THE ROLE OF CITIES IN MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES

THE ITALIAN CASE

Name: Benedetta Piersante
Student Number: 11734868
Study Program: International Relations
Research Project: New Forms of Governance: From the EU to the World?
Supervisor: Dr. J. H. Zeitlin
Second reader: Dr. J. Doomernik
Date: 23/08/2019
ABSTRACT

European Union and migration are strictly related, especially since the 2015 migration crisis in its territory. However, to provide a solution, new actors entered the scene of migration policies: cooperation and division of tasks are necessary to face the urgency of the situation, not only by coalition of member states but also from lower-level governments. This study will focus in particular on the role that cities have in this framework, facing their nation-state and the law applied. Cities are gaining more and more power on the basis of a new consciousness of the ability that they have in providing favorable situations for citizens and efficient solutions comparing themselves to other realities.

Sub-national levels are the main actors of what is called ‘local turn’ in social policies, in the bigger theory of multilevel governance in which the authoritarian role of the state is abandoned to create new functional ways to operate horizontally.

Cities, however, in many cases are imposing themselves challenging the national-state over migration policies that are usually outside of their responsibility: it is the case, for example, of Italian cities, among which Milan and Palermo. In some of these cities, the mayors are openly against the national government’s directives over migration and they try to elude them in the name of efficiency and integration for foreign people. In this perspective, it will be pointed out that even cities with the same, or similar, political background may result in different outcomes that depend on the way in which projects are implemented. City networks, at the same time, are a useful tool for cities to exchange informations and address many issues of global importance.
1 - INTRODUCTION

The theme of migration represents one of the most controversial and challenging to solve phenomenon that our society is facing: in the last years European Union member states, especially in the South of Europe, faced difficult situations related to the ongoing migration fluxes, and it created a considerable uncertainty over Europe regarding the issue of acceptance and integration.

It is important to underline how, especially regarding the theme of migration, a hard claim of powers and prerogatives exists not only on the part of nation-states but also on the part of the European Union and not less the local jurisdictions of cities. Nowadays, in the case of Europe, the member-states are not the only actors anymore that are handling the problem of migration since this phenomenon involves the entire European Community. While the globalization of markets and the openness of borders are regulated at European and global scale, migration is still mostly ruled by the individual Member States through internal laws or by sharing authority with the EU.

This thesis, then, will consider the different levels of government within the EU regarding the policies for immigration and asylum, respectively the European, the state and city levels, and the consequent instability that this can create: what is happening, indeed, is that more often, cities in many countries are taking actions in this specific policy field, following or not the guidance of their national government and especially in the case of states with a robust anti-migration influence, cities demonstrate their disagreement by implementing norms from the EU or directly by-passing national guidance.

The situation in Italy, though, is still mainly traditional, with a hierarchical structure and little to no space for local government in legislation on fields such as migration. However, since the last change of government in 2018, the center-right party “Lega Nord”¹ with its Minister Matteo Salvini is in charge of the migrants’ acceptance and integration situation. He immediately gave the order - supported by the national and international jurisdiction - to close the ports and borders to prevent migrants from continuing to enter Italian territory. Following this, other political parties and many Italian cities reacted against this order, and the new Decree-Law introduced to increase security, and openly declaring their cities open to migrants, first among them Palermo and Naples.

¹ Lega Nord (complete name: ‘Lega Nord per l'Indipendenza della Padania’, now called only ‘Lega’) is an Italian political party based on the principles of regionalism, liberal economy, anti-Statist, eurosceptic and strongly against immigration and multicultural society.
At European level, the European Council of 28-29 June 2018, based on international law, declared that in the territory of EU all people that have been saved have to be accepted on the base of a shared effort and transferred to specific centers present in member states, as the Dublin Regulation\textsuperscript{2} states. However, one limitation of this regulation is the requirement that the countries that save migrants with a legitimate right to asylum at sea are bound to take in those people and grant them protection, and usually, those countries are the main points of entrance into Europe, among them Italy. For this reason, the European Parliament itself suggests that the Dublin Regulation needs a reform to reach a fair balance between responsibility and solidarity, stating “the necessity to have mandatory redistribution of migrants and the refusal of solidarity made on a voluntary basis or only through financial support” (Senato della Repubblica, 2019).

A critical objective of the European Union during the last years is, indeed, the search for a stronger level of cooperation with the third countries where migrants come from to reduce irregular flows. This policy has resulted in support for African states that have been interested in migration routes to reduce their economic, social and political instability, and in the request to these countries to collaborate to control their borders, combat the networks of traffickers and respect the obligation for re-admission and repatriation of irregular migrants.

First of all, analyzing which role the municipality may have in these kinds of policy fields and how they cooperate using “networks of cities” it is useful to understand the amount of influence that they have over the nation-state. The idea that other sub-levels of the government other than the national level - the so-called multilevel governance - points out that cooperation and comparison can help find a solution thanks to the participation of experts in the field instead of politicians. The absence of hierarchy then would let cities act independently from the state as the real protagonists of horizontal cooperation, willing to operate in specific ways without national directions, mainly on the base of other cities’ experiences. In this way, cities become the international actors that together try to find a solution and implement new forms of governance that engage with the traditional forms of governance in different ways.

The idea of city networks originates from the necessity for cities to improve their citizens’ lives and respond to the common issues that affect each of them, considering themselves

\textsuperscript{2} The Dublin Regulation is a European Union law, born in 1990s and lastly amended in 2017, that controls the responsibility of member states over the examination of an application for asylum. This request is to be examined by only one member state and this competency is usually given to the one that managed the arrival of the migrants.
as the first level of interaction between people and institutions. According to this, cities influence and work with each other, the state and European Union to let them make the right decisions following real necessities.

This work will consider, at this point, the case study of Italy as an example of uncertain equilibrium between the state and cities regarding migration policies. Italy, indeed, as pointed out therein, is ruled by a dominant anti-migration party that is openly deployed against the European Union’s methods of inclusion and rescue of migrants, while most of the Italian cities are in contrast with national directives and they try to take over rules against migration. This, however, does not happen in all Italian cities, so it is premature to talk about an “Italian city network for migration,” but the most important cities are cooperating among themselves and with other European cities in order to improve their importance and influence.

Beyond the Italian case in general terms, the main focus of this thesis will be on the municipalities of Milan and Palermo to discuss their decisions regarding the current anti-migration law. While Milan remained neutral, saying that it is possible to find a better solution rather than fight the national government, Palermo is openly reacting against these directives saying that it will not follow them and opening the city to migrants, while pushing other cities to do the same.

However, is essential to highlight that currently Palermo and other dissident cities are not only not implementing what they said they would do, but they also do not provide essential services and integration facilities for migrants who are already present, while many other cities that remained neutral, like Milan, or even cities that agreed with the state to close borders, have instituted programs to include migrants and improve their situation.

“Migration policies have two principal objectives: to guarantee public order and security, fighting illegal immigration; to promote acceptance and integration of regular migrants with social cohesion” (Italian Ministry of Interior, 2017, http://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/immigrazione-e-asilo/politiche-migratorie), this is what the Italian governments states on the webpage of the Ministry of Interior. The slight difference between these two objectives is what has created a hard schism in the last year in migration and asylum policies between parties that would like to welcome migrants and parties that are fighting to close borders. Italian policies have always been guided by the idea of a migration that brings social conflicts, and the choice to contain the entrance sometimes culminates in a
vexatious denial of human rights, also for the foreign people already in Italy for several generations.

After the migration crisis of 2015 with all its arrivals, and after the series of terroristic attacks made principally by people originally from outside Europe, the image of the foreign as an enemy was even amplified by the press, the 59% of the Italian population indeed does not agree with the arrival of migrants (Pagnoncelli, 2019, July 5th from https://www.corriere.it/cronache/19_luglio_05/gli-italiani-la-linea-fermezzacrollata-fiduciale-non-profit-f625ce7e-9f61-11e9-9a57-b175c64fdab2.shtml?refresh_ce-cp), and Italy, as well as other member states, reacted asking for more protection instead of understanding the real uneasiness behind the violence.

This situation is well depicted by the different opinions that surround the political scene in Italy, in which politicians cannot agree between them and with the European Union, and cities started to take actions, or to try to, in order to take the law in their own hands, even if this is also considered constitutionally wrong.

The idea that cities may make the difference more than states for a specific aspect of the everyday life and influence political decisions over the fate of thousands of migrants is what drove this research and also what gives strength to smaller institutions that still can have a significant role.

The present study is divided into different sections, in order to first provide a general view of the problem and the theory, then to introduce and inquire more deeply into the issue of migration and integration related to the governance of cities – and the influence of city networks - looking at the European case. The focus will then move on to Italy and Italian cities as a case study, taking the example of two cities in particular – Milan and Palermo – that are remarkable cases of different paths to take concerning the issue of migration and integration.

1.2 - RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What drives Italian cities with the same political orientation to take different positions on the acceptance and integration of migrants, both regular and irregular?
- What allows different cities to take a different policy and administrative measures?
- What can Italian cities obtain by reacting against the decision of the national government of closing the ports to boat arrivals?
- What are the consequences of the disagreement between local and national authorities?
2 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the main topic of this thesis is the role of cities regarding migration policies for integration and their disagreements with the nation-state, it is important to consider, rather than theories regarding integration and migration policies, different theories of governance to understand this phenomenon. Networked governance and multilevel governance are the most important theories to consider, since the basic idea is to reconsider the hierarchy typical of the traditional forms of government in which the state is the principal actor for many politically sensitive fields, such as migration and asylum policies, and to give more power to expertise and other actors on the base of cooperation and peer review.

Moreover, one point to take into consideration is the importance to compare the work done by other actors and learn from each other what can be done better avoiding conflicts between each other.

The idea of global cities also considers the assumption that every city should use benchmarking on what others do well, to introduce it also in its municipality, creating networks with working groups in which they can exchange information and suggestions.

2.2 - NEW FORMS OF GOVERNANCE

To understand the involvement of different actors in the policy field of migration and integration is essential to delineate the concept of governance and consequently its implementation in the framework of the new alternatives to traditional hierarchical forms of government. First of all, is essential to oppose the term “governance” to the term “government”, since the latter is defined as “forms of command and control, characterized by the role of central public institutions, hierarchical relationship, elector responsibility, hard legal instruments and erga-omnes binding decisions” (Bartolini, 2011 pag. 7), while the former can be delineated in a context in which is necessary to co-produce functional problem-solving, going beyond territorial boundaries of the nation-state and beyond conflict management and looking for transversal structures of a broader functional regime. Governance then appears as a system in which norms and public goods are the results of the cooperation between different kinds of actors. According to Pagoulatos and Tsokalis (2013, pag. 6), indeed, “the declining capacity to control the
flows of goods, capital, services, and people within and across their borders correlated with the proliferation of various forms of governance.’ In this sense, the interest goes from the institutions to the process and activities and from the authority of each state to the coordinated actions that increase the possibility to govern with different forces. Many scholars agree that governance practices are a response for achieving the goals of individual actors that are not assured by coercion while involving flexible policy-making processes, experimentation, learning and the exchange of valid practices from one actor to another. According to Bartolini (2011, pag. 6) “at the core of governance there is an evolution towards more consensual decisions […] and an evolution from simply binding decisions towards a growing set of mechanisms and controls capacities of various actors”, meaning that the real center of interest is the society and not the state and the capacity of its institutions with their power struggle. Governance, for this reason, is implied in many different fields “where a mix of competencies and functions creates complex structures of decision, whenever a mixing of private and public actors is present, where decisions depend on the complex network of different levels of government” (Bartolini, 2011, pag 2). More in the specific, the term governance is used both regarding the profile that analyses (ex: socio-economic governance) and considering the geographic relevance (ex: national governance) to underline dynamics and procedures that participate in the process of policymaking without remaining focused only on what is provided by the law. Specifically, governance is the concept used to design how a plurality of subjects - both from the private and public sphere - reflects the solutions identified for that specific context in political choices, with a substantial dispersion of power from both vertical and horizontal point of view. The term governance, however, is neither exhaustive if used by itself nor if defined only by using dichotomies (“governance” vs. “government”). To make more sense, it needs the combination with certain adjectives that specify its reason d’être, as, first of all, the idea of “new governance.” This concept, indeed, encloses what has already been said about governance and its attitude to discover, elaborate and explore the results of cooperation without a hierarchical structure, including also the new tendency to give importance to a decisional network of a public-private nature, involving also different levels and types of actors. According to De Burca and Craig (2015), governance is defined mainly about classic intergovernmental agreements that are usually top-down and use mostly binding measures not present instead, in the absence of a clear hierarchy, in the horizontal working between actors. The authors, however, make a distinction between governance
and non-public arrangements, i.e., the private coordination between private actors, and points out that this is governance only in the case in which they were given competences from authorities.

To ulteriorly specify the concept of governance, especially concerning the topic of migration and integration, it is necessary to introduce the ideas of multilevel governance and, after that, the idea of networked governance.

2.2.1 - MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

Multilevel governance defines the coordinated action of the European Union, the Member States and regional and local entities, based on principals of subsidiarity and proportionality to define and implement the policies of the European Union. The adjective “multilevel” indeed moves the attention to the existence of a plurality of levels of government, respectively local, regional, national and European. Therefore, multilevel governance refers to the necessity to have a coordinated action of these different levels of government in several sectors of public policy, both in the phase of definition of the policy and in its execution, because it is no longer possible to think and implement rules only at the level of the nation-state.

In multilevel governance, however, not only levels of government are involved, but also ‘ad hoc networks’ that bring together also private, individual, and collective actors. Piattoni (2009) suggests that multilevel governance moves beyond representative democracy.

According to Pagoulatos and Tsokalis (2013), the focus of multilevel governance is on transnational, national, and sub-national levels at the same time, considering actors, networks, and not constitutional frameworks only. Moreover, it gives space to ‘satellite organizations’ - for example, NGOs and agencies - that can shape new institutional relationships.

According to Blank (2010, pag. 2), “the growing understanding of the need to govern and solve problems at various territorial spheres and by multi-tiered governmental institutions should be read as manifesting three processes that have become emblematic of our time: globalization, urbanization, and the shift from government to governance. […] Together, these processes require not only a new division of power between different levels of governments in order to manage various resources more efficiently, or in order to tackle different challenges more efficiently; they suggest that we must conceptualize the
relationship between different territorial spheres afresh - and therefore between competing identities and political affiliations - and that we form new legal principles in order to govern and regulate these new relationships.

Following Blank’s observation, the idea is that globalization influences the political structure since it operates at the level of social configuration in which a new “global class” emerged, and with it, the traditional sense of attachment to the nation-state became weaker. Moreover, according to Blank (2010), a global identity has taken its place - mainly across western countries -, and individuals identify and connect with people everywhere in the world, affiliating themselves, at the same time, with local and regional identities. For this reason the traditional methods used to manage the relationship between the different levels of the government are no longer reflecting the political and social scene, and, moreover, “an exclusive national identity no longer manifests the professed ideals of the state, after the state has disavowed its presumption to create a solidified and unified nation, given the pressure posed by immigration and growing internal plurality (of religions, cultures, ethnicities, and belief systems)” (Blank, 2010, pag. 4).

In his analysis, Scholten (2016) identifies four different configurations of relations between government levels, namely: centralist (top-down), localist (bottom-up) multilevel, and decoupled. Always considering the idea of cooperation between these levels, the centralist configuration refers to a clear hierarchy and division of labour with stable institutional structures; the localist configuration instead indicates a perspective in which policy competencies follow the principle of subsidiarity - i.e., that “governments need to delegate their powers, authorities, and duties to the closest-to-the-citizens jurisdiction that can efficiently perform them” (Blank, 2010, pag. 12) - and local governments also have the possibility to formulate policies and exchange knowledge with other local governments. Scholten's idea of multilevel governance means a coordinated interaction between the various levels of the government without the dominance of any, and in which networks are created not only between same level institutions but between every level of government. According to Scholten (2016, pag. 94), multilevel governance is considered to be the most effective “when the idea of there being different government levels shifts to the background” and consequently policy frames converge at different levels. Finally, decoupled relations refers to the absence of any policy coordination between levels and, as a consequence, policies at different levels result not associated and even contradictory, leading to policy conflicts.
In the discourse about multilevel governance, an important role is given to European Union and governance at supra-national level. Since the 1960s research started to investigate how to explain European integration and the necessity for nation-state to transfer their sovereignty from the domestic to the European level (Diez and Wiener, 2004).

After that period, policymaking in the EU became a new important focus, together with coordination between the European level and national level, and research shifts in “managing trans-border regional cooperation and supporting regional interest representation in EU decision making” (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger, 2006, pag. 32). Europeanization, as this phenomenon of bringing European Union measure and regulations to the domestic level has been defined, means also a certain degree of a scarcity of control for nation-states and, recalling Sholten’s definition of centralist configuration, mainly a top-down control over the majority of policy fields, with a declared supremacy of EU directives.

However, according to Pagoulatos and Tsokalis (2013, pag 3), a multilevel governance approach considers national governments as ‘an integral and powerful part of the EU' that can share ‘rather than monopolize' their control over policies and decisions.

At first, measures from European Union were introduced to push nation-states to cooperate, sponsoring intergovernmental working groups, but in order to achieve collaboration with other member states and, of course, personal benefits, they were also open to cede some power and control to EU institutions. This form of “transgovernmentalization” of Europe was the base for the concept of multilevel governance, with the national and European levels strictly connected without one controlling the other. This relation, however, appears to be a delicate balance between the different institutions since, at the same time, various patterns of interaction and relations take place simultaneously.

2.2.2 - A LOCAL TURN IN MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

The concept of multilevel governance has a substantial impact on localities since one of the most involved levels of government results to be cities and urban realities.

Recalling the idea of subsidiarity, global governance usually gives local governments the status of vehicle for the implementation of social, economic and political programs, as
well as the development of various fields, protection of human rights and promotion of
democracy.
Many scholars do agree that for this reason, localities have a privileged place, and the
capacity to fulfill all the tasks in which national and international entities may fail.
According to Blank (2010, pag. 21), “local governments are interesting and important
because they serve both as exemplary sites of human action, ideological operations,
power, and domination, but are also unique locations which expose elements of our
social reality, unseen in other areas.” In other terms, cities and localities have the
opportunity to directly manage various activities of community building, making also
easier the collection of information in order to share power with the central government.
For this reason, cities became part of the phenomenon of global governance: their
influence, as well as the power that they are able to exercise, is the necessary link
between all the different actors to manage “important aspects of human life and natural
affairs” (Blank, 2010, pag. 6).
The most important literature about how cities are shaping the global governance is given
by Barber (2013) who stresses the necessity to have a government in which cities - and
their mayors - may have their recognition and supremacy since more than half the world’s
people live in cities and is indispensable to “discover or establish alternative institutions
capable of addressing the multiplying problems of an interdependent world without
surrounding the democracy that nation-states traditionally have secured” (Barber, 2013,
pag. 4).
Barber, indeed, underlines that the most crucial point is to safeguard democracy and
cities are the ideal candidates since they were born for this task. In particular, local
governments can promote some crucial aspects of democracy as participation, allowing
people to take part in the political process, and keeping it easy and cheap (Blank, 2006).
Moreover, even if the city is always evolving and changing, “to survive and flourish they
must remain hospitable to pragmatism and problem solving, to cooperation and
networking, to creativity and innovation” because it represents the center of art, culture,
and economics that gave birth to a shared history, language and civil society.
Barber does not deny the nation as a fundamental governmental entity; on the contrary,
he based his idea on the belonging of cities to the state. However, he suggests that cities
are the only ones able to supplement the efforts of states and offset sovereign
incapacities and that they can be used to solve the conflicts “within and between
states” (Barber, 2013).
For this reason, local governments are seen as a way to strengthen polities on a global scale also by the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union (Blank, 2006), and they are obtaining always more duties, rights and power, and also autonomy. The idea of autonomy is central in the discussion about cities: what moves cities are voluntary participation and cooperation, and from dependence, it goes to interdependence, with practical problem solving rather than purely ideological operations.

It is important to notice, however, that Barber only considers cities as centre of his discourse and not localities in general terms: specifically, “as a social and geographical form, the city may be seen as a generic antonym to all that is not urban: to suburbia and exurbia; to the rural, the “country”, or even the uninhabited natural wilderness”. Indeed, he makes this distinction since cities are the base from where trade and commerce start, and consequently, globalization takes action. In this way, cities become “world cities” or “global cities,” meaning that they are both targets of globalization and agents of it (Blank, 2006), and also the most apparent manifestation of modernity.

According to Blank (2006), however, globalization is a phenomenon that affects every kind of locality, even the smaller ones, and every human settlement, including many activities and phenomena. In contrast, Barber’s idea concerns the dichotomy between cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, creativity, openness, innovation, etc. of the city and the parochialism, monoculturalism, conventionalism, bordering, repetition, etc. that characterized a rural area. Specifically, “it is not the individual features of the urban environment taken one by one, but their accumulation and aggregation that capture the city’s essential meaning” (Barber, 2013, pag. 68).

This idea seems, however, quite controversial since if what is important is democracy, direct participation, and unity, then also rural areas are a good representative of a new alternative to the “no longer adequate” nation-state.

According to Blank (2006), both big cities and small towns are involved in foreign affairs and international norma enforcement, and so they are part of the “emerging global village,” being both efficient and effective in promoting globalization.

However, Barber points out that even when it is possible to experience this sense of globalization in small localities, it is in the city that the real sense of “the public” is matured, showing the very essence of global perspectives.

What is in common, anyway, that local levels possess all the features to obtain more significant roles and responsibilities at the international level in the contest of governance.
2.3 - NETWORKED GOVERNANCE

The local turn in multilevel governance has turned out to be the perfect base for another recent phenomenon that involves Europe (but not only): the networks of cities. Many scholars agree that this represents a form of unification from the bottom-up, starting from the desire to contribute to the necessity to have a political and social consolidation of Europe.

This idea is born from the emergence of the creation of meeting to interact and project together many policy areas, with a “no-place” nature (Perulli, Rugge and Florio, 2001), meaning that there is no need to find the traditional sovranity-territorial logic, but is necessary to have new forms of shared sovereignty. According to Perulli (2001), today in the phase of post-national Europe formation, the model of city networks represents a new phenomenon within the new reticular territorial systems and the pressure on European Union is one of the tasks of these networks because nation-states are visibly giving up their sovereignty both above and below. This activity of pressure on European Union has, however, a double meaning, since on the other hand European institutions also use cities and networks of cities to implement their own policies, from culture to infrastructure, economy, environment and so on, and this leads to the creation of “institutional hybrids” (Perulli, Rugge and Florio, 2001).

At the same time, cities themselves are in a contradictory phase: from one side it seems challenging to find a unitary identity since every city is linked to the others by different links, and from the other side they define themselves as unitary actors with collective powers.

For this reason, in the 1990s the phenomenon of city networks took place, and it appears that it grew quickly due to a “contagion mechanism,” starting from the idea of emulation between cities, to arrive in the awareness that this could bring many benefits.

The idea of the creation of networks arose primarily between those cities that were willing to increase their own political influence at the European level, since the participation in networks can be seen as a strategic option, and consequently they considered it a real mission for innovation.

It appears that among their tasks, the presence of an intense lobbying activity on European Union is recurring for cities that take part in networks: a study from Perulli, Rugge, and Florio (2001) underlines how 21 of 55 networks under examination openly specify in their documents that their nature is manly of a lobby, while many others more
still have the purpose of influence the European level decision-making, albeit they did not state it as publicly.

According to Perulli, Rugge, and Florio (2001), the primary purpose of these cities is the request of every policy intervention could be managed and coordinated at a higher level than the nation-state because of their loss in legitimacy as credible, dynamic actors. In this perspective, cities are asking for new representatives, and at the same time, they recognize the networks as “arbitrators” in the process of European integration and economic globalization.

Networks seem a valid option in this sense since they are able to bring the comparison among specific problems to a higher territorial level, mediating, then, in a more efficient space. This represents an attempt to find a broader and more complete dimension of the problem taken into exam, in order to overcome local conflicts between lower community levels. In terms of governance, indeed, the activity of networking has better chances at problem-solving because they define the presence of conflicts as an opportunity and a development, and, without avoiding them, they try to manage problems using the best resources available, because they are voluntary, symbolic and exemplary actors but also “practical, efficient and transformational” (Barber, 2013, pag. 338).

These networks, indeed, are mainly a form of cooperation between cities but they can also include another kind of actor as aggregation with general and institutional purposes, or also private or semi-private institutions, or the three all together. It appears clear, at this point, that many networks have a “light nature” and even if some of them have directional organs, they cannot obtain their bureaucratic structure.

The networks, however, are still a developing phenomenon and sometimes during their still short life, they appeared ineffective, for example regarding the intention of encouraging international organizations in finding transversal forms of representation instead of nation-states for specific policy issues.

One crucial issue is that certain cities belong to different networks at the same time: if on the one hand this can be advantageous for them to create a developed linkage with other realities and influence the political frameworks from different points of views, on the other hand, these networks sometimes overlap creating a convergence of the theme but a divergence over how to operate.

According to Perulli, Rugge, and Florio (2001), one point to take into consideration is that huge networks become ineffective when they want to move from a politics of definition of the intervention lines to politics that want to give concrete solutions and aim at reach specific sectorial purposes.
This may happen because there still is no institution with a general direction where it is possible to address the policies of the cities, as the so-called “Parliament of Mayors” idealized by Barber, and in general European urban policies do not consider networks but sectorial problems of cities.

According to Barber (2013, pag 338), indeed, the creation of networks suggests that people desire a world of interconnected cities without borders, but what is left is to create an institution that can make this reality. In this way, cities may “lend impetus to informal practices they already have in place, give institutional expression and coherence to emerging cooperative relationships, amplify their collective voice and by focusing on the bottom-up role cities already play in deliberating and deciding and voluntarily implementing policies and reforms that meet the interdependent challenges of the twenty-first century”. This, however, will take place without surpassing the authority of nation-state and without adding the “burdensome job of governing the world to the already burdensome job of governing the city” (Barber, 2013, pag. 338).

2.4 - CRITIQUES

The theory of multilevel governance is apart of today’s governmental structures: an example is European Union that operates with many administrative levels and share the idea of governance (Pagoulatos and Tsoukalis, 2013). However, many scholars defined this issue more a theory than a real phenomenon since ‘it is much clearer what the notion of governance excludes than what it contains’ (Pagoulatos and Tsoukalis, 2013, pag. 9).

Moreover, according to Hooge and Marks (2001) the national government consciously decide to concede the authority to sub-national or supranational actors in order to ‘enhance its intergovernmental bargaining power’, having the possibility in this way to say that it can make limited concessions, and the cost of unpopular decisions are given to someone else.

At the same time, some scholars argue that multilevel governance is related mainly to sub-national actors since its effort to gain power, but such authority obtained is only overstated since cities and municipalities do not really have the power to shape outcomes: in other terms, as Pagoulatos and Tsoukalis (2013, pag. 9) point out, ‘mobilization and influence are not necessarily synonymous’.

What usually happens, indeed, is that decentralization is not always followed by constitutional reform and the competences of cities remain the same.
According to De Graaf (2014), the success that cities obtained in the last years are mainly because they focus on smaller and more local issues and consequently the results they obtained are easily visible, while nation-states in the meantime do rule the world. This is, in particular, a criticism at Barber's idea of the parliament of mayors, because since cities are so good at what they take care of - citizens in their everyday life with services and opportunities - are less suited to have a role in the global governance. What Barber points out, according to many scholars, is just rhetorical utopia, and cities do not have the real power to solve problems that were never in their jurisdiction. Moreover, cities seem to have many other problems that are impossible to face without the help of the state (De Graaf, 2014).

The problem with the governance of cities is that they have not produced many results yet regarding social or economic policies. Taken as example the issue of healthcare in the US, it seems to be a very problematic topic for American states but at the same time, no city could find an effective solution to implement the level of healthcare for its citizens, nor it will be possible for them since it is an issue only related to the nation-state only in which they do not have any jurisdiction.

In the same way, the topic of migration involves cities directly, but they do not have the power to implement resolutive projects, other than suggesting essential solutions for migration-related issues as integration.

Joining networks, however, can have more effects than acting on their own, but at the same time, these networks cannot pass a proper resolution and can only serve as a way to exchange information.

However, in this case of cities that are part of the same country reality, they have to respond to the national directives in the same way, and they face the same legal problems if they proceed against it.

If we take into exam the situation of cities in different countries, there may be some probabilities that the influence and reaction that they may have regarding their own country change notably.

A possible speculative explanation for this may be that the city gains more or less power according to their state’s structure: countries with a unitary constitution have regions or subnational levels that depend directly from the nation-state, without any other added power.

On the contrary, in many federal states, we do not find just the role of the national government but also the roles of each state, as in the US, the power of enforcing the law. Even if the federal state always grants the allocation of powers, and this ability to make
decisions increases the actual power of the national government at the expense of local levels, the fact that each federal state has relatively high power in respect to the national government let cities in such states gain more control. 

Taking the example of US federal structure, a state will be influenced by the ideas of its leading cities and consequently will influence in turn the national government with such ideas.

In the United States, for example, many cities decided to not engage in the decision of President Trump to deny access to undocumented migrants. In this sense, they created the so-called ‘Sanctuary Cities”, refuge cities in which migrants are accepted and welcomed in every city service as the local citizens, moreover they grant protection to migrants regardless of their status.

This trend has been shared also in many other cities around the world and in Europe too many cities are expressing their opposition to conservative and anti-migrant ministries and demonstrating the will to create safe areas for foreign people, even if arrived illegally (Chauvin, 2017, September 5th from http://cpnn-world.org/new/?p=10362).

In Italy, even if the idea has been optimistically welcomed by many cities (as indeed Palermo, but also Milan), is important to distinguish between networks of solidarity based cities with movements for integration and the concrete operations of Sanctuary Cities. In these last ones "local authorities are taking charge of the conditions and methods for integrating migrants, in order to counterbalance the fact that government are shirking their responsibilities” (Furri, 2017, February 10th from https://theconversation.com/venices-long-history-as-a-sanctuary-city-for-migrants-is-under-threat-70359) while in Italy even in cities with a historic tradition of hospitality the topdown federal control has its own predominance over the humanitarian crises (Furri, 2017).

In general terms, what emerges is that a governmental cooperation, both vertical and horizontal, may be helpful for the resolution of common issues, as in facts migration. The idea of multilevel governance, as well as networked governance, gives space to a relatively new idea that every institution and level of government may actually take a step together instead of leaving the problems just in the hands of the national authorities.

The state has the right to address certain issues; however, depending on the kind of juridical conformation that a country has, regional and local realities may actually make the difference, having a direct contacts with people in their area, and consequently they can understand better the easiest way to face the problems that may arise.
At the same time, cities are not coerced by diplomatic duties towards other entities and may easily relate with other cities through networks and meetings in which sharing informations is top priority. Learning from each other may be an optimal resolution in order to address problems of everyday life and face similar realities, as the one of integration of migrants indeed.

Cities, for this reason, are mobilizing in order to find a solution to all that problems that nation-state cannot help to improve, however it is important to have clear in mind the fine line between legal and illegal practices: in all those countries, as Italy, in which the national government has an exclusive jurisdiction over the most of decisions, implementing policies against the national directives will result unconstitutional and will lead to a fight between different levels of government, without an actual resolution.

Regarding migration, many cities are already implementing the theories of multilevel governance and networks, especially regarding the topic of integration more than the one of entrances because most of the time this is a prerogative of the nation-state in which cities have limited power.
3 - METHODOLOGY

The theme of migration and integration has been analyzed from different points of view in order to collect data that may be helpful to understand why people move from one place to another, why this happens and what are the consequences.

This thesis originated from the necessity to explore an approach of political science developed in the 1990s but very contemporary – Multilevel Governance – and to connect it with the problem of migration and integration: this issue sometimes appears as very poorly handled by nation-states, especially when talking about integration measures and cities made their way in order to fill what the national level lacks.

For this reason studying the specific role of cities as new agents able to handle this problem, and consequently, their relationship with the nation-state and its laws is necessary to understand the dynamics of cooperation and contraposition between the different levels of government. Cities appear as more willing to find a concrete solution based on experience and collaboration with other parties, while the nation-states continue to use their authority to impose their directives (Barber, 2013).

The idea to investigate the situation of Italy flows from the fact that it is one of the European member states most involved in this issue, since it is one of the main ports of entrance for migrants in Europe - together with Spain and Greece -, and appears as an extreme case in respect to other countries around Europe due to the considerable disparity between the dispositions of the national government and the position of cities.

Italy indeed represents a case study, following the definition of Flyvberg (2011), from where is it possible to analyze the concept of migration and integration in its evolution.

Moreover, Italy is a country in which migration flows started relatively late since it started to be considered as a favorable destination for migrants only after the 1970s, due to the financial and job crisis. Consequently, it is noteworthy that Italy does not have the experience acquired by other countries; for this reason, its policies regarding migration and integration are dictated by the personal interests of politicians more than effectiveness.

During the last government, then, Italy is experiencing a very anti-migrant government and the situation of conflict between Italian cities and institutions and between Italy and other member states is quickly escalating into uncertainty and measures not based on cohesion and solidarity.

This thesis is then inspired by the different situations going on in cities, especially the ones of Milan and Palermo, in handling the issue of migration and integration. The idea to
compare two different cities is useful for the purposes of the study, since it emerged that
even starting from the same points of view, different outcomes derive from the history of
the cities and their way of handling this kind of issues, moreover from the connections
that these cities may have – and consequently from the use they make of these
connections.

Accordingly, qualitative data have been useful to find a theoretical framework that could
explain the topic of migration in light of multilevel governance and of the ‘local turn’:
theories of new forms of governance and multilevel governance outline why the horizontal
cooperation between cities and third parties other than nation-states have a decisive role
in addressing specific problems better than their national government.

In this regard, the study draws on the work of several scholars to investigate the topic of
governance in general, with a particular focus on multilevel governance, the ‘local turn’
and the role of city and city networks. Among others, Barber’s thesis (2013) of the
supremacy of cities in handling specific issues has been taken as a basis for the
investigation, trying to find examples that could validate such a hypothesis but also cases
in which is not applicable, in order to achieve the broader view possible.

Moreover, the literature on the relation between migration and cities has been studied to
identify concrete examples of results achieved and, if possible, what should be improved.
Sources of information other than academic papers have been consulted, such as
newspaper articles and public statements of institutions involved in the research.

The topic investigated - the role of Italian cities in opposing the national government’s
directives on migration - is relatively new since the new government started in 2018, and
for this reason, much information is taken from the press or from public statements of
political parties and the government itself.

Also for city networks and other institutions, information derives from statements and
official reports, as of example the ones of ESPON and EUROCITIES.

Regarding the decision to investigate two cities in particular in Italy, the idea to choose
Milan and Palermo was given by the idea of fair comparison to get a complete view of the
situation in Italy: while Milan is an industrialized, vibrant technological advanced city in the
north with a strong history of acceptance and integration of migrants according to
European standards, Palermo is a typical example of city of southern Italy, with a history
of mafia and underdevelopment that also had an impact on migration.

The decision to consider Milan and Palermo came from the necessity to select cases that
were no utterly different between each other concerning the outcome under investigation
to avoid generalization (Della Porta, 2008) but still having different values - history, culture,
mayor’s decisions - so that the critical variable may change. Having a ‘most-similar systems’ design may help to find out which variables are different but, according to Della Porta (2008) it is not possible to go beyond the middle-range theories - theories applied in restricted areas. For this reason, the Milan and Palermo have been selected on the basis that they are neither too different nor too similar, since they are both Italian cities, sharing then Italian principles and history, but at the same time have separated backgrounds. It is noteworthy that both cities have a Mayor who is firmly against the national directives on migration (both Mayors are from center-left parties), but they handle the situation in a completely different way, and for this reason, the roles of the two cities are different.

Both cities engage in various networks for migration such as EUROCITIES: Milan from the beginning, while Palermo entered in 2018. However, they have different profiles regarding the relationship with the national government since the Mayor of Palermo expressed his disapproval saying that he would not implement such national directives, while that of Milan decided not to oppose the directive but still expressing disagreement with it.

This issue also emerged from a series of interviews that have been conducted in order to obtain more and accurate information regarding the current situation in Italy and the cities.

The interviews have been conducted following a semi-structured method since it was important to let the interviewee explain the project, job, research he/she is involved in, and the impressions regarding the relationship between cities and migration.

The decision to interview some experts derived mainly from the necessity to ask them specific questions regarding the comparison between the Italian situation and the European/Global standards. Moreover, since this contraposition between State and cities in Italy is a relatively new issue and consequently it is not very well depicted in the literature, it was important to fully understand the real positions of the cities of Milan and Palermo, since what is reported in the news is often influenced by a broader political discourse.

Four interviews have been conducted with, first of all, a project officer at EUROCITIES in the Social Affairs department, Feyrouz Lajili-Djalai, in order to obtain information both about the purpose of migration projects at European level and about the Italian situation. Then, Professor Maurizio Ambrosini from Università degli Studi di Milano was interviewed as an expert and because of his involvement in the Italian debate about migration, with a particular focus on integration policies.

Finally, two experts from the international offices of Milan and Palermo have been contacted, respectively Cosimo Palazzo, Director of Social Emergencies, Rights and
Inclusion in Milan, and Giuseppe Sacco, Director of the ‘extra-municipal fund office’ (‘Fondi extracomunali’) in Palermo. These last interviews were exciting and very useful because these experts are directly in contact with the municipality, the national government, networks for migration and the European institutions to find a universal and comprehensive solution to the problems linked to migration.

Another interview with an expert from the municipality of Naples would have been valuable because of the recent involvement of its Mayor in the campaign against the government’s migration policy. However, it proved impossible to contact someone in the city’s International Office, and the only facts reported are based on previous literature and reports.

In conclusion, all these sources - literature, press, reports, interviews - have been fundamental to delineate the role of cities regarding migration, starting from what have been already done and ending up at what it is still in program, and to understand if and how cities can take a role against the national government.
This chapter introduces the general framework of the relationship between cities and migration policies. Many big cities in the world and in Europe accepted the challenge to be more involved in these practices from a decisional perspective since they are already involved in many integration processes.

This section will start with a literature review that explains how and why cities are taking responsibilities for migration.

Since the refugee crisis of 2015, the number of migrants and migration flows has increased, and with them also the literature regarding this complicated situation. The conflicts and instability of many countries in the Middle East and Africa forced more and more people to seek asylum in Europe, as well as the demographic and economic factors of high poverty and unemployment and according to EUROCITIES' Cities Charter (2018) 1.2 million first-time asylum seekers were received by member states, more than double considering the previous years. The lack of overall aid and education options aggravated the situation, together with the projection that with climate change, there could be even more significant refugee flows in the coming decades (ESPON Policy Brief 2015).

According to EUROCITIES, one key challenge within this general humanitarian crisis is to provide ad hoc integration measures that meet the individual needs of refugees, among which also welcoming their diversity, with better coordination of authorities, more knowledge, and exchange of practices.

In the ESPON³ (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) Policy Brief of 2015 regarding territorial and urban aspects of migration and refugee inflow, European Union points out the most critical territorial and urban aspects to be considered by policymakers as, for example, the fact that “the influx of migrants towards Europe creates major pressure in many countries and regions in Europe, but particularly in Italy, Greece, and Hungary, as well as in Turkey”. It appears, indeed, that these countries are on the front line as entry points and usually refugees are transiting through them to more attractive

---

³ ESPON is a program funded by the European Union in order to have an European network of applied research. The main objective is the observation of the territorial development of European Union to give knowledge on territorial trends and on the influence that territorial policies may have.
places with the most favorable economic conditions and with the most attractive and inclusive integration policies. In this framework, the distribution of accepted refugees within countries should take into consideration the needs of local labor markets, and refugees as well: migrants arriving in Europe are very heterogeneous in terms of education, skills, culture and language and their integration relies on these factors.

For this reason, ESPON argues that many efforts should be put in place for the integration of migrants, considering it as an investment that can pay in the long run. “Without proper support for integration, lack of planning and inclusion measure, timely asylum procedures, reception centers offering language courses, possibilities to work, education for children, contacts with local residents, psychological assistance, etc, in other words altogether unfavorable conditions for the integration of refugees, risks exist that negative developments in society will evolve and make integration even harder” (ESPON Policy Brief 2015).

We can define integration as “the process of settlement, interaction with the host society, and social change that follows immigration” but also as “the process of becoming an accepted part of society.” (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, pag. 11). This means that from the moment immigrants arrive in the host society, they must find a fit for themselves, in the literal, social, and cultural sense. From different approaches, it seems to be agreed that “immigrants are partially engaged in multiple autonomous and interdependent fields of systems” (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, pag. 13), that can be summarized in the dimensions of cultural, structural, identificational and interactive integration (Heckmann and Schnapper, 2003).

Considering how migrants are accepted in society, Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016) note that the main dimensions that encompass the definition of integration are related to the three main factors that interplay with the entire process: the state, the market, and the nation. Since the authors’ main interest is not on immigrants but their relationship with a host society, they highly criticize the idea that immigrants must conform to the norms of the dominant majority and change almost entirely with the new culture in order to be accepted, and they present integration “not only as a must but also a straight-line process” (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, pag. 12).

In their view, the “state” can be explained as the legal-political dimension and the position that regular and irregular immigrants have in the host society, being integrated or not in the other two dimensions. The “market” is the socio-economic dimension, in which immigrants are analyzed looking at their access and participation in essential sectors as housing, education, or health care. Last, the “nation” represents the cultural-religious
dimension that “pertains to the domain of perceptions and practices of immigrants and the receiving society as well as their reciprocal reactions to difference and diversity” (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, pag. 15). These three dimensions are not independent, and the issues of illegal residence, uncertainty, lack of access to specific systems of the everyday life may have negative implications for opportunities and participation in the socio-economic and political realms.

To get a complete picture of the situation, it is necessary to examine these different policy domains together and take into account other policies that do not specifically target immigrants and include broader societal institutions, shifting the focus from governments to governance and from policy to policymaking. This is important because what matters is not only policy frames and policy measures but also how these policies are organized.

Integration policies can be differentiated according to who is meant: the ones designated for specific groups of immigrants as target groups are different from the ones that consider all immigrants or, more in general, all individuals regardless of their origins. They can also have different purposes, as grant political rights, create a representative body, promote equal opportunities, and promote cultural diversity.

Explicit integration policies are part of a specific process in which this issue is seen as a problem, and the measures taken are designed to solve it. It is essential, then, according to Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016) to define the problem, and then consider what should be done, looking at how these policies are or can be organized and implemented.

It is important to notice that not always the implementation of policies is controlled by politics, sometimes significant gaps between politics and policies arise and what politicians say and what is being done may differ significantly.

Even if the issue of migration is part of European history from a very long time (especially migration of workers), the social and governmental integration challenge is relatively new. From the early 1990s, refugees became an issue, especially in North-Western Europe and the countries on the “borders” of Europe also became attractive destinations for migrants more than places of emigration themselves. Even with the persistence of various national interests, a political consensus emerged on the need for a joint approach and culminated firstly in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 in which migration and asylum were formally defined as a standard policy concern. According to Doomernik and Bruquetas-Callejo (2016, pag. 58), “European countries’ experiences with immigration have been diverse and related to geographical location, economic context, political history, and also to notions of nationhood, national belonging, and organization of government.”
At first, in the post-war era, migrants who arrived in the North-Western European countries were seen as guest workers, and for this reason, they did not develop specific policies for the integration of migrants. Even the basic concept of citizenship was very different from one place to another, and consequently the possibility to belong or not in the community. Some countries had more comfortable admission procedures of new members as long as they adhered to constitution, laws and political rules, some others required more cultural adaptation, and other more were tolerating of cultural and ethnic diversity since the beginning, but during the years the states that previously excluded migrants from formal participation opened up to more relaxed conditions, while the countries relatively open started to become less inclusive in legal terms, adding mandatory integration courses and requirements.

In Southern Europe, the first attempt was to regulate admissions and migrant labor, previously mainly irregular. Since immigration was neither mediated nor planned in countries like Italy, Spain or Greece, “a labor-oriented approach prevailed in which immigration control and labor regulation were the main priorities and integration was relegated to a second-place (Bruquetas-Callejo et al. 2011 as cited by Doomernik and Bruquetas-Callejo, 2016). The process of integration, though, is less mediated by explicit policies, but it depends mostly on the labor market insertion. From the social point of view, in general immigrants in Southern Europe, both regular and irregular, are tolerated but seen as outsiders even after decades from their arrivals, and the integration policies are still scarce.

The migration crisis of 2015 was just the peak of a long period of flows already started a few years before that is still going on during these days. The massive increase of landings on the Italian and Greek coasts, indeed, brought back this theme on the main pages of newspapers, and many reactions arose from every European country, from the ones of solidarity to the ones of fear and exhortation to close borders. Today, the situation is not as in 2015 anymore but is essential not to consider the problem solved, regardless the number of landings: the number of foreign people living in European Union is rising, and Europe itself is changing, together with the new needs of migrants that fight with integration in new countries.

The task of integration is given in particular to cities, that is where it is possible to find the most of foreign people and where local administrations take care of what is going on in their territories.

Cities nowadays are becoming big political laboratories because of the new tendency to delegate some choices to the local level - more than in the past - and also because they
are directly involved in the entire flow of migration, from the arrival to the eventual departure, when they appear just transit areas.

To manage migrations, however, it is not enough to handle the flux: it is necessary to provide migrants with what they need to avoid criminality and violence. In this perspective, sometimes the arrival of irregular migrants was the base of the ‘security answer’ from individual national governments that decided to place measures of control to the active policies in favor of integration (Villa, 2018).

For this reason, cities are important because they can take care of what the national government is missing - integration and welcoming measures - with more or less autonomous initiatives.

The debate about how migrations should be handled in Europe has always been concentrated on national interests and policies because the management models of the fluxes are a competence of the central government of every member state or the result of specific cooperation between these actors.

Since, however, the management of migration is not only the organization of flows of people through the borders, but also and especially the measures that public administrations take to integrate the people that arrive, is important to study the role of local entities and cities, in particular, the big cities or the so-called ‘global cities’, because they can actually override the minimum standards imposed by the central governments and implement real processes of integration.

Big cities may have a more significant role that small local entities since it has been seen that foreign people and migrants prefer more prominent, more integrated and more technological places and in OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries the 66% of migrants live for this reason in highly densely populated cities (Villa, 2018).

This happens because in big cities they can find social services, a developed social network for help and jobs, and better opportunities to live as natives do. However, foreign people that live in cities continue to experience situations of disadvantage with respect to people that were born there, and for this reason is important to focus on how the policies for integration may be applied at the local level and how local actors are able to interpret and modify them in an innovative way, searching for solutions that are applicable in their specific cases, and asking some other actors to collaborate, as other levels of governments - regional, national and European.

While migrations of workers, families and asylum seekers have always been widespread in the history of Europe, the role of different actors than the national governments...
emerged only in the last decades; at the same time it was typical to consider migration in view of the problem of job hunting while it was uncommon to think of it as a social threat. From the 1970s, however, after the oil crisis and the first significant period of European austerity, the issue of migration has become an essential theme for a confrontation between the most critical countries in the North-West of Europe, among which Germany, Sweden, and France. From the 1990s, instead, the countries belonging to Southern Europe started to be considered a place for migration from North Africa, Balkans, and East Europe, and not places of migration anymore, because of their recent economic development.

At the same time, in that period the process of enlargement of European Union started: to this, a progressive ‘European’ idea of development (Villa, 2018) of the migration policies followed, before as a national exclusive and then as part of international agreements. Moreover, also the asylum system was reviewed with the Dublin Agreement in 1990, imposing that member states were the competent actor for asylum requests. However, the still unstable and disconnected relationship between nation-states was the reason why a divergence of interests and positions made impossible the realization of a standard method of management of regular migrants between them (proposed in 2001 by the European Commission) and only some specific programs for workers were created. Likewise, integration policies remained far from joint decisions among the European Union member states, due to their heterogeneity regarding practices and experiences and because specific unitarian methods necessitate several resources that are difficult to reach at the European level (Villa, 2018).

During the decades, for this reason, policies for integration have always been decentralized more to a local and decentralized level (Ambrosini, 2012), on one side following an ‘upward parabola’ that arrives at the European level, on the other following a downward one that arrives at cities (Villa, 2018).

These new local actors participate in the new policies for integration from their formulation to their interpretation and actuation, together with private actors as entrepreneurs, NGOs, migrants associations and other groups belonging to the civil society that intervene in the process of integration in a more or less formal way. The policies that are implemented regarding migration, according to Villa (2018), can be classified in two ways: according to their content and according to the kind of multilevel governance that exists between different actors. He follows the definition that identifies five types of approach to integration at local level, linked to their content: for ‘temporary migrants’, in which integration is more or less absent because they are willing to go back
to their original place; for ‘guest workers’, that recognizes their presence but only as workers that sooner or later will also leave the country; ‘assimilation’ policies, that consider the migrant as a native; ‘pluralist’ policies that consider migrants as different regarding their identity but still try to develop the best environment possible for them; and finally ‘intercultural’ policies, willing to develop an interaction between the majority of the population and migrants. In this perspective, multilevel governance is the one that tries to push for the constant interaction also between different territorial levels, creating ‘vertical forums’ in which they can coordinate and exchange experiences, considering cities almost at the same level as nation-states. This, indeed, can happen because, for certain kinds of problems, local entities prefer to intervene to fill the lack of integration policies of the national level, that, for example, usually require more financial resources than the ones available. In Europe, for example, the cost for member states of having one asylum seeker in their first year after arrival is about 10,000 Euros, costs of integration excluded because they cannot afford to spend more than for the reception (Villa, 2018). Welcoming migrants, indeed, during the 2015 crisis cost 1.4% of Swedish GDP or 0.4% of Italian GDP, in a country that needed to apply austerity policies to adjust the general budget. Integration policies, for this reason, and because they can also derive from policies that include the whole population, are shifted to the local level: in OECD countries, 35-45% of the total costs for migrants fall on local entities (OECD Migration Policy Debates 2017), and in particular those for social insurance and instruction. It seems that, according to a study by the Brookings Institution on German cities (Katz, Noring and Garrelts, 2016, September 18th from https://www.brookings.edu/research/cities-and-refugees-the-german-experience/) after the migration crisis of 2015, that the increase in the number of migrants is not equivalent of the volume of funds that cities receive from the nation-states, leading to a risk for the local public finances to collapse. However, it emerged that German cities in this particular case were very reactive and avoided a financial crisis thanks to an increase of local voluntary initiatives promoted by cities themselves, for example by the cities of Hamburg and Berlin, in order to guarantee services, healthcare, and other necessities. However, the German example was not emulated in other countries such as Greece and Italy, which had to deal at the same time with a national financial crisis and an unstable financial local administration that cut the resources destined for integration. This was also the result of the political divergence between the central government and local
administrations: in a case of disagreement between the two, it is common that the central government cuts the funds for a limited time in order to force the ‘liberal’ city to stop its integration policies. This may cause a continuous mismatch between the resources at the central level and the resources that are effectively spent at the local level; in a period of austerity, this means financial instability for local administrations (Villa, 2018).

The problem of the different ways of thinking between cities and member states is not uncommon because of the specific roles that these two different levels use to pursue. Cities are not only the places in which migrants are integrated, but they slowly become their places of belonging, where they acquire rights and identity, even if these ideas have always been linked to the member states in the past.

In this perspective, cities are not only subordinated to the state, but they gain political authority from their principles and their citizens, while states maintain order using their sovereignty. Cities have a double role (Gebhardt, 2018): as subordinated to the central state and exposed to political and social pressure that comes from their exclusion from the political choices made by the state.

Cities, however, can always adapt in a certain measure national policies to the local context: this is the case, for example, of ‘Sanctuary Cities’ in the US, in which President Trump is trying to force the implementation of federal legislation against migrants. (Kopan, 2018, March 26th from https://edition.cnn.com/2017/01/25/politics/sanctuary-cities-explained/index.html)

Sanctuary Cities are realities without a precise legal definition in which migrants arrived without documents or that stayed after their visas expired are not subject to expulsion. These cities have different laws and ordinances that do not allow local police to collaborate with migration office agents, except if the migrant committed certain crimes. Many important cities in the US define themselves as sanctuary cities, among which New York, San Francisco, and Seattle, but they are present also in Europe as in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The basic idea behind these jurisdictions is that reducing the fear of deportation and family break-up is also possible for migrants to avoid crimes and exclusion from the economic life of the cities (Wikipedia contributors, 2019).

It is possible in these kinds of cities to ‘disobey’ the national government because of the social support from the population or local organizations from civil society, referring to institutional and juridical aspects that go beyond the national jurisdiction, for example, the international legislation on human rights or the supranational institutions.

This can be possible also because in the majority of cities there is no specific department that is responsible for integration and services, so cities can either share their tasks with
different departments using cross-sectional methods or involve a single department at a time (EUROCITIES Cities Charter, 2018).

In general terms, it seems that, in general, cities are more willing to try to include migrants because they are directly in contact with the population and its problems caused by policies of exclusion. Cities implement their policies of inclusion and integration using the idea of ‘belonging’ to a particular domicile and consequently being part of that territory; moreover, they monitor and apply the rights that the nation-state gives migrants, defining the criteria for access and their placement. Another critical factor is the idea of identity that the city uses to define its citizens on the base of values, civil rights, and interests, more than of race or ethnicity (Gebhardt, 2018). This appears clear when analyzing the idea of identification that migrants have regarding the cities and the countries in which they live in. This for example, a study of 2011 (Gebhardt, 2018), found that in Amsterdam 74% of migrants from Suriname identify themselves with the city and 61% with the nation-state, while another study of 2008 (Gebhardt, 2018) found that 80% of residents in Frankfurt with a migration background identify themselves with the city, compared with 36% with Germany.

Identification derives not only from the political and sociological history of the city but more from the opportunities and rights that cities offer to migrants creating a positive environment and offering them all the services they need. Moreover, many global cities often play an active role against discrimination in order to strengthen the sense of belonging (as the campaign in Amsterdam ‘Discriminatie - Amsterdam is er klaar mee’), and this corresponds to a reality in which services, local associations, cultural institutions, etc. represent the entire population.

The services that a city can provide can be divided into four local policy domains, according to the classification of Alexander (2003, pp 48-50, as cited by Doomernik and Ardon, 2018). First of all, there is the legal-political domain in which cities can express their idea of citizenship that follows a daily process, and that allows migrants to access, for example, the healthcare system. In this way, cities recognize undocumented migrants the same as residents, by providing them free or anonymous services. Then, Alexander identifies the socio-economic domain, in which cities engage themselves with local companies to mediate between them and migrants in order to find a work arrangement because it seems that localities ‘find it easier to integrate refugees with specific skills into their labor markets’ (Doomernik and Ardon, 2018, pag. 95). Third, in the classification of Alexander, there is the cultural-religious domain, that relates to the relations based on cultural activities that help the integration of migrants. Finally, there is the spatial domain,
which includes the issue of housing since it is also strictly related to social inclusion. This is managed by the member states with rules that sometimes appear as too strict and not flexible to cater to the needs of large groups of migrants, but at the same time cities can intervene in organizing also solidarity initiatives or influence the policymaking.

Cities, then, do not appear only as a context but more as ‘institutional actors’ (Bolzoni, 2018) due to their role in the management of migration. As regards numbers, in 2017 almost 650,000 requests for asylum were presented in European Union member states, and according to UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), more than 60% of asylum seekers live in urban areas where they received their first welcome.

Cities tend, for economic, social, cultural, demographic and political reasons, to attract fluxes of people that move both voluntarily and sometimes forcibly, and they constitute areas for transit and concentration of arrivals before settlement. ‘Migrants come to cities, and cities have to take care for migrants, and do so when no other institution is able to’ (by Doomernik and Ardon, 2018), meaning that cities are able to avoid the ideologies and values of the nation-states to address the needs of migrants. Bolzoni (2018) points out that cities have this central role regarding the challenge of reception and integration because they correspond to the territorial level in which the manifestation of the phenomenon is combined to the ‘stress of its management’: this can be seen from the total amount of migrants present and their distribution on the territory, as well as the idea of openness or hostility of native population, arriving at the policy-making and informal initiatives from civil society.

The problems of segregation, degradation, and social marginality are typical, indeed, of migration at city level, as shown by the informal campsites in the peripheries of big and middle-sized cities in which asylum seekers and refugees that are already present in the territory live because they are not welcomed by a system still inadequate regarding the real necessities (Second Report of ‘Doctors Without Borders’, 2018).

The spread of racism and xenophobia during the migration crisis, then, in the majority of cases is a manifestation of the preoccupation of the native population, solely tied by the financial and job crisis, and parties and movements against migration have exploited this issue.

Even if, as has been said, cities are able to do more and better than nation-states in accepting migrants and fulfill their needs in order to reach a right level of integration, it is still true that not every city has the same administrative capabilities and the same financial resources, as well as experience in handling this challenge and the political debate.
At the same time, is necessary to underline that the issue is not only what cities do but why they do it: the different initiatives regarding migrations promoted by cities, as for example the participation in the SPRAR (‘Sistema di Protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati’ - system for protection for asylum seekers and refugees) network for Italian cities, shows how heterogeneous and truly different the implementation of programs are even where the rules are the same. Often the framework of the city networks is fragmented and characterized by a lack of unity in the organization of services.

For this reason, cities expressed the urgency to confront each other through dialogues and dense networks of exchanges and interactions in order to cooperate to find standard solutions and to encourage the best practices for integration. For big and middle-sized cities, it seems more natural to start efficient processes of policy transfer and policy learning. This, on one side, happens because the transfer of practices and interventions needs both economic and human resources, but also structures for coordination, conditions, and competencies efficiently implementing, and on the other because the closeness of the local actors and the knowledge of the local dynamics are more productive than the supra-local institutions.

Even if every city is different and presents a unique model for integration and inclusion, some specific trends and processes are common to all cities. The EUROCITIES City Charter (2018) suggests that ‘integration and diversity policies are developed within a reciprocal dimension’ in a bi-directional process in which the society provides the services and needs without discrimination, and migrants commit themselves to local habits and institutions with joint responsibility.

The Charter then points out that every city needs to provide immediate services as soon as migrants arrive, as well as legal information and general advisory to promote socio-economic integration and community building.

Moreover, it is common to adopt the idea of an ‘emergency approach’ to focus on strategies that are more inclusive and easily applicable to everyone, in order to avoid to create specific groups of migrants or asylum seekers and promote integration for everyone.

At the same time, cities started to develop new ways of handling the situation based on their own needs: the implementation of concrete solutions had - and still has - to face the difficulties that every city has to deal with, as for examples the issue of housing, the labor market and so on.
These plans for integration are mainly long-term programs - even if in the period of the migration crisis they were mostly short-term - which have been developed in different areas creating specific offices inside the local governments, with also the active participation of third parties: since 2015, indeed, cities, in the role of coordinators, opened up to these new parties working with refugees to deal with these new arrivals, as it happened in Vienna where the city with enterprises, labor market institutions and volunteers started a project for support and orientation of refugees (EUROCITIES City Charter, 2018).

It also happens that the cooperation goes beyond the borders of the city, as already pointed out, in order to have a better knowledge of good practices and ‘compensate for the lack of support from the national level’ (EUROCITIES, 2018).

In this regard, cities, especially big and middle-sized ones, often rely upon city networks, which can be defined as the institutions that, through multiple initiatives, ‘aim at establishing links between cities experiencing similar challenges - as migrations in this case - in Europe and beyond’ (Caponio, 2019, pag. 1), and in the specific case of migration, ‘support local authorities in the reception and integration’ (Report by Cities of refuge research. Oomen, Baumgartel, And Durmus, 2018).

These networks, ‘reflect cities’ increased investments in international relations in the context of economic globalization and processes of rescaling of political power. (Caponio, 2019).

Through city networks, indeed, according to Oomen, Baumgartel, and Durmus (2018), it is possible to achieve different developments and opportunities, as an international status is given by the cooperation with international organizations - always being autonomous and critical, and for example also exercising ‘moral leadership’ by every partner involved in the project. The fact that networks pursue distinct activities led to a considerable number of networks for cities to join, but at the same time, these networks emerged organically and based on the strategic plan to come together for the realization of shared objectives.

City networks - thanks to a discrete degree of authority given by institutions, for example in the case of EUROCITIES and the European Union - can influence the policy-making processes to propose their initiatives and actions, on the base of experience with the topic addressed and through bottom-up initiatives of cooperation.

Regarding migration, the networks’ mission is mainly to implement a specific policy approach to integration in both a vertical and horizontal dimension and are also effective at also formulating transnational policies that go beyond Europe, in order to enlarge their grid of contacts with other cities. City harmonization is considered as a fundamental tool
to better coordinate actions in the dialogue between different levels of government and to formulate statements in solidarity with localities inside and outside Europe (Doomernik and Ardon, 2018).

Cities recognize their role and understand that they are underestimated as agents for policymaking: more involvement, however, can be reached by joining these networks and implementing initiatives. The charter of EUROCITIES (2018), indeed, shows as concerning 2015, city initiatives have multiplied, ‘marking clear progress in local integration policies, both in quantity and quality,’ and always more cities take position approving new strategies and reacting against inefficient laws.

Among all city networks, EUROCITIES has a predominant role in influencing the EU institutions through working groups, in order to respond to typical issues, especially the one of migration.

It is a network of major European cities started in 1986 by six cities - Barcelona, Birmingham, Frankfurt, Lyon, Milan, and Rotterdam - that today counts 140 European cities and 45 partner cities. As stated on the EUROCITIES website, ‘the objective is to reinforce the important role that local government should play in a multilevel governance structure’ since city is seen as a place for inclusion and opportunities, and, has emerged in an interview with Feyrouz Lajili-Djalai, project officer at EUROCITIES in the Social Affairs Department, the organization identifies itself as ‘a voice of cities in Europe that reunite in networks to intervene on institutions’.

According to them, the city has a fundamental role in promoting positive public perception of migrants and in guaranteeing the human rights and protection according to European treaties and international law.

From EUROCITIES’ statement on asylum in cities, it seems clear that the main goal is to help to better coordinate EU approaches to migration using cities as principal actors since the European Commission’s agenda on migration does not address the whole range of issues that member states and cities are facing. The measures identified to facilitate such goals are first of all the adoption of specific measures against physical and psychological attacks in line with the guarantee of fundamental rights, and financial support for cities to help them offer services and recognition to migrants.

Lajili-Djalai explained that 2015 and the years immediately after that was a period of great insecurity and instability, in which new arrivals created a new challenge that member states were not able to address correctly. EUROCITIES tried to fill the ‘carelessness’ of
member states operating when they did not react to the crisis. Already before 2015, however, EUROCITIES was present with projects specifically designed for cities dealing with the issue of migration, as the ‘integrating cities’ process started in 2008 for integration at the local level and embracing diversity.

Projects are funded by the European Commission’s DG Home, which recognized the considerable importance of EUROCITIES in addressing specific issues: in 2019 for example, they started a new project called ‘Values - Volunteering Activities to Leverage Urban and European Social Integration of Migrants’ that will focus on community building at local level for integration through volunteering activities and is formed by thematic clusters each involving four cities in order to coordinate their practices, or in 2015 they started the project ‘solidarity cities’ to manage the refugee crisis within a cooperation with cities, the European Commission and the nation-states, based on the principles of responsibility and solidarity.

In this way, cities will be able to mutual learn and exchange practices through different activities, which are: cluster visits, volunteer exchanges, a benchmark for integration policies and an action plan for all partner cities.

Sharing responsibilities and solidarity across Europe is also another fundamental principle of EUROCITIES, together with a broader recognition by the nation-state and by the European Commission that should directly consult cities when talking about migration. According to them, cities are ready to be involved in decision making regarding different migration-related issues such as financial assistance, integration models, and resources because they can adequately manage the ‘resettlement scheme.’

For this reason, EUROCITIES is also working on encouraging national levels to work with cities and to give funds in order to act both in the short term, managing the influx of migrants with reception projects, and in the long term, to implement measures for training and to have legal and secure integration.
5 - THE ITALIAN CASE

The study of migration policies in Italy has always privileged the national level because the state has always been principally responsible for the entrance of migrants, as well as for their integration and access to city services. However, from the 1990s, following the path of the “global cities” movement worldwide, local administrations started to be considered not only as of the ones implementing rules formulated elsewhere but mostly as levels of government directly responsible for migrants, especially regarding their inclusion in the social reality of the city.

Italy does not have a long history of migrants since for a very long time it was a country of emigration and not immigration due to its unstable financial situation but from the mid-1980s, the number of foreign people entering its territory rose from 500,000 to 1,000,000 in 1990 and reached 4.3 million in 2000s (ISTAT, 2010) due to an increase of GDP and a new economic expansion.

In 2008 migration to Italy even surpassed other member states like Germany or Spain (respectively by 8.2% and 11.7%), but at the same time the number of foreigners with citizenship was barely 40,000, and the number of migrants in Italy in their totality is still less than in the countries with an old immigration tradition.

On 1st January 2018, the number of non-EU citizens who live in Italy was 3,714,934, including people from Africa, Asia and to a lesser extent, America. (ISTAT on data at 31.12.2018).

In the last five years, a change in the entrance flows has been registered, which saw an increase of entrances linked to asylum requests coupled with a progressive reduction in permissions based on work reasons due to the particular situation of the migration crisis.

The issue of migration linked to the labor market has always been important in Italy, since the incidence of foreign workers is almost 70% of the total amount of migrants and before 2015 the increase of foreign employment even counterbalanced the job crisis, but today a big challenge is the limited possibility to hire migrants considering national law (IntegratingCities Report, 2018).

However, from the first Italian policy on this theme dated 1990, the most crucial topic for Italy did not consider adequately the labor market but have always been the control of entrance flows and expulsion in case of misconduct or nonconformity with the law, together with disciplines for the labor market and the fight against irregular migration.

For this reason, the legal regulation of migration in Italy pursues two main objectives: on one side it guarantees the recognition of fundamental rights of human beings and, if
possible, an equivalent status to that of Italian citizens, and on the other, it focuses on the constant control of national borders through the system of access on the territory in order to assure a high level of security and public order (Bonifazi, 1998).

However, due to a phase of sharp recession in the last few years, adverse reactions to migrations started to rise, and Italy appears far from European ideological standards on it - in which migrants are part of the labor force of a country and are integrated in its everyday life - and, as the ‘Transatlantic Trends Research’ (2009) has pointed out, almost 50% of Italians started to see migration as a threat.

During all past governments since Unification, decisions over the entrance of migrants into Italy were always the competence of the national sovereign, as in other member states, without delegating their power to other levels of governments.

In Italy, the national government should have the right to decide in this field since it is strictly linked to the labor market, and it is the best option to evaluate its internal market. However, this claim seems to be poorly evaluated since the increasing irregular migration linked to unregulated jobs, especially in the southern part of Italy.

In September 2017, a new plan of the Ministry of Interior had been presented to help refugees to be included in society.

This plan provides that ‘every migrant to whom the status for international protection is recognized, is willing to learn Italian, to share the values of Italian constitution, to respect the law, to participate in economic, social and cultural life of his territory; while the Republic is committed to assuring equality and dignity, freedom of religion, the access to school system and formation, and other tools helpful to facilitate the inclusion into society’ (Piano Nazionale di integrazione rivolto ai beneficiari di Protezione Internazionale, 2017).

In 2018, a reorganization of the acceptance service was implemented through the rationalization of services. In the last years, indeed the presence of migrants in acceptance facilities has seen an increase from 176.000 people in 2016 to more than 190.000 at the end of 2017 (ISTAT on data at 31.12.2017). The Italian Chamber of Deputies (‘Camera Dei Deputati’) statement of 5 March 2019 claims that the new plan provides a ‘fair collaboration’ based on national and regional coordination, with different phases of acceptance. The first phase consists of the rescue and first assistance in
The ‘hotspot areas’ are structures served for rapid identification, registration and first aid of migrants, present in particular in the countries most impacted by arrivals. Migrants are reunited in this centers after their arrival until all operations of recognition are over, and they are handled by the national authorities and agents from border police, together with Europol, EASO (European Asylum Support Office), Eurojust and Frontex.

Lega Nord (complete name: ‘Lega Nord per l’Indipendenza della Padania’, now called only ‘Lega’) is an Italian political party based on the principles of regionalism, liberal economy, anti-Statist, eurosceptic and strongly against immigration and multicultural society.
migrant, and new measures to ensure quick repatriation of illegal migrants have also been included.

Regarding the possibility to enter Italian waters, the law that allows the Minister to close the ports is given by the Convention of United Nations on the Law of the Sea (approved in 1982 and ratified by Italy in 1994) that with article 19 establishes that “passage is innocent so long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal State” and among the activities considered dangerous, section 2 specifies “the loading or unloading of any commodity, currency or person contrary to the customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations of the coastal State”. In this case, if there is the suspicion that the boat may violate Italian laws on migration, authorities have full right to prevent the entrance in territorial seas.

Many cities reacted against this directive, appealing to the importance of considering human rights before security. Among others, Palermo and Naples started to challenge the national government, saying that they would not implement such a plan, which created a certain tension between the national and the local governments.

While many cities embraced this challenge supporting Palermo and Naples, other cities prefer to stay neutral in the name of the respect for the national authority, while sharing the others’ disagreement. For example, the City of Milan decided not to get involved in this particular fight but at the same time expressed the message that the city will always be open to migrants through a march organized by the municipal government in favor of refugees in which more than 100.000 people participated and that, according to Il Fatto Quotidiano, brought together the Sala with dozens of movements, associations, committees, and unions (2018).

Cities in Italy would like to do more than the law allows them to do (Feyrouz Lajili-Djalai interview) and together with ANCI (Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani - National Association of Italian Municipalities) they are working to be able to assume more influence over national government's decisions and the arrangements for the provision of funds for migration.

For this reason, many Italian cities are starting initiatives with transnational city networks on migration in particular to exchange information and best practices. Caponio (2018) suggests that since national governments mediate the access to funding, the costs cities spend to sustain such initiatives exceed the returns. The role of transnational city networks, among others, then will be to lobby for direct access to funding by the European Union and the division of powers with the national government (Caponio, 2018).
Nowadays, the most important cities in Italy are part of city networks (EUROCITIES have for example 14 Italian cities as members) for the primary purpose of knowledge exchange and policy learning, while some of them want to promote their career at the European level while others joined just for a symbolic purpose (Caponio, 2018). Regarding the idea to exchange knowledge on migration, for example in 2019 a ‘Migration Conference’ was organized in Bari in order to investigate many aspects of migration and policies at international level: the conference was previously held in London, Prague, Vienna, Athens and Lisbon and it is considered as a peer-reviewed scientific event.

However, what the Italian cities can do through these networks is only to influence the social character of interventions, such as policies for integration, welcoming services and first assistance through voluntary services and private associations, while the role of local governments in the decisions regarding entrances and acceptances still need to be defined for them (Caponio, 2004).

According to Ambrosini, it is impossible to analyze the situation of Italy with ‘European eyes,’ because Italy started its period as a location for migration much later than other member states, and consequently, nowadays policies reflect the inexperience of politicians in handling this kind of situations. Moreover, the hostility of individual cities and people towards migrants does not give much space to the central government to operate in that sense and creates controversies and differences in the Italian political landscape.

Moreover, even if Italian cities are experiencing an impressive improvement in the migration discourse comparing themselves with other big cities around the world, they have to recognize their role in the sub-government as helping the nation-state implementing its projects, more than starting one on their one: a reliable and efficient collaboration between cities and the government will bring together the experience of the national level and the concrete eye of the local level to find productive results, without spending time in competing between each other.

5.2 - MILAN

The municipality of Milan has been involved in migration and integration activities for a very long time and is the Italian city with the highest number of non-EU citizens legally residing. 12% of migrants present in Italy reside in Milan, and the proportion of migrants among the total number of residents is 11.8%, while in Italy the rate is 5.9% (ISTAT on data at 31.12.2017)
Milan has attracted migrants for over 50 years, as it was one of the first cities in the 1970s to be considered attractive for immigration especially by people from Egypt (almost 15% of migrants), followed by Philippines, China, and Peru. Due to its technological and financial advance concerning the rest of Italian cities, Milan is considered in every respect a global city: it fulfills Sassen’s definition of a ‘strategic site’ and can be considered a key location for the economy, production, and innovation. Moreover, Milan appears very well-linked to the other big cities around the globe, like New York or Tokyo, but also in Europe is at the same level as the development of London, Paris or Amsterdam. These connections are formalized by the presence of Milan in several city networks among which for example C40⁶ and EUROCITIES (it is also one of the founders), and it is also a member of IntegratingCities, a partnership created in 2006 between EUROCITIES and the European Commission in order to create the best environment at the local level to implement integration policies.

Milan’s participation in city networks, especially regarding migration, decreased considerably in the 1990s when Lega Nord won the local elections and migration policies, experienced a substantial restriction. However, in the 2000s, when Letizia Moratti from Forza Italia⁷ was elected, Milan became a valuable player at the international level (Caponio, 2018) again. In that period, many efforts to collaborate at the European level had been promoted, such as the organization of the ‘Second Integrating Cities Conference’ or the creation of projects for social inclusion. The idea of Mayor Moratti to build a positive image of the city was strictly related to the intention to integrate migrants in order to place Milan at the international level. According to Caponio, ‘the style of managing the city’s international initiatives has evolved from the mayor’s relations to a more structured policy,’ and in this sense a division of tasks between different levels of government was fundamental. Accordingly, even with Pisapia (center-left party) as mayor in 2011, the International Relations department of the municipality of Milan had a central role in managing concrete activities and relating to city networks. In 2011 the municipality of Milan also assumed the Vice-Chair of the ‘Migration and Integration Working Group’ of EUROCITIES.

From the interview with Feyrouz Lajili-Djalai, indeed, Milan emerged as a city able to carry all other cities in Italy into the migration debate and also as a municipality that is always

---

⁶ C40 is a city network specialized in taking action against climate change.

⁷ Forza Italia is an Italian center-right political party based on ideas of liberalism and social market economy and inspired by Christian democracy.
willing to measure itself at international level with important actors to get better every time. 

Benchmarking is an important factor when talking about international relations for the municipality of Milan because, as Ambrosini suggested, ‘it did a long path to share international standards, but it still has to learn a lot from cities that started certain processes before it.’

With the new Mayor, Giuseppe Sala from the center-left party ‘Partito Democratico’8, the role of Milan increased considerably due to his commitment to the importance of cities at the international level and to the networks of cities (Sala, 2018).

Milan appears like an open and developed city, and consequently, in contrast with the ideology of the current national government. Especially on the issue of migration, Sala positioned himself in opposition to Salvini’s idea to close the borders and reduce the number of foreigners.

Sala believes that migration is a considerable resource for Italy in general and Milan in particular, but of course, it has to be handled well (Palazzo interview).

However, Sala did not take part in the campaign started by other cities against the national directives to close ports because he recognizes the authority of the nation-state and ‘the idea to enter in conflict with it does not bring any success or development for the cities’ (Ambrosini interview).

The administrative plan, though, is different from the message that the city wants to send to people and institutions: Milan is a city that wants to receive migrants and can handle the situation according to the European standards.

From the interview with Cosimo Palazzo emerged that the city operates on two macro-areas in which on the one hand there is a political confrontation with other cities to improve municipal services, and on the other, there is a direct collaboration in a global hub to build new services ex-Novo. Milan has more relevant interconnections with cities outside Italy since its level of development differs from the other Italian cities with whom it is also challenging to have a collaborative dialogue. For this reason, Sala himself proposed to start a project with 20 other cities in order to let them follow Milan’s path and improve their standards, becoming more responsible and strategic.

The Mayor decided not to challenge, politically speaking, the national directive since the migration issue is still inserted in the national discourse. Palazzo pointed out that the nation-state also filters funds from the European Union and this makes impossible to act

---

8 Partito Democratico (PD) is a centre-left party that is based on the idea to build and consolidate a reformist, pro-European, socialist, democratic and liberal plan for Italy.
against it: the city of Milan, however, decided to implement a form of tacit but productive disagreement, in which the city continues with its role of guaranteeing rights for migrants and trying to influence people’s idea of migration. What both Sala (2018) and Palazzo pointed out is that even when it is not possible to change and influence the national government, a city has the duty to take care of its citizens and find an alternative way to act legally: for this reason Milan decided to strengthen its international relations to have allies with whom it is possible to cooperate and find a concrete solution.

Following the path of the policies for integration implemented in the past, Milan is trying to improve its services in order to have a harmonious development of the relationship between migrants and native citizens, and the main interest is to make the city attractive to such migrants. One point raised by Palazzo is that Milan before the migration crisis under the mandate of Giuliano Pisapia (at that time from the ‘independent left’ wing), was considered a great destination by all those migrants that could have been a significant resource for the city - among which doctors, lawyers, and experts in every field - but at that point the city government denied hospitality because, according to him, Milan was already full. Today, the municipality of Milan and Mayor Sala are willing to avoid losing resources again, and for this reason, the city is in the front line to develop a solution to the problems that current migration can bring.

First of all, in 2016, a new integration plan was approved with particular attention to the periphery areas (IntegratingCities Report, 2018) and managing the problem of housing to avoid marginalization.

The problem of housing is related in particular to the migrants of the second generation who started to look for proper houses instead of reception structures, and it faces the weakness of social policies (Crosta, Mariotto, and Tosi, 2010). The settlement of families is translated into more requests of houses that, however, impact the relatively scarce supply: in big cities, there already exists an imbalance between supply and demands, and the opportunities for regular houses are limited for the population with a low-medium income. Consequently, Crosta, Mariotto, and Tosi (2010) suggest that migrants are relegated in specific areas of the city - mainly in the periphery - that they can afford, and this could result in an impediment for them to integrate into the life of the city.

Moreover, to facilitate integration Milan has started a campaign to ‘communicate their commitment to equal opportunities for all residents’ (IntegratingCities Report, 2018) and this also means migrants: Palazzo suggested indeed that one crucial role that the city can have is to have an impact on the idea that people have of migration through public events.
and the promotion of diversity, also creating a special department to help those citizens that are victim of discrimination.

In 2015, for example, it started a program called ‘Solidarity Cities’ with EUROCITIES, and on November 2018 it hosted the IntegratingCities conference to discuss different topics among which the importance of mobility (Lajili-Djalai and Palazzo interviews).

Palazzo outlined that one important project going on at the moment is the implementation of mechanisms that allow irregular citizens that do not have documents to be redistributed: in a significant number of cases, migrants arrive in Italy to cross the border and arrive in northern countries, and if they are stopped in Italy without documents they cannot reach their destination. For this reason, a hub for north Europe has been proposed, in order to start the legal procedures for placements directly between cities.

The commitment of the city of Milan is, then, to use migration as a resource and to work on the city to better off its services for inclusion, avoiding ‘useless challenges to the national government’ (Palazzo interviews) but trying to serve as an example for other Italian cities.

5.3 - PALERMO

The city of Palermo appeared on the scene of the migration debate recently since its Mayor Leoluca Orlando from Partito Democratico openly challenged Minister Salvini for the decision to reduce migrants, close the ports and decrease the number of permissions for asylum seekers.

Orlando is the mayor of Palermo from 1993, he passed through 5 mandates (not consecutive) and he won the fifth row of elections in 2012 with a coalition of centre-left parties and not specifically with Partito Democratico, that joined only in 2018.

His statement was powerful and raised many reactions, both positive and negative, from the national level and other cities: some of them, for example Naples, took its side while other severely criticized such statement remaining neutral regarding the state.

In the first statement, Orlando gave orders to local offices to not apply the new norms because, according to him, they are against human rights and because it is the sign of a ‘cultural and political regression’ (Brunetto, 2019, April 18th from https://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2019/04/18/news/palermo_il_sindaco_orlando_contro_la_direttiva_di_salvini_pronto_a_ricorrere_al_tar_e_alla_corte_dell_aja_-224347212/). After Salvini’s response, which assigned more power to the prefectures, Orlando said that if the prefecture of Palermo would have implemented
this directive, he would directly appeal to the Regional Administrative Court and the International Court of Justice to nullify such a provision. The discussion is still going on, and Orlando put himself in the front line to make sure that Salvini withdraws the law.

Palermo is a city deeply linked to migration since most of the arrivals in Italy arrive through Sicily, and for this reason, Orlando’s speech had great resonance. The city is in 11th place among Italian cities for non-EU citizens with a number of foreign residents equal to 2.2% of the total number of residents, who come mainly from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Ghana (ISTAT on data at 31.12.2017).

However, Palermo is a place of transition more than a destination of settlement, and this is indicated by the fact that only 46.3% of migrants become long-term residents, and minors are definitely below the national standard (only 20% under 18) (ISTAT on data at 31.12.2017).

The city indeed is an everyday reality of southern Italy, with many problems related to the labor market, unemployment, social services, and corruption. Besides, the problem of Mafia has always been central in Sicilian history, and it was repeatedly linked to politics and also to the issue of migration, with exploitation, illegal arrivals and unregulated work (Mete, 2011).

Mafia in Italy had always had a significant role when talking about migration, especially in the South since it saw in traffics a good opportunity to have a cheaper workforce to exploit for illegal operations, as well as drug dealing, counterfeit goods and prostitution (Manti, 2014, August 14th from http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/soccorriamoli-mare-e-rimandiamoli-casa-cos-fa-leuropa-1044625.html). Organized criminals from Mafia have close relationships with criminals in the countries of origin with whom they organize the arrivals of new migrants: these people organize the trip collecting money, and Mafia let people without documents enter Italy - usually through corruption of police at the borders -, promising them jobs and useful services as houses and healthcare, but when they arrive they employ migrants in undocumented jobs and make them live in terrible conditions of poverty overcrowding (Manti, 2014, August 14th from http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/soccorriamoli-mare-e-rimandiamoli-casa-cos-fa-leuropa-1044625.html)

Orlando was fundamental in this context with his challenge to the Mafia through the battle for legality - the so-called ‘Palermo Spring’ started in 1985 and finished in 1990 - in which he suggested cultural and educational policies, and in a lesser degree also policies for economic development (Barber, 2013).
However, the city is not ready to welcome migrants since it lacks primary assistance facilities and efficient services for integration (Caponio, 2018). However, according to Lajili-Djalai, Palermo is doing its best to reach European standards. Palermo indeed entered EUROCITIES in 2018, and it appears motivated to copy other cities, among which Milan, and to implement plans at the municipal level.

The city and its Mayor Orlando have been cited by Barber (2013) as an example of international development and cooperation: especially regarding the problem of corruption in every sector, Orlando ‘gave Palermo a chance to liberate itself from a pernicious century-old dependency’ (Barber, 2013).

The initial efforts of Orlando have been rooted in Sicily and Palermo in particular to increase the ‘self-esteem of the city’ (Press: IlPost, 2017), and the integration of migrants is part of that plan.

In its project for foreign communities, called ‘The Cultural Council’ (‘Consulta Delle Culture’), which started in 2013, Orlando points out that he wants to implement local policies without differentiating between native and foreign citizens. Moreover, in 2015 the ‘Palermo Charter’ (‘Carta di Palermo’) was created to promote the theme of international human mobility and start the process to abolish resident permits, and according to Orlando, it represents the multicultural vocation of the city.

In this Charter, the main points are, beyond the abolition of permits, the importance of a collaboration with the European Union considered as an extraordinary example of willingness to live together, and consequently the necessity to eliminate the concepts of security and danger from the one of migration.

In the interview with Sacco, he suggested that it should be essential to change norms and organizational models, avoiding to consider migrants as a threat and to use the ‘alibi of security’ to cover racism, tortures and personal beliefs.

In the Charter is it underlined several times how cities should react against the adverse reactions deriving from a misconception of migration and how they should implement policies in collaboration with institutional organisms in favor of fair treatment, democratic participation and differentia of tasks (Carta di Palermo, 2015).

Among other things, the topic of the changing European norms is considered, since it is important to guarantee the missions of rescue for migrants in the sea. According to the charter, it is necessary to reciprocally recognize the decisions that stabilize the right to international protection, eliminating the duty of such procedures for the country in which migrants arrive.
This theme has been considered again by Orlando more recently in the dispute with Salvini on the issue of arrivals, which, according to him, should be handled by the city. Closure of borders and ports, in his view, is only a way to deny human rights: for this reason, he decided to ‘disobey’ the national orders and accept migrants.

However, as has been pointed out by Palazzo, Ambrosini and various news media, the challenge of Orlando is not in line with his real action, as since he made that statement, he has never opened his port to arriving migrants.

According to the journalist Sottile (2019), Orlando wanted to challenge a ‘big enemy’ to cover up the evident degradation resulting from the problem of garbage in the street or the high criminality in specific neighborhoods. According to his opponents, the admittance of migrants that he suggests is ‘without proportions and rules and will finish helping smugglers to increase illegal trafficking’ (Sottile, 2019, January 4th from https://www.ilfoglio.it/la-linea-sottile/2019/01/04/news/il-ritorno-di-orlando-che-per-nascondere-i-quai-aveva-bisogno-di-un-gran-nemico-231415/).

Moreover, Palazzo and various journalists identify Orlando’s struggle more as a political challenge than a humanitarian one, in which migrants are used mainly to reach consensus against a different political party (Palazzo interview), while Ambrosini argues this struggle is ‘ideological and rhetorical more than concrete’ (Ambrosini interview).

The idea to open ports by the city of Palermo, followed by the city of Naples, did not result in any concrete action because it is illegal to go against a national directive, and the Mayor is ‘not guided by such humanitarian spirits’ (Ambrosini interview), as was instead the case of the Mayor of Riace (Calabria) Domenico Lucano who opened his ports to migrants for real in 2017.

In the case of Riace, mayor Lucano developed a so-called ‘Riace Model,’ a method to manage the acceptance of migrants consisting of integrating them in everyday life of the city. He used houses no longer inhabited instead of acceptance facilities, and he created centers to allow migrants to learn a new job with the money received from the state inviting migrants to remain there even after. However, Lucano was accused of promoting illicit staying in the Italian territories avoiding the national law (‘Come Funziona il Modello Riace […]’, 2018, October 2nd from http://www.today.it/politica/mimmo-lucano-modello-riace.html).

Sacco said that Orlando and Palermo are not willing to run into legal problems, as Riace did, because they recognize the authority of the state, but this challenge is important to try to change the distribution of power in order to be able to implement their own rules in
the future. Regarding the necessity to improve Municipal services, Sacco suggests that Palermo still has many problems but that it is an extreme improvement concerning a few years ago, and it can continue to grow if European Union institutions and other cities will collaborate with it.

5.4 - COMPARISON

What emerges from the analysis of two different cities is that, first of all, the importance of national authority cannot be bypassed. In both cases of Milan and Palermo, as well as for the other Italian cities, it is impossible to change in any way or legally disobey the decision was taken at the national level, as cities do not have any jurisdiction over the issue of the entrance of migrants. A certain degree of autonomy instead is visible when talking about integration policies: cities can decide how to implement them and promote an increase in the initiatives that can help the process.

Both cities in the analysis, facing the problem of integration, decided to start influencing the idea that native citizens have of migration: many events in favor of migrants have been promoted in the hope that people stop looking at it as a threat to security and a source of economic crisis.

Milan has a long history of migration and integration has always been an essential point for the municipal government, while Palermo, even if it was very exposed to arrivals, is a little behind since it historically faced other kinds of problems first, such as the fight against the Mafia and unemployment.

Nowadays, both cities are committed to the issue of migration and are very active at both national and international levels, taking part in transnational city networks and expressing their ideas against the national government. However, the two cities manage this issue very differently since the action of Palermo is directly challenging the national government while Milan expresses a sort of ‘tacit disagreement.’ The result is that while Palermo then takes no concrete actions, Milan is trying to apply its initiatives finding ways in which its operations are still legal.

It is noteworthy that both cities have mayors that share socialist ideologies, and consequently, it would be reasonable to expect that both would react in the same way against directives from a right-wing government. From the analysis instead emerged that it is impossible to consider the opposition to the national government only through the lens of party-political competition because Milan decided to remain neutral.
According to Ambrosini, this is mainly because some mayors express their own beliefs but do not consider the broader image of the city. What happens with Sala in Milan, indeed, is that the city presents itself as in line with the national directives, a sign of harmony and professionalism, but at the same time, he knows how to adapt at the European and international standard when he thinks that the national program is not sufficient.

The city of Milan, according to Palazzo, knows when and how to take action, but it always recognizes the critical role of a national government authority. What is possible for the city to do, however, is to try to influence people’s ideology in order to work for a change in the political policies of the future. To impose something that they can never obtain is a waste of time and creates a situation in which good policies cannot be implemented anymore (Ambrosini interview).

Moreover, the case of Riace is emblematic to explain that in Italy the disobedience to the nation-state is not possible because it only causes legal repercussions on the singular members of the municipality - in this case, the mayor Lucano. This happens because in Italy the state’s structure is unitary and singular sub-levels do not have actual powers to impose themselves; on the contrary, in the US for example, sanctuary cities are possible since the sub-national units handle many powers and there is a little margin of discretion in following the national directives.
6 - CONCLUSION

The main goal of this thesis was to analyze the role of cities in migration and integration policies, with a particular focus on the Italian case, as an extreme situation in which many cities disagree with the national government. The analysis of qualitative data from previous literature and reports by international organizations as EUROCITIES, together with the information from interviews with experts, showed how different cities face similar challenges but at the same time, they behave differently and reach distinct solutions to the problems of migration and integration policy. The previous literature was useful to delineate the topic of multilevel governance and to recap the policy history of Europe and Italy, but in the Italian case, the new government was elected only one year ago (the 1st June 2018), and there was an academic scarcity of studies that covered this period.

This study analyzed first the role of cities in the European Union regarding migration and integration and underlined the link between this issue and the impact that city networks can have on the implementation of national and European regulation. Secondly, the analysis focused on the case of Italy as a relatively new actor in immigration policy. Italy appears as an example in which cities are not entirely in line with national policy and directives on migration and for this reason, started to use city networks as an instrument to lobby the government in order to obtain higher power and influence.

The thesis shows, however, that the role that cities may have in migration policies is less influential than some scholars, notably Benjamin Barber, have argued. Supporters of cities in the multilevel governance debate, indeed, suggest that cities are the most efficient possibility to improve the system of management of migration and integration since they are directly involved on the ground and facing people in their everyday lives.

Moreover, many scholars as (Doomernik and Ardon, 2018 pag.92), see cities as the representative of reason and pragmatism, meaning that in many occasions cities offer all the city services of citizenship to migrants even if the law did not grant it. In cities, indeed, more often the local government relies on its decision of the ‘reality of presence and residence in a place’ (Doomernik and Ardon, 2018, pag. 93) in order to let migrants integrate into the community and benefit all its rights.

This study, however, showed that the tasks of cities are relegated only to certain aspects of the management of migration, in particular, handling migrants after their arrival through operations of identification, first aid, and integration, but they cannot intervene in issues of entrance and actual acceptance of asylum claims. Some Italian cities challenged the national government on the issue of port closure and acceptance of migrants, but the
literature analyzed pointed out how these acts of disobedience are low-value and almost useless when talking about changing the law. The importance that such behavior may have is that it can promote attitudes of openness and integration among native citizens, but, most of the time, they are not translated into concrete actions.

From the analysis of the two cases of disagreement with the national government by the cities of Milan and Palermo, it emerged that even if the mayors of both cities are entirely opposed to the new national directives, they decided to operate differently. While Milan did not challenge the national authority but continues to implement projects for integration and to improve services for migrants, Palermo openly challenged the new law but did not achieve concrete results and the battle resulted in ‘more political and rhetorical than ideological’ outcomes (Sottile, 2019, January 4th from https://www.ilfoglio.it/la-linea-sottile/2019/01/04/news/il-ritorno-di-orlando-che-per-nascondere-i-quai-aveva-bisogno-di-un-gran-nemico-231415/) Recalling the research questions, this thesis underlines that cities facing the same problems may take different actions based on the image that their mayors are willing to promote and on the history that such cities already had on migration and integration. Milan, indeed, continues to follow its idea of openness and hospitality but at the same time, it wants to present an image of collaboration between the local and the national level (Caponio, 2018). It emerged, instead, that the consequences for the disagreement between cities like Palermo and the national government are mainly about the media discourse. This, consequently, has a profound impact on the idea that people have of the national government, considered more than ever unable to handle the problem of migration but also to control the local governments beneath.

At the moment it seems that different cities take different policy and administrative measures because the majority of them appear as inexpert both in dealing with the issue of migration and in challenging the nation-state: it is not possible to intervene in legal matters and openly to challenge the government is not wise, and it is also a sign of lack of professionalism (Villa, 2018). However, the use of city networks proved fundamental for Italian cities in order to have some standards to compare with, as in the case of Milan. In this regard, this study is in line with the assumption that city networks have been created to find a whole dimension of the problem and implement problem-solving also in areas where cities have little experience. Moreover, city networks can help cities develop new strategies that can be useful in the future to address specific issues like that of migration, as in the case of Palermo.
It should be noticed then that, in general, one relevant point to understand the role that cities have regarding their nation-state might depend on the state’s structure and constitutional position: if certain cities around the world seem more influential is because they already have certain powers given by the national jurisdiction - as it happens in federal states -, while other cities' powers will remain limited by how their state is structured.

What cities can obtain reacting against the national directives still depends on the kind of state’s structure. In particular for the Italian case, it is still difficult that cities may obtain relevant resolutions over the nation-state but for sure they may start movements and projects to sensitize the local population to migration and work for a general improvement of the integration process.

Fighting between national and local governments seems not helpful to find a common ground in which operate: if the directives are not clear stated by the authority and shared at every level of jurisdiction, the risk is that the legal base for the operations becomes blurred and the resolutions cannot be applied, as in the case of many Italian cities that still have no power to let boats enter their ports.

A critical challenge for cities and city networks, more than changing national legislation, is to change the attitudes that citizens have about migration, since now more than ever, migrants arriving in Italy have to fight not only against restrictive state norms but also against a population that is often indifferent, if not openly wary towards them. If the nation-state does not act in this direction, cities should continue to develop projects aimed more at the inclusion of migrants into society, without criminalizing them. A challenge for cities for the future, then, is to avoid and filter the adverse effects of a policy that seeks to eliminate diversity in the name of national homogeneity, as well as the effects of policies that want to keep migrants and native citizens apart due to such diversity.


Sala, G. (2018). Milano e il secolo delle Città. La Nave di Teseo


REPORTS AND CHARTERS


ESPN Flash Report Italy - 2017/16

ESPON Policy Brief Migration - 2015


IntegratingCities Report October 2018 - 2018


Second Report of ‘Doctors Without Borders’ - 2018

RAM Milano 2018 (La presenza dei migranti nella città metropolitana di Milano) - 2018

RAM 2018 (The presence of migrants in metropolitan cities) - 2018

WEBSITE ARTICLES


