



# PAPERS BARCELONA 2018 CONFERENCE

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## **Panel 79: Local innovation in asylum-seeker and refugee reception.**

### **Part 2: Arenas and actors: Negotiating space for innovative reception approaches**

*Chairs:* Caroline Oliver (University of Roehampton, London) and Jacqueline Broadhead (Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, University of Oxford)

*Discussants:* Karin Geijen (Utrecht University School of Governance) and Dirk Gebhardt (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona)

#### ***Panel Abstract:***

The panel will examine local approaches to reception for asylum-seekers and refugees, considering examples of innovation within the field. Speakers will present research on new approaches that engage both newcomers and receiving communities to enhance reception experiences and integration opportunities through the creation of shared, intercultural spaces in European cities. Drawing on conceptual work on multi-level governance and the ‘local turn’ in integration policy (Caponio & Bockert 2010) the panel will consider different examples of proactive and strategic policy and how this is manifested in local mobilization around the design and development of different types of reception arrangements. Attention will be paid to how these initiatives are negotiated and enacted within national contexts that have seen cuts in the wake of austerity and disaffection with multiculturalism (Ambrosini & Boccagni 2015). We will reflect on lessons learned from arrangements developed from civil society, as well as through wider learning through transnational city networks, considering how these multiple influences have informed strategy and research. We present early findings of evaluations of two ‘Urban Innovative Actions’: the Utrecht Refugee Launchpad and the CURANT project in Antwerp, as well as learn from the Inclusive Cities project (COMPAS, Oxford) and further examples of innovation from the Mediterranean regions to advance understanding in this field. It is expected that a journal Special Issue or book will be a longer-term outcome of the panel. References Ambrosini, M. and Boccagni, P. 2015. ‘Urban Multiculturalism beyond the ‘Backlash’: New Discourses and Different Practices in Immigrant Policies across European Cities’. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 36 (1). Caponio, T. and Borkert, M. 2010. *The Local Dimension of Migration Policymaking*. IMISCOE Reports. Amsterdam University Press.

#### ***Paper 1:***

*Authors:* Tiziana Caponio (University of Turin, FIERI and Collegio Carlo Alberto), David Donatiello (University of Turin) and Irene Ponzo (FIERI)

*Title:* Building a positive governance of asylum seekers reception. The case of rural areas in the

Piedmont Region, Italy

Currently in Italy the reception of asylum seekers is based upon a two-pronged system: the ‘ordinary’ SPRAR system (Protection System for Asylum seekers and Refugees), and the emergency system of CAS (Extraordinary assistance centres). While SPRAR centres usually show high standards and are under the responsibility of the Municipalities, CAS centres are much more heterogeneous in terms of quality of the services delivered; furthermore, they are placed under the responsibility of the Prefectures, i.e. the local branches of the Ministry of the Interior, without any obligation to consult Municipalities. This has raised protests by the population and sometimes also local authorities, that regard the plan of establishing a CAS as an imposition by the central government. Against this background, civil society organisations can play a crucial role in building consensus among different institutions, connecting various local actors, reassuring the local population while supporting mobilisation in favour of asylum seekers. In this paper we analyse three different local experiences in rural areas of the Piedmont Region, i.e.: the Lanzo and Ceres area, where mobilisation around migrants’ reception started bottom-up from a group of volunteers; the Valpellice Valley, which is characterised by the strong engagement of the Waldesian Church; and the Susa Valley, where the initiative was taken by the Mayors of the main municipalities of the area. The goal is that of understanding the conditions that have favoured the emerging of a welcoming attitude towards refugees in these areas, overcoming initial concerns and discontent in the local population. To this end, we will analyse the ‘migrants reception policy arenas’ characterising each area, paying particular attention to local networks as well to multilevel governance relations with both public and non-public actors operating at different territorial scales.

***Paper 2:***

*Authors:* Dirk Gebhardt (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona)

*Title:* Municipalist activism in refugee reception as policy innovation in Barcelona?

From the beginning of Europe’s political crisis around refugee reception, the political leadership in Barcelona has stressed the city’s willingness to host refugees. In concert with other Spanish (ciudades de refugio) and European cities (Eurocities/Solidarity Cities) Barcelona advocates for a stronger role for cities in refugee reception to counter the effects of a Spanish government that is very reluctant to host refugees, and the flawed Spanish refugee reception system. This paper takes a closer look at the local innovation in refugee accommodation in Barcelona, and in particular at the political entrepreneurship of the city to challenge a state-centred asylum policy. It analyses the different strategies and alliances that the city forges, and the arguments that are used to justify a stronger role of cities in managing refugee flows, and ultimately asks what the results of these efforts have been so far beyond a merely symbolic function. While such “municipalist” efforts to change the refugee system from below can benefit from a political opportunity of the strong mobilization of pro-refugee positions in civil society, the evident failures in managing refugee flows in the EU, and the growing recognition of the city protagonism since the “refugee crisis”, they also touch upon a sensitive topic for state sovereignty and a highly politicized debate that is difficult to navigate.

***Paper 3:***

*Authors:* Francesca Campomori (University of Venice) and Maurizio Ambrosini (University of Milan)

*Title:* Between policies of exclusion and innovative actions: the complex and heterogeneous scenario of

## refugee reception in Italy

Local policies towards irregular immigrants in Italy are a battleground where different actors come together with different interests, values and frames. Recently, policymakers at the local level implemented exclusion measures towards asylum seekers, who are depicted as dangerous, undeserving and welfare scroungers. A general display of local authorities' anti-asylum seekers attitude is that a tiny minority of them accept to manage a SPRAR project (SPRAR is a national system in which local authorities cooperate with the Home Affairs Ministry and have a crucial responsibility). A glance on local newspapers offers many examples of the mix of reasons that local governments use in order to justify the resistance against the reception of asylum seekers, ranging from security and the duty of prioritizing citizens' needs to an open conflict against the national level which has the final word on the settlement of asylum seekers in the territories. At the same time, a number of social innovative practices for integrating refugees can be mapped, which arise both from third sector organizations and local authorities. Examples of that are the experiences whose goal is the activation of local communities (in particular families through the co-housing), in order either to reduce stereotypes and prejudices or offering refugees opportunities to build social networks. These practices, that display a strong local characterization, will be analysed against a background of a lack of a national framework in the realm of the refugee integration policies. Overall, the paper intends to discuss the complexities and contradictions in the Italian approach on refugees and the empirical embodiment of the above mentioned "battleground" starting from the local level policies and governance dynamics.

### ***Paper 4:***

*Authors:* Jacqueline Broadhead (University of Oxford)

*Title:* Building Inclusive Cities: using knowledge exchange to explore and develop the inclusion of newcomers in UK cities

Cities are increasingly at the forefront of innovation in relation to the reception and integration of newcomers - as the places with the highest proportions of newcomers and therefore as those most likely to feel the effects of any failures of integration. In the UK context, this has been supplemented by an increasing devolution agenda sitting alongside the lack of a national integration policy framework acting as a driver for local government to take the lead. Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange initiative facilitated by the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity at COMPAS. It is working with 6 UK cities (Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool, Peterborough and London) from June 2017-May 2019 to develop their strategic and practical approach to the integration of newcomers. The project supports city administrations to develop an action plan of priority areas (from civic orientation, to language skills and employment through to the role of arts and sport in inclusion) delivered by a taskforce of partners. It supports cities to work with each other, supplemented by research input and a learning exchange with US NGO Welcoming America. The paper will discuss the theory on integration processes underpinning the project, integration policy and how this applies to the local level, alongside the learning from the project. This includes the development of a new local narrative of inclusion, place making through building new partnerships (with a particular focus on employer engagement) and galvanising local action, for example building on experience of small scale refugee resettlement programmes.

## **Documents**

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| <p> (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/848-between-policies-of-exclusion-and-innovative-actions-the-complex-and-heterogeneous-scenario-of-refugee-reception-in-italy/file)</p> | <p>Between policies of exclusion and innovative actions: the complex and heterogeneous scenario of refugee reception in Italy ( pdf, 491 KB ) (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/848-between-policies-of-exclusion-and-innovative-actions-the-complex-and-heterogeneous-scenario-of-refugee-reception-in-italy/file) (7 downloads)</p> | <p>18 Jun 2018</p> |
| <p> (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/843-building-inclusive-cities-using-knowledge-exchange-to-explore-and-develop-the-inclusion-of-newcomers-in-uk-cities/file)</p>         | <p>Building Inclusive Cities: using knowledge exchange to explore and develop the inclusion of newcomers in UK cities ( pdf, 230 KB ) (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/843-building-inclusive-cities-using-knowledge-exchange-to-explore-and-develop-the-inclusion-of-newcomers-in-uk-cities/file) (5 downloads)</p>                 | <p>15 Jun 2018</p> |
| <p> (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/861-paper-2-refugee-innovation-bcn-gebhardt-fin/file)</p>   | <p>Paper 2 refugee innovation BCN gebhardt fin ( pdf, 405 KB ) (/2018-imiscoe-annual-conference/program/papers-barcelona-2018-conference-sessions/panel-79-local-innovation-in-asylum-seeker-and-refugee-reception-part-2-arenas-and-actors-negotiating-space-for-innovative-reception-approaches/861-paper-2-refugee-innovation-bcn-gebhardt-fin/file) (5 downloads)</p>  | <p>22 Jun 2018</p> |

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