



IGOT

Instituto de Geografia e
Ordenamento do Território



FROM THE ECONOMIC CRISIS TO AN INTEGRATION CRISIS? Assessing evidence and policy responses in Southern Europe and beyond

Call for Papers for a workshop to be held in the framework of the
IMISCOE 10th Conference, Malmö, 25-27 August 2013

Background

Over the pre-crisis decade, all Southern EU countries experienced large and unprecedented immigration waves. The integration of millions of newcomers, in the absence of systematic and incisive public integration policies, rested mainly on two structural pillars, the solidity of which is confirmed by most empirical research: a substantial complementariness between native and immigrant labour, and the positive net contribution made by recent immigrants to receiving countries' welfare systems.

There is some evidence suggesting that a combination of contingent and structural factors has started to erode these two 'pillars of integration': on the one hand, the ever harsher occupational crisis seems to be pushing again a share of natives' labour demand towards sectors and jobs which in the previous years had systematically been shunned and 'left to immigrants'. On the other hand, the progression in the migratory cycle – with the ensuing changes in the demographic structure of immigrant collectivities – is boosting the demand of welfare services stemming from immigrant families. The economic crisis is contributing to exacerbate the latter trend, both by further inflating demand and by reducing the available offer of public services.

Although expanding, the evidence in support of the trends just recalled is still incomplete and weak. This is one of the reasons why the degree of public attention towards the integration impact of the economic crisis is still low. Other possible explanations have of course to do with the lack of political voice by immigrant communities and the relative de-prioritization of immigration in both the mediatic and the political agenda as a side-effect of the overwhelming priority given to the economic crisis.

The policy responses to these first symptoms of 'integration crisis' have so far been of very different nature: on the one hand, in some EU countries measures have been claimed and in some cases adopted to reduce immigrants' entitlements and restrict their access to ever scarcer welfare benefits. At the opposite end of the policy spectrum we find some – apparently rather isolated - attempts to counter 'de-integration' drifts through targeted measures (for instance in the field of active labour market policies). Between these two extremes, lies what seems the dominant policy attitude so far, consisting in a lack of specific attention and ad hoc policy responses, and more generally in a refusal to assume any public responsibility for the social and economic destiny of

(more or less) recent immigrants made 'redundant' by the crisis.

Goals and topics of the workshop

The workshop that we propose to organise has three main goals:

A) To initiate a conceptual exploration of the concepts of 'integration crisis' and 'de-integration' with a view to contribute to a more sophisticated theoretical understanding of the volatile and reversible nature of integration processes in contemporary European societies;

B) To gather, assess and compare the existing quantitative and qualitative evidence on the integration impact of the current economic crisis in different social and economic spheres (from work to housing, from education to returns and secondary mobility patterns). The main focus of the workshop will be on Southern Europe as the area where the social and economic consequences of the downturn are heavier, but empirical enquiries on other parts of Europe or even on sending third countries also welcome;

C) To analyse and explain policy responses to the integration impact of the crisis (or the lack of such responses), also with a view to produce policy recommendations based on comparative assessments. We will favour a multi-level governance perspective and one which stretches beyond the formal dimension of policies to include implementation processes and their repercussions on the actual conditions of migrant minorities.

Papers on one or more of these thematic dimensions of the broader theme of the workshop will be welcome.

Organisers:

- Ferruccio Pastore, FIERI, Torino, Italy
- Joaquín Arango, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain
- Lucinda Fonseca, IGOT, Lisbon University, Portugal

Requirements and deadlines

Please send paper abstracts of around 300 words (along with name, contact information and affiliation) to the workshop organisers by 10 June 2013. Selected panellists will also be eligible for funding for travel to the conference; if such funding is needed, please also send a brief reasoning for the request. Selected panellists will be informed of the selection decision by 30 June 2013 at the latest, and expected to submit a draft paper or presentation by 15 August, 2013.



This workshop is organised in cooperation with the LAB-MIG-GOV project on labour migration governance in Europe (www.labmiggov.eu), coordinated by FIERI and supported by the "Europe and Global Challenges" Programme promoted by Compagnia di San Paolo, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and VolkswagenStiftung.