

### IMMIGRATION AND RESILIENCE: THE CASE-STUDY OF INNER ITALIAN AREAS

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#### Track

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#### TEXT

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#### 1. Introduction. The migrazione fenomeno in a little area of the South of Italy

What it is the meaning to welcome today? What does it mean, today, at a time of historic crisis-not only economic but predominantly social- accept the other? And who is the other, today?

We are living in a globalized environment where what happens here, right now, is reflected on the other side of the world with effects that, in most cases, you can neither predict nor control. Similar models of living, social preconceived schemes, clothing or approved habits (using a term now obsolete) are now words of a global trend that humanity, while it is recognized as belonging to the same *human race*, on the other hand, it fears the *other* -even his neighbor- as the usurper of that delicate balance -absolutely unstable as well as kinetic- that, with difficulty, every moment seeks to rebuild.

In larger urban areas, in poli centric accommodating, masses of people, mostly hopeless, a never heard language, a different dress, a not known smell pass in the complete indifference of daily life, made even less real by the urgencies of a crisis crushing any desire to assert one's being in a conscious and positive way. In social realities, where, on the one hand, you have the ability to move like *ghosts* in the complete indifference and, secondly, the loneliness and depression accompany the days, the other -the different- is each of us.

But what happens, however, in a small urban center? And what happens if this same urban center is located in a southern region of Italy, among the least populated in the country and among the ones that have an infrastructure system that, in the face of a huge number of tracks, paths, country lanes, inter-countries roads, ancient streets, whose remains are still viable, and supplying each "corner" of the territory, it does not ensure feasibility and adequate accessibility to national speed? What happens in a territory where, to go from one city to another, the railway is expected to come out the region and the duration of the journey is equal to that of a journey crossing at least three other regions?

#### 2. The context of the hospitality

The immigration phenomenon is involving the whole national territory with particular effect on small inland areas of the Italian regions and it happens for various reasons.

Today, the hospitality to immigrants represents its most interesting time, as stated in the introduction, in smaller inland Italian centers where induces different phenomena depending on the concerned areas. In particular, in southern Italy,

and in an anomalous region, identified with two different names (or Lucania Basilicata<sup>1</sup>), a region that is geographically not inside, leaning on two seas, but it is because of its low population density determines the formation of islands urban separated from each other by vast territory flaps almost completely uninhabited, with different cultural traditions which, in some cases belong to different ethnic groups including also pockets of Albanian population (Barile, Ginestra and Maschito in the Vulture area, to the North; San Costantino Albanese and San Paolo Albanese, on the Pollino area, to the South) arrived in the region during the fifteenth century, and, today, an interesting presence of Belgians, Germans and Englishmen in the city of Matera and immediately adjacent those, for reasons very different from those that push existing migrants to flee their homelands. In particular, the case-studies will concern the observation of the town of Palazzo San Gervasio (Potenza), in the North-East area of the region, as well as of Sasso di Castalda (Potenza), in the South-West area of the region e of the Metapontino area, in the South area of the Basilicata region<sup>2</sup>.

Three study-cases chosen because they can show the different dynamics that trigger in relation to variables that often you can not scientifically controlled.

Starting from the different identified urban realities, we try to make a comparison between traditional friendliness and the SPRAR<sup>3</sup> hospitality model.

The Basilicata region is the Italian region that gives hospitality to the 1% of the migrants arrived in Italy (111,081 persons as at 31 March 2016), according to data of the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior and as following diagram. From 2014, when it began a steady stream of immigrants in the region, this percentage distribution of migrants in temporary structures, CARA<sup>4</sup> e in the SPRAR projects remained constant.

It has resulted in an inevitable change the behavioral structure of the inhabitants of small towns where such persons are housed.

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<sup>1</sup> «There are those who love the Lucania and those who love the Basilicata. An extravagance? No. The two nouns from time to time become symbols. Simplifying: the Lucania would return to the traditions and values, the Basilicata to integration and change. Giacomo Racioppi, one of the historic Lucan (he would have said basilicatesi) most important nineteenth century, author of the famous *Storia dei popoli della Lucania e della Basilicata* (1889), fiercely opposed to the Provincial Council of Basilicata intends to return to Lucania name, wrote: «What would have to do this posthumous your Lucania with the old and true Osco-Latin Lucania?»; and he added: «But if it (the Council, ed) takes my name by which I was born, I tell you the truth, I'll regret». Instead, last year, the writer and journalist Andrea Di Consoli, in an interview where he was asked: «In conclusion: you still love to Basilicata?», he responded: «I love only to Lucania. Basilicata, it sucks. But, basically, the same thing applies to me: I love to Andrea, while Di Consoli makes me sick». In any case, the Basilicata is the only Italian region with dual name». In Antonio De Rosa, *Lucania Double-Face. Tra tempi lirici e tempi moderni*, AVIAPERVIA produzioni multimediali, Oppido Lucano 2015.

<sup>2</sup> We are reporting the first results of a European project currently under way. The project that sees the town of Palazzo San Gervasio leader of three European countries: one in Albania, one in Greece and one in Spain, was funded under the European Europe for Citizens program, and it is currently underway. It will end in December of 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The protection system for asylum seekers and refugees (SPRAR) is the network of local authorities for the realization of integrated host access projects, within available resources, to the National Fund for asylum policies and services. At local level the local authorities, with the invaluable support of the third sector, guarantee interventions of "integrated reception" that exceed the mere distribution of food and lodging, also providing complementary information measures, accompaniment, assistance and guidance through the construction of individual pathways to socio-economic integration.

The main features of the protection system are:

- \_ the public nature of the resources provided and the reception of the politically responsible authorities, the Interior Ministry and local authorities, according to a multilevel governance approach;
- \_ the voluntary participation of local authorities in the network of hospitality projects;
- \_ decentralization of operations of "integrated reception";
- \_ Synergies initiated in the area with the so-called "management bodies", the third sector who make a vital contribution to the implementation of interventions;
- \_ the promotion and development of local networks, with the involvement of all stakeholders and the key partners for the success of reception measures, protection, integration in favor of the applicants and beneficiaries of international protection.

The SPRAR local projects are characterized by an active leadership, shared by large cities and small towns, from metropolitan areas and towns of the province. Unlike the European market, in Italy SPRAR realization of projects of small to medium sized -designed and implemented at the local level, with the direct participation of local players- helps to build and strengthen a culture at city communities and it favors the continuity of the pathways to socio-economic integration of the beneficiaries. In <http://www.sprar.it>

<sup>4</sup> The CARA are Asylum Seekers Reception Centres which flow undocumented foreigners applying for international protection.

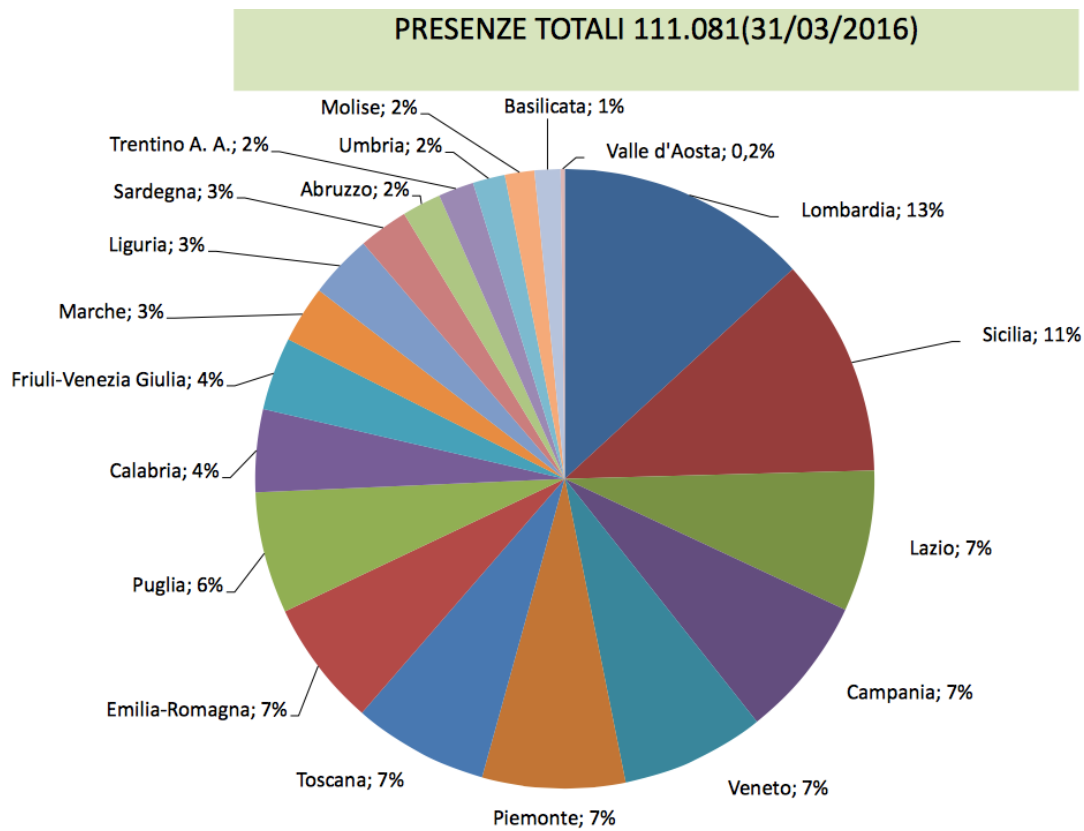


Fig. 1 \_ Proportion of migrants distribution divided by region.  
 Source: Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior

Territorio ▼	Immigrati presenti nelle strutture temporanee	Immigrati presenti nei CARA/CDA E CPSA	Immigrati presenti nei CARA/CDA E CPSA1	Totale immigrati presenti sul territorio Regione	Percentuale di distribuzione dei migranti presenti per Regione
Abruzzo	733	0	227	960	1
Basilicata	503	0	395	898	1
Calabria	1,541	1,458	1,841	4,840	7
Campania	3,740	0	1,080	4,820	7
Emilia-Romagna	2,672	0	782	3,454	5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1,289	258	323	1,870	3
Lazio	2,891	830	830	8,490	13
Liguria	953	0	313	1,266	2
Lombardia	4,915	0	948	5,863	9
Marche	1,174	80	538	1,792	3

Fig. 2 \_ Distribution of immigrants presences in the Basilicata region, data of February 2015. Elisa Murgese, «Migrants, here are the regions that will host more immigrants and those who refuse them», in <http://www.wired.it>

Beyond the question related to a very small -and many times deliberately not real- information on the welcome reality in Italy, it is to find that even though only three years ago a face of a different color than usual and even distrust created tension in the local population -at older used to know, from birth, every single inhabitant of his town- today are beginning to see the first real cases of integration, that led to early marriages of the region how it happened in the town of Sasso di Castalda.

In a region, however, so "wide" they coexist various situations, which, in some way, give reason also of the continuous emergency condition that the phenomenon has triggered in reality in which bodies involved in the reception, in particular the first reception, are poorly prepared and ready.

We are here referring, for example, to the presence, within the city of Palazzo San Gervasio, absolutely different situations: on the one hand the ex CIE (Centre for Identification and Expulsion), on the other experiments social inclusion concocted through SPRAR project, on the other hand even the emergency brought about by the forthcoming closure of the Base Camps. On the one hand, i.e., officers and employees of the Police Headquarters and Prefectures, which are facing ever before activities: rapid identifications, very often without resorting to any official document, the person recording photo reporting and collection of fingerprints of asylum seekers. On the other hand, the migrants and asylum seekers who must, by law, be held in the *hotspots*<sup>5</sup>, sorting and identification centers, at least in theory. They are replacing CIE, until the conclusion of all the identification operations that, very often, also require periods of a year of waiting. On the other, still, the risk on the part of migrants, see The application for asylum and the need to make a new request, however, it will be tried by an ordinary court with all the delays that this, is easy to understand, may have. And, in all this time, the asylum seeker what does? What can you do on the Italian territory? What activities is entitled to carry out? Let's clear up any doubt now: he can not work, he is not a recognized citizen and therefore he has no chance of making a minimum of work in the first place to feel useful and alive.

But who are the migrants who arrive in Basilicata? They are young boys, many of them minors or of age threshold, strong, vigorous, with a professional who, in many cases, already acquired in the homeland -and I am thinking of Omar and his skill in tailoring-, which speak Italian very little and do not know almost nothing of the habits and customs of the communities in which they are now living.

Live ... in fact these guys do not live in urban areas, isolated in the poorest suburbs, where, at most, a few cars pass and winter and darkness make it more difficult. Often, as happened a few months ago in Palazzo San Gervasio, where, after the evacuation of the ghetto Boreano, in an adjacent municipality -Lavello-, many of them are scattered and hidden in Venosa and Montemilone campaigns, many have flocked in the Ghetto Matinelle in Strada Mulini, where it was created a closed community that hardly welcomes the man with white skin. Provisional community, with poor hygienic conditions and made mainly of men, although that of Mulini Matinelle sees a female presence, kept under medical surveillance by employees and volunteers, at least those to which access is allowed. Because the latter community seems to be the ghetto where "the corporals"<sup>6</sup> are the masters, as it is recalled in every public meeting by the head of the commission of the migrants of the Basilicata Region, Pietro Simonetti. One might therefore wonder why just this ghetto has not yet been cleared but you can not ask it here because this is one of those mysteries of a region that seems to have chosen not to take action against the phenomenon of illegal hiring, letting these anyone lands remain in the hands of that nobody who treats human beings as an individual property. Human beings physically fit, strong, vigorous -in fact, please notice that on the Italian shores only those who have faced a terrible journey from the regions of origin to the lands beyond the sea manage to arrive- which can neither be enslaved, as it happens to those who, not asylum seekers, are intended for the collection of vegetables (the source here is predominantly African) or to care for the elderly (in this case the origin is mainly from Eastern Europe), in the less problematic cases, victims of the illegal hiring and for those who, having sought asylum permit can only loitering in the long months of waiting for the same.

Similar situation is the one you can find in the Metapontino area where the phenomenon is strongly linked to the exploitation of black labor by "the corporals" who manage the market of work and decide for the live and -sometimes- for the death of this part of humanity.

And what happens, instead, to migrants who, are accepted in the SPRAR project?

Admission to the reception centers of the (SPRAR) System, up to a total exhaustion of available places, is managed by the Central Office on the recommendation of individual local projects or third party entities (prefectures, police stations, associations). All territorial projects of the protection system, within the integrated reception measures, as well as providing room and board, ensure the realization of social support activities, aimed at the knowledge of the territory and the effective access to local services, among such as social and health care. Activities are also provided to facilitate

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<sup>5</sup> *Hotspots* are centers managed by the various national authorities, police stations and prefectures -which, in particular with regard to police headquarters, lack of adequate staff able to deal with and manage the phenomenon-, the border police officers, along with technicians and experts of European agencies such as Europol (the European Police Office), the EASO (the Agency for the right to asylum), Eurojust (for international cooperation at the external borders of the EU Member States).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.osservatoriomigrantibasilicata.it/2016/09/21/comunicato-stampa-21-sett-2016-chiudono-campi-accoglienza-venosa-palazzo-san-gervasio/>

the learning and adult education, enrollment of children in school, as well as additional legal information actions on the procedure for granting international protection and the rights and obligations of beneficiaries in relation to their status. With the objective to accompany every single person held along a (re-)wins of his or her autonomy, the SPRAR local projects complement the integrated reception with services to socio-economic inclusion of people. They are developed, in particular, training and re-training paths to promote the employment, as they are measures taken to access to housing.<sup>7</sup>

So who enters the SPRAR project has the “luck” to start a path of integration in the community that welcomes him! Well, but even here there is a problem: the duration.

While, in fact, the duration for the recognition of the right of asylum is extremely long and exhausting, on the other, taking charge in SPRAR project is too short (6 months) to allow a real fully informed integration.

And what happens in small urban realities that, from 2014 onwards, in particular, have found themselves to living with people who came halfway around the world?

It happens that a bad information or lack of information convinces that a migrant enjoys a government subsidy that a father of an Italian family, who has lost his job, does not have; it happens that a bad information convinces that a migrant eats borne by the taxpayers; it happens that a bad information convinces that a migrant has a protection from law enforcement, and it happens that a bad information convinces that if a migrant does not have his next-generation smartphone could create problems because he is not a being fully civilized. All convictions that carry the simple pensioner living in Palazzo San Gervasio or in Sasso di Castalda or in Metaponto to look good from interacting with them. Yes, this is what, at least in the early stages, happens and it happened. But then, beginning to haunt them, realize that all those too-often fears they can contract diseases- are false, and are in most cases not justified.

Often, then, it happens that especially the younger ones, by both sides, start to go out together, to learn together, to live together and build a new comm-units: mixed, rich, contaminated by many different cultures, hybridized in a new form of humanity. Haziz, Ema, Churouk are living experiences from different backgrounds in Palazzo San Gervasio but now they are all known and they are knowing themselves.

The small towns begin, then, to replenish themselves: it is hoped that the first mixed marriage, of an era of hybrids, in Sasso di Castalda should give soon good results, but we hope they get so many good reports of similar marriages.

All this for the benefit of a new fervor: residential structures begin to be regenerated, on the one hand, because it will host the other humanity -and so they should be treated with care and love- on the other, because the economy is beginning to enjoy it.

First we wrote of the case of Omar who, from Gambia, is finding himself in Basilicata and, through a project of Youth Guarantee, will resume his professionalism, also acquiring techniques that do not know, but there are also Mohammed, Ali, Sadi, and many like them who are plumbers, carpenters, gardeners. And where they will exercise their professionalism if the community will support their integrating path? Where crystallized and closed urban structures will see a renaissance thanks to these guys? Perhaps in this lies the richness of this contamination: in the understanding that, *first and foremost*, it comes to living beings, just like us who were born, at least for the historical moment, from the “right” side of the world, and then, that these same living beings, perhaps, have not come here to be saved themselves but to save us, to prevent our realities, our territories collapsing utter abandonment, to ensure that our grandparents do not go away on their own, to make so that even the political open our eyes and understand that the depopulation that, in this exceptional land, induced and accelerated, now may not be the winning tool that justifies choices weakly contested. But perhaps even more, the wealth of this contamination is in the understanding that «also us who are the privileged of the Western system», must understand that it is more necessary than ever always be «ready to sail»<sup>8</sup>. And then, if only for simple utilitarianism, why do not we understand that integration and inclusion are now an inescapable condition and that our city, perched on the mountains or islands in vast landscapes, may be an answer to the discomfort that these people live? That same uncomfortable, moreover, that we live when we are forced to move to a big city renouncing our roots and our security?

Why we not accept, for facilitating other natural processes, that our urban realities, once again, constitute an extremely valuable resource resilience?

What about the thesis second which only little towns with a sort of inside resilience could represent an answer for these men and women who had to give to their roots?

What about the possibility to have new, deep and common roots? Are we not the same humanity in every angle of the Earth?

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.sprar.it>

<sup>8</sup> Edoardo Bennato, *Pronti a salpare*, song that earned him, in 2016, the Amnesty International Award Italy (fourteenth edition), organized by Amnesty International Award in 2003 and Italy by the cultural Voices for Freedom to reward the best song on human rights published during the previous year.

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Follow the author-date method for citations. It means that the author's last name and the year of publication of the source should appear in the text, e.g., (Conforti, 2007), and a complete reference should appear in the reference list at the end of the paper.

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