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*Stakeholder Cooperation on Various Levels of Governance*

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## **STAKEHOLDERS COOPERATION ON VARIOUS LEVELS OF GOVERNANCE**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

As many documents from the EU institutions have been stressing over these last years, labour market insertion is one of the most relevant factors for migrants' integration, of which it has been considered as one of the two *structural* dimensions, together with the social inclusion.

The more jobs is a key issue for immigrants' settlement, the more it's important to foresee, in this field, an involvement as closer as possible of stakeholders in the governance processes within the receiving countries.

In order to define what extent and which levels of governance stakeholders should cooperate on, which stakeholders should be involved and what kind of contribution they should (or are expected to) provide, it's important to previously distinguish what kind of stakeholders we have to talk about.

Even by examining the inputs and good practices highlighted by some Maltese stakeholders, during the preparatory step of this project, we can significantly identify at least three different typologies of stakeholders:

- 1) independent statisticians or research centers, conducting studies and editing reports on migration issues;
- 2) associations, NGOs and other private organizations working with/for migrants in order to provide them assistance and tools for enhancing and improving their integration;
- 3) Third Country Nationals themselves (or those who have been elected as representatives of specific groups or nationalities).

On the other hand, we have to consider also the different levels of governance (from national to local, according with the administrative and political organization of the receiving country) in which these stakeholders may be involved (each kind of stakeholder for a specific kind of involvement, of course).

The topic appears, therefore, quite complex because the analysis needs not only to take into account all the many dimensions here implied, but also to consider how they should work together in the more fruitful way. so as to highlight relevant best practices and final recommendations on each main level of cooperation and governance.

In order to better integrate both the more relevant Maltese stakeholders' inputs, that have been collected from the AQ, and the items raised up during the first experts' meeting, we'll develop the analysis considering some relevant cooperation paths firstly at the national level and secondly at the local level; then, we'll highlight some general points and considerations, responding to some relevant issues raised up by Maltese stakeholders; finally, we'll draw up some final recommendations. The Italian case has been taken as a pattern throughout the analysis.

### **STAKEHOLDERS' COOPERATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

Competencies on immigration and migrants' integration policies are very often subdivided into more Ministries of the same country: in Italy, for instance, these policies are

mainly due to the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies mainly (while the Ministry for International Cooperation and Integration, for the first time instituted by Monti's government, has not been implementing any significant integration policy since its competency was quite little and even because a very small fund has been reserved to it. Moreover, it's not sure that the next government will confirm this Ministry).

Anyway, there are some other institutional structures – on which we are going to briefly refer here below – that are differently involved in the national governance on the migrants' labour integration and where stakeholders could be effectively involved in.

### **Ministry of Interior**

The Ministry of Interior has two main objectives with regards to migration policies: ensuring public order and public safety by fighting illegal migration; encouraging the reception and integration of legal migrants, securing social cohesion and protecting civil rights such as asylum, citizenship and religious freedom. The first objective is entrusted to the *Dipartimento della pubblica sicurezza* (Department of Public Security), and the second to the *Dipartimento per le libertà civili e l'immigrazione* (Department for civil liberties and immigration).

The *Direzione centrale per le politiche dell'immigrazione e dell'asilo* (Central Directorate for Immigration and asylum policies) operates within the latter Department helping both to define and plan the Government migration policies, and to promote and monitor the foreigners' integration policies on the territory.

To this end, the Central Directorate:

- Manages the network of the ***Consigli Territoriali per l'Immigrazione (Territorial Councils for Immigration)***, which are bodies set up in 1999 in all 107 Italian provinces within the Prefectures (the Government representative bodies at local level). These Councils are composed of representatives of the *Amministrazioni locali* (local Authorities), the Chamber of Commerce, workers' organizations (such as trade unions), employers, associations and institutions working with and / or in favor of migrants.

They evaluate the situation of migrants at local level, analyze their needs and promote targeted actions to promote integration within the context of reference, through a kind of collaboration that actively involves institutions and local *stakeholders*.

Precisely because of this mixed (institutional and non-institutional) composition, and also thanks to the strong local rooting, which favors a more direct contact with real problems and actual needs of migrants, the Councils probably represent the most significant experience and effective way of involving *stakeholders* in the *governance* concerning the integration of migrants: they are meaningful as they embody an intense inter-institutional collaboration among non-institutional actors active in the area, and they are also effective as they allow to tailor interventions and integration policies appropriate to the actual situation, de facto, of each different territory.

The fact that all Councils are coordinated at national level by the "Direzione Centrale del Ministero" (Central Directorate of the Ministry) provides the necessary link between center and periphery, primarily allowing national authorities to have an updated perception of the real situation of the country, in the various territories. This peculiarity has enabled the Ministry to publish a series of annual reports on the activities of the Territorial Councils for Immigration (the last was the fourth one, published in 2009).

- Manages the **Fondo Europeo per l'Integrazione (European Fund for Integration)**; The Central Directorate is responsible for managing this Fund (the Responsible Authority for Italy). In fact, concerning the use of this Fund, each year the Ministry publishes a call addressed to different actors operating within the integration support area, inviting them to submit proposals for funding: after evaluating the projects submitted, the Ministry determines, according to a merit ranking, the distribution of the Fund. It is important to emphasize that within this mechanism, the Ministry requires the territorial Councils to make a first evaluation of projects designed for the territory of reference. If this procedure has the advantage of evaluating the projects taking into account how they respond to specific needs and priorities of the actual contexts in which they will be developed (in fact the territorial Councils are more aware of these requirements and priorities than a national body such as the Ministry), on the other hand, we must be careful not to create a vicious circle: for example when proposals are submitted by territorial entities that are part of the local Council, a potential candidate could be called to provide an evaluation of his own project.

In any case the Ministry sets aside a portion of the fund to the initiatives directly entrusted to the Central Directorate; among the most recent and interesting ones addressing the involvement of stakeholders, it is worth mentioning:

- An **internal technical committee** set up in 2012 and managed in collaboration with ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics, which is - of course - the main source of aggregate statistical data regarding the legal foreign population in the country); the panel includes relevant researchers and research centers working on the integration of migrants at national level and this committee aimed at providing shared indications to improve the production of statistical data useful to ISTAT in order to devise integration indicators.

With reference to the inputs that have been collected by the Maltese stakeholders, it is also worth noting that in the website of the Ministry of the Interior is possible to find:

- the **guidebook "Staying in Italy legally"**, composed by 11 thematic chapters on relevant procedures to enter and stay in the country in a legal way, telling how and where to apply for the main kind of permits and to gain some basic rights (health care, education, citizenship). The guidebook is available in Italian and in other seven different languages: English, French, Spanish, Albanian, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. Texts are currently being updated.

- a special panel where answers to **Frequent Asked Questions (FAQ)** concerning immigration issues and procedures are collected and published.

### **Ministry of Labor and Social Policies**

A Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies managing the competence of the Ministry in this area has been set up within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; In particular, the Directorate is responsible for:

- managing the work entry permits of non-EU citizens through the annual flows planning, monitoring the allocation of quotas at local level;
- drafting and updating lists of non-EU workers;
- fostering bilateral cooperation with the migration flows' countries of origin;

- promoting and coordinating social integration policies, through measures upholding the integration of migrants within the Italian society, and also through the participation to international technical committees (the Ministry of Labour is part, along with the Ministry of the Interior, of the Network of national contact points on integration - NCP - of the European Commission).

The measures of social integration are carried out mainly by Regions and Local Authorities, in partnership with associations, services and other facilities – public and private – present in the area: these are projects that directly relate to job placement, or even the acquisition of skills or status required for a better inclusion or to legally stay in Italy (such as, for example, courses of Italian language learning and / or civic education, intercultural mediation courses, projects aimed at promoting access to housing or access to credit and banking services, etc.).

An important point to underline is that the *ratio* applied by the Ministry of Labour when allocating resources, is that a project receives funding, not the individual (or individuals) implementing it. This *ratio*, seemingly obvious, it is not of minor importance in relation to the issue of cooperation of stakeholders in active integration policies, because it encourages the participation of all interested stakeholders in the development of the same project, given the fact that by being funded it can be implemented. This open participation, however, would be precluded if the resources were to be assigned to previously designated and selected “operators”.

In this context, among the most interesting initiatives and projects for the involvement of stakeholders, we highlight:

- ***The integration portal***, launched in January 2012 and co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration with the aim to encourage and support the integration process of foreign citizens in Italy. The portal is organized using the same assets and structure of the *Plan for integration into security "Identity and encounter"* (a document, approved by the Council of Ministers in June 2010 together with the Agreement of integration, which identifies the main guidelines and tools to be undertaken in order to promote an effective process of integration for migrants): education and learning, employment, housing and territorial governance, access to basic services, minors and second generation migrants. There are five areas that, according to the Government, correspond to the fundamental requirements of foreigners' integration in the country.

The Portal is the result of an inter-ministerial collaboration is (in addition to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which coordinates the implementation of the Portal through the Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies, involving the Ministries of Interior, Education, University and Research and of the International Cooperation and Integration) and among various stakeholders who, each in a different way, contribute to the Portal not only as users but also as "makers", helping to implement specific sections assigned to them with text and contents.

In this way, the Portal is the "virtual place" used by a network of more than 1.200 people including Associations, public and private Organizations, Research centers, Employers' associations, Trade Unions, Regions, Provinces, Municipalities and Territorial Councils.

In particular, thanks to a multi-level collaboration among the various actors involved in the implementation of the website, in the *employment area* of the Portal (<http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/servizi/lavoro/Pagine/default.aspx>) there are

4.500 registered services useful to provide guidance in the labour market and access to employment opportunities, subdivided by territory and with different access for foreign nationals and employers.

The services reported - of which detailed and varied information are provided depending on the user - are: matching labor demand and supply, occasional employment, services to people, re-employment actions, intercultural mediation, access to credit, initiatives in the countries of origin. The services listed in the Portal are provided by different entities (institutions, associations, NGOs, etc..) that operate in their own specific field, throughout the country.

In addition to these services, the Employment area also provides direct links to official sites relevant to the social and working inclusion of migrants (among them, we highlight the INPS - National Institute of Social Security - portal and the portal of public usefulness "Cliclavoro" where several labor standards and types of contract are explained).

Within the *employment area* of the Portal, attention must be paid to the *Research section* realized thanks to the collaboration among the Directorate General of the Ministry and six different research centers that have been publishing research on immigration and integration of migrants in Italy for long time (at least 10 years) to analyze changes and trends. These Research Institutions have contributed to deepen the most significant aspects of the migration phenomenon, through 170 analysis reports published in this section of the Portal: it is either thematic factsheets on three relevant topics treated in their historical development (the presence of foreigners in Italy, the integration of foreigners within the Italian labour market, the extent of foreigners' integration in Italy), or a specific focus related to these main reports, sorted by territorial level (national or regional).

- The **Start it up project**, carried out by the Ministry in collaboration with Unioncamere (the National Union of Chambers of Commerce, active in all provinces), lasted throughout 2012 and had the objective of facilitating access to entrepreneurship for migrants arriving from non- EU countries.

It was a pilot project involving 10 Chambers of Commerce (Ancona, Bari, Bergamo, Catania, Milan, Rome, Turin, Udine, Verona and Vicenza), which have encouraged and supported the creation of new foreign companies providing specific services: streamlining bureaucratic-administrative procedures, providing business training and support in start-up companies (drafting of business plans, facilitated access to microcredit for small businesses start-ups or self-employment, consultancy to tendering for the granting of Regional public funds ).

In this project, the *stakeholders* who have closely worked with a *governance* body such as the Ministry were the territorial Chambers of Commerce which along with Unioncamere, planned joint actions with the Ministry and carried them forward, each of them in their relevant territory. In addition, the final meeting of the project was attended by all the concerned reference entities that have actively contributed to develop an overall assessment of the entire project activity.

- The **Doti (Endowments) program**, which refers - with his name - to all the resources in money and services set aside for an individual to establish, maintain and strengthen the relationships that develop and enhance his human capital in the best possible way. In fact, it is a program that, through the PON (National Operative Program), funds of Community origin, intends to fight phenomena of exploitation, illegal employment and social exclusion,

by funding projects designed to promote the social and working inclusion of unaccompanied foreign minors close to come of age (between 17 and 18 years) or former unaccompanied minors who recently came of age (who came of age in the two-year period 2011-2012), which - in both cases - are in need of finding a job in order to legally remain in Italy as adults.

The resources allocated to financing the project proposals in total of € 2 million and each project proposal cannot amount to less than € 50.000 and not to more than € 200.000.

The Program has funded a total of 1.226 cases: in 910 cases a personalized path of job placement was funded (with a sum of up to € 5.000 per case), while in 316 cases (with a maximum of € 3.000 per case) the beneficiaries were supported through a skills development path.

Those entitled to submit the application form for funding, in joint partnership, are: municipalities; institutions and associations active in the field of immigration and registered with the Ministry; institutions managing authorized facilities for the reception of minors, individuals authorized to perform matchmaking activity to meet supply and demand of public and private labour organizations, accredited by individual regions to the development of vocational training.

The project stands out as it provides a joint involvement of stakeholders (institutions and operators proposing and implementing funded projects), through their mandatory partnership in the planning and implementation of active policies for the employment integration of migrants as the partnerships are responsible for the design and implementation of projects providing individual inclusion of minors.

- The **RE.LA.R. program** (Italian acronym for *Rete dei servizi per la prevenzione del lavoro sommerso - Services network for the prevention of illegal employment*) wishes to tackle exploitation, illegal work and social exclusion by funding projects aimed at providing employment for migrants in the southern regions of Campania, Apulia, Calabria and Sicily (where illegal employment and exploitation of migrants is widespread). In particular, the program funds training projects and qualification of skills for migrants, in order to facilitate regular employment; the projects must foresee the creation of vocational internships (of a duration of not less than three months and not more than five) and the subsequent drawing-up of a contract of employment (of not less than six months) for the trainee.

Each internship must include an Italian language course up to a level (L2) adequate to secure the release of a formal certificate and training on health and safety in the workplace.

The maximum amount of each loan is fixed at € 5.000, to be divided into two parts: an attendance allowance for the trainees and a contribution to the cost of the internship started by the promoters (which are all private entities legally recognized and authorized to the activation of internship pathways). The contribution shall be granted provided that the promoter submits documentary evidence of the work placement (at least a six-month contract) of the trainee.

### **CNEL - ONC**

In Italy, the CNEL (Italian acronym for the National Council for Economy and Labour) is an institution provided for by the Italian Constitution performing an advisory role to the Government and the Parliament regarding economic and employment policies. It includes dozens of advisers, partly elected by public entities belonging to the labor market

(employers' organizations, chambers of commerce, trade unions, etc..) and partly appointed by the President of the Republic. Several other European countries have their own similar internal organization, and at Community level its equivalent is the European Economic and Social Committee. Usually, these structures are internally organized into committees that deal with specific issues.

The Italian immigration law of 1998 (known as the Turco-Napolitano Law) established within the CNEL the so-called *Organismo Nazionale di Coordinamento* (National Coordination Body) for the political integration of foreigners; this Organization is called upon providing guidance and qualified advice to the Government. In order to properly perform its functions, the ONC:

- Organizes debates among experts, researchers and representatives of associations and NGOs working on the field with migrants to constantly update on the actual state of things and on the specific issues that immigrants face in their process of social and employment inclusion;
- Places orders to research centers and / or University on particular aspects of the integration of migrants in Italy, with particular attention to their work placement (one of these is the Annual Report on migrants' integration Indexes in Italy which is entrusted to IDOS and which is now at its ninth edition, recently promoted along with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy);
- In 2012 a collaboration was started with the OECD, organized together with the Ministry of Labour, for the realization of a review (which will be drawn up by the OECD itself) on the integration of migrants in Italy, with particular attention to employment integration and some related issues, such as training courses, language courses, the inclusion of the second generation (IDOS acted as technical secretariat and was entrusted with a part of the employment situation review in the 20 Italian regions);
- In February 2012 it organized a workshop to compare notes on the methodology for measuring the integration of migrants at national and regional levels, among scholars and research centers that have published research and studies on the subject.

At national level at least two further examples of the involvement of *stakeholders* in the *governance* concerning the integration of immigrants should be mentioned.

- **Consulta Nazionale dell'Immigrazione** (National Council for Immigration), established in 1998 by the Turco-Napolitano law (the first systematic law on immigration in Italy) at the Ministry of Social Solidarity – at that time in charge of immigration - and lasting in actual fact until 2002, when the Bossi-Fini law entered into force (which restrictively amended the law of 1998). Since then the National Council on Immigration has been convened only sporadically. In the intention of the law-maker, this Council was supposed to be the equivalent, at national level, of what the Territorial Councils for Immigration are at provincial level. Actually 72 stakeholders were part of the National Council, consisting partly of associations' representatives, both Italian and foreign, dealing with immigration, trade unions and employers' associations, local authorities and ministries involved in various ways, and partly by experts, both Italian and foreign, operating in this field.

Presently the National Council (that no Government has ever convened again) has been replaced *de facto* by the

- **Tavolo Nazionale Immigrazione** (National Working Group for Immigration). It is composed of 11 national associations, including trade unions, employers' associations, and associations working for the reception, integration and rights of migrants (ACLI, Arci, ASGI, Caritas Italiana, Centro Astalli, CGIL, CISL, Comunità di Sant'Egidio, FCEI, Sei UGL, UIL). The working group chooses, in turn, their own spokespersons among the representatives who are part of it, meets regularly, publicly expresses an opinion or an assessment of the most important Government decisions, in the hope of pushing forward- if the Group deems them necessary – amendments or additions to policies and governance. A recent example of intervention carried out by the working Group, is to have denounced to the Ministry of International Cooperation and Integration, Labour and Interior, the extremely costly measures imposed to employers in the last regularization at the end of 2012, and also some ambiguities in the text of the regulation, where it was unclear who had to prove the presence in Italy since at least December 31, 2011, of the foreign worker who had to be legalized (a gap which for a long time kept many regularization requests still pending, threatening to block the regularization process itself).

#### **STAKEHOLDERS' COOPERATION AT LOCAL LEVEL**

There are 3 levels of territorial and administrative division in Italy, and to each one corresponds specific structures of local governance, where the stakeholders can participate to inclusion and integration policies for migrants.

- Just below the national level we have the Regional level. There are **20 Regions** in Italy, and 19 of these have their own local Administration (only the Trentino Alto Adige region does not have a regional Administration, but two autonomous provincial Governments: Trento and Bolzano). Some regional Administrations (Sicily, Sardinia, Valle d'Aosta and Friuli Venezia Giulia) enjoy greater autonomy in local governance, with respect to the national jurisdiction.

This level of local governance is more generally lacking entities able to involve the stakeholders: as early as 1986, the **Consulte per l'Immigrazione (Regional Councils for Immigration)** had been already foreseen, but at present only a few regions that have introduced local legislation on immigration have actually set them up and with purely advisory functions.

- Each region is divided, in turn, in a variable number of provinces, which relate to the most important city of the territory. In Italy, the **provinces** are **107** and each has its own local Government in its regional capital. The **Consulte per l'Immigrazione (Councils for Immigration)** had been originally planned to be even part of these local authorities, but *de facto* these Councils have been replaced by the **Territorial Councils for Immigration** - that have been mentioned above - which, as said, were established in the prefectures (representations of the central government in each province) and are under the coordination of the Ministry of Interior.

- Each province, then, consists of several **municipalities** (which are **more than 8.000** in Italy). Some among the largest and most important municipalities have internally established either a **Consulta cittadina per la rappresentanza delle comunità straniere**

(*Civic Council for the representation of foreign communities*), consisting of representatives of the largest foreign communities in their territory, or the *Consiglieri Aggiunti (Additional Councilors)* who are part of the City Council, but with a purely advisory role (i.e. with no right to vote) on migration governance at city level, directing the Council's discussions on topics of interest to foreigners living in the city or giving operational guidelines to facilitate their inclusion and integration.

With regards to this topic, it is interesting to analyze the experience of the City of Rome, which established both bodies: a *civic Council for foreign communities*, where the largest 30 national communities are represented, and also a group of *Additional Councilors* (23 in total: 4 in the Central City Council - each one representing different continental area, except for Oceania - and one for each of the 19 municipal quarters in which the Municipality is portioned out, as a representative of the local foreign population).

Both the representatives of the Civic Council and the Additional Councilors are elected by universal suffrage by non-EU citizens resident in Rome.

Within the civic Council for foreign communities, in order to avoid that particular interests of individual communities compete with each other and thus create divisions rather than internal cohesion, an *Assemblea (Assembly)* was established with the role to mediate and harmonize different needs, in order to produce main guidelines or shared and consistent requests.

## **ANSWERING THE MAIN INPUTS COLLECTED FROM MALTESE STAKEHOLDERS**

In order to integrate – within this research paper – the more relevant Maltese stakeholders' inputs, as they have been previously collected through specific Assessment Questionnaires, we have grouped them into two main thematic areas: *Participation of stakeholders in (and their role within) governance (and/or policy making)*, the first and more general one; *Stakeholders' cooperation in providing services and information concerning TCNs' labour integration*, the second one, more specifically focused on immigrants' work issues.

In this way, it would be easier to develop the whole discourse including, in a coherent way, what has been pointed out by the local stakeholders.

### **1. Participation of stakeholders in (and their role within) governance (and/or policy making)**

- 1. Stakeholders as a source of independent review and a source of information and research regarding de facto situation of migrants once in the country.*

Stakeholders' role in gathering updated, in-the-field and objective information is of basic importance. This is why each Member State is (or should be) constantly concerned to ensure stakeholder's participation in the information exchange and in a very effective use of the analyses.

Scientific research should always be independent; for this reason, sometimes public institutions commission specialized research centers to draw up reports and studies, whose results can be useful also to help policy makers in taking decisions and allocating funds just where real needs were found out by the research. These commissioned organizations may consist in well-known research centers, whose contributions are widely recognized, or even in small structures which, although conducting valuable research and providing very valid contributions, are not always

included into the main information network. Experience shows that in order to avoid the loss of many interesting sources, it is necessary to carefully monitor what has been done even in the smaller thematic and territorial dimensions. It would also be interesting to compare contributions from neighboring Member States on common or similar issues.

Information should first be provided by the public structures, both at central and local level, in the most accessible, updated and objective way, even by means of their official websites and reports. However, it is well known that even the most authoritative sources do not always ensure a widespread diffusion of knowledge; this is why a joint strategy between public and private bodies is quite essential. Of course, manners and frequency of collaboration between these two levels could always be improved (not hiding that sometimes this collaboration is lacking at all) and granting public funds to associations would be of great help. These are not unnecessary or needless expenses, because such funds would support structures whose work is highly effective and often very hard to replace.

2. *Is there room for further improvement in data sharing between all stakeholders to improve the situation analysis at different levels of decision taking?*

Unfortunately, sometimes there is a very small cooperation (especially at the beginning) between the various organizations which have conducted studies on the migration phenomenon and have a better understanding of some of its specific aspects. Often this happens because of the need of each organization to win over competitors and gain access to public funded programs. Anyway, in this regard, it must be stressed that several recent calls for research encourage joint researches and mixed teams as a better way of cooperation and collaboration between different research centers. This way to manage research programs, however, needs to be more enhanced and public authorities should do something more to promote a broader collaboration between all the stakeholders involved in the field of research. For example, we can mention and suggest:

- Conferences and seminars either on specific topics and research methodologies (as mentioned above, in Italy the CNEL organized, on February 2012, a study seminar on the different methodologies on measuring migrants' integration in the country, inviting all national research centers and institutions - both public and private - which have been developing their own research method, to exchange experiences on this topic);
- Publication of the researches on the official websites of public institutions (in Italy, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs have recently commissioned some private research centers to provide abstracts and resuming papers from their studies in order to fill the Documental Section of its Portal on Integration).
- Public conferences to sensitize people, spread abroad data and raise awareness at a territorial level, where single representatives of both the local authorities and private social organizations should be invited to speak and debate on the very effective local situation;
- Mentioning activities and researches of NGO and other associations into the institutional reports and publications.

3. *Identification of departments/entities that can work together to avoid /reduce discrimination and promote integration of TCNs; indication of how this is done in other member States (Italy)*

Even public institutions, which theoretically should collaborate with each other, sometimes have an attitude of closure. Many cases this is due to the fact that competences and jurisdiction over immigration is often divided among several institutional bodies at the national level. However, sometimes we can find the opposite.

In Italy, for example:

- the CNEL collaborate in a very close way with the Ministry of Labor;
- The Ministry of the Interior involves the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Integration and International Cooperation, the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), the local authorities and the Territorial Councils for Immigration;
- the UNAR collaborates with the corresponding offices within each Region;
- the Provinces with the Universities;
- the European Migration Network (EMN) – the EU program which is usually managed by the Ministry of the Interior of each Member State – in its practical implementation in Italy has established a strong collaboration with all public institutions having jurisdiction over immigration (as, for instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Education, University and Research, international organizations, Universities, etc.).

4. *Possibility of further government funded integration programs that may be organized by stakeholders*

During this period of long and deep crisis, even in order not to exacerbate reactions among national populations (especially when they still look at migrants as competitors into the labour market, in finding a job), it would be preferable that integration programs be co-financed by the EU (this being one of its tasks). The EU fund quota for each Member State need to be carefully controlled, in order to verify that it would be well spent and fully used.

5. *Difficulty in reaching TCNs and their communities in Malta; a platform that brings together TCNs and their communities*

In this phase of crisis, migrants have become more prudent and, especially if they are likely to fall into irregularity, they suspect of any initiative, even those specifically targeted for them. The network of social and religious organizations can really help in overcoming this distrust. Aggregation and networking among the various immigrant associations are possible, at least on specific issues, but should always be monitored and constantly improved. The most successful initiatives are those in which a public structure invites these organizations to collaborate, by grouping them under a common program. Anyway, rather than thinking of a platform which would gather in a permanent structure all the associations, it may be easier to establish something like a general Council in which they could play an advisory role: as previously said, this goal has been achieved in Italy by instituting a Territorial Council

for Immigration in each Prefecture all over the country (the Prefecture is the institution that represents the national government at the local level, so that every Italian Province has its own Prefecture). These Councils usually promote in-depth sessions or awareness-raising meetings, and also provide evaluations of the projects financed by the European fund for Integration at the local level, on the basis of the actual needs of each territorial context.

6. *Promote without delay the engagement of various stakeholders with policy making on migration and integration as well as more broadly*
7. *Political empowerment-including, through the sharing of information and open policy making processes*

In order to achieve this objective, it would be desirable to establish a general Council which would determine the main lines of action. These lines should then be implemented by specialized public structures, in collaboration, from time to time, with the various stakeholders having specific knowledge of migration. As described above, the 1998 Italian law on immigration provided for the establishment of a National Council of this kind, of which the Territorial Councils for Immigration should have been the local expression; in the latest years, however, the government has never convened this Council.

8. *Ensure that migrant voices are heard at various levels of governance, allowing space for grievances to be filed and addressed*

The consultation that I mentioned in the previous point, should of course include immigrants. We must bear in mind, however, that participation in governance is quite different from defense and protection interventions: in the first case the organized associations have a leading role, whereas in the second case the single individuals are those who can report a grievance or a discrimination, denouncing it – depending on the case – either to social organizations (in Italy, for example, trade unions and charitable institutions are very active in providing direct assistance, especially with regard to inclusion in the labor market) or to the dedicated call center of the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), which collects this kind of reports from migrants directly involved.

## **2. Stakeholders' cooperation in providing services and information concerning TCNs' labor integration**

- A. *Further cooperation with regards to information distribution concerning: procedure for job application, rights one is entitled to, means of redress, etc.*

The above-mentioned objectives require different paths.

- Public offices are involved in the job searching process:
  - o either when the worker has to come from abroad (in this case, the procedures are carried out by offices such as: in particular, the Provincial Office of Labor, which acts as a recruitment agency by collecting the applications for a job of third-country workers to be hired by Italian employers; and the Single Desks for Immigration at the Prefectures, where

- the contract of employment between the non-EU foreign worker and the employer is signed, so that a *nihil obstat* for the residence permit is issued;
    - or when the worker who already resides in the country has lost his job and has one year to find another one, so as not to lose his residence permit (on this regard, the efficiency of official channels and public services is quite low, therefore the social organizations – sometimes even the unauthorized ones – as well as the ethnic and friendship networks often act as recruitment agencies).
  - Practices for the protection of labor rights involve trade unions (and their charitable organizations, as far as social security is concerned) and even lawyers, in the worst cases.
  - Reparation practices and means of redress are settled in the courts. This possibility, however, is only theoretical if the person concerned has limited financial resources and cannot afford a lawyer; access to a free public defender is not always easy, indeed. In order to overcome these difficulties, some associations provide free legal assistance (in Italy, the most known is the Association for Legal Studies on Immigration – ASGI is the Italian short –, having various offices throughout the country).
- B. Guidelines available by the Employment Training Centre Malta and regarding “Living and Working Conditions in Malta”*

The guidelines drawn up by a public office have the advantage of coming from an authoritative and official source. They are often completed with complementary guides prepared by NGOs, containing additional information and examples of cases. These guides are quite well-known in Italy, and are often used to facilitate the solution of practical problems, mainly of a bureaucratic nature. There are, however, important practical guides issued by public institutions (such as the one entitled “Comunicare l’immigrazione – Communicating immigration”, which was published in February 2012 by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, in order to promote a more correct information about immigration by the mass media).

- C. Structure of recruiting agencies, NGOs, Trade Unions. Involvement of private sectors and international sectors (as in Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh)*

The structure of these bodies changes from a country to another, depending on the different laws of each State. Taking Italy as an example, we can see the following aspects:

- with regard to the entry of TCN workers in Italy, private recruitment agencies are mainly used to implement the complex and expensive practices regarding highly-qualified workers who are going to become holders of the so-called “blue card” (such as nurses, for example);
- some professional agricultural organizations are often called to collaborate with the Italian embassies and consulates abroad in order to facilitate the entry of TCN seasonal workers, who are largely employed in agriculture;
- there are also temporary employment agencies which work for the inclusion of both Italian and immigrant workers in the labor market, by means of time-limited jobs;

- a more direct involvement of companies in the search for workers from abroad has been recently suggested, but not yet implemented (at present, indeed, companies are required to submit a job application to the Provincial Labor Office, which still has a mediating function between the subjects involved);
- charitable organizations (Patronages) as expression of Trade Unions, but not Trade Unions themselves, are the ones which directly manage the match between supply and demand of labor; although deriving from Trade Unions, these charitable organizations have their own legal status as autonomous “institutions of public utility”, and can be authorized to deal with the inclusion of domestic workers in Italy. NGOs sometimes play this mediating function between demand and supply of labor, but only *de facto*, without any official role or authorization.

*D. Trade Testing System, Training Programs, etc. by the Employment Training Centre Malta*

It is known that the German training and educational system, for instance, based on a functional link between professional schools, public offices and companies, is really effective; its results speak for themselves.

In Italy, the responsibility for professional training lies with the local Authorities, in particular the Regions, with which many professional institutes collaborate. However, the results are not always satisfactory.

Probably, the most interesting training systems are those carried out “on the job” by the companies, which increasingly invest in improving migrants’ professional skills.

*E. Local Council will introduce a service system related to TCNs whereby a new resident can be provided an induction with basic information on the community and services provided*

In Italy, the integration agreement, which entered into force in March 2012, should have been something similar to what will be introduced in Malta; this is an agreement that every TCN over the age of 16 entering Italy for the first time is obliged to sign, in order to obtain a residence permit.

This agreement commits the TCN to achieve specific objectives (such as learning Italian) within two years; in case these objectives are not achieved, the agreement punishes the TCN with the subtraction of a certain number of points from the total scoring assigned with the residence permit. If the scoring runs out, the TCN loses the right to stay in Italy and must be repatriated.

This initiative has been criticized because some of the required objectives are difficult to be achieved. As an example, free Italian language courses (financed by the public institutions) are very few. More generally, this agreement was introduced in 2009 together with a set of restrictive rules (known as “the security package”), inspired by an attitude of mistrust and suspicion towards TCNs.

*F. A new service to be introduced with the collaboration of the competent government authorities in providing a one stop shop strictly targeted for the third country residents at the Local Council office. This service will provide relevant information. Any official documentation or application will initially be provided by the competent authority*

We can compare what will be introduced in Malta to the Italian so-called “Single Desks on Immigration” which have been operating for many years at the Prefectures, combining the competence of the Prefecture itself with that of Social Security Institutions (INPS and INAIL) and the Provincial Labor Office, in order to speed up the bureaucratic process.

Other structures, however, are excluded from this unification of jurisdictions. What can we say about that? In many European Countries, being a foreign citizen still means being a stranger, so that legal and bureaucratic rigidity are considered a weapon of self-defense.

Creating a multi-functional office is a smart way to overcome obstacles and closures which in the long term would be difficult to manage, especially due to the constantly increasing number of migrants. However, we should do much more to encourage intercultural coexistence, even in terms of management and governance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The participation of stakeholders to the governance on immigration and with regards to the integration of immigrants is crucial to design, to plan and to implement effective policies in this area.

Thanks to the experience gained on the field, in direct contact with migrants, and / or thanks to the systematic study of migration-related phenomena, the stakeholders are able to offer to policy makers a picture of the real needs (or the most urgent ones according to specific circumstances) of the migrants’ population and also a knowledge of the structural characteristics of this population: two factors needed to guide policy-makers to take the best political choices and to target their actions (and available resources) on the real critical aspects of the phenomenon, thus avoiding squandering, overlaps or gaps in their political activity.

In particular, it would be appropriate that:

- Any typology of stakeholders (research centres on migration and / or integration of immigrants; associations and organizations working for the reception, care, inclusion or cultural, social and employment integration of migrants , representatives of foreign communities or specific groups of migrants) could be valued as much as possible, by identifying each time the areas of governance best suited where this typology fits and can become involved;
- In every area of governance stakeholders should feel they are treated with equal dignity, without preference or hierarchy among them, in a climate of mutual exchange and effective collaboration for a common goal. For this purpose, they should be responsible of the governance structures and play a mediating role, guaranteeing fair coordination among the various actors they involved.
- These mixed working groups (various stakeholders and political institutions) should not be of limited duration, but represent stable structures of reference, both to enable a closer and more effective collaboration among the various actors, and also to allow a medium to long-term planning, in order not to disperse the results and network-building work carried out over time;
- These working groups should be at the same time open and non self-referential , envisaging a partial turnover of the stakeholders and / or representatives, and networking

with other groups involved in analogous activities (thus keeping alive the debate and exchange with similar realities , also in other countries), and providing opportunities to assess the work done and the results achieved.

- At each territorial level of governance there should be a structure for the participation of stakeholders. It would also be desirable that every facility of this kind could work in network with similar structures at the same territorial level, as shown above (horizontal collaboration), in the same way it would be appropriate that the local structures coordinate themselves with similar structures of higher-level, up to a national or central level (vertical coordination) in order to include their interventions and proposals within a coherent and shared framework on migration policies and integration.

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