



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

POLICY DEPARTMENT  
ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC POLICY **A**



Integration of Refugees in Greece, Hungary and Italy Annex 3: Country Case Study Italy



# Integration of Refugees in Greece, Hungary and Italy

## Annex 3: Country Case Study Italy

Study for the EMPL Committee



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES  
POLICY DEPARTMENT A: ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC POLICY

# Integration of Refugees in Greece, Hungary and Italy

## Annex 3: Country Case Study Italy

STUDY

### Abstract

This country case study is part of the Study on the Integration of Refugees in Italy, Hungary and Italy. It provides an overview of recent policy developments in the reception and integration of refugees in Italy

The focus of the analysis is on progress achieved in the last three years in the adaptation of the reception and integration system for the high numbers of new arrivals and the main challenges encountered, with focus on labour market integration measures.

Special attention is also given to the changes in perceptions in public opinion with respect to the asylum and integration of refugees and how the political and public discourse influenced policy strategies.

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### **MAIN STUDY:**

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/614194/IPOL\\_STU\(2017\)614194\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/614194/IPOL_STU(2017)614194_EN.pdf)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Migratory flows to Italy have long been high. However, during the three-year period 2014–2016, over 500 000 migrants arrived at the Italian coasts, more than the overall number of those who arrived in the previous 17 years.

As for the evolution of the profile of recent inflows, the 123 000 asylum seekers in 2016 were largely male (85 %), although the female component has increased in the last three-year period 2014–2016 (accounting for 7.5 % of applicants in 2014, 12 % in 2015 and 15 % in 2016). There were more than 11 400 minors who requested asylum in 2016 (this number includes both accompanied and non-accompanied minors). Nigeria was the first country of nationality of asylum seekers both in 2016 and in the first six months of 2017 followed by other Africa countries and Bangladesh. Children are also significantly present among those disembarked in 2016 and in the last inflows in 2017.

The integration of refugees in Italy is mainly provided through a specific second-line reception system called SPRAR (System for Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees) which is formed by small reception structures where assistance and integration services are provided through specific integration projects. On the contrary, first-line reception is provided by large-scale governmental centres for accommodation of asylum seekers (CARA), accommodation centres (CDA), first aid and accommodation centres (CPSA) and temporary centres (CAS).

First reception centres offer basic services such as food, accommodation, clothing, basic information services including legal services, first aid and emergency treatment. Each centre is run by different entities and the functioning of the services inside the centre depends predominantly on the competences, expertise and organisational attitude of the body running it.

Asylum seekers can be placed in centres all over the territory, depending on the availability of places. As the accommodation system is thought of in phases, they may be moved from one centre to another.

Reception is mainly paid through national funds and currently, no monitoring and/or evaluation reports are available so it is not possible to really understand the extent of the use of EU funds such as AMIF and FEAD.

The political climate/discourse around migration in Italy has been problematic over a long period. However, in these last years because of the steadily increase in disembarking, it has become 'the topic' in media and political discourse.

Indeed, at the moment Italy is under huge strain. With elections to be possibly held by the spring of 2018 and still no end in sight to the migration crisis, the situation has become a real emergency for its politicians. Most of them, as well as public opinion, believe that Italy has largely been left to handle the crisis on its own.

The spike in migration has inflamed one of the most divisive debates in Italian politics, and worsened tensions between Italy and the EU. The role of rescue ships operated by humanitarian groups and non-governmental organisations has now moved to the centre of that debate.

# 1 THE DIMENSIONS AND MAIN FEATURES OF THE INFLOW OF REFUGEES AND OTHER MIGRANTS

## 1.1 Evolution of the inflows of refugees and other migrants in the country since 2010

Migratory flows to Italy have long been high, with significant numbers of migrants and asylum seekers reaching its shores through the so-called central Mediterranean route. However, during the three-year period 2014–2016, over 500 000 migrants have arrived at the Italian coasts, more than the overall number of those who arrived in the previous 17 years. In the first six months of 2017 (from 1 January to 31 July 2017) a total of 94 802 persons have already disembarked in Italy with an additional increase of 1.1 % over 2016<sup>1</sup>.

At the same time, the number of migrants requesting international asylum protection<sup>2</sup> is also growing significantly: over 270 000 in the last three-year period, 2014–2016. According to the Ministry for Home Affairs data<sup>3</sup>, in 2016 the number of asylum seekers had reached the highest figure ever recorded over a period of twenty years, more than 123 000 (around 10 000 each month – 47 % more than the previous year). In the first six months of 2017, an additional 72 744 requests of asylum were presented<sup>4</sup>.

According to ISTAT – the Italian National Statistics Institute's data on stay permits for asylum and protection purposes<sup>5</sup>, it can be said that the request for asylum is now the main means of entry into Italy. Indeed, ISTAT data show that entry into Italy for asylum and humanitarian reasons have risen sharply over the past nine years. The number rose from 9 971 in 2007 to 67 271 in 2015. The percentage of permits issued for asylum and protection purposes rose from 3.7 % in 2007 to 28.2 % in 2015. In the same period, the percentage of permits for work reasons dropped from 56.1 % to 9.1 %.

The increase of asylum requests has also produced an increase in their examination<sup>6</sup>. In 2010, the number of asylum applications examined was less than 15 000, and in the 2011–

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto\\_statistico\\_giornaliero\\_del\\_31\\_luglio\\_2017.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_del_31_luglio_2017.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The international protection seeker is a person who has applied for international protection and is awaiting the decision of recognition of refugee status or another form of protection. In Italy, all immigrants are entitled to apply for international protection. In general, economic problems, although genuine and in some cases very serious, do not constitute motives for the recognition of refugee status. In these cases, police headquarters may issue a permit of stay for humanitarian reasons whenever the Territorial Commission, while not recognising the extremes for international protection, indicate 'serious reasons of humanitarian nature' regarding the person requesting asylum. Another form of protection is the so-called subsidiary protection, which is the protection that is granted to a citizen not belonging to the European Union. It could also be a stateless person that does not have the requirements to be recognised as a refugee, but with where there are founded motives to consider. This means that if he or she returns to the country of origin, or where they habitually resided, they would effectively risk serious injury. Therefore, they cannot or do not want to benefit from the protection of said country. Read more: <http://www.canestrinilex.com/resources/international-protection-in-italy-asylum-humanitarian-assistance/#ixzz4ofw07ugX>

<sup>3</sup> The Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior publishes monthly statistical reports on asylum applications and first instance decisions

<sup>4</sup> IRS elaborations on Ministry of Home Affairs data. Data – disaggregated by month – are available at the following link: <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/i-numeri-dellasilo>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2016/12/Report-Permessi-Soggiorno2015-2016.pdf?title=Permessi+di+soggiorno+e+asilo+politico+-+23%2Fdic%2F2016+-+Testo+integrale+e+nota+metodologica.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> The Territorial Commissions for the recognition of international protection consist of four members, two of whom are members of the Ministry of Home Affairs. There is also a representative of the Autonomy System, and a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Acnur/UNHCR). At the hearing of the asylum seeker, an interpreter also participates. Ten Territorial Commissions have been set up in addition to the National Commission. The national Commission mainly carries out the task of coordinating and training the

2013 three-year period, on average it was 25 000 per year. In particular, since 2014 there has been a significant increase: from 36 000 requests in 2014 to 90 000 requests examined in 2016 with an increase of 150 %. In 2016, most of the asylum requests – around 61 % (it was 58 % in 2015) – were rejected. Rejection rates increased during the years in particular since 2015 when they became the majority, while in the previous years, this percentage was 39 %<sup>7</sup>. As for the request outcomes, the percentage of those who were granted a refugee status is very low: 5.5 % in both 2015 and 2016, decreasing data in comparison to the period 2013–2014. According to data from Ministry of Home Affairs<sup>8</sup>, the percentage of those who obtained refugee status in the first six months of 2017 (from 1 January to 30 June 2017) is 8.9 %, while the rejection rate was 58.4 %. The percentage of those who were granted humanitarian protection was particularly high: 24.1 %.

Following Council Decisions 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015 and 2015/1523 of 14 September 2015, Italy is benefitting from relocation procedures<sup>9</sup>. However, according to national data from the Ministry for Home Affairs, by 14 July 2017 only 7 621 persons had been relocated.

## 1.2 Evolution of the profile of recent inflows

The 123 000 asylum seekers in 2016 were largely male (85 %), although the female component has increased in the last three years period 2014–2016 (accounting for 7.5 % of applicants in 2014, 12 % in 2015 and representing 15 % in 2016). There were more than 11 400 minors who requested asylum in 2016 (this number includes both accompanied and non-accompanied minors)<sup>10</sup>.

In 2016, Nigeria is confirmed – as it was in 2015 – as the first country of nationality of asylum seekers, equal to 27 000, one fifth of the total and continuously growing (+ 48 % over 2015). Nigeria was followed by Pakistan (11 % of total), Gambia (7.2 %) and Senegal (6.2 %). Migratory projects often provide for the only transit in our country, being the countries of Northern Europe the chosen destination for most of them. These trends are also confirmed in 2017 considering both those disembarked and those seeking asylum<sup>11</sup>.

As for the disembarked, 94 802 people arrived in 2017 (data updated to 31 July 2017). The majority again are of Nigeria nationality (17 %) followed by Guinea, Bangladesh and Cote d’Ivoire<sup>12</sup>.

Children are also significantly present. In particular, numbers of disembarked non-accompanied minors were 13 026 in 2014 and 12 360 in 2015. Their number doubled in 2016, reaching a total of 26 846 in 2016. Up to 31 July 2017, they numbered 12 583<sup>13</sup>.

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members of the Territorial Commissions, as well as examining cases of cessation and revocation of the granted status

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/i-numeri-dellasilolo>

<sup>8</sup> IRS elaborations on Ministry of Home Affairs data. Data – disaggregated by month – are available at the following link: <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/i-numeri-dellasilolo>

<sup>9</sup> According to the Council Decisions, persons eligible for relocation include applicants who lodged an application for international protection in Italy or in Greece and for whom those States would have been responsible pursuant to the Dublin Regulation. Moreover, eligible applicants must belong to a nationality for which the average recognition rate, according to the latest available quarterly average Eurostat data, is 75 % or higher

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/i-numeri-dellasilolo>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



### 1.3 Overview of the level of integration of refugees in the country

The integration of refugees in the country is mainly provided by the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (**SPRAR**)<sup>14</sup>. Established in 2002 by L 189/2002, the SPRAR system is a publicly funded<sup>15</sup> network of local authorities and NGOs which accommodates asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection. It is formed by small reception structures where assistance and integration services are provided through specific integration projects. The most recent guidelines published in August 2016 by Decree of the Minister for Home Affairs specifies that each SPRAR project must offer a number of services. These include cultural and linguistic mediation, accommodation, access to local services, language education and access to schools for minors, vocational training and traineeships, legal advice and health care. A SPRAR project should also provide assistance in accessing the labour market, housing and social integration.

SPRAR is the only integrated system that provides these kind of services to the beneficiaries. Vocational training or other integration programmes can be also provided by other National public funds (eight per thousand law) or by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). In this case, the Ministry of Home Affairs can finance specific projects to NGOs at national level concerning integration and social inclusion (see later, paragraph 3.1).

Municipalities can also finance vocational training, internships and specific employment bursaries (*borse lavoro*) through EaSi funds and, in particular, ESF (see later, paragraph 3.2) which is available to both Italians and foreigners, including asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.

According to national public available data on the SPRAR system<sup>16</sup>, the number of places and beneficiaries up to 2011 was contained but progressive, whereas it increased exponentially from 2012 to 2016. In 2003 SPRAR had 1 365 places located on national territory, in 2008 they moved to 4 388. Due to the massive number of landings linked to the so-called Emergency North Africa, they were over 10 000 in 2013. The Ministry of Home Affairs, with the ministerial decree of 17 September 2013, established the funding of 16 000 additional places for the three-year period 2014–2016. Increases were made to this number during the period. In 2014–2015, the SPRAR network was able to provide 20 752 reception places that became 26 012 in 2016.

When looking at the number of beneficiaries and not only to the number of places<sup>17</sup>, it is noted that in 2015 and 2016 the number of beneficiaries is higher than the number of places. This means there was a higher turnover of people than in the past. Indeed, in 2015, 29 698 persons were supported by 21 613 financed places, while in 2016 34 039 persons were supported by 26 012 places. This is an increase of 4 341 guests compared to the previous year. In 2016, people were supported by 652 integration projects. Local governments involved amounted to 555, mainly municipalities (491). Nearly 60 % of beneficiaries were supported in the four southern regions (Sicily, Calabria, Puglia, Campania) and in Lazio.

With specific regard to the social inclusion and integration of the beneficiaries<sup>18</sup>, in 2016 the total SPRAR projects provided 282 207 support services. Out of these, 20.9 % were related

<sup>14</sup> After the phase of first aid/assistance operations and first reception phase (see later in paragraph 2.1), a second reception phase is carried out under the structure of the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR). These second phase structures are not only aimed at setting up reception, but also assistance projects for which municipalities can apply for funds. Thus, the setting up of a SPRAR service depends on the willingness of a municipality to participate in the system, preparing a project according to given guidelines

<sup>15</sup> The SPRAR system is financed by the FNPSA, the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services

<sup>16</sup> SPRAR 2016 Annual Report, Ministry of Home Affairs, April 2017

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

to health assistance and support, followed by cultural mediation services (17 %), social assistance services (14.9 %), labour market insertion (10.5 %) and legal assistance (8.2 %). Projects covering services for health assistance are of particular importance as projects provide cultural mediators for dealing with health assistance, and support asylum seekers in access to health care<sup>19</sup>. According to Italian legislation, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection must enrol in the National Health Service. Formally, they enjoy equal treatment and full equality of rights and obligations with Italian citizens regarding the mandatory contributory assistance provided by the National Health Service in Italy. There is no distinction between asylum seekers benefitting from material reception conditions and those who are out of the reception system, since all asylum seekers benefit from the National Health System<sup>20</sup>. The right to medical assistance is acquired at the moment of the registration of the asylum request. However, very often the exercise of this fundamental right is hindered and severely delayed, depending upon the attribution of the tax code, assigned by police offices when formalising the asylum application. Pending enrollment, asylum seekers only have access to health treatment ensured by Article 35 of the Consolidated Act on Immigration (TUI) to irregular migrants. They have access to emergency care and essential treatments, and they benefit from preventive medical treatment programmes aimed at safeguarding individual and collective health. Asylum seekers benefit from free of charge health services on the basis of a self-declaration of destitution submitted to the competent ASL. The medical ticket exemption is due to asylum seekers being treated under the same rules as unemployed Italian citizens<sup>21</sup>, in the economic sectors of tourism and restoration). Over 83 % of the SPRAR projects in 2016 have carried out courses for learning the Italian language of 10 hours or more per week. There were 19 263 beneficiaries of these courses with a total of 7 553 people who have obtained frequency certification valid at national and/or regional level. Around 92 % of the projects have activated at least one traineeship with a total of 5 673 traineeships and an additional 895 labour insertions following the traineeship. In terms of integration it is worth mentioning that 12 595 interventions were also aimed to provide autonomy in terms of housing (around 51 % of the SPRAR projects in 2016 supported 10 housing insertions in a total of 2 600 apartments spread across the territory).

With specific regard to the integration of minors<sup>22</sup>, numbers show that in 2016 nearly 3 000 minors attended an Italian language course and 92.8 % of the SPRAR projects addressed to minors have provided a schooling insertion to the beneficiaries for a total of 1 310 enrolled students<sup>23</sup>. Extra schooling on educational activities involved 89.7 % of minors.

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<sup>19</sup> One of the most relevant obstacles to access health services is the language barrier. Usually medical operators only speak Italian. Therefore asylum seekers and refugees often do not address their general doctor and go to the hospital only when their disease gets worse

<sup>20</sup> Asylum seekers have to register with the national sanitary service in the Offices of the Health Board (ASL) competent for the place they declare to have a domicile. Once registered, they are provided with the European Health Insurance Card, *tessera sanitaria* (TEAM), whose validity is related to the one of the permit of stay. Registration entitles the asylum seeker to the following health services: (i) Free choice of a general doctor from the list presented by the ASL and choice of a paediatrician for children (free medical visits, home visits, prescriptions, certification for access to nursery and maternal schools, obligatory primary, media and secondary schools); (ii) special medical assistance through a general doctor or paediatrician's request and on presentation of the health card; (iii) midwifery and gynaecological visits at the family counselling (*consultorio familiare*) to which access is direct and does not require doctors' request; and (iv) free hospitalisation in public hospitals and some private subsidised structures

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Health Circular no 5, 24 March 2000:

[http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/reception-conditions/health-care - footnote11\\_wh4hygh](http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/reception-conditions/health-care - footnote11_wh4hygh)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Italian legislation provides that all minors, both Italian and foreigners, have the right and the obligation until the age of 16 to take part in the national education system. Under LD 142/2015, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children of asylum seekers exercise these rights and are also admitted to Italian language courses. LD 142/2015 makes reference to Article 38 of the Consolidated Act on Immigration, which states that foreign children present on Italian territory are subject to compulsory education, emphasising that all provisions

## 2 EVOLUTION OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Evolution of the legal and policy approach

After disembarkation, foreign nationals who have entered Italy irregularly receive assistance, are identified and detained for expulsion or, in the case of international protection applicants, for the procedures for assessing the relevant requirements.

In 2015, the majority of disembarkation operations (around 70 % of the total) took place in a Sicilian harbour: 15 % took place in Augusta, followed by Lampedusa (14.2 %), Reggio Calabria (11.4 %), Pozzallo (11.3 %); Palermo, Catania, Messina and Trapani represented between 5 % and 7 % each<sup>24</sup>. Data for 2016 confirms this trend<sup>25</sup>, while data for 2017<sup>26</sup> also shows the important role of Calabria harbours (Reggio Calabria and Vibo Valentia – nearly 14 % in total). Most disembarkations do not take place in a hotspot: indeed, in 2016, out of a total of around 180 000 migrants who arrived in Italy irregularly by sea, less than one third (52 337) disembarked in one of the four existing hotspots<sup>27</sup> (Lampedusa, Pozzallo, Trapani and Taranto)<sup>28</sup>. Migrants who arrive in an ordinary harbour might have to be taken from there to the nearest hotspot.

According to LD142/2015<sup>29</sup> – which regulates the whole Italian reception system<sup>30</sup> – the first reception and assistance operations take place in the centres regulated by the L 563/1995 – the so-called Apulia Law. These are considered to govern the first aid and reception centres (CPSA) present at the main places of disembarkation. During 2016, in addition to the existing centres placed in Lampedusa (Agrigento) and Pozzallo (Ragusa), Taranto and Trapani were added. The government clarified that such centres served as the applicant into the first or second reception centres<sup>31</sup>. These are specifically set up by the Prefecture upon the arrival of a great influx of refugees, due to unavailability of places in the first and second level

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concerning the right to education and the access to education services apply to foreign children as well. Asylum-seeking children have access to the same public schools as Italian citizens and are entitled to the same assistance and arrangements in case they have special needs. They are automatically integrated in the obligatory National Educational System. No preparatory classes are foreseen at national level, but since the Italian education system envisages some degree of autonomy in the organisation of the study courses, it is possible that some institutions organise additional courses in order to assist the integration of foreign children

<sup>24</sup> See ANCI, Caritas, Cittitalia, Migrantes, SPRAR, UNHCR, Rapporto protezione internazionale 2016, at 85.

<sup>25</sup> Ministry for Home Affairs, Civil Liberties and Immigration Department, Cruscotto statistico 31 December 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry for Home Affairs, Civil Liberties and Immigration Department, Cruscotto statistico data covering the period from 1/1/17 to 31/7/17

<sup>27</sup> According to the Ministry of Interior, hotspots are 'a designated area, usually (but not necessarily) in the proximity of a landing place where, as soon as possible and consistent with the Italian regulatory framework, new arrivals land safely and are subjected to medical screenings, receive a leaflet on legislation concerning immigration and asylum, they are controlled, pre-identified, and, after having being informed about their current condition as irregular immigrants and the possibility to apply for international protection, they are fingerprinted. Subsequently, they receive detailed information on the procedure of international protection, the relocation programme and the assisted voluntary return (AVR). If they have applied for international protection, they are channelled into the asylum procedures, including relocation for those who are entitled and have applied; otherwise they are channelled to the return procedures.'

<sup>28</sup> European Commission, Ninth report on relocation and resettlement, February 2017, p. 9

<sup>29</sup> LD 142/2015 entered into force at the end of September 2015 amending the Procedure Decree 25/2008 and repealing the previous Reception Decree 140/2005 (with the exception of the financial provisions).

<sup>30</sup> LD 142/2015 does not substantially modify the previous reception system which remains substantially the same as the previous one, and consists of two stages: at first, asylum seekers are placed in first aid and reception centres (CPSA), first accommodation centres (CPA) or temporary centres for emergency reception (CAS), and subsequently, in protection centres for asylum seekers and refugees (SPRAR), being the second reception stage.

<sup>31</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 9

accommodation centres<sup>32</sup>. LD 142/2015 also clarifies that the current governmental reception centres (former CARA) have the same functions as first reception centres<sup>33</sup>.

According to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) applicable to Italian hotspots, persons should stay in these centres 'as short a time as possible' as first reception is guaranteed in order to carry out the necessary operations to define the legal position of the foreigner concerned. Indeed, LD 142/2015 does not specify any time limit for the stay of asylum seekers in these centres, and only provides that applicants stay 'as long as necessary' to complete procedures related to their identification, or for the 'time strictly necessary' to be transferred to SPRAR structures<sup>34</sup>.

First reception centres offer basic services such as food, accommodation, clothing, basic information services including legal services, first aid and emergency treatments. Each centre is run by different entities and the functioning of the services inside the centre depends predominantly on the competences, expertise and organisational attitude of the running body.

According to law<sup>35</sup> these centres ensure respect for private life, including gender differences, age-related needs and protection of physical and mental health of the applicants. They also respect the family unit of spouses and first degree relatives, specific measures for vulnerable persons, prevention of forms of violence and safety of the accommodated. However, in practice, first accommodation centres do not all offer the same reception services and their quality of assistance varies between facilities; the monitoring of reception conditions by the relevant authorities is generally not systematic and complaints often remain unaddressed.<sup>36</sup>

Asylum seekers can be placed in centres all over the territory, depending on the availability of places. As the accommodation system is thought of in phases, they may be moved from one centre to another. They may pass from (1) first aid and accommodation centres (CPSA) to (2) first reception centres (governmental centres) or to temporary centres (CAS), and finally (3) to second accommodation centres (SPRAR structures). However, in practice, due to the limited places in SPRAR, asylum seekers can spend all the asylum procedure time in governmental centres or CAS.

Asylum seekers are often moved from one CAS to another CAS, in order to try to balance their presence on the territories. These transfers are decided by Prefectures and cannot be appealed. In some regions, during 2016, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection had to be moved because of the discontent of the local population. In some cases, the protest of the inhabitants entirely prevented their reception, as it happened in Gorino, Ferrara where, on 24 October 2016, 20 asylum seekers including 12 women and 8 children, were blocked on arrival, obliging the Prefecture to find temporary accommodation in a nearby town.

Second-line reception is provided under SPRAR. In contrast to the large-scale buildings provided in governmental centres for accommodation of asylum seekers (CARA), accommodation centres (CDA), first aid and accommodation centres (CPSA) and temporary centres (CAS), SPRAR is composed of smaller-scale decentralised projects. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs Decree of 10 of August 2016 (Article 30), these ensure:

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<sup>32</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 11

<sup>33</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 9, <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/asylum-procedure/access-procedure-and-registration/hotspots>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 10(1)

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR, UNHCR Recommendations on important aspects on refugee protection in Italy, July 2013, p. 12.

- interpretation and linguistic-cultural mediation services
- legal counselling
- teaching of the Italian language and access to schools for minors
- health assistance
- socio-psychological support in particular to vulnerable persons
- training and re-training
- support at providing employment
- counselling on the services available at local level to allow integration
- information on (assisted) voluntary return programmes
- information on recreational, sport and cultural activities.

SPRAR accommodates those destitute asylum seekers that have already formalised their applications. Therefore, asylum applicants already present in the territory may have access directly to the SPRAR centres<sup>37</sup>.

During their permanence in different centres, hosts receive the following allowances:

(1) Governmental reception centres: Asylum seekers hosted in first reception centres receive €2.50 per day per person as pocket money for personal needs.

(2) CAS: Pocket money is agreed with the competent Prefecture but according to the Ministry of Interior Circular issued 20 March 2014, the amount received by applicants hosted in CAS should be €2.50 per day per person and up to €7.50 for families.

(3) SPRAR: Pocket money varies depending on the individual project from €1.50 to €3 with up to 20 % reduction for families exceeding two people.

According to the previous Reception Decree<sup>38</sup>, for the period needed until a place is found in one of the accommodation centres, the Prefecture had to grant the applicant a financial allowance. Nevertheless, this provision has never been applied in practice. LD 142/2015 does not provide any financial allowance for asylum applicants needing accommodation. The law does not provide a definition of 'adequate standard of living and subsistence' and does not envisage specific financial support for different categories, such as people with special needs.

Italian legislation does not establish a limitation on the freedom of movement of asylum seekers. Nevertheless, the law<sup>39</sup> specifies that the competent Prefecture may limit the freedom of movement of asylum seekers, delimiting a specific place of residence or a geographic area where asylum seekers may circulate freely. Applicants' freedom of movement can also be affected by the fact that it is not possible to leave the reception centre temporarily, e.g. to visit relatives, without prior authorisation. Authorisation is usually granted with permission to leave for some days. In case a person leaves the centre without permission and they do not return to the structure within a brief period of time (usually agreed with the management body), that person cannot be readmitted to the same structure and material reception conditions can be withdrawn.

According to law<sup>40</sup>, in the first reception centres asylum seekers are allowed to leave the facilities during the day with the obligation to return in the evening hours. The law does not provide such a limitation for people accommodated in CAS or in SPRAR. However, rules concerning the entry to/exit from the centre are also laid down in an agreement signed between the body running the centre and the asylum seeker at the beginning of the

<sup>37</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 14

<sup>38</sup> LD 140/2005, Article 6(7)

<sup>39</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 5 (4).

<sup>40</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 10 (2)



accommodation period. In case the accommodation is revoked, the person concerned remains outside the national reception system. Asylum seekers out of the SPRAR system can resort to accommodation in private centres outside the national reception system. This accommodation is normally offered by charities.

According to the previous Reception Decree<sup>41</sup>, asylum seekers had the right to work after six months from the moment they filed the asylum application. This depended on whether the procedure was still ongoing and the delay was not due to the conduct of the asylum seeker. Now, according to LD 142/2015 Article 22 (1), an asylum applicant can start to work within 60 days from the moment he or she lodged the asylum application. Even if they start working, however, their stay permit cannot be converted in a work stay permit (Article 22(2)). In addition, LD 142/2015 states that asylum applicants living in the SPRAR centres may attend vocational training when envisaged in programmes eventually adopted by the public local entities (Article 22 (3)).

LD 142/2015 has also introduced a more protective norm<sup>42</sup> concerning the trafficked asylum seekers who can now be channelled to a special programme of social assistance and integration under Article 18(3-bis) of LD 286/1998.

On 10 August 2016, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a decree to facilitate the accession of municipalities to the SPRAR system, making it possible at any time without deadlines. On 11 October 2016, the Ministry issued a decree concerning a plan to improve the accommodation system to obtain a gradual and sustainable distribution of asylum seekers and refugees across the country. The plan envisages the phasing out of the CAS, with a view to the consolidation of a uniform reception system obtained through an expansion of the SPRAR system. This was also presented at the annual meeting with the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) held on 14 October 2016 in Bari. The Ministry of Home Affairs aims to encourage municipalities to host asylum seekers in their territories, inviting Prefectures not to open new CAS facilities or to gradually close the existing ones in those territories where the municipalities participate in SPRAR.

In addition, Law 225/2016 provided financial incentives for municipalities involved in the reception system, allocating €500 to each municipality for each asylum seeker hosted in its territory. There is no distinguishing between accommodation in SPRAR and CAS, or governmental centres.

The Italian <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2016/12/22/16G00248/sg> unaccompanied children victims of trafficking, entered into force on 6 January 2017.

In March 2017, the law named Provision of Protection Measures passed with an overwhelming majority of support in the Italian parliament, with 375 yes votes and 13 no. The law is the result of two years of intense lobbying by organisations focusing on children's rights in Italy. It complements the existing Italian Legislative Decree no 25/2008 which explicitly prohibits the detention of unaccompanied minors in accordance with international and European Union law. The new law introduces a series of measures starting with the assurance that unaccompanied and separated refugee children will not be subjected to refoulements and returns. It includes a reduction of the time they spend in first-line reception centres, and the establishment of a structured and streamlined national reception system with minimum standards. Finally, there is promotion of guardianship for children, foster care and host families for children, and the harmonisation and improvement of age assessment in a child-sensitive manner.

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<sup>41</sup> LD 140/2005, Article 11 (1) and (3).

<sup>42</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 17 (2).

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On 12 April 2017, a new law aimed at accelerating asylum procedures and returns was approved. The law features the creation of new reception centres for repatriation, cuts in the time asylum requests are examined, the elimination of a layer of justice for appeals, the option for asylum seekers to do socially useful work and an allocation of EUR 19 million for the execution of expulsions.

The new law creates specialised immigration chambers to hear asylum appeals. These chambers are established in 14 courts (Bari, Bologna, Brescia, Cagliari, Catania, Catanzaro, Florence, Lecce, Milan, Palermo, Rome, Naples, Torino and Venice), and are competent to decide on asylum appeal cases under a single judge. The reform also limits the possibility to be heard in such appeals: asylum appeal procedures are to be accelerated, as a decision by the specialised chamber must be taken within four months instead of six, and the decision can no longer be escalated to the Court of Appeal.

Besides the elimination of the second instance, the structure of the examination itself has changed from a summary proceeding to a full chamber proceeding without a hearing. The judge will be provided with a video recording of the asylum seeker's interview before the territorial commission. In addition, there is no obligation on the part of the judge to listen to the asylum seeker.

With regard to return, Identification and Expulsion Centres (*Centri di identificazione ed espulsione*, CIE) are renamed Return Detention Centres (*Centri di permanenza per il rimpatrio*, CPR). While currently only four CIE are operational in Italy, the new closed detention centres will be rolled out across the Italian territory. The location of the new CPRs is to be decided in consultation with the presidents of the regions concerned, on the basis of easily accessible sites and structures. By 'easily accessible', the government is said to envisage small-scale CPRs, hosting 80 to 100 persons, which will be located close to airports or highways to facilitate returns.

Finally, in July 2017 the Italian government, looking to stem a flow of migrants into the country, drew up a code of conduct for non-governmental organisations operating in the central Mediterranean off Libya. The code is intended to help stem a ceaseless tide of arrivals that has strained Italian reception capacity to the limit. The code of conduct sets 11 rules. These include a ban on phoning 'to facilitate the departure of boats carrying migrants', the obligation to allow police aboard and a requirement to have a technical certification to carry out rescues. In more detail, the first rule is the 'absolute prohibition' for humanitarian ships to enter Libyan waters, which can only be reached 'if there is a clear danger for human life at sea'. The NGOs are asked not to make phone calls or send luminous signals to facilitate the departure and the embarkation of boats carrying migrants, with 'the obvious intention of not facilitating contacts with traffickers'. Among the other obligations is that of not transporting migrants on other ships, be they Italian or belonging to international organisations, except in an emergency situation. And after rescues the NGO ships 'will have to complete the operation by taking the migrants to a safe port'. They are further asked not to hinder search and rescue (SAR) operations by the Libyan Coastguard and to make known the funding sources for their rescue activities. They must also notify their flag-flying country's maritime coordination centre of the intervention, 'so that this State is informed on the ship's activities and can assume responsibility also for the purposes of maritime safety'.

At the time of writing, only three NGOs have signed the code of conduct and this has raised a strong debate in the country (see later, Chapter 4).

## **2.2 Management and governance of reception and integration measures**

The overall activities concerning the first reception and the definition of the legal condition of the asylum applicant are conducted under the programming and criteria established by both National and regional Working Groups (*Tavolo di coordinamento nazionale e tavoli regionali*)<sup>43</sup>.

Without prejudice to the activities conducted by the Central Service of the SPRAR, the Civil Liberties Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs conducts, also through the Prefectures, control and monitoring activity in the first and second reception facilities. To this end, the Prefectures may make use of the municipality's social services<sup>44</sup>. However, while the SPRAR publishes an annual report on its reception system, no comprehensive and updated reports on reception conditions in all the other reception centres are available.

## **2.3 Examples of concrete measures implemented in the country**

The Italian second phase reception system (SPRAR) includes a number of positive and interesting concrete measures that have been implemented by those actors involved in the SPRAR network.

One of these experiences – specifically addressed to unaccompanied minors – is presented in detail in Annex III.

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<sup>43</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 9 (1)

<sup>44</sup> LD 142/2015, Article 20 (1)



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## 3 THE ROLE OF EU SUPPORT

### 3.1 The use of EU support and funding for reception

The current national plan of the AMIF in Italy focuses on strengthening the reception system of asylum seekers – with specific emphasis on the first reception phase. It mainly aims at overcoming the logic of emergency interventions and implementing structural interventions. A second goal is to promote measures for autonomy, empowerment and socio-economic inclusion of migrants, as well as to create structures dedicated to the second reception phase and integration.

The Ministry of Interior has launched a call for proposals for projects targeting the implementation of reception, integration and repatriation of third-country nationals in the first months of 2016.

Proposals were requested to cover the development and implementation of various measures aiming to achieve the following objectives:

- strengthening the autonomy of beneficiaries of international protection, through the definition and set-up of individual plans towards socio-economic inclusion;
- strengthening the system of health protection for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection in vulnerable conditions, through increased institutional capacity;
- strengthening the protection of minors (separated or accompanied), through training and capacity building activities;
- strengthening the skills of public servants working in the area of migrant integration;
- strengthening of services provided within the anti-discrimination network;
- promoting of comparisons between integration policies developed in Italy versus other Member States.

Other objectives include the elaboration of:

- regional plans for civic-linguistic training;
- experimental services for language training;
- operations for Assisted Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration.

At the moment, no monitoring and/or evaluation reports are available.

FEAD Italy's operational programme provides both food and basic material assistance to the most deprived.

Even though it has slightly improved in recent years, severe material deprivation is very high in Italy, hitting 11.5 % of the population (against an average of 6.9 % in the euro area). Material deprivation is even higher for children, and it has almost doubled since the onset of the financial crisis.

The programme dedicates about 60 % of its resources to food aid, delivered through an extensive network of around 11 000 local NGOs. However, it also aims to provide a strategic contribution to social inclusion by providing school materials for children from deprived families, and school meals at schools in deprived neighbourhoods. Basic material assistance is provided for homeless people and deprived families, which will be accompanied by other forms of support, including counselling and help to access services.

FEAD aid is distributed through a complex network of partners and relies on the cooperation of state agencies with several important private, non-profit organisations. Over the years the need has emerged for a mechanism involving these organisations not only in the implementation, but also in the strategic and operational planning of FEAD delivery. The existence of a longstanding relationship between the managing authority and a number of stakeholders committed to the fight against poverty and social exclusion has made it easier to set up this mechanism for FEAD.

The food distribution network in Italy is based on a joint planning mechanism and involves a considerable number of actors. The product basket is selected on the basis of a needs analysis and assessment carried out by AGEA together with seven charities (Croce Rossa Italiana, Caritas Italiana, Fondazione Banco Alimentare, Comunità di S. Egidio, Banco delle opere di Carità, Associazione Banco Alimentare Roma e Associazione Sempre Insieme per la Pace). These charities work as coordinating bodies for partner organisations at the national level.

At the moment, no information is available on the nature of the final beneficiaries of the food distribution supported by the FEAD funds. Research on the nature of the final beneficiaries was commissioned in July 2017.

### **3.2 The use of EU support and funding for migrants' and refugees' integration**

Measures that concern labour market access for asylum seekers and refugees are regulated by Legislative Decrees 142/2015 and 251/2007 respectively. The latter transposes the Council Directive 2004/83/EC on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third-country nationals, stateless persons as refugees or persons who otherwise need international protection and details of the protection granted.

Article 22 of the Legislative Decree 142/2015 (transposing Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection and Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection) allows asylum applicants to start work 60 days after the initial submission of their asylum application. The stay permit 'for asylum application' authorises the applicant to work only until the application procedure is settled, and cannot be converted into a regular stay permit for work reasons.

Decree 251/2007 establishes that foreign nationals who have been granted refugee status or the status of beneficiary of subsidiary protection 'are entitled to the same treatment provided for Italian nationals regarding paid employment, self-employment, and inclusion on professional registers, vocational training and on-the-job training' (Article 25).

Refugees and asylum seekers with residence permits may freely register with Public Employment Services (PES) (Centri per l'Impiego). Following the enforcement of Law Decree 34/2014, registration can take place in any PES in the national territory; before this, it was compulsory to register in the PES associated with the applicant's own temporary address. Registration is not mandatory, but it facilitates gaining access to some services and being entitled to some benefits. In particular, it provides the exemption from the co-sharing of health services costs, which is commonly referred to as the 'ticket': both asylum seekers and refugees are granted equality of treatment in access to health assistance in Italy. The exemption from the payment of the ticket is granted to all asylum seekers in the period that they are not allowed to work following the initial asylum application.

Once registered, asylum seekers and refugees can, in principle, access all job-related PES services – which are financed through ESF – under the same conditions as national citizens.

The law makes a generic reference to the right to access to employment without indicating any limitations, and asylum seekers are entitled to enlist into Provincial Offices for Labour. However, in practice, they face difficulties in obtaining a residence permit which allows them to work due to the delay in the registration of their asylum claims, on the basis of which the permit of stay will be subsequently issued.

## 4 EVOLUTION OF THE DEBATE IN THE COUNTRY

The political climate/discourse around migration in Italy has been problematic over a long period. However, in these last years because of the steadily increase in disembarking, it has become 'the topic' in media and political discourse.

According to a recent Eurobarometer survey<sup>45</sup>, 49 % of Italians believe that immigration is the main political issue facing the EU well before terrorism (which concerns 23 % of Italians) and the economic situation (also indicated by 23 %).

Moreover, the attitude of Italians towards immigrants coming to our country is becoming less and less tolerant. Mistrust and, in some cases, hostility increases. Another recent survey<sup>46</sup> shows that numbers of Italians who want to limit the magnitude of disembarking 'accepting only a specific quota and no more' is increasing, from 46 % surveyed in September 2016 to 50 % in January 2017. At the same time a more open position of 'we need to host everybody' decreased from 26 % in September 2016 to 19 % in January 2017. Italian citizens' views are exacerbated by the economic crisis and the consequent difficulties in the labour market (most Italians believe immigrants can 'steal jobs'). However, the major cause was related to the reaction to the terror attacks that have seen protagonists as immigrants of the Islamic culture. The emotional impact on the population of these events has been enormous and ended up affecting the collective perception of immigrants in general. Not only because of the fear that they are violent, but also because of the spread of the belief (whether it is founded or not), that all who come from an Islamic social context pose another threat. They are perceived as having the intention or at least the desire to impose on Western societies and thus also on Italy their customs, traditions and culture. It is true that 50 % of the sample interviewed still believes that 'there are few Islamic immigrants who want to impart their culture and their way of life.' But the other half is made up of 41 % (with an emphasis on older people, people with lower academic degrees, retirees and housewives) who think instead that 'Islamic immigrants try to impart their way of living' and of 9 % declare that they have no opinion about it.

Indeed, at the moment Italy is under huge strain. With elections to be possibly held by the spring of 2018 and still no end in sight to the migration crisis, the situation has become a real emergency for its politicians. Most of them, as well as public opinion, believe that Italy has largely been left to handle the crisis on its own. Even as the EU offers financial support, France, Switzerland and Austria are busy trying to seal their borders. Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz even went so far in July 2017 as to ask his Italian counterpart to leave arriving migrants on the small island of Lampedusa, where many migrants land.

The high number of arrivals reported in the first six months of 2017 in Italy continues to be challenging in relation to the coordination of SAR operations, and the organisation of reception, identification and registration processes. Accommodation needs to be arranged for hundreds and sometimes thousands of migrants that arrive within a very short period of time, or even at the same moment.

The spike in migration has inflamed one of the most divisive debates in Italian politics, and worsened tensions between Italy and the EU. The role of rescue ships operated by humanitarian groups and non-governmental organisations has now moved to the centre of that debate.

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<sup>45</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 86, Autumn 2016

<sup>46</sup> Eumetra Monterosa, January 2017

Right-wing parties have latched on to the climbing number of asylum seekers as a vote-winner, arguing that the centre-left government is incapable of staunching the flow of migrants.

Right-wing politicians and newspapers have spread a feeling that the non-governmental organisations are essentially profiteers who collude with human traffickers to aid and abet illegal immigration. 'They are complicit in this mass exodus and earn from it', said Matteo Salvini, leader of the Northern League.

The centre-left government has championed a more welcoming approach and saved thousands from the sea. However, it is now showing signs that its patience is wearing thin because of the intense political pressure over the surge in refugee numbers.

The Italian government is increasingly divided over the country's immigration issues in its war against human smugglers. The latest point of divide has been the code of conduct for NGOs (see paragraph 2.1) operating in its waters, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The NGOs have particularly objected to a requirement to allow an Italian police official to travel on each boat and a ban on moving rescued people from one aid vessel to another while at sea, which they say could result in avoidable deaths.

Charities that rescue migrants and refugees from the Mediterranean have reacted angrily to plans to make them subject to a new code of conduct drawn up by Italy and endorsed by other EU countries. But the new conduct code has also stirred controversy among the country's politicians of the same government party.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

This section briefly summarises the main findings on the current and future challenges encountered by the country. It underlines adopted policy approaches, their main strengths and weaknesses, and the (potential) role of the EU and EU funds in addressing these policies.

The evolution of the inflows of refugees clearly shows the magnitude of the phenomenon and its implication on the country in terms of both first aid and reception, and integration measures.

To address this extraordinary situation Italy decided to continue to adopt the same approach as in previous years, increasing the number of beneficiaries that could be attended by the national System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR). Indeed, since 2011 the SPRAR increased in a progressive way both the number of places and the number of beneficiaries who could benefit from integration projects.

However, this approach increased the level of conflict between the national government and the municipalities (who are in charge of the implementation of the SPRAR) and exacerbated public opinion against migrants and refugees. Indeed, the higher number of migrants and refugees who were settled in the different first-line reception centres were strongly contrasted by certain political parties (in particular Lega Nord) and increased a negative debate on these issues.

The hostility also had consequences on the fair distribution of migrants along the entire country, as many mayors of Lega Nord were opposed to the decisions taken at national level.

Moreover, the high number of inflows also created problems in the first-line reception centres that were not prepared to address this emergency at the same time. This contributed to a variable condition of permanence of migrants in these centres with some centres better equipped for the emergency and other less so, creating differences in the way hospitality and reception took place from one centre to another.

Notwithstanding this situation, the SPRAR has been able to currently develop very interesting practices even if for a small number of people in comparison to the total number disembarking.

The national government has very recently increased its efforts to counteract the entire situation introducing norms to facilitate the accession of municipalities to the SPRAR and to increase financial incentives. This could be more if the use of EU funds were to be further developed.

### 5.2 Policy recommendations

The following are the main policy recommendations in order to improve: (i) asylum seekers and refugees' reception and integration policies, (ii) the governance and coordination of these policies at the EU and national level, (iii) the use of EU funds/policies to address these challenges, and (iv) data collection and research.

- The fair distribution throughout the country should always take into account that the burden of the rescue and initial reception falls mostly on the southern regions, especially Sicily, Calabria and Puglia. Agreements with ANCI should be increased, also establishing bilateral agreements with those cities that are accepting a lower number of refugees.
- The necessary and inevitable use of temporary facilities has led to problems connected with the monitoring of reception standards and the management of the possible conflicts

with the local communities. The monitoring of reception standards should be continuous, formalised and structured in an homogenous way.

- The time periods for the formalisation of applications for international protection, hearings by the Local Commissions and for decisions in the case of appeals must be shortened and finally drastically reduced, in order to guarantee the respect of the individual's right to rapid recognition of international protection and then to favour the turnover in the reception centres and the SPRAR network, in the face of the very large numbers of arrivals. Progress has been made, but needs to be continued and increased.
- There is a need to organise an information system, able, among other things, to trace the presence and movements of the asylum seekers. This will not only contribute to a precise knowledge of who is where and when, but could also contribute to addressing conflicts with local communities and produce good and sound communication about the phenomenon.
- There is a strong need to strengthen and expand the network of municipalities involved in reception. This will help to achieve a more homogeneous distribution on the local and national level, and a substantial increase in the municipalities forming part of the SPRAR network. This could be achieved through more formalised agreements with ANCI, but also through bilateral agreements between the national government and single municipalities.
- Verification is needed of the actual coordination activity conducted by the coordination boards on the regional level. These are important bodies necessary for making decisions implying shared responsibilities in the context of incisive and participated geographical governance – especially with regard to the start-up of the regional hubs.
- With specific regard to the application of repatriations, the volume of flows and the nationalities of the migrants to be repatriated require the stipulation of numerous readmission agreements which should be negotiated not unilaterally by Italy, but at the European Union, also in order to exploit the greater negotiating power.

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- Website of the Ministry for Employment and Social Policies (responsible to gather data on unaccompanied children), [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it).
- Website of the SPRAR system, [www.sprar.it](http://www.sprar.it).



## ANNEXES

### ANNEX I - LIST OF INTERVIEWED STAKEHOLDERS

Interviewed stakeholders:

On the mechanisms of the SPRAR system:

Annalisa Faccini – Head of the Service of International Protection ASP Città di Bologna

e-mail: [annalisa.faccini@aspbologna.it](mailto:annalisa.faccini@aspbologna.it)

On the reported good practice:

Luana Redalié

Direzione Generale - Progetti e Innovazione

[Luana.Redalie@aspbologna.it](mailto:Luana.Redalie@aspbologna.it)

For further contacts:

On the entire system:

Dipartimento per le Libertà Civili e l'Integrazione – Ministero degli Interni

Viceprefetto dr.ssa Maria Eleonora CORSARO

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On FEAD:

Patrizia De Felici

Ministry of Labour

[pdefelici@lavoro.gov.it](mailto:pdefelici@lavoro.gov.it)

## ANNEX II – (GOOD) PRACTICE FICHE

<p><b>Name/title of the practice</b></p> <p><b>Period of implementation</b> <i>[Specify when the project/strategy/experience started, if it is still ongoing or finished and if concluded, indicate when]:</i></p> <p><b>Body responsible for implementation</b></p>	<p>Volunteer guardian training course</p> <p>The training course was first organised in 2013 by the Regional Authority for Infancy and Adolescence Office. In the following edition (2014) of the training activities the Metropolitan city of Bologna become the body responsible for implementation.</p>
<p><b>Type of instrument/intervention</b> <i>[e.g. specify if the initiative concerns the reception or integration of migrants/asylum seekers; the policy field of intervention: employment support; education/training; health care; accommodation; transportation, other...]</i></p>	<p>The initiative concerns the integration of asylum seekers.</p> <p>The policy field of intervention is unaccompanied minors' integration.</p>
<p><b>Territorial coverage (national, regional, local)</b></p>	<p>Local</p>
<p><b>Financial allocations</b> <i>[(If possible specify the overall financial assignment and the source of funding (European, national, regional, local). If EU funds involved specify which funds)]</i></p>	<p>The initiative is part of the SPRAR project for unaccompanied minors of the City of Bologna within the funding of the National Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR).</p> <p>Within this context Italian local actors receive financial aid by the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services (FNPSA).</p>
<p><b>Main goals and reasons for introduction</b> <i>[Specify the objects of the project/strategy/experience and the results it is supposed to achieve]</i></p>	<p>In 2001, the Ministry of Home Affairs – Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration – signed an agreement with the National Association of the Italian Municipalities (ANCI) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for implementing a 'national project on asylum'. The protocol set up the first Italian public system for the reception of asylum seekers and refugees spread all over the country. Such reception measures were later institutionalised by Law no 189/2002, which called for the development of the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) and established the central service for information, promotion, consulting, monitoring and technical support, in charge of coordinating the whole system.</p> <p>Within this context Italian local municipalities can implement projects for an integrated reception. In particular, the local project of the Town of Bologna in 2016 has welcomed 253 persons. Within this local project the Town of Bologna organised in 2013 an innovative pilot experience with the aim of training voluntary legal protectors for unaccompanied minors asylum seekers.</p> <p>The project intends to identify in civil society people willing to acquire the necessary skills to exercise the delicate role of legal protector.</p> <p>The general objective is the training of volunteers available to undertake the legal protection of minors asylum seekers not accompanied, thus identifying within</p>

	the civil society citizens available to learn the needed skills to exercise the delicate and important role of protection.
<b>Main target groups</b>	Main target groups of this practice are unaccompanied minors asylum seekers.
<b>Main partners/stakeholders involved</b>	The initiative is part of the SPRAR project for unaccompanied minors of the Metropolitan city of Bologna (SPRAR Minors Office), the body responsible for the implementation. The project is joined by the following managing institutions: the Municipality of Ferrara, the Emilia-Romagna Region, the Camelot–Officine Sociali Cooperative and other project partners such as the CEIS Consortium in Bologna and Opera Don Calabria Foundation – Città del Ragazzo of Ferrara.
<b>Main implementation and coordination procedures, and mechanisms adopted</b>	Particularly important for the achievement of the project goals has been the communication management system put in place between the different stakeholders and institutions involved (such as the judge supervising cases concerning guardianship, the Metropolitan city of Bologna – SPRAR Minors Office – legal protectors, unaccompanied minors asylum seekers, ASP City of Bologna (the provincial healthcare company)). In particular, ASP is in charge not only of all the information and communication aspects and taking care of asylum seekers, but also the administrative coordination functions related to the procedures for matching the willing legal protectors and the unaccompanied minors.
<b>Main actions/measures implemented</b>	The aspirant legal guardians attended an articulated training course followed by a knowledge and counselling path, together with some minors, in charge of social services. The study areas concern the formal aspects of the child's legal protection, the network of services, the local stakeholders and the psychological support. The last step of this project is expected to be the appointment of the legal protectors.
<b>Main results/achievements to date and expected longer term expected impacts according to available monitoring/evaluations</b>	Since the organisation of the first training course in 2013 a network of citizens engaged in local hosting projects as voluntary guardians of minors has been created. This led to the assumption of the legal protection of six unaccompanied minors by voluntary legal protectors. Moreover, the initiative allowed the settlement of a confident relationship between citizens (willing legal protectors) and unaccompanied minors bringing to the SPRAR Minors Office of the Metropolitan city of Bologna a different point of view that enriched the local reception and hosting system. To date, 10 volunteer guardians have been appointed in the Metropolitan city of Bologna.
<b>Main weaknesses/obstacles and how they have been addressed</b>	The main obstacle within the development of the project has been the difficulty for volunteer guardians to relate to the network of public stakeholders (such as the Prefecture or welfare councillor of the Metropolitan City of Bologna) in charge of completing the initial immigration procedures to welcome and integrate unaccompanied minors asylum seekers.

	<p>Moreover, the brief duration of the protection has to be considered that in some case has lasted only a few months, due to the slowness of the administrative machinery.</p> <p>For this reason the voluntary legal protector should build a long-lasting relationship with the unaccompanied minors in order to remain a reference person also after the child reaching the age of 18 years, representing a sort of 'bridge' towards their becoming adults.</p>
<b>Main strengths</b>	<p>The volunteer guardian, as a third figure, can act independently from the institutions that have the responsibility of managing and taking care of the unaccompanied minors. He/she can therefore fully represent the needs of the child, participating in synergy and controlling the public stakeholders' action to integrate unaccompanied minors.</p> <p>Moreover, the project allowed the construction of an effective social network for the integration process of asylum seekers.</p> <p>In addition to this it is worth mentioning that the legal protector might also become a bridge that can help overcome prejudices and fears against immigrants, facilitating their integration.</p>
<b>Innovative elements if any</b>	<p>To date, the guardian has usually been an institutional figure (in the Metropolitan city of Bologna it is the welfare councillor), while through this project the civil society is directly involved in this process: an increase in the number of legal protectors may lead to a more effective customisation of paths to be offered to unaccompanied minors.</p>
<b>Reproducibility/transferability elements</b>	<p>The experience described can be reproduced above all in force in the public contribution to the integration process of unaccompanied minors foreseen from the legislative framework.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b> <i>[Specify the project sustainability and its fund-raising possibilities, etc.]</i>	<p>Sustainability is high because of a recent Italian legislative modification (legge Zampa) that foresaw the figure of volunteer guardians.</p> <p>Moreover, the Metropolitan city of Bologna, as part of the SPRAR network, may apply for additional financial resources in order to repeat the experience.</p>
<b>Main lessons learnt</b> Main weaknesses/obstacles <i>[encountered in the implementation and the ways they were overcome]</i> Main positive elements Other relevant aspects	<p>In some cases the expectations of the volunteer guardians regarding their role and contribution to the integration process of unaccompanied minors asylum seekers might have been disregarded: the voluntary legal protector is not in fact the person in charge of managing the integration.</p> <p>The volunteer guardians should be able to promote actions and interventions for the minor in relation to their specific needs, their ethnic and cultural background and their life plan. However, he/she should be able to coordinate with the network of stakeholders in charge of integrating the minors.</p>
<b>Additional comments (if any)</b>	

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

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