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of Refugees and Asylum
Seekers

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The Role of Non-state Actors in the Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Significant variation across and within OECD countries reflects the diverse roles that non-state actors can play in the reception and integration of asylum seekers. This variation can be explained by the differences in the organisation of welfare service delivery, the various national schemes supporting employment and the specific legal frameworks allowing for the labour market access of asylum seekers, along with the inclination of local inhabitants to self-organise to face new challenges. Within the wide spectrum of non-state actors that provide assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, this paper focuses specifically on third sector organisations. Through a survey, it assesses the contribution of these organisations during the refugee crisis in Europe, from 2014 to 2016, in delivering reception and integration policies for refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers and in experimenting with innovative approaches. The paper concludes with a number of policy recommendations on the ways governments leverage the innovative capacity of third sector organisations in providing meaningful and effective initiatives to integrate refugees in the society, labour market and economy of host communities.

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1. Introduction

Non-state actors, including third sector organisations, mainstream enterprises, parishes, informal groups and individual citizens, have played a crucial role in tackling the refugee crisis in Europe. Without their commitment, shelter and food would not have been delivered to that many people; many innovative social and integration avenues would not have been followed and delivered results (Simsa, 2017; OECD, 2018b).

The panoply of non-state actors, which have been established- sometimes spontaneously- to provide medium and long-term assistance to refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers, is diverse in terms of motivations driving their engagement and impact on hosting territories. Little research has been made to map out their actions and measure their effectiveness and degree of innovative capacity. This paper aims to fill this gap.

Through a survey of various organisations involved in responding to the refugee crisis in Europe from 2014 to 2016, the report assesses the contribution of third sector organisations in delivering reception and integration policies for refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers and in experimenting with innovative approaches. It makes a number of policy recommendations on how governments can further tap into the innovative capacity of third sector organisations in providing meaningful and effective initiatives to integrate refugees in the society, labour market and economy of host communities.

2. Categorising non-state organisations

The activities of non-state actors, addressing refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers' needs, fall within a continuum between two ideal-typical types:

- The first type refers to *impromptu* initiatives, promoted by self-interested actors or by actors lacking experience in dealing with refugees issues, such as sole entrepreneurs (e.g. hotel owners,) conventional enterprises and even third sector organisations (not really able or interested to connect with the local communities or business-oriented initiatives using the legal forms of the third sector) mainly driven by business purposes. These actors often over-concentrate beneficiaries in one place to generate economies of scale, they are normally not locally-rooted, often placed away from city centres, have a questionable impact on the local territory and usually deliver low-quality or standardised services, while often employing workers with limited training and supervision.
- The second type refers to initiatives that endeavour to facilitate the social and work inclusion of refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers by supporting their autonomy. These initiatives are often created by groups of volunteers and third sector organisations that are rooted in local communities. There are many examples of third sector organisations and social enterprises that have been prolific in proposing new approaches that have eventually contributed to the regeneration of hosting communities and territories in both urban and rural contexts. Together with local authorities, this type of initiatives have tested innovative approaches and integration paths in crucial policy domains, such as dispersed accommodation and tailored language training. They have also experimented with innovative assessment tools designed to facilitate job matching through skills' recognition, certification and upgrading. Relevant patterns, here, include constant interaction with local populations, as well as networking with stakeholders both in local

authorities (e.g., welfare services, schools, vocational training agencies) and in mainstream enterprises.

Significant differences are noticeable across and within OECD countries. Country and territorial variations reflect the diverse roles that non-state actors are entitled to play in the reception and integration of asylum seekers; the rapid changes of the context of refugee integration (including asylum regulations, reception and migrant integration policies); and the overall economic conditions of receiving economies and welfare state and labour market transformations.

The role played by the non-state actors is significantly influenced by differences in the organisation of welfare service delivery in the various EU countries. Key factors include to what extent non-state actors are allowed to participate in public tenders for procuring reception and integration services, what private providers are entitled to supply these services and what are the selection mechanisms used to recruit them. While in Italy and France most reception services are delivered by non-state actors following public tenders, in Germany local municipalities play a key role, sometimes in cooperation with local volunteer relief groups.

Moreover, country variations depend on the different national schemes supporting employment and on the specific legal frameworks allowing for the labour market access of asylum seekers.

At the same time, the inclination of local inhabitants to self-organise to face new challenges arising in society also varies to a significant extent across and within countries. The diverse historical backgrounds, relevance of trust relations at the local level, and role of social movements and non-profit organisations sharing solidarity principles contribute to explaining the different propensity of receiving communities to react to the asylum challenge with pro-active collective reactions. In many territories, these differences are reflected in the creation of innovative third sector organisations or the transformation of existing ones to address migrants' needs as opposed to the predominant self-organisation of local communities against the arrival of newcomers that tends to prevail in other territories.

All these factors contribute to shaping the diverse roles non-state actors play in the delivery of reception and integration services and in triggering policy transformations in the receiving societies.

Within the wide spectrum of non-state actors that provide assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, this report focuses specifically on third sector organisations that have succeeded in triggering innovative socio-economic integration pathways, while also contributing significantly to social and territorial innovation with beneficial impacts upon recipients and the hosting community alike. These are: the association Angalia in Greece providing front line assistance, the social cooperative K-Pax in Italy delivering housing and socio-economic integration services, the association Singa in Germany mainly focussing on socio-economic integration initiatives, and the association Action Emploi Réfugiés in France promoting exclusively work integration.

Based on their ability to design strategies, services, and tools that have proved effective in strengthening community resilience and facilitating social and work integration, these organisations can be regarded as good examples of third sector organisations. Interestingly, they have gradually shifted – or are shifting – towards a stronger entrepreneurial stance. In line with the literature, they can be hence conceptualised as “social enterprises” (OECD, 1999). Indeed, they combine the carrying out of economic activities – such as the delivery

of reception, welcome or work integration services – with the pursuit of an explicit social aim (Borzaga & Defourny, 2001; Borzaga, Fazzi, & Galera, 2016; OECD, 2016). An additional feature shared by these practices is their inclusive and participatory approach, which implies the engagement of various stakeholders, having different relations with the selected organisations, in their governing bodies.

Besides drawing on the above-mentioned case studies, to gain a broader picture and critical insights on how best-case scenarios in the reception and integration domains can be triggered, this report relies also on secondary sources, including recent empirical studies and grey literature. The secondary sources analysed focus on the one hand on the role, barriers and potential of third sector organisations and social enterprises in contemporary EU societies and, on the other hand, on the asylum and integration challenges faced at EU, national and local levels.

3. Reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the EU post-2014

The frameworks for the reception and integration of refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers are set at the EU level. The need for a common framework became pressing with the entry into force of Schengen Agreement¹, which abolished internal borders among Member States and created a common external border for the EU². Moreover, it was particularly the Balkan crisis that triggered the need for a common asylum system in the 1990s. This system was set up with a view to avoid the “asylum shopping”³ phenomenon among EU member states in the Schengen area. In this period, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) started to take shape leading to a gradual harmonisation of the management of asylum applications and the reception conditions. In the period between 1999 and 2005 the CEAS became fully operative, when the Dublin II Regulation⁴ together with Asylum Procedures, Reception Conditions, and Qualifications Directives became officially the legal building blocks of the European asylum policy. In the same period, specific EU funding was also made available to implement asylum policies⁵ (2007).

¹ The Schengen *acquis* became part of the TEU through a Protocol of the Amsterdam Treaty, in 1997.

² The common external border of the Schengen Area does not coincide with the external borders of the EU area as among the signatories of the Schengen agreement there are also non-EU members and the do not coincide with all EU member states. In particular, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia are still out of the Schengen area.

³ Without a common asylum system among EU member states, regulating the conditions for status recognition, reception and asylum seekers could apply for international protection in different member states in search of the best reception and welfare conditions; this phenomenon became known as asylum shopping (see: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/asylum-shopping_en).

⁴ Regulating the country responsible for asylum application, commonly known as Dublin Regulation. The Regulation replaced the Dublin Convention which was signed in 1990.

⁵ The European Refugee Fund (ERF) was established with Decision 573/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007, covering for the years from 2008 to 2013. The beneficiaries of this fund are holders of refugee status or subsidiary/temporary protection or entitled to resettlement programmes; the ERF finances national and EU actions emergency measures for temporary protection in case of heavy inflows.

Currently the CEAS is undergoing a new major revision in order to manage the EU crisis triggered by the high number of irregular arrivals post-2014 (Frontex, 2018). The revisions of the CEAS Directives are still under discussion⁶, as well as the recast of the Dublin Regulation, now Dublin IV. EU funding schemes have also changed to accommodate the new needs deriving from a sudden increase in asylum requests (Eurostat, 2018) and the integration challenges posed by the new arrivals (OECD, 2018a).

While the EU is working towards a stronger harmonisation of the CEAS, it is also financing integration policies through its Member States. Indeed, differently from asylum policies, it is the Member States that are primarily responsible for integration policies. However, since the Tampere Programme (1999),⁷ the European Commission has proposed and amended common guidelines for harmonisation in the field of integration.

To uphold the requirement of the host society to ensure that migrants can participate in “economic, social, cultural and civil life”, the European Commission (Migration and Home Affairs) is trying to mainstream integration in EU policies. The same trend is followed mostly at the national level⁸ (OECD, 2018b; Scholten, et al., 2017) even though research on labour market integration has shown that it would be advisable to support a targeted approach (Martin, et al., 2016). The main document on integration guidelines that the Commission has recently adopted is the Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (2016). Moreover, the European Commission supports actions targeted to the integration in the labour market of legally residing Third-country nationals (e.g. European Partnership for Integration, Employers together for Integration) and manages a European website on integration⁹.

⁶ For further details on the advancement of the legislative procedure on the Directives and Dublin Regulation see: Reception Conditions Directive <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-reform-of-the-reception-conditions-directive>; Asylum Procedures Directive <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-reform-of-the-asylum-procedures-directive>; Qualifications Directive <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-reform-of-the-qualification-directive>; Dublin IV Regulation <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-revision-of-the-dublin-regulation>.

⁷ The EU definition of integration dates back to 2003 and reads as follows: integration is to be intended as “a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident Third country nation and the host society which provide for full participation of the immigrants. This implies on the one hand that it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility to participate in economic, social, cultural and civil life and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity.” (COM/2003/0336 final)

⁸ For a detailed account of both asylum seekers and refugees integration policies see: “Mapping of Asylum Seekers and Refugees Integration Policies across EU Member States”, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/refugees/Mapping%20integration%20policies-Asylum%20seekers%20final.xlsx and http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/refugees/Mapping%20integration%20policies-Refugees%20final.xlsx.

⁹ See: <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/index.cfm?action=furl.go&go=/home?lang=en>.

The next sections present key data and policies on asylum, reception and integration for each of the four countries analysed: France, Germany, Greece, and Italy.

France: country and policy context

4.1. Asylum policy and key data

France has experienced a booming and steady growth of asylum applications from 2014 until 2017. Differently from the EU-28 trend¹⁰, despite the partial closure of the Central Mediterranean Route, asylum applications did not decrease in 2017, reaching 91 thousand, or 14% of all first-time applicants in the EU-28¹¹. However, when looking at the main nationalities of first instance asylum seekers, the picture becomes clearer: the main country of origin of asylum seekers in France is Sudan for 2017, followed by Afghanistan and, again differently from other EU countries, Haiti and Albania (OECD, 2018a).

The main document regulating asylum in France is the Code of Entry and Residence of Foreigners and of the Right to Asylum¹², which transposes the main EU directives to the national law. In France, there are several major actors in charge of the different phases of the asylum procedure¹³: the first authority is the Prefecture, competent for the first examination of the asylum application. The second authority involved in the asylum process is the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), which oversees the national reception scheme and is responsible for interviewing asylum seekers and distributing them according to the available places in the national reception system. Third, the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People (OFPRA) examines the asylum application and takes the decision on the status determination. Finally, the National Court of Asylum addresses appeal cases against OFPRA negative decisions, while the Council of State decides upon further appeals.

The assessment of the asylum application made by OFPRA usually takes up to four months (114 days on average for 2017, down to 183 days in 2016), but the government intends to cap this average processing time to 2 months. However, the whole regular asylum procedure, from registration to OFPRA decision, can take up to more than a year, considering that from the time of registration to the first interview some asylum seekers have to wait up to 6 months¹⁴.

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Full citation: Code of Entry and Residence of Foreigners and of the Right to Asylum, as modified by Law n. 2015-925 of 29 July 2015 on the reform of asylum law and Law n. 2016-274 of 7 March 2016 on the reform of immigration law.

¹³ AIDA Asylum Information Database website:
<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/asylum-procedure/general/flow-chart>
accessed 01 May 2018.

¹⁴ Data retrieved from AIDA website. Available at:
<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/asylum-procedure/procedures/regular-procedure> (accessed 21 May 2018).

It must be noted that the very first phase of this system (the registration phase) is fully dependent on third sector organisations, which have been delegated the role of first contact point for potential asylum seekers from the French government.

4.2. Reception conditions and integration policies

In France, the government is the main source of programming for reception and integration policies, while implementation is in the prefectural purview¹⁵. Different forms of material reception conditions coexist. They include:

- accommodation in asylum seekers reception centres (CADA), which can be both collective reception centres and scattered housing in apartments (i.e. in private households);
- accommodation in other facilities funded by the Ministry of the Interior (e.g. emergency accommodations);
- financial benefits¹⁶.

Decisions for admission in accommodation places for asylum seekers, as well as for exit from or modification of the place of residence, are taken by OFII after it has consulted with the Director of the place of accommodation.

Access to the labour market is allowed only if OFPRA has not ruled on the asylum application within 9 months after the registration of the application and only if this delay cannot be attributed to the applicant. In this case, the asylum seeker is subject to the rule of law applicable to third-country national workers for the issuance of a temporary work permit.

In practice, asylum seekers have very limited access to the labour market, due to a number of constraints. Prior to being able to work, the applicant must have sought and obtained a temporary work permit. To obtain this work permit, the asylum seeker has to provide proof of a job offer or an employment contract. The duration of the work permit cannot exceed the duration of the residence permit linked to the asylum application, but it might be renewed. In sum, access to the job market is virtually impossible for asylum seekers, thus refugees and protection holders enter the French labour market without having the possibility to accumulate any prior experience during their asylum procedure.

The main approach currently adopted is mainstreaming integration policies through social programming and through policies that address the needs of the general population. In 2017, the Ministry of Interior acknowledged the weaknesses of the current integration policy framework for asylum seekers and refugees: “The integration of foreigners is a first priority in France for social cohesion. So far, our budgetary commitment is clearly not matching the needs. For those who have seen their refugee status recognised, we will implement an integration policy in order for them to benefit from the equality of opportunities”¹⁷. To cope

¹⁵ Asylum Information Database (AIDA) (2017). “Country Report: France. 2017 update”.

¹⁶ For a detailed and updated account of financial benefits allocated to asylum seekers please refer to AIDA or COSI website. Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/reception-conditions/access-and-forms-reception-conditions/forms-and-levels>.

¹⁷ European Commission (2017) Peer Review on “Integration of Refugees into the Labour Market” - France, p. 6. Full speech available at: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/Accueil-des->

with this situation, on April 23, 2018 the French National Assembly adopted the “Projet de loi pour une immigration maîtrisée, un droit d’asile effectif et une intégration réussie à l’Assemblée Nationale”. This was formulated starting from the consideration that every year in France more than 100,000 foreign-born residents with regular permits who sign the “contrat d’intégration républicaine” benefit from an integration package offered by the French government. However, this is not enough to cope with asylum seekers and refugees’ necessities, especially in terms of language courses provision, facilitated housing access, and support in accessing the job market¹⁸.

In France, third sector organisations not only provide reception facilities and services but also fill the gaps in public service delivery in key areas including language learning, job provision, social networking, education, and legal assistance. Overall, with regard to integration, mainly the third sector provides integration services because it is a very articulated process where relational aspects with beneficiaries are key and mainstream welfare providers are less able to provide innovative strategies, given their standardised approach to integration (Action Employ Refugees, 2018). Since 2015, there is a new start-up scene in France and a number of third sector organisations have sprung up to provide creative and innovative responses to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. A challenging area of intervention, especially for newly established third sector organisations, is the development of tools and strategies aimed at facilitating the work integration of recipients.

5. Germany: country policy context

5.1. Asylum policy and key data

In Germany, asylum requests reached their peak in 2016, with almost 750,000 first time applicants, while 2017 marked, for the first time since 2008, an interruption of the upward trend, with a reduction of asylum requests (222,683). The first nationality of the applicants in terms of numbers of applications since 2014 has been constantly Syrian, followed by Iraqi and Afghan, although with less stable trends (BAMF, 2018). As of April 2018, the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has reported that the most numerous age group of asylum applicants is the one of children under 4 years of age (24% of the total asylum applications), closely followed by the group of young people aged 18-25 (17,3%) and 25-30 (11%). The age group with lower representation among asylum seekers in Germany in the period January - April 2018 is of 60+ years old people¹⁹.

Two main legislative acts regulate asylum and reception conditions for asylum seekers in Germany: the Asylum Act or Asylgesetz in German (abbrev. AsylG)²⁰, and the Asylum

[etrangers-en-France/Pour-une-refonte-ambitieuse-de-la-politique-d-integration](#) (accessed 22 May 2018).

¹⁸ Available at: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actu-du-Ministere/72-propositions-pour-une-politique-ambitieuse-d-integration-des-etrangers> (accessed 26 May 2018).

¹⁹ Data retrieved from the BAMF document “Current figures on asylum (April 2018)”, Asylum applications by age group and gender (January - April 2018). Available at: http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Downloads/Infotehk/Statistik/Asyl/aktuelle-zahlen-zu-asyl-april-2018.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (accessed 25 May 2018).

²⁰ Asylum Act in the version promulgated on 2 September 2008 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 1798), last amended by Article 2 of the Act of 11 March 2016 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 394).

Seekers' Benefits Act or Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz in German (abbrev. AsylbLG)²¹. The first transposes into national law the Reception Conditions, Qualifications, and Procedures Directives of the EU, while the second specifies the reception conditions and the social assistance that asylum seekers are accorded in Germany.

Germany asylum process is regulated at the federal level²². The asylum application procedure, which ends with the determination of the applicant status, can last from few months for some specific nationalities of applicants (e.g., 3 to 6 months for Syrians) up to more than one year for other nationalities (e.g., 8 to 14 months for Afghani people). Overall, the average time of a regular asylum application procedure was 7.8 months in 2017 (7.1 months in 2016)²³. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is competent for each step of the asylum procedure and the appeals, which are presented before administrative courts.

It must be noted that Germany recognises also the possibility for persons who have not been granted a protection status to remain in Germany. The granting of this permit – i.e., the Duldung – is subject to the extradition and deportation prohibitions and it is designated as a residence permit "under national law with regard to international protection" in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 862/2007.

5.2. Reception conditions and integration policies

In Germany, the management of reception facilities is mostly outsourced to non-state actors. However, in 2015, following public debates questioning transparency of public tendering schemes, some Länders decided to establish their state-owned companies that are now in charge of complementing the private reception offer (OECD, 2018b). Nonetheless, traditional third sector organisations (i.e. Caritas, Diakonie, the Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der deutschen Juden, the German Red Cross, Arbeiterwohlfahrt and the Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband), which are strongly integrated in the German welfare system, continue to play a major role in the provision of a broad spectrum of reception and integration services.

Reception for asylum seekers currently includes two main options in terms of accommodation: either asylum seeker can be welcomed in (generally big) reception centres either in urban or in rural areas or they can live in apartments on their own. In both cases asylum seekers receive an allowance, whose amount depends on their age and family status. The first option is cheaper as food, clothing, heating and sanitary products are provided directly by the reception centre and this creates economies of scale. The allowance for asylum seekers living in apartments is higher as it needs to cover also the cost of the other services. It must be noted that welfare services for asylum seekers are reduced when compared to the ones granted to other migrant groups and German citizens, but only until they reach the limit of 15 months of residence.

²¹ "Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz as amended by the announcement of 5 August 1997 (BGBl. I p. 2022), which was last amended by Article 4 of the law of 17 July 2017 (BGBl. I p. 2541)"

²² AIDA Asylum Information Database website (<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/asylum-procedure/general/flow-chart> accessed 01 May 2018). Data provided by Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration.

²³ Data retrieved from AIDA website. Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/asylum-procedure/procedures/regular-procedure> (accessed 14 May 2018).

Access to labour market is granted to asylum seekers after 3 months from the asylum application, while refugees and protection holders face no restrictions for accessing the labour market. According to a recent OECD study on refugees' integration in the German labour market, Germany is one of the most advanced countries in Europe in terms of early access to the labour market of asylum seekers. At the same time, Germany has implemented the "3+2" rule, which gives asylum seekers and non-returnable people the possibility to take up a traineeship for 3 years with a possible extension of 2 additional years if they find work afterwards (OECD, 2017a). Similarly to other integration measures implemented in EU countries, the national Integration Act (3/2016), specifically with regard to labour market access, clarifies that access to apprenticeships, vocational training, as well as education are facilitated specifically for asylum seekers coming from countries with high recognition rates, thus creating in practice a two-tiered integration system for asylum seekers. Finally, the Integration Act includes a three-year residency restriction for refugees or protection holders who have been recognised after January 1st, 2016. This specifies that the place of residence must be located within the federal state where the refugee was already accommodated during his or her asylum procedure (§12a par. 1 AufenthG), thus binding him or her to the place of residence.

The national Integration Act (3/2016) was approved in 2016²⁴, signalling formally German integration efforts, both in scale and scope. Efforts have been consistent specifically in providing language courses, as language is considered the cornerstone of integration, by opening the "Integration Courses" to asylum seekers from countries with high recognition rates, which included the provision of 600 hours of language lessons and 100 hours of civic orientation, which however still do not meet the need for language courses for refugees and asylum seekers in Germany (OECD, 2017a).

The rapid increase in number of asylum requests over the period 2015-2016 prompted a quick adjustment of the big traditional third sector organisations, which increased the delivery of integration services such as language courses and vocational training to asylum seekers, refugees and protection holders. Alongside these third sector actors, which normally benefit from preferential relationships with public authorities, a myriad of new citizens-led refugees relief groups have emerged spontaneously to tackle the asylum crisis (Spencer, 2016). Indeed, at the municipal level volunteers remain one of the main engines of inclusion, supporting not only social but also economic integration of asylum seekers, refugees and status holders at the local level (OECD, 2017a, p. 14).

6. Greece: country and policy context

6.1. Asylum policy and key data

Together with Italy, Greece is the EU country that was mostly affected by the irregular arrivals over the period 2015-2016. The so-called Eastern Mediterranean Route brought to Greek shores more than 50,000 asylum seekers in 2016 and less than 60,000 the following year²⁵. In 2016, Greece became the EU country with the highest ratio of asylum applicants

²⁴ The first Integration Law in Germany was introduced in 2005.

²⁵ Hellenic Ministry of Migration Policy, Asylum Service website. Available at: http://asylo.gov.gr/en/?page_id=110 (accessed 24 May 2018).

compared to the population, with almost 5 applicants per 1000 inhabitants compared to 2.5 in the EU28 average (European Parliament, 2017).

In Greece, Syrians represented 52 % of applicants in 2016, followed by applicants from Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Overall, in the period between 2013 and 2018 the top three countries of origin were Syria, by far the most represented (40%), followed by Pakistan (13%) and Afghanistan (12%)²⁶.

In 2017, asylum seekers in Greece were mainly young (18-34 years old). However, when compared to France and Germany, asylum seekers reaching the Greek shores were more equally distributed among age groups, with the smallest group always being the one of adolescents (14-17 years old). In 2016, instead, the share of children and women was higher, indicating a higher presence of families.

Greek asylum policy is heavily conditioned by EU and international actors and agreements. Since the entry into force of the EU-Turkey statement of 2016, recognised by Greek law (L) 4375/2016, asylum policy had to undergo a deep change: a fast-track border procedure has been established and Eastern Aegean islands have been assigned to host EU hotspots and EU agencies officers (e.g., EASO officers) ever since²⁷. In practice, asylum seekers landing in Eastern Aegean islands did not have the same rights of asylum seekers reaching Greek mainland, thus creating tensions and de facto a buffer zone for asylum seekers between Turkey and the EU, until April 19, 2018 when the Greek highest court ruled for the removal of the limitations to movement of asylum seekers, even if only for the new arrivals. The main Greek institution in charge of the regular asylum procedure is the Asylum Service, while the two levels of appeal against the status determination are addressed respectively by the Appeals Committees and the Administrative Court of Appeal.

6.2. Reception conditions and integration policies

Differently from any other hosting country addressed, the Greek government has still not found an agreement on the transposition of the 2013 Reception Conditions Directive, which, is now being revised even before being officially applied by all EU countries. The relevant national law is therefore the transposition of the 2003 Reception Conditions Directive, namely PD 220/2007.

The Greek reception system for asylum seekers is formally managed by the General Secretariat for Reception of the Ministry of Migration Policy. Nonetheless, accommodation for asylum seekers is still managed jointly by the UNHCR, the National Centre for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.)²⁸ and private actors managing temporary facilities.

Asylum seekers can be hosted in reception facilities for a period not longer than 1 year, after which they might receive support to find another housing solution. Reception facilities include large-scale camps, initially conceived as temporary emergency accommodation facilities, hotels, apartments and facilities run by third sector organisations.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ AIDA website, Greece country report. Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/asylum-procedure/general/flow-chart> (accessed 12 April 2018)

²⁸ EKKA coordinates the network of actors providing social support services, care and solidarity to both Greek and third country nationals experiencing crisis situations or in need of emergency social aid.

Access to the labour market is granted to asylum seekers immediately after their asylum application has been lodged and thus after they are fully registered as asylum seekers, at least in theory. Indeed, Greece requires a pre-registration via Skype before asylum seekers can actually present their asylum request. The waiting time between pre-registration and full registration is on average of 80 days²⁹. However, due to the deep and protracted economic crisis, employment opportunities for asylum seekers are poor and limited. Indeed, after the 2016 peak of arrivals, the Greek government struggled to manage the crisis even with the support of EU and international actors, while social tensions have worsened, together with the conditions of asylum seekers, especially the ones who remained stuck in the Greek islands limbo³⁰. At the same time, the economy has been constantly lagging behind.

In an effort to provide more reception and integration services, the UNHCR is currently supporting the Greek government through the EU-funded “ESTIA” programme (“Emergency support to integration and accommodation”), which aims at providing urban accommodation and cash assistance to asylum-seekers, refugees and protection holders in Greece. Overall, the lion’s share of first aid, including running reception centres, and social integration opportunities to asylum seekers has been provided by international NGOs, and by Greek civil society and volunteers.

As compared to other EU countries, a vibrant third sector is still in its infancy in Greece, both in relation to migration focused third sector organisations as for other domains of engagement (Spencer, 2016). However, it should be highlighted that a plethora of community-led and locally based groups have flourished over the last years across the country, including the islands. These groups include both formal and informal associations providing services to meet migrants’ needs that rely on the valuable contribution of volunteers (Reimerink, 2015). Typical roles played by these organisations include providing frontline assistance (food, supplies, medical aid and legal support) to meet basic needs that dedicated institutions can only partially ensure. Interestingly, thousands of people have joined efforts to provide services and support to refugees constantly since 2015-2016. Noteworthy is the strong presence of international volunteers who, often without previous relevant experience in the field of asylum seekers, decide to cooperate with local and international third sector organisations.

7. Italy: country and policy context

7.1. Asylum policy and key data

Since 2014, Italy has been – and still is – the main entry point in the EU for asylum seekers (Frontex, 2018). Arrivals come through the so-called Central Mediterranean Route, which experimented the highest numbers of deaths and of people managing to cross the EU border in Italy. The peak of arrivals was recorded in 2016 and the first half of 2017. Asylum applicants since 2014 have been mainly from Africa, with the largest group from Nigeria followed by Senegal and Gambia, but also from Pakistan and, recently, Bangladesh. It is

²⁹ AIDA website – Greece country report (2018). Available at: <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-labour-market> (accessed 26 May 2018).

³⁰ <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2018/8/5b88f5c34/unhcr-urges-greece-address-overcrowded-reception-centres-aegean-islands.html>.

important to note that most of these asylum seekers see Italy as a transit country and not as their final destination; this has important repercussions on integration (European Parliament, 2017).

Considering the age and gender breakdown, asylum seekers landing in Italy have consistently been mainly young males (18-34), with a significant increase in numbers of unaccompanied minors in 2017 (almost 10,000). Compared to any other country in EU28, Italy has received the highest share of young males in the last year³¹.

Italian legislation base for the regulation of asylum was until recently composed mainly by the Consolidated Act on Immigration³², in Italian Testo Unico sull'Immigrazione (abbrev. TUI), first adopted in 1998 and amended in 2002, and the legislative acts implementing Procedures, Qualifications and Reception Conditions Directives. Law n.132/2018, converting DL n.113, also known as “Decreto sicurezza” or “Decreto Salvini”, from the name of Italy’s Minister of the Interior, provides new regulations, which limit significantly the granting of international protection.

The Italian asylum system is based on the cooperation of EU agencies, international organisations, Italian authorities, and with the support of third sector organisations. EU agencies and international organisations (e.g. UNHCR and IOM) operate at the sea borders, receiving asylum applications in the hotspots, while the Italian police receives applications in its offices scattered on the national territory (i.e., Questure). The Territorial Commissions then handle the asylum procedure and judge upon the merits of the application, while third sector organisations and volunteer legal experts support the asylum seekers. Finally, the civil courts and the Court of Cassation decide on the appeals against the decision of the Territorial Commissions.

In theory, the applicants should be interviewed after 30 days from the application and the decision should be taken within the next 3 days by the Territorial Commission. However, the practice is far from meeting the theoretical standards. Currently, the waiting time before the determination of the protection status is on average of one year to one year and a half.

7.2. Reception conditions and integration policies

Until the entry into force of Law n.132/2018, reception of asylum seekers in Italy was managed through three different channels: the Home Affairs Ministry in big reception centres (CARA), the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), or the local authorities (Prefettura). The SPRAR is coordinated by local municipalities that decide to adhere to the system and it is funded by the “National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services”. This reception model is based on the principle of “integrated reception” thus designed to provide not only food and housing but also complementary services, such as legal and social support, together with the development of individual programmes to promote the socio-economic integration of asylum seekers in the hosting community (OECD, 2014). The reception, which is managed by the various Prefettura present on the Italian territory, was in fact conceived to provide food and housing to asylum seekers only during the emergency period. Indeed, during the emergency, Prefettura recruited private providers of different kinds (e.g., hotel or hostel owners but also flat and house owners and third sector organisations) to host asylum seekers and to provide them with food and

³¹ Eurostat

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=migr_asyappctza&language=en&mode=view

³² Legislative Decree no. 286/1998 “Consolidated Act on provisions concerning the Immigration regulations and foreign national conditions norms”.

shelter, in exchange for a fixed amount of money per asylum seeker, which is independent of the quality of the services delivered. This reception system, also known as CAS (Centre for Extraordinary Reception), has survived the emergency crisis and it is still the most diffused type of reception in Italy (i.e., around 70% of places for asylum seekers in Italy are managed through the CAS system). Initially, conventional enterprises, including sole proprietors, were key players among the contracted non-state entities. Over the time, some of these entities have managed to use the typical legal forms covered by third sector organisations (e.g. association and social cooperative) to bid for the delivery of reception services.

While the quality of reception continues to be significantly uneven across the national territory, it must be noted that after the uncovering of a number of examples of mismanaged reception, some CAS have upgraded the quality of their services. Noteworthy is the experimentation of new pathways not only to provide basic services to asylum seekers but to support their autonomy and their socio-economic integration in and with the hosting community. In contrast with these successful experimentations, the tendency of the latest tenders published, at least by some Prefettura, is to favour large organisations (not necessarily belonging to the third sector and locally-placed) that are endowed with the resources and capacities to deliver a wide set of requested standardised services (e.g. medical services). Recent bids tend also to penalize small-scale organisations that are locally and community based. The recently enacted Law n.132/2018, might result in strengthening further this trend.

Like in the welfare domains in other countries (e.g. France), so far in Italy the provision of reception services has been largely contracted out to third sector organisations and social enterprises by public authorities (in this case, *Prefettura*). Contracted organisations, both big and small, provide a variety of services, including food and accommodation, but also legal and health assistance, language courses, job coaching and job matching, social inclusion activities, and vocational training. The plethora of non-state actors engaged in this field is diverse as the provision of reception and integration services is largely fragmented and non-standardised in terms of quality across the Italian territory with the quality of reception varying from locality to locality. With the exception of the Autonomous Province of Trento, this is due to the local character of the majority of these initiatives and the strong coordination provided by its ad hoc agency (Cinformi) in charge of managing all issues related to migration and reception of asylum seekers (Galera & Giannetto, 2017).

Access to work for asylum seekers is possible in Italy at a fairly early stage, namely after 2 months after the lodging of the asylum application. However, similarly to Greece, the economic conditions hinder the possibility of refugees and protection holders, let alone asylum seekers who often have poorer language skills, to find a job legally.

The Law n. 132/2018 radically changes the system of integration of asylum seekers and holders of humanitarian protection status. With this reform, both asylum seekers and holders of humanitarian protection status will no longer be hosted in SPRAR centres, which will instead continue to host and provide integration support measures for refugees and holders of subsidiary protection status. Therefore, asylum seekers and holders of humanitarian protection are no longer entitled to receive support to their integration process.

8. Highlighting country variations and policy challenges

Currently, the EU countries that are receiving the biggest share of asylum requests are Germany, France and Italy³³, while in 2015 Greece was strained by the arrivals from the Eastern Mediterranean route, through Turkey. In terms of nationalities, in 2017 Italy still received mainly applicants from West Africa (Nigeria) and Bangladesh, Germany from Syria and Iraq, France from Albania and Afghanistan (and, interestingly, Haiti) and Greece from Syria and Pakistan³⁴.

Country variations largely depend on the interplay among various factors. These include the role of the country as transit versus destination; how the reception is organised and responsibilities allocated across public and private actors; the conditions for accessing the labour market and the extent to which attention is paid to integration by public policies.

While Italy and Greece manage arrivals from the sea borders of the EU, Germany and France receive asylum seekers that, at least in part, have been already through other European countries, even though the Dublin Regulation has strict requirements on the competence of the first country of arrival to receive asylum requests. De facto, Greece and Italy are not only destination and host countries but also act as transit countries. This despite the stricter controls imposed at the borders through the Hotspot approach promoted by the European Commission and the reintroduction of internal border controls, therefore suspending the Schengen Agreement. The Italian and Greek reception systems are still coping with the aftermath of the peak of arrivals, in 2015 and 2016, as the majority of asylum seekers are still hosted in the national reception systems. This is why Italy and Greece are still mostly concerned with reception policies aimed at asylum seekers, while France and Germany focus mostly on the socio-economic integration of refugees and people with a subsidiary protection status.

Besides country variations, policy makers still struggle to design effective and efficient policy guidelines and strategies in terms of housing patterns, labour market integration, education, healthcare and cultural interaction with receiving societies.

Several factors can explain public policies challenges:

First, in most EU countries, a major obstacle jeopardising the prospects for integration is the insecurity of the legal status and prolonged asylum procedure, which lasts up to more than two years. In France, asylum seekers are prevented from entering the labour market until they are granted international protection with negative consequences in terms of empowerment, self-esteem and future integration opportunities.

Second, apart from the work done by the OECD, there are very few benchmark national integration models to refer to at national level. Further research and evaluation of actual strategies are needed (Scholten, et al., 2017). Depending on the country, patchy situations are noticeable for instance in Italy where excellent reception and integration initiatives, often promoted spontaneously by locally-based third sector organisations go hand in hand with ineffective and sometimes predatory initiatives (Galera & Giannetto, 2017; Galera & Giannetto, 2018; Schiavone, 2018; InMigrazione, 2018).

³³ See Eurostat graph “Number of (non-EU) asylum seekers in the EU and EFTA Member States, 2016 and 2017 (thousands of first time applicants)”, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=migr_asyappctza&language=en&mode=view.

³⁴ See Eurostat table “Five main citizenships of (non-EU) asylum applicants, 2017”, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=migr_asyappctza&language=en&mode=view.

Third, over the past few years, migration has turned into an emotionally charged topic, which has jeopardised the debate on how migration flows can be effectively managed. Most debates ignore the myriad of successful reception and integration practices that have emerged bottom up and had a role in regenerating hosting economies. While media normally pay attention to bad practices, research has mostly focused on innovative initiatives developed in large cities, whereas a significant number of grass-root practices experimented in remote areas continue to remain rather invisible (OECD, 2018b).

Finally, the opportunities for socio-economic integration of refugees, protection holders and asylum seekers and migrants more in general, are heavily dependent on the socio-economic conditions of the host country. Italy and Greece are still waiting for a full recovery from the economic crisis of 2008, which had strong repercussions also on the political attitudes of governing parties towards the challenge of migration. These repercussions are being reflected not only in the ballot box but also within the local communities.

In sum, the presence of unique conditions of the host country, coupled with the ever-changing characteristics of the migration flows, create a fluid environment in which reception and integration policies, both at national and EU level, struggle to keep up. Decisive problem-solving actors in the field of migrant integration have emerged at the local level, where innovation is in many instances boosted spontaneously by volunteers, local third sector organisations, businesses and religious organisations often in cooperation with local municipalities (Martín, et al., 2016; Fantasia & Pfohman, 2016). In many instances, the smart use of public support has enabled to start up innovative social inclusion initiatives that contributed to change the perception of the local population vis-à-vis newcomers.

Besides welcoming and contributing to integrating recipients, many of these initiatives are an extraordinary opportunity for the same receiving communities to exploit new collective energies and endeavours to design local development strategies that take stock of the skills of newcomers and valorise unused resources, spaces and buildings alike.

9. Roles and evolution of third sector organizations vis-à-vis the asylum challenge: from civic engagement towards policy innovations

The spontaneous and bottom-up mobilisation of ordinary citizens peaked in 2015, during the so-called “long summer of migration”, when an extraordinary number of volunteers mobilised all over Europe to assist newcomers. The asylum crisis has contributed to awaken a sense of collective social responsibility on a wide scale that encouraged thousands of volunteers to engage with asylum seekers individually, through informal groups or existing third sector organisations. Alongside a number of hostile reactions sometimes influenced by the discourse of local public authorities, there are many invisible practices of third sector organisations that have contributed to integrating recipients and enhancing social cohesion thus paving the way for positive changes in attitudes of some local communities towards asylum seekers. In many instances, these practices have succeeded in triggering reluctant local inhabitants to face the asylum challenge pro-actively (Hamann & Karakayali, 2016; Karakayali & Kleist, 2016)

The collective practices with asylum seekers and refugees contributed to the widespread use of the term “culture of welcome”, which is now largely used in public discourse. The form of volunteering that emerged out of this wave of civic commitment is very different from the past. It cuts across social classes and age groups and rather than reflecting the

willingness to donate time and energy for the benefit of other people in a community, this form of volunteering is strongly linked to the commitment to help migrants specifically (Hamann & Karakayali, 2016; Galera, 2016).

It should be noted that the increased number of volunteers combined with the complex issues to be faced generated significant management challenges for many third sector organisations: it implied the expansion in new fields, the recruitment and training of new staff and a more effective distribution of work within the organisation.

In some other instances, groups of volunteers that self-organised spontaneously to provide support to asylum seekers have formalised the creation of new organisations specifically designed to deliver innovative welcome and integration services, sometimes in cooperation with public administrations and mainstream enterprises.

Noteworthy are in particular innovative strategies and tools designed to facilitate the socio-economic integration of recipients both in large cities and remote areas. These include the provision of dispersed accommodation, the organisation of innovative language courses and the delivery of job orientation and integration services. Good practices also include strategies and tools that succeed in addressing multiple challenges in addition to the integration of asylum seekers like the ageing of society, depopulation trends and labour shortages in given economic sectors (OECD, forthcoming).

These initiatives are among the most innovative social enterprises that have emerged bottom up by taking stock of the collective engagement of volunteers, social workers and the community at large. While most of them are very small in scale and sometimes lack technical and managerial skills, their impact is extremely important in terms of social cohesion and territorial innovation triggered in the given communities.

There is a wide consensus in the literature that the way migrants integrate into the labour market, and the time they take to do so, will determine the long-term impact of this inflow of migrants on the economy in the receiving country (Martin, et al., 2016). Based on the observation of several good practices, the failure to integrate asylum seekers in receiving societies, who are in most cases potentially productive workers, is a source of inefficiency. In addition to wasting human capital, it generates substantial costs that must be covered by public expenditures (OECD, 2017b). Hence, emerges the importance of early interventions to facilitate labour market integration and enhance autonomy.

Noteworthy is that the sole labour-market integration is not enough. When not backed by social inclusion, labour integration is not conducive to the building of cohesive societies; rather, it can strengthen segregation and, in the most severe cases, trigger conflicts. The analysis of good practices carried out for this report suggests that third sector organisations that are rooted in local communities and engage the local inhabitants have a role to play thanks to their “holistic approach”, which does not limit itself to link integration exclusively to supporting labour-market inclusion, but it normally pays attention also to a number of crucial structural, social and cultural dimensions influencing the path towards social inclusion.

Especially relevant is in particular the capacity to empower recipients by leveraging their skills and previous work experiences. Cases in point are third sector organisations that build on recipients’ manual-informal skills and on their “survival” skills as basis for fostering their entrepreneurial skills. This implies bringing about recipients’ “hidden” skills and previous work experiences and fostering the co-design of individualised integration pathway that allow for the matching of asylum seekers and refugees’ skills and talents with the needs of the local labour market.

Citizens' mobilization has also contributed to developing new reception and integration policies and to innovating existing policy measures. Noteworthy in Italy is the inspiring role of two pioneering reception practices that experimented dispersed accommodation back in the late 1990s: association Città Futura in Riace, Calabria and ICS (Consorzio Italiano di Solidarietà) in Trieste. These initiatives paved the way for the development of the first national reception programme adopted jointly by the Ministry of Interior, ANCI and UNHCR with the support of a number of NGOs (among others CIR, ICS, ARCI): the Programma Nazionale Asilo (National Asylum Program), the precursor of the current Sistema Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati (SPRAR System).

Overall, insufficient research has so far been conducted with a view to unearth and support the widespread replication of the most innovative tools and strategies that have been experimented with by third sector organisations, sometimes in cooperation with local public authorities.

Furthermore, there is a dearth of support schemes oriented to build on the management and organisational capacities of both existing third sector organisations and volunteers that decide to self-organize to experiment with social and work integration pathways.

Finally, selection mechanisms are often unable to adequately valorise the contribution of third sector organisations that are incline to experiment with strategies and tools leading towards the social and work integration of recipients and paving the way for beneficial impacts upon hosting communities. Rather, selection mechanisms tend to favour large organisations that while being very much focused on generating economies of scale, are not interested in supporting interaction with hosting communities (InMigrazione, 2018; Trasciani & Vigilanti, 2018).

10. Focus on selected organizations in France, Germany, Greece and Italy

As described in Sections 4 to 7, significant differences exist across the four countries when it comes to the role of the third sector in the reception and integration domains.

Alongside third sector organisations, which normally benefit from preferential relationships with public authorities, a myriad of new citizens-led refugees relief groups has also emerged spontaneously to tackle the asylum crisis (Spencer, 2016). Indeed, at the municipal level volunteers remain one of the main engines of inclusion, supporting not only the social but also the economic integration of asylum seekers, refugees and status holders at the local level (OECD, 2017a, p. 14).

The four organisations presented below are strongly embedded in local communities because of the active engagement of key stakeholders, volunteers, and former recipients. Thanks to their broad perspective that pays particular attention to the empowerment of recipients and the needs of the hosting communities alike, these four organisations play a key role in changing the mind-set of local populations. At the same time, the strong relations each organisation establishes with public, private for-profit and non-profit actors (at local, national and sometimes international level), allow for the attraction of a variety of additional economic and non-economic resources. These resources are channeled to strengthen the ability of the studied organisations to achieve their institutional aims.

10.1. France: Action Emploi Réfugiés

10.1.1. Rationale for creation and development

Action Emploi Réfugiés (AERé) is a French organisation, which was first set up in Paris in 2016 along with a virtual platform that connects refugees and employers³⁵, aimed at supporting people with a protection status (i.e. refugees and people with subsidiary protection). It provides employers the possibility to advertise the opening of new job positions and supports refugees and protection holders in self-assessing their skills and competences, creating and fine-tuning their CV, and preparing for their job interviews.

Action Emploi Réfugiés was created by the wit of two high skilled women with an international background, who had previous experiences in international organisations and who are experts in asylum issues. In 2016, the two women realised that while, on one hand, refugees do not have equal opportunities to access the labour market when compared to French nationals, due to language and/or cultural issues, on the other hand, the labour market in Paris – as in other big cities in France and in some rural areas like the Bordeaux region – could offer great opportunities for refugees' economic integration. Therefore, the organisation established first an online platform, which, according to AERé, is a tool useful to level the playing field between natives and refugees in the labour market and to fill the gap between the shortages of certain types of work-force in France and the need of refugees and people with international protection to find a job.

The network of AERé grew from the personal networks of the two co-founders, who already had numerous contacts with both businesses and organisations (job providers), and with communities of refugees in Paris.

10.1.2. Typology of activities carried out

At the beginning of 2016, there was a significant attention of the French (and EU) media on refugees and their role in European countries. In the same year, Action Emploi Réfugiés was created, capitalising on this mediatic attention to steer both public discourse and funding towards the potential of refugees' integration in the French labour market. The two founders of the organisation decided to focus on labour market integration of refugees and people with protection status due to the practical hurdles to employ asylum seekers in France. They chose Paris as their first territorial focus, but then included also Bordeaux, and are thinking ahead to expand at national and European levels. Paris and Bordeaux are both densely populated areas with a high number of refugees and a significant number of work opportunities (e.g. seasonal work for the Bordeaux area). It is thanks to the network of local actors AERé relies on that it supports the matching of job supply and demand by including refugees in the labour market.

In addition to the job matching, AERé also provides individualised and group services (i.e. through workshops) for refugees for the preparation of their CVs and/or of their job interviews. It also supports both refugees and employers to assess the skills of the worker and to ensure the recognition of competences learned on the job.

³⁵ Action Emploi Réfugiés. "Our organisation". <https://www.actionemploirefugies.com/espace-editorial/the-team> (accessed March 19, 2018).

Finally, AERé carries out both a research activity aimed at understanding, facilitating and analysing³⁶ the impact of refugees' reception and integration and an advocacy activity aimed at raising awareness among French citizens on the subject of asylum.

10.1.3. Recipients

The main, direct recipients of AERé are refugees looking for a job and French employers. However, AERé also conducts raising awareness campaigns, which target French citizens. At the same time, it relies on local volunteers to carry out workshops aimed at preparing refugees for the job market.

10.1.4. Governance

The members of the board are responsible for fulfilling all management tasks. The two-presidents and the executive officer take most of the everyday administrative and financial decisions. However, the entire team participates as much as possible in the strategic decision-making regarding the future of the organisation. Ground projects are crafted directly with representatives of AERé's network (other associations, partners, experts, employers, refugees, volunteers).

10.1.5. Workers and quality of work

AERé's staff is currently composed of 21 people, including 2 founders, 1 director (executive officer), 3 employees, 3 "services civiques" (interns), and 12 volunteers dedicated to human resources: a highly skilled group of people that has grown into a larger team on the initiative of the two co-founders. Volunteers and civil servants mainly support refugees in writing their CV and in preparing for job interviews, while scouting for new potential employers and supporting the awareness raising campaigns carried out by AERé.

10.1.6. Relations with other actors

In France, as elsewhere in Europe, the third sector intervenes to find solutions on specific issues relating to refugees' integration to fill gaps left by the national, regional, and district levels of governance. In the case of AERé, the organisation operates to overcome the weaknesses of the French labour market to grant equal opportunities to refugees and to valorise their human capital.

The relevance of AERé is highlighted by the practice of several "pole emploi"³⁷, which refer refugees and asylum seekers directly to it. Compared to public services and other potential competitors, AERé has a specific expertise in finding jobs for refugees and protection holders, as well as in preparing and supporting them to gain access to the French labour market by recognizing and validating their skills.

Finally, AERé works in close cooperation with a number of national and international entities which deal with asylum seekers, refugees and holders of international protection: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the French Office for

³⁶ From AERé's website: <http://www.actionemploi-refugies.com/espace-editorial/notre-organisation-our-organization> (accessed 22 April 2018).

³⁷ Pôle emploi is a French governmental agency, which registers unemployed people, helps them find jobs and provides them with financial aid.

the Protection of Refugees and Stateless, the City of Paris, the Ministry of Interior, as well as non-state actors such as the association France Terre d'Asile and Groupe SOS, businesses (SMEs and companies of the CAC 40) and business' associations (Medef).

There are currently no other organisations in France that provide similar services for refugees, although some mainstream companies whose main area of expertise is job matching are moving towards this direction (e.g. Randstad in Italy³⁸).

10.1.7. Financing schemes

AERé draws on a mix of public and private resources. AERé receives public funding from different levels of governance: national (Interior Ministry – Dept. for Integration and Welcoming of Foreigners), regional (Paris area, Bordeaux area), department/district (Bordeaux), and municipality (Bordeaux) levels. At the same time, AERé relies also on private funding from different sources, including grant-making Foundations operating in different economic sectors (energy, utilities, telecommunications, retailers, etc.).

10.1.8. Strengths and challenges

AERé has a crucial role in filling the gaps of the labour market by supporting refugees' access to jobs and smoothing the functioning of the job matching system in Paris and Bordeaux. Since its creation over 250 people, with the most diverse backgrounds and skills' levels, found a job through AERé's services. More than 270 employers are involved with AERé, with around 800 resumés being stored in their database. Its main challenge is how to ensure its sustainability while expanding its geographical coverage. One of the solutions foreseen by AERé is to strengthen its entrepreneurial stance and turn into a fully-fledged social enterprise. The idea is to sell AERé's job matching services and expertise to big companies and to challenge traditional job matching businesses on a different target group with untapped potential.

10.2. Germany: SINGA Deutschland

10.2.1. Rationale for creation and development of the organisation

'SINGA' is a word in the Lingala language spoken in Congo meaning 'connection'. SINGA was first established in France (Paris) in 2012 as a citizens' movement and grew to become an organisation active in four different EU countries, including Germany, and two non-EU countries (i.e. Canada and Switzerland). SINGA Deutschland was founded in 2016 in Berlin as one of its co-founders moved from working for SINGA France to living and working in Berlin. SINGA Deutschland shares the same goals and values of SINGA network, albeit tailoring its work to the local needs. SINGA's main goals are to build bridges between people, encouraging dialogue, fostering cultural enrichment and creating job opportunities³⁹, while changing the mind-set of the local population about refugees and asylum seekers. SINGA Deutschland carries out its activities mainly in Berlin, its

³⁸ For further information on Randstad's work with refugees in Italy see: <http://www.lastampa.it/2017/08/09/economia/da-randstad-i-progetti-per-linclusione-dei-richiedenti-asilo-vCvCcZbhzTH4QnnjRUW7NJ/pagina.html> (accessed 18 May 2018).

³⁹ From SINGA France website: <https://www.singafrance.com/welcome-english> (accessed 22 May 2018).

surroundings and Stuttgart. At the same time, it supports other organisations and initiatives active in Germany in implementing innovative projects that lead towards an inclusive society⁴⁰.

10.2.2. Typology of activities carried out

SINGA Deutschland (and the SINGA network) focuses its core activities on the creation of opportunities for encounter and cooperation between refugees and their host communities with a view to support the socio-economic integration of refugees through their empowerment and active participation into civil society.

SINGA Deutschland's approach to refugees' work integration is devoted to support the emergence of new enterprises and start-ups owned by refugees. However, refugees do not have access to the same opportunities as German citizens do when they decide to start up a new business. Furthermore, SINGA Deutschland tries to help refugees to find an occupation that matches their skills. One of the key challenges in this process is that refugees often obtain low-skill level jobs mainly due to their poor education background or language skills.

In order to address these challenges, SINGA Deutschland has developed the "SINGA Business Lab" and the "Professional Mentoring" for enhancing the refugees' entrepreneurial skills and the "Language Café" and "Living Room Events" for facilitating their social integration.

The "Business Lab" is an inclusive incubator aimed at providing the best possible services to newcomer entrepreneurs⁴¹. The "Professional Mentoring" service is devoted to connecting refugees with locals (i.e., paired in "tandems") with similar professional background for facilitating a two-way learning process through mutual knowledge and experience sharing and for creating and expanding business networks.

Moreover, SINGA Deutschland's activities provide refugees with opportunities to use the German language and to meet German people in informal settings. This allows them to establish new relationships with German natives outside of the "student-teacher" environment and the "donor-beneficiary" relationship. The "Language Café" offers a weekly opportunity for refugees and Germanophones to meet and discuss about a variety of topics, while the "Living Room" events gather refugees and German citizens in the living rooms of volunteers to share evenings in a relaxed environment, thus facilitating the interaction among "equals".

10.2.3. Recipients

The direct recipients of SINGA's activities are newcomers in general (independently from their status) and citizens active in local communities; indirect recipients are asylum seekers, refugees and protection holders, who benefit from SINGA's raising awareness campaigns. Overall, the network currently counts on the participation and support of about 20,000 people.

⁴⁰ From SINGA Deutschland website: https://singa-deutschland.com/en/about_us/ (accessed 22 May 2018).

⁴¹ From SINGA Deutschland website: <https://singa-deutschland.com/en/1057-2/business-lab/> (accessed 24 May 2018).

10.2.4. Governance

Governance is based on a participative approach. The three co-funder take most of the everyday administrative and financial decisions. However, they take strategic decisions regarding the future of the organisation in an inclusive way by engaging volunteers, including locals and newcomers. Specific activities, such as the “Business Lab”, are always discussed with the larger team.

10.2.5. Workers and quality of work

SINGA Deutschland office team is currently consisted of nine people; seven out of them are salaried paid, one completes a “service civic” from France and one is a school intern. The team includes also three co-founders and four experts: the “Business Lab Project” manager, the Entrepreneur Guide and, the Fundraising and Community Development officer.

The organisation involves more than 100 volunteers including local people and newcomers, who are mobilised whenever there is the need to animate the professional mentoring, as well as the “Language Café” and the “Living Room” events. Overall, the involvement of the local community appears to be one of the cornerstones of SINGA’s activity.

10.2.6. Relations with other actors

SINGA Deutschland has established a high number of partnerships with public and private entities, including the European agency EASME and Zalando⁴². It also has strong ties with policy makers and public authorities at different level, job agencies, both for operational reasons and for providing advisory services. SINGA Deutschland interacts as well with local ethnic associations and associations involved in the management of reception and integration services for asylum seekers and refugees.

10.2.7. Financing schemes

SINGA Deutschland relies on a mix of private sources, including grants from foundations, private donations and own income generated thanks to the consultancies offered by its staff. SINGA does not rely on public funding.

10.2.8 Strengths and challenges ahead

SINGA was set up and managed with an entrepreneurial and impact-oriented approach. SINGA Deutschland has so far achieved significant results: since its inception it has incubated two cohorts of entrepreneurs among newcomers through the “Business Lab” and launched 12 new businesses⁴³, matched more than 80 mentoring couples, which proved to be highly beneficial not only for the beneficiaries of the mentorship (i.e. newcomers) but also for the local mentors, organised more than 80 “Language Cafés” and 30 “Living Room” events involving hundreds of participants.

The main challenge currently faced by SINGA the increase of its financial and social sustainability. SINGA is working to expand its international network and potential

⁴² From SINGA Deutschland website: https://singa-deutschland.com/en/1057-2/our_partners/ (accessed 24 May 2018).

⁴³ <http://singabusinesslab.de/startups/>

beneficiaries including through the creation of an interactive online platform with a view to building a more inclusive society.

10.3. Greece: Angalia

10.3.1. Rationale for creation and development

Angalia (which means “hug” in Greek language) is a small association based in the Greek village of Kalloni, located in the centre of the island of Lesbos. Turkey is the nearest mainland to Lesbos, which has a surface-area of 1642.3 km² and a population amounting to 85,000 inhabitants, out of whom almost half live in the capital Mitilene.

Four friends founded this association in 2007. Angalia can be described as the “continuation” of the individual spontaneous efforts of a number of Greek activists, who were struggling individually to help others in need. Thousands of people have progressively provided to this small organisation, which gained their trust and, financial support. As described by the Jury of the Council of Europe Raoul Wallenberg Prize “as a small and flexible local organisation based on volunteers, Angalia sets a leading example of effective action by European civil society on a burning global issue”⁴⁴.

This small organisation was explicitly set up to help local inhabitants and newcomers in need. Targeted people include local inhabitants, who have been burdened by the financial crisis and austerity measures that dramatically hit Greece, and asylum seekers and migrants alike. Angalia’s activities are furthermore aimed at promoting tolerance through raising awareness, fighting against racism and discrimination of any kind.

As the Greek island of Lesbos has become a European gateway for refugees and one of the areas most burdened by the refugee crisis in Greece, Angalia has been assisting some 17,000 migrants since 2015. Migrants’ arrivals to Lesbos have slowed significantly since the European Union deal with Turkey in 2016. However, a steady flow is still putting pressure on island facilities: about 8,700 of the 60,000 migrants living in Greek camps are now housed in Lesbos, in most cases under inhuman and degrading conditions as reported by several international NGOs⁴⁵.

10.3.2. Activities carried out

Angalia’s activities have been adjusted over time to encounter new needs that have emerged in Lesbos communities following the financial crisis of 2008-2010 and the asylum crisis of 2015. Angalia provides both material and knowledge-based assistance, including shelter and transportation services. Additional key activities are networking and the coordination of aid actions. Angalia’s shelter distributes food, water, cloths, warm blankets, sleeping bags, mattresses and beddings to people in need and re-distributes a significant amount of these donations to other Greek localities populated by migrants: Chios, Leros, Cos, Kalymnos, Komotini, Idomeni, Katerini, Pireus (Pyles), Athens, Kavala, Naupacte (Lepanto), Almyros, Patra, Kozani⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ <http://www.alexanderlanger.org/it/956/4016>

⁴⁵ <http://www.alexanderlanger.org/it/956/4016>

⁴⁶ <https://www.lesvossolidarity.org/index.php/en/>

Noteworthy is also Angalia's active participation in cultural activities, like the Symbiosis Art Festival, which facilitates experience sharing and mutual understanding among local inhabitants and asylum seekers.

At the same time, Angalia struggles to both advocate for the rights of its recipients and raise awareness about the roots of migration flows. Against this backdrop, communication and dissemination activities via social media are key: they enabled to build a solid platform for information sharing, sensitization and collective action.

A pilot programme named "200+200" enabled to support 200 families of local inhabitants and 200 families of asylum seekers that are living under extreme conditions in Lesvos. Angalia succeeded in bringing people together and promoting a sense of common belonging among locals and migrants. Volunteers and various donors supported this programme through a variety of actions and activities.

10.3.3. Beneficiaries

Angalia struggles to bring asylum seekers and locals together by shedding light on the common grounds of their problems and it contributes significantly to improving their life conditions through concrete actions. The main message disseminated broadly by Angalia is that solidarity can help both overcome the obstacles they both face (Ergàs, 2018).

The reach of Angalia's solidarity is very wide thanks to its multiple connections with other localities hosting migrants in Greece, which benefit from Angalia's support through the re-distribution of aid collected by Angalia.

10.3.4. Governance

Volunteers, four out of whom (now three) are members of the board of directors, which has been conceived to be small and flexible, take all decisions.

10.3.5. Workers and quality of work

Angalia has no paid staff: its activities are based on the sole contribution of people who find it meaningful to help others through their voluntary action. Angalia's volunteers are particularly active in telling their story through social media to motivate other people's mobilisation. Only in 2015, Angalia hosted more than 400 volunteers coming from all over the world to provide help to asylum seekers and migrants.

10.3.6. Relations with other actors

Angalia has no formal relations either with national governments or with EU institutions. It cooperates closely with local, national and international third sector organisations on different grounds: to allocate donations, distribute volunteers and provide psychological support to the volunteers engaged.

By cooperating with other pro-migrants' solidarity initiatives, Angalia contributes to improving the efficient and transparent allocation of aid and it has a role in scaling the impact of segmented solidarity actions that are being promoted by numerous spontaneous self-help groups and third sector organisations.

Examples are provided by Angalia engagement in the teaching initiatives of Lesvos Solidarity, the support provided to a refugee shelter in Tilos island, and to Caritas with a view to ensure medical and health assistance, and the help Angalia provides to other self-

organised and independent initiatives like Plátanos, which is based in the village of Ikamià (Lesbos).

10.3.7. Financing schemes

Angalia activities are funded exclusively through crowdfunding and thanks to the work of volunteers as the association is not interested in applying neither for EU nor governmental funding⁴⁷.

10.3.8. Strengths and challenges

Angalia provides a unique example of the extraordinary bottom-up mobilisation of volunteers locally, nationally and internationally. It is also a case in point of engaging reluctant local inhabitants and shifting their mindset and perception vis-à-vis asylum seekers. This endeavour is extremely challenging. Nevertheless, the high concentration of people together with the long asylum procedure is causing strong tensions in the camps of Lesbos. These tensions are further exacerbated by the worries over the long-term effects of the significant presence of asylum seekers to tourism, which is the main local economic activity.

Recent far-right militants' attacks against migrants and asylum seekers hosted in Lesbos camps, which hit also Angalia and put its activity at risk, represent a key challenge.

10.4. Italy: K-Pax

10.4.1. Rationale for creation and development

The cooperative K-Pax is based in Breno in the Camonica Valley. This territory is distinguished by a strong identity that goes hand in hand with very active catholic and secular social movements.

From an environmental and landscape perspective, industrialisation affected the Camonica Valley and forced local inhabitants to abandon agriculture and sheep farming after WWII. Building speculations and pollution from heavy industries had a severe impact on the environment and landscape of the Camonica Valley.

Delocalisation with the consequent crisis of the industrial distrectual model stimulated a progressive change in favour of a more environmentally sustainable and solidarity-oriented management of local resources. This change has taken place over the last 10 years thanks to the initiative of a number of enlightened mayors and numerous local associations. This has led to the recovery of traditional crops, wine and farming activities and to a direct engagement of numerous local administrations in welcoming asylum seekers.

The setting up of K-Pax Social Cooperative is very much connected to the negative reception experience of a hotel based in Montecampione that hosted 116 asylum seekers in 2011. Isolation, the failure to identify an institution in charge of delivering welcoming services and the bad quality of management paved the way for local authorities, in cooperation with a group of workers and volunteers of K-Pax, to experiment with an alternative model of reception, based on micro-dispersed accommodation. K-Pax's close knowledge of the problems and challenges faced by recipients enabled to define a reception

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*

model that fits very well with the hosting environment and has proved to be extremely innovative from several angles.

K-Pax draws on a very strong engagement of the community; it has successfully experimented with individualised training paths for recipients and it ensures a higher quality of work when compared to other private providers working in the same field.

10.4.2. Activities carried out

Over the years, K-Pax has expanded its activity. From being a provider of reception services, it has started to focus systematically also on the integration to work of disadvantaged people.

K-Pax's operation system differs from the predominant system, which tends to concentrate large groups of people in one place. Moving away from an emergency logic, it proposes a progressive integration of its recipients. The cooperative also operates in Brescia where it applies the logic of dispersed accommodation to city districts. Through this model, beneficiaries manage to interact more easily with the local inhabitants, who feel less threatened.

Personalised training paths facilitate the socio-economic inclusion of recipients. Individual meetings with specialised social workers and joint activities under the supervision of experts, who are in charge of assessing practical skills hard to bring about. Special attention is paid to the talents and specific inclination of recipients: whenever possible they are encouraged to cultivate their own passions as a mean whereby the interaction with the local community can be facilitated.

K-Pax strives to change the perception and the mind-set of the local population vis-à-vis newcomers by promoting a welcome culture through the organisation of festivals and events aimed to link food with culture and to share the experience of asylum seekers hosted in the Camonica Valley with the local community.

Over the years, the social cooperative K-Pax has gone beyond welcoming beneficiaries and promoting a welcome culture. In 2013, it bought and assumed the management of Hotel Giardino, the only hotel in Breno, which was previously abandoned. Noteworthy is that thanks to its efforts to decrease the ecological footprint through a rich offer of organic local products, the hotel has been awarded the 'Certiquality' certification by the EcoWorldHotel platform. Its regeneration has ensured regular employment to four migrants, two of whom are disadvantaged and were previously hosted by the cooperative. The opening of the hotel has attracted a significant number of tourists, especially bikers and cyclists but also people interested in learning more about the outstanding wealth and variety of engraved rock art of this valley⁴⁸.

The re-opening of Hotel Giardino contributed to the revival of the local tourism that had significantly decreased since the collapse of thermal tourism a few years ago. This form of tourism ensured the presence of a significant number of guests, whose vacations were paid by public subsidies.

Another key economic sector managed by the cooperative is the collection and sale of used clothes and shoes through 68 bins that are located across the valley. Most of the clothes and shoes are sold to a specialised company, whereas a selection of clothes is sold by K-Pax in the small charity shop "La Soffitta del Re", which is managed by volunteers. The

⁴⁸ The Camonica Valley was the first Italian site to be included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Hotel Giardino and the collection and sale of used clothes and shoes are key economic activities that spurred from the core reception activity to foster integration.

Both contribute to the sustainability of K-Pax welcome model and they directly benefit the hosting territory, thanks to the re-distribution of profits ensured to the advantage of the entire community.

10.4.3. Beneficiaries

While targeting asylum seekers specifically, K-Pax endeavours to match the needs of its main recipients with that of local inhabitants. K-Pax's direct beneficiaries continue to be asylum seekers, but newly target recipients are now also other vulnerable groups, who are indirectly supported through the Camonica Valley Territorial Enterprise for personal services (Azienda Territoriale per i Servizi alla Persona).

10.4.4. Governance

K-Pax is distinguished by a multi-stakeholder governance, which includes different stakeholders, having different relations with K-Pax, in its governing bodies. These include former recipients and volunteers in addition to workers who are the main typology of members. K-Pax builds on strong pre-existing trust relations, established by its founders and members with other local inhabitants: these relations contribute to the perception that the reception of asylum seekers is locally owned and controlled.

10.4.5. Workers and quality of work

K-Pax invests significant resources in training and supervising workers. Together with the higher wages provided on average, this policy contributes to motivating workers and increasing the quality of work, as confirmed by the low turnover of its staff.

10.4.6. Relations with other actors

K-Pax relies on two distinct public funding schemes: SPRAR and CAS.

Access to SPRAR requires a voluntary application by local municipalities in partnership with third sector organisations; CAS funding schemes are accessed through bid evaluations by local prefectures. While the SPRAR system is subject to rigid accounting rules, the CAS system is much less structured and subject to soft controls that can have controversial effects.

Over the years, the role of K-Pax in the local welfare system has changed dramatically. It shifted from supporting a parallel welfare activity tailored to asylum seekers specifically but not integrated into the local welfare system, to becoming a key funder of the local welfare system.

K-Pax enjoys strong relations with most of the local municipalities of the Camonica Valley and the Comunità Montana Camuna, gathering all municipalities located in the mountain areas and foothills. A special agreement was recently signed with the Camonica Valley Territorial Enterprise for personal services (Azienda Territoriale per i Servizi alla Persona), which is in charge of delivering a wide set of welfare services.

Concerning private enterprises, K-Pax has a commercial agreement with the company that buys the collected clothes and shoes and with numerous external suppliers of the activities run. Numerous relations are established also with local employers in a variety of economic

sectors interested in hiring asylum seekers, including local restaurants and small enterprises who often face labour shortages.

10.4.7. Financing schemes

K-Pax draws on a mix of resources: market resources generated by contracts with public authorities following competitive bids and/or contractual agreements in the frame of the CAS and SPRAR system, private market resources thanks to its trading activity, public grants, donations and voluntary work. The trading activity has increased significantly over the years thanks to the successful management of the Hotel Giardino and the sale of the collected used clothes and shoes.

10.4.8. Strengths and challenges

K-Pax has gone beyond the so called “welcome economy”, which is connected to the direct benefits generated by its reception activity, namely by: the number of new jobs created to host, assist and train asylum seekers (including social workers, psychologists, language teachers, etc.); the number of houses/apartments rented from private tenants, the specialised services demanded, and the purchase of goods and services by the same recipients from local shops.

The management of 68 bids for collecting used clothes and the Hotel Giardino enhance the viability of K-Pax and generate additional income. At the same time, the revitalisation of the hotel had a role in attracting new tourists and valorising local handicraft, artistic activities and local food products.

Thanks to the agreement signed with the Camonica Valley Territorial Enterprise for personal services, K-Pax committed itself to re-distribute part of the income generated by its trading activity to this public entity, which uses it to fund internships and housing for fragile women victim of domestic violence and/or at risk of social exclusion.

11. Conclusions

Non-state actors play a variety of roles in migrants’ reception and integration. They range from supporting innovative socio-economic inclusion pathways of asylum seekers and refugees while contributing to revitalising the hosting territories, up to carrying out controversial reception initiatives that are not oriented to supporting recipients’ autonomy (Galera & Giannetto, 2018; InMigrazione, 2018; Trasciani & Vigilanti, 2018).

The decision of many public authorities to contract out the provision of reception services to non-state actors has attracted a growing number of un-experienced and sometimes self-interested actors, including conventional enterprises and organisations that use the legal forms of the third sector in an opportunistic way. While the downside of reception patterns, including cases of mismanagement and inadequate infrastructures provided by non-state actors is highly visible in public debates, successful welcome initiatives promoted by third sector organisations that are locally rooted often poorly visible, mostly isolated, largely ignored in the public debate, and still far from being fully acknowledged by policy makers.

Drawing on the analysis of the four selected grass-root third sector organisations, this report provides a number of preliminary critical insights, which could stimulate further empirical research, on ways to make grassroots initiatives more effective.

All the case studies show very clearly that bottom-up mobilisation through the engagement of volunteers or the community at large is one – if not the most important – factor explaining the innovative reach of non-state actors. Regardless of the types of problems tackled, the four organisations have been created by individuals and groups wholly or partly dissatisfied with the reception and integration services provided by the public welfare system or by private providers. Thanks to their local embeddedness they managed to design innovative service models and integration paths, and succeeded in providing services, clothes and food to needy persons that public providers would have been unable to deliver due to budget and management constraints as well as to the difficulty to design individualised services. The innovation reach of the four organisations is due to their ability to attract additional private resources – human, environmental and cultural resources as well as economic and non-economic resources – that would not have been otherwise addressed to welfare aims.

Another common feature shared by the four organisations is that they act largely independently from the policy lines defined by public authorities, which sometimes struggle to design pro-inclusion measures. Public policies in this domain are often impacted by the need to curb public spending and/or by an emergency rationale, which ignores the structural nature of migration flows. Differently from many other providers of integration and reception services, none of the four organisations can be described as a mere implementer of public policies. Thanks to their connections with civil society and social movements the four organisations seem to be well-placed to identify the needs of recipients and local communities alike that are often neglected by both public policies and mainstream private actors. This explains why they have succeeded in designing new and more effective local responses that have a role in generating beneficial impacts upon receiving communities. While offering multiple opportunity of encounter and interaction, the engagement of the community and/or key stakeholders allows for a creative management of conflicts that are likely to arise in local communities and paves the way for the experimentation of innovative local welfare or labour market policies in the domain of refugee integration where mainstream public policies are more likely to encounter significant obstacles.

Three out of the four organisations have a strong entrepreneurial inclination, which translates in the effective organisation of the limited resources at their disposal and in the activation of new services and economic initiatives taken forward to better pursue their mission. Except for Angalia, which relies exclusively on voluntary work and donations, the organisations draw on a mix of resources, which include donations, voluntary work, grants, public contracting and incomes from trading activity. Their ability to mobilise volunteers and donations is mainly due to the strong trust relations they have established with different actors, at local, national and sometimes even international level.

Variations concern the degree of entrepreneurial development of the selected organisations, which ranges from embryonic up to the definition of a consolidated management model (K-Pax). This translates in the ability of K-Pax to develop and support additional services and activities that are of interest to the local community, while also stimulating a progressive adjustment of local welfare policies.

Also, when not engaged in influencing policy openly, all four organisations contribute to bringing key issues related to recipients' inclusion onto the agenda of public discussion. Key strategies range from activating the local community through tailored events and festivals up to the engagement of diverse stakeholders in the governing bodies of the

studied organisations. These strategies have a role in building a new civic consciousness in a practical and effective way.

In essence, based on our case study analysis, the most successful integration paths analysed combine the voluntary and spontaneous mobilisation of local communities and/or volunteers with the experimentation of territorial management, housing and integration models where different actors engage (Borzaga, Fazzi, & Galera, 2016).

That said, the key question to be addressed is, thus, how can the contribution of third sector organisations be fully valued and scaled up so as to facilitate the socio-economic integration of a growing number of recipients in receiving communities?

Based on the case studies carried out and recent analyses focused on third sector organisations and social enterprises (Borzaga, Fazzi, & Galera, 2016; OECD/EU, 2016a; Noya & Clarence, 2007), this report identifies a set of broad recommendations addressed to national policy makers that are meant to enhance the contribution of the third sector specifically in the domain of reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees:

- A proper eco-system is needed to fully exploit the contribution of civil society in the design of innovative reception and integration strategies. Policy makers should acknowledge the role and specificity of locally-based third sector organisations as key welfare providers by means of adequate legal, fiscal and public procurement frameworks. They should also recognise the specific role of third sector organisations in identifying new needs arising in local communities and co-designing innovative reception and integration services.
- Procedures for selecting non-state actors to provide reception services should be revised. Procurement procedures relying on the lowest price criterion have proved to be detrimental. While crowding out many third sector organisations that have experimented with successful integration pathways, procurement procedures have attracted many self-interested non-state actors that are not inclined to deliver high quality services and are not interested in engaging the local community in the welcome process with negative consequences upon the hosting territory (Trasciani & Vigilanti, 2018; Galera & Giannetto, 2018; Proteau & Tchernonog, 2017; Proteau, 2015; Vachey, et al., 2013). The big reception centres that normally concentrate very high numbers of recipients in one building in Italy, France, Germany and Greece are cases in point of failed integration. Indeed, rather than supporting integration, they tend to isolate asylum seekers from the hosting communities.
- At the same time, qualitative criteria such as the local anchorage and the empowerment of recipients are very difficult to be captured through competitive selection mechanisms. Based on the case study analysis and recent literature on public procurement, one possible pathway to fully valorise the contribution of third sector organisations seems to be the definition of public-private partnerships (among local public actors and locally-based and accredited third sector organisations) that are inspired by a collaborative, rather than a competitive rationale (Trasciani & Vigilanti, 2018; Borzaga, 2018; Scalvini, 2018). The collaborative rationale is more consistent with the cooperative and networking inclination of third sector organisations and their founding features (i.e. pursuit of explicit general interest aims). Moreover, adhering to a collaborative rather than competitive paradigm allows for the alignment of the general interest aims pursued by third sector organisations with those pursued by public authorities. This implies

that traditional procurement selection procedures ought to be replaced by a cooperative and collaborative framework whereby public entities and third sector organisations co-design activities and strategies aimed at supporting the integration of recipients. Indeed, local strategies reflect contextual factors that vary to a significant extent across territories and would require tailored regulations. In this respect, the Third Sector reform adopted in Italy in 2017 (Law 117) calls for a new modality of interaction between local public authorities and third sectors organisations that ought to be inspired by a collaborative paradigm (Marocchi, 2018; Trasciani & Vigilanti, 2018).

Additional key aspects include the following:

- Funding schemes aimed at building on the managerial and technical capacities of newly established third sector organisations are needed to fully exploit the contribution of civil society to tackling the migration challenge
- Funding schemes aimed at integrating recipients should have a broad focus and encourage stable interactions with local inhabitants. These interactions and integration initiatives should target local inhabitants and not exclusively refugees and asylum seekers. Policy should encourage the adoption of a broad perspective serving both asylum seekers and the entire community as a pre-condition for supporting socio-economic inclusion in hosting communities
- The failure to integrate refugees and asylum seekers in receiving communities is a source of inefficiency that generates substantial costs that must be met by public expenditures; the value of supporting experimentation by non-state organisations should be considered in this light, with a view to facilitate labour market integration and strengthen autonomy of recipients as early as possible.
- For innovative socio-economic inclusion paths to be developed, the challenge of integrating refugees and asylum seekers should be incorporated by territorial, educational, health, social, housing and labour market policies. To this end, stronger interaction with local authorities should be enhanced with a view to avoid the segregation of recipients in ghettos and through the building of a parallel local welfare system (for instance through ad hoc health services for asylum seekers). This trend is conversely supported by the predominant selection procedures that tend to favour non-state actors that over-concentrate large groups of recipients away from city centres to minimize interaction with hosting communities.

Interviewees

Case studies

France

Kavita Brahmabhatt, founder and co-president (in person, November 2017)

Alexandra Joski, financial and administrative officer (Skype call, March 2018)

Judith Aquien, CEO since July 2018 (email exchange, September 2018)

Germany

Norbert Kreuzkamp expert in migration issues (Skype call, March 2018 and in person, May 2018)

Stefan Kessler, researcher at Institute für Geographie, University of Erlangen (in person, May 2018)

Vinzenz Himmighofen, co-director SINGA Deutschland (Skype call, June 2018)

Greece

Ghiorgos Tyrikos Ergàs (Skype call, May 2018)

Italy (study visit)

Carlo Cominelli, president (in person, March 2018)

Silvia Turelli, member of the cooperative and social worker in charge of reception and vocational training

Francesca, member of the cooperative and social worker in charge of skills assessment and labour market integration

Gemma, member of the cooperative and social worker in charge of reception and the entrepreneurial project of clothes recycling

Katia, member of the cooperative and social worker in charge of reception and of the management of Hotel Giardino

Paolo Erba, mayor of Malegno

Roberta Ferrari, responsible for the area research, innovation and development of the Camonica Valley Territorial Company for personal services (Azienda Territoriale per i Servizi alla Persona)

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