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Post-2014 migrants' access to housing,
employment and other crucial resources
in small- and medium-sized towns and rural
areas

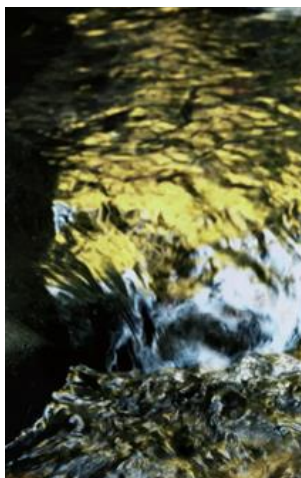
in Italy

Country Reports on integration



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FIERI



REPORT
<https://whole-comm.eu>





Abstract

This report looks at post-2014 migrants' access to housing, employment, and other relevant resources in different small and medium-sized towns and rural areas Italy. Primarily based on interviews conducted in each of the six selected municipalities, it provides an overview of 1) the concrete barriers that post-2014 migrants are facing in relation to housing and employment; 2) the local actors who are involved in, and/or seen as responsible for, facilitating their access; 3) any concrete local measures or practices that help or hinder this access; and 4) the specific target groups of these measures, initiatives or practices. The report finds that the market is the main driver of post-2014 migrants' housing and labour inclusion as well as exclusion, with the housing market displaying higher barriers than the labour market. Although local initiatives and networks are more developed in progressive localities than in conservative ones, in both cases they appear unable to actually counteract market limitations. At the same time, traditional demand-supply dynamics appear undermined by ethnic discrimination that emerges as the main challenge for post-2014 migrants, the large majority of which come from Africa and South Asia. Against this backdrop, informal contacts play a crucial role: ethnic networks appear as the main channel to find jobs and accommodation; post-2014 migrants' networks with natives are much smaller than those with co-nationals but particularly fruitful, since they tend to convey better housing and working conditions. Individual initiatives of support appear more systematic and interconnected in progressive localities than in conservative sites. Similarly, the engagement of NGOs in service provision and advocacy is higher in progressive localities so that NGOs, instead of compensating the conservative local authorities' lack of initiatives, tend to reinforce the activism of pro-migrant municipalities. As a result, initiatives to facilitate post-2014 migrants' access to housing and employment are distributed according to local actors' activism rather than to migrants' needs. This is largely explained by the weak Italian welfare policies, the local authorities' poor competences and/or resources in the fields of housing and employment, and the local initiatives' dependence on calls for projects issued by the central government.



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1. Introduction

Whole-COMM focuses on small and medium sized municipalities and rural areas (SMsTRA) in eight European and two non-European countries that have experienced and dealt with the increased arrival and settlement of migrants after 2014. More particularly, the research project explores how these communities have responded to the presence of “post-2014 migrants”¹, that is, which policies have been developed and implemented and how these policies shape and enable migrant integration. Taking an innovative Whole-of-Community research approach which conceives of migrant integration as a process of community-making, Whole-COMM pays particular attention to the interactions between multiple actors involved in local integration governance (for example, individuals, public and non-public organizations, institutions and/or corporate entities). Moreover, the project looks at the embeddedness of local actors in multilevel frameworks in which regional, national and EU policies and stakeholders may play a decisive role in shaping local integration policymaking, considering both potential collaborations as well as tensions between actors at different government levels.

Work Package Four (WP4) focuses on local policies, initiatives, and practices addressing post-2014 immigrants’ access to housing, employment and other crucial resources or services.

Following the Whole-comm approach, we assume that the multiple actors involved in integration and community-making processes may have different interests, strategies, resources, and power positions; and that mutual adjustment (between newcomers and long-term residents) and social cohesion do not necessarily represent the only/overall rationale guiding their various efforts; instead, the interplay between different actors (and their various interests and rationales) may also lead to exclusion and inequality. This interplay and the resulting measures can thus be analysed in terms of what Collyer, Hinger and Schweitzer call the ‘politics of’, or ‘negotiation around’, ‘(dis)integration’². As these authors point out, integration/disintegration or cohesion/fragmentation should not be understood as simple binary categorisations but as processes that are intertwined and often coexist within and across policies and everyday practices.

By looking at how a wide range of actors (private actors, civil society actors and street level bureaucrats) foster but sometimes also hinder migrants’ access to adequate housing, work

¹ The group of migrants that arrived in (Western) Europe after 2014 is very heterogeneous, “but mostly comprises migrants that left from areas of political and humanitarian crises” (Working Paper 1 2021, 1-2). The majority of ‘post-2014 migrants’ entered thus as asylum-seekers but may have obtained different legal statuses by now (see for more detail Working Paper 1 for the Whole-COMM project).

² Collyer M., Hinger S., Schweitzer R. (2020) Politics of (Dis)Integration – An Introduction. In: Hinger S., Schweitzer R. (eds) Politics of (Dis)Integration. IMISCOE Research Series. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25089-8_1



and other crucial resources or services, we hope to better understand (and be able to compare) these local politics of (dis)integration across different local and national contexts.

The choice of focusing on housing and employment follows two main rationales. First, they are key resources for granting fundamental rights and sustainable integration. Second, they are not exclusively dependent on local administrations but involve a diverse range of actors, thus allowing us to fully apply the whole-of-community approach. Housing is (partly or, in some cases, almost completely) in the hands of private actors, from big owners (including banks and international investment funds) to small ones. Work depends on employers, which again are very diverse ranging from big to small (including family) employers, from private to public employers and across different economic sectors. In both cases, between migrants and these private actors, we find a broad range of intermediaries (CSOs, trade unions, real estate agencies, civil society organisations, social networks, etc) and a diverse (and sometimes even contradictory) set of policies and programmes (at the national, regional, and local levels).

To assess the role (and understand the interplay) of the different actors in relation to migrants' access to housing, work, and other services and resources, WP4 identifies and analyses:

- major **obstacles/challenges** that are reported to exist in each locality for post-2014 migrants, particularly focussing on those that are perceived as being particular to each locality;
- the **actors** (public, private, and civil society) involved, and their concrete role (e.g., as initiator, promoter, implementer, critic, etc. of a concrete policy, initiative, or practice);
- concrete **local policies, initiatives, and practices** that intend/help to overcome these obstacles;
- the **target groups of local policies, initiatives, or practices**: who is entitled to particular services and how is this entitlement justified³. This question will allow us to delve into the main deservingness frames regarding migrants' access to housing, employment and other key resources and services.

1.1. Methodology

The research conducted in Italy regarded six case studies. As illustrated in Table 1, the selection followed the Whole-COMM variables for case selection and, in particular, the size of the municipalities, local politics, identified with the parties in local government, and the Whole-COMM typology. The latter is used to distinguish between left-behind, marginal, in transition, and revitalising localities, based on structural conditions, namely variations in

³ When explaining who is the target of a specific policy or practice, also those who are excluded (e.g., because they are covered by other policies or because they are simply left out or perceived as less vulnerable) are automatically identified (whether implicit or explicitly).

unemployment/income and population numbers between 2005 and 2014, and experience with cultural diversity. i.e. the share of foreign residents in 2005.

In addition, the case selection reflects the main territorial cleavage in Italy, with three localities in the Northern region of Piedmont, namely Novara, Cuneo, and Avigliana, and three cases selected in the Southern region of Sicily, namely Siracusa, Caltagirone, and Acate.

Table 1 - Variables for case selection

Population size	Medium town: 100,000 – 250.000 Small town: 50,000 – 100,000 Rural area: 5,000 - 50,000 and low population density
Presence of a reception centre	Time period: 2014-2017
Number of currently residing migrants	Time period: arrived after 2014
Share of Foreign Residents	Time period: in 2005 (SF2005)
Average income (VARAI)	Time period: 2005 and 2014 (VARAI)
Variation of number of inhabitants	Time period: 2005-2014 (VARNI)
Regional variation	For example: East / West or North / South, choosing localities from different regions
Local politics	Parties in government and local political tradition, choosing localities with different political traditions (conservative / progressive)

The table below illustrates the situations of our case studies with regard to the above-mentioned key variables. Given the very different demographic and socio-economic situation of Northern and Southern Italy, to select the localities in the relative regions we have considered the VARAI's, VARNI's and SF' average values of Northern and Southern Italy rather than the national ones.

Table 1b - Classification of target case studies

		STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS Key variables: VARUN and VARNI	
		+	-
		VARAI > Southern or Northern Italy's average VARNI > Southern or Northern Italy's average	VARAI < Southern or Northern Italy's average VARNI < Southern or Northern Italy's average.
EXPERIENCE WITH CULTURAL DIVERSITY Key variable: SF2005	+	Cuneo	Novara, Acate
	-	Avigliana	Siracusa, Caltagirone
	No established foreign residents in 2005 or SF2005 significantly lower than Southern or Northern Italy's average		

The findings of this report are based on extensive desk-based document analysis, qualitative interviews, and an online survey. We have conducted 89 interviews in person and online (listed in the Appendix) between November 2021 and February 2022 in the target localities. Specifically, they involved mayors and members of local governments, local officials from the municipalities, NGOs, pro-migrant groups, anti-migrants groups, members of the opposition in the local councils, experts, private and public service providers, employers and employers' organisations, real estate companies or unions, trade unions. The same stakeholders completed the online survey.

The qualitative research was also complemented by interviews with 4 regional officials in Piedmont and Sicily, and 2 national stakeholders.

2. Context & cases

2.1. General information on the relevant national and regional contexts

The framework law on immigration, i.e. Law 40/1998 (called *Legge Turco-Napolitano*), **grants regular migrants with welfare rights equal to Italian citizens**, and the provision of education and basic health services also to irregular migrants⁴. Yet, **a turf of further minor and unsystematic regulations that have followed in the 2000s have undermined this equality principle** by requiring a certain length of residence in the country to access certain welfare benefits.

The most relevant exception to the equality principle concerns the **Citizenship Income** (*Reddito di cittadinanza*), a universal basic income for poor and unemployed individuals that was introduced in 2019, replacing the previous and smaller-size Inclusion Income (*Reddito di Inclusione*). **Foreign residents are eligible for this new benefit only after 10 years of legal residence in Italy**, namely the same period required for naturalisation⁵. In contrast, little conditionality characterises the **Emergency Income**, an exceptional cash benefit given to people in distress during the peak of the pandemic (Decree Laws 34/2020 and 137/2020)⁶. As a result, foreigners represented a high share (23-25%) of beneficiaries. Indeed, the poverty rate among foreigners is extremely high: in 2021, in Italy, the absolute poverty rate was 30.6% among households with only foreign members.⁷

Consistently with the Mediterranean ‘familistic’ welfare model, **Italian welfare policies, including those in the fields of housing and employment, are rather weak** so that they hardly counterbalance the segregating effects of the market.

Before illustrating the policies in detail, it is important to clarify the **composition of our target population, i.e. post-2014 migrants and their relevance in terms of policies**. In Italy, unplanned inflows which occurred between 2014 and 2017, that are the Whole-COMM project’s focus, were made up of people who either passed through to reach other European countries or claimed asylum in Italy (asylum application grew especially after the end of 2015

⁴ In 2002, a new law on immigration was passed by parliament (the “Bossi-Fini Law”, no. 189/2002), which however affect immigration policies (mainly by introducing a link between job contract and residence permit, so that immigrants willing to enter Italy had to obtain a job offer before leaving their country) rather than integration measures and the relative division of competences.

⁵ See “A new Italian universal basic income, not so universal after all”, 13th February 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/new-italian-universal-basic-income-not-so-universal-after-all_en

⁶ Direzione Generale dell’Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione (2021), *Gli stranieri nel mercato del lavoro in Italia. XI Rapporto annuale*, Roma, <https://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/AnteprimaPDF.aspx?id=2877>

⁷ https://www.istat.it/it/files/2022/03/STAT_TODAY_POVERTA-ASSOLUTA_2021.pdf



when the hotspot approach started to be implemented⁸). People entering Italy on an irregular basis and never claiming asylum constituted an extremely small portion of unplanned arrivals. Yet, with the passing of time, those who claimed asylum ended up to display different legal status (the national protection named “permit for humanitarian reasons”, that was the more frequent protection given to asylum seekers till the adoption of the Immigration and Security Decree in 2018, could be converted into a family, study or work permit so that many of its former holders have eventually obtained a work permit). Moreover, a substantial part of asylum seekers saw his/her claim rejected (with the adoption of the Immigration and Security Decree in 2018 the rate of rejection passed from 60% rd to 80% rd⁹).

Against this backdrop, post-2014 migrants represent a rather diverse population and constitute an analytical category that does not make much sense for interviewees. Indeed, interventions are generally organised by beneficiaries’ legal status (eg. asylum seekers, beneficiaries of international protections, etc) or specific vulnerabilities (eg. UAMs, victims of human trafficking, homeless, seasonal agricultural workers, etc). Hence, local stakeholders approach integration through these categories rather than through the post-2014 migrant category.

A clear case in point is that of **unaccompanied minors (UAMs)** that in Italy enjoy a rather good protection. In particular, **Law 47/2017 on the protection of unaccompanied minors** is considered as a rather advanced piece of legislation, which follows several recommendations stemming, inter alia, from the European Commission. This Law has established the system of **voluntary guardianship for unaccompanied minors** and **allows** local authorities (i.e. municipal social services) to ask the Court to **prolong the protection foreseen for minors** (e.g. reception, integration measures including employment support) **till 21 years old** (in this report those individuals are named **former UAMs or young adults**).

2.1.1. Reception and housing

Although **refugee reception** does not belong to housing policies, its functioning is crucial to understand post-2014 migrants’ housing trajectories after they leave reception facilities.

The Italian reception system is **de facto two-pronged** (Semprebon and Pelacani, 2019; Marchetti 2020; Ponzo, Giannetto and Roman 2022), i.e. it is made up of **SAI facilities**

⁸ Ponzo, I., Giannetto, L. and E. Roman, The variance in multilevel governance of asylum seekers’ reception in Italy: The key roles of policy legacy, politics and civil society, in T. Caponio and I. Ponzo (eds), *Coping with Migrant and Refugees*, Routledge, 2022

⁹ Ponzo, I., I costi sociali nascosti dietro il pugno duro sull’immigrazione, Neodemos, 11, giugno 2019, <https://www.neodemos.info/2019/06/11/i-costi-sociali-nascosti-nel-pugno-duro-sullimmigrazione/>



established by the municipalities, on one hand, and **governmental reception facilities** set up by the prefectures, on the other hand.

SAI facilities are set up on a voluntary basis by local authorities that apply in response to the calls for projects issued by the Ministry of the Interior, which covers the largest share of the costs. Reception facilities, usually managed by local NGOs that participate in local authorities' public bids, are generally articulated in apartment-based solutions; they include integration measures (legal support, socio-cultural mediation, language learning, support to access services and seeking jobs and housing solutions with the possibility to use part of the funds to contribute to rent payment for a short period) and are highly regulated and monitored. Despite being largely acknowledged as a good practice, SAI has always suffered from the limited number of places available. In cases where no place is available in SAI facilities, accommodation should be provided in governmental reception facilities depending on the Ministry of the Interior¹⁰.

Within this legislative framework, **since 2014**, when a sudden increase of mixed inflows was registered, the need for **governmental facilities multiplied**. Hence, the government adopted a National Plan for the relocation of asylum seekers which **entitled the Prefectures to set up governmental reception facilities, called CAS** (Extraordinary Reception Centres), **and outsource their management to public, non-profit and for-profit organisations**. Regrettably, the **quality of services provided by CAS was extremely heterogeneous**: CAS projects went from SAI-like solutions to large-size isolated centres run by for-profit subjects and with no integration services, at least until 2017¹¹ (Commissione Parlamentare d'inchiesta 2017; Corte dei Conti 2018). Despite those limits, CAS soon made up for the large majority of reception facilities overtaking SAI.

Asylum seekers and refugees¹² had been assigned to SAI or CAS facilities according to the available places, with specific support granted to vulnerable people in both types of facilities in collaboration with local Healthcare Units¹³. Reception was reformed by the so-called **Decree on Security and Migration** (Legislative Decree 113/2018 adopted on 5 October 2018 and converted into Law 132/2018) **adopted in 2018** by the government coalition of the Five Stars

¹⁰ Legislative Decree 140/2005 which transposed the EU Reception Directive (2003/9/CE)

¹¹ In 2017, the Ministry of the Interior adopted a new bid scheme for governmental centres according to which CAS should provide reception and integration services similar to those offered in SPRAR facilities, with the exception of legal assistance to prepare for the interview, vocational training and support for job seeking and housing seeking (Ministerial Decree, 7 March 2017)

¹² In this report, we use the term "asylum seekers" for those that are still in the asylum procedure, and "refugees" for those who have obtained either an international or a national form of protection. "Beneficiaries of international protection" is a sub-category of refugees that do not include those who receive national forms of protection (eg. humanitarian protection, special cases, etc)

¹³ Vulnerable people are: minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled and elderly people, pregnant women, single parents, trafficked people, people with severe illness including mental illness, victims of torture, rape or severe violence, both physical or psychological, victims of genital mutilations

Movement and the League, with Matteo Salvini as the Ministry of Interior. This Decree neatly **distinguished between reception services for asylum seekers and for beneficiaries of international protection**: the first ones should be accommodated in CAS and the second ones in SAI centres for a maximum of 6 months, renewable once in case of necessity¹⁴. Moreover, **the government¹⁵ suppressed integration services and drastically reduced the per capita daily expenditure limit in CAS**. Finally, it narrows the conditions to obtain a residence permit based on humanitarian grounds (so-called “humanitarian protection”) and excludes its holders from reception services.

In the summer of 2019, a new coalition government was formed, in which the League was replaced by the centre-left Democratic Party. In **October 2020, the new government** repealed some of the most restrictive provisions promoted by Matteo Salvini and **brought back the possibility for asylum seekers to access SAI, although enjoying a lower amount of integration services compared to beneficiaries of protection**. Indeed, since then SAI provides for **two levels of reception**: the first level, concerning applicants for international protection, includes material reception services, as well as healthcare, social and psychological assistance, linguistic-cultural mediation services, Italian language courses and territorial orientation services; the second level, targeting individuals who obtain some form of protection, includes also work orientation and vocational training. The maximum stay in SAI has remained of 6 months, renewable once till one years (or longer in special situations).

Besides reception, in Italy **public housing policies** mainly consist of social housing, the National Funds to support the payment of rent (*Fondo nazionale per il sostegno al pagamento dei canoni di locazione*) established by Law 431/1998, and Fund for tenants in arrears (*Fondo inquilini morosi incolpevoli*), established by the Legislative Decree 102/2013.

The **social housing stock** is owned and managed by Regions’ housing agencies (i.e. the former IACP, *Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari*), Municipalities, or housing cooperatives. Yet, its size is negligible. According to OECD, in Italy social rental housing stock constitutes around 4% of the total dwellings in 2020 while, if we look at housing tenure (OECD)¹⁶. **The access to public housing is regulated by the Italian Regions**. In regional laws, the most widespread form of hidden discrimination is **the requirement of several years of residence in the region** to apply for public housing, a requirement that is more difficult to meet for migrants than for natives. Yet, the sentence of the Constitutional Court no 44/2020 has successfully suppressed this

¹⁴ Actually, the prioritisation of beneficiaries of international protection over asylum seekers in accessing SAI facilities was already decided by the Ministry of Interior in 2016 (*Circolare* of the Ministry of Interior, 5 May 2016) but at that time this was regarded as a second best since the main goal was to reduce the two-pronged reception system to a single system, namely the SAI.

¹⁵ Decree of the Ministry of Interior, 21 November 2018.

¹⁶ OECD, Our data on housing, <https://www.oecd.org/housing/data/affordable-housing-database/housing-policies.htm>; see also <https://www.housingeurope.eu/resource-111/social-housing-in-europe>



condition, when the length of required stay is unreasonably long¹⁷. The current regional law in Piedmont (Regional Law 3/2020) requires that applicants reside or work in the municipalities issuing the calls for at least 3 years while in Sicily there are no such kind of requirements (Regional Law 1/1992). In any case, **the supply of available social housing in Italy is far below the demand so that post-2014 migrants hardly access social housing**. Apart from social housing, housing is a municipal responsibility that, where municipalities are small, can be shifted to consortia managing social services on behalf of Municipalities¹⁸. However, local authorities have the duty to intervene to provide accommodation only in case of vulnerable people, mainly minors.

The two above mentioned **Funds are channelled from the central government to families through the Municipalities**. Their main limits are that **the amount is low and swinging**, given that the money given to the individuals facing difficulties in paying the rent depends on the annual amount of funding and the number of applicants. A clear instance of these dynamics is that the budget devoted to the National Fund to support the payment of rent was zero in 2016, 2017 and 2018¹⁹. Moreover, the access to this same Fund had been explicitly discriminatory until recently: Law 133/2008 introduced the requirement of a length of stay in the country for 10 years or in the region for 5 years for the TCNs. However, this requirement was suppressed by the Constitutional Court in 2018 because of its explicit discriminatory intention.

Against those poor housing policies, **housing conditions are mainly driven by the market**. In Italy, the market is extremely fragmented and difficult to steer since landlords are generally private families rather than companies. Moreover, **Italian legislation on rental contracts is very rigid and mainly aimed at protecting tenants rather than landlords**. For instance, the minimum duration of contracts is long (3+2 years or 4+4 years), and temporary contracts can be signed only at certain conditions (eg. with tenants not residing in the municipality) and cannot be renewed. In case of arrears, it takes a long time before the landlord can get back the apartment and, in the meanwhile, he/she has to pay the apartment building's expenses. And during downturns, such as the economic crisis triggered by the pandemic, the government generally blocks evictions leaving all the costs of the arrears on the landlords' shoulders. As a consequence, many landlords ask tenants for very high economic guarantees and prefer to leave their apartments empty rather than facing the risk of having tenants in arrears.

¹⁷ See the comment by ASGI (National Association of Juridical Studies): <https://www.asgi.it/discriminazioni/incostituzionale-il-requisito-di-almeno-5-anni-di-residenza-o-di-attivita-lavorativa-per-accedere-agli-alloggi-pubblici/>

¹⁸ In Italy, smaller Municipalities pool the resources for social services into consortia controlled by the Municipalities themselves and managing social services.

¹⁹ <https://www.fondielfare.it/fondo-sostegno-locazioni/>



As a result, **housing conditions are poor, especially for those living in rented housing**. The overcrowding rate in Italy is relatively high (19%) compared to other OECD countries (11%). Despite being lower than the OECD average, the housing cost overburden (for low income tenants) is high in Italy, since 32% of low-income tenants spend more than 40% of income in rent²⁰ - and, as the above-mentioned data on poverty rate demonstrate, migrants are mainly low-income tenants. On the other hand, **residential segregation** in Italy is generally fairly low, as in all Southern European countries, because of the mixed housing stocks that turns into a certain social mix of dwellers²¹.

Housing and employment are strictly related since more spending on housing allowances typically facilitates residential mobility, which is often a condition for labour mobility. When changing apartments is challenging, people might decide to face unemployment instead of moving towards the areas where job opportunities are higher. On the other hand, those whose social networks are too weak to provide support in times of hardship and have no other choice than moving to seek jobs, could end up accepting poor housing conditions, as it happens to many migrants.

2.1.2. Employment

Regular migrants do not face particular legal obstacles in accessing the labour market, except for public employment that is allowed only for long-term residents and beneficiaries of international protection (Law 97/2013 transposing the EU legislation after the infringement procedure 2013/4009). **Asylum seekers can work after 60 days from the day they fill in the asylum application**, with no specific restrictions compared to the rest of foreigners (Legislative Decree 142/2015).

SAI has always offered the following services that, since October 2020, are however accessible only to holders of international or national protection and not to asylum seekers:

- orientation to the labour market;
- orientation toward vocational training;
- matching of labour supply and demand;
- activation and monitoring of internships in local enterprises.

Yet, migrants' inclusion into the labour market is hampered by several administrative obstacles such as **the backlogs in permits renewals** (foreigners are allowed to work during the renewal period but employers may be afraid that the permit will not be renewed and could

²⁰ OECD (2021), Housing sector, Country Snapshot: Italy, <https://housingpolicytoolkit.oecd.org/www/CountryFiches/housing-policy-Italy.pdf>

²¹ S. Arbaci, Ethnic Segregation, Housing Systems and Welfare Regimes in Europe, European Journal of Housing Policy, 2007, Vol. 7, No. 4, 401–433.



be discouraged to hire them), **complex procedures for the recognition of educational qualifications**, and **poor language courses**, generally provided by the Provincial Centres for Adult Education (CPIA – *Centri Provinciali per l’Istruzione degli Adulti*), which depend on the Ministry of Education. Indeed, the flexibility of those courses is limited (eg. long duration, impossibility to organise courses by workplaces, etc.) and the venues are few so that newcomers, especially when leaving outside towns and having long working days, face difficulties in attending lessons. Reception projects have the duty to provide language learning to asylum seekers and refugees hosted there, in collaboration with CPIAs or independently, but the hours per week are few and the opportunities to practise the language are generally poor.

Although structural employment policies are rather weak, in the last years the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies has promoted several projects financed with EU funds such as AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) and European Structural and Investment Funds (gathered in the national PON programmes) to foster asylum seeker and migrant integration into the labour market by supporting their employability and providing internship opportunities (es. the projects INSIDE and its follow-up PUOI for adults and the project PERCORSI for unaccompanied minors till 23 years old²²).

Moreover, special efforts have been made **to contrast exploitation in agriculture**, where the main measures have been the following:

- Law No. 199 of 2016 on “Provisions on combating the phenomena of undeclared work and labour exploitation in agriculture,” which is aimed at tackling the gangmaster system²³ and introducing new forms of support for seasonal workers;
- the Three-year plan to Combat Labour Exploitation in Agriculture and the Gangmaster System 2020-2022, which set the guidelines for the development of a national strategy against labour exploitation;
- the National Guidelines on the identification, protection, and assistance of victims of labour exploitation in agriculture, approved in October 2021 as part of the above-mentioned Three-Year Plan.

²² The collaboration between different Ministries, Save the Children, UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM led to the adoption in April 2017 of the Law 47/2017 on the protection of unaccompanied minors. This is considered as a rather advanced piece of legislation, which follows several recommendations stemming, inter alia, from the European Commission. Importantly, the same law also established the system of voluntary guardianship for unaccompanied minors.

²³ The term gangmaster has been traditionally used to describe the self-appointed manager who took charge of a gang of workers. The gangmaster negotiated directly with the farmer over payment for the work required. His profits were usually made by taking a share of workers’ wages.

Against this backdrop, **the Italian labour market is highly segregated with foreigners concentrated in the lower segments**. The share of foreign workers is particularly high in domestic and care work, hospitality, logistics, construction and agriculture. Despite the high dependence of those sectors on migrant labour, the annual entry quotas for labour migrants have remained small-sized after the Great Recession. This has been feasible not only as a consequence of the shrinking labour demand but also because **family migrants, intra-EU mobile citizens and refugees, including post-2014 migrants, have been playing as functional alternatives to labour immigration**²⁴.

Migrants' disadvantaged position in the labour market has worsened during the pandemic. The data of the Labour Force Survey show that, between December 2019 and June 2020, the employment rate among migrants fell by 10.0 percentage points against 2.1 points for Italians. The decline of the employment rate has mainly turned into a higher growth of the inactivity rate (i.e. the proportion of the population that do not either work or seek jobs) that increased 24.2 percentage points for foreigners against 8.4 points for Italians in the same period²⁵. According to OECD, in Italy unemployment rate among immigrant workers in 2020 was 12.5%, i.e. 3.7 percentage point higher than that of natives²⁶.

2.1.3. The target regions: Piedmont and Sicily

Finally, the target Regions, i.e. Piedmont and Sicily, have promoted several initiatives, although mainly project-based, for the inclusion of migrants in the labour market whereas the interventions aimed at supporting migrants' accommodation are almost absent.

In Piedmont, the region has led several AMIF-funded projects aimed at supporting social workers' capacity building and migrants' access to the labour market. Among them, it is worth mentioning "PRIMA" (2018-2020) that was aimed at enhancing the capacity of public employment agencies to deal with TCNs and especially with beneficiaries of integrational protection (eg by providing employment agencies with case managers and intercultural mediator, offering innovating skill profiling tools, connecting reception projects and welfare

²⁴ Pastore, F. (2010). Managing migration through the crisis: evolving patterns in European policies on labour migration and mobility, Turin: FIERI; Salis, E. (2012). Labour migration governance in contemporary Europe: the case of Italy, Turin: FIERI.; Devitt, C. (2022), The admission of foreign workers to Italy: closing the "gap" with northern Europe, in Finotelli, C. and Ponzio I. (eds), Migration Control Logics And Strategies In Europe: A North-South Comparison, Springer, forthcoming

²⁵ Villosio, C. and F. Pastore (2022), *Italia: De-integrazione? Come e perché cresce l'esclusione socioeconomica nella popolazione immigrata*, in L. Prencipe and M. Sanfilippo (eds), *Migranti, Covid, Mercato del Lavoro 2020-2021: tra paura e speranza*, Rome, Centro Studi Emigrazione Roma, pp. 95-110.

²⁶ OECD (2021), *International Migration Outlook 2021*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/29f23e9d-en>.



services)²⁷. Moreover, many organisations working with migrants have made use of the regional Service for Work Vouchers (*Buoni Servizi al Lavoro*), i.e. regional vouchers funded by the ESF and covering costs of orientation towards the labour market and internships of vulnerable people, including several post-2014 migrants.

Finally, the Region was very active in **fighting the gangmaster system in agriculture**. Following the approval of the national law against the gangmaster system no 199/2016, on March 1 2019, the Region signed the “Protocol for the promotion of regular work in agriculture”²⁸ with all the regional Prefectures, several non profit organisations, the regional branches of the Direction for Labour Policies, the National Institute for Social Security (INPS), the National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL), and the National Association of Italian Municipalities. Given that the Protocol had no funds for its implementation, the next year the Region promoted the AMIF-funded project “**Good Land**” (2020-2022) to make up for the lack of economic resources. “Good Land” is aimed at informing and accommodating migrant seasonal workers, orienting them to local services, supporting the match between labour demand and supply and fighting irregular employment, raising awareness about social agriculture among employers. Unfortunately, the Protocol has not been renewed by the centre-right regional majority that got in power in 2019. Hence, a smaller-size Protocol has been signed by the Prefecture and some Municipalities in the province of Cuneo, one of the largest agricultural districts of the country, and the project “Good Land” has then been used to fund this provincial protocol.

Apart from the above-mentioned accommodation of seasonal agricultural workers, **no special measures have been adopted to deal with housing problems of migrants**.

Regarding **Sicily**, project-based actions for labour and housing inclusion have regarded **agricultural labour exploitation** and **capacity building**.

In the first respect, actions focused on **tackling the gang master system and agricultural labour exploitation** at the regional level have been funded through funds of the Ministry of Labour (PON Inclusion) and have regarded housing support initiatives, multifunctional service centres, interventions to address the situation of informal settlements in Cassibile, Castelvetrano and Campobello di Mazara.

Another set of important actions funded through AMIF funds regarded **institutional capacity building**. The COM.IN. (*Competences for Integration*) project, now in its fourth edition, aims to consolidate competences and foster policy coherence between the local and regional level, and the national and EU level. Importantly, the project has become **a platform of cooperation**

²⁷ It reached ou 1,120 TCN and 150 employees of labour agencies

²⁸ Deliberazione della Giunta Regionale 1 marzo 2019, n. 39-8502

between the five Southern Regions which take part in it, namely Puglia, the lead beneficiary, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania and Sicily.

Most recently, in July 2021, the Sicilian Regional Assembly adopted **the regional Law on Immigration and Social Inclusion of Foreigners** (Regional Law 20/2021). The goal of this law is to set policy goals in different areas of migrant inclusion, most notably in the fields of housing, access to professional orientation and training, labour integration and migrant entrepreneurship, regularisation of work contracts and cross-cutting measures to tackle the gangmaster system. Within the limits of regional competences, the law establishes a Regional Observatory on Migration to monitor inflows and social inclusion policies (Art.8) , it establishes a regional list of cultural mediators (Art. 13), and includes a specific provision on monitoring and promoting the regularisation of work contracts (Art. 19).

The Table below illustrates the main traits of the target localities.

Table 1. Main features of the target localities

	Novara	Cuneo	Avigliana	Siracusa	Caltagirone	Acate
Region	Piedmont	Piedmont	Piedmont	Sicily	Sicily	Sicily
Local political tradition and political majorities	Conservative Centre-left (2011-2016) Right-wing (2016-2021)	Progressive Centre-left (2012-2017) Centre-left (2017-2022)	Progressive Centre-left (2012-2017) Progressive centre-left (2017-2022)	Progressive Centre-left (2013-2018) Centre-left (2018-)	Conservative Centre-right (2012-2016) Centre-right (2016-2021)	Conservative Centre-right (2013-2018) Centre-right (2018-)
Inhabitants (01/01/2022) and classification by size	Medium town 101,727	Small town 55,800	Rural area 12,328	Medium town 117,053	Small town 36,241	Rural area 10,620
Number of foreign residents (01/01/2022)	15,662	6,800	623	5,599	1,253	3,139

Share of foreign residents (01/01/2005)	6.6%	4.8%	3.4%	1.5%	1.0%	5.9%
Share of foreign residents (01/01/2022)	15.4%	12.2%	5.0%	4.8%	3.5%	29.6%
Main nationalities	Morocco Pakistan Albania	Romania Albania China	Romania Morocco Albania	Sri Lanka Morocco Romania	Romania Sri Lanka Albania	Romania Tunisia Morocco

2.2. Novara (Piedmont, medium town, with a variation of the income and inhabitants lower than the average of Northern Italy)

Novara is a provincial capital, a **wealthy town** traditionally governed by **conservative coalitions**. The province is characterised by the expansion of the **logistic sector** and by the presence of important **manufacturing industries**²⁹. Both sectors employ a significant share of migrants, with the first characterised by poor and precarious **working conditions, subcontracting, and exploitation**³⁰.

Novara is also characterised by a **shortage of available accommodations** that particularly affects young people, students, and migrants. Moreover, there is a **high housing segregation**. In fact, the majority of migrants live, along with the poorer segments of the local population, in the **St. Agabio district**, an area separated from the town centre and the wealthy districts by the railway which crosses the town.

This district became a **working-class neighbourhood** in the second half of the twentieth century, when several factories were established there. It was first a place of settlement for migrants from Southern Italy and, since the 1990s, for migrants from other countries (e.g.,

²⁹ In particular, it is worth mention the industrial district of sanitarian fittings located in the province

³⁰ See: Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali, "Logistica: task force Settore logistica e trasporto merci effettua controllo a largo raggio;

<https://www.lavoro.gov.it/stampa-e-media/Comunicati/Pagine/Logistica-task-force-Settore-logistica-e-trasporto-merci-effettua-controllo-a-largo-raggio.aspx>



from Morocco, Albania, Romania) who were attracted by the low prices of housing and shops. Over time, this district has been perceived as the **rough area of the town**. More recently, post-2014 migrants have settled there.

As shown in Table 1, the share of foreign population was already high in 2005 and has substantially increased since 2005. Whereas old-established migrants, according to the interviewees, have been significantly affecting the demographic and economic situation, it is not the case for post-2014 migrants **who are generally young single men, highly mobile, and with precarious jobs**.

In the province, the number of asylum seekers hosted in the CAS system³¹ increased from 215 in 2014 to 763 in 2015 and to 1190 in 2016. The majority of asylum seekers hosted in that period in the province's CAS system came from **West Africa** (Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Guinea), also with a significant number of migrants from **Pakistan and Bangladesh**. The clear majority of these migrants were men. More than half of the post-2014 migrants were hosted in the town of Novara.

Among post-2014 migrants, **UAMs are a significant group in Novara** which ranks second in Piedmont in this regard. The flow of UAMs increased significantly after 2014 (with a peak in 2016-2017 when they reached around 100 individuals) and has different characteristics from that of adults. The majority of them are Albanian and Egyptian teenagers who autonomously report their presence to the local institutions.

A large share of migrants hosted in local reception facilities have then moved to larger cities or abroad. At the same time, there have been **inflows of migrants who spent the reception phase elsewhere who have been attracted by the job opportunities offered in the logistic enterprises**. Ethnic chains are the prevailing factor explaining inward and outward mobility and dynamics of inclusion in different segments of the job market.

2.3 Cuneo (Piedmont, small town, with a variation of the income and inhabitants higher than the average of Northern Italy)

Cuneo is a **progressive, well-off small town** where shanty housing stock is almost nonexistent and **housing prices are rather high** with the exception of Cuneo's hamlets where housing is more affordable. As a result, **there are no cheap neighbourhoods where migrants are concentrated**. Yet, some interviewees affirm that the share of post-2014 migrants is slightly higher in the blocs behind the main street, where disadvantaged strata of the population was concentrated before the city centre's renewal, since several parishes and NGOs offering

³¹ It is worth noting that Novara is the only province in Piedmont where there were only CAS facilities and no SAI centres, except for a short period in 2017. Nowadays, the Municipality of Novara is in the process of opening a SAI centre for UAMs and young adults



temporary shared apartments to those leaving reception facilities without alternative accommodations are located there.

Cuneo is the capital of a **flourishing province where important manufacturing companies and one of the main Italian agricultural districts** are located. In the 1950s and 1960s it attracted migrants from Southern Italy and then people from Northern Africa, the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Indeed, as shown in Table 1, the share of foreign population was already high in 2005 and has substantially increased since then. Whereas old-established migrants, according to the interviewees, have been significantly affecting the demographic and economic situation because they started families and got stable jobs, it is not generally the case for **post-2014 migrants who are generally young single men, highly mobile, and with precarious jobs**.

“The most recent migration is made up of very young guys, who has in part left Italy or move following job opportunities in agriculture” (I-Cu-8, trade union)

“Those who had arrived earlier have integrated without needing help: there were job opportunities, skills were not required, and it was a different inflow, namely they came here by choice and many started families while now sub-saharan migrants are mainly single men (...) Without children you are more mobile: you stay here if there are job opportunities, otherwise you leave, those we never see again are many” (I-Cu-12, non-profit employment agency)

Indeed, the impact of post-2014 migrants on the local community is hard to assess because of their **sizable outflows and inflows**. The data on movements are lacking because only a part of those migrants are enrolled in municipal registers. Nevertheless, interviewees believe that a large share of people hosted in local reception facilities have left the municipality to reach other European countries or larger Italian cities where employment opportunities are higher and ethnic networks are stronger. On the other hand, each year, from March to October the province hosts around 12,000 **seasonal workers employed in agriculture**, the large majority of which are **post-2014 migrants who have replaced previously arrived migrants by accepting lower wages**. They are **much more vulnerable** than their predecessors and a part of them arrive in the province of Cuneo without concrete opportunities of employment and/or accommodation. As a result, for the first time the gang mastering system and informal camps - that have been usual in the South of Italy - have popped up in the province and the number of homeless seasonal workers have significantly increased, raising concern among the local population and stakeholders. At the very beginning, the presence of homeless seasonal workers was limited to the “fruit district” of Saluzzo, located around 30 kilometres away from



Cuneo, but since 2019 it has concerned Cuneo as well, because of the expansion of the fruit cultivation in the surroundings and a sort of magnet effect due to the greater opportunities in terms of services and social networking. The management of this group of migrant population has been at the centre of the public debate and local integration policies over the last years.

“In the area of Saluzzo, when Africans started to arrive and be employed in agriculture, the large majority were asylum seekers or persons with a permit for humanitarian reasons, every year they grew, while in 2012-2013 those employed in agriculture were persons who had lived in Italy for a long time and has lost their jobs” (I-Cu-8, trade union)

According to interviewees, apart from **agriculture**, post-2014 migrants are employed in **manufacturing, construction and logistics (e.g. cleaning services)**. The labour demand is high: although it declined at the peak of the pandemic, it has rapidly resumed and gone through a substantial increase since 2021. Given the flourishing economy, the **labour supply is generally below the labour demand, especially for low-skilled jobs rejected by natives**, so that employers struggle to recruit workers. Whereas labour exploitation is widespread in agriculture, interviewees do not mention that as a relevant phenomenon in the other sectors.

“Cuneo is different from the other areas where we work because of the high number of foreign people we employ. In Rome or Pisa you find an Italian person available to do the forklift driver whereas Cuneo is a rich province, Italians don’t do some types of jobs, they do not submit the application, therefore those jobs are all done by foreigners. In the province of Cuneo we have 120 employees: if foreigners do not show up, we can neither start to work and it is not a metaphor. Cuneo is unique” (I-Cu-17, private employers)

“The fact is that there are not many people ready to do certain jobs, so that the demand is higher than the supply (...) We thought that certain jobs would disappear with automatisation but automatisation implies high costs, higher than poorly paid manpower, or in other cases it is not feasible” (I-Cu-16, private employer)

2.4. Avigliana and surrounding villages (Piedmont, rural area, with a variation of the income and inhabitants higher than the average of Northern Italy)

Avigliana and the surrounding villages are located in the lower Susa Valley, 30 kilometres away from the regional capital, Turin, and are governed with continuity by **progressive coalitions**. This area was characterised in the last century by the development of metalworking, steel and iron, automotive industries which attracted migrants from Southern Italy and since the 1990s from Maghreb and Eastern Europe. Currently the area has suffered the **lasting effects of deindustrialisation**, especially since the economic downturn in 2008³².

Although the percentage of foreign residents is significantly lower than the average, almost all interviewees mention that the Valley has got a long experience with immigration, mainly referring to the settlement of Moroccans and Albanians in the 1990s. Moreover, being located at the border with France, the valley has always been a **land of passage**, from the pilgrimages of the past centuries to the recent flows of migrants who try to cross the border with France.

The interviewees generally believe that post-2014 migrants have not had a significant impact on the area either in demographic or economic terms. **The few post-2014 migrants who remained in the lower valley are employed in restaurants, retail trade activities, repairing services (e.g. tyre dealer, refrigeration technician), and cooperatives.**

In Avigliana and in the surrounding villages **there is no spatial segregation** of migrants since houses are rather affordable. This is due to the housing market dynamics and, according to some interviewees, also to the fact that post-2014 migrants hosted in the local reception system have been distributed in small numbers per municipality.

The local community is characterised by its vibrant cultural and social climate, and is known for the decades-long battle of the NO TAV movement that opposes the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway line, considering it a waste of public money and harmful to the territory. This activism has also turned into **pro-migrant activism** involving associations and private citizens.

According to a report of Intersos³³, the Susa Valley had among the **highest percentages of UAMs** by inhabitants in 2017 (0.77 per 1000 inhabitants). The rate of exit from residential facilities was around 75%, because young migrants tend to leave the country and cross the border with France. At the same time, local policies aimed at fostering the integration of the minority of young migrants who remained have expanded.

³² See: "Piano programma 2021-2023 del CONISA"; www.conisa.it

³³ See: Intersos (2017), I minori stranieri non accompagnati lungo il confine settentrionale, <https://www.intersos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Rapporto-MSNA.pdf>



2.5. Siracusa (Sicily, medium town, with a variation of the income and inhabitants lower than the average of Southern Italy)

Siracusa is a provincial capital with a progressive political tradition and a vital civil society. Being a popular attraction for tourists, its economy relies on a **large hospitality sector**. Agriculture and the related agri-food industry are other important economic sectors, with a high demand of **low-skilled agricultural labour**.

The share of foreign residents (see Table 1) has increased since 2005 and, according to interviewees, has had a relevant positive effect on the economic and demographic situation of the locality. Specifically, the presence of migrant workers is seen as crucial for the local economy because it fills a void in the local supply of low-skilled labour, particularly in agriculture. Although there is no available data on outflows and inflows of post-2014 migrants, interviewees perceive Siracusa as being an attractive hub in the province for the employment opportunities that it offers. Still, informality in employment relations prevails on regular work contracts and overall working conditions are precarious and exploitative, particularly in rural areas.

The majority of migrants live in the neighbourhood of Borgata Santa Lucia in downtown Siracusa where large diaspora communities have traditionally established their presence. The housing stock in this area is often in deteriorating conditions but remains a more affordable solution for migrants who struggle to find accommodation elsewhere because of unaffordability, general distrust of property owners, and the pressure of home hospitality. Despite this, in Siracusa there is no strong segregation in terms of housing, and, despite the fact that migrants are concentrated in Borgata Santa Lucia, there is still a good degree of social mixing in shared public spaces. Post-2014 migrants tend to settle in the same district because they find other co-nationals and a network of voluntary and professional-based NGOs who operate in the area.

The situation is different in the rural surroundings of Siracusa, and specifically in the hamlet of Cassibile. This area has traditionally seen a stable presence of migrant agricultural workers who work in exploitative conditions, often without regular contracts, and live in informal settlements. Their living and working conditions have caused concern among residents and local stakeholders for public order reasons and for the pervasive violations of workers' rights. For this reason, tackling the nexus between labour exploitation and housing deprivation has been at the centre of local policies in recent years.



2.6. Caltagirone (Sicily, small town, with a variation of the income and inhabitants lower than the average of Southern Italy)

Caltagirone is a small town with a conservative tradition in the province of Catania. Despite being located in a wealthy province of Sicily, according to interviewees, Caltagirone is affected by large emigration flow. Native-born residents and post-2014 migrants hosted in reception facilities alike tend to leave in search of better opportunities.

The local economy is characterised by the presence of small- and medium-scale manufacturing pottery industries, a traditional sector in the local economy, and by agriculture. Both sectors employ post-2014 migrants, although usually in precarious working conditions or/and informally.

The available housing stock in Caltagirone is sizable and generally perceived as affordable by interviewees due to the low housing demand and the poor attractiveness of the area. While there is no significant spatial segregation in Caltagirone, the interviewees' general perception is that migrants are more exposed to accepting to live in decaying apartments which owners are unwilling to renovate. In this sense, the presence of migrants is seen as filling a gap both in low-skilled labour demand and in housing demand.

2.7. Acate and Santa Croce Camerina (Sicily, rural area, with a variation of the income and inhabitants lower than the average of Southern Italy)

Acate and the surrounding village of Santa Croce Camerina are located in the well-off province of Ragusa and have a generally conservative political tradition.

These municipalities do not offer any relevant work opportunities within the villages (mostly small family-run businesses, e.g. cafes and grocery stores), but are located in the largest agricultural area of Southern Italy, called "transformed area" (*fascia trasformata*). This extremely vast area is characterised by intense land exploitation, with related environmental problems, and very serious labour exploitation and gang mastering at the expense of migrant workers, particularly post-2014 migrants. In these localities, the demand of low-skilled agricultural labour is high, but work relations are irregular, exploitative and often accompanied by sexual violence on female workers, sexual exploitation, and child labour. In addition, migrant workers employed in this area are often forced to live in the countryside, in the proximity of the greenhouses where they work, and in inhabitable spaces (i.e. garages, shady towns). This is because their masters do not give them alternative accommodations and they cannot afford to commute to work with private means of transport.

The situation in the villages is different from that of the surrounding area. Those migrants who can afford to live in the centre and commute to work are generally better-off, although this appears to apply to long-term residents and to be less common for post-2014 migrants.



With a share of foreign residents of almost 30% (see Table 1), according to interviewees, Acate is a municipality where the presence of foreign-born residents is perceived as normal and, in fact, crucial for the economic and demographic survival of the whole area. Many foreign-born residents, particularly from Northern Africa, have been present in these municipalities for decades. Interviewees report that, over time, many of these migrants have managed to bring over their families and improve their working and housing conditions up to owning land and housing, becoming full-fledged members of society.

3. Access to housing

3.1 Main challenges / obstacles

Before going through the details of the single case studies, it is important to introduce a **difference between the housing markets in the case studies in the North and in the South of Italy respectively**. In the case of the localities in Sicily, in the South, the supply of affordable housing is generally larger. Specifically, this happens in Caltagirone, a small-size town with bad overall economic conditions, high emigration, and a consequent decline of housing demand. This also applies to larger urban centres like Siracusa³⁴, where cheaper but mostly decaying housing is easier to find in the oldest part of town, and in Acate, a small village with a good share of available, although not always adequate, housing stock. In contrast, in Northern localities (Piedmont), housing demand is generally higher and decaying housing stock is much more limited than in the Southern localities. As a consequence, affordable housing stock is substantially smaller there, with the exception of the rural area of Avigliana where the housing demand is rather limited.

In terms of **segregation and housing affordability**, the situation varies substantially across Italian case studies. **Segregation in cheaper neighbourhoods** has been registered in Novara, where the large majority of migrants lives in the same area separated from the town centre and the wealthy districts by the railway which crosses the town. In Siracusa there is greater social mixing, but, still, a high concentration of foreign-born residents in two neighbourhoods of the city centre.

³⁴ Indeed, in Siracusa the rising demand for tourist accommodation seems to affect more native-born and better-off residents than immigrants: there is no direct competition between the two housing sectors (renting to immigrants vs. tourism) because immigrants have access to/take up properties that owners do not want to renovate or are in bad conditions.



In contrast, in **Avigliana and Cuneo segregation is nonexistent, although for opposite reasons**. In Avigliana, housing is generally affordable and the few migrants are distributed all over the town and the surrounding villages. Instead, **Cuneo** is a wealthy small town where housing rents are fairly high and poor-quality housing stock is limited to a few buildings in the city centre: **there is no segregation in cheap neighbourhoods because the latter do not exist**.

In Novara and Cuneo, where housing prices are particularly high, **rents are much lower in the hamlets outside the town** where, indeed, many migrants go to live, while it is not the case in other case studies. Moreover, there it is easier to establish social relations with natives that can provide support in finding an accommodation. In this case, the main problem is that of transport: without a car, it is challenging reaching services and workplaces.

Spatial segregation does not appear to be a relevant phenomenon in **Caltagirone** either, most likely because those migrants who remain and settle down in this town after leaving the reception facilities do so because they are well-integrated into the local social fabric. In addition, there is no neat distinction between cheaper and more expensive areas that may engender dynamics of segregation.

Finally, **Acate**, and surrounding rural localities like Santa Croce Camerina, hardly fits in any of the categories above. **Segregation is virtually non-existent in the urban centres**, where social mixing is extremely high and diaspora communities have been living side-by-side with other residents for decades. **In the country** immediately surrounding Acate and in its municipal hamlets, where most post-2014 migrants live and work, **segregation is extreme** and is accompanied by spatial isolation, and poor living conditions.

Post-2014 migrants face many **obstacles** to housing integration. **Landlords' discrimination against migrants, which is higher in the case of people of colour**, has been registered in all case studies and appear to be the major obstacle to post-2014 migrants' housing integration. If not outright racial discrimination, distrust towards this target group is widespread in all localities. Indeed, this occurs even where the natives' attitudes towards foreigners are generally more positive, for example in Avigliana and Siracusa.

"Fear and mistrust towards other cultures and ways of behaving, especially in Cuneo that is small...They [landlords] tell you 'I have no problems', but when you come up with a foreign tenant, they say 'let's look for an Italian' (...) If landlords would rent out to foreigners, we would sign 4-5 times the rental contracts than we sign" (I-Cu-18, real estate agency)

"This guy from Togo has faced a lot of problems to find a decent accommodation, he lived in a very crumbling apartment for a while. Several landlords refused to sign up the contract because they don't rent out to Africans. I acted as a guarantor, signing myself the contract... Now he lives in a house belonging to my mother. When it comes to finding decent housing, the private market seems to be very close to migrants, especially Africans.



Even if they have a job contract, the only solution is relying upon an informal channel...” (I-A-19, private employer)

Some interviewees in Cuneo and Novara also report **landlords’ concern for complaints coming from tenants’ neighbours** that pushes them to not rent out their apartments to migrants: some interviewees believe that this is mainly an excuse to discriminate against foreigners, others think that this could be a peculiarity of small towns where landlords often know the persons living in the building of the rented apartment and show an accommodating attitude towards their requests.

“There are people that say ‘I would rent it out to them [i.e. migrants] but then the neighbours will complain’ or ‘I would rent it out to them but then I cannot send them away’. There is a lot of fear about the possibility that those goods [houses] could be damaged. Indeed, it is easier with landlords that have many apartments because they are more detached (...) They do not have relations with neighbours, they bought apartments as investment, they do not care (...) Maybe there was a deterioration after the Decree by Salvini, there was a massive closure” (I-Cu-4, service provider)

“It is very embarrassing for me to say to some clients that there are no possibilities because they are foreigners... I say let's evaluate the income as we do with everyone, but it is very difficult...landlords have negative attitudes towards migrants, neighbours don't want them because they do Ramadan celebration when they want to sleep and so on...there is a lot of mistrust” (I-N-15, real estate agent)

Families with children face specific discrimination since landlords know that eviction in case of arrears, that is already rather problematic (see section 1.1), becomes even more challenging. At the same time, families with minors can generally rely on **greater social support** from local residents both because schools are places of socialisation and neighbours view schooling as a key indicator of social inclusion and are more keen to provide help when children are involved. Moreover, they usually receive greater attention from social services and NGOs that in some cases temper these difficulties.

On the other hand, **single men** looking for accommodation are also viewed with suspicion, especially when perceived as highly mobile. For example, in Acate and Santa Croce Camerina, their greater propensity to follow job opportunities makes them unreliable in the eyes of potential landlord.



“One recurring complaint of landlords is that they leave the apartments without giving any notice. Non-EU migrants especially, who arrive without families and without anything, everything they own is in a suitcase. If those people find a better job somewhere else, they phone the owner and tell him that they are off and that he can take back the house.” (I-Ac-6, Real estate union)

Another relevant obstacle is **the frequent lack of permanent work contracts** and, then, the impossibility to offer solid economic guarantees. Many landlords prefer to leave their apartments empty rather than facing the risk of arrears or damages. In wealthier localities, such as Cuneo, this phenomenon is particularly widespread since landlords have less urgency to integrate their income with rents.

Instead, holding a valid residence permit is generally considered enough even when its duration is shorter than that of the rental contract: short-term resident permits or the uncertainty due to the asylum seekers' status are not regarded as major obstacles.

“The great problem is to have a permanent job and the economic guarantees. There are no problems with documents since, if they are regular migrants, they can sign rental contracts. We have never had problems in this regard: landlords have never said that it was a problem because after 2 years the residence permit would expire. The problem concerns the working contract” (I-Cu-18, real estate agency)

Given the above-mentioned obstacles, sharing apartments with co-nationals is the most widespread solution among post-2014 migrants. However, this is not free of risks. Since having an accommodation is a necessary condition to renew the resident permit, solidarity among co-nationals may turn into exploitation, especially in more attractive hubs such as Novara, Cuneo, Siracusa and Acate: newcomers may overpay to share overcrowded and poor accommodation irregularly sublet by co-nationals, or pay somebody else to register their residency or obtain a declaration of hospitality in order to renew the resident permit (residence trafficking or “*traffico di residenze*”). The latter case is not restricted to co-nationals and may concern people with an accommodation that, because of its inhabitable conditions, cannot be used to register legal residency.

“You obtain a permit for humanitarian reasons, you have to leave the CAS facility and you need a house. To renew the permit you need an

accommodation, those things are sold, it is like the gang mastering system but worse” (I-Cu-8, trade union)

“The housing situation is this: the municipality of Santa Croce has gone from 8000 to 11000 inhabitants in a few years, houses have not increased to the same extent. Extra-community people live in old and dilapidated houses that are let to several families at the same time only to register the residency. They make contracts just to have the lease, and then rent other properties off the books without a contract or with a fictitious lease.” (I-Ac-6, real estate agency)

Migrants employed in agriculture as seasonal workers, who represent a large share of post-2014 migrants in Cuneo, Acate, and Siracusa face specific challenges. Employers have the duty to accommodate only seasonal workers (in all sectors) coming from abroad but the latter represent a small share of the total seasonal workers and, most importantly, it is not the case of post-2014 migrants. Post-2014 migrant seasonal workers employed in fruit harvesting live in Italy on a permanent basis and move from one locality to another following job opportunities. In the past those people were rooted in a specific area or moved around the country relying upon chains, i.e. relations with employers or co-nationals able to act as mediators and, because of that, they were generally accommodated by employers. This solution, although still existing, is less widespread among post-2014 migrants since they can rely on weaker networks both with co-nationals and employers.

Moreover, some stakeholders suggest that employers are far less keen to accommodate African people, who represent the large majority of post-2014 migrants employed in agriculture, on their own land, close to their houses, because of discriminating attitudes and prejudice against them. If not accommodated by employers, finding housing solutions in the private market is particularly challenging for this category of workers because of the short-term work contracts and the legal framework that hinders flexible housing contracts.

Finally, post-2014 migrants face **obstacles in accessing public measures concerning housing** because of the following policy pitfalls:

- newcomers have little chances to get access to social housing, because this housing stock is limited (see section 1.1) and the waiting lists are extremely long;
- irregular rental contracts - or informal sharing with co-nationals - may hamper the access to National Funds channelled through municipalities (see section 1.1)
- post-2014 migrants have little knowledge about local measures; the acquisition of this knowledge is further hampered by their higher territorial mobility and weaker social networks compared to other migrant groups;

- local welfare services often lack skills and devices to support the access of migrants in general and/or of post-2014 migrants in particular (eg. intercultural mediators, multilingual materials, knowledge of the norms regulating foreigners' legal status and rights, etc).

Even when local welfare services appear able to interact with other groups of migrants, they often show difficulties in doing the same with **post-2014 migrants** since the latter might show **specific weaknesses** such as: precarious legal status (es. asylum seekers waiting for a decision on their application or appealing it in front of the Court), generating confusion in social workers with little knowledge of immigration norms; post-2014 migrants' little knowledge of the Italian language because of poor language courses and the limited opportunities to practise the language in reception facilities and in ethnically segregated workplaces (see section 5.1); their weaker social networks so that they do not generally have long-established relatives and friends that can mediate with services.

3.2 Actors involved (WHO)

As explained in section 1.1., **municipalities have competences over housing**, especially with regard to public housing and National Funds channelled through municipalities. This does not imply that local authorities have the duty to provide housing to local residents, be it Italian or foreign nationals. In fact, post-2014 migrants have extremely limited access to standard housing policies (see section 3.1)

This **duty exists only in the case of vulnerable people, including minors**, where **social services** play a key role³⁵. Indeed, **UAMs** represent a relevant share of minors accommodated by municipalities, either through SAI or in other types of facilities (see section 1.1).

Overall, given the poor housing policies in Italy, the large majority of local interventions including post-2014 migrants as target are:

- related to reception (SAI or CAS)
- project-based, generally relying upon EU resources passing through the central or regional governments.

Because of the limited obligations of local authorities and the relevance of projects, **the involvement of municipalities** in housing measures concerning post-2014 migrants largely **depends on political orientation**. As a result, municipalities appear as relevant actors in progressive localities by either promoting or participating as partners in project-based interventions (i.e., Cuneo, Avigliana and Siracusa), while they are marginal in most conservative localities (i.e. Novara, Caltagirone). Acate constitutes an exception to this general

³⁵ In small municipalities generally pool social services in inter-municipality consortia



trend. Despite being a conservative locality, the municipality there participates in project-based interventions related to housing for agricultural workers promoted by the central government. This can be explained by several factors. First, all neighbouring localities are involved in these projects and Acate follows suit. Second, the issue of access to housing for migrants is not politicised because preventing encampments and ensuring that all migrant agricultural workers have access to accommodation is framed as contributing to public order enforcement, rather than as being an integration measure. Lastly, migrant workers account for the greatest majority of the workforce in agriculture, and, therefore, their presence is accepted as key to the local economy.

As for professional and voluntary-based NGOs, in all the target localities they have multiple functions in all target localities:

- they lobby local authorities to mobilise over the issue;
- they mobilise to respond to housing needs of post-2014 by providing services and/or apartments either with their own resources or on behalf of the municipality.

What varies across localities is the NGOs' level of collaboration with local authorities and the size of interventions and, again, both elements seem to depend on local politics. In progressive localities (i.e., Cuneo, Avigliana and Siracusa), the collaboration between NGOs and local authorities is tight and mainly develops in project-based interventions that are generally co-designed, with NGOs having a key role in implementation. Thanks to this collaboration, those localities are able to attract resources distributed through calls for projects and set up significant measures. In contrast, in conservative localities (i.e., Novara and Caltagirone) NGOs are alone in promoting this kind of initiatives. In Caltagirone they manage to collaborate among themselves and attract limited project-based resources whereas in and Novara national voluntary-based NGOs tend to intervene using their own resources. In any case, the results are small-size interventions.

Finally, **private actors are almost out of the radar**. Private real estate agencies do not seem particularly keen to support migrant clients since they require a greater effort than natives to find landlords willing to let their apartments. Even in the progressive localities where the whole of community approach was adopted (e.g. Avigliana, Siracusa), the attempt to involve real estate agencies generally failed since the latter have very weak relations with progressive policy makers and NGOs. In the two cases where they are involved in housing integration efforts (i.e. Caltagirone, Cuneo), they seem able to play some role only in Cuneo while in Caltagirone they do not manage to secure any rental agreement due to widespread distrust.

“No, there is not a great sensibility by real estate agencies. Actually, many of them avoid migrant clients since they pay as the other clients but it takes more time [to sign a rental contract] because one landlord out of 30, 40, 50 has no preferences for Italian tenants” (I-Cu-19, real estate agency)



“We do not collaborate with private estate agencies, we tried to work with them but they did not provide us any service, they do not have contact with the progressive policy makers in charge and they are out of the network of NGOs” (I-A-16, professional NGO)

“Real estate agencies have no role, it's a small centre, I don't even know if there is one. There are private figures that the boys rely on to find a house and then they pay something to them, but officially there is nothing like that.”(I-Ac-2, private service provider)

In all localities, a crucial role of reliable mediator is usually played by natives (employers, volunteers, social workers from NGOs). In Novara, this role is generally played by employers of small companies for their own workers. In Caltagirone, NGOs workers and volunteers systematically act as mediators with potential landlords

The main dynamics that have contributed to bringing post-2014 migrants' housing problems into the public debate, triggering local actors' initiatives are the following:

- increasing numbers of rejected asylum seekers and holders of international or national protection that started to leave reception facilities without having housing solutions since 2016 (Cuneo, Novara, Avigliana, Siracusa);
- **increasing numbers of homeless among post-2014 migrants, especially among agricultural seasonal workers**, that have pushed both public entities and NGOs to set up or expand first shelters (Cuneo, Siracusa, Acate);
- the **significant share of UAMs** who receive special attention (e.g. Caltagirone and Siracusa) because they fall under the responsibility of public social services, leading to the opening of SAI facilities for UAMs, specific initiatives linked to voluntary guardianship, and temporary accommodations for the young adults who have left the reception system.

Municipalities play a role especially in the second and third types of initiatives while NGOs largely prevails in the first.

Finally, the **adoption of the Migration and Security Decree in 2018** (see section 1.1) that forced those individuals holding a permit for humanitarian reasons to leave reception facilities abruptly was a relevant trigger in Cuneo, where voluntary-based NGOs, largely value-driven, launched the initiatives “Close Ports, Open Doors (*Porti Chiusi, Porte Aperte*)” to coordinate and enhance their action to accommodate post-2014 migrants in response to the central government's decision.

In general terms, we have not identified conflicting views or tensions over housing, except for NGOs' complaints about poor public authorities' intervention, especially in conservative localities. Yet, in Cuneo, the concentration of local authorities' intervention on solutions for



homeless and seasonal migrant workers has raised **criticism from voluntary-based NGOs that highlight a prevailing emergency frame and the lack of long-term solutions.**

“From 2020 things have changed since the numbers [of migrants] have changed, they have significantly increased and there has been a general inability to recalibrate [the interventions] timely, especially by the institutions” (I-Cu-7, pro-migrant group)

In Cuneo, the different view conveyed by NGOs has materialised into **two important pro-migrant platforms**, “Networked Refugees (*Rifugiati in Rete*)” and “Clandestine Minerals (*Minerali Clandestini*)”, both covering other areas of the province beyond the municipality of Cuneo and working mainly on reception and housing, although alongside other issues. “Network Refugees” was born as a reaction to the multiplication of CAS in the province since 2015 with the aim of promoting high quality shared standards for the management of reception and integration services, contrasting the disengagement of public authorities and encouraging the collaboration between them and the civil society organisations. It has succeeded in its missions: nowadays the Municipality of Cuneo is substantially involved in post-2014 migrants reception and housing measures and the NGOs participating in “Networked Refugees” manage most of municipal services for migrant integration. “Clandestine Minerals” is a pro-migrant advocacy coalition that was born from a national mobilisation to reform the Italian immigration law (*Io ero straniero* campaign). It brings together around 50 locally rooted realities (although those actually active are less, around 20%), such as local social cooperatives, associations and charities, local branches of national and international NGOs (eg. Amnesty International), local left-wing opposition parties, trade unions. The main objectives of “Clandestine Minerals” are coordination among local stakeholders and advocating in favour of migrants³⁶.

Comparing the single case studies, in Cuneo, a large range of actors have mobilised around post-2014 migrants’ accommodation, and cooperation among them is fairly good. Specifically, voluntary-based NGOs and parishes were the first to mobilise, in 2016, offering temporary shared apartments to migrants leaving reception facilities without having any alternative accommodation. The municipality took the initiative only in 2019, when homeless seasonal agricultural workers started to sleep in the street, around the railway station, raising public concern, and initially responded with first shelters while it started to offer temporary shared apartments only from 2021. Hence, whereas value-driven action of voluntary NGOs led them

³⁶ In this perspective, the network has organised a couple of mobilisations, one against the national Security and Migration Decree in 2018 and the other against a local ordinance forbidding sleeping outside adopted by the Municipality of Cuneo in September 2020 during the Covid-19 emergency in 2020. Beside those mobilisations, the network engages in the public debate through local media and public events.



to act early and with their own resources, the municipality's greater attention for consensus and public order has delayed its intervention and favoured a focus on emergency measures.

In **Avigliana** professional NGOs, voluntary-based NGOs, public social services, progressive policy makers, pro-migrant groups, employers and sensitive citizens form a close-knit network. NGOs, together with local public actors, co-design reception and integration projects in which they provide the main services (e.g. housing mediation, orientation to local services, temporary accommodation). Beyond the project-based interventions, the informal collaboration within this network is particularly strong and generally leads to finding housing solutions for the few migrants who remain in the locality after the reception stage. **Novara**, on the contrary, shows less cooperative relations between NGOs around housing integration of post-2014 migrants. The municipality does not play any role, apart from the case of UAMs and the first shelter for the homeless. Hence, the only small size interventions specifically designed for post-2014 migrants are carried out by the main nationwide voluntary-based NGOs.

As for the cases in Sicily, in **Siracusa** a large number of actors, including voluntary-based NGOs, professional NGOs, unions and pro-migrant groups, has mobilised around access to housing for post-2014 migrants, specifically UAMs and agricultural workers, with the stewardship of progressive policy makers from the municipality. In addition to these formal initiatives, like in the case of Avigliana, Siracusa displays a close-knit network of informal collaboration among social workers, volunteers, and policy makers, who often play multiple roles, resembling the whole-of-community approach.

Housing integration in **Caltagirone** can count on a close-knit network of professional and voluntary-based NGOs, which formally provide services to reception programme beneficiaries, the majority of whom are UAMs, but, informally, extend their support role after reception, too. Most notably, NGOs workers and volunteers systematically act as mediators with potential landlords. Still, this network operates in a context where the conservative municipality offers little proactive support beyond delivering public social services.

Lastly, in **Acate**, voluntary-based NGOs have been the first to advocate for greater access to adequate housing for post-2014 migrants, although they do not provide accommodation directly. In this rural area, municipalities, despite not taking the initiative, participate in project-based initiatives promoted by the prefecture and funded by the central government to give temporary accommodation to agricultural seasonal workers in partnership with neighbouring municipalities.

3.3. Policies, initiatives, and practices that foster/hinder access (WHAT)

3.3.1. Novara

In Novara, housing is characterised by different problems. Young people, students and migrants struggle to access the housing market, since housing supply is limited. In addition, it is worth noting that there was a peak of evictions after the economic downturn in 2008. Consequently, the municipality in 2011 opened a first-shelter camp³⁷ for accommodating homeless, which has hosted up to 579 people of 23 nationalities.

The first-shelter camp managed by the municipality has sometimes involved migrants who have left the reception system, **however post-2014 migrants are not regarded as a specific target.**

Besides, the main regional projects managed by the Housing Office cover only these two following cases: 1) situations in which tenants with regular contracts are facing difficulties in paying the rent, 2) situations in which landlords and tenants are willing to sign a housing contract with the intermediation of the municipality. **Hence, these public policies do not significantly include post-2014 migrants who struggle to access the housing market and to find landlords willing to rent out apartments to them,** whereas old-established migrants would be a relevant share of beneficiaries.

The few interventions involving post-2014 migrants in the field of housing are small-size bottom-up projects. These latter can be articulated into three clusters. The first cluster consists of information and advice on how to reach housing autonomy. These services are provided by professional NGOs as a standard measure offered to migrants hosted in the reception system or provided informally to migrants in general by voluntary-based NGOs. The second cluster consists of temporary accommodation in shared apartments, which usually target former UAMs who have left the reception facilities. These interventions are carried out by nationwide voluntary-based NGOs (such as Comunità di S. Egidio) which own the apartments. The third cluster consists of a Caritas' national programme (2016-2018) which provided hospitality by some local families, for one year, to those beneficiaries of international protection who have left the reception system. Against this backdrop, ethnic networks and black market of sublets are the main channel to finding housing for post-2014 migrants, alongside the support informally offered by volunteers and social workers.

In conclusion, housing projects targeting post-2014 migrants are **small-scale initiatives which include few post-2014 migrants.** The lack of policy is a result of the following factors: **lack of**

³⁷ This camp was previously used as temporary accommodation for the workers employed in the construction of the high-speed railway.



resources and social policy at national and regional level, **lack of initiatives** at municipal level, the **strong fragmentation** of NGOs' network.

3.3.2. Cuneo

In Cuneo, housing integration has gained relevance after the arrival of post-2014 migrants, and has been at the core of local integration policies in recent years, attracting far more public attention than other issues. This is due especially to the fact that part of post-2014 migrants have become homeless after leaving the reception facilities or, when employed as seasonal agricultural workers, are not always accommodated by employers and sleep on the street. This has raised substantial public concern and some criticism by local residents, especially those living in the area of the railway station.

Besides that, according to the interviewees, the role of municipality in integration policies, including those concerning housing, substantially increased as a consequence of two events: the municipality's taking over of the coordination of the provincial SAI in 2015, that contributed to bring about migrant integration in the local political agenda; and the appointment of the new Deputy Mayor for Social Policies in 2017, whose activism has been stressed by several stakeholders.

As a result of those intertwined dynamics, in Cuneo accommodation measures involving post-2014 migrants are many and engage a wide range of local actors. However they offer short-term solutions, that last from a few days to 18 months (although often prolonged), while the access to the housing market or social housing remains extremely challenging for post-2014 migrants and interventions in this regard appear under-developed.

The interventions involving post-2014 migrants in the field of housing can be articulated into **four clusters**: intervention related to SAI; "third accommodation" after reception; first shelters for homeless people; accommodation for agricultural seasonal workers.

The **first cluster** concerns the **SAI reception project** entrusted by the municipality to NGOs. It has adopted **two different strategies** to support migrants to find housing solutions when leaving reception facilities. The first one is to develop **collaboration with three local for-profit real estate agencies**. In this case, social cooperatives managing SAI can offer a five-month economic support to pay the rent using the reception resources. Those who are not hosted in SAI still ask those real-estate agencies for support but cannot enjoy the economic support. The second solution goes, in fact, beyond housing and consists in **involving volunteers to support post-2014 migrants in everyday life** when they are hosted in reception facilities: peer relations are generally maintained after the reception stage and can turn out to be useful to find housing solutions. This good practice, based on the **whole-of-community approach**, has been transferred from the reception project managed by CIAC cooperative in Parma.



The second cluster consists of “third accommodation”, namely temporary accommodation (till 18 months, extendable) in shared apartments for post-2014 migrants who left reception facilities without having found any alternative housing solutions. These migrants are generally people who have obtained a regular resident permit - but sometimes also rejected asylum seekers are accommodated there. Moreover, when the Security Decree and Migration of 2018 suppressed the permit for humanitarian reasons and led to the expulsion of its holders from reception facilities (see section 2.2.1), those persons constituted a relevant target of “third accommodation”. The apartments (whose total places are more than 40) are generally owned or rented by local voluntary-based organisations, charities and parishes with no or little public funds. This kind of initiatives started to develop when the first refugees started to leave reception facilities, in 2016. Those organisations also mobilise a large number of (mainly elderly) volunteers that support (also but not only) post-2014 migrants in everyday life, thus fostering a whole-of-community approach.

“Over time, equipes of volunteers were set up, many were born around Caritas or local parishes. Once they opened the neighbourhood libraries, now they went to [foreign] mothers, they babysit their children, offer integrative courses, help them to get the car licence, this is around a person like a social network” (-Cu-10, service provider)

The third cluster of accommodation initiatives consists of first shelters for homeless people. Those facilities are regarded as particularly relevant for our target population since they host significant numbers of post-2014 migrants seasonal workers employed in agriculture. Those services are provided by national-based NGOs such as the local branches of Caritas, Red Cross and Papa Giovanni XXIII and have been generally expanded in response to the growing numbers of foreign homeless people. The municipality offers support either in kind (eg. the venue to the Red Cross) or cash, covering however a small amount of the total costs. Moreover, the Municipality has used part of the funds coming from the Nation Plan for Urban Peripheries³⁸ to co-finance renewal of buildings to devote to first-shelter structures run by locally-based NGOs, i.e. Don Aldo Benevelli and Città dei ragazzi, that started their activities in 2021.

The fourth cluster, with the municipality as promoter, consists of projects specifically devoted to accommodation of homeless seasonal workers in agriculture. However, municipal interventions substantially rely on NGOs and their resources (apartments, volunteers, etc). Specifically, in 2020 the Municipality of Cuneo, together with other 9 municipalities (out of the 32 which belongs to the so-called “fruit district”) signed a Protocol with the Prefecture of

³⁸ DPCM “RIQUALIFICAZIONE URBANA E SICUREZZA DELLE PERIFERIE”, 25th May 2016



Cuneo (see section 1.1). By pooling the funds coming from the Ministry of Interior and channelled through the local Prefecture thanks to the Protocol and those provided by local bank foundations and the AMIF project “Good Land” (2020-2022), the municipality offers a three-step path to accommodate foreigner agricultural seasonal workers³⁹: 1) information and orientation at info point; 2) temporary accommodation at Red Cross’ first shelter that, thanks to those additional funds, has passed from 30 to 50 places; 3) accommodation in shared apartments own by the municipality but especially by charities to which local authorities pay rents, maintenance costs and utilities (42 places in 2021).

Finally, individual-based, ad hoc actions have some relevance as well. Given the post-2014 migrants’ difficulties in offering economic guarantees (see section 1.8), **NGOs and parishes sometimes stand as surety** for post-2014 migrants. Also **employers or colleagues** do the same. Nevertheless, this solution is not always enough to overcome landlords’ mistrusts.

In terms of **governance**, it is important to emphasise that **the municipality summonies two working groups over migrant integration**. Post-2014 migrants’ accommodation, although not being the only issue at stake, is the most central one. One working group, informally called “**Tavolino - Small Table**”, encompasses the professional NGOs that run municipal services and projects regarding migration and asylum, and the voluntary-based NGOs providing key local services with a high share of foreign beneficiaries - the latter are generally local branches of national organisations such as Caritas and Red Cross. General welfare services participate when needed. The meetings are frequent and aimed at sharing policy strategies and solving practical problems. The second working group, called “**Tavolone - Large Table**”, was established in 2018 and includes smaller voluntary-based NGOs and local parishes, and the advocacy coalition “Clandestine Minerals”. According to the municipality, the “Large Table” is aimed at mapping the needs and sharing the general directions while the interviewed participants feel that is mainly used to inform the main stakeholders about the municipal strategies and decisions with little room for co-decision.

3.3.3 Avigliana and surrounding villages

In Avigliana and surrounding villages, housing integration of post-2014 migrants is considered a relevant issue. Beyond the SAI and CAS reception system, the main policies concerning housing integration are project-based activities funded by bank foundations. These can be grouped into two clusters: the first targeting migrants in general and the second specifically designed for former UAMs.

The first cluster aims to foster migrants’ inclusion into the housing market. This approach has been initially adopted within the reception system where advice and information on

³⁹ Delibera 146, 27th May 2021, Municipality of Cuneo



housing were provided in order to accompany and support migrants in their trajectories towards autonomy. Then, the approach started within reception further developed within the POLI project⁴⁰ (June 2021 - November 2022), led by the Municipality of Avigliana and providing the following services: information and orientation to local services, finding solutions in the housing market, and temporary accommodations. These services are offered to migrants (including post-2014 migrants) and all those people from the local community who need information/orientation on migrant-related issues (e.g. landlords, employers, volunteers, etc). Temporary accommodations have been designed to support those migrants who have left reception facilities or who are facing difficult times.

The **second cluster** ("Tomorrow Together", April 2019-March 2022, and "Time to Time", November 2021-October 2024, with the second being the follow-up project of the first⁴¹) aims to **accompany UAMs and former UAMs to autonomy**, working on social relations with locals, education, employability, and housing independence. Concerning housing integration, the **services** are the following: information and advice on housing autonomy, monitoring and supporting housing autonomy, housing mediation services, and temporary accommodation.

Overall, **all those initiatives have been co-designed by local authorities and NGOs**, although in the implementation stage they perform different tasks: NGOs manage the activities with beneficiaries whereas the public entities play the role of coordinators in the interventions targeting adults - but they are more directly involved in the case of vulnerable families and minors.

Alongside NGOs and public entities, policy makers, social workers, volunteers, pro-migrant activists, and citizens form a **close-knit network** that directly supports migrants, sharing their own resources in terms of informal networks and available accommodation. The involvement of the population has been actively promoted by the municipality. For instance, when the CAS reception started, the municipality used public events on diverse topics to present the project, discuss the concerns with residents and engage them. Moreover, both the municipality - especially the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for Social Policies - and the NGOs managing reception facilities have never refrained from - on the contrary they have proactively sought -

⁴⁰ POLI project funded by the bank foundation Compagnia di San Paolo through the tender "Inclusive Territories (Territori Inclusivi)" aimed at turning project-based networks over migrant integration into structural networks embedded in local welfare. The project is led by the Municipality of Avigliana. The project partners are: Con.I.S.A. Valle Susa – Val Sangone, Cooperativa Orso, Fondazione Talità-Kum, Diaconia Valdese, Cooperativa Piergiorgio Frassati, Cooperativa Amico, Unione Montana Valle Susa, Unione Montana Alta Valle Susa. It is articulated in poles, i.e., it relies upon existing public offices scattered all over the Susa Valley (Avigliana, Bussoleno and Susa) to enhance accessibility.

⁴¹ "Tomorrow Together" and "Time to Time" are funded by different bank foundations through the tender "Never Alone". The project is led by Cooperativa Piergiorgio Frassati, among projects partners are the local consortium of social services (Con.I.S.A Valle Susa-Val Sangone), the Provincial Centre for Adult Education, with other voluntary-based and professional NGOs.



informal chats with residents to provide answers and discuss possible individual concerns and complaints⁴².

3.3.4 Siracusa

In Siracusa, housing deprivation affecting post-2014 migrants has been high on the local agenda in recent years, most notably in relation to the situation of agricultural workers in the rural hamlet of Cassibile. In general, housing initiatives have been of three kinds addressing **three different targets: agricultural workers, people hosted in SAI reception facilities and UAMs**.

First, the local administration leads initiatives to tackle agricultural workers' housing deprivation in the area of Cassibile, although these have been mostly project-based. As a consequence of exploitative working conditions and lack of accommodation facilities, migrants working in this area have traditionally resorted to establishing informal settlements, with consequent public concern and criticisms by local residents. To tackle this housing emergency, in 2020 the municipality has spearheaded the ACCA project, in cooperation with the Prefecture and the Region, using funds from the Ministry of Interior (PON Legality funds). The project has led to the construction of a camp (called "hostel"), officially opened in April 2021, with 80 places in 17 accommodation units for migrant workers with a residence permit. The Bilateral Agricultural Entity (EBAT), grouping the main employers' will cover the maintenance costs. The Region provides further services, including on-site healthcare, through AMIF funds (Su.Pr.Eme project).

Second, **the Municipality has been involved in SAI reception projects**, although these have repeatedly ended into mismanagement issues by service providers.

Third, NGOs and activist groups have been active in promoting specific initiatives regarding housing for UAMs with the support of the municipality. Specifically, in addition to the accommodation measures for vulnerable UAMs provided by the municipality directly within reception programmes, through these initiatives NGOs and activist groups promote care and temporary homestays through the voluntary guardianship association Accoglierete (Welcoming Network/You will welcome), in collaboration with the prefecture and the Minors Tribunal.

On top of these initiatives, **informal solutions based on trust-based personal networks** of NGOs workers, activists, employers, parishes are widespread in Siracusa and interviewees report them as being by far the most effective solutions to find a house.

⁴² See: Caponio, T., Donatiello, D., & Ponzio, I. (2022). Relational and reputational resources in the governance of top-down asylum seekers' reception in Italian rural areas. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 10(3).



3.3.5. Caltagirone

Housing integration initiatives in Caltagirone have not been systematic and revolve around SAI reception initiatives and individual initiatives of NGOs or faith-based organisations. In general, these initiatives have followed three main strands, reflecting the development of local policies in this locality.

The first one regards the local response to the situation of abuses and precarious living conditions in and around **the largest governmental reception centre in the country, located in the neighbouring locality of Mineo**. Since its early days, the centre became an emblem of ghettoization and bad reception practices, leading to **its closure by the central government in 2019**. Following the closure, some asylum seekers were relocated to other destinations, while others were left stranded. On this occasion, Caltagirone's Dioceses through **Caritas offered** to welcome them, providing **temporary accommodation**. In this context, the role of the municipality was mostly limited to enforcing public order in the outskirts of Caltagirone, for example on the occasion of migrants' protests against living conditions in the centres.

The second set of measures regards **reception programmes in SAI facilities for adults and UAMs** entrusted by the municipality to NGOs. In addition to providing accommodation during the foreseen reception period, NGOs are also responsible for supporting beneficiaries in securing independent accommodation. To this end, one of the NGOs which provide reception services has actually managed to conclude **an agreement with a local real estate agency**. This agreement, though, has not come into being because the agency has not succeeded in finding any landlord available to rent their property to migrants. The most effective way to secure accommodation upon exit from reception programmes remains the NGO workers' personal networks and, although more rarely, employers.

Thirdly, **housing integration initiatives independent from reception** exist but are devised **informally by individual NGO workers and volunteers**. These actors occasionally act as **mediators**, capitalising on their personal trust-based network, also after the reception stage. It is plausible that the overall lack of further post-reception initiatives results from the fact that Caltagirone is not a particularly attractive location for migrants nor one where migrants tend to stay when the reception stage ends.

3.3.6. Acate and Santa Croce Camerina

In Acate and the neighbouring locality of Santa Croce Camerina, housing integration has become relevant as a result of two different kinds of inputs: the advocacy role of local NGOs and the central government's programmes concerning agricultural labour exploitation. Local administrations have limited independent means and are generally disengaged from integration issues. Even when they are leading partners in housing integration projects or provide unused municipal properties for housing integration projects, their involvement appears to be mostly motivated by public order concerns.



As for the **advocacy role of NGOs**, Caritas and the social cooperative Proxima have given visibility to the extreme housing deprivation faced by migrant agricultural workers who live in the country around these localities. In particular, in 2016, this advocacy role led to the the **FARI project** that targets migrants exposed to labour or sexual exploitation and, among other activities, involves the management of **three safe homes for victims of violence**. The project is co-financed by the national government⁴³ and the Municipalities of Ragusa, Acate, and Comiso, and implemented by NGOs Caritas and Proxima

Second, the Municipalities of Acate and Santa Croce Camerina were prompted by the Prefecture of Ragusa to undertake **housing support initiatives to tackle agricultural workers' housing deprivation**. Specifically, together with other municipalities of the Province of Ragusa, **Acate and Santa Croce Camerina were invited to the Permanent Thematic Tables of the Prefecture of Ragusa** established within the framework of the 2019 provincial Protocol on the prevention and contrast of labour exploitation. One of the tables regards the **"Allocation of real estate to regular migrants,"** and its aim is to encourage local municipalities to submit project proposals for **temporary accommodation of agricultural workers** to be funded with national PON Legality funds. The Table comprises a wide network of local, provincial, and regional actors, unions, employers' organisations, and NGOs, in addition to the various local municipalities. Following the prefectures' call, the Municipality of Acate is going to make available around 20 accommodation places in municipal property, while the Municipality of Santa Croce Camerina is going to renovate and make available confiscated property for a total of 8 accommodation places. Due to initial administrative delays, the projects are still in their initial implementation stage and accommodation services are not active yet.

3.3.7. Comparative remarks

Housing policies appear as largely affected by local politics. In conservative localities, municipalities do not address post-2014 housing problems beyond reception (Novara and Caltagirone) or do that under the inputs of NGOs or prefectures (Acate). In progressive localities, local authorities are more proactive and initiate or participate in local housing initiatives involving post-2014 migrants (Cuneo, Avigliana and Siracusa).

As a result, in conservative localities, with the exception of Acate, NGOs are the only actors working on post-2014 migrants' accommodation, although mainly providing support on an informal basis. Instead, in progressive localities NGOs participate in projects and more structured initiatives, generally in partnership with local authorities.

In terms of governance, only in two cases we have found broad coordination platforms where housing is a (not exclusive) issue of discussion and cooperation: in Cuneo the Large and Small

⁴³ Ministry of Equal Opportunities



Tables summoned by the municipality, and in Acate the provincial Permanent Thematic Tables established by the prefecture. In the other cases, coordination occurs within projects or through informal contacts.

Regardless of local actors' engagement, **almost all the local initiatives identified in our case studies consist of temporary solutions**. Only in Avigliana the POLI project aims at fostering migrants' access to the labour market while in Cuneo and Caltagirone the local SAI projects have developed cooperation with real estate agencies, although this has turned out to be fruitful only in Cuneo. Whereas support for finding housing solutions is often offered within reception (it is due for beneficiaries of protection hosted in SAI but it is often provided in CAS as well), after the end of the reception stage support in this field drastically drops and is generally given by NGOs with their own resources - with the exception of the POLI project in Avigliana.

On the contrary, **measures aimed at hosting agricultural workers have multiplied in the last few years** as a reaction to the increasing problems of accommodation explained in section 3.1. This is the case of Cuneo (where it is a recent phenomenon that started in 2019), Siracusa and Acate (where the phenomenon is long lasting). In both cases, projects funded through national programmes have been key in activating specific initiatives. Instead, measures addressing **UAMs** that go beyond the due reception have been developed in Novara, Avigliana and Siracusa where this group is sizable.

As for the **whole-of-community approach, private actors (real estate agencies, enterprises, landlords' associations) are almost absent** from the picture except for the collaboration between SAI projects and real estate agencies in Cuneo and Acate. Instead, **single employers** may mobilise to help their workers to find housing solutions while **local residents and volunteers** are active in Avigliana (where the whole-of-community approach is more developed thanks to the local civic activism, strong local identity, progressive political culture and tight-knit social networks), Cuneo (where "social Catholicism" is rooted and volunteers collaborate with the SAI project, voluntary-based NGOs and local parishes), Siracusa (where they mobilise around the the UAMs' voluntary guardianship association Accoglierete promoted locally by nation-wide NGOs), and Caltagirone (where NGO workers and volunteers often act as informal brokers making up for the poor local policies).

3.4. Specific target groups (FOR WHOM)

That said, post-2014 migrants targeted by employment measures can be grouped into four types.

The **first type** concerns **individuals leaving reception facilities**. In **Cuneo, in Caltagirone and in Siracusa**, such interventions are promoted by both the local SAI reception project that tries to support the access to the housing market, and, in the case of Cuneo, by voluntary-based NGOs that offer temporary accommodation in shared apartments and stand as surety in front

of private landlords. In **Avigliana**, this type of intervention is provided by a project-based initiative, POLI, which provides different services (e.g. mediation services, orientation to local services, temporary accommodation) to all migrants, with refugees being a relevant target.

The **second type** of target consists of **seasonal workers in agriculture**, the large majority of which are post-2014 migrants who claimed asylum in Italy, currently display very different legal status (holders of national or international protection or work permit, irregular migrants) and mainly come from West Africa and South Asia. In the case of **Cuneo**, the municipality, in strict collaboration with voluntary-based NGOs, has made available first shelters and shared apartments. The same goes for the municipalities of **Acate and Santa Croce Camerina**, while the Municipality of **Siracusa** has contributed to the establishment of a shelter for the same target group.

The **third type** is that of **homeless people**. In Sicily, this target does not appear to be relevant because homelessness in urban centres is not a particularly significant phenomenon and migrants who lack accommodation are concentrated in rural areas where they live in informal encampments or in the precarious conditions described above. Instead, measures addressing homeless, a part of which are post-2014 migrants, have been identified only in **Cuneo and Novara** (Piedmont). In this regard, the words of a regional officer in Piedmont are particularly telling.

“[That of municipalities] is a more pragmatic approach and this crosses the different political orientations: migration phenomenon does not have to create troubles (...) Hence, they have preferred to set up first shelters rather than having people in the street. As a consequence, there has been an explosion of first shelters. In the past they were more concentrated in Turin; now the medium towns have them too: in the last five years there have been an increase of this type of services and they mostly concern people with a migratory background” (I-P-1, Regional officer)

The **fourth type** concerns **UAMs** who generally arrived in Italy at 16-17 years old. By law, UAMs can be hosted in reception facilities until the age of 21 (see section 2.1). Beyond reception, projects specifically designed for UAMs are present in different localities (**Avigliana, Novara, Siracusa, Caltagirone**), although they vary in extension with the conservative medium towns having small size and fragmented interventions.

The above-mentioned measures generally **do not ask for specific requirements except for the regularity of legal status**. Indeed, public-funded interventions address regular migrants only whereas some of the interventions managed by NGOs with their own resources are even open to **irregular migrants**.

In contrast, **general housing policies**, regulated by national and regional laws, **may require a certain length of stay in the country/region/municipality**, as explained in detail in section 2.1.1. However, as illustrated in section 3.1, the obstacles faced by post-2014 migrants in accessing public housing policies do not generally derive from this kind of requirement.

Table 2 - Case-by-case summary of results/findings regarding the area of Housing

CASE	WholeCOMM Typology	Major obstacle(s)	Actor(s) involved	Measure(s)	Target group(s)
Novara	Conservative, medium town	Shortage of housing Discrimination Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees	Professional NGOs managing reception facilities; Nationwide voluntary-based NGOs	Information and training on housing autonomy Small-scale projects (temporary social housing and reception in local families)	Refugees and UAMs (Information and training on housing autonomy) Former UAMs (temporary social housing) Single mothers with children
Cuneo	Progressive and small town	Discrimination Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees	Professional NGOs managing reception facilities Nationwide voluntary-based NGOs Parishes Municipality	Accommodation in shared apartments for post-2014 migrants who left reception facilities First shelters for homeless people Accommodation of homeless seasonal workers in agriculture with the municipality as the promoter	Migrants leaving reception facilities Homeless Agricultural seasonal workers



<p>Avigliana</p>	<p>Progressive rural area</p>	<p>Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees</p>	<p>Professional NGOs; local voluntary-based NGOs; Municipality and the consortium of social services</p>	<p>Activities within the reception system Project-based initiatives funded by philanthropic foundations (information and advice, training on housing autonomy, temporary social housing)</p>	<p>Asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection (reception projects); Migrants (integration project funded by philanthropic foundations) Former UAMs and UAMs (project specifically designed for young adults)</p>
<p>Siracusa</p>	<p>Progressive medium town</p>	<p>Discrimination Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees Labour exploitation in rural areas and lack of means of transport</p>	<p>Municipality Professional NGOs managing reception facilities; Voluntary- and professional-based NGOs</p>	<p>Activities within the reception system Accommodation of homeless seasonal workers in agriculture with the municipality as the promoter Family accomodation within guardianship project by professional and voluntary-based NGO</p>	<p>Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection Agricultural workers UAMs</p>
<p>Caltagirone</p>	<p>Conservative small town</p>	<p>Discrimination Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees</p>	<p>Professional NGOs managing reception facilities</p>	<p>Activities within the reception system</p>	<p>Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection UAMs</p>



Acate	Conservative rural area	Discrimination Precarious working conditions and consequent lack of economic guarantees Labour exploitation in rural areas and lack of means of transport	Professional NGOs managing reception facilities Voluntary- and professional-based NGOs Municipality	Activities within the reception system Accommodation of victims of exploitation in rural areas by professional and voluntary-based NGO Accommodation of homeless seasonal workers in agriculture with the municipality as the promoter	Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection Agricultural workers
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4. Access to employment

4.1. Main challenges / obstacles

4.1.1. Employment situation by locality and economic sector

In Italy, migrants' participation in the labour market is characterised by some peculiar traits that it is important to keep in mind while analysing the situation of post-2014 migrants. First, in the EU14 Italy is the country with the least educated immigrants (14% have tertiary education) - and the lowest share of natives with tertiary education (20%). Among the main recipient countries, Italy stands out as that where **immigrants have the highest differential probability of being at the bottom of the income distribution** (with 11.6 percentage points higher probability of being in the bottom decile than natives), and the highest gap in the probability of being in the top decile. The **immigrant-native differences in occupational status**, both for men and for women, are more than twice the European average. Finally, among the countries with a historically large immigrant presence, Italy hosts the highest share of immigrant women over the total immigrant population (55%)⁴⁴. However, women are a slight minority among post-2014 migrants.

Given that in Italy migrants occupy the lower segments of the labour market with extremely poor possibility of upward economic mobility⁴⁵, **migrants arriving after 2014 generally manage to find jobs** not by occupying the positions left empty by those who arrived before them and have improved their situation, rather **by accepting worse working conditions and lower wages**. This is particularly **evident in agriculture and logistics**. Whereas in the first sector we have not identified any tensions between different migrant cohorts, in the large logistic hub of Novara the greater vulnerability and limited willingness of newcomers to support unions' requests for better work conditions have caused tensions with other workers.

Against this backdrop, the six Italian localities are characterised by different labour market dynamics. First, they can be clustered according to the **size of labour demand**. Although, among Italian regions, Piedmont and Sicily do not show particularly good economic performances, the **labour demand is relatively high in Cuneo, Novara, Siracusa and Acate** when compared to the other municipalities of the respective regions. In contrast, job opportunities are limited in Avigliana and Caltagirone. Because of that, **Cuneo, Novara,**

⁴⁴ Frattini, T. and I. Solmone, *6th Migration Observatory Report: Immigrant Integration in Europe, 2022*, Fondazione Collegio Carlo Alberto and Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano, https://dagliano.unimi.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Obs_Mig_6_Annual_Report.pdf

⁴⁵ Venturini, A. and C. Villosio. 2018. "Are Migrants an Asset in Recession? Insights from Italy", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44 (14): 2340–2357; Frattini, T. and I. Solmone, *6th Migration Observatory Report: Immigrant Integration in Europe, 2022*, Fondazione Collegio Carlo Alberto and Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano.



Siracusa and Acate appear able to attract substantial numbers of post-2014 migrant workers coming from other areas while this is not the case for Avigliana and Caltagirone, two localities which post-2014 migrants tend to leave after reception.

Second, localities can be grouped according to the **economic sectors in which post-2014 migrants are mainly employed**. In Piedmont, **logistics**, such as storekeeping, cleaning services for companies, offers very precarious and low-wage jobs, so that post-2014 migrants can find relevant job opportunities there. Moreover, it was one of the few sectors that did not suffer from the pandemic restrictions; on the contrary, it took advantage of that (eg. increasing demand for sanitation, food delivery, shipping). In Novara this sector is particularly large-size since the province hosts a large logistic hub which includes shipping warehouses for e-commerce companies. **Construction industry** has always been an important sector of employment for migrants almost everywhere, although occasional and/or undeclared work is very widespread and is often the only option for the newly arrived migrants. Although the construction industry has never fully resumed after the Great Recession and was particularly hit by the lockdown related to the pandemic in 2020, it boosted after the generous economic benefits introduced in 2021 by the government for housing renewal so that the labour demand has been exceptionally high in the last two years. **Manufacturing**, which is particularly relevant in Cuneo, Novara and Caltagirone, generally offers better work contracts, although post-2014 migrants perform low-level and more demanding tasks. Moreover, the size of labour demand is not the same everywhere: whereas in Cuneo and Novara the manufacturing districts employ large numbers of workers including post-2014 migrants, in Caltagirone manufacturing mainly consists of small- and medium-size pottery manufacturing companies with limited job opportunities.

Agriculture is a key sector in Cuneo, Siracusa and Acate. This sector is characterised by specific dynamics because of the high share of seasonal workers and the prevalence of informal recruitment channels. **Entry barriers to this employment sector are low but working conditions are extremely bad (long working days, low wages and poor rights). Moreover, seasonal workers, being highly mobile, are generally not enrolled in municipal registers**, a prerequisite to access local welfare provisions, including social services, social housing, and full healthcare rights.

In Piedmont, the working conditions in agriculture have worsened when post-2014 migrants, by accepting lower wages, have crowded out previously arrived migrants. According to interviewees, they can accept lower salaries because, being single, they face lower expenses than people with families. Moreover, when hosted in reception facilities, where lodge and board are provided, expenses are even lower.

The worse working conditions of post-2014 migrant seasonal workers also depend on the **weaker social networks** they have, so that they often move around the country **outside any work chains with fellows or employers able to provide support**. Consequently, they have more difficulties in finding employment and especially accommodation, and are **more frequently unemployed and/or homeless** compared to migrant workers who arrived before



them. However, there are **relevant differences between the Northern (Piedmont) and Southern (Sicily) localities**. Whereas in the Southern localities undeclared work is widespread, in the North “grey employment”, where work contracts are registered but with lower working hours than the actual ones, is the rule. Furthermore, in the South informal camps without water, electricity and sewer systems are a usual solution for seasonal workers while it is not the case in the North, where the phenomenon is far more limited and local stakeholders, including municipalities, mobilise to offer accommodation to those who are not hosted by employers (see section 3.3).

Another employment sector worth mentioning for Sicily is **hospitality**. Specifically, many post-2014 migrants find low-skilled job opportunities linked to tourism (e.g. cleaners or waiters in restaurants and hotels). Among the localities considered, this is the case for Siracusa, where tourism is the most relevant economic sector, together with the agri-food industry. As in the other sectors mentioned above, in hospitality, too, informality and discrimination negatively affect post-2014 migrants. In addition, this sector, unlike agriculture, has been particularly affected by the economic crisis ensuing from the pandemic, with shrinking migrant labour demand in the last two years.

Finally, it is worth emphasising that domestic work, despite being one of the main sectors of employment for migrants, offers few opportunities for the post-2014 target group: according to interviewees, this depends on the fact that, coming mainly from Africa and South Asia, post-2014 migrants cannot rely on specific work chains in this sector and face higher racial discrimination.

4.1.2. Main challenges to post-2014 migrants’ inclusion in the labour market

Shifting to the **main challenges, discrimination** is regarded by the majority of interviewees as relevant obstacle for post-2014 migrants, even when compared to other groups of migrants because of the origin, the prevalence of young single men and the high share of marginalised people - the anti-migrant national campaign occurred between 20014 and 2018 has contributed as well. Specifically, **discrimination seems to be higher against people of colour** - as the large majority of post-2014 migrants - **when tasks have to be performed in private houses** (e.g. care and domestic workers, plumbers, electricians, etc.), **in public, in high-visibility roles or in direct contact with customers** (e.g. waiters in restaurants, bars, hotel staff etc.).

It is worth underlining that in **Avigliana** this phenomenon appears more limited. There, the positive attitudes of natives towards migrants, the whole of community approach promoted by professional and voluntary-based NGOs and their strong relations with local employers, has led to post-2014 migrants’ employment in activities where they are in direct contact with customers or families such as retail activities, repairing services and sometimes even in the domestic sector, without facing relevant problems of discrimination.



For those jobs where contacts with native clients do not exist, some interviewed employers maintain that exploitation, rather than the result of ethnic discrimination, is due to the **limited bargain power of this specific category of people** because of the uncertainty of their socio-economic conditions (and sometimes also of their legal status) and the rather low skills.

“It’s all about money. Employers exploit them [post-2014 migrants] because they are the weakest group, regardless of skin colour. Thirty years ago it happened with migrants from Southern Italy” (I-Cu-17, private employer)

Further penalisation derives from being women with children, since care duties are regarded as possible causes of delays and absence from work. Moreover, it is important to consider that nurseries and facilities for children below 3 years old are scarce in Italy, as is the supply of part-time jobs.

Not having a private car drastically reduces job opportunities, too, given that in small towns and rural areas workplaces are scattered and public transport is extremely poor. In the case of Acate and its surroundings, this also results in owners of private means of transport providing transportation services to post-2014 migrants in exchange for exploitative fees.

“The problems are: not having a car - it holds for everybody; having a little child so that your availability is reduced (...) The presence of children in mononuclear families is a problem, also for Italian women, even more if you are foreigner, because you are alone, without relatives, employers are afraid that you don’t have a network [to take care of the children]” (I-Cu-10, service provider)

Other issues seem to be related to the specific profile of post-2014 migrants. Specifically, interviewees highlight that they have **lower education, and poorer hard and soft skills** compared to labour migrants who arrived before them from North Africa and especially Eastern Europe.

“Sub-saharan people are not competitive at all. The required skills are high: there is less and less room for not-skilled manpower (...) The problem is that there are differences between here and the country of origin with regard to both work organisation and technical issue” (I-Cu-12, non-profit employment agency)

Problems highlighted by employers are more or less the same identified by employment agencies and NGOs, although the first put more emphasis on lacking policies. Specifically, in Cuneo, Novara, and Caltagirone they complain about some limits of local policies affecting post-2014 migrants' employability: poor language learning and basic education that are regarded as a precondition for on-the-job learning; lacking public transports that make private means of transport necessary to reach workplaces; complex procedures for renewing residence permits that hamper employers' understanding of the residents' permit duration; and housing. In Novara, Siracusa, and Acate employers also complain about the lack of services matching labour supply and demand – that does not concern only migrants but also natives.

“Italian language is an enormous difficulty, many are not even able to do the interview (...) In 2018-2019 we looked for organisations that offered language courses in Cuneo, possibly compatible with work, for instance in the evening, but we found nothing (...) What is needed is someone who help them with the documents, and help them for finding houses” (I-Cu-17, private employer)

“The problem is the lack of basic education, I have noticed a complete absence of maths competences (...) The fact that the enterprise has to look for courses is a pitfall, it is left to chance. It would be better if you could call, explain what kind of training is needed and have a channel” (I-Cu-16, private employers).

“There is no public policy to foster the workers' recruitment process, to accompany migrants into the working environment, to support mobility with public transports and facilities ... it would be enough to look at what happens in Germany and Sweden and copy from these countries, which are models of integration. Here, there are no structured services, only bilateral relationships with some NGOs based on informal relations” (I-N-10, private employer)

“Access to the labour market is left to chance by word of mouth. (...) There are no databases, they come to us every day with documents, it is an organised disorganisation. (...) Employment centres are outdated, they have no reason to exist, I don't know any worker who has settled in this way. Nor a worker who has been stabilised through training courses.” (I-Ac-1, private employer)

In Avigliana, where local residents, social workers, policy makers and employers dealing with post-2014 form a close-knit network employers tend to emphasise the responsibilities of the national government, rather than the local one. Actually, the opposition between the local

community and the national level has emerged also on asylum seekers' reception as well as on infrastructures⁴⁶, and appears as a peculiar trait of the cohesive network that has developed in the Valley around some key issues.

Against this backdrop, **vocation training** shows rather specific problems. In Italy, we can distinguish two types of vocational training: 1) that ruled by regions, which decide upon courses' content and organisation and the qualifications that can be issued; and 2) ad hoc training initiatives, whose content depends on the market dynamics or projects' design. The first type is provided by public, non-profit and for-profit certified organisations and generally requires a lower secondary education degree to get access to courses. The second type can be provided by either certified and not certified organisations and, being often conceived of within specific projects, do not have specific requirements and (post-2014) migrants may be a specific target. Consequently, the first type is marginal among post-2014 migrants, the second type of training is much more common. The main challenges concern the vocation training ruled by regions and consist of:

- 1) the requirement of a lower secondary education degree to accede the courses that hampers the access of those (many) migrants who face difficulties in obtaining the recognition of educational qualifications;
- 2) the mismatch between the content of the training course and the actual market dynamics so that skills that are much demanded in the labour market are not offered by this vocational training;
- 3) poor flexibility and long duration of courses' calendar while post-2014 migrants need to accede courses all over the year, attend them after the working day or in the weekend, and receive a short training in order to begin to work as soon as possible to send money back to the country of origin;
- 4) the obsolescence of the machines employed during the training, which are very different from those actually used by enterprises.

“There is a gap between the labour market and the training entities which use old machines (...) This anachronistic training is a problem: I already struggle to convince them [post-2014 migrants] to be trained, if it is useless... (...) To put people in training is not easy: they immediately need an income to send their families some money; their representation of time is focused on the present, they have no idea of the future, for them the future is difficult to figure out; finally, almost everybody does not have a lower secondary school degree” (I-Cu-12, non-profit employment agency)

⁴⁶ Tiziana Caponio, Davide Donatiello & Irene Ponzio, Relational and reputational resources in the governance of top-down asylum seekers' reception in Italian rural areas, *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 2021

Although those limits of vocational training are well-known in the whole country, among our case studies they have been highlighted especially in Novara and Cuneo where, as explained before, the labour demand is high and the local economy needs increasingly skilled workers. So, having trained post-2014 migrants would be important for local business.

4.1.3. Peculiar traits of the target localities

Considering the single case studies, we can affirm that **Cuneo** appears as the locality with **the widest range of sectors and an extremely high labour demand**. There, the labour demand for manufacturing, logistics and construction is so high that employers use all the possible channels of recruitment (informal contacts and public, non-profit and for-profit employment agencies), are often available to hire post-2014 even when aware of their poor language knowledge and skills, and in the phase of recruitment **tend to not discriminate on the base of ethnicity because of the pressing need of manpower**, i.e. discrimination is more feasible when labour supply exceeds demand. Nevertheless, according to interviewees, **turnover among post-2014 is higher** than that of migrants who arrived earlier, since the poor soft skills and different cultures of work and reciprocal expectations often lead to break the employment relation. **Exploitation** is particularly evident in **agriculture** with a gang mastering system that has expanded in the last years.

Also in **Novara** the **labour demand is high**, and mainly concentrated in **manufacturing and logistics**, with the latter going through a rapid expansion and then constitutes an attracting pole for post-2014 migrants. This last sector is characterised by harsh work conditions, since the subcontracting to cooperatives⁴⁷ by big companies fosters forms of **exploitation and gang mastering**. Given that, **ethnic networks and temporary employment agencies** are the major channels of recruitment, whereas non profit services have weak relations with the enterprises.

“In the logistic sector there is often exploitation, large companies generally outsource to cooperatives which apply the multiservice contract, regularising only half of the working hours. This creates phenomena of social dumping with detrimental effects on the integration of these people who cultivate resentment and frustration” (I-N-10, private employer)

In **Avigliana** and the surrounding municipalities the labour demand is rather low, and mainly concentrated in **restaurants, retail trade activities and repairing services** (e.g. tyre dealers, refrigeration specialists). Because of the small size of the local community, **social networks**

⁴⁷ Some of them are targeted as “fake” since they instrumentally use the legal form of cooperatives to circumvent the law with regard to taxes and workers’ rights.



are crucial to seek jobs. Specifically, **locals are important brokers limiting both segregation and exploitation**, that appear lower than in the other target localities.

Among the Sicilian cases, **Siracusa** is the locality offering more **diversified employment opportunities** to post-2014 migrants. **Labour demand is high** in the **agricultural sector** and, despite the pandemic, in **hospitality**, so much so that this locality attracts migrants from other parts of the region. Migrant labour in these two sectors is characterised by a high level of **informality**, both regarding employment channels and work contracts, recurring forms of **exploitation** and **discrimination** by employers.

In **Caltagirone**, **the general economic situation is worse and labour demand is low**. Those post-2014 migrants who remain in the locality after reception find employment in either of the two local economic sectors, namely **agriculture and manufacturing**. The latter is based on small or medium-sized **pottery manufacturers**. Given the size of the locality, trust-based personal networks are by far the most effective channels to match labour supply and demand. More specifically, **locals who work in direct contact with post-2014 migrants, i.e. NGO workers, act as brokers** and use their own reputation or their organisations for the migrants' job placement after the reception period.

"I'm actually very satisfied because we found some very favourable contacts to take the guys for internships. Initially companies didn't understand the importance of having an extra person, without even having to pay this person with your own money. They were a little reluctant because of prejudices. But today it's much less so, and, in fact, there are many companies that contact us." (I-Ca-8, professional-based NGO service provider)

Regarding **Acate** and its surroundings, the local economy relies on a very large and productive **agricultural sector**. **Low-skilled labour demand is high** and **informality and the gang mastering system** remain pervasive. Despite this locality being small, unlike in Caltagirone, in Acate trust-based networks are not necessary to find employment because of the high demand of low-skilled daylabour. As illustrated above, post-2014 migrants are highly exposed to accepting low wages, long working hours, and bad work conditions, including being subject to outright exploitation and inadequate accommodation.

4.2. Actors involved (WHO)

4.2.1 Main actors

In our target localities, **municipalities play a rather marginal role** since employment is a regional competence rather than a municipal one. Indeed, municipalities might be leaders or partners in projects with NGOs where employment measures are delivered alongside other types of interventions such as in the case of Avigliana, Siracusa, Acate and Santa Croce Camerina.

“The municipality has no competences on employment, has no obligations, it can intervene on voluntary basis as it does for all citizens. Because of that, in Cuneo nothing has been done”. (I-Cu-8, trade union)

Instead, Service for Work (*Servizi al Lavoro*)⁴⁸ appear as key actors. They can be public, non-profit and for-profit. The public Services for Work, named Public Employment Agencies, are the main tool of intervention of the regions, which hold the main competences in the field of employment. They have several premises in all Italian provinces in order to cover the whole territory - as for our case studies, their premises are within municipal borders in Novara, Cuneo, Siracusa and Caltagirone and outside the municipal borders in rural areas of Avigliana and Caltagirone. Their main services consist of supporting clients in drafting their CVs, providing labour market orientation, generally within EU/national programmes (eg. Youth Guarantee), and keeping track of recruitments while they play an extremely marginal role in matching labour supply and demand. Although they should act as brokers, they have weak relations with private companies which in turn seldom ask Public Employment Agencies for candidates, because of their reputation of inefficiency. This is particularly evident in the Sicilian localities where Public Employment Agencies struggle to deliver more targeted services to migrants and are regarded as generally inefficient by employers, particularly compared to available informal channels. Also in Novara and Avigliana employers do not generally rely on public agencies to recruit workers. Still, in Avigliana they are regarded as relevant actors by NGOs within reception and integration projects where the local Public Employment Agency deals with administrative tasks related to internships, and hosts project-based activities carried out by NGOs in its venue. In contrast, Public Employment Agencies seem able to play some role in Cuneo, where labour demand is extremely high, and employers use all the available channels for recruitment.

⁴⁸ Services for Work (SAL - *Servizi al Lavoro* in Italian) have to be enrolled in a regional register to intermediate between labour demand and supply.



In the last years, as a consequence of governmental decisions, Public Employment Agencies' staff has expanded and its training has been enhanced, also with regard to migrant beneficiaries. Nevertheless, all the interviewed Public Employment Agencies declare to have **no specific measures to support migrants** (e. translated materials, intercultural mediators, etc.) stressing that **they treat all the beneficiaries in the same way without considering the migratory background**. Yet, **in Piedmont, each Agency has appointed a immigration reference person who is in charge of following the legislative changes concerning migration**: it has been the result of the institutionalisation of a project-based measure previously adopted in the province of Turin and then extended to the whole Piedmont, when the competences over the Public Employment Agencies passed from the provinces to the regions. This is an exception in the Italian context though (eg. Sicily's Agencies do not have an immigration reference person).

Instead, **Non-profit Services for Work**, paying special attention to vulnerable social categories, generally **play a crucial role in the post-2014 migrants' integration into the labour market**. Those organisations are rather heterogeneous: in our case studies, they go from organisations stemming from Caritas (Cuneo), training agencies (Novara), social cooperatives (Avigliana, Siracusa, Caltagirone). Generally, those organisations look for enterprises available to give chances to weaker social categories rather than being reached out by employers in search of candidates. As a result, **they generally have a selected list of employers** to which they turn to activate internships or seek job opportunities for post-2014 migrants.

Finally, **For-profit Services for Work**, i.e. (temporary) employment agencies, intermediate **the largest quota of non-skilled work** since enterprises generally ask them for workers, especially **temporary workers**. Because of that, they have many post-2014 migrants as clients.

While employment agencies act as brokers in the job hunt phase, trade unions are active in upholding the rights of those migrants already employed through advocacy campaigns and administrative services. Moreover, they generally offer support administrative services with particular regard to resident permits, employment-related issues (es. work contracts, amnesty procedures, etc) and fiscal and bureaucratic procedures.

Their role is **particularly prominent in the selected localities in Sicily**, most notably Caltagirone and Acate. This can be explained by two factors. First, here trade unions have a long-standing presence in the territory, and, secondly, they are perceived as being the most reliable and accessible contact points for administrative issues by post-2014 migrants, who often find a less supportive environment in other public/municipal offices.

Yet, **trade unions' relevance with regard to post-2014 migrants has been growing also in Piedmontese localities**, especially in Cuneo's agriculture sector where they are important actors in the fight against the gang mastering system and in Novara's logistic sector with an increasing unionisation of workers and activism in upholding their rights.

This being said, **ethnic networks** appear as key channels for post-2014 migrants to seek jobs, especially in sectors, like agriculture and logistics, where entry barriers are low. The



importance of ethnic networks seems to further increase in conservative localities, where policies are weaker and local actors less active, such as in Novara and Acate.

In addition, **native-born residents**, particularly social workers met during the reception stage, might be important brokers as well, as emerged in Avigliana and Caltagirone. Given the different political and social context of these localities, a possible explanation could be that, where labour demand is lower and the various channels of recruitment are not under stress, social relations appear more relevant. The fact that native-born brokers rely on their trust-based personal networks seems also to **contribute to limiting the likelihood of segregation and exploitation**.

4.2.2 Peculiar traits of the target localities

Although the **actors** described above play similar functions in all six localities, their **importance varies across the case studies**. As for **Piedmont**, in **Cuneo**, apart from agriculture where informal contacts prevail, public, non-profit and for-profit employment agencies seem to play some role in matching labour demand and supply alongside with ethnic networks. In **Novara**, public and non-profit employment agencies and, more generally, public policies in this field are marginal. As a result, ethnic networks are the main channels for seeking jobs. Aside from this channel, temporary employment private agencies are important channels of recruitment particularly in the logistic sector. In **Avigliana** the local network consisting of social workers, volunteers, voluntary guardians of UAMs, and sensitive citizens play a crucial role to enhance labour integration of post-2014 migrants.

Regarding **Sicily**, in **Siracusa** both agriculture and hospitality rely mostly on informal recruitment networks, although non-profit and for-profit employment agencies are also active. In **Caltagirone**, employment agencies have a negligible role and recruitment happens via informal channels, most notably through social workers and NGOs within the reception system. The same applies to **Acate**, where employment agencies are virtually absent or are not trusted by employers, and the prevalence of day-labour work makes informal recruitment through natives' networks the distinguishing feature of migrant employment in this locality.

Overall, in terms of relations and views, we can affirm that conflicts are few, with the exception of trade unions and NGOs that try to contrast migrants' exploitation by employers, especially in agriculture (Cuneo, Siracusa and Acate) and logistics (Novara). On the other hand, collaboration generally develops between non-profit organisations and, in the case of Avigliana, includes policy-makers, volunteers, employers and private citizens that belong to a tight-knit network.

4.3. Policies, initiatives, and practices that foster/hinder access (WHAT)

4.3.1. Novara

In Novara, measures concerning employment integration are usually **small-size interventions** promoted by **NGOs** managing CAS facilities and the two nationwide voluntary-based NGOs (Caritas and Comunità di S. Egidio) whereas **public actors are absent**, i.e., the municipality is not involved in any intervention and the Local Public Employment Agency does not appear as a relevant actor in the recruitment stage, and it is not generally regarded as a point of reference by NGOs.

The above-mentioned interventions promoted by NGOs are generally based on **bi-lateral collaboration between single NGOs and vocational training agencies**, rather than relying on wider networks. These projects address post-2014 migrants, including UAMs, and offer the following services:

- • Job guidance (i.e. support in drafting the CV; orientation towards the labour market and the vocational training);
- • Short and ad hoc professional training courses;
- • Matching of labour supply and demand;
- • Activation and monitoring of internships in local enterprises (whose costs could be covered by the CAS system for CAS beneficiaries, by other regional programmes like “Buoni servizi” or “Youth Guarantee”, see section 2.1).

The effectiveness of these projects depends mostly on the training agencies’ networks which do not necessarily reflect the demand of the local labour market. Training agencies generally have weak relations with the expanding logistic sector, since they are regarded as inappropriate in providing the required skills to workers. Among the other targeted sectors, training agencies have closer ties with restaurants and manufacturing industries. In both sectors several internships were activated, but the second generally offered more chances of placement.

Apart from these measures, it is worth noting that **trade unions** are active on migrant workers’ rights, especially in the **logistic sector** since it is considered particularly critical in terms of work conditions.

Overall, policies in the field of employment are poor and the market, especially **private (temporary) employment agencies, play the biggest role.**



This lack of policies is generally ascribed to the **lack of strategy** at national and regional level. Besides, some employers also complain about the **lack of local policies** aimed at enhancing the **mobility** of workers from Novara towards the logistic hubs spread out in the province, where facilities for workers and public transport are rather poor.

4.3.2. Cuneo

In Cuneo, the measures concerning labour integration are rather poor and can be grouped into two clusters: 1) activities to foster employability and seek jobs; 2) improvements of migrants' rights and working conditions.

The first cluster revolve around two main actors, i.e. the CIS Consortium, that stems from Caritas and leads the NGOs managing the municipal SAI reception project, and the local **Public Employment Agency** which on paper offer almost the same services but **differ for their approaches to migrants**.

CIS is the only Service for Work with a social vocation in Cuneo with migrants as a relevant target. It has always supported migrants in labour integration but, with its involvement in SAI, its action has widened. Indeed, in Cuneo the SAI services, including those concerning employment, have been opened to all regular migrants. This is not a standard solution since in Italy the SAI integration measures generally address only those migrants hosted in its reception facilities. However, this solution has been agreed with the national SAI Central Service and has been adopted by other Italian localities as well so it is not a peculiarity of Cuneo.

The services offered by the CIS Consortium are the following:

- drafting the CV
- orientation to the labour market
- orientation toward vocational training
- matching of labour supply and demand
- activation and monitoring of internship in local enterprises (whose costs could be covered by SAI for SAI's beneficiaries, by other regional programmes like "Buoni servizi", see section 1.1, or by the private enterprises hosting the internship)
- during summer, offering transports to the neighbouring valleys where migrants are often employed in seasonal jobs

Over time, CIS has gained the **local enterprises' trust** which is a key element to support post-2014 migrants' integration into the labour market and to overcome some of the main obstacles illustrated in section 4.1.

"If you had sent a good candidate, enterprises reach you even if you do not have economic resources to cover the intership's costs" (I-Cu-12, non profit employment agency)



“Cuneo is a sensitive realities: we have a fruitful collaboration with some organisations such as CIS (....) In Rome these dynamics are impossible. In the small settlements you manage to establish a human relationship, to build something good” (I-Cu-17, private employer)

On paper, the same services are provided by the local Public Employment Agency that, however, do not have a specific attention for post-2014 migrants or migrants in general, except for the immigration reference appointed in each Public Employment Agency in Piedmont (see section 4.1.1). Nevertheless, it has joined the most relevant project in this regard, such as the AMIF-funded regional programmes to foster migrants’ employability “PRIMA” (2018-2020) (see section 1.1), although without relevant long-term effects. Interviewed employers say that the relations with the Public Employment Agency are less tight and trusted than those with CIS, but use it to seek candidates.

Finally, private employers agencies are key in employment dynamics of post-2014 migrants but follow the market logics and are not involved in local measures and policies.

As for the **second cluster of activities**, the main actors are **trade unions** that are not relevant in the recruitment stage while they are rather **active on migrant workers’ rights**. Specifically, trade unions (CGIL) have an office in the main town of the province, including Cuneo, dedicated to migrants where they provide information and legal assistance. In the period 2014-2017, when reception facilities multiplied, they went to explain workers’ rights to people hosted there.

Moreover, trade unions have been playing a rather important role in fighting the local gang mastering system and promoting legal work contracts in agriculture through the collaboration with other local actors and within the regional project “Good Land” (2020-2022) (see section 1.1).

It is worth reminding that the **municipality** is partner of the “Good Land” (2020-2022) project too, although mainly engaged in the field of accommodation (see section 3.3.2), and is the leader of SAI where CIS services are provided. Yet, overall, its role in post-2014 migrants’ employment is marginal.

Overall, **the pandemic has produced negative effects** on labour integration not only in terms of employment opportunities when some enterprises had to freeze their activities, but also in terms of internship and vocational training that were interrupted because of the health-related restrictions and difficulties tend to persist also after the end of restrictions.

4.3.3. Avigliana and surrounding villages

In Avigliana and the surrounding villages, **the approach to migrants’ employment has been developed within the reception system**, which could also take advantage of the fact that one of the managing cooperatives, ORSO, is a non-profit employment agency with a specific experience with migrants. Specifically, by building individual projects that took into account



personal trajectories and pooled the various local resources (language courses, vocational training, internships, leisure activities and sports, etc) and developed extensive networks with local entrepreneurs, the CAS reception project (MAD, 2016-2020) was able to activate more than one hundred internships for asylum seekers and refugees hosted in reception facilities from 2016 to 2021. The costs of these internships were covered by the reception system and by regional programs (such as “Buoni Servizi”). As a result, several post-2014 migrants have been trained as chefs, gardeners, bakers, clerks, and repair workers in several local companies in the valley.

The approach developed within reception and mainly aimed at migrants’ empowerment has been further enhanced through the projects funded by philanthropic foundations already described in section 3.3.3. These projects address two different targets, i.e, migrants in general (POLI, June 2021- November 2022) and UAMs (Tomorrow Together, April 2019-March 2022, and Time to Time, November 2021- October 2024). They concern both housing and employment integration since these two aspects are considered strongly connected in the path towards socio-economic self-reliance.

Concerning employment integration these projects encompass the following services:

- Job guidance (such as support in drafting CV, competence assessment, information on local labour market);
- Orientation to the local public services;
- Information and training on migrants’ integration targeting local employers;
- Safety course and short vocational training courses (in the case of projects specifically designed for UAMs);
- Matching of labour supply and demands;
- Activation and monitoring of internships in the local companies (in the case of projects specifically designed for UAMs)

In interventions targeting **adults**, the municipality and social services are generally tasked with coordination. **The case of UAMs** is quite different since public actors are also involved in implementation. For instance, **social services and Provincial Centers for Adult Education** have activated internships in the local companies. In all interventions, it is worth highlighting that **NGOs play a crucial role not only in the implementation process but also in the policy formulation.**

Social workers from NGOs and public services, who generally live in the Valley, usually go through **informal channels** to find opportunities of placement for post-2014 migrants. As a result, discrimination is limited because of the following factors: the presence of strong relations between NGOs and some local employers; and the positive attitudes of natives towards migrants.



Nevertheless, the interviewees generally underline **that job opportunities are rather low**, and this explains why, apart from families with minors whose mobility is more challenging, the majority of migrants have left the valley.

4.3.4. Siracusa

In Siracusa, most labour integration initiatives do not regard employment directly, but are aimed at **improving migrants' access to legal counselling and administrative services**, and **promoting agricultural workers' rights**. These initiatives consist of **project-based interventions led by the Municipality and implemented by NGOs**.

As for **access to legal and administrative services**, we can distinguish **two clusters of activities**: 1) project-based initiatives led by the municipality; and 2) activities carried out by local NGOs with their own resources.

The **first cluster** consists of the AMIF-funded project “Municipality of Peoples (*Comune dei Popoli*)” that, among other things, has established an administrative service orientation desk and a training centre with qualified operators. The project, led by the municipality, is implemented in partnership with the major NGOs active in Siracusa, including the local professional NGO Impact Hub, the local branch of nation-wide NGO Arci, and religious NGO CIAO.

The **second cluster** encompasses the advocacy and independent orientation services that voluntary-based and professional NGOs as well as unions provide with their own resources. Cultural and advocacy nation-wide NGO Arci carries out advocacy activities and provides orientation and support services, including on employment. CIAO (Intercultural Help and Orientation Centre), a local faith-based NGO, offers a wide range of activities to all residents, including training and orientation services targeting in particular UAMs and young adult migrants. Local professional-based NGO Impact Hub delivers training on entrepreneurship to both native-born residents and migrants.

Regarding the **promotion of agricultural workers' rights**, the municipality is the leading partner of the ACCA Project funded in 2020 by the Ministry of Interior through PON Legality funds whereas local NGOs are implementing partners. In addition to providing temporary accommodation and on-site healthcare, the project, implemented in the rural hamlet of Cassabile, offers legal counselling to inform workers about their rights in a context of widespread exploitation and informality.

Beyond legal counselling and the promotion of workers' rights, **non-profit service for work Passwork** targets vulnerable categories including (regular) migrants and appears to have a much more **strategic approach to job placement**. In addition to delivering training and orientation services funded through the central government or SAI resources, this cooperative aims to conclude partnerships with companies in the agri-food industry that also sell abroad and, therefore, are less liable to periods of crisis at the local level compared to small companies in the same sector or in hospitality.

4.3.5. Caltagirone

In Caltagirone, initiatives regarding labour integration are carried out within SAI reception facilities by local professional-based NGO service providers and address only migrants hosted there. They provide traineeships, vocational training and labour orientation services, and activate and monitor internships in local private enterprises, as foreseen by the national SAI reception programme (see section 2.1).

Unlike the other two cases in Sicily, here there is a **more regular and effective collaboration between SAI service providers and private employers**. This can be explained by the fact that Caltagirone presents a close-knit labour market compared to both Siracusa, which is a large locality, and Acate, which, despite being a village, has an extremely vast and mostly informal agricultural labour market. The match between reception beneficiaries and employers happens on a case-by-case basis, using NGO workers' personal networks and positive reputation in Caltagirone. Specifically, in this locality **a small but significant group of private employers is involved in labour integration** in the form of taking reception beneficiaries for internship and, in some cases, hiring them. The cooperation between NGO service providers and employers is **concentrated in town**, thanks to the job opportunities in manufacturing, and not in rural areas, although some post-2014 migrants find employment in agriculture, too. The combination of size and concentration of job opportunities results in the fact that SAI service providers have a better reach to potential employers.

The **local Public Employment Agency** provides labour orientation and employability services to this target group, too, but its role is **marginal** and it recurs systematically to the support of SAI service providers to have immigration-specific insights.

As in the other Sicilian cases, in Caltagirone, too, **trade unions are actively involved in advocacy and counselling services**. Specifically, in Caltagirone, the local branch of the nationwide union CGIL has enhanced its legal counselling services through the AMIF-funded SHUBH project, activating an office on the model of the one-stop-shop approach to labour integration.

4.3.6. Acate and Santa Croce Camerina

In Acate and the neighbouring locality of Santa Croce Camerina, **labour integration initiatives are limited and regard migrant agricultural workers**. More specifically, these initiatives are based on projects **promoted by the higher levels of government** and regard the promotion of workers' rights and regular work contracts.

Specifically, the Municipalities of Acate and Santa Croce Camerina sit as partners at the Permanent Thematic Tables summoned by the Prefecture of Ragusa to promote the



regularisation of work contracts and fight labour exploitation (see section 3.3.6). The goal of the Tables is to enhance the ability of the local actors to coordinate on those issues and to attract resources. Specifically, on the one hand, they serve as a coordination platform for the Prefecture; on the other, they have the goal of promoting the submission of integration projects by the municipalities under AMIF and PON national funding programmes. In this framework, the municipalities of Acate and Santa Croce have both initiated projects under PON Legality programme that combines housing support (see section 3.3.6) and legal assistance to victims of labour exploitation, in cooperation with professional and voluntary-based NGOs.

When it comes to advocacy for labour integration, the local branches of nation-wide trade unions appear to have a much more limited role in Acate compared to other Sicilian localities. When it comes to labour integration, their role appears to be limited to administrative service provision (see section 4.2.1). In contrast, professional and voluntary-based NGOs have an important role in promoting regular work contracts and are also involved in project-based initiatives. The local branch of the nation-wide NGO Caritas, by using its own resources, provides, among other services, legal counselling on workers' rights in the service centre located in the rural hamlet of Marina di Acate ("*Garrison Project (Progetto Presidio)*." This service is particularly meaningful because it covers a remote and vast rural area where there is no access to services and where many post-2014 migrants live and work, mostly with no regular work contracts. Caritas and the local professional-based NGO Proxima also implement the FARI Project, co-financed by the national government and the Municipality of Acate, which offers, among other things, employment orientation services to victims of labour exploitation in the area.

Labour integration support provided by reception facilities is limited or absent. In Acate, a SAI reception centre was active for a short period and closed in 2015, most likely because the residents protested against it (see WP3 report, 3.1.6). In the same year, two CAS centres were opened and their management entrusted to professional-based NGO Association Medintegra (Medintegrate Association). Before the outbreak of the **pandemic**, Association Medintegrate had tried to establish a job placement service for companies with the goal of promoting the conclusion of regular work contracts. This project, though, was interrupted due to the pandemic and has not resumed yet.

When it comes to matching supply and demand on the labour market, **local public employment agencies appear to be absent from the picture**. The matching happens informally, with the mediation of native or foreign-born intermediators in agriculture and often leading to informal or exploitative work relations. In addition, **the small size of this locality does not have an impact on placement**, unlike, for example, in Caltagirone. In Acate and its neighbouring localities, in fact, town centres are extremely small and have almost no productive activities within the urban area (e.g. mostly family-run cafes, grocery shops, other basic services). Job opportunities are scattered across an extremely vast rural area that private and public actors alike have little access to.

4.3.7. Comparative remarks

When it comes to integration into the labour market, **local authorities appear as rather marginal**. In Novara and Caltagirone they are absent from the picture. In Acate, their participation has been promoted and driven by the local prefecture. In Cuneo and Avigliana the municipality - and social services in the latter - lead or actively join projects where, however, employment is just a component. Only in Siracusa the municipality is actually proactive in this field by initiating and leading initiatives specifically focused on employment. On one hand, we can conclude that **politics matters**, given that local authorities play a greater role in the progressive localities of our sample, i.e. Cuneo, Avigliana and Siracusa. On the other hand, it emerges how **municipal entities do not perceive employment as a key field of intervention**.

NGOs appear far more active. Also in this regard, however, political tradition appears relevant. In conservative localities, NGOs partially make up for the marginal role of the local authorities developing initiatives even with their own resources (see Novara and Acate). At the same time, in progressive localities NGOs seem to have developed larger and tighter networks around employment, at least in Avigliana and Siracusa. Beside political tradition, geographical location is relevant as well. In Southern localities, NGOs are key actors in advocating against irregular work in agriculture, as informal employment and exploitation are extremely widespread (Siracusa and Acate). Similarly, trade unions seem to have a greater role than in the Northern localities in promoting initiatives (Siracusa and Caltagirone) due to their long-standing presence and grassroots involvement in local labour issues.

In terms of governance, the only platform on migrants' employment is the provincial Permanent Thematic Tables established by the Prefecture of Ragusa (Acate). In Cuneo, this issue has been gaining relevance in the "Clandestine Minerals" network gathering together tens of NGOs without however turning into concrete initiatives, whereas it is not a relevant issue in the Large and Small Tables summoned by the municipality, given that the latter has no specific competencies in this regard. In our case studies, coordination generally occurs within projects or through informal contacts.

Considering the **whole-of-community approach**, only Avigliana seems to mirror that model. More generally, **natives** (resident, social workers, volunteers etc) **act as informal brokers almost everywhere** but this is apparently more important where the labour demand is lower and finding jobs is far more challenging for post-2014 migrants, i.e. in Avigliana and Caltagirone. In contrast, **the business community is almost absent in local initiatives**. Only in Cuneo, the larger national association of agriculture entrepreneurs (Coldiretti) is a partner of the AMIF project "Good Land" but its action does not display within the municipality of Cuneo. At best, in our case studies single employers have informal collaborative relations with public and non-profit organisations and are available to host post-2014 migrants' internships or to hire them. Yet, it is worth underlining that in all the progressive localities the relations



between NGOs working on migrants' employment and local entrepreneurs appear more extensive and fruitful than in conservative case studies, probably because of the more developing welcoming culture towards migrants.

4.4. Specific target groups (FOR WHOM)

Starting from the assumption that post-2014 migrants never constitute a target *per se*, as already explained in section 3.4, we can distinguish **four main targets of employment measures**.

As for the **first target group**, those who enjoy the biggest support are **post-2014 migrants hosted in reception facilities**. Holders of international or national protection hosted in **SAI** reception facilities enjoy a wide range of services, can rely on a tutor who orients them to the labour market and local services and the costs of their internships are covered, thus becoming attractive candidates for employers. After the reforms of 2018 and 2020 (see section 2.1.1), asylum seekers cannot enjoy any support for seeking employment. However, relations with local services and enterprises that SAI projects usually have end up facilitating their inclusion into the labour market as well. This is partially an unintended side effect but also the result of the pro-migrant orientation of many NGOs managing SAI facilities which are willing to support asylum seekers as well and generally believe that effort for integration should start from the very beginning, without waiting for the definite decision about the asylum claim. Moreover, in Cuneo, the SAI services, including employment ones, have been opened to all regular migrants living in the municipality, either hosted or not in reception facilities. **CAS** facilities, instead, rely upon a far smaller budget per capita than SAI after the 2018 reform promoted by Matteo Salvini (see section 1.1) so that they can hardly afford professionals or resources devoted to foster beneficiaries' inclusion into the labour market. Nevertheless, **the situation varies across localities**. For instance, in Avigliana and in the surrounding villages CAS (i.e. MAD project, 2016-2020), played a crucial role in enhancing the labour integration of the post-2014 migrants, since a high share of refugees has been involved in internships in the local companies from 2016 to 2020 while in Acate labour integration offered by CAS is rather poor. Whereas in Novara the quality of the employment services of CAS varies widely from case to case, going from the lack of initiatives to small-scale projects consisting of short vocational training courses and internships in the local companies. The latter were reduced after the national reforms of 2018.

The second target is that of post-2014 migrants who have already left reception facilities: they generally cannot enjoy specific support. However, those of them who got some form of protection and are then regularly resident in the country can be included in the target of local projects addressing migrants in general - as for housing, irregular migrants cannot access publicly funded employment projects. This is the case of POLI in Avigliana, which provides different services (e.g. legal assistance, job guidance, orientation to local services) to migrants and all those people from the local community who need information/orientation on migrant-

related issues (e.g., employers, landlords, volunteers, etc). In Cuneo, the distinction between people hosted in SAI facilities and the other foreigners is blurred, as explained above, so that regular migrants who have left the reception facilities can keep enjoying several services. In Sicilian localities the support offered to migrants who have left reception facilities is less structured and on trust-based networks or on project-based initiatives, as in the case of the FARI project in Acate which offers comprehensive support (legal assistance, housing, job orientation) to victims of exploitation.

Agricultural seasonal workers, a large share of which is made up of post-2014 migrants, are often targets of specific interventions, also thanks to the central government’s increasing investment in the fight against the gang master system and informal settlements (see section 2.1) and the consequent availability of funds for regions, prefectures and other local actors to set up projects pursuing those goals. This is the case of Cuneo (project “Good Land”), Siracusa and Acate.

Finally, **UAMs** are relevant targets in Novara, Avigliana, Siracusa, and Caltagirone. For this target group, placement is usually preceded by vocational training and completion of primary or secondary education.

Table 3 - Case-by-case summary of results/findings regarding the area of Housing

CASE	WholeCOMM typology	Major obstacle(s)	Actor(s) involved	Measure(s)	Target group(s)
Novara	Conservative medium town	Lack of active labor market policies (job guidance, recruitment services) Poor language knowledge and lack of language classes Limits of vocational training Exploitation and irregular market	Professional NGOs (organizations that manage reception facilities and training agencies) Nationwide voluntary-based NGOs	Regional measures (mainly activated within the reception system) Standard measures of the reception system (with its resources) Work grants and internships promoted by voluntary-based NGOs	Migrants hosted in the reception system Young adults (former UAMs)



		<p>Mobility problems (no driving license, inadequate public transports)</p> <p>Lack of soft skills</p>			
Cuneo	Progressive small town	<p>Poor language knowledge</p> <p>Poor basic education</p> <p>Poor hard and soft skills</p> <p>Mobility problems</p>	For-profit, non-profit and public employment agencies	Standard measures of the reception system	Migrants
Avigliana	Progressive rural area	<p>Lack of job opportunities</p> <p>Poor language knowledge</p> <p>Lack of soft skills (lack of professional skills is considered partially relevant)</p>	<p>Professional and voluntary based NGOs</p> <p>Municipality</p>	<p>Standard measures of the reception projects</p> <p>Project-based initiatives funded by philanthropic foundations</p>	<p>Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection</p> <p>Former UAMs (involved in projects specifically designed for UAMs)</p>
Siracusa	Progressive medium town	Lack of active labor market policies (job guidance, recruitment services)	<p>Professional NGOs managing reception facilities</p> <p>Municipality</p> <p>Non-profit employment agency</p> <p>Trade unions</p>	<p>Standard measures of the reception system</p> <p>Initiatives regarding the regularisation of agricultural work contracts</p>	<p>Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection</p> <p>UAM</p> <p>Agricultural workers</p>
Caltagirone	Conservative small town	<p>Poor language knowledge</p> <p>Lack of job opportunities</p>	Professional NGOs managing reception facilities)	Standard measures of the reception system	<p>Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection</p> <p>UAMs</p>

			Public employment agency Trade unions		
Acate	Conservative rural area	Lack of active labor market policies (job guidance, recruitment services) Mobility problems	Professional NGOs managing reception facilities Municipality Professional and voluntary based NGOs Municipality Trade unions	Standard measures of the reception system Initiatives regarding the regularisation of agricultural work contracts	Asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection Agricultural workers

5. Access to other resources and services

5.1 Language learning

Poor language skills have been identified as one of the major obstacles to post-2014 migrants' inclusion in the labour market (see section 4.1). Indeed, employers consider knowledge of Italian language as a basic requirement that is necessary for carrying out interviews, understanding security norms and learning on the job. It is worth emphasising that employers are the only category of actors who complain about the poor language classes offered to newcomers, revealing as **the issue is not at the core of public debate despite its importance**.

“Vocational training is useless: you learn on the job (...) The most important missing things are the basic competences such as maths and language” (I-Cu-16, private employer)

As for **policies and actors involved**, it is important to stress that language classes are not mandatory. They are mainly provided by the Provincial Centres for Adult Education (CPIA –



Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti), that depend on the Ministry of Education, although part of the funds come from the Ministry of Interior through the AMIF programme (see section 1.1). Indeed, CPIAs play this function in all the target localities, also in cooperation with reception facilities, that may nevertheless provide their own courses. In Cuneo, language training provided within the local SAI is accessible to all (regular) migrants, as are all the SAI services. At the same time, volunteers, including retired teachers, provide classes and language training in collaboration with both reception facilities and other local NGOs (Novara, Cuneo, Avigliana, Acate).

As for the **target**, courses offered by CPIAs address migrants in general and are articulated according to the language level without any other distinction (neither the language family is taken into consideration). The only requirement is to have a regular resident permit. The courses provided by volunteers might address specific targets or not, depending on the main target of the NGOs they work with.

Challenges are many. First, CPIAs are understaffed so that not all applicants can be enrolled. Because of this limit, although on paper people have to be accepted throughout the whole year, the later they apply, the fewer are the chances to get in⁴⁹.

In addition, teachers generally do not get a specific training to teach Italian as a second language and teaching materials are generally poor, especially for some linguistic families (eg. Asian). Moreover, flexibility of courses offered at CPIAs is limited (eg. long duration, impossibility to organise courses by workplaces, etc.) and, with the exception of Novara, venues are limited in number and concentrated in main towns. As a result, post-2014 migrants living outside large urban centres generally face difficulties in attending courses.

5.2. Intercultural exchange and intergroup relations

One of the main **obstacles** to integration that concern post-2014 migrants is the weakness of social relations. At the same time, the lack of good-quality interactions between migrants and natives can negatively impact the attitudes towards each other. Widening social relations can positively impact the chances to improve language skills, to find employment and accommodation and in general to increase the quality of life. For these reasons, activities aimed at enhancing intercultural exchange and intergroup relations acquire a certain relevance, especially from a whole of community perspective.

The **interventions** mainly consist of public events or more continuative activities in which natives and migrants share traditional food or play music, make art and do sports together.

⁴⁹ The problem of late enrolment is felt particularly by UAMs. Most of them arrive in the reception system when 16 or 17 years old, and, therefore, have little more than a year to learn Italian and take the final secondary school exams (middle school, 8th grade) before turning 18.



However, those interventions are less frequent in the conservative localities than in progressive ones. Moreover, in progressive localities these activities involve a wide range of actors including public entities, whereas in the conservative ones they are promoted only by NGOs.

As for the **target**, those measures generally address both natives and migrants. Young people represent a specific target since some initiatives involve schools and sportive associations, especially where minors are a significant share of post-2014 migrants (Novara, Avigliana, Siracusa).

The main **challenge** is to reach out to those local residents who are not active around migrant integration. In this regard, the presence of shared spaces as social and cultural hubs that are attended on a daily basis by both natives and migrants (i.e. Avigliana, Cuneo, Siracusa) are better able to engage a large public than occasional events or activities devoted to migrant integration.

5.3. Agriculture seasonal workers' health

Migrant agricultural workers face specific **obstacles** to healthcare access. As illustrated in this report (see section 3.1), they are often forced to live in isolated areas with no decentralised public healthcare services. Relatedly, they cannot afford private means of transport to reach the closest urban centres and have to resort to intermediators who drive them where needed in exchange for exploitative fees. At the same time, public health services have limited resources and cannot cover these areas (Acate).

Not only is healthcare access more difficult. The very working conditions of migrant agricultural workers, specifically in Sicily, give rise to specific health needs that are usually neglected. Post-2014 migrants employed in agriculture tend to live in unhealthy, overcrowded or unlivable spaces which lack sanitation or electricity. In addition, long-working hours in extreme weather conditions, poor nutrition, and the lack of running water and sanitation have serious impacts on the workers' health.

In this respect, the most significant **interventions are project-based** and that tackle labour exploitation, housing deprivation, and service access simultaneously. An example is the project funded by the Ministry of Interior and implemented with the Municipality of Siracusa as leading partner (ACCA project in Siracusa) to create temporary accommodation for homeless migrant agricultural workers living in the rural area of Cassibile. This project sees the provincial public health authority (Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale) delivering on-site healthcare services through a dedicated desk in the newly-created encampment.

The main challenge for interventions in this area is to deliver health services in non-urban areas, often very vast or difficult to access, while, at the same time, addressing exploitation.

6. Conclusion

Housing and employment appear as the most central challenges for post-2014 migrant integration in Italian case studies. Their situation is made worse by **specific weaknesses** such as: precarious legal status (es. asylum seekers waiting for a decision on their application or appealing it in front of the Court or rejected asylum seekers); little knowledge of the Italian language because of poor language courses and the limited opportunities to practise the language in reception facilities and in ethnically segregated workplaces (see section 5.1); the refugee gap that penalise those entering through the asylum channel, i.e. almost all our target population (see section 2.1) .

However, problems are not evenly distributed. In terms of structural factors, the local labour and housing markets may favour or hinder post-2014 migrants' access to employment and accommodation. In **Cuneo and Novara (Piedmont), Siracusa and Acate (Sicily), the labour demand is rather high** so that finding jobs is not too challenging, although often at **exploitative working conditions**, especially in **logistics** (Novara) and **agriculture** (Cuneo, Siracusa and Acate). Because of this, those localities attract post-2014 migrants from other places so that the large majority of post-2014 living there spent the reception period elsewhere - in general terms, post-2014 migrants' presence and mobility largely depend on job opportunities. In contrast, in Avigliana and Caltagirone job opportunities are few and pass mainly through informal contacts, especially those of natives who mobilise to provide support. Indeed, it seems that where employment opportunities are poorer, informal contacts with natives play a greater role in accessing the labour market.

As for housing, the supply of affordable housing stock - because old/decaying or empty (due to emigration) - is fairly large in all the three Sicilian localities. This facilitates post-2014 migrants' access to the housing market, although almost exclusively to the bad quality housing stock that is not attractive for natives. Affordable housing stock is substantially smaller in Piedmontese localities such as Cuneo and Novara (where many post-2014 live in hamlets outside the town, see section 3.1). The rural area of Avigliana has no decaying housing stock but, facing depopulation, housing demand is rather limited and prices lower than in the other target Piedmontese localities: this implies that housing is more affordable but not more accessible, unless one can rely on the support of locals acting as brokers. Indeed, in all target localities discrimination undermines the market dynamics so that lower housing demand do not automatically turn into higher housing accessibility for post-2014 migrants.

In general terms, **the housing market seems to have higher barriers of access than the labour market**. First, as explained in section 2.1, in Italy to interrupt a rental contract is far more difficult than to interrupt a work contract so landlords are less keen than employers to take risks. Second, waiting months to find "the desired tenant" is a more viable strategy than waiting months to find "the desired worker", especially when the demand for manpower is pressing. Finally, in Italy a large part of the housing stock is made up of family houses toward

which landlords have not only economic, but also emotional links, so that they display a range of rationales that go beyond the pure economic calculations.

Despite the above-mentioned problems, the market is the main driver of housing and labour inclusion as well as exclusion. Indeed, integration **policies involving post-2014 migrants appear as too poor and fragmented to actually counteract market limitations**. However, this has to be framed within the familistic Italian welfare state and the consequent general weaknesses of housing and employment policies (see section 2.1). As for **employment, competences are** not of municipalities, rather **of regions**, that act mainly through Public Employment Agencies and vocational training. Yet, vocational training appears obsolete and unable to offer the skills required by the market (section 4.1) and Public Employment Agencies play an extremely marginal role in matching labour supply and demand (section 4.2).

Instead, **municipalities have competences over housing**. However, their duty to provide housing accommodation is limited to vulnerable people, including minors and then UAMs (sections 2.1.1 and 3.2).

Overall, mainstream housing and employment public policies appear marginal in fostering post-2014 migrants' inclusion. Against this backdrop, **the large majority of housing and employment local interventions concerning post-2014 migrants are:**

- related to asylum seekers and refugees reception (SAI or CAS)
- **project-based**, generally relying upon EU resources (mainly PON, funded through the European Structural and Investment Funds, and AMIF) and passing through the central or regional governments that issue the calls and select projects.

This brings about three main consequences:

First, the dependence of local interventions on central government's calls for SAI and integration projects increases the **relevance of political orientation of local majority**, namely the relevance of local authorities' will to take a proactive stance over post-2014 migrant integration and participate in calls for projects issued by the central and regional governments - or bank foundations in the case of Avigliana. Indeed, **in the progressive localities** (Cuneo, Avigliana and Siracusa), **the municipality shows a proactive approach** attracting funds through projects whereas it is not the case in conservative localities (Novara, Caltagirone and Acate).

Second, given that municipalities have no specific duties in terms of migrant integration, **NGOs and trade unions** have gained relevance in developing housing and employment projects. Yet, in conservative localities, NGOs generally act rather separately from local authorities and then attract fewer projects whereas in progressive localities they act in partnership with local authorities so that project-based actions are larger and more coordinated. Overall, **the activism of NGOs and that of local authorities appears directly related, feeding a virtuous circle that increases the ability to attract resources and develop interventions**.



Hence, the third consequence is that **resources are distributed according to activism of local actors rather than to local needs**. Conservative localities have much fewer integration initiatives despite migrants' needs being the same and even worse than in progressive localities. More generally, a linear relation between the specific obstacles faced by post-2014 migrants and local initiatives does not emerge from the fieldwork. The large majority of interventions, even in progressive localities, can be explained by the way the national government designs the integration services in SAI and CAS facilities (support for seeking housing solutions and jobs) and the priorities set in calls for projects (eg. agricultural seasonal workers' informal camps and labour exploitation). The few NGOs relying upon their own funds are more reactive to the emerging needs but their resources are not large enough to make a real difference. As a result, some of the most pressing issues such as discrimination in the housing market and the lack of the economic guarantees required to rent houses, or the segregation in the most exploitative segments of the labour market, although highlighted by almost all the stakeholders, remain almost unaddressed by local measures. Indeed, local actors do not generally have adequate resources, legislative power and skills to tackle those problems.

Against this backdrop, **informal contacts** play a crucial role. **Ethnic networks** appear as the **main channel** to find jobs and accommodation. **Post-2014 migrants' networks with natives** (local residents, social workers, volunteers) are much smaller than those with co-nationals but particularly fruitful, since they tend to **convey better housing and working conditions**.

However, **informal relations may hide exploitation, especially in more attractive hubs such as Novara, Cuneo, Siracusa and Acate**. Concerning housing, newcomers may overpay to share overcrowded and poor accommodation irregularly sublet by co-nationals, or pay migrants or natives to register their residency or obtain a declaration of hospitality in order to renew the resident permit. In the field of employment, the gang mastering system is rather widespread in logistics (Novara) and agriculture (Siracusa, Acate and, more recently, Cuneo).

The ambiguous role of private actors persists also beyond those supportive or exploitative mechanisms. Private (temporary) employment agencies are key actors in fostering post-2014 migrants' access to the labour market, especially in localities where the labour demand is higher, but they also foster migrants' segregation and exploitation since they convey the market dynamics without counteracting them. Single employers, landlords and, more generally, citizens, because of the widespread xenophobic attitudes, seem to create more problems than they solve in terms of post-2014 migrants' access to housing and employment. At the same time, individual initiatives of support have been registered everywhere, although appearing more systematic and organised in progressive localities. Avigliana is the locality where private actors and citizens appear more active thanks to the local civic activism, the strong local identity, the progressive political culture and the tight-knit social network. Yet, local residents and volunteers are active also in Cuneo (where "social Catholicism" is rooted and volunteers collaborate with parishes, voluntary-based NGOs and the SAI project), Siracusa (where they mobilise around the the UAMs' voluntary guardianship association Accoglierete



promoted locally by nation-wide NGOs), and Caltagirone (where NGO workers and volunteers often act as informal brokers making up for the poor local policies).

Overall, considering the variable underlining the Whole-COMM typology, (progressive or conservative) political tradition seems to affect both policies and the local community's tendency to support post-2014 migrants, economic trends impact the housing and labour market and, in turn, the post-2014 migrants' access to those resources, while the size of the municipality and levels of diversity appear less significant since we have rural areas and medium towns as well as places with a longstanding presence of migrants both in the most and the least supportive localities.



Appendix - List of interviewees

INTERVIEWEE CODE	LOCALITY	TYPE OF INTERVIEWEE
NOVARA		
I-N-1	NOVARA	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-N-2	NOVARA	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-N-3	NOVARA	EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION
I-N-4	NOVARA	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-N-5	NOVARA	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-N-6	NOVARA	EXPERT
I-N-7	NOVARA	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
I-N-8	NOVARA	MEMBER OF OPPOSITION (PROGRESSIVE)
I-N-9	NOVARA	LOCAL OFFICIAL
I-N-10	NOVARA	EMPLOYER
I-N-11	NOVARA	EMPLOYER
I-N-12	NOVARA	TRADE UNIONS
I-N-14	NOVARA	MEMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CONSERVATIVE)
I-N-15	NOVARA	REAL ESTATE AGENCY
I-N-16	NOVARA	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs/GROUPS/ASSOCIATIONS
I-N17	NOVARA	PRO MIGRANTS NGOs/GROUPS/ASSOCIATIONS
CUNEO		
I-Cu-1	CUNEO	EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (REGIONAL PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE)
I-Cu-3	CUNEO	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-Cu-4	CUNEO	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER



I-Cu-5	CUNEO	EXPERT
I-Cu-6	CUNEO	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
I-Cu-7	CUNEO	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-Cu-8	CUNEO	TRADE UNIONS
I-Cu-9	CUNEO	LOCAL OFFICIAL
I-Cu-10	CUNEO	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Cu-12	CUNEO	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Cu-13	CUNEO	EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION
I-Cu-14	CUNEO	MEMBER OF OPPOSITION (POPULIST)
I-Cu-15	CUNEO	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
I-Cu-16	CUNEO	PRIVATE EMPLOYER
I-Cu-17	CUNEO	PRIVATE EMPLOYER
I-Cu-18	CUNEO	REAL ESTATE AGENCY
I-Cu-19	CUNEO	MEMBER OF OPPOSITION (RIGHT-WING)
AVIGLIANA		
I-A-1	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (REGIONAL PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE)
I-A-2	AVIGLIANA	LOCAL OFFICIAL
I-A-3	AVIGLIANA	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-A-4	AVIGLIANA	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-A-5	AVIGLIANA	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-A-6	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
I-A-7	AVIGLIANA	MEMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PROGRESSIVE)
I-A-8	AVIGLIANA	MEMBER OF OPPOSITION (POPULIST)
I-A-9	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYER
I-A-11	AVIGLIANA	TRADE UNION



I-A-13	AVIGLIANA	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-A-15	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (REGIONAL PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE)
I-A-18	AVIGLIANA	REAL ESTATE AGENCY
I-A-19	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYER
I-A-20	AVIGLIANA	EMPLOYER
SIRACUSA		
I-Si-1	SIRACUSA	TRADE UNIONS
I-Si-2	SIRACUSA	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Si-3	SIRACUSA	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Si-4	SIRACUSA	EMPLOYER
I-Si-5	SIRACUSA	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-Si-6	SIRACUSA	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Si-7	SIRACUSA	REAL ESTATE COMPANY
I-Si-8	SIRACUSA	EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION
I-Si-9	SIRACUSA	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
I-Si-10	SIRACUSA	LOCAL OFFICIAL FROM THE MUNICIPALITY
I-Si-11	SIRACUSA	MEMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PROGRESSIVE)
CALTAGIRONE		
I-Ca-1	CALTAGIRONE	EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION
I-Ca-2	CALTAGIRONE	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-Ca-3	CALTAGIRONE	EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (REGIONAL PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE)
I-Ca-4	CALTAGIRONE	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Ca-5	CALTAGIRONE	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Ca-6	CALTAGIRONE	TRADE UNIONS
I-CA-7	CALTAGIRONE	EXPERT



I-Ca-8	CALTAGIRONE	NON-PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Ca-9	CALTAGIRONE	LOCAL OFFICIAL
I-Ca-10	CALTAGIRONE	MEMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CONSERVATIVE)
I-Ca-11	CALTAGIRONE	PRIVATE EMPLOYER
ACATE		
I-Ac-1	ACATE	EMPLOYER
I-Ac-2	ACATE	NON PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDER
I-Ac-3	ACATE	EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION
I-Ac-4	ACATE	EXPERT / PRO-MIGRANT GROUP / SERVICE PROVISION
I-Ac-5	ACATE	PRO-MIGRANT NGOs / GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS
I-Ac-6	ACATE	REAL ESTATE COMPANY
I-Ac-7	ACATE	LOCAL OFFICIAL FROM THE MUNICIPALITY
I-Ac-8	ACATE	TRADE UNIONS
I-Ac-9	ACATE	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SERVICE
I-Ac-10	ACATE	MEMBER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CONSERVATIVE)
I-Ac-11	ACATE	EMPLOYEE OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES



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