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Knowledge for INtegration Governance

Integration Policies for Immigrants of the City of Milan, Italy

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KING - Knowledge for INtegration Governance

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The KING project's objective is to elaborate a report on the **state of play** of migrant integration in Europe through an interdisciplinary approach and to provide decision- and policy-makers with **evidence-based recommendations** on the design of migrant integration-related policies and on the way they should be articulated between different policy-making levels of governance.

Migrant integration is a truly multi-faceted process. The contribution of the insights offered by different disciplines is thus essential in order better to grasp the various aspects of the presence of migrants in European societies. This is why **multidisciplinarity** is at the core of the KING research project, whose Advisory Board comprises experts of seven different disciplines:

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The present paper belongs to the series of contributions produced by the researchers of the “Social Science” team directed by Rinus Penninx.

The project is coordinated by the **ISMU Foundation**.

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Integration Policies for Immigrants of the City of Milan, Italy

1. THE CITY OF MILAN AND MIGRATION

1.1 Some general structural data on the city

Milan is located in the North-West of Italy, in the Lombardy region, one of the wealthier and most populated Italian regions. As of January 2014, the municipality of Milan had 1,324,169 inhabitants¹ (www.demo.istat.it), distributed across nine neighbourhoods. Milan is the second largest city in Italy (after Rome), and is the financial and economic capital of the country. The stock market is located in Milan, as well as the Italian headquarters of 2,000 corporations, especially in the ITC sector, representing the 45% of those present in Italy. Furthermore, Milan hosts more than 1,000 small and medium firms in various sectors, as well as the headquarters of all the main national firms². For its multi-sector and international economic system, Milan is considered one of the first ten world city networks (Taylor 2003).

Until the 1970s, Milan was the heart of the so-called industrial triangle, linking this city together with the other two industrial centres of the North-West, i.e. Turin and Genoa. Similarly to these two cities, Milan attracted considerable migration flows from the South of the country, to be employed primarily in the automotive plants (e.g. Alfa Romeo, Pirelli etc.). However, already in the 1980s manufactory started to loose centrality in the economy of the city, which became more and more services-oriented. Today Financial and high-technology are crucial sectors, together with the fashion industry which stands out for its international reputation. In fact, in the Milan area are based something like 12,000 firms involved in the fashion industry, 800 showrooms and 6,000 retail outlets (Jansson and Power 2010).

Milan can be described in the terms of Saskia Sassen (2001) as a global city, characterised by a polarisation between a core of advanced and highly skilled tertiary occupations on the one hand, and a – widespread – periphery of less remunerative jobs in the non-qualified services, such as personal care, catering, cleaning etc. The social structure of the city appears therefore as highly unequal, since wealth and revenues are concentrated in a restricted urban élite of professionals (Cucca 2010).

Notwithstanding this unequal distribution of resources, the city is characterised by a low level of spatial segregation (Borlini 2009), with a certain degree of social mix in most of its districts (Ranci 2010; Torri 2010). The only exception is represented by the city centre, where the more valuable housing is concentrated. In the last decade urban regeneration initiatives undertaken primarily by real estate businesses and only to a lesser extent by the municipality, have gone in the direction of increasing spatial segregation (Bricocoli and Savoldi 2010; Cucca and Ranci 2013). However, the presence of a strong non-profit organisation operating in the housing sector somehow had the effect of re-balancing such a trend.

¹ Source: Demostat, www.demo.istat.it.

² Source: http://www.assolombarda.it/fs/2011526122633_20.pdf.

In the 1990 the growth rate of the GDP produced in Milan was of 3%, but this started to decrease in the 2000s (+ 1% between 2004 and 2007), pointing out a reduction of the attractiveness of the city (Cucca and Ranci 2013, 17). As for unemployment, this has been decreasing throughout the mid-2000s, ranging from 4.6% in 2004 to 3.8% in 2007³. In 2008 the unemployment rate started to grow, initially only of the 0.1%, to reach the 5.7% in 2009, the 5.8% in 2010, the 6% in 2011, the 7.8% in 2012 and the 7.7% in 2013. As is clear, the financial and economic crisis, which first burst in 2008 and is still ongoing in Italy, hit the city rather sharply, due to the high concentration of firms in the urban and suburban area. Along with the increase of the unemployment rate, also the use of short-time work schemes and of temporary - instead of permanent – job contracts have increased (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012, 18). Some expectations in terms of economic and labour market development are placed in the coming International EXPO 2015. Yet, the implementation of the EXPO has been marked by several delays, due to disagreements in the definition of the projects, in the selection of the areas and in the definition of the type of public–private relations in their purchase and management; and because of conflicts among institutional levels about the distribution of competences. Infrastructural works were also jeopardised by the scarcity of resources due to the economic crisis and the constraints of the European and national stability pacts (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012, 1-2).

From the political point of view, after a rather long experience of centre-left local governments during the 1970s and 1980s, the city was deeply shocked at the beginning of the 1990s by the wide, national corruption scandals known as Tangentopoli (Bribes City) [...]. After the political collapse of the early 1990s, and the introduction in 1993 of direct elections of mayors, 20 years of centre-right local governments followed, first with a Northern League majority, then with mayors from Berlusconi's party. In the area of social policy, these political coalitions have boosted the contracting-out or privatisation of the provision of public and welfare services especially through no-profit organisations. In spring 2011, a radical change in the local administration took place. First, the primary elections within the centre-left coalition were won by a leftist outsider candidate mayor, Giuliano Pisapia, who proposed a participatory definition of political programme and campaign, and who later won the municipal elections against the outgoing centre-right mayor (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012, 1).

1.2 Migration and composition of migrant population in Italy and in Milan

1.2.1 Migration and composition of migrant population in Italy

Italy became an immigration country in the second half of the 1970s, with three main immigration waves. The first wave included people from Africa (mainly Senegal, Eritrea and Somalia), the Middle East, Asia (The Philippines), and South America. The 1980s began with an increasing flow from the Maghreb. Other nationalities also became significant, including Chinese, Peruvians, and Nigerians (Pugliese, 2002). At the beginning of the 1990s, migration flows from Eastern Europe began. People from Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania became the fastest growing group. Nowadays, Italy is undergoing a process of structural assessment of immigration. The immigrant population has changed its characteristics from a demographic, socio-economic, as well as cultural point of view (Blangiardo, 2005).

Extension of length of stay, gender balance, increased numbers of immigrants with children and an increased number of students in schools are some of the characteristics that outline a deep-seated phenomenon. In particular, as for the length of stay, as of 1st January 2012 the 54.3% of all valid stay permits (3,764,236) were long-term residents permits (Caritas 2013). In terms of gender, according to Istat,

³ Data are on the province of Milan. Source: <http://dati.istat.it/?queryid=298#>.

as for 1st January 2014 women were the 53% of the total foreign residents and men the 47%. Regarding the age structure, minors represented the 18% of foreign residents, and most of them arrived through family reunion⁴. According always to Istat, foreign children enrolled in Italian schools in 2012 were 599,322, for the majority attending the primary school (45%), but also increasingly also the first level (from 11 to 13 years old) and the second level (14 to 18) of the secondary school (respectively the 28% and the 27%).

A diachronic analysis of the data on the residence permits of immigrants from Eastern Europe, illustrates how migrations from Poland, Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria have become more and more relevant since the late 1990s (Bonifazi, 2007; Pittau, Ricci and Silj, 2008; Cvajner and Sciortino 2009).

Tab. 1- Stay permits of Eastern European citizens as of 1st January 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007.

	2007	2002	1997	1992	
Romania	278,582	82,555	26,894	8,250	
Ukraine	118,524	12,618	1,310	5	
Poland	78,930	32,889	23,163	12,139	
Bulgaria	17,461	8,375	4,435	2,530	

(Source: www.demo.istat.it)

Tab. 2- Main nationalities of foreign citizens in Italy (as of 1st January 2014).

Country of origin	Number of foreigners
Romania	1,081,400
Albania	495,709
Morocco	454,773
China	256,846
Ukraine	219,050
Philippines	162,655
Moldova	149,434
India	142,453
Bangladesh	111,223
Peru	109,851
Poland	97,566
Tunisia	97,317

Source: www.demo.istat.it.

At the beginning of 2014, there were almost five million immigrants (4,922,085) with a regular residence permit in Italy coming from more than 196 countries, especially East-Central Europe, North Africa, Latin-America and South-East Asia. In the debate on current immigration, attention is frequently monopolized by illegal entry, and this risks confusing a part with the whole and losing sight of the ever more extensive legal movements. According to a Istat, in 2014 immigrants in Italy represent the 8% of the entire population.

National groups can be divided into different types according to the proportion of two kinds of residence permits (employment and family reunification):

⁴ www.demo-istat.it.

-
- Immigration exclusively for work reasons (Senegal, China, and Ukraine).
 - Immigration mainly for work reasons with family reunification below average (The Philippines).
 - A balance between the two types (Morocco, Albania).
 - Relevant family migration (Romania) (Ismu, 2009).

According to the territorial distribution of residence permits, at the end of 2012 61.8% of the legal foreigners were living in the North, 24,2% in the Centre and 14% in the South (Caritas 2013). The region attracting more immigrants is Lombardy (1,129,185 as of 1st January 2014), followed by Lazio (616,406), Emilia Romagna (534,308), Veneto (514,592) and Piedmont (425,523). As for provinces, the higher share of immigrants is living in the province of Rome (508,241), followed by that of Milan (416,137), Turin (222,419), Brescia (169,046) and Bergamo (128,120). Rome (353,785 foreign residents), Milan (230,181) and Turin (138,214) are also the main cities in terms of foreign residents⁵.

In terms of groups, Chinese are over-represented in Tuscany (Prato) and Lombardy (Milan), Romanians in Piedmont (Turin), and Albanians and Filipinos in Lazio (Rome) (Ismu, 2009). As for the gender composition, there is a prevalence of female immigrants among some African groups (e.g. no Nigerians and Ethiopians), Asian groups (Filipinos), Latin American (Brazilians, Ecuadorians, Peruvians), and Eastern European groups (Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Moldovans Poles), while male immigrants prevail among various African groups (Tunisians, Senegalese, Moroccans, Egyptians). The age structure shows an extremely young immigrant population, with 66% of residents aged between 20 and 54⁶.

The distribution of regularly employed workers per economic sectors is as follows: 13% in agriculture, 9,2% in industry, 18% in construction industry, 6,2 % in commerce, 10,4% in the service sector and 28% in social, domestic and care services (Caritas 2013). In the recent years there has been an increase of the temporary job contracts, regarding the 76.7% of EU workers and the 58% of non EU workers (Caritas 2013). These kind of contracts are particularly diffused in the care services sector and in the building industry, which are characterised by a high degree of casual and irregular work.

The highest concentration of immigrant workers is found in domestic services, where over half of employees are immigrants, reaching around 75% in certain areas such as Rome and Milan. If we take into account domestic workers employed illegally (for example, the so-called "child-minders" from eastern countries hired on a temporary basis), the percentage is even higher. Immigrant self-employment, mostly male, is also on the rise (Ismu, 2009).

The Italian context is also characterised by a certain proportion of irregular immigrants and an increasing number of asylum seekers. As for irregulars, it is difficult to quantify the current illegal immigrant population in Italy: it is estimated that about two-thirds of foreigners in Italy have spent some time in the country under illegal residence conditions (Caritas 2013). Regarding asylum seekers and humanitarian reasons, figures show a growing trend in the second half of the 2000s, with a peak in 2011 due to the Libyan crisis and a decrease afterwards, yet starting from a much higher number than before. Asylum seekers were 9,610 in 2007, 17,964 in 2008, 14,600 in 2009, 20,672 in 2010, 85,344 in 2011, 45,832 in 2012, 38,292 in 2013⁷.

⁵ www.demo.istat.it

⁶ www.demo.istat.it

⁷ www.stra-dati.istat.it.

1.2.2 Migration and composition of migrant population in Milan

Because of its lively economy and international reputation especially as a fashion hotspot, Milan has always attracted affluent EU and non EU foreigners from different areas of the world. As mentioned above, Milan can be described as the Italian global city, which welcomes professionals particularly requested by the financial and high-tech sectors.

As a global city, Milan also attracts less affluent migrants to be employed in the non-qualified services' sector. Immigration from less developed countries started to take place already in the 1970s. Four different groups characterised the immigrant presence in this early period (see: Murer 2000): the students and political refugees from Latin America, Africa and the Middle East; the Somali and Ethiopians domestic workers, for the majority women, followed soon after by Philippines; the entrepreneurial immigration of the Chinese community; the Egyptian community, composed essentially of men employed in the manufactories of the city suburbs⁸.

In the 1980s the immigrant population increased considerably as a result of the two national amnesties introduced in 1990 and 1996: from 37,484 foreign residents in 1989 to 81,977 in 1997⁹. Two groups emerged to the fore: North African men, not only from Egypt but more and more from Morocco (in 1997 4,401 residents) and Tunisia (in 1997 1,042 residents); Latin American women, especially from Ecuador (302 women in 1997) and Peru (2,224 resident women in 1997) entering the domestic and care services labour market. This diversification of origins continued in the following decade, as pointed out by the increasing number of immigrants from Eastern Europe, in particular Romanians and Albanians, and from Asia (Bangladesh and Pakistan).

According to the Osservatorio Regionale per l'Integrazione e la Multiethnicità (2013, 6), in 2013 230,181 foreigners were living in Milan, representing over the 17% of the total resident population. The majority of the foreign residents were women (117,398 versus 112,783 men).

With regard to the broader area of the province of Milan, as of 1st January 2014 foreign residents were 416,137. As is clear, more than a half of immigrants lives in the Milan hinterland around the city, where the manufactories concentrate. Furthermore, also the price of housing is more convenient than in the city area¹⁰.

With respect to the territory of the Lombardy region, in the city of Milan is concentrated the population coming from so called "countries with a high immigration pressure" (*paesi a forte pressione migratoria*): data on 2013 highlights a ratio of 20 immigrants from these countries every 100 residents (Osservatorio regionale per l'Integrazione e la Multiethnicità 2013, p. 14). According to Ismu (2012) estimates, the foreign population in Milan is composed of regular residents for the 82.6% of the total; regular migrants who have not registered at the Municipality and therefore are not officially residents, the 7.8%; and a share of 9.6% of undocumented immigrants, more or less 23,000 foreigners (Ismu 2012).

Table 1 provides an outlook of the 10 first national communities of foreigners coming from "countries with a high immigration pressure". The table does not consider foreigners coming from highly developed countries, but it includes new Eastern European member states, which represent today in Italy important sending areas.

⁸ Comune di Milano-Settore Statistico.

⁹ Comune di Milano-Settore Statistico.

¹⁰ www.demo.istat.it.

Tab.3 - Main nationalities of foreign residents in Milan (as of 1st January 2014).

Country	Residents	%
Philippines	36,832	16.0
Egypt	29,810	12.9
China	24,163	10.5
Peru	19,189	8.3
Sri Lanka	14,678	6.4
Ecuador	12,837	5.8
Romania	11,693	5.0
Ukraine	6,871	3.0
Morocco	6,803	2.9
Bangladesh	5,992	2.6

Source: www.demo.istat.it

As is clear from the table, the immigrant population in Milan is extremely diverse, since the first two national groups, i.e. Philippines and Egyptians, represent just about the 29% of the total of foreign residents. As pointed out above, these are among the more established communities in the city, which started to arrive already in the late 1970s. Whereas Filipinos, for the majority women as in the case of Peruvian and Ecuadorians, are employed primarily in the domestic and care sector, Egyptians are highly present as entrepreneurs in the catering and restoration sector (Ambrosini and Abbatecola 2002). Self-employment is the primary occupation also for the Chinese community (Martinelli 2003).

1.3 National integration policies

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, immigrants' integration has only blandly surfaced the public debate on immigration in Italy, since the focus was on borders control, illegal immigration and criminality (Colombo and Sciortino 2004). Yet, the first immigration law approved in 1986 did not completely neglect the issue: the regions and local authorities were assigned the task of promoting cultural programs and social inclusion measures, yet no specific funding was provided to this end.

In this context local authorities started to play a crucial role in providing the necessary conditions for immigrant settlement and integration. As early as the late 1980s and early 1990s, many local administrations, especially in the North of Italy, started to provide free advice, counselling and other services, while national legislation was still lacking in this respect. These first efforts of local public authorities to facilitate the integration of immigrants have been complemented by the activities of a wide range of civil society organisations.

Immigrant integration policies received some political attention during the second half of the 1990s, during the first, centre-left, Prodi government. The 1998 Immigration Law had the ambition of establishing a distinctive Italian model of integration, the so-called "reasonable integration model", implying both nationals' and immigrants' physical and psychological well-being on the one hand, and positive interaction between different groups on the other (Zincone 2011). On the basis of these two principles, policies aimed at fostering individual equality and at promoting intercultural relations were devised in all the crucial spheres of immigrant incorporation, i.e. employment, health, education and professional training, housing and civic participation. Regions were held responsible for policy implementation, and to this end they had

to draft, in collaboration with local tiers of government, specific immigrant integration programs to be financed by the National Fund for Immigrant Policy.

In 2002, a new law on immigration was passed by parliament (Law no. 189), which was part of the electoral manifesto of the centre-right coalition and came on the wave of massive law-and-order campaigns and “immigration alarms”. The main novelty was the introduction of a link between job contract and residence permit, implying that immigrants willing to enter legally in Italy had to obtain a job offer before leaving their country, somehow re-inventing the ‘old’ Northern European – and German in particular - guest workers model (Caponio and Graziano 2011). Employment clearly represented the crucial pre-condition in order to stay and get integrated in Italy. The duration of residence permits for subordinate work was decreased: while previously the usual duration was of two to four years, in the Bossi-Fini law it was reduced to one to two years.

As for immigrant integration policies, even if these were not formally revised, the division of tasks between State and regions established in 1998 was challenged by the approval in May 2001 of the federalist reform. This assigned to the regions full autonomy on matters of social policy, immigrant integration included. The National Fund for Immigrant Policy merged into a broader Social Policy Fund and since 2003, when the reform entered into force, the regions have been receiving a share of this latter and are completely responsible for establishing priorities on matters of social policy and allocating the resources. As a consequence, they are not obliged anymore to undertake specific programs for the integration of immigrants.

Parallel to this decentralisation of immigrant integration policy, at the national level the mid-2000s were marked by a debate on Italian identity and against multiculturalism and Islam, following focus events such as 9/11, and even more the London and Madrid bombings. Radical positions were expressed by centre-right MPs and ministries of the then Third Berlusconi government. The Northern League Minister for Devolution Roberto Calderoli for instance, in February 2006 during a TV program showed a t-shirt reproducing one of the contested Danish cartoons on Islam as a demonstration of liberty of expression in Europe. Against these risks of radicalisation, the centre-left Second Prodi government elected in May 2006 did not attempt to restore the “reasonable integration model” anymore, but actually adhered to the new cultural definition of Italian identity, trying at the same time to downplay anti-Islam positions. This is clearly showed by the initiative of the then Minister of the Interior Giuliano Amato to promote the drafting of a Charter of the Values of Citizenship and Integration. Initially intended as a set of principles to be signed by new religious organisations in Italy, Minister Amato gradually enlarged its scope. The document was to be accepted by all foreign citizens aspiring for Italian nationality and it established an integration path that - similarly to the French *Contract d’Accueil* - would have required “the learning of the Italian language, of the basic notions of the Italian history and culture, as well as the sharing of the principles regulating our society”¹¹.

Such an approach to immigrant integration was reinforced by the following 4th Berlusconi government elected in April 2008, which was able to combine the new culturalist discourse with recurrent slogans on immigrants as would-be criminals and a threat for public security (Caponio 2012). As early as June 2008, the Northern League Minister of the Interiors Roberto Maroni presented to the Senate a bill called Security Law, essentially concerned with introducing new restrictions against undocumented immigrants. At the same time, this law also formally sanctioned the new Italian culturalist approach towards integration, defined as the “process aimed at promoting civilness (*convivenza*) between Italian and foreign citizens on the basis of the respect of the Italian Constitution”.¹² To this end, the so called Integration Agreement was

¹¹ *Carta dei valori della cittadinanza e dell’integrazione - Introduzione*, pp. 1-2.

¹² See also the document “Integration and security program. Identity and encounter” (*Piano integrazione nella sicurezza. Identità e incontro*), approved by the Forth Berlusconi government in June 2010.

introduced: to be signed by the immigrant at the moment of the issuing of the first residence permit, the IA commits him/her to achieve specific integration goals in a time span of two years, i.e. a sufficient level of knowledge of the spoken Italian language (level A2), of the principles of the Italian Constitution, as well as of Italian civic life and institutions (labour market functioning, fiscal obligations etc.).

However, the IA entered into force only in March 2012, after the implementation rules were finally approved by the Monti government. In the meanwhile, funding for the undertaking of language and civic integration courses to immigrants had already been provided to the regions on the basis of a series of special agreements signed with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy since 2005 (Stuppini 2012: 242). Since 2007 this kind of intervention has become more and more institutionalised thanks to the financial resources provided to this end by the EIF (European Integration Fund), that the Ministry of the Interior decided to assign to the regions.

As is clear, the culturalist frame of immigrant integration gradually emerging in the mid-2000s has both a rhetorical and institutional *coté*. The debate on Italian identity, multiculturalism and immigrant integration has run parallel to an increasing effort on the part of national executives, does not matter their political colour, to invest more and more in civic integration courses, consistently with the 2004 European Union Common Basic Principles on Integration and even more with the 2007 EIF priorities. At the same time, the National Social Policy Fund has undergone considerable cuts, leaving to the Regions less and less resources in order to undertake specific programs on immigrant integration.

2. THE CITY'S APPROACH TO MIGRATION, INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

2.1 A brief history of local integration policies

First initiatives in favour of foreign migrants in Milan were undertaken already in the late 1970s by Catholic organisations: in 1979 Caritas opened an information and counselling office; in 1983 the Curia of Milan established the Foreigners' Secretary, an office which had the task of coordinating the interventions carried out by Catholic parishes in the city. These initiatives were essentially of a first help and social assistance kind, like night shelters, soup kitchens etc. Immigrants were regarded as people in need or the "new poor", and only emergency solutions were offered.

Such a framing was shared at the time by the municipality of Milan. Its intervention was limited to the more difficult emergencies which could not be solved by voluntary organisations alone. A case in point was the squatting of a building in the centre of the city by Eritrean families: in 1982 the municipality approved a regulation that admitted foreign immigrants suffering from precarious housing conditions to apply for public housing. Yet, in the lack of specific legislation either at a national or at a regional level, the municipality specified that immigrants could apply only for those housing accommodations owned by the municipality itself. In 1983 also the region Lombardy intervened, enabling foreign immigrants suffering from housing disadvantage full access to public housing.

As is clear, the immigration issue entered on the local policy agenda as a matter of poverty and social disadvantage. However, in the mid-1980s, an alternative framing started to emerge, emphasising issues such as recognition of cultural difference and political participation. The actors proposing such an approach

were primarily immigrant associations, in particular those of the more established groups such as the Egyptians and the Eritrean, and the Unions. In 1985 ten associations representing different national groups established the Migrants' Co-ordination (*Coordinamento Migranti*). This umbrella organisation had the aim of putting pressure on the Municipality regarding issues of political participation and representation. A result of this strategy was the creation of the Municipal Consultative Committee in 1986, an appointed body with the mandate of providing the local administration with advice and suggestions on immigrant integration needs. New associations formed soon after so that they could be represented in the Committee.

As is clear, in the second half of the 1980s the then centre-left majority governing the city of Milan was particularly receptive towards immigrants' groups requests, as pointed out also by the setting up in 1989 of the Foreigners' Centre (*Centro stranieri*), which had the ambition of being a reference point for immigrant associations in the city. The Centre provided rooms and facilities for community associations to organise their activities and favoured the creation of first immigrants' cooperatives. These were entrusted with the running of the municipal initial-accommodation centres—foreign-workers' hostels established with the funds provided by the 1990 immigration law. Furthermore, the Centre could rely upon the informal collaboration of ethnic leaders, i.e. of members of the Consultative Committee, in order to deliver social services to immigrant users who needed the help of interpreters and mediators.

Yet such a multicultural project of social integration yielded contradictory outcomes. The Consultative Committee became progressively less influential as a result of a lack of representativeness among many associations participating in it (Murer 2000: 19). The project of the Foreigners' Centre also failed because of quarrels between the managers of the administrative departments: at the end just a small Foreigners' Office remained open to deliver first reception and assistance services. As for the multi-ethnic cooperatives, most of these organisations lacked experience in running accommodation services. Maximum-stay rules (six months) were often disregarded, as were the monthly fees. Episodes of drug dealing and other illegal activities were reported by newspapers, causing tensions in the neighbourhoods concerned.

The electoral victory of the Northern League in November 1993 left no room for any positive evaluation of previous multicultural policies¹³. The first two years of the Northern League's administration were marked by an effort to close down the most disreputable accommodation centres and get rid of the insolvent cooperatives. Immigrant organisations and the unions mobilised against these plans for dissolution, and provided support to the people living in the centres. In order to face these tensions, in May 1995 a temporary roundtable on immigrants' housing problems was established gathering together local politicians, public officials, as well as representatives of the unions and of Caritas. Their decision to appoint the vice-president of a prominent Catholic organisation, the Italian Voluntary Movement (*Mo.Vi, Movimento Italiano per il Volontariato*), as head of the Social Services Department in 1995 opened a window of opportunity for the institutionalisation of the Catholic policy network, sanctioning the definitive exclusion of immigrant associations (Caponio 2010).

Thus, the implementation of the Northern League policy priorities was pursued through a strategy of redefinition of the legitimate stakeholders. These were no longer identified with immigrant groups claiming recognition and participation, but rather with foreign individuals who needed to be assisted and/or integrated. As a consequence, Catholic associations were regarded as crucial, given their greater professional experience in providing social services to people in disadvantaged social conditions.

¹³ This success of the Northern League cannot be explained with reference only to the immigration issue. It was the outcome of a more general situation of discontent in the city following the corruption scandals that decimated the Milanese political elite in 1992 (the so-called 'Tangentopoli').

An analysis of the official policy priorities pursued in Milan by the Northern League majority in the period 1993-1997 indicates how these focused essentially on supporting individual integration defined in terms of access to housing facilities (shelters and initial-accommodation centres) and to employment (vocational training). Attention was also devoted to a particularly vulnerable group such as refugees, with specific programmes aimed at assisting their insertion in the labour market (vocational training and Italian language courses). Cultural projects were almost non-existent, with the exception of the interpretation and translation service of the Foreigners' Office, which continued to hire professional interpreters only on an ad hoc basis.

A similar approach was pursued also by the following centre-right coalitions governing Milan between 1997 and 2006. Since 1997, thanks also to ad hoc national funding, another vulnerable category such as that of trafficked women started to be taken into account by local policies. Special protection and social integration programmes were promoted, in order to safeguard those women who had reported their exploiters to the police.

2.2 Political responsibility: elected representatives and officials

In 1993 the reform of the local electoral system, which introduced the direct election of the city's Mayor, changed considerably the perception of local policies in Italy, from marginal to more and more crucial for citizens' wellbeing. Since then, immigration has become a hot issue in the main cities' local electoral campaigns. In the case of Milan, as pointed out above, immigration was particularly politicised by the Northern League since 1993 onwards, and has always been in the local political agenda.

In the 2000s two phases can be distinguished in the official discourse of political parties about immigration. The first phase, covering the two electoral campaigns of 2001 and 2006, was somehow in continuity with the previous period and characterised by an emphasis on the issue of security. A negative framing of immigration prevailed: immigrants, very often compared in a confusing manner to undocumented and overstayers, were presented as a source of insecurity and criminality. In the second phase, corresponding to the 2011 electoral campaign, a greater appreciation of immigrants' diversity started to emerge, emphasising the positive role that could be played by immigrant associations and their involvement in the political sphere. Whereas in the first period the scene was dominated by centre-right parties, including the Northern League, in 2011 a sort of convergence between the two opposed political coalitions can be pointed out. In fact, both centre-right and centre-left candidate mayors acknowledged the necessity of protecting residents' security while promoting at the same time regular immigrants' active participation and representation.

In particular, as far as the centre-right candidate Letizia Moratti, was concerned, immigration and immigrant integration was dealt with under the heading: "Welcome in a context of legality". Three actions were mentioned: 1) to collaborate with regional and provincial authorities in order to establish an integrated system of services for regular immigrant residents; 2) to support the cultural initiatives organised by the communities living in Milan; 3) to establish a consultative institution to involve immigrant groups in local policy-making.

As regards the centre-left candidate Giuliano Pisapia, immigration was mentioned in the very first page of the coalition's manifesto as a positive resource for the city. In particular, high skilled immigrants such as students and researchers, were depicted as potential "friends" and "ambassadors" of the city in the world. The manifesto stressed in particular the need to involve foreign residents in the local political sphere: in this respect the candidate Mayor officially took the commitment of putting pressure on the national

government to introduce local voting rights for long-term foreign residents. The link between immigration and criminality was explicitly rejected, while emphasising the need for innovative experiments at the neighbourhood level. Furthermore, migration was also treated under the heading “Milan: International city”. Immigrants were defined “new citizens”, and the opening of multitask services aimed at catering with their needs was proposed. Through the online constant relations between different institutions such as the Police Headquarters, the population registry, the local health services etc., these services should have enabled resident immigrants to carry out all the bureaucratic procedures required in order to have access to the social services offered by the city.

2.3 Administrative organization of policies

The competence on immigrant integration traditionally lies within the Social Policy Department. The new centre-left majority has not introduced any innovation in this respect. Immigration is regarded primarily as a socio-economic matter.

As for the administrative machine, the Foreigners’ Office is a line unit of the Service for Adults in Disadvantaged Conditions (*Servizio adulti in difficoltà*). The fact that the Office has been also for quite a long-time responsible for nomads and gipsy people clearly underlines a framing of immigration as a social problem. Therefore, the Foreigners’ Office has not a coordinating role, but is rather directly involved in service delivery.

The budget of the Foreigners’ Office is composed of a mix of financial sources. According to our interviewees, if in the past the budget was provided primarily by the Municipality of Milan and the National government, today EU funding is crucial. In particular, the city of Milan has been involved in various EIF projects. These are regarded as fundamental in order to sustain immigrant integration initiatives.

To get access to EU projects and funds, a crucial role has been played throughout the 2000s by the International Relations Department of the Municipality. This Dept has a coordinating function and is directly linked with the Mayor staff (*Gabinetto del Sindaco*). In particular, the city adheres to the Integrating Cities network and has actively participated in the project “Benchmarking Integration Policies in European Cities”. In November 2007 Milan hosted the Second Integrating Cities Conference.¹⁴

As for the participation of target groups, this is still scarce, notwithstanding the attempt of the Letizia Moratti centre-right administration to establish some direct relations with immigrant associations. According to the interviewed partners, the Mayor organised three meetings with their representatives, even though no formal consultative council was established. Furthermore, a census of the immigrant associations actively working in the city area was undertaken and specific funding was devoted to their activities. In order to get access to these resources, the associations had to meet three requirements, i.e.: to have a formal charter or statute; to have a certificate of incorporation signed by a notary; to have a formal budget document.

In the late 2000s, following the cuts in the national social policy budget, these initiatives have been considerably reduced and then abandoned, notwithstanding the explicit positive attitude of the current Social Policy Deputy Mayor towards immigrant associations.

¹⁴ Milan is member of the Eurocities network since 1986 and is one of its founding cities.

Another source of funding is represented by private banking foundations. During the centre-right administration of Mayor Letizia Moratti, a specific fund was created with the contributions of these private actors for co-development projects based on the collaboration between immigrant and Italian associations in Milan and the home country. Thanks to this project, immigrant associations have get access to specific training on matters of co-development, and had the opportunity to develop transnational contacts with associations in the countries of origin.

At the time of our research (Fall 2014) the administrative structure of immigrant integration services in Milan was undergoing significant changes. Thanks to funding provided by the Ministry of Labour (see also below the project *RaggiungiMi*, § 3.1.2), the city has been engaged since 2012 in a participative process in order to establish the so called “Immigration Centre”, i.e. a one-stop-shop office where foreigners willing to leave in Milan for whatever reason should be able to have access to all kind of services they might need. According to our interviewees, such a project has to be regarded as an initiative of the new centre-left government, and in particular an idea of the new Social Policies Alderman. In February 2013 an agreement was signed with the Prefecture, the Police Head Quarters (*Questura*), the Health Unit and the Regional Education Authority. The new office should not only make it easier for newcomers to handle all kind of administrative tasks linked with the residence permit, health care insurance etc., but should also provide information on matters of a relevance for foreigners living in the city such as intercultural mediation, anti-discrimination, legal protection and the like. In the plans of the Aldermen the Immigration Centre should become operative in 2015.¹⁵ However, according to our interviewees, issues of coordination between different institutions are revealing more difficult than initially expected. If and to what extent the Immigration Centre will really be implemented is still an open question.

3. THE CITY’S PRACTICE OF (GENERAL AND SPECIFIC) POLICIES RELEVANT FOR INTEGRATION PROCESSES

3.1 The legal-political dimension of local integration policies

3.1.1. *The city and the legally non – existent residents*

Since the early 1990s immigrant integration policies in Milan have been based on the firm distinction between regular and irregular immigrants. Especially in the four years of the Northern League government, but also in some respects afterwards, these two groups have been framed in opposite terms: whereas the first were defined as ‘deserving’ migrants, insofar as they provided with their work a contribution to the local economy, the second were framed in terms of a threat to public security.

As a consequence, the services provided by the Municipality, also when on the basis of contracts with NGOs known for their work with undocumented foreigners, have just been delivered to regular immigrants. The residence permit has always been a crucial requirement in order to get access to such services (e.g. first accommodation, night shelters etc.).

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https://www.comune.milano.it/portale/wps/portal/lut/p/c0/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3hHX9OgAE8TIwP_kGBjAyMPb58Qb0tfYwMDA_2CbEdFAJbRREs!/?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/wps/wcm/connect/ContentLibrary/giornale/giornale/tutte+le+notizie+new/sindaco/accordo_istituzioni_immigration_center

(Accessed in October 2014).

A partial exception to this rule is that of asylum seekers and trafficked women: these are categories of migrants whose status is temporary and the risk of becoming undocumented is considerably high. Nevertheless, the Foreigners' Office considers them as vulnerable individuals, therefore deserving particular assistance. Special services have been carried out since the 1980s in the case of asylum seekers and the late 1990s in that of trafficked women. These two categories of migrants still represent a crucial concern for the city administration current policies.

3.1.2 Other relevant legal statuses

In terms of legal status, another category of immigrants targeted by the municipality integration policies is that of immigrants for family reasons. Thanks to a funding of the Minister of Labour, a special office was set up in 2012 to provide information on family reunion procedures, as well as psychological support and counselling (on language courses, education, employment etc.) to newly arrived family members. The project, called *RaggiungiMi* (Join me), is based on an inter-institutional partnership involving all the relevant actors intervening on family reunion procedures, i.e. the Prefecture, the Local Health Unit, the Population Registry, the Provincial Education Service, the Municipal network of Social Services and third sector associations working on the issue.

3.1.3 The practice of migrants and migrant organizations' (non-)participation in politics

As pointed out above, immigrant organisations played a relevant role in the mid-1980s, when the Consultative Committee was put in place with the goal of promoting their participation in policymaking processes (see §2.1). This was abandoned in the early 1990s, after the electoral victory of the Northern League Mayor Marco Formentini.

Since then, immigrant associations have been somehow marginalised vis-à-vis the more reliable and experienced Italian NGOs, which have been running most of the municipality services for immigrants' reception and assistance. The issue of immigrants' political participation was sidelined and became a sort of *tabu* for the centre-right majorities governing the cities since the 1990s. A change of approach though started to take place with Mayor Letizia Moratti, who, while being a prominent figure of centre-right Berlusconi movement, still showed a certain interest in immigrant associations as a resource for the city, in particular in the perspective of the EXPO 2015 event. In more concrete terms, the Mayor held three meetings with the immigrant organisations operating in the city area. However, no consultative institution was established, and relations with immigrant associations appear today to be primarily of an informal kind.

In fact, as far as immigrant political participation is concerned, the new centre-left governing majority seems to emphasise individual voting rights rather than groups' representation (see above: 2.2). During the electoral campaign of 2011, the current Mayor Giuliano Pisapia formally took stance in favour of a revision of the national electoral law, which does not allow for immigrant vote not even at a local level. After its electoral victory, he supported a national petition started by the movement *L'Italia sono anch'io* (Italy is also me) formally proposing a new law on immigrants local voting rights which has not been discussed in the Parliament yet.

3.2 The practice of policies in the hard socio – economic domains and migrants

3.2.1 Migrants and work and entrepreneurship

Access to employment has always represented a central concern for the Milan city administration. The Foreigners' Office has established a specific counselling service on matters of employment and vocational training, providing also information on the recognition of educational qualifications and on the bureaucratic procedures for undertaking an entrepreneurial activity.

Furthermore, access to the labour market is a central action underlying projects dealing with refugees and trafficked women. In particular, as far as refugees are concerned, specific vocational training programmes were offered by NGOs working in partnership with the municipal Foreigners' Office in the aftermath of the so called North Africa crisis, in 2012-2013. A case in point are the interventions funded by the Fund for The Development of Integration Policy (*Fondo per l'accompagnamento all'integrazione*) of the Associations of the Italian Municipalities (*Anci – Associazioni comuni italiani*) in 2012.

Another category targeted by labour market measures are newly arrived young immigrants. In 2012 the project SAFE (Scouting for Agriculture Forward Employment) received funding from FEI and was realised between September 2013 and June 2014 on the basis of a partnership with the main associations of the agricultural sector and with the co-operative Farsi Prossimo. A group of 30 migrants aged between 19 and 35 years old and recently arrived in the Lombardy region (i.e. maximum 4 years) were involved into a specific vocational training programme aimed at favouring their employment in the agricultural sector, which is particularly relevant for the regional (and Italian) economy. The programme included also a course of Italian language, regarded as a crucial requirement in order to get access to the local labour market.¹⁶

3.2.2 Migrants and education

According to our interviews, immigrant children access to education has become a prominent issue in the policy agenda of the city of Milan only in 2006, with Mayor Letizia Moratti, probably because of her previous experience as Minister of Education and University Research at a national level. During the Moratti period various projects have been launched on this matter, funded primarily by the national government on the basis of Law n. 285/1997, regarding the rights of minors and adolescents.

A case in point is the project called "Porto Franco", providing tutoring to the students enrolled in the city's secondary schools. While not specifically targeting immigrants, yet the 40% of beneficiaries had a foreign origin. Other projects on the contrary explicitly address immigrant students specific needs, as in the case of the project *Figure di integrazione* (Actors of immigrant integration), funded by the Ministry of the Interior on the basis of FEI resources. The project, based on a partnership with NGOs such as Farsi Prossimo and L'Impronta, consisted of specific interventions of cultural mediation, support in the learning of the Italian language, leisure activities etc. In a similar vein, the project *Mediante*, realised between September 2010 and June 2011 and always funded by Ministry of the Interior FEI resources, was aimed at providing services of link workers and intercultural mediation to primary and secondary (first cycle) schools, in order to support the dialogue between teachers, immigrant children and their families. Of a particular relevance is also the project *Cerco-Offro Scuola* (I look for-I offer School), always funded by FEI through the Ministry of the Interior, which targets young migrants arrived in Milan at the age of 16 to 25 years old. The project offers Italian language courses tailored to cater with the needs of these youngsters; at the same time other

¹⁶ For details see: <file:///C:/Users/Utente/Downloads/Dossier%20finale.pdf>.

actions are carried out in order to avoid school drop-out and to undertake a dialogue with the families of origin.

To enhance adult immigrants' access to education opportunities, and in particular to Italian language courses, in 2012 the website www.milano.italianostranieri.org was launched. This website does not only provide information, but is an instrument helping migrants to find the course that better cater their needs. It has been established in the context of the *RaggiungiMi* project (see: § 3.1.2).

3.2.3. Migrants and housing

As pointed out above (§2.1), the issue of immigrants access to housing has always been particularly hot in the local policy agenda, due to the high costs of private rents in the city. Foreign residents have been admitted to apply for public housing since the early 1980s, even in the lack of a national immigration law formally establishing such a right. According to official data provided by the municipality of Milan, since 2000 an increasing number of immigrants have been able to get access to public housing, representing over the 30% of the total number of the beneficiaries applying every year.

Tab. 4- Beneficiaries of public housing in Milan, 2000 – 2011

Year	Total	Italians	Foreigners	% foreigners
2000	1,770	1,552	218	12.3
2001	1,259	1,070	189	15.0
2002	1,127	789	338	30.0
2003	899	682	217	24.1
2004	1,057	690	367	34.7
2005	1,384	889	495	35.8
2006	1,157	762	395	34.1
2007	960	730	230	24.0
2008	1,065	738	327	30.7
2009	1,242	787	455	36.6
2010	1,059	681	378	35.7
2011	1,080	723	357	33.1

Source: Municipality of Milan

Furthermore, immigrants, in particular newcomers, can have access to temporary accommodation facilities of the municipality of Milan and run by NGOs. Some of these accommodation centres cater to the needs of specific categories of migrants such as disadvantaged families, trafficked women and single women with children. However, the great majority of the municipality housing projects target the disadvantaged population in general, immigrant and native alike. A case in point is the project *Star bene a Milano* (Living fine in Milan), which was launched in 2010 on the basis of a funding of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. A municipal building was renovated to be arranged in part as an hostel for immigrant workers and in part to apartments for single women with children (not only foreigners). Furthermore, an information desk providing counselling on housing facilities in the city was opened.

3.2.4 Migrants and health

Generally speaking, health is not a municipal competence in Italy, but rather a regional one. In the course of the 1990s the National Health System has undergone a process of increasing regionalisation, and as a consequence also health policies for immigrants are primarily a regional matter.

However, in 2007 the city of Milan adhered to the European network 'Healthy and wealthy together. Developing common European modules on migrants health and poverty', lead by the Portuguese city of Amadora and funded by EIF (period 2009-2011). The main goal of the project was that of establishing networks between public institutions and private organisations to address the link between health and migrants' poor living conditions, and to favour the exchange of information and data on the different local policies and practices. Milan municipality contributed to the network by strengthening its coordinating role in two existing projects, i.e.: the network on psychological and mental disorders linked to processes of family reunion; the vocational training project for police officers on domestic violence and abuse.

3.3 The practice of handling cultural and religious diversity and social cohesion

As already mentioned above with relation to immigrant associations and political participation, since the early 1990s immigrant integration policies in Milan have targeted primarily individual immigrants rather than cultural or religious groups. In the mid-2000s the Mayor Letizia Moratti opened a window of opportunity for immigrant and cultural associations in Milan, in the context of the city initiatives for the 2015 EXPO event. Immigrant associations and cultural groups started to be regarded as a resource for the city international outlook.

In October 2011, the new centre-left Deputy Mayor of Culture, Fashion and Design established the City World Forum, in order to favour the participation of the international communities living in the city to the cultural events linked to EXPO and to the city cultural life more generally. Over 500 associations representing 100 different groups gather together in the World Forum. Roundtables on specific issues have also been established, such as "Women and cultures", "Museum of cultures" and "Communication and cultural events". A specific roundtable has been promoted on food and culture, since nutrition is the main theme of the 2015 Universal EXPO.

This positive appreciation of cultural diversity taking place in the context of a city' branding international strategy, does not seem to take into account religious diversity. More generally, no policies of inter-religious dialogue have been promoted by the municipality. Relations with religious groups, and in particular with the Muslim community, have been not always easy. The request of an area where to build a mosque has been for a long-time disregarded by the city administration. The centre-left majority elected in 2011 abandoned such a hostile attitude, and at the beginning of its mandate promised to take the Muslim community request into account. Yet, the mosque issue has been highly politicised by the right-wing opposition parties, and only recently the municipality came to a decision. In the context of the EXPO internationalisation initiatives, three lots of public land are going to be allocated to religious communities for the building of their places of worship, and one of these is going to be assigned to the Muslim community. The mosque will be built only with private funding. Yet, the Milan mosque is not going to be opened in time for the 2015 EXPO.

However, there is no doubt that with the election of the centre-left majority, a different approach to inter-religious dialogue seems to be pursued by the municipality. In 2012 the Municipal Executive (*Giunta Municipale*) approved a deliberative act establishing an official register of the Religious Organisations

present in the city. The aim is that of fostering a greater knowledge of the various different communities that are active in the city area, which should represent a first step towards the undertaking of more structured forms of intercultural dialogue.¹⁷

4. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The framing of immigrant integration in Milan has undergone at least three main frame shifts, i.e.:

- 1) From the early 1980s to the end of the decade a multicultural frame prevailed, emphasising the role of the different immigrant associations and the need for their participation and representation into policy-making;
- 2) From the early 1990s to the mid-2000s an alternative framing of immigrant integration as an individual process entailing participation in the labour market and access to general services emerged. This socio-economic approach was clearly a reaction to the perceived pitfalls of the multicultural period. It took place not only in terms of public discourse but also of concrete practices, as pointed out by the closure of the Foreigners' Centre and the dissolution of the Foreigners' Consultative Committee.
- 3) From the mid-2000s until today a new participatory framing can be pointed out, emphasising both immigrant associations and individual immigrants' participation into the social, economic and political spheres, to enrich the international profile of the city of Milan.

Frame shifts have only partly followed changes in the colour of the city's political governments. This was the case in the early 1990s, when the newly elected Northern League Mayor explicitly opposed the previous multicultural approach and intended to remedy its supposed pitfalls. On the contrary, in the mid-2000s the shift to a participatory frame did not follow any political change, but was proposed by the centre-right Mayor Letizia Moratti in the context of the city internationalisation initiatives for the EXPO 2015 event. Therefore, this frame shift occurred as a consequence of a city branding strategy, which is still pursued by the current centre-left government. This latter just added a stronger emphasis on political participation, emphasising the need for the full inclusion of individual migrants into local voting rights.

However, both the socio-economic and the participatory frames have been characterised by a certain contradiction between the official public discourse and the concrete practices carried out by public officers, NGOs and sometimes also by political actors. In particular, at the level of public discourse, an emphasis on security and immigration control has dominated official documents and statements throughout the 1990s and until the mid-2000s. Undocumented migrants have been depicted as a possible threat for the city public security. On the contrary, regular migrants participating in the labour market and therefore contributing to the economic wealth of the city, had to be welcomed and encouraged to fully integrate into existing institutions. No ad hoc services were officially promoted, yet the Foreigners' Office has always carried out specific projects on matters such as employment and access to the labour market, housing and first accommodation, reception of asylum seekers and assistance to trafficked women. These projects informally took also into account the dimension of cultural difference, since link workers have often been contracted to carry out grassroots work with different groups.

¹⁷ C:\Users\Utente\Downloads\COMUNE DI MILANO - Albo delle Associazioni e Organizzazioni Religiose presenti sul territorio della città di Milano (1).mht (Accessed in December 2014).

In the mid-2000s the contradictions between official discourse and concrete policies has become more acute. In fact, the Mayor official discourse on public security somehow avoided to put too much of an emphasis on migrants' associations and cultures, even though these were regarded as an asset for the city branding strategy in the perspective of EXPO 2015.

On the contrary, today, under the current centre-left city government, the official discourse appears indeed far more open to cultural accommodation and participation, yet policy practices are rather contradictory. The City World Forum has been established, which however is not an institution allowing for the political participation of immigrant associations. Furthermore, no resources have been allocated to these latter to develop their projects. The severe cuts at a national level of the National Social Fund, and therefore, to the financial resources allocated to local authorities to undertake social policies, is indeed the main reason for the recent retrenchment of local immigrant integration policy. Yet the difficulties of the centre-left governing majority in accommodating the request of the Muslim community to have an appropriate place of worship shows some contradictions in the Municipal Executive attitude towards cultural difference.

As for multilevel governance relations, in the last 5 years changes can be pointed out both on the horizontal and on the vertical dimension. Considering the horizontal dimension, in the early 1990s the shift towards a socio-economic framing lead to a redefinition of the local policy network involved in policy implementation. The immigrant co-operatives previously charged with the running of first accommodation services were substituted with more experienced and reliable Italian NGOs, which became the primary partners of the municipality immigrant integration policies. Such a pattern seems to be still prevalent today, even though from the mid-2000s immigrant associations have started to be taken more into account essentially as partners in the organisation of the 2015 Universal Expo. Cultural diversity has become part of the international city branding strategy pursued by the centre-right government of Letizia Moratti and *de facto* continued by the current centre-left executive.

As for relations with NGOs, these have been usually regarded by the Municipality as contractors and partners in services delivery. In other terms, throughout the 1990 and 2000s the municipality, and in particular the political executive, defined the main lines of action, the Foreigners' Office was responsible for translating these political directions into services, while no-profit associations selected on the basis of competitive tenders were held responsible for delivery. According to our interviewees, since 2011, the new centre-left Deputy Mayor on Social Policy has adopted a different policy style, showing a greater concern for the participation of third sector organisation in decision-making processes. To this end, regular formal and informal meetings have been taking place.

On the vertical dimension, an increasing relevance of the EU can be pointed out especially in terms of funding, whereas the national and regional levels of government seem to have lost their centrality in this respect. In fact, due to the economic crisis and the consequent retrenchment of the National Social Policy Fund since 2005, EIF has become a crucial resource for the Foreigners' Office and for the other Departments (e.g. education) dealing with issues of immigrant integration. Most of the projects carried out in the second half of the 2000s are funded by the EIF resources allocated through the Ministry of the Interior.

Since 2011, with the election of the centre-left majority lead by the Mayor Giuliano Pisapia, a greater attempt to better integrate the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the MLG can be pointed out in relation to services' delivery. The project of an integrated Immigration Centre was undertaken in 2012, which has the ambition of gathering together, in a unique office, all those institutions, national and local, that are responsible for all the administrative practices regarding newcomers and, more generally, provide services to immigrants. Such an approach is at the centre of the CSI project, Building a Local System for the

Integration of TCN (*Costruzione di un sistema locale per l'integrazione dei cittadini di paesi terzi*)¹⁸. However, as pointed out above (§ 2.3), such an approach has encountered various difficulties, not least some resistance on the part of the concerned institutions in changing their routines and usual procedures in dealing with non EU migrants.

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http://www.comune.milano.it/portale/wps/portal/CDM?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/wps/wcm/connect/ContentLibrary/ho%20bisogno%20di/ho%20bisogno%20di/Progetti%20UE_CSI&catelId=com.ibm.workplace.wcm.api.WCM_Category/IT_CAT_Bisogni_55_04/15c365004878dc46b2cfbb7891963373/PUBLISHED&categ=IT_CAT_Bisogni_55_04&type=content.

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