oceania (0.1%).³

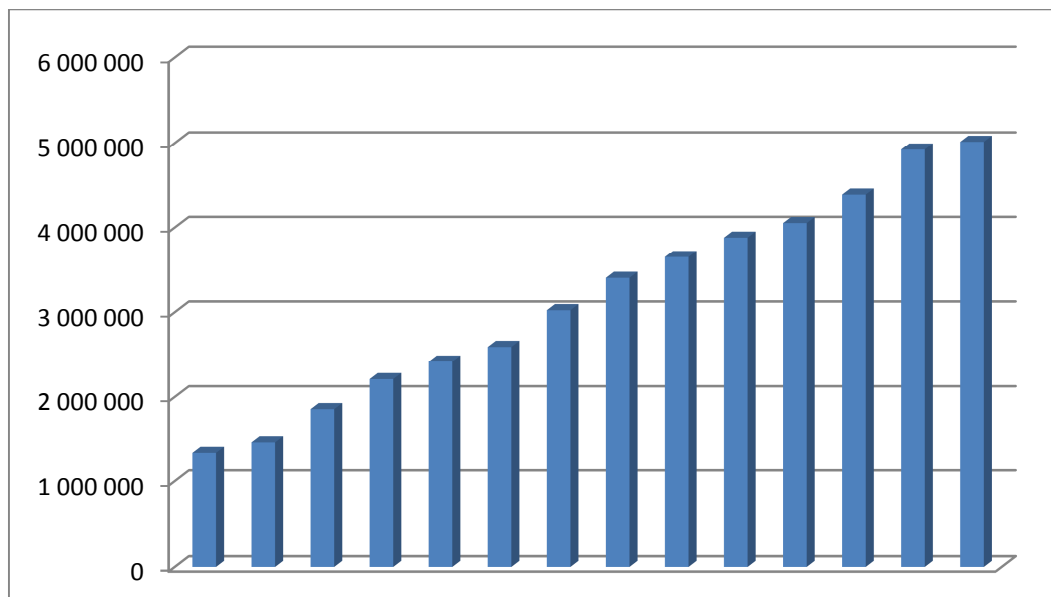


Figure 3 Total foreign resident population of Italy for each year between 2002 and 2015

³ IDOS (30 October 2012). "Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2012" (PDF). Caritas. Retrieved 28 August 2013.

4. National Policy Context

As in other aspects of public policy in Italy, there are significant variations in the way that policy on immigration and integration has emerged and been enacted, ranging between different regions, between the local and the national, and between the radical and the reactionary, as well as long-standing inconsistencies and lacunae. One scholar has described the ongoing situation as a ‘bricolage of idiosyncratic practices and fragmented policy-oriented behaviours’.⁴

When immigrants first arrived in Italy, in the late seventies, the absence of a legal framework produced a sort of limbo, in which foreigners could neither become regular nor be expelled. For quite some years undocumented migrants were able to survive without legal status, but also without the threat of expulsion. Legislation on migration was only introduced fitfully, from the mid-eighties onwards, responding more to periodic emergencies than to a coherent migratory policy, concerned more with the regulation of flows than with integration. In this context the incorporation of immigrants into Italian society has taken place mainly through a labour market that needs workers for manual and unqualified jobs relinquished by the nationals in informal sectors (small enterprises, construction, tourism, agriculture, and personal social services) in a country where the informal economy counts for around 30% of the national product, according to some estimates. The absence of policies, and the type of incorporation into the labour market, resulted in what another scholar has described as “subordinated integration”⁵.

Up until 1998, Italian national migratory policies focused mainly on regularization of irregular migrants and border control, although the word integration is occasionally mentioned in the Laws from 1986 onwards. Local institutions (Regions, Provinces and Towns) were charged with responsibility for implementing early integration policies such as courses of Italian language for foreigners, or taking care of the housing. The role of the local authorities becomes crucial in a decentralized and regionally diversified country, in a migratory context characterized by a great variety of immigrant communities, migratory trajectories and labour market experiences. Local authorities have, in turn, cooperated with a network of NGOs both secular and religious, who have been active in the reception of immigrants, the organisation of programmes of intercultural education, in various projects for integration.

It is only with the issuing of the Law 40 (called Turco-Napolitano) in 1998, that a general integration policy was outlined by the centre-left government headed by Romano Prodi. Integration is defined as: *“a process of non-discrimination and of recognition of differences, that means a process of hybridization and an experimental tool of new forms of relationships and behaviours in the continuous attempt to maintain universal principles and specificities, in the constant and everyday attempt of keeping together universal principles and specificities, of preventing situations of marginalisation and ghettoisation that threaten the equilibrium and social cohesion, and affirms the universal principles as the value of human life, the dignity of the person, the recognition of women’s freedom, the protection of childhood, on which there are no possible exceptions, even in name of the difference.”*

It was followed by the appointment of the National Commission for the policies of Integration of Immigrants, under the chairmanship of Professor Giovanna Zincone, which produced two landmark reports. They declared an intention to move Italian policy ideally on a continuum from the assimilation model towards something resembling multiculturalism – whilst attempting to develop a

⁴ Mazzucotelli, Francesco (2014) ‘Yalla, Lombards! Second Generations in Lombardy: Looking for a Model’. In *Citizenship in Transition: New Perspectives on Transnational Migration from the Middle East to Europe*, by Annemarie Profanter, Francis Owtram

⁵ Ambrosini, M. (2001). *The role of immigrants in the Italian labour market*. *International Migration*, 39(3), 61-83.

specific model of integration for Italy, taking into account the experiences of the other countries and the specificity of the Italian context. The members of the Commission call this Italian model “reasonable integration”, the pillars of which are two fundamentally interconnected principles: the recognition of the rights of the individual and the explicit promotion of positive interaction with the Italian population.

Reasonable integration is based on the recognition of cultural pluralism, the refusal of assimilation and an embracing of the intercultural approach, promoting the exchange between immigrants and Italian society. At the same time, however, the necessity of sharing common values and norms is strongly affirmed. The reasonable integration model can be seen as the product of critiques both of the assimilation model and of multiculturalism. So, at this point in 2001, it could be said that Italy leap-frogged many other European countries moving from a policy vacuum to a position of some some sophistication – at least on paper.

However, the national elections in 2001 brought to power the center-right coalition of Silvio Berlusconi meaning a severe change in government’s approach to migration. Cultural pluralism was rejected in the name of assimilation, while racist discourses came to be employed by members of the government to seek populist appeal. Even though Law 40 was not actually rescinded, but merely amended, the integration projects that the Law was intended to implement were abandoned.

The new government introduced the Bossi-Fini Law, concerned less with integration and more with the regulation of migration through the redefinition of residence permits and the introduction of a residence contract. This established a close link between employment and residence introducing restrictive clauses for long term residence, restrictive rights to family reunification and a more repressive policy towards undocumented migrants through the indiscriminate use of compulsory repatriation. The residence contract is a labour contract with two differences: firstly, the residence permit must be concluded at the *Sportello Unico per l’Immigrazione* (One Stop Shop for Migration) located within the Police Stations. Secondly, the contract must include a guarantee by the employer that the migrant has accommodation and that travel expenses for repatriation are already paid. In effect this directed Italy towards the old German Gastarbeiter model, but with an added twist of Italy’s enormous informal economy.⁶

Berlusconi returned to power in 2008 and, according to its political programme, the new government introduced some legislative changes, notably the so called ‘Security Package’. This was a set of regulations whose aim was to guarantee security for Italian citizens, to fight against illegal migration, the crimes and anti-social behaviour of immigrants. Opposition parties chose not to oppose this approach.

In the 2013 national elections immigration was discussed in a little more depth. The Democratic Party (at present the governing party) emphasized the need for a new law and criticized the existing security-based frame, whereas the centre-right parties continued (as in previous political campaigns) to emphasize security and the fight against illegal immigrants. Nevertheless, while immigration mattered in the 2013 elections, the importance of immigration policy had a low profile for all parties except for the Northern League and the Popolo della Libertà (centre-wing party coalition).

So, whereas immigration policy is usually linked with issues of security, illegality and crime, integration is never at the core of public and political discourses. On the contrary, integration has been conceived as a de facto process, which occurs principally through participation in the labour market. Only recently has the concept of integration become part of a broader political discourse, with the introduction of the *Patto per l’integrazione* (Integration Agreement) and the *Piano per*

⁶ Campani, G. (2007). *Migration and integration in Italy: A complex and moving landscape*.

l'integrazione nella sicurezza (A plan for integration in secure environment, further referred to as Integration Plan) in 2010, and the designation of a Minister for Integration, Cécile Kyenge. Nevertheless, both documents and the designation of Cécile Kyenge provoked political and public turmoil. The *Patto per l'integrazione* has been criticised for the fact that immigrants have to gain credits (ie. attending a civic course, passing a language exam, or attending professional courses) to obtain a resident permit, whereas there is an absence of real integration policies. Meanwhile Cécile Kyenge has often been attacked by politicians of the Northern League for her foreign origins.⁷

The Ministry for Integration was an innovation in the Italian context for two reasons: first, it had never existed before the Monti government (2011-2013); second, in the Letta government (2013) a person of African origin, Cécile Kyenge, was chosen to hold office (and in Italy very few people of foreign origin hold public office). Nevertheless, in 2014 the Ministry was abolished by the Renzi government as part of cuts to reduce government spending.

The *Piano per l'integrazione nella sicurezza* identifies five areas where integration occurs and in which it is necessary to intervene. First, the educational system has the task of helping with Italian, values and civic culture; language courses are also planned for adults, with particular attention to women, and training courses for Italian civic culture, laws and values are promoted.

The second area of attention is the labour market: the need to avoid the development of a black economy is stressed, the necessity of training courses in the countries of origin is noted, and entrepreneurship of immigrants is promoted. Third, housing policies have to be encouraged to support migrants in search of a house and to avoid the formation of ethnic enclaves. Fourth, access to social and health services has to be promoted, through publicity, cultural mediators, training for health and social workers, cooperation between the State, regions and municipalities. The fifth area, finally, regards children and second generation migrants, where the right to be educated has to be guaranteed; special attention is dedicated to unaccompanied minors (the Committee for Foreign Minors) is established to promote integration policies.

Integration policies are implemented with money from the National Fund for the Social Policies, which is given to regions by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. The fund is allocated to regions to favour and improve social services, including those for the inclusion of immigrants. Nevertheless, from 2008 to today, funds for social policies have been drastically reduced; and those for the inclusion of immigrants have been eliminated.

One novel approach of several Italian governments (since the Bossi-Fini Law) has been the establishment of bilateral agreements with several countries of origin, asserting the need for pre-departure training courses in order to favour integration in Italy. These cover not only training courses to learn a job but also courses to learn Italian and Italian civic culture. The Italian state has signed agreements with Mauritius, Albania, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Morocco, and Moldova (and an agreement with Tunisia is being discussed). The main aims of these agreements are: to favour the match between supply and demand through the exchange of information; to promote training courses and educational cooperation programmes; to assign preferential quotas, especially for those who have attended training courses in their countries of origin; and to enhance the role of immigrant communities in Italy. For example, through the agreement with Morocco the parties undertake to support activities for the matching of labour supply and demand, the promotion of educational and vocational training, as well as language courses in Morocco. Italy undertakes to

⁷ Caneva, E. (2014). *The integration of migrants in Italy: an overview of policy instruments and actors*. INTERACT Research Report 2014/05. European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

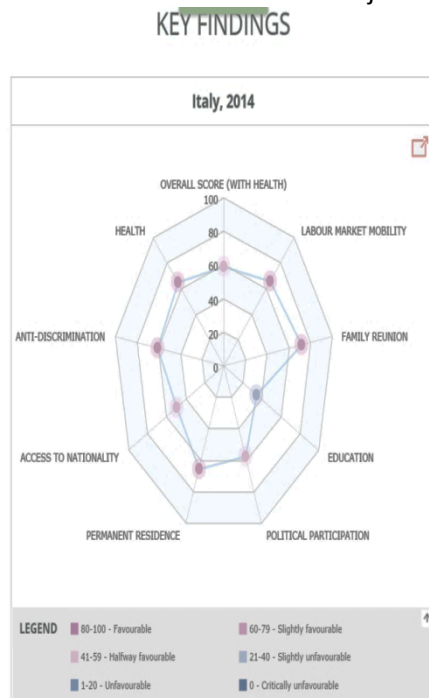
draft a list of potential workers to insert into the Italian labour market, who are then given priority. Training expenses are free of charge for Moroccan workers.

Finally, the Turco-Napolitano law of 1998 still provides for the existence of several bodies to monitor integration policies. *The Consulta per i problemi degli stranieri immigrati e delle loro famiglie* (Consultative body for the problems of immigrants and their families) is formed of representatives of associations and organizations working on immigration issues, immigrant associations, trade unions representatives, local administrations and representatives of various Ministries. The *Consulta* monitors immigrants' language and cultural needs, and promotes initiatives to favour integration.

The *Consigli territoriali per l'immigrazione* (Territorial Councils for Immigration) locally monitor the presence of immigrants and promote integration initiatives. Their members include representatives of local administrations, organisations that are locally active in assisting migrants, workers' organisations, employers' organisations and non-EU workers' organisations. Their local representatives communicate with the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration in the Ministry of the Interior and exchange information to direct integration policies across the country. On the website *Integrazione migranti*⁸ activity reports have been published since 2008 providing evidence of the most important issues dealt with by the *Consigli*, and the activities of the *Sportelli Unici per l'immigrazione*.

The Turco-Napolitano law of 1998 also tasked the *Commissione per le politiche di integrazione* (Commission for integration policies) with monitoring the integration policies and for reporting to Parliament in order improve them. The Commission worked in 1999 and 2001, but it has not met since 2001.

In conclusion we can turn to the Migrant Policy Index (MIPEX) for an assessment of Italy in comparison to other countries and of its trajectory over time.⁹



The 2007 MIPEX found that Italy's integration policies were some of the best among Europe's major countries of immigration. While the subsequent Berlusconi government made statements recognising MIPEX as an assessment tool, their restrictions (e.g. the 2009 Security Law) made Italy's score drop by 3 points in 2010 and lose their place in the ranking (falling to 13th out of 38 countries surveyed). MIPEX observes that, during this time, immigrants were presented by the government as being responsible for general social problems, backed up with debatable statistics and without evaluations of policies' impact on integration. The current Renzi government is

credited with bringing the score up 1 point in 2013/2014 by opening public sector jobs to long-term

⁸ <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/>

⁹ <http://www.mipex.eu/italy>

residents and opening this status to beneficiaries of international protection, as part of their respect of EU law.

Looking to the future, a new citizenship bill has been put before the Italian Parliament proposing to supersede *ius sanguinius* as the basis of Italian nationality with the concept *ius soli temperato*. On 13 October 2015, the Italian lower parliamentary chamber approved a draft law facilitating citizenship acquisition by children of long-term resident third country nationals. If passed by the upper legislative chamber, the law will facilitate the acquisition of Italian citizenship both for children born in Italy to parents in possession of an EU long term residence permit, and for children who arrived in Italy before the age of twelve, have resided in Italy for at least five years, and completed school in the country. However, in the wake of the Paris attacks, fear of terrorism has been deployed in an attempt to block *ius soli* reform in the Italian Senate: Forza Italia's Maurizio Gasparri, Senate Deputy Speaker, said changes to citizenship rules sent the "wrong message in a moment that requires caution", while Matteo Salvini, Northern League leader, called it "a danger" as "terrorists are on our doorsteps". It may still be many years before the bill becomes law.¹⁰

5. Local Diversity and Policy Context

Given the sense that national government (whether left or right) seems unwilling or unable to take an effective lead on integration policy, it has fallen to a combination of local authorities and non-governmental actors to fill the gap.

Since the early nineties, local authorities have experimented with different ways of giving representation for immigrants. These have included forms of elective representation, such as the Foreigners' Counsellors and Extra Foreign Advisors (*Consigliere straniero aggiunto*) and Municipal Consultative Bodies (*Consulte comunali*) first developed in Emilia Romagna. It is worth noting here that these bodies failed in many local contexts and were not set up again¹¹

Development of local integration policy has fallen to the *Assessorati alle politiche sociali* (Town Boards for social policies), or the *Assessorati al lavoro* (Town Boards for Work, which sometimes also have competencies for immigration-in association with *Delega all'Immigrazione*) in the Towns, the Provinces or the Regions. The main practice of the *Assessorati* has been the transfer of resources for the support of NGOs such as CARITAS or, where they exist, immigrants' associations. This has certainly encouraged the development of an associative life among immigrants.¹²

Where local collaborations between authorities and NGOs are common, two distinctive styles of behaviour are discernible. One which considers migrants as vulnerable groups in need of passive support, and another which insists more on their active participation. These differences appear both at the level of regional laws and in initiatives at the level of the towns. For example, the Region Emilia Romagna – historically a leftwing administration - has passed a regional law on the social integration of foreign immigrants based on principles of equality of rights and duties, with the precise goal of "encouraging trajectories of democracy and of representation of immigrants".¹³

¹⁰ <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/news/citizenship-news/1499-italian-camera-approves-of-a-draft-law-facilitating-citizenship-acquisition-by-children-of-long-term-resident-third-country-nationals%20>

¹¹ Ambrosini, M., and E. Caneva 2010. *Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Italy*, ACCEPTPLURALISM, Overview National Discourses; Background Country Reports. Available on: <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/19776>

¹² Other examples of good local practices can be found in *Libertà civili*, the journal on immigration issues edited by the Department of civil liberties and immigration. <http://www.libertacivili.it/>

¹³ Campani (2007)

In Italy non-state actors are very important in migration matters and, since the 1980s, have provided support for newcomers and defended their rights. These actors include trade unions, voluntary associations, Catholic institutions, and NGOs. Their role can be summarized into 4 forms: 1) protest, 2) promotion of networks, 3) provision of advocacy, and 4) production of services.

By contrast, migrant associations and migrant-led NGOs are not as effective at least in the public arena. They were created to satisfy cultural, social and religious needs, to promote the cultural identity of their members and to sustain integration and they offer a context in which to meet, to exchange information, to socialize, to share customs and (religious) rituals and are locally organized and they operate only in their municipalities. They have only occasional relations with Italian institutions and lack a framework of institutionalization and public support. Their participation in the public arena is possible only through the intermediation of Italian associations: they collaborate with trade unions or Catholic organizations (e.g. parish recreation centres) and sometimes with local administrations.¹⁴ They are also economically weak, so they sometimes close down. Their participation in the public arena is possible only through the intermediation of Italian non-state actors.¹⁵

Presently, there are substantial changes underway in the Italian structure of local administration. The Provincial level of government is to be removed along with the *Frazione*, which operated as subdivisions of the Comune. This places much greater responsibilities upon the municipalities and requires that they operate in cooperation with each other. In Reggio there are signs that this is producing a loss in peoples' sense of belonging to their neighbourhood or village, and a perception that city hall is becoming too distant from them. Many of these *Frazione*, within and around Reggio, had a high presence of ethnic minorities and the local committees allowed them participation and representation, which is now in danger of being lost. A new set of local committees have been created to deal with things like safety and urban renovation but minorities are now often left out of the discussions.

The ruling Democratic Party told us about how it is promoting a discussion on the challenge of diversity to the city. The main challenge is designing a socially cohesive future with 145 different ethnic communities. Using a slogan *Reggiani of Every Origin* it is trying to create a feeling of one community which is not 'us and them' but 'we'. There is a risk because of the national political debate is only concerned with prevention and reduction rather than seeking the diversity advantages, but the DP is trying to build the local discussion on the potential areas for asset building. The Party makes a 'Room of Different People' available for anyone to use to build relationships. For example the Senegalese communities were alerted to the arrival of new Senegalese that they had not known about. The DP is doing a survey to understand the needs of the Senegalese to understand who wants to stay or to return to take their skills home with them. In the longer term they are looking to build economic partnerships for foreign trade.

The DP has noticed that foreign workers who have been in Reggio for many years have great local pride, and are very sensitive to potential conflicts cause by the current crisis and political discourse. Older migrants want to maintain a good image in the city and don't want new arrivals to jeopardise

¹⁴ Daher, L. M. (2015) *Re-constructing Citizenship on the Ground: the Migrant Descendants Associations on the Move in Italy*. At: http://conference.pascalobservatory.org/sites/default/files/conference2015/papers/daher_l.m._full_paper_final_0.docx

¹⁵ Ambrosini, M., and E. Caneva (2012). *Local Policies of Exclusion: The Italian case*. ACCEPTPLURALISM, National Case Studies - Political Life; Final Country Reports. Available at <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/22317>

it. So the DP is trying to invest in them as protagonists to anticipate and offer solutions to possible problems.

Education and training

In Italy, non-Italian students are 4.8% of the total, but in the province of Reggio Emilia the figure is 12.7%. The 'second generation' characteristics linked to the educational system make Reggio Emilia closer to other European countries and proportionally different from the national context.

The question of the integration of the second generation in Italy is still relatively new and focuses inevitably upon the school, where a certain number of problems exist. The Italian Ministry of Education has proposed since the 1980s rather enlightened directives on intercultural education, but it is only with the Law 40 that the issue of the education of foreign children has been dealt with through a comprehensive approach. Law 40 has established the compulsory education for all foreign children, has foreseen initiatives for the learning of the Italian language and has promoted the protection of the language and culture of origin.

With its traditional strength in education, grounded in the world famous 'Reggio Emilia Approach' and its founder Loris Malaguzzi¹⁶, Reggio has given much thought to intercultural education. There is an ongoing discourse within Reggio and beyond about the ambiguity of the term, 'Second Generation' and whether it is useful as a tool for designing policy on education and child development. One Italian scholar Maurizio Ambrosini draws upon American research¹⁷ which makes a distinction between the concepts of 'generation 1.5', 'generation 1.25' and 'generation 1.75', in order to differentiate diverse types of foreign youngsters. By 1.25 he means those minors who have begun their socialization process and attended the primary school in the country of origin, completing the school in the country of destination. By 1.5 the author refers to the young people who emigrated between 13 and 17 years, whilst 1.75 refers to those kids who migrated, being in pre-school age (0-5 years). It seems that Reggio has done more than most to try and incorporate the nuances of this into its education system.

There are three distinct kinds of preschools in Reggio: private, municipal and state-run. Migrant kids have most presence in state-run preschools as the fees are lower. Schools are all state run (except 3 private ones based on Catholic or Steiner principles) and they draw pupils from their direct neighbourhood, although there is some evidence of 'white flight'.

There have been requests for mother tongue classes within schools, but no applications so far from anyone wishing to open an ethnically-based school. The city provides space for mother tongue in school buildings and most requests have been for Chinese and Arabic.

So far, the attainment levels of minority scholars is falling behind that of indigenous Italians. Research by the University of Modena suggests this is attributable to inadequate command of the Italian language. The city has set up an office for developing education of minorities comprehensively across the 6-29 age range. The district is divided into 5 sectors to enable management of close relationships with schools. The main activity is providing linguistic workshops for new citizens and intercultural activities for all. Workshops have been run in all secondary schools for about 15 years now. Much work has been done on understanding the difference between children who enter from the start and those who come at a later age in life.

¹⁶ <http://www.reggiochildren.it/identita/reggio-emilia-approach/?lang=en>

¹⁷ Rumbaut, R. G. (1997). *Ties that bind: Immigration and immigrant families*. Immigration and the family: Research and policy on US immigrants, 3-46.

The traditional method of teaching in Italian schools is very verbal, so language attainment is extremely important. It doesn't suit everyone however, as it has been found that Chinese children generally do better in the French system with different teaching method.

The municipality is aware of problems in education but has very limited influence as it is a national system. It is very hard to intervene as the schools are resentful of change or of adopting new ideas. Also classrooms of 30 kids make it very hard to institute new methods. It seems there is a perpetual plan for reform of Italian schools but the plans never seem to consider integration as an important factor. Even when the rules are reformed it is still hard to change practices on the ground. Also the system of training and recruitment of teachers is centrally controlled given local institutions little influence over who comes to their local schools. It is also extremely difficult for people of migrant background to qualify for a course of training in teaching, and teaching is not seen as an attractive vocation for minorities. Thus it is difficult to imagine a time when the diversity of classrooms will be matched by a diversity of teachers.

Reggio's Assessore for Education regularly receives presentations from parents who want a greater role in their children's education. Serena Foracchia has made an agreement with her to connect more closely so that school/community relations can become better coordinated. She is convinced that better education must be grounded in a wider family and community-based approach.

6. Employment and business

Reggio is a prosperous and industrious area with a GDP per capita significantly higher than the Italian average. 99.2% of workers are employed in SMEs with 50 or less employees, as is the tradition in this region of small business and entrepreneurship, in which construction, commerce and manufacturing are the largest sectors. It was estimated in 2012 that there were 9,206 entrepreneurs of minority background, representing about 9% of the total. Minority-owned enterprises are concentrated in construction (particularly Tunisians, Moroccans and Egyptians) whilst the Chinese are more concerned with commerce. The financial crisis has hit all Reggio enterprises hard and many minority-owned business have either closed or left the city. Unemployment is disproportionately higher amongst minorities.

Reggio was a participant in the ICC project DELI (Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration)¹⁸

The Trade Unions play an important role in supporting migrant workers, such as helping people in getting all the documents they need. GIL Union has a big department that connects everyone with a free service to negotiate their way through the maze of Italian bureaucracy. They have done more work on documentation than anyone else in Italy. They always work directly with migrant associations and consider their work vital in achieving the regularisation of migrants.

Another activity pursued by unions is standardizing contracts of employment and this has reduced the number of migrants who are fired illegally. They have worked to achieve influence within enterprises where 'last in first out' has usually been the norm. They say their big challenge is the fact that migrants tend to have the poorest paid and lowest skilled jobs. In the short term it makes it easier for them to find new jobs, but in the longer term but it creates higher risks and limits career development.

They work to give migrants a better representation both within and beyond their place of employment, eg if workers have housing connected to work, or if a job is linked to permission to stay in the country, they play a vital role. Their main new role is providing education and training, not

¹⁸ <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/deli/reggio-emilia>

only in Italian, but also in gaining the skills to progress in employment and to be more aspirational in their careers.

A branch of FILEF (*Federazione italiana dei lavoratori emigrati e famiglie*) was first founded in Reggio in 1970. Its main activity has been to preserve the memory of Italian people who were emigrants, to ensure that contemporary Italians do not forget that the boot was once on the other foot. They use this as the basis for a strategy of welcoming people based on the welcome Italians hoped to receive in other places. The teaching of Italian language is considered the first tool in civic education and becoming an everyday citizen and they have 125 people per week on language courses. They support women and children in after-school activity eg projects to teach mother tongue languages like Arabic and Tamil. They also help with organizing leisure activities such as football and cricket matches.

7. Culture

In Reggio the Library Service takes a leading role in intercultural relations. Reggio has one central library and 5 territorial branches but despite the crisis they have opened new spaces. These six strategic centres have been established, applying a social model requiring them to go beyond traditional service provision and to put relationship-building at the heart of their service offering many extra free courses and projects for people to attend. Despite severe austerity, which has seen libraries diminished in most other places, the service has seen an annual increase of 23,000 new books in all major European languages, plus Arabic and Chinese, partly donated by foreign communities. They have seen an average of 3,000 daily attendances with 23,000 children regularly participating. Eighty people are now volunteering to catalogue and archive all the foreign language materials and 15% of these are of migrant origin.

Services include reading promotion for the 0-16 age group, music classes and consultations with a paediatrician and the health services. All children by age 11 are enrolled as library members and they then participate in other activities. It is considered to be particularly beneficial for Chinese families. Local health units and the cultural department work very well together, as the power of reading a book to a kid is considered to promote health and the well-being of the whole family. Paediatricians want the Council to do more of this work as they believe it is effective and good value for money. If it continues from an early age right through the child's career it opens up many other connections in all parts of the family.

Baobab is a special project on creative writing encouraging children from 6-18 to write about their life, based in the major library of San Pellegrino¹⁹. Children write about living together in a society with many different outlooks and customs. Each year the library provides a topic eg. this year is gender violence. The books they produce can be borrowed and there are also book launches and public story telling events which the public can attend.

Santa Croce library has developed a way of teaching Italian on a one-to-one basis and this is particularly valuable for kids who are struggling to master language through school-based methods. Everyone is pleased with the response of the municipality to the financial crisis, in protecting key services. They have now set up a 'friends of the library' scheme which brings in sponsorship from companies and individuals. They have also coped by reducing staff though natural wastage, rather than redundancy, and training a new generation of librarians who have been transferred from jobs in other departments.

¹⁹ <http://panizzi.comune.re.it/Sezione.jsp?titolo=Baobab&idSezione=244>

A reading in mother tongue project has been developed. It is difficult to find parents to do this so they get infant and toddler centres to hold special events such as for Christmas and Eid in libraries, which gets more parents involved.

8. Language and multilingualism

Reggio has a well-established Language Network which brings together professionals from many backgrounds.

The University Department of Human Sciences has created an intercultural team which trains 2000 students in aspects of integration, language and pedagogy. They are keen to encourage the learning of second and multiple languages and the interaction between different languages. They have piloted projects in Reggio schools but have made less progress with adults so far. They have conducted many studies eg. analysing the relationship between Chinese language and proficiency in mathematics.

The Right of Word network was founded in 2010. It involves 7 NGOs, the Word of Mouth Language School and Italian culture for foreigners, and several public schools. Its aim is linguistic integration for adults and the right of everyone to an education and to be a full citizen through self-expression. Courses are free and repeated throughout the year. They welcome people in a special way, and take a multi-perspective approach to problems, focusing on people with particular disadvantages. Pacts with the Comune since 2011 define everyone's role and responsibilities. It is now accepted that voluntary work must support and supplement the work of public services. The results are seen to be more effective and there is now good coordination and training of volunteers and paid staff.

The network has been of particular value to all those who need language certificates to gain resident permits. However, illiteracy holds the whole process back and is not officially recognised by the state. This is such a serious problem it cannot be tackled by volunteers alone. It is very hard for an illiterate adult to function in a modern society. Whilst in the past it was easier to access public schools, it is much harder now. The new citizenship laws give schools a mandate of preparing migrants for the 2nd of 6 proficiency levels, but without increasing the resources available. The Italian State assumes everyone has an equal basis upon which to learn language and does not formally recognise illiteracy. The network have tried to lobby government to take a different attitude but the problem is deeply ingrained and goes wider than the recent upsurge in foreign migration. Italy traditionally has the lowest literacy competency in the OECD. It is estimated three million Italians don't understand written language at a basic level.

In Germany they say you need 2,000 hours to move out of illiteracy to level 1, but In Italian law you are only allowed 20 hours, so many schools have decided to abandon illiterate people. Many schools will not accept illiterate foreigners.

The certificate test for granting or renewal of a residence permit would be impossible for an illiterate person as they would need level A2. Foreigners have to pay 2,000 Euro to renew their permit so it is a very demanding burden for people on low wages. The government has said some people can defer the requirement to take the test for one year but they have to sacrifice many rights in the bargain. It is estimated that in Reggio up to 400 people a year are failing to take the test and are renewing the residence annually. With newcomers from war zones increasing the number of illiterates arriving in Reggio is expected to rise to crisis levels but the government continues to turn a blind eye, whilst enjoying raking in the revenues from the annual renewal fees.

On the positive side they hear many success stories. After many years their former students contact them to say they are now learning a third language because of the confidence they were originally given by their training.

Many of the migrant associations are aware of having illiterate members and they organise themselves to offer teaching, particularly the Moroccans and the Senegalese.

They are also trying to remove the stigma that attaches to illiteracy. For example, for someone to continue to function in a modern society without literacy, must suggest that the person has other skills and resources, and these should be acknowledged. For example they have great memories. What is Italian society missing out on by not engaging with these people?

They recognise that people will take a decision to address their illiteracy at different times in their lives, eg. they meet women who have been in Reggio 20 years, raising kids, but then decide the time is now right for them to do it.

They are developing awareness in the majority population of the Chinese language as a facilitator of trade and business. Working with entrepreneurs they encourage more to take up the challenge, but there is not much demand yet. The hope was to open a Confucius Centre here but there has been no progress so far. They are also hoping to develop more skills in Arabic and Russian, and there is already a competence in the latter, given the communist past.

Mondinsieme and the Moroccan government have signed 3 year pact to teach Arabic in local schools and 500 students have so far taken part, and many were also able to visit Morocco. Many were second generation and it gave them a greater respect for their parents' culture. Parents realised it had a positive scholastic impact on the kids.

9. Public space, neighbourhoods and ethnic mixing

Ethnic minorities are particularly concentrated in the Ospizio, San Pietro and S. Croce neighbourhoods, where they represent between 44%, 43% and 39% respectively of the population, but there is widespread settlement throughout the district, including rural villages.

The Comune has recently had a major rethink on the way it deals with neighbourhoods and territorial service provision. This is due, partly, to national changes, such as the removal in 2014 of Fraziones as the lowest level of administration, as well as a wish to experiment with new methodologies. This has seen the appointment of a team of 'Neighbourhood Architects'. Their role is to construct liaisons and relationships between individuals, associations and social centres. Their method is to go out into neighbourhoods, talking and listening. They don't only carry messages but also try to find solutions and partnerships. Community empowerment is seen as the new way of working here.

The Comune created a pact with the intercultural service to understand the role of asylum seekers in neighbourhoods, and to see this as the normal way of working, and not just an exemplar. They have just started but hope in the next 6 months to create many new reception centres and activities. They also give priority to building good relationship with the police.

Sadly, however, the media are always waiting for something to go wrong. For example, last summer they arranged for 30 people migrants to help at a political education event, as a voluntary job, but the media complained it was just a way of getting work done for nothing. They had no interest in the fact the minorities were playing an active citizenship role in the town.

In Reggio local committees have been created to deal with issues like safety and urban renovation but minorities are now often left out of the discussions, which is a retrograde step from the past. This presents a big challenge for how to rebuild participation and how to maintain the system. New compacts have been signed regarding sport and urban regeneration as well as Citizenship agreements acting for the care of the community. The first one was drafted in December 2015 so it is too early to gauge its impact yet.

About 35% of the tenants of public housing in Reggio are of migrant background. There is a public housing stock of about 2,300. They have started a partnership with a national investment fund to build more public housing, and there are no plans to privatise housing at the local level.

Until about two years ago most of the homeless people in Reggio were of foreign background. However they are now seeing a big increase in Italians too, whilst some foreign homeless people have gone home. New forms of poverty are emerging, particularly connected with people who do not have a strong community or family networks. This requires the creation of new spaces for meeting that bring together people from very different background across generations and origins. They find this reduces fears and suspicion. For example there is now a food distribution system for families on benefit, and they are asked to give something back by cleaning rooms or babysitting. They also give help to avoid people losing homes with a project for voluntary work as a way to benefitting the community, in return for support. This option comes to all tenants as a suggestion with the monthly rental request. Social services and the Intercultural department are working very closely together in this field including sharing the same buildings.

In a further restructuring of the former model, the Assessore for the Intercultural service has established a cross-departmental territorial team of different stakeholders in order to ensure transversal working across the municipality.

In turn, this team must cooperate with all non-government actors who are concerned with migrants, with the aim of achieving 'everyday inclusion' and ensuring an intercultural perspective. The approach is characterised by going beyond welcoming activities to introducing people to different aspects of life and understanding and analysing their differences and similarities. There is a need to give spaces and time for people and to put people in contact with their neighbourhood and help them feel empowered. For example they are welcoming asylum seekers through locating them in small apartments with other local people and helping them to make contact with local community groups. Even without any linguistic expertise, they believe that each citizen can be an intermediary and positive intercultural actor in their own neighbourhood.

When the Neighbourhood Architects open a new centre for asylum seekers in a district they inform neighbours what is going on. They always have objectors but they try to start a dialogue based on facts rather than rumours or fears. They have never yet had to back down or close a place due to local opposition, although sometimes they may move particularly problematic individuals.

10. Interfaith Dialogue

Although freedom of religion in Italy is guaranteed under the 1947 constitution of the Italian Republic, the Catholic Church maintains a position of power and influence that cannot be compared to any other western European countries. For example, the Church has a direct influence on most political parties, which is the object of controversy amongst those who favour the independence of politics. Furthermore, it is often subject to criticism from those parties that hold a more liberal views around matters such as abortion, euthanasia and gay marriages. Usage of Catholic symbolism

(especially crosses) in courts and schools has been contested by minorities, who contend that it is in violation of the principles of religious freedom outlined in the Constitution of Italy. Crucifixes and other Catholic symbols are not considered by the Supreme Court to be religious signs but cultural symbols. Also, under the 'Eight per thousand' rule Italian taxpayers allocate 0.8% of their income taxes to legally recognised religions, but if the allocation is not clearly stated in the tax return, it goes by default to the Roman Catholic Church.

However, perhaps a more serious issue is the ongoing difficulty which many minority religion find in even receiving official recognition from the Italian State. Italy has 1.5 million Muslim residents, substantial numbers of Reform Jewish congregations, Sikhs and growing numbers of Christian Evangelical churches – but none of them are formally recognised. Although, according to the Italian constitution, all religions are equal and free to operate, the constitution also specifies that mandatory individual agreements with the government are required. Governments of all political hues have proved remarkably reluctant to conduct such agreements due, it is said, to enormous pressure from the Vatican.

In local terms, this variegated landscape of recognition is particularly felt when it comes to allocating permission and space for places of worship. Because it is very difficult for many religions to find a place to worship, many turn to unofficial solution so, in effect, regulation of religion become an issue of town planning. Reggio's city plan defines sites which are available for community services including religion, yet the only official places of worship in this most religious and tolerant of cities are Roman Catholic.

A team of Council officers have been visiting every unofficial place of worship and, over a period of 8 months, have mapped them, interviewed many people and documented everything, such as ownership, capacity, safety etc. The Orthodox Church has a special agreement with the Catholics to make use of their redundant churches, but no other religion would be allowed to follow suit. Reggio has a historic synagogue but it is only used for cultural purposes and the nearest religious facility is in Modena.

Reggio calculates that the Italian State is incapable of resolving the issue. Even though Article 3 of the Constitution gives the right to establish the legal status of faith there has been little progress. Various cities have tried different methods of testing the law but to no avail.

In some cases cities have liberalized their approach to unrecognized religions, only to find themselves overruled by Liga Nord-controlled provincial governments. In theory a faith group could make a bid to turn an out-of-town industrial building into a church, but none so far has put this to the test. This is in contrast to nearby Novellara (which we also visited) and we remain unsure why it seems so difficult in Reggio.

Currently Reggio recognises the existence of the following unofficial places of worship: Evangelical (15), Orthodox (6), Pentecostal (4), Islamic (3), Others, including Polish Catholic (6). There are 34 different places, of which 9 are the property of the faith group, 15 are rented, 10 are loaned from the Catholics. It is estimated there are about 11,000 worshippers across these communities spread across over 100 nationalities. Many also include ethnic Italians within their congregations.

The tendency is for these groups to stay low profile to avoid bad publicity or prohibition. The attitude of the Comune is to help and encourage them to come out of the shadows. The Assessore for Intercultural Affairs has tried to engage with the Catholic Church and she spoke to the bishop about it. He would prefer not to make an official statement but has said he will not obstruct further

regularisation of other religions. Individual priests and churches do play a more direct ecumenical role though.

Quietly the Comune is trying to build a case for full recognition of all religions but is not making a noise about this until they can be sure it is feasible. There are still many risks and if someone chose to challenge the move they could derail it. There are three phases: sensitization of key actors, formal registration of actors, and decisions on what to do with each facility, eg whether to improve, close down or move. The work should end with a framework agreement that will lead to implementation. A local register of faith associations will be compiled. Reggio has already spent 18 months on this project and expects the same period again before it can achieve political approval and agreement.

11. Health and Social Welfare

The social and health services have created 4 new territorial posts in order to achieve more transversal cooperation and to bring greater proximity between service-providers and the public – not at all typical of Italy. Reggio believes that the way to create more community participation is not just problem-based action but through building a community-wide understanding of the situation. There is a need for longer deeper support to families during the crisis. 20% of the 7,000 families with migrant background access social welfare services. Families with kids have greatest need and the most problems in paying rent. As such Social Services have created houses to host families who need support on a temporary basis. 140 apartments are available and over 50% of users are of migrant background.

Religious and ethnic communities are also providing lots of support and the Comune is trying to feed these into what Social Services are doing. For example the Senegalese have created a support fund to help those in need. To avoid everyone turning in on themselves the Comune is insisting on the transversal approach, for example through the new spaces for relations. These include 3 canteens providing 400 meals per day. The Comune is setting up a network to manage distribution of food to everyone to avoid profiteers and freeloaders

Turning to health care there is now enormous pressure upon the service and this affects people of all backgrounds. There is concern to avoid a situation in which communities see themselves as rivals for scarce services. There are rumours spreading that migrants are bringing more diseases into the city, for example. Whilst health care services are now much better informed than the average citizen, they are also susceptible to prejudice. National law assures rights to access to health for all, and they even have a special unit to deal with undocumented migrants.

As the budget is falling they are worried over how it will be possible to maintain their slogan of serving all. The media can drive priority of spending in certain areas and this directs money towards those in greatest need. As it becomes increasingly difficult to fund highly technical forms of health care they will need to ask themselves questions such as what can the West learn from other cultures in terms of health? In particular what can they learn from local migrant communities, particularly in the role that families can play in health and well-being.

12. Refugee care

The Comune has invested in a comprehensive service to try and deal with the local impact of the refugee crisis. SPRAR (Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati) is the system to protect refugees and asylum seekers²⁰.

They are trying to apply an intercultural approach to dealing with welcoming newcomers, offering a two-stage process. The First Welcome deals with the basic issues of identification, certification, first aid etc. Then the Second Welcome offers services based upon the language, professional skills, family needs of each individual. People have very specific needs which must be dealt with and which must then be channeled into their ongoing life. They usually only have 6 months in which to demonstrate who they are and what they can do. They must learn a new language whilst they may also be undergoing trauma treatment. The service deals with employment, training and housing, with an emphasis on portraying the newcomers as an asset to the social life of the neighbourhood into which they move.

The main countries of provenance of Reggio's asylum seekers are different from the national picture. There is less emphasis upon Syria. They started in 2009 with 15 reception places and are now up to 48. Actions are directed towards legal, health, psychological, language, job market, and housing issues. Most people live in flats in small communities to help them live socially. Every placement is governed by a general agreement with the NGO which will manage the placement. Each gets a personalised pathway including 10 hours per week of language training. Then there is vocational training or an internship, with SPRAR designing the methodology for each person. The first phase of an internship is to understand how a person can introduce themselves into work, even before they have received formal asylum status. Giving them simple jobs develops an understanding of how they are able to cope with structures and social conditions. There is also an assessment of their literacy skills.

SPRAR is only currently available for adult males, but within this stricture they take on anyone regardless of their likely long-term success in the process of achieving legal status. They get support to prepare a life-plan with aspirations for education and work. Of the last 48 participants, 32 wanted asylum and 12 wanted humanitarian protection for 2 years (unique to Italy) and 4 are trying to overturn a rejection.

An extraordinary reception centre opened in March 2014 after major arrivals of people across the Mediterranean. 1,000 persons have now been hosted since then and 668 are currently being hosted there right now, including 40 women and 9 minors. It is managed by a group of NGOs, the Comune and the prefecture and has adopted the SPRAR model. They have decided not to open one big centre but to host people in 10 different hotels and then, in the second phase, in 70 apartments.

Managing small groups of people has been the strength of SPRAR, but it has been difficult to find the accommodation and to manage relationships with neighbours and owners. They have held many meetings with neighbours to reassure them their new neighbours are not criminals but people who are to be respected and befriended.

Mainly they do not use social housing and do not concentrate co-ethnics in one district, thus encouraging them to have to use Italian to communicate with each other.

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<http://www.municipio.re.it/retecivica/urp/retecivi.nsf/PESDocumentID/B26860FBA4A86E76C125765C003C9366?opendocument>

People have a lot of free time on their hands so there is a challenge in how to help them to fill it. The time between an asylum application and a final decision can be one year. One success story has been the Mare Nostrum football team which has been formed from refugees. They have entered local leagues and tournaments and are winning everything – which has helped to build local awareness and to endear them to many people.

13. Third Sector Participation

There are over 1,000 organisations in Reggio, many of which are doing intercultural work – often without even realising it. People in social cooperatives employ many migrant people and they have close community and family links to other newcomers. Also volunteers in NGOs organise the majority of migrant-related events. Many migrants join sports clubs and these have produced several specific projects eg the anti-racism championship and the football team for asylum seekers. Social centres are invaluable places where intercultural activity happens spontaneously rather than by design. The Comune is very appreciative of this input but should not take it for granted that it will always remain.

Mondinsieme occupies a special place, providing a bridge between the Comune and many other organisations. There are two main issues which now concern Mondinsieme with first and second generation. The aim is to establish second generation people not as targets of policy but as actors in its implementation. The new mission of Mondinsieme is to start from what has been done in the past but to expand it at social and political level, in 3 fields of activity:

- Education and training – running labs in schools to connect kids to new realities. The new activity is to focus on teachers because they need to know more about the context of their students.
- Giving value to diversity in the urban context, working on religious spaces, connecting migrants to become actors.
- Working on enterprise and employment, so that migrants are not considered only as beneficiaries but also as advantageous factors, so that firms start to ask how to increase the value they create. The aim is to build new services rather than substitute existing ones to create new awareness. This will fill a gap, as was identified by the DELI project, helped them to map the existence of migrant business managers and leaders.

14. Conclusions and Recommendations

Because Reggio Emilia has been a founder member of ICC, and has always been an active player in the Network, it was with some anticipation – and a little trepidation – that the Expert Team made this visit. Whilst accepting that over a period of 8 years change is inevitable, there was still concern to ensure that the achievements of the past should not be compromised, but rather should be built upon.

Actually the Expert Team needn't have worried. The visit revealed that Reggio is still driven by a profound commitment to cosmopolitan values which both comes down from the senior leadership and emerges from the wider community. Also it remains full of committed professional people with a passion for public service and a seemingly endless ability for devising new ideas and projects in response to the ever-changing challenges they face.

The Team was convinced by the underlying rationale for change, which was explained by Assessore Foracchia, ie that the tone of Reggio's policy in recent years had slipped in the direction of giving

greater priority to safety and security, and underplaying issues of intercultural engagement and active citizenship. The Team also accepted the need for structural readjustments – particularly in the context of extreme budgetary pressure – to prevent departments from slipping into patterns of insularity and self-defence through introduce a much greater emphasis upon transversality and common working. Whilst the Team might have been initially skeptical about the need to create a new central team for Intercultural Affairs, it was persuaded that this would be necessary to ensure that transversality becomes a widely understood and practiced principle. The Policy on Social Economy, Social Housing and Interculturalism (appended to their Report) sets out Team's plans.

The Team was pleased to see the alacrity with which the Comune had recognised that recent Italian State reforms threatened to adversely affect the city's traditional strength in local community, and the determined adoption of a community empowerment approach, under the banner of Neighbourhood Architects. Other members of the ICC Network will be encouraged to observe the innovation introduced by Reggio and to learn the lessons of its implementation.

The Team was impressed by the objectivity with which Reggio was responding to the current international crisis around refugees. Whilst the city has decisively taken a grip on the welcoming and treatment of newcomers in dire need, we noted that the city refuses to allow this to dominate or distort the wider discourse of diversity. It was pointed out that whilst thousands of people have settled and successfully integrated in Reggio over the last two decades, there are some who would like to focus all the attention on the current crisis, with the intention of fomenting fear and reaction.

The Team noted that Reggio had completed the ICC Index again in 2015 refreshing the findings from the last time in 2011, and that this had indicated improvements over the four years and well as demonstrating that Reggio performs much better than many other cities in the vast majority of the 14 policy areas. It also noted that, owing to the complexity of Italian government structures and political fluctuations, several of the factors on which Reggio appears to under-perform are often beyond its competence to influence. The 2015 findings showed that Reggio has many examples to benefit other cities in the fields of commitment, education, neighbourhood, public services, business and labour market, cultural and civil life, public spaces, mediation and conflict resolution, language, media policies, international outlook and welcoming. It was particularly noteworthy that there had been a rise in the area of education policies (67% in 2011 and 75% in 2015), public spaces policies (52% in 2011 and 80% in 2015), language (28% in 2011, 71% in 2015), relations with the media (50% in 2011 and 75% in 2015) and welcoming policies (from 47% in 2011 to 95% in 2015).

The Team understands that Reggio is proposing to complete the Index again in 2016 to take account of the changes in policy and structure, and awaits the outcomes with anticipation.

It is not the intention of this Report to make specific recommendations on local actions to the Comune. Reggio is now a highly experienced and competent actor, with a clear sense of what it wishes to achieve. However, we might make some comments about other issues. One would be to acknowledge the leading role which Reggio plays in the Italian Network of Intercultural Cities and to recognise that in recent times there seems to have been a diminishing in the clarity of purpose, energy and participation. We would hope the Network can find a renewed sense of purpose, perhaps through learning from the success of other national networks in ICC.

Reggio might also think more expansively not only about the policy and the content of what it does, but also the tone. We learnt that Italian is an essentially *verbal* culture, and this verbality dominates the way in which the city forms, expresses and executes its ideas. This can be very effective but it also has its limitations, especially when Italy is trying to interface with an outside world, when most Reggiani know only Italian, and most of the rest of the world do not. This is not an insoluble

problem, but it does require that we find other modes of communication and this requires creativity and a preparedness to step outside conventions. In short, Reggio has many wonderful stories to tell but cannot always tell them as well as they deserve to be told. It creates too many public interface encounters which are weighed down by a heaviness of tone and procedure and rely too much on the inadequacy of language. This is not simply a comment upon the most recent visit, but on all the encounters with Reggio over the years.

The good news is that this is an intercultural challenge and, because Reggio likes such challenges and usually overcomes them, we have every confidence that it can tackle this one too, with wit and charm!

**DRAFT PROGRAMME- ICC EXPERT VISIT
REGGIO EMILIA 27-28 JANUARY 2016**

Wednesday 27.01.2016	Thursday 28.01.2016
<p>9-10 Sede municipale Meeting with the Mayor</p>	<p>9-10 Fondazione Mondinsieme Meeting with the president TBC</p>
<p>10-11 Sede municipale Meeting with City Councilors</p>	<p>10-11.30 Via Guido da Castello 12 - piano rialzato - Sala riunioni Meeting with the managers of the programme of enhancement of welfare and religious places Assessore città internazionale - Dott.sa Serena Foracchia Policies for fair economy, social housing and interculturality - Arch. Vittorio Gimigliano Rigeneration and Urban Quality Service - Arch. Elisa Iori Fondazione Mondinsieme - Marwa Mahmoud</p>
<p>11-13 Via G. da Castello 12 - piano rialzato - Sala riunioni Meeting with Services of Reggio Emilia Culture / Manager Giordano Gasparini (da conf.) Officina Educativa/UOC Youth Participation and Wellbeing /Manager Dott. Alfonso Corradini Social Services /Manager Dott.sa Germana Corradini Programming, planning and control service / Dott.sa Barbara Guarniero Fondazione Mondinsieme</p>	<p>11.30- 13 Via Guido da Castello 12 - piano rialzato - Sala riunioni Meeting with the managers of the programme “Wellcoming and Citizenship” Assessore città internazionale - Dott.sa Serena Foracchia Policies for fair economy, social housing and interculturality - Arch. Vittorio Gimigliano Policies for smart city/neighbourhood architects - Arch. Elisa Ferretti Social Services - Dott.sa Chiara Reverberi Dimora d'Abramo - President and coordinators of the SPAR project Fondazione Mondinsieme</p>
<p>13-15 Lunch with Council Members</p>	
<p>15-17 Sala Rossa Roundtable for the territorial coordination of interculturality Fabio Bezzi - CNA Reggio Emilia Ramona Campari - CGIL Reggio Emilia Luigi Codeluppi - Coop. Dimora d'Abramo Reggio Emilia Valerio Corghi - CARITAS Reggio Emilia Rossano Fornaciari - Center for foreign family Health AUSL Reggio Emilia Laura Salsi - FILEF Reggio Emilia Margherita Salvioli - CISL Reggio Emilia Matteo Rinaldini - Fondazione Mondinsieme</p>	<p>14.30-16 Via Guido da Castello 12 - piano rialzato - Sala riunioni Meeting with the managers for the linguistic integration Assessore città internazionale - Dott.sa Serena Foracchia Rete Diritto di Parola (Right of expression Network) University of Modena e Reggio Emilia (TBC) Fondazione Mondinsieme</p>
<p>17-19 place TBC. Visit to the neighbourhoods with the neighbourhood architects</p>	<p>Ore 18 - Saletta Commissioni in Municipio CoE debriefing on results, ideas, next steps with politicians, technical staff and key persons</p>
<p>19-20.30 Fondazione Mondinsieme Meeting with the associations representing the different communities</p>	

COMMUNE OF REGGIO EMILA

Policy on Social Economy, Social Housing and Interculturalism

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TOOLS	ACTORS
(1) Changing minds and attitudes	Sharing and development platforms for intercultural policy	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia: Department of Communication and Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Reggio (Assessorato Citta Internazionale) responsible for construction of the guidelines and strategic pilot actions Mondinsieme and other partners responsible for implementation
		Intercultural Cities	
		City of Dialogue (Italian ICC Network)	
	Language and citizenship	Freedom of Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Reggio (Assessorato Citta Internazionale) responsible for construction of the guidelines and strategic pilot actions; plus schools and associations in certain aspects.
		'Park Bench' language project	
		'Mums in School' project	
		'Born to Read'	Library Service
(2) Creating Hospitality, Generating Citizenship	Train to Inform	Office for the Information of Migrants	Social Service department
		Digital tool and web portals	
	Reception and Protection, including Community and Inclusion	Refugee Reception	Social Services and Associations
	Renew the value of citizenship	Delivering Citizenship 18 years old: Maturity and Citizenship	
(3) Recognising diversity, consolidating community	Intercultural fields: between territory and Welfare	Neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Reggio responsible for construction of the guidelines and strategic pilot actions Mondinsieme and other partners responsible for implementation
		Beliefs, places, communities	
		Housing	
		Health	
	Between plural economy and intercultural community	Commerce (DELI 1 &2)	
		Labour market (for a social and intercultural balance)	
	Culture and Education: origins and the future	Music	
Sport			