

6+6x6 UNVEILED



EMBRACIN'
Enhancing Migrants' Bottom-up,
Responsive and Citizen-led
Integration in Europe

An annotated tale
of an ordinary family in extraordinary times





6+6X6 UNVEILED

An annotated tale of an ordinary family in extraordinary times.

This publication is the result of the in-depth analysis (Activity 2.1-2.3) of the project EMBRACIN'.

Author:

Sandra Rainero - ALTEREVO srls.

Cover photo: Image by pixabay.

Layout and graphics: ALTEREVO srls.

Other photos: kindly provided by the Calòs, except otherwise noted- All rights reserved.

DISCLAIMER:

The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Please cite this publication as:

Rainero S. (2020) "6+6X6 UNVEILED An annotated tale of an ordinary family in extraordinary times"
AlterEvo srls.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
PREMISE	10
MIGRATION SCENARIO IN ITALY AND CONSEQUENCES FOR INTEGRATION POLICY	12
A SCREAMING CONSCIENCE IN A QUIET VENETIAN TOWN	13
ACTIVATING THE COMMUNITY'S ASSETS	18
A LONG AND WINDING ROAD	20
THE RULES OF THE GAME	24
SIX AS A FAVORITE NUMBER: THE STEPS OF THE PROCESS	28
STEP 1: THE STARTING POINT	29
STEP 2: FIRST RECEPTION AND CREATION OF THE X6 TEAM	29
STEP 3: LEARNING THE BASICS: LANGUAGE AND SCHOOL, CULTURE, SOCIAL LIFE	31
STEP 4: LEARNING (AND EARNING) ON THE JOB	32
STEP 5: GETTING A FULL-TIME JOB AND A PLACE TO LIVE	33
STEP 6: FLEDGLINGS LEAVE THE NEST	34
SHOW ME THE MONEY!	35
A HAPPY ENDING ...OR JUST A NEW BEGINNING?	38
THE ROAD AHEAD	41
LESSONS LEARNED FROM 6+6X6 FOR PUBLIC ACTION TO MIGRANT INTEGRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL (OECD CHECKLIST)	42
References	47



executive summary

When – in the afternoon of April 19, 2015 - Antonio Silvio Calò heard about the latest migration tragedy in the Mediterranean, he decided with his wife Nicoletta to take matters into their own hands, so they went to the local Prefecture, and decided to open their home to 6 young migrants.

Since June 2015, their project – admittedly a fuzzy one at the beginning – has been unfolding and has become a good practice, awarded by the Italian President of the Republic and by the European Parliament in 2018. The experience has been named "6+6x6" by the protagonist.

The EMBRACIN' project takes inspiration from this experience, which has been analyzed and shared with partners from Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Sweden, Slovenia and the EU network ECCAR.

6+6 is the enlarged Calò family: the Italian family (parents and four children) and 6 "African" children (all adults). As soon as the project has taken shape, the components of its last element, the "x6", entered the scene. Since the outset, the family approach used by the Calòs required specific and diversified competences of external professionals to manage the process: a psychologist, a social worker, a cultural mediator, a teacher/tutor, a lawyer and a doctor. With a sound home economics approach, the costs of reception and integration went from 30 € per day per person to much less as soon as the newcomers started getting an income. As the experience evolved, it has been possible to identify 6 steps, starting from when the family has made the decision to receive to 5 incremental or "modular" steps that have led to the final outcomes of the practice.

After the arrival of the 6 youths, three months have

been dedicated to first reception and creation of the x6 team, the following 9 months have been focusing on learning the basics for integration: language and school, culture, social life in North-East Italy. A busy schedule among public school, volunteering and sharing house chores have kept everyone busy. At the end of the school, the next step has been to find a work experience, promptly identified through paid 6-month traineeships, at the end of which most of the young men found a real job. At the beginning of 2020 all young men have become independent and work, they all left the house and live on their own.

Through the EMBRACIN' project this spontaneous experience is becoming a codified good practice to scale up and transfer to other towns in Italy and Europe and to become a widespread model for dispersed reception of third-country newcomers.

The main principles or pillars of 6+6x6 that will be adapted can be summarized as:

- 1. Active civil society in migrants' integration, with a political and value-based agreement that migrants are resources and not problems, especially if the dispersed approach is used*
- 2. The holistic approach (the x6 pillar) of integration and the presence of a multidisciplinary team*
- 3. Social innovation finds middle ground between urban public policies and the engagement of civil society*
- 4. A reframing of current integration policies - especially at the local level - and shared burden of responsibilities not only among the main stakeholders but also with society at large*

IL DOCUMENTO IN SINTESI...

Il progetto "EMBRACIN" si ispira all'iniziativa della famiglia Calò, con l'obiettivo di comprenderla, adattarla e riutilizzarla in altri paesi europei e di creare una rete sul tema. Questa pubblicazione racconta la storia di questa esperienza.

Quando - nel pomeriggio del 19 aprile 2015 - Antonio Silvio Calò viene a sapere dell'ultima tragedia di migranti morti in mare nel Mediterraneo, decide, insieme alla moglie Nicoletta, di prendere in mano la situazione. Si recano in Prefettura e decidono di aprire la loro casa a sei giovani richiedenti asilo.

Da allora il loro progetto si è sviluppato ed è diventato una buona pratica, premiata dal Presidente della Repubblica Italiana e dal Parlamento Europeo nel 2018.

Questa esperienza di accoglienza e integrazione "diffusa", che contrasta con il tipico approccio di accoglienza dei rifugiati e dei nuovi arrivati per vie irregolari in grandi centri separati dalla comunità locale, è stata definita dai protagonisti "6+6x6".

Il modello "6+6x6" funziona con un approccio olistico all'accoglienza e all'integrazione dei nuovi arrivati nell'arco di poco più di due anni, al termine dei quali tutti e 6 i nuovi arrivati hanno un lavoro e sono integrati nella comunità locale. "6+6" sta per la famiglia Calò allargata: la famiglia italiana (genitori e quattro figli) e i 6 "figli africani" (tutti adulti).

Appena il progetto prende forma a casa Calò, i componenti del suo ultimo elemento, i "x6", completano il progetto con competenze professionali specifiche e diversificate per gestire un processo di integrazione a 360 gradi: uno psicologo, un assistente sociale, un mediatore culturale, un insegnante/tutor, un avvocato e un medico.

Con un solido approccio di economia domestica, i costi dell'accoglienza e dell'integrazione vanno dai 30 euro iniziali al giorno a persona a molto meno non appena i nuovi arrivati iniziano a percepire un reddito dopo aver frequentato la scuola per imparare le usanze e le regole italiane e locali. Con l'evolversi dell'esperienza, è possibile individuare sei fasi del processo di integrazione, partendo dalla decisione iniziale della famiglia di aprire la porta di casa seguita da cinque fasi incrementalmente o "modulari".

Dopo l'arrivo dei sei giovani, tre mesi sono dedicati alla prima accoglienza e alla creazione del team multidisciplinare.

I 9 mesi successivi si concentrano Sull'apprendimento delle basi per l'integrazione: lingua e scuola, cultura, vita sociale nel Nord-Est Italia. Un'agenda fitta di impegni tra scuola pubblica, volontariato e condivisione delle faccende domestiche tiene impegnati tutti.

Alla fine dell'anno scolastico, il passo successivo è quello di trovare un'esperienza lavorativa, quindi iniziano i tirocini retribuiti di 6 mesi, al termine dei quali la maggior parte dei giovani trova un lavoro a tempo pieno, alcuni immediatamente, altri in pochi mesi.

All'inizio del 2020, tutti i giovani sono indipendenti, hanno lasciato casa Calò, anche se alcuni di loro non hanno completato la lunga procedura giudiziaria per ottenere lo status giuridico definitivo.

Questa esperienza spontanea 6+6x6 sta diventando una buona pratica codificata da scalare e trasferire in altre città d'Italia e d'Europa per diventare un modello diffuso per l'accoglienza diffusa dei migranti in Europa.

I principi o pilastri principali del 6+6x6 che saranno adattati possono essere così riassunti:

1. Una società civile attiva nell'integrazione dei migranti, con la consapevolezza comune che i migranti possono essere risorse e non problemi, soprattutto se si utilizza l'approccio diffuso
2. L'approccio olistico dell'integrazione e la presenza di un team multidisciplinare per accompagnare l'integrazione efficacemente
3. L'innovazione sociale può realizzarsi quando le politiche pubbliche e l'impegno della società civile lavorano in modo integrato
4. La riformulazione delle attuali politiche di integrazione - soprattutto a livello locale - e la condivisione delle responsabilità tra pubblico e privato è imprescindibile per un'integrazione efficace e a lungo termine.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΡΙΟΤΕΡΩΝ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΝ

Το έργο EMBRACIN είναι εμπνευσμένο από την πρωτοβουλία της οικογένειας Calò, με σκοπό την κατανόηση, την προσαρμογή και την εφαρμογή της σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες και τη δημιουργία ενός θεματικού δικτύου. Το πιο κάτω κείμενο αφηγείται την εμπειρία αυτή.

Όταν -το απόγευμα της 19ης Απριλίου 2015- ο Antonio Silvio Calò άκουσε για την τελευταία μεταναστευτική-ανθρωπιστική τραγωδία στη Μεσόγειο, αποφάσισε με τη σύζυγό του Nicoletta να πάρουν την κατάσταση στα χέρια τους, οπότε απευθύνθηκαν στη Νομαρχιακή Αυτοδιοίκηση και αποφάσισαν να ανοίξουν το σπίτι τους σε έξι νέους μετανάστες.

Έκτοτε, η πρωτοβουλία τους εξελίσσεται και έχει γίνει μια καλή πρακτική, που επιβραβεύτηκε από τον Ιταλό Πρόεδρο της Δημοκρατίας και από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο το 2018.

Το εγχείρημα της «διασκορπισμένης» υποδοχής και ένταξης, το οποίο έρχεται σε αντίθεση με την τυπική προσέγγιση που περιορίζει σε μεγάλα αστικά κέντρα, ξεχωριστά από την τοπική κοινότητα, τους πρόσφυγες και τους νεοεισερχόμενους που φτάνουν μέσω παράνομων διαδρομών, ονομάστηκε «6+6x6» από τον εμπνευστή της.

Το σχήμα «6+6x6» λειτουργεί ως μια ολιστική προσέγγιση για την υποδοχή και την ένταξη των νεοεισερχόμενων σε διάστημα άνω των δύο ετών, στο τέλος του οποίου και οι 6 νεοεισερχόμενοι έχουν δουλειά και είναι ενσωματωμένοι στην τοπική κοινότητα. Το «6+6» συμπεριλαμβάνει τη διευρυμένη οικογένεια Calò: την ιταλική οικογένεια (γονείς και τέσσερα παιδιά) και 6 ενήλικες από την Αφρική.

Μόλις το εγχείρημα άρχισε να παίρνει μορφή στο σπίτι του Calò, τα μέλη του τελευταίου μέρους, το "x6", συμπλήρωσαν το σχήμα, με συγκεκριμένες και διαφοροποιημένες επαγγελματικές δεξιότητες για τη διαχείριση μιας ολοκληρωμένης διαδικασίας ένταξης: ένας ψυχολόγος, ένας κοινωνικός λειτουργός, ένας πολιτισμικός διαμεσολαβητής, ένας δάσκαλος, ένας δικηγόρος και ένας γιατρός.

Με μια υγιή προσέγγιση στα οικονομικά του νοικοκυριού, τα έξοδα υποδοχής και ενσωμάτωσης ανέρχονταν αρχικά σε 30€ την ημέρα ανά άτομο και κατέληξαν.

σε πολύ λιγότερα, μόλις οι νεοεισερχόμενοι άρχισαν να έχουν εισόδημα, μετά την παρακολούθηση μαθημάτων ιταλικής γλώσσας και τοπικών εθίμων και κανόνων.

Καθώς η πρακτική εξελίσσεται, είναι δυνατό να προσδιοριστούν έξι βήματα στην ενταξιακή διαδικασία,

ξεκινώντας από την αρχική απόφαση της οικογένειας να ανοίξει την πόρτα του σπιτιού της.

Μετά την άφιξη των έξι νέων, αφιερώνονται τρεις μήνες στην πρώτη υποδοχή και τη δημιουργία της διεπιστημονικής ομάδας.

Οι επόμενοι 9 μήνες επικεντρώνονται στην εκμάθηση των βασικών στοιχείων για την ένταξη: γλώσσα και σχολείο, πολιτισμός, κοινωνική ζωή στη βορειοανατολική Ιταλία. Ένα εντατικό πρόγραμμα μεταξύ δημόσιου σχολείου, εθελοντισμού και ανάθεσης οικιακών καθηκόντων που τους κρατά όλους απασχολημένους.

Στο τέλος της σχολικής χρονιάς, το επόμενο βήμα είναι να αποκτήσουν μια πρώτη εργασιακή εμπειρία, οπότε ξεκινούν οι αμειβόμενες εξάμηνες πρακτικές, στο τέλος των οποίων οι περισσότεροι νέοι βρίσκουν εργασία πλήρους απασχόλησης, μερικοί αμέσως, άλλοι σε λίγους μήνες.

Στις αρχές του 2020, όλοι οι νεαροί άνδρες έγιναν ανεξάρτητοι, έφυγαν από το σπίτι του Calò, αν και για μερικούς από αυτούς δεν είχε ολοκληρωθεί η μακρά δικαστική διαδικασία για να λάβουν την τελική άδεια παραμονής.

Αυτό το αυθόρμητο πλάνο του «6+6x6» γίνεται μια κωδικοποιημένη καλή πρακτική για αναβάθμιση και εφαρμογή σε άλλες πόλεις της Ιταλίας και της Ευρώπης και για να γίνει ένα ευρέως διαδεδομένο μοντέλο για τη διασκορπισμένη υποδοχή των νεοεισερχόμενων από Τρίτες Χώρες στην Ευρώπη.

Οι βασικές αρχές ή οι πυλώνες του «6+6x6» που θα προσαρμοστούν, μπορούν να συνοψιστούν ως:

1. Ενεργή κοινωνία των πολιτών στην ένταξη των μεταναστών, με κοινή αντίληψη ότι οι μετανάστες μπορούν να είναι πόροι και όχι προβλήματα, ειδικά εάν χρησιμοποιείται η διασκορπισμένη προσέγγιση
2. Η ολιστική προσέγγιση της ένταξης και η παρουσία μιας διεπιστημονικής ομάδας που θα συνοδεύει την επιτυχή ένταξη
3. Η κοινωνική καινοτομία μπορεί να ανθίσει, όταν συνεργάζεται η δημόσια πολιτική με τη δραστηριοποίηση της κοινωνίας των πολιτών
4. Μια αναδιαμόρφωση των τρεχουσών πολιτικών ένταξης – ιδίως σε τοπικό επίπεδο– και επιμερισμένη επιβάρυνση δημόσιων-ιδιωτικών ευθυνών για μακροπρόθεσμη και αποτελεσματική ένταξη.

sammanfattning

Inspirationen till projektet EMBRACIN kommer från ett initiativ av den italienska familjen Calò.

Målet är att förstå, anpassa och använda konceptet i andra europeiska länder och att skapa ett europeiskt nätverk.

Den här texten beskriver upplevelsen i familjen Calò.

Den 19:e april 2015 så hör Antonio Silvio Calò om den senaste flyktingtragedin i Medelhavet. Han bestämmer sig då för att tillsammans med sin fru Nicoletta, ta saken i egna händer.

De går till Landshövdingen och bestämmer sig för att öppna upp sitt hem för sex unga migranter.

Sedan dess har deras projekt utvecklats och priser har utdelats av den italienska presidenten och Europeiska parlamentet 2018.

Den här metoden med att fördela mottagandet och integrera har fått namnet "6+6x6".

Den särskiljer sig från det typiska sättet att motta flyktingar i asylmottagningar, separerade från den lokala befolkningen.

"6+6x6" är ett holistiskt sätt att bemöta och integrera migranter under två års tid. Målet är att efter den här tiden så ska alla de sex migranterna ha ett arbete och vara integrerade i samhället.

"6+6" står för den utökade Calò-familjen: den italienska familjen (föräldrar och fyra barn) och sex vuxna migranter.

Projektet kompletteras i familjen Calò med "x6". Specifik och varierad kompetens leder till en omfattande integrationsprocess. Dessa sex är: psykolog, socialarbetare, kulturell medlare, lärare, advokat och läkare.

Sex steg har identifierats i integrationsprocessen hos familjen Calò. Processen börjar med att man upplät boende i sitt privata hus och följs sedan av ytterligare fem steg.

Då migranterna anländer så är de första tre månaderna dedikerade till att skapa ett tvärvetenskapligt team med olika expertis.

Fokus de följande nio månaderna ligger på att lära sig grunderna för integration: språk och skola, kultur och socialt liv i nordöstra Italien. Ett fullspäckt schema med skola, volontärarbete och med att dela hushållssysslor håller alla sysselsatta.

Nästa steg är att i slutet av skolåret hitta praktikplatser för att få arbetslivserfarenhet. Migranterna påbörjar då en sex månader betald praktik. När denna är avslutad så har de flesta av männen hittat ett arbete, för några så dröjer det lite längre.

I början av 2020 var alla männen självförsörjande och hade lämnat familjen Calò. Dock hade några av männen inte avslutat sin långa process för att få sitt permanenta uppehållstillstånd eller medborgarskap.

Den här modellen "6+6x6" kan ses som ett framgångsrikt koncept och är redo att skalas upp och överförs till andra städer i Italien och Europa med målet att bli en spridd modell i mottagandet av tredjelandsmedborgare i Europa.

Summering av "6+6x6":

1. Integrationen av migranter sker genom ett aktivt civilsamhälle. Gemensam förståelse för att migranter kan vara en tillgång och inte ett problem, särskilt om ett öppet synsätt tillämpas.
2. Den holistiska inställningen till integration och tillgången till ett team med särskild expertis gör att integrationen kan bli framgångsrik.
3. Social innovation kan utvecklas när olika riktlinjer och civilsamhället samarbetar.
4. En synkronisering av olika riktlinjer och policys - särskilt på den lokala nivån- samt delat ansvar/engagemang borgar för en långsiktig och effektiv integration.



RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

El proyecto EMBRACIN' se inspira en la iniciativa de la familia Calò, con el fin de entenderlo, adaptarlo y reutilizarlo en otros países europeos y crear una red temática. Esta publicación cuenta la historia de dicha experiencia.

Cuando -en la tarde del 19 de abril de 2015- Antonio Silvio Calò supo sobre la última tragedia migratoria en el Mediterráneo, decidió, junto con su esposa Nicoletta, tomar cartas en el asunto, se dirigieron a la Prefectura local y decidieron abrir su casa a seis jóvenes migrantes.

Desde entonces, su proyecto se ha ido desarrollando y se ha convertido en una buena práctica, premiada por el presidente de la República Italiana y por el Parlamento Europeo en 2018. Esta experiencia de acogida e integración de forma individualizada que contrasta con el enfoque típico de acoger a los refugiados y recién llegados que llegan a través de rutas irregulares en grandes centros separados de la comunidad local, ha sido bautizada por el protagonista como "6+6x6".

El esquema de "6+6x6" funciona como un enfoque integral de la recepción e integración de los recién llegados durante un período de más de dos años, al final del cual los 6 recién llegados tienen un trabajo y se integran en la comunidad local. "6+6" representa la familia ampliada de Calò: la familia italiana (padres y cuatro hijos) y 6 chicos "africanos" (todos adultos).

Tan pronto como el proyecto toma forma en la casa Calò, los componentes de su último elemento, el "x6", completan el esquema con competencias profesionales específicas y diversificadas para gestionar un proceso de integración global: un/a psicólogo/a, un trabajador/a social, un mediador/a cultural, un profesor/a o tutor/a, un/a abogado/a y un/a médico/a.

Con un sólido enfoque de economía doméstica, los costos de acogida e integración van desde los 30 euros diarios iniciales por persona hasta mucho menos en cuanto los recién llegados empiezan a obtener ingresos después de asistir a la escuela para aprender las costumbres y reglas italianas y locales.

A medida que la experiencia evoluciona, se han podido identificar seis pasos del proceso de integración, empezando

por la decisión inicial de la familia de abrir la puerta de la casa con cinco pasos incrementales o "modulares".

Tras la llegada de los seis jóvenes, se dedican tres meses a la primera acogida y a la creación del equipo multidisciplinario. Los siguientes 9 meses se centran en el aprendizaje de las bases para la integración: idioma y escuela, cultura, vida social en el noreste de Italia. Un horario ocupado entre la escuela pública, el voluntariado y el compartir las tareas domésticas mantienen a todos ocupados.

Al final del año escolar, el siguiente paso es encontrar una experiencia laboral, por lo que comienzan las prácticas remuneradas de 6 meses, al final de las cuales la mayoría de los jóvenes encuentran un trabajo a tiempo completo, algunos inmediatamente, otros en pocos meses.

A principios de 2020, todos los jóvenes se han independizado, todos han abandonado la casa de Calò, aunque algunos de ellos no han completado el largo procedimiento judicial para recibir el estatus de residente definitivo.

Esta experiencia espontánea de 6+6x6 se está convirtiendo en una buena práctica codificada que se ampliará y transferirá a otras ciudades de Italia y Europa, y que se convertirá en un modelo generalizado para la recepción individualización de los recién llegados de terceros países a Europa.

Los principios o pilares fundamentales del 6+6x6 que se adaptarán se pueden resumir como:

1. Una sociedad civil activa en la integración de los migrantes, con el entendimiento común de que los migrantes aportan, entre otros, riqueza cultural y diversidad, especialmente si se utiliza el enfoque individualizado.
2. El enfoque global de la integración y la presencia de un equipo pluridisciplinar para su acompañamiento.
3. La innovación social puede prosperar cuando las políticas públicas y el compromiso de la sociedad civil trabajan juntos en el mismo sentido.
4. Una reformulación de las actuales políticas de integración -especialmente a nivel local- y la carga compartida de las responsabilidades públicas y privadas para la consecución de unas condiciones de vida más justas y sostenibles a largo plazo.

executive summary- SLO



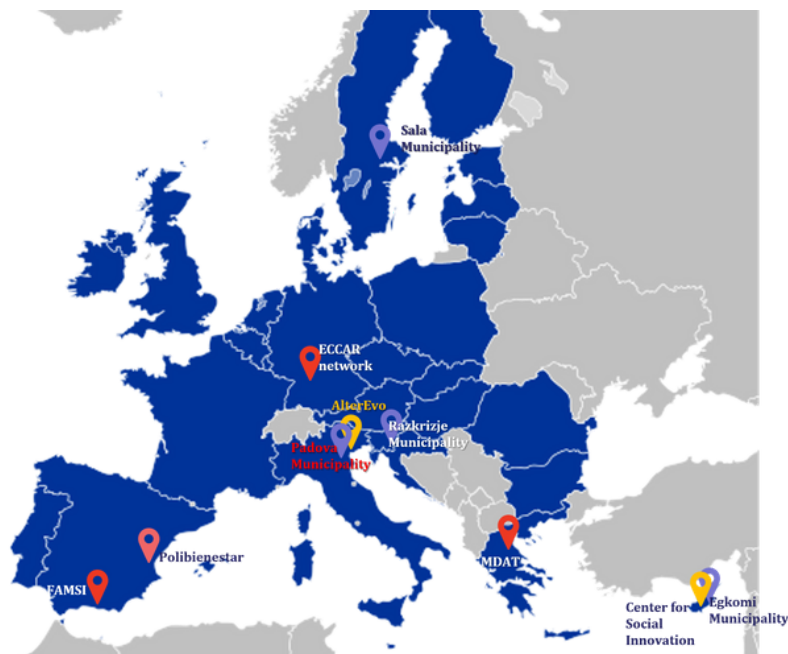
Premise

In this publication, we intend to give an overview of the 6+6x6 experience that has been the inspiration for the EMBRACIN' project, funded by the European Commission – DG home in the framework of AMIF program in 2019 and that started in early 2020 with a partnership of 10 partners coming from 7 countries.

The "6+6x6" is a journey of reception and integration of 6 young asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan countries who have been accompanied by an Italian hosting family and a multidisciplinary team that have guided their voluntary path of integration in Italy. It represents the inspirational starting point of a method of reception and integration of newcomers that sees the centrality and active role of both migrants and local citizens /communities to be adapted in different contexts in Europe, with a view to rethinking and creating a scheme applicable - in its main common principles or pillars - in Europe. The story told in this publication focuses on what "has been" with no prejudice on what "will be", it gives an overview of the facts and gives voice to the protagonist.

In the next 30 months, six municipalities in Europe will start their own process of rethinking their reception and integration practices to test the main tenets of this experience into their local systems. Ultimately, the result will be a new scheme that can be re-used at EU level.

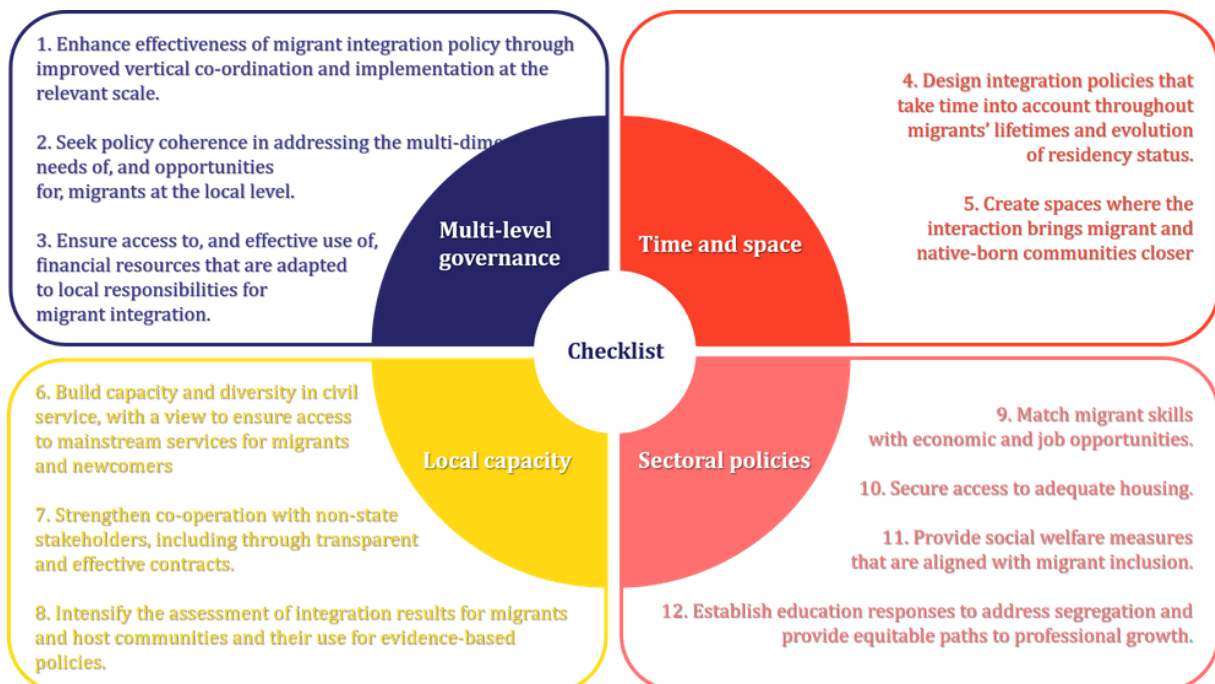
In this respect, the Project not only aims at transferring and adapting the 6+6x6 practice to other EU cities to become a European scheme for integration of third-country nationals but it is also committed to raising awareness and spreading the transnationally-tested experience beyond the partnership.



The EMBRACIN' project's partnership

Finally this publication is also addressed to the wider public of local and regional stakeholders involved in reception and integration policies and practices. The partnership is committed to the creation of a thematic network of local authorities that values and builds on bottom-up integration practices to streamline them into local policy, with a central role of governance of local actors in horizontal and vertical coherence with the territories and different levels of government.

Although we call it a tale, this is a true story of the experience of Antonio Calò and his family, and we have tried to narrate it providing contextual details for a better understanding of the process. To frame the practice into a wider context useful for the local dimension, where integration happens, we refer to the recent OECD publication "Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees*". We use the report's proposed Checklist for public action to migrant integration at the local level as a reference tool to link a local practice to general and specific objectives that any city or region can use to work across levels of government and with other local actors in their efforts to promote more effective integration of migrants.



*<https://www.oecd.org/publications/working-together-for-local-integration-of-migrants-and-refugees-9789264085350-en.htm>



THE MIGRATION SCENARIO IN ITALY AND CONSEQUENCES FOR INTEGRATION POLICY

Since the late 1980s Italy found itself transformed from a country of emigrants to a net receiver of immigrants. In the first twenty years of this millennium, the foreign population in Italy (including EU and non-EU nationals) went from little over 1 million in 2000 to over 5 million in 2015 with a small increase over the past 5 years. The positive demographic balance of the country is mostly due to net immigration. According to the latest report of Veneto Immigrazione (2019) in the Veneto region, the resident foreign population is about half million, representing over 10% of the entire population of the region. 54% come from other Member States of the EU. Regarding non -EU country nationality, Africa with over 20% and Asia 19% residents represent the bulk of population of third-country nationals.

Official statistics from the Italian Ministries of Interior and Labor show that, while yearly economic migrant flows to Italy went from 450.000 new entries in 2010 to half this figure in 2016, the number of asylum seekers and refugees increased tenfold between in the same period (from around 12.000 in 2010 to 123.000 individuals applying for refugee or international protection status in 2016).

Foreign nationals who have entered Italy irregularly are accommodated in immigration centers where they receive assistance, are identified and detained for deportation or, in the case of international protection applicants, for the procedures for ascertaining their requirements. These facilities are divided into: first aid and reception centers (Centri di Primo Soccorso e Accoglienza - CPSA), reception centers (Centri di Accoglienza - Cda), reception centers for asylum seekers (Centri di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo - Cara) and identification and deportation centers (Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione - Cie).

The process for recognition of status of refugee or for international protection has four levels. In addition to this, a reception system that focuses on the network of local authorities that carries out projects of 'integrated reception' in the territory is also in place and has been reinforced until 2018: The Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (Sistema di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati - SPRAR, now called SIPROIMI)




A SCREAMING CONSCIENCE IN A QUIET VENETIAN TOWN

When – in the afternoon of April 19, 2015 - Antonio Silvio Calò went home from school in his small rural hamlet of Camalò (Treviso), the latest migration tragedy in the Mediterranean sea that occurred the previous day was all over the news: a nameless wooden boat off the coast of Libya had sunk in the Sicilian Strait, leaving an estimated 700 hundreds + drown and only 28 survivors.

A teacher of history and philosophy at the Canova High School in Treviso, Calò lives with his family, wife Nicoletta and four adult children Andrea, Francesco, Elena and Giovanni in one of the wealthiest areas in Italy, blessed with a low unemployment level, enormous cultural heritage and an economy of small sized companies that had just – almost fully - recovered from the economic crises of 2008. He also lives in one of the most conservative regions of Italy, where the Northern League Party has been ruling in regional and local governments for the last 15 years, and counts - in the Province of Treviso - for over 50% of the local electorate. A party that has made of the anti-migration discourse one of its primary political narrative.

The news about the Syrian refugees and desperate people leaving their home countries from the Middle East and Africa has been on the media for several months, the Italian and European response dubious at least, and the new shipwreck strikes a chord in Antonio's heart.



"I came home from school with a civil and Christian conscience that screamed... When I walked into the house, I said it all out of breath to my wife Nicoletta... we cannot continue so we must do something and the only thing we can do is open our home, open the door and welcome this wounded humanity. A month and a half later, our boys arrived[1]"

[1] all quotations -unless otherwise noted - are from the interview with Antonio Silvio Calò held in January 2020 with the authors of this publication. The integral interview is available among the deliverables of the project.



Photo by: Oliviero Toscani - All rights reserved



When the Calò experience began in 2015, a high number of people seeking protection and refugees landed on Italian soil coming mainly through Libya and other Northern African Countries – many with the objective to reach Central and Northern European countries. Many were stuck in Italy as per EU Regulation 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 (so called Dublin Convention). Furthermore, the EU response to the "migration crisis" created overcrowded "hotspots" in Italy and Greece.

Agreements with Libya and Turkey managed to decrease, over a period of one year, the arrivals of 98% (EU official data), but in Italy the large numbers of arrivals required the establishment of an emergency reception system, where migrants were assigned to large reception centers.

The living conditions in such makeshift and overcrowded centers, three of them located nearby Venice and Padova (Conetta, Bagnoli and Prandina) and later closed, were inhuman.

Different solutions were needed.

But the hopelessness feeling did not last long, Antonio and his family decided to take matters into their own hands.

"What can a single citizen, a normal family like ours do in the face of such big issues? Often all this causes a sense of helplessness in sensitive people... you feel helpless."

"The necessary premise in our case: the choice to open the door was a heartfelt and uncalculated choice. If it had been deliberate perhaps this experience would never have been born."



Two working parents with four children is not the average family in Northern Italy nowadays, especially in larger cities. But in a small, rural town of about 2000 inhabitants and part of the Municipality of Povegliano, situated in the vicinity of the provincial capital Treviso and about 45 Km from Venice, and living in a large house built in the 1980s, the Calòs are not so different from many other working middle class families of Veneto. Camalò di Povegliano is a town still anchored to rural traditions and values, which has more than doubled its inhabitants in the past 30 years, becoming a residential area for many people working in larger and more expensive cities.



The town is connected to larger centers by public transport, a kindergarten (operated by the Parish) and the elementary school are available to the population. With a supermarket, a pharmacy, two pizzerias, a pub, a renowned inn and other shops, Camalò features all the basic services that make it a good place to live. The parish is highly active and the "pro-loco" – the local agency that operates for culture and tourism like in many other smaller towns in Italy - organizes many events.








ACTIVATING THE COMMUNITY'S ASSETS

Do the Calòs really represent a typical family of today's Europe? Hard to say, they are one of those close-knit families, maybe more like those you can see on some old popular TV series, equipped with a solid sense of community that comes both from being Catholic and living in a town where the *Cultura Contadina* (the peasant's culture) still shapes values and behaviors – in positive and negative terms as we'll see.

In the six weeks between the decision of opening their home to refugees and the day that the six refugees arrived at their door, the Calòs have used all their time to set the foundations for their unheard-of experiment:

The activation of the community was not an easy task, but the fact that *il professore* the professor – and former elected city councilor of culture and his wife *la maestra*, the elementary teacher were both well-known in the town, meant that they were able to mobilize parts of the civil society and acquaintances for their project, which at the time was as fuzzy and, they thought, short-term as it could be.

At the beginning only few friends and stakeholders welcomed the idea, many stopped talking to the Calòs as a sign of their disapproval. As the experience continued taking shape, more people started to change their mind.



"The month and a half between the decision to welcome and the arrival of our future "black sons" we used it to understand the necessary procedures, the legal and medical aspects, to get information on what we could do and what we could not do, what qualified staff we should involve, the possible organization at home. We were lucky enough to attend a disused rectory that thanks to the will of the parish priest and the parish community, hosted 32 refugees/migrants for almost two months."

"There were also people available and open, but initially they were very few. Then we had an opening signal when they saw how we had organized ourselves."



Before and throughout the years after the six new members of their families arrived in Camalò, the Calòs have spent considerable time to find and meet allies and support from the community. At the beginning they were the closest friends and professionals, those who would later become the six figures that accompanied the enlarged Calò family for 2 years.

Then, the local business community – the entrepreneurs and companies and the employers' association that would help find traineeships and offer jobs. The number and variety of citizens and local organizations that – over the span of the experience – have been activated, shows that 6+6x6 is only the starting point of a multiplier of community assets that involves a multitude of stakeholders who – in different ways and to different degrees - contributed to the success of the story.






A LONG AND WINDING ROAD

In those months, the arrivals by sea and the migrants/refugees who took the Balkan land routes were in the hundreds of thousands. In 2015 over 1,4 million persons applied for international protection and 1,3 million in 2016, according to EU official data.

The Ministry of the Interior, through its territorial offices of Law Enforcement (the *Prefettura* and the Police, *Questura*), struggled to manage the sheer numbers of people lodged in the overcrowded reception centers. Local authorities were called to collaborate, willingly or unwillingly. Where cities accepted to receive small numbers of migrants (5 migrants every 2000 local population), the SPRAR centers were installed. Whereas cities did not accept such arrangements (the majority), available facilities were used by the *Prefettura* for the CAS (Extraordinary Reception Centers) system. The management of such structures was publicly assigned to private (most of the time social) companies, with a standard reimbursement of 30€ per migrant per day to cover all living and service costs.

But these structures were bursting, and the Prefectures had long called on all citizens to make themselves available for a temporary shelter. As Sossio Vitale, the lawyer who has been collaborating with the Calòs since the early times of the 6+6x6, recalls how the central government handled the issue.

You could count on the tip of your fingers the migrants, the "*foresti*" in Venetian language, who lived in Camalò when the Calòs started their adventure. The presence of people with different skin color and – sometimes – ethnic garments, was not a usual sight in that village.



"The central government delegated the management of the integration paths of these people to the Prefectures and this led to many distortions of the system, because they were unprepared and, in turn, they mainly responded by delegating to the private sector through public procurement."

Lawyer Sossio Vitale

The city of Povegliano, ruled by a civic coalition supported by the Northern League Party, did not adhere to the SPRAR system, and was - like the majority of the city administrations in the Veneto region - wary of the reception of migrants/refugees. Furthermore, what the Calòs intended to do was unprecedented. In that context, there were not existing examples at hand that could be followed to configure the whole process of dispersed family hospitality.

In truth, the 6+6X6 is not the only "family" or spread reception project for migrants. In Italy there are about five hundred families who, thanks to the mediation of associations such as Refugees Welcome* and the Vesta** project in Bologna, as well as parishes and municipalities, host refugees (mostly one person per family) in their own homes. But in Camalò, it was a one-family show of the Calòs.


The relations with the *Prefettura* and *Questura* have been fruitful from the beginning, with a cooperative attitude that helped Calò clarify the rules and bureaucracy and practices to receive refugees, also in absence of an established legal procedure.

With the lack of regulations for individual families to receive refugees, the first step was to include an NGO that had an ongoing contract for reception with the Prefettura in the project, in order to be able to receive and manage the funds for the hospitality.

"I went to the Prefecture to give my availability. I thought I'd find a line of families waiting... and yet I was sure I had been preceded by so many other families for a long time that they could teach me how to do it. When I arrived at the Prefecture, three days after our decision, I found no queue. I was alone. When I expressed my intentions by saying that we would like to welcome in our home, the Prefecture staff were very amazed (they thought we'd make our 'second' or 'third' house available). Then they informed me that they had no knowledge of other families with similar requests, neither in the city, nor in the province, nor in the region, nor in the whole country."

*<https://refugees-welcome.it/>

**<https://www.progettovesta.com/>




The third sector has a crucial role in integration policies in Italy, furthermore civil society in the Veneto region is an important engine of social cohesion, bread and butter of civic activism.

It has been quite easy to find a cooperative to collaborate, soon the Hilal cooperative agreed to support the Calòs' endeavor.

The role of the Povegliano municipality has been passive: due to the political context, the city administration has never been actively involved in the experience, avoiding making any public statements or taking any action. But it has correctly provided for the paperwork required by the family concerning specific issues of its competence.

The mayor Rino Manzan, interviewed by the national newspaper La Repubblica*, stated "They never gave a problem. He (Calò) was good at setting the rules for them. I just object that we give them false hopes". *Was it really so?*



"Gradually our experience has become a laboratory and from there it has turned into a 'model' of reception. Clearly, certain decisions on medical, legal, and administrative matters were taken by the 'owners' of such competences and we were doing our best to respond according to the indications of the case. A fundamental element is that there has always been a spirit of collaboration between the involved parts."

When we started with our project that involved a continuous commitment every day, after seeing that many people in the town changed their minds. They saw that these boys were always busy doing something: first at school, then in sports, then in volunteering, then in the internship and finally in their jobs... almost all of them in the end have become more tolerant. Relationships and friendships have also been formed with different people. Now that the boys are completely autonomous and have gone to live outside the house, they have chosen houses/apartments close to ours because they now feel welcomed by the community too."

*<https://rep.repubblica.it/pwa/intervista/2020/01/09/news/migranti-245351598/>



If the 6+6x6 experience has been successful and Mr. Calò has been awarded by the Italian President Sergio Mattarella with the title "Grand Officer of Order of Merit of the Italian Republic" and also by the European Parliament with the European Citizen's Prize in 2018, this recognition has been achieved also thanks to his persistent and continuous media relations. Early in this effort, Antonio understood the importance of doing a good job with telling the tale to media and authorities, and later of keeping momentum for a newsworthy story. Amid the migration crisis, the interest of the media for this "different angle" has been high, and several national and international media, TV and newspapers, picked up the story.

This has helped to keep the awareness high and to get additional support from like-minded people who believed in the feasibility of the approach. The narrative of the "ordinary" family, which is little ordinary in truth, that debunks stereotypes and negative perception through facts has been an intrinsic motivator for success over time.




THE RULES OF THE Game

When the six youths arrived in Camalò, some of them had been in Italy for some time but spoke little or no Italian. Four of them had already applied for protection status, which had been rejected in first instance.

These six young men were not the group that the Calòs expected, Nicoletta has wished to receive young women, as she felt they were the most in need of a safe environment, but at the time it had not been possible. So, the Calòs accepted the men who were willing to stay with them. The first months were used to set the rules of the integration game. As the real experimentation began, clear rules and objectives were set: take them or leave.

Integration in a family is quite different from what may happen in the reception center, so the main approach replicates the family dynamics. It is a project of reception and gradual integration into society through an accompaniment that ends with true autonomy such as leaving the house - like any child - at the right age, with a good job, with a place to live and with a clear legal status, and all the necessary assets to truly feel active citizens - part of society.

This family approach revealed fundamental for this group, all youths are coming from Sub-Saharan African countries, where family is almost sacred. For the young men, relying on an enlarged family with two authoritative role model figures (mother and father), as well as Italian brothers and sister, has been critical. Every and each one in the new family had to play by the rules if they wanted to stay in this family. After two months, three of the six men decided to go back to the reception center because they did not feel comfortable with this family arrangement and were "exchanged" with three willing newcomers.



"We offered them utmost trust with concrete acts, the handover of the housekeys and the possibility to use all the spaces of the house. We wanted them to feel at 'home' in a short time. The first three months were dedicated to the real reception, to soothing the bereavement and physical and spiritual suffering of these boys, all with an incredible story to tell. We dedicated ourselves to them, we tried to give some security to these people, who had lived the last few years in situations of total insecurity, poor safety, and risk for their lives."





Overnight the final group of six was finally formed. Braima, Mohamed, Sahoiu, Tidjani, Siaka and Said joined Andrea, Giovanni, Elena and Francesco: the ten children of Nicoletta and Antonio - and the 6+6 element of this integration journey.

Photo by: La Repubblica - All Rights reserved

As soon as the project was taking shape, the components of its last element, the "x6", entered the scene. Since the outset, the family approach used by the Calòs required specific and diversified competences of external professionals to manage the process. The first entry was Giulia Marcon, a local psychologist who had previous experience in working with refugees and migrants. From the very beginning, she was hired to support the human and relational aspects of the new family.

The second issue that required solving was language, as the six men spoke different languages and dialects, but nobody was proficient enough on a single common language. Some of the Italian brothers helped, but the need to have a language teacher was solved when Giovanni Novara, a retired journalist and Montessori teacher, knocked at the door and made himself at disposal to teach basic Italian and tutor the newcomers for some months.

But language was not the only means of communication that was used to create intercultural and interreligious dialogue (all the asylum seekers being Muslims, and the Calòs practicing Catholic). Food plays a crucial identity and relational role: the dilemma was soon solved by agreeing that lunch would be Italian and dinner African. More help from a neighbor came in the form of meals during the week.

"She would often stop for dinner with us so that she would be seen as part of the family. Extraordinary choice. It was like having an antenna in the house about everything that was going on and needed psychological mediation and more."

"Everyone helped in setting up and clearing table, washing and cleaning. We did a calendar with shifts both in the kitchen and in the garden and in the laundry and for the bathrooms and other rooms. Then there was the very delicate and significant religious issue. Here, too, utmost respect. We got a place for their prayers and gave them the opportunity to attend the nearest mosque on Friday mornings".

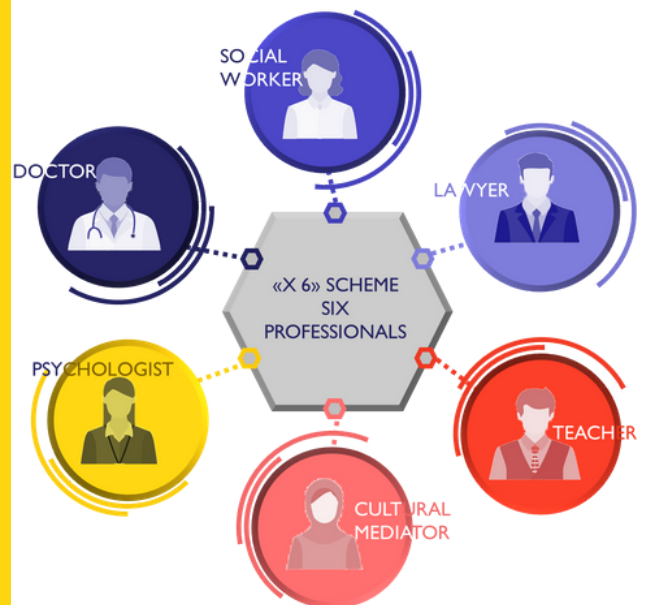




In addition to Giovanni Novara, who tutored in Italian in the initial phase, professional help was soon hired to support the family . A young cultural mediator, and a social worker have been taking care of the six young men when work and study engagements kept the Calòs away from home.

Lawyer Sossio Vitale agreed to oversee the legal issues and the applications for international protection.

Physicians and other social workers complete the " portfolio" of specific skills required to steer in a holistic way the integration process, together with entrepreneur Walter Pozzobon and Father Giovanni Kirschner.

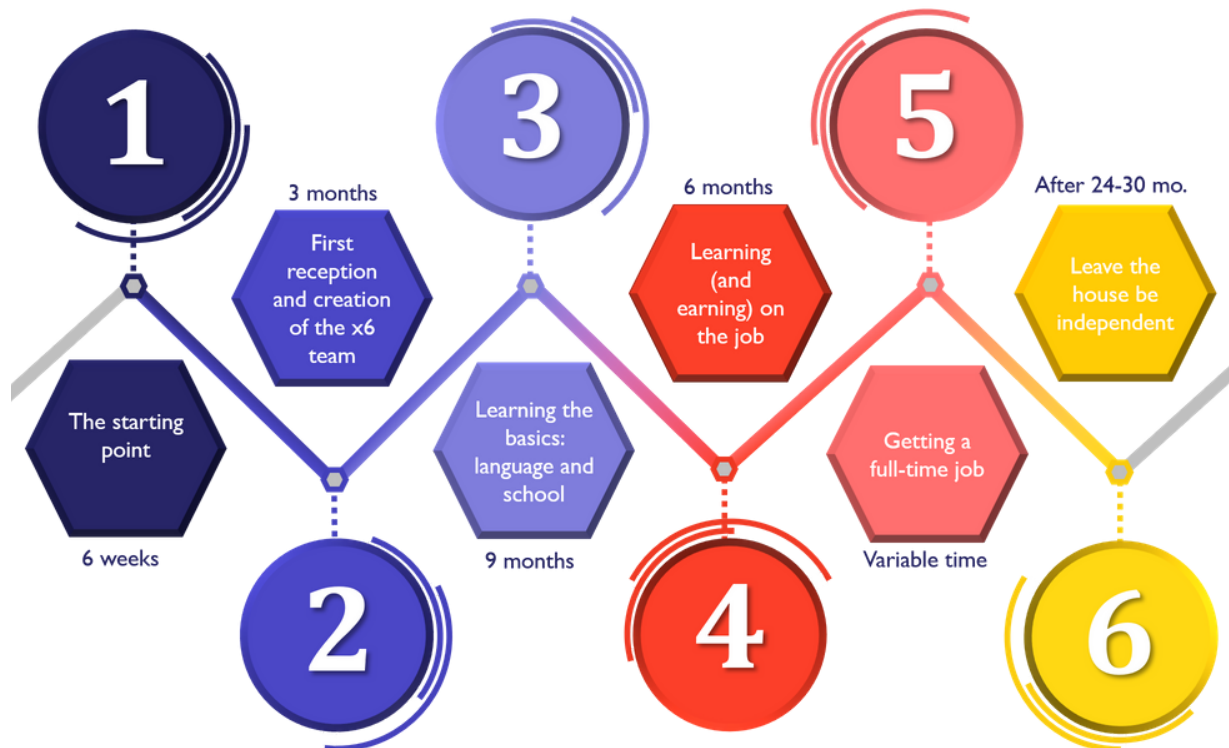


SIX as a FAVORITE NUMBER: THE STEPS OF THE PROCESS

Once introduced the main characters of this tale, a little more on its plot and how, over time, it has changed the people that lived in it.

Admittedly, a lot of improvisation has been a reiterated feature of the experience. This has been possible because there has been a substantial freedom – given mostly by the lack of an established system at the time - to deal with family reception. The process, like most social innovation initiatives, has been a learning-by-doing and trial-and-error one. With hindsight however, it has been possible to "codify" and to structure a general scheme of this experience.

We can call this codification... the **6-Step Process**: starting from when the family has made the decision to 5 incremental or "modular" steps that have led to the final outcomes of the practice.



STEP 1: THE STARTING POINT (6 weeks)

The sinking of a boat off the Sicilian strait on April 18, 2015. The decision of the family to host a group of newcomers (6+6) until the arrival at Calò's house in early June.



STEP 2: FIRST RECEPTION AND CREATION OF THE X6 Team (3 MONTHS)

"The job of the lawyer has been particularly important over the years, following all procedures to acquire a legal status for the 6 boys. There are four steps in the Italian system: first the commission, then the first degree, then the Court of Appeal, then in the Supreme Court. The lawyer has spent a lot of time reconstructing stories and compiling defense and clarification practices."

3 months (June 2015 to September 2015) In this inception period, time has been dedicated to:

- *creating a family atmosphere, soothing the traumas, facilitating a first knowledge of the Italian language, the place where the six young men ended up living, history and, above all, Italian and Venetian/Treviso customs and habits.*
- *knowing and meeting people and friends who would help and did help the enlarged Calò family. Time devoted to the organization of family life that went overnight from six to twelve members.*
- *Initiating all the necessary practices to ensure health, legal and administrative status.*

In these three months the social worker, the Lawyer - very important figure given the complexity of the cases- the psychologist (every Tuesday in the afternoon for group, family and individual therapy) and the teacher who came twice a week (introduction to the language and first knowledge of civic education) started their accompaniment to the youths.

Other friends and volunteers helped create the family routine: a retired person made himself available for the creation of a vegetable garden in the backyard - a very useful element of daily commitment and mediation of knowledge between different worlds around a universal theme such as cultivation and food; a lady came every Saturday or Sunday to prepare food; a friend brought lasagna for everyone every Thursday, another friend gave away six bicycles that turned out to be very useful.

At the end of this period the Calò family was composed by Antonio and Nicoletta, the parents, nine sons and one daughter: the "Italian" ones: Andrea 26 years old at the time, Giovanni 23, Elena 22 and Francesco 16 and the "African" ones: Braima 28 years old and Tidjani 24 from Guinea Bissau, Mohamed and Sahoiu both 25 years old at the time from Gambia, Siaka from the Ivory Coast and Said from Ghana, both 18 at the time.



STEP 3: LEARNING THE BASICS: LANGUAGE AND SCHOOL, CULTURE, SOCIAL LIFE (9 MONTHS)

In addition to the routines established in step two, during this period all the boys had a regular schedule that allowed everyone not only to learn the ropes of Italian life, but also to avoid to wander about the streets or to bother and harass people (an accusation often made to all refugees/migrants).

The typical weekly schedule in this period was:



Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. public school and attended courses of Italian, mathematics, geo-history and a language (courses of various levels depending on which schooling they had in their own country).

Mondays and Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. the teacher came to tutor and help with homework.

Tuesdays 4 p.m. to evening with the psychologist.

Thursdays in the afternoon everyone off to play a sport (gym or football).

Fridays in the morning prayers at the mosque.

Fridays in the afternoon volunteering activities for the community: heavy lifting jobs, gardening, moving, chop wood or other).

Saturdays, as in all Italian families, were dedicated to cleaning the house and groceries.

Sundays, day off



STEP 4: Learning (and earning) ON THE JOB (6 MONTHS)


After the end of the school year, and after one month dedicated to seeking an opportunity for apprenticeship/traineeship, all six young men started an on-the-job learning experience. An important aspect of this next step has been to find an institution that recognized the validity of the traineeship to be able to get remuneration as provided by the Italian Law.

The help of social partners was required. In this case was ASCOM, the company of the employers' association of the commerce sector that carried out the procedures for traineeships with the companies. The broker was once again Antonio.

During the summer, all six started a traineeship, working in carpentry, agriculture or catering. These were full-time traineeship, with a monthly pay of 400-450 euros.

Working flexibility and heavy duty were the requirements, some had to work overtime and weekends. The new trainees left home early in the morning and rode their bicycles to go to work sometimes, 10-15 Km. each way.

Follow-up of the progress at work had been ensured by Antonio: every month he visited the companies to make sure that everything was going well.



“During the school year all their problems came out clearly, and the first was: why did they come here. The answer was: to work. Families in their origin country selected them for what they could do. They sent them on this hazard, and once here, they must work and send money home. If they go back without a job, they may even be rejected by their family; these guys are seen very badly, because all the family savings have been invested in them.”

“The companies that took our African sons had to have two pre-requirements: the first: that there were no Italians who wanted to do that internship- first then the Italians and then my boys. Second the presence of my boys did not go to replace someone on maternity leave, a redundancy or other job seekers.”

“From the outset, the employers' surprise was remarkable. Astonishment at their education, their willingness to work, their punctuality... their already Italian way of interpreting their job duties.”



STEP 5: GETTING a FULL-TIME JOB and a PLACE TO LIVE (variable time)

Real independence comes only when people can get a steady income and a job that allows them to exit the reception system. Three of the young men that became part of the Calò family have a family in their home country and their choice to migrate was related to the possibility to provide for wives and children. After the traineeship - which admittedly had started because of the strong community relations of Antonio and his family and friendly employers - almost all the African "sons" had a promotion and their contract became permanent.

The time required to get to this point has a variable duration, as it depends on several factors, firstly, the labor market and economic situation of the region. Furthermore, it strongly depends on the legal status and the work permit of the newcomers.

Lawyer Sossio points out the difficulty of obtaining legal status.


In this period, all the boys held a temporary work permit, although three are still today going through the judiciary process to obtain a final status.

Although during the first period the trainees rode their bicycles to go to work, the possibility to get a driver's license has been significant at the end of this period, all six were getting their licence, and had a doctor, a healthcare card, and an ID card.



“The boys are of different ethnicity and from different states with different problems. The biggest difficulty is to make everyone understand that the irregular economic migrant has no protection in the EU.”

Lawyer Sossio Vitale



Step 4 and 5 have also meant a reduction of public spending for the reception system. When all the boys started earning with their traineeships, they were asked to contribute to the home economy (at least 200 € per month), and this allowed to cover food expenses. As they all got a full-time job, they were able to pay for everything, and they have become economically autonomous.

STEP 6: FLEDGLINGS LEAVE THE NEST

When the EMBRACIN' project started in January 2020, the 6 "African sons" had moved out of the Calòs house. They all live in their house, the result of a complete emancipation. Four of them found houses near the Calòs. Two of them, also due to job-related reasons, moved to other towns. Three have moved together with other 'brothers', another one lives in a house rented by the employer. Braima, Tidjani, Mohamed, Sahoiu, Siaka and Said are now well integrated and contribute to the economic and social life in Italy, while supporting their families back home.

Is this a happy ending? So far, the outlook is positive, although the three married men have not yet been able to reunite with their homeland families – "the real cherry on the cake" calls it Antonio.

The period required for all of them to become independent- from the reception system and from the family - has been about two years, although the family approach has allowed them to stay at the house for a longer period of time even when they had found a job – not differently than the natural children of Antonio and Nicoletta and most Italian youths.

The real issue, however, remains and concerns the recognition of the legal status, still pending.

SHOW ME THE MONEY!

Anti-migrant rhetoric and the sheer numbers of migrants/refugees that have arrived in 2015 and 2016– especially before agreements with Libya and Turkey were in place - put a spotlight on the public costs of migrant and refugees' reception. This led to the change of Italian Law in 2018 "the new security Decree" issued by the then Minister of Interior and leader of the National League Matteo Salvini, which – among other things – canceled the possibility to give support for those applying for "humanitarian reasons" (the only status that migrants not coming from war zones could apply for), and reduced the services of the SPRAR reception system only to those who had already received the refugee status.

At the time when the Calòs started their project, Italy had a publicly funded system (partly funded by EU AMIF funds and partly from national matching funds) that foresaw the cost of 30-35 € per person in the reception system per day. Such amount was all inclusive for the organizations that managed the centers and the refugees/asylum seekers.

Some of most vocal opponents to saving lives at sea and accepting desperate people on the Italian shores accused the Calòs – and in general all the NGOs that operated in this system through public procurement of the Prefectures and the Municipalities – to make money by stealing it from poor Italians and giving it to the migrants who in return stole the same jobs from the same poor Italians. But the Calòs, two teachers with four kids, already knew the real meaning of "economy" (from the Greek word *oekonomia*, gr. *οικονομία*, House management). In this respect, they used a home economics approach. In the following page an example of a monthly balance.






MONTHLY BALANCE

INCOME	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	EXPENSES	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Public funds	30 € per refugee per day	5.400,00 €	HOME		
Contributions from Salary/Wages	after start of paid job - 200€ per month			doubling of utilities expenses	250,00 €
			Utilities insurance		150,00 €
			TRANSPORTATION		
			Fuel		200,00 €
			DAILY LIVING		
			Groceries	5,1€ per day per person	1.000,00 €
			HEALTH		
			Gym Membership		50,00 €
			Doctors/Dentist Visits	paid be NHS	
			Medicine/Prescriptions	from emergency fund	
			EDUCATION - WELFARE		
			Psychologist		700,00 €
			Tutor		500,00 €
			Social worker (s)	almost full time	1.400,00 €
			Legal expenses	from emergency fund if needed	
			OTHER		
			Administrative expenses	administrative costs for the Cooperative	300,00 €
			Pocket money	2,5€ per day per person	450,00 €
			SAVINGS		
			Emergency Fund		400,00 €
		5.400,00 €	TOTAL		5.400,00 €





For clarity's sake, the Calòs have never managed the public funds directly, it was not allowed by the Law, and they never meant to. The Hilal Cooperative, the NGO who had a contract for reception with the Prefecture, received the funds from the State and reimbursed, retaining a monthly administrative fee for the management costs, the Calòs upon receipts and paid the pocket money directly (25 € every ten days per person: 2.5€ per day).

After the first year, the public costs have been steadily decreasing. When the six young men started to work, they contributed to the home with about 200 € per month, covering all food expenses, with a saving on public spending of about 1.200 € per month, and gradually all the living expenses. The costs of the people and resources -in terms of dedicated time and in-kind resources (time, clothes, the bicycles etc.) - of the family and friends directly involved could be quantified economically, although it makes little sense here, as the "Social Return on Investment" on these six men has been high to the eyes of the community.

However, it would be incorrect to deal with the economics of the 6+6x6 without taking into consideration the benefits, which have been manifold for the local community and economy, in terms of:

- *Increased revenues for local commerce: all food and home necessities are bought locally in stores and from local producers.*
- *Increased revenues for the Italian state: through the payment of labor taxes and social security the migrants are also repaying the initial costs of the reception and integration.*
- *Employment for local professionals: the people hired (psychologist, social worker, tutor, lawyer) are all from the area. For example, the social worker was unemployed before being hired, and she received a regular income that helped her Italian family.*
- *Security and safety issues: through the intense schedule and family atmosphere, including the psychological support, the neighborhood has gained a sense of security, new ties have been created to help the Calòs' "African" boys, resulting in more social cohesion.*



A HAPPY ENDING ...OR JUST A NEW BEGINNING?

As the makeshift reception plan of Calò and his extended family unrolled, and new achievements were becoming more evident, what had been an emotional impulse to open the house slowly began taking shape, and a clear pattern began to reveal. When the Italian partners of the EMBRACIN' project met Antonio in 2018, the 6+6x6 was already codified in its main phases and more news about the progress of the "African sons" towards their full integration continued to arrive.


This concrete experience found a European partnership that has an ambitious objective: to scale up and transfer the 6+6x6 scheme to other towns in Italy and Europe and to become a widespread model for dispersed reception of third-country newcomers.

Antonio, with his usual enthusiasm, excellent storytelling skills and typical Venetian pragmatism, has a truly clear plan on how that can be done...

The rationale is simple: to become an integration scheme, the 6+6x6 needs a political commitment by the authorities closest to the citizens: local authorities. Even the Calòs admit that their family acted in extraordinary ways, and the burden cannot remain solely within the family.

The trick is to diffuse newcomers in small numbers.

The municipality takes on the role of management of resources and staff and hires the "x6" team of professionals that accompany one or more nuclei of six newcomers.

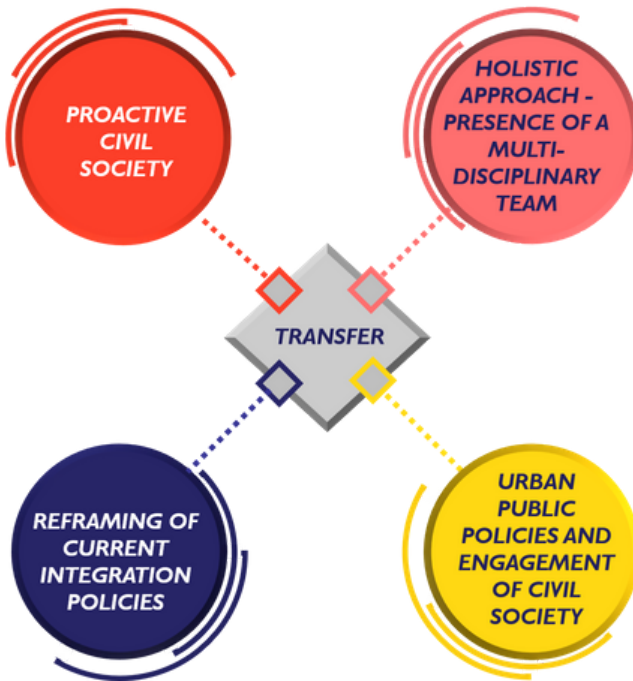


“Six refugees for each municipality of 5,000 inhabitants, 12 refugees, i.e. two units of six, for municipalities with 10,000 inhabitants, 18 refugees, that is, three units of six, for municipalities with 15,000 inhabitants and then so on as needed...”

“Each unit of six will be supported and accompanied in their own path by a team of six professionals, a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, a psychologist, a social worker and an interpreter/mediator. But these people will not only follow one group of six, but up to six groups, which will give them a full-time equivalent job.”

This operation entails not only the identification of adequate resources – which may come from the AMIF or social services funds – but also a policy improvement and commitment, at both national and at local levels.

Integration policies are dealt with by different government levels in European countries, but the commonality is that integration happens on the ground, therefore those government levels that have a higher proximity to citizens are called to play the most relevant policy role.



THE main PRINCIPLES OR PILLARS OF 6+6X6 TRANSFER

Regardless of the specific features that the adaptation and re-use of the 6+6x6 experience may have in five medium-sized cities in Europe (in Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Sweden and Italy), this is the start of a network that will be mobilized to share the main principles of the 6+6x6 journey to improve and share it with other cities and regions in Europe. The main focus of the network and of its transfer could be:

1. Migrants' integration can be facilitated by active civil society, and it is a two-way commitment, which can result in a win-win situation for the local contexts, only if there is a **political and value-based agreement** that migrants are resources and not problems, especially if the dispersed approach is used

3. Social innovation brought about by a bottom-up experience always needs to find **middle ground between urban public policies and the engagement of civil society**, whether organized or spontaneous such as in the case of the Calòs, the relations need to be dynamic to remain relevant to stakeholders and citizens

2. **The holistic approach** (the x6 pillar) of integration and the presence of a **multidisciplinary team** that accompanies the process in all the **dimensions of integration** (education and training, housing, work, health, civic engagement and dialogue)

4. A **reframing of current integration policies** - especially at the local level - is required with a view to integrating different policy fields and departments (integrated policy approach), as well as **shared burden of responsibilities** not only among the main stakeholders but also with society at large


THE ROAD aHEAD ...

It is now the challenge of the EMBRACIN' project to test the transferability and create a network of committed local authorities that innovate the way in which they warrant integration of migrants and refugees while maintaining equitable social cohesion.

The ambition of transferring the scheme will certainly have to take into consideration different cultural, political and social contexts in Europe, the feasibility is still uncertain, and the way ahead is going to be bumpy.

... But this another story, that one the EMBRACIN' project that has just started to tell and that will continue over the next three years.





LESSONS LEARNED FROM 6+6X6 FOR PUBLIC ACTION TO MIGRANT INTEGRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL (OECD CHECKLIST)

1. Multi-level governance: Institutional and financial settings

Enhance effectiveness of migrant integration policy through improved vertical co-ordination and implementation at the relevant scale.

The good relations and collaborative spirit with the Law Enforcement offices, which are a State competence has allowed the 6+6x6 practice to start with the right foot. In spite of the lack of mechanisms that allow single families to take part of the reception system, a solution to find an intermediary for the management of the financial and administrative aspects was easily found through collaborative spirit.

Attention should be paid – in terms of creating dispersal mechanisms such as the 6+6x6 on the territory – through a better coordination among local-regional-central offices. We have learned from the Calò experience that the social and economic conditions, such as a thriving labor market and social safety nets play a crucial role in the integration dynamics. They need to be in place and ready to accept also small numbers of newcomers for the “spread hospitality” to become a good approach of integration.

Seek policy coherence in addressing the multi-dimensional needs of, and opportunities for, migrants at the local level.

This has been an early preoccupation and a built-in mechanism of the “x6” element of the practice, where a holistic approach meant to deal with different policy fields in an integrated way, providing social, health, education and training and labor support through the team of 6 professionals.

Ensure access to, and effective use of, financial resources that are adapted to local responsibilities for migrant integration.

The solution found for the management of the financial costs through the cooperative that was already working with the Prefecture made the practice run smoothly and in a transparent way. In this respect, however, in the perspective of transferring the scheme- local authorities should have a more central role and responsibility in this respect.



2. Time and space: Keys for migrants and host communities to live together

Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants' lifetimes and evolution of residency status.

The 6+6x6 experience is a good example of how timing is essential, and integration processes take time – about 2 years for newcomers who don't know the language and the mores of the hosting community. Planning rigid timelines for integration may hamper this process, however speeding up some phases considering different factors makes it possible to achieve gradual results also in shorted timeframes. Also, Voluntary acceptance of be part of specific family arrangement needs to be verified, as the Calòs did in the initial two months after the arrival of the migrants at their house.

Create spaces where the interaction brings migrant and native-born communities closer

The family house has been the centerstage of the 6+6x6 initiative, as the other public or private community spaces. In spite of the initial – and persistent in some cases – reticence of the community, where banners hanged outside the balconies against the Calò family and threats were posted on the social media, the immediate inclusion of the six men in the community life – through volunteering activities, but also leisure such as sport and doing groceries shopping together– have been critical moments of interaction with the native-born and diffident community of Camalò. Interactions at the parish and a rigorous daily schedule have been bread and butter of 6+6x6. If some adjustments are required on both sides (like for example agreeing on Italian lunch and African dinner), interaction and mutual knowledge in common spaces of life not only does foster integration, but most importantly, increases general social cohesion and sense of security.



3. Local capacity for policy formulation and implementation

Build capacity and diversity in civil service, with a view to ensure access to mainstream services for migrants and newcomers

In 6+6x6, the role of the local administration has been marginal at best, but the presence of a mediator has been really important in the first phase of the journey. Furthermore, the six young men have attended – with acceptable results – a public school, that has entailed an effort on the side of teachers and educators. In transferring this experience, it would be beneficial to train civil servants on specific skills to deal with cultural diversity.

Strengthen co-operation with non-state stakeholders, including through transparent and effective contracts.

The vibrant presence of the so-called Third Sector in Italy and especially in Veneto and the value that non-state actors have in the Italian welfare system is undoubtedly one of the factors that has worked well in the 6+6x6 experience. The Hilal cooperative has had a functional role in the whole journey, but it is important to avoid that all the burden and responsibilities are delegated (with the financial resources allocated through public procurement) solely to civil society, local authorities should maintain a robust and substantial role (not only of control but also accountability and transparency) in the implementation of integration measures, in case of transfer, to make the scheme sustainable.

Intensify the assessment of integration results for migrants and host communities and their use for evidence-based policies.

If it has been quite simple to assess the success of the 6+6x6 in the Calò case, the fact that this experience has worked well for the six migrants – with the relentless presence and efforts on the family and friends' side – the results by themselves cannot represent evidence that this system may be generalized and transferred in all contexts.

The enabling conditions for dispersed reception need to be in place and – in the case of transfer or adoption of this scheme – a clear and fair integration results framework – made of hard outcomes but also soft measurement of distance travelled (figuratively speaking in the integration process) by the newcomers, by the community and stakeholders in general.



4. Sectoral policies related to integration /1

Match migrant skills with economic and job opportunities

When Antonio Calò went knocking the doors of local employers, he made things clear for them: if the young men he was proposing for a paid traineeship were not up to the job, the employers needed not to hesitate to dismiss them. Work ethics may be different across Europe, but in the current economy, productivity and knowledge of the values attached to it – as well as the skills required – to work need to be made clear. Finding a paid occupation has been the primary concern – after the initial phase, and so should be also in the transferring of this practice.

Secure access to adequate housing

The Calò's house has been a safe port in this case, a substantial and crucial difference from the inhuman conditions of the hotspots and other overcrowded tenements where some migrants have ended up living. The routine established by the Calòs has familiarized the group with the standards of cleanliness, hygiene and chores that are typical of Northern Italian families. When the flock left the nested to go live in their own place, they were probably facilitated by the fact that they already knew the drills of good housekeeping in the host country.

Because of widespread prejudice – also based on different cultural or personal behaviors – finding secure, decent and affordable housing may be hard, especially in larger cities. However, it is paramount and is considered an essential aspect in the transferring. Social housing services, co-housing – also with long-time residents -and other forms of incentives for owners of vacant houses are available solutions to be pursued. The Municipality of Padua is tackling this issue through an AMIF funded project funded at territorial level and will be making synergies with the adaptation of the 6+6x6 in the city.



4. Sectoral policies related to integration /2

Provide social welfare measures that are aligned with migrant inclusion

It is through the constant presence of the multidisciplinary team that the Camalò experiment managed, in the end, to foster the integration of the six young men that arrived at Antonio and Nicoletta's house five years ago. Welfare and education have been the primary focus from that first day in June 2015. The presence of a social worker, of the teacher/tutor that would help everyone after school and of the psychologist /physician, all worked to regain and maintain the mental and physical well-being. Basic health and social needs are provided by Law in Italy, however, in more general terms, the constant work for speeding up the status recognition would allow for a more effective and efficient welfare system. In this respect finding a paid occupation, like in the case of 6+6x6 also serves the purpose of accessing social security and welfare services.

Establish education responses to address segregation and provide equitable paths to professional growth

Getting a permanent job has been a priority for the 6 "African sons", also because it would help the case for receiving a resident status. With a great polarization of jobs between high-skilled professions and menial but necessary unskilled jobs, it is likely that for certain profiles of migrants, the latter will be more available than the former, at least as entry jobs. This is an undeniable fact. However – as for all the workforce today – life-long learning and career improvement concepts should be part – from the onset- of key educational and guidance messages and balanced with the need to have a steady income. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning should be fostered and existing validation tools used to this purpose.



References

EMBRACIN' interview with Antonio Silvio Calò (available on the projects' website)

OECD (2018), *Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264085350-en> OECD (2018) Working

Osservatorio Regionale Immigrazione Veneto:

<http://www.venetoimmigrazione.it/it/osservatorio-immigrazione-rapporto>

Italian Ministry of Interior:

<http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/cruscotto-statistico-giornaliero>

ISTAT: <http://stra-dati.istat.it/>

<https://rep.repubblica.it/pwa/intervista/2020/01/09/news/migranti-245351598/>

<https://www.progettovesta.com/>

<https://refugees-welcome.it/>



Comune di Padova



famsi
Fondo Andaluz de Municipios para la Solidaridad Internacional



MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AGENCY THESSALONIKI S.A.

Polibienestar
UNIVERSITAT ID VALÈNCIA

European Coalition of Cities against Racism



ΔΗΜΟΣ ΕΓΚΩΜΗΣ



SALA KOMMUN



Center for Social Innovation
www.csi.org.com

